

# 12 – Recovery, Cold War, and Contemporary Europe (1945 to Present)

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## KEY TERMS

Morgenthau Plan	Baby Boom	Simone De Beauvoir
Blockade of Berlin	Margaret Thatcher	Paris Summit
The Marshall Plan	Schuman and Monnet Plan	Common Market
Berlin Airlift	The Geneva Summit	Bay of Pigs
Treaty of Maastricht	Warsaw Pact	Sputnik
Balkan Wars of 1990s	Prague Spring	Berlin Wall
North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)	COMECON	Brezhnev Doctrine
Korean War	Fidel Castro	Cuban Missile Crisis
Douglas MacArthur	European Economic Community	Truman Doctrine
		Brain Drain

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## OVERVIEW

The destruction of Europe after the Second World War was far more extensive than that at the end of the First World War. The technology and tactics of the First World War had limited the worst damage to specific regions of Europe: Flanders, which consists of northeastern France and parts of Belgium, and Poland and sections of European Russia, some provinces of northern Italy and southern Austria; some areas of the Balkans. During the Second World War, the mass bombing of industrial and population centers severely damaged virtually all the cities of the European belligerents and it left Germany in ruins. The German destruction and the scorched-earth policy of the Soviets leveled tens of thousands of villages, towns, and cities in the western Soviet Union. It ruined transport systems, factories, and housing and shattered the economies of Western and Eastern Europe.

The economic recovery of Western Europe was so amazing, it was referred to as “the miracle.” Within a decade, productivity had reached prewar levels; within two decades, unparalleled prosperity prevailed. West Germany, so recently defeated, demoralized, and divided from East Germany, had been the key to recovery. The United States infused massive aid through the Marshall Plan to rebuild not only its former Allies but also its former enemies – West Germany and Italy. By the end of the 1950s, Western Europe had made the first moves toward economic and, eventually, political union. The United States also aided Japan and set up a viable democratic government.

The rebuilding of the USSR was no less spectacular. Under Stalin’s five-year plans, most of the war damage had been repaired within a decade. A vastly expanded Soviet empire, established by the successes of the Red Army

against the Nazis, included most of the countries of Eastern Europe, which became satellites of the brutally repressive Stalinist Soviet Union. After the death of Stalin in 1953, new leaders redefined the role of Soviet communism but kept an iron grip on the USSR and Eastern Europe. The emergence of the United States and the USSR as superpowers at the end of the war created a new balance of power in Europe and in the world. Europe quickly became divided into the West and the Communist bloc-the West dedicated to the containment of Soviet expansionism, the communists intent on both spreading their philosophy and defending their gains against the “capitalist conspiracy.” The Cold War (the ideological, economic, and, at times, military rivalry between the two adversaries) was all the more dangerous for the development of nuclear weapons. Several hot spots in the Cold War – such as the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War, the Yom Kippur War, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan – caused the world great concern. Peaks of tension, during which the superpower confrontations almost led to war or even nuclear holocaust, alternated with “thaws,” until a policy of “peaceful coexistence” emerged.

In the 1970s, high energy prices resulting from instability in the Middle East and the disintegration of the American-dominated global monetary system brought about a worldwide recession. Western Europe suffered stagflation and huge government deficits.

During this decade, detente (a relaxation of tensions between East and West) was furthered by West Germany’s attempts to reconcile with Eastern Europe and by the Helsinki Agreements, and it was strained by the U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the Soviet involvement in Afghanistan, and a massive American arms buildup.

The most important and dramatic developments of the 1980s and early 1990s were the largely peaceful anti-communist revolutions in Eastern Europe and the collapse of Soviet communism that led to the dismantling of the Soviet Union. The Solidarity movement in Poland, liberalization in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and the unification of East and West Germany marked the end of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe. The gradual decline of Soviet economic strength under Brezhnev and Andropov led Gorbachev to initiate profound political and social reform (*glasnost*) and economic restructuring (*perestroika*). In 1989, the first free elections were conducted since the 1917 revolution. An attempted military coup against Gorbachev in the summer of 1991 faced popular opposition and failed. Many Soviet republics declared independence and, with the promise of reform, Boris

Yeltsin was elected president of the Russian Republic. Vladimir Putin replaced Yeltsin in 2000, and oversaw the privatization of the Soviet-state possessions such as oil companies and other industry. Dmitri Medvedev replaced Putin in 2008 as his handpicked successor, while Putin still held actual power as prime minister. Putin was reelected president in 2012 when he became constitutionally eligible to do so.

The entrance of great numbers of women into the workplace and the feminist movement altered the lives of women in Europe and the United States. The birth rate dropped, the divorce rate rose, and sexual and social attitudes toward women changed. At the beginning of the twentieth century, women could not vote, and at the time of publication of this book women have been elected as prime ministers in Great Britain, Germany, India, Portugal, Norway, Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Pakistan, France, Poland, Turkey, and many other nations. The twentieth century was the century of the woman in many ways. Women in many countries gained intellectual and professional freedom and increased earning power. Widespread use of contraception led to increased emancipation in industrialized nations, allowing women to participate more equally in society as their roles changed from caretakers to wage earners in many cases. By the 1990s, laws preventing wage and other forms of discrimination against women were prevalent in Western Europe as well as in the United States, Canada, and other industrially advanced countries. Women have risen to the highest positions of power in Europe and elsewhere as they have gained more legal, political, and economic freedom than at any time in European history.

Most recently, increasing nationalism in Europe has led to anti-immigration and rightwing parties gaining ground in elections. Financial crises, as well as increasing sentiment against Muslim immigrants and others who are changing the national cultures within Europe, threaten the once growing European unity.

# Western European Recovery (1945-1957)

## The 1940s After the War: Setting the Stage for the Cold War

Since Germany's Ruhr Basin Was the industrial center of a devastated Europe, the Western Allies decided that Germany would have to be rebuilt. The Soviets had hoped to use German reparations for reconstruction of their own massive war damage, and the Morgenthau Plan had been developed by the U.S. secretary of the treasury to transform Germany back into an exclusively agricultural society. Led by the Americans, the British and French agreed that in order for Western Europe to recover, Germany would have to be rebuilt.

- The United Nations (UN), which replaced the defunct League of Nations and began with just 50 nations, now includes 193 nations and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as Amnesty International, which join in debate but do not vote.
  - The UN has a General Assembly and six main committees as well as a Human Rights Council and an Economic and Social Council; and its Security Council must approve any international military action.
  - The Security Council has five permanent members with vetoes: France, Russia, China, United Kingdom, and the United States.
  - The UN works to prevent human tragedy, preserve and promote human rights, improve health through the World Health Organization, improve education and economic development, and promote international peace and understanding.
- Joint administration of the four occupation zones in Germany broke down in 1946.
  - The American, British, and French sectors eventually became West Germany; the Russian sector, East Germany.
- Agitation by communist parties in France and Italy worsened relations between the democracies of Western Europe and the Soviet Union.
- In 1948 the Czech communists seized power in Prague and set up a government.
- The **Marshall Plan**, developed by Secretary of State **George Marshall** (1880-1959), former U.S. military chief of staff, was put into operation.

- Billions of dollars in grants went to Western Europe to rebuild housing, transportation systems, and industrial plants.
- The Western European nations created the Committee of European Economic Cooperation in 1948 as a result of the Marshall Plan as a way to coordinate economic efforts and get the most out of their aid dollars.
- This eventually led to the creation of the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), which was a primary tool of European integration until it was replaced by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which helped usher in the European Union.
- The Soviet response to the OEEC and the Marshall Plan was COMECON, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, set up in 1949 to facilitate and coordinate the economic activity of those countries in Eastern Europe in the Soviet sphere of influence known as the Eastern Bloc.
- Western Europe created new benefit systems for its citizens to reduce the peaks and valleys that capitalism creates in the human condition and to support basic necessities for all citizens, known as the **modern welfare state**.
  - Unemployment insurance became universal and lasted for long periods of “time.”
  - Housing subsidies were provided to low-income families.
  - Medical care is given to all for free, as a human right.
  - Pensions were created for all citizens.
  - Subsidies were given for large families.
  - Child-care was provided in state-sponsored facilities.
  - Higher taxes on the wealthy paid for these benefits for the neediest.
- The rapid transformation of West Germany into an economic powerhouse that became the leading economy in Europe was labeled the *Wirtschaftswunder* or “West German miracle” due to the miraculous nature of economic growth there.
  - The 1950s saw increasing standards of living with a 73 percent rise in purchasing power for the average West German.
- The United States and 11 other nations formed the North Atlantic Treaty

Organization (NATO) to rearm non-communist Europe and safeguard it against invasion.

- Soon after, West Germany (the Federal Republic of Germany), Greece, and Turkey joined.
- Eventually Germany was encouraged to organize a national army under NATO command.
- The **Warsaw Pact** was formed as an alliance of the Soviet Union and its Eastern European satellite nations (East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and Albania) as an answer to the formation of NATO by Western Europe

## Western Europe Begins Economic Integration

Productivity in those countries that received Marshall Plan aid had exceeded prewar rates, and the United States urged the Europeans to develop a European free-trade zone similar to that among the various American states.

- The **Marshall Plan** combined self-interest (communism in Europe would be contained and markets for U.S. goods opened) with altruism.
- The **General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)** was completed in 1948 in which signatories agreed to reduce tariffs and negotiated during the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment.
  - Resulted due to the failure of negotiating governments to create the International Trade Organization (ITO). GATT was signed by 23 nations in Geneva on October 30, 1947, and took effect on January 1, 1948.
  - Lasted until the signature by 123 nations in Marrakesh on April 14, 1994, of the Uruguay Round Agreements, which established the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** on January 1, 1995.
- Under the French-sponsored **Schuman and Monnet Plan**, six industrial countries on the continent, (Belgium, France, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg, and West Germany) formed the **European Coal and Steel Community** to pool their resources in 1952.
  - The **European Economic Community**, the **Common Market**, was created by the same six nations that formed the European Coal and Steel Community.
  - It aimed at an end to internal tariffs and for the free exchange of money and workers between members.
  - By 1968, its plan would be in full effect.

- In 1973, Britain, previously denied membership by France, joined as a full partner along with Ireland and Denmark.
- By 1960, many of the best scientists and engineers left Europe to go to the United States for higher salaries, creating the “brain drain.”

## **DECOLONIZATION**

France, Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, the Netherlands, and Portugal all gave up their colonial empires in the period after the Second World War. By 1975, most of Africa and Asia was back under African and Asian rule, with a few minor exceptions. The horrors of the world wars had destroyed much of the confidence the Western powers had that they were better than those they ruled and allowed Europeans to see that the rest of the world deserved self-rule.

- Britain gave up India first in 1947; then much of Africa was relinquished after 1960.
  - The British also gave up governing parts of the Middle East that now include Syria,
  - Iraq, and Israel.
  - A Jewish homeland was created in Israel in 1948.
  - There was considerable bloodshed during British decolonization: For example, between 12-20,000 Mau Mau rebels are estimated to have died fighting for independence in Kenya; and Jewish rebels in Palestine fought fiercely against occupying British troops to force the United Kingdom to withdraw.
- The French gave up Indochina after their resounding defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954 but fought very hard to keep Algeria.
  - It was a long and brutal conflict that sapped France of resources and forced it to fight against guerilla tactics and a native nationalist movement.
  - The conflict ended with a French Commonwealth that included most of the African area France had fought to keep.
- Belgium had ruled a portion of Africa that was 75 times the size of Belgium.
  - The Democratic Republic of the Congo was formed in 1960, ending more than a century of Belgian rule there.
- The Portuguese also decolonized slowly and reluctantly as their world power dissipated.

- Angola was an example of their attempt to preserve rule that brutalized natives.
- Despite indigenous nationalist movements, independence for many African and Asian territories was delayed until the mid, and even late, twentieth century by the imperial powers' reluctance to relinquish control, threats of interference from other nations, unstable economic and political systems, and Cold War strategic alignments.
  - The **Indian National Congress** agitated for independence, for almost half a century, under the leadership of Mohandas K. Gandhi before the British simply walked out of India in 1948.
  - In Vietnam, **Ho Chi Minh** organized the Viet Minh to fight for independence, first from France and then from American control, as he worked to establish Vietnam as a communist state.
  - In Indonesia, Sukarno led his people to independence from the Netherlands, which had tried to restore its rule there after the Second World War.
- Some scholars argue that the proliferation of European languages in education and finance, as well as Cold War political pressures, led to an era of neocolonialism in which nations are still dominated financially and politically rather than militarily.

## May 1968 in France

The economy of France was brought to a standstill, and President Charles de Gaulle was unable to solve the problems caused by a general strike and fled the country.

- The strikes began with student protests against the expulsion of a few students, the general poor quality of education in France, and the closure of major universities such as the Sorbonne.
- Workers joined the students, and a general strike brought the country to its knees. When de Gaulle returned in a landslide victory, and dissolved the National Assembly and promised to bring in the army, the strike lost momentum and the republic was saved.
- Questions plague historians as to whether or not these protests were part of a cultural diffusion from the United States, where riots over the shootings of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy led to general unrest and protests against the Vietnam War.



# Communism: The Soviet Union and Its Satellites (1945-1968)

## Immediately After the Second World War

Backed by the USSR “Red” Army, local communist parties in Eastern Europe, (Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Romania), took over the coalition governments and fell under the Soviet orbit. East Germany, under Soviet occupation, also became a satellite.

**Albania** and **Yugoslavia**, under Communist Party rule, managed to maintain independence from Moscow since they had not been liberated from the Nazis by Soviet troops.

## The Soviets Consolidate Power (1945-1953)

- Communist governments in the satellite nations carried out land distribution reforms and nationalization of industry.
- Forced collectivization of agriculture was only moderately successful. Soviet-type five-year plans helped reconstruction and built up heavy industry at the expense of consumer goods.
- Police state methods were used (domestic spying, arbitrary imprisonment, censorship, torture) to silence opposition parties and to neutralize the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in newly communist nations such as Poland.
- Repression was tightened to the breaking point in the USSR itself during the last years of Stalin.
  - His achievements (industrialization of Europe’s backward giant, victory in the Great Patriotic War against the Nazis, post-war reconstruction accomplished in a decade, and the spread of a Soviet communist empire to Eastern Europe) has to be measured against the brutal repression he imposed on the Russian people.
  - Over the course of his totalitarian regime he was responsible for the slaughter of perhaps 30 million of his citizens, for denying basic civil rights, for establishing forced labor camps (*gulags*), and for repressing any and every form of free expression.
- Stalin died in 1953, and there was a power struggle in the Soviet Union.
  - The party leadership executed Lavrenti Beria, head of the secret police, to prevent a coup, and it set up a figurehead premier.
  - Riots against Soviet domination broke out in East Berlin, a

precursor of greater resistance from the satellites.

## The Era of Khrushchev (1956-1964)

**Nikita S. Khrushchev** (1894-1971), a former deputy of Stalin and by 1954 head of the Soviet Communist Party, gave a speech to the Central Committee on the crimes of Stalin. Stalin, he said, had built a cult of personality, created terror among citizens and party leaders alike, and had even been responsible for the dismal failure of Soviet troops to stop the initial advances of the Nazi invaders in 1941.

- Khrushchev tried to find a middle road between the Western democracies and the old party hard liners who had thrived under Stalin by defending communism while trying to fix the excesses of Stalin.
  - Khrushchev liberalized the arts, as typified by his allowing the publication of Soviet dissident Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.
  - In a speech at the United Nations, he threatened to destroy the United States.
  - In 1962, in response to U.S. missiles being placed within range of Moscow, he attempted to site nuclear missiles on the newly communist Cuba and had a famous face-off with John R Kennedy in the **Cuban Missile Crisis**.
  - He also blockaded Berlin, which caused the United States under Kennedy to respond with a massive airlift to West Berlin in order to keep them living the Western capitalist lifestyle.
  - After the Cuban Missile Crisis, he softened his tone toward the United States; he signed a nuclear test ban treaty in late 1963.
  - By backing down against Kennedy, he sealed his fate and lost power in the USSR.
- **De-Stalinization** encouraged resistance in the satellites; revolts broke out in Poland and Hungary.
  - In Poland, Władysław Gomułka (1905-1982) managed to win concessions from Soviet leaders to liberalize the government.
  - In Hungary, armed revolt in Budapest and other cities threatened the communist regime, and the Soviets brutally crushed all resistance.
- The launching of the first artificial earth satellite, Sputnik, in 1957, pointed out the considerable technological achievements of the Soviets.

- In 1949, they had tested their first *atomic bomb*.
- In 1953, they had developed their first *hydrogen bomb*.
- Their work on rocketry, aided by German scientists captured after the war, enabled them to eventually develop intercontinental missiles capable of striking the United States.
- **Centralized economic planning (Gosplan)** had developed the five-year plans that reconstructed the USSR after the Second World War and had raised the Soviet gross national product from 30 percent of the American in 1950 to about 50 percent in the mid-1960s.
- Agriculture performed badly, though, partly because of the failure of collectivized farms to provide incentives for production and partly because of bad decisions by Khrushchev.
- Khrushchev was ousted in 1964: party rivals resented his personal power, and they found an excuse to oust him in his alleged weakness with American presidents Kennedy and Johnson.

## The Conflicts of 1968

In August, Soviet leaders sent a massive military force to end the liberalization of Czechoslovakia, a threat to both the Warsaw Pact and Soviet domination.

- The Brezhnev Doctrine, formulated by head of the Soviet Communist Party and future premier Leonid Brezhnev (1906-1982), stated that the USSR had the right to intervene in the internal affairs of any satellite nation if communism was threatened.
- This doctrine and the intervention in Czechoslovakia discredited Soviet leadership of the communist world and its role as a model for communist governments in the coming years of the Cold War.

## Recent European Economic History

Through the 1960s, Europe, led by the **Common Market**, accounted for a quarter of the world's industrial output. West Germany was third behind the United States and Japan in gross national product. In 1970, 25 years after the Second World War had ended, prosperity and democracy in Western Europe submerged centuries of national rivalry and promised peace and even greater economic progress and political cooperation.

- The United States exerted financial dominance in the capitalist Western democracies after the Second World War through the Marshall Plan and through control of vast amounts of gold.

- The Bretton-Woods Agreement set up rules for international financial exchange rates based upon a set rate of gold for the dollar.
  - Other currencies could exchange for dollars or gold at a set exchange rate.
  - The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were also created to finance nations in times of crisis.
  - The IMF and the World Bank became tools in the Cold War and afterward for imposing austerity measures on nations, which almost always meant a loss of benefits to their citizens by promising loans to debtor nations only by supporting such austerity measures.
    - Many liberal people across Europe and the United States protested against the intervention by the World Bank and the IMF in global economies because they thought that the policies of the IMF and World Bank would further impoverish those on the bottom rungs of the socioeconomic ladder.
- The United States was providing the capital that kick-started German, Japanese, and Western European economies as a way to create prosperity to fight communism.
- The **oil embargo of 1973** helped change this rosy picture.
  - The **Arab-Israeli War of 1973 incited** Arab oil-producing nations to stop the flow of oil to those nations that had supported Israel.
  - This stance was encouraged by the Soviet Union, which provided weapons and support to the Arab nations.
  - Since over 70 percent of Western Europe's petroleum came from the Middle East, the embargo and the resulting price rise threatened to destroy not only Europe's economy but the world's economy.
  - **Stagflation**, a combination of slowdown and inflation that developed into a worldwide recession, had already been a problem that the oil embargo only aggravated.
  - Western Europe's unparalleled economic growth and prosperity in the postwar period was threatened, as was that of the United States and the rest of the industrialized world.

- Although the recession, the most severe since the Great Depression of the 1930s, improved by early 1976, and while unionism and welfare benefits enabled working people to cope with it more easily, economic growth rates slowed.
- The 1980s saw Great Britain and the United States reduce spending on social programs under conservatives **Margaret Thatcher** and Ronald Reagan, respectively, which contrasted with the strong social programs in the rest of Europe.
  - Thatcher also led Britain during the last clear war for imperialism, when she had the British Navy defend the Falklands Islands off Argentina when the Argentines invaded.
  - Her brand of conservatism conflicted with the fact that she was a woman who led society forward on one social issue as she was cutting benefits to the poor in the UK on another social issue.
- By late 1991, the 12 members of the **European Community**, the Common Market, had completed a plan to integrate economically and to consolidate politically. The **Maastricht Treaty** that went into force in November 1993 was the first major step toward European unification into the **European Union (EU)**, which now shares a common currency, a central bank, and a set of trade regulations.
  - There are no tariffs or restrictions between the 28 member states that comprise the economic entity, which has one of the largest GDPs in the world, at over \$14 trillion.
  - The European Union has become a leading political as well as economic force on the world stage.
  - 18 of these nations use the euro, (€), as their currency, but all of them participate in a mixture of supranational and intergovernmental cooperation that holds this confederation of European states together.
  - The member states are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia; Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.
  - Member states are responsible for their own defense, but many belong to NATO.
  - The presidency of the European Union currently rotates, but there

is some discussion about an elected president for the European Union.

- This union has allowed cooperation on many fronts, from the financial sector to the law enforcement sector, to planning common infrastructure and energy policy, to cooperation in engineering and science.
  - The European Space Agency and Airbus, the world's second largest airplane manufacturer, are joint European projects demonstrating that the European Union is a study in international cooperation.
- The expansion of the European Union into Eastern Europe and the Baltic states has caused tensions with Russia, but has also modernized the economies of those areas.
  - The Russian incursion into Ukraine in 2014 was caused in part by the citizens there protesting in favor of joining NATO.
- Turkey has made gestures at joining the European Union, but so far that has not come to fruition.
- This economic and political union has helped revive Europe as an economic powerhouse during the transition from the twentieth to the twenty-first century.
- In less than a decade, the euro became one of the most important currencies in the world, gaining value against other world currencies, such as the dollar.
- Since 2013, the euro has been falling in value in large part due to the Greek debt crisis, which has threatened the strength of the European Union by testing the economic integration as well as the true independent sovereignty of member nations .
- In 1994 the **World Trade Organization (WTO)** was created by the Marrakech Agreement, signed by 123 nations on 15 April 1994.
  - The WTO is an international trade regulating body that enforces agreements on international trade, and it includes a judicial body that has the power to impose penalties on member nations. By providing a framework for negotiating trade agreements and a dispute-resolution process aimed at enforcing participants' adherence to WTO agreements, which are signed by representatives of member governments, the WTO has become a

powerful Non-governmental Organization, (NGO), globally.

## Cold War

The **Cold War** was the economic, cultural, ideological, political, diplomatic, and, under certain circumstances, military struggle between the Western nations and the Communist bloc. This conflict took place over decades, in varying degrees of severity, after the end of the Second World War. The two superpowers (the United States and the USSR) that led the opposing alliances allocated great portions of their productive output to increasing their military might for the aim of defeating the other in a projected war, but they never did *directly* confront each other in a direct military clash. The Cold War shaped the economic and political history of the second half of the twentieth century in many ways, from the ideological conflict to exacerbating problems in the Middle East and Africa, using these regions in proxy battles in the Cold War.

- The initial phase of the Cold War involved a struggle for control of war-devastated Europe.

By the late 1940s, U.S. aid had shored up the exhausted democracies of Western Europe against Soviet encroachment.

The Soviets had installed communist governments in Eastern Europe under Moscow's domination.

- The next phase involved the **containment** of communism by the West in the “Less Economically Developed Countries” (LEDCs), those regions that had emerged from colonialism after the Second World War.
  - In 1946, former prime minister Winston Churchill helped to define the Cold War (after he was dismissed by voters from office), when he spoke at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, and stated that “an iron curtain has descended upon the continent,” describing the nations in the Soviet sphere of influence as prisoners in totalitarian regimes.
  - Wars involving the European democracies or the United States against Marxist nationalists broke out in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
    - When China's communist revolution led by Mao Zedong (Mao Tse-tung) was triumphant in 1949, the United Nations refused to recognize the government of Mao and, instead, recognized the Nationalist Chinese government of Chiang

Kai-shek in Taiwan.

- The Soviet Union boycotted the United Nations as a result of the decision.
- At this time, North Korea invaded South Korea with Soviet aid in 1950, attacking a United Nations force. Since the Soviets were boycotting the UN, they could not prevent the body voting to oppose the North Koreans.
- The UN declared a police action to stop the North Korean invasion, and the Soviet Union was not in the Security Council to veto the action.
- Eventually the fighting was stopped at the 38th parallel, and a demilitarized zone was created between North and South Korea
- With no official truce ever signed, this remains a military hotspot that instills fear around the world.
  - Foreign aid and regional alliances, primarily provided and engineered by the United States, countered the influence of Moscow.
  - A nuclear arms race created a “balance of terror” between the two superpowers, while cracks in their systems of alliances aggravated the overall conflict.
    - The world was saved from nuclear holocaust only by the fact that both sides knew that either side could literally destroy all human life on Earth, and, therefore, they could not afford to come into open conflict.
    - This balance of power, dubbed Mutually Assured Destruction, is credited by many historians for preventing a nuclear conflict between the superpowers.
    - The role of the United Nations, expanded as more newly independent nations joined, and the superpowers realized the limitations of their might.
- The first substantive reduction in Cold War tensions was realized in the Helsinki Accords, which were the final act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation held in 1975 in Helsinki, Finland.
  - Most of the European nations on both sides of the Iron Curtain signed these agreements.
    - Codified respect for national sovereignty.
    - Acknowledged the national borders.
    - Promised to not use force against other nation signatories.



- Promised non-intervention in internal affairs of other nations.
- Respect for human rights.
- Détente prevailed in the years that followed.
  - Splits in the ranks of both the Western alliance and Communist bloc had changed relations between the two superpowers, which through the late 1940s and the 1970s had faced off with the support of allies or satellite nations.
  - De Gaulle’s France had questioned the leadership of the United States in European affairs, just as Mao’s China had questioned that of the Soviet Union in the communist world.
  - The military suppression of Czechoslovakia tarnished the Soviet image just as the Vietnam War had tarnished the American image.
- A prosperous and independent Western Europe took more and more charge of its own affairs.
- Nationalist resistance in Eastern Europe diminished Soviet influence.
- The Cold War began to “thaw.”

## The Special Case of Turkey

Turkey poses a special problem as the twenty-first century begins in that it lies partially in Europe, but mostly in Asia. It has been the traditional and literal crossroads between Asia and Europe for millennia and has had both Asian and European identities. It must be examined as a political entity for this course because of its impact on the rest of Europe, but is Turkey a part of Europe? That is for the reader to decide as it is a current political question that the Turks themselves have not fully answered, although it appears that as their global trade increases, they may be attempting to create their own identity separate from Asia and Europe. The chart of ideas that follows may help you decide where to put Turkey in the camps of civilizations.

## Is Turkey Part of Europe?

Part of Europe	Not Part of Europe
Center of Christianity for a thousand years	Majority Muslim
Partially in Europe	Many tribal and rural people
Some welfare systems	Majority of nation in Asia
Modern economy	Crusades separated cultures
Industrialized	Ottoman Empire
Secular state	Muslim banking system

50% of trade is with Europe	In 1999 72% of trade was with Europe
Democracy	Current leadership most Islamic ever
Many centuries of trade with Europe	Thus far prevented from joining European Union

## The Collapse of Communism and the End of the Cold War

In 1985, the election of **Mikhail Gorbachev** (1931-) by the Soviet Communist Party leadership to serve as party general secretary promised fresh blood to reform the ailing economy and to invigorate the party after the stagnation of the Brezhnev era. His policies of *glasnost*, or openness, and *perestroika*, or restructuring, gave the peoples of Eastern Europe hope for a better life, and the façade of Soviet power crumbled, leaving the people ready for bigger changes. An intended reformer, Gorbachev became the agent of an unintended and unexpected revolution that led to the collapse of communism and the dissolution of the world order that had reigned since the end of the Second World War.

- In 1987, two years after he took office, Chairman Gorbachev and President Ronald Reagan signed the **INF Treaty**, which began the delicate and dangerous process of nuclear disarmament with the destruction of all short-and intermediate-range nuclear missiles.
- Two years after that, the USSR withdrew from the **War in Afghanistan**.
- The Soviets were defeated by the local militias, the *mujahidin*, who were funded and armed by the American government through agents such as Osama bin-Laden.
- Gorbachev's *perestroika*, or restructuring of the economy, and his policy of *glasnost* seemed to be moving Soviet communism toward reform.
- The NATO nations engaged in a military build-up in the 1980s, along with massive television broadcasts across the Iron Curtain countries, implying American capitalist life was like *Dallas* and *The Jeffersons*, effectively propaganda that destroyed the social belief in the communist system.
  - Systemic corruption and party privilege also played huge roles in destroying faith in the communist system.
  - Even the brutal suppression by the state police, such as the Stasi in East Germany or the KGB in the USSR, could not prevent the people in Warsaw Pact nations from revolting.

- The **collapse of the Soviet Union** in 1989 marked a very important change in the European balance of power.
  - With the collapse of the Eastern Bloc in the 1990s, the Cold War is said to have ended.
  - The Soviet regime was overturned throughout Eastern Europe in mostly bloodless revolutions.
  - The Supreme Soviet lost power to the **Congress of People's Deputies**.
    - The new body demanded greater reforms.
    - Soviet Union was dissolved.
    - May have seen a bloody coup if Moscow mayor, Boris Yeltsin (1931-2007), had not intervened to ease tensions.
    - Many nations were formed from the former Soviet Union:
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Georgia
  - Communism was rejected as a failure throughout the continent.
  - China was left as the only major communist power.
  - The United States, after the dissolution of the Soviet Union, became the sole superpower.
    - The Cold War gave a focus to the amorphous conflict and competition among Earth's peoples, and decades of waging this conflict seemed to establish some rational limitations to winning it.
    - The two main protagonists managed to keep the peace between themselves for nearly a half century.
    - Despite its repressiveness and creaky inefficiencies, Soviet communism helped to restrain the uglier expressions of narrow nationalism and ethnic rivalry.
  - **Solidarity**, the Polish trade-union movement, led by Lech Walesa (1943-), who opposed the rigid communist government.
    - Had been suppressed under martial law.
    - Swept into office by the first free elections since before the Second World War.
  - Changes in the communist governments of Hungary, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia took place over the next several months.

- In November of 1989, the Berlin Wall, symbol of communist oppression, was breached.
- Marked the beginning of the downfall of the communist East-German government.
  - Violent revolution in Romania overthrew the longtime communist dictatorship.
  - Free elections established non-communist governments in many of the old East European satellites.
- In October of 1990, Germany reunited. Despite fears of a resurgent and aggressive united Germany, Gorbachev had allowed the union of West and East Germany without the promise of its neutrality.
  - Germany joined NATO, and less than a year later the Warsaw Pact, its communist counterpart, was dissolved.

The Cold War officially ended in November, when Soviet, U.S., and Western European leaders signed the Charter for a New Europe.

## Timeline for the Start of the Cold War

What follows is a detailed timeline of the Cold War that covers the era with more than enough information to answer any questions that may appear on the AP exam.

Year	Event
<b>1945-1947</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communist-agitated strikes in Western Europe and takeovers of governments in Eastern Europe, contrary to Stalin's previous promises, worsened relations between the former Second World War Allies, the United States, and the USSR.</li> </ul>
<b>1947</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Truman Doctrine was announced, pledging military aid to Greece, Turkey, and any other nation threatened with communist aggression and expansion.</li> </ul>
<b>1948</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Soviet blockade of Berlin-the former capital city administered by the four occupying powers, but deep within the Russian zone-was countered by the Berlin Airlift.</li> <li>• The Soviets had initiated the blockade to retaliate for the unification of the American, British, and French zones into West Germany.</li> </ul>
<b>1948</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The European Recovery Plan (Marshall Plan) went into effect, and the Soviets, although invited, declined to participate and forbade their satellites to do so.</li> </ul>
<b>1949</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NATO was established along with regional military alliances in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and the Southwest Pacific.</li> </ul>

Year	Event
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After nearly two decades of civil war, the Chinese Communists led by Mao Zedong (1893-1976) and aided by the USSR, defeated the corrupt regime of Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists, despite massive U.S. military aid. Drove them from the Chinese mainland to the island of Formosa (Taiwan).</li> <li>• The United States opposed the recognition of the communist government of Mao and, instead, recognized the Nationalist Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek in Taiwan.</li> </ul>
<b>1950</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Korean War (1950-1953) was the first major military conflict between the West and the communists. After the Japanese withdrew from the peninsula, Korea was governed in the north by a government backed by the Soviets and Communist Chinese and, south of the 38th parallel, by a government backed by the United States and the United Nations.</li> <li>• The Soviets rejected free elections for a unified Korea and, instead, supported a satellite regime under Kim Il Sung.</li> <li>• In June 1950, a powerful North Korean army, supported by Soviet aid, invaded south of the 38th parallel and appeared to have won a quick victory.</li> <li>• President Truman, determined not to repeat the pre-Second World War policy of appeasement, convinced the United Nations Security Council to condemn North Korean aggression and oppose it militarily.</li> <li>• Since the Russians were boycotting the United Nations for failing to recognize Communist China, they could not veto the proposal. A UN force led by General Douglas MacArthur (1880-1964) made up of mostly U.S. troops landed in South Korea. Fifteen other nations provided mostly token contingents.</li> <li>• The UN force advanced northward until hundreds of thousands of Chinese Communist troops counterattacked in November 1950, driving them back to the 38th parallel.</li> <li>• General MacArthur insisted on attacking China itself. President Truman, fearful of involving the United States in an Asian land war, removed MacArthur from command.</li> </ul>
<b>1951</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A cease-fire ended serious fighting in July 1951.</li> </ul>

<b>1953</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The war pitted United States forces against a communist foe supported and aided by the Soviet Union, and despite the losses: (36,574) U.S. dead, and almost 3 million Koreans and Chinese), it convinced the United States that military might could contain the spread of communism.</li> <li>• Neither the European democracies, preoccupied with rebuilding their shattered nations, nor the large, non-communist Asian nations of India, Burma, and Indonesia, mistrustful of a new kind of Western imperialism, shared the U.S. enthusiasm.</li> <li>• The death of Stalin thawed the Cold War.</li> <li>• Tensions rose and relaxed and then returned again, but peaceful coexistence seemed possible.</li> <li>• An armistice, returning the Koreans to the situation before the war, was signed in 1953.</li> </ul>
<b>1955</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Geneva Summit between President Dwight Eisenhower, the British and French prime ministers, and Soviet leaders led to a conciliatory atmosphere.</li> </ul>
<b>1956</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• War in the Middle East, between Israel and its Arab neighbors, renewed tensions between the Soviets, who aided the Arab states, and the West, who supported Israel (France, Britain, and Israel invaded Egypt for its nationalizing of the Suez Canal and captured the canal).</li> <li>• The Geneva Accords divided Vietnam into the communist North and the non-communist South.</li> </ul>
<b>1959</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• U.S. and Soviet relations soured further when Fidel Castro, an avowed Marxist, was openly aided by Soviet and Chinese Communists in his overthrow of Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista.</li> </ul>
<b>1960</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Paris Summit ended when Khrushchev proved that the United States had been making spy flights over the USSR after a U-2 high-altitude reconnaissance plane had been shot down over Soviet territory.</li> <li>• The USSR became capable of launching nuclear ICBM missiles.</li> </ul>
<b>1961</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba by anti-Castro Cuban refugees was a total disaster and a humiliation for newly elected president John F. Kennedy, whose administration had supported it.</li> <li>• The infamous Berlin Wall, as powerful a symbol of Soviet tyranny as the Bastille had been of royal abuses, was erected.</li> </ul>
<b>1962</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The first U.S. troops, “military advisers,” arrived in South Vietnam to shore up its anti-communist government against attacks by Communist North Vietnamese infiltrators and South Vietnamese Vietcong guerrillas.</li> <li>• The Cuban Missile Crisis brought the world to the brink of nuclear war when President Kennedy demanded that Premier Khrushchev remove nuclear missiles the Soviets had installed in Cuba.</li> <li>• The “eyeball-to-eyeball” confrontation ended when the Russian bases were dismantled.</li> </ul>

<b>1963</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nuclear test ban treaty to stop atmospheric explosions was signed by three of the world's four nuclear powers: the United States, the USSR, and Britain. France refused.</li> <li>• A hotline or direct communication phone was installed between the Kremlin and the White House to prevent accidental nuclear war.</li> <li>• A rift between the Soviets and Chinese Communists led to growing tensions and a parting of the ways between the two giants.</li> </ul>
<b>1964</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communist China became the fifth member of the "nuclear bomb club."</li> </ul>
<b>1965</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lyndon Johnson, who succeeded to the presidency after the assassination of Kennedy, bolstered American involvement in the Vietnam conflict by continuing bombing raids against North Vietnam and by sending in a massive ground force.</li> <li>• The Soviets and Chinese Communists supplied great quantities of arms and other aid to help the North Vietnamese and Vietcong maintain the fight against an eventual U.S. force of well over 500,000 troops.</li> </ul>
<b>1968</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prague Spring in Czechoslovakia occurred when the reformist Alexander Dubcek was elected and tried to give his people more civil and economic rights.</li> <li>• The other Warsaw Pact nations, led by the USSR, invaded with tanks and occupied the country until 1990.</li> </ul>
<b>1969</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the administration of President Richard Nixon, an avowed anticommunist in his early political career, he and his secretary of state, Henry Kissinger, pursued a policy of detente, peaceful coexistence between the West and the Communist bloc, although they widened the Vietnam War throughout Southeast Asia. Leaders exchanged visits, and the SALT negotiations (Strategic Arms Limitations Talks) began.</li> <li>• The United States landed a manned expedition on the moon.</li> </ul>
<b>1970</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A nonproliferation treaty to limit the spread of nuclear weapons was signed by the United States and the USSR.</li> <li>• Unfortunately, nations with nuclear power plants proved it was possible to reprocess spent fuel in order to make nuclear bombs. India became the sixth member of the "nuclear bomb club" in this way in 1974.</li> </ul>
<b>1972</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nixon's dramatic visit to Communist China, followed by scientific and cultural exchanges, established relations between the two former enemies.</li> </ul>

## Art

The period after the Second World War is often referred to as the post-modern period. **Postmodernist** ideas in philosophy and the analysis of culture have drastically influenced works of literature, architecture, and design, as well as reverberating in marketing/business and the interpretation of history, law, and culture. Postmodernism is typified by a re-evaluation of the entire Western value system (love, marriage, popular culture, shift from

industrial to service economy) – a re-evaluation that began in the 1950s and 1960s and is reflected in the movement. Although the term was popularized by Arnold Toynbee in the 1930s, it is a good way to define the reaction against the functionalism of the “Age of Anxiety.” Many new artistic forms have emerged.

- **Modernism** eliminated ornamentation and attempted to create clean, uncluttered lines for easy living as typified by the Bauhaus movement.
- **Postmodernism** revived ornamentation, and a personal relationship with art and life.
- **Pop Art** emerged to poke fun at the art industry and to make art available and accessible to the common masses as typified by the soup cans of Andy Warhol.
- **Abstract Expressionism** typified by the works of Jackson Pollock moved the center of the art world from Paris to New York City in the 1950s. It was a successor to surrealism and focused on spontaneous or subconscious creation.

## Science

The Second World War changed the way scientists did their work, how they were funded, and where their research was directed. Scientists the world over were employed by their various governments to aid the war effort, and their work led to technological advances, such as the use of atomic energy, the development of radar and jet aircraft, and the advent of computers. New discoveries, inventions, and industries spurred research after the war in both **pure and applied science**.

- New means of funding and organization of the increasingly specialized fields of research led to the advent of **big science**, which stressed teamwork, the combining of theoretical research with engineering techniques, and complex research facilities with professional managers and expensive, sophisticated equipment.

The United States took the lead in this area after the Second World War, and by the mid-1960s most scientific research (which doubled the sum of human knowledge every decade) was funded by the U.S. federal government, whose principal aim was defense.

- Many of the best scientists from Europe went to the United States for better wages and budgets in a phenomenon known as the **brain drain**.
- A “space race” between the United States and the USSR led to Russia’s



development in 1957 of the first artificial satellite, **Sputnik**, and to a manned moon landing in 1969 by the United States.

- To stem the brain drain of their best scientists to the United States, European nations began funding their own research programs. The European Union, gaining prominence and focusing on cooperation, did much to stem the brain drain.
  - Cooperative endeavors such as the international laboratory at CERN, creator of the world's largest particle collider, the Large Hadron Collider, drew scientists back to Europe in order to use the most advanced tools in the trade.
    - Other international projects have led to retention of the best minds in science.
    - Many scientists came from America and Asia to work on government-supported projects in Europe thanks in large part to the European Union.
- Advances in genetics and medicine have raised many ethical questions in the last half century.
  - Fertility treatments have allowed couples who could not conceive to do so.
  - Scientific means of fertilization have led to people gaining much more control of when and how they will bear children.
  - Genetic engineering can already detect and sometimes alter genetic maladies *in utero*.
  - Parents may soon be able to genetically alter their offspring.
  - How will we use genetic information?

## Population and Poverty

Industrialization, urbanization, attitude changes, and modem contraception had lowered the birthrate during this century in Europe and other areas with developed economies. In the Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs), including newly independent nations that had been colonial possessions, (mostly in Asia and Africa), the population exploded in the second half of the twentieth century. Cultural and religious attitudes and economic dependence on large families maintained a high birth rate. Better food production and distribution, and modem medical and sanitation practices led to a decline in the death rate. Investments that could have been made to improve the standard of living in these areas were used instead to

support the burgeoning population. Even with population-control programs and a growing women's movement, the problem continued to get worse.

- The gap between the rich industrialized nations and the less economically developed countries widened.
- When the worldwide recession of the early 1970s caused the West to reduce its aid to the LEDCs, the less developed nations became more militant in demanding a more equitable share of the world's resources and industrial production.
- This was exploited by the Soviet Union, and many communist movements gained strength and even power in former colonial possessions in Latin America, Africa, and especially in Asia.
  - Women in the Soviet Union had a much bigger burden than the men because they were expected to be equal professionally, but still had to do all of the traditional women's work at home, such as cooking, child care, elder care, and cleaning.
  - Asian nations China, Vietnam, North Korea, Cambodia, and to some extent Burma (Myanmar), all had or still have some form of "communist" leadership.
- The result is a revolution of rising expectations that helps create worldwide political instability.
  - This can be seen in even the nations that still claim to be communist such as China and Vietnam.
  - The period after the Cold War would see rising incomes occur globally.

## After the Cold War

- In mid-1991, **Boris Yeltsin**, an outspoken and charismatic political rival of Gorbachev, was elected as president of the Soviet Republic of Russia.
  - He ran as an independent candidate on a platform of drastic economic and political reform.
- During that same month, June, **Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence** from Yugoslavia, and a civil war, made more brutal by ancient ethnic rivalries, broke out.
- START, the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, was signed in July of 1991 by Gorbachev and President George H.W. Bush to reduce the number of long-range nuclear missiles of both nations.
  - One month later, old-line party and military leaders launched a

coup against the vacationing Gorbachev by sending military units toward Moscow.

- Within days, the coup collapsed in the face of massive public demonstrations against its leaders.
- **Latvia**, **Lithuania**, and **Estonia** declared their independence from the Soviet Union.
- By late 1991, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus had formed the **Commonwealth of Independent States** and the Soviet Union effectively ceased to exist.
- By 1993, ethnic rivalries among the former Soviet controlled republics resulted in a bloody war pitting Serbia and Croatia against their former Yugoslavian brothers Bosnia and Herzegovina.
  - Despite initial reluctance to get involved in the Balkan crisis, the United States and Western European nations have imposed a settlement on the warring factions and have prosecuted war criminals in the World Court.
- The nations that comprise NATO all agreed to intervene, and Serbian aggression was halted in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, Europe's newest country.
- Former Yugoslavia was reorganized into several countries: Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Slovenia, Montenegro, and Kosovo.
- The Yugoslav Wars can be divided into four smaller wars:
  - The Ten-Day War (1991)
  - The Croatian War of Independence (1991-1995)
  - The Bosnian War (1992-1995)
  - The Kosovar War (1998-1999)
- NATO was instrumental in preventing ethnic cleansing during the Yugoslav Wars of the 1990s as Croats, Muslims, and Serbs all tried to eliminate each other in these countries, although over 140,000 people were still killed.
- The collapse of communism in Europe created a *fluid* political situation globally that is similar to the disruptions of the old orders after the First and Second World Wars.
  - Power shifted; the rules changed, and Asia is rising in importance in the twenty-first century. How will Europe meet that challenge?
- The end of the Cold War diminished the prospects of nuclear war but has

created new rivalries and unleashed bloody ethnic conflicts to test the resolve of NATO.

- Increasing nationalism combined with old conflicts, and new wealth and power made for disruptive situations.
- The allies of the Gulf War Coalition adopted varying policies in the Middle East that of ten reflect their own economic interests. At the same time, Russia gave tacit support to Iran as the rest of the world attempted to prevent them from attaining a nuclear weapon.
- The birth of a new international order also took into account the rising wealth in Asia and growing military power there.

## European Society At The End Of The Twentieth Century

After the Second World War, European class distinctions blurred due to unprecedented economic growth in the West and the accompanying opportunities in jobs and in higher education. Western Europeans enjoyed a new social mobility and a greater democratization of their governments. Powerful social changes occurred after the Second World War.

- Education and ability outweighed family connections in reality for the first time ever.
- Health care and other social security programs alleviated traditional class conflicts and promoted greater economic equality.
- General prosperity promoted a **consumer culture**, making big businesses out of such products and services as food, leisure, entertainment, and travel.
- Prosperity and increased educational opportunities swelled the middle classes in both Europe and the United States.
- Government policies, such as subsidies for large families and government-run and funded child care facilities encouraged population growth after the Second World War, resulting in a **baby boom**.
- With science and technology wedded by war, **big science**, which was funded by government and industry, created new products and new career opportunities.
  - With greater educational opportunities available to women, more females sought careers outside the home.

- Cities grew as more agricultural workers left the farms in search of new, more-lucrative, and exciting vocations.
- In the 1960s, a youth culture, which grew first in the United States from the great numbers of **baby boomers**, the unparalleled prosperity, and the increased enrollment in higher education, spread globally.
  - Rebellion against the status quo manifested itself in rock music, widespread use of illegal drugs, and less rigid sexual attitudes.
  - The materialism of the West encouraged a revolutionary idealism among young people, who participated in the antiwar movement in the United States and in the student radicalism of Europe.
  - Student revolts against rigid educational practices in universities broke out in France (1968) and in other European countries.
- Economic setbacks in the 1970s and 1980s spurred changes in family life.
  - In order to maintain the family's standard of living, many women in Europe and the United States went into the work force.
  - Income independence enabled more women to get divorces.
- Birth control allowed people to plan their families and resulted in a decreased birthrate.
  - **Margaret Sanger**, an American who worked with poor immigrant women as a nurse and writer, championed the development and dissemination of birth control.
- This newfound independence and a number of gifted female writers, such as **Simone de Beauvoir** in France and **Betty Friedan** in the United States, helped launch a new feminism or a second wave of feminism, that attacked gender inequalities in all aspects of society and used political action and attitude alteration.
  - The dissolution of the Soviet Union and its communist satellites also led many women, who had lived in those more gender emancipated cultures, to encourage further emancipation of Western European women.
  - The increasing prevalence of scientific, business, and political leaders who are women, from Rosalind Franklin to Oprah Winfrey to **Margaret Thatcher**, has also done much for the feminist cause .
    - **Margaret Thatcher** was prime minister of the United Kingdom from 1979-1990 .

- **Mary Robinson** was president of Ireland from 1990 to 1997.
- **Edith Cresson** was prime minister of France for less than a year in 1991.
- Moral questions arose about abortion, fertility treatments, and birth control – questions stimulated by the rise of feminism – and Europeans generally answered that women should decide for themselves without government interference and, thus, it has become a more divisive issue in America than in Europe.
- Europeans are more concerned about issues of genetic engineering than Americans are in general.
- Women still face many social and professional inequalities such as lower pay for the same work and underrepresentation in management.
- The twenty-first century is witness to common bumper stickers that state that feminism is the radical notion that women are people.
- At the dawn of the 21st century, political parties such as the Green Party and the Pirate Party advocate for the desires of new generations of Europeans, who want a sustainable system and increased freedoms and social responsibility.
- Organized religion continued to play a role in European social and cultural life regardless of the challenges resulting from world war and ideological conflict, modern secularism, and rapid social changes.
  - Reform in the Catholic Church found expression in the Second Vatican Council, which redefined the Church's dogma and practices and started to redefine its relations with other religious communities.
    - It reshaped the Roman Catholic Church to the church it is today.
    - Engaged in modern dialogue.
    - Pardoned Galileo.
    - Made attempts at reconciliation with other world religions.
  - Pope John Paul II was originally from Poland, and his support for the Solidarity movement helped to topple communism.
  - Increased immigration into Europe altered Europe's religious makeup, causing debate and conflict over the role of religion in social and political life particularly in regard to Islam as more

Muslim immigrants arrived on the continent.

- Many non-Europeans came as guest workers after the Second World War and began to create ethnic enclaves in European countries.
- These workers and their children were not citizens.
- The Turks in Germany are one example.
- Many immigrants now come from Africa and the Middle East.
  - Increasing xenophobia in Europe has resulted in the emergence of modern nationalist parties in many European nations, such as France and Austria, in the French National Front and the Austrian Freedom Party.
- Nationalism has remained a potent force in Europe, and there has been a continuation and even an increase in the strength of various separatist movements in Europe, which have continued to exert pressure for independence or have increased such pressures.
  - Ireland has finally become a complete separate nation from the United Kingdom.
  - The Basque in the Pyrenees Mountains between Spain and France have continued to campaign for independence, both violently and peacefully.
  - The Chechen rebels in Chechnya have been trying to gain independence from Russia for almost two decades.
  - The Scottish held a referendum on separation from the United Kingdom in 2015 but decided to stay.
  - Some Flemish have been agitating for independence from Belgium as well.

## Recent Developments

The 1990s marked powerful political and economic changes in Europe, comparable in magnitude to those at the end of the two world wars. After the collapse of communist governments in the former Soviet Union and its Cold War satellites, a new order emerged. The modern era saw a growth of European unity after the Second World War, to include the creation of a common market and the European Union.

- Much of Western Europe, with the exception of Britain, Switzerland, and most Scandinavian nations, instituted a **monetary union**, a natural evolution from the political and economic ties of the European Union,

creating the **euro**, one of the most powerful and stable currencies in the world.

- Germany, completely and peacefully united (although with unforeseen complications that came from the need to absorb the formerly communist East Germany), set up its capital in Berlin once again, and became the most powerful economy in Europe, a status it had not held since the end of the Second World War.
  - There was some inequality between the former East Germany and West Germany, as it took a long time to reindustrialize the antiquated systems and training of the former East Germans.
  - With Berlin once again named national capital, the houses of the Reichstag and the Bundesrat were moved there.
- Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic established democratic governments, instituted capitalist reforms of their economies, and joined NATO.
- Independence movements from the Serb-dominated Yugoslavian government in Belgrade degenerated into bitter and bloody struggles between various ethnic groups (Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Kosovars, Montenegrins, Albanians) and revived the specter of **genocide** in the form of **“ethnic cleansing.”**
  - The intervention of NATO resulted in a precarious peace and in the prosecution of Slobodan Milosevic, Serbian president, and other Serbian leaders for war crimes.
- Russia, the largest, richest, and most populous republic of the former Soviet Union, grappled with a faltering economy, a fitful start to democratization (widespread corruption during Boris Yeltsin’s presidency tainted the effort), and a bloody ethnic war with Chechnya.
  - The replacement of Yeltsin by Vladimir Putin as president promised reform, a renewed **détente** with the West, and a more enlightened role for Russia in regional and world affairs.
  - Promise not kept.
    - Putin used power as a tool to enrich himself and his cronies.
    - **Oligarchs** became immensely rich businessmen with ties to the former Communist Party.
  - Widely regarded as decreasing freedom and opportunity in Russia.



Putin and his former KGB connections enriched themselves through corruption.

- Temporarily replaced as president in 2008 by Dmitri Medvedev, but remained as a key power holder.
- Was re-elected president in 2012.
- The **9/11 Terrorist Attacks** against the United States in 2001 marked the beginning of a new international era more dangerous to world peace and stability than at any time since the height of the Cold War.
  - Widespread poverty in the LEDCs and ethnic rivalry all over the globe have fostered religious fanaticism and conflict, such as that in the Middle East between Israelis and Palestinians.
  - Anti-Muslim xenophobia in Europe has resulted in laws like those that ban female face coverings in French public space.
- There was a huge financial crisis in 2007-2008.
  - A housing bubble in the United States that imploded in 2006 caused a large global financial crisis.
  - Brought on by high-risk lending, the securitization of mortgages, and the irresponsibility of banks, this economic failure in the United States soon spread to Europe where banks were heavily invested in the U.s. housing market through mortgages and securities.
  - Banks in many European nations failed. Iceland, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Cyprus experienced deep economic crises in large part to these bank failures, high national debt, and deficit spending.
  - As credit became more expensive after the financial crisis, these national economies, the European Union, and the euro were vulnerable.
  - As this book is being written, Greece is still threatened by crippling debt due in no small part to the reverberations of this crisis and may be forced to exit the European Union and give up the euro as its currency.

Up to this point, the European landscape was changed a number of times. Wars were fought and accords signed. Here is a quick summary of important treaties and agreements that molded the European continent.