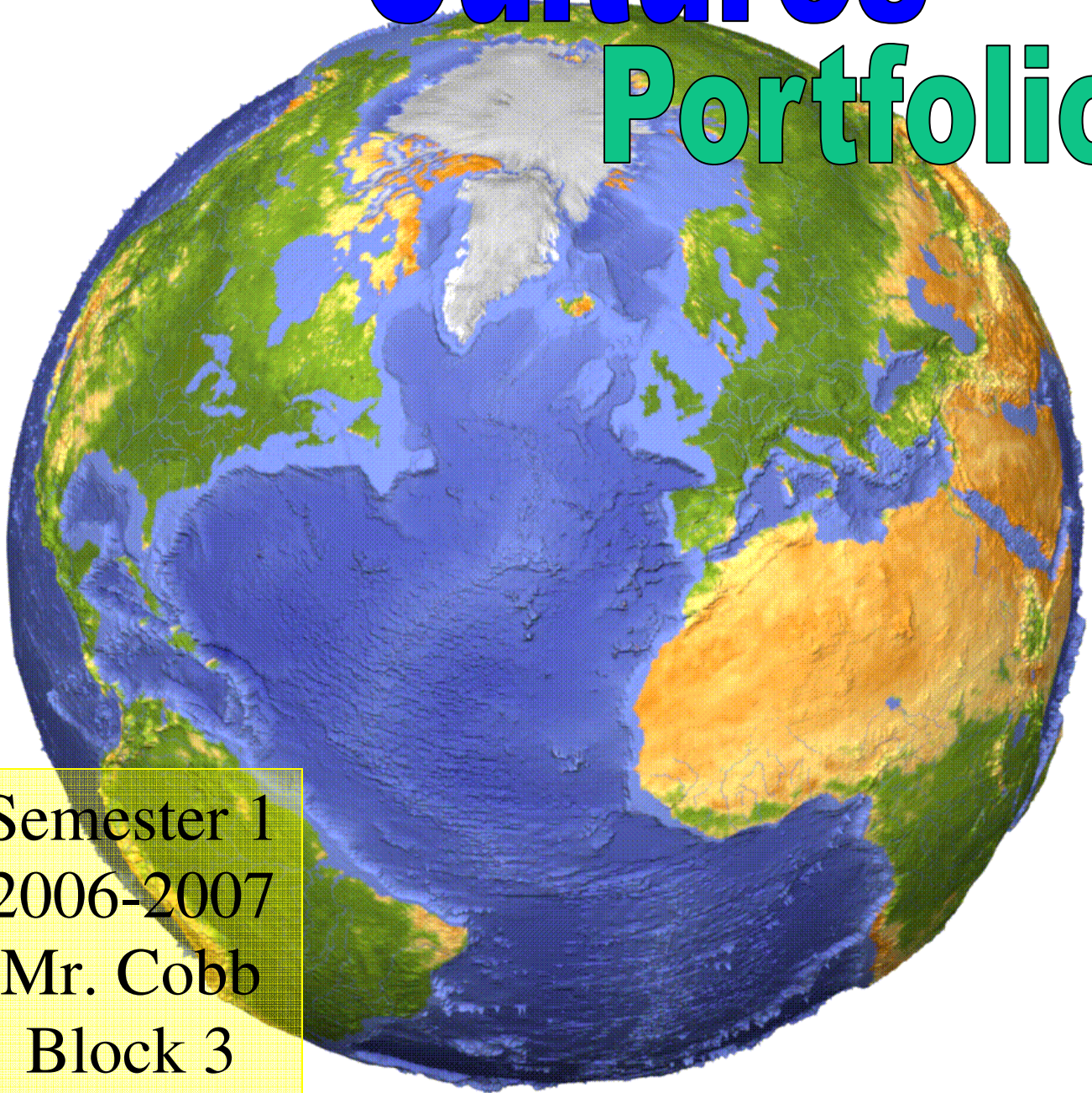


Plaz's **World** **Cultures** **Portfolio**



Semester 1
2006-2007
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Plaz's World Cultures Portfolio

The World Cultures Portfolio includes maps and assignments from the course. The portfolio mostly contains a report on different map from the class textbooks. I have looked at the maps containing such diverse topics as imperialization and landforms. Then I have written multiple 2 page reports about the history and effects on the people living in the country. The portfolio also includes graphs, postcards, and fictional journal entries from throughout the year. I have tried to include relevant photographs and information along with the portfolio. And thus I hope that this portfolio represents an honest reproduction of my work and talents.

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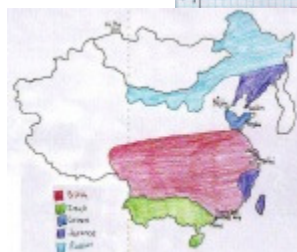
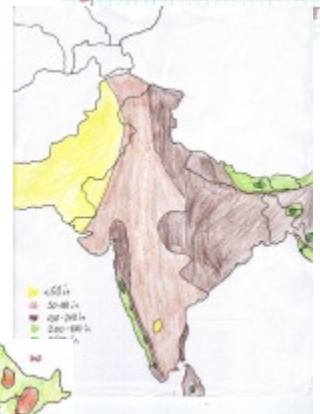
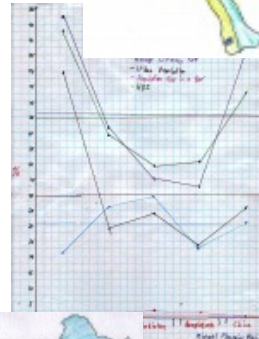
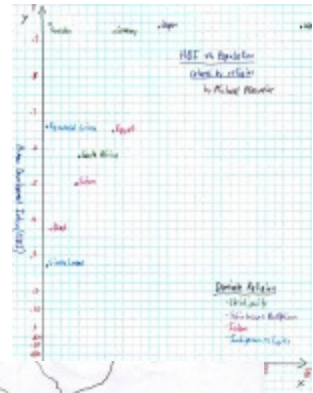
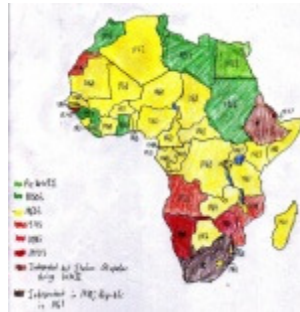
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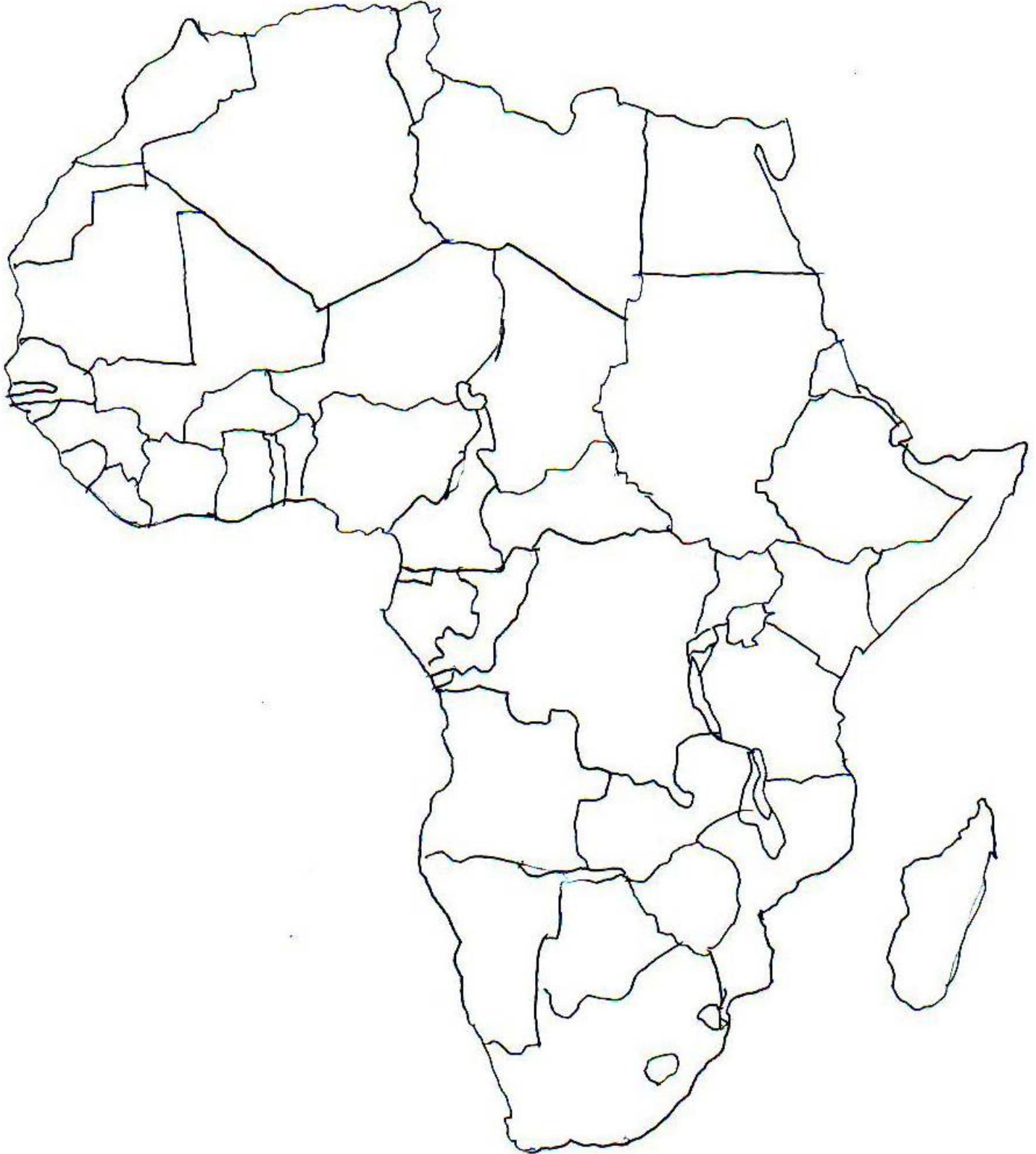
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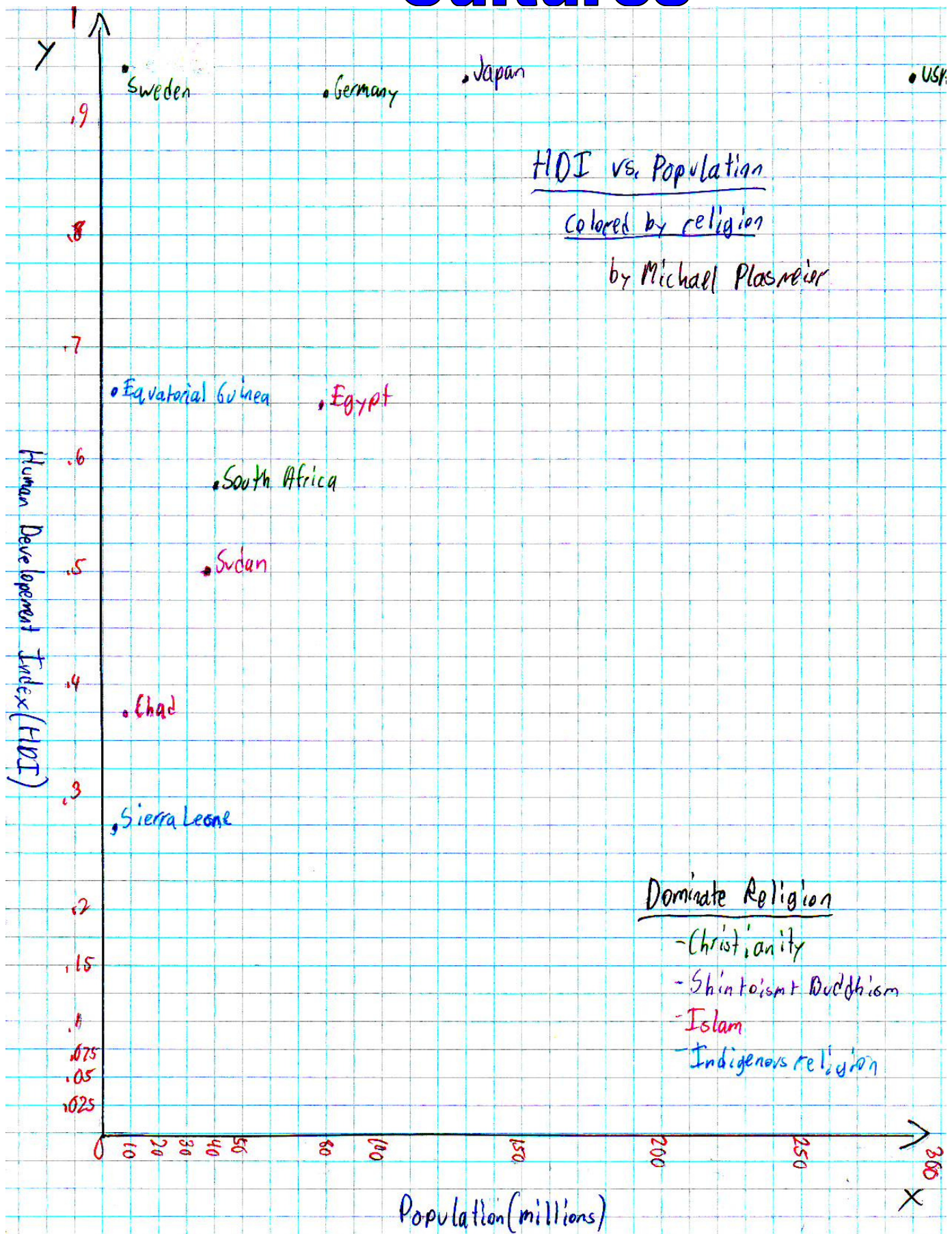
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HDI vs. Population Map Reflection

After I finished with my HDI versus population graphs, I did not find a very strong correlation between population and HDI. I am guessing that population depends more on the area of the country. In hindsight, I should have done population density versus HDI. Population density equals the number of people in a country divided by the area of it. This would have compensated for having the countries being different size. However, even with population density versus HDI, there still might not have been a trend. One might assume that wealthier societies have more land per person. However, that doesn't always happen. The country might have a lot of farmland or be comprised of mostly cities. However, the difference would be that cities in those countries would be well furnished. However, this would not show up on the population density versus HDI graph. To sum it up, both poor and rich countries can have cities, and both poor and rich countries might have farmland. Farming, however, does not end up being as productive as industry per unit of land. This again, would be a separate statistic, not represented in the population density versus HDI graph.

However, after the disappointing HDI versus population graph, I added the dominate religion for each country by coloring the countries in different colors. I could see a stronger correlation here. Christian nations seemed to have a higher HDI in relation to Islam and indigenous religions. I am not going to count Japan in this, because it's the only one with Shintoism, its traditional religion. So why do predominately Christian nation have a higher HDI? I don't think it has anything to do with the fact that they are Christian. I believe that they are set apart by their geography and history. In the book *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Jared M. Diamond comments on why Europeans became the most dominate society. He believes that because of the very good temperate climate for growing food in Europe, natives had time to pursue the quest of knowledge. This led them to better agricultural production methods, as well as to war materials and ships. Europeans dominated and defeated any non-Europeans they wanted to and took their land. Europeans mostly are Christian, just by the way Christianity

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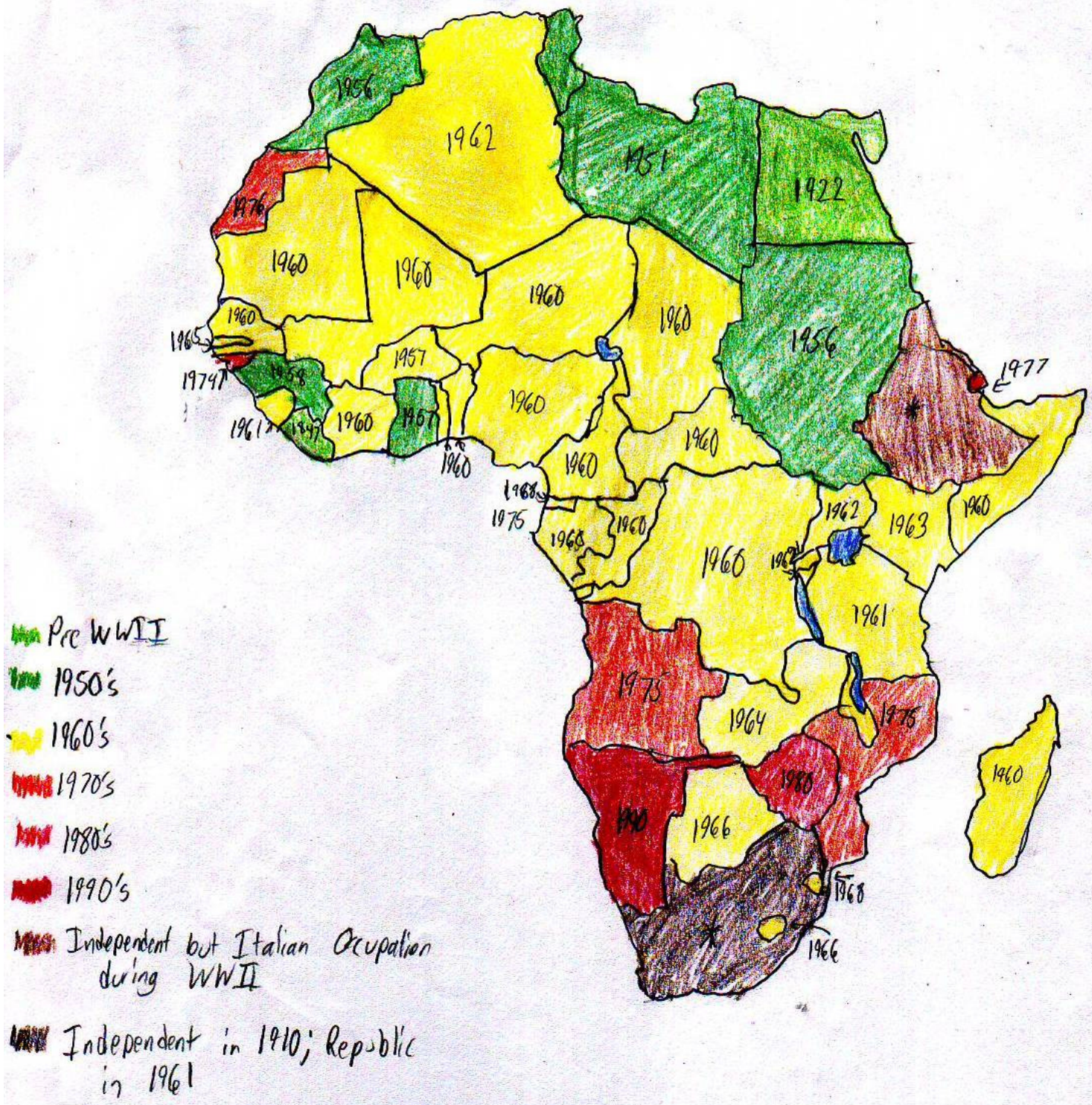
spread. A large number of South Africans converted to Christianity. I don't think they're doing any better than their non-Christian counterparts. Also, so far, Christians have managed to remain dominate.

To explain traditional religions, I guess that these countries have more of a traditional economy.

Traditional economies focus on maintaining the status quo, not making money or raising your standard of living. These often assign jobs by heredity and caste and technological innovation often are discouraged. I don't know why Islam nation lag behind. Maybe they can not connect well with the Christian powerhouses. Maybe not. Maybe religion has nothing to do with HDI, and the correlations I saw here are coincidences. It's possible.

- Sierra Leone - .275 – Has a very bad HDI meaning people die earlier, can't get good jobs, and have a much lower status of living than most other countries
- USA - .937 – It has lots of influence because it has lots of people at a high standard of living. If India or China achieves the same HDI as us, but with lots more people, we will lose influence.
- Equatorial Guinea - .664 – It doesn't have many people, but a relative high HDI (for Africa), it doesn't have much influence, however, because of its low population and size.
- Germany - .921 – Lower HDI than the USA. Germany has a much higher cost per person of employing someone, therefore more unemployment occurs. Also, the former East-side of Germany continues affect Germany.
- Sudan - .503 – Sudan has a mid HDI (for Africa) but a relatively high population. They don't have any money however, so their influence wanes. They might become more influential if their economy grew by a lot, and they stopped needing aid from other countries. However, it might be harder to increase the HDI why you have a large population. This could be a factor in Equatorial Guinea's large HDI.

Decolonization



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Africa: Decolonization

Africa has had a long and complicated history. That story started millions of years ago (Diamond).

According to Jared Diamond, humans first evolved near Africa. Some left Africa and went to Europe where they found good farmland with many domesticatable plants and animals (Diamond). This agricultural efficiency left the Europeans able to research and develop tools as well as knowledge (Diamond). Over the years, the Europeans invented guns and steel as instruments of war (Diamond). They also created complicated, efficient industrial processes which required large amounts of raw materials. One place they knew, Africa, had lots of these materials. They realized that they could use their superior weaponry to invade Africa and claim it for themselves (Africa). They stormed in and quickly overthrew the native governments and took control. The enslaved the Africans in their own country and carted out resources by the ship load. They denied blacks any say in their own country. They grew rich on the backs of the natives. This, however, worked for about 50-100 years. Soon the locals, both whites and blacks, demanded an end to direct European control and imperialism.

In 1910, South Africa declared independence, the first among the African nations ("South Africa"). However, they achieved independence because of the disagreements between the Afrikaners and British people of South Africa ("South Africa"). Native blacks still had almost no say in their now independent government ("South Africa"). In 1961, South Africa became a republic (World Cultures: A Global Mosaic). However, it remained staunchly white supremacist until the 1980's ("South Africa"). The 80's brought great rebellious and outside pressures forcing the government to change its attitude towards blacks ("South Africa"). However South Africa did not hold true, nonracial, democratic elections until April 27, 1994 ("South Africa").

In 1922, Egypt achieved independence - in kind ("Egypt"). Even though Britain declared Egypt an independent monarchy, the British reserved the right to intervene in Egyptian affairs if anyone threatened their

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interests. This robbed Egypt of any real independence. However after World War II in 1952, radical Muslims overthrew this puppet government ("Africa"). They redistributed the land to the peasants and nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956 ("Africa"). This became a symbol to other African colonies that Britain no longer remained as powerful as before ("Africa").

Ethiopia, however, managed to remain independent for most of its modern history, except for when it Italy invaded it in 1935 ("Africa"). The Italians took over Ethiopia until the British fought back in 1941 ("Africa"). After that, Ethiopia continued its independence.

In general, as World War II ended, European powers felt it increasing difficulty to hold on to their colonies in the face of weakness at home and growing internal demands for independence. The wave of freedom started in Liberia in 1952 ("Africa"). This independence went smoothly and then spread to Morocco and Tunisia in 1956 ("Africa"). However, in Algeria, independence did not occur as smoothly ("Africa"). The bloody Algerian War occurred against the French until 1962 ("Africa").

However, the French quickly granted political reform in their sub-Saharan colonies ("Africa"). Local governments started in return for agreeing to maintain economic ties with France ("Africa"). All of the French Sub-Saharan colonies became independent in the 60's except Guinea in '58 and Djibouti in '77 ("Africa").

British colonies, however, did not gain their independence this fast or this easily. The process needed to driven by the Africans and it occurred much more dispersed ("Africa"). The Gold Coast split first in 1957, becoming Ghana ("Africa"). Afterwards, most sub-Saharan African nations became independent, separately, as their people agreed on forms of government ("Africa"). The colonies with substantial numbers of white people resisted quick change to democracy ("Africa"). In addition, the British government did not stop Rhodesia and Zimbabwe from civil war or prevent minority lead governments from gaining power against blacks ("Africa").



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Belgium tried to withhold from decolonizing its Belgian Congo until 1959, when it panicked while watching its rapidly democratizing neighbors ("Africa"). In 1960, they had an ill-prepared transfer of power ("Africa"). Problem arose both because Belgium handed power to a weak government and because they still tried to control the country economically ("Africa"). Civil war has plagued the country ever since; as well as a string of assassinations, coups, and military dictatorships ("Africa").

Additionally, Portugal showed reluctance to give up its colonies. In 1974 and 1975, they withdrew from Guinea-Bissau, Angola, and Mozambique ("Africa"). However, they left behind Marxist governments to attempt to repair the damaged economies which had suffered after long periods of guerrilla wars ("Africa"). Until the end of the 1980's the countries represented pawns in the Cold War ("Africa"). After the conflicts cooled down between the Soviet Union and the United States, the countries started their own civil wars which lasted until the 1990's ("Africa").

In 1990, Namibia ended the process as the last African nation to achieve independence (Map). South Africa's occupation of the country slowed down the process ("Namibia"). Finally in 1990, the process was over; Africa finally did not have any European colonies (Map).

However, Africa's troubles did not end with the departure of European control. In fact, stability has suffered since the Europeans left. In the 60's, right after the Europeans left most African nations, the newly formed countries tried to set up one party states ("Africa"). They thought that they entire country could work together for common goals ("Africa"). Unfortunately, these rulers soon became dictators, because no one challenged them ("Africa").

Most of the urban population often favored military intervention during the first decade of independence ("Africa"). They thought that these new governments would bring an end to the corruption that the previous

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government had ("Africa"). However, the new government soon became as corrupt as the previous one, providing an invitation for yet another coup, leading the vicious cycle.

Some of these governments became incredibly powerful and venomous. In order to protect themselves against the next coup, they rooted out their opponents ("Africa"). Examples include Idi Amin Dada of Uganda and Jean-Bédél Bokassa of the Central Africa Republic ("Africa"). They murdered anyone they thought wanted to take over power from them, and they ignored their citizens. In general, they ran their countries as their personal playgrounds.

In the 80's, the problems only got worse. Cold War interests kept dictators in power ("Africa"). Not until the 1990s did African nations have a chance to have good, accountable, multi-party governments ("Africa"). At that time, citizens voted out some long time dictators which they did not like, and elected, for real, the ones they did like ("Africa"). However, this did not work in all African nations. In some where corruption ran deep, the change did not come easily. In others, the existing governments canceled their elections if the outcome did not go their way ("Africa").

And such the instability in Africa remains. Many have failed to build a solid, democratic government in the face of continuing economic hardships. The culture of violence also haunts Africa; for many they express their wills through violence. For those who lost political power, the process occurs difficultly, especially for those who can not come to terms with that loss.

This permanent sense of instability stems from several sources. Democracies, naturally, when citizens have more say, creates more conflicts. Absolute leaders, although very aggressive about rooting out other points of view, generally can keep the peace, however this is at the price of violence. Strong colonial rulers did not allow rebellions to impede the operation of their country.



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Economic hardship also continues as a problem. Without jobs or work, no income comes in. Without income, no food or shelter can get purchased. This makes the people of Africa angry, and rightly so according to Maslow's Triangle. However, jobs can not exist with instability permeating the country. This vicious cycle, similar to the chicken and the egg, continues to hold Africa back.

However, the Berlin Conference of 1884 often gets pointed out as the main cause of instability ("Africa"). At that conference the Europeans arbitrarily set the boundaries of the African nations to fit their needs. They split tribes and united rivals together. This mixing of tribes caused conflict between opposing groups who have hated each other for thousands of years. These ancient conflicts continue to this very day.

In addition, the Europeans hoped to maintain their superiority, either by direct racial policies, such as South African apartheid, or by indirect taxation or debating which made life hard for the natives. In addition, the western powers hoped to maintain their interests by influencing the politics of the supposedly independent nations. For example, the CIA supposedly murdered Patrice Lumumba of the Congo because of his non-western friendly policies ("Africa").

This combination of internal and external factors continues to shape Africa's volatile political climate in the present day. Because the Europeans arbitrarily set the boundaries of Africa without the consideration of African tribes, it seems these conflicts will go on forever. The hostility and insecurity continues despite peace agreements. These can never go away as long as the the root cause of the problem still exists. These tribes have hated each other for thousands of years. Add to that the religious differences and the special powers to some which the Europeans granted, and a recipe for conflict develops. Yes they can sign peace agreements, but that will not stop the hatred deep down inside.

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This map of Africa which I drew has let me delve into Africa's post colonial history. The nations became independent after World War II. But for the black natives, they continued oppressed. No longer by a foreign nation, but by local minority-white run governments. Only recently have blacks gained the right to steer their political future. But some have abused this privilege. For example, Zimbabwe. Robert Mugabe takes black independence too far. He supports soldiers who kill whites and take their farms. He makes his country poor and his people destitute. He overrides elections and his people's will. African governments should not do these sorts of things, even if whites are no longer involved.

Whilst anger still exists, democracy finds itself hard to achieve. The rival tribes do not want to work together. Entire countries suffer economically. Improving this situation takes time and stability. Without stability, businesses can not grow. And without business, the people will remain poor. And while the people remain poor, they will revolt. They will call for a different leadership and use power to get him in power. This will cause instability and the cycle will continue.

Africa has had a rocky history - that only seemed to get worse of the Europeans left. I see no real direct solution. Dividing up the land again would make the situation worse (take Israel for example). More peace agreements may work, but the root causes still remain. Economic development, it seems, can take the people's minds away from their age old conflicts. Africa's deeply rooted problems can only vanish if the fighting stops, and people's lives become better.

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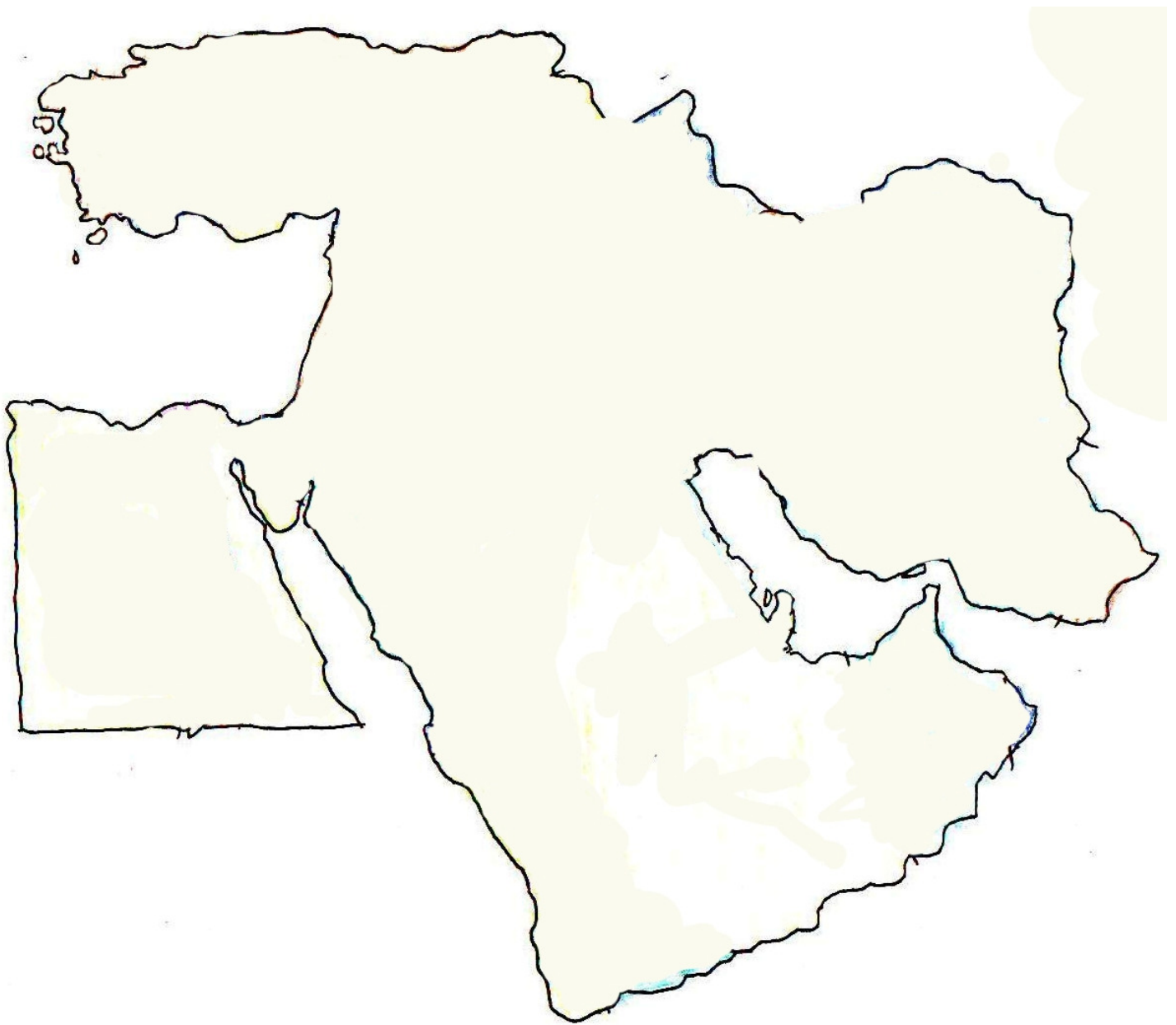
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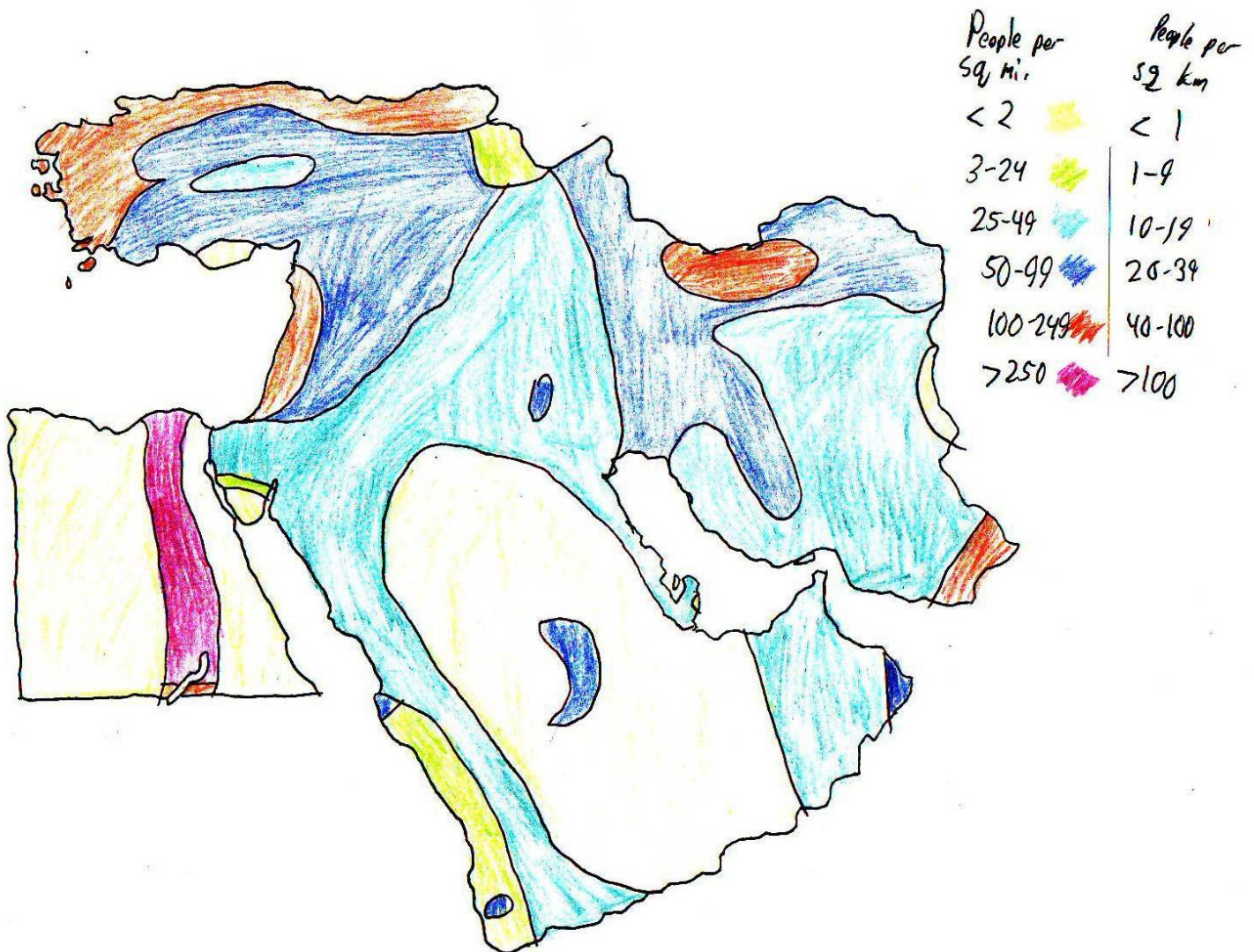
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Population Density



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Middle East: Population Density

The Middle East, a mosaic of cultures mixed together in a volatile world. Ready to blow up at a moment's notice, the Middle East often considered by many as one of the world's most troubled spots. Vast stretches of desert exist where almost nothing can live. On the other hand, next door, the cradle of civilization exists with fertile valleys stretching as far as the eye can see. Then, in another few miles, comes the sea full of shipping and commerce.

Geographical diversity, one of the defining factors of the Middle East, creates its character. From deserts to lush valleys, from mountains to oceans, the different sections of the Middle East define it. Vastly different geographies support vastly different population levels. Lush valleys support large amounts of crops which support a large population. Deserts, however, are devoid of life. They support nothing but a few creatures, if that. Thus the population of the Middle East finds itself concentrated in a few select places, while vast stretches of desert sands lie practically empty.

One of the most fertile valleys in the Middle East lies along the banks of the Nile River. The Nile River makes up the heart of Egypt, both modern and ancient. Until recently, the river flooded every year, depositing rich soil over the desert. This soil let crops grow along the river, and could support a large population. This gave rise to one of the most recognized ancient civilizations on earth, Ancient Egypt. The rulers of Ancient Egypt managed to build huge pyramids with their large population. In present day, the Nile valley supports more than 250 people per square mile, the densest population in the Middle East (Ahmad et al). Nowadays the river has a dam blocking it, modern means have replaced the floods, but the river still provides the basis of life for many people living in Egypt.

However, the large population causes overcrowding. Cities especially suffer from the problem. Overcrowding breeds disease and lowers the living standards. The worst of these areas are the slums where the

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poorest of people live. Such peoples' lives are cut short by the filth around them caused by the high population density. However a large population also helps a society become more productive. Thus a dense population represents a mixed blessing.

The section of the Middle East which included Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories also pack a lot of people into it. The region has always had a large population because of its proximity to the Mediterranean Sea. Much history has accumulated here. All of the large western religions lay claim to part of the region. However, this led to a conflict which forced many Palestinians out off of their lands and left them with nowhere to go. As one moves into Saudi Arabia, the land quickly becomes uninhabitable desert (Ahmad et al). As with everywhere else on Earth, there's only a certain amount of livable land available. This forces the population density to increase, and again, causes a decline in the overall standards of living. This problem, because of the cultural and religious differences between the groups, makes the problem only worse.

The northern party of Turkey also crowds many people into its land (Ahmad et al). This section near Europe and the Black Sea. In fact, Turkey even extends into Europe near Istanbul. The climate here matches most of southern Europe's, but not, however, the rest of the Middle East (Encarta Climate Map).

On the other hand, the desert in the middle of Saudi Arabia has almost no people living in it (Ahmad et al). Less then 2 people per square mile live here (Ahmad et al). However, in the middle of the desert the city of Riyadh exists because of seasonally flooding stream beds (Encarta "Riyadh"). Riyadh actually means water bed in Arabic (Encarta "Riyadh"). 50-99 people per square mile live in the middle of the desert and it has become a center of commerce (Encarta "Riyadh", Ahmad et al). The definition of a desert, although often thought as a hot place, only needs to be a place which receives little rain. People, of course need water to live. Without water, no life can be supported.

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Water, the life blood of the Middle East, controls the population. Much of the water available comes from rain. Rainfall appears greatest around Turkey, which reaches about 40 inches per year (Encarta Annual Rainfall Map). It's especially heavy around the Black Sea, to the north of Turkey (Encarta Annual Rainfall Map). Also rain comes down in sizable amounts to the south and southeast of Turkey, extending partly into the northern part of Iran (Encarta Annual Rainfall Map).

The area near the Caspian Sea also supports a large population because of the Elburz Mountains (Ahmad et al). The mountains block the moisture coming off the sea from floating over into most of Iran. The clouds get stuck and empty over the region making it very fertile. This rain supports up to 100 people per square mile in this little sliver of land in Iran (Ahmad et al). In this region even lies the countries' capital city, Tehran. This effect has similarities to the one of the west cost of the United States. The Rocky Mountains block the rainfall from entering the great plains like the Elburz Mountains keep most of Iran dry, and therefore sparsely populated to levels around 25-49 people per square mile (Ahmad et al).

The land which borders the sea to the south of the Middle East also supports a sizable population (Ahmad et al). These lands seem to get a somewhat generous, for the Middle East at least, rainfall. About 20 inches of rain falls here per year (Encarta Annual Precipitation Map). Of course, the inhabitants can't just drink the salt water which they live near. They are reliant on the rain for fresh water, and can only live where it rains.

However this limitation currently finds itself disappearing. Desalination, the process of removing the salt from water, changes the rules of the Middle East. However, still the process costs large amounts of money. But new desalination technologies continue to change the rules by making desalination less expensive. Areas which do not currently have any fresh water might soon change deserts into driving ranges.



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In fact, if one looks at the map of annual precipitation in the Middle East, one would notice that the maps almost align (Encarta Annual Precipitation Map, Ahmad et al). The darkest regions on the rainfall map (the areas which get the most rain) for the most part have large populations (Encarta Annual Precipitation Map). Turkey, again finds itself as the example. On the other hand, not many live in the dry deserts of lower Oman (Encarta Annual Precipitation Map). However, there are some discrepancies. Egypt receives almost no rain, but still has the largest population in the Middle East because the water flows down the Nile from the wetter regions in the north (Encarta Annual Precipitation Map, Ahmad et al).

The Encarta ecological map matches almost exactly with the population density map (Encarta Ecological Map, Ahmad et al). The more green the region on the ecological map, the more temperate and wet the region finds itself (Encarta Ecological Map). It also happens that the more temperate the region, the more people are able to live in that region. For example, the northern part of Turkey, as well as the section of Iran directly under the Caspian Sea are temperate wet forests (Encarta Ecological Map). The eastern section of Turkey gets recorded as Mediterranean woodland (Encarta Ecological Map). 50-99 people per square mile call this region their home (Ahmad et al). This amounts to less than other parts of Turkey, but substantially more than the rest of the Middle East (Ahmad et al). The remaining land mostly gets recorded as subtropical desert (Encarta Ecological Map). Remembering the definition for desert and its effects on the population can explain some of the population diversity in the Middle East.

The climate map, however, does not match up real well except in Turkey, where the climate differentiates itself from the hot deserts of the Middle East (Encarta Climate Map). Somehow the hot and arid conditions do not seem to affect the population levels of the Middle East.

In closing, the Middle East has great geographical diversity. This supports a diverse population spread out diversely throughout the Middle East. Rainfall, mountains, and desalination plants affect where people can

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live. From empty deserts to crowded oases and marshes, the Middle East finds itself defined by geography.

Unfortunately, this can cause conflicts and disagreements, but possibly the future looks better. Desalination can change all of the rules and alter the landscape, as well as the conflicts, of the Middle East.

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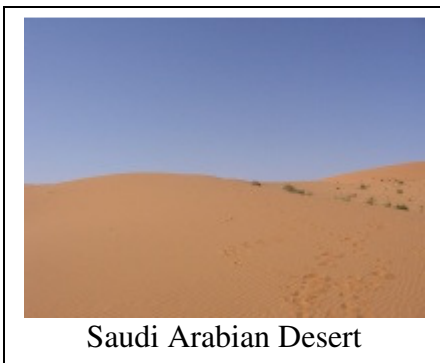
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Middle East Essay: A Peaceful Vacation

As I stepped off the plane in the Abu Dubai airport (AUH) I was amazed. The place was brand new and clean. I hardly even realized that I was in the Middle East, the most troubled spot in the world. Why, then, had the State Department warned me not to come here! I don't see any trouble, where's the conflict? Iraq, I guess, but I planning to steer clear of Iraq! I know I read about it every day in the newspapers, but I don't see any problems here. I'm really only planning to stay in Israel. The pictures I saw of Israel seemed pretty nice. It looked calm there. But then again, I also wanted to see other parts of the Middle East, so I chose to fly to Abu Dubai and drive to Israel. This will give me a flavor of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the occupied Palestinian territories. Any trouble, I expect, happens on this part of the trip.



I left the airport and started my drive through the Middle East. Abu Dubai was a busy, modern city. It seemed very Western to me with all of the luxury hotels and skyscrapers. The place seemed like New York except much cleaner and newer. How could they possibly tolerate terrorism here? Commerce and oil are king in this town; it seemed very stable.



I soon moved along into Saudi Arabia. However, I had a little problem at the border. They confiscated my bottle of liquor I was planning to bring home as a gift! They claimed t hat the entire country was dry! I remember hearing about the probation in the US and the problems that it caused. I wonder how Saudi Arabia could cope. I would soon find out, as I rolled across the border.

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A desert covers most of this country. It seems to go on forever like the ocean back home. What would happen if you got lost in it? No thank you! Big expanses of sand dunes stretch for as far as the eye can see in either direction. It feels scary!

Sharia law runs Saudi Arabia. It's this strict religious code enforced by the government, a monarchy. If you're caught stealing, they will cut your hand off. No thank you! No wonder they warned me about stay away from trouble with the police. Overall, however, I like Saudi Arabia. They use oil to finance their future, like the UAE.

Lastly on my tour, I crossed through the occupied Palestinian territories. This place seems like an empty wasteland, except people live here. In addition, Israeli tanks roll down the street and Israeli planes thunder overhead. Every 3rd building has some kind of hole in it, most caused by bombs and guns. How could these people put up with living in this environment?



Palestinian Bombed Building

By this time, I wanted to stop somewhere for lunch. I didn't see a single decent place to stop. There wasn't a McDonald's or Western restaurant for miles around. The only half-decent looking place seemed boarded up and closed. All of the other places seemed too dirty. I would not even go near them, let alone eat there. Think of all of the diseases those places must harbor!

My stomach growled as I entered Israel. But I momentarily lost my hunger as I noticed a big difference in the landscape between here and Palestine. The streets crawled with people. The farms overflowed full of food and colors. Water existed everywhere. I heard that once a desert existed here, but I don't see any evidence of one. I even counted a few McDonald's in the city. This country seemed like Dubai or America. In fact, I'm

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starting to like this place. They even have malls with my favorite designer stores like Gucci in the capital, Tel Aviv. I could definitely live here! "Why can't Palestine look like this place?," I thought as I entered McDonald's.

Boom! All of a sudden, a suicide bomber detonated right in front of me! Thoughts flashed through my mind! I had never known this sort of horror! Against my better judgment, I ran to the scene of the explosion. Blood and glass flew everywhere! A small crater stood in the road with a twisted pile of metal of where once a car had existed. Smoke smoldered up from the wreckage. The police arrived quickly. They ordered everyone back, afraid another suicide bomber would take advantage of the crowd. I quickly decided to leave in fear of my life.



A West Bank Bombed Bus

The next day, most of the people in the city acted as if nothing much had happened. In America after 9/11, the response differed greatly! How could this not affect the spirit of the Israeli's??? The mood in Tel Aviv seemed so normal! How could these people not let this tragedy affect them? What's more, how could these people live with the constant fear of death day after day?

I guess I would soon find out! I decided to do what the Israelis did, and not let the bombing scare me. So I decided to continue my vacation. The next day I went parasailing! It felt great feeling the wind in my hair. I totally forgot about what had happened yesterday! I guess that the Israelis feel like this after every suicide attack!

The day after that, I went to the Khamat Gader water park. The next day I stopped at several of the 133 museums in Israel. They looked just like the ones at home. Jerusalem, a city with a mixture of old and new, I

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went to next. The Temple Mound, I learned, has lots of volatility. The Muslim Dome of the Rock now stands where the old Jerusalem Temple used to stand. The Jews believe that that the third temple needs to exist here for the Messiah to come. The Muslims seem quite happy with their place of worship currently. In fact, some historians put the destruction of the Dome of the Rock as the most likely cause of World War 3. I hope I'm not around when that happens!

Sadly, my vacation ended too soon. It went so fast, the way all vacation do. In fact, I had a quite normal trip, except for that incident. But now, it's time to leave. Overall, I'm leaving happy; I had lots of fun in Israel. I also had fun on the drive through Dubai, Saudi Arabia and the occupied Palestinian territories; it opened my eyes to the problems of the Middle East. But I think about what it would feel like to live with such volatility day in and day out! How would it feel to know that suicide bombers might explode in front of you without notice! These poor people live with this fear for their entire lives. I would not want to live with this instability in Philadelphia! I would die everyday from the fear of death! No thank you!

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plaz
Academic Writing Rubric

Domains	Below Basic	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Focus: task assigned addressed through thesis	Limited awareness of purpose. No obvious thesis present	An attempt to establish and maintain purpose through use of a stated thesis	Focused on a purpose, through use of a clearly stated thesis	Establishes and maintains clear purpose through use of a sophisticated thesis
Content: analysis of ideas and evidence used to support thesis	Minimal idea development. None, limited and/or unrelated evidence	Surface level idea development; paper tends to repeat itself. Limited or unrelated evidence present	Depth of idea development supported by evidence, but evidence is taken at face value-not truly analyzed	Personal reflection and insight into evidence. Depth and complexity of ideas supported by rich, engaging, and pertinent analysis
Organization: progression of ideas and evidence to support thesis	Random or weak organization of evidence. Ineffective transitions, introduction, and conclusion	Organization of supporting evidence present, but lapses in focus and/or coherence, attempt at transitions, introduction and conclusion made	Logical organization of supporting evidence, transitions, introduction and conclusion	Purposeful organization of supporting evidence, transitions, introduction and conclusion
Style (sentence): Use of sentence structures to create tone and voice	Incorrect sentence structures	Simplistic and/or awkward sentence structures	Controlled sentence structure	Variety of controlled sentence structures
Style (word choice): use of vocabulary to create tone and voice	Incorrect and/or ineffective language, not on grade and/or academic level	Simplistic and/or imprecise language. Paper relies upon 'to be' verbs, passive voice, personal pronouns	Acceptable, effective language. Minimal use of passive voice. No Personal Pronouns.	Precise and/or rich language. Voice established through literary devices such as allusion, simile and metaphor
Conventions: use of grammar mechanics spelling and usage	Over 8 grammar errors	5 to 8 grammar errors	3 to 4 grammar errors	0 to 2 grammar errors

49/50
80%
well described
+ depth

Greg Nizosia
Jeff Barry

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Michael Plasmeier

Cobb

World Cultures

4 Dec 2006

A Peaceful Vacation

As I stepped off the plane in the Abu Dubai airport (AUH) I was amazed. The place was brand new and clean. I hardly even realized that I was in the Middle East, the most troubled spot in the world. Why, then, had the State Department warned me not to come here! I don't see any trouble, ^{where is} where's the conflict? Iraq, I guess, but I planning to steer clear of Iraq! I know I read about it everyday in the newspapers, but I don't see any problems here. ^{I am really on staying} I'm really only planning ^{in Israel} to stay in Israel. The pictures I saw of Israel seemed pretty nice. It looked calm there. But then again, I also wanted to see other parts of the Middle East, so I chose to fly to Abu Dubai and drive to Israel. This will give me a flavor of the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the occupied Palestinian territories. Any trouble, I expect, happens on this part of the trip.

I left the airport and started my drive through the Middle East. Abu Dubai was a busy, modern city. It seemed very Western to me with all of the luxury hotels and skyscrapers. The place seemed like New York except much cleaner and newer. How could they possibly tolerate terrorism here? Commerce and oil are king in this town; it seemed very stable.

I soon moved along into Saudi Arabia. However, I had a little problem at the border. They confiscated my bottle of liquor I was planning to bring home as a gift! They claimed that the entire country was dry! I remember hearing about the prohibition in the U.S. and the problems that it caused. I wonder how Saudi Arabia could cope. I would soon find out, as I rolled across the border.

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Plasmeier 2

A desert covers most of this country. It seems to go on forever like the ocean back home. What would happen if you got lost in it? No thank you! Big expanses of sand dunes stretch for as far as the eye can see in either direction. It feels scary!

Sharia law runs Saudi Arabia. ^{It is} ~~It's~~ this strict religious code enforced by the government, a monarchy. ^{you are} If you're caught stealing, they will cut your hand off. No thank you! No wonder they warned me about stay away from trouble with the police. Overall, however, I like Saudi Arabia. They use oil to finance their future, like the UAE. ^{UAE? Explain what it stands for.}

Lastly on my tour, I crossed through the the occupied Palestinian territories. This place ^{← don't really need to, already said it.} seems like a empty wasteland, except people live ^{ok} ~~here~~. In addition, Israeli tanks roll down the ^{thrd} street and Israeli planes thunder overhead. Every ^{thrd} ~~3rd~~ building has some kind of hole in it, most caused by bombs and guns. How could these people put up with living in this environment? By this time, I wanted to stop somewhere for lunch. I didn't see a single decent place to stop. There wasn't a McDonald's or ~~western~~ restaurant for miles around. The only half-decent looking place seemed boarded up and closed. All of the other places seemed too dirty. I would not even go near them, let alone eat there. Think of all of the diseases those places must harbor!

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^{3. What's there?}

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Plasmeier 3

Boom! All of a sudden, a suicide bomber detonated right in front of me! Thoughts flashed through my mind! I had never ^{known} know this sort of horror! Against my better judgment, I ran to the scene of the explosion. Blood and glass flew everywhere! A small crater stood in the road with a twisted pile of metal of where once a car had existed. Smoke smoldered up from the wreckage. The police arrived quickly. They ordered everyone back, afraid another suicide bomber would take advantage of the crowd. I quickly decided to leave in fear of my life. The next day, most of the people in the city acted as if nothing much had happened. In America after 9/11, the response differed greatly! How could this not affect the spirit of the Israelis??? The mood in Tel Aviv seemed so normal! How could these people not let this tragedy affect them? What's more, how could these people live with the constant fear of death day after day?

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Plasmeier 4

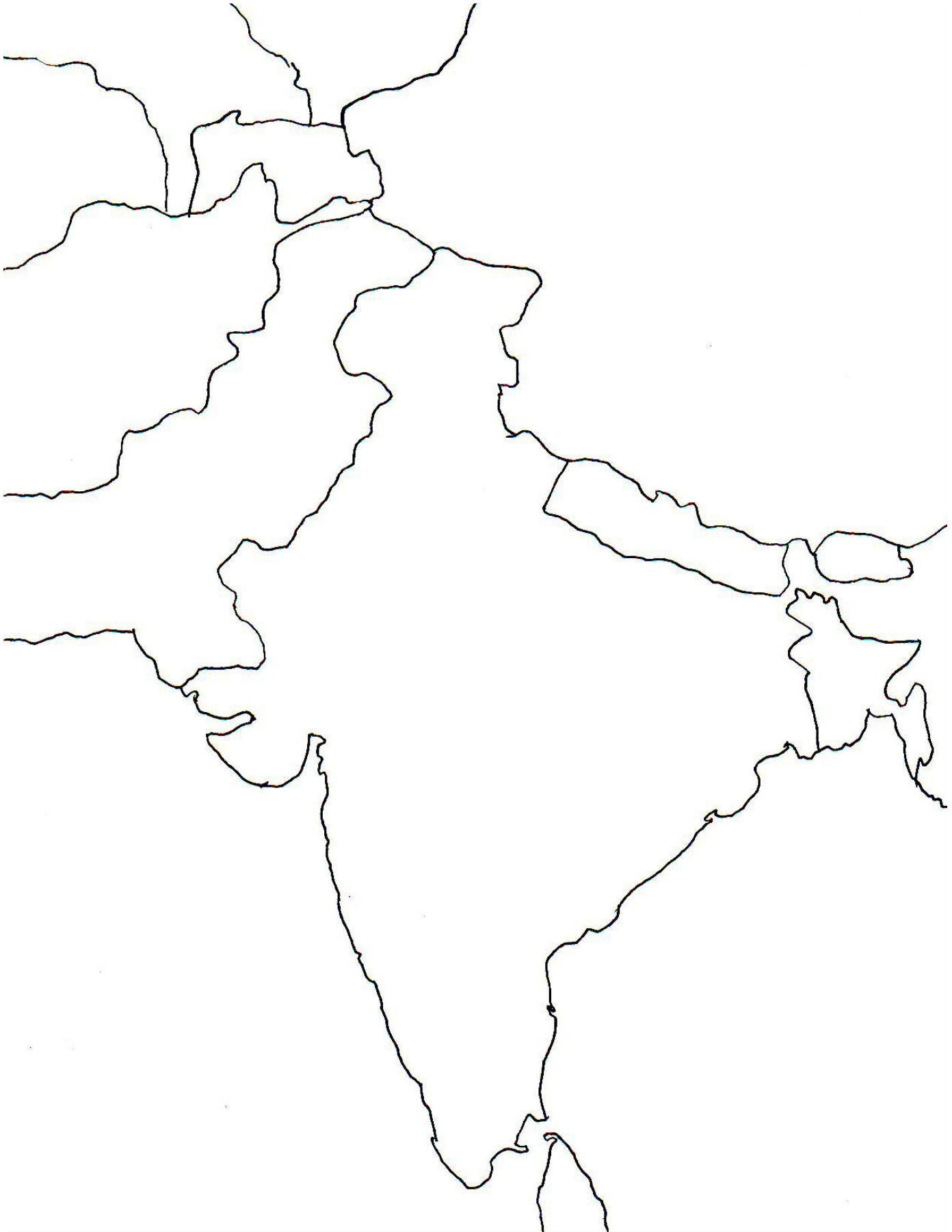
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14 to be verbs

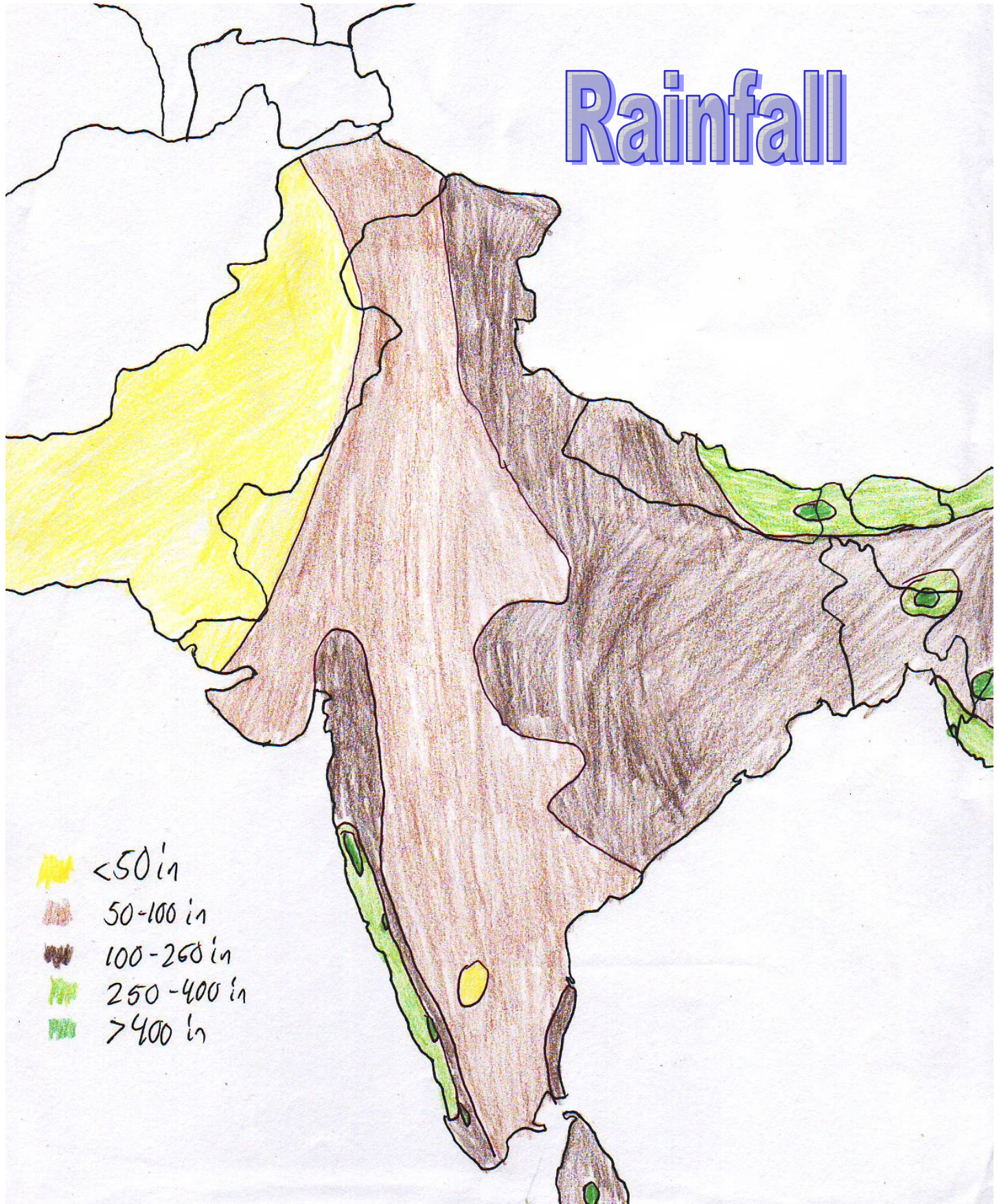
This paper captures exactly what an American traveler would think
Joel Plas

I purposely used to be verbs, contractions, and 3e ffs to subtly characterize this American narrator.

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World Cultures Portfolio/South Asia

Rainfall in South Asia varies greatly and has many effects on aspects of South Asian life. Not only does the rainfall map match closely with the climate map, but with the population map. Monsoons have a great deal of effects on the population, morale, and agriculture. India, a large nation, made up of many sections gets affected by many different climates. Dry as a desert, the western side lies, but rain ravages the eastern side. India's rain falls seasonally and unpredictably. But when it differs from its norm, problems such as floods and droughts emerge.

Various regions and countries make up South Asia. In the north-east lies Afghanistan and Pakistan. Both are very dry, similar to the rest of the Middle East. The Thar Desert exists here, a large dry region in Rajasthan (an Indian state) and Pakistan (Wikipedia). The desert covers 92,200 square miles and receives less than 40 inches of rain per year (WWF via Wikipedia; Ahmad et al). Few people wish to live in this region and thus it's sparsely populated, similar to deserts around the world.

The north-west portion of South Asia contains Nepal, and Bangladesh, among others. The northern part of this region, the part bordering the plains of China, does not receive as much rain, and gets designated "temperate humid" on the Encarta climate map. The region then gets divided into further smaller sub-regions. The largest sub-region climate appears as "winter drought, hot summer." Small different sub-variations with different drought seasons and summer temperatures border this.

As one moves south-west towards Southwest Asia, one moves into the tropics. This region gets wetter and receives significantly more rain. Larger populations also crowd this wetter region. For the most part this region borders Southeast Asia and receives about 200-400 inches per year with some spots receiving up to 400 inches per year (Ahmad et al).

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The western ghats also receive a lot of rain (Ahmad et al). This occurs because of the normal rain-trapping properties of the mountains, which can be seen all over the globe.

In the middle of Sri Lanka, Mount Pidurutalagala receives an excess of 400 inches of rain per year (Ahmad et al). On the map a small spot of dark green shows the mountain's peak (Ahmad et al). Again the mountains are what cause this small spot of heavy rain.

The rain levels in India vary along with the season. In January, India receives almost no rain except in the southern and north-eastern corners of the country (Encarta Map). However, the story in July differs greatly (Encarta Map). Rain falls heavily during the summer, especially in the north-eastern corner of South Asia. However, there's one fluke. A dry patch exists just west of the northern tip of Sri Lanka (Encarta Map). Unfortunately no explanation could arise to why this abnormality occurs.

When one thinks of monsoons, one usually only thinks about the heavy rains which occur in India during the summer. However, a monsoon, properly defined, represents a wind pattern which reverses direction with the seasons and can occur in other regions (Wikipedia). However, back to the common definition, the monsoons rains provide almost all of India's water for the entire year. This makes India very reliant on the rains which occur from July to September each year (Baldauf).

Agriculture powers 70% of India's economy (Baldauf). So when the rains come late, everyone suffers. This causes starvation among the poor villages and hardship in the cities. The rain also partially abates the heat, so when it's missing, everyone feels it (Baldauf). This heat causes a massive demand for air-conditioning, one which the power company can not keep up with (Baldauf). So once again, the lack of rains affect the Indian people.



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But as a lack of water brings hardship, so does flooding. Floods, such as the ones near Nepal in 2004 left thousands homeless (Baldauf). Just as flood waters do in the United States, flooding wipes out houses in India, gutting everything in their paths.

So, India need a balance of rain each year. Not too much, but at the same time, not too little. But when this balance gets upset, Indians suffer. Floods, drought, famine, and power outages can all result from India's haphazard rainfall. However, the rains also affect the climate and population distribution in South Asia. Different sections of Asia receive different amounts of rain. These factors all affect the daily life of many Indians, just as they do worldwide.

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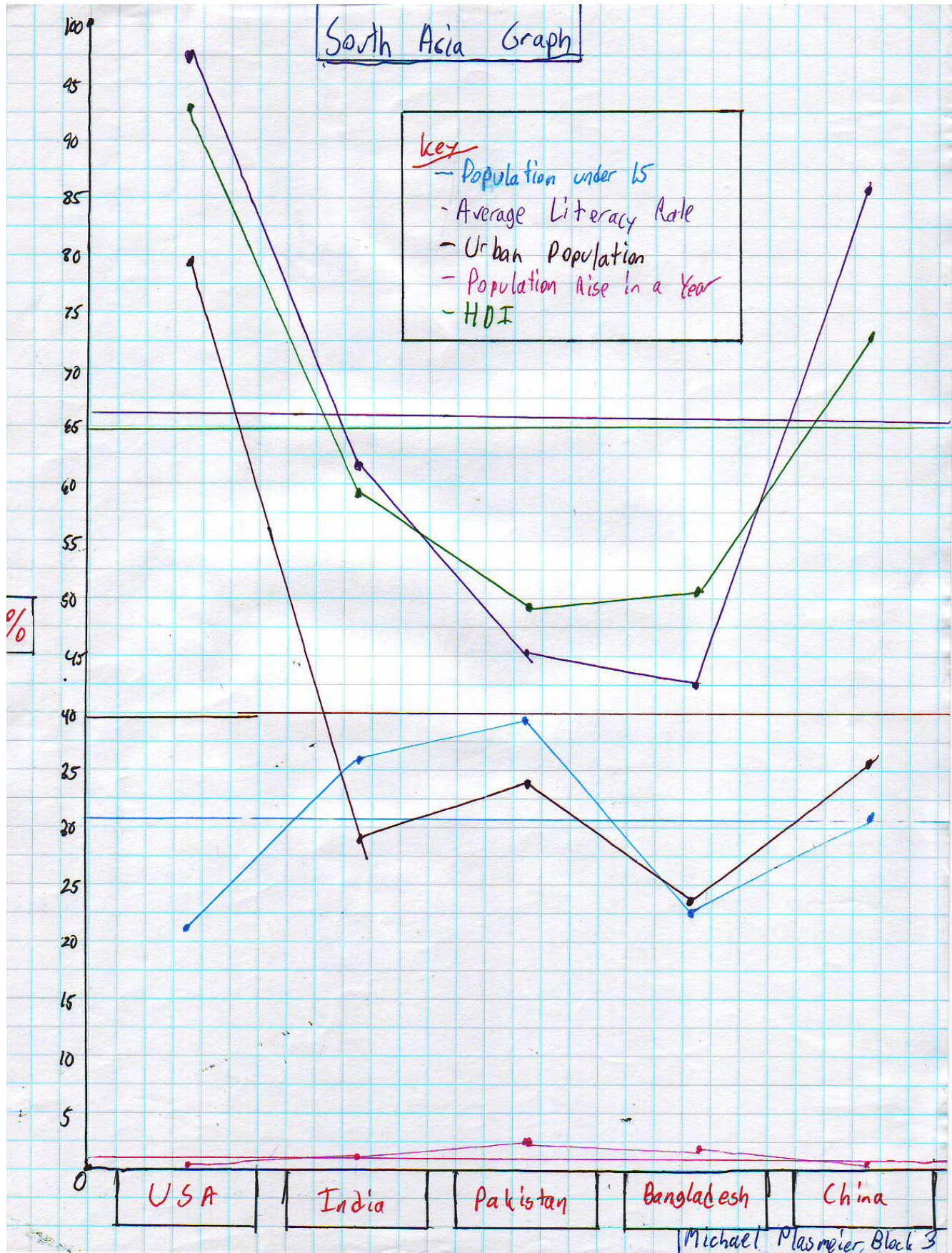
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x=6&selectedent=47614&entityname=South%20Asia%20\(region\),%20Asia](http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/features/MapCenter/MapPrintPreview.aspx?lat=18.3870980570115&long=78.9589470696392&alt=2&mapsize=Medium&mapstyle=population&mapstyleselectedindex=6&selectedent=47614&entityname=South%20Asia%20(region),%20Asia)>.

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Postcard: Ganges River



Dear Mom, I'm enjoying my trip to India. Everything's different here. Well I thought I might send you this card to let you know I'm all right and to tell you about my trip so far. Last night I visited the great Ganges River, considered by Hindus as the holiest river in India. Hindus even think of it as a goddess, or at least part of one. Did you know that Hindus are actually monotheistic? However, they believe that their god takes thousands of forms. Well anyway, I got to witness a religious ceremony. They had fire! I think you know about me and fire! Well, they use fire, among other things, to honor their gods. Most Indians even have a shrine in their houses where they make offerings to the gods. Also this means that Hindus do need to go to temple regularly. Jeeze, I wish I could do that; I could sleep in on Sunday mornings! India really represents a unique section of the world. I hope you're doing well Mom, I'll see you soon! –Michael

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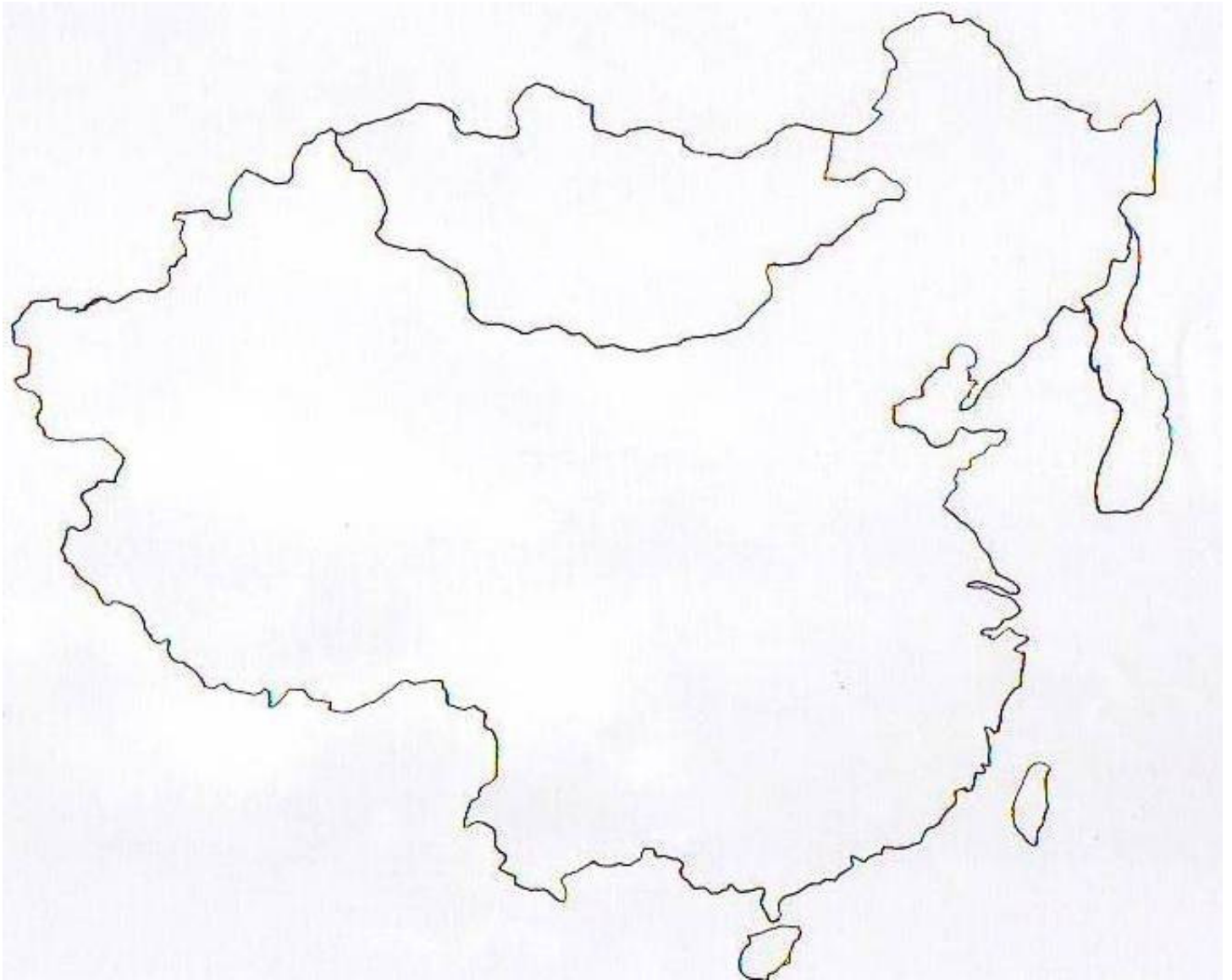
Postcard: Laxmi Street



Dear Justin, how are you? I bet you wish you were here with me in India! Actually, I kinda wish I wasn't; all of the dust and grime does not bode well for my asthma. The air is very dirty and filled with smog. You can't see it in this photo, but I can hardly breathe! On the other hand, don't you think the colors are just amazing! I love the way this photo shows them. I tweaked it a bit in Photoshop to bring out the high levels of contrast. This technique is called "HDR."

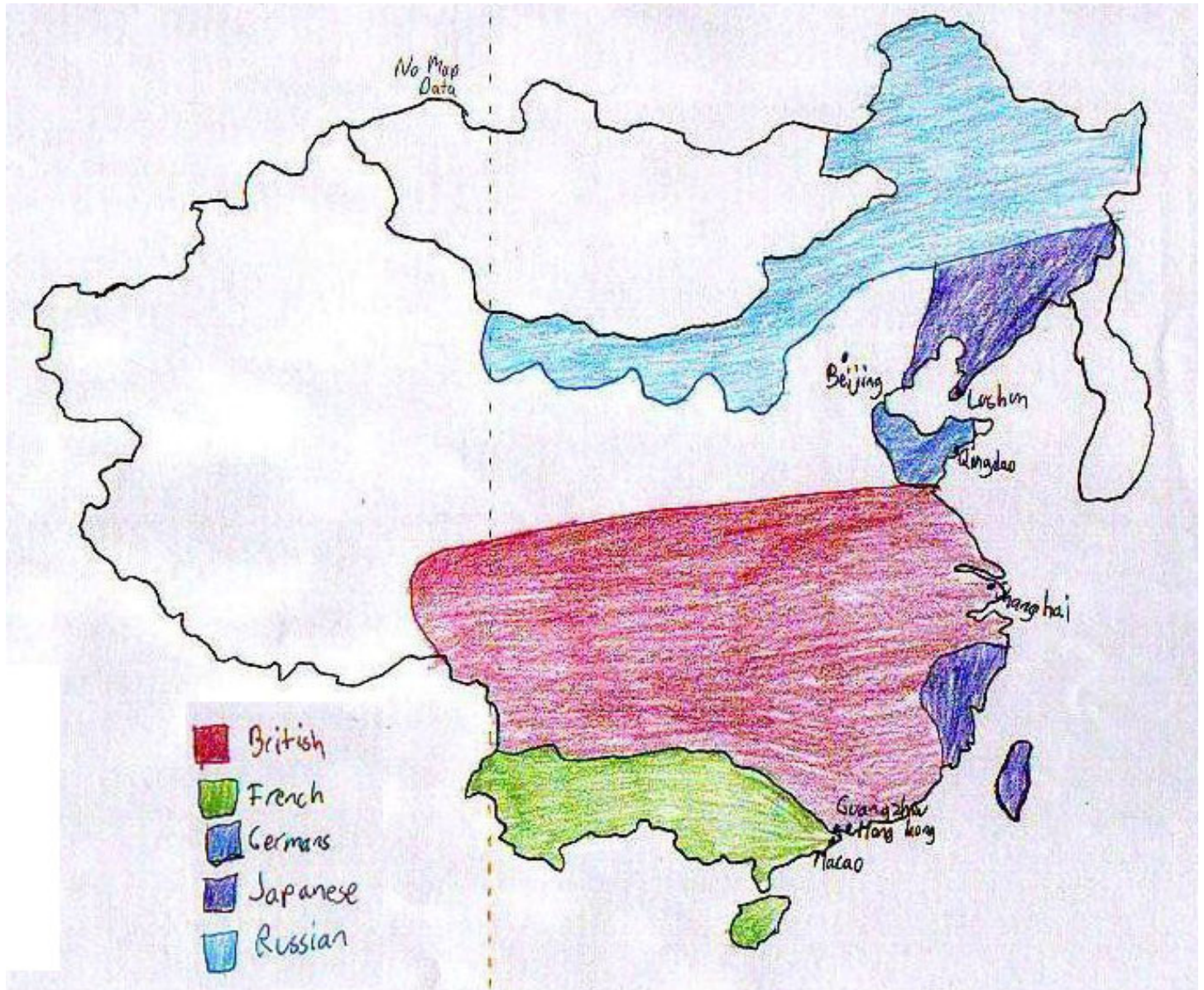
Anyway, this is the city of Pune. It is only the 7th largest city in India, but still has around 4.5 million people! That would still count as really big in the USA! Notice the old buses and motorcycle rickshaws. They cause all of the pollution. Also note that the women are wearing these beautifully colored clothes. I can't believe how they can keep them so clean considering the rest of the land, unfortunately, gets covered in shades of gray. Lastly, look down the street, the people go on for miles. The streets are just packed here in India. This means that the traffic sucks! Can you believe you can travel for hours and not get anywhere? And don't get me started on their driving techniques when they are moving, because WATCH OUT FOR THAT TRUCK!!!!. Sorry, my driver's a little crazy (and he's not the only one). Hope I make through this alive, Plaz

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Spheres of Influence



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China: Spheres of Influence

China has had a long and varied history. It has one the richest pasts of any nation, but one of the most volatile presents. It's the world's largest country by population and 3rd largest by area. But its isolationist policies and geography have kept it cut off from the outside world. Thus its history stems from that isolation.

For thousands of years, China developed more or less independently due to the restrictive physical features which surround China. To the south-east, lie the Himalayas, the tallest mountains on earth. To the west lies the great Tibetan Plateau. To the north, the vast plains of Mongolia, and farther north, the barren waste lands of Siberia. To the east, lie the vast expanses of the Pacific Ocean. These natural barriers prevented outside influences from entering China.

In addition, the Chinese culturally disliked any foreigners. They looked down in contempt to anyone who tried to enter their "The Middle Kingdom." They held a view of the world which placed them right in the center. "Barbarians" lay outside at the very edge of the circle. Thus, with this air of superiority, the Chinese did not look favorably on trade with other nations. They must have felt they had everything they needed. They felt as if they alone dominated the world. Of course, when the Europeans came, the Chinese initially did not want them and treated them with an attitude. But no longer could they hold back.

As the Europeans arrived in force, it became apparent that China lost their edge and regional superiority. Initially many Asian countries tried to keep out foreign traders. However, soon the Chinese had to allow trade. However, the Chinese wanted two-way trade, but Europe didn't have anything to trade in return for porcelain, silk, spices and tea except for silver. (Wikipedia, [Opium Wars](#)). So, the British attempted to get the Chinese addicted to Opium to correct their trade imbalance (Wikipedia, [Opium Wars](#)). The Chinese attempted to outlaw Opium, (which already was forbidden in Britain) (Wikipedia, [Opium Wars](#)). The British, obviously, did not want to end the trade of the addictive and lucrative crop, and used force to try and restart trading.

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However, the Chinese could not stand up to the British with their advanced warfare methods. The Chinese had to sign a series of unequal treaties (Wikipedia, [Unequal Treaties](#)). The first forced the Chinese to open ports and allow Christian missionaries to preach in those port cities (Wikipedia, [Unequal Treaties](#)). Later came systems of extraterritoriality where foreign countries ruled certain areas, not subject to local laws (Wikipedia, [Unequal Treaties](#)). This angered many Chinese, but let foreigners set up bases from which to trade from.

Without going into the specifics of each father nation, indirect colonization followed similar patterns in China. The country would find a good port location and establish a city there (German Historical Museum). It would bring in experts in city planning and construction to intelligently lay out and build the city. Sometimes, they would establish their own laws in the city through extraterritoriality (Wikipedia, [Unequal Treaties](#)). The city would then branch out into the surrounding countryside. New railroads set up efficient transportation methods. Ships would travel back and forth between the countries bring boxes of goods. Due to the large amounts of foreigners, the cities began to mirror the ones in Europe in the terms of entertainment and culture.

"A sphere of influence is an area or region over which an organization or state exerts some kind of indirect cultural, economic, military or political domination" (Wikipedia, [Sphere of influence](#)). Normally, the definition specifies that a influenced place can only do the will of their masters. If a influenced area could make decisions against the wills of the influencer's, it would not get classified as a true sphere of influence. And a colony differs from sphere of influence, because in a colony the colonizer has direct, official control over a region. A sphere of influence specifies indirect control only.

Let's look at where sphere of influence existed in China at their peak. The French extended their sphere of influence over much of Southern China, near the border with India. The British influenced a large section above that, but the Japanese controlled some of that area's coastline. The Germans have a relatively small area

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surrounding Qindao. The Japanese extend a sphere of influence in sections of China near Korea. Finally the Russians extended their influence over a large part of northern China. Notice that no one extends their influence near the capital city of Beijing.

After the World Wars Two, however, the outsiders either could not longer keep control of their colonies and/or no longer showed interest in having many colonies. Following World War Two, as in Africa, many European nations went home and declared their former colonies independent. This brought hardship and uncertainty on some, but caused a volatile political climate afterwards.

However, imperialism in Asia only ended only 10 years ago when the British returned Hong Kong to the Chinese. After World War 2, the British kept Hong Kong as a center for capitalistic entrepreneurs avoiding persecution (Wikipedia, [Hong Kong](#)). In 1984, the British government agreed to return Hong Kong to Chinese control, much to the dismay of most of its residents (Wikipedia, [Hong Kong](#)). China agreed to a "two systems" polity where only diplomatic affairs and national defense would integrate with the capitalistic system left alone (Wikipedia, [Hong Kong](#)). Today, Hong Kong continues to thrive, and sets an example for mainland China.

Unlike some nations after ridding themselves of foreign rulers, China focused internally, on communism, and shunned the outside world. Banning their books and influences, the Chinese wanted to remain independent, but they still strove to match other nation's levels of technology. Perhaps the vast foreign influences which once gripped China, provided support for the communist revolution in China. Also the political insatiability it set up with the weakening of the Qing dynasty

If they liked it or not, westerners have directly, and indirectly forever altered China's future. So much of its recent past focused on Europeans coming over and taking parts of it for their own goods. Once they left, China chose to take a step away from the world. That movement did not last, and China's future now shines

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brightly as a global player. But overall, only relatively recently did the East even know the West existed, much less share in their technologies and trade.

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Mao Button Journal

Dear Journal,

Today I received a gift from my great aunt who lives far, far away in a big city. For months I waited to get this. I had greeted the postman everyday at the edge of the village to see if he had a package for me. But for weeks he said he had nothing. But today it finally came! People will become jealous when they see me walking by with this on.

Everyone else's exceeds my old one in size. I want what they have. But wait! Having the same, just won't cut it! I must have a bigger, better one! I would have the best one in the entire village! Everyone would look up to me. They will celebrate me and my accomplishments!

In addition, when party officials come to town they will see that I have the largest one, they will know my loyalty and dedication. Maybe then they will allow me to move to the city and work for the party. I wouldn't have to work in the fields any more! I would have a much better life!

Having the largest Mao Button represents my ultimate dream! I would like nothing more then to profess my extreme love and deep respect for our Great Helmsman Mao Zedong. Yes, dear journal; how else could I profess my love then by wearing a big, red button featuring the great man's smiling portrait displayed proudly across my chest. Mao struggled for us, for the great People's Republic. And now I must repay this great debt by honoring his name.

From our farms glistening with crops to our technological superiority, only Mao can lead China. We toil for hours in the rice terraces our ancestors built so that our comrades can live with ample food. Chairman Mao says we need to work hard. I certainly try to do what he says. I try to practice loyalty and faithfulness. I read

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every night from his Little Red Book. I practice his principles and hope communism will rule the world. Mao taught us these things; thus I need to show my support for our great leader.

My day starts before the great red sun rises from the east. I quickly eat breakfast before I collect the big water buffalo I work with. We walk slowly to the great rice terraces and start plowing up and down the paddy. Later in the year I must help to harvest the rice and bring it to a central collection point. There the crops get sent across China to the big cities I can only dream of.

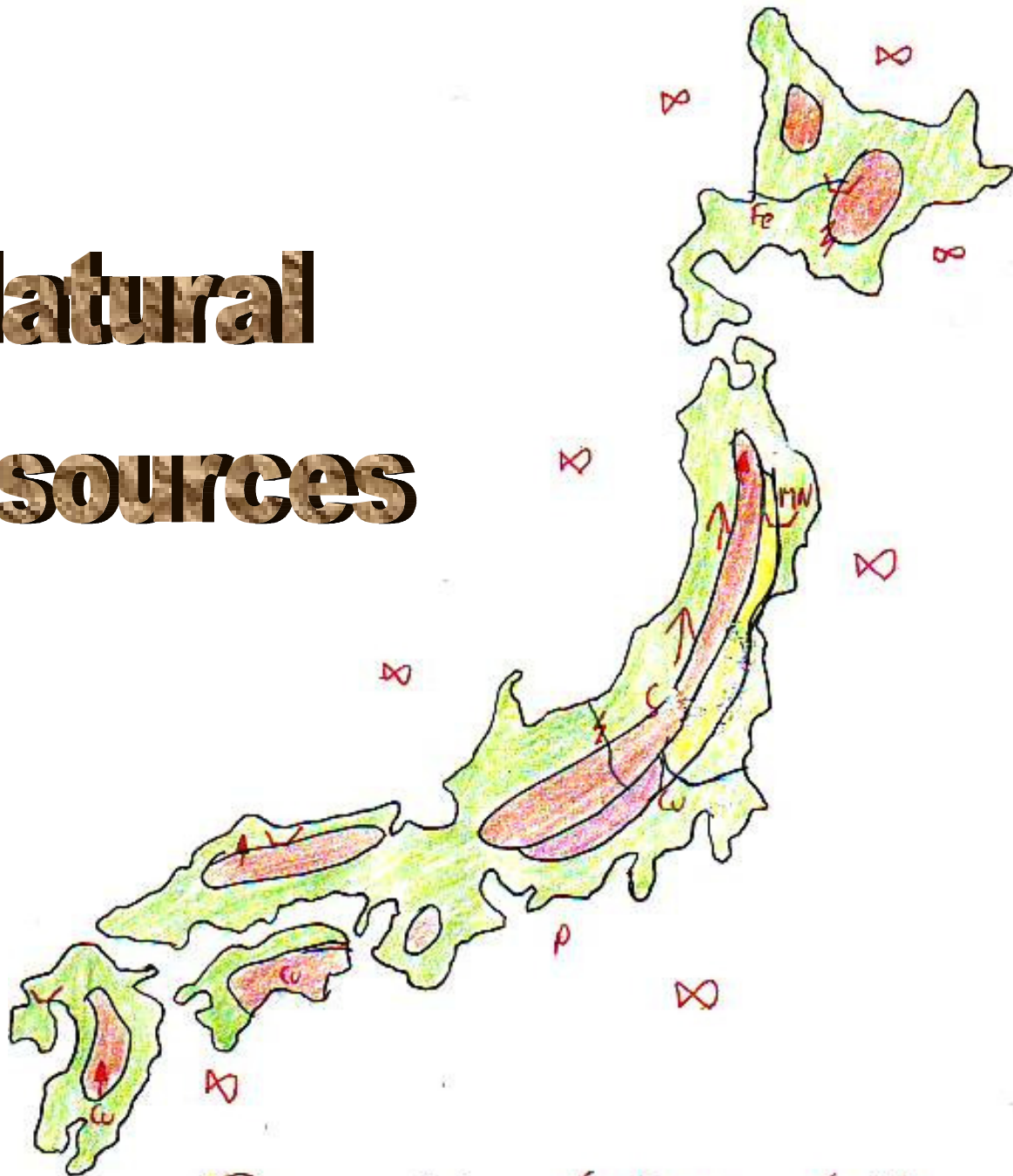
Mao keeps us employed, and my parents tell of times where no work and no food existed. Those years went by painfully. Since our great leader started guiding our nation, we have not fallen on such hard times again. And for that I feel grateful. He tends for our needs, runs our mail, and occasionally we get a tractor. Every year we get all the seed we need. I also heard about the times when we our family could not afford the seed to plant our rice. Thankfully, those times have ended, and no one goes hungry.

Still, I can't wait until tomorrow when I can walk around my village with my new Mao button. I just hope no one gets a bigger one in the meantime! I would become angry that I didn't even have a day to show it off. I would need to wait again for an even larger button. I don't know if my great aunt will come through again for me and get a bigger button. She has told me about all of the trouble she went through to get one. She said that she had to pay a lot of money, but I think it's worth it. Yeah! Can't wait.. Can't wait..!!!

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Natural Resources



-  Mountains/Hills
-  Plateaus
-  Plains
-  Lowlands
-  Rivers

- Cu - Copper
- Fe - Iron Ore
- NW - Manganese
- W - Coal
- DO - Fish
- P - Pearls
- ↑ - Petrol
- S - Silk
- ▲ - Timber
- ⚡ - Hydroelectric Power

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Japan: Natural Resources

Japan, a nation unlike any other; fiercely independent and self-sufficient for centuries, it has now arisen into one of the most powerful industrial nations on earth. Japan has managed to get around its small size due to the fierce loyalty and trustworthiness of the Japanese people. For centuries, Japan's lack of resources did not hurt it. It had what it needed. But as the age of industrialization came, Japan knew it needed more. It went to war to try and steal natural resources from others. Today, the old boundaries came back. But Japan has realized how to industrialize itself without the need for many domestic natural resources.

Japan's rose up from the sea via volcanoes which make up the ring of fire. This has many implications for the Japanese. Unlike normal earth, volcanic rock doesn't hold many resources. All of the plants and animals must have come from the mainland. In addition, the fault lines mean a large possibility for earthquakes and volcanoes. More than thirty active volcanoes make up Japan, and as many as 1,500 tremors happen each year (Ahmad et al 390). These can have devastating damage on the buildings of the Japanese. They have dedicated entire research institutes to researching earthquakes and earthquake proof buildings.

Japan, like Korea, has many mountains. More than four-fifths of Japan has little population living in it due to the mountains (Ahmad et al 390). This means that almost of the 125 million people live in the small coastal plains near the ocean (Ahmad et al 390). As a comparison, Japan has the seventh largest population squeezed in to a nation a bit larger then Great Britain, and remember to subtract the uninhabited mountain areas.

Japan has managed, somewhat, to deal with its small space. Many Americans think of the capsule hotels when they think of that problem. The hotels "room" only consist of a bed, like a bunk bed, but with the smaller end facing the room. They have a door which can close for privacy and peace. However, most tourists sleep there only one night for the novelty. In addition, the Japanese also use technology to solve their problems, such

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as a robotic parking garage. You drive your car onto a platform; get out, pay, and then the platform moves your car into a slot for storage.

Japan has some natural resources. The map indicates that all but the smallest island in Japan contain coal (Global Insights: People and Cultures). As industrialization started, one needed coal as the primary fuel source. Today oil has taken coal's place. A small amount of oil exists in the north of Honshu (Global Insights: People and Cultures). In addition, Honshu Island has many trees which one can harvest for lumber (Global Insights: People and Cultures). Paper and furniture then get produced from that wood. Also on the islands of Honshu and Hokkaido fast flowing streams have the potential for hydroelectric power plants (Global Insights: People and Cultures). Hydroelectric power will not run out and does not directly pollute the environment. The island of Honshu also produces silk (Global Insights: People and Cultures). Silk worms require mulberry leaves and silk gets spun into clothing.

The waters around Japan have many fish in them (Global Insights: People and Cultures). Fish represents an important source of protein for the Japanese people (Ahmad et al 391). Historically, the Japanese did not get enough protein from the rice and other crops, so they turned to the sea (Ahmad et al 391). The ocean provides sardines, tuna, herring, salmon, cod, and halibut (Ahmad et al 391). In addition the inland seas provide shellfish and seaweed (Ahmad et al 391). Often the Japanese get associated with fish and fishing.

However, Japan has a very limited amount of mineral resources (Ahmad et al 391). In the northern island of Hokkaido, iron ore exists in the southern part of the island (Global Insights: People and Cultures). In the north of Honshu, one can mine manganese (Global Insights: People and Cultures). One needs manganese to make steel, an important industry in Japan. In addition, in the south of Honshu, and on the islands of Shikoku, one can find copper (Global Insights: People and Cultures). Wires commonly use copper as it's one of the best conductors.



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Before industrialization, Japan did not have much of a need for these resources; they had enough with what they had. However, as factories started processing the minerals much faster, the resources could no longer feed the need. Thus, the Japanese invaded other nations like Korea and China to try use their resources. Due to their loss in World War Two, they needed to give up their colonies. Today they import iron ore from the Philippines, Malaysia, Australia, and India (Ahmad et al 391). North America, South Africa, and Australia provide coal (Ahmad et al 391). In addition they get oil from the Middle East (Ahmad et al 391).

Today Japan imports and exports many goods. The 2007 CIA World Factbook lists the following as Japan's primary exports: "transport equipment, motor vehicles, semiconductors, electrical machinery, [and] chemicals" (USA CIA). Their primary imports, as of 2001, include: "machinery and equipment, fuels, foodstuffs, chemicals, textiles, [and] raw materials" (USA CIA). Common agricultural items grown include: "rice, sugar beets, vegetables, fruit, pork, poultry, dairy products, eggs, [and] fish" (USA CIA). Large industries include: "motor vehicles, electronic equipment, machine tools, steel and nonferrous metals, ships, chemicals, textiles, [and] processed foods"(USA CIA).

Japan's natural resources have defined, helped, and hurt Japan. The tall mountains restrict arable land and force most of the population into a small area. The resources such as fish have helped their diet for centuries. But their lack of mineral resources hurt it as it industrialized. It represented a primary cause of its own imperialising history. The mountains squashed the population into a small area. However, today Japan has managed to peacefully import needed resources to power its large industry and economy and represents a success.

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Japanese Violence Journal

Dear Journal, Today I reflect on what its like living here in Japan. On one hand, our society exists so peacefully. We walk down the street in perfect safety. But on the other hand, at war lash out ruthlessly against our enemies. Back at home, we read what the west considers as gruesome cartoons. We just find them as just the normal way of life. How can this be? Why the contradiction?

On every street corner, one can find violent anime available for sale. Westerns consider the acts depicted as very gruesome. But we Japanese, we like it, and buy more and more of it. In America, kids go out and shoot people after playing Grand Theft Auto and other video games. They claim that the game provoked them to do it, but come on. In Japan, we don't fall for that nonsense. Japanese children don't get bad ideas merely by playing violent video games or reading cartoons.

Many consider our streets safe. Our capital murder rate lie at 1/6 of the United States'. I feel free wondering the streets knowing I would get robbed and murdered.

However, our society has had a long history of violence. For a long part of our history, military leaders have led us. We have a emperor, but he merely exists as a powerless figurehead. Our creation myth states that the emperor got a sword from a dragon's tale from heaven. This gave him the right to rule. Long ago, civil conflicts brought upon the rise of warring families. Each battled the other for more land and resources. When Minamoto Yoritomo gained power, he unites the kingdoms and appoints himself shogun. At the general of the army, he held all of the real power. He set up a class of feudal warriors called samurais. You may recall for watching the movies that they fight with honor and valor and never give up.

Thus, this commitment to honor and strength continue to this day. We Japanese do not want to dishonor our families or give up in war. But some things we went too far. The invasion of Nanking show the brutal

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violence which we did. Even today we will not talk about the untold horrors we committed against the defenseless Chinese citizens.

For a long time, our nation had no outside influences. As an island, we don't get too many visitors, so we did not have many friends. Even in some points in our history, we did not let foreigners in at all. But at other points we actively adopted other nation's cultures.

When the United States limited immigration in 1924, we became angry. We knew that we couldn't let bigger countries push us around. We resisted their calls to limit the size of our armies. But the same time we knew that we needed resources to power our growing industries. That's the reason we invaded Manchuria. But why again did we act so horribly there?

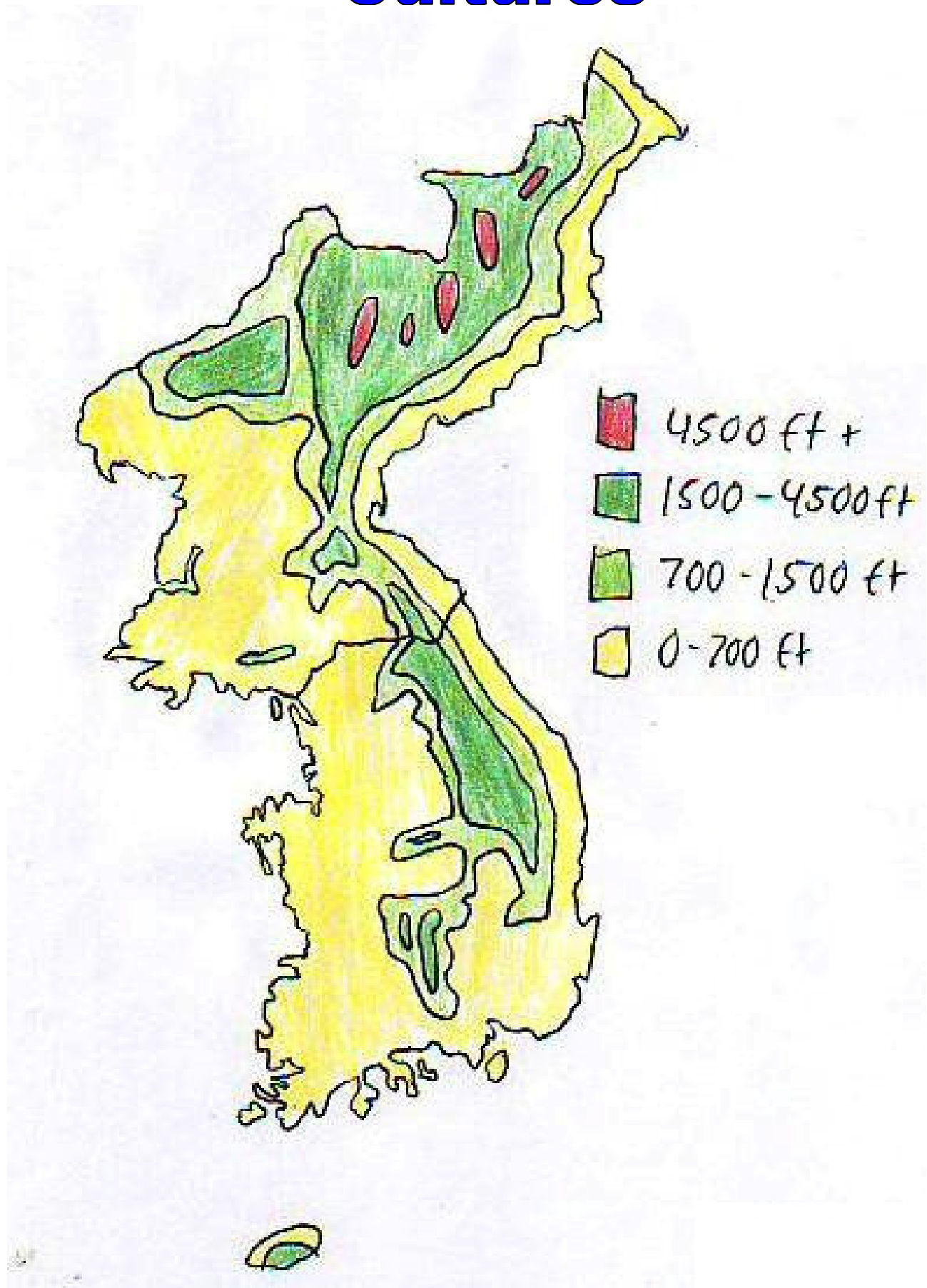
And if you look at our actions during World War Two, our military still practiced its ruthless ways on allied soldiers. Our troops would rather die than become prisoners. Some gave their lives as Kamikazes, with the hopes of just killing a few foreigners. Toward the end, our resistance towards giving up held as strong as ever. The United States had to use two nuclear bombs to make us change our minds.

Why, even though our culture exists exposed to violence, we live safely and peacefully at home. But why then, do we become so violent abroad. Our traditions? Our strict and ordered society? Our knowledge of right and wrong? If not, then what? But the violence towards foreigners? Our nationalism, our pride, which leads us to superiority? I don't know. But it remains an interesting question nevertheless.

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Korea: Physical

The rocky mountains of Korea shape its culture and society greatly. The eight mountain ranges restrict the amount of farmland available (Encyclopedia Mytha). Add an unstable political climate in the North, and the problem extends beyond mere geography. Rice and vegetables represent the primary crop of the Koreans (Ahmad et al 375). In addition, considerable industry has grown in the South because of its favorable political climate. The north, however, lacks these advancements.

Mountains cover 70 percent of the Korean Peninsula (Ahmad et al 376). The T'aebaek mountain range runs on along the east of Korea. The mountains stand taller in Northern Korea then they do in South Korea. Only the north has mountains over 4,500 feet tall (Ahmad et al). These exist in the north-eastern section of the country. Less tall mountains surround them. Overall, the mountains lay mostly on the east side of Korea, leaving the west for farming and fishing. In addition, only about 25 percent of the Koreans live in the mountainous regions (Ahmad et al 376). This means that most of the citizens live in the coastal plains.

Commonly the coastal plains get split into three regions; the northeast, the west, and the southeast. The west coastal plain, however, hold both capital cities and most of the industry and population of the peninsula (Ahmad et al 376). In addition, Korea's 6,000 mile coastline makes fishing a big industry (Ahmad et al 376). Occasionally, disputes over fishing rights with Japan arise.

The mountains of Korea severely limit the amount of farmland in the region. The CIA World Factbook 2006 reports that North Korean arable (farmable) land only makes up 22.4% of the country (USA CIA). South Korea has even less at only 16.58% (USA CIA). This severely limits agriculture, the "gateway" good to industrialization and global trade. Without it, Koreans must import much of their food, or increase the productivity of current farms.

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South Korea has managed to breed an industrial society. Tractors and modern farm equipment help make farms much more productive. Thus they can make more crops with less. In addition, the scientific research allows bigger and more disease resistant crops to grow. The south also has a strong industrial industry. The world buys semiconductors, wireless telecommunications equipment, motor vehicles, computers, steel, ships, and petrochemicals from Korea (USA CIA).

North Korea, however, does not have their priorities straight. Its regime thinks only of itself and North Koreans worship their leader. The cities exist eerily quiet and the streets have no cars due to the oil shortage. But the monuments stand massively tall. Huge buildings stand empty, and much goes to waste. A small, select few have much wealth. But most North Koreans starve to death, live in prison camps, or prepare for war via forced military service.

North Korea does have some natural resources however. Coal, iron, lead, copper, zinc and hydroelectric power all exist in North Korea (Ahmad et al 377). However, the government can not efficiently use these resources. Thus it receives little or no benefit from them. For society and for the Korean people, this does not represent a favorable situation. For the benefit of the entire world, this must change.

The geography difference between each section of Korea does not differ as much as the difference between the economy and way of life in the respective countries. Perhaps it represents the most striking example of capitalism vs. communism. On one hand, a advanced, free nation making efficient use of its resources, and on the other hand, a poor, corrupt land not making efficient use of its resources. If the state controls all, the likelihood of this happening increases dramatically.

Like all of the other locations around the world, life in Korea depends on geography. Mountains prevent trade, but rivers encourage it. Mountains may have minerals to mine, but they limit arable land. However,



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geography does not determine all in Korea. Human have the possibility to affect more, especially now in the modern years when they have learned to move large amounts of earth. Everywhere, politics affects what can get done. Scientific climate and technological advances power the increases in productivity and has made life better for hundreds of thousands of people. Thus a nation must have not only the favorable geography, but the correct political climate to nurture industry, growth, and real advances in people's lives.

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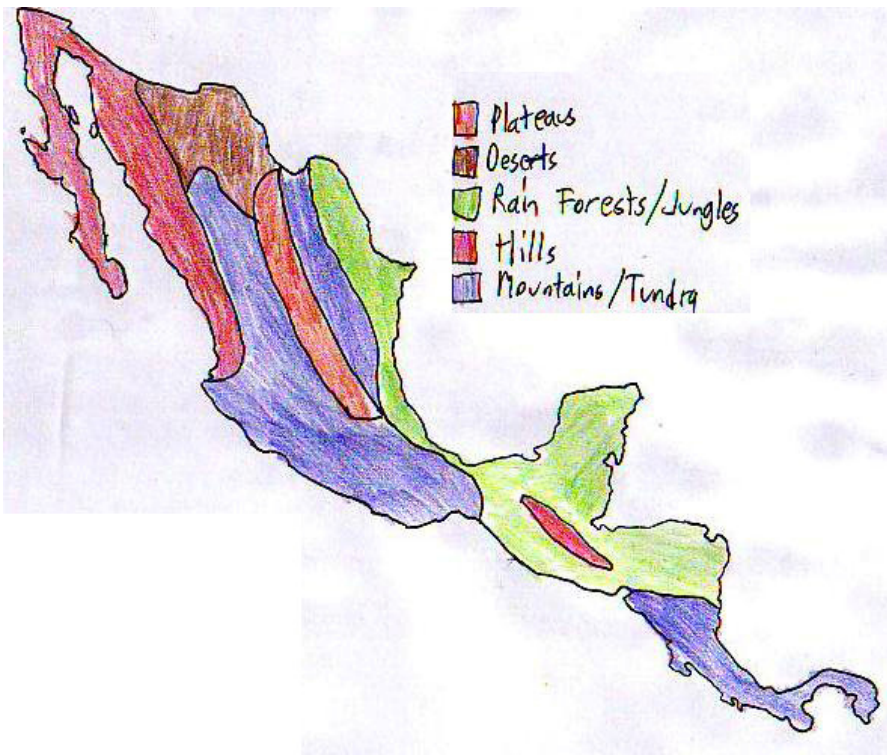
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Latin America: Landforms

Latin America stretches 5,500 long miles from the Rio Grande River to the tip of Cape Horn (Ahmad et al 441). The region receives its name from the Latin people who first "discovered" it centuries ago (Ahmad et al 441). The region stretched from tropical rain forests to icy wastelands near Antarctic (Ahmad et al 441). Latin America, a vast collection of different sub-regions, means that not just one story exists about Latin American landforms. Latin America contains Mexico, 7 nations of Central America, Puerto Rico and 13 other Caribbean nations, along with the 14 nations of South America (Ahmad et al 441). Latin America covers 20% of the earth's land surface area. Thus its landforms represent one of the most diverse collections on earth.

Much of the geography of Latin America gets affect by the La Cordillera mountain range (Ahmad et al 441). These mountains run the entire length of Latin America and even extend into North America (Ahmad et al 441). The name might not sound familiar because the mountains have different names in the different regions. The United States calls its section the Rocky Mountains. In Mexico, the Sierra Madres affect most of Mexico. The chain continues down through Central America, no doubt the force which created that land bridge. In South America, the mountains hug the western cost of the country leaving little coastal plains facing the Pacific Ocean. The mountains, as seen before, cut off the rain clouds from crossing them. Thus the Atacama Desert exists in Chile (Ahmad et al 441). Some parts of it have not received rain in 400 years (Ahmad et al 441)!

The land bridge of Central American can also explain a lot. Thousands of years before the Europeans "discovered" South America, native peoples must have traveled across that thin strip of land to find the vast continent of South America. These people must have also crossed over from Russia centuries before that. That land bridge, however, no longer stands above the water.

In the north of Latin America lies Mexico. Below the Rio Grande River, the deserts of the American west continue. Although the map doesn't show it, the Baja Peninsula often gets considered a desert. The Sierra

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Madere mountains and Central Plateau in central Mexico do not make this a good spot for agriculture. However the wide plains and prairies make this a good spot for the iconic cowboys herding cattle, so often seen in classic movies.

Moving down into Central America, one finds rain forests. Rain forests grow in the hot, humid lowlands near the equator. Mountain ranges and hills sometimes intersperse themselves throughout the desert, but for the most part, the rain forests make up the lowlands.

The west side of South America follows a similar pattern. Deserts lie sandwiched between the ocean and the high Andes Mountains, the second tallest mountain range on earth (Ahmad et al 442). Near the southern tip of South America, however, the sandwiched area turns to forests because of the precipitation blowing up from Antarctica (Ahmad et al 445). This makes the land cooler and less harsh.

However, for the most part, the eastern half of South America, of which Brazil comprises mostly of, plains and jungles lie. The Amazon Basin takes up 40% of Latin America and comprises of mostly rain forests, however the textbook map lists it as plains (Ahmad et al 442). Perhaps jungles surround only the lower section of the river. This area, from the snowy Andes Mountains in Peru, sources the great Amazon River. Ships can travel up to 2,300 miles into the Amazon, opening up an essential shipping route. Lumbar, livestock, and minerals make up the primary exports of the region (Ahmad et al 443). These resources then get traded for other goods in the world marketplace. Thus this represents a positive force for possible economic growth in the region. However, corruption, ramped in Latin America, reduces any possible benefits to the general population. These government problems need attention first if Latin America wishes to solve its economic problems.

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At the very eastern side of South America, the Brazilian Highlands separate the Amazon Basin from the Atlantic Ocean (Red book map). Because these mountains do not extend as high, the rainfall effect does not happen as much here. However, it might still block some of the trade and restrict possible agricultural activities.

Below the Brazilian Highlands, but still to the east of the great mountains, lies Argentina. Deserts comprise its lower half, but plains extend above it and into the Amazon Basin. Closer to the Andes and Chile, lie the "pampas" or grassy plains (Ahmad et al 442). Here wheat farmers and cattle ranchers make up one of the most productive farming regions of Latin America (Ahmad et al 442). Again people will adapt to their geography and make the most of their surroundings.

All of these geographical dividers separate Latin America into smaller sub-regions. Not until the Europeans arrived did the region even think of itself as a whole. The people, it seemed, did not go exploring far to discover and trade with other cultures. This contributed to regionalism, separating the different cultures of Latin America (Ahmad et al 442). This means that they developed separately unlike other, smaller regions we studied like Japan and Korea. In addition, the Americas existed quite far away for the trade and culture surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, the cradle of modern civilization. Only recently did the Europeans come over, and when they did, they did not see themselves as equals with the people they conquered. Even parts the East had more contact to Europe, unless they themselves decided to abolish that contact.

But whatever landform exists in a certain part of Latin America, one can know that it had some kind of effect on the peoples of Mexico, the Caribbean, Central, and South America. Centuries ago, Spanish and Portuguese settlers, the Latin people, found the vast expanses of Latin America and called it their own. They too affected the people, but, also they did fall victim to geography. They did not fulfill their quest for gold. The tall La Cordillera mountain range runs the length of two continents and affects much of the daily life such as the



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direction of the river's flow. But Latin America remains a large collection of smaller sub-regions each with its own problems and landforms.

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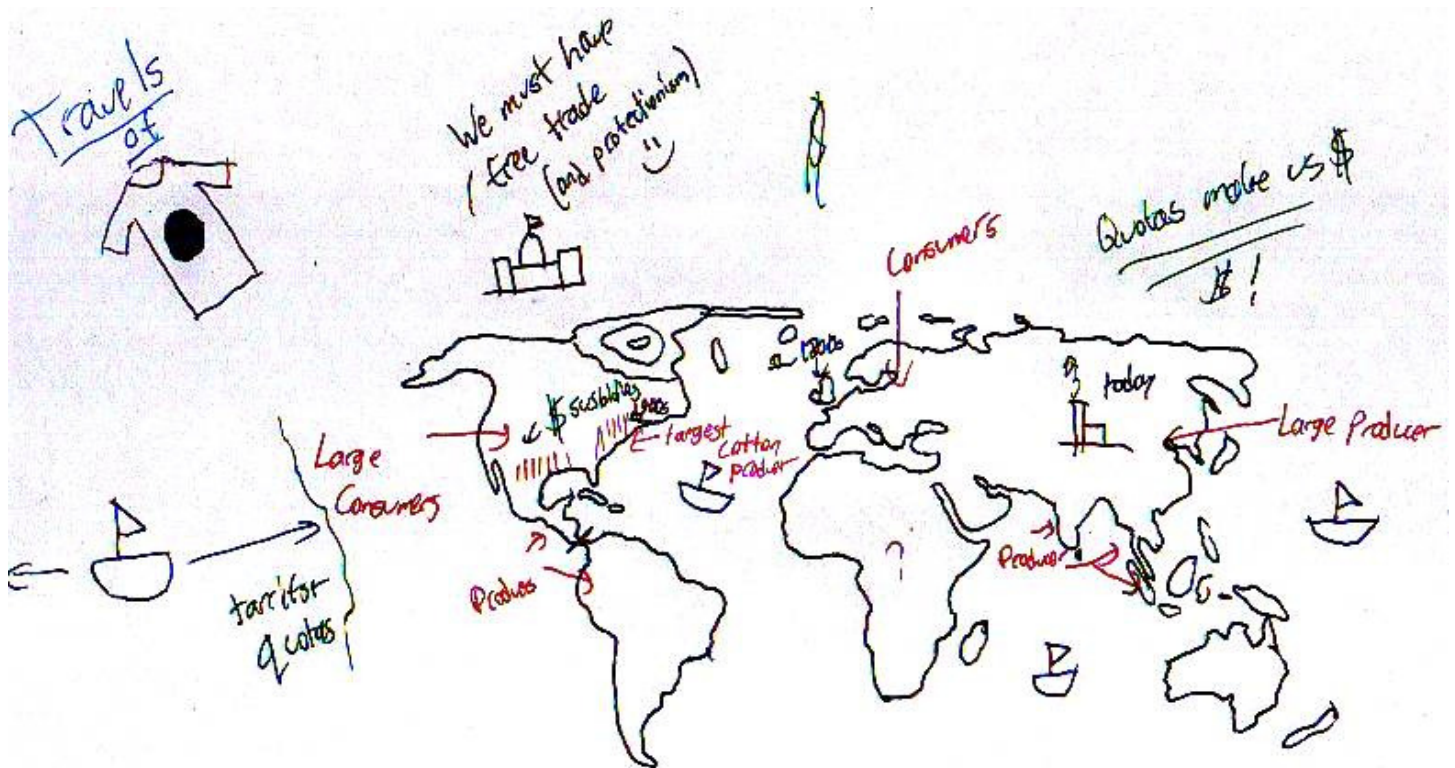
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T-Shirts



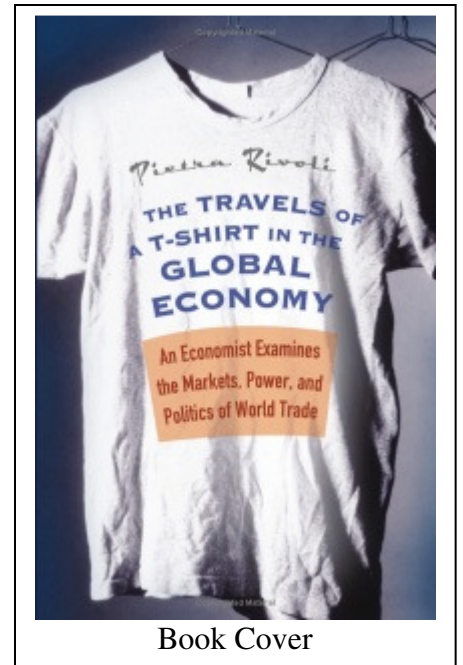
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Global: T-Shirt Trade

The Travels of a T-Shirt in the Global Economy: An Economist

Examines the Markets, Power, and Politics of World Trade explains the story (and politics) behind what it takes to produce a T-shirt to sell in America. The highly-complex system involves many people in many countries all working together to make a simple T-shirt which we can buy for only a few dollars.

After observing an anti-globalization protest in 1999, the author set out to find out if what these protesters said held true. The author, a collage professor at Georgetown University then set off to discover what went into a T-shirt. What she discovered held true to her theory, generally accepted by most economists, that globalization has helped us. Many poor countries like Taiwan and Japan have become much better off and now it helps China and India. But a T-shirt, both today and in the past, finds itself affected by creative maneuvers to avoid markets, not embrace them. The author finds that in every step of a T-shirt's life governments have attempted to regulate the textile industry, and prevent competitive markets.



Book Cover

A T-shirt starts its life as cotton grown in Texas. As farmers moved to Texas, tractors first became popular replacing the old producers in the south who relied on slave labor and did not adopt the tractors. Today, cotton farming requires almost no labor, only highly-specialized machines. In addition, universities and the Department of Agriculture research ideas which help our farmers. The developing world can not compete with the private-public partnership and mechanization. In addition, today the farmers own the plants which process, pack, and ship cotton. They band together in cooperatives to make sure their voice gets heard and that the profits go to them. Also a computer analyzes each bushel of cotton and places it onto an electronic sales system

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which connects the grower directly to the buyer. Developing nations do not have this exacting sales system.

Lastly the government provides billions of dollars in subsidies to both cotton growers and buyers. Growers face no risk of bad weather because they know that the US government will subsidize them in the case of crop loss.

In China, the state-run factories must now cope with producing for a market not a state quota. The managers must worry about quality as well as quantity. No longer can they just focus on producing Mao-style jackets, they must produce different styles of cloth and sell them. In addition, the workers crowded inside the Chinese factories choose working under "sweatshop" conditions over the harsh life of working on a farm where one must work hard and in many cases deal with an abusive father. They enjoy the bit of independence they do have; no longer must they directly honor their father's wishes. In addition, they do not need to stand out in the sun all day and get up each day at 3 AM to harvest crops.

However on the T-shirt's trip back to America the shirt encounters a mess of tariffs and quotas. Despite promising free trade, the politicians have developed thousands upon thousands of laws regarding textile imports. However, the power of the textile lobby wanes today. Domestically the industry has shrunk and has become less powerful. However, sometimes the lobby groups join together but soon break up due to bickering. (Ex: The weaving industry wants protection from foreign cloth but a free market for thread. The thread industry, however, wants protection for its product but a free market for its suppliers. etc, etc.) But some of the rules still exist today and get very complex for the importers. Due to the many agreements, each country has its own rules with America. It's a mess. And then, every product has its own rules. Furthermore, different rules then apply depending on the source of each component. Any times the imports ignore the tariff exemptions because it's easier to just pay the tariff. However this system has helped some developing countries. Producers constantly move around factories to locations with the least rules. Thus factories exist in nations with little tariffs.

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However, when the rules change again, the factories close and move elsewhere. This puts the workers out of work again.

When she finishes with her shirt, it finally encounters a free market in the highly competitive fabric recycling industry. Charities which receive donated clothing first sort out the stuff they think they can sell in their stores. Then they sell the rest to a processor for about 10 cents a pound. He then sorts the clothing into over 300 different categories. He sells what he can to many different buyers. For example he sells "distressed" jeans to expensive shops which then resell them for hundreds of dollars as special items. The sorter needs an eye for details. For example: old tie-dye = good, old sports jerseys = bad. Then much of the leftover gets shipped to Africa. However not all of it does. African consumers pick through the cloths carefully. They will not buy ripped items and Micky Mouse shirts can fetch 10 times the price of a family reunion shirt. So knowing customers represents the key in this free market of textile recycling.

So in the end the author has discovered T-shirts have more to do with un-free markets. The author believes that we should give everybody a voice in a free market. However to the activist she says continue to keep watch. The activists made life better in the US and Britain years ago. By continuing to demand cloth not made in sweatshops we can continue to make life better for foreigners. But to just protect domestic producers and to assume what employees want, that has failed time and time again. Times do change and our markets do move towards freedom and proving a better life for all. A single t-shirt touches many people and affects so much in the world.

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