

Name: _____
Global History II

Date: _____
Ms. Valdner & Mr. Patten

The Modern Problems of Africa

AIDS Pandemic

In 2001, the population of Sub-Saharan Africa living with the AIDS virus was 10%. In some countries such as Swaziland, Zimbabwe and Botswana the percentage of those infected was upwards of 30%. (These figures do not include children infected.). In North America, the infection rate is .5% amongst adults. The extent of the epidemic is only now becoming clear in many African countries, as increasing numbers of people with HIV are now becoming ill. In the absence of massively expanded prevention, treatment and care efforts, the AIDS death toll on the continent is expected to continue rising before peaking around the end of the decade. This means that the worst of the epidemic's impact on these societies will be felt in the course of the next ten years and beyond. Its social and economic consequences are already being felt widely not only in health but in education, industry, agriculture, transport, human resources and the economy in general.

Questions:

- 1.) In 2001, what were the percentages of the African population that were living with the AIDS virus?

- 2.) What is the extent of the AIDS epidemic?

- 3.) What is the expected death toll on the continent of Africa?

- 4.) What are the consequences of the AIDS epidemic in Africa?

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Tribal Violence

Africa has the largest number of active tribes on the planet, over 500 at last count. The nations of Africa are creations, put together by European colonial powers in the late 19th century. In the 1950s and 60s, most of these colonies were given their freedom. These new nations still had their tribes, plus poverty and weak legal systems. The colonial powers enforced peace and after independence, tribal animosity began to emerge very quickly.

Most of these nations soon found themselves run by military dictators. It was ugly, but it kept the peace. However, the locals were far more corrupt, often because they were intent on taking care of their tribe at the expense of everyone else. The corruption ruined the economy, as well as making most of the population increasingly angry over the poverty and injustice.

With the generals replaced by politicians, tribal violence is on the rise again. A good case in point is Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation. Nigeria has some 250 "ethnic groups" (most organized as tribes around shared customs, language and culture) in a population of 122 million. Pre-colonial tribal warfare is returning. In the past, the various kingdoms that existed before the colonial period had ethnic minorities that were oppressed, and they have not forgotten.

Historically, the only thing that works is gradual absorption of many of the smaller groups into the larger ones. Africans want to hold on to their colonial era borders, even if it means constant threat of unrest. This is preferable to the pre-colonial tribal warfare. But how do you keep the tribes from fighting?

Questions:

- 1.) What were some of the problems of the new nations of Africa?
- 2.) How did military dictators rule their nations of Africa?
- 3.) Describe the tribal violence that occurred in Nigeria?
- 4.) What are the main reasons for tribal violence and what are the ways that it can be ended?

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Water Shortages

Water has always been a rare commodity in Africa, whose rapidly growing population is now closing on the 800 million mark. And people here are not too fussy - any water, not just safe drinking water, will do to assuage their thirst. Even in ancient times, African tribes used to fight over two things: water and cattle. History is in danger of repeating itself, as today's dwindling water resources may yet become the cause of state wars in the not too distant future.

Fourteen African countries are already faced with water scarcity, while another dozen will join this list in the next 25 years. Most Africans residing in rural areas use, on average, only 30 to 40 liters of water per day for domestic consumption, the United Nations estimates. In comparison, the average U.S. consumer uses approximately 700 liters of water per day. Speaking at a recent water workshop in Nairobi, Toepfer said more than 300 million people in Africa still lack access to safe water and adequate sanitation. "In sub-Saharan Africa, only 51 percent of the population have access to safe water and 45 percent to sanitation," he reported.

Questions:

- 1.) What is a rare commodity in Africa?
- 2.) In ancient times, what did African tribes fight for?
- 3.) What is the average amount of water used in Africa and in the United States?
- 4.) As a result of a lack of water, what do you think will happen between African tribes and nations?

