2

Africa

Ecosystem – Laws

Africa

An Encyclopedia for Students

LANGUAGE FAMILIES

Africa

An Encyclopedia for Students

John Middleton, Editor

Volume 2

Ecosystem–Laws

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

GALE GROUP

THOMSON LEARNING

New York • Detroit • San Diego • San Francisco
Boston • New Haven, Conn. • Waterville, Maine
London • Munich

Developed for Charles Scribner's Sons by Visual Education Corporation, Princeton, N.J.

For Scribners
PUBLISHER: Karen Day
EDITORS: John Fitzpatrick, Brad Morgan
COVER AND INTERIOR DESIGN: Jennifer Wahi
PHOTO RESEARCH: Kelly Quin
PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR: Mary Beth Trimper

For Visual Education
PROJECT DIRECTOR: Darryl Kestler
WRITERS: John Haley, Charles Roebuck, Rebecca Stefoff, Joseph Ziegler
EDITORS: Noëlle Y. Child, Cindy George, Guy Austrian, Charles Roebuck
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Cheryl MacKenzie
COPYEDITING SUPERVISOR: Helen A. Castro
ELECTRONIC PREPARATION: Fiona Torphy

Contributors
Nancy E. Gratton, Kevin van Bladel, Frank Griffel, Jeremy Raphael Berndt

Library of Congress Cataloging in-Publication Data

Africa: an encyclopedia for students / John Middleton, editor.
p. cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-684-80650-9 (set : alk. paper) —ISBN 0-684-80651-7 (v. 1) —
ISBN 0-684-80652-5 (v. 2) —ISBN 0-684-80653-3 (v. 3) —
ISBN 0-684-80654-1 (v. 4)
1. Africa–Encyclopedias, Juvenile. [1. Africa—Encyclopedias.] I. Middleton, John, 1921–

DT3 .A249 2001
960'03—dc21

2001049348

Table of Contents

List of Maps

Table of Contents

Color Plates

A Time Line of Africa

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

**m.y.a. million years ago*

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

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

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

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 tekelii 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.

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

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-

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.

See color plate 5, vol. 4.

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.

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 *madrasa,* 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

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.

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

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*.

* **arable** suitable for producing crops

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.

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

* **pantheon** all the gods and goddesses of a particular culture

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.

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.

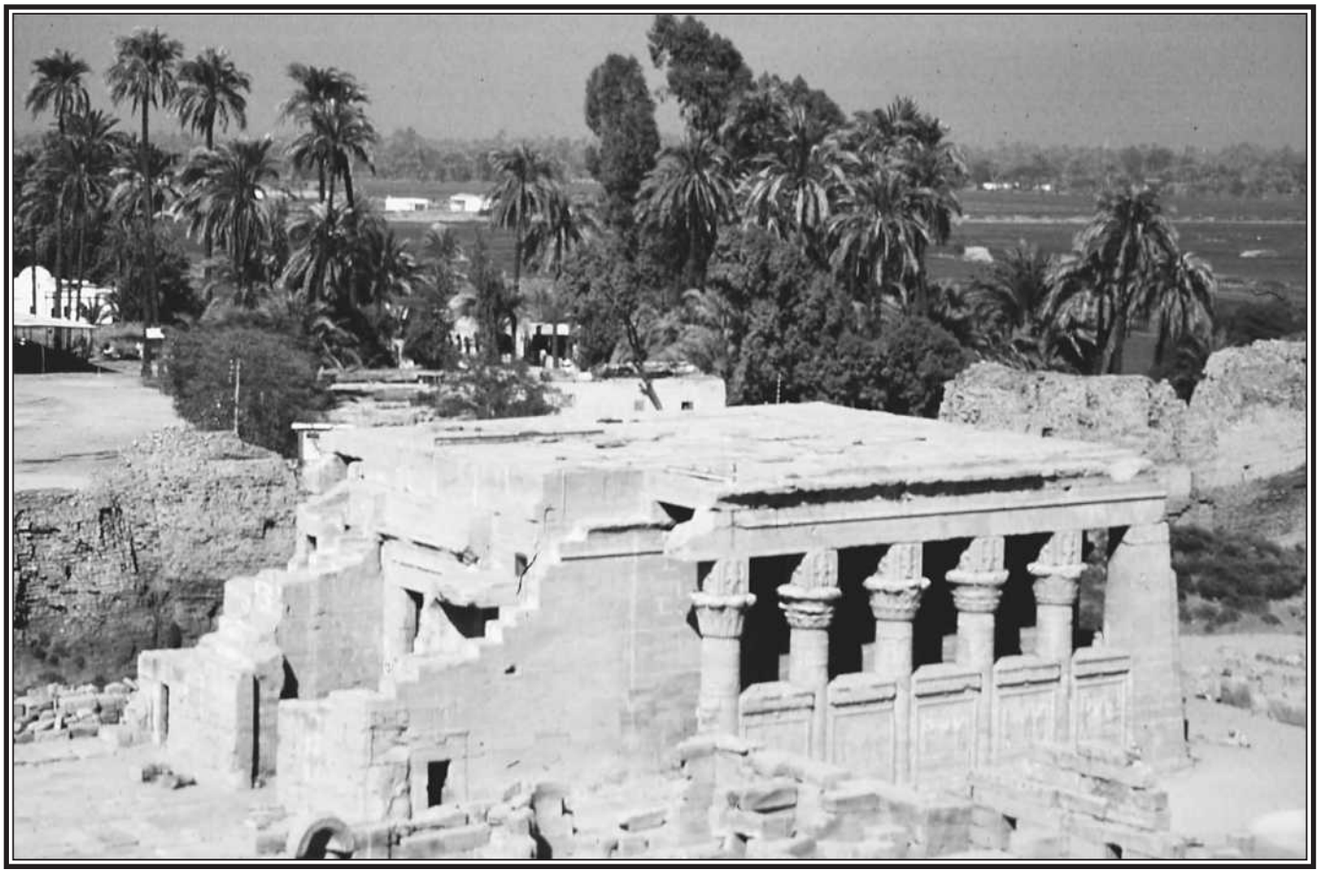
In 332 B.C. Alexander the Great, ruler of Macedonia and Greece, took control of Egypt. After his death Ptolemy, one of his generals, established Egypt's last royal family, the Ptolemaic Dynasty. For several centuries Egypt was part of the Hellenistic* world. ALEXANDRIA, a city founded by Alexander on 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.

* **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.

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



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

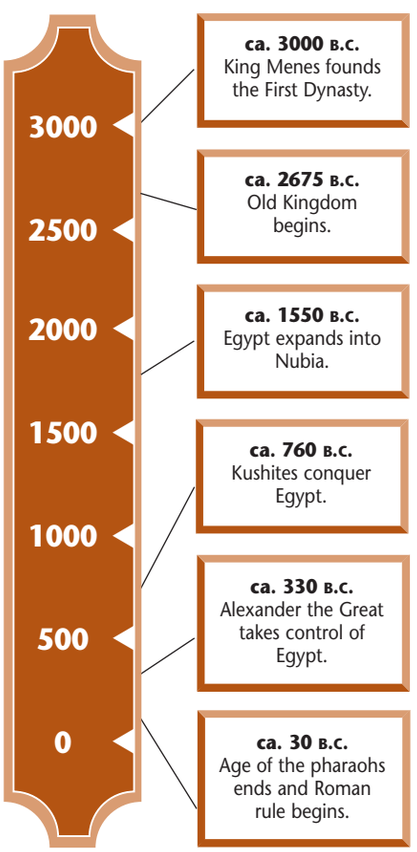
Egyptians were more closely related to Semitic and west Asian peoples than to black Africans. Also, in their art, Egyptians portrayed blacks as distinctly different from themselves.

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

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.

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.

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

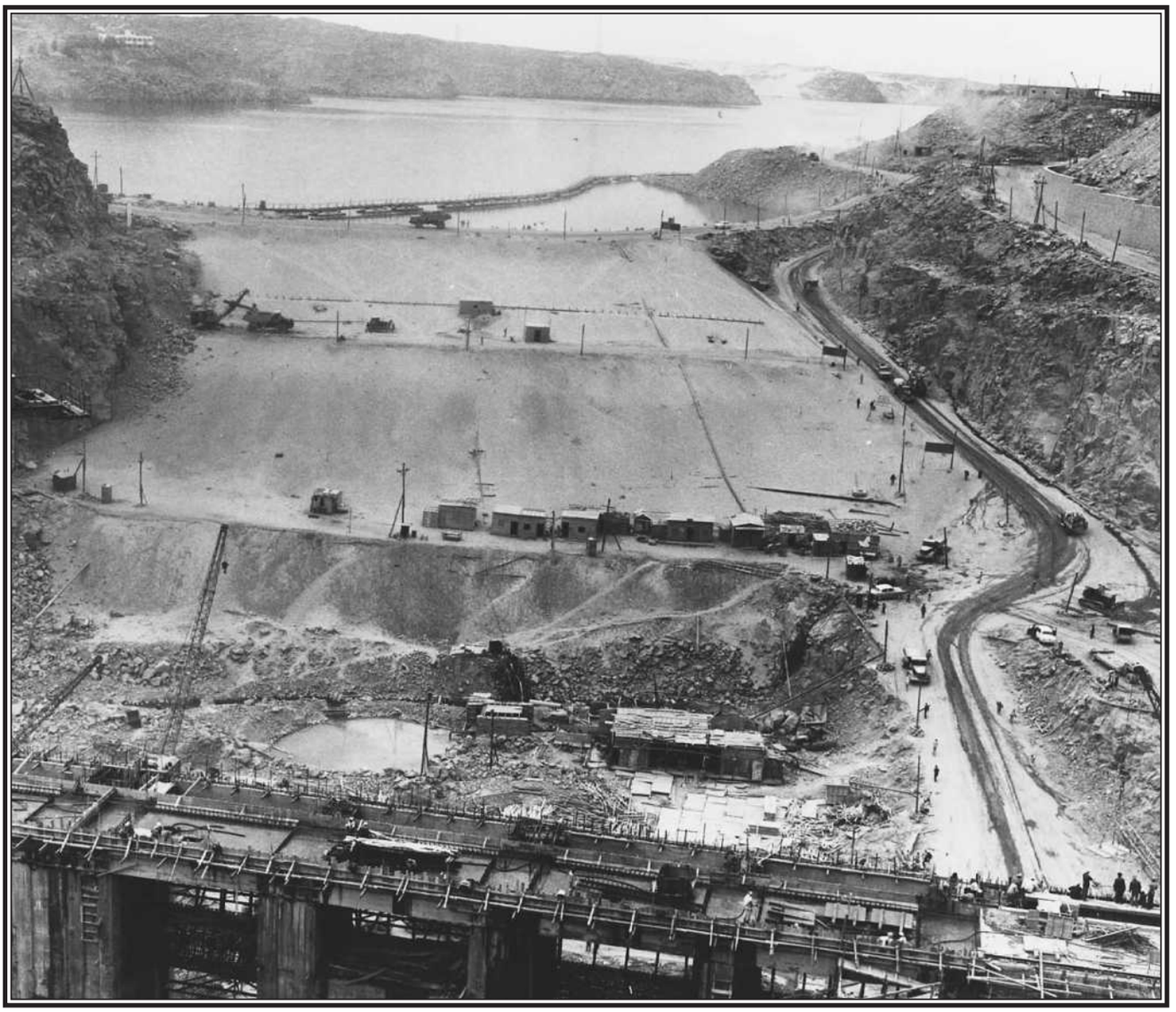
* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

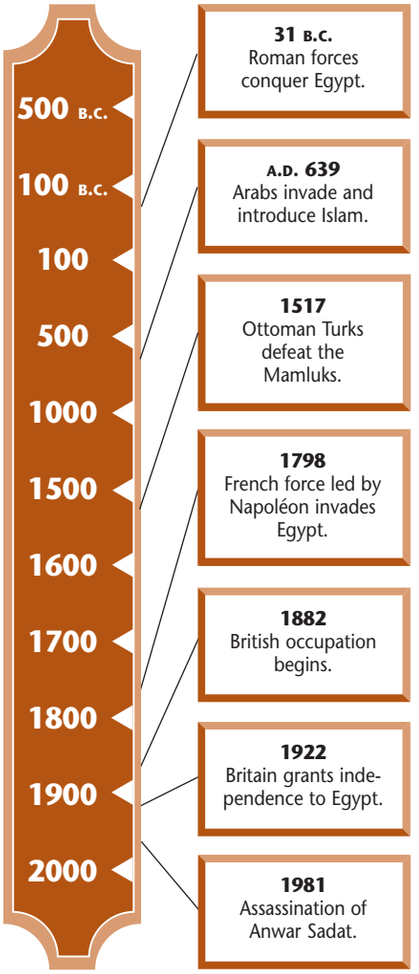
through 1340, was an impressive warrior who finally defeated the Mongol army in 1299. He also restored Cairo after the city was nearly destroyed by an earthquake in 1303.

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.



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%

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.

* **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

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

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 though 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

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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.

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

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **depose** to remove from office

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

Olaudah 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**.)

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

Eritrea

Eritrea, 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

* **autonomy** independent self-government

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

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.

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

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.**)

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

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.*

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.

* **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

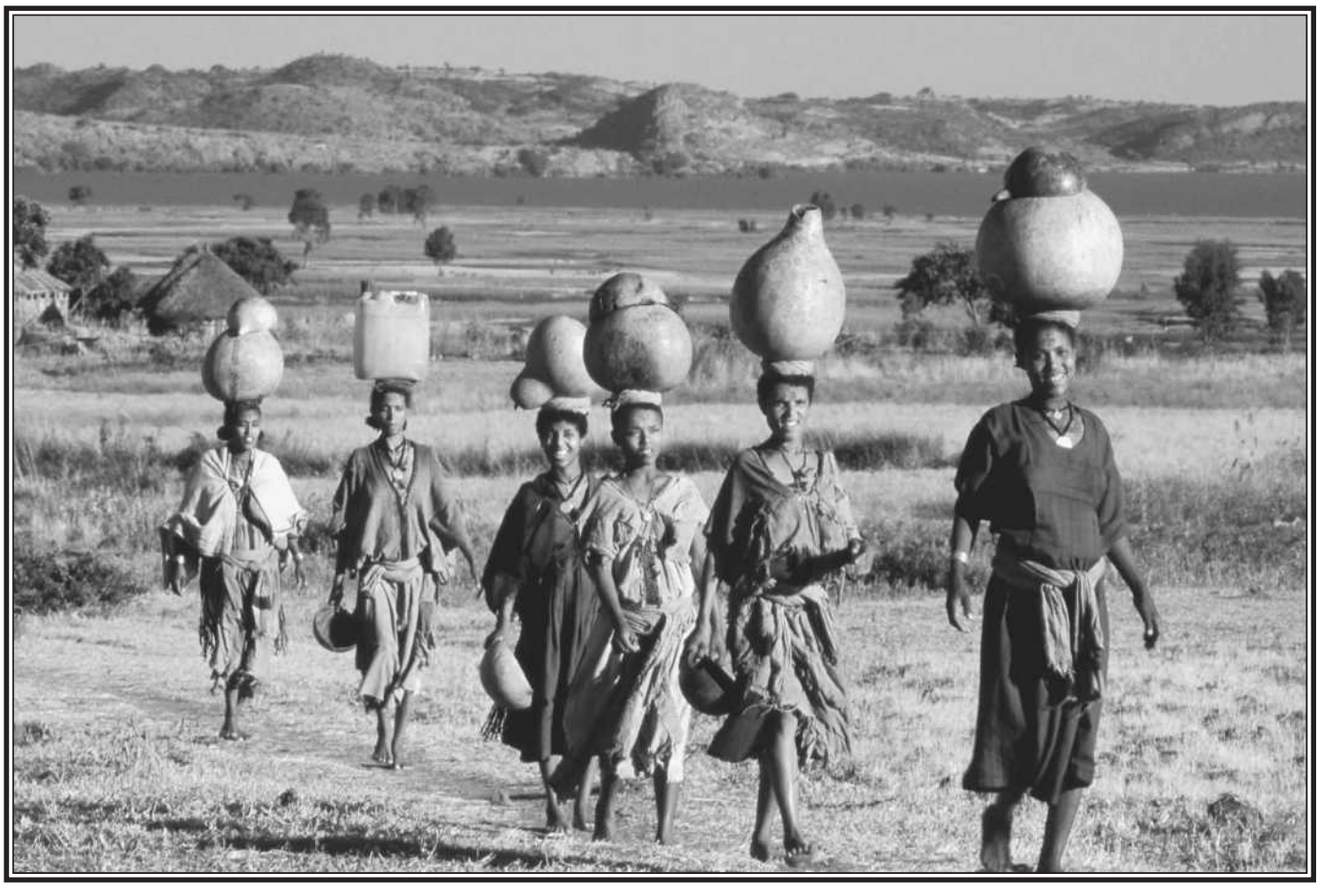
HISTORY

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.

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

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-

* **myrrh** substance used in perfume and incense



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

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.

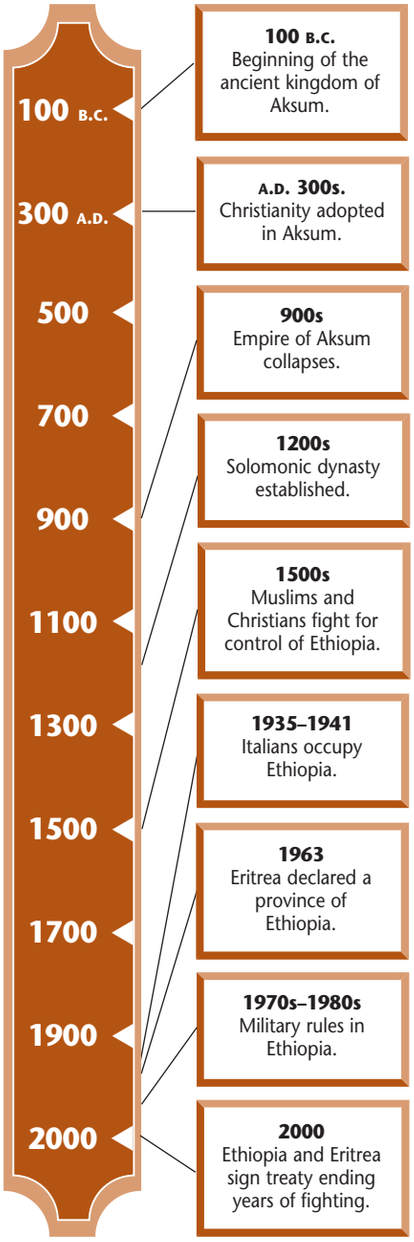
HISTORY SINCE 1600

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-



* **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

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

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.

See map in Humans, Early (vol. 2).

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

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.

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

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

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.

See color plate 5, vol. 2.

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,

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.

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.

* **patriarch** head of an Orthodox Christian church

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

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

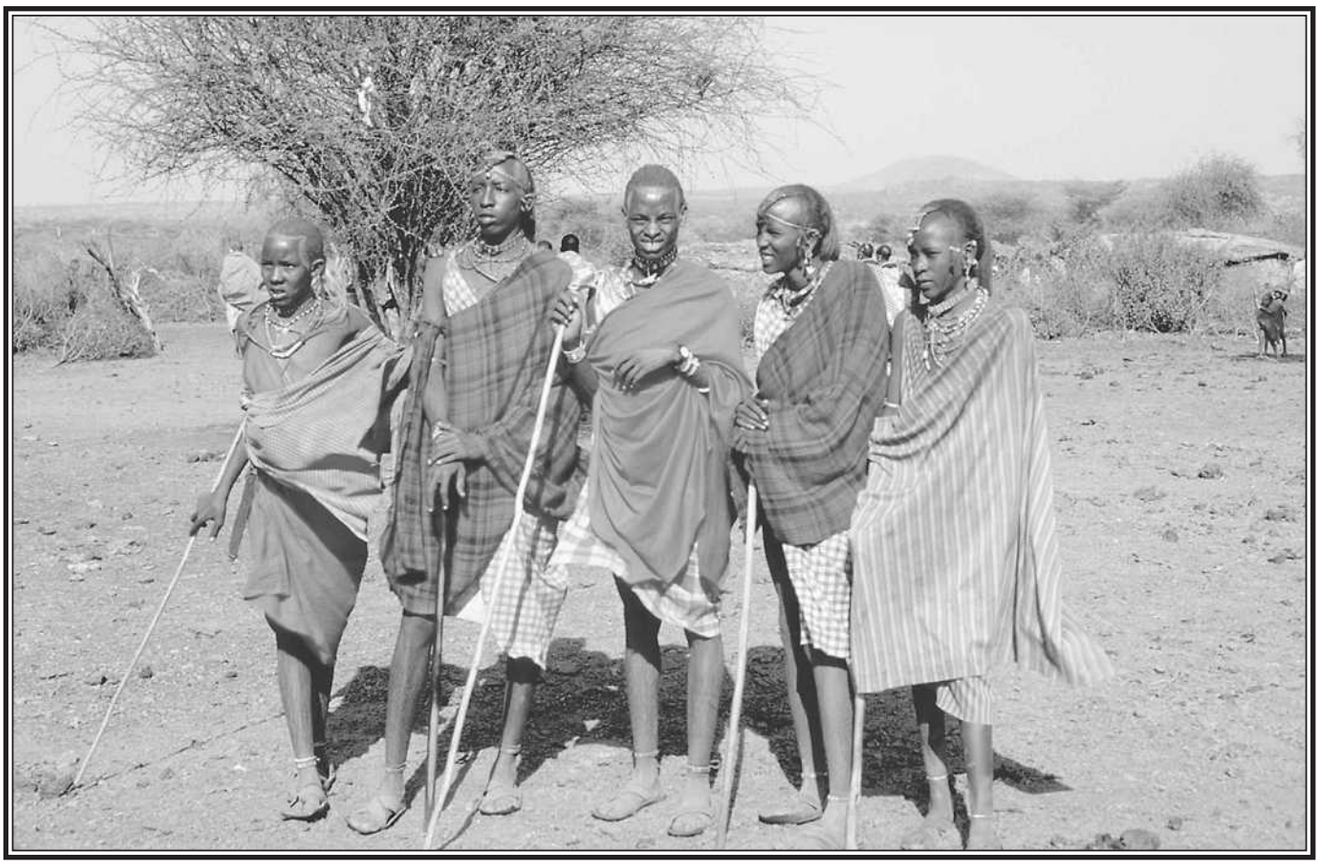
* **autonomy** independent self-government

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



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

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

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."

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

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.

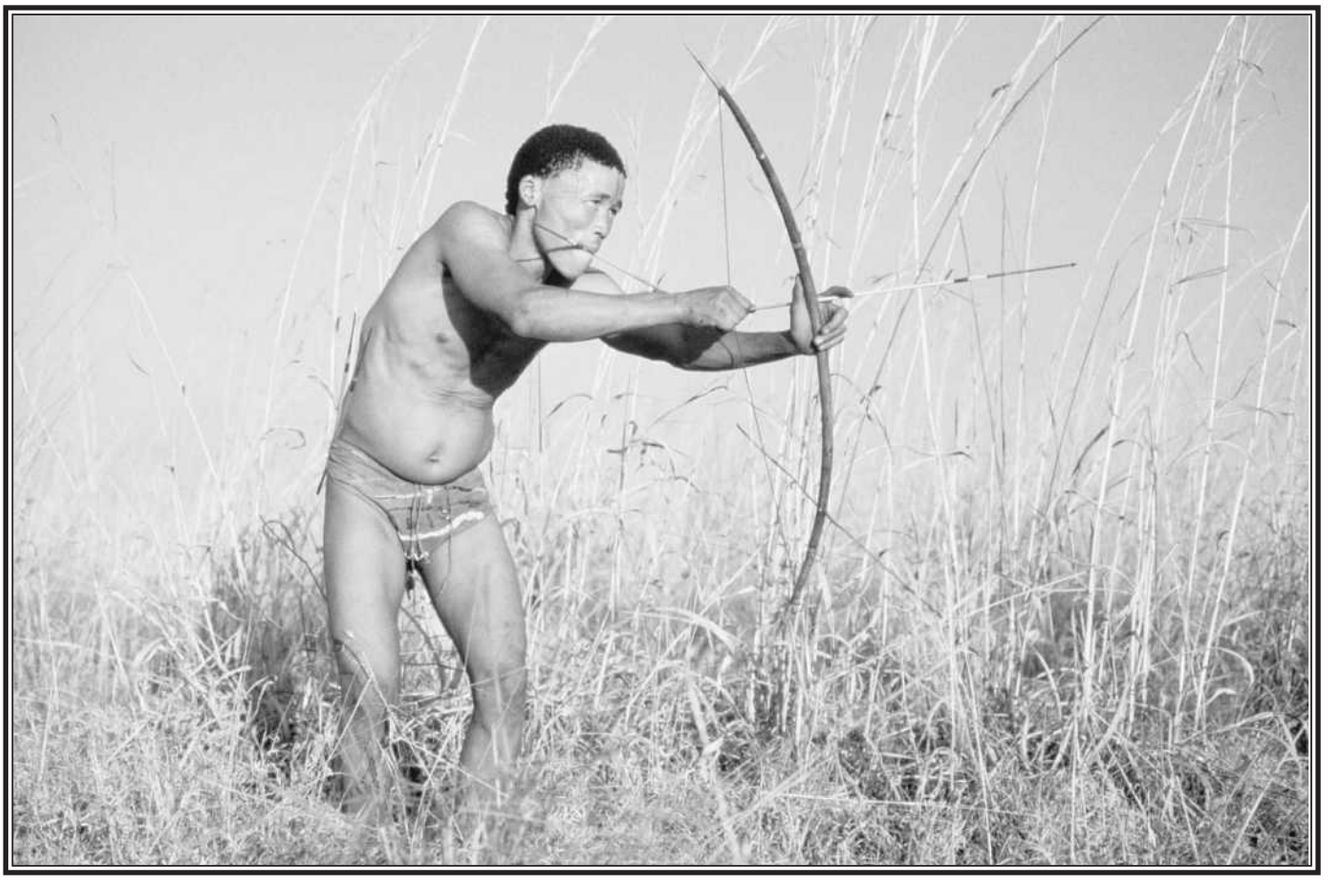
Many of the towns of central Africa began as settlements created by colonial authorities to meet the needs of government and industry. The towns have been laboratories of multiethnic social life. They have attracted migrants of many ethnic backgrounds who speak a variety of languages. Townspeople learn to communicate in a common language,

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 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

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 *1 million*	Camel herders; famous warriors; Muslims
AKAN	Ghana and Ivory Coast	Niger-Congo/Kwa *10 million*	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 *Over 20 million*	See AMHARA
ARABS	North and Northeast Africa	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic *Many millions*	See ARABS IN AFRICA

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
ASANTE (Ashanti)	Ghana	Niger-Congo/Kwa *3 million*	See ASANTE
AZANDE (Niam-Niam)	Sudan and Central African Republic	Niger-Congo/ Adamawa-Ubangi *1 million*	Village farmers; several kingdoms based on 1800s conquest of neighbors; famed for use of witchcraft
BAGGARA	Sudan	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic *1 million*	Herders and cotton farmers; main Arab cluster of Sudan; at war with southern Sudan peoples
BAMBARA (Bamana)	Mali	Niger-Congo/Mande *5 million*	See BAMBARA
BASOTHO	Lesotho and S. Africa	Niger-Congo/S. Bantu *8 million*	See SOTHO
BAULE	Ivory Coast	Niger-Congo/Kwa *2 million*	Cocoa farmers; main group of Ivory Coast; known for art
BEDOUIN	Countries of the Sahara desert	Afro-asiatic/Semitic *Several million*	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 *3 million*	Village farmers and mine workers; once a powerful kingdom, weakened today
BERBERS	Northwest Africa & Sahara	Afro-Asiatic/Berber *20 million*	See BERBERS
CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE	South Africa	Afrikaans (dialect of Dutch)	See CAPE COLOURED PEOPLE
CHAGA (Chagga)	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu *2 million*	Irrigation coffee farmers on Mt. Kilimanjaro; many chiefdoms
CHEWA (Cewa, Maravi)	Malawi and Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *3 million*	Main group of Malawi mixed farmers; Christian since 1800s
CHOKWE (Cokwe)	Angola and the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *1 million*	Farmers, traders, and miners
COMORIANS (Ngazija)	Comoro Islands	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu; *0.5 million*	Fishermen, farmers, and traders; one of clusters of Swahili peoples COPTS Egypt See COPTS

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 *2 million*	Cattle herders of southern Sudan; at war with Baggara Arabs of northern Sudan
DOGON	Mali	Niger-Congo/Voltaic *.5 million*	Mountain farmers; famed for their traditional religion and art
DYULA (Diula)	Mali, Senegal, and Guinea	Niger-Congo/Mande *3 million*	Long-distance traders in western Africa; Muslims
EDO (Bini)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa *Over 1 million*	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 *3 million*	Farmers and fishermen; many kingdoms; migrated from Nigeria in 1200s
FANG (Pahouin)	Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, and Cameroon	Niger-Congo/Bantu *2 million*	Cluster of farming groups along Atlantic coast; famed for art
FANTI (Fante)	Ghana	Niger-Congo/Kwa *Over 1 million*	Cluster of farming, fishing, and trading groups along coastal Ghana
FON (Dahomeans)	Bénin and Togo	Niger-Congo/Kwa *3 million*	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 *Over 25 million*	See FULANI
GANDA (also BaGanda, MaGanda)	Uganda	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu *5 million*	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 *6 million*	See GIKUYU
GURAGE	Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic *3 million*	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 *1 million*	Today second most important group in Ethiopia
HAUSA	Nigeria, Niger, Chad, and Bénin	Afro-Asiatic/Chadic *40 million*	See HAUSA
HAYA	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu *2 million*	Farmers west of Lake Victoria; several once-powerful kingdoms abolished in 1962
HEHE	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *1 million*	Farmers and cattle keepers; powerful kingdom in 1800s
HERERO	Namibia	Niger-Congo/ Southwestern Bantu *100,000*	See HERERO
IBIBIO	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa *5 million*	Forest farmers, traders, and oil-workers in Niger Delta
IGBO (Ibo)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa *25 million*	See IGBO
IJO (Ijaw, Kalabari)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Kwa *0.6 million*	Fishermen, traders, and oil-workers in Niger Delta
KALENJIN	Kenya	Nilo-Saharan/ Eastern Sudanic *3 million*	Large cluster of farming and herding groups of Rift Valley, including Maasai
KAMBA (also WaKamba, MKamba)	Kenya	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu *4 million*	Mixed farmers; former ivory traders
KANURI	Nigeria, Chad, and Cameroon	Nilo-Saharan/Saharan *6 million*	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 *Over 3 million*	Farmers and traders
KONGO	Democratic Republic of the Congo and Republic of the Congo	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *6 million*	See KONGO

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
KPELLE	Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone	Niger-Congo/Mande *2 million*	Rice farmers; largest group of Liberia
LOZI (Rotse)	Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *0.7 million*	Herders and farmers; core of powerful Barotse kingdom from 1800s until today
LUBA	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *5 million*	Powerful kingdom from 1700s to 1900s; Major group of Congo; known for art
LUHYA (Luhia)	Kenya	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu *3 million*	Cluster of farming groups of western Kenya
LUNDA (Aluund)	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola, and Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *4 million*	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 *7 million*	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 *20 million*	Cluster of peoples in West Africa, originally from upper Niger river
MANGBETU	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Nilo-Saharan/Central Sudanic *1 million*	Cluster of farming kingdoms and chiefdoms; renowned wood and metal artists
MBUNDU (Ovimbundu)	Angola	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *4 million*	Mixed farmers; largest group of southern Angola
MENDE	Sierra Leone	Niger-Congo/Mande *3 million*	Rice farmers; many chiefdoms; today engaged in civil war
MERINA (Hova)	Madagascar	Malayo-Polynesian/ Malagasy *4 million*	Central group of Madagascar; powerful kingdom that ruled over most of island, 1817-1895
MOSSI (Moose)	Burkina Faso	Niger-Congo/Voltaic *7 million*	See MOSSI

Ethnic Groups and Peoples

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
NDEBELE (Matabele)	Zimbabwe and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *2 million*	See NDEBELE
NUBA	Sudan	Kordofanian *0.2 million*	People of Nuba mountains of southwest Sudan; victims of warfare by Baggara Arabs
NUBIANS	Sudan	Nilo-Saharan/ Eastern Sudanic *1 million*	Most northern non-Arab group of Nile Valley
NUER	Sudan	Nilo-Saharan/ Eastern Sudanic *1 million*	Cattle herders; today in conflict with Baggara Arabs
NYAMWEZI	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *3 million*	Farmers; ivory traders during 1800s
NYANJA (Nyasa)	Malawi and Mozambique	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *4 million*	Mixed farmers; largest group of southern Malawi
NYORO	Uganda	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu *2 million*	Powerful kingdom of central Uganda from 1400s until 1900
OROMO (Galla)	Ethiopia, Kenya, and Somalia	Afro-Asiatic/South Cushitic *15 million*	Cluster of farmers and herders of southern Ethiopia
PYGMIES	Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of the Congo, Gabon, and Cameroon	Various *0.2 million*	See PYGMIES
RUNDI	Burundi	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu *6 million*	Peoples of Burundi, divided into Hutu and Tutsi; see BURUNDI
RWANDA (Ruanda)	Rwanda	Niger-Congo/ Interlacustrine Bantu *6 million*	Peoples of Ruanda, divided into Hutu and Tutsi; see RWANDA
SARA	Chad	Nilo-Saharan/ Central Sudanic *2 million*	Farmers and traders; main people of Chad
SENUFO	Mali and Ivory Coast	Niger-Congo/Voltaic *4 million*	Farmers, famed for art
SHONA	Zimbabwe	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *8 million*	See SHONA

Name(s)	Country	Language/Population	Notes
SIDAMO	Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/ Central Cushitic *4 million*	Cluster of farming peoples of southwest Ethiopia
SOMALI	Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya	Afro-Asiatic/ Eastern Cushitic *15 million*	Herders; main peoples of Somalia, divided into many hostile clans and confederations
SONGHAI (Songrai)	Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso	Nilo-Saharan/Songhai *3 million*	Farmers of Niger valley; descendants of powerful kingdom of the 1400s–1500s; Muslims
SONINKE (Sarakole)	Mali and Senegal	Niger-Congo/Mande *2 million*	Farmers, descendants of medieval empire known as Ghana; Muslims
SOTHO (Basotho)	Lesotho and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *8 million*	Farmers and mine workers in South Africa; people of Lesotho kingdom
SUKUMA	Tanzania	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *3 million*	Mixed farmers
SUSU	Guinea and Guinea-Bissau	Niger-Congo/Mande *2 million*	Farmers; main people of Guinea; Muslims
SWAHILI	Kenya and Tanzania	Niger-Congo/ Northeastern Bantu *0.3 million*	See SWAHILI
SWAZI	Swaziland and South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *3 million*	Farmers and mine workers in South Africa; powerful kingdom since 1700s
TEMNE	Sierra Leone and Guinea	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic *2 million*	Rice farmers
THONGA (Tsonga)	South Africa and Mozambique	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *5 million*	Farmers and herders; living with Shangaan immigrants from Zululand, South Africa
TIGRE	Eritrea and Ethiopia	Afro-Asiatic/Semitic *4 million*	Main people of Eritrea; language is Tigrinya
TIV (Munshi)	Nigeria	Niger-Congo/Benue-Congo *4 million*	Farmers; main group of east-central Nigeria
TONGA	Zambia	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *1 million*	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 *7 million*	Main people of Botswana; formerly several kingdoms
TUAREG	Mali and Niger	Afro-Asiatic/Berber *1 million*	See TUAREG
TUKULOR	Senegal and Mauritania	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic *2 million*	Farmers and herders; Muslims
TUMBUKA	Zambia and Malawi	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *3 million*	Mixed farmers
VENDA	South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *1 million*	Farmers of northern Transvaal
WOLOF (Jolof)	Senegal and Gambia	Niger-Congo/ Western Atlantic *4 million*	See WOLOF
XHOSA (Xosa)	South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *8 million*	See XHOSA
YAO	Tanzania, Mozambique, and Malawi	Niger-Congo/Central Bantu *2 million*	Farmers; former traders of slaves and ivory; Muslims
YORUBA (Nago)	Nigeria and Bénin	Niger-Congo/Kwa *25 million*	See YORUBA
ZULU	South Africa	Niger-Congo/ Southern Bantu *10 million*	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.

* **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

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.

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

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

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

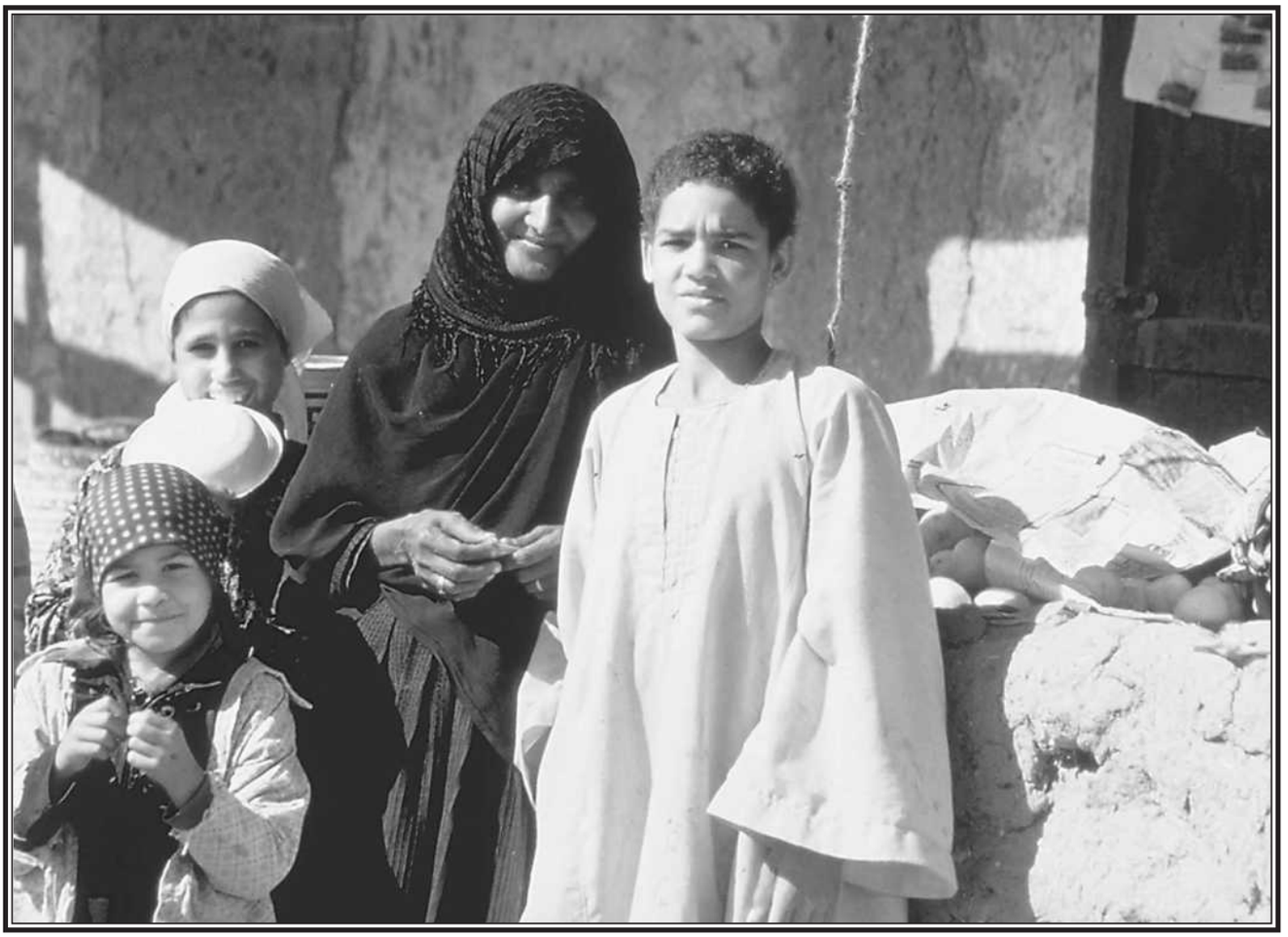
Islam has had a profound influence on family life in some parts of Africa. It has affected not only the ARABS, the majority population in North Africa, but also such non-Arab peoples as the BERBERS.

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

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

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**.)

* **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

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

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

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.

* **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.

In this festival in Swaziland, participants perform a Reed Dance to celebrate the harvest.

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**.)

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

Fishing

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.

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

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.

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

* **tuber** edible root

* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

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.

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

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.

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.

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,

* **sorghum** family of tropical grasses used for food

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

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

See color plate 6, vol. 4.

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.

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.

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,

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.

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.

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

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.

See color plate 14, vol. 1.

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.

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****.*

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.

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.

See color plate 6, vol. 1.

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

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

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.

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

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

In recent years rapid deforestation* has called attention to the impact of humans on African forests. However, the phenomenon of deforestation

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

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.

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

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

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 nonnative 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

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

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

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-

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.

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.

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

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 contol 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

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

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.

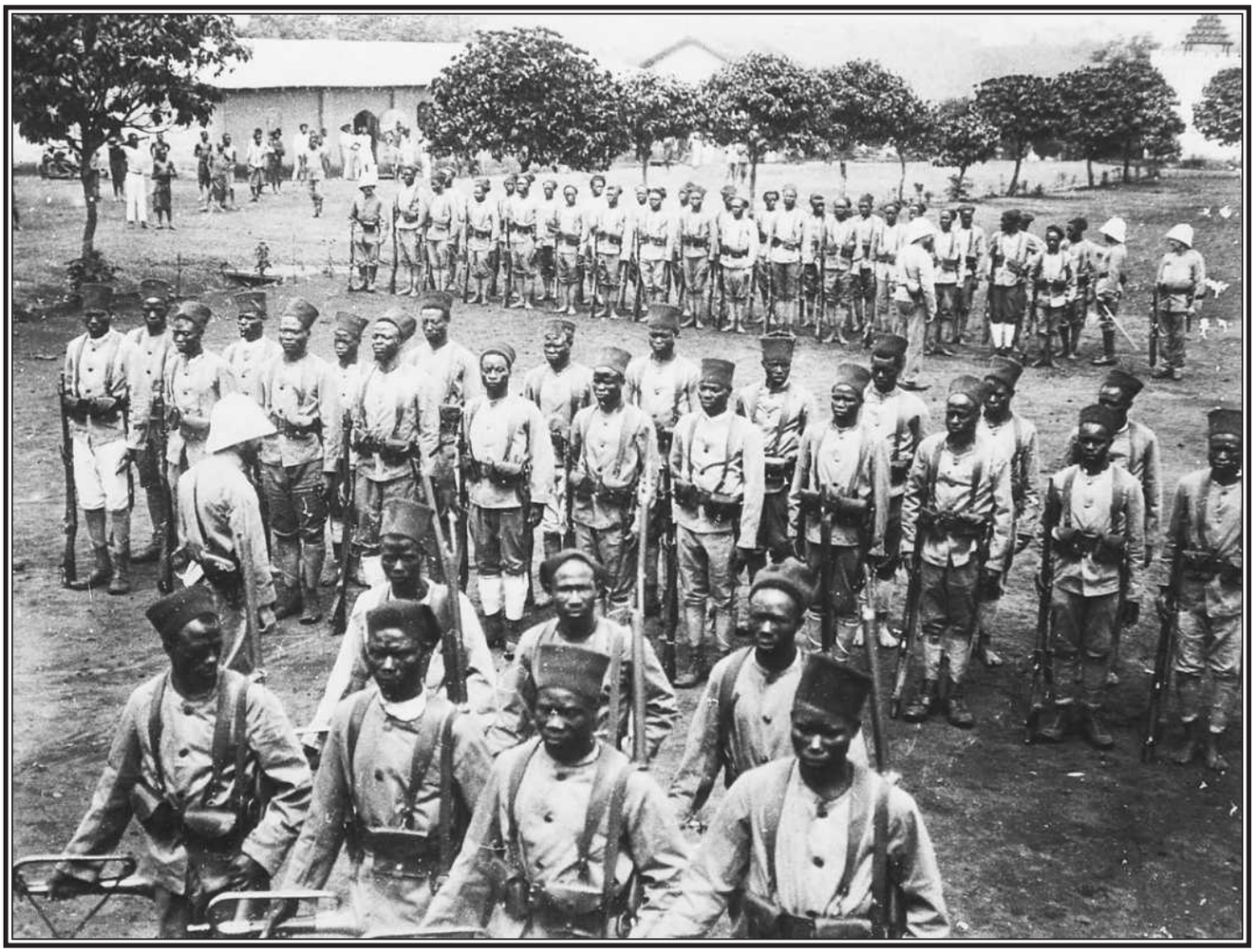
By 1920 the military had brought the region entirely under French control, and the borders of the colonies were fixed. Each colony had its own capital city, budget, and lieutenant governor. Reporting to the lieutenant governor were regional officials called commandants, who had responsibility for managing 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.

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



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.

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 Fulflde (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

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

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.

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

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.

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-

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.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

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.

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%

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**.)

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

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.

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

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.

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

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.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control of a stronger state

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.

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

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

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."

Games

See *Sports and Recreation*

Garvey, Marcus Mosiah

1887–1940
Pan-African leader

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.

* **charismatic** having a special charm or appeal that arouses public loyalty and enthusiasm

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

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*.

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

* **cassava** starchy root plant; source of tapioca

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.

* **literacy** ability to read and write

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

* **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.

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

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

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.

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

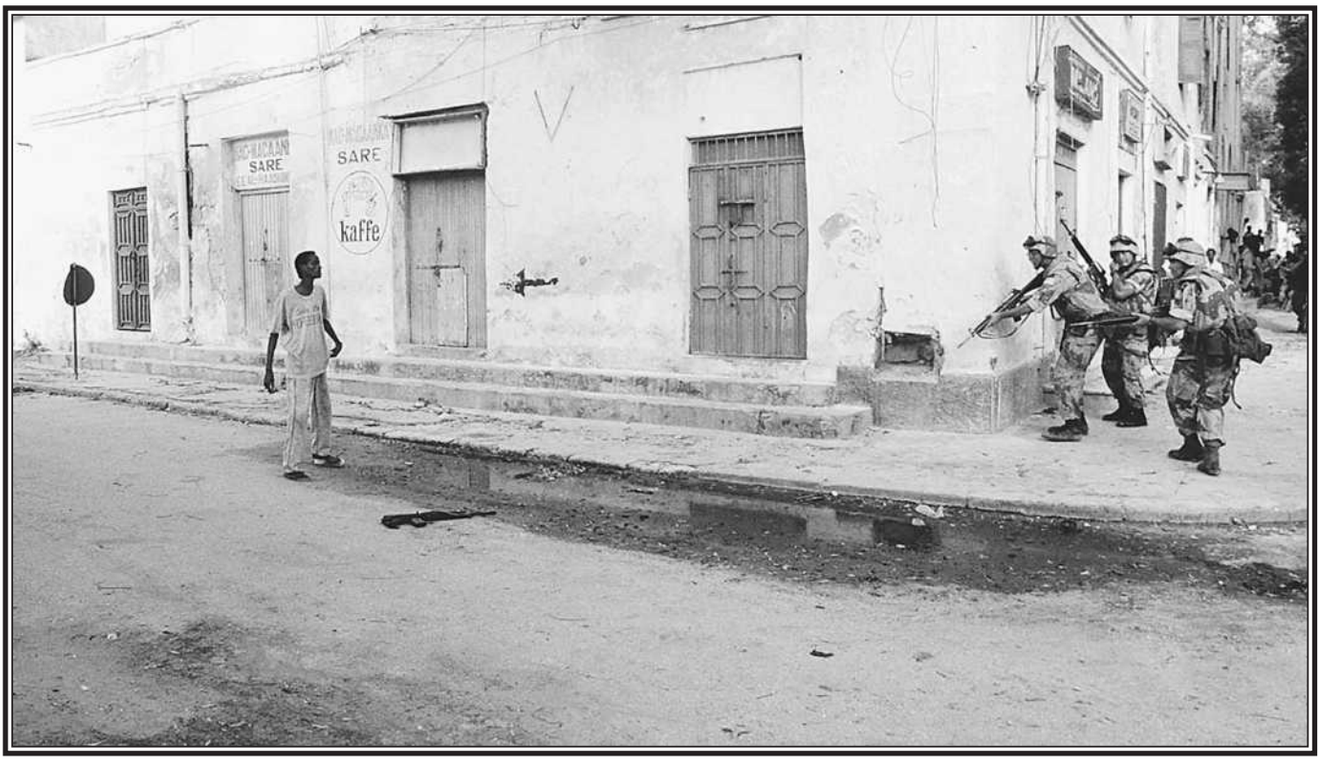
Genocide refers to the deliberate and systematic killing of an ethnic, racial, or religious group. In recent years Africa has had a tragic history of genocide and violence. Millions of lives have been lost in civil wars and other conflicts, while tens of millions of Africans have had to flee their homelands 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



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

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.

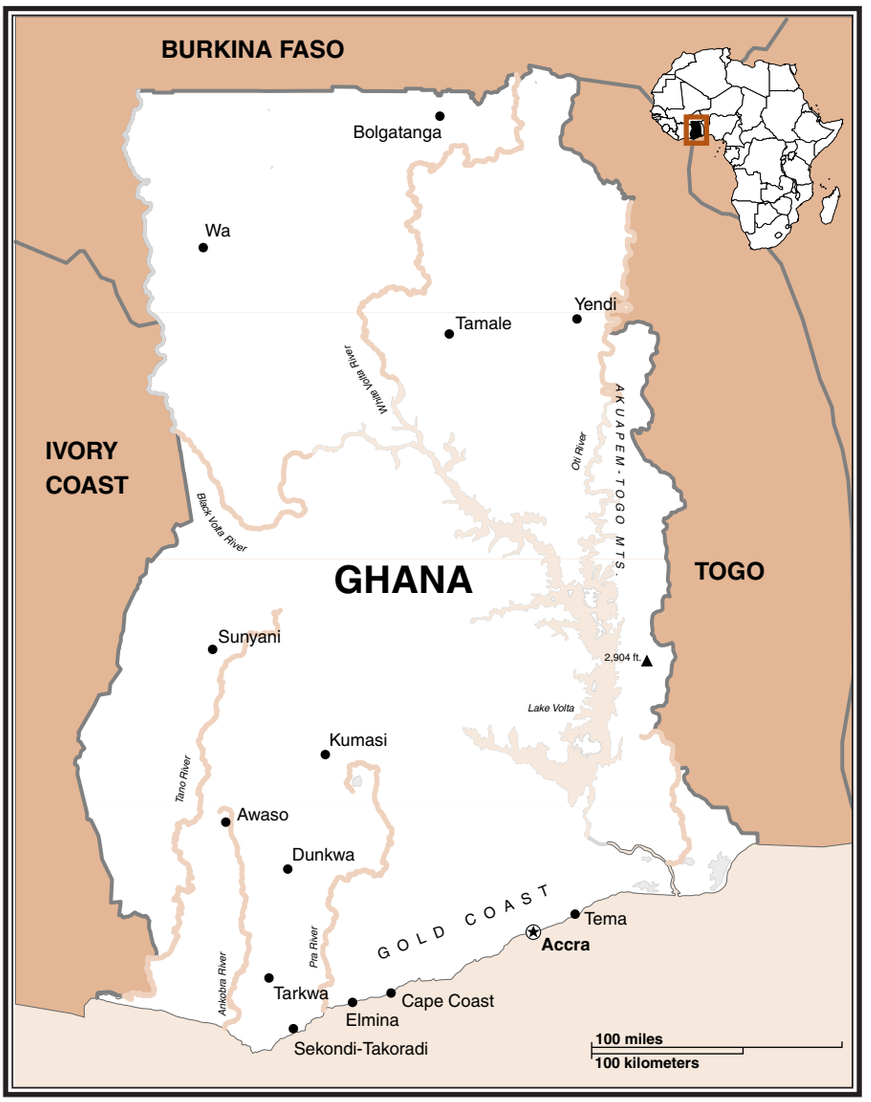
* **sub-Saharan** referring to Africa south of the Sahara desert

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.

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

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,



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.

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.

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

* **deciduous** referring to trees and shrubs that lose their leaves

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

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*.

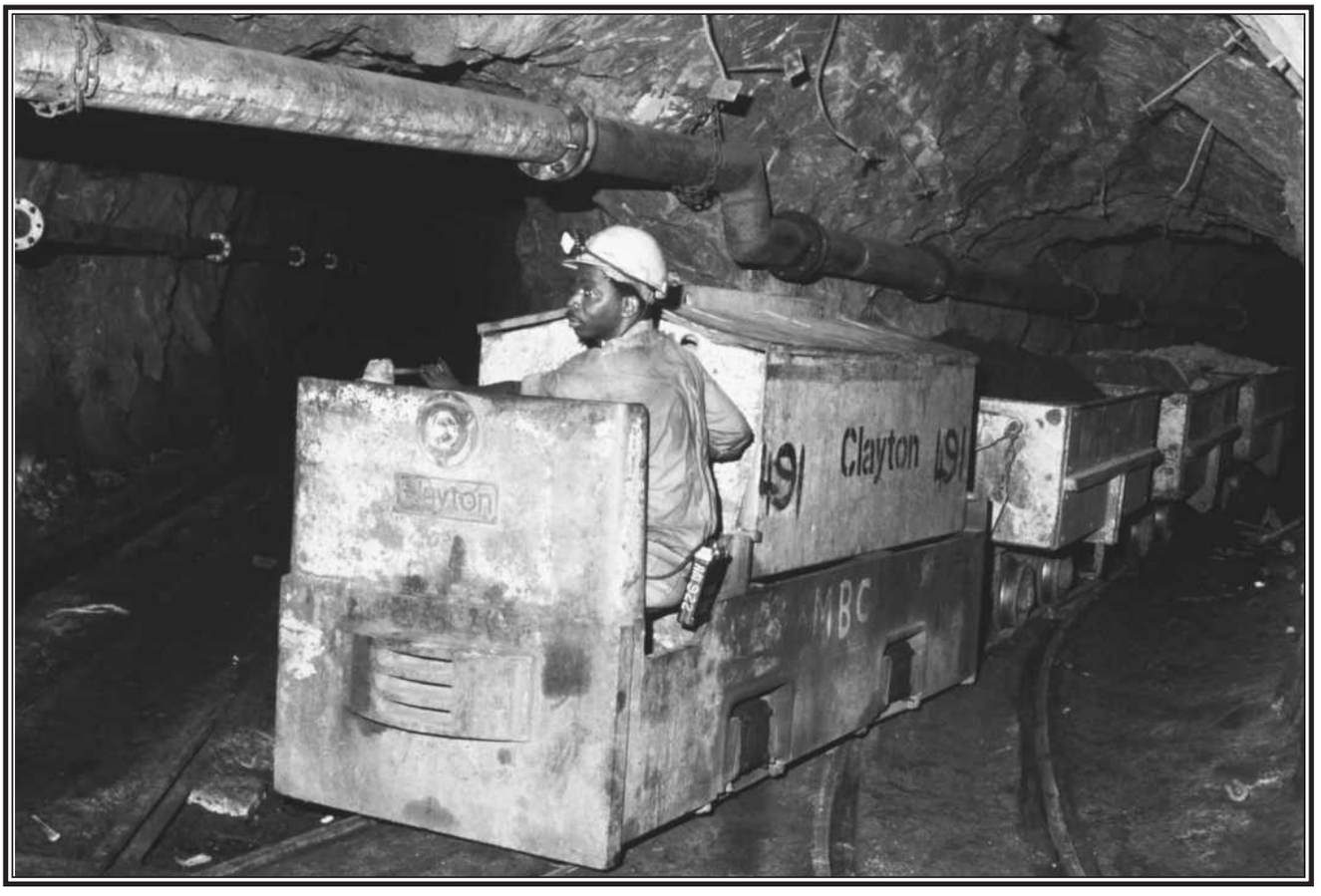
The new military regime sought to undo many of Nkrumah's policies. It sold off the state-owned businesses and devalued Ghana's currency so that its exchange rate reflected its actual value in world markets. When elections were held in 1969, Kofi BUSIA became prime minister in the restored civilian government. 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

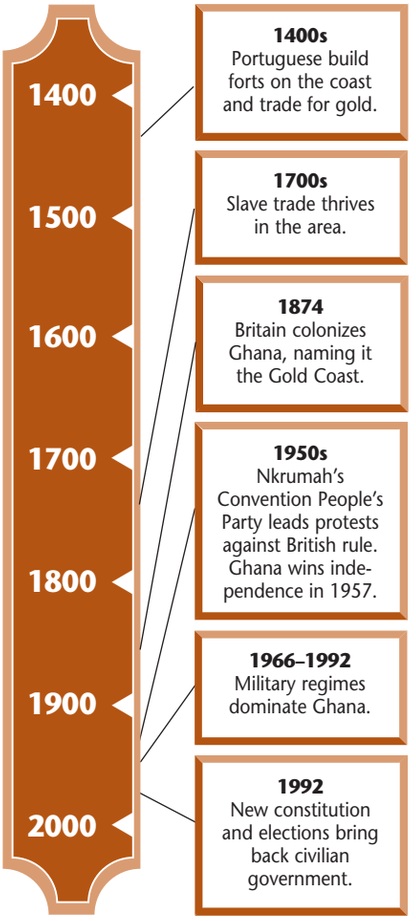
* **nationalize** to bring land, industries, or public works under state control or ownership

* **sector** part; subdivision of a society

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



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.



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 Bulsa, 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

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.

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

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**.)

* **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

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

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*.

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

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.

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

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.

* **humanitarian** referring to a concern for human welfare

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.

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.

* **Soviet Union** nation that existed from 1922 to 1991, made up of Russia and 14 other republics

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

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** native to a certain place

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.

* **pastoralist** someone who herds livestock

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.

* **domestication** adapting or training plants or animals for human use

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.

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

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 abound 4500 B.C. led to the development

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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

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.

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

* **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

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-

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

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**.)

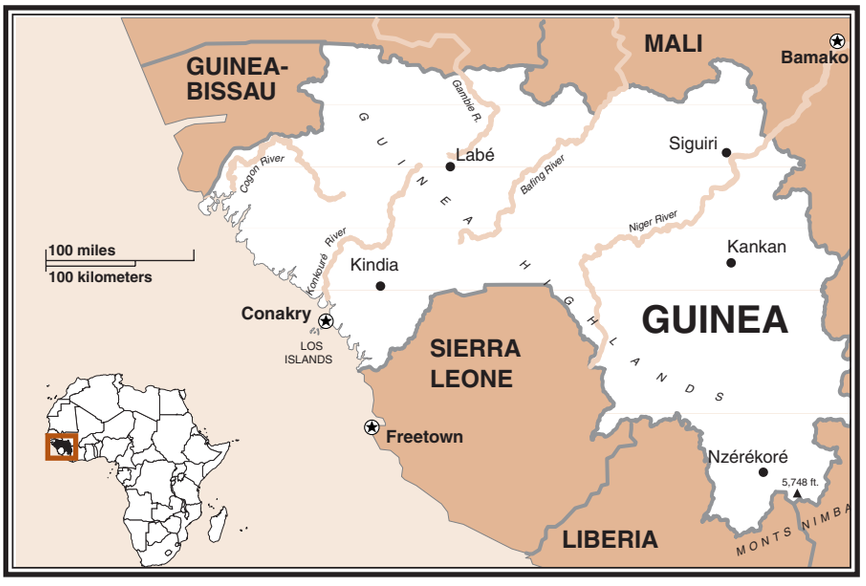
* **capital** money invested to start a business or industry

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



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, Beninoise, 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%

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.

* **privatize** to transfer from government control to private ownership

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.

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

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

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.

* **estuary** wide part of a river where it nears the sea

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

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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

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 Malan 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

* **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.

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.

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 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.

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

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.

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.

* **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

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

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.

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. 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.

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

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.

* **taboo** religious prohibition against doing something that is believed to cause harm

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.

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

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.

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.

* **sector** part; subdivision of society

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.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

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

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.

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.

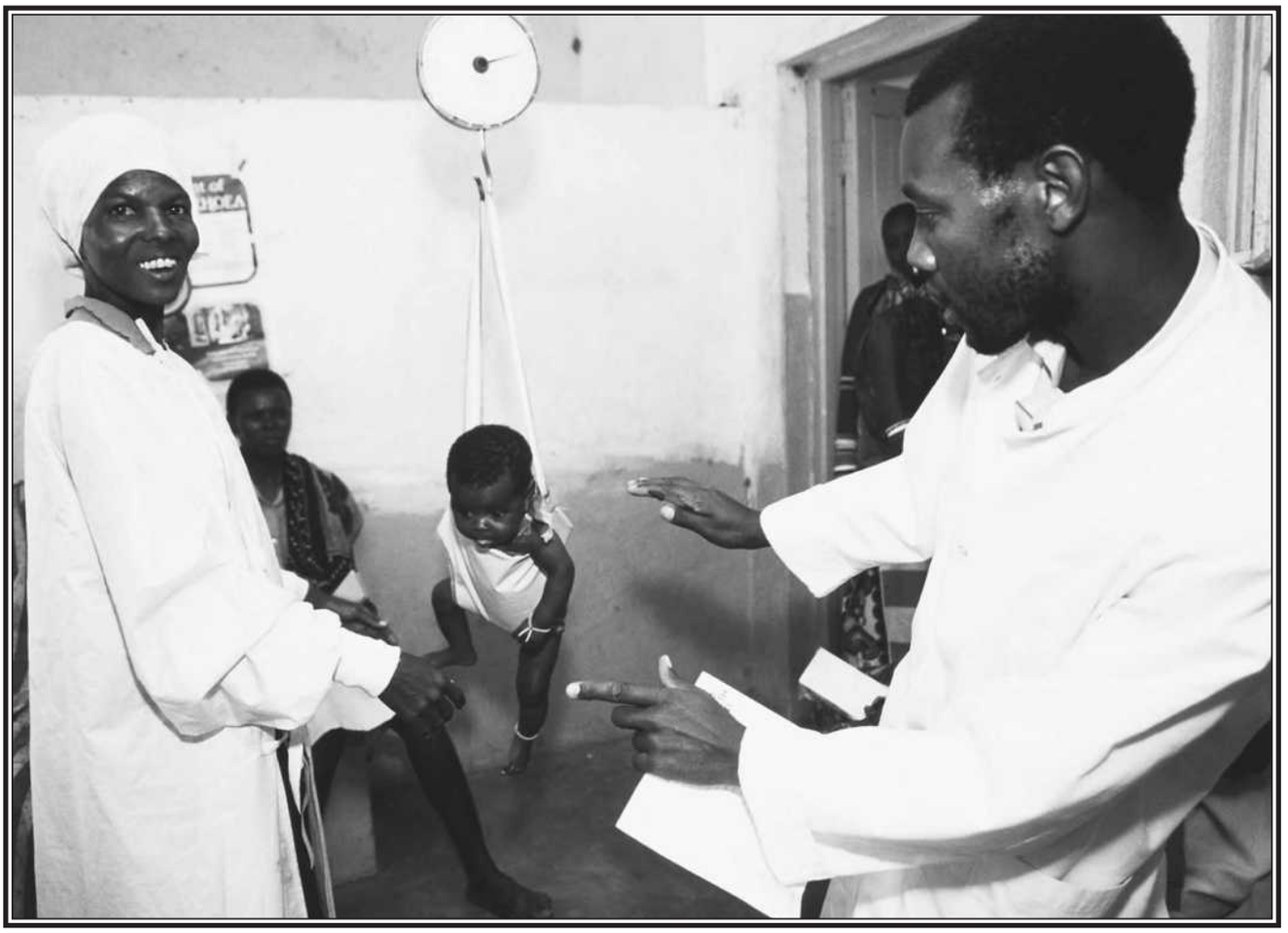
Hospitals. There are several levels of hospitals in Africa, but the most important are district hospitals. These are usually located in the small urban centers of basically rural districts. Although some district hospitals are badly understaffed and may have no doctor, an increasing number have more 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.

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.

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.

* **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

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.

* **domestication** adapting or training plants or animals for human use

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

* **pastoralism** way of life based on animal herding

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.

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.

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

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.

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

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.

* **ceramics** pottery, earthenware, or porcelain objects; the manufacture of such objects

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

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

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.

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.

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,

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

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 BORNU 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.

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.

* **staple** major product of a region; basic food

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.

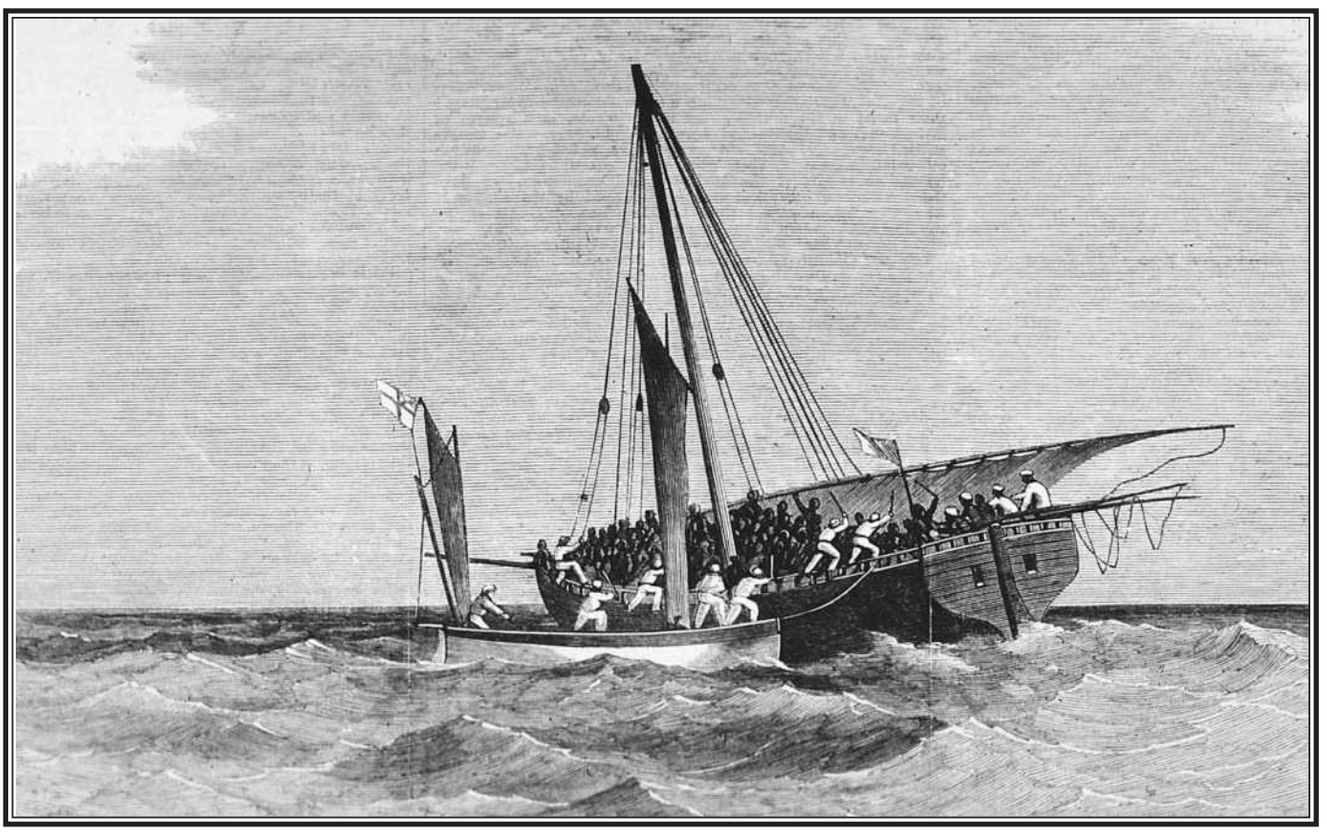
The slave trade had a significant impact not only on African coastal states but also on people far inland. Slaves came from as far away as the central Congo River basin and the BAMBARA states along the Middle Niger River, more than 600 miles from the coast. In all areas touched by the trade, slave raids 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.

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.

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



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.

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

See color plate 7, vol. 2.

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-

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.

sentatives 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

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.

See color plate 9, vol. 2.

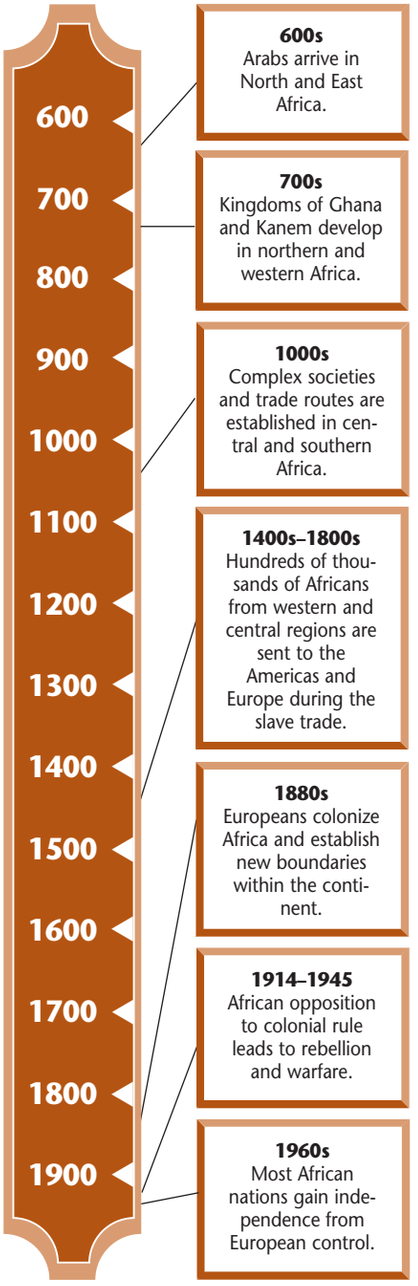
Postcolonial Politics. Following independence most African nations faced serious political problems. Traditional forms of authority had been destroyed during the colonial era, leaving most countries with a system of government inherited from their European rulers. The system, run by

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



*** 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 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

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.

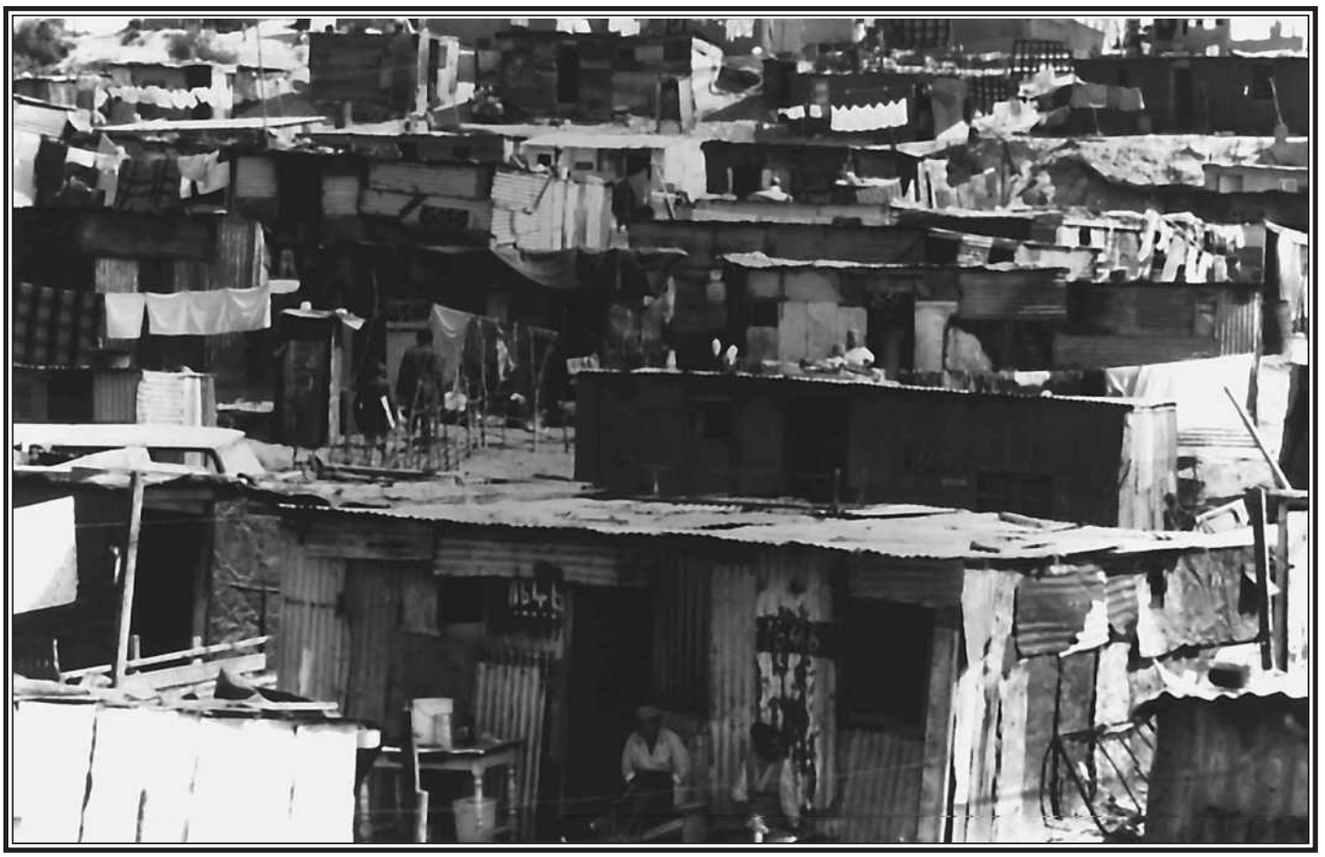
* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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.



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

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

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.

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

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

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

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.

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

* **species** narrowest classification of organisms; subgroup of genus

HUMAN ANCESTORS

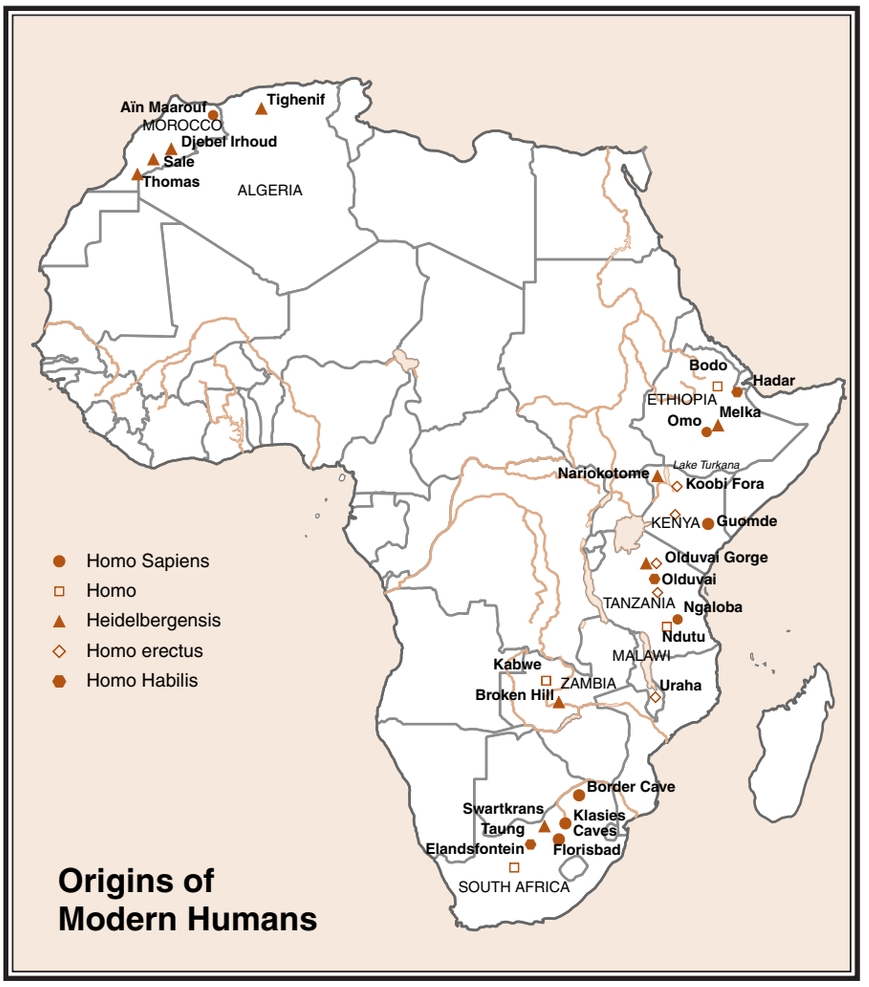
Darwin did not believe that humans were descended from apes and monkeys. Instead he believed that both humans and apes descended from a common ancestor. Fossil evidence suggests that a variety of apelike creatures, now extinct, lived in Africa at least 25 million years ago. In time, the first human ancestors 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.

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

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*



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.

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.

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.

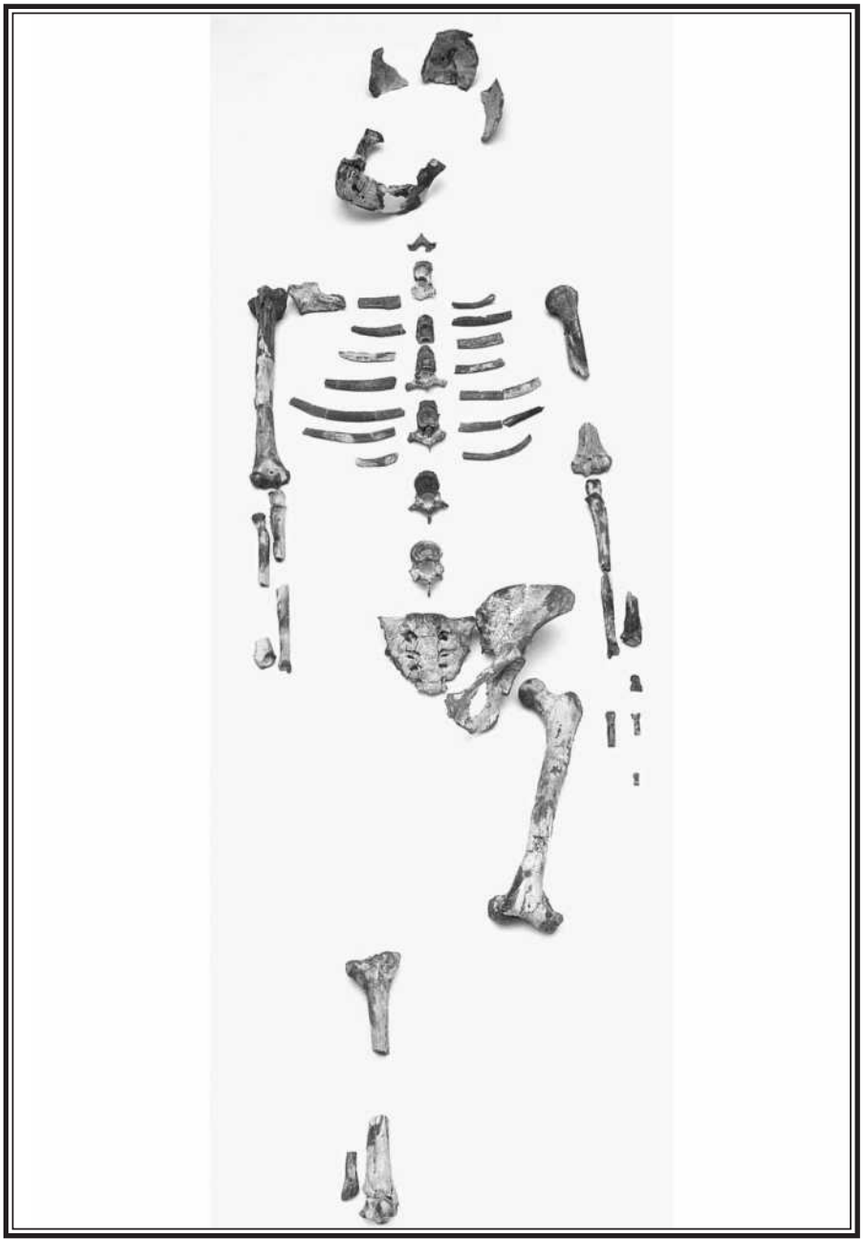
The earliest of these humans that scientists know about is called *Homo habilis,* which means "handy man." The name was given in 1964 by the paleoanthropologist Louis B. Leakey, who discovered some of the first *Homo* fossils in Tanzania's Olduvai Gorge along with the oldest recognizable stone tools. 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

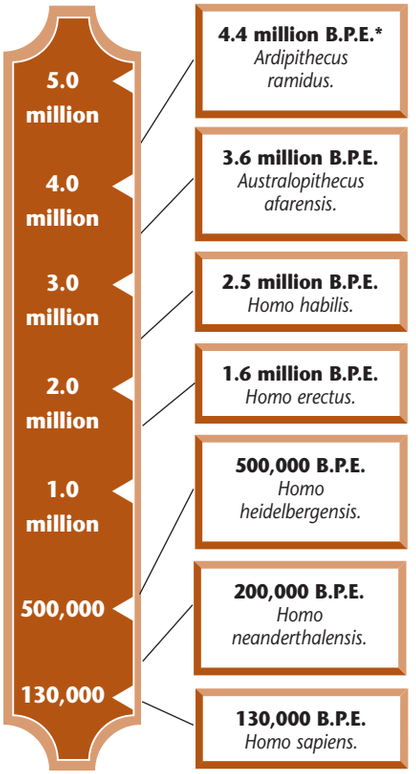
* **genus** classification of plants or animals; may include more than one species



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.



***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.

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.

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**.)

* **DNA** deoxyribonucleic acid, the biological material that carries genetic information from parents to offspring

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

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.

* **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

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.

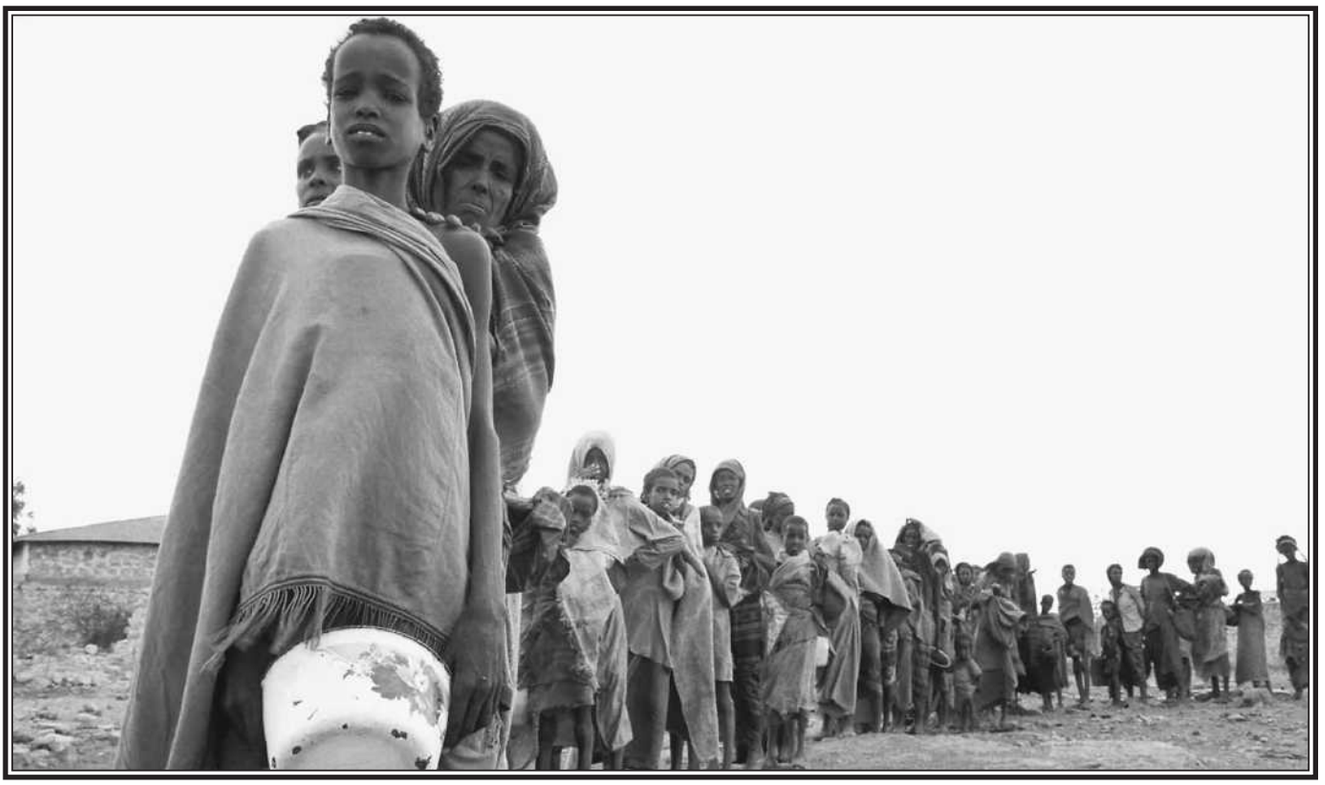
* **siege** attempt to conquer a fortress or town by surrounding it with troops and cutting it off from supplies

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.

* **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



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

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

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.

* **anthropologist** scientist who studies human beings, especially in relation to social and cultural characteristics

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.

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

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**.)

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

Igbo

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**

* **population density** average number of people living in a given area

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

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.

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

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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.

* **repression** putting down forcibly

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.

* **abolitionist** person committed to ending slavery

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.

* **exploitation** relationship in which one side benefits at the other's expense

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.

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.

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-

* **imperialist** relating to the political, economic, and cultural domination of one country or region by another

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.

* **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

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.

* **commonwealth** group of independent states associated by choice and linked by common interests and objectives

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

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

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 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.

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

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.

* **hierarchical** referring to a society or institution divided into groups with higher and lower levels

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.

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

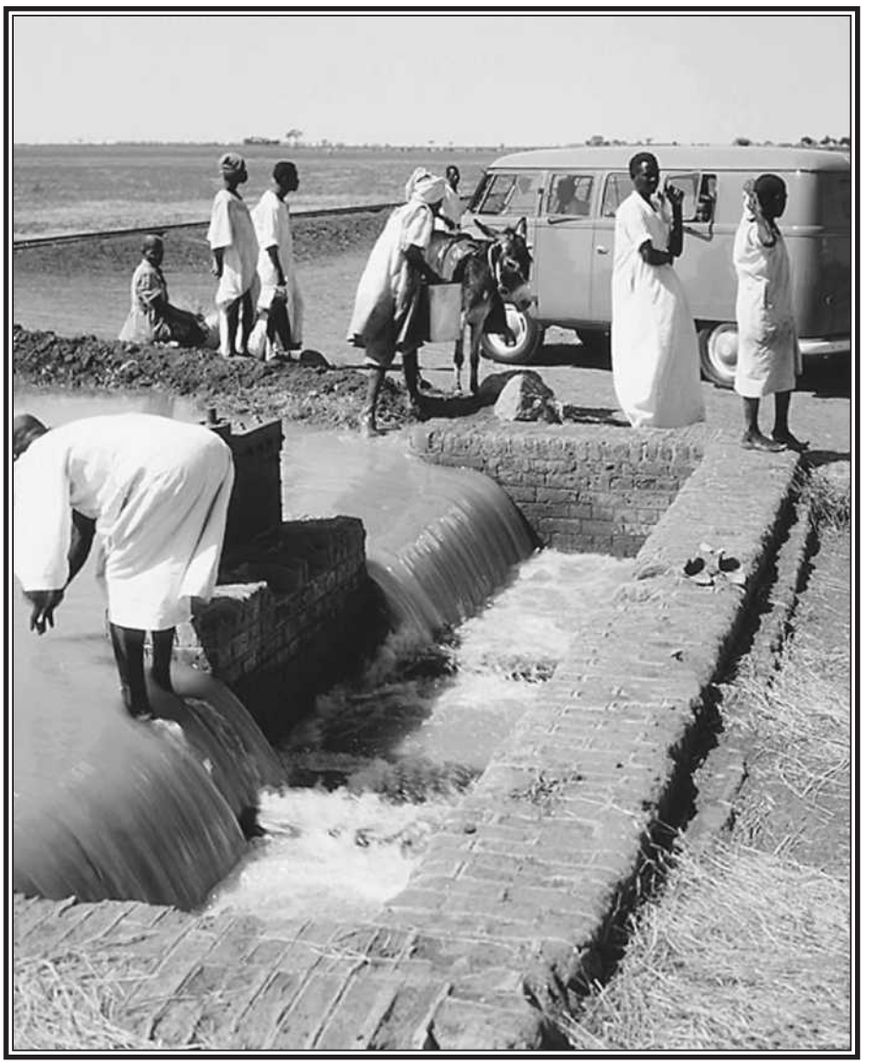
Irrigation and Flood Control

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.



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

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.

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 artifical 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.

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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

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.

See color plate 14, vol. 1.

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.

See color plate 7, vol. 4.

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 northeastern KENYA. Nomadic Somali herders spread Islam into the rural inte-

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.*

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.

* **sect** religious group

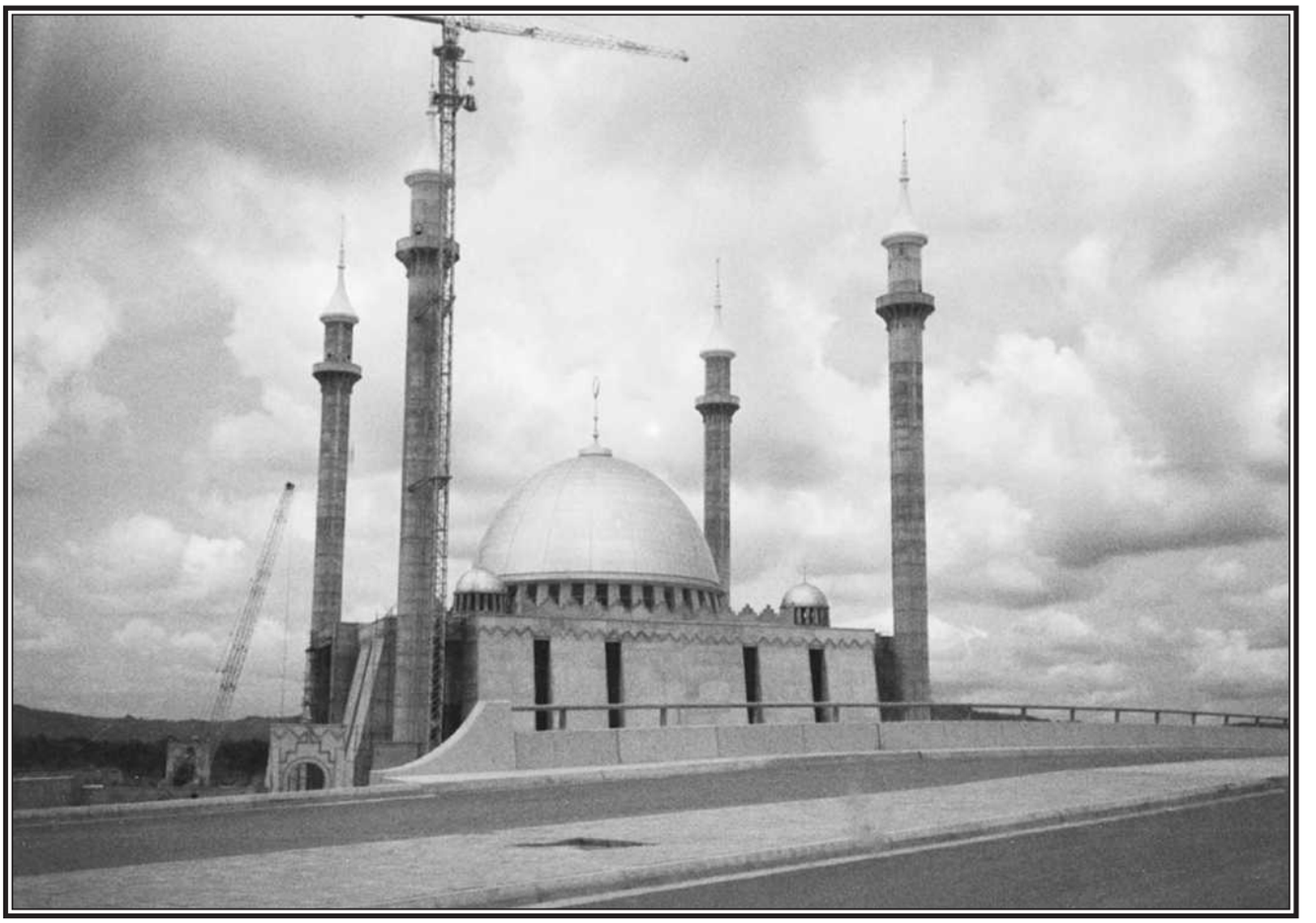
West Africa. The earliest evidence of Muslim contact with West Africa dates to about 800 in the kingdom of Kanem, in what is now CHAD. Islam became the religion of Kanem in 1085, and in other kingdoms farther west, such as Gao in MALI, around the same time. Although Muslims never gained the throne in 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



Introduced to northern Africa in the 600s, Islam gradually spread to parts of West and East Africa. This domed mosque is in Abuja, Nigeria.

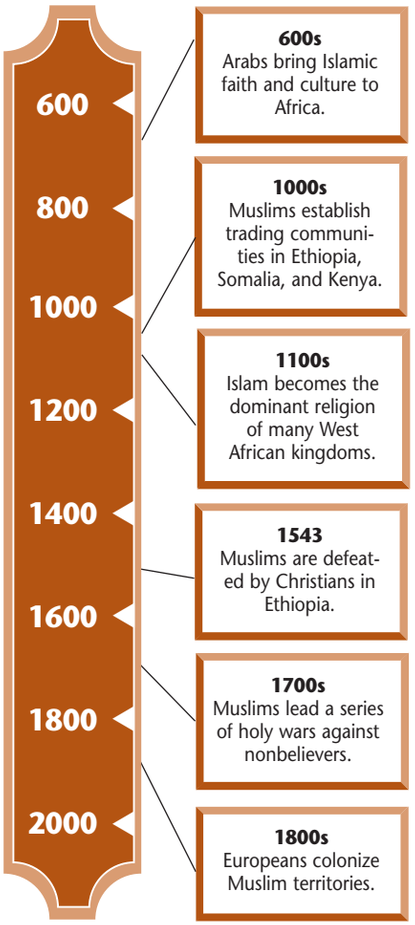
Europeans to consider Muslims to be superior to other Africans. However, when some Islamic leaders opposed colonial rule, Europeans called Islam a superstitious, fanatic, anti-Christian religion.

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



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**.)

* **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

ITALIAN COLONIES

See *Colonialism in Africa*

Ivory Coast

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.

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

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.

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

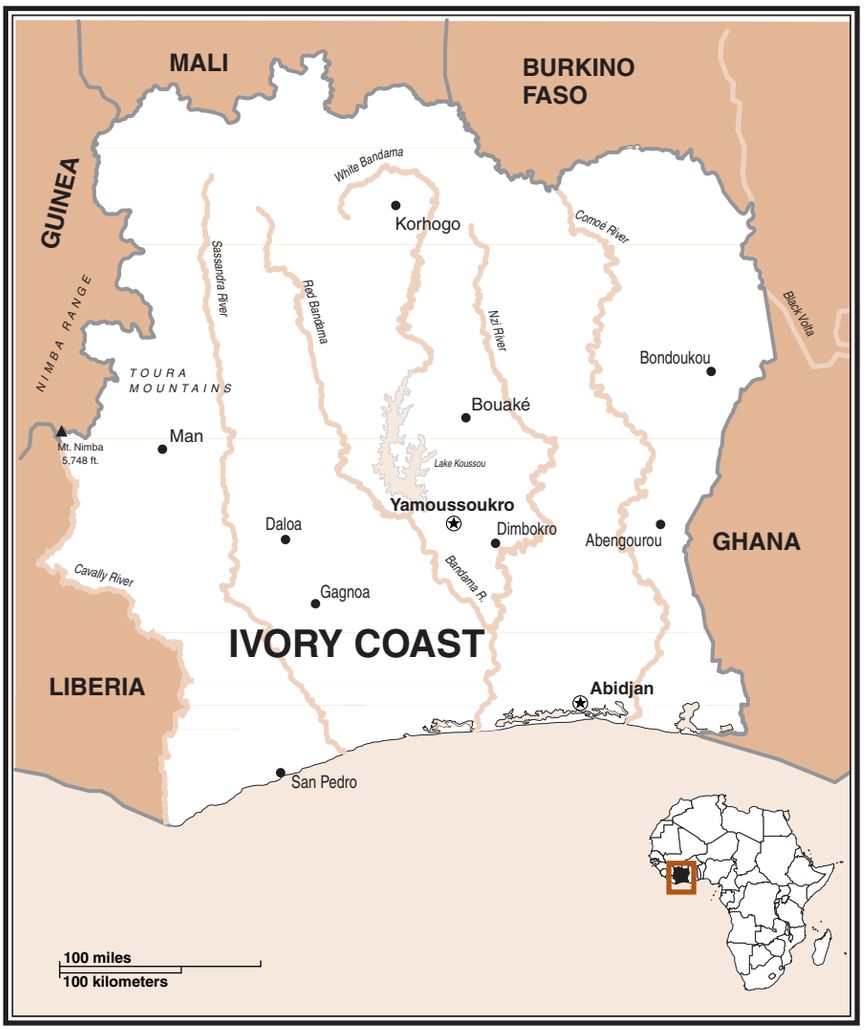
Ivory Coast's tropical climate makes it ideal for agriculture. At one point the country was the world's leading producer of cocoa and the third leading producer of coffee. These crops account for a large percentage of the nation's profits from exports to other countries. However, the world prices of 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 Ivorians.

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-



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

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.

See color plate 14, vol. 3.

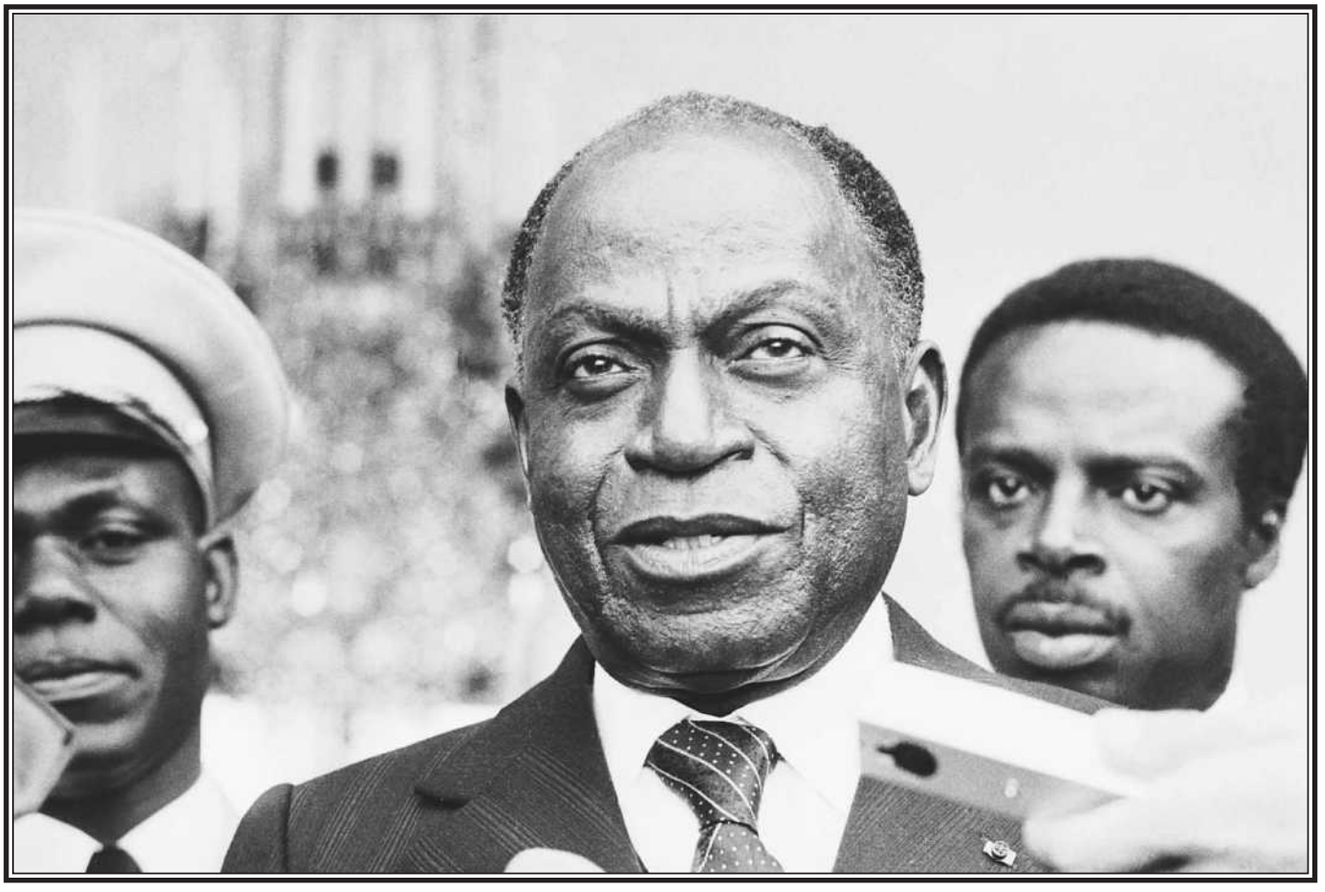
The Rise and Fall of the Economy. After gaining independence most African countries moved rapidly to increase their industry and manufacturing. But Ivory Coast focused on developing its agriculture with modern technology. Ivory Coast's prosperity peaked in 1976–1977, when a frost devastated the coffee 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.

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

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, Gaghoa, 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.

* **capital** money invested to start a business or industry

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.

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

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.

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

PEOPLES AND CULTURES

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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 Ivorians 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

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.

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

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

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

1846–1901
Yoruba historian

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.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a stronger one

Judaism in Africa

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

* **artisan** skilled crafts worker

* **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

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

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.

* **autonomous** self-governing

* **regent** person appointed to rule on behalf of another

Kalahari Desert

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

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

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.

See color plate 2, vol. 4.

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**.)

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

nation's prosperity and stability have been hampered by political corruption, ethnic violence, and a rapidly increasing population.

GEOGRAPHY

Kenya's diverse terrain includes five major regions: the coastal plain, the central highlands, the Rift Valley, the western highlands, and the dry plateaus and mountains of the north and northeast. Along the Indian Ocean coast, dense plant life and mangrove* trees thrive in the heat and humidity. A long coral reef lies just offshore. Moving inland from the coast, the climate turns drier and the vegetation thins out. The land rises gradually up to the central highlands, which feature high plateaus and mountains. Mount Kenya, the highest point in the country, sits in the heart of the central highlands. The lower slopes of Mount Kenya are green and moist, while the upper slopes are capped with icy glaciers. Home to most of the country's people, the central and southern highlands are covered in rich volcanic soils.

* **mangrove** tree found in coastal areas that grows in dense clusters

The Rift Valley, a deep north-south trench, separates the central and western highlands. A string of lakes in the valley provide water and fish to local people. West of the Rift Valley lie the western highlands. Although located on the equator, the region is so high that the climate

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.

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-

* **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).

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.

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

See color plate 10, vol. 1.

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.

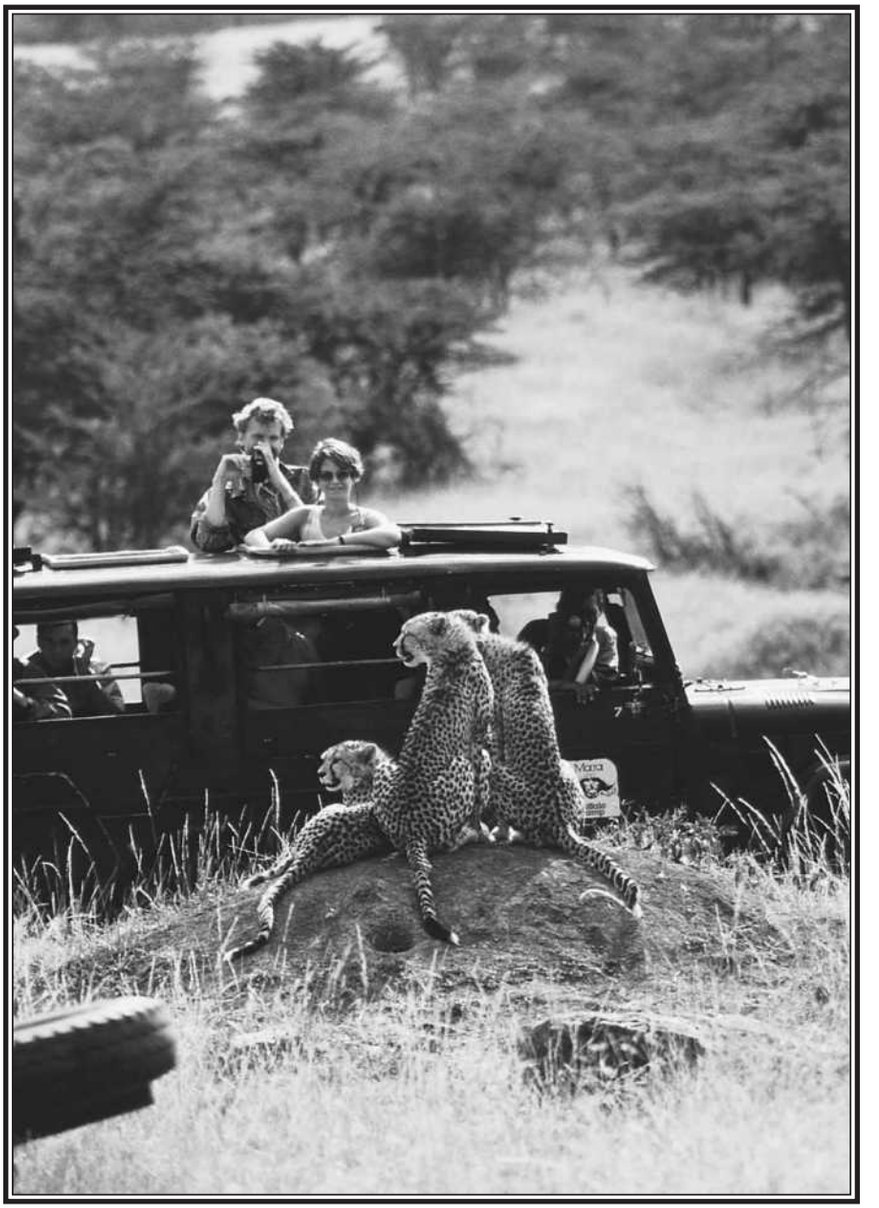
During this period, high prices for coffee and tea and a booming tourist industry made Kenya one of the most prosperous states in Africa. However, it still lacked political stability. As Kenyatta grew older, KANU split into rival factions over the choice of his successor. When he died in 1978, Vice President 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.

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

* **autocratic** ruling with absolute power and authority

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-



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

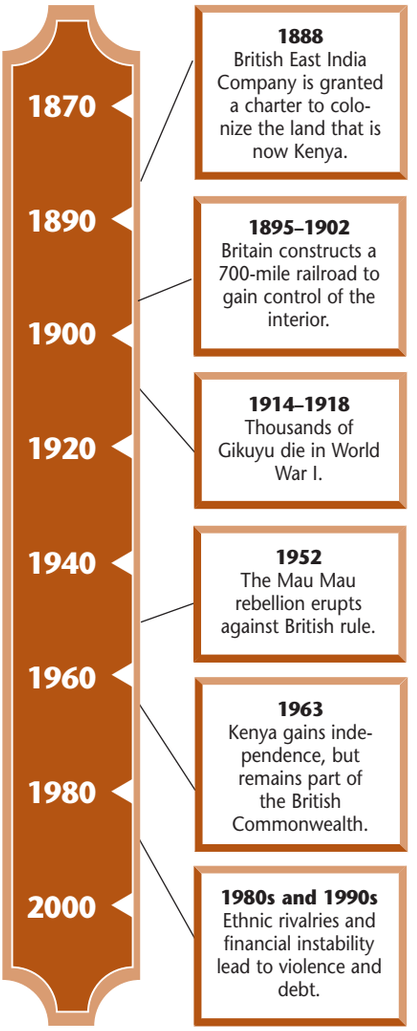
Three quarters of Kenya's people work in agriculture, which produces about one third of the country's gross domestic product (GDP)*. The main export crops are coffee and tea. Other crops include sugarcane, flowers, fruit, vegetables, and sisal—a fiber used in making ropes, mats, and baskets. During the 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.

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

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.

* **hydroelectric** power produced by converting the energy of flowing water into electricity

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



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**.)

* **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

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

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

Jomo Kenyatta, shown here in his ceremonial robes, served as president of Kenya during the early years of independence.

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**.)

* **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

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.

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.

See color plate 4, vol. 1.

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.

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

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**.)

* **fetish** object believed to have magical powers

Kimpa Vita

ca. 1686–1706
African religious leader

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-

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

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.**)

* **heretic** person whose beliefs are contrary to church doctrine

Kings and Kingship

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.

* **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

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-

eties. They have viewed their kings as fathers to their nations or herdsmen 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.

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

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.

* **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 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

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

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

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.

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

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-

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

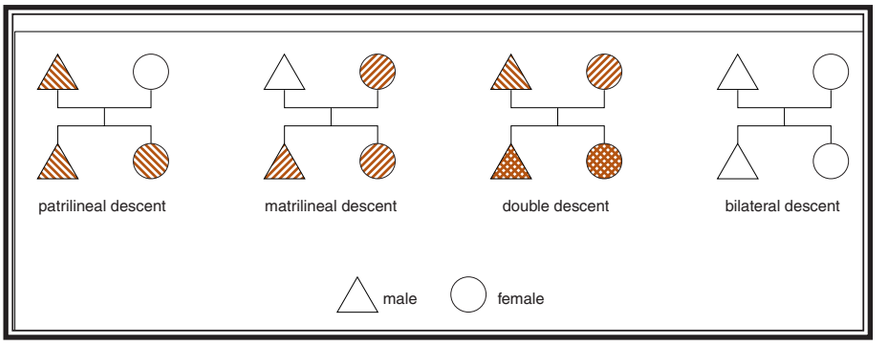


FIGURE 1. Four basic descent systems.

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 women 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-

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.*

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 paying school fees or other expenses. Extended ties of kinship remain a vital part of life in contemporary Africa. (*See also* **Family**, **Marriage Systems**.)

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

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

Kongo

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**.)

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

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, *Monnew: 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

1825–1904
South African political leader

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**.)

* **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

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.

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

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.

* **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

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

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*.

* **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

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.

* **indentured labor** form of labor in which a worker is bound into service for a set time to repay a debt

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 setters. 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.

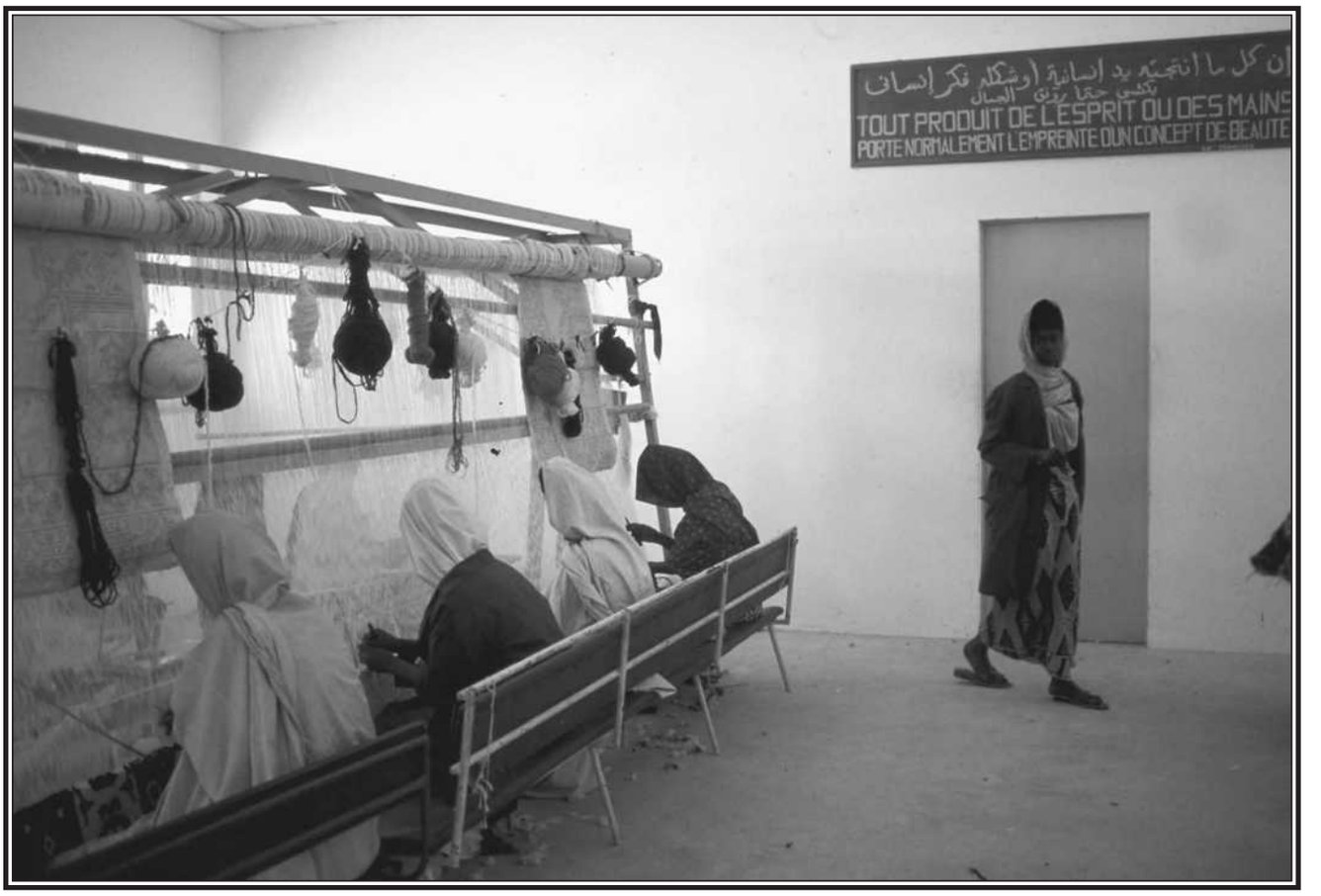
As a cash-based economy developed in Africa in the late 1800s, traditional heads of households found it increasingly difficult to provide for those in their care. Through their control of farm resources, elders had once been responsible for providing food, tools, bridewealth*, and tribute*. As money 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.

* **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

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



An increasing number of Africans work in factories and workshops today. These Mauritanians 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.

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**.)

* **apprentice** person being trained in a craft or profession

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

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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.

* **precolonial** referring to the time before European powers colonized Africa

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

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*.

* **capitalism** economic system in which businesses are privately owned and operated and where free markets coordinate most economic activity

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.

* **exploit** to take advantage of; to make productive use of

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.

* **tenant farmer** person who rents the land he or she farms and receives a share of the produce or cash

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.

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

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-

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

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.

* **linguistic** relating to the study of languages

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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.

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. Fufulde, 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

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

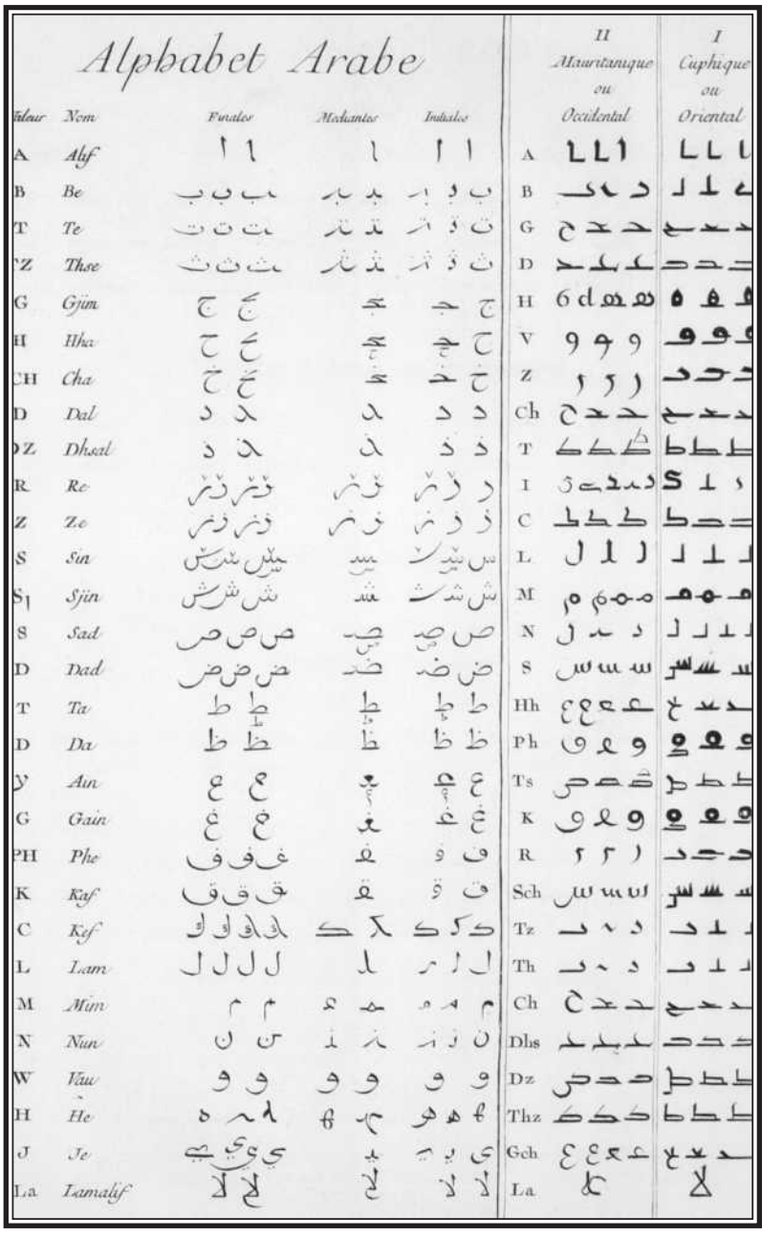
In Africa most creole languages developed as a result of contact between indigenous languages and nonstandard versions of European languages spoken by colonial settlers. In some cases, however, creole languages appeared where speakers of a dominant African language, such as Swahili, came into contact 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.

Widely spoken throughout North Africa, Arabic was introduced to the continent by Muslims from the Middle East in the 600s.



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

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

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.

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.

* **indigenous** native to a certain place

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.

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.

* **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

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.

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.

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

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.

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.

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.

* **protectorate** weak state under the control and protection of a stronger one

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.

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.

* **codify** to arrange according to a system; to set down in writing

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.

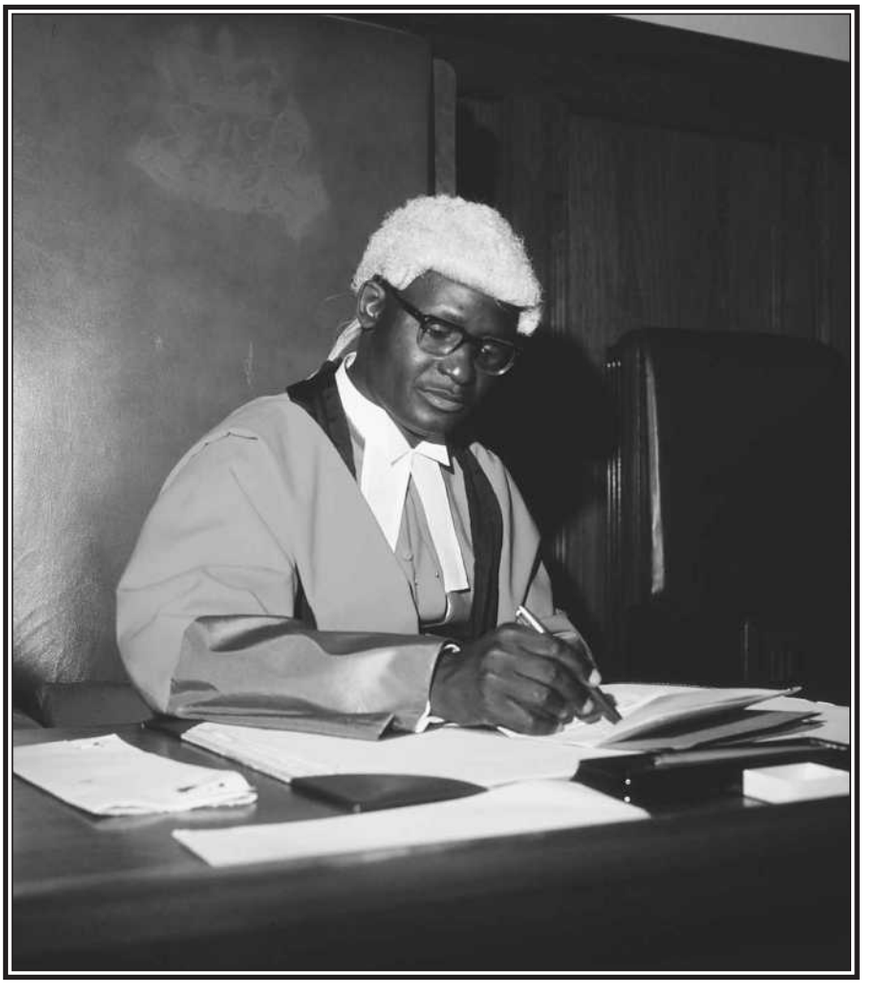
The Belgians placed local government in the hands of administrative units headed by Europeans. Each unit consisted of several small governing bodies run by indigenous leaders. These officials had both administrative and judicial power and dealt with matters involving family rela-

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.

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

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

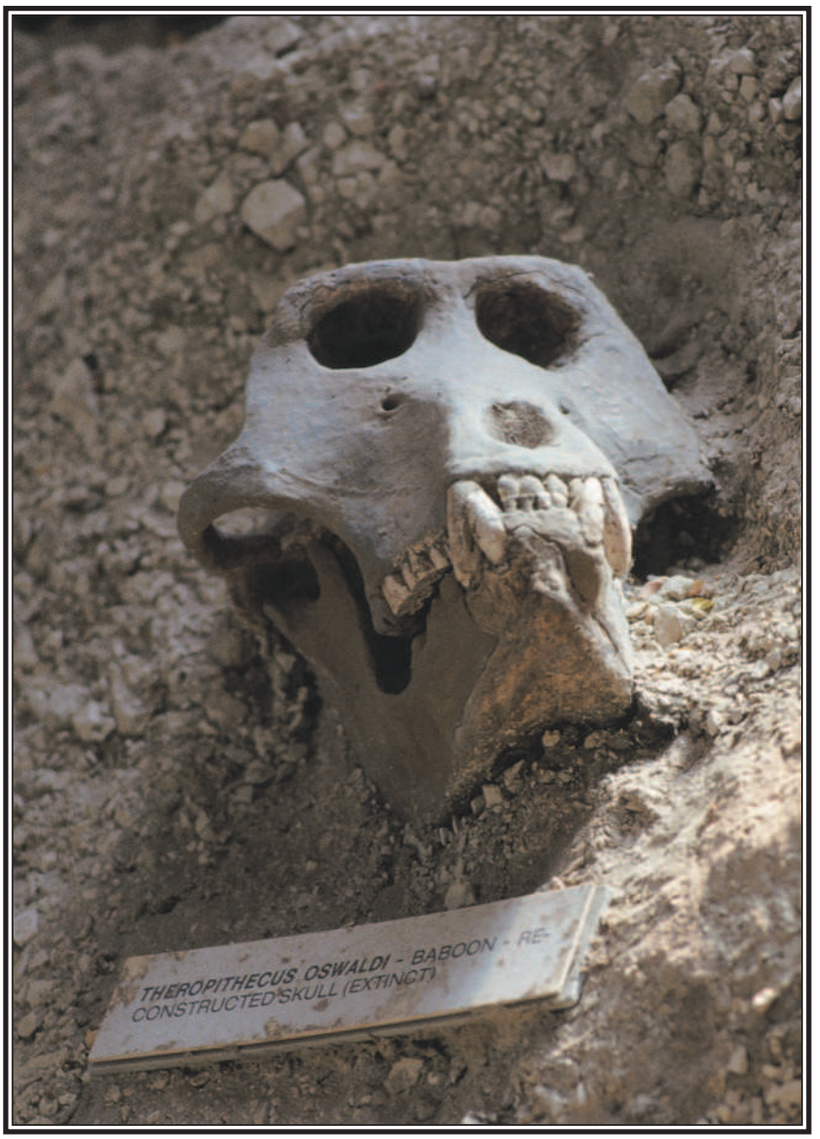


Plate 1: Eastern and southern Africa are rich sources of material from prehistoric times.This skull was found at a dig site near Nairobi, Kenya. It belonged to a giant gelada baboon (*Theropithecus oswaldi*) that roamed the earth roughly 500,000 years ago during the Early Stone Age.

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.

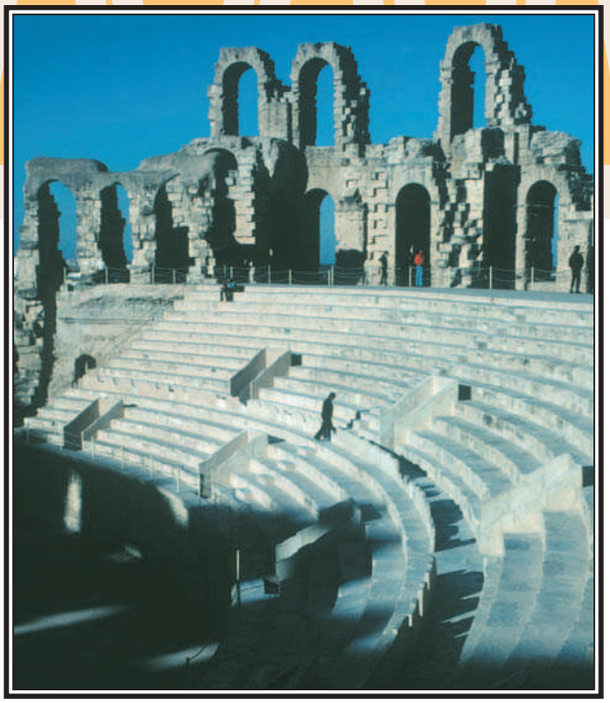


Plate 4: The Romans gained a foothold in Africa in 146 B.C. when they conquered Carthage in what is now Tunisia. During the following centuries, they took over most of North Africa and built many temples, public baths, and theaters in the provinces they established. This Roman amphitheater in El Jem, 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.

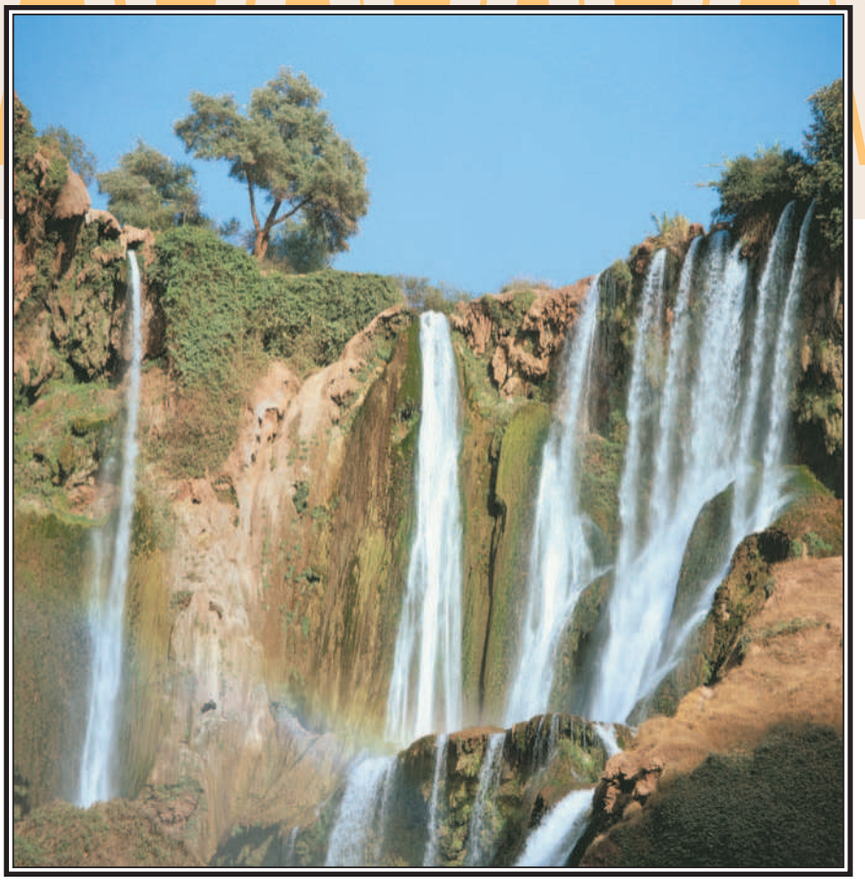


Plate 10: With its sandy beaches, Mediterranean climate, and rich cultural heritage, Morocco draws many tourists. The spectacular Cascades d'Ouzoud in the Middle Atlas mountains are one of the country's most popular attractions.

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.

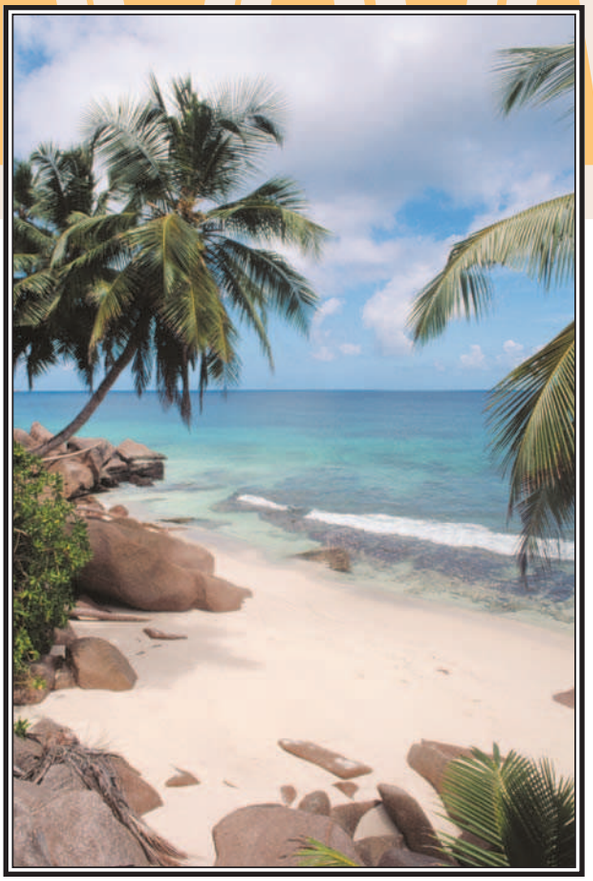


Plate 12: The Seychelles, about a hundred islands off the eastern coast of Africa, contains some idyllic beaches. Although various seafarers explored the islands, the Seychelles remained uninhabited until 1770, when France established a small colony there. Tourism is now the main economic activity in 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.

Index

Page numbers of articles in these volumes appear in boldface type.

Index

C

Index

D

E

F

G

H

I

J

K

L

M

N

O

P

Q

R

S

T

X

Y

Z