

Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

GEOPOLITICAL





Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

John Middleton, Editor

Volume 1
Abidjan–Economic




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Preface

Understanding areas outside our own corner of the globe is always a challenge. This is particularly true in the case of Africa, a vast continent with a complex web of indigenous cultures. Yet Africans make up one-fifth of the world's population, and the continent lies at the crossroads between the Americas, Europe, and the Middle East. What happens in Africa affects us all.

Moreover, North America's links to Africa go back many centuries—first as a partner in the Atlantic slave trade and later as an ally of European colonial powers that ruled Africa. The slave trade had a lasting effect on the history of both North America and Africa. It brought millions of Africans to this side of the Atlantic as slaves, forming the basis for black populations in the Americas. At the same time, the slave trade divided Africa and deprived it of generations of young people who would have played a productive role in society.

A great deal of material about Africa—in textbooks, newspapers, novels, and films—is superficial, biased, or even invented. Most of it appears in bits and pieces and not as part of a comprehensive study of the region. This work, *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students*, offers a more coherent picture of the continent. In its pages Africa emerges as a single continent with unique geographical features, a continuous, interrelated history, and similar economic, political, and social problems.

The Scope of the Encyclopedia. In its four volumes, *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students* offers both a broad and a fairly detailed view of Africa's land and its peoples—from the Mediterranean Sea to the Cape of Good Hope and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Indian Ocean. Although it is not possible to provide a detailed treatment of all aspects of the continent in less than 1,000 pages, the work does bring together a great deal of vital information and careful analysis.

The student encyclopedia is based on the four-volume *Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara*,

published in 1997, of which I was editor in chief. The original work contains 896 articles by geographers, historians, anthropologists, linguists, philosophers, and other experts from Europe, North America, and Africa. In the past most scholarly research about the continent came from non-Africans. Now, however, scholars from Africa play a leading role in the field. Africans tend to see their continent in one way, while foreigners have other perspectives. Combining these different images of Africa brings us closer to an understanding of the continent.

Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students covers much of the same ground as the earlier work at a level suitable for middle and high school students. Many of the original articles have been adapted and updated, and a substantial amount of new material has been added on North Africa. In addition to articles on standard topics such as countries, cities, and historical individuals, the student encyclopedia contains entries on broad fields of knowledge, ranging from human origins to music and song, from colonialism to marriage systems, and from slavery to food and drink. All articles are arranged in alphabetical order to make it easy for students to find information.

Features of the Encyclopedia. Alongside the text column in the pages of *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students* is a marginal column filled with helpful features. There readers will find time lines placing events in historical context, sidebars providing interesting information on a variety of topics, and definitions of difficult or unfamiliar words used in the text. Cross-references to related articles appear both within the text and at the end of entries. Fact sheets accompany each country article, providing significant data about the nation's people, geography, government, and economy in a convenient format.

The illustrations in the student encyclopedia bring the people and places discussed in the entries to life. Each volume has special full-color inserts



Preface

devoted to the themes of Peoples and Cultures, The Land and Its History, Art and Architecture, and Daily Life. The encyclopedia also includes more than 50 maps of modern nations, ancient kingdoms and colonial empires, trade routes, and various geographic features.

The original *Encyclopedia of Africa South of the Sahara* took six years to produce and *Africa: An Encyclopedia for Students* has taken nearly two more.

No single editor can do everything, and I wish to thank the publisher, Karen Day, and the senior editor, John Fitzpatrick, of Charles Scribner's Sons; Darryl Kestler of Visual Education Corporation; and the many members of their staffs. In addition, I thank the authors and the members of the original boards of associate editors, advisers, and consultants. This new student encyclopedia has been very much a cooperative effort.

John Middleton, Editor



A Time Line of Africa

4 m.y.a.*	<i>Australopithecines (early hominids) live in northern Rift Valley (Ethiopia, Kenya).</i>
2.5 m.y.a.*	<i>Early Stone Age; Homo habilis appears (Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania).</i>
1.5 m.y.a.*– 150,000 B.C.	<i>Homo erectus appears.</i>
240,000– 40,000 B.C.	<i>Middle Stone Age.</i>
80,000– 20,000 B.C.	<i>Late Stone Age.</i>
20,000– 10,000 B.C.	<i>Farming introduced in lower Nile Valley.</i>
10,000– 6000 B.C.	<i>Cattle domesticated in northern Africa. Millet and sorghum grown in western Africa.</i>
6000– 5000 B.C.	<i>Khoisan hunters of southern Africa create rock paintings.</i>
3000 B.C.	<i>King Menes unifies Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt. Agriculture develops in Ethiopian highlands.</i>
2000–1000 B.C.	<i>Horses introduced in Sahara region. Bananas grown in central Africa.</i>
332 B.C.	<i>Greeks occupy Egypt.</i>
200 B.C.	<i>Romans gain control of Carthage.</i>
32 B.C.	<i>Royal city of Meroë flourishes in what is now Sudan.</i>
A.D. 300s	<i>Aksum invades Meroë; Aksum king adopts Coptic Christianity.</i>
530s	<i>Byzantine empire takes Mediterranean ports.</i>
600s	<i>Muslim Arabs invade North Africa.</i>
ca. 1000	<i>Shona begin building Great Zimbabwe.</i>
1200s	<i>Portuguese voyage to northwest coast of Africa. Sundjata Keïta founds Mali kingdom.</i>

*m.y.a. million years ago



1312–1337	<i>Mansa Musa rules Mali and makes pilgrimage to Mecca.</i>
1400s	<i>Benin kingdom flourishes.</i>
1498	<i>Vasco da Gama sails around the southern and eastern coasts of Africa on the way to India.</i>
1505–1510	<i>Portuguese seize Swahili towns in eastern Africa and fortify Mozambique.</i> <i>Kongo king Afonso I converts to Christianity.</i>
1517	<i>Ottoman Turks conquer Egypt and port towns along the Mediterranean.</i>
1578	<i>Moroccans defeat Portuguese, remaining free of colonial control.</i>
1591	<i>Al-Mansur invades Songhai.</i>
1600s	<i>French, English, and Dutch establish trading posts along western coasts to export gold, ivory, and slaves.</i> <i>Akan state emerges.</i>
1650s	<i>Dutch settle at Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa.</i> <i>Arab traders settle on East African coast.</i>
1700s	<i>French and British establish network for slave trade in Central Africa.</i> <i>Zanzibar prospers as Arab trading center.</i>
1721	<i>French colonize Mauritius.</i>
1787	<i>British missionaries found Sierra Leone.</i>
1795	<i>British seize Cape Colony from Dutch.</i>
1798	<i>Napoleon leads French invasion of Egypt.</i>
1805	<i>Muhammad Ali takes power in Egypt, breaking free of Ottoman control.</i>
1807	<i>Britain and the United States abolish slave trade.</i>
1817	<i>Shaka emerges at head of Zulu kingdom in southern Africa.</i>
1821	<i>Freed slaves from the United States settle in what is now Liberia.</i>
1828	<i>Queen Ranavalona takes throne in Madagascar.</i>
1830s	<i>French rule proclaimed in Algeria.</i> <i>Slave trade continues in western Africa.</i>
1835	<i>Dutch settlers in southern Africa head north in “Great Trek.”</i>
1840s–1880s	<i>Slave trade flourishes in East Africa.</i>
1847	<i>Republic of Liberia is established.</i>
1852–1873	<i>David Livingstone explores Central and East Africa.</i>
1858	<i>Portuguese abolish slavery in Central Africa.</i>



1855–1868	<i>Emperor Téwodros rules Ethiopia.</i>
1859–1869	<i>Suez Canal is built.</i>
1869	<i>Diamonds are discovered at Kimberley in northern Cape Colony.</i>
1880–1881	<i>Afrikaners rebel against Britain in the First Anglo-Boer War, and British withdraw from Transvaal in southern Africa.</i>
1885	<i>Mahdist forces capture Khartoum.</i>
1880s–early 1900s	<i>European powers colonize most of Africa (present-day names of countries listed):</i> <i>Belgians in Congo (Kinshasa);</i> <i>British in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland;</i> <i>French in Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Bénin, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar, Réunion, and the Comoro Islands;</i> <i>Germans in Togo, Cameroon, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi;</i> <i>Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique;</i> <i>Spanish in Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea.</i>
1893–1895	<i>Africans in King Leopold's Congo revolt.</i>
1895	<i>France forms federation of colonies that becomes French West Africa.</i>
1896	<i>Ethiopian emperor Menilek defeats Italians, maintaining country's independence.</i>
1899–1902	<i>Afrikaners defeated by British in Second Anglo-Boer war.</i>
1910	<i>Union of South Africa formed.</i>
1914–1918	<i>World War I: French and British capture German Togo; Africans fight on the side of various colonial powers in Africa.</i>
1922	<i>Egypt gains its independence.</i>
1930	<i>Haile Selassie I crowned emperor of Ethiopia.</i>
1935	<i>Italians invade Ethiopia.</i>
1936	<i>Union party in South Africa revokes voting rights of blacks.</i>
1939–1945	<i>World War II: many major battles fought in North Africa; Africans in French and British colonies drafted to fight in Europe and Asia.</i>
1940s	<i>First nationalist political parties are formed in western Africa.</i>

- 
- 1944 *William Tubman becomes president of Liberia.*
- 1945 *Arab League, an organization of Arab states, is founded in Cairo.*
Ethiopia regains its independence.
- 1948 *Policy of apartheid introduced in South Africa.*
- 1950s *Several independence movements against colonial rule develop.*
- 1951 *Libya declared an independent monarchy under King Idris I.*
- 1952 *Gamal Abdel Nasser seizes power in Egypt.*
- 1953 *Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) join to form the Central African Federation.*
- 1954 *War breaks out in Algeria.*
- 1956 *Sudan, Morocco, and Tunisia become independent.*
- 1957 *Ghana achieves independence, with Kwame Nkrumah as president.*
- 1958 *Guinea, under Sékou Touré, becomes independent.*
- 1960 *Independence achieved in Cameroon (French Cameroun), Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Dahomey (Bénin), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso).*
- 1961 *Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Tanganyika become independent.*
- 1962 *Independence achieved in Algeria, Burundi, and Uganda.*
- 1963 *Kenya (under Jomo Kenyatta) and Zanzibar become independent.*
Central African Federation ends.
Organization of African Unity is founded.
FRELIMO begins armed struggle for liberation of Mozambique.
- 1964 *In South Africa, Nelson Mandela stands trial and is jailed.*
Tanganyika and Zanzibar join to form Tanzania.
Malawi and Zambia become independent.
Hutu overthrow Tutsi rule in Burundi.
- 1965 *Rhodesia declares independence under Ian Smith.*
Mobutu Sese Seko takes power in Congo (Kinshasa) and renames it Zaire.
King Hassan restores monarchy in Morocco.
The Gambia gains independence.
- 1966 *Independence achieved in Lesotho and Botswana.*



1967–1970	<i>Biafra attempts to secede from Nigeria.</i>
1968	<i>Swaziland becomes independent.</i>
1969	<i>Muammar al-Qaddafi seizes power in Libya.</i>
1970	<i>Egypt/Sudan: Aswan Dam is completed.</i>
1974	<i>Guinea attains independence.</i>
1975	<i>Cape Verde and Angola become independent.</i> <i>FRELIMO government gains independence in Mozambique.</i>
1976	<i>Spain withdraws from Western Sahara; Morocco and Mauritania fight over territory.</i> <i>Residents of Soweto and other South African townships begin violent protests.</i>
1970s–1990s	<i>War erupts across the continent within the countries of Angola, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and Western Sahara, and between the nations of Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, and Sudan and Uganda.</i>
1980	<i>Zimbabwe becomes independent.</i>
1990	<i>Nelson Mandela released from prison.</i> <i>Namibia becomes independent.</i>
1993	<i>Apartheid ends in South Africa.</i> <i>Eritrea gains independence from Ethiopia.</i>
1994	<i>Rwandan and Burundi presidents assassinated; ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi continues.</i> <i>Nelson Mandela becomes first black president of South Africa.</i>
1995	<i>Outbreak of deadly Ebola virus in Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1997	<i>Laurent Kabila takes power in Zaire and renames it Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1999	<i>Libya hands over two suspects in 1986 airplane bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland.</i>
2000	<i>Ghana chooses president John Kufuor in free elections.</i> <i>Paul Kagame is the first Tutsi to become president in Rwanda.</i>
2001	<i>Congo (Kinshasa) leader, Kabila, is assassinated; Kabila's son, Joseph, succeeds him as president.</i>

Abidjan

With a population of about 2.8 million, Abidjan is the capital of IVORY COAST and one of the most important ports in French-speaking Africa. Situated along the edge of the Ebrié Lagoon on the Gulf of Guinea, its ocean port handles cargo for Ivory Coast, BURKINA FASO, MALI, and NIGER. Principal exports are cocoa, coffee, timber, and petroleum. Abidjan is also a banking center for West Africa.

The Krou and the Akan make up the two major ethnic groups living in Abidjan. The city's numerous educational institutions include the national university, archives, museum, and library. There is a research center for coffee and cocoa in addition to schools for marine science, communications, and administration.

Abidjan is clearly divided into modern and underdeveloped areas. The Hotel Ivoire, a tourist resort equipped with an ice rink, bowling alley, cinema complex, and casino, is one of the city's main attractions. Another landmark is the Italian-designed St. Paul's Cathedral, one of the most elaborate churches in Africa. The city is linked to other Ivory Coast cities by highway and to Burkina Faso by rail. (See also **Tourism, Transportation.**)

ABYSSINIA

See *Eritrea; Ethiopia.*

Accra

Accra, the capital of GHANA, lies on the Gulf of Guinea on the Gold Coast in West Africa. It is the commercial, educational, governmental, and cultural center of Ghana, the hub of the country's road and rail system, and the site of the Kotoka International Airport. The population is over 1.6 million.

The Portuguese, the first Europeans to visit the region, arrived in the early 1500s. They were followed in the 1600s by the Dutch and the British, who built two forts used in the SLAVE TRADE. The forts later grew into the city of Accra. Under the British, the city was the capital of the Gold Coast, which became Ghana in 1957. Present-day Accra is sharply divided into modern sectors and shantytowns*.

Industries in Accra include brewing and distilling, fish and fruit canning, clothing, shoes, and pharmaceutical products. The city has an ocean port, but Tema, to the east, surpasses it in importance. Accra is home to the University of Ghana as well as schools for communications, science, and technology. The national museum and archives and the National Theater are all located in the city. In addition, live music performances, movie theaters, and facilities for visitors have contributed to a growing tourist industry in Accra. (See also **Tourism.**)

* **shantytown** poor, run-down section of a city, often inhabited by immigrants



Achebe, Chinua

Achebe, Chinua

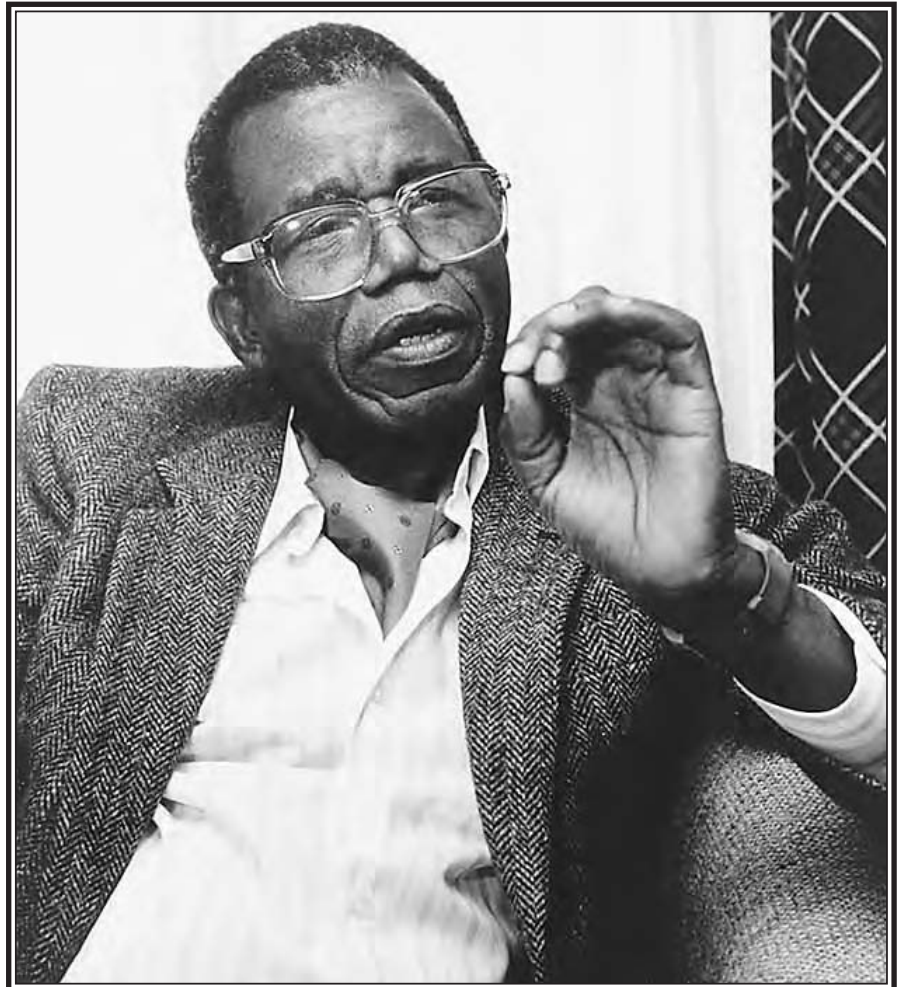
1930–
Nigerian writer

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country

Chinua Cinalomogu Achebe is a Nigerian writer whose novels often explore the difficult choices faced by Africans in modern life. Achebe's first novel, *Things Fall Apart* (1958), is considered a classic and is one of the most widely read works of African literature. The hero of the book commits suicide, unable to choose between radically different ways of life shaped by traditional values and European values.

Achebe worked as a teacher and writer before serving as director of the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation between 1961 and 1966. During the Nigerian civil war (1967–1970), he returned to his home territory of Igboland (renamed Biafra), which was attempting to secede* from NIGERIA. Achebe became a spokesperson for Biafra in Europe and North America. After the war he taught at several universities in Africa and the United States.

In addition to his novels, Achebe has written short stories and poetry inspired by his experiences during the war. He is also the author of several children's books intended specifically for use in African schools. (See also **Literature**.)



Nigerian author Chinua Achebe is known for his writings about the effects of colonialism and Western culture on traditional African societies.

Addis Ababa

* **deforestation** removal of a forest as a result of human activities

Addis Ababa, the capital and largest city in ETHIOPIA, is located on a high plateau in the center of the country. As home to the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY, an organization devoted to the interests of African states, Addis Ababa is also the diplomatic capital of Africa.

Addis Ababa was founded in 1886 by Empress Taitu, the wife of Ethiopian emperor MENILEK II. An area of the city called Arada, which contained the palace, St. George's Cathedral, and the central market, became the center of Addis Ababa. The city grew as noblemen who received land grants from the emperor established military encampments around the center.

By 1892 Addis Ababa was the capital of the Ethiopian empire. However, a lack of firewood resulting from deforestation* in the area led Menilek to consider moving his capital to another location. The importation of fast-growing wattle (acacia) trees solved the problem.

A rail line joining Addis Ababa to the Red Sea port of DJIBOUTI was completed in 1917 and helped boost the prosperity of the city. Population also grew at that time, partly because of slave raiding in southwestern Ethiopia. Many of the people who were captured—and they numbered in the many tens of thousands—were sent to Addis Ababa.

Ethiopia was under Italian control between 1935 and 1941, and the Italians planned to rebuild Addis Ababa according to a European model. They made changes that shaped much of the modern city, including the construction of roads and factories in the city. Arada, renamed Piazza, became the central market and commercial district.

Today, Ethiopia's main roads, rail network, and air routes run through Addis Ababa. With a population of about 2.5 million, the city is also the country's financial, commercial, educational, and media center.

Africa, Study of

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The study of Africa has a long history. People have been gathering information about the continent since ancient times. Early reports came mostly from travelers, explorers, missionaries, and merchants. Later, scholars in fields such as history, anthropology, geography, and the natural sciences began to conduct research there.

Early Contact. In ancient times, people living outside Africa knew little about it. The Greeks and Romans were quite familiar with parts of North Africa, but they had limited knowledge of sub-Saharan* Africa. Beginning in the A.D. 700s, the Arabs developed extensive contacts with peoples of the MAGHREB and began to explore areas south of the Sahara and along Africa's eastern coast. By the 900s Arabs had learned a great deal about the western and eastern parts of Africa through trade with the peoples of those regions.

European interest in sub-Saharan Africa began with voyages of exploration in the late 1400s. Explorers, missionaries, and merchants wrote about their visits to Africa, giving Europeans some basic information about the "dark continent." In the late 1800s, as Europeans became



Africa, Study of

involved in a mad “scramble” for colonies in Africa, scholars began to turn their attention to the region.

* **artifact** in archaeology, an ornament, tool, weapon, or other object made by humans

Colonial and Postcolonial Eras. The creation of colonies led to a more systematic gathering of facts about Africa. At the same time, European museums and private collectors began to acquire African artifacts*. Explorers and geographers mapped the continent, and colonial authorities and social scientists began studying the customs, laws, and other aspects of African societies and cultures. Some colonial powers hoped to use the knowledge they gained to strengthen their control in Africa.

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

Throughout the colonial era, the interpretation of information about Africa generally reflected the ideas and viewpoints of Europeans rather than those of Africans. In the mid-1900s, as African nations gained independence, the study of Africa began to shift. New centers and associations dedicated to the study of Africa were established both on the continent and at universities around the world. Greater attention was paid to African points of view and research expanded into many different areas. From the 1960s to the 1980s, the Cold War* created a boom in African studies. The competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for political influence in Africa generated great interest in the region.

Today political instability in many African countries makes fieldwork difficult. Nevertheless, Western and African scholars have begun an increasing number of joint research projects in which they share data and resources. In some African nations, the need to devote scarce financial resources to more pressing economic, political, and social programs has resulted in cutbacks in African studies.

Range of Research. African studies include a broad range of fields, from African LANGUAGES, LITERATURE, ART, music, and culture to African history, biology, economics, political science, geology, anthropology, sociology, religion, and philosophy. Some African studies focus on one particular area of study, such as language and literature. Others take an interdisciplinary approach that combines different areas of study and focuses on the relationships and connections among them.

One goal of African studies is to gain a greater knowledge of the forces that have affected Africa and its people over the centuries. Scholars also focus on discovering the roots of the problems facing Africa, such as widespread poverty, lack of economic development, ethnic conflicts, and political instability. Attempting to understand the continent from an African point of view is often a key feature of their work. (*See also* **Archaeology and Prehistory, Economic History, Ethnic Groups and Identity, History of Africa, Maps and Mapmaking, Music and Song, Oral Tradition, Popular Culture, Travel and Exploration.**)



See *South Africa; Zambia.*

Afrikaner Republics

The Afrikaner Republics were independent states established in the 1850s by Dutch colonists (Afrikaners) from British-ruled SOUTH AFRICA. The two longest-lived of the Afrikaner Republics were the Orange Free State, located between the Orange and Vaal Rivers, and the South African Republic (or Transvaal), between the Limpopo and Vaal Rivers. Each state had a strong central government, a judicial system with limited powers, and voting rights restricted to adult white males. The black Africans who lived in these states had no civil liberties or rights of citizenship.

Troubled by conflicts with surrounding African communities and a weak economy, the Orange Free State was unstable. The economic situation improved dramatically when diamonds were discovered there in 1867. Although the Orange Free State lost ownership of some of its diamond fields four years later, its economy became more stable. Moreover, it increased its territory by conquering several small African states.

The South African Republic also experienced political turmoil as it tried to expand beyond its borders. In addition, the country was torn by infighting between Afrikaner groups. In 1877 the British declared the South African Republic a part of their colony in South Africa. The Afrikaners resisted the takeover, defeating the British army in the First War of Independence in 1881.

When gold was discovered in the South African Republic in 1886, thousands of fortune hunters flooded the land and European colonial mining companies tried to seize control of the country. Cecil RHODES, prime minister of the British Cape Colony, failed in an attempt to overthrow the South African Republic's government in 1895. Four years later the British declared war on the South African Republic in hopes of controlling the valuable gold mines. The Orange Free State joined the South African Republic in resisting the British, but the Afrikaner Republics lost the war and in 1902 became provinces of British-governed South Africa. (See also Colonialism in Africa; Southern Africa, History.)

AFRIKANERS

See *Afrikaner Republics; South Africa.*

Age and Aging

Age has two significant roles in traditional African cultures south of the Sahara. First, respect for age and for the elderly is a universal social ideal. Second, many societies are organized into groups by age, and membership in such groups helps define a person's sense of identity and place in the community. Recent social changes have somewhat weakened these values and practices, but age is still a powerful shaping force in agricultural and pastoralist* areas, especially where local communities have a good deal of independence.

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding



Age and Aging

Age and Respect. Older people claim a right to the respect of others based on their seniority—they have lived longer than others. They deserve respect because they have acquired wisdom and experience over the years. Younger people have a reason to accept this way of thinking. By showing respect to their elders, they hope to ensure that they will receive respect when they reach that stage of life.

The ideal of the respected elder shapes many African institutions. The extended family is dominated by the senior generation. Elders control property and also grant or withhold permission for younger people to marry. Religious beliefs also reflect respect for elders. Cults* that honor ancestors are the highest form of respect for seniority—ancestors are more senior than the oldest living family members. However, the elderly have power within the community because they are closer in age to the ancestors than anyone else.

The high status of older people in African cultures is related to the idea that family growth is good and fortunate. People see large families as a source of security in times of crisis, and they want to leave descendants who will honor them as ancestors. The position of older men in the community is closely tied to this concern with family size and fertility. The power held by older men is reinforced by their control over marriages and also over status of young men. By delaying the marriages of young men, the elders create a surplus of young women. If the elders take these women as second or additional wives, they create large families, which adds to their position in the community.

Another factor involved in the respect for elders is their control of information and resources. Not all older people are respected, however, especially once their abilities decline. But those who skillfully display their knowledge, diplomatic* skills, social connections, and ability to perform rituals* enjoy high regard. These skills are considered as community assets*.

The ideal of respect toward old age does not always match the reality of relations between the generations. Harsh treatment by older men can cause disrespect and anger among younger men, who may engage in behavior that the elders cannot completely control. In addition, where communities are dominated by older men, the women do not always accept their secondary status.

Women and men experience old age differently. Women may continue to gain status and power at an age when older men experience loss. Women build up supportive networks of influence within families and households. These continue throughout their lives. Men, who tend to operate in a more competitive public domain, must eventually give up some of their power in exchange for continued respect by the younger men.

Aging and Age Sets. Many African cultures view aging not as a steady process but as a series of jumps from one stage to another—often, from youth to adulthood to “elderhood.” INITIATION RITES, ceremonies through which people acquire a new status, mark the transition from youth to adulthood. In some gerontocratic* cultures, initiation is a life-

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **diplomatic** involved with conducting relations with other nations

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **assets** property or other valuable goods or qualities

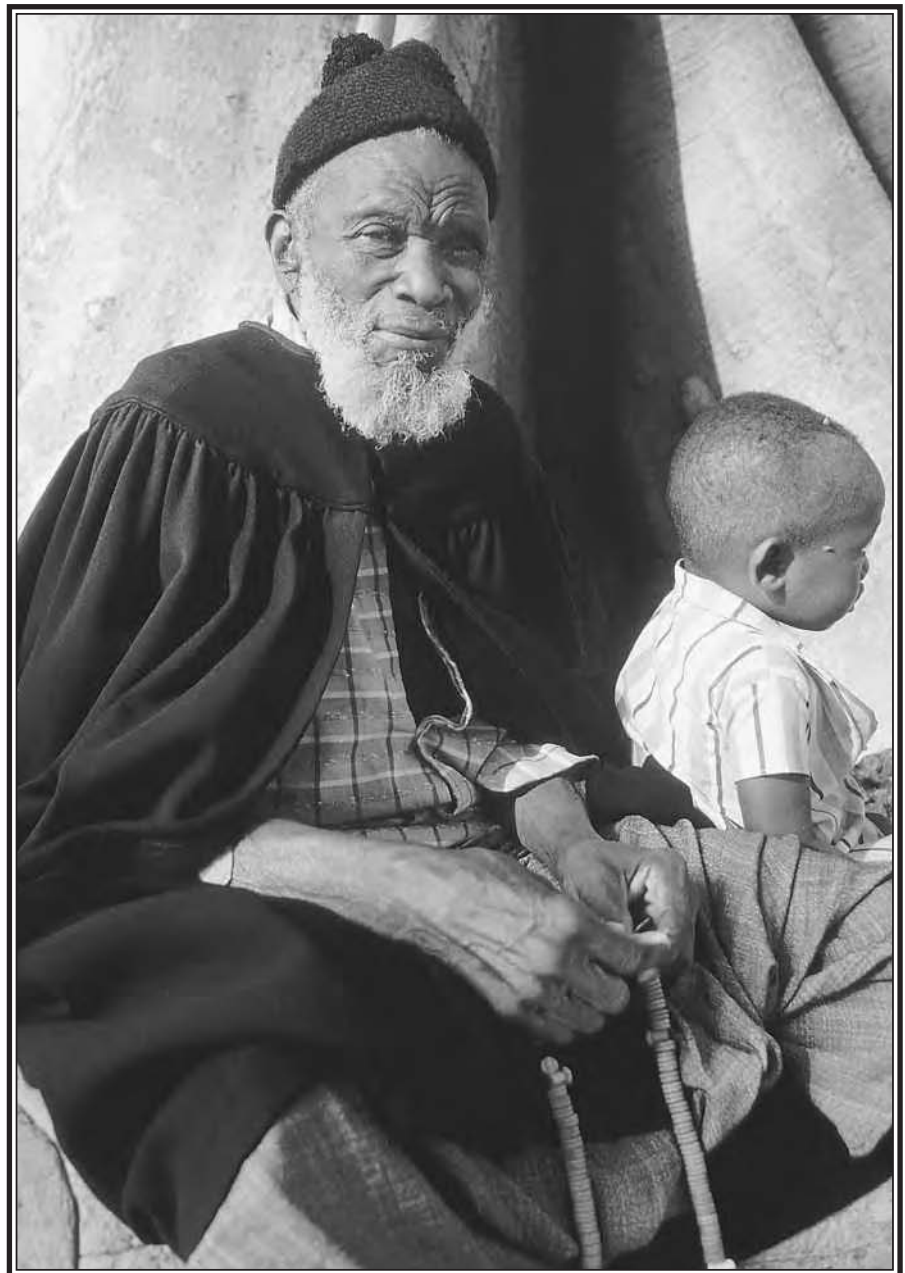
* **gerontocratic** ruled by elders

Age and Aging

long process during which the elders withhold knowledge and share it a little at a time. This delays the younger people's entry into the highest ranks. The content of the secrets is less important than the privileges that go with the possession of them.

Group initiation is one form of social organization based on age. As young people of similar age go through the process of initiation together, they form a bond or feeling of community that unites the group long after initiation, even into old age.

Another form of social organization is the age set, which involves dividing the community into groups based on age. Senior groups with-



In African cultures, elderly people are highly respected for their knowledge, skills, and experience. Older men, such as the Senegalese shown here, often hold considerable influence over the lives of younger members of the community.



Age and Aging

in such systems dominate younger ones, reinforcing the connection between age and authority. In contrast, age mates, or people within a group, experience equality and bond as peers.

One typical example of a society based on age sets is that of the MAASAI people of eastern Africa. Their system was originally military in nature. It placed young men into warrior groups by age with their roles defined according to seniority. The system has survived as the basis of gerontocratic power over young men, the *morán*, or warriors. Boys must compete with those who are older to be accepted into the next age set of *morán*.

As *morán* they remain in limbo for extended periods, neither boys nor full adults. If the elders relaxed their restrictions and allowed the younger men to marry, the older men would lose their control over the women. Eventually, however, the *morán* are allowed to marry and are also admitted to the society of the elders in something like a second initiation. Not all elders are equal, however. Competition for power continues among the various groups as new sets achieve elder status and older ones are edged out of control.

Societies organized around age systems may regard their own history as a series of age sets. In these societies, the process of aging seems to be halted during periods when family, community, or age-set relations do not change. The occurrence of a significant change—such as a birth, initiation, marriage, or death—brings awareness that everyone is older. At such times, each age set moves forward and power shifts within the community. (See also **Death, Mourning, and Ancestors; Family.**)

Agriculture

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

Agriculture plays a central role in the economies of nations throughout Africa, accounting for between 30 and 60 percent of all economic production. In many African nations, a majority of the people is engaged in farming, producing goods for domestic use and sometimes for export as well. Peasant and subsistence farming* is the basic form of agriculture in most parts of the continent.

Agricultural practices in Africa are extremely varied. Many of the differences are related to the continent’s environmental diversity—its great range of landscapes and climates. Crops and farming methods suitable for the dry, desert regions of North Africa are quite different from those appropriate for the tropical rain forests of central Africa. In addition, the cultural tradition of a group or a region influences what crops are grown and the techniques used to grow them.

PRINCIPAL CROPS

There are two main types of farming in Africa: garden crops, grown primarily from the roots or shoots of plants that have been placed in the ground, and field crops, grown mainly from seeds. Africans also raise various animals as livestock.



Agriculture

Root Crops. One of the oldest and most important root crops in Africa is the yam, a starchy plant sometimes mistakenly referred to as the sweet potato. Grown primarily in tropical or subtropical regions, yams are a reliable staple crop that can be stored easily for later use. Although rather low in nutritional value, they are often grown in combination with vegetables and other foods that help provide an adequate balance of nutrients.

In some parts of Africa—especially western, central, and eastern Africa—cassava is an important food crop. This starchy root plant is the source of tapioca. Although once regarded as only an emergency crop for use during periods of famine, cassava is now planted extensively and has even replaced the cultivation of yams in some areas. Suitable for growing in a wide range of climates, cassava can be left in the ground in both wet and dry seasons much longer than most other crops.

Two other important African root crops are potatoes and plantains. Found mainly in the drier, Mediterranean-type climates of North Africa and southern Africa, potatoes are also grown in the higher elevations of other regions. Plantains, a relative of bananas, have been an important crop in Africa's tropical rain forests for centuries. Used mostly for cooking, some varieties of plantains are also brewed to produce beverages.

Another plant of the banana family, the enset, is sometimes called the false banana. The enset does not produce an edible bunch of fruit like its cousin, the banana. Instead, its stems are used to make fibers and ropes, while its seeds are used for ornamental and medicinal purposes. Found wild in several areas, the enset is cultivated only in the highland regions of ETHIOPIA, where its starchy stem is pounded, cooked, and served as a staple food.

A variety of root crops have been introduced into Africa from other parts of the world. Taro, a plant that grows near rivers and streams, came from Southeast Asia. Groundnuts, which are valued for their oil, and various types of beans have traveled to Africa from the Americas.

Seed Crops. Seed crops of grains and cereals are grown from seeds saved from the previous harvest. Raised in cultivated fields, these crops are found throughout Africa, particularly in the savannas* and regions of medium rainfall.

The most widespread of African grains—and the most important food in the history of the continent—is sorghum. Originally developed from wild grasses native to the savanna regions of northern Africa, sorghum has been grown for food for at least 7,000 years. In some areas, the cultivation of this grain probably developed in close association with LIVE-STOCK GRAZING.

The spread of sorghum, however, is linked to the development of iron industries about 2,000 years ago. Iron tools proved especially useful for breaking and clearing the hard, dry soils of the savanna regions, as well as for weeding and harvesting crops.

Another important grain crop of the savanna regions of Africa is millet. Certain species of millet—including one called “hungry rice”—are especially important during times of famine because they can survive fairly long periods of little rainfall.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

See
color plate 6,
vol. 4.



Agriculture

In some areas of Africa, the traditional cultivation of sorghum and millet has been replaced by the growing of maize, or corn. Brought from Central America, maize was grown in very limited amounts at first and only in a few coastal areas of West Africa. During the 1900s, however, the cultivation of maize spread and it became important as a staple food crop, especially in eastern and southern Africa. Maize is also grown extensively in parts of North Africa, primarily in areas under irrigation. Farmers who practice intensive cultivation of maize often use mechanical plows and artificial fertilizers.

Two other grain crops, wheat and barley, are raised on a limited scale. Once restricted to the lower Nile Valley and the highland regions of Ethiopia, wheat and barley have been introduced to highland areas of southern and eastern Africa. Irrigation and the development of new plant strains have also allowed wheat cultivation to spread to some savanna regions. Wheat and barley are grown primarily to make flour.

Two main species of rice are grown in Africa. Common rice originated in Southeast Asia and probably reached eastern Africa more than 1,000 years ago by Indian Ocean shipping routes. The other species, Guinea rice, is native to wet areas of the Guinea coast and upper Niger River region of West Africa. Rice does not require grinding and can be stored and transported quite easily. In towns along the eastern coast of Africa, rice gained prestige as a food for travelers and guests. Among the most important rice-producing countries in Africa today are Egypt, GUINEA, SENEGAL, SIERRA LEONE, IVORY COAST, NIGERIA, and TANZANIA.

* **legumes** vegetables such as peas and beans

Other Crops. In addition to the main root and seed crops, Africans grow various legumes*, fruits and vegetables, and plants used to make beverages. Protein-rich legumes—such as beans, cowpeas, and soybeans—are produced widely throughout Africa, generally in combination with other crops. Such crops are typically grown in garden plots tended by families.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Among the most important fruits raised in Africa are dates, figs, olives, bananas, and pineapples. Dates, figs, and olives are cultivated primarily in the desert oases of North Africa. Bananas are grown throughout the tropical regions of Africa; pineapples are produced mainly as a cash crop* in SOUTH AFRICA, Ivory Coast, the Congo basin, and KENYA. Citrus fruits, including oranges and grapefruit, are grown for export primarily along the southern coast of South Africa and the Mediterranean coast of North Africa.

A number of vegetables—including tomatoes, onions, cabbages, peppers, okra, eggplants, and cucumbers—are raised in Africa. Tomatoes and onions, the most common vegetables, grow in large quantities along the coast of North Africa.

The principal beverage crops of Africa are tea, coffee, cocoa, and grapes. The largest producers of tea, grown mainly in highland regions, are Kenya, Tanzania, MALAWI, ZIMBABWE, and MOZAMBIQUE. Major coffee producers include Ethiopia, UGANDA, Kenya, Tanzania, and MADAGASCAR. Cocoa, best suited to tropical regions, is cultivated in West Africa. Grapes, produced in northern Africa and South Africa, are used primarily for making wine. These are all important cash crops, grown mainly

Agriculture

See
color plate 3,
vol. 4.

for export. Other cash crops include palm oil, coconuts, cashews, rubber, tobacco, cotton, and sugarcane.

CULTIVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

African farmers often struggle to make a living off the land. In many countries, between 70 and 90 percent of the people engage in farming on very small parcels of land, growing just enough to meet their own needs. Although the environment largely determines which crops are grown, local cultural, social, and economic conditions shape methods of cultivation.

* **fallow** plowed but not planted during the growing season

While modern tractors are found throughout Africa, animals such as oxen are often used on small farms. Here, farmers in Burkina Faso plow a field to prepare it for planting.

Systems of Cultivation. Traditionally, Africans in savanna regions and in tropical forest areas have practiced a method of farming known as shifting cultivation. Farmers clear trees and shrubs from a small patch of land, burn the vegetation to enrich the soil with nutrients, and then plant crops. After two or three years of use, the soil becomes exhausted and the patch of land is left fallow* for anywhere from 4 to 20 years until natural processes restore the fertility of the soil. Meanwhile, farmers move on to clear and plant another parcel of land, and in this way prevent soil erosion.





Agriculture

Shifting cultivation requires large amounts of land. In recent decades, African populations have grown dramatically and expanded onto much of the available land. As a result, this system of cultivation has begun to disappear in many parts of Africa.

The increasing scarcity of land has led a lot of farmers to adopt a system of rotational cultivation. This means that they plant different crops in the same fields, leaving some areas fallow for short periods. Much rotational cultivation relies on the use of fertilizers and other agricultural techniques to maintain the fertility of the soil.

In most of North Africa, and many areas south of the Sahara, farmers continuously plant crops in the same fields. This system of permanent cultivation is used where population densities are very high, farmland is very scarce—as in North Africa—or where the soils are naturally very rich—as with the volcanic soils of east Africa. To maintain crop yields and fertility, farmers use modern techniques such as commercial fertilizers, special seed varieties, and irrigation.

In many regions south of the Sahara, these different systems of cultivation overlap. For example, rotational cultivation is often combined with the permanent cultivation of household gardens. Permanent cultivation of cash crops occurs alongside subsistence crops grown under shifting cultivation.

Agricultural Technology and Labor. The majority of farmers in Africa have very little money to invest in modern technology. As a result, most agriculture is very labor intensive, with individuals performing the work on their small plots of land using hoes, hand plows, and other simple tools. Mechanized farm machinery such as tractors and harvesting machines generally are found only on large commercial farms that produce cash crops for export. The price of oil has become far too high for ordinary farmers to use these machines.

In some areas of Africa, especially densely populated regions, farming is often closely connected with livestock grazing. Some farmers use cattle as draft animals to pull plows and spread animal wastes on fields as fertilizer. In other areas—including parts of Nigeria and Kenya—nomadic herdsman usually live apart from settled farmers, resulting in a lack of access to draft animals and natural fertilizers.

Irrigation and terracing are two agricultural technologies used in Africa. Irrigation is especially important in the desert regions of North Africa, enabling farmers to cultivate land that would normally be unsuitable for agriculture. In some hilly regions—such as in northern Nigeria, CAMEROON, SUDAN, and Ethiopia—farmers have built terraces on hillsides to create fields and protect the soil from erosion.

The division of labor in African agriculture is flexible and diverse. The ways in which different societies organize farm work vary so much from region to region that it is difficult to make generalizations. As a rule though, particularly in subsistence and peasant farming communities, men prepare the land and women plant and harvest the crops and perform most other agricultural tasks. Besides growing food for the family, women also plant vegetables to take to the market, prepare cooked food to sell on the streets of towns and cities, and work as day laborers.

Women in Cameroon remove the husks from ears of maize, or corn. Originally from the Americas, maize has become an important staple food in Africa.



Rice Research

A new type of rice developed in the 1990s has been transforming farming methods in West Africa. The new rice is a cross between Asian rice and traditional varieties grown for more than 3,000 years in Africa. The African rices, with wide, droopy leaves that prevent weeds from sprouting, are resistant to drought and pests. However, many farmers in the region were planting Asian rice, which is less resistant to weeds, drought, and pests but has higher crop yields. The new rice, developed by the West Africa Rice Development Association, combines the best features of both species. It was achieved through the use of biotechnology techniques and a gene bank containing seeds of 1,500 African rices.

LAND REFORMS AND PROBLEMS

Throughout Africa, land traditionally was distributed and assigned according to age-old political and social customs. In some places, decisions about land were made by village chiefs; in others, by democratic village institutions, religious leaders, or elders. Much of the land was owned in common by all the people of a particular village, region, or group.

During the second half of the 1900s, many governments in Africa began to introduce land reforms aimed at changing the traditional land and labor systems. The goal was to create landholdings owned and operated by individuals rather than by groups. It was hoped that such reforms would increase farm production and create more stable agricultural economies. Along with land reform, African governments also encouraged farmers to grow cash crops that could create export income for their countries.

Such policies have contributed to serious problems in African agriculture. Land reform led to confusion and conflicts, as different ethnic and social groups struggled over ownership of land. In some areas, the reforms left some farmers without any land. In others, government attempts to force people to settle elsewhere disrupted traditional societies. This occurred in Tanzania under President Nyerere when farmers were forced to live in large communal settlements based on the Chinese model.

The increased emphasis on cash crops has contributed to shortages of basic food crops, making it difficult for African countries to feed their populations. As a result, many countries now import food. Rapid population growth has added to the problem, creating a demand for larger quantities of food. At the same time, the migration of Africans from rural areas to cities has reduced the number of people engaged in subsistence farming who grow enough to feed themselves.

Environmental conditions and crop failures have added to the problems of agricultural production. Africa has always experienced periods of drought and famine. However, as populations have risen, it has become increasingly difficult for African nations to cope with crop shortages. This situation has been made worse by the lack of cheap long-distance transportation.

High population growth rates, environmental circumstances, and failed economic policies have created an agricultural crisis in many African countries. Forced to import food, governments have had to spend money that could be used to improve their economies and the lives of their people. Instead, they must struggle just to provide for the basic needs of their populations. The challenge of the future will be for African countries to develop more productive, profitable, and dependable agricultural systems. (*See also Animals, Domestic; Development, Economic and Social; Hunger and Famine; Irrigation and Flood Control; Labor; Land Ownership; Peasantry and Land Settlement; Plantation Systems; Plants: Varieties and Uses; Women in Africa.*)



AIDS



* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) is a fatal disorder affecting millions of people around the world. A leading cause of death among adults in sub-Saharan* Africa, AIDS threatens to overwhelm many African nations and disrupt their social and economic development.

AIDS is caused by HIV, a virus that attacks and destroys the body's immune system, making the infected person susceptible to disease. The virus is transmitted primarily through sexual intercourse, transfusions of contaminated blood, and sharing of needles by drug users. Mothers can pass HIV to infants during birth and while breast-feeding them. Each year nearly 500,000 African children are born with HIV.

Figures released by the United Nations in 2000 showed that nearly 14 million Africans had died of AIDS-related illnesses, and 25.3 million were infected with HIV. However, the impact of AIDS is not the same throughout the continent. Although it surfaced first in East Africa, southern Africa is now the hardest hit area. The percentage of people infected with HIV there ranged from about 20 percent in SOUTH AFRICA to about 36 percent in BOTSWANA. The rate of infection was lower in East and West Africa and much lower in North Africa—though the disease is gaining ground in some of those areas as well.

In the early years of the AIDS epidemic, the disease struck mainly in African cities. In recent years, however, the rate of infection in rural areas has been rising dramatically. One reason is the increased movement of people between urban and rural areas. Many rural residents migrate to cities to work, become infected, and then spread the disease when they visit their villages. Rates of infection have been highest in areas along long-distance trucking routes.

A number of other explanations have been advanced for the rapid spread of HIV in sub-Saharan Africa. For one thing, Africans tend to begin sexual activity at a fairly young age and often have sex outside marriage. Lack of education has limited the acceptance of safe sex practices. Experts also note that individuals who have other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are more likely to contract HIV. In many parts of Africa, people with STDs may not receive proper treatment because of a shortage of health care services and the high cost of medications produced by Western drug companies.

AIDS poses a tremendous danger to the future of African nations. By reducing the number of productive workers, the disease will create severe labor shortages in industries and agriculture. Schools and hospitals will be understaffed. Large numbers of children will lose their parents to AIDS. Already, the disease has left more than 13 million African children orphaned, and it is estimated that this number will rise to 40 million by 2010. As a result, vast numbers of children may grow up in poverty with few opportunities and little hope.

At present, the prospects for controlling HIV and AIDS in Africa appear dim. Many countries lack the funds for massive education and health care programs. In some nations, officials have failed to acknowledge the scope of the problem. Although some treatments can prolong



Akan Region

the lives of people with AIDS, the cost is beyond the reach of most Africans. Researchers are currently working on a vaccine to prevent HIV infection, but such a remedy may not be available for many years. In the meantime, the best hope is to educate people about the disease and make treatment more widely available. Western drug companies have been criticized for the high prices they charge for drugs used to treat HIV and AIDS. (*See also Diseases, Family, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Health Care, United Nations in Africa.*)

Akan Region

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

The Akan region, an area on the coast of West Africa's Gulf of Guinea, lies between the Bandama River in IVORY COAST and the Volta River in GHANA. During the 1600s, separate, competing states were formed in the northern and southern parts of the region.

Before the 1400s, the region consisted of small communities of Akan clans*. These people lived in relative isolation until traders from the north arrived, attracted by the gold and kola nuts to be found in the Black Volta River region and the Akan forest. This new trade led some Akan people to move north and eventually to found several important states and trading towns.

Europeans arrived on Ghana's coast in the late 1400s, stimulating trade in gold and slaves. The Portuguese arrived first, and were followed by the French, English, and Dutch in the sixteenth century. Later, the Danes, Swedes, and Brandenburgers (traders on the Gold Coast from the Brandenburg Africa Company) arrived in the seventeenth century. Some Akan clans moved south to the coast, where they established a loose confederation known as the Fante states. These states competed for trade with the northern Akan clans. In the 1600s several different Akan states tried to gain control of the region. The most powerful to emerge were the Denkyira, who conquered a large portion of the southern and western Akan region.

In the late 1600s a group of northern Akan chiefs formed the ASANTE state. Over the years, the Asante took over territories in the region and established an empire. They expanded their trading routes and became an important source of slaves for the slave trade.

In 1807 the Asante attacked the Fante, and warfare between the two peoples continued for 11 years. This conflict brought the Asante into contact with the British, who had traded with the Fante for many years. Opposed to the Asante's slave trade, the British sided with their long-time trading partners. In 1824 the British and the Fante attacked the Asante but were badly defeated. The allies had more success two years later, and the conflict was settled in 1831 by a treaty that recognized the independence of the Fante states. To enforce the treaty, Britain expanded its political and economic presence in the area.

In the 1860s a new Asante king tried to conquer the Fante, but the British invaded and defeated the Asante. Britain declared the Fante area a British colony, and in 1896 the Asante state also became part of the British Empire. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)



Aksum



Aksum was a kingdom located in present-day ERITREA and northern ETHIOPIA between about 200 B.C. and A.D. 650. Its capital city of Aksum sat on the western edge of the Eritrean highlands and was for several centuries a powerful and wealthy city.

Historians take a particular interest in Aksum because its ruler, Ezana, converted to Christianity in 340, shortly after the Roman emperor Constantine became a Christian. The form of Christianity practiced in Aksum, called Monophysite, was based on the belief that Jesus Christ was completely divine and not human. When the Catholic Church condemned this view in 451, many Monophysite Christians fled the Byzantine Empire (the eastern portion of the Roman Empire) and settled in Ethiopia. This group probably helped spread the faith among the local population. In fact, the modern city of Aksum still exercises a great deal of influence in the affairs of the ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH.

Although the economy of ancient Aksum was based on farming and the tribute* received from other lands, the main source of the kingdom's wealth was international trade. Archaeological* evidence and written records indicate that by 100 B.C. a series of towns connected the inland capital to the port of Adulis on the Red Sea coast. These towns formed an overland trade route for valuable goods such as ivory, tortoiseshell, and rhinoceros horn. Aksum grew wealthy from exporting these goods to trading partners along the shores of the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

By the late A.D. 200s Aksum began to mint coins of gold, silver, and copper that made it easier to trade with other lands. Most of these coins have been found in southern Arabia, one of the territories that Aksum controlled.

Aksum reached the height of its power and influence in the 500s under King Kaleb. Thereafter, the kingdom suffered a rapid decline and within 100 years of Kaleb's death had lost its trading partners and the territories it had ruled. At the same time soil erosion and the people's overuse of its natural resources weakened Aksum's local economy. All that is left of ancient Aksum are the ruins of the capital, with its giant carved stone columns. These columns were probably grave monuments for the tombs of Aksum's pre-Christian kings.

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins



See *Food and Drink*.



Located on a spit of land near the NILE RIVER delta, Alexandria is the second largest city in EGYPT and the country's main port. It was founded in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great and quickly emerged as the leading city of the Mediterranean region. Renowned in the ancient world as a center of learning, Alexandria possessed the greatest library of the time and attracted scholars from near and far. Although the city remained a major port and trading center after the Arab conquest of Egypt in A.D. 642, it slowly declined over the next several hundred years.



Algeria

The French occupied Alexandria from 1798 to 1801. Then in the early 1800s the Ottoman viceroy Muhammad Ali brought new life to the city by building a canal to the Nile River and by encouraging foreign traders to settle there. Alexandria thrived as a result of the newly established cotton trade. After the SUEZ CANAL opened in 1869, the city once again became a major trading post between Europe and Asia. During the late 1800s and early 1900s, the population expanded and came to include many nationalities, cultures, and religions.

When Gamal NASSER became Egypt's leader in 1952, however, most of the foreign residents left the city. In recent years Alexandria has developed into a major center of industry and commerce. It is currently home to more than 3 million people.

Algeria

* **fundamentalist** member of a group that emphasizes a strict interpretation of religious beliefs

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

At the end of the 1900s, the North African republic of Algeria was locked in a civil war between Islamic fundamentalists* and the government, which had broad popular support. At the heart of the conflict was a struggle for control over the nation's future—should Algeria remain a secular* state or adopt strict Muslim rule? The war was the most recent chapter in the country's turbulent history, which has included periods of invasion, foreign rule, and internal division.

THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

The second largest nation in Africa, Algeria consists of 920,000 square miles of territory. It is bordered on the north by the Mediterranean Sea, with MOROCCO and MAURITANIA to the west, and TUNISIA and LIBYA to the east. The land has three distinct climate and geographical zones: the Tell, the Highland Plateau, and the Algerian Sahara desert.

The Tell. A region of fertile hills and valleys, the Tell (from the Arabic word for “hill”) runs across the country from Morocco to Tunisia. It has a Mediterranean climate with mild winters and summers and enough rainfall to support crops of grain, citrus fruits, and grapes.

Approximately 90 percent of Algeria's people live and work in the Tell, mostly in agriculture. In addition, the country's principal cities, including ALGIERS—the capital, Oran, and Annaba, are in the Tell. These modern cities blend Islamic and European influences. The Algerians who live in the cities tend to be more highly educated, more secular in outlook, and more open to Western culture than those from rural areas.

The Highland Plateau. South of the Tell are the Tell Atlas Mountains, which stretch eastward from Morocco. Beyond these mountains is the Highland Plateau. Mostly savanna*, the plateau is marked by shallow depressions that fill with water in the rainy season to form salt lakes called *chotts*. During the dry season, the water in these lakes evaporates, leaving behind salt deposits. Highly prized in ancient times, salt was the original source of Algeria's wealth. Today, the Highland Plateau is home to nearly 7 percent of Algeria's population, and most of the inhabitants make a living by keeping herds of sheep, goats, and cattle.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth



Algeria



Algerian Sahara Desert. Along the southern edge of the Highland Plateau lie the Saharan Atlas Mountains. Beyond the mountains is the vast Algerian Sahara. At the heart of this desert loom the Ahaggar Mountains, a volcanic chain that includes Mount Tahat, the highest peak in the country (9,573 feet).

Although the desert includes more than 80 percent of the country's total area, only about 3 percent of the population lives there. Most inhabitants have settled near oases, where deep wells tap into underground springs to provide irrigation for crops of grain and dates. In the desert's harsh climate, temperatures can soar as high as 120°F. A hot, dusty wind called the sirocco blows northward across the desert to parch the Highland Plateau (for 40 days each summer) and the Tell (for 20 days) before it meets moister, cooler air over the Mediterranean.



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Economy. Algeria's wealth has always been tied to its minerals. In the heyday of the trade routes that crossed the Sahara, merchants carried salt south of the desert to exchange it for gold. Today, oil and natural gas buried beneath the desert sands provide the basis for the Algerian economy. Oil and gas bring in 95 percent of Algeria's export earnings and make up a quarter of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. Reliance on oil exports, however, has made the economy unstable. In

Algeria

Barbary Pirates

In the 1500s Algeria was a province of the Ottoman Empire, based in Turkey. Algiers became a center for pirates, led by two brothers who were captains in the Turkish navy. The pirates roamed the Mediterranean Sea, launching raids on passing ships. Famous for their fierceness, they were known as the Barbary pirates (from the Latin word for "foreign"). Piracy in the Mediterranean continued into the early 1800s, when navies of the United States and Europe joined forces to bring it to an end.

* **sector** part; subdivision of society



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

1986 the collapse of worldwide oil prices plunged the nation into a severe economic slowdown from which it has yet to recover.

Throughout history, agriculture—largely in the Tell—was the livelihood of most Algerians. Today, many people work in factories, the government, and service industries. Concentrated in and around the cities, these sectors* attract rural people seeking work. Overall, there is a shortfall of jobs; in the late 1990s, the unemployment rate was about 30 percent.

HISTORY

From earliest times, Algeria's location along the shores of the Mediterranean made it a prime attraction for invaders and settlers from the Middle East and Europe. Controlled by the Roman and Ottoman Empires for various periods of its history, Algeria was ruled by the French for more than 100 years before gaining independence in 1962.

Early History. The original inhabitants of Algeria lived in the Ahaggar region as early as 40,000 years ago, before the Sahara became a desert. Rock paintings dating back about 6,000 years show the diverse wildlife once found in the region: elephants, hippopotamuses, and crocodiles. These are gone today, replaced by species that are more suited to the desert climate.

As the Sahara became a desert, the peoples of the region moved away to find better land for their farms and herds. Some made their way to the coast, founding settlements there by 3000 B.C. About 500 years later, the Phoenicians, a seafaring people from the Middle East, established outposts along the North African coast, including what would later become Algiers.

As the Phoenicians expanded their trade throughout the Mediterranean and into Europe, Rome was drawn by their wealth. In the Punic Wars of the 200s and 100s B.C., the two powers fought in North Africa, Spain, and Sicily. Eventually, Rome gained control of the region.

The Roman era, which lasted until the early A.D. 400s, was a time of relative peace and prosperity. The Romans built roads and military posts, introduced Christianity, and provided a market for Algerian grain. But as the Roman Empire declined, its control over Algeria weakened.

For a time the members of a Christian group known as the Donatists led an independent state in Algeria. This fledgling state fell to the Vandals, who invaded North Africa from Europe. The Vandals, in turn, were driven out of Algeria by the Byzantine Empire, the eastern part of the former Roman Empire.

Arab Invasion. In the 600s invaders from the Arabian peninsula attacked and conquered Algeria. Arab settlers sent to rule the coastal cities mixed with the indigenous* BERBER peoples, producing the Arab-Berber ethnic groups found in the country today. The Arabs also brought Islam, which quickly became the dominant religion of the region, as well as Islamic law and the Arabic language.

In the 1500s, under attack by invaders from Christian Spain, Algeria's Muslims turned to the Ottoman Empire in Turkey for assistance. The

Algeria

Turkish fleet succeeded in turning back the Spanish, and Algeria came under the control of the Ottoman Empire.

French Colony. The Ottomans ruled Algeria for 300 years. During this time Algeria carried on trade with European countries, particularly France, which was a major importer of Algerian grain. In 1830 France decided to take over Algeria. Using the excuse of a trade dispute, the French attacked Algiers.

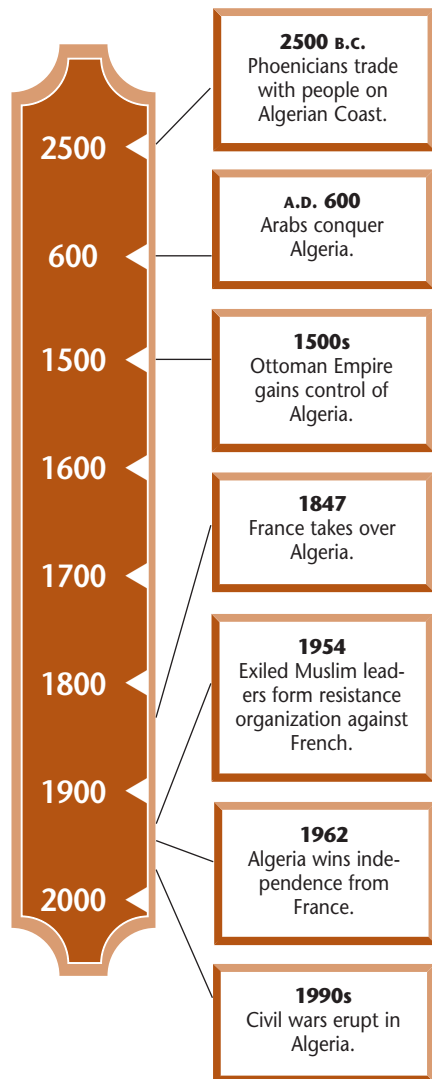
The Algerians resisted, but by 1847 France had gained control of the country. To strengthen its hold, France began sending settlers to the region. By 1912 nearly 800,000 had arrived. The French also imposed social and political order on Algeria, replacing Arabic with French as the official language and suppressing Islamic culture. Only French citizens and Algerians who converted to Catholicism enjoyed the rights of citizenship. Most Algerians were excluded from the best land and jobs and denied political rights. It was only a matter of time before the situation exploded into violence.

During the 1950s French troops crisscrossed the Algerian countryside in an effort to put down uprisings by rebel bands fighting for independence.

Independence Movements. The first steps toward an Algerian independence movement occurred in the 1930s, when a group of Algerians



Algeria



demanded that Muslims be granted greater rights. The French colonists, recognizing the threat that this posed to their way of life, strenuously opposed any such action. The situation gradually worsened. Relations between Algerian Muslims and French colonists hardened into mutual hatred, and Muslim leaders began to call for armed revolution.

In 1954 several exiled Algerian Muslim leaders, including Ahmed BEN BELLA, met in Egypt to form the National Liberation Front (FLN). In November of that year they launched an attack on government and military sites throughout the country. A fierce and bloody war followed. In 1958, General Charles de Gaulle of France was called in to resolve the crisis. Recognizing that no military solution was possible, de Gaulle announced a referendum in Algeria on independence and opened the vote to Muslims. The French colonists responded with violence, but they had no hope of success. In the referendum, held in 1962, Algeria's population voted nearly unanimously for independence and elected Ben Bella as the first president. By the end of the year, most of the French had fled the country.

Post Independence. President Ben Bella had to deal with a devastated economy and a nation exhausted by decades of war. He promptly nationalized* the oil and natural gas companies and redistributed lands that had been held by the French colonists. He also sought to build ties with other African nations and with other revolutionary governments—such as Cuba, led by Fidel Castro. However, in 1965 Ben Bella was overthrown by a military coup* and Colonel Houari BOUMÉDIENNE was installed as president.

When Boumédiénne took power, the Algerians were impatient for change. The urban centers were bulging with refugees from the countryside who lacked the skills and the education needed to obtain jobs in the cities. Boumédiénne proposed programs to improve services and living conditions for the people. In 1978 he introduced a new constitution, establishing the FLN as the sole legal party. However, Boumédiénne died suddenly and was replaced by Colonel Chadli Benjedid in 1979.

When Benjedid assumed leadership, many Algerians felt that the promise of independence remained unfulfilled. The FLN lost much of its popular support as people turned to leaders drawn from Islamic fundamentalist groups. After a series of increasingly violent protests in the 1970s and 1980s, a mass demonstration erupted in 1988 calling for multiparty elections. Benjedid was forced to allow free elections in 1991, with more than 20 political parties participating.

The Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), a radical fundamentalist party, won the majority of seats in the legislature. The FIS leaders announced their plan to impose rigid Islamic rule, patterned after the government then in power in Iran. This touched off a new round of demonstrations, particularly among the trade unions, professional classes, and women, all calling for the election results to be overturned. The military, with support from France and the United States, suspended the constitution and set up a five-member military council to rule the country. The FIS responded by adopting guerrilla* tactics in an effort to regain power.

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors



Algeria



The Democratic and Popular Republic of Algeria

POPULATION:

31,193,917 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

919,595 sq. mi. (2,381,740 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Arabic (official); French, Berber dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Algerian dinar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim (Sunni) 99%, Christian and Jewish 1%

CITIES:

Algiers (capital), 4,200,000 (1999 est.); Oran, Constantine, Annaba, Batna

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 30 in. (760 mm) along the coast to less than 4 in. (100 mm) in the Sahara

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$4,650

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: wheat, barley, oats, citrus fruits, olives, grapes, wine, dates, figs, sheep, cattle

Manufacturing: electrical, petrochemical, food processing, light industries

Mining: petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, phosphates, uranium, lead, zinc

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1962. Multiparty republic.

President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies:

Assemblée Populaire Nationale (legislative house), prime minister and cabinet of ministers appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1962–1965 Ahmed Ben Bella

1965–1978 Houari BoumÉdienne

1979–1991 Chadli Benjedid

1991–1998 Liamine Zeroual

1999– Abdelaziz Bouteflika

ARMED FORCES:

122,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–15; literacy rate 62%

Civil War. The conflict between educated, westernized Algerians who sought a secular, multiparty state and poorer, more religiously centered citizens touched off a civil war. The FIS targeted leaders who spoke against it, including Mohammad Boudiaf, president of the State Council, who was assassinated in 1992. The government's response was equally harsh, imprisoning suspected FIS sympathizers without trial, and resorting at times to torture and execution of such prisoners.

In 1994 General Liamine Zeroual assumed control of Algeria and made some attempts to resolve the conflict. He called for elections to be held in 1997, but barred political parties that based membership on religion or language from participating. This enraged the FIS and other Islamic parties. The Armed Islamic Groups (GIA) called for a jihad, or holy war, against the government. A new and even bloodier phase of civil war began, as GIA supporters embarked on a campaign of terror and violence against anyone thought to be collaborating with the government.

In 1999 new presidential elections were held, and Abdelaziz Bouteflika won. However, charges of fraud accompanied the election. Bouteflika's presidency has failed to reduce the violence raging throughout the country.

Unable to achieve peace, the government provided arms to villagers to use for self-defense. Local units, called *les patriotes*, formed to protect their communities. However, many of these groups have used their weapons to launch revenge attacks against neighboring villages. The violence, which continues to escalate, underscores the profound differences dividing Algerian society. (See also **Arabs in Africa**, **Atlas**

Amhara

Mountains, Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements, Islam in Africa, Maghreb, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures, Sahara Desert.)

Algiers

Algiers, the capital of ALGERIA, is situated on a hillside overlooking the Mediterranean Sea. Home to 3.7 million people, it is one of the major cities of North Africa. The various sections of the old city show the different cultures that have influenced Algiers: French-style districts of wide boulevards alternate with Arab sections such as the Casbah, a neighborhood of narrow winding passageways. On the plain spreading to the south and east lies a growing industrial area and new suburbs.

First settled by the ancient Phoenicians, Algiers was destroyed by the Vandals in the A.D. 400s. Rebuilt by BERBERS in the 900s, the city later belonged to the Ottoman Empire. In 1830 the French captured Algiers; they controlled it until 1962, when Algeria won its independence.

After independence, the Algerian government made efforts to modernize the capital. Many rural people migrated to Algiers, replacing departing French settlers who had lived and worked there. By the mid-1960s, Algiers claimed Algeria's highest literacy rate and had the most cars, buses, hospitals, theaters, libraries, museums, and sports complexes. Over the next few decades, industries in the Algiers region produced increasing amounts of agricultural goods, textiles, wood, paper, and mechanical and electrical machinery. Unchecked industrial growth, however, began to damage the surrounding farmland. In the 1980s the government ordered an end to expansion and relocated large numbers of new residents. (*See also Architecture.*)

AL-MAHDI

See Mahdi, al-.

AL-MANSUR

See Mansur, al-.

Amhara

The Amhara and the Tigrinya, indigenous* peoples of ETHIOPIA, make up the group commonly known as Abyssinians. Both the Amhara and the Tigrinya are descendants of the founders of the ancient kingdom of AKSUM, and both speak Semitic languages.

Originally based in the Ethiopian highlands, the Amhara gradually spread out to settle a large area of central Ethiopia. The Tigrinya live

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



Amhara

mainly in Tigre province and ERITREA. Largely agricultural, both peoples cultivate crops and, to a lesser extent, raise livestock.

Over the centuries the Amhara have dominated the region politically and their culture has spread to neighboring peoples. Most Amhara are followers of Monophysite Christianity, the religion of the old Aksumite kingdom that holds that Jesus Christ is solely divine and not human in nature. Contact with the Amhara has led some Islamic inhabitants of the Ethiopian highlands to adopt Christian customs.

Until modern times, a continuous line of Amhara royalty ruled Ethiopia. These rulers considered themselves to be descendants of Menilek I, who was said to be the son of King Solomon of Jerusalem and the queen of Sheba. The last Ethiopian emperor of this dynasty, HAILE SELASSIE I, was overthrown in 1974. (*See also Christianity in Africa.*)

Amin Dada, Idi

ca. 1925–
Ugandan dictator



Idi Amin Dada, a member of the Nubi people, ruled UGANDA from 1971 to 1979. Regarded as one of Africa’s most ruthless leaders, Amin used murder as a political tool, and may have killed as many as 300,000 people during his reign.

Enlisting in the military as a young man, Amin advanced rapidly. He was one of the few black Ugandans to become an officer before Uganda won its independence in 1962. During the next six years, he reached the rank of major general and was named commander of both the army and the air force. Amin also became a close ally to Uganda’s first president, Milton OBOTE. After both men were accused of gold smuggling in 1966, Obote took total control of the country with the support of Amin and the military. However, Obote did not trust Amin and arrested him four years later.

In 1971, while Obote was out of the country, Amin led a coup* and took over the office of president. Amin began by ridding the army of soldiers from Obote’s area of northern Uganda, replacing them with loyal troops. He seized foreign-owned businesses (mainly those owned by Indians) and gave them to his supporters. But the new owners looted the companies, leading to the ruin of Uganda’s economy. To maintain his power, Amin sought support from traditionally Muslim Arab countries and declared Islam* Uganda’s official religion, though few Ugandans were Muslims.

In 1976 Amin gained international attention when he allowed Palestinian hijackers to land a plane full of Israeli hostages at the capital of Entebbe. Israeli commandos later rescued the hostages. He received further attention a year later when several prominent people in Uganda were killed in suspicious circumstances.

In 1978 Amin invaded and seized Tanzanian territory, which led TANZANIA to attack Uganda the following year. Meanwhile, various groups in Uganda that opposed Amin united against him. These rebels joined with the Tanzanian army to defeat Amin’s troops, forcing him to flee the country in April 1979. Amin went into exile in Saudi Arabia.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

ANCESTORS

See *Death, Mourning, and Ancestors*.

Angola

The Republic of Angola is located on the southwestern coast of Africa on the Atlantic Ocean. This former colony of Portugal has had a tumultuous history since gaining independence in 1975. Torn by a long, bitter, and destructive civil war, the nation is still trying to find an end to that conflict.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Angola is the seventh largest country in Africa, with an area greater than Texas and California combined. A small part of the nation—a coastal area called CABINDA—is separated from the rest of Angola by a strip of territory belonging to the neighboring country of CONGO (KINSHASA). Rich in natural resources, Angola has great potential for industry and economic prosperity. However, since independence, frequent civil unrest has slowed Angola’s development.

The capital of Angola is Luanda, a coastal city that was once a major slave-trading port for the Portuguese. Although it boasts modern skyscrapers, an international airport, and a state-run university, Luanda has been severely damaged by the civil war. In addition, refugees fleeing the fighting in the countryside are crowding the city’s poorer sections and overwhelming public services.

Landforms. Nearly two thirds of Angola consists of vast interior plateaus and highlands—including the Kongo Highlands, the Malanje Plateau, and the Central Highlands. These features average 3,150 to 4,430 feet in elevation, with some peaks as high as 8,465 feet.

To the west of these areas, the land falls in a series of dramatic escarpments* to a narrow coastal plain, cut by fertile river valleys and dotted with natural harbors. Most of Angola’s rivers start in the interior highlands and flow through the coastal plain to the sea. Only a few of these are navigable* for any distance inland. Several rivers are tributaries* of the CONGO RIVER and the ZAMBEZI RIVER. One of Angola’s major rivers, the Kubango, flows into the Okavango Swamp—a vast swampland in northern BOTSWANA.

Climate. With the exception of the temperate Central Highlands, Angola’s climate is primarily tropical. Rainfall in the tropical regions is seasonal, occurring mainly between October and May. Parts of southern and eastern Angola have a drier climate, and the southernmost part of the country borders the great KALAHARI DESERT. The Benguela Current—a cold, northward-flowing ocean current—brings both a dry climate and rich fishing grounds to Angola’s coastal region.

Vegetation and Wildlife. Much of Angola is covered with savanna*. In the north these grasslands have scattered trees, while in the south the

* **escarpment** long, clifflike ridge of land or rock

* **navigable** deep and wide enough to provide passage for ships

* **tributary** river that flows into another river

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Angola



savanna consists of low, thorny shrubs. Dense rain forests are scattered through the northern half of the country, primarily in Cabinda. Angola once had more extensive rain forests, but since colonial times many have been cut down by the logging industry and to make way for agriculture. One of the few plants that survive in the desert regions of far southwestern Angola is the tumboa, an unusual plant with a very deep root and two wide 10-foot-long leaves that spread along the ground.

The wildlife of Angola is typical of other grassland regions of Africa. Mammals include elephants, hippopotamuses, rhinoceroses, giraffes, zebras, wildebeests, leopards, lions, and various types of antelopes and monkeys. Angola is also home to many species of birds and a great variety of reptiles, including crocodiles. Among the most dangerous animal species in Angola is an insect—the tsetse fly, which carries diseases that harm both humans and livestock. Marine life thrives in the ocean off Angola's coast, especially in the waters swept by the Benguela Current.



See map in *Archaeology and Prehistory* (vol. 1).

Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing. Farming is the main economic activity in many areas of Angola. About 80 percent of the Angolan people are engaged in subsistence farming, in which families grow only enough food for their own use. One of the principal food crops is manioc (or cassava), a plant with thick, starchy roots that are cooked and

Angola

* **maize** corn

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

eaten like potatoes. Other major crops include maize*, potatoes, beans, millet (a type of grain), bananas, peanuts, rice, and wheat.

During the colonial period, Angola grew several profitable cash crops* for export, including cotton and coffee. These commercial crops declined dramatically after independence as a result of changing economic policies and years of civil war. Nevertheless, crops such as tobacco, coffee, bananas, sisal, cocoa, sugarcane, and cotton are still grown commercially.

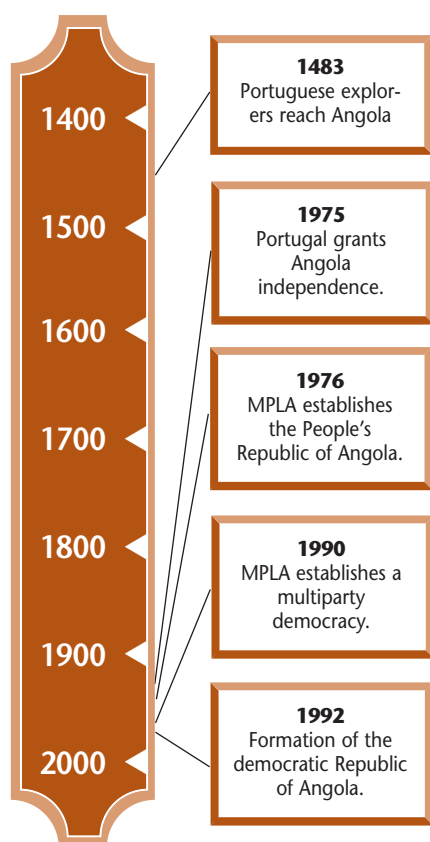
Subsistence farmers in Angola raise a variety of livestock, including sheep, goats, pigs, and poultry. Cattle raising is most successful in southern Angola, where the disease-spreading tsetse fly is less of a problem than in other areas of the country.

Forestry is concentrated in Cabinda, where the dense rain forests provide valuable lumber. Portuguese colonists developed a thriving fishing industry off the coast of Angola, which supplied fish for both export and local markets. However, after 1975, the local fish population shrank and Angola's fishing industry became less significant.



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

* **first millennium A.D.** years from A.D. 1 to 1000



Industry and Mining. Prior to independence, Angola enjoyed expanding industrial activity, especially manufacturing and construction. As with commercial agriculture, the upheavals following independence disrupted Angolan industry and caused it to decline.

Manufacturing in Angola today is focused on fulfilling domestic needs rather than on producing goods for export. The principal manufacturing activities are oil refining, food processing, brewing, textile making, and the production of construction materials. One major manufacturing center is the city of Luanda. The electricity needed to run Angolan industry comes from hydroelectric plants that harness the energy of the country's great rivers.

Mining plays a very important role in Angola's economy. The country's principal exports are petroleum and diamonds. Petroleum alone, most coming from Cabinda, accounts for more than 90 percent of Angola's export income. Although Angola's iron mines have been inactive since 1975, the nation produces other minerals including phosphates, manganese, and copper. The country also has deposits of natural gas.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

In ancient times, hunting and gathering societies inhabited the area that is now Angola. Sometime during the first millennium A.D.* large migrations from other parts of southern Africa brought Bantu-speaking peoples to the region. These groups eventually established a number of independent, centralized kingdoms, the most important of which was the Kongo. Angola later took its name from another early kingdom, known as Ngola.

The Colonial Period. Portuguese explorers reached Angola in 1483. They traded with the inhabitants and worked to convert them to Christianity. Over the next few centuries Portugal became increasingly involved in the African SLAVE TRADE, and several Angolan kingdoms were



Angola

Angolan Art

Angola has a rich artistic heritage. Masks, sculptures, and other artworks are made from ceramic, wood, ivory, and malachite (a type of green stone). These pieces often have symbolic meaning, representing themes such as life and death or the celebration of a harvest. Angola's Chokwe people are well known for their fine wooden sculptures, and the inhabitants of Cabinda are praised for their ivory carvings. Another form of Angolan art is the decoration of the body, including very elaborate hairstyles that are worn by the Nyaneka and Nkhumbi groups.

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

eventually destroyed because they resisted **SLAVERY**. Portuguese settlers soon dominated the coast of Angola and organized the local economy around supplying slaves to Brazil, Portugal's South American colony.

Portugal's claims to rule the lands and people of Angola were officially recognized by other European governments in 1891. Then Portugal extended its authority beyond the coastal region of Angola. This expansion led to a dramatic growth in export products, primarily cash crops grown by Portuguese settlers. Some Angolan groups were fairly successful in competing economically with the Portuguese colonists. Nonetheless, all came under Portuguese control between 1890 and 1922.

The further extension of Portuguese colonial power in the early 1900s created great hardship for both Africans and Afro-Portuguese—people of both African and Portuguese ancestry. Many of these people were pushed out of the administrative and commercial activities they dominated in earlier years, and they had few opportunities to achieve economic success. As a result, nationalist* movements emerged in Luanda and other coastal cities. Nationalist leaders spoke out against forced labor, racism, and other abuses, and called for Angolan independence.

When Angola officially became an overseas province of Portugal in 1951, the Angolan people faced more mistreatment by Portuguese authorities. Tensions mounted and led to a serious rebellion against Portuguese rule in 1961. This proved to be a turning point in Angola's history, as increasing numbers of people were drawn into the struggle for independence. By the end of the 1960s several nationalist groups had launched guerrilla* operations against the Portuguese government. Each group also competed for power.

An Independent Angola. Portugal yielded Angola its independence on November 11, 1975. However, it did not formally transfer power to any one of the competing nationalist groups. One group, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), gained control of most of the country and founded a communist* state called the People's Republic of Angola in 1976.

Rivalries continued between the three main groups—the MPLA, FNLA (National Front for the Liberation of Angola), and UNITA (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola)—fueling a long and bitter civil war. Cold War* politics contributed to the strife because the MPLA had support from the Soviet Union and Cuba, while UNITA had the backing of **SOUTH AFRICA** and the United States. In addition, the Angolan government was aiding the neighboring country of **NAMIBIA** in its fight for independence from South Africa. As Angola's complex struggle dragged on, it hindered economic progress and efforts to move ahead with social programs.

Signs of hope for an end to the fighting appeared in the late 1980s. Talks between Angola, Cuba, South Africa, and the United States led to a series of agreements concerning Namibian independence and the withdrawal of Cuban troops that had been supporting the MPLA. When the last Cuban forces left Angola in 1991, peace finally seemed possible.

In 1990 the MPLA had voted to turn itself into a democratic party, establish a multiparty system, and create policies that gave individuals

Angola

and companies a larger role in the economy. These changes led to the establishment of a new democratic government and to the birth of the Republic of Angola in 1992. Since 1979 Angolan politics have been dominated by two individuals—José Eduardo dos Santos, the nation's president and MPLA leader, and Jonas Savimbi, the leader of UNITA. Each enjoys support from different ethnic groups within the country.

Despite the establishment of a democracy, progress in Angola has not come easily. The economy has been slow to develop and improve, and smuggling—mainly of diamonds—has caused great damage. Education and medical care are inadequate, malnutrition is widespread, and infant deaths are common. Moreover, the MPLA and UNITA continue to compete fiercely for control. Since 1992 fighting has broken out several times in various parts of the country, and a return to full-scale civil war remains a possibility. Even in times of relative peace, many Angolans are killed or injured by the millions of land mines still hidden in the ground.

PEOPLE AND CULTURES

The majority of Angolans are members of various Bantu-speaking groups, each with a distinctive culture and language. Other Angolans are of Portuguese or other European ancestry, and a few isolated bands of a Khoisan group known as the !Kung live in the remote southeastern corner of the country. Portuguese is the official language and is spoken by

A parade held in Luanda, the Angolan capital, in 1975 to celebrate the country's independence from Portugal.





Angola



Republic of Angola

POPULATION:

10,600,000 (estimated population)

AREA:

481,351 sq. mi. (1,246,700 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Portuguese (official); Bantu languages (at least 55)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Kwanza

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 47%, Roman Catholic 38%, Protestant 15%

CITIES:

Luanda (capital), 2,677,000 (2000 est.); Lobito, Benguela, Malanje, Huambo, Cabinda, Lubango

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 0 in southwestern coastal desert to 70 in. (1,780 mm) in extreme north

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, sisal, cotton, tobacco, sugarcane, bananas, manioc, corn, timber, fish, livestock

Manufacturing: food and beverage processing, textiles, cement, petroleum refining, fish processing, brewing, tobacco products

Mining: petroleum, diamonds, iron ore, copper, feldspar, phosphates, gold, bauxite, uranium

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Portugal, 1975. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 220-member Assembleia Nacional (elected), Council of Ministers appointed by President.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1975–1979 Antonio Agostinho Neto

1979– José Eduardo dos Santos

ARMED FORCES:

114,000 (2000 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–15; literacy rate 40%



many Angolans. However, most groups also speak their own native languages.

As Bantu-speaking groups settled throughout present-day Angola, each formed a culture based on the particular type of environment in which they lived. The largest group is the Ovimbundu. They live mainly in the Central Highlands of Angola, where the climate is well suited to farming. Over time, the Ovimbundu have developed extensive agricultural communities with large populations. Those living in drier areas to the south raise cattle as well. Many Ovimbundu have migrated to the cities of Benguela, Lobito, and Luanda.

The second largest group in Angola, the Mbundu, dominates the capital city of Luanda and other coastal towns as well as the Malanje highlands to the east. The culture of the Mbundu has its roots in the ancient warrior state called Ngola. Among the many other groups in Angola are the Ngangela, Ovambo, and Chokwe.

Although some Angolans continue to follow traditional religions, most have adopted Christianity. Roman Catholicism is particularly well established among the Ovimbundu. Various Protestant faiths have strong followings among other Bantu groups.

Despite the influence of European culture and Christianity, most Angolan peoples still share certain Bantu traditions. Extended families are central to social life, polygamy* is common, and ancestors are deeply respected. Forms of witchcraft are still practiced in many areas, even among people who have converted to Christianity. Another ancient tradition that survives today is Angola's rich oral literature—stories that have been passed down for many generations.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband



Animals, Domestic

The country's rural inhabitants often follow the same traditions and ways of life their ancestors did. Others, especially city dwellers, have adopted more modern lifestyles. In every region and walk of life, Angolans retain long-standing ethnic loyalties and distinctions. The many differences that enrich Angola's culture also continue to fuel the nation's political unrest. (See also **Bantu Peoples; Colonialism in Africa; Diseases; Ethnic Groups and Identity; Forests and Forestry; Independence Movements; Languages; Livestock Grazing; Minerals and Mining; Neto, Agostinho; Religion and Ritual.**)

Animals, Domestic

* **domesticated** raised by humans as farm animals or pets

* **evolution** changes in groups of organisms that occur over time

Africans have been raising animals for their own use for thousands of years. Species of domesticated* animals spread slowly southward through Africa, beginning around 3000 B.C. or earlier, and livestock herding became a traditional way of life across broad regions of the continent. Cattle, in particular, have played a central role in the social, economic, and religious lives of many African peoples.

Domestication. The process of domestication begins with wild animals. The definition of domestication states that animals have been domesticated when they have been worked into the social structure of a human community as objects that people can own, exchange, buy, sell, and inherit. In biological terms, domestication is something like evolution*. A small number of wild animals are separated from the other members of their species. Over time, these animals become used to living with humans, who may control their breeding to emphasize certain characteristics.

In order to be domesticated, an animal must have a temperament that allows it to accept human control and to live in close contact with people and other animals. It must also breed well in captivity. Cattle, sheep, and goats have these qualities. In addition, elephants are occasionally trained for work, and in ancient times they were used in war. Other potentially useful animals—such as antelope—do not have these traits, which probably explains why they have remained wild.

Although a few types of animals seem to have been domesticated in Africa, many species became part of the human community first in Asia and entered northeastern Africa from the Near East or Arabia. The ancient Egyptians had dogs, cats, and all of the kinds of domestic livestock now found in Africa. It took a long time for domesticated species to spread southward, however. Most African groups probably did not adopt such animals until their populations had grown too large to be supported by hunting. Disease, especially sleeping sickness (trypanosomiasis) carried by the tsetse fly, kept some animals from thriving very far south of the Sahara.

African Cattle. Africa has long been a melting pot for different kinds of cattle. Rock paintings found in mountains of the central Sahara suggest that people were herding and milking cattle there as early as 6,500 years ago, when the region was wetter and greener than it is today. A

Animals, Domestic

The Cat's Meow

Cats have been family pets since ancient times. The cat was first domesticated in Egypt around or before 1500 B.C., most likely to help protect stores of grain from mice and other rodents. Archaeologists have found many ancient images of domestic cats, including statues, cat-shaped toys, and a carving of a girl holding a kitten.

In the 700s B.C., Egypt experienced a great revival in animal worship. Among the most popular cults was that of Bastet, the cat goddess. An impressive temple was built for her, and worshipers left mummified cats with decorative masks and wrappings in her honor. Vast cat cemeteries lay nearby. The Greek historian Herodotus reported that whenever a cat died, the Egyptians shaved their eyebrows as a sign of mourning.

- * **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding
- * **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern
- * **bridewealth** property paid by a groom's family to that of his future wife
- * **vulnerable** open to harm or attack

thousand years later, livestock herding was well established in the Sahara. Pastoralist* groups tended longhorn and shorthorn cattle originally domesticated in Europe and Asia, as well as native shorthorn cattle domesticated in North Africa. Beginning around 5,000 years ago, the growing dryness of the Sahara drove these peoples south and east. They introduced cattle to the Nile Valley, Ethiopia, and northern Kenya.

Around the same time zebu, or humped cattle, from India and western Asia were brought to Ethiopia. They crossbred with the longhorn and shorthorn cattle, producing a new breed called the sanga, which spread through central and southern Africa. Since then, crossbreeding has created dozens of varieties of cattle, including newer zebu breeds that are replacing the sanga in parts of northern and eastern Africa. Tsetse flies and parasites have kept cattle from becoming numerous in Africa's rain forest regions, although efforts are being made to introduce breeds that are resistant to sleeping sickness.

The many breeds of African cattle are put to various uses. Some herding peoples keep the animals mainly for milk, while other groups eat the meat as well. Cattle are frequently used to pull plows, turn waterwheels or grain mills, and carry loads. Sometimes cattle are ridden. In many herding societies, cattle are regarded not only as a convenient source of food but also as a living symbol of well-being and prosperity—both spiritual and economic. The pastoral peoples of Kenya do not kill their cattle for food, although they consume milk and blood from living animals and use the hides of dead ones. Cattle are important in many old African rituals*, including sacrifice and the giving of bridewealth* from a groom's family to a bride's family.

Beasts of Burden. The dromedary, or one-humped Arabian camel, is found across the North African desert and the lands along its southern edge. All dromedaries are domesticated. About 70 percent of the world's camels live in the Sahel, northern Kenya, and the lowlands of northeastern Africa, including Egypt. Because camels are extremely vulnerable* to diseases such as sleeping sickness, they cannot survive in wetter regions inhabited by the tsetse fly. In the Sahel and in the northeastern lowlands, nomadic herders raise camels almost entirely for their milk production, while in western Sudan and parts of Kenya, camels are used for meat and transport.

In northern Sudan and North Africa, camels are used primarily for riding and carrying loads. The main advantage of these animals is that they require much less water than cattle. They can tolerate desert conditions and carry loads of up to 350 pounds over long distances. For hundreds of years caravans—groups of traders and travelers journeying together—have crossed the Sahara with the help of camels. As recently as the early 1900s, traditional salt-trading caravans included as many as 20,000 animals.

Horses came to Egypt from western Asia about 3,500 years ago. In many parts of the continent they suffer both from sleeping sickness and from African horse disease—an illness that can kill 90 percent of a herd. Most horses are found in North Africa, the Saharan and Sahelian regions, and parts of western Africa. Horses that were originally brought by European settlers live in South Africa.

Animals, Domestic

Unlike horses, donkeys were domesticated in Africa in the Nile Valley around 6,000 years ago. More than half the donkeys in Africa today are located near the Nile region, in northeastern Africa, and the Sahel. People ride donkeys and use them to pull plows and carry firewood, water, and other loads.

Animals Raised for Food and Other Products. Domestic sheep from western Asia were brought to Egypt 5,000 years ago. African sheep today are descended from several basic types, some of which have fat tails or rumps that are an extremely valuable food resource. Sheep throughout Africa produce milk and meat. Pastoralist groups in northwestern and northeastern Africa favor indigenous* breeds that tolerate dry conditions. In southern Africa, European settlers introduced breeds such as the merino and Blackhead Persian sheep for fine wool production.

Goats—also first domesticated in western Asia—have evolved over the centuries into various African breeds. All of them are used for meat and skins, although some are milked as well. In the Sahel region on the

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Dromedaries (one-humped camels) like this one can survive without water longer than any other mammal. This trait makes them ideally suited for life in the desert regions of northern Africa.



Animals, Domestic

See
color plate 2,
vol. 4.

fringes of the Sahara, medium-sized goats have adapted to the area's very dry grazing lands. One such goat breed, the Red Sokoto, has a very fine hide prized by the leather workers of Morocco and Nigeria. In wetter areas of western Africa and Sudan, farmers raise smaller animals called dwarf goats. Angora goats were brought to southern Africa in the 1800s, and since then the region has become a major producer of mohair—the Angora goat's long, woolly hair.

In the past, pigs have not been very important in Africa. Muslim peoples have religious restrictions against eating their meat. In addition, pigs are better suited to life on a farm than to the pastoral lifestyle of many African peoples. Pigs are also vulnerable to many African diseases and parasites. Most of the continent's domestic pigs are raised on large, European-style commercial farms. However, pigs are gradually being introduced into the farming systems of indigenous peoples, where they provide meat in areas that lack other meat sources.

Various smaller animals are also raised for food in Africa. The guinea fowl, a chicken-like bird, is native to Africa and was domesticated there. European explorers later carried it to other parts of the world. Africans also raise chickens. In some parts of western Africa, people have bred the giant African rat and the cane rat as food animals.

Many domesticated animals in Africa, like this donkey, are used to pull carts or carry passengers.





Annan, Kofi

Crossbreeding. Over the last 2,000 years, African domestic animals have been crossbred with foreign breeds brought by Arab and Asian traders and, more recently, by colonial settlers from Europe. The combination of evolution and controlled breeding produced many new breeds with distinctive features, such as the rounded horns of cattle from the region of Lake Chad in the Sahel.

During the twentieth century, Africans called for improved livestock—animals that would be more productive than African breeds and better suited to the African environment than foreign livestock. This demand led to many experimental breeding programs. For example, the native cattle of southern Ethiopia, which can survive in a semidesert environment, were crossbred with cattle from northern Europe that produce large quantities of milk and beef. Such practices increase production of beef and milk in the short term, but crossbreeding may have serious long-term effects on the ecosystem. The unique genetic makeup of local breeds of livestock may be lost in the process, and new breeds may have less resistance than the native animals to diseases or to environmental stresses such as drought.

People now recognize that long-established domestic species are as much a part of the African environment as wildlife. As a result, some livestock “improvement” projects have been halted, and Africans are making an effort to preserve the remaining herds of purely indigenous livestock. (See also **Agriculture, Climate, Diseases, Ecosystems, Livestock Grazing, Pests and Pest Control, Wildlife and Game Parks.**)

ANIMALS, WILD

See *Wildlife and Game Parks*.

Annan, Kofi

1938–
Ghanaian diplomat

Elected Secretary-General of the United Nations (UN) in 1997, Kofi Annan is the first Secretary-General from Africa south of the Sahara. This diplomat from GHANA has worked for the UN since 1962, except for a brief period in the 1970s when he served as Ghana’s director of tourism.

Before embarking on his career in diplomacy, Annan attended colleges and graduate schools in Ghana, the United States, and Switzerland. He holds a bachelor’s degree in economics and a master’s degree in management. He is fluent in English, French, and several African languages.

Over the years, Annan has held several posts within the UN. He began as a budget officer with the World Health Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. Later, he served with the UN Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA. While Under Secretary-General in the mid-1990s, he oversaw UN peacekeeping operations in SOMALIA and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

As Secretary-General, Annan has focused on the international community’s commitment to help Africa’s developing nations. Annan has



Annan, Kofi

also worked at improving relations between the UN and the United States, which were strained in the early 1990s. (See also **United Nations in Africa**.)

Antananarivo

Located on hills overlooking the Ikopa and Betsiboka Rivers, Antananarivo is the capital and largest city of MADAGASCAR. A king of the Merina people called Andrianjaka conquered the site in the early 1600s. Antananarivo, which means “city of a thousand,” was named for the guard of 1,000 men who defended it after Andrianjaka’s conquest.

By 1800 the Merina kingdoms established control over Madagascar, and Antananarivo became the center of the most important of those states. The Merina restricted access to the city by refusing to build roads and sometimes banning Westerners. Nevertheless, missionaries, traders, and architects eventually made their way to the city and brought European influence with them.

When the French made Madagascar a colony in 1896, they renamed the city Tananarive. During the early 1900s they renovated the city, widening its streets and building roads and rail lines to connect it to the coast. While under French rule, the city’s population increased by almost 200,000 people.

Madagascar achieved independence in 1960, and the city regained its original name after a revolution in 1972. Today Antananarivo is home to nearly one million people, and it remains the economic and political center of the country.

Apartheid

Apartheid, a system of racial segregation, was official government policy in the Republic of SOUTH AFRICA from 1948 to 1994. Under apartheid, South African blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry called “Coloureds” were systematically separated from white society, deprived of any participation in government, and subjected to all forms of discrimination*.

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

The idea of white supremacy and racial discrimination had been accepted in South Africa before 1948, and white South African governments had put various segregationist policies into effect. However, it was not until after the 1948 elections, won by the pro-segregation National Party, that these policies became law.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the South African government passed a number of laws that classified people by race. These laws deprived blacks, Coloureds, and Asians of most basic rights—taking away their property, restricting their movement and activities within the country, and forcing blacks to relocate to special “reserves” apart from white society. The laws affected millions of people. They segregated South Africans in every aspect of life and gave a tiny white minority total control over the nation.

By the 1960s other nations had begun to criticize South Africa for its apartheid policies. At the same time, increasing numbers of black South



Arabs in Africa

Africans started to protest against apartheid laws. Partly in response, the government accelerated a policy for creating independent, self-governing “homelands” where black South Africans could develop their own societies. This policy, designed to further the separation of blacks, proved a failure. The homelands consisted of poor quality lands, often broken up into small blocks of territory. They did not have the resources to become economically self-sufficient and truly independent.

* **repeal** to undo a law

As a result of international pressure, increasing unrest within South Africa, and the worsening of economic conditions in the homelands, the South African government was forced to abandon its apartheid policies. In 1991 the government under President De Klerk repealed* the basic apartheid laws. Three years later, the adoption of a new constitution gave equal rights to all South Africans. Despite this change, apartheid has left behind a history of racial conflict, poverty, and inequalities in education, housing, and welfare that will affect South Africa for many years to come. (*See also Afrikaner Republics; Biko, Steve; Cape Coloured People; De Klerk, Frederik Willem; Mandela, Nelson; Southern Africa, History; Tutu, Desmond Mpilo; Verwoerd, Hendrik Frensch.*)

Arabs in Africa

Arabs have lived in Africa since at least the A.D. 600s, when people from the Arabian peninsula conquered EGYPT and LIBYA. Arabs eventually controlled much of North Africa. Arab culture—including the Arabic language and the practice of Islam—has been so widely adopted that Egypt, Libya, ALGERIA, TUNISIA, and MOROCCO are now considered to be part of the Arab world. Other regions of Africa have also been influenced by contacts with Arab culture, primarily through trade.

North Africa. In 640 an Arab force invaded Egypt, then part of the Byzantine Empire (the eastern portion of the Roman Empire). From Egypt, various Arab generals moved to the west taking over the north-west African coast. This territory, known as the MAGHREB, was inhabited by the BERBERS, who surrendered in large numbers to the invaders and adopted Islam. By 705 the Maghreb had become a province under the control of the Muslim Umayyad dynasty. As colonial rulers, the Arabs brought their religion, customs, and language to the region.

Eastern Africa. Eastern Africa lies across the Red Sea from the Arabian peninsula, the birthplace of Islam and much of Arab culture. People and goods traveled between the two regions well before the rise of Islam in the 600s.

ETHIOPIA was one of the first areas in eastern Africa to be influenced by Arab culture. By about A.D. 100, people from southern Arabia had reached Ethiopia by sea, bringing their language and their ability to build in stone. Trading relations between Arabs and the local people contributed to the emergence of the Aksumites, who founded the kingdom of AKSUM in the Ethiopian highlands. Ethiopians also crossed the Red Sea into southern Arabia.



Arabs in Africa

By the 900s many peoples along the coast of SOMALIA and the interior lowlands had converted to Islam, and a number of Islamic states had been established. These states controlled trade in the region and posed a threat to the Christian communities that had developed in Ethiopia.

To the west of Ethiopia, NUBIA (in present-day SUDAN) consisted of a number of Christian kingdoms. By the 1300s these kingdoms had fallen to Muslims from Egypt. Their defeat increased the threat of a Muslim invasion of the Christian state of Ethiopia. Migrating Arabs intermarried with the people of Nubia and introduced the Arabic language and the practice of Islam, both of which spread rapidly throughout much of the southern Nile valley.

* **secession** formal withdrawal from an organization or country

In modern times, Arab Muslims have supported the secession* of ERITREA from Ethiopia. To counter the Muslim pressure, Ethiopia has sought other allies, including the nation of Israel. Meanwhile, Muslim groups in Sudan have tried to make the country entirely Muslim and Arab. This effort has led to periodic outbreaks of genocide* against the non-Muslims in southern Sudan by Arabs wishing to take their land and control its oil resources.

* **genocide** deliberate and systematic killing of a particular ethnic, religious, or national group

The Swahili Coast. Known to the ancient Arabs as the land of Zanj, the Swahili coast runs from present-day Somalia to MOZAMBIQUE. Easily reached by sea from southern Arabia, this region was an ideal location for trade between Africans and Arabs even before the rise of Islam. Later, Arab merchants settled in the area's growing city-states, such as Mombasa and Kilwa. By A.D. 900 the eastern African coast had emerged as a prosperous commercial center.

Islam became a major force along the Swahili coast. By adapting to local traditions, the religion gained new followers. Some people converted to Islam because it opened up opportunities for commerce and social advancement. The blending of Arab and African traditions in this region also led to the emergence in the 1000s and 1100s of the Swahili civilization. After reaching a peak in the 1200s and 1300s, this civilization declined when the region was colonized by people from Portugal and from Oman on the Arabian peninsula.

Western Africa. Trade, intermarriage, and shared religious beliefs shaped the relations between Arabs in North Africa and the peoples of western Africa. Although western Africa never experienced significant Arab migration, Islamic religion and culture took hold and spread in the region. Islamic traditions coexisted with local customs and beliefs. In many West African kingdoms, educated Muslims played key roles in administration and diplomacy*. The work of Islamic scholars from the Niger River region (in present-day MALI) became famous throughout the Muslim world.

* **diplomacy** practice of managing relations between nations without warfare

In the mid-1700s a strict Islamic religious movement swept through much of western Africa. When Europeans arrived in Africa, they were faced with this intense religious culture, and it influenced their policies during the colonial period. Arab influence is still very strong in parts of MAURITANIA, Mali, NIGER, and CHAD. In these lands, as well as in other parts of Africa, Arab culture is admired; as a result, many people claim to have Arab ancestors.

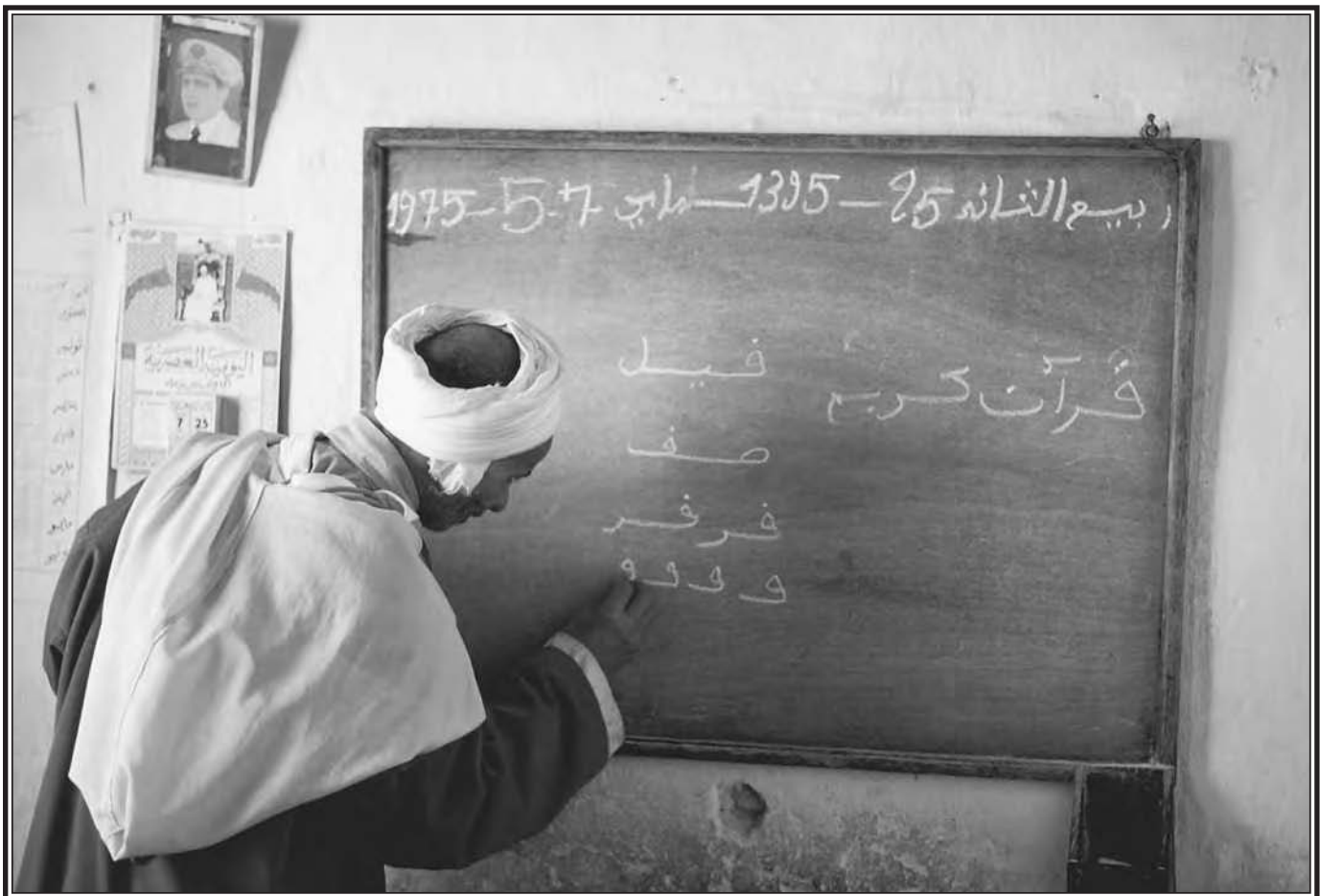
Arabs in Africa

Colonial and Postcolonial Periods. Contact between Arabs and Africans south of the Sahara desert—including trade and migration—decreased during the colonial period. The policies of the European colonial governments altered the ties that had existed between Africa and the Arab world. The Europeans replaced Islamic learning with Western education, substituted the Roman alphabet for the Arabic one in the writing of many African languages, and stressed Arab involvement in the African SLAVE TRADE. Although the struggle against European colonialism brought Arab and African leaders closer together, the connection between them was based on nationalism* rather than on commerce or culture.

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

In 1963 African and Arab resistance to colonialism led to the formation of the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU). The OAU played a significant role in strengthening relations between the two groups. Despite some suspicions and mistrust on both sides, African and Arab leaders managed to work together on matters of mutual interest, such as economic development. Numerous African nations, including Egypt, Libya, Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Algeria, Mauritania, Somalia, and DJIBOUTI also joined the Arab League, a regional organization of Arab states.

Muslim schools, such as this one in Fès, Morocco, educate young people through study of the Qur'an, the sacred text of Islam.





Arabs in Africa

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

In 1967 many of the nations of sub-Saharan* Africa supported Egypt in the Suez Canal war against Israel. However, some more recent conflicts in Africa—such as a civil war in Chad—have strained Afro-Arab relations by dividing Arabs and Arabic-speaking or Muslim Africans. Intervention in African affairs by Arab leaders such as Muammar al-QADDAFI of Libya has also frightened some African leaders and persuaded them to seek help from the West to counter Arab power.

Since the end of the Cold War*, some leaders in sub-Saharan Africa have become alarmed by the increasingly political role of Islam in North Africa and by attempts to make it a powerful force in other African nations with large Muslim communities. At the same time, however, a number of Muslim nations in North Africa have experienced internal disputes over territory and other matters. These unresolved issues restrain the relationship between Africa and the Arab world. (*See also Ethnic Groups and Identity, Islam in Africa, Languages, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa, Trade.*)

Archaeology and Prehistory

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

* **paleontologist** scientist who studies prehistoric life through fossils and other remains

Africa's archaeological* heritage is both ancient and rich. Several million years ago, the first ancestors of humans emerged in Africa. About 100,000 years ago, the first modern people appeared there as well. Since that time, a pageant has unfolded across the continent's vast and varied landscapes. Multitudes of cultures have emerged, peoples have migrated, empires have risen and fallen, and Africans have interacted with traders and invaders from other parts of the world.

Because many African cultures did not use written language until the last century or two, historical records of Africa's past are rare. However, bricks and stones, broken pots and buried beads, and graves and bones may speak as clearly as words on a page to archaeologists, paleontologists*, and others trained to interpret them. Archaeology, the study of the physical traces left by people of the past, is the major source of information about how Africans have lived at various times in the course of their long history.

The work of archaeologists is not limited to studying grand and well-known sites such as the PYRAMIDS of ancient EGYPT. As they discover prehistoric wall paintings in caves in the SAHARA DESERT, excavate ancient royal cities in western Africa, and unearth tools from centuries-old villages in central Africa, archaeologists are painting an increasingly complex and vivid picture of Africa's past.

INTRODUCTION TO AFRICAN ARCHAEOLOGY

African archaeology is as diverse as the continent's cultures and geographical regions. The objects it studies range from the simple stone tools used by ancient human ancestors to the ruins of great civilizations. African archaeology not only reveals something of the continent's most distant past, it also provides a background for understanding the traditions and roots of the many ethnic groups that live in Africa today.



Archaeology and Prehistory

Changing Views of the African Past. Ideas about the African past have changed since the mid-1900s. Before that time, Africa was sometimes called a “continent without a past.” People outside Africa associated ancient Egypt with other great civilizations of the ancient world. They regarded North Africa and modern Egypt, which had been colonized and influenced by Arabs after the rise of the Islamic religion, as part of the Arab world. Most of the rest of Africa—sub-Saharan* black Africa—lacked written history, which led some people to think that it lacked archaeological history as well.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Politics and racism also shaped the attitudes of outsiders toward African archaeology. Europeans based much of the political and social structure of their colonies in Africa on the notion that black Africans were inferior to white people and “uncivilized.” The controversy over the ruins of Great Zimbabwe shows how these attitudes affected African archaeology.



Great Zimbabwe is a collection of impressive stone ruins in the southern African country of Zimbabwe (formerly the British colony of Rhodesia). Some white archaeologists thought that Africans had built Great Zimbabwe. Many others, however, argued that the site’s builders had been ancient voyagers from the Mediterranean region, Arabia, or even China—in their view, peoples from more highly developed civilizations than Africa. Since 1950 archaeologists using new scientific methods have shown beyond a doubt that the ancestors of the SHONA and other African groups built Great Zimbabwe and other stone structures as political and religious centers.

Archaeology is continually expanding Africans’ knowledge of their history. Pointing out that archaeology had revealed unknown civilizations and cultures, Mali’s national director of arts and culture urged sub-Saharan African nations to “make more use of archaeology to find the truth about their past.” They must also take steps, he said, to protect Africa’s archaeological heritage from destruction or misuse.

History and Prehistory. Archaeology can be divided into two basic categories. Historic archaeology deals with periods that have written records, produced either by local people or by outsiders. Prehistoric archaeology studies cultures or periods without written records.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Written history merely brushes the fringes of Africa’s past. Although Egypt developed written language before 2000 B.C., ancient Egyptians recorded little about Africa outside the Nile Valley. A few ancient Greek and Roman scholars left written accounts of Egypt and North Africa, but their descriptions do not provide much accurate information about the indigenous* peoples of those regions. The civilization that arose in Ethiopia around A.D. 400 also kept written records. However, like the Egyptians, the ancient Ethiopians said little about lands beyond their own borders.

Much later, beginning in the A.D. 900s, Arabs documented their visits to the southern regions of the Sahara and to the East African coast. Europeans began exploring the African coastline in the 1400s, but their descriptions of local peoples and cultures are not always reliable. For much of the continent, recorded history is only a century or two old. As



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a result, prehistoric archaeology is the main key to unlocking Africa's past.

* **evolution** changes in groups of organisms that occur over time

Archaeologists studying prehistoric Africa may use various research tools to fill in the picture of the past. Paleontology, which focuses on the physical remains of early humans, offers clues about the evolution* of prehistoric peoples. Another tool is oral history, a group's traditions, myths, and stories as passed down from generation to generation in spoken form. In some societies, oral history provides useful knowledge of the past century or two. Historical linguistics, another tool, concerns the relationships among languages and how they have changed over time. It may provide clues about the past migrations and relationships of ethnic groups. Ethnography, the study of present-day ethnic groups and their immediate ancestors, helps archaeologists trace connections between the past and the present. Geography and geology offer insights into the physical landscapes that earlier peoples inhabited. Of course, artifacts* are the most familiar objects of archaeological research. By studying tools and other material remains of past cultures, archaeologists can find clues about the way people lived long ago.

* **artifact** in archaeology, an ornament, tool, weapon, or other object made by humans

The Stone Age in Africa. Prehistoric archaeologists divide the past into different periods based on the kinds of tools people made. Several of these periods are grouped under the name the Stone Age.

Broadly speaking, the Early Stone Age in Africa began about 2.6 million years ago, when the ancestors of humans shaped the first large, handheld cutting tools of stone to carve the carcasses of animals. Scientists believe that these early beings hunted small game and looked for carcasses that had been killed by large animals. This way of life continued until around 200,000 years ago.

During the Middle Stone Age, from about 200,000 to 45,000 years ago, large stone tools were replaced by smaller tools made of sharp flakes struck from specially prepared rocks. As in the Early Stone Age, people lived off game killed by animals and gathering wild foods. Hunting probably played an increasing role during the Middle Stone Age. However, archaeologists differ as to whether people hunted large game animals, and if so, how and when they learned to do so.

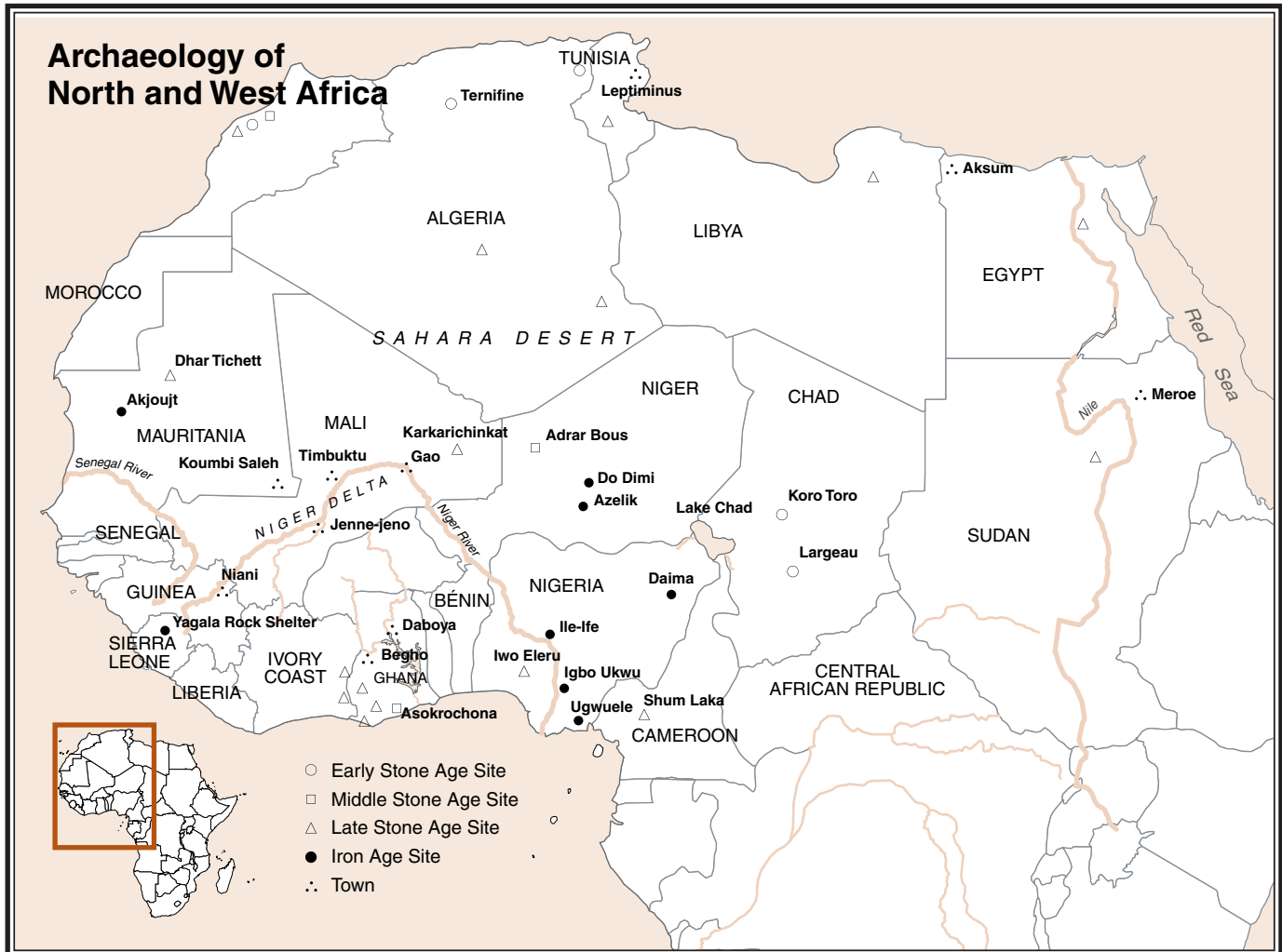
Africa's climate became cooler and drier during the Middle Stone Age, producing environmental changes that challenged people to adapt to new conditions. Archaeologists who study the Middle Stone Age are trying to determine what the environment was like and how it affected human life.

The Late Stone Age, which began about 45,000 years ago, marked the appearance of very small stone blades and tools that people attached to handles of wood or bone. Late Stone Age people hunted and gathered a wide variety of plants and animals to eat, including seafood. They made beads, painted pictures on rock walls, and formally buried their dead. They also produced many artifacts of perishable organic materials such as wood, bone, leather, and shell, which have survived at a few sites. Among the oldest such artifacts are 10,000-year-old tools of wood, bark, and grass, found at Gwisho hot springs in Zambia.

* **domesticated** raised by humans as farm animals or pets

By 7000 B.C. people living in what is now the Sahara had domesticated* cattle. Between 6500 and 4000 B.C., climate changes caused these

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cattle-herding societies to move southward, introducing domestic animals into sub-Saharan Africa. The development of economies based on livestock herding and farming marked the end of the Late Stone Age. At around the same time, ironworking technologies appeared in some regions, and new cultures began to develop.

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding

Some of these new cultures were settled; others were nomadic. Some were based on agriculture, others on pastoralist* activities. In a few desert areas and within deep forests, small bands of hunter-gatherers continued to live much as their ancestors had done. Elsewhere, however, African societies grew more complex and began interacting with each other. Around the edges of the continent, they began to encounter people of other races and cultures. Each region of Africa followed its own route to the present, a route that can be retraced through archaeology.

NORTHERN AFRICA

Northern Africa includes Egypt, the northern half of Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. The region's archaeological heritage ranges from the massive monuments of ancient Egypt to the faint traces



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* savanna tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

left by pastoral nomads thousands of years ago, when the Sahara was a wooded savanna* instead of the desert it is today.

Prehistory. One of the oldest archaeological sites in northern Africa is Ternifine, Algeria. There scientists have discovered both human fossils and stone axes mingled with the remains of animals that lived more than 500,000 years ago. Early Stone Age axes have been found throughout North Africa, from the Red Sea to the Atlantic Ocean and from the Mediterranean coast southward. In the Sahara they have often been unearthed near former springs and lakeshores that supported life during wetter eras in the region's past.

Archaeologists have studied Middle Stone Age settlement patterns at various places in the Egyptian Sahara. Some sites were quarries, where people obtained stone for their tools. Others, especially those on ancient lakeshores, served as workshops for the shaping of tools. In some places, people butchered their kills. Still other sites, back from the lakes, may have been where people slept, out of the way of large animals that hunted near the water at night. This pattern continued for thousands of years.

The Romans, who conquered most of North Africa along the Mediterranean coast, constructed many temples and public buildings that still stand today. These ruins of a Roman bathhouse in Tunisia date from the A.D. 200s.





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The Golden Mummies

In 1996 an Egyptian donkey led to a sensational discovery at Bahareya, an oasis southwest of Cairo. The donkey tripped in a hole that turned out to be a tomb containing dozens of mummies—preserved bodies of men, women, and children wrapped in cloth and wearing gold-painted masks. The mummies dated from the A.D. 100s, and their adornments reflected a blend of Egyptian and Roman traditions. One woman's mask combined a Roman hairstyle with an image of the ancient Egyptian goddess Isis. The tomb was part of a large cemetery that may contain thousands of mummies. Excavating the entire site is expected to take ten years or more.

Middle Stone Age sites in the Sahara and the MAGHREB (northwest Africa) show that people butchered rhinoceroses, giraffes, horses, antelopes, and gazelles. A few sites also contain stones that people may have used to grind wild plant foods to make them easier to eat. A location in the Nile River valley that has many fish bones, including some from very large deepwater fish, is among the oldest evidence in the world of fishing.

By the Late Stone Age, people in northern Africa had become very efficient hunters of large herd animals, such as wild cattle, gazelles, and sheep. Starting around 20,000 years ago, they began making a new kind of small stone blade that was often pointed. Sometimes they mounted several little blades together on a handle, a step toward more complex technology.

Archaeologists have studied many Late Stone Age sites in the highlands and mountains of northern Africa, but these may have been only seasonal hunting camps. Between 20,000 and 13,000 years ago, the sea level along the Mediterranean shore was much lower than today, and coastal regions that are now under water were probably the main centers of population. The Nile River, much smaller than it is today, supported a narrow ribbon of life surrounded on both sides by extreme deserts. The people who lived there probably had to compete for resources—many skeletons show evidence of violence, sometimes approaching the intensity of warfare.

Around 11,000 years ago, changes in rainfall patterns increased the flow of the Nile and also moistened the Sahara. Human population expanded into the Sahara, where some archaeological sites reveal fragments of early pottery and the bones of domesticated cattle. At first, people stayed in the Sahara only during rainy seasons. But by about 8,000 years ago they lived there year-round, digging wells and constructing round houses. They also set up large standing stones arranged in lines or circles, which perhaps had astronomical or religious meaning. Several thousand years later, the climate shifted again and much of the Sahara became too dry for humans to live in.

In the Nile Valley around 6,000 years ago, hunter-gatherers began herding, farming, and building villages. In some villages in northern Egypt, all houses were similar in size and had similar contents, suggesting that the inhabitants belonged to a society of equals with no class distinctions. In southern Egypt, however, burial sites reveal significant differences, and some graves had richer goods than others. This indicates that society was becoming more complex and social difference had emerged.

Archaeologists have not determined whether the growing complexity of the region's social structures and technology (such as pottery) reflects influences from Southwest Asia or from the eastern Sahara. Whatever the source, this development in the Nile Valley eventually led to the rise of a great civilization.

The Historic Period. By 3100 B.C. a nation-state ruled by kings known as pharaohs had emerged in Egypt. This ancient civilization has revealed itself to archaeologists through written records and also



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The Mystery of Igbo Ukwu

Igbo Ukwu, in forested southern Nigeria, is an archaeological site that includes a burial mound from around A.D. 900. Among the objects uncovered there were more than 150,000 imported glass beads and many precious objects of ivory and metal. Rich and elaborate burials usually occur in highly developed societies, and graves similar to that at Igbo Ukwu generally contain kings. Yet around A.D. 900 that part of Nigeria had no large state. Who was buried at Igbo Ukwu remains a mystery—possibly the head of a religious brotherhood or a secret society. Such groups still have great influence in the region.

through monuments such as the pyramids, temples, graves, villages, palaces, and other structures.

South of ancient Egypt along the Nile was a land that the Egyptians called Kush and the Arabs later called NUBIA. Today the area is divided between Egypt and SUDAN. The home of a black African civilization, Kush grew into an empire that traded gold, ivory, slaves, and ostrich feathers to the Egyptians. Closely linked with Egyptian society, Kush even ruled Egypt from 760 to 656 B.C.

Like the Egyptians, the Kushites buried their rulers under pyramids. The Kushites actually built more pyramids than the Egyptians, though theirs were smaller. The largest Kushite pyramid, discovered at a site called Nuri in Sudan, measures about 95 feet (30 meters) a side. Archaeologists have focused their efforts on the northern part of Kush, studying as much as they could before a series of dams on the Nile flooded the area. Research in southern Kush has centered on the royal cities of Napata and MEROË.

The Egyptian civilization survived, passing through many phases, until A.D. 30. In that year Cleopatra, the last ruler descended from the pharaohs, died. By then Egypt had been under Greek and Roman influence, and sometimes political control, for several hundred years. Some important archaeological discoveries of recent times date from this Greco-Roman period. Among these are statues and buildings in the harbor of the city of Alexandria, drowned by waters that have risen since ancient times.

Greco-Roman ruins also dot the North African coast west of Egypt. The Tunisian site of Leptiminus, for example, was a Mediterranean port that came under Roman rule in the A.D. 100s. During the 1990s archaeologists excavated three Roman cemeteries there. One was located in an area that produced a distinctive type of pottery, a major trade item in the Mediterranean region for five centuries.

WESTERN AFRICA

Western Africa includes Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, Benin, Burkina Faso, Togo, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Gambia, and Senegal. The region stretches into the Sahara desert in the north, but its coastal area consists primarily of tropical rain forest. Archaeologists believe that changes in climate—especially shifts between wetter and drier periods—played a key role in shaping the past societies of the region.

Prehistory. Although archaeologists think that parts of western Africa were inhabited more than 2 million years ago, they do not yet have a clear picture of the earliest settlements. In 1995 scientists found a fossil jaw and seven teeth at Koro Toro, Chad. The fossils came from an australopithecine, an early kind of human ancestor previously known only from sites in eastern and southern Africa.

Stone tools from both the Early Stone Age and the Middle Stone Age occur widely in western Africa, especially in the Sahara and northern Nigeria. At Asokrochona in Ghana and other sites in the southern part



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of the region, archaeologists have found tools from the Middle Stone Age that may have been used in woodworking.

Relics of the Late Stone Age show how climate affected human life in the region. During a very dry period between 20,000 and 12,000 years ago, the Sahara desert extended farther than it does today, and no traces of human life from that time have been found in the northern part of the region. During the wetter years that followed, the Sahara was reoccupied, probably from the north. Rock paintings of elephants and wild buffalo in areas that are now extremely dry may date from this period.

Work at a number of Saharan sites has revealed harpoons and the remains of fish, crocodiles, and hippopotamuses, suggesting that people of this period had access to lakes and rivers. In 1998 archaeologists discovered a boat more than 25 feet long near the Yobe River in northeastern Nigeria. Known as the Dufuna canoe, it dates from around 6500 B.C. and is thought to be Africa's oldest boat.

Archaeological sites throughout western Africa highlight milestones in the region's prehistory. At a place called Iwo Eleru in the forested area of southwestern Nigeria, scientists have uncovered a rock shelter that was inhabited as early as 10,000 years ago. The shelter contained many small stone blades that may have been used as arrowheads or, attached to handles, as cutting tools. Pottery found in the Sahara dates from the same period. Cattle skeletons excavated at a site called Adrar Bous in Niger show that people were herding domestic cattle, sheep, and goats about 4,000 years ago. Other archaeological discoveries in Mali and Mauritania suggest that agriculture—specifically, the farming of millet, a cereal grain—began in the region between 4,000 and 3,000 years ago.

Beginning around 2000 B.C., agricultural production increased and settled communities developed in the forest and savanna regions in the southern part of western Africa. More than two dozen sites in Ghana and Ivory Coast have revealed houses in large settlements, complete with a variety of stone tools, remains of sheep and goats, and pottery vessels and figurines.

Around the same time, people in the area began to work metal. They may have learned techniques from cultures in Sudan and North Africa or developed them on their own. Discoveries in Niger show that people there worked copper as early as 2000 B.C. The earliest evidence of iron-working, also in Niger, dates from about 1000 B.C., although iron tools did not completely replace stone tools. A few centuries later, Nigeria, Mali, Ghana, Chad, and Senegal were also producing iron.

Historians used to think that western Africa developed large urban centers and complex social structures as a result of contact with Arabs from North Africa after the A.D. 600s. Growing archaeological evidence, however, reveals large, complex societies in western Africa long before that time. Some of the earliest such evidence comes from the Saharan Borderlands, where archaeologists excavated the city of Jenne-jeno in Mali. Established by 250 B.C., the town entered a period of rapid growth some 500 years later.

Elsewhere in western Africa large earthen mounds have been found. These contain burial chambers, human sacrifices, and various objects buried with the dead. Some archaeologists believe that such sites,

See
color plate 2,
vol. 2.

See
color plate 3,
vol. 3.



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together with evidence of expanding trade across the region, suggest the development of larger states and kingdoms. The trend toward centralization of power would eventually produce a number of great empires in western Africa.

The Historic Period. Oral tradition and a few written records, including accounts by Arab travelers, provide archaeologists with additional insights into western African states after A.D. 1000. Ancient Ghana, the subject of many of these reports, extended over much of present-day Mauritania, Mali, and Senegal. Arabic sources refer to Ghana as a flourishing kingdom. One description of a king's burial has shed light on the ritual purpose of burial mounds in the area. At Koumbi Saleh, a site in Mauritania thought to have been Ghana's capital, researchers have unearthed multistory stone buildings and graveyards.

As Ghana's influence faded, the kingdom of Mali became powerful in the region, reaching its peak in the 1200s and 1300s. Some archaeologists believe that Niani, a site in present-day Guinea, was the capital of Mali. Although the site has extensive ruins, excavations suggest that it was unoccupied during Mali's most powerful era. The exact location of the capital, as well as the true extent of ancient Mali, remain undetermined.

Arabic and European sources describe the rich and powerful kingdom of Benin in Nigeria, which reached its peak between the 1200s and 1600s. Archaeologists have added detail to these written accounts. Their research reveals that the inhabitants of Benin City, the capital, worked with copper and built massive earthen walls around important structures.

Archaeological sites along the coast of western Africa include forts and castles built by Europeans as they explored and traded in the area in the 1400s and later. Recent archaeological work has focused on indigenous towns and states near these European outposts, studying how local Africans responded to contact and trade with Europeans. One of the most fully studied sites is Elmina on the coast of Ghana, the location of the first and largest European trading post in sub-Saharan Africa. By the 1800s, the African town there had grown to 15,000 or 20,000 inhabitants. Excavations have revealed evidence of far-flung trade: European pottery, glass and beads, and fine ceramics from China.

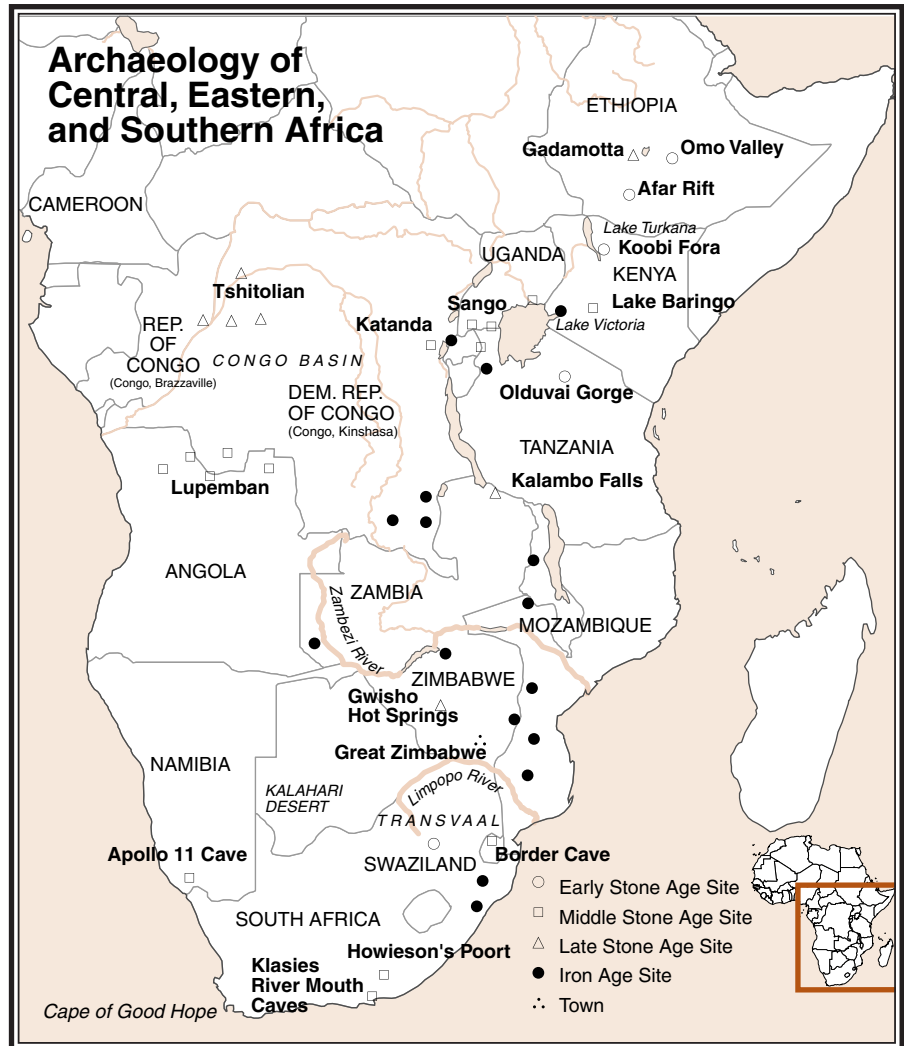


EASTERN AFRICA

Eastern Africa includes Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda. Organized archaeological research did not begin in this region until around 1960, though some earlier work was done by colonial officials who collected various artifacts.

Eastern Africa first became famous in the 1960s when dramatic fossil discoveries were made by members of the LEAKEY FAMILY. These findings cast new light on the earliest human origins in Africa. Other archaeological work has focused on more recent eras in the region's human history.

Archaeology and Prehistory



A key feature of current archaeology in the region is the growing participation of African scientists, students, universities, and museums. Interpretation of the region's history was once largely in the hands of Westerners, but now more local archaeologists and other scholars are studying their own past. In addition, eastern Africa has turned some archaeological sites into tourist attractions and has created local museums to educate schools and communities about their archaeological heritage.

See
color plate 1,
vol. 2.

Prehistory. Discoveries by the Leakeys and others have made sites in eastern Africa, such as the well-known Olduvai Gorge in Tanzania, centers of paleoarchaeological research. Paleoarchaeology concerns the study of very old traces of human existence and culture. One area of research is the evolution of the first humans several million years ago. Another is the emergence of the modern human species, *Homo sapiens*.

Theories that suggest an African origin for *Homo sapiens* have focused attention on the Middle Stone Age sites, such as Gadamotta near Lake



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Zwai in Ethiopia. The inhabitants of Gadamotta used obsidian—glassy, volcanic rock that can hold a sharp edge—to manufacture tools more than 200,000 years ago. Other important sites in Tanzania contain stone tools more than 100,000 years old.

Archaeological remains from the Late Stone Age, including small stone tools and rock art, are found at many sites in eastern African. At Gamble’s Cave and Nderit Drift, near Lake Nakuru in Kenya, archaeologists have found blades, scrapers, and other tools crafted from obsidian between 13,000 and 9,000 years ago. Sites on the shores of Lake Turkana in Kenya have revealed bone harpoons, stone scrapers, scrapers, grinding stones, and pottery. Hunter-gatherers there ate a wide variety of foods, including crocodile, hippopotamus, fish, and plants. In the vicinity of Lake Victoria, Africa’s largest lake, archaeologists have located relics of a hunter-gatherer population they call the Oltome culture. Among its artifacts are pieces of highly decorated pottery with stamped decorations. The best-known Oltome site is Gogo Falls, which dates from between 4000 and 1000 B.C.

Archaeological evidence suggests that the herding of domestic livestock began in eastern Africa about 4,000 to 5,000 years ago, and many groups in the region still follow a pastoral way of life. The most common domesticated animals were cattle, sheep, and goats, though archaeologists have also uncovered bones of camels from sites in Ethiopia and northern Kenya. The earliest indications of farming in the region come from Lalibela Cave in the highlands of Ethiopia, which contained traces of beans, barley, and chickpeas. Evidence of domesticated wheat, grapes, and lentils has been found at other Ethiopian sites. Although grown in eastern Africa, all these food plants originated in the Near East and would have been introduced to the region.

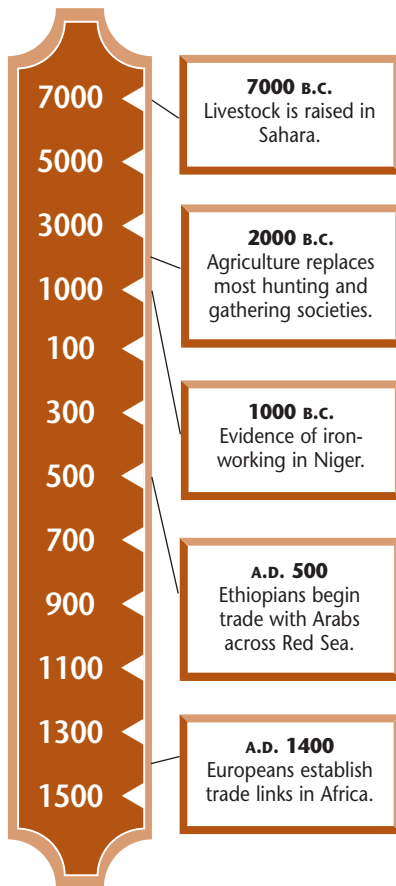
An economy that combined farming and trading developed rapidly in the Ethiopian highlands starting about 2,500 years ago. Local African communities traded valuable raw materials, such as gold, skins, and ivory, across the Red Sea to the Arabian peninsula. Several hundred years later, Ethiopia became part of a trading network that also crossed the Indian Ocean. These farming communities of Ethiopia are known from archaeological excavations at AKSUM, which eventually developed into a major state.

The first communities to use iron in eastern Africa arose along the shores of Lake Victoria between 2,500 and 1,700 years ago. Archaeologists have not yet identified the origins of these communities, and evidence remains scarce. By about A.D. 500, farmers using iron tools seem to have occupied areas of eastern Africa with wooded and wet environments, especially the coastal hills and plains.

Historic Era. Early evidence of complex African societies comes from the coast of eastern Africa, where urban communities based on Indian Ocean trading networks were developing by A.D. 800. Some communities built large structures of timber, coral, and limestone and minted their own coins. There is evidence of Islam, the religion that originated in Arabia. The inhabitants of these urban centers at Zanzibar and elsewhere along the coast were the ancestors of the SWAHILI coastal traders who now live in east African towns such as Mombasa.

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

Archaeology and Prehistory



Fierce debate has swirled around the origins of the Swahili coastal communities. Earlier generations claimed that Asian colonists had “brought civilization to Africa.” However, Swahili is a native African language. Archaeologists now believe that the Swahili coastal culture originated in Africa but that colonists from southern Arabia influenced the culture.

The pattern of peoples and cultures in eastern Africa today is largely the result of events during the past thousand years. Chief among these events are migrations from the north, with waves of livestock-herding people settling in the area. The newcomers developed a dairy economy, keeping cattle for milk and sheep and goats for meat.

The past thousand years also saw the emergence of large population centers around the lakes of eastern Africa. One such center, Bigo, had earthen walls more than 6.2 miles long, with ditches up to 16 feet deep. Some states that appeared in the region later, such as Buganda and Bunyoro, have survived.

CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Africa’s central and southern regions include Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Republic of Congo, Rwanda, São Tomé and Príncipe, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Archaeological sites in these areas contain evidence for the origins and evolution of humans, as well as more recent remains of complex civilizations and trade networks. Research has been uneven, however, and many areas remain unexplored.

Prehistory. Archaeologists first uncovered fossils of humanlike australopithecines in South Africa in the 1920s and 1930s. The importance of these discoveries was not immediately recognized, but eventually paleontologists realized that australopithecines are the earliest human ancestors. Most likely they lived by gathering wild foods and scavenging carcasses killed by large animals. Some of the australopithecine fossils found in the region were individuals killed by animals, and the sites where they were found do not necessarily represent the places where they lived or made tools of stone and bone.

Some archaeological sites in southern Africa, such as Border Cave in Swaziland and Klasies River Mouth on the coast of South Africa, contain skeletons of *Homo sapiens* along with evidence of “modern” behavior such as the development of family groups, food sharing, and the planned use of resources. These sites may be more than 100,000 years old.

Archaeological evidence shows that, during the Late Stone Age, the peoples of central and southern Africa were largely nomadic, moving with the seasons between mountainous areas and low-lying lands. They trapped and hunted animals, gathered a wide variety of plant foods, and used marine resources such as shellfish. They also carefully buried their dead, sometimes placing various objects in the grave, and painted complex images on the walls of rock shelters—facts that lead archaeologists

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Louis and Mary Leakey, shown here at work in Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania, made major contributions to scientific knowledge about human origins.

to believe that these Stone Age people had a strong sense of the spiritual world.

Around 2,000 years ago, the Stone Age way of life began to change in the region. In the drier western areas, domesticated sheep became an important part of the economy. Scientists debate the origins of this pastoralism, questioning whether local hunter-gatherers developed livestock herding on their own, or whether pastoral peoples arrived in the region from the north. Researchers agree, however, that the early pastoralists were the ancestors of the KHOISAN, the indigenous people of southern Africa.

In parts of central and southern Africa with fairly dependable summer rainfall, people adopted a system of mixed agriculture, combining grain farming with livestock raising. Excavation of many ancient villages has shown that this way of life was firmly established by A.D. 200. The villages were linked by the exchange of goods, such as food products, pottery, salt, and iron. They may also have interacted with hunter-gatherers who still followed the Stone Age way of life because stone tools have been found in some village sites.

Historic Era. The archaeological picture of central and southern Africa is clearer for the past thousand years or so. Domestic livestock, especially cattle, became very important throughout much of the region. Farming settlements spread into the highlands, where ruins of stone-built communities indicate the existence of large, thriving populations.

By the A.D. 1100s, complex states were emerging. Mapungabwe and other hilltop towns along the Limpopo River in Zimbabwe and Botswana were centers of such states. These societies were organized into different economic and social classes. Their rulers controlled both the local economy and connections with the outside world. These links occurred with traders from Arabia on the coast of the Indian Ocean, where African goods such as gold, ivory, and animal skins were exchanged for foreign items such as glass beads and cotton cloth.

The Mapungabwe state was followed by Great Zimbabwe, which flourished until the 1400s. At its peak Great Zimbabwe probably had a population of more than 10,000 people and included territory from eastern Botswana to near the Indian Ocean. The large stone walls in the center of the town reflected the high status of the ruling class; ordinary people lived in mud and thatch houses around the central stone buildings. More than 50 smaller regional centers, built in the same style, helped maintain the power of Great Zimbabwe.

The Arab traders who linked southern Africa to the Indian Ocean limited their settlements to the coast. European colonists, beginning with the Portuguese in the early 1500s, ventured into the interior. They were following rumors of vast wealth. Portuguese forts, Dutch trading posts, and British colonial buildings and settlements are the focus of archaeological research into the recent colonial past of southern and central Africa. Many parts of the region, however, are not well known archaeologically. Much work remains to be done, particularly in the great tropical rain forest that covers much of central Africa. Future research will



Architecture

undoubtedly challenge and change present ideas about the past of central and southern Africa and of the continent as a whole. (*See also Africa, Study of; Animals, Domestic; Art; History of Africa; Hunting and Gathering; Humans, Early; Islam in Africa; Livestock Grazing; Roman Africa; Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)

Architecture

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

From small mud huts to towering steel skyscrapers, African architecture is a mix of indigenous* and foreign, old and new. The continent's diverse architecture reflects its varied climates and environments as well as the many different cultures and traditions of African peoples. Outside influences have played a major role as well. European designs and building methods can be seen in countries throughout the continent, and Islam has shaped much of the architecture of North Africa. Nonetheless, African traditions continue to be the most important factor.

TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Indigenous architecture in Africa is closely connected to the lives of the people of an area. Their social systems, livelihood, and religion influence the type of structures they build and the way in which they lay out their communities. The climate and natural resources of a region also play a role in determining the forms and materials used in construction. Both culture and natural resources of an area affect the way people create and decorate their architecture.

See
color plate 9,
vol. 4.

Role of Culture. People throughout Africa have developed styles of architecture that are central to the cultures of particular ethnic groups. In many rural societies, especially those based on agriculture, people live in compounds consisting of several separate buildings connected to or surrounded by a wall or fence. Such compounds typically house an extended network of family members. The individual dwellings of mud, wood, and thatch are round in some regions and rectangular in others.

Each building in a compound has a specific purpose. There are spaces for cooking, sleeping, storage, worship, domestic animals, and sometimes for burying the dead. The buildings and outer walls of a compound surround a central courtyard, which is usually the main working place for the family.

Many African towns and cities are patterned after the basic rural compound. Many cities were originally enclosed by walls made of wood, earth, or stone, depending on the available natural resources. Markets and palaces of rulers surrounded the large central square. In North Africa, towns with narrow twisting streets and tightly clustered homes were often protected by a massive outer wall and defensive fort called a Casbah.

In some cultures, belief in a spiritual life after death focused architectural efforts on creating elaborate monuments and tombs. Among the most famous structures on the African continent are the great temples and PYRAMIDS of ancient Egypt. Built for Egyptian rulers believed to be



Architecture

gods, these tombs were constructed of massive stones and designed to last forever. The ancient AKSUM culture in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea once built monuments on a similar scale, including pillars carved in the shape of multistory buildings that towered over 100 feet high. These remain standing today.

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

In contrast to these monumental structures is the temporary housing of hunting-gathering societies and some pastoralists*. Their architecture often consists solely of tents and other shelters that can be assembled and taken apart quickly. Built of various lightweight materials, such as wood, grasses, and hides, these portable structures accommodate the nomadic lifestyle of their inhabitants.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Environment and Building Materials. The environments found in Africa range from harsh deserts to tropical rain forests to temperate savannas*. The architecture of each region is directly related to its environment and the building materials available.

In tropical regions of heavy rainfall, people typically build homes with sloping roofs that allow water to run off easily. Numerous openings in exterior and interior walls permit outside air to pass through a building and cool it. Because vegetation is often dense in such regions, common construction materials include wood and plant matter, such as leaves and vines. By contrast, in hot, dry regions where timber is scarce, dried mud or bricks are often used for buildings. Thick walls with few openings help keep out the daytime heat, allowing the interiors to remain relatively cool. In areas that have strong, regular winds from a certain direction, structures are placed to take advantage of the cooling effects of breezes and some walls may be reinforced to withstand storms.

The building materials used in traditional architecture depend largely on a region's resources. In North Africa and along the east African coast, many ancient cities and monuments were made of stone. The Egyptians constructed temples and pyramids of local limestone. The coastal-dwelling Swahili built with blocks of coral. Even today, some settled rural populations in East Africa use stone for houses, grain storage buildings, and the foundations of walls because stone lasts far longer than wood in tropical climates.

In the rainforest regions of Africa, people harvest hardwood for walls, ceilings, roofs, and doors. Some tropical hardwoods are brought to savanna areas, where trees and bushes are scarce. Other common rainforest building materials are bamboo and the flexible roots of trees. Palm fronds, grasses, and vines are woven into mats that are used for walls and roofs and for decoration.

In many parts of Africa, buildings are made of earth. Some people use mud to form cone-shaped or rectangular bricks that are dried or baked until hard. Others build with balls of wet mud. Clay pots and pottery may be employed as paving tiles, gutters, and wall linings.

African builders frequently work with combinations of stone, earth, timber, textiles, and other materials. They top earthen roofs with wooden planks, dry straw, or plant leaves. They reinforce earthen walls and arches with tree roots and bamboo sticks, and they make tents with branches, leather, and textiles.

Symbolism in Architecture

For the Dogon of Mali, each element of architecture—from the individual parts of a house to the entire plan of a village—has symbolic meaning associated with their religious beliefs. Each Dogon community compound, which consists of various buildings, symbolizes a man lying on his side. The hearth, or fireplace, is associated with the man's head. The storerooms represent his arms, the stables his legs, and the central workrooms his belly. The compound as a whole symbolizes a man in the act of procreation, or producing offspring.

- * **artisan** skilled crafts worker
- * **mosque** Muslim place of worship
- * **rite** ceremony or formal procedure

- * **bas-relief** type of sculpture in which figures are raised slightly from a flat surface



The Construction Process. Building in rural Africa has traditionally been a family or even community effort. Many people lend their skills to erect a building. The building process might involve blacksmiths, woodworkers, weavers, and potters. Specific tasks are often assigned according to gender. Usually, men cut and carve wood, mold and shape bricks, and construct the earthen walls of houses. Women may make architectural pottery such as tiles, gutters, and decorative features, carry water to the work site, and apply the finishing coats of plaster or mud on walls, floors, and other surfaces.

In Africa's Islamic cities, however, construction has generally been left to specialized groups of builders and artisans*. Deeply respected, these workers have held a high place in society. Many people have also feared them, believing them to have magical powers. Often Islamic political and military leaders designed the cities. They planned city walls, mosques*, and palaces based on religious principles and the decorations found in the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam.

The construction process in Africa often includes religious rites*. Many peoples perform sacrifices and other ceremonies before, during, and on completion of a building project. Such rites are believed to help ensure that the structure will remain strong and stable and that the life of its occupants will be peaceful and prosperous. Some nomadic groups build a house as part of their marriage ceremony.

Decoration in Architecture. For some African groups, decoration is an important part of a building's construction. The bricks or stones in a wall may be laid so that they form a particular design. The Rozwi people of southern Africa, for example, built intricately patterned stone walls during the 1600s and 1700s. Some groups arrange straw or other grasses in appealing patterns on roofs; others twist branches and plant materials into decorative features. Designs and colors may be woven into roof and wall mats, such as those made by the Kuba people in the Congo.

Decorative elements may also be added to structures after they are built. The most commonly applied surface decoration—used primarily on stone or earthen walls—is dried mud. The mud may be colored with vegetable dyes, carved in bas-relief*, or embedded with pieces of pottery, seashells, or other materials. Architectural decoration is found most frequently on doorways and entrances, around window openings, on exterior walls and interior courtyards, and on the tops of roofs. It may also be used to mark a significant place, such as a hearth or storeroom, or an important building in the community.

The patterns of surface design vary according to ethnic group, religion, and building function. The ancient Egyptians added paintings and carvings to their architecture to tell stories and communicate religious messages. In Islamic communities, buildings are usually adorned with geometric and scriptlike designs because the Muslim religion forbids making pictures of people and animals. In many cultures, certain colors or patterns may hold special symbolic meaning. The HAUSA of northern Nigeria decorate the outside of their homes with bas-relief or painted designs, sometimes including pictures of bicycles and cars to represent high social standing. The NDEBELE of South Africa decorate homes,



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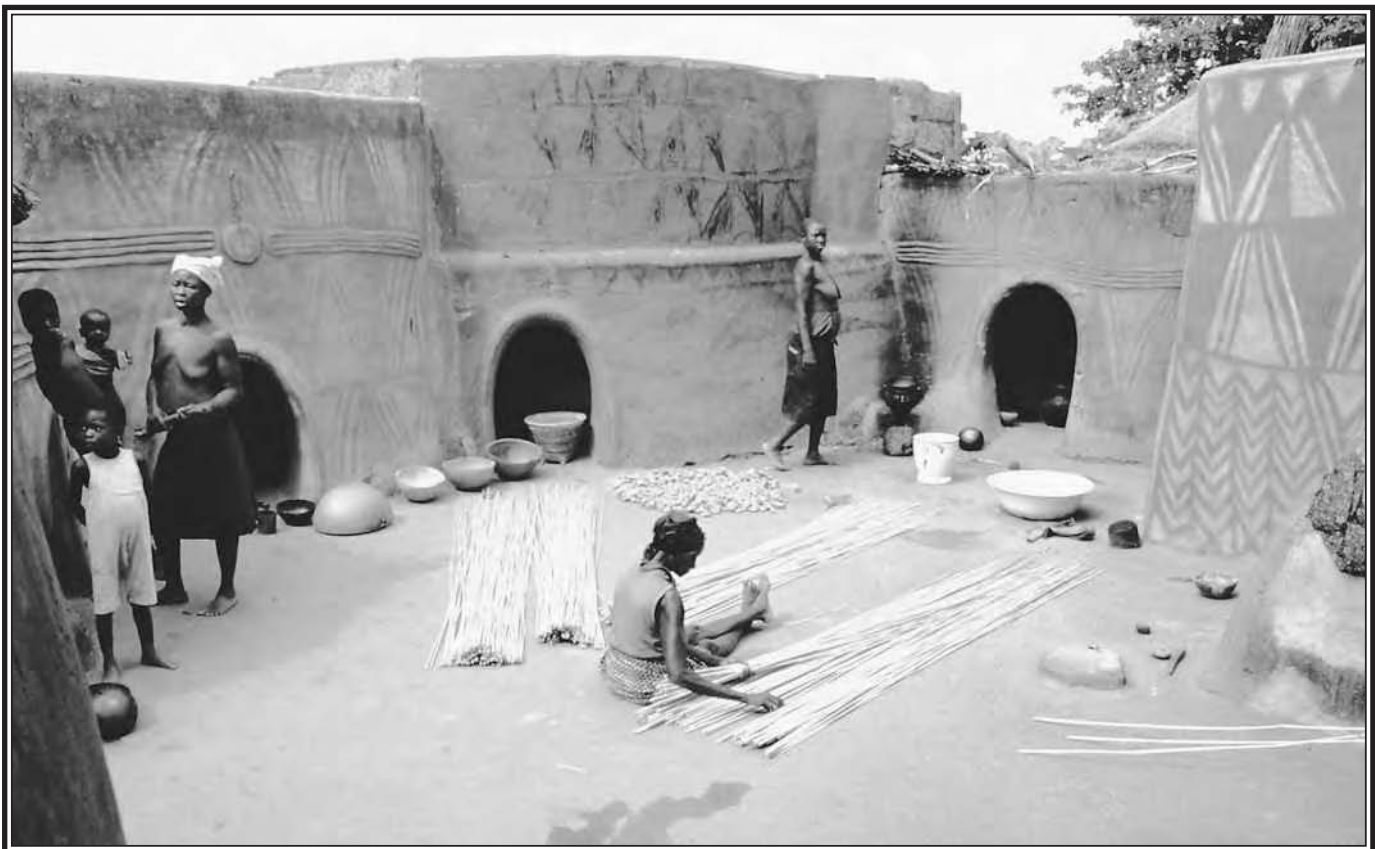
churches, and other buildings with bold and colorful geometric patterns.

EARLY FOREIGN INFLUENCE

Travelers from Europe and Asia have long influenced Africa's architecture. The ancient Mediterranean civilizations of Phoenicia, Greece, and Rome built great cities in North Africa. Later Arabs introduced Islamic architecture to the people of Africa's northern coast. Christianity played a lesser role in the continent's early architecture, although it inspired some unique early churches in northeastern Africa.

Greek and Roman Influence. Settlers and invaders from the around the Mediterranean—particularly the ancient Greeks and Romans—brought their own styles of architecture to Africa. Around 800 B.C., the Phoenicians, a seafaring people from the eastern Mediterranean, built the thriving city of CARTHAGE in what is now Tunisia. The Romans destroyed the original buildings around 150 B.C. Later they rebuilt the city and made it the capital of their African province. The new city boasted an amphitheater, a forum, and miles of aqueducts that carried water to luxurious baths like those in Rome. After Carthage declined, later generations of Tunisian builders reused its stones in surrounding cities.

This enclosed village in Ghana combines shelter for family groups with a courtyard for activities such as weaving mats.





This fortress in central Morocco was built on a hillside overlooking the valley below. It includes square towers and an ornamental roofline, features common to many other North African buildings.

The Greeks constructed another of North Africa's great cities, ALEXANDRIA, in ancient Egypt. Founded in 332 B.C. by Alexander the Great, the city included palaces, parks, and temples in the Greek style. Among its most famous buildings were a vast library and a museum, which served as an institute for higher learning. A towering lighthouse with a fire at its peak guided ships into Alexandria's harbor and was considered one of the wonders of the ancient world.

Islamic and Christian Influence. By the 900s, Arabs were spreading Islamic culture and architecture along the coasts of northern and eastern Africa. Mosques are among the most striking forms of Islamic architecture in Africa. They are often decorated with elaborately carved stucco and wood and with detailed tile and glass mosaics. Built around a courtyard and a prayer hall, many mosques feature horseshoe-shaped archways, multiple domes, arched ceilings, and up to six minarets—tall, thin spires from which Muslims are called to prayer. North African mosques are particularly ornate.

Although mosques in Africa are distinctly Islamic in function and decoration, they include elements of indigenous architecture. In Cairo, mosque builders used an ancient Egyptian technique to carve finely detailed decorations directly into the surface of stone. In East Africa, Swahili palaces and mosques are constructed of coral blocks. Several early West African mosques, including one in TIMBUKTU in Mali, are made in the local fashion using mud strengthened with numerous wooden poles that poke out from the exterior walls. The ends of the



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poles serve as a scaffold for workers to climb up and repair the mud walls when they are damaged by heavy downpours during the rainy season.

Although Christianity spread to Africa in the first centuries A.D., it had little effect on African architecture until the late 1800s when European-style churches were introduced. One exception is the churches built in what is now Ethiopia and Eritrea. In the 1200s indigenous Christians of that area carved massive churches out of solid rock. The style of these churches owed something to the carved monuments of the earlier Aksum culture. Another uniquely African style of Christian architecture developed in the Gondar and Lake Tana regions of Ethiopia in the late 1500s. Churches built in this area were round and were surrounded by long walkways covered with arches and walls topped by towers.

COLONIAL ARCHITECTURE

Some ancient mosques in West Africa, like this one in Djenné, Mali, were built of hardened mud.

When Europeans began to colonize Africa in the 1500s, a new style of African architecture was born—colonial architecture. From government and commercial buildings to the houses of wealthy Africans, colonial architecture reflected the political and economic relations between





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Europeans and Africans. It was primarily an expression of European power and authority.

European Influence. Although many European nations played a role in colonizing Africa, no clear distinction can be seen in the architecture of their colonies. Rather, these colonial powers produced a common style with variations that reflected local African building traditions, climate and natural resources, and political developments.

Some of the earliest colonial architecture appeared in West Africa. From the 1500s to the 1800s “Portuguese-style” houses were constructed along the West African coast. Rectangular in shape, these buildings had a whitewashed exterior and a veranda—a long, roofed porch. In Saint-Louis (in present-day Senegal), the first colonial capital of French West Africa, merchants built houses with interior courtyards and second-floor porches. During the mid-1800s, European missionaries in West Africa constructed two-story buildings with a porch and covered passageway.

During the late 1800s, Brazil, a former colony of Portugal, lent its own flavor to colonial architecture in West Africa. Wealthy middle-class residents of African and Brazilian ancestry built lavish dwellings with the ground floor devoted to business and the upper stories for living quarters. They featured highly decorated facades—building fronts—that proclaimed the wealth of their owners.

The Dutch and British had an influence on the colonial architecture of South and East Africa. Dutch colonial houses combined thatched, or straw-covered, roofs and white plastered walls with ornate gables. When the British took over the region in the early 1800s, they replaced these simple houses with a grander style of architecture that featured fancy facades. British colonial-style buildings were one or two stories tall with encircling porches. Some were made of prefabricated materials, and most had roofs covered with sheets of metal.

Common Characteristics. By the late 1800s a formal colonial style had developed in Africa. This style was also found in India, Southeast Asia, the West Indies, and other European colonial areas. The typical residential structure was a two-story building raised on pillars. Doors and windows were aligned to take full advantage of air currents, and a veranda surrounded the building on both levels. The veranda existed in West Africa before the arrival of Europeans, who readily adopted it for their own use because it created a shaded living area open to cooling breezes.

Government and administrative buildings, located in the capital cities of African colonies, had an important role in colonial architecture. Built to reflect colonial power and prestige, such buildings were large and impressive. They included various durable materials such as stone and hardwoods that were meant to last a long time.

MODERNIZATION

Since the colonial period, foreign design and technology have continued to influence architecture in Africa. Colonial policies, urban growth,

See color
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migration, and Western technology encouraged the introduction of new building materials, systems of construction, and building functions. In many rural areas, however, the basic forms of traditional architecture have remained relatively unchanged. But now instead of using grasses and palm leaves for roofing, African builders often replace these natural materials with sheets of iron or aluminum. Instead of sun-dried brick, they may use concrete blocks.

The impact of foreign cultures and new materials is especially evident in cities. Many African nations have adopted the universal concrete and steel urban architecture, submerging much of the unique character of African architecture. However, some nations, such as Morocco, have taken steps to promote the use of local design and decoration in new buildings. The character of indigenous architecture also continues to change rapidly, as professionally trained architects become increasingly involved in developing new forms of architecture. (See also *Art, Cities and Urbanization, Crafts, Colonialism in Africa, Roman Africa.*)



ARMIES

See *Warfare*.



Art

Each of the hundreds of different cultures in Africa has its own artistic traditions and its own ideas of what is beautiful or important. Variations in the style and form of artworks, as well as in the materials used to produce them, reflect such factors as a region's geography and climate, its social customs, and the available technology. Of course, the skill and tastes of individual artists—and the purpose for which the work is created—also play a role in shaping the final product.

OVERVIEW OF AFRICAN ART

African art takes many forms, from sculpture and paintings to masks, textiles, baskets, jewelry, and utensils. Artistic style also covers a wide range, from lifelike representations of people or animals to abstract* geometric patterns. The YORUBA of Nigeria and the Bamileke of Cameroon, for example, believe that sculptures should resemble their subjects and must also show certain ideal qualities such as youth and beauty. The BAMBARA of Mali favor geometric shapes and idealized images over realistic portrayals of people or animals.

In sub-Saharan* Africa, many art objects are created to serve a particular purpose. These purposes include dealing with the problems of life, marking the passage from childhood to adulthood, communicating with spirits, and expressing basic beliefs. Artists carve figures to honor ancestors, rulers, and gods. They make masks for use in rituals* and funerals and for entertainment. They design jewelry and body painting that often function as a sign of wealth, power, and social position.

In North Africa, Islamic* beliefs restrict the creation of images of living things. As a result, artists have applied their skills to decorative arts such as carpet weaving and calligraphy, or ornamental writing.

* **abstract** in art, referring to designs or shapes that do not represent a recognizable object or person

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Twins in Life and Art

Among the Yoruba of Nigeria, small carved figures play a significant role in family life. When one child in a pair of twins dies in infancy, the mother asks an artist to make a figure representing the deceased child. Carved in wood, the figure has hair, often dyed a rich blue-black. The mother cares for the figure as if it were a real child, providing it with food, expensive clothing, and jewelry until the surviving twin is old enough to take care of it.

Calligraphy can be seen on buildings, household items, sacred books, and other places.

Meaning in African Art. The subject of a work of art and the way in which it is made often have an influence on its meaning. In some cases, objects of great social and ritual significance have to be assembled according to certain procedures. Following the rules ensures that the piece will be filled with the appropriate “power.” If the rules are broken, the artwork loses its power and becomes an ordinary object. In other cases, the power is given to the object after it is completed.

Some objects serve as a base for materials that add to their significance. For example, when a carver makes a mask, village elders may contribute medicines or herbs to give the mask power. The resulting piece is considered to have a personality of its own.

Design and decoration play a major role in the meaning of an object. An artist may make a mask large to indicate that it is important and add a prominent forehead to suggest that the mask is swollen with spiritual power. Certain patterns have particular significance, perhaps standing for water, the moon, the earth, or other ideas. Objects that represent spirits or spiritual powers are often abstract because the things they represent are abstract. Figures that represent living rulers tend to be more realistic to make it possible to recognize the individual’s features. Some objects include symbols that represent powerful animals.

In one type of African art, forms that have known meanings are used in creating images of figures and ideas. The purpose is to portray rulers or ancestors as superhuman and, at the same time, to communicate a sense of permanence. Another category of art includes sculptures and masks that represent the visible world but refer as well to an unseen world behind them. These objects may be used in activities such as healing ceremonies and divination*.

* **divination** practice that looks into the future, usually by supernatural means

A third type of African art consists of everyday objects, such as spoons, pots, doors, cloths, and so on. Some of these items have elaborate decorations, such as the intricate human faces carved into the handles of wooden ladles from Ivory Coast. Often reserved for the wealthy, these objects can also be markers of social position.

Collecting African Art. Europeans began collecting African artworks as early as the 1600s, and by the 1800s interest in these objects was high. However, the first African pieces brought to Europe were regarded as curiosities rather than works of art. While admiring the workmanship, some people considered African art to be “primitive” and without artistic value. Nevertheless, by the end of the 1800s many European museums had acquired African pieces for their collections, usually to show everyday life in their countries’ colonies.

African works did not attract much attention as art until the 1920s, when interest focused mainly on sculptures in wood and bronze. Since the 1950s Western collectors, scholars, and museums have come to recognize more and more African objects as valuable works of art. Prices of these works have risen accordingly.

In the early years, European museums often displayed African objects with exhibits of animals, rather than with other works of art. Today,



Art



Power Figures

Carved figures or other objects thought to have magical power (sometimes called fetishes) are found in societies in many parts of Africa, including the Kongo and the Fang. The figures can take various forms, from representations of ancestors or other humans to images of real or imaginary animals. No matter what they represent, most of the figures contain special ritual substances to give them their “power.” These substances—often blood, vegetable matter, minerals, or parts of animals—are placed in a cavity inside the figure or attached somewhere on its body.

* **motif** in art and music, repeated theme or design



* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

museums present African pieces in their art collections. Furthermore, collectors now understand that, although individual works are not signed, many African artists are well known in the continent by name and reputation.

Art collecting has also changed in Africa. In the past, Africans sometimes threw objects away when they were thought to have lost their power. Without a specific function, the items had little value. Recently, however, more Africans have begun to collect works of art and a number of museums have been established on the continent with collections of African art.

Recent African Art. Over the centuries, African art has changed with the times. Not surprisingly, modern African society and culture are reflected in the recent work of African artists. Some of the religious rituals and other traditional activities for which African art was created no longer exist. Furthermore, new traditions, such as those connected to the practice of Christianity, have been introduced. Some artists have combined African ideas and Christian themes in their work. Others have produced pieces with African motifs* and designs that are not intended for use in rituals. Yet, though much of the current art reflects modern concerns and issues, traditional art forms continue to play a meaningful role in the lives of ordinary people.

Styles of art change as well. Traditional designs often appear in new ways, such as using body painting designs in paintings on canvas. Perhaps one of the most notable features of recent African art is its role in the modern marketplace. In many places, an art industry has developed to produce objects specifically for Western tourists and collectors. Such “tourist” art may include copies of older art forms as well as contemporary designs.

SCULPTURE

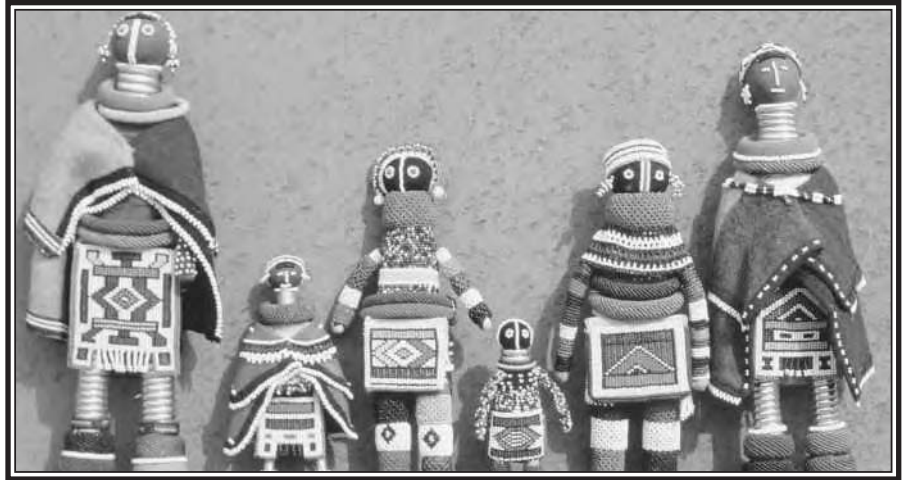
For sculpture, perhaps sub-Saharan Africa’s greatest art form, the most commonly used materials are wood and clay and metals such as iron, bronze, and gold. Unfortunately, wood decomposes and is easily destroyed, so few pieces of early wooden sculpture have survived.

West Africa. Sculpture is one of the major art forms in West Africa. Scholars divide the artistic traditions of the region into two broad geographical areas: the western Sudan and the Guinea Coast. Although some common themes appear in the art of these areas, the most striking feature of West African sculpture is its diversity.

The western Sudan, a savanna* region that extends across West Africa, includes several well-defined sculptural traditions. Figures from this region often have elongated bodies, angular shapes, and facial features that represent an ideal rather than an individual. Many of the figures are used in religious rituals, and they often have dull surfaces encrusted with materials placed on them in ceremonial offerings.

The Mande-speaking peoples of the western Sudan create wooden figures with broad, flat surfaces. The body, arms, and legs are shaped like cylinders, while the nose may be a large vertical slab. Artists often burn

These beaded dolls made by the Ndebele people in South Africa include items worn by married Ndebele women and were originally fertility charms.



patterns of scars—a common type of body decoration—into the surface of figures with a hot blade. Scar patterns also consist of large geometric shapes. The Mande wooden figures are usually dark brown and black.

Another important sculptural tradition of this region is that of the Dogon people of Mali. Much Dogon sculpture is linked to ancestor worship. The Dogon carve figures meant to house the spirits of the dead, which they place on family shrines. Their designs feature raised geometric patterns, such as black-and-white checkerboards and groups of circles in red, white, and black.

The Guinea Coast extends along the Atlantic Ocean from Guinea-Bissau through central Nigeria and Cameroon. Sculptural figures of this region tend to be more realistic in design than those from other parts of West Africa. The arms, legs, and bodies of figures are curved and smooth. Detailed patterns representing body scars—also typical of this region—rise above the surrounding surface. Many figures are adorned with rings around the neck. A common form of body adornment, the rings are symbols of prosperity and well-being.

Two noteworthy sculptural traditions of the Guinea Coast are those of the ASANTE (Ashanti) and the Fon. The Asante carve dolls that represent their idea of feminine beauty. They also produce swords and staffs, covered in gold foil, for royal officials. The Fon people are known for their large copper and iron sculptures of Gun, the god of iron and war.

The artistic traditions of Nigeria are very old indeed. Among the earliest sculptures from northern Nigeria are realistic clay figures of animals made by the Nok culture as early as the 400s B.C. The human figures produced by the Nok, with their tube-shaped heads, bodies, arms, and legs, are less realistic. The ancient kingdom of Benin in Nigeria was renowned for its magnificent brass sculptures. Dating from about the A.D. 1400s, these include images of groups of animals, birds, and people.

Another important sculptural tradition is that of Ife, an ancient city of the Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria. Between A.D. 1100 and 1450, the people of Ife were creating realistic figures in brass and clay, and some of these probably represent royalty. Life-sized Yoruba brass heads from this time may have played a role in funeral ceremonies. Yoruba carvings typically portray human figures in a naturalistic style. The sculptural tra-

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Art Schools

In many African cities—including Cairo, Johannesburg, and Addis Ababa in Ethiopia—artists today can study at formal art schools. Often associated with universities, these schools bring artists together to share ideas and learn artistic skills.

Painter Uche Okeke helped develop the art program at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka in the 1970s. The school became a center for artists who include traditional Igbo forms, known as uli, in their work. Using media such as ink, watercolor, and oil paint, the Nsukka artists create images that deal with political and economic conditions, explore human relationships, and depict the beauty of the Nigerian landscape.

ditions of Ife are still followed, but individual cults* often have their own distinct styles.

Central Africa. Central Africa, a vast area of forest and savanna that stretches south from Cameroon to Angola and west to the Democratic Republic of Congo, contains a great diversity of cultures and arts. Yet, in most cases, the differences in artistic styles are so striking that experts have no trouble identifying the area where an object was produced.

A number of groups in Central Africa have ancient sculptural traditions, and some of the most impressive carving in Africa comes from this region. Pieces range from the wooden heads made by the Fang people to the royal figures carved by the Kuba to guard boxes of ancestral relics*. The Kuba figures are decorated with geometric patterns and objects symbolizing each king's accomplishments. The Kuta-Mahongwe work in a more abstract style to produce guardian figures covered with sheets of brass or copper.

The varied sculpture of Central Africa does have some characteristic features, such as heart-shaped faces that curve inward and patterns of circles and dots. Some groups prefer rounded, curved shapes, while others favor geometric, angular forms. Specific details are often highlighted. Particularly striking are the richly carved hairdos and headdresses, intricate scar patterns and tattoos, and necklaces and bracelets. Although wood is the primary material used in carving, the people of this region also create figures from ivory, bone, stone, clay, and metal.

Eastern Africa. Although sculpture is not a major art form in eastern Africa, a variety of sculptural traditions can be found in the region. An unusual sculptural form in some parts of eastern Africa is the pole, which is carved in human shape and decorated. Usually associated with death, pole sculptures are placed next to graves or at the entrances to villages. Among the Konso of Ethiopia, for example, the grave of a wealthy, important man may be marked by a group of carved wooden figures representing the deceased, his wives, and the people or animals he killed during his lifetime.

Sculpture is mainly associated with the dead in parts of Madagascar as well. Figures are often placed on tombs or in shrines dedicated to ancestors. The tombs of prominent Mahafaly individuals may be covered with as many as 30 wooden sculptures. Carved from a single piece of wood, each sculpture stands about 6 1/2 feet high. The lower parts are often decorated with geometric forms, while the tops are carved with figures of animals, people, and various objects.

Southern Africa. Sculpture does not have a particularly strong tradition in southern Africa. The oldest known clay figures from South Africa, dating from between A.D. 400 and 600, have cylindrical heads, some with human features and some with a combination of human and animal features.

Among the more notable carved objects found in southern Africa are wooden headrests in various styles from geometric designs to more realistic carvings of animal figures. Some headrests were buried with their owners, and some were handed down from one generation to the next.

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **relics** pieces of bone, possessions, or other items belonging to a saint or sacred person

MASKS

Masks are one of the most important and widespread art forms in sub-Saharan Africa. They may be used in initiation ceremonies, such as that marking the passage from childhood to adulthood. Masks also serve as symbols of power to enforce the laws of society.

Masks are usually worn as disguises in ceremonies and rituals, along with a costume of leaves, cloth, feathers, and other materials. Although masks may represent either male or female spirits, they are almost always worn by men. The person wearing the mask in the ceremony is no longer treated as himself or herself but as the spirit that the mask represents.

In addition to face masks (which just cover the face), there are helmet masks (which cover all or most of the head) and crest masks (worn on top of the head like a headdress). Made of wood, clay, metal, leather, fabric, or other materials, masks may be painted and decorated with such things as animal skins, feathers, beads, and shells.

West Africa. Many different forms and styles of masks can be found in West Africa. The Bambara people of Mali have specific masks for their various male societies. Many of these masks represent animals that stand for mythical characters. The masks are decorated with real antelope horns, porcupine quills, bird skulls, and other objects. The characteristics of several animals are combined in masks of the Senufo people of Ivory Coast.

Masks play a role in rituals and ceremonies related to death or ancestors. Once a year, in elaborate performances honoring their ancestors, the Yoruba of Nigeria put on masks made of colorful fabrics and small carved wooden heads. In other parts of Nigeria, masks representing both human and animal characters are worn at the funerals of important elders as a way of honoring the deceased.

The IGBO people of Nigeria have two types of masks to mark the transition from childhood to adulthood. Dark masks represent “male qualities” such as power and strength, prosperity, and impurity, while delicate white masks symbolize “female qualities” of beauty, gentleness, and purity. Among the Mende people of Sierra Leone, elaborate black helmet masks representing the Mende ideals of feminine beauty are used in rituals initiating young girls into womanhood. This is the only case of women wearing masks in Africa.

Central and Eastern Africa. Many Central African masks signify rank and social position, representing the authority and privilege of kings, chiefs, and other individuals. Some also function as symbols of identity for specific groups. While certain masks are considered the property of individuals, others are owned collectively by the group. Used in a variety of situations, masks may inspire fear, fight witchcraft, or entertain. As elsewhere in Africa, many masks are linked with initiation and funeral rituals.

Among the most notable masks of Central Africa are large helmet masks with figures of humans, animals, and scenes on top. Too heavy to be carried or worn, they are displayed during important ceremonies. The





Art

The wooden mask shown here was carved by the Yaure of the Ivory Coast. The Yaure often use fine patterns of lines to indicate beards, hairlines, jewelry, and scars.



* **amulet** small object thought to have supernatural or magical powers

masks of the Pende people of Angola and Congo (Kinshasa) are among the most dramatic works of art in Africa. These large helmet masks have faces with angular patterns and heavy triangular eyelids. Topped by plant fibers that represent hair, they are thought to possess mysterious powers. The Pende make smaller versions of these masks in ivory or wood for use as amulets*. In nearby Zambia, various materials are used to create ceremonial masks. The Mbundu work in wood, and the Luvale and Chokwe attach pieces of painted bark cloth to a wicker frame.

Masks do not play an important role in the art of eastern Africa. However, the Makonde of Mozambique and southeastern Tanzania create distinctive face masks and body masks.

PAINTING

Painting on canvas is a recent development in Africa. Although Africans have always painted, they have done so primarily on rock surfaces or on the walls of houses and other buildings. Africans also apply paint to sculpted figures, masks, and their own bodies.

The earliest known African paintings are on rocks in southern Africa. Made by the KHOISAN people about 20,000 years ago, these rock paintings portray human and animal figures, often in hunting scenes. The paintings may have had ritual or social significance, though no one knows for sure. Other ancient rock paintings have been found in the Sahara desert in North Africa. Dating from as early as the 4000s B.C., these paintings also portray animals and human figures. The strongest traditions of rock painting are found in eastern and southern Africa.

Eastern Africa. The people of eastern Africa have traditionally painted and marked their bodies in various ways. Such decoration has been considered a sign of beauty as well as a form of artistic expression. Some of it is temporary, as in the case of body painting with various natural pigments and other coloring agents. The patterns and designs used often signify group identity, social status, and passage through important stages in life.

Other forms of painting can be found in Ethiopia. Christian influence has been strong in Ethiopia for centuries, and around the A.D. 1100s Ethiopian artists began painting religious scenes on the walls of churches. Since the 1600s, Ethiopians have also produced religious pictures on canvas, wood panels, and parchment.

Traditions of painting are found in several other areas of eastern Africa as well. The Dinka and Nuer people of southern Sudan, for example, paint pictures of cattle and people on the walls of huts. Members of the secret snake charmer society of the Sukuma people in Tanzania decorate the interior walls of their meetinghouses with images of humans, snakes, and mythological figures. The LUO of western Kenya paint geometric designs on fishing boats, and the Mahafaly of Madagascar paint scenes on the sides of tombs.

Southern Africa. Wall painting on the interiors or exteriors of buildings is an important art form in southern Africa. Some very striking examples can be found in this region. Among the best known are those of the NDEBELE of South Africa and Zimbabwe. Almost exclusively the work of women, these paintings were traditionally done in natural earth colors using bold geometric shapes and symmetrical patterns. In recent years, Ndebele women have also used commercial paints, and their designs have become more varied, incorporating lettering and objects such as lightbulbs, as well as abstract designs.

DECORATIVE ARTS

The decorative arts include such items as textiles, jewelry, pottery, and basketry. While viewed as crafts in some Western cultures, these objects

See
color plate 2,
vol. 2.

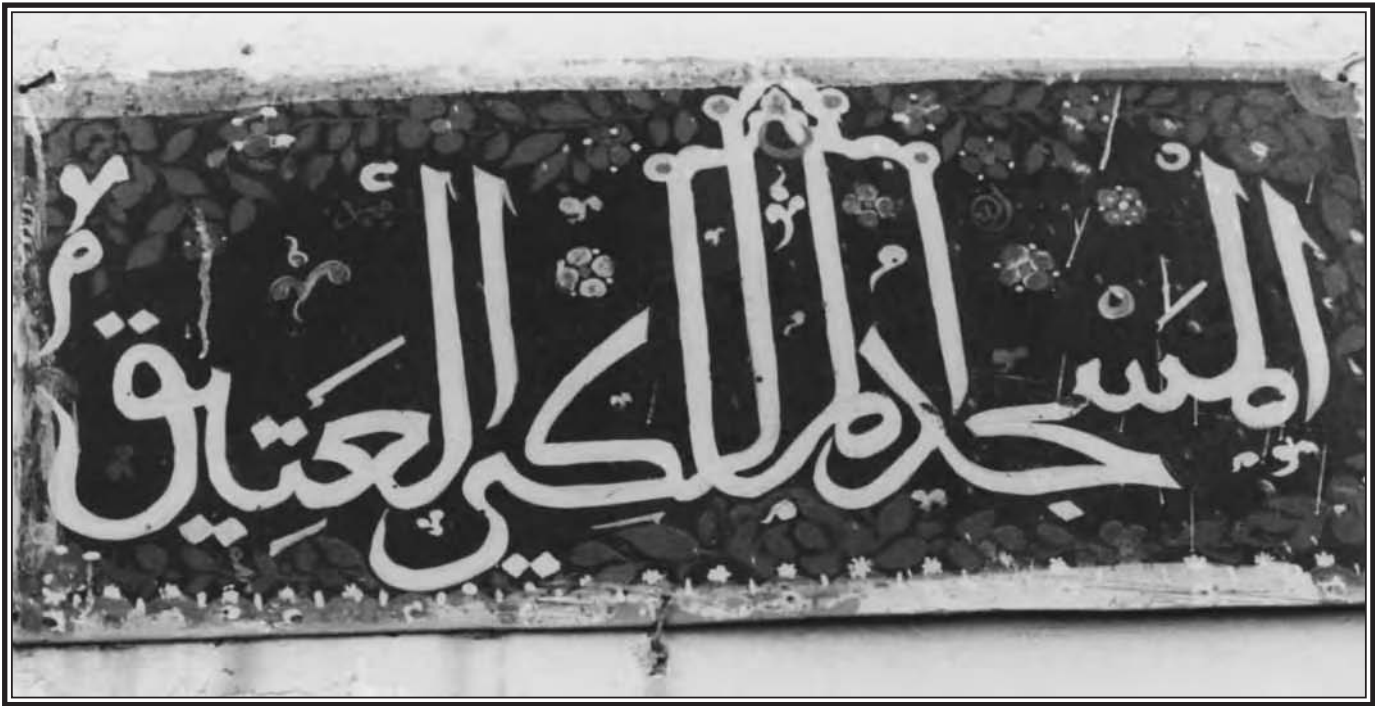
See
color plate 3,
vol. 3.

See color
plate 15,
vol. 3.

See
color plate 8,
vol. 4.



Art



North African artists use calligraphy to decorate buildings and a variety of household items.

can also be seen as works of art because of the care and level of skill that goes into their creation.

Many useful objects are carved from wood or other hard materials and then decorated. The SWAHILI of eastern Africa used ivory and ebony (a hard wood) to build elaborate “chairs of power” with footrests and removable backs. In West Africa, some Nigerian artisans make musical instruments and food containers from round fruits known as gourds. The outer surfaces of the gourds are covered with delicately carved and painted geometric designs.

African artists create jewelry for adornment, as symbols of social position, and even to bring good health and luck. They use materials such as gold, silver, and various types of beads to make necklaces, bracelets, crowns, rings, and anklets. In the KALAHARI DESERT in southern Africa, artisans fashioned ornaments with beads made from glass or ostrich eggshell. In West Africa the Asante are famous for their gold jewelry and gold-handled swords.

The Asante are also skilled weavers, known for their kente cloth—richly colored cotton or silk fabrics. Many groups of people in western and central Africa have developed their own weaving traditions, using particular types of looms and decorative techniques such as embroidery, patchwork, painting, stenciling, or tie-dyeing. Weavers use cotton, wool, wild silk, raffia*, or synthetic threads to create their designs. In Niger, the Zerma weave large cotton covers in vivid red and black patterns. The Mandjak of Senegal produce magnificently colorful cloth of synthetic silk, rayon, or lurex fibers.

In North Africa, one of the most important decorative art forms is calligraphy. Calligraphy has special significance for Muslims because they consider the written word a sacred symbol of Islamic beliefs. In addi-

See color plate 12, vol. 3.

See color plate 9, vol. 3.

* raffia type of palm used for weaving and basketry



Asante

See color plate 13, vol. 3.

tion, because of the restrictions on creating images of human beings, artists turn to calligraphy to decorate their work. Calligraphy is found on buildings throughout North Africa and on many objects used in daily life. Carved in wood and stone, painted on walls and pottery, burned into leather, woven into cloth, or shaped into jewelry, calligraphy appears in a wide variety of materials and styles. Geometric designs or flowing patterns of lines and curves resembling flowers, leaves, vines, and even animals often accompany the calligraphy. These designs are always highly stylized, not realistic in form.

Rugs are another major art form in North Africa. The production of intricate hand-knotted rugs began to flourish in Egypt in the 1400s under the Muslim Mamluk rulers. Early rugs featuring a central design surrounded by border elements sometimes contained as many as six colors. Woven carpets are produced in many areas of North Africa, including Sudan and Morocco, often by groups of BERBERS. (*See also Architecture, Body Adornment and Clothing, Crafts, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Festivals and Carnivals, Houses and Housing, Initiation Rites, Masks and Masquerades, Religion and Ritual, Rock Art, Spirit Possession, Witchcraft and Sorcery.*)

Asante

See color plate 9, vol. 1.

The Asante (Ashanti) are the largest and most powerful of a cluster of AKAN chiefdoms of southern GHANA and IVORY COAST. Originating around Lake Bosumtwi, the Asante migrated to the area around the town of Tafo in the early 1600s. Around 1700, Chief Osei Tutu made alliances with several surrounding kingdoms to form the Asante Union. Included in the union were the Mampong, Bekwai, Kokofu, Dwaben, and Nsuta people. It is legend that Osei Tutu, aided by Okomfu Anokye, established the Golden Stool as the traditional symbol of Asante unity, to be held by the Asante ruler. The stool is kept at the capital city of Kumasi.

By the early 1800s the Asante had expanded toward the Atlantic coast, threatening British control over trade there. Conflicts occurred with British troops, who burned Kumasi in 1874 and sent several important Asante into exile. In 1902 the British made the Asante state part of their colonial empire. Although they allowed the re-creation of the Asante Union in 1935, it became part of the Gold Coast, as Ghana was then called.

There are about three million Asante, most of whom make their living from agriculture. Their main products are gold, cocoa, palm oil, timber, bauxite, and rubber. Many Asante are highly educated and hold important positions in Ghana's government, businesses, and religious institutions. The Asante practice various religions, including Christianity, Islam, and traditional religions; most combine different forms of belief and worship. Of the approximately 150,000 Asante who are Muslim, the majority follow the Sunni school of the Maliki tradition, while a minority believe in the Shafi'i rite. Family inheritance is determined by matrilineal descent. (*See also Christianity in Africa, Islam in Africa.*)



Asantewa, Yaa

Asantewa, Yaa

ca. 1832–1921
Asante queen

* **siege** attempt to conquer a fortress or town by surrounding it with troops and cutting it off from supplies

Yaa Asantewa was queen of the ASANTE town of Edweso, located in present-day GHANA. In 1900 she led a three-month siege* against British troops in the Asante capital of Kumasi. The British had seized Kumasi four years earlier in an attempt to extend their control of the country, then known as the Gold Coast. They forced a group of Asante chiefs and elders, including Asantewa’s grandson, to leave their land.

During this conflict, the Asante hid the Golden Stool, the sacred symbol of Asante kingship. When British governor Sir Frederick Hodgson arrived in Kumasi in 1900, he demanded payment from the Asante as well as surrender of the Golden Stool. These demands led to an uprising and siege by Asantewa and leaders of the surrounding Asante towns. The British eventually broke the siege and exiled Asantewa to the SEYCHELLES, where she died 21 years later. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**.)

ASHANTI

See *Asante*.

Askia Muhammad I

(?)–1528
Ruler of the Songhai Empire

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place

Askiya Muhammad I was a statesman and military leader who ruled the Songhai Empire of West Africa for more than 30 years. During his reign Muhammad not only expanded the empire, he also reorganized it and transformed it into a Muslim kingdom. He is said to have been a nephew of the Songhai emperor Sunni Ali Ber. Soon after Sunni Ali’s death, Muhammad attacked and defeated the new emperor, Sunni Baru. He then gave himself the title Askia. Two years later Muhammad made a pilgrimage* to Mecca, and when he returned in 1497 he made Islam the official religion of the Songhai Empire.

Muhammad conquered a wide area of northwestern Africa, and his empire’s influence extended even farther. However, his main achievements were organizational. He divided the empire into provinces administered by governors and appointed separate ministers to direct financial affairs, justice, agriculture, and other areas of importance to the state. He also established a permanent army and a fleet of war canoes and placed them under the command of a general and an admiral. The well-run empire became a model for surrounding states.

Muhammad’s children brought an end to his successful rule. They fought bitterly over the riches of his empire. In 1528 his eldest son killed Muhammad’s new general in chief and exiled Muhammad to an island in the NIGER RIVER. When another son took power in 1537, he called his father back to the capital at Gao, where Muhammad died the following year. His tomb, an earthen pyramid topped by wooden spikes, still stands. It is considered one of the holiest Islamic sites in West Africa. (See also **Islam in Africa, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa, Sunni Ali**.)

Asma'u, Nana

1793–1864
Islamic poet and teacher

- * **jihad** Muslim holy war
- * **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire
- * **Sufi** member of a Muslim movement characterized by mysticism and dedication to poverty and prayer

Nana Asma'u, an Islamic teacher in what is now northern Nigeria, was known for her writings and for her work in educating Muslim women. Fluent in Arabic and several African languages, she memorized the entire Muslim holy book, the Qur'an. Her father, UTHMAN DAN FODIO, was an Islamic ruler who led a jihad* in 1804 in Hausaland. Nana Asma'u later wrote extensively about this jihad.

After her father's death, Nana Asma'u became part of a team that organized a new Muslim community in the Sokoto Caliphate*. She also assisted her brother, Caliph Muhammed Bello, in translating and adapting a work on Sufi* women in verse form. Through her poetry Nana Asma'u reminded the new leaders of the caliphate of their responsibilities to the people. Some of her writings provide a glimpse into the workings of the Muslim community. She is perhaps most fondly remembered for creating an educational network for rural Muslim women that instructed students in their native languages. This network still exists today. (See also Literature, Sufism.)

AXUM

See Aksum.

Atlas Mountains

The Atlas Mountains are the principal geographic feature of the North African countries of MOROCCO, ALGERIA, and TUNISIA. They are made up of six mountain ranges—the Anti-Atlas, the High Atlas, the Middle Atlas, the Saharan Atlas, the Tell Atlas, and the Aurés—with high plateaus and plains between them. The mountains run northeast from the Atlantic coast of Morocco to the Mediterranean coast of Tunisia for approximately 1,250 miles.

The Atlas Mountains have had a profound effect on North Africa's climate, economic resources, and human history. Separating the coastal lowlands from the SAHARA DESERT in the interior, the ranges prevent the desert heat from reaching the coast. They also trap moist winter storms that blow in from the Atlantic Ocean and Mediterranean Sea, which causes rainfall along the coast and prevents rain from reaching the interior. In addition, snowfall in the mountains feeds rivers and streams that water the northern parts of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. For these reasons, the northern districts are greener and better suited to agriculture than the flat desert lands found elsewhere in North Africa, and over the centuries people have chosen to settle in these more fertile areas.

The Atlas Mountains are home to several tribes of BERBERS, indigenous* North African people. Because of their isolation in the Atlas Mountains, the Berbers have been able to maintain their languages and customs. Many of them support themselves by farming and raising livestock.

The mountains' name comes from the Greek mythical figure Atlas, who bore the world on his shoulders. The ancient Greeks believed that Atlas lived among the North African peaks. The Arabs who later settled

- * **indigenous** native to a certain place



Atlas Mountains



The Atlas Mountains act as a barrier between the coastal lowlands of western North Africa and the Sahara desert. The mountains trap moisture along the fertile coast and shield the region from the heat of the desert.

in the region called the mountains Jazirat al-Maghrib, “island of the west,” because of their contrast to the surrounding desert. Today Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia are sometimes called the MAGHREB or Maghrib.

Azikiwe, Benjamin Nnamdi

1904–1996
President of Nigeria

Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe was the first president of the Federal Republic of NIGERIA, after the country won its independence from Britain in 1960. As a young man, Azikiwe left Nigeria to study in the United States. He earned master’s degrees in both political science and anthropology. After his studies, he worked for three years as editor of the newspaper *African Morning Post* in Accra, GHANA. Then Azikiwe returned to Nigeria and started the newspaper *West African Pilot*.

Azikiwe launched his political career in 1944, when he joined forces with Herbert MACAULAY, the founder of Nigeria’s first political party, the



Banda, Ngwazi Hastings Kamuzu

Nigerian National Democratic Party. Together they organized the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons. Azikiwe became leader of the party (renamed the National Convention of Nigerian Citizens) two years later.

Azikiwe served as premier of Eastern Nigeria under British rule from 1954 to 1959. After Nigeria achieved independence, he served as governor general from 1960 to 1963 and became the nation's first president in 1963. However, Azikiwe was deposed* three years later when the military seized control of Nigeria and banned political parties. After the ban was lifted in 1978, Azikiwe returned to political life as a member of the Nigerian People's Party. By the time he retired from politics in 1986, he had gained wide respect as a political strategist. He was also known as a Nigerian patriot and a champion of human rights. He wrote several books on African politics.

* **depose** to remove from office

Bambara

With a population estimated at 3 million, the Bambara are the largest ethnic group in MALI. Large numbers of them live in northern IVORY COAST as well. They are sometimes called Bamana, the name of the Mande language they speak.

In the 1700s two Bambara kingdoms arose in the region, but they fell to Muslim forces during the 1800s. When the French moved into the area, they destroyed the remaining Bambara armies. By the early 1900s some Bambara had converted to Islam, the religion of their longtime Muslim enemies, as a way of resisting French rule. The process of conversion increased rapidly after World War II, and since the 1980s more than 70 percent of the Bambara have been Muslims.

Many of the Bambara who live in cities hold important positions in politics, business, and professions such as law and medicine. The Bambara of rural areas are mainly farmers, growing staple crops and several cash crops* including peanuts, rice, and cotton. They are renowned as artists and weavers of cloth that is exported around the world. In recent years many Bambara have moved from rural to urban areas to find work as laborers. (*See also Islam in Africa.*)

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Banda, Ngwazi Hastings Kamuzu

1906–
President of Malawi

Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda served as president of MALAWI from 1966 to 1994. His presidency was a time of one-party rule. Born in the British colony of Nyasaland (present-day Malawi), Banda left home at age 17 to study in SOUTH AFRICA. Later he traveled to the United States, where he attended college and medical school.

While practicing medicine in London and GHANA, Banda became involved in his country's politics. He joined the Nyasaland Congress and protested Britain's decision to create a federation linking Nyasaland with the neighboring colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia. In 1958 the Congress asked him to come back home.

Banda soon formed his own political party, the Malawi Congress Party (MCP). He was a lively and appealing public figure, and when



Banda, Ngwazi Hastings Kamuzu

Nyasaland won independence as Malawi in 1964, Banda became the country's prime minister. Three years later he was chosen president. In 1971 he changed his title to President for Life and made the MCP the only legal political party in the country. Banda's political opponents were driven into exile, imprisoned, or killed. His foreign policy favored Western governments. At home he sought to modernize Malawi's agriculture and public works, while enforcing a strict moral code on the people. Banda regulated everything from the length of women's skirts to the books people could read.

Despite his harsh rule, Banda was widely respected in Malawi and was nicknamed Ngwazi—meaning savior or conqueror—by the local media. However, he upset many African leaders by supporting South Africa's apartheid* government and by backing guerrilla* rebels in

MOZAMBIQUE. In 1991 various groups spoke out against Banda's human rights abuses, further weakening his power. In 1994 Banda reluctantly allowed the first multiparty elections in nearly 30 years and resigned the presidency.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

BANKING

See *Development, Economic and Social; Money and Banking.*

Bantu Peoples

The Bantu, a large group of related peoples, originated along what is now the border between NIGERIA and CAMEROON and spread throughout central and southern Africa. The term *Bantu* is sometimes used to describe all Africans and African culture in general. But this use of the term is inaccurate; Bantu peoples make up only about a third of Africa's population. Bantu is also the name of the family of related LANGUAGES spoken by these people. Over time, the many Bantu-speaking peoples have become very different from one another.

Bantu Origins. All Bantu languages arose from a single language known as proto-Bantu. About 4000 B.C. the people who spoke this language developed a culture based on the farming of root crops, foraging*, and fishing on the West African coast. Over the years, Bantu became more widely spoken than the languages of the nomadic peoples who lived in the same area. Its spread was probably aided by the unique social organization of the early Bantu, based on a system of cooperation between villages. Every village consisted of several "Houses," and each House formed working relationships with Houses from other villages. This strong but flexible social network may have helped the Bantu migrate across the continent.

According to archaeological* evidence, the Bantu migration began sometime after 3000 B.C. One group of Bantu moved southward, reaching southern Cameroon by about 1500 B.C. Within a thousand years the migrants also settled the coast of Congo and the Congo Basin in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo (CONGO (KINSHASA)). These West Bantu people developed new skills such as ironworking and the

* **forage** to hunt or search for food

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

Bantu Peoples



These Zulu women of South Africa speak one of the nearly 600 Bantu languages found on the continent.

making of ceramics. They continued to live side-by-side with other peoples, but apparently shared little in the way of culture or technology.

* **interlacustrine** between lakes

The Interlacustrine Bantu. Long after the West Bantu migration, a second Bantu migration began—this one toward the east. Sometime before 1000 B.C. Bantu groups arrived in the northwestern Great Lakes area in what is now UGANDA. Known as the Interlacustrine* Bantu, these peoples learned new farming methods from neighbors in eastern Africa who spoke Cushitic and Sudanic languages. They raised livestock—particularly cattle—and practiced agriculture, growing grain crops such as sorghum. Bantu women eventually married Sudanic and Cushitic men and raised their children to speak the Bantu language. Between about 500 B.C. and A.D. 800, the Bantu language spread throughout the Great Lakes region.

Two specific developments brought steady prosperity to this region after A.D. 1000. The first was the emergence of plantain farming. The second was pastoralism—a way of life in which cattle were driven from place to place in search of new grazing land. Both plantains (a banana-like fruit) and cattle produced a reliable year-round supply of food, enabling communities to grow in size and complexity. The Bantu founded new settlements, created a new style of pottery, and developed new social and political ties.



Bantu Peoples

Bantu communities that practiced pastoralism were particularly influential in the area. Their cattle were a source of moveable wealth. People who owned cattle gained political power by loaning the cattle to neighbors, who were obligated to provide support and assistance to the lender in return. In this way, loaning cattle forged new political relationships and incorporated outsiders in existing political and social groups.

* **medium** person called upon to communicate with the spirit world

Bantu herding communities also spread their religion as they traveled, introducing new spirits and beliefs into the communities they visited. Their mediums* established new centers of spiritual and political power that competed with and often replaced the worship of local spirits. Between 1000 and 1500 the new forms of economic, political, religious, and social life that arose under Bantu influence completely transformed Africa's Great Lakes region.

Later Bantu Cultures. The Interlacustrine Bantu eventually spread east to modern-day KENYA and TANZANIA and south into the present-day countries of ZIMBABWE, BOTSWANA, MOZAMBIQUE, and parts of SOUTH AFRICA. This movement was very rapid and most likely occurred before 200 B.C. As in the west, Bantu languages scattered widely throughout eastern Africa. After the first eastern expansion ended, East Bantu speakers in southeastern Congo (Kinshasa) and ZAMBIA moved westward and joined with West Bantu speakers. The languages in this area show a mixture of East and West Bantu influences.

The most extensive archeological evidence of Bantu culture in eastern and southern Africa dates from about A.D. 400. By this time, cattle were so important in southern Bantu society that villages were erected around a central pen. In Kenya the first towns built by the SWAHILI—another Bantu people—appeared around 750. Swahili settlements soon dotted the Indian Ocean coast as far south as Mozambique. Around the same time, systems of farming and herding arose in Uganda and RWANDA. These regions featured Bantu settlements with fortified central areas that eventually grew into kingdoms after about 1500.

By A.D. 1000, settlements along the Limpopo River had developed into a town called Mapungabwe—the capital of a Bantu kingdom that controlled much of the surrounding territory. After Mapungabwe declined, it was replaced around 1250 by the kingdom of Great Zimbabwe. This powerful empire flourished for almost 200 years by supplying gold and ivory to Swahili traders from the North. Bantu civilizations continued to dominate south and east Africa politically until European colonial governments displaced them in the 1800s.

Today, the Bantu peoples are as diverse as the land they inhabit. Hundreds of societies in central and southern Africa trace their roots to the Bantu, and about 150 million Africans speak one of nearly 600 Bantu languages. Yet regional differences in environment, livelihood, and history have made each Bantu society and tongue unique. The Bantu languages are so distinct that people who speak one language usually cannot understand their neighbors who speak another. Bantu patterns of social organization, forms of government, and ways of tracing KINSHIP vary widely. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Livestock Grazing.**)

Barghash ibn Sa'id

1833(?)–1888
Sultan of Zanzibar

Sultan Barghash ibn Sa'id ruled ZANZIBAR from 1870 until his death in 1888. He was a reformer who tried to eliminate corruption and to improve the economy of Zanzibar.

Barghash rebuilt the clove economy after it was destroyed by a hurricane in 1872. Later he established a fleet of steamships that boosted the country's trade and revenues. The sultan used this new wealth to build a number of palaces and introduce public improvements such as electricity and piped water to the town of Zanzibar.

However, the sultanate soon came under the shadow of European colonial ambitions. In 1890 Germany and Britain signed two treaties that forced Barghash to accept reductions in the size of Zanzibar. Germany took Tanganyika (part of present-day Tanzania), leaving Zanzibar with only a narrow strip of coastal land in Kenya. The two offshore islands of Zanzibar and Pemba fell under British control. Barghash did not survive the breakup of his sultanate. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Barth, Heinrich

1821–1865
German traveler and explorer

Heinrich Barth was a German-born scholar who made two long trips to Africa that he recorded in a book called *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa*. Barth's extensive knowledge of the peoples and places described in his book made it a standard reference for scholars of Africa.

Barth was educated in Berlin, where he earned a doctorate in 1844. Although he already spoke five languages, he went to London to perfect his Arabic before traveling in North Africa from 1845 to 1847. Shortly after his return to Germany, he accepted an invitation to join a British expedition to central Africa. The expedition began in 1850 but within a year its leader, James Richardson, died. Barth took over the expedition, which continued exploring as far south as the present-day countries of CHAD, CAMEROON, MALI, NIGER, and NIGERIA. Before returning to Europe in 1855, Barth visited the Arab leaders of the Sokoto Caliphate* as well as their rivals in the cities of Kukawa and TIMBUKTU.

After leaving Africa, Barth settled in London. There he wrote an account of his travels, but it received little attention. Furthermore, the proud Barth quarreled with the Royal Geographic Society and the British government. He went home to Germany in 1859 but had no success there either. He failed to win political posts he sought, and he was denied full membership in the Royal Academy of Sciences. The University of Berlin also refused to name him to succeed his mentor Karl Ritter as professor of geography. In 1862 he published an important book, the *Collection of Vocabularies of Central African Languages*. He died three years later without achieving recognition for his accomplishments. That recognition came years after his death. (*See also Travel and Exploration.*)

* caliphate state in the Muslim empire



Bello, Ahmadu

BASUTOLAND

See *Lesotho*.

BECHUANALAND

See *Botswana*.

BELGIAN COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa*.

Bello, Ahmadu

1910–1966

Premier of Northern Nigeria

Ahmadu Bello, a Nigerian leader, served as the first premier of Northern NIGERIA in 1954, when the country was under British rule. He was active in the Northern People's Congress (NPC), a cultural organization that he helped transform into a political party in the early 1950s. Under Bello's leadership, Northern Nigeria and the NPC dominated Nigeria's politics at the time of its independence in 1960.

Bello was a direct descendant of the founder of the FULANI empire of Sokoto, a state in Northern Nigeria. He hoped to become the *surdauna* of Sokoto, the spiritual leader of Northern Nigeria's Muslim population. This position would have given him both political power and religious authority. Bello's ambitions, however, were cut short when he was murdered by the military during an uprising in January 1966. (See also *Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements*.)

Ben Bella, Ahmed

1918(?)–

First president of Algeria

A leading figure in Algeria's struggle for independence from France, Ahmed Ben Bella served as the country's first president from 1963 to 1965. Educated at a French primary school near Oran, ALGERIA, he became involved with the independence movement while pursuing further studies in the nearby city of Tlemcen. During World War II he served in the French army, receiving the prestigious Croix de Guerre in 1940.

After the war Ben Bella returned home and helped found an underground political movement devoted to armed struggle against French colonial rule. In 1950, to gain money for the independence effort, he robbed a post office. He was captured and served two years in jail. After escaping to EGYPT, he met followers of the Egyptian revolutionary leader Gamal Abdel NASSER.

In 1954 Ben Bella and other Algerian leaders living in Egypt formed the National Liberation Front (FLN). The organization called for the overthrow of French rule in Algeria, and launched a civil war. French

Bénin

authorities arrested Ben Bella in 1956, and he remained in prison until Algeria won its independence six years later. With the support of Colonel Houari BOUMÉDIENNE, head of the National Liberation Army, Ben Bella became prime minister. He was elected president in 1963.

As president Ben Bella reestablished order in war-torn Algeria and instituted reforms in education and agriculture. However, his policies were often poorly planned. In 1965 Boumédiénne overthrew Ben Bella, who remained under house arrest until after Boumédiénne's death. Freed in 1980, Ben Bella spent the next ten years in exile, eventually returning to Algeria in 1990. (*See also Agriculture, Colonialism in Africa, Education, Independence Movements.*)

Bénin

The Republic of Bénin is located in West Africa along the Gulf of Guinea. It is bordered by NIGERIA on the east, TOGO on the west, and by BURKINA FASO and NIGER on the north. Bénin's present-day borders were shaped by the kingdom of Dahomey, which extended through the region in the mid-1800s, and by European countries trying to establish empires in Africa.

GEOGRAPHY

Although Bénin lies entirely within the tropics, it has considerable variety in both its geography and climate. Southern Bénin was once covered with rainforests, but most of the land has been cleared for agriculture. The destruction of rainforests has led to a decrease in precipitation during the two rainy seasons the south experiences each year. Forests cover central Bénin, savanna* dominates in the northeast, and the Atakora Mountains rise in the northwest. Northern Bénin has only one rainy season per year, which makes the region less suitable for raising crops.

Most of Bénin's population is concentrated in the south, where the land is better suited to farming. Both Bénin's capital, Porto Novo, and its largest city, Cotonou, are located in this region.

ECONOMY

Bénin's economy is based on agriculture, informal trade (smuggling), and foreign aid. Due to a lack of infrastructure*—such as roads, railroads, and power generation—industry and trade have developed slowly in the country.

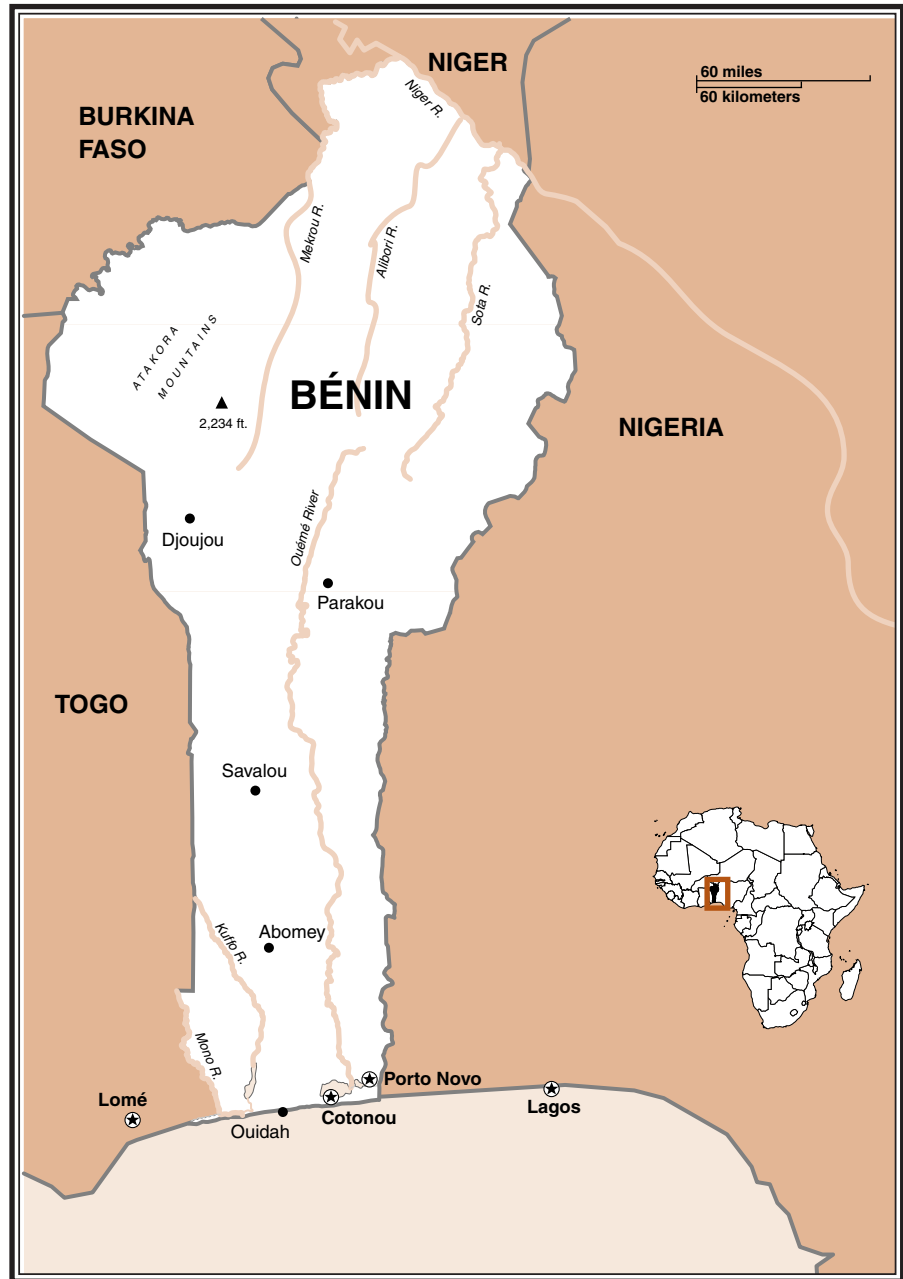
More than half of the people in Bénin make a living in agriculture, which accounts for about one third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. However, most of the soil is of poor quality. Despite this disadvantage and a doubling of the population between 1962 and 1995, Bénin has been able to produce enough food to feed itself. It also exports food to Nigeria. Rice, corn, peanuts, and cotton are some of Bénin's main crops. Palm oil and palm kernel oil are also major agricultural exports.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Bénin



Bénin has a long history of people smuggling goods across its border with Nigeria. The goods move in both directions. Most of the cocoa crop that Bénin exports is smuggled in from Nigeria. Illegal drugs from South America also enter Bénin before being shipped to Europe.

Regular trade with countries outside of Africa accounts for more than one third of GDP. Trade with African countries is much smaller because of internal problems such as lack of transport, customs barriers, and officials who charge “tariffs” that they keep for themselves. These help drive up the cost of transporting goods.

Industrial development in Bénin, based on international financing, has not had much success. Bénin has reduced the amount of oil it

Modern Witch-Hunt

In the 1970s President Kérékou's government sought to replace Bénin's local leaders with people loyal to the president. Some of the old leaders were Vodun (voodoo) priests, and the program to replace them led to a campaign to detect sorcerers and witches, who were considered dangerous. The first people accused of witchcraft held positions of power, but later the accused were mostly women and the elderly. Torture was frequently employed to obtain confessions. Many people opposed the witch-hunt, but others were glad that a government finally addressed the fear of sorcerers shared by large numbers of people. Although the campaign split communities and families, it did allow the government to replace old leaders.

imports by producing oil using offshore resources. A large percent of Bénin's electricity is generated in GHANA.

Foreign countries and international institutions provide more than \$250 million of economic assistance to Bénin per year. Much of this aid has been misspent on projects such as trying to introduce plow agriculture in the south. A great deal of the funds also goes to pay government salaries, which take up a large portion of the national budget.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The history of Bénin involves the history of several African kingdoms. Although Benin was the name of an ancient kingdom in what is now Nigeria, that kingdom is not related to present-day Bénin. This state is a twentieth-century invention, created by French colonial officials who combined areas that had few ties.

Precolonial Bénin. Before the 1800s the peoples of north Bénin were closely connected to the other lands of West Africa. South Bénin was ruled by a series of kingdoms controlled by the Fon and the Adja, who were related to peoples from Togo and Ghana. The most powerful of these kingdoms was that of Dahomey, which occupied southern Bénin as well as parts of present-day Togo and Nigeria. Dahomey built its power and wealth from trading slaves captured in raids on northern lands. The kingdom also produced palm oil and sold it to the French. Thus when the transatlantic SLAVE TRADE ended in 1851, Dahomey had a product available to replace slaves.

Colonial Bénin. The French hoped to build an empire in Africa and attempted to acquire territory on the West African coast. King Ghezo, who ruled from 1818 to 1856, gave France control over a portion of the coast that later became the city of Cotonou. However, the French wanted more territory, and in 1890 they mounted an attack on Dahomey with the help of the southern kingdom of Gun. The attack failed, but the French were successful two years later, and Dahomey became part of the federation* of FRENCH WEST AFRICA.

The French established an administration partially based on institutions from the kingdom of Dahomey. Colonial authorities relied on powerful local individuals to carry out policies in the villages and countryside. Overseeing this colonial structure were district officers who had the power to raise and collect taxes, recruit labor by force, and draft individuals into the military. However, French rule in Dahomey was quite unstable, and the colony produced little revenue.

In the early 1900s, Dahomey experienced a series of brief uprisings among several local peoples. Calls for independence grew louder after World War II. In 1960 France finally granted independence to Dahomey. Fifteen years later, Dahomey changed its name to Bénin.

Postcolonial Bénin. Between 1960 and 1972 Bénin had 12 separate governments, 5 of which were overthrown in coups*. During this time, French "technical advisers" actually controlled the workings of government, and France paid Bénin's national debt. In 1972 military leader

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government



Bénin

- * **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals
- * **cooperative** referring to a business or organization owned by its workers
- * **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

Mathieu Kérékou seized power and embarked on a communist* program of economic and social development. He took over large private plantations and turned them into cooperative* farms and nationalized* many businesses. The state also replaced local leaders who were not easily controlled by the central government.

In the early 1980s, Bénin suffered an economic crisis. Over the next several years, its state-owned banks began to fail and the salaries of government employees were paid irregularly. In 1989 the government cut its spending, and President Kérékou abandoned his communist political program and accepted a democratic constitution for Bénin.

In 1991 Nicéphore Soglo was elected president in free elections. Three years later, Bénin suffered an economic crisis when its currency was reduced in value by 50 percent, but the situation became more stable within a couple of years. In 1996 Kérékou defeated Soglo and returned as the country's president.

Bénin's waterways serve as vital transportation routes. The residents of this village construct their houses directly over the water on tall stilts.

Government. Bénin's government is a democracy headed by a president elected by the people. The president nominates cabinet ministers and the governors of Bénin's six provinces. Bénin's parliament has the power to make laws and decisions about the budget. In some ways, modern Bénin still operates like the colonial government. Local author-





Republic of Bénin

POPULATION:

6,395,919 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

43,483 sq. mi. (112,620 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Fon, Yoruba, Adja, Banba

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

traditional 70%, Christian 15%, Muslim 15%

CITIES:

Porto Novo (capital), 330,000 (1999 est.); Cotonou, Abomey, Ouidah, Parakou, Natitingu

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 58 in. (1,500 mm) in the southeast to 30 in. (770 mm) in the extreme north

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,300

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: palm oil, cotton, coffee, cocoa, cassava, yams, corn, livestock, peanuts, timber

Manufacturing: vegetable oil processing, cement, textiles, palm products

Mining: offshore oil deposits, limestone, marble, iron ore

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1980:

1972–1991 Major (later Lieutenant General) Mathieu Kérékou

1991–1996 President Nicéphore Soglo

1996– President Mathieu Kérékou

ARMED FORCES:

4,800 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–12; literacy rate 37%

ities have a great deal of influence, and the central government relies on them to carry out policies. The laws of the state often have limited control over the workings of the local government, and the opportunities for corruption at the local level are great. Bénin does have a powerful constitutional court that requires that the government accounts for its actions. This has helped ensure that laws passed by the government follow the country's constitution.

PEOPLE AND CULTURES

The colonial government classified the people of Bénin by language, although that was only one of many ways by which they identify themselves. Some groups identify themselves through ancestry, and some through associations with other peoples. In reality the history of the people in the region has led to a pattern of settlement that is very mixed.

The largest single Béninese group is the Fon, whose language Fongbe is the dominant tongue in southern Bénin. Before the colonial period, Fon society was based on slave raiding, and many slaves became Fon when they were brought into Fon households. The Fon did not absorb members of every group they ruled over, however. The Ayizo, who had to send people to serve in the Fon army and who speak a dialect of Fongbe, resisted alliances or identification with the Fon. Bénin is home to several other former slave raiding peoples, such as the Wasangari and the YORUBA.

Gur speakers of the north, called Berba, identify themselves through a common initiation ritual. The Baseda and other groups living near the border with Togo belong to a cultural association based on mutual defense.



Bénin

The Béninese people belong to several different religious groups. Although one third of the people practice either Christianity or Islam, the majority follow traditional African beliefs. Many practice VODUN, or voodoo, a religion that originated in Bénin and that involves the worship of many gods. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, History of Africa, Land Ownership, Slavery, Witchcraft and Sorcery.**)

Benin City

Located in the Bendel State of southern NIGERIA, Benin City is famous for the work of its numerous artisans. Despite its name, the city is not related to the nation of BÉNIN, which lies west of Nigeria.

Around A.D. 1000 a center of regional importance arose on the site of the present Benin City. This early town, also known as Benin, served as the seat of government for the ancient kingdom of Benin. In the mid-1200s Oba (king) Ewedo built an elaborate palace in the heart of the city. Destroyed by a revolt in about 1480, the capital was rebuilt by the victorious leader, Oba Ewuare. From that time on, the city became a center for the production of works of art in brass, ivory, and wood.

In 1897 the British sacked Benin City, seizing most of the palace's ornaments as well as items symbolizing the king's power. The city remains an important hub of regional trade today, receiving most of its income from the export of palm oil, rubber, and wood.

Berbers

The Berbers are a cluster of peoples who live in North Africa and in the northern parts of the Saharan countries of MALI, NIGER, and MAURITANIA. The Berbers have their own languages, which belong to the Hamitic or Afro-Asiatic language family, and they write in their own scripts.

The native people of the region, the Berbers resisted the Arab conquest of North Africa in the A.D. 600s. Eventually, though, they accepted Islam, the religion of the Arabs. During the 700s the Berbers took part in the Arab conquest of Spain. A few centuries later, they established the Almoravids and the Almohads, two of the Islamic empires that ruled North Africa and Spain. During the 1800s the Berbers fought against French colonization in Africa.

With a estimated population of more than 12 million, the Berbers consist of at least 200 groups or tribes. The Kabyle, Rif, and Shluh are the largest of the Berber groups. The desert-dwelling TUAREG are among the best known.

Traditionally the Berber economy depended on the herding of livestock, especially camels, and the farming of grain. Some mountain-dwelling Berbers on the fringe of the Sahara desert continue to graze livestock, moving seasonally to provide their herds with water and pasture. Most Berbers, however, live in rural settlements or small towns. Their livelihood is based partly on family farms and partly on the labor



The Tuareg, a Berber group of the northern Sahel, are skilled camel herders. In this photo, a Tuareg rider presses forward in a camel race.

of the men, who spend time working in North African or European cities and sending money home. Regarded as inferior by some urban Arabs and ruling parties, many Berbers live in poor and unproductive districts. (See also **North Africa: History and Cultures.**)

Beti, Mongo

**1932–
Cameroonian novelist**

Mongo Beti is Cameroon's most celebrated novelist. His early novels usually explore the conflict between traditional African values and those of European colonialists. His best-known works, published in the 1950s, feature characters who come to understand the injustice of colonial rule and to realize they must help end it.

Beti's most famous novel, *Le Pauvre Christ de Bomba*, tells the story of a well-meaning missionary sent to convert a small village. He eventually realizes that the villagers come to him only to learn about Western technology, and they neither want nor need European religious guidance.

Beti's later writing, starting with the 1972 work *Main basse sur le Cameroun: Autopsie d'une décolonisation*, deals mainly with the abuses of dictatorship in post-colonial Africa. This book, which condemned the postindependence regime of CAMEROON, was banned in France for five



Beti, Mongo

years. Beti's other novels are also strongly political, and many of them are still banned in his native land. (*See also Literature.*)

BIAFRA, REPUBLIC OF

See Nigeria.

Biko, Steve

1946–1977
South African social activist

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Steve Biko, an outspoken opponent of apartheid*, earned fame as a leader of the black consciousness movement in the 1960s and 1970s. The movement was based on the belief that the divisions between whites and blacks in South Africa were so great that blacks could not count on whites to end apartheid. Biko also insisted that blacks had to form their own political structures and to develop a new sense of pride in their own culture, religion, and ethical system.

Born in the eastern Cape Province of SOUTH AFRICA, Biko studied medicine at the University of Natal. While in college he became politically active and established a number of all-black associations. His activities led the South African government in 1973 to restrict his movements and to forbid him to speak or write publicly. Four years later Biko was arrested and held without trial for violating his travel restrictions. He died in prison after being tortured by the police. His death served to rally opponents of apartheid, and Biko has been remembered worldwide in song, drama, and film. (*See also Apartheid.*)

Blyden, Edward Wilmot

1832–1912
Pioneer of Pan-African Unity

Edward Blyden was a teacher and author who promoted the idea of black African pride. He stressed the importance of African languages and culture but also explored the possibility of combining African and Western cultures. The inventor of the phrase "African personality," Blyden laid the groundwork in his writings for the NEGRITUDE movement of the mid-1900s.

Of African descent, Blyden was born on the Caribbean island of St. Thomas. In 1850 he went to the United States to study at a theological college. However, the school refused to accept Blyden because of his color. The following year Blyden emigrated to LIBERIA, where he worked as a minister, teacher, and newspaper editor. He also served as Liberian ambassador to Great Britain and president of Liberia College. Blyden later moved to FREETOWN, the capital of SIERRA LEONE. There he became increasingly interested in Islam and held the post of director of Muslim education. Blyden died in Freetown in 1912, but his ideas had enormous influence in the twentieth century among African and African American leaders and intellectuals. (*See also Independence Movements.*)



Body Adornment and Clothing

Body Adornment and Clothing

People communicate information about themselves by the clothes they wear and the way that they adorn their bodies. In Africa body decoration and dress may offer clues to a person's age, ethnic group, region, social position, and even political opinions. As Western-style attire becomes more common in Africa, some traditional types of adornment and dress are fading from everyday use—especially in the cities. However, many Africans still wear traditional clothing and decoration for special occasions or as a form of self-expression.

* **ocher** red or yellow earth containing iron ore, used to color paints and textiles

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Body Adornment. Africans have been decorating themselves with paint or pigment since at least 4000 B.C., when people in **SUDAN** used ocher* as a cosmetic. Ancient Egyptians used cosmetics as well, enhancing their lips and cheeks with red coloring. Men, women, and children in **EGYPT** wore eye paint, or kohl, on both their upper and lower eyelids. In addition to being considered beautiful, kohl helped protect the eyes from insects and the glare of the sun.

Body paint also functions as a sign of social status and ethnic background and as part of many African rituals*. **Turkana** men in **KENYA** cake their hair with clay and red coloring to celebrate a successful hunt or the end of planting. In many parts of the continent, decorating the body with white clay represents spirituality. Ceremonies marking a new stage in life often involve body painting. Young **Dan** women from **IVORY COAST**, for example, paint themselves with bold geometric patterns during rituals that mark the passage from girlhood to womanhood.

For many years, people throughout Africa have created permanent body decorations by scarification, or making small cuts in the skin. As they heal, these minor wounds form scars. The procedure is usually performed during childhood, and the patterns and designs of the scarification are often similar to those used in a group's pottery and sculpture. Both men and women bear these scars, usually on the face, torso, thigh, or upper arm.

Some types of scarification carry special meanings. Certain scars on the foreheads of men in the **IGBO** region of **Nigeria**, for example, indicate high social rank. In some cultures, scarification is believed to make a person more beautiful or to provide magical or protective benefits. Because various peoples have developed distinctive styles of scarification, scars may also identify the wearer as a member of a particular ethnic group.

Other types of body decoration practiced in Africa are also permanent. In North Africa, some **Bedouin** and **BERBER** tribes mark their faces with tattoos. Berber tattoos often indicate membership in a particular group and are modeled after ancient **Libyan** script. Some East African peoples beautify themselves by extracting certain teeth or by filing or chipping their teeth into sharp points. Other groups pierce holes in their lips and earlobes and then gradually stretch them by inserting larger and larger plugs or plates.

* **raffia** type of palm used for weaving and basketry

Clothing. Long ago Africans dressed in skins, woven grass and raffia*, leaves, and cloth made of tree bark. Today such items are used only in a few places or during certain ceremonies. The **Kuba** people of **CONGO**



Body Adornment and Clothing

The Ancient Art of Beadwork

Since prehistoric times Africans have made beads of stone, shell, ivory, metal, and glass. People of western and central Africa cover garments with complex pictures or patterns of tiny beads. Some fine beadwork was traditionally reserved for officials, such as the kings of Benin and Yoruba. Women in Nigeria and Mali work beads into elaborate hairstyles. In eastern Africa both men and women may wear beaded ornaments indicating their clan, village, wealth, age, and marital state. African beadwork is more than simply beautiful. It is a powerful expression of personal identity and style.

* **amulet** small object thought to have supernatural or magical powers

See color plate 15, vol. 1.

See color plate 12, vol. 3.

(KINSHASA) still produce the embroidered raffia shirts with geometric patterns that both men and women used to wear for rituals and public events. However, today the main function of these shirts is to dress the dead at funerals.

Most Africans wear garments of woven cotton cloth. Men appear in a wide variety of smocks and robes. Rural men in Egypt and Sudan may wear the *jellaba*, an ankle-length robe with sleeves and side pockets, made to be worn over a shirt. A similar long, loose robe is the *dishdasha*, used by both men and women in ALGERIA.

A number of African garments consist of a single piece of cloth. Women frequently wear wrappers—large rectangles of cloth they wrap around their bodies. Often a woman dresses at home in a single wrapper tucked and twisted under her arms, and she adds additional items when appearing in public. The typical outfit of YORUBA women consists of a wrapper tied at the waist, a smaller cloth worn over the first wrapper or over the left shoulder, and a long-sleeved blouse. Nomadic men in Mali wear patterned wool blankets during the cold nights of the dry season. In parts of GHANA and IVORY COAST, men wrap themselves in a large, rectangular piece of cloth that is draped over the left shoulder.

Some African attire has special significance. A man's social position may be proclaimed by the size and shape of his smock or by the decoration of his robe. Among the BAMBARA people of MALI, hunters display their skill by wearing white smocks adorned with leather-covered amulets* and hunting trophies. An expert hunter's shirt may be almost invisible under the horns, claws, and bits of fur or hide the wearer has attached to it. Sometimes a particular pattern of cloth has a name that refers to a proverb, local event, or political issue. People wear these cloths because of the messages communicated by the patterns.

Accessories and Hairstyles. Jewelry and other accessories may express even more about their wearer than clothing does. Various styles of brass, stone, bone, or iron bracelets and armbands may declare an African's success, gender, or religion. In some cases, much of a person's wealth is worn in the form of gold jewelry. Belts, caps, and jewelry may be decorated with beadwork in designs that represent a certain idea or message.

Accessories often indicate a person's authority. In some societies, only leaders or members of special groups may wear items made of precious materials, such as ivory or gold. The pharaohs who ruled ancient Egypt wore a type of beaded necklace reserved only for gods. In ancient Benin, the traditional costume of the king consisted of a coral-beaded crown and smock, and jewelry of ivory and coral. The red of the coral represented power, while the white of the ivory stood for spiritual purity. Among the ZULU of SOUTH AFRICA, the king wears a necklace of leopard claws, while lesser chiefs wear ornaments of bone carved in the shape of leopard claws. Fly whisks—animal hair attached to handles and used to wave away flies—are symbols of leadership used by men throughout Africa. Both traditional and modern rulers often carry them during public appearances.

In North Africa the head covering is perhaps the most common

Body Adornment and Clothing



Africans use a wide range of items to decorate themselves and their clothing. These Gikuyu dancers in Kenya paint their faces and wear beaded belts and bracelets.

accessory. Some men wear the traditional Arab head cloth, or *kafiyya*, held in place with a coil of cord. Others may wear the fez, a cylinder-shaped hat that originated in the region. Among the TUAREG people of the Sahara region, men cover their heads and faces with long veils dyed blue with indigo, while women wear headcloths. Women in Muslim countries or communities have traditionally covered their heads and faces with a veil.

Hairstyles are also used in parts of Africa to express symbolic meaning as well as personal style. Common styling techniques include shaving, braiding, stringing beads on the hair, interweaving fibers with the hair, and shaping the hair with mud or clay. Some peoples use hairstyles to mark stages in life. Young men of the MAASAI shave their heads when they become adult warriors. Then they let their hair grow long, spending hours styling each other's hair into elaborate arrangements of many twisted strands coated with red mud. (See also **Art, Crafts, Initiation Rites.**)



Bokassa, Jean-Bédél

BOER WAR

See *Afrikaner Republics; South Africa; Southern Africa, History.*

Bokassa, Jean-Bédél

1921–1996
President of the Central African Republic

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Military leader Jean-Bédél Bokassa became the president of the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC after a coup* in 1966. Eleven years later, he had himself declared emperor and renamed the country the Central African Empire.

The son of a village chief, Bokassa began his military career in the French army in 1939. He fought in Indochina and achieved the rank of captain in 1961. By that time, the Central African Republic had gained its independence from France, and David Dacko was the new country's president. Bokassa returned home and was appointed chief of staff of the armed forces in 1964. He overthrew Dacko's government two years later, and in 1977 Bokassa declared himself emperor of the Central African Republic.

After more than 12 years as president and emperor, Bokassa's downfall began in 1979 when he ordered the army to shoot protesters. About 400 people died. Strikes by teachers and students led to the arrest, torture, and killing of children. Bokassa was overthrown and went to live abroad. When he returned the Central African Republic in 1986, he was arrested and charged with embezzlement*, murder, and cannibalism. He was sentenced to death in 1987. Freed six years later, Bokassa remained in the Central African Republic until his death.

* **embezzlement** illegal taking of money entrusted into one's care for personal use

Bornu

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

The empire of Bornu existed in north central Africa from about 1400 to 1900, when it became part of Britain's colonial empire. Bornu had its origins in an earlier state named Kanem that arose around 1200 in what is now southwestern CHAD.

The leaders of Kanem were divided into two competing dynasties*: the Duguwa and the Sayfuwu. Driven out of Kanem in the mid-1200s, the Sayfuwu founded the state of Bornu on the southwestern shore of Lake Chad. They increased their power by defeating the local Sao people in the early 1300s. However, dynastic feuds troubled Bornu until the ruler Ali Gaji took power in the mid-1400s. Under his rule, Bornu extended its influence as far as the HAUSA states (now northwestern NIGERIA).

Bornu invaded Kanem in the early 1500s and again in the late 1500s, forcing its rulers to flee to the southeastern part of the kingdom. Under King Idris Alauma, Bornu conquered territory north into present-day LIBYA and drove the Sao onto islands in Lake Chad.

Attacked by the FULANI people in the early 1800s, Bornu managed to defeat the invaders in the 1820s. In the late 1800s the Arab warrior Rabih Zubayr conquered Bornu. Rabih died in 1900, and two years later the British moved into Bornu and made it part of their colony of

Botswana

Nigeria. The kingdom of Kanuri still exists and is possibly the oldest state in Africa. (See also **Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.**)

Botswana

The country of Botswana is located in the center of southern Africa, surrounded by ZIMBABWE, ZAMBIA, NAMIBIA, and SOUTH AFRICA. Since gaining independence from Great Britain in 1966, Botswana has emerged as one of the most successful new nations in Africa.

Geography and Economy. Botswana is a dry land dominated by the KALAHARI DESERT, which occupies the western two-thirds of the country. Drought is a permanent feature of the climate. Almost all of Botswana's surface water lies in the rivers of the Okavango Delta in the northwest. Most of the vegetation consists of dry grasses, which are used for grazing cattle. Gaborone, the capital, is located in the southeast near the border with South Africa.

Before the discovery of diamonds in the 1970s, Botswana's economy was based on livestock and money sent home by migrant laborers. Revenue from diamonds, however, has made Botswana the world's fastest-growing economy. The country has managed its wealth well,



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).





Botswana

The Politics of Race

In 1948 Seretse Khama of Bechuanaland married a white woman named Ruth Williams in England. Shortly afterward the government of South Africa adopted a policy of apartheid and called for Bechuanaland to be incorporated into the country. As a gesture to South Africa, the British banned Khama from his homeland. However, support in Bechuanaland for Khama and his marriage, and opposition to incorporation in South Africa, caused Britain to move carefully. The British eventually refused to make Bechuanaland part of South Africa. They allowed Khama to return in 1956, and within ten years he was elected as the first president of an independent Botswana.

avoiding the cycles of boom and bust common to many mineral-based economies. It has a small but well-functioning infrastructure*, and the government has actively promoted the growth of industry and commerce. As a result, average income is much higher than in most developing countries.

Most of the people of Botswana, who are known as Batswana, still live in rural areas and make their living by farming and raising livestock. The country relies heavily on South Africa for industrial goods, and the gap between the rich and the poor is among the highest in the world. Despite these difficulties, Botswana's economy is considered a model of success for developing countries.

History and Government. The people of the area now known as Botswana had little or no contact with Europeans until the late 1800s. At that time fighting broke out with Afrikaners (or Boers), Dutch settlers from what is now South Africa. In 1885 KHAMA III, chief of the Tswana people, asked Britain for help against the Afrikaners, and the region (then known as Bechuanaland) came under British protection.

After World War II, Bechuanaland, like many other African territories, sought independence from colonial rule. The independence movement gained momentum in the 1950s under the leadership of SERETSE KHAMA, a descendant of Khama III. By 1960 the people of Bechuanaland had gained the right to form independent political parties.

The most influential of the early political parties was the Bechuanaland People's Party (BPP). Supported by urban migrant workers, the BPP called for immediate independence and a socialist form of government. Seretse Khama, who felt that the BPP was too extreme, formed the rival Bechuanaland Democratic Party (BDP). The BDP's followers were mostly rural, and its leadership consisted mainly of cattle owners who had inherited their wealth. Like the BPP, the party sought independence, but it was not interested in socialism*. The BDP overwhelmingly won the first multiparty national elections in 1965. The following year, Bechuanaland achieved independence and renamed itself the Republic of Botswana.

Following independence, Botswana opposed South Africa's apartheid* government. However, it did not support UNITED NATIONS sanctions* against South Africa because it was dependent on trade with that country. During the 1970s Botswana had a tense relationship with the racist state of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), and it offered a haven to Rhodesian refugees. Rhodesia occasionally raided Botswana in pursuit of these refugees. During the 1980s South Africa accused Botswana of protecting anti-apartheid terrorists, and South African forces attacked Botswana in 1985. Since that time the conflict between Botswana and South Africa has calmed down, and the two countries have established diplomatic relations.

Political power in Botswana is shared by a directly elected National Assembly and a president chosen by the assembly. Elected councils oversee affairs at the district, town, and city level, but all these councils depend on the national government for funding. A body called the House of Chiefs, made up of the hereditary leaders of the main Tswana

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's Blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

* **sanction** measure adopted by one or more nations to force another nation to change its policies or conduct



Republic of Botswana

POPULATION:

1,576,470 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

231,804 sq. mi. (600,372 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English, Setswana (both are official)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Pula

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 50%, traditional 50%

CITIES:

Gaborone (capital), 134,000 (1999 est.); Serowe, Francistown, Lobatse, Selibi-Phikwe, Kanye, Maun, Molepolole, Ramotswa, Mochudi, Ghanzi

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 18–25 in. (460–625 mm) in the extreme northwest to less than 5 in. (125 mm) in the extreme southwest

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$3,600

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: livestock, sorghum, maize, millet, pulses, peanuts, beans, cowpeas, sunflower seeds

Manufacturing: meat processing, diamond processing, soda ash

Mining: diamonds, nickel, copper, coal, salt, potash

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Great Britain, 1966. President elected by National Assembly. Governing bodies: National Assembly, elected by universal adult suffrage, and House of Chiefs.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1966–1980 President Seretse Khama

1980–1998 President Quett Ketumile Joni Masire

1998– President Festus Mogae

ARMED FORCES:

8,500

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for 7 years; literacy rate 70%

tribes, advises the assembly and carries out local political and judicial functions.

The political situation in Botswana has been remarkably stable since independence, with free and open elections. This has been made possible largely by the fact that the BDP has little effective opposition. The strength of Botswana's diamond-based economy has also helped the party maintain political power. The Botswana National Front (BNF) has been the main opposition party since independence. Although the party achieved some success in local elections, it has not gained much power nationally.

Peoples and Cultures. The main language groups in Botswana are Bantu and KHOISAN. Among the Bantu speakers, the Tswana are the most numerous as well as the largest single group in Botswana. The Tswana are divided into smaller local groups, each with its own chief.

Tswana families often have three homes: one in a village near schools and shops, one near a water hole where they keep their cattle, and one near their farmland. In the village, the Tswana practice a democratic form of leadership based on discussions in the *kgotla*, a central meeting place. Women usually work the land where crops are planted, and men generally tend the herds at the cattle post. The Tswana place a high value on cattle, which are often used as a form of payment. Other Bantu-speaking groups include the Herero and Mbanderu, who also raise cattle, and the Mbukushu, whose livelihood is based on fishing and farming.

The Khoisan peoples of Botswana can be divided into northern, southern, and central language groups. Many of them work herding cattle for Tswana landowners. The northern Khoisan are known as the





Botswana

!Kung, and the main southern group is the !Xo. Cattle and goat herding people called the Khoikhoi also live in the south near the border with Namibia. The central Khoisan group includes a great number of peoples who have adopted Tswana customs, including the herding of cattle. In addition, Botswana contains a substantial white population, many of whom are ranchers living near the South African border or in the central-western Kalahari. (*See also Apartheid, Bantu Peoples, Climate, Colonialism in Africa, Deserts and Drought, Livestock Grazing, Refugees.*)

Boumédiène, Houari

ca. 1927–1978
President of Algeria

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Houari Boumédiène was the first vice president of ALGERIA after it won independence from France in 1962. Three years later, he led a coup* against President Ahmed BEN BELLA. Boumédiène became Algeria's president and remained in that position until his death.

In his youth, Boumédiène was involved in the movement for Algerian independence. He rose to prominence as a military leader in the National Liberation Army during the Algerian War of Independence (1954–1962). Although he and Ben Bella supported each other in the early years, political differences arose between them over governing the newly independent country.

After Boumédiène staged his coup and took over the government, he kept control of the economy because he believed that it was better for economic decisions to be made by a central authority. He is credited with helping to improve the Algerian economy, but it had begun to suffer a decline by the time of his death. (*See also Independence Movements.*)

Boundaries in Africa

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Before the arrival of European colonists, African boundaries were very loosely defined. Borders reflected the territories inhabited and controlled by different ethnic groups, and they often changed over time—generally as a result of migration or conquest. Moreover, these boundaries did not define all the available space in Africa. Some areas remained unclaimed or served as neutral zones between indigenous* ethnic groups.

European nations began to redraw African territorial lines in the late 1800s, when their interest turned from establishing coastal trading posts to developing the continent's rich inland resources. By the 1880s European explorers such as Sir Richard BURTON, David LIVINGSTONE, Henry Morton STANLEY, and John Speke were staking national claims to larger and larger portions of African territory. Many explorers arranged treaties with African chiefs, claiming the land for European rulers. Although much of Africa remained unknown and unexplored, European competition for territory increased with the desire to gain control of mineral resources and other riches from the African interior.

During this "Scramble for Africa," European countries tried to acquire as much territory as possible. The amount of territory that each nation



Bourguiba, Habib

actually colonized depended largely on its power in Europe. Britain, France, Germany, and Italy, which were strong and rising European forces, ultimately controlled more land in Africa than weaker countries such as Spain and Portugal.

As a result of the “Scramble,” the map of Africa changed from a collection of loosely defined ethnic territories into a series of fixed colonial states. European colonists set boundaries according to their territorial claims, with no regard for the traditional borders of indigenous peoples. In some cases, these new territorial lines divided ethnic groups between different colonial powers. In other cases, they placed groups with a history of hostility toward each other together in one colony.

The Europeans set boundaries by geography—or sometimes merely by drawing a straight line on a map. Natural features, particularly rivers and lakes, often became the borders of European colonies. For the most part such lines remained fixed, except when they were redrawn as a result of the changing fortunes of the colonial powers. For example, Germany lost its African territories after suffering defeat in World War I, and these territories were incorporated into the colonies of other nations.

African nations began to gain their independence in the 1950s, but the colonial boundaries remained basically unchanged. At first some African leaders called for creating a type of United States of Africa, with relatively open borders between nations. That idea never took hold. In some regions, border disputes—such as that between SOMALIA and ETHIOPIA—have contributed to ongoing or recurring conflicts.

Today, the boundaries that separate and define Africa’s many nations are still based largely on the lines drawn by Europeans. National borders often divide members of ethnic groups or force historical enemies to live together. In such areas, people’s allegiance to the state is often challenged by tribal and ethnic loyalties, and political unrest is common. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Nationalism.**)

Bourguiba, Habib

1903–2000
President of Tunisia

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one’s country

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Habib Bourguiba, son of a former Tunisian army officer, grew up under French colonial rule in TUNISIA. He was a leader in his country’s independence movement and became its first president in 1957.

After receiving a good education in Tunisia, young Bourguiba studied law in Paris. There he met other North Africans who were committed to independence from France. Bourguiba’s interest in politics developed at this time, and on his return home he became active in the nationalist* movement. In the 1930s he established the Neo-Destour party. Over the years he transformed the nationalist movement into a mass movement. He also spent some time in prison for his political activities against French colonial rule.

Faced with broad support for independence across the country, the French decided to negotiate. They agreed to self-rule for Tunisia in 1955 and full independence in 1956.

The new President Bourguiba soon embraced socialism*, declaring his own Neo-Destour political party as the only one in the country. His gov-



Bourguiba, Habib

* **cooperative farm** large plot of land worked by many farmers

ernment took over Tunisia’s trade and industry and established cooperative farms*. When his policies proved unpopular, he changed course somewhat. Bourguiba’s calls for a settlement in the heated Arab-Israeli dispute did not win him friends among the Arab nations. In addition, his policy of discouraging traditional Muslim religious practices made him unpopular with many in his own country.

By the late 1970s, Bourguiba’s government was under attack for failing to make political changes. Moreover, his poor health led to extended bouts of unexplained behavior. In 1987 his appointed successor, General Zayn al-Abidine Ben Ali, had doctors declare Bourguiba unfit to rule. The ousted president retired to live in a palace in his home village along the Tunisian coast. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.**)

Braide, Garrick Sokari

ca. 1882–1918
Nigerian religious leader

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **Anglican** Church of England

Garrick Sokari Braide, a Nigerian missionary and prophet, was largely responsible for the spread of Christianity in the Niger Delta region of Africa in the early 1900s. His preaching and methods combined traditional African elements with Christianity and stressed prayer and faith healing.

Braide was born in the village of Obonoma, the center of a cult* to a god called Ogu. Some accounts of Braide’s life say that he practiced Ogunism as a youth. After becoming a Christian, Braide campaigned against the use of African religion symbols. But elements of Ogunism remained in his practice of Christianity.

In the late 1880s Braide probably attended the open-air Christian meetings that took place in his village. He became involved with the Anglican* Church and took instruction in Christianity for many years. He completed his studies and was baptized at the age of 28.

Braide went on to become a preacher and missionary and a prominent leader in the Niger Delta Pastorate Church. He was known for his gifts of prayer, prophecy, and healing. His reputation for performing miracles and magic, such as causing rain and storms, gained him wide recognition.

Braide preached against the use of alcohol, because drunkenness was a problem in the Niger Delta villages. His anti-alcohol movement caused conflicts with the British, who ruled Nigeria at the time and profited greatly from the sale of alcohol in their colonies. Uneasy about Braide’s emergence as a public figure with a large following, the British arrested him in 1916 for sedition*. Braide was found guilty and jailed, but he was released several months before his death.

Braide left Africa with two legacies—the first was the spread of Christianity in Nigeria. The number of baptized Christians in the Niger Delta increased by almost 11,000 during the years he was preaching. Second, Braide showed Nigerians that they had the potential to become independent. As a leader who took a position against the colonial government and broke with the traditional church, he demonstrated that Africans could rise up and take control. (See also **Christianity in Africa, Religion and Ritual.**)

* **sedition** resistance or rebellion against a lawful authority

Brazzaville

The city of Brazzaville is the capital of the Republic of Congo and one of the country's main industrial centers. It sits on the west bank of the Malebo Pool at the beginning of the navigable portion of the Upper CONGO RIVER, a place known as "the gateway to the heart of Africa." Founded by the French in 1883, the city takes its name from explorer Pierre de Brazza, who signed a treaty with a local king that gave France control of key parts of the region. Because of its location, Brazzaville became an important base in France's colonial empire in West Africa. During World War II it was the center in Africa of the French resistance to Germany and its allies.

Today Brazzaville is one of the industrial centers in the Congo (the others are Pointe-Noire on the Atlantic Coast and N'kayi, which lies between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire). The leading industries in Brazzaville are textiles, food processing, and leather goods. Many goods are shipped between Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, both by train and, in recent years, by motor vehicle and by air. Brazzaville is home to one of the Congo's two international airports.

Brazzaville has served as capital of the Congo since the country gained its independence in 1960. The city has about 1 million inhabitants, almost one third of the country's population. It is a main port on the Congo River and serves as the headquarters for many important African organizations. These include the World Health Organization's African headquarters, the Pan African Union of Science and Technology, and the African Petroleum Producer's Association. Brazzaville is also home to many educational, scientific, and technical institutions. (See also Congo (Brazzaville).)

Brink, André

**1935–
South African novelist**

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

André Phillipus Brink is a South African novelist who writes in both Afrikaans and English. He became known as known one of the "Sixtyers," writers of the 1960s who wanted to revolutionize South African fiction by addressing social, moral, and political issues.

Born in SOUTH AFRICA, Brink was educated both there and in France. His early books were not political in nature, but his later ones examined the human cost of the government's policy of apartheid*. His novel *An Instant in the Wind* (1975) deals with the destructive nature of racism by exploring the relationship between a black man and a white woman. In *The Chain of Voices* (1982), Brink looks at an 1825 slave revolt through the eyes of characters on both sides of the conflict. Though praised outside of South Africa, Brink's novels have often been unpopular in his homeland, and some were banned by the South African government. (See also Apartheid, Literature.)

BRITISH COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa*.

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso, formerly known as Upper Volta, is a landlocked nation in western Africa. It is one of many states formed after the breakup of the French colonial empire. Although the nation went through periods of unrest after gaining independence in 1960, it has become a relatively stable country. The name *Burkina Faso* means “Land of the Honorable People” or “Homeland of the Proud People.”

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

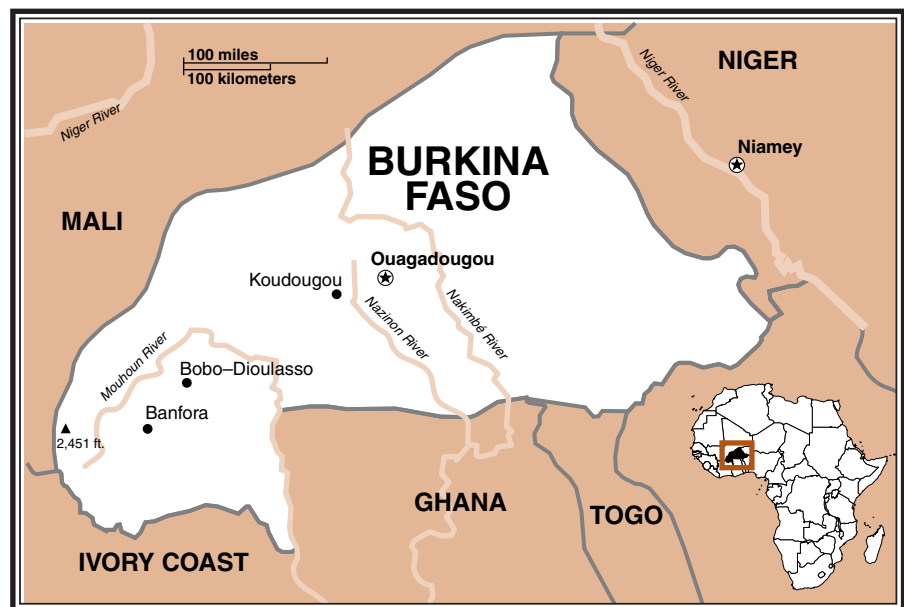
* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Burkina Faso is a fairly flat country dominated by forests and savannas*. Towering mounds of red termites dot the grasslands. The northern region is quite dry, as is the country's southern edge, averaging only about 5 inches of rain per year. The central and southern regions of the country are generally much wetter, receiving 2 to 3 feet of rain annually. In all areas, the rains tend to fall in brief, heavy storms that can wash away crops and topsoil.

Most of the population makes a living from agriculture, raising livestock, cotton, and food crops. Livestock and related products such as meat and leather contribute about one-third of Burkina Faso's export revenues. Another important export is labor. About a million Burkinabé live in neighboring IVORY COAST and send money home to relatives. Many more residents leave the country to find work on a temporary or seasonal basis.

The small amount of industry in Burkina Faso is mainly concentrated in towns such as its capital, Ouagadougou. For years most industries were owned by the state, but since 1991 many have been transferred to private ownership. The nation's gold mining industry has grown in importance since the 1980s. However, a lack of funding and infrastructure*, such as roads and railroads, has hindered the mining of other minerals.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works



Film Festival

For more than 30 years Burkina Faso has been a major center of African film. Every other year the nation's capital hosts the largest film festival in Africa, Festival Panafricain du Cinéma et de la Télévision de Ouagadougou (FESPACO). The event features a competition of African films from the whole continent.

Soon after film enthusiasts started the festival in 1969, FESPACO became a government-sponsored institution. Today FESPACO acts as a market for African film and television professionals, publishes works about African cinema, and maintains a African film library. It also strives to promote African cinema in other international festivals.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Unlike much of western Africa, Burkina Faso was untouched by European influence until the late 1890s. Then the French gained control of the area and ruled it from 1904 to 1960.

Precolonial and Colonial History. Before the arrival of Europeans, many small household- and village-based societies occupied the western portion of what is now Burkina Faso. Mossi people from the south invaded the central and eastern areas of the region during the 1400s. According to tradition, the Mossi were descended from Naaba Wedraogo, the son of a princess of a town in northern GHANA. For many years, the Mossi moved throughout the region conquering new areas. In the late 1400s and early 1500s they established several kingdoms, the most important of which were Ouagadougou and Yatenga. The kingdoms featured complex political and religious systems.

The French arrived in the region in the 1870s. Over the next decades, they formed alliances with African societies that lived around the Mossi. In 1896 and 1897 the French defeated the Mossi and other independent peoples nearby. Naming the region Upper Volta, the French declared it a military zone in 1899. A few years later, they incorporated the area into the colony of Upper Volta-Senegal-Niger. The French colonial government introduced taxes and a military draft and forced the Africans to work for little or no pay. This treatment led to several rebellions—especially among the western peoples. The French crushed these uprisings and destroyed all traces of African rule.

Upper Volta became a separate colony in 1919. However, the French soon found that its only economic value was as a source of laborers for other colonies. Within 13 years, they divided Upper Volta's territory between the colonies of Ivory Coast, NIGER, and Soudan (now MALI). After World War II, France granted new political rights to its African colonies. In response to pressure from Mossi leaders, it made Upper Volta a separate colony again in 1947.

In 1958, when France allowed each of its African colonies to vote for independence, Upper Volta chose to remain a largely self-governing French colony. Maurice Yaméogo, the head of Upper Volta's main political party, the Rassemblement Démocratique Africain (RDA), was elected president of the Council of Ministers. In 1960 he banned the main opposition party. Later that year Upper Volta requested and received independence from France. With no organized opposition, Yaméogo was chosen president, and the RDA became the dominant political force in the country.

The Early Republics. Yaméogo was reelected in 1965 with nearly 100 percent of the vote. He then tried to place tight restrictions on government spending. Trade unions protested the restrictions by calling a general strike in January of the following year. Amid the unrest, the army overthrew Yaméogo's government, and Colonel Sangoulé Lamizana took over the presidency. Lamizana ended Yaméogo's ban on political activity. However, when violence erupted between competing political

Burkina Faso



Traditional and modern cultures mingle in this urban market in Burkina Faso, where handcrafted items are sold alongside factory-produced household equipment.

groups, Lamizana re-imposed the ban. He announced military rule but promised to restore civilian government after four years.

Free elections were held in 1970, and a new constitution created Upper Volta's Second Republic. The constitution provided for Lamizana to continue as president for four years, and it called for the military to participate in all political institutions. A new crisis arose in 1974, when Prime Minister Gérard Ouédraogo lost support in parliament but refused to resign. Lamizana again proclaimed military rule and banned political parties. When he tried to establish a single political party for the nation the following year, the trade unions responded angrily with another general strike. Lamizana backed down, and in January 1976 he appointed a new government consisting mostly of civilians.

In 1977 another constitution established the Third Republic. It limited the number of political parties to the top three vote-winners in the national elections that followed. Lamizana was reelected president. However, no single political party won control of a majority of the seats in the assembly. The result was a weak government that once again ran into difficulty with the trade unions. A strike in late 1980 was followed by a military coup* led by Colonel Saye Zerbo. However, friction grew between leaders of the military government, and Zerbo himself was overthrown in late 1982.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Burkina Faso



Burkina Faso

POPULATION:

11,946,065 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

105,869 sq. mi. (274,200 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Mossi, Dyula, many local languages

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA Franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 50%, traditional 40%, Christian 10%

CITIES:

Ouagadougou (capital), 1,100,000 (2000 est.); Bobo-Dioulasso, Koudougou, Ouahigouya, Kaya, Banfora

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 40 in. (1,000 mm) in the south to less than 10 in. (250 mm) in the north

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: peanuts, livestock, cotton, sesame, sorghum, millet, maize, rice, shea nuts

Manufacturing: cotton tint, food and beverage processing, soap, agricultural processing, cigarettes, textiles

Mining: gold, manganese, limestone, marble, antimony, copper, nickel, bauxite, lead, phosphate, zinc, silver

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Bicameral national legislature—Assemblée des Députés Populaires and Chambre des Représentants.

HEADS OF STATE:

1980–1982 Colonel Saye Zerbo

1982–1983 Surgeon-Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo

1983–1987 Captain Thomas Sankara

1987– President Captain Blaise Compaoré

ARMED FORCES:

5,800 (1998 est.) Compulsory 18-month service.

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 19%

Communist Rule and The Fourth Republic. The leaders of the coup created a ruling body called the Council for the People's Salvation (CSP). The CSP named Surgeon-Major Jean-Baptiste Ouédraogo president and Captain Thomas Sankara prime minister. Sankara quickly abandoned the nation's allies in the West and established ties with developing countries such as Libya, Cuba, and North Korea. Critics within the government arrested Sankara in May 1983, but Captain Blaise Compaoré freed him in August and overthrew the CSP.

Backed by communist* groups, Sankara adopted a foreign policy that rejected Western governments. To symbolize the country's break with its colonial, pro-Western past, Sankara changed Upper Volta's name to Burkina Faso in 1984. He established "revolutionary councils" at all levels of society to try to establish a totalitarian* system with himself at its head. However, as Sankara began using force to maintain power, opposition to his rule increased. He eventually lost the support of his own people, and in October 1987 Captain Compaoré ordered his troops to kill Sankara.

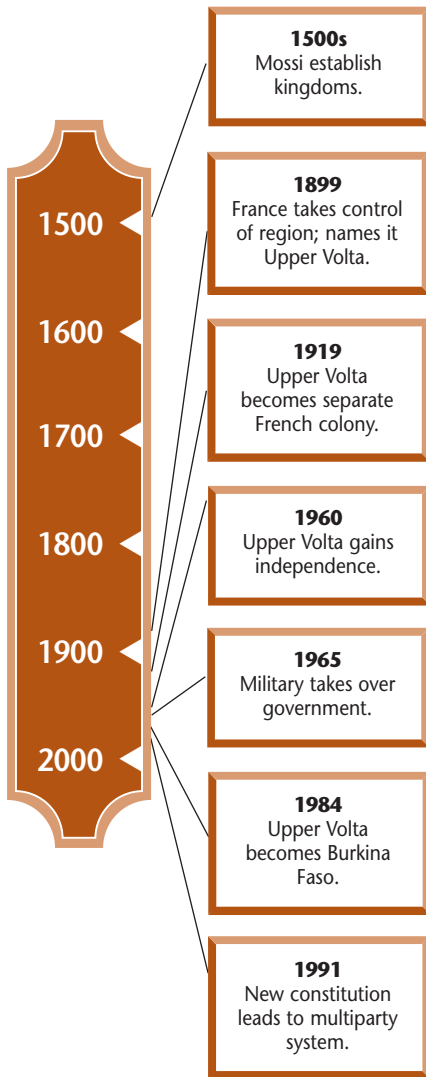
Compaoré reversed many of Sankara's policies and rejected the previous government's communist ties. In 1991 a new constitution was approved reestablishing multiparty politics and direct election of the president and National Assembly (Assemblée des Députés Populaires). Later that year Compaoré was elected as the first president of the Fourth Republic. However, the opposing parties refused to participate in the election because they felt the government was not protecting their rights. In response, Compaoré ended persecution of his political opponents and called new elections in April 1992. He was again elected and

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **totalitarian** referring to a government that exercises complete control over individuals, often by force



Burkina Faso



continues to serve as president of the country. However, his government has not always responded well to criticism, and in 1995 an opposition leader was jailed for insulting Compaoré.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Burkina Faso is home to many different ethnic groups. The largest of these, the Mossi, make up nearly half of the population. Other major groups include the FULANI, the Gulmanceba, and the Gurunsi. The social organization of most of these peoples is based upon the lineage—a kind of extended family. Each lineage traces its origins back to a common, often mythical, ancestor and forms a group that usually lives in a particular village neighborhood. Most lineages trace descent through male family members.

Older members of society are treated with great respect. In many places the oldest male member of the family makes all of the important decisions for his family. The oldest male in a lineage is in charge of dealing with local gods. In many cases, he also has responsibility for enforcing laws and serves as a peacemaker. Although women hold few leadership posts or religious offices, they do exercise informal influence.

A male political leader, a *naaba*, holds a sacred position among the Mossi, the Gulmanceba, and the Gurunsi. In addition to his special spiritual powers, the *naaba* owns the land and its inhabitants. At one time he could require subjects to serve him as warriors and laborers and to pay tribute*. The *naaba* protected his power by granting distant villages and lands to certain princes and to descendants of the founder of the empire.

The peoples of Burkina Faso share a rich religious heritage. In traditional agricultural religions, the spirit of the earth and the spirits of ancestors are particularly important. These spirits ensure that people follow custom and tradition, and they provide the community with rain, fertility, and health. The spirit of heaven is also prominent in local religions. Heaven, which made the world, is responsible for rain, fate, and children's souls.

Bush spirits rule the land outside the villages. Besides controlling the abundance of game and the fortune of hunters, they also punish wrongdoers. These spirits appear in the form of animals—most often reptiles—who serve the lineage elders. Lineage members must not kill or eat these animals because they may help elders find water or lead them to victory over enemies. The spirits inhabit prominent places in nature such as hills, rocks, lakes, and caves.

Fortune-tellers play an important part in traditional beliefs. They give people advice on what actions to take in everyday life, and they teach them to use nature's powers for their own purposes. However, WITCHCRAFT or other types of magic that cause damage or trouble are generally avoided. Although many people still follow traditional religious beliefs and practices, some of Burkina Faso's people have adopted Christianity, and about half the nation's population is Muslim. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Unions and Trade Associations.**)

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

Burton, Sir Richard Francis

1821–1890
British explorer

* **diplomatic** involved with conducting relations with other nations

Sir Richard Francis Burton made four journeys in Africa in the mid-1800s. Although he failed in his mission to locate the source of a branch of the Nile River, he contributed greatly to European knowledge of African geography.

Born in Torquay, England, and raised in France and Italy, Burton served in the British army in India. He mastered many languages, including Arabic, and became famous for disguising himself as a Muslim and entering the holy city of Mecca in Arabia. In 1854–1855, an expedition with fellow explorer John Hanning Speke into eastern ETHIOPIA and what is now SOMALIA ended in disaster when Somalis wounded both men. In 1857 the two explorers again moved westward from the East African coast, seeking the source of the White Nile. Their friendship ended in disagreement over whether the river originated in Lake Victoria. Burton, who claimed that it did not, was later proven wrong.

Burton's later career included three years of diplomatic* service in West Africa, during which he studied local customs. His books about West African life, along with the popular narratives of his earlier explorations, formed the popular image of Africa. Burton died in Trieste, in northeastern Italy. (See also **Travel and Exploration**.)

Burundi

A small, densely populated country located in the heart of east central Africa, Burundi is one of the poorest nations in the world. It also has experienced some of the most serious and violent conflicts on the African continent. These conflicts are rooted in a struggle for control between the country's two main ethnic groups, the Tutsi and the Hutu.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Located just south of the equator, Burundi is a land of rolling hills and lakes. There are spectacular escarpments* in the northeast and savannas* in the southwest. Bujumbura, the capital, sits along the shore of Lake Tanganyika, which forms the country's southwestern border.

Much of Burundi's original forest has been cut down, with woodlands remaining mostly on upper mountain slopes. Burundi's wildlife includes antelopes, baboons, and warthogs, but poaching—illegal hunting—has taken a toll on many species, including the elephant.

Although Burundi lies near the equator, its high elevation keeps the climate mild year-round. Rainfall is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year except for a dry season from May to August. Although soil erosion is a serious problem in hilly areas, the rich soil in the larger river valleys provides good conditions for farming.

Burundi's economy is based primarily on agriculture. The main commercial crops are coffee, cotton, and tea. Coffee, the leading cash crop*, accounts for the majority of the nation's export earnings. Most agriculture, however, consists of subsistence farming* of food crops such as beans, corn, cassava*, and sorghum*. Raising livestock such as cattle, sheep, and goats, is also important.

* **escarpment** long, clifflike ridge of land or rock

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

* **cassava** starchy root plant; source of tapioca

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food

Burundi



Burundi has very little industry or mining, and its poor transportation system limits industrial growth. Concentrated in Bujumbura, the country's few industries consist of consumer goods manufacturing and food processing. In addition, political instability has damaged the economy in recent years, causing Burundi to rely heavily on foreign aid to meet its basic needs.

PEOPLES AND CULTURE

The people of Burundi belong to three main ethnic groups—the Hutu, the Tutsi, and the Twa. The majority of the people are Hutu, and the

Burundi

Tutsi Culture

The Tutsi, one of the two main ethnic groups in Burundi, possess a rich artistic heritage. Traditional Tutsi ceremonies included graceful dances accompanied by pulsing rhythmic music. Dancers wore elaborate costumes ornamented with animal skins and hair. The Tutsi were also noted for their singing, often used to tell a story. One Tutsi song identifies warriors on their way into battle; another describes the actions of hunting dogs tracking game.

* **hierarchy** organization of a group into higher and lower levels

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **League of Nations** organization formed to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **insurrection** violent uprising against authority; rebellion

Tutsi make up about 20 percent of the population. The Twa, a Pygmy people and the original inhabitants of the region, represent less than 1 percent of the population today.

The people of Burundi speak three major languages: Rundi, French, and Swahili. Rundi, the most widely spoken, is a Bantu language. People involved in trade often use Swahili. A large percentage of the population is Christian, mostly Roman Catholic. However, many people—including some Christians—also practice traditional African religions.

Although Burundi has one of the highest population densities—the number of people who inhabit each square mile—in Africa, few people live in urban areas or even in villages. Most live in small family compounds scattered around the countryside. In these isolated settlements, family members build clusters of beehive-shaped huts.

Burundi's society is made up of a hierarchy* of rankings based on ethnic or clan* identity. Traditionally, the Twa have occupied the lowest level. The highest social rank has consisted of princely Tutsi families, who are descended from the rulers of ancient kingdoms that occupied the region.

Traditionally, the Hutu have been farmers, while the mostly tall Tutsi have raised cattle. A long history of mistrust and fear between the Hutu and Tutsi has led to periodic struggles between the two groups. In the 1970s the ethnic conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi erupted in civil war, resulting in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The Hutu began migrating into Burundi around A.D. 1000; the Tutsi arrived about 400 years later. Although outnumbered by the Hutu, the Tutsi eventually gained dominance in the area and founded a number of kingdoms. By the 1800s the entire region was ruled by a Tutsi king.

In 1890 Burundi and its neighbor RWANDA became part of the colony of German East Africa. In 1919, after Germany's defeat in World War I, the League of Nations* placed the region under Belgian rule. Belgian control of the territory—later known as Ruanda-Urundi—continued until 1962, when the region became the two independent nations of Rwanda and Burundi.

Ethnic Conflict. After independence on July 1, 1962, Burundi became a constitutional monarchy ruled by the Tutsi *mwami*, or king. Hostilities between Hutu and Tutsi began to increase over the next several years, and fighting broke out a number of times. In October 1965, a group of Hutu army officers tried to overthrow the monarchy. The attempt failed, and the Tutsi retaliated by executing many Hutu—political leaders, intellectuals, and ordinary citizens.

A military coup* in November 1966 ended the monarchy and led to the establishment of a republic. Michel Micombero, a Tutsi, became president of the new government. At this point, Burundi politics tended to revolve around internal struggles within the Tutsi minority. In the background, however, there loomed the threat of insurrection* by the Hutu majority.

Burundi



Since independence ethnic conflict between Burundi's Hutu and Tutsi has periodically erupted in episodes of violence. In this photo a group of Hutu return to their homes after a Tutsi attack.

In 1972 a wave of violence erupted in Burundi as the Hutu rebelled against Tutsi oppression. The uprising triggered massive attacks by the Tutsi against the Hutu. At least 100,000 Hutu were killed between April and September. The killings and repression intensified the hatred between the two groups. The attack marked an important point in the Hutu-Tutsi conflict, as it truly brought the Hutu people together because they were suffering at the hands of the Tutsis.

Conflicts within the Tutsi led to the overthrow of Michel Micombero by a military coup in 1976 and the rise to power of Jean-Baptiste Bagaza, another Tutsi. Bagaza was overthrown in 1987 by another military coup led by Pierre Buyoya. Under Buyoya, Burundi was ruled by a military

Burundi

* **junta** group that runs a government, usually after seizing power by force

junta*. Ethnic hostilities between Hutu and Tutsi erupted again in 1988, causing many Hutu to flee the country.

Attempts at Reform. Attempts by President Buyoya to reform the government and lessen ethnic divisions led to the adoption of a new constitution in 1992. The document prohibited political organizations based on ethnic identity and required political parties to include representatives from both the Hutu and Tutsi. Under this new constitution, Burundi held its first free democratic election in 1993. Hutu leader Melchior Ndadaye won the presidency in a landslide, ending nearly 30 years of Tutsi control.

Ndadaye freed many political prisoners and set up an administration that was two-thirds Hutu and one-third Tutsi. However, this attempt at two-party government came to a dramatic end in October 1993, when Ndadaye was assassinated in a Tutsi-led military coup. News of Ndadaye's assassination outraged the Hutu, who responded by killing tens of thousands of innocent Tutsi civilians.

The wave of violence in 1993 was followed by attacks against the Hutu led by the largely Tutsi army, causing nearly 800,000 Hutu to flee to neighboring countries. An uneasy calm returned to Burundi when moderate leader Cyprien Ntaryamira became president in January 1994. However, his term of office came to an abrupt end the following April when the plane in which he and Rwandan president Juvénal Habyarimana were traveling crashed in suspicious circumstances.

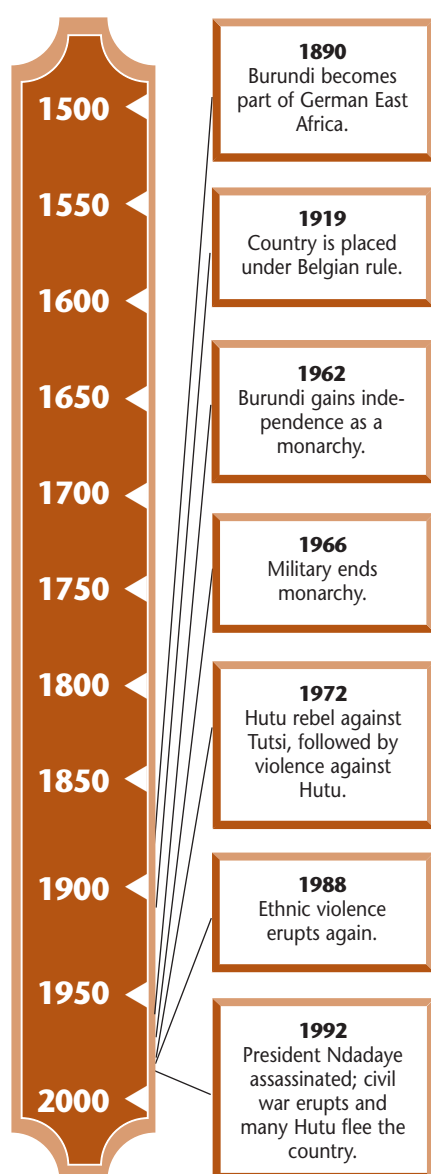
The announcement of Ntaryamira's death had little effect in Burundi. In Rwanda, however, the death of President Habyarimana had a dramatic impact. Like Burundi, Rwanda also has a population of Hutu and Tutsi divided by ethnic rivalries. Suspicion for the crash and the death of President Habyarimana fell on Tutsi groups, setting off a wave of violence against Rwandan Tutsi.

Outlook for the Future. Events in Rwanda increased ethnic tension in Burundi. Tens of thousands of Hutu and Tutsi refugees fled Rwanda and sought safety in Burundi. The presence of these refugees carried the seeds of further conflict.

After the death of President Ntaryamira, the Hutu leader Sylvestre Ntibantuganya became acting president of Burundi. Days later Tutsi soldiers began attacking Hutu, and a group of Tutsi tried to stage a military coup. The coup failed and outbreaks of violence continued.

Growing international concern about Burundi prompted the United Nations to send advisers to study the situation in 1995. By 1996 UN reports of civil war in various parts of Burundi led the United States and many European nations to suspend their foreign aid to the country.

The threat of violence remains high in Burundi, and the country faces continuing political and economic problems. A military coup in 1996 returned president Pierre Buyoya to power, and he has struggled to resolve the many problems facing his country. Meanwhile, fighting has continued in many parts of Burundi. It remains to be seen whether the nation will be able to resolve its problems in the near future. (*See also*





Burundi



Republic of Burundi

POPULATION:

6,054,714 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

10,747 sq. mi. (27,834 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Rundi, French (both official); Swahili

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Burundi franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 67%, traditional 32%, Muslim 1%

CITIES:

Bujumbura (capital), 300,000 (1994 est.); Gitega, Ngozi, Kayanza, Mwaro

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Ranges from 1,194 mm (47 in.) on the plateaus to 762 mm (30 in.) in lower areas

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$740

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, cotton, tea, cassava, sorghum, maize, live-stock, hides

Manufacturing: light consumer goods, food processing

Mining: nickel, uranium, vanadium, phosphates

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Belgium, 1962. Transitional regime.

President elected by universal suffrage. Legislature: Assemblée

Nationale (elected by universal suffrage)

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1976:

1976–1987 President Jean-Baptiste Bagaza

1987–1993 President Pierre Buyoya

1993 President Melchior Ndadaye

1993–1994 Interim government; President Cyprien Ntaryamira

1994–1996 President Sylvestre Ntibantuganya

1996– President Major Pierre Buyoya

ARMED FORCES:

40,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 35%

Agriculture, Bantu Peoples, Class Structure and Caste, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Genocide and Violence, Refugees, Tribalism, United Nations in Africa.)

BUSHMEN

See *Khoisan*.

Busia, Kofi A.

**1913–1978
Prime minister of Ghana**

Born into African royalty, Kofi A. Busia was elected prime minister of GHANA in 1969 and led his country for a brief period. In addition to politics, Busia focused on philosophy and economics. He earned a doctoral degree from Oxford University in England and wrote many books, including *Africa in Search of Democracy* (1967).

In 1942 Busia was appointed one of the first African district commissioners under British colonial rule. He continued his political activities as a member of the colonial legislative assembly in 1951. As Ghana neared independence in 1956, Busia became the leader of the National Liberation Movement (NLM). The party was formed to oppose the government of Prime Minister Kwame NKRUMAH. After Nkrumah moved against political opponents, Busia fled Africa fearing arrest. He spent the next years in the Netherlands and Britain.




Cabinda

In 1966 military leaders overthrew Nkrumah, and Busia returned to Ghana as an adviser to the new government. Three years later he became prime minister. His government was marred by conflicts with workers and the military, a sagging economy, and the exile of non-Ghanaian Africans from the country. Overthrown by the military in 1972, Prime Minister Busia again left Ghana and spent the rest of his life in Britain.



Cabinda

 Cabinda, a province of the country of ANGOLA, is separated from Angola by a narrow strip of land belonging to the CONGO (KINSHASA). Though small in size (about 2,800 sq. miles), Cabinda has figured prominently in the economics and politics of the region for many years—particularly because of its valuable oil fields.

Europeans visited the region in the 1500s to trade for copper, ivory, and slaves. When European powers carved Africa up into colonial empires, the Portuguese gained control of Cabinda. To keep a close watch on separatist groups within the local population, Portugal made the port city of Cabinda a district capital of northern Angola. Portuguese companies exported the riches of Cabinda, including timber, cocoa, palm products, and other resources.

In the 1960s oil was discovered offshore, making Cabinda one of Angola's key resources. When Angola won independence in 1975, a civil war began between the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). Both groups hoped to control Angola eventually, and neither wanted to lose the valuable Cabinda. While the rest of Angola's economy suffered during the war, government forces protected Cabinda's oil operations and oil production continued.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

At the same time, the Front for the Liberation of the Enclave of Cabinda (FLEC), formed in the 1960s, waged a guerrilla* war for Cabindan independence. It sometimes fought from bases in neighboring countries. Both the MPLA and the UNITA attacked FLEC at one time or another. In the mid-1990s, the MPLA and the UNITA officially ended their conflict, but FLEC continues its battle. Although many Cabindans support independence, FLEC is too divided by internal rivalries to accomplish this goal. However, it seems likely that a majority of the population would vote for some type of independence if a free vote was held. It is also hard to determine the size of the Cabinda population due to the area's instability in the late twentieth century and the coming and going of refugees. It has been variously estimated at 100,000 and 200,000.

Meanwhile, Cabinda's rich resources continue to make the region of vital importance to Angola. The Cabinda Gulf Oil Company, run by the American firm Chevron, produces over half of Angola's oil. Natural gas deposits have also been found in the area. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)



Cabral, Amílcar Lopes

Cabral, Amílcar Lopes

1924–1973

Political and revolutionary activist

* **oppression** unjust or cruel exercise of authority

Born in the Portuguese colony of GUINEA (later, GUINEA-BISSAU), Amílcar Lopes Cabral went to Portugal to study. After graduating from the University of Lisbon, he returned home a revolutionary leader, and he brought about Guinea-Bissau’s independence.

Cabral believed that people who opposed oppression* should take action and commit themselves to social reform. He won respect at home and abroad for his political convictions. In 1956 he formed and led an underground movement against Portuguese rule. In time the movement achieved military and political victories, but Cabral himself was assassinated by Portuguese agents in 1973. The following year Guinea-Bissau gained independence, and Cabral’s brother became the first president of the new country.

Cairo

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

Cairo is the capital of EGYPT and the largest city in Africa. The city’s strategic location on the NILE RIVER has made it a defensive stronghold for Egypt for nearly 1,500 years. In medieval* times, Cairo was one of the busiest centers of trade and education in the Mediterranean and Middle East. Today the city remains a vibrant hub of Islamic culture and politics.

History. Before the founding of Cairo, other great cities had risen and faded in the area. Just to the southwest was Memphis, the first capital of ancient Egypt, built by the pharaohs around 3000 B.C. To the northeast stood Heliopolis, an important religious center around 2500 B.C. It later housed Greek schools where Plato and other famous philosophers studied.

Modern Cairo began as a military camp. It was established in A.D. 640 by Amr ibn al-As, an Arab leader who brought ISLAM to Egypt. Over the next 300 years Arab rulers added to and improved the city, known as al-Fustat, which developed into a major river port.

In 969 the Fatimids, an Islamic sect*, invaded the region and built the city of al-Qahirah (meaning “The Victorious”) northeast of al-Fustat. *Cairo* is the Westernized version of al-Qahirah. The Fatimids expanded the city and built the mosque* and university called al-Azhar, one of the greatest centers of learning in the medieval world. The university still exists today. Al-Fustat remained the region’s commercial center for nearly 200 years. In 1168, however, it was burned by the Muslims to keep it from falling into the hands of Christian invaders. The Muslim leader, Saladin, went on to establish a large empire with Cairo as its capital.

During the Middle Ages, Cairo occupied an important place in the spice trade between Europe and Asia. By the 1340s its population had reached half a million. But beginning with an outbreak of the Black Death in 1348, Cairo was struck by a series of plagues and other misfortunes. A sea voyage that occurred just before 1500 changed the country’s fortunes. The Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama reached Asia by sailing around the southern tip of Africa, opening a new route to the countries that grew spices and eliminating Cairo’s key role in that trade. Then, after the Turks conquered Egypt in 1517, Cairo lost its place as the

* **sect** religious group

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

Cairo



Islam has been a large part of the culture of Cairo since the 600s. Minarets rising from the city's many mosques dot the skyline.

capital of a major empire. The city fell into decline. By 1800 its population had shrunk by nearly half.

In the mid-1800s the construction of the nearby SUEZ CANAL and a railroad between Cairo and ALEXANDRIA brought immigration and new growth to Cairo. After 1850 the city developed along European lines inspired by improvements made in Paris. Large boulevards were added to handle motorized vehicle traffic, new bridges were built, and utilities such as gas, electricity, water, and telephone were provided. New public transportation services enabled suburbs to multiply outside Cairo, and by the end of World War II the city was home to more than 2 million people. Since then, Cairo has grown enormously, with new suburbs spilling out into the surrounding desert and Nile delta.

Modern Cairo. Today Cairo's population approaches 12 million people, which means that about one in every five Egyptians lives in the city. Cairo's rapid growth, however, has caused serious problems of pollution and unemployment in the area. Although predominantly Muslim, the



Cairo



city contains the largest concentration of Coptic Christians in the world.

Cairo is the center of Egyptian government, industry, finance, and culture. It contains most of Egypt's banks and businesses and a good part of its recreational and entertainment facilities. Cairo's lively film and music industry attracts the most popular entertainers of the Arab world. The city also offers more than 20 museums, various performing arts organizations, and several noted universities that draw students from many Arab nations. (*See also Cities and Urbanization, Copts.*)

Calendars and Time



In African cities, many people use the Western system of clocks and calendars for official and business purposes. They divide the day into 24 hours and the year into 12 months based on the earth's movement around the sun. As in the West, a general system of dating is used to create a common framework for past events from many locations.

Traditionally, however, African societies have not used formal, structured methods to measure, count, or keep track of hours and months. Instead, they marked time by the rhythms of daily life and by the events of a community's or people's shared history. This approach still shapes the idea of time in rural and traditional African cultures.

Months, Seasons, and Years. People in North Africa, where Islam is the dominant religion, use the Muslim calendar, which has 12 months in a year. Unlike the Western calendar, however, Muslim months are based on the 29.5-day cycle of the moon's phases. Each month begins on or near the date of the new moon and contains either 29 or 30 days.

The Muslim year has a total of either 354 or 355 days—10 or 11 days shorter than the Western year, which is based on the solar cycle. This difference means that the Muslim months do not occur in the same season every year. Over a period of 32.5 Western years, each Muslim month moves through the cycle of seasons.

In sub-Saharan* Africa, some groups do not identify and name months. People in these cultures are aware of the phases of the moon and the yearly cycle of seasons. But instead of using a calendar to schedule their work, they carry out their activities—hunting, farming, rituals*—in accordance with regular events they observe in nature. Such events include the positions of the stars and the sun, the flowering of plants, the rise and fall of rivers, and seasonal changes in temperature, rainfall, and wind.

Other indigenous* groups—especially those centered on agriculture—do have systems of named months, with calendars based on the lunar cycle. Like the months of the Muslim calendar, the months of a traditional African lunar calendar do not occur in the same season each year. For this reason, the timing of agricultural activities cannot be based on a lunar calendar. Even in calendar-keeping societies, farming is thought of not in terms of months or dates but as a succession of

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



Camara Laye

tasks, such as tilling, planting, weeding, scaring away birds, and harvesting. Each task is performed when certain conditions occur.

A few groups correct the imbalance between the lunar calendar and the solar cycle by adding an extra month to the calendar or by repeating a month when the calendar falls significantly out of line with the solar year. In most cases, however, traditional African calendars are used mainly for timing social and ritual activities. Even when a calendar of months exists, the year does not necessarily begin in one specific month. A group may observe separate agricultural, ritual, and legal years that begin in different months. The year usually starts in whatever season is most important to a particular society, such as the rainy season.

The people of sub-Saharan Africa did not develop systems of dates applied across large areas and based on historical events. However, some states in West Africa and East Africa have maintained royal genealogies, or lists of their kings. Scholars and historians once believed that such lists provided an accurate chronology* for these societies. But in recent times, they have realized that many factors make the king lists inaccurate. The list-makers sometimes added early names to make their societies appear more ancient. They also dropped the names of rulers who were later overthrown or adjusted the lists to support the current ruler's claim to the throne. Though valuable as cultural documents, king lists are not reliable as chronologies.


* **chronology** order of events

Hours and Days. Some traditional African societies divide each month into halves—before and after the full moon—and count days within each half. More important than the counting of days, however, is organizing them into weeks. Most groups define a week according to the cycle of local market days. The week is as long as the interval between the beginning of one market cycle and the next, usually around five days.

The African day begins at dawn or sunrise, not in the middle of the night as in the Western system. Indigenous groups do not divide the day into fixed hours, minutes, or seconds. Instead, they organize the day by the changing position of the sun and the social activities associated with it. A typical daily sequence might be: first light, sunrise, breakfast, going to the fields, noon, cattle returning, sunset, supper, and sleep, followed again by first light. The night is not usually subdivided into any periods, and a 24-hour period may be called a “day,” a “night,” or a “sleep.”

Camara Laye

1928–1980
Guinean author

 amara Laye is one of Africa's best-known and most respected francophone (French-speaking) authors. His first novel, *L'enfant noir* (*The Black Infant*) is also one of his most popular. Written in 1953, the book tells of Camara's childhood in the town of Kouroussa, GUINEA. On the one hand, it is a personal account of the author's Mande culture, including a description of secret initiation rites. On the other, it is the story of an African exiled to France who remembers the culture he was forced to abandon.



Camara Laye

- * **epic** long poem about legendary or historic heroes, written in a grand style
- * **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

Dramouss, another work based on Camara's personal experiences, is about his disappointment with the political regime of President Sékou TOURÉ. The Guinean ruler's cruelty forced Camara into exile in SENEGAL. Camara's last book, *Le maître de la parole*, is a retelling of the Mande epic* about the medieval* Emperor Sunjata. Camara wrote down and translated the tale from the performance of a traditional storyteller.

Another novel that appeared under Camara's name was *Le regard du roi* (*The Radiance of the King*). Some people doubted that Camara was actually the author of the book, and shortly before his death he confirmed that the novel was written by someone else. Camara Laye died in Senegal in 1980. (See also **Literature**.)

Cameroon

The West African country of Cameroon extends from the shores of the Atlantic Ocean to Lake Chad in the interior. As one of the most culturally diverse nations in Africa, Cameroon includes hundreds of different ethnic groups. Long a crossroads for merchants from the Middle East and Europe, it was controlled by various European powers before gaining independence in the 1960s.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Cameroon's Atlantic coast is swampy and densely forested. Mount Cameroon, an active volcano and the highest peak in western Africa, towers above the rest of the coastline. Farther inland, the country divides into two main regions: the western highlands and the southern plateau.

Landforms. The mountains of Cameroon's western highlands serve as a natural boundary with NIGERIA. The mountains contain various mineral deposits and are covered with rich volcanic soil. The western highlands merge into the southern plateau, also known as the Bamileke Grassfields. This area of gently rolling hills stretches eastward into the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC. Cameroon's capital city, Yaoundé, is located in the center of the southern region.

Northern Cameroon features the Benue Depression, a low-lying district around the Kébi River valley that is enclosed on three sides by mountains. Beyond the mountains the Chad Plain gradually slopes down to the shores of Lake Chad. Cameroon's many rivers, noted for their rapids and waterfalls, are used for transportation and the production of hydroelectric power.

Climate and Vegetation. Cameroon's climate and vegetation vary with the terrain. Southern Cameroon has a warm and rainy equatorial* climate. Mangrove* swamps along the southern coast eventually give way to thick rain forests, particularly in the southeast.

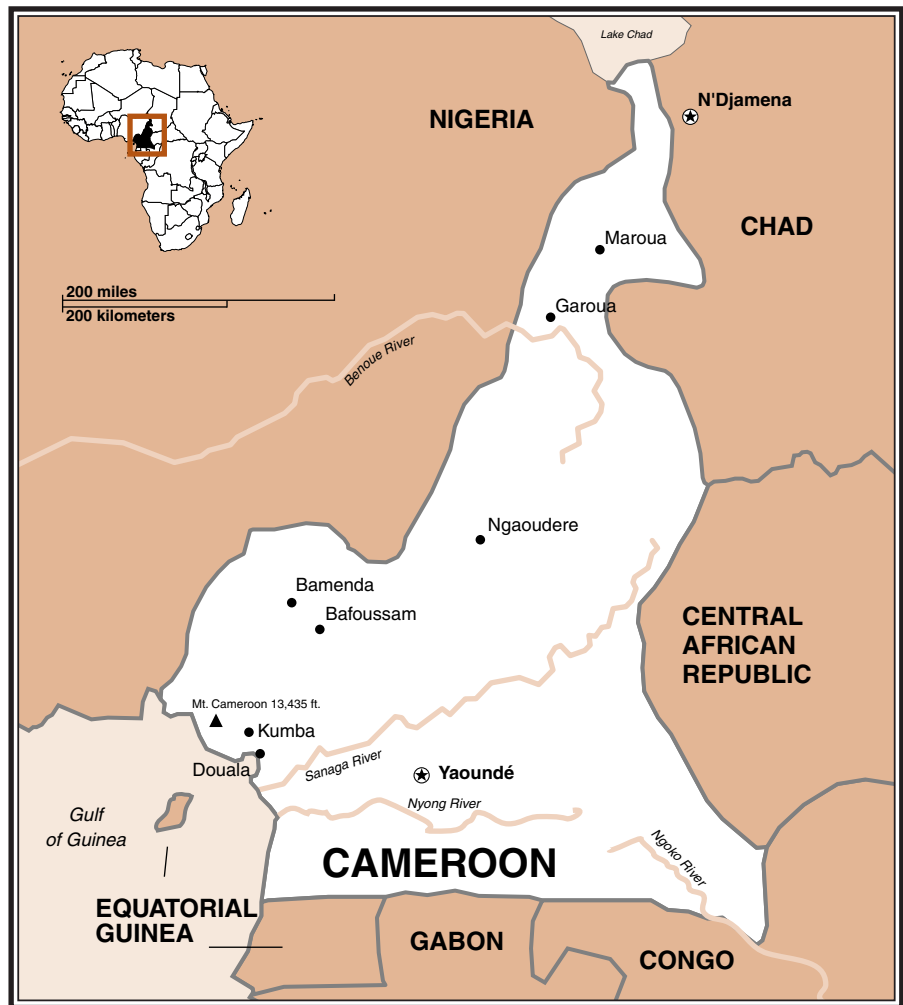
The coast has a wet season that runs from May through October, followed by a dry season from November to April. The coast receives more rainfall than the interior, where the rainy season lasts only two or three months. Farther north the climate is hotter and drier, and the vegetation changes from rain forest to wooded grasslands. The far north experiences desertlike conditions. Grass and shrubs grow during the wet season, but the region has little vegetation during the rest of the year.

- * **equatorial** referring to the region around the equator
- * **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

Two Traditions

The colonial powers of France and Britain left widely different legacies in Cameroon—in such areas as language, educational institutions, and political systems. When Cameroon achieved independence, these different traditions became the source of conflict. In an effort to smooth out some of the differences between English- and French-speakers, Cameroon declared itself bilingual, making both languages official. In 1984, to symbolize the unity of the country, its name was changed from the Federal Republic of Cameroon—suggesting a federation of separate parts—to the Republic of Cameroon.

Cameroon



Economy. Cameroon's strong agricultural base produces enough food for its growing population as well as a surplus for export. The main agricultural exports are cocoa, coffee, and timber. Cameroonian industries produce both oil and tin, and the country also contains deposits of uranium and iron ore. In addition, the peoples of the southern plateau produce items such as wood carvings for sale to outside markets.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

The transportation infrastructure* is relatively well developed, with good roads connecting most towns and cities to the surrounding areas. These roads allow many people of the densely populated southern plateau to leave the area to work and send money home to family members. However, despite its natural resources, Cameroon's economy was in crisis in the 1990s due to political instability and poor investment of the profits from agriculture and industry.

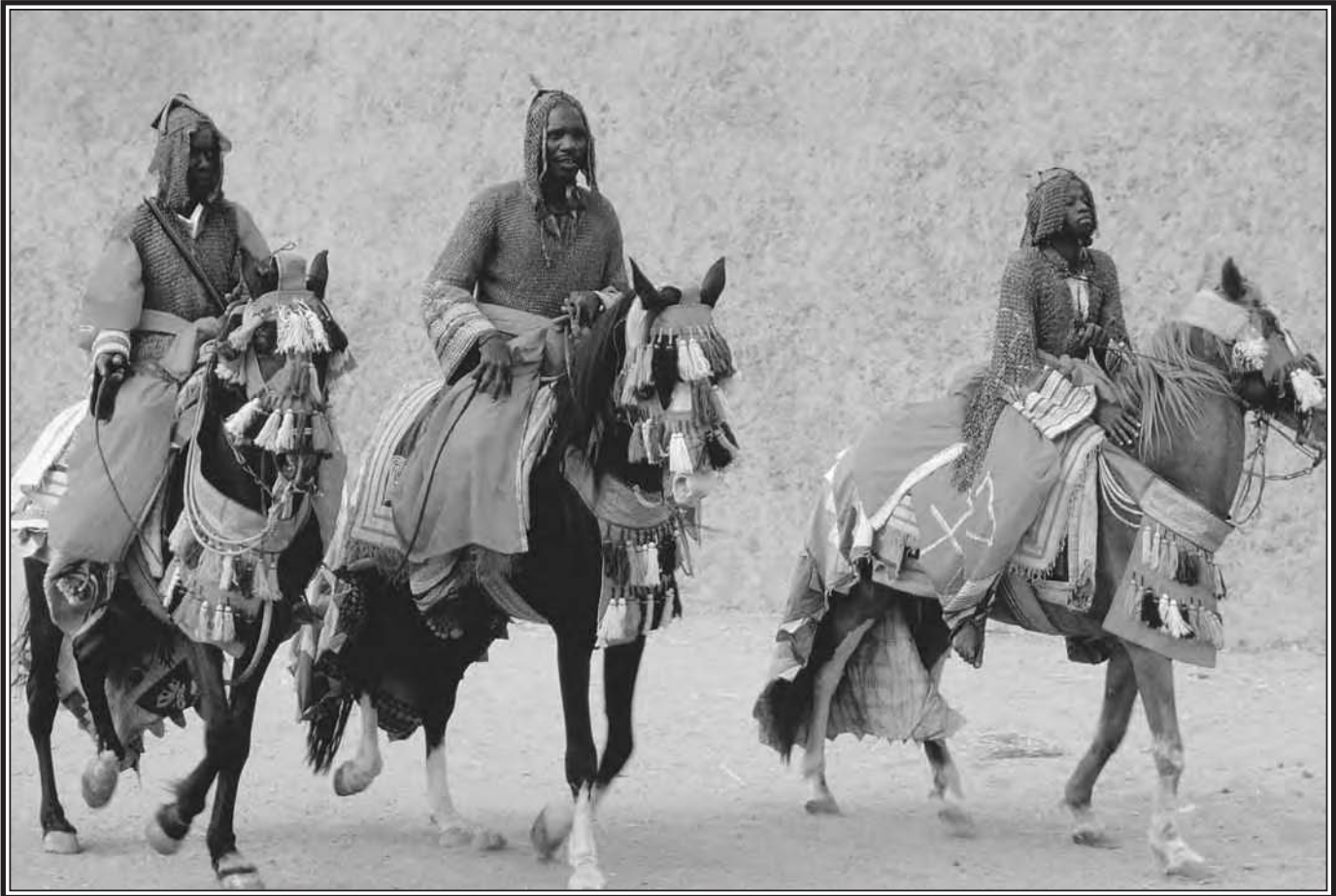
HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Several powerful kingdoms existed in Cameroon before the arrival of Europeans in the late 1400s. During the colonial era, which began in the late 1800s, the region was controlled by three different European powers: Germany, Britain, and France. Modern Cameroon reflects the legacy of these various political influences.



See map in *Archaeology and Prehistory* (vol. 1).

Cameroon



Northern Cameroon has long been a stronghold of Fulani culture. These Fulani riders and their festively decorated horses parade through the northern town of Rey Bouba.

Precolonial and Colonial History. People of Cameroon's early societies crossed the Sahara desert to trade with Egypt and other civilizations along the Mediterranean Sea. Gradually, separate kingdoms arose around Lake Chad and in the eastern grasslands. Trade, migration, and expansion brought the kingdoms of the region into contact with one another. In the 1400s the Bamileke and Bamum kingdoms joined together to form a confederation. Another early kingdom, Mandara, was conquered by the BORNU empire in the 1500s.

Many of the first Europeans in Cameroon were merchants. They began exporting ivory and slaves from the area. By the late 1800s several European powers had set their sights on Cameroon. In 1884 the Germans established the Kamerun Protectorate in the region, but during World War I the British and French took over the colony. After the war, Britain and France divided the colony and ruled it under the supervision of the League of Nations, an organization formed to promote international security.

Britain controlled the northwestern portion of the country, known as British Cameroons and incorporated it into the colony of Nigeria. However, Britain did little to develop the area. In fact, British rule is seen as a time of neglect, and many Cameroonians were angry with both the British colonial leaders and the Nigerians. France invested much more

Cameroon



Republic of Cameroon

POPULATION:

15,421,937 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

183,568 sq. mi. (475,400 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French, English (official); Bantu dialects (24)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 51%, Christian 33%, Muslim 16%

CITIES:

Yaoundé (capital) 1,119,000 (1999 est.); Douala, Nkongsamba, Maroua, Bafoussam, Foumban, Garoua, Limbe, Bamenda, Kumba

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies by region from 23 in. (600 mm) in the extreme north to 390 in. (10,000 mm) along the coast

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$2,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, cocoa, cotton, rubber, bananas, livestock, timber

Manufacturing: textiles, lumber, food and beverage processing

Mining: petroleum, bauxite, iron ore

GOVERNMENT:

German colony until 1916, then divided by League of Nations between France and England. In 1960 French portion declared independence. In 1961 English portion voted to split, with part joining Nigeria, remainder joining Cameroon. Multiparty democracy; president and Assemblée Nationale elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1982 President Ahmadou Ahidjo

1982– President Paul Biya

ARMED FORCES:

13,100 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–11; literacy rate 63%

time and money in French Cameroun, and a large number of French citizens settled there. By the time of independence, this part of the country was wealthier, more educated, and had a much stronger infrastructure than the British section.

In 1958 pressure for greater political freedom caused France to declare Cameroun a republic with limited self-government. Two years later the republic became independent. In 1961 the northern section of British Cameroons voted to join Nigeria; the southern section became part of the Federal Republic of Cameroon.

From Colony to Dictatorship. The first president of the new republic, Ahmadou Ahidjo, promised to maintain close relations with France and to build an economy based on capitalism*. One of Ahidjo's main goals was to unite the English- and French-speaking parts of the country. He hoped to get Cameroonians to identify with the nation rather than their own ethnic groups. To achieve his goals, Ahidjo combined the nation's political parties into a single party, the Cameroon National Union (CNU). The president ruled as an absolute dictator, with power concentrated in his hands and exercised through the CNU.

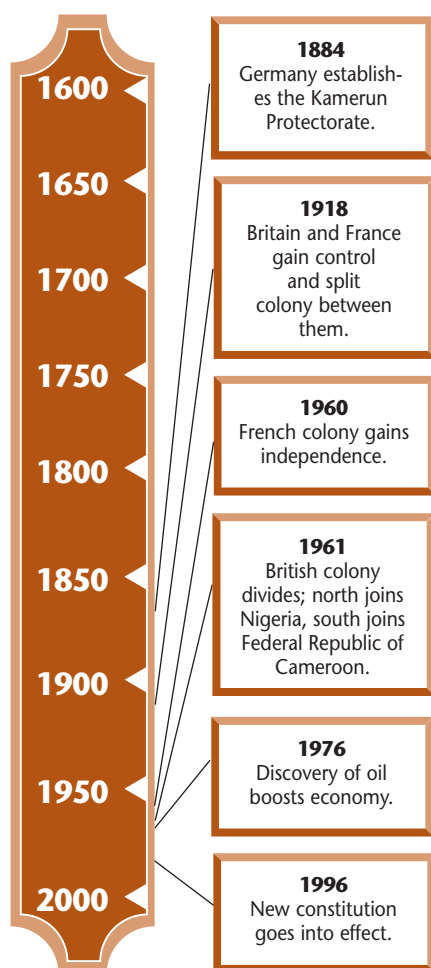
Problems soon arose in stabilizing the country's economy. During the early years of independence, Cameroon was heavily dependent on foreign trade and produced few goods for its own population. With the discovery of oil in 1976, petroleum became Cameroon's main source of income. However, much of this money was spent on poorly planned projects.

In 1982 Ahidjo resigned and his prime minister, Paul Biya, took over the presidency. However, Ahidjo tried to maintain control of the gov-

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity



Cameroon



* **authoritarian** relating to strong leadership with unquestioned powers

ernment from behind the scenes, and this led to a confrontation between the two men. Forces loyal to Ahidjo staged an uprising in 1984, but Biya defeated them and exiled Ahidjo. Up to this time Biya had been trying to make the country more democratic, but the uprising caused him to adopt more authoritarian* measures.

The people of Cameroon, who wanted more political freedom, opposed Biya's policies. They pressed the government for democratic reforms and staged demonstrations in 1990. New political parties emerged and multiparty elections were held in 1992. Still, Biya and his party managed to maintain their majority. Biya then arrested the leader of the main opposition party, leading to clashes between the government and its opponents. A new constitution, drafted the following year, gave the president and the central government very strong powers. Although parliamentary elections were held again in 1997, Biya's party was able to control the process under the new constitution. Many observers considered the elections unfair.

Government. The president of Cameroon is elected directly by the people for a seven-year term and may serve a maximum of two terms. The president appoints the prime minister, the official head of the government. The legislature consists of the Assemblée Nationale, whose members are directly elected, and the Senate. The people elect regional and local councils, but the president may suspend or dissolve these councils. In general, the president holds enormous political power and progress toward democracy has been slow.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Cameroon is home to over 250 ethnic groups and more than 300 different languages. The ethnic groups correspond to the various geographical regions of the country. The southern coast and inland forests are inhabited by a wide variety of agricultural and fishing societies as well as nomadic Pygmy groups. Most people in the inland forests live in small villages headed by a chief or a council of elders. Christianity and formal education are more widespread near the coast, where contact with Europeans occurred earlier than in the inland villages.

The Bamileke, a group of tightly organized chiefdoms, live in Cameroon's grassy plateaus. These communities vary in size from a few people to tens of thousands. Although most of the Bamileke practice Christianity, the ruling families of one group, the Bamum, converted to Islam in the 1800s.

Northern Cameroon has been heavily influenced by a Muslim people known as the FULANI. Several dozen Fulani states were established in northern Cameroon during the 1800s and absorbed much of the non-Muslim population. As a result, Islam is widespread in the region. With the migration of many rural people to the cities of northern Cameroon, the influence of Fulani culture has continued to spread. (*See also Climate, Colonialism in Africa, Islam in Africa, Pygmies, Slave Trade.*)

Canary Islands

The Canaries are a group of seven volcanic islands that lie off the northwestern coast of Africa. The westernmost islands are actually the peaks of mountains that rise from the ocean floor to heights several thousand feet above sea level. The eastern Canaries are much flatter. Gran Canaria and Tenerife are the two most important islands.

The Canaries have a fairly consistent subtropical climate year-round with temperatures ranging between 64°F and 79°F and little rainfall. Vegetation varies by altitude. Plants suited to hot, dry conditions grow at lower elevations, while fruits and vegetables are raised at elevations above about 1,400 feet. Bananas are the most important export crop, along with potatoes, tomatoes, oranges, and grapes. Since the 1960s, however, tourism has been the mainstay of the economy, and some 80 percent of the island's inhabitants are connected in some way with the tourism. Aside from a large petroleum refinery in Santa Cruz that processes crude oil, there is little industry on the islands.

The Canaries were originally inhabited by a North African Berber people known as the Guanche. The king of MAURITANIA visited the islands in about 40 B.C., a journey that was noted by the ancient Romans. The name of the islands probably comes from the Latin word *canis*, meaning dog, because of the many large dogs found there. European sailors first arrived in the 1200s, and Spanish settlers took over the islands during the 1400s. For hundreds of years the Canaries served as an important port on Spain's transatlantic route to the Americas. Christopher Columbus stopped in the islands for supplies on each of his westward voyages across the Atlantic.

The Canaries were a Spanish province until 1927, when rivalry between the main islands of Gran Canaria and Tenerife caused Spain to split them into two separate provinces. In 1982 the entire island group became a self-governing community, electing its own representatives to the Spanish parliament and senate. Most of the islands' approximately 1.5 million inhabitants are descended from the original inhabitants and the Spanish conquerors. The two major cities are Las Palmas and Santa Cruz. Canarians speak Spanish and the local culture is largely Catholic. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**.)

Cape Coloured People

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Cape Coloured People are the mixed race population of various towns in Cape Province, SOUTH AFRICA. They are descendants of Dutch, British, and Kxoe people (various non-Bantu-speaking groups of southern Africa), as well as of slaves brought from MADAGASCAR and East Asia. Until the late 1950s, when apartheid* policies were adopted in South Africa, most of the Cape Coloured lived in cities such as CAPE TOWN or Port Elizabeth. During the 1970s, they were sent to undeveloped areas outside the towns and their homes were given to white families.

Most of their 2 million members belong to Dutch Protestant churches, but a small minority is Muslim. The Cape Coloured People speak a form of Dutch called Afrikaans, but they maintain a cultural identity separate from both whites and blacks. Politically, they have tended to support the white-led National Party rather than the black-led African National Congress. (See also **Apartheid**.)



Cape Town

Cape Town

See color plate 15, vol. 4.

Located about 30 miles north of the Cape of Good Hope, Cape Town is the oldest city in SOUTH AFRICA. With its many gardens, parks, beaches, historical buildings, and mountains, it is considered one of the most beautiful cities in the world.

Cape Town (known as Kaapstad in Afrikaans) was founded in 1652 as a supply station for Dutch ships sailing between Europe and Asia. The Dutch brought in slaves from Asia and MADAGASCAR. French and Dutch colonists settled there later. The British took the city in 1806 and abolished slavery, causing many Dutch settlers to leave Cape Town. These settlers trekked north in the 1830s and eventually founded the AFRIKANER REPUBLICS.

In the late 1800s the discovery of diamonds and gold in the northern Transvaal led to the founding of JOHANNESBURG. The new town soon replaced Cape Town as the leading city in southern Africa. However, Cape Town remained the region's principal port until the 1980s. It still boasts one of the world's largest dry docks and offers offshore services for large tankers.

Cape Town has long been known for its diverse ethnic population. Before South Africa introduced its policy of APARTHEID in 1948, the city was largely integrated. Afterwards, thousands of CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE—mixed-race descendants of European,

KHOISAN, and Asian ancestors—were expelled from Cape Town and forced to settle in undeveloped areas outside the city. As a result, many thousands of black people from elsewhere in South Africa were brought in to replace them as laborers. One of the worst of these areas, Crossroads, grew to a shantytown* of 70,000 people. Since the end of apartheid in the 1990s, Cape Town has once again become an extremely diverse city. (See also Colonialism in Africa.)

* **shantytown** poor, run-down section of a city, often inhabited by immigrants

Cape Verde

* **arable** suitable for producing crops

The nation of Cape Verde (also known as Cabo Verde) consists of 15 islands about 400 miles off the coast of SENEGAL. Although the name means "Green Cape," the islands actually have a hot, dry climate and very little arable* land. The capital city of Praia is on the island of Santiago

Before its discovery by the Portuguese in 1460, Cape Verde was uninhabited. Portugal used the islands as a supply base for slave ships making the voyage from Africa to America. The islands eventually became home to descendants of African slaves and European settlers from Portugal and the Mediterranean. The Portuguese often chose Cape Verdeans to administer their other African colonies; many served overseas.

During the late 1950s, Cape Verde joined GUINEA-BISSAU in seeking independence from Portugal. By 1975 both colonies had won their independence, and for the next five years one political party, the PAIGC, governed both countries. Aristides Pereira became the first president of Cape Verde. The nation planned to unite with Guinea-Bissau, but a 1980 coup* in Guinea-Bissau altered the course of events. The

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government



Cape Verde

Cape Verde PAIGC changed its name to the PAICV and declared itself the country's only legal party.

Cape Verde's government has been remarkably stable since independence, with only a single unsuccessful coup attempt in 1977. In 1990 opposition political groups formed the Movement for Democracy (MPD) and pressured the government to end single-party rule. Multiparty elections were held in 1991, and António Mascarenhas Monteiro of the MPD was elected president.

* **homogenous** similar in nature

The population of Cape Verde, about 400,000, is ethnically homogenous*. Almost all the people are Catholic and speak Crioulu, a Portuguese-African language. In culture, Cape Verdeans are closer to the Portuguese than to West Africans.

With little rainfall, the islands produce only enough food to supply about 10 percent of the needs of the people. Drought and famine are common occurrences. Nevertheless, the majority of the people work in agriculture. Much of the land is held by landlords who hire laborers to work their fields. Most farms are very small, typically less than three acres in size.

For many years, a large number of men have emigrated to find work overseas. Many have worked in the cod fishing industry in the north

Cape Verde contains ruins of many Portuguese forts, like this one on the island of São Vicente. The Portuguese held Cape Verde for more than 500 years and had a lasting influence on the islands' culture.





Cape Verde

Atlantic ocean and have settled in southeastern New England. In fact, twice as many Cape Verdeans live outside the country as live on the islands. These emigrants send millions of dollars home each year, contributing a large percentage of the country's foreign earnings. Because so many men have left the islands, the adult population is about 55 percent female, and women head almost 40 percent of all households. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Slave Trade.*)

CARNIVALS

See *Festivals and Carnivals.*

Carthage

Carthage, a rich and powerful city of the ancient world, once dominated the coast of North Africa. It stood on a peninsula in what is now TUNISIA, with a good harbor on each side. At one time the city controlled an empire that included North Africa, southern Spain, the Mediterranean islands of Sardinia and Corsica, and part of Sicily.

The Phoenicians, a trading and seafaring people of the eastern Mediterranean, founded Carthage sometime before 814 B.C. The city grew wealthy as a result of mining silver in North Africa and Spain. After gaining independence from Phoenicia around 600 B.C., Carthage had several conflicts with the Greeks and then began enlarging its territory about 410 B.C. At the time Rome was a rising power, and the Carthaginians and Romans eventually clashed over control of Sicily. Between 264 and 146 B.C. the two powers engaged in a series of struggles that the Romans called the Punic (meaning Phoenician) Wars. Rome finally defeated Carthage and burned it to the ground.

Roman rulers later sent its citizens to colonize Carthage, and for several centuries after 29 B.C. the rebuilt city was a major center of Roman administration in North Africa. About A.D. 700, Carthage was captured by the Arabs as part of their conquest of North Africa. Many Roman structures were destroyed, and the city was absorbed into the Arab town of Tunis. (*See also North Africa: History and Cultures.*)

CATHOLICISM

See *Christianity in Africa.*

Central African Federation

The Central African Federation was created in 1953 by the union of the British colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Politicians had two reasons for forming this federation. One was to gain access to the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia and the cheap labor of Nyasaland. The other was to calm the fears of white settlers who were concerned about losing their grip on power over the region.

Central African Republic

Although some of its founders hoped the federation would lead to a multiracial society, black leaders opposed this idea from the beginning. In fact, the creation of the federation spurred the growth of black nationalist parties that called for independence. The white governments of the area reacted by trying to crush the black political parties and imprisoning their leaders. However, by 1960 black citizens had won the right to vote, and in time political power was transferred to the black majority. The Central African Federation dissolved after Nyasaland (now MALAWI) and Northern Rhodesia (now ZIMBABWE) became independent in 1963. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**.)

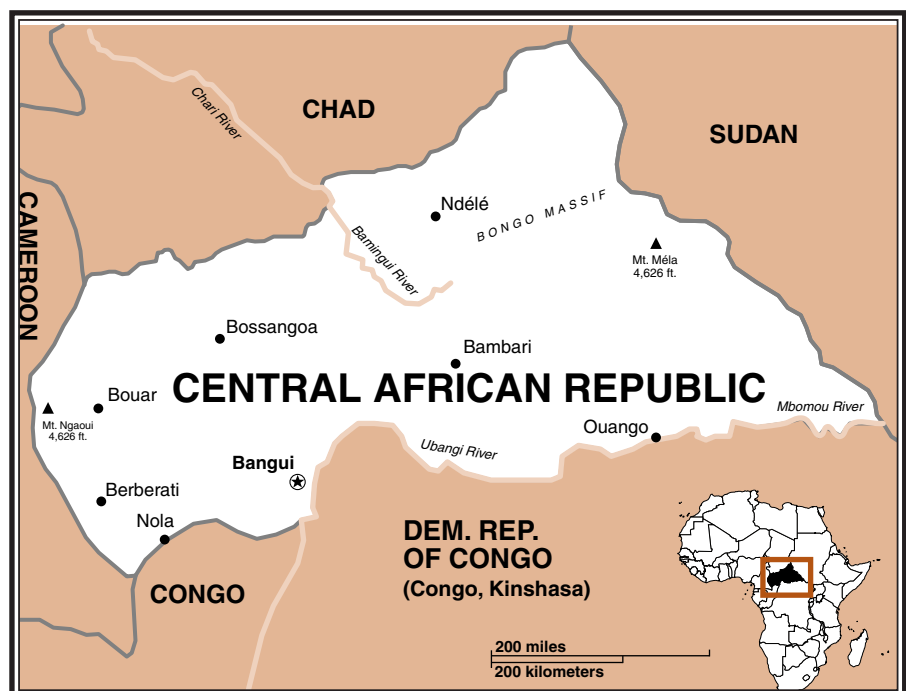
Central African Republic

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Located in a broad, rolling plateau just north of the equator, the Central African Republic varies from tropical rain forest in the southwest to savanna* woodlands in the northeast. Although most of the country receives abundant rainfall, the extreme—and very dry—northeast receives only about 0.2 inches annually. The Oubangui River, the most important waterway, runs past Bangui, the capital, and along the nation's southern border.

ECONOMY

The Central African Republic contains immense natural resources that could easily make it one of the richest countries in Africa. These resources include fertile land, plentiful wildlife and timber, and exten-





Central African Republic

Small But Powerful

The Central African Republic includes a number of small ethnic groups—such as the Yakoma, the Banziri, and the Sango—that together make up less than 5 percent of the population. Despite their small size, these groups have enormous political influence. The ancestors of these peoples escaped the precolonial slave raids by moving to islands in the Oubangui River. Active in trade, they were the first groups in the area to come in contact with Europeans. As a result, the river peoples developed ties with the colonial government. After independence, members of these groups continued to exercise political influence, holding many government posts.

sive mineral deposits. However, partly as a result of poor economic planning, the nation has not fully benefited from its rich resources.

In spite of its fertile land and reliable rainfall, the Central African Republic imports more food than it exports. About 80 percent of the inhabitants work in agriculture—mostly subsistence farming*. The main export crops are cotton, coffee, and tobacco. Central Africans also raise cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs, except in areas where the tsetse fly—an insect that spreads disease—is found.

Mining in the Central African Republic focuses on gold and diamonds, with diamonds producing over half of export revenues. The country also has rich reserves of copper, uranium, iron, and other minerals. The timber industry processes hardwood from the tropical rain forests. Light industries include food processing, breweries, textiles, and footwear. Petroleum and durable goods such as appliances and automobiles are imported. Because the cost of imports exceeds revenues from exports, the country is deeply in debt.

The poor infrastructure* of the Central African Republic limits economic growth. The nation has no railroad and a critical shortage of good roads. Less than 5 percent of the existing roads are paved. In addition, the health care system is poor. Although tropical diseases are widespread and epidemics occur frequently, the country has only one major hospital, in the city of Bangui.

- * **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on
- * **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works
- * **indigenous** native to a certain place
- * **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

HISTORY

Before the arrival of Europeans in the late 1800s, the region that is now the Central African Republic was frequently invaded by Islamic slave raiders from the north. Weakened by the slave raids, the local population was unable to oppose the European merchants and settlers who followed. In 1894 France established a colony in the region, known as Oubangui-Chari.

The French forced the indigenous* people to work for them, to perform military service, and to pay taxes. Farmers had to grow cash crops* such as cotton instead of the food crops they needed to survive. These policies, as well as cruel treatment of local inhabitants by the French, led to uprisings in 1909 through 1911 and again from 1928 to 1945. In 1960 France granted independence to the colony, which took the name Central African Republic.

David Dacko, the country's first president, introduced a single-party system of government. In 1966 Dacko was overthrown by Captain Jean-Bédel BOKASSA, who committed brutal acts against civilians and squandered much of the nation's wealth. In 1977 Bokassa proclaimed himself emperor of the newly renamed Central African Empire. Two years later, his government—already very unpopular—reached a crisis. Riots broke out in Bangui. French troops took over the airport and the capital, and restored David Dacko to power.

In 1981 Dacko was forced to cede* power to General André Dieudonné Kolingba, who suspended the constitution and assumed absolute authority over the government. After a failed military coup* the following year, Kolingba's rule became even harsher. He introduced



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

- * **cede** to yield or surrender
- * **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Central African Republic



Central African Republic

POPULATION:

3,512,751 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

240,324 sq. mi. (622,436 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Sango, Arabic

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 50%, Traditional 24%, Muslim 15%, Other 11%

CITIES:

Bangui (capital), 524,000 (1999 est.); Baoli, Berbérati, Bambari, Bossagoa, Carnot

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 75 in. (1900 mm) in the south to 0.2 in. (50 mm) in the extreme northeast

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,000

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cotton, coffee, timber, tobacco, cassava, yams, millet, bananas, corn

Manufacturing: diamond cutting, textiles, sawmills, brewing, footwear, bicycle/motorcycle assembly

Mining: diamonds, uranium, gold

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Multiparty republic; president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Council of Ministers appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1959–1966 President David Dacko

1966–1979 Colonel Jean-Bédél Bokassa; president, 1967–1976; emperor, 1976–1979

1979–1981 President David Dacko

1981–1985 General André Kolingba; president, 1985–1993

1993– President Ange-Félix Patassé

ARMED FORCES:

2,700 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–14; literacy rate 60%

a new constitution in 1986 and was elected for another six-year term as president.

A poor economy forced Kolingba to cut spending. In addition, the government fell behind in paying civil servants' salaries. These difficulties and Kolingba's harsh policies led to riots and strikes. As the result of elections held in 1993, Ange-Félix Patassé became president. Since that time, violence has broken out over living conditions and a lack of representation for opposition parties.

The Central African president continues to hold considerable power. As head of state and commander of the armed forces, the president appoints the prime minister and the members of the Council of Ministers. There is an elected legislature, but the president has the power to dissolve it and call for new elections.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

The Central African Republic is home to about 3.5 million people, and more than 40 percent of them are under 15 years of age. Almost half of the inhabitants live in cities and towns such as Bangui.

Of the eight major ethnic groups in the Central African Republic, the largest are the Banda and the Baya (or Gbaya). Other groups include the Mbum, the Zande, and the Aka (or Bibinga), a Pygmy people. Although the role of traditional leaders diminished during the era of French control, ethnic identity is still strong, particularly in the countryside. French is the official language and most of the population speaks Sango, a Bantu language.



Central African Republic

About one-half of Central Africans consider themselves Christians, about 15 percent are Muslim, and 24 percent practice traditional religions. In reality, though, these are little more than labels because most people maintain traditional beliefs and customs. (*See also Agriculture, Bantu Peoples, Colonialism in Africa, Forests and Forestry, Health Care, Minerals and Mining, Pygmies, Slave Trade.*)

Cetshwayo

1832–1884
Zulu king

* **annex** to add a territory to an existing area

Cetshwayo kaMpande was king of Zululand, in southeastern Africa, from 1872 to 1879 and again from 1883 to 1884. Although he fought with great skill and courage to keep his kingdom free and undivided, his efforts were overwhelmed by British colonial forces.

During his early reign, Cetshwayo developed ties with Britain's coastal colony of Natal. He hoped the British would support him in his border dispute with Transvaal, Zululand's inland neighbor. However, in 1877 the British annexed* the Transvaal as part of a plan to establish a confederation in southern Africa. Cetshwayo resisted, and war broke out. Although the Zulu had the upper hand in the early stages of fighting, the British won a decisive victory in the summer of 1879 and sent Cetshwayo into exile.

Three years later Cetshwayo visited Britain and convinced the British government that he was not the warlike tyrant described by British colonial officials. He was restored to his throne in 1883, but local colonial officials supported Cetshwayo's enemies. Civil war followed. Cetshwayo was defeated and died a refugee in a part of Zululand controlled by Natal.

Chad

Chad is a large, landlocked country that lies south of LIBYA. Its history since independence has been marked by civil war, which has left Chad one of the poorest countries in the world.

The Land and the People. Chad lies on a vast plain that is divided into two very different regions. The northern part of the country is very dry, and desert dominates the far north. Most of the inhabitants are nomadic Muslim groups such as the FULANI, who raise livestock and camels.

The south consists of relatively well-watered savanna* and contains the country's main rivers, the Shari and Logone. About half of the people of Chad live in the south, which also has most of the country's urban centers. The main livelihood of southerners is agriculture. Many of the people have converted to Christianity, but large numbers still hold on to traditional religious beliefs and practices.

History and Government. Rock paintings and other archaeological* evidence indicate that northern Chad was settled as early as 5000 to

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins



Republic of Chad

POPULATION:

8,424,504 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

495,792 sq. mi. (1,284,000 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French, Arabic (official); Sara, Sango, others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 50%, Traditional 25%, Christian 25%

CITIES:

N'Djamena (capital), 826,000 (1999 est.); Sarh (Fort Archambeault), Moundou, Bongor, Doba, Lai, Abéché, Koumra

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Variable, from 35–47 in. (900–1200 mm) in subtropical zone to 18–20 in. (200–500 mm) in Saharan zone

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$600

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cotton, cattle, sorghum, millet, peanuts, rice, cassava, sugarcane, livestock, fish

Manufacturing: livestock products and meatpacking, beer brewing, textiles, tobacco processing

Mining: petroleum, uranium, natron, kaolin

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 57-member Conseil Supérieur de la Transition, elected by a national conference, and Council of State, appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1975 President François-Ngarta Tombalbaye

1975–1979 General Félix Malloum, chairman of Supreme Military Council

1979– President Idriss Déby

1979–1982 President Goukouni Oueddei

1982–1990 President Hissène Habré

1990– President Lieutenant General Idriss Déby

ARMED FORCES:

25,400 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 8–14; literacy rate 48%

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

2000 B.C. The southern portion of the country was not occupied until about 500 B.C. BERBER peoples moved into northern Chad around the A.D. 700s, pushed southward by the spread of the SAHARA DESERT into borderland regions. A series of kingdoms arose in central Chad between 1000 and 1600. They gained power and wealth by conquering peoples of the region and demanding tribute* and by controlling the southern part of the trade route across the Sahara. Much of their wealth came from capturing people from the south and selling them as slaves to Arab peoples in the north.

The French colonized Chad in 1900, combining the northern and southern sections for the first time. Under the French the south received far more assistance than the north. Some southerners held positions as teachers and businessmen, and some entered government service. After World War II, these groups played a major role in organizing the movement for independence. Chad gained its independence from France in 1960.

The first president of the new country, François-Ngarta TOMBALBAYE, outlawed all political parties except his own and installed an overwhelming number of southerners in the government. This led to protests and uprisings in the central and northern parts of Chad, where rebel groups gained control in the early 1970s. A military coup* in 1975 was followed by a long civil war, and during this time warlords ran much of the country.

The authority of the central government was finally reestablished in 1982, but its harsh rule led to renewed fighting. In 1990 troops under



Chad

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

the command of General Idriss Déby defeated President Hissène Habré, and Déby became president. In 1996 the country held the first multi-party presidential elections. Déby won. However, Chad continues to be plagued by political violence and low-level guerrilla* warfare.

Under Chad's constitution the people elect the president, while a national conference chooses the prime minister. The conference also chooses the national assembly, which oversees the government and has the power to dismiss the prime minister.

Economy. Chad has few natural resources, and many of these have been devastated by continual war. Most Chadians are engaged in agriculture, with cotton accounting for about 60 percent of the country's export earnings. However, Chad's agriculture does not always produce enough to feed the people, and the country must import food in years when rainfall is not adequate. Chad has very little industrial development and relies heavily on foreign assistance to meet its budget. The discovery of oil in the late 1990s may help relieve some of the country's economic problems.

Childhood and Adolescence

* **socialization** process by which children acquire the values of the community and learn to live by its rules and customs



For most Africans in the past, growing up meant helping the family produce food, learning the community's values, and gradually taking on new tasks, privileges, and responsibilities. After about 1900, however, patterns of childhood education and socialization* began to change. Three major influences for change have been Western-style schooling, religious schooling in the Islamic nations of northern Africa, and the growth of cities. Yet many aspects of childhood and adolescence continue to reflect distinctly African values and cultures.

Children's Lives. African children are considered to be infants while they breast-feed, typically from 12 to 24 months. Infants sleep next to their mothers at night, and during the day they are the main focus of the mothers' parenting activities. Mothers quiet their crying babies quickly, and infants generally do not develop the habit of crying loudly to express emotions. Mothers also use warnings and commands to keep their infants safe and to teach them to respect authority—an important lesson in most rural African communities. On the whole, male and female infants are treated fairly equally.

When mothers work away from the home, infants are usually tended by other women, such as sisters, grandmothers, or other mothers within the extended family. An older sister—perhaps as young as five years old—may become responsible for carrying an infant on her back. In some eastern African cultures, a woman who carries her younger brother on her back has an especially close relationship with him when they are adults.

Once out of infancy, young children are expected to join their brothers and sisters and other related children in the home and eventually the neighborhood. They begin learning about their roles and responsi-

Childhood and Adolescence

African infants are often carried on the back of their mother or another relative, who can tend to the baby's needs while performing other tasks.



bilities. Children as young as two to four years old may help adults with household tasks or with livestock herding. Older children care for younger siblings during the day, supervising their learning and work. During these early years, African children rapidly acquire knowledge about the societies and environments in which they live. They learn the customs that govern speech, behavior, and facial expressions; the relationships among men, women, and children; and the routines of work, play, and ceremonies.

During middle childhood, African children are given increased responsibility. Between the ages of five and seven, many urban children enter school. In rural areas, children of this age may take on new tasks such as carrying pots of water or watching infants. By the age of ten, African children are contributing significantly to their families' eco-



Childhood and Adolescence

Creative Solutions

With few factory-made goods available, children in Africa often invent their own toys. They make dolls, spinning tops, boats, flying objects, and musical instruments. Children create toys from whatever is at hand, including tree branches, leaves, seeds, and scraps of manmade materials.

In the 1990s, the government of Zambia held a children's toy-making contest. Children produced an impressive array of inventions, such as bicycling dolls, cars, trucks, and other vehicles. Most of the toys were made of tin, cloth, and wire. While admiring the children's creativity, some Zambians noticed new holes in their wire fences.

conomic life. They help with farming or herding, or they perform household chores so that the adults can work. Children who are good workers are considered to show maturity and the prized values of respect and obedience.

Between 5 and 12 years of age, some African children are sent by their families to live with relatives who are wealthier or more privileged. In exchange for working for the relatives, the children are expected to receive opportunities not available at home. A rural family, for example, may send a child to live with and work for an uncle in the city, hoping that the uncle will pay for better schooling than the child could receive in the village. Sometimes such arrangements benefit both sides, but in other cases they take advantage of young children. As more Africans move to the cities and divisions between poor and well-off family members grow wider, the temptation to exploit* children's labor increases.

From 12 to 20. Africans experience adolescence differently than teenagers in Western countries. In the West, adolescence leads to sexual and social maturity and to making choices about work—all at about the same time. The teen years are seen as a movement toward eventual individuality and independence. In Africa, however, young people are not automatically considered independent adults when they reach their twenties. Even young people who have arrived at sexual maturity and engaged in courtship may not be considered adults. To Africans, adolescence is not a preparation for independent life but a furthering of the childhood process of fitting into family and community structures.

For African teens, personal choice may be limited. Young men and women are expected to mirror the roles and activities of their fathers and mothers or to accept the choices made for them by their families. A girl's father, for example, may arrange her marriage to a rich man she has never met. In addition, African men and women usually marry at very different ages. It is common in most African cultures for girls to marry in their middle teen years, while men marry later and at a much larger range of ages. That range often spans from age eighteen to age thirty. African adolescents do not expect to live on their own in the near future. Even when they are married and raising their own children, young men and women often belong to the household of the husband's parents or other senior relatives. However, as more and more young Africans live in cities, attend school, and choose their own occupations, their experience of adolescence is coming closer to that of Western teenagers.

Many African adolescents are affected by rituals and customs inherited from the past. In some groups, INITIATION RITES have traditionally marked the passage out of childhood for both boys and girls. Such ceremonies in eastern Africa have involved surgery on the young person's sexual organs. In western Africa, boys and girls have been brought into separate SECRET SOCIETIES, living in the forest apart from their families during their initiations. Although some of these practices are changing in modern Africa, they are still woven into the fabric of community life in many places. (See also **Age and Aging, Education, Family, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Kinship, Marriage Systems.**)

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Chilembwe, John

1871–1915
Malawian nationalist

John Chilembwe was a church leader and opponent of European colonialism in Africa. His activities helped inspire the independence movement in his country of MALAWI and nationalism in Africa.

Schooled at a Scottish Presbyterian mission in Malawi, Chilembwe broke with the Presbyterians in 1892 after meeting Baptist missionary Joseph Booth. Booth took Chilembwe to the United States to attend a black Baptist seminary in Lynchburg, Virginia. Upon his return to Malawi in 1900, Chilembwe established the Providence Industrial Mission. In addition, he criticized local European estate holders for their treatment of African workers.

In 1914, on the eve of World War I, Chilembwe published a letter titled “The Voice of African Natives in the Present War.” The letter was an early expression of African nationalism. Chilembwe also secretly organized an uprising against colonial rule. Authorities put the rebellion down quickly, and Chilembwe was killed. His reputation, however, lived on. The memory of Chilembwe played a major role in Malawi’s eventual independence and the breakdown of colonial rule in central Africa. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Chinese in Africa

From the late 1700s to the early 1900s, Chinese traders and laborers traveled to southern and eastern Africa to earn a living in the colonies established by Europeans. A large number of Chinese also moved to African islands such as MAURITIUS, RÉUNION, and MADAGASCAR. A second wave of immigrants settled in Africa in the 1920s and 1930s, a time of great unrest in China.

Although many Chinese were recruited as mineworkers in the South African gold mines, others became involved in local business and formed social ties. Traders often lent money to local farmers and bought their crops, which they resold to European firms. Many of these early Chinese settlers produced children with local women. They accepted these children into their own families but sometimes sent them to China for schooling. In recent years the Chinese of SOUTH AFRICA have interacted more with their white neighbors than with black Africans. Many Chinese have left African countries that won their independence during the 1960s and 1970s.

Almost all African Chinese trace their roots to the southern Chinese province of Guandong. They are descended from the original Chinese traders, rather than from Chinese laborers brought to Africa by Europeans at the same time. The current Chinese population in Africa totals about 70,000. Most of these people live in the southeastern part of the continent, where they make a living primarily as grocers and restaurant owners. However, many younger Chinese pursue professional careers. A few have taken high government positions in countries such as ZIMBABWE and Mauritius.

Since the 1950s a commercial community of Hong Kong Chinese has developed in West African nations such as GHANA and NIGERIA. Hundreds of Taiwanese businessmen have also moved to South Africa and the surrounding countries to set up industrial plants. These entrepreneurs, however, have been criticized for taking advantage of local labor in their factories.



Christianity in Africa



African Christianity goes back to very early times, and the Christianity that developed in Africa influenced the religion's later growth in Europe. However, African Christianity ultimately developed its own special character in which local traditions played a role. This religion has had a profound effect on the social and political development of modern Africa. Today, membership in Christian churches is growing faster in Africa than anywhere else in the world.

EARLY AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

According to tradition, shortly after the founding of Christianity the apostle Philip baptized a member of the royal court of ETHIOPIA. The early church historian Eusebius wrote that the apostle Matthew also spread the new faith in Ethiopia. In this way, Christianity arrived in Africa before it reached Europe.



Roots of African Christianity. Christianity took root in North Africa at a very early date. Many important figures in the early church came from this region, including the church fathers Clement and Origen of ALEXANDRIA in EGYPT, and St. Augustine of Hippo, a city in present-day ALGERIA. From the A.D. 100s to 400s, Christianity spread throughout much of North Africa. Perhaps the most important force in this development was the monastic* movement, which began in Egypt and only later made its way to Europe.

By the 300s, Christianity had spread to Ethiopia and ERITREA, centered on the city of AKSUM. Most of the region is still Christian today. Beginning in the 500s, Christian kingdoms also flourished on the upper Nile River in NUBIA (in what is now SUDAN). In the 1300s, the Nubians were conquered by Muslims from Egypt.

Spreading Christianity. Despite the early introduction of Christianity in Ethiopia and North Africa, the religion did not penetrate sub-Saharan* Africa for several hundred years. Christianity reached those regions by way of Europe during the great age of exploration. The Portuguese arrived in the kingdom of KONGO in 1483. Eight years later the king of Kongo was baptized under the name of João I, in honor of the Portuguese king João II.

As Europeans established outposts on the coast of Africa in the 1400s and 1500s, they brought along missionaries, who settled among indigenous* populations. At first, the introduction of Christianity was limited to Africans in coastal areas. With a few exceptions, missionaries did not carry Christianity into the interior of the continent until the 1800s.

Europeans considered converting Africans to Christianity to be part of the process of colonization. As a result, their exploitation* of Africa's wealth was accompanied by missionary activity. However, the primary interest of most of the conquerors and traders who journeyed to Africa was to enrich themselves. This goal often involved enslaving and even killing local populations. Although Christian missionaries had come to Africa to save souls, they were often associated with the greed of their fellow Europeans. For this reason, many Africans resisted the missionaries and their message.

* **monastic** relating to monasteries, monks, or nuns

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

Christianity in Africa



The stone church of St. George in Lalibela, Ethiopia, is more than 700 years old. Designed in the form of a cross, it was cut from the surrounding rock.

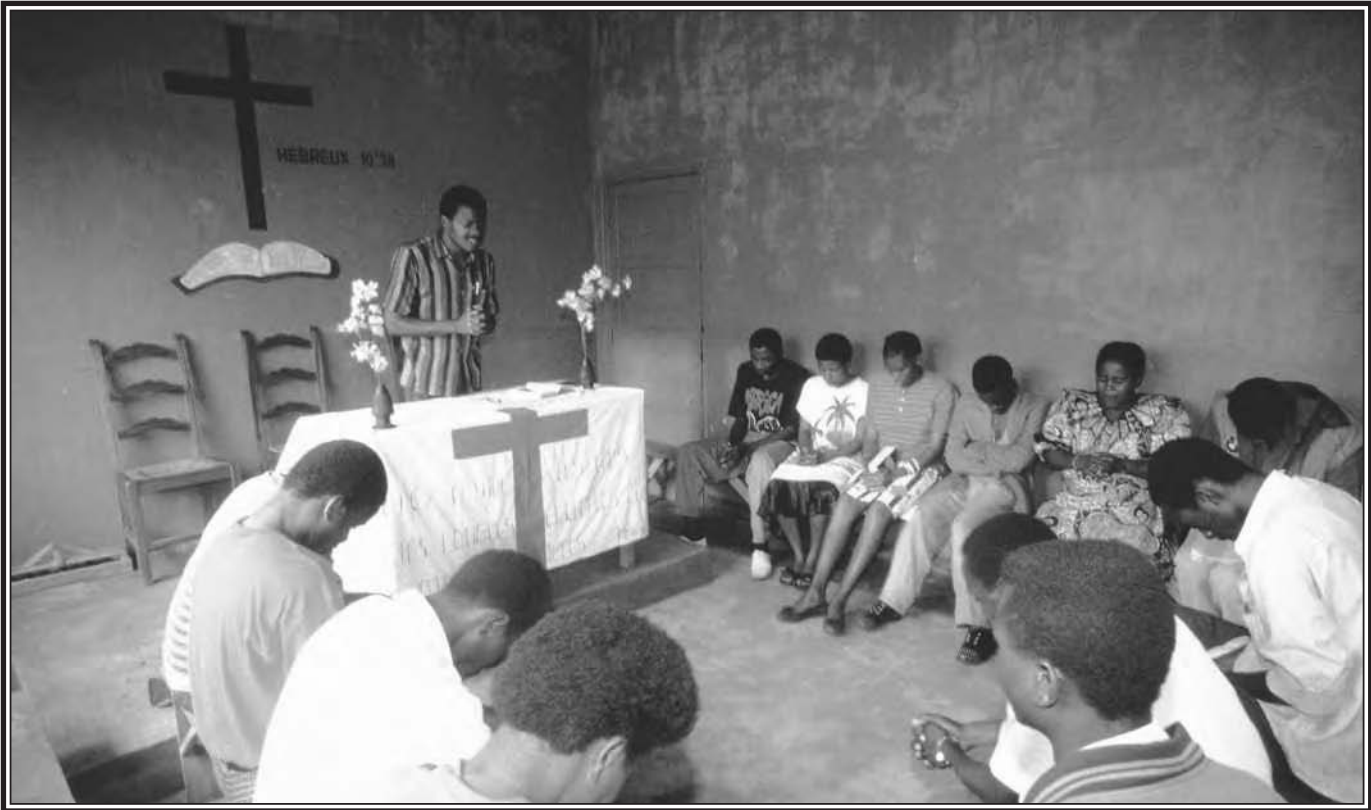
After a while, instead of trying to impose Christianity on the Africans, Europeans began to look for ways to use local institutions to gain converts. Missionaries attempted to win over rulers and then use their authority to spread Christianity among the people.

The long-term success of efforts to convert Africans to Christianity often depended on local political developments. The Christian nature of African kingdoms could prove short-lived if the ruling group was overthrown or challenged by a group opposed to Christianity. Attempts to spread the faith by reaching out to ordinary Africans did not occur for many years.

NEW DIRECTIONS IN AFRICAN CHRISTIANITY

For hundreds of years the Roman Catholic Church was the only church active in Africa. The Protestant outcry against the SLAVE TRADE in the late 1700s and early 1800s marked a turning point for African Christianity. Significantly, the first Protestant missionaries to arrive in West Africa were former slaves who had supported the British in the American Revolutionary War. These black preachers and their successors transformed the face of African Christianity.

Christianity in Africa



A variety of Christian denominations are found in Africa. The members of this church belong to the Assemblies of God, a Protestant group.

* **evangelist** person who preaches and spreads the Christian gospel

Black Evangelism. In 1792 more than a thousand former slaves accepted a British offer of free passage to Africa. Most of them were had fought on the British side in the American War of Independence and had later been resettled in Nova Scotia, Canada. There in what is now SIERRA LEONE they founded the city of FREETOWN. Although not formally authorized as Protestant ministers, some of these former slaves became enthusiastic leaders of the effort to convert indigenous Africans to Christianity. In preaching to Africans, they saw much common ground between the lessons found in the Bible and traditional African beliefs and values. This link between the Christian message and African culture was an important factor in the spread of Christianity across the continent in the 1800s and 1900s.

The Protestant evangelists* who founded missionary movements in Africa around 1800 adopted a different course from the Catholics who came before them. They stressed the important contributions that indigenous Africans could make to missionary activity. In 1861 a missionary named Henry Venn took the bold step of transferring nine churches in Sierra Leone to local control. He later named Samuel Ajayi CROWTHER, a former slave who had come to Freetown in 1822, as the first African bishop.

From this point on, black preachers played a leading role in spreading Christianity throughout the continent. They used their familiarity with the people and their culture to relate the Christian message in a uniquely African context, one that combined elements of European Christianity with African traditions.



Christianity in Africa

Staying the Course

Christianity enjoyed remarkable staying power in some parts of Africa, even in places that did not see priests or missionaries for many years. The rulers of the Kingdom of Kongo adopted Christianity in the 1400s. However, when Garcia V became king in 1803, there was no priest around to sanction his rule. It was not until 1814 that a representative of the Catholic Church came to Kongo to bless the king's rule and his marriage. During this period of neglect, Kongo had remained strongly Catholic, and 25,000 of Garcia's subjects were baptized when the priest came to town. Ten years later his son Pedro became a Catholic priest.

* **vernacular** native language or dialect of a region or country

African Scriptures. One of the tasks Crowther set himself as bishop was to translate the Bible into an African language. His first Bible, written in the Yoruba language, was followed by versions in other African languages. These vernacular* Bibles were a major factor in spreading Christianity among indigenous populations.

Few African languages had been written down before. The impact of the grammars, dictionaries, and other works needed for the translation of vernacular Bibles was immense. Reading the scriptures in native languages gave white missionaries and scholars a chance to grasp the African point of view. At the same time, giving Africans access to written forms of their language allowed them to connect with their own history and cultural heritage. The work of Crowther and others like him ensured that Africans, not Europeans, would now lead the missionary efforts in Africa.

White Missionary Activity. Opposition to the slave trade fueled the great missionary efforts of the 1800s and led to the creation of many new orders. Protestant missionaries, such as Scottish explorer David LIVINGSTONE, not only spread Christianity but also played a major role in mapping the land, documenting African social systems, and recording African languages. In addition, they identified the rich natural resources that would be the targets of later colonial exploitation.

Catholic mission activity was re-energized and reorganized at this time as well. The Catholic Church set out to train indigenous clergy to establish an African Catholic Church led by Africans themselves. Until that happened, white missionaries were urged to adopt African dress, language, and customs. The Catholic Church also moved to decentralized control of its missions, giving each one more independence and responsibility for its activities.

Twentieth Century Christianity. The early 1900s produced a number of charismatic African religious leaders, including Yohana Kitigana and William Wadé Harris. A former Buganda chief, Kitigana converted to Christianity, gave up his title, wives, and possessions, and traveled through central Africa preaching. Harris was a Protestant teacher in LIBERIA who abandoned his Western style of life and traveled through western Africa baptizing tens of thousands of people. Both men continued and reinforced a particularly African form of Christianity that blended indigenous and European religious traditions.

Beginning in the early 1900s, education became a major focus of Christian activity in Africa. Schools set up by both Protestants and Catholics during this period educated many of the people who became leaders of postcolonial Africa. Another concern was health. Christian missions established hospitals and clinics, and many religious leaders and independent churches focused even more attention on healing than on education.

In the 1960s the Catholic Church officially adopted the position that local African churches should lead Catholic missionary efforts in Africa. Later, in the 1990s, it stated that African churches would not be forced



Christianity in Africa

to accept pre-existing religious structures and ideas but could develop their own based on local traditions and needs.

The result of Protestant and Catholic activity over the centuries has been the spread of Christianity throughout Africa. Today the continent has more than 300 million Christians. While remaining true to its basic beliefs, Christianity in Africa has become a distinctly Africanized faith with elements of traditional belief and culture. The impressive growth, energy, and vitality of indigenous churches have transformed the continent into a new Christian heartland. (*See also Copts; Education; Equiano, Olaudah; Ethiopian Orthodox Church; Islam in Africa; Kingsley, Mary; Missions and Missionaries; Prophetic Movements; Religion and Ritual; Tutu, Desmond Mpilo.*)

Cinema

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

* **Afrikaner** South African of European descent who speaks Afrikaans

People in Africa have been watching, acting in, and making movies since the early 1900s. Until the 1950s, films were generally controlled by European colonial powers. The colonial governments oversaw production and decided which movies could be shown to the public. In the years since African nations gained independence, Africans have developed their own cinema with their own directors and actors. Many of their films have gained worldwide attention for their passionate portrayal of social and political issues such as apartheid*.

Cinema During Colonial Times. The early history of African film was dominated by movies made by and for non-Africans. Imported films were shown in West African colonies as early as 1900, and soon afterward colonists in South Africa were making their own movies. One of the first very successful African pictures was *De Voortrekkers (Winning a Continent)*, a movie about white South African history made in 1916 by Afrikaner* and British producers.

Many American and British moviemakers came to Africa to film stories of adventure and colonial conquest. These were often enormous productions, with crews and leading actors brought from overseas. The story of H. Rider Haggard's British novel *King Solomon's Mines* was filmed in Africa several times. In the first version in 1918, thousands of ZULU extras acted in a battle scene. For Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer's 1950 version, the film crew traveled for 12,000 miles and five months through four countries. They gathered truckloads of footage of animals and scenery that was used in movies for years afterward. Several foreign actors gained fame for their roles in such films, including African American actors Paul Robeson in the 1930s and 1940s and Sidney Poitier in the 1950s.

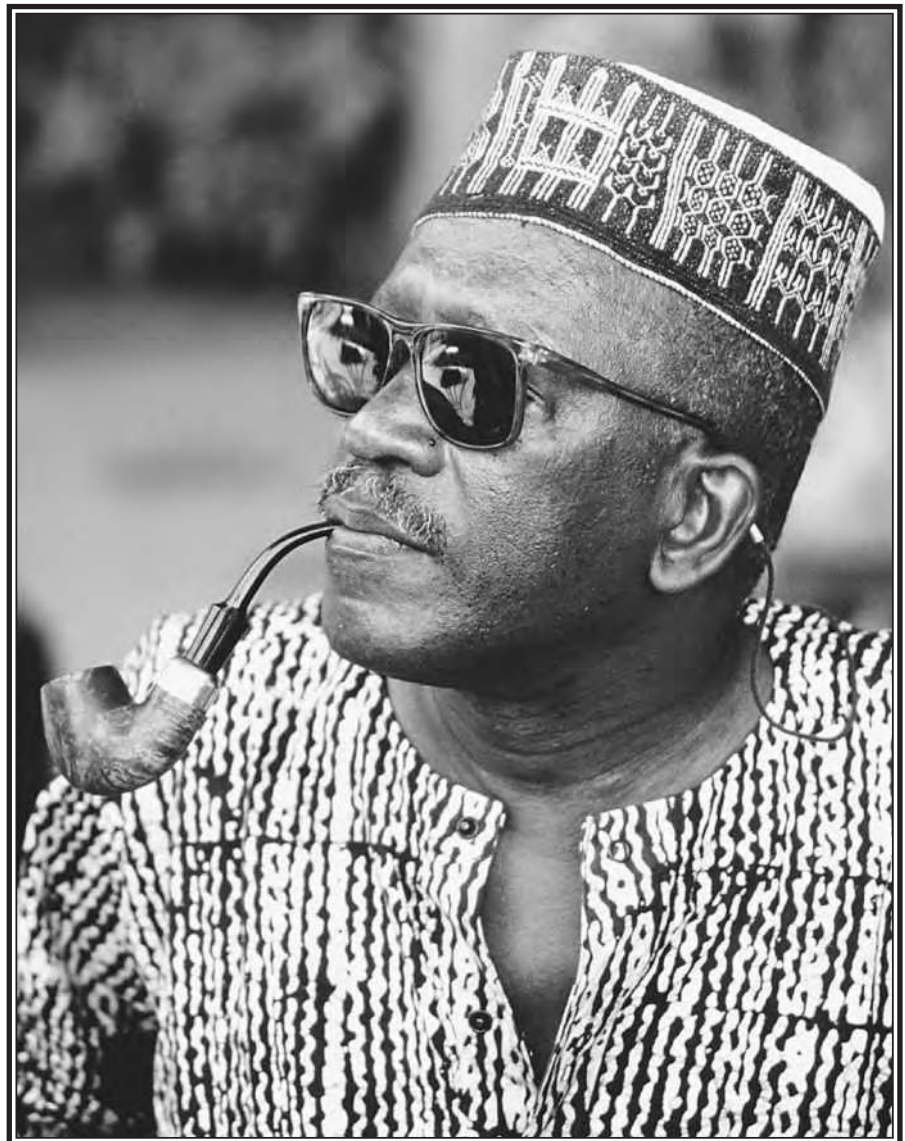
Beginning in the 1920s, feature-length documentaries about African people, animals, and geography became popular with foreign audiences. In 1928 Americans Martin and Osa Johnson made *Simba: The King of Beasts*, a film about lions; in 1959 Henri Storck, a Belgian director, filmed *Les seigneurs de la forêt (Masters of the Congo Jungle)*. Documentaries about animals were often broadcast on American television.

Cinema

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

More numerous than movies of dramas and documentaries, however, were the many educational and research films produced in Africa during colonial times. Anthropologists* and explorers used film to record their research on African peoples and cultures. Colonial officials and missionaries created educational films to teach black Africans “correct” political and cultural views. The viewpoints expressed in such works are now considered outdated and even racist. However, the films remain valuable historical documents that provide unique images of places and peoples.

Occasionally foreign-made films dealt with issues that troubled the colonial powers in Africa. Such films were usually banned by the colony they criticized. René Vautier of France was jailed for his 1950 movie *Africa 50*, an unflattering look at French rule in Ivory Coast. As late as the 1980s, the white South African government prohibited movies that criticized apartheid.



Many people view Sembène Ousmane as the father of African cinema. His films have dealt with such issues as colonialism, poverty, and the role of women in Africa.



Cinema

The Rise of African Cinema. North Africa's film industry dates from the 1920s. The first Arab film, *Ayn al-ghazal (Gazelle's Eye)* was shot in Tunisia by Tunisian Shemama Chicly. His daughter, Hayde Chicly, wrote the script and starred in the picture. In 1927 the first Arab film company was founded in Cairo. Its *Layla*, made with an Egyptian producer, director, and cast, was the first Egyptian movie. The Egyptian film industry went on to become one of the most productive in Africa, making films shown widely throughout the Arab world.

In addition to creating popular entertainment, such as romance movies, North African filmmakers have also addressed serious subjects. They have documented revolutions and other events that transformed their nations in modern times. For example, Algerian director Mohammed Lakdar Hamina has made several films about the effects of Algeria's revolution and independence from France. One of his best-known works is *Vent de sable (Desert wind)*, produced in 1982.

Other Africans have also used movies to explore social themes and present them to wide audiences. Senegalese director Sembène Ousmane is considered by some to be the founder of African filmmaking. He produced African-language films dealing with such topics as colonialism, poverty, corruption, and the role of women. Between 1972 and 1982, Ola Balogun of Nigeria made ten feature films, some of which are based on traditional plays of the YORUBA people.

During the 1970s and 1980s, many African filmmakers explored political subjects. Pictures such as *Sambizanga* (1972) portrayed Angola's revolutionary struggle. Ethiopian Haile Geraima studied film in California before making *Harvest: 3,000 Years* in his country in 1974. He also produced *Sinkofa*, a 1993 movie about slavery in Ghana. One of the most famous African filmmakers is Souley-Mane Cisse of Mali. His 1995 picture *Waati (Time)* is a vision of the African continent as discovered by a young girl. As people throughout the world gain greater appreciation for different cultures, the distinctly African cinema of these artists may reach movie and television audiences everywhere. (See also **Popular Culture**.)

Cities and Urbanization

The image of Africa as a continent of traditional villages and small towns has never been correct. Africa has always included both highly urban and rural settlements. However, its cities have grown dramatically in recent years, and some researchers who study population trends have predicted that by the early 2000s about half of all Africans will live in urban areas.

Urbanization—the growth of cities and surrounding areas—has followed different patterns in sub-Saharan* Africa and North Africa. In both areas, however, the recent rapid growth of cities has been fueled by two factors: the high birth rate of city dwellers and the migration of large numbers of people from rural to urban areas.

African cities are a magnet. For those living in agricultural areas devastated by drought or war, moving to the city offers the opportunity for a better life. But many African cities are plagued by problems, including

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert



Cities and Urbanization

North Africa's Tin Towns

Many urban areas in Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco are surrounded by unplanned, hastily built shantytowns called bidonvilles. The original bidonvilles sprang up in the late 1800s. Their name comes from bidon, the French word for kerosene tin. The villagers and countryfolk who migrated to the cities built homes of these tin containers, and in time the bidonvilles became permanent settlements. In response to sometimes violent protests by the residents of the bidonvilles, local governments eventually began to provide water, electricity, and other city services to some of the communities. Still, these settlements remain the drabest and poorest parts of the North African urban landscape.

unemployment, lack of housing, crime, and poverty. They also suffer from inadequate public services such as water, electricity, schools, and health care. With urbanization likely to continue, African governments and international aid agencies are under pressure to create plans for managing the growth of Africa's cities.

AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA

Until about 1980, sub-Saharan Africa was overwhelmingly rural, and experts believed it would remain that way. African governments focused on programs for rural and agricultural development, paying little attention to the rapid growth of their cities. Now urbanization is recognized as a major trend in sub-Saharan Africa. But it has not been accompanied by the modernization and economic growth needed to improve the quality of urban life and support expanding city populations.

Precolonial Cities. In the centuries before European colonization, western Africa was the most urbanized region south of the Sahara. Cities arose there as centers of religion and government in ancient kingdoms, and a web of trade routes linked these centers with Muslim cities in North Africa and the Saharan borderlands.

Jenne-jeno, located in MALI, is thought to be the oldest city in West Africa. Already nearly a thousand years old by A.D. 800, Jenne-jeno consisted of many round brick houses surrounded by a wall. At that time, it was actually two cities: a native town and a nearby settlement of Arab merchants. This mixture of Islamic and African elements was typical of many sub-Saharan cities with links to North Africa. The town of TIMBUKTU in Mali, founded around A.D. 1000, became a major trading hub and a center of Islamic learning in the 1400s and 1500s.

Farther south in present-day NIGERIA, the YORUBA established city-states that controlled areas of the surrounding countryside. Ile-Ife, the Yoruba capital, was centered on the king's palace. Radiating out from the palace were 16 residential areas, one for each of 16 major family groups. When the European trade for gold and slaves began along the West African coast in the 1400s, new cities emerged to extend the trade northward into the interior. Despite the presence of European trading posts, the organization and the population of these cities remained African.

Cities existed in other parts of Africa during the precolonial period. In ETHIOPIA, the city of AKSUM was an important economic, political, and religious center. Along the Indian Ocean coast in East Africa, urban centers sprang up at ports that served seafaring traders from the Arabian and Indian peninsulas. Kilwa, with magnificent mosques, palaces, and baths, was the most splendid East African city in the 1400s. However, larger but less splendid cities, such as Mombasa, and in the 1800s ZANZIBAR, came to dominate coastal trade.

Colonial Urban Development. Between the 1500s and mid-1900s, European influence and colonial rule created a number of major urban centers in sub-Saharan Africa. Some of these cities arose from settlements founded by Africans, which the Europeans changed and enlarged. Others were new settlements established to serve as colonial adminis-

Cities and Urbanization



Tripoli, Libya, is a modern city with an ancient history. Here, a merchant sells fresh melons in front of a Roman arch.

trative or trading centers. But most cities developed near the sites of natural resources—such as gold, tin, coal, or diamonds—that were being mined by the Europeans.

In the early colonial period, Europeans established small forts and trading posts, often on or near the coasts. These settlements eventually developed into major urban centers, including ACCRA in GHANA, LAGOS in Nigeria, and CAPE TOWN in SOUTH AFRICA. Most of the inland cities, such as JOHANNESBURG and Nairobi, were not founded until the late 1800s and early 1900s. The urban areas became centers of industry. At first, the African populations in urban areas consisted largely of adult men who had come in search of industrial jobs and left their families behind. The

Cities and Urbanization

high proportion of males continued until the mid-1900s, when more and more families began moving to cities from the countryside.

One of the main features of colonial cities in sub-Saharan Africa was the separation of blacks and whites. Europeans established residential and commercial areas in the more desirable sections of the city, forcing black Africans to establish their neighborhoods elsewhere. Colonial administrators also created parklands or industrial areas to serve as buffer zones between the European and African quarters. While colonial officials made an effort to ensure the comfort and safety of Europeans and to provide them with various services, they generally devoted much less attention to the African quarters.

Cities Since Independence. Sub-Saharan Africa is still the least urbanized region in the world, with less than one third of its population living in cities. However, sub-Saharan Africa is also experiencing the fastest urban growth in the world, and researchers predict that more than half of the region's population will be urban by the year 2025.

Although southern Africa ranks as the most urbanized part of sub-Saharan Africa, the cities in western and eastern Africa are expanding much more rapidly than those in other areas. Lagos, Nigeria, one of the fastest-growing cities, is becoming what experts call a megacity—a very

Tall modern buildings line this busy street in Nairobi, Kenya. Although Nairobi is the financial, commercial, and tourist center of East Africa, unemployment and inadequate housing make life difficult for many of the city's residents.





Cities and Urbanization

large urban center. If growth rates continue, Africa will contain more megacities than any other continent by the end of this century. Managing the growth of these urban centers and solving their problems are among the most serious challenges now facing African governments.

* **shantytown** poor, run-down section of a city, often inhabited by immigrants



One of the most common features of modern African cities is the growing number of people who live in shantytowns*. Usually overcrowded and filled with inadequate housing, these communities have little or no sanitation or other public services. People in shantytowns build shelters with whatever materials they can find—boards, tin sheets, or even cardboard and plastic—generally on land they do not own. Since African governments cannot afford to replace inadequate housing or provide basic services, many shantytowns have been accepted as unavoidable.

Another problem facing African cities is a shortage of jobs. The economies of most African nations are just not able to create enough jobs for their growing populations. Unemployment and the high cost of living in cities combine to create a serious problem of poverty. Linked with poverty and unemployment are various other problems, such as crime, illiteracy, and disease. Because these conditions can lead to social and political unrest, they threaten not only the stability of cities but of African nations as well.

Some experts believe that one way to improve prospects for Africa's urban future is to encourage the growth of small and midsize cities, reducing the burden on large urban centers. These smaller cities could also serve as a link between megacities and the agricultural countryside. However, such plans require reliable transportation systems, and in much of Africa highway and rail connections between cities and rural areas are inadequate.

Another way of dealing with the future is the development of national urban plans. Such plans would look beyond the immediate needs of cities and focus instead on long-range efforts to provide housing and services and to create jobs and build economic connections between urban centers and the rest of the country. African leaders realize that continued urban growth is unavoidable, and that city life will be in the future of more and more Africans.

NORTH AFRICA

North Africa, home of the ancient Egyptian civilization and site of ancient Phoenician, Greek, and Roman colonies, has a long history of urban life. Today, it is the most urbanized part of Africa. In MOROCCO, TUNISIA, ALGERIA, and LIBYA, more than half the total population lives in cities or towns.

Large cities have existed in North Africa for thousands of years, and some present-day towns stand on the sites where they were founded. The Egyptian culture that built the pyramids and other monuments also established cities that show evidence of careful urban planning. ALEXANDRIA, a major port on the Mediterranean coast, dates back more than 2,000 years.

The Arabs who conquered North Africa during the Middle Ages



Class Structure and Caste

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

founded many of the region's major cities, including Marrakech and Fez in Morocco, Tripoli in Libya, and Tunis in Tunisia. At the heart of each Arab city was the Casbah, a fort that served as the center of government, and a mosque* with an accompanying tower called a minaret. Around the city was a wall pierced by several gates.

After European powers took control of North Africa in the 1800s, urban areas expanded rapidly. Colonial trade, in particular, contributed to the growth of port cities, such as Casablanca, in Morocco, ALGIERS, and Tunis. As Europeans settled in large North African urban centers, they became dual, or twin, cities. One half of the dual city was the medina, the old walled Arab city with narrow, twisting streets. The other half was a new European-style city with wide, straight, tree-lined streets and houses built on large lots.

The rapid growth of cities that began in the colonial period continued after North African nations gained their independence in the mid-1900s. Governments of North Africa have faced two challenges in regard to their cities. The first has been to unify the native and European areas of the cities and modernize them. This has proved very difficult, and in many cases the divisions remain. The second challenge has been to provide housing, employment, and services for the people who flock to cities in ever-increasing numbers. (See also **Architecture; Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; European Communities; Houses and Housing; North Africa: Geography and Population; Population.**)

Class Structure and Caste

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

* **hierarchy** organization of a group into higher and lower levels

African societies, like those in nearly all areas of the world, are divided into various groups or classes. Each class has its own distinct characteristics, roles, privileges and limitations, and relations with other groups. Only a few societies based on hunting and gathering have no formal division into classes.

The class structure of African societies today is a patchwork. Some of the traditions that shape it have been carried over from precolonial* times. Other elements can be traced to Western influence. The result is a complex structure that is still developing as new forces of change reach African societies.

TRADITIONAL CLASS SYSTEMS

Traditional African societies are stratified—organized into levels like the layers of a cake. Three basic principles define the hierarchy* within African class systems. The first of these is elderhood, the quality of being older than someone else. The second is servitude, the condition of controlling or being controlled by others. And the third is rank, or a person's level in society relative to the ruler.

Elderhood. Peasant society, made up of fairly simple agricultural communities, is widespread in Africa. In such societies, everyone lives in much the same way. Differences in wealth and occupation have little or



Class Structure and Caste

Keep Your Distance

When empires such as the kingdom of Mali ruled western Africa, behavior at the royal courts was governed by rules that emphasized the distance between the king and his subjects. The king's power, wealth, and dignity raised him far above commoners, nobles, and even his own relatives. People coming before this godlike figure had to show their own lowly status by putting ashes or dust on their heads. The king, in turn, maintained his distance from other people by addressing his subjects through a spokesman, never speaking to them directly.

no importance. Instead, hierarchy is based on the concept of precedence, that is, who came first. Status—respected position—and power belong to old and established groups rather than to the new.

Respect for elderhood is the key to the social organization of these societies. For example, a group that has cleared an unoccupied piece of land gains precedence, or the right to be honored, as the first settlers on that land. To maintain peaceful relations, newcomers who want to live nearby must acknowledge the precedence of those who were there first. The first settled family usually heads local councils. Other families assume duties according to their abilities, and some may gain influence because of their wisdom, strength, courage, or fertility.

Within most communities and families, status is linked to age. Each person has less status and authority than older individuals but more than those who are younger. Final authority rests with the eldest person in the community. But even that person must respect the authority of the dead elders—the ancestors. In some societies, the entire community is organized into age sets—groups of people at the same stages of life. As the members of an age set become older, they gain greater power and status in the community.

Servitude. In other traditional African societies, class structure has been based on levels of control or servitude. After about A.D. 500, several centrally organized, warring states appeared in parts of Africa. In these states, violence and exploitation* led to societies ruled by classes of military aristocrats or nobles.

Slaves and servants were at the bottom of the social structure. Slaves were people who had been captured or defeated in war. Servants were the descendants of slaves and other servants, born into bondage on their masters' estates. Just above slaves on the social ladder were commoners, including peasants and merchants. They could not be enslaved, but they could own slaves. With more rights and authority than commoners, aristocrats were still higher in society. Only people from this class could rise to the highest level of all—rulership.

Many African societies share a similar three-part class structure. Among the TUAREG of northwestern Africa, for example, kings or leaders come from the *imajeghen*, a class of nobles who make up less than one percent of all Tuaregs. Below this class is the *imghad*, the common people. The third and lowest class, the *iklan*, consists of farmers, herders, laborers, and artisans* whose ancestors were black Africans enslaved by the Tuareg.

A form of hierarchy called patronage or clientage has also shaped African societies. It is a relationship between people of unequal status, wealth, or power. The higher-status patron* provides protection or security to the lower-status client, who in turn is expected to give loyalty and obedience to the patron. A patron may have many clients, and clients may have clients of their own. Complex webs of patronage are part of the structure of social and political life in both traditional and modern communities.

In some aristocratic societies, patronage grew into a system called caste*. Patrons protected and took care of members of certain castes—such as blacksmiths, leather workers, or musicians—who produced

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

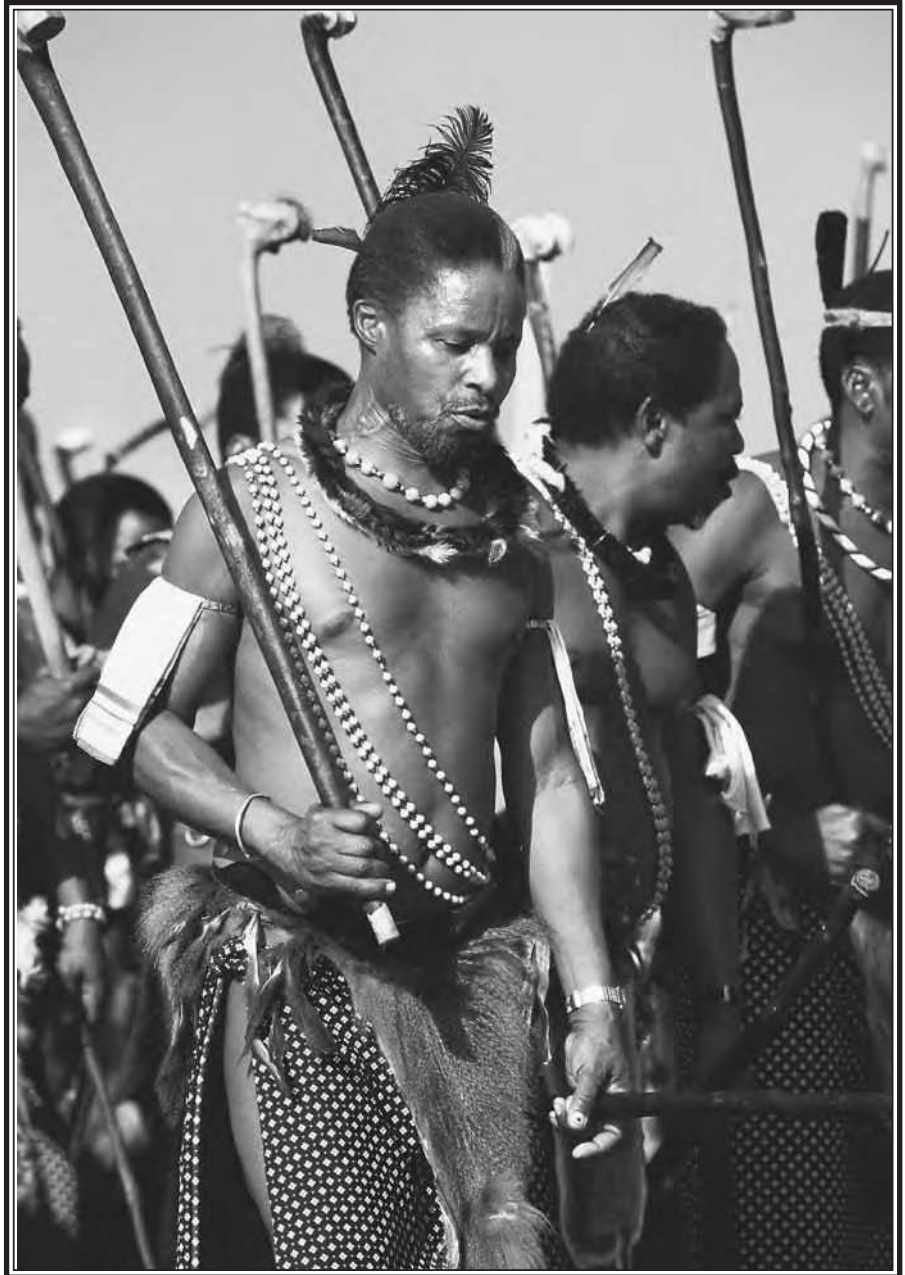
* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

* **patron** special guardian, protector, or supporter

* **caste** division of people into classes based on birth

Class Structure and Caste

In many African societies people gain respect and significance with age. Senior members of a group, such as these community elders from Swaziland, often hold positions of leadership.



things that the patrons wanted. Although caste members were considered free, they were under the authority of kings and nobles and could not marry outside their own groups. Castes tended to become closed, hereditary groups within the larger societies.

Rank. As aristocrats competed for power and status, systems of rank emerged, creating hierarchies within the courts of kings and emperors. Some of these hierarchies included many subdivisions. Ranking gave rise to elaborate systems of etiquette by which individuals acknowledged each other's rank.



Class Structure and Caste

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Heirs to a throne and aristocrats were not the only individuals who could reach high rank. Because rival heirs and ambitious aristocratic clans* could threaten a king's power, rulers often appointed trusted slaves to high-ranking positions as advisers or military officers. Sometimes, as in the kingdom of TOGO, court slaves eventually took over the throne.

Islamic societies in northern Africa adopted an Arab-influenced system of rank in which warrior clans held power. Elsewhere, even small communities of Muslim merchants created Islamic-style local governments. Judges and holy men had high rank because they administered the laws and advice needed to conduct business, manage slavery, and settle disputes.

MODERN SYSTEMS

Although many Africans remain deeply loyal to traditional social systems, Western institutions and policies dominate modern Africa. Social class affects everyone's daily behavior, yet the class structure is too complex and varied to be easily summarized. Indeed, the class structure of African society is still taking shape.

Class. In urban settings and societies undergoing modernization, the elite class—people with power and influence—is expanding. In the 1960s, the African elite consisted of small groups of men and women, generally from the same schools and universities. Today the elite class has become both larger and more diverse. Its members serve as links between African societies and a global elite—the owners and executives of international corporations and agencies such as the United Nations. Although the African elite are at the top level of their own local or national status system, they form the lower level of the international superclass.

Members of the global elite also form a permanent social class in African society. Non-African officials of international companies and agencies are not citizens of any African nations where they live and work. They do not vote. They have no local ancestors and usually no descendants who will remain in Africa. However, their Western lifestyles and behavior have a far-reaching effect on African society.

In contrast to the elite is a mass of peasants, workers, migrants, shopkeepers, small businesspeople, clerks, schoolteachers, soldiers, police, and minor officeholders. These people cannot rightly be called a class because they have little in common to unite them. However, they generally share resentment over the widening gap between them and the elite.

Ethnicity. African peoples are divided into thousands of ethnic groups. Ethnic ties and loyalties connect people across the lines of class. Workers belonging to one ethnic group are likely to feel closer to elite members of the same group than to workers from another group. In Africa, where nations often contain many different ethnic groups, ethnic ties can hinder the growth of national identity. Individuals may regard themselves as Ganda or YORUBA, for example, rather than



Cleopatra

Ugandan or Nigerian. Ethnic ties may also affect class divisions. Heads of state sometimes favor members of their own ethnic group with positions of power and profit. Such favoritism has led to civil war among competing groups in many African nations.

SOUTH AFRICA was formerly the continent's prime example of a social structure based on ethnic and racial identity. Under the system called APARTHEID, social groups were legally organized into a hierarchy, with whites at the top, followed by Indians, "Coloureds" (people of mixed race), and Africans at the bottom of the social ladder. Although apartheid has ended, its social and economic inequalities linger, and South Africa's class structure still has strong ethnic and racial elements.

Rank. In modern Africa, rank has little influence on social organization. Rank has lost most of its importance because it has no place in the foreign economic and political systems that now dominate much of Africa. Only in a few cases, including SWAZILAND, LESOTHO, and BOTSWANA, have systems of hereditary rank been preserved. The ethnic kings of these nations are heads of state. Elsewhere, ethnic rulers—such as the Buganda king in UGANDA and the Muslim emirs of northern NIGERIA—have become regional leaders with limited power.

In a few situations in which rank remains important, it may have religious as well as political meaning. Following Islamic tradition, some groups of BERBERS in North Africa give the highest place in their social order to people who claim to be descended from Muhammad, the prophet of Islam. Catholic churches in Africa also maintain a rigid, elaborate, and formal hierarchy of ranks. (See also **Age and Aging, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Islam in Africa, Kings and Kingship, Kinship, Slavery, Women in Africa.**)

Cleopatra

69–30 B.C.
Egyptian queen

Cleopatra, one of the most famous figures of ancient history, was the last ruler of EGYPT in the tradition of the pharaohs who had governed the land for several thousand years. She came to the throne in 51 B.C. as the wife of her brother, Ptolemy XIII.

For several hundred years before that time, Rome had been increasing its control over Egypt. The young Cleopatra needed an ally in a struggle with enemies in Egypt. According to legend, she had herself rolled in a carpet and delivered as a gift to the powerful Roman general Julius Caesar. With Roman support, Cleopatra defeated Ptolemy and ruled as pharaoh. She also began a love affair with Caesar. Caesar built a palace in Rome for Cleopatra and their son, Caesarion.

After Caesar was assassinated in 44 B.C., Cleopatra allied herself with Mark Antony, another leading Roman. Antony hoped that the riches of Egypt would help him become ruler of Rome. Cleopatra bore Antony three children. She hoped that he would make her children his heirs and Rome's future rulers. In 32 B.C. Octavian, Antony's great rival in the Roman government, declared war against Antony and Cleopatra. The two lovers lost their navy in a battle near Greece and retreated to



Cleopatra

ALEXANDRIA, where both committed suicide. Although she lost her life and her kingdom, Cleopatra is remembered in history as an intelligent, ambitious, and passionate ruler.

Climate

The diverse climates of Africa range from scorching deserts to icy glaciers, from steamy rainforests to grassy plains. Climate is a long-term weather pattern, the sum of features such as temperature, rainfall, and wind. The amount of heat from the sun plays a major role in determining climate. The equator receives more solar heat than any other part of the earth, and the zones on either side of the equator are called the tropics.

Africa, with the equator cutting across its center, is the world's most tropical continent. Only its northern edge and southern tip are outside the tropics. Half of Africa lies north of the equator and half to the south. This symmetry, or balance, produces matching belts of climate at approximately equal distances north and south of the equator.

The center of the continent has a wet tropical climate, with extremely heavy rainfall. To the north and south are belts of tropical climate with a dry season. Beyond lie belts of tropical climate with longer dry periods and occasional droughts, such as those that have caused famines in the SAHEL. North of the Sahel lies the almost rainless SAHARA DESERT, but in the narrow southern part of Africa cool, moist air masses moving inland from the oceans bring some summer rainfall to the KALAHARI DESERT. Finally, north and south of the desert regions are belts of Mediterranean climate, with hot dry summers and mild moist winters.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Maritime Madagascar
The large island nation of Madagascar, located off Africa's southeastern coast, has a maritime climate, which means that it is influenced mainly by the ocean. Strong regular winds called trade winds blow from the southeast, bringing moisture from the Indian Ocean to eastern Madagascar, which gets up to 137 inches of rain a year. More than any other part of Africa, eastern Madagascar is affected by cyclones, large tropical storms with high winds that sweep over the island from the Indian Ocean between November and April.

Climate Shapers. Other environmental factors, such as winds, ocean currents, and the surface features of the land, create variations within these climate belts, giving different regions of Africa their particular local climates. One of the chief climate shapers in sub-Saharan* Africa is the Intertropical Convergence Zone, or ITCZ, which is the point where warm, moist tropical air masses meet. The regular cycle of movements of the ITCZ carry it north of the equator between March and June and south of the equator between September and December. These movements determine the number and timing of rainy seasons throughout Africa. Areas within the path of the ITCZ have two rainy seasons; those at the northern and southern reaches of the ITCZ's path have only one rainy season. The Sahara in the north and the Namib-Kalahari desert region in the south lie outside the influence of the ITCZ and receive little precipitation.

Mountains and ocean currents influence climate as well. Mountains force the air masses of the ITCZ to rise, grow cooler, and shed their moisture in the form of rain or even snow, giving mountainous areas greater annual precipitation. The cold Benguela Current in the Atlantic Ocean cools the surrounding air and keeps the ITCZ away from southwestern Africa. As a result, that region generally receives little rain. It does, however, get some moisture from fog that forms along the coast.



Africa's tropical rainforests receive heavy rainfall year round, which supports lush vegetation and a canopy of tall trees.

Seasonal movements of the atmosphere over the North Atlantic Ocean affect the climate of North Africa. In the summer, an area of high atmospheric pressure known as the Azores High blocks moist Atlantic air from reaching the region's Mediterranean coast. For this reason, summers in North Africa are hot and dry, influenced by winds blowing north from the Sahara. In winter, however, the Azores High moves southward, allowing cool, damp air from the Atlantic to reach the coast, bringing milder and wetter weather.

Regional Climates. Each climate region has its local variations. The Mediterranean climate of North Africa brings its coast at least 16 inches of rainfall a year, with some mountainous areas getting several times more. However, the region's southern interior has a desert climate with fewer than 4 inches of precipitation. Between these two areas is a region of dry, flat plains, called steppes, where annual rainfall ranges from 4 to 16 inches and summer droughts last five months or longer. Rainfall in the steppes can cause devastating flash floods.

Equatorial Africa includes the southern coast of West Africa and the rainforests of Central Africa. This region receives heavy rain throughout the year, although there are two periods with even more rainfall. These rainier seasons generally last from September to November and from February to June, although they are longer near the coast.



Climate

The interior of West Africa, the Sahel, Sudan, and the Ethiopian highlands form another, drier climate region. The northern parts of this area receive less precipitation than the southern parts and have a single rainy season from October through June. In addition, rainfall in the region generally decreases from west to east. Parts of eastern Ethiopia and Somalia near the Indian Ocean have a desert climate.

East Africa, consisting of Uganda, Kenya, and Tanzania, straddles the equator. It has a hot, humid climate along the coast and around Lake Victoria, but cooler climates in the highlands and mountains. The rainiest areas are the Lake Victoria basin, the mountains, and the coastal islands, which receive more than 59 inches of rain annually. Other parts of the region average 30 inches of annual rainfall. April and May form one rainy season, October and November the other.

Southern Africa has a climate somewhat similar to that of West Africa and southern Sudan. The rainy season is longest in the northern part of the region, where it lasts from November to March. Precipitation decreases from north to south and increases from west to east—the reverse of precipitation patterns north of the equator. The dry season in southern Africa can bring drought. The tip of southern Africa, along the coast, has a Mediterranean climate, with rainfall from April to September and a dry season during the rest of the year. (See also **Deserts and Drought, Ecosystems.**)

Coetzee, J. M.

1940–
South African novelist

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

The South African writer and literary critic John Michael Coetzee is known for novels that explore the effects of apartheid in his homeland. Coetzee studied at the University of Cape Town and at the University of Texas, where he received a Ph.D. in literature. He then returned to SOUTH AFRICA despite his opposition to the government's racial policies.

Among his best-known works is the *Life and Times of Michael K*, which won Britain's prestigious Booker Prize in 1983. The book tells the story of an uneducated man struggling to understand and deal with the civil war in his country. His 1986 novel *Foe*, a retelling of Daniel Defoe's classic *Robinson Crusoe*, examines how people can be enslaved by language. In 1999 Coetzee won a second Booker Award for *Disgrace*, a novel that looks at the problems of South Africa after apartheid.* In addition to writing and literary criticism, Coetzee teaches English at the University of Cape Town and translates works from Afrikaans (a language based on Dutch) into English. (See also **Literature.**)

COINS

See *Money and Banking.*

Colenso, John William

1814–1883
British missionary

* **imperialism** domination of the political, economic, and cultural life of one country or region by another country

John Colenso was an outspoken critic of conventional missionary work who condemned the way colonial authorities treated Africans. Born in England, Colenso became the first bishop of the Diocese of NATAL in 1853 and established a mission station in the town of Bishopstowe. He was well-read in both Christian teaching and modern scientific thinking and discoveries. He was also familiar with the way Africans understood Christian teaching and supported many of their views about religious belief and experience.

This knowledge and his early experiences in Africa led Colenso to write a book called *The Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua Critically Examined* (1870). In it he argued that the Bible was not the literal word of God. The book greatly upset religious authorities, and Colenso was excommunicated, or expelled, from the church.

In the early 1870s, Colenso exposed Britain's unjust treatment of the Hlubi people of Natal and their chief, Langanlibalele. Later when the British invaded the ZULU kingdom and deposed its ruler, CETSHWAYO kaMpande, he championed the cause of the Zulu people. Unfortunately, Colenso did not succeed during his lifetime in his efforts to reform religious thought and colonial political activity. His protests, however, highlighted the violence and injustice that were basic elements of European imperialism* in Africa. Colenso had three daughters who carried on the struggle for African rights in SOUTH AFRICA after his death. (See also **Christianity in Africa, Missions and Missionaries.**)

Colonialism in Africa

Colonialism, which refers to the establishment of political and economic control by one state over another, had an enormous impact on Africa. The colonial experience began in the late 1400s, when Europeans arrived and set up trading posts in Africa. It reached a peak in the late 1800s and early 1900s, when European powers dominated many parts of the continent. Colonialism in Africa created nations and shaped their political, economic, and cultural development. The legacy continues to influence the history of the continent.

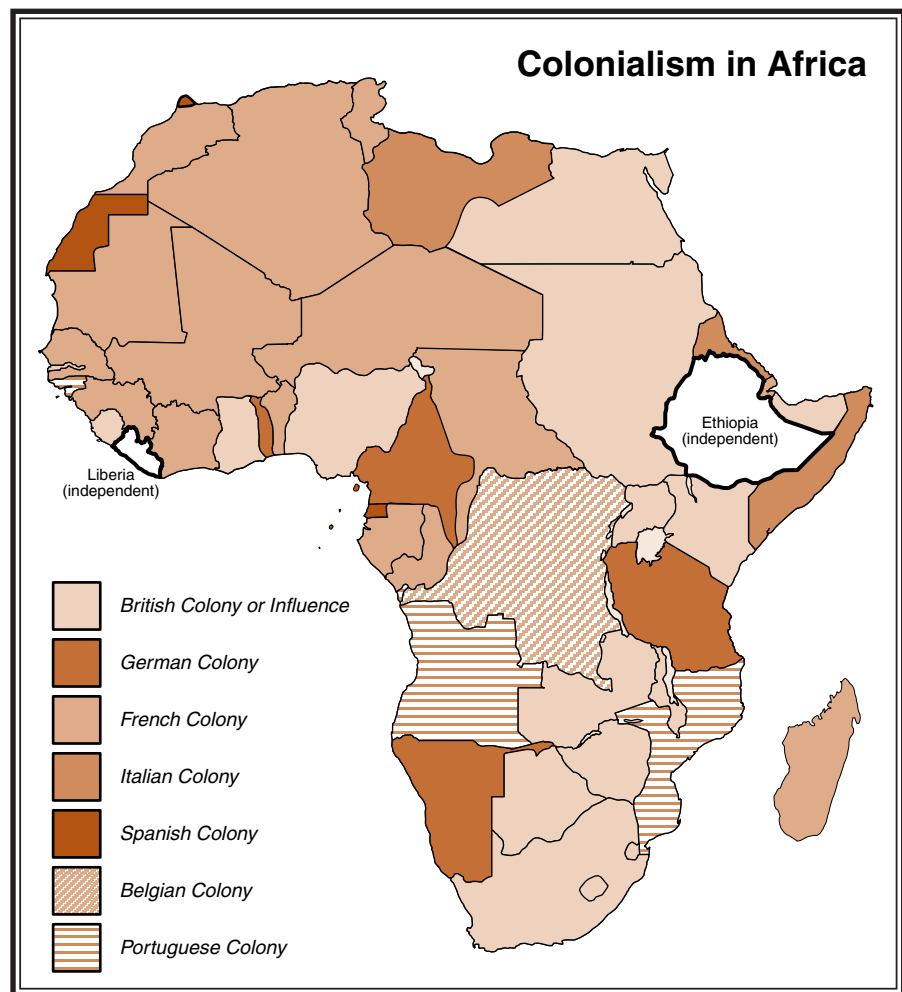
OVERVIEW OF COLONIALISM

Between the 1400s and 1800s, Europeans began to take an interest in Africa, mainly the coastal regions. Sailing along the shores of the continent, they established trading posts and engaged in commerce with local peoples. They made little attempt to explore the interior. During this period, Europeans had very little influence in Africa.

From the mid-1700s to 1880s, Europeans became more involved in the continent. One reason for this increased involvement was growing opposition to the SLAVE TRADE. In 1787 the British founded a colony for freed slaves in SIERRA LEONE. About 30 years later, a group of Americans established LIBERIA for freed slaves and their descendants. Along with efforts to end slavery, Europeans also tried to bring Christianity to Africa. Their missionaries traveled throughout the continent, seeking to convert Africans and spread Western culture.



Colonialism in Africa



By the late 1800s many Africans had begun to accept and adapt various elements of European civilization. At the same time, the nature of European interest in Africa changed dramatically. Impressed by the continent's abundant supply of natural resources, Europeans sought to exploit* the potential wealth. To achieve this goal, they attempted to overpower African peoples and force them to accept foreign rule. In the 1870s rival European nations raced to colonize as much African territory as possible. By the late 1880s, they had divided up most of the continent among themselves, without permission from the African peoples.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Patterns of European Expansion. The first European settlements in Africa were established by traders. Although merchants generally operated independently, from time to time they called on their home governments for help in dealing with hostile Africans. Eventually, European nations negotiated alliances and trading treaties with the coastal peoples. They also appointed officials to protect commercial interests at strategic points along the coasts.

* **intermediary** go-between

Christian missionaries were the first Europeans to establish outposts in the interior of Africa. The missionaries acted as intermediaries* between Africans and Europeans and often helped settle disputes

Colonialism in Africa

The “Scramble” for Africa

The competition for territory in Africa was truly a “scramble,” as explorers, traders, and adventurers of all kinds fanned out across the continent signing treaties with local rulers.

Many people feared that this haphazard approach would create overlapping claims. In November 1884, German chancellor Otto von Bismarck called a meeting in Berlin to discuss colonization in Africa. Representatives from 14 countries, including the United States, the Ottoman Empire, and most European nations, attended. They agreed to guarantee free trade and the neutrality of the Congo Free State. Moreover, the guidelines they established influenced the way in which European nations carved up Africa.

- * **indigenous** native to a certain place
- * **entrepreneur** person who organizes, manages, and takes risks of a business venture
- * **cede** to yield or surrender
- * **annex** to add a territory to an existing area
- * **imperialism** domination of the political, economic, and cultural life of one country or region by another country

between indigenous* communities. However, Christian missionaries also became a disruptive force in African society. After converting to Christianity, many Africans would no longer recognize the authority of their local chiefs. In addition, some missionaries provided essential information to European armies and supported military expeditions against African groups that refused to accept Christianity.

African rulers did not develop a common policy toward the Europeans. Some tried to regulate or prohibit contact with Europeans. Many coastal states, however, had already become too dependent on overseas trade to cut their ties with Europe. Meanwhile, Europeans took advantage of rivalries between African peoples and forged alliances with some groups against others.

By the late 1870s, Africa had begun to attract other kinds of Europeans: adventurers and entrepreneurs*. Many of these individuals were interested only in obtaining riches or in recreating European culture in Africa. They urged their governments to establish colonies that would serve as sources of raw materials and as markets for European goods.

The drive to establish colonies and obtain raw materials led to the so-called “scramble” for Africa. At first four nations—Belgium, France, Great Britain, and Portugal—struggled to claim territory and establish colonial outposts. Various individuals tried to get African rulers to sign treaties that would cede* control of land.

Between 1884 and 1885, representatives from several European nations met in Berlin, Germany, to discuss ways to avoid conflict over the competition for African colonies. The European powers agreed on a set of rules for annexing* territory. In the years that followed, they signed various treaties that resulted in the partitioning, or division, of Africa into colonies with clearly defined borders.

As the pace of European imperialism* increased, many African peoples became very concerned. Fears that Europeans would seize all the land led to a number of armed conflicts. Some of these developed into full-scale wars as well-equipped armies from Europe invaded Africa to secure territorial claims. By 1914 Europeans had taken over the entire continent except for ETHIOPIA and Liberia. European imperialism now moved into a new phase—establishing colonial administrations that would maintain order and provide economic benefits for the governing nations.

The Colonial Order. European policy in Africa had two parts: the colonial government and the colonial economy. The colonial government was concerned with the affairs of a colony at the central and local levels. European officials directed the central government, which made and carried out laws and oversaw the judicial system. The local governments were supposedly run by traditional African leaders. In most instances, however, local chiefs and kings were allowed little real authority.

European officials dominated almost all colonial governments until after World War II, when some countries permitted Africans to play a greater role. Although colonialism brought stability to some regions, it



Colonialism in Africa

did little to promote the development of African political institutions or to provide administrative training for local people.

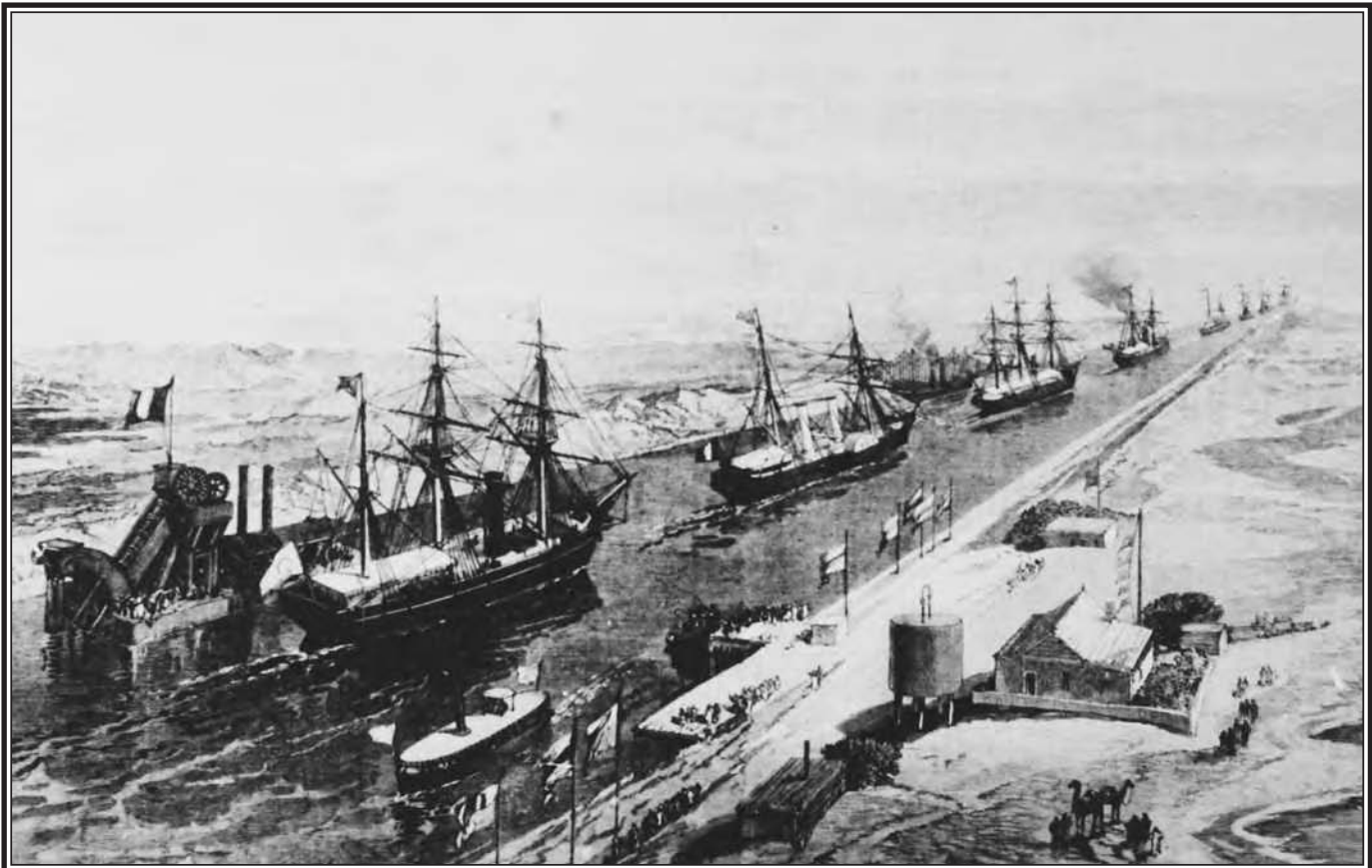
The colonial economy was perhaps the most important aspect of European policy in Africa. Before the 1800s Africa had developed a system of local and foreign trading networks, and Africans and Europeans were fairly equal trading partners. This situation changed, however, as Europeans took steps to control trade and natural resources in Africa.

The colonial powers flooded Africa with European-made goods, causing many African industries to fail because they could not compete. Europeans also encouraged the growth of cash crops* in Africa, with each colony specializing in a different crop. The emphasis on cash crops destroyed many traditional forms of agriculture. In some colonies white farmers received special treatment. They claimed the best land, forcing Africans to work less desirable plots. Some colonial governments imposed taxes on Africans. To pay them, many Africans had to abandon their land and work for wages on white-owned farms and in mines.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Opened in 1869, the Suez Canal created a passageway for trade between the Mediterranean and Red Seas. By gaining control of the canal in 1876, Britain was able to invade Egypt and conquer it.

Impact of Colonialism on African Societies. Colonial governments brought roads, railroads, ports, new technology, and other benefits to Africa. However, their policies also damaged traditional economies and dramatically changed patterns of land ownership and labor. Although the colonial system provided opportunities—such as





Colonialism in Africa

King Leopold's Colony

Crowned king of Belgium in 1865 at the age of 30, Leopold II soon became fascinated by the vast unexplored regions of Africa. With the help of explorer Henry Morton Stanley, he laid claim to a region of the Congo river basin about 80 times the size of Belgium. Although Leopold's main interest in the colony was the personal power and prestige it brought him, he also sought to profit from its abundant supply of natural rubber. This led to his downfall. When word spread about the mistreatment of rubber workers in the Congo under Leopold, Belgium stepped in to take over the colony.

education, jobs, and new markets for goods—for some Africans, it left many people poor and landless. In addition, the emphasis on cash crops raised for export made African societies dependent on foreign nations. Little was done to develop trade between colonies. As a result, many African nations still trade more with overseas countries than with neighboring states.

Colonial rule disrupted the traditional political and social institutions that had developed in Africa over centuries. As Europeans carved out empires, they destroyed existing kingdoms and split up or combined many ethnic groups. In time, the colonies they created became African nations consisting of diverse groups with little in common with their fellow citizens. Furthermore, European powers destroyed much of the political and social control of traditional African chiefs and rulers. They failed, however, to establish lasting replacements for these authorities. Finally, European colonialism introduced Africans to various aspects of Western culture. African schools and universities are based on European systems of education and religion. But other parts of Western culture have not taken root as firmly.

The impact of colonialism varied somewhat with each European power. Moreover, some governments used various approaches from one colony to the next. The handful of European nations that dominated Africa—Belgium, Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Spain—developed different sets of policies for their colonial possessions.

BELGIUM

In some ways, Belgium became a colonial power by accident. Unlike Britain, France, and Spain, it had no history of conquest and colonization in the Americas or in Asia. The nation's involvement in Africa came about because of the actions of one individual—King Leopold II of Belgium.

The Congo Free State. In the late 1870s King Leopold hired British adventurer Henry Morton STANLEY to obtain territory for him in Africa. Experienced in exploring central Africa, Stanley traveled to the Congo region and made treaties on Leopold's behalf with a number of local chiefs.

When European powers agreed on plans for colonizing Africa at the Berlin Conference, Leopold received control of an area around the Congo River basin. The colony became known as the Congo Free State and was owned by the king and not by Belgium. Leopold ruled it with an iron hand, directing all his economic and political policies toward increasing profits. He introduced harsh measures, such as forced labor, and allowed the brutal treatment of workers.

By 1904 other nations began to put pressure on Leopold to end the cruel conditions in the Congo Free State. After investigating the situation there, the Belgian government decided to annex the region in 1908, making it a Belgian colony rather than a personal possession of the king.

The Belgian Congo. Under Belgian rule, the Congo Free State became known as the Belgian Congo. Belgian authorities ended forced



Colonialism in Africa

Protectorates

Rather than claiming territory in Africa as colonies, European powers sometimes established protectorates instead. Although the term “protectorate” came into use in the 1800s, situations in which one country exercises some control over another have existed since ancient times. Rome had relationships of this type with various kingdoms, including Numidia in North Africa and Syria and Pergamum in the Middle East. In 1648, at the end of the Thirty Years’ War, France set up an informal protectorate over the region of Alsace. In 1815 the Ionian Islands off the west coast of Greece became a British protectorate. Britain later established several protectorates in various parts of Africa.

labor and gave greater recognition to traditional chiefs. Furthermore, they made no attempt to impose European culture on the African peoples. At the same time, the Belgian authorities allowed other groups—including missionaries and private companies—a great deal of freedom to pursue their own interests in the region.

Belgian colonial authorities, the Catholic Church, and big business generally worked together, although they sometimes found themselves at odds. The Catholic Church, for example, objected to government attempts to support the authority of traditional African chiefs, which might weaken the influence of missionaries. Both the church and the government criticized Belgian companies for their methods of recruiting workers, which often disrupted rural communities.

In the mid-1950s some Belgians and Africans began calling for decolonization—a gradual ending of colonial rule. By this time Belgian authorities had granted Africans certain limited rights, but no voting privileges. After rioting broke out in 1959, the Belgian government announced that it would grant independence to the Congo in June 1960. This abrupt change from colony to independent state left Africans in the Congo unprepared to govern or manage the economy. As a result, the new nation—later known as Zaire and then as Democratic Republic of Congo or CONGO (KINSHASA)—remained dependent on Europeans for guidance and assistance.

Ruanda-Urundi. For a time, Belgium also held the territory to the east of the Congo known as Ruanda-Urundi. Ruled by Germany from 1899 to 1917, the region was transferred to Belgium by the League of Nations* after World War I. Belgium administered the colony until 1962, when it split into the independent nations of RWANDA and BURUNDI.

GREAT BRITAIN

Great Britain acquired a huge colonial empire in Africa during the late 1800s through a combination of diplomacy* and military force. In ruling this vast territory, Britain’s policies varied according to local conditions and the nature of British settlement. In some areas, colonial authorities favored a form of “indirect rule,” in which local African rulers had some degree of power. In others, British officials took a more direct approach to governing, controlling all aspects of society. Although a few well-educated Africans—mostly lawyers—held high government posts in the late 1800s, they were replaced by British officials after 1900.

West Africa. The British colonies in West Africa were NIGERIA, the Gold Coast (present-day GHANA), Sierra Leone, the GAMBIA, and—after World War I—CAMEROON. Throughout West Africa, Britain tended to exert its power indirectly, often cooperating with African kings. In areas without established rulers, the British generally chose Africans to serve as chiefs.

The British established a system of law and order in these colonies. They also built a network of roads, railways, and ports for the move-

* **League of Nations** organization formed to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

* **diplomacy** practice of managing relations between nations without warfare



Colonialism in Africa

ment of cash crops and other goods. They imposed taxes on Africans, which had to be paid in cash, to increase the labor force. The only ways Africans could make these tax payments were to sell products or work for wages. Colonial authorities sometimes allowed forced labor as well.

The British provided few benefits for Africans. Although the colonial governments established some schools, most educational institutions were run by missionaries. Services such as medical facilities and electricity were concentrated in major cities and, as a result, reached only a small number of Africans.

In the early 1940s, British authorities began to offer more services and to involve Africans in economic planning and government. Ultimately, however, such policies were not enough to satisfy the desire of Africans for self-government. By the mid-1960s Britain had granted independence to all its colonies in West Africa.

East Africa. Britain's colonies in East Africa were UGANDA, KENYA, ZANZIBAR, British Somaliland, and Tanganyika, a former German colony known as German East Africa. The British also governed the islands of MAURITIUS and the SEYCHELLES in the Indian Ocean. They began to take control of East Africa in the late 1800s and eventually set up quite different administrations in each colony.

* **autonomy** independent,
self-government

In Uganda the British adopted a policy of indirect rule, giving considerable autonomy* to local leaders. They encouraged Africans to produce cash crops, which made Uganda one of the richest colonies in Africa.

The British authorities in Uganda gave their political support to the Ganda, one of the country's many ethnic groups. However, the Ganda became too powerful and other African groups came to resent them. The Ganda tried to prevent the British from interfering in Uganda's affairs and providing social services, education, and agricultural improvements to the people. During the 1940s, other Ugandan groups organized protests against the Ganda. Eventually opposition to European and Asian control of the cotton industry united the people of Uganda, and Britain granted the country independence in 1962.

In contrast to Uganda, the colonial government of Kenya was dominated by European settlers. The fertile highlands of Kenya attracted many European farmers who established huge plantations, taking the best land and forcing Africans to resettle elsewhere.

For many years, British policies in Kenya benefited the white settlers. As the population grew, Africans began to press for the right to expand onto white-owned lands. This expansion was strongly resisted by the settlers. In the early 1950s, a group known as the MAU MAU, made up of members of the GIKUYU people, began a violent uprising against the settlers. After attempting to put down the rebellion, colonial authorities realized that they would have to agree to some of the Mau Mau's demands. The government allowed Africans to farm in the highland regions, making some white settlers give up their land. In addition, the British began discussions with Kenyans about independence, which was granted in 1963.

Located south of Kenya, Tanganyika was a German colony until World War I, when Britain took it over. Initially, the colony attracted few



Colonialism in Africa

British settlers and little investment. In the 1950s, however, Britain became more involved in Tanganyika, encouraging settlement and introducing various political and economic measures. Although the Africans resisted some of the British policies, the move toward independence—granted in 1961—was relatively peaceful.

Zanzibar had been a colony of the Arab state of Oman since the mid-1800s, used mainly as a source of slaves. It had been ruled for years by an Arab upper class. When the British took Zanzibar over, they continued the tradition, appointing Arabs to most government posts. Rivalries between the Arabs and the indigenous population led to conflicts that Britain was unable to resolve. The colony was granted independence in 1963. The following year, Zanzibar and Tanganyika united to become the nation of TANZANIA.

British Somaliland was located in the northern portion of present-day SOMALIA, near DJIBOUTI. Britain established a protectorate* there in the 1880s. In 1960, the region joined with Italian Somaliland, farther south, to form the independent Republic of Somalia.

Britain captured the island of Mauritius in 1810 and then formally received control of it under the Treaty of Paris (1814), signed by several European nations at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The same treaty gave Britain the islands of the Seychelles. Mauritius gained its independence in 1968, followed eight years later by the Seychelles.

Central and Southern Africa. Britain's colonial possessions in central and southern Africa included Southern Rhodesia (present-day ZIMBABWE), Northern Rhodesia (ZAMBIA), Nyasaland (MALAWI), Bechuanaland (BOTSWANA), Basutoland (LESOTHO), and SWAZILAND. Before 1910, when SOUTH AFRICA became independent, Britain also had two colonies in that region—the Cape Colony and Natal.

Involvement in South Africa dated from the early 1800s, when Britain acquired the Cape Colony from the Dutch. British immigrants flooded into southern Africa in the late 1800s. They never gained more than partial control there, however, because of the presence of large numbers of Dutch settlers, known as Afrikaners, or Boers. As British settlement increased, many Afrikaners tried to move north into Bechuanaland. The African rulers of Bechuanaland, fearing an invasion of the Dutch settlers, asked Britain for help in 1885. Britain agreed and Bechuanaland became a British protectorate. Britain maintained a system of indirect rule there until Bechuanaland gained independence in 1966.

A similar situation occurred in Basutoland, a mountainous land that the Afrikaners had originally considered unsuitable for settlement. In the 1850s, however, the Afrikaners began to expand into Basutoland. In response to an appeal from the local people for help, Britain established a protectorate in Basutoland. Originally governed as part of the Cape Colony, Basutoland came directly under British rule in 1884. However, most of the administration of the area was left in the hands of indigenous authorities.

Swaziland also became a British protectorate. In this case, the British stepped in to end warfare between two African peoples, the Swazi and

* **protectorate** control of a weak state by a stronger one



Colonialism in Africa

Zulu. Once again, Britain established a system of indirect rule. It granted Swaziland self-government in 1967 and full independence in 1968.

In 1889 Britain gave the British South Africa Company, headed by Cecil RHODES, rights to the area that became known as Southern Rhodesia. Attracted by the offer of large tracts of land, white settlers flooded the region. Attempts by Africans to rebel against the settlers were brutally crushed, and Southern Rhodesia became a highly segregated society, dominated by whites. Forced to live on poor farmland in special areas known as reserves, many Africans had to work for the settlers to earn a living.

The British South Africa Company also gained the rights to Northern Rhodesia. At first, the British administered the region mostly through local African authorities, and there was little opposition to colonial rule. As in Southern Rhodesia, however, the settlers took over the best land and gained political and economic control of the colony and its rich copper mines.

The area to the east of Northern Rhodesia became known as Nyasaland. Ruled after 1904 by British colonial officials, it never attracted as many white settlers as the Rhodesias. Nevertheless, the spread of European-owned plantations in the region eventually aroused opposition among Africans, which led to armed rebellion in 1915. For many years, Nyasaland served as a source of labor for other colonies. Whites in Northern and Southern Rhodesia relied on Africans from Nyasaland to work on farms and in mines.

In 1953, in an effort to promote the economic and political development of the region, the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland joined together as the Central African Federation. Meanwhile, African protests against colonial policies grew stronger. By the early 1960s, the colonial administrations of Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia began allowing Africans greater participation in government. Both regions won independence in 1964; Nyasaland took the name Malawi and Northern Rhodesia became Zambia.

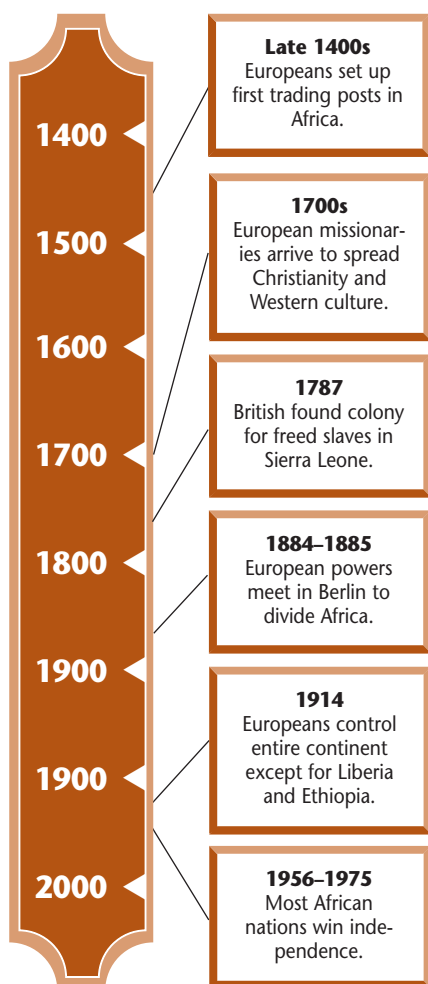
In Southern Rhodesia, settlers fiercely resisted any attempts to increase African power. In 1965 the white-dominated government declared independence for the colony. African opposition to the government erupted in guerrilla* warfare, and in the 1970s the administration's power began to crumble. By 1980 a majority black African government ruled the nation, which was renamed Zimbabwe.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

North Africa. Britain was involved in governing two large territories in North Africa—EGYPT and the SUDAN. Egypt had been conquered in 1517 by the Ottoman Empire, based in Turkey. Ottoman influence spread to northern Sudan and other parts of North Africa. In the 1800s Britain gained control of Egypt as a result of dealings over the newly built SUEZ CANAL, which provided a shipping route between the Mediterranean and Red seas. Facing a financial crisis in 1876, the Egyptian ruler sold all of Egypt's shares in the canal to Britain. The sale made Britain the majority shareholder. As Egypt's finances continued to worsen, British power in the region increased. In 1882 Britain responded to an Egyptian revolt by invading and occupying the country.



Colonialism in Africa



* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization within a government

At the start of World War I, Britain made Egypt a protectorate. After the war, local opposition arose to the British, who introduced harsh policies to keep the peace. Tensions continued to grow and Britain granted Egypt limited autonomy in 1922. Britain continued to maintain some control until the mid-1930s.

South of Egypt along the Nile River, the Sudan was conquered by British and Egyptian forces in 1898. Britain set up a joint administration with Egypt to govern the region. As in Egypt, the British had to use brutal measures to maintain control in the Sudan during World War I. British and Egyptian rule continued until 1956, when the Sudan gained independence. The new nation faced bitter regional differences between the Muslim-controlled north and the Christians of the south.

FRANCE

The French colonization of Africa took a number of years, beginning in the 1830s in North Africa and extending into Central Africa in the early 1900s. A number of territories began as “military colonies,” conquered and then governed by the French armed forces. Over time, however, civilian administrations replaced military rule.

In principle, France maintained a policy of direct rule in Africa. French officials had full authority for governing and directing the affairs of the colonies. In practice, however, Africans often played important roles in the colonial bureaucracy*. The French relied on local rulers to support their administration. Unlike the British, who left local matters pretty much in the hands of African authorities, the French intervened constantly in the affairs of their African subjects.

An important feature of French colonial administration was the distinction between “citizens” and “subjects.” Only citizens had the same rights as French colonists, and very few Africans became citizens. All other inhabitants of the colonies were subjects. Subjects had no political rights, but they had various obligations, such as serving in French armies. France recognized African laws and allowed the people to be judged by them. At the same time, the authorities tried to get Africans to adopt certain aspects of French culture, such as the French language.

As with other European powers in Africa, an important aim of French colonization was economic development. However, France had a difficult time stimulating its colonial economies. Many of its colonies were thinly populated and could not supply many workers. Moreover, for many years private businesses and trading companies controlled the economies of a number of colonies. France exercised little influence over these companies.

North Africa. France’s North African colonies consisted of ALGERIA, TUNISIA, and MOROCCO. French forces invaded Algeria in 1830 in an effort to stop pirates based there from attacking ships in the Mediterranean. After placing a number of coastal towns under military rule, the French eventually gained control of the rest of the country. In the 1860s and 1870s, French settlers began colonizing many areas of Algeria.

Colonialism in Africa



Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia helped to negotiate independence from France and became his country's first president.

* **vulnerable** open to harm or attack

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

In Tunisia, France competed with Britain and Italy for economic control. When violence broke out in Tunisia in 1881, a French naval force invaded and established a protectorate. Morocco escaped European domination for many years. In 1880, however, the European powers forced the Moroccans to sign a treaty guaranteeing the rights of foreigners in the country. In the 1890s political disorder in Morocco left the country vulnerable*. France and Spain took control in 1906, governing jointly for three years until Spain withdrew its claim to the country.

French control of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco was never secure. Throughout the colonial period, the inhabitants of the region were in an almost constant state of rebellion. In some of the more remote areas, the people never came to accept French rule. As early as the 1930s, popular resistance began to fuel movements for independence.

When France was occupied by Germany in World War II, its Vichy government maintained loose control over the North African colonies. American and British forces invaded and took over the region in 1942, but returned it to France when the war ended. In the following years, Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco all experienced a surge of nationalism*, and local opposition to French rule grew dramatically. Faced with spreading violence, terrorism, and rioting, the French granted the countries independence—Morocco and Tunisia in 1956, and Algeria in 1962.



Colonialism in Africa



West and Central Africa. French colonies in West and Central Africa included SENEGAL, GUINEA, IVORY COAST, TOGO, Dahomey (present-day BÉNIN), Cameroon, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, GABON, and French Congo, (now CONGO, BRAZZAVILLE). Before the mid-1800s, France had little interest in these areas except to establish trading posts and missionary stations along the coasts. During the “scramble” for Africa, however, the nation set its sights on a number of areas in each region, hoping to get territories with valuable resources.

France used military force to take over most of its colonies in West Africa. In some areas—such as Guinea, Ivory Coast, and Dahomey—the French met fierce resistance from the Africans. After establishing control of the coasts, it sometimes took a number of years to move inland and gain possession of the interiors. In 1904 France’s colonies in West Africa, including some in the southern Sahara, were formally organized into a large administrative unit known as FRENCH WEST AFRICA. Eventually, French West Africa included Senegal, French Sudan (present-day MALI), Guinea, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Upper Volta (present-day BURKINA FASO), NIGER, and MAURITANIA. Some of the people of Senegal were granted French citizenship and a few became members of the French legislature in Paris. After World War I, the former German colony of Togo was divided between France and Britain.

France acquired Cameroon in Central Africa as a result of World War II. Formerly the German colony of Kamerun, it was divided into East Cameroon (or Cameroun, controlled by France) and West Cameroon (or Cameroons, controlled by Britain). France gained Congo, Gabon, and the Central African Republic as the result of treaties with local rulers and military force. In 1910 Gabon, Congo, Central African Republic, and CHAD were combined in an administrative unit known as FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA.

Serious challenges to French colonial rule began after World War II, when Africans began agitating for greater autonomy. Drained financially by the war and by problems with its territories in Southeast Asia, France was unable to put up much resistance to African demands. The Overseas Reform Act in 1956 gave the African colonies autonomy in their internal affairs, while France remained responsible for defense and foreign policy. By 1960 all the French colonies of West and Central Africa had gained full independence.

The Southern Sahara. The French colonies in the southern Sahara, which included the area known as the SAHEL, were Mauritania, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, and Chad. France colonized this arid region primarily to link its other territories and to prevent other Europeans from claiming it.

Although France gained control of most of the southern Sahara in the 1890s, the nomadic peoples of the area continued to resist foreign rule for many years. The French governed the vast and thinly populated region through local rulers, who had a great deal of autonomy. Most of the colonies were administered as part of French West Africa, with Chad included in French Equatorial Africa.

There were no strong independence movements in the southern Sahara after World War II. In 1958 France created the French



Colonialism in Africa

Community, an organization that gave internal autonomy to its African colonies. Although created mainly to satisfy independence movements in other parts of Africa, the French Community also benefited the colonies of the southern Sahara. When France granted independence to its West and Central African colonies in 1960, it did the same with its southern Sahara colonies.

East Africa. France's colonies in East Africa included MADAGASCAR, RÉUNION, the COMORO ISLANDS, and French Somaliland (present-day Djibouti). During the late 1700s and early 1800s, France competed with Britain for control of the island of Madagascar. For a number of years, France dominated the coastline of Madagascar while Britain held the interior. At the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, Britain agreed to let France establish a protectorate over the island. Resistance to French rule led to a bloody but unsuccessful rebellion in 1916. When Germany occupied France in World War II, the British took charge of Madagascar because of its strategic location along shipping routes between Asia and Europe. After the war France regained control but faced a growing movement for independence, which it granted in 1960.

The island of Réunion came under French control in the early 1700s. An important sugar-growing area, it was dominated by white plantation owners who used slaves to tend the sugar crop. By 1848 the French government had abolished slavery. In 1946 the island became an overseas department of France. The French established a protectorate for the four Comoro Islands in 1885, then made them into a colony in 1912. The islands declared their independence in 1975, but France still claims one of them—Mayotte—as a territory.

France obtained the tiny colony of French Somaliland as a result of treaties signed with local African rulers in 1862. Located at the southern end of the Red Sea, the colony allowed France to guard the shipping lanes leading to the Suez Canal and the railway to Ethiopia. France granted the colony independence in 1977.

GERMANY

German colonialism in Africa lasted only from 1884 to 1914. Germany's defeat in World War I resulted in the loss of all its colonies. The nation gained little economic benefit from its African possessions, and opposition to colonial policies led to a number of bloody rebellions.

German colonies in Africa included Togo and Kamerun (Cameroon) in West Africa, South-West Africa (present-day NAMIBIA), and German East Africa (present-day Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi). Germany's policies in these areas differed somewhat, reflecting the history of its involvement in the region.

Germany began establishing commercial and missionary activities in Togo and Kamerun in the mid-1840s. During the “scramble” for Africa in the 1880s, the nation acquired both areas as colonies. Two distinct colonial systems developed under German rule. In Togo, traders and missionary societies worked together to influence colonial policies that would favor their interests in the colony. In Kamerun, plantation owners exerted a great deal of power in the colonial administration. In both

See color
plate 11,
vol. 3.



Colonialism in Africa

colonies, Germany's primary aim was to exploit the natural resources. The colonial administration's policies were often brutal and harsh.

German missionaries entered South-West Africa in the 1840s. Settlers soon followed and established farms and towns, and the area became a German colony in 1885. Following the discovery of mineral resources in the late 1800s, a mining industry developed. Resistance from Africans to colonial policies led to a bloody revolt from 1904 to 1908. Germany responded by sending troops into the colony, and afterward the military dominated the colonial administration. South-West Africa became one of the most brutal colonial societies on the continent, and many Africans (mainly members of the Herero people) were killed as part of a strategy of genocide*.

* **genocide** deliberate and systematic killing of a particular ethnic, religious, or national group

German exploration of East Africa began in the 1860s, and Germany's claim to the region was established at the Berlin Conference. At first, the colony was ruled by a trading company, the German East Africa Company. However, after violent uprisings by Arabs in the coastal regions, the German government took control. As in other German colonies, colonial rule in East Africa tended to be ruthless.

After Germany's defeat in World War I, Britain and France acquired Togo and Kamerun and divided the territories between themselves. The League of Nations authorized South Africa to administer South-West Africa, and it gave control of most of German East Africa to Britain. The rest of German East Africa, known as Ruanda-Urundi (present-day Rwanda and Burundi), went to Belgium.

ITALY

Like Germany, Italy's rule in Africa was relatively short-lived. Also like Germany, Italy lost its colonies in Africa as a result of war—in this case, its defeat in World War II.

Italy had no history of conquest and colonization in other parts of the world. As a result, it had few officials experienced in colonial matters. Moreover, the Italian government and people had little interest in colonization. Consequently, Italian colonial polices were rather haphazard and disorganized, and colonial rule depended largely on local decisions and situations. Because of their inexperience, Italian authorities often had to rely on the military to help administer and control the colonies.

Italy's first colonies were in the "horn" of Africa, a region wedged between the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. In 1885 Italy signed various treaties with Muslim rulers in that region, obtaining rights to ERITREA and Italian Somaliland (present-day Somalia). Both colonies were hot, dry regions that other European powers had considered worthless. However, because Italy was a weak nation at the time, it could not compete with other countries for more valuable territories.

In 1936 Italian forces based in Eritrea invaded and took control of ETHIOPIA, an ancient African kingdom that had remained independent during the "scramble" for Africa. Italy combined the conquered territory with Eritrea and Somaliland to form the colony of Italian East Africa. In 1937 an assassination attempt on the Italian governor of Ethiopia led to a reign of terror, in which many Ethiopians were arrested and exe-

Colonialism in Africa



Portugal, the first European power to explore Africa, established settlements on the continent's west and east coasts. This Portuguese fort in Mombasa, Kenya, was built in 1593.

cuted. Unrest in the country continued to grow, and by 1940 Ethiopian resistance groups had gained some power. During World War II, British forces invaded Ethiopia, restored the monarchy, and ended Italian rule.

Italy's other colony was LIBYA, on the coast of North Africa. For many years, Italians had crossed the Mediterranean Sea to settle in Libya. However, Italy made no attempt to colonize the area until the early 1900s. In 1911 Italian forces invaded Libya and tried to take control from the Ottoman Turks, the Muslim rulers of the country. After occupying a number of coastal areas, the Italians claimed the region as a protectorate. Muslim resistance to Italian rule led to an organized revolt that continued in some places until about 1931. During World War II, Britain, France, and their allies launched extensive campaigns against the Italians in Libya. After the war, the colony was split between the British and the French, but a united Libya gained its independence in 1951.

PORTUGAL

The Portuguese were the earliest explorers of sub-Saharan Africa, first sailing along its coasts in the 1400s. Their first colony there, the CAPE VERDE islands off the north coast of Africa, was established in the 1440s. Cape Verde settlers pioneered new systems of tropical agriculture and developed a distinctive culture that blended African and Portuguese elements.



Colonialism in Africa

Portugal went on to carve out four more colonies in Africa: Portuguese Guinea (present-day GUINEA-BISSAU), SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE, ANGOLA, and MOZAMBIQUE. Guinea-Bissau, a small administrative post in Portuguese Guinea, became the capital of the Portuguese colonies of West Africa in the 1900s. An international trading zone since the 1400s, Guinea-Bissau over the centuries supplied ivory and gold to Europe and slaves to the Americas.

In the 1600s and 1700s, Angola was also a source for slaves. Portugal established its claim to Angola through treaties with other European powers in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In 1914 Portugal gave Angola a degree of autonomy, although white Portuguese still ruled the colony. The African population staged periodic uprisings until Angola gained its independence in 1975.

The tiny island colonies of São Tomé and Príncipe also gained their independence in 1975. Primarily agricultural, these islands had been controlled by Portugal since the 1400s. For many years they served mainly as way stations on the Portuguese slave route from Africa to the Americas.

The Portuguese presence in Mozambique dated from the late 1400s, when explorers established a number of trading posts along the coast. Portuguese claims to the colony were recognized during the European negotiations over Africa in the late 1800s. At that time, a commercial firm, the Mozambique Company, was put in charge of administering the colony. Mozambique gained independence in 1975.

Portuguese colonial rule in Africa focused on trade and economic development. Some Africans in Portugal's colonies acquired commercial skills, while others received enough education to become clerks and administrators. In general, however, little attempt was made to involve Africans in colonial government. Moreover, colonial economic policies often supported forced labor and other harsh measures.

By the early 1900s, significant numbers of Portuguese began migrating to the African colonies in search of opportunity. This migration increased in the 1930s. The presence of the immigrants, who took jobs and land away from Africans, heightened racial tensions and led to political and social unrest. In some colonies, particularly Angola and Mozambique, this unrest played a major role in the drive toward independence.

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

SPAIN

From the late 1400s to early 1800s, Spain maintained a large colonial empire in the Americas. However, by the time European nations divided Africa into colonies in the late 1800s, the Spanish had little power. As a result, Spain acquired only a few colonies in Africa: Spanish Sahara (present-day WESTERN SAHARA), Spanish Guinea (EQUATORIAL GUINEA), and a group of tiny territories on the north coast of Morocco.

Spain's claim to Spanish Sahara—a barren, desert area—dates from 1884, but only in 1934 did Spain gain control of the interior. By the early 1960s, Morocco and Mauritania had begun to claim parts of the region, and this fueled an independence movement in Spanish Sahara. Finding the colony increasingly difficult to govern, Spain withdrew in 1976.



Comoro Islands

Spain gained control of the small colony known as Spanish Guinea on the west coast of Africa at the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885. In 1902 Spain formed a special council to administer the colony and oversee its development. Two years later it established basic rules of land ownership, including protection of the landholdings of some of the indigenous peoples. The Spanish left local affairs largely in the hands of traditional African rulers and groups. In the 1950s Spain's sub-Saharan territories became "overseas provinces," which made them integral parts of Spain. Africans in Spanish Guinea were granted Spanish citizenship in 1959, and the region gained autonomy in 1963 and independence in 1968.

Spain's tiny territories of Ifni, Ceuta, and Melilla along the coast of Morocco were remnants of a time when both Spain and Morocco were controlled by the Moors*. During the colonial period, Spain and France jointly ruled Morocco, although France actually governed the colony. When France granted Morocco independence in 1956, Spain gave up all claims to the region except for Ifni, Ceuta, and Melilla. It returned Ifni to Morocco in 1968, but Ceuta and Melilla still remain Spanish territories. (See also **Afrikaner Republics**; **Arabs in Africa**; **Christianity in Africa**; **Development, Economic and Social**; **Economic History**; **History of Africa**; **Independence Movements**; **Missions and Missionaries**; **Nationalism**; **Neocolonialism**; **Plantation Systems**; **Southern Africa, History**; **West African Trading Settlements**; **World Wars I and II**.)

* **Moors** North African Muslims who conquered Spain in the A.D. 700s

COMMERCE

See *Markets; Trade*.

Comoro Islands

The Comoros are a group of four islands lying in the Indian Ocean between MOZAMBIQUE and MADAGASCAR. Mayotte, the easternmost island, is an administrative territory of France. The other three—Grande Comore (Ngazidja), Anjouan (Nzwani), and Mohéli (Mwali)—make up the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoro Islands.

All the islands are volcanic in origin. Mayotte, the oldest, is fairly flat; the other islands are mountainous. Rising to 7,790 feet, Mount Karthala is the highest peak on the islands and an active volcano. The Comoros enjoy a tropical climate, featuring a wet season from October to April and a dry season from May to September. The temperature averages around 66°F during the dry season and between 75°F and 79°F in the rainy season.

The islands' fertile volcanic soil and mild climate provide favorable conditions for agriculture. Most of the inhabitants depend on local farming, raising livestock, and fishing for a living. However, the population has increased so much over the last 50 years that there is some question about the continuing ability of the Comorians to feed themselves. In addition, crops grown for export are producing less income because of reduced demand for the islands' main agricultural products—vanilla, cloves, and perfume oils.



Comoro Islands



Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros

POPULATION:

578,400 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

838 sq. mi. (2,170 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French, Arabic (official); Comoran (a Swahili dialect)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Comorian franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Sunni Muslim 86%, Roman Catholic 14%

ISLANDS:

Grand Comore (Ngazidja), Anjouan (Nzwani), Mohéli (Mwali), Mayotte (Maore); Capital: Moroni, 30,000 (1999 est.)

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 43–114 in. (1,100–2,900 mm)

ECONOMY:

GNP per capita: U.S. \$685

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: vanilla, cloves, perfume oils, copra, coconuts, cinnamon

Manufacturing: perfume distillation, textiles, jewelry, construction materials

Tourism is also an important industry.

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1975. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Fédérale elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1990:

1990–1995 President Said Mohamed Djohar

1996–1998 President Mohamed Taki Abdulkarim

1998 President Tadjidne Ben Said Massoude (interim)

1999– Colonel Azali Assoumani

ARMED FORCES:

520 (1996 est.), serving under approximately 20 French officers.

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–15; literacy rate 57%

In recent years, the islands have made a major effort to build up the tourist industry. With their beautiful beaches, coral reefs, and warm climate, the Comoros have long attracted visitors. Tourism provides an opportunity for economic growth in the near future.

The Comoros have been inhabited for over a thousand years, but during most of that time each island was separate, ruled by its own sultan or sultans. As a result, the islands developed independent traditions and dialects of the language known as Swahili. Even today inhabitants of the various islands have difficulty understanding one another.

For hundreds of years the Comoros prospered as Indian Ocean winds brought sailing ships engaged in trade between Asia and Africa to the islands. This trading activity resulted in a very diverse population made up of Africans, Arabs, Indians, Europeans, and Malagasy (peoples from Madagascar). The invention of the steamship put an end to this era, and the islands eventually became dependent upon the French.

France gained control of the Comoros in the late-1800s and in 1912 placed them under the authority of its colony of Madagascar. The islands continued to be attached to French Madagascar until the end of World War II. Three of them gained independence in 1975, but the inhabitants of Mayotte chose to remain under French control.

Since independence, the government has been toppled several times by coups* backed by foreign mercenaries*. Twice the French have stepped in. The country became the Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoro Islands (FIRCI) in 1978 with Ahmed Abdallah as president. An attempt by the island of Anjouan to secede* from the republic led to another coup in 1999 and to military rule under Colonel Azali Assoumani. The island of Mayotte is still claimed by FIRCI, but it remains a territory of France. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Government and Political Systems, Islam in Africa.**)

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **mercenary** hired soldier

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country



Congo (Brazzaville)

Conakry

Conakry, capital of GUINEA, lies at the tip of the Kaloum Peninsula on the western coast of Africa. The surrounding land is swampy, and its climate is tropical. During the rainy season, about 144 inches of rain fall in five months. About 1 million people live in the city.

In the 1200s and 1300s, Conakry was part of the Mali Empire, and descendants of Mali nobility, the Malinke, still live in Conakry. From the 1880s to the 1950s, the city—and the rest of Guinea—was ruled by French colonists. After Guinea won independence in 1958, residents of Conakry and the rest of the nation suffered under the radically anti-French leadership of President Sékou TOURÉ. The city grew extremely poor.

Since Touré's death in 1984, Conakry has experienced new life. Streets in the city's center are now paved and shaded with mango trees. Modern shops, nightclubs, and restaurants have appeared, and utilities such as electricity have become more reliable. Conakry's deep-water port services a lively export trade in bauxite, bananas, iron ore, and other products. The city is also home to Guinea's only international airport. Roads connect Conakry with IVORY COAST, MALI, and SENEGAL, and railways connect it to other Guinean cities, including Kankan, Fria, Boké, and Kamsar.

Congo (Brazzaville)

Congo, Republic of

The Republic of Congo lies along the equator and stretches northeast from the Atlantic coast into the heart of the African continent. Its dominant feature is the CONGO RIVER, one of Africa's most important waterways and the main highway for trade in the area. Many different ethnic groups live together in Congo's cities, often contributing to political and social unrest.

HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND ECONOMY

Two kingdoms and several smaller chiefdoms once occupied what is now the Republic of Congo. France took control of the region in the 1800s and claimed it as a colony for more than 150 years. Since gaining independence, Congo has struggled to achieve a stable government and economy. But internal conflict and continued exploitation* by European powers have made this task especially difficult.

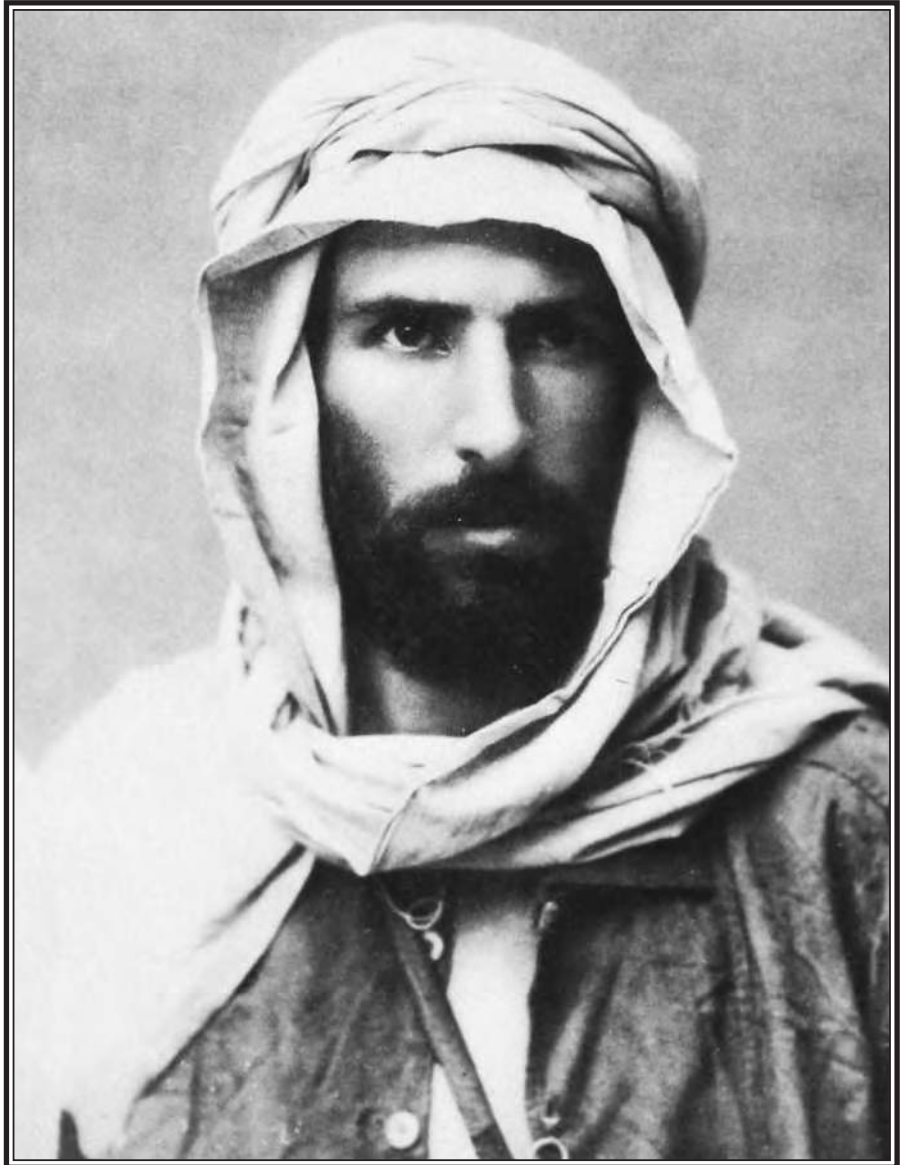
* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

History and Government. The most important of the precolonial kingdoms were the Kingdom of Kongo and the Kingdom of Téké. The Kingdom of Kongo occupied the southwestern Congo region, with its capital in what is now northwestern ANGOLA. The Kingdom of Téké was located along the center of the Congo River, where it controlled the flow of goods between the region's interior and the coast.

The Portuguese were the first Europeans in the Congo area. Arriving in the 1480s, they maintained a strong presence there for more than 200 years. However, French traders and missionaries gradually pushed out the Portuguese, and by the late 1700s France had become the major

Congo (Brazzaville)

Before signing the treaties that established the French Congo, Pierre de Brazza (1852-1905) explored much of western and central Africa for France. Brazzaville, Congo's capital, was named for him.



European power in the Congo. Between 1875 and 1885, a representative of the French government, Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, signed a treaty with the Téké king and established military posts in the region. Brazza—after whom Congo's capital city BRAZZAVILLE is named—later became the first commissioner of French Congo. However, he was replaced when he refused to open the country to exploitation by French companies. Under colonial rule, the local population was forced to work under brutal conditions to extract the region's natural resources and to build roads and the railroad to the Atlantic coast.

After World War II, France granted the Congo a degree of self-rule and allowed limited political and social reforms. Congo won its independence in 1960, and Fulbert Youlou became its first president. In 1963 Youlou declared Congo a single-party state with himself at its head. Three days of rioting followed the announcement, and Youlou was overthrown. His successor, Alphonse Massamba-Débat, ruled for four years

Congo (Brazzaville)



Republic of Congo

POPULATION:

2,830,961 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

132,000 sq. mi. (342,000 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Kongo, Lingala, Teke, Monkutuba, other Bantu dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian (mostly Roman Catholic) 50%, Traditional 48%, Muslim 2%

CITIES:

Brazzaville (capital), 1,004,000 (1999 estimated population); Pointe-Noire, Kayes, Loubomo, Ouesso, Impfondo, Fort Rousset, Djambala

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies by region, averaging about 60 in. (1,520 mm) per year

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,500

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cassava, sugarcane, rice, corn, peanuts, vegetables, coffee, cocoa, timber

Manufacturing: lumber and plywood, petroleum refining, cement, textiles, food processing

Mining: potash, petroleum, lead, zinc, copper, uranium, phosphates, natural gas

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Military dictatorship, officially declared multiparty in 1991. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale and Sénat (elected legislatures), Council of Ministers (appointed by president)

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1979:

1979–1992 President Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso

1992–1997 President Pascal Lissouba

1998– President Denis Sassou-Nguesso

ARMED FORCES:

10,000 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–16; literacy rate 75%

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

before being replaced in a military coup* led by Captain Marien Ngouabi. Like his predecessors, Ngouabi tried to gain complete control over the government. In 1977 he was assassinated and replaced by General Joachim Yhombi-Opango.

Two years later another coup brought Colonel Denis Sassou-Nguesso to power. Sassou was more successful than previous Congolese leaders in securing control over the nation. He eliminated political rivals and placed his supporters in government posts. But Sassou heeded calls for greater democracy in 1991, when he allowed the formation of a national convention that stripped him of his powers. The following year Pascal Lissouba was elected president. Sassou and others organized resistance to Lissouba's rule, and by 1997 the nation was engaged in a violent civil war. Lissouba was forced to flee the country, and Sassou again assumed the presidency. Outbreaks of fighting and civil war continued in the following years.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

Economy. Congo is rich in natural resources including timber, diamonds, gold, and many different minerals. However, political unrest and a lack of infrastructure* have slowed the nation's economic development. Although many Congolese people are engaged in farming, agriculture accounts for only a small percentage of national wealth. As a result, Congo imports much of its food. Oil was discovered offshore in the early 1970s and quickly became the chief source of the nation's income. However, a large portion of this revenue goes to the European firms that have helped Congo develop its petroleum resources. Other



Congo (Brazzaville)

industries—including food processing and textile production—are located in the three main cities of Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, and Nkayi.

LAND AND PEOPLE

Congo consists of four main regions: the coastal plain, the Nyari Valley, the Téké Plateau, and the Congo Basin. All the regions experience two dry and two rainy seasons per year. The coastal plain has a cooler and drier climate than the rest of the country. The Nyari Valley, just northeast of the coastal plain, features fertile soil that produces many of the nation's crops such as coffee, cocoa, and sugar. The Téké Plateau, lying north of the capital, is a region of low hills and rolling, sandy plains. The Congo Basin in the northeast consists of tropical rain forest and flat, swampy valleys. Because of its rugged terrain, the northern part of the country is much less developed than the south.

The population of Congo is highly concentrated in the south, with almost two thirds of the people living in or around the cities of Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, which are the two end points for the Congo-Océan railroad. In addition, many people live in the small towns that sprung up along the rail line, towns that were created mainly to serve as railway stations. Nearly one-third of the country's entire population lives in Brazzaville alone. Although most of the people share an urban lifestyle, the Congolese are extremely diverse and can be divided into about 75 distinct groups. About half of Congo's population belong to the Kongo ethnic group, who live between Brazzaville and the coast. The other major ethnic groups are the Téké of south central Congo and the Mbochi of the north. These different groups have maintained strong traditions and rivalries, and most Congolese still identify with their own ethnic group rather than with the nation as a whole. This has made unifying the country under shared political leadership a particularly difficult task. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, French Equatorial Africa.**)

Congo (Kinshasa)

Congo, Democratic Republic of

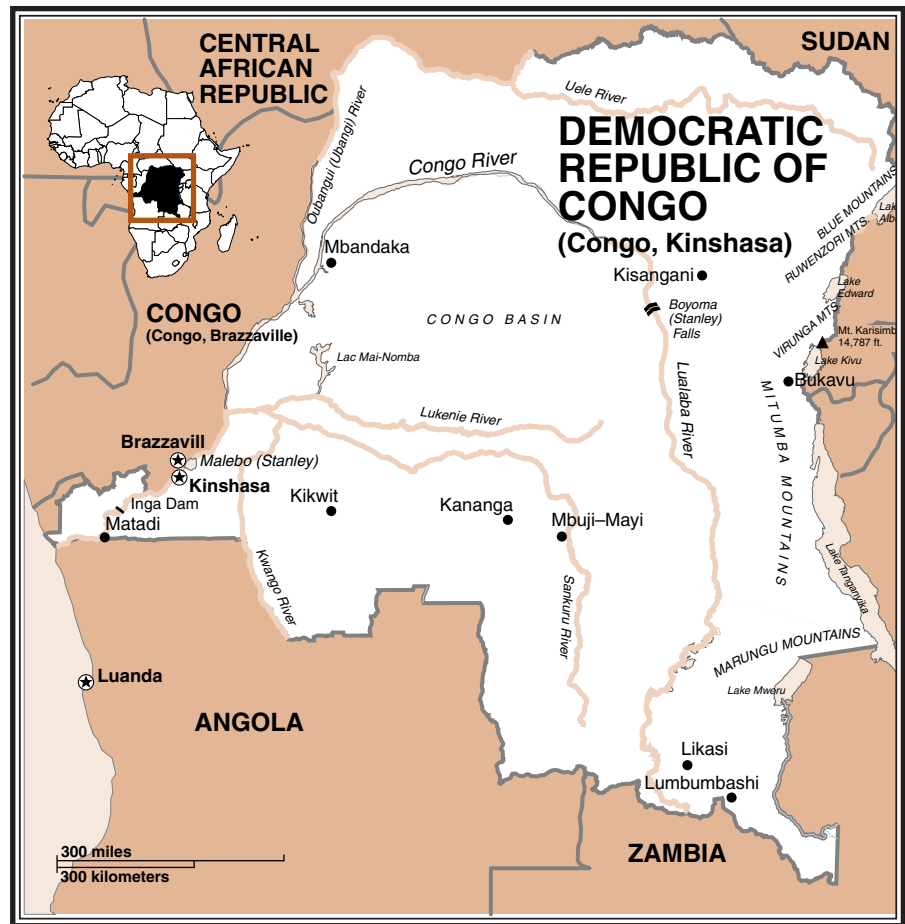
* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The Democratic Republic of Congo—formerly known as Zaire—is the second-largest country in Africa. Located in the center of the sub-Saharan* region, the Congo is huge and diverse and blessed with abundant natural resources. But the nation's history is troubled. Since gaining independence in 1960, it has been plagued by violence, dictatorial rule, economic mismanagement, and political corruption. Once a land of promise, the Congo has become the prime example of the problems facing modern Africa.

GEOGRAPHY

The Democratic Republic of Congo is about the size of the United States east of the Mississippi River. Except for a very small section of coastline along the Atlantic Ocean, the country is landlocked.

Congo (Kinshasa)



The Congo is dominated by the CONGO RIVER, one of the largest rivers in the world. The river divides the country into four distinct geographic regions. In the center of the country is the immense Congo Basin, or Central Basin, an area of roughly 300,000 square miles covered by dense tropical rain forest. This hot, humid region contains a number of large plantations that produce coffee, cocoa, palm oil, and rubber. It is the most thinly populated area of the country.

North and south of the rain forest are woodlands. These areas, which enjoy abundant rainfall, a fairly temperate climate, and two growing seasons per year, produce most of the country's food. The majority of the nation's inhabitants live in the woodland areas.

The easternmost part of the Congo features high mountains rising to nearly 17,000 feet. With rich volcanic soils, this fertile region produces a variety of food crops as well as coffee and tea. The southernmost part of the Congo consists of forested savanna* and has a much drier climate and relatively few inhabitants.

* savanna tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

* exploitation relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

The history of the Democratic Republic of Congo has been marked by violence and exploitation* of the people by their leaders. This pattern,



Congo (Kinshasa)

established under Belgian colonial rule from 1885 to 1960, continued after independence under MOBUTU SESE SEKO.



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

Precolonial and Colonial History. The first large state to emerge in the region was the kingdom of Kongo, which by 1500 covered an area of about 30,000 square miles. Kongo dominated the region until 1665, when civil war broke out after the death of the king. The Portuguese, who had been active in the area since the late 1400s, tried to take advantage of the confused situation by invading Kongo. Kongolese forces defeated the Portuguese, but the continuing war and internal rivalries greatly damaged the kingdom. It never regained its former power.

In the late 1800s, the Belgian king Leopold II sent American adventurer Henry Morton STANLEY to explore the Congo River basin. Although Stanley had already traveled parts of the region, he had never journeyed so far inland. On his mission for Leopold, Stanley signed several treaties with local chiefs. Leopold then used the treaties to lay personal claim to the area. In 1885 an international agreement in Europe gave the king ownership of the region, then known as the Congo Free State. Leopold leased parts of his territory to private companies that wanted to profit from the region's riches. The companies used brutal tactics to force the local population to work for them on rubber plantations, in the mines, as porters, and to serve in the colonial army. Some scholars estimate that violence, overwork, and starvation killed perhaps as many as 10 million Congolese people in 20 years.

Leopold ran the Congo Free State as his own private kingdom until 1908, when in disgust at his greed, the Belgian government declared it a colony of Belgium. Many of Leopold's practices continued under Belgian rule, although treatment of the indigenous* population was slightly less brutal. Virtually all state resources and services were controlled by colonial authorities and foreign companies, and the local people had little or no say in economic or political matters.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Independence and the Congo Crisis. By the 1950s the independence movements sweeping through Africa spread to the Belgian Congo. In response to Congolese demands for greater rights, the Belgian government proposed a 30-year timetable for independence. Most Congolese found this unacceptable, and mounting political and economic unrest in the late 1950s forced the Belgians to grant the Congo independence in 1960.

The first president of the new nation was Joseph Kasavubu; Patrice LUMUMBA, a political rival, served as prime minister. Within weeks of independence, the Congolese army mutinied and civil unrest spread throughout the country. Hundreds of Europeans were massacred and thousands fled the country and returned to Europe.

As the revolt continued, Prime Minister Lumumba asked the UNITED NATIONS (UN) to send troops to restore order. Lumumba also sought assistance from the Soviet Union*, and soon the United States became involved in the conflict as well, raising the prospect of a major war. During this time, the important copper mining region of Shaba in the southeast declared its independence from the new nation.

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics



Congo (Kinshasa)

Heart of Darkness

"An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest... At night sometimes the roll of drums behind the curtain of trees would run up the river and remain... as if hovering in the air high over our heads." These images of Congo's remote interior are found in Joseph Conrad's short story "Heart of Darkness"—one of the most famous works of English literature. The tale was inspired by Conrad's own experiences as a young steamboat captain journeying through the unexplored Congo in the late 1800s. It explores not only the darkness of the African jungle, but also the darkness—greed and corruption—Conrad felt existed in the heart of man.

The Congolese military soon stepped in to help Kasavubu, aided by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. The military arrested Lumumba and turned him over to the leader of the Shaba rebels, Moïse Tshombe, who had Lumumba killed. Meanwhile, civil war continued to rage between Shaba and the Congo. In 1962 the UN proposed a peace plan, but Tshombe resisted it, believing he could conquer the entire country. But the forces against him were too powerful, and he surrendered to Kasavubu the following year. In 1965 Kasavubu was himself overthrown by Colonel Joseph Désiré Mobutu, who would rule for more than 30 years with the help of U.S. financial support.

The Mobutu Years. Mobutu immediately moved to consolidate power in his own hands by eliminating political opponents and stirring up rivalries between competing ethnic groups. He also dissolved the parliament and created a single party to control political life.

In 1971 Mobutu changed the country's name from Congo to Zaire, which he claimed was an African word for "big river" (it was actually a Portuguese mispronunciation of the word for river.) He also took the name Mobutu Sese Seko ("the all-powerful") and declared European names illegal. He even went so far as to outlaw neckties because they were part of Western clothing.

Instead of building up the country, Mobutu and his allies robbed it. Mobutu took possession of foreign-owned businesses and gave them to his friends and supporters, who proceeded to destroy much of the nation's economy. In addition, political corruption became widespread because poorly paid public officials had to accept bribes to make a living. In the mid-1970s Mobutu issued some reforms in an attempt to ease some of the economic conditions his policies had created. The reforms had little effect.

Mobutu's dictatorship allowed no opposition, and many of his policies were very harsh. Yet Mobutu received support in the 1970s and 1980s from the United States and other Western countries because of his opposition to communism*. During this period, Zaire's southern neighbor ANGOLA was in the midst of its own civil war, and Western nations saw Mobutu as a stronghold against the Communist forces battling in Angola.

By the 1980s Mobutu faced increasing criticism at home and abroad. Zaire's economy was in a disastrous state, public servants were unpaid and restless, and public order was disintegrating. When the Cold War* ended in the early 1990s, Mobutu's Western allies no longer needed him as a stronghold against communism.

As Mobutu saw his control of events slipping away, he made a desperate bid to stay in power by approving multiparty elections in 1990. However, he kept postponing them for various reasons. The next year the economy almost totally collapsed, and riots and violence swept through Zaire, killing hundreds of people and destroying much of the nation's infrastructure.

In 1996 rebel forces in eastern Zaire, led by Laurent Kabila, began marching west toward the capital of KINSHASA. Zaire's armed forces were so disorganized and demoralized that they offered almost no resistance. In less than a year, the rebels gained control of the entire country and forced Mobutu from power.

* **communism** system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

Cold War period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

Congo (Kinshasa)



Democratic Republic of the Congo

POPULATION:

51,964,999 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

905,560 sq. mi. (2,345,410 sq. km.)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Kongo, Lingala, Swahili, Tshiluba, Ngwana

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Congolese franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 80% (Roman Catholic 50%, Protestant 20%, Kimbanguist 10%), Muslim 10%, Traditional 10%

CITIES:

Kinshasa (capital), 5,064,000 (2000 est.); Kisangani, Lumbumbashi, Kanaga, Likasi, Mbandaka, Mbuji-Mayi, Bukavu

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 30–60 in. (800–1500 mm) in south to 80–118 in. (2,000–3,000 mm) in central basin rainforest

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$110

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, sugar, palm oil, rubber, tea, cassava, bananas, corn, fruits

Manufacturing: mineral processing, cement, textiles, leather goods, cigarettes, processed food and beverages

Mining: diamonds, cobalt, copper, cadmium, gold, silver, zinc, iron ore, coal

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Belgium, 1960. Dictatorship.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960 Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba

1960–1965 President Joseph Kasavubu

1965–1997 President Mobutu Sese Seko

1997–2001 Laurent Désiré Kabila

2001– Joseph Kabila

ARMED FORCES:

50,000 (2000 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–12; literacy rate 77%

The Congo Today. When Kabila took over as president in 1997, he changed the country's name to The Democratic Republic of Congo and promised that elections would be held after a two-year period of reorganization. However, Kabila made little progress in introducing democracy, and his government proved to be almost as corrupt and brutal as the one it replaced.

By mid-1998 Kabila himself faced a rebellion after ousting the military advisers who had helped him to power. These advisers led a rebel force that nearly captured Kinshasa before Kabila called for support from neighboring Angola and ZIMBABWE. Within months the conflict expanded to include CHAD, ANGOLA, LIBYA, RWANDA, UGANDA, and even Zimbabwe.

By the year 2000, rebel forces controlled the eastern third of the Congo, while Kabila ruled the rest of the country with the military support of his foreign allies. Like Mobutu before him, Kabila ruled by force and by decree, but his hold over the country was largely dependent on the continued presence of foreign forces. In January 2001, Kabila was assassinated and his son, Joseph, was sworn in as president.

ECONOMY

About 75 percent of the people of the Democratic Republic of Congo are engaged in agriculture. Most farms are small, lack modern equipment, and use little in the way of improved seeds or fertilizer. Although some plantations employ more modern, large-scale farming methods, this type of agricultural production has decreased over the past 30 years.

Mining has been an important part of the nation's economy since the colonial era. Copper was the main export until the early 1990s, when it



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).



Congo (Kinshasa)

was replaced by diamonds. Manufacturing is concentrated in the capital city, Kinshasa, and in a few other urban centers. However, manufacturing represents only a small percentage of the nation's economic activity.

* **regime** current political system or rule

In the early 1970s, high copper prices and political stability led to several years of growth in the country's economy. Then in 1973, the nation's president, Mobutu Sese Seko, seized all foreign-owned businesses and gave them to Zairians who supported his regime*—a policy known as Zairianization. Most of these new owners had little business experience and no particular interest in making their companies profitable. Instead, they enriched themselves on whatever profits they could make.

* **inflation** increase in prices

Zairianization had a disastrous effect on the nation's economy. Many businesses went bankrupt because of poor management and corruption, and the economy began a long-term decline. Industrial production and mining decreased dramatically. High rates of inflation* made the nation's currency virtually worthless. With no money to spend on maintaining roads and other transportation services, the country saw its infrastructure* deteriorate. As a result, the cost of moving food from the countryside to the cities rose sharply and food prices skyrocketed.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

In the 1990s, the economic problems led to rioting, looting, and general civil disorder. Civil war erupted in the mid-1990s. Today, the nation's economy remains in desperate shape and shows little sign of improving in the near future, despite the nation's natural riches and potential.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

The population of the Congo is unevenly distributed. Most of the people are concentrated in a few areas, more than half of them in cities. About 70 percent are Christian, including many members of the Kimbanguist Church—a Baptist-style church founded in Congo by Simon KIMBANGU. Between 20 and 25 percent practice traditional African religions. The remaining 5 to 10 percent of the Congolese people are Muslim. Many of the Christians include elements of traditional religions in their rituals* and beliefs.

The Congo is home to about 300 different ethnic groups of varying sizes. The most important factor in determining a person's ethnic identity is LANGUAGE. The country has more than 200 languages, but four BANTU languages stand out above the others. Used for instruction in most schools, these four languages—Lingala, SWAHILI, Tshiluba, and Kongo—also dominate radio and television broadcasting.

Shared histories and participation in the economy and government play a role in ethnic identity in the Congo today. In practice, ethnicity is very flexible, and people often identify themselves with more than one group. A single national culture does not yet exist, although a common national identity is only now beginning to take shape in the nation's cities, especially Kinshasa. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Global Politics and Africa.*)



Congo River

Congo River

* **equatorial** referring to the region around the equator

* **navigable** deep and wide enough to provide passage for ships

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

* **estuary** wide part of a river where it nears the sea

For centuries the Congo River has played a key role in trade, travel, and exploration in equatorial* Africa. The Congo and its many tributaries form the largest system of navigable* waterways in Africa. For local peoples, the river is a vital highway of commerce and communication.

The Congo flows for 2,900 miles in a great curve through the center of Africa. It is the world's second most powerful river (after the Amazon in South America), emptying 10 million gallons of water each second into the Atlantic Ocean. Together with its many tributaries, it drains a vast area that covers most of the nations of Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, and the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC. It also drains parts of ZAMBIA, ANGOLA, and TANZANIA. Much of the river lies within the *cuvette centrale*, a vast, basinlike depression in the plateau of equatorial Africa. The Congo's main tributaries include the Aruwimi, Ubangi, Lulonga, Tshuapa, Sangha, and Kasai Rivers.

The Congo is called the Lualaba at its source in the savannas* near the southeastern corner of the Democratic Republic of Congo. It flows north over many falls and rapids to Wagenia Falls, not far from the city of Kisangani in the heart of the rain forest. Below Wagenia Falls the river's name changes to Congo. Dotted with countless islands, it follows a lazy curve west and then south through the rain forest. In some places the river is more than 9 miles wide, and during periods of high water it spills over its low banks onto wide floodplains on either side. Below the city of Liranga, the river forms the border between the two Congo nations.

At Tchumbiri, the river leaves the swampy flatlands of the *cuvette centrale* and begins carving a path to the ocean through the Téké Plateau and the Crystal Mountains. It narrows and flows rapidly between steep banks, then widens again to form Malebo Pool, also called Stanley Pool. On either side of the pool stand the two capital cities, KINSHASA (The Democratic Republic of Congo) and BRAZZAVILLE (the Republic of Congo). Between Kinshasa and Matadi, the Congo drops steeply, passing over 32 waterfalls. This section of the river could be the largest source of hydroelectric* power in the world, although little has yet been done to harness that power. For its final 150 miles, from Matadi to the Atlantic coast, the river is navigable by oceangoing ships.

The Congo's waterfalls and rapids kept Europeans out of the central basin during the years of the SLAVE TRADE. So little was known of the river that as late as the 1800s Europeans thought that its mouth might be the mouth of the Niger River, far to the north. The upper Congo was familiar, however, to African fishers and traders, who traveled the river in very long dugout canoes with as many as 60 or 70 paddlers.

France and Belgium sought control of the Congo River while they were establishing their colonies in equatorial Africa. The European scramble to colonize the area was started by Henry Morton STANLEY, the first white explorer to travel most of the river's length. Early colonists transported steamboats piece by piece from the river's estuary* to Stanley Pool. Once assembled, the boats were used to control commerce and impose colonial rule on the central stretch of the Congo. Later, railroads carried people and goods from the coast to the steamboat networks.



Copts

After the nations of equatorial Africa achieved independence in the mid-1900s, Africans reclaimed control of the Congo waterway network. At first, African fishermen began to gain power by working on the steamships that traveled the river or by carrying on trade from their own dugout canoes. Those early African traders often had to travel at night to avoid colonial river patrols. Since then, riverboats and the barges they pull have become floating marketplaces, sometimes even described as floating cities. For a large part of equatorial Africa, the Congo River remains the principal route of trade and travel. Local people often call it simply *Ebale* (the river). (See also **Congo (Kinshasa)**, **Congo (Brazzaville)**.)



Copts

* **sect** religious group

The Copts, a Christian sect* in EGYPT, trace their history back almost 2,000 years. They follow customs and beliefs that they adopted long before Islam, the dominant religion in Egypt today, arrived in the region.

According to tradition, Christianity was introduced to Egypt in the A.D. 40s. The city of ALEXANDRIA became a center of Christian scholarship, and the religion spread down the Nile river basin to NUBIA and southeast into ETHIOPIA. In the 200s Saint Antony, an Egyptian Copt, founded a movement to establish monastic communities—religious colonies where Christians could seek spiritual growth. Many Christians from Greece, Rome, Syria, Nubia, and Ethiopia spent time in Coptic monasteries.

Over time, a conflict arose between the church in Rome and the Egyptian church. The church in Rome held that Jesus Christ had two separate natures—divine and human. The Egyptian church—along with certain other eastern churches—claimed instead that Christ had a single, divine nature. This eastern belief came to be known as Monophysite Christianity, from the Greek words for “single nature.” In 451 a church council held at Chalcedon (near present-day Istanbul) condemned the monophysite view. As a result, the Egyptian Christians and the other eastern churches split with Rome.

In the 640s the ARABS conquered Egypt and introduced Islam to the region. They began to refer to the Egyptian Christians as “Copts.” Under Arab rule, the Copts slowly abandoned the use of their own language (a version of ancient Egyptian) and began to speak Arabic. Many Copts worked in the civil service or ran businesses.

Today between 6 and 9 million Copts live in Egypt. Some are farmers and others work in various trades in the cities. Although the Copts’ right to practice their religion is guaranteed by Egyptian law, they often face discrimination* from Muslims. The Coptic Church (also known as the Coptic Orthodox Church) runs its own schools as well as a college connected to the Institute of Coptic Studies in CAIRO. Its rituals* are similar in many ways to those of the ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH, which is also sometimes called Coptic. (See also **Christianity in Africa, Religion and Ritual**.)

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern



Correia, Mãe Aurélia

Correia, Mãe Aurélia

**Early 1800s
Trader in Guinea-Bissau**

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

* **commodity** article of trade

Mãe Aurélia Correia was a wealthy and powerful trader in the GUINEA-BISSAU region from the 1820s to the 1840s. Among the many women traders of African or mixed ancestry at the time, Mãe Aurélia was the most successful.

Little information exists about Mãe Aurélia's birth and family because the Portuguese colonial authorities in Guinea-Bissau kept poor records. Her sister (or aunt), Mãe Julia da Silva Cardoso, worked closely with her. They operated trading vessels and maintained many slaves, including sailors and skilled artisans*. As the business grew, the two women accumulated large quantities of gold and silver jewelry and expensive garments, and they lived in European-style houses.

Around 1825 Mãe Aurélia married Caetano José Nozolini, an army officer from CAPE VERDE. It is certain that Nozolini must have had excellent leadership skills and other positive attributes, for Mãe Aurélia would have been very careful to choose a husband that could be of the most help to her in building her business ventures. Together, the couple continued to gather great wealth, dominating the war-torn and untamed Guinea-Bissau region. No other leader in the region could mobilize as many people as Mãe Aurélia could to defend her family's interests. Nozolini's leadership abilities, combined with Mãe Aurélia's shrewd business skill, enabled the couple to dominate trade in slaves and other commodities* along the Geba and Grande rivers and on various nearby islands.

Portuguese colonial officials lacked soldiers and supplies, and they depended on Mãe Aurélia, Nozolini, and other traders to help maintain order in the region. In 1826 Mãe Aurélia and her husband played an important role in putting down a mutiny at the Portuguese fort in Bissau. In 1842 the Portuguese asked for Mãe Aurélia's assistance when the inhabitants of Bissau laid siege to the fort.

When British authorities took notice of the slave trading activities of Mãe Aurélia and Nozolini, the couple claimed the slaves they were shipping to Cape Verde were members of their extended family. During the 1830s, Mãe Aurélia and her husband used slaves to develop peanut plantations on the easily accessible island of Bolama along the coast. The island's location gave the British an opportunity to strike at the two slave traders. In a series of raids on the island, British naval squadrons took hundreds of slaves to freedom in SIERRA LEONE.

A son and three daughters of Mãe Aurélia and Nozolini survived infancy. The son, who was educated in France, took over the family business; two of the daughters married doctors involved in commerce; and the third daughter married a wealthy trader. Through their own ventures, the children maintained the family's prominence in Guinea-Bissau. (See also **Slave Trade, Trade.**)

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

See *Ivory Coast.*

Crafts

See
color plate 7,
vol. 3.

* **wattle-and-daub** method of construction that consists of mud or clay laid on a framework of poles

For centuries Africans have produced handmade items such as cloth, baskets, and pottery to meet the practical needs of everyday life. Such handicrafts are also expressions of their makers' skills and of personal, regional, and cultural styles. Many are produced specifically for sale or for export to markets in other countries.

Basketry. Both men and women make many kinds of baskets and mats out of plant materials such as wood, palm leaves, reeds, grasses, and roots. They decorate their handiwork with patterns of differently colored and textured materials or with leather stitched onto the basketwork. There are two basic basket-making techniques. In plaited basketry, strands of plant fiber are soaked and then twined, woven, or twisted together. In sewn basketry, a thin strip of continuous material—usually grass—is stitched onto itself in a coil. Some baskets made this way are so tightly sewn that they hold liquid.

Baskets serve a wide range of practical purposes. Most are used as containers for serving food, storing items, or carrying goods. Some baskets function as tools, such as traps for fish and animals and strainers for flour or homemade beer. Basketry techniques are applied to other tasks, including fashioning the framework for thatched roofs and wattle-and-daub* walls.

African baskets have decorative and social purposes as well. Hats are often made of basketwork adorned with fiber tufts, feathers, fur, and leather. The traditional beaded crowns of the YORUBA people of Nigeria, for example, have basketry foundations. Groups such as the Chokwe of Angola and Zambia create dance masks of basketry or bark cloth on a wicker frame. Over much of eastern Africa, baskets ornamented with shells, beads, dyed leather, and metal dangles are presented as special gifts. They may also be included among a bride's wedding decorations.

Flat mats, another form of basketry, often serve as ground covering on which to sit or sleep. The nomadic Somali people use mats to roof their temporary shelters. In the Congo region, traditional houses are often walled with rigid mats, patterned in black on a background of natural yellow.

Beads and Jewelry. Africans use beads to adorn their bodies, their furnishings, and their burials. Nigerians had developed a glass bead industry by 1000 B.C., and ancient trade routes circulated beads of bone, stone, ivory, seed, ostrich eggshell, metal, and shell. Cowrie shells from the Indian Ocean were highly valued. Once used as money, they still serve as symbols of wealth in many places.

Western and central Africans traditionally used beads to cover furniture, sculpture, and clothing. Groups in Nigeria and Cameroon fashioned complicated pictures out of tiny colored beads. For many nomadic peoples, beadwork, which could be carried with them, was the main form of visual art. In eastern Africa, beadwork ornaments displayed the wearer's social position through a complex system of color and design. In many regions children wore beads to bring good health and luck.

See color
plate 12,
vol. 3.



Crafts

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Foreign contact and modern materials have changed the types of beads used in Africa. Glass beads from India were imported into sub-Saharan* Africa more than 1,000 years ago. By the late 1800s, colored glass beads manufactured in Europe were being shipped by the ton to Africa, where they served as trade goods. Despite the widespread use of these imported beads, native African bead-making techniques survived. However, craftspeople began using new materials in their work. For example, MAASAI groups have recently incorporated blue plastic pen caps into their beadwork in place of traditional feather quill pens. Today, people produce beads and other kinds of jewelry from coins, buttons, wire, and discarded aluminum and plastic, working these materials into their traditional styles.

African artists and craftspeople also make metal ornaments and jewelry. Many parts of western Africa have a long history of producing fine gold jewelry. The country that is now Ghana was formally named the Gold Coast. The name came from the fact that the local ASANTE kings wore so many gold necklaces, bracelets, crowns, rings, and anklets. In Ancient Egypt, craftspeople used gold to create spectacular jewelry, burial items, vessels, and furniture for their kings, the PHARAOHS. The TUAREG people of northeastern Africa specialize in making silver jewelry. Today many Africans produce jewelry and beadwork to sell to tourists.

See
color plate 8,
vol. 4.

Pottery. Pottery is among Africa’s oldest crafts. Archaeologists have discovered evidence that people in the Sahara desert were making pottery more than 10,000 years ago. Deposits of clay are found throughout the continent. This versatile material is used to make containers for cooking, storing, and measuring foodstuffs, as well as for jewelry, furniture, coffins, toys, beehives, musical instruments, household utensils, and tiles. Even broken pottery has value in Africa—as game pieces, floor tiles, and raw material for making new pottery.

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

Traditionally, each piece of African pottery was made by hand. Potters, some of whom were traveling craftspeople, developed a variety of techniques that could produce sturdy pottery quickly and inexpensively. They baked it over open bonfires, in fire pits, or in simple furnaces called kilns. Although these methods remain in use, some African manufacturers now make pottery by pressing or pouring clay into molds for mass production.

People in various parts of Africa create jewelry and other ornaments from colorful beads. This Zulu woman of South Africa is stringing glass beads on cotton thread.

Africans often decorate their pottery with texture. They carve or raise patterns and designs on the surface of the clay. Craftspeople in Islamic cultures, especially in North Africa, paint clay tiles with elaborate geometric patterns and designs inspired by Arabic script. These are generally used to decorate mosques* and Muslim religious schools.



Africans tend to draw a line between clay sculpture and functional pottery vessels. Traditionally, in much of the continent, sculpture is produced by men and the pottery by women. This division of labor came in part from a belief that making clay images of people or animals was considered similar to a woman’s ability to have children. However, in many cultures, powerful women and women beyond childbearing age may create figurines.

African pottery vessels sometimes carry meanings beyond their everyday functions. The style of a pot may reflect a person’s position in soci-

Raffia Artists

Textiles in the Congo region and other parts of central Africa were traditionally made of raffia. Today the finest raffia weavers come from the former central African kingdom of Kuba. Men weave the raffia cloth in small rectangles. Women decorate these pieces with embroidery or by cutting patterns into the fabric surface. One garment of the region is the *ntshak*, a long skirt made of many rectangles sewn together. The *ntshak* is decorated by a group of relatives, either men or women, depending on whether it is to be worn by a man or a woman. The resulting garment belongs to the 6 or 12 people who helped create it.

* **raffia** type of palm used for weaving and basketry

See
color plate 9,
vol. 3.

See
color plate 8,
vol. 3.

ety. A widow, a married man, and a child might each be expected to use a pitcher of a different shape. A flour jar marking a tomb may indicate that a fertile mother is buried within. Pottery vessels may also act as containers of spiritual forces. A dead woman's spirit could be thought to inhabit the pot that she used for years to haul water.

Textiles. Textiles are cloths woven of threads. In Africa, they have great cultural as well as practical significance. People offer textiles as gifts on important social occasions and often bury them with the dead. Textiles may indicate the wearer's importance in the community. Their patterns or color combinations sometimes carry symbolic messages. In some parts of Africa, cloth was once used as money. Textiles remain an important item in the economy, especially in West Africa, where more workers are engaged in the production and trade of cloth than in any other craft profession.

Barkcloth, traditionally used throughout much of central and eastern Africa, is not a true textile. It is pounded from the bark of the *ficu* tree. However, Africans have long used barkcloth in the same way they use textiles. Textile weaving and the production of barkcloth rarely occur in the same area.

African textile makers have traditionally used at least five types of hand-operated looms to weave their cloth. Some types are worked on only by men, others by women. All of these looms produce long, narrow strips of material, ranging from less than an inch to about 10 inches in width. When sewn together, the strips make rectangular cloths. Today African textiles are often manufactured on automatic looms in factories.

Africans produce many distinctive cloths woven from cotton, wool, wild silk, and raffia* fibers. Egyptian weavers have been making fine linen for over 1,600 years. The **FULANI** people of Mali are known for their *kaasa* covers, a tightly woven wool fabric that offers protection against cold and insects. The weavers of southern Ghana and Togo are famous for their *kente* cloth, large, richly colored textiles worn by men at important ceremonies. The most valuable of these are made of silk. **BERBER** women produce colorful wool rugs woven in unique geometric designs. Manufactured fibers such as rayon play an important part in the modern textile trade of Africa.

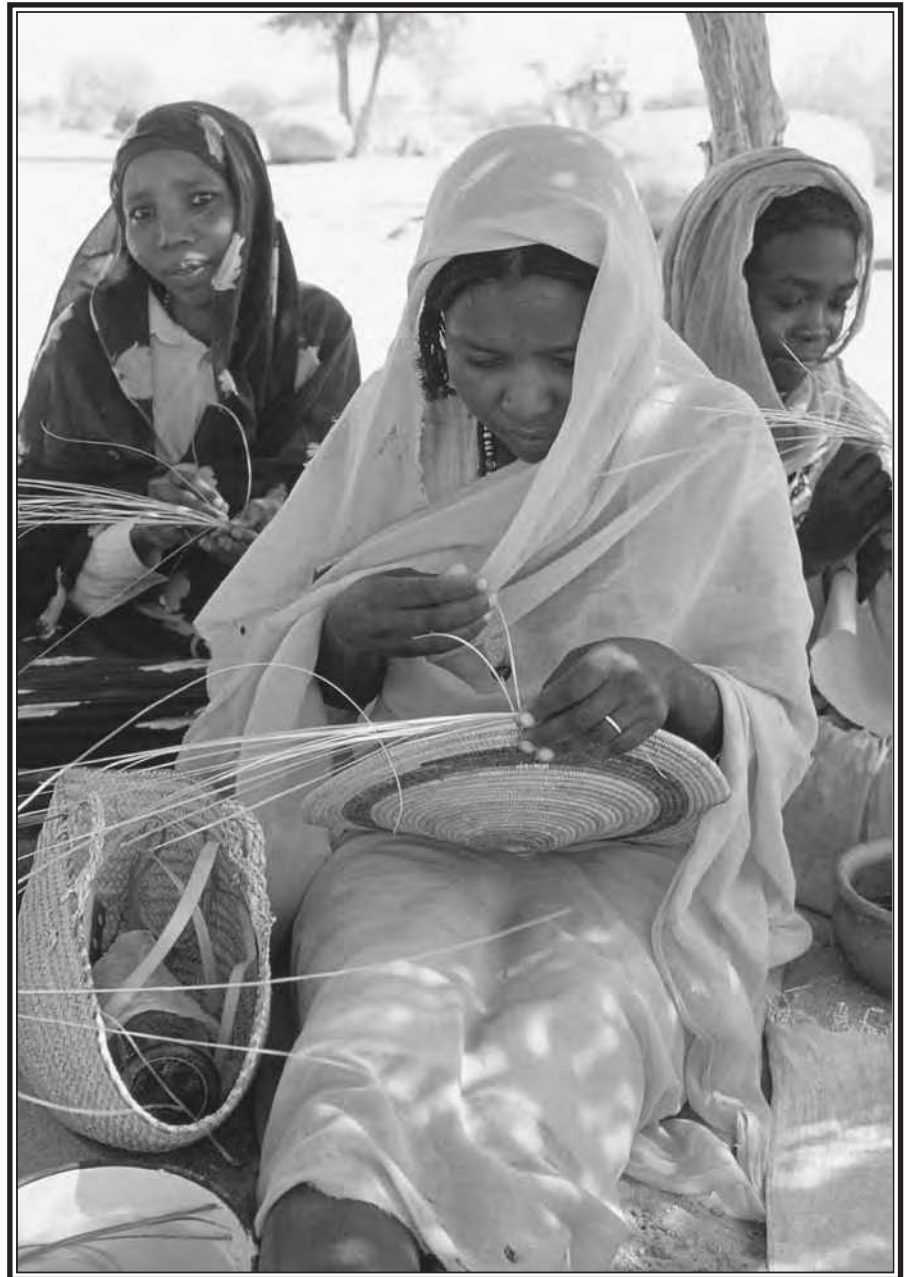
Carving. African carvers—usually men—produce sculpture and other art works, such as masks. They also create a wide range of everyday items, including stools, axe handles, dugout boats, headrests, containers for food and liquid, and spoons. Such items are generally made of wood. Artworks and high-quality handicrafts may be adorned with carved patterns and figures of people or animals. Some carvers decorate their woodwork with a technique called *pyrogravure*, which involves blackening the wood with a hot iron blade.

The carving of very simple items, such as an axe handle, may require no special ability. Often the local blacksmith combines the skills of iron-working and woodworking and will fit a handle to the metal tool he has made. On a higher level, there may be one man in an area who is widely known for his craftsmanship. He might spend most of his time carv-



Crafts

Many African artisans specialize in creating useful items. The Sudanese women shown here are weaving baskets from natural materials.



ing. In some North African societies, noblemen paid skilled carvers to create highly decorated wooden objects, from delicate spoons to carved camel saddles.

Not all carving is done in wood. African artists have a long tradition of working with ivory (from hippopotamus and elephant tusks), bone, and horn. In Cameroon and the Congo region, carvers craft buffalo horn into ceremonial drinking vessels. Some groups have carved figures and pipes from soapstone, and in Egypt, great temples still display detailed images and hieroglyphics* cut into the stone by ancient craftspeople. (See also **Art, Body Adornment and Clothing.**)

* **hieroglyphics** ancient system of writing based on pictorial characters




Creoles

In Africa, the term *Creole* refers to any people with some mix of African and non-African racial or cultural heritage. Creole populations can be found on most African islands and along many of the continent's coasts, areas where Africans first mingled with Europeans and Arabs. From these contacts, six major Creole types emerged: Portuguese, black American, French, Dutch, British, and Arab.

Portuguese, Black American, British, and French Creoles.

Portuguese Creoles were the first of the European Creoles. They emerged during the late 1400s when the Portuguese traded and settled along the west and east coasts of Africa. Creoles living in the islands of CAPE VERDE are offspring of Europeans and enslaved Africans from the mainland. They speak either Portuguese or a Creole language based on Portuguese. Creoles who live near the coast of ANGOLA trace their origin to mestizo*, Brazilian, and African ancestors. They have considerable influence on the country's affairs. Creoles in the area of MOZAMBIQUE disappeared during a series of wars between 1830 and 1911.

Black American Creoles are found in SIERRA LEONE, LIBERIA, and in scattered communities along the coast of GHANA. They are descendants of liberated slaves and, in Liberia, of free black Americans from the southern United States. The Creoles of Sierra Leone are descended from freed Africans who lived in Britain, Jamaica, and Nova Scotia.

The islands of MAURITIUS and SEYCHELLES as well as the French territory of RÉUNION are home to most of Africa's French Creoles. They are the descendants of French settlers and slaves brought from east Africa and MADAGASCAR in the 1700s. They speak a French-based Creole language.

Dutch and British Creoles. More than 3 million Dutch Creoles, known as Coloureds or CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE, live in SOUTH AFRICA. There are also small populations in NAMIBIA and other southern African countries. They emerged during the 1600s and 1700s through a mixture of individuals of European and KHOISAN origin with Asians from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, and India, and enslaved Africans from Madagascar and southern Africa. Most are Christian, although there is a small Muslim minority known as Cape Malays. The vast majority of those living in South Africa speak Afrikaans, a Dutch-based language.

A few thousand British Creoles, known as Fernandinos, live in the island of Bioko in EQUATORIAL GUINEA. They are descendants of liberated slaves from Sierra Leone and Cuba who intermarried with settlers from CAMEROON, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and NIGERIA during British colonial rule. Their Creole offspring became cocoa planters.

Common Features of Creole Culture. Creole groups today have more in common with one another than they have with any African ethnic groups. On African islands, Creole languages predominate; on the mainland, Creole languages are national languages in Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Liberia, and South Africa. In island societies, Creoles occupy a wide range of positions, from plantation workers to members of the wealthy and powerful upper class. On the coast of mainland Africa, Creoles were often given economic and political opportuni-

* **mestizo** person of mixed European and Native American ancestry



Creoles

ties by foreign rulers. They developed a strong sense of identity and formed their own political parties. When African nations were struggling for independence in the mid-1900s, many Creoles supported colonial rule. Some Creoles fought for independence and afterward held positions of power. However, in most countries, Creoles gradually lost their political power to inland ethnic groups that were considered more African.

The Creole community of Africa has grown in several ways. On the islands, elements of Creole culture, including language and music, came to dominate popular culture. In Creole cities on the mainland, some non-Creoles tried to become part of Creole society, which often enjoyed special status. Most people seeking to join the Creole community converted to Christianity, the religion shared by nearly all Creoles except for Comoran Creoles and Cape Malays. (See also **Ethnic Groups**.)

CRIME

See *Laws and Legal Systems*.

**Crowther, Samuel
Ajayi**

**ca. 1806–1891
Anglican bishop**

* Anglican Church of England

Samuel Ajayi Crowther was an educated traveler, translator, and missionary who was named the first African bishop in the Anglican* Church. Born in what is now NIGERIA, Crowther was captured and sold into slavery at the age of 12. A British antislavery ship rescued him at sea, however, and took him to FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE. There he was baptized and educated by the Christian Missionary Society (CMS). Crowther soon began to study and to preach in the YORUBA language, and in 1843 he became a minister in the Anglican Church. He served as a pioneering member of CMS Yoruba missions and helped translate the Bible into Yoruba. In 1857 Crowther became leader of the Niger Mission and opened five new mission stations, including one for the Niger Delta.

In 1864 the Anglican Church named Crowther Bishop of Western Equatorial Africa with responsibility for missions in LIBERIA, Rio Pongas, and other places. In 1890, however, European missionaries critical of Crowther's administration of the Niger Mission forced him to resign. Before his death a year later, Crowther helped plan the reorganization of the Niger Delta Mission, and his son later became its pastor.

DA GAMA, VASCO

See *Gama, Vasco da*.

DAHOMY

See *Bénin*.

Dakar

Dakar, the capital and largest city in SENEGAL, is one of the most important ports of West Africa. The Portuguese landed near the site of modern Dakar in 1444, and several European powers fought over the region until the French gained control in the mid-1600s. The area was originally valued as a source for slaves. After the banning of SLAVERY in 1815, however, the French forced the local population to grow peanuts as a cash crop*.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

For many years Dakar served as the capital of the colony of FRENCH WEST AFRICA. In 1887 some of the city's inhabitants were granted French citizenship, including the right to vote and to participate in local government as well as representation in the parliament in Paris.

During World War II Dakar was first occupied by the pro-German Vichy French government, but American forces captured the city in 1942. Dakar remained the political center of Senegal after the country gained its independence in 1960. Today this city of about 1.7 million people is home to the University of Dakar, an art museum, and a center for nutritional research. It boasts a thriving port, manufacturing industry, and Senegal's only international airport. Dakar is also a popular tourist spot. Even so economic growth has stalled and the city is heavily dependent on foreign aid.

Dance

Through dance, African people celebrate, worship, educate, and express social organization. Styles vary greatly from culture to culture, but most African dance shares some common features. In particular, it emphasizes rhythm. Elements of traditional dance and music often blend with contemporary or foreign styles to create new kinds of African dance.

Purposes of Dancing. In all African cultures, dance is an expression of social structure. People of the same status, age, or occupation usually perform together. In their dances, these groups demonstrate behavior that is considered appropriate to their place in the community and to the occasion. Dance unites them and reinforces their identities. For example, among the TUAREG of northeastern Africa, each social class has its own style of dance and music and even its own musical instruments.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

In traditional societies with hierarchical* organizations, dance can be an expression of leadership. A ruler is expected to proclaim his authority in formal dances. If he fails to meet the required standard of performance, his subjects may lose some respect for him. A ruler's wives and lesser chiefs also have their own specific forms of dance to show their position in society. Followers may pledge loyalty and honor their leaders through still other dances. One example of a royal dance is that



Dance

Imitating Life

African dance often reflects the movements or conditions of people's daily lives. Some of the Tekna women of southern Morocco spend their time in low tents, so they dance on their knees. Farmers and fishers have incorporated the motions of hoeing and throwing nets into dances that display their skills. Hunters may dance in imitation of the movements of their prey or act out a hunt that has just been completed. A dance after the killing of a large animal, for example, tells everyone in the community how it was killed.

* **deity** god or goddess

* **rite** ceremony or formal procedure

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

of the ASANTE kings of Ghana, who wave ceremonial swords while dancing. Pointing the swords toward the sky symbolizes the kings' dependence on the gods and the ancestors. Pointing the swords toward the earth represents the king's ownership of the land.

For many traditional African religious leaders, dance is a vital part of their role. Priests and priestesses use movement to describe the gods they serve. In Nigeria, YORUBA priests who serve the thunder god Shango show his wrathful nature with fast arm motions that represent lightning. They roll their shoulders and stamp their feet to indicate thunder. The leaders of many women's religious societies in western Africa use dance as therapy. They employ songs and dances to cure women of various disorders.

Masquerade dancers, who represent spiritual beings, play a central role in many religious societies. Often the masquerade dancer's personal identity is a closely guarded secret. The dancer performs completely covered by cloth and wearing a metal or wooden mask that symbolizes a particular deity* or spirit. Before performing special rites*, dancers may train for many years beginning at an early age.

In societies that are organized into sets, or groups, by age, individuals pass through many age-grades in their lifetime. The dances of each age-grade promote qualities that the society admires in people of that age. The dances of elders are usually sedate and dignified, while those of younger men and women may show off such characteristics as strength, endurance, and beauty.

Dance is an important form of education in traditional African societies. The repeated patterns of dances teach young children physical coordination and control. Dance can also introduce children to the community's social customs and standards of behavior. Children may form their own dance and masquerade groups or join adults at the end of a dance line.

Features of African Dance. In North Africa, some dance forms have sprung from the region's Arab and Islamic heritage. One example is the whirling dance of the Sufi Muslims known as dervishes. In their rituals*, the dervishes enter a religious trance and dance wildly, spinning and twirling around. Other traditional North African dances share the emphasis on rhythm that is found throughout sub-Saharan* Africa. The BERBERS of Morocco dance to the beat of drummers who assemble around a bonfire. The dancers form two lines. Individuals in one line call out a phrase or line, and someone in the opposite line responds. As the calling continues, the dancers move as one—shuffling, bending back and forth at the waist, and raising and lowering their arms. In some Berber groups, men and women mix; in others, the women form their own line.

Rhythm is the central element in sub-Saharan dance. Music and dance are usually inseparable. Normally musicians lead the dancers, using drums, rattles, and other percussion instruments to sound a beat for the dancers to follow. But in some cultures the dancer may take over, challenging the musicians to follow his or her rhythm. Sometimes dancers wear leg or ankle rattles that emphasize the rhythm of their movements. In Western cultures, people focus on the shapes created by



Funerals in Africa often include ceremonial music and dances. Here, a group of Mossi people participate in a funeral dance in Ivory Coast.

See
color plate 2,
vol. 1.

a dancer's body. African audiences also judge a dancer's skill by his or her ability to follow rhythms.

Styles of African dance range from the simple to the acrobatic. The Kambari people of Nigeria move in a circle around their drummers, sliding one foot forward while the other stamps a repetitive beat. The Nduu of southern Africa perform a more energetic war dance on the theme of "stamping the feet in pain." The style of the dance changes rapidly as accelerating drumbeats encourage the powerful dancers to explode into vigorous new forms of expression.

Dance is a group activity. In addition to age-sets and occupational groups, such as hunters, that perform together, dance groups or clubs are common in Africa. These allow both sexes and various ages to dance together to perfect their skill. Once a dance club has acquired a reputation for excellence, it is invited to perform at major social events, such as marriages or funerals, or to entertain chiefs and important visitors. In some dance groups, the members follow a leader and perform rehearsed movements together, with little or no opportunity for individual expression. Other groups allow each dancer to develop a personal style or to step forward from the group for a solo performance.

Although it is a collective effort, African dancing can be highly competitive, even aggressive. Many traditional dance forms encourage individual dancers or groups to try to outdo each other. In the early 1900s, some wealthy urban Africans learned the formal steps of Western-style



Dance

dances and competed in ballroom dancing championships modeled on those of the United States and other Western countries. With much emphasis on fine clothes, these competitions showed the enduring power of dance to establish a person's position in society.

Dance and Society. Dance reflects the social order, and as African society changes, so does its dance. The Dogon of Mali, for example, have long performed dances in honor of their ancestors in which they carry and manipulate carved wooden masks. In the 1930s foreign promoters discovered their outstanding dancing and took Dogon dance groups to Paris and the United States. The Dogon dancers learned elements of modern choreography*. They also modified their costumes and modernized their masks for foreign audiences. After returning to Mali, they continued to perform traditional ritual dances in their home territories, but their choreographed shows gained popularity with both local and foreign audiences.

* **choreography** designing or arranging a dance

Dance is not always reserved for important social functions. It is also the most popular form of recreation in sub-Saharan Africa. Even on informal occasions, however, Africans usually do not dance simply for individual expression. They often perform for the admiration and attention of others.

Informal African social dance is continually developing into new styles either invented by talented individuals or drawn from foreign influences. In the 1960s a recreational dance called highlife became popular in West African cities. It originated in Ghana, where musicians were playing Western instruments such as saxophones and guitars in open-air cafes. Nigerian musicians began following the same lively style, using local instruments, and dancers adapted their movements to the new sound. Various styles emerged. In some African countries, music and dance took on the flavor of Latin rhythms such as the cha-cha. The people of the Congo excelled at jazz, which in turn gave rise to its own dance forms. Such examples show that although African dance draws on deep and honored traditions, it is an ever-changing expression of life as it is lived today. (*See also Masks and Masquerades, Music and Song, Musical Instruments, Religion and Ritual.*)

Dar es Salaam

Dar es Salaam (which means "haven of peace" in Arabic) is the capital and largest city in TANZANIA. In the late 1990s, its population was about 1.5 million. Arabs from Southern Arabia first established fishing villages in the area during the A.D. 1600s, but the city did not really grow until Sultan Sayyid Majid of ZANZIBAR built a palace there in the 1860s.

In the 1890s Dar es Salaam became the capital of the newly established colony of German East Africa. The Germans constructed new buildings and a rail line heading northwest, then they lost the region to Britain during World War I. Renamed Tanganyika, the colony achieved independence in 1961. Three years later it joined with Zanzibar to form the United Republic of Tanzania. In the 1970s the city of Dodoma was



Death, Mourning, and Ancestors

proposed as a new capital, but the cost of relocation was too great and the government remained in Dar es Salaam.

Located in a protected harbor along Tanzania's coast, Dar es Salaam has the national university, many foreign embassies, and a lively night life. In the city center is the main market, Kariakoo, built on the site of a former British military camp. On the outskirts, industrial areas have grown up along the rail lines and near the harbor. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Death, Mourning, and Ancestors

* **ritual** ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **funerary** relating to death, burial, or funerals

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

"People who die are not buried in a field, they are buried in the heart," goes a saying of the central African nation of RWANDA. Death of course is more than the physical fact of a life's end. It also brings emotional and social change to families and communities. Africans mark those changes with rituals* that draw on traditional beliefs and customs, as well as on Muslim and Christian practices. These funerary* customs provide ways for people to dispose of their dead, express their grief, and honor the memory of those who have died.

For Muslims in North Africa and other regions in Africa, Islamic writings and beliefs govern burial customs and ideas about the afterlife. In sub-Saharan* Africa, traditions about death and mourning vary a great deal. Across much of that region, death is seen as the act of becoming an ancestor, and funerary practices are related to the important role ancestors play in the lives of those they left behind.

DEATH AND BURIAL

In all cultures, burial customs are a way of separating the dead person from the living. They may also fulfill religious requirements or expectations. In addition, funerals and obituaries generally serve social functions, giving families and communities a public opportunity to display their social position and relationships.

Funerary Practices in Sub-Saharan Africa. Burial customs in sub-Saharan Africa reflect differences in the cultures and histories of various communities. Both European colonial influence and modernization have played a role in shaping these practices.

The Lugbara people of northwestern UGANDA live in densely populated settlements, where death occurs daily and is witnessed—or at least known of—by many. Although death is familiar, the Lugbara give it great importance. Their funeral rituals are longer and more elaborate than ceremonies for birth, coming of age, or marriage. Large numbers of people attend funerals, not just the relatives of the deceased.

In contrast, the Mbeere people of KENYA have traditionally lived in small, roving, widely separated groups. They left their dead in the wild with little ceremony. In the 1930s the British, who controlled Kenya, required burial of the dead, and 30 years later they introduced individual land ownership. Responding to these changes, the Mbeere developed elaborate funeral ceremonies that became indications of property



Death, Mourning, and Ancestors

The Foreheads of the Dead

In the early 1900s, the Kalabari people of Nigeria began carving ancestral screens with images of their honored dead. The images, called duein fubara (“foreheads of the dead”), emphasize the forehead, believed to be the site of the teme—the spirit that controls a person’s behavior. At death the teme leaves the body. It sometimes enters the body of someone living and possesses that individual. The Kalabari believed that the duein fubara allowed them to locate and control these spiritual beings.

* **deity** god or goddess

* **clergy** ministers, priests, or other religious officials

ownership as well as tributes to Mbeere leaders and to the strength of their followers.

Deaths and funerals often involve issues of identity in Africa, where many people follow more than one religious tradition and have ties to more than one ethnic group. In one such case, the death of a wealthy man in GHANA sparked a rivalry between two towns to which the deceased belonged by kinship, marriage, and political and economic ties. The rivalry was complicated by the dead man’s links with both the Presbyterian church and the non-Christian deity* of his father. When the Presbyterians buried him and claimed him as one of their own, the question of the dead man’s hometown and primary kin was decided in favor of the town with the Presbyterian connection. Yet funeral arrangements can also serve to acknowledge more than one identity. Some Africans favor funeral services led by several clergy* together.

The dead in sub-Saharan Africa are usually buried, typically after being washed and sometimes shaved. Those able to preserve the body of the deceased may do so for several days to allow people to gather for the funeral. The form of the funeral may depend on the dead person’s age, gender, ethnic group, class, or religion. Status within the community and type of death also affect the funeral. Sudden and untimely deaths are considered “bad,” and someone whose life ends in such fashion may receive no funeral at all. Long life, community service, and wealth, however, are celebrated with large and elaborate funerals. In all cases, death is associated with pollution, and at the end of the funeral guests are expected to cleanse themselves. Young children and pregnant women, thought to be especially likely to be tainted by death, are often forbidden to attend funerals.

In NIGERIA, Ghana, BÉNIN, BOTSWANA, and elsewhere, details about the deceased and funerals usually appear in obituaries. Wealthy people place these death notices in newspapers and on radio and television to draw attention to the coming funerals. Poor folk—and Muslims, who must bury their dead quickly—rely mainly on radio announcements. Obituaries, as well as memorial notices that relatives place in the media months or years after a death, give survivors a chance to celebrate their position in society by dwelling on the career and achievements of the deceased. Some groups create other kinds of memorials to the dead, such as the carved wooden posts made by the Mahafaly of MADAGASCAR and the Giryama of Kenya.

Some traditional African ideas about the soul’s life after death focus on journeys or judgments. The Dogon of MALI and the YORUBA of Nigeria, among others, believe that the dead must undertake a long and difficult trip to distant spirit lands. Sometimes the highest deity makes a final judgment about the character of the deceased. While the spirit lands and afterlife are hidden from the living, the dead, in their role as ancestors, remain very much a part of living communities.

Islamic Traditions. Muslims never cremate, or burn, their dead. They bury them. Tradition calls for the burial to take place very soon after death. Whenever possible, someone who dies during the day is buried before sunset; a person who dies at night is buried in the morn-

Death, Mourning, and Ancestors



The Mahafaly of Madagascar bury their dead in remote locations in the countryside. Their box-like tombs are often decorated with geometric forms and carved wooden sculptures.

ing. After being washed, the body is wrapped in a white cloth and buried with its face turned toward Mecca, the Islamic holy city in Saudi Arabia.

Muslim funeral and mourning customs vary. Among the BERBERS of MOROCCO, only men attend funerals, and local schoolmasters or prayer leaders read from the Qur'an, the Islamic holy book. In many Berber groups, relatives of the deceased hold a feast for those who attended the funeral some days or weeks later.

Islamic beliefs about the fate of the soul after death are based on the Qur'an and the Kitab al-run (Book of the Soul). According to these texts, the Angel of Death sits at the head of a dying person and directs the soul toward either the anger or the mercy of God, depending on whether the person has lived a wicked or a good life. Two other angels record the deeds of the deceased. Souls judged to be good, as well as the souls of all Muslims who die in a jihad, or holy war, go to a garden paradise. Wicked souls go to a hell of eternal punishment.

THE ROLE OF THE ANCESTORS

Explorers and scholars of the 1800s described African beliefs and customs about the dead as ancestor worship. More recent study has shown that the relationship between the living and their ancestors varies



Death, Mourning, and Ancestors

among African peoples but is always complex. Some scholars describe such relationships as respect rather than worship. This view is rooted in the idea that families and communities are shaped by those who have gone before. The dead continue to have meaning and authority, as long as the living remember and honor them. In turn, the living are judged by how well and faithfully they perform their duties to their ancestors.

Ancestors in Everyday Life. The Lugbara of central Africa believe that their elaborate and very public funerals are an essential part of a transformation that begins with death: the transformation of the deceased into a spirit whose name will be remembered by descendants. Rituals for the dead may extend over a period of years. The Lugbara plant fig trees at the graves of important elders and may put small stone slabs together to form “houses” honoring the dead. The trees and stones are shrines where people may consult their ancestors. In time, the most senior ancestors lose their ties to a specific location and are considered part of the creator deity.

* **genealogy** family history; record of ancestry

Shrines, family stories, and genealogies* make ancestors a familiar presence in everyday life throughout much of sub-Saharan Africa. The living interact with the dead in various places and ways. Inherited property, called “the tears of the dead” in ZIMBABWE, represents a link with ancestors. The Nzima people of Ghana regard long-term projects such as orchards and plantations as the work of the dead continuing across generations. Children are named for ancestors, and sometimes the spirits of ancestors are thought to be reborn in the young.

African Muslims honor their ancestors with rituals. Some people perform a ceremony each year that is believed to open the passage between the living and the dead. In exchange for the prayers of the living, the dead return blessings.



Not every dead person is honored as an ancestor—someone whose identity contributes to the social position of descendants. There is ranking among the dead just as among the living. Unmarried or childless individuals, the very poor, orphans, former slaves, criminals, those who commit suicide, and people who died “bad” deaths or from certain “bad” diseases such as leprosy are unlikely to be remembered as ancestors. Someone who has not buried a parent “well” will be regarded as foolish or useless and will probably be forgotten also.

Ancestors and beliefs about them appear in many expressions of African cultures. Some West African stories, for example, feature a type of wayward or unruly spirit who keeps appearing as a newborn child only to die back again into the spirit world. Such beliefs are not limited to literature. Nigerian author Chinua ACHEBE began writing about this spirit after hearing a 16-year-old girl speak of her experiences. He described the pain and bewilderment she felt at being treated as a living person who could disappear into the spirit world at any moment.

Ancestors and Politics. At various times and places in African history, death and ancestry have become political tools. One of the most powerful ways to take away a group’s place in society—short of enslavement—is to limit the ability of its members to carry out funeral and



De Klerk, Frederik Willem

mourning rituals. African governments and societies have done this by enforcing different codes of burial for different classes of people.

In some societies, “proper” burials may be priced so high that poor people cannot afford them. Stripped of these important ties to the rest of the community and to other generations, the poor are seen as having neither past nor future. Africans have responded to this situation by forming burial societies, which date from the time when they began moving into cities in the early 1900s. Members of these societies pool their resources and contributions to provide each other with “proper” burials that meet the standards of their cultures.

Some African political movements in the 1800s and 1900s called upon ancestral figures. They were said to have inspired many prophets or leaders of uprisings or crusades against colonial rule. In the 1850s, for example, a young XHOSA woman named NONGQAWUSE caused some commotion in SOUTH AFRICA. Claiming to speak for the ancestors of her people, she ordered the Xhosa to sacrifice all their cattle as a way to end their quarrels and become strong again. They followed her advice and became very poor.

Burial has also become a political issue in struggles over the corpses of well-known people. One such struggle took place in Uganda in the 1970s. Seeking to win the favor of the country’s Ganda people, General Idi AMIN DADA brought the corpse of their former ruler back from Great Britain, where he had died. Amin then staged a public viewing of the body and a large state funeral. However, when the ruler’s heir tried to strengthen his own claim to office by burying the body in the royal tomb of the Ganda, Amin Dada dismissed the action as a meaningless ritual. Of course, the action was not meaningless. It was an illustration of the significance that death, mourning, and ancestry hold for many Africans. (*See also Ethnic Groups and Identity, Islam in Africa, Kinship, Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession.*)

De Klerk, Frederik Willem

1936–
South African political leader

Frederik Willem De Klerk served as president of SOUTH AFRICA from 1989 to 1994. He was the driving force behind government efforts to end the country’s official system of race discrimination known as APARTHEID. De Klerk was raised in a political environment. His father was a cabinet minister who served as president of South Africa’s senate. After graduating from university, De Klerk became an attorney and was active in the National Party. In the early 1970s he was elected to Parliament twice, and later he held several cabinet posts in the national government.

Early in his political career De Klerk supported traditional policies that limited the rights and freedoms of blacks in South Africa. However, he gradually changed his political views, and as president he introduced a new approach to dealing with the country’s racial conflicts. Instead of consulting the military on political matters as previous leaders had done, he sought advice from civilians. He also allowed peaceful demonstrations by opponents of apartheid.



De Klerk, Frederik Willem

See color
plate 11,
vol. 1.

Soon after his election as president, De Klerk released eight members of the outlawed African National Congress (ANC) from prison. Over the next few months he began talks with the ANC, the South African Communist Party, and other political groups about the future of South Africa. One of his most important moves was to release Nelson MANDELA, who had spent more than 20 years in prison for opposing the apartheid regime. In the early 1990s, De Klerk represented the existing government at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa, a meeting that laid the groundwork for a postapartheid state. After stepping down as president in 1994, he took a position in the government of national unity that oversaw the country's transition to full democracy.

De Klerk boldly pushed through reforms leading to a new political order in South Africa in which the opportunities available to citizens would no longer be determined by their race. He did so even though he knew that he and his party would lose their immense political power as a result of his efforts. For his work in helping to end apartheid and grant full civil rights to South Africa's black majority, De Klerk shared the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize with Nelson Mandela.

Deserts and Drought

Africa contains two desert regions, the SAHARA DESERT in the north and the Namib-Kalahari region in the southwest. Traditionally, very few people have lived in Africa's deserts. However, some groups inhabit the semiarid lands bordering deserts—areas that are somewhat wetter than the desert. The well-being of these people depends on rainfall, which varies greatly from year to year.

With an area of about 3.3 million square miles, the Sahara is the world's largest desert. Its extreme dryness (less than about 5 inches of rainfall per year) has long made it a barrier between the Mediterranean world and sub-Saharan* Africa. Nevertheless, through the ages nomads and traders have crossed this formidable desert. Most of the Sahara consists of rock or gravel plains, with several large mountain masses. About 20 percent of the desert is covered by seas of loose sand, called ergs, that form "living" dunes. Moved and shaped by wind, these dunes reach heights of more than 500 feet.

The SAHEL, a semiarid region along the southern border of the Sahara, contains large areas of ancient ergs with "dead" dunes that are held firmly in place by vegetation. The Sahel generally receives from 4 to 8 inches of rainfall annually.

The Namib is Africa's only true desert south of the equator. It stretches along the Atlantic coast for 1,240 miles in a long narrow band. The driest part of the desert, by the coast, receives less than half an inch of rain per year, though moisture from fog and humidity supports some plant and animal life. To the east lies the KALAHARI DESERT, a vast and featureless red sand plain that is really a semiarid region rather than a desert.

Before Europeans took over the continent, Africans had learned to cope with the climate of deserts and semiarid regions. Small, nomadic populations inhabited many dry areas. European colonial rule brought

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

See color
plate 15,
vol. 2.

Deserts and Drought



Low vegetation and rocky soil cover this desert region in Niger.

fixed national borders, which made it difficult for nomads to travel freely.

Since the mid-1900s, as African populations have grown, many people have moved to crowded urban centers. With the best agricultural land already occupied, others have migrated to drier and less fertile areas, such as the Sahel. This population movement has caused more Africans to face the hardships of drought and desertification—the spread or creation of a desertlike landscape.

Drought is a prolonged period of reduced rainfall or of altered rainfall patterns, as when the rain falls at the wrong time of year for local crops. In modern times the western Sahel has seen three major drought periods: 1910–1914, 1941–1943, and 1968–1985. Devastating droughts have also occurred in southern, eastern, and northeastern Africa. Some of



Deserts and Drought

these have led to severe food shortages and famines, effects that worsen as Africa's population continues to increase.

Drought also contributes to the problem of desertification. Sometimes climate changes cause an existing desert to expand. Other times, land takes on the properties of a desert when the soil becomes less fertile or begins to erode rapidly. Human activities, such as cutting trees or plowing up natural vegetation that holds soil in place, can also lead to desertification. The process has been most noticeable in the West African Sahel, especially in the years following the drought that began in 1968. (*See also Climate, Ecosystems.*)

Development, Economic and Social

In general, development refers to a process by which countries use their natural and human resources to improve the economy and the lives of their people. Many experts also study development in terms of its outcome—the results that are achieved through economic, political, and social programs. A complex concept, development includes economic measures such as income and economic production, political measures such as civil rights and freedoms, and social measures such as literacy and public health. In terms of development, Africa lags dramatically behind most of the world.

THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPMENT

Development is not simply a matter of building factories, improving farmland, or investing in new technology. It also involves providing opportunities for all citizens to participate in economic and political activities and to benefit from them. This aspect of development has presented particular challenges to many African nations over the past 40 years.

Trends in African Development. During the colonial period, European powers carried out various improvement projects in their African territories. They built roads, railroads, and airports, expanded cities and ports, and founded schools. In the years immediately following independence, most African nations modeled themselves after their former colonial masters. Economically, this meant building an industrial society that could produce the kind of material wealth enjoyed by Europe and the United States. Government was seen as the institution best able to carry out these tasks, and development activities were centralized within African national governments.

Most African nations at this time began large-scale projects designed to stimulate certain sectors* of the economy, such as mining or manufacturing. Government experts decided what needed to be done and how to do it. The general population had little involvement with the planning or execution of development projects. By the mid-1960s, however, it had become clear that this approach to development was not working. Wealthy and educated people tended to benefit from development projects, while the majority of the population did not.

* sector part; subdivision of society



Development, Economic and Social

The Misery Index

Every year the United Nations prepares a report that measures growth in every nation by examining a wide range of social and economic factors. Based on this report, the United Nations then publishes a “misery index,” listing the world’s poorest and most disadvantaged nations. For the year 2000, 30 of the 35 nations at the bottom of the index were in sub-Saharan Africa. The 10 worst-off countries were all in Africa, led by Sierra Leone, which has suffered from ongoing civil war. Stressing that political freedom is critical for achieving economic progress, the UN report notes that a number of nations at the bottom of the list—including Burundi, Chad, and Niger—are military dictatorships.

In the next phase of development, African nations began to emphasize the redistribution of resources. The aim was to make vital resources, such as land and access to technology, more widely available. Lower-level officials were given greater freedom to make decisions and carry out policies. Projects designed and supervised by central government planners gave way to programs adapted to local needs and priorities.

During the 1970s, Western economists identified government as the main obstacle to effective development. They said governments were trying to do too much, growing too large, and creating too many regulations. Many nations introduced reforms that reduced the size of their governments, cut social services, sold off nationalized* industries, and eliminated policies that protected local businesses against foreign competition. Such actions helped stabilize currencies and increase market efficiency, but they also led to cuts in social services and funds invested in the country’s infrastructure*. In many African nations, the level of development actually decreased during this time.

Since the 1980s, economists have placed greater emphasis on the role of the individual in development. Local programs created and run by individuals, families, and community groups are now seen as powerful sources of change. In addition, international agencies and nations that have lent money to African states for development have placed increasing pressure on African governments to change the way they operate. One thing they demanded was the establishment of more democratic forms of government. In recent years, more open government has been seen as the key to development in Africa.

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

Models of Development. African nations have several models of development that they can follow. Some favor a system of Western capitalism—with the marketplace determining what goods and services are needed and private businesses providing those goods and services. Other nations have adopted a system of socialism—with the government setting priorities and creating state-run institutions to achieve its goals.

So far no single model of development has proved best for all countries at all times. Because many African nations are heavily in debt to other countries and to international lending institutions, those lenders have a good deal of influence on which models the borrower nations adopt.

An important issue facing African nations is whether to try to be self-sufficient and produce all needed goods locally or to rely on the international marketplace for certain goods. Some countries have looked beyond national borders and joined with neighboring states to draw up regional development plans.

DEVELOPMENT AND REFORMS

In the early years of independence, many African nations took steps to control their economies and provide employment for their people. They created state-run industries and passed laws protecting these industries from foreign competitors. They also greatly expanded the government’s role in developing the infrastructure and social services. Many govern-



Development, Economic and Social

Workers install a water pipeline in Ethiopia. Access to water supplies can improve public health and increase agricultural productivity.



ments borrowed heavily to finance these development plans, but much of that money was lost due to mismanagement and corruption.

* **recession** economic slowdown

In the 1980s worldwide economic developments—a major recession* and very high interest rates—made matters worse for hard-pressed African nations. As their debts mounted, African leaders turned to institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to refinance their loans. To qualify for debt relief, borrowers were required to undergo “structural adjustment.” This meant adopting reforms aimed at reducing government spending and control over the economy, promoting the growth of private enterprise, and relaxing trade restrictions to allow foreign businesses to compete with local businesses. It was hoped that these policies would reduce inflation*, make markets more efficient, and stimulate long-term economic growth. This, in turn, was expected to improve social and economic conditions.

* **inflation** increase in prices

The success of structural adjustment programs has been mixed. Many experts agree that they helped stabilize local African markets and



Development, Economic and Social

economies, but they did not promote long-term growth. Some experts argue that structural adjustment actually held development back by cutting government funding for improvements in infrastructure and education that are necessary for continued long-term growth. In addition, advances expected in agriculture and industry did not take place. Again, critics charge that development in these sectors of the economy has been hurt by poor transportation and roads, lack of access to credit, and poor education—all areas where funding was cut under structural adjustment programs.

EFFECTS OF ECONOMIC AID

* **capital** money invested to start a business or industry

According to early theories of development, the best way to promote growth was to increase the amount of capital* in a country and to plan carefully how to invest it. The thinking was that outside financial aid would allow people in developing countries to purchase goods and services while still saving money. This aid would also provide revenue for the nation until its economy was strong enough to generate money from foreign trade.

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

Unfortunately, this theory did not work out as hoped in Africa. Its failure can be explained, in part, by the fact that during the Cold War* financial aid was often given for political rather than economic reasons. In many cases, aid went to nations considered strategically important, not necessarily to those that needed help the most.

By the early 1990s, various financial institutions had begun to stress programs run at the local level rather than ones coordinated by the central government. However, for such programs to work, local people had to learn the skills needed to run programs themselves. Unfortunately, at the same time technical assistance decreased, aid for long-term projects was increasingly replaced by short-term aid. This made it more difficult for local people to gain the ability to operate on their own.

International lenders also emphasized that to receive aid in the future African nations would have to develop more democratic and efficient forms of government and to change their economic policies. However, laying off government employees or ending protection for local businesses can lead to political unrest. So African governments often resist such changes and lose their eligibility for international aid. These new lending policies have contributed to a decline in the amount of aid flowing to Africa.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Community development is a different approach to development. It combines funding and services from the central government with the participation of local citizens. The goals of community development are modest compared to those of large aid programs. They include digging new wells, improving local sanitation, increasing literacy, and other small-scale works.

Community development programs achieved some successes in Africa, but they also ran into problems. Perhaps the most serious was



Development, Economic and Social

that the government programs and their directors often came into conflict with local officials, who saw the programs as challenges to their authority and considered the directors to be political rivals. Because the programs did not produce large-scale progress, international aid agencies and central governments in many nations lost enthusiasm for community development. In a number of cases, community development programs were taken over by the central government.

The success of community development programs depends largely on a close working relationship between central and local governments. The local governments must have a great deal of independence to set priorities and decide how to achieve goals. They also need to control their own budgets and resources to pursue their goals. Some African countries have relatively independent local governments. In many others, however, local governments are merely an extension of the central government, and they lack the power to set goals and must depend on the central government for money and resources.

Many African countries lost faith in the idea of building up local governments and sharing power with the central government. Some substituted a system in which the central government appointed local officials and controlled their policies and budgets. As Africa's economies went into decline this system was abandoned, and some countries returned to more independent local governments.

Recently, many local African communities have begun to take development into their own hands, often with little or no government help. A new model is emerging in which communities plan their own programs and provide the people to run them, while local government provides financial assistance. This approach cannot provide large-scale development—such as maintaining roads, building, or utilities—but it is changing accepted ways of thinking about the people's and the government's role in development.

Diagne, Blaise

1872–1934
Senegalese politician

The Senegalese politician Blaise Diagne was the first African elected as a deputy to the French National Assembly in Paris. Like all Africans born in SENEGAL during the colonial period, Diagne was an *originnaire*—a French citizen with certain limited rights. Educated in France and at the University of Saint-Louis in Senegal, he worked in Africa for the French customs service.

In 1914 Diagne was elected to represent Senegal in the National Assembly. He vowed to work against taxes and laws that treated the Senegalese harshly and to clarify the rights of *originnaires*. Soon after Diagne took his seat in the National Assembly, World War I broke out and the French needed soldiers. Diagne offered to help enlist *originnaires* in the armed forces if they received full rights as French citizens. The government agreed to his demands. By 1918 Diagne had recruited 60,000 *originnaires*. In return the French built veterans' hospitals, agricultural schools, and a medical school in Senegal.

Diagne was reelected overwhelmingly in 1919. Disturbed by Diagne's growing power, the French authorities began to work against him and



Diaspora, African

he lost the election of 1923. Nevertheless, Diagne stayed in politics, serving as Under-Secretary of State for the French Colonies in the 1930s. In Senegal, some saw Diagne as a hero, while others thought the lives lost in the war and his compromises with the French were not worth the benefits he gained for the colony. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Government and Political Systems, World Wars I and II.**)

DIAMONDS

See *Minerals and Mining*.

Diaspora, African

Today, Africans and their descendants are found on every inhabited continent. African traditions have influenced religion and art, and popular music the world over owes much to African rhythms and musical styles. This global presence is due largely to the African diaspora—a movement of people of African descent to areas outside their homeland.

The story of the African diaspora has three parts: dispersion, settlement abroad, and return to Africa. In the dispersion, or spreading out, people left Africa for other parts of the world. Some departed voluntarily, but many did not. The dispersion was driven by a SLAVE TRADE conducted by Arabs, Europeans, and Americans, who forced enslaved Africans to leave their homes and move to other areas. The second part of the diaspora, settlement abroad, concerns the lives of Africans and their descendants in their new countries—including their relationships with people of other races and their legal, social, and economic position in society.

Some dispersed Africans—and people of African descent—actually returned to Africa. Many of them played leading roles in the continent's social and political development. Others never set foot in Africa, but they drew upon the idea of their ancestral homeland for personal identity or for cultural or political purposes.

Africans in Africa and those who are a product of the diaspora share the legacy of the slave trade and of domination by other peoples who saw themselves as superior. Both in Africa and worldwide, Africans have reacted to this history of slavery and racial subjugation and persecution by striving to maintain their own identities and to claim freedom, independence, and equality.

AFRICANS IN ASIA AND EUROPE

For centuries Africans have settled in various parts of Asia and Europe in a dispersion that has included both voluntary migrations and forced movement as a result of enslavement.

Asia. In ancient times Africans traveled across the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Indian Ocean as merchants, sailors, soldiers, adventurers, and slaves. Ethiopian traders settled on the Arabian penin-




See map in *Slave Trade* (vol. 4).



Diaspora, African

Reclaiming a Lost Past



A CD-ROM database recently released by the Louisiana State University Press contains information about more than 100,000 people sold into slavery in Georgia and Louisiana in the 1700s and 1800s. The data is the result of 15 years' work by a New Orleans researcher. It was compiled by poring through records in Louisiana, Texas, France, and Spain looking for the names, African birthplaces, and skills of men, women, and children who were once nameless and forgotten. Similar databases on disk and the Internet are helping African Americans trace family histories. Scholars use such databases to study links between the African origins of enslaved persons and the cultures they created in the Americas.

sula and in the Persian Gulf region long before those areas became part of the Roman Empire. Africans were taken as slaves to Arabia and Persia. In the A.D. 500s, the Ethiopian king Ella-Asbaha occupied parts of Yemen on the Arabian peninsula and left some people behind.

People of African slave descent living in Arabia, the Persian Gulf region, and India became known as Siddis and Habshis. Some modern historians have found evidence that the Arabs and Persians of those regions had strong feelings of contempt for Africans and treated them as inferiors. Several men of African origin became poets known as the Crows of the Arabs. One of them, an African slave named Abu Dulama whose poetry was well known throughout the Arab world in the 700s, described Arabic society's view of his fellow blacks: "We are alike in color; our faces are black and ugly, our names are shameful."

Africans sometimes rebelled against their lowly status. In the part of the Arab world that is now Iraq, enslaved Africans led freedom movements in 694 and again in 868. The second revolt led to the founding of an independent state called Dawlat al-Zanj that survived for 15 years.

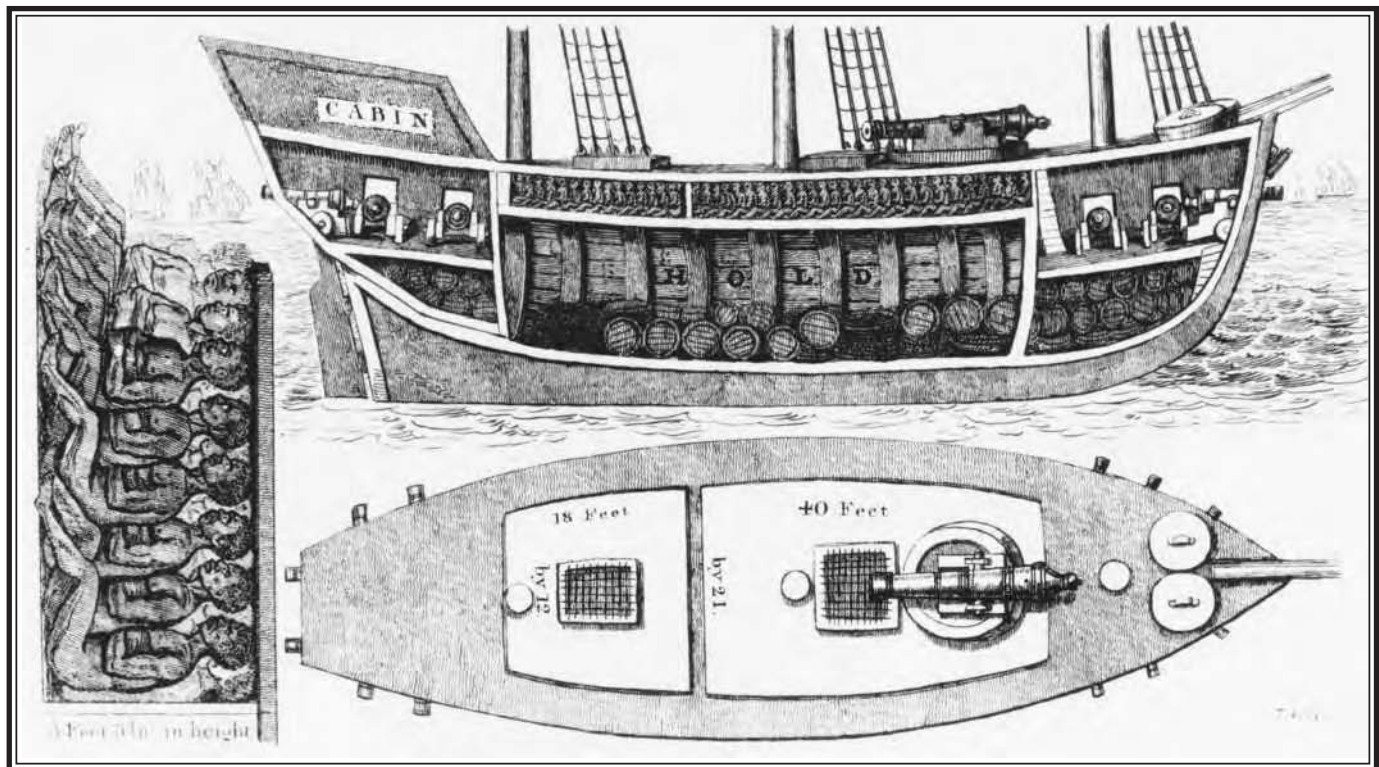
Over time, communities of free and enslaved Africans emerged in many Arabian and Indian towns and cities. Africans worked as merchants, dock workers, clerks, and agricultural laborers. Enslaved Africans also appeared in China, taken there by Arab traders in the 650s. The largest number of enslaved Africans in Asia, however, were resettled in India, where they worked as guards, soldiers, and sailors. A few rose to high positions in the armies or governments of various Indian states.

The life stories of some Africans in Asia are known. One of them, Malik Ambar, was captured in Ethiopia by Muslim Arab slave traders and sold in Baghdad, Iraq. There he learned Arabic and became a clerk. Later he was sold to Indians who took him to central India. He became a soldier, organized a revolt, and seized control of the Indian state of Ahmadnagar. He ruled from 1601 to 1626, employing Africans, Arabs, Persians, and Indians at his court. During his reign Ambar founded towns, built canals and roads, and encouraged trade, scholarship, and the arts. He also joined forces with other Siddis against Indian and European foes.

By the 1500s Europeans were competing with Arabs to trade both goods and slaves in Asia. Arab vessels carried Africans to the farthest reaches of Asia, including Indonesia, China, and Japan. The Europeans began abolishing the slave trade in the 1800s, but Arab traders continued to carry slaves from ports such as ZANZIBAR in East Africa to Arabian and Asian markets. By 1830 the city of Karachi in present-day Pakistan was importing about 1,500 African slaves each year.

Some of these Africans gained fame. Zahur Shah Hashmi and Murad Sahir became noted poets, and Mohamed Siddiq Mussafar wrote a compelling eyewitness account of the slave trade and the lives of enslaved Africans in Pakistan. Mussafar praised the achievements and hopes of African Americans such as Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington, who fought for black freedom and dignity. His poem "Africa's Gift" recognized the global presence of people of African descent and their contributions to other societies.

Diaspora, African



For hundreds of years slave traders captured large numbers of Africans and transported them overseas in ships like the one shown here.

During the early 1800s, free Africans continued to settle in Asia. Some were merchants. Others accompanied Asians for whom they had worked in East Africa. Like earlier African migrants, they adopted various aspects of Asian culture while maintaining some of their own as well. In parts of Pakistan, Habshis still celebrate the Waghu Mela, or Crocodile Festival, which has African roots. In scattered areas of India, people speak SWAHILI, the trade language of East Africa.

Europe. In ancient times trade relations between Europeans and Africans developed around North African cities, attracting merchants from the SUDAN, the Sahara region, and the Nile River valley. These early commercial contacts led to the migration of Europeans to Africa and of Africans to Europe. Enslavement also played a role in the movement of Africans to the Mediterranean region. The ancient Greeks and Romans, like the Egyptians, held Africans in bondage.

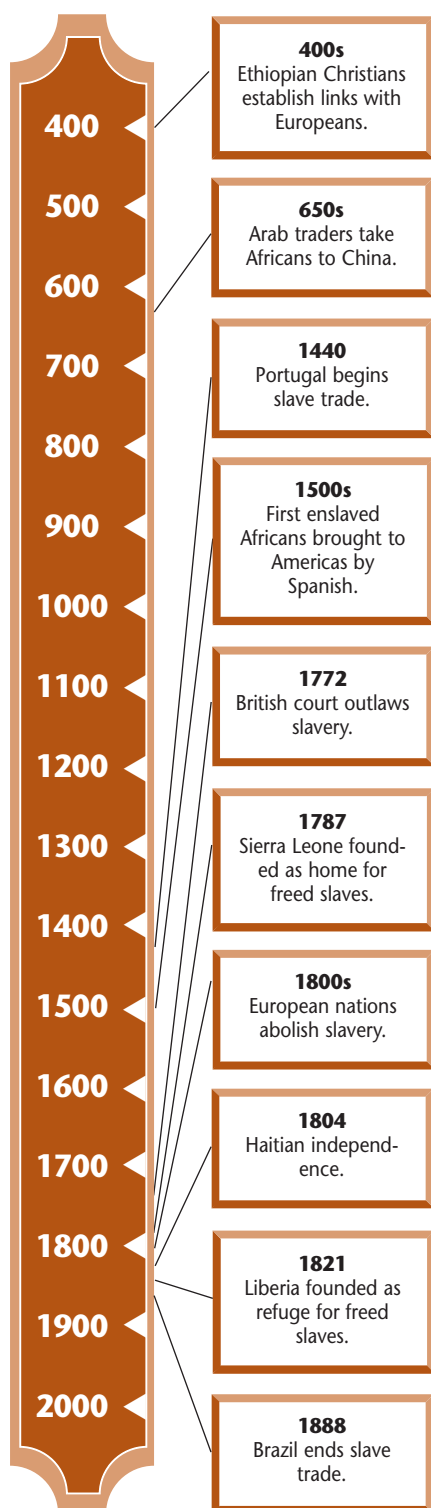
The African presence in Europe increased after the A.D. 700s, when Muslim Arabs from North Africa invaded and occupied Spain. The Muslims dominated the Mediterranean Sea until the 1400s. Throughout this time, Arabs and Europeans traded in African slaves. During the medieval* period, a number of Africans were settled along stretches of the northern Mediterranean coast and on Mediterranean islands such as Sicily.

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

Free and enslaved Ethiopians also visited and lived in medieval Europe. ETHIOPIA, a Christian state since the A.D. 400s, was reaching out for connections with European Christians, and Europeans sought an alliance with Ethiopia against the Muslims. During the Middle Ages, a



Diaspora, African



number of Ethiopians visited Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and official representatives from Ethiopia spoke at several important church conferences in Europe.

The greatest dispersion of Africans into Europe started when Europeans began exploring the world in the 1400s. Europeans formed direct links with the caravan trade in gold across the SAHARA DESERT, which led to a larger number of Africans visiting and settling in European cities. Some of them became interpreters and guides for Europeans exploring Africa. The Portuguese, disappointed by the amount of gold they obtained in the African trade, began trading in African slaves in the 1440s. Soon both enslaved and free Africans were at work in farms, mines, workshops, and armies in Portugal and Spain.

The voyage of English mariner William Hawkins to West Africa in 1530 led to an increase in the number of Africans in England. In 1556 Queen Elizabeth I complained that there were too many “blackamoors” in the country and suggested that they be returned to Africa. By the 1800s the African population in England had risen to about 15,000. Many of them were poor and unwelcome. The number of Africans living in France increased as the French share of the slave trade grew. Officially, France did not permit SLAVERY, but it emerged there anyway. Africans could also be found in Italy, Eastern Europe, Turkey, and Russia, though little is known about the African diaspora to these areas.

The position of Africans in Europe was precarious. Although laws in Europe did not recognize slavery, those of European colonies in Africa, Asia, and the Americas did. As a result, enslaved Africans taken to Britain and France from the colonies were often kept as slaves in Europe. This situation continued until 1772, when a British court declared that Africans in Britain could no longer be legally held as slaves. During the early 1800s, European nations gradually outlawed and ended the slave trade, changing the legal status of all Africans in Europe to free people.

Before that time, not all Africans in Europe had been enslaved. A few African students lived there, especially after the mid-1700s when African rulers began sending their sons to schools in Europe to learn the language and commercial skills needed for conducting business with Europeans. Some of these students became involved with the European abolition movement. One, Ottoban Cugano, wrote a book called *Thoughts and Sentiments on the Evil and Wicked Traffic of the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species* (1787), which stirred debate about the slave trade.

AFRICANS IN THE AMERICAS

Africans arrived in the Americas with the Europeans. From the early days of European exploration of North, Central, and South America, Africans were present. However, it was the slave trade that led to the greatest movement of Africans to the Americas. As a result of that forced migration and later waves of immigration, millions of Africans came to live in the Western Hemisphere. Today the majority of the people of Panama, Barbados, Haiti, and Jamaica are of African descent, but Brazil and the United States have the largest African American populations. In



Diaspora, African

varying degrees, the African diaspora has played a role in shaping the social, cultural, and political fabric of all of these places.

African Migrations. By 1800 an estimated 10 million Africans lived in the Americas. Most were enslaved Africans and children born to them in captivity. About 2 million African Americans were in the United States, and this number doubled by the late 1800s. Another 2 to 3 million lived in Brazil, which continued the slave trade until 1888. By that time, Brazil's African population had increased by millions.

Most Africans brought to the Americas by the slave trade came from the region between present-day GHANA and CAMEROON and from the area around the mouth of the CONGO RIVER. However, smaller numbers of Africans also arrived from the eastern coast of the African continent, long dominated by the Arab slave trade and colonized by the Portuguese.

Africans were usually captured by African kings, sold to slave traders, and packed on ships bound for the Americas. Some shiploads included enslaved Africans who spoke the same or related languages, came from the same areas, or belonged to the same ethnic groups. This made communication among the prisoners possible and, in some cases, led to acts of resistance such as shipboard revolts. Records of these mutinies show that the prisoners sometimes spent days plotting them. Occasionally, African women who served as cooks on the ships helped prisoners plan their mutinies by passing on information gathered from the European crew.

A New Culture. Amid the horrors of the slave ships and the dangerous voyages across the Atlantic Ocean, Africans forged friendships that lasted into the system of slavery in the Americas. These relationships formed the beginning of a new culture, blending elements from different African homelands that would endure and continue to develop during the slavery period and beyond.

During the 1600s and 1700s, blacks adopted the terms *African* and *Ethiopian* as identifying labels. Slave masters renamed Africans, but many individuals tried to keep their original names. Although American laws made it a crime to speak African languages and practice African religions and customs, many enslaved people did so in private moments. In time, however, the Africans learned European languages spoken in the Americas and adopted some elements of European culture.

Africans in the Americas were unified by the relationships formed on slave ships and by the continuing use of their languages and customs. These bonds provided a strong base for freedom movements, which sometimes led to uprisings or to the establishment of communities for fugitive slaves. In the 1500s a black community called Coyula arose in Mexico; in 1603 black pearl divers revolted in Venezuela.

In the French colony of Haiti the struggle of enslaved Africans for freedom reflected the combination of African and Western cultures. It began in 1791 when an African named Boukman attracted a group of loyal followers and succeeded in turning the Africans against the slaveholders. Toussaint L'Ouverture, a Haitian-born African, joined Boukman and organized a guerrilla* war. The war led to Haitian independence in

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors



Diaspora, African

1804. The second independent American republic in the Western Hemisphere (after the United States), Haiti became a symbol of African freedom in the diaspora.

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

These freedom movements reveal the beginnings of African nationalism* in the Americas. Africans did not want just revenge or escape from slavery. They sought control over their communities to promote their own values, goals, and traditions. Africans in the Americas made enormous contributions to the economic development of their countries and also fought for justice. Some became spokespeople for the idea of a larger African identity and, like African American abolitionist* Frederick Douglass, even traveled abroad to promote freedom for blacks in other parts of the world.

African Institutions. As Africans adapted to life in the Americas, they established churches, schools and other organizations that paralleled those of European-American society. Scholars are still investigating the history of these institutions to see how far they incorporated African ideas and traditions and how much they were influenced by European models.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

African culture shaped many aspects of life in black communities in the Americas. Place names, speech patterns, proverbs and folktales, types of food preparation, decorative styles, personal adornments, beliefs, and ritual* practices are a few examples. Areas that once had widespread slave-based plantation economies, such as the Caribbean and the southeastern United States, are the historic heartland of African-influenced culture. However, the influence has spread far beyond this heartland as a result of the movement of African descendants after the Civil War and more recent international migrations. In addition, non-African people have adopted elements of African style and culture.

* **divination** practice that looks into the future, usually by supernatural means

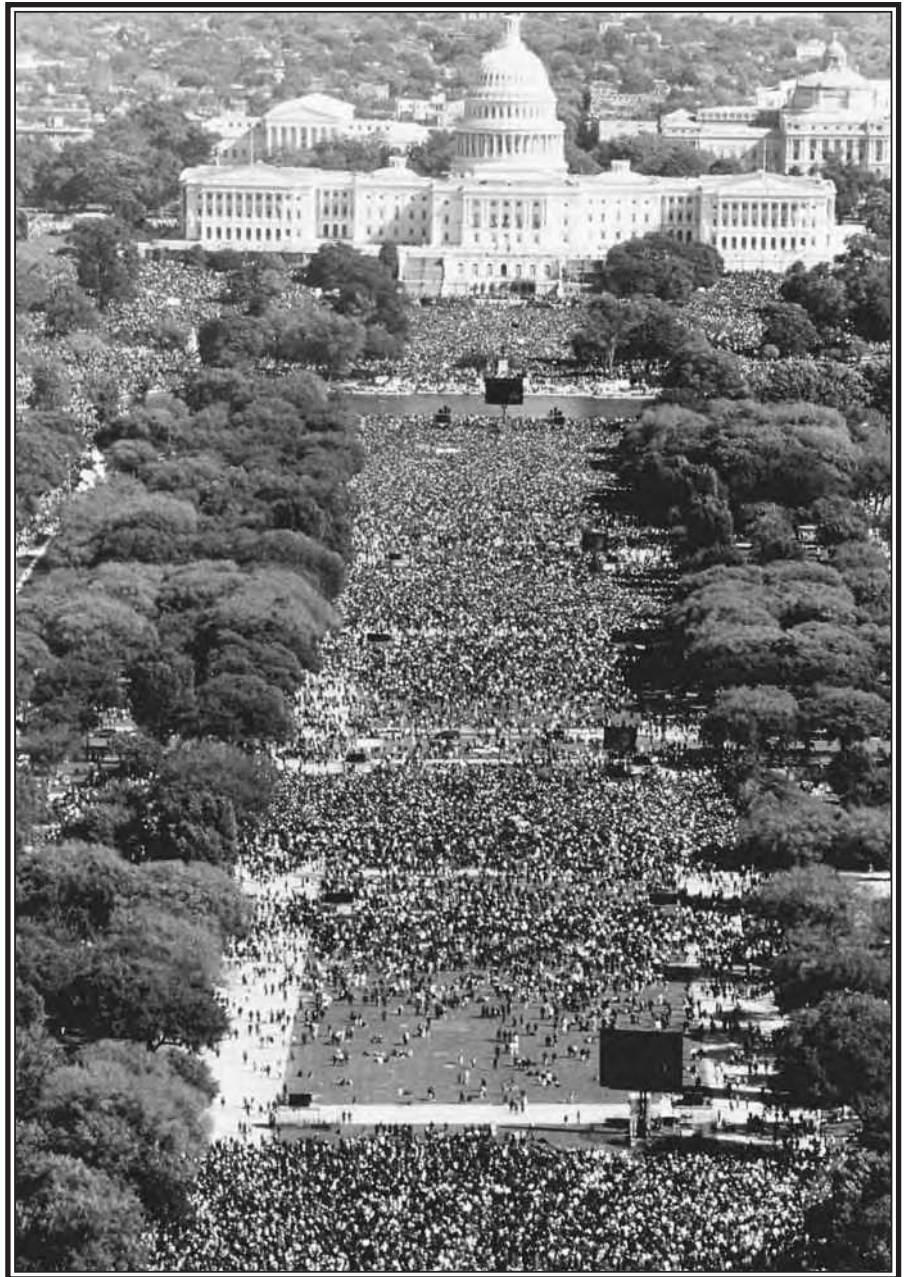
Scholars have identified certain aspects of culture in the Americas as African. For example, the divination* systems known as Santería in Cuba and Candomblé in Brazil are so similar to practices of the YORUBA people of NIGERIA that the African connection is clear. But other aspects of African American culture are not as easy to link to African sources. Scholars have long debated, for example, whether some types of African American social organizations, such as mother-centered families, are survivals of African traditions or were shaped by conditions in the Americas. Moreover, blacks in the Americas have sometimes “re-Africanized” themselves, seeking contact with or knowledge of Africa to strengthen their sense of African identity.

Religion. Throughout the Americas, religion reflects various forms of African influence. Many of the Africans who came to the Americas worshiped local gods and ancestors. Others were Christians, and some practiced hybrid religions, mixing Christian elements with traditional African beliefs. These people and their American descendants created a complex religious legacy that includes faiths that are specifically African and African influence in other religions.

Some religions in the Americas are distinctly African in their beliefs and practices—Candomblé in Brazil, and Sèvi Iwa (voodoo) in Haiti.

Diaspora, African

The Million Man March, held in Washington, D.C., in 1995, attracted more than 800,000 participants. It aimed to promote unity and spiritual renewal among Americans of African descent.



The gods of these religions have recognizable counterparts in African societies. African-inspired forms of ancestor worship also continue to be practiced on Caribbean islands and among the descendants of escaped slaves in the South American nation of Suriname.

European influence has also been strong. In parts of the Americas colonized by Roman Catholics from Europe, Africans often came to identify their gods with Catholic saints and to use some Catholic symbols and rituals. Most practitioners of Candomblé and Santería consider themselves Roman Catholic as well. In addition, some followers of Candomblé and other African-inspired religions claim Native American sources for their practices.



Diaspora, African

African influences also appear in American religions that do not view themselves as specifically African. In various African American Protestant churches, for example, the importance of dancing and of being “filled with the Holy Spirit” can be viewed as versions of African sacred dance and SPIRIT POSSESSION.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Religious practices are among the visible contributions of sub-Saharan* Africa to American civilization. Yet many African elements have been touched and transformed by European and Native American practices and beliefs. In a process that began centuries ago with the arrival of the first Africans on American shores, these different traditions—African, European, and American—are constantly combining and influencing one another in different ways.

THE RETURN TO AFRICA

Africans in the diaspora remained attached to Africa, and many longed to return there. Numerous Africans lost their lives attempting to resist capture in their homeland, during slave-ship mutinies, or in revolts against enslavement. Some, however, succeeded and returned to join their families in Africa. Still others returned as businesspeople, teachers, and missionaries.

One early phase of the return to Africa began in Great Britain. By the late 1700s, that country’s growing black population included many freed slaves from the United States who had fought for the British during the American Revolution. Abolitionists developed the idea of resettling these and other blacks in Africa. The hope was that the returning Africans would establish a society that would promote Christianity, the abolition of the slave trade, and Western principles of government. In 1787 a group of more than 400 Africans left Britain to found SIERRA LEONE, and by the mid-1800s, their descendants had brought the country’s population to about 70,000. Many of the inhabitants were former captives freed from slave traders by the British. A group of people known as CREOLES emerged there, blending Western and African beliefs, customs, and language. As teachers, missionaries, and employees of the colonial governments, Creoles extended the influence of the diaspora across much of West Africa.

Free Africans in the United States made their own plans to return to Africa. The U.S. Navy seized American slave ships and delivered their cargoes to the African colony of LIBERIA, which was founded in 1821. By 1870 Liberia had more than 20,000 settlers. The majority came from the United States, and they patterned their political and social institutions after American ones. On declaring independence in 1847, Liberia became the second African nation to win international recognition (after Ethiopia) and the first whose leaders were part of the African diaspora.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

In both Sierra Leone and Liberia the descendants of the returned Africans established governments that ruled over the indigenous* population. As in Africa’s European colonies, the indigenous peoples were treated as inferiors. Several prominent African Americans went to Liberia and made significant contributions there. One of them, Edward BLYDEN, emphasized the importance of African languages and culture and developed ideas about the blend of African and Western culture.



Dingiswayo

During the 1800s people of African descent from Brazil, Cuba, the Arabian peninsula, and India also returned to Africa. In modern times a two-way movement developed, with diaspora Africans returning to Africa and people from Africa migrating to other nations to work or study. These links contributed to a global sense of African identity and helped inspire the independence movements in Africa during the mid-1900s.

AFRICAN CULTURAL INFLUENCES OUTSIDE AFRICA

African traditions spread by the diaspora have influenced world culture in various ways, most notably in art and music. Artistic influences, particularly art forms created by people of African descent in the Americas, range from African-style painting and sculpture, masks carved in Yoruba style in Brazil, and a Cuban tradition of costumed dance that echoes the rituals of many peoples of West Africa.

Africa's greatest impact on world culture, however, has been through music. In the Americas, African traditions gave birth to many new musical forms, such as black gospel, blues, jazz, calypso in Trinidad and the West Indies, reggae in Jamaica, and samba in Brazil. African American music began to be recorded in the 1920s. By the mid-1900s records had made their way to Africa, where they inspired urban musicians to adopt some African American styles and blend them with traditional African ones.

African musicians have continued to borrow from African American music. In turn, American and European popular musicians have adopted the sounds of African popular music. Today, Africa is part of the world of popular music. The influence of African and African American music has shaped much of modern jazz, rock and roll, and pop music. (*See also Art; Dance; Ethnic Groups and Identity; History of Africa; Humans, Early; Music and Song; Negritude; Refugees; Religion and Ritual.*)

Dingiswayo

1770s–1816
Chief of the Nguni
confederation

Dingiswayo was the last chief of the Nguni confederation of southern Africa before Europeans colonized the area. According to legend, Dingiswayo became chief by killing his brother because he believed that his brother was not the rightful ruler. After assuming power, Dingiswayo combined several related kingdoms into a unified confederation. He then appointed subchiefs from those kingdoms to help him oversee the union.

Dingiswayo also introduced a military system in which young men preparing to be warriors spent a great deal of time together before their initiation. His goal was to develop a sense of fraternity among the warriors that would make them trustworthy companions in military campaigns. One of those brought up under this system was Shaka, the son of the Zulu chief. After the chief died, Dingiswayo sent Shaka to claim the Zulu throne. In 1816 Dingiswayo was killed by a follower of one of the subchiefs, and the confederacy began to fall apart. Shaka later took over as chief and reunited the confederacy under his own leadership. (*See also Shaka Zulu, Southern Africa, History.*)



Diop, Alioune

Diop, Alioune

1910–1980

Writer and cultural leader

* **ideology** set of concepts or opinions of a person or group

The Senegalese writer Alioune Diop played a major role in changing the way the French-speaking world viewed Africa. Born and educated in SENEGAL, Diop worked as a professor and represented the colony in the French Senate. In 1947 he started *Présence africaine*, which became the most influential French-language journal on Africa.

In *Présence africaine*, Diop tried to reshape the European image of Africa and to emphasize the continent's significance in world affairs. Diop was afraid that Africa was all but invisible when it came to world politics and that its people had become "disinherited" by other world leaders. His goal was to completely redefine the role of the African continent on the world stage. The journal consistently attacked colonialism without identifying itself with a particular philosophy or ideology*. In addition to his writing and journalism, Diop was active in promoting African literature and art in the Société Africaine de Culture he founded. He also played a major role in organizing the first and second International Congress of Black Writers and Artists (1956 and 1959), the first World Festival of Negro Arts (1966), and the Festival of Black and African Arts and Culture (1977). (See also **Publishing**.)

Diop, Cheikh Anta

1923–1986

African scholar and political leader

* **carbon-14 dating** method of determining the age of ancient objects by measuring the decay of radioactive carbon

Cheikh Anta Diop was an accomplished historian, physicist, archaeologist, and linguist who championed the cause of African independence and explored the roots of African culture and civilization. Born to a Muslim family in SENEGAL and educated in both Africa and France, Diop had an unusual background from which to examine Africa's colonial experience.

While doing graduate work in Paris, Diop became involved in the anti-colonial movement and helped to organize the first Pan-African Student Conference in 1951. He also began to research the origins of civilization in Africa. He wrote a doctoral thesis that argued that ancient Egypt was a black African civilization. It took nine years for the Sorbonne—France's most prestigious university—to assemble a panel of scholars to judge the thesis, which earned Diop a doctor of letters degree in 1960. Diop then returned to Senegal where he set up a laboratory for carbon-14 dating* and founded several political parties.

Diop devoted his academic and literary career to defining Africa's identity, which had been shattered by years of European colonial rule. His books trace Africa's contributions to classical Greek culture and examine the relationship between Islam, Christianity, Judaism, and Egyptian religious thought. He argued that European colonial rulers had been racist and violent because they came from male-dominated societies. According to Diop, female-centered societies—which he claimed originated in Africa—were more humane. He believed that together Africans could repeat the great achievements of their distant past.

Diop received many honors during his lifetime, and at the first World Festival of Negro Arts in 1966, he was named one of the two scholars "who exerted the greatest influence on Negro thought in the twentieth century." (See also **Africa**, **Study of**; **Egypt**, **Negritude**.)

Diseases

Poverty and the scarcity of adequate health services have combined to make disease a particularly severe problem throughout Africa. Africans have to deal with many of the same illnesses that affect people in other parts of the world. They suffer from infectious diseases such as measles, lifestyle-related illnesses such as cancer and heart disease, and sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). However, social and economic conditions in Africa make the treatment and prevention of these diseases more of a problem than in wealthier, more industrialized nations. Moreover, certain diseases exist only in Africa, and various factors such as climate and traditional ways of living make it especially difficult to keep them under control.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

* **virus** microscopic organism that can only live and reproduce within the cells of other living things

* **parasite** organism that feeds on the body of another organism

* **vector** organism that carries disease-causing substances from one body to another

Africa is home to a wide variety of infectious diseases caused by viruses* or parasites* that live in monkeys, rats, or other animals known as hosts. Flies, mosquitoes, and other agents known as vectors* transmit the diseases to humans.

Africa has some infectious diseases that appear nowhere else in the world and appears to be the source of numerous diseases found on other continents. Over the centuries, these diseases were spread through trade and travel. The SLAVE TRADE, for example, brought various African diseases to the Americas.

In modern times, the ease of travel has allowed infected people and livestock to carry additional viruses and parasites from Africa to other parts of the world. Mosquitoes and other animals that act as disease vectors have also found their way to other continents by way of airplanes and ships.

Parasitic Diseases Limited to Africa. One of the most common parasitic diseases in Africa is trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness. Often fatal, sleeping sickness is caused by a single-celled microorganism that lives in wild animals and is transmitted to humans and cattle by the bite of the tsetse fly.

Treatment with drugs can cure most cases of sleeping sickness, and the spread of the disease can be controlled by eliminating tsetse flies near populated areas. However, sleeping sickness remains a serious problem in rural areas and in nature preserves protected from human settlement.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Sleeping sickness is found mostly in Africa's savanna* regions, which are home to the game animals that carry it. Although a serious problem for humans and domestic animals, the disease has helped preserve wildlife herds in Africa by discouraging the expansion of human settlement in the savanna. It has also played a role in controlling the spread of the desert into savanna areas by limiting the livestock herds that graze on grasslands.

Leishmaniasis, another African parasitic disease, causes sores and disfigurement of the face. Some forms of the disease are found in South America and Asia, but one variety appears only in Africa. A common host animal for the disease is the hyrax, a cave-dwelling rodentlike animal. Sand flies feed on the blood of the hyrax and transmit the disease to humans.



Diseases

Poisoned by Poverty

Climate and poverty can multiply the problems of disease, as shown during a severe drought in Mozambique in the 1980s. The only food crop to survive the drought was cassava, a root plant that contains the poison cyanide. Acids found in beans normally counteract the poison, but the drought had wiped out the bean crop. The cyanide can be removed by drying or soaking the cassava. But because cassava was the only food crop available, people often did not take the time to do this. As a result, many individuals in Mozambique suffered damage to their nervous systems as a result of cyanide poisoning. Those most affected were children and women because working males had access to other food.

Several parasitic diseases are transmitted by worms. The loa loa worm carries a disease called loiasis that causes swelling of the skin and allergic reactions. The small worm enters the bloodstream of humans through bites from a type of large horsefly. It can often be seen crossing under the thin membrane that lines the inner surface of the eyelid in an infected person.

Parasitic Diseases of African Origin. A number of parasitic diseases found around the world originated in Africa. Perhaps the most widespread of these is malaria, now also a major health problem in Asia and South America.

The parasites that cause malaria, a disease characterized by recurring cycles of severe chills, fever, and sweating, are carried by *Anopheles* mosquitoes. Each year more than a million children—mostly in Africa—die from malaria. It is the leading cause of death among African children.

Most adults who live in areas of Africa where malaria is common have developed a great deal of natural immunity, or resistance, to the disease. Vaccines to prevent malaria exist but are not widely available to Africans. The vaccines may also damage naturally acquired immunity. Various drugs are used to treat malaria, but the malaria parasites have developed resistance to some of them. Most efforts to prevent malaria focus on eliminating mosquito-breeding areas and using mosquito netting to protect potential victims.

Parasites that live in small water-dwelling snails cause a disease called schistosomiasis, or bilharziasis. Once confined to central Africa, the disease was spread to the Americas by the slave trade and now occurs in many places that lack piped water supplies or that rely heavily on irrigation. Humans become infected by bathing, washing, or working in water containing the snails and their parasites.

Health experts estimate that schistosomiasis affects 200 million people worldwide, most of whom live in Africa. A single dose of a drug called praziquantel can cure schistosomiasis, and the snails can be killed with chemicals. The best long-term solution, however, is providing safe water supplies and educating people about how to avoid exposure to the parasites.

One of the most serious parasitic diseases in Africa is onchocerciasis, or river blindness, which is caused by a certain species of worm. The worms are carried by blackflies that breed in rivers and streams of rain forests. River blindness causes severe disfigurement of facial skin and often leads to permanent blindness. Over 30 million Africans suffer from river blindness, and in some areas about one third of the adult population has been blinded by the disease.

River blindness came to the Americas with the slave trade and is now widespread in Central America and South America. A drug called ivermectin provides an effective treatment for the disease, but eliminating breeding areas for the mosquitoes that carry the disease has dramatically reduced infection rates in many areas of Africa.

Viral Diseases Limited to Africa. Lassa fever, which is carried by rats, is found mainly in West Africa. This viral disease causes fever,



Diseases

bleeding, swollen face and neck, and liver failure. The rats that carry lassa fever live in thatched-roof huts in rural areas, making it difficult to control the spread of the disease. Researchers are currently working on a vaccine.

Two of the most frightening viruses in Africa are the Marburg virus and the Ebola virus. The Marburg virus causes an extremely serious, often fatal disease characterized by severe internal bleeding. Little is known about the source of infection, but it seems to be transmitted by direct contact with an infected person.

Similar to the Marburg virus, the Ebola virus also causes severe internal bleeding and is usually fatal. It is spread by contact with the blood of an infected person, by infected needles, and through sexual contact. The host animal for the virus has not been identified, but bats are suspected.

So far there have been only occasional outbreaks of Marburg and Ebola in Africa, but experts fear the possibility of epidemics in the future. There is no vaccine or known treatment for either virus, and the only way to stop their spread is by keeping infected individuals in quarantine.

Viral Diseases of African Origin. Although first identified in Cuba, Central America, and the United States, yellow fever originated in Africa, where the hosts are tree-dwelling monkeys. Mosquitoes in forested areas transmit the virus to humans, who bring the disease back to populated areas. There it is spread by *Aedes aegypti*, a common species of mosquito. Yellow fever causes a yellowish discoloration of the skin, internal bleeding, and vomiting. A highly effective vaccine is available that gives lifelong protection against yellow fever, and control of the disease is also achieved by eliminating mosquito habitats.

The viral disease AIDS was identified in the United States in 1981. However, research has shown that the first human cases occurred in central Africa at least as early as 1959. Researchers believe that HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, originated in African monkeys or apes. Among human populations, HIV is spread by sexual intercourse or contact with contaminated blood. Mothers can also pass HIV to unborn children during pregnancy or while breast-feeding their infants.

In most cases it takes a number of years for HIV to develop into AIDS. As it progresses, AIDS destroys the human immune system, which normally protects the body against infectious disease. Death is often caused by secondary infections that occur after the breakdown of the victim's immune system. Drug treatments have helped prolong the lives of some people with AIDS, but a cure for the disease has not yet been found.

In the early years, African officials paid little attention to AIDS, but the seriousness of the problem soon became evident. The number of cases of AIDS in Africa has skyrocketed, with infection rates in some major cities in central and eastern Africa reaching 25 percent of sexually active adults. Because of the high death rate, the absence of an affordable and effective treatment, traditional sexual practices, and the lack of effective health education, AIDS threatens to be a devastating public health problem in many parts of Africa in the coming years.

Diseases



The insects that carry the disease known as river blindness breed in fast-flowing water. As a result, the disease is prevalent along rivers with heavy rapids, such as the Nile, the Congo, and the Volta. This girl is helping a man infected with river blindness.

DISEASES WITH SPECIAL FEATURES IN AFRICA

A number of diseases that exist within and outside of Africa occur in somewhat different forms or circumstances in Africa. These differences can be traced mostly to factors such as climate, geography, and the behavior and customs of people likely to be affected by the disease.

Infectious Diseases. During the 1960s measles was the leading cause of death among West African infants. Widespread malnutrition contributed to the development of pneumonia, diarrhea, and other secondary infections in children with measles. Other complications from measles led to blindness, deafness, and mental retardation. Vaccines now available have helped reduce the danger from measles in urban areas, but the disease is still a major problem in remote areas.

Meningitis is another viral disease that has been much more devastating in Africa than in the West. At one time, periodic epidemics of the disease killed as many as 15,000 people. Antibiotic drugs have been effective in controlling meningitis, but parts of Africa—particularly the northern savanna region stretching from BURKINA FASO to SUDAN—still experience epidemics from time to time.



Diseases

Two common infectious diseases related to animals, hydatid disease and trichinosis, also have special characteristics in Africa. Hydatid disease is caused by a worm that lives in dogs and is transmitted through their bodily waste. It is most common in the Turkana region of KENYA, where working mothers often use dogs to look after their children, than anywhere else in the world. Hydatid produces large growths in the liver that can be treated either with surgery or drugs.

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

Trichinosis, caused by eating tainted meat from pigs, attacks muscle tissue, including the heart, and can cause heart failure. In Africa, trichinosis infects wild pigs, but not domestic pigs. Taboos* against eating wild pigs have helped to control the spread of the disease.

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), such as syphilis and gonorrhea are widespread in Africa. Lifestyle and attitudes toward GENDER ROLES AND SEXUALITY play a major role in this problem as does the high proportion of young people in Africa. A significant part of the population falls in age groups most affected by STDs—men 20 to 30 years of age and women 15 to 25. Moreover, African men tend to marry later than men in the West. In the meantime, they may have sex with prostitutes who may carry STDs. In addition, many men move to urban areas to find work, and when they return home they may bring STDs back to their wives. Many men are also reluctant to use condoms.

With few doctors and little access to health care, education about and treatment of STDs in Africa lags far behind the West. As with other diseases, Africa's poverty contributes both to the development and spread of STDs and to the difficulty of preventing and curing the diseases.

NONINFECTIOUS DISEASES

The leading cause of death in industrialized countries is coronary heart disease, caused by a high-fat diet, lack of exercise, and cigarette smoking. In Africa heart disease is almost unknown, even among people who have a high-fat diet. But rheumatic heart disease, which is now rare in the West, is the most common cause of heart failure in Africa. One reason may be that rheumatic heart disease is associated with poverty and a certain type of bacterial infection—both widespread in Africa.

Cancer occurs in Africa as well as in the West, but the most common types are different. Lung cancer, for example, has been rare in Africa, though it is on the rise now as more Africans are smoking. Another type of cancer found more frequently in the West than in Africa is prostate cancer, which affects only men. The low incidence of this disease in Africa may be related to diet. However, cervical cancer is more common in Africa than in Western countries. The high rate of this type of cancer, which affects women, seems to be associated with early sexual activity and multiple pregnancies. Another type of cancer that is common in the West but almost nonexistent in Africa is skin cancer caused by too much exposure to the sun. In Africa, solar cancers are almost unheard of because there are built-in protective mechanisms in African's pigmented skin. Scientists learn a great deal about tumors by studying the factors that make some cancers common in Africa, but not in the West. (*See also AIDS, Healing and Medicine, Health Care, Pests and Pest Control.*)



Divination and Oracles

Divination and Oracles

Throughout much of Africa people turn to divination for guidance in resolving their troubles. The act of divination involves advice, an explanation, or a prediction for the future—all of which are considered messages from the spiritual world. Many Christian and Muslim Africans do not see divination as conflicting with their faiths. Their approach to understanding life and solving its problems combines divination, religion, and other elements such as modern medicine.

Diviners and Their Methods. Diviners, the men and women who perform divination, are believed to be spokespersons for spiritual forces, including supernatural beings and the dead. Some people are selected at birth to become diviners; they may be descended from or related to other diviners. Other individuals are identified through religious or magical rituals or after recovering from a particular illness. Diviners are sometimes thought to have spiritual twins of the opposite sex. To bridge the gap between the earthly and spiritual worlds, a male diviner may dress in women’s clothing or a female diviner in men’s clothing.

Two main types of divination are practiced in Africa. Revelatory divination explains past misfortunes, and predictive divination foretells likely future events. Diviners rely on various methods, and some may use more than one technique.

Often diviners act as mediums, channels of communication between the earthly and spiritual worlds. This may involve entering a trance in which the diviner is thought to be taken over by a spirit or deity*. The diviner then passes along or acts out a message. In southeastern Burkina Faso, for example, a spirit has no tongue but communicates through a diviner’s hand gestures. Some spirit mediums are associated with the shrines of major African cults*, such as the cult of Mwali in southeastern Africa and the cult of Ngombo in southern Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola. In other cases, a diviner may act as a medium without being possessed by a spirit. He or she may enter a trance and, upon waking, tell of a vision or a journey into the spirit world.

Dreams can be viewed as forms of divination. The TUAREG of North Africa believe that the spirits of the dead roam near graves and sometimes carry news to the living. To obtain a vision of the future, a person may sleep on a grave.

Diviners often interpret physical signs as spiritual messages. Among the Dogon people of Mali, for example, diviners trace a grid or set of lines in the dust outside the village at sunset. Over it they sprinkle grain to attract the pale fox, an animal that moves about by night. The following morning, the diviners read messages in the fox’s tracks across the grid. Other diviners keep items in a special basket, bag, or cup. These items include seeds, insects, and parts of animals or birds. Manufactured objects that are important in daily life or associated with myths and symbols may also be used. The diviner observes the movement or arrangement of these items and interprets it to provide the message.

Purposes of Divination. People consult a diviner to discover the causes of a misfortune such as a difficult conflict, a disaster, a great loss, a mysterious illness, or even death. Divination is based on the idea that human relations can be the cause of such troubles. The diviner’s mes-

* deity god or goddess

* cult group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god



Two Dogon diviners in Mali interpret a spiritual message by examining marks in the sand.

sage is expected to reveal the people or issues involved in the problem and to restore peace of mind. It may suggest a course of action.

A type of divination called an oracle may be used to determine guilt. In such cases, the diviner calls on an invisible force to arrange or move special items, such as horns, rattles, or gourds. The diviner might also poison a fowl, ask a series of yes-or-no questions, and interpret the movements of the fowl as answers to those questions. Sometimes the diviner will ask spirits or recently dead members of the community to respond to the questions of the oracle.

A diviner claims to be neutral in the process of divination, merely an instrument through which the spirits speak. His or her interpretations are respected. Oracles generally reinforce public opinion and the beliefs, values, and morals of the society. At the same time, they may reveal feelings of envy and an underlying power struggle within the community. Most traditions of divination operate at the level of family or community and have little to do with politics. In some cases, however, divination clearly serves to support political authority. (*See also Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession, Witchcraft and Sorcery.*)

DIVORCE

See Marriage Systems.

Djibouti

Djibouti

The tiny country of Djibouti is located at the southern entrance to the Red Sea. Although the landscape is mostly flat and barren, several mountain ranges cross the northern part of the country. The climate is extremely hot; during the dry season temperatures can reach 113°F.

Djibouti's economy is based mainly on its role as a trading center for goods traveling to and from Africa on the Red Sea and Indian Ocean. It has a modern port and a railroad connection to ADDIS ABABA, the capital of ETHIOPIA. Apart from these commercial activities, however, the economy is not strong. Because most of the land is not suited for agriculture, Djibouti depends on imported food. It has little industry and unemployment ranges from 40 to 70 percent. Furthermore, a flood of refugees from the war-torn nations of Ethiopia, ERITREA, and SOMALIA has strained Djibouti's resources and increased its need for foreign aid.

The main ethnic groups in Djibouti are the Issa of the south and the Afar of the north. Other peoples include ARABS, recent immigrants from northern Somalia, and French citizens who hold many key government posts. Most of the population lives in or near the city of Djibouti, the nation's capital and major port.

A former French colony, Djibouti became independent in 1977. For many years President Hassan Gouled Aptidon and his party ruled the country. Most of Gouled's support came from the Issa people, which led to discontent among the Afar. In 1991 an Afar guerrilla* force of about 3,000 began a civil war against the Gouled regime*. Gouled responded by holding multiparty elections for the presidency and legislature in 1992 and 1993. Charging that the election system was unfair, oppo-

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **regime** current political system or rule



Republic of Djibouti

POPULATION:

451,442 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

8,500 sq. mi. (22,000 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French, Arabic (both official); Afar, Somali

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Djibouti Franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 94%, Christian 6%

CITIES:

Djibouti (capital), 383,000 (1999 est.); Ali Sabieth, Dikhil, Tadjoura, Obock

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Less than 5 in. (127 mm)

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,200

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: goats, sheep, camels, cattle, coffee
Manufacturing: dairy products, mineral water bottling, port and maritime support, construction
Mining: salt extraction
Economy is based mainly upon services and commerce.

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1977. Parliamentary government limited to no more than 4 political parties. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale; Council of Ministers (appointed by president).

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1977–1999 President Hassan Gouled Aptidon
1999– President Ismail Omar Guella

ARMED FORCES:

9,600 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Literacy rate 46%



Éboué, Adolphe-Félix-Sylvestre

nents of the government refused to participate. Nevertheless, Gouled and his party declared victory. Gouled then seized the opportunity to attack and crush the armed opposition. He continued to dominate Djibouti's politics and government until 1999, when his nephew, Ismail Omar Guellah, was elected president. (See also **Climate, Colonialism in Africa, Trade, Transportation.**)

Du Bois, W.E.B.

1868–1963
Father of Pan-Africanism

William Edward Burghardt Du Bois was a leading champion of equality for blacks in the United States and elsewhere. An African American born in Massachusetts, Du Bois attended college and earned a Ph.D. degree from Harvard University. In the early 1900s, he became a black civil rights leader. Du Bois was known for his view that social change could be achieved only through active protest. In 1909 he helped create the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which became a leading civil rights organization in the United States.

Du Bois was also the founder of Pan-Africanism, a movement aimed at unifying blacks throughout the world in protest against racism and colonialism. He believed that people of African descent everywhere had common interests and should work together to improve their place in society. However, he campaigned against the ideas of fellow Pan-Africanist Marcus Mosiah GARVEY, who encouraged black Americans to go “back to Africa” to rediscover their heritage and build new lives there. Du Bois organized several Pan-African conferences in the 1920s and 1930s.

Du Bois wrote many books, including *Souls of Black Folk* (1903), *The Negro* (1915), *Color and Democracy* (1945), and *The World and Africa* (1947). Toward the end of his life, Du Bois moved to Ghana, where he renounced his U.S. citizenship. (See also **Diaspora, African, Negritude.**)

Éboué, Adolphe-Félix-Sylvestre

1884–1944
Colonial administrator

Adolphe-Félix-Sylvestre Éboué was a Creole official who served France in a variety of colonial posts during the early 1900s. He is most famous for bringing several French colonies in Africa into World War II to fight on the side of the Allies.

Born in French Guyana in South America, Éboué attended a school of colonial administration, where he formed friendships that were important to his future career. He served in the French colony of Oubangui-Chari in central Africa from 1909 to 1931 and then held posts in several of France's Caribbean territories. In 1939 Éboué was demoted and sent back to Oubangui-Chari—probably at the request of personal enemies. Yet this turned out to be a fortunate move for both Éboué and France.

When France was occupied by Germany in World War II, most of France's African colonies supported its pro-Nazi Vichy government. However, Éboué convinced CAMEROON and FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA to



Éboué, Adolphe-Félix-Sylvestre

join the Allies and Charles de Gaulle's Free French forces in fighting against Germany. After Éboué's death, de Gaulle ordered that he be buried in the Pantheon of Heroes in Paris. He is the only black person ever to receive that honor. (See also **World Wars I and II**)

Economic History

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

A lack of written sources makes it difficult to trace the early economic history of much of the African continent, especially sub-Saharan* Africa. What is clear is that Africans in precolonial* times had basic economic activities that provided them with the things they needed to survive. At the same time, however, many factors limited the kind of intensive economic development that occurred in Asia and Europe.

Much of Africa's recent economic history is linked to the period of European colonialism, from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s. The nations that colonized Africa saw the continent as a vast source of untapped wealth. Only after many false starts and much wasted investment would they recognize the forces that had held back the African economy for centuries.

PRECOLONIAL ECONOMIES

Africans provided for their own economic needs and traded among themselves long before they had contact with other peoples. However, scholars have different views on the nature of these early economic activities.

Agriculture. Economic history begins with the appearance of agriculture and the domestication* of animals. These two developments pave the way for settled communities that not only provide for their basic needs but also produce surplus food for trade. In addition, agricultural surplus leads to the creation of specialized groups—such as traders and artisans*—who are not involved in food production. Food surpluses also stimulate trade and commerce between neighboring societies.

Africans living in the SAHARA DESERT had domesticated cattle as early as the 6000s B.C. African agriculture, which developed around the late 1000s B.C. in the SAHEL region, spread to southern Africa by the A.D. 100s or 200s.

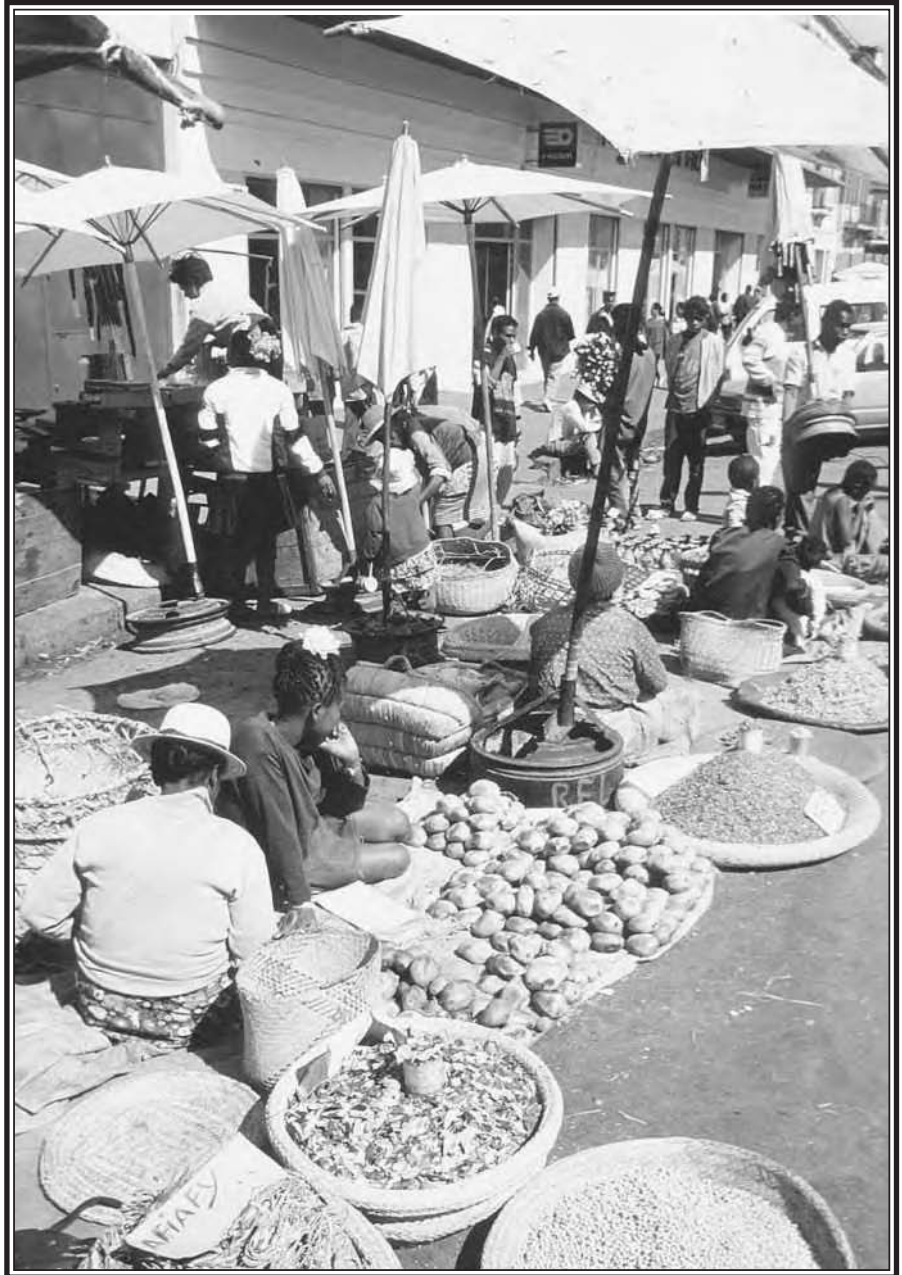
For several reasons, the shift to agriculture did not always result in dramatic increases in productivity. First, the most common farming method was swidden, or slash-and-burn. This method, involving small parcels of land and little irrigation or fertilizer, usually produces low crop yields. Second, the poor soil and unpredictable rainfall found in much of Africa makes it almost impossible to count on consistent crops over a long period of time. Third, Africa's geography makes transportation of goods extremely difficult. The terrain in the interior is rugged and unhealthy for the large animals often used to haul goods. Moreover, most rivers in the interior are navigable only for short distances, and Africa has few natural harbors along its coasts for shipping cargo.

* **domestication** adopting or training plants or animals for human use

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

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Much local commercial activity in Africa takes place in open-air markets like this one in Antananarivo, Madagascar.



Because of the problems in transporting goods to distant markets, farmers had little reason to produce surplus food.

Another factor that slowed agricultural improvement was the lack of population pressure on the land. Until recent times, the overall population of Africa remained fairly low, partly because of the presence of many disease-carrying organisms. Furthermore, Africa contained abundant open space. When the farmland near a village became less fertile, some inhabitants simply moved to new areas. The **SLAVE TRADE**, which flourished between A.D. 800 and 1900, removed as many as 20 million people from Africa, further decreasing the population. Finally, African



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cultural values, which placed little value on goods and money, did not promote the production of surplus food for trade.

The situation in North Africa was different. There irrigation along bodies of water such as the NILE RIVER made intensive cultivation possible. EGYPT grew into a prosperous society by the 3000s B.C. and developed numerous connections with the ancient Middle East. By the 400s B.C., the city-state of CARTHAGE in present-day TUNISIA became one of the leading commercial powers in the Mediterranean world. With the Sahara desert acting as a barrier to migration, densely populated societies grew up in the fertile areas of North Africa.

Trade and Commerce. Despite various difficulties, trade and commerce did occur in precolonial Africa. Scholars have uncovered evidence of early exchanges between farmers and cattle raisers. Members of these groups also traded with hunting, fishing, and metalworking peoples. Such trade, however, was mostly local.

In sub-Saharan Africa, trade with groups outside the region developed very slowly. As early as the A.D. 100s, merchants from Southwest Asia were trading along the East African coast. By the 500s, camel caravans began to cross the Sahara, creating commercial links between sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, and the Middle East.

Trade developed more easily in North Africa. As early as the 400s B.C., Carthage was exchanging manufactured goods with people on the Moroccan coast and obtaining tin from northern France. Carthaginian merchants were a common sight in the marketplaces of ancient Greece. Early Egyptian commercial ties extended to the kingdoms of Sumer and Babylonia in the Middle East, and ancient Egyptians conducted regular trading expeditions to SUDAN and ETHIOPIA. The Romans obtained many goods from North Africa, including grain, olive oil, livestock, timber, and marble.

The most common early exports from sub-Saharan Africa were gold, slaves, and ivory. Items of lesser importance included timber, spices, vegetable oils, and rubber. For hundreds of years, Africa was the major source of gold for the Mediterranean region and South Asia. The search for gold also motivated the earliest European trading voyages to Africa in the A.D. 1400s. For Europeans, the importance of African gold declined after they began to explore the Americas and to develop gold mines there.

Slaves made up an important part of sub-Saharan Africa's trade with North Africa, the Middle East, and Asia during the Middle Ages. In the 1500s European plantation owners in the Americas became the main customers. After European nations abolished slave trading in the 1800s, Muslims took over the commerce. Islamic involvement in the African slave trade reached its peak during the 1800s and did not stop until toward the end of that century.

During the precolonial era, Africans generally exported raw materials in exchange for manufactured goods, primarily textiles, metal goods, weapons, and shells and beads. In some cases, Africans used imported products, such as iron bars, to make manufactured goods. Beads and shells often served as currency as well as consumer goods. By and large,

Oil Rich and Oil Poor

The major exceptions to the poor performance of African economies have been the oil-producing states of North Africa. Libya, the largest oil producer in Africa, has the highest per-person income on the continent. Since independence, Algeria has developed both its oil and natural gas industries, which have contributed to rapid industrialization. However, Nigeria, Africa's second-largest oil producer, has not benefited nearly as much from petroleum. This is partly because Nigerian oil revenues go to a small, powerful segment of the population, and partly because of corruption among government officials who oversee the industry.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Africa's foreign trade affected coastal peoples much more than those living farther inland. Few imported goods reached the interior.

COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL ECONOMIES

By the beginning of the colonial era in the late 1800s, the market for many of Africa's exports had declined sharply. Some, such as slaves, were no longer in great demand. Others, such as vegetable oils, were being replaced by cheaper alternatives from other sources. However, colonialism led to a revival of exports from Africa as Europeans took for themselves what they previously had obtained through trade.

The Role of Exports. At first, the European nations that colonized Africa gave private companies the rights to exploit* the continent's natural wealth. Most of these companies, however, failed because of the high cost of setting up mines or plantations and of building roads and railroads to transport products.

By the early 1900s, European governments had stepped in to administer the colonies and oversee African exports. Over the next 60 years, trade and commerce between Africa and other parts of the world increased significantly. African mining was highly successful. By the mid-1930s, Africa supplied almost all the diamonds, half of the gold, and about one-fifth of the copper sold worldwide. Other important mineral exports included manganese, asbestos, and phosphates used in fertilizer.

The increase in exports helped stimulate the development of new manufacturing and service industries in Africa. In western Africa these new businesses were largely in the hands of Africans, but in eastern Africa they were dominated by Asian immigrants. Few of the new industries developed into large-scale companies. In southern and central Africa, the growth of mining and manufacturing led to a greater demand for food.

The colonial powers' agricultural efforts, however, were much less successful than the mining operations. The large plantations were often no more efficient than smaller farms. Moreover, colonies with agriculture-based economies often focused on a small number of crops and suffered when demands for those products dropped. In many areas, African peasants became skilled at growing and selling cash crops*. Rural incomes and standards of living were higher in places that featured small-scale farming rather than plantation agriculture.

The human cost for the colonial powers' focus on exports could be high. Governments and private companies often resorted to harsh methods, including forced labor, to ensure production. Africans were often denied access to land and to employment in skilled positions. In the late colonial period, a huge gap developed between urban and rural incomes.

The Postcolonial Economy. In the early years after independence, most African economies continued to grow fairly well. However, the difference in incomes between urban and rural populations led to increased migration from the countryside to the cities as people



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* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization within a government

sought for economic opportunities. By the mid-1960s, increased government spending on education resulted in large numbers of educated but unemployed youths in cities.

Under pressure to provide more jobs, many governments expanded their role in the economy. Bureaucracies* grew and government-owned and operated businesses multiplied. Most of these businesses were highly inefficient, employing far more people than they could reasonably afford. To increase revenues, leaders began to restrict imported goods that competed with locally produced items. They also kept the value of their currencies artificially high compared to foreign currency. In the long run, however, these policies reduced the price of exports and caused export earnings to shrink.

The effect of these postcolonial economic policies was dramatic. Between the late 1960s and 1980, agricultural exports fell by one-third. Mineral exports fared better, but in some countries they fell by up to 40 percent. Low prices for crops and minerals during the 1970s made the problem worse by lowering revenues for the goods that were exported. Personal incomes fell and unemployment soared, reducing government tax revenues.

To balance their budgets, African nations borrowed large sums of money from other countries as well as from institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. By the late 1980s, African economies were in serious trouble as their debts mounted and economic growth continued to decline.

The combination of reduced tax revenues, declining export earnings, staggering national debts, and growing political and social unrest forced African leaders to rethink their economic strategies. At the same time, nations and institutions that had lent money began to demand changes in the way African nations did business. Lenders forced many African countries to adjust the value of their currency to reflect its true value in the world marketplace. They also demanded an end to import restrictions and price controls. Many state-owned enterprises became private companies, and the size of government payrolls was cut. Even spending on social programs was reduced to help balance government budgets.

So far these new strategies have had little effect on African economies. Business owners have lacked confidence in the ability of governments to bring about change, and the production of goods has not increased significantly. Investors have been uncertain about Africa's commitment to economic reform. As a result, foreign investment in the continent has not grown as much as it has in other parts of the world.

Both lender nations and African leaders hope that reform policies will eventually improve the continent's economic outlook. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Fishing; Forests and Forestry; Hunting and Gathering; Labor; Livestock Grazing; Markets; Minerals and Mining; Plantation Systems; Trade; Transportation; West African Trading Settlements.*)

People and Culture



Plate 1: The Herero are Bantu-speaking people of southern Angola, Namibia, and Botswana. Those living in Botswana are descendants of Herero who fled the German colony of Southwest Africa (now Namibia) in 1904. The dress of this Herero woman is said to be based on the style of clothing worn by the wives of German missionaries in the 1800s.

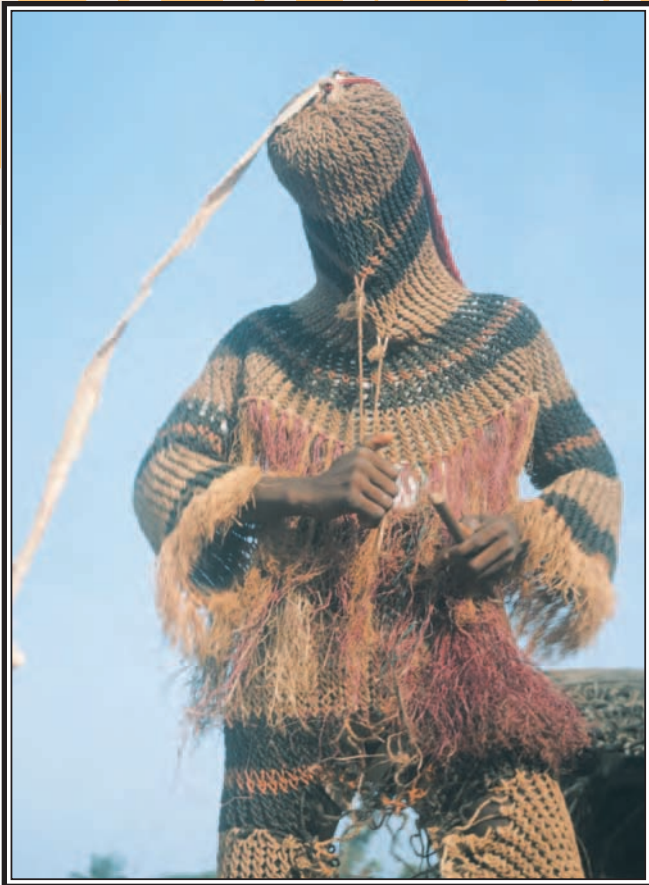


Plate 2: Music and dance play an essential role in many African cultures. Masked figures in ritual dances often represent spiritual beings, and the dancer's identity may be kept secret. This masked dancer performs in Eastern Nigeria.

Plate 3: Following an Islamic tradition, royal courts in western Africa often have musical ensembles that play on ceremonial occasions. The musicians pictured here with side-blown horns and a drum are attached to the court of the Sultan of Cameroon.





Plate 4: Many African societies hand down information orally through stories, poems, and songs. Men and women with a knowledge of local culture and history and a gift for storytelling are held in high regard. In Namibia, a Khoisan woman tells a story.



Plate 5: Christianity probably arrived in Ethiopia during the 300s. The Ethiopian Orthodox Church that developed remains an important force in the country. An Orthodox priest in the ancient city of Gondar displays a picture of St. George and the dragon.

Plate 6: The Basotho (or Sotho) live in the small kingdom of Lesotho, a land completely surrounded by South Africa. This Basotho woman is steaming corn bread over a fire.



Plate 7: The colorful *souks*, or markets, of Marrakech, Morocco, sell just about everything, and bargaining is part of the process. This stall is devoted to the sale of wool.





Plate 8: During their first two years, African children are protected, indulged, and taught to respect authority. Older brothers or sisters often care for the infants during the day. Here a toddler in Uganda plays with her doll.

Plate 9: The Asante make up a large and powerful chiefdom within southern Ghana and Ivory Coast. When Osei Tutu II became the sixteenth Asante king in 1999, he took the name of the ruler who founded the Asante kingdom in the late 1600s. The new king also received the traditional symbol of Asante unity—the Golden Stool.





Plate 10: Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya led his country to independence and became its first president in 1964. He is shown in 1977 at one of his last public appearances. He died the following year.



Plate 11: In 1993 F. W. de Klerk, the president of South Africa, and Nelson Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress, received the Nobel Peace Prize for working together to end the system of racial segregation in South Africa. The following year brought free elections in which all races could vote. Mandela became the nation's first black president.

Plate 12: African athletes have excelled in international competitions. Runner Paul Tergat of Kenya is shown arriving first at the finish line of a half-marathon in Mexico.

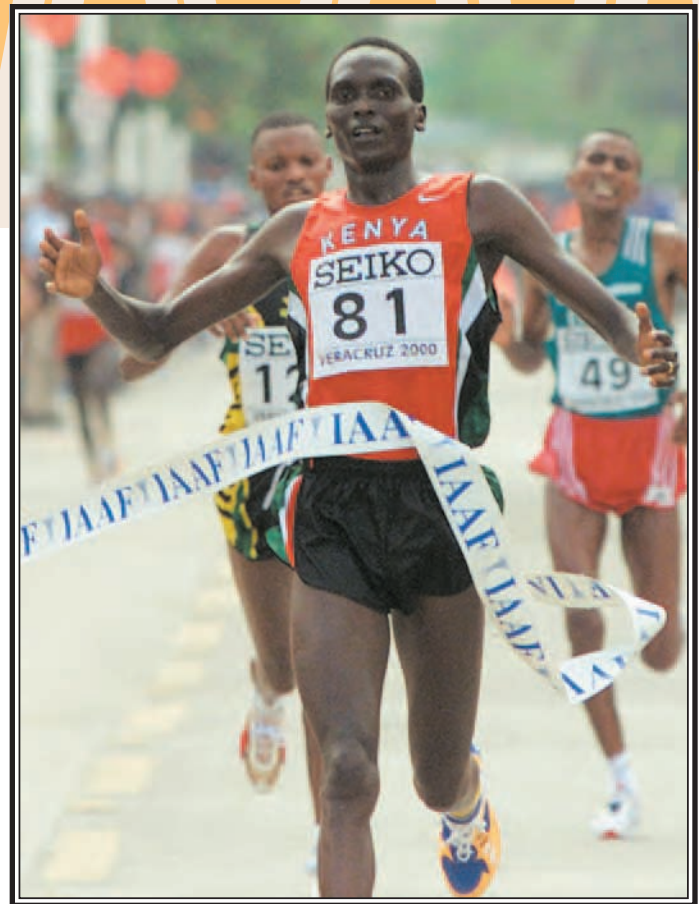


Plate 13: Rwanda has been torn by conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi people since 1959. During this time, millions of Rwandans have fled to neighboring countries. Here Rwandan refugees cross the Kagera River, seeking safety in Tanzania.



Plate 14: During the holy month of Ramadan, Muslims fast during daylight hours and eat after sundown and just before dawn. In Cairo a man prepares sweets traditionally eaten at the early meal.

Plate 15: The Sakalava, a large ethnic group in Madagascar, live on the western coast of the island. They have a long history as seafarers, trading food, spices, and slaves in the Persian Gulf, Asia, and the Americas. The Sakalava wear distinctive clothing, such as the colorful waist wraps seen here.



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Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

LANGUAGE FAMILIES





Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

John Middleton, Editor

Volume 2
Ecosystem–Laws




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A Time Line of Africa

4 m.y.a.*	<i>Australopithecines (early hominids) live in northern Rift Valley (Ethiopia, Kenya).</i>
2.5 m.y.a.*	<i>Early Stone Age; Homo habilis appears (Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania).</i>
1.5 m.y.a.*– 150,000 B.C.	<i>Homo erectus appears.</i>
240,000– 40,000 B.C.	<i>Middle Stone Age.</i>
80,000– 20,000 B.C.	<i>Late Stone Age.</i>
20,000– 10,000 B.C.	<i>Farming introduced in lower Nile Valley.</i>
10,000– 6000 B.C.	<i>Cattle domesticated in northern Africa. Millet and sorghum grown in western Africa.</i>
6000– 5000 B.C.	<i>Khoisan hunters of southern Africa create rock paintings.</i>
3000 B.C.	<i>King Menes unifies Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt. Agriculture develops in Ethiopian highlands.</i>
2000–1000 B.C.	<i>Horses introduced in Sahara region. Bananas grown in central Africa.</i>
332 B.C.	<i>Greeks occupy Egypt.</i>
200 B.C.	<i>Romans gain control of Carthage.</i>
32 B.C.	<i>Royal city of Meroë flourishes in what is now Sudan.</i>
A.D. 300s	<i>Aksum invades Meroë; Aksum king adopts Coptic Christianity.</i>
530s	<i>Byzantine empire takes Mediterranean ports.</i>
600s	<i>Muslim Arabs invade North Africa.</i>
ca. 1000	<i>Shona begin building Great Zimbabwe.</i>
1200s	<i>Portuguese voyage to northwest coast of Africa. Sundjata Keïta founds Mali kingdom.</i>

*m.y.a. million years ago



1312–1337	<i>Mansa Musa rules Mali and makes pilgrimage to Mecca.</i>
1400s	<i>Benin kingdom flourishes.</i>
1498	<i>Vasco da Gama sails around the southern and eastern coasts of Africa on the way to India.</i>
1505–1510	<i>Portuguese seize Swahili towns in eastern Africa and fortify Mozambique.</i> <i>Kongo king Afonso I converts to Christianity.</i>
1517	<i>Ottoman Turks conquer Egypt and port towns along the Mediterranean.</i>
1578	<i>Moroccans defeat Portuguese, remaining free of colonial control.</i>
1591	<i>Al-Mansur invades Songhai.</i>
1600s	<i>French, English, and Dutch establish trading posts along western coasts to export gold, ivory, and slaves.</i> <i>Akan state emerges.</i>
1650s	<i>Dutch settle at Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa.</i> <i>Arab traders settle on East African coast.</i>
1700s	<i>French and British establish network for slave trade in Central Africa.</i> <i>Zanzibar prospers as Arab trading center.</i>
1721	<i>French colonize Mauritius.</i>
1787	<i>British missionaries found Sierra Leone.</i>
1795	<i>British seize Cape Colony from Dutch.</i>
1798	<i>Napoleon leads French invasion of Egypt.</i>
1805	<i>Muhammad Ali takes power in Egypt, breaking free of Ottoman control.</i>
1807	<i>Britain and the United States abolish slave trade.</i>
1817	<i>Shaka emerges at head of Zulu kingdom in southern Africa.</i>
1821	<i>Freed slaves from the United States settle in what is now Liberia.</i>
1828	<i>Queen Ranavalona takes throne in Madagascar.</i>
1830s	<i>French rule proclaimed in Algeria.</i> <i>Slave trade continues in western Africa.</i>
1835	<i>Dutch settlers in southern Africa head north in “Great Trek.”</i>
1840s–1880s	<i>Slave trade flourishes in East Africa.</i>
1847	<i>Republic of Liberia is established.</i>
1852–1873	<i>David Livingstone explores Central and East Africa.</i>
1858	<i>Portuguese abolish slavery in Central Africa.</i>



1855–1868	<i>Emperor Téwodros rules Ethiopia.</i>
1859–1869	<i>Suez Canal is built.</i>
1869	<i>Diamonds are discovered at Kimberley in northern Cape Colony.</i>
1880–1881	<i>Afrikaners rebel against Britain in the First Anglo-Boer War, and British withdraw from Transvaal in southern Africa.</i>
1885	<i>Mahdist forces capture Khartoum.</i>
1880s–early 1900s	<i>European powers colonize most of Africa (present-day names of countries listed):</i> <i>Belgians in Congo (Kinshasa);</i> <i>British in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland;</i> <i>French in Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Bénin, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar, Réunion, and the Comoro Islands;</i> <i>Germans in Togo, Cameroon, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi;</i> <i>Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique;</i> <i>Spanish in Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea.</i>
1893–1895	<i>Africans in King Leopold’s Congo revolt.</i>
1895	<i>France forms federation of colonies that becomes French West Africa.</i>
1896	<i>Ethiopian emperor Menilek defeats Italians, maintaining country’s independence.</i>
1899–1902	<i>Afrikaners defeated by British in Second Anglo-Boer war.</i>
1910	<i>Union of South Africa formed.</i>
1914–1918	<i>World War I: French and British capture German Togo; Africans fight on the side of various colonial powers in Africa.</i>
1922	<i>Egypt gains its independence.</i>
1930	<i>Haile Selassie I crowned emperor of Ethiopia.</i>
1935	<i>Italians invade Ethiopia.</i>
1936	<i>Union party in South Africa revokes voting rights of blacks.</i>
1939–1945	<i>World War II: many major battles fought in North Africa; Africans in French and British colonies drafted to fight in Europe and Asia.</i>
1940s	<i>First nationalist political parties are formed in western Africa.</i>



- 1944 *William Tubman becomes president of Liberia.*
- 1945 *Arab League, an organization of Arab states, is founded in Cairo.*
Ethiopia regains its independence.
- 1948 *Policy of apartheid introduced in South Africa.*
- 1950s *Several independence movements against colonial rule develop.*
- 1951 *Libya declared an independent monarchy under King Idris I.*
- 1952 *Gamal Abdel Nasser seizes power in Egypt.*
- 1953 *Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) join to form the Central African Federation.*
- 1954 *War breaks out in Algeria.*
- 1956 *Sudan, Morocco, and Tunisia become independent.*
- 1957 *Ghana achieves independence, with Kwame Nkrumah as president.*
- 1958 *Guinea, under Sékou Touré, becomes independent.*
- 1960 *Independence achieved in Cameroon (French Cameroun), Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Dahomey (Bénin), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso).*
- 1961 *Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Tanganyika become independent.*
- 1962 *Independence achieved in Algeria, Burundi, and Uganda.*
- 1963 *Kenya (under Jomo Kenyatta) and Zanzibar become independent.*
Central African Federation ends.
Organization of African Unity is founded.
FRELIMO begins armed struggle for liberation of Mozambique.
- 1964 *In South Africa, Nelson Mandela stands trial and is jailed.*
Tanganyika and Zanzibar join to form Tanzania.
Malawi and Zambia become independent.
Hutu overthrow Tutsi rule in Burundi.
- 1965 *Rhodesia declares independence under Ian Smith.*
Mobutu Sese Seko takes power in Congo (Kinshasa) and renames it Zaire.
King Hassan restores monarchy in Morocco.
The Gambia gains independence.
- 1966 *Independence achieved in Lesotho and Botswana.*



1967–1970	<i>Biafra attempts to secede from Nigeria.</i>
1968	<i>Swaziland becomes independent.</i>
1969	<i>Muammar al-Qaddafi seizes power in Libya.</i>
1970	<i>Egypt/Sudan: Aswan Dam is completed.</i>
1974	<i>Guinea attains independence.</i>
1975	<i>Cape Verde and Angola become independent.</i> <i>FRELIMO government gains independence in Mozambique.</i>
1976	<i>Spain withdraws from Western Sahara; Morocco and Mauritania fight over territory.</i> <i>Residents of Soweto and other South African townships begin violent protests.</i>
1970s–1990s	<i>War erupts across the continent within the countries of Angola, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and Western Sahara, and between the nations of Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, and Sudan and Uganda.</i>
1980	<i>Zimbabwe becomes independent.</i>
1990	<i>Nelson Mandela released from prison.</i> <i>Namibia becomes independent.</i>
1993	<i>Apartheid ends in South Africa.</i> <i>Eritrea gains independence from Ethiopia.</i>
1994	<i>Rwandan and Burundi presidents assassinated; ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi continues.</i> <i>Nelson Mandela becomes first black president of South Africa.</i>
1995	<i>Outbreak of deadly Ebola virus in Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1997	<i>Laurent Kabila takes power in Zaire and renames it Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1999	<i>Libya hands over two suspects in 1986 airplane bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland.</i>
2000	<i>Ghana chooses president John Kufuor in free elections.</i> <i>Paul Kagame is the first Tutsi to become president in Rwanda.</i>
2001	<i>Congo (Kinshasa) leader, Kabila, is assassinated; Kabila's son, Joseph, succeeds him as president.</i>

Ecosystems

An ecosystem is a closely woven web of plant and animal life within a particular type of physical environment. Africa has five main kinds of ecosystems: coastal environments, deserts and semideserts, mountain environments, savanna grasslands, and forests. Each ecosystem has its typical environment and climate, and the people who live there have adapted to its conditions and learned to use its resources.

Coastal Ecosystems. Africa has three coastlines—along the Mediterranean Sea in the north, the Atlantic Ocean in the west, and the Indian Ocean in the east. These shores consist of stretches of sand, soil, or rock. In general, plants and animals on Africa’s western coast are less varied and numerous than on the eastern coast. The coastal environments of Africa include coral reef, lagoon, mangrove, salt marsh, and seagrass ecosystems.

Coral reefs are made of the skeletons and shells of millions of tiny sea creatures. Long chains of coral just off the eastern coastline of Africa have created sheltered warm-water environments in which many species of marine life can flourish. Fewer reefs are found on the west coast, where unprotected cliffs are battered by cold water and heavy surf.

All African coasts have lagoons—shallow bodies of water separated from the sea by a strip of land—and river deltas—fan-shaped areas at the mouth of a river formed by deposits of mud and sand. Because lagoons and deltas harbor large populations of fish, shrimp, and shellfish, they are among the most economically important coastal ecosystems. However, some of them have been harmed by pollution and construction projects, notably in western Africa’s Gulf of Guinea. A floating weed called water hyacinth has also caused damage to lagoons and deltas.

Mangroves are trees that grow along warm, muddy coastlines. In Africa, mangrove ecosystems occur most commonly in sheltered deltas and lagoons along the continent’s tropical and subtropical* coasts. In the vast swamps of the NIGER RIVER AND DELTA, mangrove trees reach heights of 17 feet, though elsewhere they are shorter. The tree’s roots rise out of the water, providing habitats* for snails, barnacles, oysters, and algae. Mangroves also protect shorelines from storm damage and erosion and serve as a local source of wood. Throughout Africa, however, mangrove ecosystems are threatened by oil spills and by the clearing of coastal lands for industrial, agricultural, or construction purposes.

Salt marsh ecosystems, found at the mouths of rivers in southern Africa, are dominated by low-growing grasses and plants that tolerate high levels of salt in the water. Seagrass ecosystems occur in shallow, protected areas of offshore sand or mud. They consist of underwater plant meadows that nurture a variety of creatures. Seagrass meadows are more widespread and diverse off the eastern coast, but they are also found off the coast of Angola in the west.

Deserts and Semideserts. Africa has two large areas of little rainfall and scant vegetation—the SAHARA DESERT across the northern part of the continent and the combined Namib Desert and KALAHARI DESERT in the southwest. Each region consists of both true desert and semidesert, which is somewhat moister.

* **subtropical** located at middle latitudes of the earth, between the equator and the polar regions

* **habitat** place where a plant or animal lives or grows

Ecosystems

Africa's Alpine Marvels

*In some parts of the world, lobelias are just pretty blue flowers. But in the high mountain meadows of Africa, some kinds of lobelias have evolved into sturdy survivors that can endure extreme temperature changes. On Mount Kenya, the leaves of *Lobelia tekellii* form a roselike shape that traps a large quantity of rainwater. This pool absorbs heat during the summerlike temperatures of midday and keeps enough heat during the freezing night to protect the growing part of the plant. The lobelia's little pool also benefits insects that spend the early stages of their lives there.*

The northern fringe of Africa is a narrow zone of Mediterranean climate and ecosystems, with mild winters, hot and dry summers, and vegetation similar to that found in southern Spain and Italy. To the south of this area lies the vast expanse of the Sahara, the world's largest desert. Scientists divide the Sahara and the land around it into three zones—Saharan, Sahelian, and Sudanese—although the boundaries between these zones are gradual rather than sharp.

The Saharan zone receives less than six inches of rain per year. The climate changes little with the seasons, and rainfall is rare and highly irregular. Only about 500 species of plants, mostly shrubs and grasses, live in the Saharan zone, and few animals flourish there. One famous exception is the camel, well adapted to browsing on desert vegetation and going without water for long periods.

South of the Saharan zone—and less forbidding—is the Sahelian zone, which receives up to 24 inches of rain per year and is crossed by the NILE, Niger, and Senegal Rivers. Vegetation includes thorny trees, bushes, fruits, wild grains, and herbs. Nomadic herders guide cattle, goats, and camels through this region, taking advantage of temporary water sources such as pools of rainwater. Farther south still, the Sudanese zone receives more than 24 inches of rainfall and supports an even greater variety of plant and animal life, as well as agricultural settlements.

The Namib Desert, along Africa's southwest coast, receives almost no rain, but cold water currents offshore make the Namib humid and foggy. Its vegetation consists of many hardy varieties of grass, and its animal life includes the jackal, hyena, oryx (an antelope with straight horns), springbok (a gazelle), and zebra. The nearby Kalahari is an immense semidesert region that has long been home to hunter-gatherer peoples, including the KHOISAN. The Kalahari's landscape is a thorny bush plain or grassland resembling the Sahelian zone of the Sahara, with trees such as acacias, baobab, and doom palms, and animals such as giraffes, eland (an antelope with twisted horns), and gnu (an antelope with curved horns).

Mountain Ecosystems. Montane, or mountain, ecosystems have their grandest example among the ATLAS MOUNTAINS, a series of ranges stretching across the northwestern corner of Africa. The High Atlas range in MOROCCO has several snowcapped peaks. Its northern slopes receive rain and support high meadows of alpine* flowers and grasses, dense thickets of shrub, forests of cedar and pine, and Mediterranean trees such as cypress and olive. Its southern slopes are dry with desert vegetation such as date palms and esparto grass.

Most of sub-Saharan* Africa is fairly flat and low, but the eastern part of the continent, from ETHIOPIA to SOUTH AFRICA, includes several regions of high elevation. The Ethiopian Highlands and the Ruwenzori Mountains of UGANDA and eastern CONGO (KINSHASA) are high enough that trees cannot grow near their peaks. Other areas, such as South Africa's Drakensburg range, are low enough to be forested. TANZANIA's Mount Kilimanjaro at 19,340 feet and KENYA's Mount Kenya at 17,058 feet are the continent's two highest peaks. Kilimanjaro is an active volcano, and Kenya is an extinct volcano.

* **alpine** referring to the zone including the elevated slopes above the timberline in mountain regions

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert



Much of Africa is covered in savannas similar to this one in Kenya's Amboseli National Park. Here an elephant roams the grasslands among wildebeests and zebras. Mount Kilimanjaro can be seen in the distance.

Unique alpine ecosystems exist above the tree line on Africa's eastern mountains, where the temperature has been described as "summer every day, winter every night." The plants and animals that live there have adapted to the conditions. Most ground-dwelling insects, for example, have a natural "antifreeze" in their body fluids.

Below the alpine zone is the montane zone with various types of forest, particularly podo tree and bamboo. Numerous animals are native to the montane zone, including mountain gorillas, monkeys, elephants, buffaloes, and rodents. Beginning in the 1900s, people cut and cleared large areas of Africa's montane forests, which are suffering from soil erosion and the disappearance of certain species.

Savannas. Savannas occupy more than half of Africa's land surface. A savanna is a tropical plain with both trees and grass. The typical image consists of a broad grassland dotted with large trees and herds of grazing animals such as zebra and antelope. However, in some savanna ecosystems, trees cover more than half of the area.

Africa has two main types of savannas, fine-leaved and broad-leaved. Fine-leaved savannas occur in dry areas with fertile soil. Trees—typically the short, thorny acacia—cover less than 30 percent of the land. Grasses grow evenly and are a rich source of food. In these savannas animals consume a substantial amount of the plant growth.



Ecosystems

See color plate 13, vol. 2.

Broad-leaved savannas are found in moist areas with relatively poor soil. Trees, mostly thornless, cover more than 30 percent of the land. The grass, which is low in food value, tends to grow in tall bunches. People who live on this type of savanna often set fires to the vegetation to improve the soil for crops. But generally the major plant-eaters on the savannas are not human. Caterpillars may suddenly appear and devastate the broad-leaved savannas, while swarms of grasshoppers and locusts may descend on the fine-leaved savannas.

Savannas contribute to the economy in a number of ways. They provide firewood and timber for many Africans. They are the main grazing lands for livestock, and their use as agricultural lands is expected to increase. In addition, the savannas contain all of Africa game parks, which attract many tourists.

Forests. A forest is a continuous group of trees whose crowns interlock and cast enough shade to prevent grasses from growing. Africa’s various forest ecosystems include tropical rainforests; thick, high-branched forests that wind through savanna woodlands along rivers; and groves of tiny dwarf trees that grow high on mist-wrapped peaks.

Tropical and humid forests occupy about 7 percent of the continent’s total land area. Five thousand years ago, before human activities such as burning and clearing land began on a large scale, forests covered three times as much ground. Today, the major forest areas are along the eastern and southern coasts, the central mountains, and in the Guineo-Congolian region that stretches across central Africa.

The forests’ boundaries are mainly established by water and human activity. Rainfall is the most important factor in determining what type of forest will develop and how far it will extend—although groundwater from rivers or swamps can also support forests. The influence of humans has also been enormous. Forests provide many useful products, including timber, skins, meat, and medicines. Modern deforestation—loss of a forest as a result of human activities—has been devastating. Deforestation is linked to population growth, the timber industry, road-building, large-scale agriculture, and major movements of workers and refugees. In recent years, efforts to preserve the forests have focused on involving local people, protecting a diversity of plant and animal species, and searching for ways to use the forest for economic purposes without destroying it. (*See also Climate, Deserts and Drought, Forests and Forestry, Wildlife and Game Parks.*)

Education

In the modern world no country can hope to prosper and advance without an educated population. During most of the colonial period, Africa’s black population was systematically denied access to quality schooling and higher education. After gaining independence, most African states made it a priority to strengthen their educational systems. That process has not always been smooth, and serious problems remain. However, many African nations made major strides in education over the past 50 years.

Just a Click Away

In many parts of Africa, educators lack current resources to help them plan lessons and run schools. However, for those with Internet access, a new Web site established by a branch of the United Nations in Ethiopia offers educational materials and information.

At the Web site, educators may read current articles about math, science, or language and find news about teaching methods and education planning. They may explore creative lesson plans that spark students' interest through games and activities tailored to African life. The site also provides advice on the unique challenges faced by many African teachers, such as how to teach 50 to 100 students of various grades in one classroom.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **literate** able to read and write

COLONIAL EDUCATION

During the early colonial period, European powers had little interest in educating the indigenous* populations of their African colonies. They were concerned with extracting the continent's natural wealth, not with building functioning nations. Nor did they envision Africans as playing a significant role in the colonial government or economy. As a result, there were few schools of any kind for local populations before the mid-1800s.

Religious Roots. Without government support, education in Africa was left in the hands of missionaries and other religious groups. Islamic schools had existed in North Africa for hundreds of years. They were generally small and limited to those who practiced the Muslim faith. European missionaries established schools in the coastal areas of West Africa in the 1600s and 1700s, but these early schools lasted only a short time.

When Christian missionaries began arriving in Africa in greater numbers in the early 1800s, they made a serious effort to educate local populations. The goal of the early missionary schools was to produce literate* individuals to take over minor positions in local churches and become functioning church members. However, missionary schools served a limited number of Africans because they were usually located in coastal towns or near mission stations. They also suffered from lack of money and staff. As long as education remained in the hands of religious groups—either Islamic or Christian—it would reach only a small number of Africans and be restricted to certain subjects.

Government and Education. As Europe's African colonies grew larger and more prosperous, colonial rulers began to see the need for general education. On the one hand, more and more Europeans were working and settling in Africa, and these settlers demanded schools for their children. On the other hand, European officials realized that prosperity depended on having a trained local workforce that could handle tasks in the colony's political and economic organizations. Providing basic instruction in reading and writing and some technical training gained new importance. The need for a more educated population led to the establishment of government-sponsored schools throughout Africa.

The schooling offered by the various colonial powers had similar features. The vast majority of schools were primary schools, with a limited number of secondary schools and almost no colleges or universities. A school's curriculum often depended on its location. Students in rural schools usually learned skills needed to work in agriculture, while children in urban areas received training to work in crafts or as laborers in industry. The secondary schooling available to Africans was aimed primarily at training teachers or preparing individuals for lower-level professional jobs such as nurses, railroad engineers, or clerical workers. A few of the most gifted students might be trained for minor positions in local government. In general, European administrators viewed education as a way to make Africans more useful to the colonial system, not to offer them opportunities for advancement.

Education



Since independence, the numbers of students attending African secondary schools and colleges and universities have been increasing. These girls attend a school in Botswana.

Schooling and Segregation. In most African colonies, whites and blacks attended separate schools with separate goals. “White” schools generally were part of a well-funded educational system consisting of primary, secondary, and tertiary (college and university) institutions based in Europe. Students who graduated from one level advanced to the next and were often evaluated to determine an appropriate career path.

Colonial schools for blacks were designed to train an African workforce. Usually poorly funded and understaffed, the schools were not tied into any larger system that would allow the best students to move on to higher education. Colonial officials occasionally allowed bright African students to attend “white” schools, but this was a rare occurrence that required special arrangements.

The most racially segregated educational system developed in SOUTH AFRICA. In the early 1900s, the country had a racially segregated educational system. Yet small numbers of the black students who graduated from the best missionary schools were able to receive a decent secondary education. Then, in 1948, the strongly racist National Party gained control of the South African government, introduced apartheid*, and began making significant changes in the country’s educational system.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country’s blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry



Education

The National Party adopted a policy known as Christian National Education (CNE), which declared that whites and other ethnic groups should each have their “own education” suited to their “own needs.” The Bantu Education Act of 1953, based on this policy, gave the national government responsibility for educating nonwhites and led to the elimination of most missionary schools. The South African government provided ample funding and resources for white schools but very little for nonwhite ones. The result was a highly fragmented, second-class educational system for blacks. Missionaries and certain other groups criticized these policies, but almost nothing was done to change the educational system until the end of apartheid in the early 1990s.

Higher Education in the Colonial Era. For centuries the only formal institutions of higher education in Africa were Islamic schools such as the University of Timbuktu (in present-day Mali) and the famous al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. Established in A.D. 970, al-Azhar is the oldest continuously operating university in the world.

Like most traditional Muslim schools, these institutions had no formal program of study and awarded no degrees. Their primary goal was to develop strong devotion to the teachings of Islam and produce religious leaders and judges trained in Islamic law. In the late 1800s, the Egyptian government took steps to modernize the curriculum of al-Azhar and to transform it into a true university. It has since developed into one of the foremost universities in the Muslim world.

The first western-style institution of higher education in Africa was Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827 in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Established by the Church Missionary Society, the school was intended to train religious leaders for the Anglican Church. Other early colleges in western Africa, such as Liberia College in Monrovia, Liberia, were also centers of religious training.

Two years after Fourah Bay College opened, the South African College was established in Cape Town. Other colleges followed, including the South African Native College, founded in 1916 to educate blacks. Although black students could attend white colleges at this time, few did so. All these early colleges were in British colonies. The French and other colonial powers did not establish colleges or universities in Africa until the 1950s.

POSTCOLONIAL EDUCATION

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

The neglect and discrimination* that marked education during the colonial period has had harmful effects on education in Africa since independence. When the colonial powers withdrew during the 1960s, they left behind a largely uneducated black population. Since that time, African leaders have faced the enormous task of producing enough highly trained individuals to run their countries while providing basic education for the majority of their citizens.

Primary and Secondary Education. One of the main educational goals of most African nations since independence has been to provide an education for all citizens. Many countries have come close to achiev-



Education

ing this goal at the primary level. In the Republic of Congo, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Gabon, Tunisia, Algeria, and Nigeria, around 90 percent or more of all children of primary-school age attend school. In many other countries, however, particularly those torn by civil war such as Chad and Angola, the numbers of students attending primary school are much lower.

In general, primary school attendance drops significantly in rural areas, and the number of girls in school is generally lower than the number of boys. In most African countries primary education is required of all children until they reach a certain age. In many places, however, only about half of the students who attend primary school finish the entire course of study, and in some areas more than 90 percent of primary school students repeat at least one grade.

A much smaller percentage of students attend secondary school than primary school. Nevertheless, the number of students in secondary schools today is dramatically higher than during the colonial period. Moreover, secondary education is increasingly available in many rural areas.

After independence, school enrollment throughout Africa skyrocketed, and few African nations have been able to find adequate funds for their educational systems. Although in many places primary and secondary education is officially free of charge, most nations do not have the resources to provide educational materials and equipment. Parents are often required to purchase textbooks, and local communities are typically responsible for constructing classrooms or school buildings. Many schools are overcrowded and have a shortage of qualified teachers.

During the colonial period, most of the people trained to run the government and economy were Europeans. They left after independence. Faced with the need to quickly train people to fill positions of leadership, most African countries gave more financial support to colleges, universities, and technical schools than to basic education. They could not hope to survive in the modern world without a core of educated professionals, technicians, and civil servants. Focusing on higher education did produce people capable of running government agencies and business enterprises, but it drained much-needed resources from primary and secondary schools.

One of the main problems facing African school systems today is that there are too few jobs available for the students who finish school. For most of the postindependence period, a large portion of secondary school graduates found positions in government. In recent years, however, financial problems have forced most nations to drastically reduce the size of government and the number of jobs. Another problem is that African schools do not seem to be teaching the kinds of skills needed by most private companies. The schools also face the challenge of linking education with the needs of local communities. Instead of applying the knowledge and skills they learn at school in their local communities, many students leave their towns or villages for jobs in the cities or even other countries.





Education

Higher Education. The number of colleges and universities in Africa has grown dramatically since independence. This is especially true in former British colonies. In Nigeria, the government founded seven new universities in the mid-1970s alone.

East Africa also saw the establishment of many new schools of higher learning in the 1970s and 1980s. In some countries, such as Kenya, Tanzania, and Ethiopia, the state pays the full cost of a university education. However, budget problems have forced some colleges to ask students to share part of the cost of their education.

South Africa has a well-developed system of higher education, featuring 21 universities, about 100 colleges, and 15 technical schools, with a total enrollment of more than half a million students. The legacy of apartheid, however, has left former “white only” schools with significant advantages over former “tribal colleges,” often referred to as “historically black universities.” Nevertheless, a number of South African colleges and universities now offer high-quality instruction. In 1994, the South African government created the National Commission on Higher Education to oversee the development of colleges and universities. Some of the key issues the commission addressed included funding for higher education, the transformation of institutions after the end of apartheid, and providing access to higher education for students that had suffered discrimination under apartheid. Perhaps the main issue facing South Africans as they struggled with education after apartheid was balancing the government’s limited resources with the need to maintain a high-quality system of higher education.

People throughout Africa view colleges and universities as important tools of national development that will enable their nations to grow and prosper. The desire to compete in the modern world has led to the establishment of new and separate universities specializing in science and technology. These institutions have been successful in attracting students and filling staff positions with Africans. However, men and women do not have the same opportunities in higher education. Most African colleges and universities have few female faculty members, and male students far outnumber females in most institutions.

Educational Alternatives. Dissatisfaction with the quality of public schools at all levels has led a growing number of Africans to seek alternative forms of education. Some can afford to send their children to private schools. Many university and college students study abroad, usually in Europe or the United States.

Muslim parents who want their children to get a more religiously based education may send them to Islamic schools. Usually attached to a mosque*, these schools offer instruction in the Qur’an, the holy book of Islam. Students who advance beyond the elementary level learn to read and write Arabic and study Islamic texts in greater depth. The *madrassa*, a more modern form of Islamic schooling, features both religious instruction and Western-style education. A number of Islamic colleges and universities, mostly in the Arabic countries of North Africa, also exist to serve Muslim Africans. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Childhood and Adolescence; Development, Economic and Social; Islam in Africa; Missions and Missionaries; Oral Tradition; Women in Africa.*)

* mosque Muslim place of worship

Egypt, Ancient

Egypt, Ancient

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **arable** suitable for producing crops

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **pantheon** all the gods and goddesses of a particular culture

The Egyptian civilization that arose along the banks of the NILE RIVER in ancient times was one of the longest-lasting in world history. For nearly 3,000 years, Egypt dominated the northeastern corner of Africa. The ancient Egyptians interacted with the peoples of the Near East and the Mediterranean. At the same time, they traded goods and maintained relations with groups in sub-Saharan* Africa.

Geography and Agriculture. Ancient Egypt developed along the valley of the Nile River, stretching from present-day SUDAN in the south to the river's broad delta on the Mediterranean Sea. The SAHARA DESERT flanked the valley on the east and west. The Egyptian population was concentrated in three regions: Lower Egypt, the northern area around the Nile delta; Upper Egypt, the river valley between the delta and Sudan in the south; and the Fayum Depression, a well-watered lowland west of the delta.

The Nile River supported and nourished the civilization of ancient Egypt. It served as a major transportation route and a source of fish, an important element of the Egyptian diet. The greatest benefit of the river, however, was its annual flooding. Every year, the Nile's floodwaters soaked the valley and deposited nutrient-rich mud and sediment, making the soil fertile and arable*.

Agriculture was the backbone of the Egyptian economy. The principal food crops were wheat, barley, and legumes such as beans and lentils. From these, Egyptians made bread, porridge, and beer. Flax and papyrus were also important crops, grown in the wetland areas of the Nile. Flax was used to make rope and textiles, and papyrus was processed into a paperlike writing material of the same name.

History. Historians divide ancient Egyptian history into three general periods called kingdoms. During these kingdoms and the times of turmoil and instability that separated them, Egypt was ruled by more than 30 dynasties*. Egyptians believed their rulers to be embodiments of the god Horus, and they honored them as divine as well as royal. After their deaths many rulers were worshiped along with the gods and goddesses of the Egyptian pantheon*. From the time of the Eighteenth Dynasty (about 1529 B.C.), Egypt's rulers—usually kings but occasionally queens—were known as pharaohs.

Egypt's earliest inhabitants were nomads who hunted, gathered, and fished for wild foods. During the 5000s B.C., immigrants from western Asia introduced agriculture to Egypt. Agriculture opened the way for the formation of settled communities—first villages and later small kingdoms. Around 3000 B.C. Menes, a king in Upper Egypt, conquered Lower Egypt and unified the country, founding the first dynasty.

The rise of the Third Dynasty around 2675 B.C. marked the beginning of what historians now call the Old Kingdom. By this time several key features of the ancient Egyptian civilization had appeared. Egyptians had a written language using characters called hieroglyphs, a system of record keeping, and a strong and wealthy central government. They mastered the art of building great monuments in stone, including the famous PYRAMIDS. For this reason, the Old Kingdom is often called the

Hatshepsut

The daughter of the pharaoh Thutmose I, Hatshepsut became queen during the brief reign of Thutmose II. After Thutmose II died, she became regent. She ruled on behalf of her young stepson Thutmose III. Then about seven years later, around 1472 B.C., Hatshepsut and Egypt's leading priests declared that the god Amun had named her the pharaoh. In art and architecture, Hatshepsut is shown wearing kingly dress, including the false beard that symbolized a king's power. Her reign was prosperous, and she built several great monuments, including a magnificent temple at Dayr al-Bahri. Hatshepsut was one of only four women to rule Egypt.

* **Hellenistic** term referring to the Greek-influenced culture of the Mediterranean world and the Near East during the three centuries after the death of Alexander the Great in 323 B.C.

See
color plate 2,
vol. 3.

Pyramid Age. This era ended around 2130 B.C., when Egypt's central government fell apart amid social unrest. Decades of civil war followed, as rival dynasties fought for control.

The Middle Kingdom began with the Eleventh Dynasty around 1980 B.C. During the Middle Kingdom, Egypt traded with states of the ancient Near East that bordered the Mediterranean. The Egyptian kings expanded their control into NUBIA, the land south of Egypt. Art and literature flourished. However, around 1630 B.C. invaders from western Asia conquered Lower Egypt, bringing the Middle Kingdom to an end.

Almost 100 years later, Ahmose, the first king of the Eighteenth Dynasty, overthrew the invaders and reunited Egypt. The reunification ushered in the New Kingdom, which lasted until around 1075 B.C. The years of the New Kingdom were the country's longest period of strong central government. Egypt became wealthier and more powerful than ever, controlling not only Nubia but also territory in what is now Syria. Some splendid and well-known relics of ancient Egypt, including the tomb of the pharaoh Tutankhamen, date from this period in Egyptian history.

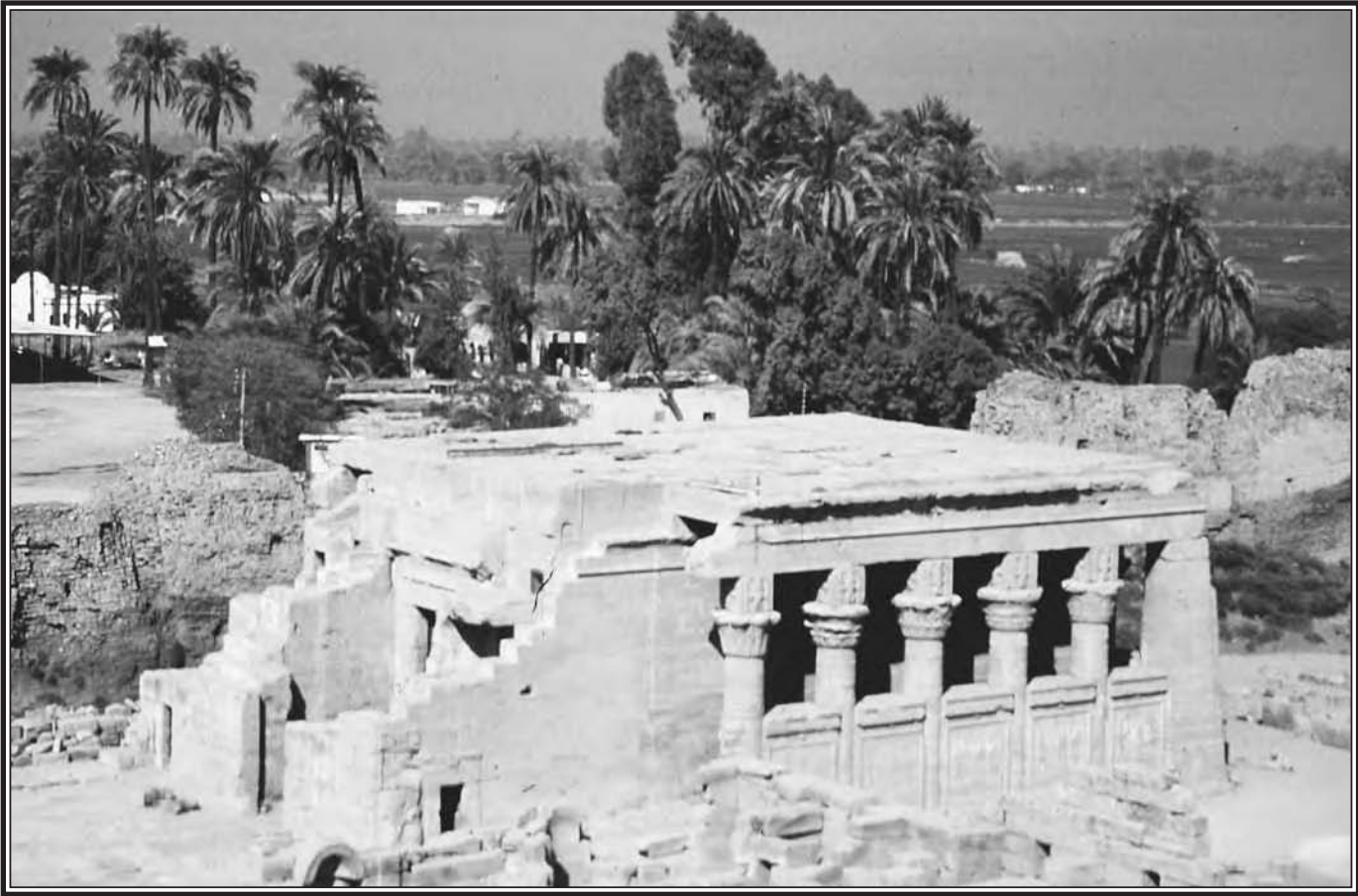
The New Kingdom ended in disorder as minor local kings arose and divided the country among them. Egypt also came under foreign pressure. Libyans from the west and Nubians from the south took over parts of Egypt. In the late 600s B.C., Egypt fell under the rule of the Assyrian Empire, based in present-day Iraq. Later it was conquered by the Persian Empire. From time to time Egyptian kings succeeded in uniting their land, but these periods of native rule were brief.

In 332 B.C. Alexander the Great, ruler of Macedonia and Greece, took control of Egypt. After his death Ptolemy, one of his generals, established Egypt's last royal family, the Ptolemaic Dynasty. For several centuries Egypt was part of the Hellenistic* world. ALEXANDRIA, a city founded by Alexander on the Nile delta, became famous as a center of scholarship. The Ptolemaic Dynasty ended in 30 B.C. with the suicide of CLEOPATRA, Egypt's last pharaoh. By that time Rome had replaced Greece as the dominant power in the Mediterranean world, and Egypt remained under Roman rule throughout the remainder of the ancient era.

Cultural Life. Religion shaped every aspect of Egyptian culture and daily life. Little is known about the everyday religious lives of ordinary people. However, royal tombs, monuments, and temples have preserved a wealth of detail about ancient Egypt's official state religion. One key element of this religion was the belief that the gods would protect Egypt as long as the king served them faithfully. The king was responsible for the upkeep of temples and for performing certain ceremonies.

Another important part of Egyptian religion was the belief in a life after death. A number of religious practices were designed to prepare the dead for this afterlife. One was mummification, a process by which the bodies of the dead were chemically treated to resist decay. Another custom was to bury in tombs objects that people would need in the afterlife, including food, utensils, and furniture. Written texts—such as the Book of the Dead—were also buried with individuals to guide their souls on their journeys after death. Such tombs have provided archaeologists

Egypt, Ancient



Ruins from the ancient Egyptian city of Thebes can be seen in the modern town of Luxor on the Nile River.

See
color plate 2,
vol. 3.

with much of what is known about ancient Egyptian society and thought.

One of ancient Egypt's greatest achievements was its architecture. The pyramids, mostly built during the Old Kingdom period, demonstrate that the society that constructed them possessed a high level of mathematical knowledge and accurate surveying and measuring skills. The Sphinx, another famous symbol of ancient Egypt, shows a mastery of large-scale sculpture. This massive statue of a man's head on a lion's body probably represents King Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty.

Egyptian culture also found expression in wall paintings, in oral storytelling, and in texts. After modern scholars learned to read hieroglyphs, they deciphered a vast number of Egyptian writings on papyrus scrolls. The works covered a wide range of subjects, from autobiography to astronomy, and included poems, letters, stories, myths and fairy tales, and political and religious writings.

Ancient Egypt's Links with Sub-Saharan Africa. Although isolated from the rest of the continent by stretches of desert, Egypt was part of the African world. Its language belonged to the Afroasiatic language family, blending elements of Semitic* and North African languages. Scholars are now debating what ethnic groups the ancient Egyptians belonged to. The many surviving portraits show that the

* Semitic referring to the language family that includes Amharic, Arabic, and Hebrew

Egypt, Ancient

Egyptians were more closely related to Semitic and west Asian peoples than to black Africans. Also, in their art, Egyptians portrayed blacks as distinctly different from themselves.

Most research into the connections between ancient Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa focuses on two issues: the origins of the Egyptian people, and the relationship between the Egyptians and the rest of the African continent. Ancient Egypt and sub-Saharan Africa met in Nubia, a region now divided between southern Egypt and northern Sudan. There Egyptian influences blended with those of the indigenous* peoples of the Nile River valley.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

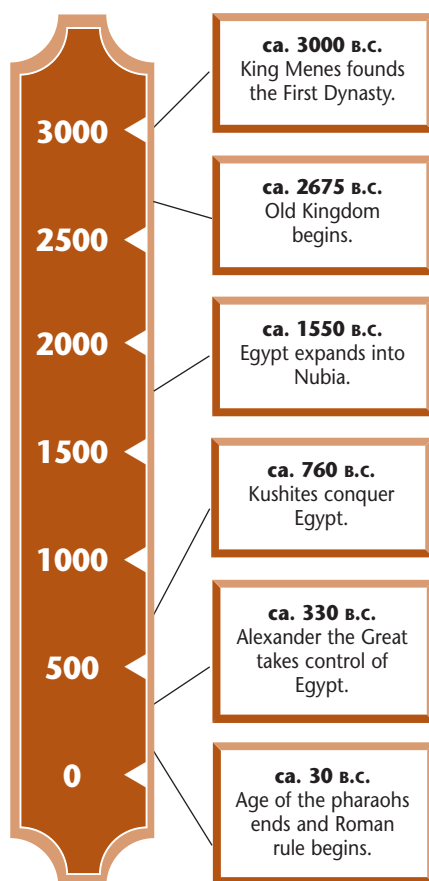
By about 4000 B.C., communities in the Nile delta and the Fayum had developed a culture based on farming that was distinct from the culture of the Nile River valley peoples. In the centuries that followed, agriculture became more widespread in Upper Egypt, and a civilization that modern historians call the Nagada culture developed there. Archaeologists have found cemeteries with royal burials, ceramic pottery, and carvings in bone and ivory in this region. The Nagada culture eventually spread northward and took over the delta and Fayum communities, unifying Egypt.

As the Egyptian state was taking shape, Nubian culture was developing as well. Aswan was long thought to have been a “frontier” between Egyptian and Nubian regions. However, modern research suggests that the two cultures were quite closely connected. For example, archaeologists have found pottery that shows that the Nubian and Nagada communities often traded with each other. Some historians believe that a state similar to the early Egyptian state arose in Nubia by around 3100 B.C.

After Egypt was unified, Egyptians continued to trade with the Nubians for ivory, animal skins, and other goods. Around 2900 B.C., Egyptians began building forts in northern Nubia and raiding the region for slaves. The early Nubian communities disappeared, possibly as a result of slave raids. But by 2400 B.C., northern Nubia had been repopulated and new villages stood along the banks of the Nile Valley. Farther south, beyond the area of Egyptian control, Nubia developed a civilization of its own around the city of Kerma. For nearly 900 years, Kerma was one of the most advanced states in sub-Saharan Africa.

During the New Kingdom, Egypt expanded southward into Nubia, destroying Kerma around 1550 B.C. The reason for the expansion may have been gold, Nubia’s most important product. Egyptian kings rebuilt the old forts in the region and constructed temples there. The pharaoh Ramses II, in particular, built several temples at Abu-Simbel and other Nubian sites. The Egyptians ruled their Nubian territory through an official called the viceroy of Kush. He and other local officials were Nubians who recognized Egyptian authority. Scholars believe that some of them probably spent time in Egypt, absorbing its culture and religion, which they then spread in Nubia. Around 1000 B.C. the Egyptians withdrew from Nubia, although they maintained at least one fort in the northern part of the region.

At the same time in southern Nubia, near an Egyptian temple at Gebel Barkal, a local dynasty arose and founded the kingdom of Kush. Between



Egypt, Ancient



See map in *Archaeology and Prehistory* (vol. 1).

760 and 653 B.C., the Kushites conquered and ruled all of Egypt. The six Nubian rulers of the Nile River valley during this period are Egypt's genuine "black pharaohs." They rebuilt many old Egyptian temples and restored trade between Egypt and Nubia. Around 654 B.C., invading Assyrians drove the Kushites back to Nubia. The Kushites established their capital at Napata and continued to follow many of the traditions of Egyptian rulers. Later they moved their capital to Meroë, which was farther south and more removed from Egyptian contact.

Although the Kushite state collapsed around 350 B.C., contact between Egypt and the south continued during the Hellenistic era. It flourished when Egypt was the wealthiest and most powerful state in Africa, from about A.D. 500 to 1500. During this time, Egypt carried on a vigorous trade with sub-Saharan Africa. Merchants carried cloth, glass beads, and other Egyptian products south along the Nile. Then they traveled by camel along caravan routes that stretched west and south across the Sahara. They returned from West Africa bearing gold, ivory, and slaves. Egyptian traders journeyed by sea as well, sailing southward from ports on the Red Sea coast of Egypt to ports along the coasts of East Africa and India. (See also **Aksum, Archaeology and Prehistory, Egypt, Modern.**)

Egypt, Modern

The Arab Republic of Egypt is located in the northeastern corner of Africa, with LIBYA to the west and SUDAN to the south. Freed from colonial rule in 1922, Egypt has become a modern republic that plays a leading role both in Africa and the Arab world. The capital, CAIRO, lies in the fertile delta of the NILE RIVER, the country's major water route.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

Egypt contains four geographical regions: the Nile River valley and delta, the Sinai Peninsula, the Western Desert, and the Eastern Desert. The Nile valley and delta is a lush, well-watered region that stretches from the southern highlands north to the Mediterranean. Most of the nation's population lives in this region.

The Sinai Peninsula, located at the northern end of the Red Sea, connects Egypt to the Arabian Peninsula. In A.D. 639 Arab invaders crossed the Sinai, bringing the religion of ISLAM to Egypt. To the west of the Sinai is the Gulf of Suez, which was the end point of ancient trade routes that crossed the SAHARA DESERT. Later it became the entrance to the SUEZ CANAL.

The remaining two regions of Egypt are the Western Desert, an extension of the greater Libyan Desert, and the Eastern, or Arabian Desert, which lies east of the Nile. These territories contain much of the nation's oil and mineral wealth.

Most of Egypt has a hot, dry climate year round. Along the Mediterranean Coast, the weather is milder, with heavy winter rains. In the spring a hot wind called the khamsin blows in from the desert, bringing sand and dust storms. Away from the coast, temperatures can become scorchingly high in summer and can fall to the freezing point in winter.

Egypt, Modern



The vast majority of Egyptians are Muslims, while about 6 percent are COPTS (Egyptian Christians). Both Muslims and Christians speak Arabic, and many educated Egyptians also speak English or French. In addition to farming communities found in the fertile regions along the Nile, Egypt has many towns and cities, including Cairo, the largest urban center in Africa. The deserts, which make up more than 95 percent of Egypt, are thinly populated. The Bedouin who live there were traditionally nomadic herders, although today many make only seasonal migrations from a base camp or live in permanent settlements.

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

Egypt exports oil, cotton, and textiles, and produces hydroelectric* power on the Nile. The nation's many ancient historical sites—including the famous PYRAMIDS—attract tourists from all over the world.

HISTORY

In the centuries following the Roman takeover of Egypt in 31 B.C., a series of major cultural changes swept across Egypt. The Romans introduced Christianity to the region. Later, various Arab rulers spread Islam throughout Egypt. During a period of colonial occupation, the British added elements of European culture to the Arabic customs of the country.



Egypt, Modern

Aswan High Dam

The Aswan High Dam, built across the Nile River, created an enormous reservoir known as Lake Nasser. It controls the flooding of the river, provides a reliable water supply, and produces electric power. However, the project's benefits came at the cost of major disruptions to the environment and human lives. Completed in 1970, it required submerging the land below the dam under water. Tens of thousands of families were forced to leave the area, and the monuments of the ancient Abu Simbel temple site had to be moved. Furthermore, before the flood-control system was in place, the Nile deposited a layer of fertile silt on the land each year. Now many Egyptian farmers must use artificial fertilizers on their crops.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

Christianity and Islam. Under Roman rule, Egypt's capital city, ALEXANDRIA, became a major center of religious scholarship. Heavily influenced by Greek thought, the Egyptian church developed its own form of the faith, known as Coptic Christianity. By the A.D. 400s, Rome's hold over its far-flung empire had weakened. The Vandals, invaders from northern Europe, stormed North Africa in 429 and easily conquered Egypt and the surrounding area.

In the 500s the Byzantine Empire seized the Mediterranean coast of North Africa, including Egypt. The Byzantine emperor, Constantine, tried to prevent the Copts from practicing their faith. This policy caused great resentment in Egypt. Thus, when the Arabs invaded in 639, Egypt's Coptic bishops refused to help the Byzantines fend off the attack. The first wave of Arabs took al-Farama, a fortified settlement east of the Nile. Within a few years, the Arabs held Alexandria.

When the Arabs introduced Islam to Egypt, a series of revolts broke out as the Christian population sought to retain control over religious matters. Only in the late 700s and early 800s did Islam begin to take root in Egypt. The new rulers made Arabic the official language of the country and granted special privileges to Islamic converts. Conversion was more successful in Lower Egypt (the northern section) than in Upper Egypt (the southern section). Even today, Upper Egypt is home to the majority of the country's Copts, who make up as much as 60 percent of the local population in many communities.

Arab rule. From about 960, Egypt was ruled by the Fatimids, an Islamic dynasty* said to be descended from Fatima, daughter of the prophet Muhammad. After establishing their capital at Cairo, the Fatimids extended their influence as far east as Palestine.

In the 1000s, European Christians launched a series of Crusades against Islam, first invading Muslim Spain and then attempting to conquer North Africa and the Middle East. In 1171 the Muslim general Saladin took command of the forces fighting the Europeans. He defeated the Christians in Jerusalem in 1187 and founded Egypt's next ruling dynasty, the Ayyubids.

Saladin recruited Greek and Turkish warriors and politicians to serve in his army and his government. Known as *mamluks* (which means "slave" or "property"), they functioned as a separate, powerful class in Egyptian society and eventually gained control of the state. Egypt soon came under attack from the Mongols, who had conquered much of western Asia. A Mamluk general named Baybars defended Egypt and halted the Mongol invasion. Claiming the title of sultan, Baybars founded the Mamluk dynasty, which ruled Egypt until the 1500s.

Under Mamluk rule, the Egyptians built massive public works, from canals and fortresses to libraries, mosques*, and monuments. The Mamluk sultans established relations with leaders throughout Europe and the Middle East, raising Egypt to prominence as a world power.

A total of 22 Mamluks ruled Egypt, many only briefly. Shajar al-Durr, a woman, held power for only 80 days before being assassinated. Qala'un, who reigned from 1279 to 1290, is remembered as one of Egypt's greatest administrators. Al-Nassir, who led Egypt from 1293

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

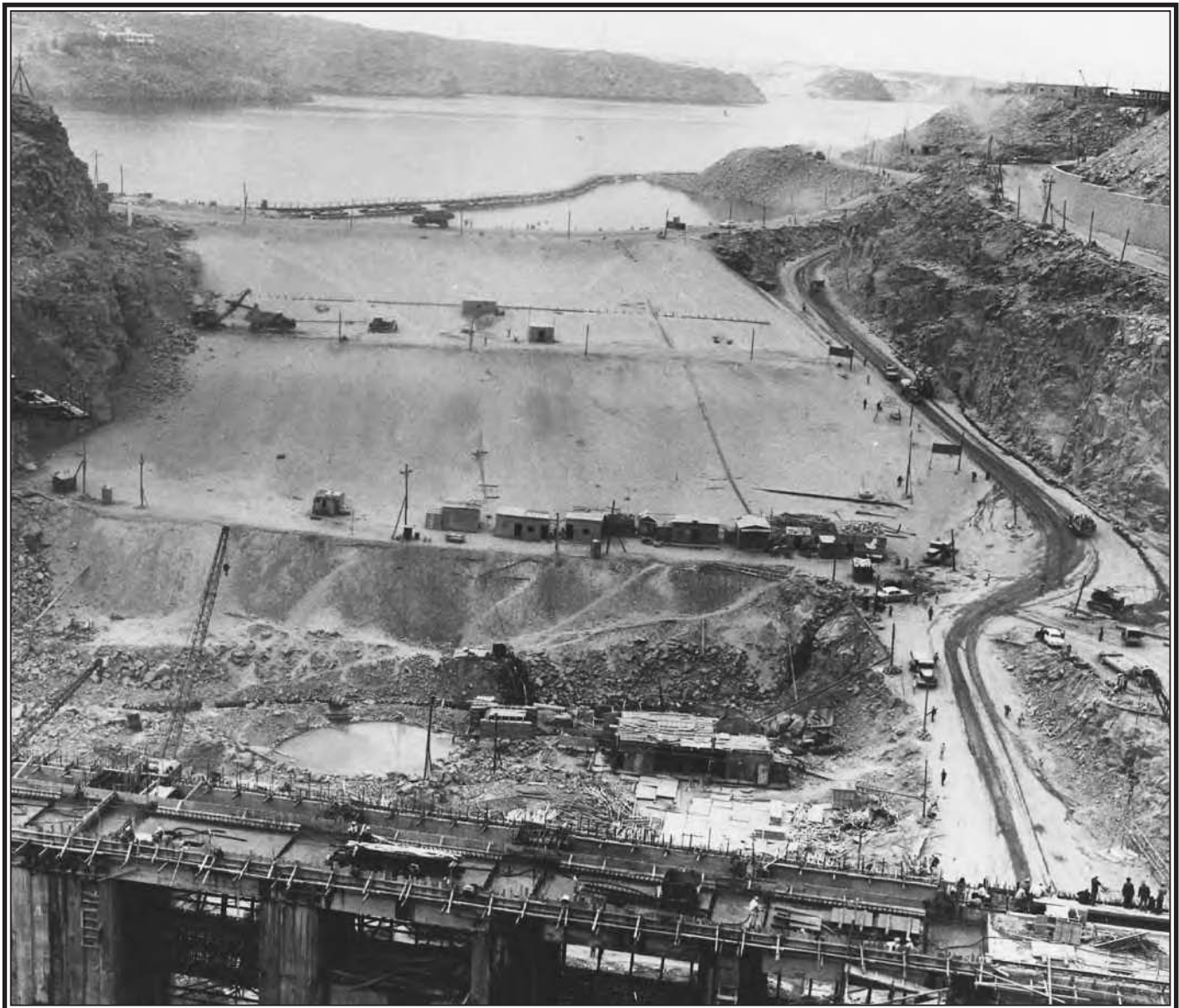
Egypt, Modern

through 1340, was an impressive warrior who finally defeated the Mongol army in 1299. He also restored Cairo after the city was nearly destroyed by an earthquake in 1303.

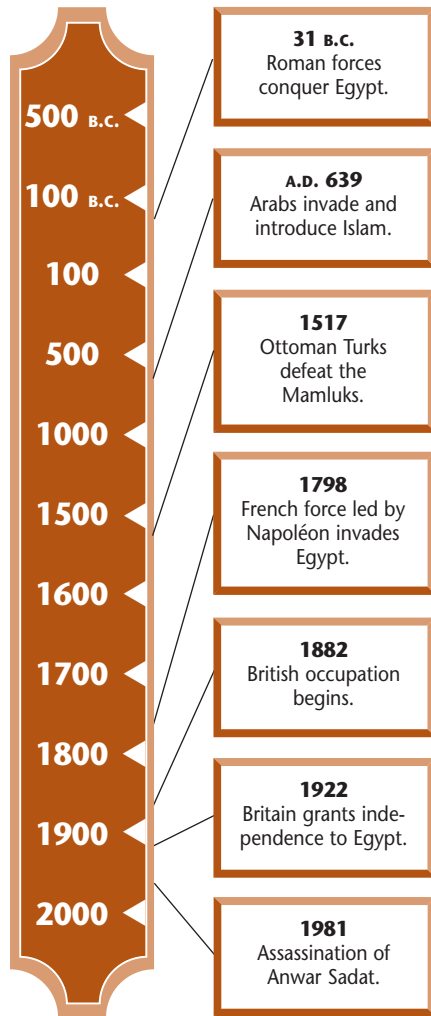
Ottoman rule. By the late 1400s, the Mamluks had relaxed their military policy, counting on their reputation as warriors to discourage attackers. They soon paid a price for this attitude. In 1517 the Ottoman Turks marched into Egypt. The Mamluks' swords, bows, and arrows were no match for the guns and cannons used by the Ottomans, and Egypt fell to the invaders.

The Ottomans held Egypt for 281 years. During that time they extended the country's borders deep into NUBIA to the south. At first the country was ruled by an Ottoman viceroy, or governor, but over time the

The construction of the Aswan High Dam on the Nile River in the 1960s created Lake Nasser, which provides water to irrigate millions of acres of farmland.



Egypt, Modern



Mamluks regained power. Gradually, however, the Mamluks split into competing groups. With the Ottoman leadership far away in Istanbul, the stage was set for the invasion of Egypt by yet another ruler—Napoléon Bonaparte.

Arrival of the Europeans. In the late 1700s, the French decided to invade Egypt. Caught up in a rivalry with the British, who ruled India, the French hoped to expand their own empire and block British trade routes through the region. In 1798 French forces led by Napoléon succeeded in defeating the Mamluk army. After Egypt's Ottoman rulers asked Britain for assistance, a British fleet blockaded the Nile Delta and drove out the French. By 1801 Ottoman rule was restored.

To strengthen their hold over Egypt, the Ottomans placed a general named Muhammad Ali in charge. He introduced a number of important economic, military, and political reforms. At the same time, he established his family in a position of influence, founding a powerful dynasty.

Meanwhile, the French and British remained interested in Egypt. The two soon forced Egypt to open its ports to European traders. The British, seeking a route across the region to India, began laying railroad lines in Egypt. In 1859 the French began building the Suez Canal.

During the 1860s Egypt enjoyed an economic boom, based primarily on the cotton trade. When the cotton-growing states of the American South were preoccupied with the Civil War, Egypt became the world's main supplier of cotton. After the war ended, however, the Egyptian cotton market crashed. Egypt found itself severely indebted to the French and British governments. In 1875 the debts led Egypt to sell all its shares in the Suez Canal to Britain, making Britain the majority shareholder. Four years later Britain and France assumed joint economic control of Egypt, supervising government revenues and expenses to ensure that debt payments were made. In 1882 Britain and France divided up North Africa, and the British took possession of Egypt.

British Occupation. British rule was extremely unpopular and resulted in outbreaks of violence and rioting. However, the Egyptian economy was so shattered that the country was in no position to demand independence. Egypt was completely dependent on exports of cotton to Britain.

With the outbreak of World War I, Egypt supported the Allied forces against Germany. Meanwhile Egyptian nationalists* began to call for the departure of the British. In 1922 Britain formally granted independence to Egypt, but kept control over the Suez Canal and many government institutions. Egypt became a monarchy, headed by a king and a prime minister.

World War II provided another opportunity for Egypt to break free from Britain. Once again Egypt supported the Allies, although many groups sympathized with the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan). At the war's end, Egypt again demanded autonomy*, and the most powerful political group, the Wafd Party, called for the immediate withdrawal of British troops. After a period of riots and violence, Britain pulled out most of its forces in 1947.

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **autonomy** independent self-government



Arab Republic of Egypt

POPULATION:

68,359,979 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

386,200 sq. mi. (1,000,258 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Arabic (official); English, French

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Egyptian Pound

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 94%, Coptic Christian 6%

CITIES:

Cairo (capital), 10,552,000 (2000 est.); Alexandria, Shubra El-Khemia, Giza, Aswan

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 7 in. (178 mm) along the coast to virtually rainless along the Red Sea coastal plain and Western Desert.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$2,850 (2000 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cotton, rice, corn, vegetables, beans, fruits, wheat, livestock

Manufacturing: textiles, chemicals, petroleum, food processing, cement

Mining: oil, natural gas, phosphates, gypsum, iron ore, manganese, limestone

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Great Britain, 1922. Republic with president elected by legislature, then confirmed in popular election. Governing bodies: the People's Assembly (legislative body) and the Advisory Council.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE 1956:

1956–1970 President Gamal Abdel Nasser

1970–1981 President Anwar Sadat

1981– President Hosni Mubarak

ARMED FORCES:

450,000 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–13; literacy rate 51%

* **repeal** to undo a law

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

Independent Egypt. In the early 1950s, rioting broke out to protest the remaining British troops in the Suez Canal zone. In 1952, Prime Minister Nahas Pasha repealed* the law granting Britain control over the Suez Canal. When King Farouk punished Pasha for this act, a small group of army officers staged a coup* to remove the king and take over the government. They installed General Naguib as prime minister. However, the country was actually governed by the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), led by Colonel Gamal Abdel NASSER.

The RCC abolished the monarchy, ending the dynasty founded by Muhammad Ali. In 1956 Nasser became president. He declared Egyptian ownership of the Suez Canal and nationalized* all European-owned businesses in the country.

In 1970 Nasser was succeeded by Anwar SADAT. Three years later Sadat launched a surprise attack on Israel. Although the attack ended without a victory for either side, Sadat was viewed as a hero for challenging Israel's military might. Over the next several years, Sadat introduced government and economic reforms, legalized political parties, ended restrictions on the press, and released political prisoners who had been jailed under Nasser. He opened Egypt up to international investment and entered into peace talks with Israel in 1977. The peace negotiations won him the Nobel Peace Prize (along with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin), but distanced him from the rest of the Arab world and from the Egyptian people. Muslim leaders began to call for his overthrow. In 1981, while reviewing a military parade, he was shot by an assassin.




Egypt, Modern

With the death of Sadat, Vice President Hosni MUBARAK assumed the presidency. His primary goal was to maintain Egypt's standing in the international community while forming good relations with moderate Arab nations. Under his leadership, Egypt supported Saudi Arabia and Kuwait during the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991. In addition, Mubarak has continued to cooperate in the Middle East peace process. In 1999 he was reelected for another six-year term with nearly 94 percent of the popular vote.

Egypt's recent political stability has not brought economic prosperity. Unemployment is high and oil production is decreasing. Tourism declined sharply following a series of Muslim terrorist attacks on foreign visitors in the 1990s. However, after Egypt's security forces broke up the main terrorist groups and posted guards at major sites, tourism revived dramatically. (See also **Arabs in Africa**; **Colonialism in Africa**; **Egypt, Ancient**; **North Africa: Geography and Population**; **North Africa: History and Cultures**; **World Wars I and II**.)

Ekwensi, Cyprian

1921–
Nigerian writer


 Cyprian Ekwensi has won fame for his books about urban life in modern Africa. Born into an IGBO family in northern NIGERIA, he was educated at Ibadan University College in Nigeria and at the Chelsea School of Pharmacy in London. He spent his early career working in communications in the Nigerian civil service.

Ekwensi turned to writing after the end of World War II. His first work, a collection of Igbo folktales translated into English, appeared in 1947. Since then Ekwensi has published a long list of essays, children's books, short stories, and novels. His most successful novel, *Jagua Nana*, appeared in 1961. Like many of his works, the story of *Jagua Nana* unfolds in an urban setting, where characters abandon their rural values for the excitement and temptations of city life.

Ekwensi was one of the first writers to produce modern African literature in English. From the beginning, he aimed his writing at ordinary working people. In addition, he attempted to bridge the ethnic rivalries that divide Nigeria by focusing on the human concerns that bring people together. His works appeal to a broad audience and are recognized as an outstanding record of Nigerian society. (See also **Literature**.)

Emin Pasha

1840–1892
Explorer and colonial
governor

 In the late 1800s, a European known as Emin Pasha became the object of a much-publicized rescue operation in Africa. During this time, the European powers were deeply involved in Africa. Emin, a provincial governor in the Egyptian colony of SUDAN, had been stranded by a religious war.

Born Eduard Schnitzer in what is now Poland, Emin received a medical degree from the University of Berlin in 1864. He worked in Turkey and Albania, adopted a Turkish name, and is believed to have become a Muslim. By 1876 Emin was in EGYPT, where he became the physician of British general Charles George GORDON, the governor of Sudan. Two



Energy and Energy Resources

years later Gordon appointed Emin governor of the province of Equatoria, as southern Sudan was then known.

A holy war against Sudan by Muslim rebels called Mahdists left Emin Pasha cut off in his headquarters on Lake Albert in the African interior. He appealed to the outside world for aid, and in 1889 the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, led by the famous explorer Henry Morton STANLEY, reached Equatoria. Emin, who had never made it clear whether he wanted to be rescued or simply needed fresh supplies, was reluctant to leave his stronghold. Finally, however, he and Stanley led a group of about 1,500 men, women, and children to the African coast of present-day Tanzania. Emin refused to accompany his “rescuers” back to Europe. Instead he joined a German expedition and returned to the interior. Several years later he was murdered by slave traffickers. (*See also Mahdi, al-.*)

Energy and Energy Resources

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

Africa’s resources include an abundant supply of petroleum, natural gas, and wood for fuel. The continent also has numerous rivers and waterfalls that could provide hydroelectric* power. But Africans rely mostly on wood for energy. Most of the continent’s other resources are expensive, available only in small quantities, and in limited areas. For a number of reasons, the development of petroleum, natural gas, and hydroelectric resources has proceeded slowly in Africa. Distributing the energy to consumers presents another problem. In addition, foreign ownership of energy resources has drawn off much of the continent’s oil and gas for sale abroad.

Sources of Energy. Africa contains about 7 percent of the world’s known reserves of petroleum, 6 percent of its natural gas, and 6 percent of its coal. These resources are not evenly distributed throughout the continent. The North African countries of LIBYA and ALGERIA have about two-thirds of the petroleum. NIGERIA and ANGOLA account for almost all the rest, along with CAMEROON, CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE), GABON, and CONGO (KINSHASA). The situation is much the same for natural gas because natural gas and petroleum often occur in the same location. Coal, another important fuel, is found mainly in SOUTH AFRICA.

The potential for hydroelectric power is concentrated in two main areas in Africa. The first is the string of great lakes running through East Africa from KENYA in the north to ZAMBIA in the south. The other is the West African coastal region from GUINEA to Angola. Between these two regions, Congo (Kinshasa) contains some 60 percent of Africa’s hydroelectric resources. However, only half of this potential energy can be tapped with existing technology.

The main energy source in Africa is fuelwood. Nearly a quarter of the land in sub-Saharan* Africa is covered by forest. Some countries, such as SWAZILAND, are thickly forested, while others such as MALAWI have almost no wooded areas. The heavy use of fuelwood has raised a serious concern about deforestation*. Over 25 million acres of tropical forest are cleared each year in Africa, mainly for agriculture and human settlement. In

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **deforestation** removal of a forest as a result of human activities



Energy and Energy Resources

Crisis Control

In the 1970s Africa faced a critical shortage of fuelwood. Many governments adopted a policy of planting fast-growing trees such as eucalyptus. Most of their plans failed because they focused exclusively on providing wood that would be a good source of fuel. But local people also rely on trees for construction, fruit, food for livestock, medicine, and many other uses. Tree planting programs became more successful when they were developed together with local communities to plant trees that satisfied many of their needs.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

some areas, the problem is severe. For example, virtually all the land within 250 miles of Sudan's capital KHARTOUM has been cleared of wood.

Energy Production. African countries face a number of difficulties in producing and delivering energy to their people. Among the most serious is the lack of infrastructure*. Most countries lack the money to explore for petroleum or to put in place the equipment and facilities required for obtaining, refining, and storing petroleum. The facilities that do exist are often outdated, too small, and in need of repair. In addition, the poor state of transportation in Africa makes it difficult to distribute oil efficiently or profitably.

Because many electric power plants run on petroleum, the problems with Africa's oil industry affect the production of electricity. Hydroelectric facilities are less dependent on petroleum but cost a great deal of money to build. They have other drawbacks—such as altering the local environment, sometimes forcing people to relocate, and producing much less power during droughts.

The lack of infrastructure also hampers the distribution of electricity. Networks of electrical wiring are very limited, and few of these power grids are connected between countries. This makes it difficult to share or trade power over national borders. In addition, outdated equipment and the high cost of maintenance make the power supply rather unreliable. As a result, many wealthy households, companies, and factories invest in their own power generators.

Energy Use. The vast majority of Africans rely on wood as their primary source of energy. The problems with commercial fuel—petroleum, natural gas, or electricity—make it very expensive and difficult to get. Wood provides about 85 percent of all the energy used in Africa. Even in most cities, wood accounts for almost half of the energy. However, the use of fuelwood is difficult to measure or regulate in the same way as other fuels because many people gather it themselves and do not pay for it.

Most of the commercial fuel consumed in Africa goes to industry. However, Africa's industries are not highly developed, and this is both a result and a cause of the continent's difficulties with energy production. The uncertainty and cost of commercial energy has hindered industrial growth. At the same time, the low demand from industry gives energy producers little reason to expand or modernize their facilities. Most of the commercial energy not used by industry goes to transportation, mainly passenger cars.

A small percentage of Africa's energy comes from so-called alternative fuels. These fuels include solar energy (from the sun), thermal energy (from the earth), and biomass energy (from plant matter or animal waste). Africa's geography and climate make it an ideal place for solar energy, but alternative fuels in general have not been popular. The high cost of equipment and lack of knowledge have resulted in little interest in alternative technologies. Some countries have offered tax breaks to encourage industries to use alternative energy sources, but these efforts have found only limited success.

Energy and Energy Resources



Much of Africa's petroleum comes from North Africa. This well off the coast of Tunisia pumps oil up from under the seabed, through a network of huge pipes, to an oil tanker. Smaller ships then carry the oil to shore.

Energy Policy. Although poverty and lack of infrastructure are serious obstacles to the growth of Africa's energy industry, politics has also played a role. War and civil unrest undoubtedly take a toll on production and distribution, and energy policies can be almost as destructive. In the early 1990s, the Nigerian government, which owns the country's oil industry, adopted a policy of selling oil to its citizens below market value. This led to widespread smuggling of oil across Nigeria's borders by private citizens, causing producers to lose profits. The smuggling problem got worse and eventually contributed to an oil shortage in Nigeria, even though that country is a major producer of petroleum.

However, national governments are not in full control of their countries' energy supplies and policies. As in the colonial era, much of Africa's oil reserves and production facilities are owned by corporations based in North America and Europe. Also, loans for major energy projects such as dams often come from international agencies such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. In many cases, these loans come with strict instructions on managing energy industries. To repay these loans, African nations must produce energy and other resources for export sales. Thus much of the profit from African oil leaves the continent. African energy policy is not always designed to meet the needs of the people.



Energy and Energy Resources

Close attention and cooperation with local people and communities have brought some encouraging results in solving Africa's energy problems. These programs have been aimed at using fuelwood resources in ways that do less damage to the environment. In many areas, people and companies have harvested too many trees, which leads to loss of soil, and some of these regions are turning into desert. To combat this problem, governments and other agencies have worked with local communities to plant more trees and harvest them wisely. Such efforts will be crucial, since wood will likely remain the major source of fuel in Africa for decades to come. (See also **Development, Economic and Social, Forests and Forestry, Minerals and Mining.**)

Equatorial Guinea

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea consists of mainland territory on the coast of western Africa and five islands in the Gulf of Guinea. Controlled for almost 500 years by Portugal and then by Spain, the country became independent in 1968. Its struggling economy got a boost from the discovery of oil in the Gulf of Guinea. However, the rule of a harsh dictator leaves the people of Equatorial Guinea few freedoms and little opportunity to share the new wealth.

LAND AND CLIMATE

Equatorial Guinea is divided into two provinces. The mainland and the small islands of Corisco, Elobey Grande, and Elobey Chico make up the province of Mbini. The two islands farthest from the mainland, Bioko (formerly Fernando Póo) and Annóbon, form the Bioko province.

The total area of Equatorial Guinea is about 10,800 square miles, roughly the size of the state of Maryland. Most of the mainland territory is a plateau covered in dense rainforests that thrive in the tropical climate. The Mbini River cuts through the plateau's center from east to west, and many smaller streams branch off through the jungle. The region boasts some unusual wildlife, including huge frogs that grow up to 3 feet in length.

Bioko, the nation's largest island, is located to the northwest, off the coast of CAMEROON. The island of Annobón is far to the southwest. Both islands are volcanic, with fertile soil, and hot, humid weather.

HISTORY, ECONOMY, AND CULTURE

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to explore the area that is now Equatorial Guinea. In 1494 an agreement with Spain, the Treaty of Tordesillas, gave Portugal rights to the region. Another agreement in 1778 granted Spain control of the islands of Equatorial Guinea. However, many of the first Spanish settlers died of yellow fever, and in 1781 they abandoned the islands. Spain did not occupy the area again until it acquired the mainland territory in the mid-1800s. After making Spanish Guinea an official colony in 1900, Spain developed a thriving economy. Timber from the mainland and cocoa, coffee, and palm oil

Equatorial Guinea



Money from Equatorial Guinea's growing oil industry is financing improvements to the nation's ports and transportation systems. In the capital city of Malabo, cranes tower over the construction of a new airport terminal.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **depose** to remove from office

from the islands were the main exports. But as in many other European colonies, the government of Spanish Guinea did little to develop or reward the talents of the indigenous* population.

Independence. After Equatorial Guinea gained independence in 1968, it suffered harsh and violent rule by dictators. Its first president, Francisco Macías Nguema, destroyed most of Bioko's plantations and devastated the national economy. His political practices were equally damaging. Within the first year of his reign, he outlawed all political parties. He tortured and murdered political opponents and caused nearly all of the educated upper class to flee the country.

In 1979 Macías Nguema's nephew, Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, deposed* him and had him killed. At first, the international community hoped that Obiang Nguema would bring greater freedom to Equatorial Guinea. Instead, he continued most of the abuses of his uncle and surrounded himself with hundreds of guards. In 1987 Obiang Nguema formed his own political party, the Partido Democratico de Guinea Ecuatorial (PDGE).

In the 1990s several events attracted foreign investment to Equatorial Guinea. Large oil reserves were discovered off the nation's coasts. The government worked to develop the oil industry, along with investors from France and the United States. As oil production grew, so did the economy. Ports and shipping were upgraded, and roads and bridges

Equatorial Guinea



Republic of Equatorial Guinea

POPULATION:

474,214 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

10,800 sq. mi. (27,972 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Spanish, French (both official); Bubi, Fang, Ibo, Ndowe

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA Franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian (mostly Roman Catholic) 79%; Traditional 21%

CITIES:

Bata (capital), 24,100; Malabo, Luba, Moca, Nietang, Evinayong

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

79 in. (2,000 mm)

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$2,000 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cocoa, timber, coffee, bananas, fish, sweet potatoes, cassava, palm oil nuts

Manufacturing: sawmills, food processing, soap factories

Mineral Resources: oil, gold, uranium, manganese, natural gas

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Spain, 1968. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: *Cámara de Representantes del Pueblo* (national legislature), elected; Council of Ministers and prime minister, appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1968–1979 President Francisco Macías Nguema

1979– President Brigadier General (ret.) Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo

ARMED FORCES:

1,300 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–11; literacy rate 78%

rebuilt. Spain helped improve Equatorial Guinea's education system and invested in local radio stations.

Even so, most citizens of Equatorial Guinea are not much better off than they were 30 years ago. Much of the money generated by the oil industry is used to support Obiang Nguema's powerful dictatorship. The nation has no rail system and no paved roads. The "free" elections held in the 1990s were accompanied by fraud, violence, and human rights abuses, ensuring that the PDGE remained in power. The government then began a campaign to promote urban development by relocating the site of the nation's capital, and in 2000 Bata became the administrative capital of the mainland. However, throughout the country, the best jobs still go to those connected with the PDGE.

Peoples and Culture. Most of Equatorial Guinea's citizens are of BANTU ancestry. These include the Fang, the major ethnic group in Mbini province, and the Ndowe who dominate the mainland coast. Some Bayele PYGMIES live along the Mbini River. The island of Bioko includes a variety of peoples, such as Bubi, the island's first inhabitants; Fang migrants from the mainland; and CREOLES, people of mixed African and European ancestry.

Years of Spanish rule left their mark on the small nation. The only Spanish-speaking country in sub-Saharan Africa, Equatorial Guinea has two branches of Spain's national university in the cities of Malabo and Bata. Equatorial Guineans have also maintained religious ties to the largely Catholic Spain. Although many people also practice traditional African religions, over half of the population considers itself Catholic. The remaining population is primarily Protestant (13 percent) or animist (21 percent). The nation is one of the few countries in Africa in which Islam is entirely absent.

Equiano, Olaudah

ca. 1740s–1797
Abolitionist writer

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

O laudah Equiano, a former slave, became a forceful voice in the antislavery movement. His autobiography had considerable influence on British public opinion. Born in the kingdom of Benin to an IGBO family, Equiano was captured by slave traders at the age of ten. Later a British naval officer renamed him Gustavus Vassa and took him to England. There, Equiano received some education and eventually his freedom.

In the early 1780s, Equiano threw himself into the antislavery movement, speaking publicly in various British cities. His outstanding contribution to the abolitionist* effort, however, was his autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano; or Gustavus Vassa the African* (1789). First published in English and then translated into Dutch, German, and Russian, this lively book describes Equiano's childhood in Africa, the appalling experiences of slavery, and his later life in freedom. (See also **Slave Trade, Slavery**.)

Eritrea

* **autonomy** independent self-government

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

E ritrea, a small country located between SUDAN, ETHIOPIA, and the Red Sea, is the newest independent nation in Africa. Once one of Africa's most promising regions, Eritrea suffered through decades of costly civil war. Since achieving independence in 1993, outbreaks of fighting with Ethiopia have hampered efforts to rebuild the nation.

From Ancient Kingdom to Free Nation. From about A.D. 300, Eritrea was part of ancient AKSUM and the Ethiopian kingdom. However, it enjoyed some autonomy* until the 1500s, when it came under the control of the Ottoman Empire. Over the next centuries, Eritrea changed hands several times. Then in 1889 a treaty between Italy and Ethiopia declared the territory an Italian colony. Eritrea remained under Italian rule until 1941, when Italy lost its African colonies in World War II. Great Britain occupied the region for the next 11 years.

In 1952 British occupation ended, and the United Nations combined Eritrea and Ethiopia in a federation*. Although this arrangement supposedly provided for Eritrean self-rule, Ethiopia soon violated Eritrean rights. In 1962 Ethiopian Emperor HAILE SELASSIE made Eritrea a province of Ethiopia. The Eritrean Liberation Front (ELF), formed in 1961 by a small group of armed men, immediately began fighting for independence from Ethiopia.

In the 1970s an offshoot of the ELF, the Eritrean Popular Liberation Front (EPLF), took over the battle for independence. In 1991 this new group formed a temporary Eritrean government, and in 1993 Eritrea became an independent nation. The EPLF changed its name to the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) and became the nation's only political party. Isayas Aferworki, former EPLF leader, was elected president in 1993 and again in 1997.

More than 60,000 Eritreans died in the war for independence, and nearly 700,000 people fled the country. In 1998 thousands more lives were disrupted when a border dispute between Eritrea and Ethiopia led

Eritrea



State of Eritrea

POPULATION:

4,135,933 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

46,774 sq. mi. (121,144 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Tigrinya (official); Afar, Arabic, Kunama, Tigre

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Ethiopian birr

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 50%, Christian 50% (Coptic, Roman Catholic, Protestant)

CITIES:

Asmara (capital), 431,000 (1995 est.); Massawa, Assab, Keren, Agordat, Teseney, Adikwala, Addi Ugri

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 18–29 in. (460–740 mm) in southern highlands to 12–14 in. (310–360 mm) in eastern lowlands to 4 in. (100 mm) in Danakil Depression.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$750 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: maize, sorghum, lentils, cotton, vegetables, livestock, fish, coffee, tobacco, sisal

Manufacturing: food and beverage processing, textiles, tanning

Mining: copper, gold, potash, zinc, salt, oil (under exploration)

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Ethiopia, 1993. Transitional government since that time. National Assembly (legislature) elects the head of state.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1993– President Isayas Aferworki

ARMED FORCES:

47,100

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 20%

the two countries to war again. A peace treaty signed in December 2000 ended two years of some of the fiercest fighting in Africa.

Land and People. Most of Eritrea's population is concentrated in the country's northern, western, and eastern lowlands and in the Dahlak Archipelago, a system of islands off the coast. The country's physical features, climate, and soils influence where people settle and how they earn their living.

Generally high temperatures, low rainfall, and poor soils limit agriculture to the few areas where crops can be irrigated by rivers. Irrigation enables farmers to grow cotton as a cash crop* in the northwestern plains. Some agriculture is also possible on Eritrea's central plateau where the climate is relatively mild. However, the plateau region has a history of famines because of crop failure, crop destruction by locusts and other pests, and the death of plow oxen from disease and drought. Nomadic herders live in the western foothills and plains bordering Sudan.

Since independence, Eritrea has tried to improve its economy by modernizing agriculture, expanding small-scale manufacturing, and increasing mineral exploration. Through its ports at Massawa and Assab, Eritrea provides Ethiopia with its only access to the Red Sea and to important international trade.

Eritreans speak a wide variety of languages, the most widespread being Tigrinya (in the southeast) and Tigre (in the Dahlak Islands). They also represent many ethnic groups, including Kunama, Baria, Arabs, Sudanese, and Afar. In religion, the country is almost equally divided between Muslims and Christians. (See also **Mengistu Haile Mariam.**)

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Ethiopia

Ethiopia

With a culture dating back to early times, Ethiopia rivals Egypt as one of Africa's great ancient civilizations. Beginning around 100 B.C., a series of kingdoms and empires arose in Ethiopia. The country managed to remain independent in the 1800s and early 1900s when European powers took over much of Africa. In recent times, Ethiopia has been battered by decades of revolution, rebellion, and deadly famine. Today the country struggles to modernize its economy and to become more democratic.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Located in the interior of the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia is bordered on the west by **SUDAN**, on the south by **KENYA**, on the east by **SOMALIA**, on the northeast by **DJIBOUTI**, and on the north by **ERITREA**. The country's economy has long been based on local grains and animal herds, as well as the export of coffee.

Land and Climate. The terrain of Ethiopia consists basically of cool, wet highlands surrounded by hot, dry lowlands. The broad Ethiopian Plateau in the Western Highlands reaches altitudes between 8,000 and 12,000 feet. Dividing the Western Highlands from the Eastern Highlands



Ethiopia

Tracing Human Origins

The northern reaches of the Great Rift Valley in Ethiopia are a rich source of information about human origins. In 1974 scientists working at Hadar in the lower valley of the Awash River discovered Lucy—the most complete skeleton ever found of a human ancestor. Lucy is 3.2 million years old, and she belongs to a species known as *Australopithecus afarensis*. This name comes from the Afar people who live in the area. In the mid-1990s, at a site near the Ethiopian village of Aramis—about 50 miles south of where Lucy was found—scientists discovered the teeth and bones of still older human ancestors. Estimated to be about 4.4 million years old, these remains represent the earliest known human ancestors.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

* **myrrh** substance used in perfume and incense

is the Great Rift Valley, a low region dotted with lakes and volcanoes. However, some of its ancient peaks rise above 13,000 feet. The Rift Valley runs roughly north and south across all of central Ethiopia, with the arid Danakil Depression at its northern end.

The Western Lowlands, bordering on Sudan, include Ethiopia's largest river basin with the Baro, Blue Nile, Atbara, and Tekkeze rivers. Rising in the Western Highlands, the rivers pass through the Western Lowlands on their way to the White Nile in Sudan. The Eastern Lowlands in the southeastern regions of Ethiopia include the Sidamo-Borana plain as well as the arid regions known as Hawd and Ogaden.

Land Use. Although the northern regions of the Highlands have irregular rainfall, the southwest enjoys regular periods of precipitation. Peasants in the north have grown grains for thousands of years, but these crops were introduced in the south only in the 1800s. In the humid southwest, peasants grow *ensete*, also known as the false banana tree. They scrape the stems of this tree to produce a dough that they leave in the ground to ferment.

Since the 1800s northern peasants have begun to raise cash crops*. The main one, coffee, accounts for more than half of Ethiopia's export earnings. The area around the city of Harar grows and exports *khat*, a mild drug popular among Muslims for chewing. In the Lowland regions, nomadic cattle herders supply a variety of animal hides including oxen, sheep, and goats.

Land use changed dramatically in 1979, when a military government led by MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM launched the Green Revolution. This was an attempt at land reform patterned after the system of large state-owned farms used in the Soviet Union*. The state farms featured a single crop, mechanical equipment, and many workers. The government forced many peasants to relocate. In the mid-1980s, nearly 600,000 households were moved to hastily developed, unhealthy sites in the southern Lowlands. By 1988 the government had forced another 12 million people from various places in Ethiopia to settle together in large villages.

HISTORY

The history of Ethiopia is inseparable from the history of the Horn of Africa, a triangular landmass on the eastern corner of the continent. The Horn has been a cradle of humanity, a crossroads of civilizations, and a symbol of freedom. Studies by archaeologists reveal that the region was home to the most distant human ancestors and later became an area where people developed stable farming communities.

Kingdom of Aksum. According to ancient records, the Egyptians knew Ethiopia as the land of Punt, supposedly a vast area that included what is now the Somali coast and part of the Ogaden Plateau. Punt was known as a source of incense and myrrh*. Later, around 100 B.C., the kingdom of AKSUM arose. The center of a caravan trade based mainly on ivory and slaves, Aksum grew into a regional power. In time the king-

Ethiopia



In the Lake Tana region of Ethiopia a group of women carry jars of drinking water on their heads.

dom stretched from the Ogaden in the east to the gold-producing region bordering the Blue Nile River in the west and even minted its own coins.

Aksum adopted Christianity in the 300s. In the 500s the kingdom defended its faith by sending armies across the Red Sea to protect Christian communities persecuted by local Jewish inhabitants. Aksum's massive military campaign took a toll on its rulers. They were further weakened when Muslims took control of the trade along the Red Sea in the 700s. The empire finally collapsed in the 900s, after rebels destroyed Aksum. The rebel leader, according to tradition, was a Jewish woman. The new rulers, the Zagwe dynasty*, brought a new culture and language, but they were faithful to Christianity.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

Christian and Muslim States. In the late 1200s Yekuno Amlak seized the throne. Claiming to be a descendant of Aksum's former rulers, he established the Solomonic dynasty. He and his descendants were able to control important southern trade routes from a base in Shewa, a small southern kingdom established by Muslim traders.

For more than two centuries, a fierce rivalry existed between the Solomonic rulers in the north and several Muslim states in the south. Frequent raids and wars resulted in a weak northern Christian state, but

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The Legend of Prester John

During the Crusades a legend arose in Europe about a king in the east who would help Christians conquer Palestine from the Muslims. Various missionaries and travelers, including Marco Polo, journeyed to Asia seeking the rich kingdom of this so-called priest-king named Prester John. In the 1300s European priests, monks, missionaries, and adventurers took the search south into Ethiopia. Some of them met the Ethiopian emperor and found him to be an ordinary ruler. They developed formal relations with Ethiopia that continue to this day.

the Muslim states were also fairly unstable. The northern rulers led an unsettled life, traveling in royal camps. They had no permanent capital. Their massive armies and many attendants caused more harm to the land and crops than locusts. A royal visit completely upset the area's environment and took a heavy toll in human lives.

Conditions were no better in the Muslim south. Wars among the states and conflicts with the north left these kingdoms very weak. People moved around in great numbers. Economic development was limited, and cultural centers developed in only a few cities. In addition, wars in the Middle East between European Crusaders and Muslims resulted in a decline in international trade.

The Wars of Grañ. At the start of the 1500s, the Red Sea commerce revived and the Turks and the Portuguese became active traders in Ethiopia. The first official representative of the Portuguese arrived in 1520. At the same time, the southern Muslim peoples were being organized by a leader named Imam Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi. His nickname, *Grañ*, means "the Left-Handed."

Grañ won a major battle against the Christian north in 1528, and he attempted to bring the entire Horn of Africa under his control. The Turks sided with Grañ, but he later expelled them from his territory. Meanwhile, the Portuguese supported GALAWDEWOS, the defeated Christian ruler, and made an effort to punish Grañ. The years of warfare finally ended in 1543, when a Portuguese bullet fatally wounded Grañ.

The wars sapped the energy of both the north and the south. The way was clear for another major force, the Oromo, to enter the central Highlands. During the 1500s the Oromo overran the Horn of Africa. They absorbed peoples and old states all over Ethiopia, challenging the Solomonic emperors who now ruled a shrinking empire from their court at Gondar.

HISTORY SINCE 1600

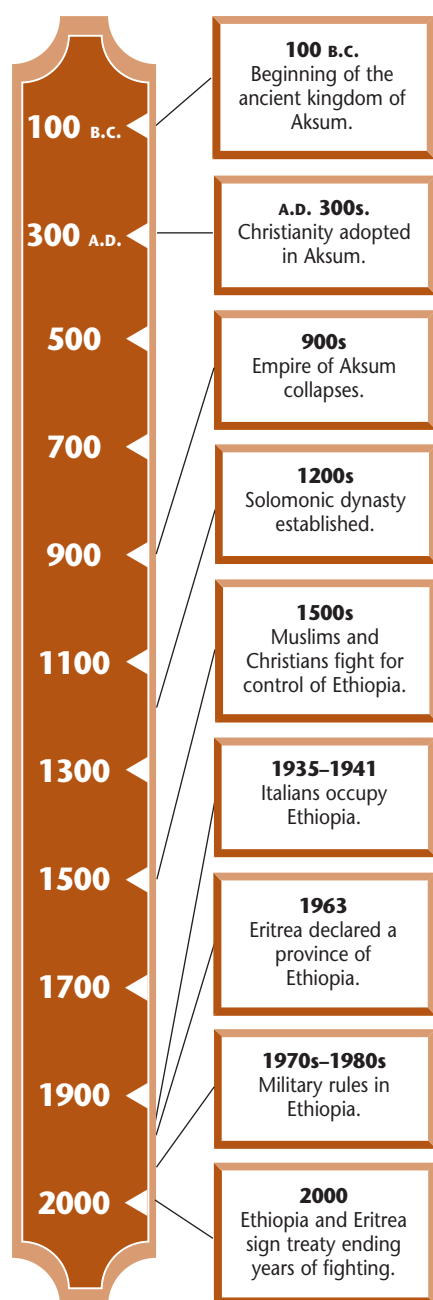
During the 1600s the Solomonic emperors relied on an alliance of their Christian nobles and some Oromo nobles to protect the realm from the rest of the Oromo peoples. However, the two groups of nobles fought constantly for power and position. By the beginning of the 1700s, their rivalry had broken up the empire and ushered in the "Age of Princes," 150 years of anarchy*.

* **anarchy** state of lawlessness or political disorder

Two Emperors. The economy of the north collapsed during the Age of Princes. Warring armies ruined the countryside. Only the central highland region of Ethiopia remained untouched and continued to prosper, especially in the Shewa district where trade thrived.

The Age of Princes ended in the mid-1800s when a soldier named Kassa Hailu built up a small but effective army and challenged the authorities in Gondar. In 1855 he was crowned emperor as Téwodros II. Téwodros tried to centralize power in Ethiopia, but his policies were opposed by nobles and the church. A minor dispute with British diplomatic representatives led the British to send in an army. Lacking popu-

Ethiopia



* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

lar and military support, Téwodros was defeated and committed suicide to avoid capture by the British.

Yohannes IV of Tigre succeeded Téwodros in 1872. The new emperor called on local lords to become part of a federation* under his rule. King Menilek of Shewa at first refused, but he joined when Yohannes brought military force against him. Another challenge came in 1885, when Italians landed troops in Eritrea. Yohannes succeeded in confining them to the coastal regions. In 1889 he was shot and killed in Sudan, where he had gone to put down attacks along the border.

The Reign of Menilek. Soon after the death of Yohannes, Menilek declared himself emperor. He quickly signed a treaty of trade and friendship with the Italians, but he later learned that the Italians believed that the treaty made Ethiopia a colony of Italy. Menilek delayed any action against the Italians while he worked to restore his economy, to trade for modern weapons, and to deal with the famine and disease that were sweeping East Africa. These measures, along with two years of good grain harvests, enabled Menilek to gather his forces against the Italians.

The Italians ridiculed Menilek and the very idea of an Ethiopian nation. They believed that their 35,000 troops, equipped with out-of-date weapons, could defeat Menilek's 100,000 well-armed Ethiopian soldiers. On the morning of March 1, 1896, the Italians appeared on the heights above the Ethiopian camp. Menilek attacked before the Italians could dig in, and by noon the Italians were in retreat. The Treaty of ADDIS ABABA canceled the previous treaty with Italy, but it gave the Italians control of Eritrea.

Over the next ten years, Menilek expanded Ethiopia to its present borders. Surrounded by European colonial powers, Menilek modernized his capital at Addis Ababa, opened schools and hospitals, and oversaw the construction of better communications in Ethiopia and a railroad from Addis Ababa to Djibouti. In 1909 Menilek suffered a stroke and was succeeded first by his grandson and then his daughter.

Haile Selassie I. Menilek's children were dominated by a powerful noble, Ras Tafari Makonnen, who also worked tirelessly to modernize Ethiopia and keep it independent. When Menilek's daughter died in 1930, Tafari declared himself emperor. He was crowned Emperor HAILE SELASSIE I, meaning "Strength of the Trinity."

The emperor issued a national constitution and continued development programs for roads, schools, hospitals, communications, and public services. As a result, the economy improved, and taxes from coffee exports brought new wealth to the government. However, Haile Selassie's successes prompted the Italians to invade Ethiopia in 1935. The emperor was forced to flee while the people resisted the Italians in the countryside. During World War II, the British supported Haile Selassie and prepared an Anglo-Ethiopian invasion. The Italians withdrew from Ethiopia in 1941.

The 1950s brought a new period of unrest in Ethiopia. In 1952 the United Nations approved the country's request for a federation with Eritrea. Then in 1963 Haile Selassie's government ended the federation

Ethiopia



Between 1998 and 2000, tens of thousands of people in Ethiopia and Eritrea died in a war over a disputed border. Here Eritrean women protest the killing of civilians.

and declared Eritrea a province of Ethiopia. Many Ethiopians opposed this move, and the Eritreans rebelled. By the early 1970s, Ethiopian troops were fighting a war in Eritrea while putting down tax rebellions in other regions of the country. At the same time, high oil prices dented the economy, and drought and famine overtook the north. The aging emperor could no longer cope.

The Revolution. The last of the Solomonic emperors, Haile Selassie, was removed from power in 1974 by a group of military officers known as the *derg*, meaning “committee.” The first head of the revolutionary state, General Aman Andom, was overthrown within months and was followed by General Tafari Benti. General Tafari nationalized* Ethiopian land and pronounced Ethiopia a socialist* state before he was killed by rivals.

His successor, *derg* chairman Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam, turned Ethiopia into a communist* state with all power in the central government. He accepted military help from the Soviet Union to fight wars against rebels in Eritrea and an invading Somali army in the Ogaden region. At the same time, his government created associations of peasants to farm the countryside. This organization led to smaller harvests and damaged farmlands, resulting in a disastrous famine in 1984. Donations of grain from Western nations the following year gradually relieved the famine.

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals



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Toward the end of the 1980s, Mengistu's army suffered some serious setbacks. The Eritrean rebels and their allies succeeded in pushing back the Ethiopian forces. The Soviet Union refused to send more arms and advised Mengistu to make peace. One of the most powerful of his opponents was the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). By May 1991 the EPRDF controlled most of the provinces around Addis Ababa and insisted that Mengistu resign. Mengistu fled to Zimbabwe and the EPRDF marched into Addis Ababa and assumed power under Meles Zenawi.

The Eritreans were left in control of their own territory, and two years later they formally declared independence. However, the peace between Eritrea and Ethiopia was uneasy, and in 1998 fighting erupted again over a disputed border in the Tigre region. Many called it a "useless" war, but it continued for two years and killed tens of thousands of people. At last representatives of both sides met in ALGERIA. They signed a peace treaty in December 2000.

Inside Ethiopia the ruling EPRDF had strong popular support throughout the 1990s. Nevertheless it had to contend with a number of small uprisings and other challenges to its power. At the same time, drought threatened in the countryside, where the state still claimed control over farms.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Ethiopia has a rich and diverse ethnic background. Ethiopians speak languages of four different language families, though they share a common written script called Ge'ez. Among the country's major ethnic groups are the AMHARA, Tigre, and Oromo. Their ancient cultures may be seen in their art and architecture, which draws heavily from both Christianity and traditional African culture.

The Amhara and Tigre. Until the end of World War II, Ethiopia was known to the Western world as Abyssinia and its people as Abyssinians. This term refers mainly to the Christian peoples who are properly called the Amhara and the Tigre. These people speak Amharic and Tigrinya, languages of the Semitic family that also includes Arabic and Hebrew.

The homelands of the Amhara and Tigre are spread over the western and northern Highlands of the Ethiopian Plateau. The Amhara, the major ethnic group in Addis Ababa, have moved in recent centuries into the Western Lowlands near the Blue Nile River. The Tigre live mainly to the north of the Amhara, inhabiting the province of Tigre along the border with Eritrea.

Most of the Amhara and Tigre are devout followers of the ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH. They are mainly settled farmers who also raise livestock on their lands.

The Oromo. The Oromo are spread over nearly half of Ethiopia. They live along the Ethiopian Plateau, from the largely Muslim province of Harar on the east, to the Kenya border on the south, and westward to the Blue Nile. Numerically the largest group of Ethiopians, the Oromo



See map in *Humans, Early* (vol. 2).

Ethiopia



Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

POPULATION:

64,117,452 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

435,184 sq. mi. (1,127,127 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Amharic (official); Gallinya, Tigrinya, Orominga, Somali, Italian, English

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Birr

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 40% (Ethiopian Orthodox), Muslim 45%, Traditional 15%

CITIES:

Addis Ababa (capital), 2,431,000 (1999 est.); Dessie, Dire Dawa, Harar, Gondar, Jimma, Mekele, Nazret

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 104 in. (2,640 mm) in southwest to 4 in. (100 mm) in the Danakil Depression.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$560 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, sugarcane, cereals, potatoes, vegetables, livestock, animal hides and skins

Manufacturing: textiles, food processing, beverages, cement

Mining: gold, natural gas, platinum, copper, potash, iron

GOVERNMENT:

Oldest independent country in Africa. President elected by House of People's Representatives. Governing bodies: House of Representatives and House of Federation (legislature); Council of Ministers, appointed by prime minister

RULERS SINCE 1930:

1930–1974 Emperor Haile Sellassie I (excluding Italian occupation of 1936–1941)

1974–1977 Provisional Military Administrative Council (led by General Aman Andom (1974), Brigadier General Tafari Benti (1974–1977)

1977–1991 Lieutenant Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam

1991–1995 Acting President Meles Zenawi

1995– President Negasso Gidada

ARMED FORCES:

120,000 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 35%

are divided into a dozen smaller groups. All the Oromo speak a common language, which belongs to the Cushitic family.

After the 1500s some Oromo settled lands next to the Amhara and Tigre and adopted many of their living patterns and agricultural practices. However, the Boran and Arussi divisions of the Oromo follow a culture of cattle herding shared by other East African peoples. The Boran and Arussi regard cattle as status symbols and use them in ritual* sacrifices.

Islam, which had its center in the city of Harar, spread northward with the eastern Oromo during and after the 1500s. New Muslim populations included not only the Oromo but also the Raya, Somali, and Afar. Today these people are independent herders who mine salt in the hot lowlands of the Danakil Depression. Throughout the Oromo settlements, traditional religions exist alongside Muslim and Christian worship. The Falasha peoples (also known as Beta Israel) follow the Jewish religion. In recent years many of them have migrated to Israel.

Other Ethiopian Ethnic Groups. The lake peoples of the Great Rift Valley include the Sidamo and Konso ethnic groups. Most are settled farmers, although the Arbore are herders.

The Kafa and Janjero live along the southern stretch of the Omo River. Their languages are part of the Omotic language family. Until about 1900, the Kafa and Janjero had independent cultures centered around elaborate rituals. They grow *ensete* and several other grains and

* **ritual** religion ceremony that follows a set pattern



Ethiopia

also trade extensively in gold and ivory. Their small kingdoms had complicated structures that were unusual for their size and region.

The Sudanic peoples, whose languages belong to families found in the eastern SAHARA DESERT and along the NILE, live in scattered settlements along the length of Ethiopia's border with Sudan. Most live in permanent settlements where they cultivate grains and root crops. Those living along the banks of the Baro River supplement their diet with fish.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Cross-Cultural Ties. Christians, Muslims, and followers of indigenous* religions often live as neighbors in the same villages. They participate in the same community events and share any food or drink that does not violate their religious laws. The last outbreak of religious conflict in Ethiopia was in the 1500s, when the Grañ launched his war against the Christian north. In the past, trade in goods and services linked the diverse peoples of Ethiopia, even those that may have been enemies. It remains to be seen whether these ties remain strong under modern governments.

Art and Architecture. For thousands of years, Ethiopia has been a major crossroads for the peoples of Africa, the Middle East, and the Mediterranean. The country's art and architecture, as diverse as its people, reflect the richness of its past. The art that has been most famous and most thoroughly studied is associated with the Tigre and Amhara of the highlands. Remains of palaces and temples, as well as stone sculpture and metal objects, date back 2,000 years or more.



The present town of Aksum still contains traces of the great Aksumite empire. The remains include large stone palaces built on raised platforms, royal tombs lined with carved stone, and tall stone monuments that mark the tombs of Aksum's ruling elite. Aksum's Christian traditions appear in its early churches.

Ethiopia's most famous churches, however, were built during and after the 1100s. These contain the oldest Ethiopian religious paintings still in existence. Over the centuries, Ethiopian priests and monks painted on the walls of churches, on wood panels, and in religious texts to inspire believers. They obviously interpreted their faith through Ethiopian eyes. Christian subjects are often depicted in Ethiopian settings and society.

The art of the Muslim peoples in eastern Ethiopia resembles that of their neighbors in Somalia and the Arabian peninsula. Among the main art forms are silver jewelry and multicolored baskets. The baskets serve a practical use as containers for milk, butter, and water. But in their woven designs and the way they are hung on walls, the baskets record the history, as well as the social and economic position, of their owners.

The Gamu people of the southern highlands are known for fine weaving. The women grow cotton and spin the thread, and the men weave the cloth. Perhaps the most distinctive artistic tradition in this area is the building of magnificent "basketry houses." These structures are shaped like cones, often reaching 20 to 30 feet high. Made of bamboo strips, they are covered with either barley or wheat straw or bamboo stems.

Since the mid-1900s a number of Ethiopian artists have gained international fame for their work. Among them are Gebre Kristos Desta,



Ethiopia

Afewerk Tekle, Skunder Boghossian, and Zerihun Yetmgeta. Often the artists combine Ethiopian with European and international traditions. (See also *Archaeology and Prehistory*; *Art*; *Christianity in Africa*; *Crafts*; *Ethnic Groups and Identity*; *Humans, Early*; *Languages*.)

Ethiopian Orthodox Church

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church is the largest church in ETHIOPIA, with some 29 million members. The neighboring country of ERITREA has another 1.8 million members. This Christian church—also known by the name *tewahido*, meaning “unity”—separated from the Roman Catholic Church in A.D. 451 after the Council of Chalcedon. The council had declared that Jesus Christ had both a divine and a human nature. However, the people who formed the Ethiopian church believed that Jesus Christ had a single nature that was a union of his divine and human natures.

Christianity may have existed in Ethiopia before A.D. 100 among Middle Eastern merchants. The religion spread in the 300s through the efforts of St. Frumentius of Tyre and his brother Aedisius. According to one historian, the two men were shipwrecked in Ethiopia and adopted by the king of AKSUM, the empire that occupied much of what is now Ethiopia. As they rose to positions of power, the brothers converted the court and many of the people to Christianity.

* **Byzantine Empire** Eastern Christian empire based in Constantinople (A.D. 476–1453)

In the 400s monks began arriving from the Byzantine Empire*, and they established a strong tradition that continues today. Ethiopian Christians have great respect for monks and nuns, and many take monastic vows toward the end of their lives.

* **patriarch** head of an Orthodox Christian church

During the 600s and 700s, the Ethiopian church was cut off from the rest of the Christian world by Muslim conquests in northeast Africa. The church remained a major force in Ethiopia for well over a thousand years, though the country’s Christian rulers and patriarchs* had to fight off several challenges from Muslims. The dominant position of *tewahido* ended in 1974, when rebel forces overthrew Emperor HAILE SELASSIE. The new government took the church’s land, replaced its patriarch, and made it an equal among other religions.

See
(color plate 5)
vol. 1.

Ethiopian Orthodox services and texts are mainly in the church’s ancient language, Ge’ez, although many texts have been translated into Amharic, the modern language of Ethiopia. Priests and deacons perform religious services. Both Saturday and Sunday are holy days, and over half the days in the year are fasting days when the faithful do not eat breakfast and live on vegetables and plant products. Each church is built around a replica of the Ark of the Covenant, reflecting *tewahido*’s belief that it is the true heir of Judaism.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church faces several challenges, including how to modernize its practices and how to be independent of the government. A major crisis occurred in 1993, when the government’s choice of patriarch was rejected by most Ethiopian Christians outside of the country. They then began organizing an independent *tewahido* church. (See also *Copts*, *Galawdewos*, *Islam*, *Religion and Ritual*.)

Ethnic Groups and Identity

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Ethnic groups are populations that feel connected by a complex mix of kinship, culture, history, and geography. Together, the people in an ethnic group shape their ethnic identity—the sense of belonging to the group and sharing in its culture. Ethnic identity in Africa is as richly diverse as its people, and for most Africans it plays a central role in politics and social life.

Ethnicity—a person’s ethnic identity—is not the same thing as race, religion, or language. It is, however, often defined by some or all of these factors. For many Africans, ethnic identity is highly complex and has multiple layers. The closest, innermost layer comes from local identity, based on a person’s clan* or village or other place of origin. The next level may be a somewhat broader idea of identity, perhaps a sense of being from a particular district.

Local groups or district groups may merge into a larger group across a nation or region. Although most of the members of this larger group do not know each other, they may see themselves as having more in common with each other than with people of other ethnic groups. Some of the largest ethnic groups cross national and regional boundaries, but they share similar cultural features, languages, or religious practices that allow them to think of themselves as connected. With all these layers, individual Africans may think of their ethnic identity in different ways. They may present that identity differently in various circumstances.

Africa’s tapestry of hundreds of ethnic groups is woven of many strands. Some strands can be traced back to the centuries before Europeans conquered Africa and ruled it as colonies. In this precolonial period, cultures emerged and mixed as peoples moved about and invaded each other’s lands. Other strands developed as a result of European colonial governments that looked for differences among groups and created ethnic categories that often had little meaning for the people themselves. Still other strands are closely linked to political and economic life in modern Africa, in which leaders depend on the backing of their ethnic groups and reward them with power and influence.

* **genocidal** referring to the deliberate and systematic killing of a particular ethnic, religious, or national group

Conflict among ethnic groups lies at the root of many civil wars in Africa—sometimes on a horrifying scale, such as the genocidal* violence that flared in RWANDA in the mid-1990s. Yet ethnic identity can inspire pride and hope and unite people in groups for effective political and social action. The challenge for many African countries is to balance the diversity of ethnicity with equal access to political power, wealth, opportunity, and the resources of the nation.

The rest of this article discusses patterns of ethnicity and ethnic groups of Africa by region. Following this article is the Ethnic Groups and Peoples chart, which summarizes information about 100 of the largest or most important ethnic groups in Africa.

NORTH AFRICA AND SUDAN

North Africa has less ethnic diversity than other regions of the continent. The majority of people are either BERBERS or ARABS, two groups that have grown more similar over the centuries. However, many other groups also make North Africa their home, and the population of SUDAN is especially diverse.

Ethnic Groups and Identity

The Harratin

For the Harratin (or Haratin) of northwestern Africa, ethnic identity is bound up with skin color and slavery. The Harratin are dark-skinned people whose ancestors were probably a mix of Berbers and black Africans. They were forced into slavery long ago, sometimes serving in armies or as royal secretaries or officials. Though no longer slaves, the Harratin continue to have difficult lives. Treated as inferiors by lighter-skinned Arabs and Berbers, they can find work only as servants and laborers. In some places, people use the word harratin as a racist slur.

* **autonomy** independent self-government

Berbers and Arabs. The Berbers were the ancient inhabitants of North Africa. They lived there thousands of years ago, when adventurous traders and settlers arrived from Phoenicia, a land at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. Later, the Romans referred to the Berbers as Numidians.

Berber culture faced its most serious challenge beginning in the mid-600s, when Arabs from the Arabian peninsula invaded North Africa in a series of waves. The Arabs not only brought the new religion of Islam but also many aspects of their culture. The Berbers resisted the onslaught at first, but they eventually converted to Islam. Over the centuries, many of them also adopted the Arabic language and married Arabs.

Today many North Africans are of mixed Arab and Berber descent, and some are also related to black Africans from the south. Language is now the main distinguishing factor between Arabs and Berbers. People who speak Arabic consider themselves Arabs. Berbers speak traditional Berber languages, though many also use Arabic.

Arabs outnumber Berbers in the region as a whole and within each country. Berbers live in a few oases in western EGYPT and LIBYA but are more numerous in ALGERIA and MOROCCO. Despite its great diversity, the Arab population of North Africa is unified to some extent by shared language, religion, and culture. Berbers are divided into a number of smaller ethnic groups. Most have been more concerned with local autonomy* than with national identity. Berber groups include the Rif, the Kabyle, and the desert-dwelling TUAREG.

Other Groups and Influences. After the Arab conquest, North Africa fell to other foreign powers. Spanish Muslims settled in TUNISIA between the 1200s and 1500s. Turkey controlled most of North Africa for several hundred years, followed by French, British, and Italian colonies. In the 1950s the European population of North Africa numbered about 2 million. By the early 1960s, the success of independence movements in the various colonies had caused most Europeans to leave. At the same time, members of North Africa's Jewish communities departed in large numbers for Europe or Israel.

Original ethnic groups such as the Nubians and Beja remain. In ancient times, the Egyptians knew the land of NUBIA as a source of rich gold mines. Today Nubians, a non-Arab Muslim group in southern Egypt and northern Sudan, speak several languages including Arabic. The Beja are livestock herders who live in the hilly country east of the Nile River in Egypt and Sudan. They have adopted Islam and claim Arab ancestry.

Sudan is a diverse and divided country. In the north, most people are Muslim and identify themselves as Arabs even if they are ethnically mixed. In the south, the majority of people are black Africans who follow either traditional religions or Christianity. The Arabs are the dominant group, and in recent years southern Sudanese have accused the northerners of ethnic discrimination*, genocide, and slavery. The country's largest non-Arab population group is probably the Dinka, who live along the southern Nile. Sudan has identified about 20 major ethnic groups and more than 100 languages or dialects.

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

Ethnic Groups and Identity



The Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania speak languages of the Maa family. They also share various customs, such as clothing styles and distinctive bead decorations.

WESTERN AFRICA

Ethnicity has always been an important element in the way people identify themselves. In western Africa, however, European colonial powers made ethnic categories more rigid than they had been before. The colonial authorities imposed strict definitions on western Africa's complex and changeable social structures. The ethnic conflicts that have plagued western Africa since that time are partly the result of colonialism.

Ethnic Patterns in the Past. Before conquest by Europeans, western Africa's ethnic groups were rarely separate or self-contained. Rather, they belonged to chains or networks of societies with many shifting connections. Even so, Arab geographers made distinctions between Arab and African regions, which they called white countries and black countries. Other distinctions existed as well. People in various environments lived differently: nomadic herders roamed the deserts, and farmers planted crops in the savanna* and forests. Meanwhile, merchants, traders, and laborers filled the cities. But even these boundaries between people were blurred. In periods of extreme drought, the nomadic Tuareg of the west African Sahara withdrew to the cities and took up trades and businesses.

Trade, war, and politics brought ethnic groups into contact and even some forms of unity. As states rose to power and expanded their territory, they created new forms of ethnic identity. For example, when the

* savanna tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth



Ethnic Groups and Identity

Nostalgia for the Village

Central Africans view the “village home” as the source of ethnic identity. The village home usually means a rural area governed by a chief or the head of a clan. It represents purity, order, and a meaningful life. But part of its appeal is nostalgia for the past. Today, many people have never known village life, and ethnic identity develops in cities through political parties, churches, and cultural associations. Still, traditional costumes, weapons, and leaders add emotion to urban festivals and political demonstrations by calling up images of the ideal village.

Nupe kingdom emerged along the banks of the Niger River after about 1500, the ethnic group and the state were identical. A Nupe was anyone considered a subject by the Nupe ruler. On the fringes of such states—but still under the state’s influence—people lived in societies based on local kinship groups. Over the course of their histories, these societies might be known by several ethnic names as they passed from local organization to state control and back again when the state lost power.

When France and Great Britain explored and colonized western Africa, their missionaries, administrators, and social scientists looked for fixed ethnic categories. They oversimplified the region’s complex ethnicity. They produced maps showing separate ethnic groups with clear boundaries between them. These ethnic categories hardened in place as the colonizers identified certain Africans as leaders and developed relationships with them.

This way of regarding ethnic groups suited the French and British strategy of “divide and rule.” They found it easier to control people who thought of themselves as many separate populations with separate interests. Based on the notion that some groups were racially or ethnically superior to others, the colonial powers gave favored groups some degree of self-rule or even control over other groups. In what is now NIGERIA, for example, the British regarded the FULANI as more advanced than other peoples and allowed them to be governed by their own institutions and chiefs.

Ethnicity Today. The many ethnic conflicts that occur today in western Africa do not represent a return of ancient hostilities in the absence of colonialism. Rather, the conflicts are the legacy of the colonial era, which invented artificial categories, broke up relations among societies, and fostered resentment and competition among ethnic groups. In countries such as BÉNIN and IVORY COAST, governments continue to divide and rule their citizens by reinforcing the separations between ethnic groups. Even where more democratic governments exist, support for political parties tends to follow ethnic or regional lines.

Colonization was not just a temporary phase. It left a lasting mark on Africa and changed relations between ethnic groups. Western Africa did not return to its precolonial state after independence. Civil wars and ethnic and border conflicts in SENEGAL, MAURITANIA, LIBERIA, GUINEA, MALI, and NIGER may be signs that the region has entered into a period of redefining itself. The states and borders that the colonial powers put in place are weakening as new social structures and new relations among ethnic groups come into existence.

EASTERN AFRICA

Like western Africa, eastern Africa today shows the political and social effects of colonial rule, which imposed artificial divisions on ethnic groups. The colonial powers divided the peoples of UGANDA, KENYA, and TANZANIA into separate “tribes,” usually ignoring the complex relations of marriage and trade between regions and peoples. The word *tribalism* refers to this way of thinking of society along ethnic lines. Many modern scholars have rejected the terms *tribe* and *tribalism* because of their



Ethnic Groups and Identity

connection with these false and rigid definitions. However, traces of colonial practices remain. People in eastern Africa sometimes use the concept of tribalism to explain differences and conflicts among themselves, even when the differences have more to do with money, land, and resources than with customs or culture.

Meanings of Ethnicity. Whether imposed from outside or claimed as one's own, ethnicity divides people into categories. Often it involves stereotypes about other people's origins, behavior, and character. It may even suggest that some groups are more "human" than others. The names of some groups indicate that they view themselves as special. Both the Nuer and the Dinka of southern Sudan call themselves by names that mean "people." The general term for many of the peoples of eastern Africa is BANTU, which is a family of languages but also means "people."

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

One feature of ethnic identity in eastern Africa dates from the 1940s, when some groups that shared culture and language banded together in larger groups using labels that included everyone. In Kenya, for example, the Nandi, Turkana, and Pokot peoples allied themselves under the name Kalenjin. Individuals use the name of their small group locally, but in national or political matters they often identify with the more influential Kalenjin—the group to which Kenya's president, Daniel arap Moi, belongs.

Modern Ethnic Relationships. As in other parts of Africa, ethnic identity in eastern Africa has been changing. More people have gone to live and work in the cities, where different ethnic groups intermarry, share cultures, and create new styles. Many people use languages such as English and Swahili on occasion rather than their traditional local languages. Political events have also created upheavals in ethnic identity. To counter these trends, ethnic leaders often launch cultural revival movements or make ethnic awareness a political goal.

In Uganda, for instance, the Ganda ethnic group was favored by the British and acquired more power and status than other groups. After Uganda gained independence in 1962, two political parties emerged. One represented the Ganda, while the second had members from many of the country's other ethnic groups. The two parties formed an alliance, but within a few years a power struggle shattered the alliance, and the party of the Ganda king was banned. The country became deeply divided along lines that were partly ethnic: Ganda versus non-Ganda, southerners versus northerners, speakers of Bantu versus speakers of Nilotic languages. During the 1970s Ugandan leader Idi AMIN DADA took advantage of these sharp divisions by explaining his government's failures as the treachery of one ethnic group after another.

Kenya is a striking example of the problems caused by colonial policies to identify ethnic groups and establish territorial boundaries. The political border that the British created between Kenya and Uganda cuts across ethnic groups linked by language, culture, and history. Kenya's borders with Tanzania, ETHIOPIA, Sudan, and SOMALIA also disregarded ethnic relationships. As a result, artificial differences arose between related peoples.



Ethnic Groups and Identity

Tsonga or Zulu?

Ethnic identity can be related to gender, and sometimes men and women claim different identities. In one southern African community with Tsonga and Zulu ties, women are likely to consider themselves Tsonga and to use the Tsonga language because the position of women is better in Tsonga society than among the Zulu. However, more men in this community identify themselves as Zulu, a culture that prizes masculinity and warriors. Zulu culture also offers men better treatment as migrant workers and some advantages over women at home.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Tanzania has taken a different approach to ethnicity. The government encourages the use of SWAHILI, the coastal language, as the national tongue, and people often identify themselves as belonging to several ethnic groups. But although Tanzania's ethnic divisions are not as deep as those of Uganda and Kenya, economic tensions tend to highlight small differences. For example, the Chaga, who live in the foothills of Mount Kilimanjaro, have enjoyed success in farming and business. They have faced envy and discrimination from neighboring groups, even though they are very similar to them ethnically.

CENTRAL AFRICA

Colonial administrators of central Africa divided the region into units and considered each unit home to a specific "tribe" with a leadership structure, a unique culture, and centuries of tradition. This practice was no more accurate or effective in central Africa than in other regions. It ignored the flexible, changeable, and evolving nature of ethnic identity. Christian missionaries reinforced this colonial concept as they chose local languages for education and Bible translation and created a structure for the churches' own administrative units. Research in the late 1900s showed that many ethnic names of this region came from colonial practices rather than indigenous* African tradition.

Even after independence, some central African politicians and intellectuals have continued to reinforce the colonial concept of tribes, which favors certain individuals and groups. However, ethnic identity can also benefit less favored groups by promoting a sense of unity and pride and giving them political influence. Politicians and ethnic leaders with varying interests have tried various approaches, including sponsoring ethnic festivals and associations, working to define the histories and folklore of ethnic groups, and calling for the return of traditional leadership.

Multiethnic Societies. Before the colonial era, most African states were multiethnic, that is, they usually had one dominant ethnic group, several other groups, several languages, and a shared culture. The colonial powers remolded ethnicity into a hierarchical* structure of separate geographical units, each governed by a traditional ruler who served as a colonial official. Today, however, everyday life is multiethnic again, especially in towns but increasingly in rural areas as well.

Although many associations are organized along ethnic lines and designed to promote ethnic identification, numerous recreational, sports, and religious organizations resemble society in general and are multiethnic. In them, individuals learn to operate in the wider society. World religions such as Islam and Christianity are perhaps the least ethnically divided institutions in central Africa. Many churches offer services or rituals in more than one language.

Many of the towns of central Africa began as settlements created by colonial authorities to meet the needs of government and industry. The towns have been laboratories of multiethnic social life. They have attracted migrants of many ethnic backgrounds who speak a variety of languages. Townspeople learn to communicate in a common language,

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

Ethnic Groups and Identity

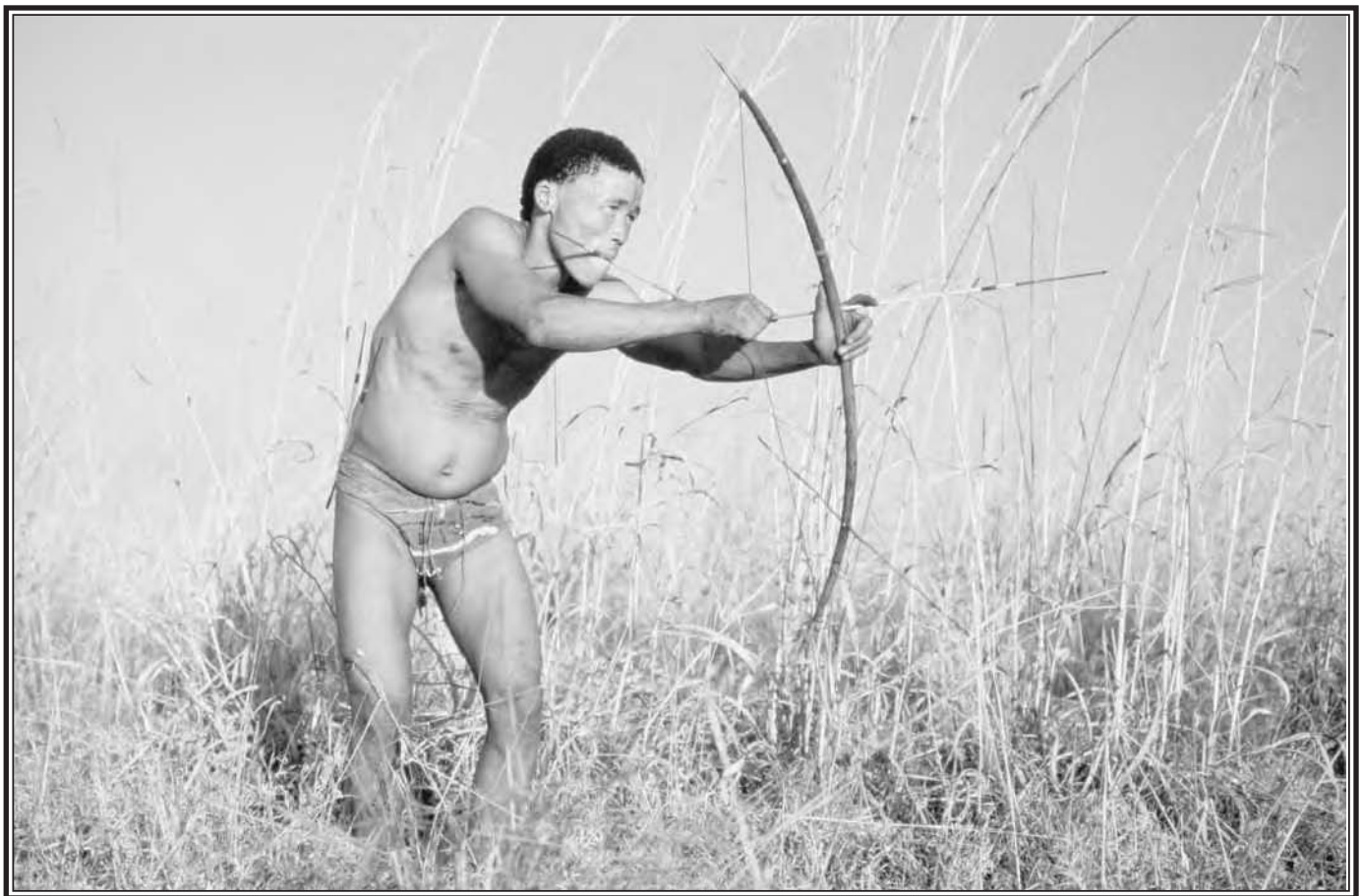
and they share the common experiences of urban life. But many people have complex ties to rural cultures as well.

The region, rather than the individual ethnic group, also shapes politics in central Africa. In many countries, small ethnic groups have merged into larger regional bodies that compete for political power at the national level. In ZAMBIA this process has given rise to “mega-ethnic groups” such as the Bemba. This name once referred to only one of the many ethnic groups in northeastern Zambia. Today, however, it refers to a cluster of groups in northern Zambia that has adopted Bemba as a shared language. The trend toward mega-ethnic groups appears to be continuing.

Ethnicity and Conflict. A society divided into different ethnic groups does not necessarily produce equal groups with the same amounts of power and status. Some groups may be seen as older, larger, richer, or more advanced than others. Ethnic groups tend to compete, striving to improve their positions. When they fail, individuals may try to move into more favored groups by changing their dress, language, or name.

Many Central Africans regard ethnicity as the most important factor in politics, and they tend to view any disturbance as an ethnic conflict.

Armed with a bow and arrow, a Khoisan man hunts in the Kalahari region of Namibia. Since the country's independence, several ethnic groups have asked for the return of their ancestral lands.





Ethnic Groups and Identity

Ethnic labels allow complex social, economic, and political issues to be reduced to a simple case of “us against them.” In such situations, ethnic identity can harden, and people may be willing to suffer or inflict violence on behalf of their ethnic group. In many states in this region, poverty and political disorder have been regarded as ethnic conflicts. This viewpoint has led to bitter confrontations and, in some cases, to large-scale violence. In Rwanda the dominant Hutu waged a gruesome genocidal campaign of violence against the minority Tutsi in the mid-1990s. This tragedy continues to be felt throughout the region.

SOUTHERN AFRICA

For many years, ethnic identity in southern Africa was shaped by APARTHEID, the policy of racial segregation that the white government of SOUTH AFRICA adopted to maintain control over the indigenous population. The government used ethnicity to justify its creation of ethnic “homelands” for black people. Many people who opposed apartheid and supported African nationalism* rejected this approach as racist. To them, ethnicity was created entirely by the racist state to support its aims—property and profit for white people based on the cheap labor and obedience of black people.

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one’s country

Since the end of apartheid in the 1990s, South Africa has had a continuing debate about ethnic identity. Some people believe that as the racist structure of South Africa has been dismantled, more authentic forms of ethnicity have emerged. Others still feel that ethnicity is an expression of earlier racist policies and only serves the interests of the ruling class—whether black or white. According to this view, British and Dutch colonists used ethnicity to make black Africans easier to divide, control, and put to work in diamond mines and other white-owned industries. In addition, tribal identities kept people obedient to tribal leaders who were either appointed or influenced by the colonial powers. However, culture is a powerful force, and the fact that ethnic identity was largely invented does not make it a less real part of society.

The difficulty of defining ethnicity in southern Africa is illustrated by the ZULU. The Zulu state formed in the mid-1800s when many independent chiefdoms that shared culture and languages came under the rule of the Zulu king. Even when the Zulu kingdom united against the British, however, regional loyalties remained important, and most subjects of the state did not regard themselves as Zulu. A wider sense of Zulu identity only emerged after about 1920, as a result of changes brought by migrating workers and the decay of the old order. That identity received official recognition through the policy of apartheid when the South African government created a territory called KwaZulu as the Zulu “homeland.” Since the end of apartheid, some Zulu politicians continue to emphasize the rich Zulu history and to campaign for a self-governing Zulu region or even a fully independent state.

Ethnic identity tends to emerge most strongly when different groups interact and compete for power or resources. In southern Africa during colonial times, many indigenous groups were united in their opposition to foreign rule and tended to overlook their own differences. After independence, however, ethnic distinctions reappeared as groups struggled

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

for the power once held by colonial administrations. In the same way, ZIMBABWE's two major ethnic groups, the SHONA and the NDEBELE, worked together to defeat the white-dominated government and to win independence. Afterward they came into conflict.

The question of how to balance ethnic and national identity will likely remain a central issue of political life throughout the African continent. In NAMIBIA, for example, the years since independence have brought a number of ethnic claims for the recognition of rights to ancestral lands or kingdoms as well as a continuing public debate about how to reconcile these claims with national unity. (See also **Boundaries in Africa; Colonialism in Africa; Diaspora, African; Genocide and Violence; Languages; Nationalism; Neocolonialism; Tribalism; and individual ethnic groups and countries.**)

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

There are probably at least a 1,500 ethnic groups in Africa. They vary in size, in ways of making a living, in their forms of government, in their kinds of family life, and in their religions. Yet all are African and as such are different from other peoples of the world.

The following list contains the usually accepted names of 100 ethnic groups of the continent. Almost all shown here number over a million people; a few others are included because of their historical importance and interest. All are units of the modern nations of Africa, which are discussed in separate articles in this encyclopedia.

A few groups in the following list have their own entries in the encyclopedia, which provide additional details.

The first column gives the common name (there are many variants); the second gives the countries in which most of these people live; the third gives the language family and subgroup (see entry on LANGUAGES) and approximate population figures; the last column gives a few of the main features of the people concerned. If the encyclopedia has an entry on the group, it is indicated here as "See Asante."

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
AFAR (Dankali, Danakil)	Djibouti	Afroasiatic/Cushitic <i>1 million</i>	Camel herders; famous warriors; Muslims
AKAN	Ghana and Ivory Coast	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>10 million</i>	Farmers and traders; made up of about 12 kingdoms; economy based on gold, cocoa, bauxite, timber; Asante is the largest group
AMHARA	Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic <i>Over 20 million</i>	See AMHARA
ARABS	North and Northeast Africa	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic <i>Many millions</i>	See ARABS IN AFRICA

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Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
ASANTE (Ashanti)	Ghana	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>3 million</i>	See ASANTE
AZANDE (Niam-Niam)	Sudan and Central African Republic	Niger-Congo/ Adamawa-Ubangi <i>1 million</i>	Village farmers; several kingdoms based on 1800s conquest of neighbors; famed for use of witchcraft
BAGGARA	Sudan	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic <i>1 million</i>	Herders and cotton farmers; main Arab cluster of Sudan; at war with southern Sudan peoples
BAMBARA (Bamana)	Mali	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>5 million</i>	See BAMBARA
BASOTHO	Lesotho and S. Africa	Niger-Congo/S. Bantu <i>8 million</i>	See SOTHO
BAULE	Ivory Coast	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>2 million</i>	Cocoa farmers; main group of Ivory Coast; known for art
BEDOUIN	Countries of the Sahara desert	Afro-asiatic/Semitic <i>Several million</i>	Arabs in Sahara; includes most inhabitants of Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt; general name for many camel herding groups who conquered northern Africa in 600s;
BEMBA	Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Village farmers and mine workers; once a powerful kingdom, weakened today
BERBERS	Northwest Africa & Sahara	Afro-Asiatic/Berber <i>20 million</i>	See BERBERS
CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE	South Africa	Afrikaans (dialect of Dutch)	See CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE
CHAGA (Chagga)	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu <i>2 million</i>	Irrigation coffee farmers on Mt. Kilimanjaro; many chiefdoms
CHEWA (Cewa, Maravi)	Malawi and Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Main group of Malawi mixed farmers; Christian since 1800s
CHOKWE (Cokwe)	Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>1 million</i>	Farmers, traders, and miners
COMORIANS (Ngazija)	Comoro Islands	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu; <i>0.5 million</i>	Fishermen, farmers, and traders; one of clusters of Swahili peoples COPTS Egypt See COPTS

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
CREOLES	Cape Verde, Guinea Bissau, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Réunion Krio, Crioulu (dialects of Portuguese French)		See CREOLES
DINKA	Sudan	Nilo-Saharan/Eastern Sudanic formerly <i>2 million</i>	Cattle herders of southern Sudan; at war with Baggara Arabs of northern Sudan
DOGON	Mali	Niger-Congo/Voltaic <i>.5 million</i>	Mountain farmers; famed for their traditional religion and art
DYULA (Diula)	Mali, Senegal, and Guinea	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>3 million</i>	Long-distance traders in western Africa; Muslims
EDO (Bini)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>Over 1 million</i>	People of ancient and powerful kingdom of Bénin, 1400s–1600s; defeated by British in 1897; famed for art
EWE	Togo, Bénin, and Ghana	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>3 million</i>	Farmers and fishermen; many kingdoms; migrated from Nigeria in 1200s
FANG (Pahouin)	Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Cameroon	Niger-Congo/Bantu <i>2 million</i>	Cluster of farming groups along Atlantic coast; famed for art
FANTI (Fante)	Ghana	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>Over 1 million</i>	Cluster of farming, fishing, and trading groups along coastal Ghana
FON (Dahomeans)	Bénin and Togo	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>3 million</i>	Main group of former kingdom of Dahomey, former slave and palm oil traders
FULANI (Peul, Fulbe)	Nigeria, Cameroon, and Burkina Faso	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic <i>Over 25 million</i>	See FULANI
GANDA (also BaGanda, MaGanda)	Uganda	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>5 million</i>	Plantain and coffee farmers; 1300s kingdom of Buganda; today main group of Uganda and most powerful of Great Lakes region
GIKUYU (Kikuyu)	Kenya	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu <i>6 million</i>	See GIKUYU
GURAGE	Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic <i>3 million</i>	Mixed farmers; once-powerful kingdoms west of Lake Victoria

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
HA	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>1 million</i>	Today second most important group in Ethiopia
HAUSA	Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Bénin	Afro-Asiatic/Chadic <i>40 million</i>	See HAUSA
HAYA	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>2 million</i>	Farmers west of Lake Victoria; several once-powerful kingdoms abolished in 1962
HEHE	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>1 million</i>	Farmers and cattle keepers; powerful kingdom in 1800s
HERERO	Namibia	Niger-Congo/ Southwestern Bantu <i>100,000</i>	See HERERO
IBIBIO	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>5 million</i>	Forest farmers, traders, and oil-workers in Niger Delta
IGBO (Ibo)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>25 million</i>	See IGBO
IJO (Ijaw, Kalabari)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>0.6 million</i>	Fishermen, traders, and oil-workers in Niger Delta
KALENJIN	Kenya	Nilo-Saharan/ Eastern Sudanic <i>3 million</i>	Large cluster of farming and herding groups of Rift Valley, including Maasai
KAMBA (also WaKamba, MKamba)	Kenya	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu <i>4 million</i>	Mixed farmers; former ivory traders
KANURI	Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon	Nilo-Saharan/Saharan <i>6 million</i>	Farmers and herders of Lake Chad region; powerful kingdom from 800s until today; Muslims
KHOISAN	Namibia, South Africa, and Botswana	Click	See KHOISAN
KIMBUNDU	Angola	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>Over 3 million</i>	Farmers and traders
KONGO	Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of the Congo	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>6 million</i>	See KONGO

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
KPELLE	Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>2 million</i>	Rice farmers; largest group of Liberia
LOZI (Rotse)	Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>0.7 million</i>	Herders and farmers; core of powerful Barotse kingdom from 1800s until today
LUBA	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>5 million</i>	Powerful kingdom from 1700s to 1900s; Major group of Congo; known for art
LUHYA (Luhia)	Kenya	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Cluster of farming groups of western Kenya
LUNDA (Aluund)	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, and Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>4 million</i>	Cluster of farming and trading peoples; kingdoms linked under Lunda empire, 1500s to 1700s
LUO (Jaluo)	Kenya	Nilo-Saharan/Eastern Sudanic	Farmers and urban workers of western Kenya
MAASAI (Masai)	Kenya and Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Eastern Sudanic	See MAASAI
MAKUA	Mozambique, Tanzania, and Malawi	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>7 million</i>	Farmers closely related to neighboring Makonde; famed wood carvers
MALAGASY	Madagascar	Malayo-Polynesian /Malagasy	Cluster of some 20 peoples; see MADAGASCAR
MANDE (Mandingo)	Mali, Guinea, and Senegal	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>20 million</i>	Cluster of peoples in West Africa, originally from upper Niger river
MANGBETU	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Nilo-Saharan/Central Sudanic <i>1 million</i>	Cluster of farming kingdoms and chiefdoms; renowned wood and metal artists
MBUNDU (Ovimbundu)	Angola	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>4 million</i>	Mixed farmers; largest group of southern Angola
MENDE	Sierra Leone	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>3 million</i>	Rice farmers; many chiefdoms; today engaged in civil war
MERINA (Hova)	Madagascar	Malayo-Polynesian/ Malagasy <i>4 million</i>	Central group of Madagascar; powerful kingdom that ruled over most of island, 1817-1895
MOSSI (Moose)	Burkina Faso	Niger-Congo/Voltaic <i>7 million</i>	See MOSSI

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
NDEBELE (Matabele)	Zimbabwe and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>2 million</i>	See NDEBELE
NUBA	Sudan	Kordofanian <i>0.2 million</i>	People of Nuba mountains of southwest Sudan; victims of war- fare by Baggara Arabs
NUBIANS	Sudan	Nilo-Saharan/ Eastern Sudanic <i>1 million</i>	Most northern non-Arab group of Nile Valley
NUER	Sudan	Nilo-Saharan/ Eastern Sudanic <i>1 million</i>	Cattle herders; today in conflict with Baggara Arabs
NYAMWEZI	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Farmers; ivory traders during 1800s
NYANJA (Nyasa)	Malawi and Mozambique	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>4 million</i>	Mixed farmers; largest group of southern Malawi
NYORO	Uganda	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>2 million</i>	Powerful kingdom of central Uganda from 1400s until 1900
OROMO (Galla)	Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia	Afro-Asiatic/South Cushitic <i>15 million</i>	Cluster of farmers and herders of southern Ethiopia
PYGMIES	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Gabon, and Cameroon	Various <i>0.2 million</i>	See PYGMIES
RUNDI	Burundi	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>6 million</i>	Peoples of Burundi, divided into Hutu and Tutsi; see BURUNDI
RWANDA (Ruanda)	Rwanda	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu <i>6 million</i>	Peoples of Ruanda, divided into Hutu and Tutsi; see RWANDA
SARA	Chad	Nilo-Saharan/ Central Sudanic <i>2 million</i>	Farmers and traders; main people of Chad
SENUFO	Mali and Ivory Coast	Niger-Congo/Voltaic <i>4 million</i>	Farmers, famed for art
SHONA	Zimbabwe	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>8 million</i>	See SHONA

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
SIDAMO	Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/ Central Cushitic <i>4 million</i>	Cluster of farming peoples of southwest Ethiopia
SOMALI	Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya	Afro-Asiatic/ Eastern Cushitic <i>15 million</i>	Herders; main peoples of Somalia, divided into many hostile clans and confederations
SONGHAI (Songrai)	Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso	Nilo-Saharan/Songhai <i>3 million</i>	Farmers of Niger valley; descendants of powerful kingdom of the 1400s–1500s; Muslims
SONINKE (Sarakole)	Mali and Senegal	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>2 million</i>	Farmers, descendants of medieval empire known as Ghana; Muslims
SOTHO (Basotho)	Lesotho and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>8 million</i>	Farmers and mine workers in South Africa; people of Lesotho kingdom
SUKUMA	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Mixed farmers
SUSU	Guinea and Guinea-Bissau	Niger-Congo/Mande <i>2 million</i>	Farmers; main people of Guinea; Muslims
SWAHILI	Kenya and Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu <i>0.3 million</i>	See SWAHILI
SWAZI	Swaziland and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Farmers and mine workers in South Africa; powerful kingdom since 1700s
TEMNE	Sierra Leone and Guinea	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic <i>2 million</i>	Rice farmers
THONGA (Tsonga)	South Africa and Mozambique	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>5 million</i>	Farmers and herders; living with Shangaan immigrants from Zululand, South Africa
TIGRE	Eritrea and Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic <i>4 million</i>	Main people of Eritrea; language is Tigrinya
TIV (Munshi)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Benue-Congo <i>4 million</i>	Farmers; main group of east-central Nigeria
TONGA	Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>1 million</i>	Farmers and workers in copper mines

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
TSWANA	Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>7 million</i>	Main people of Botswana; formerly several kingdoms
TUAREG	Mali and Niger	Afro-Asiatic/Berber <i>1 million</i>	See TUAREG
TUKULOR	Senegal and Mauritania	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic <i>2 million</i>	Farmers and herders; Muslims
TUMBUKA	Zambia and Malawi	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>3 million</i>	Mixed farmers
VENDA	South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>1 million</i>	Farmers of northern Transvaal
WOLOF (Jolof)	Senegal and Gambia	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic <i>4 million</i>	See WOLOF
XHOSA (Xosa)	South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>8 million</i>	See XHOSA
YAO	Tanzania, Mozambique, and Malawi	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu <i>2 million</i>	Farmers; former traders of slaves and ivory; Muslims
YORUBA (Nago)	Nigeria and Bénin	Niger-Congo/Kwa <i>25 million</i>	See YORUBA
ZULU	South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu <i>10 million</i>	See ZULU

EUROPEAN COLONIAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

See *Colonialism in Africa*

European Communities

Millions of Europeans live in communities scattered throughout Africa. Many of these communities date from the early decades of colonialism. In general, the numbers of European settlers in Africa gradually increased during the colonial period and then fell immediately after the colonies became independent nations. The population of SOUTH AFRICA includes more than 5 million Europeans, the largest community of Europeans in Africa.



European Communities

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Early Settlements. Europeans first began to explore the coast of sub-Saharan* Africa during the 1400s. They were seeking a route around the continent to Asia, where they could obtain spices and other valuable items. In 1482 the Portuguese built a fortress along the Gold Coast in present-day GHANA. Over the next 100 years, they established forts and trading posts all along the west and east coasts of Africa. Meanwhile, in the mid-1500s the English and French explored the west coast of Africa and settled traders there. By 1652 the Dutch had gained control of the Gold Coast and the Cape of Good Hope. Both of these regions became centers for European settlement.

By the 1800s groups of French and British merchants were living in towns on the coast of West Africa to manage their trading operations. At first, tropical diseases such as malaria and sleeping sickness prevented Europeans from settling in the interior. Only after the discovery in 1850 of quinine—a drug that prevents malaria infection—could they move inland.

The scramble for African territories resulted in disputes among the European nations. To resolve these conflicts, various European powers met in Berlin in 1884 and into 1885 and divided Africa among themselves. The colonial era had formally begun.

Settlement Patterns. By the early 1900s, Europeans had lived in Africa, particularly along the coasts, for centuries. In South Africa people of Dutch descent known as Afrikaners had migrated north into the interior and the Portuguese colony of ANGOLA. Angola also attracted poor Portuguese peasants who could make a better living there than at home. MOZAMBIQUE, Portugal's more industrialized colony, welcomed skilled workers from Europe. In East Africa, Germans controlled the region of present-day TANZANIA, and the British held KENYA and UGANDA. Few Europeans lived in FRENCH WEST AFRICA, which stretched all the way from IVORY COAST to ALGERIA.

South Africa's mild climate and stable economy continued to attract European settlers through the mid-1900s. In the 1960s and 1970s, many colonies in other parts of Africa gained their independence, and the new nations offered little security for Europeans. As a result, large numbers of Europeans migrated to southern Africa from the rest of the continent.

In North Africa groups of French colonists settled throughout the region, particularly in ALGERIA, TUNISIA, and MOROCCO. Spanish colonists also moved to Morocco, and Italians settled in LIBYA and Tunisia. EGYPT received immigrants from Greece and Britain as well as France and Italy. The majority of these Europeans lived in cities and towns, although some became involved in agriculture in rural areas. As independence movements spread across the region in the 1950s and 1960s, most of the settlers departed, leaving only small groups of Europeans behind.

Occupations and Lifestyle. Europeans came to Africa in three phases. The first arrivals were traders and missionaries, followed by colonial administrators, and finally by skilled workers, technicians, and farmers.

Areas such as the Copperbelt (in present-day ZAMBIA and CONGO, KINSHASA) drew miners, technicians, and engineers. European settlers who came as farmers faced special challenges in Africa. They tended to



European Communities

locate in the highlands of South Africa, ZIMBABWE, Angola, Congo, Kenya, or present-day Tanzania. Although cattle raising was possible in all of these areas, only southern Africa offered fertile soils and sufficient rainfall for large-scale farming. Later, the development of improved crop varieties and hardier livestock made farming more profitable for the settlers. Europeans also settled in the Indian Ocean islands of MADAGASCAR, RÉUNION, MAURITIUS, and the SEYCHELLES.

Throughout the colonial period, Europeans could obtain education, training, and skilled jobs. They ran the railroads, mines, and factories. They lived in segregated neighborhoods, joined clubs restricted to Europeans, and sent their children to all-white schools. Most Europeans had little social contact with Africans.

Today, individuals of European background who live in Africa fall into two categories: (1) those who cannot leave, either for financial or other reasons, and (2) those who choose to be there. People in the first category tend to follow colonial social patterns, whereas many in the second category have adapted to the culture and society of modern Africa. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Indian Communities, Land Ownership, Missions and Missionaries, West African Trading Settlements.*)

EXPLORATION

See *Travel and Exploration*

EVOLUTION

See *Humans, Early*

Family

Family plays a central role in African society. It shapes such daily experiences as how and where individuals live, how they interact with the people around them, and even, in some cases, whom they marry. It can determine a person's political identity and the way money and property are transferred. In rural areas, the family typically remains the basic unit of agricultural production.

However, no single type of family exists in Africa. Societies have defined family in many different ways, and many bear little resemblance to the Western idea of the nuclear family*. Furthermore, throughout the continent, traditional family patterns are changing. Colonialism, capitalism*, the growth of cities, exposure to Western culture, and increasing opportunities for women are some of the factors that are affecting the shape of family life.

* **nuclear family** family unit consisting of a man, a woman, and their children

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

FAMILY STRUCTURE

Each of the many family systems in Africa can be defined in terms of two broad kinds of relationships. Relationships of descent are genealogical—that is, based on the connections between generations. Relationships of affinity are marital—based on marriage. The interweaving of these relationships creates the family that an individual sees every day, as well as the wider network of kinship that surrounds each person.

Relationships of Descent. Everyone is part of some sort of descent system, either patrilineal, matrilineal, or both. In patrilineal systems, property and political power pass through the male side of the family; the female side determines descent in matrilineal systems. In these relationships, senior generations have more power or status than junior ones. Younger people are expected to show respect toward older family members. In the past, this power could take the form of ownership. Among some peoples in the Congo Basin, for example, a man could sell his sister's child into slavery.

Relationships of Affinity. MARRIAGE SYSTEMS in Africa are highly diverse. In sub-Saharan* Africa, some pairings of men and women are temporary, others permanent. Depending on the culture, a couple may live in the husband's home or the wife's home. Among some groups, such as the ASANTE, each spouse continues to live in the home in which he or she was born. Children may stay with their parents until they marry, or they may spend part of their adolescence in the home of another relative. In some cultures, young people leave their families at puberty to live in villages of adolescents.

African marriage can be polygynous—that is, a man may have more than one wife. In practice, though, only the senior or wealthy individuals in a society have been able to have multiple wives. When polygyny occurs, the family unit is based on mothers. Each wife has her own house and property that are generally transferred to her own children. The mother and child, rather than the husband and wife, thus form the basis of family and kinship in such communities. Christian marriages in Africa, as elsewhere, are generally monogamous, with a man having only one wife.

In some African societies, nuclear families are contained within larger social groups that may include kinfolk, neighbors, people of the same age or gender, and others. The nuclear family does not always have its own property or decide what tasks its members will perform. Rather, relationships between husbands and wives and between parents and children often unfold within larger domestic units called households, which may consist of joint or extended families.

Households. In a household community, several generations and several nuclear families live and work together. In joint family households, all members live together in a single large homestead or compound. In extended family households, the nuclear families within the household each live in separate compounds. A joint or extended family is under

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert



Family

Substituting Siblings

In some traditional African societies, siblings are considered to have interchangeable roles in the family structure. In such societies, the words for “father” and “father’s brother” and for “mother” and “mother’s sister” may be the same. Siblings may be expected to substitute for one another in certain social relations or duties. For example, if a wife dies early or bears no children, her sister may replace her. And if a husband dies, his brother is expected to father his widow’s children.

the authority of its senior member, typically a grandfather or great-grand-father. Such families may be patrilineal or matrilineal.

Most members of a joint or extended family household are born and raised within it or marry into it. Some, however, such as adopted children or adults, may be unrelated to the others. In sub-Saharan Africa, distant relatives are sometimes invited to settle with a household, but they usually have lower status than their hosts. A household might also include servants or, in the past, slaves.

The household functions as an economic as well as a family unit. It can be described in material terms—for example, by acres of land, number of buildings, or certain tasks performed by certain members. A family compound among the Tswana of Botswana might include the huts and grain sheds of a man and his wife (or wives) and children, an unmarried brother, and an elderly mother. In rural areas, household members work together to produce food and other goods; in a town or city, the members might work to pay rent and buy groceries. In either case, the household needs to maintain itself, which means that productive new members must be added to replace the elderly, the disabled, and those who die. In this way, households are more flexible and inclusive than other family groups.

ISLAM AND FAMILY LIFE

Islam has had a profound influence on family life in some parts of Africa. It has affected not only the ARABS, the majority population in North Africa, but also such non-Arab peoples as the BERBERS.

Arab Families. Arabs who live in rural areas tend to maintain more traditional customs than the inhabitants of towns and cities. Rural Arabs live in extended families, with three generations or more sharing a residence. Marriage is regarded not as the union of two individuals but as the joining of two families, often already linked by ties of KINSHIP.

Family members are expected to stick closely to expected roles: fathers are stern disciplinarians, mothers are nurturers, and children become members of the family workforce who will one day provide for their parents in old age. Children of both genders are treated with affection, but boys have a higher position in the family and inherit more of its money and land.

The tight, traditional structure of rural Arab families is sometimes weakened when family members take on new roles—as when a son leaves to work in a city or a daughter decides not to marry the man chosen by her parents. Such breaks in traditional patterns occur most often in urban settings, where people have more job opportunities and can be more independent.

Berber Families. The Berbers are non-Arab peoples descended from the original inhabitants of North Africa. They have adopted the Islamic religion and some Arab customs. A traditional Berber household consists of father, mother, and unmarried children. Family descent is patrilineal. Today, however, with many men working away from home for long periods, more households are headed by women. Both the Berbers



Throughout Africa, family relationships are at the center of many social activities. Young people, such as these Egyptian children, learn the society's customs by observing their older relatives.

and the Arabs permit polygyny under Islamic law, but in practice only wealthy men can afford separate households for each wife.

CHANGES IN FAMILY LIFE

New social customs and the cash economy are changing the household structure. As senior members lose control over the marriages of junior members, and as younger people leave rural households to work in cities, the household weakens and becomes dependent on money sent home by members working elsewhere. One reason the household is still important, however, is that it is often the only reliable form of security in old age and sickness in fast-paced modern societies based on wage labor and competition.

Just as the household structure is changing, family is also being redefined in some parts of Africa. In some patrilineal groups, women who traditionally moved in with their husband's families now often remain with their own families or move back to them. Some studies show that women are becoming more reluctant to marry, perhaps because marriage may limit their control over resources or their access to education



Family

and jobs. Some women are raising children apart from the traditional family frameworks. Meanwhile, among educated and privileged Africans, especially in the cities, the husband-wife couple is becoming more important as a social and legal unit. This trend sometimes means that nuclear families are growing farther from their kinship networks. The spread of Christianity has also affected families, sometimes introducing great conflict when one member of a family converts to Christianity but others do not. As tradition and modern life continue to combine in new ways, family life in Africa is likely to continue to change. (See also *Age and Aging, Childhood and Adolescence, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Houses and Housing, Women in Africa.*)

FAMINE

See *Hunger and Famine*

Fanon, Frantz

1925–1961
Algerian psychiatrist
and theorist

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Born in the French West Indies, Frantz Fanon is considered one of the leading theorists of revolution of his time. After attending medical school in France, he served for three years as chief psychiatrist at a hospital in Blida, Algeria. Then he joined the National Liberation Front, a movement formed to free Algeria from French rule. Fanon's political and philosophical outlook had begun to take shape while he was still in France, influenced by the revolutionary and socialist* writings of Karl Marx.

In his first book, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Fanon expresses his frustration with racism. His best-known work, *The Wretched of the Earth*, appeared in 1961. By this time, Fanon was convinced that colonialism corrupted both the people who were colonized and their colonizers. He argues in the book that colonized peoples should use violence if necessary to cleanse their minds of the colonial way of thinking. After Fanon's death, his theory of revolutionary cleansing became well known in the United States in the Black Liberation Movement and in the Black Panther Party. (See also *Diop, Alioune.*)

FARMING

See *Agriculture*

Fasiladas

1632–1667
Emperor of Ethiopia

Fasiladas stands out among historic emperors of ETHIOPIA because of his long reign and his impact on the country's political and religious policies. One of his first acts as emperor was to expel representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and to insist that only Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity could exist in his empire.

Fasiladas founded a new capital at Gondar, the first real capital the country had had for centuries. Emperors of earlier times had moved



Festivals and Carnivals

around the country. Fasiladas also rebuilt the cathedral of AKSUM, which wars of the previous century had left in ruins. Under his rule, Ethiopian art and music flourished.

Fasiladas ended Ethiopia's long hostility to the Muslim states on the north and east. The neighboring countries joined forces against the Portuguese, who had built forts and trading stations in eastern Africa and had become their common enemy. Fasiladas worked with the Muslims to keep all Europeans out of the area. (See also **Ethiopian Orthodox Church**.)

Festivals and Carnivals

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

From Fasting to Feasting

Africa's Muslims observe Ramadan, an annual month-long holiday during which they do not eat or drink between sunrise and sunset. Each evening they break their fast with a meal. In Morocco one of the most common dishes for this meal is a soup called harira, made of lamb, lentils, and beans. People who cannot be home when the day's fast ends may buy harira in cafés or from street vendors. The most special fast-breaking meal of all occurs at the end of Ramadan and often features m'choui, an entire sheep roasted on a spit. This ceremonial treat is brought whole to the table. Diners cut off pieces of meat and dip them in cumin, a flavorful spice.

Festivals and carnivals serve a multitude of social, religious, and political purposes. In Africa such events have been documented in travel books, museum displays, and studies of ethnic culture. Traditional celebrations also have been incorporated in dance and theater performances. Both scholars and the people who participate in festivals often view them as fixed traditions, handed down unchanged from generation to generation. In reality, however, African festivals are constantly changing. They take different forms as people forget old elements or add new ones and adapt to new circumstances.

African festivals and carnivals fall into five general categories. Within each category are many variations. Each festival has its own flavor shaped by the identity of the participants and the way music, dance, dress, food and drink, merriment and seriousness, and ritual* are combined in the event.

The first category includes royal rituals and festivals of sacred kingship. Such festivals took place in areas where centralized states developed in sub-Saharan* Africa. Many are linked to the kingdoms and empires of West Africa and to areas of central and southern Africa where BANTU states arose. The Shango festival of Nigeria's YORUBA people is typical of these royal celebrations. By purifying and giving power to a sacred ruler, participants seek to renew or protect the order of the natural world and society. Such festivals—sometimes called “new yam” or “first fruit” ceremonies—usually take place during harvests.

A second type of African festival is the masquerade, linked in some places with the celebration of sacred kingship. Masquerades honor spirits of the dead, social groups, or SECRET SOCIETIES and associations. Traditionally, masquerades were held to soothe the dead and control witchcraft. The costumes of masqueraders often reflect images of power, such as colonial officers or airplanes.

Muslim festivals are celebrated across North Africa and in many parts of West Africa, areas where the Islamic religion has taken hold. The principal festivals are associated with Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar. The final night of Ramadan, called *Id al-Fitr*, is a particularly joyous occasion. In some West African kingdoms, people blended elements of traditional African rituals into the Muslim's annual Sallah festival performed on *Id al-Fitr*. During the Sallah festival, the ruler gave gifts to his chieftains. Then, surrounded by drummers and singers, political and religious leaders on horseback proclaimed their loyalty to their leader before thousands of spectators.

Festivals and Carnivals



In this festival in Swaziland, participants perform a Reed Dance to celebrate the harvest.

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

Colonial festivals are the fourth category of African festivals. These were introduced or arranged during colonial times by the European powers that controlled most of Africa. Such events supported colonial authority by inspiring loyalty to European symbols and leaders. In the African colonies of Britain, for example, Empire Day provided a festive celebration of British rule. Colonial officials held sports competitions and distributed food and prizes.

National festivals, the fifth category, are state-sponsored celebrations of arts and culture. They emerged along with the cultural nationalism* of the independence movements that swept Africa in the mid-1900s. Once the former colonies had achieved independence, the festivals developed into expressions of national identity. They occur at all levels of political organization, from local districts or provinces to an entire country. National festivals try to weave the various ethnic identities of the peoples within a country into a single modern culture. They often adapt traditional ritual and masquerade performances to suit this goal. Occasionally similar festivals are organized on an international or global scale. **SENEGAL**, for example, has hosted a World Festival of Black Arts, and **NIGERIA** has held a World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture. (*See also Dance, Independence Movements, Masks and Masquerades, Music and Song, Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession.*)

Fishing

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

In Africa fishing industries have long played a major role in commerce and in daily life. As early as the 1400s, dried, smoked, and salted fish were sold along trade routes that linked West Africa and the Sahel. By the 1500s commercial fishing was a significant industry. Fishing has also been a major source of food. Most Africans eat very little meat, because livestock are scarce and expensive to raise. Fish provides a large part of the animal protein in their diet. Today millions of Africans work in the fishing industry. Most of the continent's catch comes from sub-Saharan* Africa. However, Morocco also has a major fishing industry.

Coastal Fishing. Africa's marine fisheries can be found along the Atlantic coast of West Africa and the Indian Ocean coast of East Africa. The Atlantic fisheries stretch all the way from the Strait of Gibraltar in the north to the tip of South Africa. The best areas for fishing are those where the water is rich in plankton, tiny organisms that are an important food source for fish. The nutrient-rich waters of some ocean currents, such as the Canary, Guinea, and Benguela currents, provide excellent fishing zones. In the Indian Ocean, the richest fishing grounds are located near coral reefs.

Fishing is an important economic activity along the Atlantic coast of Senegal. Here, fishers in Dakar unload the catch.





Fishing

The catch along Africa's western coast includes sardines, tuna, mackerel, hake, octopus, grouper, and snapper. Shellfish, crustaceans (such as lobsters), and turtles are also harvested for local use. The Indian Ocean provides tuna, sardines, various reef fishes, sharks, and shrimp.

Inland Fisheries. Inland fisheries exist throughout sub-Saharan Africa. Most are on lakes, rivers, or other freshwater environments. Major inland fishing grounds are found in NIGERIA, IVORY COAST, ZAMBIA, KENYA, CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE), GHANA, CONGO (KINSHASA), TOGO, MADAGASCAR, and SUDAN. Most of Africa's lake fisheries are located in the East African Rift Valley. Since the 1890s the number and diversity of fish there have steadily declined. However, more than 30 varieties of fish are raised on fish farms. Many fish farms consist of small ponds ranging from 1,000 to 10,000 square feet. These may be used for subsistence farming* or for small-scale commercial farming. Larger, privately owned commercial fish farms range in size from 5 to 75 acres.

* subsistence farming raising only enough food to live on

Small-Scale Fishing. Many of Africa's fishers produce food mainly for their own use or sale within the region. Relying on local technologies, they work long, hard hours during certain seasons of the year. The members of a family or community often work together. Whether fishing inland or on the ocean, most small-scale fishers use wood dugout canoes, hooks and lines, and various designs of traps and nets.

Because many fish migrate or travel to breeding grounds at a specific time of year, fishing is highly seasonal. To continue earning a living throughout the year, fishers follow migrations and the movements of ocean currents along the coast. They often travel great distances and must preserve their catches. Because many areas of Africa do not have reliable refrigeration, people preserve fish by other methods, such as salting, drying, or smoking.

Small-scale fishing involves a systematic division of labor. In marine and lake fishing, many workers are required to drive fish into nets, cast and haul wide nets, paddle and work on canoes, and to quickly process the catch. Large family and community groups often perform these jobs. Traditionally, only men fish on the open sea or large lakes. Women are usually responsible for processing and selling the fish. Both men and women may collect shellfish, crustaceans, and urchins found along the shore. In areas with inland fish farms, women usually manage and work the ponds, while men focus most of their efforts on crop farming.

Commercial Fishing. Although most of Africa's commercial fishing industry is located along the coasts, some medium-sized commercial fleets exist inland. They work Lake Victoria and a number of other large African lakes, where Nile perch have been introduced. Most of the fish taken by these fleets is sold in Africa, but an international demand for Nile perch is growing.

In contrast, the catch from Africa's marine fishing grounds goes mainly for export abroad. Large fleets from Europe, Russia, North America, and Asia fish off the coast of Africa. Many fleets are based in Africa, but their owners are usually foreign.



Food and Drink

Spain, Russia, Japan, and South Africa claim the largest hauls along the western coast of the continent. Pakistan and India are the dominant fishers along the eastern coast. The catches are either immediately exported on airplanes and courier ships or processed aboard the fishing ship. There are a few large-scale commercial processing plants located in African ports. Like the big commercial fishing fleets, most plants are owned by multinational corporations, such as the tuna-canning facility in Tema, Ghana.

Since 1983 most of the world's coastal nations have claimed exclusive use of marine resources within 200 miles of their coastlines. Poor African nations, however, lack the vessels or military power to enforce their rights within the 200-mile limit.

Throughout Africa both small-scale and commercial fishers are bringing in smaller and smaller catches. Many small-scale inland fishers have resorted to using dynamite and poisons to catch larger quantities of fish. Such methods damage both fish populations and fishing environments. Better management of Africa's marine and inland fisheries is needed to protect these valuable resources for the future.

Food and Drink

From the fish stew of Tunisia to the dried caterpillars of the Congo, African foods and eating customs vary according to the resources available. Religion and local custom have also played a role in determining diet.

In many areas, traders and colonists from other continents introduced new foods and new ways of producing food.

Throughout Africa the way people live influences what they eat. The diets of a nomadic herder, a farmer, and a city dweller are likely to be different. Much of Africa's large agricultural population still grows, prepares, and consumes food in traditional ways. However, eating habits are changing as more people live in cities and imported and preserved foods become more widely available.

AFRICAN FOODS

Most African diets are based on cereal grains or tubers*. Because rainfall determines where these staple* crops can be grown, climate affects what foods the people of a region eat. Grain is more common in drier regions, while tubers are the staples in humid and forested areas. Fruits and vegetables and some meat and dairy products add variety and supplement the nutritional value of grains and tubers.

Grains. The main element of most meals in sub-Saharan* Africa is a starchy porridge made from tubers or cereal grains. This dish is accompanied by a soup or stew of cooked vegetables. If the household can afford meat or fish, the stew may contain pieces of these protein sources as well. Soups or stews tend to be cooked for a long time until they resemble thick sauces. They are often served over the starchy main dish.

* **tuber** edible root

* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Food and Drink

Wild Foods

Only a few Africans still depend entirely on hunting and gathering for their food. Many rural people, however, add wild foods to their diets. In addition to game meat, people consume fruits that grow wild. Commonly eaten by children, fruits are especially important in remote areas and during times of famine. In woodland areas, people gather many varieties of wild mushrooms, and women and children sell them at stands along the roadsides. Women in Central Africa harvest caterpillars—a valuable source of protein and vitamins—to be eaten fresh or dried.

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food

* **legumes** vegetables such as peas and beans

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Grains include millet, sorghum*, and wheat. In ETHIOPIA a staple pancake-like bread called *enjera* is made from a grain called *teff*. Maize, or corn, is now cultivated in most parts of Africa. It was brought to the continent from the Americas in the 1500s, as were tomatoes, chili peppers, and cassava. A root that can be pounded into an edible paste or flour after it has been boiled, cassava has spread widely through Africa and is becoming an important staple in the diet. Plantains, which are similar to bananas, can also be processed into flour, although they are often eaten boiled or fried. People in North Africa and in the SAHEL eat couscous, a grain that is steamed until its texture resembles that of well-cooked rice.

Bread is a staple food of North Africa. Most loaves produced in the region are flat breads (such as pita), containing little or none of the leavening agent that makes bread rise. A flat bread called *aysh*, made with wheat bran, is found throughout EGYPT. In neighboring SUDAN, the staple food is *kisra*, a bread made from fermented millet or sorghum flour. Wheat bread is popular in LIBYA, along with *bazin*, a dough made from wheat flour and olive oil.

Vegetables and Fruits. Vegetables eaten in sub-Saharan Africa include okra, peppers, pumpkins, beans, eggplant, and edible leaves, such as those of the yam and cassava plants. Crushed peanuts may form the basis for a soup. The main cooking fats are peanut oil, palm oil from pressed palm nuts, sesame oil, and a butter made from shea nuts (the seeds of the shea tree). Salt and red pepper are used widely as seasonings.

North Africa shares many features of its diet with southern Europe and the Middle East, including olives and olive oil and fruits such as lemons and oranges. Dates and figs, which grow well in desert conditions, are central to the Libyan diet. Vegetables found in North African dishes include eggplant, onions, celery, spinach, sweet peppers, and zucchini. In Sudan, farmers grow pumpkins and melons. Legumes*, a key source of protein when eaten with bread or rice, are a staple food throughout North Africa. Egyptians often eat *ful mudammis*, a paste of mashed fava beans that can serve as the basis for breakfast, lunch, or a snack. *Kashary*, a casserole of rice, lentils, and macaroni, is another typical dish.

Meat and Dairy Products. Many African farmers keep a few small animals, such as fowl or goats. Cattle cannot survive in rainforest areas because of disease carried by the tsetse fly, but milk and dairy products are part of the diet of cattle-herding peoples in other regions. In many societies, people do not routinely kill domestic animals other than fowl just for cooking. Instead, the animals are offered as sacrifices to gods or ancestors, and their meat is eaten as part of a ritual*. Some areas still have large game such as antelope, which people hunt for food. Smaller animals such as monkeys, rodents, lizards, and snails are also food items. People who live near the ocean or along inland waterways eat various types of fish.

Lamb is popular in North Africa, although many people eat meat only for special meals. Dishes of the region include *tajines*, lamb, beef,

Food and Drink

or vegetable stews cooked in clay pots; fish stews in Tunisia; and pigeon pie in MOROCCO. North Africans make dairy products, including yogurt, from camel, sheep, goat, and sometimes cow milk. In the MAGHREB, herders occasionally eat camel meat. They also prepare gruel, or thin porridge, by mixing grain with butter or sour milk.

See
color plate 6,
vol. 4.

Food Preparation. In African households women play the key role in preparing and serving food. They tend gardens or gather vegetables, grasses, and fruits; they pound grain, tubers, and nuts into usable form; and they fetch water and firewood for cooking. Hunting is generally the responsibility of men, although both men and women may engage in fishing. In some cultures people of both genders own and tend flocks of domestic fowls. Young boys may be given responsibility for raising their own poultry.

Porridge, eaten throughout sub-Saharan Africa, is usually prepared by adding the pounded grain or tuber to boiling water and stirring frequently until it thickens. Other techniques used in African cooking include steaming in leaves, frying in oil, toasting or grilling over a fire, roasting, and baking in hot coals.

Many African dishes are fried, grilled, or simmered over an open fire. Cooking a meal often involves gathering fuel for the fire as well as preparing the ingredients.

Africans use a variety of techniques to preserve food for future use. Farmers often keep crops such as cassava in the ground until needed to prevent spoilage. Fish is usually salted for long-term storage or transport,





Food and Drink

Peanuts

Roasted or boiled peanuts are a popular snack food in Africa. They also appear as an ingredient in many soups and stews. To make a West African peanut soup, mash 1 clove garlic and heat it in a saucepan with 1 tablespoon vegetable oil. When the garlic is golden, stir in 1/3 cup tomato paste, 2/3 cup peanut butter, 1/8 teaspoon cayenne, dash salt, and 4 cups chicken broth. Simmer 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Garnish with chopped peanuts.

and meat is dried. People also dry some vegetables and fruits, such as tomatoes and mango slices.

BEVERAGES

Africans prepare and consume a variety of beverages ranging from tea and fruit juices to beer and wine. Although Islam forbids its followers to drink alcohol, some largely Muslim nations produce beer and wine for use by the non-Muslim minority or for export.

Brewing. Sub-Saharan Africa has an ancient tradition of making beer from fermented sorghum, millet, or corn. Brewing was usually a female activity because women were responsible for planting, weeding, and harvesting the grain crops. Although large-scale commercial breweries exist in many African countries, family brewing continues. Certain social interactions traditionally involve drinking and sharing beer. When neighbors lend a hand in harvesting someone's crops, they usually receive beer for their efforts.

In the forest zones the typical alcoholic beverage is palm wine, made from the fermented sap of certain kinds of palm trees. Unlike beer-making, tapping palm trees for sap and making the wine are male activities. Ethiopians make an alcoholic beverage from fermented honey and water.

Africa's traditional alcoholic beverages were perishable and had to be consumed soon after being made. This fact shaped the development of African drinking customs. While many Europeans drank small amounts of alcohol on a regular basis, Africans tended to drink larger quantities from time to time. When a household invited neighbors and friends to share a newly made beer or wine, the guests would be expected to stay until everything was consumed.

European traders introduced distilled liquors such as rum, gin, brandy, and whiskey to Africa. Some cultures began using imported liquor in their rituals and at social events. Beginning in the mid-1800s, however, anti-alcohol movements led colonial governments to enact strict regulations on the production, sale, and consumption of alcohol. The popularity of bottled beer has increased since the 1960s. Today, breweries are among the most profitable industries in Africa, and liquor taxes form an important part of some national incomes.

Nonalcoholic Beverages. In countries with a large Muslim population, tea (often flavored with sprigs of mint) is a staple beverage. In the Maghreb, people drink sweetened mint tea from small cups throughout the day. Coffee, water, and soft drinks are also popular.

Beverages made from apricot and orange juice are served in North Africa, while South Africans enjoy mango and pineapple drinks. In SENEGAL people prepare buttermilk and a drink made from the fruit of the tamarind tree.

EATING CUSTOMS

In all societies food is both a source of nutrition and a part of the culture. The customs that groups of people have for preparing and consuming food form an essential part of their shared tradition.



Food and Drink

Social Behavior. Throughout Africa, learning the rules of eating and sharing food within the household is an important experience for young children. In strict Muslim families, and in many non-Muslim agricultural societies, it is customary for men and women to eat separately. Sometimes there are three eating groups: one consisting of men and older boys; one of women and very young children; and a third of older children, supervised by an older sister. A group that eats together may share a large bowl of food, each person taking his or her food with the right hand. Men may get the choicest foods, such as a good piece of meat or fish. In some societies where polygamy* exists, a man's wives take turns cooking meals for the entire household. Among other groups, each wife cooks separately for her own children and sends cooked food to the husband.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

See color
plate 14,
vol. 1.

Food Taboos. Africans may avoid eating particular foods for a variety of reasons. Some groups consider certain foods taboo, or off-limits. This taboo may apply in special circumstances or on all occasions. For example, Muslims do not consume pork or alcohol. Nomadic livestock herders avoid fish out of scorn for the way of life in fishing communities. In some cultures women avoid vegetables when pregnant out of fear that the vegetables could harm unborn children. History sometimes plays a role in food taboos. A royal family in GHANA has refused to eat red pigeon, believing that a pigeon once helped an ancestor win a battle.

The Hunger Season. In some parts of Africa, such as northern Ghana, the hunger season—a period of food shortage—is a feature of agricultural life. It comes at the beginning of the rainy season, when supplies from the last harvest are getting low and the new harvest is not yet ready.

Households have long-established methods of coping with the hunger season. They may reduce the number of meals eaten in a day, serve smaller portions, or thin the food with water. When the food shortage lasts longer than usual, people turn to “hunger foods,” things generally eaten only as snacks or supplements, including peanuts, seed pods, mice, and wild fruits. At such times, normal customs of hospitality such as offering food and drink to guests are suspended. In desperate circumstances, families may resort to eating the seeds that were set aside for the next season's planting.

THE ECONOMY OF FOOD

Africa has always been part of an international food exchange. Since ancient times salt mined in North Africa has been carried across the Sahara to be traded for gold. In some places the salt was worth its weight in gold. Caffeine-containing kola nuts from the forests of West Africa have long been traded throughout the Islamic world, where they are considered a socially acceptable stimulant. Although much of Africa's food is still produced and consumed at the local level of communities and households, imported and industrially produced foods are playing a growing role, especially in the cities.



Fruits

A wide variety of fruits—including grapes, melons, peaches, figs, quince, and tangerines—grow in southern Africa. They are eaten raw or cooked, or made into jams. To prepare a South African fruit salad, cut up 2 cantaloupes and 1/4 watermelon. Place 1/2 cup sugar, 3/4 cup apple juice, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, 1 tablespoon cider vinegar, and 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger in a saucepan. Stir well and bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Cool syrup. Pour syrup over melon and chill. Garnish with fresh mint leaves or grated orange peel.



Food and Drink

Supplies, Distribution, and Marketing. Several systems of food distribution exist in Africa. Much of the urban food supply comes from networks of small farmers who sell their food to traders or purchasing agents. The agents sell the food in the large, colorful urban marketplaces. In towns and small cities, farmers from the surrounding region sell their crops directly in the marketplace. In rural areas most landowners produce some of their own staples, and people periodically set up roadside stands or small markets to sell food items.

Women play a large role in food processing and marketing, sometimes acquiring economic and political power through these activities. In western Africa, the term *mama benz* refers to a Mercedes-Benz automobile owned by a wealthy female trader. Food transport and long-distance trade, however, are often dominated by men.

Recent government policies have tended to favor large-scale agriculture over small farms, mainly because large landowners or agricultural industries have political connections. Large-scale farming is not always profitable, especially in places where the climate is unpredictable. Economic demand, however, has encouraged a trend toward replacing food crops for local use with cash crops—such as cotton, coffee, or cocoa—that are produced for export. The cultivation of export crops has forced many African countries that were once self-sufficient to import staple foods.

Changing Food Habits. Population growth has had two main effects on Africa's food habits. First, there are more mouths to be fed. Some countries have shifted from native crops such as millet and yams to cassava and maize, which produce more food per acre but are less nutritious. The result is that more people can be fed, but their diet is lower in quality. Supplies of ingredients such as meat and fish have also diminished.

The second effect of population growth is the growing demand for wood, which is the main fuel for cooking in most households. As the supply of wood declines, women must spend more time collecting wood—and perhaps change their methods of food preparation. In MALAWI, for example, people economizing on fuel have replaced legumes with vegetables. The vegetables require less cooking time but provide less protein.

Other changes in food habits are the result of urban growth. New food patterns often develop in cities. One trend is an increased demand for imported food such as canned meat and fish, powdered milk and milk products, and bottled beer and soft drinks. Another is greater individual freedom for food choices, including food consumed outside the household. One response to this new pattern is the development of street food—foods and beverages served ready to eat by vendors in streets and public places. Poor urban households may find it less expensive to purchase street food than to cook at home.

City dwellers generally enjoy a more varied diet than people who live in the country. They have access to an assortment of fruits and vegetables and more meat, and they are also exposed to foods from other cultures. But although new food habits and new kinds of food are constantly being incorporated into urban culture, the typical diet of city

See
color plate 6,
vol. 1.



Forests and Forestry

people remains basically the same as that of country folk. (*See also Agriculture; Animals, Domestic; Fishing; Hunger and Famine; Hunting and Gathering.*)

Forests and Forestry

Forests are one of Africa’s most important natural resources, both for the influence they have in the continent’s ecology and for their economic benefits. For thousands of years, the forests have provided habitats for a wide range of plants and animals. They have also served as a source of food, fuel, building materials, and trade goods for humans. Because of the crucial role they play in the natural and human environment, African forests have long been the focus of various management programs.

FOREST ECOSYSTEMS

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Over one-fifth of Africa is covered with forests. They range from low-lying tropical rain forests to woodlands in the savannas* or the highlands. From earliest times, climate changes have influenced the types of forest found on the continent.

Tens of millions of years ago, Africa was part of a giant continent known as Gondwanaland. Gondwanaland eventually broke apart, leaving Africa surrounded by oceans that produced a very rainy climate. For a time rain forests covered virtually the entire African continent. As Africa drifted northward, its climate changed and the forests retreated to the south. Later, the ice ages that left Europe and North America covered with glaciers also brought cooler and drier weather to Africa. Forests in drier climates shrank, while those in wetter climates remained largely intact.

Today most of Africa’s forests are located in a band stretching from the southern tip of the continent north to the horn of Africa and west to SENEGAL. Coastal areas of eastern, northeastern, and southern Africa support small areas of tropical forest. Dry forests are found in the mountains and highland regions of east-central Africa, and gallery forests—stands of trees in open plains—follow the courses of many rivers in savanna areas.

Rainfall and other sources of moisture play a leading role in the location of forests and their physical environment. In hotter lowland regions, forests require about 60 inches of rain per year to thrive. The trees in these forests are much taller than those at high altitudes, with some species reaching 200 feet. At cooler, higher elevations, 40 inches of rain per year is sufficient for forest growth. Groundwater from rivers or swamps can occasionally provide enough moisture to support forests in areas that do not receive large amounts of rain. In high-altitude mist forests, many trees are covered by mosses that absorb moisture from the clouds and serve as a source of water for the trees.

FOREST USE AND MANAGEMENT

* **deforestation** removal of a forest as a result of human activity

In recent years rapid deforestation* has called attention to the impact of humans on African forests. However, the phenomenon of deforestation

Forests and Forestry



This aerial view of a forested hillside in South Africa shows a strip of land where the trees have been removed.

is not new. Colonial rulers in the early 1900s voiced many of the same concerns as environmentalists today. Unfortunately, their solutions often did nothing to help the situation, and in many cases they made it worse.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Precolonial Management. African populations managed and exploited* forest resources long before Europeans arrived on the continent. They used forests for farming and herding, and as a source of trade goods such as kola nuts. Forests also supplied fuel for cooking and warmth; foods such as nuts, fruit, honey, and game animals; and poles, branches, and leaves for building and thatching. In addition, they were often considered places of spiritual and religious significance.

As local populations increased, they cleared forests for settlement and cultivation. Africans have practiced swidden (slash and burn) agriculture in wooded areas for thousands of years. Peoples who raised livestock often cut or burned forests to provide pasture for their animals. This also served to eliminate breeding grounds for the tsetse fly, which carries a disease that is deadly to humans and large animals.

Because of the importance of forests in their lives, many African societies took an active role in managing forest resources. Leaders often determined who could use various parts of the forest, when, and for what purposes. Forest dwellers might abandon areas when resources were exhausted and return later when the region had recovered. The

Spirits of the Forest

To many Africans the forest is a spiritual place. Forest dwellers, such as the pygmies, view the woods as a safe and protective place that has sheltered many generations of their people. However, most Africans who live outside the forest see it as a dangerous region inhabited by wild animals and evil spirits. Before entering the forest to hunt, many peoples hold rituals to ward off animals and spirits that might harm or kill them. On their return they perform another ceremony to purify themselves so that forest dangers will not follow them home.

low population density in Africa before the colonial era exerted little pressure on forest resources, so that even activities such as swidden agriculture had limited impact on the environment.

Colonial Policies. The European colonization of Africa brought major changes to the way forests were used. Europeans saw Africa's vast forests primarily as a source of timber or products such as rubber, elephant ivory, or minerals. Private companies received rights to exploit the forests and often overexploited many of the resources.

As the forests began to shrink and valuable species of trees became scarcer, colonial authorities became concerned about maintaining and managing forest resources. Sometimes blaming the loss of trees on local practices such as swidden agriculture, Europeans began to restrict Africans' access to the forests. Their policies included establishing forest reserves and tree plantations to grow a single type of tree (often a non-native species) for commercial purposes. Colonial authorities sometimes resorted to brutal methods to enforce rules limiting forest use. Despite these efforts, timber resources continued to dwindle, largely because the European settlers knew little about the ecology and dynamics of the rain forest.

Many colonial practices continued after independence as African nations looked to their forests to provide goods for export. Some Africans rejected colonial policies. They realized that the policies not only failed to yield significant revenues or prevent deforestation but also denied local populations access to food and fuel from the forest. Poor soils and unpredictable climate make large-scale agriculture difficult in most places in Africa. For this reason, many people rely on forest products to supplement their diets. In addition, people need wood, still Africa's primary fuel, for heating and cooking.

Modern forestry officials have come to understand the advantages of the multiuse strategy that existed in precolonial days. Some countries have begun to adopt policies that give local populations a greater say in how the forests are used. Deforestation is still a major concern, and Africa continues to lose about 0.7 percent of its total forest cover each year. Giving rural people more control over the forests may increase local efforts to manage resources well. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ecosystems, Energy and Energy Resources, Peasantry and Land Settlement, Plantation Systems.**)

Freetown

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

Founded in 1787 as a colony for freed slaves, Freetown is the capital of SIERRA LEONE. It is also the country's chief port and largest city, with a population of about 500,000.

Freetown's founders were British abolitionists*, merchants, and bankers. They believed that the SLAVE TRADE could be replaced by other types of commerce and that Christianity could help repair the damage Africans had suffered. The early settlers of Freetown were freed slaves from England, the United States, and Jamaica. British missionaries set up schools for them. In time the resettled population of freed slaves



Freetown

came to form a distinct ethnic group, known as Krio or CREOLE. The Krio had their own language and identity. Many adopted the English way of life and held high positions in the British colonial administration.

After Sierra Leone gained its independence in 1961, tens of thousands of people from rural areas migrated to Freetown in search of jobs. The city changed as headmen from various ethnic groups became involved in city politics and business and as the proportion of Muslims increased. Racial tensions became strained as the new urban headmen challenged Krio dominance. In the 1990s, civil war in the countryside spilled over into Freetown. By the year 2000, parts of the city, including some famous historic buildings, had been badly damaged or destroyed. The British sent in paratroopers to help Freetown withstand further rebel assaults. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Slavery**.)

FRENCH COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa*

French Equatorial Africa

French Equatorial Africa was a French colony in the late 1800s and early 1900s, located in the area now occupied by the countries of CAMEROON, GABON, the CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE), the CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, CHAD, and SUDAN. France administered the colony in a heavy-handed and inefficient manner. As a result, they did not get much benefit from their control over the region.

* **equatorial** referring to the region around the equator

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a stronger state

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Early History. The first major French settlement in equatorial* Africa was Libreville, a coastal city established in 1849 as a home for freed slaves. French explorer Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza led several expeditions up the CONGO RIVER in the 1870s and 1880s. He signed treaties with local chiefs making much of the area a French protectorate*. Instead of forcing the indigenous* peoples to submit to French rule, Brazza promised them greater trading opportunities if they would cooperate with him. For a time the colony ran smoothly. But in the 1890s, when France attempted to gain control of territory to the north, several local rulers resisted the takeover. French troops were brought in to conquer the region, but northward expansion of the colony proceeded slowly.

France refused to invest in the vast, thinly populated, and unstable colony. Seeking other ways to make money, the French colonists granted private companies 30-year leases to exploit* the wealth of the region. In return for a small fee, these firms, called concessionary companies, were given large areas of land from which they could harvest ivory and wild rubber. The companies were also allowed to collect taxes and to open the area to trade. However, they abused their rights, imposing heavy taxes on local populations, forcing people to work for little or no pay, and imprisoning local women and children. They became known for their extremely brutal treatment of workers.

The concessionary system did not work for the French for other reasons. The ivory supply ran low and, after 1911, competition from plan-



French Equatorial Africa

tation-grown rubber from Malaysia made the rubber business unprofitable. In addition, neither the companies nor the colonial officials were willing to spend money for the roads and other systems needed to bring goods to market and to supply operations with equipment and workers.

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

Discontent and Political Turmoil. In 1908 France made French Equatorial Africa a federation* of territories modeled after FRENCH WEST AFRICA. The new federation consisted of four territories: Gabon, Congo (modern-day Congo, Brazzaville), Oubangui-Chari (modern-day Central African Republic), and Chad. France hoped that this reorganization would strengthen its central authority in the region.

However, the French were slow to change the concessionary system, and local uprisings occurred throughout the 1920s and 1930s. One such conflict, called the war of Kongo-Warra, lasted several years. It spread from eastern Cameroon as far north and west as Chad, and claimed tens of thousands of lives. At the same time, Africans in the colony were becoming more politically active and more determined to resist French control.

In the 1930s the towns of French Equatorial Africa began to grow at an increasing rate, drawing people from the surrounding countryside. The new cities became centers of African resistance. In an attempt to control the indigenous population, the government separated black and white neighborhoods in cities and provided services and equipment only to white areas. Despite such efforts, a new and thriving black urban culture developed in the cities.

War and Independence. During World War II, Félix ÉBOUÉ, the governor of Chad, convinced most of French Equatorial Africa to support Charles DeGaulle's Free French Forces rather than Nazi-occupied France. To ensure that war supplies would be produced for the Allies, colonial officials strengthened forced labor laws. This, along with the arrival of new European settlers, produced more discontent among the indigenous population.

Near the end of the war, a conference was held in BRAZZAVILLE to discuss the future role of France in Africa. Over the next several years Africans gained new freedoms. A small percentage of the population received the right to vote, and Africans were allowed to form their own political parties. At first these parties were controlled by politicians who worked closely with the colonial authorities. However, as more Africans gained the right to vote, political differences between African and European parties widened. In an attempt to control politics in the colony, French authorities formed secret ties with African leaders. They also stirred up rivalries between ethnic groups to weaken the power of local parties. Election fraud became commonplace, and parties often gained votes by threatening voters.

In the late 1950s, the territories of French Equatorial Africa prepared to split into separate independent nations. Aggressive and powerful politicians, such as Gabon's Léon Mba and David Dacko of Chad, emerged as the leaders of some territories. In other territories local groups struggled for control. In Brazzaville, Congo, conflicts between northern supporters of Fulbert Youlou and southern backers of Jaques



French Equatorial Africa

Opangault led to the massacre of hundreds of people. Such violent unrest would become a common part of life in many of the nations that emerged from French Equatorial Africa. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

French West Africa

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

French West Africa was a federation* of French colonies in West Africa that existed from 1895 until 1958. Created in stages, French West Africa eventually included eight colonies: SENEGAL, French Sudan (present-day MALI), GUINEA, IVORY COAST, Dahomey (present-day BÉNIN), Upper Volta (present-day BURKINA FASO), NIGER, and MAURITANIA.

France established the federation to help coordinate French military efforts to dominate West Africa. French West Africa had a governor-general who supervised the colonies and an army that dealt with any remaining armed resistance to colonial rule. The city of DAKAR in Senegal became its capital.

At first French West Africa received economic support from France. However, in 1900 France declared that the federation must be self-sufficient. Although the colonies could borrow money from France, they had to rely primarily on their own resources.

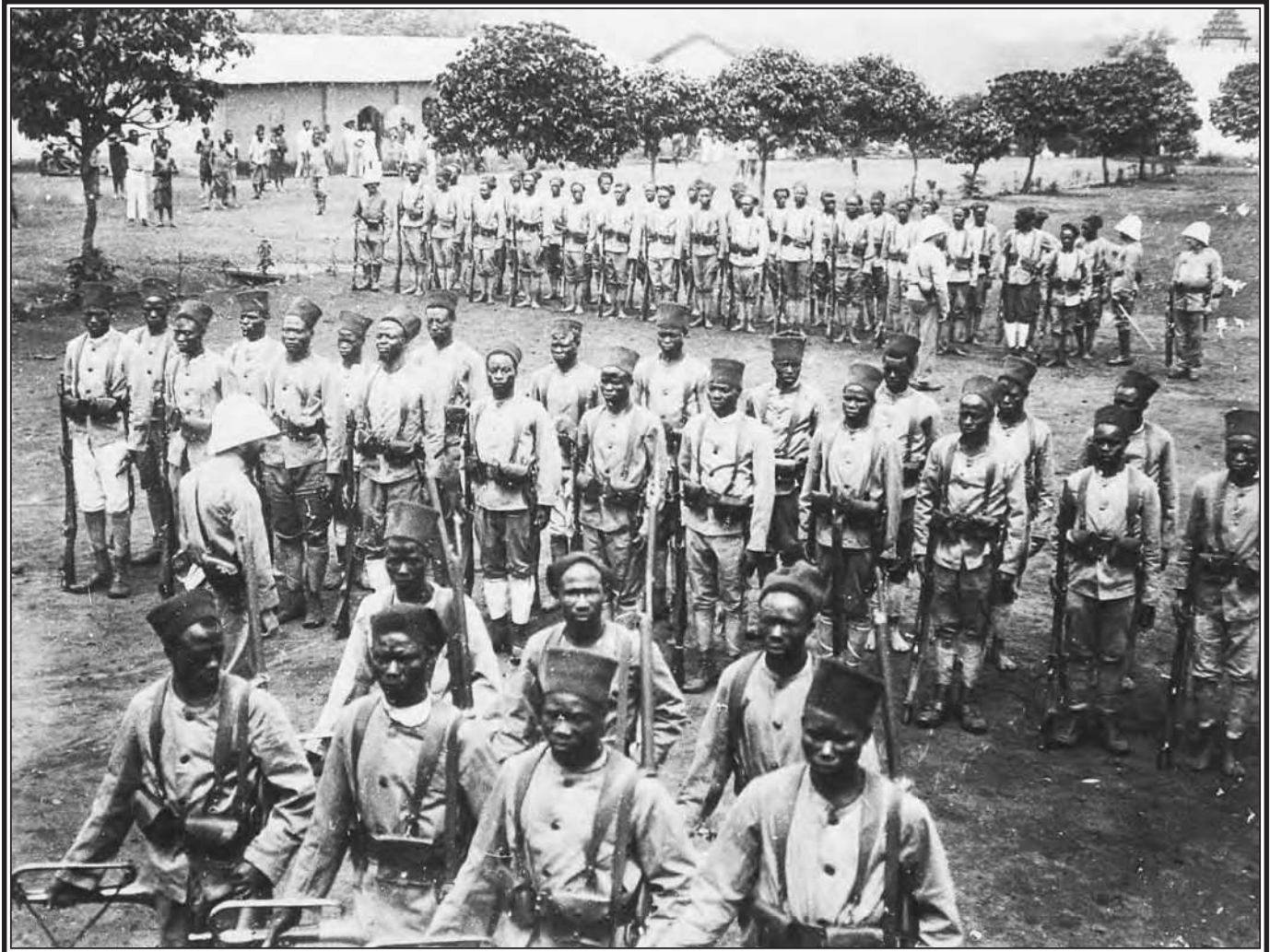
By 1920 the military had brought the region entirely under French control, and the borders of the colonies were fixed. Each colony had its own capital city, budget, and lieutenant governor. Reporting to the lieutenant governor were regional officials called commandants, who had responsibility for managing districts within the colony.

French West Africa had a highly centralized colonial government. The lieutenant governor of each colony reported to the governor-general in Dakar. He was the only colonial official allowed to communicate directly with the government in France. All laws regarding the economy, education, and health originated in Dakar, and decisions on all local matters needed approval from the governor-general. As the management of the colonies grew more complex, authority became even more concentrated in Dakar. For this reason, Senegal enjoyed a position of prominence within French West Africa.

Under French colonial administration, Africans were confined to the lower ranks of government, where they worked as clerks, interpreters, and police. The French also appointed Africans to serve as chiefs, who represented the colonial government on a local level. The chiefs held considerable power. Their responsibilities included collecting taxes, supervising public works, and recruiting soldiers and laborers for the colony. However, they were constantly required to prove their loyalty to the colonial authorities to maintain their positions.

Regardless of its location or history, each of the colonies in French West Africa was forced to adopt the same political and economic structure. As a result, the colonies developed similar laws and political institutions. They also shared a common tax system. Customs taxes on exports financed the budget of the federation, and a personal tax imposed on Africans provided revenue to the individual colonies.

French West Africa



French authorities trained these Senegalese soldiers in the 1930s. Such troops were expected to help defend France's claims to French West Africa against European rivals.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

The French West African colonies provided raw materials to France and purchased goods manufactured in France. Agriculture was the most important economic activity in the colonies, each of which developed its own cash crops*, such as peanuts, coffee, cocoa, and bananas. The emphasis on cash crops and export limited the development of other economic activities in the region.

In 1946 the French government made the West African colonies overseas "territories" of France. Each territory had an elected legislature and a representative in the French parliament. This was an important step toward the breakup of French West Africa. The process accelerated in 1956, when a French law called Loi-Cadre reduced the role of the colonial government in the federation. Two years later France changed the federation into an organization of states called the French Community. Member states gained responsibility for all governmental matters except foreign policy, currency, and defense.

In 1960 the colonies of French West Africa gained independence as separate nations. They each signed agreements with France that established new political and economic ties with the former colonial power.



French West Africa

Today, these nations continue to reflect the influence of French West Africa in their language, administration, and culture. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, French Equatorial Africa, Government and Political Systems, History of Africa.**)

Fugard, Athol

1932–
South African playwright

Athol Fugard is one of Africa’s best-known and most respected playwrights. His plays explore the personal suffering of individuals living under APARTHEID—the policy of racial segregation followed in SOUTH AFRICA from 1948 to 1994. Growing up in a poor white family placed Fugard in contact with the poor and oppressed black population of South Africa from an early age. Later he hitchhiked across Africa, and worked as the only white crewmember on a steam ship.

Fugard returned to South Africa in 1956 and married actress Sheila Meiring. He worked for a time in a court that tried people accused of violating the nation’s pass laws that prohibited nonwhites from traveling in “white” areas without a pass card. His experiences helped shape his view of the cruelty of apartheid that is reflected in his work.

In 1961 Fugard staged *Blood Knot*, the first play performed in South Africa with a mixed-race cast. He collaborated with black theater companies and protested the segregation of South African theaters. In 1967 the government seized his passport and began to watch his activities closely. Until the 1990 play *My Children! My Africa!*, Fugard’s plays did not openly discuss politics. However, they clearly criticized apartheid by portraying the pain and distress caused by racism.

Fugard’s powerful and groundbreaking work has won him international praise. During the 1980s, *A Lesson from Aloes*, “*Master Harold*” . . . *And the Boys*, and *The Road to Mecca* were widely acclaimed in New York and London. In 1989 *Time* magazine named Fugard “the greatest active playwright in English.” In addition to his many plays, Fugard also has written several television and film scripts, a novel, and hundreds of newspaper articles. (See also **Literature, Theater.**)

Fulani

Today one of the largest ethnic groups in West Africa, the Fulani (or Fulbe) were first recorded as living in the Senegal River valley and western GUINEA. In about the 1100s, they expanded eastward. The Fulani are now widely scattered, with large concentrations in NIGERIA, SENEGAL, Guinea, MALI, CAMEROON, and NIGER. In French-speaking areas they are known as Peul.

The Fulani speak Fulfulde (also called Fula) and in many cases the dominant language of the area as well. Although originally migrant herders, some Fulani settled into towns and practiced agriculture in the 1100s. These town dwellers adopted Islam* and played an important part in spreading the religion in West Africa. In the 1800s a Fulani scholar named UTHMAN DAN FODIO created an Islamic empire in what is now Nigeria.

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Gabon

During the 1900s more and more Fulani exchanged their nomadic lifestyle for settled communities. The disappearance of grasslands and the introduction of modern boundaries between African nations contributed to this movement.

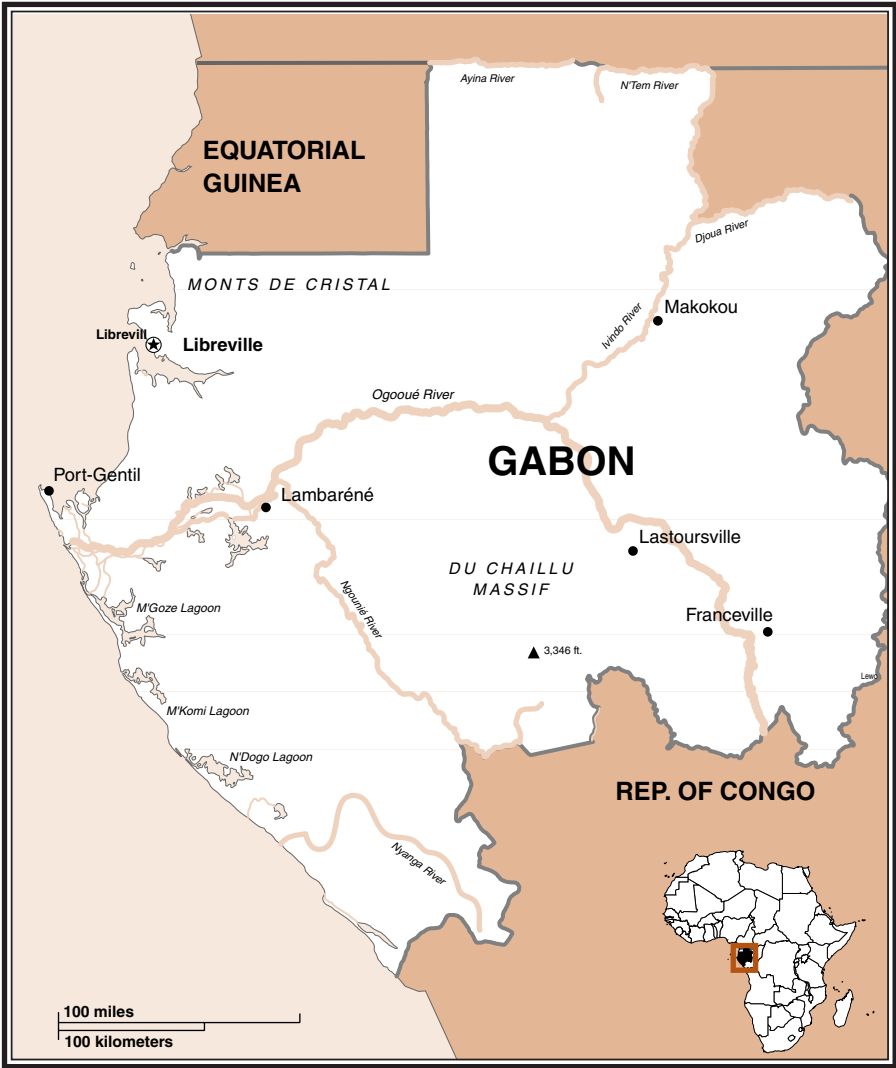
Gabon

* sub-Saharan referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Gabon is a heavily forested country that straddles the equator on Africa's Atlantic Coast. Its abundance of natural resources, particularly oil, has made it one of the most prosperous countries in sub-Saharan* Africa.

GEOGRAPHY, PEOPLES, AND ECONOMY

The rain forests and rivers that dominate Gabon's landscape have heavily influenced the country's social and economic development. Before the discovery of oil, forest products were the source of Gabon's wealth.



Gabon

On a country road in Gabon, a young woman carries a sewing machine on her head.



Because of the difficulty of traveling through the dense forests, goods were transported by boat along the rivers.

Geography. The coastal plain and much of Gabon's interior are relatively flat, but mountains rise up in both the northwest and south-central regions. Dense tropical rain forest covers three quarters of the country. A number of rivers—including the Ogooué, the largest—flow through the forest. The Ogooué served as the country's main transportation route until a railroad was built in the 1970s.

Over half of Gabon's population lives along the coast, in the capital of Libreville and the city of Port-Gentil. In the past, many rural inhabi-



Gabon

tants lived near rivers running through the forest. Today, government-built roads lead to most inland villages.

Peoples. The population of Gabon is made up of a number of Bantu-speaking peoples with similar cultures and beliefs. The traditional social structure was based on family compounds. Each compound consisted of a male leader and his extended family, as well as friends, slaves, and dependents. Widespread ancestor worship strengthened family ties. The family compounds were grouped in villages, which in turn might belong to districts made up of several villages. Bonds based on trade, marriage, mutual defense, and shared rituals helped to unite the districts.

Economy. During the early colonial period, timber and rubber were the most important products of Gabon's economy. In the 1920s and 1930s, cocoa and coffee were introduced as cash crops* in northern Gabon. Since the country became independent in 1960, oil has dominated the economy. Today, largely because of oil, Gabon's per person income is among the highest in sub-Saharan Africa. However, for the most part, the benefits of the oil boom have been limited to a small group of citizens. Gabon's other major exports are timber, manganese, and uranium.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

No major kingdoms existed in Gabon prior to the colonial era. The first Europeans to visit the region made trade arrangements with coastal groups who acted as go-betweens with peoples of the interior. Coastal traders carried European products and salt inland. Dealing with village leaders in the rain forest, they exchanged the European goods for slaves and ivory to be shipped abroad.

The Colonial Era. Several European powers sought to control Gabon, but the French were the first to establish a permanent base. In 1843 they set up a naval station at Libreville and, over the next 50 years, explored the country. Real control of the area came only with the expeditions of Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza, who explored the Ogooué River and beyond between 1874 and 1883. In the 1890s Brazza convinced local chiefs to sign treaties that the French used as the basis for taking over the region.

The French government gave several companies exclusive rights to exploit* Gabon's timber and rubber in exchange for building roads and improving the land. But poor management, high operating expenses, and the collapse of the rubber market led to the failure of most of these ventures.

The economy improved with the introduction of coffee and cocoa farming in the early 1900s. However, in the 1920s educated Gabonese began to call for more political rights and a change in French policies. After World War II, France allowed Gabonese to hold seats in both the French National Assembly and the Gabonese Territorial Assembly. In 1960 Gabon gained independence.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Gabon



Gabon

POPULATION:

1,208,436 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

103,347 sq. mi. (267,658 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Fang, Mpongwe, Eshira

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 60%, Traditional 40%, about 3,000 Muslims

CITIES:

Libreville (capital), 462,000 (1999 est.); Port-Gentil, Franceville, Lambaréné

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

100 in. (2,540 mm) on coast, 150 in. (3,810 mm) in interior

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$6,400

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

*Agricultural: cocoa, coffee, palm oil, rubber, okoumé wood
Manufacturing: petroleum refining, lumber, chemicals, mineral and wood processing, food and beverage processing, cement, textiles*

Mining: petroleum, iron ore, manganese, uranium, gold

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. President elected by universal suffrage.

Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale, elected by universal suffrage, and Senate, elected by regional and municipal delegates.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1964 Prime Minister Léon Mba, president, 1961–1964 Jean-Hilaire Aubame

1964–1967 President Léon Mba

1967– President Albert-Bernard (El Hadj Omar) Bongo

ARMED FORCES:

4,700 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–16; literacy rate 63%

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Postcolonial Gabon. The first ruler of the newly independent nation was prime minister Léon Mba. He quickly moved to make Gabon a single-party state. By 1964 opposition to Mba's rule led to a coup*, but the French sent troops to Gabon to restore Mba to power. Mba chose his own successor, Albert-Bernard Bongo, who took over after Mba's death in 1967.

Until 1990 Bongo—now known as El Hadj Omar Bongo—ruthlessly crushed all attempts to establish a multiparty democracy. However, falling oil prices in the late 1980s weakened the economy and set the stage for political change. The government cut back social services, which caused widespread unrest. At a series of conferences in the 1990s, the government agreed to various political reforms. Nevertheless, Bongo's party has managed to maintain control of both houses of the legislature as well as the presidency. Most of the promised reforms, such as freedom of speech and the press, have not yet been fully realized. (See also **Bantu Peoples, Colonialism in Africa, Forests and Forestry.**)

Galawdewos

ca. 1522–1559
Emperor of Ethiopia



Galawdewos took the throne of ETHIOPIA in 1540. At the time much of the country was under the control of Ahmed Grañ, leader of the Muslim kingdom of Adal. When a Portuguese expedition arrived in Ethiopia in 1541, Galawdewos formed an alliance with its leader, Cristovão da Gama, to fight the Muslims. Grañ killed da Gama, but Galawdewos took charge of the remaining Portuguese forces. In 1543 they killed Grañ and ended the war.

Gambia, The

The Ethiopians were Oriental Orthodox Christians with their own church. The Portuguese sent Catholic missionaries to persuade Galawdewos to accept the authority of the Pope in Rome. Although grateful to the Portuguese for their help in battle, Galawdewos skillfully defended the ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH and its practices against the Catholic missionaries. The Portuguese eventually gave up their attempt to force their religion on the Ethiopians. Several years later Galawdewos was killed in another war with Adal.

Gama, Vasco da

ca. 1460–1524
Portuguese navigator
and discoverer

Vasco da Gama discovered the route around Africa to India and changed the nature of trade between east and west. Bartolomeu Dias was the first European to sail around Africa's Cape of Good Hope and into the Indian Ocean. In 1497 the Portuguese ruler Manuel I sent Vasco da Gama on a voyage that would follow Dias's route and then continue to India.

Da Gama left from the Portuguese city of Lisbon, rounded the Cape, and reached the east coast of what is now South Africa on Christmas Day 1497. From there he slowly proceeded north along the continent's east coast, reaching the city of Mombasa the following April. Farther north he found a Muslim pilot to accompany him across the Indian Ocean to India. After reaching the Indian city of Calicut on May 20, 1488, da Gama returned home and received great honor.

In 1502–1503, da Gama made a second voyage to India and brought back trade treaties and enormous quantities of spices and other goods. He was rewarded with lands, wealth, and the title of Count of Vidigueira. Appointed viceroy of India in 1524, da Gama died a few months after his arrival. (*See also Travel and Exploration.*)

Gambia, The

The Gambia is the smallest independent state on the mainland of Africa. A long, narrow country located along the shores of the Gambia River, it is surrounded on three sides by SENEGAL. A former British colony, the Gambia established a successful democracy after gaining independence. In recent years tensions with Senegal, rebellions, and economic problems have caused periods of instability.

Geography. The Gambia stretches inland from the Atlantic coast for about 200 miles. The country extends outward only about six miles on each side of the Gambia River. The river is one of the most easily navigated waterways in West Africa, with an excellent natural harbor near the nation's capital of Banjul.

Close to the Atlantic, the river is salty and mangrove* swamps line the shores. Farther upriver the river water is fresh, and the land is suitable for growing rice. Still farther upriver, the banks climb to a savanna* region, where grains such as millet and sorghum grow well. In the uppermost river area, hills and streams run through plains used for grazing cattle.

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Gambia, The

* subsistence farming raising only enough food to live on

Economy. The Gambia has long been a poor country. Its economy is based on subsistence farming* and sales of peanuts—the main export crop. However, agricultural production has decreased since the 1960s, due to such factors as decreasing rainfall, overcultivation of the land, and the migration of young people from the villages to urban areas or other countries.

Access to the Atlantic Ocean and inland waterways have made the Gambia a center for foreign imports. Cash earned from peanut exports is used to buy European manufactured goods, which Gambian merchants often sell to importers in Senegal and MALI. In recent years Gambians have developed a tourist industry with hotels on the coast and tourist camps upriver. In addition, the Abuko Nature Reserve, created to preserve endangered species, has become a tourist attraction. Gambians produce tie-dyed items, woodcarvings, silver objects, and other crafts to sell to foreign visitors. Most tourists come from northern Europe, but a few also come from the United States.

International aid plays an important role in the Gambian economy. Agencies such as the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank, and the U.S. Agency for International Development provide not only money but also expert assistance in medicine, agriculture, veterinary science, and forestry.

In a Gambian village a group of workers dig a well to supply drinking water. Behind them, the conical roofs of houses appear between the trees.





Republic of the Gambia

POPULATION:

1,367,124 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

4,361 sq. mi. (11,295 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English (official); Mandinka, Wolof, Fula

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Dalasi

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 90%, Christian 9%, Traditional 1%

CITIES:

Banjul (capital), 42,407 (1993 est.); Brikama, Basse, Bakua, Farafenni, Serekunda, Kuntaur, Bansang

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

40 in. (1,016 mm)

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,030 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: livestock, peanuts, rice, palm kernels, fish, millet, sorghum, corn, cassava, forestry

Manufacturing: peanut, fish, and hide processing; beverages, woodworking, metalworking, clothing, agricultural machinery assembly

Tourism is also a major source of income.

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Great Britain, 1965. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: House of Assembly, elected, and Cabinet, appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1962–1970 Prime Minister Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara

1970–1994 President Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara

1994– Lieutenant (later Colonel) Yahya Jammeh, president since 1996

ARMED FORCES:

800 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Free for ages 7–13; literacy rate 39%

History and Government. The quest for a route into the interior of Africa, the search for gold, and the SLAVE TRADE attracted various European powers to the Gambia after about 1500. After the British outlawed the slave trade in 1807, they established a settlement called Bathurst (present-day Banjul) at the mouth of the river. Their purpose was to prevent slave traders from entering or leaving the river. By the early 1900s Britain had a protectorate* in the Gambia, which it ruled through tribal chiefs until the 1950s.

Independence came in 1965. Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara headed the new government for 29 years, first as prime minister and then as president. In July 1981, when Jawara was traveling overseas, revolutionary leader Kukoi Samba Sanyang tried to overthrow Jawara's government. Sanyang was defeated with the help of troops from Senegal.

As a result of their joint effort to put down the attempted coup*, the Gambia and Senegal formed a confederation in 1982 called Senegambia. Once the crisis was over, however, Gambians began to resent the Senegalese troops stationed in their midst. Senegal eventually withdrew the troops, but Gambians still complained about Senegal's restrictions on trade. The confederation was finally dissolved in 1989.

Jawara's government acquired a reputation as one of the successful democracies in Africa. The country had a number of political parties, an elected parliament, an independent court system, and a free press. Nevertheless, in 1994 a group led by army officer Yahya Jammeh accused the government of corruption and staged a coup that forced Jawara to leave the country.

Jammeh's government suspended the constitution, banned all political parties, and exercised strict control of the press. The government

* **protectorate** weak state under the control of a stronger state

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

Gambia, The

shifted its focus from civil rights to development, especially in the areas of health, education, and agriculture. A new constitution, favoring the military, was adopted in 1996. Since the 1994 coup, most of the aid from Europe, the United States, and Japan has been cut off. However, NIGERIA and LIBYA have sent shipments of rice. In addition, Jammeh has turned to Cuba, Iran, EGYPT, and Pakistan for aid.

People. The Gambia is the mostly densely populated country in West Africa. Among the peoples inhabiting its narrow land area, the Mandinka—originally from Mali—are the largest and most widespread. The FULANI, the second largest group, are concentrated in the middle and upper river regions, where they raise cattle. Many of the Wolof work in Banjul as traders, civil servants and artisans*. Other significant groups include the Jola and the Serahuli. (*See also Agriculture, Tourism, Trade, Transportation.*)

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker.



Marcus Garvey dreamed of creating an African nation ruled by blacks. Here he appears in uniform as the self-proclaimed president of the "Republic of Africa."

Gender Roles and Sexuality

GAMES

See *Sports and Recreation*

Garvey, Marcus Mosiah

1887–1940
Pan-African leader

* **charismatic** having a special charm or appeal that arouses public loyalty and enthusiasm

Marcus Mosiah Garvey played an important role in Pan-Africanism, a movement aimed at unifying blacks throughout the world in protest against racism and colonialism. At the time, most of Africa was controlled by European colonial powers. One of Garvey's greatest contributions was making the world aware of the problems that blacks in Africa faced under their rule.

Born in Saint Ann's Bay, Jamaica, Garvey founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914. The UNIA worked to draw attention to the concerns of black people. It also tried to improve the lot of all blacks by encouraging them to help themselves and each other. One of the goals of the UNIA was to create an African nation governed by blacks. This idea eventually became part of a "Back to Africa" movement that urged blacks in the United States and the West Indies to move to Africa.

In 1916 Garvey traveled to the United States. He was a charismatic* leader, who became very popular in black communities. However, support for Garvey and his ideas fell sharply in the mid-1920s. His fiery attacks on colonialism had angered many colonial authorities, who banned him from Africa. In 1925 he was imprisoned on charges of U.S. mail fraud. Two years later he was deported from the United States and went to England. He died a relatively forgotten man. (*See also Liberia, Negritude.*)

Gender Roles and Sexuality

* **subordinate** belonging to a lower rank, class, or position

Gender roles are the activities, responsibilities, and rights that a society considers normal and appropriate for men and women. There is no single model of gender roles in Africa. The continent's diverse cultures have many different ideas about male and female roles, although in general women have been subordinate* to men in both public and family life. Like gender roles, notions about sex and standards of sexual behavior differ widely across Africa. For several generations, however, African attitudes toward both gender roles and sexuality have been changing, especially in the cities and in areas where Western influence has been strongest.

Gender Roles. Learning how people of each gender are expected to behave is a key part of growing up in any society. In Africa, as elsewhere, men and women have traditionally had different roles in the family and community and in the work they do.

The earliest economies in Africa were based on HUNTING AND GATHERING wild foods. A few societies, such as the !Kung in the KALAHARI DESERT and the Mbuti in the rain forest of CONGO (KINSHASA), survived almost completely unchanged into modern times. Through them, scientists have



Gender Roles and Sexuality

been able to study the ancient hunting-and-gathering way of life. Early theories about biological and social development in humans stressed the importance of meat eating and of men's roles as hunters. Today, however, researchers know that women were the primary economic producers in many early societies. Between 60 and 80 percent of the calories consumed by people in the existing hunting-and-gathering societies come from the fruits, roots, grains, nuts, honey, and other foods gathered by women.

This pattern did not change after agriculture took hold across most of Africa. Women today perform between 60 and 80 percent of the continent's agricultural labor. Throughout most of rural Africa, their roles in farming differ from men's, a fact that is illustrated by the way particular tools are associated with gender. The ax is considered a man's tool because men clear and prepare the land. They also plow the fields. The hoe is reserved for women, who plant, harvest, process, and store the crops. Women are also responsible for most tasks involved in producing food for families, including obtaining water and firewood, often across long distances.

Although work patterns have changed since around 1900, the division of labor is still based on gender in many cases. In some cultures, such as the Nandi people of KENYA, men and women cultivate the same crops, but for different purposes. The men raise cash crops*; the women focus on subsistence crops, grown for family use. Among other peoples, men and women cultivate different crops. In NIGERIA, IGBO men raise yams, while the women grow cassava*.

The shift to an economy based on cash during the colonial period generally benefited African men more than women. In most cases colonial officials recognized male rather than female authority, and they conducted their business with men. Women continued to be important producers, but often the goods they produced were sold by their fathers, husbands, or brothers. The belief that men are entitled to the income from women's work has not entirely died out in modern Africa.

Social and economic policies of the colonial powers generally favored men. Since independence, the differences between men's and women's roles have become even greater as a result of various laws. Consequently, women have lagged behind men in education, literacy*, and access to good jobs.

In African cities women generally make a living as traders or domestic servants rather than as salaried employees. Some work as prostitutes. In western Africa women dominate trading in local markets. Among the HAUSA of northern Nigeria, married women are required by religious law to stay inside their homes. Some manage to run trading businesses, though, by using their children to carry messages and goods. In eastern Africa women often divide their time between trading and farming. Many women in eastern African cities produce and sell beer.

Gender Roles and Islam. In the largely Muslim countries of Africa, attitudes toward gender roles and sexuality have been shaped by Islam and Arab cultural traditions. In traditional Arab societies, men and women have different privileges and women are subordinate to men. Many Muslim nations still allow men to take multiple wives, though

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **cassava** starchy root plant; source of tapioca

* **literacy** ability to read and write



Gender Roles and Sexuality

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

the practice is becoming less common. In religious life women may be barred from entering the mosque* or restricted to a special section. In rural areas chores are divided by gender, with men taking care of large livestock such as camels and women tending small animals.

In recent years urbanization, education, and contact with other cultures have brought new freedom and opportunity for Muslim women in Africa. At the same time, the subordination of women to men in families remains because the home is one of the few areas where a man can still exert his authority. Nevertheless, the roles of Muslim men and women are constantly changing. During the second half of the 1900s, in nations such as EGYPT, MOROCCO, ALGERIA, and SUDAN, women became more active in politics, even fighting in revolutions and forming political parties.

Sexuality and Sexual Behavior. Like gender roles, sexual behavior and attitudes about sex are shaped by a society's culture and are learned by each new generation. In African societies sexual norms can vary according to class, age, religion, or ethnic background.

Researchers have uncovered two very different attitudes in Africa toward sexuality in general. In many African societies, people enter casually into sexual relationships and view sex mainly in terms of reproduction. Many non-Muslim groups traditionally expressed little concern about casual sex, and some cultures have regarded prostitution as a business transaction. For example, in NAIROBI, Kenya, during the colonial period, women who became prostitutes could often acquire greater economic security than they might have gained through marriage.

Other African societies, however, regard sex as something powerful and dangerous that can destroy the social order if certain taboos* are broken. Rules regarding sex might require that a particular ritual be followed or might forbid relations between certain partners. Many eastern African societies consider it taboo to discuss sex publicly, and forbid even married partners to refer directly to the sex act. The Ganda people of UGANDA have sex only in the dark, because seeing one's partner naked is taboo.

Views of the sexual role of women vary widely in Africa. In some cultures, such as the Kgatla of BOTSWANA and the !Kung, both men and women enjoy sex and speak openly about it. But in many societies, women are not expected to enjoy sex. In Sudan a woman who shows direct interest in sex faces severe penalties. Some researchers believe that one of the main reasons for the custom of female circumcision, surgery on the sexual organs of girls and young women, is to control women's sexuality by making intercourse painful and difficult. The practice occurs in varying degrees of severity in more than 20 African nations.

Homosexuality can be found in Africa today, and there is evidence that it existed before the arrival of Europeans. In places where boys and young men lived apart from the rest of the community, it was common for them to engage in homosexual relationships before reaching the age of marriage and fatherhood. During the colonial era, men migrated in large numbers to all-male mining towns. Older men entered into "mine marriages" with younger men, who played both domestic and sexual roles for which they were paid. The younger men used the money to

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm



The Women's Wars

Although overlooked by many historians and politicians, African women have made their presence felt and have reacted strongly to attempts to control them. In the 1920s, when British administrators in southern Nigeria tried to collect fees from female traders in markets, the women united in the "women's war." They staged mass demonstrations and pillaged administrative buildings, forcing officials to eliminate the fees. Another "women's war" broke out in 1933 in the city of Lomé, Togo, when authorities tried to tax fabric merchants. Women took to the streets, bringing everything to a standstill until the tax was abolished.



Gender Roles and Sexuality

marry women and establish themselves in adult life. In some African cultures, the bonds of affection and friendship between girls or women have included sexual relations. For many individuals, same-sex relationships were a phase in the life cycle, although some cultures have included permanently homosexual members. In the SWAHILI Muslim society of Mombasa, Kenya, for example, male and female homosexuals are open about their behavior.

One institution found in Africa—but nowhere else in the world—is the female marriage, a socially recognized union between two women who do not have sexual relations with one another. The “wife” may engage in sex with men, while the “husband,” who is the senior woman of the pair, is regarded by her society as a male. A woman may take this role to gain political status, accumulate wealth, or obtain heirs. (*See also AIDS, Family, Islam in Africa, Marriage Systems, Women in Africa.*)

Genocide and Violence

Genocide refers to the deliberate and systematic killing of an ethnic, racial, or religious group. In recent years Africa has had a tragic history of genocide and violence. Millions of lives have been lost in civil wars and other conflicts, while tens of millions of Africans have had to flee their homelands and live as refugees. The increase of violent conflicts during the late 1990s devastated many African nations and severely damaged their economies. In some cases this has led to the partial and even total collapse of states.

Africa has witnessed violence throughout its history. Recent upheavals, however, reveal some new characteristics. In the decades since independence, African nations have faced the challenge of trying to unite diverse groups whose identities are based on race, ethnicity, language, culture, and religion. They have also grappled with the problem of determining how these groups should share power, national wealth, and economic opportunities. In many cases, nations have failed to meet these challenges, and the result has been staggering levels of genocide and violence among competing groups.

Traditional African Society. Although conflict is a fact of life, people generally prefer to cooperate rather than fight. The extent to which the members of any community live together in peace depends in large part on the strength of their culture and the effectiveness of their codes of behavior. Stable groups accustomed to working together tend to avoid physical conflict, while instability and disunity contribute to outbreaks of violence.

Studies of African cultures have noted that people in traditional societies generally lived together peacefully. Their cooperation grew out of a common identity based on KINSHIP, language, ethnicity, race, and religion. Traditional behaviors, enforced by tribal leaders and elders, helped to bring about unity and social harmony.

Conflict in Modern Africa. Some of the conflicts troubling Africa today grew out of its history of colonialism and of national policies after independence. European powers created colonies that largely ignored

Genocide and Violence



In the 1990s tens of thousands of people were killed during the civil war in Somalia. Here, a group of U.S. Marines (right) force a man to lay down his gun in Mogadishu, the capital.

the traditional divisions and boundaries of African societies. Each colony contained a variety of racial, ethnic, cultural, and religious groups that may or may not have lived and worked together in the past. Groups sharing a common identity were often broken apart, and colonial authorities encouraged different groups to remain separate.

During the struggle for independence, the various groups in a colony usually worked together to gain freedom from European control. After winning independence, however, conflicts arose among these same groups over who would control the power and wealth of the new country. Some African leaders tried to create a new group identity based on national citizenship. In many cases, however, one group tried to impose its own culture on the rest of the nation. Doing so provided a basis for discrimination* and often led to outbreaks of violence as minority groups fought oppression* by others. Members of the dominant group, in turn, sometimes took action to protect their own power and privilege.

Most African countries are now more or less united on the issue of national borders but are still struggling to bring together diverse groups of citizens. Power, participation in government, wealth, and opportunity are not shared equally among the competing groups. The greater the gulf between the groups, the more likely the breakdown of order and eruption of violence. In some instances the conflicts have escalated and turned into genocidal wars.

Since the 1960s, civil wars in ANGOLA, SUDAN, and MOZAMBIQUE have resulted in the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people. Similar wars and violence have led to the collapse of SOMALIA and LIBERIA, and conflicts threaten to overwhelm other African nations as well. Perhaps the

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

* **oppression** unjust or cruel exercise of authority



Genocide and Violence

worst case of genocide on the continent occurred in RWANDA in the mid-1990s. Conflict between the Hutu and Tutsi in Rwanda erupted in a wave of genocide that claimed the lives of more than 500,000 people and forced millions more into exile as refugees in neighboring countries. Rwanda's neighbor, BURUNDI, has been devastated by genocidal wars between Hutu and Tutsi groups as well.

Finding Solutions. Some African nations have tried hard to resolve ethnic, religious, and racial divisions and reduce the levels of conflict in their societies. However, huge differences in the wealth, opportunity, and role in government of various groups exist in many countries.

Other nations and international agencies have tried to help find solutions to these problems, and they have provided much needed aid in times of crisis. The basis for lasting peace and stability, however, must be found by Africans themselves. While honoring traditional distinctions, all groups must learn to respect and tolerate others and to share power and resources fairly. (*See also Class Structure and Caste; Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Ethnic Groups and Identity; Human Rights.*)

GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICA

See *Climate; Ecosystems*

GERMAN COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa*

Ghana

The West African nation of Ghana was the first country in sub-Saharan* Africa to gain independence from colonial rule. Known as the “Black Star of Africa,” Ghana was one of the continent’s most prosperous countries in the early years of its independence. However, poor economic management and ongoing political turmoil have taken their toll on this promising nation.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

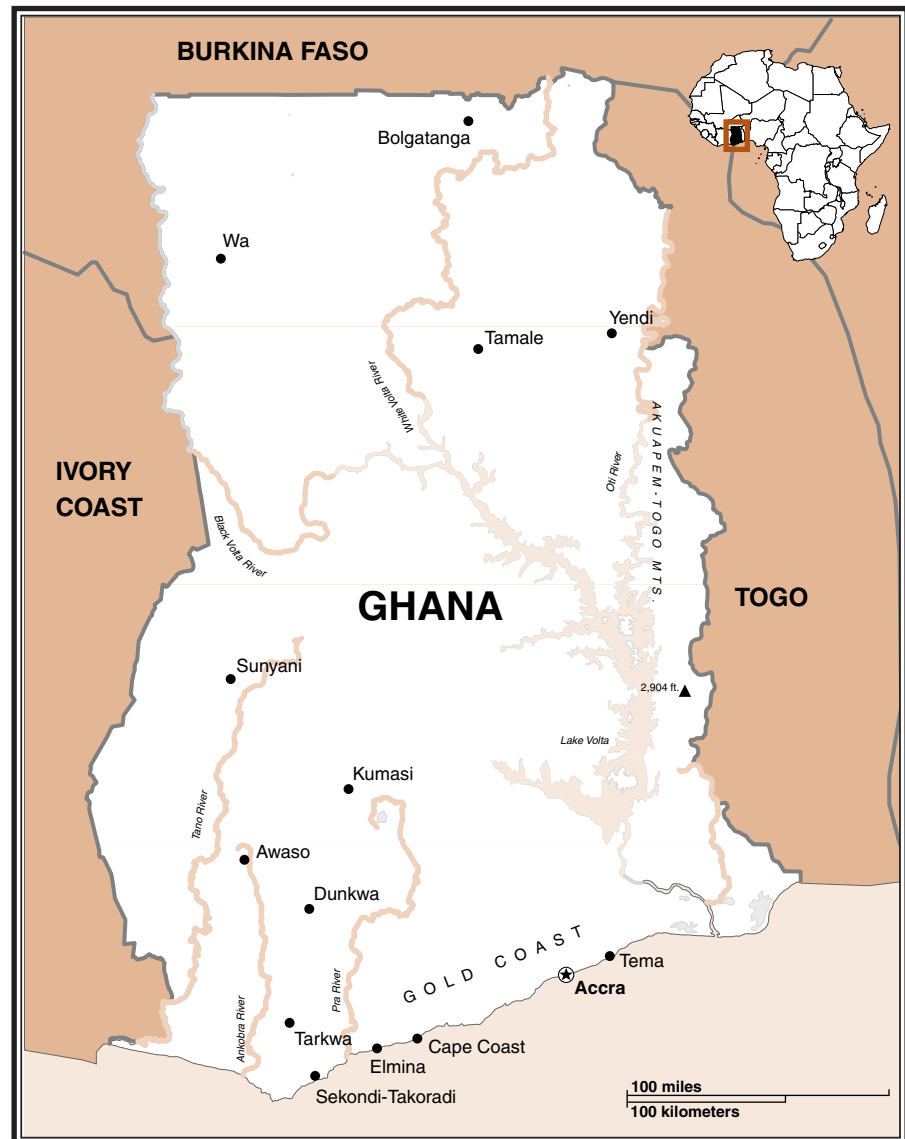
Ghana is a flat country with several large rivers and a climate that is mostly hot and humid. Well suited for agriculture, the land also contains rich deposits of gold and bauxite. The overwhelming majority of Ghana’s people make their living in agriculture and cocoa-growing. ACCRA, the capital city, is the center of the country’s political life.

Geography. Ghana is dominated by flat plains that rarely rise above 1,600 feet. The country has two mountain ranges—along its eastern border with TOGO—but the highest point is less than 3,000 feet above sea level. The country’s largest rivers, the White Volta and the Black Volta,



See map in *Minerals and Mining* (vol. 3).

Ghana



join in the center of the country to form the Volta River. The Volta flows southeast through Lake Volta before emptying into the Atlantic Ocean.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **deciduous** referring to trees and shrubs that lose their leaves

Ghana includes several environmental zones, each with a different climate. In the north are the Guinea savanna* and the Sudan savanna, which have a single rainy season and relatively little rainfall. The southern part of Ghana is divided into high rain forest, deciduous* forest, and coastal savanna. The south has two rainy seasons. The forests receive fairly high amounts of rainfall, but the coastal savanna is the driest region in the country. In the center of the country, the forest-savanna transitional zone is wetter than the north but drier than the forests of the south.

The Sudan savanna in the north is the hottest part of the country, and the high rain forest of the south is the coolest. However, temperatures remain relatively constant throughout Ghana, ranging from 70°F to 95°F, and the humidity stays fairly high most of the year.

Ghana

Celebrating Young Womanhood

Several Ghanaian cultures place a great deal of importance on female puberty and have developed elaborate rituals to celebrate it. Among the Fante of southern Ghana, the rite of *bragoro* lasts a full week. During this time the girl is bathed, oiled, and perfumed, and she usually stays at home or in special quarters. She and her family also eat special foods, and the ritual ends with a feast. In the Dangme state, several different groups perform a similar puberty ritual for girls, called *dipo*.

Economy. Ghana's economy is still based on the most important industries of its colonial period, gold mining and agriculture. Gold continues to be Ghana's main source of foreign earnings. Diamonds and bauxite, an aluminum ore, are also mined in Ghana. Aside from the gold industry, though, mining and manufacturing play a fairly small role in the national economy. However, the country has a developing petroleum industry. Ghana's agricultural exports include cocoa, pineapples, kola nuts, cottonseed, and palm kernels.

HISTORY AND POLITICS

Prior to colonization almost all of what is now central Ghana was part of the ASANTE empire. The coastal strip was inhabited by the Fante and Ga peoples. The first Europeans to arrive in the area were the Portuguese, who built forts on the coast in the late 1400s and traded for gold. Over the next centuries, the English and Dutch also established trading posts.

Enslaved Africans were a major export of the region's European traders, with figures at one point reaching some 10,000 slaves a year. After the British outlawed the SLAVE TRADE in 1807, they formed alliances against the Asante, who were considered the main source of slaves. The British made Ghana a colony in 1874, naming it the Gold Coast after its most important export. By 1901 they had conquered the Asante and the land north of the Asante kingdom. Modern Ghana consists of the British Gold Coast colony, plus the western part of the former German colony of Togoland, which passed to British control after World War I.

Independence. Resistance to British rule began in the late 1800s, especially among educated Ghanaians. However, no significant movement toward independence occurred until after World War II. Kwame NKRUMAH, leader of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC), was Ghana's first important national political figure.

In 1949 Nkrumah started the Convention People's Party (CPP), which called for complete independence for Ghana. After the CPP led a series of strikes and boycotts*, the British jailed Nkrumah. However, to calm the political unrest, Britain made provisions for Ghanaians to have a local representative government. Nkrumah was allowed to run for office. When the CPP won an overwhelming victory in the first elections, Nkrumah became prime minister. At the time a British colonial governor still held ultimate power.

In 1954 a new constitution provided a framework for self-government for Ghana, and the CPP won control of a newly elected assembly. The National Liberation Movement (NLM), based in the central Asante region, challenged Nkrumah and the CPP, leading to demonstrations and widespread violence. In 1956 the British called new elections. Although the NLM and its allies did well in the north and the Asante country, the CPP won the overall vote. On March 6, 1957, Ghana became an independent country with Nkrumah as its first president. The name Ghana—taken at independence—came from the first medieval* empire of West Africa. However, modern Ghana has no actual ties to the historical Ghana.

* **boycott** refusal to buy goods, as a means of protest

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in Western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

Ghana

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **sector** part; subdivision of a society

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Troubles and Unrest. At the time of independence, Ghana had one of Africa's strongest economies. The CPP did not nationalize* many existing private businesses, but it did create several state-owned industries and farms that proved costly and inefficient. Nkrumah took steps to expand Ghana's industrial sector* and to provide free public education. These programs were funded by taxing the agricultural sector and borrowing from foreign countries. As Ghana's debt grew, so did government corruption. In 1964 Nkrumah outlawed all political opposition, and Ghana became a one-party state. Two years later, military leaders overthrew Nkrumah in a relatively bloodless coup*.

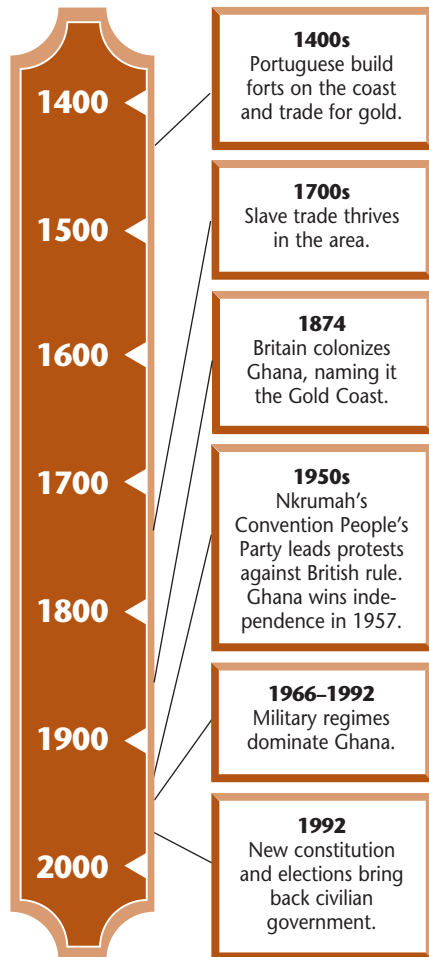
The new military regime sought to undo many of Nkrumah's policies. It sold off the state-owned businesses and devalued Ghana's currency so that its exchange rate reflected its actual value in world markets. When elections were held in 1969, Kofi BUSIA became prime minister in the restored civilian government. Busia continued the free-market policies of the military government, but the economy did not respond and unemployment continued to grow. Three years after giving up power, the military again seized control of the government.

General Ignatius Acheampong, leader of the military government, revalued Ghana's currency and refused to pay its foreign debts. Though highly popular within the country, these steps proved a disaster for the

Gold mining brings much-needed foreign revenue to Ghana's economy. This miner uses a small train to carry ore out of the Ashanti Gold Mine.



Ghana



economy. In 1977 Acheampong promoted a plan called Union Government that gave some power to citizens but kept most power and control with the military and police. The plan led to strikes and demonstrations, forcing Acheampong to resign. His successor, General Frederick Akuffo, agreed to a return to civilian rule, and Ghana prepared for new elections in 1979.

The Rawlings Era. Shortly before elections were held, junior officers led by Air Force Lieutenant Jerry J. Rawlings attempted to seize control of the government. Although Rawlings was arrested and jailed, a group of supporters soon broke him out of jail. Rawlings took control of the military government, but he agreed to let the elections proceed as planned. The voters chose Dr. Hilla Limann as president, and his party won a majority of seats in the assembly. As agreed, Rawlings handed power to the civilian government.

Limann was unable to cure the ailing economy or to control unemployment and corruption. His rule lasted only two years before Rawlings took over again in 1981. This time Rawlings outlawed all political parties and dissolved the assembly. He and his supporters formed the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC) to run the country.

In its early days, the PNDC called for a “people’s democracy” based on states such as LIBYA and Cuba, but economic and political unrest created a constant state of crisis. Political violence, kidnappings, and assassinations were common. Meanwhile, the PNDC’s economic policies brought the nation to bankruptcy. These policies and HUMAN RIGHTS abuses brought fierce opposition from civilian organizations, students, trade unions, and some parts of the military.

Faced with severe economic problems and foreign debts, Rawlings agreed to economic plans drawn up by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Under these plans the currency was again devalued, foreign loans were repaid, tax policies were changed, restrictions on foreign imports were lifted, and foreign investment in the economy was encouraged. By 1990 Ghana had paid off its foreign debt and economic activity had rebounded. However, while foreign investors and the upper levels of Ghanaian society saw the benefits, Ghana’s workers and farmers bore the costs. Once again the people called for a return to civilian government.

In 1992 a group assembled by the PNDC approved a new constitution, and national elections were held. Rawlings, who ran as a civilian candidate, won the presidency with nearly 60 percent of the vote. Independent observers judged the elections to be fair, but opponents disagreed and boycotted the parliamentary elections that followed. As a result, Rawlings and his allies won 90 percent of the seats in the assembly. Despite continuing political unrest, Rawlings was elected for a second term in 1996. Yet, in 2000, Rawlings stepped down after losing a country-wide election in favor of President-elect John Kufuor.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Ghana can be divided roughly into two major cultural groups: one group in the northern savannas; the other in the southern savanna and



Republic of Ghana

POPULATION:

19,533,560 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

92,098 sq. mi. (238,534 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English (official); Dagbani, Ewe, Fante, Ga, Moshi-Dagomba

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Cedi

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 38%, Muslim 30%, Christian 24%, Other 8%

CITIES:

Accra (capital), 1,673,000 (1999 est.); Kumasi, Tamale, Takoradi, Cape Coast, Tema, Sekondi

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 29–39 in. (750–1,000 mm) in the southeast coastal savanna to 59–82 in. (1,500–2,100 mm) in the extreme southwest.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,900 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cocoa, timber, coffee, corn, cassava, rice, peanuts, bananas, citrus

Manufacturing: wood processing, cocoa processing, textiles, oil refining

Mining: gold, manganese, bauxite, diamonds

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Great Britain, 1957. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 200-member Parliament elected by universal suffrage; Council of Ministers appointed by the president and approved by Parliament.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1957–1966 Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah, president from 1960

1966–1969 Lieutenant General Joseph A. Ankrah

1969 General Akwasi O. Afrifa

1969–1972 Prime Minister Kofi A. Busia

1970–1972 President Edward Akufo-Addo

1972–1978 Colonel Ignatius Acheampong (later general)

1978–1979 General Frederick Akuffo

1979–1981 President Hilla Limann

1979–2000 Flight Lieutenant Jerry J. Rawlings, president from 1993

2000– President John Kufuor

ARMED FORCES:

7,000 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–16; literacy rate 64%

forests. However, some ethnic groups from central Ghana share elements of both northern and southern cultures. There are also cultural differences between eastern and western groups. For example, groups of central and western Ghana are matrilineal, meaning that property and political power pass through the female side of the family. Most northern and eastern groups follow a patrilineal pattern, passing inheritance rights through the male side of the family. However, the north-south cultural differences are much stronger than those between the east and the west.

Northern Ghana. Northern Ghana has three regions. In the Upper East Region, the main ethnic groups are the Balsa, Nankani, and Gurunsi. The Upper West Region is home to the Dagaba, Dagara, Wali, Chakali, and Sissala. The Northern Region is dominated by the Dagomba. These groups have different names depending on their relation to ISLAM. Traditional Muslims, converts to Islam, and nonbelievers all are referred to by different names.

Islam is well established in the larger northern towns, while traditional African religious practices based on ancestor worship are common in the rural areas. Polygamy* is part of the culture of some non-Christians in this region. Most but not all peoples of northern Ghana speak languages of the Gur family. Gur is also used by some ethnic

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband



Ghana

groups in central Ghana, along with Gurunsi and Gonja. Some peoples in central Ghana speak a dialect of the Mande language.

The north includes several kingdoms ruled by hereditary chiefs. Although the social structure has been heavily influenced by Islam, not all chiefs are practicing Muslims. The northern groups that have formed kingdoms also developed towns. Groups that do not form kingdoms live in small settlements, led by heads of households rather than by a chief.

The most important social event in northern communities is the funeral, which may last for several days. Marriage is an occasion for public celebration and often includes a ceremonial kidnapping of the bride. Married couples in northern Ghana usually live with the husband's family, and rights to property and political power are typically passed through the male side of the family.

Southern Ghana. The peoples of southern Ghana include the Asante, Fante, Kwahu, Akyem, Brong, Agona, and Akuapem. Most southern Ghanaian peoples share features of the AKAN culture, including the Akan language and matrilineal social system. Property and political office pass through the mother's side of the family, and wives often live with their mothers after marriage. Marriages are not celebrated publicly, but one of the more important rituals* is the girls' coming-of-age ceremony.

Most settlements in southern Ghana are villages organized into small states or kingdoms. While the kingdoms of the north were established by outside groups, the Akan states of the south are native to the region. Even non-Akan peoples of the south organize their states along the Akan model.

Ewe-speaking peoples such as the Ewe and Anlo dominate the southeastern portion of Ghana around Lake Volta. Religion in this part of Ghana differs greatly from one ethnic group to another, but areas along the coast are dominated by several large cults*. The hilly parts of Ewe country contain several smaller ethnic groups that speak languages that are very different from one another and from the other languages of southern Ghana. (*See also Agriculture, Colonialism in Africa, Minerals and Mining, Religion and Ritual.*)

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

GHANA, KINGDOM OF

See *Sudanic Empires of Western Africa*

Gikuyu

Numbering well over 4 million people, the Gikuyu (also known as the Kikuyu) are the largest ethnic group in KENYA. They live in the high, fertile region between Mount Kenya and the capital city of NAIROBI. Their language, also called Gikuyu, is one of the Bantu languages.

Traditionally, Gikuyu societies were based on farming, particularly millet* and root crops, and raising goats and other livestock. During the

* **millet** family of grains



Global Politics and Africa

1900s, white settlers began pushing Gikuyu out of their homeland. Many of the Gikuyu moved to Nairobi, where they worked mainly as unskilled laborers. Others migrated as farm workers into territory claimed by white colonists.

In the 1950s some of the landless Gikuyu organized a group known as the MAU MAU. Hoping to speed progress toward Kenyan independence, they led a terrorist uprising against the colonial administration. Many years of fighting followed and thousands of Gikuyu lost their lives. Finally, the British subdued the Mau Mau.

When Kenya gained independence in 1963, the nation's first president was a Gikuyu leader named Jomo KENYATTA. During his rule, the Gikuyu people gained numerous rights and held many important posts in the Kenyan government. However, the next president, Daniel arap MOI, was a member of an opposing party and a different ethnic group. Moi withdrew most of the privileges the Gikuyu had received and removed many Gikuyu from positions of power. (*See also Ethnic Groups and Identity.*)

Global Politics and Africa

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **humanitarian** referring to a concern for human welfare

Global politics, or geopolitics, refers to the relationships and interactions among nations as they compete for power, influence, and economic resources. Since the 1600s the global politics of Africa have been marked by dependence on others. To a large extent, Africans have been under the control of outsiders from the time of the transatlantic SLAVE TRADE, to European colonial rule, to the Cold War*.

Today most African nations have difficulty promoting their interests on an international level. They also remain open to interference by non-African nations, the United Nations (UN), international relief agencies, and multinational corporations. In the past such interference was forced upon African nations. Today, however, many African states are so desperate for help dealing with economic crises and political and social turmoil that they welcome foreign assistance.

Regional Problems. Many of the nations of sub-Saharan* Africa are among the poorest in the world. Most suffer from poor economic growth, frequent food shortages, and declining levels of international TRADE. Besides economic problems, the region has suffered some of the most violent internal disturbances in the world. A number of countries have experienced long years of political instability, social disintegration, and devastating violence.

African governments have tried to solve these problems by themselves and through regional institutions such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU). They have also sought help from non-African nations and institutions. In recent years, however, outsiders have been reluctant to provide continuing assistance because of the magnitude of Africa's problems. Although not a high priority to the rest of the world, Africa remains a cause of concern because of its strategic location and natural resources as well as the humanitarian* issues at stake.



Global Politics and Africa

Among the most difficult problems confronting many African nations are political instability, violence and lawlessness, and the collapse of state institutions. The international community has responded to these problems in various ways. The United Nations has sent peacekeeping troops to some areas and supervised changes of government. Western nations have increased economic aid to the continent's democratic governments. In some cases, the UN and independent relief agencies have also provided special assistance to African disaster areas.

In stable and relatively peaceful African states, international agencies and private corporations are also working to promote economic development and international trade. They have established various policies regarding the reforms they consider necessary for economic growth. However, some of these policies have been very unpopular among Africans, and African governments have questioned their effectiveness. Local objections have had little effect because the donors have insisted that reforms take place before providing assistance.

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

Strategic Issues. During the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union* considered Africa a strategic area and competed for influence there. Now, however, the situation in Africa has become a low priority matter in the foreign policy of Western nations. Yet Western powers are concerned about the growth of powerful Islamic movements in parts of Africa. They fear that Islamic groups may weaken some African governments and threaten the peace and security of neighboring nations.

In general, there is little agreement among Western powers about African affairs. Most nations have pursued their own foreign policies in Africa, focusing on matters of greatest concern to them. As a result, efforts to work jointly on African issues have had little success. As Western nations have cut back their role in Africa, other developed nations, such as Japan, have stepped in. This might be a result of Africa's power in the United Nations General Assembly, where African governments control 45 votes (the largest group of votes from one continent).

Role of Regional Organizations. Africans have handled global politics in various ways, including forming regional organizations to deal with common problems. Some of these organizations show promise. In western Africa, for example, the peacekeeping forces of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) managed to maintain order in LIBERIA during a period of power struggles. The Southern African Development Community has supported moves toward peace and democracy in ANGOLA, MOZAMBIQUE, and LESOTHO. African regional organizations have had less success solving economic problems, partly because African governments have been unable to contribute funds for economic development programs.

In the future the Organization of African Unity may be increasingly involved in establishing governments and bringing about peace and security for African nations. Only after achieving political stability can African nations truly begin to pursue their own interests in global politics. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Economic History; Genocide and Violence; Government and Political Systems; History of Africa; United Nations in Africa.*)

GOLD COAST

See *Ghana*

Gordimer, Nadine

**1923–
South African writer**

Nadine Gordimer, a prizewinning author, has written extensively about life in SOUTH AFRICA under APARTHEID—a policy of racial segregation followed from 1948 to 1994. Born in a white family in South Africa, Gordimer left school at the age of 10 for medical reasons. She was educated at home and in her local library. By the time she was 14, she had written stories that were published in the Johannesburg *Sunday Express*.

Over the years Gordimer has published many collections of short stories, several books of essays, and ten novels, including *The Conservationist* (1974), *Burger's Daughter* (1979), and *July's People* (1981). She has been awarded numerous honors, including degrees from Harvard and Yale Universities. Her many literary prizes include the 1974 Booker Prize for *The Conservationist* and the 1991 Nobel Prize in literature.

Most of Gordimer's short stories and novels focus on the details of the lives of individuals in South Africa. Her characters experience brutality, fear, and betrayal as a result of apartheid. Through their stories, Gordimer makes indirect but powerful political statements.

**Gordon, Charles
George**

**1833–1885
British general in Sudan**

General Charles George Gordon fought for Britain in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Killed defending the city of KHARTOUM in SUDAN, he was regarded by the British as a hero and a martyr*.

Born in Woolwich, near London, Gordon entered the military in 1852. He fought Britain's wars in various parts of the world, earning the nickname "Chinese Gordon" for helping to crush a rebellion in China during the 1860s. In 1873, Isma'il Pasha, the ruler of Egypt, appointed Gordon the governor of Equatoria Province in the Sudan, which Egypt then controlled. Four years later Gordon became governor-general of Sudan and launched a vigorous campaign against the slave trade.

Gordon resigned his post in Sudan in 1880. Soon thereafter an Islamic rebellion against Egyptian rule and foreign influence arose in the country. Led by Muhammed Ahmad, who was called al-MAHDI, this movement quickly gained strength. In 1884 the British, who now controlled Egypt, sent Gordon to Khartoum to rescue Egyptian forces there from al-Mahdi's followers. Gordon reached the city in January 1885 and prepared to defend it. The Mahdists surrounded Khartoum, but Gordon refused to leave and was killed when they took the city. British indignation over his fate played a role in the government's decision to conquer the Mahdist state in 1898.

* **martyr** someone who suffers or dies for the sake of a cause or principle



Government and Political Systems

Government and Political Systems

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

* **domestication** adapting or training plants or animals for human use

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

The political systems of most African nations are based on forms of government put in place by colonial authorities during the era of European rule. Because these governmental institutions reject the indigenous* political systems on which African society was built, they have generally failed to bring political stability. Many local and regional governments borrow from indigenous systems, but national political structures rely primarily on European models.

INDIGENOUS GOVERNMENT

Four basic types of indigenous government developed in Africa: hunter-gatherer bands, small-scale villagers and pastoralists*, chieftaincies, and states. These classifications are based on the structure of leadership, population, and economic organization.

Hunter-Gatherer Bands. The earliest form of indigenous government in Africa arose among HUNTING AND GATHERING groups before the domestication* of animals or the beginnings of agriculture. Once widespread, hunter-gatherers now number less than 100,000 people scattered around Africa.

Groups of hunter-gatherers are located primarily in the Congo River basin, the KALAHARI DESERT, and in areas of northern TANZANIA and western KENYA. These bands range in size from about a dozen individuals to perhaps 100 people. Band size depends on environmental factors, such as available food supplies, the season of the year, knowledge of the landscape, and access to waterholes and game. Social factors, such as conflicts between members of the group and relations with other groups, also affect the size of the band.

Hunter-gatherer bands are highly egalitarian. That is, they believe that each group member should have equal political, social, and economic rights. As a result, such bands lack strong central authority and rarely have a dominant chief who makes decisions for the group. Leaders may be chosen to direct certain activities, such as hunting, ritual* performances, or settling disputes. The basis for such leadership varies from one group to the next and may involve age, gender, personal skills, or the rights to territory. The emphasis on egalitarian principles and the fact that bands break up regularly for a variety of reasons tend to limit these patterns of leadership.

Long-established bands may have a headman who leads discussions about important issues. Even headmen tend to have limited authority, though, and their position depends on the success of their decisions. The headman often consults with respected elders and skilled younger members of the band to make decisions, settle disputes, and organize group activities. Rules and laws are quite flexible in hunter-gatherer society. Crimes such as theft are typically settled on a case-by-case basis. The punishment is measured to suit the crime and not determined by a set code of laws or conduct.

Small Scale Villagers and Pastoralists. The development of farming and pastoralism in Africa around 4500 B.C. led to the development



Government and Political Systems

of new forms of social organization and government. Settled agriculture produced small independent villages in which the people lived near farm fields and livestock pastures. Such settlements are still common throughout Africa today. They range in size from perhaps 25 to several thousand people, averaging about 300 to 500 residents. When the population becomes too great for the land to support, members of the group leave to form new villages.

Individuals or families in small village or pastoral communities typically inherit the right of access to certain lands or herds of livestock. For the group to survive, succeeding generations of families must continue to have access to these assets*. To ensure this continuity the community needs organized institutions of government.

* **assets** property or other valuable goods or qualities

African villages are often divided into two main groups: the founders and their descendants and those who joined the village later. The founding families generally own land close to the village and have higher status in society and access to political offices. Newcomers have lower status, less political power, and land that is farther from the village.

Villages are led by a headman chosen by respected elders who assist him and serve as a court to enforce community laws. Age, gender, KINSHIP, political skill, personal success, and household membership play a role in the choice of headman. Although the position is usually hereditary, other political offices are open to all village members, within certain limits of age and gender.

In addition to the headman, villages usually have a village priest who serves as a link to the local spirits. Like the headman, the priest is responsible for the well-being of the community. Among his most important duties are performing rituals to avoid natural disasters, diagnosing the cause of misfortunes, and punishing wrongdoing. Other village officials include various leaders responsible for particular activities, such as hunting.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

Each village household also has a head. The larger the household, the greater the political and economic power of its head. Institutions such as polygamy* increase the size of households and the power of their heads. Household heads also encourage kin to take on slaves and clients—people bound by a relationship of mutual obligations—as ways to increase household size. Of course, households divide as older members die and younger members leave to start households of their own. Sometimes a household breaks up voluntarily, and the new units form a political alliance that helps to increase the power of the group.

Communal rights and responsibilities are important in African village and pastoral groups. Because of the complex social organization of these groups, each member must adjust his or her actions and desires to the needs of the group as a whole. Although personal factors may play a role in determining leadership, even a very successful individual must abide by the established rules for assigning positions of authority.

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

A variation of the village form of political organization is a segmentary system, in which clans* or kinship groups maintain relations with one another across a wide region. Segmentary systems allow different groups to cooperate while maintaining separate identities and power structures. Cooperation may take the form of shared rituals or activities

Government and Political Systems

The Symbol of the State

In early African states the king was so closely associated with the state that he came to be considered the living embodiment of the people. This is often reflected in phrases used to refer to kings. In Uganda, for example, the king was said to “eat” the state when he was crowned. This implied that he, the people, and the country became one being at that time. In Bornu the king was called the father of the people. In many places kings were considered sacred. No one could speak to or touch the king. In some states it was common for people in the king’s presence to put dirt or dust on their heads to indicate their inferior position.

- * **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force
- * **assimilate** to adopt the beliefs or customs of a society
- * **hierarchy** organization of a group into higher and lower levels

- * **bureaucracy** large departmental organization within a government
- * **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

such as hunting, or it may involve fighting together against a common enemy. Members of segmentary systems can also share resources, allowing some of them to expand into less desirable areas. This gives them an advantage when competing for resources with settled village groups.

Another type of political organization, found mainly among pastoralists, is the age-set system. In this system people of a similar age belong to an “age set” that has responsibilities for specific activities. For example, young people of a certain age set often tend cattle, while older males, depending upon age, commonly adopt the roles of warrior, decision-maker, or elder. The same group of individuals typically move through age set grades together, occupying similar roles as they enter each new level. In some societies each age set forms its own separate village or group. Like segmentary systems, age-set systems often allow for alliances across groups, under a single leader if necessary.

Chieftaincies. A chieftaincy forms when a local chief or headman is recognized as leader by the heads of other groups. This high chief heads a council of leaders, including rivals for his own position as a group headman. His main duties involve coordinating relations among the various groups, rather than merely leading his own village. His role might include performing rituals, sponsoring public works, and conducting relations with foreign groups. Often lower-ranking chiefs send tribute* in the form of food or other goods needed for the large gatherings of people around the high chief. In return, the high chief distributes trade goods, luxury items, and weapons to the lower chiefs and directs resources to needy members of the different groups.

Chieftaincies typically grow by assimilation*. This means that when a new group joins the chieftaincy—either voluntarily or by force—it adopts the language, culture, and customs of the chieftaincy. The common culture helps to unify the group. Other forces, however, tend to break chieftaincies apart. One is the emphasis on social and political hierarchy* and on inheritance of rank. Village leaders and their close relatives hold most offices, creating rivalries among the various heirs. This sometimes leads to conflict and to the breakup of a group into factions of the descendants of various rivals. The strength of a chieftaincy, therefore, depends on its ability to develop a common culture and to provide effective leadership among different groups.

States. A state is a centralized political structure with a permanent bureaucracy*, a capital town, and a ruler who exercises control over a large area. In earlier times the head of most states was a hereditary ruler who claimed descent from a recognized dynasty*.

States emerged in Africa at a very early date. Ancient EGYPT, for example, arose around 3500 B.C. AKSUM, a state in what is now ETHIOPIA, was founded about 500 B.C. The Arab invasions that began in the A.D. 600s brought centralized state structures to all of North Africa by about 1100. The number of African states grew steadily after that time.

The rise of most states was linked to control over resources or trade, migration, or a reaction to conflict with neighboring groups. When dealing with such issues became too difficult for kin-based political systems, nonkinship groups banded together and centralized states were

Government and Political Systems



In South Africa, antiapartheid activist Nelson Mandela (right) was sentenced to life imprisonment for his political activities. In 1990 President F.W. de Klerk (center) freed him. Four years later Mandela was elected president of South Africa.

formed. Trade was probably the most important issue in relations between states. Much of the revenue for a state came from government control over long-distance trade through the state's territory. The need for trade revenue led state governments to form alliances with neighboring states—or to fight with them—to keep trade routes open.

The early African state was organized hierarchically. Headed by a monarch—usually a king but sometimes a queen—it consisted of a council of nobles that gave advice on policy and carried out the monarch's decisions. The monarch served as a symbol of the state, and his abilities, health, and sacred status represented the society as a whole. Between the monarch and the people were layers of officials who were responsible for seeing that the state ran efficiently. They collected taxes and ensured that troops were available for military campaigns. In most cases these officials could come from any ethnic group. This tied the various peoples of the state more firmly together and helped limit ethnic strife.

The state's power extended beyond the capital town to surrounding territories, usually under the control of nobles and local leaders. Because the outlying lands were potential sources of rebellion, the state created links between the central authority and local officials. In the kingdom of Buganda, for example, the monarch married women from each of the leading families in the outer territories, which gave each of these fami-



Government and Political Systems

lies a chance to provide an heir to the throne. Because of their involvement in the state's future leadership, the territories were much less likely to rebel against its authority.

COLONIAL AND POSTCOLONIAL GOVERNMENT

The European powers that colonized Africa weakened or, in some cases, destroyed the indigenous political systems that existed prior to their arrival. In their place they set up governments that reflected European political structures and institutions. Colonial authorities also introduced ideas of leadership and control that were foreign to Africa. The ways in which Africans assimilated and reshaped the colonial legacy produced problems for African societies and nations after independence.

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

Colonial Ideas of Leadership and Control. In general, European forms of government place an emphasis on the independence of individuals within society. In Africa, by contrast, the individual is seen as part of a larger community, such as kin, ethnic group, or village. Also, Westerners tend to judge political leaders by such qualities as personal character, statesmanship, and political skill, and they expect leaders to safeguard individual rights and privileges. Africans, however, tend to judge leaders on how well they reflect the communities they represent and how they can best serve those communities.

One expression of this difference is the way each society considers the relationship between wealth and power. In Western nations an individual who uses public office for private gain is considered corrupt or at least is viewed unfavorably. In Africa, power and wealth are related, and politics is seen as an avenue to economic control. It may not matter if an individual enriches himself while in office, as long as he also redistributes wealth and resources to the people he represents. Even though many European colonial officials were honest, few used their control over resources to help the African populations they governed.

Another feature of colonial governments was that they were not politically accountable to the African peoples they ruled. Colonial governments included institutions such as courts and local councils that promised an equal voice and equal justice to all people. In practice, though, the needs and desires of the colonial officials and settlers always took priority over those of the indigenous population. Policies were enforced by military power if necessary, and Africans got the message that "might makes right." The existence of democratic institutions provided no guarantee of fair treatment, and this tradition was carried over to African states after independence.

Postcolonial Crisis. The leaders of newly independent African nations inherited foreign political systems and instruments of force to support them. For the most part, these leaders focused on consolidating power and building the nation rather than establishing democratic traditions in their countries. Many leaders maintained power by redistributing resources to important clients, who then passed along benefits to

Guinea

others. In this way national leaders exercised a form of political responsibility that was acceptable to the majority of the people.

As Africa's economic situation deteriorated in the 1970s, these relations began to break down. Leaders who could no longer redistribute resources to maintain their power turned increasingly to the use of violence and force. As a result, many Africans lost faith in their leaders and governments, and order soon broke down. In many places military rulers and other strongmen seized and held power at gunpoint.

In recent years Western governments and lending institutions have demanded that African leaders be held politically accountable in order to receive badly needed capital*. This has led, in many countries, to the establishment of multiparty democracies and the end of single-party or single-person rule. This change, however, has not always brought greater responsibility on the part of those in power. Eventually, it will be up to Africans themselves to hold their leaders accountable for their actions. Whether this means a continuation of Western forms of government or the adoption of more "Africanized" political structures remains to be seen. (*See also Class Structure and Caste, Colonialism in Africa, Global Politics and Africa, Kings and Kingship, Laws and Legal Systems, Neocolonialism, Tribalism.*)

* **capital** money invested to start a business or industry

GRIOTS

See *Oral Tradition*

Guinea

The Republic of Guinea is a crescent-shaped country on the coast of West Africa that consists of several distinct regions. First unified under French colonial rule, Guinea's regions vary greatly in terms of



Guinea

Grains of Paradise

Grains of paradise, also known as Guinea pepper or Guinea grains, are a spice harvested in the Guinea region. The small red-brown seeds are sometimes sold in their seedpod. They are related to cardamom and have a strong, peppery flavor.

The spice was once so popular that the coast of Africa from Guinea to Ivory Coast was called the Grain Coast. Today, the spice is used mainly in Nigerian, Beninese, and Moroccan cooking. Most of the Guinea grains harvested today are shipped to North Africa. Although rarely seen in U.S. markets, Guinea grains can be found in certain herbal shops because some followers of the Yoruba religion use the spice.

geography, ethnicity, and religion. The regional differences have presented problems for the country in both colonial and modern times.

GEOGRAPHY

The four regions of Guinea—lower, central, upper, and southeast—have well-defined natural borders. Lower Guinea, the region along the coast, is dominated by plains and crisscrossed by several rivers and many smaller tributaries. Its hot, humid climate is well suited to agriculture. Inland is the mountainous region of central Guinea. Its peaks rise to a height of 5,000 feet. Although less favorable for farming, central Guinea is the most densely populated portion of the country. Upper Guinea, located in the northwest, is marked by a series of plateaus that are divided by the NIGER RIVER. Forests cover southeast Guinea, which is higher and more rugged than the other regions.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Before the arrival of Europeans, the inland regions of Guinea were the sites of frequent warfare. Local chiefs and Islamic rulers from the southern SAHARA DESERT raided the area for slaves. These disturbances drove many people to the coastal region. The empire of Futa Jalon controlled communities along the coast, and Islamic states ruled the highlands. The forest region was divided into many small political units.

The Colonial Era. In the mid-1800s France established three military posts in the region. After founding the city of CONAKRY in 1880, the French received official recognition in Europe of their claims to Guinea. Over the next 20 years, they conquered most of the remainder of Guinea, defeating Futa Jalon in 1896. The forest region proved more difficult to subdue and was under military occupation until 1912.

As elsewhere in Africa, the French sought to exploit* Guinea's natural wealth. The colonists tried several cash crops*, including peanuts, rubber, and bananas. Guinean rubber was in great demand during the early 1900s. However, competition from rubber plantations in Asia led to the collapse of the market by 1913. Bananas, introduced in the 1930s, dominated Guinea's colonial economy for 20 years until a leaf disease devastated the crop. Rich deposits of iron ore near Conakry were heavily mined during the 1950s.

Postcolonial Guinea. After World War II, France granted its African colonies greater political freedom, including the right to establish local political parties. In 1958 Guinean leader Sékou TOURÉ told French president Charles de Gaulle that Guinea would prefer "poverty in freedom to opulence in slavery." The same year, Guinea voted for independence from France, and Touré became the new nation's first president. Guinea formed ties with the Soviet Union and other communist* countries. However, the nation also signed economic agreements with Western countries, including the United States and France.

Soon after independence, Touré took steps to eliminate opposition to his rule. He outlawed all political parties except his own, and in time he

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals



Republic of Guinea

POPULATION:

7,466,200 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

94,925 sq. mi. (245,856 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); many indigenous languages

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Guinean franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 85%, Christian 8%, Traditional 7%

CITIES:

Conakry (capital), 1,558,000 (1999 est.); Kankan, Siguiri, Labé, Kindia

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 170 in. (4,300 mm) at the coast to 80 in. (2,000 mm) 125 miles (200 km) inland.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$1,200 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: palm products, coffee, pineapples, bananas, rice, cassava, fish

Manufacturing: aluminum refining, agricultural processing, light manufacturing, food and beverage processing

Mining: bauxite, iron ore, diamonds, gold, uranium

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1958. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 114-member Assemblée Nationale and Council of Ministers.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1958–1984 President Sékou Touré

1984–1993 Colonel (later General) Lansana Conté, president

and head of the Comité Militaire du Redressement National
1993– President Lansana Conté

ARMED FORCES:

9,700 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Free and compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 36%

* **privatize** to transfer from government control to private ownership

also brought most of the economy under state control. Touré's actions prompted almost one million Guineans to leave the country.

Upon Touré's death in 1984, the military took control of Guinea and began to privatize* the economy and restore political freedoms. New political parties emerged, and in 1993 Lansana Conté was elected president. His rule has been marked by unrest from within the government, from opposition parties, and from neighboring nations. In 2000 rebel groups from neighboring SIERRA LEONE and LIBERIA attacked Guinea, killing hundreds of civilians and causing tens of thousands more to flee their homes.

PEOPLE AND ECONOMY

Guinea is home to over 16 different ethnic groups, most of which practice Islam. The Soso dominate the coastal region, while the FULANI and Tukulor are the largest groups in the highlands. The Malinké people inhabit upper Guinea, an area known for its Muslim schools and scholars. Several ethnic groups are found in the forest region, including the Loma, Kpelle, Manon, Kono, and Kissi. Over half a million refugees from war-torn Sierra Leone and Liberia have also joined Guinea's population.

Guinea's borders, which were drawn by the French, have separated some cultural groups into different countries. As a result, many of these groups do not identify strongly with the nation of Guinea. Such conflicts between ethnic and national identity have posed a problem for the country's unity.

About three quarters of Guinea's population work in agriculture. Coffee and bananas are two of the country's most important cash crops. The fertile coastal plain produces a wide variety of crops, including



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).




Guinea

palms, sugarcane, fruit trees, and rice, while vegetables and other garden crops are grown in central Guinea. Cattle and other livestock are raised in several parts of the country.

Since the mid-1900s, however, minerals have been replacing agricultural products in importance in Guinea's economy. Bauxite, a mineral used in the production of aluminum, accounts for about 85 percent of the country's export income. Gold and diamonds, also mined in the forest areas, are exported as well. (*See also Boundaries in Africa; Colonialism in Africa; French West Africa; Minerals and Mining; Touré, Samori.*)

Guinea-Bissau

 Guinea-Bissau, located on Africa's Atlantic Coast, is one of the poorest countries in the world. Since winning its independence from Portugal in 1974, the country has been torn by political rivalries and ethnic tensions that have devastated its economy.

GEOGRAPHY AND PEOPLES

The most striking feature of Guinea-Bissau's geography is the great number of watercourses that run through the small nation. Many large tidal estuaries* break up the coast, and swamps extend deep into the country's interior. Inland, the flat, low-lying terrain is covered with dense tropical rain forests. Toward the southeast, the forest gives way to savanna* woodlands and to the foothills of mountains. The country's climate is tropical, with high temperatures and humidity and a single rainy season.

Over 30 ethnic groups live in Guinea-Bissau. The Balanta, who make up about one third of the population, are the nation's major rice producers. Other important ethnic groups include the FULANI, Manjaco, and Mandinka. Unlike their mostly Muslim neighbors in Senegal and Guinea, most Guinea-Bissauans practice indigenous* African religions. The country's spirit shrines attract pilgrims from nations throughout West Africa.

HISTORY, GOVERNMENT, AND ECONOMY

In the mid-1400s the Portuguese became the first Europeans to visit the area that is now Guinea-Bissau. They used the region as a source of slaves for their colonies in Brazil and CAPE VERDE, a group of islands off the coast of SENEGAL. For several centuries Portugal managed the Guinea-Bissau area as part of Cape Verde. This arrangement led to a history of tense relations between Guinea-Bissauans and Cape Verdeans. When Guinea-Bissau became a separate Portuguese colony in 1879, its government was dominated by mixed-race settlers from Cape Verde who had adopted European customs and the Portuguese language.

Although the Cape Verdeans in Guinea-Bissau enjoyed numerous advantages, a group of them led the colony's struggle for independence. From 1961 until 1973, Amílcar CABRAL and the African Independence

* **estuary** wide part of a river where it
nears the sea

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical
grassland with scattered trees and
drought-resistant undergrowth

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



Republic of Guinea-Bissau

POPULATION:

1,285,715 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

13,948 sq. mi. (36,125 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Portuguese (official); Crioulo, Balante, Fula, Malinke

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Guinea peso

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 50%, Muslim 45%, Christian 5%

CITIES:

Bissau (capital), 233,000 (1995 est.); Bafatá, Bissorã, Bolama, Cacheu, Teixeira Pinto, Farim, Gabu, Mansôa

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 49 in. (1,250 mm) in the northeast to 108 in. (2,750 mm) along the southern coast.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$900 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cashews, palm kernels, rice, cassava, beans, corn, fish, cotton, forest products

Manufacturing: beer brewing, beverage processing (including fruit juices), agricultural processing

Mining: bauxite, phosphates, oil

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Portugal, 1974. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assembleia Nacional Popular (National Popular Assembly), also directly elected; Council of Ministers and Prime Minister, appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1974–1980 President Luíz Cabral

1980–1999 President João Bernardo Vieira

1999– President Malam Bacai Sanhá

ARMED FORCES:

7,300 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 55%

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Party of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) waged a guerrilla* war against the colonial authorities. Finally in 1974, Portugal declared Guinea-Bissau an independent nation. Cabral had been assassinated in 1973, and his brother Luís, the new leader of the PAIGC, became Guinea-Bissau's first president.

The war ruined much of Guinea-Bissau's already weak economy, and ethnic tensions added to the new nation's instability. Many Guinea-Bissauans resented the Cape Verdean influence in the PAIGC. In 1980 Luis Cabral was overthrown in a coup*. Former vice president João Vieira took control of both the country and the PAIGC, which remained the only political party. In 1985 unrest among the nation's largest ethnic group, the Balanta, led to an attempted coup. In the early 1990s Vieira agreed to hold multiparty elections. He was reelected president and the PAIGC again won control of the national assembly. However, Vieira faced frequent political struggles within his own party and with opposition parties.

In 1998 Vieira fired the army's chief of staff for failing to stop arms smuggling to rebels in neighboring Senegal. The army rebelled against Vieira, who then asked Guinea and Senegal to send troops to stop the uprising. Several African states negotiated a cease-fire between Vieira and his opponents. An independent investigation later placed most of the blame for the smuggling on Vieira. In 1999 another uprising chased Vieira out of the country. In elections held that year Malam Bacai Sanhá was chosen as president.

Guinea-Bissau's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, with cashews and fish being its major exports. Most of the people are engaged



Guinea-Bissau

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

in subsistence farming*, and rice is the main staple* crop. Once an important export, rice crops have been drastically reduced by war and drought and can no longer support the country's population. Guinea-Bissau has very little manufacturing and no mining, although resources of oil, phosphates, and bauxite have been discovered. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.*)

Haile Selassie I

1892–1975
Emperor of Ethiopia

* **regent** person appointed to rule on behalf of another

* **feudal** relating to an economic and political system in which individuals gave services to a landlord in return for protection and the use of land

The emperor of ETHIOPIA from 1930 to 1974, Haile Selassie I sought to transform Ethiopia into a modern nation. He also hoped that Ethiopia would take a leading role in Africa. Born Lij Tafari Makonnen, Selassie was the son of an adviser to Emperor MENILEK II. The emperor recognized Selassie's abilities and promoted him to important positions.

As a provincial governor, Selassie set out to improve social and economic conditions in the region. He also tried to limit the power of local nobility by strengthening the central government. In 1917 Selassie was named regent* for Menilek's daughter and heir to the throne. He worked to modernize Ethiopia by establishing provincial schools, strengthening the nation's police forces, and abolishing feudal* taxes. These efforts to bring the country into the twentieth century continued after Selassie became emperor in 1930.

When Italy invaded in 1935, Selassie fled to Britain. He returned to power in 1941 after British and Ethiopian forces recaptured the capital city of ADDIS ABABA. Selassie continued his work to reform the country's economy, educational system, and government. However, political power remained centralized in his own hands.

During the 1950s revenue from Ethiopia's coffee exports helped Selassie modernize the government. In 1955 he introduced a new constitution, which made the government more responsible to the people. By the 1960s, however, Selassie's popularity began to fade. Critics questioned his policies, and the aging emperor seemed too feeble to deal with such serious problems as famine and rising unemployment. In the midst of growing social unrest, military leaders seized power in 1974. Selassie died the next year while under house arrest.

Harare

Harare is the capital and largest city in ZIMBABWE. Founded in 1890 by British colonists, it was originally called Salisbury. After independence in 1980, the city was renamed Harare for Neharare, an important local chieftain who had lived in the area.

Situated in a highland region at an elevation of 4,865 feet, Harare has a mild climate. It is a well-planned modern city with tall buildings and tree-lined avenues. Harare's educational and cultural institutions include the University of Zimbabwe and the Rhodes National Gallery. The National Gallery features sculpture by the country's renowned stone carvers.

Hausa

Harare is the center of Zimbabwe's industry, commerce, and tourism, and a hub of rail, road, and air transport. Agricultural products, particularly tobacco, are shipped there from the surrounding area for distribution and export. There are also important gold mines nearby. The metropolitan area includes residential districts and industrial suburbs. Its estimated population is over 800,000. (*See also Minerals and Mining, Trade.*)

Hassan II

1929–1999
King of Morocco

Hassan II, king of MOROCCO from 1961 until his death, was credited with preserving the Moroccan monarchy. During his reign he introduced a number of democratic reforms and tried to build closer ties with the United States and other Western countries.

Educated in both Arabic and French, Hassan studied law at the University of Bordeaux in France. He was appointed head of Morocco's Royal Armed Forces in 1955 and prime minister in 1960. The following year, on the death of his father, MUHAMMAD V, he became king.

Hassan tried to overcome opposition to his authority by issuing a new constitution and extending voting rights to all Moroccans in 1962. Following another wave of opposition, he dismissed the parliament in 1965 and maintained military rule for five years. At the end of that period, he restored limited democratic government under a new constitution. In the early 1970s, the king introduced economic policies to encourage agricultural improvements, such as new irrigation systems, and small- and medium-sized industries.

In international affairs Hassan defended Morocco's claim to WESTERN SAHARA, which was disputed by ALGERIA. He also maintained open relations with Israel and supported the actions of United Nations troops against Iraq in the Persian Gulf War (1990–1991). Hassan's position on Israel helped strengthen Morocco's ties with the West and made him a valuable participant in efforts to bring about peace between Arabs and Israelis in the Middle East. He was succeeded by his son, Muhammad VI. (*See also Arabs in Africa, North Africa: History and Cultures.*)

Hausa

The Hausa are the largest ethnic group in West Africa. Since ancient times their people have lived in the region between Lake Chad and the Niger River. Hausa kings ruled their states from large, walled cities and established successful trading networks. Today, the largest group of Hausa lives in NIGERIA, but NIGER, CHAD, and GHANA also have Hausa populations.

Originally, the Hausa worshiped various ancestral gods. Islam was introduced to the region in the late 1200s, but did not really take hold until the early 1800s, when the Muslim FULANI launched a jihad* there. The Fulani overthrew the old Hausa states, placed them under Muslim rule, and unified the region. Most of the Hausa became Muslims, and the Fulani rulers adopted the Hausa language.

* jihad Muslim holy war



Hausa

The Hausa have always been known as traders. Over the years they developed weaving, dyeing, leatherworking, glassmaking, and metalworking industries. They sold their products throughout West Africa and along caravan routes across the SAHARA DESERT. The Hausa also established small trading posts at many points in Nigeria, which gave them a wider network through which they could distribute their goods. These posts also gave them access to additional markets. After the Fulani takeover, the Hausa trading network expanded even farther.

* **millet** family of grains

The Hausa are also farmers, growing corn, millet*, rice, peanuts, and beans. They rely on an irrigation system that uses water drawn from shallow wells or streams. In Nigeria, the Hausa play an important role in politics and have produced a number of political leaders. (See also **Ethnic Groups and Identity, Islam in Africa, Trade.**)

Head, Bessie

1937–1986
Botswanan writer

Bessie Head is the author of several novels and short stories about the political and social conditions of African society. She was the illegitimate daughter of a white South African woman and a black stable hand. Head spent most of her childhood in the home of a mixed-race foster family in SOUTH AFRICA. At age 13, however, she was taken from her foster mother and raised in a Christian orphanage.

She became a teacher, married, and worked for a time as a journalist. In 1964 she left her husband and moved to BOTSWANA. It was there that Head did most of her writing. Her works deal mainly with the experience of being a female in traditionally male-oriented African society. Some of her writing is also about being an outsider, reflecting her experience as a light-colored black child who was accepted by neither the white nor the black community. Her third novel, *A Question of Power* (1973), was nominated for the prestigious Booker Prize in Britain. Head's other works include *When Rain Clouds Gather* (1968); *Maru* (1971); *The Collector of Treasures and other Botswana Tales* (1977); *Serowe, Village of the Rainwind* (1981); and *A Bewitched Crossroad: An African Saga* (1984). (See also **Literature.**)

Healing and Medicine

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **supernatural** related to forces beyond the normal world; magical or miraculous

African ideas of healing and medicine have been shaped by both indigenous* and imported traditions. For thousands of years, African peoples have practiced forms of healing and medicine that involve both natural and supernatural* explanations and remedies. The ancient Egyptians developed medical practices that influenced neighboring civilizations, including Greece and Rome. Then Greek and Roman ideas about health and sickness had a similar effect on Islamic medicine. The ripple effect continued as Islam spread to Africa beginning in the A.D. 600s, and people throughout the continent adopted Islamic notions of healing. Later, Christian missionaries brought the practices of Western medicine to Africa. Today, Africans draw on all of these traditions in fighting illness and pursuing health.

Healing Cults

Some groups in Africa are devoted to healing particular diseases. Members of these cults include both those who suffer from the disease and those who have recovered from it. Former sufferers serve as healer-priests who train the new, or novice, sufferers in healing rituals. The mark of growth or healing in the novice sufferer is often a dream vision, the creation of a personal song based on the suffering, or some other emotional experience. The songs of the novices often contain powerful words used to overcome the spiritual forces causing the misfortune or sickness. When the society as a whole is considered ill, such healing songs may be directed at the community.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

IDEAS OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS

Traditional African views of health, sickness, and healing are shaped by beliefs about the nature of the world. These views are often expressed in terms of relationships between the individual, society, and the natural environment. One approach sees the natural condition of the body as a perfect, ordered structure, and any change—such as an appearance of redness on the skin—represents sickness.

Another traditional approach is based on the notion of flow and blockage. Just as food and drink must move freely through the body for good health, good will and material wealth must flow through society for the health of the community. Envy or ill will can cause blockages in society and may lead to constipation, infertility, witchcraft, and disease in individuals.

Other approaches are characterized by opposing forces that must be in balance for the health of the individual and society. A medical tradition established by the ancient Greek physician Galen explains sickness as an imbalance of four bodily fluids, or humors. Treatment is aimed at restoring the balance. Purity and pollution are another pair of opposing forces that affect health and illness. Purity exists when the human world is in harmony. When something upsets this harmony, the result is ritual* pollution or sickness. Coolness and heat are another set of opposites related to health. Coolness represents grace and good health, while heat indicates conflict and ill health.

These traditional explanations of health and sickness also affect the therapies chosen for a particular disorder. In East Africa the idea of pollution versus purity has influenced the treatment of an intestinal disorder often called “snake in the stomach.” To cure the disorder, healers used laxatives or emetics (substances that cause vomiting) to expel the pollution and cleanse the body of the sufferer. Such treatments suggest that traditional ideas of health and illness combine with practical observation to produce treatments for specific diseases.

MEDICINE AND DISEASE

For most Africans ideas about illness and the methods used to treat it come largely from traditional practices. Of course, modern medicine has been adopted throughout Africa as well. It is, however, often applied in combination with traditional healing. Islamic medicine, used by many Africans today, has also been combined with traditional healing.

* **deity** god or goddess

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

* **diviner** person who predicts the future or explains the causes of misfortune

* **shaman** person thought to possess spiritual and healing powers

Views of Illness. Health and religion are closely connected in Africa. Spiritual forces are often seen as agents of both sickness and its cure. Many diseases are thought to result from the deliberate actions of deities*, spirits, or evil humans such as witches. In polygamous* households in NIGERIA, for example, a mother might blame her child’s sickness on sorcery and witchcraft practiced by another of her husband’s wives. This “personalistic” view of illness explains it not as an accident but as the result of willful actions against an individual. Sufferers go to diviners* or shamans* to determine the cause of the disease and why the individual is affected.



Healing and Medicine

A “naturalistic” view of disease considers illness in impersonal terms. Such explanations are often based on the balance or imbalance of forces such as heat and coolness. Among the HAUSA of Nigeria, for example, childhood malaria is thought to be caused by too much moisture during the rainy season; joint and limb pain can be traced to too much coldness. Illnesses viewed in naturalistic terms are typically treated with herbal medicines designed to restore balance and eliminate the “seeds” of disease in the body.

Herbal and Other Medicines. Many traditional remedies in Africa are based on native plants found throughout the continent. Some of these plants were first collected in the wild by HUNTING AND GATHERING societies thousands of years ago. With the development of settled agriculture, people began to cultivate medicinal plants. Over time, a wide variety of medicinal plants has been identified in different regions.

Markets in Africa today typically have sections devoted to the plants of these regions. Healers evaluate natural medicines by their taste, color, texture, and action. They use the medicinal plants for diagnosis and cure and to determine the course of a disease’s development. Among the Hausa, for example, if the use of a plant aggravates an existing intestinal disorder, it indicates that the illness is caused by spirits rather than natural causes. This finding affects the choice of treatment.

Modern pharmaceuticals, or drugs, also play an important role in African medicine. Because the practice of medicine is less closely controlled by governments in Africa than in Western nations, pharmaceuticals are relatively easy to obtain without a prescription. However, in many cases these drugs are used as an extension of traditional medicine. For example, traditional healers often note certain symptoms of a disease as it leaves the body and then use drugs that produce similar symptoms to treat the disease. The last stages of childhood malaria are marked by green urine. To hasten the end of the disease, Hausa healers give patients drugs such as laxatives and muscle relaxants that turn the urine green. Such drugs are not intended for use against malaria.

Islamic Medicine. In many parts of Africa, Islamic medicine offers an alternative to traditional African and Western medicine. Islamic ideas take physical, social, and psychological aspects of the individual into account. Key features of Islamic medicine include faith in the healing power of pious* individuals and the Muslim holy book, the Qur’an; the ideas of the Greek physician Galen; and guidelines on hygiene and diet.

Religious leaders called *sharifa*, who claim to be descended from the prophet Muhammad, are believed to have special powers that enable them to cure sickness. Sometimes, the healer must deal with *jinn*, supernatural creatures that cause a person to stray from the proper conduct of a devout Muslim. This loss of direction leads to illness.

Religion, medicine, and politics occasionally interact in Islamic societies. Among the Hausa, for example, the male-dominated nature of Islamic culture has led to a gender split in healing cults*. Females tend to follow the traditional cults, while men for the most part rely on Islamic medicine. In the 1980s in Kenya, an Islamic reform movement

* **pious** faithful to one’s beliefs

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

Healing and Medicine

rejected the idea of spirit-caused illness, challenging the power of the *sharifa*. Although expressed in medical and spiritual terms, the conflict reflected an underlying political struggle between the two groups.

TRADITIONAL AFRICAN THERAPIES

Traditional African medicine considers that disease may have both a physical and a nonphysical, or “mystical,” aspect. Healers use different types of therapy for these two aspects. The choice of therapy generally depends on the setting in which the disease occurs, its severity, and the response to treatment.

Mundane and Ritualized Therapy. Mundane therapies are those that focus solely on the physical causes and effects of illness. They are aimed at diagnosing the illness and identifying and eliminating its symptoms. Western medical treatment, with its emphasis on diagnosing and treating the physical aspects of disease, would be considered mundane therapy.

Ritualized therapy, which consists of various rituals, is considered appropriate for the mystical aspects of an illness. Healers identify mystical aspects by the tension, anxiety, or fear of human or supernatural pol-

Throughout Africa, traditional healers use medicinal plants and herbs to diagnose and cure disease. Many markets devote a section to herbal products, such as these being sold in Madagascar.





Healing and Medicine

lution in the patient. Ritualized therapy involves the use of powerful emotional or spiritual symbols or actions designed to restore the order that has been upset in some way. It might include making sacrifices to ancestors or counteracting evil spirits, and can only be conducted by priests or diviners.

* **divination** practice that looks into the future, usually by supernatural means

Divination. Divination* remains a common method of diagnosing and treating illness in Africa. A diviner is usually consulted only when the family of a sufferer suspects that the causes of illness are not natural. This may occur when a sick person suddenly becomes worse, an individual dies suddenly and without explanation, an illness strikes one side of a family but not the other, or some social conflict is associated with the illness.

In such cases the diviner is called in to determine what caused the illness, why it struck a particular individual or family, and what the family can do. In many instances the diviner seeks answers in the actions of the patient or those around him or her. For example, poor judgment, rivalries, malicious gossip, social conflict, harmful words, or even poisoning are often identified as the cause of the problem.

Forms of divination vary across Africa. In a technique found in western Africa, shells are tossed from a cup or tray. The pattern made by the shells is related to coded verses that indicate a particular life situation and are used as a basis for diagnosis. Other kinds of African divination involve the “reading” or interpretation of animal bones, carved figurines, or other objects to determine the causes of illness.

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

Taboos and Words as a Cause of Sickness. The violation of taboos* or the use of powerful words are sometimes seen as the source of a victim’s misfortune. Taboos include the killing or eating of certain animals that are associated with a particular group and believed to have spiritual power within that group. Such taboos are not merely superstitions. They help people follow healthy lifestyles by restricting consumption of rich foods and alcohol or by prohibiting unhealthy behaviors.

The idea that sickness or misfortune can be caused by anger or ill will as expressed in powerful, hurtful words is also widespread in Africa. This may include spells or oaths spoken against an individual. In treating an individual, the diviner may ask the victim to recall the words spoken by others in association with any misfortunes recently suffered. Such therapy provides a way for the victim to deal with the persons or relationships that may have some bearing on the problem. Treatment may also include rituals involving herbal medicines and the use of healing words and gestures.

Effectiveness of Traditional Healing. Western medicine has often attacked and rejected traditional forms of healing. However, recent research has shed new light on some aspects of African healing and medicine. One example of a new attitude is the growing acceptance of medicinal plants in treating illness. Another example is the recognition that psychological aspects of disease can be just as important as physical ones.



Health Care

Given the financial problems facing many nations in Africa, as well as the high costs of Western medicine, traditional forms of healing offer possibilities for health care that appeal to African governments. For this reason, many government officials are taking a closer and more serious look at traditional African healing methods and institutions. (*See also Disease, Divination and Oracles, Health Care, Spirit Possession, Taboo and Sin.*)



Health Care

The state of health and health care in Africa is influenced in a dramatic way by the continent's poverty. Hospitals, clinics, trained medical personnel, and needed medicines are all in short supply, and available resources are often too far away or too expensive for the average African. These realities have shaped the organization and functioning of health care systems in most African nations.

BASIC HEALTH CARE

Although still primarily a rural agricultural society, Africa is making the transition to an urban industrial one. This shift has been accompanied by social, cultural, lifestyle, and dietary changes that have had an effect on people's health. Infectious diseases continue to take a large toll on the population, but at the same time illnesses related to lifestyle, such as cancer and heart disease, are affecting increasing numbers of people.

Major Health Issues. Infectious diseases are the greatest threat to life and health in modern Africa. Over two thirds of all deaths on the continent can be traced to infectious diseases, a rate twice as high as that of the world as a whole. The types of infectious illnesses range from tropical diseases such as malaria and sleeping sickness to sexually transmitted diseases such as AIDS. Newborns in Africa can expect to live, on average, about 50 years—some 20 to 25 years less than in most industrialized nations.

Women and children are particularly hard hit by the lack of health education and access to health care in Africa. In many parts of the continent, family planning programs are either limited or nonexistent. As a result, the birthrate in sub-Saharan* Africa is well above the world average. Although some nations (such as ZIMBABWE) have seen significant decreases in births, others (such as ETHIOPIA) have experienced increases in recent years. Among the poor, high birthrate is often associated with high infant death rates: about 15 percent of all African children die before age five. In addition, one out of every five African women dies from complications related to childbirth.

Diseases of the industrial world are also becoming much more common in Africa. As a result of lifestyle changes, the amount of fat and salt in diets is increasing, as are the consumption of alcohol and tobacco. These are all risk factors for heart disease, cancer, and other chronic diseases such as diabetes. Also on the rise are motor vehicle and industrial accidents, which come with increasing levels of urbanization and industrialization.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert



Health Care

Flying Doctors

In remote areas of Africa, a treatable injury or illness can become fatal for lack of professional medical care. In East Africa, the African Medical and Research Foundation runs the Flying Doctor Service. This service sends air rescue teams to fetch critically ill patients throughout the region and bring them to hospitals in Nairobi, Kenya, for special care. It also flies medical experts to rural areas to train local health workers.

The Flying Doctors perform about 600 medical rescues every year, responding to calls for help made by radio, fax, telephone, or e-mail. They handle all types of emergencies, from car crashes to wild animal attacks.

* **sector** part; subdivision of society

Providing Health Care. Unfortunately, the continent's health care systems are not equipped to handle most of these problems. Doctors are in extremely short supply, and the vast majority of Africans have no access to hospital care—even those who do can rarely afford it. For these reasons, basic health care in Africa relies heavily on other resources. Far more people are treated by traditional healers than by modern clinics or health care centers, especially in rural areas. Modern health care is provided mainly by staff nurses, medical aides, and health assistants—not by professional nurses or physicians.

The World Health Organization (WHO) has developed a health care program to address problems faced by developing nations such as those in Africa. Much of the program's focus is not on purely medical matters but on other factors that contribute to poor health. It stresses the prevention of disease by improving nutrition and providing safe water and basic sanitation. It encourages the control of disease through appropriate treatment and access to essential drugs. It also promotes health education, including information on family planning and the importance of immunization. Some of the efforts of WHO are aimed at changing social and political priorities. The organization is attempting to increase local involvement in health care planning and delivery, and to find ways for various sectors* of society to work together to improve general health and safety.

Funding comes from a variety of sources. Individual households provide most of the money for health care systems through their spending on health services. Governments also provide funding, although the amount they spend on health care is limited. In some countries, industry contributes significant amounts of money to health care. In ZAMBIA, for example, the mining industry pays for about one-fifth of all health care expenses. Foreign aid also helps fund health care in Africa. Some aid comes as direct payments to national governments, while some is in the form of programs set up to eliminate or control specific diseases. Christian missions also provide health care services, especially in rural areas.

THE STRUCTURE OF AFRICAN HEALTH CARE

The health care system in Africa is basically hierarchical*. Countries are divided into a number of geographical districts, each of which is served by a district hospital. The district hospital provides advice and assistance to various health centers, which in turn serve health clinics and community health workers at the local level.

Clinics. The basic level of health care in Africa is the clinic or dispensary. The staff usually includes medical assistants and staff nurses who have limited training and fewer qualifications than professional nurses. The clinics are generally involved in various local health care activities and give support to health care workers within the community. They provide the greatest amount of preventive health care in Africa.

African health clinics offer health education, immunization, prenatal (before birth) and neonatal (newborn infant) care, and family-planning

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels



Health Care

services on a regular basis. They also handle treatment of common complaints, refer more complicated or serious problems to a higher-level health facility, and often work on environmental issues related to health.

Unfortunately, because clinics often serve isolated communities, they run the risk of being attacked in times of social unrest. In countries such as ANGOLA, LIBERIA, SOMALIA, and Ethiopia, small clinics have been destroyed and their staffs killed or threatened during civil wars.

Health Centers. The next level up in the health care system, health centers, fill important functions in providing early treatment, improving nutrition, and lowering death rates. The staffs at larger health centers include registered nurses and medical assistants, but few have doctors, especially in rural areas. The centers have a few beds for patients and often have laboratory and dental facilities. In addition to patient care, health centers also keep track of health trends and collect health data. This data is used to guide the planning of district health programs.

In some cases health centers are linked to university medical schools. The university staff trains health center personnel to work as a team to solve community problems with local participation. They also teach new generations of doctors and develop ways to expand the types of services that health centers can provide. These training programs have had a positive influence on the development of health centers throughout Africa.

Hospitals. There are several levels of hospitals in Africa, but the most important are district hospitals. These are usually located in the small urban centers of basically rural districts. Although some district hospitals are badly understaffed and may have no doctor, an increasing number have more than one doctor and perhaps even medical specialists. The staff may also include newly graduated doctors from Western countries seeking to get medical experience in developing countries. Despite the presence of doctors, much of the work at hospitals is handled by medical assistants, nurses, and other health workers.

Many district hospitals have developed strategies to deal with the lack of senior staff. Some have radio links with regional or national hospitals that can provide expert advice. Some are served by visiting doctors from higher-level hospitals who perform surgery or train the local staff. Specialized services such as dental, eye, and psychiatric care are often delivered by visiting physicians. Despite such efforts, district hospitals face numerous challenges. They often struggle with too many patients and too little money for maintenance or equipment. Their resources are strained by diseases such as AIDS, measles, severe anemia, and malnutrition. There is an urgent need for more community health centers to combat such problems before they overwhelm hospitals.

Above the district hospitals are the regional and national hospitals. Regional hospitals usually have a variety of medical specialists who advise district hospital staffs and deal with serious cases from district hospitals. Even so, regional hospitals rely on nurses and medical aides to do most of the daily work with patients.

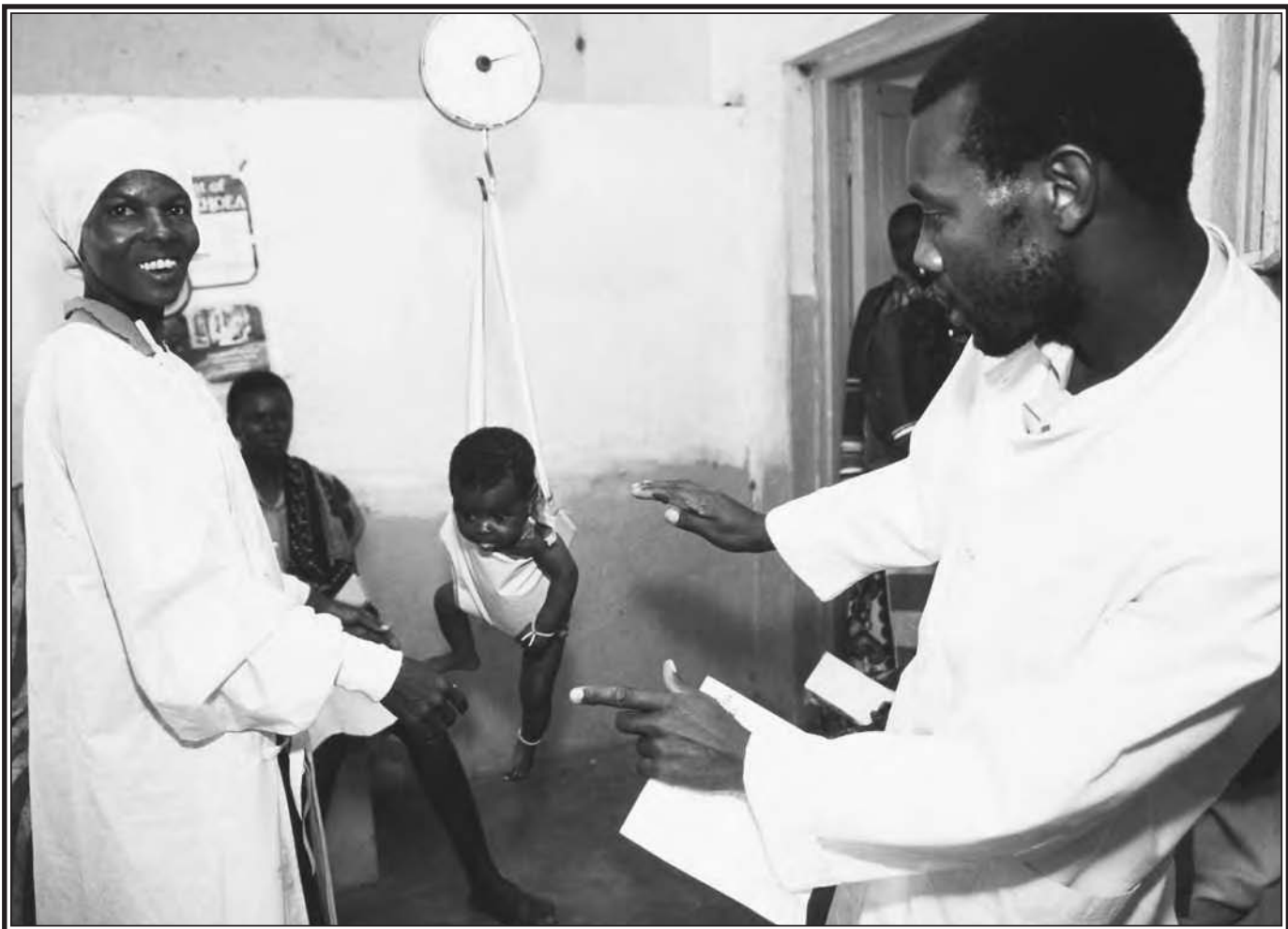
Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

Health Care

National hospitals are the highest category of health care, but they have the least impact on national health. Located in larger urban areas, such hospitals are primarily medical research and training centers. The cost of care at national hospitals is more than most Africans can afford, and many of the doctors trained in them have no desire to work in the more primitive conditions found at district hospitals or remote community health centers. In addition, national hospitals are sometimes plagued by corruption, with patients having to pay extra to see a doctor, be put on a waiting list, or obtain needed drugs.

Overcrowding, deterioration, and corruption at government-run national hospitals have led to an increase in the number of private hospitals in Africa. These serve mainly the wealthiest Africans and government workers who have health coverage. However, smaller, less expensive private hospitals are appearing as well. Although private hospital care is more expensive than most Africans can afford, the corruption and delay at government facilities often makes private care cheaper in the long run. (See also **AIDS, Diseases, Healing and Medicine, Pests and Pest Control.**)

Local clinics provide most of the preventive health care available in Africa. In this Kenyan clinic, a baby dangles from a scale while the doctor checks its weight.





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Herero

See
color plate 1,
vol. 1.

The Herero are a Bantu-speaking people of southern ANGOLA, NAMIBIA, and BOTSWANA. Their traditional herding society consisted of clans that traced their descent from both female and male ancestors.

In the 1840s the Namibian Herero formed alliances with local chiefs, traders, and German missionaries. With the help of their allies, the Herero acquired firearms and increased their power. Eventually, three Herero states emerged in central Namibia. In the 1880s the region became a German colony and one of the Herero states cooperated with the colonial authorities. However, in the early 1900s war erupted between the Herero and the Germans. Some 80 percent of the Herero were killed, and the rest were put into concentration camps.

In 1915 South African forces occupied Namibia. They permitted the Herero to own cattle but did not allow them to return to their ancestral lands. The Herero later became leaders in political organizations calling for civil rights, as well as in the Namibian independence movement. (See also **Bantu Peoples, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Livestock Grazing.**)

History of Africa

Tracing the history of Africa has presented a challenge to historians because of the lack of written records for much of the continent's past. Until recently most information had come from reports of foreign visitors, traders, and invaders over the last several hundred years. Historians of Asia and Europe, by contrast, have been able to use ancient records to construct accounts of societies that existed thousands of years ago.

Modern scholars have begun to employ techniques from fields such as archaeology, anthropology*, and linguistics* to fill in the gaps in Africa's historical record. Their efforts have provided insight into the continent's distant—and not-so-distant—past and allowed historians to trace broad patterns of development. The research reveals a continent that has long been a source of scientific, social, and political innovation*. It also shows that interactions with non-Africans have had a profound influence—and in many cases a destructive one—on indigenous* African cultures.

PREHISTORY TO THE IRON AGE

Archaeology has revealed that Africa was home to the earliest ancestors of humans more than 4 million years ago. The first modern humans appeared on the continent about 250,000 years ago. Less known and appreciated until recently are the many new developments that emerged in early African civilizations. These societies began domesticating* animals, dividing up work among different specialized groups, and developing urban centers.

Early Food Production and Settlements. Africa is the only place on earth where the herding of animals appeared before the development of agriculture. By about 7500 B.C., people in the western desert of EGYPT had domesticated cattle. Pastoralism* became an established way of life

- * **anthropology** study of human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics
- * **linguistics** study of languages
- * **innovation** development of something new
- * **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **domestication** adapting or training plants or animals for human use

* **pastoralism** way of life based on animal herding

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African Origins of Herding

Scholars offer several theories for how the early domestication of cattle in Africa occurred. Some suggest that humans and animals were attracted to the same water sources. They argue that, over time, people managed to control the movements of the wild herds of cattle that used these water sources, and this led to domestication of the animals. There is evidence that early herders in some parts of Africa deliberately moved wild cattle into areas too dry to support them naturally. The herders then dug water holes to keep the cattle alive. Because the cattle could not survive away from these areas, they became dependent on the water provided by the herders and were thus domesticated.

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **ceramics** pottery, earthenware, or porcelain objects; the manufacture of such objects

long before Africans first planted and harvested grains. Over the next 2,000 years, the practice of herding spread into the central SAHARA DESERT. From there it made its way to the Atlantic coast, into the highlands of present-day ETHIOPIA, and south to the border of Africa's tropical forests.

It may seem surprising that Africans could raise cattle in the Sahara. However, Africa's climate has changed considerably. At one time many parts of the Sahara region were well watered, supporting forests and other vegetation. About 6000 B.C., the weather began to change and the Sahara became drier. This process continued for about 4,500 years until North Africa had become mostly desert. During the long period of change, a surprising variety of settlements flourished in the central and southern Sahara.

Scholars originally expected that the economy of these settlements would consist of a mix of fishing, HUNTING AND GATHERING, and some cattle herding. Instead, the archaeological* sites show an amazing degree of specialization—different groups concentrating on different activities. Some communities depended almost entirely on pastoralism, others on fishing, and still others on hunting and gathering. The communities also adapted to changing climatic conditions. Pastoralists began to rely on wild grain to supplement their diet, and this eventually led to the development of agriculture. People may have begun to experiment with growing grain crops such as sorghum, millet, and rice in response to the dry conditions that threatened their regular food sources.

These early Saharan settlements did not exist in isolation. Scholars suggest that the various communities formed relationships based on the exchange of goods and obligations. There is even evidence that members of different communities gathered together at certain times of the year. By sharing their resources and skills, they had a better chance of surviving difficult environmental conditions. It may have been that these relationships between settlements played a role in making people feel secure enough to experiment with growing grains.

Southerly Migrations. The drying up of the Sahara forced people living in the area to migrate to neighboring savanna* regions in the south. After about 2500 B.C., many pastoral groups made their way into central, eastern, and southern Africa. Herding peoples occupied the highlands of Ethiopia more than a thousand years before farmers appeared there. By about 1000 B.C. pastoralists had spread into the Rift Valley in present-day KENYA, and by 400 B.C. they had reached the border of present-day TANZANIA. Pastoralism also had spread to central Africa by 400 B.C. and to southern Africa by A.D. 200. There is no evidence that these herders attempted to grow wild plants before the arrival of farmers from western Africa hundreds of years later.

South of the Sahara, BANTU PEOPLES developed a culture or set of cultures in what is now southeastern NIGERIA and northwestern CAMEROON. Some scholars think that these cultures could have arisen as early as 6000 B.C. By at least 3000 B.C., Bantu cultures were well developed, with stone tools and the manufacture of ceramics*. These early Bantu peoples raised crops and supplemented their diet by fishing, hunting and gathering, and with meat from small herds of domesticated animals.



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By 1500 B.C. Bantu-speaking peoples had migrated into the eastern part of present-day Cameroon, and they eventually spread east and south across central and southern Africa. As they migrated, the Bantu began growing grains and were among the first to produce iron in sub-Saharan* Africa. The Bantu often lived side by side with the farmers and hunting and gathering peoples who inhabited areas before the Bantu arrived. The use of iron technology did not change the nature of Bantu settlements. They remained small communities practicing a mix of farming and herding.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

SOCIETY, TRADE, AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Although iron technology had little impact on the Bantu cultures, the widespread rise of metalworking revolutionized social development in Africa. The use of metals sped up the growth of specialization, leading to a more hierarchical* society and to new ideas about authority. It also played an important role in the development of trade and cities in Africa.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

The Spread of Metals Technology. People in ancient Egypt and NUBIA were smelting bronze as early as 2000 B.C. The Greeks and Carthaginians brought iron and copper technology to North Africa sometime after 1000 B.C. and from there it spread southward down the Nile Valley. However, some scholars also suggest that sub-Saharan peoples were already working with metals at about that same time.

The earliest evidence of ironworking in sub-Saharan Africa, discovered in present-day NIGER, dates to about 700 B.C. Copper smelting seems to have begun in the region of present-day MAURITANIA about a hundred years later, although it may have appeared in Niger even earlier. Dates for the earliest iron smelting in East Africa are less certain. Some scholars suggest that the Bantu were working iron in East Africa shortly after 1000 B.C., while others claim that Bantu ironworking appeared much later.

Iron had an immediate impact on African civilization. In West Africa, for example, the use of iron tools helped in the clearing and settling of land in the valleys along the Senegal and NIGER RIVERS, and iron goods from these areas were probably part of the early trade in this region. People quickly realized the advantages of iron over stone. Iron tools allowed new lands to be settled, which resulted in an increase in population. The artisans* who produced iron and the people who controlled it acquired new power and authority in their communities.

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

By about 300 B.C. ironworking technology was well established in the areas of western Africa settled by the Bantu. From there it spread into central Africa and ultimately to eastern and southeastern Africa. Iron artifacts* dating from about A.D. 100 to 400 have been found at Lake Victoria, in southern Tanzania, and in southeastern Africa. In these areas the expanding Bantu settlements began to engage in regional trade that included locally produced metals and products from distant lands, such as salt. As these communities became larger and more densely settled, trade networks grew and the first cities began to appear in sub-Saharan Africa.

* **artifact** in archaeology, an ornament, tool, weapon, or other object made by humans

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In many parts of Africa, archaeologists are searching for clues about the continent's rich history. Many treasures are being uncovered in excavations like this one near the Great Pyramids at Giza, Egypt.

Complex Societies. By about A.D. 600 urban settlements featuring a hierarchical society, specialized labor, large-scale production of goods, long-distance trade, and complex political organization were appearing throughout Africa. In West Africa, for example, expanding long-distance trade along the Middle Niger River promoted the growth of early urban areas. Many of these were clusters of settlements inhabited by farmers and artisans. Traces of urban centers from about this time have also been found in present-day MALI and GHANA. Despite their complexity, these centers do not seem to have had the kind of centralized political organization usually seen in urban areas. Instead, evidence suggests that authority was shared among members of society.

The situation was somewhat different in southern Africa. For example, in the areas of present-day BOTSWANA and ZIMBABWE increasing prosperity led to the development of large societies divided into different levels. Investigating the sites of stone-built communities, such as Mapungabwe in Zimbabwe, archaeologists have found signs of social divisions based on wealth, often related to the size of cattle herds. Burial sites in these areas also reveal the existence of a privileged group who controlled access to gold, ivory, and imported goods. Coastal towns

Small Fly, Big Impact

One of the biggest influences on the development of African society was a tiny insect, the tsetse fly. The flies, which carry a disease called sleeping sickness that is fatal to cattle, live in the warm, moist forest lowlands and river valleys that cover the middle of the continent. Without cattle to pull plows, farmers in those areas had to use hoes to break the soil by hand. This greatly limited the amount of land they could cultivate as well as the size of their communities. As a result, social and political organization remained rural and local in those areas. By contrast, in areas such as Egypt and Nubia where tsetse flies did not exist and the plow was in use, large cities and centralized states developed very early.

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

developed in Tanzania and Kenya at settlements supported by trade networks with urban centers in Zimbabwe and elsewhere. By the late 700s, large urban centers with hierarchical social structures had appeared in many other areas of Africa as well.

INFLUENCE OF ISLAM

Between the early 600s and late 1400s the most important developments in Africa were the arrival and spread of Islam* and the development of distinct social and cultural traditions in different regions of the continent. The rise of these regional traditions stimulated trade between different parts of Africa as well as with the outside world. Some of Africa's most powerful kingdoms and states arose during this period.

The Islamic Invasion. In A.D. 639 Muslim Arabs invaded Egypt, and in less than 100 years they had conquered virtually all of North Africa. It would be some time, however, before Islamic influence spread south of the Sahara. In West Africa, for example, the rulers of Mali converted to Islam just before 1100. From Mali and other kingdoms in the SAHEL region, Muslim merchants and religious leaders carried Islam farther south and set up trading posts. During the golden age of the Mali Empire, which lasted from about 1250 to 1450, much of West Africa came under Muslim political and cultural domination.

Islamic invaders had less success in eastern Africa, where Christian kingdoms in SUDAN successfully resisted Arab conquest until after 1300. However, Arab nomads from Egypt had begun migrating into the northern Sudan before that time, and by 1317 the region was under Muslim rule. Muslim trading networks also spread into eastern and southern Ethiopia, and small states arose throughout the region. By the 800s the Christian kingdom of AKSUM in Ethiopia began a gradual decline, although monasteries continued to spread the Christian faith farther southward. By the early 1300s, Ethiopia's Christian rulers had created an efficient army and organized a confederation, or alliance, of many smaller kingdoms in the area. This confederation dominated the region until the late 1400s.

Throughout much of eastern Africa, Muslim traders accomplished what soldiers were unable to do—spread their influence and establish outposts of Islamic culture. By 750 the merchants had set up a trading network between the Arabian peninsula, the Persian Gulf, and the East African coast. Sometime after 1000, several Islamic kingdoms arose, and Muslim influence and religion spread throughout the coastal towns. By 1100 an urban SWAHILI culture, consisting of a mixture of African and Islamic traditions, was well established in the region.

Developments in West Africa. Farming populations in western Africa grew rapidly after about A.D. 500, and this had a major impact on the economy of the region. Increased production was accompanied by growing specialization of labor. An extensive commercial network developed for exchanging goods both within the region and with other areas. Food, iron, salt, textiles, and luxury products such as copper, pepper,



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and gold were traded from the Atlantic Ocean to the Sahara and even as far north as TUNISIA in North Africa.

Accompanying these economic changes were social innovations and political developments. Kingdoms such as Ghana and Kanem appeared in the Sahel region, and independent cities ruled by groups of powerful citizens arose along the Niger River. Within these cities and states, the work people did determined their level in society. In many places this eventually led to a system of fixed castes* based on occupation.

* **caste** division of people into fixed classes based on birth

Around 750 Muslim merchants from North Africa came to West Africa searching for gold. After their arrival, trade networks in the region expanded and the volume of trade increased. By 1000 all the major centers of West Africa were linked by trade routes, and new cities appeared near goldfields, along the Atlantic coast near present-day ACCRA and BÉNIN, and in the areas of Hausaland and Yorubaland in present-day Nigeria. Several of these urban centers developed into political capitals, which had a significant influence on the surrounding rural areas. From these urban centers emerged a handful of cultural traditions that eventually came to dominate all of western Africa.

Climate change also had an impact on society in western Africa during this period. The region's climate became much drier between 1100 and 1500. The change led to the northward spread of the dreaded tsetse fly, which carried diseases affecting both humans and cattle. In response, herders in Senegal began to move eastward to the delta area of the Middle Niger River and then to the kingdom of BORNUN near Lake Chad. As the Middle Niger region dried up, many groups headed south, and the seat of political power shifted southward as well. The kingdom of Ghana gave way to the kingdom of Mali, and Bornu emerged as a successor to the much drier state of Kanem.

Eastern, Southern, and Central Africa. Population growth also led to the emergence of newer, more complex societies in eastern, southern, and central Africa between 750 and 1100. These included kingdoms, city-states, states ruled by councils made up of the heads of large households, and communities headed by people of the same age group or clan*. The social structure of these kingdoms and states varied. Ritual* associations were important in some societies, while others had a hierarchical system based on ethnic groups and social classes. About a dozen distinct cultural traditions developed that flourished in the centuries that followed.

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Long-distance trade in eastern Africa, organized by Muslim traders, began in towns along the coast. Gold was the main item in this commerce, which also included slaves, ivory, timber, iron, ceramics, and other luxury goods. By 900 the goldfields of Zimbabwe had become the most important part of the trading network. They were connected to coastal stations farther north and then to Swahili coastal towns in Kenya and Tanzania. By 1200 trade routes had reached into the interior at Great Zimbabwe, the monumental capital city of the kingdom of Zimbabwe. Within 100 years trade started flowing from the coast up the Zambezi River, and trading routes soon reached all parts of southeastern Africa. Although much of the commerce was directed and controlled by Muslims, Islam made no significant impact on the culture of Zimbabwe.



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* **staple** major product of a region;
basic food

The items exchanged in this growing trade revolutionized agriculture in eastern and central Africa. New crops brought from Asia included sugarcane, taro, cotton, eggplants, plantains, and bananas. The last two had a major impact on social and economic conditions. Introduced to the rain forests of central Africa by 1000, plantains soon became the region's main staple* crop. They provided farmers with food surpluses, allowed them to settle anywhere in the region, and served as the basis for developing trade relations with local people who lived by fishing and hunting and gathering. They had a similar effect in east Africa. The ability to grow groves of plantains led to permanent agricultural settlements, and an abundance of food allowed those settlements to expand and prosper.

EUROPEAN INFLUENCE AND THE SLAVE TRADE

The Portuguese were the first Europeans to make extensive contact with the people of sub-Saharan Africa. They visited the Atlantic coast of West Africa as early as the 1440s, seeking gold and spices. At the time most slaves in the Mediterranean region came from eastern Europe. But in 1453, when the city of Constantinople fell to the Turks, this source was cut off. Africa then became central to the SLAVE TRADE.

The Atlantic Slave Trade. The establishment of sugar plantations around the Mediterranean and on islands in the Atlantic Ocean fueled the European demand for African slaves. This demand increased dramatically with the development of plantations in the Americas. West Africa, where local kings had kept slaves for centuries, soon became the center of slaving activity, with Europeans buying slaves from African or mixed-race agents. During the early years, very few Europeans settled in Africa. They conducted most of their business from ships or trading posts on the coast.

The level of interaction between Africans and Europeans varied greatly from one place to another. The kingdom of Kongo, for example, welcomed the Portuguese, adopted Christianity, and even allowed slave traders to live at the royal court. The Kongo kings were major suppliers of slaves until the late 1500s. In contrast, the kingdom of Benin refused to let foreign slavers live in the capital city. They were restricted to a licensed trading center on the coast. During the 1600s Kongo disintegrated into civil war and never regained its former power. Benin, meanwhile, remained an important regional power until almost 1900.

The slave trade had a significant impact not only on African coastal states but also on people far inland. Slaves came from as far away as the central Congo River basin and the BAMBARA states along the Middle Niger River, more than 600 miles from the coast. In all areas touched by the trade, slave raids reduced the number of farmers and displaced rural populations. People who were targets of slave raids often retreated from farmlands to more defensible areas or moved into walled villages for protection. Some scholars suggest that the slave trade contributed to the famines that struck West Africa in the 1700s.

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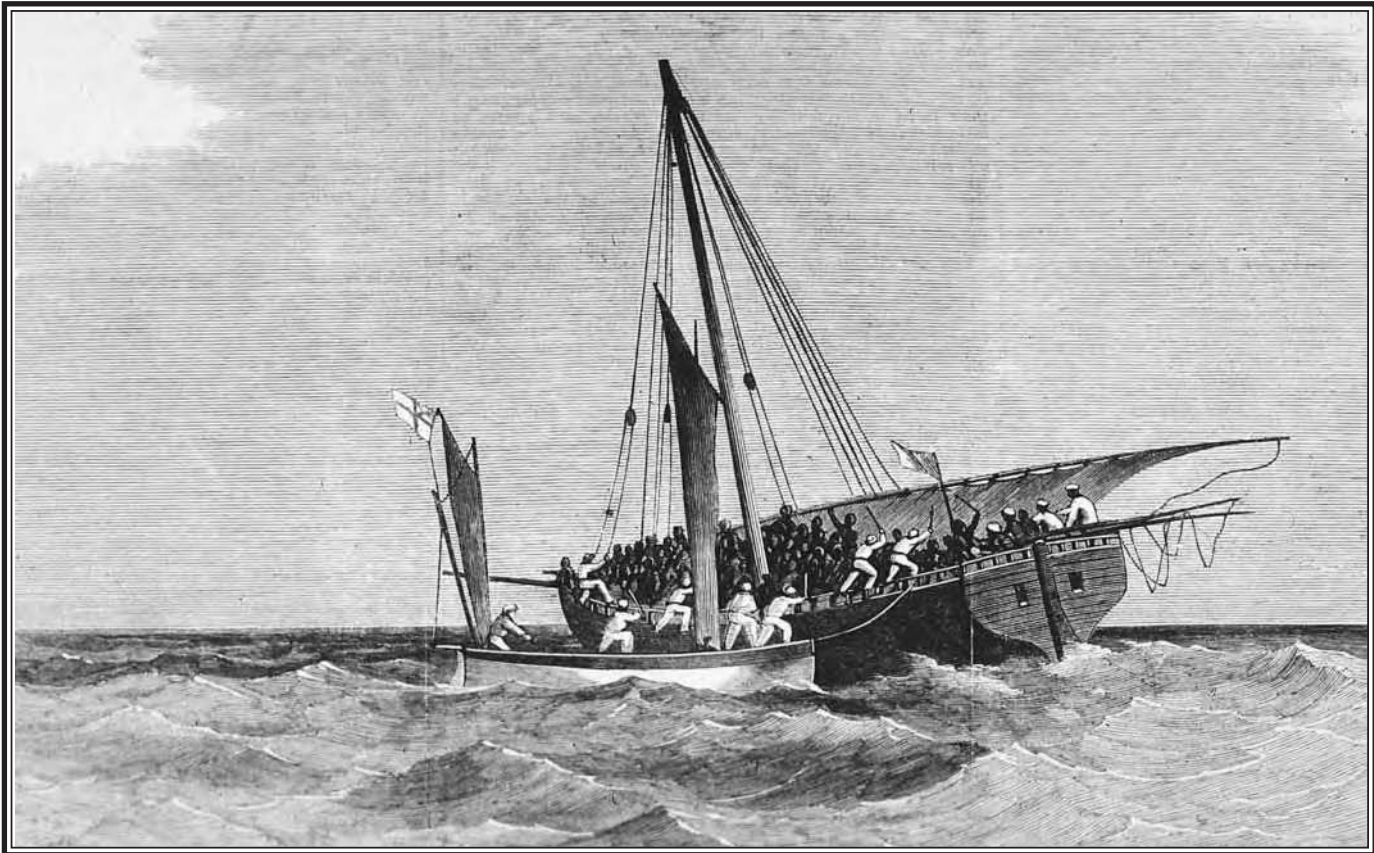
The Arab Role. As the European slave trade developed along the Atlantic coast of sub-Saharan Africa, an Arab slave trade flourished in North Africa, the Sahara, and East Africa. All the Islamic states of North Africa brought slaves across the Sahara from the south, perhaps as many as Europeans exported from the Atlantic coast. The Arab-controlled slave trade to Arabia and India lasted until the end of the 1800s. The economic strength of many of the Islamic states depended on this commerce. However, while many Muslim merchants participated in the trade, Islamic religious leaders gained support among Africans by opposing it.

Elsewhere in Africa the slave trade had less effect on local populations. In southern Africa the arrival of the Dutch in the mid-1600s led to the decline of the region's indigenous KHOISAN peoples through disease and warfare. Dutch settlers came to rely on slave labor imported from eastern Africa and Asia, but Khoisan people who survived and did not retreat into the interior were also enslaved.

After Britain outlawed the slave trade in the early 1800s, its navy policed the seas and often rescued enslaved Africans. Here, British sailors from the HMS Daphne climb aboard a slave-trading vessel off the coast of East Africa.

Internal Developments. The period from 1500 to the late 1800s saw major developments take place in Africa that were not related to European or Arab influence. The most important of these was the formation of a number of new states as older ones declined.

In 1702 the ASANTE state in what is now Ghana emerged victorious from a power struggle with Denkyera, its main rival. Asante would





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remain a leading force in West Africa until well into the 1800s. Also in West Africa, the Segu Bambara formed a powerful military state in 1712. Both of these states engaged in the slave trade to secure weapons and goods.

In East Africa several powerful states rose or fell during this period. By 1500 the kingdom of Zimbabwe had declined and was replaced by several smaller states. The largest of these, Mwene Mutapa, exported gold and ivory to distant lands and carried on a lively local trade in salt, iron, copper, and food. A number of states arose in the Great Lakes region of East Africa. North of Lake Victoria the Bunyoro kingdom became the dominant power, while Rwanda emerged as the strongest state in the southern part of the region.

Another influential state in East Africa was Buganda, which stood out in the region because its ruling class was not made up of pastoralists. Another unusual feature in Buganda was that power depended on ability and loyalty to the king, not on birth or heredity. The kingdom grew rapidly during the 1700s by dominating local trade and exporting ivory to the east coast.

Elsewhere in the region, European influence actually decreased as the Swahili cities joined forces with Arab merchants to cut Portugal out of the Indian Ocean trade. The last Portuguese fortress on Africa's eastern coast fell to Swahili and Arabs in 1698. Farther south the Portuguese attempted to penetrate the interior to gain access to gold from Mwene Mutapa. Granting land to African traders, they created chiefs who owed loyalty to both the king of Portugal and local rulers.

Perhaps the most important change of the period took place in far southern Africa, where the Nguni established states based on both herding and farming in the early 1700s. In time, powerful chiefs strengthened by new military techniques imposed their will on lesser leaders. This process reached a peak after 1818 with the rise of the Zulu kingdom under SHAKA ZULU. The military techniques of the Zulu were soon adopted by neighbors and rivals, who established a number of states from South Africa to Tanzania.

THE ROOTS OF COLONIALISM

Until the 1800s Europe was primarily interested in Africa as a source of slaves, gold, and ivory. However, Great Britain outlawed the slave trade in 1807, and most other European nations had done the same by the mid-1800s. Meanwhile, the Industrial Revolution in Europe created a demand for tropical oils to use as lubricants in industrial machinery. New markets also appeared for African products such as gum, rubber, coffee, and cocoa. European powers began to look at Africa as a place for colonies that could supply these and other items, bypassing local African rulers and merchants.

Effects of the Industrial Revolution. Two developments during the Industrial Revolution had a significant impact on African states. The first was the modernization of weapons after about 1850. Many African states that traded with Europe wanted guns in exchange for their goods. Those with up-to-date weapons had a major advantage over their ene-

See
color plate 7,
vol. 2.



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mies. One example was Ethiopia, which emerged as a major power in eastern Africa. In the late 1880s, Ethiopian king MENILEK II accumulated many modern guns and trained his troops in their use. Using these weapons, Ethiopia defeated an invading Italian army in 1889. As a result of its victory, European powers officially recognized Ethiopia as a state.

The second major development was a decline in prices for African goods after 1850. Lower prices came partly a result of increased production, which soon outpaced demand. In addition, the opening of the Suez Canal in the 1860s made delivery of Asian goods to Europe much quicker and cheaper. Competition from Asian products contributed to a further drop in prices, forcing African rulers to find other ways to raise revenue. In many cases this meant demanding tribute* from the people they ruled or providing slaves to Arabs or to other African states.

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

The use of modern weapons and financial problems made the 1870s and 1880s perhaps the bloodiest time in Africa's history. As African rulers faced financial difficulties and struggled to hold their kingdoms together, groups of well-armed men could gain control. For example, the Bornu Empire of central Africa fell to a small force of Arab riflemen in 1897. Civil war plagued many states on the continent at this time as well. Some states, such as Buganda, were able to expand using modern weapons, but many were swept aside or destroyed by internal conflict. This political and economic turmoil made the European colonization of Africa in the late 1800s much easier.

Early Colonial Developments. Only a few European colonies existed in Africa before the 1880s. In South Africa the Dutch had established Cape Colony in 1652. After the British took over the colony in 1806, the original settlers began to move farther inland. The Dutch set up two states—the South African Republic and the Orange Free State—which became known as the AFRIKANER REPUBLICS. Europeans found diamonds in the area in the 1860s and gold in the 1880s. These discoveries led to more immigration and investment, as well as to increased conflict with Africans in the region.

British control of South Africa suffered a temporary setback in 1870 when the Zulu defeated a British army at Isandhlwana. Within a year, however, the British had conquered the Zulu, and many other southern African peoples soon came under their control as well. In 1899 the British attacked the Dutch Afrikaner Republics, and by 1902 they had taken over both states and added them to Cape Colony. Soon afterward white settlers began moving farther north into what are now Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Elsewhere in Africa, European colonization was pushed along by both political and economic factors. The search for raw materials and markets for European-made goods led to increasing European activity in Africa. So did the desire of European nations to increase their power and prestige by establishing colonial empires on the African continent. The rush to gain these empires began in earnest in the 1880s when King Leopold II of Belgium claimed the Congo Basin as his personal possession. The European powers soon became involved in a “scramble” for Africa in which they competed for territory and colonial outposts. In 1885 repre-

Early Tourists

It is commonly assumed that when Arabs and Europeans first visited Africa they found it primitive and inferior. This is not true. When the famous Arab traveler Ibn Battuta arrived at the Swahili city of Kilwa in the 1330s, he wrote that it was "one of the most beautiful and well-constructed towns in the world. The whole of it is elegantly built." The Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama, who reached Kilwa in 1502, stated "The city is large and of good buildings of stone and mortar with terraces. ... and in the port there were many ships." Da Gama's description could almost apply to the Swahili towns of today, which have hardly changed over the centuries.

representatives from several European nations met at a conference in Berlin, Germany, to set out rules for colonization and divide up the African continent. Within 25 years Europeans controlled almost all of Africa.

THE COLONIAL ERA

The Berlin Conference established national borders in Africa based upon the competing claims of the European powers. Africans themselves did not take part in any discussions about the fate of their continent. The legitimacy of many European territorial claims was supposedly based on treaties with local rulers, but these rulers had no say in the future of their lands. At another meeting in Brussels in 1890, European leaders prohibited the sale of weapons to Africans. With Africans thus denied access to modern weapons, European mastery of the continent was assured.

Colonial Boundaries. The drawing of colonial borders at the Berlin Conference had profound consequences for the future of Africa. These boundaries were created without regard for ethnic and linguistic divisions within the continent. In many cases the borders placed members of the same ethnic group in different countries. In others they forced rival groups to share the same land. The difficulty of crossing the new borders affected nomadic herders and hunting-gathering groups, who needed to move about freely to find pastures for their animals or fresh sources of food. The creation of borders threatened the survival of these peoples. It also increased the likelihood that they would come into conflict with settled communities over access to land and resources.

Colonial Economics. The European nations that colonized Africa hoped to exploit* the continent's natural resources for their own benefit. From the start, however, their efforts were hampered by lack of familiarity with Africa and by inadequate funding.

At first, most colonial powers granted European companies a monopoly* over the production of resources such as rubber or timber. In return, the companies agreed to build much of the infrastructure* needed to extract the resources and bring them to Europe. This included building towns for workers, roads and railroads to ship the goods to port, and harbor facilities to service the ships carrying goods between Africa and Europe.

The agreements between colonial rulers and European companies caused major disruptions in African society. Companies had the right to take over land, remove those who lived there, and deny Africans access to the land's resources. In many cases Africans were forced to work for the companies for little or no pay, often under brutal conditions. Hundreds of thousands of Africans died working in mines, fields, and factories, and while building roads and railroads through Africa's difficult terrain. Despite efforts to control expenses, most of these undertakings were very costly. The large coffee and cocoa plantations set up by European companies, for example, were far less efficient than the many small African farms that produced the same crops.

Despite many years under European rule, most African countries were still very underdeveloped when they achieved independence in the

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works



History of Africa

1950s and 1960s. Few roads or railroads had been built, and most of these served limited areas. Because the European powers saw Africa as a market for their manufactured goods, they established very little industry in their colonies. Instead, African raw materials were sent to Europe, where they were used to produce finished goods that were then shipped back to Africa. African dependence on foreign manufactured goods would contribute heavily to economic problems after independence.

Colonial Politics. Colonial efforts to cut costs were not confined to economic activities. The administrations that were set up to govern African colonies were often understaffed and overworked. European leaders did not want to invest more resources in their colonies in Africa than they could get out of them. As a result, the amount spent on government was limited to whatever revenue the colonial authorities could raise from taxes and fees charged on imports and exports.

With only small staffs to govern their colonies, the European powers developed other ways to maintain control. Britain and France, the most important colonial powers, adopted different strategies. The British kept many traditional sources of authority in place. They relied on existing African leaders to maintain order at the local level and incorporated them into the general structure of colonial government. The French, on the other hand, eliminated local governing institutions and replaced them with councils and other organizations based on French models. In all colonies the rights and needs of the colonial powers and white settlers came before the rights or needs of Africans.

The most drastic form of white domination arose in South Africa, where a highly segregated state began to emerge during the early 1900s. Although white and black populations lived separately in all parts of sub-Saharan Africa, in South Africa that division was backed by law. Under *APARTHEID*, South Africa's policy of segregation, nonwhite residents lost virtually all their civil rights, including the right to move freely within the country. Blacks were forced into separate schools, driven out of "white" areas in towns and cities, and made into a permanent underclass with no chance of improving their lives.

AFRICA SINCE INDEPENDENCE

Between 1914 and 1945, worldwide economic and political crises—World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II—caused European nations to reduce their investment in African colonies. During this time the first African labor unions and political parties arose to challenge white privileges and white rule. After World War II, the European powers moved to grant more rights and freedoms to Africans. Most colonies achieved some form of self-rule, although final authority remained in Europe. Despite such changes, calls for greater freedom intensified, and during the 1960s most African countries gained independence.

Postcolonial Politics. Following independence most African nations faced serious political problems. Traditional forms of authority had been destroyed during the colonial era, leaving most countries with a system of government inherited from their European rulers. The system, run by





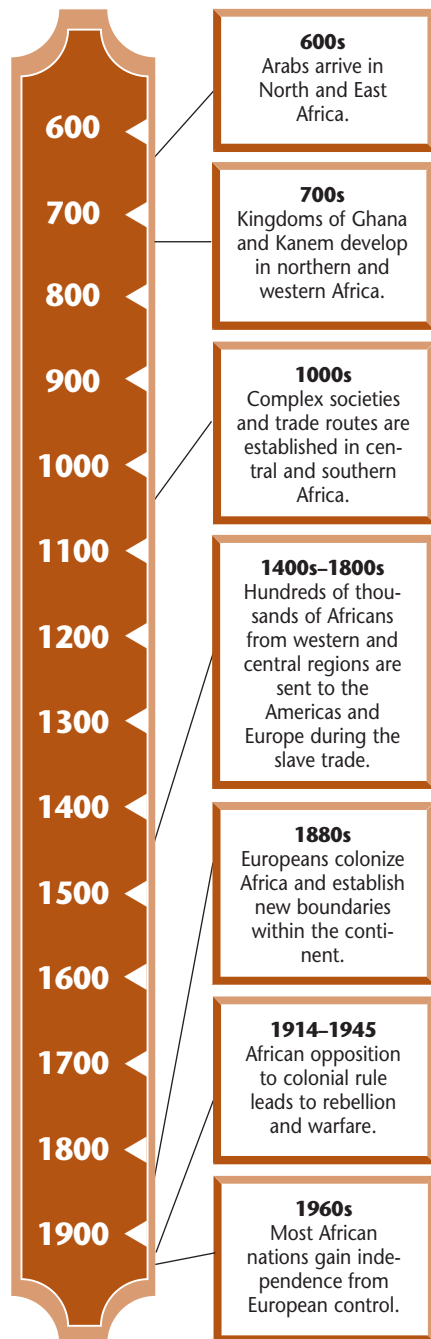
Kenyan Tom Mboya became a labor organizer and political leader while his country was under colonial rule. After independence he held several government posts. Here Mboya wears a shirt bearing the face of Jomo Kenyatta, the first president of Kenya.

a small group of educated Africans, excluded the majority of the population from political power.

The most pressing issue for most African leaders was to build strong central governments in countries with deep racial and ethnic divisions. The boundaries created during the colonial period remained after independence, producing nations composed of rival groups, often long-standing enemies. Struggles among competing ethnic groups and violence marked politics in countries such as Nigeria, Sudan, RWANDA, and BURUNDI. Military leaders emerged as rulers in nations where the army was the only effective way of gaining and maintaining power. In some countries public order broke down completely, and civil war has raged in many African nations since independence.

Postcolonial Economics. African nations have also experienced economic problems in the years since independence. Because of colonial neglect, few countries had the infrastructure needed to support a modern economy. In addition, African economies have been dependent on

History of Africa



* regime current political system or rule

exports of raw materials such as minerals and agricultural products—items with unstable prices that cannot produce steady income. African nations also have had to import most of the expensive manufactured goods they need from Europe and other parts of the world. The imbalance in trade revenues forced African nations to borrow heavily to finance improvements such as roads, railroads, seaports, power plants, and schools, leaving many countries deeply in debt.

In the 1980s Africa faced a continent-wide financial crisis: most nations were unable to pay back the money they had borrowed. Lenders agreed to forgive or refinance debts if borrowers reduced the size of government and cut back on spending. Doing so, however, left even less money to spend on development and social services. In fact, many of those social services—such as education and transportation—rapidly decline once spending is cut. Most African nations had targeted such services for growth after the end of colonialism, but rising populations combined with spending cuts led to underfunded schools and crumbling roadways and railroads. The inability of African leaders to meet the needs of their citizens resulted in political unrest, leading some nations to use severe measures to control the people. The most brutal regimes* often were very corrupt, with leaders stealing government funds and gaining advantages through bribery and threats.

Africa's Dilemma. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, Africa stands at a crossroads. While many developing countries in Latin America and Asia have advanced both politically and economically, most of Africa lags far behind. A number of African nations still face the threat of internal conflict and some, such as SOMALIA and LIBERIA, are so torn by civil strife that their governments have completely collapsed.

Many of Africa's problems can be traced back to the slave trade and colonial policies that disrupted or destroyed the continent's traditional social, economic, and political institutions. Modern African leaders now face the challenge of building stable nations on weak economic foundations and governmental structures that are not generally accepted as legitimate by the people.

To solve Africa's problems and help the continent move forward, its leaders must take steps to repair the damage done by slavery and colonialism. This will almost certainly require the cooperation of the nations that profited from the exploitation of Africa for so many years. Until that occurs, most Africans will continue to be denied the benefits of the independence they won nearly 50 years ago. (See also *Africa, Study of*; *Arabs in Africa*; *Boundaries in Africa*; *Cities and Urbanization*; *Colonialism in Africa*; *Development, Economic and Social*; *Diaspora, African*; *Economic History*; *Ethnic Groups and Identity*; *Genocide and Violence*; *Global Politics and Africa*; *Government and Political Systems*; *Humans, Early*; *Independence Movements*; *Kings and Kingship*; *Laws and Legal Systems*; *Nationalism*; *Neocolonialism*; *North Africa: History and Cultures*; *Southern Africa, History*; *Sudanic Empires of Western Africa*; *West African Trading Settlements*; *World Wars I and II*.)

**Horton, James
Africanus**

**1835–1883
Sierra Leonean physician**

James Africanus Beale Horton, an IGBO from West Africa, became a physician and served for 20 years as a medical officer and administrator. He also wrote books on medicine and on the political situation in the region.

Born in SIERRA LEONE to a father who had been rescued from a slave ship, Horton grew up in the capital, FREETOWN. At the time race was not a barrier to advancement there. Educated at mission schools, Horton went on to train in Britain as an army medical officer. He served in West Africa and rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel. After retiring from the army in 1879, he formed a gold-mining company and opened a bank in Freetown.

Horton published nine books, including a textbook on tropical diseases. His best known work, *West African Countries and Peoples: A Vindication of the Negro Race* (1868), challenged racial theories of the day. It also proposed many of the political changes that occurred after the end of the colonial period. (See also **Healing and Medicine, Health Care.**)

**Houphouët-Boigny,
Félix**

**1905–1993
President of Ivory Coast**

Félix Houphouët-Boigny, who served as president of IVORY COAST for 33 years, was one of the most powerful and influential politicians in Africa. The son of a wealthy Baule chief, he attended French colonial schools and received a degree as an African physician, the highest medical degree an African could obtain under French colonial rule. Because his family was part of one of the largest and most socially dominant ethnic groups, Houphouët-Boigny automatically received a high social status. This status helped him become a successful member of the African elite, as he practiced as a physician from 1925 to 1940 and served as chief of his home district before becoming a successful planter. Despite his social status, however, Houphouët-Boigny never lost sight of the fact that others in his country were less fortunate than he was and that he should help whenever possible.

After his successful medical career, Houphouët-Boigny became a coffee planter and worked to organize African planters. In 1945 he was elected to the National Assembly of France. He became a national hero by overseeing the passage of a law that ended the use of forced labor by Africans on French colonial PLANTATIONS. The next year he founded the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast (PDCI), which still controls the country.

When Ivory Coast gained its independence in 1960, Houphouët-Boigny was elected president almost unanimously. He established a single-party state, but his ruling style emphasized rewards and compromise rather than force and intimidation. While other African countries were attempting to industrialize, he stressed agricultural development. His approach proved highly successful. He also managed to control the rivalries between ethnic groups that split many other African nations. Under Houphouët-Boigny Ivory Coast became one of the most prosperous and peaceful countries in Africa. In 1990 he was reelected for a seventh term as president in the first multiparty elections in the nation's history. He died in office on December 7, 1993, on the thirty-third anniversary of the country's independence.



Houses and Housing

Houses and Housing

Houses and housing issues in Africa vary dramatically between rural and urban areas. People in most rural areas build houses using long-established methods that suit traditional ways of life. The situation is quite different in the continent's rapidly growing cities. Increases in population density, government regulations, and the diverse lifestyles of city dwellers have combined to create a housing crisis in virtually every urban area in Africa.

RURAL HOUSING

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Housing styles in rural Africa reflect the environment, economy, and social system of a particular place. Constructed of indigenous* materials, traditional rural homes serve as both living and work spaces.

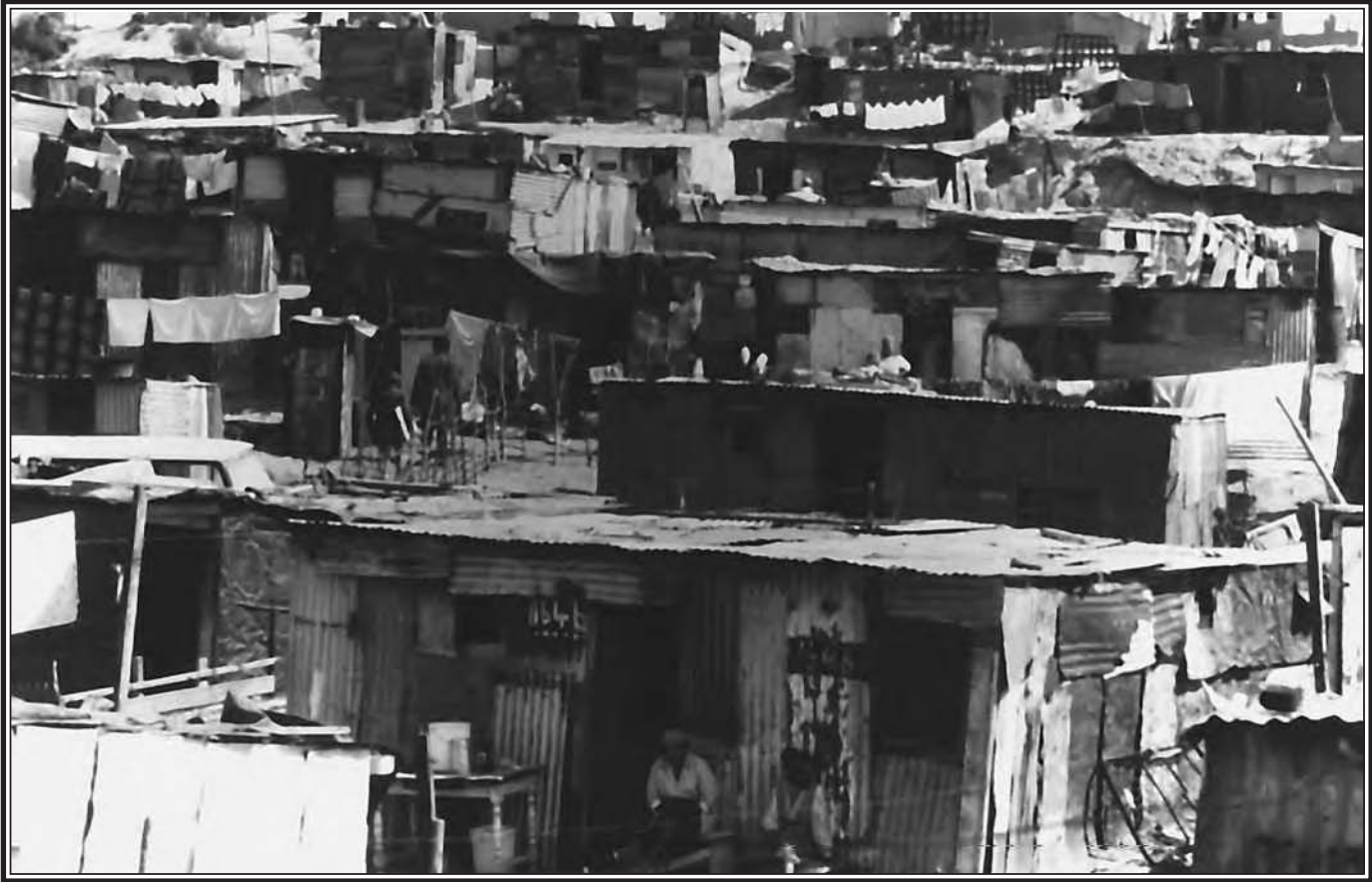
Materials and Construction. In most parts of Africa, rural settlements are small and self-sufficient, with housing that can be built by a small number of people with local materials. Because farming and LIVESTOCK GRAZING can exhaust the land's resources rather quickly, many communities move from place to place to find fertile soil. These people generally use houses for only a few years, so they build them of materials such as wood, leaves, bark, and reeds. More permanent rural societies typically use mud or mud brick construction, and a few build with stone.

Social factors play an important role in housing construction. Traditionally, rural societies have placed a high value on equality and fitting in among its members rather than on wealth and individuality. Accumulating riches is discouraged, and displaying wealth—in a luxurious home, for example—is viewed as a threat to community stability. As a result, most rural houses are about the same size, design, and quality. A large family may have a large house to accommodate its many members, but the house should not be noticeably grander than the others in the village. Because these values also emphasize the importance of decent housing for all members of society, few Africans living in rural communities are homeless.

Style. A typical African homestead in a rural community consists of several small buildings, each with its own roof. These units are grouped together by a surrounding wall or fence. Each building has a specific purpose, such as cooking, sleeping, or storage. In societies based on livestock herding, this traditional style of house includes a corral or stable within the walls. A central courtyard provides light and air and serves as a common area where members of the household can gather.

Most rural homes are rebuilt and rearranged frequently to accommodate changes in the size and structure of a household. As families grow or divide, buildings are added to homes and their uses are adapted to the needs of the occupants. Yet despite the nearly constant reconstruction of homes—whether for household convenience or during a community move—styles of rural housing have changed very little over the centuries.

Houses and Housing



Overcrowded shantytowns, like this one in South Africa, have sprung up around many African cities. Most have no paved roads or public utilities.

URBAN HOUSING

Since the mid-1900s, Africans have streamed from the countryside into the continent's cities. Large numbers of urban dwellers are either homeless or live in poorly built, overcrowded houses with few or no utilities. In many nations this urban housing crisis has become worse as a result of economic troubles and government policies that have made the construction of decent, affordable housing difficult.

Policies. Many of Africa's urban housing problems date back to the 1800s, when European nations colonized the continent. Building codes in colonial towns and cities reflected European standards and required the use of expensive imported materials such as stone or steel. City dwellers were forbidden to build homes using traditional materials or techniques. In many cases colonial governments limited the number of Africans that could move into urban areas and established separate sections for Africans and for whites. Housing in African sections was often limited to accommodations provided by the government or by private employers.

After gaining independence in the mid-1900s, many African nations continued to follow the housing policies of the colonial era. However, they removed restrictions on migration to cities. The result was a new flood of people into urban areas who could not afford to build houses



Houses and Housing

according to existing building codes or government regulations. At first national governments tried to take on the responsibility of providing adequate housing and utilities. However, few countries had the resources or the political will to meet that challenge. The small number of homes they built could not satisfy even a portion of the demand for urban housing, and they were too expensive for most residents.

Realities. With little or no affordable housing, many African city-dwellers have built houses illegally on public or private land. In CAIRO, Egypt, hundreds of thousands of people have resorted to living on city rooftops, and over 3 million squatters inhabit Cairo's famed City of the Dead, living among and in ancient tombs. In most cases, homes are made of traditional materials and recycled urban waste materials, such as cardboard, flattened tin cans, and plastic sheeting. They are crowded, with several people living in a single room.

Neighborhoods of these improvised structures, called squatter settlements or shantytowns, are a common sight on the outskirts of most large African cities. Typically these communities have no utilities or improvements such as paved roads, schools, or parks. As more people move into a neighborhood, houses are built closer together and open space is gradually lost. The environment becomes unhealthy as well as unappealing.

The shortage of urban housing has led wealthy Africans to invest in low-cost housing. Builders often construct cheap structures and try to attract as many residents as possible. These developments are frequently as poorly built and serviced as squatter houses. Because residents often have trouble keeping up with rent payments, many of them lease part of their homes to other people. This leads to more crowding and a greater strain on already overtaxed utilities.

Illegal settlements present a dilemma for African nations. On one hand they are an eyesore and could become centers of disease, unrest, and crime. On the other hand, they are the only housing available for many urban residents. Some governments have regularly destroyed squatter settlements or taken steps to prevent their appearance. However, others tolerate the settlements to avoid angering city dwellers. Because most African countries have limited financial resources to deal with this issue, urban housing in Africa is likely to present problems for some time to come. (*See also Architecture, Cities and Urbanization, Colonialism in Africa.*)

Human Rights

* **genocide** deliberate and systematic killing of a particular ethnic, religious, or national group

At the end of the colonial era, each new African nation became responsible for ensuring the human rights of its citizens. Unfortunately, the continent's record since then has been very poor, with widespread abuses ranging from censorship of the press to genocide*. By the early 2000s, many international organizations had become involved in promoting human rights in Africa and conditions had begun to improve in some places.



Human Rights

Defining Rights. In 1948 the United Nations produced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document listing the basic rights and freedoms that every human being should enjoy. The declaration covered a wide range of legal, political, economic, and social rights, such as the right to equal protection under the law, the right to participate in the political process, the right to own property, and the right to education. It has served as a basis for various other international agreements promoting human rights.

The nations of Africa have made a number of formal pledges to ensure human rights. In 1981 the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) adopted the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights, also called the Banjul Charter. The charter established the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to make recommendations to individual governments and the OAU.

The Banjul Charter includes several features that reflect Africa's particular circumstances, needs, and culture. It emphasizes the right to development and stresses economic rights (such as the right to food, shelter, health care, and education) over civil and political rights. It also views human rights in the context of the group or community, not of the individual. In addition to listing individuals' rights, it includes their duties to the family, community, and state.

In the Muslim nations of North Africa, Islamic law (Shari'a) and tradition shape local practices. In 1990 the countries belonging to the Organization of the Islamic Conference met in EGYPT and adopted the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam. Written in response to criticism that Islamic tradition did not protect human rights sufficiently, it lists most of the rights covered in other international documents.

Violators and Watchdogs. Like nations elsewhere in the world, African nations have failed in many ways to live up to the high ideals embodied in their human rights charters and declarations. From the independence era until about 1990, most states were governed by military rulers, dictators, or one-party regimes*. In many nations civil rights were limited, and people who openly disagreed with or criticized the government faced arrest, even torture and execution. Many simply "disappeared."

* **regime** current political system or rule

The worst violations of civil rights have involved genocide and terror conducted by the state. For example, during the rule of Francisco Macias Nguema in EQUATORIAL GUINEA, from 1968 to 1979, there was widespread slaughter, and between one-third and one-half of the population was driven from the country. Genocidal massacres killed as many as 500,000 people in UGANDA in the 1970s and 1980s. The 1990s brought horrifying outbreaks of violence between the Hutu and Tutsi people of RWANDA and BURUNDI. Rape and violence against women became a weapon in conflicts such as the civil strife that raged in ALGERIA in the 1990s, making that country the most violent in North Africa.

International groups such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International have tried to monitor and report on human rights abuses. Until the 1990s the human rights movement within Africa was extremely weak, limited to some scholars and students, church leaders, and professional people, especially lawyers. In the 1990s a much broader section

Human Rights

of the population actively promoted human rights. Supporters formed groups such as Nigeria's Civil Liberties Organisation and the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights. African women, a powerful force for change, became increasingly involved in organizations working to improve not just women's rights but human rights in general. (See also **Apartheid, Genocide and Violence, Law and Legal Systems, Refugees, United Nations in Africa.**)

Humans, Early

* **evolution** changes in groups of organisms that occur over time

* **species** narrowest classification of organisms; subgroup of genus

In 1871 Charles Darwin, the man who gained fame with his theory of evolution*, discussed the origins of humans in a book called *Descent of Man*. Darwin noted that chimpanzees and gorillas—humans' closest animal relatives—are found only in Africa and suggested that Africa was also the birthplace of the human species*. Modern paleoanthropologists—the scientists who study early humans and their relatives—agree with Darwin. Fossils and other evidence indicate that human ancestors, and probably modern humans as well, appeared first in Africa.

The story of human origins in Africa and of how humans populated the rest of the world is not complete. It will probably change as archaeologists uncover more fossils. Even the evidence that now exists has given rise to different interpretations and theories, and some ideas concerning early humans are hotly debated. Still, most scientists today agree on a broad outline of human evolution that begins in Africa millions of years ago.

HUMAN ANCESTORS

Darwin did not believe that humans were descended from apes and monkeys. Instead he believed that both humans and apes descended from a common ancestor. Fossil evidence suggests that a variety of ape-like creatures, now extinct, lived in Africa at least 25 million years ago. In time, the first human ancestors evolved from one of these species.

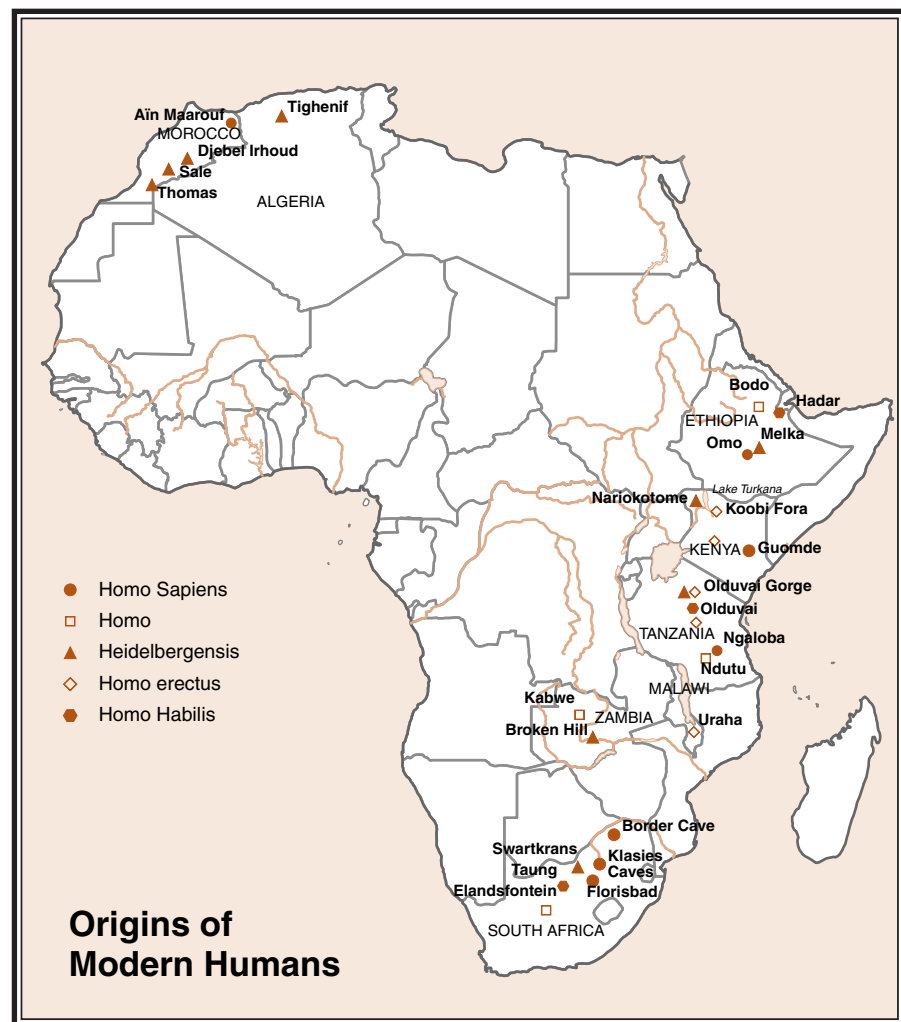
The First Hominids. Human beings are bipedal, meaning that they normally walk on two feet. Bipedal walking is one of the main physical characteristics of hominids, members of the *Hominidae* family to which humans belong.

Probably sometime between 8 million and 6 million years ago, one of the ancient African ape species became bipedal. Scientists do not know what caused the shift from four-footed to two-footed walking, which marked the beginning of hominids and the first step in human evolution. Some believe that widespread climate change transformed large areas of African forest into savanna* plains. This environment suited creatures that could stride upright and look far ahead. But this theory has not been proved.

Over several million years, a variety of different hominids evolved in Africa, the only continent where traces of such ancient human ancestors have been found. The earliest known hominid is called *Ardipithecus*

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Humans, Early



ramidus. Fossils found in ETHIOPIA, and possibly some from KENYA, belong to this species; they are about 4.4 million years old. The head and teeth of *A. ramidus* were very similar to those of apes, but it seems to have walked upright. It had already separated from the evolutionary line leading to the modern African gorilla and chimpanzee.

A better-known hominid species, *Australopithecus afarensis*, lived from at least 3.6 million to about 2.8 million years ago. At a site called Hadar in Ethiopia, fossil diggers discovered a nearly complete female *A. afarensis* skeleton. Nicknamed Lucy, this hominid became one of the most famous fossils in the world. Another important find came from Laetoli in TANZANIA, where the paleoanthropologist Mary Leakey discovered *A. afarensis* footprints in volcanic ash. The tracks confirm that this hominid walked upright, though scientists who have studied its hand and foot bones believe that it also spent a lot of time in trees. *A. afarensis* was small by modern standards, probably about 4 feet tall and weighing between 64 and 99 pounds, with males much larger than females. The same is true of a similar species, *Australopithecus africanus*, that lived around the same time in what is now SOUTH AFRICA. *Kenyanthropus platyops*, a fossil found in 1999 in northern Kenya, suggests that another

See
color plate 1,
vol. 2.



Humans, Early

Pass the Termites

Australopithecus robustus, a type of early hominid, lived in Africa more than a million years ago. Archaeologists first believed that *Australopithecus* ate mainly vegetables and plants, using bone tools to dig up roots. However, a new study shows that these early hominids may also have eaten termites.

Researchers made experimental tools out of bones and used some to dig in hard dirt for roots and others to poke the soft soil of termite mounds. Using microscopes, they compared scratches on the tips of the experimental tools to those found on ancient bone tools. They concluded that australopithecines probably used bone tools to break up termite mounds. As the insects swarmed out, the early hominids gathered and ate them, adding protein and fat to their diet.

* **genus** classification of plants or animals; may include more than one species

species with a flatter face and smaller teeth lived at about the same time as *A. afarensis*.

Other australopithecines also evolved in Africa, but scientists are not certain which species was the ancestor of later hominids, including today's humans. Some fossil evidence suggests that one or more kinds of australopithecines survived until about 1.5 million years ago in eastern and southern Africa. By that time, however, more advanced hominids had developed and were living alongside them.

Early, Extinct Humans. The new type of advanced hominid appeared around 2.5 million years ago. With a larger brain and a flatter, less apelike face than the australopithecines, it belonged to the genus* *Homo*, a subcategory of hominids that includes all species considered to be true humans.

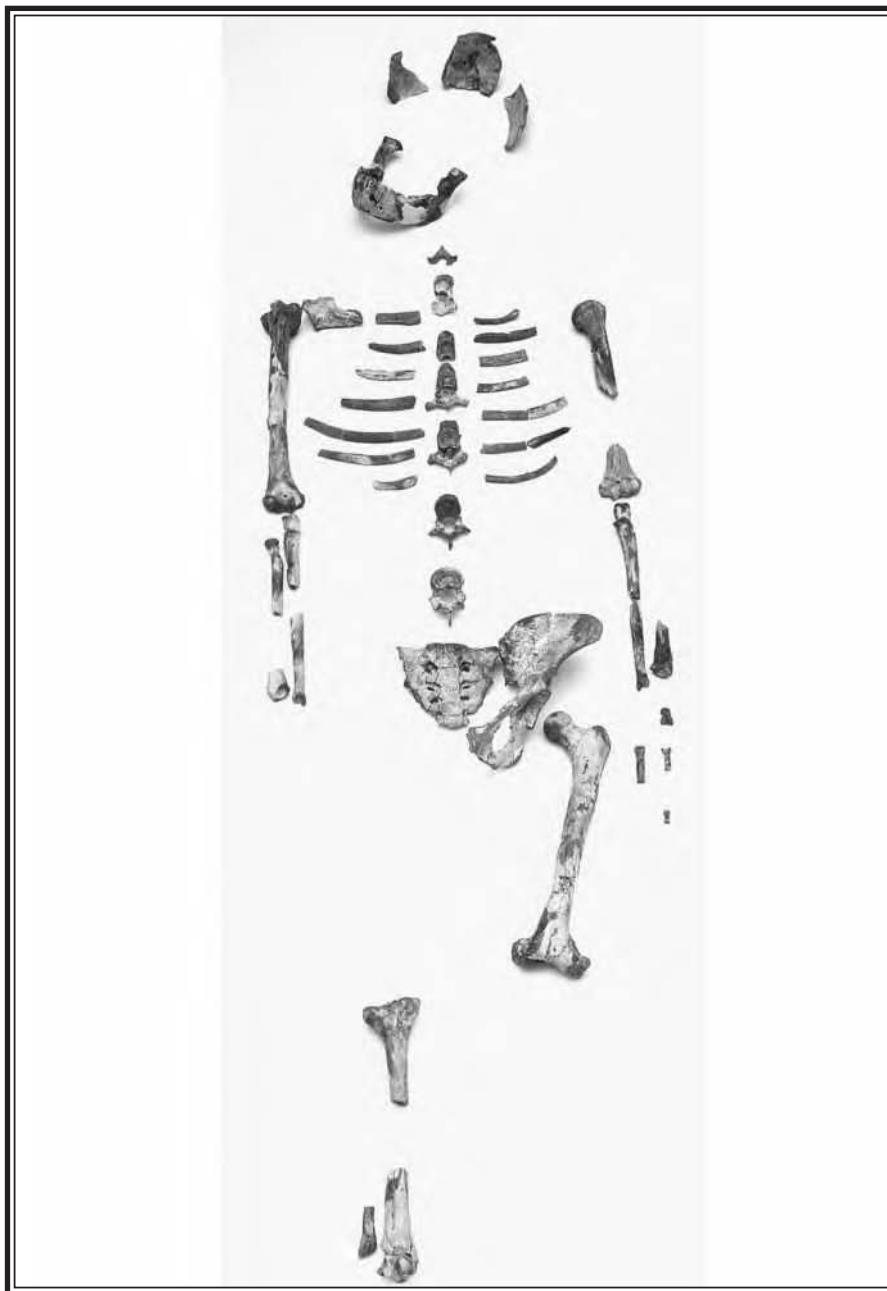
The earliest of these humans that scientists know about is called *Homo habilis*, which means "handy man." The name was given in 1964 by the paleoanthropologist Louis B. Leakey, who discovered some of the first *Homo* fossils in Tanzania's Olduvai Gorge along with the oldest recognizable stone tools. Although some scholars think that the later australopithecines may have made and used simple tools, the evidence is unclear. There is no doubt, however, that soon after 2 million years ago, *Homo habilis* turned flakes of stone into tools for cutting and scraping.

By this time the genus *Homo* had evolved into several kinds of humans in East Africa. Other types may have lived in other parts of the continent. Paleoanthropologists do not always agree on the *Homo* species of a fossil find—often mere fragments, a jawbone, a few teeth, a hip bone. Discovering a complete skull is rare, and even more rare is finding different parts of the skeleton of a single individual. When comparing two skull fragments, one archaeologist might see them as members of different species, while another could regard them as differences within a single species.

A remarkably complete skeleton found in 1984 at Nariokotome, near Lake Turkana in Kenya, shows how hominid fossils can be interpreted in different ways. The skeleton belongs to a boy who was about 11 years old when he died, some 1.6 million years ago. Researchers estimate that if he had reached adulthood, he would have been taller than 6 feet and weighed around 150 pounds. Some experts regard him as an example of a human species they call *Homo ergaster*, which later evolved into *Homo erectus*. But most scientists think that the Turkana boy already belonged to *H. erectus*.

Homo erectus—"upright man"—ranged farther than any of the other early human species. Its remains have been found in North Africa, in sites in MOROCCO and ALGERIA, as well as at several sites in eastern and southern Africa. In addition, *H. erectus* is also the first human species known to have left the African continent. Sites in China and on the Indonesian island of Java have yielded fossils of *H. erectus*, and some of those from Java may be 1.8 million years old, almost as old as the earliest known African examples. In 1999 scientists working in the southeastern European nation of Georgia discovered skulls and bones that

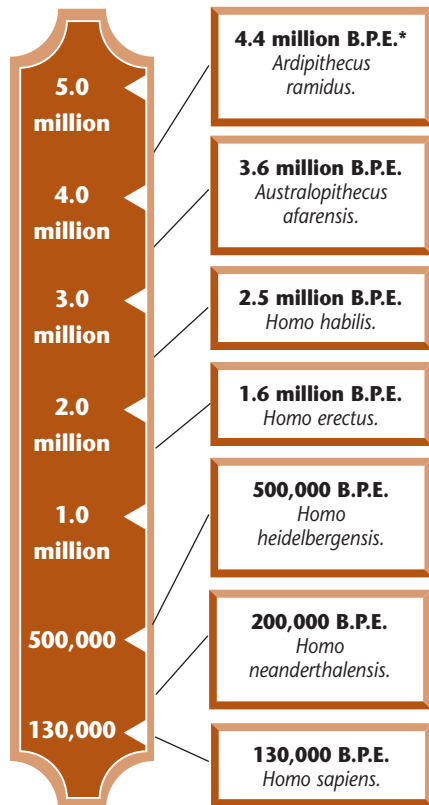
The discovery of this *Australopithecus afarensis* fossil helped to shed light on the early humans who lived in Africa about 3 million years ago.



were 1.7 million years old, but they are unsure whether the fossils belong to *Homo ergaster* or *Homo erectus*.

From evidence found in caves and other sites, paleoanthropologists know that the *Homo erectus* of Africa and Asia were nomadic individuals who gathered wild plants and hunted for meat. They made flaked stone tools, and around 1.4 million years ago, those in Africa began making larger, multipurpose stone tools such as cleavers and hand axes. *Homo erectus* survived for more than 1 million years but eventually gave way to new human species, including *Homo sapiens*—modern humans, the only hominid species that still exists.

Humans, Early



*4.4 million B.P.E. (before present era) means 4.4 million years ago.

MODERN HUMANS

Nearly all paleoanthropologists think that *Homo erectus* was the direct or indirect ancestor of *Homo sapiens*. How the change took place, however, is the subject of vigorous debates and disputes. Only additional fossil finds and further study, perhaps with research techniques not yet developed, will settle the question.

One clue may lie in a group of African and European fossils with features that fall somewhere between those of *H. erectus* and *H. sapiens*. Some scientists think that these represent a species called *Homo heidelbergensis* that lived between 500,000 and 200,000 years ago. *H. heidelbergensis* evolved into a type of human called *H. neanderthalensis*, or Neanderthal man, that lived in Europe and western Asia before becoming extinct around 30,000 years ago. Before they disappeared, the Neanderthal people shared their world with modern *Homo sapiens* for some time. But where, when, and how did those modern humans emerge? The most recent scientific discoveries and interpretations have led to two general theories: the multiregional theory and the “out of Africa” theory.

The Multiregional Theory. Some scholars believe that *Homo erectus* evolved into *Homo sapiens* in more than one region of the world. According to the multiregional theory, *H. erectus* left Africa before 1.8 million years ago, spread across Asia and possibly Europe, and then began to evolve into modern humans, who have some differences in appearance around the world.

Although no *H. erectus* fossils have yet been found in Europe, supporters of the multiregional theory believe that *H. erectus* existed in Europe, where it evolved into the Neanderthals. Some scientists who accept this interpretation believe that *H. erectus* and its various regional descendants are really just one species, *Homo sapiens*, reaching back 1.8 million years into the past.

The “Out of Africa” Theory. The alternate view is that although *Homo erectus* spread to Asia and Europe, its evolution there ended with extinction. Meanwhile in Africa, *Homo sapiens* evolved in a separate line which developed and spread around the world. If so, all humans alive today are descended from a relatively recent origin in Africa. Africa has produced the oldest known *H. sapiens* fossils. A skeleton from Omo in Ethiopia and a skull and leg bone from Guomde in Kenya could be as old as 130,000 years, while remains from South Africa are between 120,000 and 70,000 years old.

According to the “out of Africa” theory, *H. heidelbergensis* or some other descendant of African *H. erectus* evolved into *H. sapiens* between 200,000 and 120,000 years ago. By about 100,000 years ago, part of the *H. sapiens* population had spread from Africa into neighboring regions. They reached Australia by about 40,000 years ago, using boats or rafts. By walking across a land bridge between Siberia and Alaska, or by sailing to the southern Alaskan islands, they reached the Americas between 35,000 and 15,000 years ago.



Hunger and Famine

The “out of Africa” theory says that all regional variations in the modern human population developed during and after the migration from Africa. If this theory is true, there is no genetic connection between the ancient *H. erectus* populations of China and Indonesia and the present-day inhabitants of those countries. All people alive today are descended from the *Homo sapiens* population that evolved in Africa and spread out from there 100,000 years ago. Outside Africa, *H. erectus* evolved into new human types, including the Neanderthals, but these became extinct. They probably did not contribute to the ancestry of modern humans, although some scientists have wondered whether *H. sapiens* might have interbred with early human species such as the Neanderthals.

* DNA deoxyribonucleic acid, the biological material that carries genetic information from parents to offspring

The African Eve. In 1987 the technology of DNA* testing gave rise to a new theory about human origins. Researchers focused on a particular kind of DNA called mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA), which mothers pass to their children. By comparing samples from around the world, the researchers were able to examine mtDNA differences among various populations for clues to the relationships among those groups. The results showed that African mtDNA reflected more genetic diversity than European or Asian mtDNA. This suggested that the African DNA was older, which was interpreted as evidence that humans originated in Africa.

One version of this theory became a popular myth, claiming that all present-day human mtDNA could be traced back to a female ancestor in Africa about 200,000 years ago. Some people called this mythical woman the “African Eve,” after the biblical story of the first woman. The “African Eve” theory attracted public attention, but it was not based on well-grounded conclusions. In addition, the term “Eve” gave the false impression that there had been a single ancestor, instead of an ancestral population.

Additional DNA testing has, however, given support to the general “out of Africa” theory. *Homo erectus* certainly came from Africa, and there is growing support for the theory that its modern descendants originated there as well. In any case, human evolution is an ongoing process that will not end with *Homo sapiens*, so long as the species survives. (See also *Archaeology and Prehistory, Leakey Family.*)

Hunger and Famine



One of the most enduring modern images of Africa is that of a land plagued by hunger and famine. Pictures of Africans starving during droughts and of hungry REFUGEES fleeing civil war appear in the news media every few years. While hunger and famine are ongoing problems for many Africans, their severity, causes, and solutions are often misunderstood or misrepresented.

Realities of Famine. Although accurate information about famine in Africa is difficult to come by, a number of conclusions can be drawn. One is that most famine deaths in Africa occur among children. Famine



Hunger and Famine

also claims the lives of more men than women. Another conclusion is that the principal cause of death is not starvation but disease. Weakened by hunger, people are more likely to die from measles, malaria, and other diseases. One common response to famine in Africa is mass migration. When famine strikes a region, millions of Africans move in search of food. Finally, although thousands of Africans die in famines, the numbers produced by international organizations and other groups are often exaggerations. Still, the problem of famine is very real in Africa, and its effects are widespread.

Views About Famine. European colonizers blamed the continent's frequent famines on what they called the "backwardness" of Africa. Pointing to the relative absence of famine from 1945 to 1970, colonial rulers argued that their "enlightened" policies had put an end to famines caused by the inability of local populations to manage food resources effectively.

When droughts and famines struck the continent in the 1970s, some Africans blamed capitalism*. They argued that capitalist systems put in place during the colonial era disrupted traditional economies, which were well adapted to local conditions. Historical research does not support either view. Records from the precolonial* period show that African societies have long suffered from famine and hunger.

Causes of Famine. A variety of factors contribute to famine in Africa, and one of the most important of these is war. War leads to famine by destroying crops, fields, and other resources. Armies promote famine by consuming available resources. Military strategies also play a role. One common tactic is to lay siege* to a town, cutting off its food supplies. In some cases defending forces may restrict the flow of food to punish people believed to be sympathetic to the enemy or to drive up the price of food and profit from it.

Another military strategy that has contributed to famine involves forcibly resettling rural populations. Local civilians thought to be aiding the enemy may be moved to areas where their actions and movements can be controlled. This drives people off agricultural lands, prevents herders from finding pasture for livestock, and disrupts local trade networks. Such resettlement damages the rural economy, forcing people to rely on the charity of the groups in charge. This particular strategy has been applied widely throughout Africa in recent years.

A second major cause of famine is crop failure. Short-term environmental crises such as drought may combine with other economic problems to create long-term famine. Nations with weak economic development, limited social services, and poor transportation infrastructure* are particularly at risk when drought or other environmental problems occur. Among the hardest hit are poor rural dwellers with limited resources, households headed by females, unskilled laborers, and minority groups. In some places minority groups become targets of government policies that contribute to famine. For example, many African governments have restricted the movements of pastoralists* and taken away their land rights, depriving them of their usual methods of obtaining food.

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

* **siege** attempt to conquer a fortress or town by surrounding it with troops and cutting it off from supplies

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

Hunger and Famine



Disasters such as droughts and civil wars have caused severe food shortages throughout Africa. Here, people of all ages line up to receive food during a famine in Somalia.

A more recent cause of famine in Africa is the emergence of rulers whose main goal is to plunder the country of its wealth. In some cases these countries devote little or no effort to providing basic services for the people. In others, armed factions compete with one another for control of resources and territory. In SOMALIA, local warlords survive by looting, smuggling, and forcing individuals to give them money, land, or resources in return for protection.

Responses to Famine. African governments have generally had little success in preventing famine. International aid agencies attempt to provide relief, but their role is limited. Food aid from such organizations reaches only about one-fifth of Africans who are in need.

During the colonial era, African governments usually responded to famine by providing employment to those struck hardest or by developing village-based relief plans. After independence, some countries felt that famine was a colonial legacy that would disappear along with colonialism. As a result, they abandoned these famine response strategies. At the same time, many new nations developed programs to deal with famine. The programs proved fairly effective in the 1970s but, for the most part, have been unable to deal with more recent famines.

Some African countries have done a much better job than others in responding to famine. BOTSWANA, for example, set up an ambitious drought relief program in the 1970s. The program has provided relief to rural populations during periods of drought and prevented the recurrence of famine, even during serious droughts. One reason for its success



Hunger and Famine

is Botswana's political system. As a representative democracy, the country has political groups that pay attention to people's needs because they want to win elections and power. Dictators and military leaders, by contrast, do not depend on elections to stay in power.

Most Africans continue to rely on their own survival skills to deal with famine. Such skills include turning to wild food supplies, selling personal possessions and livestock, and moving to find new food or work. Many of these strategies, such as selling livestock, make the people poorer in the long run. Others, such as cutting and selling firewood, damage the natural environment. Some people respond to famine by taking up banditry or raiding, but this contributes to conflict, insecurity, and other problems. Unfortunately, there seem to be few other responses to famine in Africa at the present time. As a result, the prospect of frequent and severe famines remains a continuing threat to the continent and its people. (*See also Agriculture, Deserts and Drought, Disease, Ecosystems, United Nations in Africa.*)

Hunting and Gathering

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

Hunting and gathering refers to a system of securing food through the hunting of wild game and the gathering of roots or wild plants. Hunting may be an individual or group effort. One person may hunt using a bow and arrow or a simple trap, or a group of people may cooperate by chasing prey into a pit or net and then killing it. Gathering is largely an individual activity using a few basic tools, such as a sharpened stick for digging and sacks for carrying the food. The earliest human societies obtained their food by hunting and gathering.

Until recently anthropologists* believed that hunting and gathering societies were very simple. They claimed that people in these societies did not have the ideas of property, trade, social status, and land ownership. All members of hunting and gathering groups were thought to possess the same skills, share land in common, own little or no private property, and have limited social contact with other groups. It seemed that hunting and gathering cultures lacked complex forms of social organization and relations. Anthropologists considered them "Stone Age" cultures that could be studied to gain an understanding of early human society.

Modern studies of hunting and gathering cultures have changed this image. Although the land used by hunting and gathering groups is typically owned by the community as a whole, individuals gain access to the land by a complex set of social relations. The right to use land is usually inherited, either through a person's own kin or through relations between kin and members of other groups. Land access rights may also be based on marriage and status. In many cases marriages are negotiated with relatives in other groups to strengthen a person's claim to land access.

Anthropologists now recognize that the individuals in hunting and gathering societies may own private property, such as weapons and tools. They exchange items with others through a system of social relationships. Often, desirable trading partners are linked by marriage.

Ibn Battuta

Goods pass from family members in one group to relatives in another, who may then exchange them with relatives in more distant groups. Such practices have shown that hunting and gathering peoples have complex societies with social ties that extend far beyond their immediate group. (*See also Humans, Early.*)

HUTU

See *Rwanda*

Ibadan

Ibadan, the second largest city in NIGERIA, is located on a group of seven hills in the southwestern part of the country. The city began as a military camp about 1829, and it grew into the most powerful town of the YORUBA people. Unlike other Yoruba settlements, Ibadan had an open society where advancement depended on talent rather than birth. This open system attracted many people with various skills, including some with administrative ability and military experience. By 1855 the leaders of Ibadan ruled over most of Yorubaland.

The British gained control of Ibadan in 1893. They built railroads linking the city with other Nigerian towns as well as an airport. The transportation network has helped to make Ibadan a commercial center. Household goods, crafts, and agricultural products are sold at market squares throughout the old section of the city. Local businesses include furniture making, printing, and leather working. The city's artisans* practice a variety of crafts such as weaving and tie-dyeing cloth, bead making, pottery making, and metalworking. Many residents are farmers who go to their farms outside the city every day. Ibadan is considered the intellectual center of Nigeria. Its university, established in 1948, was the first in the country and is respected worldwide. (*See also Crafts, Lagos.*)

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

Ibn Battuta

1304–ca. 1369
Arab traveler

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Born in Tangier in Morocco, Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Battuta was one of the most widely traveled individuals of the Middle Ages. Trained as a religious lawyer, he set out at the age of 21 on a pilgrimage to the Muslim holy city of Mecca. Before he died he had visited almost the entire Islamic world.

Ibn Battuta made two journeys to sub-Saharan* Africa. His first took him along Africa's eastern coast; his second crossed the SAHARA DESERT from Spain to MALI. In the course of his travels he visited the famed cities of TIMBUKTU and MOGADISHU and various Islamic royal courts, recording his impressions of local sights and customs. His journals are virtually the only eyewitness accounts of sub-Saharan Africa during this time. Ibn Battuta admired black Africans for their sense of justice and their devotion to Islam, although he objected to many of their cultural practices. (*See also Travel and Exploration.*)

Igbo

Igbo

* **population density** average number of people living in a given area

The Igbo (or Ibo) are one of the three principal ethnic groups in NIGERIA. Their homeland, Igboland, straddles the NIGER RIVER and covers a territory of some 16,000 square miles. But the Igbo, who number about 20 million, can be found throughout Nigeria, not just around the Niger River. They form one of the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria's Delta State.

The Igbo appear to have been a separate ethnic group for over 6,000 years, and several Igbo civilizations have risen and fallen during that time. Although the population density* of the Igbo is extremely high, they live in small farming communities with no strong central authority. During the colonial era many Igbo became government officials. Today the Igbo still practice agriculture, but they are also among the leading traders in Nigeria. Some Igbo have developed skills in crafts such as metalworking, textile manufacturing, pottery making, and wood carving. They also produce a great variety of masks, which are used mostly in festivals. (See also **Ethnic Groups and Identity**)

IMPERIALISM

See *Colonialism in Africa*.

Independence Movements

Between 1957 and 1993 nearly 50 African states achieved independence from colonial rule. The first sparks of resistance to foreign control took shape much earlier, though, in some cases hundreds of years earlier. Independence movements developed throughout Africa in the mid-1900s. Although they followed different paths, they shared a common beginning: resistance to domination by foreign powers. Unfortunately, once in control, many of these independence movements imposed their own form of domination. As a result, modern Africa continues to wrestle with many of the same political problems that motivated the independence movements of the past.

EARLY ROOTS OF INDEPENDENCE

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's own country

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

The first stirrings of what could be considered African nationalism* came in response to criticism of African civilization by outsiders. As early as the 1500s in SUDAN, African writers were defending indigenous* culture by describing the achievements of powerful states such as the Songhai Empire. However, it was the growing Atlantic SLAVE TRADE of the 1700s and 1800s that produced the most powerful early attacks on foreign domination.

* **repression** putting down forcibly

The Slave Trade. The slave trade was marked not only by the physical repression* of Africans but also by cultural and spiritual domination. Europeans tried to justify the slave trade on Biblical grounds. They also argued that their more advanced culture proved the natural superiority of Europe over "backward" African societies.



Independence Movements

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

In the late 1700s, a number of former slaves, including black abolitionist* Olaudah EQUIANO, wrote searing accounts of the horrors of the slave trade and the reasoning used to justify it. In addition to his tales of outrage, Equiano also tried to show the European colonial powers that an economic system built upon cooperation and shared economic power would be much more beneficial to both sides than the existing system of slavery. Free, industrious African nations would be much more productive, he argued. These writings were part of a general tide of opinion that helped to end the European slave trade in the early 1800s. However, Arab slave traders continued to operate in northern and eastern Africa for nearly 100 more years. This led some Africans to attack Islam as a destructive influence on African life and culture.

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

During the mid-1800s European interest in Africa shifted from the slave trade to the exploitation* of Africa's natural resources. Attracted by the promise of wealth from gold, diamonds, exotic hardwoods, and other natural riches, European nations claimed large portions of Africa for their colonial empires. Besides seizing the land of Africans, the Europeans also destroyed many of their freedoms and their institutions of government. In time, missionaries took over the education of African children. Their churches and schools promoted the Christian religion over traditional beliefs and European social and political ideas over African practices. In this way the colonization of Africa by Europeans involved cultural domination as well as physical and political control.

Responses to Colonization. The first African reactions to European colonization focused on cultural elements. In books and other writings, Africans examined the strengths of indigenous culture and the impact of European influence. Books by the YORUBA minister Samuel JOHNSON and John Mensah SARBAH of Ghana defended traditional African societies against European accusations of barbarism or backwardness. Other African writers sought to obtain greater participation for Africans in colonial administrations.

Rarely did these early responses to colonialism call for political independence or the formation of national identities. Before the colonial era, much of Africa was made up societies with little or no central authority. Political organization was basically local in nature and based on KINSHIP or other forms of personal association. The European idea of nationhood did not exist. A few Africans, such as historian James Africanus HORTON of Sierra Leone, argued that Africans could benefit from the formation of independent nations just as Europeans had. However, such ideas were overwhelmed by the spread of European colonialism.

Faced with European military and economic superiority and hampered by ethnic group rivalries, Africans were unable to seek any meaningful form of independence during the colonial period. However, protests against the repressive practices of colonialism occurred frequently. European rulers managed to prevent serious unrest by encouraging traditional rivalries that kept opponents divided and disorganized. Only after World War II did conditions favor true political independence for Africa.

Independence Movements

Islands of Independence

Not all African nations were European colonies prior to the 1960s. Liberia, founded by free blacks from America, had been an independent republic since 1847. Ethiopia, though threatened at various times, remained an independent kingdom through most of its history. Only in 1935, when Italian forces conquered the country, did it fall under European control. The period of occupation ended in 1941, and Ethiopia regained its independence. Egypt was also an independent nation before the 1960s. However, it had been under British control until 1922 and was occupied by the British during World War II to protect the Suez Canal.

* **imperialist** relating to the political, economic, and cultural domination of one country or region by another

THE INDEPENDENCE ERA

Two factors played a significant role in accelerating the pace of political change in Africa after World War II. First, the moral basis of the war against imperialist* and racist dictatorships provided a weapon for those desiring independence from foreign rule. The nations allied against Germany and Japan claimed to be fighting for self-determination—the right of people to rule themselves. This call for self-determination made it difficult for European powers to deny the same freedom to their colonial subjects in Africa, who had provided soldiers for the war effort. Secondly, World War II imposed a severe financial strain on Europe. Britain and France, in particular, suffered physical and economic devastation, and maintaining their colonial empires became increasingly difficult.

African Political Parties. Before World War II, organized protest against colonial rule was centered in organizations such as labor unions, student groups, social clubs, and religious groups. After the war these associations became better organized and focused increasingly on political issues. The first local and regional African political parties grew out of these groups. Many of them opposed colonial rule and supported freedom movements.

Where strong and capable leaders emerged, the early political parties broadened their bases of support to include members of different social, cultural, and economic groups. Parties such as the Convention People's Party in GHANA and the African National Congress of southern Africa were able to overcome their differences to challenge both European authority and the Africans who worked with colonial officials.

Despite some early success in unifying diverse groups, these political parties still had enormous obstacles to overcome. Most developed in towns and cities, where Africans could easily get together and share ideas. Building ties to rural areas was limited by the lack of communication, poor transportation, and the vast distances of the African continent. Within urban areas parties were often organized along traditional lines and drew support from certain ethnic or social groups. Including a broader range of groups in the parties was essential to success, but this goal was difficult to achieve.

Two general types of political parties arose in Africa at this time. "Patron" parties sought to recruit leading members of local society who could attract support and organize voters. This type of party reflected a traditional approach that relied on the personal authority of established African leaders. "Mass" parties bypassed prominent individuals, working instead through local party branches to build support that was not based on personal or tribal loyalties.

The political organization of patron parties reflected existing social structures and power relations. Mass parties, on the other hand, received support from the masses and gained power as a result of popular calls for liberation from colonial rule. These two types of parties differed in their strategies for achieving independence. Patron parties typically chose to work for gradual independence within the existing colo-



Independence Movements

nial power structure. Mass parties often rejected any compromise with colonial authorities and insisted on immediate freedom. In time a great variety of individual political parties and independence movements arose to challenge colonialism.

European Response. As the opposition to foreign control increased and became better organized, colonial powers adopted different strategies. Some European nations understood the difficulty of maintaining total control over their colonies. They began to work with African political parties to expand the rights of Africans and increase their participation in government. Other European nations, fearing the loss of political power, colonial wealth, and international prestige, cracked down harder on indigenous peoples and placed greater limits on freedoms.

The Portuguese chose the second path, increasing their military force in Africa and intensifying political repression. As a result, independence for Portuguese colonies such as ANGOLA and MOZAMBIQUE came much later than it did for most other African colonies. In addition, during the 1960s and 1970s, ideology* divided the independence movements in these two colonies. In Angola the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) adopted communist* principles and had support from the Soviet Union and Cuba. Meanwhile, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) received backing from SOUTH AFRICA, the United States, and other Western powers. When Portugal finally granted independence to Angola in 1979, a civil war erupted between MPLA and UNITA that only began moving toward a peaceful conclusion in the late 1990s.

Britain and France took the other path, gradually expanding political freedom in their colonies. Beginning as early as the late 1940s, both nations granted many colonies local self-rule, with Africans assuming various leadership positions. Final authority, however, still rested in the hands of the colonial powers. With many British colonies, this arrangement gradually gave way to independence within a commonwealth* system. NIGERIA and Ghana, for example, came to enjoy the same relationship with Britain as other commonwealth countries such as Canada or Australia.

The French were less committed than the British to total independence for their African colonies. In some places France tried to crush African political parties and independence movements, which led to increasing unrest and violence. Even after granting independence to a colony, the French often continued to influence local political parties, interfere in elections, and send in troops to reverse developments considered unfavorable to French interests.

Even colonies that enjoyed local self-rule often turned to violence to achieve full independence. In KENYA, for example, the political rights of Africans expanded significantly after World War II. However, it took the violent MAU MAU uprising of the 1950s to convince Britain to give Kenya full independence. The French faced growing unrest in their North African colonies. In 1954 they granted independence to MOROCCO and TUNISIA so they could focus efforts on ALGERIA, their most important

* **ideology** set of concepts or opinions of a person or group

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **commonwealth** group of independent states associated by choice and linked by common interests and objectives

Independence Movements



Members of the women's unit of FRELIMO (the Mozambique Liberation Front) rest during the struggle to end Portuguese rule in their country. Organized in 1962, FRELIMO played a major role in winning independence for Mozambique.

colony. But after committing huge sums of money and tens of thousands of troops to fighting in Algeria, the French were finally forced to pull out in 1962.

After Independence. Many Africans today face the same kinds of political and social challenges that independence movements and political parties promised to solve by expelling colonial masters. African nations inherited artificial boundaries that divided ethnic groups and led to future border conflicts. In many states the parties that hold power still reflect ethnic and social divisions that have existed for hundreds or thousands of years. Urban groups continue to control power and too often ignore the needs of rural populations. Powerful leaders have often used their positions of authority to promote their own allies, punish political enemies, and enrich themselves and their friends.

Despite such problems, the growth of independence movements and political parties established important traditions of democracy and the rule of law that had been absent under colonial rule. Their achievement in winning independence also serves as a reminder to Africans that people can change society, even in the face of repressive government. (*See also Boundaries in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Government and Political Systems, History of Africa, Nationalism, Neocolonialism, Unions and Trade Associations.*)



Indian Communities

Indian Communities

Although people from India had reached Africa many centuries ago, large groups of Indians did not settle there until the second half of the 1800s. At that time Britain ruled India as well as a number of colonies in Africa. The British presence in both regions made it possible for many Indians to migrate to eastern, central, and southern Africa.

The Colonial Period. When the British built railroads in Africa to link their colonies, they brought laborers from India to help lay the tracks. By 1904 more than 32,000 Indians had come to Africa to work on the railroads. Many of them returned home after the completion of the rail lines, but the British encouraged thousands of other Indians seeking work to move to Africa.

Most of the Indian immigrants came from western or northeastern India, and they included both Hindus and Muslims. Colonial policies tended to keep them separate from Africans. Indian communities grew up in cities such as NAIROBI and DAR ES SALAAM in East Africa, and Durban and JOHANNESBURG in SOUTH AFRICA. People from Portuguese-held regions of India settled in MOZAMBIQUE. Because many Indians spoke English, they were able to work in various professions, including teaching. They also found jobs in trade and industry and were able to rise to higher social and economic levels. Over time, white settlers who resented the Indians' success began to oppose the government's immigration policies. The whites considered the Indians a separate ethnic group and granted them only limited rights.

After Independence. When independence movements formed in colonies across Africa, Indian settlers were faced with a choice: remaining under colonial rule or joining the fight for independence. Many Indian leaders favored independence and supported the movements to end European control of the colonies.

After independence Africans held power in most countries. Indians had to adjust to this change. Some Africans began to resent the Indians, claiming that Indian entrepreneurs* took jobs and business opportunities away from Africans. This attitude caused tensions that led tens of thousands of Indians to leave Africa. Many moved to Britain. In addition, more than 70,000 Indians were expelled from UGANDA in 1972 by President Idi AMIN DADA.

The largest group of Indians in Africa is in South Africa, where they make up about 5 percent of the population. Smaller numbers live in TANZANIA, KENYA, and ZIMBABWE. Although many Indians have left the continent since independence, some countries have welcomed skilled professionals from India to help with development programs. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, European Communities, Independence Movements.*)

* **entrepreneur** person who organizes, manages, and takes the risks of a business venture

INDUSTRY

See Development, Economic and Social

Initiation Rites

Initiation Rites

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern



Initiation rites are ceremonies performed when people take on a new role in life. In various parts of Africa, such rites may usher individuals into adulthood, secret societies, or positions of leadership. They are one of several types of rites of passage—the ceremonies that mark a person’s progress through the stages of life.

Initiation rites vary from one society to another, but they do share some characteristics. They usually involve a temporary separation from the community, a symbolic change, and then a return to the community. During the ceremonies individuals often receive some secret knowledge or new privileges or power. Although the rituals* are deeply rooted in tradition, they do change over time, sometimes in response to circumstances. In the late 1800s, missionaries banned one of the initiation rites of the Bemba of ZAMBIA. The people continued the practice, but they shortened the ritual, omitted some events, and added modern dances to the traditional celebration.

Types of Initiation Rites. Rituals celebrating the beginning of adulthood are probably the most widespread type of initiation rites in Africa. They mark the end of childhood and instruct young people in their responsibilities as adults. Among the Bemba coming-of-age rites may last for a month and include secret sayings and special songs and dances performed in the woods and in an initiation house. Different societies see adulthood beginning at different ages. For the Gusii of KENYA, the passage from childhood to adulthood occurs at age 8, while the MAASAI of Kenya and TANZANIA initiate youths between ages 15 and 18. The TUAREG of the Sahara celebrate the first time a boy wraps the face veil around his head at about age 18.

Membership in African secret societies begins with an initiation rite. In western Africa the ceremony often includes a masquerade with songs and dances performed in elaborate costumes. In SIERRA LEONE, LIBERIA, GUINEA, and IVORY COAST, Sande societies for women and Poro societies for men have existed for at least 400 years. The secret societies are organized hierarchically*. The first level of membership occurs at adulthood, and members may advance to higher levels through additional instruction. The societies play an important role in the community’s political and economic life, making decisions on legal matters, agriculture, and trade.

Initiation ceremonies are also held to install new leaders. Among the Swazi, the rituals emphasize the new king’s identity and position of leadership. They include an appeal to the spirits of royal ancestors for protection and good fortune.

Other Rites of Passage. African societies perform rituals for other rites of passage, such as birth, marriage, and death. In North Africa Bedouin mothers keep newborn babies in seclusion and perform purification rites to make the infants members of the household.

Marriage rituals seal the bond between two people as well as the tie between their families. They often involve exchanging goods and calling on the spirits of ancestors to witness the match and recognize the couple’s future offspring.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels



Irrigation and Flood Control

In traditional African religions, rituals surrounding death are performed to help transform the deceased person into an ancestor who will be honored by descendants for generations. If the local customs include burial, relatives or other members of the community prepare the body and sometimes place distinctive markers at the grave site. Christians and Muslims have their own traditions connected with death. The BERBERS of MOROCCO place the body on its side in a narrow grave so that the face is turned toward Mecca, one of the holy cities of Islam*. (See also **Childhood and Adolescence; Christianity in Africa; Death, Mourning, and Ancestors; Gender Roles and Sexuality; Islam in Africa; Marriage Systems; Religion and Ritual; Secret Societies.**)

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Irrigation and Flood Control

For thousands of years, Africans have sought to manage the flow of water through their landscape. The continent's unreliable rainfall and frequent droughts make irrigation an essential tool for agriculture. In addition, various rivers flood frequently, and many people live in the floodplains surrounding them. Farmers and engineers have devised a variety of irrigation and flood control systems to make the best use of available water resources.

Traditional Irrigation Schemes. The earliest use of irrigation probably took place in ancient EGYPT along the banks of the NILE RIVER. The Nile floods every summer, leaving behind a layer of rich silt when the water recedes in early fall. Egyptian farmers developed a system called basin irrigation that involved dividing the land along the river into large basins with low walls. During the flood, water filled the basins. When the river fell, the farmers allowed the water to drain away and then planted crops in the wet soil left behind. Although basin irrigation supplied water for planting crops, it could not control the size of the flood, and farmers still faced crop failures during dry years. In addition, farmers using basin irrigation could only plant one crop a year on their fields.

Floodwaters also support crops in MALI, where the NIGER RIVER forms an inland delta. Farmers in the region practice a technique known as flood cropping. They plant rice near the river in July and August. The river floods in the fall, covering the land and helping the rice to grow. When the water recedes between December and February, the farmers harvest the rice. Like that of the Nile, the size of the Niger flood is unpredictable. The farmers therefore plant several varieties of rice, some adapted to drier and some to wetter conditions. In this way, a crop will survive regardless of the extent of the flood.

Livestock herders take advantage of river flooding. In Mali herders graze their flocks in the Niger floodplain during the dry season, moving away when the waters begin to rise. The annual flood allows the delta to support about one-fifth of Mali's cattle, sheep, and goats. In addition, the flood provides excellent conditions for fishing. Nutrients brought to the fields by floodwaters encourage the growth of vegetation. The vegetation attracts small creatures that provide food for fish, which migrate into the floodplain to breed. For this reason droughts that reduce the extent of the flood affect fishing.

Irrigation and Flood Control

In the dry Gezira region of Sudan, irrigation canals provide water for growing crops in the plain.



Irrigation Technology. Basin irrigation and flood cropping both depend on river flooding, which can vary from year to year. To overcome this problem, farmers developed technology that allowed them to draw water from rivers for irrigation and to store water during the flood season for use at other times of the year. These new systems have made it much easier to provide crops with water during droughts.

Some basic irrigation systems found in Africa use simple pumps or animal power to move quantities of water. Another device, the shadoof, has a long pole set on a pivot with a bucket at one end and a counterweight on the other. The bucket is filled with water and raised using the counterweight. The pole is then rotated to swing the bucket and empty the water into irrigation canals that carry it to the fields.

More advanced irrigation systems such as barrages and dams are designed to store water. A barrage is a barrier built across a river that blocks the flow of water during flood season, creating a reservoir. The



Irrigation and Flood Control

water is stored in the reservoir until the dry season, when it is released to irrigate fields downstream. Muhammed Ali Pasha, the viceroy of Egypt, built the first two barrages on the Nile between 1833 and 1843. Located about 70 miles north of CAIRO, they allowed the Egyptians to control the flow of water to the Nile delta and increase the amount of land under irrigation.

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

Dams also block the flow of river water, often creating a lake behind the barrier. Africa's first large dams were constructed in the 1900s. In 1925 the Sennar Dam was built on the Blue Nile in SUDAN. The dam provided water to irrigate the Gezira plain south of KHARTOUM. Because of its success, the Gezira project became a model for large-scale irrigation programs throughout Africa. In the 1960s Egypt built the Aswan High Dam on the Nile, which created Lake Nasser, the largest artificial lake in the world. Dams supply water for irrigation and produce hydroelectric* power and new fishing industries. However, they also disrupt the local ecology by changing the flow of the river and submerging dry land under water.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Modern Irrigation Programs. Since independence many African nations have concentrated on building or improving irrigation systems as a way to increase crop yields. During the 1970s and 1980s, NIGERIA set up a number of River Basin Development Authorities to build dams, control water supplies, and provide services and supplies such as seeds to farmers. The governments of Mali, MAURITANIA, and SENEGAL jointly created the Senegal River Development Organization to manage water resources in their region. However, some government irrigation programs have fallen short of expectations due to the high cost of construction and maintenance, poor planning and management, and lack of knowledge of the region's environment and economy. In many instances modern systems have failed to improve on indigenous* methods of irrigation because they were unsuited to the local conditions or crops.

In recent years African countries have increasingly turned to farmer-managed irrigation systems. Under these plans local farmers control water supplies, plan irrigation schedules, and maintain irrigation equipment. By taking control of irrigation away from the government and placing it in the hands of local farmers, African nations hope to benefit from the farmers' knowledge and skill while controlling costs. These programs also recognize the value of indigenous irrigation systems, which are often the most efficient methods of watering crops.

It is hoped that all of these changes will improve the quality of irrigation systems in Africa. Irrigation policy is becoming more diverse, with more options available to farmers at all economic levels. In addition, government leaders are paying more attention to indigenous methods and are not forcing farmers to use systems that might use more technology, but actually produce poorer results. The skills and needs of small farmers now play an important part in irrigation policy, although it will take time for new systems to gain acceptance. In addition, there is hope that large-scale agriculture businesses will also benefit from new policies. (*See also Agriculture, Climate, Deserts and Drought, Ecosystems, Fishing.*)

Islam in Africa

Islam in Africa

See color
plate 14,
vol. 1.

See
color plate 7,
vol. 4.

The religion of Islam arose in the Arabian city of Mecca around A.D. 610 through the work of its prophet Muhammad. After Muhammad died in 632, his teachings were carried into Africa by Arab traders, settlers, and soldiers. By conversion and conquest, Islam spread across North Africa, into the eastern Horn of Africa, and even over the SAHARA DESERT into West Africa. The arrival of Islam had a major impact on the political and social development of those regions, and it remains a significant force in Africa today.

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

Islam first took hold on the continent in the 600s and 700s. It was brought to EGYPT and North Africa by conquering armies and to the East African coast by traders and merchants. West Africa did not encounter Islam until about 800, and the religion spread more slowly there than in the eastern part of the continent.

Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia. In 639 an Arab army of some 4,000 men invaded Egypt, which was then under the control of the Byzantine Empire. Despite its small size, this Muslim force succeeded in driving the Byzantines out of Egypt and installing their own ruler, known as emir. Soon afterwards the Arabs began to push south along the NILE RIVER, attacking the Christian kingdoms of NUBIA in what is now northern SUDAN. However, Nubian resistance halted the Arab advance, and in 651 the emir of Egypt signed a peace treaty with the Nubians.

Only in the 1200s, when the Nubian kingdoms had gone into decline, did Islam begin to take hold in Nubia. Arab Muslims from Egypt began to settle there and to intermarry with Nubians. Within a hundred years, Islam has replaced Christianity as the main religion. However, Islam made little headway in southern Nubia, which remains mostly Christian to this day. Moreover, conflict between the Muslim north and the Christian south continues in the modern nation of Sudan.

Unlike the rest of Africa, ETHIOPIA had contact with the Arab world long before the rise of Islam. Thus, when followers of Muhammad fled persecution in Arabia in 615 and 616, they found a safe haven in the Ethiopian Christian kingdom of Abyssinia. As a result Muslims adopted a tolerant attitude toward Ethiopia. One of the traditional sayings of Muhammad was "Leave the Ethiopians alone." Muslim merchants established settlements along the coast of the Red Sea that came to dominate trade routes to the interior. These Muslim settlements later grew into small kingdoms ruled by sultans. In the 1500s a Muslim leader known as Ahmad Grañ united the sultanates in war against Christian Ethiopia. However, the defeat of the Muslims in 1543 ended the expansion of their influence in Ethiopia.

Somalia and East Africa. Like Ethiopia, SOMALIA was home to Arab trading communities before the rise of Islam, and by the 900s Muslims had settled on the coast at several places, including MOGADISHU. Another wave of Muslim migration to Somalia began in the 1100s. As the Somalis moved south, they brought Islam with them as far as north-eastern KENYA. Nomadic Somali herders spread Islam into the rural inte-

Islam in Africa

Faith and Healing

Islamic law and medicine have influenced African customs, but Islam has also had to adapt to African traditions. Although Islam pressed Africans to give up the worship of ancestors and spirits, many Africans consider worship of Allah and traditional spirits as two parts of the same religious experience. Traditional and Islamic medicine have been blended as well. Among the Swahili people, Muslim healers treat people with both the African ritual known as ngoma (“drum” or “dance”) and the reading of the Qur’an, the holy book of Islam.

* sect religious group

rior, where it developed alongside traditional African religions and customs and blended with them. In the 1900s Somalia was home to a number of Sufi brotherhoods, mystical Islamic sects*. One of the Sufi leaders, Muhammad Abdallah Hasan, emerged as a major opponent of the European colonization of Somalia.

In 740 a new group of Muslims arrived on the shores of eastern Africa from southern Mesopotamia (now Iraq). Many of them settled in Arab towns on islands just off the coast. These island towns, as well as those along the coast itself, became centers of Muslim influence, and over time the Muslims adopted the SWAHILI language and many local customs. A new East African Islamic culture developed in cities and towns from southern Somalia to northern MOZAMBIQUE.

Islam’s spread to the East African interior began only in the 1800s. At that time much of the coast was controlled by Muslims from the Arabian kingdom of Oman. Omani merchants, who had established a trading empire based in ZANZIBAR, set up new trade routes to the interior, establishing settlements and caravan routes into Kenya, UGANDA, and TANZANIA.

By the late 1800s, British and German colonial armies had taken over these regions. Colonial officials hired Muslims as civil servants, soldiers, and tax collectors, making centers of Muslim culture into colonial administrative centers. This situation tended to keep Muslim influence concentrated in the cities and towns.

West Africa. The earliest evidence of Muslim contact with West Africa dates to about 800 in the kingdom of Kanem, in what is now CHAD. Islam became the religion of Kanem in 1085, and in other kingdoms farther west, such as Gao in MALI, around the same time. Although Muslims never gained the throne in the ancient West African empire of GHANA, they worked there as scribes and ministers. In the late 1000s, Muslims from North Africa and Spain helped bring about the collapse of the Ghanaian empire. This upheaval showed that militant Islam was a political force in western Africa as elsewhere.

At that time Muslim traders also controlled the caravan routes that crossed the Sahara between northern and western Africa. These caravans carried gold, slaves, salt, cloth, and horses over hundreds of miles. To maintain control over trade and increase tax collection, local Muslim rulers conquered towns and villages along the routes. These towns eventually grew into large kingdoms, such as Mali, Songhai, and Kanem.

* indigenous native to a certain place

In many of these kingdoms, Islam existed side-by-side with indigenous* religions. Although this arrangement helped maintain order, it angered Sufi leaders who wanted the people to follow Muslim principles more strictly. Beginning around 1700 Sufi leaders in western Africa launched a series of jihads, or holy wars, against Muslim kingdoms that had not completely abandoned traditional religions. The jihad movement lasted almost 200 years and resulted in the founding of several strict Islamic states.

In the late 1800s, French and British armies defeated the forces of the jihads. From then on, as in East Africa, educated Muslims often cooperated with and served in the colonial governments. This led many

Islam in Africa



Introduced to northern Africa in the 600s, Islam gradually spread to parts of West and East Africa. This domed mosque is in Abuja, Nigeria.

Europeans to consider Muslims to be superior to other Africans. However, when some Islamic leaders opposed colonial rule, Europeans called Islam a superstitious, fanatic, anti-Christian religion.

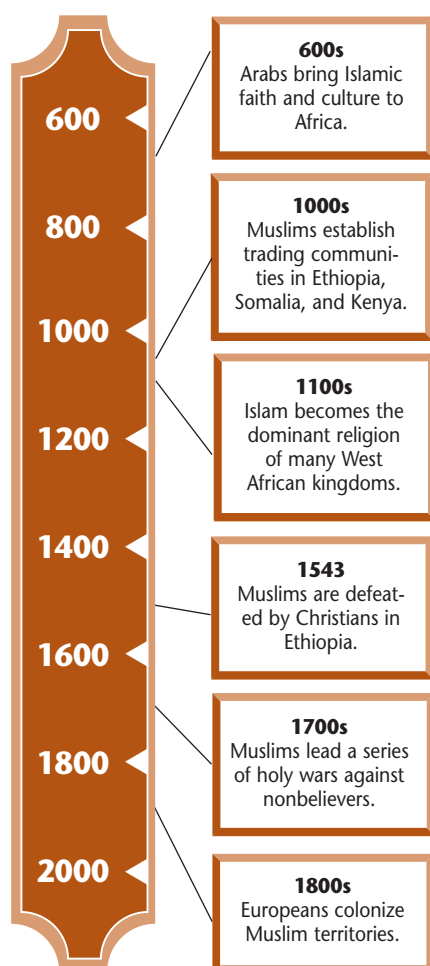
ISLAMIC INFLUENCE IN AFRICA

As a political and military force, Islam united large areas of Africa. However, as Muslim culture took root across the continent, it also clashed with existing legal, religious, and social practices.

Islamic Law. The introduction of Islamic law has changed important aspects of the legal relationships of individuals in African society. Islamic law, or Shari'a, is a written system; many indigenous legal traditions are oral systems. In numerous places these two traditions have come together, resulting in a blend of Islamic and indigenous practices. But where Islamic authorities have insisted on a strict interpretation of the written law, Shari'a has changed some of the basic elements of social relations.

In traditional African societies, kinship relations—relations of family and community—are basic to one's identity, rights, responsibilities, and

Islam in Africa



* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **polytheistic** believing in more than one god

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

role in society. Islamic law has redefined many of these relations in ways that conflict with traditional practices. For example, many rural African societies considered that land belonged to the community, while Islamic law emphasizes individual ownership of land. It also says that property is inherited through the male side of the family and favors certain relatives over others. Islamic laws therefore contradict the practice of some African societies, which have many different ways of dealing with inheritance.

Islamic law has affected the role of women in African society as well. It generally gives men considerable power over the property, actions, and personal lives of the women in their households and also restricts the right of women to make decisions about pregnancy and birth. Many traditional African societies allowed women more personal freedom.

While Islamic law has altered approaches to personal and family law, it has not been widely adopted in Africa in areas covered by civil and criminal law. Since the colonial era, the power of Islamic judges and courts has been limited in most African nations. Only Sudan and northern Nigeria apply Islamic law in all areas. However, throughout Africa religious officials and judges have usually been appointed by secular* rulers, and this practice has blurred the line between religious and secular authority. In recent years reformers have worked to modify parts of Islamic law to bring it more in line with other traditions.

Religious and Social Interactions. Islam brought to Africa new religious beliefs, rituals*, and practices. Although some African cultures already had the idea of a supreme being, most also recognized the presence of many other minor gods and spirits. The Islamic belief that there is no God but Allah clashed with African polytheistic* beliefs. However, many West African converts readily accepted Muslim prayers and charms, as their traditional religions already had similar elements. In addition, some Africans saw Muhammad's role as Allah's messenger as similar to the role of holy men and women in their own religions.

Islam also posed a political problem for African rulers who adopted it. In many traditional societies, the rulers' leadership was based partly on their role as guardians of the religious traditions. So rulers who accepted Islam had to abandon some African beliefs, and this move weakened their claim to leadership. African kings and chiefs were often torn between the demands of Muslim scholars and those of the indigenous priests and non-Muslims who made up the majority of their subjects.

For the last century or so, Islam's influence in Africa has been challenged by Christian missionaries. Strengthened by European conquests, the missionaries converted many millions of Africans. In practice, however, most African Christians have merged Christian and traditional beliefs. Islam remains the major religion in North Africa and many of the countries on the southern fringe of the Sahara, but Christianity is growing in sub-Saharan* Africa. However, Africans throughout the continent have often incorporated Christian and Muslim beliefs and practices into their indigenous religions. (See also *Arabs in Africa*; *Asma'u, Nana*; *Barghash Ibn Sa'id*; *Christianity in Africa*; *Colonialism in Africa*; *History of Africa*; *Ibn Battuta*; *Mansa Musa*; *North Africa: History and Cultures*; *Slave Trade*; *Sufism*.)

Ivory Coast

ITALIAN COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa*

Ivory Coast

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Ivory Coast, also known as Côte d'Ivoire, gained its independence from France in 1960. For more than 30 years the nation had a reputation as one of the most prosperous and stable countries in sub-Saharan* Africa. Many of its successes—and some of its difficulties—resulted from the strong leadership of its long-time president, Félix HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY. His death in 1993 has been followed by economic troubles, ethnic rivalries, controversial leaders, and a popular desire for democracy.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Located on the southern coast of West Africa, Ivory Coast is almost completely flat, sloping gradually upward away from the sea. The country's only highlands are the Man Mountains, on the western border with GUINEA, which rise to a height of about 3,000 feet. The south is covered with thick rain forests and experiences heavy rainfall and high humidity during two rainy seasons. In the central region, the rain forest gives way to mixed forest and savanna*. The north is mainly grassland with scattered trees and dry bushes. With only one long rainy season and desert winds between December and February, the north is much drier and somewhat cooler than the south. It has suffered severe droughts in recent years and has lost some of its plant and animal life.

Ivory Coast's tropical climate makes it ideal for agriculture. At one point the country was the world's leading producer of cocoa and the third leading producer of coffee. These crops account for a large percentage of the nation's profits from exports to other countries. However, the world prices of cocoa and coffee change from year to year, so the health of the economy depends heavily on those prices. Other export crops include palm oil, rubber, cotton, bananas, and pineapples.

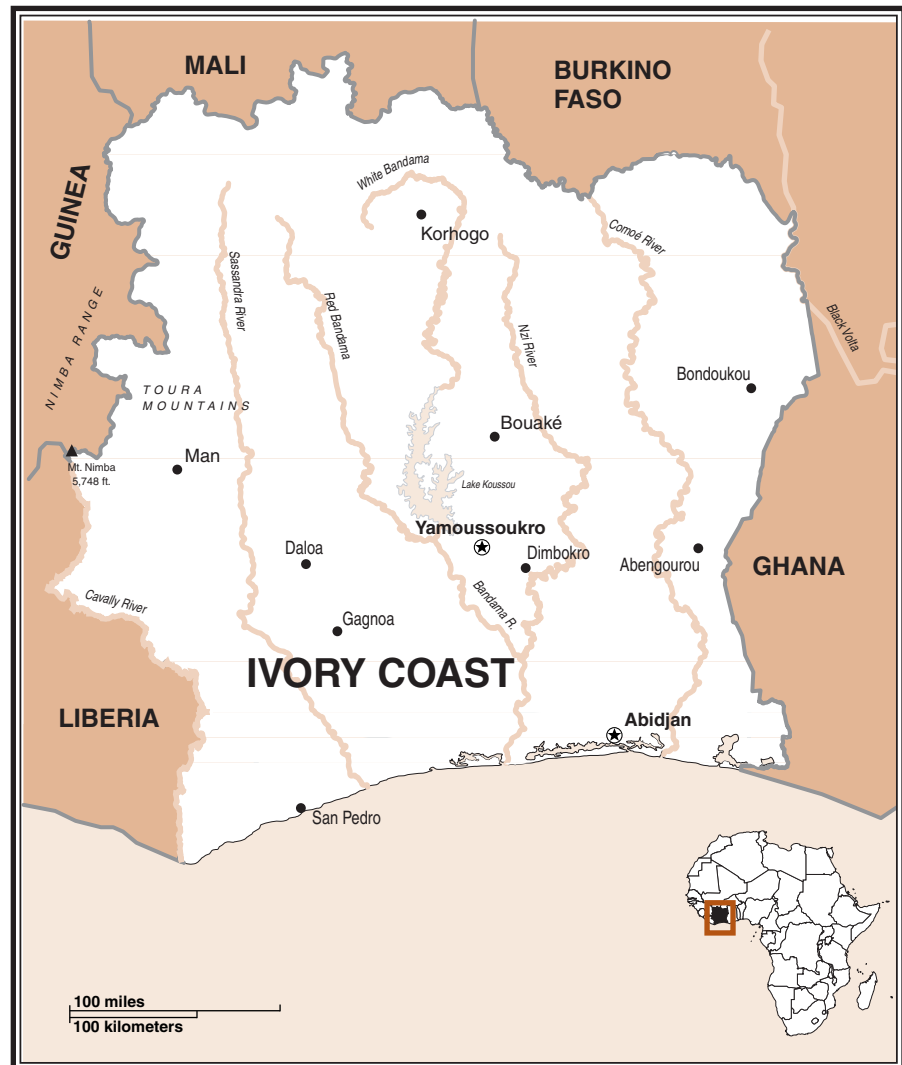
Timber is also a major industry, but heavy logging has dramatically reduced the size of Ivory Coast's forests. Although mining and manufacturing are a smaller part of the economy, the country has reserves of both oil and natural gas, as well as limited deposits of gold, iron ore, nickel, and manganese.

The coastal city of ABIDJAN, the nation's traditional capital, is a major port and banking center. It has a population of about 2.8 million. The country's people are known as Ivoirians.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

For about 50 years, the history and government of Ivory Coast were dominated by Félix Houphouët-Boigny. His actions and policies influenced social, political, and economic developments in the country. They also left a record of stability and growth unmatched in any coun-

Ivory Coast



try in Africa led by black Africans. But that stability dissolved into bitter riots by 2000.

Early and Colonial History. Before the arrival of Europeans in the 1400s, three kingdoms and many small tribal societies occupied what is now Ivory Coast. The first European trading posts, established along the coast in the late 1600s, were gateways for the export of African ivory and slaves. The IVORY TRADE led Europeans to name the area Ivory Coast. During the 1800s the French signed agreements with local chiefs that brought Ivory Coast under French rule in 1893.

As colonial rulers the French established plantations to grow crops such as cocoa and coffee and forced Africans to work as serfs on their land. However, the plantations were always short staffed, and they were no more productive than the small farms. Today, most of the country's coffee and cocoa comes from small farms.

In the late 1930s Houphouët-Boigny organized a union of African farm workers. The union worked to overturn laws that allowed forced



Ivory Coast

The African Cathedral

Félix Houphouët-Boigny gave his hometown of Yamoussoukro an impressive gift: the largest Christian church in the world. Named Notre Dame de la Paix (Our Lady of Peace), its design was inspired by St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome. Completed in 1989, the church reportedly cost \$200 million. Houphouët-Boigny claimed that he paid for the construction with his own money, but his wealth was closely tied to his control of the nation's economy. Many Ivorians see the extravagant amount spent on the church as a symbol of corruption at the highest levels of the nation's government.



labor and favored French growers. When France opened its National Assembly to colonial Africans in 1945, Houphouët-Boigny was chosen to represent Ivory Coast. As a deputy in the French legislature, he succeeded in passing a law that ended forced labor, causing his popularity to soar among Africans.

Back in Ivory Coast Houphouët-Boigny founded the country's first independent political party, the PDCI. During the 1950s he campaigned in favor of a federation of French colonies in which Ivory Coast could govern itself. But the people of Ivory Coast wanted complete independence from France, and in 1960 they won this goal. They elected Houphouët-Boigny to serve as their first president, giving him almost 99 percent of the vote.

Father of the Nation. Houphouët-Boigny believed that Ivory Coast needed a strong leader at all costs. He also believed that the country's 60 different ethnic groups would make it less stable and threaten his leadership. To ensure his control over the nation, Houphouët-Boigny abolished all parties other than his own PDCI. He also controlled the national assembly. Although its members were elected by the people, all the candidates were nominated first by a political committee dominated by the PDCI. With little effective opposition, Houphouët-Boigny won the election for president every five years until his death.

While Houphouët-Boigny enjoyed nearly complete power over Ivory Coast's government and economy, he never ignored the voice of his people. He tried to make his personal rule legitimate by emphasizing his closeness to the common citizen. He often invited social and professional groups to tell him their problems and to voice their complaints about the government. The president also reached out to the Muslim population of the north. He himself was part of the Christian population of the south, which had enjoyed greater political and economic status since the days of European rule.

The Rise and Fall of the Economy. After gaining independence most African countries moved rapidly to increase their industry and manufacturing. But Ivory Coast focused on developing its agriculture with modern technology. Ivory Coast's prosperity peaked in 1976–1977, when a frost devastated the coffee crop in Brazil. Prices rose worldwide, and Ivory Coast's coffee industry brought in large amounts of foreign money.

The government used this revenue to expand government services, hire more government employees, and finance a construction boom. But coffee prices soon returned to normal, and Ivory Coast fell into debt. The country was forced to borrow money from international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In 1981 these lenders forced Ivory Coast to spend less money, cutting back social services and firing government employees. Five years later the market for both coffee and cocoa collapsed, and Ivory Coast was forced to begin another round of economic reorganization. The new restructuring plan cut the prices paid to coffee and cocoa farmers in half, taxed private incomes, and reduced government spending by one-fourth.

Ivory Coast

Political Change. The economic hardship led Ivorians to protest the restructuring and to call for a more democratic government. The protests forced Houphouët-Boigny to cancel the economic program and to hold multiparty elections in 1990—the first in the nation’s history. However, the large number of political parties participating meant that no single party had enough power to overcome the PDCI, which won over 90 percent of the seats in the national assembly. Houphouët-Boigny again won the office of president. Under a new law he named Allassane Ouattera, a northern Muslim politician, to run the government as prime minister. A rivalry soon developed between Ouattera and Henri Konan Bédié, a southern Christian who was the speaker of the assembly.

When Houphouët-Boigny died in 1993, Bédié succeeded him as president. After ousting Ouattera, Bédié began to strengthen his own position through a campaign of ethnic division. He promoted the idea that some Ivorians were more truly “Ivorian” than others and that Christians were superior to Muslims. Christians felt free to harass Muslims and immigrants.

Under Houphouët-Boigny foreigners had been encouraged to settle in Ivory Coast, to find work, and to participate in politics. But in 1996 Bédié created laws granting citizenship and voting rights only to those whose parents and grandparents were born in Ivory Coast. This meant

Félix Houphouët-Boigny was the first president of Ivory Coast. Considered the father of the nation, he is often credited with making Ivory Coast one of the most prosperous and stable countries in sub-Saharan Africa.



Ivory Coast



Ivory Coast

POPULATION:

15,980,950 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

124,503 sq. mi. (322,463 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Dioula (Djula), other native languages

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 60%, Christian 22%, Traditional 18%

CITIES:

Yamoussoukro (political capital), 120,000 (1999 est.),
Abidjan (economic capital), 2,793,000 (1999 est.); Bouaké,
Man, Gagnoa, Grand-Bassam, Bingerville

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 50–94 in. (1,270–2,413 mm) on the coast to
50–60 in. (1,270–1,542 mm) in the north.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,700

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, cocoa beans, timber, palm oil and kernels, bananas, rubber, cotton, sugar, rice, corn, cassava, sweet potatoes

Manufacturing: agricultural product processing, food and beverage processing and canning, petroleum refining, textiles, wood processing

Mining: petroleum, diamonds, nickel, manganese, iron ore, cobalt, bauxite, copper

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Multiparty democracy.

President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies:

Assemblée Nationale elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1993 President Félix Houphouët-Boigny

1993–1999 President Henri Konan Bédié

1999–2000 General Robert Gueï

2000– President Laurent Gbagbo

ARMED FORCES:

8,400 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 40%

that about 40 percent of the people in the country—including Ouattera—could no longer serve in government or even vote. Bédié came under a great deal of criticism for these actions and responded by clamping down on his opponents. He arrested journalists for printing articles that he considered “insulting,” and he refused to give up any power to other political parties.

In managing the economy, Bédié went farther than Houphouët-Boigny in opening the economy to private capital* and foreign investment. He sold most of the nation’s public utilities and resources to corporations. He also abolished many laws that regulated the treatment of workers and the prices of crops. Fortunately, the world prices of coffee and cocoa rebounded in the late 1990s, helping to restore some strength to the economy.

In 1999 a growing crisis ended with a violent military coup*, led by Robert Gueï, a Christian general. In elections held the next year, Ouattera was ruled ineligible to run for office, and many Muslims decided not to vote. A southern Christian politician, Laurent Gbagbo, won the election, but Gueï refused to leave office. Thousands of Gbagbo’s supporters, joined by some police and military troops, protested in Abidjan and forced Gueï to flee.

Gbagbo rallied his supporters by fanning the flames of anti-Muslim prejudice. In late 2000 Christians and Muslims fought in the streets of Abidjan, and Christians burned down several mosques*. Ouattera’s party called for the north to secede from the south. In January 2001 an attempted coup against President Gbagbo’s government failed.

* **capital** money invested to start a business or industry

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Ivory Coast is home to a wide variety of ethnic groups and languages. The largest group is the Baule, one of several **AKAN** peoples of central and eastern Ivory Coast. The second-largest group, the Bete, speak Kru and live mainly in the western part of the country. The Mande people, whose language is also called Mande, are divided into northern and southern groups. The northern Mande are indigenous* to Ivory Coast, while the southern Mande originally came from areas now occupied by **LIBERIA**, **Guinea**, and **MALI**. The north is also inhabited by the Senufo, who speak a language of the Gur family. A large number of smaller ethnic groups live in the far south, near the coast.

Many people came to Ivory Coast from other West African countries as part of Houphouët-Boigny's campaign to strengthen the economy by encouraging immigration. People also arrived from as far away as Lebanon, Vietnam, Korea, and Indonesia. Many immigrant groups, like many local ethnic groups, control specific parts of the economy. This division of occupations presents another potential source of ethnic rivalries.

The population of Ivory Coast is about 60 percent Muslim and 20 percent Christian. The north is the Muslim area, while the majority of Christians live in the south. However, many Ivoirians incorporate elements of traditional religion into their beliefs and practice. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Plantation Systems.*)



Ivory Trade

For centuries ivory—the material of elephant tusks—was one of the most sought-after luxury items from Africa. A brisk ivory trade developed in ancient times, linking hunters deep within the continent to markets around the world. By the 1980s elephants had been hunted nearly to extinction, and most nations banned the ivory trade.

Egyptian records show that Africans were trading ivory before 2200 B.C. It was highly prized by the rulers of ancient Egypt and later by people in the Roman Empire, India, and China. Most ivory came from eastern and northeastern Africa. However, after the A.D. 1100s, demand for ivory rose in Europe, and the hunt for elephant tusks expanded into central Africa. Three hundred years later, Portuguese explorers began trading for ivory along the coast of West Africa.

Despite vigorous trade in other regions, East Africa remained the world's chief supplier of ivory. Business flourished in **ZANZIBAR** and **MOZAMBIQUE**, where merchants exported tusks to western India and other markets. By the late 1700s East Africa's vast ivory network reached as far inland as the Congo Basin. Some local peoples specialized in hunting elephants and transporting their tusks to the coast.

The ivory trade was often linked to the **SLAVE TRADE**. African, Arab, and **SWAHILI** traders led both hunting and slave-raiding parties. The end of the slave trade in the late 1800s, however, did not bring an end to the ivory trade. Exports increased during the next century. Concern grew over the fate of Africa's dwindling elephant herds led in 1989 to an international



Ivory Trade

agreement that placed the African elephant on the endangered species list. The legal ivory trade halted nearly everywhere. However, BOTSWANA and ZIMBABWE insisted that their elephant herds not be included in the ban on trading. Poaching, or illegal hunting of protected elephants for their ivory, remains a concern in many other African nations. (See also **Wildlife and Game Parks**.)

JENNE

See *Sahara Desert*

Johannesburg

Johannesburg is the largest city in SOUTH AFRICA. It was renamed Greater Johannesburg in 1994, when its boundaries were extended to include surrounding suburbs. With a population of more than 5 million people, Greater Johannesburg is growing faster than any other major city in Africa.

Geography and Peoples. Greater Johannesburg is located inland on the Highveld, South Africa's broad central plateau. The inner city, made up of the business district and northern suburbs, straddles a series of rocky hills called the Witwatersrand. Just south of Greater Johannesburg lies the Witwatersrand Main Reef, a layer of gold-bearing rock that stretches for hundreds of miles under the Highveld. The city enjoys a temperate climate, with a wet and dry season and temperatures that usually remain above freezing.

The settlement patterns of Greater Johannesburg remain much as they were during the era of apartheid*, which ended in 1994. While many Africans live in the inner city, most whites inhabit the prosperous northern suburbs. The Indian and Coloured (people of mixed descent) populations are concentrated in townships that lie at a considerable distance from the inner city. The South-West Townships, better known as Soweto, are a cluster of towns inhabited by about 1 million Africans. More than 40 of the city's poor, informal, or "shack," settlements are found in Soweto.

Black South Africans make up at least 80 percent of Greater Johannesburg's total population. However, this figure does not include the huge number of Africans from other countries who have moved to Johannesburg. The rest of the population is made up of whites, Coloureds, and Asians, mostly Indians. All 11 of South Africa's official languages are spoken in the city. However, the major spoken languages are Zulu, Tswana, English, and Afrikaans, the language developed by early Dutch settlers.

History and Economy. Europeans founded Johannesburg in 1886 after discovering gold nearby. People from around the world—as far as

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Johannesburg



The sprawling metropolis of Johannesburg is the largest city in South Africa and the nation's financial and commercial center.

Australia, California, and Wales—flocked to the city to seek their fortunes in the Witwatersrand mines. Poor South Africans and blacks from many African nations came to work in the mines as well. By 1899 Witwatersrand was the world's top gold producer.

Johannesburg became the financial, commercial, and industrial hub of South Africa and remained so even after most of the area's gold deposits had run out in the 1970s. Today, most of South Africa's banks, leading construction companies, engineering, insurance, and commercial and retail firms are located in central Johannesburg. The city houses the nation's stock exchange and the headquarters of its mining companies. A large international airport and an excellent system of roads, highways, and railways serve the urban area.

Greater Johannesburg is an important political and educational center. It is also the capital of Gauteng, the richest province in South Africa. The city has seven daily newspapers and serves as the base for national broadcasting and television systems. Students come to Greater Johannesburg to study at its highly regarded University of the Witwatersrand and the Rand Afrikaans University. The city also has a branch university in Soweto and several technical colleges and teacher-training schools. (*See also Apartheid, Cape Town, Cities and Urbanization.*)

Johnson, Samuel

Johnson, Samuel

1846–1901
Yoruba historian

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a stronger one

Samuel Johnson was the author of the first important history of the YORUBA people. The son of a liberated slave and descendant of African kings, Johnson was born in SIERRA LEONE. At the age of 11, he and his family moved back to Yorubaland in what is now NIGERIA. Educated in schools run by the Church Missionary Society (CMS), Johnson was eventually appointed schoolmaster of CMS schools in Ibadan. He later became the pastor of a CMS church in Oyo.

During the Sixteen Years' War (1877–1893), Johnson served as go-between in negotiations with warring Yoruba chiefs and helped to establish the British protectorate* over Yorubaland. Over the years he collected oral histories from Yoruba elders and combined their stories in an extensive written history of the Yoruba people. The manuscript, titled *The History of the Yorubas: From the Earliest Times to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, was lost when it was sent to a publisher. But after Johnson's death, his brother Obadiah rewrote the history from Samuel's original notes and drafts. The work was finally published 20 years later, and it remains one of the most complete sources of information about Yoruba history.

Judaism in Africa

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

Judaism in Africa is represented mainly by two separate groups of people: Jews from Europe and the Middle East and indigenous* Africans who claim Jewish or Israelite descent. Jews from the Middle East arrived in Africa before A.D. 400, settling mainly in North African countries such as EGYPT and ALGERIA. Most worked as artisans*, merchants, or laborers. In the late 1300s many Jews fled from Catholic Spain to Algeria, and in the 1600s and 1700s, Italian Jews joined them. However, when Arab leaders in Egypt and Algeria established anti-Jewish policies in the mid-1900s, most Jews left those countries. Today, SOUTH AFRICA is home to the largest population of Jewish immigrants in Africa.

Several African groups claim to be descended from the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel or other early Jewish groups. Most scholars believe these peoples were not originally Jewish but picked up elements of Jewish culture and religion through contacts with Christians or Muslims. These groups include the Lemba of South Africa and the Bayudiya of Uganda. The Beta Israel of ETHIOPIA claim to be descendants of Jews who moved to East Africa near the beginning of the Christian era. Although scholars now estimate that the Beta Israel arose in Ethiopia between the 1300s and 1500s, the group has nevertheless been recognized as Jews by the state of Israel. Over 45,000 members of the group have moved to Israel, members of Beta Israel in other African countries have claimed Jewish heritage in hopes of settling in Israel as well.

Many indigenous African groups have incorporated Jewish rituals and practices into their religious systems. Some point to ancient Biblical customs such as polygamy* and ritual* sacrifice to justify their traditional practices to Western missionaries. Other African groups have customs like those of Jewish cultures, but many scholars view such similarities as coincidental and not as evidence of direct Israelite influence.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Kabarega

ca. 1850–1923
King of Bunyoro-Kitara

Kabarega was ruler of the kingdom of Bunyoro-Kitara in what is now the nation of UGANDA. During his reign he expanded the empire and led a determined resistance to British colonization in East Africa. Although some historians consider Kabarega a tyrant and a murderer, others see him as a hero and an early African nationalist.

Kabarega's father Kamurasi ruled Bunyoro from 1852 to 1869. After his death, Kabarega and his brother Kabigumire fought for control of the kingdom. Their struggle ended in 1870 with the crowning of Kabarega, who set out to restore the former glory of the Kitara Empire. The new king created a standing army that he used to extend his influence over his neighbors, as well as to raid them for slaves and wealth. Within six years he and his allies ruled a large part of northern and western Uganda. He also undertook public works such as building roads and constructing granaries to store food in case of shortages. However, Kabarega had little control over the outlying parts of his kingdom, and he never succeeded in unifying the many different peoples under his rule.

In 1872 a British colonial traveler named Samuel Baker arrived in Bunyoro and claimed Kitara for EGYPT. A short time later, Baker's troops attacked Kabarega's palace in the village of Kihande and burned Bunyoro houses there. Violence erupted again in 1891 when Frederick LUGARD, an agent of the British East Africa Company, attacked Kabarega's forces in the kingdom of Toro. Lugard built a series of forts along the border of Bunyoro and Toro and placed one of his own allies, King Kasagama, on the Toro throne. Two years later, Kabarega sent forces to attack Toro and oust Kasagama. This led the British to declare war on Kabarega. Within a month British forces captured Kabarega's capital, and Kabarega retreated to the forest. African forces allied with the British drove him out of the forest, forcing him to fight a guerilla war. Kabarega was unable to gather much support for his struggle against the British, but he won some battles.

Joined by King Mwanga of Buganda, Kabarega continued to hold out against the British until capture in April 1899. Both men were exiled to the SEYCHELLES Islands in the Indian Ocean. In 1923 the British allowed Kabarega to return to Bunyoro, but he died on the journey home. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Kadalie, Clements

ca. 1896–1951
South African labor leader

Clements Kadalie, an early African labor leader, organized a black union that challenged white rule in SOUTH AFRICA. After graduating from high school in his home country of Nyasaland (now MALAWI), Kadalie traveled through southeastern Africa. He arrived in CAPE TOWN in 1918. That year he founded the Industrial and Commercial Workers Union of Africa, which became known as the Industrial and Commercial Union or ICU. Africans referred to the union as ICU *Mlungu*, or "I see you, white man."

In its first two years, the ICU led successful strikes around the country. The union was so effective that it won wage increases for Cape Town dockworkers merely by threatening to strike. By the 1920s over 100,000 workers had joined the ICU, making it the largest nonwhite union in the



Kadalie, Clements

country. However, the union's size also made it a threat to the white government of South Africa.

In 1923 the leader of the South African government, Jan SMUTS, passed a law that increased segregation in towns. The following year he granted all workers except blacks the right to bargain with employers as a group. In response, Kadalie encouraged blacks to support a political coalition* running against Smuts in the 1924 election. The coalition won, but once in office it failed to improve conditions for black workers. Instead it adopted a policy that reserved certain jobs for whites. The ICU broke up in 1929. However, Kadalie formed a new union called the Independent ICU. He later spent two months in jail for leading the Independent ICU in a general strike. Kadalie wrote an autobiography, *My Life and the ICU: The Autobiography of a Black Trade Unionist in South Africa*. It was not, however, published until 1970—nearly 20 years after the author's death. (See also **Unions and Trade Associations**.)

* **coalition** temporary union of individuals, parties, or states

Kagwa, Apolo

ca. 1868–1927
Prime minister of Buganda

* **autonomous** self-governing

* **regent** person appointed to rule on behalf of another

Apolo Kagwa emerged as the leader of the Christian Party, one of the groups struggling to control BUGANDA during the religious wars of the late 1800s. From 1889 to 1926, he served as *katikiro* (prime minister) of the semi-autonomous* kingdom of Buganda under British authority.

In 1897 Kagwa helped overthrow Buganda's King Mwanga and then had Chwa, a child, declared successor to the throne. Kagwa acted as chief regent* until Chwa came of age in 1914. As prime minister, Kagwa earned the support of the British by backing them when their Sudanese troops mutinied. In return, the British granted Buganda a large measure of self-rule.

In addition to his political accomplishments, Kagwa founded several important educational institutions and published two books on Buganda's history and culture. He was knighted by the British in 1905.

Kalahari Desert

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

The Kalahari Desert is a large, sandy plain in southern Africa with forested regions in its northern reaches. Really a semidesert or dry savanna* rather than a true desert, the Kalahari measures about 1,000 miles from north to south and 600 miles from east to west at its broadest points. About 100,000 KHOISAN people and approximately 1.5 million BANTU-speaking people live in this area.

The Kalahari covers most of the nation of BOTSWANA, the eastern part of NAMIBIA, and parts of southern ANGOLA and northern SOUTH AFRICA. Much of it is covered by deep sand, which in many places is red. The western part consists of row after row of long sand dunes ranging from 20 to 200 feet high. The Kalahari also features pans—hard, white, flat areas that resemble dry lakes. They are formed by streams that flowed during a wetter period in the region's history or that still flow briefly after rainstorms.

The most desert-like part of the Kalahari is in the southwest, where it blends into the Namib Desert. Less than 5 inches of rain falls annually

Kalahari Desert



A vast, open plain broken by high sand dunes, the Kalahari Desert supports some plant life. Scattered trees grow in this section of the desert in South Africa.

in this area, limiting plant life to thin, drought-resistant brush. Animals of the southern Kalahari include herds of springbok, wildebeest, and hartebeest—which are all types of antelope.

The northeastern Kalahari receives up to four times as much rain as the southwestern region. In addition, the Okavango River carries rainfall from central Angola into the northern Kalahari, where it fills a network of swamps. Vegetation ranges from grasslands and some trees in the central Kalahari to forests and water plants in the north. Elephants, zebras, giraffes, antelope, lions, cheetahs, warthogs, baboons, and other animals live in the northern Kalahari.

Some scholars believe that the Khoisan people of the Kalahari have lived in small, isolated bands of hunters and gatherers since prehistoric times. However, others say that the Khoisan have been interacting with Bantu-speaking herding and farming people for 2,000 years—ever since the Bantu began migrating into the region from central Africa. For a long time the Khoisan and the Bantu maintained close economic and social ties, including marriage. In the early 1800s, however, the Bantu-speaking Tswana began to dominate the other peoples of the Kalahari by controlling local trade in European goods. In more recent times many Khoisan have served as laborers on cattle ranches and farms. The poorest among them have returned to a lifestyle of hunting and gathering. (See also *Climate, Deserts and Drought, Ecosystems.*)

See
color plate 2,
vol. 4.

Kanemi, Muhammad al-Amin al-

**Kanemi, Muhammad
al-Amin al-**

**ca. 1775–ca. 1837
Scholar and ruler of Bornu**

Muhammad al-Kanemi was born in southwestern LIBYA and received an extensive Muslim education in both Africa and Arabia. He traveled widely, finally settling in the kingdom of BORNu in north central Africa in 1799. There he attracted a large following of scholars. Soon after his arrival, the ruler of Bornu asked for al-Kanemi's help in defending the kingdom against a jihad (holy war) by FULANI Muslims. Al-Kanemi and his followers prevented the Fulani from capturing central Bornu, although the Fulani conquered the kingdom's western provinces. Al-Kanemi then began a correspondence with the rulers of the state that sponsored the jihad, eventually convincing them to end the war. At the same time he reorganized Bornu's administration and prevented the collapse of the government.

By 1819 the people considered al-Kanemi the savior of Bornu and their rightful king. Al-Kanemi's son succeeded him as ruler and established his descendants as the official rulers of Bornu. (*See also Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)

KANO

See Nigeria

Kaunda, Kenneth

**1924–
President of Zambia**

Kenneth Kaunda served as ZAMBIA's first president and became a prominent political leader within Africa. Born in what was then Northern Rhodesia, Kaunda trained as a teacher but became active in politics in the 1950s. He organized the local branch of the African National Congress, the country's first political party, and later served as the party's secretary general.

In 1960 Kaunda formed the United National Independence Party to oppose colonial rule in Northern Rhodesia. Four years later he led the country, renamed Zambia, to independence and was elected president.

Kaunda won reelection six times, but after 1973 he ruled Zambia as a one-party state. As chairman of international groups such as the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY and the Non-Aligned Movement, Kaunda tried to find peaceful solutions to the problems arising from the end of colonial rule in southern Africa. However, he lost popularity at home when the Zambian economy declined in the 1980s. In 1991 Kaunda became the first African leader to lose power in multiparty elections. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Independence Movements; Southern Africa, History.*)

Kenya

The nation of Kenya, which lies on the Indian Ocean and straddles the equator, is the commercial center of East Africa. After gaining independence from Britain in 1963, Kenya developed one of the most successful economies in the region. However, since the late 1980s, the

Kenya

Kenya's Baby Boom

Kenya's population is growing too fast for the country's resources. The population grows by 4 percent every year, one of the highest rates in the world. Several factors contribute to this pressing problem. Fathering many children is a sign of status and manhood in Kenya, and the Catholic Church in this mainly Christian country opposes any form of birth control. As a result, many girls as young as age 12 become pregnant. This baby boom, along with poverty, has put many children on the streets to make a living however they can.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **tenant farmer** person who rents the land he or she farms and receives a share of the produce or cash



See map in Humans, Early (vol. 2).

stays fairly cool. Rain falls throughout the year, enriching the fertile soil and making the western highlands a center of Kenyan agriculture. Most other parts of Kenya have two rainy seasons a year that occur unpredictably, resulting in frequent droughts. The driest part of Kenya, the northern region, includes some stretches of desert.

HISTORY

Prior to the arrival of the British in the late 1800s, the peoples of Kenya lived in well-established homelands. The GIKUYU formed stable farming communities in the south. The LUO people around Lake Victoria also farmed. The MAASAI led a nomadic life, herding cattle in the central inland region. Along the coast, traders who spoke SWAHILI established contacts with Arab and Asian merchants. Members of different groups could travel with some freedom between regions. The British changed this situation completely.

Colonization. In 1888 Britain granted a charter to the British East India Company to exploit* part of East Africa. However, the British settlers met resistance from the local people. In 1895 Britain began building a railroad from the coastal city of Mombasa to Lake Victoria in the west. The railroad carried British troops and settlers into the interior, speeding up the conquest of the territory. By 1911 Britain had full control.

The British moved the capital inland from Mombasa to NAIROBI and encouraged whites to settle in the interior. The central highlands came to be known as the "White Highlands," as settlers established large plantations to grow cash crops*, including wheat, tea, and coffee.

The colonial rulers treated the indigenous* peoples harshly. They took land from Africans and created large white-owned plantations. They forced Africans to live and work on the plantations, either as slaves or as tenant farmers*. The British settlers also fenced off much of the land on which the Maasai nomads had grazed their cattle, turning open plains into private property. The Maasai were eventually forced into the dry areas around the Rift Valley. In addition, colonial authorities divided the country into districts and restricted the freedom of Africans to cross district borders. The new borders often separated members of related ethnic groups and disrupted long-standing trade networks.

World War I to Independence. World War I was a disaster for the Gikuyu. The British drafted 150,000 Gikuyu, and nearly one-third of them died on the battlefield. Thousands more perished in a worldwide influenza epidemic in 1919.

Following the war, opposition to British rule grew. Many Kenyans refused to perform labor demanded by the government, and African political groups began to protest colonial policies such as land seizure and wage cuts. For a time Gikuyu political organizations worked with British officials to ease some of these problems. However, in 1929 a serious crisis emerged when Christian missionaries attempted to stop the Gikuyu practice of female circumcision, performing surgery on the sex-



Kenya

ual organs of girls and women. Up to this time the missionaries had succeeded in converting many Gikuyu to Christianity. However, the dispute led some Gikuyu to abandon the missions and set up their own independent churches.

Meanwhile, white farmers began to take over land in reserves that the British had set aside for Africans. Many Gikuyu and other herding peoples lost land rights. Large numbers of rural people moved to cities such as Nairobi, which soon swelled with the poor and unemployed.

In 1944 a group of educated Africans founded the Kenya African Union (KAU) to demand the return of land taken by settlers. Meanwhile, peasants organized an armed guerrilla* group called the MAU MAU. In 1947 Jomo KENYATTA became the head of the KAU. Although he distanced himself from the Mau Mau, the British were convinced that he was secretly behind the armed movement. They arrested and jailed Kenyatta, setting off a bloody war known as the Mau Mau rebellion. Partly a civil war among the Gikuyu and partly a revolt against the British, the conflict lasted from 1952 to 1956. About 13,000 Gikuyu died in the violence.

Following the Mau Mau rebellion, political change came swiftly in Kenya. Africans were allowed to elect an assembly for the first time, and Britain prepared to grant them majority rule. However, in 1959 white guards at a detention camp clubbed 11 prisoners to death. The episode caused a scandal and convinced the British to give up control of Kenya. Africans held free elections in 1961 and chose Kenyatta as the country's prime minister. Kenya achieved full independence two years later, although it remained part of the British Commonwealth, a group of former British colonies that maintain trade and cultural ties with Britain.

Independent Kenya. Jomo Kenyatta became president of the new nation, with the slogan of "Uhuru na Kenyatta" ("independence with Kenyatta"). He made his own party, the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the only political party. Under Kenyatta's rule the Gikuyu enjoyed political and economic control. But in 1966, the vice president, a Luo named Oginga Odinga, resigned to form a new party dominated by the Luo. Three years later, a Luo attacked Kenyatta, who then outlawed Odinga's party.

During this period, high prices for coffee and tea and a booming tourist industry made Kenya one of the most prosperous states in Africa. However, it still lacked political stability. As Kenyatta grew older, KANU split into rival factions over the choice of his successor. When he died in 1978, Vice President Daniel arap Moi assumed the presidency.

Moi identified with a new ethnic group called the Kalenjin, partly made up of soldiers who had served in World War II. A year after Moi took office, new elections were held. Moi won by rigging the vote count and blocking Odinga and the Luo party from participating. He then proceeded to break up the Gikuyu control over businesses and farms and give preference to the Kalenjin.

Three years later, members of the air force attempted a coup*. The coup failed, and Moi cracked down on his opponents. As he became more autocratic*, church leaders urged him to reopen the political sys-

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of fighters

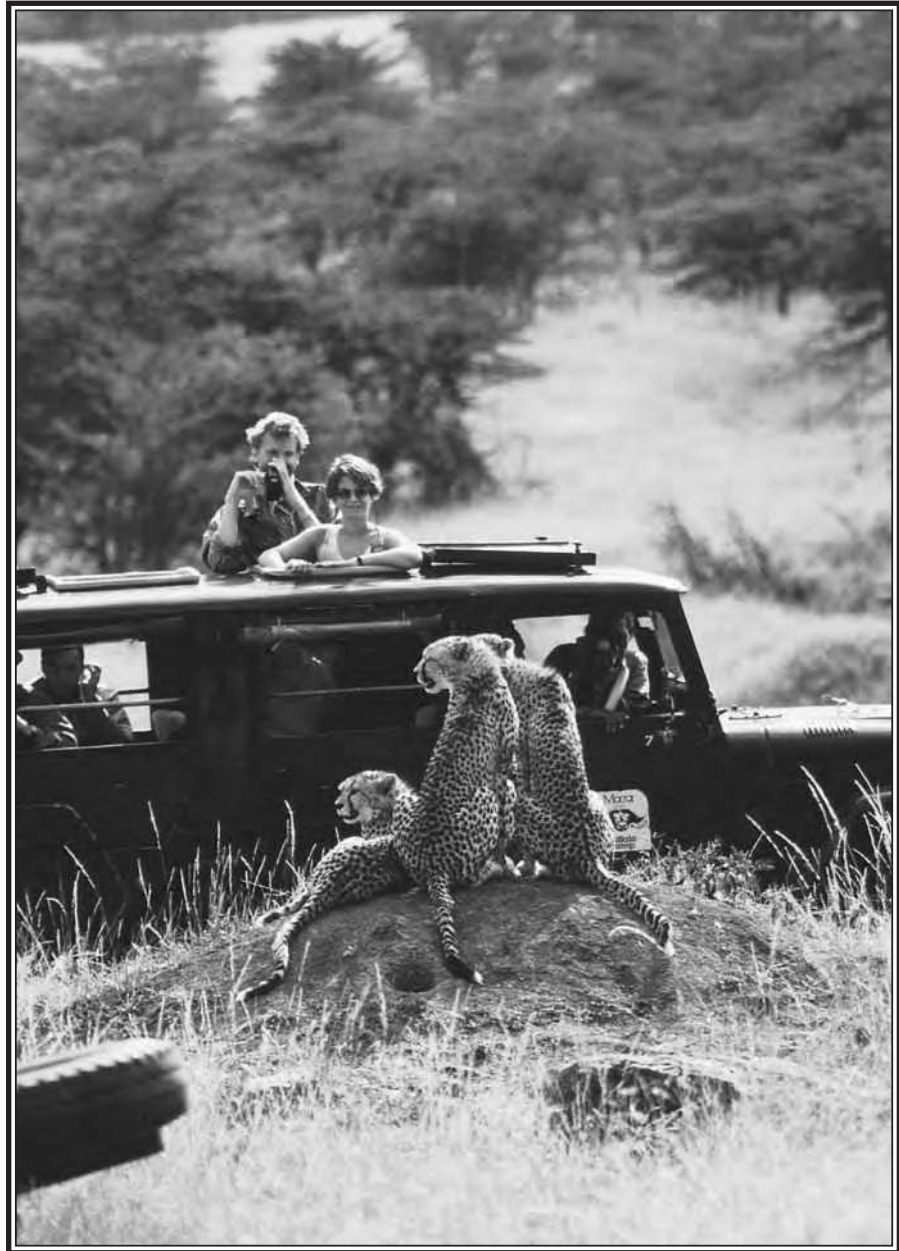


* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **autocratic** ruling with absolute power and authority

Kenya

Kenya's wildlife attracts thousands of visitors every year. Here, tourists observe a group of cheetahs in the Masai Mara Game Reserve.



tem to more than one party. At about the same time, a disastrous drought struck the country and coffee prices fell to an all-time low. International banks suspended loans to Kenya's government.

Bowing to pressure at home and abroad, Moi allowed opposition parties to participate in the elections of 1992. But his rivals split into competing ethnic groups, sapping the strength of their opposition to Moi. With no effective opponents, Moi was reelected with less than 40 percent of the vote. The same ethnic rivalries among his opponents helped Moi to win the 1997 elections.

Moi's presidency has continued to be marked by violence, corruption, and economic decline. He has used his control over the police,



Republic of Kenya

POPULATION:

30,339,770 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

224,960 sq. mi. (582, 646 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English, Swahili (official); Gikuyu, Nandi, Kamba, Luhya, Luo

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Kenya shilling

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Protestant 38%, Roman Catholic 28%, Traditional 26%, Muslim 7%, Other 1%

CITIES:

Nairobi (capital), 2,000,000 (1999 est.); Mombasa, Nakuru, Kitale, Nyeri, Kisumu, Thika, Malindi, Kericho

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 29 in. (750 mm) in the highlands and coastal belt to 20 in. (500 mm) for most of the country.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: U.S. \$1,600

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: tea, coffee, sugarcane, corn, fruit, dairy, vegetables, beef, pork, poultry, eggs
Manufacturing: food and agro-processing, textiles, petroleum processing, cement, plastics
Mining: salt, rubies, gold, limestone, soda ash, garnets
Tourism: Important to the Kenyan economy. Principal attractions are the nature preserves.

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Great Britain, 1963. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing body: 200-member National Assembly (legislative body), 188 elected, 12 appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1963–1978 Prime Minister Jomo Kenyatta (president after 1964)
 1978– President Daniel Toroitich arap Moi

ARMED FORCES:

24,200 (1998 est.)

EDUCATION:

Free and compulsory for ages 6–14; literacy rate 78%

army, and media to shape policy. Although he has promised a more “people sensitive” administration in 1997, he has done little to make it a reality.

ECONOMY

Three quarters of Kenya’s people work in agriculture, which produces about one third of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP)*. The main export crops are coffee and tea. Other crops include sugarcane, flowers, fruit, vegetables, and sisal—a fiber used in making ropes, mats, and baskets. During the colonial era, white landowners used African laborers to produce coffee and tea on large plantations, but today half of Kenya’s coffee is grown on small farms. Coffee is such an important crop in the country that any variation in its world price affects the entire economy.

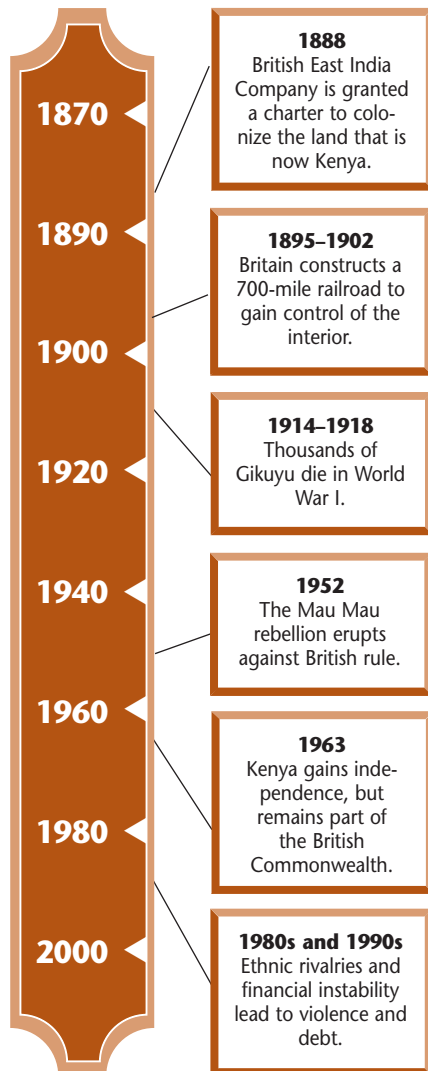
Kenya’s manufacturing industries produce a wide range of products, including textiles, clothing, vehicles, tires, chemicals, steel, minerals, and books. Manufacturing makes up about one fifth of the GDP, but it employs only about 1 percent of the work force. Firms from the United States and Britain control about half of the manufacturing businesses. Kenya’s frequent droughts have hurt its industries, which rely heavily on hydroelectric* power.

The largest portion of the country’s economy is the service industry, which includes trade and tourism. Since the late 1970s, tourism has emerged as a major source of income. Thousands of visitors come each

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

Kenya



* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Kenyatta, Jomo

1888 (or 1889)–1978
President of Kenya

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

year to game preserves such as Masai Mara, along the border with TANZANIA. However, Kenya's government has not succeeded in protecting and managing its wildlife resources, leading to a decline in the animal populations and a drop in tourism. Political unrest and attacks on visitors have also damaged the tourist industry.

PEOPLE AND CULTURES

Kenya contains about 70 different ethnic groups with individual cultures and dialects. Most of its ethnic groups spill over into neighboring nations.

Major Ethnic Groups. The largest ethnic group is the Gikuyu, a farming people who inhabit the south central part of the country between Nairobi and Mount Kenya. The second largest is the Luo, another agricultural society living along the banks of Lake Victoria. Northern Kenya and the Rift Valley are home to nomadic herding groups, such as the Maasai, and agricultural peoples, such as the Nandi. Just inland from the coast live BANTU-speaking farmers such as the Mijikenda and Pokomo; the Swahili trade and fish along the coast.

Kenya's traditional societies were small and organized into clans*. Clan identity was flexible, and people moved freely from one clan to another. In some societies status was based on age. Members of similar age groups went through initiation rituals* and some of them eventually became leaders. Many of the clans had close trade relations. When the British arrived, they disrupted the network of clan relations by creating internal boundaries and restricting freedom of movement. They appointed certain African leaders as chiefs who were responsible for collecting taxes, keeping the peace, and supplying labor to the white settlers.

Modern Kenya has not developed a strong sense of identity as a nation, partly because of the diversity of its ethnic groups and because colonialism widened the gaps between those groups. As a result, Kenyans still identify strongly with their own peoples, and the country's politics has often played out along ethnic lines. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Plantation Systems.*)

Jomo Kenyatta, the most important African leader in colonial KENYA, served as the country's first president after independence. A member of the GIKUYU ethnic group, Kenyatta was born Kamauwa Muigai, and later baptized under the name Johnstone. After leaving the Scottish mission school he attended as a youth, he changed his name to Jomo Kenyatta.

In the late 1920s, Kenyatta became general secretary of the Kikuyu Central Association (KCA), which fought for black rights in Kenya. He traveled to London to present the complaints of indigenous* Kenyans to

Seretse Khama



Jomo Kenyatta, shown here in his ceremonial robes, served as president of Kenya during the early years of independence.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

See color plate 10, vol. 1.

Khama III

ca. 1835–1923
Tswana ruler

Seretse Khama

1921–1980
President of Botswana

* **protectorate** a weak state under the control and protection of a stronger one

the British government. The British authorities never granted him an audience. Kenyatta completed his education at the London School of Economics and worked with other Africans in England to promote the civil rights of blacks around the world.

In 1946 Kenyatta returned to Kenya and soon became the leader of a mainly Gikuyu political party called the Kenya Africa Union (KAU). However, younger, more radical members began taking control of both the KAU and KCA. They created the Central Committee, a secret organization that planned activities without consulting Kenyatta. For example, they secretly required followers to swear an oath to take up arms against the colonial government. In 1952 Kenyatta denounced the movement, which was known as MAU MAU. But the government did not believe his statements against Mau Mau and instead considered him the leader the movement. When Kenyatta was arrested along with some 150 nationalist leaders, his popularity among Kenya's black population grew even stronger.

While Kenyatta spent time in jail, Mau Mau waged a four-year guerrilla* war against the government. More than 12,000 Africans and some 100 Europeans died in the conflict. Eventually, Britain was forced to allow self-rule in Kenya. Kenyatta was released from prison in 1961, and a year later he became prime minister of Kenya. The nation gained its independence in 1963, and when it became a republic in 1964, Kenyatta won election as its first president.

Early on, Kenyatta launched a program to modernize and unify Kenya under the slogan "Harambee," which brought to mind images of harmony and hard work. In 1969 he outlawed opposing political parties, making Kenya a one-party state. He served as the country's president until his death nine years later.] (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.**)

Khama III and Seretse Khama were members of a ruling family of the Sotho-Tswana people that live in the eastern KALAHARI DESERT. In 1872 Khama III became chief of the Ngwato state in what is now BOTSWANA. Thirteen years later, he and several other Tswana chiefs accepted Britain's offer to form a protectorate* over the area. The agreement with Britain allowed the Tswana to continue to govern their territory.

Khama III, who had converted to Christianity many years before, used missionaries and Ngwato Christians to extend his authority throughout the protectorate. In 1895 he traveled to England to ask the British to protect his land from Cecil RHODES, a British adventurer and head of a diamond mining company. Rhodes eventually founded his own state in southern Africa named RHODESIA.

After Khama III's death, his son Tshekedi took over until Khama's grandson, Seretse, was old enough to rule. While studying law in London in the 1940s, Seretse married a white English woman. Both Tshekedi and the British opposed the marriage, and they barred Seretse from ruling or returning to the Ngwato kingdom. However, Ngwato politics became increasingly violent during this period, and Seretse was eventually permitted to return home.



Seretse Khama

In 1962 Seretse helped to found a political party that led Botswana to independence from British rule. He became Botswana's first president in 1966, a position he held until his death in 1980. Seretse brought Botswana limited democracy and improved education and health care. When diamonds were discovered in the 1960s and 1970s, Botswana became one of Africa's most prosperous nations. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Khartoum

Khartoum is the capital and political and industrial center of **SUDAN**. Its strategic location at the meeting point of two rivers, the Blue Nile and White Nile, made it a much-contested prize. In 1821 northern Sudan was conquered by the Ottoman Turks. They established an outpost at nearby Omdurman, and set up a military camp at Khartoum. Three years later the outpost was moved to Khartoum. Situated on the main caravan route to **CAIRO**, it grew quickly.

By 1850 Khartoum was a major city where the Ottoman governor-general had his palace. However, in 1885 the city came under attack. The Islamic leader al-**MAHDI** led a revolt against foreign rule, destroying the city and killing many of its residents, including Sudan's governor-general, Charles George **GORDON**. Then he abandoned Khartoum and established his capital in Omdurman. Thirteen years later British forces led by Lord Horatio Kitchener defeated the Mahdists and rebuilt Khartoum. The city became the capital of Sudan, which was jointly ruled by Britain and **EGYPT** until 1956.

Modern Khartoum has a population of about 2.25 million. It is part of the Three Town area, which includes Omdurman, an Islamic cultural site, and Khartoum North, an industrial area. Still an important trading center, Khartoum is linked by railroad to Egypt and the Red Sea coast. The climate is hot and dry, with temperatures that can reach 117° F. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Islam in Africa.*)

Khoisan

Khoisan is a name often given to the non-**BANTU**-speaking peoples of southern Africa formerly called Bushmen (or San) and Kxoe (or Khoi). The Khoisan do not have a common culture or ethnic background. Instead they share a unique family of languages, which features the use of "clicks." Khoisan peoples have inhabited southern Africa for more than 20,000 years. Rock paintings made by Khoisan artists thousands of years ago are among the oldest artworks in Africa.

The migration of Bantu-speakers from East Africa around **A.D. 500** and the arrival of Europeans in the mid-1600s put pressure on the Khoisan people. Many Khoisan were forced to move into the drier, more remote areas of southern Africa. Some eventually became members of South Africa's Cape Coloured population. Others were killed by white settlers or died of European diseases, such as smallpox. Among the Khoisan groups that survive today are the **!Kung** of eastern **NAMIBIA** and western **BOTSWANA**, the **!Xo** and **Gwi** of the central **KALAHARI DESERT**, and the Nama of Namibia and **SOUTH AFRICA**.

See
color plate 4,
vol. 1.

Kimpa Vita

Scholars once believed that the Khoisan lived only as hunters and gatherers or as sheep and cattle herders. However, the Khoisan have also specialized in agriculture and trade. Today some groups practice a traditional herding lifestyle on reserves in South Africa and Namibia. Most Khoisan have integrated into modern society, although they are often treated poorly by the majority population. (See also **Cape Coloured People, Hunting and Gathering, Livestock Grazing.**)

KIKUYU

See *Gikuyu*

Kimbangu, Simon

ca. 1887–1951
Congolese religious leader

* **fetish** object believed to have magical powers

Simon Kimbangu was born in the Lower Congo (now CONGO, KINSHASA) and raised as a Baptist. Although not a member of the clergy, he began to preach in British missions in 1918. He also experienced a series of spiritual dreams and visions. In an effort to escape them, he moved to the city of Léopoldville (now KINSHASA). But the visions continued.

Three years later Kimbangu returned to his home village and began a healing ministry at a place he called New Jerusalem. He drew huge crowds of followers who were convinced that he possessed miraculous powers. He destroyed the fetishes* associated with traditional African religions and converted large numbers of people to Christianity. While some Baptist leaders accepted his ministry, others were skeptical.

Belgian colonial authorities arrested Kimbangu and sentenced him to death, though he had not committed a crime. In response to a request from the Baptist Missionary Society, Belgium's King Albert I overturned the death sentence. However, Kimbangu remained imprisoned until his death 30 years later and many of his followers were exiled to Upper Congo. Kimbangu's ministry was continued by his sons. In the late 1950s they established the Church of Jesus Christ on Earth Through the Prophet Simon Kimbangu, which is now a member of the World Council of Churches. (See also **Christianity in Africa, Missions and Missionaries, Prophetic Movements, Religion and Ritual.**)

Kimpa Vita

ca. 1686–1706
African religious leader

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Kimpa Vita was a member of the nobility in the west-central African kingdom of KONGO. For a time, she was a *nganga*, a person who performed certain important rituals*. After recovering from an illness, she claimed to have died and returned to life possessed by the spirit of the Christian saint Anthony. Taking the name of Beatrice, she began a religious movement known as Antonianism.

At the time Kongo was engaged in a long civil war. In response to the violence and misery caused by the war, Kimpa Vita urged the people to unite and rebuild their kingdom. In 1705 she moved to the abandoned capital at Mbanza Kongo, and many supporters joined her. The follow-



Kimpa Vita

* **heretic** person whose beliefs are contrary to church doctrine

ing year she was arrested by the Christian king of the Kongo, Pedro IV. Because of her religious views, which differed from church teaching, she was accused of being a heretic* and burned at the stake. (*See also Christianity in Africa, Prophetic Movements, Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession.*)

Kings and Kingship

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **patriarchy** society in which men hold the dominant positions

* **regent** person appointed to rule on behalf of another

Kings have ruled in Africa at least since the time of the pharaohs, the early Egyptian kings who came to power about 3000 B.C. EGYPT's system of royal rule lasted for nearly 3,000 years. Other kingdoms developed in western North Africa and large areas south of the Sahara desert. Some African kings ruled up to 1 million people, as in the YORUBA and Benin kingdoms of Nigeria, the ASANTE kingdom of Ghana, and the ZULU, Sotho, and Swazi kingdoms of southern Africa.

Although the rise of modern nation-states has diminished the power of Africa's monarchs, the institution of kingship still holds meaning for many Africans. Kings remain living symbols of ethnic identity and history. Studies of African kingship by anthropologists* have led to a greater understanding of monarchies everywhere.

Origins and Features of Kingship. Some early scholars of African kingship suggested that sub-Saharan* Africa adopted the idea of monarchy from Egypt. But many others believe that cultures in sub-Saharan Africa invented the concept of kingship on their own. Monarchy may have developed from social systems based on patriarchy*—that is, the authority of African kings may have been modeled on the authority of male heads of households and KINSHIP groups. Most royal rulers have been men, though women have ruled among a few peoples such as the Lovedu of southern Africa. Even where men have ruled, women have held considerable power in their roles as wives and mothers of kings. At times, women have governed as regents* for kings who were too young to rule.

In some cases, outside powers did introduce kingship to African societies. In 204 B.C. the Romans made Masinissa, a North Africa chieftain, king of a region called Numidia. They allowed Masinissa and others to rule Numidia until 46 B.C., when Julius Caesar converted the kingdom into a province of the Roman Empire.

Some African kingdoms have covered large areas and included many people; others have been smaller, with only a few thousand subjects. Yet even the smaller kingdoms have been different from communities governed by chieftains. Kings have had a special role. They have not merely governed. They have embodied the nation, the people, their land, and their history. Their subjects have considered them sacred and viewed the institution of kingship as eternal. Individual kings might die, but the monarchy that upheld the state would continue.

Kingly Symbols and Powers. Africans have thought and spoken of their kings in terms that have reflected their environments and soci-



Kings and Kingship

eties. They have viewed their kings as fathers to their nations or herds- men to the national flock. They have seen them as fierce lions, leopards, or elephants protecting the state and overpowering its enemies. Kings have also been considered providers of rain, sources of fertility, masters of supernatural powers, and in some cases descendants of mysterious or divine conquerors.

Some cultures have associated kingship with powers both positive and negative, embracing all aspects of the universe. Kings have represented danger and destruction as well as fertility, lightning as well as rain, and animal predators as well as livestock. Rituals* and magical medicines have played a significant part in maintaining and expanding kingly powers. Sometimes these special powers have been thought to come to kings when they have taken the throne. In other cases the medicines and rituals have been repeated regularly, often at seasonal occasions such as planting or harvest time.

Kingship and religion have been linked in North Africa since the arrival of the Islamic religion in the A.D. 600s. The Muslim kings, often called caliphs or emirs, presented themselves as the defenders and promoters of the true version of ISLAM. They governed as both the spiritual and political heads of their states. Kings held a similar position in the ancient Christian kingdom of ETHIOPIA.

African kingships have maintained their sense of continuity and immortality through various rituals and symbols. One of the rituals has involved visits to shrines of royal ancestors, often with the offering of sacrifices. Many sub-Saharan kingdoms, including Buganda in eastern Africa, Sakalava in Madagascar, and Lozi in Zambia, have had such shrines. Also important as a symbol of continuity has been a kingdom's royal regalia—the clothing, jewelry, and adornments worn by the king during ceremonies or public appearances. Such regalia might be simple objects such as spears, bead necklaces, and wooden stools. Or it might consist of an immense treasury of sacred objects, such as the golden stool of the Asante or the ornate beaded crowns of the Yoruba rulers. Some royal treasuries have been filled with artworks and beautiful craft objects, many made of precious materials such as gold and ivory. These objects have served as earthly symbols of the king's glory.


Kings have had the responsibility of representing and uniting all social groups within the kingdom—rival clans*, city dwellers and country folk, the living and the dead, the nobles and the commoners, the free people and the slaves. Kings have stood above and apart from all groups, even from the royal relatives. However, kings have rarely pleased everyone and have often made enemies. As a result, they have frequently faced attacks from dissatisfied subjects, power-hungry relatives, and opponents within and outside the kingdom. The violent histories of many kingdoms, such as Zulu, Benin, and Buganda, show how dangerous it could be to be king, and how often a ruler's grip on power has been loosened.

African kings have also faced problems related to kinship, marriage, and succession*. As heads of royal kin groups, they have been expected to give wealth and privileges to their younger kin in return for support

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **succession** determination of person who will inherit the throne



Stolen Symbols of Royalty

The great treasury of the kingdom of Benin in Nigeria once held thousands of brass plaques, ivory and wood carvings, statues, and jewelry, fashioned over many centuries. To the people of Benin, these works were the royal state's connection with its ancient, sacred ancestors. When the British took control of the Benin territory in the 1800s, they looted the royal treasury. Today, many of the most prized royal objects of Benin are displayed in European and American museums as examples of African art.

Kings and Kingship

Prince Galenia, pictured here, comes from a long line of Zulu leaders. Although few African countries have monarchs, traditional rulers still play an important role in many cultures.



and loyalty. If royal relatives have grown too powerful or ambitious, they have sometimes tried to overthrow the king. Rulers have worked to avoid such situations by carefully balancing ties with the kingdom's most powerful clans, often through marriage. Polygyny, the practice of taking multiple wives, has allowed kings to spread such ties across all regions, ethnic groups, and major clans within their realms.

Kings have had two general methods of dealing with the question of succession. Sometimes they have named their heirs or established a system of regular inheritance, in which the throne might go to the oldest son or to the firstborn son of the primary wife. This method has prevented conflict over the succession, but it has also disappointed and angered relatives and kin groups by cutting off their access to the throne. The other method has been to declare no heir and to let clan leaders or others choose a new king from among the many competing royal sons and relatives. This approach has often resulted in conflict and disorder upon the king's death. Fratricide, the murder of brother by brother, has been a common feature of stormy royal politics.

Ambitious royal kin have posed one of the principal dangers to a king. African rulers have used two strategies for surrounding themselves with loyal supporters. Some, like the Ganda and the Zulu, have depended heavily on their mother's relatives, who cannot inherit the throne in patrilineal* kingdoms but can enjoy power and privilege as long as their son rules as king. The other method, used in the kingdom of Benin and Muslim states of western Africa, has been to appoint royal servants or even slaves as court officials or generals. These people, dependent on the king's favor and unable to rule on their own, have generally made loyal and dependable deputies.

* **patrilineal** referring to a society in which property and political power pass through the male side of the family



Kinshasa

Kingship in Modern Africa. Some African kings, such as those of Benin and Buganda, have possessed great power. Some have been tyrants, who undermined the traditional powers of clans and royal officials, even massacring subjects to demonstrate their power. Other kings, such as those of the Shilluk and Anuak of southern Sudan and the Jukun of Nigeria, have held little political power but have been regarded as symbols of religious belief or group identity. They have reigned but have not really ruled.

Only two ruling kings of nations are left in Africa, those of LESOTHO and SWAZILAND. These southern African nations are constitutional monarchies—the kings are the official heads of state, but they follow the country’s laws as set forth in a constitution. People still honor the traditional kings of the Zulu, Asante, Yoruba, and Benin kingdoms. However, their kingdoms are part of other nations today, and the kings serve as symbols of history and ethnic identity but have no real political power. In spite of efforts by the modern nation-states to limit the influence of local ethnic groups, the remaining monarchs of Africa serve as rallying points for the people who identify as their subjects. (See also **Government and Political Systems, History of Africa.**)

Kingsley, Mary Henrietta

1862–1900
British traveler

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

While growing up in London, Mary Kingsley followed her father’s travels around the world with great interest. His adventures and her own reading fueled her desire to explore the globe herself.

After both parents died in 1892, Kingsley decided to travel. In the years between 1893 and 1895 she made two trips to Africa, visiting ANGOLA, the Congo region, NIGERIA, GABON, and CAMEROON. During her journeys she collected biological specimens—chiefly fish and reptiles—for the British Museum. Her most daring adventure took place in Gabon, where she visited the territory of the little-known Fang people, who were reputed to be cannibals.

Kingsley became known in Great Britain as something of an authority on Africa. Her books *Travels in West Africa* (1897) and *West African Studies* (1899) were extremely popular, and she delivered many lectures about her travels and about African culture. Kingsley shocked many people with her criticisms of Christian missionaries in Africa and her defense of African customs such as polygamy*. However, she is now seen as one of the most enlightened and respectful European travelers to explore Africa in the 1800s. She died while nursing prisoners of war in SOUTH AFRICA.

Kinshasa

Located on the CONGO RIVER, Kinshasa is the capital and largest city of the Democratic Republic of CONGO. Stone tools found in the area indicate that the site has been inhabited since the 7000s B.C. When the explorer Henry Morton STANLEY arrived in the region in the 1880s, Kinshasa was a small fishing village. Stanley signed a treaty with the most powerful local chief and claimed the area for Belgium. The colo-



Kinshasa

nial city that grew up on the site was originally named Léopoldville after Belgium's King Leopold II.

Modern Kinshasa is the political and economic center of the country. It has the national university and other educational institutions, the main army headquarters, and one-third of the nation's industry. The city is also the center of Congo's transportation network. Minerals and other raw materials from the interior are shipped to Kinshasa by road, rail, and river.

As Kinshasa's population has grown to more than 5 million, urban problems such as unemployment have worsened. Many areas have no proper sewer system, creating major public health concerns. Nevertheless, Kinshasa's music and vibrant culture have led some to refer to it as an African New Orleans. (*See also Cities and Urbanization.*)



Kinship

Kinship is the web of relationships woven by family and marriage. Traditional relations of kinship have affected the lives of African people and ethnic groups by determining what land they could farm, whom they could marry, and their status in their communities. Although different cultures have recognized various kinds of kinship, traditional kinship generally means much more than blood ties of a family or household. It includes a network of responsibilities, privileges, and support in which individuals and families are expected to fill certain roles. In modern Africa social and economic changes have begun to loosen the ties of traditional kinship, especially in the cities. But these ties still play a large part in the everyday lives of many Africans.

Kinship and Descent. Kinship is often based on relationships of descent in which kin groups define themselves as descendants of shared ancestors. In one type of descent group—the lineage—all members know, or believe they know, their exact relationships to one another. The clan, another type of group, is larger than a lineage. Members recognize that they are all part of the group but do not know how they are related to each other. They may, for example, believe that they share a common ancestor but be unable to trace all the links from their own lineages to that ancestor. Anthropologists* who study kinship have identified four major types of descent: patrilineal, matrilineal, double, and bilateral. Africa includes all of them.

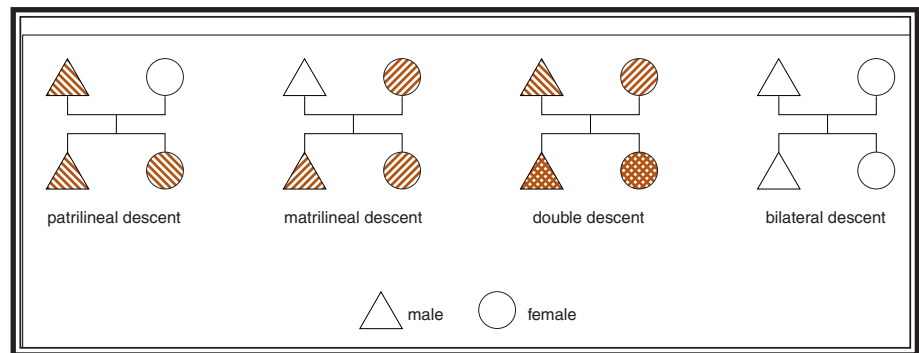
Patrilineal descent emphasizes the male side of the family, tracing relationships through the generations from fathers to their children. Patrilineal descent is common among pastoral* societies. Because Islam* arose among pastoral people in Arabia in the A.D. 600s, Islamic law tends to reflect patrilineal practices. For example, male children are favored over females in inheriting a father's property. This and other aspects of patrilineal social organization can be found among the ARABS, BERBERS, and other Islamic peoples of North Africa. Many other pastoral groups, including the Nuer of SUDAN and the ZULU and Swazi of southern Africa, are patrilineal.

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

* **pastoral** related to or dependent on livestock herding

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

FIGURE 1. Four basic descent systems.



Matrilineal descent, which traces lineage through mothers, exists in many African societies based on farming, especially in central Africa. Among the Bemba people of ZAMBIA, mothers own the fields and pass them on to their daughters.

Societies with matrilineal social organization are not necessarily ruled by women. Some peoples who trace descent through women give political authority to men. In certain cultures men traditionally go to live with their mothers' brothers, while women move to their husbands' villages. Thus the men remain together, while the women through whom they trace descent are spread among the population. Because the men generally remain in the community, they have greater authority.

A fairly rare form of kinship is double descent. In double-descent systems, every individual belongs to the patrilineal group of the father and the matrilineal group of the mother. Rights, obligations, and inheritance are split between the two groups. Double descent exists in western and southern Africa among such peoples as the Yako of NIGERIA and the HERERO of NAMIBIA and BOTSWANA. Among the Herero, daughters inherit ordinary cattle from their mothers, but sons inherit certain sacred cattle from their fathers.

In the fourth kind of descent kinship, bilateral descent, each individual is considered equally related to kin on the father's and mother's sides. This system occurs more frequently in other parts of the world than in Africa. But bilateral kin groups do exist among some African peoples who live on hunting and gathering. Membership in such groups is flexible. People can identify with either parent's local groups or with other relatives by marriage.

In hunter-gatherer groups with bilateral descent, kinship can extend throughout all of society because everyone is classified as some sort of kin. The !Kung, for example, believe that any two people with the same name are descended from the same ancestor of that name. If a person's sister shares a name with another woman, the !Kung consider them sisters. This means that a man cannot have a sexual relationship with someone who shares his sister's name because that woman would also be his sister, and sexual relations between siblings are forbidden.

Features of African Kinship. One feature of social life in Africa's patrilineal societies is the close relationship between a man and his sis-



Kinship

Preserving Names

Among the Bedouin who travel through North Africa, the name of a man or woman includes his or her personal name, the father's name, and the father's father's name. Married women are known by their father's family names, not by the family names of their husbands. A household, or bayt, is known by the name of its oldest male. Most Bedouin also belong to descent groups larger than the bayt, such as lineages and tribes, and many of them know the names of their father's male ancestors for five generations and the relationships among their descendants.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

ter's son—his nephew. Anthropologists call this relationship the avunculate, and in African cultures it may require the uncle to give his best cattle to his nephew or to accept teasing from the nephew. A brother might also be expected to support his sister's children or to participate in the rituals* that mark the stages of their lives. In southern Africa, where the avunculate is common, a boy's uncle on his mother's side may be called his "male mother" in recognition of this special link. In some groups the opposite relationship occurs, with a boy's father's sister—his aunt—seen as an authority figure called the "female father." The Tsonga (Thonga) of Mozambique and the Nama of Namibia are some of the best examples of groups that practice the avunculate, although neither group follows the custom as closely as it did in the past.

Kinship and marriage are closely linked in several ways. On one level, kinship rules may determine marriage partners. In this respect, North African and sub-Saharan* societies differ widely. North African peoples encourage marriage within a group, often a kinship group. Traditionally, the ideal marriage is between cousins, including the children of two brothers. Among the Bedouin, for example, a boy has the right to marry his father's brother's daughter. Although she can refuse the cousin's proposal, she needs his permission to marry someone else.

Most lineage groups in sub-Saharan Africa, in contrast, favor marriage outside the group. As a result, kinship is not limited strictly to lineage. An individual has important ties with two different kin groups, the mother's and the father's. Such ties often extend outside the village or community, offering certain advantages. If a community suffers from drought, war, disease, food shortages, or other disasters, for example, its members may go to live with kin in other areas.

Marriage and kinship are also linked by customs governing the transfer of property between and within kin groups. The most common form of such transfer in Africa is called bridewealth. This is a gift from the groom or his family to the bride's family, often in livestock but sometimes in money or other forms of wealth. Some hunter-gatherer societies follow the custom of bride service, which involves the groom moving to the home of his wife's family and hunting or working for his parents-in-law.

Traditional African kinship is a cooperative relationship between household members and members of the larger lineage group. It involves a set of social obligations and expectations that ensures that no one faces tragedy alone. In societies without welfare services provided by a central government, kinship provides a "safety net" for individuals—orphans, widows, the elderly, the disabled, and divorced women—who lack an immediate household to care for them. Although kinship relations have grown weaker—especially in the cities—they continue to serve this function. For example, African kinfolk may support women and children while their husbands are away, perhaps by helping pay school fees or other expenses. Extended ties of kinship remain a vital part of life in contemporary Africa. (See also **Family, Marriage Systems**.)



Kongo

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

Kongo was the name of a west-central African kingdom that emerged in the late 1400s and eventually became part of the Portuguese colony of ANGOLA. Kongo was initially a federation* of several small states, whose people elected its king. Over time the kings concentrated power and resources in the capital at Mbanza Kongo and established a more centralized government. They appointed leaders to govern the provinces and used a large army based in the capital to maintain order.

The Portuguese arrived in the area in the 1480s. By the mid-1500s Kongo’s rulers had adopted Christianity and many European customs. The capital, rebuilt in stone in 1596, became the seat of power for a Catholic bishop.

After the death of King António I in 1665, civil war erupted in Kongo. The royal family split into three groups, with each of the three establishing a base in a different part of the country. The civil war was a fierce one that wiped out many of the people who lived in Kongo, as some were killed and many were captured and exported as slaves. King Pedro IV reunited Kongo in the early 1700s, but the kingdom was much weaker than it had been before the war. It no longer exists. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Kourouma, Ahmadou

**1927–
African novelist**

Ahmadou Kourouma, a celebrated writer, is the author of two of the most famous African novels in French. In his work he criticizes postcolonial governments and one-party political systems. He also describes the despair felt by many Africans when independence failed to fulfill their expectations. These themes have appeared in many works written by French-speaking Africans.

Born in IVORY COAST, Kourouma studied accounting in France. In the 1960s he worked for several years in banking and insurance in ALGERIA, CAMEROON, and TOGO. His first novel, *The Suns of Independence*, appeared in 1968. Set in the newly independent nation of “Ebony Coast,” it follows the misfortunes of Fama Doumbouya, an honorable but weak man. Fama becomes the chief of a poor village where he tries unsuccessfully to restore the traditional customs. He is eventually arrested and dies after an encounter with border officials.

Kourouma’s second book, *Monneu: A Novel* (1990), looks at the life of Djigui, the king of Soba. Djigui assumes power just before the French conquer the region. Later, he cooperates with the colonial authorities. When Soba achieves independence, Djigui’s son Béma seizes power. Béma establishes one-party rule and so deceives his people. In addition to their political and social commentary, Kourouma’s novels feature a lively literary style and a unique blending of French and the indigenous* Malinke language. (*See also Literature.*)

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Kruger, Paul

Kruger, Paul

1825–1904

South African political leader

* **imperialism** domination of the political, economic, and cultural life of one country or region by another country

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation in South Africa intended to maintain white control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

* **ideology** set of concepts or opinions of a person or group

Paul Kruger led the Dutch **AFRIKANER REPUBLICS** in their war against British control in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Kruger was born in Cape Colony in what is now **SOUTH AFRICA**. When the British tried to take over the region, his family fled in what became known as the Great Trek—the migration of thousands of Dutch settlers called Afrikaners (or Boers) to eastern South Africa. Kruger's family settled in the region of Transvaal, where he later became a farmer and soldier.

Kruger held several government posts in Transvaal. In 1877, when Britain claimed the Afrikaner Republics of Transvaal and the Orange Free State, he went to London to protest. Kruger had little success, and four years later he led the Afrikaners into war against the British. The fighting won independence for the Afrikaner Republics, known collectively as the South African Republic. Kruger became its first president. Conflict with the British continued, however, and increased when gold was discovered in 1896. Further tensions arose over voting rights for British immigrants who settled in the Afrikaner states. In 1899 fighting resumed in the South African (Boer) War, which the British won in 1902. Kruger was forced to leave Transvaal during the war, and he remained in exile in Europe until his death.

Afrikaners have hailed Kruger as a hero who resisted British imperialism*. However, many others have criticized him because he strongly supported the domination of blacks by whites. In the 1980s South Africa issued gold coins named Kruggerands in his honor. Most countries prohibited the sale of the coins in protest of South Africa's policy of apartheid* and Kruger's racist ideology*. (See also **Southern Africa, History**.)

KUSH, EMPIRE OF

See *Meroë; Nubia*

La Guma, Alex

1925–1985

South African writer

Alex la Guma was a South African writer of mixed race. His novels portray the experiences of nonwhites living under **APARTHEID**, the policy of racial segregation followed in **SOUTH AFRICA** from 1948 to 1994. The son of a well-known trade union leader in **CAPE TOWN**, la Guma became politically active at an early age. When he was 22, he joined the Young Communist League and later became chairman of the South African Coloured People's Organization.

While working as a journalist, la Guma was often harassed and arrested because of his political opinions. In 1962 the government placed him under five-year house arrest and banned his works in South Africa. Four years later he moved to London with his family. In 1969 la Guma won the Afro-Asian Writer's Association's Lotus Prize for Literature, and in 1978 the African National Congress named him its chief Caribbean representative. He served in this position in Havana, Cuba, where he died in 1985.



Labor

La Guma's best known works include *A Walk in the Night* (1962), *And a Threefold Cord* (1964), *The Stone Country* (1967), *In the Fog of the Season's End* (1972), and *Time of the Butcherbird* (1979). Most of these novels feature a central character who decides to take political action after events force him to acknowledge the cruelty and injustice of South African society. Although they describe individual suffering, la Guma's works focus on the need for collective action. (See also **Literature**.)

Labor

- * **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on
- * **capitalism** economic system in which business are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

Africa has a number of different labor systems that reflect an economy in the process of change. Still occupying an important role are the traditional forms of work and division of labor based on subsistence farming*. Industrial capitalism* has brought new forms of labor organization that have transformed Africa—without completely displacing the earlier systems.

AFRICAN LABOR SYSTEMS

Africa is still a largely rural continent, and the great majority of Africans work in agriculture. Although wage labor—working for pay—is increasingly common, it is limited mainly to urban centers and to regions of SOUTH AFRICA. African agriculture is based primarily on small family farms that grow crops both for personal consumption and for sale to markets. However, agricultural work is highly seasonal. In certain periods it requires intensive labor from many people; at other times there is not enough work to keep everyone employed. For this reason rural dwellers must frequently supplement their farm income with nonfarm wage labor. This often means traveling to urban or industrial centers that are far from home.

Many Africans are landless and have no control over agricultural production or farm labor. They must find employment as migrant workers or as wage laborers in agriculture or industry. Along with farmers looking for seasonal nonfarm employment, the landless form a large and floating pool of labor in most African nations. Many mines, factories, and farms of all sizes rely heavily on this floating pool. Despite its economic importance, though, wage labor in Africa suffers from low pay, poor working conditions, and lack of job security.

LABOR MIGRATION

Labor migration, the movement of people to work, has long been a feature of African society. Before the colonial era, rulers often rounded up large groups of laborers to work in gold and salt mines or to build fortresses or other defensive works. People were usually forced to provide such labor, and seasonal migration for agricultural work was also common.

When European nations colonized Africa, they sought to use the indigenous* workforce as a ready source of cheap labor. Colonial policies were designed to ensure that African labor was available to the state for mines and plantations and to white settlers for agricultural and domestic help.

- * **indigenous** native to a certain place



Labor

* **sharecropper** person who works the land for an owner in exchange for equipment, seeds, and a share of the crop

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **indentured labor** form of labor in which a worker is bound into service for a set time to repay a debt

African workers preferred to avoid wage labor and to pursue the commercial opportunities that came with colonization. Those who lived near mines often made money by providing mine owners and workers with food, fuelwood, and transportation. Those near plantations frequently became sharecroppers* or raised cash crops*.

Unable to rely on these local workers, colonial enterprises often had to recruit wage laborers from rural areas where employment opportunities were scarce or working conditions and wages were poor. Colonial authorities frequently used local chiefs for recruiting workers, though private recruiters and state agencies also performed this task.

When volunteer labor could not be found, Africans might be forced into service. Slave labor was still used on colonial plantations until after World War I, and workers in some colonies had to work in mines and serve in the army up until World War II. In some cases labor shortages prompted colonial officials to establish systems of indentured labor*, bringing workers from India, China, and other foreign countries.

Recruiting labor from distant areas gave certain advantages to employers, who could lie about wages and working conditions or change the terms of labor contracts once the worker arrived at the site. Mine workers were often housed in compounds near the mines, where food and shelter were inadequate and sickness and death were not uncommon.

For many migrant wage laborers, periods of employment alternated with long stretches of unemployment, during which workers returned to their farms and homes. This system remained in place because it served the needs of Africans as well as those of European employers. African workers wanted to maintain ties to rural homelands and claims to land, so they rarely moved permanently to a distant work site. In any event, colonial authorities seldom wanted the wives and families of workers to move to industrial centers, and blacks were generally discouraged from settling in the cities.

By the mid-1900s colonial policies regarding migrant labor were changing. In the 1940s, for example, copper mines in present-day ZAMBIA began to encourage workers' families to settle near mine sites. Various other colonies adopted similar policies to stabilize the workforce. South Africa, on the other hand, continued its policy of long-distance recruitment and controlled black workers with laws restricting their movement within the country. Since APARTHEID ended in the 1990s, more migrant workers are applying directly to work in South African mines instead of being recruited. Labor migration to these mines continues because it provides jobs for workers who might not find employment otherwise.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

Farming in Africa still requires a great deal of labor. The vast majority of African farmers are too poor to afford mechanized farm equipment, and their plots of land are too small for its use. Draft* animals cannot be used in large areas of Africa because of the presence of the tsetse fly, which carries a virus that can kill livestock. Thus fields are hoed by hand instead of plowed, and tasks such as clearing land, weeding, and har-

* **draft** used for pulling loads

Forced Labor

European colonial authorities used many strategies to force Africans to work for the state or white settlers. In some cases, men were asked to “volunteer” for work in the presence of armed recruiting agents, who whipped those who were unwilling or threatened to burn grain supplies. Private labor recruiters sometimes kidnapped African women and refused to release them until they had signed work contracts. Some agencies persuaded the government to issue travel passes only to those who signed work contracts. Other ways of recruiting forced labor included requiring African chiefs to supply workers or imposing taxes to be paid in cash, thus forcing Africans to take wage-paying jobs.

vesting crops are done manually. Because of the importance of labor in agriculture, determining who performs what tasks and when is crucial for success.

Division of Labor. The heads of families are generally responsible for assigning people to different jobs. Gender and age are important factors in the customary division of labor. Men typically perform heavy jobs such as clearing brush, while women weed and harvest crops. Social and cultural factors may affect patterns of gender-based labor. For example, cash crops or new farm technologies introduced to a household are usually handled by senior men.

Traditional roles are sometimes modified to accommodate changes in the family. When members of the household are sick or injured, the assignment of tasks may change. If distant kin join a household, responsibilities may be rearranged. Death or the departure of a family member also affects labor patterns. For example, able-bodied men often work at jobs that take them away from their families for varying periods of time. Their absence shifts more responsibility for food production to women, children, and the elderly.

The introduction of cash crops during the 1800s added a new dimension to farm labor in Africa. Growing both food crops and cash crops required additional labor. This meant either working longer hours or hiring outside workers. Cash crops also undermined the social structure of rural Africa by creating divisions in households. Younger men often wanted to grow cash crops to earn money to buy manufactured goods. However, senior men traditionally controlled these crops. Many younger workers thus set up their own farms, which reduced the output of the family farms they left behind.

As a cash-based economy developed in Africa in the late 1800s, traditional heads of households found it increasingly difficult to provide for those in their care. Through their control of farm resources, elders had once been responsible for providing food, tools, bridewealth*, and tribute*. As money became increasingly important, young men found that they could, and often had to, acquire such items themselves. This situation affected the system of obligation between generations that was the basis of the traditional household. Elders lost a great deal of authority as well as the ability to control the labor needed to support the household.

Alternate Forms of Agricultural Labor. Households suffering from a labor shortage occasionally make use of communal labor, large work groups that provide labor in exchange for food and drink. However, many people cannot afford to feed all the workers. In some cases labor is exchanged for a promise to return the favor at a later date. The use of communal work groups has declined in recent years, and those who participate often demand cash payment or contracts to perform specific tasks. Today, large communal work groups are used mostly by commercial farmers.

Two other agricultural labor arrangements are the share contract and contract farming. Under a share contract, a person agrees to perform farm labor in exchange for food, shelter, and a piece of land of his own to work. This system relieves farmers of the need to pay wages and

* **bridewealth** property paid by a groom's family to that of his future wife

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

Labor



An increasing number of Africans work in factories and workshops today. These Mauritians are weaving a rug on a loom.

allows them to employ help at crucial times during the growing season. Workers may also receive payment in the form of a percentage of the total crop, which they may then sell or use as they see fit.

In contract farming a central export or food processing authority signs contracts with farmers, who agree to provide certain crops at set prices. The authority, often controlled by the government, also specifies the methods of production the farmers must use to grow the crops. Although contract farming involves guaranteed payments, it reduces the ability of farmers to negotiate prices for their product in the open market.

INDUSTRIAL, INFORMAL, AND DOMESTIC LABOR

Although African mining and manufacturing rely heavily on migrant labor, several important changes have taken place in recent years. One change has been a decrease in irregular employment periods, with mine owners demanding that workers not return to rural homelands as frequently. Employee turnover rates have also fallen, while the number of those who choose mining as a permanent career has increased.

The compound system, in which migrant workers live together in company housing at a work site without their families, has undergone

Striking Back

African workers had a number of ways of resisting forced labor for European settlers. Strikes were one strategy, but they often met with a violent response from colonial authorities. Migrant workers also traded information about wages and working conditions at various places of employment and tried to avoid those with the worst records. Some miners forged their bosses' signatures on work tickets that indicated they had worked a full shift and were entitled to food rations. Miners in Lesotho in the 1870s even used their wages to buy guns to defend their lands from seizure by the very people for whom they were working.

* **apprentice** person being trained in a craft or profession

some change as well. Some mining companies have begun to offer housing schemes to workers, building houses for them and their families near mines but away from the compounds, which often have high levels of violence. Such housing is still very limited, however. Some miners have brought their families to live in squatter camps or settlements where they can earn money through peddling, domestic work, or other forms of short-term employment.

Many Africans today work in the informal economy—making and selling crafts, clothes, tools, or other items, or providing services such as transportation or recycling metal. Most of these activities involve a business owner, one or two apprentices*, and perhaps a few wage laborers. Apprentices are usually recruited from family, friends, neighbors, and customers. Although the terms and conditions of employment are irregular and wages are low, the informal sector is vital to the survival of many African households, especially in urban areas.

Domestic labor is also an important source of entry-level employment for many Africans. In the early years of the colonial period, poor white European women and black African men performed domestic service for white settlers. However, concerns about the mixing of races in such situations led to the replacement of white women with Africans.

Today, domestic service continues to employ African men and women as well as African youth of both sexes. Now, however, employers may be black or white. Wages for domestic service are low, and those who have other opportunities tend to leave as soon as they can. A number of labor unions have arisen in recent years to represent domestic workers, but the prospects for improving working conditions or wages seems poor. (*See also Agriculture; Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Economic History; Gender Roles and Sexuality; Minerals and Mining; Peasantry and Land Settlement; Plantation Systems; Slavery; Unions and Trade Associations.*)

Lagos

Lagos is the chief port and former capital city of NIGERIA. Founded by the YORUBA people in the 1400s, Lagos developed into a large regional trading post. By the 1790s it had become a major center of the Atlantic SLAVE TRADE. The British navy bombarded Lagos in 1851, and ten years later Britain gained control over the city through a treaty. Lagos attracted European settlers as well as Christian refugees from surrounding countries. It also became a haven for escaped slaves. In 1914 Lagos became the capital of Nigeria.

After independence Nigeria's rulers placed limits on the physical expansion of the city. However, its population continued to grow, leading to the development of slums and squatter settlements. Although Nigeria's capital was moved to Abuja in 1991, Lagos remains the country's most important commercial and industrial center. It still has much of the traditional culture, including long-established markets where dyed cloth, herbs, and local leather goods are sold. The city also has traditional chiefs and a king, though these individuals no longer exercise much political power.

Land Ownership

Land Ownership

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **tenant farmer** person who rents the land he or she farms and receives a share of the produce or cash

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

In modern Africa conflicting views about land ownership cause legal, political, and economic problems. Traditional African ideas concerning the use, inheritance, and disposal of land differ sharply from those of Western nations. During the colonial era, European powers usually imposed their own ideas about ownership on their African territories, often ignoring indigenous* practices. The resulting confusion about land use and ownership has had serious consequences for African nations.

Systems of Land Ownership. The precolonial* system of land ownership in Africa was, in general, communal rather than individual. Most goods were produced for use by the group and not for sale. For this reason it was important for all members of the society to have access to the land, and different groups could hold different rights to a single plot of land. For example, a chief might claim political rights over a district. At the same time, a local priest might have the right to perform rituals* there, while farmers and herders might exercise the right to plant crops or graze livestock on the land.

By contrast, the system of land ownership brought to Africa by the European powers was based on the idea of land as personal property. Under this system individuals possess exclusive control over land, and landowners have the absolute right to use and dispose of their land. This view of land ownership is part of capitalism*.

Impact of Colonialism. During the colonial era, Europeans believed that private ownership of land was necessary to bring about modernization and development in Africa. They considered any land that was not permanently occupied or exploited* to be available for European settlement or seizure. Areas that had once served as seasonal pastureland, reserves for hunting or gathering, or the inheritance of a particular family group were given to European settlers.

The seizure of communal lands disrupted traditional economies. Many farmers and herders were forced to work as tenant farmers* or laborers on land taken by Europeans. Others moved to less desirable plots or went to the cities to look for work.

Postcolonial Policies. After independence much of the property held by Europeans was abandoned or seized by the government. This often led to confusion about who had the right to use the land. A common solution was for the state to nationalize* the property, divide it up, and distribute it to new owners. However, these programs often split the land into plots too small to support their owners, and many small farmers ended up selling out to larger ones. In some instances government leaders gave state-owned land to relatives or political supporters. No matter how the land was distributed, the meaning of “ownership” remained unclear. Some people continued to follow indigenous traditions of land use, while others followed the European pattern.

Modern Africa faces a situation in which several forms of land ownership exist side-by-side. However, in most countries the law is only slowly changing to define land rights. Policies relating to land owner-



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ship remain a confusing mix of traditional and capitalist approaches. In recent years African policy makers have studied ways to work with these different systems to provide greater access to land for those who need it while still protecting the rights of private property owners. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Development, Economic and Social, Economic History, Laws and Legal Systems, Peasantry and Land Settlement.**)

Languages

* **linguistic** relating to the study of languages

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

With more than 1,500 different languages, Africa boasts greater linguistic* variety than any other continent. The tremendous range includes major languages such as Swahili and Hausa, spoken by millions of people, and minor languages such as Hazda, which have fewer than a thousand speakers. The linguistic situation is constantly changing. While many of the continent’s major languages are rapidly expanding, smaller languages are disappearing.

The choice of language is shaped by a variety of factors. As a result of the years of European colonization, many Africans speak English, French, or Portuguese in addition to their indigenous* languages. Centuries of Arab influence in North Africa have led to the widespread use of Arabic in that region. In fact, most African countries have adopted Arabic or one or more European languages as their official language.

CLASSIFICATION OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES

Most scholars today have adopted a system of classification of African languages that was established in the mid-1900s. Under this scheme African languages are divided into four major groups: Afroasiatic, Niger-Congo (also called Niger-Kordofanian), Nilo-Saharan, and Khoisan. In addition to these four groups, the continent contains a variety of creole* and pidgin* languages that have developed from the interactions between African and European languages.

* **creole** language developed from a mixture of two or more languages

* **pidgin** simple language with no native speakers and limited usage

Afroasiatic Languages. The Afroasiatic languages consist of about 230 modern and a dozen dead (no longer spoken) languages that originated in northern and eastern Africa and in western Asia. They are divided into five major language families: Ancient Egyptian (a dead language), Berber, Semitic, Chadic, and Cushitic. Some linguists* include a sixth family, Omotic, in the Afroasiatic group. The number of people who speak a particular language within these five linguistic families ranges from a few hundred to millions.

* **linguist** person who studies languages

The Semitic language group, which includes Arabic, boasts the greatest number of speakers. Modern Arabic alone is used by more than 160 million people in North Africa, northeastern Africa, parts of northwestern Africa, and southwest Asia. The Chadic family, named after its place of origin near Lake Chad, contains about 150 languages. Hausa, with about 40 million speakers throughout western Africa, is the most widespread language in this group. The Cushitic language family of eastern Africa can be found from **SUDAN** in the north to **TANZANIA** in the south.



Languages



Spreading the Word

English missionaries took the lead in promoting literacy in Africa. To spread the message of Christianity, they developed the first written versions of many African languages. As a result, spelling and grammar in local languages became widely standardized in British colonies, and in time African-language literature developed. The impact of colonial missionaries on literacy in Africa can still be seen. Much of the continent's modern publishing began with religious printing presses, and in some countries missionary printers remain a major source of local African language publications.

North Africa is home to the Berber languages. *Berber*, an Arabic word, came from the Greek *barbaros*, which originally referred to someone speaking a language other than ancient Greek. This is also the root of the English word *barbarian*.

Niger-Congo Languages. Most branches of the Niger-Congo languages are found in western Africa, considered the homeland of this major language group. However, Kordofanian, one of these language branches, exists only in Sudan. Some scholars believe that Kordofanian speakers migrated to that region from western Africa. Others, however, consider Niger-Congo languages to be part of the Nilo-Saharan group. If that is true, then Sudan may be the homeland of Kordofanian, and other Niger-Congo languages may have migrated to West Africa from there. The Mande, Gur, and Ubangi languages of this group are each spoken by at least 3 million people. Ffulde, the language ranging over the widest area, is found throughout western, central, and eastern Africa.

Bantu, a special subgroup of the Niger-Congo languages, was long considered a separate language family. The BANTU languages are the most widespread of any linguistic group in Africa. Bantu speakers—more than 200 million—can be found throughout Africa south of an imaginary line that runs roughly from CAMEROON in the west to KENYA in the east. The large number of Bantu speakers is matched by the number of Bantu languages: estimates vary from more than 300 to nearly 700. Scholars disagree as to whether these are all distinct languages or whether many are simply dialects of major Bantu tongues. Swahili has the largest number of speakers of any single Bantu language, but Gikuyu, Zulu, and Xhosa also claim millions of speakers.

Most scholars trace the origin of Bantu, some 2,000 or 3,000 years ago, to an area around present-day NIGERIA and Cameroon. From there, Bantu-speakers migrated east and south. A second migration, along the western coast of Africa, took place later. As a result of these various migrations, some Bantu languages have many similarities, while others are quite different from each other.

Most countries where Bantu is spoken contain dozens of different Bantu languages and dialects. This had made it difficult for government officials, educators, and others to choose a common language in which to conduct business and other activities. East African countries use Swahili for such purposes. However, in most other places where Bantu languages dominate, the language of the former European colonial power serves as the official means of communication. Meanwhile, the local Bantu tongues are used in private conversation, in markets, in local primary schools, and sometimes in secondary schools.

Nilo-Saharan Languages. The Nilo-Saharan languages are found mostly in central and eastern Africa, from the Lake Chad area into southern Sudan and Kenya. A western branch of this group, Songhai, is spoken along the Niger River in southern MALI. However, recent studies have shown that Songhai shares features of Niger-Congo and Afroasiatic language and may actually be a creole language. Although some 150



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Nilo-Saharan languages exist, only 3 of them—Kanuri, Luo, and Dinka—are widely spoken. Linguists still debate whether Nilo-Saharan should be a separate group or whether these languages are properly included under the Niger-Congo and Afroasiatic groups.

Khoisan Languages. Khoisan languages are restricted to southern Africa, particularly in present-day NAMIBIA and BOTSWANA. Notable for the use of click sounds, they are sometimes called click languages. The three main Khoisan language groups are the Zhu (Northern), Khoi (Central), and Qwi (Southern). Each group is distinct, and speakers of one group cannot readily understand speakers of another group. Khoisan languages have had a significant impact on the sounds and vocabulary of Bantu languages in southern Africa, and they have themselves been strongly influenced by Bantu and European cultures. The dominance of Bantu languages, English, and Afrikaans (a language developed from Dutch in the 1600s) in southern Africa has led to the decline of the Khoisan languages, and few of them claim more than a few thousand speakers today.

Creole and Pidgin Languages. When two languages come into contact, one typically becomes dominant because more people speak it or because its speakers enjoy a higher social status. This interaction often leads to the development of a creole, a mixture of the two languages. Creole languages are usually based on the vocabulary and grammar of the dominant language, but they include many features of the subordinate* language.

* **subordinate** belonging to a lower rank, class, or position

In Africa most creole languages developed as a result of contact between indigenous languages and nonstandard versions of European languages spoken by colonial settlers. In some cases, however, creole languages appeared where speakers of a dominant African language, such as Swahili, came into contact with speakers of less widespread African languages. This often occurred near colonial trading posts or factories, where Africans who spoke many different language groups came together and needed a common tongue to communicate.

The term *pidgin* was first used in the early 1800s to describe the form of English adopted by Chinese merchants in the city of Canton who conducted business with Europeans. Pidgin languages differ from creoles in that they generally have no native speakers, are used for limited purposes such as trade, and have less complex grammatical structures. Some scholars claim that creoles originally developed from pidgin languages adopted by children who used them as a form of everyday speech. However, historical facts surrounding the development of some creole languages tend to contradict this view.

LANGUAGE CONTACT AND USE

When the same speakers use two or more languages, those languages are said to be in contact. This occurs frequently in Africa because of the many different languages spoken on the continent. Language contact often leads to the replacement of one language by the other, or to one language emerging as the dominant form of communication.

Languages

Widely spoken throughout North Africa, Arabic was introduced to the continent by Muslims from the Middle East in the 600s.

<i>Alphabet Arabe</i>					II <i>Alphabetique ou Occidental</i>	I <i>Alphabetique ou Oriental</i>
<i>Latin</i>	<i>Nom</i>	<i>Formes</i>	<i>Mechanics</i>	<i>Indicatio</i>		
A	<i>Alif</i>	ا ا	ا	ا ا	A	ا ا ا
B	<i>Be</i>	ب ب ب	ب ب ب	ب ب ب	B	ب ب ب
T	<i>Te</i>	ت ت ت	ت ت ت	ت ت ت	G	ت ت ت
Z	<i>Thse</i>	ث ث ث	ث ث ث	ث ث ث	D	ث ث ث
G	<i>Gjin</i>	ج ج ج	ج ج ج	ج ج ج	H	ج ج ج
H	<i>Hka</i>	ح ح ح	ح ح ح	ح ح ح	V	ح ح ح
CH	<i>Cha</i>	خ خ خ	خ خ خ	خ خ خ	Z	خ خ خ
D	<i>Dal</i>	د د د	د د د	د د د	Ch	د د د
DZ	<i>Dhaal</i>	ذ ذ ذ	ذ ذ ذ	ذ ذ ذ	T	ذ ذ ذ
R	<i>Re</i>	ر ر ر	ر ر ر	ر ر ر	i	ر ر ر
Z	<i>Ze</i>	ز ز ز	ز ز ز	ز ز ز	C	ز ز ز
S	<i>Sin</i>	س س س	س س س	س س س	L	س س س
Sj	<i>Sjin</i>	ش ش ش	ش ش ش	ش ش ش	M	ش ش ش
S	<i>Sad</i>	ص ص ص	ص ص ص	ص ص ص	N	ص ص ص
D	<i>Dad</i>	ض ض ض	ض ض ض	ض ض ض	S	ض ض ض
T	<i>Ta</i>	ط ط ط	ط ط ط	ط ط ط	Hh	ط ط ط
D	<i>Da</i>	ظ ظ ظ	ظ ظ ظ	ظ ظ ظ	Ph	ظ ظ ظ
y	<i>Ain</i>	ع ع ع	ع ع ع	ع ع ع	Ts	ع ع ع
G	<i>Gain</i>	غ غ غ	غ غ غ	غ غ غ	K	غ غ غ
PH	<i>Phe</i>	ف ف ف	ف ف ف	ف ف ف	R	ف ف ف
K	<i>Kaf</i>	ق ق ق	ق ق ق	ق ق ق	Sch	ق ق ق
C	<i>Kif</i>	ك ك ك	ك ك ك	ك ك ك	Tz	ك ك ك
L	<i>Lam</i>	ل ل ل	ل ل ل	ل ل ل	Th	ل ل ل
M	<i>Mim</i>	م م م	م م م	م م م	Ch	م م م
N	<i>Nun</i>	ن ن ن	ن ن ن	ن ن ن	Dhs	ن ن ن
W	<i>Vau</i>	و و و	و و و	و و و	Dz	و و و
H	<i>He</i>	ه ه ه	ه ه ه	ه ه ه	Thz	ه ه ه
J	<i>Je</i>	ي ي ي	ي ي ي	ي ي ي	Gch	ي ي ي
L.v	<i>Lamalikif</i>	لا لا لا	لا لا لا	لا لا لا	La	لا لا لا

Language Contact. By examining language contact, linguists can determine how languages have influenced each other. Studies of sounds, grammar, and use of words often show the impact that one language has had on another. Borrowed words may indicate the types of situations in which contact between different groups was most important. For example, Swahili religious and legal terminology contains many words borrowed from Arabic, indicating that contact in these two areas was more intense than in others.

The intensity of language contact often relates to social and economic factors. When language contact occurs, the language with higher social and economic status tends to become a second language for



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speakers of subordinate tongues. Moreover, languages with lower status tend to borrow more from a dominant language, rather than the other way around. In the long run, speakers of a subordinate language may abandon their original language in favor of the dominant tongue. This generally takes place in stages over a period of time. One part of the group or community may abandon the language first, followed by others until the language dies out completely. Such a change from one language to another is called language shift. An example of language shift occurred in East Africa in the late 1800s and early 1900s, when Aasáx speakers adopted the Maasai language, and their own language became extinct.

Language contact does not always lead to the abandonment of one language for another, especially when many more people speak the subordinate language. For example, when the FULANI took over the HAUSA kingdoms of western Africa in the early 1800s, they did not impose their own language but instead adopted Hausa as an official language. This not only made the change in leadership less noticeable, but also allowed the Fulani to use their own language as a secret form of communication. English colonists sometimes followed a similar course. When they found that African languages such as Swahili or Hausa were widely spoken in an area, they often learned those languages and used them to communicate with local peoples. In fact, before leaving Europe for Africa, English colonial officials were encouraged to learn the most important local languages in the areas to which they were assigned.

Language Policies. Language is not only a form of communication, it also serves as a way to transmit social and cultural values. When a country adopts a particular tongue as its official language, it gives an advantage to the people who speak the language. Those who do not speak it have a handicap.

The European powers that colonized Africa established their own languages as the official ones for government business and legal matters. This policy gave European languages a much higher status than indigenous tongues and provided a reason for local peoples to learn them.

The French and Portuguese conducted all business and even basic education in their own languages. Children in missionary schools or government-run schools learned French or Portuguese from the earliest age. Local languages were considered acceptable only for personal communication. In the French colonies, the need to master the French language led to the development of a rather sizable group of African upper classes who spoke French. However, a much smaller percentage of the indigenous population was literate* than in British colonies.

* **literate** able to read and write

The first missionary schools in British colonies used local African languages for instruction. This was motivated largely by the desire of missionaries to train Africans to preach to local peoples, as well as to spread Christian ideas by producing Bible translations in indigenous languages. When the British government took over colonial education, they continued the policy of using African languages in schools. Though English was the official language, African languages were widely used for many purposes, even by colonial officials. For this reason, British colonies had



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many people who learned to read in a local language, but only a small group of Africans who mastered English.

After independence most African nations adopted the language of the former colonial power as their official language. Although only a small percentage of the population spoke that language, it provided a universal means of communication for official purposes. Thus, many African countries have made English, French, or Portuguese their official language.

Some countries use African languages for government business. In Kenya and Tanzania, Swahili has become the official language because it is widely spoken. It is not, however, the primary language of most people in either country. A number of African countries have two or more official languages, which may include a European language and widely spoken African ones.

Language Choice in Writing. Since the colonial period, European languages have also dominated African literature. Two factors are mainly responsible for this. First, many African languages had no written form before colonization, so most Africans learned to write in the language of the colonial power. Second, because African languages are virtually unknown outside Africa, the easiest way for African writers to reach a large audience is by using a major world language such as English or French.

Many African writers have accepted the dominance of European languages in literature, and some have even suggested that African languages are inadequate for literary expression. In recent years, however, a number of noted African authors, including Chinua ACHEBE and NGUGI WA THIONG'O, have begun to reconsider this idea. These authors are now using more African vocabulary or grammar in their works, and some are even writing in local languages. Nevertheless, European languages will probably remain the main ones for African literature in the near future. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Education, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Literacy, Missions and Missionaries, Oral Tradition, Publishing, Writing Systems.*)

Laws and Legal Systems

The laws and legal systems of Africa have developed from three distinct legal traditions: traditional or customary African law, Islamic law, and the legal systems of Western Europe. In many cases European or Islamic legal traditions have replaced or significantly modified traditional African ones. Even so, customary law still exerts a strong influence in some areas of African life.

AFRICAN LEGAL TRADITIONS

Customary law, Islamic law, and Western law spring from very different social and cultural sources, and each has a unique view of the relationship of the individual to society. Disagreements about that relationship are at the heart of many of the differences between the three systems.



Laws and Legal Systems

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Customary Law. “Customary law” refers to indigenous* and almost always unwritten legal rules, procedures, institutions, and ideas. Before colonial times, most African societies were small groups based on KINSHIP. Many communities had no central authority and maintained order without rulers, courts, or other formal legal institutions. Economic and social relations were regulated by customs upheld by social pressure and by family heads or elders. These traditions made up a system of customary law. With thousands of ethnic groups in Africa, there was no universal body of law that was accepted in all, or even in most, places.

Customary law dealt primarily with issues such as marriage and divorce, inheritance, the use of land, and the righting of personal wrongs. Serious problems that threatened the security or order of the group, such as murder or witchcraft, were dealt with as they arose. The remedy or punishment usually depended on the specific conditions of the situation, rather than on a formal set of rules. Indeed, one of the strengths of customary law was its flexibility and willingness to consider unique circumstances before passing judgment.

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization within a government

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Some precolonial* African societies were large kingdoms with powerful leaders and extensive bureaucracies*. However, most people lived in small groups in which local leaders enforced both customary law and any laws proclaimed by the king. In some kingdoms many different authorities existed simultaneously. Kings, heads of clans*, minor chiefs, queen mothers, and other authority figures all had their own courts for settling disputes and enforcing customary laws.

When European colonists brought their written legal systems and traditions to Africa, they did not ban customary law. They rejected only those customs that conflicted with their own system or that they considered offensive to “natural justice, equity, and good conscience.” They left other customary laws in place and allowed traditional authorities to resolve most civil cases involving Africans.

European colonial courts handled most criminal cases, as well as cases involving non-Africans. However, Africans could sometimes choose to have legal issues decided under European law. For example, a will filed by an African under colonial laws might be processed according to European rules of inheritance rather than customary African ones.

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Islamic Law. When Arabs invaded North Africa in the A.D. 600s, they brought Islam* and Islamic law with them. So did Arab merchants, who established trading posts along the coast of eastern African coast. Within a few hundred years Islamic influence had spread to parts of Africa’s SAHEL region, and by the year 1000 it had reached West Africa as well. Islamic culture and law took root in some places, especially in North Africa and the East African coast. In other places it influenced local law to a lesser extent.

Islamic law is known as Shari’a, an Arabic term meaning “the path leading to the water”—in other words, the way to the source of life. The Shari’a was originally based on the Qur’an, the holy book of Islam. Later, the Sunna, a collection of the sayings and conduct of the prophet Muhammad, was incorporated in the Shari’a. Over time, the Qur’an and the Sunna became established as the most reliable and complete sources of Islamic law.



Laws and Legal Systems

From Houses to Elephants

Islamic law in Africa has covered an extremely broad range of subjects in great detail. Between the A.D. 1400s and 1700s, Islamic law had an important role in African city planning and housing design. In urban centers such as Timbuktu and Kano, the law provided specific guidelines on how windows should be placed in buildings, how wide streets should be, and how local markets should be organized.

Islamic law has also addressed modern-day issues not covered by traditional African law. These matters include the use of tobacco and the regulation of trade in ivory, which comes from hunting endangered elephants.

Shari'a governs both public and private life. It is highly detailed in some areas, such as the rules of inheritance. In other areas Shari'a provides only a framework for the analysis of legal issues. Islamic judges use this framework as a basis for creating new laws to handle situations not covered by Shari'a. Early Islamic authorities often took local customs into consideration when writing new laws. As a result, Islamic law developed a common legal tradition with regional differences. These differences are reflected in the various schools of Islamic law that exist in Africa and other parts of the Muslim world.

Unlike African traditional law, Shari'a is a written system of law administered by specialists. It emphasizes the rights or obligations of individuals rather than those of kinship groups in matters such as marriage and property. It provides a system of commercial law that encourages long-distance trade. Shari'a also controls political authority through rules that attempt to prevent the abuse of power.

As European colonial powers expanded into Africa, they encountered Islamic legal institutions in several regions. In some places—such as NIGERIA, SUDAN, and ZANZIBAR—they left Islamic legal systems largely untouched. Elsewhere, European authorities generally gave Islamic law the same status as customary law. They allowed Islamic judges to apply Islamic civil and family law to Muslim residents, but European courts tried criminal cases.

After gaining independence in the mid-1900s, a few African countries considered adopting Islamic law as the common law of the land. Most nations decided against this course, however, because Islamic law often favors Muslims over non-Muslims and men over women. Such principles conflict with the ideals of equal rights, which Africans had been denied under colonialism and had struggled so hard to achieve. Today, many of the Islamic legal systems in Africa deal with religious issues and try civil cases, but the scope of their authority is limited.

Western Law. The legal systems that Europeans introduced into Africa, though similar in many respects, had distinct sources and traditions. French law is based on strictly applied legal codes that do not allow authorities to adjust judgments or sentencing according to individual circumstances. Although modified or updated as needed, these codes always serve as the final word on the law.

English law also relies on certain legal codes, but to a lesser extent than the French system. More important to English law are legal precedents—rulings in earlier cases with similar circumstances. These precedents form the basis for many judicial decisions. English law has developed over time without the need for broad changes in legal codes. Dutch-Roman law, the system of law originally adopted in South Africa, is based on ancient Roman law modified by the rulings of judges.

LAW IN THE COLONIAL PERIOD

European nations followed similar courses in applying their legal systems to the African continent. However, the exact paths they chose varied somewhat, and a colonial power occasionally adopted different methods in its different colonies.



Laws and Legal Systems

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a stronger one

British Africa. English merchants established outposts in West Africa in the form of castles along the coast. At first English law applied only in the territory occupied by the castles themselves. However, the British soon extended their authority to surrounding lands, establishing colonies and protectorates*. Africans living in the colonies were usually subject to English law, while those in protectorates were allowed to follow customary law. Cases involving Europeans were always tried under English law.

The decision to leave most African legal affairs in the hands of Africans was a practical response to the shortage of British legal officials. In places where traditional leaders commanded the respect of local populations, these leaders administered local law under the supervision of British officials. Where no local tradition of central authority existed, the British often set up a chief of their own choosing and gave him the power to enforce customary law for Africans. Colonial officials could change or overturn the decisions of African courts, and Africans were allowed to appeal decisions to higher colonial courts.

The British dealt with Islamic legal systems in their African territories in much the same way. They allowed Islamic courts to decide Muslim civil cases, including marriage, divorce, inheritance, and land rights issues. In some areas, such as ZANZIBAR, British colonial authorities also permitted Islamic courts to handle criminal matters involving Muslims. Non-Muslims were tried under English law.

* **codify** to arrange according to a system; to set down in writing

French Africa. The French, like the British, developed a dual system for Africans and non-Africans. They appointed traditional authorities to deal with matters involving Africans under customary law. In addition, the French tried to record local laws and codify* them so that they could be applied in a consistent manner. These efforts made little headway, though, because of the sheer size of the task, the lack of personnel to accomplish it, and the difficulty of standardizing a body of law that is flexible by nature.

When codified versions of some customary laws were produced, the African laws were altered to reflect French views and legal traditions. These revised versions ignored local standards of conduct and social behavior and so were less effective than the original laws in dealing with local disputes.

Belgian Africa. Belgium's colonial empire in Africa included the areas that are now RWANDA, BURUNDI, and CONGO (KINSHASA). When Belgians took control of the Congo in the late 1800s, they tried to establish a system of centralized, direct rule in which all authority was in the hands of colonial officials. Africans had no involvement in government. However, the Belgians soon abandoned attempts at direct rule because they were unwilling to devote the money and personnel needed for such a system.

The Belgians placed local government in the hands of administrative units headed by Europeans. Each unit consisted of several small governing bodies run by indigenous leaders. These officials had both administrative and judicial power and dealt with matters involving family rela-

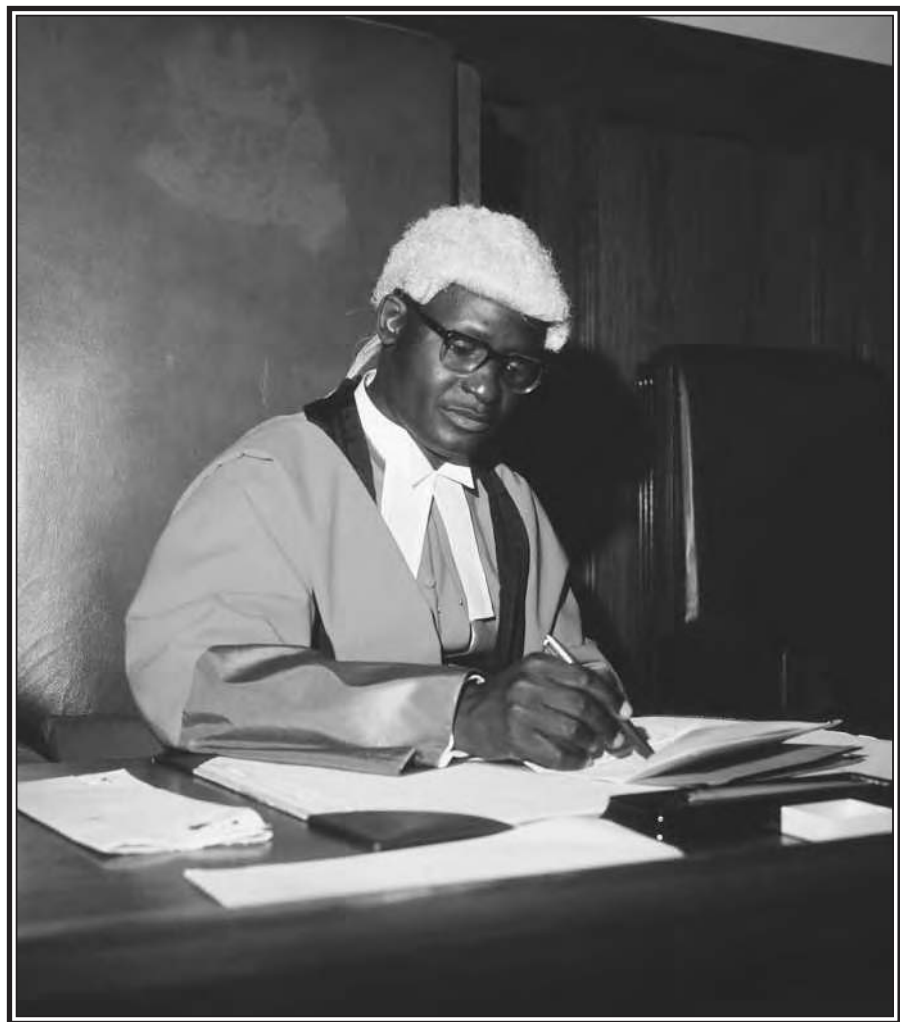
Laws and Legal Systems

tions, property, inheritance, contracts, civil wrongs, and some criminal law. Africans could produce new law only with the approval of Belgian authorities. European officials enforced the laws. The Belgians used the same system when they took control of German East Africa (now Rwanda and Burundi) during World War I.

Portuguese Africa. Portugal introduced a dual legal system in its African colonies, but the separation between European and customary law was greater elsewhere. The French and British allowed Africans to be judged by European law. The Portuguese excluded Africans from the protections of Portuguese law.

From the late 1920s, Portugal denied citizenship to black Africans or the descendants of black Africans. Only Africans who passed a difficult legal test—proving they possessed the same language, professional, and material qualifications as middle-class Portuguese—could become an *assimilado*, or assimilated* citizen. However, the children of *assimilados* could not inherit citizenship from their parents.

* **assimilate** to adopt the beliefs or customs of a society



A Zambian judge, dressed in the style of the British judiciary, at work.



Laws and Legal Systems

Portuguese colonial law, called the *indigenato*, was developed to ensure Portuguese power over Africans. Some matters—such as issues dealing with marriage and control over women or children—were left to customary law and indigenous authorities. Portuguese officials rarely interfered unless a matter threatened the social order. The colonial bureaucracy often resolved disputes involving Europeans and Africans, so that colonial courts addressed only European affairs.

Southern Africa. Dutch settlers introduced Roman-Dutch law into southern Africa in the 1650s. When the British took control of the Cape Colony in 1806, they kept this legal system and applied it to their other colonies and protectorates in the region. English law became an important secondary authority in these areas.

Under the legal system developed by the British in southern Africa, white “native commissioners” were appointed by the state. They presided over special courts that handled both civil and criminal matters involving Africans. Through this system customary law was limited and also modified to serve the needs of the colonial administration and economy.

When SOUTH AFRICA became an independent state, it continued to follow the Dutch and British legal traditions. Then, in the 1940s, South Africa introduced APARTHEID, a system that established racial segregation and excluded black Africans from the legal protection of the state. Apartheid laws prohibited all sorts of social interactions between blacks and whites, including living in the same neighborhoods, attending the same schools, and intermarriage. In the 1970s the South African government created ten “homeland” states, where many blacks were forced to resettle. The government granted some of these states independence, which simply meant that their residents lost South African citizenship and any rights they had as citizens.

LAW IN POSTCOLONIAL AFRICA

When African nations achieved independence in the 1900s, leaders faced the challenge of building legal systems that suited the needs of developing societies as well as of people living traditional lifestyles. Many countries continued to use the Western systems of law established in colonial times, adapting the systems to include some use of African customary law. Several nations, particularly those in North Africa, based their legal systems on Islamic law.

Western and Customary Legal Systems. Most nations in sub-Saharan* Africa have adopted various combinations of English law and African customary law. In ZAMBIA local customary courts decide land and family cases involving Africans. The legal system of GHANA relies heavily on English law—including the use of English precedents—but it uses accepted principles of customary law for dealing with certain matters. In MALAWI traditional courts are part of the main legal system. However, some customary laws have been modified to follow Western laws more closely.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert



Laws and Legal Systems

The influence of other European legal systems has varied. Portugal's former colonies abandoned Portuguese law after independence and sought to establish a legal system that treats all citizens equally. Such efforts have had some success but typically only in urban areas. In many rural areas, people rely entirely on customary law. Many former French colonies, on the other hand, have largely abandoned customary law in favor of French or other Western legal systems.

International political pressure forced South Africa to abandon its apartheid laws in the early 1990s. The nation now recognizes equal rights for all citizens, regardless of race. Customary law has regained authority in many areas. All South African courts can apply indigenous laws to cases involving black or non-black Africans, provided that the laws are not "opposed to the principles of public policy or natural justice."

Islamic Legal Systems. Most countries in North Africa have adopted some form of Islamic law (Shari'a) or use a combination of Islamic and Western law. Because of France's long history in North Africa, French law is more influential in the region than English law. The Egyptian Civil Code is essentially French, but it allows Shari'a as an additional source of law. ALGERIA kept a French-based legal system after independence, but in 1984 it adopted Shari'a as the basis for family law. Both TUNISIA and MOROCCO use a combination of French and Islamic law.

Supporters of Islamic law and of Western law have often clashed in North Africa. LIBYA, which had been an Italian colony, first adopted a legal system similar to EGYPT's. However, in 1969, when Muammar al-QADDAFI took control of the nation, he imposed a very strict version of Islamic law. In the late 1970s and 1980s, other North African nations tried to reverse secular* reforms and adopt more traditional forms of Islamic law. However, people in those countries are demanding greater political reform, a justice system that is free from religious or government interference, and greater guarantee of human rights. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Government and Political Systems, Islam in Africa, Kings and Kingship, Land Ownership, North Africa: History and Cultures, Women in Africa.*)

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

LAYE, CAMARA

See *Camara Laye*

The Land and Its History



Plate 1: Eastern and southern Africa are rich sources of material from prehistoric times. This skull was found at a dig site near Nairobi, Kenya. It belonged to a giant gelada baboon (*Theropithecus oswaldi*) that roamed the earth roughly 500,000 years ago during the Early Stone Age.



Plate 2: The earliest known African paintings were discovered on rocks in southern Africa. Made by the Khoisan people about 20,000 years ago, these rock paintings contain human and animal figures, often in hunting scenes. The rock art shown here is from the Kamberg Nature Reserve in South Africa.



Plate 3: Much of the art that remains from ancient Egypt has been found in the tombs of monarchs. This painted wooden chest came from the tomb of King Tutankhamen, who ruled from about 1332 to 1322 B.C. The chest is adorned with scenes glorifying the king, including this one of Tutankhamen in the form of a sphinx trampling Egypt's enemies.

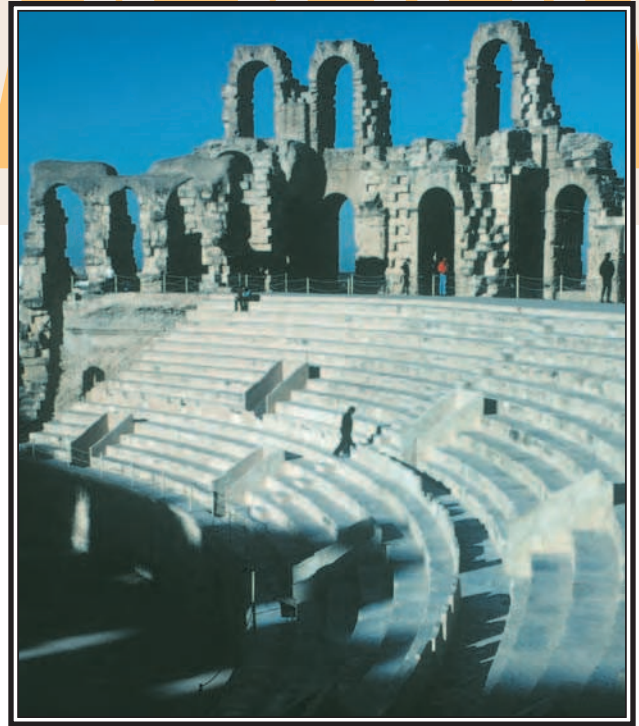


Plate 4: The Romans gained a foothold in Africa in 146 B.C. when they conquered Carthage in what is now Tunisia. During the following centuries, they took over most of North Africa and built many temples, public baths, and theaters in the provinces they established. This Roman amphitheater in El Jem, Tunisia, dates from the A.D. 200s.



Plate 5: Fasiladas, emperor of Ethiopia from 1632 to 1667, founded the city of Gondar and made it the capital of his kingdom. The emperor and his successors built European-style castles and churches with the help of Portuguese workers. This castle from the 1600s remains an imposing structure.



Plate 6: For many centuries caravans have traveled across the Sahara desert loaded with merchandise. Heading north they carried gold, slaves, spices, and ostrich feathers; on the return trip they had weapons, horses, textiles, and paper. This camel caravan hauling blocks of salt from northern Mali follows the age-old trade route to the famous city of Timbuktu.



Plate 7: Gorée Island, off the coast of Senegal, played a key role in the transatlantic slave trade. Many captive Africans passed through this fortified island on their way to the Americas. European powers fought over control of Gorée, which France finally won in 1677.



Plate 8: Muhammad Ahmad ibn Sayyid Abdullah, known as al-Mahdi, launched a rebellion against Egyptian rule in Sudan in 1881. After defeating the Egyptian armies, he and his followers—known as Mahdists—set up a Muslim state. In 1898 a British-Egyptian expedition led by Lord Kitchener captured the capital of the Mahdist state. This print shows a battle of this Sudanese war.



Plate 9: After Nigeria became an independent nation in 1960, it was torn by civil war and oppressed by a series of military takeovers. In 1999 Olusegun Obasanjo (right) won election as president, heading the country's first civilian government in 15 years. The next year he led Nigeria in celebrating 40 years of independence.

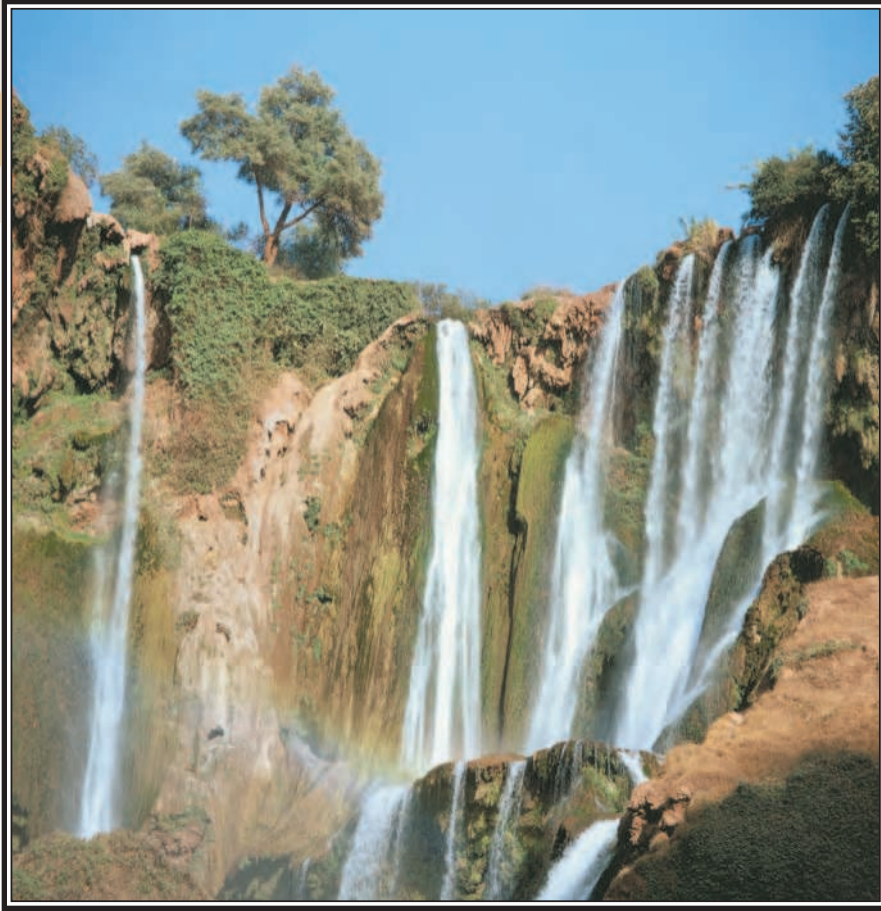


Plate 10: With its sandy beaches, Mediterranean climate, and rich cultural heritage, Morocco draws many tourists. The spectacular Cascades d'Ouzoud in the Middle Atlas mountains are one of the country's most popular attractions.



Plate 11: Madagascar contains an amazing assortment of plant and animal life. Among the island's most distinctive animals are the lemurs, small animals related to monkeys and apes. Most lemurs live in trees and are active at night.



Plate 12: The Seychelles, about a hundred islands off the eastern coast of Africa, contains some idyllic beaches. Although various seafarers explored the islands, the Seychelles remained uninhabited until 1770, when France established a small colony there. Tourism is now the main economic activity in the Seychelles, an independent republic since 1976.



Plate 13: Often covered by clouds that clear at sunset, Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro is considered the most beautiful mountain in Africa. In the foreground, zebras graze in Amboseli National Park in Kenya.



Plate 14: Giraffes crowd around the watering hole in Etosha National Park in Namibia. The world's tallest animal, giraffes can reach a height of 18 feet. To drink water at ground level, they have to spread their front legs far apart or bend them.

Plate 15: Rain is rare in the Sahara desert, and snow is even rarer. Most of the people who live in the Sahara make their homes on oases or the highlands on the fringe. Desert dwellers raise camels, goats, and sheep, and in some oases they also grow gardens and date palms. Shown here is an oasis in Algeria.



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Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

GEOPOLITICAL





Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

John Middleton, Editor

Volume 3
Leakey–Rwanda




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A Time Line of Africa

4 m.y.a.*	<i>Australopithecines (early hominids) live in northern Rift Valley (Ethiopia, Kenya).</i>
2.5 m.y.a.*	<i>Early Stone Age; Homo habilis appears (Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania).</i>
1.5 m.y.a.*– 150,000 B.C.	<i>Homo erectus appears.</i>
240,000– 40,000 B.C.	<i>Middle Stone Age.</i>
80,000– 20,000 B.C.	<i>Late Stone Age.</i>
20,000– 10,000 B.C.	<i>Farming introduced in lower Nile Valley.</i>
10,000– 6000 B.C.	<i>Cattle domesticated in northern Africa. Millet and sorghum grown in western Africa.</i>
6000– 5000 B.C.	<i>Khoisan hunters of southern Africa create rock paintings.</i>
3000 B.C.	<i>King Menes unifies Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt. Agriculture develops in Ethiopian highlands.</i>
2000–1000 B.C.	<i>Horses introduced in Sahara region. Bananas grown in central Africa.</i>
332 B.C.	<i>Greeks occupy Egypt.</i>
200 B.C.	<i>Romans gain control of Carthage.</i>
32 B.C.	<i>Royal city of Meroë flourishes in what is now Sudan.</i>
A.D. 300s	<i>Aksum invades Meroë; Aksum king adopts Coptic Christianity.</i>
530s	<i>Byzantine empire takes Mediterranean ports.</i>
600s	<i>Muslim Arabs invade North Africa.</i>
ca. 1000	<i>Shona begin building Great Zimbabwe.</i>
1200s	<i>Portuguese voyage to northwest coast of Africa. Sundjata Keïta founds Mali kingdom.</i>

*m.y.a. million years ago



1312–1337	<i>Mansa Musa rules Mali and makes pilgrimage to Mecca.</i>
1400s	<i>Benin kingdom flourishes.</i>
1498	<i>Vasco da Gama sails around the southern and eastern coasts of Africa on the way to India.</i>
1505–1510	<i>Portuguese seize Swahili towns in eastern Africa and fortify Mozambique.</i> <i>Kongo king Afonso I converts to Christianity.</i>
1517	<i>Ottoman Turks conquer Egypt and port towns along the Mediterranean.</i>
1578	<i>Moroccans defeat Portuguese, remaining free of colonial control.</i>
1591	<i>Al-Mansur invades Songhai.</i>
1600s	<i>French, English, and Dutch establish trading posts along western coasts to export gold, ivory, and slaves.</i> <i>Akan state emerges.</i>
1650s	<i>Dutch settle at Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa.</i> <i>Arab traders settle on East African coast.</i>
1700s	<i>French and British establish network for slave trade in Central Africa.</i> <i>Zanzibar prospers as Arab trading center.</i>
1721	<i>French colonize Mauritius.</i>
1787	<i>British missionaries found Sierra Leone.</i>
1795	<i>British seize Cape Colony from Dutch.</i>
1798	<i>Napoleon leads French invasion of Egypt.</i>
1805	<i>Muhammad Ali takes power in Egypt, breaking free of Ottoman control.</i>
1807	<i>Britain and the United States abolish slave trade.</i>
1817	<i>Shaka emerges at head of Zulu kingdom in southern Africa.</i>
1821	<i>Freed slaves from the United States settle in what is now Liberia.</i>
1828	<i>Queen Ranavalona takes throne in Madagascar.</i>
1830s	<i>French rule proclaimed in Algeria.</i> <i>Slave trade continues in western Africa.</i>
1835	<i>Dutch settlers in southern Africa head north in “Great Trek.”</i>
1840s–1880s	<i>Slave trade flourishes in East Africa.</i>
1847	<i>Republic of Liberia is established.</i>
1852–1873	<i>David Livingstone explores Central and East Africa.</i>
1858	<i>Portuguese abolish slavery in Central Africa.</i>



1855–1868	<i>Emperor Téwodros rules Ethiopia.</i>
1859–1869	<i>Suez Canal is built.</i>
1869	<i>Diamonds are discovered at Kimberley in northern Cape Colony.</i>
1880–1881	<i>Afrikaners rebel against Britain in the First Anglo-Boer War, and British withdraw from Transvaal in southern Africa.</i>
1885	<i>Mahdist forces capture Khartoum.</i>
1880s–early 1900s	<i>European powers colonize most of Africa (present-day names of countries listed):</i> <i>Belgians in Congo (Kinshasa);</i> <i>British in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland;</i> <i>French in Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Bénin, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar, Réunion, and the Comoro Islands;</i> <i>Germans in Togo, Cameroon, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi;</i> <i>Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique;</i> <i>Spanish in Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea.</i>
1893–1895	<i>Africans in King Leopold’s Congo revolt.</i>
1895	<i>France forms federation of colonies that becomes French West Africa.</i>
1896	<i>Ethiopian emperor Menilek defeats Italians, maintaining country’s independence.</i>
1899–1902	<i>Afrikaners defeated by British in Second Anglo-Boer war.</i>
1910	<i>Union of South Africa formed.</i>
1914–1918	<i>World War I: French and British capture German Togo; Africans fight on the side of various colonial powers in Africa.</i>
1922	<i>Egypt gains its independence.</i>
1930	<i>Haile Selassie I crowned emperor of Ethiopia.</i>
1935	<i>Italians invade Ethiopia.</i>
1936	<i>Union party in South Africa revokes voting rights of blacks.</i>
1939–1945	<i>World War II: many major battles fought in North Africa; Africans in French and British colonies drafted to fight in Europe and Asia.</i>
1940s	<i>First nationalist political parties are formed in western Africa.</i>



- 1944 *William Tubman becomes president of Liberia.*
- 1945 *Arab League, an organization of Arab states, is founded in Cairo.*
Ethiopia regains its independence.
- 1948 *Policy of apartheid introduced in South Africa.*
- 1950s *Several independence movements against colonial rule develop.*
- 1951 *Libya declared an independent monarchy under King Idris I.*
- 1952 *Gamal Abdel Nasser seizes power in Egypt.*
- 1953 *Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) join to form the Central African Federation.*
- 1954 *War breaks out in Algeria.*
- 1956 *Sudan, Morocco, and Tunisia become independent.*
- 1957 *Ghana achieves independence, with Kwame Nkrumah as president.*
- 1958 *Guinea, under Sékou Touré, becomes independent.*
- 1960 *Independence achieved in Cameroon (French Cameroun), Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Dahomey (Bénin), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso).*
- 1961 *Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Tanganyika become independent.*
- 1962 *Independence achieved in Algeria, Burundi, and Uganda.*
- 1963 *Kenya (under Jomo Kenyatta) and Zanzibar become independent.*
Central African Federation ends.
Organization of African Unity is founded.
FRELIMO begins armed struggle for liberation of Mozambique.
- 1964 *In South Africa, Nelson Mandela stands trial and is jailed.*
Tanganyika and Zanzibar join to form Tanzania.
Malawi and Zambia become independent.
Hutu overthrow Tutsi rule in Burundi.
- 1965 *Rhodesia declares independence under Ian Smith.*
Mobutu Sese Seko takes power in Congo (Kinshasa) and renames it Zaire.
King Hassan restores monarchy in Morocco.
The Gambia gains independence.
- 1966 *Independence achieved in Lesotho and Botswana.*



1967–1970	<i>Biafra attempts to secede from Nigeria.</i>
1968	<i>Swaziland becomes independent.</i>
1969	<i>Muammar al-Qaddafi seizes power in Libya.</i>
1970	<i>Egypt/Sudan: Aswan Dam is completed.</i>
1974	<i>Guinea attains independence.</i>
1975	<i>Cape Verde and Angola become independent.</i> <i>FRELIMO government gains independence in Mozambique.</i>
1976	<i>Spain withdraws from Western Sahara; Morocco and Mauritania fight over territory.</i> <i>Residents of Soweto and other South African townships begin violent protests.</i>
1970s–1990s	<i>War erupts across the continent within the countries of Angola, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and Western Sahara, and between the nations of Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, and Sudan and Uganda.</i>
1980	<i>Zimbabwe becomes independent.</i>
1990	<i>Nelson Mandela released from prison.</i> <i>Namibia becomes independent.</i>
1993	<i>Apartheid ends in South Africa.</i> <i>Eritrea gains independence from Ethiopia.</i>
1994	<i>Rwandan and Burundi presidents assassinated; ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi continues.</i> <i>Nelson Mandela becomes first black president of South Africa.</i>
1995	<i>Outbreak of deadly Ebola virus in Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1997	<i>Laurent Kabila takes power in Zaire and renames it Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1999	<i>Libya hands over two suspects in 1986 airplane bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland.</i>
2000	<i>Ghana chooses president John Kufuor in free elections.</i> <i>Paul Kagame is the first Tutsi to become president in Rwanda.</i>
2001	<i>Congo (Kinshasa) leader, Kabila, is assassinated; Kabila's son, Joseph, succeeds him as president.</i>

Lebanese Communities

Leakey Family

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

* **evolution** changes in groups of organisms that occur over time

For two generations, the Leakey family of KENYA has contributed significantly to paleoanthropology—the study of early humans and their ancestors—in Africa. Fossils discovered by the Leakeys helped establish the continent as the site of human origins. Members of the family who participated in this research include Louis S.B. Leakey (1903–1972); his second wife, Mary Douglas Leakey (1913–1996); their son, Richard E.F. Leakey (born 1944); and Richard’s wife, Meave Gillian Leakey (born 1942).

The son of British missionaries stationed in Kenya, Louis Leakey was trained as an archaeologist and anthropologist*. In 1936 he married Mary Douglas Nicol, an archaeologist. They began investigating the history of early humans in Africa, focusing their research on a place called Olduvai Gorge in TANZANIA. At Olduvai, Mary Leakey unearthed the oldest group of stone tools ever found.

In 1959 Mary Leakey discovered the skull of an early hominid, a member of the *Hominidae* family that includes modern humans and their ancestors. Known as *Australopithecus boisei*, it was 1.75 million years old. This find helped to expand scientists’ understanding of human evolution*. A few years later Louis Leakey found the first fossils of another hominid, *Homo habilis*. By writing and lecturing on these and similar discoveries, Louis Leakey aroused wide interest in paleoanthropology and inspired a generation of younger researchers. After Louis’s death, Mary Leakey continued her work. At Laetoli, Tanzania, she discovered fossils of hominid footprints that were about 3.5 million years old.

Richard Leakey’s major contribution to paleoanthropology was his discovery of a site called Koobi Fora in Kenya. It proved to be the world’s richest known source of hominid remains. Together with Meave Leakey, he conducted a series of expeditions there from the late 1960s onward. In 1999 Meave Leakey and a team of researchers discovered the skull of a hominid called *Kenyanthropus platyops* in Kenya. About 3.5 million years old, it provided new information about the history of human ancestry. (See also **Archaeology and Prehistory, Humans, Early.**)

Lebanese Communities

* **entrepreneur** person who organizes, manages, and takes risks of a business venture

West Africa is home to many Lebanese immigrants and their descendants, most of whom are shopkeepers and small business owners. The first Lebanese arrived in the region in the late 1800s, and many of those who came later were following relatives. Lebanese immigration increased sharply between World Wars I and II. Many of the immigrants settled in SENEGAL and other French territories because France ruled Lebanon at the time. For the most part, the early arrivals were Maronite or Greek Orthodox Christians, but after 1920 the majority were Muslims from southern Lebanon. Today IVORY COAST boasts the largest Lebanese community, consisting of perhaps 100,000 people.

Many Lebanese became entrepreneurs* in Africa, buying crops from farmers and selling them to European merchants. After World War II, they expanded into other areas of activity, such as trading in gold and diamonds and importing foreign goods. Wealthier Lebanese invested in firms making building materials, plastics, and cosmetics. Others owned hotels, pharmacies, restaurants, gas stations, and insurance companies. However, most Lebanese businesses are small and family-owned.



Leakey Family

The Lebanese have a complex relationship with African peoples. They often learn the local languages and contribute to local schools and hospitals. Yet many go back to Lebanon, Europe, or the Americas when they retire instead of remaining in Africa. Some Africans resent the Lebanese immigrants' financial success and political influence and their reluctance to integrate or intermarry with local populations. (*See also European Communities, Indian Communities.*)

Lenshina, Alice

1920–1978
**Zambian religious leader
and prophet**

Alice Lenshina was the founder of a **PROPHETIC MOVEMENT** that gathered tens of thousands of followers. In the 1960s she led an uprising against the colonial government in **ZAMBIA**.

Lenshina was born in northern Zambia among the Bemba people. As a young woman, she was preparing to join the Presbyterian Church at the mission center of Lubwa. She failed to complete her religious studies, but she became familiar with the Bible.

Alice married Petros Chintankwa Mulenga and had five children. In 1953, after experiencing several bouts of serious illness, she met with the Reverend Fergus Macpherson at the Lubwa mission. She told him that she had died four times, met with Jesus Christ, and risen from the dead. She said that Jesus had taught her hymns, shown her special religious texts called the Book of Life, and given her certain spiritual powers.

After meeting with Reverend Macpherson, Alice resumed her religious studies. However, she soon left the Presbyterian Church and founded the Lumpa Church, an independent Christian group. She became known as Alice Lenshina, from the Bemba pronunciation of the Latin *regina* (queen). Her fame as a healer and prophet spread rapidly. By 1959 the Lumpa Church had between 50,000 and 100,000 members and nearly 150 congregations, mostly in northern and eastern Zambia.

As Zambia moved toward independence, Lenshina told her followers to withdraw from all secular* activities, a move that angered colonial officials and local chiefs. In 1964 fierce battles raged between Lumpa followers and other Zambians. Over 700 people died before army troops stopped the fighting. Many Lumpa were placed in prison camps and others fled the country. Arrested by the authorities, Lenshina was released in 1975 and kept under house arrest in the city of **LUSAKA** until her death. (*See also Christianity in Africa.*)

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

Leo Africanus

ca. 1485–ca. 1554
Arab geographer

Leo Africanus was an Arab geographer who made numerous journeys in the northern and western regions of Africa and wrote a book about the places he visited. Born in Spain and educated in **MOROCCO**, he traveled extensively throughout North Africa and made three trips to **EGYPT**. South of the Sahara, he visited Gao and **TIMBUKTU** in the Songhai Empire of western Africa.

Leo Africanus



Alice Lenshina, shown here holding an unknown child, was the founder of the Lumpa Church, which had more than 50,000 members. In the 1960s, she led an uprising against the colonial government in Zaire that ended with her arrest.

Around 1520 pirates captured him off the coast of TUNISIA and presented him to Pope Leo X as a slave. The pope freed him and baptized him as a Christian. At the pope's request, Leo Africanus wrote *Description of Africa*, which became an important source of information about this period in African history. The book, which appeared in 1526 (five years after the pope died), has been published in many editions and has been translated into several languages. He remained in Rome most of his life but returned to Tunis before his death. Some people say that Leo Africanus returned to Islam before his death, but that remains uncertain. (See also **Sudanic Empires of Western Africa, Travel and Exploration.**)

Lesotho

Lesotho

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **annex** to take over or add a territory to an existing area

A small, mountainous country in southern Africa, the Kingdom of Lesotho is completely surrounded by SOUTH AFRICA. Before gaining independence in 1966, Lesotho was a British protectorate* known as Basutoland. Today it is dependent on South Africa economically and for access to the outside world.

Lesotho is located in the Drakensberg Mountains at the edge of the southern African plateau. The western part of the country contains a narrow strip of lowlands ranging in elevation from 5,000 to 6,000 feet. The eastern highlands, crossed by a number of rivers, contain peaks of more than 11,000 feet. The climate is generally moderate, with average temperatures between 45°F and 70°F and a rainy season from October to April. Severe droughts occur occasionally.

History and Government. In prehistoric times Lesotho was inhabited by KHOISAN hunter-gatherers. From about the 1500s BANTU PEOPLES began migrating into the area and settled among the Khoisan groups. In the early 1800s, a leader named MOSHOESHOE I united some 22 separate clans* under his authority. When the area was invaded by other groups, including the ZULU, Moshoeshoe successfully repelled them. His followers became known as the Basotho, and their homeland was called Basutoland.

In 1834 a new threat emerged. White settlers of Dutch ancestry, called Afrikaners, began migrating northward from Cape Colony in South Africa and seized land belonging to the Basotho. The Basotho fought the Afrikaners for decades. The conflict intensified in 1854 when the Afrikaners established a new colony, the Orange Free State, west of Basutoland. The Basotho sought protection from the British, who annexed* Basutoland as part of Cape Colony in 1871. Twelve years later Basutoland became a protectorate under British colonial authority. The Basotho chiefs were allowed to continue enforcing traditional laws.

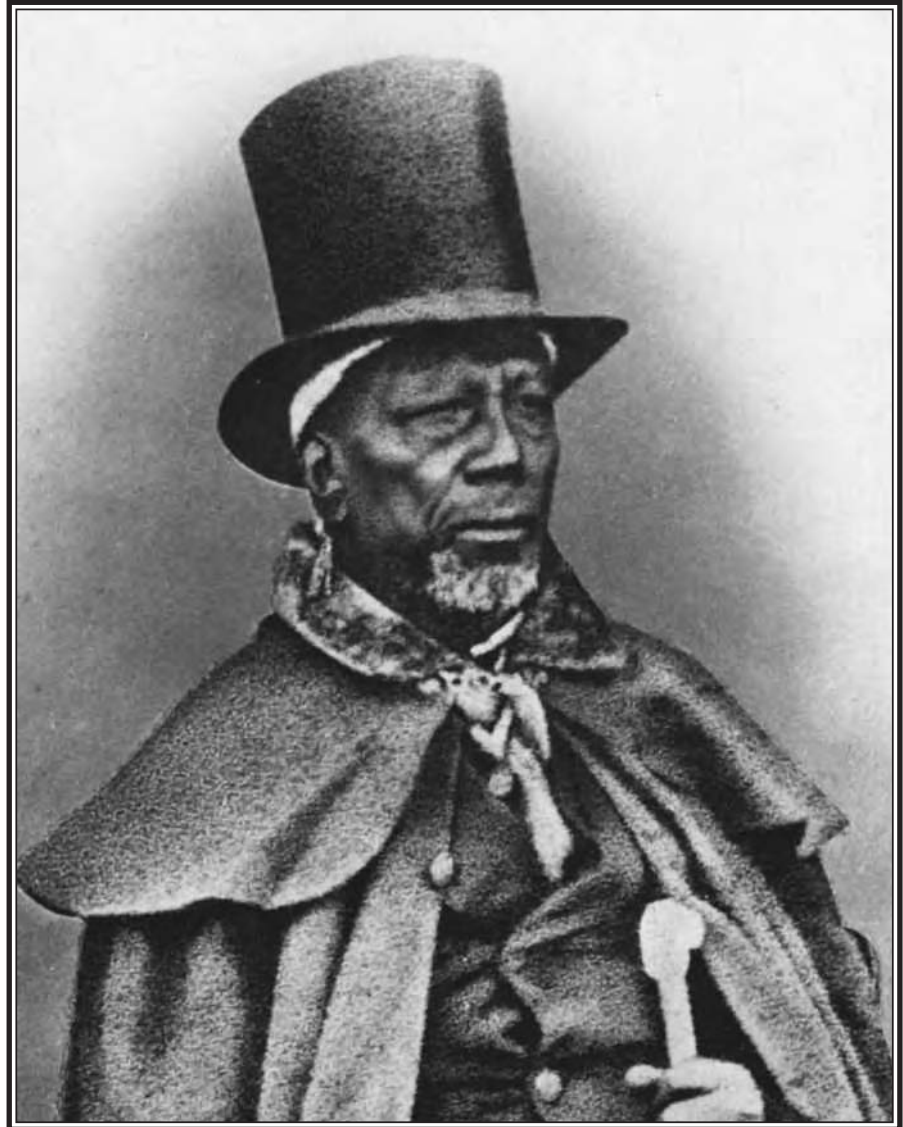
Between the late 1800s and mid-1900s, Basutoland moved slowly toward self-government, which it achieved in 1965. The following year the country gained full independence as the Kingdom of Lesotho. A constitutional monarchy, Lesotho has a king who serves as head of state, an elected assembly, and a prime minister who leads the government.

Since independence, rivalries within Lesotho have caused political instability. In 1966 the king, Moshoeshoe II, demanded greater power and Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan placed him under temporary house arrest. Four years later, when Jonathan faced defeat in the national elections, he declared a state of emergency, suspended the constitution, arrested opposition leaders, and sent the king into exile. Jonathan held power as a dictator until 1986, when he was overthrown by the military under General Justin Lekhanya.

Lekhanya installed a military dictatorship in Lesotho, but by 1990 he faced political unrest. In an effort to win support for his government, he put Moshoeshoe II back on the throne—with limited powers. However, when Moshoeshoe opposed some of Lekhanya's policies, the king was replaced by his son, Letsie III. The following year, Lekhanya was overthrown.

Lesotho

Moshoeshe I (1786–1870) united the Basotho people and established the kingdom that later became Lesotho.



The new head of government, General Elias Ramaema, agreed to hold elections in 1993. This resulted in the restoration of democracy under Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle. However many junior army officers opposed the new government, and fighting soon broke out within the army. During one of the struggles, the deputy prime minister was killed. King Letsie III stepped down in 1995 to allow his father to return as king, but Moshoeshe II died the following year in an automobile accident. Letsie once again took the throne.

* **insurrection** violent uprising against authority; rebellion

Following the election of Pakalitha Mosisili as prime minister in 1998, a wave of protests swept through Lesotho. Fearing an insurrection*, the government asked South Africa and BOTSWANA for assistance. Many businesses and government offices were looted and destroyed in rioting before troops of soldiers were able to restore order.

Lesotho



The Kingdom of Lesotho

POPULATION:

2,143,141 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

11,720 sq. mi. (30,555 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English, Sesotho (both official)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Maloti

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 80%, Traditional 20%

CITIES:

Maseru (capital), 400,200 (1995 est.); Leribe, Mafeteng

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

25 in. (635 mm)

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$2,240 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: livestock, mohair, corn, wheat, sorghum, peas, beans, potatoes, asparagus

Manufacturing: food and beverages, textiles, vehicles, hand-crafts

Mining: diamonds

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Great Britain, 1966. Parliamentary constitutional monarchy. Prime minister elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: two-house parliament.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

Kings:

1966–1990, 1995–1996 King Moshoeshoe II

1990–1995, 1996– King Letsie III (formally Prince Mohato)

Heads of government:

1966–1986 Prime Minister Leabua Jonathan

1986–1991 Military Council chief Major-General Justin Lekhanya

1991–1993 Colonel Elias P. Ramaema

1993–1998 Prime Minister Ntsu Mokhehle

1998– Prime Minister Pakalitha Mosisili

ARMED FORCES:

2,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–13; literacy rate 71%

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food

Economy. Lesotho is a poor country with few natural resources. Although the economy is based primarily on farming and raising livestock, only about 10 percent of the land is suitable for agriculture. The main crops are corn, sorghum*, wheat, and beans. Unable to produce enough to support the population, Lesotho imports about 25 percent of its food.

Lesotho's few industries export items such as clothing, pottery, and leather goods. Tourism, especially from South Africa, has been increasing in recent years because of the country's scenic beauty.

Poverty, unemployment, and the lack of natural resources have made Lesotho economically dependent on South Africa. For decades, tens of thousands of workers have migrated from Lesotho to South Africa to work in industries such as mining. However, in the late 1980s South Africa began to restrict the number of foreign workers in the country, which has left many people in Lesotho unemployed.

Peoples and Cultures. Almost all the people in Lesotho are Basotho. Most are Christian, though about 20 percent practice traditional religions. Despite the country's great poverty, about 70 percent of the population is literate*. Both English and Sesotho, the Basotho language, are spoken.

Lesotho is still primarily a rural society, and nearly 80 percent of the people live in small villages. Apart from Maseru, the capital, there are no other large towns or cities. Many Basotho continue to follow traditional ways of life, living in thatched houses and accepting the authority of

* **literate** able to read and write

Liberia

the chiefs. Clan and family loyalties play an important role in Basotho society, creating a strong sense of cultural unity. (See also **Afrikaner Republics, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Kings and Kingship, Southern Africa, History.**)

Liberia

Located on the Guinea Coast of West Africa, Liberia is the oldest black republic in Africa. It was founded by free blacks from America in 1847 and maintained its independence throughout the years of European rule in Africa. At one time the country had one of the world's fastest growing economies. However, since 1980 Liberia has been wracked by civil war and violence that have devastated the social and economic fabric of the country.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

The geography of Liberia has played a significant role in the country's development. Its swampy coastline and heavily forested interior not only discouraged European settlement but also determined the farming methods used by colonists.

Geography. Liberia's location just north of the equator gives it a tropical climate marked by warm temperatures and high humidity. The country experiences distinct dry and rainy seasons each year, and annual precipitation averages 190 inches.

Tropical rain forest covers nearly 60 percent of the country's interior. At one time these forests probably extended to the Atlantic coast. However, several hundred years of human settlement have produced a savanna*-like environment along the coast. The coastline itself features many narrow barrier beaches and coastal lagoons but no natural harbors. The lack of harbors is undoubtedly one reason Europeans established few trading posts in the area and later made no real effort to colonize it.

Moving inland from the broad coastal plain, the elevation increases, with rolling hills, tropical forest, and eventually high plateaus and mountain ranges in the north and west. The Nimba Mountains, the highest part of Liberia, are rich in iron ore and also contain deposits of diamonds, gold, and other minerals.

The nation's current boundaries are the result of territory the American founders purchased from indigenous* people. Liberia was under constant threat from surrounding French and British colonies until well into the 1900s. It now shares borders with SIERRA LEONE on the west, GUINEA on the north, and IVORY COAST on the east and northeast.

ECONOMY

Liberia's economy has traditionally been based on agriculture, primarily subsistence farming*. Dry upland rice, the most important staple* crop, is planted in fields created by clearing forests. In dry rice farming the fields are left fallow* for 7 to 12 years between crops to allow the soil to become fertile again. The system makes it difficult for the country to pro-

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

* **fallow** plowed but not planted during the growing season

Liberia



* **cassava** starchy root plant; source of tapioca

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works


duce enough food for its population, and Liberia depends heavily on imported food. Cassava*, eggplant, corn, okra, and peppers are often planted along with the rice. Many Liberian farmers also grow crops such as citrus fruits, bananas, and sugarcane.

The economy of the country has also depended heavily on exports of raw materials, particular rubber and iron ore. In many cases the Liberian government sold the rights to exploit* these products to foreign companies. Liberians received little benefit from their country's leading exports because foreign firms controlled them. In any event, after civil war broke out in Liberia, rubber and iron exports plummeted.

Development of other areas of the economy, such as manufacturing and commerce, has been held back by the country's poor infrastructure*. In addition, the civil war destroyed many of the country's roads, railroads, and industrial facilities. Future economic development will require massive amounts of foreign aid and a climate of stability that will attract foreign investment.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Many historical accounts claim that Liberia was founded by freed American slaves. However, like many statements about Liberian history, this is an oversimplification of some complicated events.



From Prison to Promised Land

Liberia's name came from the fact that its freed black settlers saw it as a land of liberty. However, the country grew out of an idea that was far from liberating. Haunted by the fear of a violent slave revolt, legislators in Virginia proposed establishing a separate colony for rebellious blacks. They asked President James Monroe to acquire land in Africa for that purpose. The idea was never pursued, but it led in 1816 to the organization of the American Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color. The efforts of this group, later known as the American Colonization Society, eventually resulted in the founding of Liberia.

Early History. The original inhabitants of Liberia were Mel-speaking peoples who were joined by Mande speakers from the northern forests and savannas in the 1400s. Long before the arrival of Europeans on the Atlantic coast, these groups were involved in trade across the SAHARA DESERT in pepper, gold, ivory, and other products. When European traders appeared in the 1500s, trading activity moved toward the coast. Mande and Mel chiefdoms provided slaves for the Atlantic trade, while Kru-speaking peoples of southeastern Liberia served as dockworkers, deck hands, and laborers.

U.S. involvement in Liberia grew out of the efforts of the American Colonization Society (ACS), a group of wealthy white Americans who worked to resettle free blacks in Africa. This group sought to remove free blacks from America because their presence served as a challenge to the moral and legal basis of SLAVERY. Formed in 1816, the ACS brought the first black American immigrants to Liberia in 1822. Many of them were educated business and professional people who felt a sense of superiority to both the local population and to the freed American field slaves who came to Liberia later.

In 1847 the educated black immigrants declared independence from the ACS and founded Liberia as a republic modeled after the United States. These settlers were determined to end the SLAVE TRADE and take over the dominant position in the coastal economy. Using a combination of military force, treaties, trade agreements, and political marriages into prominent local families, they managed to extend their control over the region. These Americo-Liberians controlled power in Liberia and discriminated against indigenous peoples in education, business, and civil service. However, because the local population was not racially distinct from the newcomers, some indigenous peoples were able to gain access to positions of influence. This contrasted sharply with European colonies in which skin color presented a steep barrier between the rulers and the ruled.

The Tubman Era. Perhaps the most important political figure in Liberian history, William TUBMAN served as the nation's president from 1944 to 1971. His election ushered in a new era in Liberian politics because he did not belong to one of the prominent families that dominated the capital city of Monrovia.

Although a loyal member of the True Whig Party, which had controlled Liberian politics since 1877, Tubman tried to reach out to indigenous peoples. He launched what he called the Open Door Policy to provide economic opportunities for all Liberians by making the country more attractive to foreign investors. He also gave indigenous people the right to vote and lowered property qualifications for voting. At the same time, though, Tubman introduced programs designed to continue minority rule while creating the illusion of sharing power with the African majority.

Under Tubman, Liberia continued to be a one-party state, but Western leaders found his policies attractive. Liberia was the first nation in Africa to earn a seat in the United Nations Security Council. President John F. Kennedy made Liberia a focus of the Peace Corps, whose members helped build many schools and hospitals in the country. Tubman want-

Liberia



President of Liberia from 1944 to 1971, William Tubman extended full rights of citizenship to all Liberians. Here Liberians line the streets of Monrovia to greet their president.

ed to be a leader of the newly independent African states, and his politics had a great deal of influence on the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY.

When Tubman died in 1971, his vice president, William Tolbert, succeeded him. The new president claimed to be interested in listening to and meeting the needs of the indigenous population, but he continued most of the policies established under Tubman. By the mid-1970s, Liberia's government faced a number of political and economic challenges. Tensions came to a head in April 1979, when police and army forces fired into a crowd of unarmed protesters, killing an unknown number of people. A year later, Tolbert was overthrown in a military coup* and assassinated.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Military Government and Civil War. The leader of the coup, Samuel Doe, formed a military government and promised to hold elections in five years. During that time he appointed members of his own ethnic group, the Krahn, to many government and army posts. This marked the first time that ethnic identity was introduced as a factor in Liberian politics.

When elections were held in 1985, Doe claimed victory even though he actually lost by a wide margin. An army general attempted a coup a month after the election, but Doe survived and retaliated brutally against members of the Dan, the general's ethnic group. In December



Liberia

POPULATION:

3,164,156 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

43,000 sq. mi. (111,370 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English (official); Mande, Kru, Bassa, Vai, Kpelle, others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Liberian dollar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 70%, Muslim 20%, Christian 10%

CITIES:

Monrovia (capital), 962,000 (1999 est.); Greenville, Buchanan, Robertsport, Harper

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Ranges from 203 in. (5,210 mm) on northwestern coast, to 100 in. (2,540 mm) at southeastern tip of country, to 70 in. (1,780 mm) on central plateau

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$1,000 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: rubber, rice, palm oil, cassava, coffee, cocoa beans, sugarcane, timber, bananas, eggplant, corn, okra, peppers, livestock

Manufacturing: rubber processing, palm oil processing, construction materials, food processing

Mining: diamonds, iron ore, gold

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from the American Colonization Society, 1847.

Republic with president elected by universal suffrage.

Governing body: National Assembly (legislative house).

HEADS OF STATE:

1943–1971 President William Tubman

1971–1980 President William R. Tolbert

1980–1990 General Samuel K. Doe

1990–1994 Interim President Amos Sawyer

1994–1997 Several chairmen of Council of State

1997– President Charles G. Taylor

ARMED FORCES:

14,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–16; literacy rate 38% (2001 est.)

1989, Charles Taylor, a former member of Doe's government, led a small force into Liberia from Ivory Coast. The local people supported the invaders and civil war erupted.

In 1990 an international military force led by NIGERIA intervened in Liberia and prevented Taylor from taking Monrovia. In the meantime a rival group had captured and killed Doe. A regional alliance, the Economic Community of West African States, then set up a civilian government led by Amos Sawyer, another former Doe supporter. Sawyer and his forces controlled the towns, but Taylor held the countryside.

The civil war ended with a cease-fire in 1997, and later that year Taylor was elected president. He has run Liberia like a warlord, with his security forces arresting and executing opponents of his regime*. Taylor has also plundered Liberia's resources for his personal gain and helped destabilize the area by supporting rebels fighting the government of neighboring Sierra Leone. By the year 2001, the Liberian economy continued to deteriorate, and a return to peace, democracy, and stability appeared a dim hope.

* regime current political system or rule

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Liberia's people are divided into three major language groups: the Mande, Mel, and Kruan. The largest of these is the Mande, who mainly inhabit the north and west along with the Mel. The Kru-speakers live mainly in the southeast. Many Liberians share ethnic identity with people living in the neighboring countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Ivory Coast.

Liberia

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

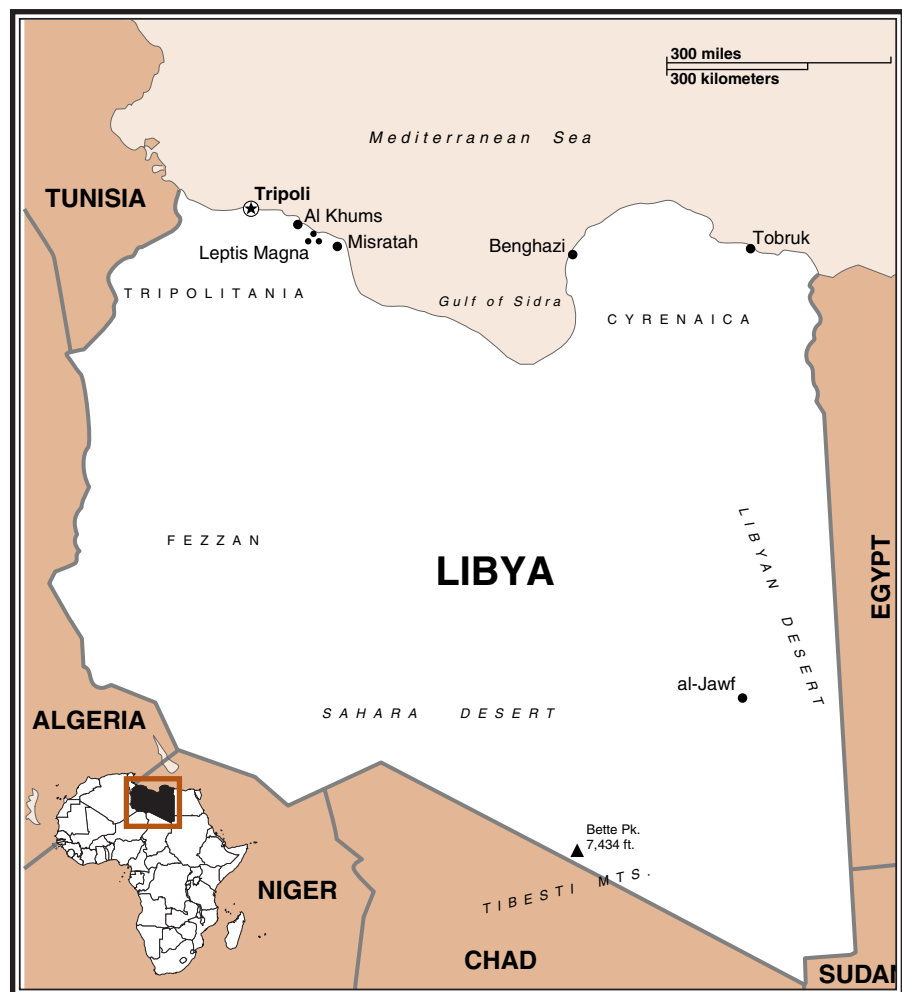
* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

The Mande and Mel have hierarchical* societies in which individuals trace ancestry through the male line. Both societies are also characterized by the existence of SECRET SOCIETIES. The Kruan peoples are less hierarchical, and secret societies do not exist among them.

Traditional religions feature ancestor worship and have been influenced by Western religions. Many Liberians are members of Christian churches as well. Islam* has also become an important force in the country. In the past, religious and ethnic group affiliations were not terribly important in Liberia. This provides some hope that the people can overcome the divisive effects of civil war and build a unified national identity. (See also **Ethnic Groups and Identity, History of Africa, Tribalism, United Nations in Africa.**)

Libya

Bordering the Mediterranean Sea, Libya has played a significant role in North Africa and the Middle East since ancient times. For centuries the country's three distinct regions—Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and Fezzan—were ruled by foreign powers such as the Romans, the



Tobruk

A port city in northeastern Libya, Tobruk changed hands many times over the centuries. The Greeks established a farming colony, called Antipyrgos, there. Later the Romans built a fortress on the site to defend the borderland between Cyrenaica and Egypt. In 1911 the Italians used the harbor as a naval base. During World War II, the city was the scene of combat between the British and the Germans. When Libya became a kingdom in 1951, King Idris I lived in Tobruk. Today the city is the endpoint of the oil pipeline that runs from the Sarir oil field to the coast.

- * **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of
- * **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods
- * **indigenous** native to a certain place



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

- * **maritime** related to the sea or shipping

Muslim Arabs, and the Ottoman Turks. During the period of European colonial rule, Italy united these regions and created the borders of the modern state of Libya.

Since gaining independence in the 1950s, Libya has exploited* its rich oil reserves and experienced a period of unprecedented prosperity. Beginning in 1969 the revolutionary government headed by Colonel Muammar al-QADDAFI introduced reforms based on socialism* and ideals of Arab and African unity. However, Qaddafi's policies have alienated Libya from Western nations and many of its potential allies.

THE LAND AND ITS PEOPLE

The fourth largest country in Africa, Libya has a total area of nearly 680,000 square miles. It is surrounded by ALGERIA and TUNISIA on the west, CHAD and NIGER on the south, and EGYPT and SUDAN on the east. Most of the population lives in the northern region along the coast. The remainder of the country lies in the SAHARA DESERT.

A series of ridges known as the Jebel run along the southern edge of the region of Tripolitania. South of the Jebel is Fezzan, mostly barren desert broken up by oases. In eastern Libya, Cyrenaica rises in a series of ridges along the coast and extends into the desert in the south.

The vast majority of Libyans are Muslim Arabs and about 5 percent are BERBERS, an indigenous* people of the region. A large number of immigrant workers employed by Libyan businesses live in the country. To increase the size of the workforce, the government has encouraged Libyans to have large families. As a result much of the population is very young. The two largest cities, Tripoli and Benghazi, are on the Mediterranean. Most of the people in rural areas live near oases where they can obtain water to irrigate their farms.

HISTORY

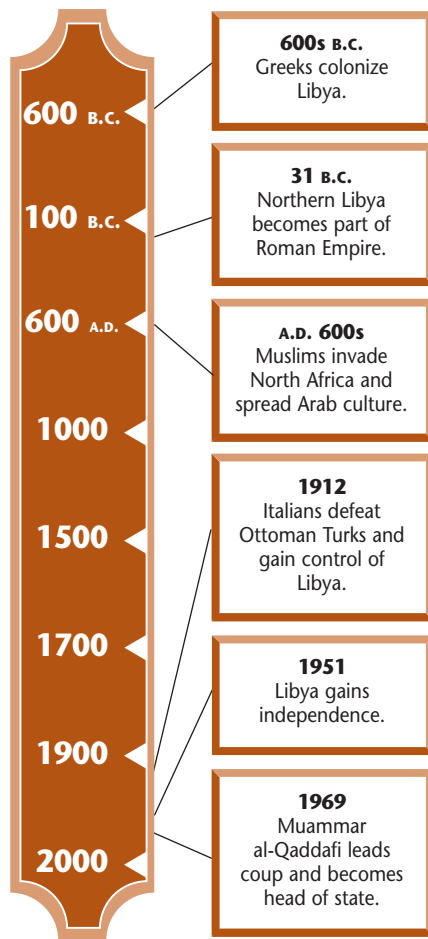
Each of the foreign powers that conquered Libya contributed to the country's cities and towns as well as its culture. Since independence, the revolutionary government has tried to limit Western influences on Libyan society. It has also become deeply involved in Middle Eastern politics.

Ancient Times. Libya had extensive contact with the various civilizations that grew up around the Mediterranean Sea. The Egyptians used the name *Libya* to refer to a Berber people who lived west of the NILE RIVER. The Greeks and Romans used the term to refer to Cyrenaica, the North African coast, or sometimes even the entire continent.

The two coastal regions of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica had distinct cultures made up of Berbers and immigrants from other areas. In the late 600s B.C., the Greeks colonized Cyrenaica. The local people adopted Greek culture, and the region produced a number of important writers and philosophers. By the 400s B.C., Phoenicians from Lebanon had settled in Tripolitania and built a powerful maritime* empire in the region.

During the 200s and 100s, the Romans conquered the western Mediterranean, including Tripolitania. Shortly after, they gained control

Libya



of Cyrenaica as well. North Africa remained part of the Roman Empire for almost 700 years. Evidence of this long association with Rome can be seen at Leptis Magna in Libya, the site of some of the best-preserved remains of a Roman city.

By the A.D. 400s, Rome's control over its vast empire began to weaken. The Vandals, a Germanic people from northern Europe, migrated south into Africa and took over Tripolitania. The Vandals dominated trade in the Mediterranean until the Byzantines in the eastern half of the Roman Empire reconquered the lost territory in 533.

Muslim Influence. The arrival of Islam in the 600s changed North Africa forever. Muslim Arab forces conquered vast portions of territory around the Mediterranean, including what is now Libya. The Berber groups that inhabited Tripolitania, Cyrenaica, and the surrounding deserts adopted Islam. Although some local people continued to speak Berber, most learned Arabic, which replaced Greek and Latin as the language of literature and law. Meanwhile, several waves of nomadic* Bedouins migrated into the region, bringing with them their own ways of life.

After the Muslim takeover, a series of Islamic dynasties* ruled Libya. The powerful Abbasid dynasty appointed the Aghlabids to govern the region. The Aghlabids restored the Roman irrigation system and made Libya increasingly prosperous. During the 900s the Fatimids brought most of northern Africa under their control.

By the 1500s the coast of northern Africa was famous for its pirate kings, who often came into conflict with the European states across the Mediterranean. In 1551 the Ottoman Turks conquered Libya, which became a Turkish province known as Tripolitania. The Turkish sultan appointed a series of rulers to govern the province.

European Colonization. By the late 1800s, Britain, France, and Italy were looking for opportunities to establish settlements and expand their trading interests in North Africa. To gain control of Libya, Italy declared war on the Ottoman Turks in 1911. The Turks surrendered the region a year later. However, led by members of the Sanusi, a Sufi* religious order, the Libyans resisted Italian rule. Italy succeeded in dominating Libya until the 1940s, and thousands of Italians settled in the colony.

After World War II, France and Britain won control of Libya. In 1951 they decided to grant the territory independence. A council of leaders from Libya's three regions met and declared the new country to be a united kingdom headed by Muhammad Idris. A hero of the Sanusi resistance against the Italians, he became King Idris I.

Modern Libya. At first the new kingdom of Libya was very poor and required large amounts of aid from Western powers to survive. In 1955 the discovery of rich petroleum resources in Libya ushered in an era of prosperity. Yet even with the benefit of its oil wealth, the country faced many challenges in developing a diverse modern economy.

During the 1960s, changes in other Arab countries, particularly a movement for Arab unity, began to affect Libyan society. Conflicts

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad; religious faith of the Muslims

* **nomadic** referring to people who travel from place to place to find food and pasture

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **Sufi** member of a Muslim movement characterized by mysticism and dedication to poverty and prayer

Libya

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

In an old quarter of Tripoli, the Libyan capital, narrow passageways lead to markets and historic mosques.

between various Arab states and Israel, as well as uncertainty about the fate of the Palestinian people, helped win support for the movement. In 1969 a group of military officers led by Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi carried out a coup* that ended the monarchy. Colonel Qaddafi took over as head of the revolutionary government and introduced wide-ranging social, political, and economic reforms. Under his rule all public institutions, including schools, businesses, and the media, were administered by “people’s committees.” The military and foreign relations remained outside the people’s control.



Libya



Libya

POPULATION:

5,115,450 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

679,400 sq. mi. (1,759,540 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Arabic (official); Italian, English, Berber dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Libyan Dinar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim (Sunni) 97%

CITIES:

Tripoli (capital), 1,822,000 (2000 est.); Benghazi, Misurata

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from about 4 in. (100 mm) in the steppe to less than half an inch (12.5 mm) in parts of the Sahara desert

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$7,900 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: barley, wheat, sorghum, dates, olives, citrus, almonds, figs, grapes, peanuts, tobacco, livestock
Manufacturing: food and beverage processing, textiles, petrochemicals, aluminum, cement, leather goods
Mining: crude oil, natural gas, natron, potash, iron ore, salt, gypsum, manganese, sulfur

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Italy, 1951. Third International Theory, an Islamic Arabic Socialist state of the masses (called Jamahiriya). In theory, governed by the people through local councils; in fact, a military dictatorship. Governing bodies: General People's Congress (legislative body) and General People's Committee (cabinet).

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1951–1969 King Idris I

1969– Colonel Muammar al-Qaddafi

ARMED FORCES:

65,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–15; literacy rate 76%

In 1973 Qaddafi launched a “cultural revolution” aimed at eliminating foreign influence and creating a society based on Muslim principles and socialism. He also made several unsuccessful attempts to unite Libya with other Arab countries. Relations with Western powers became strained after the Libyan government was suspected of supporting international terrorist activities and the United States placed economic sanctions* on Libya.

In 1986, following charges of terrorist activities by Libya, the United States bombed important Libyan sites. Two years later an American passenger airline exploded over Lockerbie, Scotland, and British and American authorities claimed that Libyan terrorists had caused the explosion, increasing tensions even more. Libya was punished by the United Nations and various other organizations until 1999, when the Libyan government turned over two suspects in the explosion. The trial in Lockerbie, Scotland, resulted in a split verdict. One suspect received a life sentence, and the other was found not guilty.

ECONOMY

Libya's economy is more like that of the oil-rich states of the Persian Gulf than that of its neighbors in Africa. The main source of the country's income, oil has made Libya one of the wealthiest states in Africa. Nevertheless, the government continues to put great emphasis on agriculture. Farmers raise livestock and plant crops such as barley, wheat, sorghum*, almonds, citrus fruit, apricots, and figs. To increase agricultural production, the country has built extensive irrigation works in the last several decades. The largest program, the Great Man-Made River

* **sanction** measure adopted by one or more nations to force another nation to change its policies or conduct

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food



Literacy



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

project, consists of a huge pipeline to carry water from wells in the southern Sahara to the coastal region. Libya has also launched programs to prevent desertification—the spread of desert conditions to usable stretches of land. (See also **Arabs in Africa**, **Colonialism in Africa**, **Deserts and Drought**, **Energy and Energy Resources**, **Islam in Africa**, **North Africa: Geography and Population**, **North Africa: History and Cultures**, **Roman Africa**.)

Literacy

One of the greatest challenges facing modern Africa is increasing the rate of literacy—the ability to read and write—among its population. Studies have shown that literacy leads to improvements in many areas of life. These include better health and nutrition for mothers and their children, a lower infant death rate, higher productivity in agriculture, and increased political participation. However, in recent years the economic and political troubles of many African nations have led to a decline in the availability and quality of educational programs.

Literacy has benefits on many levels. It helps people to improve their thinking skills and absorb information more readily. It also changes the way that they view themselves and relate to others. On a practical level, literacy enables individuals to read printed materials such as the instructions that come with medicines and agricultural chemicals. Literate adults are more likely to understand the information and to prepare and use the products correctly. In this way, the benefit of literacy can extend beyond individuals to their families and society as a whole.

Measuring Literacy. Literacy is often difficult to measure. It does not always relate to the number of years of schooling a person completes. The quality of the educational program can make a difference in how well students learn to read and write. In some African societies the most common form of reading material is sacred texts, used for religious ceremonies. Individuals might be skillful in reading these texts but inexperienced with other types of writing, such as technical instruction manuals.

In many African countries, more than one language is spoken. Children may be taught to read in an indigenous* language or in another language such as English or French. Estimating the level of literacy across the population may be complicated by the variety of languages and schools found in the culture.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Literacy in Africa. In 1961 African ministers of education met in ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA, and pledged to eliminate illiteracy in 30 years. They planned to achieve this goal by making primary education universal by 1980 and by sponsoring adult education programs. The early results were impressive: by 1980 nearly 80 percent of African children were enrolled in elementary schools. In addition, some countries such as Ethiopia and TANZANIA launched large-scale adult literacy campaigns during the 1970s and early 1980s. Between 1970 and 1990, the illiteracy rate among African adults dropped from 77 to 53 percent.



Literacy

In recent years, social, economic, and political problems have hindered efforts to increase literacy in Africa. Many countries have experienced high population growth and economic decline. Others have been devastated by political unrest and even civil war. By 1997 only about half of African children were attending school. Those who do attend are often taught by untrained teachers.

All of these factors have widened the gaps in literacy among African countries. By 2000 Botswana had achieved a literacy rate of 70 percent, while Burundi had a rate of only 35 percent. One promising trend noted by researchers is that parents involved in literacy programs are more likely to send their children to school and to keep them there. For this reason, various countries, including Ghana and Senegal, have recently launched national literacy campaigns. (*See also Education, Languages, Literature, Publishing, Writing Systems.*)

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African literature has developed from sources and influences that originated both within and outside of the continent. One major source, Africa's rich tradition of oral stories and histories, is much older than the continent's written literature. Written scripts arose in Africa in Egyptian hieroglyphs, a complex system of picture-writing used by the ancient Egyptians. However, written scripts using alphabets and words did not appear in Africa until traders, missionaries, colonists, and armies from foreign lands brought them.

This process occurred in three waves, separated by time and location. In the first, which took place during the first thousand years B.C., scripts from the Semitic peoples of the Middle East and Arabia arrived in eastern Africa. In the second wave, which began in the A.D. 600s, the Arabic language and Islamic* religion swept across North Africa. The third wave, which started with European trading posts on the western coast of Africa in the late 1400s and engulfed the whole continent by about 1900, brought European languages and the Roman alphabet.

The Arab and European invasions had far-reaching consequences for every aspect of African life, including its literature. Africans adopted and adapted the languages and scripts used by the invaders. Some Africans began writing in these foreign languages, while others used the alphabets to create written forms for indigenous* languages. Africans wrote in these new forms to express their feelings about the profound social and psychological changes caused by conquest and colonization. Women writers in particular have turned to literature to consider their position in society and to struggle for their own liberation.

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

AFRICAN LITERATURE IN ARABIC

In A.D. 632, Muslim Arabs invaded EGYPT, and by 1000 they had conquered all of North Africa. Parts of East Africa and West Africa also came under Islamic influence, and several cities became centers of Islamic learning.



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* **theology** study of religious faith

The Spread of Islam and Arabic. From the 1400s to the 1600s, the city of TIMBUKTU in MALI produced a rich body of literature in the form of historical chronicles and works of Muslim science, law, medicine, and theology*. Over time, indigenous languages were written in Arabic script as well. This development made it easier to spread Islam among the African peoples and led to the beginnings of written literature in African languages such as FULANI, HAUSA, and WOLOF.

A second source of Arabic influence came by way of Arabia and Persia to East African coasts along the Indian Ocean. After A.D. 700, immigrants and merchants from those areas arrived in the region that is now KENYA and TANZANIA. There they interacted with local BANTU-speaking peoples and forged a common culture and tongue known as SWAHILI. At some point Swahili also began to be transcribed into Arabic script. The earliest known Swahili manuscripts date from the early 1700s and feature mainly religious and secular* poetry.

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

Islam and the Written Word. Islamic culture holds the written word in high esteem, and where Islam appeared in Africa, African versions of Arabic script often followed. Many written works from East and West Africa are known as Afro-Islamic, based on indigenous tongues that have absorbed much Islamic expression and content. However, some cultures with Afro-Islamic literature, such as Somali and Mandingo, still favor oral over written literature.

Islamic literature made its greatest contribution in the area of poetry. A wide range of themes—from the life of the prophet Muhammad to works about society, religion, and politics—can be found in Islamic poetry. The period from about 500 to 1500 was a golden age of poetry among the educated aristocracy* of North Africa and the Middle East.

* **aristocracy** privileged upper classes of society; nobles or the nobility

Colonial North Africa. During the 1800s and 1900s, the role of Islamic prose expanded considerably in North Africa. Some authors revived forms and themes from classical Arabic literature while dealing with the people and politics of their own times. Novels and novellas appeared chapter by chapter in popular newspapers and magazines, often written by the publishers themselves. Authors began to use common forms of Arabic instead of the classical Arabic of high culture, and readers and writers from the lower classes began to take part in literature.

During the mid-1900s, literature played a crucial role in North Africans' struggles against French and British rule. Islamic associations and schools encouraged people to speak and write in Arabic rather than French or English, and writers responded with powerful portrayals of colonial society.

After independence, many writers turned their criticism on the new governments' corruption and incompetence. Both male and female authors have campaigned to free women from strict Islamic religion and culture. Modern Arabic literature has developed a wide range of fantasy and realism, tradition and innovation, culture and politics. Yet many writers continue to explore the relationship between Islam and modern Western culture, and fierce debates rage over the choice of language. Meanwhile, international fame has come to some, such as Egypt's Naguib MAHFOUZ, who won the Nobel Prize in 1988.

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Keepers of the Lost Ark

The biblical tale of the Queen of Sheba is familiar to many Western readers. However, the Ethiopian version, the *Kibre negest*, adds some interesting details. In this version, the Queen of Sheba travels from Ethiopia to Israel, where she converts to Judaism and bears a son by King Solomon named Menilek. When he reaches adulthood, Menilek returns to Israel for a visit with his father. Solomon sends Menilek back home with priests to teach the law and set up a Jewish state in Ethiopia. But Menilek also takes with him the Ark of the Covenant, the chest containing the tablets of the Ten Commandments. Ethiopian religious leaders say that the ark is still in their country.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

LITERATURE IN AFRICAN LANGUAGES

Many African cultures had oral traditions that formed the basis for indigenous literature after written scripts were created. For example, the arrival of Arabic script in East Africa in the A.D. 900s led to writing in the Swahili language and in time to Swahili literature. Other languages such as Somali, however, did not have a written form until quite recently.

Ethiopian Literature. The earliest evidence of written African literature comes from the ancient kingdom of AKSUM, in what is now ETHIOPIA. Inscriptions there are written in a Semitic script native to southern Arabia. Around the 300s B.C., Egyptian monks converted Aksum to Christianity and eventually translated the Bible from Greek into the local Ge'ez language. Although Ge'ez died out as a spoken language and was replaced by Amharic, it has remained the language of Ethiopian Christianity, and the 1300s and 1400s marked the golden age of Ge'ez literature.

Ethiopian literature was largely religious in nature, and much of it came from the traditions of Egypt's Coptic Christian Church. But by writing in Ge'ez, the Ethiopians preserved their own independent culture. The first works in Ge'ez were the Gospels, followed by other religious books. Ethiopian literature went into a decline in the 900s, but it revived with the Solomonic dynasty* of kings that took power in 1270. This period produced a work of national history and myth called the *Kibre negest* (*Glory of the Kings*), a version of the biblical tale of the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon of Israel. The story originally appeared in Arabic, which may mean that Ethiopian writers once used Arabic as well as Ge'ez.

The most productive author of traditional Ethiopian literature was the emperor ZARA YA'IQOB, who ruled from 1434 to 1468. He wrote many stories about miracles involving the Virgin Mary, as well as religious essays, prayer books, and hymn books. But by the end of the 1500s, civil wars and a Muslim invasion brought literary activity to an almost complete halt.

In response to these pressures, Ethiopian rulers moved their capital to the city of Gondar, where literature enjoyed another revival. This period produced many hymns, such as the *ginie*, individual poems composed for each particular day and sung only once. Though an old form, the *ginie* became newly popular at that time.

The end of the Gondarite period in 1755 also brought a decline in Ge'ez literature. Amharic rose to challenge Ge'ez as a literary language, helped along by Catholic missionaries who used it to communicate with local populations. Early Amharic authors focused on theology and Christian ethics, and they criticized tradition as an obstacle to progress.

Modern Amharic literature deals mostly with universal themes such as love, death, and social problems. Meanwhile, civil unrest has driven many Ethiopians to live abroad, where they have produced a body of non-African Amharic literature. It includes not only creative writing but also several types of Amharic computer software created by Ethiopian engineers.

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Swahili Literature. Swahili culture arose from interactions between Bantu-speaking East Africans and Arabs from Persia and Arabia. The main form of Swahili literature has been poetry, which reached a peak with warrior-hero Fumo Liyongo. The style of Liyongo, who may have lived as early as the 900s, shows so much polish and skill that scholars believe Swahili poetry was already highly developed by his time. Later Swahili poets based their work mainly on forms he used. Poems were generally passed on orally, although some religious poetry was written down.

In the 1800s and 1900s, colonial rule had a major impact on Swahili literature. The translation into Swahili of English novels such as *Treasure Island* and *Gulliver's Travels* led to the rise of Swahili novels. The best-known early Swahili novelist was SHAABAN ROBERT, who drew heavily on traditional stories for inspiration. Later Swahili novels turned more to realistic portrayals of modern life. Modern Swahili literature deals mainly with the colonial experience and its effects on Africa. Novelists have also grappled with the conflict between rural and urban life.

Somali Literature. The East African nation of SOMALIA has produced some of the most experimental fiction on the continent. After the government adopted the Roman alphabet for the Somali language in 1972, works by a new group of writers appeared that combined traditional oral poetry and written forms. A more political group of novelists, including Nuruddin Farah, had novels published in installments in newspapers and journals until stopped by government censorship. During the Somali civil war of the 1980s and 1990s, many novels were written and published thanks to new desktop computers and the absence of a strong government to censor the works.

Hausa Literature. The written literature of the Hausa, an ethnic group in northern NIGERIA, blossomed shortly after 1800. Prior to that time, the Hausa oral tradition consisted mainly of praise songs. Among the aristocracy the songs praised traditional leaders and patrons, while common people sang of farmers, hunters, boxers, and wrestlers. This tradition continues today with popular singers who chant alongside music and choruses both to praise patrons and to address social issues such as poverty and drug abuse.

In 1804 an Islamic holy war produced much Hausa religious poetry written in both Arabic and the local Fulani language. After conquering the Hausa, the military leader Shehu UTHMAN DAN FODIO used poetry to win his new subjects over to Islam. He and his daughter Nana ASMA'U wrote poetry in Hausa that explained the principles of Islam and attacked non-Islamic ideas. Modern Hausa poets still use these forms to debate politics, economics, and culture.

Prose writing in Hausa began with a colonial competition in 1933 and has recently developed into a full social and political force. Novelists such as S. I. Katsina have focused on Nigeria's ruling class and the corruption of the oil industry and national elections.

Yoruba Literature. The Yoruba of southwestern Nigeria, neighbors of the Hausa, also have a rich oral tradition. Their chant poetry, called *ewi*,

Wole Soyinka, Nigerian author and political activist, wrote a play in honor of his country's independence in 1960. The play celebrated the end of colonial rule but warned Nigerians of other forms of tyranny. In 1986 Soyinka won the Nobel Prize for literature.





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plays an important part in Yoruba life. Important public ceremonies almost always include a local poet performing *ewi*. Poets also chant *ewi* to make comments on modern society.

Written Yoruba literature did not appear until English missionaries collected and published a vocabulary of Yoruba words in 1828. The first collection of Yoruba poetry appeared 20 years later, and the first Yoruba newspapers began in 1859. The papers printed long stories in serial form. Daniel O. Fagunwa, the first major Yoruba novelist, wrote fantasy novels inspired by oral traditions. However, a call for more realistic works produced a generation of writers who have concentrated on modern life.

The Yoruba novel is growing, but traditional Yoruba THEATER is on the decline.

South African Literature. Southern Africa, and the nation of SOUTH AFRICA in particular, includes ethnic groups speaking languages such as ZULU, XHOSA, Nguni, Sotho, and Tswana. Several South African languages have strong oral traditions that include praise poetry, stories, proverbs, and riddles. A professional praiser was present at the ceremony that installed Nelson MANDELA as president of South Africa in 1994. Many of the oral traditions include human encounters with a trickster* god, who often remains in disguise until the end of the story. Other common themes are meetings with monsters who seem half human and half ogre; the hero of the story must know the ogre's weakness in order to escape.

In the 1800s Protestant missionaries compiled written versions of many languages of southern Africa. Their main goal was to produce Bibles and other religious materials in local languages. However, their works determined which forms and dialects of each language eventually became standard. Later, English novels translated into Zulu, Xhosa, and Sotho inspired indigenous writers to create novels on Christian themes. But since 1960, novels have tended to focus on themes of isolation, self-destruction, and the tension between tradition and modernity.

The apartheid* policies of South Africa had a major impact on Zulu, Xhosa, and Sotho literature. The government controlled many of the publishing houses and censored writing in African languages, aiming to prevent protest literature from reaching its audiences. Many indigenous authors had to use English or Afrikaans (a version of Dutch) to publish their message abroad. The end of apartheid in the 1990s has led to an explosion of South African literature in indigenous languages.

AFRICAN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

Literature in English—known as anglophone literature—has several sources in Africa. Some is the work of Christian missionaries and European colonists; other material is by indigenous writers. Some African authors wrote in English after they left the continent. A typical example is the autobiography of Olaudah EQUIANO, who was seized in what is now Nigeria and taken to England as a slave. Other African writers began using English while living in Africa. African anglophone liter-

* **trickster** mischievous figure appearing in various forms in the folktales and mythology of many different peoples

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Afrikaans and Apartheid

The Dutch colonists who settled Cape Colony in the late 1600s developed a distinct dialect of Dutch that the local African population attempted to master. The language, called Afrikaans, fell out of favor among educated South Africans after the British took over the colony in 1806. However, in 1875 a group of white settlers championed the use of written Afrikaans to promote a national identity of white supremacy. Early writers in Afrikaans rarely addressed moral issues such as apartheid. But in the 1960s and 1970s, Afrikaans literature turned critical of South Africa's social policies. Thus, a literature that once promoted racial division eventually helped to end it.

ature only became established after 1900, as indigenous writers began to record their impressions and feelings about the colonial experience.

Western Africa. The first African work of anglophone fiction was Joseph Casely-Hayford's *Ethiopia Unbound* (1911), which dealt with the European belief in the superiority of Western over African cultures. No significant works of anglophone fiction appeared for the next 30 years. In 1952 Amos TUTUOLA caused a sensation with his novel, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard and His Dead Palm-Wine Tapster in the Deads' Town*. It was a hit with Western readers, who mistook its unconventional style for a bold experiment in language. In fact, the writing reflected Tutuola's lack of familiarity with English.

African critics had harsh words for Tutuola's work, believing that his poor English reflected badly on Africa as a whole. However, his success inspired new authors such as Chinua ACHEBE, a Nigerian who became one of Africa's most celebrated novelists. In *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and other works, Achebe examines both the triumphs and failures of Nigerian history. Other authors have focused on personal lives, including Flora NWAPA in her novels about Nigerian women.

Anglophone poetry in West Africa closely followed Western traditions until the 1950s. At that time poets began to concern themselves with the kind of African experiences that motivated Achebe. In the 1960s, poets such as Lenrie Peters of GAMBIA and Kofi Awoonor of GHANA focused on the tensions between traditional and modern life in Africa.

Drama in West Africa achieved maturity in the late 1950s and early 1960s with playwrights such as Joe de Graft and Ama Ata Aidoo. Their plays deal with themes such as conflict and intermarriage between social groups and the influence of women on history and society. Wole SOYINKA of Nigeria gained fame as Africa's most successful dramatist and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986. In *A Dance of the Forests*, written on the occasion of Nigeria's independence, Soyinka destroyed the myths of a glorious Nigerian past and predicted a bleak future for the new state. Since that time, many of Soyinka's plays have bitterly criticized Nigeria's leaders.

Eastern Africa. From the early 1900s, poetry, prose, and song were key weapons in the struggles against British colonialism in eastern Africa. Some political writing was published in code to avoid censorship. For example, one crucial work, Jomo KENYATTA's *Facing Mount Kenya* (1938), portrayed the GIKUYU culture of Kenya in opposition to the British, and the author later served as the first president of independent Kenya.

Poets, including Julius NYERERE, helped found the political party known as TANU that fought for Tanganyikan independence. Nyerere became the first president of Tanganyika (now Tanzania). Since independence, East African writers such as Abdilatif Abdalla and NGUGI WA THIONG'O have continued to explore colonial history and its impact on Africa.

In their works East African authors have expressed their disappointment with the corruption and violence of their own governments. Both



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Defying Tradition

Tsitsi Dangarembga's novel Nervous Conditions highlights women writers' concerns with traditional attitudes in modern Africa. Its heroine is a poor rural girl who wants to travel to the city for a Western education. The novel turns a common African theme, the city versus the country, on its head. The classic version of this theme is to portray the city as dangerous, foreign, and hostile to women, while idealizing the countryside as a paradise of traditional ways. In contrast, Dangarembga suggests that a brighter future for women lies outside of traditional society and its values.

Abdilatif and Ngugi have worked with human rights organizations to document abuses in Kenya, and Ngugi was imprisoned for his efforts. In Somalia, the government responded to the novels of Nuruddin Farah by sending him into exile on threat of death. A number of East African writers such as Thiong'o have published novels or diaries set in prison.

Following independence, many students and teachers pushed for more works by Africans in college literature courses. This movement also spurred a call for more work in East African languages. A new generation of Kenyan and Tanzanian authors began to write in the Swahili tongue, KiSwahili. Another important development has been the study of spoken compositions known as *orature*.

Southern Africa. The earliest literary works from southern Africa were written by white settlers such as the poet Thomas Pringle, who described his feelings about the land alongside his unease about being part of a brutal colonial society. In the 1880s, Olive SCHREINER received wide attention for her *The Story of an African Farm*, a complex novel expressing critical views of colonialism. However, adventure stories, such as H. Rider Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines*, were also popular at this time. These stories often told of heroic white men exploring and taming the wilderness and conquering the black people who lived there.

The first recognized black writer from southern Africa was Sol PLAATJE. His 1917 novel *Mhudi* attempted to preserve indigenous versions of the region's history. At about the same time, several black literary journals emerged. After 1948, however, apartheid policies drove a wedge into the developing black literary scene. The state of South Africa persecuted talented black writers and censored their work. Many fled the country and published from exile. Meanwhile, some white writers continued to protest the policies of apartheid in their works. Among this group were Nadine GORDIMER, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1991, and Alan PATON, whose novel *Cry, the Beloved Country* (1948) may be the most widely read work of South African fiction. Other well-known writers, both black and white, include J. M. COETZEE, Bessie HEAD, and Athol FUGARD.

AFRICAN LITERATURE IN FRENCH

African literature in French, known as francophone literature, appeared later than African anglophone literature, even though the French arrived on the continent before the British. One possible explanation is that the French discouraged the expression of indigenous cultures and tried harder than the British to impose French culture on their African subjects. In addition, French Catholic missionaries did not share the interest of English Protestant missionaries in compiling written vocabularies of indigenous languages. As a result, francophone literature in Africa began only in the early 1900s.

Western Africa. Apart from a few early novels, the rise of francophone literature can be traced to the NEGRIITUDE movement of the 1930s. Negritude developed into the French colonies in the Caribbean as a revolutionary celebration of black African heritage and a reaction to French



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colonial policies. The movement spread to Paris, where it was adopted by African students such as Léopold SENGHOR and Alioune DIOP of SENEGAL. The movement's main contribution came in the area of poetry, hailed by some critics as the finest in modern Africa.

During the 1950s novels moved to the forefront of francophone literary activity, while poetry declined. Also inspired by Negritude, the novels of this period portrayed French colonial power as corrupt and violent. The works of Mongo BETI, one of the leading novelists, explored how Africans from traditional cultures felt alienated in the world created by colonization. Beti was sharply critical of Guinean novelist CAMARA LAYE, who offered a more positive view of Africans' lives under the French.

* **oppression** unjust or cruel exercise of authority

Sembène Ousmane of Senegal remains one of the best-known francophone novelists. He has paid little attention to the damage of colonialism, seeing it as a temporary enemy to be defeated. He has focused instead on elements of society, such as traditional religions and the oppression* of women, that he feels held Senegal back. Influenced by Karl Marx, Sembène believes that the truly universal struggle is between the haves and the have-nots, regardless of color or ethnic identity.

As elsewhere in Africa, francophone authors have incorporated the African tradition of spoken works known as *orature*. They have borrowed techniques from *orature*, such as the use of shifting viewpoints to tell a story from many different angles. The novelist Ahmadou KOUROUMA from Ivory Coast used this method in his early novels *The Suns of Independence* and *Monnew*. More recent writers have worked with other features of *orature* such as proverbs, family histories, and recurring images. The main goal is to use language to create a mood and stir the emotions; the plot is secondary.

North Africa. North African countries such as MOROCCO, Tunisia, and Algeria benefited from religious and political efforts to preserve Islamic culture and the Arabic language. Even so, many North African authors chose to write in French, sometimes as a way of expressing the clash of African and European culture. Some of the best-known include Morocco's Driss Chraïbi, Algeria's Moulaoud Mammeri, and Tunisia's Albert Memmi. Memmi wrote from the unusual position of a North African Jew caught between tradition, colonialism, and Nazism.

Of the North African nations, Algeria endured the most violent and traumatic colonization, including a bitter war for independence from 1954 to 1962. Many Algerian writers, such as Mohammed Dib in his Algeria trilogy, turned to documentary styles to express the tragedy of this struggle.

Central Africa. Francophone literature developed later in central Africa, often stimulated by the rise of local literary journals. The most influential, *Liaison* and *La Voix du Congolais*, were actually sponsored by colonial governments. However, they provided a place for black African writers to comment on social and cultural issues. Nevertheless, few francophone authors of the region are well known outside their homelands. The two Congolese republics—one a former colony of France, the other of Belgium—have produced the most prominent writers.



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Congolese poetry blossomed in the late 1960s and 1970s, stimulated by both the Negritude movement and the increasing contact between black writers across the continent. One of its leading figures, Valentin Mudimbe, founded a publishing house to promote Congolese literature. He has since emerged as a prominent novelist and scholar, who lives in the United States.

Congolese literature may be best represented by the comic novels of Jean Malonga and the poetry of Gérard Félix Tchicaya U Tam'si. Beginning his career as a poet, Tchicaya turned to novels and theater in the 1980s. While his poetry is mysterious and religious, his plays and novels face hard realities such as Africa's past and the abuse of power in modern society. Henri Lopès, another Congolese writer, is known for novels that explore serious topics with humor and satire.

WOMEN WRITERS

The development of African literature during the 1800s and early 1900s was largely restricted to male writers. Sexism made it difficult for women to write and to be recognized, both at home and in Europe. But as the movements for African liberation gained strength after World War II, women writers joined the struggle and made significant contributions to African literature and politics. They wrote from their special experience as victims of both colonialism and sexism, and they did not spare their home countries from criticism. Especially since the appearance of Flora Nwapa's famous novel *Efuru* in 1966, women writers have become leading literary voices on the continent and outspoken voices for change.

Issues in Women's Literature. The late development of female literature in Africa has its roots in the attitude of African cultures toward women. Women in traditional societies are often excluded from decision making and are limited to defined roles as wives and mothers, despite significant contributions in farming, housework, and child rearing. Practices such as polygyny, in which a man has more than one wife, also serve to emphasize the power of males over females in such societies. Motherhood is considered the greatest achievement for a woman, and women are often judged on their ability to produce offspring. These bounds on the world of traditional African women severely limit their ability to express their identities, experiences, and hopes.

The work of many male African authors has focused on the conflict between traditional and colonial society, the destruction of indigenous ways of life, the abuses of colonialism, and the corruption of modern Africa's rulers. Many look back on Africa's precolonial* past as a kind of glorious golden age. Many women writers, however, have taken a less romantic view of traditional society. For them, the fight for independence meant not only freedom from European domination, but also from a male-dominated world that did not allow them to have a voice of their own.

Meanwhile, in criticizing African society after independence, women have typically been less concerned with political change at the high levels of government and more concerned with the individual's role in

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

Many of Nadine Gordimer's short stories and novels involve the tensions of everyday life in South Africa during apartheid, the strict racial segregation enforced by the government. In 1991 Gordimer received the Nobel Prize for literature.



society. Many male authors blame corrupt political leaders for the moral breakdown in African society. Women writers, however, often point out that the average person bears much of the blame—and much of the responsibility for progress.

Attitudes Toward Men and Society. Much writing by African women has focused on male behavior—not only on traditional male practices such as polygamy, but also on the sexist attitudes of modern



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African men. Female writers accuse African men of allowing the corrupt social structure to continue because it preserves male advantages. This theme runs through Maraima Bâ's novel *So Long a Letter* (1979). It tells the tale of Ramatoulaye, an African woman whose husband takes a very young second wife after 20 years of marriage. He dies, leaving Ramatoulaye to raise 12 children by herself. The book explores her growth as an independent person.

Female writers examine other aspects of the tension between modern and traditional society. Many do not seek to destroy or abandon African culture; they often emphasize that they are African women. But in trying to change their society for the better, they do not disregard all Western influence. For example, many male authors portray Western-style education as a form of colonial domination, but female authors tend to see it as a liberating force for women. Books such as Bâ's *Scarlet Song* (1981) explore the dilemma of educated women in traditional African society, women who find themselves valued by their husbands mainly as wives and mothers.

African women writers see the modern Africa as neither a paradise nor a land without hope. Instead they see a continent still struggling to throw off the oppressions of colonialism and sexism. They work for social change that will allow all Africans, men and women, to reach their potential. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Literacy, Missions and Missionaries, Oral Tradition, Publishing, Theater, Women in Africa, Writing Systems.*)

Livestock Grazing

* **nomadic** referring to people who travel from place to place to find food and pasture

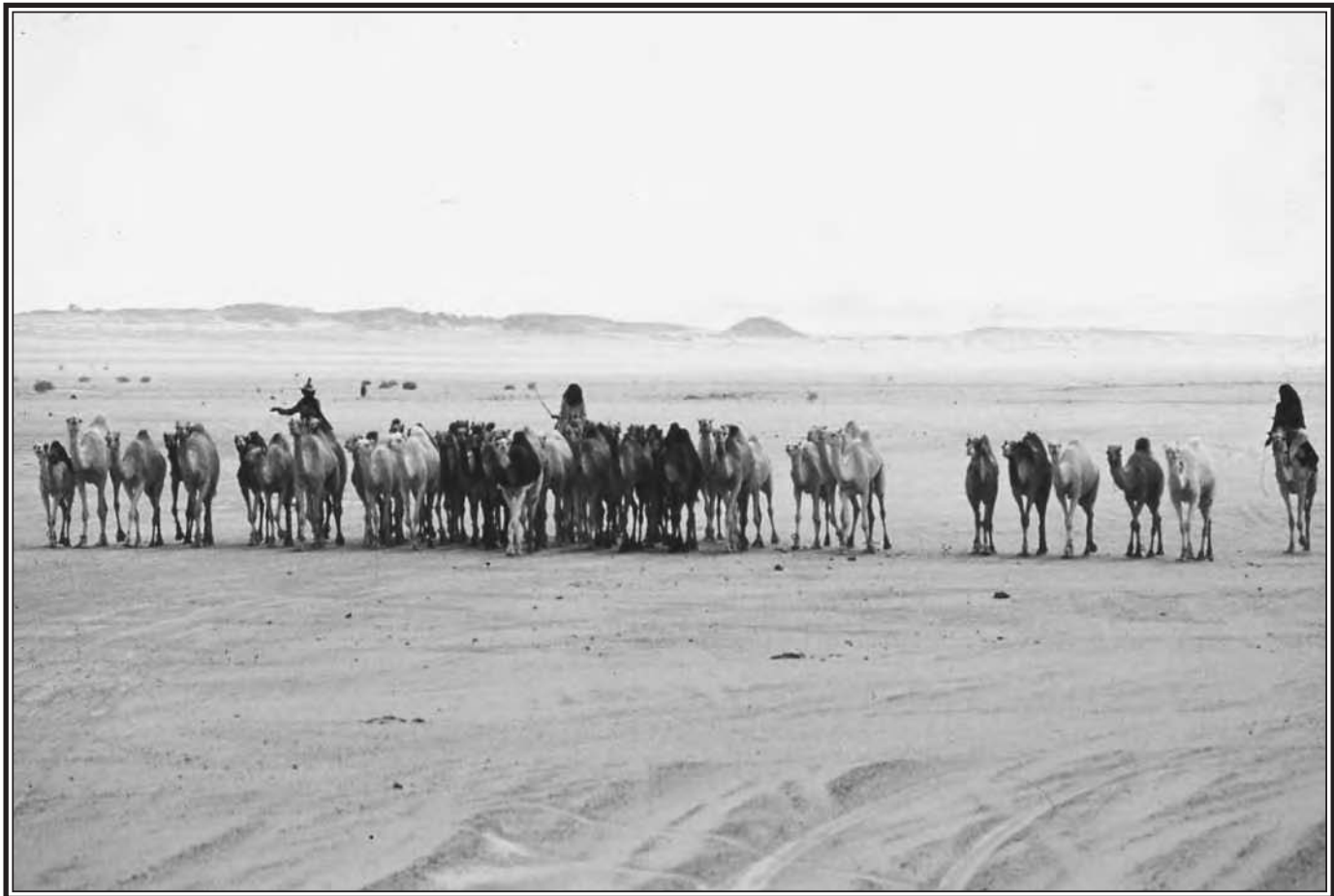
* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Livestock grazing, also known as pastoralism, has been practiced in Africa for many thousands of years. Nomadic* herding cultures existed throughout the continent long before the arrival of Europeans. As colonial governments seized land for agriculture and industry, many pastoral societies were forced to abandon or modify their traditional lifestyles. Nevertheless, some African peoples still depend on herding for their livelihood.

Types of Pastoralism. There are two types of African cultures based on livestock grazing: cattle societies and camel societies. Cattle societies are spread across the savanna* regions of northwestern, eastern, and southern Africa. Camel societies live mostly in the continent's northern and eastern deserts. Herding peoples have historically avoided central Africa, where the tsetse fly is found. Tsetse flies often carry sleeping sickness, which can be deadly to humans and large animals.

Cattle societies place a high value on the ownership of cattle. Individuals who control the largest herds have the most power and prestige. Because cattle do not provide for all of the community's needs, pastoral groups often combine livestock raising with gathering foods that grow wild or farming. They also enter into exchange relationships with agricultural societies, trading meat, milk, and hides for grains, fruits, and vegetables. These economic relations sometimes develop into political ties. In the past the FULANI, a herding people of western and central

Livestock Grazing



Camel caravans, like this one in Niger, transport goods across the Sahara desert. Some herding societies raise camels for use as pack animals.

Africa, had trading relations with farming communities. Fulani leaders later formed states that included the groups in their trading networks.

Camel societies, organized around the use of camels as pack animals, are a relatively recent development. Groups such as the BERBERS of North Africa began using camels to transport goods across the SAHARA DESERT several hundred years ago. Like cattle societies, camel herders rely on exchange with farming peoples to obtain plant foods. They often work as traders, acquiring goods from various groups and distributing them in distant regions.

History of African Pastoralism. Animal bones found in the northern Sahara suggest that people were raising livestock thousands of years before farming took place. The earliest herders kept sheep and goats, but after about 4000 B.C. people began to raise cattle. At that time the Saharan climate was much cooler and moister than it is today, with extensive woods and grasslands.

African rock paintings show scenes of people tending herds of cattle and sheep. Beginning about 2500 B.C., a change in climate caused the Sahara to dry up. Overgrazing—allowing large herds of animals to feed on the land until the surface vegetation is destroyed—may have accelerated the process. The climate change forced pastoralists to move farther south.



Livestock Grazing

In East Africa, cattle raising was firmly established by 2000 B.C. Shepherding societies flourished in southern Africa during the last centuries B.C. These animals may have come from East Africa or they may have been introduced into the region by BANTU-speaking peoples migrating from west-central Africa.

Colonialism and its aftermath have greatly affected the lives of African pastoralists. The open ranges where they traditionally grazed their herds were fenced in, and their movements were restricted by new political borders. Agriculture and industry damaged some of the grasslands that once supported livestock. In many cases herding peoples whose livelihood was threatened participated in political movements protesting the changes.

Social relations in many livestock-based societies have also altered over the years. People who once measured wealth in animals now measure it in terms of money. Nevertheless, pastoralism is still an important part of the economies of many African countries. (*See also Animals, Domestic; Colonialism in Africa; Diseases; Economic History; Ecosystems.*)

Livingstone, David

1813–1873
British missionary
and explorer

David Livingstone went to Africa as a missionary in the mid-1800s and became one of the continent's leading explorers and geographers. He also played a key role in the movement to end the SLAVE TRADE.

Born in Blantyre, Scotland, Livingstone began work in a cotton mill at the age of ten. Determined to become a medical missionary, he studied religion and medicine, and in 1841 the London Missionary Society sent him to SOUTH AFRICA. By the late 1840s, Livingstone was eager to travel into unexplored areas. His long-term goals in Africa included abolishing the slave trade and achieving a better understanding of the continent and its people. On a journey into present-day BOTSWANA in 1849 he discovered Lake Ngami, for which he received an award from Britain's Royal Geographical Society.

Four years later, leaving his wife and children in Scotland, Livingstone began his greatest journey of exploration. It lasted for more than three years and carried him northeast to Luanda (in present-day Angola) on the Atlantic coast and then across Africa to Quelimane (in present-day Mozambique) on the Pacific coast. In the course of his travels he came upon the ZAMBEZI RIVER and its magnificent waterfall, which he named Victoria Falls after Britain's queen. From 1858 to 1864 Livingstone commanded a British government expedition up the Zambezi. Although he had hoped that the expedition would introduce modern trade to the region, its greatest success was locating Lake Malawi.

Livingstone spent the years from 1865 to his death in what is now TANZANIA and ZAMBIA, investigating the slave trade and exploring. The outside world received no news of the famous explorer. Rumors about his fate prompted Henry Morton STANLEY, an American journalist, to go to central Africa to look for him. In 1871 Stanley met the explorer on the shores of Lake Tanganyika and supposedly remarked, "Dr.



Lugard, Frederick John Dealtry

Livingstone, I presume.” Despite increasing illness Livingstone refused to accompany Stanley back to the coast. Two years later, at Chitambo in present-day Zambia, Livingstone died. His African servants carried his body to the coast, and he was later buried in Westminster Abbey, London.

Through his journals, letters, and books, as well as speeches in Britain, David Livingstone did much to inform Europeans about Africa. He promoted the view that Africans could become full members of modern civilization, and he aroused strong feelings against the slave trade. (*See also Missions and Missionaries, Travel and Exploration.*)

Lobengula

ca. 1836–1894
King of Matabeleland

Lobengula was the last ruler of the NDEBELE kingdom of Matabeleland in present-day ZIMBABWE. After the death of his father, MZILIKAZI, the founder of the kingdom, civil war broke out. Lobengula eventually won the war, and he took the throne in 1870. However, the kingdom remained in chaos.

Lobengula spent much of his reign trying to balance rebellious Ndebele groups and the demands of South African settlers and prospectors for land and mining rights. He agreed to some of their demands under pressure from Europeans, including the adventurer Cecil RHODES. Fearing that his kingdom was threatened, Lobengula also signed an agreement in 1888 with British authorities, pledging that he would have territorial negotiations only with Britain.

In response to continued threats from white settlers and miners, the Ndebele attacked an outpost of the British South Africa Company in 1893. Despite Lobengula’s requests for peace, the company retaliated brutally. An army consisting of the company’s police force and off-duty British soldiers attacked the Ndebele settlement of Bulawayo and burned it to the ground. Lobengula died of smallpox while retreating. (*See also Southern Africa, History.*)

Lugard, Frederick John Dealtry

1858–1945
British colonial administrator

Frederick John Dealtry Lugard played an important role in British colonial Africa. Lugard worked to end African slavery and slave trading. He also created the system of “indirect rule,” which gave traditional African authorities considerable control over their local affairs.

Born in India of missionary parents, Lugard attended school in England and began a career in the military. In the 1890s he led several expeditions in Africa and helped bring the territory of Buganda under British rule. From 1900 to 1906, Lugard served as high commissioner of the protectorate* of Northern Nigeria, where he introduced the system of indirect rule. As governor-general of Northern and Southern Nigeria from 1912 to 1919, he sought to unify these two colonies. Only partially successful, he failed to create an efficient central administration on which to build a united NIGERIA.

After retiring in 1919, Lugard continued working on matters related to Africa. As British representative to a commission on colonial affairs

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state



Lugard, Frederick John Dealtry

* **League of Nations** organization founded to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

with the League of Nations*, he dealt with issues related to slavery and African labor. An opponent of the transfer of power to European settlers in KENYA, he also opposed the Italian invasion of Ethiopia in 1935.

Throughout his career Lugard worked on behalf of Africans. He believed that the ultimate aim of colonial rule was to grant independence to African peoples. However, he considered his task to be protecting Africans from exploitation* rather than preparing them for independence. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Government and Political Systems, Slave Trade.*)

Lumumba, Patrice Emery

1925–1961
Congolese political leader

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

Patrice Emery Lumumba was the first prime minister of Zaire, the country now called CONGO (KINSHASA). Known for his fervent nationalism* and his commitment to freeing Africa from colonial rule, Lumumba played a leading role in gaining independence for his country.

Born in the Kasai province of the Belgian Congo, Lumumba received a basic education at Christian missionary schools and then continued to study and read widely on his own. He went to work as a clerk in a post office and held important positions in several employees' organizations. In the mid-1950s, he became active in politics, founding the Congolese National Movement in 1958. His party differed from other parties in its broad appeal to both nationalism and Pan-Africanism—a movement to unite blacks throughout the continent and oppose racism and colonialism. Lumumba and the party worked toward independence from Belgium.

Lumumba was the most important leader in the independence movement for a number of reasons, the most important of which was his political views. Those views were based both on his own experiences in Africa and on the knowledge he gained attending important conferences in Europe. Additionally, Lumumba had excellent public speaking skills and an ability to work with people from many different political parties. When the first general election was held in 1960, his party was the clear winner, despite Belgian opposition.

When the colony gained its independence as Zaire in 1960, Lumumba served as the first prime minister. He immediately faced a number of crises, including secession* movements by the provinces of Kasai and mineral-rich Katanga. Lumumba did what he could to deal with the situation, but his army was weak and his administration inexperienced. When the United Nations ignored his appeals for help, Lumumba sought assistance from the Soviet Union*, a move that alarmed many Western powers and fueled opposition to him within Zaire.

In September 1960, Zairan president Joseph Kasavubu dismissed Lumumba as prime minister. Then, on February 12, 1961, Lumumba was arrested and murdered in the city of Elisabethville by anti-Lumumba forces loyal to Kasavubu. His death shocked and angered many in Africa, and later even his enemies called him a national hero. (*See also Independence Movements.*)

* **secession** formal withdrawal from an organization or country

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

Luo

The Luo, an ethnic group of East Africa, inhabit a region on the eastern side of Lake Victoria. They trace their descent from people who migrated south from the Nile Valley region of southern **SUDAN** about 500 years ago. The majority of the Luo live in **KENYA**, but sizable numbers are also found in **UGANDA** and **TANZANIA**.

Luo territory consists of flat dry country near Lake Victoria and hilly fertile areas to the north and east. The rural Luo live mainly by farming but also engage in livestock herding and fishing. Cattle play an important role in their society, both as ceremonial sacrifices and as bridewealth—payments from a groom and his kin to the bride's family.

Rural Luo generally live in scattered homesteads surrounded by fields. Most Luo towns, including Kisumu, grew up around important marketplaces. Luo-speaking communities can also be found in **NAIROBI**, Mombasa, and other East African cities. These urban dwellers, who work mainly as laborers, maintain strong economic, social, and spiritual ties to Luo communities in the Lake Victoria region.

Luo society is organized according to clans* that trace descent through male relatives. Inheritance of land and cattle is also through the male line. When a Luo woman marries, she moves to the home of her husband, creating bonds that link various Luo communities. Since Kenya gained its independence, the Luo have tended to play important roles in opposition parties because **GIKUYU**-speakers and members of Kalenjin groups have dominated the country's political and economic life.

Education is very important to the Luo, who are known for their skill in English. Because of this, Luo-speakers have dominated many departments in East African universities. In religion, most Luo practice Roman Catholicism or Protestant faiths, although some are followers of Islam*. Luo country is also home to large numbers of independent Christian churches. (See also **Christianity in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Mboya, Tom.**)

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Lusaka

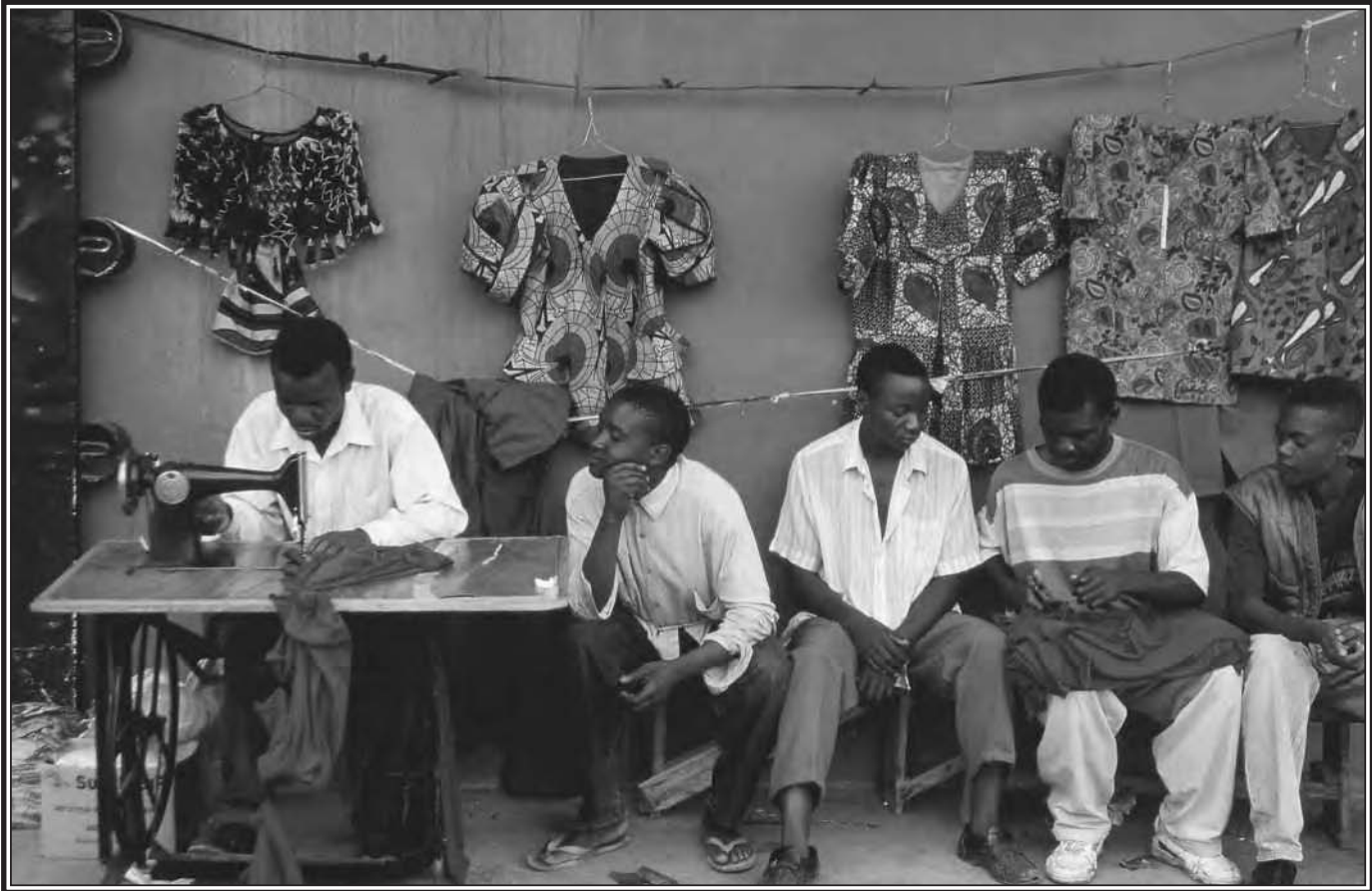
Lusaka, the capital of **ZAMBIA**, is a sprawling city of about 1.5 million people located in an agricultural region. A financial and commercial center, the city lies at the junction of major rail lines heading to the Copper Belt, the city of Livingstone, and **TANZANIA**.

Lusaka became the capital of the British colony of Northern Rhodesia in 1935. The city's architecture and design were meant to demonstrate European dominance and to serve as a symbol of the authority and dignity of the British monarchy.

During the colonial period Lusaka was a hub of opposition to British rule. In 1948 various African leaders met there and established the Northern Rhodesia African Congress, a group that worked for African rights and independence. In 1960 Lusaka was the center of a campaign of civil disobedience* aimed at undermining the Central African Confederation of the colonies of Northern Rhodesia, Southern Rhodesia, and Nyasaland, which the British had established in 1953. This cam-

* **civil disobedience** policy of peaceful, nonviolent actions to demonstrate opposition

Lusaka



A major commercial center, the Zambian capital of Lusaka is home to many large and small industries. The men shown here work in a tailor's stall in the market.

paign led to the breakup of the confederation in 1963 and to Zambia's independence a year later. Lusaka remained the capital of the newly independent nation.

In the 1970s and 1980s Lusaka served as headquarters of the African National Congress and other groups involved in fighting white-dominated governments in SOUTH AFRICA, ZIMBABWE, and MOZAMBIQUE. The city's role as a center of opposition to white rule faded in later years as black Africans took power in those three countries. Among the biggest challenges facing Lusaka today are rapid population growth and economic development.

Lutuli, Albert

1898–1967

South African political leader

Albert Lutuli was president of the African National Congress (ANC), a black-led political party in SOUTH AFRICA that fought for African rights. In 1960 he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in the nonviolent struggle against racism.

The son of a preacher, Albert John Mavumbi Lutuli was born in Southern Rhodesia (present-day ZIMBABWE) and grew up in Natal, South Africa. After graduating from college, Lutuli became a teacher in Natal. Elected a ZULU chief in 1935, he administered local justice and organized peasant farmers.



Macaulay, Herbert Samuel Heelas

In 1945 Lutuli joined the ANC. Forced to resign as Zulu chief in 1952 because of his work with the political group, Lutuli was elected ANC president the same year. In this role, Lutuli helped transform the party from a collection of educated and privileged blacks into a broad-based popular movement.

While serving as ANC president, Lutuli was often confined to his neighborhood by government authorities and banned from attending political gatherings. Despite these restrictions, he had considerable influence and enjoyed widespread loyalty from black Africans.

In his later years, Lutuli was considered an honored elder statesman. By this time, however, the ANC had begun to abandon his nonviolent methods and adopt more radical policies. Still confined to his neighborhood by the authorities, Lutuli died in 1967 after being struck by a train near his home. (*See also Apartheid.*)

Maasai

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding

The Maasai are made up of about a dozen ethnic groups who live in the Rift Valley of east Africa, primarily in KENYA and TANZANIA. These groups speak a language called Maa and share many cultural characteristics, such as the way they dress. Their social systems are based on clans* and age-sets, groups of people of the same age. The society has no centralized political leadership. In the past, the Maasai had an effective military organization for raiding and warfare, and their warriors were known for great courage and strength.

The Maasai have traditionally been cattle herders with a pastoralist* lifestyle. However, many have also practiced agriculture and engaged in trade. Some have close ties through marriage with various Bantu-speaking groups, including the GIKUYU. Photographers and travel writers often portray the Maasai as a “pure” and “untouched” society of cattle herders and warriors. However, some Maasai now live in towns. Perhaps more than other groups in Africa, the Maasai have shown an unwillingness to accept many aspects of Western culture because of a fierce pride in their traditional ways of life. (*See also Ethnic Groups and Identity, Livestock Grazing.*)

Macaulay, Herbert Samuel Heelas

1864–1946

Nigerian political leader

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one’s country

Considered the founder of Nigerian nationalism*, Herbert Samuel Heelas Macaulay promoted self-government in NIGERIA in the early 1900s. Born into an educated, Christian Nigerian family, Macaulay attended school in Lagos. In 1890 he won a scholarship from Nigeria’s British colonial government to study abroad. After earning a degree in civil engineering in England, he returned to Nigeria and worked for the colonial administration. In 1899 Macaulay resigned to set up his own business, and he began a career of political protest against colonialism.

Engineering work brought Macaulay in contact with Nigeria’s traditional rulers, and he became familiar with the land-ownership customs that had existed before colonial times. He began publishing a newspaper, the *Lagos Daily News*, to champion the land and political rights of



Macaulay, Herbert Samuel Heelas

Nigerians. In 1923 he founded the country's first political party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP). Twenty-one years later, he was elected the first president of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (NCNC), one of several parties formed as Britain began to allow its colonies a greater degree of self-government.

Machel, Samora Moises

1933–1986
President of Mozambique

Samora Machel was a leader of the independence struggle in MOZAMBIQUE who became the country's first president in 1975. He became politically active as a young man, joining the movement known as FRELIMO that was dedicated to Mozambique's independence. He volunteered for FRELIMO military training in ALGERIA and was later sent to Mozambique to participate in armed resistance to Portuguese rule.

After FRELIMO's leader Eduardo MONDLANE was assassinated in 1969, Machel took control of the movement. Machel led military campaigns against Portuguese colonial forces in the mid-1970s that resulted in decisive victories for FRELIMO. In 1975 Mozambique gained its independence and Machel was elected president. His presidency was marked by efforts to combat rebels from Rhodesia and SOUTH AFRICA sent to undermine the new nation. In 1986 he died in an airplane crash that many suspect was caused by sabotage. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Madagascar

The island nation of Madagascar lies off the southeastern coast of Africa. A most unusual place, the island contains an amazing diversity of plants, animals, and environments. Perhaps the most intriguing aspect of Madagascar, though, is the origin of its people—trying to determine where they came from and when they arrived.

GEOGRAPHY

Although now an island, Madagascar at one time belonged to a giant continent called Gondwanaland that also included Africa, India, and Australia. This continent broke up some 150 million years ago, and Madagascar drifted to its current location about 240 miles from mainland Africa.

Madagascar consists of low-lying coasts surrounding a central plateau with mountains reaching nearly 9,500 feet. The western half of the island rises gradually from the coast in a series of hills and plateaus to the more mountainous interior. The eastern part contains a narrow coastal strip bordered by steep cliffs and mountainsides that rise abruptly to the central plateau.

At one time rain forests covered much of the island's interior, but over the centuries most of them have been cleared for agriculture. Major forests remain only on the mountains near the eastern coast and in the far northwest. Most of the island's interior hills are covered with thin vegetation. Savannas* dominate the western part of Madagascar, while the south is quite dry and contains large areas of semidesert.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Madagascar



* **monsoon** seasonal winds, often associated with heavy rainfall

Trade winds from the southeast blow across Madagascar throughout the year. From December to May these winds meet monsoon* winds coming from the northwest. During this period, rain falls almost every day, with the east coast receiving more than the west coast. Between May and October the weather becomes generally cooler and drier, and at higher elevations temperatures can fall to freezing. Madagascar has many local climate variations as well, and changes from one area to the next can be dramatic.



Madagascar

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Although little is known of its early history, it appears that Madagascar was settled by people from lands bordering the Indian Ocean. When they arrived is still a mystery. In a relatively short time these different peoples created a uniform culture, but one with distinctive differences in various parts of the island. This combination of unity and diversity has been an important factor in Madagascar's historical and political development.

Early History. Archaeological evidence indicates that Madagascar was one of the last places on earth to be settled by humans. The earliest traces of humans date back around 1,900 years, but the first continuously occupied site is much more recent—from about the A.D. 700s. Linguistic* evidence suggests that the early settlers probably came from Africa and from what is now Indonesia. Researchers have found a relationship between the local Malagasy language and languages spoken on the Indonesian island of Borneo and have also demonstrated the significant influence of BANTU languages of eastern and southern Africa.

Genetic evidence indicates that the ancestors of the Malagasy, the people of Madagascar, came from India and lands surrounding the Persian Gulf as well as from Africa and Indonesia. Some scholars believe that Africans were the island's first settlers, joined later by Asians. Others think that the Asian populations came first and the Africans arrived later. Still others suggest that Asian immigrants migrated to Africa where they mixed with local peoples and that the descendants of the mixed population later settled on Madagascar.

In any event, by about 1350 the original inhabitants of Madagascar had spread out across the island and established settlements both along the coasts and in the interior. Most of these early sites were small farming or herding communities, but the northwest coast had an urban trading center called Mahilaka of about 10,000 inhabitants.

Between the early 1500s and mid-1700s, a number of kingdoms arose in Madagascar alongside many scattered groups with no central authority. The largest of these kingdoms, Madagascar, belonged to the Merina. Their king, Ratsimilaho, hoped to unify the island, but he died in 1750 before he could accomplish that task. The failure to unite the various kingdoms marked the beginning of a period of instability that ended with the French conquest of Madagascar in the late 1800s.

Anarchy and Consolidation. After Ratsimilaho died, his kingdom was divided among his four sons and soon fell into disarray. It was not reunited until the reign of King Andrianampoinimerina (1783–1810), who launched a series of military campaigns to conquer neighboring peoples. His successor, Radama I (1810–1828), extended Merina control over about two-thirds of the island.

The British governor of MAURITIUS helped Radama expand, providing military technology and other assistance in hopes of keeping the island out of French hands. Radama was succeeded by Queen Ranaivalona I, who came from a nonnoble Merina clan* called the Hova. Under her rule, the Hova increased their power and wealth at the expense of the

* **linguistic** relating to the study of languages

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Madagascar

The Ways of the Ancestors

The Malagasy have an intense interest in the origins and practices of their ancestors. One way that they express this interest is through an emphasis on proper burial and the creation of large and elaborate tombs. Regardless of how far from home they move, Malagasy try to return to ancestral tombs when a relative is buried. Most such tombs contain several ancestors. Family members assume responsibility for building and maintaining these tombs. Burial itself is an important ritual, and people will often spend most of their resources for a memorable burial as an honored ancestor.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

rest of the Malagasy peoples. Ranavalona was more hostile to European influence, even closing the island's ports to outside trade.

Merina rule was far from popular on Madagascar. Most of the conquered peoples had no desire to be governed by the Merina, who exploited* them politically and economically. The situation became worse under King Radama II (1861–1863), who reopened Madagascar to European influence. He rashly adopted many Western ways that were unpopular with most Malagasy. Radama II was assassinated. His brother succeeded him but was overthrown after only one year. In 1864 Rainilaiarivony, the Merina prime minister, took control of the kingdom. Ruling for more than 30 years, he reorganized and modernized the army and adopted more favorable policies toward the non-Merina population.

Rainilaiarivony and his queen, Ranavalona II, converted to Protestantism in 1869. Because only educated Merina followed their lead, the conversion further widened the gulf between the Merina and non-Merina Malagasy. Tensions increased as the Merina became more Westernized. However, internal division was only one problem with which Rainilaiarivony had to deal. His kingdom also faced the threat of France's colonial ambitions.

French Conquest and Colonialism. In the early 1860s, the Merina ruler Radama II signed a treaty with a Frenchman named Lambert. Called the Lambert Charter, it granted the French territorial rights to part of Madagascar. The agreement was later canceled by the Malagasy ruler.

Relations with France grew worse when the Merina kingdom adopted Protestantism (France was a Catholic country). The French responded by claiming the land mentioned in the Lambert Charter. Madagascar appealed without success to both Great Britain and the United States, and in 1883 the French invaded the island.

The Franco-Malagasy War lasted two years and ended in victory for Madagascar, which maintained its independence. In 1890, however, France and Britain signed an agreement that recognized France's right to establish a protectorate* over the island. In return, the French agreed to a British protectorate over ZANZIBAR.

In 1895 the French again invaded Madagascar and quickly defeated Merina forces. The Merina rulers then signed a treaty in which they agreed to the protectorate. The next year Merina nobles led an uprising against French rule. The French crushed the rebellion and exiled the queen, bringing an end to the Kingdom of Madagascar. In the late 1890s and early 1900s, the French put down several other rebellions on the island.

Under French rule, Madagascar's cities were modernized; ports, roads, and railroads were built; and French settlers arrived on the island. These colonists were given various special privileges, such as the right to use forced Malagasy labor. The Malagasy were taxed and compelled to serve in the French army. Those who failed to obey French authority received harsh punishments. The French also outlawed trade unions and restricted freedom of the press. Malagasy discontent with colonial rule rose

Madagascar

after World War I, but in the 1930s a change in the French government led to some improvement in conditions.

Malagasy involvement in World War II helped move the country toward independence. In 1944 Madagascar was allowed to send four elected representatives to the French parliament. Two years later the island's first independent political party was founded. Madagascar became an overseas territory of France, which gave French citizenship to all Malagasy.

Although white settlers and civil servants resisted the changes sweeping Madagascar, nationalist* feelings intensified. In 1947 the Malagasy Revolt erupted. French reaction was swift and brutal, with some 90,000 Malagasy killed in violent reprisals. Although the rebellion was crushed, the island remained in a state of siege for nearly ten years as France tried to maintain control by force.

By this time events were racing beyond French control. In 1956 pressure from abroad led France to allow internal self-rule to its overseas territories. Two years later Madagascar voted to become a self-governing republic within the French community. In 1958 Madagascar adopted a new constitution calling for complete independence, which France granted in June 1960.

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

The terraced fields carved into the side of a mountain in central Madagascar are planted with rice, a mainstay of the local diet.





Madagascar

After Independence. The first president of the newly independent nation was a former schoolteacher, Philibert Tsiranana. He maintained close ties with France and became one of the founders of the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU).

Reelected twice as president, Tsiranana hoped to improve the lives of Malagasy peasants. However, he angered the people by trading with South Africa, known for its harsh treatment of blacks and Asians under apartheid*. Moreover, during Tsiranana's rule, Europeans assumed leading positions in Madagascar's economy, which was strongly focused on trade with France. This trade benefited France more than it did Madagascar. The level of corruption in government was also high, and many young Malagasy saw little hope for a better future.

Disappointment with Tsiranana's rule led in 1972 to the rise of a student movement and to a series of strikes and rebellions. The killing of 400 demonstrators by the police caused opposition parties to boycott* elections that year. When the army refused to support Tsiranana, he asked the army commander, General Gabriel Ramanantsoa, to form a new government.

After taking power, Ramanantsoa met with French leaders to arrange the closing of French military bases on Madagascar and the withdrawal of foreign troops. At the same time, he developed closer ties with African nations, released political prisoners, introduced economic reforms, took steps to curb corruption, and replaced French teachers and civil servants with Malagasy.

Despite Ramanantsoa's efforts, opponents attempted a coup* in 1974, and the following year he gave up power. But his successor was assassinated six days later, and the military formed yet another government. The man chosen to lead the country was Lieutenant Didier Ratsiraka, who had served as Ramanantsoa's foreign minister.

Leftist* Ratsiraka nationalized* many businesses and encouraged collective agricultural policies. Moderately successful at first, these policies soon led to economic decline, and Madagascar was forced to adopt tough economic reforms to qualify for international loans. These reforms stabilized some parts of the economy, but also led to higher food prices, food shortages, and greater unemployment as the nationalized companies came under private ownership. Despite these difficulties, Ratsiraka was reelected in 1983.

After his reelection, Ratsiraka tried to turn Madagascar into a one-party state. He restricted freedom of the press as well as the formation of new political parties. Elected again in 1989 with support from the military, Ratsiraka eventually bowed to pressure from church leaders and other groups and restored many of the freedoms he had taken away. However, this did not prevent unrest, and in 1991 a massive demonstration calling for more democracy ended in violence when police fired on the crowd, killing many demonstrators.

During this time a doctor named Albert Zafy emerged as a leading opponent of Ratsiraka's government. In 1992 a new constitution was adopted that limited presidential powers. In elections held later that year, Zafy became president. However, the new government was unstable, with several prime ministers coming and going during the next four years.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

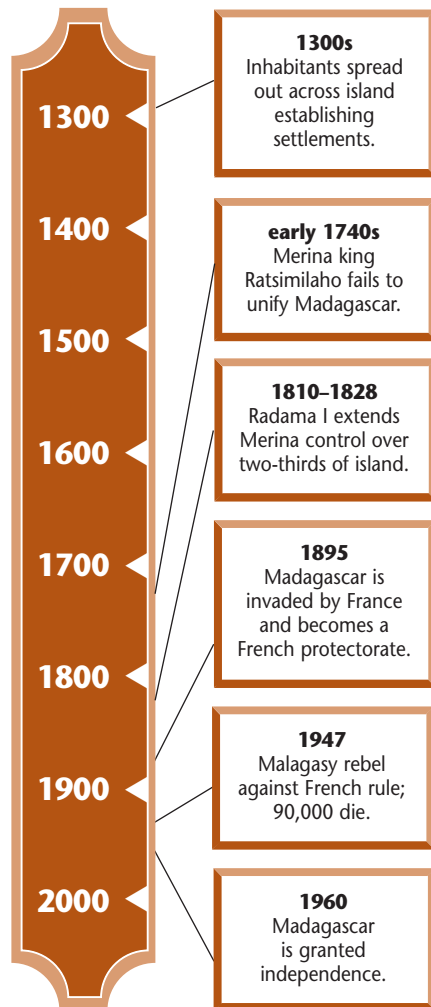
* **boycott** to refuse to participate or buy goods, as a means of protest

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **leftist** inclined to support radical reform and change; often associated with the ideas of communism and socialism

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

Madagascar



* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

* **literate** able to read and write

In 1996 Zafy was impeached by the parliament after a long-running feud and removed from office. In the elections that followed, the voters returned Ratsiraka to power. Ratsiraka then proposed changes to the constitution that strengthened presidential powers. Voters, not fully understanding the changes and hoping to end some of the instability that plagued Zafy's presidency, approved the measures by a slim margin. Ratsiraka has since made moves to consolidate his power while putting together a government that reflects the diversity of Madagascar's population. His cabinet included members of many different ethnic groups.

ECONOMY

About 75 percent of Madagascar's working population is engaged in agriculture. The staple* crop is rice, which is grown in the lowlands on marshy plains and in the highlands on terraces carved into the sides of mountains. At one time rice was also a major export crop, but the failure of various agricultural policies has forced Madagascar to import rice. The island's main exports now are crops such as coffee, sugar, cloves, vanilla, pepper, and tobacco. The instability of world prices for these products is a major reason for Madagascar's slow economic growth. However, soil erosion caused by the massive clearing of forests and overgrazing of livestock has also led to a decline in agriculture.

Madagascar's industry includes some mining and manufacturing, but these activities play only a minor role in the economy. In the late 1990s, a mining boom in sapphires contributed little to the island's income and caused great environmental damage. As a result of its weak economy and slow economic growth, Madagascar is heavily dependent upon foreign aid, particularly from France.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

In the colonial era the French divided the Malagasy into 20 different ethnic groups, but ethnicity is not a useful basis for classification. The Malagasy themselves form communities based on KINSHIP, shared location and customs, and common histories and leadership.

The largest Malagasy group, the Merina, make up about 25 percent of the population. They live in the central highlands. Most Merina make their living as rice farmers, but those who live in cities work in government or as traders or teachers. The Merina are highly literate* and largely Christian.

The Betsimisaraka of the central east coast, the second largest group, are also mainly rice farmers. The Betsimisaraka arose from families who banded together to control the SLAVE TRADE. The Merina conquered them during the 1800s, and a shared history of domination by the Merina is part of their group identity. Traditional ancestor worship is still common among the Betsimisaraka, but Christianity has gained converts.

Perhaps the most important distinction among the Malagasy is between the Merina and the *côtier* ("coastal peoples"). The term *côtier* refers to non-Merina groups. These peoples share a history of domination by the Merina that continued under colonial rule. The French relied on the Merina to administer their colonial government, which



Madagascar

POPULATION:

15,506,472 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

226,658 sq. mi. (587,044 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Malagasy and French (both official)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Malagasy franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 52%, Christian 41%, Muslim 7%

CITIES:

Antananarivo (capital), 1,507,000 (2000 est.); Mahajanga, Toamasina, Fianarantsoa, Antseranana

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 120–190 in. (3,000–5,000 mm) on the east coast to 20 in. (510 mm) in the southwest

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$780 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, cloves, vanilla, shellfish, beans, rice, sugar, cassava, peanuts, livestock

Manufacturing: meat processing, textiles, petroleum products

Mining: chromite, graphite, coal, bauxite

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale, Senate, and prime minister appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1972 President Philibert Tsiranana

1972–1975 Prime Minister Major General Cabriel Ramanantsoa

Feb. 1975 General Gilles Andriamahazo

1975–1993 President Didier Ratsiraka

1993–1996 President Albert Zafy

1996–1997 Interim president Norbet Ratsirahonana

1997– President Didier Ratsiraka

ARMED FORCES:

21,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–13; literacy rate 46%

gave the group many advantages in education and other areas. The Merina still exercise most economic and political power, though President Ratsiraka is a *côtier*.

While the Merina-*côtier* rivalry pulls the country apart, the common Malagasy language helps to keep it together. Also beneficial is the fact that the national borders are based on geography rather than imposed by colonial powers. Thus, unlike most of Africa, Madagascar has escaped the problem of having competing ethnic groups forced together to form a modern state. (See also **Boundaries in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity.**)

Maghreb

Maghreb, or Maghrib, is an Arabic word meaning “west” or “place of sunset.” It refers to the area of North Africa west of EGYPT. Known in ancient times as Africa Minor, the Maghreb refers to MOROCCO, ALGERIA, TUNISIA, and sometimes LIBYA. The interior desert regions of these countries are not always considered part of the Maghreb.

The Maghreb contains fertile coastal plains, mountains, and scrubland in the south that merges into the SAHARA DESERT. The area north of the mountains generally receives enough rainfall to support intensive agriculture on the coastal plains, where most of the population lives.

The ancestors of the BERBERS are the original inhabitants of the region. The Arabs conquered the Maghreb between A.D. 643 and 711 and ruled it through semi-independent kingdoms and chiefdoms. From the 800s to the 1300s, the region was the center of an active trading economy

Maghreb

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

linked by caravan routes across the desert to sub-Saharan* Africa. Although colonized by European powers in the 1800s and 1900s, the Maghreb has retained much of its Arab heritage, including the Arabic language and Islamic religion. (See also **Arabs in Africa, Islam in Africa, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures.**)

MAGIC

See *Witchcraft and Sorcery*.

Mahdi, al-

ca. 1840–1885
Sudanese religious leader

See
color plate 8,
vol. 2.

Al-Mahdi, the founder of an Islamic religious movement, seized control of **SUDAN** and established an empire that lasted for nearly 20 years. Born Muhammed Ahmad ibn Sayyid Abdullah, he began religious studies at an early age and joined a religious order in the capital city of **KHARTOUM**. He eventually left the order and moved with a number of disciples to an island in the **NILE RIVER**.

In 1881 he proclaimed that he was al-Mahdi, a religious leader who according to tradition would return to restore and purify Islam. He sent letters to religious leaders in Sudan, urging them to reject the Turkish-Egyptian political rulers who controlled the country. Two months later, against great odds, he and his followers managed to defeat an army sent by the Egyptian government. Over the next two years, three more government armies met the same fate, and many new supporters joined al-Mahdi's cause.

Assembling an army of some 100,000 men, al-Mahdi fought and defeated British troops led by General Charles **GORDON** and captured Khartoum in 1885. He then established his own capital across the Nile in Omdurman, where he set up an empire based on Islamic law and the teachings of the Muslim holy book, the Qur'an. But less than six months after his victory, he died suddenly, possibly of typhus. The Mahdiya, as his empire was known, controlled all of northern Sudan until 1898, when it was conquered by British troops. Al-Mahdi's successful revolt against foreign domination caused later Sudanese leaders to look up to him as the father of their country's independence. (See also **Islam in Africa.**)

Maherero, Samuel

ca. 1854–1923
Chief of the Herero

Samuel Maherero became chief of the **HERERO** people of **NAMBIA** after the death of his father in 1890. Baptized and schooled by German missionaries, Maherero cooperated with German colonists who arrived in Namibia about this time. By selling land to the Germans, he obtained their support in overthrowing and conquering rival Herero chiefs.

In 1904, misunderstandings and tensions led to war between the Herero and white settlers. The Germans defeated Maherero and his fol-



Maji Maji

lowers and drove them into the KALAHARI DESERT. Many died before reaching Bechuanaland (modern BOTSWANA) and receiving sanctuary. Prohibited from returning to Namibia, Maherero led his followers into SOUTH AFRICA. There they worked in the gold mines in exchange for the right to settle in the country. In 1921 he returned to Bechuanaland and died soon afterward. His body was taken back to Namibia where he was buried next to his father and grandfather.

Mahfouz, Naguib

1911–
Egyptian writer

Author of 40 novels and short story collections and more than 30 screenplays, Naguib Mahfouz received the Nobel Prize for literature in 1988. He was the first Arabic author to win that honor, which brought attention to his work and to modern Arabic fiction in general. During most of his writing career, Mahfouz also worked in the Egyptian civil service.

Born in Cairo, Mahfouz studied philosophy at Cairo University. In the 1930s he published many articles and short stories. His first novels dealt with ancient Egypt. After World War II, however, Mahfouz became interested in the political and social changes occurring in Egypt and soon began writing about modern life. His masterpiece, a set of three novels called *Al-Thulathiyya* or *The Cairo Trilogy* (1956–1957), tells the story of several Cairo families across three generations. Later works examine issues such as censorship, religion, politics, and the treatment of women.

The opinions Mahfouz expresses have prompted some Muslims to criticize his writing. In 1994 representatives of an Egyptian Islamic movement tried unsuccessfully to kidnap the author. Mahfouz suffered a severe neck injury in the attack, but he continues to write by dictating his work to others. (*See also Literature.*)

Maji Maji

Between 1905 and 1907 several small ethnic groups from Tanganyika (present-day TANZANIA) rebelled against German colonial authorities in an uprising known as the Maji Maji Rebellion. Although unsuccessful, the rebellion was one of the most important events in the history of East Africa.

The Maji Maji Rebellion was centered in the southern highlands of German East Africa, a colonial territory that included Tanganyika and present-day RWANDA and BURUNDI. During the uprising, 20 small groups united in opposition to German rule, though they often quarreled among themselves. The groups resented German attempts to force them to grow cotton, pay high taxes, and provide labor for colonists. They also objected to the replacement of indigenous* local leaders with colonial administrators.

The name of the rebellion came from the Swahili word for water, *maji*. In 1902 a healer named Kinjikitile became the guardian of a pool believed to have magical powers. Kinjikitile declared that the people of the region should join together to fight the Germans and that drinking

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



Maji Maji

the pool's water would make them immune to German bullets. People also came to believe that drinking the water would cause them to form spiritual bonds with the other groups involved in the struggle.

During a drought in 1904, people came from throughout the area to the magical pool to ask for rain, and Kinjikitile's message spread widely. The first attacks against the Germans came in July 1905. The next month Kinjikitile and one of his assistants were seized and hanged by the Germans. After their deaths, the uprising spread and became more serious. The Germans finally defeated the rebels in 1907. Today the uprising is remembered as a symbol of the common purpose and identity of the people of Tanzania. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Prophetic Movements.**)



Malawi

Malawi, the former British colony of Nyasaland, is a small, landlocked nation in southeastern Africa. One of the most densely populated countries in Africa, many of its people live in desperate poverty. Since gaining independence in 1964, the nation has struggled to develop its economy and meet the needs of its people.

Geography. About 500 miles from north to south and a little more than 100 miles across at its widest point, Malawi is a narrow, curving land on the western edge of Africa's Great Rift Valley. It is bordered on the east by Lake Malawi (formerly Lake Nyasa), one of the largest lakes in Africa. The lake takes up more than one-fifth of the total area of the country. The people of Malawi have both historic and economic links to the lake.

Malawi is a spectacular land of high mountains covered with lush forests, sparkling lakes, and rolling plateaus. The nation's plateau regions enjoy some of the most fertile soils in east Africa, a feature that has attracted settlement throughout Malawi's history. The nation's climate is generally temperate, with a rainy season between November and April. Temperatures vary with the seasons, but because of the high altitude in much of the country they average between 55° and 85°F.

History and Government. The first Bantu-speaking inhabitants of Malawi arrived in the area nearly 2,000 years ago. Around the 1400s more Bantu peoples began migrating into the region from the north. Some only passed through Malawi and continued moving into southern Africa, but many stayed and eventually established a number of chiefdoms and kingdoms. Among the most important of the kingdoms were Kalanga, Lundu, and Undi, which dominated different parts of the region from the 1500s to the 1700s.

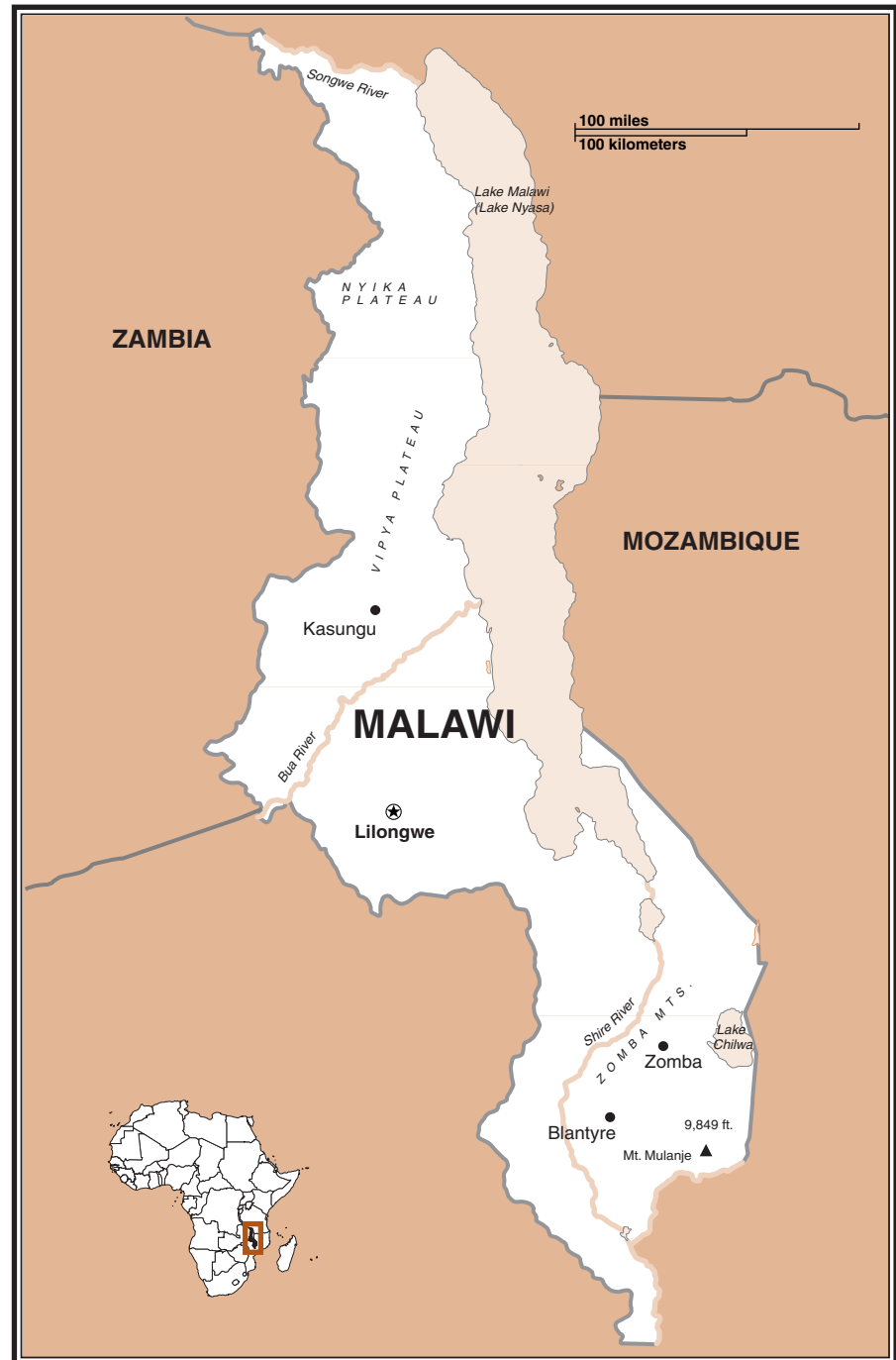
When Portuguese traders reached the region in the 1500s, they established commercial relations with various groups. Competition for trade became a key factor in political power, and some kingdoms declined in importance as trade went to other groups. During the 1800s other Bantu peoples invaded the region. These invasions were linked directly to the **IVORY TRADE** and the growing **SLAVE TRADE**.



Religion and Protest

The migration of workers from Nyasaland to other parts of Africa contributed to the growth of protest movements against colonial rule throughout the region. One of these was the Watchtower movement of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Originating in northern Nyasaland, the movement took root in the mining centers of Northern and Southern Rhodesia. Protests continued after the colonial period ended. In the 1970s the government of Malawi harassed Jehovah's Witnesses because of their activities, causing thousands to flee into exile in neighboring countries.

Malawi



European missionaries became active in Malawi in the mid-1800s and established numerous missions and schools. British missionaries dominated and played a key role in the establishment of a colonial administration. One of the most famous missionaries in the region was David LIVINGSTONE.

In 1889 the British South Africa Company received a royal charter to develop its economic interests in a large area of southern Africa, including the region near Lake Malawi. To ensure control, British officials



Malawi

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

made a series of treaties with chiefs in the region. As a result of these treaties, the region became a British protectorate* in 1891. In 1907 the territory was renamed Nyasaland.

As white settlers moved into Nyasaland they took much of the best agricultural land, leaving many Africans without land to farm. Unable to work and feed their families, many Africans migrated to Northern Rhodesia (present-day ZAMBIA), Southern Rhodesia (present-day ZIMBABWE), and SOUTH AFRICA to work as laborers in gold, diamond, and copper mines. Continued migration of laborers from Nyasaland in the early 1900s contributed to the growing poverty of many rural areas.

The growth of the European-controlled PLANTATION SYSTEM contributed to the outbreak of rebellion in Nyasaland in 1915. Thousands of plantation workers rose up to protest the policies and brutality of their white employers. The rebellion, brief but intense, failed to win wide support before being crushed. Despite its failure, the revolt began a tradition of resistance to colonial rule.

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

In 1953 Britain joined its Rhodesian colonies and Nyasaland into a federation*. Colonial authorities believed that this would lead to more efficient administration and contribute to long-term economic and political development of the region. Africans, however, saw the federation as reinforcing white rule and opposed it bitterly. During the 1950s, protests against colonial rule in Nyasaland became increasingly forceful, leading to widespread arrests and a crackdown on opponents in 1959. In the face of growing unrest, Britain granted Nyasaland internal self-government in 1963. The following year it gained full independence as Malawi.

* **autocratic** ruling with absolute power and authority

From independence until 1994, Malawi was ruled by Hastings Kamuzu BANDA. Prime minister from 1964 until he became president in 1966, Banda was named life-president of Malawi in 1971 under a one-party political system. Under his autocratic* rule, Banda extended his powers from governmental matters to such things as regulating hair styles and dress and censoring books, magazines, and films. Intolerant of any dissent, he dealt ruthlessly with opponents, who were either imprisoned, sent into exile, or killed.

Attempts at revolt in 1965 and 1967 were crushed, and Banda faced no serious challenge to his rule until the 1990s. By that time he was coming under increasing criticism for HUMAN RIGHTS abuses. In 1992 Banda reluctantly agreed to hold multiparty democratic elections, and in 1994 he was voted out of office. The following year he was arrested and charged with killing political opponents. Banda was acquitted in 1995 and died two years later.

Malawi president Bakili Muluzi, elected in 1994, worked to improve his nation's economy, expand its infrastructure, and increase foreign investment. While his reforms led to modest improvements, they have had little effect on most rural areas of the country, which remain mired in poverty.

Economy. Although more than half of Malawi's land area is suitable for agriculture, much less than that is actually farmed. Nevertheless, agriculture is the nation's primary economic activity, employing more than 80 percent of the people and generating nearly 90 percent of



Ngwazi Hastings Kamuzu Banda served as president of Malawi from 1966 to 1994. During this time, he established a strict one-party government.

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

Malawi's export income. Many of Malawi's people engage in subsistence farming*, and rural poverty is widespread. Cash crops*, such as tobacco, tea, and sugar, also play a significant role in the nation's economy.

Malawi has very little industry and few mineral resources of any commercial value. The nation's primary industries include cement factories, sawmills, shoe factories, tobacco processing, and the manufacture of textiles, chemicals, and fertilizers. Most industrial activity occurs in the southern part of Malawi, particularly around Lilongwe, the nation's capital. Although Malawi's most important mineral resource is bauxite, an ore that contains aluminum, little has been done to extract and use this resource. Malawi's lakes and rivers provide a rich source of fish, but most of the catch reaches only local markets.

The development of Malawi's economy is hindered somewhat by the lack of an extensive infrastructure*. The country's rail network is confined to the southern part of the country, where railways link the nation with ports on the coast of neighboring MOZAMBIQUE. The country's

Malawi



The Republic of Malawi

POPULATION:

10,385,849 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

45,747 sq. mi. (118,484 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English, Chewa (both official); Tonga, Yao, Tumbuka, Lomwe

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Kwacha

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Protestant 55%, Muslim 20%, Roman Catholic 20%,
Traditional 5%

CITIES:

Lilongwe (capital), 395,500 (1994 est.); Blantyre, Zomba,
Mzuzu

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

30–40 in. (760–1,010 mm)

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$940 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: tea, tobacco, sugar, cotton, corn, potatoes, cas-
sava, sorghum, goats, peanuts

Manufacturing: agricultural product processing, cement,
sawmill products, consumer goods

Mining: lime, coal, bauxite

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Britain, 1964. Multiparty democracy
with president elected to five-year term. Governing bodies:
National Assembly (legislative body) and cabinet appointed
by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1964–1994 President Hastings Kamuzu Banda

1994– President Bakili Muluzi

ARMED FORCES:

5,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–14; literacy rate 56%

reliance on foreign investment and variations in foreign demand for Malawi's agricultural exports have often created serious financial problems for the nation.

People and Culture. Most of Malawi's people are Africans of Bantu origin, although a few Europeans and Asians also live in the country, primarily in the cities. The major ethnic groups are the Chewa, Yao, Nyanja, Chipoka, Tonga, Tumbuka, and Ngonde. The Chewa, the largest single group, occupy the central region of Malawi and areas in the far south. Among the most distinctive aspects of Chewa culture are ritual masked dances and the SECRET SOCIETIES associated with them. Masked dances are a cultural feature shared by several of the other peoples of Malawi as well. In fact, Malawi is known throughout East Africa for its dance societies, which were used in the past as a tool in social and political control.

The country's ethnic groups share other cultural features. One of these is a matrilineal social system in which descent is traced through the female rather than the male line. Despite cultural similarities, the various groups in Malawi clearly regard themselves as different from one another. Yet the country has not faced the serious ethnic conflicts that plague other African nations.

Although Malawi is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa, it is also one of the least urbanized. Nearly 90 percent of the people live in rural areas. Rural villages are generally quite small and are organized around extended families and kinship groups. Most of the nation's cities are located in the southern part of the country. (*See also Bantu Peoples, Central African Federation, Colonialism in Africa, Masks and Masquerades, Missions and Missionaries.*)

Mali

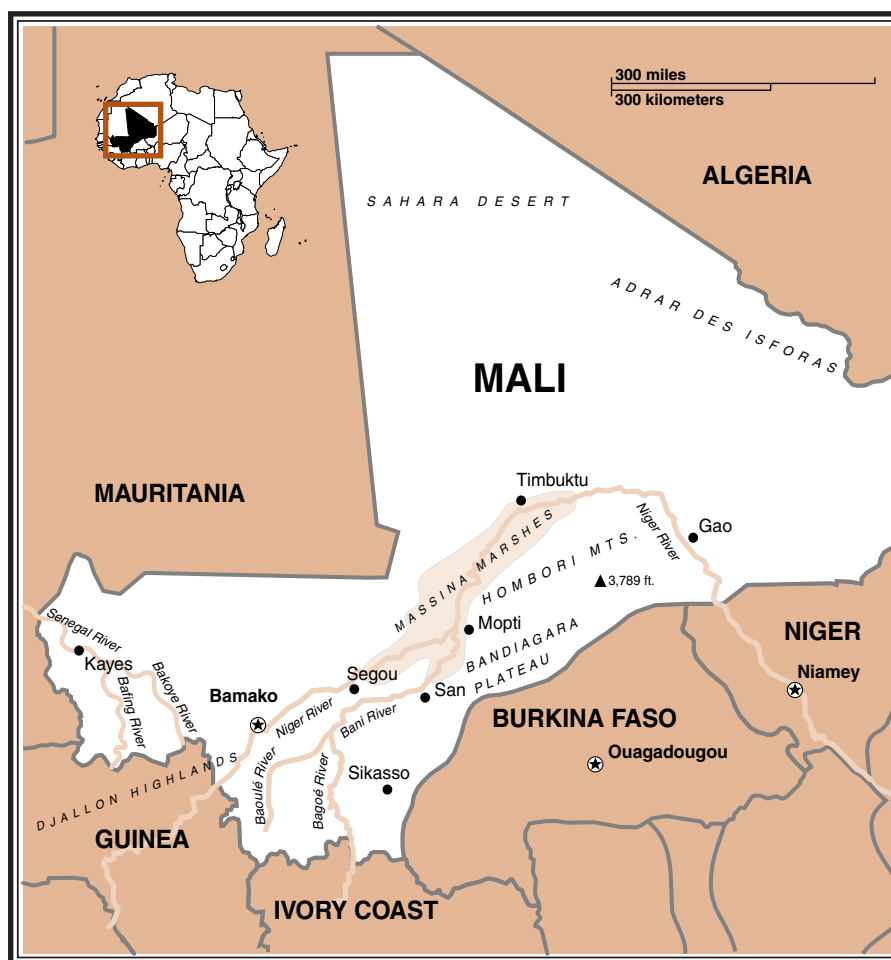
* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Large but thinly populated, the West African nation of Mali is one of the poorest in Africa. However, its early history includes a number of powerful and wealthy empires. Conquered and colonized by the French in the late 1800s, Mali gained its independence in 1960. Its modern history has involved a series of dictators and military coups*, but the recent trend has been toward developing a democratic society.

GEOGRAPHY

The largest country in West Africa, Mali is about twice the size of Texas. Its land is mostly flat and rocky and covered with poor soils that make agriculture difficult. The only mountain range, the Adrar des Iforas, lies in the northeast.

The NIGER RIVER flows through the middle of this landlocked country, providing its only access to the sea. But the river cannot be navigated in all seasons, and it passes through other nations before reaching the sea. Part of the middle Niger Valley is a vast inland delta, where the river has deposited soil and dirt. The Niger floods its delta regularly. When the waters recede, they leave behind shallow lakes, and farmers work the land that emerges.



Mali

Children at Work

Families in Mali work hard to provide for themselves, and that includes the children. About half of the country's children aged 10 to 14 work, mostly at farming. Mali has few job opportunities for people with an education, so few parents have a reason to send their children to school. Only about 20 percent of Mali's school-age population actually attends school—one of the lowest rates in the world.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Though generally hot and dry, the climate of Mali varies considerably from north to south. The northernmost region lies within the SAHARA DESERT and endures extreme heat with little rain or plant life. To the south is the SAHEL, a somewhat less dry region with a milder climate but also periods of severe drought. Mali's southernmost region enjoys the mildest temperatures and the most rainfall, from 20 to 59 inches per year. The south contains small areas of forest, extensive savannas*, and most of Mali's wildlife.

Mali has two distinct seasons, dry and wet. The dry season begins in November when a cool wind lowers temperatures throughout the country. In February a hot, dry wind called the harmattan blows out of the Sahara, pushing temperatures to their highest levels. The rainy season starts in late May or early June and lasts until October.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Inhabited since prehistoric times, Mali has seen the rise and fall of several powerful empires. Trade in slaves and gold brought wealth to these states. The kingdom of Ghana (unrelated to the modern nation of GHANA) flourished between about A.D. 800 and 1100. After Ghana came the empire of Mali, founded by SUNDJATA KEÏTA in 1235. The magnificent MANSÁ MUSA ruled Mali from 1312 to 1337. He built mosques and palaces in the city of TIMBUKTU and made it a center of Islamic* culture. In the 1460s, SUNNI ALI established the empire of Songhai, which fell to Moroccan armies in 1591.

Following the Moroccan conquest, numerous small kingdoms emerged in Mali and West Africa. One of them, Segu, was started in the early 1700s by a group of young bandits and was based on slavery and war. Macina and the Tukulor Empire, both Muslim states, flourished in the 1800s.

French Colonial Rule. French interest in the region began in the late 1850s. Twenty years later France launched a series of military campaigns against Tukulor and the other indigenous* states, crushing them easily. In 1892 it established a colony known as French Sudan over what is now Mali. The colony underwent several name and border changes in the following decades.

Life was somewhat less difficult for Africans in French Sudan than for those in other French colonies. This was mainly because the area had fewer resources the French wanted to exploit*. Still, though the French had abolished slavery, they sometimes recruited forced labor for special projects such as building a railroad. They also drafted nearly 50,000 Africans to fight in World War II.

Independence. Soldiers returning after the war played a key role in the political struggle for independence. Workers, intellectuals, religious leaders, and ethnic leaders were also involved. The colony gained a degree of self-government in 1956 and some more two years later under the name Republic of Sudan. In June 1960, the republic joined Senegal in the independent Federation of Mali. Senegal withdrew two months

Mali

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **nomadic** referring to people who travel from place to place to find food and pasture

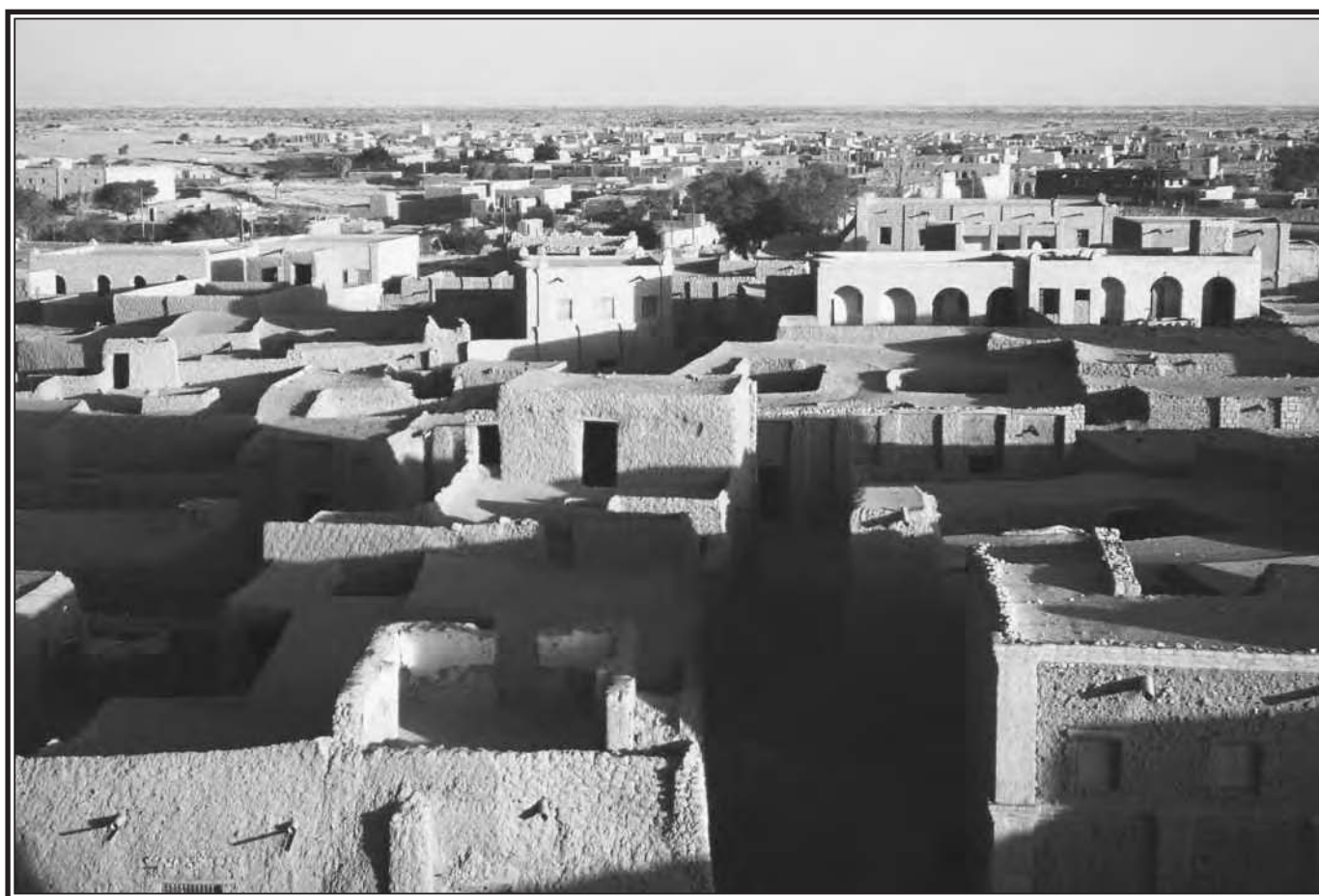
The mudbrick buildings of Timbuktu rise from the edge of the desert. Once a great center of Islamic culture and trade, Timbuktu is one of Mali's most popular destinations for tourists.

later, and the Republic of Sudan became the Republic of Mali. Soon afterward, the new nation cut all its political ties to France.

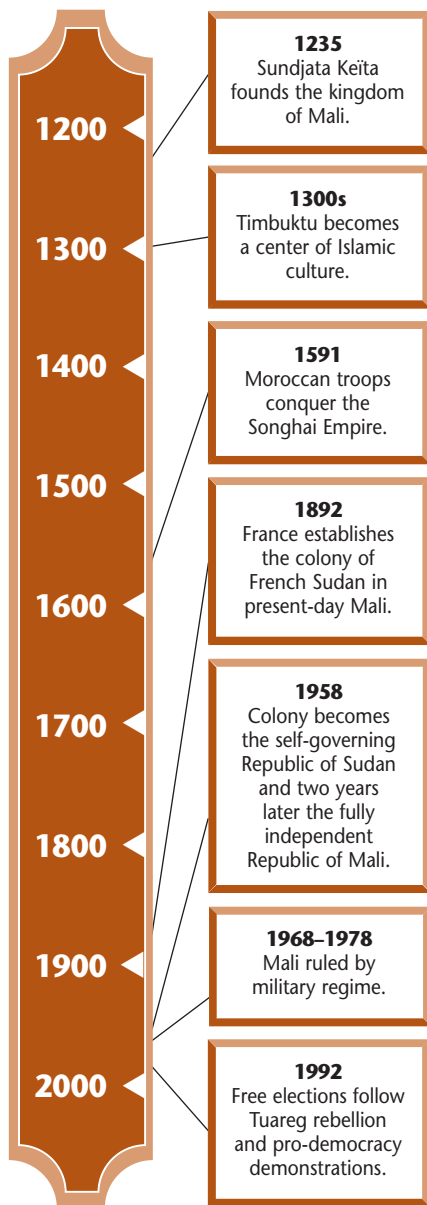
The first president, Modibo Keita, governed Mali as a one-party state. He introduced socialism* and nationalized* the economy. However, Keita's policies led to an economic disaster in Mali. Dissatisfaction with his rule grew throughout the 1960s as the nation's economic crisis deepened.

In the late 1960s, Keita began to reorganize the government and to reduce the political power of the army. In response a group of young officers, led by Lieutenant Moussa Traoré, launched a coup in November 1968. Although promising to return Mali to civilian government, Traoré ruled Mali through the military for more than a decade. A new constitution created a presidency and a legislature in 1979, but Traoré dominated this government as well.

Meanwhile, a long drought brought terrible suffering to northern Mali during the 1970s and 1980s. Traoré ignored the people most affected, the nomadic* TUAREG, and opposition to his rule grew. The drought also worsened Mali's staggering economic problems. Two international bodies, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, offered loans and aid if the government sold the national industries and cut



Mali



* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works



funding for public programs. The government agreed despite fierce protests by many people.

Another crisis hit in 1990, when the Tuareg launched a rebellion. That same year, students and workers began organizing a pro-democracy movement that led to violent demonstrations in March 1991. Days later, the military staged another coup, led by Lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré. The new ruler soon replaced the military with a plan for a multiparty democracy. Free elections in 1992 led to the election of Alpha Oumar Konaré as president, and the Tuareg gradually reached a peace agreement with the government.

Since taking power, Konaré's government has actively encouraged the development of democratic institutions, including a free press and independent radio stations. Konaré was reelected in 1997, but the elections were so poorly managed that many opponents cried foul and took to the streets. Doubt and instability have continued to plague Konaré's efforts, but he has persisted with reforms. His approach has been to give local communities the power to govern themselves and create their own schools. Meanwhile, foreign investors have begun to see Mali as a generally stable and profitable opportunity, bringing new money into the economy.

ECONOMY

Although Mali has little fertile farmland, agriculture and livestock are the foundation of its economy. The best land is found in the southern region and along the Niger River. Between 80 and 90 percent of the people work in agriculture. Most of them grow food crops for their own use. Few use modern machinery.

Commercial agriculture and livestock are important sources of foreign income. The main export crops are cotton, peanuts, and sugarcane. Cotton is the most important export crop, as it produces about half of Mali's total export earnings; livestock is the second greatest source of foreign money. However, periodic droughts damage both crops and livestock. Mali also exports fish from its lakes and the inland delta of the Niger River. Though a landlocked country, Mali is the largest producer of fish in West Africa.

Mali's abundant mineral deposits include iron, tin, petroleum, uranium, manganese, bauxite, and diamonds. Most of these resources remain undeveloped, however, because money, technology, and infrastructure* are lacking. By comparison, gold mining has attracted considerable foreign investment. In the past salt was the country's most important mineral resource. For hundreds of years, camel caravans carried salt across the Sahara to the Mediterranean world—and they still do. Though less important today, salt mines still operate in northern Mali.

A tiny manufacturing industry produces canned foods, household goods, and textiles. Most manufacturing takes place in Bamako, the capital and largest city. In manufacturing as in mining Mali suffers from a lack of investment, transportation, and infrastructure. Despite its vast size, the country has only a single rail line and few roads, most of which are unpaved.



The Republic of Mali

POPULATION:

10,685,948 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

478,767 sq. mi. (1,240,007 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Bambara, numerous others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

C.F.A. Franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 90%, Traditional 9%, Christian 1%

CITIES:

Bamako (capital), 919,000 (1999 est.); Mopti, Ségou, Kayes, Gao, Kimparana

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 20–60 in. (500–1,500 mm) in the south to 0–7 in. (0–175 mm) in the Sahara region

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$820 (1999)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cotton, millet, rice, peanuts, corn, vegetables, sorghum

Manufacturing: food processing, consumer goods, construction products

Mining: gold, phosphates, kaolin, bauxite, iron ore

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Asemblée Nationale (legislative body), Council of Ministers and prime minister appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1968 President Modibo Keita

1968 Lieutenant Moussa Traoré and Captain Yoro Diakité

1968–1991 Colonel Moussa Traoré, president after 1979

1991–1992 Lieutenant Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré

1992– President Alpha Oumar Konaré

ARMED FORCES:

7,400

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–16; literacy rate 31%

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

For more than 600 years, Mali has been a crossroads of western Africa, where people from North Africa met those from the sub-Saharan* region. Over the centuries, economic and cultural exchanges among these groups have created a web of social relations and commercial networks based on KINSHIP, political alliances, and regional homelands.

The population of Mali includes several major ethnic groups, each with its own language and cultural practices. In any given region, however, the differences have blurred through trade and migration. As a result, people tend to emphasize their family name, clan*, or place of origin more than their ethnic identity.

Black Africans dominate southern and central Mali and are the major force in the political life of the country. Speaking languages of the Mande family, these people combine indigenous black cultures with Islamic traditions. The largest and most important Mande group is the BAMBARA; related groups include the Malinke, Dyula, and Soninké. They make a living mostly by farming, ranching, and trade.

In these societies the families are patrilineal—that is, property and power pass through the male side of the family. Authority, especially in rural areas, remains with the eldest male of the family. Some ethnic groups within these societies also divide people according to social origin, with nobles at the top and descendants of slaves at the bottom. A separate caste* includes hunters, craftsmen, artists, and mystics who perform special, sometimes sacred, services for the nobles. What sets this caste apart is that they are believed to control a powerful—though potentially destructive—spiritual or magical force.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **caste** division of people into fixed classes based on birth

Mali

See
color plate 9,
vol. 4.

The main ethnic groups of the northeast are the Songhai and the FULANI. Descended from the people of the ancient Songhai Empire, the Songhai farm and raise livestock. Their traditions have been strongly shaped by Islam. The Fulani, originally nomadic herders, have been forced to establish permanent communities after severe cattle losses in the droughts in the 1970s and 1980s.

The population in northern Mali consists primarily of nomadic peoples. The Tuareg are part of the ancient BERBER people, with a strong Islamic heritage, though they speak a Berber tongue. Driving herds of livestock and trading goods, the Tuareg range over vast areas of the Sahara and northern Sahel. The Tuareg were fierce opponents of French colonial rule and still resist efforts of others to intrude on their land or traditions. However, in recent times many young men have migrated to Bamako and urban areas in foreign countries to find work. (*See also Arabs in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Deserts and Drought, Ethnic Groups and Identity, French West Africa, Islam in Africa, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)

MALI, KINGDOM OF

See *Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*

Mami Wata

Mami Wata is a female figure important to religious and social life in many parts of Africa. In some cultures she is a goddess. In others, the term *Mami Wata* refers to women who have the qualities of Mami Wata, including exceptional beauty and great power.

Throughout western and central Africa, Mami Wata is a beautiful river goddess with long flowing hair and fair skin. During colonial times, prints from Europe or India of light-skinned women and female deities were often used to represent Mami Wata. In other images, she is shown with the tail of a fish to indicate her connection with the world of water spirits.

Mami Wata is believed to be powerful and seductive. She may bring good fortune to those who worship her, but she may cause terrible misfortune to those who anger her. Her wild, free, and independent nature is associated with the modern lifestyle of urban women. She also represents irresistible female sexuality.

The worship of Mami Wata as a deity* appears to have arisen in the early 1900s in southern NIGERIA and then spread to other parts of Africa. Men and women join the cult* of Mami Wata for a variety of reasons, including physical and spiritual sickness. To please her, they make offerings of sweet drinks and food, perfume, powder, and other luxury goods used by women.

In CONGO (KINSHASA), Mami Wata is represented as a mermaid in the west and as a crocodile person, known also as Mamba Muntu, in the east. Images of Mami Wata are found in murals, paintings, and other forms of popular ART. The idea of a being that is half woman, half aquat-

* **deity** god or goddess

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to particular person, belief, or god



Mandela, Nelson

ic animal combines elements of local culture, including traditional beliefs in water sprites, a colonial-era belief that whites were ghosts who came from beyond the sea, and aspects of West African folklore.

As African nations gained independence from their European rulers in the mid-1900s, Mami Wata became an important social and political symbol in the Congo region. Many people displayed a painting of Mami Wata in their homes because she was said to provide guidance on how to succeed in the modern world. However, such paintings often showed her accompanied by a snake, which represented evil. The snake reminded the viewer that the knowledge, power, and wealth offered by Mami Wata and modern urban life could be harmful if misused. After the 1980s, Christian symbols and paintings took the place of most Mami Wata images in city homes. (*See also Gender Roles and Sexuality, Popular Culture, Religion and Ritual, Women in Africa.*)

Mandela, Nelson

1918–
President of South Africa

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

See color
plate 11,
vol. 1.

Nelson Mandela is one of the best-known and most influential political leaders in Africa. Imprisoned for many years because of his activities against apartheid*, he later became the first black president of SOUTH AFRICA. For many South Africans, Mandela symbolized the hope for black equality.

Born in the Transkei region of South Africa, Mandela was the son of a XHOSA chief. Although a member of a royal family, he could not inherit the chieftainship because his mother was his father's third wife. After his father's death, the nine-year-old Mandela was sent away to school. When he finished his primary education in 1938, he gained admission to Fort Hare College. However, he was expelled two years later for taking part in a strike.

In 1941 Mandela moved to the city of JOHANNESBURG, where he worked as a policeman and took correspondence courses to complete his college degree. He then studied law at Witwatersrand University. In law school, Mandela met Indian and white students and came in contact with many radical ideas. In 1944 he joined the African National Congress (ANC), a black political movement, and eventually became one of its leaders.

When the South African government began to establish its apartheid policies after 1948, the ANC became an important source of opposition. The group organized work stoppages and other activities to protest and defy the racist laws. Following an outbreak of violence in 1952, the government banned several ANC leaders, including Mandela. He was not allowed to move about the country freely or to associate with other people. The government placed banning orders against Mandela again in 1953 and in 1956.

In 1955 the ANC adopted a document called the Freedom Charter, which called for the establishment of a nonracial, democratic South Africa. The South African government declared the charter to be treason and arrested Mandela and more than 150 other ANC leaders. However, when they were brought to trial, all were acquitted.

Racial tensions led to violence in 1960, when police killed 69 protesters during a peaceful demonstration against apartheid in the



Mandela, Nelson

Johannesburg suburb of Sharpeville. In response to the killings, black South Africans held a massive work stoppage. The government declared a state of emergency, banned the ANC, and arrested thousands of blacks. Mandela was again among those arrested, but he was soon released. He resumed participation in antiapartheid activities, working in secret to avoid another arrest.

* **sabotage** act designed to interfere with work or damage property

Mandela decided that stronger action was needed to oppose apartheid. In 1961 he founded a group called Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation) to organize acts of sabotage* against the government. By the end of 1961, the group was bombing government sites. Mandela left South Africa secretly and traveled to other African nations to raise money and to set up training bases for Umkhonto members.

When Mandela returned to South Africa in the summer of 1962, he was arrested and brought to trial on charges of leading a strike and leaving the country illegally. He received a sentence of five years in prison. Two years later, the government sentenced him to life imprisonment for sabotage and for attempting to overthrow the government through violent revolution. Mandela spent 28 years in prison. Yet black South Africans and people in other countries continued to support him and his struggle against apartheid.

Unrest and threats of revolt, as well as international criticism, shook the South African government. In 1988 it began negotiating with Mandela over the conditions of his imprisonment. Two years later, South African president Frederik Willem DE KLERK released Mandela from prison. The two men then worked together to dismantle the apartheid system and prepare South Africa for a nonracial democracy. Because of their efforts to bring about peaceful change, de Klerk and Mandela shared the Nobel Prize for peace in 1993.

In 1994 South Africa held the first elections in its history in which all races could vote. Mandela became the nation's first democratically elected president. He worked to improve the economic and educational conditions of blacks and to root out the last elements of apartheid. In 1999 Mandela chose not to run for a second term as president and retired from active politics. (*See also Apartheid.*)

Mansa Musa

**Early 1300s
Emperor of Mali**

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place

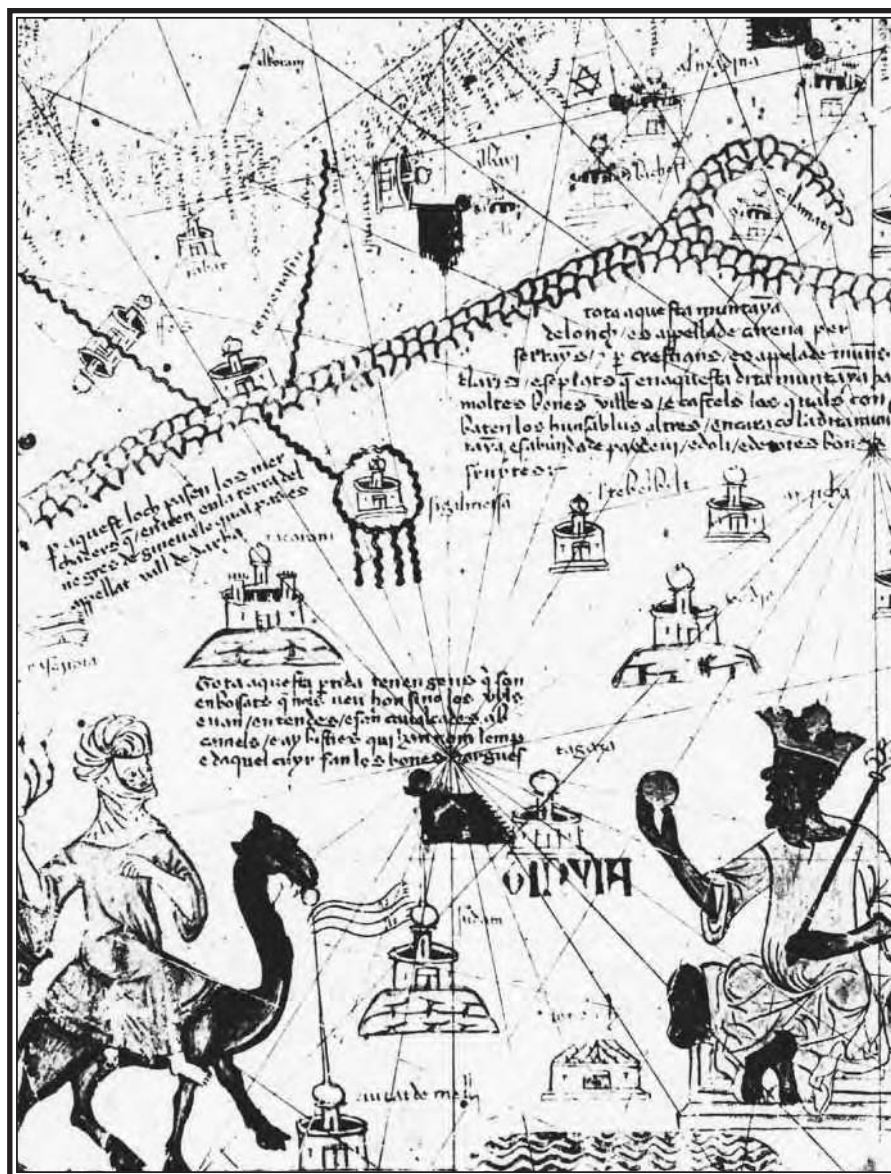
* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Mansa Musa was the most famous ruler of the ancient West African empire of MALI. During his reign the Mali empire reached its greatest size, extending hundreds of miles from north to south and from east to west. However, Mansa Musa is best remembered for his pilgrimage* to Mecca, the holy city of Islam*, in 1325. The magnificence and riches he displayed on this trip dazzled people along the way.

Thought to be a descendant of SUNDJATA KEÏTA, the founder of the Mali empire, Mansa Musa took the throne in about 1312. He was educated in Arabic and followed the tradition of Malian rulers in making a pilgrimage to Mecca. To support his journey, Mansa Musa required contributions from the towns and provinces of his empire. In this way he amassed a treasure of gold and other riches to take with him.

Mansa Musa

Emperor Mansa Musa of Mali, shown at the lower right hand corner of a map, traveled to Mecca in 1325. The great wealth he displayed and distributed during his trip brought him great fame.



Arriving in CAIRO in 1324, Mansa Musa astounded the inhabitants and the royal court of Cairo in EGYPT. According to accounts of the time, he came on horseback, superbly clothed, and followed by a procession of more than 10,000 followers. His camels carried bags of gold and jewelry that were distributed as gifts. Mansa Musa gave away so much gold in Cairo that the price of that precious metal dropped.

Mansa Musa returned home from his pilgrimage with a famous Arab architect, who constructed several magnificent buildings. One of them, Djinguereber mosque*, still stands in the city of TIMBUKTU. A patron* of the arts, Mansa Musa attracted poets and artists to his royal court. He also built several libraries and supported education in the Qur'an, the holy book of Islam. (See also *Islam in Africa, Kings and Kingship, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

* **patron** special guardian, protector, or supporter

Mansur, al-

Mansur, al-

1549–1603
Ruler of Morocco

- * **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group
- * **diplomacy** practice of managing relations between nations without warfare
- * **mercenary** hired soldier

Mulai al-Mansur was the sixth, and perhaps greatest, ruler of the Sa'di dynasty* of MOROCCO. During his reign (1578–1603) Morocco enjoyed a long period of peace and prosperity, highlighted by its conquest of the ancient city of TIMBUKTU, now part of present-day MALI.

A master of diplomacy*, al-Mansur managed to balance relations with many competing foreign powers including France, Portugal, Spain, and England. He also kept Morocco largely independent of its official ruler, the Ottoman sultan in Turkey. Al-Mansur reorganized and centralized the government of Morocco, developed the country's industry and agriculture, and encouraged foreign trade.

Al-Mansur assembled a highly trained army consisting largely of foreign mercenaries* who used European firearms. In 1590 he sent the force south to invade the Songhai empire in West Africa and captured the rich cities of Gao and Timbuktu. The cost of the campaign was very high, however, and it provided few long-term benefits for Morocco. After al-Mansur's death, Morocco went into a decline. (*See also Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)

Maps and Mapmaking

- * **cartographer** person who practices cartography, the science of mapmaking

If Africans had a mapmaking tradition before the coming of Europeans, no traces of it survived. The mapping of Africa was carried out largely by Europeans until independent African nations began producing their own maps in the late 1900s.

The Greeks created the earliest maps of Africa, and they dealt mainly with the northern and eastern coastlines of the continent. Later, Arab cartographers* added to these maps. Although the Arabs devoted little attention to the interior of Africa, their knowledge of the eastern coast was appreciated by Chinese cartographers, who used it in drawing their world maps.

Beginning in the 1400s, Portuguese navigators charted the west coast of Africa. They launched a wave of exploration, and for several hundred years Italian, Dutch, French, English, and German mapmakers recorded the information that explorers brought to Europe. At first, maps of Africa dealt only with the outline of the continent. Details about the interior of Africa came from written texts and were based largely on guesswork.

The oldest known printed map of the whole continent was published in Italy in 1508. Gradually, African maps began to include names of places in the interior. From the late 1700s through the 1800s, travelers and explorers published a vast body of material on Africa, including maps. For the most part, these maps were concerned with locating the main physical features of the continent, especially rivers and lakes, and with drawing attention to areas that held valuable economic resources. Europeans felt that producing scientific maps was part of the process of "civilizing" Africa. Cartography helped justify their penetration into the continent and their growing involvement in its affairs.

Beginning in the late 1800s, the mapping of Africa was driven by the



Markets

needs of the European powers that controlled most of the continent. These colonizers wanted maps recording boundaries and property ownership. After the 1940s, governments and organizations involved in planning social and economic development programs required large-scale maps showing land features and resources. Cartographers used new techniques such as aerial photography—taking images from planes with special cameras—to produce highly detailed maps.

Independence had little immediate effect on mapmaking in Africa. The former colonial powers continued to provide cartography as a form of foreign aid. In the late 1900s, however, many African countries loosened their ties with former colonial powers, and cartography became the responsibility of African national mapping agencies. Economic difficulties, however, have limited their activities. As a result, some nations are more thoroughly mapped than others. (*See also Travel and Exploration.*)

Maranke, John

1912–1963
African religious leader

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

John Maranke was the founder of a successful independent church called the Apostolic Church of John Maranke. Today the church claims over 500,000 members in Africa, and many European converts outside the continent.

Maranke was born Muchabaya Ngomberume in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). His mother was the daughter of the Shona chief Maranke, whose clan name he adopted when he founded the church. Little is known of his early life, but church tradition says he had the first of several spiritual visions at age five. It is reported that he suffered mysterious illnesses throughout his adolescence and had a near-death experience. Maranke claimed a voice told him to take the name John the Baptist and to preach to many nations. In July 1932, he held his first religious ceremony, at which approximately 150 people joined the new Apostolic Church of John Maranke.

The practices of Maranke's church, a mixture of Jewish, Christian, and indigenous* Shona religious elements, were inspired by his visionary experiences. As the church grew, Maranke gave some followers—including family members—leading positions. After his death, control of the church passed to his sons. (*See also Prophetic Movements, Religion and Ritual.*)

Markets

* **barter** exchange of goods and services without using money

The open-air market is an important feature of African life in both rural and urban areas. As centers of commerce where cash and barter* transactions take place, they play a key role in the economy. Most African agricultural products and craft goods enter the system of exchange at local markets, alongside imported products. Tailors, barbers, carpenters, and other tradesmen come to market to sell their services. Markets also serve as community centers where people socialize and share news and information.



Markets

In small settlements, they are often located next to important buildings such as the chief's house or the court.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Traditional Markets. Across sub-Saharan* Africa, nearly every community has a market of some kind. Most take place outdoors in open spaces. Sellers squat behind their baskets of goods or display their wares in temporary shelters made of branches roofed with palm leaves or grass thatch. Only in some large towns do markets contain permanent, concrete vendors' stalls.

Though generally crowded, markets are usually well organized. Authorities charge fees to vendors and supervise the pricing of goods. Certain areas of the market may be devoted to particular kinds of products, such as vegetables or cloth, so buyers can easily find and compare all available wares. The number of buyers and sellers at a market ranges from a handful in tiny rural settlements to thousands in the bustling marketplaces of Africa's great cities. Resembling strips of open shops, large urban markets often develop into permanent shopping streets.

Most commerce in rural North Africa takes place in traditional markets called *suqs*. Each *suq* is held on a specific day of the week and takes its name from the day and from the group on whose territory it is held. In larger towns, the *suq* is a more permanent feature. It serves as a meeting-place for nomads, townspeople, and traders bringing goods that are not produced locally.



Market Cycles and Traffic. Large urban markets are busy every day. However, most rural markets operate on a periodic schedule, which ranges from opening every other day to opening every seventh or eighth day. In any given district, a group of periodic markets may function as a ring or cycle. An eight-day ring, for example, might include seven markets in different locations, each open on one day. A day on which there is no market completes the cycle. When markets are set up in an eight-day ring, markets held on successive days are usually far apart in the market region. For example, the first market might be in the center of the region, the second in the far south, and the third in the far north. This ensures that no town in the market area ever goes more than three days without having a market open nearby.

On market day, streams of vendors and traders move to and from marketplaces, walking or riding on bicycles or in trucks. Many are women, carrying goods on their heads. A study of one market ring showed that on each market day, as many as 5,000 women—30 percent of the total population of the region—visited that day's market. In a week, a woman might travel a total of 50 miles to various markets.

Changes in African life may alter the market's role. As increasing numbers of Africans move into urban centers, they obtain more of their goods from stores and European-style shopping centers. Improvements in the mass transport of goods have made local markets less important in the selling of major cash crops* such as coffee. However, with their unique combination of social and economic functions, it is unlikely that open-air markets will ever disappear from African cities and towns. (See also **Trade**.)

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Marriage Systems

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Marriage takes many forms in Africa. Throughout the continent, the diversity of systems reflects the traditions, religions, and economic circumstances of a wide variety of distinct cultures. Islamic* laws and customs have shaped the institution of marriage in North Africa and in some nations of western and eastern Africa. In recent years, modern life, industry, and cities have brought changes to African marriages and to the roles of men and women.

African marriage systems do share several characteristics. They almost always involve the transfer of bridewealth—cash, goods, or services—from the groom or his family to the bride’s family. This exchange is both real and symbolic, as it marks the woman’s passage from one social group to the other. Thus, for Africans, marriage is a matter between families as much as between the bride and groom, and many families arrange the marriages of their members.

The Western attitude that marriage is the union of two people drawn together by love has had some influence in Africa, especially in the cities. But African cultures emphasize that the union of two individuals must fit into the larger picture of social networks known as KINSHIP groups. Each marriage creates an alliance between or within kinship groups, and the children of the union will inherit property, rights, and responsibilities from their kin.

Types of Marriage Systems. In Africa the institution of marriage varies as widely as the many thousands of ETHNIC GROUPS and cultures. Although some cultures forbid certain types of marriage, all the traditions are designed to promote kinship ties, to safeguard land and wealth through an orderly transfer, and to create a social order in which members of the community clearly understand their roles and relationships to others. Polygamy* is common in much of sub-Saharan* Africa, and it is the privilege of men, not of women. Polygamy enlarges a family and increases its ability to work and earn a living. It also demonstrates the power and status of the head of the household. In addition, polygamy gives men more freedom in selecting partners. If a man follows certain rules and traditions for his primary marriage, his others may be guided by personal choice or feeling.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Africans practice four other main types of marriage. Each is defined by whom a man or woman is allowed, expected, or encouraged to marry. One common type of marriage involves unions between close relatives. A man may marry his niece, his cousin, or even his half sister or granddaughter. A second type consists of marriages between in-laws, people already related from previous marriages. A man might marry his wife’s brother’s daughter, his niece-in-law. A third type, called the levirate, occurs when a man marries the widow of his older brother. Finally, a sororate union is a man’s marriage to his wife’s younger sister, either after his wife’s death or while she is still alive.

Many societies in central and southern Africa favor marriage between cousins. Since cousins’ parents are brothers and sisters, the marriage of two cousins means that bridewealth is transferred among siblings and their families. This system of marriage, with several variations, strengthens the bonds between brothers and sisters and ensures that the

Marriage Systems

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding

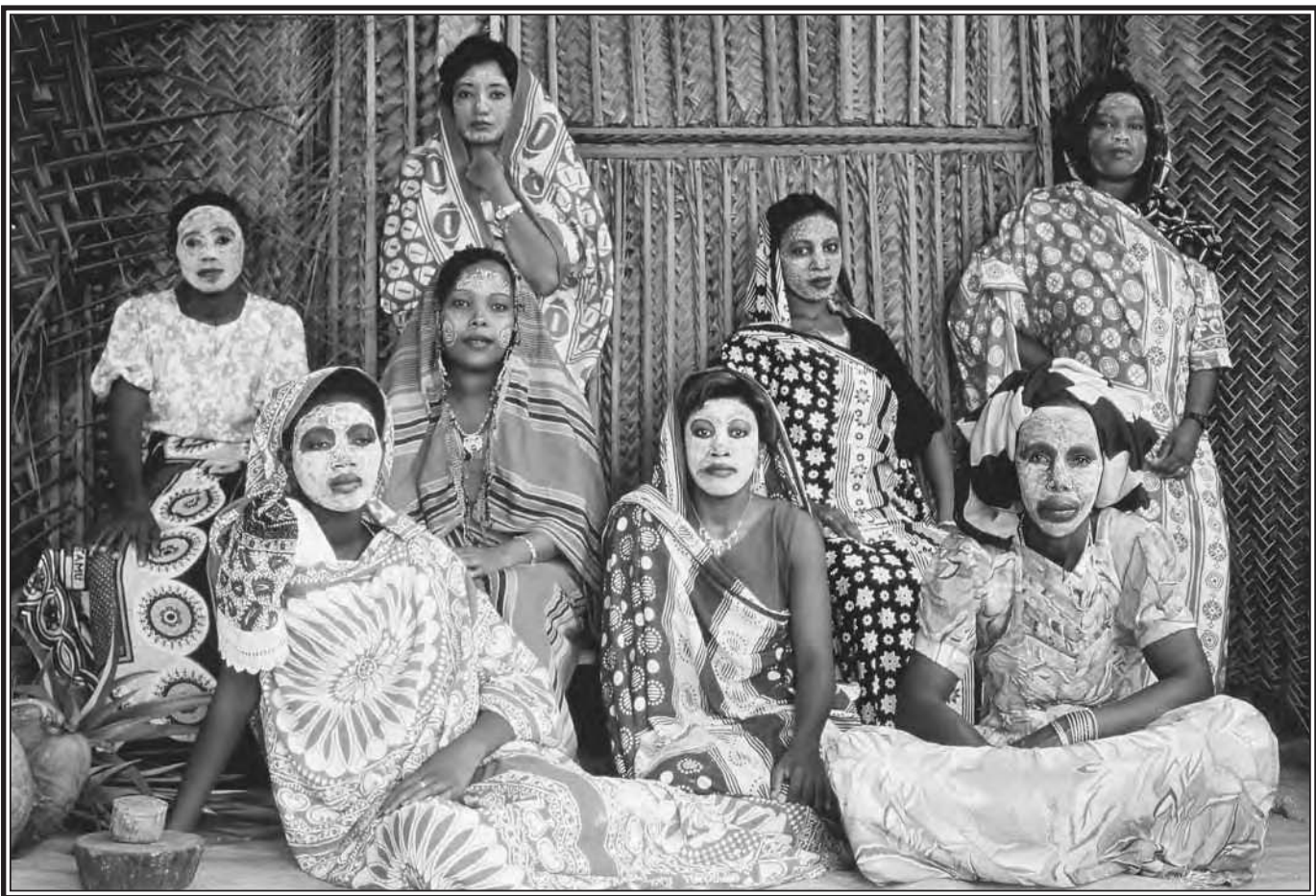
* **assets** property or other valuable goods or qualities

bridewealth stays within the extended family. Such arrangements are especially common among pastoralist* peoples who offer cattle, vital assets* for them, as bridewealth. However, some ethnic groups prefer bridewealth paid in service, not money or cattle. For instance, among the Bemba, farmers in a poor region of ZAMBIA, a man earns his bride by working for years for her family.

Some marriage systems circulate women instead of wealth. Among some peoples of central NIGERIA, women must marry many men from different kinship groups. They change their residence each time they go to a new husband or return to an earlier one. Young children follow their mother at first, but when they get older, they join a male member of the family—their father, their mother's brother, or one of their mother's other husbands. Other Nigerian groups expect a man who marries to give a sister in marriage to a male in his bride's family. In this way, the two families exchange women through marriage. If the man has no sister to offer, he must give his wife's family custody of his children instead.

African men rarely seek to divorce their wives because divorce means that they must give up the marriage's material goods as well as its social alliances. Women do sometimes seek a divorce. In some cases, they may

The wide variety of marriage traditions and systems in Africa reflects the continent's diverse ethnic groups and cultures. Here, on the Comoro Islands, wedding guests wear traditional dress and body paint.



Masks and Masquerades

Ghost Marriages

Some unions in Africa are called “ghost marriages.” People who marry in this way hope to have children, sometimes on behalf of the dead. For example, a widow may have children by her husband’s male relatives, and the dead man will be considered their father. When an unmarried man dies, another man may marry a woman in his name and father offspring who are regarded as his children. Other nontraditional marriages are unions between two women. The “wife” has children who are regarded as the offspring of the “husband” woman. In this way, a rich or powerful woman may take a wife and obtain children without losing her property or position to a man.

* **dowry** money or property that a woman brings to the man she marries

wish to end a traditional first marriage and to make a second marriage based on personal choice. Generally, however, the courts do not allow women who divorce to keep their children.

Islamic Marriage and Divorce. Islam, the major religion of North Africa, encourages marriage as the proper way of regulating sexuality and organizing families. Many groups regard marriages between cousins as ideal because they strengthen family ties and keep property within the extended family. When families arrange marriages, the selection process may begin with the women, but the final decision comes from the elder men of the family. The groom or his relatives pays bridewealth to the bride’s family, which in turn provides a dowry* for the bride. The wedding ceremony usually takes place at the groom’s family home.

Islamic law—based on the Qur’an, the holy book of Islam—gives men and women different rights and privileges in marriage and divorce. A man can divorce his wife whenever he wishes to do so, whether she agrees to the divorce or not. A woman can only divorce her husband under certain conditions. The practice of polygamy is limited to men, who may have as many as four wives at the same time. Women are not permitted to have more than one husband. Polygamy has never been universal among North Africans, and the practice has dropped sharply in modern times.

Marriage in Modern Africa. Modern life in Africa’s growing cities has distanced people from their traditional rural kinship groups. Men and women in urban areas are becoming more likely to insist on their personal wishes in arranging a marriage, though they may still seek approval from their families in the countryside. African women now have greater opportunities for jobs and education, and they have gained more power to make choices and be independent. They are generally marrying at a later age and having fewer children.

Modernization has brought other changes to marriage systems. Many families now accept money instead of the more traditional forms of bridewealth such as cattle. In urban areas this change has made it easier for employed young men to marry. In addition, media such as television and film in urban areas have exposed more people to Western models of relationships. Like other forms of social organization in Africa, marriage systems are changing as people combine the demands of modern life with those of tradition. (See also **Family, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Islam in Africa.**)

Masks and Masquerades

Many African societies have a rich tradition of masquerades, which are plays, ceremonies, or dances by masked performers. Masquerades provide entertainment, define social roles, and communicate religious meaning. The masks used in such performances may be treasured as works of art. They are also important symbols of ancestors, spirits, or even the history and culture of whole peoples.

Masks and Masquerades



This Bamileke folk dancer in Cameroon performs in a mask and costume. The mask features a pair of prominent eyes.

Masks. Masks take many forms. Some are made of carved wood, such as the towering masks of the Dogon people of Mali. Engraved with designs telling the history of generations, the intricate Dogon creations represent multistory family houses. Other groups make masks from bark, animal skins, plant fibers, and woven cloth. Not all masks are worn on the head or over the face. The traditional rulers of western African states such as Benin wore special masks on their chests or hips that symbolized royalty.

In most societies, only certain people are allowed to own or wear masks. With a few exceptions, women may not wear them. Groups of men—usually members of a community, kinship group, professional



Mau Mau

organization, or club—own most masks. Masks are also linked with SECRET SOCIETIES. They are symbols of the special knowledge held by those within the society and of their authority. Members of some secret societies wear miniature masks of wood or ivory as badges of membership or symbols of their rank.

See
(color plate 5,
vol. 3.)

Masquerades. Masquerades play a central role in many cultures in western and central Africa. They are less common in northern, eastern, and southern Africa, although they occur among a few groups in these regions. Several BERBER groups in Morocco, for example, hold masquerades in connection with Muslim festivals. The Chewa people of rural Malawi hold ceremonies with individuals wearing spirit masks when a new village headman takes office.

People in many societies believe that spirits become visible and perform through masquerades. Groups such as the YORUBA of Nigeria and the Chokwe of Congo (Kinshasa) hold masquerades in which ancestral spirits appear. The Dan of Ivory Coast and the Ibo of Nigeria believe that the spirits of the forest act out masquerades. Powerful water spirits perform during yearly masquerades in other Nigerian communities.

Important social events, such as INITIATION RITES, or coming-of-age ceremonies, often include masquerades. Spirits acting through masked performers oversee the symbolic rebirth of adolescents into adults. They also may appear in the public ceremonies that present the new adults to the community. Masks also play important roles in funeral customs. Among the Hemba of the Congo region, for example, a figure masked as death appears in two funeral masquerades. The first illustrates the social disorder brought by death; the second shows order restored.

In modern Africa, masquerades are taking on new forms and purposes to meet new needs and conditions. One example is the urban, multi-ethnic masked associations called Ode-Lay that sprang up in Sierra Leone in the 1950s. Developed in response to social unrest, Ode-Lay associations helped unite people by drawing on the masquerade rituals of various hunting groups and secret societies. In other countries, masquerades have been incorporated into the routines of national dance troupes. Some traditional masquerades, such as Dogon funerals, are occasionally performed for tourists. (*See also Art, Dance, Festivals and Carnivals, Music and Song, Mythology.*)

Mau Mau

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Mau Mau began as a movement by Africans against British rule in KENYA in the 1950s. Eventually the movement became a guerrilla* war. With complex political, economic, and social roots, Mau Mau has been interpreted in various ways. To the fighters and their supporters, Mau Mau was a struggle for liberation. To European settlers and British officials, it was an outbreak of terrorism and primitive violence. Although the British ended the rebellion with military force, Mau Mau forced them to change their role in Kenya and opened the way for majority rule by black Africans in 1963.



Mau Mau

Origins of Mau Mau. The origin of the term *Mau Mau* is unknown, but it had come into use by 1947. The British colonial administration in Kenya soon associated it with an underground antigovernment movement. This movement arose at the end of a long period during which Africans had tried without success to change the policies of land ownership, government, and social organization that made them second-class citizens in their own country.

Many of the Africans' grievances concerned land. In the early 1900s, the British began establishing white settlers in Kenya. They created an economy based on export crops such as coffee. More than 7.5 million acres of land once inhabited by the MAASAI, GIKUYU, and other peoples were set aside for about 4,000 European-owned plantations and farms. The desire to reclaim these "stolen lands" became a powerful force in Mau Mau.

Before the late 1930s, Africans were not allowed to grow coffee and other high-income crops. In order to raise money to pay for taxes, schooling, and medical care, many black men became migrant workers on white-owned farms, docks, and railways. African laborers received low wages, and those who worked in cities lived in poor housing. The result was a tension-filled society divided by race into unequal classes.

Although Africans were not represented in the Kenyan legislature, they organized a number of political and social welfare associations to promote their goals. The Gikuyu people founded the Kikuyu Central Organization (KCA) in 1924. At the outbreak of World War II in 1939, colonial authorities banned the KCA, fearing it might form an alliance with Germany, Britain's enemy. The KCA went underground, becoming secretive and militant*. Other African groups did the same, even after the war ended in 1945. Trade unions of African laborers called many strikes in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The sense of militancy and unrest felt by many Kenyans, especially young people, was channeled into Mau Mau.

* **militant** aggressive, willing to use force

Activities and Effects. Mau Mau began with threats and acts of violence among the Gikuyu, both in rural areas and in urban centers such as NAIROBI. The government banned Mau Mau in 1950, but the violence continued, directed against both Europeans and Africans who were believed to be opposed to the movement.

A key element in establishing Mau Mau was the use of secret military-style oaths to bind members in a pact against the colonial government. The nature of these oaths made it clear that Mau Mau leaders expected a military confrontation with the government. In 1952 Mau Mau fighters assassinated an African chief who supported the British. The government responded by declaring a state of emergency and arresting more than 150 black political and labor leaders. Authorities also questioned and imprisoned thousands of Africans, mostly Gikuyu.

The Kenyan fighters rejected the label "Mau Mau" and used other names, such as the KCA or the "Kenya Land and Freedom Army," to refer to themselves. Among them were peasants, urban workers, the unemployed, and World War II veterans, as well as a few educated individuals and some women. The lifeline of their movement consisted of



Mauritania

the men, women, and children who did not actually belong to Mau Mau but provided food, medical supplies, ammunition, and information. Not all Africans aided or approved of the movement, however, and Mau Mau support varied from region to region.

The British viewed Mau Mau as something from Africa's past, and they regarded the group's often violent practices as a sign of breakdown among Africans. Yet the authorities used equally brutal methods to crush the movement. By 1956 British forces had defeated Mau Mau. The war left at least 12,000 Africans and about 100 Europeans dead. It also changed the social and political landscape of Kenya forever. Although the Mau Mau leaders had not provided a clear plan for the future, most who supported the movement sought return of the "stolen lands" and political independence for Kenya. The British had put down the rebellion but could not ignore its message. Mau Mau shocked Britain into beginning the reforms that led to black majority rule and to the return of land to Africans. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.*)



Mauritania

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

A former French colony, the Islamic Republic of Mauritania is a large, thinly populated nation that borders the Atlantic Ocean in western Africa. Geographically, it connects the **MAGHREB** in North Africa and the coastal regions of West Africa. It also forms a link between the cultures of Arab North Africa and of sub-Saharan* Africa.

Geography and Economy. The northern, central, and eastern regions of Mauritania—more than half of the country's land area—are part of the **SAHARA DESERT**. These arid regions consist of vast stretches of sandy plains and dunes occasionally broken by rocky peaks and plateaus. South of the Sahara region is the **SAHEL**, a semidesert area of scattered grasses, low-growing bushes, and stunted trees. The most fertile and inhabitable region of the country is a small area in the extreme southwest along the Senegal River.

Mauritania's dry climate makes agriculture very difficult, except in areas along the Senegal River and at oases in the desert. Fertile soil and water from the river support farming, although much of it is merely subsistence farming*. Among the major food crops are rice, corn, dates, sorghum*, and millet*. At oases, scattered throughout the desert, groups of nomadic peoples who move from place to place with their livestock sometimes grow a few crops. The economy of Mauritania's Sahel region is based primarily on the raising of cattle, sheep, goats, and camels.

Small-scale trading has always been an important economic activity in Mauritania, with goods generally moving between North Africa and the coastal regions of West Africa. Mining and fishing are the most important of the nation's industrial activities. Much of the mining occurs in the Sahara region, which has plentiful deposits of iron ore and copper. The fishing industry, based along the Atlantic coast, accounts for about half of the country's export income.

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food

* **millet** family of grains

Mauritania



In recent years Mauritania's traditional agricultural and livestock activities have failed to support the nation's population. Moreover, much of the country suffers from periodic droughts, which have had a severe impact on agriculture. Since the 1970s Mauritania has been largely dependent on food imports to feed its people. The nation also relies heavily on other types of foreign aid and assistance.

History and Government. Mauritania was originally inhabited by BERBERS in the north and black Africans in the south. When the Muslim Arabs conquered North Africa, they established trade routes across Mauritania and spread Islam* throughout the region. In the A.D. 1000s the center of the empire of Ghana was located in Mauritania, and in the 1300s and 1400s Mauritania was part of the empire of MALLI.

The first Europeans to visit Mauritania were the Portuguese, who established forts and trading posts along the Atlantic coast in the mid-1400s. Later the Dutch, French, and British joined in the competition for trade in the region. France finally gained control of Mauritania in the 1800s, and in 1903 it became a French protectorate*.

At first Mauritania was governed as part of the French colony of SENEGAL, and the Senegalese town of St. Louis served as the colonial capital. In 1920 Mauritania became a separate colony within the administrative federation* of FRENCH WEST AFRICA. Throughout the colonial period, the French did little to develop the economy of Mauritania or to educate its people.

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

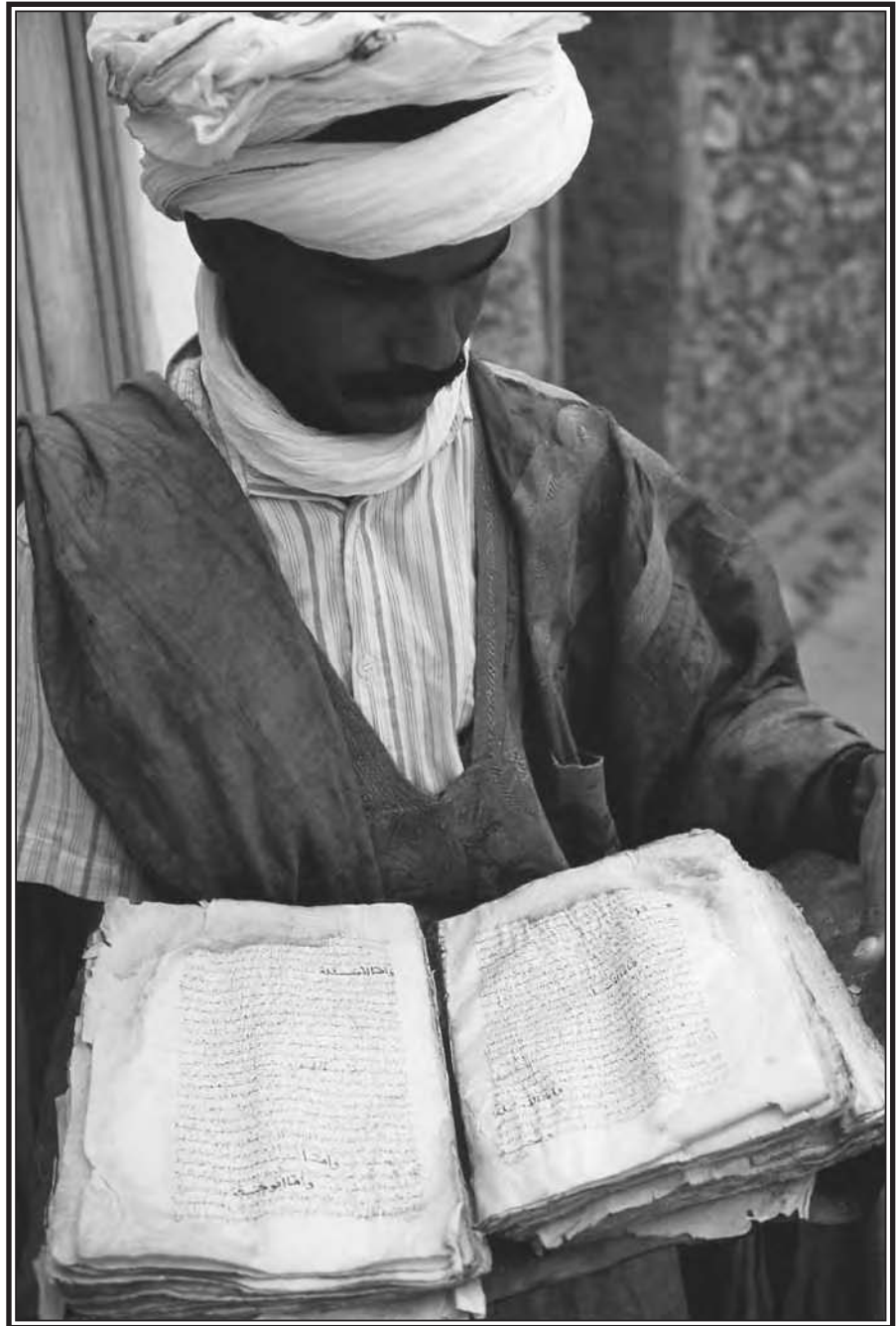
* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

Mauritania

After World War II INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS arose in Mauritania, and in 1958 France granted the colony self-government. Two years later Mauritania gained full independence from France and adopted a system of government headed by a president. The nation's first president, Mokhtar Ould Daddah, ruled from 1961 until his overthrow by the military in 1978. Between 1978 and 1992 Mauritania was governed by a succession of military regimes*. Some attempts at political and social reform

* regime current political system or rule



The government of Mauritania has promoted Arab culture and ties to the Arab world. This man in Chinguetti reads an ancient copy of the Qur'an.

Mauritania



The Islamic Republic of Mauritania

POPULATION:

2,667,859 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

397,953 sq. mi. (1,030,700 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Hasaniya Arabic, French (both official); Wolof, Pular, Soninke

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Ouguiya

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim, nearly 100%

CITIES:

Nouakchott (capital), 735,000 (1995 est.); Atar, Zouérate, Kaédi, Nouadhibou

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from less than 20 in. (500 mm) in the south to less than 4 in. (100 mm) in the northern desert region

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$1,910 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: dates, millet, sorghum, root crops, livestock, fish, corn, rice, beans

Manufacturing: fish processing, petroleum refining, textiles, plastics and chemicals production

Mining: iron ore, copper, gypsum, gold

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Senate and National Assembly (legislative bodies), Council of Ministers and prime minister appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1978 Prime Minister Mokhtar Ould Daddah (elected president in 1961)

1978–1979 Lieutenant Colonel Mustapha Ould Mohammed Salek

1979–1980 Prime Minister Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed Khouna Ould Haidalla and Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed Mahmoud Ould Louly

1980–1984 Lieutenant Colonel Mohammed Khouna Ould Haidalla

1984– President Colonel Maaouya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya

ARMED FORCES:

15,700

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–12; literacy rate 38%

took place during this period, but for the most part the nation's rulers pursued harsh policies that restricted freedoms.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Mauritania faced several problems, including tensions between black Africans in the south and the Arab-Berber population in the north. These tensions arose primarily from a rivalry between the two groups as each sought to dominate the country's government and its economy. In the 1970s Mauritania became involved in a conflict over the fate of Spanish Sahara (now known as WESTERN SAHARA). Mauritania and MOROCCO each laid claim to different portions of the former Spanish colony, provoking a highly destructive guerrilla* war. Armed by ALGERIA, groups fighting for the region's independence waged a devastating campaign across Mauritania. Focusing their attacks on the country's iron mines and railroads, the rebels effectively crippled the nation.

Beginning in the 1970s, a source of great conflict in Mauritania has been the policy of "Arabization," by which the government took steps to strengthen Arab culture and increase links with Arab nations in North Africa. This policy has been bitterly resisted by the nation's black population. It contributed to growing political unrest that erupted in violence several times in the 1980s and early 1990s. In 1989 the racial and ethnic tensions in Mauritania spilled over into a crisis with neighboring Senegal. Several hundred Mauritians and Senegalese were killed and tens of thousands of people fled the two countries to avoid the violence.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors



Mauritius

Increasing demands for political reform led to the adoption of a new constitution in 1991 and to multiparty elections the following year. The newly elected government began taking steps to bring greater political and economic stability to the nation and to improve its relations with Senegal and other neighboring countries. Despite these efforts, many problems remain and Mauritania still faces political and social unrest as well as economic uncertainty. The country's Arabization policies continue, and Mauritania remains more closely linked to the Arab nations of North Africa than to the countries of sub-Saharan Africa.

* **Moors** North African Muslims who conquered Spain in the A.D. 700s

People and Culture. More than two-thirds of Mauritania's population are Moors*. Half of them are of mixed Arab and Berber ancestry; the other half are black Africans. Traditionally, the Moors have been nomads, moving from place to place with their cattle, camels, and other livestock. The remainder of Mauritania's people are black Africans, including members of the FULANI, Tukulor, Soninke, and WOLOF groups. Most live in the southernmost part of the country. For the past few decades, Mauritania has faced serious racial and ethnic conflicts between Moors and black Africans. These conflicts grew out of a history of blacks being held as slaves by the Moors, which ended only in the 1960s.

Nearly 80 percent of Mauritania's population live in the southwest, where the capital city of Nouakchott is located. About one-quarter of the people are still nomads. Traditionally, the nomads, farmers, and ranchers have depended on one another for trade and food. Several factors, including changes in agricultural patterns and serious droughts in the Sahel, have caused the number of nomads to decline in recent years, and many have settled permanently in farming villages, towns, and cities. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Deserts and Drought, Islam in Africa, Livestock Grazing, North Africa: History and Cultures, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.**)

Mauritius

The small island nation of Mauritius lies about 500 miles east of MADAGASCAR in the Indian Ocean. It consists of Mauritius and several small islands off to the north and east. Once heavily dependent on the production of sugar, Mauritius has developed a strong economy that includes a variety of manufacturing industries.

Of volcanic origin, the island of Mauritius measures only 38 by 29 miles. Its high central plateau is broken by gorges and small rivers and by peaks that remain from an ancient volcanic crater. Mauritius has a subtropical climate with fairly even temperatures throughout the year. The central plateau receives more rain per year than other areas.

Sugar, first introduced to Mauritius in the 1600s, remains the island's leading export. Since the 1970s the country has diversified its economy by establishing the Mauritius Export Processing Zone, an industrial center focusing on producing goods for export. Among the most important manufactured goods are textiles and clothing. The tourist industry is also growing.



Mauritius

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

The first people to reach Mauritius were probably seafarers from the Arabian peninsula. (The island had no indigenous* population.) The Portuguese explored the area in the early 1500s. Between 1638 and 1710, the Dutch made several attempts to colonize the island, which they named Mauritius. However, it was the French who established the first permanent colony there in 1721. Renamed Île de France, Mauritius remained a French colony until 1810 and was used as a naval base to defend French interests in India. Its main port and capital city, Port Louis, became a major commercial center.

* **cede** to yield or surrender

Located along the shipping routes between Europe and Asia, the island had great strategic importance and attracted the interest of other nations, including Britain. In 1810 the British captured the island and reinstated the name Mauritius. France formally ceded* the island to Britain in 1814. Mauritius remained a British colony until it gained independence in 1968. Originally a constitutional monarchy, with Queen Elizabeth II as head of state, Mauritius became a republic with an elected president in 1992.

* **Creole** person of mixed European and African ancestry

Mauritian society and culture are very diverse. Many of the people are either Creole* or of French ancestry. Those of Indian descent make up the single largest group. Many Indians came to Mauritius in the 1800s as indentured laborers—people who agree to work in another country for a specific length of time in return for transportation. Mauritius also has a sizable Chinese population. The three main religions on the island are Hinduism, Christianity, and Islam. The official language is English, but French, Hindi, and other languages are widely spoken. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Indian Communities.*)

Mboya, Tom

1930–1969
Kenyan labor and political leader

Tom Mboya was a labor leader who played a key role in the early government of KENYA after independence. At age 22 he founded a government workers' union and later became general secretary of the Kenya Federation of Labor. At the time, labor organizations had considerable power in Kenya (then a British colony) because African political parties were not allowed.

In the mid-1950s, Mboya went to England to study. On his return, he was elected to Kenya's Legislative Council, where he fought for and won a new constitution for the colony. He also helped form the Kenya Africa National Union (KANU). When Kenya gained independence in 1963, KANU became the country's governing party.

Mboya, a member of the LUO ethnic group, served in the government of Kenya's first president, the GIKUYU leader Jomo KENYATTA. As minister of economic planning and development, Mboya promoted a program in which Western nations would assist African nations with economic development. As Kenyatta aged, some Gikuyu became concerned about holding onto power after their leader's death. Mboya was considered a likely successor, but as a Luo he raised alarm among the Gikuyu. On July 5, 1969, a Gikuyu man assassinated Mboya. (*See also Unions and Trade Associations.*)

Mengistu Haile Mariam

ca. 1942–
President of Ethiopia

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Mengistu Haile Mariam led a military coup* that removed Ethiopia's emperor HAILE SELASSIE I from power in 1974. As head of state, Mengistu hoped to modernize Ethiopian society and unify the country by lessening ethnic rivalries.

Mengistu's military career began when he joined the Ethiopian army at the age of 14. After attending officer training school, he rose to the rank of colonel.

As president, Mengistu tried to limit the influence of the AMHARA people in Ethiopia's government. Following socialist* policies, he brought many of the country's private industries under state control and also took over vast tracts of land. However, a series of attempted coups, failed governmental programs, and an independence movement in the province of ERITREA led to his downfall. Mengistu fled the country in 1991 and was given refuge in ZIMBABWE. (See also **Ethiopia, Independence Movements.**)

Menilek II

1844–1913
Emperor of Ethiopia

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

Menilek II was the son of the heir to the kingdom of Shewa in what is now central ETHIOPIA. In 1856 TÉWODROS II used modern weapons to conquer Shewa and many other parts of Ethiopia. Menilek was captured and taken to Téwodros's court, where he was raised and educated. Nine years later, he escaped and returned to Shewa. After Téwodros died in 1868, Menilek tried to win the Ethiopian throne but lost out to Yohannes IV. Menilek then worked to make Shewa the center of Ethiopian political and economic power by expanding his control over lands to the south and east.

In 1889 Yohannes died in battle, and Menilek succeeded him as the emperor of Ethiopia. That same year, Italy declared Ethiopia a protectorate*. Menilek led the Ethiopians to war to defend their independence, eventually defeating the Italian forces in 1896. Later, he expanded Ethiopia to its present size and promoted economic growth by building a railway from ADDIS ABABA to DJIBOUTI. Under his rule, Addis Ababa became the country's first modern city. When Menilek suffered a severe stroke in 1909, his grandson took over as emperor.

Meroë

Located on the Nile River about 120 miles north of present-day KHARTOUM, the royal city of Meroë was the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kush. The kingdom arose in the region known as NUBIA (in what is now southern Egypt and northern Sudan) about 750 B.C. and flourished until the A.D. 300s. Although strongly influenced by Egypt, the Kushites eventually developed their own culture.

Meroë was inhabited by the 700s B.C., but at that time the Kushite rulers lived and were buried in the city of Napata to the north. Later, perhaps in the 600s B.C., the royal residence and administrative center of Kush moved to Meroë, which became the new capital. However, the city did not become the burial site for Kushite royalty until around 300 B.C.



Meroë

* deity god or goddess

Scholars know little about the organization of the Meroitic state. They do know that its monarchy was similar to that of Egypt and that its rulers—some of them women—were closely identified with gods. Many of the deities* pictured on the walls of temples and pyramid chapels were Egyptian in origin, but there were also purely Meroitic gods, such as the lion-headed Apedemek.

* hieroglyphics ancient system of writing based on pictorial characters

Meroë was an important urban center. In its heyday it was the largest city in Africa south of Egypt, with elaborate stone palaces and temples as well as areas where the common people built their mud-brick dwellings. The city was noted for its industries, especially for ironworking. Meroitic craftspeople also produced pottery in a variety of Nubian, Egyptian, and Mediterranean styles and made glass and cloth. The earliest inscriptions in the city were Egyptian hieroglyphics*, but by the 200s B.C. the people of Meroë had developed a version of Egyptian script in which to write their own language. Scholars have not succeeded in translating these texts.

The last royal burials at Meroë date from around A.D. 350. Archaeologists think that the Meroitic state came to an end at that time, perhaps as a result of war campaigns in Meroitic territory by Aezanes Aksum, king of Ethiopia. (See also **Aksum**; **Egypt, Ancient**; **Sudan**.)



See *Minerals and Mining*.



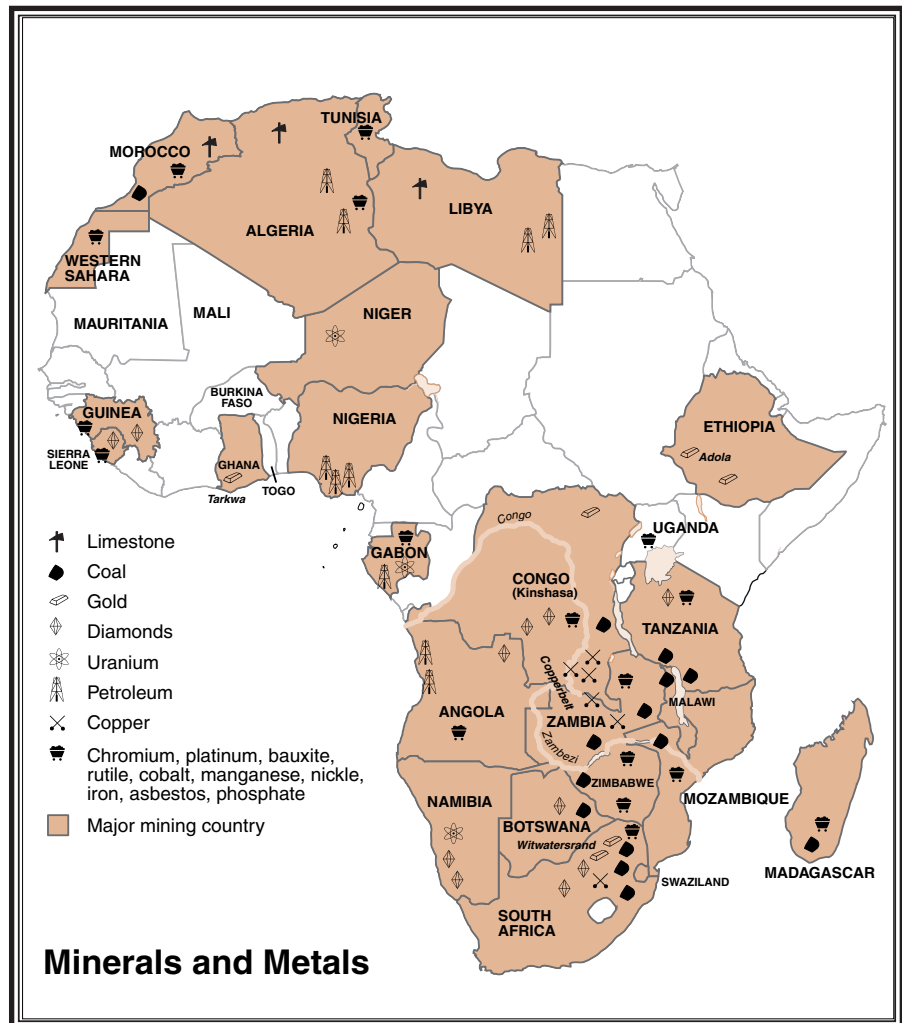
Deep in the ground of the African continent lies a wealth of minerals, metals, and gems. But few African countries—and few Africans—receive the benefits of these resources. The lack of technology and investment money have limited mining operations, and not all countries have significant resources. However, even countries with major deposits have seen most of the profits go to foreign corporations or small groups of privileged Africans. Meanwhile, mine workers labor under harsh conditions for little pay. The explanation for Africa’s abundant resources and limited benefits begins with the European quest for riches in colonial times and continues with the modern plague of corruption.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Africa’s mineral wealth takes many forms thanks to its long history of geology—the activities of mountains, rivers, volcanoes, lakes, and forests. Ancient woodlands have been transformed over millions of years into fossil fuels such as petroleum, natural gas, and coal. The courses of rivers and the upheavals of landforms have produced deposits of metals such as uranium, iron, copper, zinc, and tin, as well as rock minerals such as phosphates. Africa’s rocks, soil, and volcanic activity are the source of some of the world’s greatest treasures—from gold and



Minerals and Mining



platinum to diamonds of all sizes. Unfortunately, mining operations have also damaged the environments that yielded these resources.

Although abundant, Africa's mineral resources are not evenly distributed. North Africa's reserves of petroleum and iron ore may run out in a few decades. In sub-Saharan* Africa, metals and minerals are concentrated in a few major areas, and about half of the region's mineral production comes from two countries: SOUTH AFRICA with its gold and diamonds and NIGERIA with petroleum.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

See color plate 13, vol. 4.

Fossil Fuels. Africa produces petroleum for the global market. ALGERIA and LIBYA together possess about 3 percent of the world's known petroleum reserves, and North Africa earns much of its foreign income from its petroleum and natural gas. However, the continent's largest petroleum producer is the West African country of Nigeria. Coal deposits exist in limited quantities in MOROCCO and in large reserves in the sub-Saharan nations of MOZAMBIQUE, MALAWI, TANZANIA, ZIMBABWE, and South Africa.



Minerals and Mining

Gold and Diamonds

In ancient times, gold was one of the most important items of trade between sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean world. In later centuries, tales of fabulous riches in gold lured European explorers into Africa's interior. Most of the continent's gold is found in a few places, especially in Ghana and South Africa. South Africa also contains the world's largest diamond mines. Some of the stones extracted end up as gems, while others are used in industry as cutting tools.

Industrial Metals and Minerals. North Africa's nonpetroleum resources are fairly limited. The region's deposits of iron ore have been greatly reduced over the last 2,000 years, but small deposits remain of lead, zinc, manganese, copper, and other metals.

Industrial metals are a major industry in some African countries, making them key players in the global economy. ZAMBIA and CONGO (KINSHASA) produce more than half of the world's cobalt and a significant amount of its copper. Other leading suppliers of industrial metals include GUINEA and GHANA, of the aluminum ore bauxite; Zimbabwe, of asbestos; and GABON, of manganese. Uranium—an essential ingredient in nuclear reactors and weapons—is also produced in Africa, mainly by Gabon, NAMIBIA, and NIGER.

Rock minerals are another major African resource. Phosphates, a mineral used to manufacture detergents and fertilizers, come from MOROCCO, TUNISIA, and elsewhere. North Africa also contains abundant deposits of limestone used in cement.

Precious Metals and Gems. More than half of all the world's diamonds and platinum are mined in Africa. South Africa's vast gold field, the Witwatersrand, is rivaled by important deposits in Ghana, ETHIOPIA, and Zimbabwe. South Africa's diamond mines are world famous, but major diamond deposits exist in ANGOLA, Guinea, BOTSWANA, Tanzania, and Congo (Kinshasa) as well.

MINING

Mining has a long history in Africa. In North Africa, people have mined for iron ores and other metals for more than 2,000 years. Iron mining began in sub-Saharan Africa by around 500 B.C. and had spread through the region by the A.D. 200s. Iron played a crucial role in the improvement of agricultural tools and weapons.

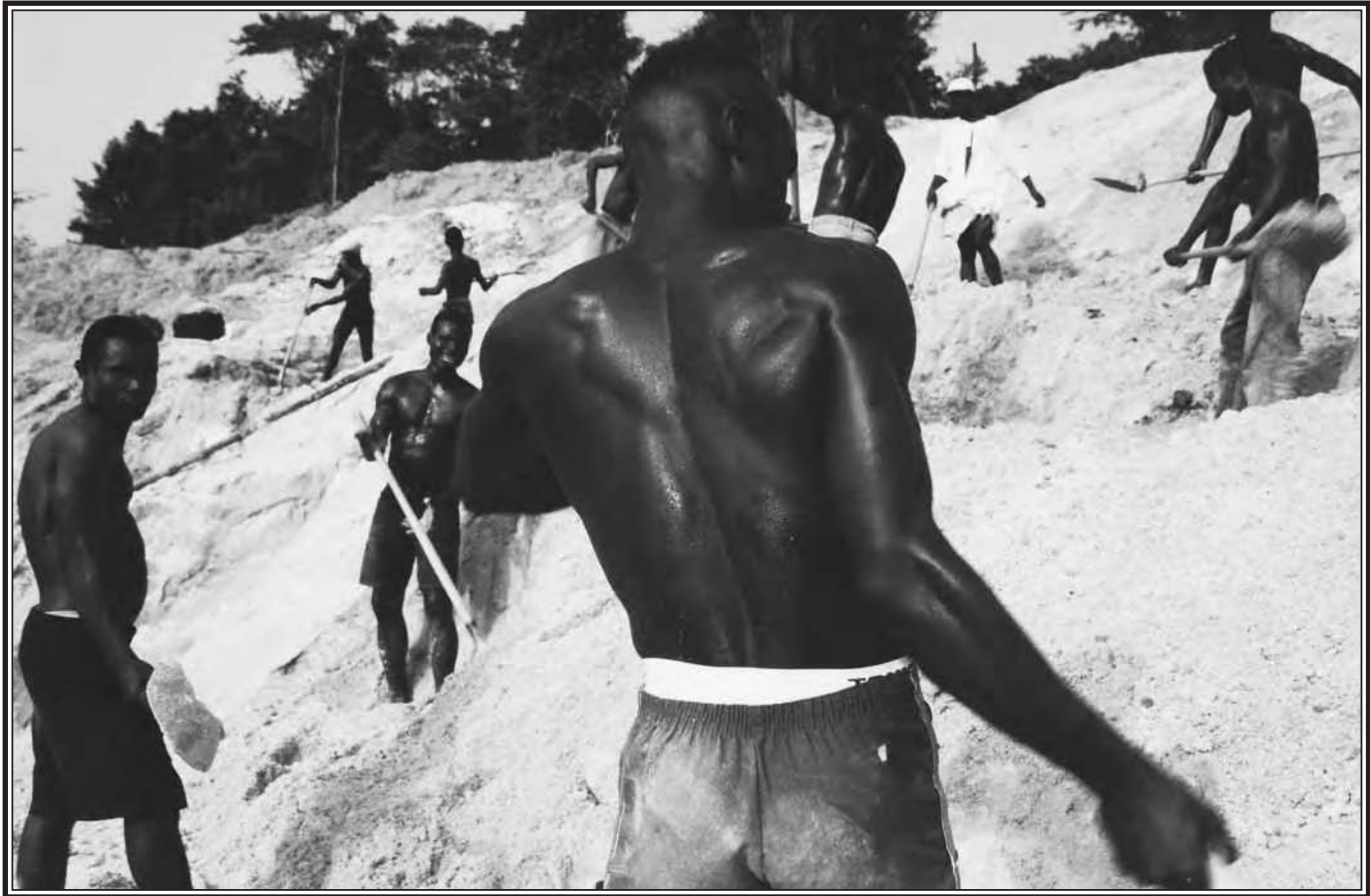
During the colonial period, Europeans eager to profit from Africa's mineral wealth made developing mining a priority. Since the 1950s and 1960s, when most African states won their independence from Europe, mining has remained an important but troubled part of the national economies.

Early Mining. The ancient Egyptians, and later the Romans, launched substantial mining operations in North Africa thousands of years ago. Between the A.D. 700s and 1500s, gold mining provided the major item of trade in the former western African kingdoms of Ghana, MALI, and Songhai. In eastern Africa, the ancient civilization of MEROË (in present-day SUDAN) mined iron ore. Later, gold from what is now Zimbabwe was shipped across the Indian Ocean to Arabia and India, and inhabitants of central Africa mined copper long before the arrival of Europeans.

Mining in these early periods had different forms and meanings than it would later have. With limited technology, Africans could not dig deep into the earth and could only exploit* fairly shallow deposits. They also had no way of emptying water from mines filled with groundwater.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Minerals and Mining



Much of the revenue from African mines goes to foreign corporations, leaving local communities with few benefits. Here workers dig for diamonds at a mine in Liberia.

When Africans reached the limits of their skills, they had to abandon mines. Mining took place only in the dry seasons. In addition, mining had an almost sacred meaning. Many groups had rituals*, ceremonies, and taboos* surrounding these resources and the process of bringing them out of the earth.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

The Colonial Period. The fabled gold mines of south-central Africa lured Portuguese explorers into the continent's interior in the late 1400s and 1500s. But the Portuguese failed to establish any effective mining operations, and by the 1700s most European colonizers preferred making their money in the SLAVE TRADE.

By the 1880s, however, Europeans were involved in a frantic race to conquer all of Africa and to exploit its natural riches. Surveyors in South Africa had found astonishing sources of copper in 1854, diamonds in 1867, and gold in the 1880s. For the next few decades, Europeans established mines throughout Africa. In south-central Africa, a chain of major copper mines stretched from what is now Zambia to present-day Congo (Kinshasa). In western Africa miners produced diamonds and gold in Ghana and SIERRA LEONE, and tin and coal were found in Nigeria.

Mining supported many colonial African economies, but the profits went back to the mining industry and its owners. European corporations invested their money mainly in mining, ignoring the development of



Minerals and Mining

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

transportation or other infrastructure* except to exploit mining. Railroads were built to carry minerals to ports on the coasts—not to link major cities, populations, or other industries. Like the minerals themselves, the profits from mining were taken out of Africa to make Europeans wealthy.

Meanwhile, the people who worked in the mines suffered severe hardships and upheavals. Many thousands of rural Africans left their families and moved into large settlements owned by the companies. Together with white workers, their movements and behaviors were strictly controlled. Even after slavery was abolished, the companies subtracted the costs of rent, equipment, and other expenses from workers' wages—little remained. Furthermore, accidents and diseases killed and injured workers at a frightening rate, leading to many major labor strikes. The companies responded in some cases by raising the white workers to supervisory jobs with higher pay, separating them from the black workers and fueling racial prejudice.

The Postcolonial Period. The impact of colonial control on the mining industry continued after African nations won independence in the mid-1900s. Mines and miners kept working and producing. However, now European owners often granted a share of the profits, as well as taxes, to African governments.

In some nations, the new governments seized ownership of the mines. But the results were often disastrous. The industries suffered from poor management, lack of investment money, low selling prices, political turmoil, outdated machinery, and general neglect. Labor disputes remained common. As African economies faltered in the 1970s and 1980s, their governments fell in debt to Western banks and international institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. These bodies pressured African nations to sell their mines and other industries to private investors, mainly international corporations.

Several other factors limited the profitability of African mining in the late 1900s. For the most part, the continent's raw ores are exported to other countries for manufacturing. The ores sell for much less than the goods made from them. Furthermore, changes in industrial processes worldwide have reduced the demand for copper, iron ore, and other metals. In Africa, the mining industry continues to be poorly connected to other industries and methods of transportation. In addition, diamond smuggling is widespread in illegal markets, drawing taxes and other profits away from African governments and companies.

Most mining operations in Africa today are on a large scale, and small companies find it hard to compete. Even so, small-scale mining—often for local use and not for profit—does exist in more than 30 African countries. It is estimated that small-scale mining operations account for more than \$800 million a year in the African economy and employs more than one million people. Africa still contains vast mineral riches, but for the present, much of that potential is not being tapped. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Economic History; Energy and Energy Resources; Labor; Slavery; Trade; Unions and Trade Associations.*)



Missions and Missionaries

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Christian missionaries have played an important, yet inconsistent, role in African history. While the goal of missions has remained the same—to convert indigenous* peoples to CHRISTIANITY, methods and attitudes have changed dramatically over time. During the last 1,500 years, the focus of missionary activity in Africa has shifted from the people in power to the average African. As a result, African Christianity has gone from a religion strongly supported by the state and serving its needs to one that addresses the concerns of the African people and finds its leaders from among them.

EARLY MISSIONARY ACTIVITY

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

In the past the nature of missionary activity in Africa has reflected the social and political conditions in which Christianity developed. As the secular* influences on Christianity changed, so did the way in which missionaries approached their task in Africa.

Initial Successes. Africa's connection to Christianity began soon after the founding of the church. According to the Bible, Christian missionaries visited Africa before going to Italy. The apostle Philip is said to have converted a member of the royal court in ETHIOPIA. Although early Christian missionaries in Africa sought converts among ordinary folk, they worked mainly through traditional power structures. They hoped to convert rulers, who would then force their subjects to adopt the new religion.

By the A.D. 500s, Christian missionaries had succeeded in bringing their faith to EGYPT, MEROË, AKSUM, and Ethiopia. The monastic movement, based on the founding of isolated monasteries that served as centers of Christian faith and learning, developed in Egypt. However, the monastic movement had its earliest successes in Europe, where monasteries became the main means of missionary activity. By the time monastic Christianity finally reached sub-Saharan* Africa, it had become entangled in European politics and served the interests of commercial expansion as well as of faith. With the age of European exploration, missionary activity became closely linked with conquest.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The Age of Exploration. Beginning in the early 1400s, European explorers carried European culture, including Christianity, to the farthest points on the globe. The primary motives for these voyages of discovery were financial profit and the creation of large empires. The church saw the voyages as an opportunity to bring Christianity to new converts in distant lands. Thus, priests and monks often accompanied explorers and conquerors as they sailed to America, Africa, and Asia.

The goals of conquest and accumulating riches clashed with the ideals of Christianity. However, by this time the success of the church was tied directly to the success of the kingdoms and rulers that embraced and supported the faith. To bring the faith to people in other lands, missionaries had to cooperate in the conquest of those lands. A church decree called the *Padroado*, issued by Pope Nicholas V in 1455, was typical of the type of arrangement the church made with the state. The

Missions and Missionaries

The White Father

An early champion of indigenous involvement in the missionary effort was French bishop Charles Lavigerie. In 1868 Lavigerie founded the Society of African Missions, known as the White Fathers. The bishop emphasized the importance of African participation in converting other Africans. Moreover, his goal was to train Africans to lead the Christian missionary effort in a way that left them truly African, rather than transform them into Europeans. In the meantime he urged white missionaries to adopt African dress, language, clothing, food, and customs. In 1882 Lavigerie became archbishop of Carthage (in present-day Tunisia) and head of the Catholic Church in Africa.

Padroado authorized Portugal to seize land and enslave indigenous peoples wherever Portuguese authority extended.

Conquest was not always necessary to spread Christianity. In Ethiopia and other early centers of African Christianity, the rulers willingly embraced the new faith. Notable among them was King Afonso I of the kingdom of KONGO in central Africa. Afonso made his subjects adopt Christianity, and by 1491 his kingdom had been converted. European nations recognized Kongo as a Christian kingdom, and Kongo officials who visited Lisbon and Rome received warm welcomes.

Despite the acceptance of Christianity in Kongo and a few other African kingdoms, the popularity of the faith eventually declined in many of those states. Local peoples went back to their traditional beliefs and abandoned Christianity, which survived only among foreigners and their agents and slaves. By the 1800s, Christianity had vanished almost without a trace in many places.

The Influence of Slavery. The decline of Christianity in much of Africa was a sign of the weakness of missionary policies. By the late 1700s, most local Africans saw missions as centers of unwanted foreign influence. Missionaries became associated with the merchants and soldiers who killed and enslaved Africans. As it turned out, however, the SLAVE TRADE provided the motivation for a new, more successful missionary effort in Africa.

In 1807 Great Britain outlawed the slave trade and soon afterward began a campaign to end the trade among other nations. To influence public opinion, antislavery forces recruited former slaves to tell their stories. Besides generating antislavery sentiment among Europeans, such activities also marked the beginning of African participation in the missionary enterprise. It became clear that this participation would play a vital role in missionary success in Africa. Christianity would come to Africa only through indigenous involvement.

MISSIONARY EFFORTS AFTER 1800

Shortly after 1800 various new missionary orders were founded that would lead the effort in Africa. Both Catholics and Protestants adjusted their policies with the aim of producing an indigenous clergy*. In this way, members of local populations, rather than Europeans, would be responsible for spreading Christianity in Africa.

Toward an Indigenous Clergy. In 1845 Pope Gregory XVI issued a decree that called for establishing overseas seminaries, or religious schools, to train indigenous clergy in lands conquered by European Catholic powers. At the same time, Protestant missionaries began following a similar path, with missionary organizations such as the Church Missionary Society seeking to enlist African clergy to lead Africans.

In 1861 Henry Venn, a leader of the Church Missionary Society, transferred nine parishes* in SIERRA LEONE to indigenous clergy. Many more would come under African control over the next several years.

* **clergy** ministers, priests, or other religious officials

* **parish** church district

Missions and Missionaries

These events occurred at the same time as the formation of the Niger Mission in Nigeria, headed by Samuel Ajayi CROWTHER, the first African bishop. Such changes marked a turning point for African Christianity, and Crowther played a crucial role in the African missionary enterprise.

Crowther translated the Bible into his native YORUBA language, the first time the Scriptures appeared in an African tongue. He also produced works in the IGBO, HAUSA, and Nupe languages. These efforts stimulated Christian missionaries to compile the first written versions of many African languages.

The Bibles, prayer books, dictionaries, and other works that appeared in African languages transformed the spread of Christianity and secular knowledge in Africa. With access to written languages, Africans began to master their own history, and materials written in African languages gave European readers a chance to understand the African point of view. As missionaries and church authorities came to see the importance of an indigenous clergy and African-language scriptures, Africans took a larger role in planning and carrying out missionary policy.

A philosopher and devout Christian, Dr. Albert Schweitzer founded this medical mission in Lambarene, Gabon, in the early 1900s. In 1952 Schweitzer received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on behalf of "the Brotherhood of Nations."





Missions and Missionaries

* **charismatic** having a special charm or appeal that arouses public loyalty and enthusiasm

During the late 1800s, a number of independent African churches and movements emerged, many led by charismatic* figures such as William Wadé Harris of IVORY COAST. These churches reinterpreted European Christianity in an African environment and redirected growing social unrest into religious channels. Harris and other African prophets also interpreted political events in religious terms, such as seeing the outbreak of World War I as a sign that the end of the world was near.

Most of the new churches and prophetic movements split off from Protestant missions; few developed in areas dominated by Catholic missions. Because Protestant missionaries preached that only those who could read the Bible themselves could be converted, a steady stream of Africans left the church to begin their own sects. The approach of Catholic missionaries was different. They baptized all who entered the church. African Catholics thus had less compelling reasons to leave the church than African Protestants.

Missions in Modern Africa. World War II disrupted missionary work in Africa, as the attention of Europeans was focused on the battle at hand. When the war ended, European leaders assumed that missionary ties in Africa would be renewed and strengthened. However, the struggle to restore freedom and liberty to nations conquered by Germany and Japan inspired Africans to seek the same freedom for themselves. Africans were no longer willing to accept European authority without question.

Independent churches flourished in the new environment in which Africans not only called for, but fought for, political freedom. Although these churches took a number of different forms, they shared a reforming zeal and continuity with traditional African religious belief and practice. The coming of independence for African nations in the 1960s removed other barriers to the development of indigenous churches. It also contributed to a process that resulted in the development of a “world” Christianity partly defined by the values of non-Western cultures and languages.

Established Christianity indicated its acceptance of these trends in 1995 when the first African Synod, a meeting of Catholic bishops, was held in CAMEROON. Pope John Paul II attended the meeting, which confirmed the church in Africa as a new, indigenous movement committed to addressing the political, economic, and social needs of African peoples.

The acceptance of an “Africanized” Christianity was the logical result of the long period of missionary activity in Africa. Once a distant continent with only a few isolated Christian outposts, Africa now boasts some 300 million Christians. With its large Christian population and vibrant local traditions, the continent has produced an important new form of Christianity. (*See also Braide, Garrick Sokari; Colonialism in Africa; Equiano, Olaudah; Ethiopian Orthodox Church; Kingsley, Mary Henrietta; Livingstone, David; Prophetic Movements; Tutu, Desmond Mpilo.*)



Mogadishu

Mobutu Sese Seko

1930–1997
President of Zaire

* **regime** current political system or rule

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

President of Zaire—now known as CONGO (KINSHASA)—from 1965 to 1997, Mobutu Sese Seko ruled as a dictator. His regime* gained a reputation for corruption and mismanagement. Despite Zaire’s rich natural resources, the nation suffered a serious economic decline under Mobutu’s rule.

Born Joseph Désiré Mobutu in the Belgian colony of Congo, Mobutu was educated in missionary schools and entered the army in 1950. When the Congo gained its independence in June 1960, he was appointed head of national defense. During a struggle between the nation’s top leaders, Joseph Kasavubu and Patrice LUMUMBA, Mobutu seized power. After a few months Mobutu turned the government over to Kasavubu, who named him commander in chief of the nation’s armed forces.

In November 1965, Mobutu seized power again. This time he declared himself president and began establishing tight control over the country. He outlawed opposing political parties, set up a centralized government, and nationalized* certain industries. He took steps to “Africanize” the nation by renaming it Zaire, and changed his own name to Mobutu Sese Seko.

For a time it appeared that Mobutu had stabilized Zaire’s economy and was encouraging development. However, by 1975 the nation had begun a long and steady decline. Groups opposed to Mobutu staged coups* to remove him from office, but they were unsuccessful. As opposition grew in the early 1990s, Mobutu was forced to allow multiparty elections in Zaire. In 1997, seriously threatened by rebel forces, he finally relinquished power and fled the country.

Mogadishu

Mogadishu, the capital of SOMALIA, is the nation’s largest city and major seaport. During the long civil war that ravaged Somalia in the 1980s and 1990s, large parts of the city were destroyed, and hundreds of thousands of its inhabitants fled to other towns and to the countryside.

Mogadishu was founded in the A.D. 900s as a Swahili and Arab outpost on the Indian Ocean. By the 1200s it had become the most important town in East Africa. A major trading center, the town grew considerably during the 1300s and had a large population of rich merchants. After visiting Mogadishu about 1330, the famous Arab traveler IBN BATTUTA wrote about its great size and its wealth.

For centuries Mogadishu was an independent city-state ruled by its own sultans. In the mid-1800s, however, it came under the control of the sultans of Zanzibar. They rented the city to the Italians in 1892 and sold it to them in 1905. The Italians made Mogadishu the capital of Italian Somaliland. The city remained under Italian control until after World War II, and then the British took it over.

When Somalia gained its independence in 1960, Mogadishu became the capital of the new nation. The city grew rapidly, nearly doubling in size between 1965 and 1974. Many of Somalia’s exports, primarily fruits and animal hides, passed through the city, and it supported a number of industries, including food processing, textiles, and cosmetics.



Mogadishu

Mogadishu suffered tremendous damage in Somalia's civil war. A three-month struggle in 1991 left burned-out buildings and dead bodies scattered throughout the city. At least 400,000 people fled to the countryside. International peacekeeping forces were unable to bring order to Mogadishu. In 1994 they pulled out, leaving the city still in a shambles. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Moi, Daniel arap

1924–
President of Kenya

In 1978 Daniel Toroitich arap Moi succeeded Jomo KENYATTA as president of KENYA. Moi has managed to remain in power since then, despite a growing opposition and accusations of corruption.

A member of the Kalenjin people, an ethnic minority in Kenya, Moi worked as a teacher as a young man. In 1955 he was one of the first Africans chosen to serve on the colony's Legislative Council. Five years later he became assistant treasurer of the Kenya African National Union (KANU), which became the country's governing party after independence. For a while, he belonged to a rival party consisting of politicians who feared that ethnic GIKUYU and LUO were dominating KANU. This second party was later absorbed by KANU.

After Kenya won its independence, Moi served as minister of home affairs and, later, as vice president. When Kenyatta died in 1978, Moi assumed the presidency. Moi began his administration by launching an anticorruption campaign and releasing various political prisoners. However, his reform program soon stalled, and by 1982 Kenya was a single-party state. That year the air force attempted to overthrow the government, but Moi's forces defeated and jailed the rebels.

Moi's rule has been marked by a lack of political freedom and a poor record on HUMAN RIGHTS. During the 1988 elections, he did away with secret balloting and opponents accused him of rigging the vote. Two years later the murder of a respected member of the government led to calls for a multiparty political system. Moi allowed the formation of an opposition party, the Foundation for the Restoration of Democracy, in 1991. Moi was reelected in 1992 and 1997, but his victories were tainted with charges of fraud.

Mondlane, Eduardo Chivambo

1920–1969
Mozambican anticolonial
leader

Eduardo Mondlane established the freedom movement known as FRELIMO that eventually won MOZAMBIQUE's independence from Portugal. Educated in South Africa, Portugal, and the United States, Mondlane became heavily involved with the movement for Mozambican independence. He concluded that Portugal's inflexible attitude probably meant that war was inevitable for Mozambique. However, he was determined to avoid devastating the country in the process.

After founding FRELIMO in 1962, Mondlane oversaw the expansion of military action against the colonial government. In 1969 he was killed by a package bomb sent from either a Portuguese or South African source. Mondlane is remembered as one of the founders of an independent Africa. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Independence Movements; Machel, Samora Moises.*)

Money and Banking

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

African societies had many types of money in the precolonial* period, but no banking systems. As Europeans established colonies in Africa in the late 1800s and early 1900s, they introduced uniform systems of money and established banks to handle the exchange of money and other financial transactions.

MONEY

Money has three distinct functions. It can serve as a medium of exchange, a way of storing wealth, or a standard of value. In Western cultures, money combines all three of these functions. However, traditional African cultures generally have different forms of currency for each function. For example, gold jewelry might serve as a store of wealth, glass beads as a medium of exchange, and copper bars of a certain size and weight as a standard of value.

Traditional African Money. People in Africa relied on a variety of materials to serve as money, including metals, cloth, coins, gold, beads, seashells, cows, salt, and slaves. Africans used these “currencies” as a medium of exchange and lent or borrowed them as a form of credit.

Brass and copper—usually in the form of wires, rods, or handcrafted objects—served as money in many areas of Africa. Wires were usually worth less than metal in other forms. Some of the metal “currency” was produced in Africa, but a substantial amount came from Europe. Iron was also used as money, mostly in the form of bars and rods but in a variety of objects such as hoes, knives, and axes as well.

Cloth woven into strips or made into mats served as money in some regions of Africa. Beginning in the 1700s, cloth imported from Europe or other regions replaced locally made cloth currencies. The most valuable imported cloths came from India, in particular a blue cloth made from an indigo dye. Such cloth was a major form of currency in MAURITANIA.

A variety of coins from Europe, the Middle East, and the Americas served as money in Africa, although silver and gold coins were considered too valuable for everyday use. In West Africa, however, silver dollars—particularly those from Latin America—were used in trade along the coast. Gold dust functioned as money in some areas, especially among the ASANTE people of West Africa. The state controlled the production of gold dust, and those who used this currency weighed it very carefully.

Certain types of beads served as currency as well. In general, the societies that used bead money were small and poor. Seashells were also in wide circulation. In West Africa, cowrie shells were important. Most of these brightly colored shells originated in the Maldiv Islands in the Indian Ocean and reached West Africa by way of caravan routes across the SAHARA DESERT. Later, cowrie shells traveled in the cargo holds of ships as ballast, which provided stability for the ships in rough seas.

Several groups, particularly those in East Africa, used cows as money. East Africa had many pastoralist* societies that valued cattle highly. Salt existed as a form of currency in many parts of Africa. It usually circulated in the shape of blocks, cakes, cones, or bundles. In all areas of Africa, people used slaves as money in major transactions.

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding



Money and Banking

In some areas, more than one type of money might be in circulation at any given time. Such places usually had fixed rates of exchange for different types of currencies. With multiple currencies in circulation, the type of money in use frequently changed, with moneys of lower value replacing those of higher value. Frequent changes of currency, however, led to periods of considerable instability.

Generally, one form of precolonial money could be substituted for another, and some—such as salt or cloth—had other functions. For example, gold, silver, and cowrie shells could serve as money or as decoration and display. No matter how they were used, they maintained their monetary value. However, salt lost value if used to flavor food, and cloth cut for clothing became less valuable.

Unlike domestically produced currency, coins came from distant places. Coins came to Africa through the export trade—for example, in payment for slaves. Foreign coins were also acquired in exchange for African goods such as mineral resources, cotton and other agricultural products, and ivory and gold.

Colonial and Modern Currency. Colonial rule led to the replacement of informal African currencies with coins and paper notes. Each colonial power issued its own coins and paper money, which were usually backed by treasury reserves in the home country. These formal colonial currencies were standardized. They consisted of silver coins for high-value transactions and copper, bronze, and nickel coins for low-value exchanges. In general, paper notes came into circulation in Africa in the early 1900s.

The transition from traditional to colonial money was slower in some areas of Africa than in others, and in many cases local currencies remained in use as well. The colonial powers took steps to undermine traditional currencies in favor of their own money. Sometimes they simply banned the use of local currency. They also required that tax payments be made in colonial money.

All modern African nations have their own formal currencies of coins and paper notes. Urban areas also have electronic money—various forms of credit and debt without the exchange of actual coins or paper currency. In many rural areas, however, traditional currencies are still in use as a means of exchange and a sign of wealth.

BANKS AND BANKING

No formal system of banks and banking existed in Africa before the arrival of Europeans. Colonial officials established banks to handle the financial transactions of the government as well as those of individuals and businesses. European commercial banking practices penetrated Africa very unevenly, with banks set up primarily in urban areas. Even today many rural Africans have little connection with banks or banking.

After gaining independence, African nations retained the banking systems established by the colonial powers. In some cases, private banks owned by Europeans continued to operate as foreign-controlled businesses. In others, African governments nationalized* the banking sys-

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership



Money and Banking

tem, taking control of all the banks in the country. The banking systems in Africa today consist of a mixture of private and government-controlled banks.

Every African nation today has a central bank that supervises its banking system. These central banks usually issue currency, maintain foreign currency reserves, control the credit supply, oversee the specialized lending institutions of the government, and regulate the commercial banking industry. In the Muslim nations of Africa, Islamic* law governs various financial and banking practices.

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Most African nations also have development banks, which help finance economic development projects and provide technical assistance for such activities. Several countries in North Africa, for example, have branches of the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa, which has its main headquarters in SUDAN.

In addition to central and development banks, African nations have a variety of commercial and savings institutions. Such banks may be owned and operated by the government or by private companies; most have branch offices throughout the country. Although commercial and savings banks have been established in many parts of Africa, only a small percentage of Africans use them frequently. For rural Africans especially, money remains something to use before it loses value, is stolen, or is taken by beggars—not to put in the bank. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Development, Economic and Social, Economic History, Ivory Trade, Slave Trade.*)



Morocco

Morocco lies at the northwest corner of Africa, on the southern side of the Strait of Gibraltar. On a clear day, it can be seen from the Spanish coast, a mere nine miles away. At the crossroads between Africa and Europe, Morocco has always been a melting pot of people and ideas, a country influenced by many cultures.

THE LAND

Geographically, Morocco is divided into three major regions: the ATLAS MOUNTAINS, which run diagonally across the country; the Atlantic coastal plains (northwest of the mountains); and the SAHARA DESERT (southeast of the mountains). Four ranges make up the Atlas Mountains: the Rif, along the Mediterranean coast; the Middle Atlas, south of the city of Fez; the High Atlas; and the Anti-Atlas, which runs southwest to the sea. Beginning as small hills at the edge of the Atlantic, the Atlas Mountains rise rapidly and reach 13,665 feet at Mount Toubkal. With an average elevation of 2,600 feet, most of Morocco lies at high altitudes.

Morocco's landscape, climate, and economy are affected by its geography. Northern Morocco, especially along the coast, enjoys a Mediterranean climate—mild, rainy winters and hot, dry summers. The annual rainfall ranges from 8 to 32 inches in the northern coastal plains

Morocco



and from 30 to 80 inches in the mountain regions. Devastating floods sometimes occur during the rainy season.

The Sebou River basin, a vast plain between Fez and the capital city of Rabat, is heavily populated and includes the fertile Gharb (or Rharb) Plain. South of the Sebou basin, the country rises gradually to a number of less populated, but agriculturally important, plains. The major city of the high plains is Marrakech, an oasis nourished by water from the Atlas Mountain springs. Between the High Atlas and Anti-Atlas ranges is the Sous Valley, where many of Morocco's political movements have begun.

The southern regions of Morocco depend on the water from several streams that flow down the eastern slopes of the Atlas Mountains into the Sahara. These streams form the Dadès, Ziz, and Dra'a Rivers. Farmers in the region use complicated irrigation systems to carry water from the streams to their fields.

HISTORY AND POLITICS

BERBER peoples from the Sahara and Southwest Asia arrived in Morocco between 4000 and 2000 B.C. The earliest reports of the region and its people come from ancient Greek and Phoenician records. The



See map in *Archaeology and Prehistory* (vol. 1).



Morocco

* **annex** to take over or add a territory to an existing area

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

Phoenicians, who originated in the eastern Mediterranean, founded the first Moroccan towns on the southern side of the Strait of Gibraltar. By A.D. 100, Rome had annexed* most of North Africa.

Arab Rule. North Africa was invaded by Arabs in the 600s and loosely incorporated into the Islamic* world by the early 700s. A large Arab army passed through Morocco to conquer the Iberian Peninsula, but Arab interest in Morocco remained slight until 789. In that year Idris I, a descendant of the prophet Muhammad, established a small independent state in the region. In 809, his son, Idris II, moved the capital to the newly established city of Fez. The Idrisid dynasty* transformed Morocco into an Islamic, Arabic-speaking society. The Idrisids were succeeded by several other dynasties: the Almoravids and Almohads (from the 1000s to the 1200s), the Merinids (from the 1200s to the 1400s), the Sa'adis (in the 1500s), and the Alawids (from the 1600s to the present).

During these centuries, Morocco was divided into many principalities, or emirates. The most important of these was the Merinid emirate of Fez. The emirates struggled constantly to keep the indigenous* peoples under control and to defend Moroccan ports against Portuguese and Spanish invaders. In 1664 the Alawids seized power and began a vigorous program of modernizing the country. Opposition from rural peoples, however, led to the downfall of this program. Morocco fell into political decline, which lasted until 1912, when most of the country became a French protectorate*.

European Colonization. Europe's interest in Morocco began in the late 1800s. By 1900 the French had begun building a commercial port in the fishing village of Casablanca. A treaty between France and Spain divided the country into two protectorates, with the Spanish controlling the northern part of the country. The rest of Morocco, governed by the French, was effectively a colony. Large numbers of Europeans settled in the most fertile regions of the country. Both France and Spain spent much time and money putting down rebellions among the Berbers of the Rif and Atlas Mountains, who objected to European rule.

Independence. After World War I, French forces began a campaign to end the Berber rebellion. In 1934 they finally brought the rebels under control. About ten years later, members of a Moroccan nationalist* movement founded the Istiqlal (Independence) party with the support of Sultan MUHAMMAD V (later King Muhammad). After World War II, Istiqlal began to demand independence, which France granted in March 1956. An agreement between Morocco and Spain a month later ended the Spanish protectorate. The following year Muhammad changed the Sultanate of Morocco to the Kingdom of Morocco. European settlers were forced to leave the country, and a new era in Moroccan history began.

In 1959 Istiqlal split into two parts—a larger group representing the older, more traditional members, and a smaller group representing younger members who favored socialism*. King Muhammad ruled until

In Name Only

During the time that Morocco was a French protectorate, the idea of the supremacy of the reigning sultan was preserved. However, real power rested in the hands of the French-appointed resident general. This official ran the country and was accountable only to the French government. The insignificant role of Moroccan officials can be seen in the lengthy service of the grand vizier (Moroccan chief administrator). Installed when the protectorate began, he held his post for 44 years—until he was more than 100 years old.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

1961, when his son, HASSAN II, came to power. The following year, Morocco became a constitutional monarchy.

The governments of Muhammad V and Hassan II introduced modest and cautious modernization programs to the country. Clashes developed between the new urban population and the traditional leaders over issues such as providing funds for basic food products and introducing democracy. During the early years of King Hassan's reign, his inexperience led to some serious mistakes and two coup* attempts. Officials linked these threats to Berbers in the military, who were subsequently removed.

In the mid-1970s, King Hassan sought to gain control of Spanish Sahara (now WESTERN SAHARA). The large Spanish colony lay south of Morocco along the Atlantic Coast. It was mostly desert but contained valuable deposits of phosphates. Spain eventually withdrew its claim to the region, but a Saharan independence movement, known as Polisario, declared its opposition to Moroccan rule. In the 1990s negotiations about holding an election on the question of independence stalled, leaving the fate of the Western Sahara unresolved.

By the early 1980s, poor harvests and a sluggish economy had drained Morocco's resources, causing riots in Casablanca. In recent years, international lending agencies and human rights organizations have pressed the nation for political and economic reform.

Unlike most of its Arab neighbors, Morocco has generally sided with the West rather than with the former Soviet Union* and its allies. King Hassan helped pave the way for the Camp David Accords (1978) between Israel and Egypt and continued to press both Israelis and Palestinians to seek a peaceful resolution of their disagreements.

By the end of the 1990s, King Hassan was the longest-reigning monarch in the Arab world. He introduced various democratic reforms to Moroccan politics but at the same time kept a firm hold on the government and the legislative process. In his role as the religious head of state, he gained widespread support among the urban poor and rural people. Remembered for his political savvy and appealing personality, Hassan was succeeded by his son, Muhammad VI, in 1999.

ECONOMY

With about 33,000 square miles of good farmland and a generally temperate climate, Morocco has better conditions for agriculture than most African countries. About 40 percent of the people are engaged in farming. Agricultural activities account for nearly 20 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP)*. Moroccan farms produce grains and meats for domestic use and fruits and vegetables for export. The production of commercial crops, such as cotton, sugarcane, and sunflower seed, is expanding. Nevertheless, the danger of drought is constant—generally occurring every third year and devastating crops.

Manufacturing in Morocco consists mainly of the production of phosphates, which are used in fertilizers. When Morocco acquired the Western Sahara, it also gained about two-thirds of the world's phosphate

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Morocco

See color
plate 10,
vol. 2.

reserves. Higher fuel costs and decreased demand for phosphates, however, have reduced export earnings.

The waters off Morocco's west coast contain abundant supplies of fish. Because the country lacks modern fleets and processing plants, however, it is unable to benefit from the rich fishing grounds. A trade agreement between Morocco and the European Union allows Spain to fish in Moroccan waters, for an annual fee.

Morocco's sandy beaches, comfortable climate, and cultural heritage account for its appeal to tourists. Tourism has grown rapidly, providing jobs and a source of hard currency.

A well-maintained network of roads links the regions of Morocco. Built during the colonial period, the roads have been gradually expanded since that time. In addition, railroads connect the major cities of the north to the Western Sahara. Morocco has more than 20 ports along its coastline.

The government spends about 20 percent of its budget on education, mostly to build schools. The country also has many clinics and other medical facilities, although the rural population has little access to health care. Infant mortality remains high and about one-third of the population is malnourished.

As in other parts of North Africa, many of the older towns in Morocco were once protected by a massive outer wall and defensive fort called a Casbah. The well-preserved Casbah of Ait Benhaddou, shown here, has been featured in several major films.





Kingdom of Morocco

POPULATION:

30,122,350 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

178,620 sq. mi. (446,550 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Arabic (official); French, Berber dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Dirham

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 98.7%, Christian 1.1%, Jewish 0.2%

CITIES:

Rabat (capital), 1,496,000 (2000 est.); Casablanca, Marrakech, Fez, Oujda

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from about 32 in. (800 mm) to less than 8 in. (200 mm) in the northern coastal lowlands, and 30–80 in. (760–2,030 mm) in the southern mountain regions

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$3,600 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: grain, citrus, wine grapes, olives, fish
 Manufacturing: food and beverages processing, textiles, leather goods
 Mining: phosphates, iron ore, manganese, lead, zinc

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1952. Constitutional hereditary monarchy. Governing bodies: elected legislative body consisting of Chamber of Councilors and Chamber of Representatives, and Council of Ministers and prime minister appointed by the monarch.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1952–1961 Sultan Muhammad V (adopted title of king in 1957)
 1961– King (Moulay) Hassan II
 1999– King Muhammad VI

ARMED FORCES:

196,300

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 44%

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

The people of Morocco live mainly in cities. They are mostly Berber and Arab in origin, and centuries of intermarriage between the two groups have erased most of their cultural differences.

The main distinguishing feature that remains between ethnic groups is linguistic. Berber-speaking Moroccans are divided into three groups: the Riffi of the Rif Mountains, the Tamazight of the Middle Atlas, and the Shluh of the High Atlas and Sous Valley. The remainder of Moroccans speak Arabic, the national language, with French as a second language used in commerce, education, and government. Radio broadcasts can be heard in Arabic, French, Berber, Spanish, and English. Newspapers are written in both Arabic and French. Despite a recent boost in Berber culture, Berber languages remain largely unwritten.

Islam is the state religion and most Moroccans belong to the Sunni tradition. King Hassan II, a descendant of the prophet Muhammad, was the symbol of Islam throughout his long reign. Hassan was also responsible for expanding Morocco's territory. Beginning in 1975, he extended the country's borders by moving to the south and incorporating territories that were formerly part of the Spanish colonial empire. This included land held by the Sahawari Arab Democratic Republic, which at the time claimed independence. In 1993 he constructed the world's largest mosque in Casablanca. Morocco also has a small Jewish community. (See also **Arabs in Africa**, **Colonialism in Africa**, **Independence Movements**, **Islam in Africa**, **North Africa: Geography and Population**, **North Africa: History and Cultures**.)

Moshoeshoe I

Moshoeshoe I

1786–1870
Founder and king of
Basutoland

* **diplomatic** involved with conducting relations with other nations

Founder and king of the Basotho nation (present-day LESOTHO), Moshoeshoe I was noted for his military skill and diplomatic* abilities. He played a major role in protecting Lesotho from conquest by European settlers, and he helped the country achieve independence.

Originally named Lepoqo, Moshoeshoe was the son of a Koena chief. While a young adult, Moshoeshoe gained a reputation as a leader by making daring cattle raids. Yet he was impatient and hot-tempered, and he killed followers for minor offenses. A local wise man told him that being just and humane would make him a more successful leader. This advice helped Moshoeshoe to realize that peace, not war, would gain him more faithful followers. Using this approach, he united various small groups to form the Basotho nation by the early 1830s. During that time, Moshoeshoe studied the complex relationships between African and European populations and learned to deal with them in a positive manner. By showing he was a strong and intelligent leader, Moshoeshoe earned the respect of other African leaders and colonial officials, which would prove to be an important factor in his struggles to maintain an independent Basotho nation.

The greatest challenges facing Moshoeshoe during his reign were attempts by European settlers to conquer the Basotho people and seize their land. At first Britain sided with the settlers. In 1852 a British force invaded Lesotho, but Moshoeshoe defeated them. Over the next 15 years, the settlers tried to overpower Moshoeshoe and his followers but failed. Through his diplomatic skill, Moshoeshoe earned the respect of colonial officials and brought the British government over to his side. By forging an alliance with Britain and gaining its protection, he helped save the Basotho from European control. As a result, the people of Lesotho consider Moshoeshoe the father of the country. (*See also Southern Africa, History.*)

Mossi

The Mossi are the largest ethnic group in BURKINA FASO, making up almost half of the population. They speak Mooré, which is used as a common language throughout the country. The Mossi arose from the merging of many different ethnic groups and formed several competing empires. Soldiers known as Mossi conquered the city of TIMBUKTU during the reign of Emperor MANSÁ MUSA of MALI in the 1300s. However, the modern Mossi may not be descended from these warriors.

In the 1400s, warriors on horseback arrived from the south and founded the first Mossi dynasty* in what is now northern Ghana. Mossi nobles called *nakombse* led small groups out to conquer new areas. All later Mossi empires trace their origin back to the *nakombse*, who founded several major kingdoms, including Ouagadougou. Mossi empires had strong central governments and a hierarchical* social structure. After the French colonized the region in the late 1800s, the *nakombse* rulers lost most of their power and privileges. Nevertheless, modern Mossi leaders are still respected in Burkina Faso both by political leaders and the population as a whole.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

Mozambique

Mozambique

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

A large country on the east coast of Africa, Mozambique has had a long and violent history. After 450 years of exploitation* by the Portuguese, Mozambicans fought a ten-year war for independence, then a civil war that lasted into the 1990s. Today the people of Mozambique have begun to put their violent past behind them. But drought, flooding, and a crushing national debt have made it one of Africa's poorest countries.



Mozambique

Breaking With Tradition

When Portugal ruled Mozambique, thousands of men were forced to leave home to work. Women came up with new ways to cooperate and survive—and sometimes went against their traditional roles. To ease their workload, many rural women organized labor exchanges among themselves. Others took over tasks, such as chopping down trees, that male relatives thought were beyond their abilities. Thousands also broke the taboo against women working with cattle. They used the cattle to pull their plows and lighten their labors.

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

GEOGRAPHY

A land of great contrasts, Mozambique is nearly twice the size of California. The country has hundreds of miles of coastline along the Indian Ocean, with some of the best natural harbors in Africa. The Mozambique Channel separates the country from the large island nation of MADAGASCAR.

The country's terrain consists mainly of a low plain along the ocean coast, rising westward to a high central plateau and mountains. The ZAMBEZI RIVER divides the country from west to east. North of the river, the coastal plain is narrow and rises steeply to the highlands. South of the river, the plain is much broader and the change in elevation more gradual. In the far northwest, Mozambique borders the waters of Lake Malawi.

The northern two-thirds of Mozambique has a rainy season from November to April, with annual rainfall between 39 and 55 inches. The southern third sees less rain, only about 23 to 31 inches, and sometimes suffers from long periods of drought. Although Mozambique lies not too far from the equator, its temperatures generally remain moderate because of the country's high elevations. The hottest weather is found in the low-lying coast and the Zambezi River valley.

Mozambique has a rich diversity of forests, waters, and wildlife. Along the coast, shrimp and other marine creatures thrive in the marshy mangrove* forests. Tropical forests are shrinking but still exist in coastal areas and in the north-central region, while savanna* grasslands cover much of the plateaus.

Mozambique's natural resources hold great promise for the country's future. Geologists believe that a wealth of metals and minerals lie below the surface. However, the country has little capacity for mining, and many forests and wildlife habitats are being destroyed for short-term profits. Mozambique's greatest resource may be its rich soils, which can support a wide variety of farming. Many people live in the most fertile areas.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

From the earliest known hunters and gatherers to the politicians and bankers of modern life, Mozambique's history spans thousands of years. The region has experienced a long series of migrations, invasions, conquests, and struggles.

Early History. By about A.D. 70, people living in what is now Mozambique had established some stable settlements where they farmed, fished, processed iron, and crafted pottery. Around 250 small groups of BANTU PEOPLES began migrating into the region from the north and west. Over the next 150 years, waves of Bantu displaced or absorbed much of the indigenous* population. They laid the foundation for a shared Bantu heritage that still can be felt in the languages and social customs of Mozambique.



Mozambique

After about 1000, Arab, SWAHILI, and Indian traders began to settle along the coast. They founded small chiefdoms that grew into independent states. The port of Sofala became a major center for exporting gold and ivory.

These coastal traders had contact with several African states that lay farther inland. The kingdom of MUTAPA, also known as Mwene Mutapa, controlled the gold trade south of the Zambezi River, and by the 1500s it was probably the largest and most powerful state in central and southern Africa. The kingdom of MALAWI controlled the IVORY TRADE north of the river.

Within Mutapa and Malawi, chiefs and councils of elders ruled over small local areas. They distributed land to their subjects and called on the spirits of ancestors to make the land flourish. In return, the people paid taxes to the chiefs in food and labor, and the chiefs were entitled to the larger tusk of any elephant that died in their territory. The chiefs, however, had to pay tribute* to the larger state. The local economies of Mutapa and Malawi rested mainly on farming, along with cattle raising, hunting, fishing, and mining. Trade in gold and ivory linked both Mutapa and Malawi to the Arab and Swahili merchants on the coasts.

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

The Portuguese Invasion. Portuguese sailors first landed on the coast of Mozambique in 1498, while searching for a sea route to India. Other explorers followed, and within a few years the Portuguese had several small settlements and trading posts on the coast. During the 1500s the Portuguese challenged the Swahili and eventually succeeded in taking control of the coast.

From their strongholds on the ocean shores, the Portuguese sent their armies and diplomats inland. In 1607 they forced the rulers of Mutapa to give up all their mines, and in 1632 they defeated Malawi. The king of Portugal gave out *prazos*, large estates in the interior, to Portuguese settlers. These settlers, *prazeiros*, often formed alliances and marriages with local African families, producing a mixed Afro-Portuguese culture. As a result, the influence of Portuguese authority declined. Indian traders moved in on Portuguese commerce, and several Arab and African groups revolted. In 1692 Mutapa and its allies drove the Portuguese from the interior.

The Slave Trade. In the mid-1700s, however, the Portuguese regained power and wealth through the SLAVE TRADE, which grew to terrifying proportions. As many as 1 million Africans from the region were forcibly taken to work in the Americas, the Caribbean, India, and Madagascar. Although Portugal outlawed the slave trade in 1836, the trade continued to dominate commerce throughout the century.

Slave raiders destroyed and captured entire communities in Mozambique. The rural economy was ruined as productive workers were taken away, and the remaining people could not grow enough food or protect against droughts. Indigenous societies were deeply disrupted and divided as a new, small class of Africans profited from enslaving other

Mozambique



Soldiers from the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) on parade in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique. In the 1960s FRELIMO launched a guerrilla war to free the country from Portuguese rule.

Africans. Southern Mozambique suffered less from the slave trade, but in the mid-1800s the area was conquered by the Nguni, an African people who had fled from South Africa.

Colonial Rule. Although the Portuguese grew rich from the slave trade, they were dependent on the Africans and *prazeiros* who controlled much of it. This situation and the success of the Nguni limited Portuguese influence. In the late 1800s, however, Portugal launched new assaults on the interior. Many Africans took up arms to defend their homelands, and Portugal did not overcome all resistance in Mozambique until 1917.

To increase their control over the country, the Portuguese set up a centralized administrative system with districts divided into European and non-European areas. They forced many African peasants to work for farms and factories owned by Europeans. Large numbers of Mozambican men went to work in South Africa for better pay in the mines and plantations there.



Mozambique

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **autonomy** independent self-government

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

Portugal also granted private companies the right to rule the lands and peoples of specific areas. In return, the companies were supposed to develop the area's agriculture, trade, and infrastructure*. Most companies, however, merely exploited the natural resources for their own profit.

In 1932 a dictator named Antonio Salazar came to power in Portugal. Mozambique was given a new status, that of province, that seemed to involve more autonomy*. In fact Portugal kept a harsh grip on its Mozambique. The colonial authorities forced the indigenous population to grow cotton, rice, and other cash crops* for export. The workers received little or no pay, so Portuguese companies could obtain these products very cheaply and make enormous profits on the world market.

Portugal also declared that Mozambicans who adopted the Portuguese language and culture could gain citizenship and rights. But in practice very few Africans could qualify, allowing the whites to justify their own dominance. During the 1950s and 1960s, thousands more Portuguese settlers came to Mozambique to claim the opportunities denied to indigenous people.

Meanwhile, the Salazar regime gave the Roman Catholic Church full responsibility for educating and converting black Mozambicans. The church's mission was to provide only a basic education and to instill discipline so that the Portuguese could rely on Africans as a source of cheap labor. As a result, the vast majority of Africans in Mozambique remained illiterate.

These policies continued to devastate black communities in Mozambique. Rural areas lost hundreds of thousands of their most productive members, while the emphasis on growing export crops left little land for food crops. Debt, famines, disease, and other problems all increased. The few Africans who lived in urban areas endured segregation and filthy slums.

Independence and After. By the 1950s a number of black leaders emerged in Mozambique to oppose colonial rule. In 1962, several groups united as the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), a political party that spearheaded the movement for independence. Two years later, under its leader Eduardo MONDLANE, FRELIMO took up arms and launched a guerrilla* war. For more than a decade, the rebels fought to liberate areas of the country. They abolished the cash crop system so that people could grow food for themselves and the army, and they helped open free clinics, schools, and orphanages. In 1974, Portuguese officers overthrew the dictatorship in Portugal and ended the war.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Independence came in 1975, but peace and progress did not. Thousands of Portuguese settlers left the country, taking their skills and wealth. Before leaving they killed cattle and destroyed property and machinery, which had a ruinous effect on the economy.

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

FRELIMO and its leader, Samora MACHEL, established a one-party state based on socialism*. The government nationalized* all industry and abolished private ownership of land. It also provided a safe haven for black rebels who were fighting the white minority governments of SOUTH

Mozambique



Republic of Mozambique

POPULATION:

19,104,696 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

308,642 sq. mi. (799,384 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Portuguese (official); Sena, Shona, Makua, Swahili, and others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Metical

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Traditional 50%, Christian 30%, Muslim 20%

CITIES:

Maputo (capital), 3,025,000 (2000 est.); Tete, Beira, Quelimane, Sofala

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

55 in. (1,420 mm) in center, less in the north and south

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$1,000 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cashews, cotton, sugar, corn, cassava, tea, tobacco, rice, tropical fruits, beef, poultry

Manufacturing: chemicals, petroleum products, textiles, food and beverage processing, cement, glass

Mining: coal, titanium, tantalite, some gold, mineral sands

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Portugal, 1975. Republic with president elected by popular vote. Governing bodies: Assembleia da Republica (legislature) with 250 seats elected by popular vote; Cabinet and prime minister appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1975–1986 President Samora Machel

1986– President Joaquim Alberto Chissano

ARMED FORCES:

6,100

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–14; literacy rate 40%

AFRICA and Rhodesia (present-day ZIMBABWE and ZAMBIA). In 1976 Rhodesia began to supply arms and funding to an opposition movement in Mozambique. With additional backing from South Africa, the Mozambique National Resistance Movement (RENAMO) launched armed strikes against FRELIMO that developed into a bloody civil war by 1982.

In 1986 FRELIMO abandoned socialism. It accepted loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, international organizations that required Mozambique to change its economic system so that it could produce enough money to pay back the loans. The government sold off many state industries, often to foreign investors. It devalued its currency, which caused the country's poor people to become even poorer. Hardship, unemployment, and unrest grew amid a few economic success stories.

Meanwhile, FRELIMO reached a cease-fire with RENAMO in 1992 and opened elections to other political parties. Although the 1999 elections drew wide protests by RENAMO supporters, FRELIMO managed to cling to power. The government has pursued new goals for industry and tourism and has introduced a program to combat poverty by empowering women.

ECONOMY

Mozambique's economy is still in transition from socialism to capitalism*. The economy has grown and has benefited a few people in business and government. Despite new optimism, Mozambique faces a great challenge to develop its agriculture and industry and overcome the poverty of its people.

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

Mozambique

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

* **hydroelectric power** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Agriculture is the primary economic activity in Mozambique. Most people engage in subsistence farming*, growing corn and sorghum* and raising cattle, goats, sheep, and chickens. In the most fertile areas, however, large plantations have replaced family farms since the early 1900s. The plantations employ many laborers to produce cash crops, especially cashew nuts, sugar cane, cotton, and tea. However, this large-scale agriculture did not perform well under socialism and has suffered from a series of droughts.

Mozambique has a large fishing industry, and shrimp is the country's major export. However, the shrimp industry faces a growing threat—the destruction of coastal mangrove forests where most of the shrimp live and breed. Overfishing also poses a danger, although the government has recently set limits on how much fish and shrimp can be caught.

Mozambique currently produces iron ore, titanium metal, oil, and natural gas. Small industries exist to refine oil, process aluminum, and manufacture textiles, machinery, chemicals, and cement. However, these activities employ only a small percentage of the population. Mozambique's industry suffers from corruption, outdated technology, a shortage of roads and rail lines, and a shortage of electrical power.

The nation's many rivers are a great resource that could be used for hydroelectric power*. The giant Cabora Bassa dam on the Zambezi River does produce electricity, but most of this power is sold to South Africa and not used to develop Mozambique itself.

PEOPLE AND CULTURE

Mozambique has a great diversity of ethnic groups and ways of life. From the far corners of the country near Lake Malawi to the bustling cities and shores, Mozambican life is both traditional and in transition.

The great majority of Mozambicans belong to related ethnic groups that speak Bantu languages. The largest Bantu group, the Makua-Lomwe, lives mainly north of the Zambezi River. Along the northern coast, many residents speak Swahili and are part of the Islamic* culture and religion. The Nguni peoples are a smaller group who migrated to Mozambique from South Africa in the 1800s. While more information is being learned about the people of Mozambique, very little historical information exists. Both the Portuguese colonial leaders and native leaders such as ex-president Samora Machel were reluctant to gather information on the different ethnic groups that populate the country. Instead they attempted to present the image of a unified Mozambique in which all people used a common language and shared similar goals. Those attempts at unification largely failed.

Most Mozambicans live in rural areas and follow traditional lifestyles based on KINSHIP relations. Many groups north of the Zambezi River have a matrilineal society in which people trace descent through the female side of the family. Most groups south of the Zambezi have patrilineal descent through the male side of the family. Today, growing numbers of Mozambicans are moving to the capital city of Maputo and other urban areas in search of opportunities. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Independence Movements, Ivory Trade, Plantation Systems, Southern Africa, History.**)

Mubarak, Hosni

Mubarak, Hosni

1928–
President of Egypt

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **militant** aggressive, willing to use force

Hosni Mubarak became president of EGYPT in 1981 after the assassination of Anwar SADAT. Reelected several times, Mubarak has steered Egypt through a difficult period marked by growing unrest, guerrilla* violence, and threats from Islamic* political groups.

Born in the Nile River delta to a peasant family, Mubarak graduated from the Cairo Military Academy in 1949. He embarked on a career in the Egyptian air force, rising steadily in rank. As commander in chief of the air force, he took charge of Egypt's air preparations for the Arab-Israel War of 1973. Because of Mubarak's outstanding service, President Anwar Sadat appointed him vice president in 1975.

After Sadat was assassinated, Mubarak took over the presidency. He sought solutions to Egypt's economic and social problems and tried to curb the corruption that had marred Sadat's last years in office. Although Mubarak encouraged Western and Arab investment in Egypt, he limited the role of foreign corporations in the country.

In foreign affairs, Mubarak maintained close ties to the United States. He also began repairing Egypt's relations with other Arab countries, which had been damaged when Sadat signed a peace treaty with Israel. In 1990 Mubarak attempted to resolve a dispute between Iraq and Kuwait. When Iraq invaded Kuwait the following year, causing the Persian Gulf War, Mubarak supported the United States and its allies and sent troops to assist in the military campaign.

In the 1990s Mubarak faced rising economic and social unrest in Egypt. In addition, he had to deal with growing political opposition and militant* Islamic groups. He escaped an assassination attempt in 1995 and was slightly wounded in another attack four years later. Throughout his presidency, Mubarak has played an important role in trying to bring about peace in the Middle East. (*See also North Africa: History and Cultures.*)

Mugabe, Robert

1924–
President of Zimbabwe

Robert Mugabe has been the leader of ZIMBABWE since the country achieved independence in 1980. Born and educated in a Catholic mission in the British colony of Southern Rhodesia, Mugabe became a teacher. In 1956 he moved to the newly independent nation of GHANA. Several years later, he returned to his home country and entered politics. At the time, white colonists led by Ian Smith controlled the government.

Mugabe founded a political party called the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU). When it split along ethnic lines between SHONA and NDEBELE members, he joined the Shona-dominated Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU). In 1963 he fled Southern Rhodesia after being charged with speaking out against the government. He returned in 1964 and was jailed for almost ten years. International pressure and civil war finally toppled Smith's government, and in 1980 Mugabe was chosen prime minister in the country's first free elections. However, political rivalry with ZAPU soon led to another civil war. Mugabe and ZANU eventually won the struggle, and in 1987 Mugabe became the first president of Zimbabwe.



Museveni, Yoweri

Mugabe achieved political success by bringing opponents into his government. He unified the two opposing political parties and named the leader of the former ZAPU party (a member of the rival Ndebele ethnic group) as vice president. He convinced white landowners to join his party to retain their political influence. However, Mugabe's rule gradually became harsher. By 2001, authorities were censoring and arresting those who criticized the government, and support for Mugabe was dwindling both among the people of Zimbabwe and among other nations. (See also **Colonialism in Africa; Independence Movements; Southern Africa, History.**)

Muhammad V

1909–1961
King of Morocco

King Muhammad V was the first ruler of MOROCCO after the country gained its independence from France in 1956. Born Sidi Muhammad, the future king was the son of Sultan Moulay Yusuf. When Yusuf died in 1927, the French colonial authorities named the 18-year-old Muhammad as the new sultan. The French hoped to control the young ruler, but he soon attracted followers who demanded Moroccan independence.

During World War II Muhammad angered the French by allowing the formation of a local independence movement. In 1953 the French removed him from office and sent him out of the country. However, support for the sultan grew in his absence. He returned home in 1955 and helped win independence for Morocco the following year. Muhammad officially adopted the title of king in 1957. After his death he was succeeded by his son, who became King HASSAN II. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements, North Africa, History and Cultures.**)

Museveni, Yoweri

1944–
President of Uganda

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Yoweri Museveni, a former political activist, became president of UGANDA in 1986. Under his leadership, Uganda has achieved considerable political stability and economic growth. As a youth Museveni organized a movement to prevent pastoralists* from being forced off their lands. He attended the University of Dar es Salaam in TANZANIA, where he led a student group dedicated to African independence. He later worked for Ugandan president Milton OBOTE.

In 1971 Idi AMIN DADA overthrew President Obote. Museveni then formed a guerrilla* group that fought Amin and toppled him in 1979. The following year Obote was chosen president in an election widely seen as fraudulent. Museveni organized another rebel group, the National Resistance Army, to challenge Obote. The rebels eventually seized power and Museveni became president in 1986.

As president, Museveni has created a strong, centralized state and a disciplined army. He has pursued free-market economic policies and has supported opposition movements in several neighboring countries. In 1995 he oversaw the adoption of a new Ugandan constitution. He won the presidential election held the following year and was reelected in 2001.

Music and Song

Music and Song

* **genre** type of literary or artistic work

From the rural farmlands of MOZAMBIQUE to the booming dance halls of NIGERIA, music plays an essential role in the lives of Africans. Many regions have rich, deeply rooted traditions of music and song. But Africans have also incorporated in their music various outside influences—of the Arabs who arrived on the continent long ago, of the Europeans who ruled until well into the 1900s, and of the modern Western media. These influences have brought a tremendous diversity to African music. Swing, jazz, rock, reggae, techno, and other popular forms have exploded into whole new genres* of African music that pour out of concert halls, nightclubs, and radio stations across the continent.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN MUSIC

* **rite** ceremony or formal procedure

Africans include music in many aspects of their lives, from religious ceremonies to social gatherings to landmarks in the life cycle. For example, some societies hold INITIATION RITES for adolescents when they reach puberty. Boys and girls in these societies learn and perform certain songs as part of the rites*. Music also plays an important role in many traditional methods of healing. Peoples across the continent—from the Hamadsha of North Africa to the !Kung of SOUTH AFRICA—use music and dance to bring on states of meditation, ecstasy, trance, or SPIRIT POSSESSION that are believed to cure illness. In Nigeria, the Hausa play a lute and rattle to summon spirits that heal the sick.

Other kinds of social music include that of the *rebita* clubs of Luanda, ANGOLA, which draw on an urban tradition of ballroom dancing. Many southern Africans enjoy gathering around radios and record players for dancing. In such settings, people may be divided by age, gender, or class. But not all African music is performed with a group or for an audience. People also play instruments or sing to themselves for pleasure and to relieve stress.

Words play an important role in African music. In many African societies, music is closely linked to the ORAL TRADITION of spoken or recited literature. Storytelling frequently includes songs, and some forms of music mimic the spoken word. “Talking drum” music uses drumbeats with different tones to echo the sounds of language. Many musical forms are based on the singing and storytelling, and musicians sometimes use their instruments as voices that speak a language.

African music is rarely just for instruments. Musicians and listeners alike take great interest in the lyrics. Singing styles range from solo performances to large group participation. When singing in a group, individuals may sing the same words together. However, in a style known as polyphonic, each person voices a different phrase or syllable to create a variety of vocal patterns and combinations.

In Africa, music is generally considered inseparable from words, dance, and the occasion for which it is performed. It is not linked to specific notes and rhythms within measured units of time. Instead, African musicians play music based on their own individual sense of rhythm or on rhythmic phrases they have learned. Although a drum or rattle may keep a steady rhythm, other players may not use it as a basis for the beats they play or for how they accent notes in the music.

REGIONAL AFRICAN MUSIC

Students of African music are sometimes puzzled by the striking similarities that can be heard in various parts of the continent. For example, people in Mozambique on the Indian Ocean and IVORY COAST and LIBERIA in western Africa play similar-sounding music on log xylophones. Some songs and dances in western UGANDA and TANZANIA resemble those of the HERERO people in faraway NAMIBIA. These similarities may reflect the complex crisscrossing and migration of peoples and cultures in Africa's history.

North Africa. North African music reflects the long influence of Arab culture. The region shares many songs, musical styles, and instruments with cultures of the Middle East. Yet Arab musical traditions have developed in different ways throughout the region. One example is the *nawba* or *nuba*, a traditional composition in several parts, like a symphony or suite in Western classical music. In recent years, governments and private organizations have sponsored a revival of the *nawba*, which has taken on different regional forms. In EGYPT and LIBYA, it has eight parts and uses the lute, zither, violin, flute, and drum. The different style of *nawba* that appears in ALGERIA, TUNISIA, and MOROCCO may have originated in Spain.

North Africa has also produced its own unique styles. Some popular music draws on the musical heritage of the southern parts of Libya, Tunisia, and Algeria. The extremely popular *rai* began hundreds of years ago in the Algerian countryside. In the early 1900s, young Algerian singers—many of them women—gave *rai* a new twist by composing songs with political lyrics. In time *rai* became the music of rebellious young people, and youth now dance to it in Algerian and Moroccan clubs. *Rai* musicians combine traditional instruments such as clay drums with modern Western ones such as electric guitars and synthesizers. The energetic sound of Cheb Mami, Cheb Khaled, and other *rai* musicians is winning fans around the world.

Not all North African music emerges from Arab culture. The BERBERS of western North Africa have their own traditions. A *rwai* is a group of Berber artists that performs poetry and dance as well as music; an *imdyazn* is a group of four traveling musicians that performs in village marketplaces. Berber, Arab, and Western musical styles sometimes merge, as in Moroccan *chaabi* music, known for songs with a political or social message. People use songs to make political statements in many parts of North Africa. In SUDAN, the two sides in a civil conflict sing the praises of their rival leaders.

Western Africa. People throughout western Africa have developed various types of traditional music to suit different religious, political, and social events. The Songhai perform a style of religious music called *follay*, in which each of their divinities is honored with its own special melodies and rhythms. Songhai teenagers sing to one another during courtship, and music is played at wrestling matches as well as at dances. Among many groups, music plays a central role at funerals. For the LoDagaa of GHANA, funerals include special songs and dances, each spe-



Whisper Songs

The people of Burundi in East Africa perform a unique type of music known as *inanga chuchotée*. Its name comes from the instrument it is played on, a wooden zither called the *inanga*, and the French word *chuchotée*, meaning “whispered.” While plucking out a melody on the strings of his *inanga*, the performer whispers a text.

Inanga chuchotée is performed in quiet, intimate settings where the audience listens carefully to the music. The musician sits on a low stool and keeps his head very close to the face of his instrument. His whispers blend with the soft sounds of the strings, so that the *inanga* itself seems to speak.



Music and Song

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

cific to a certain part of the event. They use one style of performance for funerals of men and another for those of women.

As Islam* spread from North Africa into the savanna* country of western Africa, it carried Arab culture with it. The Hassaniya people of Mauritania have developed music based on instruments and singing styles similar to those of North Africa. In Nigeria, NIGER, and CHAD, the state music performed at the courts of the HAUSA and Kanuri peoples includes drums mounted on horses or camels. It is a rich expression of the North African Islamic tradition.

Elsewhere in western Africa, popular music blends local elements with influences from Europe and the Americas. Ironically, many of the European and American genres that have come to Africa—such as American ragtime and rap and Caribbean rumba and reggae—were developed by people whose African ancestors left Africa as slaves. These blended forms are very popular with the young people of urban areas.

Blended music has a long history. The drum music called *goombay*, which started in Jamaica, reached western Africa around 1800. There local people embraced and adapted it. During the 1800s colonial armies and Protestant missionaries introduced marching band music and new instruments such as trombones. In the 1900s musicians on the West African coast blended African drums with the guitars, banjos, and harmonicas of foreign sailors to create a group of styles known together as “palm wine music.” These genres include the *maringa* of SIERRA LEONE, the *makossa* of CAMEROON, and the blues of the ASANTE people of Ghana.

During World War II (1939–1945), nightclubs flourished in the West African cities where British and American troops were based, exposing local musicians to such foreign styles as jazz, swing, calypso, and Afro-Cuban music. After the war, musicians in Ghana mixed this lively brew into a style called highlife. Played by small swing groups, highlife spread through western Africa, and it often had a rebellious edge. People knew that one of the first and most influential highlife bands, the Tempos, favored independence.

As early as the 1950s, the newly independent nations of western Africa adopted policies that encouraged women to be artists and performers. Some women won fame on their own or with bands, while others had government support, such as the Workers Brigade bands in Ghana. Independence also brought a renewed interest in African cultural roots, and some entertainers began using traditional instruments in their performances or playing traditional music on Western-style electric instruments.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

West African musicians created powerful fusions of Latin, Afro-Cuban, and indigenous* dance music in forms known as Afro-rock, Afro-soul, Afro-beat, and more. They often turned their talents to political commentary. Alpha Blondy of Ivory Coast had a worldwide hit with his Afro-reggae song, “Apartheid is Nazism,” which criticized the South African policy of apartheid—racial segregation to maintain white control over the country’s black population. Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, a huge star in Nigeria, was censored, harassed, and jailed by his own government.

Music and Song

African popular music often reflects both traditional sources and foreign influence. Singer Salif Keôta of Mali, shown here in concert, became an international star in the 1980s. His music combines acoustic instruments and female vocal choruses with modern synthesizers and drum machines.



Eastern Africa. Although the traditional music of eastern Africa has been used for many purposes, it played a central role in royal courts. Kings and chiefs of the region carried special drums to symbolize their power. The ruler of Buganda once kept several musical groups in his court, including a private harpist, a group of six flutes and four drums, and a band of trumpeters. In some kingdoms, royal musicians had special privileges, such as the right to own land, and they passed on their skills only within their own family or clan*.

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Since the 1930s many styles of popular music have emerged in eastern Africa to entertain audiences in urban dance halls, clubs, and bars. Almost all use the guitar as the main instrument. A Tanzanian dance



Music and Song

group, for example, might feature three guitars, a bass, trumpets, saxophones, drums, and percussion. Although such dance music uses modern instruments, it is deeply rooted in local musical traditions.

Some of the most popular and widespread genres of dance music feature songs in SWAHILI, the main local language and one used by traders on the eastern coast. But in recent years, people have been writing songs in other local languages, especially in KENYA and Uganda. The lyrics may comment on everyday life, love, current affairs, or politics. The ruling groups of some countries have recognized that music can serve educational purposes and have used songs to communicate information to their people—though they often portray musicians as loafers or drunkards. Authorities also view many singers and songwriters as social critics and frequently censor or ban their songs.

Not all modern eastern African music comes through the urban dance hall. Some genres belong to social occasions, especially celebrations. The best-known of these is *taarab*, the wedding music of the Islamic Swahili-speaking people of the east coast and nearby islands. *Taarab* is sung poetry, and while the words often speak of love and marriage, they also deal with politics and society in general. Female *taarab* expressing the concerns of women has enjoyed great popularity. *Taarab* groups perform wherever Swahili speakers live, and their music has reached wide audiences through radio and recordings.



Southern Africa. As in other parts of Africa, southern Africa has a rich heritage of traditional music, used in religious, political, and social settings. The Sotho of LESOTHO play a unique type of music by blowing on an instrument called the *lisiba*, which is made of a stick, a string, and a feather. They use the music both as an accompaniment to cattle herding activities and as a means of controlling their animals. In Zambia, music takes center stage during an important ritual of the Lozi people. They celebrate the annual rising of the river with a procession to higher ground, carrying a national drum called the *maoma*, which may be played only by royal men. The festival includes two days of dances and drumming.

Western folk, religious, and popular music have had considerable influence in southern Africa, perhaps more so than in other parts of the continent. In addition, musicians in MALAWI, ZIMBABWE, Mozambique, and parts of Angola have been swayed by the jazz style known as *soukous*, which comes from CONGO (KINSHASA). Despite these outside influences, southern Africa has developed distinct local and regional styles, and elements of traditional indigenous music remain alive in the music of today.

In southern as in western Africa, colonial army bands and Christian missionaries introduced new musical instruments and styles. Church hymns had a great impact. In the early 1900s, southern African musicians absorbed foreign ragtime and vaudeville tunes and combined them with rural traditional music to create many local popular genres, often featuring guitars. Beginning in the 1930s, South Africa developed its own version of jazz. Bands blended jazz and swing with a local hymn style called *marabi*, which gives a distinctive flavor to South African jazz, such as the work of pianist Abdullah Ibrahim.



Musical Instruments

A style called *mbaqanga*, based on the guitar music of Zulu-speaking migrant laborers, dominated southern African popular music from the 1950s through the 1980s. Western rock music and African American soul appeared in the 1970s. More recently, reggae and rap have caught on. Some of the world's best-known reggae artists, such as Lucky Dube of South Africa, now come from southern Africa.

Another important trend has been the growing international interest in southern African song and music. Groups such as the South African choir Ladysmith Black Mambazo have become part of the "world beat" movement, which has introduced Western audiences to popular and traditional music from other cultures.

South Africa's musicians have rarely escaped the effects of the country's racial politics. In the 1960s a number of talented black performers fled the country. Some, such as trumpeter Hugh Masakela and singer Miriam Makeba, became international stars. Others took part in the struggle against apartheid. For example, Johnny Clegg was not only a musical star of the 1980s, but a leading activist against apartheid. His band of both white and black musicians appealed to many people as an image of what South Africa might look like without racial barriers. (See also **Dance, Musical Instruments.**)

Musical Instruments

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Wall paintings in ancient Egyptian tombs show that the people of Africa have made and played musical instruments for thousands of years. Over the centuries, the many invaders of Africa introduced new instruments. Arabs brought musical instruments and styles that became part of the culture of North Africa, the western savanna*, and the eastern coast. European colonial armies and missionaries introduced Western instruments such as brass horns. Urban musicians of modern Africa have adopted Western electric instruments—guitar, bass, and synthesizer—to create exciting new music.

Yet from the dance halls to the rural farmlands, many musicians still play the traditional instruments of Africa. Some of these instruments are unique to Africa, although they are related to instruments used elsewhere in the world. Their sounds—ancient and deeply rooted in the land—help create the distinctive qualities of African music.

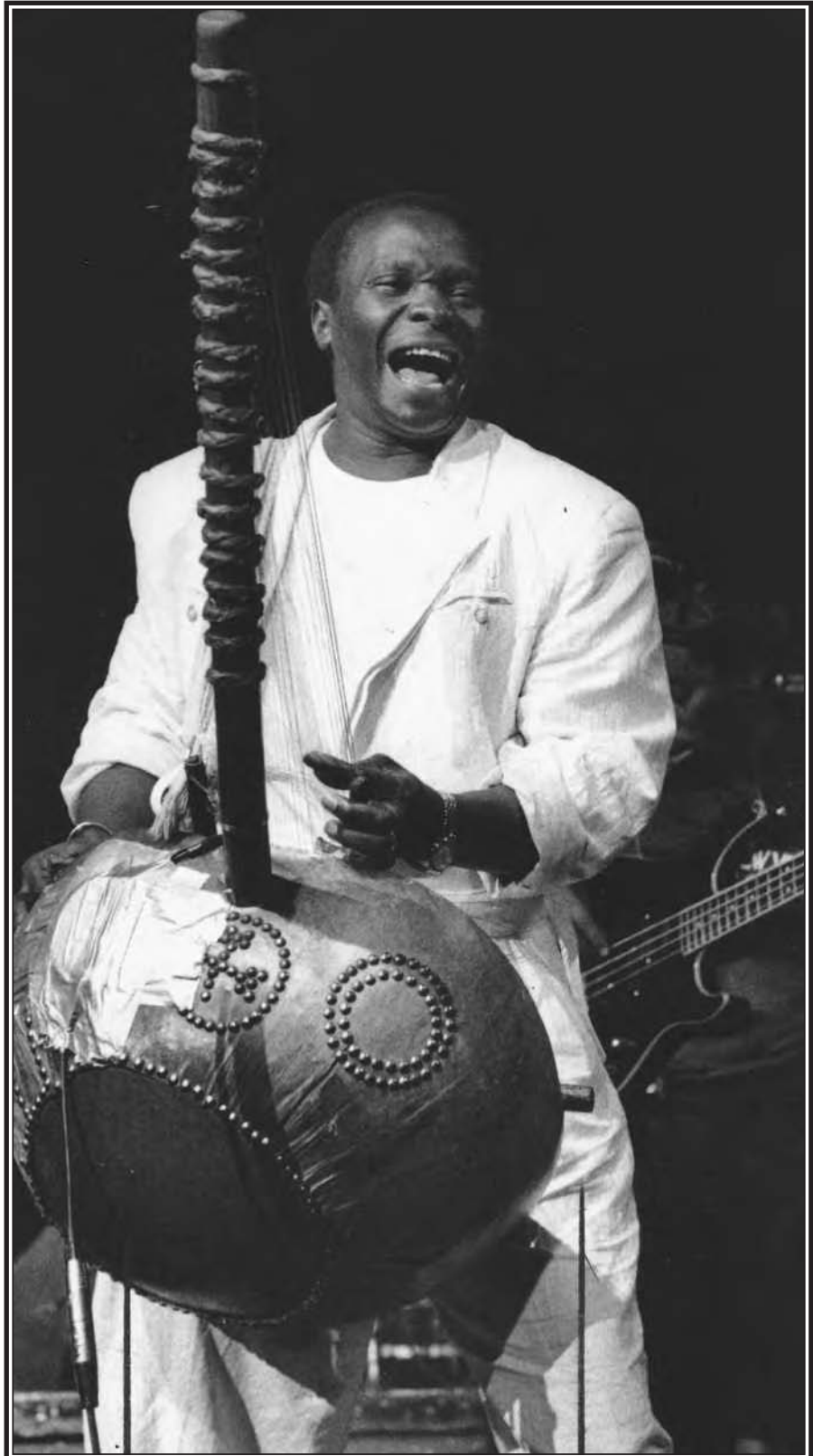
CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN INSTRUMENTS

Most traditional musicians fashion their own instruments. The types of instruments they make—and the sounds produced—depend on the materials available. A person setting out to make an instrument draws on a wealth of knowledge about the properties of local materials.

Wood determines the sound qualities of many instruments. In central and southern Africa, musicians favor *kiaat* or sneezewood, which produce a rich, resonant sound. A xylophone made in southern Mozambique is an environmental masterpiece that uses at least 15 natural materials, including gourds, beeswax, palm leaf, and rubber. Africans have developed great skill in creating special sounds and tex-

Musical Instruments

Popular in parts of West Africa, the *kora* has 20 or more strings stretched over a double bridge. It is commonly referred to as a "harp-lute."





Musical Instruments

tures by adding assorted objects—from seed pods to bottle caps—to their instruments.

A key feature of African music is that when instruments are played together, each is supposed to be heard separately. Musicians in a group usually value contrast more than the blending of sounds. They choose and tune their instruments carefully so that each has its own recognizable voice contributing to a sort of musical conversation or storytelling.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Musicians in sub-Saharan* Africa frequently increase their instruments' contrast and texture by adding buzzing devices to the instruments. Buzzers can be made of many materials, including loosely attached metal rings, bells, shells, beads, seeds, string, grass, or bottle tops. Some buzzers, called mirlitons, consist of membranes* that vibrate when air moves through an instrument. For example, when a player strikes a xylophone made of gourds, the gourds vibrate and push air against the membrane, which makes a buzzing or humming sound. Africans have made mirlitons from countless materials, including cow intestines, spider egg sacs, carbon paper, and plastic bags.

* **membrane** thin sheet of tissue, cloth, skin, or other material

TYPES OF INSTRUMENTS

African musical instruments can be grouped into several large families according to the part of the instrument that vibrates to make sound. These include aerophones—wind instruments; chordophones—stringed instruments; membranophones—drums; and idiophones, which produce sound when the instrument's body or part of it vibrates.

Aerophones are basically tubes. The player blows into or across a hole in the tube to produce the sound. Across the continent, people play simple pipes that produce only one note. When playing in a group, each player inserts his or her note into the total pattern at the right moment. African musicians also use panpipes, several pipes fastened together to give the player a choice of several notes.

In North Africa and regions of Arab influence, some musicians play aerophones with vibrating reeds in the mouthpieces, similar to the oboes and clarinets of the West. Examples include the North African *shawn*, an ancestor of the modern oboe; the Tunisian *mezonad*, a version of the bagpipe; and the Egyptian *arghul*, a type of double clarinet.

Chordophones produce sounds when strings are plucked or strummed. The harps that people play in much of Africa sometimes show a remarkable resemblance to ancient Egyptian harps. Ethiopia and other eastern African countries have long favored the lyre, an ancient instrument with a skin-covered body, two necks, and strings that stretch from the bottom of the body to the ends of the necks. A related instrument, the lute, has only one neck. The lute player may pluck the strings or rub them with a bow. Bowed lutes are widely used in North African and Arab music, as are the *rahab*, a type of fiddle, and the oud, a wooden lute as popular in Arab music as the guitar in Western music.

The most magnificent of all African chordophones may be the *kora* of Guinea and neighboring countries. A large round gourd forms the body, covered in skin, and at least 21 strings stretch down from a tall wooden neck across the body. It is held upright by a seated musician. The *kora* is



Musical Instruments

the instrument of choice of the griots, professional musicians and storytellers whose long history began in the royal courts of West African chiefs, kings, and emperors.

Struck with hands or sticks, the sounds of drums resonate almost everywhere in Africa. Drummers in western Africa have developed the greatest varieties and specialties of membranophones. Though they come in an enormous range of shapes and sizes, drums are of two main types—closed and open. In closed drums, the airspace within the drum is completely sealed. The drum may have one membrane that the player strikes, or it may have membranes on top and bottom. Open drums have only one membrane and are not completely enclosed. Closed drums have a clearer musical pitch but little variety of sound, while open drums make more sounds possible. The sound of each drum is affected by the shape and materials of the drum body. Tambourines are also membranophones.

African musicians have a long tradition of inventing and making small handheld idiophones such as rattles and bells. Xylophones are also idiophones. They consist of a row of wooden slats mounted on a frame and tuned to produce various notes when struck. Sometimes the maker adds hollow bodies such as gourds to amplify the sounds of the slats or buzzing devices for added textures. Some African xylophones require as many as four players.

The *mbira* is a wooden soundboard with a row of several narrow metal keys mounted on it. A bar fixes one end of the keys to the board, while a bridge raises the other end. The player plucks the ends of the keys with thumbs or fingers. From South Africa to Uganda to Sierra Leone, more than 200 types of *mbira* exist. People often play the *mbira* casually, in public or alone, while walking, at parties, or simply to pass the time. In Zimbabwe and the valley of the Zambezi River, however, the *mbira* is played at all-night religious ceremonies involving ancestral spirits. This ancient instrument may have originated in that region, but today it joins the African musical tradition across a large part of the continent. (See also **Dance, Music and Song, Theater.**)

Mutapa

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

Mutapa, or Mwene Mutapa (meaning “Ravager of the Lands”), is the title held by a dynasty* of kings that ruled the area that is now ZIMBABWE and MOZAMBIQUE from the 1400s to the 1880s. Historians also use the term to refer to the state led by these kings. The Mutapa state probably arose from branches of the nearby culture of Great Zimbabwe.

Mutapa rulers were members of the *nzou*, or elephant clan, and were said to be descendants of a legendary king named Mbire. Nyatsimba, who ruled in the late 1400s, was the first to take the title Mwene Mutapa. During the 1500s, the kings attempted to expand their territory. However, in most cases, those who were sent to conquer new lands for Mutapa set up independent dynasties of their own.

The heart of the Mutapa state was the territory of Mukaranga, a region of fertile soil, valuable grazing land, and rich deposits of gold. Although most people lived by farming, some mined gold and hunted



Mvemba Nzinga

elephants for ivory. Half of the gold and ivory collected went to the Mutapa ruler. The rest was used in trading for imported cloth and beads. Trade included expeditions to the Zambezi River and to ports on the Indian Ocean as well as a lively exchange with Muslim and Portuguese merchants living under Mutapa rule.

In the 1570s Portuguese forces invaded the Mutapa state. After conquering the region in the mid-1600s, they quickly exhausted its gold fields. Many of the original inhabitants of Mutapa died or migrated to other areas. Frequent civil wars ravaged the state during the 1600s and 1700s. The power of the Mutapa rulers gradually declined, and by the 1880s the Mutapa state had faded away.

Mutesa II, Frederick

1924–1969
Ruler of Buganda

Frederick Mutesa II, known as “King Freddie” by Westerners, was ruler of the East African state of Buganda from 1939 to 1953. Buganda enjoyed special treatment within the British colony of UGANDA until 1953. When the British decided to end Buganda’s special status, Mutesa demanded independence for his kingdom. When he also refused to pass along British recommendations to his parliament, the British arrested and deported him.

Bugandan leaders arranged for Mutesa’s return in 1955 as king of Buganda, under a more limited system of British control. He served in that role until Uganda won its independence in 1963. President Milton OBOTE tried to appoint Mutesa to a position in the Ugandan government, but the two men argued over Mutesa’s role and the status of Buganda within the new nation. Conflict erupted when Mutesa tried to stir up trouble between residents of northern Uganda and those in his southern kingdom. The dispute grew until 1966, when Obote forced Mutesa into exile in Britain. Mutesa died three years later. (*See also Kings and Kingship.*)

Mvemba Nzinga

ca. 1465–1543
Ruler of kingdom of Kongo

Mvemba Nzinga, son of the ruler of the kingdom of Kongo, was baptized as a Christian in 1491 and took the name Afonso I. When his father died in 1506, Mvemba Nzinga became king, claiming that he had divine help in gaining the throne. He increased his power by selling ivory, copper, and slaves to Portuguese traders in exchange for exotic European goods. He then gave these valuable items to his officials and allies as rewards. Later, Mvemba Nzinga tried unsuccessfully to bypass local Portuguese merchants and deal directly with traders in Lisbon, Portugal.

An enthusiastic student of Christian teachings, Mvemba Nzinga erected churches throughout the country. He sent young nobles, including his son Henrique, to study in Portugal. Despite his Christianity, though, Mvemba Nzinga continued to practice polygamy*. Some historians believe he allowed himself to be used by cooperating with the Portuguese. Others point out that Mvemba Nzinga used his trade relationship with Portugal to strengthen his own power and expand his kingdom.

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

Mythology

Mythology

- * **deity** god or goddess
- * **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims
- * **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert
- * **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern
- * **pantheon** all the gods and goddesses of a particular culture

Conversations with Ogotemmeli

Scholars have long relied on individuals as a source for the stories and themes of African mythology. No informant is more famous than Ogotemmeli of the Dogon people of Mali. A hunter who lost his sight in an accident and was gifted with exceptional intelligence and wisdom, Ogotemmeli spent a month telling French researcher Marcel Griaule about Dogon beliefs and sacred myths. Griaule's 1948 book, *Conversations with Ogotemmeli*, describes myths of the creation of the world and the origins of the social order. As Griaule discovered, Dogon traditional beliefs are complex and detailed—it takes seven days, for example, to recite the Dogon cosmology.

Myths are the stories that define a culture. They tell of the creation or beginning of the world; of deities* and their relations with humans; and of the values, heroes, and histories of a group or society. Cosmological myths—those about the origin, structure, or purpose of the universe—reveal a culture's ideas about the universe. With the passage of time, myths may develop into legends or folk tales. They begin, however, as sacred stories, often intertwined with religious belief. In North Africa, where Islam* has been the dominant religion for centuries, mythology is filled with Islamic elements. In sub-Saharan* Africa, mythology reflects the great diversity of beliefs and cultural traditions that can be found in the region.

Egyptian Mythology. The oldest known mythology in Africa is that of ancient EGYPT. In other parts of the continent, mythologies still form the basis for rituals*, stories, and literature. Ancient Egyptian mythology, however, is no longer part of any living culture, and our knowledge of it comes only from documents and inscriptions that are thousands of years old.

Ancient Egyptian mythology included a large pantheon* of national, regional, and local gods and goddesses. Priests and worshippers devoted to individual deities tended temples regarded as the dwelling places of the gods and goddesses. Many deities were associated with particular animals. The god Horus, for example, was frequently portrayed with the head of a falcon, and the goddess Sekhmet was shown as a lioness or a cat-headed woman.

One group of Egyptian myths concerns the creation of the world and of the gods. In some versions the gods are born from the sweat of the creator spirit, while humans emerge from the creator's tears. Other myths deal with the cycle of day and night. According to these stories, day begins with the birth of the sun god, who crosses the sky in a boat. Each night the sun god travels through the underworld, or land of the dead, where various enemies oppose him, trying to prevent the sun from rising again the next day.

Among the most widely told Egyptian myths were those about the god Osiris, his sister-wife Isis, and their son Horus. Isis's magical restoration of Osiris, who was cruelly butchered by his brother Set, is a mythical treatment of the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth. Battles between Set and Horus, who sought to avenge his father's death, depict the struggle between good and evil. In the end, Osiris travels to the underworld to judge the dead and deal out punishment and reward to souls in the afterlife, an idea that was central to the religious belief of the ancient Egyptians.

Islamic Mythology. North Africa and areas of East and West Africa have been deeply influenced by Islam. The Qur'an, Islam's holy book, is the primary source of Islamic mythology about creation and the afterlife. Muhammad, the Arab prophet who founded Islam in the A.D. 600s, became the focus of many legends, as did members of his family. As these legends and traditions grew, they incorporated elements from the mythology and folklore of the various regions that adopted Islam.



Mythology

* **monotheistic** believing in only one god

* **supernatural** related to forces beyond the normal world; magical or miraculous

A monotheistic* faith, Islam does not have a pantheon of deities but does include various supernatural* beings, such as angels and demons. Less powerful than demons or angels, but still more powerful than humans, are fire or air spirits called jinn, who appear in many North African folk tales. A jinn (or genie) may be good or evil. Although jinn are tricky and mischievous, many tales tell of people gaining power over jinn and forcing them to carry out their wishes.

Mythological Themes. Africa has a multitude of mythological traditions that developed over thousands of years. Sometimes these traditions have become mixed with elements introduced from outside the continent, such as Islam or Christianity. Even many Muslim and Christian Africans, for example, still hold to the traditional African belief that the spirits of ancestors continue to be part of the community. Until modern times, the myths of sub-Saharan Africa were part of an ORAL TRADITION that passed beliefs and information from generation to generation within each community through the spoken word. Africans have illustrated mythological stories in carvings of wood, ivory, and clay and have acted them out in DANCE.

Among the themes commonly found in African mythology are creation, the idea of a lost paradise, heroes who bring civilization to humans, and the arrival of death in the world. African mythologies contain many deities. Although a creator deity often reigns supreme over the others, he or she may be remote from the world and unconcerned with its daily happenings, leaving humans to interact with lesser gods.

* **diviner** person who predicts the future or explains the causes of misfortune

In addition to the deities, the universe is filled with spirits, supernatural beings that are either good or evil. People, animals, plants, elements such as fire and water, and landforms such as mountains and rivers may all possess spirits that must be treated with the proper respect to prevent them from doing harm. Magicians and diviners* are thought to control these spirits.

Tricksters and Animals. The trickster is a mischievous figure that appears in various forms in African myths and legends. Fond of pranks, sometimes helpful, and sometimes causing harm, the trickster is also quick-witted and usually able to get out of trouble. In African tales, the trickster is often a small, helpless creature, such as a spider or a rabbit, who fools larger and more powerful animals. One African trickster story, for example, tells how Rabbit tricked Elephant and Hippopotamus into tugging on opposite ends of a rope, each thinking that Rabbit was on the other end. Their strenuous game cleared a field so that Rabbit could plant his crops.

* **cosmic** large or universal in scale; having to do with the universe

Animals are characters in many sub-Saharan myths, often symbolizing human qualities or aspects of African cosmologies. In CONGO (KINSHASA), for example, animals called pangolins—a type of scaly anteater—have great symbolic significance. Though scaled like fish, pangolins have legs and climb trees like animals. Like humans, they give birth to one infant at a time. Some African peoples see these creatures as a symbol of the union of the different cosmic* realms of earth and sky. Another animal with symbolic importance in sub-Saharan Africa is the

Mythology



The ancient Egyptian god Horus receives an offering. Shown here as a tall figure with the head of a bird, Horus was one of the most important figures in Egyptian mythology.



Mzilikazi

leopard, which is widely associated with kingship. While Europeans may regard the lion as the “king of beasts,” Africans place the smaller but more cunning and ferocious leopard in that role. Animals also appear in numerous African fables, many of which teach some moral lesson.

Color has important symbolic meanings as well in African mythology and cosmology. Societies throughout the continent recognize white, black, and red as the three primary colors. White typically represents enlightenment, good fortune, and purity. Red is the color of blood and symbolizes heat, energy, and violent change. Black stands for hidden or secret knowledge—either helpful wisdom and insight or dangerous magic. Color symbolism adds a dimension of meaning to many myths. Stories of the Luba people of Congo tell about the wise hero Mbidi Kiluwe, who is “black like the night,” and his opponent, a red-skinned serpent named Nkongolo Mwamba. (*See also Art, Divination and Oracles, Masks and Masquerades, Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession, Vodun, Witchcraft and Sorcery.*)



Mzilikazi

ca. 1790–1868
Founder of Ndebele kingdom

For a short time in the early 1800s, Mzilikazi served as a lieutenant in the army of the Zulu ruler SHAKA ZULU. After one battle, Mzilikazi kept the cattle he captured instead of sending them to Shaka. When the chief sent men to investigate, Mzilikazi insulted Shaka by cutting the feathers off their headdresses. Realizing that Shaka would be furious, Mzilikazi led several hundred followers north and established his own kingdom called Ndebele.

Mzilikazi built his kingdom by conquering local groups. His military tactics were devastating: his army surrounded villages at night and attacked at dawn, rhythmically beating their shields, killing all but young men and women, and burning the village to the ground. He incorporated the captive men in his army and gave the women of defeated enemies to his followers as wives. Refugees could join the Ndebele but were not allowed to marry until they had served in the army. Under Mzilikazi, the Ndebele moved often to expand their base of power and to escape the Zulu armies sent to pursue them.

During the 1830s Mzilikazi not only defeated Zulu armies, he also raided white settlements, capturing large numbers of livestock. Around 1840 he founded a capital at Bulawayo in what is now ZIMBABWE. From there, he led military campaigns against both local clans* and white Afrikaner* settlers. He forced the Afrikaners to sign a peace treaty in 1852. By this time, his kingdom included more than 20,000 people and had an extensive law code that covered every aspect of Ndebele life, including farming, war, marriage, and taxation. Mzilikazi controlled the region until the gold rush of 1860, when thousands of immigrants contested his rule. After Mzilikazi’s death, his son LOBENGULA lost the struggle with the immigrants over land rights, and the Ndebele kingdom collapsed. (*See also Ndebele, Southern Africa, History.*)

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **Afrikaner** South African of European descent who speaks Afrikaans

Nairobi

Nairobi

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

Nairobi, the capital of **KENYA**, is the largest city in eastern Africa south of **CAIRO**, Egypt. British colonists founded Nairobi in 1899 as a camp for laborers who were building the railroad from the coastal city of Mombasa to Lake Victoria. A railway yard and depot were established, and the camp grew rapidly into a town. In 1905 the British named it the capital of the British East Africa Protectorate* (now Kenya).

Nairobi attracted a wide variety of people: Indian merchants, members of the **GIKUYU** ethnic group from the surrounding area, and white settlers. As Europeans forced the Gikuyu off their lands, more and more Gikuyu settled in Nairobi. Racial tensions eventually led to the **MAU MAU** uprising of the early 1950s. During this conflict Kenya's British colonial government imprisoned thousands of Africans in and near Nairobi.

After Kenya achieved independence in 1963, Nairobi prospered. However, the city's rapid growth caused a housing shortage, and people built makeshift homes, which the government often bulldozed. Such slums continue to be a feature of life in Nairobi.

Today Nairobi is a lively, modern city of about two million people whose main industry is **TOURISM**. A favorite destination of big game hunters from Europe and America in the early 1900s, the city serves as the gateway to East Africa's major wildlife parks. Modern tourists carry cameras instead of guns to the Amboseli, Tsavo, and Masai Mara parks near Nairobi. Other major industries include food processing, cigarette and beverage production, and light manufacturing. Despite a fairly strong economy, Nairobi continues to suffer from a lack of jobs and adequate housing. (*See also Cities and Urbanization, Houses and Housing, Wildlife and Game Parks.*)

Namibia

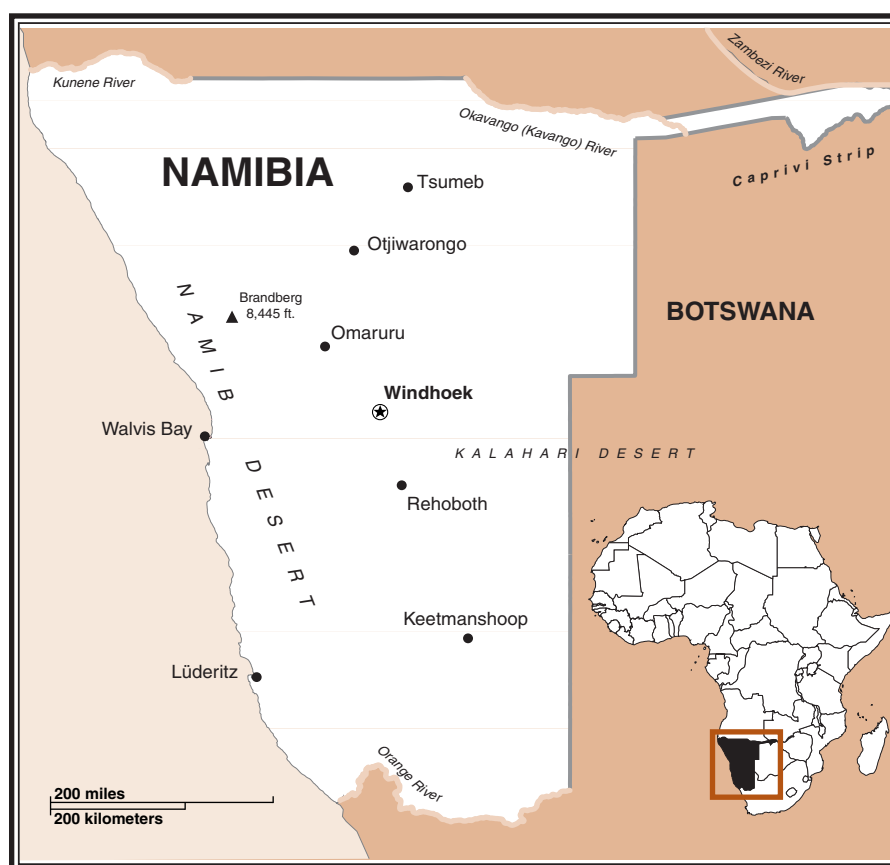
The Republic of Namibia, which achieved independence in 1990, was the last country in Africa to throw off colonial rule. Although thinly populated and dominated by deserts, its great mineral wealth made it an attractive target for European colonizers. Namibia's natural riches continue to play a significant role in the country's economy. However, many years of colonialism have left deep scars in the social and economic fabric of the nation.

GEOGRAPHY

Namibia lies along the west coast of southern Africa. About twice the size of California, it has fewer than two million people. Its sparse population is due largely to the dry climate, which makes most of Namibia unsuitable for agriculture. However, the rugged and inhospitable terrain contains large deposits of gold, diamonds, uranium, and other valuable mineral resources.

Namibia consists of a high central plateau surrounded mostly by dry grasslands and deserts. The Namib Desert runs the length of the coast and stretches some 60 miles inland, while the **KALAHARI DESERT** covers

Namibia



most of the northern and eastern portions of the country. To the south is a vast dry area known as Namaqualand. Wedged between these barren areas is the central plateau, which is home to most of Namibia's people. In the southeast, the Orange River forms Namibia's border with SOUTH AFRICA.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **annex** to take over or add a territory to an existing area

Before the mid-1800s Namibia was home to KHOISAN hunter-gatherers and some pastoralist* BANTU PEOPLES. By the 1850s, European traders had begun operating from Walvis Bay on the Namibian coast. Local HERERO peoples obtained guns from the traders and overthrew various Namibian states of the Oorlam peoples. As Oorlam power crumbled, settlers from what is now South Africa moved into the region and established a republic in southern Hereroland. This alarmed the Herero, who asked Britain to establish a protectorate* over central Namibia. The British declared a protectorate in 1876, but it included only the area around Walvis Bay.

German Colonization. In the 1880s a German entrepreneur named Adolf Lüderitz acquired some Namibian coastland. Germany set up a protectorate over the land in 1884 and later annexed* the entire coast except for Walvis Bay. In 1889 the Germans seized Walvis Bay and over the next 15 years gradually expanded their control over the interior by cooperating with some local chiefs and fighting others.



Namibia

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Tensions between German settlers and indigenous* peoples led to full-scale war in 1904. More than 80 percent of the Herero and some 75 percent of the Nama people died during four years of fighting. Many survivors were placed in concentration camps, sent to other German colonies in Africa, or pressed into forced labor. Meanwhile, colonial officials gave ranch land to German settlers, and the discovery of diamonds and other minerals led to a growing colonial economy.

South African Domination. During World War I, troops from the Union of South Africa invaded Namibia and defeated the German troops there. After the war South Africa received international authorization to oversee Namibia, making it in effect a South African province. During the 1920s the South African government resettled hundreds of white families in Namibia to strengthen its control over the colony. The indigenous peoples rose up against South African rule several times during the 1920s and 1930s, but each revolt was crushed by South African forces.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

After World War II South Africa adopted apartheid* laws and policies and applied them to Namibia as well. It also tried to convince the United Nations (UN) that Namibians wanted their country to become part of South Africa, but the UN rejected that claim. During the 1950s and 1960s, apartheid policies forced Namibian blacks off their lands and led to occasional outbreaks of violence. During this period, Namibian nationalists* founded the Southwest African Peoples Organization (SWAPO), which became the leading force in the struggle for independence.

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

In 1966 SWAPO guerrillas* in Namibia began an armed struggle against South African rule. The 1970s saw an intensified fight for independence. When neighboring ANGOLA became independent in 1975, it allowed SWAPO guerrillas to operate out of Angolan bases. South Africa responded by increasing the size of its army in Namibia and sending troops into Angola to attack SWAPO bases. The fighting took a toll on both the Namibian and the South African economies and eventually became unpopular with the South African people. In 1989 South Africa agreed to a cease-fire, and the following year it withdrew its troops. Namibia gained independence on March 21, 1990.

* **guerrilla** member of a fighting force outside the regular army that uses surprise raids against an enemy or government

Namibia Since Independence. Namibia's president since independence has been Sam Nujoma, a prominent SWAPO leader. He overwhelmingly won elections in 1990 and 1994, but the nation's constitution limited him to two terms in office. In 1997 Nujoma announced his intention to run again in 1999 and called for a constitutional amendment to allow him to do so. His action led to a split in the SWAPO party and charges that Nujoma was trying to establish himself as a dictator. Despite the controversy, the amendment passed and Nujoma enjoyed another sweeping victory in 1999.

* **authoritarian** relating to strong leadership with unrestricted powers

Nujoma has ruled Namibia in an authoritarian* style, rewarding his political supporters but neglecting those areas and groups loyal to his opponents. His policies have resulted in unrest in the Caprivi Strip in northeastern Namibia, which threatened to secede* in the late 1990s. Nujoma has also angered neighboring BOTSWANA by proposing to reroute water from the Okavango River to Windhoek, the Namibian capital.

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country



A colony of Cape fur seals gathers on a sandy beach along the Skeleton Coast of Namibia.

Nujoma's persecution of anyone opposing his plans threatens to undermine his attempts to bring stability and prosperity to the nation.

ECONOMY

Northern Namibia is the only area with enough precipitation for intensive agriculture. However, the central plateau receives sufficient rain to produce a groundcover for grazing sheep and cattle, long a major economic activity in the country.

Two industries that show promise in Namibia are FISHING and TOURISM. The cold Benguela Current that runs along the Atlantic coast attracts large schools of fish. This area was overfished in the 1980s, but the government has since passed strict controls to help fish stocks recover. Meanwhile, tourism has been growing at an impressive rate in Namibia since independence.

See color
plate 14,
vol. 2.

Namibia



The Republic of Namibia

POPULATION:

1,771,327 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

317,260 sq. mi. (824,295 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English (official); Afrikaans, German, Damara, Herero, Kavango, Ovambo, Nama

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Namibian dollar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 80–90%, Traditional 10–20%

CITIES:

Windhoek (capital), 190,000 (1995 est.); Walvis Bay, Swakopmund, Keetmanshoop, Rehoboth

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from less than 2 in. (51 mm) in western Namib and lower Orange River valley to more than 19.8 in. (508 mm) in the northern border regions.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$4,300 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: millet, sorghum, peanuts, livestock, fish
Manufacturing: meat packing, dairy products, fish processing
Mining: diamonds, copper, gold, tin, lead, uranium, salt, cadmium, lithium, natural gas, zinc

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from South Africa, 1990. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: National Assembly and National Council (legislative bodies); Cabinet appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1990– President Samuel Nujoma

ARMED FORCES:

9,000 (2000 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–16; literacy rate 40%



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

The economy of Namibia depends heavily on the export of raw materials such as diamonds, metals, and livestock. In the past South Africa has been the most important market for Namibian goods, but in recent years Namibia has tried to reduce its dependence on that nation.

Despite a relatively high average annual income, Namibia suffers from a large gap between rich and poor. Unemployment stands at about 30 percent of the workforce and more than half of Namibians are illiterate. Fortunately, the country's foreign debt is small and its population is growing at a modest rate. Even so, factors such as unequal distribution of land and ethnic strife severely limit Namibia's potential for economic growth.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

The population of Namibia is mostly Christian (about 90 percent) and very young (about half of the people are under 18 years of age). The major ethnic groups in the north are those of the Huambo cluster, who practice agriculture and livestock raising. They are one of many matrilineal* societies in this part of Africa. Other matrilineal groups inhabit the Caprivi Strip and the Okavango River in the northeast. Pastoralists and foraging* groups such as the !Kung live outside the towns and mining areas of northern Namibia.

Western, central, and southern Namibia are home to pastoralists such as the Herero and some of the Khoisan. The Herero also have a primarily matrilineal society, although religious items such as sacred cattle are passed through the male side of the family. The Khoisan include both pastoralists and foragers whose societies are noted for their very com-

* **matrilineal** tracing ancestry or descent through the mother's side of the family

* **forage** to hunt or search for food



Nasser, Gamal Abdel

plex KINSHIP systems. Of considerable interest to researchers are the small HUNTING AND GATHERING group called the San, also known as the Bushmen. (See also Colonialism in Africa; Independence Movements; Maherero, Samuel; Southern Africa, History; Witbooi, Hendrik.)

Nasser, Gamal Abdel

1918–1970
President of Egypt

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

President of EGYPT from 1956 to 1970, Gamal Abdel Nasser was a leading figure in the Arab world. The son of a postal clerk, Nasser attended primary school in a small village in the Nile Delta. He moved to his uncle's home in Cairo, where he received his secondary education and then attended law school briefly. In 1936 Nasser entered the Royal Military Academy.

Nasser rose quickly in the military and fought in a war against Israel in the late 1940s. With several other officers, he formed a secret revolutionary group known as the Free Officers. In 1952 he led the Free Officers in a coup* that overthrew Egypt's ruler, King Farouk. Egypt became a republic the following year, and Nasser was named its premier in 1954. Middle- and upper-class Egyptians opposed the military coup and Nasser's rule, and one Arab group, the Muslim Brotherhood, attempted to assassinate him. However, Nasser had the protection of the military and police, and his policies earned the support of Egypt's many peasants.

In 1956 Nasser became president of Egypt. Soon after taking office, he nationalized* the Suez Canal, which was controlled by Britain and France. Britain, France, and Israel responded by invading Egypt. Although the Egyptians resisted fiercely, their forces were defeated. Nasser triumphed politically, however, when the United States and the Soviet Union* pressured the invaders into retreating.

Encouraged by his success in gaining control of the canal, Nasser moved to make Egypt the leader of the Arab world. In 1958 Egypt and Syria united to form the United Arab Republic, which was later joined by Yemen. Meanwhile, Nasser attempted to revolutionize life within Egypt. He introduced socialism*, worked to increase the nation's industrial strength, and made improvements in health and education. He also brought about land reform and tried—with little success—to improve agriculture.

Nasser hoped that the entire Arab world might someday unite, but his United Arab Republic lasted only until 1964. The failed union reduced respect for Nasser in the Arab world. Moreover, Nasser's foreign policies had led to conflict with Saudi Arabia and worsened relations with the United States. Partly in response to these setbacks, Nasser adopted a more aggressive policy toward Israel. In 1967 he moved to close the Suez Canal to Israeli ships. Israel declared war and quickly defeated Egypt. Nasser offered to resign, but Egyptians rallied in the streets, demanding that he remain in office.

Nasser ruled for three more years. He refused to accept the terms of peace dictated by Israel and continued to provoke conflict in the canal zone. When he died of a heart attack in 1970, he was succeeded by Anwar SADAT. (See also Arabs in Africa, United Nations in Africa.)

Nationalism

Nationalism

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **literacy** ability to read and write

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Nationalism is the belief that a group of people have the right to live in and govern their own nation-state. European powers had gained control over most of Africa in the late 1800s and established colonies. In the 1900s, African nationalist movements emerged in many parts of the continent that sought to end colonial rule and European economic power. Eventually, nationalist leaders called for independence and the creation of new nation-states. To achieve this goal, they encouraged Africans to identify themselves as members of national groups, rather than as members of ETHNIC GROUPS, tribes, or clans*.

However, Europeans resisted African demands for freedom with delay and violence. The struggle for African liberation lasted almost 50 years. Success came first with the decolonization—ending European rule—of LIBYA in 1951 and continued across the continent, colony by colony, until ERITREA gained its independence in 1993.

After winning independence, many African nations were racked by internal tensions. The nations' borders were the same as those of the colonies—arbitrary lines that divided ancient ethnic homelands. The institutions of government were often the same as well, keeping power in a few hands and using force to control the nation's citizens. Furthermore, some ethnic groups refused to give up their independence, sowing the seeds of conflict and civil war.

The Character of African Nationalism. The nationalist movement was led primarily by Africans who had recently acquired education, literacy*, and social and economic power. Among the early champions of nationalism was James Africanus HORTON of SIERRA LEONE, a black scientist and businessman. He believed that European models of education would help modernize the continent and pull Africans out of their desperate living conditions. In some ways, leaders like Horton shared the Europeans' racist view of Africans as “backward” and “primitive.” These leaders considered nationalism to be a decisive break with traditional African ways of thinking about themselves and their communities.

By emphasizing a break with precolonial* cultures, African nationalism lost the opportunity to build on Africa's own achievements. The continent had a centuries-old history of self-rule, including federations* of independent villages and clans. But the nationalists looked instead to the history of Europe and the United States, where people had gained greater independence by forming nation-states in the 1700s and 1800s. African nationalists believed that Africans could gain equality and self-respect in the modern world only by having their own nations. They realized that they might have to keep Africa's indigenous* political and cultural traditions under control. But they saw no other way of ending the abuses of colonial rule. For better or for worse, nation building on the European model became Africa's destiny.

Nationalist Movements. African nationalism had its start in World Wars I and II. Africans watched as people fought to break up empires and gain freedom, and as the Japanese, nonwhite people, stood up to

Nationalism and African Women

Nationalism appealed to millions of African women not only because it promised independence from colonial rule, but also because it offered greater opportunities and personal freedoms. Nationalism opened the way for women to participate in politics—whether as members of political parties, providers of supplies for rebel forces, or even as soldiers in combat. The nationalist party in Guinea rewarded women's support by raising the minimum age of marriage and by limiting the tradition of bridewealth—the payment of money, property, or services for the bride by the groom or his family.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Europeans and Americans in war. Many Africans gained combat experience after being drafted into colonial armies. Meanwhile, in India, a powerful movement for independence took shape during the 1940s, and India succeeded in throwing off British rule in 1947. This development had an impact on African hopes and plans.

Throughout Africa, nationalist groups found early support in towns and urban areas. There, migrants from rural areas—people seeking jobs and a better life—were an important source of anticolonialism. These displaced people came together in tribal associations based on ethnic group and language. Some of the associations later adopted nationalism and helped spread it to the countryside through networks of family and trade.

In many areas, nationalism led to political competition between different groups. In some respects this competition had its roots in traditional rivalries, although the main disputes were access to power and resources. In many colonies, the tribal associations grew into political parties. Loyal to both the nation and their ethnic groups, these parties helped the privileged groups that were building the nation to gain a wide audience.

The movement for nationhood first gathered steam in North Africa, and in 1951 the former Italian colony of Libya won independence. EGYPT, MOROCCO, and TUNISIA followed in 1956, but ALGERIA had to fight a bloody guerrilla* war against France before gaining its freedom in 1962. West African colonies such as GHANA and LIBERIA also had strong early movements, helped by links to black nationalists in the United States such as Marcus GARVEY. Dozens of sub-Saharan* colonies gained independence in the 1960s, some with little violence, others after long periods of armed struggle. In southern Africa, governments controlled by white settlers won nationhood for SOUTH AFRICA and Southern Rhodesia but were later overthrown by black Africans.

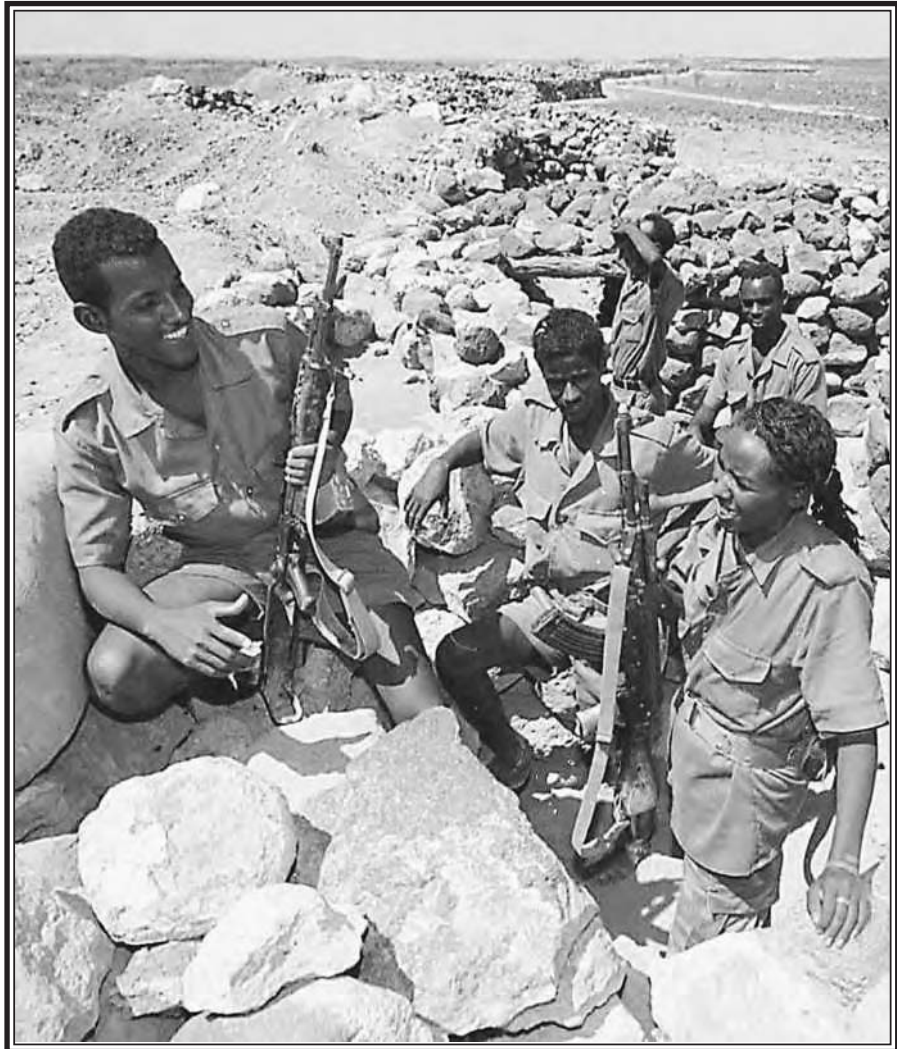
The Hopes of Independence. The goals of national liberation included social, cultural, and economic progress. For millions of Africans, opportunities for education, health care, employment, and other necessities improved with nationhood. Although many new African states had to begin from little or nothing, they made rapid progress. As public education expanded, more graduates could staff the newly built hospitals and medical schools. Towns and cities grew dramatically, and governments worked to meet the basic needs of urban residents.

Nationalism provided new sources of self-respect for Africans who, for decades, had suffered the humiliations of colonial rule. Now citizens rather than servants, Africans found themselves welcomed throughout much of the world. In the United Nations, Africans spoke as confident equals to the representatives of other nations. Great academies elected Africans to honored memberships, and African men and women won medals at the Olympics and other athletic competitions.

As Africans took their place on the world stage, African national identities replaced ethnic identities. Everything from individual people to musical styles became known as Kenyan, Ethiopian, or Nigerian, rather

Nationalism

Eritrea won its independence from Ethiopia in 1993 after a long civil war. Eritrean soldiers guard the country's borders.



than GIKUYU, AMHARA, or IGBO. Nationalism brought Africans dignity and a sense of worth that helped to banish racist stereotypes and notions of inferiority. Instead of seeing “backward” or “primitive” peoples, the world—and Africans themselves—now saw a vivid range of African men and women, politicians and diplomats, scientists and poets.

The Limits of Nationalism. As African colonies gained their independence, leaders began to speak about the possibility of governing in different ways, such as through federations of villages, cities, or regions. In practice, however, the emerging states took over the forms of government that had been designed to meet colonial needs. They found themselves chained to colonial habits, structures, and institutions. Neither the Europeans nor the nationalists offered long-term programs to develop democratic government.

The nationalist governments thus took shape as bureaucracies* with power concentrated at the top. They often used the media and the armed forces to silence opposition. Some countries, such as ANGOLA and

* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization within a government

Ndebele

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

* **vulnerable** open to harm or attack

* **imperialist** relating to the political, economic, and cultural domination of one country or region by another

MOZAMBIQUE, adopted the model of the Soviet Union*, in which the central government also owned the land and controlled the economy. But without the possibility for all people to debate ideas and govern themselves, African nations could not develop true democracy.

The new African governments also faced major economic problems. By the mid-1970s, drought, mismanagement, fuel shortages, poverty, and other factors combined to ruin African economies. The hard times increased unrest. Ethnic groups competed ever more fiercely for ever fewer resources. Centralized governments were vulnerable* to takeovers by small but powerful groups, whether businessmen or military officers. Some countries dissolved into bitter fighting among rebels, criminals, warlords, religious leaders, and ethnic groups. The dreams of the early nationalists for a bright future seemed very dim.

Meanwhile, foreign powers found new ways to control and profit from their former colonies. They provided money or military support to governments or rebels whom they saw as allies. As the economic crises deepened in the early 1980s, many African nations had to take loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. To qualify for the loans, Africans had to sell national resources to foreign corporations and put in place various social and economic policies. Members of the ruling group sometimes profited from the new loans and policies, but the majority of Africans sank deeper into poverty. Protests and calls for democracy grew louder.

By the late 1990s, disappointment with the promises of nationalism was widespread. Africa gained independence through a nationalism that reflected an imperialist* age. Many Africans realize that in order to survive their nations now must adopt new goals and different political and economic structures. (See also **Boundaries in Africa; Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Ethnic Groups and Identity; Government and Political Systems; History of Africa; Independence Movements; Neocolonialism; World Wars I and II.**)

Ndebele

The Ndebele are an offshoot of a group of BANTU-speaking peoples of southern Africa known as the Nguni. The branch of the Ndebele that is centered in ZIMBABWE traces its roots to MZILIKAZI, a former lieutenant under SHAKA ZULU. The other branch, founded by the leader Musi, is located in SOUTH AFRICA. Both branches of the Ndebele at one time fled from Shaka's armies and incorporated other peoples who were doing the same. Both also had encounters with white settlers. Those in South Africa were quickly subdued, but those in Zimbabwe—known to the British as Matabele—offered a much fiercer resistance.

Like other Nguni, the Ndebele are both farmers and herders, raising corn and tending livestock. In recent years some Ndebele have left the land and moved into cities. Today, many work far from home in South Africa's mines. In 1997 the Ndebele elected their first female chief, Singobile Mabhena. The election gained worldwide attention and was perhaps influenced by the emergence of several other female leaders in southern Africa. (See also **Ethnic Groups and Identity.**)

Negritude

Negritude

Negritude was a black literary and cultural movement that spanned the 1930s to 1950s. The movement first took shape among French-speaking writers in Africa and the Caribbean. The leading figure in the Negritude movement was Léopold Sédar SENGHOR, a poet and philosopher who became the first president of SENEGAL when it won independence from France in 1960.

The origins of Negritude can be traced to the shared experiences of Africans who suffered under SLAVERY and colonialism. It developed partly as a response to Western views of Africa as a primitive and savage land and of blacks as an inferior race. These views inspired people in the Negritude movement to emphasize positive African qualities such as emotional warmth, closeness to nature, and reverence for ancestors.

The idea of Negritude was also an outgrowth of political and social movements. Among the most important of these were the “pan-African” movements led by Marcus GARVEY and W.E.B. DU BOIS. These movements encouraged the development of a black identity and sought to unify blacks around the world. Another forerunner of Negritude was the Harlem Renaissance, a literary and artistic flowering that took place in the United States in the 1920s.

As it developed, Negritude came to represent black protest against colonial rule and the assimilation* of Western culture and values by blacks. Many writers in the movement criticized colonialism and Western ideas. Negritude also served as a source of racial pride. Focusing on the richness of black history and culture, it provided a sense of common identity and dignity for blacks in Africa, the Americas, Europe, and other parts of the world. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**; **Diaspora, African**; **Literature**.)

* **assimilation** process of adopting the beliefs or customs of a society

Neocolonialism

After independence, some African nations declared their political allegiance to their former European rulers—such as Britain, France, and Belgium—and continued to rely on them for economic assistance. This policy became known in the 1960s as neocolonialism.

Not all African nations chose to pursue neocolonial relationships. Those that had gained independence after violent struggles against European powers, such as ALGERIA, usually chose to remain nonaligned, or neutral, or they developed close ties with the Soviet Union* or non-Western countries. In many cases, these African countries adopted economic systems based on socialism* rather than capitalism*. They associated capitalism with the exploitation* they had suffered at the hands of Europeans.

For the most part, the African nations that followed the neocolonialist path, such as IVORY COAST and MALAWI, had been granted independence without conflict. Their relationships with their former colonial rulers remained friendly and often involved financial and technical support. Although the neocolonial nations had also suffered from economic exploitation, they felt that many of the economic and social changes introduced under colonialism were positive. As a result, they followed the path of Western-style capitalism.

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense



Neto, Augustinho

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

The leaders of the neocolonial states proposed to do more rapidly what colonization was supposed to have begun—the creation of a modern economy. Following the colonial model, these states continued to emphasize mining and cash crop* agriculture to increase their export income. Instead of carrying out agricultural reforms, they allowed foreign landowners to hold onto the property they had acquired. They also kept their economic institutions closely linked to foreign capitalist systems. To keep peasant majorities under control, they favored single-party government rather than full democracy.

The neocolonialists assumed that economic development would occur in orderly stages. They believed that profits from agriculture and mining would create a market for industry, which would attract foreign and local investors. However, the transition from one stage to the next did not take place as planned. Although certain countries managed to create an illusion of economic success, they soon discovered that the path to prosperity was more difficult than assumed. To survive, many neocolonial governments began to depend on loans from foreign countries and international organizations, and ran up enormous debts. By the 1980s debt payments were draining resources away from programs such as education and health care.

In the long run, neocolonial policies led to a number of unintended consequences: limited political rights for the people, slower economic growth, decreasing food production because of the emphasis on export crops, the collapse of social services, and increasing political corruption. Overall, neocolonialism has been a dramatic failure in Africa, leading to serious political and economic crises throughout much of the continent. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Economic History; History of Africa; Independence Movements.*)

Neto, Augustinho

1922–1979
President of Angola

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

Augustinho Neto was a leader in the fight against colonial rule in ANGOLA and the country's first president after independence. The son of a pastor, Neto went to Portugal to study medicine in 1947 but soon became involved in the Angolan independence movement and was also involved in communist* activities. After returning to Angola in 1958, he was arrested and exiled, first to CAPE VERDE and then to Portugal. In 1962 Neto escaped, went back to Angola, and assumed leadership of the forces resisting Portuguese control of the country. The fight for independence would not be an easy one, nor would it be quick. For the next thirteen years, Neto's leadership remained constant as his forces struggled to gain power in the face of strong opposition from the Portuguese.

Angola won its independence in 1975 and Neto was elected president. Almost immediately, however, SOUTH AFRICA invaded and tried to take over the country. Only the arrival of Cuban troops saved Angola from defeat. Neto died just a few years after the war ended. In addition to his political achievements, Neto was also a notable poet who published a volume of verse entitled *Sacred Hope*. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.*)

Ngugi wa Thiong'o

Ngugi wa Thiong'o

1938–
Kenyan author

* **leftist** inclined to support radical reform and change; often associated with ideas of communism and socialism

Writer Ngugi wa Thiong'o is known not only for his literary work but also for his political protests and his commitment to writing in African rather than European languages. Born into a peasant family of the GIKUYU people near NAIROBI, KENYA, Ngugi received an education at a colonial high school. He began to write while attending Makerere University College in UGANDA. Ngugi also studied at Leeds University in England, where he developed leftist* political views.

In 1967 Ngugi became the first African member of the University of Nairobi's English department. He influenced Kenya's cultural life in two ways: he was the first African to publish creative LITERATURE in English, and he promoted a course of study focused on African subjects, which other African universities used as a model. In 1978 Ngugi was imprisoned for a year because of his protests against government policies. In prison he decided that he would write only in Gikuyu.

The university did not restore Ngugi to his post, but he continued to work in Kenyan THEATER. Still at odds with the government and fearing another arrest, Ngugi left Kenya for London in 1982. He then moved to the United States, where he has taught at Yale University and New York University. Ngugi continues to write about the ways in which Africa and its people are dominated and manipulated by non-Africans.

Niger

A large, landlocked country in north central Africa, Niger is one of the most thinly populated nations on the continent. The SAHARA DESERT covers most of the country, leaving only a small portion of the land suitable for permanent settlement. To make matters worse, long-term drought has devastated Niger's agriculture. A poor economy, combined with political mismanagement, has made Niger one of the world's poorest countries.

GEOGRAPHY AND ECONOMY

Niger is a mostly barren country, dominated by the desert and semi-desert that make up some 80 percent of its total area. Mountain ranges in the center of the country rise to a height of about 6,600 feet, but most of the remaining terrain is flat plains and plateaus covered by rocks and sand dunes. The NIGER RIVER crosses the southwestern corner of the country.

The vast majority of the nation's people live on a thin strip of land along Niger's southern border. Known as "useful Niger," it is the only part of the country with enough rainfall to allow agriculture. The main staple* crops are the grains millet and sorghum, and peanuts are a major cash crop*. In addition, livestock raising is an important activity in this region.

Niger's economy relies heavily on the production of uranium ore, which makes up half of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP)* and 80 percent of its exports. However, the price of uranium dropped steeply in the 1980s and has not recovered. The collapse of the uranium market and the longstanding drought have contributed to a staggering foreign debt and terrible poverty.



See map in Mining and Minerals (vol. 3).

* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Niger



HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Before the arrival of Europeans, Niger was controlled by a succession of different kingdoms and empires. Most of these were Muslim states, and Islamic* religion and culture became strongly established throughout the country.

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Precolonial and Colonial History. The Songhai people established the earliest centralized state in Niger in the A.D. 600s. By the 1400s the Songhai Empire dominated the western portion of Niger, while the kingdom of BORNU controlled most of the eastern part of the country. At about the same time, the sultanate* of the Aïr gained prominence in the north. During the 1600s the Djerma peoples migrated from the north, and the HAUSA rose to a position of power in the southwest. Meanwhile, the nomadic TUAREG peoples joined together in the northern desert region.

* **sultanate** territory ruled by a Muslim leader called a sultan

In the 1800s the FULANI swept through the region and established the Empire of Sokoto after conquering much of northwestern Africa. Also known as the Sokoto Caliphate*, the empire incorporated many Muslim and non-Muslim kingdoms, although the Tuareg and several sultanates maintained their independence. In the early 1900s, a British force from Nigeria conquered the Sokoto Caliphate. The French moved into Niger at the same time, forming alliances with some sultanates and attacking the Tuareg. Despite fierce resistance, the Tuareg were finally defeated. Niger became a French colony in 1922. After 38 years of French rule, Niger gained its independence in 1960.

* **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire

Modern History. Niger's first president, Hamani Diori, stifled all political opposition and ruled the country as a single-party state. Diori's inability to improve conditions, along with the effects of drought, led to a military coup* in 1974. The new ruler, Colonel Seyni Kountché, suspended the constitution and restored order, but several coups were attempted during his rule. General Ali Saïbou took over as president in 1987. Under Saïbou, Niger adopted a new constitution, allowed political

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Niger



Republic of Niger

POPULATION:

10,075,511 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

489,189 sq. mi. (1,267,000 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Hausa, Dejerma, others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 80%, Christian 10%, Traditional 10%

CITIES:

Niamey (capital), 420,000 (1994 est.); Zinder, Maradi, Tahoua, Dosso, Agadez, Arlit

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 20 in. (500 mm) in the south, to 4 in. (100 mm) at Agadez, to almost 0 in. in the far north.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$1,000 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: millet, sorghum, peanuts, beans, cotton, cowpeas, onions, livestock

Manufacturing: cement, brick, textiles, chemicals, food processing

Mining: uranium, coal, iron ore, tin, phosphates

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: National Assembly (legislature); cabinet and prime minister appointed by president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1974 President Hamani Diori

1974–1987 Lieutenant Colonel Seyni Koutché

1987–1993 Colonel (later General) Ali Saibou, president after 1989

1993–1996 President Mahamane Ousmane

1996–1999 President (Brigadier General) Ibrahim Baré

Mainassara; Major Daouda Mallam Wanke, provisional president in 1999

1999– President Mamadou Tandja

ARMED FORCES:

5,300

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–15; literacy rate 14%

opposition and protests, and moved for the first time toward a multi-party democracy.

After a period of transition in which Niger was ruled by a National Conference, elections were held in 1993. The new president, Mahamane Ousmane, faced considerable opposition and a chaotic political and economic situation. Among the difficulties he faced was an armed rebellion of the Tuareg in the north. In 1996 Ousmane was overthrown by General Ibrahim Mainassara, who was elected president later that year. Mainassara achieved some successes during his rule, notably the disarming of two groups of guerrillas* that had opposed the government for years. However, Niger's continuing economic problems resulted in strikes, rebellions, and growing instability. Mainassara's reelection in 1999 was marked by fraud and violence and led to widespread protests and unrest.

On April 9, 1999, Mainassara was shot and killed by his presidential guard. The guard's commander, Major Daouda Mallam Wanke, assumed the presidency and announced that there would be no investigation of Mainassara's death. Many countries expressed outrage and threatened economic sanctions* unless democracy was quickly restored.

Under pressure, Wanke scheduled elections for the fall of 1999, and Tandja Mamadou was chosen president. Tandja's party also gained a majority of seats in the national assembly, giving the new president some hope of maintaining a stable government. However, bringing order and a measure of prosperity to this desperately poor country promises to be a difficult task.

* **guerrilla** member of a fighting force outside the regular army that uses surprise raids against an enemy or government

* **sanction** measure adopted by one or more nations to force another nation to change its policies or conduct



Niger River and Delta

PEOPLE AND CULTURES

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

Niger contains many ethnic groups, including the Hausa, Zerma-Songhai, Dendi, Tuareg, and Fulani. The first three of these are agricultural peoples, while the last two are pastoralists*. These groups all share many Muslim beliefs and practices, although many have kept certain elements of pre-Islamic culture as well.

Under French rule, Nigerois who spoke Zerma achieved positions in the colonial government, and they continue to dominate Niger's political life. The Tuareg and Fulani, however, have struggled. The nomadic lifestyle of the Tuareg was disrupted by the French takeover, and the Tuareg have benefited little from Niger's commercial economy or from Western education.

Social and economic differences tend to be more important in Niger than differences between ethnic groups. Before the colonial era, sharp distinctions existed between nobles and commoners, herders and farmers, warriors and producers. Under French rule, people in the same classes held similar positions in the workforce, government, and military. As a result, people of similar social and economic backgrounds tend to share common interests regardless of ethnic group. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Deserts and Drought, French West Africa, Islam in Africa, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)

Niger River and Delta

* **hydroelectric power** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

* **navigable** deep and wide enough to provide passage for ships

The Niger River flows in a great arc through West Africa. The continent's third longest river, after the NILE RIVER and CONGO RIVER, it has carried travelers, traders, and explorers for hundreds of years. The Niger still serves as a highway for people and goods, but it also supplies water for agriculture and hydroelectric power*. The delta at the river's mouth in NIGERIA was an early center of European trade and now yields oil and natural gas.

Geography. The Niger River is navigable* for most of its 2,585 miles. Its source lies in the Kouranko Mountains on the border between SIERRA LEONE and GUINEA. Although the Atlantic Ocean is just 200 miles west of that source, the shape of the land makes the river flow east and north for a long distance before finally turning south toward the Atlantic. Along the way the Niger passes through Guinea, MALI, NIGER, the northern edge of BÉNIN, and Nigeria.

Descending from the Guinea highlands into Mali, the river broadens and moves slowly. Two major tributaries, the Sankarani and Bani Rivers, join the Niger in Mali and add to its flow. Entering a flat plain, the Niger then branches out into a network of waterways called the Inland Delta. During the rainy season, which begins in late August, these channels overflow their banks and form a shallow lake 150 miles wide and 300 miles long. This yearly flood deposits fertile soil, making the inland delta an ideal agricultural zone. In especially wet years a branch of the river reaches the city of TIMBUKTU, seven miles from the river's main channel.

Niger River and Delta



For centuries the Niger River has been a major trade route through West Africa. Boats like this one still carry passengers and cargo along the river's winding course.

The Niger curves to the south at Kabara in Mali and narrows as it passes through a gorge. Flowing through Nigeria it receives another major tributary, the Benue. The river empties into the Atlantic Ocean after passing through a sprawling delta created by soil deposits from the river. Over thousands of years, the Niger has extended this delta out into the Atlantic.

History and Ethnic Groups. Long used for communication and commerce, the Niger River has played an important role in the history of West Africa. It contributed to the rise of the **SUDANIC EMPIRES OF WESTERN AFRICA** and later offered Europeans a route into the interior.

During the period of the Songhai Empire in the 1400s and 1500s, large canoes carried grain downstream from the Inland Delta to the cities of Timbuktu and Gao. Military and court officials traveled from one end of the empire to the other on the river. The river helped make Timbuktu a busy and prosperous trade center, where the caravan routes that crossed the **SAHARA DESERT** connected with the Niger's river traffic.

Beginning in the late 1400s, the Ijo people of the Niger Delta formed various city-states that became the focus of European trade. However, archaeological* evidence—including pottery and copper bracelets once used as money—shows that the delta peoples were involved in long-distance trade with the interior well before the Europeans arrived.

European knowledge of the Niger River began with Arab maps of the Middle Ages, which mistakenly suggested a link between the Nile and the Niger Rivers. The maps also indicated that the Niger began in what

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins



Nigeria

is now CHAD and flowed west. Scottish explorer Mungo Park disproved this notion in 1796 when he traced part of the river's course. By 1830 Europeans had mapped the full course of the Niger and knew that it emptied into the Atlantic through the Nigerian delta.

European explorers, missionaries, and merchants—mostly British—advanced up the Niger River from the sea to trade and establish settlements. Their expeditions paved the way for the Royal Niger Company, founded in 1886, which not only gained control of European trade along the lower Niger but also expanded Britain's political and military power in the region. British rule of Nigeria soon followed. Meanwhile, far upstream, the French moved east along the river from their colony in SENEGAL, and took over Guinea, Mali, and Niger.

Many diverse ethnic groups live along the Niger and in its delta. The largest are the BAMBARA and Songhai in Mali, the Jerma in Niger, the Nupe in central Nigeria, the IGBO (Ibo) in southern Nigeria, and the Ijo (Ijaw) in the Niger Delta. The Niger River is central to the way of life of a number of these peoples, including the Sorko, a Songhai-speaking group that travels along the river from Nigeria to the Inland Delta, fishing and hunting hippopotamus.

During the 1900s Europeans and Africans used the Niger River for economic purposes. In the 1930s French colonial authorities began digging irrigation channels in Mali to bring the river's water to fields of cotton, rice, and sugarcane. A large hydroelectric dam at Kainji in Nigeria, completed 30 years later, harnessed the power of the river for economic development and is a major source of electricity for Nigeria and Bénin. In the Niger Delta region, oil and natural gas have been exploited* since the 1950s, providing significant revenue for Nigeria. (*See also History of Africa, Irrigation and Flood Control, Transportation, Travel and Exploration.*)

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of



Nigeria

With a large and enterprising population and a wealth of natural resources, the West African nation of Nigeria has enormous potential. However, since shortly after independence the country has been troubled by ethnic rivalry, religious strife, and violence. Furthermore, government corruption has hindered progress in many areas. After more than 40 years of unfulfilled promise, the country is still struggling to make the most of its rich heritage.

GEOGRAPHY

Located on the Guinea Coast of West Africa, Nigeria is bordered by the nations of BÉNIN, NIGER, and CAMEROON. The landscape is largely flat and low with few areas above 3,000 feet. The marshy coast is dominated by a wide belt of swamps that give way to thick tropical rain forest inland. Beyond the forest, the land rises gradually until reaching the Jos Plateau, the highest part of the country. This region is covered with savanna*; semiarid and desert areas are found farther north. A series of mountain ranges mark Nigeria's border with Cameroon.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Nigeria



Climate changes dramatically in Nigeria as one moves from south to north. The south is hot and wet, receiving up to 150 inches of rain per year. Precipitation decreases significantly in the upland savanna area and drops to 25 inches or less per year in the hot, dry north. Nigeria has a rainy season and a dry season. Dry weather lasts about a month in the south but up to seven months in the northeast. The NIGER RIVER and its main tributary, the Benue, are the two most important rivers in the country. Together this river system divides Nigeria into three main areas—the north, southeast, and southwest—the homelands of Nigeria's main ethnic groups.

With varying growing conditions, each of the country's regions produces different crops. People in the south grow mainly root crops such as yams and cassava*, while those in the north cultivate grains including millet, sorghum, and rice. Cattle are raised widely in the north but not in the south because of the tsetse fly, which carries a disease that is deadly to large mammals. The middle region of Nigeria can support both root crops and grains and is rapidly becoming the nation's breadbasket.

* **cassava** starchy root plant; source of tapioca

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The modern nation of Nigeria was created by joining two separate British colonies in 1914. These colonies contained three main ethnic and political divisions: Hausaland to the north, Yorubaland to the southwest, and Igboland and the kingdom of Benin (an ancient state unrelated to modern Bénin) to the southeast.

Precolonial Hausaland. Before the colonial era, northern Nigeria was divided into a number of independent states of varying size and wealth. This region, known as Hausaland, lay between two great trading centers—the ancient kingdom of BORNUN to the east and the powerful empires of Mali and Songhai in the west. Since at least the 1300s, merchants from these two areas competed for control of the rich HAUSA region.

Bornu, a Muslim state, had considerable influence in Hausaland and received tribute* from many Hausa states. When Mali began expanding, Bornu set up its own trading centers in the Hausa region. At this time the inhabitants of Hausaland were not Muslims, and few spoke the Hausa language. However, trade brought Islam* to the region and led to the establishment of large urban centers in which people of different ethnic groups came together. It was from this mixing of traditions in a Muslim setting that the Hausa culture first emerged.

While some of the region's original inhabitants left the new Muslim states, others remained and converted to Islam. Still others continued to follow indigenous* religions and became minorities within the Hausa states, providing food and protection for the trading caravans of Muslim merchants. Over time Hausa developed as the common language of the urban military and merchant population and their farming allies. It eventually replaced the various other languages spoken in the countryside.

Around 1500 a series of Muslim kingdoms emerged in Hausaland. They enjoyed power and prosperity until about 1650, when a severe economic turndown in North Africa spread to West Africa. After 1650 large-scale invasions of people from the non-Muslim south, combined with a period of unrest and uprisings in several Hausa states, caused the region to splinter politically, and various new kingdoms emerged.

In the early 1800s, the FULANI launched a jihad* against the Hausa kingdoms. Led by Shaikh UTHMAN DAN FODIO, they crushed Hausa political power, set up their own rulers, and replaced traditional religious practices with Islam. The resulting division between the Hausa and the Fulani had a lasting effect on northern Nigeria.

Precolonial Yorubaland. In precolonial* times the YORUBA-speaking peoples of southwestern Nigeria (an area later known as Yorubaland) belonged to many separate states. Nevertheless, these peoples shared a common identity based on their origin in the town of Ife. The town, said to be the location of the creation of the world, was the site of an early kingdom that flourished between the 1100s and 1400s.

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **jihad** Muslim holy war

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa



Nigeria

Going Nowhere Fast

For years Nigeria's government kept the price of gasoline low by providing subsidies, or cash payments, to oil producers. As a result, Nigerians could afford to fill up their cars and get on the road. However, when the subsidy was withdrawn and fuel prices soared, the city of Lagos enjoyed an unexpected benefit. In the days of cheap gas, the city suffered from massive traffic jams, sometimes lasting an entire day, as well as many accidents. One observer called Lagos residents the world's worst drivers. Now traffic jams in the city average "only" two or three hours.

In the 1400s and 1500s, the kingdom of Benin conquered part of Yorubaland and maintained some degree of control there until the early 1800s. By the 1600s the most powerful Yoruba state was Oyo, which had an army based on cavalry forces. The plains and savannas of northern and western Yorubaland were ideal territory for mounted troops, and Oyo conquered several Yoruba states. It also took over the kingdom of Dahomey in what is now the modern nation of Bénin. Eventually Oyo became a major supplier of slaves, and by the 1700s the port city of LAGOS had become an important center of the Atlantic SLAVE TRADE.

In the 1800s Oyo collapsed as a result of civil war, and much of Yorubaland was crippled by wars among various states of the region. During that time Muslims seized control of parts of northeastern Yorubaland, while major wars continued to rage in the south. These wars resulted in the capture of many Yoruba, who were sold to European slave traders. By 1862 the state of Ibadan had emerged as the dominant power in Yorubaland. But an alliance of Yoruba states against Ibadan resulted in continued warfare until Europeans took over the region.

Precolonial Igboland and Benin. Southeastern Nigeria has been inhabited by speakers of the Edo (or Benin) language for more than 3,000 years. These peoples lived in small settlements until about 400 B.C. At that time, a growing population and the introduction of iron tools led to larger and more complex villages with forms of centralized authority and social classes of different levels. Linked to Yorubaland through trade networks, these villages eventually grew into towns and larger urban centers with rulers and elaborate royal courts.

Sometime after A.D. 1000, urban centers at Udo and Benin became the leading powers in the region. Eventually, Benin emerged as the more powerful of the two. Despite a strong government, Benin failed to expand, and about 1480 it was conquered by another state. The ruler of this new Benin state consolidated his power and then began waging war on his neighbors. Benin defeated Yoruba peoples to the west, Edo peoples to the north, and IGBO (Ibo) towns to the east. Conquered territories close to Benin came under direct rule; those farther away became provinces that paid tribute to the king of Benin. Continuing to expand, Benin reached its greatest size by about 1650.

Igboland, unlike Benin, did not develop a strong central government. Instead, the Igbo lived in independent villages that sometimes joined together to share a meeting place or market. Spread out on both sides of the Niger River, they were mostly farmers. By the 1600s the Igbo had become involved in supplying slaves to the slave traders along the coast.

Early European Influences. The Portuguese were the earliest European visitors to the region, making contact with the kingdom of Benin in 1485. Interested in gold and ivory at first, Portuguese and other European merchants eventually became involved in Africa's growing slave trade. Lagos became a principal export point for slaves bound for the Americas.

It was a desire to end the slave trade that brought Britain to Nigeria in the early 1800s. British naval vessels patrolled the coastal waters look-



Nigeria

* **depose** to remove from office

ing for slave ships, and when the king of Lagos refused to sign a treaty against the trade in 1851, the British deposed* him. Ten years later they took over the slave port of Lagos.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

At about the same time, Christian missionaries became active along the Nigerian coast and later penetrated inland. British merchants began to take a greater interest in regional products such as palm oil, a lubricant for early industrial machinery. These various activities led the British government to move toward setting up colonies and protectorates* in Nigeria. Fearing French competition, Britain intensified its colonization efforts in the region in the mid-1800s.

Early British Rule. Britain expanded its role in Nigeria in the late 1800s, establishing the Niger Coast Protectorate in what is now southern Nigeria and forcing the states of Yorubaland to accept peace on British terms. In 1897 the British conquered the kingdom of Benin, ending organized resistance in the south. But they continued to send military expeditions on a regular basis to deal with uprisings.

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business

While taking control in the south, Britain began to extend its authority over northern Nigeria. In 1886 it granted a monopoly* over trade along the lower Niger River area to the Royal Niger Company. Authorized to act as a political administration, this private company established local laws and administered justice. Its frequent abuse of this power led to several rebellions by local peoples. In 1900 the British government took over the lands originally granted to the Royal Niger Company and formed the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria. Three years later British forces defeated the Sokoto Caliphate*, a Muslim state that controlled much of northern Nigeria.

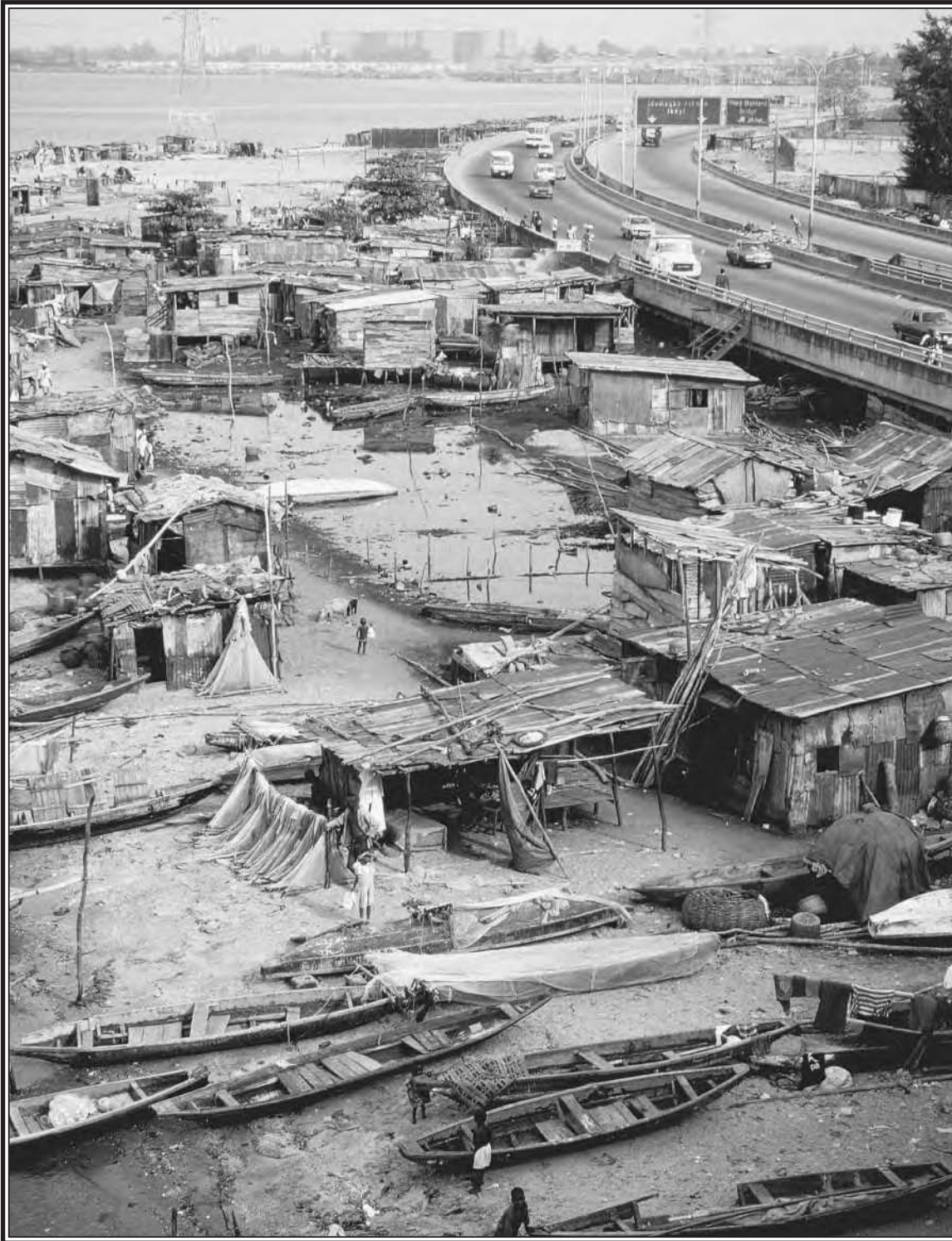
* **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire

The first high commissioner of the northern protectorate, Sir Frederick LUGARD, developed a system of administration known as indirect rule. Under this policy, traditional African rulers who cooperated with the British were allowed to run local governments and courts. British officials acted as advisers rather than making policy themselves. This system of indirect rule saved the British the expense of setting up a full-scale colonial administration in the north, and they used the system later in most of their African colonies.

Indirect rule in the north did meet some opposition. Many Muslim leaders resisted the British, and armed uprisings were not uncommon. Furthermore, while indirect rule worked well in northern Nigeria, it failed in the south. Northern Nigeria had been the site of large empires for centuries and had a centralized power structure, which the British could use. By contrast, the history of southern Nigeria had been dominated by competing states, and no single political structure had developed in the region.

From Union to Independence. Northern and southern Nigeria remained separate British protectorates until 1914. At that time Britain decided to make the two into one colony ruled from the southern capital at Lagos. This merger simplified the task of ruling Nigeria, but it also planted the seeds of political division. The creation of a single colony forced long-time foes—the Hausa, Fulani, Yoruba, and Igbo—to become

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A traditional fishing village stretches out along the highway in Lagos, Nigeria's main port and its most important commercial and industrial center.



Nigeria

part of the same nation. Britain managed to keep these ethnic rivalries in check during the colonial period, but they broke out anew after Nigeria achieved independence in 1960.

During the early years of British rule, northern Nigeria was weaker economically than the south. It also lagged behind the south in educational and political development. Christian missionaries had established many schools in the south, but Muslim rulers in the north resisted missionary activities. At first British colonial authorities excluded the north from the Legislative Council that oversaw the colony. As a result, northern Nigeria had no direct voice in colonial government.

Britain gradually introduced political changes in Nigeria. In 1939 it divided the south into eastern and western provinces. Seven years later it created a regional House of Assembly that included representatives from all parts of the country, along with a House of Chiefs for the north. Further changes over the next several years resulted in the north becoming a separate region with its own government and system of courts.

Political parties began to appear in Nigeria in the 1950s, and they played significant roles in the years leading up to independence. In the north the Northern People's Congress (NPC) and Northern Elements Progressive Union (NEPU) both drew support from the Hausa population. The NPC emerged as the stronger of the two parties, and from 1954 to 1959 it led efforts to increase the education and training of northerners in preparation for independence. The two main political parties of the south were the National Council of Nigerian Citizens and the Action Group. However, their support was not as widespread as that of the northern parties.



Independent Nigeria. Nigeria gained independence from Britain on October 1, 1960, and the NPC soon took its place as the new nation's leading political party. Nigeria's First Republic enjoyed a few years of relative quiet, but ethnic tensions were building. Once the poor neighbors of the Christians in the south, the Muslim Hausa in the north now made up a majority of the population and dominated Nigerian politics and government. Yoruba and Igbo leaders complained about Hausa control but were unable to cooperate with one another to change the situation.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

A military coup* by Igbo army officers overthrew the First Republic in January 1966. Igbo control was short lived, however, as another coup in July of that year brought Hausa colonel Yakubu Gowon to power. Hausa and other northerners then launched a campaign of violence against the Igbo, killing thousands across the country. The situation turned into civil war when an Igbo colonel, Odemegwu Ojukwu, proclaimed independence for the eastern (Igbo) half of southern Nigeria—called Biafra. The Igbo fought desperately, but by 1970 their rebellion was crushed. Some two million people lost their lives in the war.

During the relatively calm period that followed the war, Gowon's government tried to smooth over ethnic differences. The challenge of rebuilding Nigeria was aided by the discovery of oil in the early 1970s. The prospect of national wealth and stability faded, though, as government officials and their friends stole much of the money produced by oil and political turmoil continued. Gowon was overthrown in 1975,



Nigeria

and his successor was killed several months later. General Olesgun Obasanjo took control, but voluntarily stepped aside in 1979 to allow the election of a civilian government.

The new government, led by President Shehu Shagari, was marked by increasing corruption and rapidly declining oil revenues. This so-called Second Republic was even briefer than the first, lasting only four years before the military stepped in once again in 1983. The principal figure in Nigeria in the later 1980s was General Ibrahim Babangida, whose military regime* was marked by massive corruption and a complete lack of concern for public opinion. When Nigeria's economy failed to improve, and the nation's political situation remained unstable, Babangida came under increasing pressure to return Nigeria to civilian rule.

* **regime** current political system or rule

Elections in mid-1993 seemed to result in victory for Moshood Abiola, a Yoruba Muslim and friend of Babangida. However, the military overturned the election results, and General Sani Abacha took the presidency. Abacha outlawed political parties and labor strikes, seized government offices, and returned Nigeria to military rule.

When Abacha died suddenly in June 1998, he was replaced by General Abdusalam Abubakar, who promised a swift return to civilian rule. Under an arrangement with northern politicians, two southern Yoruba were named as candidates for the presidency: Olusegun Obasanjo and Olu Fulae. Obasanjo, who had given up power voluntarily in 1979, won the 1999 election. The first southerner elected to the presidency, Obasanjo quickly took steps to combat corruption in government and spent money on long neglected repairs to the country's oil refineries. He also announced a plan to privatize* some of Nigeria's state-owned corporations.

* **privatize** to transfer from government control to private ownership

Political and human rights have improved somewhat under Obasanjo, but his government has faced unrest and turmoil. It sent military forces to put down an uprising in the oil-rich Niger Delta and to prevent a northern governor from establishing Muslim law in his state, resulting in many deaths. Economic problems as well as ethnic and regional differences continue to trouble the country.

ECONOMY

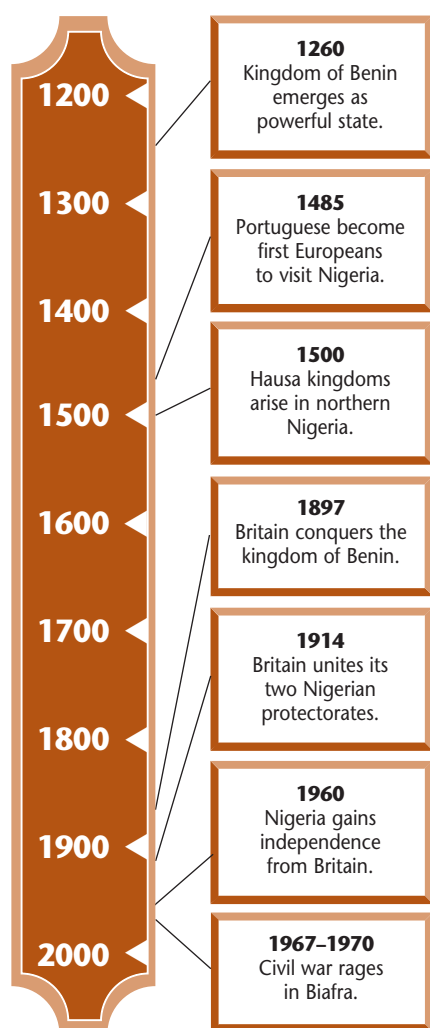
Nigeria's economy is dominated by its petroleum industry, centered in the Niger River delta. The country's enormous petroleum reserves should be the basis for a strong economy. However, corruption in the petroleum industry has shifted much of the oil revenue into the hands of government officials and their friends. Nigeria is attempting to end its dependence on oil by developing a natural gas industry.

Until the discovery of oil in the late 1960s, agriculture was the mainstay of Nigeria's economy. It still contributes nearly 40 percent of the nation's gross domestic product (GDP)*. Nigeria's major agricultural exports include cocoa, palm oil, peanuts, cotton, rubber, and timber. Although its mining industry is not well developed, Nigeria contains an abundance of mineral resources such as gold, lead, zinc, and other industrial minerals. Nigeria also contains large deposits of coal.

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).



* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

In the late 1940s, British colonial officials began a program of industrialization in Nigeria. However, instead of using local raw materials, the program involved importing partially processed raw materials to produce finished goods in Nigerian factories. This costly and inefficient manufacturing process continues, consuming a large portion of Nigeria's export revenues and adding to its huge foreign debt.

By the late 1980s, Nigeria's debt had forced the nation to adopt various economic reforms. These included cutting levels of government spending and employment and privatizing state-owned industries. Changes in the exchange rate led to a steep drop in the value of the nation's currency, creating severe hardship for most Nigerians. Despite these measures, the Nigerian economy remains unstable, and economic growth is still uncertain.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Nigeria is a highly diverse country consisting of many different ethnic groups. The most prominent are the Muslim Hausa, Kanuri, and Fulani of northern Nigeria and the largely Christian Yoruba and Igbo of the south. There are more than 450 languages spoken in the country, but the widespread use of a few major ones, such as English, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo, enables Nigerians from different linguistic groups to communicate.

Northern Nigeria. Northwestern Nigeria is dominated by the Hausa, who are primarily farmers and pastoralists*. During the Sokoto Caliphate in the 1800s, the Hausa absorbed many local peoples who eventually adopted Hausa culture. However, many other groups resisted the Muslim caliphate and maintained their own identities. Some of these groups, such as the Dendi, Busa, and Tienga, do not speak Hausa or Fulani languages.

Among the major groups in northeastern Nigeria are the Kanuri and Fulani. Both groups are primarily Muslim. Most of the Kanuri live by farming, although some engage in trade. Kanuri society is very hierarchical*, with a sharp division between royalty and commoners. The Fulani are both farmers and herders. Town society among the Fulani is also hierarchical, headed by a strong Islamic political leader called an emir.

Northern Nigeria is also home to a wide variety of smaller ethnic groups, many of which are organized into chiefdoms. Quite a few of these groups continue to practice traditional religions, but that number is shrinking as Christianity and Islam make further inroads in the area. Conflict between Christian and Muslim groups is common.

Southern and Central Nigeria. The Niger River divides southern Nigeria into eastern and western halves. Yoruba-speaking peoples dominate the western portion, but they have had much interaction with other ethnic groups in the region. The Yoruba had developed centralized power structures and a hierarchical social system based on descent before the arrival of Europeans. These political structures survive in local governing institutions, while ancestry is still important in determining social position and inheritance. The Yoruba are primarily farmers.

Nigeria



Nigeria

POPULATION:

123,337,822 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

356,669 sq. mi. (923,774 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English (official); Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Naira

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 50%, Christian 40%, traditional 10%

CITIES:

Abuja (Federal Capital Territory), 378,700 (1991 est.); Lagos, Ibadan, Ogbomosho, Kano, Ilorin, Oshogbo

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Highly variable, 70–170 in. (1,700–4,310 mm) from west to east along the coast; 20 in. (500 mm) in the extreme north

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$970 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cotton, cocoa, rubber, yams, cassava, sorghum, palm kernels, millet, corn, rice, groundnuts, plantains, maize, potatoes, fruit, livestock, fish, timber

Manufacturing: oil refining, iron and steel production, sugar refining, textiles, cement, building materials, chemicals, food processing, pharmaceuticals

Mining: petroleum, tin, columbite, iron ore, coal, limestone, lead, zinc, natural gas, gold

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Britain, 1960. Republic, transitioning from military to civilian rule. President elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: National Assembly and House of Representatives (legislative bodies); Federal Executive Council.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1966 Governor General Benjamin Nnamdi Azikiwe (president after 1963)

1966 Major General Johnson Aguiyi-Ironsi

1966–1975 Lieutenant Colonel (later General) Yakubu Gowon

1975–1976 Brigadier (later General) Murtala Ramat

Muhammed

1976–1979 Lieutenant General (later General) Olusegun Obasanjo

1979–1983 President Shehu Shagari

1984–1985 Major General Muhammadu Buhari

1985–1993 Major General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida

1993 Interim President Ernest Shonekan

1993–1999 General Sani Abacha

1999– President Olusegun Obasanjo

ARMED FORCES:

77,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–15; literacy rate 57%

The largest group east of the Niger River is the Igbo (Ibo). Neither the Igbo nor other ethnic groups in this area ever developed centralized power structures. Christianity is the most widely practiced religion in southeastern Nigeria, but many people also follow traditional religions. Among the main sources of livelihood in the area are agriculture, fishing, and crafts such as weaving and woodcarving. Many people are also employed in the Niger Delta oil industry. As the center of crude oil production in Nigeria, southeastern Nigeria is home to some of the largest commercial centers in the country, including Onitsha, Aba, and Port Harcourt. The well-developed region is also home to numerous universities and several airports and seaports.

Central Nigeria is one of the most ethnically diverse parts of the country. It is the home of many different language and ethnic groups that have interacted extensively over time, resulting in much cultural exchange. The site of important trade routes in the precolonial era, central Nigeria was also exposed to a variety of outside influences. Most groups in the region are agricultural, while mining has attracted large numbers of people from other regions of Nigeria to the area. (*See also Boundaries in Africa; Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Energy and Energy Resources; Ethnic Groups and Identity; History of Africa; Missions and Missionaries; Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.*)



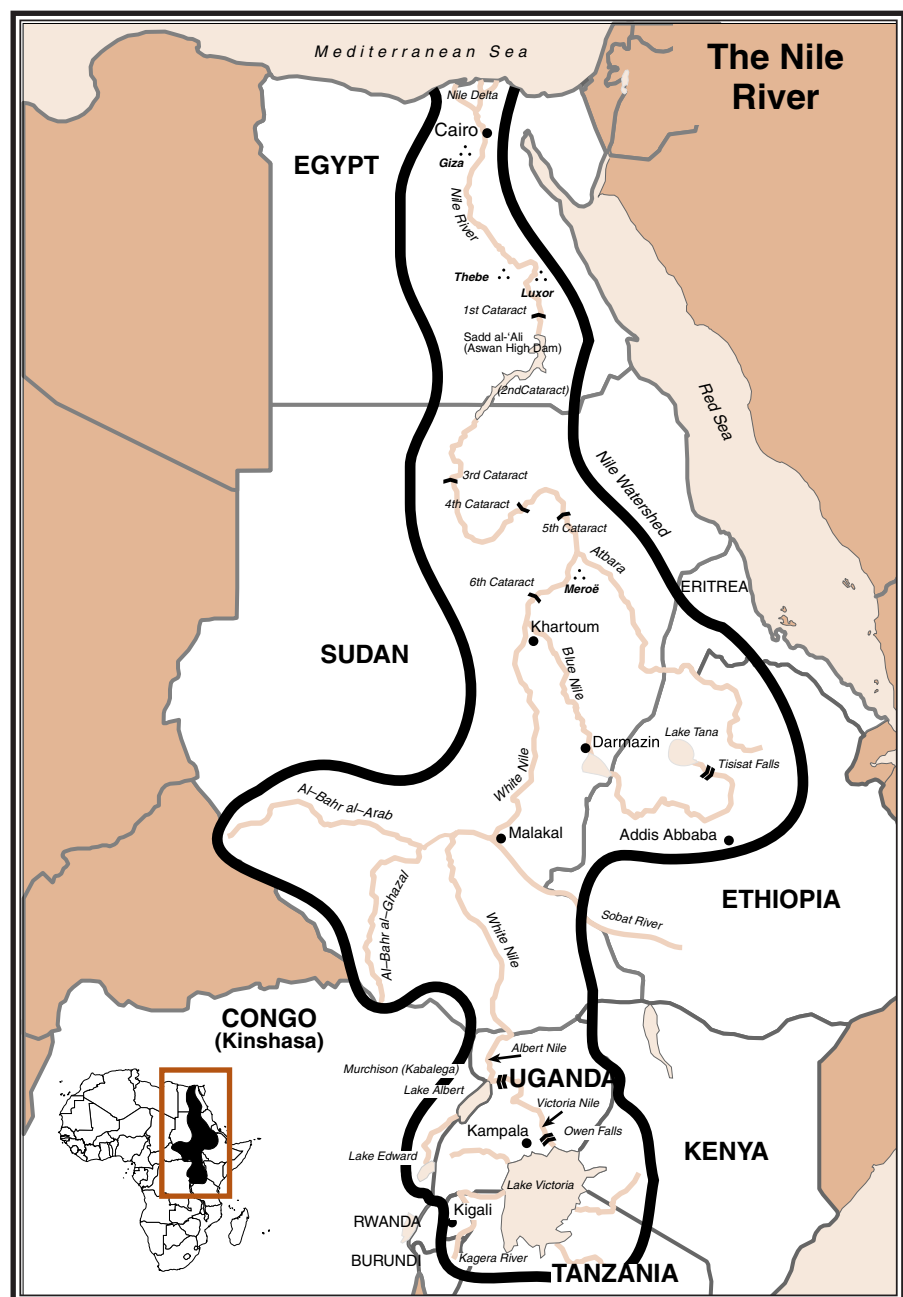
Nile River and Delta

Nile River and Delta

* **tributary** river that flows into another river

The Nile, the world's longest river, begins in the heart of Africa and empties into the Mediterranean Sea. Snaking north through eastern Africa for more than 4,000 miles, the river passes through nine countries on its way to the sea. The Nile basin, the area drained by the river's tributaries*, covers 1.2 million square miles. For thousands of years, the Nile River has been the most important geographic feature of this enormous region, providing water and fertile soil for agriculture and serving as a highway for people, goods, and cultures.

Geography. The portion of the Nile that flows through EGYPT is





Nile River and Delta

formed by the blending farther south of three main sources: the White Nile, Blue Nile, and Atbara Rivers. The White Nile, the southernmost source, originates at a spring in BURUNDI. The spring gives rise to the Kagera River, which flows into Lake Victoria, the world's second largest freshwater lake. Water runs out of the north end of the lake and through northern UGANDA to merge with the outflow from a series of smaller lakes to the west. From there the river plunges over a waterfall and proceeds northward as the White Nile. For 230 miles it wanders through a region called the *sudd*, a vast swamp in southern SUDAN. At the Sudanese city of Malakal the White Nile absorbs several tributaries flowing from the west and from the highlands of ETHIOPIA to the east. Then it heads north for 600 miles through flat, arid plains to KHARTOUM, the capital of Sudan.

At Khartoum the White Nile meets the Blue Nile, which begins at a spring in the Ethiopian highlands. The Blue Nile flows into Lake Tana, dotted with islands on which stand churches, monasteries, and the tombs of Ethiopian emperors. The river runs out of the lake, over a waterfall, and through a winding, mile-deep canyon. Descending onto the plains of Sudan, it flows northward to meet the White Nile.

North of Khartoum, the Nile travels through desert. Its only remaining tributary is the Atbara, which rushes down from the Ethiopian highlands during the wet season but is dry from January to June. Beyond the Atbara, the Nile makes a great S-shaped bend before flowing into a reservoir created by Egypt's Aswan High Dam. Released from the dam, the Nile travels another 700 miles to the sea. North of CAIRO, Egypt's capital, it separates into two branches, the Damietta and the Rosetta. Together with a network of smaller branches and canals, these river mouths form a fan-shaped delta 100 miles deep and 180 miles wide at the Mediterranean coast. About 60 percent of Egypt's population lives in the Nile Delta, benefiting from the river's gifts of water and soil.

Historical and Cultural Importance. Since ancient times the Nile has been vital to life in northeastern Africa. Not only does the river provide water in a barren region, but its annual floods, fed by the downpours of the highland rainy season, deposit moist, fertile soil along the riverbanks. The Saharan peoples who settled along those banks soon learned that although the river gave life, it could also be deadly. If the flood was too high it brought destruction, but a low flood could result in crop failure and famine.

The Nile nourished the Egyptian civilization that arose 5,000 years ago, as well as the later civilizations of NUBIA in what is now southern Egypt and northern Sudan. After Christianity became established in Egypt, the new religion spread up the Nile to Ethiopia. Then the Arab invasions of the A.D. 600s brought Islam* to North Africa, and the new faith slowly moved south along the river. The Nile could serve as a highway, but it had barriers—the swamps of the *sudd* and the warlike peoples of southern Sudan halted the southward march of Arabs and Islam into eastern Africa.

Beginning in the 1800s, Egypt and various European powers competed to control the Nile basin. As part of this effort, European explorers

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims



Nkrumah, Kwame

such as Sir Richard BURTON and John Hanning Speke searched for the source of the White Nile. By the end of the 1800s, Britain dominated the Nile from the delta to Lake Victoria. In the mid-1900s however, British colonial rule came to an end, and the African states in the region gained their independence.

During the colonial period, Britain constructed several dams to regulate the Nile for irrigation and flood control and to supply water to areas of growing population. The independent nations of the region have continued to manage and develop the river through such projects. Egypt built the Aswan High Dam to produce hydroelectric power* and to supply water for irrigation, and Sudan has also built dams. In an effort to prevent famines caused by unpredictable rainfall, Ethiopia has proposed two new dams to make use of the Blue Nile waters. In 1959 Egypt and Sudan signed an agreement that gives 20 percent of the Nile's water to Sudan. However, water needs are growing rapidly in both nations. Although the Nile is the most developed river in Africa, rivalries among the countries along its shores threaten to jeopardize regional cooperation. (See also **Egypt, Ancient; Fishing; Irrigation and Flood Control.**)

* **hydroelectric power** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

Nkrumah, Kwame

1909–1972
President of Ghana

* **civil disobedience** policy of peaceful, nonviolent actions to demonstrate opposition

Francis Nwia Kofi Nkrumah, known as Kwame Nkrumah, was the prime minister and first president of GHANA. Born in the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana), Nkrumah attended Achimota College in the colony. He continued his studies in the United States, where he served as president of the African Students Association, and in England. In London he wrote a book, *Towards Colonial Freedom* (1947), that outlined his ideas on fighting colonialism in Africa.

Returning to the Gold Coast, Nkrumah became active in politics. He founded the Convention People's Party, which organized strikes and civil disobedience* against the colonial government. Jailed in 1950 for his part in a strike, he was released early in order to take a seat in the Legislative Assembly. Nkrumah became prime minister of the colony in 1952 and continued in the post five years later when Ghana won its independence from Great Britain.

In 1960 Ghana became a republic and Nkrumah was elected president. As president, he focused much of his attention on working toward African unity. Ghana's economy was initially strong due to high prices for cocoa, its leading crop. But as prices fell, so did the nation's fortunes. During the early 1960s Nkrumah escaped several assassination attempts, and each time he responded by arresting opponents and tightening his control over the country. While he was still a leader in the movement to create a unified Africa, it was clear that Nkrumah was rapidly losing power in his own nation. In 1964 he declared Ghana a single-party state under his leadership. Two years later, while Nkrumah was on a trip abroad, the military took over the government. Nkrumah returned to Africa and settled in GUINEA, where President Sékou TOURÉ named him copresident. In his later years, Nkrumah continued to write about the struggle for freedom and unity in Africa. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.**)

Nongqawuse

NOMADS

See *Berbers*.

Nongqawuse

ca. 1840–ca. 1900
Xhosa prophet

Nongqawuse was a young woman whom the XHOSA people of SOUTH AFRICA regarded as a prophet who communicated with the spirit world. She urged them to kill their cattle—advice that proved tragic for her people and their kingdom.

An orphan, Nongqawuse was raised by her uncle, a Christian convert, in South Africa's Transkei region. In 1856 she claimed that she could see and talk with the spirits of the dead. The communications she relayed from the ancestors made no sense, so her uncle interpreted them for the Xhosa. The spirits ordered the Xhosa to kill all their cattle, destroy their corn, and throw away their magical devices. Soon the dead would rise, bringing a perfect new world. Cattle and corn would be plentiful, the blind would see, the old would grow young, and no one would suffer again. These prophecies offered hope to the Xhosa, who were suffering from a long epidemic of cattle sickness and from conflict with white settlers over their land.

After 15 months of cattle killing, about 40,000 Xhosa had starved to death, including Nongqawuse's uncle. Another 150,000 had abandoned their homes to search for food. For 80 years the Xhosa kingdom had blocked the advance of the British Cape Colony. However, the disastrous cattle-killing movement devastated the kingdom, and white settlers snatched up much of the Xhosa territory. Colonial authorities held Nongqawuse for a time in Cape Town. Details of her release and later life are not known, but she is thought to have spent the rest of her life with relatives on a white-owned farm. (See also **Prophetic Movements, Religion and Ritual, Southern Africa, History**.)

North Africa:
Geography and
Population

North Africa consists of five countries that border the Mediterranean Sea—EGYPT, LIBYA, TUNISIA, ALGERIA, and MOROCCO. The SAHARA DESERT, the dominant feature of the North African landscape, sweeps across the southern part of the region. The Sahara serves as a geographical boundary between North Africa and sub-Saharan* Africa, except in Egypt. It also marks a transition zone from the largely Arab population of North Africa to black Africa of the south.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The Land. North Africa has three main geographic features: the Sahara, the ATLAS MOUNTAINS in the west, and the NILE RIVER AND DELTA in the east. The Atlas Mountains—a complex cluster of ranges, ridges, plateaus, and basins—stretch for 1,200 miles along the North African coast from southwestern Morocco across Algeria to northeastern Tunisia. The tallest peaks are in the High Atlas range in south-central Morocco, which has many snowcapped peaks.

North Africa: Geography and Population

African Apes in Europe

North Africa's native monkey is a tailless, ground-dwelling member of the macaque family that lives in Algeria and Morocco. It is called the Barbary ape—although it is a monkey, not a true ape—because North Africa was formerly known as the Barbary coast. Barbary apes also live in Gibraltar, a British-controlled peninsula in southern Spain. They are Europe's only wild monkeys, possibly carried to the continent by the Moors, Arabs from North Africa who invaded Spain in the Middle Ages.

South of the Atlas Mountains is the dry and largely barren expanse of the Sahara. In places the desert is cut by irregular watercourses called wadis—streams that flow only after rainfalls but are usually dry. The Sahara's major landforms include *ergs*, large seas of sand that sometimes form into huge dunes; the *hammada*, a level rocky plateau without soil or sand; and the *reg*, a level plain of gravel or small stones. The Sahara covers the southern part of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, and most of Libya. Only two regions of Libya are outside the desert: Tripolitania in the northwest and Cyrenaica in the northeast.

Most of Egypt is also desert, except for the Nile River and the irrigated land along its banks. The Nile Valley is a narrow green and fertile thread that runs the length of the country. The Egyptian desert also contains oases, fertile areas around natural water sources. Oases are scattered through other parts of the desert as well.

Climate, Water, and Resources. Coastal North Africa has a Mediterranean climate, with hot summers and mild, damp winters. Along the Atlas chain, the mountains trap moisture-laden clouds blowing south from the Mediterranean Sea. The moisture falls as rain on the mountains' northern slopes. As a result, these slopes and the coastal area between them and the sea are well-watered and fertile, compared with the more arid conditions on the southern side of the mountains. Similar conditions exist in Libya, where cliffs and low mountains separate Tripolitania and Cyrenaica from the desert interior.

Throughout North Africa, the availability of water has always been the chief factor in determining where and how people live. In Egypt, 95 percent of the people live within a short distance of the Nile River or in the delta at its mouth on the Mediterranean Sea. Water from the river is used to irrigate fields of cereal grains, vegetables, cotton, and other crops.

In the other North African countries, about 90 percent of the people live within 200 miles of the coast, generally in valleys that have streams and rivers. These areas are suitable for agriculture, especially with the aid of irrigation. Citrus fruits, olives, and grapes are major crops. Farther south, drier hills and grasslands bordering the desert have long been the home of pastoralists* who raise herds of sheep, goats, cattle, and camels. The only farming in the desert takes place in oases, where the main crops raised are date palms, fruit, and cereal grains.

North Africa possesses valuable mineral resources. Libya and Algeria have extensive deposits of petroleum and natural gas. Industrial development of these resources has been underway since the 1950s, and fuel exports are a major source of revenue for these countries. Egypt and Tunisia have oil industries as well, though on a smaller scale. The region also contains small quantities of other minerals, such as copper, zinc, and manganese. Morocco and Tunisia have fairly significant deposits of phosphates, while iron ore is found in Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia.

The People. North Africa's geographical setting has determined its population and its place in world affairs. In some ways, North Africa is

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

North Africa: Geography and Population

closer to Europe and the Middle East than to the rest of Africa. The northernmost point in Morocco lies only eight miles from Europe across the Strait of Gibraltar. The Tunisian coast is just 85 miles from the Italian island of Sicily. North Africa has had extensive contact with Europe over the centuries, and in ancient times it was part of the Roman Empire. Moreover, the Sinai Peninsula, the northeastern part of Egypt, borders the Middle East. Contacts between the Middle East and North Africa also go back many centuries.

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Arab culture and the Islamic religion have dominated much of North African life since the invasion of Muslim Arabs in the 600s. Most of the women shown in this picture of Tunis, the capital of Tunisia, wear traditional Muslim garb.

The population of North Africa is mainly white, like the peoples of Europe and the Middle East. But racial mixing has occurred over the years between the people of North Africa and the black population of sub-Saharan Africa. North Africa shares the Middle East's dominant ethnic group (Arab), language (Arabic), and religion (Islam*). For this reason North Africa is sometimes considered part of the Middle East, at least culturally. Arabs have long used the term **MAGHREB** (or **Maghrib**), meaning "west," to refer to Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco, which they consider the westernmost part of the Arab world.

The most significant feature of North Africa's population is that it is more uniform than the population of any other African region.





North Africa: History and Cultures

Although minority populations exist in all five nations, most North Africans are either Arabs, BERBERS, or a mixture of the two groups. The Berbers were the original inhabitants of North Africa. Between the A.D. 600s and 1000s, Muslim Arabs from Arabia swept across the region in a wave of conquest. The two peoples, physically quite similar, formed a single population in many areas as Berbers merged into Arab society.

The Arabs brought with them to North Africa the Arabic language and the Islamic religion. Both the language and the faith, along with many other features of Arab culture, became dominant across North Africa. Some Berber groups, however, have maintained their separate identity. These groups generally live in the more isolated or remote mountain and desert areas of Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco.

* **nomadic** referring to people who travel from place to place to find food and pasture

Although Muslims, the Berbers often continue to speak their own languages and follow their traditional pastoralist, and sometimes nomadic* or seminomadic, way of life. One Berber-speaking group—the TUAREG—live primarily in the desert regions of North Africa and cling strongly to their traditional lifestyle. Despite such differences, however, centuries of interaction between the Berbers and Arabs has created a strong sense of cultural unity.

The people of North Africa are overwhelmingly Muslim. Egypt has a small but significant group of Coptic Christians, followers of an early form of Christianity. Jewish communities have existed in North Africa since ancient times. In recent years, however, they have almost disappeared as North Africa's Jews have emigrated to Israel or Europe.

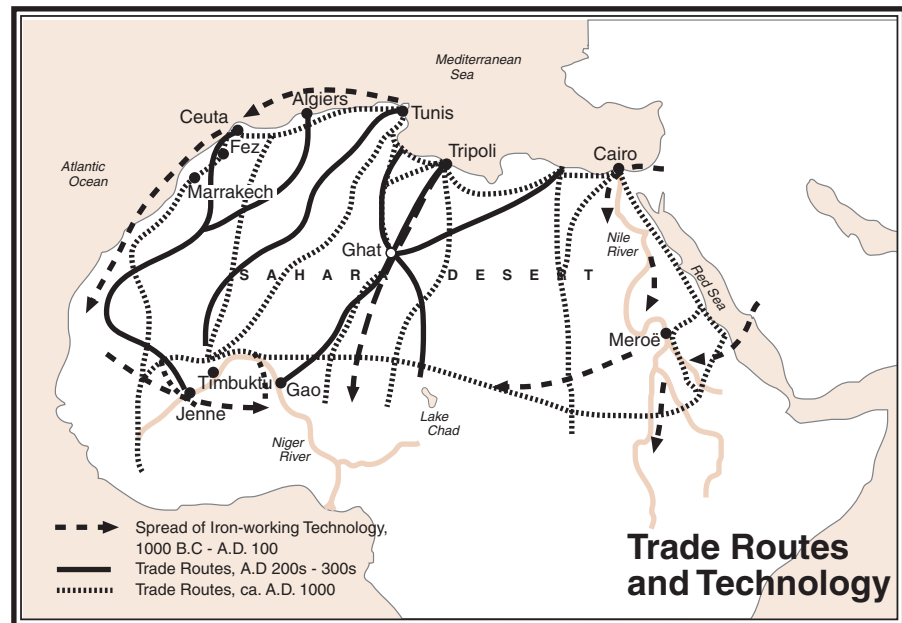
North Africa's population numbered approximately 144 million in 2000. The country with the largest population was Egypt, with more than 68 million inhabitants. Algeria had 31 million people, Morocco 30 million, and Tunisia nearly 10 million. Libya's population numbered only 5 million. Arabic is the official language of all five countries, but many North Africans also speak other languages. French is often used in business in the former French colonies of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Many Libyans, especially in the cities, understand English and Italian, and many urban Egyptians speak English. Berber is most often heard in Morocco and Algeria, which have large Berber populations.

North Africa has had cities since ancient times, when ALEXANDRIA in Egypt and CARTHAGE in Tunisia were major Mediterranean ports. CAIRO in Egypt and Fez in Morocco flourished as centers of the caravan trade during the Middle Ages. More recently, trade and industrial development have stimulated the growth of several port cities in North Africa. Major urban centers now include Alexandria, Cairo, Tripoli in Libya, Tunis, ALGIERS in Algeria, and Casablanca in Morocco. (See also **Arabs in Africa**, **Climate**, **North Africa: History and Cultures**, **Roman Africa**.)

North Africa: History and Cultures

Separated from the rest of Africa by the SAHARA DESERT, the peoples of North Africa share a language and many cultural, political, and economic traditions. The term *North Africa* refers to the modern states of EGYPT, LIBYA, TUNISIA, ALGERIA, and MOROCCO, as well as the territory of WESTERN SAHARA. In ancient times the lands north of the Sahara and west

North Africa: History and Cultures



of Egypt were treated as a single unit. The Greeks called the region “Libya,” and the Arabs referred to it as “Jazirat al-Maghreb,” meaning “island of the west.” Although the geography and history of North Africa might suggest that the region developed separately from the rest of the continent, in fact its peoples have always had close contact with their neighbors south of the Sahara.

EARLY HISTORY

By about 40,000 years ago, North Africa’s first human inhabitants had developed complex stoneworking techniques. This achievement led to the spread of human settlement across the region. After these Stone Age people began to form communities, a series of long droughts occurred in the Sahara. The change in climate drove the human inhabitants north, east, and south in search of better lands. Over the next 30,000 years, the Sahara had several wet and dry cycles. During each wet phase people would form settlements, only to move on as drought made the lands barren.

Migration and Settlement. Some people migrated east until they reached the NILE RIVER. By about 6000 B.C. they had developed a culture based on fishing, which eventually grew into the great civilization of Egypt. Others traveled north to the Mediterranean coast, where they found fertile lands and learned to grow grains. Those who traveled south settled around oases in the desert or found their way to the lands beyond the desert. These southern migrations provided the foundation for what would later become the great Saharan trade routes.

By about 1000 B.C. the domestication* of crops and animals had spread throughout North Africa and ironworking technology had developed. The peoples who had settled along the Nile learned to control the river’s flooding and improved their farming techniques. The population

* **domestication** adapting or training plants or animals for human use

North Africa: History and Cultures

Desert Trading Posts

Instead of going straight across the desert, early Saharan trade routes wandered from one Berber settlement to the next. These settlements were located near natural wells that provided water for the desert-dwelling peoples and their animals. In the 600s B.C., Berbers from the Atlas Mountains and the northern Sahara traveled from one oasis to another, exchanging salt for food, copper, gold, and other items. At the end of their journey the Berbers headed for the wealthy Phoenician city of Carthage, where there was a ready market for goods from tropical Africa.

of the region increased rapidly and new forms of social organization developed. Small states arose along the Nile's fertile valley and delta. In about 3000 B.C. King Menes united the entire region—from the southernmost settlements to the Nile Delta in the north—and became Egypt's first pharaoh.

Egypt. Over the next several hundred years, Egypt expanded northward into Palestine and became the most powerful nation in the region. Farther north in what is now Turkey arose the Hittite Empire, and to the east in Mesopotamia emerged the empire of Babylon. By 2000 B.C. the southern border of Egypt had extended beyond Aswan to include the region known as NUBIA. For the next 1,000 years, Egypt was the gateway for new inventions and trade goods entering Africa from the Middle East.

Centuries of Invasions. By the 600s B.C. the Assyrian Empire (in modern Iraq) had conquered the Hittites, the Babylonians, and Egypt. Later, the Persians, who came from what is now Iran, overthrew the Assyrians. At about the same time, traders from Phoenicia in the eastern Mediterranean began sailing along the North African coast. They established settlements where they could repair and provision their ships on the way to Spain. The most important of their settlements, CARTHAGE in present-day Tunisia, grew into a major city—and eventually an empire. The Phoenicians also founded three cities in what is now Libya, around which developed the region known as Tripolitania.

The city of Carthage formed trade relationships with the nomads of North Africa's interior, such as the Sanhaja BERBERS. These nomads had a monopoly* on trade across the Sahara, exchanging salt from North Africa for food, gold, ivory, and slaves. By 600 B.C. Carthage had achieved great wealth and become an independent state.

As the demand for trade goods increased, Carthage's commercial network expanded south to the NIGER RIVER and west to settlements in what is now MAURITANIA. These trading contacts provided for the exchange of more than goods: along with salt and cloth the visitors from the north brought skills, such as ironworking, to their trade partners in the sub-Saharan* lands.

The Phoenicians, however, were not the only people to claim land on the North African coast. The Greeks had reached northeastern Libya in about 1100 B.C. They had formed alliances with indigenous* tribes and launched an unsuccessful attempt to invade Egypt. When the Greeks returned to North Africa about 500 years later, Phoenicia had already gained control of most of the coast. The only territory left unclaimed was the stretch of shore on which the Greeks had originally landed. Here they founded the town of Cyrene (in modern Libya) in about 630 B.C.

At first the Greek colonists settled into friendly relations with the local peoples, but as their numbers increased relations turned hostile. The greatest threat to peace, however, came from outside. Egypt tried, and failed, to invade the Greek territory in 570 B.C. Less than 50 years later, the Persians conquered the region. Persia held it for about 200 years, until Alexander the Great defeated Persia and claimed its North

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

North Africa: History and Cultures



The fortified complex of Chella, near Rabat, Morocco, includes an Islamic burial site from the 1300s.

African colonies. After Alexander's death in 323, his general, Ptolemy, became pharaoh of Egypt and ruled the region from the newly created capital city of ALEXANDRIA.

ROMAN RULE

The arrival of Romans in North Africa deeply influenced the region's development. As Rome grew it sought to gain land, resources, and commercial opportunities in Africa.

Relations with Local Kingdoms. Rome began by challenging Carthage for control of the North African coast. The Phoenician army rose in defense, assisted by leaders of some of the indigenous peoples ruled by Carthage, including the Numidian commander Masinissa. In 204 B.C. the Romans promised to recognize Masinissa as king of Numidia (now part of Tunisia and eastern Algeria) if he would abandon Carthage. Not a strong supporter of Carthage, he quickly switched sides. Soon afterward, a Berber leader named Bocchus struck a similar deal with the Romans and was recognized as king of Mauretania (present-day Morocco and western Algeria).



North Africa: History and Cultures

Rome destroyed Carthage in 146 B.C. and sent its own colonists to North Africa. Settling on the coast, the Romans built great plantations that were worked by slaves from nomadic groups in the Sahara. Over time resentment of the Romans grew among some of the peoples of the interior. Mauretania remained loyal, but the Numidians began raiding Roman settlements.

In 46 B.C. the Romans overthrew the Numidian monarchy and made the kingdom into a Roman province. They spent the next several decades consolidating their holdings in North Africa. Having already gained control of Egypt's Libyan province, Cyrenaica, they took over Egypt in 30 B.C.

As Roman control spread across North Africa, opposition stirred among the indigenous peoples. Even in Mauretania, where the kings continued to support Rome, independent Berber groups mounted raids against Roman estates. Over time, however, these conflicts lessened. Rome had powerful reasons for maintaining peace and order in North Africa. The farms in the region produced an abundance of grain, and the Saharan trade routes were a source of great wealth.

Trade. Trade flourished in North Africa under Roman rule. The Romans built garrisons* to protect their colonies and the trade routes. Caravans increased in size and number and trading centers—such as Leptis in Libya and Djemila in Algeria—grew rapidly. Berber groups dominated commerce across the region.

Trade brought the ivory and gold merchants of the western Sudan into contact with the Mediterranean region and with new development from the world outside of Africa. The rise of the early SUDANIC EMPIRES along the Niger River occurred in large part as a response to the rich trade in ivory, gold, slaves, and other goods. The wealth generated by this trade was so great that merchants from other regions were attracted to North Africa. Arabs from Yemen on the Arabian Peninsula established commercial centers in Africa, extending the Saharan trading network as far east and south as ZANZIBAR.

The peace and prosperity of North Africa under Roman rule allowed Christianity to spread across the region. Christian communities began to appear in the A.D. 100s, and by the 300s the new religion had reached ETHIOPIA. The movement spread down the Nile River into Nubia and provided a common faith for many of the independent peoples of the region.

In the 400s the Roman Empire came under attack from the north. The Goths and Vandals of northern Europe stormed the city of Rome and, in a series of invasions, broke the strength of the empire. What remained of Roman territory was an area that came to be known as the Byzantine Empire, based around Constantinople (modern Istanbul in Turkey). The Vandals took over Rome's colonies in North Africa, and the Romans lost their share of the Saharan trade. However, within 150 years the Byzantine Empire had regained control of Rome's former territories in Tunisia.

* garrison military post



Cyrene

Stately Greek columns and crumbling houses and temples mark the site of the ancient city of Cyrene in modern Libya. Founded by Greek immigrants in about 631 B.C., Cyrene grew into a prosperous colony with a port on the Mediterranean Sea and several outlying towns. Taken over by Egypt in 323, Cyrene became a great center of scholarship that boasted a medical school and renowned philosophers and geographers. In 96 B.C. the Romans conquered the region, known as Cyrenaica. After the fall of Rome in the A.D. 400s, Cyrene fell into decline, but the province of Cyrenaica became part of the modern state of Libya.



North Africa: History and Cultures

MUSLIM RULE

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Soon after the collapse of Roman rule, the religion of Islam* was founded. This new faith quickly gained followers and became a major cultural and political force in North Africa and the Mediterranean region.

The Rise of Islam. In 622 the prophet Muhammad rose to power in the Arabian city of Medina and founded Islam. The Muslim leaders, or caliphs, who followed him used the religion to solidify and expand their rule throughout the Middle East and into North Africa. By the mid-600s they had invaded Egypt and the territories of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania in Libya. Then they expanded their North African holdings as far west as Tunis, spreading the new faith as they went.

Arab Trade and Culture. By the early 700s the Arabs had extended their empire across North Africa and up into Spain. Waves of settlers from Arabia came to live in North Africa, strengthening Arab control of the coast and trading with the Berber merchants of the region. Once again, trade provided a means of spreading new ideas. Through Arab merchants Islam quickly expanded beyond the Sahara, as far south as the Niger River and as far west as present-day SENEGAL.

Gradually, Arabic became the language used in everyday conversation and in literature and scholarship. Many people came to know Arabic through the Qur'an, the Islamic holy scripture. The spread of Islam also brought Islamic customs and religious practices to a wide area. The Arab rulers used Islamic law, called Shari'a, to settle disputes.

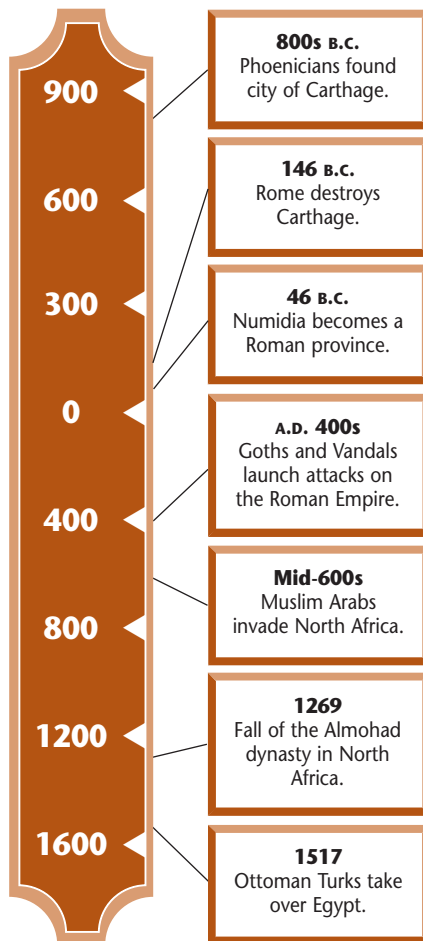
Under Arab rule, trading caravans ran more frequently and commercial networks expanded, accelerating the spread of Islam to distant regions. The Arabs relied on camels in their Saharan caravans and passed their skill in handling the animals on to the Sanhaja Berbers. The camels, superbly adapted to the desert, allowed merchants to travel more quickly and cover greater distances. New Berber groups became involved in trade and new routes opened up from Algeria south into Songhai and Mali.

Ruling Dynasties. By the late 900s the Arabs were well established in North Africa and had achieved independence from Baghdad (in modern Iraq), the political center of the Islamic world. In North Africa various powerful families worked to establish themselves as hereditary monarchs. A dynasty* called the Tulunids took over in Egypt, and the Ahglabids rose to power in Algeria. The Idrisids gained influence in northern Morocco. These dynasties controlled the coastal strip of North Africa. However, in the south, the Berbers—particularly the Sanhaja and the TUAREG—remained independent.

For the next 400 years, different forms of Islam competed for dominance in North Africa. A version of the religion called Shia Islam was practiced by the Fatimid dynasty, which claimed descent from Muhammad's daughter Fatima. Gaining influence in Egypt and Tunisia, the Fatimids attempted to spread Shia Islam to the rest of North Africa.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

North Africa: History and Cultures



* **sect** religious group

* **doctrine** set of principles or beliefs accepted by a religious or political group

The followers of Sunni Islam, the more widespread version of the religion, opposed the Fatimids.

The conflict among these different forms of Islam kept the peoples of North Africa divided until a few great dynasties consolidated them. The Almoravids, Sanhaja Berbers who practiced Sunni Islam, rose to power in the west. By the 1100s, they had united the area from Morocco to Algeria and south into Senegal, Ghana, and Songhai. They also conquered much of Muslim Spain. Even after the Almoravid movement had passed on, it left a strong legacy in northern Africa. In its wake, it left behind the Maliki school of Islamic law, which became the dominant form of Islam in the region. It remains a powerful presence in parts of Africa. The Ziriids, also Sunni, came to power in western Algeria and Tunisia. The Fatimids remained in Egypt. Two Arab, rather than Berber, dynasties also gained some influence: the Hilali in western Algeria and Tunisia, and the Sulaym in Libya.

The Almoravids were the most powerful of these North African dynasties. However, in the 1100s the Soninke of Ghana challenged the Almoravids from the south. At the same time, the Almohads, a dynasty led by Berbers from the Atlas Mountains, began to challenge the Almoravids. The Almohads took the Almoravids' Spanish provinces and their lands along the North African coast. They held the region until 1269, when three new Berber states arose, ruled by the Marinid, Hafsid, and Zayyanid dynasties.

The Berber States. The Marinid dynasty held power in the territory now called Morocco, the Hafsids ruled from western Libya (Tripolitania) to eastern Algeria and Tunisia, and the Zayyanids controlled most of western Algeria. These rulers decided not to identify their states with any single religious sect*, and they encouraged cooperation among followers of different doctrines*. In this atmosphere, Islam thrived and the major cities of North Africa became important centers for scholarship and culture.

Relations among the three Berber states were frequently strained. In the mid-1300s the Marinid sultans, Abu al-Hasan Ali and Abu Inan, launched attacks on their eastern neighbors but were forced back. Such conflicts continued throughout the 1300s and 1400s, and territory in the region traded hands several times. The Marinids tried to take advantage of this instability and gain control of the entire region. But before they could do so, armies from Europe began to invade North Africa.

Toward the end of the 1400s, the conflict between Christian Europe and Muslim North Africa intensified. The Spanish and Portuguese captured several towns, leading the peoples of the North African states to join forces to defend the coast. To defeat the Portuguese, the Sa'di family of southern Morocco organized a movement that succeeded in occupying Marrakech in 1525. Within 30 years the Sa'dis had gained control of Morocco. Meanwhile, the Ottoman Turks had taken over Egypt in 1517. Since the Ottomans were Muslim, the other North African states turned to them for support in their fight against Christian conquest. Algeria was the first to seek help from the Turks. However, Turkish assistance came at a price—Algeria had to submit to Ottoman rule.



North Africa: History and Cultures

Ottoman Takeover. Once the Ottomans had a foothold in the region, they attempted to take over the port city of Tunis, then occupied by Spanish troops. The Ottomans expelled the Spanish in 1534 but held Tunis for only a year before Spain recaptured it. Forty years later the Turks finally won the city. In 1551 Ottoman forces seized Tripoli from its Christian rulers and took Libya. Morocco remained outside the Ottoman Empire because the Sa'dis had succeeded in repelling the Christian invaders without assistance from the Turks.

North Africa's membership in the Ottoman Empire marks the beginning of the formation of its modern nation-states. Morocco remained independent of Turkish rule. Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt became provinces in the Ottoman Empire, ruled by military governors. Eventually the provinces became autonomous* states under the Ottoman sultan. These states did not become independent nations for a long time, partly because of the arrival of European powers in the region. Beginning in the 1800s, England, France, Germany, and Italy all attempted to claim territory in North Africa. The status of Western Sahara was disputed for decades and still has not been clearly determined. (*See also Animals, Domestic; Arabs in Africa; Christianity in Africa; Egypt, Ancient; History of Africa; Islam in Africa; North Africa: Geography and Population; Roman Africa; Trade.*)

* **autonomous** self-governing



Nubia

Nubia, a region along the NILE RIVER, is now divided between southern EGYPT and northern SUDAN. The region takes its name from the Nubians, a distinctive ethnic group who speak languages of the Nubian family. Although there has never been a nation called Nubia, the region has been home to a number of empires and states.

Around 2,000 years ago, Nubian-speaking people began migrating from western Sudan into the Nile Valley. They settled in the Sudanese empire of Kush, a state that maintained a capital in the city of MEROË and that had a long history of interaction with ancient Egypt. Gradually the Nubian languages replaced the old languages of Kush. By the time the empire broke up in the A.D. 300s, the people of the region spoke Nubian languages.

When Christian missionaries entered Nubia in the 500s, they found three well-established kingdoms. Nobadia was in the north on the Egyptian border; farther south was Makuria; and the southernmost kingdom was Alodia (also known as Alwa). All three Nubian kingdoms rapidly accepted Christianity, and the Nubian church became part of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt.

Less than a century after Christianity came to Nubia, Arabs conquered Egypt and introduced the Islamic* faith. After Arab forces tried and failed to conquer Nubia, the Arabs made a treaty that guaranteed peace to Nobadia and Makuria for 600 years in exchange for regular shipments of slaves. As a result of this treaty, medieval* Nubia was peaceful and prosperous. Art, architecture, and literature all reflected the strong influence of Christianity. Brightly colored paintings on

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s



Nujoma, Samuel Shafiishuna

church walls and elaborately decorated pottery were the outstanding artistic achievements of Nubian civilization.

In time, the kingdoms of Nobadia and Makuria were combined under a single ruler, but they had separate administrations. Nobadia used Egyptian money and allowed Arab traders to travel and settle down. The king ruled Makuria more directly and controlled all commerce. The united kingdoms flourished for several centuries, sending gold, ivory, slaves, ebony, and ostrich feathers to Egypt in exchange for cloth, glassware, and wine.

When a different group of Islamic rulers seized power in Egypt in 1250, Nubia began to decline. Egypt's new rulers broke the ancient treaty and launched attacks on Nubia. In the long run, mass migrations of Arab nomads proved more destructive to Nubian civilization than military attacks. Arabs from Egypt and the Arabian peninsula overran Makuria and Alwa, where Arabic gradually replaced the Nubian languages. Although Christianity survived for a while in a small kingdom called Dotawo, it had disappeared by the late 1600s. After the end of the fifteenth century, information about Dotawo is primarily based on archaeological evidence, as the historical record for the region vanishes for several centuries. Archaeologists have determined that after lower Nubia was taken over by the Ottoman Empire near the end of the seventeenth century, all traces of Christianity and the Nubian church disappeared. The people of the region converted to Islam, though they continued to speak Nubian rather than Arabic.

Today there are about 1.2 million speakers of Nubian living in Egypt and Sudan. The name Nubia now applies only to the region they traditionally occupied, from Aswan south to Ed Debba in Sudan. The building of the Aswan High Dam in the 1960s flooded much of Nubia, requiring some inhabitants to be resettled in distant parts of Egypt and Sudan. (*See also Egypt, Ancient; Copts.*)

Nujoma, Samuel Shafiishuna

1929–
President of Namibia

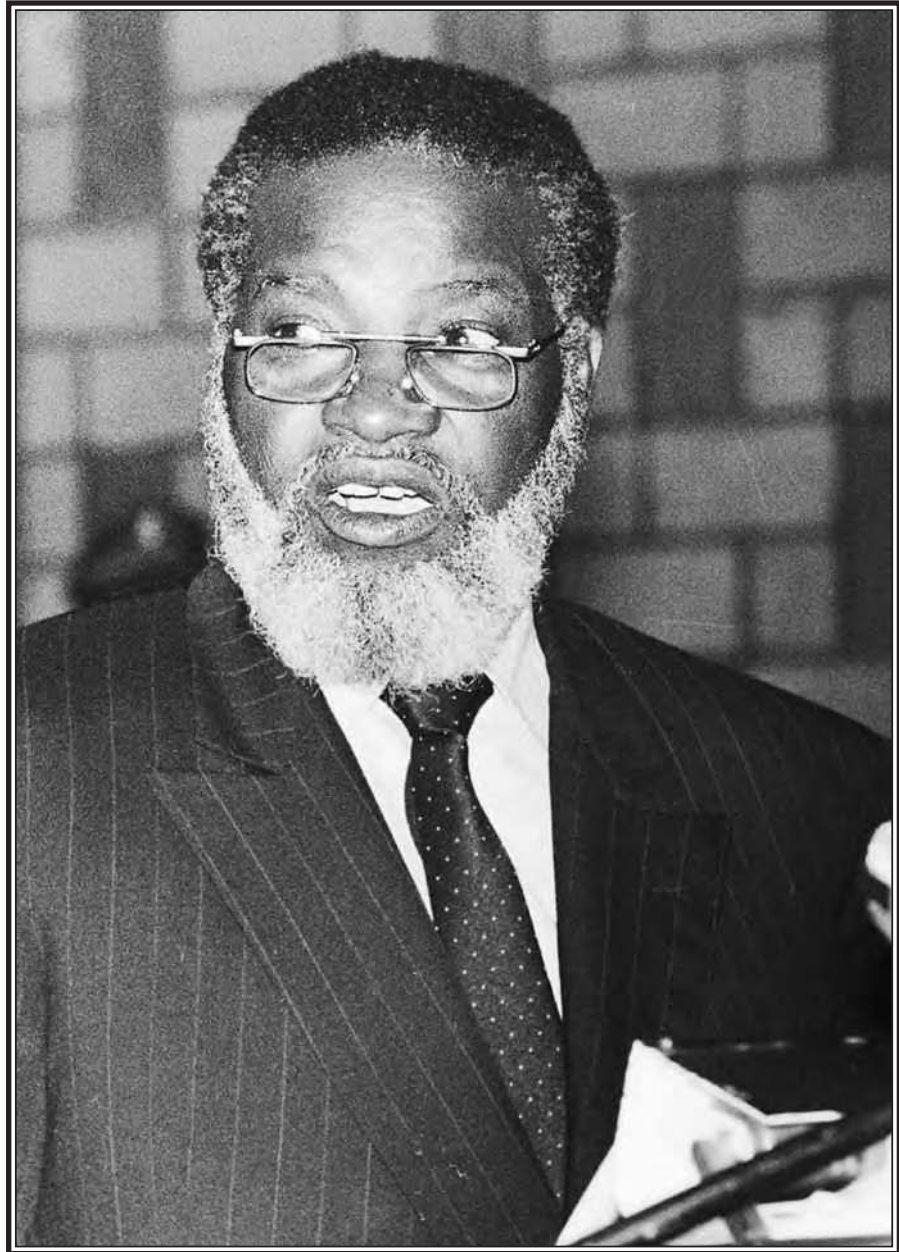
* League of Nations organization founded to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

Sam Nujoma was a political organizer in colonial NAMIBIA (then known as South West Africa), who became the country's first president. As a young man, Nujoma worked for the railway but was fired from his job for attempting to organize a union. In 1958 he founded and became president of the Ovamboland People's Organization. His goal was to end an arrangement of the League of Nations* that placed Namibia under the control of South Africa. Forced to flee the country in 1960 because of his political activities, he formed the South West African Peoples Organization (SWAPO).

Nujoma returned to Namibia but was deported. He then established SWAPO headquarters in TANZANIA. Under his leadership, SWAPO waged an armed struggle against South African rule. After nearly 30 years of fighting, his country won its freedom and took the name Namibia. In 1990, Nujoma was elected president of Namibia and was reelected again in 1994 and 1998. World leaders have praised Nujoma for his steady rule and commitment to democracy. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements.*)

Nujoma, Samuel Shafiishuna

The first president of Namibia, Sam Nujoma has won respect abroad for his commitment to democratic rule.



Number Systems

The peoples of Africa employ a wide variety of systems for counting objects or representing numbers. Many of these are verbal systems, others involve gestures, and some use pictures or other counting devices.

Verbal number systems use words to express quantities. Most are founded on the numerical bases of 5, 10, and 20. For example, the Makhwa of MOZAMBIQUE use five (*thanu*) and ten (*nloko*) as bases. Their expression for six is “*thanu na moza*,” or “five plus one.” To describe 20, they say “*miloko mili*,” or “ten times two.” Some verbal number systems also use subtraction to form number expressions.



Nyerere, Julius Kambarage

Many African groups traditionally use gestures to count and describe numbers. The Yao of MALAWI and Mozambique represent the numbers one through four by pointing with the thumb of the right hand at extended fingers on the left hand. Making a fist with the left hand indicates the number five. Raising the fingers of both hands and joining the hands together is the signal for ten.

Visual number systems employ devices such as knotted strings or sticks. For example, Makonde women of TANZANIA and Mozambique tie a knot in a string at each full moon to keep track of how many months it will be until they give birth. The FULANI herders of Nigeria place sticks in front of their houses to indicate how many cattle they own. A “V” indicates 100 animals, an “X” symbolizes 50, and an “I” indicates single animals. In front of one particularly wealthy household the following arrangement of sticks was found—VVVVVVXII, indicating that the owner of the house had 652 cows.

Nwapa, Flora

1931–1993
Nigerian writer

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country



One of Africa’s leading female authors, Flora Nwapa used her work to promote the role of women in society. She was the first black African woman to have a novel published, and she founded Tana Press in 1977 to bring the works of African women to the public.

Born at Oguta in eastern Nigeria, Nwapa was educated in the cities of Lagos and Ibadan and at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. She later worked as a teacher and college administrator in Nigeria. After the war in which the southeastern region of Nigeria tried to secede* from the rest of the country, she served on the East Central State Executive Council. One of her works, *Never Again*, was a memoir of the war.

Nwapa’s first novel, *Efuru*, tells the story of an IGBO woman who rises to prominence in her society as a trader and priestess. The novel reflects the author’s view that African women can only achieve social independence through financial independence. The author of four novels, several collections of short stories, and many books for children, Nwapa was honored with many awards during her lifetime. (See also **Literature, Publishing**.)

Nyerere, Julius Kambarage

1922–1999
President of Tanzania



Julius Nyerere led the fight to end British rule in Tanganyika (now TANZANIA) and served as the country’s president from 1962 to 1979. He also played a key role in Africa’s struggle for freedom and social justice, and African independence movements found refuge in his country.

The son of a chief, Nyerere was educated in Uganda and worked as a teacher before attending Edinburgh University in Scotland. Graduating in 1952 with a master’s degree in history and economics, he returned to Tanganyika to teach. Nyerere soon became active in politics, and in 1954 he founded the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU). Calling for social equality and racial harmony, he became a leading figure in Tanganyikan politics.



Nyerere, Julius Kambarage

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Tanganyika gained its independence in 1961 with Nyerere as prime minister. When the country became the United Republic of Tanzania three years later, Nyerere was elected its president. Establishing one-party rule, he followed a policy of socialism* and self-reliance called *ujamaa*. However, his program failed to develop agriculture and industry, and Tanzania's dependence on outside aid increased. Within Africa, Nyerere was a founder of the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY and a supporter of the fight against apartheid* in South Africa. After resigning as president of Tanzania in 1979, he worked as a political writer and commentator. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements**.)

Obote, Milton

1924–
President of Uganda

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **regime** current political system or rule

Milton Obote sought to end British colonial rule in East Africa and twice served as president of UGANDA. Expelled from Makerere University in Uganda for political activity, he moved to KENYA where he joined a number of African political groups. When he returned to Uganda several years later, he was elected to the newly formed Legislative Council. In that position he frequently criticized British colonial policy.

In 1959 Obote formed his own political party, the Uganda People's Congress. Three years later he was elected prime minister of the colony. When Uganda won its independence later that year, Obote continued as prime minister with King MUTESA II of Buganda as the country's president.

In 1966 Obote seized control of Uganda and forced Mutesa into exile. Obote suspended the constitution, declared himself executive president, and nationalized* many foreign businesses. During this time, he worked closely with army officer Idi AMIN DADA, who helped him to expand the government's power. Within a few years, however, Obote began to distrust Amin and placed him under house arrest.

In 1971 Amin led a military coup* that overthrew Obote. Amin took over the presidency and established a ruthless regime*, killing his enemies and opponents in the government. Seven years later forces from TANZANIA defeated the Ugandan army, toppling Amin's government. Obote, who was living in Tanzania, returned to Uganda and was elected president the following year.

Obote had no more success in his second term as president. After Amin's terror-filled reign, Uganda's economy was in ruins and law and order had broken down. Obote faced a restless population, a disgruntled army, and a rebellion led by his 1980 political opponent Yoweri MUSEVENI. In 1985 another military coup toppled Obote, who fled to ZAMBIA. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**.)

OLDUVAI GORGE

See *Humans, Early; Leakey Family*.

Olympio, Sylvanus Epiphanio

1902–1963
President of Togo

- * **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government
- * **authoritarian** relating to strong leadership with unrestricted powers

The first president of Togo, Sylvanus Olympio was also the first leader of an independent African country to be overthrown by a military coup*. Olympio was born into a wealthy family and studied in Europe before embarking on a career with a multinational company operating in Togo. He rose high in the company but was exiled from Togo for political activity prior to World War II. He returned after the war, when France allowed elections in its African colonies.

Togo achieved independence in 1960, and Olympio was elected president the following year. However, his authoritarian* style of rule, strict budget-cutting measures, and continued ties with France made him unpopular. Furthermore, the northern Togolese held few posts in his government and resented the exclusion. His refusal to expand the army and increase its pay finally led to the coup that toppled and killed him in 1963.

Oral Tradition

Every society passes information about its history, myths, and customs along to new generations. In many African societies such material has been transmitted orally, through the spoken word. This method of passing along literature and history is oral tradition.

African oral tradition involves both the material that is spoken—the oral art—and the setting in which it is spoken. Although very old, oral tradition remains alive and meaningful for many Africans. Performers and audiences have adapted oral tradition, adding new content and making use of new communications tools.

Oral Art and Its Uses. Among the many varieties of oral art are songs, chanted recitations, poems, and PROVERBS AND RIDDLES. Dramas, epics*, and other stories about the real or imaginary past are also important.

Oral art is more than simply telling or repeating something—it is a carefully crafted performance. Artists use a variety of stylistic devices to highlight certain aspects of the stories they tell and the songs they sing. These stylistic devices are also memory aids. One device of this sort is the repetition of key phrases or sentences, such as a hero’s features or virtues. Another is onomatopoeia, the use of words that sound like what they represent, such as the noises made by animals or by the wind.

Songs and dramas may be accompanied by musical instruments. The music is more than a background and can add to the meaning of the spoken text. For example, a performer reciting the epic of SUNDJATA, a legendary medieval* warrior king of the Mali Empire, might play a harp. At key points in the story the performer may suddenly change rhythm and play a pattern associated with Sundjata. This honors the hero and flatters those people in the audience who consider themselves his descendants.

Skilled oral artists appeal to the audience’s eyes as well as its ears, using body movements, gestures, and objects to illustrate or emphasize important points in the story. Performers also incorporate DANCE to add visual and dramatic impact to their recitals.

- * **epic** long poem or story about legendary or historical heroes, written in a grand style

- * **medieval** relating to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s



Oral Tradition

Oral art forms serve many purposes. Performances can amuse or educate an audience, either at formal gatherings, such as official celebrations, or at informal gatherings of family and friends. Some take place during religious ceremonies. Songs and recitations are often used to increase the reputation of particular individuals or groups.

Performers and Patrons. Men and women with extraordinary memories and public-speaking talents are well suited to become oral artists. Their skills earn them great respect, especially if they also possess musical abilities. While many are known only within their local communities, a few individuals acquire far-reaching fame as artists.

See
color plate 4,
vol. 1.

Some societies do not regard oral artistry as a distinct profession, and artists in these communities do not earn a living by performing. In other groups, however, oral artists are recognized as professionals who specialize in communication. Whether or not they are members of a professional group, oral artists need a long period of training. They must memorize vast amounts of material, learn to use appropriate performance techniques, and perhaps practice playing an instrument. A young artist may learn these skills from a recognized master, working for the master in return.

In the past, many oral historians and artists were supported by royal, noble, or wealthy patrons. In exchange for food, housing, and protection, the artists defended their patrons' interests and promoted their honor and fame. At important public events in the royal court of RWANDA, oral performers would praise their patron families' legendary pasts or current achievements. Retelling a ruling family's history in public could help a king maintain his leadership. Griots, as storytellers are called in the SAHEL of western Africa, performed this function in the royal courts of the SUDANIC EMPIRES OF WESTERN AFRICA. Among the XHOSA and ZULU of southern Africa, a performer called an *imbongi* specialized in glorifying the ruler.

Some oral artists still perform on behalf of families or individuals. However, social and political changes have altered the old relationships, and artists can no longer count on support from patrons. Print publications, radio, television, and other media now compete with storytellers as shapers of public opinion. Yet oral artists can change with the times. In the cities of GUINEA, SENEGAL, GAMBIA, and MALI, some griots now broadcast their songs on television and radio. Cassette tapes of their performances reach even remote rural areas. By blending new technology with ancient oral tradition, some of these artists have gained an international reputation. (See also **Literature, Music and Song, Mythology, Popular Culture, Writing Systems.**)

ORANGE FREE STATE

See *South Africa*.



Organization of African Unity

Organization of African Unity

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) is an organization founded to promote harmony between African governments. It seeks to coordinate and increase cooperation among African nations, to defend their independence, and to eliminate all forms of colonialism from Africa. The OAU also promotes international cooperation in keeping with the charter of the UNITED NATIONS and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The OAU grew out of the Pan-African movements of the early to mid-1900s, such as those led by Marcus GARVEY and Kwame NKRUMAH. These groups promoted African unity in the struggle against domination by European colonial powers. In 1963 the leaders of the 32 independent African nations that existed at that time met in ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia, for the Conference of Independent African States. On May 25 they signed the charter that created the OAU.

In articles II and III of the charter, the members agree to promote unity and solidarity, cooperate to create better lives for African people, defend their borders and independence, wipe out all forms of colonialism in Africa, and promote international cooperation, especially with regards to the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In addition, OAU member states also agreed to coordinate their policies in a number of fields. These included politics and diplomacy; economics, including transportation and communications; education and cultural affairs; health, sanitation, and nutrition; and defense and security. The states also pledged to recognize the equality of member states, to avoid interfering in members' internal affairs, and to seek a peaceful settlement to disputes. They stated that they would condemn assassination or other subversive activities, strive for the independence of all African states, and stay free from other political associations.

* **mediator** go-between

The OAU has had several notable successes. Serving as a mediator*, it helped resolve disputes in the 1960s between ALGERIA and MOROCCO and between SOMALIA and its neighbors ETHIOPIA and KENYA. The OAU sparked the creation of the African Development Bank, which finds investors and financing from around the world to help pay for African development projects. It has established several helpful commissions, including one that works to place and educate refugees within Africa and another that promotes HUMAN RIGHTS throughout the continent. In 1991 the OAU created the African Economic Community to coordinate economic policies between member states.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Despite its achievements, the OAU has had little impact on some of the greatest problems facing Africa. It has failed to prevent or end most of the continent's wars and has rarely condemned military coups*, unconstitutional rule, or conflict between ethnic groups within member states. In a speech marking the OAU's 35th anniversary in 1998, Secretary General Salim Ahmed Salim acknowledged the organization's shortcomings. He called on member nations to rededicate themselves "to the elimination of poverty, misery and blood-shed" and challenged them to turn "declarations and blueprints into concrete programs and activities." In 2000, the OAU adopted a resolution banning from the organization leaders who came to power by corrupt and undemocratic means. (See also **Global Politics and Africa, Nationalism.**)

Osei Tutu

Osei Tutu

ca. 1636–1717
Asante king

Osei Tutu, the first king of the ASANTE people of western Africa, united the people in campaigns of military conquest and expansion. In about 1685 Osei Tutu succeeded his uncle as ruler of Kumasi, one of many Asante states. He continued the wars of expansion that his uncle had begun and brought the various Asante territories together against common foes (1699–1701). This military union provided the framework of Asante unity. Osei Tutu made Kumasi the capital of a growing Asante kingdom, which under his successors included most of present-day GHANA and eastern IVORY COAST.

As *asantehene*, or king, Osei Tutu introduced several institutions that endure today. One is the Golden Stool, the supreme shrine of the Asante people and a symbol of their spiritual and political identity. Another is *odwira*, an annual festival that brings together all Asante. Osei Tutu also established a set of laws that the Asante regard as the basis of their nation. (See also **Festivals and Carnivals, Kings and Kingship, Laws and Legal Systems.**)

OUSMANE, SEMBÈNE

See *Sembène Ousmane*.

Paton, Alan

1903–1988
South African writer

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Alan Paton was a white South African novelist and a dedicated political activist. Through his writing and his political efforts, he protested against racial injustice and apartheid*.

Born and educated in Pietermaritzburg in the Natal province of South Africa, Paton worked as a schoolteacher. Then he served as the head of a reform school for African boys, where he tried to improve conditions for the students. In 1948 he published his first book, *Cry, the Beloved Country*, a novel about a black minister whose son is convicted of killing a white man. It enjoyed international acclaim and made readers around the world aware of South Africa's struggle with race relations.

Encouraged by his success, Paton left the reform school and devoted himself full-time to writing and fighting racism. In 1953, he helped found the anti-apartheid Liberal Party of South Africa and served as its national president. From 1960 to 1970, the government took away his passport to punish him for expressing his opposition to apartheid. His works of fiction include *Too Late the Phalarope* (1953), *Tales from a Troubled Land* (1961), and *Ah, But Your Land Is Beautiful* (1981). Paton also wrote essays, biographies, and a two-volume autobiography.

Peasantry and Land Settlement

* **urbanization** referring to the growth of towns and cities

In Africa, despite increasing urbanization* a majority of the population can still be classified as peasants. Peasants are people such as farmers and livestock herders who make their living off the land, generally using only manual labor and nonmechanized technology. Africa's climate and the poor quality of much of its soil have long presented challenges to peasants. These factors have shaped the livelihoods of peasants and the ways in which they interact with each other. Along

Peasantry and Land Settlement

with Africa's colonial history, they have also profoundly affected land settlement and land use patterns on the continent.

PEASANT FARMERS AND HERDERS

Most African peasants fall into two broad groups: agriculturalists who make their living from farming and pastoralists who herd livestock. In many areas of Africa these two groups have traditionally lived in close contact with one another, sometimes sharing the same land during parts of the year. The groups also share common values and traditions. Agriculturalists generally have a strong sense of membership in a community, often with deep roots in a particular geographic location.

Peasant Livelihoods. In Africa, peasant farming communities traditionally have been concentrated in regions that have fertile soil and ample rainfall. Households in these communities produce a variety of crops for their own use, and perhaps grow a surplus for market. They often raise a few animals as well, particularly sheep, goats, and chickens.

Although peasant farmers use manual labor and only simple technology, they have devised various agricultural practices—such as rotating

Peasant farmers in Tanzania prepare the soil before planting crops.





Peasantry and Land Settlement

crops and cultivating several crops in the same field—that have enabled them to take advantage of climatic conditions, variations in soil quality, landscape, and water availability. Men, women, and children all play important roles in farming activities, often with different responsibilities based on gender.

Bordering the more fertile areas of Africa are marginal lands that are drier and have less vegetation. Few crops can grow in such regions, but the shrubs and grasses can support the livestock grazing of pastoralists for much of the year. As grazing exhausts vegetation in one area, pastoralists move their herds to new pastures. When they reach areas cultivated by peasant farmers, the pastoralists often graze their herds on crop stubble left in the fields after harvesting. At the same time, the manure from the animals helps to fertilize the fields in which they graze.

Sometimes the timing of the herders' migrations brings animals to areas where crops have not yet been harvested from fields. This can cause conflict between the peasant farmers, who must protect their crops from the animals, and the pastoralists, who need pasture for their livestock. In general, however, the interaction between the two groups benefits both of them.

Peasant Economics. While peasants are defined by their livelihood and their relationship to the land, relatively few earn a living solely from farming and herding. Many can provide for their basic needs, but they have to acquire certain goods—such as tools, utensils, shoes, and salt—from other sources. In addition, they need cash to pay tribute* to local rulers or taxes to government officials. For this reason, African peasants have always been tied into economic systems beyond the village or pastoral group and have engaged in such activities as TRADE and CRAFTS to supplement their earnings.

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

In the past, the need to find alternate sources of income led to extensive migration among African peasants. When farming or herding failed to provide for a family's needs, male members often traveled long distances to find other work. Much of the migration for all Africans is seasonal. The peasants work their farms during the growing season, and then leave to look for other work after the crops have been harvested. This process accelerated during the colonial era as white settlers forced many Africans off the land. Landless peasants had little choice but to seek employment in towns or on white-owned farms, plantations, and mines. Labor migration continues to be an important part of the economy in Africa, and many peasant families rely heavily on money sent by relatives working far from home.

LAND SETTLEMENT AND USE

Traditional patterns of land settlement in Africa were based on the understanding that different groups needed to share lands. However, the Europeans who colonized Africa came from societies with very different ideas about land ownership and use. The introduction of European notions about land to Africa disrupted rural economies and peasant societies, and it has had a major impact on the continent's development.



Peasantry and Land Settlement

Impact of Colonial Policies. During the colonial period, white settlers and colonial governments rejected African traditions of land use. They relied on their own ideas of private land ownership to justify taking land from Africans. The seizure of land produced a crisis for Africa's peasant farmers and pastoralists. Driven off the land, they were often forced to work as wage laborers on land they had once farmed. Others moved to towns to seek employment, finding only low-paying jobs. This led to the creation of large slums that remain a feature of urban life throughout Africa. Those who continued to farm on their own usually had to make do with the worst lands. Those farmers who were forcibly resettled by colonial governments often did not receive the money they were promised in exchange for their land, or, if the cash was received, it was never enough to provide a long-term living for the farmer who had lost his land.

European landowners and colonial governments also denied African pastoralists access to the seasonal pastures they needed. Many herders lost their livelihoods in this manner. Like peasant farmers, they had to work as wage laborers in rural or urban areas. Because of the devastating impact that Europeans had on their way of life, peasant farmers and pastoralists were often strong opponents of colonial rule.

Modern Land Settlement. After independence, African countries had to deal with the problems created by colonial land policies that drove so many Africans off the land. Different countries took different approaches. UGANDA gave small plots of land to thousands of landless peasants. KENYA consolidated many small plots of land into larger holdings. By doing this, the government hoped to make mechanized farming possible. Larger landholdings were also easier to tax.

Neither of these land reform policies proved very successful. In Uganda the division of land was unequal, with influential people receiving larger or better quality plots. Many farmers in Kenya resisted land consolidation because they could farm smaller plots more efficiently. Moreover, those who received larger holdings often did not report the transactions in order to avoid paying fees or taxes.

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **cooperative farm** large plot of land worked by many farmers

Some countries that adopted socialist* land reforms, such as TANZANIA, outlawed private landholding altogether. They resettled peasants into cooperative farms* and villages and promised to provide basic services such as water, health care, and schools. However, the villagers soon exhausted the surrounding land as well as nearby supplies of firewood and water. As a result, either they had to travel farther each day to tend crops and get supplies, or they had to split up their families to establish distant homesteads.

While some type of land reform could help African peasants, reform alone will not solve the problems they face today. For better or worse, African peasants are part of a global economy. To compete successfully they need modern tools and machinery, better roads to transport goods to market, and greater access to social services such as schooling and health care. Because governments provide many of these services, the future of African peasants is tied closely to the condition of their nation's economy. (See also **Animals, Domestic; Colonialism in Africa; Land Ownership; Livestock Grazing; Plantation Systems.**)



Peasantry and Land Settlement

Pereira, Aristides Maria

1924–
President of Cape Verde

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Aristides Maria Pereira helped transform CAPE VERDE from an island colony into a modern nation. He fought for independence and then, as president, guided the new country through its first 15 years.

Pereira was born in Boa Vista in the Cape Verde Islands off the coast of West Africa. The islands were then a colony of Portugal, and after he finished school, Pereira went to work for a Portuguese trading company. In 1956 Pereira and several others, led by Amílcar CABRAL, founded a secret movement aimed at freeing Cape Verde and the mainland colony of Guinea from Portuguese rule. Pereira played a leading role in the guerrilla* war that led to independence for GUINEA-BISSAU in 1974 and for Cape Verde in 1975.

After independence, Pereira became Cape Verde's first president. He worked to modernize the country and to create democratic institutions, including a multiparty political system introduced in 1990. The following year, the people of Cape Verde voted Pereira and his party out of office. He accepted the defeat as an expression of the democratic principles for which he and his fellow party members had fought. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Pests and Pest Control

African farmers generally face a tougher battle with pests than do farmers in temperate regions. The warm temperatures and abundant rainfall of the continent's tropical regions create an environment in which pests flourish. To make matters worse, chemical pesticides developed in Western nations are of limited use in Africa.

Insects and rodents do the most damage to African crops. Insects of all sizes consume up to 15 percent of African crops in the field, and they destroy between 10 and 50 percent more during storage, processing, and marketing. Swarms of locusts periodically descend on huge areas of land to devour the green parts of every type of plant. Termites and rats damage many stored foods. In addition, weeds and other parasitic plants harm crops as they grow by competing for food, water, and light.

The chemical pesticides used in western nations have many drawbacks in Africa. These pesticides often are not effective against species found primarily in Africa. Also, the continent's high temperatures and heavy rains reduce the long-term strength of chemical pesticides. In any event, few African farmers can afford them.

For these reasons, African farmers rely heavily on a variety of physical, biological, and cultural pest control methods. Physical pest control methods include dragging brushes or tarred paper over crops to remove or crush insects and creating metal barriers to keep termites out of storage bins. Biological methods involve the use of living organisms to fight pests. For example, a type of American wasp has been imported to combat a pest that destroys cassava, an important staple crop in Africa. Cultural pest control includes practices such as rotating crops and planting different types of crops on the same land to control the spread of insect pests and weeds. Farmers also select crop varieties that show the greatest natural resistance to pests.



Pharaohs

Several recent technological advances in pest control may help African farmers. Farmers may use packages that combine seeds with weed killers and fertilizers, or they may plant crops that are genetically engineered to be resistant to certain pests. However, since these technologies can be expensive, experts are also working to develop new practices that take advantage of indigenous* farmers' knowledge and locally available tools and materials. (See also **Agriculture, Plants: Varieties and Uses.**)

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



Pharaohs

Although today the kings of ancient Egypt are referred to as pharaohs, that term was never part of their official titles. The word *pharaoh* developed from an Egyptian phrase meaning “great house” and was first used to describe the royal palace. Around 1500 B.C. Egyptians began using the word to refer to their king, and by 730 B.C. *pharaoh* was a term of respect.

Between about 3000 and 30 B.C., Egypt was ruled by a long string of pharaohs—including one queen, Hatshepsut—from 32 different dynasties*. The basic Egyptian idea of kingship changed very little during this period. The pharaoh was not only the ruler of the Egyptian people; he was also a link between the human and the divine worlds.

The Egyptians identified their kings with the gods, especially the sun and sky gods. In their eyes, the pharaoh was a deity* who embodied sacred or magical powers. He was the source of all justice. People believed that the pharaoh maintained order in Egypt as well as a cosmic* order or balance that they called *ma'at*. On a more basic level, the pharaoh owned much of the land and property in Egypt and determined both how it would be used and who would use it. He had the last word over every aspect of life in Egypt, including the lives and deaths of each of his subjects. No one person, however, could attend to every decision involved in administering a kingdom. Pharaohs shared their authority with high-ranking assistants at court and with officials in the provinces.

The combination of divine and royal status set the pharaoh apart from all other people. Pharaohs lived out of public view. Often they married their sisters or daughters, who were also thought to be divine. Court ceremonies and religious rituals* emphasized the pharaoh's role as a god. Pictures and statues of pharaohs, especially those that showed the kings as warriors defending Egypt, often portrayed the rulers as much larger than everyone else. When a pharaoh died, priests carefully preserved the ruler's body so that he could live on as a god in the afterlife. Some pharaohs were buried in elaborate tombs that they had built for themselves in caves or pyramids.

Although the Egyptian people spoke of their pharaohs as divine, they clearly recognized the human shortcomings of their rulers. They rebelled against some pharaohs and even assassinated a few of them. Like monarchs in many times and places, the pharaohs of Egypt faced ambitious

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **deity** god or goddess

* **cosmic** large or universal in scale; having to do with the universe

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern



Pharaohs

rivals, palace plots, discontented populations, and enemies they could not overcome on the battlefield. (*See also* **Egypt, Ancient; Kings and Kingship.**)

Photography

People have been taking photographs in Africa almost since the invention of photography. Early images taken by foreign travelers reflect European views of Africa, while photos taken by Africans shed light on African ideas of beauty, identity, and art.

History. In the mid-1800s, Europeans who had mastered the complex technique of early photography documented their journeys to Africa. A member of explorer David LIVINGSTONE's 1858 expedition on the Zambezi River took some of the first photos of the African interior. Fascination with the exotic monuments of ancient Egypt drew other European photographers to the Nile River valley.

By the 1880s, photographic equipment had become more widely available and easier to use. Missionaries, colonial officials, and scientists working in Africa took photos for personal mementos, research projects, and exhibits. Some Europeans specialized in anthropological* photography designed to sort the African population into racial and cultural types or categories. Sets of these pictures entered the collections of many museums.

From the late 1800s to the mid-1960s, European colonial governments in Africa used photography to advertise the success of their administrations. The rapid growth of photojournalism and documentary photography produced a flood of images from Africa after the 1920s. European and American photographers—as well as some Africans—recorded current events and social conditions around the continent. Although some photographers worked for colonial governments, many others worked for independent publications.

Some of the first non-European photographers in Africa were Indians, who operated photo studios in eastern Africa as early as the 1860s. Africans soon entered the business, opening studios or working as traveling photographers. At first, they specialized in portraits or group pictures of members of the upper class, such as teachers, priests, and clerks.

By the 1940s photographers also were covering social and political events. At the same time, magazines in South Africa and Nigeria began publishing the work of African photojournalists. Some work from this period has gained recognition as fine art as well as a valuable record of African culture. In 1997, photos by Seydou Keïta of Mali were published and exhibited in the United States and Europe.

Cultural Role. Local beliefs and values affected the practice of photography in Africa. At first, some Africans resisted having their pictures taken. They believed their souls and shadows could be stolen through magic, and photography appeared to be a magical art. This fear quickly

* **anthropological** relating to anthropology, the study of human beings, especially their social and cultural characteristics



Plaatje, Sol

faded, however. In some cases photography replaced earlier art forms. In Ghana, for example, people began taking photographs of the dead instead of making traditional pottery images in their honor. Elsewhere, people adopted photographs for use in ancestor worship, medicine, and magic. Some traditional healers use photos to diagnose illness, and the “love magic” practiced to bring back a lost lover often features the use of photos.

Photography also gained a place in social customs. In many areas, Africans welcome visitors to their home by presenting the family photo album. As elsewhere in the world, photography in Africa has become an important part of wedding feasts and other major celebrations. In some African cultures, the quantity and quality of photographs given to guests at a wedding demonstrates the host’s standing in society. Africans also enjoy exchanging photos as reminders of events and as signs of friendship.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Style. Much of the photography in sub-Saharan* Africa shares a common style. Nearly all photographs are images of people, rather than of landscapes and other subjects. They are usually formal pictures, with the subject in the center, facing forward. A person’s entire body is usually included in the picture. Whereas Western photographers generally use techniques that emphasize depth and make the subject stand out from the background, most African photographers favor images that appear flat, with the subject blending smoothly into the background.

Studio photography is highly popular in many African countries. Studio owners provide backdrops, such as paintings of urban scenes or rooms filled with modern appliances. They also offer a wide range of props, such as royal ornaments, and items of Western and traditional clothing. African studio images are not intended to reproduce reality; they are ways of making a statement about one’s standing in the world. (*See also Art.*)

Plaatje, Sol

1876–1923
South African writer

An accomplished writer and a founder of the African National Congress, Sol Plaatje worked for political and cultural causes in SOUTH AFRICA. He was born in Boshof in what was then the Orange Free State of South Africa, one of the AFRIKANER REPUBLICS founded by Dutch colonists. He spoke the Setswana (or Tswana) language and worked for the government as an interpreter. When the South African (Boer) War broke out between the Dutch colonists and the British in 1899, Plaatje kept a record of it in a journal. Having discovered that he could write, he founded a newspaper in 1901, the first Setswana newspaper.

Plaatje’s career in journalism led to an interest in politics. In 1912 he helped organize the South African Native National Congress (SANNC), which eventually became the African National Congress (ANC). As the group’s first general secretary, he led an effort to oppose land laws that prevented Africans from owning or living in territories that the British




Plaatje, Sol

had chosen as their own. He went to London to protest the land laws to the British government, but his protests were not successful.

Plaatje remained abroad, spreading the news about South Africa's racial troubles. He stayed in England for three years, lecturing on race issues and working as a language assistant at the University of London. He spent a year in Paris, where he attended several international conferences, including the Pan-African Congress. Plaatje also traveled to the United States to meet with American publishers. He returned to South Africa in 1923.

Plaatje was passionately devoted to the preservation of the Setswana language and culture. He wrote several books on Setswana life and culture, and he translated two of William Shakespeare's plays, *Comedy of Errors* and *Romeo and Juliet*, into Setswana. His final book, a novel called *Mhudi: An Epic of South African Native Life a Hundred Years Ago*, was published in 1930.

Plantation Systems

 In Africa, plantations are large farms that specialize in one or two crops grown for export. They produce many of the continent's most important export crops such as coffee, cocoa, tea, sugarcane, tobacco, rubber, and bananas. Plantations also handle at least some processing of the crops, and typically maintain a large unskilled labor force. Nevertheless, the plantation system does not dominate African agriculture as it does in some parts of the world.

History of African Plantations. The first plantations in Africa were founded between 1500 and 1800 on islands such as CAPE VERDE, SÃO TOMÉ AND PRÍNCIPE, ZANZIBAR, MAURITIUS, and RÉUNION. Early Portuguese sugar plantations based on slave labor eventually failed because of slave rebellions and difficult farming conditions. French and Dutch plantations in SOUTH AFRICA and the Indian Ocean were more successful. They employed better technology and planted improved varieties of sugarcane. Also, after the SLAVE TRADE was abolished in the 1800s, these plantations had access to indentured labor* from Asia.

Until the early 1900s, many West African plantations were established and run by indigenous* rulers using local slave labor. They produced sugar and groundnuts as well as palm oil, which was used for making soap and lubricating machinery. As Europeans began to colonize large parts of Africa, they shut down many indigenous plantations and set up their own.

Plantation owners soon found that the cost of housing and feeding large numbers of unskilled laborers made plantations less profitable than small farms producing the same crops. To help planters stay in business, colonial governments gave them low-cost land grants and forced the local population to work on the plantations. They also gave planters a monopoly* by preventing the sale of crops grown by other farmers. These state-supported plantations often produced most of a colony's exports.

* **indentured labor** form of labor in which a worker is bound into service for a set time to repay a debt

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business



Plants: Varieties and Uses

As African nations gained independence in the mid-1900s, many plantations were broken up and the land was given to small farmers. However, some countries continued to rely on plantations to grow many of their export crops. Governments profited from successful independent plantations by taxing their profits. Some countries placed plantations under state ownership and allowed the workers to participate in their management.

Plantations in Modern Africa. Today, the major part of Africa's crops comes from small farms rather than from plantations. Even coffee and cocoa, once grown almost exclusively on plantations, are now primarily small-farm crops. Large international firms run most of the successful plantations in Africa, including rubber plantations in LIBERIA and tobacco plantations in MALAWI, ZIMBABWE, and South Africa. Modern research and development have made these operations somewhat more efficient than earlier efforts. However, labor is still a problem. Most Africans avoid plantation work, and organizing and managing a large labor force remains costly.

The traditional plantation system is gradually being replaced by a system in which plantation owners contract with small farmers to produce crops. The farmers bring their crops to a central location for processing, marketing, and distribution. In this way, planters profit from the efficiency of processing large amounts of crops at one time, and farmers benefit from the ability to bring their crops to a wider market. In addition, advances in agricultural technologies, management methods, and communications are making it easier to produce and export crops without the use of plantations. (See also **Agriculture, Colonialism in Africa, Development, Economic and Social, Economic History, Plants: Varieties and Uses.**)

Plants: Varieties and Uses

* **domesticated** raised by humans as farm animals or pets; plants adapted for use as crops

The enormous array of plants native to Africa have always been a valuable resource for the continent's inhabitants. Africans use plants for food, medicine, fuel, paper, construction materials, and many other purposes. Some plants have been domesticated* for agriculture; others are gathered in the wild. Africans have also adopted plants from other parts of the world, and a number of African plants are now grown on other continents.

Varieties of Vegetation. The vegetation that grows in any given area is determined by natural factors such as climate, elevation, and soil type, as well as by human activities such as clearing land, gathering firewood, and grazing livestock. There are three broad categories of African plant life: forest, desert and semidesert, and a group that includes open woodlands and grasslands such as the savanna*.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

Africa's forests cover about 20 percent of its land area. They are concentrated in the lowlands of coastal West Africa, the Congo basin of central Africa, and the mountains of East Africa. The tropical rain forests



Plants: Varieties and Uses

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

contain an astonishing variety of plant species, including many large trees up to 150 feet high. The rain forest on the island nation of MADAGASCAR is somewhat drier, with smaller trees, while the continent's Indian Ocean coast has a belt of similar lowland forest, mixed with evergreen trees. Africa also has dense mangrove* forests along its tropical coastlines.

About 40 percent of Africa's land area is desert or semidesert. This includes the enormous SAHARA of North Africa and the Namib and KALAHARI Deserts in southern Africa. Vegetation in these zones consists mostly of tough, hardy bushes and grasses that require little water. These and other desert plants generally grow more readily in rocky areas than in areas of shifting sands. The Sahara has fewer plant species than most parts of the world. Some Saharan plants exist mostly beneath the surface, with wide-spreading root systems and only small parts exposed above ground.

Africa's semidesert zones gradually merge into grassy savanna or bushland, an area with mixed shrubs and thorny bushes. Some 40 percent of Africa is covered by grasslands, bushlands, and dry open woodlands, which have a thin covering of drought-resistant trees. The coastal areas of North Africa and South Africa—which have a Mediterranean climate with dry summers and mild rainy winters—contain woodland vegetation. Although these areas do not have dense forests, they contain some palm trees and hardy, low-growing species of oak, cedar, and juniper trees. A special type of grassland occurs along the NILE, NIGER, and ZAMBEZI RIVERS. Called *sudd*, which means “barrier,” along the Nile, it contains a thick growth of reeds and water plants that can interfere with river traffic.

Lentils

Lentils are the flat seeds of a plant that produces a leafy stalk. In Ethiopia, they are cooked with onions, garlic, and spices to make a pungent stew. To prepare Ethiopian Red Lentils, soak 1/2 pound red lentils in cold water for 30 minutes. Rinse and drain. Peel and finely chop 1 onion. Sauté the onion in 1/4 cup oil until golden. Add 1 1/2 tablespoons tomato paste and 1/4 teaspoon paprika and stir. Add 2 cloves mashed garlic, 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger, 1/4 teaspoon pepper, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1 1/2 cups water. Stir the mixture well, cover, and heat until boiling. Then add the lentils and cook on low for 20–30 minutes, until the lentils become soft.

Food Plants. People who live in Africa's tropical forests and woodlands gather and eat various wild fruits, though these are not major items in their diets except in times of food shortage. Instead, Africans cultivate a wide range of domesticated food plants. Food plants native to Africa fall into four main groups, each associated with a particular climate or environment.

The most widespread of these is the savanna food group, which consists of plants adapted to grassland and woodland environments. The key savanna crops are cereal grains, including sorghum, pearl millet, and rice. Sorghum, the most important of these, covers more ground than any other African food plant. Also in the savanna food group are watermelons, earth peas, black benne seeds (sesame seeds), and African tomatoes.

The forest margin group of plants includes the oil palm, the yam, a grain called Guinea millet, the kola nut, beans, potatoes, and peas. The third main group, the Ethiopian group, consists of plants native to Ethiopia in the eastern highlands of Africa. Among the plants in this group are coffee; *teff*, a cereal grain; *noog*, an edible oil plant; and a banana-like plant called *enset*. The last food plant group, the Mediterranean, includes date palms, grain barley, lentils, and olive and fig trees.



Deforestation, caused by fires or by cutting down stands of trees, changes the growing environment for plants. It increases the amount of heat and light reaching the ground and can lead to soil erosion.

Other Plant Uses. Africa's plants have many other uses in addition to providing food. Thousands of years ago the ancient Egyptians perfected the art of making paper from the stems of papyrus, a plant that forms part of the *sudd* vegetation. Esparto grass, which grows on North African grasslands, is used in papermaking today and is exported by TUNISIA and ALGERIA.

Wood is Africa's primary source of energy, either as firewood or as charcoal, a fuel made of partially charred wood. City dwellers generally buy fuelwood or charcoal at markets, but rural people gather their own. Women are the main collectors and users of fuelwood for household purposes, favoring small pieces of dry, fallen wood that are easy to gather and carry. Men generally collect larger quantities and bigger pieces of wood needed for projects such as smoking fish and firing bricks. Fuelwood also provides energy for industries, such as tobacco curing in MALAWI. The demand for fuelwood is a leading cause of deforestation* in parts of Africa.

* **deforestation** removal of a forest as a result of human activities



Plants: Varieties and Uses

Africans have traditionally built houses and other structures from plant materials. Construction usually requires many wooden poles of different sizes, bark-fiber ropes for tying them together, and grass for covering the roofs and sides of structures. Woodlands and forests are an important source of timber for construction. However, in places where forest resources have been overused, the large posts of durable wood needed as major support pieces in buildings have become scarce or even unavailable.

Wood is also the principal material for homemade or locally produced household items such as plates and bowls; for tools such as ax handles, bows, and arrows; and for CRAFTS such as wood carving. Certain trees are favored for particular uses—light, flexible woods for making bows and strong, split-resistant woods for ax and hoe handles. Other tree products include dyes, gums, oils, and chemicals useful in tanning leather. New leaves on trees and bushes are a welcome source of food for both domestic livestock and wild grazing animals during the dry season, and farmers and gardeners gather fallen leaves to use as fertilizer.

In addition to their practical uses, plants play a role in many African spiritual and cultural traditions. Groves of trees used as burial sites, for example, are often the settings for traditional religious ceremonies. The roots, leaves, and bark of many species of plants are key elements in traditional medicines, and many of the plants used are thought to have magical or religious properties. People in rural areas without formal health care facilities are especially dependent on plant medicines.

Many Africans know how to select and prepare plant remedies for common ailments such as coughs, headaches, sores, and diarrhea. For more serious complaints they may consult traditional healers or herbalists—specialists in the use of plant medicines. Although the disappearance of woodlands is making medicinal plants harder to find, an informal trade in these plants exists among collectors and herbalists in different African countries. (*See also Deserts and Drought, Ecosystems, Food and Drink, Forests and Forestry, Healing and Medicine, Hunting and Gathering.*)

POETRY

See *Literature*.

POLITICAL SYSTEMS

See *Government and Political Systems*.

Popular Culture

Popular culture includes all forms of social and personal expression that are widely available and highly visible. Related to the world of ordinary middle-class, working-class, and poor people, this “mass culture” differs significantly from the more formal “high” culture of



Popular Culture

privileged and well-educated people. Often mass produced and current, popular culture includes forms of music, theater, and the other arts. It incorporates elements of everyday life such as hair and clothing styles, jokes, advertising images and slogans. Even “sidewalk radio”—an African practice of passing along rumors, gossip, and news in conversation, usually after reading the pages spread out on sidewalks by newspaper vendors—belongs to popular culture.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

African popular culture is an ever-shifting mix of indigenous* and foreign elements. Some Western influences, such as European languages and clothing styles, stem from the colonial period. Other international elements, such as kung fu movies, reflect the development of a global popular culture communicated through magazines, television shows, films, CDs, and videos from abroad.

African popular culture reflects local or regional traditions as well. It may carry meanings related to current events, politics, or the sense of identity of those who produce and consume it. An example is the *chiluba*, a jacket made from secondhand imported Western clothing that was worn in Zambia in the 1990s. The name of the garment came from Frederick Chiluba, Zambia’s first democratically elected president, who wore such jackets. The name and the jacket together symbolize a new freedom, a new style of government, and Zambia’s entry into the international marketplace.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country’s blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

South Africa. The history of popular culture in SOUTH AFRICA reveals the creative energy of black peoples who continually found new ways to respond to apartheid*, poverty, and oppressive* social conditions. Between the 1920s and the 1950s, urban black popular culture in the region produced local jazz clubs, dance competitions, and gospel churches. That culture was nearly destroyed in the 1960s, when government apartheid policies forced blacks to move from cities and suburbs to distant townships consisting of rows of cheap, similar brick houses. Despite limited resources, residents of the black townships created new forms of popular culture that helped their homes and communities bloom amid the barren surroundings.

* **oppressive** referring to unjust or cruel exercise of authority

Drawing upon African American popular music and culture for inspiration, black South Africans asserted their identity in their popular culture. During the 1950s, a handful of magazines published political articles. By 1963 the government had banned these magazines. Some writers fled the country; others fell silent. During the 1970s, however, writers found a new outlet—poetry that encouraged black pride and identity. After a time, the government outlawed the publication of new collections of black poetry, but in the 1980s artists turned to oral poetry and drama to express themselves. Performed without written texts and presented in a mixture of English and African languages, these works challenged apartheid and supported the struggles of workers and the poor. Out of this tradition came South African musicals such as *Sarafina!*, which addressed serious social problems yet offered song, dance, and the appeal of popular entertainment.

By the 1990s, black South Africans had achieved some of their political goals, and the energy of their struggle for liberation found a new

Popular Culture

Effects of “Sidewalk Radio”

The gossip of the rumor mill known as sidewalk radio can have serious effects. For example, in 1990 in what is now Congo (Kinshasa), “sidewalk radio” spread rumors that a new currency note featuring the image of a gorilla incorporated satanic symbols. These symbols supposedly linked the forces of evil to the nation’s president and other prominent individuals. Many people refused even to touch the currency for fear of being contaminated. The picture of the gorilla also led to anger. The Congolese word for monkey was a common racial insult in colonial times, and many people thought that the image of the gorilla was a way of calling the people uncivilized savages.

focus in a youth popular culture oriented toward performance and the media. “Culture clubs” and youth clubs sprang up in black urban communities throughout the country, offering entertainment as well as educational programs and job training to the young people of the townships.

Central and Eastern Africa. In eastern and central Africa, popular music reflects the ability of African popular culture to blend and reshape elements borrowed from many sources. Pop music in the region includes an Arab style of singing called *taarab*, reggae sounds from the Caribbean, rhythms called *benga* from rural KENYA, and other influences. Many songwriters focus on love, marriage, betrayal, life, and death, but their words often incorporate political and social commentary as well.

The blend of foreign sources in the region’s popular culture can be seen in the American, Indian, British, and Chinese movies, videos, CDs, books, and television shows available in all major cities. The influence of Western culture is particularly strong, especially in film. This has led to an interest in developing a local film industry. Images from Western popular culture also appear almost everywhere within the region.

African authorities have recognized that popular culture can be an effective means of communicating a message. In TANZANIA, UGANDA, Kenya, and ZIMBABWE, the ruling parties have used popular theater performances as a way to promote economic and social policies. Private groups in Uganda have also turned to popular culture to spread health information. However, authorities have sometimes interfered. In 1977 the government of Kenya disbanded a theater group that had been working with laborers and peasants to revive an adult education center. The government saw this project as a threat to established authority, which led to the arrest and exile of one of the group’s members, NGUGI WA THIONG’O.

Throughout eastern and central Africa, popular novels offer stories that are easy to read, emotional rather than intellectual, and intended primarily to entertain rather than to educate. Published in English and a variety of African languages, this popular fiction draws on two influences: the Western novel and traditional storytelling. Many of the novels deal with the difficulties of human relationships and the struggle to survive and succeed in a modern urban society. Some African writers have adapted Western fiction genres*, such as romance and mystery novels, to African settings and culture. For example, Aubrey Kalitera of MALAWI has written stories of dramatic and often ill-fated romances in Malawian settings, using local names and landscapes rather than exotic foreign ones. Also popular are crime novels dealing with African concerns, such as ivory smuggling. Kenyan popular novelist Meja Mwangi has explored issues such as crime and punishment and ethnic and racial tensions in urban areas.

Western Africa. Some aspects of popular culture draw on traditional forms of expression that have not been greatly affected by Western influence. The masquerade—masked ceremonies or drama—has long

* **genre** type of literary or artistic work

Popular Culture

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

been associated with social and religious rituals* in western Africa. However, masquerades can also provide entertainment and offer ordinary citizens a way to express their views. At events such as the *okumpka* masquerades of southern Nigeria, people can make fun of or criticize chiefs, elders, and local politicians through masks, costumes, dancing, and songs.

During the colonial period, new forms of popular culture emerged in the urban areas of western Africa. Some of the most distinctive of these forms were musical. Highlife, a style of music born in Ghana in the 1920s, became popular and spread across much of the region in the decades that followed. Using a wide range of instruments, highlife musicians drew upon Western styles such as jazz and swing music as well as traditional African rhythms and songs. With the introduction of electric amplification in the 1940s, highlife became the dominant form of popular music in the region. Highlife songs often offered the male view of the changing customs and social patterns in the region's fast-growing cities, especially of the changes in GENDER ROLES of urban men and women.

By the 1970s new regional forms of popular music, such as the *juju* music of the YORUBA peoples of southwestern Nigeria, began replacing highlife music. Another important development in the 1970s was the introduction of the cassette recorder, which allowed musicians to record and sell their own music and brought them greater recognition. At the same time, many musicians in the region began returning to their African musical roots. Most did not abandon Western instruments and equipment—instead, they combined African and Western traditions. Singers began performing and recording in local languages and dialects. As in other parts of Africa, popular music in western Africa sometimes carried a political message and could get the singer in trouble. In 1984 Nigerian musician Fela Anikulapo-Kuti was jailed for 20 months because his Afro-beat songs repeatedly criticized the government.

Local traditions are often incorporated into African popular music and performance. Here the group Heshoo Beshoo performs in Cape Town, South Africa.





Popular Culture

The 1990s brought a surge of interest in griot artists, who belong to a centuries-old tradition of storytelling and singing. In MALI and SENEGAL, griot music is now strongly associated with national identity. Some of the most successful singers have been women called *djely mouso*—praise singers who recount the origins and achievements of noble families. In recent years some of these artists have recorded with orchestras and achieved great success, inspiring other women to become musicians.

North Africa. While influenced by Western culture to some extent, popular culture in North Africa is largely shaped by the customs and laws of Islam, the region's dominant religion. For example, Islamic law bans the creation of images of people or animals, and this has affected the development of painting, poster-making, and other art. North Africa's popular culture is also deeply influenced by Arab traditions. Pop music in North Africa is generally sung in Arabic and incorporates many elements of traditional Arabic songs. Islam and Arab culture are also strongly reflected in much of the region's popular literature, filmmaking, and theater.

North Africa has produced its own styles of pop music. One of the best known is Algerian *rai*, a style of music that uses Western equipment such as drum machines and synthesizers. Portable cassette players helped spread *rai*, which is associated with urban youth, the celebration of pleasure (including drinking alcohol, which is forbidden to Muslims), and a rebellious attitude toward authority. That rebelliousness is not just a pose. Several music producers and singers have been killed for violating traditional Islamic customs. In North Africa and elsewhere on the continent, popular culture is intended to entertain, but it often makes a powerful personal or social statement as well. (See also **Art, Body Adornment and Clothing, Cinema, Dance, Festivals and Carnivals, Islam in Africa, Literature, Masks and Masquerades, Music and Song, Oral Tradition, Photography, Proverbs and Riddles, Publishing, Radio and Television, Sports and Recreation, Theater.**)

Population

Africa's population is growing at a faster rate than that of any other region of the world. According to the International Data Base of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the estimated population of the continent in 2001 was 823.2 million people. The same organization projects that by the year 2050 Africa will have 1.8 billion people—perhaps 20 percent of the world's population.

Information about population figures and trends is of vital importance in determining how to use resources and plan for the future. Demographers, the researchers who study population data, are interested in more than just the number of people living in a particular country or region. They also want information about the age and gender of the population, the number of children born to each woman, and the number of deaths each year. These factors help them predict how the



Population

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

population will change in the coming years. For a number of reasons, population data is less certain for Africa, especially sub-Saharan* Africa, than for any other major world region. Demographers know, however, that sub-Saharan Africa has the world's highest birth, death, and population growth rates.

Gathering Population Data. No reliable information about Africa's overall population existed before the 1900s. Colonial officials in British-administered colonies such as EGYPT and SIERRA LEONE did begin taking censuses—systematic counts of the population—in the late 1800s, and by the mid-1900s other colonial administrations were carrying out censuses as well. The concept of counting people and keeping records was new to Africans, and census takers had to devise methods that people could easily use. Some of the early solutions were creative, such as having villages send gourds containing a bean for each man, a nut for each woman, and a stone for each child who lived in the village.

Beginning in the 1950s, censuses took on new importance for development planning. They also had a role in the independence movement because officials often used census data to prepare lists of voters. The new censuses were more reliable than earlier ones, partly because of the greater number of educated Africans, especially schoolteachers, who could serve as census takers. The UNITED NATIONS became involved in 1971 with the establishment of the African Census Program, which has held at least one census in every African nation.

Despite improvements in census taking, problems remain. Many Africans have been reluctant to provide information, generally because they fear being identified for tax purposes. Counters have sometimes inflated the numbers for some groups because of ethnic or political rivalries or because the distribution of promised resources is based on population counts.

Recording people's ages is another problem. In many African cultures, people do not reckon their age in years. Instead, they consider themselves part of an age-set, a group of individuals who are about the same age. Demographers cannot obtain more precise information from official records because no African nation has a completely effective system for recording the births and deaths of all citizens.

Current Information and Trends. The rapid rate of Africa's population growth is due to two main factors. One is mortality—the number of deaths in a given time or place. Africa's mortality rate has fallen for the past 100 years. In general, this means that more people are living longer, although mortality rates are uneven across the continent. A person born in sub-Saharan Africa today can expect to live an average of 49 years, while in North Africa the life expectancy is 68 years. Infant mortality—the number of infants who die in the first year of life—is also higher in sub-Saharan Africa than in North Africa.

The second factor is the birth or fertility rate, based on the average number of children a woman bears in her lifetime. Like the mortality rate, the fertility rate varies across Africa. North Africa's fertility rate has fallen somewhat to an average of four children per woman, while in sub-

See color
plate 14,
vol. 3.

Population

Saharan Africa the fertility rate has remained fairly steady at nearly six-children per woman, the highest in the world. Reasons for North Africa's birthrate decline include greater ease of divorce, marriage at later ages, and increased educational and job opportunities for women. Demographers expect that as such trends become stronger in sub-Saharan Africa, the birthrate will fall there also.

Overall, Africa's is an extremely young population. In most of the continent, more than 40 percent of the population is under 15 years of age. This high percentage of children and young adolescents means that even if each young woman bears fewer children than her mother or grandmother did, Africa's population will keep growing at a high rate for some time. (*See also Age and Aging, AIDS, Diseases, Health Care, Hunger and Famine, Warfare.*)

PORTS

See Transportation.

PORTUGUESE COLONIES

See Colonialism in Africa.

PREHISTORIC AFRICA

See Archaeology and Prehistory.

Prempeh, Agyeman

ca. 1871–1931
Asante king

* **confederacy** alliance or league of peoples or states

* **Anglican** of the Church of England

Agyeman Prempeh was king of the ASANTE (Ashanti), a people who once controlled much of present-day GHANA and IVORY COAST. Prempeh took power in 1888 after defeating rivals for the Asante throne. As king of a confederacy* of Asante chiefdoms, he tried to unite his people by ending fighting in the central region and conquering rebels in the north.

In addition to internal problems, Prempeh faced outside threats. For some years the British had been trying to weaken the Asante by supporting their enemies and interfering with their laws. In 1896 a British force invaded Kumasi, the Asante's capital city. The invaders banished Prempeh to SIERRA LEONE and then to the SEYCHELLES Islands.

During his years in exile, Prempeh learned English and joined the Anglican* Church. Meanwhile, the Asante confederacy had become a British colony. In 1924 the British allowed Prempeh to return to his homeland as a citizen. Taking advantage of the former king's influence with his people, they made him ruler of Kumasi state. Between 1926

Prophetic Movements

and his death, Prempeh reorganized the laws and politics of Kumasi. He also helped pave the way for the return of the Asante confederacy, which was reestablished in 1935. (See also **Akan Region, Colonialism in Africa.**)

PRETORIA

See *South Africa*.

Prophetic Movements

- * **indigenous** native to a certain place
- * **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad
- * **sect** religious group

- * **seer** one who can predict the future
- * **diviner** person who predicts the future or explains the causes of misfortune
- * **medium** person called upon to communicate with the spirit world

Prophets and prophetic movements have flourished in Africa since the mid-1800s. Prophets—religious leaders with messages about divine judgment or moral law who often make predictions about the future—usually arise in groups facing major social upheaval. By addressing such crises and offering radical solutions, they tend to inspire followers who respond with fervor to their message.

Prophetic movements in Africa have drawn from indigenous*, Christian, and Islamic* traditions. Many emerged in response to the dramatic changes that followed European colonization of the continent. Most of these movements were short-lived, lasting only until the resolution of the particular crisis at hand. Others, however, took root and continued to thrive long after the situations that inspired them had ended. Some have even grown into mainstream religious sects* with many thousands of followers.

ROOTS OF AFRICAN PROPHECY

African societies have long included individuals who claimed to have the ability to communicate with sources responsible for good and bad fortune. Seers*, diviners*, spirit mediums*, or dream interpreters have played a role in virtually every indigenous belief system in Africa. However, there are significant differences between such religious figures and prophets. These differences relate both to the nature of the person's vision and the sources of his or her ideas and symbols.

Magicians, Healers, and Prophets. The KONGO people of west-central Africa make a useful distinction between the *nganga* (magician or healer) and the *ngunza* (prophet). Both employ mystical power from the dead to benefit the living. However, the *nganga* does so for private or personal ends, while the *ngunza* does so for the public good.

The *nganga* are traditional religious figures who establish contact with the spirit world through dreams, trances, or possession. Called on for help in dealing with sickness, crop failure, or everyday problems, the *nganga* serve mainly to identify the source of a problem and recommend an action to overcome it. The *nganga* rarely offer new remedies. Instead, they explain how to use old, traditional remedies more effectively.

The *ngunza*, on the other hand, deals with extraordinary crises that affect the group as a whole. Sometimes a traditional African society

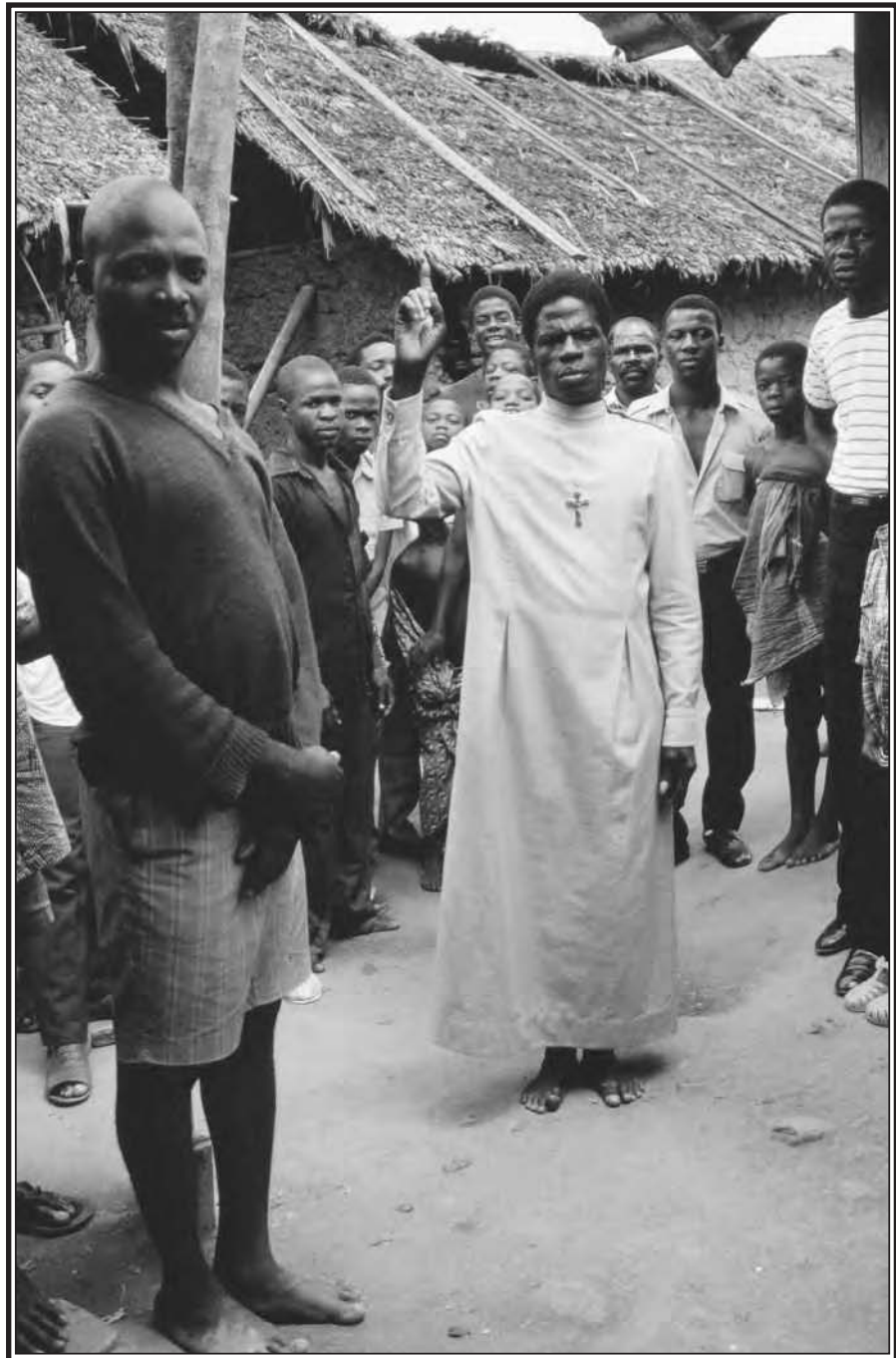
Prophetic Movements

* **fetish** object believed to have magical powers

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

reaches a point at which social ills or other problems seem overwhelming. The members of the community interpret the crisis to mean that the charms or fetishes* that protected them from evil powers have lost their power. This is usually the moment when a prophet arises to destroy old fetishes and reveal new ones, to establish new shrines and rituals*, or to bring about a new religious order.

The *ngunza* promotes new solutions to problems, rather than relying



Many African prophets have been inspired by Christian beliefs. Here, a prophet visits a village in Ivory Coast to teach the local people about Christianity.



Prophetic Movements

on old ones. Such solutions typically involve reforming society, as old ideas are rejected and replaced by new ones. At some point, however, the new order will also lose its effectiveness and a new prophet will arise to overturn society once again.

Before the colonial period, the process of social reformation led by African prophets usually occurred within limits set by the existing culture. However, the unique circumstances and profound changes brought by European colonization led African prophets to promote much more radical changes in society.

The Influence of World Religions. While based on indigenous religious beliefs and practices, most African prophetic movements have drawn heavily on ideas and symbols from Islam and Christianity. One idea found in both of these religions is millennialism—the belief that the world will be destroyed and re-created anew, bringing about a thousand-year period of peace and justice.

Millennialism blended well with the African prophetic tradition of reforming society through the elimination of witchcraft or evil. Its impact was greatest when applied to the “evils” of colonialism. Millennialist ideas inspired prophets such as UTHMAN DAN FODIO, who led a Muslim jihad, or holy war, against French forces in West Africa.

Christianity has been an important source of inspiration for many African prophets. The Bible offers numerous examples of prophets who predicted the fall of the old, corrupt social order and told people what to do to bring in a new one. Many of the missionary groups that came to Africa also incorporated millennialist ideas in their teaching. Christian practices such as mass baptisms and the rejection of traditional charms and idols echoed prophets’ calls for social purification and a new beginning, and African prophets adopted many of these ideas.

PROPHETS AND PROPHETIC CHURCHES

The European conquest of Africa was a sign to many Africans that the old fetishes and gods had lost their power. Throughout the continent, prophets preached the need to abandon the old sources of spiritual power and seek renewal through new means.

Major Prophets and Movements. A number of well-known African prophets and prophetic movements emerged during the years of European colonialism. Among the earliest prophets were William Wadé Harris of LIBERIA and Garrick Sokari BRAIDE of NIGERIA. Both men joined and then broke away from missionary churches to preach against witchcraft and old fetishes.

In the Belgian Congo (present-day CONGO, KINSHASA), SIMON KIMBANGU also spoke out against the evils of witchcraft and called on his followers to destroy ritual objects. Although Kimbangu’s message was not political, Belgian authorities considered him a threat and imprisoned him in 1921. Although his movement—Kimbanguism—was banned, it took root and led to the establishment of a church that later played a major role in the country’s religious life. It also inspired Congolese nationalism* and the movement for independence.

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one’s country



Prophetic Movements

Eastern Africa saw a wave of politically inspired prophetic movements in the early 1900s. Leaders of the MAJI MAJI rebellion in Tanganyika (present-day TANZANIA) and the Yakan movement of UGANDA both claimed to receive prophetic gifts and power from magical water. Drinking the water supposedly brought back dead ancestors, made the drinker immune to bullets, and would cause invading foreigners to vanish. Both movements ended in brief and bloody uprisings that were crushed by colonial troops.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Another East African prophetic movement with political ties was the Watu wa Mungu (“People of God”), which rejected European culture and clothing. The group apparently had links to the MAU MAU uprising, an anticolonial guerrilla* movement in Kenya in the 1950s. Jomo KENYATTA, the first president of independent KENYA, was associated with the Watu wa Mungu.

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

Alice LENSHINA, a female prophet in ZAMBIA, spoke out against colonialism and instructed her followers to withdraw from all secular* activities. Lenshina established the Lumpa Church, a movement that swept through much of Zambia in the 1950s. In the months before Zambia gained its independence in 1964, Lumpa followers engaged in fierce battles with colonial forces. When the fighting ended, many Lumpa fled Zambia or were imprisoned, including Lenshina herself.

A more recent example of a prophetic movement with political goals is the Holy Spirit Movement in Uganda. Alice Auma, the movement’s leader, claimed to be a medium passing along the commands of a prophet called Lakwena. In the mid-1980s she built up a military force dedicated to cleansing the world of evil and building a society in which humans, the spirit world, and the environment would coexist in peace. Auma directed military operations against the Ugandan army until her troops were defeated in 1987. Remnants of her army continue to fight in Uganda under the name the Lord’s Resistance Army.

* **clergy** ministers, priests, or other religious officials

New Christian Churches. Many prophetic movements were founded by African followers of Christian mission churches. They left mission churches because European clergy* failed to treat blacks equally or to entrust them with responsible positions. The new African-led churches retained much of the structure and teachings of the mission churches.

Most of these prophetic movements split from Protestant churches; very few developed in areas dominated by Catholics or Muslims. Because Protestant churches preached that few people would be chosen for salvation, a steady stream of converts left the church to begin their own sects. The approach of Catholicism was different. It baptized all who entered the church and attempted to work out problems with individuals, rather than rejecting them as unworthy. Catholic Africans thus had less compelling reasons to leave the church than Protestant Africans.

Prophetic and Charismatic Churches. Another independent church movement in Africa led to the formation of prophetic churches based on prayer, healing, and prophecy. African men and women who felt the call to prophecy established a number of such churches in West



Prophetic Movements

Africa during the early 1900s. These are often called spirit churches or Aladura, a Nigerian word meaning “people of prayer.” The earliest were the Church of the Lord, the Christ Apostolic church, and the Cherubim and Seraphim church. Fast-growing prophetic churches of recent times include the Celestial Church of Christ and the Brotherhood of the Cross and Star.

Though vastly different in many ways, prophetic churches generally have little formal structure or dogma*. Authority lies entirely with their founders, whose preaching and instruction are considered divinely inspired. Worship tends to be inventive and often includes preaching based on ORAL TRADITION and the use of African music and dance. Although the churches recognize traditional Christian holy days and sacraments such as marriage, they often have their own special practices and taboos*.

The churches known as Pentacostal-Charismatic are evangelical* groups that emphasize the conversion of their members from traditional to “born again” Christianity. Services feature speaking in tongues, healing, and miracle working. The church emphasizes the role of God in providing material success and prosperity for members. Widespread throughout West Africa in particular, Pentacostal-Charismatic churches have a global outlook, with leaders maintaining contact with similar religious groups around the world.

Both charismatic and prophetic churches focus on the primary concerns of all African religious communities: healing, well-being, material success, and long life. Although both have condemned indigenous religion as “pagan,” they recognize the endurance of beliefs such as WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY. They have waged a continuing battle against indigenous religious institutions and ritual practices by burning shrines, destroying charms and fetishes, and casting out “demons” from people’s bodies.

African Independent and Zionist Churches. Frustrated by unequal treatment in white churches, a group of black Protestants in southern Africa founded several African Independent Churches (AICs). These churches followed the doctrines and organization of the white Protestant churches but were controlled entirely by blacks. AICs have grown rapidly since the early 1900s, especially in urban areas of SOUTH AFRICA. Once closely allied with nationalist movements, most have become more traditional since independence.

The prophetic movement in southern Africa also led to the establishment of Zionist churches, which arose among farm workers exploited* by white landlords. These churches have no central organization and are characterized by a wide variety of beliefs and practices. However, most of the churches seek to ease the suffering of the poor by urging them to work hard, avoid alcohol, save money, and support each other. Zionist churches also believe in prayers to the Holy Spirit to accumulate spiritual power for healing the sick.

Zionist churches are popular among women. For one thing, they admit women to the clergy and even have female bishops. Furthermore, the churches promote a hardworking, disciplined, family-oriented

* **dogma** system of established principles

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

* **evangelical** referring to Protestant groups that stress the importance of personal religious experience and the authority of the Scriptures

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of



Worldwide Appeal

Africa’s major Pentacostal-Charismatic churches operate in very similar ways to charismatic churches throughout the world. Many hold large revival meetings and open-air services. They use electronic media, such as recorded music, videos, and electronic keyboards to enliven religious meetings. Between services, the churches publish weekly and monthly literature, including prayers, selections from the Bible, and Bible reading guides. These materials are usually printed both in English and in local African languages, helping the churches attract a wide variety of followers.



Prophetic Movements

lifestyle that is often lacking in modern urban Africa and is especially appealing to women.

* **ideology** set of concepts or opinions of a person or group

The Watchtower. The movement known as “Watchtower” or “Kitawala” offers an example of the entire range of beliefs, methods, and ideologies* of African prophetic movements and independent churches. It is based on the ideas of the American Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (now known as the Jehovah’s Witnesses), which an English preacher named Joseph Booth brought to Africa in the early 1900s.

Kitawala, the African form of the movement, claimed that Christian missions deliberately withheld biblical truth and baptism from blacks. It also denounced British rule and said that the end of the world would be marked by the defeat of the British and the recapture of Africa from European control. One characteristic of the movement was its rejection of politics or allegiance to any government. During World War II, Kitawala followers were persecuted for their refusal to participate in the military.

Like other prophetic movements, Kitawala imported foreign ideas and then adapted them to the conditions in Africa. It called for a rejection of both traditional fetishes and mission-based Christianity. It replaced white male religious leaders with black African men and women. It also gave rise to many related groups, each practicing its own form of the religion with different focus and rituals. Like most of Africa’s prophetic movements and churches, the defining features of Kitawala are constant change, fresh division into new sects, and a commitment to spread its message across the continent. (*See also Chilembwe, John; Christianity in Africa; Divination and Oracles; Healing and Medicine; Independence Movements; Islam in Africa; Kimpa Vita; Missions and Missionaries; Nongqawuse; Religion and Ritual; Shembe, Isaiah; Spirit Possession; Taboo and Sin.*)

PROTESTANT CHURCHES

See *Christianity in Africa*.

Proverbs and Riddles

In most African societies, proverbs and riddles are forms of art. They are simple and elegant ways to communicate a lot of meaning in few words. Proverbs and riddles play an important role in the traditions of African speech and conversation.

African proverbs are sayings that express the shared wisdom of a culture. Based on close observation of life and nature, colored by thoughtful reflection, they are believed to express truths that no one can dispute. Many collectors and scholars of African art study proverbs, which are found in nearly all African cultures.

Proverbs are often used as a tactful and delicate way for people in close-knit African communities to comment on and correct each other’s



Publishing

behavior. Some sayings express how people in a society are supposed to behave. The Jabo people of Liberia say that “a grown-up who [imitates] children is a fool.” Other proverbs sum up an event in life. When a person is laid low by misfortune, the Zulu of southern Africa say, “The beast has fallen on its horns.”

Like proverbs, African riddles are brief and based on observations of nature. However, with riddles, the listener is expected to guess the answer to a question or the meaning of a statement. Sometimes a riddle is nothing more than a sound. “Seh!” is a riddle of the Kamba people of Kenya. Its answer is “a needle stabbed the sand,” because “seh” is the sound of the needle entering the sand. In Africa, riddles are often used as the introduction to storytelling. They catch the audience’s interest and prepare people for the meaning of the story that is to come. (*See also Oral Tradition.*)

Publishing

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Writing and LITERATURE have a long history in Africa, beginning in ancient EGYPT with the picture-writing called hieroglyphics. Publishing traces its roots to the rise of Islam* on the continent, and printed works in Arabic appeared in major cities and trading centers by the 1600s. However, it was through the work of European missionaries and colonial governments in the 1800s and 1900s that publishing became established and spread throughout Africa. Today small publishing industries exist in every African country.

Early Book Publishing in Africa. Missionaries brought printing presses to Africa as early as the mid-1700s and produced Bibles, prayer books, and hymn books in many indigenous* LANGUAGES. Because these languages lacked written forms, missionaries first had to compile vocabulary lists and grammars. Within 100 years, presses were running in NIGERIA, KENYA, and SOUTH AFRICA, and some of them still exist today. By the early 1930s, many colonial governments had set up Vernacular (in the local language) Literature Bureaus to publish reading materials for an African audience. In 1931, Algerian reformers founded the Association of Algerian Muslim Ulama to encourage Islamic culture and Arabic language in the face of French colonialism. The association ran a press that nurtured the growth of Algerian Arabic literature by publishing local poetry and fiction.

The rapid expansion of EDUCATION in Africa after World War II—especially as countries won their independence—led to a great need for textbooks. Most of these books were published abroad and did not serve the needs of African readers. Many contained material that was racist. Books written in Africa by Africans did not become widely available until the 1960s.

By the 1970s, indigenous publishers were expanding their businesses and began to challenge the dominance of foreign publishing corporations. However, economic crises in the 1980s took a severe toll as governments cut funds that supported publishing and libraries. Even where



Publishing

governments remained involved, publishing suffered from government bureaucracy, inefficiency, and censorship.

* **literacy** ability to read and write

Book Publishing Today. African book publishers today face a variety of special problems involving the size of the market. The continent's literacy* rate of less than 50 percent limits the number of people who can read or buy books. Publishers can rarely market a book widely because Africans speak a great variety of languages, none of which is common throughout the continent. One option is to write and publish in European languages that more people speak but few people favor. In addition, distributing the books is difficult because economic declines of recent years have led to unreliable electricity, poor roads, and few vehicles.

African publishers have responded to these challenges in many ways. Some have promoted inexpensive paperback novels designed to appeal to a popular audience. Some critics have attacked these books for questionable morals, but such novels have attracted many new readers who previously had little enthusiasm for books.

African publishers have also joined together in groups such as the African Publishers Network, which trains people who work in publishing. The African Books Collective works to win an international audience for African literature and to promote writing and scholarship in Africa. A major prize called the Noma Award has also encouraged the growth of the industry.

Newspapers and Periodicals. Colonial governments supported many newspapers, magazines, and journals for the benefit of European settlers. Colonial newspapers typically backed government policies and the interests of the settlers against the rights of indigenous peoples. Among the first was *Al-Mubashir*, printed in 1847 in Algeria. In other colonies, an opposition press developed to give voice to African ideas, to challenge official policies, and to promote independence. Examples of such early publications were *Muiguithania* in Kenya and *Drum* in South Africa.

After independence, many African rulers took control over the main newspapers to reduce the ability of the press to criticize their governments. However, by the 1980s pressure for more open government led to greater freedom for the African press. When MALAWI's president agreed to allow opposition political parties in 1993, the country had only two newspapers. Three years later, more than 15 publications covered Malawi's politics, economics, and social issues.

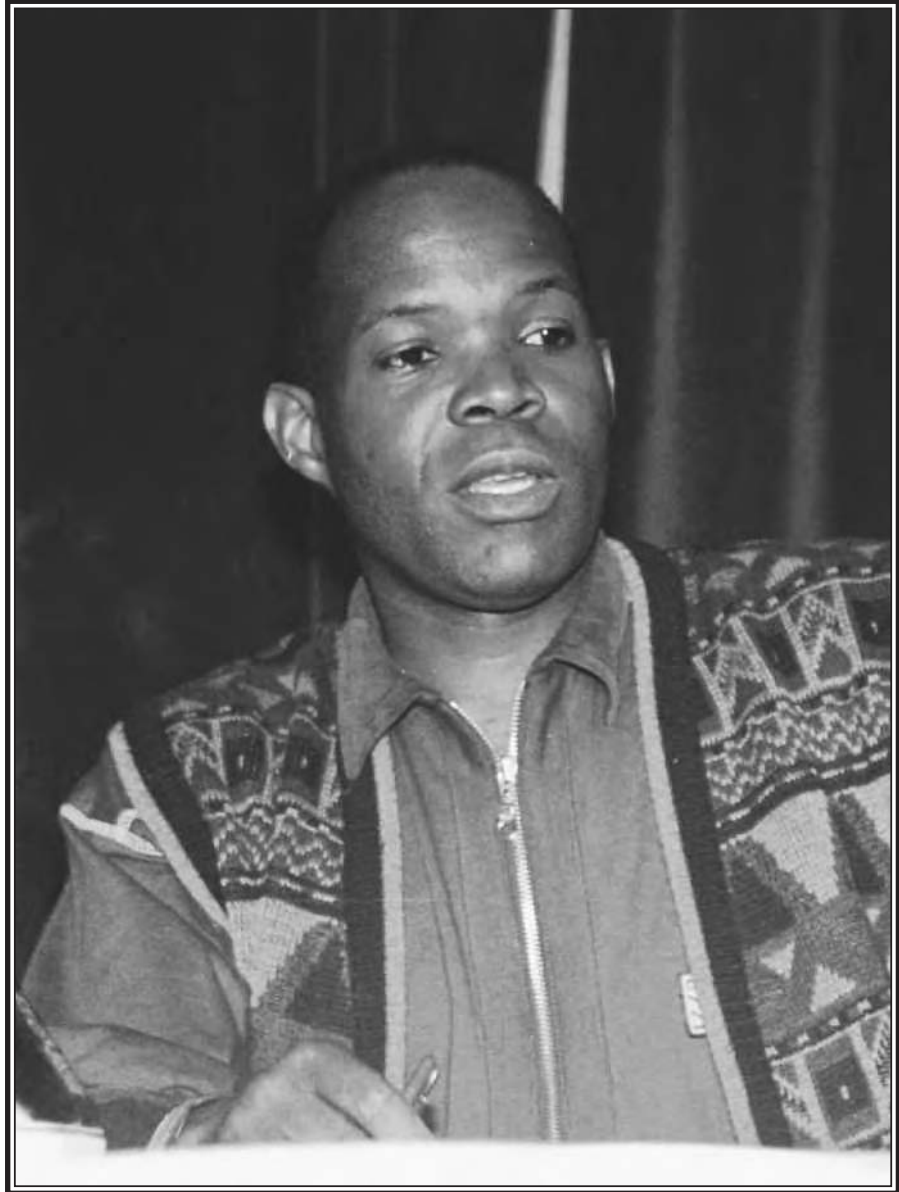
However, many states still exercise control over the media, and publishers that challenge government policies or officials often face harassment and imprisonment. So many attacks have been made against journalists and publishers in TUNISIA that the country's president, Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, has been declared one of the world's top ten enemies of the press. Nigeria and Kenya boast vigorous local presses, but the governments of those nations often shut down newspapers and magazines that criticize too harshly. Yet the publications least like-



Nigerian Bestsellers

In the mid-1940s, local writers in Onitsha, Nigeria, began producing small, inexpensive booklets called chapbooks. Some of them offered practical instruction, such as How to Succeed in Life and How to Avoid Enemies and Bad Company. Others were emotional dramas about troubled relationships—Agnes the Faithful Lover or “Innocent Grace” and Her 23 Husbands. Some Onitsha chapbooks sold hundreds of thousands of copies. Although desktop publishing and slick paperbacks have replaced the old chapbooks, many Nigerian towns still have vigorous publishing industries.

The development of a free and independent press is a continuing issue in much of Africa. Fred M'membe, editor of a Zambian newspaper, was accused by the government of publishing secret information about plans to change the nation's constitution.



ly to support government policies are often the most popular. In 1996 the circulation of Kenya's independent daily paper, *The Nation*, reached about 190,000, while that of the government-owned *Kenya Times* remained at about 6,000.

As Africa moves into the twenty-first century, illiteracy, financial difficulties, and undemocratic governments present the main challenges to developing a free and financially sound press. However, African publishers have so far shown remarkable durability and resourcefulness under difficult conditions. Those that survive could play a major role in addressing the continent's political and social problems. (See also **Christianity in Africa**, **Colonialism in Africa**, **Missions and Missionaries**.)

Pygmies

Pygmies

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

The term *Pygmies* refers to a number of peoples in central Africa who share two characteristics. Most of them are quite short, and they live by HUNTING AND GATHERING in forests. Since ancient times, both Africans and outsiders have recognized Pygmies as distinct from other people on the continent. Anthropologists* do not know whether the peoples called Pygmies are a true racial group or whether they are racially the same as their non-Pygmy neighbors. They may simply be shorter than neighboring peoples because they have lived in the forest for generations. Unlike ethnic groups, the Pygmies do not share a common language or use languages of their own. Each Pygmy group uses the languages of its non-Pygmy neighbors. The four main Pygmy groups are the Aka or BaBinga of Congo (Brazzaville), Gabon, and the Central African Republic; the Mbuti of the Ituri forest in Congo (Kinshasa); the Twa of Rwanda and Burundi; and the Gesere, who live near Lake Kivu, between Rwanda and Congo (Kinshasa).

There is no single Pygmy society or culture. These people live in small bands that do not have chiefs or other political heads. Most bands are isolated from other Pygmies and are linked to local farming peoples, with whom they trade. The Pygmies exchange forest products such as game or honey for grain, iron, and salt, and sometimes they provide hunters and soldiers to neighboring chiefs. Traditionally Pygmies have been nomads. However, in some regions, the destruction of their environment by mining, logging, and farm expansion now threatens their ability to live off the forest. In addition, some governments have policies to encourage Pygmies to settle down and become farmers.

Pyramids

Although many cultures have constructed pyramids, those of Egypt are among the most famous structures in the world. The ancient Egyptians erected huge pyramids as burial monuments for their kings, the PHARAOHS.

Around 2650 B.C. an Egyptian architect named Imhotep built the oldest known pyramid for his king, Djoser. It was the first royal tomb in Egypt to be made entirely of stone, instead of mud-brick. It consists of six layers, each smaller than the one below it, and is known as the Step Pyramid. Beneath the pyramid is a network of underground rooms and tunnels, including the king's burial chamber.

The next 500 years were the golden age of pyramid construction in Egypt, as kings and nobles ordered ever more massive or elaborate structures. Surrounding each pyramid, which contained or stood on top of the tomb, the Egyptians erected many other buildings, such as temples and smaller pyramids for family members. In some cases, a wall enclosed the entire complex, and passages and shafts ran underneath the structures. The pyramids were built of mud-brick or limestone blocks and were covered on the outside with a layer of the whitest limestone.

Of the 80 or so pyramids found in Egypt, many fell into ruin long ago. The best-preserved structures are found at Giza, Dahshur, and



Qaddafi, Muammar al-

Saqqarah, sites south of CAIRO that were close to the ancient Egyptian city of Memphis. The three large pyramids at Giza have been a major Egyptian tourist attraction since the 400s B.C., when the Greek historian Herodotus marveled at them. They were built between 2575 and 2465 B.C. for the kings Khufu, Khafre, and Menkaure. The largest, the Great Pyramid of Khufu, has been called the largest building ever constructed. It measures 756 feet on each side and was 481 feet high when it was new. It is shorter today because people stripped its outer limestone blocks for use in other structures. The Great Pyramid contains about 2.3 million blocks of stone weighing almost 6 million tons. Nearby is the Great Sphinx.

The pyramids were designed to proclaim the might and power of the kings who lay buried beneath them. Unfortunately, they called too much attention to the royal burial sites. Beginning in ancient times, robbers looted nearly all the tombs, carrying off the goods and treasures that were buried with the royal and noble dead. Eventually, the kings of Egypt stopped erecting pyramids and instead built secret royal tombs in the remote caves of the Valley of the Kings. (*See also Egypt, Ancient.*)

Qaddafi, Muammar al-

**1942–
Libyan military and political leader**

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Muammar al-Qaddafi (also spelled Khadafy or Gadhafi) has been the head of the government of LIBYA since 1969. He was born in northern Libya into a family of Bedouin, nomadic desert-dwelling Arabs. After attending a local Muslim school, he entered the Libyan Military Academy and began rising through the ranks of the Libyan army. Qaddafi became a committed nationalist*, determined to reform his country. In 1969 he and several other officers led a coup* that overthrew King Idris I. Qaddafi became commander in chief of Libya's military forces and chairman of the Revolutionary Command Council, which he established as the nation's governing body.

Qaddafi took immediate steps to transform Libya and purge it of European influences. He enforced Islamic* law and outlawed alcohol, nightclubs, and non-Muslim churches. He closed U.S. and British military bases, forced most Italian and Jewish citizens to leave the country, and seized control of foreign-owned petroleum plants. During the 1970s, income from petroleum sales supported the Libyan economy while Qaddafi experimented with economic reforms, such as abolishing retail stores and giving landlords' property to tenants.

Qaddafi tried to forge unions between Libya and other Arab nations in the Middle East, but he was unsuccessful. He bitterly criticized EGYPT for entering peace talks with Israel, and he involved Libyan forces in civil conflicts and coup attempts in Egypt, SUDAN, and CHAD. Many countries criticized Qaddafi for his support of guerrilla* movements such as the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), the Black Panthers, and the Irish Republic Army. The United States viewed him as an enemy and a sponsor of international terrorism.

In 1986, in response to the bombing of a German nightclub thought to have been carried out by Libyan agents, U.S. forces bombed Qaddafi's



Qaddafi, Muammar al-

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

residence in Tripoli. He escaped but began to make fewer public appearances. During the 1990s, Qaddafi's program of reform suffered setbacks after the Soviet Union*, which had supported his government, collapsed.

Quaque, Philip

1741–1816
Ghanaian missionary and educator

* **Anglican** of the Church of England

Philip Quaque was a missionary, an educator, and the first African to become a priest in the Church of England. Although he failed in his efforts to spread Christianity and education in the Gold Coast (present-day Ghana), his writings are a valuable source of information about the struggle for control of western Africa in the early 1800s.

As a young man, Quaque left his home at Cape Coast and went to England to study. His training was sponsored by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (known as the SPG). He became a deacon of the Anglican* Church, then a priest. When he returned to Cape Coast as a Missionary School Master in 1766, he worked for the SPG and the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, an association of British merchants involved in the SLAVE TRADE.

Quaque had mixed results in achieving his goals in Cape Coast. As a minister he practiced “fortress Christianity,” focusing on converting chiefs and other rulers rather than ordinary people. His efforts failed because the chiefs feared that their authority would be weakened by becoming Christian. Quaque had little more success as a teacher. He attracted few students and was unable to build a new school. Still, he did train some students who became teachers themselves and helped to spread education throughout the Cape Coast area.

While Quaque was trying to convert chiefs and other rulers, he watched how these leaders governed and how they responded to Europeans. His writings on what he observed have given scholars a better understanding of political relations in western Africa in the late 1700s and early 1800s and of the role Europeans played in the region. (*See also Christianity in Africa, Education, Ghana, Missions and Missionaries.*)

Queens and Queen Mothers

African monarchies have always been dominated by men. Their authority over kingdoms is patterned on the role of male heads of households and families. However, royal women have held and still hold considerable power. A few have reigned as queens in their own right, but more often the power, influence, and responsibility of royal women lies in their relationship to kings, as mothers, sisters, or wives.

Only a few cases of ruling queens are known. The Lovedu kingdom of SOUTH AFRICA switched from a king to a queen in about 1800, and all Lovedu rulers since that time have been female. Known as Rain-Queens, they have little political authority but are believed to have mystical power over rain. The Rain-Queen is symbolically both male and female. She has no husband and is not supposed to bear children. In return for rain, chiefs and nobles present her with “wives,” and she in turn gives

Queens and Queen Mothers

Queen Regent Ntombi ruled Swaziland until 1986, when her son the crown prince came of age and was crowned King Mswati III.



these wives to other nobles. The children of these unions regard the Rain-Queen as their father.

In the 1800s women took over the monarchies of the Merina and Sakalava peoples of MADAGASCAR. Europeans were gaining influence in the area, and the people of these kingdoms may have put queens rather than kings on the throne in an attempt to avoid conflict with Europeans. Among both groups, queens are referred to in language that conceals the fact that they are women. The Merina queen is called “the person who rules,” while the Sakalava queen is addressed as a male.

Although reigning queens are rare, in most African kingdoms certain female relatives of the king have important roles. They may act as

Queens and Queen Mothers

* **regent** person appointed to rule on behalf of another

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **matrilineal** tracing ancestry or descent through the mother's side of the family

regents* for kings who are too young to rule, or they may maintain courts of their own and exercise powers similar to those of senior chiefs. These women are generally the sisters or mothers of kings. Most African kings have many wives, and although the wives play significant roles, they seldom have influence over the entire kingdom. Instead, they serve as representatives at court for their various clans*.

A king's sister, on the other hand, may be regarded as a partner in rule. The Lozi people of ZAMBIA divide their kingdom into northern and southern parts, with identical capitals 25 miles apart. The southern one is ruled by a sister of the king, who has her own chiefs, advisers, and army. Her realm serves as a refuge from the king's anger.

The queen mother, who may be the king's mother or another female relative, can have similar powers. Among the Shi people of eastern CONGO (KINSHASA), the queen mother controls about half the land in the kingdom and rules until her son is old enough to take power. Among the ASANTE and other matrilineal* peoples of GHANA, queen mothers do not rule the kingdom, but they have the authority of royal men to judge issues. They are not just female chiefs—in fact, they have the same royal status as a man does, and they even dress as men and have more freedom in marriage than other women.

The Ganda kingdom of UGANDA illustrates how complex the roles of royal African women can be. Kingship is divided between the living king and the most recently deceased king. Both are addressed by the title *kabaka*, and so are the mother of the living king, his oldest sister or half sister, known as the queen sister, and his chief wife. Together, these individuals form a total kingship. (See also **Cleopatra; Gender Roles and Sexuality; Kings and Kingship; Kinship; Marriage Systems; Ranavalona, Mada; Women in Africa.**)

Radama I

ca. 1793–1828
King of Merina

Radama I became king of the Merina kingdom in MADAGASCAR in 1810. He succeeded his father, who had founded the kingdom. In 1816 Radama negotiated an agreement with the British government that provided military and administrative support to Merina. Radama went on to conquer most of Madagascar.

Under the terms of the agreement, the British supplied Radama's army with weapons and training. They also trained Merina's government officials in schools run by the London Missionary Society. In exchange, Radama banned the export of slaves from his kingdom. The ban increased his power by weakening his rivals, who had benefited from the SLAVE TRADE.

Radama's military campaigns cost the lives of many of his soldiers. As a result of the loss of large numbers of men, Merina's households were increasingly headed by women. The king's most vocal opponents were women who objected to the growing influence of European culture. In 1822 a group of women staged a revolt when the king cut his hair in a European fashion. Radama's wife, Mada RANAVALONA, who succeeded him, attempted to eliminate European influence from Madagascar.



Radio and Television

Radio and Television

Radio and television can communicate information, arouse strong emotions, and inspire action. African governments, both the European-run colonial administrations and the independent nations that followed them, have been sharply aware of the power of these broadcast media. Governments have generally owned and controlled most national broadcast stations and have used them to promote their views, often censoring programs that opposed those views. Under pressure from both inside and outside Africa, however, governments began allowing a few private stations to operate in the late 1980s. Gradually radio and television broadcasts in some areas are beginning to reflect a broader diversity of opinions.

Role of Radio and TV. Radio got an early start in Africa. The first regularly scheduled broadcasts began in SOUTH AFRICA in 1924, just four years after programming started in the United States. By 1932 EGYPT had several stations broadcasting news, music, and readings from the Qur'an, the Islamic* holy book. As colonies gained their independence as nations in the 1950s and 1960s, many established new national stations. Radio became an important way for governments to communicate with their citizens and with people beyond their borders. In Egypt, Gamal Abdel NASSER used radio as a propaganda tool, launching a powerful station called Voice of the Arabs that broadcast to other countries in the Middle East. Radio also became a teaching aid, as in the literacy* programs broadcast on many national radio stations.

Today radio remains the most influential electronic medium in Africa because radio receivers are relatively inexpensive, widely distributed, and portable. In addition, radio programming is cheaper to produce than television broadcasts. In rural areas where there are few television sets and in places with limited television service, radio is the main source of information, education, and entertainment. Television, however, is popular in urban centers, as are videotapes. People buy or rent videos of movies from the United States, Europe, India, Japan, and China. Some are legal copies; others are pirate editions made in violation of international copyright laws.

Programming. African radio and television stations broadcast dramas, news, music, talk shows, and documentaries about health, the environment, agriculture, and other topics. Many countries have used fictional but realistic dramas to educate people about social issues such as the status of women. African stations also broadcast international programming, including material from CNN, the Voice of America, and the British Broadcasting Corporation. These radio and television shows include international news as well as programs developed especially for African audiences and delivered in various indigenous* LANGUAGES. The Voice of America, for example, produces a daily 30-minute segment focusing on African news as well as events around the world that affect Africa.

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **literacy** ability to read and write

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Radio and Television



A South African family watches an evening television program. Television is popular in urban areas of Africa, but radio reaches a much broader audience.

Imported entertainment shows, such as television soap operas from the United States, Mexico, and Australia, have loyal audiences, although some critics argue that these programs' violence, sexuality, and emphasis on Western lifestyles make them inappropriate for African viewers. Ideas about how radio and television should operate in Africa often generate debate. Media critics generally agree about calling for an end to government control of the airwaves, but they may have different opinions about what audiences ought to see and hear. Some feel that the flow of programs from industrialized nations to less-developed African countries promotes Western views that are harmful to Africa.

African nations have taken steps to develop their own media industries and services. The Union of National Radio and Television Organizations of Africa (URTNA) was established in 1962. Funded in part by the UNITED NATIONS and international agencies, it promotes the exchange of television and radio programs within Africa, the training of personnel, the media coverage of African cultural and sports events, and the international marketing of African television programs. It also conducts research on the technical aspects of broadcasting and organizes seminars to improve the use of the media in national and regional development. The Television News Coordinating Centre, opened in ALGIERS in 1991, organizes television news broadcasts transmitted by satellite. (*See also Cinema, Oral Tradition, Popular Culture, Publishing, Theater.*)

RAIN FORESTS

See *Ecosystems; Forests and Forestry*.

Ranavalona, Mada

1788–1861
Queen of Madagascar

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **Malagasy** referring to the people of Madagascar

Mada Ranavalona was the wife of MADAGASCAR's King RADAMA I, who unified most of the island under the rule of the Merina clan*. When Radama died in 1828 without naming an heir, Ranavalona assumed power. She secured her position by negotiating with Merina nobles and military leaders, and by executing all potential rivals.

A fierce defender of Malagasy* traditions, Ranavalona reversed her husband's pro-Western policies. Radama had negotiated with the British to protect Madagascar from interference by other nations. He also welcomed European traders and adopted many European customs. Ranavalona terminated the agreement with Britain. She would allow foreign traders to do business only at ports controlled by Malagasy governors, where the foreigners were sometimes subjected to forced labor and ordeal by poison.

Ranavalona suppressed CHRISTIANITY because it undermined support for traditional religious practices and because it opposed slavery, an important feature of Malagasy society. In 1835 she declared it illegal for a Malagasy person to convert to Christianity. Throughout her reign, she tortured and killed many Christians and exiled missionaries.

While she added no new territory to the Merina kingdom, Ranavalona strengthened royal control over the lands conquered by Radama. She ruthlessly defended the kingdom against attacks by the British and French navies, displaying the heads of those who died in battle. In the late 1850s when she uncovered a plot to bring Madagascar under French rule, she imprisoned and killed over 1,000 of her subjects and banished all Europeans from the island. Upon her death in 1861, Ranavalona's son Prince Rakoto succeeded her, becoming Radama II.

Rawlings, Jerry

1947–
President of Ghana

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **regime** current political system or rule

Jerry Rawlings, an air force officer, ruled the nation of Ghana from 1981 to 2000. Originally named Jerry Rawlings John, he was the child of a Ghanaian mother and a Scottish father. After attending the respected Achimota Secondary School, he joined the Ghanaian air force in 1967. During his years as a fighter pilot, he became increasingly frustrated with Ghana's government, which he believed was both corrupt and ineffective.

In 1979 Rawlings led a coup* against the military regime* of I.K. Acheampong and F.W.K. Akuffo. As leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), he took over the government, promising to introduce civilian rule. However, the AFRC tried and executed Acheampong, Akuffo, and other former leaders before holding elections for a civilian government. After Hilla Limann won the presidency, the AFRC stepped down from power. Rawlings soon lost faith in Limann's administration, and in 1981 he led another military coup. Rawlings and



Rawlings, Jerry

* **privatize** to transfer from government control to private ownership

several others formed a new one-party government, the Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC). To revive Ghana's struggling economy, Rawlings launched an economic program created by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The program, which reformed tax and trade policies and privatized* many state-owned industries, is considered one of the most successful of its kind in Africa.

In 1992, in response to growing political opposition and accusations of human rights abuses, Rawlings and the PNDC again transformed Ghana's government. They adopted a new constitution that was approved by a national vote and held multiparty elections for a parliamentary government. Running as the National Democratic Congress candidate, Rawlings won the presidency and was re-elected in 1996. After serving a second four-year term, Rawlings left office as called for in the constitution. John Kufuor succeeded him as president.

Refugees

Refugees are forced migrants, people driven from their homelands by violence, fear, or other conditions that make it impossible for them to remain. Throughout the history of Africa, famine, disease, war, environmental disasters, and competition for resources have created refugees by causing people to flee from troubled areas. In the past, most refugees eventually settled in the regions to which they fled. Since the 1980s, however, African nations and international aid agencies have viewed refugees as people who will eventually be repatriated, or returned to their native countries. As a result, some displaced Africans have spent years in refugee camps originally meant to provide temporary shelter.

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

Causes of Forced Migration. In precolonial* Africa, warfare caused much migration and population resettlement. Chain reactions occurred, in which the people displaced by a conflict went on to displace other groups. For example, conflicts with the ZULU drove the NDEBELE people from southern Africa into what is now western ZIMBABWE. As they fled, the Ndebele displaced the SHONA. Tensions still exist between the Ndebele and other groups who consider themselves the original inhabitants of the land. Similar situations have occurred across Africa.

From as early as the A.D. 800s, the SLAVE TRADE was another major cause of involuntary population movements. Over the next thousand years, the trade took millions of Africans away from the continent and made others flee the operations of slave raiders and traders. Even after slavery had officially ended, competition among European powers for trade, influence, and territory in Africa continued to disrupt African communities. White colonists drove Africans off their land. They also required tax payments that forced Africans to seek wage labor, sometimes traveling great distances to work in agriculture or mining.

Beginning in the mid-1900s, Africa's European colonies became independent states. Many won their independence through wars that produced refugees. The new national boundaries corresponded to the old

Refugees

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

People forced from their homes often have to leave most of their possessions behind and live in crowded, makeshift shelters. These refugees in Congo (Kinshasa) wait at a camp near the border with Rwanda.

colonial borders that Europeans had drawn with little regard for the identities or relations of the various ETHNIC GROUPS within them. In the modern era, a number of wars have been fought over national borders. In addition, civil wars have erupted as various groups within nations have tried to secede*. All of these conflicts have produced refugees.

Racial, religious, and ethnic differences have also created refugees. Apartheid* forcibly uprooted millions of people within SOUTH AFRICA and forced thousands of others to seek safety outside the country. After the Jewish state of Israel declared its independence in 1948, EGYPT became involved in hostilities between Arab states and Israel, and thousands of Jews fled Egypt for Israel, Europe, or the Americas. Thousands of other Jews left the former French colonies of MOROCCO, TUNISIA, and ALGERIA for Israel or France.

Many of the newly independent African states forcibly drove out minority groups. UGANDA, for example, expelled 40,000 Asians in 1972 and more than 500,000 members of African minority groups in the 1980s. SIERRA LEONE expelled Ghanaians; GHANA expelled migrant workers who came from NIGERIA, NIGER, and Upper Volta (present-day BURKINA FASO); and in 1989 MAURITANIA began violently expelling its black population. During the 1990s hundreds of thousands of people belonging to the Hutu and Tutsi groups fled bloody ethnic warfare in RWANDA and BURUNDI. In SOMALIA several factors combined to drive people from their homes: a series of droughts in the 1970s and 1980s, conflicts over the border with Ethiopia, and the Somali civil war, which began in 1991.





Refugees

See color
plate 12,
vol. 1.

Treatment of Refugees. Over the centuries most African refugees settled among their hosts and every African society developed some way of absorbing the strangers. In modern Africa, however, poverty and political conflicts have undermined the ability and willingness of nations to make these involuntary migrants part of their communities.

A 1969 agreement of the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) governs the status of refugees in Africa. The agreement, which defines a refugee as someone forced to seek safety outside his or her country of origin, reflects the concerns of states seeking to control their borders and their populations. The OAU agreement forbids states to forcibly repatriate refugees, but it includes provision for voluntary repatriation. This wording has encouraged the African nations to regard refugee status as temporary.

African countries rely on international aid to feed and supply their refugee populations, which are often quite large. The office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) oversees many aid programs. Its policy is to settle refugees in camps where they can easily be counted and where food and other aid can be most conveniently distributed. To receive UNHCR aid, African states have had to discourage refugees from settling in local communities. In some cases they have used army troops to force refugees into camps.

The UNHCR's encampment policy was intended to make refugees self-sufficient. But it has not achieved this goal, and since the early 1980s the organization has increasingly promoted repatriation. A few countries, however, have rejected the policies of encampment and repatriation in favor of more traditional ways of dealing with refugees. Both Sierra Leone and GUINEA have turned down offers of international aid administered by the UNHCR. Instead, both nations have absorbed large numbers of refugees from wars in neighboring countries, incorporating the newcomers into their national economies. With millions of people on the continent coping with forced displacement, African nations and the international aid community face the challenge of finding ways to solve the problem that meet the needs of states and also respect the rights of refugees. (*See also Diaspora, African; Genocide and Violence; Human Rights; United Nations in Africa; Warfare.*)

Religion and Ritual

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Religious beliefs and rituals* play a central role in the everyday lives of most Africans. Few African societies make a rigid distinction between religious behavior and other forms of social conduct. In fact, most African languages lack a word that could be translated as “religion,” and many of the words associated with the idea have a meaning closer to “custom” or “proper behavior” than to “religion.”

The arrival in Africa of CHRISTIANITY and Islam* had a major impact on the development of African religions. Hundreds of millions of Africans now claim one of these faiths as their chosen religion, and Africa is currently the site of a dramatic growth in Christian converts. However, relatively few Africans—even those who identify themselves as Muslims or Christians—have completely abandoned traditional religious beliefs



Religion and Ritual

and practices. Most still turn to local gods for help with traditional problems or situations.

ELEMENTS OF AFRICAN RELIGIONS

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Although there are as many indigenous* religions in Africa as there are different societies, these religions share many common features and beliefs. Their beliefs deal with the relation of humans to the divine and with communication between the human world and the spirit world. African religions also share many ideas with world religions such as Judaism and Buddhism. Yet certain aspects of African faiths differ from those of most world religions.

* **deity** god or goddess

Gods and Spirits. Most African religions acknowledge the existence of a supreme deity* who created the world and then, in most cases, retired from dealing with earthly affairs. This deity is usually male and often rules with a female earth goddess or mother goddess. As in the Christian and Muslim faiths, the supreme being of African religions possesses attributes* that define him as the opposite of humans—immortal, all powerful, all knowing, and incapable of error. However, while the God of Christians and Muslims is concerned about all humans, the supreme deity of African religions generally cares only for the people of a particular society.

* **attribute** quality, property or power of a being or thing

In some African religions, the supreme deity continues to have dealings with humans after creating the world. More often this duty falls to a host of lesser spirits or mystical beings. Generally considered living aspects of the supreme deity, these spirits may hold power over humans, who are usually unaware of them. The spirits have no shape or form and cannot be detected unless they wish to be. They are often associated with a sacred site, which may serve as their dwelling place or shrine. A major distinction from one African religion to another is that each has its own unique set of spirits.



* **rite** ceremony or formal procedure

Ancestors are considered a special type of spirit in many African religions, and ancestor worship plays an important role in various rituals. Not all deceased individuals become ancestors. Individuals must be selected for the honor and then receive proper funeral rites*. The individuals chosen vary from one society to another but may include men who have fathered children and women who were the firstborn in their families. Meanwhile, Africans offer prayer and sacrifices to ancestors to protect the living and punish those who harm or are disloyal to the family groups or clans* of descendants.

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Myths. All African religions feature myths, which are stories that are used to explain the nature of society and of the universe. Myths tell about the creation of the world, ancestral origins, historical events, and heroes. Many Africans regard myths as representing basic truths, though they may be clothed in fanciful narratives. What matters is that myths help explain the past and present, resolve moral and social issues, and provide a cosmology—an account of the structure and purpose of the universe.

Religion and Ritual



Entry into many traditional African religious cults involves a ritual of initiation. The ceremony of a Bwiti cult in Cameroon, pictured here, represents a journey to the land of the dead.

Creation myths are an essential part of African religions. All share a basic pattern: a supreme deity creates the world from nothing, sacred figures appear and use magic or divine power to form society, and then humans appear and create the earthly history of a group. The creation story emphasizes the separation between humans and the divine, which is often represented by the division between the earth and the sky. This separation occurs because of the wickedness of humans, which causes them to break up into many cultures and languages and lose their divine nature.

Other common African myths deal with the relationship between humans and animals and the differences in the natures of men and women. Many of these myths serve to explain and justify the distribution of power and authority among humans and other living things.

Like the myths of other cultures, African myths help to explain the world and human society, making the world more predictable and controllable. However, the deeper meaning of the myths may be available only to individuals who have the special training or insight needed to communicate with the world of the spirits.

Evil and Witchcraft. All African religions contain notions of evil, which may take the form of sudden illness or death, unexpected failure,



Religion and Ritual

or bad dreams or visions. Believed to originate outside the individual, these forms of evil may affect the body and eventually cause it to break down and disintegrate. The occurrence of evil may be unexpected, may spring from a sense of guilt, or may be punishment for antisocial actions.

* **divination** practice that looks into the future, usually by supernatural means

Africans use divination* to explain and combat forms of evil and to identify its source—either spirits or other humans. The spirit world is usually considered the source of “predictable” misfortune, that is, punishment for misdeeds or the result of personal actions. In such cases, the evil is removed through sacrifice. Unjust or unexplained misfortune is typically blamed on humans known as witches and sorcerers*.

* **sorcerer** magician or wizard

In all African societies, WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY usually express jealousy and hatred between rivals, and it is assumed that the victim and evildoer know one another. Remedies for the problem are based on this rivalry and may include forcing the accused person to withdraw the evil or misfortune. The evildoer may be punished or even killed, especially if accused of witchcraft or sorcery on many occasions. Frequent accusations against an individual are usually a sign of a long-standing unpopularity in the group. Belief in witchcraft and sorcery occurs among urban Africans as well as among rural folk.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES AND PROHIBITIONS

Contact and communication between the living and the nonliving are at the heart of almost all African religions. Communication between humans and the spirit world can be led by human intermediaries*—such as priests, diviners, or prophets—in the form of prayer, visions, prophecies, and sacrifice. It can also be initiated by spirits through possession of humans.

* **intermediary** go-between

Sacrifice and Rituals. Sacrifice is a way to purify the community or an individual through ritual. Often performed on a regular basis, sacrifices are usually conducted to remove contamination caused by existing conditions. The most common regular sacrifices are rites of passage, which are rituals performed at important moments of transition in a person’s life.

African rites of passage usually occur at birth, marriage, and death; on initiation into SECRET SOCIETIES (often associated with reaching a certain age); and on achieving an important position such as that of king or priest. In rites of passage, the person being initiated is typically separated from the everyday world both physically and symbolically. This period of seclusion, which may be long or short, is marked by symbolic reversal of the normal order—such as wearing forbidden clothes or eating forbidden foods. It may also involve performing actions such as wild dancing or working oneself up into an ecstatic state to show closeness to the source of divine and spiritual power.

In addition to regular sacrifices, special purification sacrifices can be performed at any time to heal individuals struck down by sickness, physical or psychological harm, or moral impurity. Such sacrifices often include killing and feasting on an animal that is blessed and identified



Religion and Ritual

Animal Symbols

Animal symbolism plays an important role in African religion, appearing in both myths and rituals. In parts of central and southern Africa, the python represents the being from which the world was created. Other creatures, such as the praying mantis in the myths of the San people of southern Africa, play the role of creator as well. Among the Tabwa people of Congo (Kinshasa), the aardvark is a living symbol of the contradictions and puzzles of human existence. It was also a symbol for the ancient Egyptians, who originally pictured their god Set as an aardvark. Cats feature prominently in mythology as symbols of the seasons, of day and night, and of life and death.

* **medium** person called upon to communicate with the spirit world

with the person for whom the sacrifice is being performed. Slaughtering and cooking the animal carries away the person's sin or sickness. By eating the animal's flesh together, the community symbolically renews the communal bond that was disrupted by the pollution of the affected individual.

Possession and Divination. Communication between the living and nonliving may also occur through possession, a condition in which a spirit or ancestor takes control of a living person. Possession is seen as a mystical link between the person being possessed and the spiritual agent that takes control. When a person with no special religious status is possessed, it is seen as a sign that he or she has been chosen by the spirits and linked to their world. Individuals with professional skill or knowledge may be able to convince a spirit to possess them through dancing, hyperventilation (becoming dizzy by rapid breathing), or the use of drugs. Although either men or women may be possessed, the majority who reach this state are women. Well-known examples include the *bori* cult of northern Nigeria and the *zar* cult of northeastern Africa, in which women possessed by spirits form cult groups around the particular possessing spirits. The possessed person often does not recall the experience. As with sacrifice, one effect of possession is the purification of the victim and a change of status, such as being removed from certain family or social obligations.

Another form of communication with the spirit world is the practice of divination. Diviners, the men and women who perform divination, are believed to speak for spiritual forces. They may explain past misfortunes or foretell likely future events. Many diviners act as mediums*, communicating with spirits through possession or trance. The mediums often wear clothing or eat foods that symbolize the "wilderness" that is the source of their special knowledge. Other diviners interpret physical signs, such as animal tracks or the arrangement of items in a basket, as spiritual messages. A type of divination called oracle consultation is sometimes used to determine guilt. In consulting an oracle—usually a material object or a place thought to contain spirits—the diviner asks it to respond to a series of yes-or-no questions to reveal a person's guilt or innocence.

Religious Reform. African history is filled with the appearance of prophets who have come from outside the community to reform or reshape a society and its religion. The upheaval caused by European colonization of Africa inspired many prophets who promoted political as well as religious change, including some who led their followers into battle for independence. In recent times, prophets have drawn heavily on ideas and symbols from Islam and Christianity. Many prophets have founded new Christian churches that focus on African concerns, including healing, well-being, material success, and long life. Others have merged ideas from indigenous and foreign faiths into religious groups that are unique to Africa. (*See also Death, Mourning, and Ancestors; Divination and Oracles; Healing and Medicine; Initiation Rites; Islam in Africa; Masks and Masquerades; Mythology; Prophetic Movements; Spirit Possession; Taboo and Sin.*)



Réunion

Réunion, a small island lying about 500 miles east of MADAGASCAR, is ruled as an overseas territory of France. Along with the islands of MAURITIUS and Rodrigues, it forms a region of great natural beauty known as the Mascarene Archipelago.

Land and Peoples. Despite its small size, Réunion has a diverse geography. Three peaks of over 9,000 feet form wide valleys drained by several rivers. The southern and eastern portions of the island receive up to 300 inches of rain per year, while the north and west receive only about 25 inches. The climate is tropical in low-lying regions and much cooler and drier in the mountains. Forests cover one-third of the country.

Arriving in the early 1600s, the French were the first people to live on Réunion. Dutch, Italian, English, and African settlers soon joined them. The Europeans imported slaves from India and Africa until the practice was outlawed in the mid-1800s. Later, they brought indentured laborers* from Asia and Africa. The island's current population is mostly descended from African slaves who intermarried with other groups. Most citizens are Catholics and speak both creole* and French, the nation's official language.

History, Government, and Economy. In the 1700s the French used the island, then called Île de Bourbon, as a naval base from which to attack India. After the French Revolution, the island's name was changed to Réunion and a colonial assembly was created. However, French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte soon restored royal control of the island's government. Britain seized the island during the Anglo-French War of the early 1800s but returned it to France after Napoleon was defeated in 1814. In 1848 France abolished slavery and gave colonial subjects the right to elect deputies to the National Assembly.

Since 1946, Réunion has been an overseas territory of France with its own elected assembly. France provides welfare payments and other forms of social relief to many islanders. However, these benefits are less than those paid to French citizens in France, and islanders have sometimes protested this unequal treatment with demonstrations, strikes, and riots.

Sugarcane dominates Réunion's economy, with almost 70 percent of the arable* land dedicated to sugar cultivation. This is still true even though old laws regarding land use, aging plants, droughts, and tropical storms have greatly reduced the sugarcane output on the island. The sugarcane trade is dominated by 10 sugar estates that are controlled by roughly five large sugar companies. Smaller sugar planters used to play an active role in the economy, but the high cost of buying mechanized equipment and the rising prices charged for imported fertilizers drove out all but the largest companies. Other important crops include vanilla and various plants used in making perfumes. Declining sugar prices and high unemployment have led to widespread poverty. The government has taken steps to diversify the economy, with limited success. The tourism industry also brings revenue to Réunion, which is a popular vacation spot. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

* **indentured labor** form of labor in which a worker is bound into service for a set time to repay a debt

* **creole** language developed from a mixture of two or more languages

* **arable** suitable for producing crops



Rhodes, Cecil John

Rhodes, Cecil John

1853–1902
British colonial leader

Cecil John Rhodes rose to a position of great wealth and power in Britain's Cape Colony in southern Africa. He developed the region's diamond mines and was responsible for British expansion northward into the land that is now ZAMBIA and ZIMBABWE.

The son of a clergyman in Bishop's Stortford, England, Rhodes left home at 17 to seek his fortune in southern Africa. After a period of farming cotton in Natal, he headed for the diamond fields of Kimberley in the Cape Colony. So successful was he that by age 36 he controlled South Africa's diamond mines through his company, De Beers Consolidated Mines. He also owned many of the region's gold mines. Although Rhodes had received a limited education in his youth, he obtained a degree from Britain's prestigious Oxford University in 1881.

That same year Rhodes was elected to the Cape Colony's parliament, and from 1890 to 1896 he served as the colony's prime minister. With ambition to match his wealth, he promoted the conquest of African lands north of Cape Colony. That conquest took most of the 1890s and resulted in new British colonies called Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) in Rhodes's honor. Rhodes's political power was brought to a sudden end in 1895 by the Jameson Raid. An official appointed by Rhodes staged the disastrous attack on Transvaal, a colony ruled by Afrikaners, white settlers of Dutch origin. The embarrassing failure forced Rhodes to resign as prime minister.

Among Rhodes's many legacies were the racist legislation that took voting rights away from blacks in the Cape Colony, the introduction of scientific citrus farming to South Africa, and the Rhodes scholarship, which enables students from abroad to study at Oxford. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Southern Africa, History.*)

RHODESIA, NORTHERN

See *Zambia*.

RHODESIA, SOUTHERN

See *Zimbabwe*.

Rock Art

Many thousands of years ago, the ancestors of modern Africans created rock art—pictures on boulders, cliffs, and the walls of rock shelters. Carved rock art images are known as petroglyphs, while painted ones are pictographs. These rock pictures offer haunting glimpses of the lives of people long vanished. Some images also show an ancient environment very different from that of modern Africa.

Southern Africa. Some of the oldest rock art—often made on small, portable stones—comes from southern Africa. In a rock shelter in



Rock Art

NAMIBIA, six portable painted stones were found in a layer of deposits estimated to date from around 26,000 years ago. Stones with petroglyphs created between 4,000 and 10,000 years ago were discovered in SOUTH AFRICA. People have found similar examples of portable rock art in caves along the South African coast. Most pieces are about 2,000 years old. After that time people appear to have stopped making portable rock art, working instead on fixed rock surfaces.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

See
color plate 2,
vol. 2.

The ancient people who created most of the rock art in southern Africa probably had beliefs and rituals* similar to those of the people who inhabit the KALAHARI DESERT today. Their artwork shows people performing a dance with the same postures and gestures used in the trance dance, a central ritual of Kalahari people. Rock art also features many images of eland, a kind of antelope that the people of the Kalahari believe to be magical. These pictures establish a link between past and present cultures. They also indicate that the rock art of southern Africa was more than a pastime or even a historical record. It was an expression of religious and magical beliefs.

Eastern Africa. Most of the rock art in eastern Africa is found in central TANZANIA. The most common images are pictographs related to hunting, including realistic illustrations of wild animals such as giraffe, eland, and elephants. Painted in shades of red, the animals are sometimes running away, lying on the ground, or shown with lines drawn from their mouths, which may indicate bleeding. Human figures are also shown, sometimes dancing or holding bows. The age of this work is unknown, but it may be 20,000 years old.

More recent rock art from Tanzania consists of human and animal forms, especially giraffes and lizards, drawn in thick white paint. Some works also feature handprints, spirals, circles and rays, and other symbols. This art may have been associated with ancient rituals. Even today, certain rock art sites are used for magical or spiritual ceremonies.

Rock art in ERITREA, ETHIOPIA, and SOMALIA shows more cattle than wild animals, suggesting that the artists who created it were herders. Circles, spirals, and other geometric patterns found with these images and in western Kenya resemble designs that people of the region today use as cattle brands. The oldest cattle images may date from several thousand years ago, but some rock art around Lake Victoria and other eastern lakes is much more recent. One image shows a canoe with a type of sail that was unknown in the area until the 1800s.

See
color plate 3,
vol. 3.

Northern Africa. Northern Africa is especially rich in rock art, with more than 30,000 paintings and carvings discovered in the SAHARA DESERT alone. These pictures reveal dramatic changes in the environment and culture of the area over the past 10,000 years.

The oldest images are petroglyphs made after about 8000 B.C. Like the rock art of central Tanzania, they represent the world of the hunter. Hippopotamus, giraffe, buffalo, ostrich, elephant, and antelope are portrayed realistically—sometimes life-sized—on the rock walls of valleys. Human figures are much smaller and less realistic. They may hold axes, clubs, or bows, and they sometimes carry animal masks. All of these



Rock Art

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **pastoralist** related to or dependent on livestock herding

* **abstract** in art, referring to designs or shapes that do not represent a recognizable object or person

images reflect the Sahara when it was an immense savanna* dotted with lakes, not the desert it is today.

The first Saharan pictographs date from around 6000 B.C. and are found at Tassili n'Ajjer, a site in ALGERIA. Most of the paintings show groups of human figures with round heads that may represent ceremonial masks. They were drawn with ochre (a reddish or yellowish clay) mixed with a protein-filled liquid, such as milk or blood.

Later pictographs at Tassili n'Ajjer show the cultural changes that occurred as the Sahara region gradually became drier. As game grew scarce, pastoralist* groups replaced hunters. They painted images of humans and cattle, showing people in everyday activities, such as tending herds and talking. Details such as hairstyles and clothing are clear, and the use of different colors suggests that both light-skinned and dark-skinned people lived in this herding culture. The rock art made after 1200 B.C. contains many images of horses and chariots, introduced by newcomers to the region. More recent images from the past 2,000 years show the desert environment and feature pictures of camels.

Rock carvings have also been found in North Africa, high in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco. These petroglyphs feature abstract* and geometric designs and pictures of weapons. They appear to be the work of a Mediterranean culture that left no traces elsewhere in Africa. (*See also Archaeology and Prehistory, Art, History of Africa.*)

Roman Africa

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

For centuries North Africa was part of the ancient Roman Empire, linked to Rome by conquest, colonization, and trade. Remains of Roman glory can still be seen at numerous archaeological* sites from MAURITANIA in the west to EGYPT in the east.

Rome gained a foothold in Africa in 146 B.C., when it conquered the Phoenician colony of CARTHAGE in what is now TUNISIA. Eventually Carthage became the capital of the Roman province of Africa. West and south of Carthage lay Numidia, located in parts of present-day Algeria and Tunisia. Masinissa, a Numidian chieftain, had joined forces with Rome against Carthage in return for Roman recognition of his kingship. In 46 B.C. eastern Numidia became a Roman province called Africa Nova ("New Africa"). A separate province called Numidia was created later.

After Rome had acquired Carthage, Julius Caesar and his successor, Augustus, founded new settlements in Africa and extended Roman territory eastward to Cyrenaica (northeastern LIBYA). Roman forces also pushed south to the edge of the Sahara. In the A.D. 100s they constructed walls and ditches to mark the boundaries between Roman settlements and the nomadic peoples who roamed the desert and mountain regions to the south. By that time Egypt had also become Roman. Augustus once boasted that "[he had] added Egypt to the empire of the Roman people." In 31 B.C. his forces triumphed over those of his Roman rival Marc Antony and the Egyptian queen Cleopatra. Their defeat at the Battle of Actium paved the way for Augustus to claim Egypt as a Roman province. About 70 years later, Mauretania, west of Numidia, was divid-

See
color plate 4,
vol. 2.



Rwanda

* **annex** to take over or add a territory to an existing area

* **imperial** relating to an empire or emperor

ed into two Roman provinces. By that time, all of North Africa had been annexed* by Rome.

Roman Africa played a significant role in the affairs of the Roman Empire. Egypt served as the launching point for military expeditions into Arabia. Many men born in the African provinces served in high positions in the imperial* administration or in the Roman Senate. Septimius Severus, who became emperor of Rome in A.D. 193, came from a wealthy African family.

Africa's primary contribution to the empire, however, was food. Although Roman Africa engaged in trade and small-scale industries such as pottery-making, agriculture was the backbone of its economy. The region's principal exports were cereal grains and olive oil. As early as the first century A.D., Africa was supplying two-thirds of all grain consumed in the city of Rome. Much of the region's agricultural production came from farms owned by the thousands of retired Roman soldiers who had received land in the African provinces for their service to the empire.

A key feature of Roman Africa was the development of urban life. A few major cities, such as Carthage and ALEXANDRIA, existed before the Roman annexations. Rome established new cities and towns throughout the provinces, introducing urban culture to present-day ALGERIA and Tunisia. Wealthy citizens erected temples, theaters, and public baths in their African towns, just as wealthy people had done in Rome and in northern Roman provinces. Built of local marble and adorned with statues and colorful mosaic tiles, these structures are an enduring reminder of the time when North Africa belonged to Rome.

After the mid-400s, Roman control over the region weakened. When Arabs invaded the Roman provinces in the 600s, the struggling Byzantine Empire—all that remained of the former Roman Empire—offered little resistance. (*See also Archaeology and Prehistory; Egypt, Ancient; North Africa: History and Cultures.*)

ROMAN CATHOLIC
CHURCH

See Christianity in Africa.

Rwanda

Rwanda is a small landlocked country in East Africa whose scenic alpine landscape led early European observers to call it the "African Switzerland." In recent years Rwanda's natural beauty has been marred by a civil war that killed nearly a million people. During the conflict millions of refugees fled to the neighboring countries of BURUNDI, UGANDA, TANZANIA, and CONGO (KINSHASA).

GEOGRAPHY

Nestled in the heart of the Great Lakes region of East Africa, Rwanda consists mainly of high plateaus dominated by rolling hills and towering volcanic peaks. Many small lakes and marshy plains break up the hilly

Rwanda



landscape. Because of the country's geography, local people have long referred to Rwanda as the "land of a thousand hills."

Beautiful Lake Kivu forms Rwanda's western border with Congo. Just east of the lake lie the Virunga Mountains, with peaks rising to nearly 15,000 feet. Although the country is located near the equator, it has a fairly temperate climate because of its high elevation. At the same time, sharp differences in climate and vegetation from one part of Rwanda to another have contributed to the development of distinctive subcultures.

Rwanda suffers from an acute shortage of land, a factor that contributed to the civil war that ravaged the nation in 1994. At that time, tiny Rwanda was the most densely populated country in Africa. The shortage of arable* land led to social tension. As large numbers of rural people migrated to urban centers, the competition for jobs increased and ethnic differences grew.

* **arable** suitable for producing crops

HISTORY

The history of Rwanda has been shaped largely by the interaction between its two main ETHNIC GROUPS, the Hutu and the Tutsi. During the civil war, leaders on both sides used ethnic differences to stir up hatred between these groups. However, in many ways the causes of the war were more political and cultural than ethnic in nature.



Rwanda

Early History. Rwanda's original inhabitants were a hunting and gathering people known as the Twa, a PYGMY group. The Twa were eventually displaced by the Hutu, a BANTU farming people from West-Central Africa who migrated to the region several hundred years ago. In the 1500s or 1600s, the Tutsi, a warrior people who herded livestock, invaded Rwanda from the north.

* **assimilate** to adopt the beliefs or customs of a society

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

Partly by assimilating* the Hutu and Twa, the Tutsi conquered Rwanda and established a highly centralized and hierarchical* kingdom. Tutsi overlords forced the Hutu to become serfs—peasant workers bound to the land in a state of semibondage. Each Hutu had to choose a Tutsi lord as a protector. The protector allowed his Hutu serfs to use, but not own, cattle, which were the Tutsi's highest status symbol and source of wealth. The Tutsi dominance of Rwandan society created great resentment among the Hutu, who were far more numerous than their masters.

The Colonial Era. In 1899 Rwanda became part of the colony of German East Africa. Realizing that the country had an efficient administration run by Tutsi rulers, the Germans decided to leave the existing political structure in place. German officials ruled the colony, but they allowed Tutsi lords to control local affairs.

* **League of Nations** organization founded to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

After Germany's defeat in World War I, the League of Nations* appointed Belgium to administer Rwanda and neighboring Burundi, which together became known as Ruanda-Urundi. Like the Germans, the Belgians made use of Tutsi lords as local administrators to reduce the expense of running the colony. However, the society changed somewhat during this time. The Belgian colonial government encouraged the Hutu to grow coffee as a cash crop*, which increased Hutu economic power.

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

By the late 1950s, increasing land shortages, combined with longstanding tensions between the Hutu and the Tutsi, laid the groundwork for ethnic warfare. In 1959 the Hutu finally revolted and killed tens of thousands of Tutsi. In this atmosphere of exploding violence, Belgium decided to grant Rwanda its independence. Elections held in 1961 resulted in a landslide victory for the Hutu presidential candidate, Grégoire Kayibanda. For the first time ever, the Hutu majority ruled over their former Tutsi masters. Rwanda gained full independence the following year.

Rwanda Under the Hutu. The Hutu revolution of 1959 to 1960 forced hundreds of thousands of Tutsi into exile in neighboring countries. These REFUGEES formed the nucleus of a force that would engage in a 30-year struggle against the Hutu government of Rwanda. Meanwhile, President Kayibanda and his Hutu political allies from southern and western Rwanda worked to consolidate their power. Northern Hutu, who had been incorporated into the Tutsi monarchy during the colonial era, held little power in the Kayibanda government.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

In 1972 ethnic tensions in Rwanda heated up after the Tutsi massacre of thousands of Hutu in neighboring Burundi. Kayibanda's opponents accused him of not acting decisively against the Tutsi, and the following year a military coup* toppled his government. Major General Juvénal Habyarimana took over as president and appointed members of his

Rwanda

Poetic (In)Justice?

An epic poem written in Kinyarwanda, the language of both the Hutu and the Tutsi, is sometimes used to justify Rwanda's historical social order. In the poem, a divine ruler named Kigwa devises a test to determine which of his three sons will succeed him as king. He gives each boy a bowl of milk to guard overnight. One son, Gatwa, drinks the milk. Yahutu spills the milk while he sleeps. Only Gatutsi guards the milk as he is told. According to legend, this is the reason the Tutsi became nobles, the Hutu became their servants, and the Twa became outcasts.

family and trusted advisers to the most important political positions. Under a new constitution adopted in 1973, only a Hutu could become president.

Military rule in Rwanda ended officially in 1975, but Habyarimana and his political party, the MRND, set up a single-party system. In the 1980s conditions in the nation worsened. The price of coffee beans, Rwanda's major export, fell dramatically on the world market. Meanwhile, Rwandans became increasingly discontented with single-party rule. In 1990 Tutsi refugees based in Uganda staged an armed invasion of Rwanda.

Growing Violence. Tutsi refugees in Uganda had formed the Rwandese Alliance of National Unity (RANU). Ugandan rebel leader Yoweri MUSEVENI recruited RANU members for a force that he used to overthrow the Ugandan army in 1986. In return, Museveni gave the RANU members weapons and military equipment to use in their own invasion of Rwanda. In October 1990, some 6,000 of these Tutsi troops, part of a group called the Rwandan Patriotic Front (FPR), streamed into Rwanda and advanced to within 40 miles of Kigali, the capital city.

France, Belgium, and Zaire (present-day Congo, Kinshasa) all came to the aid of Rwandan president Habyarimana. Zaire's president MOBUTU SESE SEKO sent his presidential guard to fight the FPR, while French and Belgian paratroopers arrived in Kigali, supposedly to protect Europeans there. The FPR was stopped, but Habyarimana was forced to end his one-party rule and allow the Tutsi to share power in a democracy. However, many Hutu wanted the Tutsi excluded from the government. Violence and killings continued and then accelerated in 1993, when Tutsi army officers assassinated the Hutu president of Burundi, Melchior Ndadaye. The assassination led to a wave of ethnic violence in Burundi and forced hundreds of thousands of panic-stricken Hutu to seek refuge in Rwanda.

Civil War and Its Aftermath. In 1994 the violence between Tutsi and Hutu erupted in genocide* and civil war in Rwanda. In April 1994, a plane carrying Habyarimana and the new president of Burundi, Cyprien Ntaryamira, was shot down as it approached Kigali airport. Although Hutu rivals of Habyarimana may have been responsible, Hutu leaders blamed the incident on Tutsi rebels. A horrific bloodbath followed, with Hutu death squads killing Tutsi as well as Hutu political rivals. Over the next five months, hundreds of thousands of Tutsi men, women, and children were mercilessly slain. According to one estimate, at the peak of the violence five people per minute were murdered.

In response to the atrocities, Tutsi FPR forces launched an offensive that crushed the Rwandan military. In July they seized control of the government. Two million Hutu, fearing attacks from the FPR, fled into Zaire. The new Rwandan government consisted of a coalition of Hutu and Tutsi members, with a Hutu president and prime minister. However, the real power lay with the Tutsi commander of the FPR, Paul Kagame, and his regime* became one of the most brutal in Africa. Tutsi also controlled the nation's various districts and towns.

* **genocide** deliberate and systematic killing of a particular ethnic, religious, or national group

* **regime** current political system or rule

Rwanda

See color
plate 12,
vol. 1.

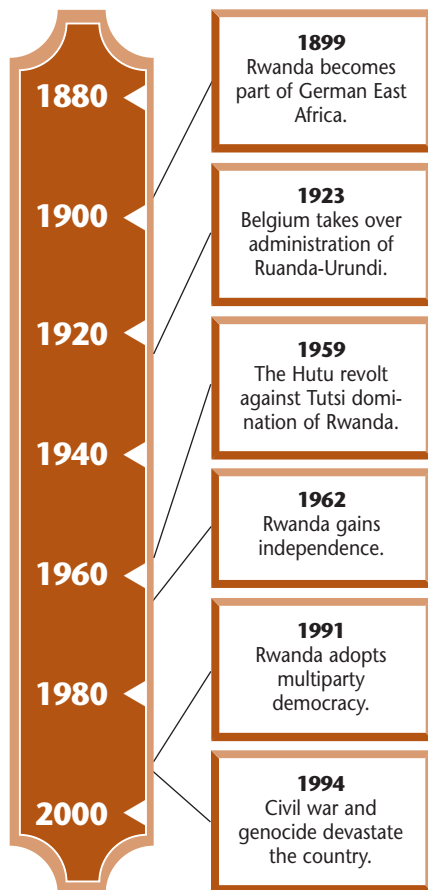
Although the fighting ended in July, violence against the Hutu continued in Rwanda. Local Tutsi leaders had little control over the actions of the military or the FPR. As a result, Hutu were often arrested for no reason and their property given to returning Tutsi refugees. Meanwhile, millions of Hutu refugees remained in exile, fearing that they would not be safe in Rwanda. In Zaire, Hutu leaders began organizing refugees and providing them with military training. When the Zairian government failed to protect the Tutsi from attacks by the Hutu forces, the FPR threw its support to various rebel leaders.

Several months after the end of the fighting in Rwanda, the United Nations established the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. Made up of three groups of judges, the tribunal was created to hear cases involving genocide and other violations of international law.



The Hutu killed hundreds of thousands of Tutsi people during Rwanda's violent civil war in 1994. After the war, millions of Hutus fled the country, fearing revenge. Although many Hutu refugees have returned to Rwanda, others are afraid to come home.

Rwanda



* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

Attempts to Unify Rwanda. Since 1994 Rwanda has been ruled by a National Unity Government composed of the FPR, the Hutu-controlled Republican Democratic Movement (MDR), and a coalition of other small political parties. In elections held in 1999, Rwandans chose the Hutu leader Pasteur Bizimungu as president and FPR's Paul Kagame as vice president.

Despite a promising start, the government soon broke apart, and President Bizimungu resigned under pressure in March 2000. The parliament then elected Kagame as president, the first Tutsi to hold that office. This election merely confirmed the fact that Kagame had been the true source of power in Rwanda since the civil war.

Although Kagame called on all refugees to return home, continued violence against the Hutu in Rwanda has led many Hutu refugees to stay in exile. Reunifying and rebuilding Rwanda will be an enormous task. The economy and judicial system are both in shambles, and the continued presence of Rwandan troops in Congo is a source of friction between the two countries. Massive foreign aid is needed to rebuild Rwanda physically. In addition, healing the wounds of civil war and ethnic hatred will take time.

ECONOMY

Rwanda's economy is heavily dependent on agriculture, with coffee and tea the most important crops. Coffee alone accounts for more than half of the country's export revenue. During the years of ethnic violence, export earnings declined by more than half, coffee revenues fell by over 70 percent, and production of tea decreased by nearly two-thirds.

The war left food production in ruins. Before the war, the Hutu formed the bulk of the farming population, but the majority of them either fled the country or were killed during the conflict. As a result, Rwanda's agricultural output was cut in half, and many fields still remain unplanted. European nations are sponsoring a massive rehabilitation program of investment in agriculture and infrastructure*. However, there is some concern that Rwanda's Tutsi-dominated government will allocate little of that money to the Hutu.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Before the civil war, the Hutu made up about 80 percent of Rwanda's population, the Tutsi accounted for about 19 percent, and the Twa made up the remaining 1 percent. Since the war, however, millions of Hutu have left the country and hundreds of thousands of Tutsi refugees have returned. As a result, the current population may be as much as one-quarter Tutsi.

The Hutu and Tutsi were once distinguished by physical appearance. The Tutsi were generally tall and slim, while the Hutu were shorter and stockier. However, intermarriage has made it difficult to determine ethnic identity by physical appearance.

Various social and cultural differences appear within the Hutu and Tutsi. For example, northern Hutu are considered a distinct group and are referred to as Kiga by southern Hutu. During the colonial era, some



Republic of Rwanda

POPULATION:

7,229,129 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

10,169 sq. mi. (26,338 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French, Kinyarwanda, English (all official); Kiswahili

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Rwanda franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Roman Catholic 65%, Traditional 25%, Protestant 9%, Muslim 1%

CITIES:

Kigali (capital), 234,500 (1993 est.); Butare, Gikongoro, Gisenyi, Bitarama, Nyanza, Ruamagana

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

70 in. (1,770 mm) in the west, 30 in. (760 mm) in the north-east and east

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$720 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, tea, pyrethrum (insecticide), bananas, sorghum, beans, potatoes, livestock
Manufacturing: agricultural products processing, light consumer goods, cigarettes, cement
Mining: tungsten, tin, cassiterite

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Belgium, 1962. Republic with the president elected by popular vote; special election for president by deputies of the National Assembly and governmental ministers held April 2000. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale de Transition (legislative body); Council of Ministers and prime minister, appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1962–1973 President Grégoire Kayibanda
1973–1994 President Major General Juvénal Habyarimana
1994 President Théodore Sindikubabo
1994–2000 President Pasteur Bizimungu
2000– President Major General Paul Kagame

ARMED FORCES:

47,000

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–14; literacy rate 60%

Kiga were incorporated into the Tutsi monarchy. Among the Tutsi are a distinct group of northern cattle herders called Hima. The Hima rarely marry outside their group, and their nomadic lifestyle has always separated them from other Tutsi. (*See also Class Structure and Caste, Colonialism in Africa, Genocide and Violence, Tribalism, Warfare.*)

Art and Architecture



Plate 1: Sometime before the year 1000, the Shona people of southern Africa built the massive stone structures of Great Zimbabwe. These cone-shaped towers lie within the Great Enclosure, a circular stone wall more than 30 feet high. Archaeologists have found glass beads and Chinese porcelain at the site, suggesting that Great Zimbabwe was connected to trading networks that stretched to the Indian Ocean.

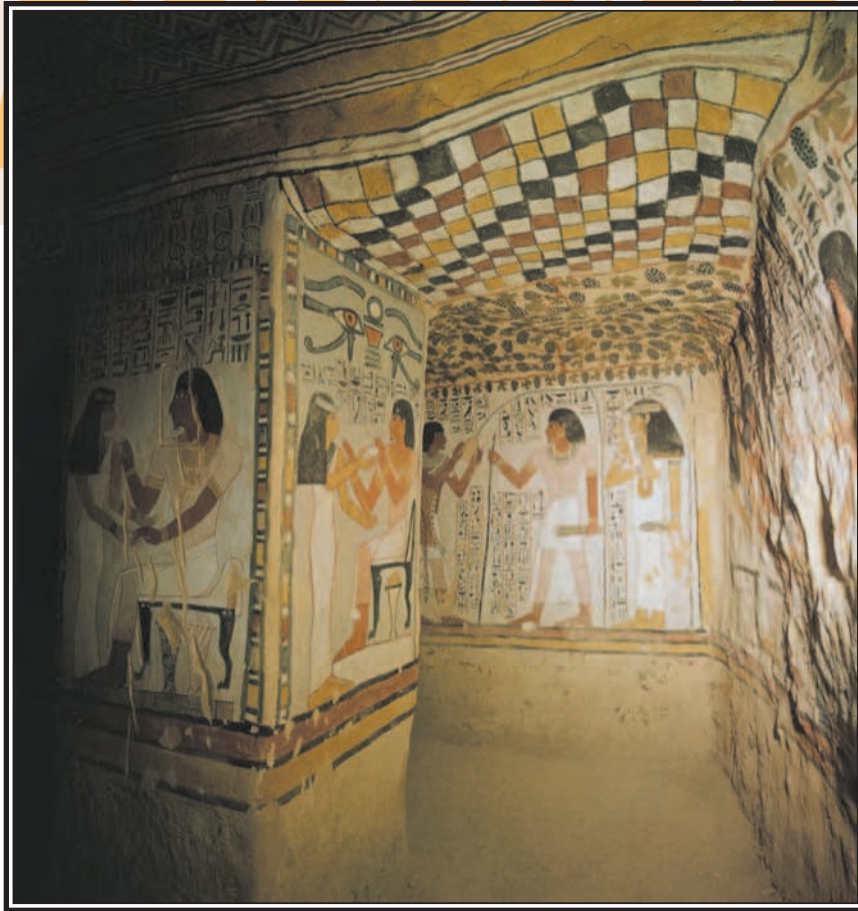


Plate 2: The ancient Egyptians decorated the tombs of kings, queens, and high officials with scenes of family and everyday activities, as well as images of the afterlife and Egyptian mythology. This nobleman's burial chamber is at Thebes.



Plate 3: The Dogon people of Mali have an elaborate mythology and complex rituals related to agriculture and death. This painting on a cliff wall marks the site of Dogon initiation ceremonies.

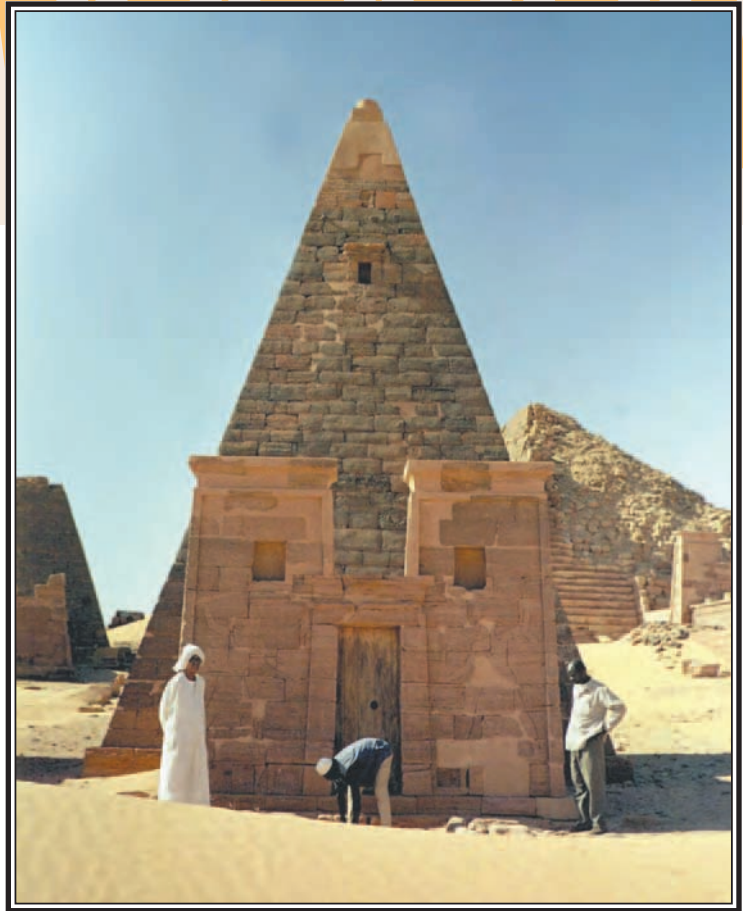


Plate 4: Heavily influenced by Egyptian civilization, the ancient kingdom of Kush in northern Sudan buried its kings and nobles in pyramid-like structures. Some 70 of these royal tombs, dating from about 750 B.C. to A.D. 350, have been found at the old and new capitals of Napata and Meroë.



Plate 5: The Baule, the largest ethnic group in Ivory Coast, are known for their sculpture and wood carving. The Baule masks shown here play an important role in a ceremony.

Plate 6: The work of West African artisans tends to follow gender lines. Men carve wooden masks and figures and work with iron; women make pottery and textiles. Yoruba figures, such as the head shown here, often have large, protruding eyes. Hairstyles, clothing, and scars are shown with intricately carved lines.



Plate 7: Africans use baskets for storing or serving food or for carrying goods. These woven baskets made of reeds come from Huíla Province in the Central Highlands of Angola.

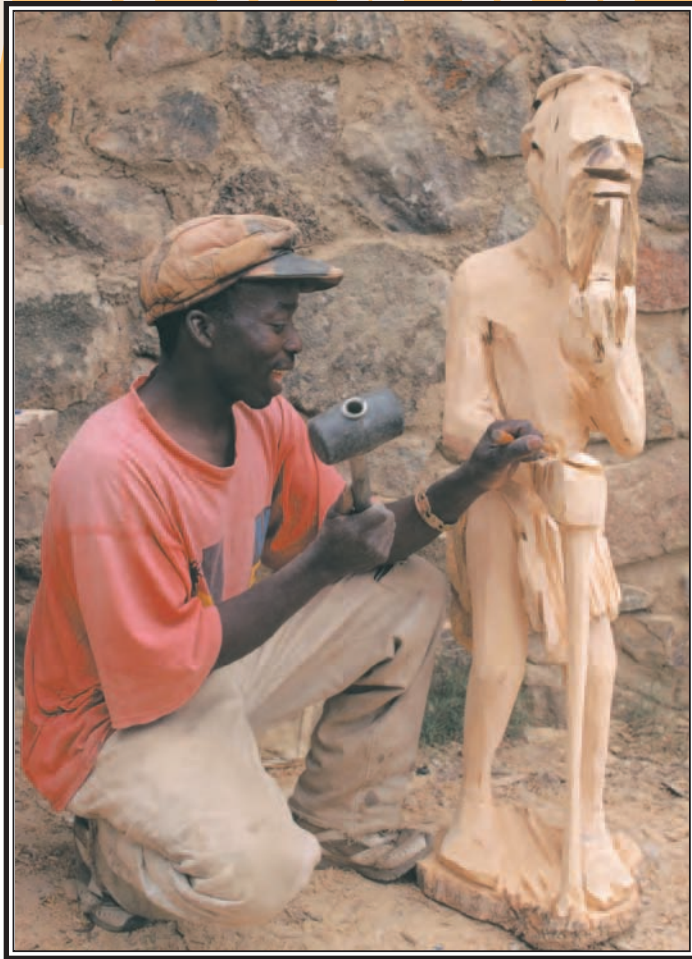


Plate 8: Traditionally, carved objects were made for functional or ceremonial purposes. This craftsman in Swaziland in southern Africa carves a statue of a man out of a piece of wood. Most of his work is sold to tourists.



Plate 9: Asante weavers of Ghana make the famous kente cloth. To form the complex patterns, they sew together strips of richly colored fabric. Blue and gold, which symbolize power, are often used. Men wear kente cloths on ceremonial occasions.

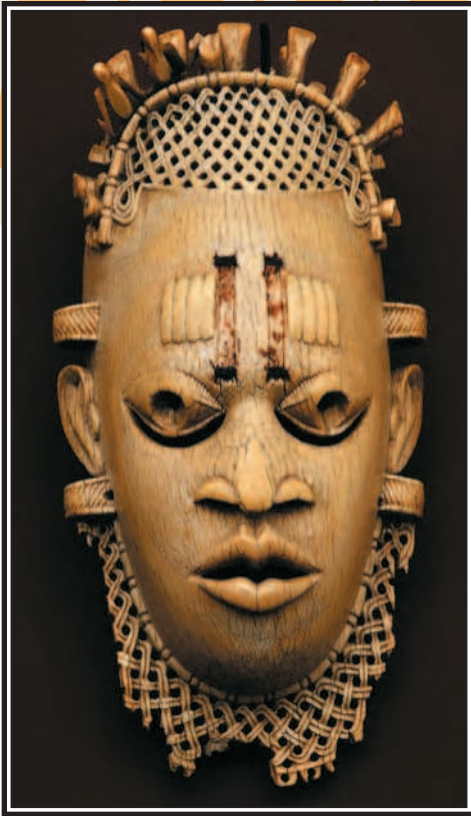


Plate 10: After the British conquered the West African kingdom of Benin in 1897, Benin's bronze sculptures (actually brass) became famous in Europe. The kingdom's artistic tradition also included fine pieces made of ivory and wood. This striking ivory face, probably that of Queen Idia, was carved in the 1500s.

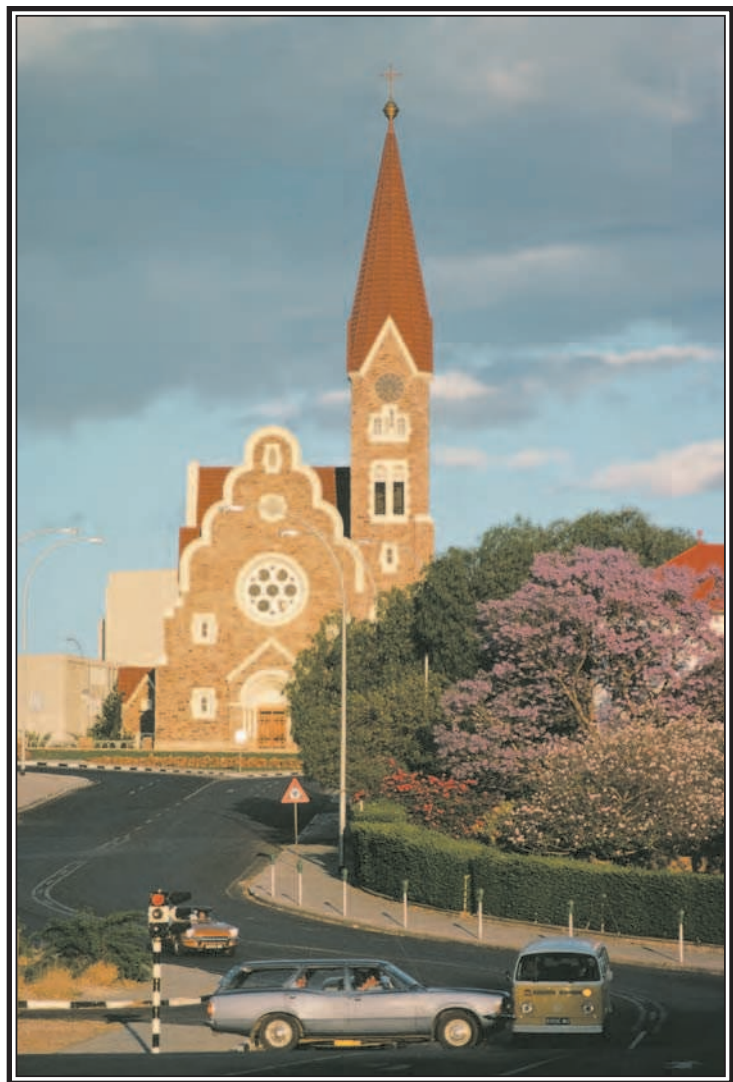


Plate 11: Namibia was a colony of Germany and then of South Africa. This Lutheran church in the Namibian capital of Windhoek was built in 1910 during the German rule.

Plate 12: Beadwork has a long history in Africa, and beads made of bone, ivory, stone, shell, glass, and metal have been found at sites throughout the continent. For the Samburu and other nomadic peoples, beadwork was the main form of visual art. The collar of glass beads worn by this Samburu woman of Kenya tells of her status and her clan.

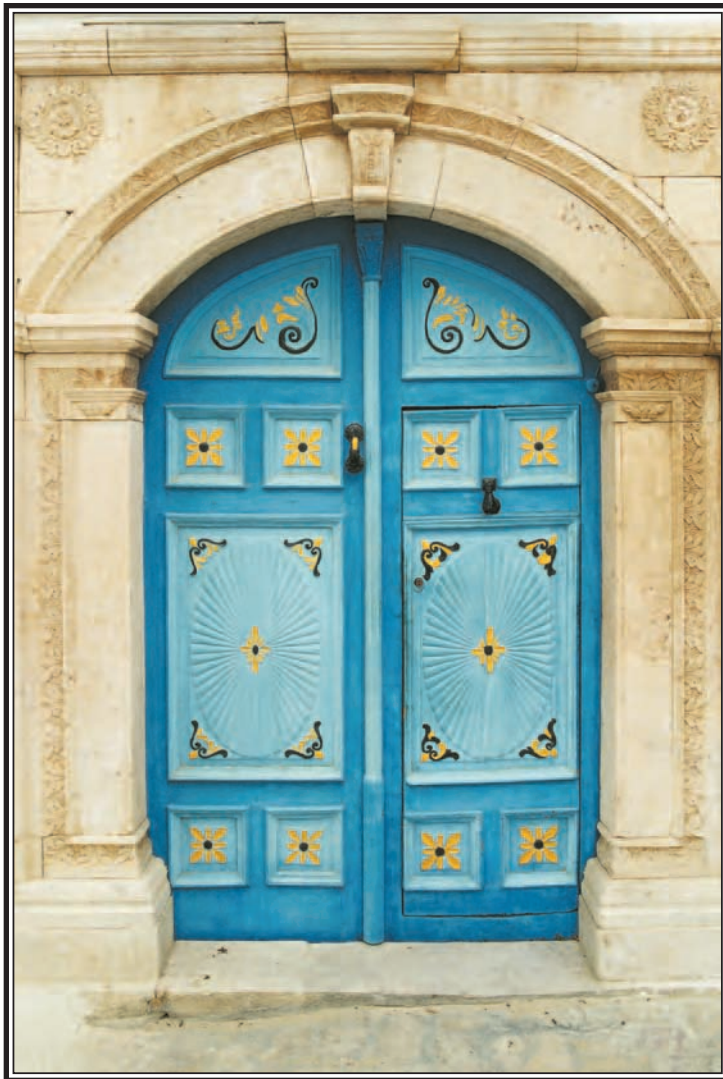


Plate 13: Geometric designs, flowing patterns of lines and curves, and calligraphy—decorative script—adorn many buildings in North Africa. This colorful door marks the entry to a house in Tunisia.



Plate 14: Abidjan, the economic capital of Ivory Coast, is a major financial center and deepwater port for French-speaking Africa. The modern part of the city boasts sleek skyscrapers and wide shady streets, but Abidjan also has undeveloped areas.

Plate 15: Malangatana, the best-known artist in Mozambique today, specializes in murals. His paintings include scenes from his country's history, including the colonial period and World War II. Shown here is his mural at the University of Western Cape in South Africa.



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Africa

**An Encyclopedia
for Students**

LANGUAGE FAMILIES





Africa

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John Middleton, Editor

Volume 4
Sadat–Zulu
Index




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A Time Line of Africa

4 m.y.a.*	<i>Australopithecines (early hominids) live in northern Rift Valley (Ethiopia, Kenya).</i>
2.5 m.y.a.*	<i>Early Stone Age; Homo habilis appears (Olduvai Gorge, Tanzania).</i>
1.5 m.y.a.*– 150,000 B.C.	<i>Homo erectus appears.</i>
240,000– 40,000 B.C.	<i>Middle Stone Age.</i>
80,000– 20,000 B.C.	<i>Late Stone Age.</i>
20,000– 10,000 B.C.	<i>Farming introduced in lower Nile Valley.</i>
10,000– 6000 B.C.	<i>Cattle domesticated in northern Africa. Millet and sorghum grown in western Africa.</i>
6000– 5000 B.C.	<i>Khoisan hunters of southern Africa create rock paintings.</i>
3000 B.C.	<i>King Menes unifies Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt. Agriculture develops in Ethiopian highlands.</i>
2000–1000 B.C.	<i>Horses introduced in Sahara region. Bananas grown in central Africa.</i>
332 B.C.	<i>Greeks occupy Egypt.</i>
200 B.C.	<i>Romans gain control of Carthage.</i>
32 B.C.	<i>Royal city of Meroë flourishes in what is now Sudan.</i>
A.D. 300s	<i>Aksum invades Meroë; Aksum king adopts Coptic Christianity.</i>
530s	<i>Byzantine empire takes Mediterranean ports.</i>
600s	<i>Muslim Arabs invade North Africa.</i>
ca. 1000	<i>Shona begin building Great Zimbabwe.</i>
1200s	<i>Portuguese voyage to northwest coast of Africa. Sundjata Keïta founds Mali kingdom.</i>

*m.y.a. million years ago



1312–1337	<i>Mansa Musa rules Mali and makes pilgrimage to Mecca.</i>
1400s	<i>Benin kingdom flourishes.</i>
1498	<i>Vasco da Gama sails around the southern and eastern coasts of Africa on the way to India.</i>
1505–1510	<i>Portuguese seize Swahili towns in eastern Africa and fortify Mozambique.</i> <i>Kongo king Afonso I converts to Christianity.</i>
1517	<i>Ottoman Turks conquer Egypt and port towns along the Mediterranean.</i>
1578	<i>Moroccans defeat Portuguese, remaining free of colonial control.</i>
1591	<i>Al-Mansur invades Songhai.</i>
1600s	<i>French, English, and Dutch establish trading posts along western coasts to export gold, ivory, and slaves.</i> <i>Akan state emerges.</i>
1650s	<i>Dutch settle at Cape of Good Hope in southern Africa.</i> <i>Arab traders settle on East African coast.</i>
1700s	<i>French and British establish network for slave trade in Central Africa.</i> <i>Zanzibar prospers as Arab trading center.</i>
1721	<i>French colonize Mauritius.</i>
1787	<i>British missionaries found Sierra Leone.</i>
1795	<i>British seize Cape Colony from Dutch.</i>
1798	<i>Napoleon leads French invasion of Egypt.</i>
1805	<i>Muhammad Ali takes power in Egypt, breaking free of Ottoman control.</i>
1807	<i>Britain and the United States abolish slave trade.</i>
1817	<i>Shaka emerges at head of Zulu kingdom in southern Africa.</i>
1821	<i>Freed slaves from the United States settle in what is now Liberia.</i>
1828	<i>Queen Ranavalona takes throne in Madagascar.</i>
1830s	<i>French rule proclaimed in Algeria.</i> <i>Slave trade continues in western Africa.</i>
1835	<i>Dutch settlers in southern Africa head north in “Great Trek.”</i>
1840s–1880s	<i>Slave trade flourishes in East Africa.</i>
1847	<i>Republic of Liberia is established.</i>
1852–1873	<i>David Livingstone explores Central and East Africa.</i>
1858	<i>Portuguese abolish slavery in Central Africa.</i>



1855–1868	<i>Emperor Téwodros rules Ethiopia.</i>
1859–1869	<i>Suez Canal is built.</i>
1869	<i>Diamonds are discovered at Kimberley in northern Cape Colony.</i>
1880–1881	<i>Afrikaners rebel against Britain in the First Anglo-Boer War, and British withdraw from Transvaal in southern Africa.</i>
1885	<i>Mahdist forces capture Khartoum.</i>
1880s–early 1900s	<i>European powers colonize most of Africa (present-day names of countries listed):</i> <i>Belgians in Congo (Kinshasa);</i> <i>British in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland;</i> <i>French in Mauritania, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Bénin, Central African Republic, Gabon, Congo (Brazzaville), Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar, Réunion, and the Comoro Islands;</i> <i>Germans in Togo, Cameroon, Namibia, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi;</i> <i>Portuguese in Guinea-Bissau, São Tomé and Príncipe, Cape Verde, Angola, and Mozambique;</i> <i>Spanish in Western Sahara and Equatorial Guinea.</i>
1893–1895	<i>Africans in King Leopold’s Congo revolt.</i>
1895	<i>France forms federation of colonies that becomes French West Africa.</i>
1896	<i>Ethiopian emperor Menilek defeats Italians, maintaining country’s independence.</i>
1899–1902	<i>Afrikaners defeated by British in Second Anglo-Boer war.</i>
1910	<i>Union of South Africa formed.</i>
1914–1918	<i>World War I: French and British capture German Togo; Africans fight on the side of various colonial powers in Africa.</i>
1922	<i>Egypt gains its independence.</i>
1930	<i>Haile Selassie I crowned emperor of Ethiopia.</i>
1935	<i>Italians invade Ethiopia.</i>
1936	<i>Union party in South Africa revokes voting rights of blacks.</i>
1939–1945	<i>World War II: many major battles fought in North Africa; Africans in French and British colonies drafted to fight in Europe and Asia.</i>
1940s	<i>First nationalist political parties are formed in western Africa.</i>



- 1944 *William Tubman becomes president of Liberia.*
- 1945 *Arab League, an organization of Arab states, is founded in Cairo.*
Ethiopia regains its independence.
- 1948 *Policy of apartheid introduced in South Africa.*
- 1950s *Several independence movements against colonial rule develop.*
- 1951 *Libya declared an independent monarchy under King Idris I.*
- 1952 *Gamal Abdel Nasser seizes power in Egypt.*
- 1953 *Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and Nyasaland (Malawi) join to form the Central African Federation.*
- 1954 *War breaks out in Algeria.*
- 1956 *Sudan, Morocco, and Tunisia become independent.*
- 1957 *Ghana achieves independence, with Kwame Nkrumah as president.*
- 1958 *Guinea, under Sékou Touré, becomes independent.*
- 1960 *Independence achieved in Cameroon (French Cameroun), Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Dahomey (Bénin), Gabon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Togo, and Upper Volta (Burkina Faso).*
- 1961 *Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Tanganyika become independent.*
- 1962 *Independence achieved in Algeria, Burundi, and Uganda.*
- 1963 *Kenya (under Jomo Kenyatta) and Zanzibar become independent.*
Central African Federation ends.
Organization of African Unity is founded.
FRELIMO begins armed struggle for liberation of Mozambique.
- 1964 *In South Africa, Nelson Mandela stands trial and is jailed.*
Tanganyika and Zanzibar join to form Tanzania.
Malawi and Zambia become independent.
Hutu overthrow Tutsi rule in Burundi.
- 1965 *Rhodesia declares independence under Ian Smith.*
Mobutu Sese Seko takes power in Congo (Kinshasa) and renames it Zaire.
King Hassan restores monarchy in Morocco.
The Gambia gains independence.
- 1966 *Independence achieved in Lesotho and Botswana.*



1967–1970	<i>Biafra attempts to secede from Nigeria.</i>
1968	<i>Swaziland becomes independent.</i>
1969	<i>Muammar al-Qaddafi seizes power in Libya.</i>
1970	<i>Egypt/Sudan: Aswan Dam is completed.</i>
1974	<i>Guinea attains independence.</i>
1975	<i>Cape Verde and Angola become independent.</i> <i>FRELIMO government gains independence in Mozambique.</i>
1976	<i>Spain withdraws from Western Sahara; Morocco and Mauritania fight over territory.</i> <i>Residents of Soweto and other South African townships begin violent protests.</i>
1970s–1990s	<i>War erupts across the continent within the countries of Angola, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Kinshasa), Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, and Western Sahara, and between the nations of Ethiopia and Eritrea, Ethiopia and Somalia, and Sudan and Uganda.</i>
1980	<i>Zimbabwe becomes independent.</i>
1990	<i>Nelson Mandela released from prison.</i> <i>Namibia becomes independent.</i>
1993	<i>Apartheid ends in South Africa.</i> <i>Eritrea gains independence from Ethiopia.</i>
1994	<i>Rwandan and Burundi presidents assassinated; ethnic violence between Hutu and Tutsi continues.</i> <i>Nelson Mandela becomes first black president of South Africa.</i>
1995	<i>Outbreak of deadly Ebola virus in Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1997	<i>Laurent Kabila takes power in Zaire and renames it Democratic Republic of the Congo (Kinshasa).</i>
1999	<i>Libya hands over two suspects in 1986 airplane bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland.</i>
2000	<i>Ghana chooses president John Kufuor in free elections.</i> <i>Paul Kagame is the first Tutsi to become president in Rwanda.</i>
2001	<i>Congo (Kinshasa) leader, Kabila, is assassinated; Kabila's son, Joseph, succeeds him as president.</i>

SACRIFICE

See *Religion and Ritual*.

Sadat, Anwar

1918–1981
Egyptian president

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

The presidency of Anwar al-Sadat was shaped largely by the way he conducted Egypt's relationship with Israel. Sadat won the admiration of Arabs for his war against Israel and then earned international praise for making peace with Israel.

Born in an Egyptian village, Sadat attended school in CAIRO and then joined the army. Dedicated to the goal of ending British control over EGYPT, he sought aid from Germany, Britain's enemy, during WORLD WAR II. The British imprisoned him, but he escaped. Sadat became a follower of Egyptian military officer Gamal Abdel NASSER, who helped lead a coup* against Egypt's British-backed monarchy in 1952. When Nasser became president in 1956, Sadat served as his vice president and took over as head of government on Nasser's death in 1970.

Sadat soon showed that he was not afraid to take decisive action in international affairs. Feeling that Egypt was not receiving proper support from the Soviet Union*, he threw thousands of Soviets out of the country. In 1973 he formed an alliance with the Arab nation of Syria to make a surprise attack on Israel. The war made Sadat a hero in the Arab world because Egypt managed to win back some territory in the Sinai Peninsula from Israel.

After the war Sadat turned toward peace, visiting Israel to propose a treaty between the two nations. Although the Soviet Union and most Arab nations disapproved of this move, Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin signed a peace agreement in 1979. The two men shared the Nobel Peace Prize for this landmark achievement, but Sadat's actions were unpopular with many in Egypt. Two years later he was assassinated by members of a Muslim group that rejected the notion of peace with Israel. (See also *Arabs in Africa, Global Politics and Africa, Islam in Africa*.)

Sahara Desert

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Stretching across northern Africa from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east, the Sahara is the world's largest desert. It forms a natural barrier between two very different geographic and cultural regions: NORTH AFRICA, with its Arab-influenced Mediterranean culture; and sub-Saharan* Africa, where indigenous* African culture is dominant. Yet for centuries people have crossed this dangerous expanse along trade routes, supplying goods to the towns and kingdoms on the Sahara's borders and linking Africa's northern and southern communities. Today the desert supports a population of about 2.5 million people.

Geography. The Sahara desert covers 3.3 million square miles in 11 countries and the territory of WESTERN SAHARA. Two Saharan countries are almost entirely desert—LIBYA and EGYPT.



Sahara Desert

Life on a Salty Oasis

In the Saharan oasis of Bilma, Niger, mud homes stand amid date palms and leafy trees. Nearby is a series of watery pits—the salt mines that have supported this community for generations. Although today traders may carry Bilma's salt to market by truck rather than by camel, life here has changed little in the past centuries.

Miners collect the salt by hand, scooping it into molds, where it hardens. When traders arrive, they exchange blocks of salt for grain. The salt from Bilma is highly prized throughout the region by livestock herders, who say it makes their animals strong and healthy and is more effective than vitamins.



About a fifth of the Sahara is covered with sand seas, called ergs. In some places the strong Saharan winds shape the sand into rows of towering dunes. Elsewhere the desert consists mostly of plains covered with gravel or barren rock. Within the Sahara lie two mountain ranges, the Ahaggar in ALGERIA and the Tibesti in CHAD. The highest point in the desert is Emi Koussi, an 11,204-foot peak in Chad. The lowest point, 4,356 feet below sea level, is in Egypt's Qattara depression, one of several Saharan basins.

Two rivers flow all year through the Sahara: the NILE in the eastern desert and the NIGER in the southwest. After the desert's rare rainfalls, smaller streams and rivers appear briefly before drying up and disappearing. The driest parts of the Sahara receive no more than 4 to 6 inches of rain each year. The SAHEL, the zone of transition between the true desert and the rest of Africa to the south, receives up to 24 inches of rain. Occasional springs or pools dot the desert, giving rise to oases, islands of green vegetation amid arid surroundings.

The Sahara was not always as dry as it is now. Before about 3000 B.C., the area experienced cycles of heavier rainfall in which a wide variety of plant and animal life flourished. Prehistoric humans occupied the region during these periods, leaving ROCK ART that shows images of a greener, wetter time when even water-loving hippopotamuses lived in the Sahara.

History. Arab invaders gained control of northern Africa in the A.D. 600s. In the centuries that followed, camel caravans carried gold, slaves, spices, leather, and ostrich feathers from sub-Saharan Africa north across the Sahara and exchanged these goods for weapons, horses, textiles, and paper from the Mediterranean coast. The Saharan people benefited from the trade, providing marketplaces in the oases and collecting tolls and protection money from foreign traders. Cities such as TIMBUKTU (in what is now northern MALI) became thriving centers of commerce.

During the Middle Ages, several kingdoms rose on the fringes of the Sahara. States in the area that is now GHANA and NIGERIA extended their influence into the desert region, but their dominance over the western Sahara ended in 1591, when the sultan of MOROCCO conquered Timbuktu. Saharan groups such as the TUAREG then took control of the region.

Around 1850 Europeans began colonizing Algeria and other parts of the Sahara region. Most of the desert came under French control. When North Africa regained independence in the 1960s, the colonial divisions made by the French became national boundaries. However, the border between Libya and Chad remained in dispute until 1994.

People and Economy. Most of the people who live in the Sahara occupy the oases and the highlands on the desert fringes. Arabic-speaking peoples, including the Bedouin of Libya and the Chaamba of Algeria, live in the northern Sahara. On the northern and western edges of the desert are many groups of BERBERS. The largest Berber-speaking group within the Sahara is the Tuareg, who number between 500,000 and 1 million people. The Berbers and Tuareg have cultural and reli-

Sahara Desert



Arab culture spread across the Sahara along caravan routes and down rivers such as the Nile. These Muslim tombs near Aswan, Egypt, date from the 1000s.

* **Islamic** referring to Islam, the religion based on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad

gious ties to Islamic*, Arab-speaking northern Africa. To the east, in NIGER and northern Chad, live the Teda or Tubu peoples, whose languages and cultures are closely linked to those of sub-Saharan African groups.

Livestock herding and trade are the main economic activities of the Sahara. Desert dwellers raise camels, goats, and sheep, and in some oases they also grow gardens and date palms. The principal trade good is salt, either mined or obtained from evaporated water. Since ancient times,



Sahara Desert

Saharans have traded salt for grain and other goods from the agricultural regions south of the desert. The Tuareg salt trade continues today, unlike most of the long-distance trade that once crisscrossed the Sahara. The major economic event of the 1900s in the Sahara was the discovery of mineral resources, particularly oil, phosphate, iron, uranium, and bauxite, the source of aluminum.

Jenne and the Saharan Borderlands. In ancient times, many cities and states flourished in the southern and southwestern borderlands of the Sahara. Before the 1970s historians believed that Arabs and Berbers from North Africa sparked the formation of these states by introducing long-distance trade to the region in the A.D. 800s or 900s.

* **archaeological** referring to the study of past human cultures and societies, usually by excavating ruins

Recent archaeological* evidence, however, reveals a different history. Excavations show that large, highly organized towns existed before the Arabs arrived and before major trade began across the Sahara. Jenne (or Jenne-jeno) in Mali is one of the best studied of these sites.

Human settlement at Jenne dates from the 200s or 100s B.C. The city reached its height between A.D. 500 and 1000, with a population of at least 10,000. Its citizens exported copper, pottery, and agricultural goods through a local trade network that covered much of the middle course of the Niger River.

Two features show that Jenne was a purely African creation, different from ancient cities built by Arabs and Europeans. First, there is no evidence of a ruling class. Jenne does not have the rich burial sites or monumental public architecture that indicate the presence of nobles or powerful rulers. Second, Jenne was not a dense urban settlement enclosed by a city wall. It was a central town with satellite communities clustered around it. Ruins at other ancient sites in the Niger region suggest that this clustered organization was typical of the African civilizations that arose there. These societies later merged with or developed into the states that joined in the cross-Saharan trade established by Arabs. (*See also Climate, Deserts and Drought, Ecosystems.*)



* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **savanna** tropical or sub-tropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

The Sahel is a narrow semi-desert region of western Africa. Its name comes from the Arabic word for “shore” or “border,” and it is the southern border of the SAHARA DESERT. The Sahel forms a zone of transition between the desert, which extends across the northern part of the continent, and the forests and grasslands of sub-Saharan* Africa. Its dry, desert-like landscape is broken up by thorny trees, bushes, and plants, and during the rainy season grass covers much of the region.

The Sahel is defined by rainfall. It receives an average of 6 to 24 inches of rain a year, more than the desert but less than the savanna* and forest regions farther south. The Sahel usually has a three- to five-month dry season, although in some years this season lasts much longer. From time to time droughts occur, leading to crop shortages and famine in Sahelian nations such as NIGER and Mali.

The boundaries of the Sahel are not fixed. In wet periods, Sahel vegetation moves northward into the Sahara. In dry periods, the Sahel

Saint Helena

reaches southward and consumes grassland through a process called desertification, in which land loses its fertility and becomes desert-like. Human activities, such as cutting trees for firewood and grazing livestock, are thought to be hastening desertification in parts of the Sahel. (See also **Deserts and Drought**.)

Sa'id ibn Sultan

1791–1856
Sultan of Zanzibar

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Sa'id ibn Sultan reigned as sultan of Oman and Muscat in the Middle East for some 50 years. During this time he extended his sultanate from Arabia to the east coast of Africa, establishing one of the great trading empires in the region.

Sa'id was the son of the lord of Muscat, who was killed by pirates when Sa'id was 13. One of his cousins seized the throne, but in 1806 Sa'id staged a coup*, killing his cousin and becoming sultan. He then formed an alliance with the British to defeat his rivals in Arabia, including the pirates who had killed his father.

In the early 1820s Sa'id turned his attention to the coast of East Africa. Responding to an invitation from the people of the region, he helped overthrow the Portuguese who dominated the area. By 1837 he controlled the coast from the Persian Gulf to MOZAMBIQUE. Three years later Sa'id moved his capital to the island of ZANZIBAR. He established trade routes into the interior, dealing mostly in ivory and slaves. He exported slaves to plantations in Asia until the British, who had abolished the SLAVE TRADE, prohibited the sale of Omani slaves in Asia.

Sa'id then took up other activities, including sugar refining and growing indigo for dye. However, his greatest success was the introduction of cloves to Zanzibar. He also opened Zanzibar to Western nations that helped modernize its economy. By the time of his death, exports from Zanzibar had doubled and the island had become the world's leading producer of cloves. (See also **Arabs in Africa, Ivory Trade**.)

Saint Helena

The British colonial territory of Saint Helena consists of three small volcanic islands in the southern Atlantic Ocean—Saint Helena, Tristan da Cunha, and Ascension. Saint Helena, the largest of the three, lies 1,150 miles west of ANGOLA. Tristan da Cunha is about 2,500 miles to the southwest, and Ascension is 700 miles northwest of Saint Helena. Jamestown, a small port town on Saint Helena, is the colony's capital.

Rocky cliffs dominate the coast of Saint Helena. The fertile volcanic crater in the island's center is dotted with small farms growing mostly potatoes and vegetables. The islanders also fish and raise LIVESTOCK. Until the mid-1800s the economy was based on hemp, wool, flax, and crafts sold to passing ships. But after the SUEZ CANAL opened in 1869, shipping routes changed and the island has grown steadily poorer. Aid from Britain and money from relatives overseas now supply most of Saint Helena's income.

The two smaller islands have few inhabitants. Tristan da Cunha contains one settlement, and a colonial official and the crews of American



Saint Helena

and British weather and satellite stations are the only residents of Ascension. Like Saint Helena, Tristan da Cunha relies on money from abroad to supplement its farming income.

All three islands were uninhabited before their discovery by Portuguese navigators between 1501 and 1506. The Portuguese controlled the islands for about 150 years until the Dutch took over briefly. In 1659 the British East India Company gained possession of Saint Helena, using the island as a place to restock ships sailing to and from the Far East.

Saint Helena is most famous as the island to which Napoleon Bonaparte was exiled after his defeat at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. Since that time the British Crown has assumed responsibility for the island and a British governor has ruled the colony. Over the years attempts to grant the territory independence have met with resistance. The people prefer the islands to remain a colonial possession, and the economy is too weak to support an independent nation. (*See also Colonialism in Africa.*)

Samba, Chéri

1956–
Congolesse painter

* **apprentice** person being trained in a craft or a profession

Chéri Samba is one of the first modern African painters to receive international recognition for his work. His paintings explore how relations between Africans and Europeans have influenced the way Africans view themselves. Samba has described himself as an explorer of modern Africa and the West. According to some art critics, the main subject of his paintings is the corruption and sin in present-day African and Western society.

Originally named David Samba wa Mbimba-N'zinga-Nuni Masi, Samba was born in the Belgian Congo (present-day CONGO, KINSHASA). At age 16 he moved to KINSHASA, the capital, where he became an apprentice* to a painter. In 1975 he opened his own studio and soon gained the admiration of local art circles. His most popular early paintings were *mbanda* scenes—pictures that show rival wives of the same man quarreling—and images of MAMI WATA. Mami Wata is a mermaid-like figure who represents the temptations of modern life. Often accompanied by a snake, she usually appears holding a mirror and comb.

In 1978 Samba's work was featured at the International Congress of African Studies. The following year he took the professional name Chéri Samba. By the late 1990s his paintings had appeared in more than 30 exhibitions in Europe, North America, and Japan, earning him world renown. (*See also Art, Popular Culture.*)

SAN

See *Khoisan*.



São Tomé and Príncipe

São Tomé and Príncipe

São Tomé and Príncipe, which consists of two islands in the Gulf of Guinea, is one of the smallest countries in Africa. However, its strategic location off the coast of West Africa has given it an importance out of proportion to its size and population.

The two islands, São Tomé and Príncipe, are part of a chain of volcanoes that stretch to CAMEROON. Because of this, their terrain is very rugged. The climate of São Tomé, the larger island, varies by altitude. The mountainous interior receives heavy rainfall almost year round, but the climate is drier below about 3,000 feet. The nation's capital, São Tomé, sits on a plain near the coast. The smaller island, Príncipe, lies northeast of São Tomé island.

History and Government. Portuguese sailors discovered the uninhabited islands of São Tomé and Príncipe around 1472. Using slaves from mainland Africa as laborers, the Portuguese established sugar plantations on the islands. These served as models for the sugar plantations in the Americas. Over time, a variety of other immigrants reached the islands. The mix of European and African influences produced a unique CREOLE culture that still exists.

In the 1600s the sugar market declined, and São Tomé and Príncipe became a supply station for slave ships sailing between Africa and the Americas. In the late 1800s the plantations made a comeback with the introduction of coffee and cocoa. The society became strictly divided into groups of free white planters, mixed-race planters known as *forros* and *filhos da terra*, and plantation workers called *serviçais* and *tongas*. Forced to work on the plantations, the laborers had no political rights.

In 1975 São Tomé and Príncipe gained its independence from Portugal. Manuel Pinto da Costa served as the nation's first president from 1975 to 1991. Under his rule the islands became a socialist* state with all businesses under state control. By 1985 the economy was in steep decline. Two years later da Costa agreed to reduce the state's role in the economy in return for aid from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

The results of the economic reforms have been disappointing. The value of the currency has plummeted and prices have shot up, causing occasional food riots. The instability of the government has made these problems worse. Political offices change hands frequently, but they are generally filled only by individuals from the *forro* class. In 1991 Miguel Trovoada, a former colleague of da Costa, was elected president. He faces strong opposition in the legislature (Assembleia Nacional), which has hindered his ability to make changes.

Economy and Peoples. Cocoa dominates the economy of São Tomé and Príncipe. About 60 percent of the arable* land is devoted to cocoa production, which accounts for nearly all of the country's export revenue. Most of the cocoa is grown on large plantations established during the colonial era. However, such heavy dependence on cocoa has caused severe economic problems in years when the price of cocoa fell. São Tomé and Príncipe has also long served as a distribution center for goods moving between Africa and the rest of the world because of its location off the coast of West Africa.

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **arable** suitable for producing crops

São Tomé and Príncipe



Democratic Republic of São Tomé and Príncipe

POPULATION:
159,883 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
372 sq. mi. (964 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
Portuguese (official); Fang, Kriolu

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Dobra

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Roman Catholic (89.5%), Evangelical Protestant, Seventh-Day Adventist

CITIES:
São Tomé (capital), 43,000 (1993 est.); Trindade, Santana, Neves, Porto Alegre, Santo Antonio

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 40 in. (1,000 mm) in northern lowlands to 150–200 in. (3,800–5,000 mm) in highlands.

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$1,100 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: cacao (cocoa), coconuts, coffee, bananas, palm kernels, cinnamon, poultry, pepper, papayas, beans
Manufacturing: textiles, soap, beer, fish processing, timber

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Portugal, 1975. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing body: Assembleia Nacional, elected by popular vote.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1975–1991 President Manuel Pinto da Costa
1991– President Miguel Trovoada

ARMED FORCES:
800 (1997 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 7–14; literacy rate 73% (1991 est.)

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

The leaders of São Tomé and Príncipe have been investigating ways to expand the economy by developing new industries. They have recently discovered promising oil reserves beneath the islands, but have not yet begun to exploit* them. Tourism is another possibility. The islands' favorable climate and natural beauty make them an ideal tourist spot. Although a luxury resort recently opened on Príncipe, development of a tourist industry has been hindered by poor infrastructure*, limited overseas transport links, and a lack of trained personnel.

The class structure established in the colonial era still exists to some extent in São Tomé and Príncipe, with the oldest *forro* families controlling the best land. These families also hold considerable power in important local associations. While the different groups no longer live in strict separation, class still plays an important role in defining social relations on the islands. (See also **Class Structure and Caste**, **Colonialism in Africa**, **Plantation Systems**, **Tourism**.)

Sarbah, John Mensah

1864–1910
Ghanaian politician

John Mensah Sarbah was the leading African politician in the Gold Coast (modern-day GHANA) in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Born into a wealthy family, Sarbah went to England to study law. At the age of 23, he returned to the Gold Coast to set up a legal practice. He became known for defending the rights of Africans against British colonial authorities. He founded two newspapers, *The Gold Coast People* and *Gold Coast Weekly*, and became an authority on the traditions of the Fante people.

In 1892 Sarbah led the fight against a bill that proposed to transfer administration of public lands from African chiefs to British officials. In



Schreiner, Olive

1901 he was appointed to the Legislative Council. There he fought the Native Jurisdiction Bill, which gave Fante chiefs exclusive powers to administer local laws. To Sarbah this went against the democratic traditions of the Fante. In addition to his political achievements, Sarbah wrote two books about the Fante and played an important role in establishing public schools in the colony. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Laws and Legal Systems, Publishing.**)

SAVANNAS

See *Ecosystems*.

SCHNITZER, EDUARD

See *Emin Pasha*.

Schreiner, Olive

1855–1920
South African writer



Olive Schreiner wrote various works of social criticism and fiction, including South Africa's first important novel, *The Story of an African Farm* (1883). Her books combine vivid descriptions of life in South Africa, criticism of British colonialism, and support for women's rights and racial equality.

Schreiner was born in Wittebergen, SOUTH AFRICA, where her German father and English mother were missionaries. She spent her childhood at a Lutheran mission and then worked as a governess, caring for children, in the diamond-mining town of Kimberley. In 1881 she moved to London. Two years later she published *The Story of an African Farm*, which tells of a farm girl who seeks independence in a culture that limits opportunities for women. The book was a success and brought Schreiner considerable fame.

In 1889 Schreiner returned to South Africa and married. She and her husband published a book about the country's political and economic problems. Schreiner became increasingly involved in political causes, such as women's rights. She also supported the Afrikaners, Dutch settlers in South Africa, in their war against the British. She wrote a lengthy work of social and economic criticism called *Women and Labour*, but British soldiers burned the manuscript. She rewrote one chapter from memory, which was published in 1911. Two years later Schreiner left her homeland for the second time, returning only in the year of her death. (See also **Literature, Women in Africa.**)

SCULPTURE

See *Art*.

Secret Societies

Secret Societies

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **ritual** ceremony that follows a set pattern

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

* **rite** ceremony or formal procedure

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad

The English term “secret societies” refers to a wide range of traditional cults* in Africa. Members of these groups possess secret knowledge gained through participation in rituals*. Belonging to a secret society gives its members power in the community.

During the colonial era, Europeans in Africa viewed secret societies with alarm. They felt threatened by the involvement of these groups in warfare and politics among the African chiefdoms. Europeans believed that secret societies promoted anti-colonial activity, and some colonies attempted to limit their power. In 1897 British authorities in SIERRA LEONE banned the practice of marking commercial crops and palm trees with symbols—a secret society’s way of controlling the size of harvests. As colonial fears grew, many Europeans came to believe that secret societies were widespread, tightly organized groups devoted to rebellion and cannibalism.

Role of Secret Societies. Today, anthropologists* recognize that secret societies are highly diverse and that many of them play a role in political and legal institutions. Among the YORUBA people of western Nigeria, members of the Ogboni society sit on a council with the king. In coastal KENYA, elders belonging to the Vaya society act as judges that determine whether a person is guilty of moral wrongdoing.

Other secret societies have religious or social purposes. Some focus on a single important rite*, such as the INITIATION RITES that mark a child’s passage into adulthood. Societies may also be associated with particular skills or activities, such as hunting, blacksmithing, making war, or regulating sexual conduct. In some cases societies address a variety of political and social concerns.

The key element in all secret societies is the “secret,” which usually involves the details of a group’s initiation rite and other rituals. Other special knowledge may include important historical and political information not possessed by others in the community. Although people outside the society may know its secrets, they do not hold the status or power of members because their knowledge has not come through rites and personal experience.

Poro and Sande Societies. In western Africa the Poro association for men and the Sande or Bondo association for women have wide-ranging activities and interests. Traditionally, all boys in Poro areas must be initiated into the society as part of becoming adults. Elder members generally have higher rank and greater secret knowledge than younger members, whose labor and services they often control. Poro leaders make important community rulings about such matters as land disputes and political succession. The Poro society also controls the timing of certain harvests and passage along trade routes. In some urban or Muslim settings, governmental or Islamic* authorities now hold many of the powers claimed by the Poro, and fewer boys are brought into the association.

The women’s Sande or Bondo society continues to flourish even in urban and Muslim locations because its power does not conflict with that of other authorities. The Sande or Bondo association gives the sta-



Senegal

tus of adulthood to girls. Its spirit is a river spirit whose powers involve women's secret medicines, including those used for childbirth. The leadership and organization of the women's society are closely linked to those of the Poro. This connection is especially clear in some parts of LIBERIA, where the two societies alternate their "rule" over communities in different years. In Sierra Leone, Muslim Sande has emerged, with Muslim songs replacing the traditional ones. (See also **Masks and Masquerades, Religion and Ritual, Witchcraft and Sorcery.**)

Sembène, Ousmane

1923–
Senegalese author and
film director

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Ousmane Sembène is widely regarded as the father of African CINE-MA. Born in SENEGAL, Sembène served in the French army during World War II. He returned to his homeland briefly and took part in a railway strike in 1947–1948. He went back to France and, over the next several years, traveled to Denmark, Russia, China, and Vietnam.

In 1960 Sembène published his best-known novel, *God's Bits of Wood*. Then he went to Russia and studied filmmaking in Moscow for two years. While continuing to write novels and short stories, he began to direct films. He achieved a commercial success with the 1968 film *Mandabi*. This was the first of three films that examined the struggles of Senegalese citizens faced with the social problems of their country. Sembène later directed three historical films, including *Ceddo* (1976), which was banned for years in Senegal because it exposed the role of Islam* in the West African SLAVE TRADE. His most recent film, *Faat-Kine*, tells the story of a Senegalese woman and the sacrifices she makes for her family. Sembène's films and novels have challenged authority and dealt with sensitive issues. He has received many awards for his work. (See also **Literature, Popular Culture.**)

Senegal

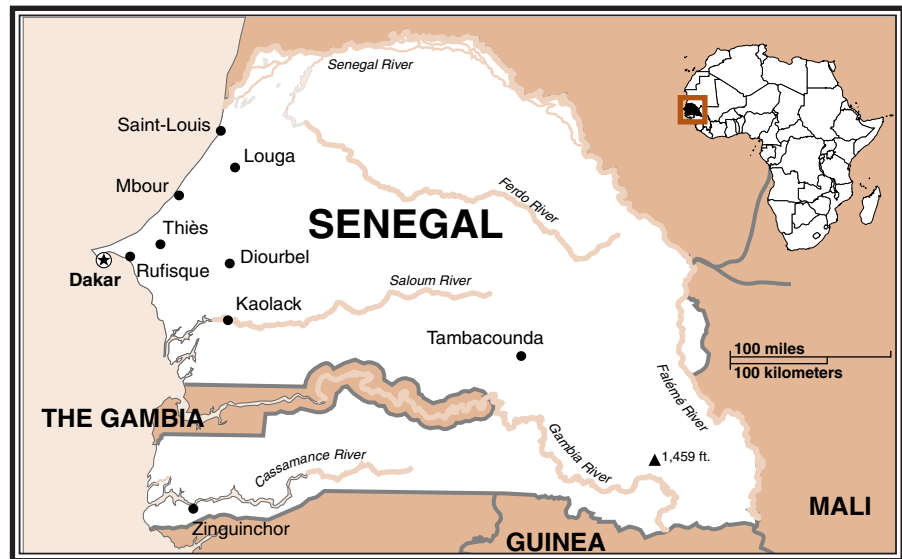
The West African country of Senegal is one of the few nations in Africa that has enjoyed relatively stable and democratic government since independence. In recent years, however, the nation has faced economic difficulties and an ongoing threat of rebellion in its southern region. These problems have severely tested the strength of Senegalese democracy.

GEOGRAPHY

Located on Africa's Atlantic coast, Senegal is dominated by a series of rivers that cut through its rolling plains. The mighty Senegal River forms the country's northern border, and the Gambia River flows through the southern region. Although Senegal has no real mountains, the foothills of GUINEA'S Futa Jallon mountains extend into southeastern part of the country.

The nation is bordered on the north by MAURITANIA, on the east by MALI, and on the south by Guinea and GUINEA-BISSAU. The tiny nation of

Senegal



the GAMBIA juts into southern Senegal along the Gambia River, largely separating the southern province of Casamance from the rest of Senegal.

Senegal's climate is warm and dry in the north, but it grows hotter and wetter as one travels south. Vegetation is thin in the far north, where each year the SAHARA DESERT expands southward a few more miles. The barren north gives way to savanna* in the central part of the country, while the more tropical southern region contains mangrove swamps.

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Before the colonial era Senegal was part of a fragmented geographical region that we know today as Senegambia. Located at the crossroads of several cultural traditions and containing diverse groups of people, Senegambia remained a backwater until the 1400s. Developments of the following centuries still have a profound effect on the political atmosphere of modern Senegal.

Precolonial Senegambia. In the 1400s Senegambia saw the rise of various kingdoms that drew their power from control of major rivers. Trade, mostly focused on the great trade routes across the Sahara, enriched the peoples of the interior. The arrival of Portuguese merchants about 1500 led to a redirection of trade to the coast. New kingdoms also arose along the coast, taking advantage of the Atlantic commerce in gold and ivory. Later slaves emerged as the most important part of trade.

The growth of the SLAVE TRADE hastened the decline of the trans-Saharan trade routes. It also increased violence within the region, as rulers raided neighboring lands—as well as one another—to acquire slaves. This led to a centralization of power and to popular uprisings led by Muslim leaders known as marabouts. Nasr al-Din, one of these lead-

From Slaves to Masters

Before the colonial era, slaves in northern Senegal were typically divided into three classes. Trade slaves, born outside the household, were considered strangers with few rights. Household slaves, by contrast, had limited rights and were protected against being sold. Warrior, or royal, slaves formed a separate military caste within society. After slavery was abolished in the 1800s, the trade and household slaves merged into a single group. The warrior slaves, who adopted Islam as their religion, became powerful leaders in colonial Senegal.

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business



* **indigenous** native to a certain place

ers, controlled the Senegal River valley from 1673 to 1677, when an alliance of kingdoms defeated him.

By the late 1600s the remaining marabout leaders had established their own kingdoms in Senegambia. Although they protected their citizens from the slave trade, they continued to draw power from the sale of slaves and arms. The area remained divided into many small states that existed in an almost perpetual state of war against one another to capture slaves.

European Control. The Portuguese trade monopoly* in the Senegambia region was eventually broken by the arrival of other groups of Europeans, who divided the coastal region into areas of Dutch, English, and French influence. In the 1800s France and Britain emerged as the main powers in the region.

France worked to gain control over the area surrounding the Senegal River, while Britain concentrated on the Gambia River region. Along with Portugal, both nations established forts on offshore islands and seized control over trade from the coastal kingdoms. The forts also enabled Europeans to take over the areas that produced groundnuts, the crop that became the basis of the region's colonial economy after the slave trade ended in the early 1800s.

While Europeans attempted to dominate Senegambia, the region was troubled by internal tensions. African rulers in the north struggled to maintain control over their rural subjects, while militant Islamic forces overran parts of the interior. In the mid-1800s the marabouts launched a series of jihads, or holy wars, but this new movement was eventually put down by African rulers loyal to the European colonial powers. The end of these jihads eliminated one threat to local rulers, but a new danger soon appeared—growing conflict with the European colonizers.

The Colonial Conquest. In time France gained control over most of the region of present-day Senegal, while Britain held power over a narrow strip along the Gambia River. The Europeans faced a complex political and social environment in Senegambia. Most of the region was under the rule of local monarchs who dominated towns and cities but had less influence in rural areas, where the marabout movement had its greatest support. In addition, a number of societies also existed on the edges of the region.

When the French established the colony of Senegal, they divided indigenous* peoples of the region into subjects and citizens. The vast majority of Africans lived in agricultural areas where groundnuts were grown. Although classified as French subjects, these people had limited political rights and were restricted to territorial zones overseen by traditional chiefs. By contrast, the Africans of Dakar and certain other urban market areas were considered French citizens and were represented by a deputy in the parliament in Paris.

When Muslim marabout leaders emerged as Senegal's major groundnut producers, they replaced local chiefs as heads of territorial zones. The French incorporated the marabouts into colonial administration by giving them visible roles in public celebrations and having them serve



Senegal

as official representatives at Muslim religious ceremonies. Identified in this way with colonial power, the marabouts became the main link between the colonial government and the rural populations. Outside of the groundnut-growing areas, however, it was not easy to identify local leaders to bring into the colonial administration. This resulted in a lack of control over remote areas, which developed without a sense of allegiance to a central government.

Independent Senegal. Senegal won its independence from France in 1960, but many of the old political problems remained. Those who controlled groundnut production still exercised the most power and authority, and many rural populations continued to be outside the mainstream of political life. The political system was still based largely on patronage*, with powerful leaders exercising authority over and providing for the needs of weaker clients.

* **patronage** power to appoint people to government positions

Before independence the most powerful political parties in Senegal were the SFIO (the “Reds”) and the BDS (the “Greens”). The rivalry between these two parties dominated Senegalese political life from 1948 to 1958, when the two parties merged to form the UPS. A former leader of the Reds, Léopold Sédar SENGHOR, was chosen as the nation’s first president. Mamadou Dia, former Green leader, became prime minister.

In 1962 Dia tried to seize control of the country. This attempted overthrow led to the adoption of a single-party system of government headed by a strong president. During the period that followed, Senegal practiced a form of socialism* in which the state controlled the economy and was the main source of jobs and political power. Socialism played a central role in all areas of society as leaders attempted to unify the nation under a single banner. By the early 1970s, however, opposition to the so-called nationalist project was emerging, and groups that had resisted central authority in the past began to challenge the legitimacy of the government.

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

The 1970s were a time of turmoil in Senegal. The economic effects of a drought that began early in the decade were increased by a sharp rise in oil prices and a dramatic decline in prices for Senegal’s principal exports, including groundnuts. At the same time, President Senghor agreed to an economic reform plan proposed by international lending agencies, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which called for reducing Senegal’s national debt and the number of government employees. The result was a steep downturn in the economy and a fiscal* crisis.

* **fiscal** relating to financial matters and revenues

In the midst of these economic difficulties, Senghor embarked on a policy of political reform aimed at liberalizing the government. He allowed the formation of opposition political parties and strengthened the role of the prime minister. In 1980 the ailing Senghor resigned as president and was succeeded by Prime Minister Abdou Diouf.

Senegal Since 1980. Economic reform and the presidency of Abdou Diouf launched what seemed to be a new chapter in Senegalese politics. As government resources declined, the old system of state patronage began to break down, and Diouf looked to a new generation of techni-

A True Source of Power

Senegal is primarily an Islamic nation, and among the most powerful groups in the country are Islamic "brotherhoods." Although the power of these conservative societies is mainly in religion, their opinions also strongly influence Senegalese politics, economic policies, and cultural issues. Each brotherhood has a spiritual leader, called the caliph, whose position is passed down from generation to generation within the same family. The largest Islamic brotherhood in Senegal is the Tijani. The Mouride brotherhood, which owns enormous groundnut plantations, is the most influential of the groups because of its great wealth.

cal experts to fill government posts. Diouf was easily reelected in 1983, 1988, 1993, and 1996. However, the economy continued to struggle, and a new political challenge emerged from the Senegalese Democratic Party (PDS) led by Abdoulaye Wade.

The elections of 1998 produced a close race for president, won again by Diouf. But the next election marked the end of his rule. A scandal erupted over the printing of a duplicate set of voter cards, and public outrage led to the election of Abdoulaye Wade as president in February 2000.

Trouble in Casamance. Perhaps the most serious problem facing President Wade is the situation in Senegal's southern province of Casamance. This region is a major source of groundnuts and contains rich FISHING areas off its coast. It also produces cotton for the nation's textile industry and is growing in popularity as a tourist destination for Europeans. The people of Casamance, however, have seen little benefit from these activities.

Since the mid-1980s the Movement of Democratic Forces of Casamance (MFDC) has been fighting for independence from the rest of Senegal. This separatist group is frustrated by economic problems related to the fishing industry and rice growing, and criticizes the lack of government spending on local infrastructure*.

For years Casamance's rebels have received arms from the army of Guinea-Bissau. When Guinea-Bissau's army rebelled against its president João Vieira in 1998, the Senegalese government supported Vieira. The uprising in Guinea-Bissau was put down with the help of Senegal and Guinea. But when the foreign troops left in 1999, the army rose again and overthrew Vieira. Relations between Senegal and Guinea-Bissau have deteriorated since that time.

THE ECONOMY

About 70 percent of Senegal's population works in agriculture, with groundnuts being the most important export crop. Major food crops include rice and millet*, and fishing and cattle-raising are also important economic activities. Despite the large number of people involved in farming, agricultural production is quite low. This is due partly to unreliable weather conditions, which can dramatically affect crop yields from year to year.

Over half of Senegal's gross domestic product (GDP)* comes from trade, transportation, tourism, and service industries. These activities are helped by Senegal's fairly well-developed transportation infrastructure, which includes a busy international airport and extensive road and rail connections. Many service and trade-related activities are performed on an informal basis, so their role in the economy is difficult to determine. Senegalese industry is focused on food processing, mining-based activities, textiles, and CRAFTS.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **millet** family of grains

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Senegal



Set on an island at the mouth of the Senegal River, Saint-Louis was founded by the French as a trading post in 1638. Today this island port relies on fishing and the export of peanuts.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

The population of Senegal is very diverse, with the WOLOF being the largest ethnic and language group. About a third of Senegalese are of Wolof ancestry, and Wolof serves as the common language in both Senegal and the Gambia. However, because of Senegal's ethnic diversity, social structure is perhaps the most appropriate way to categorize its people.

Cultures in northern and eastern Senegal traditionally have been based on a hierarchical* social structure consisting of nobles, free persons, occupational castes* (such as blacksmiths), and slaves. Free persons were once mainly farmers, but in recent years many have moved to urban areas in search of other economic opportunities. Although this strict hierarchical social order has broken down in modern times, there is still little intermarriage between descendants of the different groups.

Societies in southern Senegal historically have been less hierarchical and more suspicious of centralized power. Before the colonial era, government in the region came mainly through township councils and small groups of elders associated with various spirit shrines. Different clans* controlled separate shrines, as did men and women on occasion. This type of system helped to avoid the accumulation of power into the hands of a few.

While women in southern Senegal often hold considerable general power, those in northern Senegal frequently act as local political and

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

* **caste** division of people into fixed classes based on birth

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Senghor, Léopold Sédar



Republic of Senegal

POPULATION:

9,987,494 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

75,749 sq. mi. (196,190 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

French (official); Wolof, Malinke, Fulani, Pulaar

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

CFA Franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 92%, Traditional 6%, Christian 2%

CITIES:

Dakar (capital), 2,079,000 (2001 est.); Kaolack, Thiès, Saint-Louis, Ziguinchor

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 12–20 in. (300–500 mm) in north to 40–60 in. (1,000–1,500 mm) in south.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$1,650 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: groundnuts, millet, sorghum, manioc, rice, cotton, corn, green vegetables, poultry, cattle, pigs, fish
Manufacturing: agricultural and fish processing, fertilizer production, petroleum refining, construction materials, textiles
Mining: phosphates, petroleum

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1960. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: Assemblée Nationale (legislative body), elected by universal suffrage; Council of Ministers, appointed by prime minister.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1980 President Léopold Sédar Senghor
1981–2000 Prime Minister Abdou Diouf (president after 1983)
2000– President Abdoulaye Wade

ARMED FORCES:

11,000 (2001 est.)
Education: Compulsory for ages 7–13; literacy rate 33% (2001 est.)

economic leaders. They often have influence in the north's powerful Islamic brotherhoods. This continues the precolonial tradition in which women rulers emerged among the Wolof and Serer peoples. (*See also Class Structure and Caste, Colonialism in Africa, Dakar, Ethnic Groups and Identity, French West Africa, Islam in Africa, Ivory Trade, West African Trading Settlements.*)

Senghor, Léopold Sédar

1906–
President of Senegal



Léopold Sédar Senghor was both a successful poet and a major political figure. Born in French West Africa (now SENEGAL), Senghor studied to become a Catholic priest. However, he was forced to leave the seminary because he protested against racism. In 1928 he traveled to France to study. He hoped to become recognized as a Frenchman rather than as an African, but he soon decided that this was an impossible goal.

Instead Senghor explored his African roots, writing prizewinning poetry about his identity as an African. While fighting for France in World War II, he was captured by the Nazis. He spent two years in concentration camps, where he continued to write. After the war Senghor entered politics, and in 1946 he became one of Senegal's representatives to the French National Assembly. When Senegal achieved independence in 1960, Senghor was elected its first president.

Throughout his life Senghor balanced political, intellectual, and artistic interests. He developed a theory that the world's civilizations should unite and form a single universal culture. He also helped to create and



Senghor, Léopold Sédar

promote the black literary and cultural movement known as **NEGRIUDE**. In 1984 Senghor was the first African elected to the Académie Française, France's highest academic honor. He wrote several books of poetry, including *Oeuvre poétique*, which was published in 1990.

SENNAR, HISTORY

See *History of Africa*.

Seychelles

The Seychelles is a nation consisting of about 115 islands in the Indian Ocean off Africa's east coast. A former British colony, it has been an independent republic since 1976. The country's inhabitants, the Seychellois, are descended from Europeans, Africans, and Asians who settled on the islands.

The heart of the Seychelles is a group of about 40 mountainous, rocky islands. The largest, Mahé, is home to about 80 percent of the country's population and contains Victoria, the nation's capital. Most of the rest of the Seychellois live on the nearby islands of Praslin and La Digue. The country also includes several outlying groups of flat, coral islands.

Arab seafarers may have visited the Seychelles before the 1500s. The first Europeans to explore the islands were the Portuguese, followed by the English and French. Despite these expeditions, the Seychelles remained uninhabited until 1770, when France established a small colony there. In the years that followed, France was at war with Britain and the colony surrendered to the British seven times. Finally in 1814 France formally turned the islands over to Britain. The Seychelles remained under British control, first as a territory of the colony of MAURITIUS and then as a separate colony, until it became independent.

In addition to the original French colonists, groups of people from southern India settled in the Seychelles. The French and Indians settlers brought large numbers of slaves to the islands, mostly from MADAGASCAR and the east African coast. By the early 1800s slaves accounted for more than 85 percent of the colony's population. In the early 1900s additional immigrants from India as well as some from China settled on the islands.

For many years the economy of the Seychelles depended on agriculture. Cotton, coconuts, vanilla, and cinnamon were important export crops. Since the 1970s TOURISM has developed into the islands' major economic activity. The international airport that opened on Mahé in 1971 has made travel to the Seychelles more convenient. Commercial tuna fishing and canning have also become important in recent decades.

The Seychelles' first constitution established a multiparty democratic government. After a 1977 coup* led by France Albert René, the nation adopted a one-party socialist* system and René became president. In 1991, under pressure from Great Britain and France, the Seychelles restored the multiparty system. President René was reelected in 1993 and 1998. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**.)

See color
plate 12,
vol. 2.

* **coup** sudden, often violent overthrow of a ruler or government

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Shaaban Robert



Republic of Seychelles

POPULATION:

79,326 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

175 sq. mi. (454 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English and French (both official); creole

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Seychelles rupee

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Roman Catholic 90%, Anglican 8%, other 2%

CAPITAL CITY:

Victoria, 25,000 (1993 est.); Main islands: Mahé, Praslin, La Digue

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

On Mahé varies from 90 in. (2,300 mm) at sea level to 140 in. (3,560 mm) on mountain slopes.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$7,500 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: vanilla, coconuts, sweet potatoes, cinnamon, cassava, bananas, poultry, fish (especially tuna)

Manufacturing: fish processing and canning, coconut and vanilla processing, boat building, printing, furniture, beverages

Services: Tourism

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Britain, 1976. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 35-seat Asemble Nationale and Cabinet of Ministers.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1976–1977 President James R. Mancham

1977– President France Albert René

ARMED FORCES:

200 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–15; literacy rate 84% (2001 est.)

Shaaban Robert

1909–1962

Tanzanian poet and writer



heikh Shaaban Robert is regarded as one of the greatest poets and writers in the SWAHILI language. He developed a new style of Swahili writing that combined traditional storytelling with the techniques of modern poems and novels. He also introduced the essay into Swahili literature.

Born near the port city of Tanga in Tanganyika (present-day TANZANIA), Shaaban Robert was educated in DAR ES SALAAM. After completing his studies he went to work as a civil servant in Tanganyika's British colonial government, serving as a customs clerk and in the Veterinary Department, the Provincial Commissioner's Office, and the Department of Land Survey. In addition to his work as his civil servant, he was also active in a number of government and other organizations. He was a member of the East African Swahili Committee, the East African Literature Bureau, the Tanganyika Language Board, and the Tanga Township Authority, which later became the Tanga Town Council. Meanwhile, he began to write, publishing many of his poems in a newspaper run by the colonial government. He also translated great works of literature, such as the *Rubaiyat* by the Persian poet Omar Khayyam, into Swahili.

In his later years, Shaaban Robert wrote realistic novels. In works such as *The Day of Reckoning* and *Utubora the Farmer* (both published in 1968), he examined the problems of his land and its people. He belonged to various literary organizations, such as the East African Literature Bureau and the Tanganyika Languages Board, and won honors for his writing. Today Shaaban Robert's poems, novels, and essays are widely read by students of Swahili literature. (See also **Literature**.)



Shaka Zulu

Shaka Zulu

ca. 1790–1828
Ruler of the Zulu

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

Shaka Zulu founded the Zulu kingdom, which once controlled sections of present-day South Africa. In 1816 Shaka succeeded his father as ruler of the Zulu, a small ethnic group in southern Africa. Shaka soon expanded his chiefdom. He created a fierce army, providing his troops with long-bladed spears that were ideal for stabbing enemy soldiers in close combat. He also developed effective battle strategies that enabled him to defeat rival armies.

Several neighboring chiefdoms accepted Shaka’s rule and became part of the Zulu state. His troops raided and conquered other nearby peoples. Shaka forced the surviving males of defeated groups to join the Zulu army. He also required conquered people to pay tribute*, which greatly increased his wealth and made the Zulu the most powerful group in the region. Shaka’s wars and invasions were a disaster to those he conquered. His rule also brought violence and hardship to his own people, and in 1828 several Zulu leaders murdered Shaka. (See also **Southern Africa, History of; Zulu.**)

Shembe, Isaiah

1870–1935
South African church leader

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Isaiah Shembe was a ZULU prophet who founded his own church in the early 1900s. As a young man Shembe experienced a dramatic conversion that led him to give up worldly things and become a wandering preacher and healer. He joined the African Baptist Church in 1906 and eventually became an ordained minister. However, he broke away in 1911 to establish the Church of the Nazaretha.

Based on Old Testament teachings, Shembe’s church incorporated elements of indigenous* Zulu religion. According to his followers, Shembe performed miracles of healing and was able to foresee the future. After his death he was buried in the village near Durban, SOUTH AFRICA, where his church was based. Shembe’s tomb became a place of pilgrimage for his followers and the area around the burial site became known as “paradise.” Two of his sons took over leadership of the church, which still exists. (See also **Christianity in Africa, Prophetic Movements, Religion and Ritual.**)

SHIPS AND SHIPPING

See *Transportation.*

Shona

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

The Shona are a cluster of peoples who have lived for about 2,000 years in the Zimbabwean Plateau, a region of southern Africa that includes most of ZIMBABWE and part of MOZAMBIQUE. The Shona divide themselves into clans* that are associated with particular chiefdoms and areas. Although most Shona identify with a clan rather than with the Shona group as a whole, most Shona communities contain a mixture of clans.

Over the centuries a number of Shona states have developed. The



Sierra Leone

See
color plate 1,
vol. 3.

Shona kingdom of ancient Zimbabwe flourished in the 1300s and 1400s and was part of a gold trade network that extended as far as China. At the heart of the kingdom, the Shona built the impressive stone city of Great Zimbabwe—its ruins are now a major tourist attraction. After Zimbabwe lost power, the Shona formed smaller kingdoms, including Monomatapa and Rozvi Mambo. In the 1800s neighboring peoples weakened Shona authority in the region. By the time the British and Portuguese colonized Shona territory in the late 1800s, the Shona had divided into many small, independent chiefdoms.

In the past the Shona farmed and herded livestock. Today most of them combine farming with work in the cities, maintaining strong links between town and country. The Shona are known internationally for two art forms: stone sculpture and the music of the *mbira*, an instrument made of a hollow gourd with metal reeds that the player plucks. Although many Shona practice Christianity, they often turn to traditional religions to solve personal problems, such as illness, and to improve the fertility of the land.

Sierra Leone

Established as a haven for former slaves, Sierra Leone was for many years one of Africa’s success stories. When it gained independence in 1961, this resource-rich nation had a prosperous merchant class and a long history of representative government. Its recent history, however, has been filled with political instability and violence. Since 1991 a devastating civil war has reduced the nation to a state of chaos.

GEOGRAPHY

Sierra Leone is located on the Atlantic coast of West Africa between the countries of GUINEA and LIBERIA. Its broad coastal belt, covered by dense mangrove* swamps, gives way to wooded hills and gently rolling plateaus in the interior. The mountainous southeastern portion of the country features peaks up to 6,000 feet high. The climate of Sierra Leone is extremely hot and humid, with average rainfall of about 200 inches along the coast. Dense tropical rain forest covers portions of the country’s land area.

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Europeans first visited Sierra Leone in 1460 when Portuguese explorer Pedro de Cintra landed on the coast. He named the area Sierra Leone, meaning “Lion Mountains,” because of the beauty of its mountains. At that time the region was thinly settled by indigenous* Mende and Temne people. Contact between local peoples and coastal traders was frequent throughout the period before European rule.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Refuge for Slaves. In 1787 a British abolitionist* named Granville Sharp persuaded his government to establish a colony in Sierra Leone for people of African descent living in Britain. The first settlers to arrive

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

Sierra Leone



angered a local Temne chief and were driven away. Four years later a private London firm called the Sierra Leone Company reestablished the settlement. The company hoped to introduce “civilization” and replace the local trade in slaves with trade in vegetables grown in the region.

The Sierra Leone Company recruited about 1,200 colonists from Canada, who founded the coastal settlement of FREETOWN in 1792. The group included American blacks, loyal to Britain, who had been freed during the American Revolutionary War. The Sierra Leone Company and its colonists disagreed about the purpose of the colony. The settlers viewed Sierra Leone as a haven of freedom in which to start a new life; the company regarded it as a moneymaking venture. These disputes led to an armed uprising of settlers in 1800 that was put down by the company.

Growing Pains. The Sierra Leone Company had problems not only with settlers but also with local Temne rulers. In the past the Temne had leased land to European slave traders but had kept control over it. However, in the treaties they signed with the Sierra Leone Company the Temne unknowingly surrendered control of the land to the company. This led to arguments that resulted in war. In 1801 and 1802 Temne forces attacked Freetown, but the British eventually drove the Temne away from the area.

The Temne were not the only threat to the colony. Britain and France went to war in 1793, and the following year French forces burned Freetown to the ground. Because of continuing losses, the Sierra Leone company could not make a profit, and in 1808 it yielded control of the colony to the British Crown. In the following years, Sierra Leone became a naval base from which the British conducted raids on ships that violated Britain’s ban on the SLAVE TRADE. Enslaved Africans who were picked up on the ships were resettled in Freetown.



Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone Flourishes. During the early 1800s, some 80,000 freed slaves were settled in Sierra Leone. Under the guidance of missionaries and British officials, most converted to Christianity, learned English, and adopted Western names and lifestyles. The mixing of people from different backgrounds and races produced a Creole society that combined elements of both African and European culture. In time the members of this mixed population became known as Krio.

With little European competition, Krio traders in Sierra Leone established profitable import-export businesses dealing in timber, palm oil, and palm kernels. A Krio middle class emerged that invested in land and built large houses for themselves. Prosperous Krio business leaders contributed generously to the building of churches and schools. Christian missions provided schooling for children, and in 1827 the Church Missionary Society founded Fourah Bay College for higher education. With these educational opportunities, new generations of Krio became doctors, lawyers, and government officials.

The majority of the Krio population were originally YORUBA people from NIGERIA who kept many of their cultural traditions, such as belief in Islam* and membership in SECRET SOCIETIES. Over time, many people from surrounding areas moved to Freetown. Although the Krio worked alongside these newcomers, they tended to separate themselves from non-Krio groups. Some Krio even considered them a threat.

By the 1840s lack of employment opportunities forced many Krio to leave Sierra Leone. Some returned to their Yoruba homeland, while others decided to start new businesses elsewhere. This migration took many educated Krio to neighboring colonies such as the Gold Coast (present-day GHANA), the GAMBIA, Nigeria, and Liberia, where they became missionaries, traders, businesspeople, and government workers. The stream of emigrants from Sierra Leone formed the nucleus of an African middle class in British West Africa during the late 1800s.

The Road to Independence. During the 1800s tensions arose and intensified between the Krio and local British businessmen. To protect their commercial interests against Krio competition, Britain annexed* the interior of Sierra Leone in 1896 and established a protectorate*. Two years later the British imposed a Hut Tax on Africans to help pay the cost of colonial government. This led to an armed uprising in 1898, and resistance to British rule increased over the following years.

At about this same time, the British began expanding the political rights of Sierra Leoneans. In 1882 the colonial council appointed its first black member, and regular elections were held in Freetown beginning in 1895. Outside Freetown, however, few people had the right to vote. Furthermore, despite Sierra Leone's history as a haven for former slaves, its first antislavery law was not passed until 1926. By this time tensions existed not only between the Krio and the British but also between the Krio and the colony's growing Lebanese population. Social tensions sometimes erupted in protests, violent riots, and forms of guerrilla* warfare.

By the 1950s events were rapidly moving toward independence for Sierra Leone. A constitution adopted in 1951 called for a black majority in the Legislative Council, and within six years all residents in Sierra

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **annex** to take over or add a territory to an existing area

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors



Sierra Leone

Lawlessness and Survival

The breakdown of order in Sierra Leone has been accompanied by widespread corruption. In 1999 the officials who control the diamond fields oversaw the smuggling of more than \$30 million of diamonds to Liberia. Armed gangs patrol roads in the countryside and demand payment for passage. On one 170-mile stretch of road between Freetown and Kenema, a reporter was stopped more than 60 times. Even the average citizen has to resort to illegal means to survive. The war has destroyed so many roads to urban markets that many farmers find it easier to smuggle their crops over the border to neighboring countries than to try to sell them in Sierra Leone.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

Leone had the right to vote. By the time independence came in 1961, Sierra Leone had a long history of participatory government marked by free and fair elections.

Civilian Rule. The country's first prime minister, Sir Milton Margai, ensured that Sierra Leone enjoyed a free press, open debate in government, and effective participation in the political process by people throughout the land. When he died in 1964, his half-brother Albert was elected prime minister. However, the second Margai lost support when he tried to set up a one-party state. In the 1967 elections the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was defeated by the opposition party, the All People's Congress (APC). Shortly after the APC candidate Siaka Stevens became the new prime minister, the military staged a coup*. But military rule met with considerable opposition, and Stevens was returned to power a year later.

Stevens and the APC took the coup as a warning against weakness and quickly moved to establish stronger control over the government. Political corruption and violence increased, and by 1978 Sierra Leone had become a single-party state under APC leadership. Although Stevens was popular at first, growing corruption combined with a declining economy undermined his support. Faced with political defeat, Stevens resigned in 1986 and turned the government over to a hand-picked successor, Major General Joseph Momoh.

In his first years Momoh took steps to reform politics and create a more open system of government. He set up a commission to explore a return to multiparty politics and draft a new constitution. He also addressed the nation's growing economic problems by creating a program designed to control government expenditures and increase revenue. Momoh's plans were disrupted in 1991 when Liberian rebel leader Charles Taylor invaded Sierra Leone.

Descent Into Chaos. Joining Taylor in his invasion was a Sierra Leone rebel group known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Together, these forces quickly overran the countryside and captured Sierra Leone's diamond mining areas. Nigeria and Ghana sent troops to support the Sierra Leonean army, but they had little success against Taylor's guerrilla soldiers. Amid growing turmoil, a military coup led by Captain Valentine Strasser overthrew Momoh in 1992.

Despite initial victories against Taylor and the RUF, Strasser was no more effective than Momoh at ending the civil war. By 1994 rebel forces controlled the interior of Sierra Leone, and within a year they held major mining facilities, cutting off a crucial source of the nation's income. By 1995 the country was overrun by independent warlords and bandit groups in addition to the RUF. The government controlled only Freetown, and the economy was devastated. A 1996 coup toppled Strasser, and despite the continued fighting, elections were held in March of that year.

Only six months later, however, another coup ended the rule of the new civilian president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. The leaders of the coup freed from prison Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who was awaiting trial for an earlier coup attempt against Kabbah. Koroma ruled Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone

* **anarchy** state of lawlessness or political disorder

for a year as head of an armed forces council. During this time the country slipped into anarchy*. Freetown was engulfed in violence, including looting by soldiers and rebels.

After ten long months of fighting, troops provided by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) drove Koroma out of Freetown and restored Kabbah as president. Still, the fighting continued, and in January 1998 Freetown suffered another devastating attack that destroyed a fifth of the city's buildings. The international community finally intervened, pressuring both sides to find a solution, and peace talks were scheduled for the spring of 1999.

* **amnesty** official pardon granted to individuals for past offenses against the government

The Lomé Accord. In July 1999 the RUF and the government of Sierra Leone signed a peace treaty in Lomé, the capital of TOGO. According to the terms of the agreement, Kabbah ruled as president but shared power with RUF leader Foday Sankoh and Johnny Paul Koroma.

The Lomé Accord also called for rebel soldiers to turn in their arms and return to civilian life. All who had taken part in the fighting were granted amnesty*. Since the signing of the agreement, United Nations forces have replaced ECOWAS troops as peacekeepers, and there have been plans for a war crimes trial to prosecute rebels for atrocities against civilians. Meanwhile, RUF forces continue to hold parts of the country,

Civil war in Sierra Leone began in the early 1990s. These Kamajor hunters banded together in defense units to protect villages against attacks by rebels and groups of roving soldiers.



Sierra Leone



Republic of Sierra Leone

POPULATION:
5,232,624 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
27,699 sq. mi. (71,740 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
English (official); Krio, Temne, Mende, Limba

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Leone

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Muslim 60%, Traditional 30%, Christian 10%

CITIES:
Freetown (capital), 669,000 (1990 est.); Bo, Koindu, Kenema, Makeni

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 200 in. (5,000 mm) on the coast to 85 in. (2,160 mm) in the north.

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$500 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: coffee, cocoa, palm kernels, rice, palm oil, peanuts, livestock, fish

Manufacturing: mining, beverages, textiles, cigarettes, footwear, petroleum refining
Mining: diamonds

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Britain, 1961. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 80-seat House of Representatives (legislative body), with 68 members elected by popular vote; Ministers of State, appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1961–1964 Prime Minister Sir Milton Margai
1964–1967 Prime Minister Sir Albert M. Margai
1967 Brigadier David Lansana
1967–1968 Brigadier Andrew T. Juxon-Smith
1968–1986 Prime Minister Siaka Stevens (president after 1971)
1986–1992 President Joseph Saidu Momoh
1992–1996 Captain Valentine Strasser
1996 Brigadier Julius Maada Bio
1996–1997 President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah
1997–1998 Major Johnny Paul Koroma
1998– President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah

ARMED FORCES:
5,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:
no universal and compulsory education system exists; literacy rate 31% (2001 est.)

and Liberia's president Charles Taylor continues to be a destabilizing force in the region.

THE ECONOMY

Before the outbreak of war in 1991, the economy of Sierra Leone was based on agriculture and mining. Agriculture employed most of the population, with coffee and cocoa being the main export crops. The bulk of the nation's export revenues came from the mining of diamonds, iron ore, and the mineral rutile, a form of titanium.

The civil war has ravaged Sierra Leone's economy. Fighting in rural areas drove many people off the land and into the cities. As a result most of the best farming land remains unplanted, leaving major agricultural areas out of production. Rebel forces control the mining industry and earn money from smuggling diamonds and mineral ores to Liberia and other neighboring countries. The prospects for economic improvement in the short term are dim.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

The majority of the people of Sierra Leone are rural dwellers who depend on subsistence farming* for a living. Some 60 percent belong to the Mende and Temne ethnic groups, and about 10 percent are Krio. The rest of the population consists mostly of other West African groups.



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on



Slave Trade

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

Political relations in Sierra Leonean society have traditionally revolved around who receives and who provides tribute*. The tribute takers have usually been those in power, who are also responsible for distributing wealth and ensuring the fertility of the land and people. This social relationship has broken down in recent years, largely as a result of widespread government corruption and the violence unleashed by the civil war. A small educated group continues to control Sierra Leone and most of the nation's wealth, while the rural population struggles just to survive. The result is a massive social and economic divide within the country. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Creoles, Genocide and Violence, Lebanese Communities, Slavery, United Nations in Africa, Warfare.**)

Slave Trade

Throughout history SLAVERY has been a feature of many societies in all parts of the world, including Africa. Some Africans were enslaved within their own homelands. Far more, however, were carried off as slaves to other parts of Africa or around the world through the slave trade. The slave trade was a type of commerce in which enslaved humans were bought, sold, or traded as goods or property.

It is impossible to know for certain how many millions of Africans suffered the brutality and cruelty of the slave trade before it came to an end in the 1800s. In terms of forcible relocation, the greatest number of people were taken from western and central Africa and shipped across the Atlantic Ocean to European colonies in the Americas. However, slave traders had carried off people from other parts of Africa for centuries before the transatlantic slave trade began.

To those enslaved, the slave trade brought profound suffering. To some of the slave trade operators, it brought great wealth. The slave trade also had various long-term effects, including the establishment of African populations on other continents, the weakening of African societies that were robbed of many productive young people, and warfare among African states, some of which supplied captives to foreign slave traders.

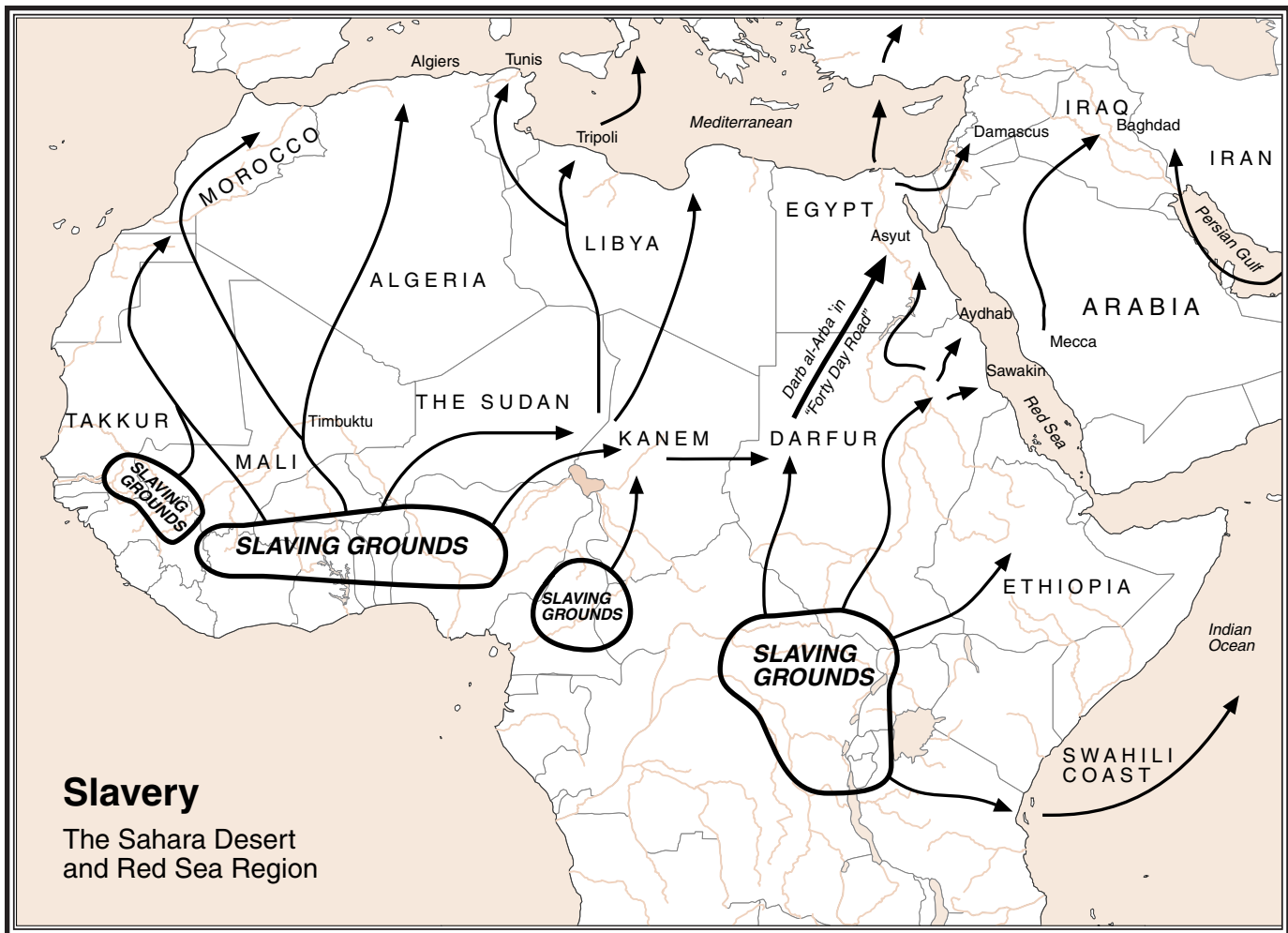
REGIONAL FEATURES OF THE SLAVE TRADE

Slave trading occurred in most parts of Africa. However, distinctive forms of the trade developed in the northern, western, central, and eastern parts of the continent. Each of these regions was also the source of slaves for specific foreign markets.

Northern Africa. The northern branch of the African slave trade arose after Arabs invaded and conquered North Africa in the A.D. 600s. Slavery became a feature of the Islamic* civilization established by the Arabs along Africa's Mediterranean coast and in the Near East. At first, most of the enslaved people brought to Islamic areas came from central and eastern Europe. They were supplied by Italian agents, who undertook the trade despite the Catholic church's ban on the selling of Christian slaves to Muslims

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad

Slave Trade



After about the year 1000, the states of Europe became stronger and better able to protect their citizens from slavery. As a result the supply of European slaves to Muslim traders dwindled. To replace these slaves, North African merchants, who were already engaged in commerce across the SAHARA DESERT with western Africa, began acquiring more and more black captives from that region, along with such goods as gold, ostrich feathers, and ivory.

The largest part of the northern African slave trade involved camel caravans organized by the BERBER and Arabic-speaking peoples of North Africa and the Sahara region. Some of these caravans crossed the western Sahara, carrying enslaved black Africans from what is now MALI, NIGER, NIGERIA, GHANA, and other parts of western Africa to settlements in Arab North Africa.

Other caravans began farther east in Darfur in what is now SUDAN. They carried captives from the southern NILE RIVER valley, ETHIOPIA, and southern Sudan north to EGYPT along a route called the Forty Day Road. Most of the slaves who traveled these desert routes had to walk, and many died along the way. Another branch of the northern African slave trade took captives on foot eastward through Ethiopia to ports on the



Slave Trade

Red Sea. From there they were shipped to the Arabian peninsula and places farther east.

Historians estimate that 3.5 to 4 million captives crossed the Sahara and another 2 million crossed the Red Sea between the 700s and the 1900s. Most of these victims of the Saharan and Red Sea slave trades were settled in North Africa, Arabia, the lands around the Persian Gulf, or southern Asia. Others, however, remained within the Sahara region, northern Sudan, or Ethiopia. Among the slaves were many women, destined to become domestic laborers or concubines*. Enslaved men were acquired to work in agriculture, mining, shipping, fishing, and for other manual labor. In addition, some rulers in Egypt and elsewhere in North Africa used black male slaves as soldiers.

* **concubine** woman maintained by a man in a sexual relationship other than marriage

Western Africa. Beginning in the 1400s European powers established colonies in a number of areas, first on islands in the Atlantic Ocean, later in the Americas, and finally in Africa. In order to exploit* the vast resources of these new colonies, especially those in the Americas, Europeans needed many workers. They turned to slave labor to meet this need.

* **exploit** take advantage of; to make productive use of

Colonizers in the Americas first tried to enslave the native peoples, but their attempts ended in failure. Overworked and infected with European diseases, the Native Americans were nearly wiped out in many places. As a result, the colonizers had to bring in labor from other regions. European traders were already familiar with western Africa as a source of goods such as gold, pepper, and copper and had even acquired some black slaves there. With the colonization of the Americas, the trickle of black slaves grew into a flood, and a slave trade developed that involved both Africans and Europeans.

Europeans rarely ventured inland on slave raids, leaving that part of the business to Africans based on the coast of western Africa. Many of the captives came from interior regions, and nearly all were acquired by violence—through war, raids by organized groups of slave-takers, and kidnappings by individuals or small groups. Those taken were marched to the coast and held in captivity until a European slave ship arrived.

African slaves became part of a highly profitable commercial network that is often called the triangle trade. On the first leg of the triangle, ships carried European manufactured goods such as cloth and cheap guns to Africa to be exchanged for slaves. The second leg of the triangle, known as the Middle Passage, took the enslaved Africans to the Americas. The majority of them ended up on sugar plantations on the island colonies of the Caribbean. Others went to sugar and coffee plantations in Brazil and to tobacco and cotton plantations in Britain's southern American colonies. The third leg of the trade carried sugar, rum, tobacco, and other plantation crops to Europe.

The Middle Passage was a fearful ordeal for captive Africans. Chained slaves were jammed into crowded, poorly ventilated cargo holds for the voyage, which lasted from three to six weeks. On average, 15 to 30 percent of the human cargo died of disease, abuse, or exhaustion during the trip. Of the enslaved people who survived the journey, many died of overwork or malnutrition within a few years of their arrival in the Americas.

See
color plate 7,
vol. 2.



Slave Trade

The Zanj Revolts

During the late 600s and 700s thousands of Africans from the eastern coast of the continent were sent as slaves to the Middle East. Known as the Zanj, they staged many revolts against their Arab masters. One revolt began in 869, lasted for 14 years, and involved tens of thousands of African slaves. The rebels managed to capture Basra, a center of Arab political and military might. For a time the rebellion threatened the survival of the Arab state. Eventually the Arabs crushed the revolt—but for centuries afterward they avoided importing slaves from eastern Africa.

The transatlantic slave trade lasted from the 1440s to the 1860s and was at its peak from 1700 to 1850. Historians estimate that at least 13 million people were shipped from Africa to the Americas as slaves. Most of them were between 15 and 30 years old. About two thirds of the captives were male—slaveholders in the Americas preferred men for field labor.

Of the 13 million Africans forced to make the overseas journey to the Americas, the great majority came from the coastal region of western Africa, between SENEGAL and CAMEROON. So many captives were taken from the lands between the Volta River in Ghana and the NIGER RIVER in Nigeria that Europeans called that region the Slave Coast.

Central Africa. Central Africa also contributed a steadily increasing share of the captives sent to European colonies in the Americas. In the 1500s about one out of five slaves in the transatlantic trade came from the west-central African coast between CONGO and ANGOLA. After 1800 nearly half of the slaves shipped from Africa originated in that region.

The Portuguese began exporting slaves from central Africa in the 1500s, when they established sugar plantations on the island of SÃO TOMÉ off the western coast of Africa. By the 1560s the Portuguese had brought 30,000 slaves to the island, mostly from Angola. In the century that followed, they developed a large-scale slave trade south of the CONGO RIVER, aided by bands of young African warriors who conducted raids to gather slaves.

By the 1600s Brazil had replaced São Tomé as the principal market for Portuguese slave traders. The vast sugar plantations of Brazil required ever larger numbers of African slaves, and the discovery of gold and diamonds in Brazil in the 1700s increased the demand for labor even more. In the late 1600s English, French, and Dutch slavers also began operating along the Atlantic coast of central Africa, shipping enslaved people primarily to sugar plantations in the West Indies.

As the demand for slaves grew, some groups of central Africans became more deeply involved in the trade, opening new territories in the interior as sources of slaves. Warlords led raids into the population centers of these territories and sent caravans of captives back to the coast. The slave trade eventually included enslaved Africans from regions as distant as the center of the continent, 900 miles from the coast.

By the 1700s nearly all societies in central Africa owed their power either to their control of slaving routes or to the defensive strengths they had developed to protect themselves from slave raids. African kingdoms near the coast gave up raiding and became go-betweens, buying slaves from the zones of violence in the interior and selling them to buyers on the coast. To profit from the commerce in slaves, some local rulers in central Africa forced their subjects into debt and then condemned them to slavery when they could not repay what they owed.

Eastern Africa. Enslaved people from eastern Africa were shipped out of ports on the Indian Ocean coast for centuries. The first evidence of a significant slave trade in the region dates from after the rise of Islam

Slave Trade

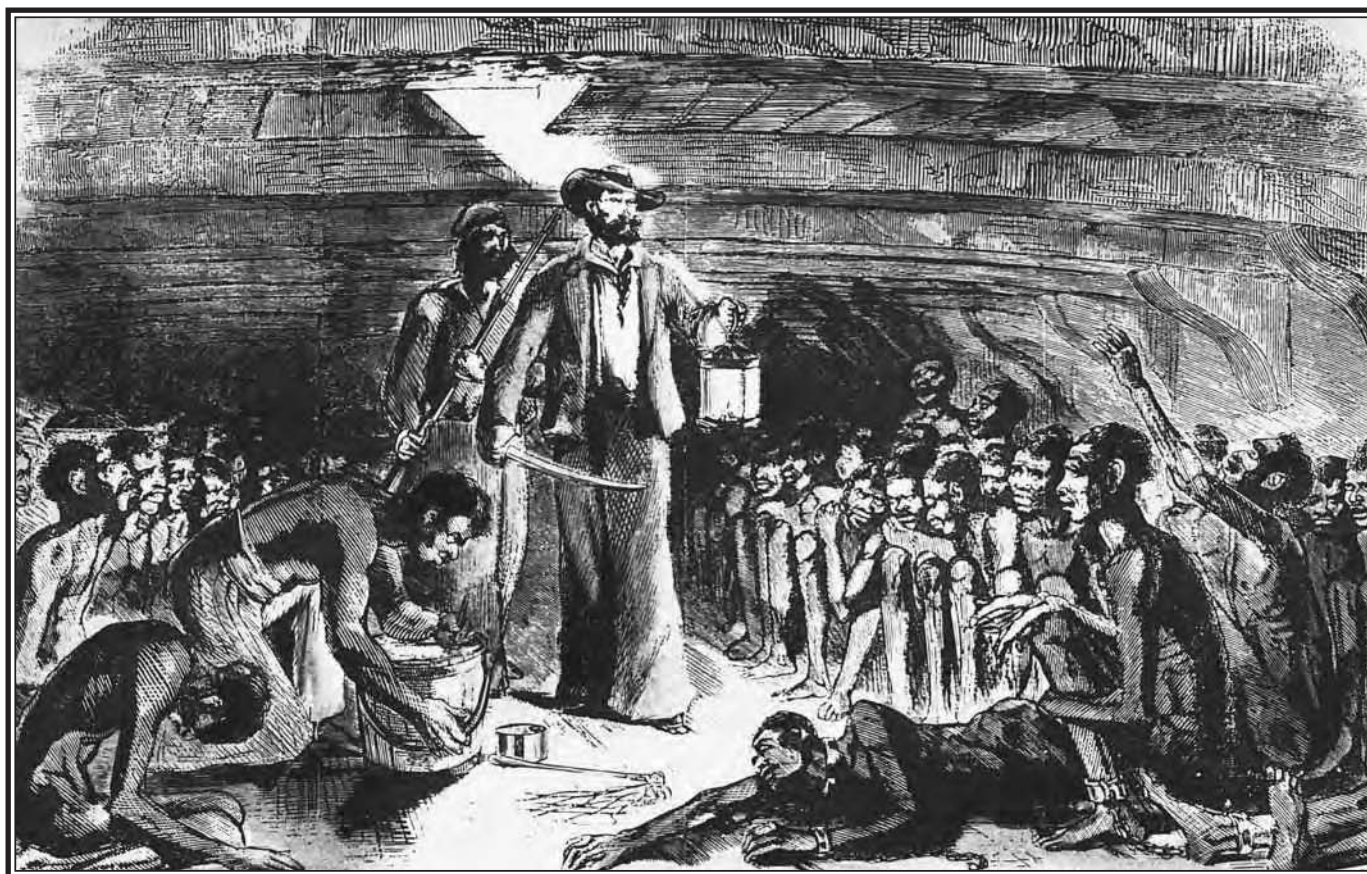
* **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire

in the A.D. 600s. The Abbasid Caliphate* that formed in what is now Iraq and Iran imported African slaves for use as soldiers, farm laborers, and domestic workers. Muslim traders also sent Africans farther east, to Indonesia and China.

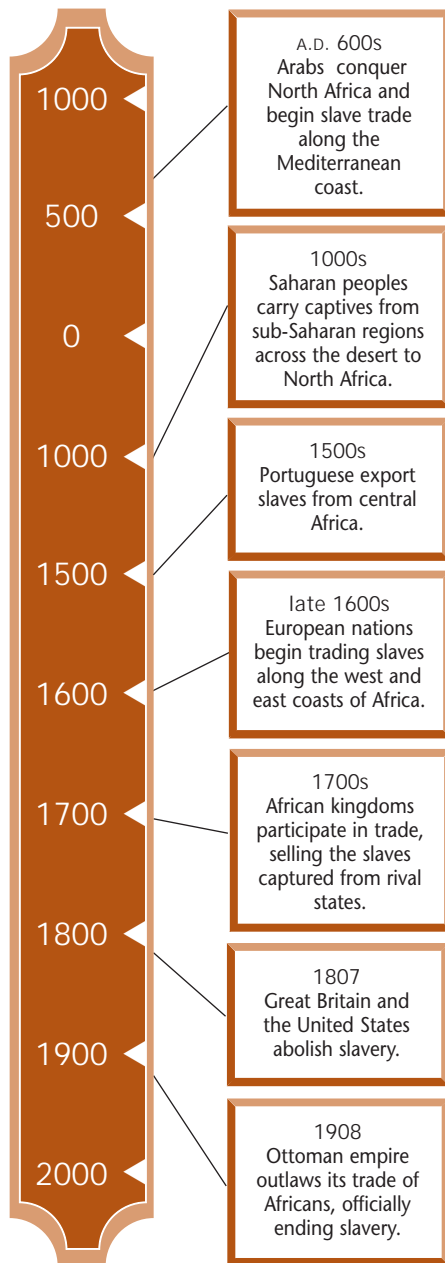
In the centuries that followed, slaves may have been exported from eastern Africa, but the Arabs who established trading communities along the coast were mainly interested in gold and ivory. After the Portuguese arrived in the area and gained control of the coast in the 1500s, they carried some enslaved Africans to Portuguese colonies in Asia. However, slave raiding and slave trading did not become major economic activities in eastern Africa until the mid-1700s, when new demands for labor appeared.

Beginning in the late 1600s, the state of Oman on the Arabian coast expanded its cultivation of date palms and also started plantations along the coast of KENYA. In the early 1700s the French established Caribbean-style sugar plantations on the Indian Ocean islands of MAURITIUS and RÉUNION. These developments created a growing demand for slave labor. To meet the demand, new slave markets arose in eastern Africa. The largest were in the southern part of the coast, but by the 1800s virtually every port on the eastern coast was involved in the slave trade to some degree. From these bases, Arab, SWAHILI, and African slave traders conducted raids and buying expeditions into the interior.

From the 1500s to the mid-1800s, Europeans brought millions of enslaved Africans to the Americas to work in agriculture and mining. This print shows the "passengers" of the slave ship *Gloria* in 1850.



Slave Trade



Most victims of the eastern African slave trade came from MOZAMBIQUE, TANZANIA, the region around Lake Malawi, eastern Congo, and MADAGASCAR. Some of those who passed through the coastal slave markets were sent overseas or to the offshore islands; others went to Arab-operated plantations in ZANZIBAR, Kenya, and southern SOMALIA. During the first half of the 1800s, slave traders from Brazil also appeared in the slave markets of eastern Africa, seeking labor for Brazil's booming plantation economy. The African rulers of Madagascar and Dutch settlers in SOUTH AFRICA also imported slaves from eastern Africa. This slave trade in this region reached its height between 1770 and 1870, with exports perhaps reaching 30,000 people a year.

THE END OF THE SLAVE TRADE

Although every age had some compassionate or just-minded individuals who opposed the traffic in human beings, putting an end to this ancient and widespread evil required broad public support. Abolition—the movement to end slavery—began to attract support among Europeans in the late 1700s, largely because of moral outrage against slavery. In the late 1800s the Ottoman Empire, which controlled Islamic North Africa and the Near East, also moved toward abolishing the slave trade as a result of internal reform movements and pressure from European powers. In the end the slave trade was eventually stamped out partly for religious or moral reasons and partly for economic ones. Four hundred years of violent slave trading, however, had left deep marks on the African population.

Abolition. The late 1700s saw the growth of European political philosophies that stressed the rights of all people to freedom and equality. At the same time Africans themselves fought against slavery and the slave trade, both through resistance in Africa and efforts to sway public opinion in Europe. Africans such as Olaudah EQUIANO and Ottobah Cugoano, former slaves from western Africa who lived in England, spoke and wrote about the cruelties of the slave trade and urged that it be outlawed. Other Africans performed the same role in France and the Americas. The personal stories of such individuals, told with eloquence and conviction, helped swell the ranks of the growing abolition movement.

While the abolition movement was gaining strength, far-reaching changes in industry and trade were reducing the economic rewards of slavery. The prices of raw materials such as sugar began to fall on world markets, but African traders and rulers were raising the price of slaves. These factors meant that slaveholders had to pay more for slaves whose output in labor was worth less in the marketplace. At the same time the rise of the Industrial Revolution encouraged bankers and other investors to put their money into factories, not plantations. British and European business leaders began to believe that the economic value of Africa in the future would be as a source of raw material for industry and a market for mass-produced factory goods rather than as a source of labor. From an economic point of view, abolition involved transforming Africans from slaves into customers for European goods.



Slave Trade

In 1805 Denmark became the first country to make it illegal for its citizens to participate in the slave trade. Great Britain did the same two years later. The United States banned the slave trade in 1808, followed by the Netherlands in 1814 and France in 1817. In addition to abolishing the slave trade, Britain took on a policing role, sending naval vessels to the Atlantic coast of western Africa to seize slave ships. Britain did not succeed in stopping the trade immediately—in fact, the number of slaves shipped from western Africa rose during the 1820s and 1830s. In time, however, the combination of enforcement and reduced demand caused the slave trade to decrease significantly.

Outlawing the slave trade was only the first step in ending slavery. Great Britain abolished the institution of slavery and freed all slaves in 1834. By the time Brazil ended slavery in 1888, the institution had been outlawed throughout the Western world. Meanwhile, within the Ottoman Empire the period from the 1830s to the 1880s was a time of reform when upper-class, educated people began questioning slavery on moral grounds. During that time Ottoman rulers also came under increasing pressure from Great Britain and other European nations to abolish slavery. Britain took steps to choke off the trade routes that supplied the Ottoman empire with slaves. As a result, the Ottomans passed a series of laws between 1847 and 1908 ending the trade in both African and white slaves and officially abolishing slavery.

Even after the slave trade was outlawed, the traffic in slaves continued in some places, though on a greatly reduced scale. In addition, people remained in various forms of bondage in Africa and elsewhere. Such practices, however, had not only become illegal—they were internationally recognized as profoundly wrong and violations of HUMAN RIGHTS.

Long-Term Effects. The trade in African slaves brought about the largest forced movement of people in history. It established the basis for black populations in the Caribbean and in North and South America. At the same time, it disrupted social and political life in Africa and opened the door for European colonization of the continent.

The effects of the slave trade are well illustrated in western Africa, the source of most enslaved people in the transatlantic trade. When Europeans first began exchanging goods for gold, pepper, and other items along the western African coast, such commerce encouraged peaceful relations and trade among indigenous* societies. Everyone benefited as these trade goods flowed smoothly among African groups and between Africans and Europeans.

The shift in European demand from gold, foodstuffs, and such products to slaves changed the relations among African groups and states. The prices Africans received for slaves made it more profitable for them to take captives from their neighbors than to establish networks for producing and selling other goods. In this way the slave trade encouraged strong states to raid weaker states for slaves. As a result, many African societies were torn by organized slave wars and general banditry. Successful slave-raiding and trading societies formed new states that were dominated by military groups and constantly at war with their neighbors.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place



Slave Trade

While the abolition movement achieved tremendous victories and did much good, in one way it had a negative effect on Africa. Abolition and the Christian reform movement with which it was closely linked gave Europeans a strong interest in the internal affairs of African states and an excuse to become involved in those affairs. Eventually the mission to stamp out slavery became, in the eyes of many Europeans, a justification for bringing African territory under their control. During the late 1800s they divided the continent into colonies.

Another legacy of the slave trade was the loss, in generation after generation, of young Africans who would play a productive role in the economic or political development of their homelands. Some parts of Africa were severely depopulated* by the taking of captives and the flight of people trying to avoid capture. It is impossible to say what Africa could be like today had it escaped the widespread and long-lasting ravages of the slave trade. (See also **Colonialism in Africa; Diaspora, African; Economic History; History of Africa.**)

* **depopulated** referring to a greatly reduced number of inhabitants

Slave Exports from Central Africa

Years	Total Exports	Central Africa	Percentage from Central Africa
1450–1600	367,000	50,000	13.6%
1601–1700	1,868,000	500,000	26.8%
1701–1800	6,133,000	2,058,000	33.6%
1801–1870	3,274,000	1,517,300	46.3%
Total	11,642,000	4,125,300	35.4%

Source: Lovejoy, Paul E. "The Volume of the Atlantic Slave Trade: A Synthesis," *Journal of African History*, 23, no. 4 (1982). All figures are estimates.



Slavery

Slavery involves treating human beings as property that people can own. In the past, when slavery was legal or customary in many places, some slaves were granted certain rights and privileges. However, no slave ever had true liberty or freedom, and the institution of slavery rested on force or the threat of force that could be used against the enslaved.

In Africa, as in other parts of the world, forms of slavery have existed since the beginning of recorded history. The **SLAVE TRADE** forcibly removed millions of Africans from the continent, and many other individuals remained enslaved within Africa. In numerous African societies, slavery and the institutions and conditions related to it had economic, political, and cultural significance. Although slavery was abolished during the 1800s, variations of it have continued to exist in some groups in Africa into modern times.

FORMS OF SLAVERY

* **servile** relating to a slave or a person in lowly position

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **creditor** one to whom money is owed; lender

Various type of servile* institutions developed in Africa. Under systems of formal slavery, enslaved persons were considered property. Ownership gave masters the right to sell slaves and use them and their labor without regard for the slaves' wishes. Such slavery existed in some traditional African societies as well as in the Muslim societies that developed in North Africa after Islam* entered the continent in the A.D. 600s. Islamic law permitted slavery but included rules governing the relationship to prevent extreme cruelty and abuse. The law also defined categories of people who could or could not be enslaved. The categories varied. Muslims did not always agree, for example, on whether or not other Muslims could be enslaved.

Concubinage was a special category of slavery in which masters maintained female slaves called concubines as sexual partners. Concubines and their children sometimes had certain rights, especially under Islamic law. If a concubine bore a child fathered by her master, he could not sell her or the child. In non-Muslim areas, children born to concubines were usually treated as equal to the children of free women.

In some African societies, certain slaves belonged not to individuals but to a particular political position. They lived on land that was controlled by the individual who held that position at a given time. This form of slavery, in which people were bound to the land rather than to a particular master, has been compared to the condition of peasant workers called serfs in medieval* Europe. Sometimes the bondage was religious rather than political. Along the coast of western Africa, for example, cult* slavery was common. Slaves were presented to a shrine, and the priests of the shrine had access to their labor and their bodies. These slaves could not be sold because they belonged to the shrine, but they and their children were outcasts.

Debt peonage, also called pawnship, was a servile condition based on a relationship between a debtor and a creditor*. Under this system a creditor held an individual—a “pawn”—as a guarantee that a debt would be repaid. Often the pawn was not the actual debtor but one of the debtor's relatives. The pawn had to work for the creditor until the debtor paid off the debt, ending the pawn's period of servitude. If the debt was not repaid, or if the creditor himself fell into debt before the pawn was released, the creditor could sell the pawn into slavery. In business arrangements, one side sometimes held individuals as commercial hostages. If the other side failed to complete the transaction, the hostages became slaves. In certain societies pawnship sometimes served as a way for men to acquire additional wives. Slave wives or concubines were captured or purchased, but pawn wives were gained in return for canceling debts.

Practices associated with pawnship and other forms of enslavement suggest that there were various stages between freedom and slavery in Africa. For example, not all war captives, political prisoners, and kidnapping victims became slaves immediately. Often they entered a form of servitude from which they could be released by payment of a ransom. If the ransom was not paid, they became slaves. Although in some cases



Slavery

Captured in Song

The kingdom of Kanem arose near Lake Chad around A.D. 700. For the next thousand years Kanem and Bornu, the kingdom that followed it, seized slaves in raids on the lands to the south. These slaves performed agricultural labor and sometimes colonized new territory. Slave-taking required ruthlessness, a quality praised in a song about one king during the 1000s:

The best you took (and sent home) as the first fruits of battle:

The children crying on their mothers you snatched away from their mothers:

You took the slave wife from a slave, and set them in lands far removed from one another.

individuals succeeded in moving out of slavery, countless other people were enslaved through kidnappings, raids, wars, or violations of safeguards that were supposed to protect pawns and servants.

FACTORS INFLUENCING SLAVERY

Slavery occurred in both large and small societies in Africa and in various political settings. Economic conditions played a major role in the kinds of servile arrangements that developed and the number of people who were enslaved.

Economic Factors. Slavery became especially important in areas where large-scale agriculture, with its high demand for labor, developed into a major economic activity. Many slaves, for example, worked as agricultural laborers in the SAHEL, the region south of the SAHARA DESERT. One ruler of the Songhai Empire in Nigeria in the 1500s is said to have owned about 20 plantations along the NIGER RIVER, most of them producing rice and all of them worked by slaves. The importing of slaves into the Sahel continued into the late 1800s.

Along the Atlantic coast, slaves played a large role in the economy, working in agriculture and carrying goods to market. During the 1800s, thousands of slaves worked on plantations along the coasts of SENEGAL and the GAMBIA, producing groundnuts for export. Although the Jola people of the southern Senegal coast had resisted the slave trade for years, as the trade in groundnuts increased they began selling each other into slavery. The Jola slaves cultivated rice plantations that fed the groundnut producers.

During the 1800s European and Arab colonies in southern and eastern Africa made extensive use of slaves, especially in producing goods for export. On the island of ZANZIBAR and along the coast of eastern Africa, Arabs and SWAHILI established plantations where slaves cultivated cloves. The Portuguese used slave labor to grow sesame in MOZAMBIQUE, and cotton, coffee, and other crops in ANGOLA. These developments were part of a trend also seen in tropical areas of the Americas and Asia—the effort to capture export markets through the use of slave labor on plantations and in mines.

Enslaved persons from Africa had another economic role as well—as exports in the international slave trade. States of western Africa that supplied captives to the trade, such as ASANTE in present-day GHANA and Dahomey in BÉNIN, became the dominant powers in that region during the 1700s and early 1800s, when slave exports from Africa were at their peak.

Political Factors. Slavery and servile conditions existed in a variety of cultures in Africa. Slavery was present in some small communities in which the difference between groups or social classes was not great. In larger, more complex societies, it occurred on a larger scale. Such societies had many roles that slaves could fill. Some served as bureaucrats*, soldiers, commercial agents, or wives and mothers of rulers; others labored in mines, plantations, or agricultural slave villages.

* **bureaucrat** one who works in a bureaucracy, a large departmental organization within a government



Slavery

By the 1700s slaves and servile pawns were concentrated in Africa's most centrally organized states and most economically developed areas. Political and commercial groups—rulers, nobles, and merchants—had acquired the majority of slaves. In many places rulers maintained their hold on political power by collecting a large personal following, which often included slaves and people in other servile conditions as well as relatives. Many male slaves were placed in their masters' armies as soldiers, while female slaves generally lived and worked in the households of their masters.

In a number of African states, including Ghana, ancient EGYPT, and some Nigerian societies, slaves were killed when royal or noble masters died so that they could accompany the masters into the afterlife. Some groups sacrificed slaves into the 1800s. A funeral for a wealthy master was not the only occasion for such sacrifices—slaves might also be killed in religious ceremonies. Such events took place most often in societies where slaves had become very numerous. They had various purposes—to decrease slave populations, to terrorize slaves and make them easier to control, to punish criminals, and to frighten rival societies by killing captives.

Abolition—the movement to end the slave trade and slavery itself—became a powerful political force in Europe during the 1800s. Although the abolition movement grew out of the sincere belief that slavery was wrong, it also provided Europeans with a reason to invade and conquer the African continent. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, the European powers established firm control over most of Africa. Together with the spread of Christianity, their rule undermined slavery and other servile institutions.

These institutions did not disappear overnight. In some regions reform was gradual, and slavery and pawnship died out slowly. Colonial administrations themselves established new servile institutions, such as forced labor for road-building projects or plantations. They also introduced taxation, which often required Africans to take whatever wage labor they could find in order to pay their taxes. As a result, many Africans labored in conditions not very different from servitude. In addition, local African rulers who cooperated with the new colonial administrations usually were allowed to keep some degree of power over those who had been slaves or pawns. Finally, although Europeans made the buying and selling of slaves illegal, the laws were not always easy to enforce. Traffic in slaves continued for years in parts of Africa. In some areas it survived even after the colonies gained independence in the mid-1900s.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AFRICAN SLAVERY

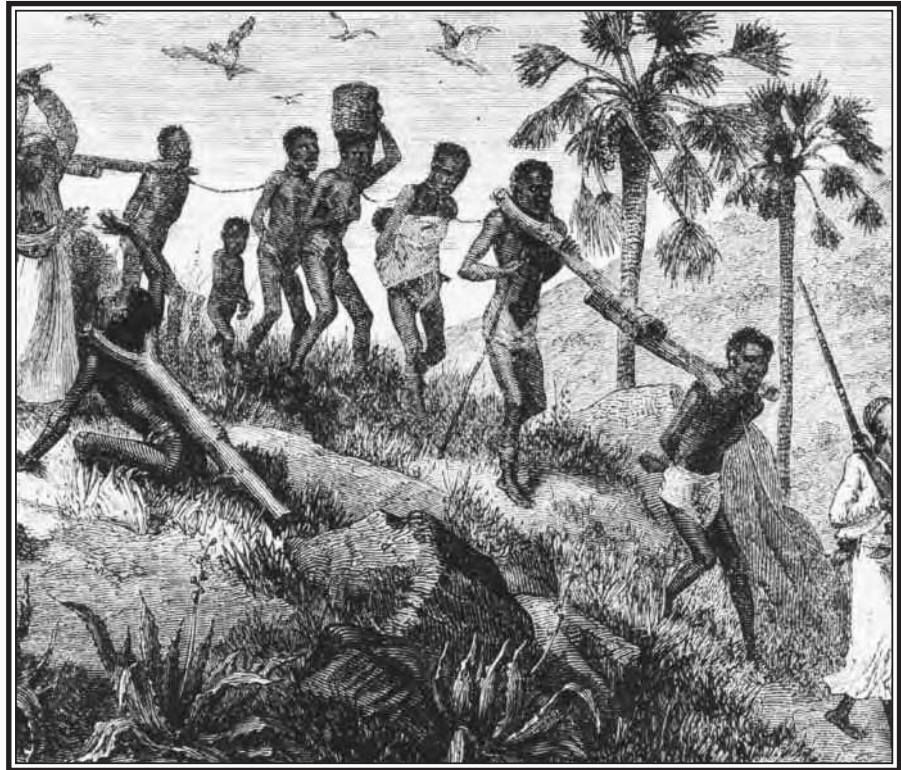
* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

Some anthropologists* believe that African slavery is best understood in relation to African culture. African slavery, they argue, differed in key ways from the slavery practiced by Europeans and Americans who obtained slaves as laborers through the international slave trade.

Western slavery was an economic institution—slaves were property whose value lay in the work they could perform. In Africa, on the other

Slavery

Slave traders lead a group of African captives to the coast, where the captives will be sold as slaves and loaded onto ships.



hand, slavery involved not only economic but also social and political factors. People acquired slaves for reasons other than economic usefulness. Ownership of a large number of slaves, for example, was a sign of power and importance.

African slavery was also closely related to issues of **KINSHIP**, the network of extended family relationships that form the primary social unit in most African cultures. Forcibly torn from their kinship groups or their lines of ancestry, slaves and pawns were stripped of their social identities. They became nonpersons in cultures that traditionally defined existence as membership in a social group rather than in terms of individuality.

Slaves who were intended for sale or sacrifice remained nonpersons. Once acquired by a master, however, slaves and pawns became part of the master's social network, which could include immediate family members, more distant relatives, persons in various types of servile relationships, and other slaves. Although slaves occupied the outer rim of this network, they were still recognized as part of it. Generally they were given new names to mark the fact that their old identities had ceased to exist.

The main characteristics of Western slavery were the loss of freedom and the possibility of regaining it. In African societies, however, people placed a very high value on belonging to a kinship group. For them slavery also involved the loss of kinfolk. Newly acquired slaves in Africa possessed none of the rights or benefits of kinship, but in time they or their descendants could receive some of those rights and benefits as they gradually became part of the master's kinship group.

Sobhuza I and II

Sometimes slaves were adopted outright and transformed into family members rather quickly. In other cases, the process occurred slowly, as succeeding generations came to be regarded more and more as part of the group, until eventually the boundaries between those of free descent and those descended from slaves became blurred. In this sense, the Western notion of slavery—the ownership of people as property—was very different from the realities of the institution of slavery in Africa. (*See also Class Structure and Caste; Diaspora, African; Economic History; Ethnic Groups and Identity; Plantation Systems.*)

Smuts, Jan Christiaan

1870–1950
Prime Minister of South
Africa

* **League of Nations** organization founded to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

Jan Christiaan Smuts spent most of his life trying to unify SOUTH AFRICA, first as a soldier and later as a politician. The son of Afrikaners, South Africans of Dutch ancestry, Smuts lived in Cape Colony before studying law at Cambridge University. After returning to South Africa, he fought on the side of the AFRIKANER REPUBLICS during the South African (Boer) War (1899–1902) against Britain. Following peace negotiations, Smuts helped to unite South Africa—then a self-governing British territory—under largely Afrikaner leadership.

During World War I Smuts fought with British forces that conquered German Southwest Africa (now NAMIBIA). In 1916 he went to England where he held a cabinet post in the government of Prime Minister Balfour. During that time he helped to draft the declaration that proposed founding a Jewish state in Palestine. At the end of the war, he attended the peace conference, where he supported the decision to create a League of Nations*.

In 1919 Smuts was elected prime minister of South Africa. He tried to strengthen the country's ties to Britain—a move that many Afrikaners opposed. Smuts was defeated in the elections five years later. He won office again in 1939 and brought South Africa into World War II against the wishes of his political opponents.

Smuts dedicated his career to achieving a peaceful union of British and Afrikaner settlers in a South Africa governed by European principles. Although he did not believe in sharing power with Africans, he opposed the racist APARTHEID policies introduced by the National Party in 1948. (*See also World Wars I and II.*)

Sobhuza I and II

Kings of Swaziland

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Sobhuza I (ca. 1780–1839) founded the Swazi kingdom of southwest Africa by uniting various Nguni-speaking clans* in southern SWAZILAND. To accomplish this, he used techniques of persuasion that included arranging alliances through marriage and granting titles and choice lands to neighboring chiefs. Sobhuza then moved his people into central Swaziland, defeating rival clans and expanding his holdings as far north as the Transvaal. He defended his territory against attacks by ZULU and Ndwandwe forces and was negotiating with missionaries to consolidate the kingdom at the time of his death.



Sobhuza I and II

* **diplomacy** practice of managing relations between nations without warfare

Sobhuza II (1899–1982), a descendant of Sobhuza I, was named heir to the throne as an infant. By the time he was crowned in 1921, the Swazi kingdom had grown considerably weaker. However, Sobhuza II was skilled in diplomacy* and managed to restore the kingdom’s power by playing off settlers, colonial officials, and local rivals against one another. When Swaziland achieved independence in 1968, he became its first ruler. Five years later he canceled the nation’s constitution. Extremely popular, Sobhuza II continued as king without opposition until his death. (See also **Kings and Kingship; Southern Africa, History.**)

SOCIAL STRUCTURE

See *Class Structure and Caste.*

Somalia

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Since the beginning of its civil war in 1991, Somalia has served as a grisly example of what can happen when an African state collapses. Once a relatively prosperous nation, Somalia turned to ruins when independent warlords—representing various Somali clans*—battled viciously for turf and power. The fighting disrupted all services, and famine took thousands of lives. In the year 2000, a peace conference selected a president to head a new central government. But many people still live in areas outside the government’s control.

GEOGRAPHY

Somalia occupies a strategic position on the Horn of Africa, the region of eastern Africa where the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean meet. The country consists mostly of a large plateau broken by a chain of mountains in the far north. Its extremely hot and dry climate includes two rainy seasons alternating with two dry seasons. During the hottest part of the year, temperatures can climb to over 120°F. Rainfall in the north averages only about 3 inches per year, but the far south of the country can receive up to 20 inches.

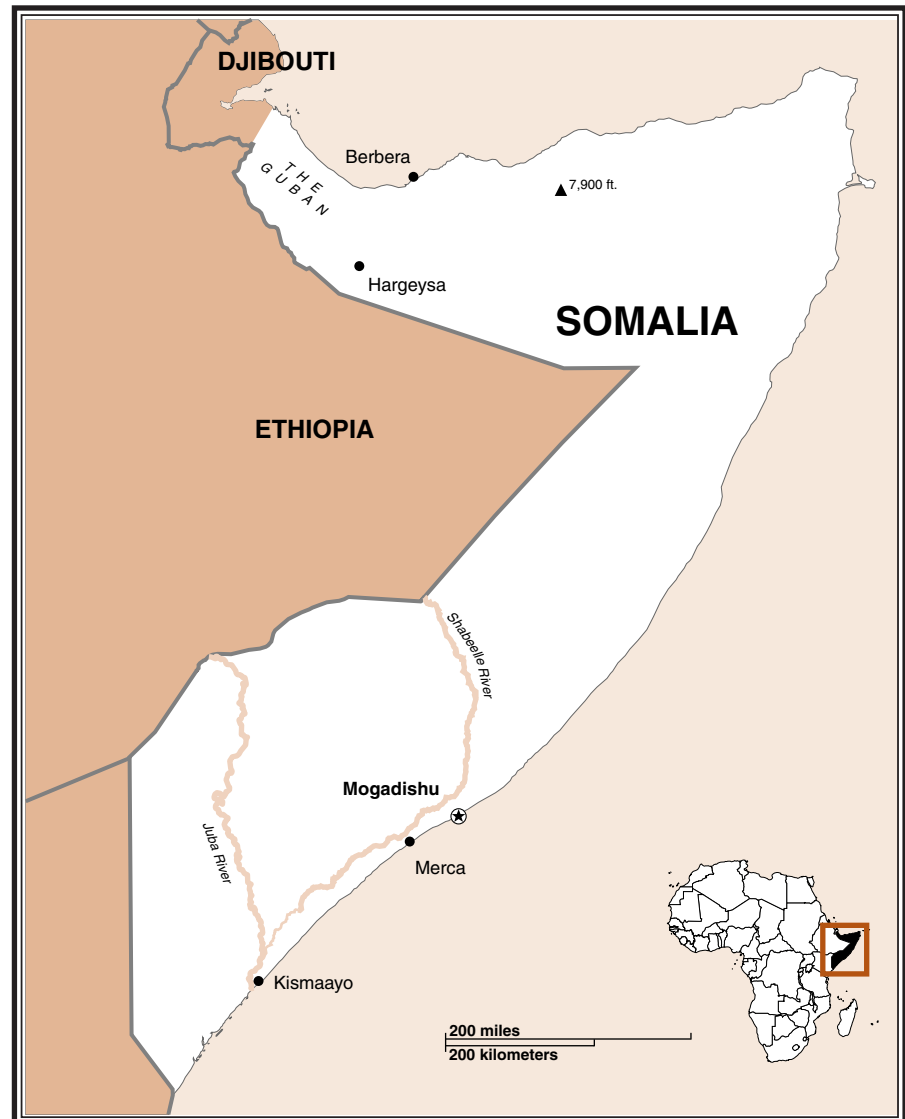
Somalia has two rivers that carry water all year round, the Juba and Shabeelle, both in the far south. The area between the rivers is virtually the only place in the country that can support commercial agriculture. Banana and sugar plantations are located here, along with acacia and aloe trees (also grown in the north). Most of the remaining plant life consists of scrub brush and grasses. In the north, such vegetation and the area where it grows are called the *guban*, meaning “burned.” Mangrove* swamps line the coast, which has a cooler and more humid climate than the interior.

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

The Haud Plateau and the Ogaden Plains, important features of Somalia’s geography, stretch out across the nation’s northwestern border with ETHIOPIA. Both the Haud and the Ogaden have served as grazing lands for pastoralists* for hundreds of years. Until recently, Somalis

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

Somalia



crossed into Ethiopia on a seasonal basis in search of good pastureland. However, since the late 1970s this territory has been the subject of disputes between the two countries, and the movement of the herders has been disrupted. Tension over the Haud and Ogaden continues, and even fighting has occurred.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Ancestors of the Somali peoples inhabited the Horn of Africa as long as 2,000 years ago. Some clans trace their occupation of the area back to the A.D. 1100s. But while the Somalis forged a common culture based on agriculture, pastoralism, and Islam*, they never united under a single political ruler.

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Colonial Somalia. In the late 1800s, Britain and Italy both established colonies in what is now Somalia. The British occupied the north-



Somalia

A Tale of Two Flocks

Somali pastoralists traditionally divide their flocks of animals into two separate herding units. One unit is based on the needs of goats and sheep, which require frequent watering. The other is based on the needs of camels, which need water much less often. Grazing camels, which provide milk, are usually put in the care of young unmarried men. Sheep and goats, on the other hand, travel with families. The families also use camels to carry their tents and other belongings. Thus, while a married herder with his sheep and goats may be in one place, his main herd of camels may be far away under the care of a younger kinsman.

ern region, called Somaliland, but used it mainly as a base to supply their port of Aden on the Arabian Peninsula. British officials allowed the Somalis to keep their local clan councils and left them in charge of resolving conflicts among the local population. However, they transferred the traditional Somali grazing lands of the Haud and Ogaden to Ethiopia. This move laid the groundwork for the later conflicts between the two countries.

The Italians controlled the central and southern regions that make up the bulk of modern Somalia. In Somalia Italiana, colonial officials followed a policy of eliminating local authority and forcing Somalis to adopt Italian law. Southern Somalis reacted to Italian rule with armed resistance that continued until the 1920s.

By the late 1950s, the drive for Somali independence had gained momentum. The most important political parties in both the north and south called for all Somali territories to unite under a single flag. By June 1960, both Somaliland and Somalia Italiana had won independence, and in the following month they joined to form the Somali Republic. Its first elected president was Aden Abdullah Osman Daar.

Civilian Rule. Although united as a nation, the two former colonies remained far apart in many ways. In the north, British colonial policies had produced a highly educated group of Somalis, many of whom attended British universities. In the south, the Italians had provided much less education. The only real tie between the peoples of the two regions was a vague sense of shared identity. When the new state took shape, the south gained most of the benefits of government. The greatest number of political offices went to southerners, even though far more northerners were qualified to fill them.

Northerners and southerners typically had different ideas about what type of policies to pursue. The northern politicians emphasized the importance of developing the nation's economy and fostering good relations with neighboring countries. However, the southerners who dominated the government were generally passionate nationalists*. They pushed for the idea of a "greater Somalia" that incorporated those areas of KENYA and Ethiopia where Somalis lived. This program led to ongoing border clashes with Ethiopia and poor relations with Kenya.

The Barre Regime. On October 15, 1969, Somalia's president Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke was assassinated, and one week later, the military seized control of the government. The leader of the coup* was the army's commander in chief, Major General Muhammad Siad Barre. Along with the other military leaders, Barre formed the Supreme Revolutionary Council to run the country and was selected as the council's chairman. He quickly dismantled Somalia's democratic institutions, banned political parties, and arrested his political opponents. He set up a series of councils, with himself at the head of each, to run the various affairs of state.

Barre moved to eliminate the clan and KINSHIP ties that formed the traditional routes to political power in Somalia. In an effort to unify the nation, his government introduced the first written form of the Somali language and aggressively promoted LITERACY programs. At the same

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government



Somalia

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

time, Barre signed an agreement with the Soviet Union* and established a socialist* dictatorship. He also brought most parts of the economy under state control and prohibited private trading activities.

With Soviet help Barre expanded the military. In 1977 he sent Somali troops into Ethiopia to back a rebel group sympathetic to Somali territorial claims. However, this action angered the Soviet Union, which also supported the Ethiopian government. The Soviet Union sent arms and supplies to Ethiopia, and with the help of Cuban troops the Ethiopian army drove the Somalis out. REFUGEES fleeing the fighting poured into Somalia in large numbers. Barre sought assistance from the United States.

By this point Barre had made many enemies. In 1981 northern clans rose against him, and he turned the military against them. The Somali army destroyed the northern city of Hargeisa, killing some 50,000 people. The fighting devastated the northern economy, and civil unrest spread throughout the country. By the late 1980s, several southern clans had established their own militias led by local warlords. In 1990 rebel forces entered the capital of MOGADISHU. Barre fled early the next year.

Civil War and Anarchy. One faction of the United Somali Congress, the group that captured Mogadishu, named General Muhammad Farah Aideed to head the government. However, other groups rejected Aideed, and civil war broke out. Central government in Somalia collapsed entirely. In its place, a dozen or more clans controlled their own regions of the country, supported by their own militias.

Fighting was especially fierce in Mogadishu. The battles destroyed most of the once-beautiful seaside city and created tens of thousands of refugees. A crippling drought struck from 1991 to 1992, creating a famine in which between 300,000 and 500,000 people died. This enormous tragedy led the UNITED NATIONS (UN) and other international agencies to mount an emergency relief operation.

International relief efforts soon gave way to frustration. The UN saw most of its aid taken by the warlords and given to their followers rather than to the starving population. The organization sent troops from several nations—mostly from the United States—to protect the shipments of food, medicine, and other aid. But the operation soon changed its focus to trying to restore peace and order in the country. This ambitious goal meant disarming the warlords, who refused to cooperate. The United States and its allies sought to capture General Aideed. But when Aideed's forces shot down an American helicopter and killed several U.S. troops in a gun battle, the Americans pulled out of the operation. By 1995, the UN had also abandoned relief efforts in Somalia.

While the south was being torn apart by war, the leaders of the northern clans met to discuss the future of their region. In 1991 they decided to secede* and form a separate state called Somaliland. Another region called Puntland also declared itself autonomous*. Local northern militias turned in their weapons and some order began to return to the north. But so far, other countries have refused to recognize Somaliland as an independent nation, preferring that all of Somalia reunite.

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country

* **autonomous** self-governing

Somalia

Somalia Today. In 1996 General Aideed was killed in fighting and was succeeded by his son Hussein, who refused to attend peace talks in 1996. Negotiations continued in several countries, but little came of them. Then, in May 2000, President Ismail Omar Guelleh of DJIBOUTI hosted a conference to try to find a solution.

The conference agreed to create an assembly of 245 members, including seats reserved for women and for members of less powerful clans. The assembly chose Abdikassim Salad Hassan as Somalia's new president, to head a government for three years before holding national elections. However, most of the warlords did not take part in the conference, and they remained cool to Salad Hassan's presidency. In addition, Somaliland and Puntland refused to rejoin a united Somali state.

Salad Hassan faces the formidable challenges of restoring peace, disarming the warlords, and rebuilding a nation from the destruction of civil war. The capital lies in ruins and the economy is in tatters. Clan rivalries are as strong as ever. In a more positive development, tensions with Ethiopia have died down, thanks to the diplomatic intervention of Libya's ruler, Muammar al-QADDAFI. But Somalia's road ahead appears long and filled with dangerous obstacles.

More than 50,000 refugees of Somalia's civil war have fled to Yemen. In 2000 many of these Somalis lived in camps such as the one pictured here.





The Somali Democratic Republic

POPULATION:

7,253,137 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

246,000 sq. mi. (637,660 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Somali (official); Arabic, Italian, English

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Somali shilling

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Sunni Muslim

CITIES:

Mogadishu (capital), 1,219,000 (2001 est.); Hargeisa, Kismayu Merca, Berbera, Boosaaso, Borama, Giamama

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Less than 3 in. (77 mm) overall, but up to 20 in. (550 mm) on high ground

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$600 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: livestock, bananas, incense, sugarcane, cotton, cereals, corn, sorghum, mangoes, beans, fish

Manufacturing: sugar refining, textiles, limited petroleum refining

Mining: gypsum; unexploited deposits of uranium, iron ore, bauxite, gold, tin

GOVERNMENT:

Independent Somali Republic formed in 1960, the union of British and Italian Somaliland protectorates. Since 1991, the government has been in transition.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1960–1967 President Aden Abdullah Osman Daar

1967–1969 President Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke

1969–1991 Major General Muhammad Siad Barre (president after 1976)

1991–1997 Several presidents elected for same period by different groups: Ali Mahdi Mohamed (1991–1997);

Abdurahman Ahmed Ali "Tur" (1991–1993); Mohamed

Ibrahim Egal (1993–); Mohammed Farah Aideed

(1995–1996); Hussein Mohammed Aideed (1996–)

1997–2000 41-member National Salvation Council

2000– President Abdikassim Salad Hassan

ARMED FORCES:

225,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–14; literacy rate 24% (1990 est.)

ECONOMY

Before the civil war, livestock and agriculture formed the base of Somalia's economy. Livestock was the country's leading export, followed by bananas. Frankincense and myrrh, aromatic gums used in the manufacture of incense and perfume, also provided sources of income. But a series of droughts in the 1980s, combined with the effects of the war, have ravaged Somalia's livestock herds and crippled its agriculture.

The early rulers of independent Somalia tried to develop manufacturing. Between the 1960s and the mid-1970s the country built food processing, textile, and pharmaceutical plants and a petroleum refinery. The economy fared relatively well. But the situation began to deteriorate when the government took over most areas of the economy in the 1970s. Droughts and the ongoing border struggle with Ethiopia made the situation worse.

In the early 1980s Somalia agreed to an economic restructuring plan proposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The program, which included plans to return companies and resources to private ownership, made little headway. In 1984, the economy suffered a severe blow when a cattle disease called rinderpest struck Somali livestock, and Saudi Arabia refused to import any Somali animals. Somalia's exports earnings fell by almost half, and Somalia could no longer make payments on its debts to the IMF. The IMF and other donors cut off aid in



Somalia

1988, and three years later the civil war began. Since that time, the nation's economy has been in shambles.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

The Somalis form a single ethnic group related to peoples in the neighboring countries of Ethiopia and Kenya. They traditionally practice a pastoral lifestyle, moving from pasture to pasture with their herds of livestock. However, some Somalis in the more fertile areas of the country have adopted farming.

See
(color plate 7,
vol. 4.)

Most Somalis follow ISLAM, which provides a further cultural connection with peoples in the lands surrounding Somalia. As Muslims, Somali men may have up to four wives, whom they may divorce.

The Somalis have long lived in a very decentralized society without hereditary chiefs or kings. Instead, councils of elders run the affairs of the country's six major clan families. Political decisions between clans occur during council meetings, long gatherings in which people discuss matters in great detail before reaching a decision.

Somalia has a distinguished tradition of oral poetry. The Somalis use poetry to preserve history, comment on current events, and express public and personal feelings. The country's first female pop star, Maryam Mursal, turned to poetry to criticize the government of Muhammad Siad Barre. Poetry also plays an important role in the large clan meetings that are the basis of Somali politics.

SONGHAI EMPIRE

See *Sudanic Empires of Western Africa*.

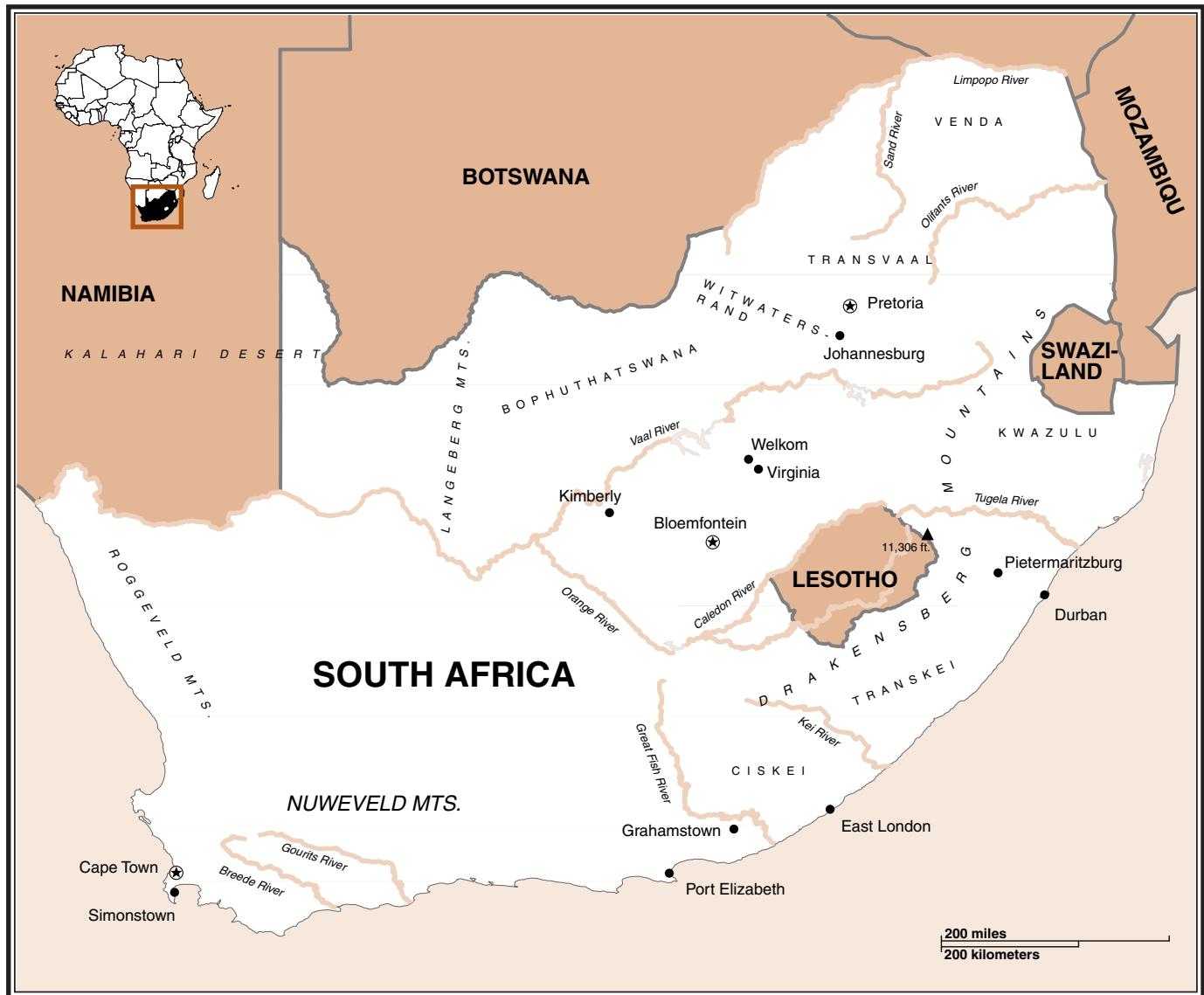
South Africa

The modern state of South Africa includes former British and Dutch colonies in which white settlers brutally dominated the region's black African population. As an independent nation, South Africa expanded and strengthened this pattern of racial discrimination under a policy known as APARTHEID, meaning "separateness." Suffering greatly under the rule of the white minority government and police, black South Africans continued their resistance. The dramatic defeat of the white government in 1994 signaled an end to apartheid and the beginning of a new era of black majority rule. It did not, however, mark the end of the country's political and economic troubles.

GEOGRAPHY

South Africa occupies the southernmost tip of the African continent and includes several small offshore islands. It is bordered on the north by NAMIBIA, BOTSWANA, ZIMBABWE, MOZAMBIQUE, and SWAZILAND. The small independent nation of LESOTHO lies within South African territory. South Africa's terrain can be divided into three major regions: the coast,

South Africa



the mountains that run parallel to the coast, and a broad plain north of the mountains.

Along the westernmost part of the coast, the climate is generally warm and dry with a long rainy season. Just inland, several small mountain ranges divide the coast from the KALAHARI DESERT. Some plants and animals do live in the Kalahari, which receives a small amount of precipitation. Flanked by the Drakensberg range, South Africa's highest mountains, the eastern coast is hot and humid.

Beyond the central and eastern mountains lie the veld, made up of high plateaus. Grassy hills roll across the north central plateau known as the highveld. It includes the Witwatersrand (or Rand), a rocky ridge that is the source of several rivers and enormous deposits of gold and diamonds. The bushveld, a grassy plain dotted with trees and bushes, stretches north of the Rand. To the west, the Cape Middleveld includes the basin of the Orange River.

South Africa



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

South Africa's climate does not have many extremes, with an average temperature of about 60°F. The western part of the country averages less than 20 inches of rain per year. The eastern part receives more precipitation and is the site of most of the country's major agriculture. However, the Western Cape province in the far southwest does enjoy enough rainfall in winter to grow wheat, fruit, and wine grapes.

South Africa has only one true lake but several large rivers. The Orange, Vaal, and Limpopo Rivers form a major river system in the central and northern areas. Several other rivers drain the southern and eastern coasts into the ocean. However, water is scarce in some areas, and people must use water transported from other parts of the country.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Issues of race and segregation have dominated South African history and politics. While informal at first, discrimination* against nonwhites eventually became enshrined in law. It reached a peak after 1948 in the state policy of apartheid, which denied blacks even the most basic of civil rights. Years of resistance to apartheid finally bore fruit in 1994 with the election of Nelson MANDELA, the country's first black president.

History Before 1910. Western South Africa was originally inhabited by HUNTING AND GATHERING peoples known as the San and nomadic herders called Khoi. BANTU-speaking farmers dominated the eastern part of the region. In the mid-1600s Dutch farmers settled the area that is now CAPE TOWN. They eventually expanded north and east, killing and enslaving the Khoi and San and fighting with the XHOSA and other indigenous* groups.

The British took over the Cape Colony in 1806. They drove indigenous people off much of the land and gave it to British colonists. The Dutch settlers, known as Boers or Afrikaners, resented British rule, and in the 1830s and 1840s thousands of them moved north and east across the Orange River into lands where groups such as the ZULU, Sotho, and NDEBELE had been warring with each other. The Dutch colonists established several independent states including the Orange Free State and Transvaal.

The situation changed quickly when gold and diamonds were found on Afrikaner lands. Settlers and investors rushed to the Afrikaner republics, founding boom towns such as JOHANNESBURG. They soon built a huge mining industry on the labor of black workers. Increasing conflicts between Afrikaner and British interests led to war in 1899. Winning the war, Britain created a new state in which white colonists—Dutch as well as British—held power over a large population of black Africans.

The Union of South Africa, established in 1910, was part of the British Empire. Louis Botha and James Hertzog led the largest political party, the South African Party, which adopted moderate policies based on the shared interests of the Europeans. However, Hertzog and his supporters, mainly rural Afrikaners, split off to form the Nationalist Party.

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

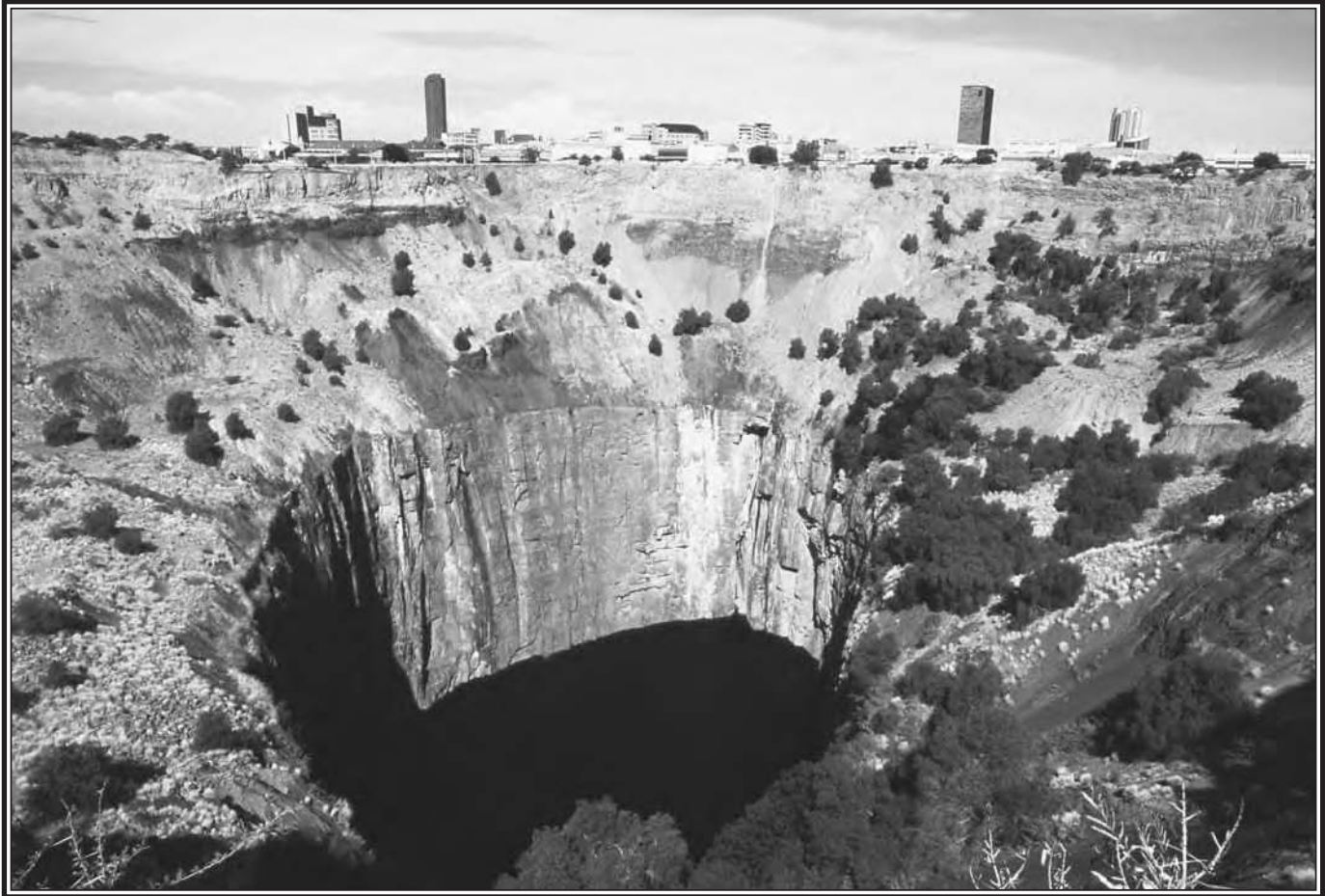
* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Making Music

With roots in many different African musical traditions and African American jazz, South African popular music includes an impressive variety of styles. Some stars produce slick dance tunes known as bubblegum music that feature electric drums and synthesizers. In other popular bands, a male "groaner" sings in a deep voice, accompanied by a soft female chorus singing in close five-part harmony.

Since the 1990s, South Africa has encouraged the popular music industry, hosting many national and international music festivals. Several South African bands, including the acclaimed male cappella group Ladysmith Black Mambazo, enjoy worldwide fame.

South Africa



During the colonial era, Europeans developed enormously successful gold and diamond mines in South Africa. The Big Hole Mine in Kimberley was once the world's richest diamond mine.

The Rise of Black Politics. In 1912 the South African government passed laws to restrict the areas where blacks could own or purchase land. These laws also limited the movement of other nonwhites, including Asians and the mixed-race population known as CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE. Mohandas K. Gandhi, a leader of the Indian community in the Transvaal and Natal provinces, protested these laws with a strategy of nonviolent resistance. He later used this strategy to great effect in leading India to independence.

The tensions caused by these laws were typical of the social and political atmosphere in South Africa. Afrikaners rose up in arms several times, and other white workers loudly protested labor conditions. Black workers also began to organize, staging a series of strikes just after World War I. In the 1920s Clements KADALIE formed the first mass African political movement, the Industrial and Commercial Worker's Union (ICU), with over 100,000 members at its height.

Political parties emerged as well. The African Native Convention (ANC), formed in 1912, represented the political hopes of black people, and changed its name to the African National Congress in 1925. The African Political Organization fought for the rights of the Coloured population. The Communist Party of South Africa also became involved in



South Africa

politics, and by the late 1920s it had formed close ties with the ANC and called for black majority rule.

By the end of the 1920s, however, most of these labor and political movements were fading. The great labor campaigns of the ICU lost steam, while internal bickering nearly destroyed the Communist Party. The ANC spoke only for the black middle class, a small group, and had few supporters among the mass of poor and rural Africans.

The Road to Apartheid. In the 1930s, the worldwide Great Depression brought new hardships. The main white parties chose to cooperate in a new United Party. But in 1934 the Afrikaner politician Daniel Malan left the organization to form the National Party (NP). The NP worked to bring together Afrikaners of all social classes by emphasizing their common ethnic identity, skin color, and language—Afrikaans, a version of Dutch. The NP campaigned on a platform of white supremacy that called for total racial segregation and discrimination.

Many English-speaking conservatives supported the NP's proposals. The government passed laws that forced black people to move into specially created "native reserves" and gave their land to white settlers. Black people were not permitted to live in some areas of cities or have certain jobs.

South Africa recovered from the Depression thanks to a dramatic rise in the price of gold and an increase in industry during World War II. Blacks looking for work flocked to the cities in large numbers, leading to housing shortages and slums. White people, who controlled all the businesses and resources, grew richer while their black workers and servants stayed poor. More and more black people joined unions, strikes, and demonstrations.

By this time younger elements in the ANC forced the party to take a more aggressive position toward the government. In 1949 the ANC adopted a program of "national freedom" that called for black autonomy* and an end to white domination. The National Party responded with an openly racist program, designed to put an end to black political activity. Campaigning on proposals for a system of apartheid, the NP won a narrow victory in the elections of 1948.

* **autonomy** independent self-government

The Apartheid Era. The NP passed a series of laws that made segregation a part of every public institution. Residential and business districts were classified as white or black, and many blacks were forcibly removed from neighborhoods where their families had lived for generations. Public places and services were segregated to prevent the mixing of races.

At birth, each South African was classified as white, black, Asiatic, Coloured, or other. This racial identity determined where an individual could live, work, and go to school. It also affected whether people could vote, where they could own property, and even where they were allowed to stand. Pass laws required all citizens to carry passbooks identifying them by name and race. Police could demand to see passbooks at any time and arrest anyone caught in a forbidden area.

South Africa

In 1960, 69 people were killed in Sharpeville, South Africa, when police opened fire on a crowd of unarmed protestors. The event resounded around the world. Here on the tenth anniversary of Sharpeville, students in London re-enact the shooting.



Under apartheid, each race had separate schools. While the nation's Department of Education focused only on white schools, the government drastically cut funding for black schools. While white students were trained for technical and professional careers, black students were expected to take unskilled jobs.

In 1958, under Prime Minister Hendrik VERWOERD, the South African government changed the name of the native reserves to "black homelands." It assigned each of these desperately poor rural areas to a different African ethnic group and gave them some degree of autonomy. The government promised independence to any homeland that requested it. But many black people, including the ANC, saw the plan as a way to ignore the needs of the black population while keeping the best land in white hands. Moreover, the millions of black people who lived in slums around white cities had no voice in either the white government or the black homelands.



South Africa

The ANC Fights Back. The ANC responded to apartheid with massive protests and resistance campaigns. The party allied itself with other organizations, including the South African Indian Congress, the Coloured People's Congress, the South African Congress of Trade Unions, and a group of white liberals called the Congress of Democrats. But in the late 1950s, a group of black members refused to accept white allies and formed an "Africanist" organization called the Pan-African Congress (PAC).

In 1960 both the ANC and PAC sponsored demonstrations against the pass laws. In the town of Sharpeville, police officers fired on an unarmed crowd of demonstrators, killing 69. The government declared a state of emergency, banned the ANC and PAC, and arrested over 2,000 activists.

The leaders of the ANC and PAC went underground to avoid arrest. The ANC and the Communist Party formed a military group called Umkhonto we Sizwe, or "Spear of the Nation," also known as MK. This organization carried out armed guerrilla* attacks. The government increased the powers of the police: anyone suspected of a crime could be arrested and held for up to ten days; those suspected of terrorism could be jailed without a trial or a time limit. In 1963 the police caught MK leaders including Nelson Mandela and Walter Sisulu. They were sentenced to life in prison without parole.

For the next ten years, the apartheid system enjoyed its greatest success. White industry owners made huge profits, and foreign investment poured into the country. Segregation increased in all spheres of life. The police stepped up arrests under the pass laws, keeping black people out of the cities except to work.

Apartheid in Crisis. By the early 1970s, events both inside and outside of South Africa increased the pressure for changes in the system. A worldwide economic slowdown led to inflation* and unemployment. The country depended on goods and technology imported from abroad, and its own exports could not keep pace. Meanwhile, black trade unions, banned since the 1950s, began to reassert themselves in the form of strikes and protests.

Active opposition to apartheid spread throughout black society. Steve Biko's Black Consciousness Movement swept through schools and colleges. In 1976, teachers in the black township of Soweto led schoolchildren in a protest against a rule that English and Afrikaans be used equally in classes, although most black schools operated entirely in English. Police opened fire on the protesters, and the resulting deaths sparked a week of rioting and revolt. The police cracked down with overwhelming force, killing over 174 blacks and wounding over 1,200.

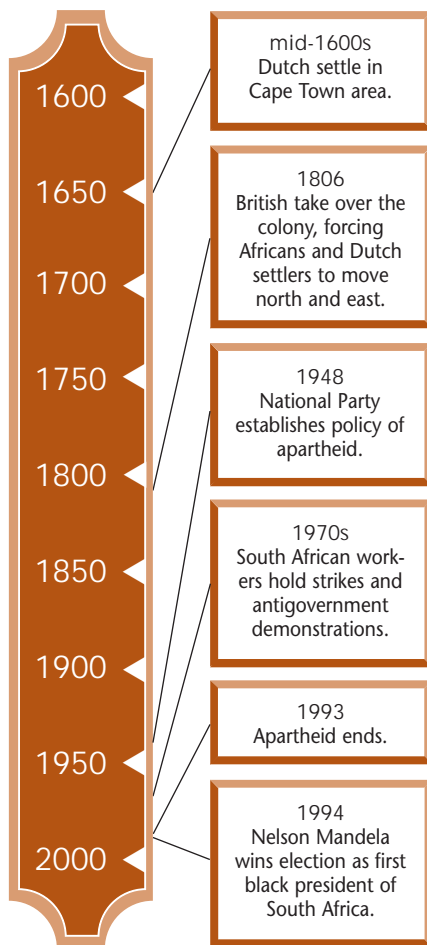
The Soweto Massacre generated a wave of protest both at home and abroad. In South Africa, it sounded the call for a younger generation of black activists to take up the struggle. Overseas, officials of the ANC pressed foreign governments to boycott South African goods and refuse to sell weapons to the South African police and military. Archbishop Desmond Tutu issued a powerful moral message.

Meanwhile, events in neighboring African countries also spelled trou-

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

* **inflation** increase in prices

South Africa



ble for the NP government. In the mid-1970s, communist* guerrilla movements won independence for black Africans in two Portuguese colonies, ANGOLA and Mozambique. Shortly afterward, black guerrillas overthrew the white supremacist government of Ian Smith in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). White South Africa found itself surrounded by independent, hostile black nations.

The Total Strategy. In response to these pressures, President Pieter W. Botha adopted a policy known as “Total Strategy.” He hoped to preserve apartheid through compromise and force. He increased spending on black education and eased rules governing black labor and residency. But at the same time, he gave the police, army, and intelligence services a larger role in the government. More than ever, South Africans lived in a police state.

The NP also tried to form alliances with prosperous Indians and Coloured people against the black groups. It created a new National Assembly with three bodies—one for whites, one for Indians, and one for Coloureds—but still with no black representation. The white upper house had the authority to impose laws without the consent of the other houses and could veto any law those houses proposed.

Botha’s plan failed to satisfy black South Africans. In the 1980s they organized against apartheid as youths, as women, as workers, as students, and as neighbors. The MK staged several astonishing military attacks, and the ANC returned from exile to center stage in South African politics. Strikes, protests, and riots shook the nation, and the state responded with massive detentions, trials, police brutality, and army troops sent into the black townships. Abroad, ANC leaders and their supporters convinced other nations and corporations to withdraw economic support from South Africa. In return, wealthy Western nations pressured the ANC to abandon its communist goals. As the economy staggered, the NP replaced Botha with a new president, F.W. DE KLERK.

The Beginning of the End. By 1990 both the state and the ANC were facing a crisis. The declining economy and deteriorating social situation sapped the government’s strength. Meanwhile, the ANC lost its bases in Angola and Mozambique, while the Soviet Union* dramatically reduced its funding for communist groups such as the ANC. In February Mandela wrote to President de Klerk from prison, and the two leaders met. De Klerk freed Mandela and other political prisoners and proposed negotiations.

Not everyone was excited about this turn of events. Some white South Africans opposed any real equality for black citizens. Meanwhile, the ANC faced a stiff challenge from the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), which had been created in the early 1970s when the ANC was officially banned. The ANC had always had its base in the Xhosa, Sotho, and Tswana ethnic groups; the IFP has strong ties with the Zulu people. While many ANC supporters came from urban slums, Zulu members of the IFP generally had a fairly stable lifestyle and hoped to avoid widespread violence by cooperating with the white government.

With the release of Mandela, the ANC once again became a legal party—as well as a rival of the IFP for black power. The IFP deeply resent-

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics



South Africa

ed a government measure, passed under pressure from the ANC, that banned the Zulu practice of carrying spears and other traditional weapons. The IFP's leader, Gatsha Buthelezi, called for a separate Zulu state, and clashes between IFP and ANC supporters became commonplace, leading to thousands of deaths.

The End of Apartheid. Despite increasing chaos and uncertainty, plans for a new constitution went forward. After three years of negotiation, elections were set for early 1994. On May 10, 1994, the results were announced, with the ANC winning nearly two-thirds of the votes. Mandela took office as the first black president of South Africa. The ANC abandoned its earlier communist ideals. It called for a capitalist* market economy in which state-owned business would be sold to private and foreign investors.

Mandela's victory did not end black discontent. The ANC made many election promises, most of which it could not possibly keep due to the condition of the nation's economy. Efforts to privatize* industries and reduce the size of government led to layoffs that angered the unions and the Communist Party. Labor strikes, protests, and political violence remained common.

Despite these difficulties, Mandela managed to steer a middle course, balancing the demands of his supporters with the needs of the nation's economy and international relations. He set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to take testimony about the violence and injustice of South Africa's past. A new constitution went into effect in 1996, adding a Bill of Rights that guarantees broad freedoms. Elections in 1999 took place fairly peacefully, and the ANC remained the dominant party. Mandela retired, and his vice president, Thabo Mbeki, was elected president.

However, Mbeki inherited a country still struggling to deal with an ailing economy and a history of racial injustice. He and the ANC face formidable challenges in returning the country to the prosperity it once enjoyed without exploiting* black workers. Mbeki has eased the process of privatizing industries and allowed investors to buy and sell freely in the country's markets. His policies have become more practical, but he does not speak with the moral voice of Mandela. Even so, the end of apartheid offers black citizens the freedom to participate in their government and to hope for peaceful change and progress.

* **capitalist** referring to an economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

* **privatize** to transfer from government to private ownership

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

ECONOMY

Compared to its neighbors, South Africa has a large and diverse economy, but one that has grown slowly. Manufacturing now employs more than 25 percent of the workforce. The main industries are steel production, clothing, textiles, and food processing.

Mining, once the mainstay of the economy, has declined heavily in recent years. Although gold and diamonds are still important exports, the low price of gold threatens to close many mines. In addition, a financial crisis in Asian countries in the 1990s reduced the export of South African diamonds. However, coal has become a more important export, and it supplies most of South Africa's energy needs.



See map in Mining and Minerals (vol. 3).

South Africa



Republic of South Africa

POPULATION:

43,421,021 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

471,008 sq. mi. (1,219,912 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English, Afrikaans, Ndebele, Pedi, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana, Venda, Xhosa, and Zulu (all are official)

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Rand

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 68%, Traditional and animistic 28.5%, Muslim 2%, Hindu 1.5%

CITIES:

Pretoria (administrative capital), 1,508,000 (2001 est.); Cape Town (legislative capital), 2,993,000 (2001 est.); Bloemfontein (judicial capital), 300,150 (1991 est.); Johannesburg

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 40 in. (1,000 mm) on east coast to only 2.4 in. (61 mm) in the extreme west.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$6,900 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: corn, wheat, sugarcane, wine grapes,

macadamia nuts, vegetables, livestock, wool, dairy
Manufacturing: automobile assembly, metalworking, machinery, textiles, iron and steel, chemicals, fertilizer, food processing
Mining: gold, diamonds, chromium, and coal
Services: tourism

GOVERNMENT:

Granted self-governing power from Britain, 1910. Became part of British Commonwealth in 1931. Declared an independent republic in 1961. Republic with president elected by the National Assembly. Governing bodies: 400-seat National Assembly, elected by universal suffrage; 90-seat National Council of Provinces, with 10 members elected by each of the nine provincial legislatures.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE DECLARED INDEPENDENT REPUBLIC:

1961–1967 President Charles Robberts Swart
1967–1968 President Jozua Francois Naude
1968–1975 President Jacobus Johannes Fouché
1975–1978 President Nicholaas Diederichs
1978–1979 President Balthazar J. Vorster
1979–1984 President Marais Viljoen
1984–1989 President Pieter W. Botha
1989–1994 President Frederik W. de Klerk
1994–1999 President Nelson Mandela
1999– President Thabo Mbeki

ARMED FORCES:

82,400 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–16; literacy rate 82% (2001 est.)

Less than 15 percent of the land in South Africa has fertile soil, and agriculture plays a small role in the country's economy. The main crops are wheat, corn, wine grapes, and macadamia nuts. South African farmers are among the world's leading producers of cannabis—the plant that produces marijuana and hashish—and it has an important role in the country's illegal economy.

The healthiest economic sector seems to be the TOURISM industry. Over 500,000 people work in the tourism industry, serving over five million visitors each year. Most of the tourists are fellow Africans who come to enjoy the country's stunning mountains and sparkling beaches. However, South Africa's crime rate, among the highest in the world, continues to discourage prospective visitors.

HEALTH AND EDUCATION

Like all developing countries, South Africa struggles to provide adequate HEALTH CARE and EDUCATION for its citizens. The country's greatest health challenge is undoubtedly AIDS.

South Africa's HIV infection rate is the highest in the world—one out of every five South Africans is HIV-positive. Unfortunately, AIDS drugs are very expensive, and the Western companies that produce them are



South Africa

* **boycott** refusal to participate or buy goods, as a means of protest

only now beginning to take steps to make the drugs available at greatly reduced prices. Past government policies have aggravated the problem, researching ineffective solutions and even denying medical care to some.

Education is in as desperate condition as health care. In 1976 the ANC called for a boycott* of schools, which resulted in a generation of young South Africans who cannot read and write. Although more than 90 percent of children are now enrolled in school, many do not attend classes, and schools face a critical shortage of teachers. The school system has not produced enough qualified graduates to fill jobs that demand skilled workers, and the economy has suffered for it. Education and job training are high priorities for South Africa's government.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES



See map in *Humans, Early* (vol. 2).

South Africa includes a tremendous variety of ethnic groups and cultures. Most South Africans belong to Bantu-speaking groups such as the Nguni (which includes the Xhosa, Swazi, and Zulu peoples), Sotho, Venda, and Tsonga. The main difference among these groups is in their languages, although some cultural differences exist among them as well. Bantu groups were traditionally led by chiefs who inherited their position from older relatives. Councils assisted the chiefs at all levels of government. These power relationships were expressed by the saying, "A chief is chief by his people." All Bantu groups worshiped ancestors and showed a great respect for the elderly. However, as Africans moved to the cities, their traditional beliefs and practices weakened.

Non-Bantu populations in South Africa include remnants of the San and Khoi, as well as white descendants of Dutch and English settlers. Since the mid-1970s the Inkatha Freedom Party has worked to establish a strong separate identity for the country's Zulu population. Indians, originally brought over as slaves in the late 1800s, have grown into an important urban population. They now total some one million people, located mostly in the southeastern portions of the country. The Cape Coloured population, descended from the mixing of whites, Asians, and Africans, numbers over three million. (See also **Colonialism in Africa; Global Politics and Africa; Independence Movements; Indian Communities; Khoisan; Minerals and Mining; Southern Africa, History; Unions and Trade Associations.**)

Southern Africa, History

* indigenous native to a certain place

The arrival of Europeans in southern Africa in the 1600s set in motion a long period of upheaval that transformed the region. A series of violent conflicts pitted Dutch settlers against indigenous* peoples, the Dutch against the British, the British against indigenous peoples, and various African groups against each other. After white settlers discovered gold and diamonds in the 1800s, they established a booming industry that relied on white control of black labor. This system set the stage for APARTHEID—the policy of racial segregation in SOUTH AFRICA.

Southern Africa, History



In the South African (Boer) War (1899-1902), Afrikaners and British colonists fought for control of the region's rich gold reserves. More than 60,000 people—civilians as well as soldiers—lost their lives in the struggle.

* **barter** exchange of goods and services without using money

The Period of Settlement. Around 1600, BANTU-speaking farmers known as the Nguni dominated the eastern part of southern Africa. The west was home to the San, a people who hunted and gathered food. Along the southwestern coast, the Khoi tended to herds of livestock. The borders between their lands were not rigid, and the groups apparently lived side by side without major conflicts.

In the early 1600s, British and Dutch ships bound for Asia were making regular stops at Table Bay, the future site of CAPE TOWN. There they took on fresh water and bartered* with the Khoi for cattle. In 1652 the Dutch East India Company ordered Commander Jan VAN RIEBEECK to establish a permanent supply base at the cape. The company granted land and supplies to poor Dutch and French Protestant settlers, who spread into the countryside.

The Khoi and San resisted the European takeover, but bands of settlers attacked Africans and their livestock, and death and disease took their toll. By the late 1700s the Dutch settlers, known as Boers, had displaced or killed many of the Khoi and San and taken their lands. Those who survived were often forced to work on the settlers' farms. Owning slaves became a measure of wealth for the Boers.



Southern Africa, History

* **annex** to take over or add a territory to an existing area

By 1780 the Dutch Cape Colony had grown to about 10,000 settlers. But the colonists' expansion eastward was halted by the XHOSA, a farming people who fought fiercely for their land. For the next hundred years, the colony's eastern frontier became a bloody battleground.

In 1795 Britain annexed* the Cape Colony, returning it briefly in 1803 before taking control again three years later. British military forces defeated Xhosa armies and gave Xhosa land to white settlers. The British brought in thousands of new settlers and created a strong central government in Cape Town, headed by a governor-general. The missionaries who came to convert Africans to Christianity brought more change, and some missionaries criticized the way Europeans treated Africans.

The Mfecane and the Great Trek. During the early 1800s, as white settlers were fighting the Xhosa in the east, the NGUNI and other peoples of the region were building stronger states. In a competition for land and control of the IVORY TRADE, powerful chiefs led their warriors against other peoples, driving weaker groups north and west. The region's upheavals—conquests and population shifts—were known as the Mfecane, or “the crushing.” Meanwhile, Britain's Cape Colony demanded slave labor and other goods, intensifying the conflicts of the Mfecane.

The most famous figure of the Mfecane was SHAKA ZULU, who ruled a powerful ZULU kingdom from 1816 to 1828. Zulu attacks forced some African peoples to migrate, causing confrontations with others. The great leader MZILIKAZI took the NDEBELE people farther north. SOBHUZA led the Ngunwane to form a new kingdom that became the basis for the modern state of SWAZILAND. MOSHOESHOE conducted the Sotho people to a mountainous region farther south, founding a nation that still exists today as LESOTHO.

News of the Mfecane reached the Cape Colony. Frustrated with British rule, many Boers decided to move northward and settle the lands Africans were fleeing. Between 1834 and 1845, several thousand Boers undertook this journey, later known as the “Great Trek,” which carried them beyond the boundaries of the British colony. The Boers also came to call themselves Afrikaners and their language Afrikaans.

Diamonds and Gold. The Afrikaners conquered the Africans who remained in the region known as the highveld, and they established several independent states. The Afrikaners and the British maintained an uneasy truce until diamonds were discovered in Boer territory in 1870. Britain tried to annex some of the diamond areas but was beaten back by Afrikaner forces. Around the same time the British succeeded in crushing the last traces of indigenous resistance, including a major conflict with the Zulu and their king CETSHWAYO.

In 1886 prospectors in Afrikaner territory discovered a huge area of gold-bearing rock, near what is now the city of JOHANNESBURG. But the gold was deep underground, and great quantities of rock had to be mined to produce small amounts of gold. Large companies began

Voting Rights

In the late 1900s South Africa followed a policy known as apartheid, which segregated black people and denied them the right to vote. Ironically, blacks had enjoyed broader legal rights under British colonial rule. In 1853 all adult males who owned property, regardless of color, received the right to vote. Unfortunately, few blacks had property. Under the constitution of 1910, blacks could vote in some areas but not others. Where they had the right, though, various restrictions kept the black vote to a minimum. In 1936 the white government of South Africa removed all blacks from the voting rolls.

employing thousands of laborers and expensive equipment to recover the precious metal.

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

The companies created a racist system of mine labor that set a pattern for discrimination* in all aspects of life in what later became South Africa. Some 90 percent of the mine workers were blacks, and they received one-ninth of the white workers' salaries. The companies promoted white employees to skilled and supervisory positions, while keeping black workers in backbreaking, unskilled jobs. Many blacks were forced to live in compounds owned by the companies, where they paid high prices for rent, food, and other needs. Most workers were migrants who had traveled many miles from home and spent months separated from their families.

War and Union. As mining in Boer lands became a major industry, Britain feared that the Afrikaners would dominate the region. The British tried several schemes to create conflict with the Afrikaners and their leader, Paul KRUGER. One such scheme forced Cecil RHODES, the prime minister of the Cape Colony, to resign. In 1899 the two main AFRIKANER REPUBLICS, Transvaal and the Orange Free State, declared war on the British Cape Colony and Natal. Both sides used black Africans as workers and soldiers in the South African (or Boer) War. Although the British troops outnumbered the Afrikaners by about five to one, the Afrikaners won several early victories under capable leaders such as General Jan Christiaan SMUTS.

The British troops countered by destroying Boer farms and imprisoning civilians in concentration camps, where 20,000 Afrikaners and 13,000 Africans died. After three years of bitter fighting, the Afrikaners gave in. The two sides agreed to a union as a white minority in control of the black majority. In 1910 an all-male, all-white convention drew up a constitution for a new state called the Union of South Africa, a part of the British Empire. It became fully independent in 1961, but the black majority did not overthrow the white minority until 1994. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Khoisan, Nongqawuse.*)

Soyinka, Wole

1934–
Nigerian writer

Wole Soyinka is a noted Nigerian writer and political activist. He was born in Ijebu-Isara in western NIGERIA, the son of a schoolteacher. After studying at a university in the city of Ibadan, he traveled to England, where he attended the University of Leeds and earned a degree in English literature.

In 1957 Soyinka moved to London and wrote scripts for the British Broadcasting Corporation. He also wrote plays, several of which were produced in London theaters. His play *The Lion and the Jewel* concerns two African men competing for a beautiful woman. One is a young schoolteacher who foolishly “Westernizes” himself. The other, an older but wiser man, wins the woman by drawing on African cultural traditions. The play’s lesson—the importance of developing new ideas within a framework of traditional culture—has been a recurring theme in Soyinka’s work.



Soyinka, Wole

* **oppression** unjust or cruel exercise of authority


After returning to Nigeria in 1960, Soyinka wrote *A Dance of the Forests* in honor of Nigerian independence. The play celebrates the end of the colonial era but warns its audience of the dangers of other forms of oppression*. It shows Soyinka's mastery of the English language and his commitment to social and political criticism. That commitment later brought trouble to Soyinka, who was imprisoned in the late 1960s for criticizing the government. After his release in 1969, Soyinka traveled abroad, writing prison memoirs, plays, fiction, poetry, and essays.

In 1976 Soyinka returned to Nigeria as chairman of the department of dramatic arts at the University of Ife. He continued to write, founded several theater groups, and expanded his political role. He championed campaigns to improve everyday life in Nigeria, such as by insuring safety on the nation's roads. In 1986 he became the first black African to receive the Nobel Prize for literature. Since that time Soyinka has been an important voice on behalf of individual liberty and human rights in Nigeria. His 1989 novel *Isara: A Voyage around "Essay"* is a tribute to his family and community. (See also **Literature, Theater.**)

SPANISH COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa.*

Spirit Possession

 In spirit possession, nonhuman forces or entities are believed to enter a person's body and affect his or her actions. Western cultures usually view possession as a sign of madness or evil. But in Africa, spirit possession is considered a form of communication between people and spirits that has important religious, social, and political meaning.

Although it is believed that the spirits that possess people have greater powers than humans, they are not considered gods. In some cultures they are ancestors or mythical heroes; in others they are foreign beings. The spirits signal their presence through illness, dreams, sudden avoidance of certain items or practices, or the appearance of several distinct personalities in one person (the host). Spirits considered harmful may be exorcised, or removed. However, in many cases the spirit's host accepts possession.

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

When possession is accepted, a ritual* of accommodation is usually performed in which the spirit is summoned and invited to take over the host's body. The host enters a trance followed by a period of total or partial amnesia. The spirit may demand that the host wear certain clothes, eat certain foods, or perform certain activities on a regular basis. Afterwards, the possessed individual often becomes a medium* through which the spirit communicates on certain social or religious occasions.

* **medium** person called upon to communicate with the spirit world

There are several theories about the meaning and purpose of spirit possession. Among some groups, possession is an important religious activity that uses spirits to uphold the moral order of society. An official priesthood, typically male, interprets the communication between the



Sports and Recreation

spirit and human worlds. Other cultures see it as a way to deal with personal problems such as illness or infertility.

Ultimately, spirit possession provides a powerful form of communication within African societies. Through possession, the spirits of heroes or ancestors pass on cultural knowledge that unifies members of a group. Spirits representing outside forces, such as different religious or political systems, express new ideas and discuss new practices. Possession can serve as a force of resistance—encouraging people to avoid new ideas—or a force of change—encouraging them to adopt or adapt new ideas. (See also **Death, Mourning, and Ancestors; Healing and Medicine; Mythology; Religion and Ritual; Taboo and Sin; Vodun; Witchcraft and Sorcery.**)

Sports and Recreation

Traditional African cultures valued play and recreation. Africans enjoyed board games and took part in organized activities such as wrestling, dancing, and canoe racing. When Europeans introduced Western sports during the colonial era, Africans found aspects of those sports familiar. Since then Africans have incorporated Western sports into their cultures, won prizes in international sports competitions, and continued to enjoy traditional African pastimes.

Development of Sports in Africa. Europeans introduced Western sports to Africa both by playing themselves and by teaching sports to young Africans. At first, missionaries and other Europeans trained Christian converts and the upper level of African society in Western-style sports. By the 1920s—often in response to African demands—colonial educators and social workers encouraged investment in playing fields and equipment for the general population. Only after the African nations gained their independence in the 1960s, however, did sports facilities become more widely available.

Some young Africans became involved in sports through organized instruction in schools or youth clubs. Others learned by watching. In SOUTH AFRICA, for example, crowds watched British soldiers play soccer in their free time during the Boer War (1899–1902). Soon barefoot boys were playing the game in dusty streets, using makeshift balls of rags or paper. Teams sprang up in African townships and competed in matches. Soccer became extremely popular in the cities because it filled urban players’ and fans’ need to create new identities and social networks. Teams could represent ethnic groups, neighborhoods, religious denominations, or occupations such as railroad workers or police.

By the 1930s, organized sports in Africa had taken on the characteristics of the games that were played around the world. Teams competed in leagues in stadiums before large, enthusiastic, sometimes uncontrollable crowds, supported by specialists such as coaches and referees.

Even international sports, however, have had distinctive characteristics in Africa. One African twist is the use of magic in sporting contests. Boxers have worn armbands containing special magical preparations to bring them victory, and soccer teams have planted charms in the mid-

See
color plate 4,
vol. 4.

Sports and Recreation

African athletes have won many medals and set new records in international competitions. Here Kenyan runner Catherine Ndereba arrives triumphantly at the finish line of the Boston Marathon in 2001.



dle of playing fields to cause difficulty to their opponents. Such practices still occur, and soccer teams preparing for important matches often employ team magicians in the hope of improving their chances.

Another feature of organized sports in Africa is the broad role of sports clubs. Such clubs became centers of social activities, and their administrators took on the role of village elders to young players. They gave advice, collected dues, helped club members with family expenses, and assisted young men in finding jobs.



Sports and Recreation

Africans in International Sports. Many African governments view sports as an opportunity to promote national unity, community among African nations, and international recognition of African achievement. The first All-African Games took place in the city of BRAZZAVILLE, Republic of Congo, in 1965, with more than 3,000 athletes from 30 countries. African nations then established the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa. Based in CAMEROON, the council promotes and coordinates continent-wide sporting events.



Africans have enjoyed growing success in the major events of the international sports calendar. They have competed in the Olympic Games since 1908, and their participation has grown dramatically since they have gained independence. Some African customs have discouraged girls from participating in sports—such as the early age of marriage for women. However, girls and young women are increasingly active in athletic competitions and have won gold medals in track and other Olympic events. Kenyan, Ethiopian, Moroccan, and Nigerian runners have had great success around the world.

Soccer remains the most popular sport in Africa, and teams from African countries have begun to attract attention in the World Cup, the international soccer championship. Members of some African soccer teams play professionally for European clubs, which offer higher salaries than African clubs. In addition, African basketball players have had successful careers with American professional teams.

African Games. Africans have a board game called *mancala* or *bao* in which players try to capture game pieces dropped in cups or holes on a board. *Mancala* is ancient. People in sub-Saharan* Africa were playing versions of it centuries ago, along with other strategy games similar to checkers, chess, and backgammon. Introduced to the Americas by enslaved Africans, *mancala* is the basis for commercially marketed board games such as Pitfall and Oh-Wah-Ree.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

In earlier times *mancala* was more than recreation. Associated with rulers, shrines, and temples, it could be played only by kings and their relatives in some countries. In the Buganda kingdom of UGANDA, the game was kept in the court hall, where the prime minister played it while deciding court cases. In GHANA, the ASANTE kings played *mancala* on golden boards, and it was said that even the gods enjoyed the game. Today people of all ages and classes play versions of *mancala*. Equipment varies from lines or holes dug in the ground, with stones or seeds as counters, to beautifully carved and decorated sets found in art collections. The playing ground may have two, three, or four rows with as many as 50 holes in a row, but games of two or four rows with six to eight holes per row are most common.

Other African games include KENYA's *shisima*, similar to tic-tac-toe; SIERRA LEONE's chess-like *kei*, which uses a board divided into squares and game pieces called black men and white men; and *nigbe*, a western African game of chance that uses cowrie shells as dice. When played in public, these games draw crowds of onlookers, who cheer on the players and follow each move closely—African games are generally a community affair.



Sports and Recreation

Children learn counting, concentration, and the art of interacting with others through games and play, often accompanied by singing and dancing. Many Africans still consider the old games important for developing children's mental and physical skills, and the games are sometimes included in coming-of-age ceremonies. (See also **Dance, Festivals and Carnivals, Popular Culture.**)

**Stanley, Henry
Morton**

**1841–1904
British explorer and author**

Henry Morton Stanley made several extensive journeys in Africa in the second half of the 1900s. The books he wrote about his adventures were widely read. Stanley was born John Rowlands in Wales, where he grew up in an orphanage. In 1859 he traveled to the United States and changed his name to that of a merchant who had befriended him. Drifting from place to place, Stanley fought on both sides in the American Civil War and served on naval and merchant ships. In the late 1860s he became a journalist reporting on the Indian Wars of the American West.

Stanley went to Africa as a correspondent for the *New York Herald*. In 1871 the newspaper sent him to search for David LIVINGSTONE, the British missionary and explorer who was missing in central Africa. Stanley found the explorer and uttered the now famous greeting, "Dr. Livingstone, I presume?" His accounts of the journey received wide attention. When Livingstone died a few years later, Stanley decided to continue the explorer's work. Between 1874 and 1877 he led an expedition across Africa from east to west by way of Lake Victoria and the CONGO RIVER—a journey described in his book *Through the Dark Continent* (1878).

Stanley next spent five years working for King Leopold II of Belgium, overseeing the construction of a railroad in the Congo colony. In the late 1880s he led a third and final expedition, crossing Africa from west to east to rescue EMIN PASHA, a European working as a provincial governor for Egypt. Emin was reportedly stranded in the center of the continent. Stanley wrote *In Darkest Africa* about that expedition. He spent his remaining years in England, serving as a member of the British Parliament. (See also **Travel and Exploration.**)

STORYTELLING

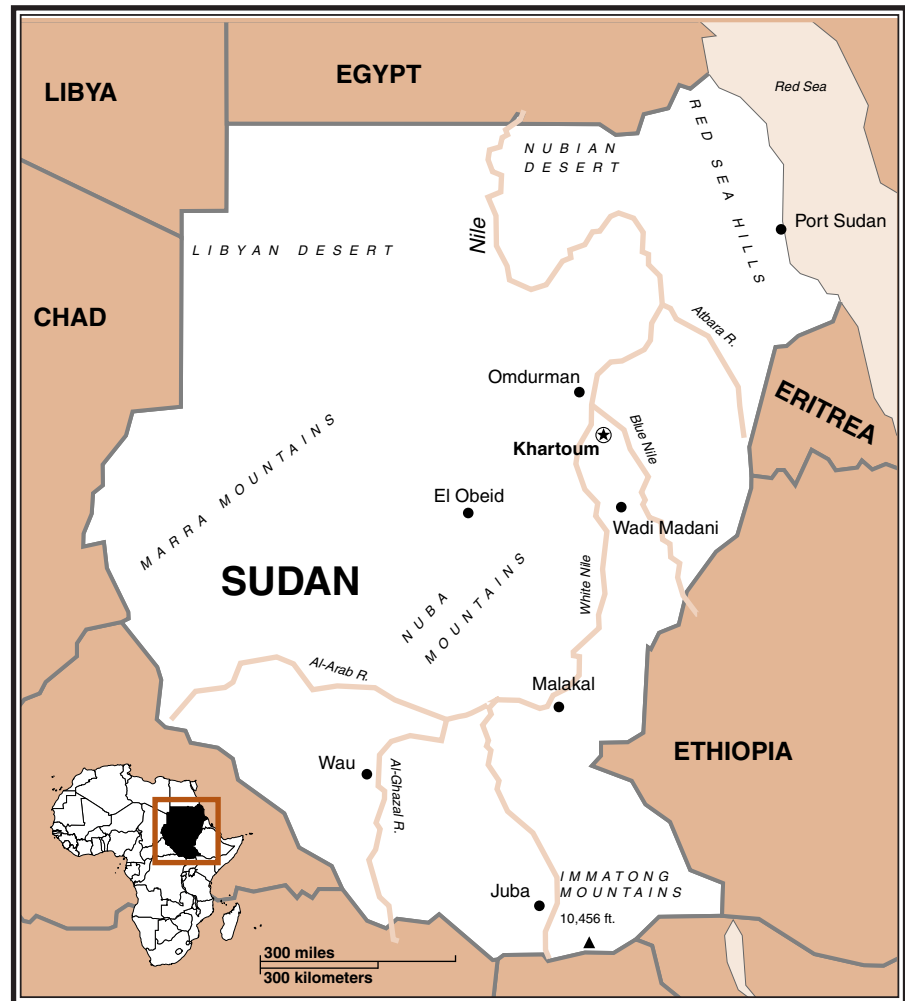
See *Oral Tradition*.

Sudan

Sudan is the largest country in Africa and one of the most troubled. Almost from the moment it won independence in 1956, political violence and civil war have torn the nation apart. In part, these difficulties reflect longtime divisions between the various ethnic and religious groups that occupy the region. In part, they are the result of colonialism and conquest by the British, Turks, and Egyptians. Global



Sudan



politics and struggles over resources such as oil have continued to trouble Sudan's complex political life.

GEOGRAPHY

Sudan occupies almost a million square miles of highly diverse terrain in northeastern Africa, an area greater than that of the United States east of the Mississippi River. Stretching nearly 1,200 miles from north to south, the country straddles three distinct environmental zones: the desert, the SAHEL, and the tropics.

Environments. The SAHARA DESERT dominates the northern third of the country, from the border with EGYPT to the Sudanese capital of KHARTOUM. South of Khartoum lies the Sahel region, a semiarid zone that covers most of the country. This region receives just enough rainfall to support short grasses, scrub trees, and crops such as sesame and sorghum* that need little water. In the eastern Sahel, many people use water irrigation to grow crops; in the western Sahel, most Sudanese are pastoralists*, raising herds of animals. The most southerly portion of

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock



Sudan

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than local consumption

* **tributary** river that flows into another river

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

Sudan has a tropical climate, with about twice as much rainfall as in the Sahel. In times of peace, the country's most important cash crops* are grown in the south. However, the ongoing civil war has disrupted agriculture in this part of the country.

Rivers and Mountains. Settlement in Sudan, as in Egypt, depends for its life on the NILE RIVER. The White Nile River rises in UGANDA and flows north across the Sudanese border into the Sudd, the world's largest permanent swamp. Half of the river's water evaporates in the swamps before the remaining stream continues north. The Blue Nile has its source in ETHIOPIA, which borders Sudan on the southeast. The Blue Nile and White Nile Rivers meet at Khartoum and flow as one toward Egypt. Over half of Sudan's population lives along the Nile or its tributaries*.

For the most part, Sudan consists of a large, rolling plain, broken occasionally by baobab trees and formations of volcanic rock. Several mountain ranges rise from the landscape, including the Nuba, Marra, and Immatong ranges. The country's highest point, Mount Kinyeti, looms 10,456 feet above the border with Uganda. A line of hills and low mountains also lie inland from the Red Sea coast.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The area occupied by Sudan has historically been home to a many ethnic groups with various languages, social customs, and political structures. Its ancient history includes the kingdom of NUBIA, which had close relations—and conflicts—with the pharaohs of Egypt. But Sudan was not united politically until about 1500, when a series of major powers began competing to control the region.

The Funj Sultanate. Around 1504 Muslim immigrants from Arabia united with the local Funj dynasty* of northeastern Sudan to form the Funj Sultanate. This Islamic kingdom was ruled by noblemen whose rank depended on their blood relation to the monarch. Diverse groups of people lived within the kingdom, growing crops and raising livestock in small settlements. They paid tribute* and taxes for the right to live and work on the land.

Throughout the 1500s the sultans of Funj successfully fought off attacks by the powerful Ottoman Empire, which had its bases of power in Turkey and the Middle East. During the 1600s the Funj expanded their kingdom and opened trade routes to the Red Sea and Arabia. Their capital city, Sennar, grew large and prosperous. However, by the mid-1700s internal divisions weakened the sultanate.

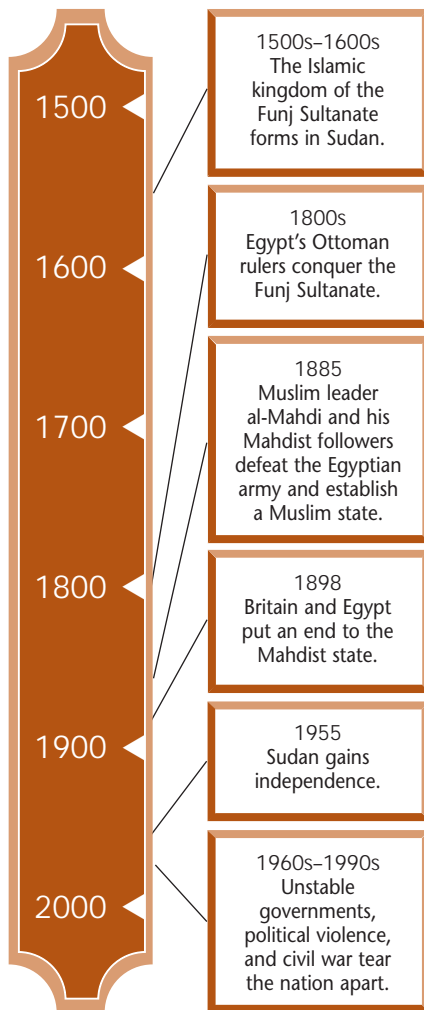
Turkish and Egyptian Rule. In 1821 the Ottoman ruler of Egypt, Muhammad Ali conquered the tottering remains of the Funj Sultanate. His main goals were to capture slaves to build up his army and to exploit* Sudan's natural resources. He took thousands of captives during his raids, but many died on the journey through the desert to training camps in Egypt. Because his plan to obtain soldiers from the Sudan failed, Muhammad Ali focused on exploiting resources, growing cash

Something for Everyone

One of Sudan's greatest natural resources is a thorny tree called *Acacia senegal*. The Sudanese use its wood for fuel and construction, weave strong ropes from its root fibers, and dry its seeds for food. But the tree's most significant product is its sap, known as gum arabic. For thousands of years, local people have collected the gum for use in medicine, crafts, and food.

Today, companies around the world buy nearly all of the gum arabic Sudan can produce. This versatile ingredient keeps ice creams smooth, prevents cakes from crumbling, and makes sodas more flavorful. It also coats pills for easy swallowing, makes skin lotions feel silky, and provides the adhesive for postage stamps.

Sudan



crops such as cotton. He earned money through the sale of these crops and through the heavy taxes imposed on the people who grew them.

The Ottomans divided Sudan into provinces ruled by Islamic governors appointed by the Egyptian government. However, the governors had little control over the rural areas of their provinces. The rulers who followed Muhammad Ali introduced administrative changes to the system. They named some Sudanese to government posts, and Arabic gradually replaced Turkish as the language of government.

By the mid-1800s the Ottoman rulers expanded their authority to include southern Sudan because of its natural wealth. Traders and merchants from Europe and the Middle East saw the opportunities for profit, and they created a thriving trade in slaves and ivory. The SLAVE TRADE reached such devastating levels that European countries put pressure on the Egyptian government to end it. The Egyptians sent several expeditions to fight the slave traders but had limited success. In most cases the expeditions were led by Europeans.

The Revolt of the Mahdi. Many Sudanese complained bitterly under the burden of high taxes, foreign rule, and the violent campaign against the slave trade. Large numbers of people supported the rebellion launched in 1881 by Muhammad Ahmad ibn Sayyid Abdullah, a holy man who proclaimed himself al-MAHDI, meaning “the expected one.” According to legend, the Mahdi would appear in order to restore the purity of Islam and liberate the people from Ottoman rule.

Supported by pastoralists from the north, al-Mahdi and his followers defeated the Egyptian armies and captured Khartoum in 1885. He established a Muslim state ruled according to religious principles and laws. Al-Mahdi himself died a few months after his victory, and the task of running the new state fell to his successor Khalifa Abdullahi. Controlling most of what is now Sudan, the Mahdists fought constantly with their neighbors. In 1898 a British-Egyptian expedition led by Herbert Horatio Lord Kitchener captured the Mahdist capital and put an end to the Mahdist state.

Anglo-Egyptian Rule. By that time, several European powers had become well established in northeastern Africa. In Sudan, the British and Egyptians jointly ruled the country in an arrangement known as the Condominium. Under the Condominium, a British governor-general had final authority over civil and military matters. The Egyptian government appointed this official based on recommendations from the British—Lord Kitchener himself served as the first governor-general of Sudan.

The Condominium administration divided Sudan into provinces ruled by governors. Until World War I most of these governors were, like Kitchener, army officers. However, in the mid-1920s the British began a program of turning the Sudanese against themselves. They began to choose governors from among the indigenous* Sudanese leaders. They also began to treat the country’s northern section, where most of the people were Muslim, quite differently from the southern areas, where

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Sudan

most people followed traditional religions. In separating the north from the south, the British hoped to prevent Islam from spreading southward.

The British provided education and economic opportunities in the north, while neglecting the south. The two halves of Sudan also grew apart in their culture and language. The so-called Southern Policy has had devastating effects on Sudan and has been a factor in the civil wars that have raged in Sudan since its independence.

Independence and Civil War. From the 1930s to the 1960s fervor for national independence swept across Africa, and Sudan was no exception. Though the movement started among a small group of intellectuals in Sudan, it soon split along religious lines into two main political parties. The National Unionist Party (NUP), allied with the Khatmiyya religious sect, wanted a union of Sudan with Egypt. The Umma Party, allied with the Mahdists, called for independence. These parties were joined in their struggle by the Sudanese Communist Party and several labor unions.

In 1953 Britain agreed to grant the Sudanese self-rule for three years, followed by a vote on the future of the country. In an election for a new parliament, the NUP won the majority of seats, but it soon changed its position and announced that it favored independence for Sudan. In

More than half of Sudan's population lives along the Nile River or one of its tributaries. Shown here is a section of the Nile north of Khartoum.





Sudan

* **autonomy** independent self-government

December 1955 the parliament voted unanimously for independence, effective the following month. But northern Muslims dominated the whole process, ignoring southerners' demands for local autonomy*. Just five months before independence, army units in the south rebelled and killed hundreds of northern traders and officials.

The NUP and the Umma Party formed a government together, but the political situation remained so unstable that the prime minister invited the military to take power. General Ibrahim Abboud suspended the constitution and outlawed political parties, trade unions, and strikes. The government pursued brutal policies to promote Islam and Arabic culture in the south, where the violent rebellion continued. In 1964 a popular uprising forced the military to surrender control of the state.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

The new civilian government lasted just four years before being overthrown by another military coup*. Colonel Ja'far Nimeiri took over as head of government and, supported by the Communist Party, declared Sudan a socialist* state. However, the Communists soon split with Nimeiri and attempted a coup of their own in 1971. Nimeiri held onto power, but he found himself with few remaining allies. He signed a peace treaty with the southern rebels that gave the south some autonomy.

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

A Brief Peace. To strengthen his hold on power, Nimeiri joined forces with the militant Muslim Brotherhood. At the same time, he repeatedly violated the agreement he signed with the rebels. He declared that Sudan would be ruled by Shari'a, Islamic law. The discovery of oil in the south made him determined to regain control of the region. The south rebelled yet again, this time led by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). A coup drove Nimeiri from power in 1985.

In 1989, another military coup brought General Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Beshir to power, supported by the Muslim Brotherhood and a new party, the National Islamic Front (NIF). Beshir promised a return to civilian rule but declared that Sudan would be an Islamic state ruled by Shari'a. The southerners could not accept this policy, and they forced the government to abandon Shari'a in the south two years later.

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country

John Garang, leader of the SPLA, demanded self-rule for the south. But some southern groups signed peace agreements with Beshir, and rebel leader Riek Machar joined the government. Other groups called for the south to secede*. Some of these splits were caused by friction between two ethnic groups, the Nuer and the Dinka—Garang and most the SPLA belonged to the Dinka.

Garang utterly rejected any deal, and the SPLA combined with Beshir opponents from both the south and the north in the new National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The NDA launched armed attacks on dams that supplied electric power to Khartoum, as well as on the pipeline that carried oil from southern oil fields to the Red Sea.

The Wunlit Covenant and After. In 1999, many of the Dinka and Nuer rebel groups met at the city of Wunlit and signed a treaty called the Wunlit Covenant. Faced with the threat of a reunited southern opposi-

Sudan



Republic of the Sudan

POPULATION:
35,079,814 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
967,244 sq. mi. (2,505,813 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
Arabic (official); Nubian, Ta Bedawie, English, dialects of Sudanic and Nilotic languages

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Sudanese pound

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Sunni Muslim 70%, Animist 25%, Christian 5%

CITIES:
Khartoum (capital), 2,731,000 (2001 est.); Port Sudan, Wad Medani, El Obeid, Atbara, Juba, Malakal, Renk

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
From 5 in. (130 mm) in the central region to 50 in. (1,270 mm) in the south

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$940 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: cotton, gum arabic, sesame, sorghum, millet, wheat, sheep, groundnuts

Manufacturing: textiles, cement, cotton ginning, edible oils, soap, distilling, sugar, footwear, petroleum refining
Mining: oil, iron ore, chromium, copper, zinc

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Britain and Egypt, 1956. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 400-seat National Assembly (legislative body), with 275 members elected by popular vote and 125 elected by National Congress.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1956–1958 Council of State (civilian)
1958–1964 General Ibrahim Abboud
1964–1965 Supreme Council (military)
1965–1969 Isma'il al-Azhari
1969–1985 Colonel Ja'far Muhammad Nimeiri (president after 1971)
1985–1986 Lieutenant General Abd al-Rahman Siwar al-Dahab
1986–1989 Supreme Council (civilian)
1989– General Umar Hasan Ahmad al-Beshir (president after 1993)

ARMED FORCES:
94,700 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 7–12; literacy rate 46% (2001 est.)

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

tion, Beshir signed a separate peace with the leader of Sadiq al-Mahdi, an influential Islamic politician who had been part of the NDA. With al-Mahdi's support, Beshir forced a leading Islamic militant, Hassan al-Turabi, from the government. Beshir tried to sell himself as a champion of secular* rule. This policy pleased the governments of neighboring states, which were also struggling against fundamentalist Islamic movements. Beshir signed agreements to end hostile relations with Egypt, Uganda, LIBYA, ERITREA, and ETHIOPIA.

But while achieving peace with other nations, Beshir launched a new offensive to take over the southern oil fields. International agencies have accused the Sudanese government of killing and enslaving civilians in an attempt to drive all non-Arabs from the area. Meanwhile the civil war with the south continues. The war has had a ruinous effect on the region, with at least 1.5 million dead and 5 million displaced. With food supplies and health care disrupted, starvation and disease are common. Few observers see prospects for peace anytime soon.

ECONOMY

For many years Sudan has relied on agriculture as the main pillar of its economy. Cotton accounts for more than half of all export earnings.



Sudan

The main cotton-growing region is the area between the White and Blue Niles called the Gezira. In the 1920s the colonial government established a huge irrigation project in the Gezira to grow crops for export.

Other important cash crops include coffee, tea, tobacco, and gum arabic. Gum arabic has many uses in candy, cosmetics, and medicines, and Sudan produces more than three quarters of the world's supply. A terrible drought in 1984 and 1985 took a serious toll on agriculture, and over 250,000 people died in a famine.

Oil reserves were discovered in the south in the late 1970s, and the government has fought since that time to exert control over the oil fields. Several foreign companies have significant stakes in Sudan's oil industry. However, Beshir's actions in the south have led HUMAN RIGHTS groups to put pressure on these nations to withdraw their investments in the country.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Sudan's geographic diversity is matched by its cultural diversity. The Sudanese speak an estimated 400 different tongues, although Arabic serves many as a common language. While the government has vigorously promoted Islam, about one fourth of the people follow traditional religions. Most non-Muslims live in the southern part of the country.

The peoples of northern Sudan share historical connections to the Arab world, but few of these cultures are purely Arabic. The Islamic Funj Sultanate, for example, had links to the black Africans of the Nuba Hills and the Ethiopian border. Most of the people who live along the rivers trace their ancestry to Arab sources and speak Arabic, but their traditions often reveal a Nubian heritage.

In many parts of northern Sudan, the word "Arab" simply means a nomadic herder of the desert. Some nomadic Arab populations of Sudan are light-skinned because they have not intermarried much with black Sudanese. However, most northern populations, such as the Baggara, have done so. While these societies usually moved from place to place with their herds of animals, they settled in farming villages and grew crops when conditions for pastoralism were poor.

In recent times, West African peoples such as the HAUSA and FULANI from NIGERIA have settled in Sudan. Some were drawn by a desire to establish farms in the Gezira region; others came on their way to Islamic pilgrimages to Arabia.

The most numerous peoples of southern Sudan are the Dinka and Nuer herders. These people, particularly the Nuer, have often valued their autonomy and resisted authority. Other groups of this region include the Azande, Shilluk, and Nuba. (*See also Arabs in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Deserts and Drought, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Genocide and Violence, History of Africa, Hunger and Famine, Islam in Africa, Livestock Grazing, Warfare.*)



Sudanic Empires of Western Africa

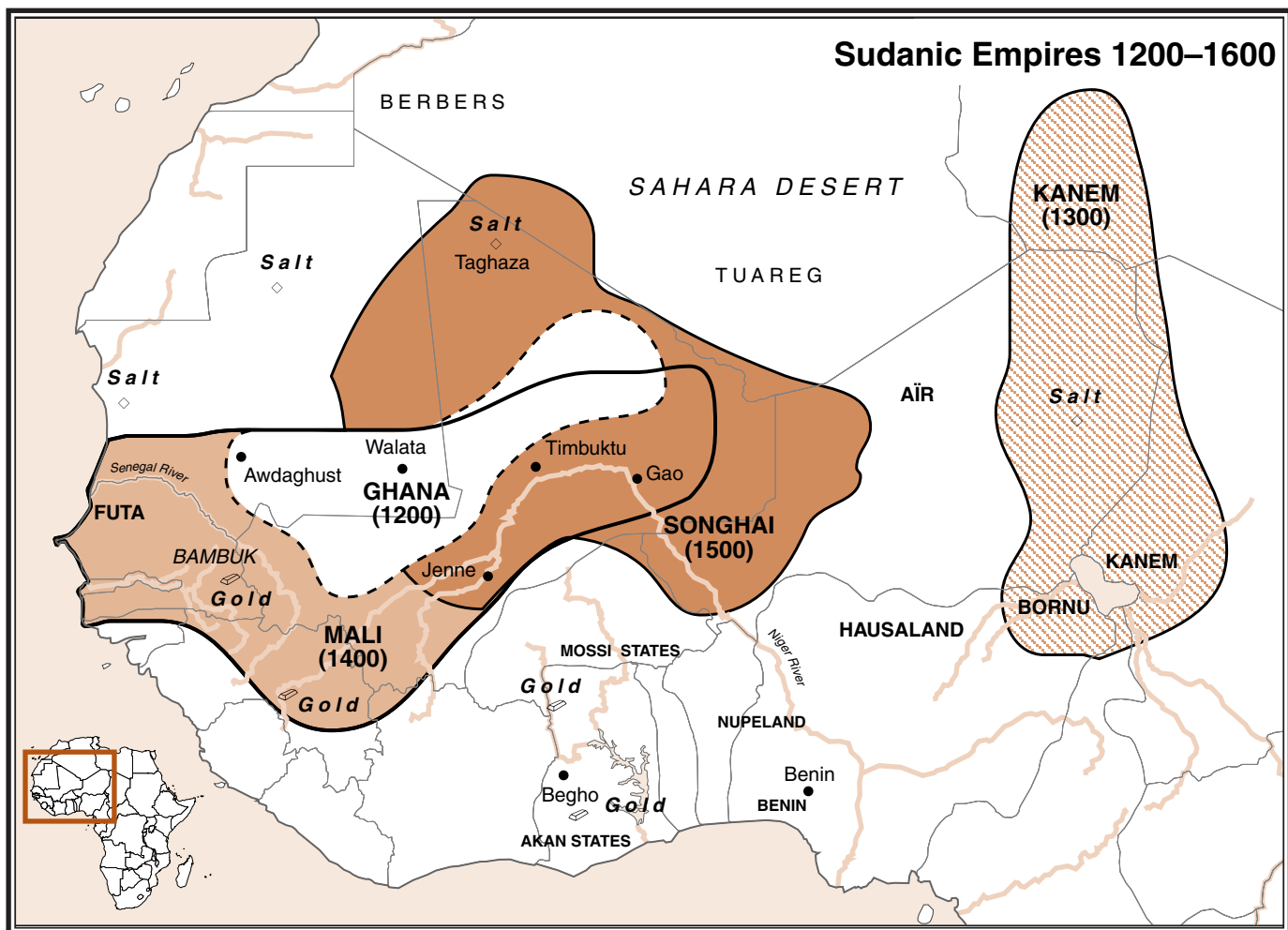
Sudanic Empires of Western Africa

* sub-Saharan referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The Sudanic empires of Western Africa were a group of powerful states that developed south of the SAHARA DESERT between the A.D. 700s and 1500s. The most prominent of these states were GHANA, MALI, and Songhai. The Arabs called the whole stretch of land south of the desert *bilad al-sudan* (“the land of the blacks”). Thus the term “Sudan” came to mean the area ranging from the present-day nation of SUDAN through western Africa. The Sudanic empires developed vast commercial networks, trading grains and gold from the SAHEL and sub-Saharan* Africa for salt from the Sahara.

History and Government. Ghana, the first great Sudanic trading empire, was founded by Soninke peoples. By about 800 Ghana was a wealthy kingdom, and it reached its peak in the mid-1000s. Soon afterward the empire began to decline as the Almoravids, a Muslim group from North Africa, gained control of the Saharan trade routes and parts of the Sudan. Although Ghana survived until the 1200s, it never regained its former power.

In the early 1200s a group of southern Soninke peoples known as the Susu began gaining influence in the region. However, they were con-





Sudanic Empires of Western Africa

Sudanic Currency

Traders in the Sudanic empires used various types of money, including gold, copper, iron, shells, and strips of cloth. One of the most important currencies was gold, either in the form of dust or coins. Merchants weighed the dust against gold coins to determine its value. By the 1000s gold coinage had been adopted throughout the Muslim world. At about the same time, cowrie shells from the Maldives in the Indian Ocean appeared in markets in Mali. Only in areas without access to cowrie shells did traders use cloth money.

- * **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force
- * **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place
- * **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group
- * **succession** determination of the person who will inherit the throne

quered in the mid-1200s by SUNDJATA KEÏTA, the king of the Malinke. Sundjata took over the remnants of Ghana and founded the empire of Mali. At its height in the 1300s, Mali stretched from the Atlantic coast in the west into the Sahara in the northeast. The BERBERS of the Sahara region paid tribute* to Mali and served in its armies. The most famous of Mali's rulers, MANSA MUSA, shaped the Islamic character of Mali and expanded the empire to its greatest size. In 1325, during a pilgrimage* to the holy city of Mecca in Arabia, he passed through EGYPT, where the people of CAIRO marveled at his wealth and generosity.

By the late 1300s Mali had lost its political influence over the Sahara. The TUAREG people of the desert took advantage of the empire's weakness and captured the trading city of TIMBUKTU. In the 1400s Songhai, the last of the great Sudanic empires, rose in power. SUNNI ALI, a Songhai ruler, chased the Tuareg from Timbuktu and gradually gained control of a large area around the middle NIGER RIVER. Songhai enjoyed its greatest power in the 1500s under the members of the Askiya dynasty*, who formed alliances with the Tuareg and extended the empire over large portions of the western Sudan. In 1591 MOROCCO conquered Songhai, bringing the 800-year history of the Sudanic empires to an end.

The Sudanic monarchs had great power, wealth, and dignity, and a wide social distance separated them from their subjects. Kings never spoke directly to their subjects, but used spokespersons, such as griots, the oral historians of the empire. The griots also served as counselors and settled legal disputes.

When a monarch died, there were often no clear rules about who should take over the throne. As a result, disputes over succession* were common. Dynasties survived primarily because they were not challenged by others. The Keita dynasty of Mali, for example, held power from the 1200s to 1500s and continued to rule over small chiefdoms after the break up of the empire.

Economy. Agriculture, fishing, and cattle raising were all important to the economies of the Sudanic empires. These activities produced a variety of products that stimulated trade. Women tended to dominate local trade and men generally controlled the long-distance Saharan routes. Merchants established a network of branches off the main commercial routes, and used relatives and slaves to help conduct their businesses.

Trade strengthened the power of the Sudanic rulers by bringing them wealth, connections with foreign merchants, and a near monopoly* over important products, such as metals and horses. As the empires grew, the trade routes became more well-established. The Arabic traveler IBN BATTUTA praised the safe trade routes he found in the Sahara and throughout the empire of Mali.

- * **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business

Religion. The Sudanic rulers were the first people in their kingdoms to convert to Islam*. They were drawn to the faith because they thought that Muslims represented a higher, more prosperous civilization, and Islam was seen as a powerful religion. Chiefs and kings adopted Muslim names, learned how to pray, and celebrated Muslim festivals. They asked Muslim religious leaders for blessings and gave them official roles in

- * **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims



Sudanic Empires of Western Africa

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

state ceremonies. However, most rulers did not abandon their traditional beliefs. Instead, they attempted to add the spiritual protection of Islam to that offered by their indigenous* religions.

Most common people continued to follow their ancestral beliefs while adopting some aspects of Islam. Generally, Islam became the dominant faith only in certain market towns. Merchants often converted to Islam more readily because their life of constant travel separated them from the traditional culture at home. While some Sudanic rulers attempted to incorporate Islamic practices in their states, others did little to encourage the spread of Islam. (*See also Arabs in Africa, History of Africa, Islam in Africa, Kings and Kingship, North Africa: History and Cultures.*)

Suez Canal

The Suez Canal is an artificial waterway in EGYPT that links the Mediterranean and the Red Seas. Cut across the Isthmus of Suez, a strip of land connecting Africa and western Asia, the canal made it possible for ships to travel from Europe to Asia and back without sailing all the way around Africa.

The Suez Canal was not the first waterway built across part of Egypt. In ancient times, the Egyptians dug a channel that ran from the NILE RIVER to the Red Sea. The Romans later lengthened the canal, but in A.D. 775 the Arab rulers of Egypt destroyed it.

As trade between Europe and Asia increased in later centuries, various European nations considered building a canal across Suez to shorten trade routes. Each time the project was considered too difficult. Finally, in 1854, Egypt authorized a French engineer named Ferdinand de Lesseps to construct a canal. Work began two years later under the management of the Suez Canal Company, an association of European and Egyptian shareholders that owned the rights to operate the canal for 99 years. At first, the company forced unpaid or poorly paid Egyptian peasants to dig the canal by hand. Later, in response to international criticism, the company hired European workers with heavy machinery to complete the job.

When it was completed in 1869, the canal measured 100 miles long, 30 feet deep, and 100 feet wide. Its route passed through four lakes and had eight major bends. Several hundred ships used the Suez Canal during its first year of operation. In following decades both cargo and passenger traffic steadily increased, especially after 1950, when oil was first shipped from Persian Gulf oilfields to Europe by way of the canal. In 1956 the Egyptian government took control of the canal, and it has been managed since that time by the Egyptian Suez Canal Authority. Egypt closed the canal twice, from 1956 to 1957 and again from 1967 to 1975, because of conflicts with nearby Israel. The canal's busiest year was 1966, with 21,250 transits, or passages.

Today, usage of the Suez Canal has declined somewhat. Although engineers widened and deepened the canal several times to a final measurement of 590 feet wide and 53 feet deep, many modern tankers are too large to travel through the canal. In addition, a pipeline now carries

Sundjata Keïta

great quantities of oil across the Suez Peninsula. Still, the Suez Canal remains an important route for ships transporting agricultural products from North America and Europe to Asia and for carrying petroleum products from the Middle East to European refineries. Other common cargoes include cement, metals, and fertilizers. (See also **Trade, Transportation.**)

Sufism

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

Sufism, the mystical tradition of Islam*, has had a profound influence on the beliefs and practices of Muslims in Africa. Arabs from the Arabian Peninsula first brought Islam to Africa in the A.D. 600s. By the early 1200s various orders, or schools, of sufism had emerged in North Africa, based on the teachings of influential religious leaders.

Sufism reached its peak in Africa during the 1800s. At that time many new Sufi orders sprang up in northern and eastern Africa, such as the Sanusiyya founded by Muhammad ibn Ali-Sanusi. The new orders, led by the families of their founders, adopted different ideas and patterns of organization from the older ones. Instead of being based on a local tribe, the new orders drew members from various groups. They were the first to teach Islam in indigenous* languages instead of Arabic. They insisted on strict faithfulness to the Qur'an—the Islamic holy scriptures—and devotion to the prophet Muhammad.

During the colonial era some Sufi orders helped organize local resistance to foreign rule. The Sufi leader Umar al-Mukhtar led the forces fighting Italian power in LIBYA until his death in 1931. Two Sufi orders of SUDAN, the Mahdists and the Khatmiyya, formed political parties that supported Sudanese nationalism*. But not all Sufi leaders opposed the colonial powers. The Muridiyya in SENEGAL worked with colonial officials, despite government mistrust of the group.

Over time the Sufi brotherhoods grew more urbanized and became active in business. They valued Western education, and today a large percentage of educated Sudanese are members of Sufi families. Since independence Sufi groups such as the Wahhabis in MALI and the Izala in NIGERIA have emerged to challenge the dominance of the established orders. The growth of African cities and the spread of modern systems of communication have helped new forms of Sufism to replace the traditional Sufi orders in many parts of the continent. (See also **Islam in Africa, Religion and Ritual.**)

Sundjata Keïta

ca. 1205–1255
Founder of the Empire of
Mali

A brilliant military leader and skilled administrator, Sundjata Keïta founded the empire of MALI, one of the great SUDANIC EMPIRES OF WESTERN AFRICA. Under his rule Mali adopted various laws and customs that are still followed by the people of the region.

Born in the west African city of Dakajala, Sundjata was the second son of the ruler of Manding, a kingdom of the Mandinka people. When Sundjata was only seven years old, his father died and his elder brother,



Sundjata Keita

Dankaran-Tuma, took the throne. Persecuted by his brother, Sundjata went into exile with his mother, sisters, and younger brother.

The king of Manding owed allegiance to the emperor of GHANA. When Sundjata's brother became king, Ghana was being torn apart by civil war and was in a state of decline. Another powerful monarch in the region, King Sumanguru Kante of Susu, gained control over much of Ghana and dominated the kingdom of Manding. Unable to defend Manding, Dankaran-Tuma gave up his throne and fled.

The king of Susu brought a reign of terror to Manding and put down several revolts by the Mandinka and the nearby Malinke people. These groups sent a secret mission to Sundjata, asking him to return. The ruler of the kingdom where Sundjata was living gave him an army to lead back to Manding. Sundjata returned to his homeland, and the Malinke revolted against Susu. A fierce battle led to the defeat of Susu and the destruction of its capital.

Under Sundjata's leadership, the Malinke won victory after victory over other kingdoms and peoples in West Africa. They eventually built a vast nation—the empire of Mali—which extended from TIMBUKTU to the Atlantic Ocean. Sundjata, who ruled Mali from 1235 to 1255, created a fairly loose governmental structure. He gave the various kingdoms and peoples in the empire a great deal of autonomy* and allowed each community to follow its own traditions and customs.

Sundjata kept the roads of the empire secure, established new laws and rules, and created alliances among Malinke clans* and between Malinke clans and others. Because of his grand accomplishments, Sundjata is known by many names and prestigious titles in the Malinke ORAL TRADITION. Among these are Sundjata the King, Lord Lion, and Master Hunter with the Venerable Bearing.

* **autonomy** independent self-government

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

Sunni Ali

1464–1492
Ruler of Songhai

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Sunni Ali was a member of the Sunni Muslim dynasty* that ruled the Songhai Empire of western Africa in the 1300s and 1400s. Known for his immense energy and leadership skills, he expanded the borders of the empire.

By the time Sunni Ali came to power, the Songhai kingdom had lost much of its influence over the Middle NIGER RIVER region. Even the key trading center of TIMBUKTU had been taken over by nomadic TUAREG herders. Sunni Ali led a successful campaign to capture territory along both sides of the river, stretching from present-day NIGERIA into what is now central MALI. In 1468 his forces recaptured Timbuktu.

Many of the scholars and leaders of Timbuktu fled the city after its defeat, and some of those who stayed were mistreated and even killed. Muslim leaders looked upon Sunni Ali as a tyrant and a murderer and questioned his devotion to Islam*. Nevertheless, the state he founded later grew into one of the most powerful and important empires in the SAHEL. (See also **Islam in Africa, Sudanic Empires of Western Africa.**)



Swaziland

Susenyos

ca. 1580–ca. 1632
Emperor of Ethiopia

One of the most powerful emperors of ETHIOPIA, Susenyos attempted to change the Ethiopian Church. Soon after taking the throne in 1607, Susenyos decided that, for political and religious reasons, Ethiopia should accept the authority of the Catholic Church in Rome rather than the Coptic Church in ALEXANDRIA in Egypt. A Jesuit missionary, Pedro Páez, and Susenyos' brother Celakrestos encouraged the emperor in this matter, and he officially accepted the authority of Rome in 1622.

In 1625 Susenyos welcomed a Roman Catholic official named Alphonsus Mendes to his royal court. The official immediately began introducing Latin elements of Christianity into the Ethiopian church to make it more Roman Catholic in style. However, these efforts met with widespread public opposition and led to a series of revolts. Susenyos eventually gave the throne to his son FASILADAS, who expelled Mendes from Ethiopia and restored the authority of Alexandria. (*See also Christianity in Africa, Copts, Ethiopian Orthodox Church.*)

Swahili

The Swahili people live in towns and villages along a 1,000-mile stretch of the East African coastline, from SOMALIA to MOZAMBIQUE. Many also live on ZANZIBAR, Pemba, and the COMORO ISLANDS off the coast. The name Swahili, an Arabic term meaning “people of the coast,” was given to them by Arabs who conquered the region in the early 1700s. However, the Swahili rarely use this name, preferring to identify themselves by names that refer to individual towns.

The Swahili are Muslims and use both the Arabic and the Roman alphabets for writing. Their language, Swahili, belongs to the Bantu family of African languages but includes many words borrowed from Arabic. It has become a common language of trade and communication throughout eastern Africa.

Swahili civilization, unlike that of neighboring African peoples, is urban, maritime*, and based on commerce. Since they first established towns along the coast before A.D. 1000, the Swahili have been agents in trade between Africa and Asia. Their economy suffered when Great Britain ended the SLAVE TRADE in the 1800s and more recently when long-distance shipping trade across the Indian Ocean declined. The Swahili are noted for their large, stone-built houses and towns, their elegant clothing and food, and for a high level of literary achievement, especially in poetry. (*See also Bantu Peoples.*)

* **maritime** related to the sea or shipping

Swaziland

Swaziland is a tiny landlocked kingdom located between SOUTH AFRICA and MOZAMBIQUE. Ruled by a hereditary king, Mswati III, Swaziland is the last absolute monarchy in Africa.

History and Government. Caught in the conflict between the British and Dutch in southern Africa during the late 1800s, Swaziland

Swaziland



Kingdom of Swaziland

POPULATION:
1,082,289 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
6,704 sq. mi. (17,364 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
siSwati and English (both official); Zulu, Afrikaans

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Lilangeni (plural: Emalangeni)

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Christian 60%, Traditional 40%

CITIES:
Mbabane (administrative capital), 47,000 (1990 est.); Lobamba (legislative capital), 30,000 (1988); Manzini, Mhlambanyati, Tshaneni, Bunya, Goedgegun

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
35–90 in. (900–2,300 mm) throughout most of country

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$4,200 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

*Agricultural: corn, livestock, sugarcane, fruits, cotton, rice, sorghum, tobacco, peanuts, timber
Manufacturing: milled sugar, cotton, processed meat and wood, chemicals, machinery, beverages, consumer goods, paper milling
Mining: iron ore, coal*

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Britain, 1968. Hereditary monarchy with membership in the British Commonwealth. Governing bodies: Libandla (legislature) with Senate and House of Assembly; prime minister appointed by the monarch.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

*1968–1982 King Sobhuza II
1982–1983 Dzeliwe Shongwe (regent)
1983–1986 Ntombi Thawala (regent)
1986– King Mswati III*

ARMED FORCES:
2,657 (1983 est.)

EDUCATION:
No information on education system; literacy rate 77% (1995 est.)

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

became a British protectorate* in 1903. In 1968 it achieved independence under King SOBHUZA II. A British-style parliament was created at that time, but Sobhuza dissolved it five years later, and in 1979 he established a new parliament with very little authority.

Sobhuza was a shrewd politician and capable ruler. He came to terms with his powerful neighbor South Africa, even though he opposed the racist apartheid* government there. He also founded a private fund called the Tibiyo Taka Ngwane that was free from both taxes and parliamentary control. The fund owned a major piece of every foreign investment in the country, forming a powerful base of capital to support the king's plans.

Sobhuza II's death in 1982 set off a power struggle within Swaziland. Mswati III, the king's second-youngest son, was named the successor. His mother ruled until 1986, when he reached his eighteenth birthday and assumed power. Mswati immediately fired the prime minister, dismissed his council of advisers, and appointed new people to his cabinet. He has been under great pressure to end the monarchy and transform Swaziland into a democracy. However, despite occasional pro-democracy protests and violence, the young king seems determined to retain his ancient title.

The king has control over the government at all levels. He appoints many members of parliament, which consists of a national assembly and senate. Traditional assemblies loyal to the king then choose candidates for a public parliamentary election. The king chooses his cabinet from the assembly, and appoints the prime minister as well.



Taboo and Sin

See
color plate 8,
vol. 3.

Geography, Economy, and Culture. Covering less than 7,000 square miles, Swaziland has a very diverse geography. The western portion is mountainous, with a cool, moist climate. Central Swaziland is a gently rolling plateau that receives enough rainfall to permit commercial agriculture. This area is the country's most densely populated region and the source of most of its food. Eastern Swaziland consists of low-lying land with good soil but little rainfall. The Lebombo Plateau, which resembles central Swaziland, stretches along the nation's eastern border.

Swaziland's temperate climate and many rivers make it ideal for agricultural activity. Its main export crop is sugar, but it also produces pineapples and other citrus fruit. Timber from western Swaziland also plays an important role in the national economy. Although the country once had abundant coal and iron ore reserves, these resources have been largely exhausted. Manufacturing, especially the processing of timber and food items, contributes over one third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. TOURISM is another important source of revenue.

Most of the people in Swaziland speak the siSwati language and share a common cultural heritage. Within this ethnic group, there are several different clans* arranged in a hierarchy*. The Nkosi Dlamini, the clan of the Swazi kings, dominates the other clans. The members of each clan traditionally assume specific roles in society. For example, women from certain clans, including the Simelane, Ndwandwe, and Nxumalo, are married into the royal clan to serve as queen mothers. People from some other clans, such as the Fakudze and Zwane, become national officials.

Although many Swazi practice CHRISTIANITY, first introduced by Western missionaries in the mid-1800s, they continue to hold traditional beliefs about the spirit world. Ancestors are revered and sacrifices are offered to them to ensure good luck and to prevent misfortune. In cases of illness or other trouble, many people seek help from diviners*, who explain how to solve problems caused by angered spirits. Others consult traditional healers, whose remedies often combine the use of modern medicines and ancient religious practices. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Kings and Kingship**.)

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **hierarchy** organization of a group into higher and lower levels

* **diviner** person who predicts the future or explains the causes of misfortune

Taboo and Sin

* **deity** god or goddess

Sin and taboo are two ways of regulating behavior that are used by African religions and African social systems. A sin is a wicked act that breaks the laws of a deity* or deities. It is also a deliberate act—the sinner knows that he or she is committing a sin. Taboo is a type of social rule that must not be broken. If a person breaks a taboo, even unknowingly, serious misfortune is believed to result.

Sins. Sins are offenses against a god or goddess and are considered fundamentally wrong or evil. They are defined only by religious beliefs and teachings. Therefore, a sin is not necessarily illegal in terms of human law. A person may commit a sin that is not a crime or a crime that is not a sin.

African religions have various ideas about sin and how it is punished. Some faiths say that people are reborn from earlier lifetimes in order to



Taboo and Sin

pay for past sins. According to other religions, there is an afterlife during which the dead are punished for sin or rewarded for virtue. Some religions teach that people who commit sins but later repent, regretting their sinful acts and wishing to make up for them, may be purified by religious rituals. Concepts of sin, repentance, and purification are forms of social control. They encourage the specific moral behavior that all those who share a particular religion have agreed is desirable.

Taboo. The idea of taboo controls moral behavior as well. Most taboos involve certain prohibitions, entry into sacred places, or kinds of physical contact. Taboos in central Africa forbid pregnant women and small children to have anything to do with a person who has committed adultery*. A child's life is thought to be endangered if an adulterer eats food cooked on the same fire used to cook the child's food. The taboo breaker is not the adulterer, however, but the child's mother, who puts herself and her child at risk.

* **adultery** sexual relationship between a married person and someone other than his or her spouse

African taboos may involve such acts as walking on a dog's grave, touching a corpse, or failing to show the proper respect to certain beings, such as rulers or twins. In some parts of Africa the birth of twins is considered an extremely powerful event in which the deities interrupt the normal course of human birth. Twins are surrounded by taboos all their lives and must be treated correctly. Among the Lele of CONGO (KINSHASA), if a stranger who is a twin arrives at a village, the village must perform a ceremony of twin-entry or its hunting will not prosper.

Most Africans believe that if they break a taboo, punishment will follow swiftly and automatically—whether or not they intended to do wrong. The punishment may fall on the individual who broke the taboo, his or her relatives, or the whole community. Because any member of a group may suffer if someone breaks a taboo, community members often watch each other to make sure that taboos are observed. The effect of breaking a taboo can be undone if the taboo breaker performs the necessary acts of purification.

The concept of taboo reflects a view of the universe as having a natural world, a human social order, and a divine order. The divine order regulates the natural world through rules that humans must follow. The rules do not always have an obvious moral significance—in other words, they may not appear to be concerned with questions of good or evil. Generally, however, they are important for maintaining a community's customs. Respect taboos, such as taboos against insulting a leader, support the political system, and sexual taboos, such as those that punish incest or adultery, protect the institution of the family. When a society changes its ideas about the things that are important to it, old taboos fall out of favor, and new ones may arise. When this happens, it is almost as if a simple purification occurred, after which the old taboos no longer had any power. In a similar manner, strong community ties have become weaker in many parts of Africa, and the individual has gained importance at the expense of the group. In this situation, taboos are no longer enforced by the community, so it is up to each person to obey the taboos. In this way, taboos become more of a personal honor system than a community rule. (See also **Divination and Oracles, Religion and Ritual.**)

* **incest** sexual relations between relatives

**Tafawa Balewa,
Abubakar**

1912–1966
Prime Minister of Nigeria

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **authoritarian** relating to strong leadership with unrestricted powers

The first prime minister of NIGERIA, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa helped keep a newly independent Nigeria united in the early 1960s despite serious ethnic and regional differences. A HAUSA born in northern Nigeria, Abubakar became a schoolmaster in 1933 and published a prizewinning novel the next year. However, politics was his true calling. In 1946 Abubakar became a member of the legislature of Northern Nigeria, a British protectorate* at that time. He called for the reform of the rule of emirs, the Islamic* princes of the region. Abubakar held other government positions during the 1950s, including vice president of the Northern People’s Congress, minister of works, and minister of transport.

Elected prime minister of the Nigerian Federation in 1957, Abubakar held the same office after Nigeria gained independence in 1960. He soon gained a reputation for modesty and integrity and became widely respected both within the country and in other nations.

As leader of Nigeria, Abubakar faced many challenges. He had to deal with fierce political rivals, the authoritarian* rule of his party’s leader, Ahmadu BELLO, and a nation divided by ethnic groups. Abubakar’s greatest test came in 1964, when political crisis threatened to tear Nigeria apart. He boldly restructured the government and saved the nation from disintegration. However, Abubakar’s success was short-lived, and in January 1966 a bloody mutiny erupted during which he was kidnapped and assassinated. He is remembered as one of Nigeria’s finest politicians and leaders.

Tanzania

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

The East African country of Tanzania was once one of the most prosperous places on the continent. For centuries, merchants traveled from Arabia and India to trade with the residents of towns along Tanzania’s Indian Ocean coast. Today, however, the nation struggles because years of colonial neglect and socialist* reforms have made it one of the poorest and most debt-ridden countries in Africa.

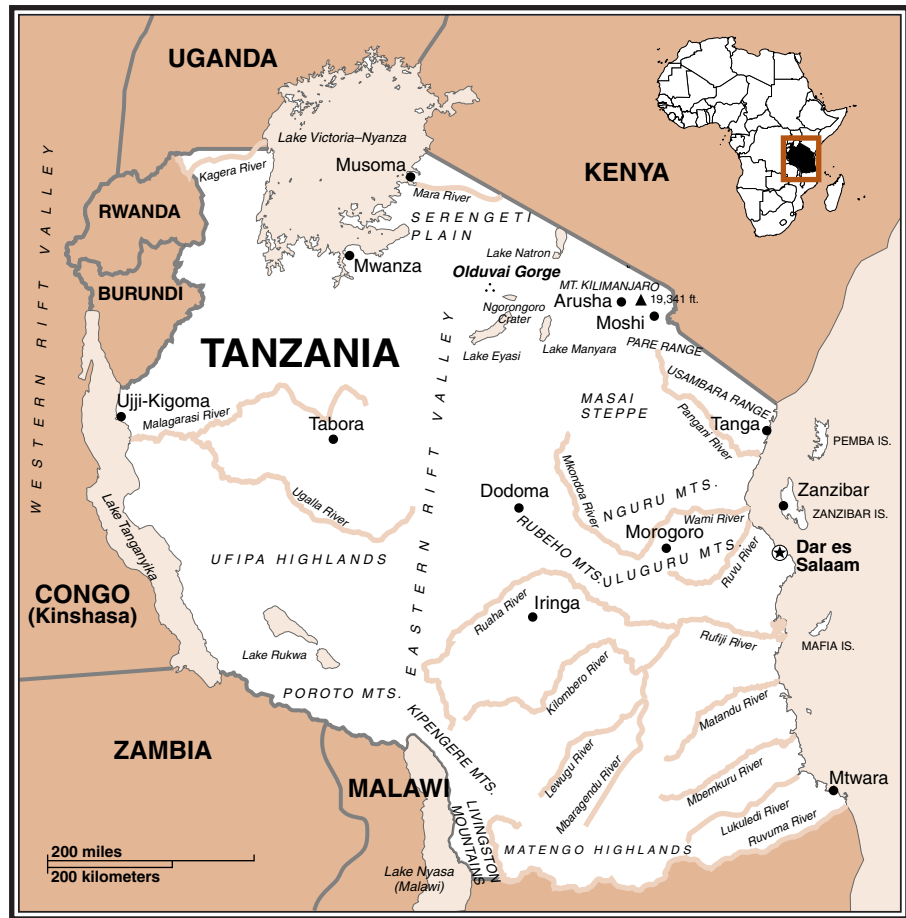
GEOGRAPHY

Tanzania borders the Indian Ocean just below the equator. A narrow, fertile plain runs along its 500-mile coastline. From there the land gradually rises to a central plateau. A range of medium-size mountains extends through central Tanzania. Another, much higher, chain of mountains forms the country’s western border with ZAMBIA, MALAWI, and CONGO (KINSHASA). Between the two mountain ranges lies the Rift Valley, which divides Tanzania roughly in half. At the northern end of the valley is a series of high peaks, including Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa’s highest mountain.

Tanzania contains more surface water than any other African nation. Lake Victoria, Africa’s largest lake, is located in the northwest, and Lakes Nyasa and Tanganyika lie along the western border. In addition, Tanzania has a number of smaller lakes and major rivers.



Tanzania



The nation's climate varies considerably from one region to another. The coastal plain and the northern inland areas receive ample rainfall, and most of the country's agriculture takes place in these regions. The central plateau is hotter and drier, and the mountainous uplands are cooler with heavy rainfall.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Evidence of coastal trading settlements in Tanzania dates to the A.D. 700s and possibly earlier. About this time traders from Arabia arrived and mixed with the indigenous* African population. Over the next several hundred years they formed a unique SWAHILI society. Their trading settlements flourished until shortly before the arrival of Portuguese traders in the 1500s.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **League of Nations** organization founded to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

Colonial Rule. European colonization of the region began with its occupation by the Germans in 1884. They created the colony of German East Africa, which included Tanganyika (now part of Tanzania), RWANDA, BURUNDI, and ZANZIBAR. After Germany's defeat in WORLD WAR I, the League of Nations* assigned Britain to administer Tanganyika.



Tanzania

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

* **sisal** plant whose leaves contain a stiff fiber used for making rope

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

The British focused on exploiting* Tanganyika's natural resources. They established mines and raised crops for export, such as coffee, tea, sisal*, cotton, tobacco, and cashews. These are still the country's main agricultural products. The British appointed indigenous rulers as government agents to recruit labor, collect taxes, and monitor crop production. This association with colonial officials undermined the authority of the indigenous rulers. When a movement for independence emerged in the 1950s, conflicts developed between these traditional rulers and members of nationalist* groups, who saw them as allies of the British.

Independence Under Nyerere. In 1961 Tanganyika won its independence and Julius NYERERE, head of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), became the country's first president. Once in power, Nyerere moved to ensure that TANU would dominate the political and social life of the country. He banned opposition parties and placed the trade unions under TANU control. In 1965 a new constitution made the country a single-party state.

On the nearby island of Zanzibar, Nyerere's political allies staged a coup*, overthrowing the elected government in 1964. At their request, Tanganyika and Zanzibar were joined to form the United Republic of Tanzania the following year.

Nyerere launched a series of socialist reforms that involved state control of industries and reorganizing agricultural production. In 1967 he announced the Arusha Declaration, a program designed to move rural people to planned villages to increase crop production and improve delivery of public services. Specifically, the plan was supposed to create communities that worked closely together, which in turn would encourage more advanced production methods, promote group production of crops, and provide more efficient access to education, health services, and drinking water. Instead, the plan turned out to be a disaster. People were forced to abandon their farms and relocate. Within a few years agricultural production dropped dramatically, forcing Tanzania to import large quantities of food. The country fell deeply into debt.

Restructuring. In the early 1980s, in return for assistance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, Tanzania agreed to sell its state industries, reduce the size of the government, and lift restrictions on imports and foreign investment. However, this program failed to stabilize the economy. In 1985 Nyerere resigned his presidency, and Ali Hassan Mwinyi took over. Mwinyi, too, was unable to turn the economy around. As the situation worsened, people began to press for political change.

In 1991 Tanzania passed the Political Parties Act, allowing multiparty elections. Four years later Ben Mkapa of the Chama Cha Mapinduzi party won the presidency, but his opponents received over 40 percent of the vote. Although the nation is now a republic, the assembly and the courts are weak and the president still determines government policy.

The city of Dodoma, in central Tanzania, has been selected as the site of the nation's new capital and the government has been gradually moving there. Meanwhile, many administrative offices remain in the old capital of DAR ES SALAAM.



Jewels of Nature

Tanzania boasts several spectacular natural wonders that attract visitors from around the world. In the north is Mount Kilimanjaro, Africa's highest peak. Although just south of the equator, it is permanently capped with snow and ice. The precious blue stone tanzanite is found only on its southwestern slopes. Lake Victoria, on the border with Uganda, is Africa's largest lake and the second-largest freshwater lake in the world. Lake Tanganyika, in the western Rift Valley, is the world's longest freshwater lake, stretching over a distance of 410 miles. Its 4,700 foot depth also makes it the world's second deepest lake.

Tanzania

ECONOMY AND CULTURE

Tanzania is one of Africa's least developed countries. Agriculture, which employs over 90 percent of the population, dominates the economy. But in recent years declining prices and periodic droughts have severely hurt farmers' incomes. In other areas of the economy, mining and TOURISM show some promise. Gemstone mining has grown and new gold deposits have been discovered. Tourism is rebounding after years of decline, as game reserves along the border with KENYA attract foreign visitors. However, Tanzania's other industries remain underdeveloped, partly because of the poor condition of the nation's infrastructure*.

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

One of Tanzania's strengths is its social unity. Unlike many African nations, Tanzania did not adopt the official language of its European colonial rulers. Although the country has over 120 language groups, most Tanzanians speak Swahili, which is also the main language used by the media. The presence of a common language, combined with the long-term rule of a single leader (Nyerere), have helped spare Tanzania the ethnic strife that has troubled many other nations.

Most of Tanzania's population is divided among Christians, Muslims, and those who practice traditional religions. However, Zanzibar is pri-

Mount Kilimanjaro, in northeastern Tanzania, looms high over the surrounding plateau. Rising to 19,341 feet, Kilimanjaro is the highest peak in Africa.





United Republic of Tanzania

POPULATION:

35,306,126 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

364,928 sq. mi. (945,166 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Swahili and English (both official); Chagga, Gogo, Ha, Haya, Luo, Maasai, others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Tanzanian shilling

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 45%, Muslim 35%, Traditional 20%

CITIES:

Dar es Salaam (capital), 2,347,000 (2001 est.); Dodoma (to be new capital) 1,238,000 (1999 est.); Zanzibar City, Tanga, Mwanza, Arusha, Morogoro

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

30–100 in. (770–2,570 mm), varying by region

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$550 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, sisal, tea, cotton, cashews, tobacco, cloves, wheat, fruits, vegetables, livestock
Manufacturing: agricultural processing, oil refining, footwear, cement, textiles, wood products, fertilizer
Mining: diamonds, petroleum.

GOVERNMENT:

Tanganyika gained independence from UN trusteeship administered by Britain in 1961; Zanzibar became independent from Britain in 1963; Tanganyika and Zanzibar united under the name United Republic of Tanzania in 1964. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Zanzibar elects own president for domestic matters. Governing body: 274-seat Bunge (National Assembly).

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1961–1985 President Julius Nyerere
 1985–1995 President Ali Hassan Mwinyi
 1995– President Benjamin William Mkapa

ARMED FORCES:

34,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–14; literacy rate 68%

- * **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life
- * **fundamentalist** member of a group that emphasizes a strict interpretation of religious beliefs

marily Muslim, while northeastern Tanzania is largely Christian. The country is officially a secular* state, but in recent years Christian and Muslim fundamentalists* have sought to gain greater political influence. (See also **Arabs in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Independence Movements, Languages, Minerals and Mining, Wildlife and Game Parks.**)

Téwodros

ca. 1820–1868
Emperor of Ethiopia

- * **feudal** relating to an economic and political system in which individuals gave services to a landlord in return for protection and the use of land
- * **vernacular** native language or dialect of a region or country



considered the first modern ruler of ETHIOPIA, Téwodros set out to reunite his country, then a cluster of warring states. Born to noble parents and originally named Kasa, he was educated at Christian monasteries. He became a bandit in the early 1840s, and in 1852 he launched a military campaign against feudal* chiefs throughout Ethiopia. Three years later, he was crowned emperor and took the name Téwodros, meaning “King of Kings.”

Téwodros had mixed success during his years as emperor. He pioneered the use of Ethiopia’s modern vernacular* language, Amharic, over the classical literary language, Ge’ez, which had dominated for centuries. His attempts to reorganize local government angered local leaders and left him struggling to hold Ethiopia together. He made efforts to modernize his military but was unable to convince the British to give him the advanced equipment he desired. In 1862 Téwodros imprisoned a British



Téwodros

official and other foreigners after the British failed to acknowledge a letter of friendship. The British responded by sending a military expedition to the emperor's fortress in 1868. Surrounded by British troops, Téwodros chose to commit suicide rather than submit to them.

TEXTILES

See *Crafts*.

Theater

- * **indigenous** native to a certain place
- * **ritual** ceremony that follows a set pattern
- * **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Theater in Africa takes many different forms and comes from diverse roots. Indigenous* customs, such as storytelling, ritual*, dance, and masquerades, are the oldest types of theater on the continent. In North Africa and other areas dominated by Islamic* culture, theater often includes reciting popular tales and acting out religious stories, such as the deaths of the grandsons of the prophet Muhammad. Since the arrival of Europeans, Africans have also staged plays in the style of Western theater—dramas and comedies based on scripts.

Today, African artists often combine various forms to create new styles of theater. For example, many modern African plays are Western in structure but include traditional elements. In many cases, African plays deal with controversial political and social issues.

Traditional Theater. The types of performance that existed in Africa before the arrival of Europeans are generally referred to as traditional theater. Some traditional theater is performed for entertainment, such as the storytelling of the Akan people of GHANA. Other traditional theater has important religious and social meaning. Examples of such performances include the ancient ritual dramas and dances of the KHOISAN people of southern Africa; the spectacular masquerades performed in SIERRA LEONE, NIGERIA, and Ghana; and the songs and ritual stories acted out by the XHOSA and ZULU people in southern Africa.

Traditional theater in all African cultures shares certain features. It does not have a script or a “correct” version that performers must follow. Characters are not portrayed as individuals but as general types, such as the dishonest merchant, the prostitute, or the foreigner. Performances often criticize or make fun of political and social targets, such as corrupt chiefs or greedy prophets of foreign religions. Song, music, and dance are highly important elements of the performance.

African traditional theater is a group activity, often without boundaries between creators, performers, and audience. Unlike modern plays, traditional rituals and tales are not written by individual playwrights. They have been molded from the culture and customs of an entire community and are passed on by memory from generation to generation. Rather than taking place on a stage at a planned time and date, performances are part of the social and cultural activities associated with daily life and with major events such as birth, INITIATION RITES, hunting, marriage, SPIRIT POSSESSION, and death.

The People's Theater

Popular theater is aimed at ordinary people, such as students and rural villagers. In Africa this type of theater combines traditional and Western elements and uses live music and dance in addition to acting. Performed in local languages, it often has timely or local themes.

Most popular theater companies are independent groups operating without the support or control of universities and government agencies. The groups travel frequently, and sometimes their performances carry powerful messages. In South Africa during the 1980s, plays put on by black trade unions increased workers' political awareness and strengthened opposition to racist laws.

A good example of African traditional theater is the Koteba of MALI. This light-hearted performance has two parts. The first consists of music, chanting, and dancing, with the audience participating. The second part is a series of short plays and skits made up by performers. These comic presentations make fun of character types such as the blind man, the miser, the leper, and others. The official theater company of Mali, the National Koteba, works to preserve the techniques of traditional performance.

The Colonial Era. During the colonial era European authorities discouraged or even banned some forms of traditional theater. Most colonists had little respect for non-Western culture. In addition, Europeans believed that most traditional theater was linked to African religious practices, which they wanted to eliminate and replace with Christianity.

Europeans introduced new styles of theater, as well as new subject matter, to Africa. Missionaries taught elements of Christianity by having people act out scenes from the Bible. Students performed short plays in school. Europeans in major colonial cities established theater companies that presented white audiences with familiar plays in European-style settings. In EGYPT in the late 1800s, a movement to translate European literature into Arabic led to Arabic versions of French plays. They were performed with Egyptian slang and settings to make them more understandable to local audiences.

Colonial administrators also used theater as a means of communicating with and educating Africans. In the 1930s in Nyasaland (now MALAWI), plays were staged for African audiences to promote health care. In the 1950s a play called *The False Friend* encouraged farmers to adopt new agricultural techniques.

Despite colonial domination, Africans continued to perform traditional theater whenever possible, and their performances reflected the changes that were taking place in African life. During rituals of spirit possession in southern MOZAMBIQUE, performers began to impersonate foreigners. Elsewhere, Africans created dances, masks, and songs that imitated and also mocked the culture of the white colonists. Traditional theater sometimes took on political significance, such as in KENYA, where Africans performed indigenous rituals during the MAU MAU rebellion against colonial authorities.

As young Africans studied Western literature in colonial schools, some of them began writing new plays in the Western style, using both African and European languages and themes. The Egyptian dramatist Tawfiq al-Hakim wrote plays based on legends and myths from both European and Arabic culture. In southern Africa, Herbert Dhlomo wrote a play in English about a Xhosa legend.

Modern Theater. By the 1930s modern African theater was emerging, with new styles and wider recognition. Egypt became a major theatrical center not just of North Africa but of the entire Arab Middle East. Visits by Egyptian theater companies inspired the growth of theater in

Theater



African theater productions often include music, dancing, and storytelling. In this picture, members of the Somali National Theater Company perform in Mogadishu, Somalia.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

MOROCCO and TUNISIA. Throughout Africa, playwrights began experimenting with new subject matter.

For many African playwrights, theater offered a way to express views on important issues and perhaps even to bring about social or political change. Beginning in the late 1950s, South African playwrights such as Athol FUGARD wrote about people living in the shadow of apartheid*. In the 1970s the Black Consciousness movement in South Africa argued that before Africans could achieve political freedom, they must liberate their traditional culture from the restrictions imposed by white authorities. Theater groups such as the Peoples' Experimental Theatre stood trial under South Africa's Terrorism Act for presenting plays that the government considered dangerous or possibly revolutionary.

As other African nations were freed from colonial rule in the 1960s, independence brought new energy to theater. Many writers rejected colonial influences and began to use traditional elements in creative ways. West African playwright Ola Rotimi wrote in English but added African PROVERBS and expressions to his plays. Focusing on episodes from African history, his works included *Kurunmi* (1969), a play about wars among the YORUBA people.

While some playwrights explored the effects of colonialism on Africa, others emphasized African social problems. In her play *The Dilemma of a Ghost* (1964), Ghanaian writer Ama Ata Aidoo addresses the subject of



Thuku, Harry

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

conflicting cultures by showing the turmoil in a village when a young man introduces his African-American wife. Marriage and family relationships form the material of many plays with social messages. Daudo Kano and Adamu dan Gogo of Nigeria criticized the practice of polygamy* in *Tabarmar Kunya (A Matter of Shame, 1969)*.

Important modern playwrights have come from all parts of Africa. Many of these artists continue to play a role in changing the social and political directions of their countries. Izz al-Din of Morocco is known for his works on the subject of revolution. In his play *Thawrat Sahib al-Himar (The Donkey-Owner's Revolt, 1971)*, the heroine confronts her male-dominated society and questions its practices. Nigerian writer Wole SOYINKA, the first African to win the Nobel Prize for Literature, has written plays criticizing aspects of modern Nigerian society and politics. Kabwe Kasoma of ZAMBIA and Tse-gaye Gabre-Medhim of ETHIOPIA have attempted to shape the development of their countries by writing plays that expose the truth behind historical events and cultural tensions. In some African nations, such playwrights—like other writers—have been jailed, exiled, or even killed for expressing their views. Kenyan playwright Ngugi wa THIONG'O was arrested for criticizing the government in his plays, and he eventually left Kenya so that he could work safely.

In recent decades, African theater has been expanding both within the continent and worldwide. Many African nations, including BENÍN and IVORY COAST, host local theater festivals, and an international association of performers is based in CONGO (BRAZZAVILLE). The International Theater for Development Festival, held every two years in Ouagadougou, BURKINA FASO, promotes theater that is used to encourage social change or to debate important issues in African life. Some African plays and musicals, such as *Sarafina!* (1990) have become popular hits in the United States and other countries, and many African performing groups now bring African theater of all varieties to audiences around the world. (See also **Dance, Masks and Masquerades, Music and Song, Oral Tradition.**)

Thuku, Harry

1895–1970
Kenyan political leader

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

Harry Thuku led a nationalist* group in KENYA that opposed the land and labor policies of the British colonial government. Born into a poor family in northern Kenya, he attended a missionary school. At the age of 16, he traveled to NAIROBI, where he worked as a messenger before being jailed on minor charges. After his release from prison in 1913, he worked for a newspaper, the *Leader of British East Africa*, and began to learn about political issues. He was especially angered by agricultural issues and by the system of forced labor, in which colonial leaders forced laborers to work for low wages.

Under British colonial rule some of Kenya's best farmland had been given to European settlers. Africans, forced off their land and desperate for work, had to take jobs with low wages and poor working conditions. In the early 1920s the colonial government raised the taxes paid by African workers. The move angered many Kenyans, who formed politi-



Thuku, Harry

cal groups such as the East African Association (EAA) to fight the colonial land distribution and labor systems. Thuku became the first president of the EAA.

In 1922 Thuku was arrested, and the EAA staged demonstrations throughout Kenya in protest. During the uprising colonial troops killed 20 people in Nairobi. Thuku spent about nine years in detention, using his time to study agriculture. When he returned home in 1930, he worked on his own farm, which became one of the most successful in Kenya. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Labor, Land Ownership.**)

Timbuktu

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

Located near the NIGER RIVER in northern MALI, the town of Timbuktu rose to greatness as a center of trade in the 1300s. It was a stop on the caravan routes that crossed the SAHARA DESERT, and river traffic linked it with regions to the southeast and southwest. Culturally, Timbuktu was a point of connection between Islamic* North Africa and the civilizations of western Africa. The city attracted merchants, scholars, and students from every direction.

Timbuktu may have originated as a seasonal camp for the BERBERS, Saharan nomads who brought their livestock to water and pasture along the banks of the Niger. By the late 1200s it had become part of the empire of Mali. In 1325 the Malian ruler MANSÁ MUSA visited the city and ordered that a mosque* be constructed there. Known as Djinguereber, or “The Great Mosque,” it has been enlarged and repaired many times and still stands. In the 1350s the great Arab traveler IBN BATTUTA stopped in Timbuktu during an African journey that included the leading cities of Mali.

Timbuktu reached its peak in the 1500s, when it was part of the Songhai Empire. Traders passed through the city carrying gold from sub-Saharan* Africa to the Mediterranean coast. The Sankore Mosque, the city’s second large mosque, was a center of advanced study in Islamic law and religion. Distinguished scholars taught students who spread their teachings widely in western Africa. The city’s glory was shattered in 1591, when an invading force from MOROCCO defeated the Songhai and took over much of their empire. The Moroccans made Timbuktu the capital of Songhai and set up local rulers called pashas. The pashas soon shook off the reins of Moroccan control and ruled Timbuktu as an independent state until the early 1800s. However, weakened by rivalries among the pashas, Timbuktu’s power and trade gradually declined.

From the 1770s until 1893, Timbuktu was repeatedly invaded by desert-dwelling TUAREGS and by neighboring states. During those years European explorers competed for the prize of being the first to travel to Timbuktu and back safely. The honor went to Frenchman René Caillié, who managed to visit the city and return to Europe with an account of it in 1828. Timbuktu came under French rule in 1893 and remained part of French colonial Africa until Mali gained its independence in 1960. Today Timbuktu is a popular tourist destination. (See also **Sudanic Empires of Western Africa, Travel and Exploration.**)

Tinubu, Madame

1805–1887
Nigerian merchant

Madame Tinubu was a Nigerian woman who flourished as both a trader and a politician. Her people rewarded her services with the title *iyalode*, the highest honor a woman could receive, and she has become a legend.

Tinubu spent her life in towns on the southwestern Nigerian coast that traded with Europeans. Born in Abeokuta, she was married in about 1832 to a prince who later became king of the city-state of LAGOS. As a merchant in Lagos, Tinubu traded local products for a variety of European imports. As a politician, she became deeply involved in rivalries within the ruling class of Lagos. She grew wealthy and powerful but gained enemies who resented her success.

In the 1850s the British began intervening in the political situation in Lagos. They regarded Madame Tinubu as a “terror” who promoted the SLAVE TRADE and caused trouble. In 1856 she was forced to leave Lagos. Returning to Abeokuta, she rebuilt her business and again became active in politics. Today a plaza in Abeokuta is named after her, and her tomb is a tourist attraction. In Lagos a major street and square bear her name. (*See also Nigeria, Trade, Women in Africa.*)

Tippu Tip

ca. 1837–1905
Arab trader and ruler

* **sultanate** territory ruled by a Muslim leader called a sultan

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business

Hamed bin Muhammed el-Murjebi, known as Tippu Tip, was an Arab trader on the CONGO RIVER who established a powerful empire during the late 1800s. Working as an ivory merchant between the east coast and Lake Tanganyika, Tippu Tip gradually built up a military force and gained control of the Upper Congo region.

During the 1800s the sultanate* of ZANZIBAR had taken over the SWAHILI trade routes dealing in ivory and slaves. Zanzibar’s Sultan BARGHASH IBN SA’ID gave sections of one of these trade routes between the coast and the interior to Tippu Tip and to Mirambo, a Nywamwezi chief.

Both Tippu Tip and Mirambo became powerful independent rulers in the region. However, when Mirambo lost the sultan’s trust, Tippu Tip gained control over the trade route. The sultan hoped that Tippu Tip could prevent the Belgians, led by Henry Morton STANLEY, from sending ivory down the Congo River to the western coast of Africa. The sultan wanted to keep his monopoly* on the supply of ivory for trade in Zanzibar.

Named governor of the Upper Congo region, Tippu Tip had authority over a large territory. He appointed his own officials, including many Arab traders, and administered justice. He also negotiated an arrangement between Zanzibar and the Belgians and kept peace among the competing local chiefs. Tippu Tip is a perfect example of a trader who, in an effort to make more money, actually turned into a strong political leader. Because he temporarily owned the only firearms in the area, he was able to maintain political domination over a large area. In 1891 Tippu Tip returned to Zanzibar, where he died. Soon afterward his empire was conquered by European forces. (*See also Arabs in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Ivory Trade.*)

Togo



A small, narrow country on the Gulf of Guinea, Togo got its name from the Ewe words *to*, meaning “water”, and *go*, meaning “coast” or “bank”. During the colonial period it was controlled by a succession of European powers—Germany, Britain and France, and then France alone. For most of the time since its independence in 1960, the country has been ruled by one-party government and military dictatorship.

GEOGRAPHY

Togo lies on the southern coast of the West African bulge, between BÉNIN and GHANA. BURKINO FASO borders the country to the north. Only about 30 miles wide, Togo’s coast is usually hot and humid and experiences two rainy seasons per year. Farther north, the climate becomes cooler and drier, and the country widens to its maximum breadth of about 100 miles. Overall, Togo’s climate is considerably drier than that of its neighbors in the region.

Four major rivers flow through the narrow land of Togo. Most of the country is flat, but a range of low mountains runs along the western border with Ghana. The country’s highest point is Mount Agou, rising to 3,225 feet. Swamp and rainforest dominate the south, while grassland covers most of the north.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

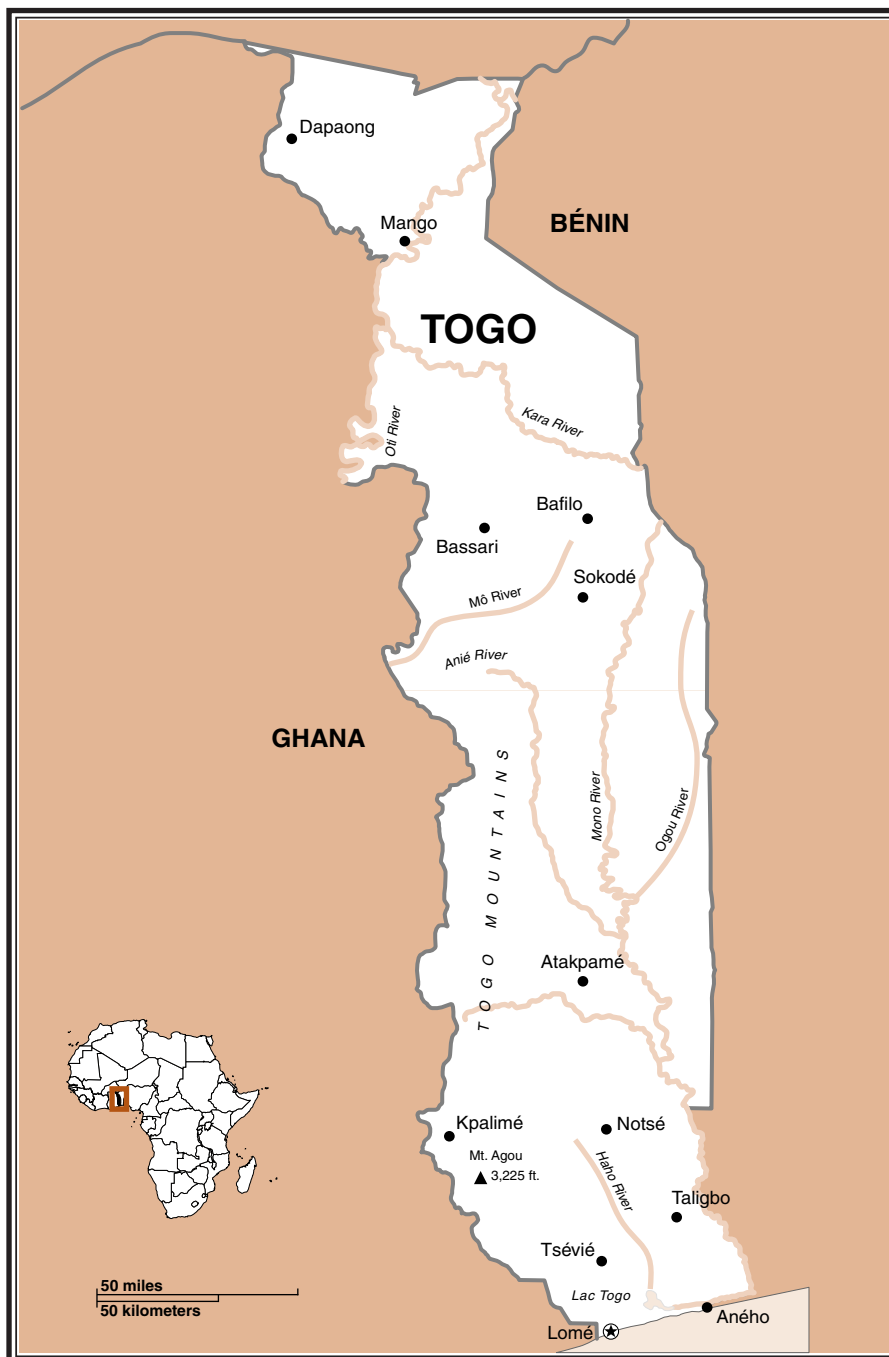
People first settled in northern Togo between A.D. 600 and 1100. The southern region was populated around the 1100s and 1200s, when Ewe groups moved into the area from NIGERIA. Over the next several centuries, many different ethnic groups migrated into what is now Togo.

Colonial Rule. Although Portuguese navigators were the first Europeans to visit the region around 1471, it was Germany that eventually colonized Togo. In 1884 the Germans, who were looking for access to the NIGER RIVER, signed a protectorate* agreement with Chief Mlapa III in the coastal town of Togo. Thirteen years later the Treaty of Paris confirmed the borders of the German colony known as Togoland. At that time the colony included part of the Gold Coast, the area that is now Ghana.

To ship cash crops from the colony’s interior to Europe, Germany built roads, railroads, and a broadcasting system. Most of the development took place in the south, while the north was largely neglected. Southern Togolese generally fared better under German rule than the country’s northern peoples. Many even obtained posts in the colonial government.

Shortly after World War I broke out in 1914, English and French troops occupied Togoland. After the war it was divided between the occupying powers. France received the larger, eastern portion of the territory, while England took control over the western portion. The southern portion of the country continued to benefit most under British and French rule.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state



The breakup of Togoland divided members of its main ethnic groups, the Ewe in the south and the Konkomba in the north, between the two new colonies. Each of the colonies experienced ethnic tensions between these rival groups as well as calls to unify British and French Togoland. However, in 1956 the majority of the inhabitants of British Togoland voted to become part of the British colony of Gold Coast. That same year, French Togoland voted to become a self-governing republic within the French Community and changed its name to the Republic of Togo.



Togo

* **authoritarian** relating to strong leadership with unrestricted powers

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **sanction** measure adopted by one or more nations to force another nation to change its policies or conduct

Early Years of Independence. The 1956 election installed Nicolas Grunitzky as Togo's first prime minister. Two years later his brother-in-law, Sylvanus OLYMPIO, succeeded him. When Togo gained its independence from France in 1960, Olympio became Togo's first president. Hoping to free Togo from economic dependence on France, he championed a program of high taxes and trade restrictions. Although his plan balanced the budget, it was not popular—nor was the president's authoritarian* rule.

In 1963 a military coup* led by Sergeant Étienne Eyadema assassinated Olympio and replaced him with Grunitzky. However, after four years of little progress Eyadema overthrew Grunitzky and declared himself president. Hoping to unify Togo and to give the military a key role in politics, Eyadema created a party called the Rassemblement du Peuple Togolais (RPT). He proclaimed the RPT the nation's only legal political party and planned to use it to bring development to the long-neglected north, his homeland.

Eyadema's Rule. From 1970 to 1992 Eyadema ruled Togo without opposition. However, as corruption within his government weakened the country's economy, unrest grew. In 1985 a series of bomb attacks rocked the capital city of Lomé. Eyadema began a campaign of killing and torturing anyone suspected of being against him, conduct that brought criticism from international human rights groups. When he accused Ghana and Burkina Faso of harboring political opponents, he strained Togo's relations with its neighbors as well.

In 1991 Eyadema responded to public pressure for multiparty democracy by establishing a one-year transition government. Talks were scheduled to discuss how a new political system would be put into place. However, one month after the conference began Eyadema cancelled it because it proposed taking away most of his powers.

Over the next two years, political violence tore the country apart and organized strikes brought the economy to a standstill. Between 200,000 and 300,000 Togolese fled the country. Opposition parties refused to participate in elections scheduled for 1993, which foreign observers claimed were tainted by voting irregularities. Eyadema won with over 95 percent of the vote.

The 1998 presidential elections were also unfair. Eyadema created new government bodies, filled with his supporters, to oversee preparations for the election. At the last minute, the election date was moved up two months to give opponents less time to prepare, and Eyadema again won the presidency. The following year the RPT swept legislative elections, although opponents claim that only about 10 percent of registered voters bothered to participate.

By 1999 the Eyadema regime had come under increasing fire from outside the country. Amnesty International, a leading human rights group, called Togo a "state of terror," listing hundreds of political executions. Economic sanctions* begun by the European Union (EU) in 1993 were hurting the economy.

In July 1999 Eyadema finally seemed willing to compromise, agreeing to discuss "national reconciliation" with his opponents in talks

Nana Benz

Textiles are not only a growing source of export revenue for Togo, but also a means of communication and social commentary. A popular form of textile is cloth that is wax-printed with intricate designs. The designs have names such as "divorce" and "dynasty" that reflect popular culture or tensions between the sexes.

Women from the Ewe and Mina ethnic groups control most of this cloth industry. Such women are commonly referred to as Nana Benz. This term combines nana, a title of respect, with Mercedes Benz, the most popular form of transportation among these wealthy women.



A woman sells brooms on a street in Lomé, the bustling capital of Togo.

overseen by representatives from various European and African countries. Eyadema promised to call new legislative elections in 2000 and create an independent electoral commission to oversee voting. However, Eyadema's opponents did not trust him and were unwilling to take part in political discussions. Doubts about Eyadema's sincerity about reforming the government were reinforced when the legislative elections planned for March did not occur.

ECONOMY

Like many of its West African neighbors, Togo's economy depends heavily upon agriculture. The vast majority of the workforce is employed in farming, which accounts for much of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. The main export crops are cotton, cocoa, and coffee.

Phosphates, used to make fertilizers, are the country's leading export. Although a rise in the price of phosphates during the 1970s promised to transform the economy, prices leveled off in the 1980s. Togo also manufactures a number of items for export including cement, refined sugar, beverages, footwear, and textiles. However, development of both new and existing industries is limited by the country's reliance on imported electricity. TOURISM, once an important industry for Togo, has declined since the mid-1980s because of the nation's political unrest.

* **gross domestic product (GDP)** total value of goods and services produced and consumed within a country

Togo



The Republic of Togo

POPULATION:
5,018,502 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
21,930 sq. mi. (56,790 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
French (official), Ewe, Mina, Kabye, Dagomba, Komkomba

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
CFA franc

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Traditional 70%, Christian 20%, Muslim 10%

CITIES:
Lomé (capital), 513,000 (1990 est.); Sokodé Palimé, Atakpamé, Bassari, Tsévié, Aného

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Ranges from 40 in. (1,020 mm) in the north to 70 in. (1,780 mm) in the south.

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$1,700 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: cocoa, coffee, cotton, yams, cassava, corn, beans, rice, millet, sorghum, livestock, fish
Manufacturing: food processing, cement, textiles, beverages
Mining: phosphates

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from French-ruled UN trusteeship. Republic under transition to multi-party democratic rule; president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: National Assembly (legislative body) elected by popular vote; Council of Ministers and prime minister appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1960–1963 President Sylvanus Epiphany Olympio
1963–1967 President Nicolas Grunitzky
1967– President General Gnassingbe Eyadema

ARMED FORCES:
7,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 6–12; literacy rate 52%

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Togo contains dozens of different ethnic groups. The Ewe and the Mina dominate the south. During colonial times, both of these groups profited from trade with Europeans and took advantage of commercial and educational opportunities. As a result they became the privileged classes after independence and still maintain that role, despite Eyadema's efforts to improve the position of northern peoples.

A great variety of ethnic groups live in northern Togo, including the Kabye, Komkomba Basari, Kotokoli, Tamberma, Tchokossi, Moba, and Gourma peoples. Many of these groups trace their language and cultural traditions to Burkina Faso. Northerners are mostly small-scale farmers, although some now work in the government. Some government workers are employed by the national government, while some are part of local authorities. At the local level, political figures often share power with a council of elders, who advise political and religious leaders to aid in decision-making. In addition, in some northern areas, there is a figure known as an "earth priest" who holds a position of authority and, at times, conducts rituals that ensure the fertility of the land and good crop harvests. The most prominent northern people are the Kabye, largely due to the fact that Eyadema claims Kabye descent.

About 70 percent of all Togolese practice traditional African religions. Some 20 percent are Christian, mostly Roman Catholic. Togo has relatively few Muslims, but Islam* is growing in popularity. As in many African countries, those who practice Christianity and Islam also mix in elements of traditional worship. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, West African Trading Settlements.**)

* Islam religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

**Tombalbaye,
François-Ngarta**

**1918–1975
President of Chad**

The first president of CHAD, François-Ngarta Tombalbaye promoted the interests of Christian groups in southern Chad at the expense of Muslims in the north. Born in southern Chad and educated by Protestant missionaries, Tombalbaye became a school teacher. However, his interests eventually turned to politics, and in 1946 he helped create the Chad Progressive Party. He later became president of the first Chadian trade union. After being elected to the French National Assembly in 1952, Tombalbaye rose in importance, serving as vice president of the Grand Council of French Equatorial Africa and as Chad's prime minister.

When Chad became independent in 1960, Tombalbaye won the presidency. He began supporting Christian interests—particularly those of his own ethnic group, the Sara—over those of the nation's Muslims and ruthlessly eliminated his Muslim political opponents from northern Chad. At the same time, he launched a cultural revolution aimed at restoring national unity. However, his revolution failed when he revived a traditional, but long abandoned, INITIATION RITE. The ceremony, which involved deep facial scarring, caused many of Tombalbaye's supporters to leave his political party.

By the mid-1970s Tombalbaye faced strong opposition in the north, growing political unrest in the south, and dissatisfaction among the military. On April 13, 1975, a group of army officers and police surrounded Tombalbaye's residence and asked him to surrender. Resisting arrest, he was shot dead in his home.

Touré, Samori

**ca. 1830–1900
Ruler in Guinea**

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

Samori Touré built a state that stretched far across the savannas* of what is now the Republic of GUINEA and defended his kingdom for many years against French colonization. Touré was born along the upper Milo River in the highlands of Guinea. The valley of the Milo was an important long-distance trade route that linked the Guinea coast to the interior. Merchants from different areas settled at key points along the route. Many were originally Muslims, although some abandoned Islam* to adopt the beliefs of the local people. Samori Touré belonged to such a family.

In the 1850s Touré learned the arts of war in conflicts among the small states that competed for control in the Milo River valley. He then became a military leader among his mother's kinfolk. Organizing the local warriors into disciplined units of foot soldiers and mounted troops, he taught them to use imported horses and firearms. Around 1874 Touré declared himself king. He extended his military power over commercially valuable areas such as gold fields. As his state expanded to cover an immense territory, he fought to defend it from the French, who were colonizing the SAHARA and parts of western Africa.

To bind his subjects together with more than military might, Touré embraced the Muslim faith in the mid-1880s and ordered his people to do the same. Around the same time he reluctantly signed a treaty of peace and trade with the French. Some of his subjects rebelled against him, partly because he had forced them to become Muslims and partly



Touré, Samori

because he had suffered military setbacks and could not give them the loot and spoils of war.

Starting in 1888 Touré reorganized his army. He acquired repeating rifles and recruited African soldiers who had fought for the French or British to teach his troops the techniques of European warfare. A few years later he decided to move eastward. To discourage the French from settling on his land, he ordered all the inhabitants of his kingdom to destroy their villages, take their food, and follow his army.

During the 1890s Touré conquered vast new territories, including much of modern-day IVORY COAST. Although he hoped to find a region that neither the French nor the British were colonizing, he instead found himself trapped between French and British armies. In addition, he suffered uprisings by Africans who resented the abuses inflicted by his army and his practice of enslaving the people he defeated. Touré was returning with his followers to Guinea in 1898, when the French captured him. They sent him to GABON, where he soon died of pneumonia. Touré had resisted the French for more than 17 years, and his capture was the final step in the French military conquest of West Africa.

Touré, Sékou

ca. 1922–1984
First president of Guinea

A leader of the INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT in GUINEA, Sékou Touré became the first president of the newly independent Republic of Guinea in 1958. Born to a modest Muslim family in upper Guinea, Touré had little education. However, he had natural talent as a speaker and leader and he acquired some Islamic learning. After practicing a variety of trades, Touré took a job with the colonial postal administration. He soon also became a trade union leader and politician. In 1947 he helped found the Democratic Assembly of Africa, and he later served as the secretary-general of the local branch of that political party. He was a strong supporter of pan-Africanism—a movement that encouraged the development of black identity and sought to unify blacks in Africa and around the world.

In his role as a union leader and politician during the 1940s and 1950s Touré organized many labor strikes and spoke out often against colonialism. He denounced African chiefs who served as colonial administrators and appealed to people on the margins of society, such as slaves, youth, and women. Touré also established the General Union of North African Workers. His political influence increased throughout the 1950s as he was elected to the territorial assembly of Guinea, became mayor of the capital city of CONAKRY, and served as a representative to the French National Assembly.

When France allowed its African colonies to vote on the issue of independence in 1958, Touré spoke out in favor of immediate independence for Guinea, making the famous statement, “We prefer poverty in freedom to [riches] in slavery.” The people of Guinea voted overwhelmingly for that idea, and Guinea became the first French colony in sub-Saharan* Africa to achieve independence. Touré became the first president of the new republic.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries or public works under state control or ownership

After Guinea's independence France withdrew much of its support. Facing an economic crisis and finding little help from Western nations, Touré turned to the Soviet Union* and other communist* countries for help. Under communist influence, he formed a one-party state, abolished civil rights, and nationalized* industry. As Guineans grew more and more opposed to his radical policies, Touré tightened police security and killed or imprisoned tens of thousands of people. More than one million Guineans fled the country. Beginning in the late 1970s, Touré began to reform the nation's economy and undo various communist policies, a trend that continued after his death in 1984.



Tourism

Traveling to experience places and people other than their own, tourists spend money on hotels, restaurants, tours, transportation, entertainment, visits to museums and historic sites, and souvenirs. The business of providing those goods and services, the tourism industry, accounts for a significant part of the incomes of some African countries.

History. Tourism in Africa began in the 1800s, when Europeans making what was called the “grand tour” of Europe began extending their travels to include more exotic destinations. MOROCCO, ALGERIA, SOUTH AFRICA, and especially EGYPT and the NILE RIVER valley attracted many European visitors. Tourists favored these areas largely because they were located on the Mediterranean Sea, or because they had been colonized by Europeans and were regarded as linked to Europe culturally.

A different type of African tourism was popular from about 1918 to 1939, the years between WORLD WARS I and II. Wealthy Europeans and North Americans traveled to Africa for safaris, excursions on which they hunted big game such as elephants and lions. Many returned to their homes with trophies in the form of animal heads or skins and with photographs of their hunting adventures.

Tourism Today. Since the end of World War II in 1945, Africa's tourism industry has boomed. As commercial airlines made travel faster and less expensive, many more people could afford to make overseas visits. Tour companies developed and advertised package tours, or pre-planned vacations, of a week or two in Africa.

Tourists come to Africa to enjoy a wide variety of experiences—from natural wonders to cultural landmarks. Ski resorts in the mountains of Morocco and Algeria attract tourists from the Middle East. Archaeological and historical marvels, such as Egypt's PYRAMIDS and the stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe, also draw crowds. The most popular countries for mass tourism have been South Africa, KENYA, ZIMBABWE, Morocco, TUNISIA, and Egypt. However, the operators of package tours now offer visits to more remote parts of Africa.

Ecotourism, or tourism in natural settings, is the fastest growing trend in African tourism. Visitors on safari tours in eastern and southern Africa aim cameras instead of rifles at local wildlife. Tourists to Africa's Indian



See color
plate 10,
vol. 2.



Tourism

Ocean islands, such as the COMOROS and the SEYCHELLES, scuba dive along spectacular coral reefs. Others seek a glimpse of mountain gorillas in UGANDA, lemurs in MADAGASCAR, or rare birds in BOTSWANA. In Ghana's Kakum National Park, tourists can explore the rain forest canopy on a walkway that is suspended more than 90 feet above the ground.

Impact on African Life. Tourism has negative as well as positive effects. One is that the local people usually receive only a small part of the income from tourism. Most of it goes to foreign tour operators and African governments. Another is that tourists ignorant of local values and customs sometimes behave or dress in ways that offend Africans. In some nations, such as Egypt in the 1990s, radical political and religious groups have attacked popular tourist sites to make trouble for national governments.



Even ecotourism poses problems. Just by passing through an area tourists may damage wildlife habitats, such as delicate reefs and rain forests. The pollution and development associated with a growing tourism industry may harm the environment for both animals and people. In some nations local peoples have been displaced from their homelands in order to preserve wilderness for ecotourism. In Tanzania, the Maasai people have been banned from the Ngorongoro Crater and Serengeti National Park, forcing them to give up their traditional cattle-herding lifestyle.

Despite such problems, however, tourism has become a key contributor to the income of many African countries. Recognizing the economic benefits of tourism, African governments have promoted it within their countries in a variety of ways. Some have established WILDLIFE AND GAME PARKS and protected marine areas; others have created new tourism policies to ensure that more tourism earnings directly benefit local communities. In some areas with few economic possibilities, tourism has provided jobs and economic development. For example, Algeria has constructed several successful resort hotels in oases of the SAHARA DESERT.

Trade

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

Trade has always been the engine of economic growth. Individuals and communities that trade successfully with their neighbors gain wealth and power. In precolonial* times, Africa's natural riches gave it an important place in international trading networks. However, the SLAVE TRADE and European colonization profoundly disrupted the development of African economies, and the impact of these events is still felt today.

PRECOLONIAL TRADE

In Africa, as elsewhere around the world, trade arose shortly after humans formed permanent farming communities. Before this development people had spent much of their time securing food to ensure the



Trade

group's survival. These settled communities produced enough food and other goods to support themselves, but no surplus to trade with other groups.

* commodity article of trade

Origins of Trade. The spread of AGRICULTURE led to two significant changes in the pattern of economic activity. First, it created extra food that could serve as a commodity* for trade with other groups. Second, it allowed fewer people to produce more food, thus freeing individuals to pursue skilled craftwork such as weaving or iron working.

The creation of food surpluses and specialized crafts provided a basis for trade between communities. Groups that produced certain foods or goods could trade them with other groups who lacked those items. In exchange, they could obtain things from their trading partners that they could not produce themselves. By the first century A.D., Africans had developed a diverse economy in which people traded and went to markets regularly.

The Growth of Market Systems. Several types of market systems grew up to handle trade in precolonial Africa, and not all of them were marketplaces. Food sellers often visited individual households to find buyers for their goods. Herders learned the times of year when farming villages would have surplus produce and would travel to those villages to exchange meat, milk, hides, and other animal products for vegetables and grain.

See
color plate 8,
vol. 1.

As the volume of trade in an area increased, people created marketplaces and more sophisticated market systems. One of the most common systems, still popular today, is the periodic market system. In such a system, several villages in the same general area hold markets on different days of the week. Often the system forms a ring around a centrally located village. This central village might hold a market one day, followed by a village to the south the following day and one to the north the next.

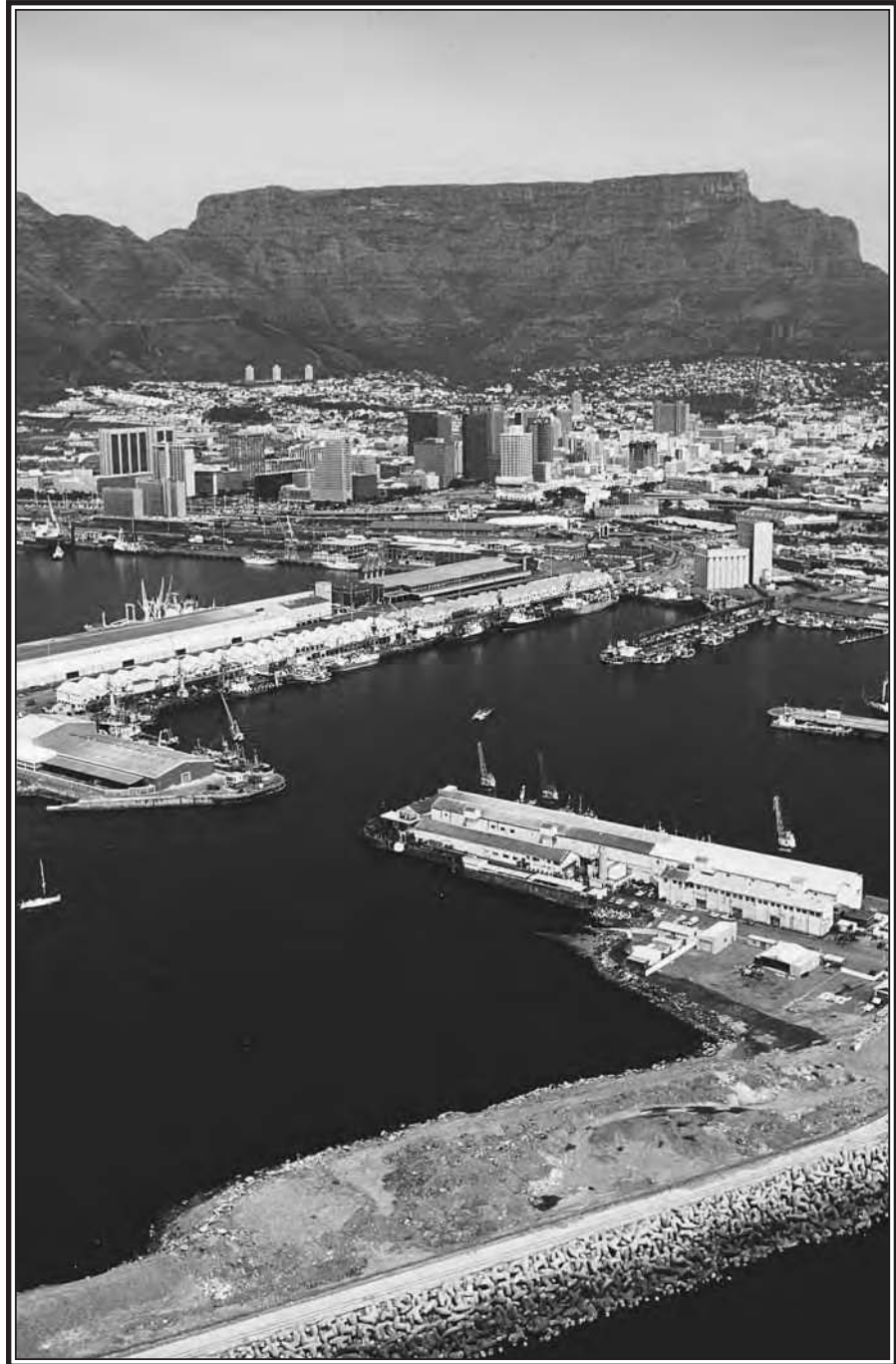
Such a periodic system has several advantages over a single market. Rotating market days between villages reduces the average travel time to market and the cost of transporting goods. Moving the market from one village to another also expands the circle of people who come into contact regularly. Thus, the market turns into a vital and valuable social space, especially in isolated rural areas. Studies have shown that African women often visit the market where they can see people they want to see and fulfill their social obligations, even if that market is not the closest one.

See
color plate 6,
vol. 2.

Long-Distance Trade. While local trade flourished throughout Africa, regional and long-distance trade developed more fully in western Africa than elsewhere on the continent. The region contained valuable commodities such as gold and salt that merchants could transport easily—ideal goods for long-distance trade. The revenue brought by these goods covered the cost of transporting them and still provided a handsome profit.

Trade

The city of Cape Town, South Africa, is an important manufacturing center. Goods produced there are shipped all over the world.



Trade in western Africa also benefited from the growth of strong, centralized states such as those of the ASANTE and MOSSI. In these kingdoms a separate merchant class arose to sell goods that other members of the society produced. Revenue from trade enabled the kingdoms to build strong armies and maintain control over their subjects. Because these armies also protected traveling merchants, many trade routes ran through these kingdoms.



Trade

Western Africa had more people living close together than did other parts of Africa. The region's many towns and cities were natural locations for markets. In some cases urban areas emerged because of the trade: towns grew up along trade routes to serve the needs of traveling merchants and earn money from the commercial traffic. Some town-based markets appeared along the East African coast as well.

European Contacts and the Slave Trade. African trade grew quickly after the development of agriculture around the late 1000s B.C., and by the A.D. 100s merchants from India and southern Asia were traveling to the East African coast. Sometime after the 500s camel caravans from Arabia and the Mediterranean were making their way across the SAHARA DESERT to the gold fields of western Africa. By this time people in western coastal communities had developed trade networks linking them to the interior of the continent. They exchanged fish and sea salt for gold, agricultural goods, and CRAFTS.

These coastal communities had their first direct contact with European traders in the late 1400s. The Portuguese built a series of trading posts and forts along the western African coast, between present-day SENEGAL and GHANA. Other European powers, including Spain, France, England, and Denmark soon followed. Although these countries came in search of gold at first, their outposts eventually turned into major centers of the Atlantic slave trade.

Until the 1500s Africa was the main supplier of gold to South Asia and the Mediterranean region. But by the 1500s, African gold supplies began to drop off just as Spaniards in the Americas found new sources. Europeans established plantations in the "New World" that relied on large numbers of low-cost indigenous* workers to produce high profits for their owners. Because Europeans had largely destroyed some Native American societies through disease, hard labor, and battle, they looked for other sources of workers. They decided to bring in enslaved Africans.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

A limited trade in slaves already existed within Africa, and slavers from Arabia also took some captives from East Africa to the Middle East. But the demands of plantation agriculture in the Americas gave rise to a slave trade of enormous scale, far greater than anything that had occurred up to that point. Between 1500 and 1850, the transatlantic slave trade forced more than 13 million Africans to leave their homelands. Many died on the slave ships crossing the ocean.

Limits on African Trade. Although trade played a key role in the culture and economy of precolonial Africa, its growth was hindered by the continent's challenging landscape. Geographic features such as deserts and jungles made transporting goods across the land extremely difficult. However, most items had to be taken overland because few rivers allowed long-distance travel by boat.

In most cases merchants hired or enslaved people to walk and haul goods on their heads or backs, a form of transport called portage. Because humans cannot carry great weights, portage limited the distance a merchant could go to market and the amount of goods he could take. Africa did have pack animals, but many areas also had the tsetse fly



Trade

that carries a deadly disease called sleeping sickness. Animals cannot survive long in the tsetse zones, so traders did not use animals or wheeled carts and wagons widely in precolonial Africa.

Because of these difficulties, long-distance trade was only profitable for goods, such as gold, that had great worth relative to their size. Food, tools, and other everyday items did not have enough value to justify the expense of transporting them to distant lands. People traded them only at local markets.

TRADE IN COLONIAL AFRICA

In 1807 Great Britain outlawed the slave trade and began to police the slave trading activities of other countries. As a result, European interest in Africa shifted from the export of slaves to the exploitation* of natural resources. European nations began to explore ways of profiting from Africa's agricultural and mineral wealth.

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

Colonial Trade Practices. To tap Africa's natural riches, Europeans first had to gain control over them by conquering the indigenous peoples and seizing their land. Colonial authorities then gave the property to companies or individual settlers. Colonial plantations soon produced coffee, tea, spices, and even vegetable oils for lubricating the new industrial equipment produced in Europe. Other companies opened large and dangerous mines to extract copper, gold, and other valuable minerals for export to Europe.

To speed the transportation of raw materials, colonial powers built roads and railroads to connect interior areas to the coast. These projects dramatically reduced the cost of bringing goods to ports for shipment to Europe. Ports with rail connections swelled into large cities that dominated the commercial activity of the colonies. Meanwhile, settlements at a distance from rail lines suffered economically.

Effects of Colonial Trade Policy. The colonial economy had devastating effects on Africans. Deprived of their land, many were forced to work on the plantations and in the mines for little pay under brutal conditions. Workers often had to travel great distances to work because a colony's economic activity was usually concentrated in a few areas of intensive production and one or two large cities. Families were frequently split up as men found work on plantations, in mining camps, or in towns while other family members remained in the countryside.

Colonial trade policy also undermined the African economy. The raw materials so cheaply produced did not go to make goods for local use. Instead the materials were sold to Europe, where the new industrial cities turned them into manufactured goods that were shipped back to Africa for sale. Colonial companies made enormous profits with this system. By contrast, colonial governments neglected African industry to prevent local competition for European goods. By the time most African countries won independence, their economies were almost totally dependent on raw materials. This situation led to serious problems in the following years.

Shopping Without Money?

Until the 1900s cash currencies were rarely used for buying and selling in Africa. Most people employed the barter system—exchanging goods and services without paying money. Under colonial rule, however, people had to pay taxes in cash, and some communities used cloth, metal rods, or cowrie shells as currency. Yet barter remains an important form of trade in some parts of Africa. In countries such as Rwanda, where war has ravaged the local economy, barter has again emerged as the preferred means of exchange.

POSTCOLONIAL TRADE

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

At independence, most African economies had little industrial development. The selling prices of their raw materials could swing up or down unpredictably, and these price changes could create an economic boom or bust with unsettling speed. In addition, the transportation infrastructure* served few areas within each country. Although they achieved political freedom, African nations continued to struggle under economic burdens caused by the policies of their former colonial masters.

Postcolonial Developments. Throughout the 1960s, high prices for minerals and agricultural products led to economic growth in Africa. However, a fall in commodity prices and a sharp increase in the cost of fuel oil crippled many African economies in the early 1970s. Earning little from exports and forced to pay high prices for imports, African economies went downhill rapidly, and local currencies lost much of their value. Many countries borrowed money from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, but few could repay even the interest on these loans.

Meanwhile, African leaders tried to develop industry in their countries. Many leaders hoped to limit the role of foreign corporations, but few local companies had the funds to launch major projects. Many governments formed state-owned corporations to handle utilities, infrastructure*, and other needs. Unfortunately, most state companies proved highly inefficient or corrupt. African industries are still struggling to make inroads in international markets, and multinational corporations continue to dominate trade within Africa.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund demanded that African nations restructure their economies to earn money to repay their loans. Many African leaders continued to push agriculture and industry toward exports, while removing barriers to imports. They also cut spending on social programs such as health care and education and cut the value of their currencies. As a result, Africans lost services and purchasing power and services, and unrest in urban areas grew.

To lessen the demand for increased wages, governments artificially lowered the price of food. However, this hurt local farmers, who began to withhold food from the regular market and sell it in illegal markets where they could get higher prices.

Current Bases of African Trade. Despite efforts to diversify their trade economies, most African nations still depend heavily on the export of raw materials. Agricultural products make up the bulk of these exports, accounting for more than 80 percent of foreign revenues in some countries. For most of these countries, exports are a trap from which they seem unable to escape.

Mineral resources are the other mainstay of African overseas trade. In NORTH AFRICA, the nations of LIBYA, ALGERIA, and TUNISIA rely on revenues from petroleum and natural gas. MOROCCO and Tunisia export large amounts of phosphates, a major ingredient of fertilizers. NIGERIA man-



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).



Trade

aged to produce and export oil in the 1970s, but corruption has drained much of that wealth from the public treasury. In southern Africa, BOTSWANA has developed diamond, copper, and coal industries. SOUTH AFRICA is also a world leader in gold and diamond production.

The outlook for a recovery in African trade is certainly dim. Most countries still shoulder heavy debt payments that crush their ability to spend money on domestic needs. Foreign companies continue to control many vital national resources, but many investors are cautious about placing money in countries with unstable political environments. Local investors often prefer to put their limited funds into established companies overseas. Finding a solution to the problem will require the cooperative efforts of Western nations and international organizations to forgive African debts, provide economic aid, and diversify trade between Africa and the rest of the world. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Economic History; Global Politics and Africa; Ivory Trade; Markets; Minerals and Mining; Money and Banking; Plantation Systems; Slave Trade; Transportation; West African Trading Settlements.*)

Transportation

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

Africa suffers from an overall lack of transportation facilities, and many of those that do exist are inefficient, inconvenient, unreliable, and poorly maintained. Moreover, the quality and availability of transportation varies greatly from one place to another. Methods of getting around in Africa range from jet aircraft to camels. Upgrading and expanding the transportation infrastructure* is a major challenge facing most African nations.

HISTORY OF TRANSPORTATION

Most of Africa's transportation systems were developed during the colonial era. Designed to serve the interests of the European colonial powers, these systems largely ignored the needs of local populations. Colonial policies have had a profound effect on transportation facilities in Africa today.

Colonial Transportation. European colonization and settlement altered the nature of transportation in Africa dramatically. The most obvious change was technological. Mechanized transport, such as steamships and railroads, replaced canoes and animals as cargo carriers. This allowed the movement of greater quantities of goods, more quickly and reliably, over longer distances. Modern transportation also overcame various problems associated with Africa's difficult terrain and climate, such as seasonal flooding.

Although colonial authorities greatly expanded the ways of moving people and goods, the networks they created were focused on bringing raw materials from interior regions to coastal ports. This approach benefited European mining companies and white settler plantations, but it did little to help ordinary Africans get around more easily or to improve

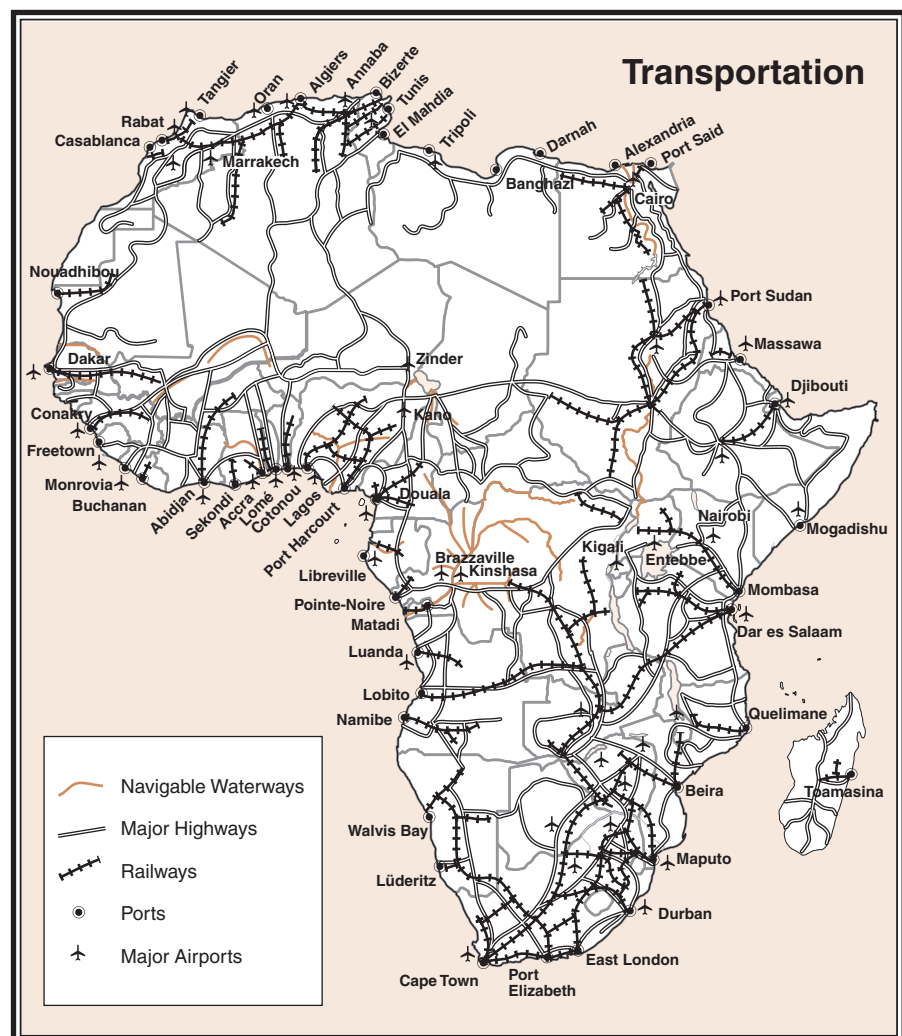
Transportation

their access to markets, schools, and shops. In many cases, modern transportation actually reduced people's mobility as new and more expensive forms of transport replaced affordable indigenous* ones.

* indigenous native to a certain place

After the Colonial Period. As African nations won their independence, they sought to restructure transportation systems to suit the needs of their people. A major goal of many states was to link rural districts to each other and to the growing urban areas. Most focused on constructing new roads rather than railroads because they were cheaper to build and maintain and could be more easily completed in difficult terrain.

At the end of the colonial era there were few overland links between African nations. The colonial powers had seen no reason for building highways or railroads to the colonies of rival nations. After independence many new African states wanted to construct highways connecting them with their neighbors. Unfortunately, this goal was only partly realized.





Transportation

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics



Many of the same European countries that had colonized Africa took part in the modernization of African transportation after independence. Some African nations also received help from the Soviet Union* and their allies. Despite these efforts, transportation networks grew slowly and had much less economic impact than expected. Local organizations lacked the money and expertise to develop a transportation infrastructure, so the job fell to the governments of each country. However, the financial condition of most African nations severely limited the amount of money available for such projects. Moreover, the roads, railways, and ports that were built often deteriorated due to a lack of funds for maintenance. An economic downturn in the 1970s and 1980s aggravated the problem by further reducing the money available to spend on transportation.

Technological changes also had a negative effect on African transportation. As oceangoing ships became larger and more sophisticated, few African ports could handle them. Nor were the ports equipped to deal with containerization—a system in which specially designed ships carry goods in large metal boxes called containers. Aircraft got bigger as well, making it less profitable for airlines to serve Africa's small market for air passengers and freight. In addition, new ships and planes required special navigation equipment that African seaports and airports did not have.

All these factors contributed to a crisis that has caused many African nations to reconsider their transportation plans. Instead of building new facilities, many nations have devoted more money and effort to improving and maintaining existing ones. National airlines and railroads, for example, have tried to increase efficiency by standardizing their vehicles. This reduces maintenance costs because the vehicles all use the same parts. Having fewer types of vehicles also makes it easier to train pilots and drivers.

One of the greatest challenges facing African nations is providing adequate transportation for their poorest people, both those in urban areas and remote rural communities. In the past African nations focused their transportation programs on the needs of corporations and government. Some recent plans attempt to offer solutions for people who lack access to reliable public transportation. Such plans include promoting simpler and more affordable technologies, such as bicycles and donkey carts, in order to decrease reliance on expensive forms of mechanized transport.

AIR TRANSPORTATION

Africa's air transportation lags far behind networks in other regions of the world. The continent commands a very small share of global air traffic, and its airlines are, for the most part, extremely uncompetitive.

African Airlines. Africa possesses very few large air carriers, and only a handful of the world's leading airlines are based on the continent. This lack can be explained in part by colonial history. The European powers in Africa operated only a couple of airlines from a few major cities. Air



Transportation

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries or public works under state control or ownership

* **deregulate** to remove restrictions on a particular activity, particularly those imposed by government

* **privatize** to transfer from government control to private ownership

connections to the outside world were limited; connections between African destinations were even rarer.

At the time of independence, most African countries with air service nationalized* their airlines. These carriers then had to compete with other government programs for funding. Many had to borrow money to keep operating and are now heavily in debt and lack funds for maintenance and modernization. In addition, deregulation* in the airline industry in the 1970s led to greater competition and lower fares, making it extremely difficult for African airlines to compete effectively.

A major trend in recent years has been the formation of global alliances between airlines in order to reduce costs and share passengers. However, only a few African airlines have joined such alliances. In some cases, major international airlines have bought a stake in local carriers. For example, KLM Royal Dutch Airways acquired part of Kenya Airways when that carrier was partially privatized*. Unfortunately, most African airlines are so heavily indebted that they are unattractive to foreign investors.

Air Traffic. Africa is a very minor player in the area of international air traffic. The continent's airlines account for less than 2 percent of international air passengers and airfreight. The vast majority of this traffic is between Africa and Europe. In addition, the number and frequency of scheduled international flights to and from Africa is extremely limited, and Africa's largest airports handle far fewer passengers each year than the largest American and European airports.


Flights between African countries are also limited, with few and infrequent connections between cities. This is primarily a result of the continent's poverty, because the majority of Africans cannot afford to travel by plane. It also reflects the small market for business travel within Africa. Business travelers contribute a significant share of airline revenues in the United States, but a very small percentage in Africa.

SEAPORTS

Several factors influence the establishment and growth of seaports. These include the presence of a good natural harbor and links to areas of economic activity in the interior. Both of these factors have played a significant role in the development of Africa's ports.

Despite its large size Africa contains few major seaports, and these few are unevenly distributed around the continent. In part, the lack of ports can be explained by the fact that Africa has few good natural harbors. It also stems from colonial history. The European colonial powers typically built only one or two major roads and railroads to connect mining and agricultural areas with a single seaport on the coast. As a result, most coastal African nations have only one port that dominates seaborne traffic.

Africa has several different types of seaports. The largest are designed solely for the export of minerals or crude oil and have no other significant role. The most important general-purpose cargo ports—including ABIDJAN, CAPE TOWN, DAKAR, and LAGOS—are also major urban centers.



Carrying the Mail

The earliest air routes in Africa were created to carry the mail. In West Africa, the French airmail service led to regular air routes in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In East Africa, a Cape (South Africa) to Cairo (Egypt) route was opened and operated by Britain's Imperial Airways. These pioneering mail services established the basis of air transport in sub-Saharan Africa and created air routes that remain relatively unchanged to the present day.

Transportation



In the early 1900s, the Portuguese rulers of Mozambique used the forced labor of Africans to build roads and lay rail lines. The elegant train station of Maputo in Mozambique offers a reminder of the country's colonial past.

Even these ports suffer from inadequate and outdated facilities, though, a result of tight-fisted colonial policies and the weak economies of modern African states. Finally, various medium-sized ports—such as FREETOWN in Sierra Leone and DAR ES SALAAM in Tanzania—serve as commercial hubs for particular regions.

Not all African countries have access to the sea. Landlocked countries such as NIGER and UGANDA must depend on neighboring coastal states for access to ocean ports. This presents difficulties for those nations but also forces ocean ports to be competitive and offer better services to attract business. Some landlocked countries have ports on lakes and rivers that play an important role in regional transport between African nations.

RAILROADS

The coming of railroads to Africa in the late 1800s had a significant impact on the continent's economic and political development. Railroads served as avenues for the export of raw materials and the import of finished goods. They also allowed European powers to exert political control over territory and thus justify their colonial claims over the land.



Travel and Exploration

Rail Networks. Colonial rail-building policies left most African nations with only one or two major lines running from a seaport to the interior. As a result, only a handful of African nations have more than 500–600 miles of track. SOUTH AFRICA, with about 13,000 miles of track, boasts the largest rail network on the continent. Many landlocked countries, such as CHAD and RWANDA, have no railroads at all.

The colonial powers also made no effort to link together the various parts of their colonies with rail networks. For this reason, even nations with fairly large rail systems contain many areas with little or no access to railroads. In recent years African governments have proposed plans to join existing national railways to form a system linking the continent. This would greatly benefit landlocked countries with no rail access, but the cost of such a project makes its completion unlikely.

Rail Technology and Traffic. African railroads are burdened with outdated equipment and inefficient routes. Colonial railroads were built cheaply and quickly, often using lightweight track. To help speed construction and keep costs down, engineers avoided building tunnels or embankments, so many lines have sharp curves, steep inclines, and roundabout routes. These factors limit both the speed at which trains can travel and the loads that they can carry. Aside from South Africa, which has modern and efficient railways, most African rail systems are inefficient, poorly run, and technologically backward.

The main activity of most African railroads is carrying freight, particularly raw material for export. However, the volume of freight varies considerably from year to year because of the changing demand for the raw materials. In recent years railroads have lost a large amount of traffic to highways. Most railroads also offer passenger service, but slow travel make this an unattractive option. Only in South Africa do railroads serve as a main element of urban mass transit.

The same financial problems that affect other forms of African transportation hamper the development of better rail service as well. International lending agencies have recommended closing inefficient rail lines in some nations as a way to reduce government spending. As a result, Africa's rail network is likely to shrink even further in the near future. (*See also Colonialism in Africa; Development, Economic and Social; Economic History.*)

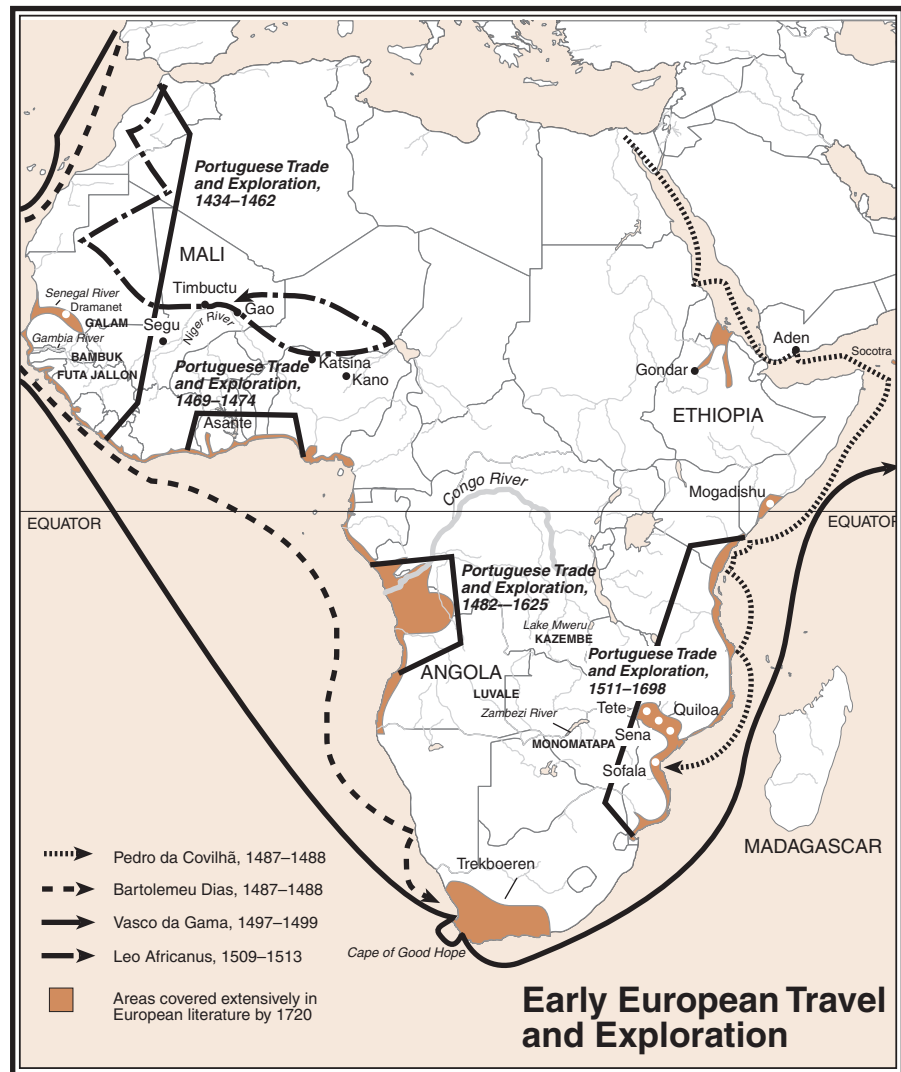
TRANSVAAL

See *South Africa*.

Travel and
Exploration

Early in recorded history, people from outside Africa visited—or at least knew about—the lands on Africa's northern coast. In ancient times kingdoms of the Middle East and southern Europe had dealings with EGYPT. Phoenicians from what is now Lebanon founded the colony of CARTHAGE (in present-day TUNISIA), the Greeks established settlements

Travel and Exploration



in LIBYA, Alexander the Great conquered Egypt, and for about 300 years the Romans included the coastal region of North Africa in their empire.

The rest of Africa, however, remained a mystery to the outside world until medieval* travelers began exploring the continent. Arabs crossed the northern and western parts of Africa. The Chinese learned much about eastern Africa's coast along the Indian Ocean. Europeans spent hundreds of years charting the shores of Africa and then probing all of the continent's interior. Driven by trade, conquest, religion, science, or curiosity, generations of explorers gradually revealed Africa to the rest of the world.

Arab Travelers. Beginning in the A.D. 600s, invaders from the Arabian peninsula colonized Egypt and North Africa. They introduced Arabic language and culture and the religion of Islam* to the region. Eventually some Arabs began venturing south into the SAHARA DESERT and beyond it to the Africa they called the *bilad al-sudan*, "the land of the blacks." Reports of their journeys appear in books from as early as

* **medieval** referring to the Middle Ages in western Europe, generally considered to be from the A.D. 500s to the 1500s

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims



Travel and Exploration

the 900s. Most of these accounts were written by scholars who stayed comfortably north of the desert and collected tales from returning travelers. The early Muslim travelers took particular interest in two African kingdoms: Kanem, located north of Lake Chad, and Ghana, on the border of present-day MAURITANIA and MALI (not part of modern Ghana).

Trade motivated many Arab merchants to travel. They bought slaves, gold, and other goods from the lands on the southern edge of the desert. One Arab account compares the experiences of two traders, one with gold and the other with slaves, returning north across the desert. The first trader had a fairly easy trip, but the second had constant trouble with slaves who were hungry, sick, or trying to escape.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The spread of Islam was closely related to travel into sub-Saharan* Africa. Some early references describe Arab travelers as holy men who performed religious services for local rulers. Such functions as fortune telling, praying for rain, and interpreting dreams gave Arab travelers a chance to plant the seeds of Islam and gain converts. One notable holy man, Abdullah bin Ya Sin, may have brought Islam to ancient Ghana in 1076.

The first extensive eyewitness account of travels in sub-Saharan Africa comes from the Arab IBN BATTUTA. In 1330 he sailed along the eastern coast, visiting Mombasa and Kilwa (now in TANZANIA). A second expedition 20 years later took him from MOROCCO across the Sahara to the empire of Mali. Another traveler from Morocco, Muhammad al-Maghili, visited Mali's Songhai Empire in the 1490s and left a detailed description of the empire's Islamic life and customs.

Chinese in Africa. Information about Africa filtered into China for centuries before the first recorded visit to the continent by Chinese explorers. The Chinese traveled mainly along the eastern coast of Africa, and reports of their journeys turn up in a variety of places. For example, the memoirs of a man named Tu Huan, held captive by Muslims in central Asia in the mid-700s, include accounts of the city of MEROË in what is now SUDAN that he heard from his captors.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

China's overseas trade increased during the Sung dynasty* (960–1279), and contacts with foreign merchants brought the Chinese information about eastern Africa. The earliest known Chinese map of Africa, dating from the early 1300s, accurately shows the shape of the southeastern part of the continent. At the time Europeans believed that southern Africa stretched far to the east and that the Indian Ocean was a landlocked sea.

Yet the Chinese did not gain firsthand experience of Africa until the early 1400s, when the rulers of the Ming dynasty sent a series of naval fleets to the Indian Ocean. Two of these missions reached the Horn of Africa, the peninsula that extends eastward below the Gulf of Aden. As a result, information about this region of Africa appeared in official Ming histories and in unofficial accounts. Descriptions of giraffes aroused special interest because the giraffe seemed to resemble a Chinese mythical animal called the *ch'i-lin*, believed to bring good fortune. When an African ruler sent a giraffe to the Chinese emperor, the event was celebrated as a sign of "endless bliss." Through these contacts the



Travel and Exploration

Chinese knew far more about eastern Africa than Europeans did. But Europeans soon began a vigorous program of exploration and conquest that greatly expanded their knowledge of African geography.

European Exploration before 1500. Little is known about European travelers in Africa before 1500. European rulers and merchants maintained a policy of secrecy about African travel, commerce, and politics to prevent rivals from taking advantage of their knowledge. Although medieval Europeans did visit the Christian kingdom of ETHIOPIA, no reports of this contact have survived. In the 1400s the Portuguese made some daring explorations of the coastal areas of Africa, but most of Portugal's historical documents perished in an earthquake in 1755.

Ethiopia and Europe developed relations through their shared religion, Christianity. Ethiopians visited Rome in 1302, and for several centuries afterward Europeans tried to visit Ethiopia. Some travelers were blocked from their goal by the Muslim rulers of Egypt. Others reached Ethiopia but were prevented from returning home by Ethiopian officials. One such traveler, Pedro da Covilhã, left Portugal in 1487 and went as far east as India before venturing south from Egypt into Ethiopia. Covilhã arrived in Ethiopia but never left—a later traveler named Francisco Alvarez met him there in 1525.

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of this volume will guide you to more information on many topics.

The major European effort to explore Africa before 1500 took place at sea, not on land, and focused on Africa's western coast. In 1419 Prince Enrique of Portugal, known to later historians as Henry the Navigator, set up a research center on Portugal's south coast to gather information about Africa and to sponsor expeditions southward into waters unknown to European sailors. After the prince died in 1460, Portugal continued to send these explorers out to sea.

By the 1480s the Portuguese had charted most of Africa's western shores. Bartolomeu Dias reached the southern tip of the continent in 1487–1488. A decade later Vasco da GAMA led the first expedition to sail around southern Africa and enter the Indian Ocean. Gama and other Europeans of the time were chiefly concerned with commerce and conquest in Asia, not Africa, but Portugal's voyages also opened the way for Portuguese trade and exploration in Africa. A region around the mouth of the CONGO RIVER later became the Portuguese colony of ANGOLA, and another area on the Indian Ocean coast became the colony of MOZAMBIQUE.

European Exploration from 1500 to 1800. Europeans completed the exploration and mapping of the African coastline in the early 1500s. For the next 300 years, their knowledge of sub-Saharan Africa grew slowly and was limited mostly to coastal trading areas for gold, ivory, and slaves. But a few travelers did explore parts of the African interior and left records of their journeys.

One such traveler, LEO AFRICANUS, an African who lived in Europe and converted to Christianity, made two visits to western Sudan between 1509 and 1513, and Europeans relied on his writings for nearly 300 years. Around the same time, António Fernandes of Portugal explored

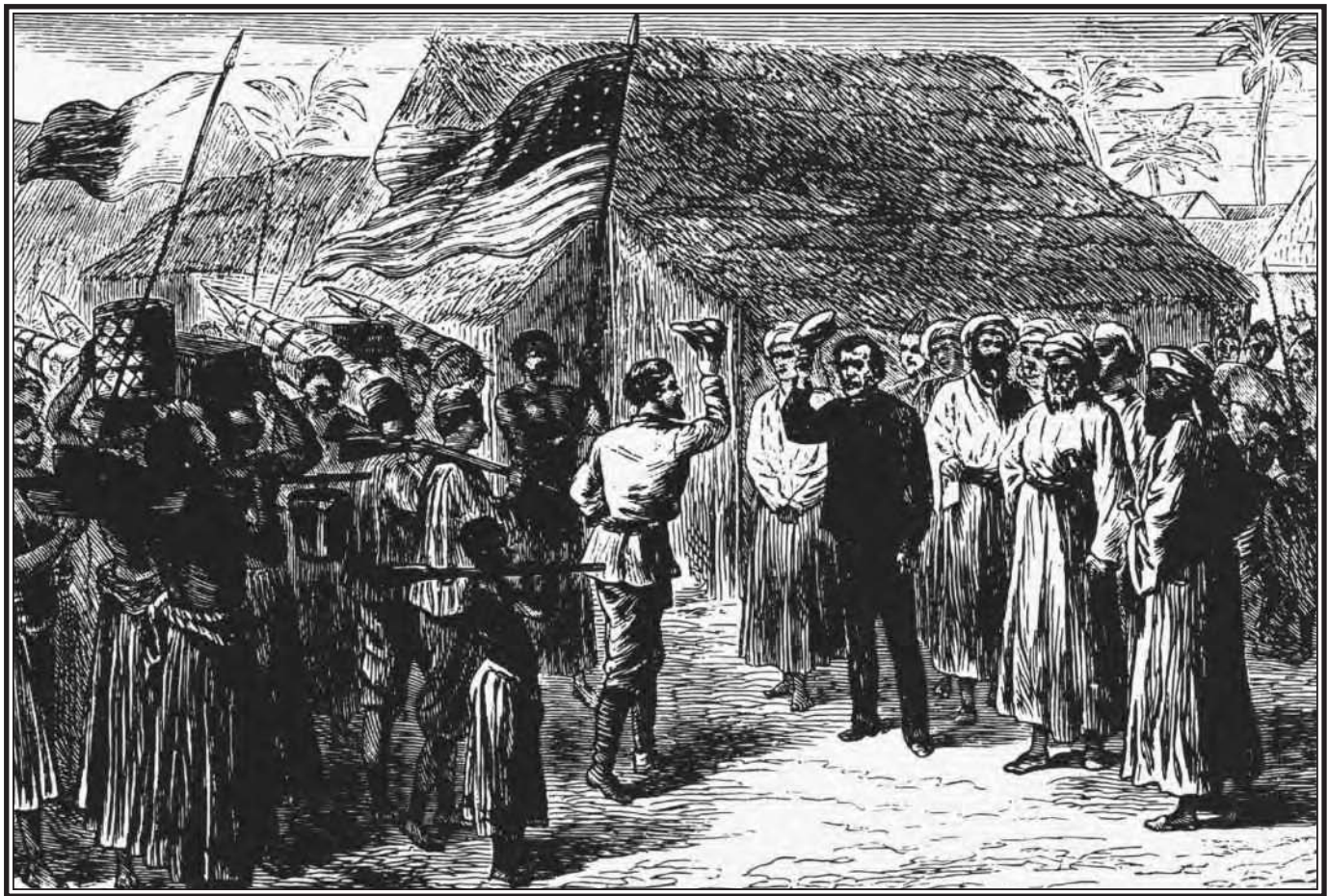
Travel and Exploration

Mozambique and visited gold mines in Mutapa, a kingdom of the south-eastern interior. Eventually the Portuguese established control over the valley of the ZAMBEZI RIVER in that part of Africa. Meanwhile, in western Africa, English traders probed inland along the Gambia River, while the French used the Senegal River as a highway into the interior.

As a Christian kingdom in Africa, Ethiopia continued to hold a powerful fascination for Europeans. A number of travelers managed to visit Ethiopia in the 1500s and 1600s—and to return to Europe with tales of their experiences. António Fernandes was one of them. James Bruce of Scotland traveled in Ethiopia between 1769 and 1772, and his vivid accounts of the country's warfare and court life caused a sensation in Europe. His book *Travels to Discover the Source of the Nile* (1790) became a classic of adventure and travel writing.

The popularity of books such as Bruce's, especially in London and Paris, showed Europeans' growing interest in African exploration at this time. In 1788 the Association for Promoting the Discovery of the Interior Parts of Africa (usually called the African Association) was formed to sponsor expeditions. A few years later, the Association sent Scottish explorer Mungo Park to chart the course of the NIGER RIVER. Park's adventures included imprisonment by an Arab chief, a long ill-

This drawing re-creates the famous meeting of journalist Henry Morton Stanley and explorer David Livingstone in central Africa in 1871. Through their travels and writings, Stanley, Livingstone, and other Europeans brought some knowledge of African geography and cultures to the rest of the world.





Travel and Exploration

Quest for Timbuktu

Arab descriptions fired European curiosity about Timbuktu, the fabled city in the interior of western Africa. Beginning in the late 1700s, British and French explorers vied to be first to visit Timbuktu. The French Geographical Society fueled the competition by offering a cash prize. In 1826 Alexander Gordon Laing, a British officer, reached Timbuktu but died before returning with the news. Two years later the young Frenchman René Caillié made his way to Timbuktu disguised as a Muslim pilgrim. Caillié did not find an exotic city of gold, only “badly built houses of clay.” Nonetheless, on his return to France he received a hero’s welcome.

ness, and a difficult journey alone, but he failed to map the Niger. Ten years later the British government sent him to try again, this time with 40 men. Park and his companions traveled down the river by boat for hundreds of miles before drowning while under attack by local people.

European Exploration after 1800. At the beginning of the 1800s, European maps of Africa’s interior had large blank areas. For the next 100 years, European travelers, explorers, missionaries, diplomats, and soldiers fanned out across the continent.

Explorers in western Africa continued Mungo Park’s quest. Dixon Denham, a British army officer, set out to trace the Niger after crossing the Sahara and finding Lake Chad. Like Park, however, Denham died on the Niger. His servant, Richard Lander, later explored the lower Niger but died in an ambush in 1834. Despite resistance by local people, other British travelers soon completed the journey on the Niger by boat.

Besides mapping major geographic features, many travelers gathered information about the peoples, cultures, languages, and natural history of Africa. Perhaps the most scholarly explorer of western Africa was Heinrich BARTH of Germany, who traveled in LIBYA, NIGER, and the region south of Lake Chad. Some travelers, however, were simply big-game hunters. South Africa especially appealed to British hunters, and some of them made trips into unknown territory in search of game trophies.

David LIVINGSTONE, a Scottish missionary doctor, achieved great fame as the key figure in African exploration during the mid-1800s. Driven by hatred of the slave trade and the belief that his course was directed by God, Livingstone made several very long journeys. During a three-year crossing of the African continent he became the first European to see the great waterfalls of the Zambezi River and named them for Britain’s Queen Victoria.

The search for the source of the Nile River grew into an obsession for many Europeans. In 1856 Britain’s Royal Geographical Society sent Richard Francis BURTON and John Hanning Speke to solve the mystery, considered one of the great geographic puzzles of the age. In the course of their exploration Speke sighted Lake Victoria. He identified it as the river’s source, confirming this fact with a second expedition. Speke had found the source of the White Nile River, the longer of the two main branches of the Nile.

However, some doubt remained, and in the 1860s Livingstone undertook another expedition to settle the matter. While searching for the “fountains of the Nile,” Livingstone lost contact with the outside world. In 1871 the American journalist Henry Morton STANLEY made a famous journey to find the explorer. Stanley’s book about his meeting with Livingstone made him an international hero, and he went on to lead several long and grueling expeditions across central Africa.

Women also played a role in the exploration of Africa during the late 1800s. The century’s last important European traveler was Mary KINGSLEY of Great Britain. Her book *Travels in West Africa* (1895) describes two journeys and criticizes the policies of colonial governments and missionaries toward the African people. Kingsley’s book was widely

read, and like other popular works of travel and exploration did much to shape the images of Africa held by most Europeans and Americans.

Yet these images did not provide the full story of European involvement in Africa. By the second half of the 1800s, exploration in Africa had cleared the way for full-scale conquest and colonization. European nations hired explorers such as Stanley and Pierre Savorgnan de Brazza to help establish colonial governments. Britain, France, Portugal, Germany, and Italy all competed furiously to gain control over the continent and divide it among themselves. European exploration led to colonization, which left deep wounds in the politics and cultures of Africa. (See also *Arabs in Africa*, *Islam in Africa*, *Maps and Mapmaking*, *Roman Africa*, *Sudanic Empires of Western Africa*.)



Tribalism

Tribalism is identification with a particular ethnic group or “tribe.” In discussions of African politics and culture, tribalism usually appears as the opposite of NATIONALISM, devotion to the interests and culture of one’s entire country. African leaders seeking to build new nations sometimes regard tribalism as primitive, an obstacle to developing a modern national identity. Another view of tribalism, however, is that it shows pride in one’s cultural and historical roots and builds unity among people who share a common heritage.

Defining Tribalism. Africans themselves and people outside Africa generally agree that the basic social and cultural units of the continent are tribes (often called ethnic groups, peoples, societies, or communities). Nations are made up of combinations of these groups. A major difficulty in discussing tribalism, however, is deciding how to identify a “tribe.” Foreigners and Africans have used different approaches.

European missionaries and scholars were the first to classify Africans into tribes. In various situations they used language, location, or political organization as the basis for classification. Africans who shared a language were considered to be part of the same group. However, because most African languages include many dialects, identifying people by language could be complicated. Some Europeans used location as the method of classification, regarding a group occupying a single area of land as a tribe. Unfortunately, for the most part the territorial boundaries of groups were not precisely marked or matched to those of language use. As to political organization, some Europeans thought that a single political unit could be considered a tribe. The problem with this view was that an African king might rule over many different linguistic or geographic “tribes,” perhaps brought under his rule by conquest.

Africans use other methods of classifying themselves, related to systems of exchange—including trade and marriage—and shared beliefs and traditions. People who share a group identity handle trade issues, such as prices and credit, one way among themselves and another way with outsiders. When it comes to marriage, people have almost always preferred to find a spouse within their own group. Therefore, a group in which intermarriage occurs can be regarded as a tribe. Africans also rec-

Tribalism



Among the Samburu people of Kenya, elders take a leading role in making decisions for the group.

ognize identity groups based on a shared cosmology, or view of the universe. A common set of religious beliefs and ceremonies and a sense of obligation to help members of the community may define a tribe as well.

Colonialism and “Tribes.” When Europeans began to colonize Africa they soon discovered that the local social and political systems were very different from those of the nations of Europe. One of the Europeans’ first steps was to map their African territories, drawing boundaries around groups that they regarded as distinct tribes and defining them as political units.

Some of the groups identified by the Europeans had chiefs, recognized leaders with whom the colonial rulers could deal in matters of administration and taxation. If a group did not have a political leader, the colonial authorities appointed a chief. Some communities refused to accept these “invented chiefs,” leading to prolonged conflict with the authorities. In many cases, however, multiple small groups were placed under the rule of one appointed chief. These larger groups came to be treated as a single people, an “invented tribe.” Just as the borders of many modern African nations reflect territorial lines drawn by European powers, some of the tribal groupings now found in Africa were created by colonial administrators.



Tshombe, Moïse Kapenda

The Europeans built new towns and cities in the colonies, and Africans came to these urban centers to work. In the cities tribal identity became less important than social or economic class. However, when urban workers returned to their rural homes when they were old or sick, they generally returned to their ethnic or tribal identities as well, a pattern that continues today.

Tribalism Today. In modern Africa tribalism can mean several things. It may refer to the desire to preserve traditions, such as group names, values, and customs. Sometimes, however, the word *tribalism* is raised as an accusation. African nationalists—and those outside Africa who support them—may view those who disagree with them as “tribalists.” For example, rural Africans who do not share the ambitions of the governing class or who disapprove of government programs may be dismissed as “tribalists” without a sense of civic responsibility toward the nation.

Ethnic identity is a central issue in Africa, where on more than one occasion ethnic rivalries have led to civil war. Yet in searching for a solution, some observers have suggested that tribalism and nationalism need not be regarded as opposites. Instead, both approaches perform the same function—establishing a group’s identity—in different ways, and can contribute to strengthening African societies. (See also **Boundaries in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity.**)

Tshombe, Moïse Kapenda

1917–1969

Prime Minister of Democratic
Republic of Congo

* **autonomy** independent self-govern-
ment

* **coup** sudden, often violent, over-
throw of a ruler or government

Moïse Kapenda Tshombe was one of the first leaders of CONGO (KINSHASA). Born in Katanga province in what was then the colony of Belgian Congo, he was trained as a Methodist preacher and a teacher and later became a merchant. In 1958 he helped found the Confederation of Tribal Associations of Katanga, an organization aimed at protecting the interests of ethnic groups in Katanga province.

Tshombe took a leading role in his country’s INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT. In meetings with colonial authorities in 1960, he recommended a system of government in which each province would have almost total autonomy*. When the colony gained independence as the Democratic Republic of Congo in June 1960, Tshombe was elected president of the provincial government of Katanga. Soon afterward he proclaimed Katanga’s withdrawal from the central government headed by Patrice LUMUMBA. Lumumba was assassinated the following year.

When UNITED NATIONS troops were sent to control the growing political unrest in Congo in 1963, Tshombe fled to Spain. One year later the Congolese government asked him to return, made him prime minister, and ordered him to put down rebellions in the eastern part of the country. He succeeded but was then fired by president Joseph Kasavubu. The political struggle that followed led to a military coup* by MOBUTU SESE SEKO, and Tshombe again fled to Europe. While attempting to regain power in a coup in the late 1960s, he was arrested and taken to a prison in Algeria, where he died.

Tuareg

Tuareg

- * **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad
- * **nomadic** referring to people who travel from place to place to find food and pasture
- * **ritual** ceremony that follows a set pattern

The Tuareg are an Islamic* people who dwell in and around the SAHARA DESERT. They speak Tamacheq, one of North Africa's Berber languages. Numbering about one million people altogether, Tuareg can be found mainly in MALI and NIGER but also in BURKINA FASO, ALGERIA, and LIBYA.

Descendants of the nomadic* BERBERS, North Africa's original inhabitants, the Tuareg appeared first in Libya and spread into regions bordering the Sahara. They incorporated local farming peoples into their society, sometimes trading with their neighbors, sometimes raiding them for slaves. Tuareg culture has several distinctive features, including a custom that requires men to veil their faces and a religion that blends traditional beliefs and rituals* with Islam.

In the past Tuareg peoples earned a living by breeding livestock, gardening in desert oases, operating trading caravans, running Islamic schools, and practicing metalwork. Agriculture is not easy for the Tuareg for several reasons. In the parts of Mali and Niger where most Tuareg live, the land is primarily made up of flat desert plains, rugged grasslands, and desert borderland. In these areas, some crops can be raised, but only if daily irrigation is used, and repeated droughts have made even basic irrigation a difficult prospect. Livestock and salt, two other staples, have declined in value and further hurt the Tuareg's economic stability. More recently some Tuareg have become migrant laborers, while others have begun making art and craft items for North Africa's tourist trade. Fleeing drought and political unrest in their home countries, many Tuareg have moved south to cities and rural areas in western Africa. In the early 1990s some Tuareg joined an armed revolt against the governments of Mali and Niger. Since rebel and government forces signed an agreement to end the fighting in 1995, movements to revive Tuareg culture have flourished. (*See also Islam in Africa.*)

Tubman, William Vacanarat Shadrach

1895–1971
President of Liberia

Considered the man who modernized LIBERIA, William Vacanarat Shadrach Tubman served as president of that nation for 27 years. Born in southeastern Liberia, Tubman was a descendant of freed American slaves who had moved to Liberia from Georgia in the 1800s. A member of Liberia's ruling class, he received a college education and became a lawyer in 1917. Because he often took legal cases without receiving payment, Tubman became known as a "poor man's lawyer."

Ambitious and well liked, Tubman joined the True Whig Party in 1923 and became the youngest senator in Liberia's history. He became a member of the Supreme Court in 1937 and was elected president of Liberia in 1944. Although he imposed one-man rule, Tubman remained a popular leader. He organized economic development programs, established a national public school system, extended full rights of citizenship to Africans in remote areas of the country, and gave all Liberians the right to vote. In addition, in 1963 Tubman helped draw up plans for the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU), an organization founded to promote harmony and cooperation among African governments.



Tunisia

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad



See map in Archaeology and Prehistory (vol. 1).

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **autonomy** independent self-government

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

The small North African nation of Tunisia lies in the center of the continent's Mediterranean coast. Its two neighbors—ALGERIA and LIBYA—are both many times larger. Mostly Islamic* with a rich Arab culture, Tunisia came under French rule in the 1880s and gained independence in 1956.

Most of the country's main cities, including Tunis—the capital—Bizerte, Sousse, Sfax, and Gabes are located along the coast. Northern Tunisia, the most mountainous part of the country, includes the Northern Tell and High Tell chains of the ATLAS MOUNTAIN system. The north is also the wettest region, with average annual rainfall of about 60 inches, and it has the country's only river, the Mejerda. Central Tunisia, flatter and drier, is made up of plateaus and plains. It contains seasonal salt lakes, the largest of which is Shatt al-Jarid. The southern part of the country lies in the SAHARA DESERT.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

In ancient times Tunisia was settled and conquered by various powers drawn to the rich agricultural areas along the coast. Meanwhile, various BERBER-speaking nomadic* groups lived in the drier interior.

Carthage and Rome. In the 800s B.C., settlers from Phoenicia in the eastern Mediterranean founded the city of CARTHAGE on Tunisia's northern shore. Carthage dominated Mediterranean commerce until the 200s B.C., when it fought a series of wars with Rome. In 146 B.C. the Romans sacked Carthage and incorporated it in the province of Africa, which included Tunisia and parts of eastern Algeria. Although Carthage never fully regained its glory, the Romans made it the capital of Africa and a major center in their empire.

In the A.D. 400s the Vandals, a people of northern Europe, attacked Rome and its possessions. They seized the province of Africa and held it until 533, when the region was taken over by the Byzantine Empire, the eastern portion of the Roman Empire.

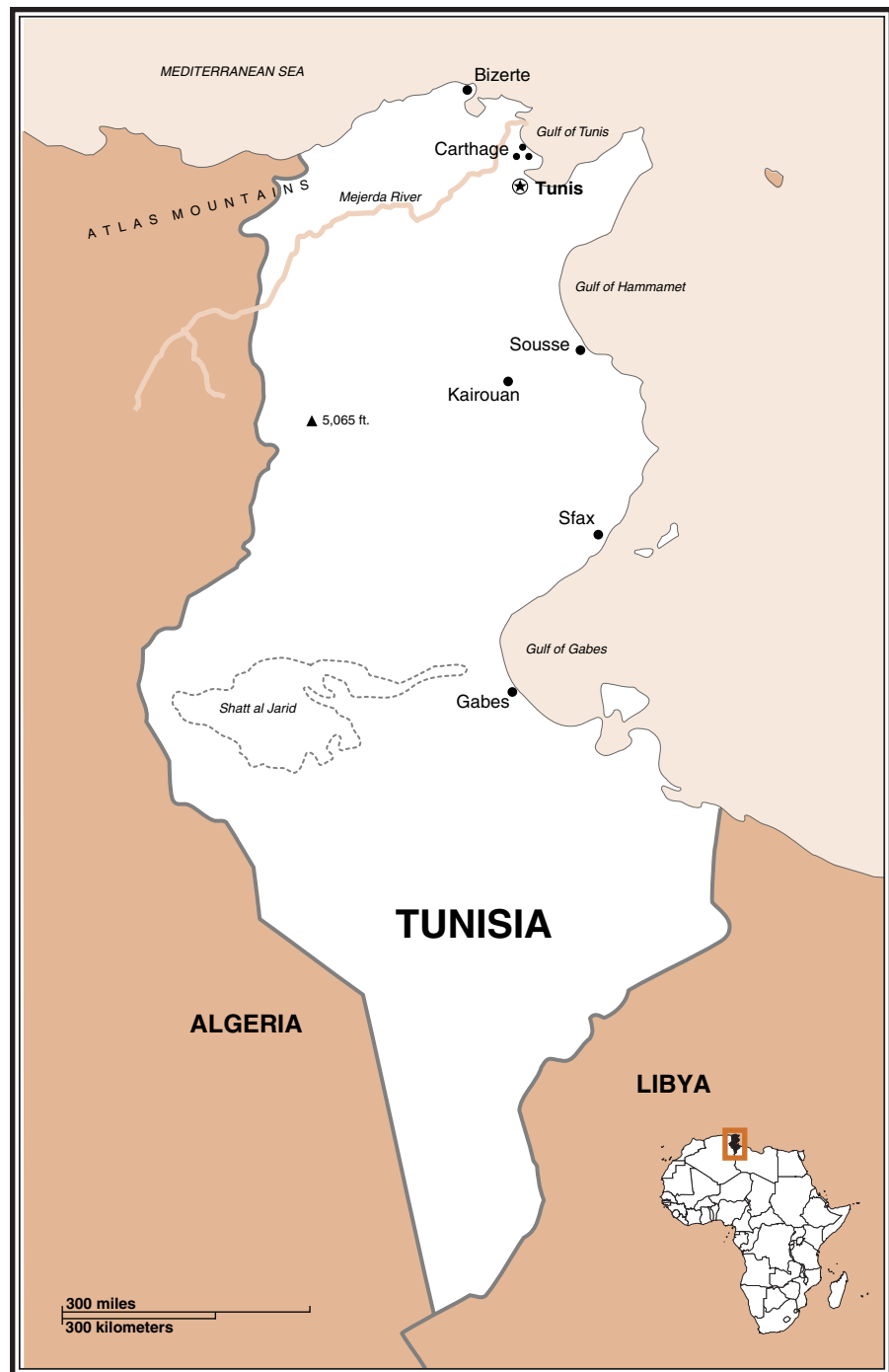
Arab Rule. Muslims from the Arabian Peninsula invaded Byzantine Tunisia in the 640s. By the end of the century they had conquered the province of Africa—which they called Ifriqiya—and established permanent settlements there. Under Arab rule Tunisia continued to trade with its Mediterranean neighbors. It also developed commercial connections with sub-Saharan* Africa, a major source of gold and slaves. Yet Tunisia's most significant political links were now with Muslim powers to the east and west. Over the next 1,200 years, Tunisia was conquered by a series of Muslim states but always managed to maintain its autonomy*.

Tunisia's first Muslim rulers were the Umayyads from Damascus, in present-day Syria. After taking control of Carthage in 698, they moved the provincial government to Kairouan, an inland town. Tunis, a small town near Carthage, became the main port. The Aghlabids, another Muslim dynasty*, governed Ifriqiya from 800 to 910. The next rulers, the Fatimids, used Ifriqiya as a base to conquer EGYPT. In 973 they moved their capital to CAIRO, and placed the Zirid family in charge of Ifriqiya.

Tunisia

In 1159 the Almohads of Morocco conquered the region, but Ifriqiya did not have an effective government until the Hafsids came to power in the 1220s. The Hafsids transferred the capital to Tunis, which led to the replacement of the name Ifriqiya with Tunisia.

During the 1500s Spain and the Ottoman Empire competed for control of the lands bordering the Mediterranean. In 1574 the Ottomans took control in Tunisia and appointed local army officers, known as



Military Mastermind

Hannibal, one of the greatest generals of all time, led the army of the ancient city of Carthage in the 200s B.C. As a boy he vowed never to be an ally of Rome—Carthage's great rival. Hannibal became a military officer. He took command of the Carthaginian army when he was only 25 and led it across Spain in a series of conquests. In 218 B.C. Hannibal's forces crossed the snow-swept Alps, with horses and elephants in tow and hostile tribes hurling stones from above. Arriving in Italy, he won a series of major battles. However, after returning to North Africa in 203 B.C., Hannibal suffered defeat by the Romans.

deys, to run the country. The deys gained considerable power, and eventually the Ottoman rulers in Istanbul had only symbolic authority in Tunisia. In the 1600s the deys were replaced by another group of officers, the Muradid beys. The Muradids were followed in 1705 by the Husaynid beys, who ruled Tunisia until the arrival of the French.

French Rule. The French invaded Tunisia in 1881 and two years they later made it a protectorate*. Soon many Europeans, mostly French but also some Italians, migrated to Tunisia and settled on the best land. In response, educated Tunisians formed a variety of organizations to protect their rights and to seek autonomy and independence. The Young Tunisians, founded in the late 1800s, was followed by the Destour Party in the 1920s and the Neo-Destour Party—led by Habib BOURGUIBA—in the 1930s. As the independence movement gathered force in the early 1950s, it met with fierce resistance from the European settlers and led to occasional violence.

On March 20, 1956, France granted independence to Tunisia. The following year Tunisia became a republic with Habib Bourguiba as its first president, a position he held for 30 years. Bourguiba was reelected in 1964 and 1969 and was named president for life in 1974. His Neo-Destour Party, known after 1964 as the Socialist Destour Party, was the only legal political party in the country. Various opposition leaders and government ministers who fell into disfavor were jailed, forced into exile, or even killed.

President Bourguiba maintained close ties with France. Although he supported Arab nationalism*, his relations with other Arab leaders were often strained. In 1974 he agreed to unite Tunisia with Libya, but then withdrew from the plan.

When Bourguiba became too ill to govern in 1987, Prime Minister Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali assumed the presidency. Ben Ali has released political prisoners, abolished the post of president for life, and legalized some opposition parties. However, he has dealt severely with members of the Islamic opposition. Although the government's election practices have been questioned, Ben Ali was reelected in 1989, 1994, and 1999, and his party has maintained a large majority in the National Assembly. The president has formed strong relationships the United States and organizations such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. At the same time he has worked toward closer ties with Arab neighbors, founding the Arab Maghreb Union with Algeria, Libya, MAURITANIA, and MOROCCO in 1989.

Women's rights have been an important issue in the Bourguiba and Ben Ali governments. Starting with his 1956 Personal Status Code, Bourguiba introduced dramatic marriage reforms, outlawing polygamy* and forced marriage. He also granted women the right to vote. Ben Ali has passed laws against workplace discrimination* and has changed a law requiring women's obedience to their husbands. Men remain the legal heads of families and payment of dowry*, opposed by some Tunisian feminists, is still legal and widely practiced.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one's country

* **polygamy** marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

* **discrimination** unfair treatment of a group

* **dowry** money or property that a woman brings to the man she marries

Tunisia



The women of a Bedouin family in Matmata, Tunisia, prepare to have tea. In the past Bedouins were nomadic Arabs who lived in desert or semidesert areas.

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

* **inflation** increase in prices

ECONOMY

In the 1960s Tunisia adopted various socialist* economic policies. Since the 1980s it has introduced some reforms that have helped to control inflation* and encourage the growth of manufacturing and tourism. Exports and imports have both increased, but progress has been uneven and unemployment remains high. In 1995 Tunisia signed a free trade agreement with the European Union, its principal trading partner. It also has commercial relations with Algeria, Libya, and the United States.

About one-fifth of the Tunisian labor force works in agriculture. Crop yields vary considerably according to conditions such as drought and rainfall. Wheat, barley, grapes, olives, and citrus fruits are the most important crops. Farmers also raise sheep, goats, and cattle.

Tunisia exports large quantities of oil. It also produces phosphates—used in making fertilizer—natural gas, iron ore, and lead. Manufacturing industries include textiles, leather goods, food processing, and chemicals. Tourism, particularly along the country's Mediterranean beaches, is another major source of jobs and foreign currency.

Some Tunisians still follow a nomadic lifestyle—though their numbers are declining—and others farm small plots of land. However, more than 60 percent of the population now lives in cities and towns near the coast. Many urban dwellers are unable to find steady jobs, forcing them



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

Tunisia

to take casual work with lower wages. Large numbers of Tunisians have migrated abroad, primarily to Europe. Money sent home by those working abroad makes up a significant part of the economy.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

The vast majority of Tunisians identify themselves as Arab. Most of the rest are Berbers. Many centuries of Arab domination helped to spread Arab culture in Tunisia and allowed it to become firmly rooted there.

Tunisia's Arab heritage has influenced the way the people dress. Some women cover their entire bodies, including the head, with a single white rectangular cloth known as a *safsari*. Others have adopted the *hijab*, a simpler head covering. Men often wear a plain calf-length robe and a *shashiya*—a brimless, red felt cap. Other Tunisians dress in European clothes. Elaborate, richly embroidered garments are worn for weddings.

Influences. Tunisian music, art, literature, and education reveal the influence of Arab and European cultures. For example, refugees from Spain brought *maaluf*, an urban, classical music, to the region. Written for violin, lute, and drum, *maaluf* performances often last several hours. Tunisia has a centuries-old literary tradition. Before the colonial era authors from the region wrote secular* poetry and philosophy as well as influential religious texts. Ibn Khaldun, a historian born in Tunis in the 1300s, wrote *Muqaddama*, a complex work of social theory. Since the 1900s Arabic-language novels have become increasingly popular.

Before the period of French rule, Tunisian education emphasized religious subjects such as study of the Qur'an—the Islamic sacred text—and religious law. Grammar, logic, and medicine were also offered. The most

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life



The Republic of Tunisia

POPULATION:

9,593,402 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

63,170 sq. mi. (163,610 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

Arabic (official); French; some Berber dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Tunisian dinar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Muslim 98%, Christian 1%, Jewish and other 1%

CITIES:

Tunis (capital), 1,897,000 (2001 est.); Bizerte, Sousse, Sfax, Gabes

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 60 in. (1,524 mm) in the north to 8 in. (203 mm) in the Sahara region.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$5,500 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: olives, grain, dairy products, tomatoes, citrus fruits, beef, sugar dates, almonds

Manufacturing: textiles, footwear, food processing, beverages

Mining: petroleum, phosphates, iron ore

Services: tourism

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from France, 1956. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing body: 163-seat

Majlis al-Nuwaab (Chamber of Deputies), members elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1957–1987 President Habib Bourguiba

1984– President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali

ARMED FORCES:

35,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 6–16; literacy rate 67% (2001 est.)



Tunisia

notable centers of learning were in Kairouan and at Tunis's Zaituna Mosque-University. In the 1800s European models of education became increasingly influential. Sadiqi College, a prestigious secondary school founded in Tunis in 1875, focused on science, math, and European languages. Since independence, strong government support for education has helped to reduce adult illiteracy rates. Most classes are taught in Arabic, except in the universities, where French is widely used. A small group of educated French-speaking Tunisians controls government administration and much of the country's wealth.

Religion. Most modern Tunisians are Sunni Muslims. A small number of Jews—remnants of a community founded more than 2,000 years ago—still live in the country. A once-vibrant Christian community, which produced the religious scholar Augustine, disappeared by the 1100s. During the colonial era many European Christians settled in Tunisia, but most of their descendants left after independence.

Recently, a movement to base the government on Islam has gathered force. The movement is supported by Nahda, an illegal political party. President Ben Ali's government opposes the movement and has tried to suppress it. The role of Islam in Tunisian society is perhaps the most serious question facing the nation. (*See also Arabs in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Islam in Africa, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures.*)

Tutu, Desmond Mpilo

1931–
South African religious leader
and activist

* **theology** study of religious faith

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

A leader of the Anglican Church, Desmond Mpilo Tutu is best known for his tireless efforts for peace, unity, and human rights in SOUTH AFRICA. Born in Klerksdorp, he hoped to become a doctor but could not afford medical training. Instead, he became a schoolteacher and attended the University of South Africa. After graduating in 1958 he suffered a serious illness and decided to become a priest of the Anglican Church. He studied for three years in England, then taught theology* at various universities throughout southern Africa. In 1972 he returned to England to work for the World Council of Churches.

When Tutu came back to South Africa three years later, he quickly became an important figure in both the religious and the political world. In the church he rose to positions never before held by a black person, including dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg and bishop of LESOTHO. While serving as the general secretary of the South African Council of Churches in the late 1970s, Tutu spoke out strongly against apartheid*. He encouraged South Africans to stage nonviolent protests and urged foreign nations to apply economic pressure to South Africa's racist government. He won the Nobel Peace Prize for those efforts in 1984. In 1986 Tutu became archbishop of Cape Town, the head of South Africa's Anglican church—a role he held for ten years.

As apartheid came to an end in the early 1990s, Tutu played a major role in bringing peace and unity to the long-divided nation. He worked together with Nelson MANDELA, the nation's first black president, who in



Uganda

1996 named Tutu chairperson of the Commission on Truth and Reconciliation.

TUTANKHAMEN

See *Pharaohs*.

Tutuola, Amos

1920–1997
Nigerian writer

Nigerian novelist Amos Tutuola gained fame for his retelling of traditional YORUBA myths, legends, and fables. The son of a poor farmer, Tutuola struggled to obtain an education. He gathered and sold firewood to help his father pay for his schooling. When his father died in 1939, however, the family could no longer afford Tutuola's tuition, and he had to leave school. Over the next several years, he held jobs in a variety of trades, including farming, metalworking, and photography. Finally, he took a job as a messenger at the Department of Labor.

It was while waiting for messages to deliver that Tutuola wrote his first novel, *The Palm-Wine Drinkard and his Dead Palm-Wine Tapster in the Deads' Town* (1952). The novel tells of a "drinkard," or alcoholic, who embarks on a journey to the land of the dead to find his deceased tapster, a person who serves liquor. During the journey, the "drinkard" encounters wicked creatures and magical places and eventually gains wisdom. Tutuola's story borrows from Yoruba mythology, and its structure is based on both modern novels and traditional oral stories. Although the novel received praise in England, some Nigerians criticized it, saying that Tutuola's use of poor grammar and Yoruba folklore were unsophisticated.

Despite the criticism, Tutuola continued to write. His second novel, *My Life in the Bush of Ghosts* (1954), received more praise abroad than in Nigeria. He did not become popular in his own country until 1962, when he wrote a stage version of *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. Tutuola's other works include *Simbi and the Satyr of the Dark Jungle* (1955), *Yoruba Folktales* (1986), and *The Village Witch Doctor and Other Stories* (1990). (See also **Literature**.)

TUTSI

See *Rwanda*.

Uganda

The East African nation of Uganda once served as a symbol of everything that could go wrong in post-independence Africa. Ruled by corrupt dictators and torn by ethnic violence, Uganda was a land of poverty and despair despite its rich natural resources. Since the late 1980s, however, Uganda has made a remarkable turnaround, and many people have looked to it as a model for progress in modern Africa.

Uganda



GEOGRAPHY

Uganda lies in the Great Lakes region of east-central Africa and shares borders with five other countries: SUDAN to the north, KENYA to the east, TANZANIA and RWANDA to the south, and the CONGO (KINSHASA) to the west.

Located on the equator, the country rests on a high plateau that makes the climate fairly moderate. Much of the country is mountainous, with high peaks rising in the east, west, and southwest. The western end of the Rift Valley, an enormous trench, also passes through Uganda.

Water—rivers, streams, lakes, and swamps—covers about 15 percent of the surface area of Uganda. Among the most prominent bodies of water are Lake Victoria, the world's second-largest freshwater lake, and the NILE RIVER. The Nile begins in Lake Victoria and flows into Lake Albert before traveling more than 3,000 miles north to the Mediterranean Sea.

Uganda enjoys abundant rainfall and very fertile soil, excellent conditions for agriculture. The south and west receive an average of about 90 inches of rain per year. The extreme northeast is much drier, and many people there raise animals rather than plant crops.

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

Before the arrival of Europeans in the mid-1800s, Uganda was made up of many autonomous* societies. In the north, most people lived in

* autonomous self-governing



Uganda

small communities without a strong central authority. In the south, many groups were ruled by chiefs or kings. The largest kingdom was Buganda, on the shores of Lake Victoria in the southern part of Uganda. Muslim traders from the Indian Ocean coast established businesses in Buganda and won influence at the court of the Ganda king.

European Involvement. The first Europeans to visit Uganda were explorers such as John Hanning Speke, who came in 1862 in search of the source of the Nile River. Missionaries arrived about ten years later, and merchants such as Frederick LUGARD of the Imperial British East Africa Company were in the area by 1890. Four years later the British declared a protectorate* over the area.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

This was a time of turmoil in which Africans fought each other and the British. Christians and Muslims went to war in 1888–1889, and Catholics and Protestants clashed three years later. The kingdom of Bunyoro in the north fought with the British and their allies from the powerful kingdom of Buganda. But the Ganda ruler later rebelled against British authority and took up arms against some of his chiefs, who had converted to Christianity.

The Uganda Agreement. In 1900 the British and representatives of the region's major chiefdoms and kingdoms signed the Uganda Agreement. This document recognized the existence of four separate kingdoms—Buganda, Bunyoro, Toro, and Ankole—within the British colony of Uganda and allowed each state to govern itself. However, Buganda received more autonomy and a larger share of the benefits of colonial development, such as education by Christian missionaries, than the other kingdoms.

A main goal of British rule in Uganda was to exploit the land's fertility. The British put people to work growing crops such as cotton, coffee, and tea to sell as exports. Much of this farming took place in Buganda, as did other economic activity. The British also established their government in this kingdom in a new town called Entebbe, and many Ganda received civil service jobs and helped the British rule the colony.

Development in the south proceeded rapidly, but the British did not establish firm control over the northeast until the late 1920s. Many northerners then moved south to find work, often in the colonial police forces. Some Ganda in the south felt that their privileged position was threatened.

Another source of ethnic tension was the large number of Asian merchants. Asians owned the majority of the sugar plantations, dominated the cotton industry, controlled the manufacturing and importing of most goods, and ran most of the shops in Kampala, the major city that became the capital in 1958. Many indigenous Africans resented the Asians' wealth and power.

The division of Uganda into separate kingdoms produced lasting rivalries. Bunyoro repeatedly pressed to regain the land it lost in its war with Buganda. Meanwhile, the Ganda king demanded independence from the rest of Uganda in an effort to protect Buganda's autonomy.



Raid on Entebbe

Uganda's dictator Idi Amin Dada made world headlines in the summer of 1976 when he allowed a hijacked airliner to land at the Entebbe airport. The plane, with many Israeli citizens aboard, had been seized by Palestinian terrorists demanding freedom for a group of imprisoned Palestinians. The world watched breathlessly as a week of suspense ended with a daring raid by Israeli commandos. They stormed into the airport terminal and freed the hostages. Seven hijackers, three hostages, and one commando died in the raid.



Uganda

As political parties formed during the 1950s, religious rivalries reappeared. The Democratic Party was a Catholic stronghold, while the Uganda People's Party had Protestant roots. Local and regional power struggles seemed more important than national unity and independence from Britain. The one thing many Ugandans shared was resentment of the Asian community. A nationwide boycott of non-African businesses in 1954 resulted in many Asians leaving the country when it became independent.

A Difficult New Beginning. In October 1960, Uganda gained independence from Britain and held its first elections the following year. The new constitution called for a single state with little autonomy for individual kingdoms. Buganda rejected this arrangement and refused to participate in the elections. As a result, the Democratic Party won.

The following year a member of the Lango ethnic group named Milton OBOTE joined forces with a Ganda political party. The coalition won the election, with the Ganda king MUTESA II as president and Obote as prime minister. Obote then consolidated his power and pushed aside his Ganda allies. When they tried to stage a coup* in 1966, the national army, led by General Idi AMIN DADA, crushed the Ganda and forced Mutesa to flee the country.

During the early years of Obote's reign, Uganda made progress in education, the economy, and other areas. However, Obote abolished all political parties except his own and put many Lango into high government, army, and judicial posts. He turned the country towards socialism* and steadily lost support. In 1971 the army revolted, bringing Amin to power.

Uganda Under Idi Amin. At first Idi Amin enjoyed wide popular support. A former national heavyweight boxing champion, he seemed friendly and confident. But beneath his smiles was a cold-blooded and brutal tyrant. Over the next eight years, he plunged Uganda into a world of terror and corruption that claimed perhaps as many as a million lives.

Amin quickly turned against anyone he thought might threaten his control over Uganda and its wealth. In 1972 he expelled all Asians from the country. Most black Ugandans approved of this action, but the country's economy suffered from the loss of these experienced businesspeople. Amin also drove out clergy and missionaries and outlawed some Christian groups. In addition he targeted the Lango and other rival ethnic groups. He did not hesitate to use violence, torture, and murder to advance his goals.

In the end, however, it was Amin's military adventures in other countries, not his reign of terror at home, which led to his downfall. In 1979 he invaded Tanzania to punish its president, Julius NYERERE, for supporting Ugandan rebels. The invasion failed badly, and Tanzanian troops stormed into Kampala and forced Amin to flee to Saudi Arabia.

The Movement. Uganda's government was restored with elections. Obote manipulated the process and regained his position as president.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **socialism** economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution of goods

Uganda

But he could not control ethnic violence in the country, and Ugandans lost patience with his corruption. A rebellion in 1985 pushed him out of office, followed by more than a year of chaos. Finally Yoweri MUSEVENI, the leader of the main rebel group, captured Kampala and proclaimed himself president.

Museveni set about trying to rebuild and unify Uganda. He hoped to overcome the ethnic divisions that had plagued the country for so long, and he argued that political parties increased these rivalries. He therefore outlawed political parties and set up the National Revolutionary Movement, a system of government that claimed to include all Ugandans. Though many feared he would rule as a dictator, Museveni formed a commission to draw up a constitution that would provide fundamental freedoms and protection of HUMAN RIGHTS. The commission spent years consulting people in all parts of Ugandan society, hoping to create a constitution by consensus.

The constitution, adopted in 1995, established a parliament with members elected by the people but forbidden to run as members of a party. The president, also elected, was limited to two terms of five years. The constitution also provided for a vice president, a cabinet of ministers, and independent system of courts.

In 1996 Museveni won Uganda's first free and open presidential election in over 30 years. But the country still faced major problems. Rebel

Since the mid-1980s, Uganda's president Yoweri Museveni has sought to overcome ethnic tension in his country and build a stable government.



Uganda



The Republic of Uganda

POPULATION:
23,317,560 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
93,065 sq. mi. (241,038 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
English (official); over 40 others including Swahili, Ganda, Nyoro, Lango, Acholi, Alur, Chiga, Kenyi, Teso, Arabic

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Uganda shilling

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Christian 66%, Traditional 18%, Muslim 16%

CITIES:
Kampala (capital), 1,212,000 (2001 est.); Jinja, Mbale, Mbarara, Masaka, Entebbe, Gulu

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 90 in. (2,250 mm) near Lake Victoria to 15 in. (400 mm) in the northeast.

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$1,060 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: coffee, cotton, tea, tobacco, cassava, potatoes, corn, millet, livestock, dairy products
Manufacturing: sugar, brewing, cotton textiles
Mining: copper, cobalt

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Britain, 1962. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing body: National Assembly.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1963–1966 President Edward Mutesa II
1966–1971 President Milton Obote (prime minister from 1962–1966)
1971–1979 President for Life Idi Amin
1979–1980 President Yusuf Lule (1979), President Godfrey Binaisa (1979–1980), Paulo Muwanga (1980)
1980–1985 President A. Milton Obote
1985–1986 General Tito Okello
1986– President Yoweri Museveni

ARMED FORCES:
40,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:
Free, universal, and compulsory education has not been introduced; literacy rate 62% (1995 est.)

forces in northern and western Uganda, supported by Sudan, fought Museveni's government. Museveni had also involved his country deeply in the civil wars raging in Rwanda and Congo (Kinshasa). His political opponents continued to call for a democracy with political parties. Despite these difficulties, Uganda seemed to recover steadily from the devastating years of Obote and Amin.

In 2001 Museveni won reelection, but his main political opponents refused to participate in the elections and questioned the legitimacy of his victory. Many Ugandans, as well as foreign diplomats, have grown uneasy with Museveni's interventions in Congo and elsewhere. Although the glow of Museveni's early days has faded, many people still hope that he can bring peace and prosperity to Uganda.

ECONOMY

Agriculture is Uganda's main economic activity, employing more than 90 percent of the population and accounting for nearly all of the country's exports. Coffee ranks as the country's most important export. Manufacturing, mining, and the rest of the economy contribute little income. However, tourism has made a strong comeback during the relative calm of the Museveni years. Visitors have long admired Uganda's abundant and varied wildlife and spectacular scenery, including several major national parks.

Museveni's government has improved economic performance by trying to encourage producers to rely less on traditional exports and by selling unprofitable state-owned companies to private investors. New

Umar ibn Sa'id Tal

government policies have brought inflation under control, and improved tax collection has increased revenues. The country borrowed heavily from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, which called for many of these changes. In 1998 these institutions recognized Uganda's improving economy and announced a program to forgive some of the country's debt.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Several different language families exist in Uganda, providing a foundation for the country's political and ethnic divisions. BANTU speakers dominate the southern portion of the country, where good conditions for agriculture led to the formation of centralized societies that developed into kingdoms. People in the north speak languages of the Eastern Nilotic, Western Nilotic, and Sudanic families. Many northerners raised herds of livestock because the region's climate was too dry for large-scale farming.

All of Uganda's ethnic groups—both northern and southern—are dominated by men. Property and political power pass through the male side of the family, and women are generally treated as socially inferior. The constitution acknowledges this problem by guaranteeing seats in Parliament to women representatives.

About two-thirds of Uganda's people are Christian, while the rest are divided about evenly between ISLAM and traditional African religions. However, most of those who follow Islam or Christianity include traditional beliefs and customs in their worship. In recent years many new religious groups have arisen in Uganda. One of these, the Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments, gained notoriety in 2000 when many of its members committed mass suicide. (See also **Colonialism in Africa; Kagwa, Apolo; Tribalism; Wildlife and Game Parks; Women in Africa.**)

Umar ibn Sa'id Tal

ca. 1794–1864

Muslim leader in West Africa

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **theology** study of religious faith

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place



Muslim cleric, or religious leader, Umar ibn Sa'id Tal played an important role in spreading Islam* across a broad area of West Africa. Through his writing, military achievements, and his role in the religious brotherhood of the Tijaniyya, he remains a prominent figure for Muslims in West Africa.

Born in the valley of the Senegal River, Umar was the son of a local cleric and teacher in a Muslim society dominated by the FULANI people. A gifted student, Umar trained as a Muslim cleric, studying Islamic law, theology*, and literature. He was also initiated into the Tijaniyya.

Between 1828 and 1830 Umar made three pilgrimages* to the holy cities of Mecca and Medina in Arabia, earning the honorary title al-Hajj ("the pilgrim"). Soon after, he began spreading the Tijaniyya brotherhood in West Africa. Umar spent time in many of the Muslim centers of West Africa and by the 1840s he had developed a very loyal group of followers. During this period he also wrote his major work, *Al-Rimah*, which remains an important resource for the Tijaniyya today.



Umar ibn Sa'íd Tal

Between 1852 and his death in 1864, Umar led his followers and other Muslims in a jihad, or holy war, against non-Muslim kingdoms in the upper Senegal and Niger River valleys. In 1862 he conquered the Fulani state of Segu on the NIGER RIVER. However, the inhabitants of Segu soon joined forces with a powerful leader in TIMBUKTU. Umar's army was defeated by the armies of Timbuktu and its allies, and Umar was killed. (See also **Islam in Africa**.)

Unions and Trade Associations

Informal worker's unions and trade associations first appeared in Africa during the 1890s. However, organized union activity did not get underway until after World War I in the British colonies and after World War II in French colonies. Few unions arose in Portuguese territories such as ANGOLA and MOZAMBIQUE. In SOUTH AFRICA, years of rule by racist white governments led to unions for each race.

Development of Unions. In English-speaking Africa, white-collar professionals organized separately from unskilled or semiskilled blue-collar workers. The issue of wages was important for both groups, but blue-collar workers had much greater need to protect their incomes and jobs. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, many people lost their jobs, producing a surplus of available workers. This drove down wages for those who did find jobs.

As the situation worsened in the late 1930s, colonial authorities worried that unhappy workers would blame their troubles on the government and give their support to nationalist* politicians seeking to end colonial rule. To appeal to workers, Britain decided to allow unions in its African colonies to register with the government. This made the unions legally recognized organizations. However, ties between unions and INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS remained strong. Many early African political leaders emerged from the union movement.

In many North African nations, the union movement was linked to nationalist efforts as well. In the late 1940s in TUNISIA, the General Union of Tunisian Workers, led by Ferhat Hached, worked closely with nationalist politicians. Because of his association with the independence movement, Hached was later assassinated by the Red Hand, a French organization opposed to independence. In 1955 a nationalist party in MOROCCO helped form the Union Marocaine du Travail (UMT), which is now one of the nation's largest unions. Today the UMT is no longer affiliated with any political party, although it works to maintain good relations with the government.

In most colonies unions were made up of people of different races and ethnic backgrounds. However, this was not the case in South Africa, where two separate union movements developed—one for whites and one for blacks. In 1919 an African named Clement KADALIE founded the most important black union in South Africa, the Industrial and Commercial Worker's Union. Around the same time, South African socialists* and communists* organized white workers into unions. One

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **socialist** relating to an economic or political system based on the idea that the government or groups of workers should own and run the means of production and distribution

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, goods, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals



United Nations in Africa

such union had the slogan, “Workers of the World Unite for a White South Africa.” The division between white and black union movements became even wider in 1922, when several white unions violently forced the government to agree to protect their members from black competition. In the late 1900s black unions grew more powerful, ultimately playing a major role in ending South Africa’s apartheid* regime.

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country’s blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Post-Independence Africa. Since gaining independence in the mid-1900s, only a few African nations have produced strong union movements. In Morocco and Tunisia union members have struggled for democracy and human rights as well as for better wages, occasionally suffering imprisonment and violence from government authorities. In South Africa unions which are allied with the African National Congress (ANC), have become more active since the ANC took power in 1994. In NIGERIA, oil workers struck in 1994 to protest election results. Some scholars suggest that countries such as these have strong and active unions because these nations are more involved in the world economy than many poorer African states. To help increase union activity and effectiveness throughout the continent, an association called *the Organisation de L’Unité Africaine* (OATUU) works to coordinate the action of African unions. Based in GHANA, its members include about 50 different national unions. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Economic History**.)

United Nations in Africa

* **humanitarian** referring to a concern for human welfare

Created after World War II, the United Nations (UN) is an international organization that promotes peace and security among member states and cooperation on economic, social, cultural, and humanitarian* issues. When the UN was founded in 1945, only four African countries were independent states and members of the organization: EGYPT, ETHIOPIA, LIBERIA, and SOUTH AFRICA. By 2000 more than 50 African countries had joined the United Nations.

As members of the United Nations, African states have a voice in international affairs, debating issues affecting member states and providing support for various UN programs. African nations have perhaps their most important role in the General Assembly, the branch of the United Nations consisting of all member states. The General Assembly discusses and makes recommendations on issues under consideration by the organization.

Role in Africa. The United Nations has a significant impact on African countries through its policies and the activities of its agencies. In its role in promoting world peace and security, the UN has been active in many of Africa’s trouble spots. It has intervened or acted as a negotiator in numerous wars resulting from the struggle for independence and in internal conflicts. In 2000 it had three major peacekeeping operations in Africa: in CONGO (KINSHASA), SIERRA LEONE, and WESTERN SAHARA.

The United Nations is also involved in economic development activities in Africa—the least developed region in the world. Economic devel-



United Nations in Africa

opment involves increasing the efficiency and productivity of a country's economy and improving the living conditions of its people. Nearly all UN development agencies play an active role on the continent. A special agency, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), was created in 1958 to assist African states in their efforts to improve and expand their economies.

UN Agencies. UN agencies provide a variety of different services in Africa, from food and economic assistance to education and financial advice. The ECA works to promote economic cooperation among African nations, raise the level of economic activity in each country, and increase the standard of living of African peoples. Each of the agency's divisions focuses on particular issues, such as agriculture, industry, trade, natural resources, transportation, and communications. The ECA has also played a key role in bringing the plight of African countries to international attention.

Created in 1965, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) works to help UN member nations around the world with their development efforts. The agency is the largest source of technical support for developing countries worldwide. Assistance usually consists of providing experts, equipment, and training. One of the agency's programs, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, focuses on small-scale development projects such as building irrigation systems, roads, and housing in poor communities.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), established in 1951, assists REFUGEES displaced as a result of war, social unrest, or persecution. The agency offers protection for refugees, ensuring that they are treated according to international guidelines. It also provides refugees with emergency food, shelter, medical care, education, and counseling, as well as assistance with resettlement in their homelands or in other countries. UNHCR was particularly active in Africa in the 1990s, when millions of refugees were forced to leave their homes in SOMALIA, ERITREA, RWANDA, and other countries because of famine, ethnic violence, and internal strife.

Established in 1945, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is dedicated to raising levels of nutrition and standards of living by improving the production and distribution of food and other agricultural goods. In Africa the FAO has worked to change agricultural policies, conserve the environment, and develop institutions and infrastructure* to support increased production. The agency provides both technical assistance—such as distributing seed samples and fighting soil erosion—and training.

The World Bank, also known as the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, is a specialized UN financial agency. In the 1990s it was Africa's largest source of loans. The bank also provides research grants and technical advice and training related to its loan projects.

Other UN agencies that play an active role in Africa include the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works



Van Riebeeck, Jan

Population Fund (UNPF), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). (See also **Annan, Kofi**; **Development, Economic and Social**; **Global Politics and Africa**; **Human Rights**.)

UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

See *Education*.

Uthman dan Fodio

1754–1817
Founder of the Sokoto Caliphate

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teaching of the prophet Muhammad

* **caliphate** state in the Muslim empire

Uthman dan Fodio was an Islamic* scholar and preacher who founded the Sokoto caliphate* in what is now northern NIGERIA. In the 1800s Sokoto became one of the largest independent states in Africa.

Born in the town of Gobir, Uthman belonged to a family of Islamic scholars. He grew up speaking Fulfulde, the language of the FULANI people, but he was educated in Arabic. At the age of 20 Uthman began preaching Islam in rural areas, later moving to the court of the sultan of Gobir. Unlike many preachers at the time, he used simple language to teach the basics of Islam to herders, farmers, and women.

By the time he was 50, Uthman had become so popular that the rulers of Gobir feared his influence. Threatened with attack, he fled Gobir for the town of Gudu where he was elected imam, or spiritual leader. He announced a jihad, or holy war, against various Muslim states that did not recognize his leadership. Over the next several years his supporters fought their way across Hausaland in northern Nigeria. By 1808 the last HAUSA city had fallen and an area of more than 200,000 square miles had been united under Uthman's leadership. Four years later Uthman divided the empire between his son, Muhammad Bello, and his brother, Abdullah dan Fodio.

In addition to his political and spiritual leadership, Uthman wrote over 100 Arabic works and some 50 poems, mostly in Fulfulde. He had 37 children, many of whom became religious leaders and scholars. His daughter Nana ASMA'U was a noted poet and a pioneer in educating women. (See also **Islam in Africa**.)

Van Riebeeck, Jan

1619–1677
Dutch colonial administrator

Jan Van Riebeeck was a Dutch merchant who founded Cape Colony, the first European settlement in what would later become SOUTH AFRICA. Born in the Netherlands, Van Riebeeck began traveling at an early age with his father, who worked for the Dutch East India Company. In time he, too, worked for the company, and he became wealthy through his trading activities in Asia. However, the company discovered that he was trading on his own, and banished him from Asia.

As punishment Van Riebeeck was sent to lead an expedition to the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa in 1652. The plan was to create a supply station for Dutch ships headed for Asia. However, Van



Van Riebeeck, Jan

Riebeeck decided to build a fort to protect his people from both the Africans and from other Europeans.

Eventually Van Riebeeck decided to found a colony, establishing a settlement that later became CAPE TOWN. He imported slave labor to work the land and began to buy cattle from the local KHOISAN people. After a time he had bought all the cattle from nearby groups and had to trade with others much farther away to obtain new animals. The settlers eventually owned so many cattle that they had to seize land from the Khoisan to graze their herds.

The land seizures led to war in 1659, but the settlers retreated to their fort and held out against the Khoisan. Afterwards, Van Riebeeck ordered thorn bushes to be set up on the borders of the colony to keep out the indigenous* population. This was the beginning of racial separation in the colony that would lead in time to the South African policy of apartheid* in the 1900s. Although Van Riebeeck continued to trade with the Khoisan, he would have preferred to conquer them. However, his superiors in Holland would not allow him to pursue such a policy.

Van Riebeeck led the settlement until 1662, when he was named governor of Malacca, in what is now Malaysia. Three years later he retired to the Dutch colony of Batavia (modern-day Indonesia) where he died a wealthy man. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Southern Africa, History of.*)

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

VEGETATION

See *Climate; Ecosystems; Plants: Varieties and Uses.*

Verwoerd, Hendrik Frensch

1901–1966
South African politician

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry

Hendrik Verwoerd created South Africa's policy of racial segregation known as apartheid*. As prime minister in the early 1960s, he followed racist policies that deepened the divide between whites and blacks.

Born in the Netherlands, Verwoerd moved with his family to SOUTH AFRICA when he was two years old. His father, a grocer, was a missionary for the Dutch Reformed Church. After completing high school, Verwoerd went to Germany to study at universities in Hamburg, Leipzig, and Berlin.

Returning to South Africa in 1927, Verwoerd became a professor of psychology at the University of Stellenbosch. Later he held professorships in sociology and social work. He and others at the university opposed South Africa's plan to take in Jewish refugees from Nazi Germany. In 1937 Verwoerd became editor of the Afrikaans-language newspaper *Die Transvaaler*, which he used to express his anti-British, anti-Jewish, and pro-Nazi views.

Verwoerd joined the racist National Party and, in 1948, became a member of the Senate. He was the party's leader in the Senate for eight years and served as minister of "native affairs." During this time he devised the policy of apartheid, calling for total segregation of all races



Vodun

in the country and restricting the black population to reservations known as Bantustans. In 1958 Verwoerd became prime minister.

Apartheid increased tensions between blacks and whites, which led to various organized protests. In 1960 police fired on 5,000 peaceful protesters in Sharpeville, a black township south of JOHANNESBURG, killing 69 and wounding over 300. Shortly afterward a white farmer tried to assassinate Verwoerd at an agricultural show in Johannesburg. Verwoerd was wounded, but survived and made a full recovery.

During a 1961 conference of prime ministers of the British Commonwealth, Verwoerd pressed Britain to recognize South Africa as a fully independent republic. Although he was turned down at the time, two months later the Republic of South Africa was created. Over the next few years apartheid increasingly isolated the country from the rest of the world, but Verwoerd refused to modify the policy. In 1966 he was stabbed to death by a white man who entered the parliament disguised as a messenger. (*See also Apartheid.*)

Vodun

* **deity** god or goddess

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

* **diviner** person who predicts the future or explains the causes of misfortune

* **cult** group bound together by devotion to a particular person, belief, or god

* **ritual** religious ceremony that follows a set pattern

Vodun is a traditional religious practice of southern BÉNIN. Also known as Orisha to the YORUBA people of the region, Vodun was brought to the Americas by slaves. There, especially in Haiti, it developed into a form called voodoo.

People who practice Vodun believe that their ancestors entered into agreements with several deities* called the Vodun, which represent forces of nature. The ancestors promised the Vodun that people would offer them food and service and would obey certain taboos*. Followers claim that misfortunes—such as natural disasters, illness, or the death of a child—occur when someone breaks the contract that the ancestors made with a particular Vodun. When trouble arises, a diviner* identifies the exact cause of the problem. Then the offending person may soothe the angry Vodun by giving offerings and performing ceremonies.

Cults and Rituals. Among the many people who practice Vodun, only a few are members of cults* dedicated to its deities. Male priests lead these cults, often inheriting their positions from their fathers. The cults' many female members are expected to obey the priests without question. However, women play a prominent role in public ceremonies, where some called *vodunsi*—said to be the Vodun's "slaves" or "wives"—perform dances and rituals*. Sometimes these women enter a trance, in which a Vodun is believed to inhabit their bodies. The practice of such Vodun rituals is usually considered more important than the underlying beliefs.

Perhaps the most important role of Vodun is as a social and political force. Through rituals such as divination and INITIATION RITES that last for several years, Vodun priests exercise great authority over their followers and others in the community. In many cases they compete with other social and political institutions for local control. From 1975 through the 1980s, the government of Bénin banned Vodun, believing that its powerful influence might lead people to oppose the revolutionary policies



Vodun

the government wanted to promote. When a new government was established in 1991, authorities encouraged a massive revival of Vodun, hoping to gain favor with the rural population.

Vodun Today. In the cities Vodun has lost some of its power to explain misfortune. The idea of age-old contracts between village elders and gods of nature seems unconvincing in an urban setting where events appear to depend largely upon human actions. City dwellers frequently blame their troubles not on the Vodun but on WITCHCRAFT, actions by human witches or sorcerers* that can be fought through magic. Diviners who once claimed that troubles were caused by the Vodun now explain them as the result of witchcraft or a combination of Vodun and witchcraft.

* **sorcerer** magician or wizard

Not everyone in Bénin practices Vodun. Nonetheless, most people believe that the Vodun deities exist and many people who are not members of a Vodun cult turn to the practice in times of stress. Only Bénin's Islamic* groups and a few Protestant Christian groups, including the Methodists and the Jehovah's Witnesses, do not share the belief in a universe of Vodun. Both followers and opponents have criticized Vodun for allowing occasional corruption or excessive control by priests and for charging extremely high fees to perform initiation rites. Many people also feel threatened by the secrecy that surrounds Vodun practices. (See also **Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession.**)

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

Warfare

Warfare has played a role in almost every society in human history. As societies grow larger and more complex, the nature of conflict and the motivation behind it tend to change. In Africa, where warfare once consisted of quick raids made by small bands of people, these changes are evident. Modern African nations have permanent professional armies backed by powerful weapons, and conflicts between different ethnic or political groups and between countries have developed into long-term fighting on many parts of the continent.

THE NATURE OF WARFARE

Some scholars who study warfare place conflicts in one of two main categories: proto-war and war. The distinction lies in the type of society involved, the reasons for conflict, and the weapons used.

Proto-War. Proto-war often involves small societies without a hierarchical* structure, such as small groups that function with little or no central authority. In HUNTING AND GATHERING bands, for example, no single person commands the group at all times. Instead, informal or temporary leaders assume authority in certain situations. Other groups have leaders such as chiefs or elders, whose role may be more permanent, but the power relationships between leaders in the group are less defined than those among officials in modern states.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher or lower levels



Warfare

In Africa, nonhierarchical groups usually wage war by creating kin militia. The members of the militia are related by descent or marriage and may all be about the same age. Usually consisting of no more than 30 soldiers, kin militias are organized on a temporary basis from people who have other roles in society. They use simple weapons, from farming tools to small firearms, and lack the command structures and supply lines of modern armies.

* **casualty** person killed or injured in an accident or military action

Small and temporary, with few arms or supplies, kin militias generally suffer few casualties* in their conflicts. Campaigns last a few days or weeks at most, and the losers often leave the area. The victors rarely have the ability to pursue their enemies or impose their will on the defeated group. Militia members then return to their normal lives.

Proto-wars often stem from personal grievances and disputes over property. Conflict may arise, for example, if one group takes livestock or kidnaps women from another. Because both animals and women have important roles in the economy, their loss poses a threat to the community. Each group must define how severe such losses are and how much violence it should use to deal with the situation.


War. As states grow more complex, leadership becomes centralized and the powers of rulers are more clearly defined. Before the modern era African states such as chiefdoms featured strong rulers supported by lower officials with limited authority. Although more structured than that of a band or tribe, the leadership of these pre-modern states lacked the complex organization typical of the government of a modern state.

The size and power of modern governments allow them to control the resources produced by their people. These resources can be used to support a professional army, created for the sole purpose of making war. Such armies have many members, specialized roles for different soldiers, and weapons designed specifically for war.

Full-scale military campaigns between armies can last for years and result in thousands or even millions of casualties. The winning state gains power over the one that loses, and the outcome of war can lead to long-term changes in power relations between the warring societies. Such conflicts are classified as war.

In African states before colonial times, personal disputes often caused conflicts. But the states also went to war to gain control of sources of income such as property, money, food, or labor, and the losers were forced to give these up to the victors.

In modern African states, wars are often fought to determine who will be part of the ruling class. Most ordinary Africans live in poverty, but state officials enjoy comfortable lives. As a result, members of the ruling class struggle to stay within it, while challengers strive to enter it. In some cases, officials who have fallen out of power have organized movements and armies in the name of national liberation. These movements sometimes disguise the personal ambitions of their leaders. To attract supporters they frequently make use of existing ethnic rivalries or invent new ones.



Morals or Money?

Around 1800 in the area that is now Chad, a personal dispute between two rulers led to full-scale war. Sabun, the ruler of Wadai, charged that the king of Bagirmi had married his own sister. Sabun proclaimed that this incest was a moral outrage that demanded punishment. Wadaian forces invaded and conquered Bagirmi, giving Wadai access to riches and revenue once controlled by Bagirmi. The centralized power of the Wadaian state allowed it to mobilize a real army, and the conflict permanently affected power relations between Wadai and Bagirmi.

Warfare

Children fought on both sides of the civil war in Angola. Former UNITA rebel leader General Zacarias Mandombe thanks one of these child soldiers for his efforts.



SOURCES OF CONFLICT IN MODERN AFRICA

Since African nations gained their independence, they have fought most of their wars over three main issues: the struggle for internal control, disputes over borders, and rivalries for dominance of a region.

Internal Power Struggles. Once they overthrew European colonial rulers, most African nations went through periods of conflict as different groups sought to control power and define the nature of the state. In many cases African groups that had been allies during the struggle for independence turned against each other. They had set their ethnic and political differences aside during the fight for freedom, but these tensions resurfaced after the foreign rulers left.

NIGERIA and ANGOLA provide examples of conflicts caused by ethnic and political differences. In the Biafran War in Nigeria (1967–1970), the IGBO people tried to secede* from the nation because the government and economy were dominated by the HAUSA, YORUBA, and FULANI ethnic groups. This war represented a common situation in postcolonial Africa, as the Nigerian federal government was uncertain what role the nation's different regions should play on the national level. Political differences played the major role in the civil war in Angola that began in 1975. When Portuguese rule collapsed, two rival rebel groups fought for control over the state: the MPLA, backed by the

* **secede** to withdraw formally from an organization or country



Warfare

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

Soviet Union* and Cuba, and UNITA, supported by South Africa and the United States.

Border Disputes. At independence African nations generally agreed to accept the boundaries drawn during the colonial era, but some lines had never been well defined. MOROCCO and ALGERIA fought a war over their border in 1963. They did not draw up a preliminary agreement until 1972 and did not sign the agreement until 1989.

ETHIOPIA has had several disputes concerning boundary lines with neighbors. It fought with SOMALIA over borders in 1964 and again in both 1977 and 1988, winning the third conflict. But the tables turned for Ethiopia in 1993, when ERITREA won its fight to secede from the nation and form an independent state.

Regional Rivalries. A number of wars have erupted in Africa because of rivalries between nations in a region. In the 1970s and 1980s, for instance, LIBYA engaged in a series of conflicts with NIGER, TUNISIA, CHAD, and SUDAN as part of an effort to dominate Arab states in the Sahara region. More recently, several African nations have sent troops and arms to fight on both sides of the civil war in CONGO (KINSHASA).

Nations in Southern Africa have also competed for regional power. The civil war in Angola served as a major site of this competition during the 1970s and 1980s. The white government of SOUTH AFRICA intervened on the side of Angola's UNITA forces, while the black leaders of ZAMBIA, ZIMBABWE, BOTSWANA, TANZANIA, and MOZAMBIQUE supported the nation's MPLA. This conflict, like others during the Cold War*, also attracted outside powers such as the United States and the Soviet Union, which hoped to gain global advantages from local fighting.

* **Cold War** period of tense relations between the United States and the Soviet Union following World War II

Controlling Conflicts. Few of the wars fought in the years since African nations gained independence have had a permanent impact. In most cases the conflicts have ended in stalemates and ceasefires. These agreements have often depended on the diplomatic efforts of others.

The charter of the ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (OAU) called for a commission to settle disputes between African nations, but the commission never formed. Instead, many conflicts have been settled through the personal efforts of African leaders. Foreign powers such as the United States and former colonial nations such as France have also helped resolve disputes. Global organizations, including the UNITED NATIONS and the International Court of Justice, have played a peacekeeping role as well. However, many of these efforts have been poorly handled or taken on mainly to serve the interests of the mediators.

In the 1990s African states have borne more of the burden of peacekeeping, with both negotiations and armed forces. Neighboring countries have sometimes acted collectively to deal with conflicts that affect their region. This trend seems likely to continue in the coming years. (See also **Boundaries in Africa, Colonialism in Africa, Global Politics and Africa, Government and Political Systems, Independence Movements, Refugees.**)



West African Trading Settlements

West African Trading Settlements

Europeans began setting up trading posts on the coast of western Africa in the mid-1400s. The result was a string of European settlements from present day SENEGAL to the coast of modern NIGERIA. Centuries later these trading posts became the bases for European colonial claims in western Africa.

European traders referred to sections of the coast by the main goods traded there: grain, ivory, gold, and slaves. The Grain Coast (in modern LIBERIA) and the Ivory Coast (in the country of the same name) had relatively few trading posts. The greatest number of settlements appeared on the Gold Coast (now part of GHANA).

The Portuguese, the first Europeans to visit the western coast of Africa, established trading posts on the CAPE VERDE Islands in the 1460s and began building forts on the Gold Coast in 1482. For more than a century they were the only Europeans in the region. After 1621 however, a Dutch trading firm called the West India Company captured some of Portugal's African bases. Similar trading companies formed in England, France, and Denmark and became active on the African coast. In addition, the German realm of Brandenburg-Prussia founded several trading settlements that were operated by Dutch merchants.

The trading companies and the nations they represented tended to concentrate on particular regions. The French established their influence in Senegambia, the region around the Senegal and Gambia rivers. The English gained the dominant position in SIERRA LEONE. By 1700 the Gold Coast was crowded with 23 forts and some smaller trading posts, mostly built by the English, Dutch, Danish, and Brandenburgers. As the demand for slaves in the Americas grew, European interest shifted eastward to the Slave Coast, the area that is now BÉNIN and NIGERIA. The English, French, Portuguese, and Dutch were active there, and the first three erected permanent forts. All along the coast, however, much commerce took place outside the settlements as African traders dealt directly with European ships or even individual Europeans who were not attached to trading companies.

European trading settlements ranged from mud-and-thatch buildings staffed by one or two people to great stone forts that housed 80 Europeans and an even larger number of African servants. Towns grew up around some of the major trading settlements—for example, Elmina developed around the Portuguese fort of São Jorge da Mina on the Gold Coast. Europeans in the settlements frequently formed relationships with African women. By the 1700s their Creole* descendants had created powerful families that played an increasingly important role in local trade and politics.

Europeans had no political control over their African neighbors, though they sometimes formed alliances with one party in a local dispute. The Europeans also had little influence on local religious practice. The efforts of Western missionaries in Africa did not really get underway until the 1800s.

Some European settlements were fortified and armed to protect against attack by rival Europeans. Maintaining such forts became too expensive for the companies, however, and after the mid-1700s the

* **Creole** person of mixed European and African ancestry



Western Sahara

* **imperialist** relating to the political, economic, and cultural domination of one country or region by another

European governments took responsibility for them. After the Atlantic SLAVE TRADE ended in the 1800s, the trading settlements lost their original purpose. Instead, they became the starting points for imperialist* expansion as the European nations carved out colonial claims in Africa. (See also **Colonialism in Africa, Ivory Trade, Trade, Travel and Exploration.**)

Western Sahara

Western Sahara is a former colony on the northwestern coast of Africa whose status remains unresolved. Once an overseas province of Spain, it was called Spanish Sahara until 1976. Since that time, Western Sahara has been the subject of competing claims by various African nations. Furthermore, Polisario, a political party in Western Sahara, wants to make the region an independent state.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Land and People. With an area of about 102,000 square miles, Western Sahara borders the Atlantic Ocean, MOROCCO, ALGERIA, and MAURITANIA. Located in the SAHARA DESERT, it is barren and dry, with an average yearly rainfall of less than two inches. Western Sahara has two main areas: Río de Oro in the south and Saguia el Hamra in the north.

* **nomadic** relating to people who travel from place to place to find food and pasture

The indigenous* people of Western Sahara are the Sahrawi—a mixture of BERBERS, who have lived in the region for about 2,000 years, and Arabs, who migrated there in the 1200s. Traditionally the Sahrawi were nomadic* herders and traders but during the colonial era they established some permanent settlements. El Aaiún, near the coast, was the colonial capital and is still the major town. Smara, located inland at an oasis, contains historic Muslim monuments.

History and Government. In the past the region that is now Western Sahara has been linked to various Muslim states that rose and fell in Morocco. However, it was never formally part of Morocco. In 1884 Spain claimed the region. The Spanish planned to use it as a base for further colonization in North Africa, but were prevented from expanding by the French in Mauritania.



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

In the 1930s an independence movement emerged in Morocco, and its supporters viewed Spanish Sahara as part of Morocco. After Morocco became independent in 1956, it claimed Spanish Sahara and sent troops to occupy the region. Spanish forces drove the Moroccans back. In the 1960s Mauritania also claimed Spanish Sahara, and valuable deposits of phosphates—minerals used in making fertilizer—were discovered in the region.

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Competition over Spanish Sahara increased in the early 1970s, when Sahrawi seeking self-government formed Polisario (Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Río de Oro). In an effort to curb Morocco's power and influence in the region, Algeria supported Polisario. Outbreaks of guerrilla* fighting by Polisario members led Spain to withdraw its claim to the colony in 1976. After the departure of the Spanish forces, Mauritania and Morocco divided Western Sahara. However, Polisario began attacking the outposts of the two powers.

Western Sahara



Western Sahara

POPULATION:
244,943 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
97,000 sq. mi. (252,000 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
Arabic (official); Berber dialects

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Moroccan dirham

PRINCIPAL RELIGION:
Muslim

CITIES:
El-Aaiún (Laayoune), Cabo Bojador, Bu Craa, Smara (Semara), Ad Dakhla

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Less than 2 in. (50 mm)

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: N/A

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: fish
Manufacturing: handicrafts
Mining: phosphates

GOVERNMENT:
Claimed and administered by Morocco since 1979, but independence movements and guerrilla warfare have left the sovereignty of the land unresolved. The UN administered a cease fire in 1991, and the government remains in transition.

EDUCATION:
N/A

In 1979 Mauritania made a peace agreement with Polisario and left the territory, but Morocco has continued to claim Western Sahara and to mine its phosphates. The UNITED NATIONS has proposed holding an election in which the Sahrawi could decide whether to join Morocco or to establish an independent state. However, plans for the election have been delayed several times. During the late 1980s and 1990s, relations between Morocco and Algeria improved, and Algeria's support of Polisario declined. At the same time Morocco established tens of thousands of settlers in Western Sahara. (See also **Independence Movements, Minerals and Mining, North Africa: Geography and Population, North Africa: History and Cultures.**)

Wildlife and Game Parks

Elephants passing in slow, stately groups, lions lazing under a tree in the noonday heat, shaggy mountain gorillas feeding in a clearing in the rain forest—these images instantly suggest Africa, which is famous around the world for the amount and variety of its wildlife. Yet the rapid growth of Africa's human population, accompanied by the use of ever more land for farming and other human activities, threatens many individual species and the future of Africa's wildlife in general.

African nations are working to protect their natural heritage by developing wildlife management plans and by setting land aside as national parks and game preserves. The most successful conservation efforts will probably be those that recognize the needs and desires of the African people as well as the need to protect animals.

African Mammals. Africa is home to an astonishing variety of mammals. The continent's herbivores, or plant-eating animals, range from elephants, rhinoceroses, and hippopotamuses to hoofed mammals, such as the giraffe and the African buffalo. Vast herds of grazing

Wildlife and Game Parks

* **savanna** tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

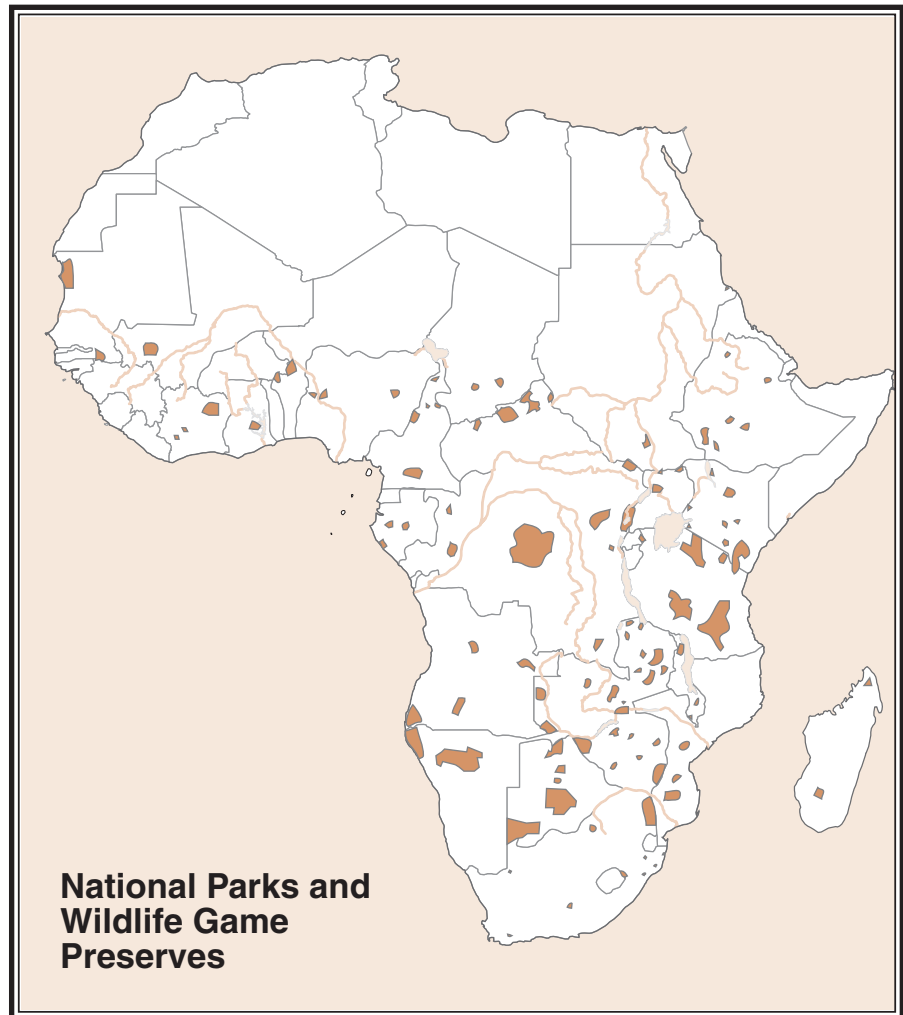
* **species** narrowest classification of organisms; subgroup of genus

animals, such as zebras and wildebeests, roam the open plains and savannas*. Africa's many varieties of antelope include the hartebeest, gnu or wildebeest, dik-dik, gazelle, impala, springbok, oryx, reedbuck, and eland, the largest antelope.

More than 60 species* of carnivores, or flesh-eating mammals, prey on the herbivores and sometimes on smaller and weaker carnivores. In addition to hunting live animals, the carnivores devour carcasses. Africa is home to three kinds of large cats—lions, leopards, and cheetahs—and smaller felines such as the serval and wildcat. Wild dogs, jackals, foxes, hyenas, civets, and weasels are also predators.

Forty-five species of monkeys and two species of great apes, the chimpanzee and the gorilla, live in Africa. The continent also has many species of lemurs, small animals that belong to the primate family, like monkeys and apes. Most lemurs live in trees and are nocturnal, or active at night, although a few are active by day. The island of MADAGASCAR has the largest variety of lemurs in the world.

Some of the mammals that live in Africa are found nowhere else in the world. These include giraffes, hippopotamuses, jumping hares, and the long-snouted, insect-eating tenrecs of Madagascar. Another animal





Wildlife and Game Parks

Living with Elephants

Wild animals from parks sometimes interfere with the lives of people living nearby. Elephants, for example, wander out of parks and eat the corn and bananas of neighboring farms, leading angry farmers to shoot the beasts. Dr. Ferrel Loki Osborn, an elephant researcher who has worked in northern Zimbabwe, has discovered that hot chili peppers painlessly repel elephants. He shows farmers how to plant peppers and to use fences of twine rubbed with pepper extract to keep elephants out of their crops. Such simple methods, using easy-to-acquire ingredients, may help people and animals live together peacefully.

unique to Africa is the armadillo, a large nocturnal animal with a piglike body, long tail, rabbitlike ears, and a long snout. The armadillo rips open termite nests with its sharp claws, then uses its sticky almost one-foot-long tongue to lap up the insects inside.

Bird, Reptile, and Marine Life. Nearly 2,000 species of birds spend at least part of each year in Africa. In addition to varieties of hawks, eagles, owls, larks, kingfishers, and other birds found elsewhere in the world, several bird species are native only to Africa. These include the ostrich, Africa's largest bird; the hammerkop, which resembles a heron; and touracos, birds with brightly colored feathers. Several species of small, drab birds are called honey guides because people follow them to honeybee nests.

A great many reptiles and amphibians creep, slither, or hop along Africa's varied terrain. Reptiles include lizards, tortoises, crocodiles, and many types of snakes. Some snakes, such as the mamba and the Egyptian cobra, are venomous enough to be dangerous to humans. Boa constrictors and iguanas live only on Madagascar. Among Africa's amphibians are various salamanders and frogs, including the bizarre hairy frog of CAMEROON.

Of the almost countless species of insects in Africa, several are regarded as pests. Locusts devour crops and other vegetation; mosquitoes carry malaria; and tsetse flies carry trypanosomiasis, or sleeping sickness, a disease that harms both humans and livestock. Other African insects include various species of large butterflies, dung beetles, stick insects that resemble twigs or leaves, driver or safari ants that travel in huge columns, and termites that cooperate to build tall earthen mounds. Spiders are plentiful everywhere.

A wide variety of marine life exists off the coasts of Africa, and the continent has more kinds of freshwater fish than any other—about 2,000 species. Some freshwater creatures are ancient varieties that have changed little over millions of years, such as lungfish, lobefins, and reedfish, which can breathe air. Certain types of African catfish not only breathe air but also move across land during rainy weather. Lake Nyasa alone has about 160 species of fish found nowhere else in the world. The waters of southern and eastern Africa harbor the coelacanth, an ancient form of fish thought to have been extinct for over 60 million years until one was caught in 1938. Other coelacanths have been discovered more recently.

Wildlife Preservation. Wildlife numbers have fallen in Africa since the widespread introduction of firearms in the mid-1800s. At first European hunters and colonists slaughtered large numbers of animals. However the greatest decline has come since the 1940s, due to hunting and habitat* destruction by Africans. Some species have been affected more severely than others. The number of African elephants dropped from about two million in the early 1970s to around 600,000 by 1990, mainly as a result of illegal hunting for their ivory tusks. Rhinoceros and gorilla populations were dramatically reduced and the animals became

* **habitat** place where a plant or animal lives or grows

Wildlife and Game Parks

endangered species. In the 1990s experts named Cameroon, CONGO (KINSHASA), and Madagascar as the countries in which wildlife species are most threatened.

Most African nations have taken steps to protect and preserve wildlife. One problem is that different countries disagree about how best to deal with the situation. Countries in northeastern and eastern Africa, for example, support a total ban on the IVORY TRADE to protect elephants, while those in southern Africa want a regulated ivory trade to continue.

Game Parks. Many African governments have established national parks and wildlife preserves, or game parks, as wilderness areas to be protected from human development. Colonial authorities in the early 1900s created the first parks to provide a safe haven for wildlife, a base for scientific study, and educational and recreational opportunities for both local people and visitors. The oldest of these is SOUTH AFRICA'S Kruger National Park.

Africa's protected areas and parks vary greatly in number, size, and quality from country to country. Eastern and southern Africa are particularly well known for their wildlife parks. Tsavo in KENYA and Serengeti in TANZANIA are among the continent's largest and most famous parks. MALAWI, NAMIBIA, ZAMBIA, and ZIMBABWE also boast impressive preserves. However, few countries in western Africa have significant parks.

In Africa's game parks, visitors can observe a remarkable array of wildlife in natural habitats. Here, tourists in the Masai Mara Game Reserve in Kenya view herds of zebras and wildebeests.





Wildlife and Game Parks

See color
plate 14,
vol. 2.

Several countries of northern Africa, including **SUDAN**, **ALGERIA**, **MOROCCO**, **TUNISIA**, **EGYPT**, and **MAURITANIA**, participated in international talks about preserving wildlife in the 1990s. Since then, they have begun setting aside new protected areas, developing training programs for park managers, and launching efforts to protect certain species, such as endangered seals. Government programs in Morocco have saved the macaco, or Barbary ape, from extinction in the forests of the Middle Atlas mountain range.

Not all of Africa's wildlife parks offer the same level of protection to animals and their habitats. Some governments have completely banned human presence or activity in parks, moving people away from homes that lie within park boundaries. In Tanzania alone, more than 50,000 people have been relocated from parks. Other governments allow people to live in protected areas, but prohibit the use of resources, such as firewood or pasture, inside the parks. Some preserves are designed for multiple use.

In addition to setting aside land, wildlife management in Africa includes efforts to preserve genetic diversity, which means keeping a wide variety of animals in populations large enough to reproduce healthy young. To accomplish this, authorities and park managers work to protect the **ECOSYSTEMS** in which plants and animals flourish. Although many of Africa's parks are in savannas and rain forests, new parks have been designed to protect areas such as mangrove swamps, deserts, and lakes.

Increasingly, governments and conservation experts are trying to balance the interests of animals and humans. They recognize that Africans will be more likely to protect wildlife if they see the economic benefits of preservation. **TOURISM** is one source of benefits. However, while wildlife tourism produces significant income for Africans in a few areas, in most regions much of the profit goes to overseas tour operators. Wildlife managers are seeking ways to share that profit with local Africans. At Amboseli National Park in Kenya, people who traditionally used the parkland have been granted a share of the park's profit. Such systems may help stop illegal hunting and farming on park lands. (*See also Animals, Domestic; Diseases; Fishing; Forests and Forestry.*)

Witbooi, Hendrik

1830–1905
Nama leader

Hendrik Witbooi, chief of the Nama people, was a religious leader who fought against German rule in southern Africa. Trained as a carpenter, he became a deacon, an official of the Christian church.

Witbooi was born in Pella, a region south of the Orange River, between the nations of **NAMIBIA** and **SOUTH AFRICA**. After nearly dying in 1880 in a confrontation with the **HERERO** people, he came to believe he had a divine mission to lead his Christian Nama followers north to a new homeland.

About 600 Nama set off with Witbooi in 1885. He was promised safe passage by the Herero and hoped to unite his people with them against the Germans. But the Herero, led by Samuel **MAHERERO**, attacked the



Witchcraft and Sorcery

* **guerrilla** type of warfare involving sudden raids by small groups of warriors

Nama. Witbooi lost two of his sons, several dozen followers, and most of his property in the battle. Witbooi led the surviving Nama to safety in the nearby mountains. From there he waged a successful guerrilla* war against the Herero, who had signed a treaty with the Germans. The Germans responded to the attack and defeated Witbooi's forces in 1894. For ten years he cooperated with German colonial forces in southwest Africa, but in 1904 he led his people against Germany again. He was mortally wounded in an attack on the Germans in southern Namibia. (See also **Colonialism in Africa**.)

Witchcraft and Sorcery

* **supernatural** related to forces beyond the normal world; magical or miraculous

Many Africans view both misfortune and spectacular success as unnatural and believe that witchcraft or sorcery causes such events. Individuals referred to as witches or sorcerers—and by various local African names—are said to use secret, magical forces to hurt other people, to bring great success to themselves, or to maintain a powerful position in society. Their activities, which are usually considered destructive, are therefore closely related to jealousy, inequality, and the desire for power.

Witches and sorcerers may be either men or women. In some parts of Africa, people distinguish between witches and sorcerers. They believe that witches are born with supernatural* powers and the ability to hurt others merely by wishing them ill. Sorcerers, however, are thought to be people of normal ability who have learned to use magical substances to harm others.

Some people view witchcraft as the dark side of kinship and possibly the result of aggression and envy within a family. In some African societies it is said that witches have an urge to eat their relatives. Many traditional stories tell of witches who leave their bodies at night and fly off to join others of their kind. At these meetings they turn over their kin, whose vital parts are devoured in cannibal banquets.

Witchcraft in the Modern World. A belief in witchcraft and sorcery exists in modern African cities as well as in traditional villages. Western observers once assumed that as modernization and education spread throughout Africa, these ideas would disappear. In the 1970s European priests in CAMEROON declared that there could be no sorcery where there was electricity. Since then, electrification and other modern developments have gained ground, but belief in witchcraft has not declined. Instead, new ideas about sorcery appear all the time, often with elements borrowed from foreign cultures—such as the notions that witches belong to the Mafia or study with European professors of witchcraft. Rumors about the use of hidden forces are common in African politics, sports, churches, schools, and business.

People in new and unfamiliar social settings, such as urban environments where there is strong competition for jobs and money, often fear that the use of witchcraft is growing. Such views are especially common when new forms of wealth appear. Some say that successful Africans who

Witchcraft and Sorcery



Many Africans consult witch doctors and diviners for protection from sorcery. A witch doctor in Zambia has a collection of gourds and other special items to use in his work.

have become rich have done so by using magic to take advantage of others. In some cases the rich are accused of turning their victims into zombies, or living corpses, who are put to work on invisible plantations. Theories of this sort are used to explain the success of the few and the poverty of the many. They have even inspired attacks on newly rich people.



Witchcraft and Sorcery

The views of African governments toward witchcraft beliefs are not always clear. Many governments take sorcery seriously, branding it as a particularly dangerous form of illegal or rebellious activity. Civil servants frequently tell villagers to stop trying to interfere with government projects by using witchcraft. Many educated Africans of the upper classes view sorcery as a real social problem, an obstacle to development and modernization.

At the same time, however, other members of Africa's upper classes, including civil servants and political figures, rely on witchcraft to protect themselves from people who might be jealous of their success. For a high price, wealthy Africans can buy potions, charms, and other witchcraft and sorcery objects.

* **divination** practice that looks into the future, usually by supernatural means

* **diviner** person who predicts the future or explains the causes of misfortune

Protection from Witches. Traditional African defenses against witchcraft include the use of divination* and the services of a witch doctor. Someone who fears becoming the victim of harmful magic may seek the help of a diviner* who calls on special powers to find out what the sorcerer has done. Many Africans say that diviners have “a second pair of eyes”—an extra sense that allows them to “see” witches. The victim may also need a witch doctor to attack or undo the original witchcraft. Respected for their great powers, witch doctors are said to be able to overcome witches and force them to lift their spells. Sometimes called “superwitches,” they are feared as well as respected. In southern Cameroon, witch doctors called *nganga* are thought to gain their powers by sacrificing one of their parents. Because of their supernatural powers, witch doctors and diviners are sometimes accused of doing evil themselves.

Throughout history, anxieties about witchcraft running wild have encouraged a search for new forms of protection. During the colonial period, Africans developed a rich variety of anti-witchcraft tools and procedures, including poison ordeals, in which suspected witches were treated with poison. More recently, Christian movements within Africa have led the struggle against witchcraft. A lively debate is taking place within the Roman Catholic Church, for example, about how far priests can go in fighting witchcraft beliefs. Several African priests and even bishops have gotten into trouble with the church because they tried to follow too closely in the footsteps of witch doctors.

African governments are under growing pressure to take action against sorcery. Ever since colonial times Africans have accused state authorities of protecting witches because laws forbid poison ordeals and the execution of witches by chiefs and witch doctors. Some governments have given in to public demand. During the late 1970s the government of BÉNIN launched a radio campaign against sorcery that developed into a witch hunt. Around the same time, the state courts of Cameroon began convicting people of the crime of witchcraft, mainly on the word of witch doctors.

Direct action by the state has led to the appearance of a new type of witch doctor, one who is often interested in publicity. These witch doctors display their importance by wearing modern fashion items, such as sunglasses, by carrying symbols of Christian and Asian beliefs, and by



Witchcraft and Sorcery

showing off knowledge of medical terms. Above all, they have an aggressive style in finding clients and unmasking witches. Often they approach people with warnings to beware of danger in their surroundings, insisting that “purifications” are needed for protection against sorcery. Such witch doctors or healers play an important role in reinforcing the belief in witchcraft. (*See also Divination and Oracles, Religion and Ritual, Spirit Possession.*)

Wolof

The Wolof, a western African people, live in the nations of SENEGAL and GAMBIA, mainly in villages between the Senegal and Gambia Rivers. The Wolof number about 4 million. Their language, also called Wolof, is widely spoken in Senegal.

According to tradition, individual Wolof villages combined to create an empire with its center in northwest Senegal sometime in the 1200s. After the Portuguese arrived on the African coast in the mid-1400s, the Wolof formed a trading partnership with them. The Wolof empire developed into a powerful slave-trading state that conquered neighboring kingdoms. Its trading network broke down in the mid 1500s, however, when it lost control of a state that provided access to trading centers along the Atlantic coast. By the mid-1800s the Wolof had converted to Islam*, although some traditional practices and beliefs, including witchcraft and magic, remain.

Wolof society is divided into clearly defined classes: royalty, nobility, warriors, several kinds of commoners, craftspeople, and descendants of slaves. Individuals inherit class membership from their parents, and people tend to marry within their own class or choose a person of equal status. The great majority of Wolof are rural farmers, but some also live in cities and towns where they work as merchants, artisans*, and civil servants. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Slave Trade.*)

* **Islam** religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad; religious faith of Muslims

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

Women in Africa

During the second half of the 1900s, the rise of women’s movements around the world brought new attention to the role of women in Africa. Long overlooked by historians and scholars, African women have begun to gain recognition for their contributions to economic and political life as well as to the home and family. Still, African women generally do not receive the same education or employment opportunities as men, and in many cultures they are subordinate* to men.

Role in Food Production. In the past many scholars regarded men as the principal players in African life. When forming theories about human origins, they focused on the importance of meat eating in human development—and meat eating depended on the male activity

* **subordinate** belonging to a lower rank, class, or position



Women in Africa

of hunting. The female activity of gathering plant food was thought to be of minor significance. Recent studies have shown, however, that gathered plant foods make up 60 to 80 percent of the diet of HUNTING AND GATHERING societies such as the !Kung of the KALAHARI DESERT in southwestern Africa and the Mbuti of the central African rain forest. The same was probably true of prehistoric hunting and gathering groups. These studies places the value of the work of female gatherers in a new light.

Few African societies now live by hunting and gathering, but African women play a central role in agriculture, the continent's main economic activity. Between 60 and 80 percent of all agricultural workers are women. Their work, however, has been undercounted and undervalued in official surveys because such surveys rarely include their unpaid labor on family land under the heading of "economic activity."

Social, Economic, and Political Roles. In some traditional African cultures, particularly those organized in patrilineal* and patriarchal* ways, women had less power, status, and independence than men. This inequality deepened during the colonial era. Colonial administrators' views of family and society were based on a male-centered European Christian model. The laws and economic arrangements that they created in their African colonies imitated those models. Men, for example, were almost always regarded as the heads of households. As a cash economy developed in the colonies, men became the primary controllers of cash crops*, jobs, and money.

Because both traditional and colonial systems often favored men, African men usually received an education, became literate*, and enjoyed employment opportunities earlier than African women did. However, women as well as men have taken part in the movement that has swelled the population of Africa's cities and towns. Beginning in the late 1900s, harsh economic conditions for rural women, together with a growing desire for personal independence, led some young women to move from their villages to the cities. Today women outnumber men in all major African cities except LAGOS, NIGERIA, which is a large industrial port.

The opportunities available to women in African cities often depend on their level of education. Women without education find it hard to get jobs that pay wages and often join the informal labor market, performing tasks that require little training. Many of these women are market traders, bargaining for goods and then reselling them in open-air markets. In western Africa in particular, women dominate the market economy. Other urban women work as domestic servants, makers and sellers of beer, and prostitutes. Since the mid-1900s educated African women have enjoyed more professional opportunities in areas such as teaching and nursing.

Women's political roles are also expanding. In some colonies women made key contributions to the independence movements and the wars of national liberation of the 1960s. By the end of the 1900s, women had begun to appear in some high-level government positions. MALI, for

* **patrilineal** referring to a society in which property and political power pass through the male side of the family

* **patriarchal** describing a society in which men hold the dominant positions

* **cash crop** crop grown primarily for sale rather than for local consumption

* **literate** able to read and write



Women in Africa

example, had two women government ministers and a woman ambassador in the 1990s.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **Islamic** relating to Islam, the religion based on the teachings of the prophet Muhammad

* **polygamy** form of marriage in which a man has more than one wife or a woman has more than one husband

Education. Unequal education remains a barrier to the full participation of African women in government and economy. In sub-Saharan* Africa, the problem is one of quality. Boys and girls are often educated separately, and girls' schools are not as good as boys' schools. Three-quarters of women cannot read or write, and only between one-quarter and one-third of all girls attend school, compared with more than half of all boys.

The situation is similar in the Islamic* nations of North Africa. Fewer girls receive an education than boys. Women in these countries live with the fact that Islam is often interpreted in patriarchal ways that limit opportunities and privileges for women. However, more and more North African women are learning to read, especially in freer, more modern countries such as EGYPT and MOROCCO. Some go on to study Islamic and state law, often interpreting religious and civil laws in ways that favor women's rights. In recent years some of Africa's Islamic nations have passed laws improving the status and rights of women, including raising the minimum age for marriage, granting women greater rights in cases of divorce, and limiting polygamy* systems. (*See also Family, Gender Roles and Sexuality, Kinship, Marriage, Queens and Queen Mothers.*)



WORK

See *Labor*.



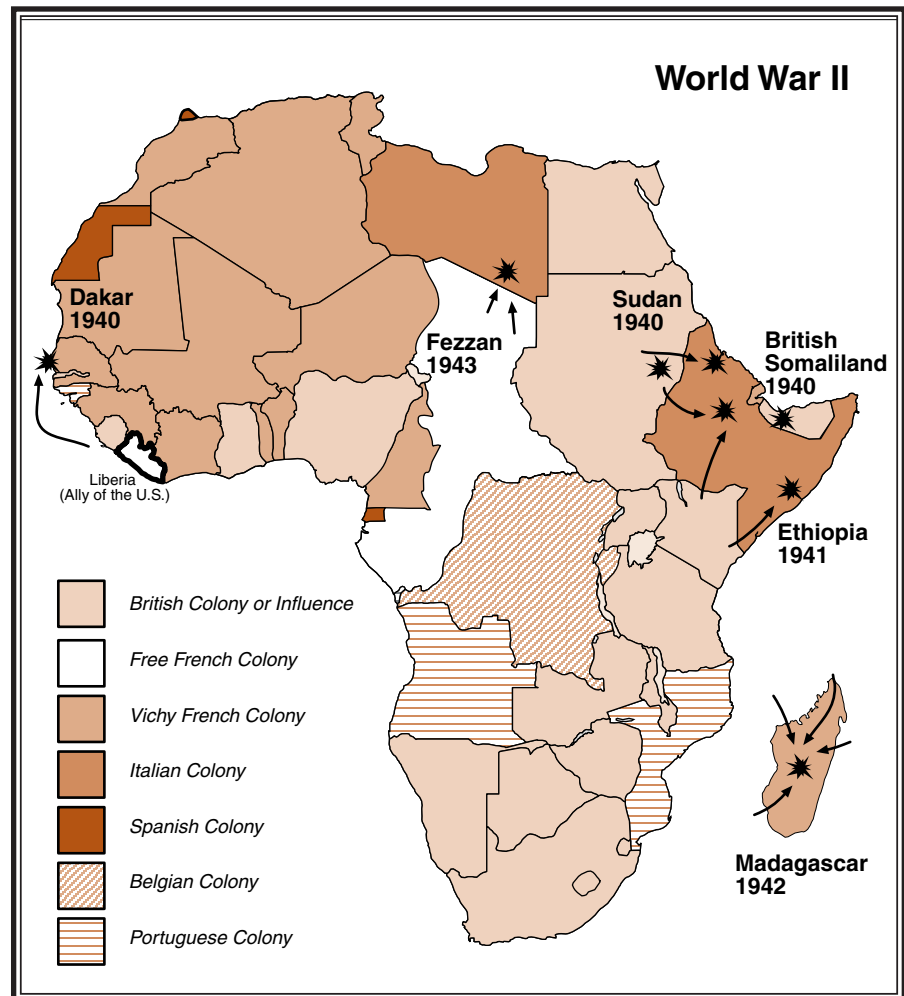
World Wars I and II

Although Africa did not play a significant role in either World War I or World War II, the wars had a major impact on the continent. Africans participated in fighting, and African colonies supplied the European powers with food and raw materials. A number of colonies changed hands as a result of the wars, and the wartime struggles inspired Africans to seek their freedom from European domination.

World War I. From the African perspective, the primary aim of World War I was to oust the Germans from their colonies in Africa. Military campaigns took place in four main areas: the German colonies of Togoland, Kamerun (present-day CAMEROON), German South-West Africa, and German East Africa. Africans became involved in these campaigns on the side of the Germans or the Allies (Britain, France, and Belgium in Africa), depending on which European powers governed them at the time.

Encounters between the Germans and the Allied forces in Africa took place over several years. An English and French invasion of Togoland in 1914 removed the German administration in a matter of weeks. The campaign in South-West Africa in 1914–1915 was also relatively brief

World Wars I and II



and led to the withdrawal of German troops. The British and French effort to remove the Germans from Kamerun took longer, some 15 months between 1914 and 1916. The most important conflict, in German East Africa, lasted from 1914 to 1918. This campaign, which involved large numbers of troops and modern military equipment such as trucks and airplanes, most nearly resembled the war in Europe. In North Africa, Britain and France used their colonies mainly as a base of operations for fighting in Europe, the Middle East, and sub-Saharan* Africa.

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

The immediate impact of World War I on Africans was the transfer of German colonial possessions. France and Britain divided Togoland and Kamerun. Britain and Belgium split German East Africa, while SOUTH AFRICA took control of German South-West Africa. The former German colonies were all placed under League of Nations* mandates, which gave Britain, France, Belgium, and South Africa the right to administer them.

* **League of Nations** organization founded to promote international peace and security; it functioned from 1920 to 1946

During the war Africans participated directly and indirectly as soldiers, supply carriers, agricultural producers, and in many other occupations. Some African troops served in Europe and the Middle East with

World Wars I and II

the British and French. For the most part Europeans had to force Africans to serve. African soldiers and laborers in the war effort had poor training and equipment and received inadequate medical care. An estimated 250,000 Africans were wounded or killed in the war.

Many Europeans feared that the war would change political attitudes in Africa, awakening a desire for independence from colonial rule. While the war did inspire some calls for freedom, the European concern was largely unfounded. Africans achieved unexpected gains in employment in jobs previously limited to whites, such as managers and colonial administrators. For the most part, however, such gains were short-lived and the old colonial order was eventually restored.

Important military action took place in North Africa during World War II. Here British officers lead a line of Indian troops from their camp in Egypt in 1940.

World War II. Most of Africa's involvement in World War II took place in North Africa, the scene of various battles between German and Italian forces and those of the Allies, which included Britain, France,





Writing Systems

and the United States. The region also served as a base of operations for the Allied invasion of Italy and southern Europe.

Sub-Saharan Africa was not a major center of operations in World War II, with two exceptions. In 1940 the Allies attempted to seize the port of DAKAR in SENEGAL. The following year they liberated ETHIOPIA from the Italians and they freed MADAGASCAR from the Vichy government of France. Nonetheless, the significance of the war for the history of Africa was considerable.

The near defeat of Britain, France, and other European nations in the war, combined with the devastating effect on their economies, ended European claims to “great power” status. Instead, two new superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union*—came to dominate world politics. Both of these superpowers were hostile to colonialism. In addition criticism of colonialism surfaced in the newly created UNITED NATIONS.

In Africa, World War II unleashed forces of nationalism* that contributed to the rise of INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS. Wartime demand for African products and raw materials stimulated economic growth and helped bring about social change on the continent. Many Africans who served in the armed forces acquired literacy* and other skills. Returning to their homelands, these troops often faced low wages, inflation*, and other economic problems. Few felt they had been adequately rewarded for their wartime service.

After the war the colonial powers generally tried to regain their authority over Africans, which had been relaxed during the conflict. However, the Europeans faced a changed atmosphere in which large numbers of Africans saw colonial policies as unfair. Many Africans assumed that the end of the war would bring about reforms and greater freedoms. They expected improvements in housing, education, health care, and employment benefits. They also believed that they deserved the same freedom from oppression* that had been the basis of the war against Germany, Italy, and Japan. Such feelings fueled the movements that eventually led to the independence of European colonies throughout the continent. (*See also Colonialism in Africa, Global Politics and Africa, History of Africa, Nationalism, Warfare.*)

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

* **nationalism** devotion to the interests and culture of one’s country

* **literacy** ability to read and write

* **inflation** increase in prices

* **oppression** unjust or cruel exercise of authority

Writing Systems

Although there are thousands of African LANGUAGES, most of the systems used to record them originated outside the continent. A number of factors determined the writing system chosen for each language, including which system seemed to fit the language best and various social and political reasons.

Types of Writing Systems. There are two basic types of writing systems: logographic and phonetic. The symbols in logographic systems represent whole words or morphemes, units of language than cannot be broken down into smaller meaningful parts. An example would be



Writing Systems

“most,” such as in the words “mostly” or “almost.” Phonetic systems are either syllabaries, in which symbols represent whole syllables, or alphabets, in which each symbol represents a single vowel or consonant. Most African languages use phonetic writing systems.

Roman script, the writing system used by English and many other European languages, is the most common script in Africa. It was spread throughout the continent by missionaries and colonial rule. European missionaries prepared the first written forms of many African languages. Later, European nations established colonies all over Africa and held power there for many years. In most places where the Roman script was introduced, it eventually replaced any previous writing systems. In most cases, administrators, educators, and publishers all preferred Roman script, which in turn influenced the general public. Roman script tends to have fewer and less complex symbols than other scripts, which gives it a real advantage over the competition.

In areas of Africa influenced by Arab culture, Arabic script is often used for writing. The SWAHILI language, the official language of TANZANIA, developed after A.D. 700 when Arab traders mixed with East African populations. Many Swahili-speakers use an Arabic script for writing.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Very few indigenous* African writing systems remain in use today. Among the most widely known are alphabets for Somali, WOLOF, Kpelle, Mende, Vai, and Bamum. Most of them developed in the late 1800 and early 1900s. According to their inventors, both the Vai and Bamum scripts were inspired by dreams. The shapes of the characters they use are unrelated to either Roman or Arabic scripts. Wolof uses characters similar to Arabic, but some of the pronunciations are different.

Adapting Foreign Systems to African Needs. When Africans embraced foreign writing systems, they adapted the scripts to fit the specific needs of each different language. They had to make numerous adjustments. Many African languages are tonal, meaning that the words must be pronounced at specific pitches to make sense. However, very few writing systems indicate tone. In addition, a foreign script may contain symbols that represent sounds not used by the African language, or it may lack symbols for certain sounds in the African language.

Some African societies have avoided the problem of such symbolic differences by basing their writing on standardized writing systems. These systems are specifically designed to be able to express a wide variety of languages. They include the International Phonetic Association system and the International African Institute’s Africa alphabet.

Writing Numbers. While Roman script is most often used for words, the Indo-Arabic system, adopted by Western cultures, is most commonly employed for numbers. It uses only ten symbols (0 through 9) to represent all numbers, which makes it very adaptable and convenient for calculation. Other systems exist, however. The Arabic system has two sets of numbers as well as letters from the Arabic alphabet. The Ethiopian system is based on modified Greek symbols. Both have special symbols for 10, 20, 100, 200, 1,000, and so on. (*See also Number Systems.*)

Xhosa

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

The Xhosa, an ethnic group of SOUTH AFRICA, mostly live in Eastern Cape province in the southeastern part of the country. Although some groups farther north speak Xhosa, they are not considered part of the cluster of Xhosa chiefdoms.

The language of the Xhosa reveals clues about their history and their connections with other groups. It is very closely related to the language of the South African ZULU people, but it also shows signs of close contact with KHOISAN groups in precolonial* times.

Traditionally the Xhosa lived as extended families in scattered homesteads, farming and herding livestock. By the mid-1800s they had lost most of their livestock and land to British colonists. Today many Xhosa live in the major South Africa cities, supported by wages or social services. As in the past, KINSHIP links remain important in daily life. The Xhosa still practice their traditional forms of ancestor worship, with offerings of livestock and beer. Converts to Christianity have blended many old beliefs and practices into the new faith. Many Xhosa still have a strong believe in witchcraft, traditional healing, and other ancient practices. Through the years, they have maintained a rich oral tradition and also developed their own written literature. The Xhosa arts include colorful beadwork and elaborate clothing dyed reddish-brown with ochre, a pigment made from the earth.

Yoruba

See
color plate 6,
vol. 3.

* **millet** family of grains

The term *Yoruba* refers to several western African peoples, including the Ife, Ibadan, and Egba. Europeans called all these groups *Yoruba* because they shared common features of language, political organization, and culture. However, when referring to themselves, the Yoruba tend to use the names of their individual groups. Located mainly in southwestern NIGERIA, BÉNIN, and northern TOGO, the Yoruba number more than 25 million.

The Yoruba are descended from the founders of kingdoms that arose as early as the 1300s, although these kingdoms probably never formed a single empire. The Yoruba have long followed an urban style of life. A typical settlement consists of a densely populated town surrounded by villages, with the palace of the *oba* (king) at the center. In the traditional Yoruba political organization, the king is advised by a council of chiefs, leaders of the smaller villages around his town.

Although the Yoruba are primarily town dwellers, their economy has always been based on agriculture. Farmlands are often at some distance from towns, so the men build dwellings near their fields and travel back and forth between them and their homes in town. Farmers grow yams, corn, and millet* for food and cocoa for export. Women traditionally do not farm but control a complex market system, and a woman's status depends largely upon her skill as a trader. Yoruba arts and crafts—especially masks, pottery, and bronze sculptures—are widely known outside of Africa.

Both Islam and Christianity have a large following among the Yoruba. However, many people maintain traditional beliefs as well.



Zambezi River

ZAIRE

See *Congo (Kinshasa)*

Zambezi River

The Zambezi River is the fourth longest in Africa, after the NILE, CONGO, and NIGER rivers. It runs for 1,678 miles across the southern part of the continent, from ZAMBIA through ANGOLA, NAMIBIA, BOTSWANA, ZIMBABWE, and MOZAMBIQUE before emptying into the Indian Ocean. Along the river's course are many distinctive natural and human-made features.

For 354 miles from its source in northwestern Zambia, the river is called the Upper Zambezi. This stretch of the river is home to the Lunda people, who once lived by hunting but are now mostly farmers. The Luena and Luvale people, who live between the settlements of Chavuma and Zambezi, fish and hunt, using dugout canoes to carry their goods up and down the river highway. Farther along on the low-lying Buluzi Floodplain is the kingdom of the Lozi people, who build houses out of wooden frames covered with woven reed mats. During the rainy seasons when the river rises and floods the plain, the Lozi migrate outward to drier regions. The Upper Zambezi ends in the Caprivi Swamps.

The section known as the Middle Zambezi begins below the swamps at the majestic Victoria Falls, Africa's largest waterfall. More than 35,000 cubic feet of water cascade over the mile-wide falls every second, dropping more than 300 feet at the highest point. Often called one of the world's seven natural wonders, Victoria Falls attracts tourists from all over the world. Immediately below the falls, the river plunges through a series of rugged and uninhabited gorges. After leaving Botoka Gorge, the last in the series, the Middle Zambezi flows into Lake Kariba. This 137-mile-long lake is formed by a huge hydroelectric dam that supplies electricity to Zambia and Zimbabwe. The lake is also known for fishing and tourist industries.

Another important feature of the Middle Zambezi is the Mana Pools area, which was made into a national park in 1963. Home to a large wildlife population, Mana Pools has been named a World Heritage site by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Beyond Mana Pools, the Luangwa River flows into the Zambezi from the north. The human population along the river increases at this point.

After the river enters Mozambique, it is known as the Lower Zambezi. It passes through another large lake and dam, the Cabora Bassa. Local warfare has prevented the people of this region from taking full advantage of the dam's potential as a fishing area and for producing electricity. From the dam to the coast, much of the valley of the Lower Zambezi is fertile and densely populated. Some of the oldest towns in Africa, such as Tete and Sena, stand on its banks. In peaceful times, the farmers of the Lower Zambezi produce a variety of crops and fruits for trade in Mozambique's cities and towns.

Zambia

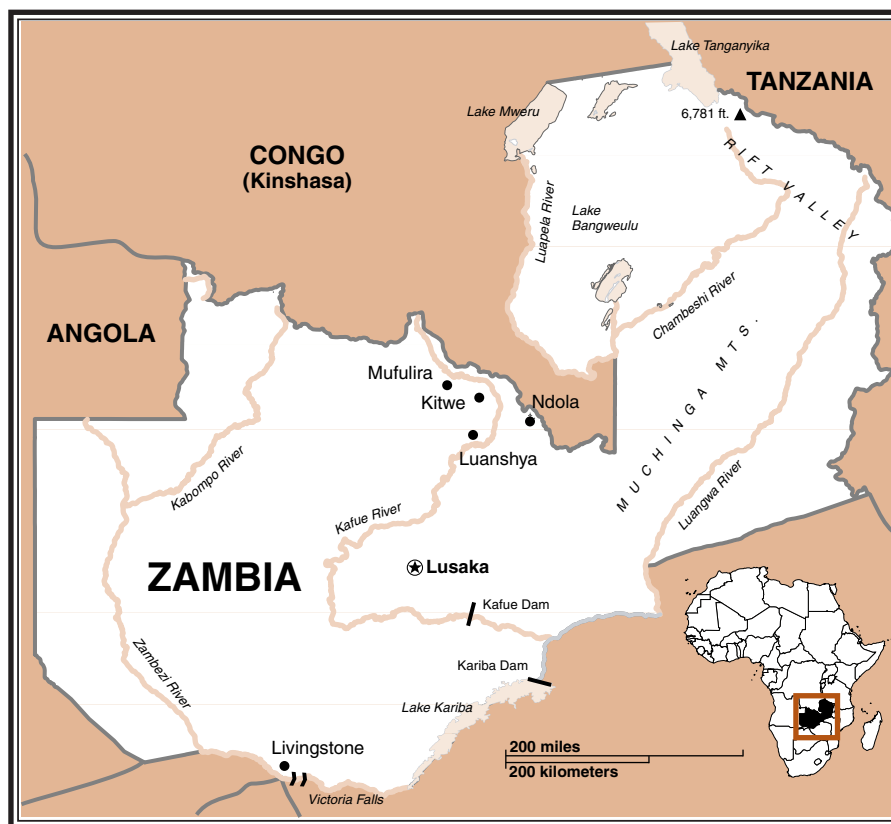
* **urbanized** concentrated in cities and towns

Zambia, a landlocked country in south central Africa, is known for its spectacular natural beauty and geographic diversity. It is also highly urbanized* and was, until recently, one of the continent's most prosperous nations. Today, however, Zambia struggles with the effects of an economy heavily dependent on mining and years of limited political freedom for its people.

GEOGRAPHY

Located on a plateau between 3,000 and 5,000 feet high, Zambia has a pleasant climate. Heat and humidity are a problem only in low river valleys. The Muchinga Mountains dominate the northeastern portion of the country, sloping down to the Rift Valley along Zambia's eastern border with TANZANIA. Central Zambia is a rolling plateau that gives way to the KALAHARI DESERT on the country's western border. LUSAKA, the capital, lies in this central region.

Zambia's many rivers and lakes provide an ample supply of water. The most important waterway, the mighty ZAMBEZI RIVER, forms a good part of the country's southern border. The river cascades over Victoria Falls, the world's largest waterfall, and then flows into Lake Kariba, one of the largest artificial lakes in the world. Other notable water resources include Lake Mweru and Bangweulu Lake and Swamp.





Zambia

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The first inhabitants of Zambia were the Bantu-speaking Tonga, who arrived around A.D. 1000. Over the next several hundred years, other peoples, including the Luba and the Bemba, migrated there. In the 1820s the Mfecane, a ZULU military movement in South Africa, drove the Ngoni and the Sotho north into the region. By the time Europeans settled in the area, Zambia had a highly diverse population.

Colonial Rule. In the 1890s the British South Africa Company signed treaties with several local chiefs granting the company control over Zambia's land and resources. In the early 1900s extensive copper deposits were discovered in southern Zambia. Copper soon became the mainstay of the colonial economy.

In 1924 the territory became a British protectorate* known as Northern Rhodesia. Meanwhile, in neighboring Southern Rhodesia (now ZIMBABWE), European settlers gained control and established their own government. In the 1940s the white settlers of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland (now MALAWI) proposed linking the three territories in a federation*. African nationalists* opposed the move, fearing domination by the white racist leaders of Southern Rhodesia. Nevertheless, in 1953 Northern Rhodesia joined with Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to form the CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION. Southern Rhodesia dominated the federation, and much of the revenue from Northern Rhodesia's copper mines was used to develop its southern neighbor. Living conditions for Africans worsened as wages failed to keep up with a rising cost of living. Britain dissolved the federation in 1963, and Zambia became an independent republic the following year.

Kaunda's Zambia. Kenneth KAUNDA, head of the United National Independence Party (UNIP), became Zambia's first president. The main opposition party was the African National Congress (ANC). The constitution called for an elected president serving no more than two five-year terms. It also established a one-house legislature.

In 1973 Kaunda outlawed all parties besides the UNIP. He enlarged the legislature and abolished the two-term limit on the presidency. As president, Kaunda had sweeping powers, including appointing almost all the government officials. Under the new system he won every election for the next 18 years.

The Kaunda government nationalized* most of Zambia's major industries, including the copper industry, which accounted for over 90 percent of the country's export earnings. Continuing the policy of the former colonial rulers, Kaunda neglected the agricultural sector*. Prices for agricultural produce were so low that some farmers stopped growing crops to sell. Many abandoned their land and moved to the cities, even though few jobs were available there. Unemployment rose and the country became dependent on imported foods.

Until the mid-1970s Zambia prospered through its exports of copper. However, the price of copper collapsed in 1974 to 1975, cutting average

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a strong state

* **federation** organization of separate states with a central government

* **nationalist** devoted to the interests and culture of one's country

* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **sector** part; subdivision of society

incomes in half. Forced to borrow heavily from foreign countries, Zambia accumulated huge debts. In the 1980s Zambia agreed to an International Monetary Fund program designed to reduce state spending and balance the national budget. The program produced few results and Kaunda eventually ended it. However, he kept some of its policies, such as devoting a portion of export earnings to debt payment.

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **privatize** to transfer from government control to private ownership

* **monopoly** exclusive control or domination of a particular type of business

* **inflation** increase in prices

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **subsistence farming** raising only enough food to live on

Urban Melting Pot

Zambia's busy cities are filled with migrants from the countryside. In these urban areas, rural people sometimes develop new customs and traditions. By the 1950s a number of young men of the Bisa ethnic group had migrated to the copper mining town of Luanshya. Together they developed the Kalela dance, which they performed for audiences in the city. Dressed in European clothing, the dancers sang songs praising the Bisa while insulting other ethnic groups. This mixing of rural customs with new influences is not unusual in Zambia's diverse urban centers.

Political Change. By 1990 economic hardship had led to political unrest. A group known as the Movement for Multiparty Democracy (MMD) called for an end to single-party rule. After a failed coup* in June, Kaunda agreed to allow multiparty elections. The following October, Frederick Chiluba of the MMD won the presidency and his party captured 125 of the 150 seats in the legislature.

During his first term in office Chiluba privatized* over 140 state-owned businesses. He also ended the government monopoly* on the purchase of food, which increased farmers' incomes and led to agricultural improvements. Although the national debt declined, economic problems such as inflation* and a weak currency, as well as government corruption, still plagued the country.

As the 1996 elections approached, Chiluba feared that Kaunda might attempt a political comeback. To prevent this, he passed a law that allowed only native Zambians who had not served as president to run for the office. Kaunda, of course, had already served as president; in addition, since his parents came from Malawi, he was not considered a native Zambian. Kaunda's angry supporters refused to take part in the election. Nevertheless, about 40 percent of the eligible voters went to the polls, and Chiluba won.

Shortly after the election Kaunda warned of a coming "explosion" in Zambian politics. The next day an army captain made an attempt to overthrow the government. Although the uprising was crushed within hours, Chiluba declared a state of emergency and took complete control of the government for the next several months.

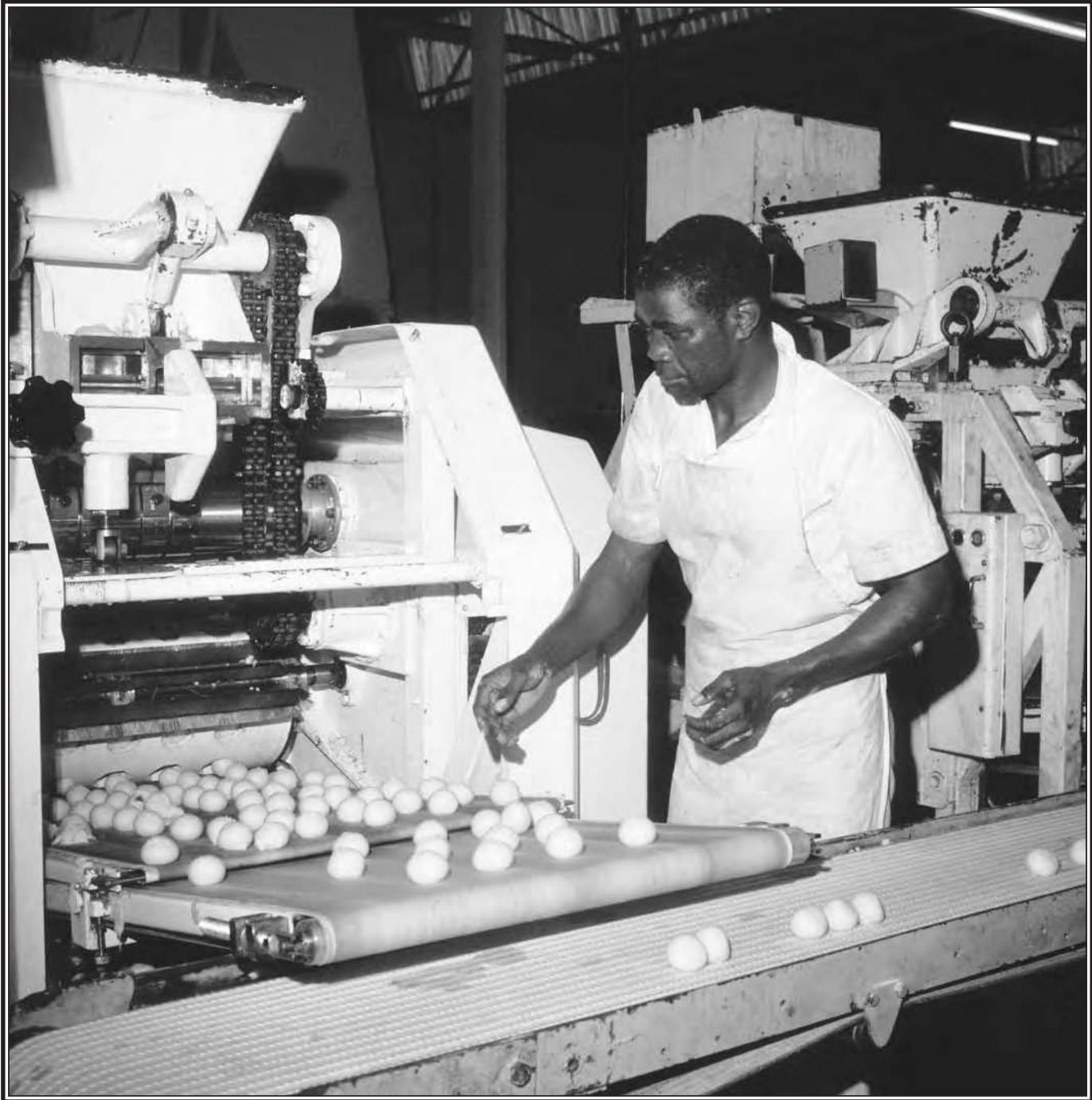
The Chiluba government has faced high unemployment and an economy still heavily dependent on copper. It has also struggled with major health issues. In the late 1990s about 70 percent of Zambians were infected with tuberculosis and about 20 percent had HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. Wars in neighboring CONGO (KINSHASA) and ANGOLA have created ongoing foreign policy concerns.

ECONOMY

Zambia's economy can be summarized in a single word: copper. This resource still provides over 80 percent of export revenues. However, prices have not recovered from their downturn in the 1970s, and production has declined. The industry needs large amounts of money to purchase new equipment for aging mines and to upgrade the country's infrastructure*.

About two-thirds of Zambia's population still practices subsistence farming*. In addition, commercial farmers grow cotton, tobacco, and

Zambia



Although copper still dominates the economy of Zambia, food processing, textiles, and chemicals have become important industries. Shown here is a bread factory in the city of Kabwe.

coffee for export. Manufacturing has become a major sector of the economy. Mining of emeralds and other minerals has also been growing.

The country's major economic challenges include finding ways to broaden the economy and to reduce its huge foreign debt. Political problems in neighboring countries also affect Zambia's economy. With no outlet to the sea, it depends on other nations for access to ports. Any



Republic of Zambia

POPULATION:

9,582,418 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:

290,586 sq. mi. (752,618 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:

English (official); Bemba, Tonga, Lozi, Lunda, Nyanja, others

NATIONAL CURRENCY:

Zambian kwacha

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:

Christian 50–75%, Hindu and Muslim 24–49%, Traditional 1%

CITIES:

Lusaka (capital), 1,640,000 (2001 est.); Kitwe, Ndola, Chingola, Mufulira, Luanshya, Kabwe, Livingstone

ANNUAL RAINFALL:

Varies from 50 in. (1,400 mm) in the north to 20 in. (510 mm) in the south.

ECONOMY:

GDP per capita: \$880 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:

Agricultural: cotton, tobacco, coffee, corn, sorghum, rice, cassava, peanuts, sugarcane, livestock and livestock products
Manufacturing: food and beverage processing, textiles, chemicals, fertilizer

Mining: copper, zinc, lead, cobalt, coal, emeralds, gold, silver, uranium

GOVERNMENT:

Independence from Britain, 1964. Republic with president elected by universal suffrage. Governing bodies: 150-seat National Assembly (legislative body), elected by universal suffrage; Cabinet, appointed by the president.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:

1964–1991 President Kenneth David Kaunda

1991 President Frederick Chiluba

ARMED FORCES:

21,600 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:

Compulsory for ages 7–14; literacy rate 78% (2001 est.)

disruption in surrounding countries threatens Zambia's ability to export its goods.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Zambia's population is mostly made up of Bantu-speaking peoples divided into at least 70 different ethnic groups. The Bemba, who originated in what is now Congo (Kinshasa), dominate the Northern Province. Southern central Zambia is home to the Tonga, while the Ngoni are the primary ethnic group of the southeast. The Lozi are the predominant group in the southwest. Zambia's population is very unevenly distributed. Almost 80 percent of the people live on roughly 33 percent of the land. In the high-density population areas, the residents tend to be better educated than rural dwellers, as two-thirds of them are literate.

Many of Zambia's ethnic groups are matrilineal, meaning that they trace descent through the mother's side of the family. The main exceptions are some Ngoni cattle herders, who are patrilineal (descent through the father's side of the family) and the Lozi, who trace descent through both sides of the family.

About two-thirds of Zambians practice Christianity, which has played a major role in the country's social history. During the colonial era mission schools were important centers of educational as well as spiritual leadership for black Zambians. Many Zambian Christians have held on to various beliefs and customs of traditional religions, including ancestor worship and witchcraft. (See also **Bantu Peoples; Cities and Urbanization; Colonialism in Africa; Minerals and Mining; Rhodes, Cecil John** .)

Zanzibar

Zanzibar

Zanzibar, an island state in the Indian Ocean, lies about 30 miles off the coast of East Africa. Long an Arab stronghold, it became a British colony in the late 1800s. Zanzibar gained its independence in 1963 and the next year joined Tanganyika in forming the United Republic of TANZANIA.

Geography. Zanzibar consists of two main islands, Unguja (also called Zanzibar Island) and Pemba, and several smaller ones. Unguja, the largest, covers an area of 637 square miles. Made of limestone, coral, and sandstone, the islands are fairly flat—the highest point on Unguja is 390 feet above sea level. At one time the islands supported dense forests, but human activity long ago destroyed all but small patches of the original tree cover. Today, mangrove* swamps line their eastern shores.

Zanzibar has two rainy seasons, from March to May and from October to December, and receives about 70 inches of rain each year. The tropical climate and the deep, well-drained soil are ideal for growing clove trees. Cloves, a spice, are one of Zanzibar's major exports. Farmers also raise coconuts and rice, an important local food.

History. Located within reach of Africa, Arabia, and India, Zanzibar attracted colonists from several continents. The earliest inhabitants were BANTU PEOPLES from sub-Saharan* Africa. Migrants from Arabia arrived in the 900s and blended with the African population. Later, Arabs—mostly from Oman, on the Arabian peninsula—colonized the islands.

The Arabs used Zanzibar both as a commercial port and as a base for slave trading expeditions to the African mainland. In the 1500s the Portuguese began conquering many East African coastal settlements, including Zanzibar. However, in 1698 the Omanis drove them out of the region. Under Omani rule, Zanzibar became a center of the IVORY TRADE and the SLAVE TRADE.

In 1832 SA'ID IBN SULTAN, the Omani ruler, moved his capital from Muscat in Oman to Zanzibar. He established a loosely organized state, allowing local groups some freedom to govern themselves. He promoted the development of Zanzibar's clove industry, which depended on slave labor. Meanwhile, he extended the Omani trading network deep into the African mainland. To strengthen the islands' commercial relationships, Sa'id signed trade agreements with the United States, Britain, and France. The merchants of Zanzibar grew wealthy on exports of cloves, ivory, and slaves.

After Sa'id's death in 1856, Zanzibar separated from Oman and became an independent sultanate. In 1890 Britain took control of the islands and abolished the slave trade. Zanzibar became an independent nation within the British commonwealth in 1963. The following year the islanders revolted against the Arab-dominated government, and the sultans' rule came to an end. The uprising led to Zanzibar's union with Tanganyika in the United Republic of Tanzania. Within the republic, Zanzibar maintains some autonomy* concerning education, immigration, and other policy areas. The president of Zanzibar serves as one of Tanzania's two vice presidents.

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

* **autonomy** independent self-government



Zimbabwe

Peoples and Economy. Today's Zanzibaris are a mixture of African, Omani, and other Middle Eastern peoples. Most consider themselves as either Arab or SWAHILI. The language of the islands is Swahili, a Bantu language that has borrowed many words from Arabic, but some recent immigrants from Oman speak Arabic. The great majority of the population is Muslim.

Rural Zanzibaris support themselves through farming, fishing, picking cloves for wages, and small businesses. In the towns, trade is the main economic activity. Merchants sell imported items and locally produced goods in open-air marketplaces. In addition, TOURISM is gaining importance and has brought modern hotels, shops, and restaurants to Zanzibar Town, the islands' capital. Zanzibar Town has two parts: Stone Town and Ng'ambo. Stone Town is a maze of narrow, stone-paved lanes and historic buildings, including the former sultan's palace and a church founded by missionary-explorer David LIVINGSTONE. Ng'ambo is the newer, more sprawling side of the city. (*See also Arabs in Africa, Colonialism in Africa.*)

Zara Ya'iqob

**Ruled 1434–1468
Emperor of Ethiopia**

* **theology** study of religious faith

Zara Ya'Iqob, a powerful and intelligent Ethiopian ruler, was a devout Christian. He sometimes took strong measures to make sure that Christianity remained the dominant religion in ETHIOPIA.

The son of emperor Dawit of Ethiopia, Zara Ya'iqob was educated at his father's royal court. When his father died and his brother became emperor, Zara Ya'iqob was confined in a remote mountain prison. He remained there for more than 20 years until he was called to the throne.

As emperor, Zara Ya'Iqob attempted to improve relations between the Christians of northern and southern Ethiopia. In 1449 he declared both Saturday and Sunday as sabbaths, or holy days, to combine the northern and southern traditions for observing the sabbath. Yet, Zara Ya'iqob was less tolerant of other religious customs. He persecuted certain groups of Christian monks, Ethiopian Jews, and those accused of non-Christian practices. He wrote several books outlining a theology* that became an important part of Ethiopian tradition.

Zara Ya'Iqob built a stone palace in which he lived during his later years. Unlike other Ethiopian emperors of this period, who spent much of their time traveling throughout the empire, Zara Ya'iqob rarely ventured beyond his palace's walls. (*See also Christianity in Africa, Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Religion and Ritual.*)

Zimbabwe

Although a powerful and complex kingdom some 700 years ago, Zimbabwe was one of the last countries in Africa to win its independence in the late 1900s. Impressive architectural ruins show glimpses of the nation's past grandeur. From the early civilizations that built these

Zimbabwe



structures down to the modern day, Zimbabwe has played an important role in southern Africa.

GEOGRAPHY

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country in southeastern Africa, bordered by ZAMBIA to the north, MOZAMBIQUE to the east, BOTSWANA to the west, and SOUTH AFRICA to the south. An elevated ridge known as the highveldt divides the country roughly in two from southwest to northeast. An area called the middleveldt slopes down from either side of the highveldt, covering about 40 percent of the land. The extreme northwest and southeast make up the lowveldt. Mountainous terrain dominates the Eastern Highlands bordering Mozambique.

Most of the country ranges from 1,000 to 4,000 feet above sea level, and this height produces a moderate climate. However, the land is generally better suited to ranching than agriculture because of its thin sandy soils. In addition, rain falls unpredictably, leading to severe droughts that strike the land and people. Although forest covers about one-third of Zimbabwe, forested areas have been disappearing in recent years, which has caused much concern. Savanna* grasslands account for much of the rest of the country. The spectacular Victoria Falls and Kariba, one of the world's largest artificial lakes, are in the northwest.

* savanna tropical or subtropical grassland with scattered trees and drought-resistant undergrowth

HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT

The modern country of Zimbabwe takes its name from the massive stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe that are one of Africa's most impressive archaeological sites. These dzimba dza mabwe, or "houses of stone," were built before A.D. 1000 and testify to the rise of the earliest centralized societies in southern Africa.



Great Zimbabwe. The site called Great Zimbabwe was built by the Mashona (or SHONA) people. Its main feature is the Great Enclosure, a circular stone wall over 30 feet high and 800 feet in circumference. Inside the enclosure lie the remains of a cone-shaped tower, as well as other walls and clay building platforms. Glass beads and Chinese porcelain found at the site suggest that Great Zimbabwe was connected to SWAHILI trading networks that stretched to ports along the Indian Ocean coast.

The valleys surrounding the Great Enclosure contain other stone enclosures with similar smaller towers and clay platforms. The remains of clay floors indicate that as many as 10,000 people were living in close quarters in the area. The society featured a complex division of labor between agriculture, pastoralism*, and craft activities. The labor system probably required a highly structured and powerful central authority. Additional walls at the site divided the living areas of the privileged classes from those of the common people.

The rulers of Great Zimbabwe extended their control over a wide area of the surrounding plateau from which they extracted resources and tribute*. The high walls of the Great Enclosure served more as a symbol of the power of the rulers than as a real military defense. Great Zimbabwe was not, however, the only such walled settlement in the region. Some 150 smaller sites have been uncovered in Zimbabwe, eastern Botswana, South Africa, and Mozambique. One of these, Mapungubwe, in South Africa, appears to have been built earlier than Great Zimbabwe. Although not as advanced in its architecture, it too appears to have had a complex division of labor and trading ties with the coast.

* **pastoralism** lifestyle characterized by herding livestock

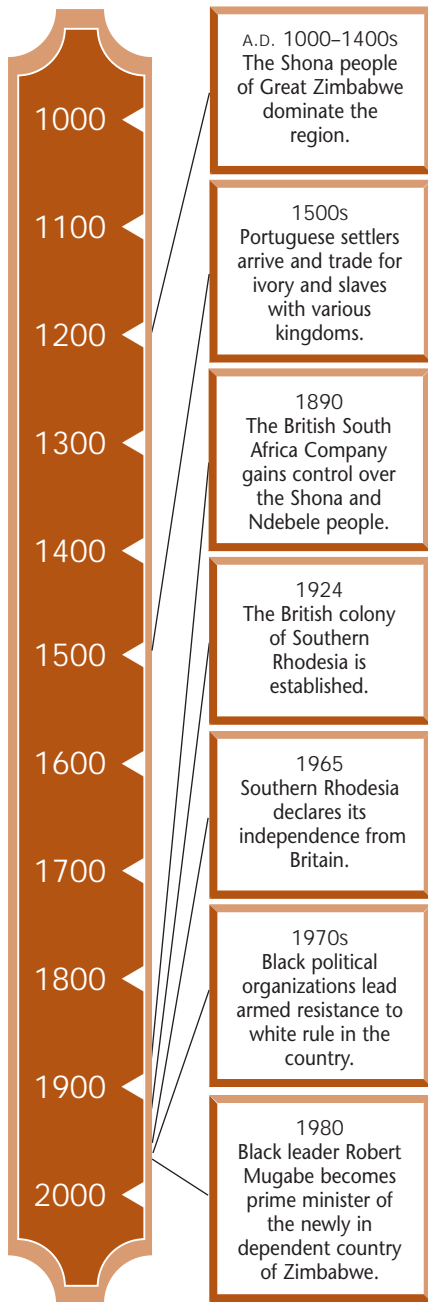
* **tribute** payment made by a smaller or weaker party to a more powerful one, often under the threat of force

Reclaiming African History
To justify their colonization of Africa, the British invented the myth that black Africans had no history of advanced civilization or culture. Thus, when British archaeologists discovered Great Zimbabwe in the late 1800s, they did not believe it was built by Africans. Instead they thought it was the remains of an ancient colony of Phoenicians from what is now Lebanon. Only later did other scholars prove that Great Zimbabwe was, indeed, an African creation.

The Decline of Great Zimbabwe. The state of Great Zimbabwe dominated its region until the mid-1400s. At that time the rulers began to lose control of peoples living on the edges of their empire. Around 1450 the states of Torwa and MUTAPA (also known as Mwene Mutapa and Munhumutapa) emerged. A Portuguese document dated 1506 contains the earliest existing reference to Mutapa. It, too, held power over surrounding territory and received tribute from weaker kingdoms in the area.

Portuguese traders made contact with Mutapa around 1500 and established trading posts along the ZAMBEZI RIVER and the Zimbabwe plateau. By the early 1600s, they had gained control over the gold and IVORY TRADE with the coast, and the ruler of Mutapa had to obey the orders of the Portuguese. In the 1660s a new ruler became powerful enough to force the Portuguese out of the region. However, internal divisions and

Zimbabwe



* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **sanction** measure adopted by one or more nations to force another nation to change its policies or conduct

rebellions in outlying areas soon fractured the state and led to its decline.

The Rise of Rhodesia. In the early 1800s the NDEBELE people moved into southwest Zimbabwe from South Africa. They were part of the ZULU nation that had been driven from its land by the eastward expansion of white settlers. Clashes with settlers resulted in the destruction of the Ndebele kingdom in the late 1800s. The displaced Ndebele made frequent raids on the neighboring Shona to obtain food, cattle, and laborers. The ethnic divisions dating from this period have remained an ongoing problem for Zimbabwe.

In 1890 armed troops of the British South Africa Company, a private firm under the leadership of Cecil RHODES, invaded what is now Zimbabwe. Despite fierce resistance from the Shona and Ndebele, Rhodes's army gained control over the region. In 1924 the area was proclaimed a self-governing British colony and named Southern Rhodesia after its leader. Like its neighbor South Africa, the colony practiced racial segregation, denying basic freedoms and civil rights to black Africans. White authorities threw black farmers off their best lands and turned the property over to a handful of influential white settlers.

In 1953 Southern Rhodesia joined with the British colonies of Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) and Nyasaland (now MALAWI) to form the CENTRAL AFRICAN FEDERATION. The main goal of the federation was to allow Southern Rhodesia access to Northern Rhodesia's abundant copper reserves and Nyasaland's pool of cheap LABOR. During this time the country's leaders took some timid steps toward granting black people a place in government. A new constitution in 1961 set aside about a quarter of the seats in Parliament for blacks.

Most black Rhodesians realized that the new arrangement was only a tactic to delay true majority rule by the indigenous* population. African political groups increased their calls for democracy. In 1962 a right-wing white party called the Rhodesian Front (RF) emerged to challenge those white leaders who approved the 1961 constitution. The RF, led by the openly racist Ian Smith, dedicated itself to total white supremacy.

A year after the founding of the RF, Britain dissolved the Central African Federation and granted independence to Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland under black majority governments. This move alarmed the RF's leaders, who suspected that Britain supported black rule in Southern Rhodesia as well. In 1965 Smith, by then prime minister, declared independence for Southern Rhodesia. The British passed economic and political sanctions* against Southern Rhodesia, but Smith still hoped that other countries would recognize his nation's independence.

Conflict and Negotiation. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, several black political organizations arose to challenge white rule in Rhodesia. The first group to emerge was the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), led by Joshua Nkomo. In 1963 some members of ZAPU split off to form the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) under



Zimbabwe

the leadership of Robert MUGABE and Ndabaningi Sithole. ZANU announced a policy of armed resistance, and a war of liberation against the white government began in the 1970s.

ZANU and ZAPU joined forces in 1976 to form the Patriotic Front (PF), carrying out their anti-government campaign from bases in Zambia and Mozambique. During this time the British attempted to negotiate a settlement between the rebels and the Rhodesian government. This effort resulted in the so-called “internal settlement” of 1978–1979 that put blacks into several high political offices, including president and prime minister. However, whites still controlled the real power in the country, and neither ZANU nor ZAPU accepted the deal.

In 1979 all of the parties agreed to a compromise agreement that called for free elections the following year. To reassure the white minority, 20 seats in the legislature were set aside for whites for a period of seven years. In the resulting elections, ZANU won the majority of seats, and Mugabe became prime minister of the country, renamed Zimbabwe.

Independent Zimbabwe. Mugabe moved cautiously in changing Zimbabwean society. He realized that the Smith regime had developed an impressive industrial infrastructure* to offset the effect of British economic sanctions and boycotts*. As a result, Zimbabwe had a relatively healthy and diverse economy that Mugabe did not want to damage. Although he pledged to resettle black people on land stolen by white settlers, he realized that moving too fast would disrupt the large-scale agriculture that provided the country’s main source of export earnings.

Even so, Mugabe did make several important changes. His government turned some white lands over to black people, invested in HEALTH CARE and education, and helped more black Zimbabweans get higher positions in business and civil service. But at the same time relations between ZANU and ZAPU grew worse. In 1982 ZANU accused ZAPU of hoarding weapons for a coup* and fired several ZAPU leaders from the government. The next two years saw a brutal conflict in which ZANU and its followers killed thousands of ZAPU supporters.

Throughout the 1980s Mugabe said that he wanted to turn Zimbabwe into a single-party state based on communist* principles. However, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM), a new party headed by former ZANU leader Edward Tekere, emerged just before the 1990 elections. Mugabe won nearly 80 percent of the vote, but only about half of the eligible voters participated.

The fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 led Mugabe to abandon his call for a communist state but not his desire for political dominance in Zimbabwe. A new constitution adopted in 1992 made ZANU the only party eligible for state funding. Mugabe accelerated the land redistribution program in the following year. However, ordinary people found out that some of the first lands taken under the program went to high government officials.

By that time corruption and political mismanagement were ruining Zimbabwe’s economy. A catastrophic drought struck in 1992, and poor government planning led to a serious food shortage. In 1996 it was revealed that government officials had stolen money from a fund for

* **infrastructure** basic framework of a society and its economy, which includes roads, bridges, port facilities, airports, and other public works

* **boycott** refusal to participate or buy goods, as a means of protest

* **coup** sudden, often violent, overthrow of a ruler or government

* **communist** relating to communism, a system in which land, good, and the means of production are owned by the state or community rather than by individuals

Zimbabwe

army veterans. In protest, most opposition parties boycotted the elections that year and less than one-third of the electorate voted.

In 1998 Mugabe made a fateful decision to send troops into CONGO (KINSHASA). Congo's leader Laurent Kabila, who had recently overthrown the dictator MOBUTU SESE SEKO, faced a rebellion of his own. Mugabe hoped to take control of valuable resources such as copper and dia-



Many people in Zimbabwe work in agriculture, an important source of revenue for the country. These women in the fields separate soybeans from their hulls.



Zimbabwe

monds that Kabila's government could not protect. His arms purchases for the war sent the country deeper into debt.

* **inflation** increase in prices

Zimbabwe struggles under a crushing foreign debt, widespread unemployment, and very high inflation*. Mugabe's foreign adventures have bankrupted the treasury. Bands of armed black citizens roam the countryside forcing white farmers off their land and harassing their black workers. Although Mugabe still holds power, most observers believe that a new leader is needed before Zimbabwe can improve its situation.

ECONOMY

Zimbabwe's economy includes a fairly diverse range of activities and goods. Agriculture provides almost half of the country's export earnings: tobacco is the country's largest agricultural export, followed by cotton and beef. Zimbabwe usually produces enough to feed its people without large imports of food. But droughts in 1991–1992 and 1994–1995 destroyed much of the maize (corn) that Zimbabweans rely on for their own food.



See map in Minerals and Mining (vol. 3).

* **sector** part; subdivision of society

Industry and manufacturing, well developed under the Smith regime, contribute a substantial portion of the export revenues. Leading industries include construction equipment, transportation equipment, metal products, chemicals, textiles, and food processing. However, much of the industrial infrastructure has aged and needs to be upgraded. Zimbabwe also has a mining sector* that produces gold and platinum, but foreign companies dominate most mining activities.

Service industries also play a significant role in the economy, with many of them created by government programs. Violence in rural areas has damaged both TOURISM and agriculture. Many experts expect that Zimbabwe's economy will continue to decline for some time.

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

Most Zimbabweans belong to either the Shona or Ndebele ethnic groups. The Shona, made up of six main linguistic subgroups, work mainly as farmers or herders. The Shona forbid marriage between members of the same clan. Marriages usually involve a transfer of wealth from the groom to the bride's family. Married couples often live with the groom's parents. If the groom does not have wealth and gifts to offer, he may perform labor for his father-in-law.

The Ndebele (also known as Matabele) traditionally live as herders with a highly structured social system. In the 1800s they raided Shona settlements and captured Shona as servants. Their social system discouraged marriage between the two groups to ensure the dominance of the Ndebele privileged classes. Ethnic tensions between the two groups still erupt occasionally.

About half of Zimbabweans practice a mixture of CHRISTIANITY and indigenous religions based on reverence for dead ancestors. These religions include SPIRIT POSSESSION, by which religious leaders communicate with the spirit world. Although many Zimbabweans say they belong to the Catholic or Anglican church, their worship often mixes elements of

Zimbabwe



Republic of Zimbabwe

POPULATION:
11,342,521 (2000 estimated population)

AREA:
150,803 sq. mi. (390,580 sq. km)

LANGUAGES:
English (official); Shona, Ndebele

NATIONAL CURRENCY:
Zimbabwe dollar

PRINCIPAL RELIGIONS:
Syncretic (part traditional, part Christian) 50%, Christian 25%, Traditional 24%, Other 1%

CITIES:
Harare (capital), 1,752,000 (2001 est.); Bulawayo, Gweru, Mutare, Kwekwe, Kadoma, Hwange, Masvingo

ANNUAL RAINFALL:
Varies from 40 in. (1,020 mm) in Eastern Highlands to 15 in. (400 mm) in Limpopo valley.

ECONOMY:
GDP per capita: \$2,400 (1999 est.)

PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND EXPORTS:
Agricultural: coffee, tobacco, corn, sugarcane, peanuts, wheat, cotton, livestock
Manufacturing: steel mills, textiles and footwear, wood products, cement, chemicals, fertilizer, food and beverage processing
Mining: coal, gold, copper, nickel, iron ore, tin, clay

GOVERNMENT:
Independence from Britain, 1980. Paramilitary democracy with president nominated by the House of Assembly and elected by universal suffrage. Governing body: 150-seat House of Assembly, with 120 members elected by universal suffrage.

HEADS OF STATE SINCE INDEPENDENCE:
1980–1987 President Canaan Banana
1987 President Robert Mugabe

ARMED FORCES:
39,000 (2001 est.)

EDUCATION:
Compulsory for ages 6–13; literacy rate 85% (2001 est.)

indigenous beliefs. (See also **Archaeology and Prehistory, Colonialism in Africa, Ethnic Groups and Identity, Harare, Independence Movements, Land Ownership, Southern Africa, History** .)

Zulu



The Zulu, a large ethnic group in SOUTH AFRICA, are based in Natal Province on the country's eastern coast. They speak a BANTU language closely related to that of the XHOSA. Originally one of many small societies in the region, the Zulu grew into a powerful nation in the 1800s.

Traditionally the Zulu were farmers, growing millet, a kind of grain. In addition, the men tended large herds of cattle, which were an important sign of wealth. In the early 1800s a leader named SHAKA ZULU united the Zulu and other neighboring peoples into a well-organized state that dominated the region. Later, European settlers took over much of the Zulu grazing land, causing the great herds to shrink.

The modern Zulu have retained many of the traditional features of their society. In the settlements of KwaZulu in Natal, villages are organized around a hierarchy* made up of older men who serve under the king as clan* chiefs and the heads of clan sections. First created by Shaka Zulu, this form of organization is reflected in the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party, which was involved in the movement to end apartheid* in South Africa.

The Zulu practice polygyny, a marriage system in which a man may have more than one wife. They also follow the traditions of levirate mar-

* **hierarchy** organization of a group into higher and lower levels

* **clan** group of people descended from a common ancestor

* **apartheid** policy of racial segregation enforced by the white government of South Africa to maintain political, economic, and social control over the country's blacks, Asians, and people of mixed ancestry



Zulu

riage, in which a woman whose husband dies is married to her husband's brother, and ghost marriage, in which a woman is "married" to a dead relative so that her children will carry on the dead man's family line. Early Zulu religious beliefs were based on ancestor worship. Today Christianity is the main religion among the Zulu, with some independent churches organized around PROPHETIC MOVEMENTS. (See also **Ethnic Groups and Identity, Southern Africa, History**.)

Daily Life



Plate 1: The manufacture of textiles made of homegrown cotton is an important industry in Ivory Coast. Some of the brightly patterned fabric is sold in markets, such as the one shown here in Abidjan.



Plate 2: Many of the people of the Kalahari live by keeping cattle or goats. A herder in Botswana drives along his goats, which are raised for their meat, milk, and hide.



Plate 3: Sugarcane, an important crop in Madagascar, is grown on plantations in the northwestern part of the island and on the east coast. Here workers harvest sugarcane.



Plate 4: Soccer is the most popular sport in Africa. Teams compete at the local, national, and international level. In Mombasa, Kenya, soccer players take the field near the ruins of Fort Jesus, built by the Portuguese in 1593.



Plate 5: In 1997 Uganda adopted a policy known as Universal Primary Education to increase school attendance and the level of literacy. These children attend a primary school in Kampala, the country's capital.

Plate 6: In rural areas of Zambia, women make flour the hard way—by pounding millet, a kind of grain, in a mortar. They cook the flour with water to create a thick porridge, a basic part of their diet.



Plate 7: Religion plays a significant role in the daily life of Africans. For Muslims that means stopping whatever they are doing five times a day, turning toward the holy city of Mecca, and praying. This Muslim man observes the call to prayer in war-torn Somalia.





Plate 8: The Venda, a cultural group with a shared language, live in the northeastern corner of South Africa. Venda women have something of an artistic tradition, especially in wall painting and sculpture. Here a Venda woman makes pottery.

Plate 9: Dogon children stand in front of a great house in a village in Mali. Such houses serve as the home of the senior man in an extended family or of the village headman. Grouped around the great house are the small dwellings of the rest of the villagers.

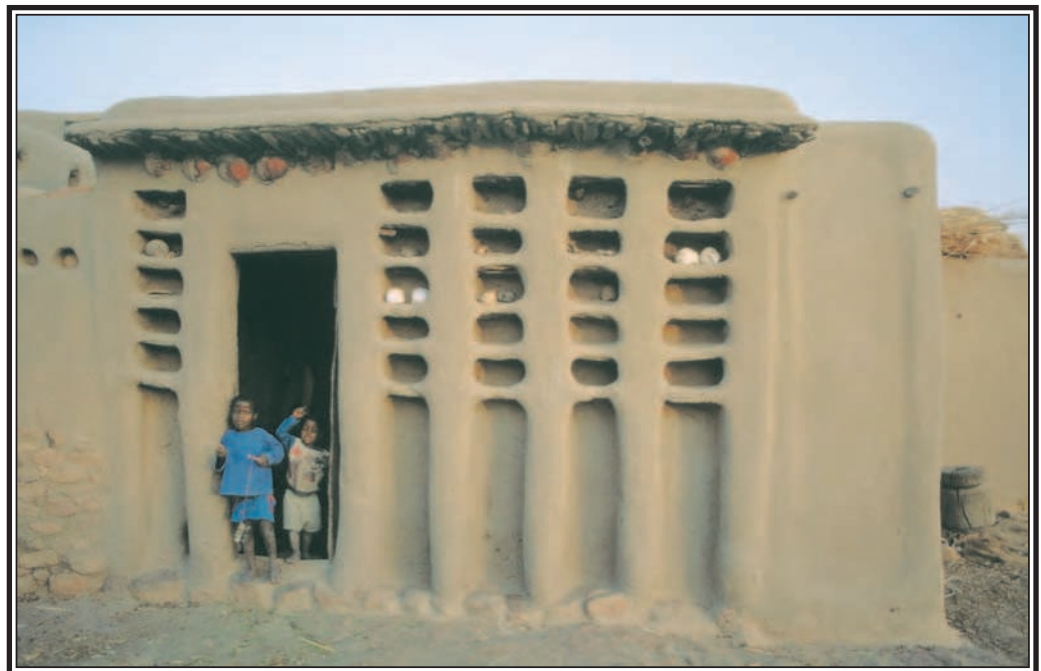




Plate 10: Sugar is the main export crop of Swaziland, but the country also produces citrus fruit and pineapple. Here Swazi women core and prepare pineapples for canning at a food-processing plant.



Plate 11: In the Sahara desert, salt is the most important trade good. Men cut slabs of salt from the earth at the mining settlement of Taoudenni in northern Mali. Arranged in rows, the slabs will be carried south across the desert on an old trade route.



Plate 12: One way to get around the town of Antsirabe on Madagascar is to rent a *pousse-pousse*, the local version of a rickshaw. *Taxi-brousses* (minibuses or limousines) are popular for travel between towns.



Plate 13: The development of oil and natural gas resources has brought new revenue to some countries in Africa. Tunisia has built refineries, such as the one shown here, and oil is now one of its main exports.



Plate 14: In Cairo, Egyptian men go to tearooms to drink coffee or tea, chat with friends, and read the paper.

Plate 15: Cape Town, the oldest city in southern Africa, was founded in 1652 as a supply base for the Dutch East India Company. Now a major port and manufacturing center, Cape Town is known for its historical buildings and parks. Visitors come to enjoy the nearby beaches, mountains, and vineyards.



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Suggested Readings

On-line Resources

Africa Daily. *Provides daily news reports for entire African continent, as well as several links to other African web sites.*

www.africadaily.com

Africa: South of the Sahara, Stanford University. *Contains a multitude of links to web sites concerning African issues and individual country information.*

<http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/guide.html>

African Information Centre. *Provides web site links to academic centers, governmental information, and current events.*

<http://www.africainformation.co.uk/index.html>

African Policy Information Center. *Discusses political, economic, racial, and health struggles in Africa, and promotes positive change.*

www.africapolicy.org

African Studies Center, Michigan State University. *Provides various resources of information on Africa, including access to the University's Africana library.*

<http://www.isp.msu.edu/AfricanStudies/>

African Studies Center, University of Pennsylvania. *Contains country-specific data and information on African organizations in the U.S.*

http://www.sas.upenn.edu/African_Studies/AS.html

AllAfrica Global Media. *Provides daily news reports from over 80 media organizations on events occurring throughout Africa.*

www.allafrica.com

CIA World Factbook 2000 online. *Provides updated statistical information on each country.*

<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

New Africa. *Contains information on business, economy, news, and tourism.*

www.newafrica.com

The Story of Africa: African History From the Dawn of Time, BBC World Service. *Provides a detailed historical account of the continent.*

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/africa/features/storyofafrica/index.shtml>

U.S. Aid in Africa. *Discusses the actions the U.S. has taken to improve the political and economic situations in Africa.*

<http://www.usaid.gov/regions/afr/>

U.S. State Department—Bureau of African Affairs. *Provides country and regional information on U.S. involvement in Africa, particularly sub-Saharan.*

<http://www.state.gov/www/regions/africa/>

World Atlas. *Provides maps of Africa and individual nations, plus some statistical information on each country.*

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