The Postwar World: Comparative Colonial Rebellions and Independence

I. The Eclipse of Europe
II. Postcolonialism
III. Postcolonial Rebellions in Asia, Africa and Latin America
The Eclipse of Europe

- Europe severely weakened during WWII economically, politically and internationally.
- During and immediately after WWII (1940-1965), many of Europe’s colonies began to seek independence.
- During emerging Cold War, new nationalist struggles must negotiate with U.S. or Soviet Union for support.
Postcolonialism

• “Post” or after colonial control.
• Hundreds of years of foreign control of economy, political system, administration of state and economic exploitation of labor and natural resources.
• New nationalist movements in former colonies seek independence from colonial rulers.
• Use armed resistance and/or political resistance.
• Postcolonial movements dominate 1940-1965.
Postcolonial Rebellions in Asia, Africa and Latin America

- After WWII, series of nationalist postcolonial revolutions. Some listed below. (former colonial power in parentheses).
- Indonesia, 1945 (Netherlands)
- India, 1947 (Great Britain)
- Ghana, 1947 (Great Britain)
- Cuba, 1953 (U.S.A)
- Algeria, 1962 (France)
- Vietnam, 1975 (France)
- We will examine India and Vietnam as two case studies in postcolonialism.
Indonesian Independence, 1945
Indian Independence, 1947
French Indochina, 1880s
French Indochina (Vietnam) 1945-1975

Early VM guerrilla unit. Note mainly British weapons and Adrian helmets (original photo shows painted red stars in a yellow pentagon)
Cuban Revolution, 1953
Algerian Revolution, 1954-1962
Ghana, 1957