



# History and Governments

## TERMS & NAMES

mandala

military dictatorship

East Timor

### MAIN IDEA

Southeast Asia has experienced a variety of cultural and governmental influences throughout its history.

### WHY IT MATTERS NOW

The current governments of the nations of Southeast Asia are relatively new and unstable.



## New Cultures in Southeast Asia

Seven hundred years before Marco Polo's visit, Southeast Asia had come under the influence of two stronger, more advanced cultures: China and India. China made Vietnam part of its empire. Vietnam was not able to gain its independence until A.D. 939. India never ruled any part of Southeast Asia, but its culture spread throughout the region and had a lasting influence.



**Influences of China and India** New religions—Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism—came to Southeast Asia from China and India. So did writing systems, literature, and ideas about government and social class. Indian ideas about government were especially important.

**Human-Environment Interaction •**  
For centuries, Southeast Asians have been trading by sea in ships like this one in Jakarta, Indonesia. ▼



**Southeast Asian Governments** Instead of states or nations, Southeast Asia was made up of mandalas. A **mandala** (MUHN•duh•luh) had at its center a ruler who worked to gain support from others. The ruler used trade and business to influence others and maintain power. Mandalas varied. Some were larger than others, some depended on agriculture, and some had more advanced technology. The mandala system stayed in place

in many parts of Southeast Asia until the 19th century. One ancient mandala, called Oc Eo, was located in southern Vietnam. Ships from this port carried goods to and from places as far away as Rome. Over time, the mandalas developed into states, and the people began to think of themselves as belonging to these states. Because of trade and communi-

cation, new ideas were exchanged among the peoples of the region and between the region and other parts of the world. Each state took what it wanted from these new ideas and developed into a unique nation.

#### Reading Social Studies

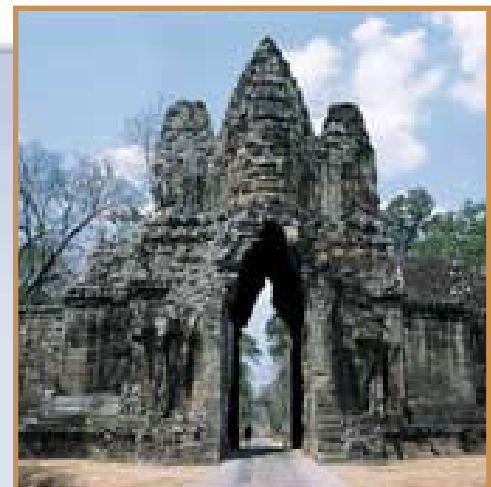
**A. Summarizing**  
How did nations develop out of mandalas?



**Cambodia's Temple Treasures**  
Angkor (ANG•kawr) was an early civilization in northwestern Cambodia between the 9th and 14th centuries. Its capital, also called Angkor, contains temples that are among the world's greatest works of art and architecture.

One of these temples, Angkor Wat, is particularly splendid. It was built to honor the Hindu god Vishnu. This huge pyramid-shaped temple covers almost

one square mile. Its stonework is covered with richly carved scenes from Hindu mythology. For centuries after the city and its magnificent temples were abandoned, jungle growth hid them until their rediscovery around 1860. Later, war kept admirers away. Today, efforts are under way to restore Angkor Wat as a world monument to Cambodian culture.





**Culture** • Today, most Indonesians, like these boys studying the Qur'an, are Muslims. ▲

**New Religions** Trade with other parts of the world also brought Christianity and Islam to Southeast Asia. In the ninth or tenth century, Muslim traders brought Islam to the region, especially to the islands of Sumatra and Java, part of what is now Indonesia. Islam spread gradually throughout the other islands of Indonesia and Malaya.

In the early 1500s, Christian missionaries came to Southeast Asia from Portugal, France, and Spain. The Spanish missionaries met with success in the Philippines, where there was no organized religion to combat, although each group of Filipinos had its own set of beliefs. Today, about 90 percent of Filipinos are Christians. However, in the rest of Southeast Asia, the missionaries were not as successful. Buddhist monks worked to keep the missionaries from making converts.

## European Colonialism

Europeans came to Southeast Asia as traders as well as missionaries. The Portuguese were the first to arrive, in 1509. The Spanish, the Dutch, the British, and the French all followed. These European traders came for wealth—spices, gems, and gold—not power. For the most part, the Europeans controlled port cities and nothing more for the first three centuries.

## Strange but TRUE

**Dragons of Komodo** On Komodo (kuh•MO•do) Island and a few other islands in Indonesia lives one of Earth's most fearsome creatures. Its body is covered with scales, and its tail is long and powerful. It has sharp teeth, long claws, and a yellow tongue that flicks in and out. If this description makes you think of a storybook dragon, you are not alone.

Hundreds of years ago, Chinese fishermen thought the same thing when they called this creature a dragon. Komodo dragons are really lizards. In fact, they're the largest living lizards in the world. Some Komodo dragons grow more than 10 feet long and weigh as much as 200 pounds. They're so strong that they can overpower and eat deer, wild pigs, and water buffalo. They have even been known to attack people.







### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting a Map

1. **Location** • What bodies of water surround Southeast Asia?
2. **Region** • What nations of Southeast Asia are found on the mainland?

Then, in the 19th and early 20th centuries, these European nations began to colonize the nations of Southeast Asia. The Philippines was under Spanish rule until 1898, when it came under the rule of the United States. Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam were all ruled by France. The British ruled Burma, most of Malaysia, and Singapore, and the Dutch ruled Indonesia. Only Thailand never became a colony.

During World War II, the Japanese pushed out most Europeans from the region. When the war ended in 1945, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, Malaysia, and Indonesia fought for independence. The Philippines won independence peacefully.

**Contributions of the Europeans** The Spanish discovered the chile pepper in North America and brought it to Southeast Asia. Immediately, the chile pepper became a familiar part of the diet in Southeast Asia. Coffee came to the region with the Dutch. Today, coffee is an important crop in Indonesia, Laos, and Vietnam.

**Culture** • King Bhumidol Adulyadej (pu-mee-PAWL ah-dul-yah-DEHT) is the longest-reigning monarch in Thailand's history. His duties are mainly ceremonial. ▼

## After Independence

After gaining independence, many nations in Southeast Asia found themselves in turmoil. Political parties fought one another to gain power. In Vietnam, Myanmar, and Indonesia, the military eventually took control of the government. Over the next 20 years, the nations of Southeast Asia worked out their own unique government systems.





### Reading Social Studies

**B. Making Inferences** How do you think the people of Myanmar might have felt about the overthrow of their elected government?

**Governments** Brunei, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Thailand are all constitutional monarchies. Indonesia, the Philippines, and Singapore are republics. Myanmar was also a republic, but in 1988, the military overthrew the government. Since then, it has been a **military dictatorship**, ruled by one man whose power comes from the army. Laos and Vietnam are both Communist states.

**East Timor** The island nation of **East Timor** declared its independence from Portugal in 1975. A month later, the neighboring country of Indonesia invaded and took over. The United Nations said the people of East Timor could decide their government for themselves. In 1999, they voted for independence.

However, Indonesia did not accept the people's ruling. The United Nations has accused the Indonesian army of killing and deporting people because of the vote. UN peacekeeping forces were stationed in East Timor. In August of 2001, East Timor held its first democratic elections.

## Citizenship IN ACTION

**Aung San Suu Kyi** (AHNG-SAHN-SOO-CHEE) Suu Kyi was born in Burma, now called Myanmar, in 1945. In 1988, she became the leader of a new national movement against the brutal military dictatorship that controlled Myanmar. She and millions of followers used peaceful methods to protest human rights abuses and to demand a democratic government. The military killed thousands of protesters. Suu Kyi was put under house arrest. In 1991, she won the Nobel Peace Prize.



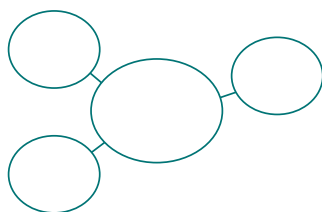
## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

### Terms & Names

1. Identify: (a) mandala (b) military dictatorship (c) East Timor

### Taking Notes

2. Use a cluster map like this one to take notes on ways the Chinese, Indian, European, and other cultures influenced Southeast Asian culture.



### Main Ideas

3. (a) Who brought Islam and Christianity to Southeast Asia?  
(b) Why did European nations come to Southeast Asia?  
(c) How is the government of Thailand different from the government of the Philippines?

### Critical Thinking

#### 4. Analyzing Causes

Why do you think many of the newly independent Southeast Asian nations came under the control of military dictators?

#### Think About

- ♦ the political and social confusion many countries find themselves in when their colonial rulers leave
- ♦ the role of the military

### ACTIVITY -OPTION-

Make a **chart** showing the countries of Southeast Asia and each country's system of government.