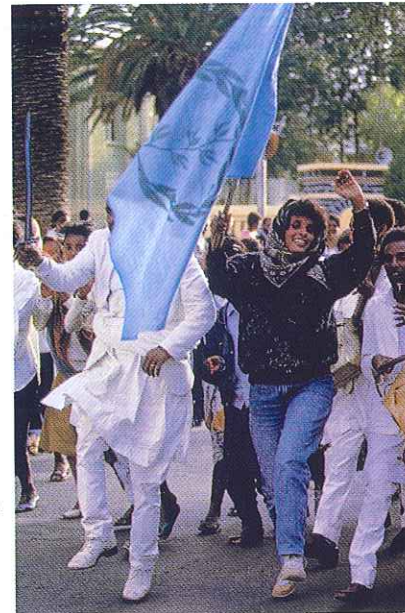


I ndependence Sweeps the World

After World War II, numerous European colonies in Africa and Asia began seeking independence. Most succeeded within the next 35 years. In the 1990s, after the fall of communism, a second wave of independence swept Asia and Europe itself.

- The war weakened the economies of the European colonial powers. They could no longer afford to run their overseas empires.
- The colonies felt they could manage their own resources to improve the lives of their citizens. But independence brought unexpected problems, including poverty and civil war.



A In this picture, Eritreans celebrate their independence from Ethiopia after 30 years of war.



B Different regions gained independence at different times. It was common for many countries in the same region to gain independence within a few years of each other. Which regions gained independence in which decades?

Independence Timeline

1945 United Nations (UN) is founded.	1947 India and Pakistan replace British colony of India.	1960-1962 All French colonies in Africa gain independence.	1980 Zimbabwe is last British Colony in Africa to gain independence.	1992-2006 Yugoslavia breaks apart.		
1945	1955	1965	1975	1985	1995	2005
1948 Israel is a new nation.	1949 Indonesia is no longer the Dutch East Indies.	1974-1976 Spain, Portugal withdraw from Africa.	1991 Soviet Union breaks up—15 countries created.	1993 Eritrea breaks away from Ethiopia.	2002 East Timor becomes free.	

C The United Nations, which was established late in World War II, encouraged decolonization in Asia and Africa. In 1989-1991 the fall of communism led to the breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia.