

## Southeast Asia

### Section 2



#### MAIN IDEAS

1. Southeast Asia's early history includes empires, colonial rule, and independence.
2. The modern history of Southeast Asia involves struggles with war and communism.
3. Southeast Asia's culture reflects its Chinese, Indian, and European heritage.

## Key Terms and Places

**Timor** small island that Portugal kept control of after Dutch traders drove them out of the rest of the region

**domino theory** idea that if one country fell to communism, other countries nearby would follow like falling dominoes

**wats** Buddhist temples that also serve as monasteries

## Section Summary

### EARLY HISTORY

Many people from China and India settled in this region. The most advanced early civilization was the Khmer Empire in what is now Cambodia. The Khmer built a huge temple, Angkor Wat. This temple showed their advanced civilization and Hindu religion. Later, the Thai settled in the Khmer area. Buddhism began to replace Hinduism in the region.

In the 1500s European countries began to set up colonies in this region. Led by Portugal, they came to colonize, trade, and spread their religious faith. For example, Spain claimed the Philippines and spread Roman Catholicism there. Later, the Dutch drove out Portugal from much of the region.

**Timor**, a small island, was all that stayed under Portugal's control.

In the 1800s the British and French set up colonies and spread Christianity. The United States came into the region in 1898, when it won the Philippines from Spain in the Spanish-American War. Colonial powers ruled all of the area, except for Siam (now Thailand) by the early 1900s.

**Why did European countries come to this region?**

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**Circle the year the United States entered the region.**

**Section 2, continued**

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After World War II, the United States granted the Philippines independence. Other people in the region started to fight for freedom, too. The French left in 1954 after a bloody war in Indochina. The independent countries of Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam were formed from this area. By 1970, most of Southeast Asia was free from colonial rule.

**Name the three countries formed out of Indochina.**

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**MODERN HISTORY**

In Vietnam, the fighting against the French divided the country into North and South Vietnam. In South Vietnam, a civil war started. In the 1960s, the U.S. decided to send troops to South Vietnam based on the **domino theory**—the idea that if one country fell to communism, other nearby countries would fall, too. After years of fighting, North and South Vietnam became one Communist country.

**Restate the domino theory in your own words.**

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In Laos and Cambodia civil wars broke out, too. Fighting lasted in Cambodia until the mid-1990s, when the United Nations helped restore peace.

**CULTURE**

The many different ethnic groups in this region mean that many different languages are spoken here. The main religions are Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, and Islam. Many grand Buddhist temples, or **wats**, which also serve as monasteries, are found in Southeast Asia. Traditional customs are still popular, especially in rural areas. Also, many people still wear traditional clothing such as sarongs, strips of cloth worn wrapped around the body.

**CHALLENGE ACTIVITY**

**Critical Thinking: Solving Problems** Imagine you are the top government official in South Vietnam before its civil war started. Prepare and deliver a speech that tells what you will do to try to prevent this war from starting.