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Lessons of World History

From the Glorious Revolution to Contemporary Conflicts

4º ESO Bilingüe



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Región de Murcia
Consejería de Educación y Cultura



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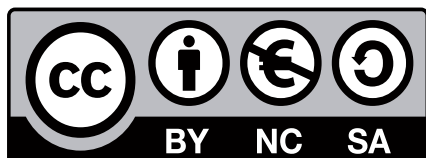
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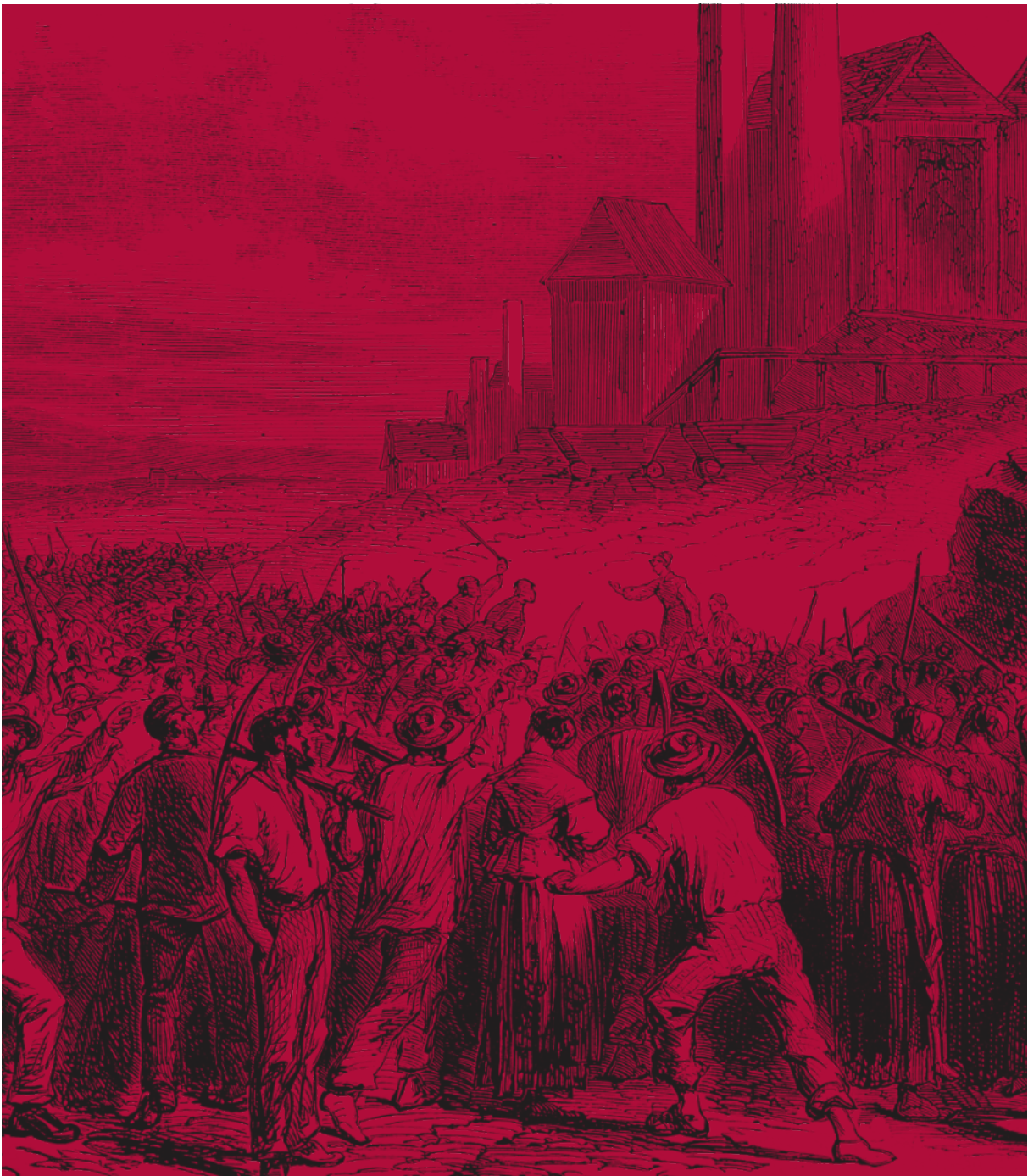


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UNIT 1

Revolutions



UNIT 1. Revolutions

I. 18th century in Europe. The old and the new regime

The 18th century in Europe (the 17th century for England) was a period of deep changes that affected all aspects of life and decisively contributed to the forging of our contemporary world.

1. Absolute monarchies and Parliamentarianism

Since the late 15th century, the monarchs of Spain, France and England created centralized governments and bureaucracies able to limit the power of the aristocracy and to intervene in the international arena through a permanent royal army. New Modern States increased the collection of taxes and the efficiency of the financial State resources.

During the 17th century, Spain and France developed the principles of royal authority towards the so-called absolutism of the Crown, which was based on the divine right of the kings. Monarchs derived their power from God himself, and therefore, theoretically, there was no obstacle to the royal will. The model of royal absolutism was the French king Louis XIV, the *roi soleil*, who concentrated all the powers of the State in his court of Versailles. He meaningfully declared that *l'état, c'est moi* - I am myself the State, a phrase that summarizes the absolutist ideal. Nevertheless, England and the Unified Provinces (which emerged as an independent country during the war against Spain) evolved towards a new concept of State, the Constitutional State. In England, there was a confrontation between King Charles I Stuart and Parliament (1642-1649) that finished in the execution of the king and the dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell, leader of the Puritans (Civil War or First Revolution).

After the restoration of the Monarchy in 1660, the catholic king James II attracted widespread enmity and was consequently deposed by the Parliament in 1688 (the Second, or Glorious Revolution). In 1689 the new queen Mary, married to the ruler of the Low Countries, William, signed the Bill of Rights. It implied the limitation of the powers of the Crown and the right of Parliament to participate in the government. It was the



Workshop of Claude Lefebvre, *portrait of Louis XIV*. Oil on canvas, 1670, New Orleans Museum of Art
[Wikimedia Commons](#)



Anton van Dyck, *portrait of Charles I of England*, 1634, Musée du Louvre
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

I. 18th century in Europe. The old and the new regime

beginning of a new form of political organization named Parliamentary Monarchy, where the king retained only the executive power and appointed the government. The power to make laws was in the hands of Parliament, whose members were elected through very limited suffrage.

Soon the political game was shared between two main political parties: the *tories* or conservatives and the *wighs* or liberals (bipartisanship). The main innovation of the new system lied on the fact that both the Crown and Parliament needed to cooperate to promote the common good.



James Thornhill, *William and Mary*.
Ceiling of the Painted Hall, Greenwich
Hospital, London
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

2. The social and economic transformations of European society

The traditional European society (or *old regime* society, which refers to a time prior to the French Revolution) was rigidly divided into closed classes. Everybody belonged to a class since the moment of birth, and it was very difficult to move towards a better one. There were two main classes: the privileged minority (aristocracy and clergy, which enjoyed tax exemptions), and the unprivileged majority, which was borne the fiscal pressure. The latter was a heterogeneous group, although there were great differences between its members: the poorest of peasants had the same legal status as a wealthy businessman or a rich merchant.

However, there were changes. Whereas in certain countries (such as Spain), the aristocracy did not share the ideals and goals of the emergent bourgeoisie, and rejected a mentality based on economic profits, in England the nobility did not disdain to marry the members of the plebeian but wealthy groups. As a matter of fact, the bourgeois and aristocratic mentalities began to merge.

The most important economic sector during the old regime was agriculture. Ownership of the land meant economic, social and political control, and therefore the biggest landlords belonged to the privileged group, whereas most peasants could only work on alien lands.

Industrial structure was manifold. The production of goods was mainly in the hands of craft guilds, which enjoyed labour and production monopolies. Theoretically, nobody could work in a craft unless being a member of the guild. Local authorities and guilds fixed prices and wages, and even regulated the number of goods and the quality of manufactures. The objective of this system was not to encourage production or to make profits, but the protection of the market. In parallel, some large manufactures were created to supply the needs of the royal palaces or the upper classes. The Crown could also grant trade or production privileges to certain influential persons.

Since the 17th century the development of capitalism transformed the European mentalities, economy and society. The need to increase production and the new objectives of wealth multiplication became increasingly incompatible with the rigid economic structure of the old regime.

I. 18th century in Europe. The old and the new regime

The main factor for the emergence of an early capitalist society was international trade. English and Dutch merchants and manufacturers built networks of international trade, connecting all continents and making enormous profits. The development of trade encouraged the manufacture sector, since more products were required to be sold in distant markets. Colonial trade was based on a triangular link that connected Europe, Africa and America. Europe imported raw materials and coffee, tea, tobacco, cocoa or sugar from the colonies, and sent manufactures in exchange. Europeans also captured African slaves and sold them in America in order to make them work in the plantations.

3. Some 18th-century economic schools

Mercantilism. It was based on the idea according to which the wealth of a country lied on the accumulation of precious metals –gold and silver. When mines were not available, the State needed to create an industrial structure able to consolidate an intense export flow. Jean-Baptiste Colbert, minister of king Louis XIV of France, was one of the most prominent mercantilist figures.

Physiocracy. Mercantilism was soon superseded by physiocrats such as Turgot or de Gournay, who considered that the basis of the economy was agriculture (agricultural labour). Once agricultural activities were promoted, the other economic branches would grow accordingly.

The definition of economic liberalism: Adam Smith. Economic liberalism is based on the idea that private parties make their goods and services available on the free market in order to achieve a profit. Businessmen compete with each other, and prices and wages are determined by the forces of supply and demand, and not fixed by the authorities. In 1776, Adam Smith developed these ideas in his book *The Wealth of Nations*.

4. International affairs: the Seven Years' War (1756-1763)

It was called the first global war in history, since it involved four continents and most of European countries. One of the main reasons for the war was the imperial rivalry between France and Britain. French and British navies fought in India and, with the participation of Spain, also in America. However, the enmity between Austria (allied to France) and Prussia (allied to Great Britain) led to the outbreak of the war on the Continent.

The war finished with the Treaty of Paris (1763) signed by France, Spain and Great Britain, and Peace of Hubertusburg between Austria, Saxony and Prussia, which implied the victory of Great Britain and Prussia. All French territories in America (Canada, lands east of the Mississippi river) were transferred to Great Britain. Spain ceded Florida in exchange of Manila and Havana, although received Louisiana from the French in compensation. France lost all its colonies in India except five ports.

Even if the result of the war was highly favourable to Great Britain (which emerged as the world leading naval power) and to Frederick the Great's Prussia, the huge war expenditures led to a general financial crisis and had a direct impact on the American and French Revolutions.

SUMMARY**18th century Europe. The old and the new regime****a) Absolute monarchies and Parliamentarianism****I. Late 15th century****NEW MODERN STATES****Monarchs of Spain, France and England limited the power of their aristocracy**

1. Centralized governments.
2. Centralized bureaucracies.
3. Permanent royal army.
4. Increasing:
 - collection of taxes
 - financial efficiency

II. 17th century**ABSOLUTISM/ PARLIAMENTARIANISM****Spain and France : absolutism of the Crown**

1. Divine right of the kings: no obstacle for the royal will.
2. The model: French king Louis XIV.

England and the Unified Provinces: the Constitutional State

1. First Revolution: king Charles I against the Parliament (1642-1649), Oliver Cromwell.
2. 1688 (the Glorious Revolution): 1689, Mary & the Bill of Rights.
Parliament: *tories* and *wighs*.

b) European society and early capitalism**The traditional European society (ancient regime) (mainly France & Spain)**

1. Rigid Social Classes by birth:
 - a. privileged minority (tax exemptions) -aristocracy and clergy
 - b. unprivileged majority (fiscal pressure) -from the poorest of peasants to a rich merchant.
2. Production in the hands of local monopolies, the craft guilds (fixed prices and wages).
3. The most important economic sector was agriculture, and the biggest landlords belonged to the privileged group.

Early capitalism started in England and the Low Countries, based on the idea of free market, private property, private profit and competence.

4. The main factor for the early capitalist society was international trade. English and Dutch merchants and manufacturers made enormous profits in colonial trade.

In groups of 4/5 students check and discuss these aspects. You might be expected to explain your point of view to the rest of the class.

- What is the opposite of a centralized government?
- Why is a permanent army so important?
- Write two sentences giving information about Louis XIV
- Explain orally who Cromwell was and what he did
- Try to explain all the aspects of a modern society
- What did the English and Dutch merchants make with the profits of the colonial trade?

VOCABULARY. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions. Use your own words

- Absolutism
- Charles I
- Glorious Revolution
- Oliver Cromwell
- Bill of Rights
- Guild

UNIT 1. Revolutions

II. The American Revolution

1. Material basis for the revolution: imperial wars and taxes

During the first half of the 18th century, the Thirteen Colonies recognised British rule, since colonial trade was protected by the British army. The British victory in the Seven Years' War (a colonial fight between Britain and France (1756-1763) in Europe, India and North America) ensured the hegemony of its navy and constituted the starting point of a vast and prosperous Empire. Nevertheless, the financial problems due to the high costs of the war made the British government increase taxes.

Successive taxes were passed by the British Parliament: the Sugar Act, the Stamp Act (1765, on legal documents and publications), the Townsend Act (1767, on imports), or the Tea Act (1773). Actually, Americans had to import all manufactures from Britain and sell their products (sugar, coffee, tobacco) using British ships and paying taxes for them. For the colonists, the British had no right to collect more money from them without a proper Parliamentary representation (Americans had no representative in London). It would be better to have a government of their own instead of following the British commands.

2. The Declaration of Independence and the war

The beginning of the struggle for independence took place in Boston. In 1773, the colonists threw a cargo of British tea into Boston harbour -the Boston Tea Party. The reaction of king George III, who ordered to close the harbour and to send the redcoats, strengthened the American resistance: the Thirteen Colonies organized the Continental Congress of Philadelphia in 1774 in order to coordinate their action against the British. On 4 July 1776 the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence.

A Second Congress appointed George Washington as the commander-in-chief of the American army, which was supported by the old colonial enemies, France and Spain. Although the rebels had no professional army, Washington used guerrilla tactics against the British successfully. His troops defeated the redcoats in Saratoga (1777) and Yorktown (1781), where the British troops surrendered.



Gilbert Stuart Williamstown, *portrait of George Washington*. Oil on canvas, 1796. [Clark Art Institute](#)

II. The American Revolution**THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE**

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. That whenever any form of government becomes destructive to these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness (...) But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security (...) The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good. (...)

For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing taxes on us without our consent:

In every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms: our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. (...)

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in General Congress, assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor.

Adopted by Congress on July 4, 1776

II. The American Revolution

3. Peace and the creation of a new State

After the definitive battle of Yorktown, the British government recognized American independence in the Peace of Paris of 1783.

Representatives of the thirteen new independent States signed a federal Constitution in Philadelphia in 1787. It reflects the principles of the Enlightenment: division of powers, popular sovereignty, and a list of rights (freedom of religion, of speech, right of property). The government is in the hands of an elected President: George Washington was voted as the first ruler. The federal structure guarantees the autonomy of the federated States, whereas certain matters remain the exclusive field of the federal government (foreign affairs, armed forces).

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

WE, the PEOPLE of the UNITED STATES, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

ARTICLE I.

Sect. 1. All legislative powers, herein granted, shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

Sect. 7. All bills for raising revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with amendments, as on other bills.

ARTICLE II.

Sect. 1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same term, be elected as follows.

No person, except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States at the time of the adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office, who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

ARTICLE III.

Sect. 1. The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such Inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and Inferior Courts, shall hold their offices during good behaviour; and shall, at stated times, receive for their services a compensation, which shall not be diminished during their continuance in office.

Done in Convention, by the unanimous consent of the States present, the seventeenth day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the twelfth. In witness whereof, we have hereunto subscribed our names.

II. The American Revolution

The Thirteen colonies



Summary

The American Revolution

a) Material basis for the revolution: imperial wars and taxes

The financial problems from the high costs of the French and Indian Wars (1754-1763), made the British government increase control over the 13 colonies and taxes:

1. The Sugar Act
2. The Stamp Act (1765)
3. The Townsend Act (1767)
4. The Tea Act (1773)

Americans had no representative in Parliament: they wanted a government of their own.

b) The Declaration of Independence and the war

- In 1773 the Boston Tea Party.
- In 1774 Continental Congress of Philadelphia.
- 4 July 1776 the Continental Congress adopted the Declaration of Independence.

The rebels had no professional army, but Washington used guerrilla tactics:

- Saratoga (1777), defeated the redcoats.
- Yorktown (1781), British troops surrendered.

c) The Peace and the creation of a new State

- Peace of Paris of 1783: British government recognized American independence
- Philadelphia 1787, Representatives of the 13 States signed a federal Constitution with:
 - division of powers,
 - popular sovereignty,
 - list of rights.
- The federal structure guarantees the autonomy of the States.
- Foreign affairs, armed forces, exclusive field of the federal government.
- George Washington was voted as the first ruler.

In groups of 4/5 students check and discuss these aspects. You might be expected to explain your point of view to the rest of the class.

- Explain the different imperial taxes orally
- Explain the Boston Tea Party orally
- Explain two points from the Declaration of Independence
- Mark the battles of Saratoga and Yorktown on a map
- Explain orally three rights from the American constitution

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/ institutions

- Thirteen Colonies
- The Boston Tea Party
- George Washington
- Yorktown
- Constitution of 1787
- Seven Years' War
- Continental Congress of Philadelphia
- Saratoga
- Peace of Paris

Maps. Write the names of the thirteen States of North America



UNIT 1. Revolutions

III. The French Revolution

1. Reasons of the French revolution

a) Enlightened political thought. Montesquieu (division of powers), Rousseau (the principle of national sovereignty), were thinkers whose ideas influenced French revolutionary leaders. They sought to replace the *ancient regime* or old order with a new political and social structure.

b) The independence of the United States of America. Americans had put into practice the principles and ideas of the Enlightenment through the creation of an entirely new State.

c) Social structure. The existing tension between the privileged social sectors (clergy and noblemen) and the third estate (the commons, including the bourgeoisie) increased at the end of the 18th c. in France. Peasants had to pay high rents and taxes to the Crown, the Church and the nobles, although most of the people were on the verge of famine. The bourgeois or middle class was made up of professionals like lawyers, teachers, even enriched merchants or bankers. In spite of their economic position and influence, the ancient regime did not allow them to participate in governmental affairs.



Antoine-François Callet, portrait of Louis XVI. 1778-1779.
[Museo del Prado](#)

d) Economic crisis. The colonial wars against Britain first, and afterwards the support of the American war of independence had shown the financial limits of the French State. New levies had to be collected, but, since only the third estate paid taxes, the new economic burden was too much for the peasants. Besides, a series of bad harvests and the consequent famines hardened the situation of the majority of the people. In order to solve the financial situation, the king called the Estates General, the traditional assembly of the three estates, in order to pass new taxes. This was the first step towards the revolution and the end of the old order.

2. The Revolution

a) The National Assembly (1789-1791)

In May 1789 king Louis XVI summoned the Estates General at the palace of Versailles. The governmental tax project included the privileged classes. Nevertheless, while the nobles and the clergy had no intention to lose their privileges, the members of the third estate tried to start a social and political reform. Inspired by the principle of national sovereignty, they actually asked for a voting system based on the person instead of the estate, because the majority of the

III. The French Revolution

members of the Assembly came from the third estate. When the king refused to accept and closed the access to the chamber, they went further and met in an indoor tennis room (*jeu de paume*) on June 1789, declared themselves the National Assembly (in other words, the only representatives of the French people), and swore that they would provide France with a Constitution (the tennis court oath). Some aristocrats and part of the clergy joined them.

The political revolution was supported by popular movements: on 14 July 1789 the crowd took the Bastille, a royal prison in Paris that was the symbol of the tyranny of the old regime, and put the head of its commander on a pike. The popular revolt spread to the provinces and the countryside, and the peasants burned the palaces of the aristocrats and killed them. It was a troubled period called "the great fear" (*la grande peur*).



Jean-Pierre Houël, *The Storming of the Bastille*, Bibliothèque nationale de France
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

In August, the National Assembly began its program of social and political reform: the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (equality of all men under the law, popular sovereignty, individual rights such as liberty or property). The feudal system (above all the rents paid by the peasants to their lords) was abolished. A new Constitution was promulgated in 1791, based on the revolutionary principles, it created a constitutional monarchy in France.

Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, 26 August 1789

The representatives of the French people, constituted as a National Assembly, and considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of the rights of man are the sole causes of public misfortunes and governmental corruption, have resolved to set forth in a solemn declaration the natural, inalienable and sacred rights of man: so that by being constantly present to all the members of the social body this declaration may always remind them of their rights and duties; so that by being liable at every moment to comparison with the aim of any and all political institutions the acts of the legislative and executive powers may be the more fully respected; and so that by being founded henceforward on simple and incontestable principles the demands of the citizens may always tend toward maintaining the constitution and the general welfare.

In consequence, the National Assembly recognizes and declares, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following rights of man and the citizen:

1. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be based only on common utility.
2. The purpose of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.

III. The French Revolution

3. The principle of all sovereignty rests essentially in the nation. No body and no individual may exercise authority which does not emanate expressly from the nation.

4. Liberty consists in the ability to do whatever does not harm another; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no other limits than those which assure to other members of society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by the law.

5. The law only has the right to prohibit those actions which are injurious to society. No hindrance should be put in the way of anything not prohibited by the law, nor may any one be forced to do what the law does not require.

6. The law is the expression of the general will. All citizens have the right to take part, in person or by their representatives, in its formation. It must be the same for everyone whether it protects or penalizes. All citizens being equal in its eyes are equally admissible to all public dignities, offices, and employments, according to their ability, and with no other distinction than that of their virtues and talents.

7. No man may be indicted, arrested, or detained except in cases determined by the law and according to the forms which it has prescribed. Those who seek, expedite, execute, or cause to be executed arbitrary orders should be punished; but citizens summoned or seized by virtue of the law should obey instantly, and render themselves guilty by resistance.

8. Only strictly and obviously necessary punishments may be established by the law, and no one may be punished except by virtue of a law established and promulgated before the time of the offense, and legally applied.

9. Every man being presumed innocent until judged guilty, if it is deemed indispensable to arrest him, all rigor unnecessary to securing his person should be severely repressed by the law.

10. No one should be disturbed for his opinions, even in religion, provided that their manifestation does not trouble public order as established by law.

11. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious of the rights of man. Every citizen may therefore speak, write, and print freely, if he accepts his own responsibility for any abuse of this liberty in the cases set by the law.

12. The safeguard of the rights of man and the citizen requires public powers. These powers are therefore instituted for the advantage of all, and not for the private benefit of those to whom they are entrusted.

13. For maintenance of public authority and for expenses of administration, common taxation is indispensable. It should be apportioned equally among all the citizens according to their capacity to pay.

14. All citizens have the right, by themselves or through their representatives, to have demonstrated to them the necessity of public taxes, to consent to them freely, to

III. The French Revolution

follow the use made of the proceeds, and to determine the means of apportionment, assessment, and collection, and the duration of them.

15. Society has the right to hold accountable every public agent of the administration.

16. Any society in which the guarantee of rights is not assured or the separation of powers not settled has no constitution.

17. Property being an inviolable and sacred right, no one may be deprived of it except when public necessity, certified by law, obviously requires it, and on the condition of a just compensation in advance.

b) The constitutional monarchy and the war

A relatively moderate political position prevailed. A majority political party composed of rich bourgeois, which would later come to be known as the Girondins, was willing to reach a compromise with the king to support a new constitutional regime. The king was not excluded from government, but he was considered only the head of the executive power. The Legislative Assembly, elected by a limited number of citizens, held the legislative power, although the king enjoyed a right of veto against the laws passed by the Assembly. Nevertheless, king Louis could not stop the civil constitution of the clergy that separated State and Church and imposed an allegiance oath to priests. The properties of the Church were confiscated and sold at auction.

The Constitution of 1791 opened the government to the participation of the bourgeoisie, but only the richest citizens had a voting right. It kept the king as the head of the government, but, as a matter of fact, Louis XVI was not happy with the revolutionary changes. He tried to stop the revolution and to come back to the absolute regime with the support of part of the clergy and the aristocracy.

The king conspired against the regime he apparently respected, and secretly called the absolutist monarchs of Europe to help him. After being forced to leave Versailles and to come to the Tuileries Palace in Paris, the king decided to flee from the capital. But the royal family was recognised at Varennes and forced to return to Paris. The flight to Varennes (June 1791) revealed the real intentions of the king with respect to the Revolution and his plans to favour a foreign military intervention in France. The king had lost the trust of his people.

Meanwhile, the European powers hesitated about the right path to follow, above all Spain, where the king was also a Bourbon, and Austria, whose emperor was a relative of the queen. Actually, the second Assembly declared war on Austria and Prussia; when the Austrian and Prussian troops invaded France to restore the ancien régime, popular demonstrations against the king took place in Paris, and finally the crowd entered the Tuileries, forcing the Assembly to remove Louis XVI from power: in September 1792 France became a Republic.

III. The French Revolution

c) The Convention (1792-1795)

The Convention was the third Assembly elected in a moment of panic due to foreign invasion, and as a result, it implied the radical turn of the Revolution. The new government called for a mass conscription against the European powers and the enemies of the Revolution. At home, the Convention eliminated people suspected of being enemies of the revolution by using massively the guillotine. Even king Louis and his wife Marie Antoinette were convicted of treason and executed in 1793.

In the same year a new Constitution was promulgated, based on the universal suffrage and the principle of social equality. The government approved a number of social laws to improve the conditions of life of the popular classes, such as the Law of Maximum in order to establish a limit in the prices of basic necessities (bread).

Maximilien Robespierre, leader of the Jacobins (the radical party) dominated the Convention, with the support of the *sans culottes* (lower classes) of Paris. This period is known as the reign of Terror: to protect the revolution, thousands of people were condemned as traitors by a Revolutionary Tribunal controlled by Robespierre. Executive and military powers were given to certain committees (above all the Committee of Public Safety and the Committee of General Security) composed by a number of its members. Actually, this confusion of powers between the executive, legislative and judiciary was contrary to the ideas of Montesquieu. Robespierre chose to concentrate all power to save the Revolution at the expense of democracy.

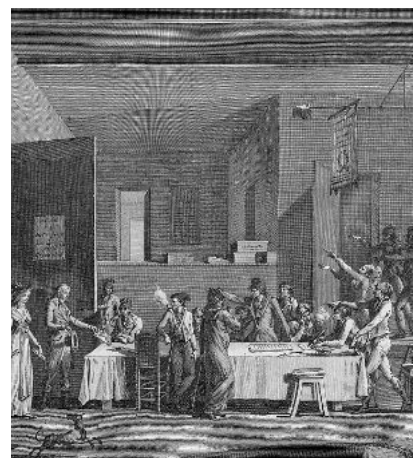


Maximilien Robespierre. Drawing, c. 1792
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

On the other hand, there were reasons to fear a counter-revolution. In the Vendée, a region in the West of France, the peasants rebelled against the revolutionary authorities because of their allegiance to the old monarchy and the Catholic Church. In fact, the radical position of the Convention saved the Republic from its internal and external enemies. Universal conscription provided France with an army able to defeat the successive coalitions of European powers sent against it. Military victories expanded the Revolution over new countries.

In domestic affairs, Jacobins sought to change France completely. With respect to the Church, they wanted to eliminate its influence by closing churches and promoting the alternative cult of goddess reason. The calendar was changed, replacing seven-day for ten-day weeks, and proclaimed 1792 as the year I of a new era.

Because of the new situation and of the radicalisation of the Jacobins, most of people opposed the Convention, and the Terror finished with the execution of Robespierre himself in 1794.



P.G. Fragonard, Intérieur d'un Comité révolutionnaire. Print, 1801. Collection De Vinck, Bibliothèque Nationale de France
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

III. The French Revolution

MAXIMILIEN ROBESPIERRE. SPEECH TO THE CONVENTION, FEBRUARY 5, 1794

(...)What is the goal toward which we are heading? The peaceful enjoyment of liberty and equality; the reign of that eternal justice whose laws have been inscribed, not in marble and stone, but in the hearts of all men, even in that of the slave who forgets them and in that of the tyrant who denies them. (...)

Democracy is a state in which the sovereign people, guided by laws which are of their own making, do for themselves all that they can do well, and by their delegates do all that they cannot do for themselves. (...)

Now, what is the fundamental principle of popular or democratic government, that is to say, the essential mainspring which sustains it and makes it move? It is virtue. I speak of the public virtue which worked so many wonders in Greece and Rome and which ought to produce even more astonishing things in republican France - that virtue which is nothing other than the love of the nation and its law.

But as the essence of the republic or of democracy is equality, it follows that love of country necessarily embraces the love of equality. (...)

But the French are the first people of the world who have established real democracy, by calling all men to equality and full rights of citizenship; and there, in my judgment, is the true reason why all the tyrants in league against the Republic will be vanquished. (...)

Here the development of our theory would reach its limit, if you had only to steer the ship of the Republic through calm waters. But the tempest rages, and the state of the revolution in which you find yourselves imposes upon you another task. (...)

We must smother the internal and external enemies of the Republic or perish with them. Now, in this situation, the first maxim of your policy ought to be to lead the people by reason and the people's enemies by terror.

If the mainspring of popular government in peacetime is virtue, amid revolution it is at the same time both virtue and terror: virtue, without which terror is fatal; terror, without which virtue is impotent. Terror is nothing but prompt, severe, inflexible justice; it is therefore an emanation of virtue. It is less a special principle than a consequence of the general principle of democracy applied to our country's most pressing needs.

It has been said that terror was the mainspring of despotic government. Does your government, then, resemble a despotism? Yes, as the sword which glitters in the hands of liberty's heroes resembles the one with which tyranny's lackeys are armed. Let the despot govern his brutalized subjects by terror; he is right to do this, as a despot. Subdue liberty's enemies by terror, and you will be right, as founders of the Republic. The government of the revolution is the despotism of liberty against tyranny. Is force made only to protect crime? And is it not to strike the heads of the proud that lightning is destined? (...)

III. The French Revolution

d) The Directory (1795-1799)

After years of political instability, the Revolution came to a moderate phase, under the influence of conservative bourgeois eager to give birth to an appropriate political framework for their businesses. These new leaders created the new governmental institution called the Directory.

Nevertheless, military victories and the expansion of the revolutionary ideas (Low Countries, Switzerland, Italy) paved the way for the pre-eminence of certain triumphant generals in the political arena, such as Napoleon Bonaparte. After his campaigns in Italy and Egypt, Napoleon joined the Directory till a new coalition formed by Austria, Prussia, Russia and Britain threatened again the Revolution. Then he overthrew the Directory after a *coup d'État* and imposed a new constitution and a new political system called the Consulate in 1799 (18 Brumaire). The Revolution was officially finished.

3. Consequences of the French Revolution

In spite of the military opposition of the European States against the French Revolution, revolutionary ideas spread throughout Europe as the principles of the Enlightenment had done during the 18th century. French revolutionary leaders believed that their fight against absolutism was the first step of a universal struggle for freedom and popular sovereignty.

The French military success favoured the creation of a number of revolutionary Republics under French influence: the Batavian, Helvetic, Ligurian, Cisalpine, Roman, Parthenopean Republics. The Austrian Low Countries and the Rhineland were put under the direct rule of France. Afterwards, the imperial conquests of Napoleon enlarged the influence of the revolutionary ideas.

Summary**THE FRENCH REVOLUTION****a) Reasons of the French revolution**

- a. Enlightened political thought: Montesquieu's division of powers, Rousseau's national sovereignty.
- b. The independence of the United States.
- c. Social structure: tension between the privileged social sectors and the third estate:
 - Peasants had to pay high rents and taxes although most were on the verge of famine.
 - The bourgeois could not participate in governmental affairs in spite of their economic position and influence.
- c. Economic crisis:
 - New levies had to be collected because of the colonial wars and the support of the American independence.
 - Bad harvests and famines.
 - The king had to call the Estates General to pass new taxes.

b) The Revolution

1. The National Assembly (1789-1791)

- May 1789 Louis XVI summoned the Estates General at Versailles.
- The third estate seized the opportunity and asked for a social and political reform.
- The king refused to accept and closed the access.
- June 1789 the third estate met in an indoor tennis room (jeu de paume) and declared themselves the National Assembly.
- The tennis court oath: not to disband until France had a Constitution.
- The political revolution was supported by popular movements:
 - 14 July 1789 the crowd took the Bastille;
 - peasants burned palaces of aristocrats and killed them (la grande peur).
- In August, the National Assembly began its program of social and political reform:
 - Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen;
 - the feudal system was abolished;
 - 1791 a new Constitution was promulgated.

2. The constitutional monarchy and the war

- The moderate Girondins dominated the situation: they wanted a compromise with the king
- The properties of the Church were confiscated and sold at auction.
- The Constitution of 1791 was moderate and conciliatory.
- The king conspired against the regime; he fled from the Tuileries Palace in Paris.
- With the flight to Varennes (June 1791), the king lost the trust of his people.
- Austrian and Prussian troops invaded France to restore the ancien régime.
- September 1792 France became a Republic.

3. The Convention (1792-1795)

- The Convention was the third Assembly elected when France was suffering a foreign invasion.
- It was a radical turn of the Revolution.
- Mass conscription provided an army to defend the revolution.
- Massive use of the guillotine against political suspects.
- 1793 king Louis and his wife were put to death.
- 1793 new Constitution.
- Social laws to improve the conditions of life the Law of Maximum.
- With Maximilien Robespierre, leader of the Jacobins (the radical party) in the Convention, with the support of the sans culottes, revolutionary massacres reached their peak.
- Jacobins sought to change France completely.
- The Convention saved the Republic from its internal and external enemies.
- The reign of Terror: executive and military powers given to committees.
- There was counter-revolution in the Vendée.
- Military victories expanded the Revolution over new countries.
- 1794 execution of Robespierre.

4. The Directory (1795-1799)

- Moderate phase, under the influence of conservative bourgeois called the Directory.
- Military victories paved the political way for generals.
- 1799 Napoleon Bonaparte overthrew the Directory after a *coup d'État* and imposed a new constitution and a new political system, the Consulate.

c) Consequences of the French Revolution

- Revolutionary ideas spread throughout Europe.
- The French military success favoured the creation of revolutionary Republics under French influence.
- The Austrian Low Countries and the Rhineland were put under the direct rule of France.
- The imperial conquests of Napoleon enlarged the influence of the revolutionary ideas.

COOPERATIVE WORK: Complete with the words and expressions given (3/4 students)**a) Reasons of the French revolution**

- a) _____ political thought: Montesquieu's division of powers, Rousseau's national sovereignty.
- b) The _____ of the United States.
- c) Social structure: tension between the _____ social sectors and the third estate:
 _____ had to pay high rents and taxes although most were on the verge of famine.
 _____ could not participate in governmental affairs In spite of their economic position and influence.
- d) Economic crisis:
 New _____ had to be collected because of the _____ and the support of the American independence
 The king had to call the Estates General _____ new taxes.

To pass • levies • the bourgeois • colonial wars • enlightened • privileged • independence • peasants

b) The Revolution

1. The National Assembly (1789-1791)

- May 1789 Louis XVI summoned the Estates General at Versailles.
- The third estate _____ the opportunity and asked for a social and political reform.
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 - Declaration of the Rights of Man and the _____ ;
 - the feudal system was abolished;
 - 1791 a new Constitution was promulgated.

Social • oath • seized • burnt • Citizen

III. The French Revolution

Activities

2. The constitutional monarchy and the war

- The _____ Girondins dominated the situation: they wanted a compromise with the king
- The properties of the Church were _____ and _____ at _____ .
- The Constitution of 1791 was moderate and conciliatory.
- The king conspired against the regime; he _____ from the Tuileries Palace in Paris.
- With the flight to Varennes (June 1791), the king lost the _____ of his people.
- Austrian and Prussian troops _____ France to restore the ancien régime,
- September 1792 France became a Republic.

Auction • Invaded • sold • fled • trust • moderate • confiscated

3. The Convention (1792-1795)

- The Convention was the third Assembly elected when France was _____ a foreign invasion.
- It was a radical turn of the Revolution.
- Mass conscription _____ an army to defend the revolution.
- Massive use of the guillotine against political suspects.
- 1793 king Louis and his wife were _____ death.
- 1793 new Constitution .
- Social laws to improve the conditions of life the Law of Maximum.
- With Maximilien Robespierre, leader of the Jacobins (the radical party) in the Convention, with the _____ of the sans culottes, revolutionary massacres reached their peak.
- Jacobins sought to change France completely.
- The Convention _____ the Republic from its internal and external enemies.
- The reign of Terror: executive and military powers given to committees.
- There was counter-revolution in the Vendée.
- Military victories _____ the Revolution over new countries.
- 1794 execution of Robespierre.

Put to • suffering • support • saved • provided • expanded

4. The Directory (1795-1799)

- Moderate phase, under the influence of conservative bourgeois called the Directory.
- Military victories paved the political way for generals.
- 1799 Napoleon Bonaparte _____ the Directory after a *coup d'État* and he _____ a new constitution and a new political system, the Consulate.

Overthrew • imposed

c) Consequences of the French Revolution

- Revolutionary ideas _____ throughout Europe.
- The French military success _____ the creation of revolutionary Republics under French influence.
- The Austrian Low Countries and the Rhineland were _____ the direct rule of France.
- The imperial conquests of Napoleon _____ the influence of the revolutionary ideas.

Spread • put under • enlarged

There will be an allotted time. The group that gets the greatest number of right answers in the shortest time gets the credits.

| Noun | Verb | Adjective |
|------|------|-----------|
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/ institutions. Use your own words

- Estates General
- Bastille
- Constitution of 1791
- The First French Republic
- M. Robespierre
- Sans Culottes
- The Convention
- The Consulate
- National Assembly
- Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen
- Girondins
- Jacobins
- The Terror
- The Vendée
- The Directory

Drama & Role playing, making live history.

The situation in question is a session of the French Legislative Assembly in 1791. Four groups of 4-5 students will defend/oppose a particular political position and defend/oppose a particular piece of legislation, they might surf the net to get extra information, they will be needing 2-3 sessions to prepare and present their positions. With their teacher's indications they might assume such roles as:

- Lameth
- Lafayette
- Brissot
- Carnot

Even though Robespierre did not participate in the discussions, he will be allowed to speak before the Assembly.

Every group will prepare a piece of legislation to be submitted to the consideration of the Assembly:

- The war against the absolutist powers
- The limitation of the prices of bread
- The conditions of the abolition of feudal rights
- The punishment of the refractory clergy

A debate will follow in a session of the Assembly, where all the groups will discuss their positions under the control of an elected speaker.

UNIT 1. Revolutions

IV. Napoleon and the Napoleonic Empire

General Napoleon Bonaparte used his brilliant military capabilities (campaigns of Italy and Egypt) to seize power in France. In 1800 he concentrated the actual powers of the State after a plebiscite, as First Consul; in 1802, he became Consul for life; in 1804 he crowned himself emperor. It was a contradictory position, since he was said to be the follower of the Revolution and at the same time he was determined to concentrate an almost absolute power in his hands.

Napoleonic Empire in 1812



IV. Napoleon and the Napoleonic Empire

Napoleon centralized the power of the State. In spite of the formal existence of representative bodies, the emperor could ignore them and take political decisions without the participation of elective institutions. He also controlled local administration. He limited certain rights as the freedom of speech (the government frequently censored newspapers), and eradicated political opposition through a secret police. For some historians, Napoleon was little less than a dictator.

On the other hand, Napoleon reorganized France under the principles of effectiveness and moderation, as a reaction against the radicalism of the Revolution. The Bank of France was created to organize the State financial system (including the issuing of banknotes). The Code of 1804 confirmed the right to private property, which implied the economic security that the bourgeoisie needed to create a prosperous country. A new educational system was developed with new lycées (secondary schools). Scientific research was encouraged. The principle of equality of all men ensured a merit-based system.

The strategic talent of Napoleon was able to defeat the coalition of European powers in victorious battles: Austerlitz against Austria and Russia (1805), Jena against Prussia (1806), Friedland against Russia (1807). The Empire reached then its greatest extension: annexed to France were Belgium, Genoa and Piedmont, the Illyrian Provinces, the francophone cantons of Switzerland, Northern Germany, Rome and Florence; the kingdom of Italy was governed directly by Napoleon. Satellite or family States were Holland (with his brother Louis as king), Westphalia (under Jérôme Bonaparte), Spain (under Joseph Bonaparte), and Naples, where reigned his general Murat. Other States under French influence were the newly created Confederation of the Rhine and the Duchy of Warsaw. Except Great Britain, nobody could resist the French army. Against Britain, Napoleon created the Continental System, an economic and trade blockade, but the British naval superiority kept the island safe. In fact, a combined navy of French and Spanish ships was defeated in Trafalgar in 1805 by the British; this sea battle implied the beginning of the British world naval supremacy.



Jacques-Louis David, *Consecration of emperor Napoleon I* (detail)
[Wikiart](#)

In 1812 the emperor decided to send a "Grand Army" of 500.000 men to invade Russia, since the Tsar had refused to accept the Continental System against Britain. He reached Moscow, but the Russian troops withdrew and avoided battle. The result was that the French army found itself without supplies. Winter forced Napoleon to order a retreat, but he lost 250.000 soldiers, and 100.000 were taken prisoners. Immediately a new coalition was formed between Great Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia;

their armies defeated Napoleon in the battle of the Nations of Leipzig (1813). The emperor abdicated and was exiled to the island of Elba, from where he escaped in 1815 and tried to recover the throne (the "Hundred Days"). He was definitely defeated at Waterloo and exiled again to the island of St. Helena, where he died.

Summary

NAPOLEON AND THE NAPOLEONIC EMPIRE

Contradictory position: follower of the Revolution but concentrated an almost absolute power.

- 1800, First Consul.
- 1802, Consul for life.
- 1804, crowned himself emperor.

Little less than a dictator:

- Centralized the power of the State.
- Formal existence of representative bodies, but the emperor could take political decisions without the participation of elective institutions.
- Controlled local administration.
- Limited certain rights as the freedom of speech.
- Eradicated political opposition through a secret police.

A great politician and organizer

- Reorganized France under effectiveness and moderation.
- Created the Bank of France to organize the State financial system.
- The Code of 1804 confirmed the right to private property and so to economic security.
- A new educational system was developed with new lycées.
- Scientific research was encouraged.
- Merit-based system for social and political promotion.

A great general

- His strategic talent defeated several coalitions of European powers.
- Austerlitz against Austria (1805),
- Jena against Prussia (1806),
- Friedland against Russia (1807).
- The Empire reached then its greatest extension.
- Except Great Britain, nobody could resist the French army; British naval superiority kept the island safe.

Defeat

- Trafalgar in 1805 was the beginning of the British world naval supremacy.
- In 1812 a "Grand Army" of 500.000 men invaded Russia. Winter forced Napoleon to retreat. He lost 250.000 soldiers, and 100.000 were taken prisoners.
- Leipzig (1813) a new coalition between Great Britain, Austria, Russia and Prussia defeated Napoleon.
- The emperor abdicated and was exiled to the island of Elba,
- He escaped in 1815.
- He was definitely defeated at Waterloo.
- Banished to the island of St. Helena, where he died.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING - WRITING AN ESSAY (2/3 STUDENTS)

It is said that the composer Ludwig van Beethoven admired the ideals of the French Revolution. He dedicated his 3rd Symphony, the Eroica, to Napoleon. Nevertheless, when he knew that Bonaparte had crowned himself as French emperor, he considered him a tyrant and eliminated his name. Write an essay of about 500 words, about Napoleon and the contradictory role he played with respect to the principles of the French Revolution. Assess the positive and negative aspects of his reign. Try to use your own words where possible. Each student will be responsible for a part of the writing and might have to read and defend it aloud in class.

**Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions.
Use your own words**

- Austerlitz
- Friedland
- Jérôme Bonaparte
- The Grand Army
- The Hundred Days
- St. Helena
- Jena
- Joseph Bonaparte
- Continental System
- The Battle of the Nations of Leipzig
- Waterloo

MAPS

Identify the different territories under the rule of Napoleon



UNIT 1. Revolutions

V. Restoration

After the fall of the Napoleonic Empire, a new international system emerged to maintain the balance of power in continental Europe. The United Kingdom was interested to prevent the creation of a new continental empire able to threaten its economic expansion. Austria, under the direction of prince Klemens von Metternich, was eager to preserve its preeminence in Central Europe and to expand over the Balkans, but the heterogeneity of the peoples and nationalities under its control led to an anti-nationalist, anti-liberal position, and made it necessary to support the *statu quo*. Russia, under Tsar Alexander I, was an autocratic country, ready to expand towards the Black Sea, the Pacific Ocean and Central Europe. Prussia was waiting to consolidate a hegemonic position in Germany at the expense of Austria. Finally, France (in spite of being a defeated nation) has seen recognized its right to participate in the new international system, thanks to the ability of its minister Talleyrand.

The Congress of Nations takes place in Vienna in 1814; what is important to underline is the willingness of the different countries to meet in order to reach an agreement in different matters, such as the new borders of Europe. Russia keeps Finland from Sweden, Bessarabia from Turkey, and most of Poland. Prussia obtains several territories in Germany, above all the Rhineland. Austria loses Flanders, but in exchange receives Venice and Lombardy in Italy, and Austrian princes will rule Parma, Modena and Tuscany. As barriers against France two little States enlarge their territories: in the South the kingdom of Sardinia, and in the North the Low Countries receive Belgium. In sum, the greatest advantage goes for Great Britain, since the new Europe guarantees the balance of powers and the British economic expansion based on its naval superiority and industrial growth. Moreover, Great Britain receives Malta and the Ionic islands in the Mediterranean, and other possessions that ensured its maritime hegemony.

The coming back to power of Napoleon (The Hundred Days) meant the interruption of negotiations and the creation of the Quadruple Alliance. The Quadruple Alliance between Russia, Prussia, Austria and Great Britain was created to preserve the balance of power in Europe, and to prevent any new attempt by France to restore a hegemonic position in the Continent.

Nevertheless, the other main international commitment, the Holy Alliance, was not signed by Great Britain. It was suggested by Tsar Alexander on a religious basis: the compromise by the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant sovereigns (Russia, Austria and Prussia) to fight against revolutionary movements, to preserve the *status quo* and to consult each other in different meetings –the Concert of Europe, based on a system of Congresses. Actually it implied the right to intervene in the domestic affairs of any country to keep absolute monarchs in their thrones. The principles of the rule of the legitimate dynasties (legitimism), and the right to restore legitimate princes (intervention), are the two main features of the European Concert.

V. Restoration

Great Britain, enjoying a Parliamentary regime, refuses to give its systematic support to this conservative scheme. Although the British participate in the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818, they do not attend subsequent congresses (Troppau 1820, Laibach 1821). Great Britain does not approve the intervention in Spain discussed in the fourth Congress that takes place in Verona in 1823.

Nevertheless, although the countries at war against revolutionary France try to keep their borders closed against the influence of the new ideas, it was not possible to stop the political, social and economic changes initiated by the French revolution. National movements against the Napoleonic invasion had already changed social and political perspectives.

Europe in 1815



Summary**RESTORATION**

New international system emerged after the fall of Napoleon designed to keep the balance of European powers from a position of moderation, anti-nationalism and maintenance of the status quo. (Metternich, Talleyrand).

The Vienna Congress in 1814, reached an agreement on the new borders of Europe.

The Quadruple Alliance (Russia, Prussia, Austria and Great Britain) after "the 100 days" wanted to preserve the balance of powers in Europe, and to prevent France from restoring hegemony.

The Holy Alliance (Britain didn't sign it), gave the right to intervene in any country to keep legitimate monarchs on the throne.

It was not possible to stop the political, social and economic changes initiated by the French revolution and the national movements against the Napoleonic invasions.

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions.**Use your own words**

- Balance of powers
- Alexander I
- Quadruple Alliance
- K. von Metternich
- Holy Alliance

DRAMA & ROLE PLAYING, MAKING LIVE HISTORY

We are going to dramatize a session of the Congress of Vienna. Several groups of 4-5 students will assume (to defend/oppose as assigned by the teacher) the positions of some relevant historical characters, such as the ones given. Students will surf the net for extra information following their teacher's indications:

- Metternich
- Castlereagh
- Hardenberg
- Talleyrand
- Gómez de Labrador
- Alexander I

All groups will pay particular attention to:

- Territorial concessions and acquisitions (a map will be provided to the meeting)
- The principle of intervention against any revolutionary principle
- The principle of institutionalized meetings or congresses to settle disputes and to avoid the war

A debate will follow in a session of the Assembly, where all the groups will discuss their positions under the control of an elected speaker.

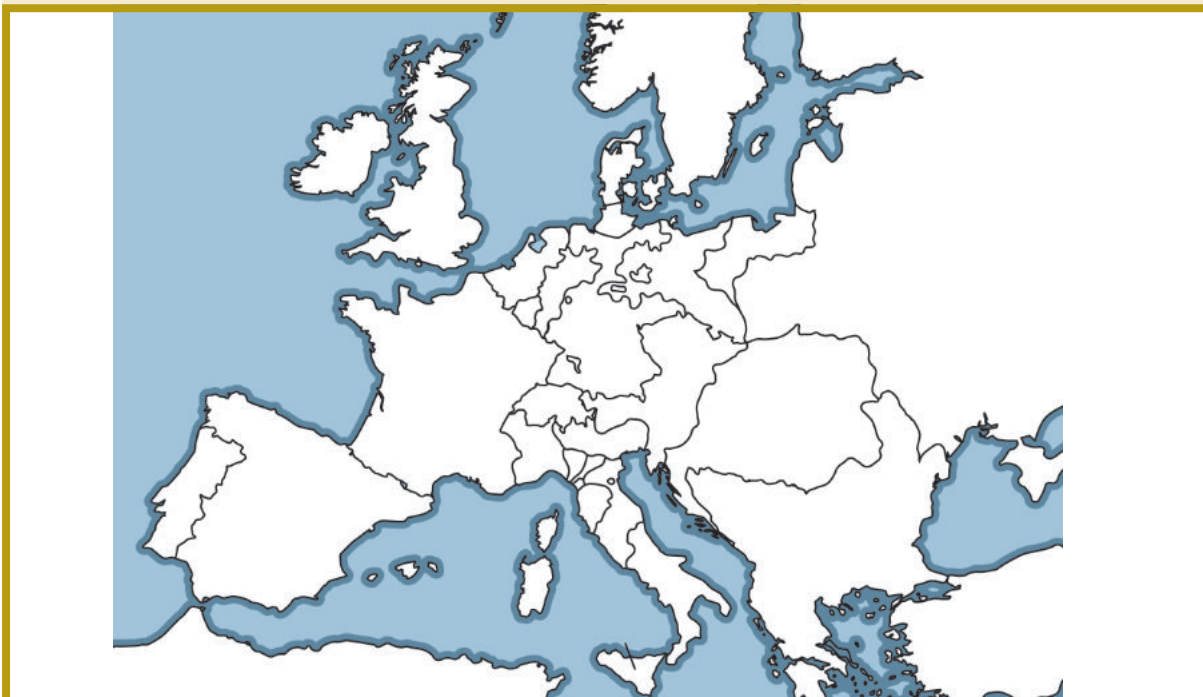
Maps

Compare the political maps of Europe in 1789 and 1815. Which are the differences between them? Identify the European borders in 1815.

Europe in 1789



Europe in 1815



UNIT 1. Revolutions

VI. Liberalism and Nationalism

Nationalism and Liberalism were the two main dynamic forces of Europe in the 19th century. The conservative system of Alliances and Congresses created to maintain absolutist regimes as a means to keep stability in Europe did not work, and even the most reactionary countries saw the spread of successive revolutionary waves.

Liberalism. The reaction of absolutism did not stop the spread of liberal ideas throughout Europe. A succession of revolutionary waves changed the political map of Europe during the 19th century. Liberal ideas expanded in continental Europe having the references of the Enlightenment and the American and French Revolutions. Liberal States provided the structured political alternative to the old regime: absolutism was rejected and new Constitutions, where the values of freedom and division of powers were stressed, were proclaimed. A limited participation of people in governmental affairs was allowed. On the economic side, liberal governments abolished any limitation to production and distribution, and guaranteed the right to property.

Nationalism. Nation refers to a feeling of belonging to a community that shares certain features, such as a common language, common values, history, customs and traditions, religion, etc. Nevertheless, the concept is unclear and different characteristics can be emphasized depending on the specific national case: the German Volk is based on links of culture (literature, traditions) and blood that bind the individuals within the community. The French idea of *patrie* is related to the territory and the language spoken by the people established on the national soil.

In the context of the beginning of the 19th century, Nationalism became a powerful political force, above all in the places where national communities did not enjoy a government of their own. As a matter of fact, in the restored Europe after the fall of Napoleon there were on the one hand national communities without a political organization (such as Polish, Magyars, Finnish, or even Italians and Germans, divided into different States). On the other hand, there were also imperial States that dominated different nationalities (Russia, Austria, the Ottoman Empire). The supreme aspiration of these nationalities was to constitute a political system free from imperial subjugation or external interference.

The revolutions of 1820s. In 1821 the Greeks rebelled against the Ottoman Empire. Since the Greeks were supported by Russia, France and Great Britain (Lord Byron died while fighting against the Turks), the Ottomans recognized Greek independence in 1827.

The revolutions of 1830s. The absolutist tendencies of king Charles X of France led to a revolutionary movement that created a new constitutional monarchy in France. King Louis Philip of Orleans satisfied only the more moderated bourgeois elements, and popular classes were mostly excluded from government. On the other hand, Belgian people rebelled against the rule of The Netherlands. Belgium obtained its independence and elected Leopold of Saxony-Coburg as a king

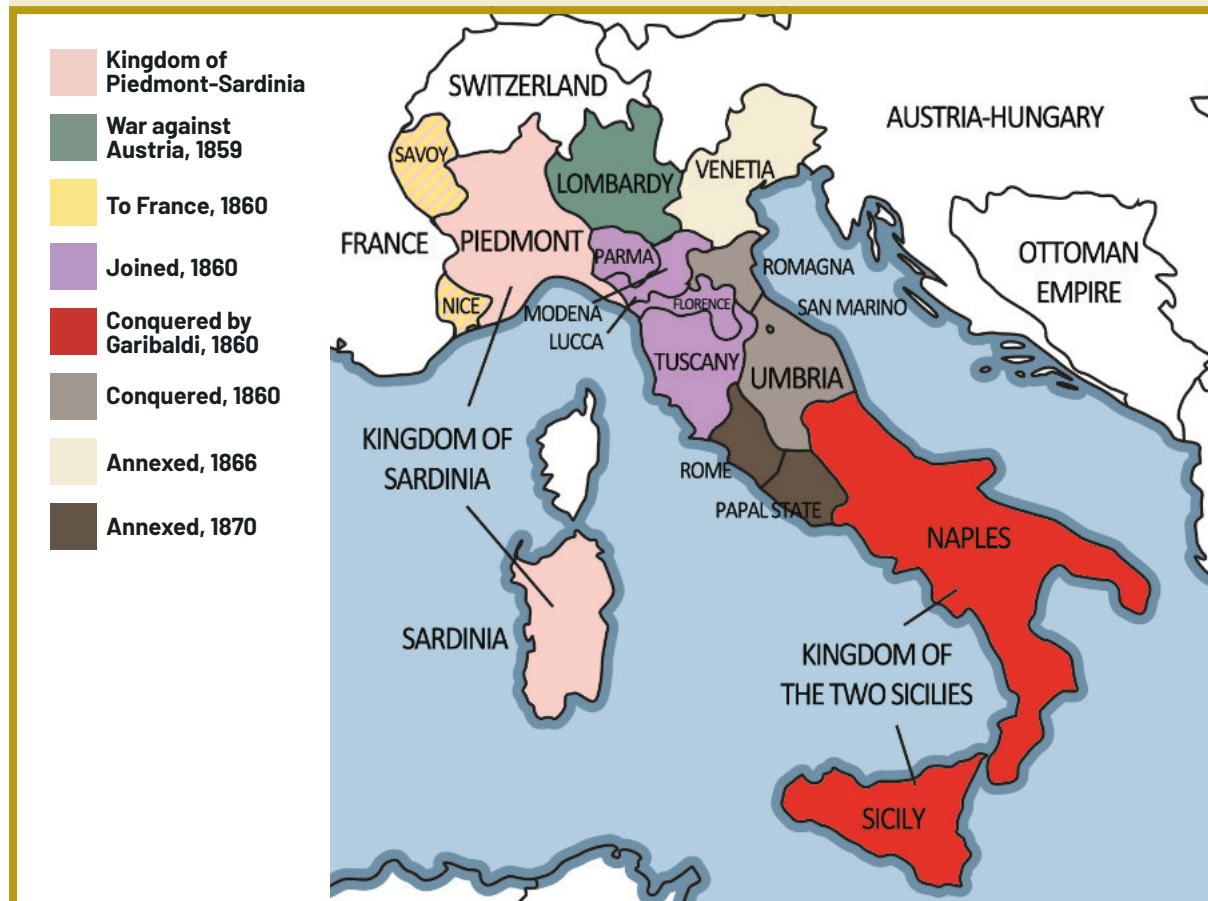
VI. Liberalism and Nationalism

The revolutions of 1848. The revolutionary movements of 1848 pursued the establishment of democracies based on the principles of universal suffrage, popular sovereignty and the definition of certain economic and social rights. In Paris, popular demonstrations ended in the abdication of the king and the proclamation of the Republic: the new Constitution declared the right to work and the freedom of strike. In Vienna, the government of prince Metternich fell, and Czechs, Italians and Hungarians rebelled, but the imperial troops crushed the revolutionaries. In Frankfurt an Assembly of representatives of the German States met in order to attain the unification of Germany, but this objective failed.

THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY AND GERMANY

Italian unification. Italy was divided into different political entities; some territories were even subjected to a not-Italian rule. In the South, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies (under the Bourbon dynasty) had not the strength enough to lead the unification. In the North, Milan (Lombardy) and Venice belonged to the Austrian Empire; the little principalities of Parma, Modena or Tuscany were equally unable to contribute decisively. Rome could also play a unifying role, but the Pope rejected nationalism, liberalism and democracy as the pillars of a new Italian State. Only the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont had the economic and political dynamism to fulfil the nationalist objective of unification.

Unification of Italy 1850-1971



VI. Liberalism and Nationalism

As a matter of fact, Piedmont was too weak to fight alone against the Austrian Empire. Being aware of this limitation, Cavour, prime minister of Sardinia, sought the support of the French Empire of Napoleon III: in exchange of the territories of Nice and Savoy (interview of Plombières), France helped Piedmont to conquer Milan in 1859. In 1860 a spontaneous popular movement offered the sovereignty of the Italian central territories to king Vittorio Emanuele II. Moreover, an army of volunteers led by Giuseppe Garibaldi (1.000 "red shirts") invaded Sicily and soon reached Naples. The Southern territory was also absorbed by the new kingdom of Italy.

The new kingdom needed the alliance of a powerful State to annex the remaining territories of Venice and Rome. Prussia followed its own unification process, and consequently supported the Italian aspirations. As a result of the Austrian defeat in the battle of Sadowa against Prussia (1866), Italy received Venice. Similarly Rome, protected by the French troops, adhered to Italy after the battle of Sedan (1870), which meant a new triumph of Prussia, the fall of Napoleon III and the subsequent withdrawal of the imperial army from the capital of the new Italian State.



Silvio Capisanti, *Bettino Ricasoli presenta il plebiscito di annessione della Toscana*, c. 1860. Museo Nazionale del Risorgimento, Torino
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

German unification. Germany was also divided into a number of independent territories. Here Austria and Prussia were the two poles of unification. Nevertheless, Prussia proved to be more dynamic in economic and military terms. Here also a monarch -Wilhelm I- appointed a capable prime minister able to lead the process: *kanzler* Otto von Bismarck. Bismarck needed two wars to bring about a unified Germany.

Firstly, as a result of the Austrian defeat in the battle of Sadowa (1866), Austria would be excluded from the unification process. Prussian victory also implied the constitution of a North German Confederation and the annexation of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Next step would be the defeat of France, whose emperor Napoleon III feared the birth of a powerful German State under the rule of Prussia. The pretext of the Franco-Prussian war was the question of the Spanish succession. Queen Isabella II fled the country after a revolution in 1869, and Prussia had offered prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen as a candidate to the throne. He was rejected by France, which had a candidate of its own. The publication of the Ems telegram meant the war and a new Prussian victory in Sedan (1870). France surrendered, a new Republic was proclaimed in France, and Paris was occupied by the German troops. On January 1871, in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles, the Second German Empire or *Reich* was proclaimed, with the king of Prussia as its first emperor (*Kaiser*). Formerly French Alsace and Lorraine were annexed to Germany, and so were the Southern German territories (Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg).

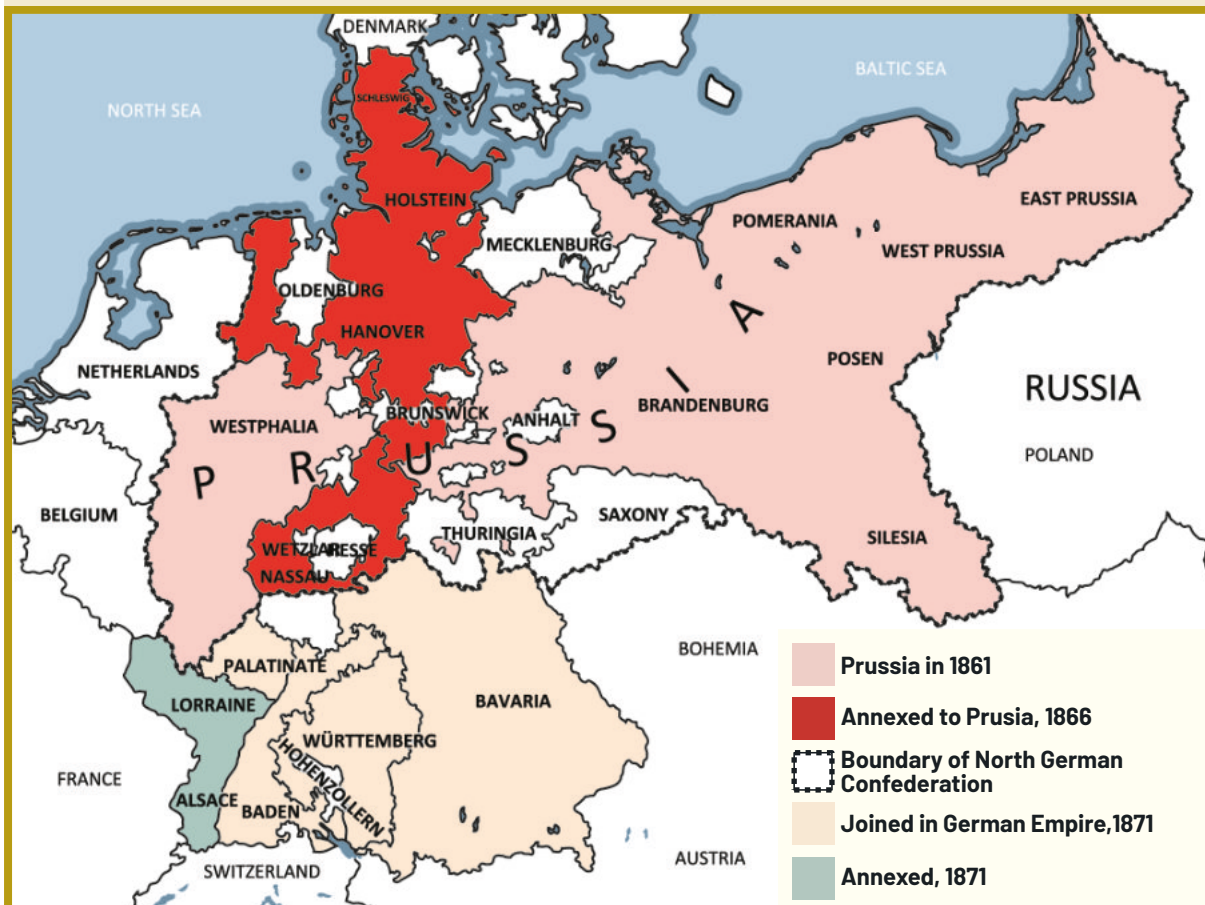


Otto von Bismarck with pickelhaube
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

VI. Liberalism and Nationalism

The creation of two new States in Europe meant the end of the balance of power created after the end of the Napoleonic Empire in continental Europe. Above all the foundation of a powerful Germany gave rise to a new period of German political, industrial, economic and cultural ascendancy in Europe. The diplomatic ability of Bismarck after the unification preserved this position without serious opposition; things would change with a new Kaiser on the throne.

Unification of Germany 1859-1870



Summary**LIBERALISM AND NATIONALISM****a. Liberalism.**

- Liberal ideas from the enlightened thought of the 18th century expanded in continental Europe during the 19th century.
- Liberal States with Constitutions that:
 - stressed freedom and division of powers,
 - admitted a limited participation of people,
 - abolished feudal limitations to production and distribution,
 - guaranteed the right to property.

b. Nationalism.

- At the beginning of the 19th century, together with Liberalism, Nationalism became a powerful political force.
- The conservative system of Alliances and Congresses created to maintain absolutist regimes as a means to keep stability in Europe did not work
- In the Europe of the Restoration, there were national communities such as Polish, Magyars, Finnish, or even Italians and Germans, divided into different States that belonged to imperial States: Russia, Austria, The Ottoman Empire. The supreme aspiration of those national communities was to constitute a political system free from imperial subjugation or external interference.

c. The revolutions of 1820s.

- In 1821 the Greeks rebelled against the Ottoman Empire; supported by Russia, France and Great Britain. Independence in 1827.

d. The revolutions of 1830s

- French rebelled against King Charles X and installed a constitutional monarchy (king Louis Philip of Orleans).
- Belgians rebelled against the rule of The Netherlands.
- The Polish were repressed by the Tsarist army.
- Liberal rebellions in both Italy and in Germany did not succeed.

e. The revolutions of 1848.

- The revolutionary movements pursue the establishment of democracies based on the principles of universal suffrage, popular sovereignty and certain economic and social rights.
- French II Republic and a new Constitution with the right to work and the freedom of strike.
- Czechs, Italians and Hungarians rebelled but the imperial troops crushed them.
- A German attempt at unification and liberalism failed again.

THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY AND GERMANY

a. Italian unification

- Nationalism, Liberalism and certain democracy were the pillars of a new Italian State (1859-1860).
- Only the Kingdom of Sardinia-Piedmont had the economic and political dynamism to fulfil the nationalist objective of unification.
- French Empire of Napoleon III helped Piedmont against Austria.
- King Vittorio Emanuele II and Giuseppe Garibaldi and the 1000 "red shirts") unified North and South.
- Venice joined Italy (1866) after the Austrian defeat by Prussia in the battle of Sadowa.
- Rome adhered to Italy after the triumph of Prussia in battle of Sedan (1870), and the fall of Napoleon III.

b. German unification

- Germany was also divided into a number of independent territories. Here Austria and Prussia were the two poles of unification.
- Prussia was more dynamic in economic, military and political terms.
- Wilhelm I and his Prime Minister Bismarck made a unified Germany possible after two wars.
- The Austrian defeat in the battle of Sadowa (1866).
- The defeat of France in Sedan (1870).
- On January 1871, in the Hall of Mirrors of Versailles, the Second German Empire or Reich was proclaimed with the king of Prussia as its first emperor (Kaiser).
- French Alsace and Lorraine and the Southern states Bavaria, Baden, Württemberg, were annexed to Germany.

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions.
Use your own words

- Cavour
- Vittorio Emanuele II
- Sadowa
- Plombières
- Bismarck
- Sedan

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: CREATING AN OPINION TEXT

Do you think that nationalism is nowadays a powerful stimulus for the different countries and peoples? In that case, should it be so? Choose an example to illustrate your opinion and use the concepts and characteristics of nationalism learned above. Try to use your own words where possible. Each student will be responsible for a part of the writing and might have to read and explain it aloud in class.

UNIT 1. Revolutions

VII. The Industrial Revolution

The term “industrial revolution” implies a vast transformation of the economy and society that began in Britain in the 18th c. and spread throughout Europe and other areas of the world during the following centuries. It refers to the process of transformation of agricultural societies into industrial societies. In this process, the multiplication of production based on new technologies supported a growing population, allowed the urbanization of society and expanded European political power.

1. Factors of the industrial revolution

a) Population growth. During the pre-industrial time, population increase was limited by the growth of agricultural productivity. Population was constrained by the limit of the available food: beyond that limit, subsistence mortality appeared. The size of the population is important for the creation of an industrial market: the fall in price of the different products, and subsequently the fall in the cost of living is only possible when the market has reached a size enough to absorb a growing supply. Thus, economic development is limited by population growth, and this is impossible without an increasing agricultural production.

b) Agricultural revolution. Technological innovations were used to obtain the multiplication of food production: new machines, new crops. Certain authors underline the importance of the efficiency of distribution through better integrated markets and an international trade system that ensured food supplies.

c) Trade and communications. During the 17th and 18th centuries, Great Britain developed a profitable international trade system that constituted the basis for an early accumulation of capital. British trade capital was easily invested in new technologies and industries. On the other hand, Great Britain was an integrated market at the end of the 18th c., since domestic customs and barriers had disappeared. Goods and services circulated freely, thanks to an efficient communications network –channels and roads.

2. New industries, sources of energy and organizational methods

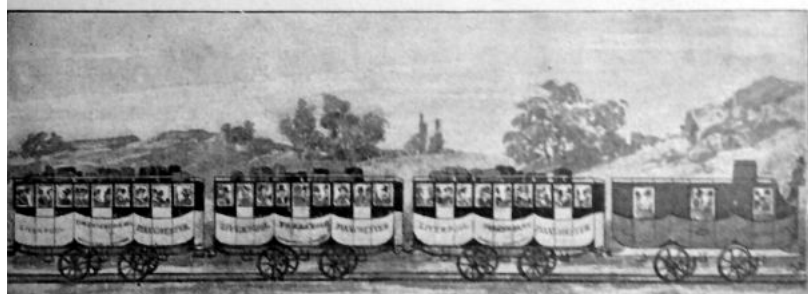
The invention of the steam engine in 1765 by James Watt was the most important technological innovation and the energy basis of the first industrial revolution. Steam engines used coal to boil water and to create steam, which powers different machines for multiple purposes through a piston that turned a wheel. Textile industry and communications (trains, ships) used extensively the new engine, which resulted in greater productivity and faster means of transport.

VII. The Industrial Revolution

Cotton industry. A strong cotton demand favoured the inventions that mechanized the cotton textile industry (spinning and weaving). In 1733 John Kay invented the flying shuttle, which speeded up the weaving process. This stimulated the demand for thread¹, which favoured mechanical weaving: in 1785 Cartwright invented a power loom. The advantage of all these inventions lies on the fact that the price of the manufacture is cheaper when the productivity and production are greater.

Iron and steel. Cheaper iron and steel was produced thanks to technological progress, above all better and bigger blast furnaces and a more powerful and cheaper coal -coke. Coke was used by Abraham Darby for the first time in 1709. In 1794 Henry Cort invented a new method of making better iron, more resistant and free from impurities, called "puddling". Afterwards, in 1856, Bessemer invented a converter that transformed iron into steel in a furnace. Iron and steel became the main component of the new structures of buildings and means of transport.

Means of transport. George Stephenson invented the first steam-powered locomotive in 1815. The first railway was built in 1825 between Stockton and Darlington in England, and the first passenger railways connected Manchester and Liverpool in 1829. The capacity of trains and steamships to carry rapidly bigger and heavier cargoes lowered the costs of transportation. The quick development of new transportation structures, above all railroads, supported the demand of iron and steel. European railroad networks expanded during the 19th c., connecting distant regions and favouring market integration.



First passenger railway 1830 (Liverpool-Manchester). Print, 1910
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

The factory. The key method of production in the industrial revolution was the factory. The factory system is different from the pre-industrial organization, firstly because it implies a tightened control of the workers by the manager. Work discipline and rhythm is imposed by the machine and the needs of production, not any longer by seasons, weather or the sun. Secondly, workers are mere wage earners that sell their work and depend on the entrepreneurs. Machinery becomes so expensive that a factory can be created only after a substantial accumulation of capital.

1. In 1765 the spinning Jenny of James Hargreaves could work eight times faster; the Water Frame of Richard Arkwright used water power for spinning purposes in 1768. Samuel Crompton was even quicker with his Spinning Mule in 1779, since it was adapted for steam power: it could produce a hundred times more than a manual spinning wheel.

3. The second industrial revolution. Industrial capitalism

Energy. After 1870 new sources of energy appeared, replacing those of the first industrial revolution. Electricity from hydroelectric plants was used for all kind of applications: communications (telephone, invented by Graham Bell, telegraph by Marconi), public and private lighting (electric bulb created by Edison), transport (trams). Oil began to be used for the new internal combustion engine, a creation of Diesel and the basis for the car industry.

New industries. Chemical (explosives, fertilizers, artificial fibres, etc.), electric (General Electric, AEG, Siemens, Philips), food (canning).

Mass production. The factory production system evolved towards an unprecedented division of labour: unskilled workers made only a small part of the final product. The result was the improvement of speed and productivity. Henry Ford introduced the assembly line to automobile production in 1913, which allowed him to produce millions of cheap cars (half of the world production).

Corporations. New entrepreneurial organizations emerged: the corporation became the most common form of business organization in industrial societies. The capital of a corporation is divided into shares or stocks. Investors receive dividends in proportion to their shares, although their responsibility is limited to their investment. The objective of the corporation is to attract capital from different sources, enough to make business possible.

Some big businesses tried to eliminate competition through the creation of monopolies or associations of enterprises. They could control industry through vertical concentration: a single corporation or a group of enterprises dominates the production process. For instance, the Standard Oil Company of John D. Rockefeller controlled drilling, processing, refining, marketing and distribution of oil in the USA. Competition could also be eliminated through horizontal concentration, the cooperation of different companies of the same business: the cartel. Cartels fixed prices and production.



Ford assembly line, 1913
[Wikimedia Commons](#)



John D. Rockefeller walking on the street
with John D. Rockefeller, Jr., 1915
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

4. Social transformations

Industrialization changed the social patterns and the models of social organization. Before the industrial revolution society was mainly rural, agriculture was the main source of wealth and employed most of labour force. Ancient regime's society was based on the power of the privileged classes, which enjoyed a special legal status and were at the same time the largest landowners.

VII. The Industrial Revolution

Industrialization created new social classes and gave the economic power to a new group of bourgeois (entrepreneurs, businessmen, bankers, etc.). The bourgeois morality and expectations, based on the accumulation of wealth, substituted those of the old aristocracy, based on honour and the acquired rights of birth. On the other hand, the multiplication of production implied the enlargement of wealth, which became accessible for an increasing middle class. Middle classes became very influential in the bourgeois society, since they constituted a large market; they were also considered as a social reference.



William Powell Frith, *Poverty and Wealth*, 1888
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

On the other hand, a new working class emerged. Workers depended on the wages earned at the factory and were subjected to the discipline imposed by the production and the entrepreneur. Since the application of the principles of economic liberalism implied freedom of salary and labour without intervention of the State, there were no limits for child work or labour exploitation (too many working hours, poor wages, no social protection for unemployment, retirement or sickness).

5. The organization of the workers

a) The beginnings

The first associations of workers, created in Great Britain, sought limited working hours and the improvement of salaries and labour conditions. At the beginning these aspirations were seen reluctantly by the governments as a distortion of the free market, and declared illegal. Afterwards, the recognition of the right of association allowed workers to create the first trade unions in order to improve their social and economic conditions.

Next step was to add political demands to socio-economic questions. The first worker movement asking for political rights was chartism. In a document called *People's Charter*, written in 1838, chartists asked the British House of Commons for universal suffrage and a more flexible electoral system to facilitate the presence of worker representatives at the Parliament. Other expressions of social thought had a more comprehensive approach. Utopian Socialists wanted to found a new society on the basis of the eradication of all inequalities. Robert Owen or Charles Fourier built communities where production and work were organized out of any competitive capitalist objective, stressing education and cooperation.

The failure of the first attempts to transform capitalist society led to new approaches: Anarchism and Marxism.

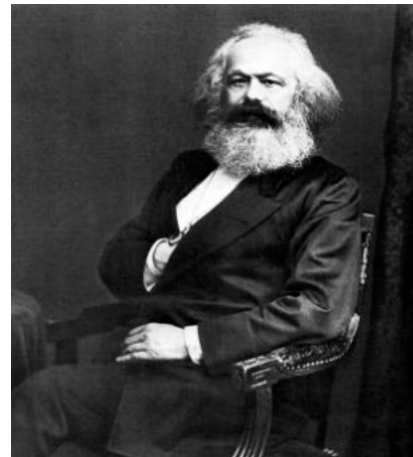
b) Marxism

Karl Marx assessed in his work *Capital* the inequalities of the European society of the 19th century, and concluded that capitalism created two antagonistic classes, the workers or the proletariat, who were exploited by the bourgeoisie and had but their work to sell, and the capitalists, who

VII. The Industrial Revolution

owned all means of production (industries, capital) and consequently the industrial production. Exploitation is benefit based on the difference between the prize of a product and the wage paid to the worker who made it.

The political, economic and social framework of the liberal State constituted for Marx the main support of the capitalist class. The proletariat needed to realize its conditions of exploitation and to react against them. In the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) Marx and Engels predicted that the structure of capitalism led inevitably to its own destruction. When the situation of the workers were intolerable, the socialist revolution would take place spontaneously, and then the proletariat would control the State in order to abolish private property and all the repressive structure of capitalism –the dictatorship of the proletariat. Once attained the objective of destruction of the bourgeois society, the State would disappear and communist society would take place: a society without classes, State or inequalities.



Karl Marx
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Manifesto of the Communist Party (K. Marx, Friedrich Engels, 1848)

A spectre is haunting Europe – the spectre of communism. All the powers of old Europe have entered into a holy alliance to exorcise this spectre: Pope and Tsar, Metternich and Guizot, French Radicals and German police-spies.

Where is the party in opposition that has not been decried as communistic by its opponents in power? Where is the opposition that has not hurled back the branding reproach of communism, against the more advanced opposition parties, as well as against its reactionary adversaries? (...)

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended, either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes.

In the earlier epochs of history, we find almost everywhere a complicated arrangement of society into various orders, a manifold gradation of social rank. In ancient Rome we have patricians, knights, plebeians, slaves; in the Middle Ages, feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes, again, subordinate gradations.

The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones.

VII. The Industrial Revolution

Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinct feature: it has simplified class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other — Bourgeoisie and Proletariat. (...)

But with the development of industry, the proletariat not only increases in number; it becomes concentrated in greater masses, its strength grows, and it feels that strength more. The various interests and conditions of life within the ranks of the proletariat are more and more equalised, in proportion as machinery obliterates all distinctions of labour, and nearly everywhere reduces wages to the same low level. The growing competition among the bourgeois, and the resulting commercial crises, make the wages of the workers ever more fluctuating. The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious...

(...) Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of Modern Industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product.

c) Anarchism

Mikhail Bakunin focuses his analysis on the nature of individual freedom, which is only possible in the context of a complete lack of coercion or authority. Anarchism rejects the State as a repressive instrument, and industrialization and private property as agents of inequality. Since an anarchist organization is just a worker movement, it does not accept the participation in politics through the creation of a political party in order to improve the situation of the workers. Bakunin envisages a society without State or classes, based on a system of independent communities where the property will be collective.

Nevertheless, the nature of anarchism itself implies different views and developments depending on the thinker and the particular experience. Actually, some anarchists rejected violence as a means to reach social and political objectives (anarcho-syndicalism), although another group accepted the idea of using terrorist activities to destabilize all established authority.

SUMMARY**The Industrial Revolution**

The term refers to a vast transformation of the economy and society that began in Britain in the 18th c. and spread throughout Europe and other areas during the following centuries.

Economy: agricultural societies become industrial societies;
growth of production based on new technologies.

Society: growing population;
urbanization;
expanded European political power.

a) Factors of the industrial revolution

1. **Population growth** made possible by increasing agricultural production, and necessary for the creation of an industrial market.
2. **Agricultural revolution:** technological innovations and better integrated Markets.
3. **Trade and communications development,** so goods and services could circulate freely.

b) New industries, sources of energy and organizational methods

- **The steam engine** in 1765 by James Watt was the most important technological innovation; used extensively it meant greater productivity and faster means of transport.
- **Cotton textile industry:** the flying shuttle and the power loom increased productivity and production and made manufacture cheaper.
- **Cheaper iron and steel** became the main component of the new structures of buildings and means of transport, Thanks to new blast furnaces, Coke, and "puddling".
- **The first steam-powered locomotive** invented in 1815.
- The capacity of trains and steamships to carry rapidly bigger and heavier cargoes lowered the costs of transportation.
- **European railroad networks expanded** during the 19th c., connecting distant regions and favouring market integration.
- **The factory was the key** method of production in the industrial revolution
- **Workers become mere wage earners** that sell their work.
- **Capital** accumulation is needed to create factories because machinery is expensive.

c) The second industrial revolution. Industrial capitalism

- After 1870 new sources of energy appeared: electricity and oil.
- Diesel created the new internal combustion engine.
- New industries appeared: Chemical industry (explosives, fertilizers, artificial fibres, etc.), electric industry (General Electric, AEG, Siemens, Philips), food industry (canning), car industry.
- The factory system developed a high division of labour (the assembly line); the result was Mass production.
- The corporation became the most common form of business organization.
- The capital of a corporation is divided into shares or stocks to attract capital from different sources, enough to make business possible.
- Monopoles or associations of enterprises or cartels control competition and fix prices.

d) Social transformations

- Industrialization created new social classes and gave the economic power to a new group of bourgeois (entrepreneurs, businessmen, bankers, etc.).
- The bourgeois morality and expectations, based on the accumulation of wealth, substituted those of the old aristocracy, based on honour and the acquired rights of birth.
- The multiplication of production made a certain wealth accessible for an increasing middle class.
- Middle classes became very influential since they constituted most of the market, and a large part of the electorate, and were considered a social reference.
- A new working class emerged there were no limits for child work or labour exploitation.
- The first associations of workers, created in Great Britain, sought limited working hours and the improvement of salaries and labour conditions.
- The recognition of the right of association allowed workers to create the first trade unions.
- The first worker movement asking for political rights was *Chartism* (*People's Charter*, written in 1838). They asked the British House of Commons for universal suffrage and a more flexible electoral system.
- Utopian Socialists wanted to found a new society on the basis of the eradication of all inequalities.
- The failure of the first attempts to transform capitalist society led to new approaches.

1. Marxism.

- A political and economic doctrine assessed by Karl Marx in his work *Capital*: Capitalism as way of production created two antagonistic classes, the capitalists, who owned all means of production (industries, capital), and the workers or proletariat, who only had work to sell and were exploited by the first were exploited because the product of their work was sold at a higher price than its work value. The profit from that was kept by the capitalist and part was accumulated into capital to create more factories and part went to luxury consumption.
- In the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) Marx and Engels predicted that the structure of capitalism led inevitably to its own destruction.
- The socialist revolution would take place spontaneously, and then the proletariat would control the State and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat as a first step for a communist society without classes, State or inequalities.

2. Anarchism.

- Anarchism itself implies different views: Mikhail Bakunin, its main thinker, considers that individual freedom is only possible in the context of a complete lack of coercion or authority.
- Anarchism rejects the State as a repressive instrument, and industrialization and private property as agents of inequality.
- Bakunin considers a society without State or classes, based on a system of independent communities where the property will be collective.
- Anarchism does not accept the participation in politics through the creation of a political party
- Some anarchist currents defend direct action through terrorism, others rejected violence.

**Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions.
Use your own words**

- J. Watt
- Puddling
- Factory
- Corporation
- Chartism
- Communist society
- Cartwright
- G. Stevenson
- Fordism
- Cartel
- Dictatorship of the proletariat
- M. Bakunin

UNIT 2

Imperialism, World War I and the Interwar Period



UNIT 2. Imperialism, World War I and the Interwar Period

I. Imperialism

Colonial expansion existed before the 19th c., since early examples of Modern empires can be found in Portugal or Spain. Nevertheless, Industrialization and Nationalism constituted the distinctive basis for a new kind of colonialism. Industrialization provided the metropolis with a stimulus for the conquest of new markets. Nationalism added a component of extreme competition between European States.

1. Reasons for Imperialism

a) Economic factors. Colonies were sources of raw materials that supplied European industries and provided them with cheap work force. Colonial territories were also consumers of manufactured products coming from the metropolis. Thus, colonies were dependent on the economy of the imperial power: for example, India was before the 19th c. the world first producer of cotton textiles. English colonial rule reoriented the Indian cotton production to serve the needs of the British textile industry. English powerful factories produced cheap textiles that were exported to India and ruined local manufactures.

On the other hand, dominated lands were considered as the natural destination for European migrants. Imperial authorities encouraged migration flows of workers from the metropolis, since national demographic growth was too high for the increasing expansion of industry. Most of them went to the United States, but also to settler colonies in Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

b) Political factors. Even if the conquest of new territories was not economically beneficial, it was justified on the grounds of political needs. The French colonial empire was built as a means to compensate the marginal position of France in political and diplomatic terms since the defeat of Sedan in 1870.

National tensions between European States implied new confrontations overseas. For example, France (expanding towards the Indian Ocean from Algeria) and Great Britain (trying to control the river Nile to protect its protectorate on Egypt) collided in Sudan. The conflict almost finished in an open war at Fashoda. In Asia, British progress in India led to the Russian interest to go further towards the South, and to the French expansion in Indochina.

c) Technological factors. Industrialization made possible the massive production of more powerful weapons. European armies easily imposed an imperial control because of their superiority in war technology (rifled guns, iron ships). New communication and transportation tools (telegraph, steamboats, railways) helped to organize efficiently the imperial control and administration.

I. Imperialism

d) Cultural justifications. Missionaries favoured the introduction of new ideas and the imperial culture. On the other hand, some of the political thinkers of the metropolis developed the idea of a civilizing mission to justify imperial activities. That implied two assumptions: firstly, the superiority of the white race ("We [the British] are the finest race in the world" said Cecil Rhodes in 1877) and secondly the need to bring civilization to backward regions. The consequence was the unavoidable subjection to the imperial rule of these regions and peoples.

2. The scramble for Africa

Before 1875, there were few European colonies in Africa: Portuguese in Angola and Mozambique, French in Northern Algeria (a settler colony), and Dutch and British in South Africa. After 1875, nationalist rivalries gave an impulse to the colonization of the entire continent except Ethiopia and Liberia.

Explorers and missionaries came first and provided reliable geographical information for European merchants about coasts and rivers. Businesses attracted soon the protection of the State and the establishment of a colony or a protectorate. A good example is provided by the Belgian Congo: king Leopold II created the Congo Free State in order to facilitate business and trade from Europe, while he actually amassed a fortune on rubber plantations run by forced labour –one of the most terrible examples of colonial brutality and abuse that resulted in millions deaths.



Leopold II, king of the Belgians
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

These meddling American missionaries! These blabbing Belgian-born traitor officials! –those tiresome parrots are always talking, always telling. They have told how for twenty years I have ruled the Congo State, not as a trustee of the Powers, an agent, a subordinate, a foreman, but as a sovereign-sovereign over a fruitful domain four times as large as the German Empire –sovereign absolute, irresponsible, above all law; trampling the Berlin-made Congo charter under foot; barring out all foreign traders but myself; restricting commerce to myself, through concessionaires who are my creatures and confederates; seizing and holding the State as my personal property, the whole of its vast revenues as my private "swag" –mine, solely mine-claiming and holding its millions of people as my private property, my serfs, my slaves; their labor mine, with or without wage; the food they raise not their property but mine; the rubber, the ivory and the other riches of the land mine –mine solely-and gathered for me by the men, the women and the little children under compulsion of lash and bullet, fire, starvation, mutilation and the halter... They have revealed these and yet other details which shame should have kept them silent about, since they were exposures of a king, a sacred personage and immune from reproach, by right of his election and appointment to his great office by God himself...

Mark Twain
King Leopold's Soliloquy
1905

I. Imperialism



Berlin Conference, 1884
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

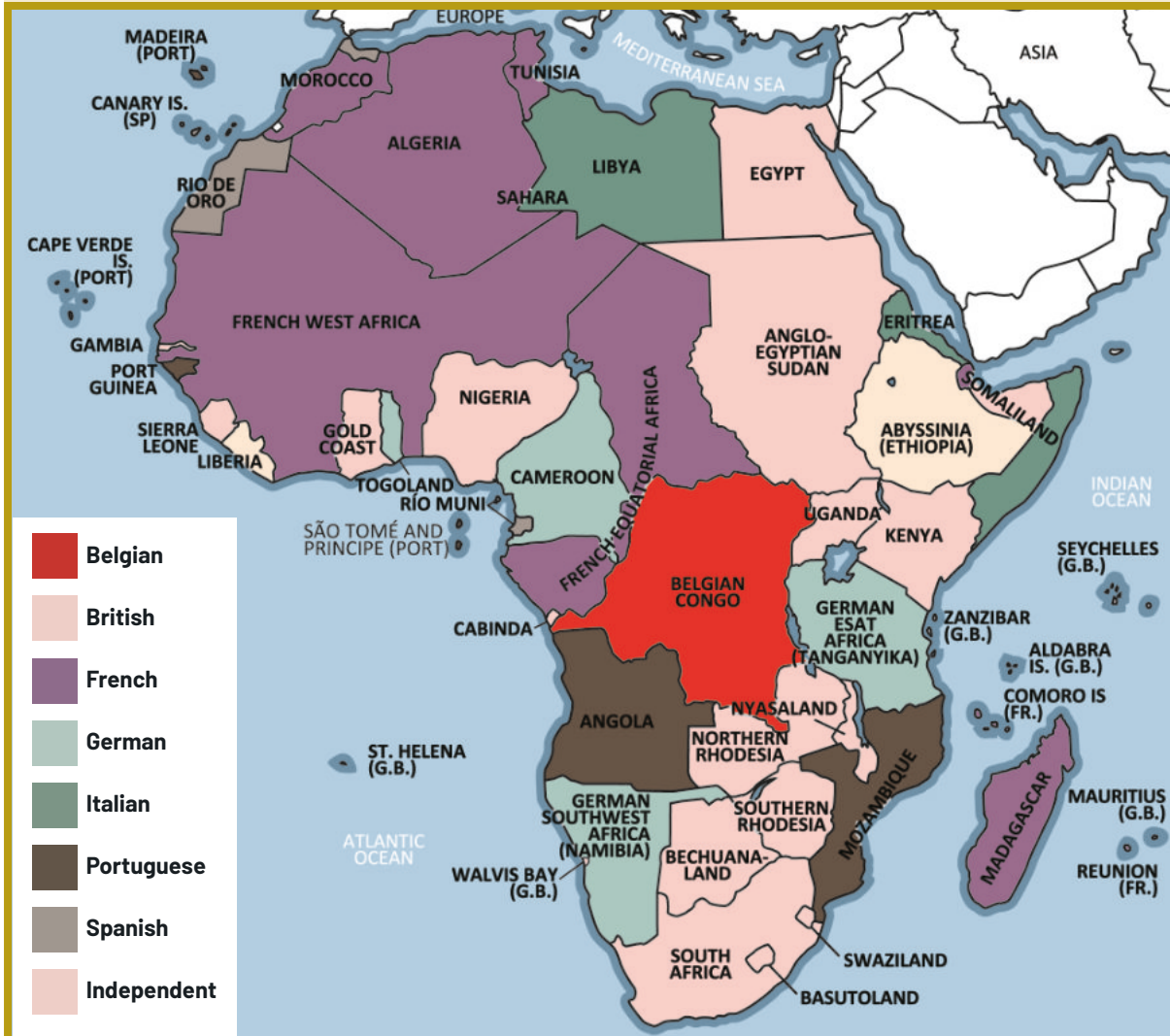
The establishment of Belgian and British colonies alarmed European States. In order to solve peacefully potential disputes, German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck called them to the Berlin Conference (1884-1885). European States agreed on the principle that colonial occupation was allowed after the effective occupation of a territory and notification to the other countries. Following these rules, in 25 years European modern armies had colonized the continent.

The most important colonial powers were Great Britain and France. Coming from Algeria, France controlled Tunisia and (after a treaty with Spain in 1912) Morocco, and expanded towards the South and East trying to reach the Indian Ocean and the French island of Madagascar, just to be stopped by the British at Fashoda. France consolidated instead French West Africa and French Equatorial Africa, apart from French Somaliland (Djibouti) in the strategic strait of Aden.

Other countries came late or were unable or not interested to expand their imperial sphere of influence: Germany acquired Togo, Cameroon, Southwest Africa and Tanganyika. Portugal penetrated further into the continent from its positions in Angola and Mozambique. Italy occupied Libya, Eritrea and part of Somaliland before the Great War, and Spain dominated Equatorial Guinea (Rio Muni), Rio de Oro (Western Sahara and Ifni), and North Morocco.

I. Imperialism

European colonies in Africa before the Great War



I. Imperialism

3. The British Empire. Colonies in Asia

India was considered “the Pearl of the Crown”, the objective of imperial ambitions since the 16th c. British direct imperial rule was imposed in 1858, after a period of activity of the East India Company. A viceroy was appointed to represent royal authority and an English bureaucracy administered Indian affairs. As a matter of fact, the peak of the British imperial power was reached when Queen Victoria was proclaimed empress of India in 1876.



Portrait of Queen Victoria, empress of India, 1886
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

A communication network and a defensive strategy were developed around the most important of British colonies. On the one hand, a direct link to India was secured through a chain of British possessions. In the harbours of Gibraltar, Malta, or Cyprus the British fleet was able to find supplies in its way to India. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 enabled steamships to travel from Britain to India in two weeks; consequently it attracted British attention to Egypt. In 1882 the British army occupied the country to protect the economic interests of the metropolis after a popular rebellion.

The need to protect the source of all Egyptian wealth, the river Nile, led to imperial expansion towards Lake Victoria: Sudan, Uganda and Kenya became territories under the influence of the British. At the same time, an expansive movement tried to connect Cape to Cairo: from Cape Colony, the British absorbed Rhodesia (the name of Zambia and Zimbabwe, coming from Cecil Rhodes, a diamond mining businessman). Other important British possessions in Africa were Nigeria and British Somaliland.

the British Empire



Vocabulary strategies

Find words in the texts that derive from the words given in this exercise.

For example: Empire ----> Answer: Imperialism.

Then check the meanings of the words you have found. Among them, there is one "false friend". Which word is this?

- a. Industry ----> _____
- b. Colony ----> _____
- c. Possess ----> _____
- d. Expand ----> _____

Give a brief definition for each of the following terms. Then make a sentence including each term:

- a. Empire
- b. Metropolis
- c. Colony / Protectorate

Cloze texts. Fill in the gaps in each of these texts:

THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Britain _____ a great empire in the 19th century. The "pearl of the crown" was India which had a _____ to represent royal authority. Britain had a chain of _____ such as Gibraltar, Malta or Cyprus, where the British could find supplies in its way to India.

Egypt _____ by the British army in 1882 and later Sudan, Uganda and Kenya also became _____ territories. Rhodesia, Nigeria and British Somaliland _____ other important possessions in Africa.

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/institutions

- Fashoda
- Leopold II
- Protectorate
- Settlement colonies
- Cecil Rhodes
- Berlin Conference
- Exploitation colonies
- Dominion

Readings

Heart of Darkness, written by Joseph Conrad and published in 1902, depicts the moral decadence associated to colonial domination.

Discuss the meaning of these phrases from the book and then agree on an answer to the questions:

They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force— nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weariness of others.

...[a kind of note] was very simple, and at the end of that moving appeal to every altruistic sentiment it blazed at you, luminous and terrifying, like a flash of lightning in a serene sky: 'Exterminate all the brutes'!

1. What do you think about the idea of Kurtz concerning universal civilization?
2. Where in Africa the novel is placed? Which was the metropolis of this territory?
3. Which is the feeling of the protagonist with respect to the natives?
4. Why did he go to Africa?
5. How would you define Kurtz? Why does he enjoy such an influence on natives and Europeans? Do you think there was some kind of evolution in his thoughts? What he did become?
6. Discuss your conclusions

RESEARCH/WATCHING & LISTENING & COMMENT

Choose a film such as *A passage to India* (1984, directed by David Lean, based on the novel of E. M. Forster, written in 1924). It describes the social and political atmosphere of India under the British rule in the twenties, as well as the differences and separation between the British ruling class and native Indians. If you choose to watch the film, you might compare what they watch with what they have learned in this unit and present your conclusions to the rest of the groups.

RESEARCH/READING & COMMENT

Take a look at several online newspapers about a sub-Saharan country, paying attention to its social, political and economic situation. Assess together whether or not that situation is due to a previous colonial exploitation. Present your conclusions to the rest of the groups.

Useful links:

<https://www.theguardian.com/international>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/>

<https://www.independent.co.uk/>

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/>

THINK CRITICALLY

During the air strikes against governmental military positions in Libya (March 2011), Colonel Ghaddafi declared that the intervention was a colonial crusade, just a colonial interference of France, Great Britain and the USA caused by their interest on Libyan oil. Define the group's position/s on the subject. Explain your reasons.

Maps

1. Identify the colonial territories of Great Britain, France, Portugal, Germany, Italy Belgium and Spain.



2. Identify the colonial territories of Great Britain.



UNIT 2. Imperialism, World War I and the Interwar Period

II. The First World War and the peace settlement

1. Rivalries and antagonistic alliances

Chancellor Otto von Bismarck had kept the European balance of powers under German supremacy thanks to his diplomatic ability to isolate France, to maintain a peaceful relationship with Great Britain, and to avoid a conflict with Russia. The ambitions of the new emperor or kaiser, William II, led to the end of this international political balance.

A system of hostile alliances was consolidated. On the one hand, the Central Powers: Germany tightened its traditional links with Austria-Hungary, and Italy (as a reaction against the French occupation of Tunisia, one of its colonial objectives) joined them in the Triple Alliance. On the other hand, the Allies were France, Russia (looking for support against Austria and Germany) and Great Britain: they formed the Triple Entente.

The reasons for this alignment can be summarized as follows:

- Tension between France and Germany. A nationalist desire of revenge existed since the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian war and the loss of Alsace and Lorraine.
- Naval and economic rivalry between Germany and Great Britain. During the second industrial revolution, Germany had surpassed the British industrial capacity. Both countries started a naval race, looking for a strategic maritime superiority.
- Territorial tension between Russia and Austria-Hungary. The Balkan region had been a point of friction, since both empires sought to enlarge their territory against a weak Ottoman empire (the "sick man" of Europe). Instead, they supported the different new Balkan States in order to strengthen their own position. Russia supported a pan-Slavic movement to unite all Slav peoples against Austria. Actually, the tsar (or Russian emperor) backed up Serb dreams to create a Great Serbia, which was a direct threat for Austria-Hungary.

2. Crisis leading to the war

a) Moroccan crisis. Germany wanted to expand its empire in one of the remaining areas free from colonial domination. Germans did not seek to build a great colonial empire during the government of Bismarck, but now the new emperor wanted Germany to have "a place in the sun". Kaiser William II



Kaiser William II, 1913. Portrait by E. Bieber
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

II. The First World War and the peace settlement

declared in 1905 that he would help the sultan to maintain Moroccan independence; after the Conference of Algeiras and the subsequent Spanish and French occupation of Morocco, in 1911 a gunboat was sent to Agadir to put a pressure on France. Finally, thanks to the British support to France, Germany recognized the French protectorate in Morocco in exchange of a territory close to Cameroon.

b) Balkan crisis. Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed to the Austrian empire in 1908. This was in direct opposition to the Serbian will to create a Great Serbia and to integrate all Serbs in one single State. Russia did not move forward because Germany made it clear that it would back Austria, but the tsar decided not to let the Germans repeat this humiliation.

On the other hand, two Balkan wars had resulted in an increasing tension between the alliances. In 1912 the Balkan League (Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Montenegro) attacked and defeated the Ottoman Empire, consequently enlarging the territories of the allied countries. But Bulgaria was not satisfied with the Serbian acquisition of Macedonia, and started a new war in 1913 against its former allies and Turkey; the potential intervention of Austria to support Bulgaria meant the enmity of Rumania. The subsequent peace limited the territorial gains of Bulgaria, and the creation of the new State of Albania (backed by Austria) frustrated the Serbian access to the Adriatic Sea.

The Balkan Wars (1912-1913)



II. The First World War and the peace settlement

3. The War

The First World War broke out precisely in the Balkans. On June 28, 1914, the heir of Austria-Hungary, archduke Francis Ferdinand, was assassinated in Sarajevo (the Bosnian capital) by a Serbian-Bosnian terrorist, Gavrilo Princip. Immediately Austria blamed Serbia, sent an ultimatum, and finally declared the war. In support of Serbia, Russia ordered a general mobilization against Austria and Germany, and consequently Germany declared war on Russia (August 1) and France (August 3), and invaded Belgium in a strategic movement towards Paris. Formally in response to the violation of the Belgian neutrality, Great Britain declared war on Germany. The Great War had begun.



French 87th Regiment, cote 34, Verdun, 1916

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

The Western front. Germany followed the Schlieffen Plan, according to which the German army needed a quick defeat of France in order to move afterwards against Russia (the problems of deployment and transportation of the tsarist troops were well known). As a matter of fact the Schlieffen Plan failed, and the German invasion was stopped 32 km from Paris at the battle of the Marne (September). A double line of trenches was dug from the English Channel to Switzerland. Both the German and Allied armies tried to advance, breaking the line of trenches through massive attacks concentrated in specific points, without success. One of these attempts was the battle of Verdun, due to a German initiative; another one was the battle of the Somme, an Anglo-French attack. Both failed in 1916 with thousands casualties.

Italy entered the war against the Central Powers in 1915 (as it was eager to obtain Libya from the Ottomans and because of the Allies promise of Austrian territories), but its army did not represent a significant advantage to the Allies.

The Eastern Front. Russia invaded Eastern Prussia, but was soon defeated by the German army, which helped Austria to reject tsarist troops; actually Germany penetrated deeply into Russian territory, while Serbia and Romania were occupied. The Ottoman Empire entered the war on August on the side of Germany.

The collapse of the Russian army fuelled the opposition to the tsarist government, and eventually finished in the October revolution. The first decision of the Bolshevik government was to get Russia out of the war. The treaty of Brest-Litovsk recognized in 1918 the independence of Finland and renounced to Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The Great War was the first “total war” in History. All citizens, not only soldiers, were affected, since it was necessary to mobilize all national forces against the enemy. States

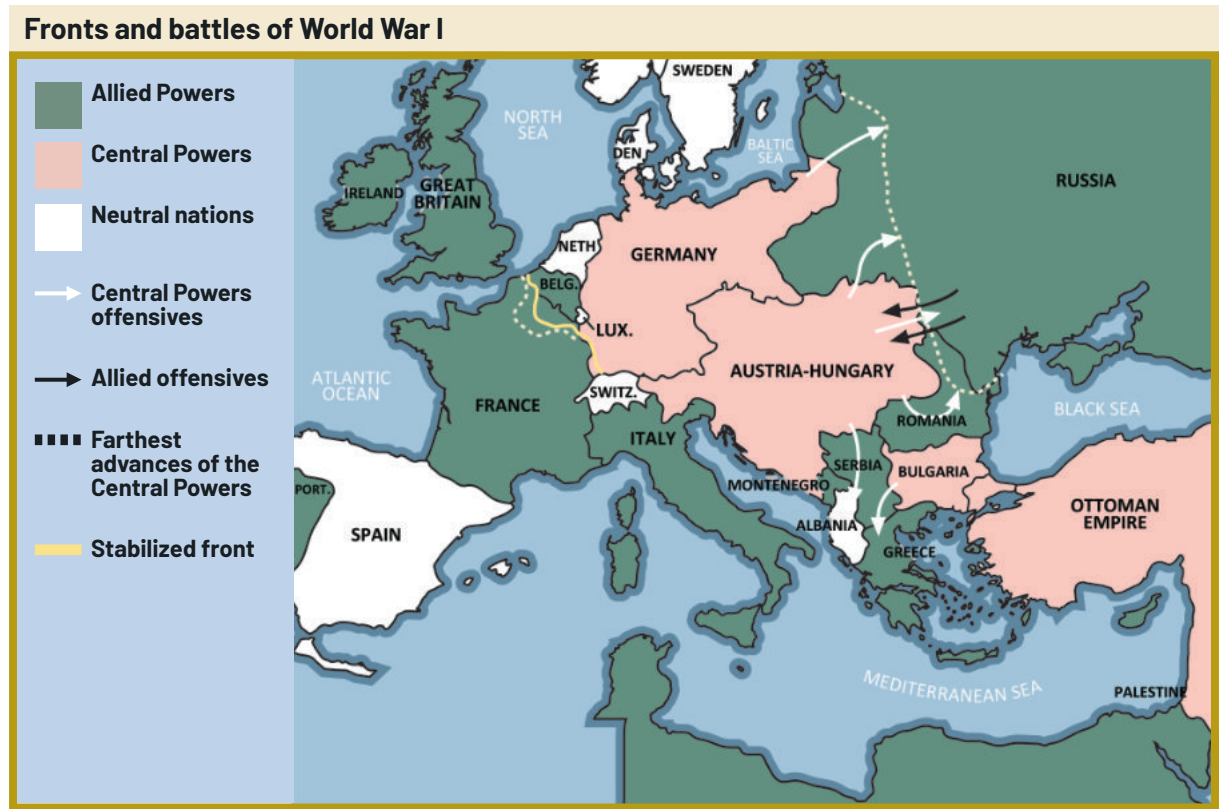


Marines in a trench, c. 1918

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

II. The First World War and the peace settlement

centralized and strengthened their power in order to organize resources effectively. Millions of people were sent to the battle lines after mass conscription. Governments, even the traditionally liberal ones, suspended free market economy and planned industrial and agriculture productions, intervened prices and wages and controlled means of transport. Women left their traditional place at home for new jobs at the “home front”.



4. The end of the war and the peace settlement

The American entry into the war on the Allies side was decisive for the defeat of the Central Powers. The USA came into war because their strong links with the British. The naval blockade on Great Britain led to unrestricted attacks of German submarines against any suspected ship. Since the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915 (a British passenger boat with more than one hundred American citizens,) American public opinion turned in favour of the war, which was declared against Germany in April 1917.

American industrial power and fresh troops were able to break all war fronts against the Central Powers. Bulgaria, the Ottomans, and Austria capitulated, and finally Germany accepted an armistice on 11 November 1918.

In 1919, the victorious powers met in Paris to settle the terms of the peace. Defeated nations were not allowed to participate, so that the Peace Treaties were decided mainly by the USA, France and Great Britain. The influence of American president Woodrow Wilson was crucial to apply the principles of his Fourteen Points, a speech addressed to the American Congress in which self-determination for emergent nations was encouraged. That meant the creation or recognition of new States from the disintegration of Austria-Hungary and Russia: Czechoslovakia, Poland,

II. The First World War and the peace settlement

Finland, and the three Baltic Republics. Serbia was rewarded with the creation of the new kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Yugoslavia).

On the other hand, Wilson was a strong supporter of an organization able to solve international disputes and to maintain world peace. The League of Nations was created in order to ensure a lasting peace through collective security (military or economic sanctions imposed collectively to an aggressor State). A General Assembly, composed by representatives of all member States, would decide on general matters, and a Council dominated by the four victorious powers (Great Britain, France, Japan and Italy) as permanent members plus a number of non-permanent members, would solve the international disputes. As a matter of fact, the League failed to fulfil its objectives. The American Congress refused to ratify the Covenant of the League, so the USA did not participate in the international organization; moreover, Germany and the USSR were only allowed to join in 1926 and 1934.



President Woodrow Wilson, 1912
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

1. (...) diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
2. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas (...)
3. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations consenting to the peace and associating themselves for its maintenance.
4. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest points consistent with domestic safety.
8. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted, in order that peace may once more be made secure in the interest of all.
10. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity of autonomous development.
11. Romania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea (...)
12. The Turkish portions of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development (...)
13. An independent Polish state should be erected (...)
14. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

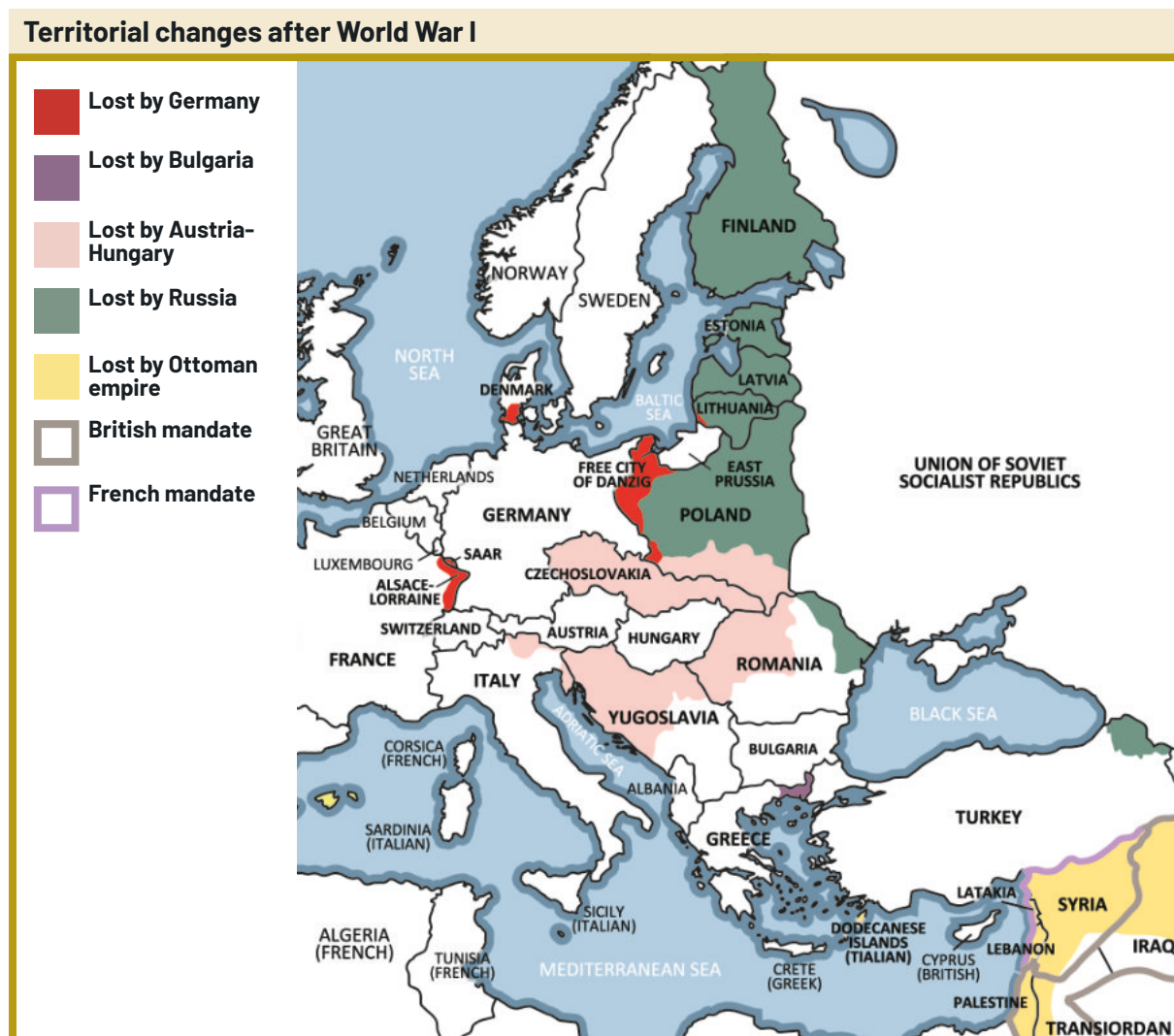
*Fourteen Points Speech by W. Wilson
 January 1918*

II. The First World War and the peace settlement

Five separated treaties were signed with different countries, although the most important of them was the Treaty of Versailles with Germany:

- Germany and Austria were considered responsible for the war, and compelled to pay huge war reparations;
- German army was reduced to 100.000 soldiers;
- German colonies were shared between Great Britain and France;
- the border region of Rhineland was demilitarized;
- Alsace and Lorraine were returned to France;
- part of the territory of Prussia (the Polish corridor) was ceded to Poland.

All this was considered a dictated peace in Germany, and created a strong feeling of revenge.



1. Cooperative Work (I): groups of 3/4 students

- Summarize how 1st World War broke out.
- Use the text: *The First World War and the Peace Settlement*.
- Follow these points:
 1. The ambitions of the new emperor, William II
 2. Hostile alliances
 3. Rivalry between France and Germany
 4. Rivalry between Germany and Great Britain
 5. Tension between Russia and Austria-Hungary
 6. Moroccan crisis
 7. Balkan crisis

2. Cooperative Work (II) (groups of 6/7 students)

- Each group will choose a leader and a secretary
- Half of the groups will represent the Allies and half the Central Powers.
- Each group will have a meeting to make clear how the war develops
- The groups will recreate the movements in the courtyard
- Half of the groups will recreate the movements of the Allies and the Central Powers in the Eastern front. The leaders will give instructions to the group as to how, when and where to they have to go, the secretary will record everything, and, after editing it in group, send a copy to the teacher
- Half of the groups will recreate the movements of the Allies and the Central Powers in the western front. The leaders will give instructions to the group as to how, when and where to they have to go, the secretary will record everything, and, after editing it in group, send a copy to the teacher.

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/ institutions

- William II
- Triple Entente
- Gavrilo Princip
- Battle of the Marne
- Battle of the Somme
- "Total War"
- The Fourteen Points
- League of Nations
- Triple Alliance
- Conference of Algeciras
- The Schlieffen Plan
- Battle of Verdun
- Brest-Litovsk
- Woodrow Wilson
- Treaty of Versailles

SIMULATION GAME & DEBATING (class divided into groups of 3/4 students)

You will assume that you are part of the negotiations that took place in Paris after the armistice of November 1918.

A group of 4-5 students will defend a common political position of a particular role based on information taken from the Internet, such as:

- Woodrow Wilson
- David Lloyd George
- Georges Clemenceau
- Vittorio Orlando
- Makino Nobuaki

Every group will prepare its own position with respect to a future set of treaties to be signed with the defeated countries:

- War reparations
- A clause of war responsibility
- Territorial boundaries
- Prevention of future wars

All groups will discuss their positions under the control of an elected speaker in joint session.

RESEARCH/READING & COMMENT

Fall of Giants (2010) is a novel written by Ken Follett that describes the life of different persons in Great Britain, Russia, Germany and the United States before the Great War, and how the war affected them. Should you choose to read it, agree on a group conclusion/s and present it to the rest of the class.

RESEARCH/WATCHING & LISTENING & COMMENT

The red baron (2008), directed by Nikolai Müllerschön, tells the life of Manfred von Richthofen ("the Red Baron"), a legendary German pilot during WWI. It shows the beginning of the air forces and what constituted a particular sense of war honour in the framework of contemporary war. Should you choose to watch it, agree in a group conclusion/s and present it to the rest of the class

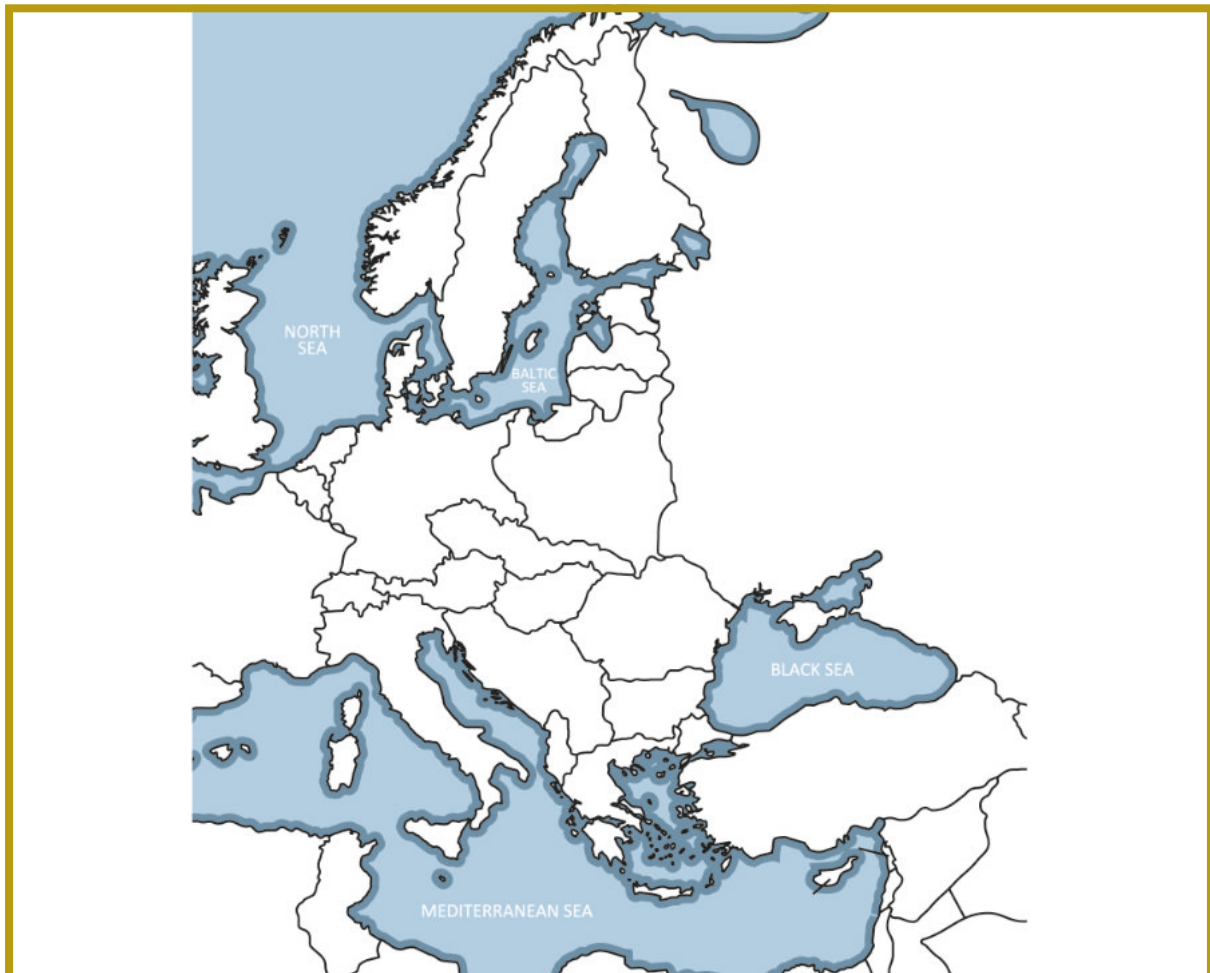
Maps**1. The Balkan Wars (1812-1813)**

Write the names of the different Balkan countries and their territorial gains or losses during the two wars.



2. Territorial changes after World War I

Identify the new States recognized after WWI and the territorial losses and gains of the different countries.



Think critically

The work of William Faulkner *A Fable* (1954) is based on real events that happened in 1917, when the war stopped in a particular area of the trenches line. Troops of both sides disobeyed the orders given and refused to fight. Consider in group the specific context of WWI and try to understand the position of the soldiers and the military objectives, present you conclusions to the rest of the class.

UNIT 2. Imperialism, World War I and the Interwar Period

III. The interwar period

1. The Russian Revolution

a) The Russian Empire under Nicholas II

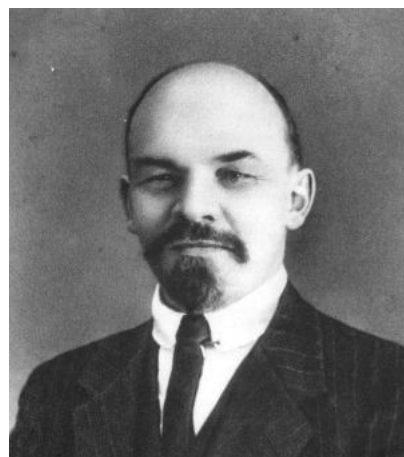
Before the Revolution, in political terms Russia was an autocracy. In other words, the tsar was an absolute monarch, chosen by God to rule the country without the participation of the people. There was no Constitution, division of powers or representative Parliament. The power of the tsar was based on the army and the Orthodox Church. As a result, the stability of the Empire depended on military success in frequent wars.

As a matter of fact, Russia was a vast and backward country, populated mostly by peasants, since agriculture was the main economic activity. The land was in the hands of a reduced number of aristocrats and large landowners. Nevertheless, a weak industrialization process had begun around the largest cities such as Moscow or St Petersburg, thanks to foreign investments.

Although political parties were forbidden, at the end of the XIXth century the Russian Social Democratic Party was created under the ideological influence of Karl Marx. At the beginning of the following century this illegal party was divided into two branches: the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks (led by Vladimir Ilich Lenin). Both wanted to see radical changes in Russia, but the Bolsheviks believed that transformation could come only through a violent revolution. The political thought of Lenin was based on the assumption that only a strong and organized workers' party would be able to bring about the revolution by leading the proletariat. Marx thought that the revolution would start by a spontaneous movement of the proletariat.



Tsar Nicholas II, 1909
[Wikimedia Commons](#)



Vladimir Ilich Lenin, 1919
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

b) The 1905 Revolution

Both Russia and Japan were eager to expand their areas of influence over Korea and Manchuria in China. In the subsequent Russo-Japanese war in 1904, a decadent Russia was defeated by a newly industrialized country. Military defeat immediately meant troubles at home. A peaceful demonstration of workers led by a priest took place before the Winter Palace in St Petersburg, the residence of the tsar, in order to demand better social conditions. But the government

III. The interwar period

ordered the imperial guard to charge against the people, and many were killed. This fact brought discredit to the tsar and favoured new riots; even the sailors of the battleship *Potemkin* in Odessa mutinied.

Nevertheless, the tsar agreed to create a Parliament or Duma under a new Constitution, although the ultimate political and legislative decisions remained in the imperial hands. In fact the Duma was in a permanent conflict with the tsar, who dismissed the assembly twice before the First World War.



Seizing of Winter Palace in Petrograd by bolshevik Baltic Sailors, 1917. From October, by Grigori Aleksándrov and Serguéi Eisenstein, 1929
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

c) The February Revolution

Again, the war was seen as an opportunity to unify all Russians against the common enemy –now Germany and Austria-Hungary. But the lack of efficiency of the Russian army made it impossible to obtain a quick victory, and consequently thousands of soldiers were lost on the battlefields. Moreover, the diversion of resources to the war and the raising military expenses led to a severe economic crisis and food shortages. The tsar lost almost all popular and political support, and people began to organize the soviets, or assemblies composed by soldiers and peasants. The soviets constituted a powerful opposition and a parallel government.

Finally, the tsar abdicated in February 1917. A provisional government was formed, presided by prince Lvov, who was replaced by the socialist Alexander Kerensky. Since he refused to finish the war the position of his government was more and more challenged by the soviets, above all the Petrograd Soviet. The soviets were strongly influenced by the Bolshevik party, small but very active on the troubled Russian political arena. Bolsheviks created also a militia, the armed branch of the party –the Red Guard. In fact, Kerensky was trapped between the radicalism of the Bolsheviks and the counter-revolutionary movements. One of these was the attempted *coup d'état* of general Kornilov, that pushed Kerensky to ask the Bolsheviks for support.



Adolf Joffe and Leon Trotsky in Brest-Litovsk, november 1917
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

III. The interwar period

It was the moment for the Bolsheviks. Lenin came back to Petrograd from exile, and Trotsky organised the imminent revolution. In October, the Red Guard occupied the key positions of the capital, and the battleship *Aurora* threatened the Winter Palace, now the governmental see. Bolsheviks seized power and Lenin declared the Soviet Republic.

We have already said above, and shall show more fully later, that the theory of Marx and Engels of the inevitability of a violent revolution refers to the bourgeois state. The latter cannot be superseded by the proletarian state (the dictatorship of the proletariat) through the process of 'withering away', but, as a general rule, only through a violent revolution. The panegyric Engels sang in its honor, and which fully corresponds to Marx's repeated statements (see the concluding passages of *The Poverty of Philosophy* and the *Communist Manifesto*, with their proud and open proclamation of the inevitability of a violent revolution; see what Marx wrote nearly 30 years later, in criticizing the Gotha Programme of 1875, when he mercilessly castigated the opportunist character of that programme) — this panegyric is by no means a mere "impulse", a mere declamation or a polemical sally. The necessity of systematically imbuing the masses with this and precisely this view of violent revolution lies at the root of the entire theory of Marx and Engels. The betrayal of their theory by the now prevailing social-chauvinist and Kautskyite trends expresses itself strikingly in both these trends ignoring such propaganda and agitation.

The supersession of the bourgeois state by the proletarian state is impossible without a violent revolution. The abolition of the proletarian state, i.e., of the state in general, is impossible except through the process of "withering away".

A detailed and concrete elaboration of these views was given by Marx and Engels when they studied each particular revolutionary situation, when they analyzed the lessons of the experience of each particular revolution. We shall now pass to this, undoubtedly the most important, part of their theory.

Vladimir Ilich Lenin: The State and the Revolution, 1917

d) Communism and civil war

The first measure of the new government was to make peace with the Central Powers. The treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed on March 1918: Russia renounced to Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Poland, Belarus and Ukraine. Most of these countries became independent, except Ukraine, that was one of the founder States of the future Soviet Union.

The Bolshevik government abolished private property and controlled banks, industries and communications. The land was also nationalised and confiscated from large landowners and the Church —the so-called *War Communism*. Nevertheless, these measures worsened the chaotic economic situation of the country after the war. Agriculture and industrial productions fell dangerously, and the new communist State was constantly threatened by strikes and revolts.

III. The interwar period

Then Lenin began to eliminate political opposition. In July 1918 the former tsar and his family were executed in Ekaterimburg.

A civil war broke out in Russia between Reds (Communists) and Whites (counter-revolutionaries) supported by the former allies of tsarist Russia. The efficient organisation of the Red Army (the successor of the Red Guard) under the guidelines of Trotsky gave the victory to the Communists in 1920. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or USSR, a consolidated Communist Federation, was born in 1922.

After the victory in the civil war, Lenin implemented the *New Economic Policy*, a compromise between pure Communism and market economy. Large industries, banks and communications were still controlled by the State, but small private industries and agriculture exploitations were tolerated. The NEP was the basis for the economic reconstruction of the country.

2. Stalinism

a) The dictatorship

After the death of Lenin in 1924, a struggle for power in the USSR started between the followers of a permanent revolution to expand all over the world (Trotsky) and Josif Stalin, who wished to consolidate the revolution in the new communist State (*socialism in one country*). Stalin concentrated all power and eliminated political rivals, including Trotsky, who left the country and was assassinated in Mexico on his orders. Then began the dictatorship of the communist party (instead of the dictatorship of the proletariat) led by the iron will of Stalin –“man of steel”.

Opposition within the communist party was eradicated. After the economic problems of the collectivization and planned programs, in 1934 a sector of the party wanted to revise the decisions taken by Stalin. The dictator reacted with a purge of political opponents: 11 million people were sent to forced work camps in Siberia or executed.



Stalin, 1941
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

b) Economic policy

The Soviet regime gave priority to economic development based on collectivization of agriculture and an urgent industrialization. The main objective of Stalin was to make the USSR a great industrial power, with an emphasis on heavy industry, since iron, steel and machinery were the basis of a strong military power. The Five-Year Plans were aimed to transform the economic basis of the country, through the implementation of defined (and often unrealistic) production targets. The decision and execution of the Plans were centralized in a State institution, the Gosplan.

Agriculture was collectivized. The State reorganized completely Soviet agriculture through the expropriation of lands (a movement against the *kulaks*, little landowners accused of raising the

III. The interwar period

price of grains) and the creation of State-owned cooperatives managed by the peasants themselves (*kolkhoz*), or by an appointed official (*sovkhos*). Production was also decided by the central government, and delivered to the State at a low price; access to private market was severely limited. The result of the collectivization effort was a complete disaster: planned quotas were never met, since State prices were not incentive enough for peasants. The richest areas of the country, such as Ukraine, saw their production of grain fall drastically. Scarcity of agriculture products led to famine levels, and 3-4 million people died of starvation. 10 million peasants migrated to cities, although the State tried to stop them by issuing internal passports in 1932.

By 1939, the objectives of development of Stalin were strategically successful, but emphasis on heavy industry meant the scarcity of consumer goods (clothes, housing), the introduction of rationing and the sacrifice of people.

REMARKS ON A SUMMARY OF THE MANUAL OF THE HISTORY OF THE U.S.S.R. 8 August 1934

The group presided over by Vanag has not accomplished its task and has not even understood it.

...The authors of the summary appear to have forgotten that the Russian revolutionaries are recognized to be the continuators and pupils of Marxist thought. In the summary, the ravages of the first imperialist war and the role of Tsarism in this war are not shown up, in as much as the dependence of Russian Tsarism on Russian capitalism and the dependence of Russian capitalism on Western Europe, is not brought out. Also the importance of the October Revolution which liberated Russia from her semi-colonial situation remains undefined.

The summary does not acknowledge the existence of a European political crisis on the brink of a world war, which will be brought about by the decadence of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarianism. Also the importance of the Soviets from the viewpoint of universal history, as the representatives of the proletarian democracy, organs of the liberation of workers and peasants from capitalism remains undefined.

The summary does not acknowledge the inner party struggle of the Communist Party of Russia, nor the struggle against Trotskyism and petty-bourgeois counter-revolution. And thus to continue. We judge a radical revision of this summary to be indispensable in the light of the propositions stated above, and it is necessary also to realise that this necessitates a manual where each word and each concept must be weighed and not just an unclear review which substantiates not more than idle and irresponsible chatter.

...

STALIN - IDANOV - KIROV

(J. V. Stalin: Works, vol. 14, 1978)

1. Important happenings in the Russian revolution

Find images on the net and write some captions as if you were creating revolutionary propaganda

2. A virtual visit to some useful museums might be useful.

<https://www.visitberlin.de/en/deutsch-russisches-museum-berlin-karlshorst>
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-41833406>
https://www.inyourpocket.com/st-petersburg-en/revolutionary-stpetersburg_74870f
<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205091229>
http://russiasgreatwar.org/media/military/women_soldiers.shtml

3. Find images or graphics on the net that match these economic and political statements

- Russia was a vast and backward country, populated mostly by peasants.
- Land belonged to a reduced number of aristocrats and large landowners.
- Weak industrialization had begun in big cities thanks to foreign investment.
- Political parties were forbidden.
- The Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks were illegal political parties.
- Violent revolution or peaceful change? That was the question.

4 The February Revolution. Make an interactive poster:

- The war against Germany and Austria-Hungary.
- severe economic crisis and food shortages.
- The soviets were a parallel government strongly influenced by the Bolshevik party.
- The tsar abdicated in February 1917.
- Bolsheviks created the Red Guard.
- The attempted coup d'état of general Kornilov allowed Bolsheviks to seize power and declare the Soviet Republic

5. Communism and civil war. Look for images on the net that match these sentences and create some interactive poster or leaflet:

- The treaty of Brest-Litovsk, March 1918
- The Bolshevik government abolished private property, nationalised and confiscated the land, and controlled banks, industries and communications.
- Chaotic economic situation
- Elimination of political opposition
- July 1918 the tsar and family were executed in Ekaterimburg.
- Civil war between Reds and Whites
- New Economic Policy

**WITH EXERCISES 4 & 5, A GROUP WORK WILL BE CHOSEN AS THE BEST ONE:
THIS WILL BE THE SCORING RUBRIC:**

- Originality in presentation, 30
- Correctness and accuracy in language and contents, 40
- Communicative ability, 30

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/ institutions

- Bolsheviks
- Soviet
- Kerensky
- Brest-Litovsk
- NEP
- Gosplan
- Sovkhoz
- Mensheviks
- Lenin
- October Revolution
- War Communism
- Trotsky
- Kolkhoz

DEBATING ON A HISTORICAL FIGURE

Stalin transformed the USSR into a superpower. Even nowadays he is considered by many as the saviour of the country, but, actually, Iosif Vissarionovich Dzhugashvili (or Ioseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili, as he was born in Georgia) was one of the merciless dictators of Contemporary history.

The class will split into two groups, they will find and organize materials in order to, one defend, and the other oppose the figure of Stalin and of Stalinism in a class debate. Each group will choose 3 speakers for the debate. A jury of 3 teachers and 2 students from another class will choose the best debating group using an international debate rubric.

Useful links:

<https://libcom.org/library/bolshevism-and-stalinism-paul-mattick>

<https://www.bbc.com/timelines/z8nbcdm>

III. The interwar period

3. The Great Depression**a) The basis**

The twenties were a period of general prosperity in Europe and the USA. Europe had recovered its pre-war industrial levels of production. Nevertheless, there was soon a problem of overproduction. European industrial and agricultural production was added to that of the USA, and as a consequence the amount of stocks increased in certain sectors. Prices of industrial goods and agriculture dropped.



Crowd at New York's American Union Bank, early in the Great Depression
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

In spite of this process of overproduction, the USA enjoyed a stock-exchange boom. Wages, consumption and the value of industrial stocks were high. Enterprises covered their lack of benefits with easily obtained bank loans, since their value remained unchanged. But the stocks were overvalued and speculative movements spread, distracting capitals from productive investments.

b) The crisis of 1929 and its repercussions

On Black Thursday (24 October 1929), thousands of investors in panic sold their stocks on the New York Stock Exchange. Stock prices were reduced to less the value of the paper where they were printed. After the stock-exchange collapse, the banks tried in vain to collect their debts, so that many of them went bankrupt. Financial crisis led immediately to a general and deep economic depression, with rising levels of unemployment and poverty, a decrease of wages and a falling demand. Banks were unable to afford capital payments, and useless queues were formed in front of the closed doors of the financial institutions to recover the deposits and savings of a large amount of people. By 1933, there were 15 million unemployed, and the industrial production had fallen to 50%.



Relief workers at Annerley during the Great Depression, 1938
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

III. The interwar period

After the crash of October, American investors began to withdraw their capital out from Europe. Since European wealth was based on American loans, the crisis expanded to European countries, first of all to Germany and Austria, whose financial systems collapsed. There were 4 million German unemployed by the end of 1930. The result was a decrease of business and industrial activities, unemployment and inflation. Finally, the rest of the world, which depended on the developed economies (colonies, raw materials exporters) suffered also the impact of economic crisis. A system of trade barriers was set up to protect the financial, industrial and commercial interests of formerly linked economies.

c) The New Deal

When Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt won the presidential election of 1932, he initiated a policy of State intervention in the economy. American government invested in large public works (roads, barrages, airports) in order to reduce the number of unemployed. It launched social legislation in order to guarantee minimum wages and social security for pensions and unemployed –the welfare State. The banking system and agriculture prices were also supported. Nevertheless, the recovery of the American economy would not take place but during World War II.



Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Activity for Conversation Sessions

Time: 3 sessions**• First session**

1. The class will be divided into 2 groups.
2. They have to compare the Great Crash with the present crisis we are experiencing.

• Second session

3. When they finish the comparison they will suggest concrete solutions for our crisis, offering at least two concrete measures.

• Third session

4. Oral exposition of the comparison and the solutions.

Guidelines to mark the differences:

1. Causes
2. Repercussions
3. The New Deal/new solutions

Evaluation:

1. Group work 20%
2. Comprehensibility of contents 40%
3. Oral quality: correctness and communication ability 40%

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/ institutions

- Black Thursday
- Roosevelt
- New Deal
- Welfare State

Readings

John Steinbeck wrote *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1939. The novel tells the story of a family of Oklahoma that migrates to California in search of better living conditions. It describes the situation of poverty, unemployment and lack of expectations in the USA during the Great Depression.

Should you choose to read it, agree on a group conclusion/s and present it to the rest of the class.

Think critically

Nowadays our economic system is not completely based on a free market: the State intervenes in economic matters in order to correct its distortions. Taking into account that one of the reasons for the 1929 crash was the lack of an effective public control on the economic activity, why in your opinion the current crisis has taken place?

Mark the differences with the 1929 crack in the causes and the solutions taken by Governments in both cases. Present in no more than 7 minutes, your group conclusions to the rest of the class; all members of the group have to take part in the presentation.

III. The interwar period

4. Fascism and Nazism

a) Ideology

During the 20s and 30s, most of the European countries changed their democratic systems for dictatorial regimes. They were characterized by an extreme control of all citizens, in order to get a massive identification with the regime and its objectives. Devotion to nation-state and the leader who guides it was the sacred duty for individuals. In order to understand the very nature of these authoritarian regimes, it is necessary to differentiate between an activist and a limited style of politics:

-First, within a limited style of politics, the community is based on the law, which is the expression of the *general will*, and at the same time a limitation for governmental action. But within an activist style of politics, there is not such a limit, because the guiding principle is ideology. Ideology is the new expression of the community. Nevertheless, ideology does not provide effective restrictions for the abuse of power.

-Second, there is a clear distinction between the private and public aspects of life in a limited style of politics, which is not existent in a dictatorship. Individual citizens are granted democratic rights and freedoms, but in a dictatorial State an individual is of no importance; what matters is the collective fate of the nation.

The Fascist doctrine is based on the following principles:

1. Supremacy of the State. Individuals are blindly identified with the principles and goals of the State and follow them without discussion or opposition. The nation prevails over the person, and controls all aspects of individual life through different organizations (youth, women, workers).
2. Ruling minority. Equality of men is a fallacy of the "cancer of democracy". Only a selected ruling class is prepared to lead the country, the elite of the one party (Fascist or Nazi). Women are reduced to their role as mothers and homemakers (the three Nazi "k": *kinder, küche, kirche*, or children, kitchen, church).
3. The leader. The totalitarian State is ruled by a charismatic leader (*Duce, Führer, Caudillo*), an exceptional man who determines the fate of the country and its citizens. His decisions are infallible laws, since *he is always right (Mussolini ha sempre ragione)*.
4. Mistrust in reason. Fanaticism and irrational obedience to the dictates of the leader implies a rejection of the traditional legacy of rational thought (since classical Greece, the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, reason has been used as an instrument to understand Nature and human behaviour).
5. Exacerbated nationalism. National community is exalted as the most perfect expression of the people. A great nation needs a geographical space large enough to provide the community with the means of its greatness. A superior people have the right to conquer a vital space (*Lebensraum*), against inferior nations (e.g. Germans/Slavs).
6. Anti-communism. The Marxist conception of a society divided into two antagonistic classes and the need for a revolution of the proletariat is rejected. Order and social unity to

III. The interwar period

strengthen the nation are the prerequisites for a powerful State. In fact, Fascism is a “third way” between capitalism and communism –National-Socialism.

7. Anti-liberalism. There is no need for the democratic balance of powers, or for the democratic game of the political parties, because it implies a limitation of the totalitarian State.

...If we admit the significance of blood, that is to say, if we recognize the race as the fundamental element on which all life is based, we shall have to apply to the individual the logical consequences of this principle. In general I must estimate the worth of nations differently, on the basis of the different races from which they spring, and I must also differentiate in estimating the worth of the individual within his own race. The principle, that one people is not the same as another, applies also to the individual members of a national community (...).

The first consequence of this fact is comparatively simple. It demands that those elements within the folk-community which show the best racial qualities ought to be encouraged more than the others and especially they should be encouraged to increase and multiply.

(...) A philosophy of life which repudiates the democratic principle of the rule of the masses and aims at giving this world to the best people – that is, to the highest quality of mankind – must also apply that same aristocratic postulate to the individuals within the folk-community. It must take care that the positions of leadership and highest influence are given to the best men. Hence it is not based on the idea of the majority, but on that of personality.

(...) Thus at the origin of the material civilization which flourishes today we always see individual persons (...). The broad masses do not invent, nor does the majority organize or think; but always and in every case the individual man, the person (...). Such men of brains are selected mainly, as I have already said, through the hard struggle for existence itself. In this struggle there are many who break down and collapse and thereby show that they are not called by Destiny to fill the highest positions; and only very few are left who can be classed among the elect (...). The destructive workings of Judaism in different parts of the national body can be ascribed fundamentally to the persistent Jewish efforts at undermining the importance of personality among the nations that are their hosts and, in place of personality, substituting the domination of the masses. The constructive principle of Aryan humanity is thus displaced by the destructive principle of the Jews. (...).

Marxism represents the most striking phase of the Jewish endeavour to eliminate the dominant significance of personality in every sphere of human life and replace it by the numerical power of the masses. In politics the parliamentary form of government is the expression of this effort. We can observe the fatal effects of it everywhere...

Hitler: Mein Kampf, vol. 2, Ch. 4

III. The interwar period

b) Italian Fascism

Benito Mussolini was the founder of the *Fascio di Combattimento* in 1919, a precedent of the Fascist party. A paramilitary militia (the black shirts or *squadristi*) was organized as the armed branch of the movement. The Italian social and economic crisis favoured a general climate of confrontation and violence between workers and employers. In such conditions, Fascism attracted conservative adherents and economic supporters to his movement.



March on Rome, 1922
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

During a general strike in August 1922, the black shirts kept all basic services (trains, buses) working; in October, Mussolini announced a march on Rome if they were not given power. Under this pressure, the government decided to declare the state of emergency, but king Vittorio Emanuele III refused. After the resignation of the cabinet, the king appointed Mussolini as new head of government.

Step by step, Mussolini created a dictatorship. After the elections of 1924 (won by the Fascists), the socialist MP Matteotti criticized the Fascist programme and actions, and some days later he was kidnapped and murdered. After that, Mussolini suspended the constitutional civil rights, introduced press censorship, and outlawed non-Fascist political parties. Thus he became the *Duce* (leader).

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In terms of economic policy, State intervention in Fascist Italy organized production through mixed unions of employers and workers under the direction of the State. Investments for public works increased to reduce unemployment. The State also planned agriculture, industrial and general economic development (*battle for wheat, battle for the lira, battle for births*). Emphasis was made on economic self-sufficiency (autarky) and economic growth.

c) German National-Socialism. The Third Reich

Adolf Hitler joined the German Workers' Party at the end of World War I, and soon he became its leader as the National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP or Nazi). The *Storm Troops* or SA were the militia of the Nazi movement. In 1923 the Nazis tried a failed uprising against the Weimar Republic in Munich (the Beer Hall Putsch); Hitler was put into prison, where he wrote *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*), an exposition of Nazi ideology.



Mussolini and Hitler in Munich, 1937
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

The Nazi Party attracted an increasing number of followers and voters at the end of the 20s, due to the deep economic

III. The interwar period

depression and the general feeling of national humiliation identified with the Treaty of Versailles. The payment of war reparations was considered the main responsible of the situation of Germany. Hitler promised to restore national honour inside and outside German borders, full employment and economic growth. The parliamentary system of the Weimar Republic became a symbol of lack of efficiency, and the conservative sectors (including industrialists, aristocrats, and the military) saw Hitler as the saviour of Germany against social chaos and a Marxist revolution.

In January 1933, president von Hindenburg appointed Hitler as chancellor. After the burning of the Reichstag in Berlin, the Nazis blamed the Communists and Hitler declared the state of emergency, suspending constitutional rights. The subsequent Enabling Act authorised the government to rule the country without the participation of the Parliament. This was the beginning of the creation of a totalitarian State. When Hindenburg died in 1934, Hitler added the position of head of State to that of chancellor as *Führer* (leader).

Political parties (except the Nazi party) and trade unions were dissolved; strikes were forbidden. The federal structure of the old Republic was replaced by a centralized State. The administration, the Universities and the judiciary system were purged. A secret police (*Gestapo*) was in charge of the elimination of political dissidents and social minorities. The SA² were replaced in their role of Party elite by the SS (*Schutzstaffel* or "protection echelon"), more structured and loyal to the Führer, under the direction of Himmler. The country was controlled by State and party organizations for all professions and ages (for example, the *HitlerJugend* for the youth).

Jews were persecuted: the Nuremberg Laws of 1935 forbade mixed marriages or relationships between Jews and Aryan Germans; the former were excluded from civil service and professional life, and persecuted in everyday life. During the *Kristallnacht* of 1938 (9-10 November), violent actions against the Jews were undertaken, and as a result synagogues and businesses were burned, and Jews killed or sent to concentration camps. The objective was to create a pure and superior race without Jews. Also other minorities were affected, such as gypsies, gays, etc. During World War II, the "Final solution" implied the systematic extermination of about 6 million Jews (*the shoah*), and 6 more of the considered "asocial people".

On the economic side, unemployment was solved thanks to the intervention of the State through public investments in communications (highways), armament industries, etc. The State, as in the Italian and Soviet cases, planned the agriculture and industrial productions with a view to economic autarky.



Entrance to Auschwitz, German concentration camp: "Arbeit Macht Frei"
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

2. During the "Night of the long knives", the leaders of the SA (Röhm) were arrested and executed.

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/persons/ institutions

- Black shirts
- Matteotti
- *Mein Kampf*
- Beer Hall Putsch
- *Gestapo*
- Nuremberg Laws
- *Shoah*
- Vittorio Emanuele III
- SA
- Hindenburg
- Enabling Act
- SS
- *Kristallnacht*

ASSESSING HISTORICAL- LEGAL TEXTS: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING / GROUPS OF 3/5 STUDENTS**THE RACE QUESTION. UNESCO STATEMENT ISSUED 18 JULY 1950**

1. Scientists have reached general agreements in recognizing that mankind is one: that all men belong to the same species, *Homo sapiens*. It is further generally agreed among scientists that all men are probably derived from the same common stock (...).
2. From the biological standpoint, the species *Homo sapiens* is made up of a number of populations, each one of which differs from the others in the frequency of one or more genes. Such genes, responsible for the hereditary differences between men, are always few when compared to the whole genetic constitution of man and to the vast number of genes common to all human beings regardless of the population to which they belong. This means that the likenesses among men are far greater than their differences (...).
6. National, religious, geographic, linguistic and cultural groups do not necessarily coincide with racial groups: and the cultural traits of such groups have no demonstrated genetic connexion with racial traits. Because serious errors of this kind are habitually committed when the term "race" is used in popular parlance, it would be better when speaking of human races to drop the term "race" altogether and speak of ethnic groups.

- Read the text and the excerpt of *Mein Kampf*.
- Could you use the term "Spanish race" with respect to the inhabitants of our country? Why?

RESEARCH/WATCHING & LISTENING & COMMENT

Valkyrie (2008), played by Tom Cruise and Kenneth Branagh and based on a true story, tells the attempt of colonel Klaus von Stauffenberg and other German military officers to assassinate Hitler during WWII. It shows the existence of resistance movements in Nazi Germany. Should you choose to watch it, widen your research on resistance movements in Nazi Germany, and present your results to the rest of the class.

THINK CRITICALLY: groups of 3/4 students

In *The open society and its enemies*, K. R. Popper makes a distinction between a closed society (totalitarian States) and the open society (democracy), characterised by the systematic use of critical thought. Is it possible to identify our modern European culture with an open society? Are there threats against it?

Present your group conclusion(s) to the rest of the class. No more than 7 minutes, all members must take part in the presentation.

UNIT 3

The Second World War and its Aftermath



UNIT 3. The Second World War and its Aftermath

I. The Second World War

1. Causes of WWII

- a) Revision of the peace settlement after the Great War. Italian, Japanese, and above all German aggressive foreign policy defied the system of international borders established after the Peace of Paris.
- b) Economic crisis. Economic depression and social confrontations favoured the creation of totalitarian States willing to expand their areas of influence.
- c) Formation of two main alliances: on the one hand, Japan, Italy and Germany constituted the Axis. Originally, the Rome-Berlin Axis, renamed Pact of Steel in 1939, became the Tripartite Pact the following year. On the other, the Allied powers: France, Great Britain and the Commonwealth (Australia, Canada); afterwards the USSR and the USA joined the Allies side.

2. Japan, Italy and Germany: the steps towards the war

Japan considered Asia an area of imperial expansion. After the military faction took the power in Tokio, Japan invaded Manchuria, a Chinese province, and created a puppet State called *Manchukuo*. As China and Japan were both members of the League of Nations, the former appealed to the League, but no action against the Japanese aggressor was taken. As a matter of fact, Japan withdrew the League of Nations in 1933 and started the invasion of Northern China. In 1937, the Marco Polo Bridge incident was an excuse to take Beijing. The ineffectiveness of the collective security system within the League of Nations encouraged Italy and Germany to follow a similar aggressive military policy. War against the USA began in 1941, when the Japanese air force attacked Pearl Harbor.

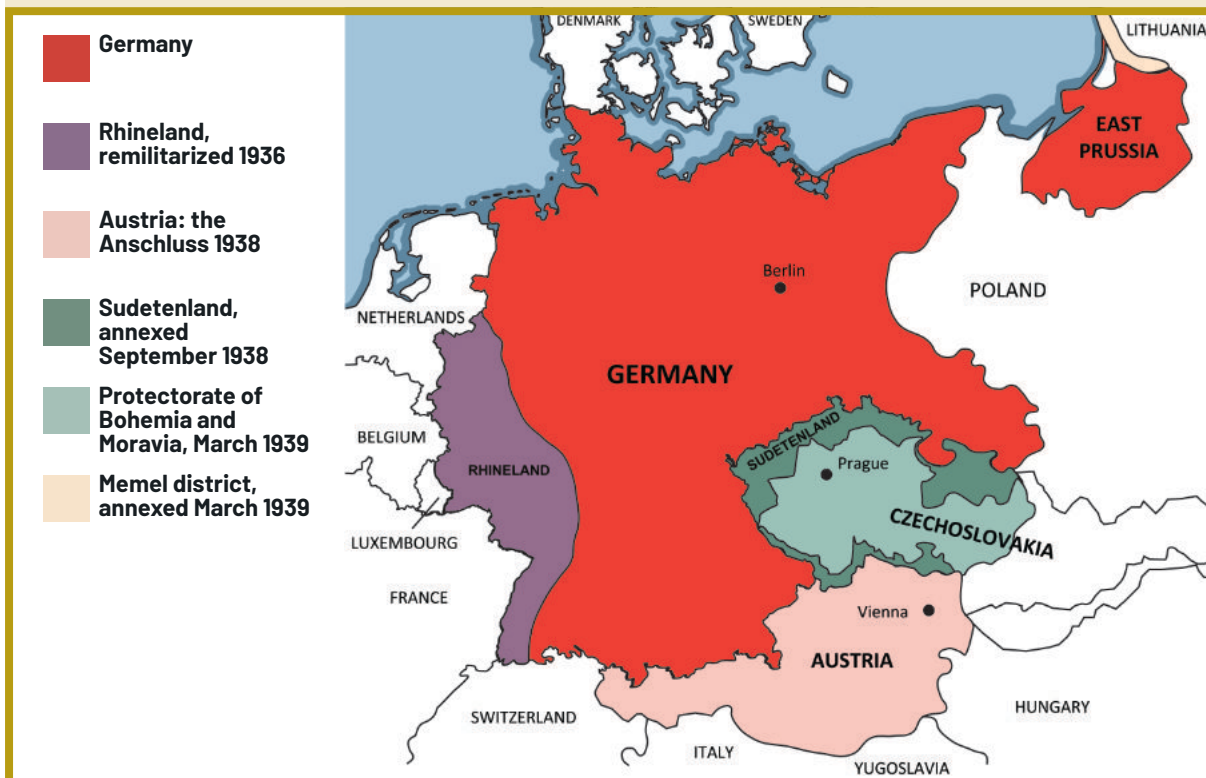
Italy was not treated as a victorious power after the Great War, at the level of France or Great Britain. On the contrary, Italy was disappointed by the creation of Yugoslavia, since this country expected to receive territorial acquisitions in Eastern Europe as a compensation for its war efforts. Mussolini, at the time of the foundation of the Fascist State, promised the creation of a new Roman Empire through military expansion. Therefore, Libya and Ethiopia were conquered by 1936, and Albania in 1939. The conquest of Ethiopia (or Abyssinia), a member of the League of Nations, showed the limits of the system of collective security. The Assembly of the League decided to impose economic sanctions against Italy, but they were abandoned later. Since no punishment for the aggressor followed the invasion of a sovereign State, the League peace system was again discredited.

Hitler's Germany withdrew from the League of Nations in 1933, and started the German rearmament. In 1936 he remilitarized Rhineland, an action taken directly against the Versailles

I. The Second World War

settlement. In 1938 forced the Anschluss or union with Austria. Next step was the annexation of the Sudetenland, a Czech region inhabited by Germans. Surprisingly, the governments of Great Britain and France were willing to avoid the war and did not support Czechoslovakia against Hitler: at the Munich Conference (September 1938), Germany was allowed to annex the region. Hitler also invaded Czechoslovakia, occupied Prague, and created the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

German revisionism under Hitler 1936-1939



The weakness showed by France and Great Britain favoured the signature of the Nazi-Soviet Pact (or Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) in 1939, that divided Eastern Europe into two spheres of influence under Hitler and Stalin. It made possible the Nazi invasion of Poland in September 1939, and the beginning of WWII.

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, 1939

The Government of the German Reich and The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics... have reached the following Agreement:

Article I.

Both High Contracting Parties obligate themselves to desist from any act of violence, any aggressive action, and any attack on each other, either individually or jointly with other Powers.

I. The Second World War

Article II.

Should one of the High Contracting Parties become the object of belligerent action by a third Power, the other High Contracting Party shall in no manner lend its support to this third Power. (...)

Secret Additional Protocol

Article I.

In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement in the areas belonging to the Baltic States (Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), the northern boundary of Lithuania shall represent the boundary of the spheres of influence of Germany and U.S.S.R. In this connection the interest of Lithuania in the Vilna area is recognized by each party.

Article II.

In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish state, the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. shall be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narev, Vistula and San.

The question of whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish States and how such a state should be bounded can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments.

In any event both Governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement.

Article III.

With regard to Southeastern Europe attention is called by the Soviet side to its interest in Bessarabia. The German side declares its complete political disinterestedness in these areas.

Article IV.

This protocol shall be treated by both parties as strictly secret.

Moscow, August 23, 1939

The behaviour of France and Great Britain concerning the aggressive foreign policy of Japan, Italy and Germany was based on a wrong assumption. In the view of the British prime minister Neville Chamberlain, there was a need of "appeasement" with respect to Hitler and Mussolini, because their national claims were based on the unfair treatment received after the WWI. Concessions and satisfaction of nationalist grievances would mean the continuity of peace. On the other hand, it was hoped that this approach would provide France and Britain with time to strengthen their military power against the Fascist regimes. Actually, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy had not limits in their expansive objectives. In sum, the new policy of appeasement meant the end of the system of collective security.

I. The Second World War

Before I come to describe the Agreement which was signed at Munich, I would like to remind the House of two things which I think it very essential not to forget when those terms are being considered. The first is this: We did not go there to decide whether the predominantly German areas in the Sudetenland should be passed over to the German Reich. That had been decided already. Czechoslovakia had accepted the Anglo-French proposals. What we had to consider was the method, the conditions and the time of the transfer of the territory. The second point to remember is that time was one of the essential factors. All the elements were present on the spot for the outbreak of a conflict which might have precipitated the catastrophe. We had populations inflamed to a high degree; we had extremists on both sides ready to work up and provoke incidents; we had considerable quantities of arms which were by no means confined to regularly organised forces. Therefore, it was essential that we should quickly reach a conclusion, so that this painful and difficult operation of transfer might be carried out at the earliest possible moment and concluded as soon as was consistent, with orderly procedure, in order that we might avoid the possibility of something that might have rendered all our attempts at peaceful solution useless.

(...) I would like to say a few words in respect of the various other participants, besides ourselves, in the Munich Agreement. After everything that has been said about the German Chancellor today and in the past, I do feel that the House ought to recognise the difficulty for a man in that position to take back such emphatic declarations as he had already made amidst the enthusiastic cheers of his supporters, and to recognise that in consenting, even though it were only at the last moment, to discuss with the representatives of other Powers those things which he had declared he had already decided once for all, was a real and a substantial contribution on his part. With regard to Signor Mussolini (...). I think that Europe and the world have reason to be grateful to the head of the Italian government for his work in contributing to a peaceful solution.

In my view the strongest force of all, one which grew and took fresh shapes and forms every day war, the force not of any one individual, but was that unmistakable sense of unanimity among the peoples of the world that war must somehow be averted. The peoples of the British Empire were at one with those of Germany, of France and of Italy, and their anxiety, their intense desire for peace, pervaded the whole atmosphere of the conference...

Parliamentary Speech of Neville Chamberlain on the Munich Conference, October 3, 1938

On the other hand, France was sure of the invincibility of the Maginot Line (a system of fortifications along the border, based on a defensive strategy), and erroneously ignored the new mechanized and offensive weapons such as tanks and planes. As a result, the USSR had little confidence in France as a powerful ally against Germany. This fact explained why Stalin chose to reach an agreement with Hitler instead of facing a war against Nazi Germany without an effective support of the Allies.

3. The War

a) Blitzkrieg (1939-1940)

The German invasion of Poland was a quick success. The victory based on the combined action of both air force and tanks (*Panzer divisions*): the so called *blitzkrieg* or "lightning war". In April 1940 the Nazis occupied Denmark and Norway, and afterwards they invaded Belgium in order to attack France. Far from offering a long resistance, the French surrendered in June. That convinced Mussolini to join the German side, and to try to invade Greece and Egypt.

Next objective was Great Britain; nevertheless, in spite of the heavy bombings by the *Luftwaffe* (German air force) on British cities, the Germans were forced to abandon the project to invade Britain, due to the counterattacks of the Royal Air Force.



German troops in Paris, 1940. Allgemeiner Deutscher Nachrichtendienst - Zentralbild
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

b) The attack on the USSR and the USA (1941-1942)

By 1941 German conquests extended from the Atlantic Ocean to the Balkans. Italian troops were not able to defeat the British in Egypt and to occupy Greece, so that Hitler helped Mussolini and sent the *Afrika Korps* of Rommel to Northern Africa. The German army successfully invaded Greece. Then Hitler decided to launch operation Barbarossa, or the invasion of the USSR. Although a quick defeat of Soviet forces was expected, by December the Germans could not conquer Moscow, Leningrad or Stalingrad, and the coming of winter allowed the Soviets to reorganize their troops.

Japan attacked the American base of Pearl Harbor in December, and Hitler declared also the war on the USA. The Japanese empire reached an enormous extension after the conquest of eastern China, Siam, Burma, French Indochina, Indonesia, Malaisia and New Guinea.

I. The Second World War

Expansion of Axis powers during WWII



c) The defeat of the Axis (1942-1943)

The American industrial power proved to be a great advantage for the Allies: in contrast, German economy began to have difficulties to support war efforts. The reorientation of the American industrial capacities to war objectives made possible the Allies offensives. In the Russian front, the battle for Stalingrad in 1943 was a victory for the Soviets and the beginning of the end for the Nazis.

American and British armies defeated the Germans in Northern Africa (El Alamein), and then invaded Italy. The conquest of Sicily caused the fall of Mussolini, but while the Americans occupied the South, the North, including Rome, became controlled by the Germans. Nevertheless, Rome itself fell in the hands of the Allies in June 1944.



Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, 1941
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

I. The Second World War

A third front was opened on *D day* (6 June 1944), when British and American troops landed on the French coast of Normandy (operation *Overlord*). Soon Paris and Belgium were liberated, and both the British-American troops from the West and the Russians from the East advanced towards Berlin. Nazi resistance ended in a street-by-street battle in the capital, and finally Germany surrendered in May 1945.

The battle of Midway in 1942 was a turning point in the Pacific front, since the Japanese naval and air forces (carriers and planes) were seriously diminished. It was followed by the victories of Iwo Jima and Okinawa in 1945. In spite of the fact that the Japanese home islands were subjected to constant bombings, the Japanese were determined to resist. This forced the USA to use atomic bombs against Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6 and 9 August 1945. As a result, Japan surrendered on 15 August.

That year, on August 6, I was in the third year of girls' high school, fifteen years old. I was an operator at the telephone exchange. We had been mobilized from school for various work assignments for more than a year. My assigned place of duty was civilian, but we, too, were expected to protect the nation. We were tied by strong bonds to the country. We'd heard the news about the Tokyo and Osaka bombings, but nothing had dropped on Hiroshima. Japan was winning. So we still believed. We only had to endure. I wasn't particularly afraid when B-29s flew overhead...

There was no sound. I felt something strong. It was terribly intense. I felt colors. It wasn't heat. You can't really say it was yellow, and it wasn't blue. At that moment I thought I would be the only one who would die. I said to myself, "Goodbye, Mom."

They say temperatures of seven thousand degrees centigrade hit me. You can't really say it washed over me. It's hard to describe. I simply fainted. I remember my body floating in the air. That was probably the blast but I don't know how far I was blown. When I came to my senses, my surroundings were silent. There was no wind. I saw a slight threadlike light, so I felt I must be alive. I was under stones. I couldn't move my body. I heard voices crying, "Help! Water!" It was then I realized I wasn't the only one. I couldn't really see around me. I tried to say something, but my voice wouldn't come out.

"Fire! Run away! Help! Hurry up!" They weren't voices but moans of agony and despair. "I have to get help and shout," I thought. The person who rescued me was Mom, although she herself had been buried under our collapsed house. Mom knew the route I'd been taking. She came, calling out to me... Nobody there looked like human beings. Until that moment I thought incendiary bombs had fallen. Everyone was stupefied. Humans had lost the ability to speak. People couldn't scream, "It hurts!" even when they were on fire. People didn't say, "It's hot!" They just sat catching fire.

My clothes were burnt and so was my skin. I was in rags. I had braided my hair, but now it was like a lion's mane. There were people, barely breathing, trying to push their intestines back in. People with their legs wrenched off. Without heads. Or with faces burned and swollen out of shape. The scene I saw was a living hell. Mom didn't say

I. The Second World War

anything when she saw my face and I didn't feel any pain. She just squeezed my hand and told me to run. She was going to go rescue my aunt. Large numbers of people were moving away from the flames. My eyes were still able to see, so I made my way towards the mountain, where there was no fire, toward Hijiyama. On this flight I saw a friend of mine from the phone exchange. She'd been inside her house and wasn't burned. I called her name, but she didn't respond. My face was so swollen she couldn't tell who I was. Finally, she recognized my voice. She said, "Miss Yamaoka, you look like a monster!" That's the first time I heard that word. I looked at my hands and saw my own skin hanging down and the red flesh exposed.

Yamaoka Michiko: Eight Hundred Meters from the Hypocenter

Summary**I. THE SECOND WORLD WAR****1. Causes of WWII**

- International borders established after the Peace of Paris were defied by the aggressive foreign policy of Italy, Japan and above all Germany.
- Economic depression and social unrest promote totalitarian States bent on expanding their areas of influence.
- Two main alliances:
 - Rome-Berlin Axis: Japan, Italy and Germany;
 - the Allied powers: France, Great Britain and the Commonwealth (Australia, Canada); later the USSR and the USA.

2. Japan, Italy and Germany: the steps towards the war

- a. The system of security of the League of Nations was useless and that encouraged Japan, Italy and Germany to follow an aggressive military policy.
- b. France and Great Britain assumed that there was a need of "appeasement" with respect to Germany and Italy, because of their unfair treatment after the WWI.
- c. They thought that concessions to nationalist expansionism, was the best guaranty of peace.
- d. They hoped that this would give them time to strengthen their military power.
- e. The USSR had little confidence in France and preferred a pact with Nazi Germany.

1. Japan: After the military faction took power, a part of China was invaded, Manchuria. China protested in the League of Nations but no action was taken. Japan left the League in 1933 and invaded the north of China.
2. Italy: After the Great War Italy expected territorial compensations in Eastern Europe for its war efforts, instead; Yugoslavia was created. Mussolini, head of the Fascist State decided to conquer Libya and Ethiopia by 1936, and Albania in 1939. The League of Nations did nothing though Ethiopia was a member State.
3. Germany: Left the League of Nations in 1933, and started the rearmament, against the Versailles settlement.
 - In 1938 forced the Anschluss or union with Austria and annexed the Sudetenland, a Czech region inhabited by Germans. Great Britain and France did not support Czechoslovakia. So Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, occupied Prague, and created the protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.
 - Then in 1939, Hitler signed the Nazi-Soviet Pact (Molotov-Ribbentrop) that divided Eastern Europe into two spheres of influence under Hitler and Stalin.
 - The Nazi invasion of Poland in September 1939 marked the beginning of WWII.

3. The War**a) The Blitzkrieg (1939-1940) "lightning war".**

- A quick victory based on the combined action of both air force and tanks.
- After the invasion of Poland, the Nazis occupied Denmark and Norway, and Belgium in 1940. France surrendered in June.
- Mussolini joined the German side and invaded Greece and Egypt.
- Nazi Germany's next objective was Great Britain; but it abandoned the project due to the counterattacks of the Royal Air Force.

b) The attack on the USSR and the USA (1941-1942)

- In 1941 Hitler decided to invade the USSR. The Germans could not capture Moscow, Leningrad or Stalingrad. Winter allowed the Soviets to reorganize their troops.
- Japan attacked the American base of Pearl Harbor in December, and Hitler declared also the war on the USA.

c) The defeat of the Axis (1942-1943)

- The American industrial power was directed to war objectives.
- The German economy began to have difficulties to support war efforts.
- In the Russian front, the battle for Stalingrad in 1943 was a victory for the Soviets and the beginning of the end for the Nazis.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: GROUPS OF 3/4 STUDENTS

These statements are false. Be ready to explain why.

Discuss and then be ready to explain orally why these statements are false. (Use the summary from unit 3)

1. Italy and Japan followed a policy of "appeasement" because they were suffering economic depression and social unrest.
2. If the League of Nations had not existed the war would have started earlier.
3. Italy obtained Libya and Ethiopia after the Great War as a compensation for its war efforts.
4. Hitler invaded Austria and annexed Poland because of the unfair treatment after the WWI.
5. The Blitzkrieg's objective was the invasion of Great Britain. But Germany abandoned the project due to the winter.
6. America entered the war late because of economic problems at home.

RESEARCH: READING & COMMENT: 7/8 STUDENTS GROUPS

"Anne Frank. The Diary of a young Girl"

1. Create a Blog where each member of the group selects an entrance of the diary and rewrites that entrance from another character's point of view: it must be a character from the story; for example, Anna's mother discovers that page of the diary and writes about her opinion or her account of Anna's thoughts or the happenings she has written about.
2. Create and include in the blog an interactive morphologically classified glossary of terms, with reference to page. Complete with short sentences with real information about the war situation at that moment and illustrate it with images from Anna, her companions, and the house where they were hiding in Holland.

USEFUL LINKS:

<https://www.annefrank.org/en/>

<https://www.annefrank.com/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_people_associated_with_Anne_Frank

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00gvptr>

READINGS & WATCHING & COMMENT

The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas (2006) is a novel written by John Boyne and a 2008 film. It tells the story of two young boys, a German and a Jewish, in a concentration camp.

- Identify and describe these characters: Bruno, Gretel, Shmuel, Ralph Hoess.
- Would you describe the script as realistic?
- People living near a concentration camp were or were not aware of what was happening with the Jews in those camps?

Should there be any historical evidence that supports your answer, contribute it.

Maps**1. German revisionism 1936-1939**

Show on the map the steps towards the war of Nazi Germany.



2. Expansion of Axis 1941

Identify on the map the different European territories under the control of the Axis powers.



Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions. Use your own words

- Appeasement policy
- Operation Barbarossa
- Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact
- Blitzkrieg
- Battle of Stalingrad
- Operation Overlord
- Battle of El Alamein
- Afrika Corps
- Anschluss
- The Munich Conference
- Pearl Harbor
- "D" day
- Battle of Midway

UNIT 3. The Second World War and its Aftermath

II. The Post-war order

a) *Casualties and destruction.* World War II was the most destructive confrontation in human History: sixty million dead (among them, 20 million were Soviets, 6 million Polish, 4 million Germans, 2 million Japanese, 600.000 French, around 400.000 British and Americans), and 6 million Jews exterminated in the Holocaust (*Shoah*).

The war caused also more than 20 million refugees and massive migration flows. Eight million Germans tried to reach the territory occupied by the Americans or the British to avoid the Soviet occupation. On the other hand, millions had been forced to work in Germany during the war, or were war prisoners; all of them wanted to come back home.



Wilhelmsplatz, Berlin, 1946
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Devastation was also a common result of the war. Most of the transport networks or industrial structures were destroyed, above all in Germany, France or Western USSR. Around 25 million people lost their homes.

b) *The organization of peace.* The end of the war was not followed by a general peace agreement, due to the differences between the USSR and its formal allies. Instead, different peace treaties were signed. The organization of peace was sketched in three meetings of the leaders of the Grand Alliance (USSR, USA and Great Britain), even before the end of the war. In November 1943 Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill met at Tehran to decide the American-British invasion of Normandy. This implied the fact that Eastern Europe would be liberated by Soviet troops, and that Germany would be divided after the defeat of Hitler.

In February 1945 the three leaders met again in Yalta. Discussions focused on the opening



Churchill, Truman and Stalin. Conference of Potsdam, July 1945
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

II. The Post-war order

of a second front against Japan by the Soviets and the creation of the United Nations Organization. On the other hand, it was agreed that Germany would be divided into four occupation zones. The USSR would keep its influence over the occupied territories of Eastern Europe but the governments of the liberated countries would be freely elected.

A new conference was held at Potsdam in July 1945, after the defeat of Germany. The new American president, H. Truman, who had succeeded Roosevelt, hardened his position with respect to the USSR. He called for free elections in Eastern Europe, something that Stalin was not willing to accept. It was the beginning of the Cold War. The Eastern part of Germany was occupied by the Soviets, and the USA, Great Britain and France took over the other sectors. Berlin remained under the control of the four powers.

1. The Cold War

a) Concepts

-*The origins.* The origin of the Cold War was the consequence of the differences between the USSR and the USA at the end of the war. As a matter of fact, the Soviets supported the access to power of the communist parties in the countries of Eastern Europe. Even when free elections were allowed (like in Hungary), the communists controlled the government. Only Yugoslavia, under marshal Tito, resisted the interferences of Moscow.

President Truman responded to the communist movements in Greece and Turkey with a declaration before the American Congress –the Truman Doctrine, enunciated on 12 March 1947. Truman initiated a policy of containment of communism through economic and military support against the expansion of the Soviet influence. In 1947, secretary of State George Marshall proposed a recovery plan to help the European economies, devastated by the war. The Marshall Plan constituted a capital flow of 13 billion dollars that was rejected by the countries under the Soviet sphere of influence.

TRUMAN ADDRESS BEFORE THE CONGRESS. MARCH 12, 1947

The gravity of the situation which confronts the world today necessitates my appearance before a joint session of the Congress. The foreign policy and the national security of this country are involved.

One aspect of the present situation, which I wish to present to you at this time for your consideration and decision, concerns Greece and Turkey. (...) The very existence of the Greek state is today threatened by the terrorist activities of several thousand armed men, led by Communists, who defy the government's authority at a number of points, particularly along the northern boundaries (...) Turkey now needs our support.

(...) The peoples of a number of countries of the world have recently had totalitarian regimes forced upon them against their will. The Government of the United States

II. The Post-war order

has made frequent protests against coercion and intimidation, in violation of the Yalta agreement, in Poland, Rumania, and Bulgaria. I must also state that in a number of other countries there have been similar developments.

At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one.

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression.

The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio; fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.

I believe that we must assist free peoples to work out their own destinies in their own way.

I believe that our help should be primarily through economic and financial aid which is essential to economic stability and orderly political processes.

(...) We must take immediate and resolute action. (...) The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured by misery and want. They spread and grow in the evil soil of poverty and strife. They reach their full growth when the hope of a people for a better life has died. We must keep that hope alive.

As an alternative, in 1947 the Molotov Plan offered Soviet aid, and in 1949 the USSR created the COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance). Besides, the Kominform organized the coordination between the European communist parties (included the Italian and the French) under the direction of Moscow.

**RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE MEETING OF
THE COMMUNIST INFORMATION BUREAU. 1949**

The preparations for a new war carried out by the Anglo-American imperialists, the crusade of bourgeois reaction against the democratic rights and the economic interests of the working class and the mass of the people call for intensified struggle of the working class to maintain and consolidate peace and to organize a resolute rebuff to the warmongers and the onslaught of imperialist reaction. Unity in the ranks of the working class is a guarantee of success in this struggle (...) Never before in the history of the international working class movement has the unity of the working class, both within individual countries and on a world scale, been of such

II. The Post-war order

decisive significance as at the present time. Unity of the working class is essential to safeguard peace; to frustrate the criminal designs of the warmongers; to foil the conspiracy of the imperialists against democracy and Socialism; to prevent the establishment of fascist methods of domination; resolutely to rebuff the crusade of monopoly capital against the vital interests of the working class and to secure an improvement in the economic conditions of the working masses. The realization of these tasks can be achieved, above all, on the basis of rallying the broad mass of the working class, irrespective of party affiliation, trade union organization or religious convictions. Unity from below -such is the most effective way to consolidate all forces of the workers to defend peace and the national independence of their countries and to defend the economic interests and democratic rights of all working people.

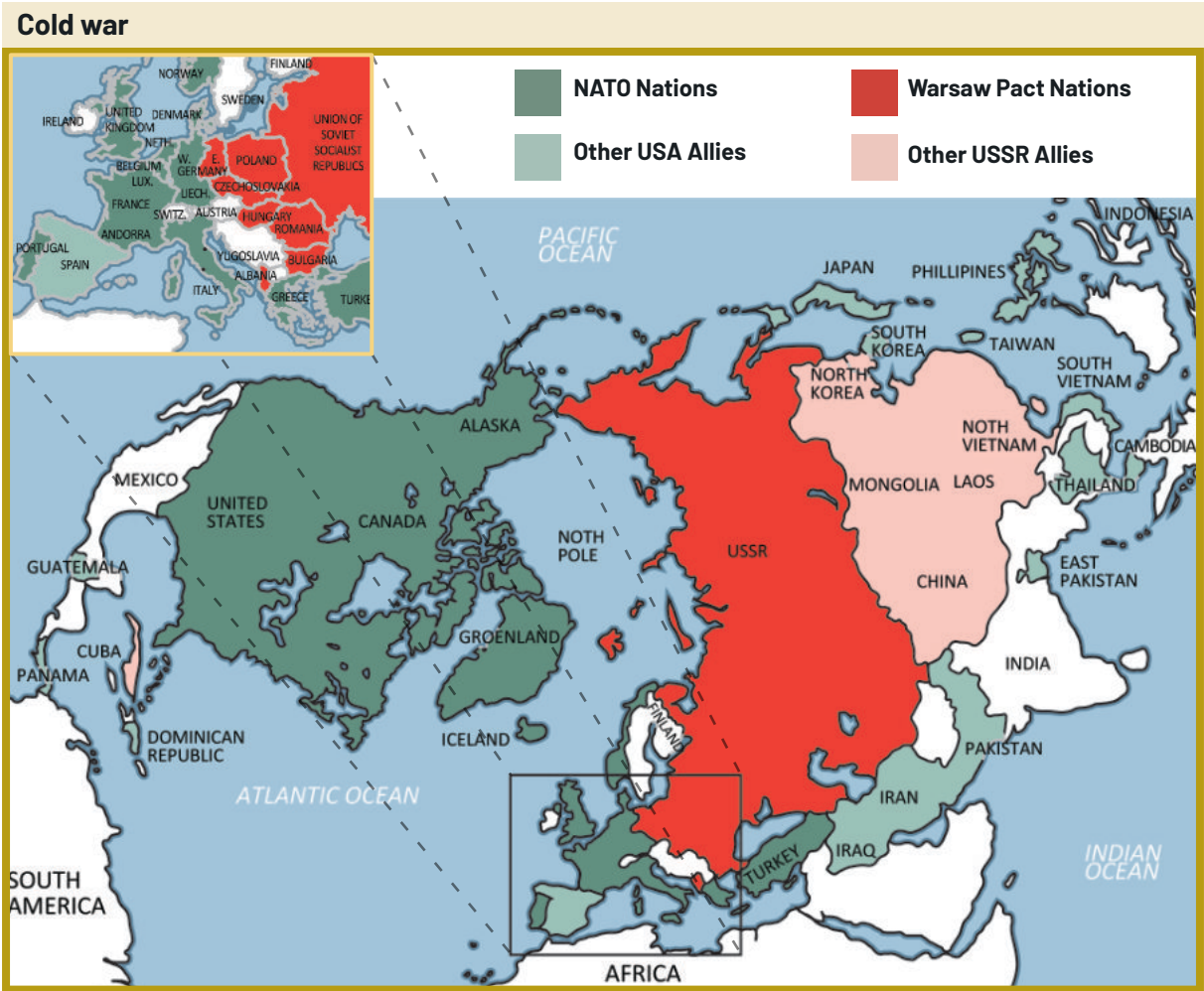
(...)On the direct orders of U.S. and British imperialists, the Right-Wing Socialist and reactionary trade union leaders split the ranks of the working class movement from above, seeking to destroy united working class organizations created in the postwar period. In those countries where Right-Wing Socialists are in the Government (Britain, France, Austria and the Scandinavian countries), they emerge as ardent champions of the "Marshall Plan," "Western Union," the "North Atlantic Agreement" and of all other forms of U.S. expansion. These pseudo-Socialists perform a foul role in persecuting the working class and democratic organizations which defend the interests of the working people (...) having completely abandoned the Marxist doctrine(...)

The Information Bureau is of the opinion that on the basis of working class unity it is essential to achieve national unity of all democratic forces, to mobilize the broad masses of the people for the struggle against Anglo-American imperialism and reaction at home.

-*Two blocks.* The Cold War meant the division of the world into two main social, economic and political areas (communist and capitalist) led by one of the two superpowers. In other words, it implied the creation of a bipolar world. In Europe, Winston Churchill declared that an "iron curtain" divided the continent: on the one side, Western and capitalist countries; on the other, the territories occupied by the Red Army, which soon became popular democracies or communist States. In 1949 NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was created by the USA and their Western allies as an instrument of collective defence against the Soviet block (it provided mutual assistance if one of the allies were attacked). When West Germany was admitted in 1955, the USSR created the Warsaw Pact as a military alliance of the communist countries against NATO.

Germany was a good example of the division of the European continent. In 1948 the USA, Great Britain and France agreed to merge their respective occupation zones, as a first step to create a new German State. Stalin decided to keep the Soviet zone separated. When the Western powers introduced a new currency in West Berlin, Stalin closed all means of transport and isolated this part of the city. This blockade failed because an airlift provided the Western part of the capital with the necessary supplies. This consolidated the division of Germany into the Federal Republic (West Germany) and the Democratic Republic (East Germany) in 1949.

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-Cold war, hot wars. As a matter of fact, in spite of the military contest between the two blocks, the Cold War never became a USSR-USA direct confrontation. The atomic bomb, used by the Americans against Japan, was successfully tested by the Soviets in 1949. The proliferation of nuclear weapons within a new arms race was the following step. Notwithstanding, the risk of a world total destruction was precisely the main obstacle for an open and generalized conflict.

Instead of a war between the two superpowers, a number of local “hot” conflicts took place in the context of the Cold War. One of them was the Korean War. At the end of WWII, along the 38^o parallel, Korea was divided into the communist North and the capitalist South. In 1950 North Korean soldiers crossed the parallel and took Seoul. With a UN mandate, the USA led a military force that rejected the North Korean army. Only the support of the Chinese government could stop the Americans, and the 38^o parallel became again the border of a divided country.

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b) The time of coexistence and the Vietnam War

-The speech at the 20th Party Congress. After the death of Stalin, Nikita Khrushchev criticized the excesses of the former Soviet government and call for a peaceful coexistence with the West in his speech at the 20th Congress of the Soviet communist party. As a result, a treaty on Austria was signed in 1955 in order to put an end to the presence of occupation forces and to create a neutral country.



Nikita Khrushchev, 1961
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

SECRET SPEECH DELIVERED BY N. KRUSCHEV AT THE 20TH PARTY CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF THE SOVIET UNION, FEBRUARY 25, 1956

(...) Allow me first of all to remind you how severely the classics of Marxism-Leninism denounced every manifestation of the cult of the individual. (...) Marx stated: "From my antipathy to any cult of the individual (...)

During Lenin's life the central committee of the party- was a real expression of collective leadership of the party and of the Nation. Being a militant Marxist-revolutionist, always unyielding in matters of principle, Lenin never imposed by force his views upon his coworkers. He tried to convince; he patiently explained his opinions to others. Lenin always diligently observed that the norms of party life were realized, that the party statute was enforced, that the party congresses and the plenary sessions of the central committee took place at the proper intervals.

(...) Stalin acted not through persuasion, explanation, and patient cooperation with people, but by imposing his concepts and demanding absolute submission to his opinion. Whoever opposed this concept or tried to prove his viewpoint, and the correctness of his position-was doomed to removal from the leading collective and to subsequent moral and physical annihilation. This was especially true during the period following the 17th party congress, when many prominent party leaders and rank-and-file party workers, honest and dedicated to the cause of communism, fell victim to Stalin's despotism.

(...) Stalin, on the other hand, used extreme methods and mass repressions at a time when the revolution was already victorious, when the Soviet state was strengthened, when the exploiting classes were already liquidated, and Socialist relations were rooted solidly in all phases of national economy, when our party was politically consolidated and had strengthened itself both numerically and

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ideologically. It is clear that here Stalin showed in a whole series of cases his intolerance, his brutality, and his abuse of power. Instead of proving his political correctness and mobilizing the masses, he often chose the path of repression and physical annihilation, not only against actual enemies, but also against individuals who had not committed any crimes against the party and the Soviet Government.

(...) It was determined that of the 139 members and candidates of the party's Central Committee who were elected at the 17th congress, 98 persons, that is, 70 percent, were arrested and shot (mostly in 1937-38)(...) The same fate met not only the central committee members but also the majority of the delegates to the 17th party congress. Of 1,966 delegates with either voting or advisory rights, 1,108 persons were arrested on charges of anti-revolutionary crimes, i.e., decidedly more than a majority. This very fact shows how absurd, wild, and contrary to commonsense were the charges of counter-revolutionary crimes made out, as we now see, against a majority of participants at the 17th party congress.

-*The limits of coexistence.* In spite of this, the Soviets kept a strict control over their satellites: in 1956, a massive movement against the communist government in Hungary was crushed by Russian troops. In 1961, a wall was built in Berlin to prevent East Berliners escaping to the West (3 million had done so since the end of the war). In 1968, an attempt of the Czechoslovakians to reform their political system (the *Prague Spring*) led to another military intervention of the Warsaw Pact.

The Cuban missiles crisis showed the real limits of coexistence. In 1959 Fidel Castro had deposed the pro-American dictator Batista; the new government soon accepted the Soviet support and broke off its relationship with the USA. The situation became rapidly a cold-war confrontation: president J. F. Kennedy backed a failed plan to invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, Castro declared the island a socialist country, and Khrushchev decided to install nuclear missiles able to reach the main American cities from Cuba. It was one of the tensest situations of the Cold War, since Kennedy ordered a naval blockade of Cuba and sent the Navy to prevent the Soviet fleet from bringing the missiles. A direct confrontation came dangerously close to a nuclear war. Finally, Khrushchev ordered the Soviet ships to come back and Kennedy agreed to preserve Cuban sovereignty.

The result of the Cuban crisis was to improve the relationship between the two superpowers: the "hot-line" or direct phone communication between Washington and Moscow was established to solve future crisis; an agreement was reached on a nuclear test ban treaty. Nevertheless, the nuclear race continued and new crisis arose, such as the Vietnam War.

-*The Vietnam War.* Vietnam was part of French Indochina. After the end of WWII the *Vietminh*, a guerrilla that had fought against the Japanese occupation and led by the communist Ho Chi Minh, now resisted the French. In 1954 the country was also divided into a communist and a capitalist



Fidel Castro in 1959
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

II. The Post-war order

zone. Then the USA decided to support the South Vietnamese against the Northern communists within a clear cold-war context. The American involvement increased in financial and military terms, as the communist intervention and the guerrilla or *Vietcong* strengthened their influence in the South. Actually, in spite of having deployed around 500.000 troops in the area, the American intervention failed and president Nixon ordered the withdrawal since 1973. In 1975 Saigon, the Southern capital, was occupied by the *Vietcong* and the North Vietnamese army: Vietnam became a united country.

c) The détente

In the early 70s the superpowers tried again to achieve a peace settlement and to diminish the risk of a nuclear confrontation. This was called the "détente". New nuclear weapons had been added to the American and Soviet arsenals and could destroy the world many times³. On the communist side, the USSR realized that its economic structure could not support the financial requirements of the arms race; on the other hand the relationship between Moscow and Beijing worsened, so both countries were eager to negotiate with the Americans to strengthen its own position. On the other side, the USA were weakened by their failure in Vietnam, and were looking for a strategy different from confrontation.

As a result, the SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Talks) Treaty was signed in 1972.

The objective for the Americans was the principle of equivalence, or equal nuclear power for both superpowers as a means to avoid a nuclear war. In 1975 the Helsinki Accords were signed by the USA, the USSR and European countries of both sides. They formally acknowledged the European borders established since WWII and stressed the importance of the protection of human rights.

Nevertheless, in fact the détente was followed by an increase of nuclear arsenals. President Carter failed to obtain the approval of the Congress for the SALT II Treaty, signed in 1979. New president R. Reagan started a new program called the Strategic Defence Initiative (Star Wars), aimed to destroy ballistic missiles in flight. He also supported the rebels in Afghanistan, which had been invaded by the Soviets in 1979.

Vietnam War



American soldiers in Long Khanh Province, Vietnam, 1966
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

3. For example, the American ballistic missiles Polaris, launched from submarines, or the missile with multiple heads for different targets, the cruise missiles (to be based in Europe) to avoid the radars, etc.

II. The Post-war order

2. The United Nations Organization

After WWII, the UN was created to replace the League of Nations. Based on the proposals of China, USA, USSR and Great Britain (the Dumbarton Oaks meeting), the Conference held in San Francisco in 1945 decided to agree on the principles of its foundational Charter.

The objectives of the UN are: 1, to maintain international peace and security; 2, to promote economic, social and cultural development; 3, to protect human rights and to safeguard the rights of peoples and nations.

The structure of the UN is based on the General Assembly, the Security Council, a Secretariat, the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court and the Economic and Social Council.

CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Article 2

The Organization and its Members, in pursuit of the Purposes stated in Article 1, shall act in accordance with the following Principles. The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.

1. All Members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfill in good faith the obligations assumed by them in accordance with the present Charter.

2. All Members shall settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered.

3. All Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations.

4. All Members shall give the United Nations every assistance in any action it takes in accordance with the present Charter, and shall refrain from giving assistance to any state against which the United Nations is taking preventive or enforcement action.

5. The Organization shall ensure that states which are not Members of the United Nations act in accordance with these Principles so far as may be necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security.

6. Nothing contained in the present Charter shall authorize the United Nations to intervene in matters which are essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of any state or shall require the Members to submit such matters to settlement under the present Charter; but this principle shall not prejudice the application of enforcement measures under Chapter VII.

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The General Assembly, based in New York, is the representative and deliberative institution of the UN. It is composed of all member States, under the principle of one vote per member. Decisions are taken by majority, although for some specific issues (admittance or expulsion of members, actions of peace maintenance) a two-thirds majority is needed. Its recommendations are not binding for all members.

The Security Council, based also in New York, is the permanent institution of the UN in charge of the maintenance of peace. Its resolutions are binding for all members. Since 1965 the Council is composed of 15 members, 5 permanent (USA, USSR –afterwards Russia, France, China, and Great Britain), and 10 non-permanent, elected by the Assembly. Decisions need 9 votes in favour, but only without the veto of one of the 5 non-permanent members. Nevertheless, the General Assembly introduced the resolution *Uniting for Peace* in 1950, declaring that in case of veto against a Council resolution, the Assembly could decide in 24 hours about the appropriate measures to take, including military intervention. As a matter of fact, the right of veto has limited in a number of cases the potential actions of the UN.

The Secretariat, with 50.000 employees, carries out the administrative work of the UN. The Secretary-General, appointed by the Assembly for 5 years on the recommendation of the Council, is the spokesman of the Organization and head of the Secretariat.

The International Court of Justice is composed of 15 judges elected for 9 years by the Assembly and the Council jointly. Based in the Hague, it decides on disputes between States, but only when both parties agree to accept the verdict. Actually, the Court has been successful in certain cases, but not in others, because it has no power to enforce its own judgements.

The International Criminal Court began its activities concerning the judgement of international crimes (war crimes, genocide, crimes against humanity) in 2003 in the Hague. Nevertheless, the US government, after having signed the Rome Statute of 1998, refused to recognize the Court.

The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has 27 members elected by the Assembly, and promotes social and economic cooperation and development through the implementation of projects. It also coordinates other specialized agencies, such as the ILO (International Labour Organization), the WHO (World Health Organization), the FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization), the UNESCO (UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), or the UNICEF (UN Children's Fund).

The intervention of the UN in some international disputes has been successful. For example, when North Korea invaded the South, the UN supported a military intervention (authorized by the Council only thanks to the absence of the Russian delegate); more recently, when Saddam Hussein occupied Kuwait in 1990, international troops under the mandate of the UN liberated the emirate. Nevertheless, other actions of the UN have failed. The UN has been unable to solve the Palestine conflict and to stop the successive Israeli-Arab wars, to provide a solution for the Turkish-Greek confrontation in Cyprus, to prevent the continuation of the civil war in Somalia, or to lead (or to impede) the intervention that in 2003 British and American troops undertook in order to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

II. The Post-war order

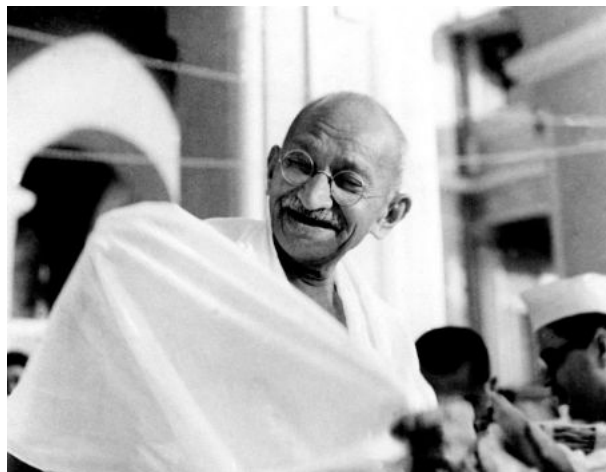
3. The end of empires and decolonisation

a) Factors

- Nationalist movements. Even before WWII, native nationalist groups spread in colonized countries. These groups were led by persons educated at the Universities of the metropolis, thus perfectly able to underline the cultural values of their countries of origin (the concept of *négritude* in French Africa) and to create structured political movements (the Indian National Congress, created in 1885).
- World War II. Large colonial territories were occupied by the Axis powers. On the one hand, national resistance to new invaders continued against the metropolis after the end of the War (as the *Viet Minh* did against the Japanese and the French). On the other, war efforts and devastation weakened the position of the imperial powers.
- The bipolar world. Both the USSR and the USA disliked the continuation of the colonial empires.
- The principle of self-determination of peoples. One of the purposes of the United Nations is to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples (art. 1. 2 of the Charter).

b) Asia

During the interwar period, Great Britain had granted a limited Indian self-government. But after WWII the two main political parties, the Indian National Congress (Hindu, founded in 1885) and the Muslim League (founded in 1906) asked for independence. Fearing a minority position in the new India, the Muslims demanded a separate State. On the contrary, the Hindu leaders Jawaharlal Nehru and Mohandas (*Mahatma* or Big Soul) Gandhi were in favour of a unified India.



Mahatma Gandhi, 1942
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

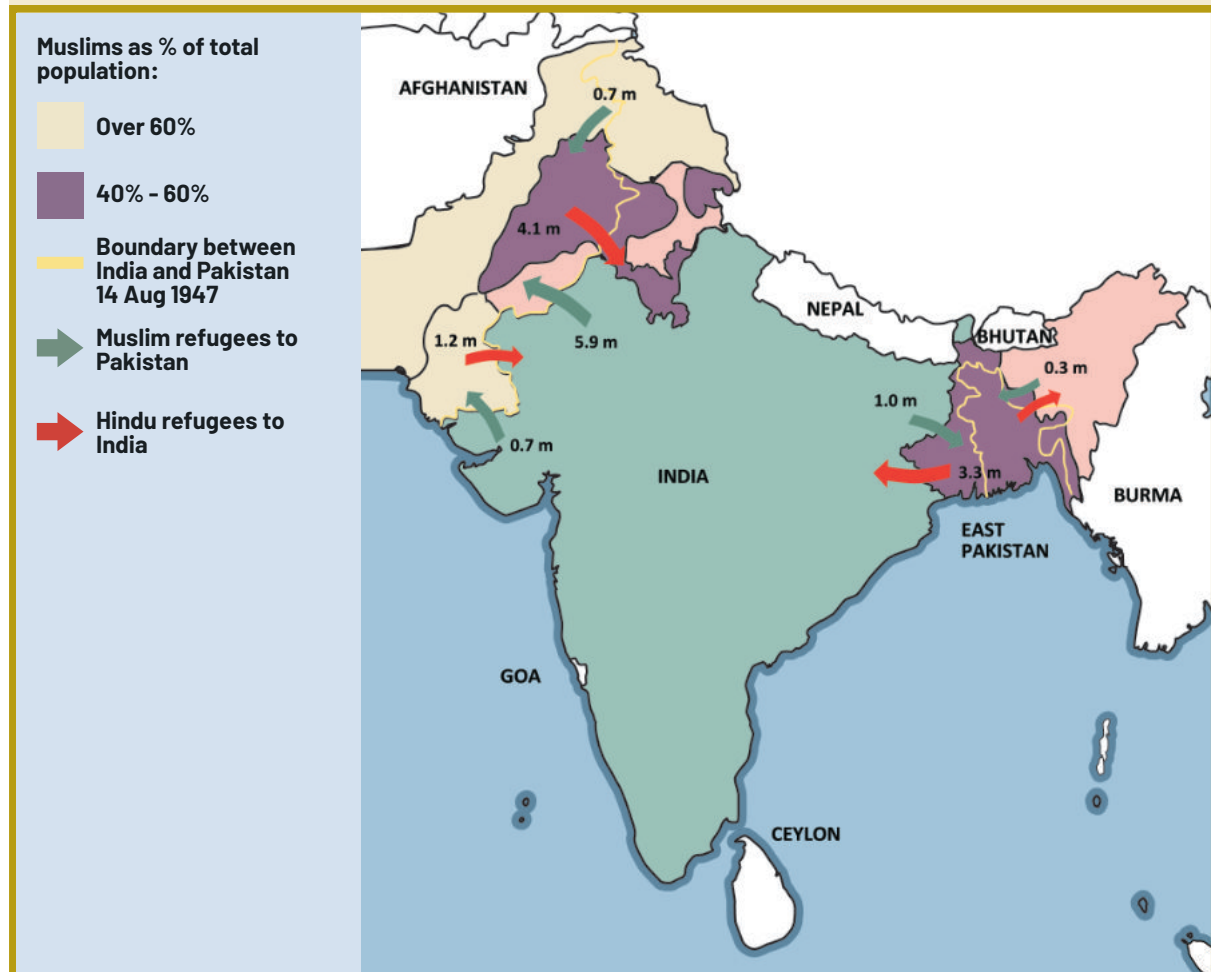
In 1947 India became an independent country, but it was divided into two States: Muslim West and East (Bangla Desh) Pakistan, and India. Violence accompanied the partition, and ten million people migrated to one or the other territory. Immediately an open war broke out between the two new States for the possession of Kashmir in the North. Because of his non-violent position and his opposition to separatism, Gandhi was murdered by a radical Hindu in 1948. Nowadays the conflict between India and Pakistan remains active, since both countries possess nuclear weapons.

Other metropolis did not accept to leave their colonies. The Dutch army intervened in Indonesia to restore imperial rule; although formal independence was conceded in 1949, a truly independent Republic was not created but in 1960. A military conflict between the colonial power

II. The Post-war order

and nationalists took place also in French Indochina, where Ho Chi Minh declared the independence of Vietnam after the Japanese defeat in 1945. Subsequent French intervention ended in the victory of the Vietminh at the battle of Dien Bien Phu, the withdrawal of the French troops and the division of the country.

The partition of India



c) Africa

France was determined to keep control over Algeria. Two million French settlers (the *pied-noirs*) supported the colonial rule against the nationalist Front de Libération Nationale (FNL), which adopted guerrilla tactics. Although France sent 500.000 soldiers to Algeria, a long war took place and the country only acceded to independence in 1962. Since France needed to focus on Algeria, other North African countries obtained it earlier: Morocco and Tunisia became independent in 1956.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Ghana started the process in spite of the British repression against the nationalist movement led by Kwame Nkrumah: the country was granted independence in 1957. Nkrumah supported the idea of African unity as an instrument for political independence and economic development.

II. The Post-war order

For centuries, Europeans dominated the African continent. The white man arrogated to himself the right to rule and to be obeyed by the non-white; his mission, he claimed, was to “civilise” Africa. Under this cloak, the Europeans robbed the continent of vast riches and inflicted unimaginable suffering on the African people.

(...) It is clear that we must find an African solution to our problems, and that this can only be found in African unity. Divided we are weak; united, Africa could become one of the greatest forces for good in the world.

Although most Africans are poor, our continent is potentially extremely rich. Our mineral resources, which are being exploited with foreign capital only to enrich foreign investors, range from gold and diamonds to uranium and petroleum. Our forests contain some of the finest woods to be grown anywhere. Our cash crops include cocoa, coffee, rubber, tobacco and cotton. (...) This is one of the reasons why we have in Africa the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty, and scarcity in the midst of abundance.

(...) There are at present some 28 states in Africa, excluding the Union of South Africa, and those countries not yet free. No less than nine of these states have a population of less than three million. Can we seriously believe that the colonial powers meant these countries to be independent, viable states? The example of South America, which has as much wealth, if not more than North America, and yet remains weak and dependent on outside interests, is one which every African would do well to study.

(...) The greatest contribution that Africa can make to the peace of the world is to avoid all the dangers inherent in disunity, by creating a political union which will also by its success, stand as an example to a divided world. A Union of African states will project more effectively the African personality. It will command respect from a world that has regard only for size and influence.

(...) We have to prove that greatness is not to be measured in stock piles of atom bombs. I believe strongly and sincerely that with the deep-rooted wisdom and dignity, the innate respect for human lives, the intense humanity that is our heritage, the African race, united under one federal government, will emerge not as just another world bloc to flaunt its wealth and strength, but as a Great Power whose greatness is indestructible because it is built not on fear, envy and suspicion, nor won at the expense of others, but founded on hope, trust, friendship and directed to the good of all mankind.

The emergence of such a mighty stabilising force in this strife-worn world should be regarded not as the shadowy dream of a visionary, but as a practical proposition, which the peoples of Africa can, and should, translate into reality. There is a tide in the affairs of every people when the moment strikes for political action. Such was the moment in the history of the United States of America when the Founding Fathers saw beyond the petty wranglings of the separate states and created a Union. This is our chance. We must act now. Tomorrow may be too late and the opportunity will have passed, and with it the hope of free Africa's survival.

*Kwame Nkrumah, I Speak of Freedom:
A Statement of African Ideology, 1961*

II. The Post-war order

The case of Kenya was not as peaceful. White settlers and nationalists (especially the Kikuyu, who created a secret society called Mau-Mau) became involved in a violent conflict. The British government sent troops against the Kikuyu and imprisoned the nationalists like Jomo Kenyatta. Nevertheless, in spite of its military victories, the British were not able to maintain a white political and social domination, and consequently allowed the formation of free political parties, one of them headed by Kenyatta. This led to the independence of the country in 1963.

In 1960, thirteen French colonies in Africa acquired their independence, as well as the Congo from Belgium. But in the Congo different groups started a violent confrontation for the control of the country, and finally the democratic government was deposed by general Mobutu in 1965. As a matter of fact, civil struggles in the Congo persist nowadays.

Decolonisation of Africa



II. The Post-war order

c) Arab nationalism. The State of Israel

Before WWII, only Egypt enjoyed an autonomous administration. After the War, Arab States became fully independent (Egypt, Syria, Irak, Lebanon, Jordan). Nevertheless, the major source of conflict came from the creation of the State of Israel. The Zionist movement sought to re-create a Jewish homeland in Palestine since the 19th century. Migration became stronger under the British mandate (especially after the persecution of Jews in Europe and the Holocaust), and as a result conflicts between Jewish settlers and the Arab Palestinian population increased.

In 1947 the UN proposed a plan for the division of the region into two separate States, Arab and Jewish. Since the Arabs rejected the plan, Great Britain withdrew, and the Jew leader David ben Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel (1948). Immediately the Arab States declared the war, but the Israeli troops rejected the combined Arab forces and defeated them. After three more wars, Israel consolidated its position in spite of the hostility and opposition of the Arab world.



David Ben Gurion, 1952
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Summary

II. THE POST-WAR ORDER

- World War II was the most destructive confrontation in human History: sixty million dead; most transport networks or industrial structures destroyed, mainly in Germany, France or Western USSR. 25 million people lost their homes.
- The end of the war came about through different peace treaties: the peace settlement was sketched in three meetings of the leaders of the Grand Alliance (USSR, USA and Great Britain):
 1. Tehran, November 1943
 2. Yalta, February 1945
 3. Potsdam, July 1945
- After the defeat of Germany, May 1945: the Eastern part of Germany was occupied by the Soviets. The USA, Great Britain and France took over the Western part. Berlin remained under the control of the four powers.

1. The Cold War

a) The origins, coexistence and the Vietnam War

- The Cold War meant the division of the world into two main social, economic and political areas, communist and capitalist, at the end of the war. Each area led by one of the two superpowers.
- It was a consequence of the differences between the USSR and the USA.
- In 1949 NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) was created by the USA and their western allies as an instrument of defence against the Soviet block.
- In 1955, when West Germany was admitted in NATO, the USSR created the Warsaw Pact as a communist military alliance against NATO.
- In 1947, the USA implemented the Marshall plan, a recovery plan for European economies, devastated by the war.
- In 1947, the *Molotov Plan* offered Soviet aid.
- Germany was a symbol of the division of the European continent: its division became the Federal Republic (West Germany) and the Democratic Republic (East Germany) in 1949. West Berlin suffered a blockade that failed because of airlift provided by the West.
- The proliferation of nuclear weapons was an important consequence. However, the Cold War never became a USSR-USA direct confrontation. Instead a number of local "hot" conflicts took place:
 1. The Korean War, 1950.
 2. Revolt in Hungary, 1956, was crushed by Russian troops.
 3. The Berlin wall, to prevent East Berliners escaping to the West, 1961.
 4. The Bay of Pigs Invasion, 1961 and the Cuban missiles crisis 1962.
 5. Czechoslovakian invasion, 1968, another military intervention of the Warsaw Pact to stop reforms.
 6. The Vietnam war, 1955-1975.

b) The détente

- In the early '70 the mutual nuclear weapons arsenals and the superpowers financial, political and prestige problems, made them eager to negotiate to a peaceful settlement to diminish the risk of a nuclear confrontation. This was called the "détente".
- Agreements:
 1. the SALT I Treaty, 1972;
 2. the Helsinki Accords, 1975;
 3. the SALT II Treaty, 1979.

However, the détente was followed by an increase of nuclear arsenals.

- New president R. Reagan started a new program, Star Wars, aimed to destroy ballistic missiles in flight, and also supported the rebels in Afghanistan, which had been invaded by the Soviets in 1979.

2. The United Nations Organization

- After WWII, the UN was created to replace the League of Nations.
- The San Francisco Conference 1945, based on the Dumbarton Oaks meeting between China, USA, USSR and Great Britain, agreed on the following principles:
 1. Preserve international peace and security
 2. Promote economic, social and cultural development
 3. Protect human rights and safeguard the rights of peoples and nations.

The structure of the UN:

1. The General Assembly, based in New York.
 2. The Security Council, based also in New York.
 3. A Secretariat.
 4. The International Court of Justice, based in The Hague.
 5. The International Criminal Court.
 6. The Economic and Social Council.
- The intervention of the UN in some international disputes has been successful. For example, when North Korea invaded the South, or when Saddam Hussein occupied Kuwait in 1990.
 - The UN has been unable to solve other disputes, such as the Palestine conflict, to provide a solution for the Turkish-Greek confrontation in Cyprus, or to lead (or to impede) the intervention of British and American troops to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

3. The end of empires and decolonisation**Factors**

1. Nationalist movements led by persons educated at the Universities of the metropolis. They underlined their own cultural values and were able to create structured political movements.
2. World War II stimulated national resistance to new invaders and then against the metropolis weakened after war efforts and devastation.
3. The bipolar world. The USSR and the USA opposed colonial empires.
4. The principle of self-determination of peoples of the United Nations

1. Asia

- In 1947 India became an independent country divided into two States: Muslim West and East (Bangla Desh) Pakistan, and India. The two main political parties were: the Indian National Congress (Hindu, founded in 1885) and the Muslim League (founded in 1906). Violence and open war (Kashmir) accompanied the independence and the partition. The conflict remains active. Both countries have nuclear weapons.
- An independent Republic of Dutch Indonesia was not created until 1960. In 1945, after the Japanese defeat Ho Chi Minh had declared the independence of Vietnam from France. In 1954, the victory of Dien Bien Phu, and the Geneva Conference put an end to war, but left the country divided.

2. Africa

a. North Africa

Algeria became independent in 1962 after a long war with France and French settlers (the pied-noirs). As France was busy with this war, Morocco and Tunisia became independent in 1956.

b. Sub-Saharan Africa

Ghana started the process in 1957. Kenya became independent of in 1963 after a violent conflict with white settlers (Mau-Mau). In 1960, thirteen French colonies in Africa acquired their independence, as well as the Congo from Belgium. Civil struggles persist nowadays in many African countries.

3. Arab nationalism

- After the War, Arab States became fully independent (Egypt, Syria, Irak, Lebanon, Jordan). However, the creation of the State of Israel has become a permanent source of conflict.
- The Zionist movement sought to re-create a Jewish homeland in Palestine since the 19th century under British protectorate. Migration became strong after the Holocaust. Conflicts between Jewish settlers and the Arab Palestinian population increased.
- In 1947 the UN proposed a division into two separate States, Arab and Jewish. The Arabs rejected the plan, Great Britain withdrew, and the Jew leader David Ben Gurion proclaimed the State of Israel (1948).
- The Arab States declared the war, but the Israel defeated them.
- After three more wars, Israel consolidated its position. However, hostility and opposition from the Arab world continues.

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions. Use your own words

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| • Marshal Tito | • Truman doctrine |
| • COMECON | • Kominform |
| • Prague Spring | • N. Krushev |
| • Cuban crisis | • Corean War |
| • Marshall plan | • NATO |
| • Warsaw Pact | • Détente |
| • San Francisco Conference | • Ho Chi Minh |
| • Pied-noirs | • K. Nkrumah |
| • Mobutu | • J. Keniatta |
| • David Ben Gurion | |

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING: GROUPS OF 3/4 STUDENTS

These statements are false. Be ready to explain why.

Discuss and then be ready to explain orally why these statements are false. (Use the summary from unit 3)

1. After the defeat of Germany, May 1954: the Eastern part of Germany was occupied by the USA. The USSR, Great Britain and France took over the Western part. Berlin remained under the control of the USSR.
2. The Cold War began because the Marshall plan, a recovery plan for European economies, devastated by the war, did not include the Soviet block.
3. The Korean War, 1950, meant a direct USSR-USA confrontation.
4. R. Reagan started a new program of negotiations called the "détente".
5. The UN was created to intervene occasionally in some international disputes.
6. After WWII it was difficult for nationalist leaders to create structured political movements.
7. India became independent before WWII peacefully.
8. Although Vietnam was defeated in Dien Bien Phu, it became independent in the end.
9. Kenya became independent of in 1963 after the Mau-Mau, a white settlers secret organization was defeated.
10. The State of Israel, was created by the UN in 1957 and accepted by the Palestinians.

RESEARCH/ CREATING AN OPINION TEXT - GROUPS OF 4/5 STUDENTS

Surf the net looking for information about one of the current struggles in the North of Africa or Asia. Analyze and summarize the causes of the conflict and the actors involved, including foreign countries. Prepare a short essay (300 words) on the situation and the group analysis.

DRAMA & ROLE PLAYING, MAKING LIVE HISTORY

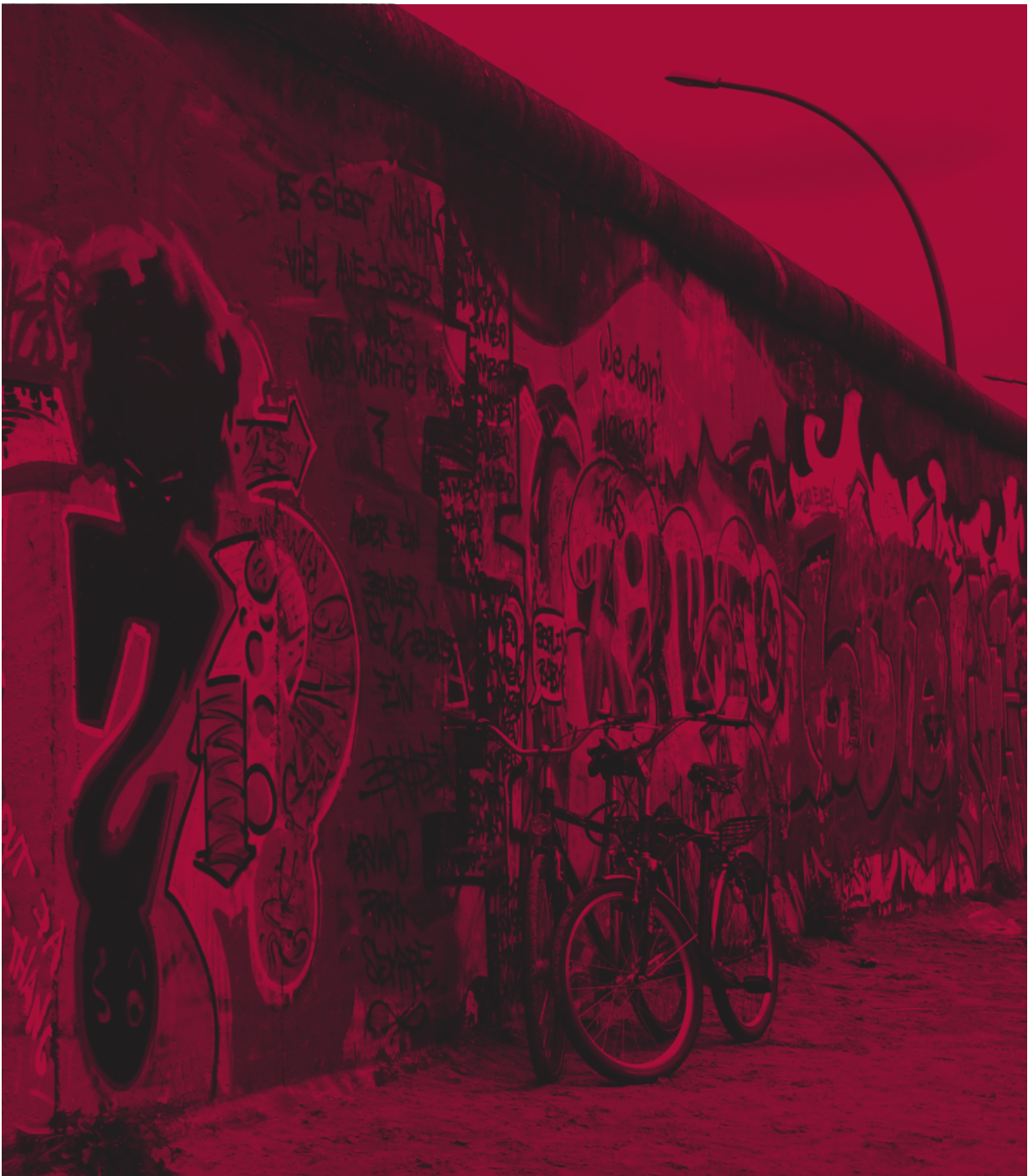
We will simulate a session of the UN Security council in March 2011 on Libya, on the need to pass a resolution in order to create an air exclusion zone to prevent the governmental army from attacking Libyan civilians. Information on the representative's roles will be taken from the internet (newspapers and the UN web page).

Taking into account the rules of procedure of the Security council, a group of 8 students will act as the representatives of the USA, Russia, China, Great Britain, France, Lebanon and Germany, together with an elected chairman that will conduct the discussion. A final decision will be adopted.

The rest of the class will create a blog and, as journalists, will publish in the blog reports on the happening, giving account of the procedure, the performances and illustrating them with pictures.

UNIT 4

Contemporary World



UNIT 4. Contemporary World

I. The USA

a) Social and economic structures

After WWII, the USA became the world's wealthiest country. A constant economic growth during the 50s and 60s transformed the American social structure. A consumer society was created on the basis of relatively high salaries and a domestic market able to provide the new middle class with all kind of consumer goods (such as TVs, washing machines, cars, and good houses).

Nevertheless, the so-called "affluent society" was not available for everybody. Homelessness and poverty persisted. African-American people were systematically segregated, above all in the Southern States.



John F. Kennedy in 1963
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

b) The New Frontier and its limits

Although the main aspects of the New Deal were not changed under H. Truman and D. Eisenhower (including State intervention in economic matters and public support of social services), democrat president J. F. Kennedy underlined the need to enlarge the scope of social protection. His *New Frontier* programme tried to boost the elimination of poverty, unemployment benefits and other social funding. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963, but his successor L. Johnson continued this political direction and launched an additional initiative to achieve equal rights for African Americans (the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to illegalize discrimination and the Voting Rights Act of 1965).

In 1963, Martin Luther King (Nobel Prize for Peace in 1964) marched on Washington DC to protest against the situation of African Americans, segregated in education, voting, labour market and housing. He gave there a famous speech –"I have a dream...", pleading for a non-violent activism. Notwithstanding, racial violence did not decrease, and King himself was murdered in 1968.



Martin Luther King. Civil Rights March on Washington D.C, 1963
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

c) Nixon and Reagan

America moved politically to the right after the presidential election of republican R. Nixon, who cut social funds. Nixon resigned because of his involvement in the Watergate affair (illegal wiretapping at the headquarters of the Democrat party), but the conservative direction continued under republican R. Reagan. A former actor and governor of California, Reagan favoured a renewed American economic growth through a lower fiscal pressure. A reduction of the intervention of the State and lower taxes would leave additional resources to the private sector and consequently would support economic dynamism. As a matter of fact, Reaganomics (the economic policy of Reagan) was not successful in social terms (reduction in public spending on education, unemployment, medical programs), although the American economy did grow since 1983.



President Ronald Reagan, Nancy Reagan and Margaret Thatcher in London, 1984
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

d) Foreign affairs

On the other hand, public expenditures and deficit increased because of the governmental interest in defence. Reagan reactivated the nuclear arms race and supported the initiative *Star Wars*. He also backed guerrilla groups in Central America and ordered the bombing of the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. Under his successor George Bush, the USA led an international coalition against Iraq, which had invaded Kuwait in August 1990 –operation “Desert Storm”, during the 1st Gulf War. In spite of the defeat of Iraqi troops and the liberation of Kuwait, Saddam Hussein was not removed from power.

The USA remains as the only superpower after the fall of the USSR in 1991 and the end of the communist regimes in Europe. Moreover, many analysts pointed out the “end of history” with the universal triumph of democracy and market economy. Nevertheless, new challenges arose, related to the terrorist activities of al-Qaeda and the attacks against the World Trade Center. President George W. Bush declared war on terrorism and attacked Afghanistan first, and after Iraq.

COOPERATIVE WORK/GROUPS OF 6-7 STUDENTS:

- Choose 4 Relevant USA Presidents and Activists.
- Explain the relevant reasons to choose them, present your information to the rest of the class.

Some useful links:

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/presidential-documents-archive-guidebook/executive-orders-jq-adams-1826-trump-2018>

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/presidential-documents-archive-guidebook/presidential-signing-statements-hoover-1929-obama>

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/index.php>

Each group, in maximum 10 minutes, should cover very schematic information, for each President chosen, about:

- Economic & social measures
- International conflicts or military interventions a president got involved in
- Some interesting quotes from their speeches
- Affairs or political scandals and their consequences

UNIT 4. Contemporary World

II. Western Europe

1. The European model

Western Europe recovered promptly from war devastation thanks to massive American aid (Marshall Plan), which fuelled an intense economic development. The European model is hence based on the intervention of the State in the socio-economic structure, by combining capitalism and the principles of social democracy –the Welfare State. Public programmes were created to provide the population with a general level of social protection, such as health care, benefits for unemployment or sickness, or public support to housing and education. The State also created compulsory minimum standards concerning labour market (minimum wages, holidays).



Europeans flags in front of the European Commission, Brussels. Photo Sébastien Bertrand
[Flickr](#)

2. The process of European integration

1. The origins

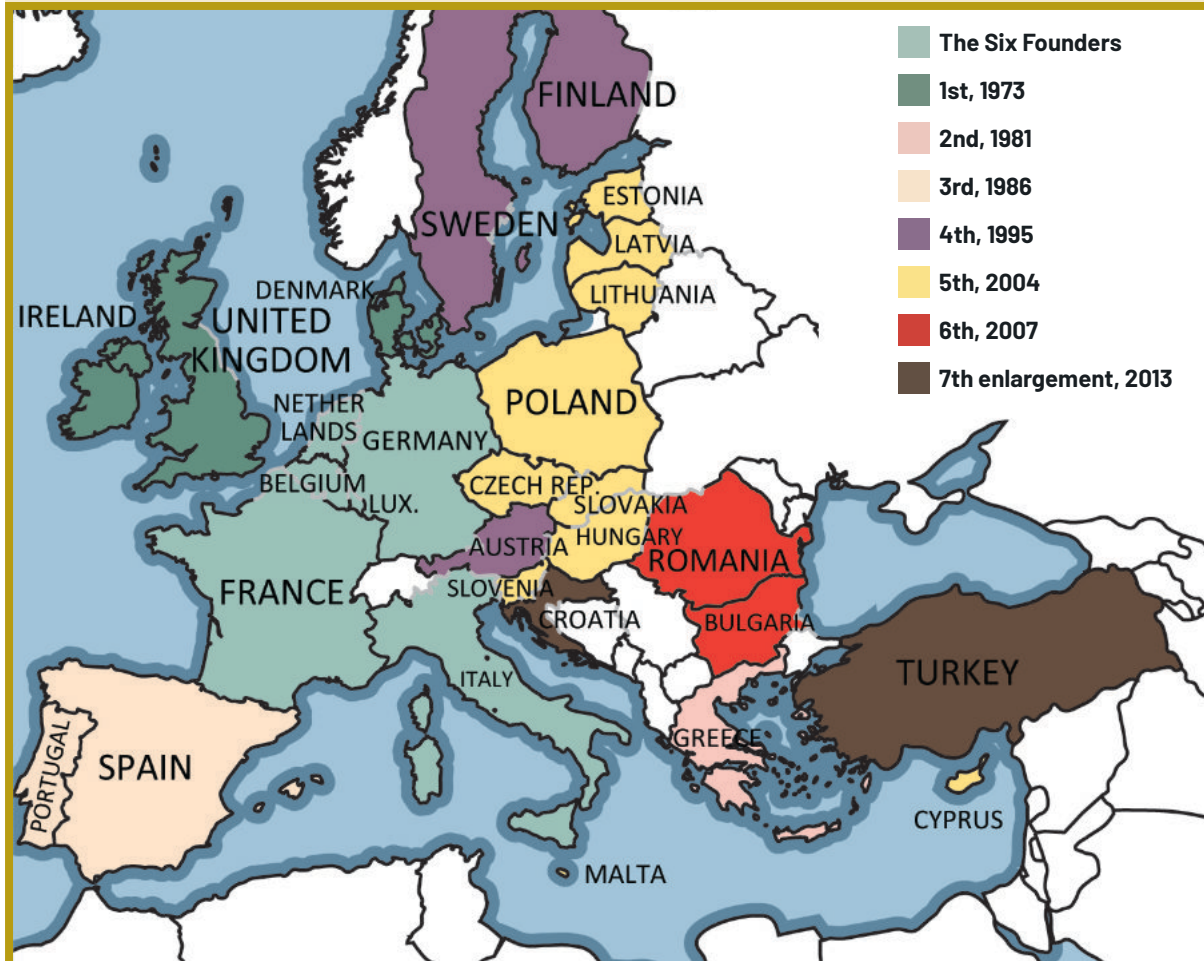
Although previous attempts of European co-operation had been made, the process of European integration began with the Schuman Declaration on 9 May 1950 (Europe Day). The French minister of Foreign Affairs stated the need to make it impossible a future European war through the creation of a supranational body to manage the production of coal and steel. Coal and steel were the core industries of a country, the basis of its military power, so that the initiative would put an end to the Franco-German historical antagonism.

The first treaties were the Treaty of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) signed in Paris in 1951, and the two Treaties of Rome of 1957, which created the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (or *Euratom*). The founding members of the three Communities were France and Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, Luxembourg and Italy.

The purpose of the EEC was to establish a common market based on the freedom of movement of goods, capitals, services and persons, as well as an increasing coordination of economic policies. As a matter of fact, the intention of the founding members was not merely to share certain economic aspects, but to go beyond, towards a deeper European integration.

II. Western Europe

EU enlargements



2. The reforms

Leaps forward in this integration process were the different treaties and agreements that were signed afterwards.

a) *The Treaty of Maastricht*. The Treaty of Maastricht or Treaty of the European Union was signed in 1992, and instituted the European Union based on the three Communities. A three-pillar structure was created. The first one (the European Community Pillar) concerned the traditional activities of the European Community, dealing with the first treaties. The Second Pillar was related to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), in order to improve cooperation between member States on this field. The Third Pillar was that of Justice and Home Affairs. The two new pillars were implemented by intergovernmental methods, because the matters concerned were still considered as an essential part of the State sovereignty. Decisions concerning the first pillar followed a special procedure, where the European institutions played the most important role.

b) *The treaty of Lisbon*. It was signed in December 2007, and constitutes the last step forward in the process of European integration. The architecture based on the three pillars is no longer

II. Western Europe

applicable, especially concerning the differences between the first and the third pillars. After Lisbon, the final legal structure of the European Union is based on two treaties: the Treaty of the European Union (TEU) and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU). The TEU is the basis of the European law (general purposes of the EU, governance of European institutions, rules concerning the foreign and security policy). The TFEU is based on the old Treaty of Rome (internal market, free movement of goods, services and capitals), and establishes the authority of the EU with respect to specific areas.

3. Community institutions

a) The European Commission

The European Commission represents the interests of Europe as a whole. It is independent of national governments. The Commissioners do not represent the governments of their home countries.

The Commission consists of 28 members, one from each EU country, assisted by about 32.000 civil servants, most of them in Brussels. Each of them has responsibility for a particular EU policy area. The President and members of the Commission are appointed for a period of five years, coinciding with the period for which the European Parliament is elected.

The President of the Commission is chosen by EU governments and approved by the European Parliament. The other commissioners are nominated by the Council in agreement with the in-coming President, and must be approved by the Parliament.

Functions

1. Legislative initiative. The Commission presents proposals for new European laws to the European Parliament and the Council.
2. Implementation of EU policies and administration of EU funds, as well as enforcement of European laws.
3. The Commission is the guardian of the Treaties, so it can act against rule- breakers, taking them to the Court of Justice if necessary.

After the Treaty of Lisbon, it is considered that the executive power of the EU is not held by the Council, but shared by both the Commission and the Council. There is a direct link between the results of the European elections and the choice of candidate for president of the Commission.



Berlaymont Building, Brussels
[Pixabay](#)

II. Western Europe

Finally, the president is now stronger, having the power to dismiss the Commissioners. On the other hand, although Lisbon provided for the reduction of the number of Commissioners to 18, it has not yet achieved.

The post of **EU High Representative for foreign and security policy** was also created in Lisbon. The High Representative has a dual role: representing the Council on common foreign and security policy matters (CFSP) being also Commissioner for external relations and Vice-President of the Commission. The High Representative conducts both common foreign policy and common defence policy.

b) The European Parliament

The European Parliament is the only supranational institution whose members are democratically elected by direct universal suffrage every five years. It represents the people of the Member States.

The European Parliament is made up of 750 Members (MEPs), plus its President. They are grouped by political affinity and not by nationality. They meet in Brussels and Strasbourg; the Secretariat is located in Luxembourg.

The EP is represented by a President that is elected for a renewable term of two and a half years.



European Parliament. Strasbourg
[Pixabay](#)

Powers of the EP

1. The EP is one of the legislative bodies of the European Union, together with the Council of the European Union. The European Parliament shares legislative power equally with it.

Basically, the legislative process is as follows: the European legislative procedure is initiated by the European Commission, the only institution empowered to do so. Then the Parliament discuss the proposal and adopts a final text, and finally the Council of the European Union approves it.

2. The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union together constitute the Union's budgetary authority, which decides each year on its expenditure and revenue.
3. The European Parliament exercises democratic control over the Commission (initial appointment, questions, censure power).

II. Western Europe**c) The European Council**

Consists of the heads of State and/or government the member States, plus its president and the president of the Commission. The position of president of the European Council was created by the Treaty of Lisbon, and he or she is appointed by the Council itself for two and a half years. The main job of the president is to prepare the Council's work. The European Council defines the EU's general political direction and priorities.

d) The Council of the European Union

The Council consists of ministers from the national governments of all the EU countries. Meetings are attended by whichever ministers are responsible for the items to be discussed: foreign ministers, ministers of the economy and finance, ministers for agriculture and so on, as appropriate.

Each country has a number of votes in the Council reflecting the size of their population, but weighted in favour of smaller countries. Most decisions are taken by majority vote, although sensitive issues in areas like harmonization of national legislation on indirect taxation, family law, or foreign and security policy, require unanimity.

Functions

1. The Council shares with the Parliament the responsibility for passing laws.
2. It takes policy decisions, above all in the field of the common foreign and security policy (CFSP).
3. It approves the EU budget, together with the Parliament.

Up to four times a year the presidents and/or prime ministers of the Member States meet as the European Council. These "summit" meetings set the main political lines of the EU.

e) The Court of Justice of the European Union

The CJEU, located in Luxembourg, is composed of two Courts: the Court of Justice and the General Court. It makes sure that EU law is interpreted and applied in the same way in all EU countries. The Court also makes sure that EU member States and institutions do what the law requires them to do.

The Court of Justice has one judge from each member country. It deals with requests for preliminary rulings from national courts (when a national court is in doubt about the interpretation of a EU law), actions for annulment of EU acts that violate EU treaties or fundamental rights, or when a national government fails to comply with EU law (infringement).

The General Court has 47 judges, increased to 56 in 2019 (two judges from each member country). It deals with actions for annulment brought by individuals and companies.

COOPERATIVE WORK (The class is divided into 3 groups for 3 tasks)

European cooperation and integration

- Be ready to explain the treaty of ECSC (use the map beside: Founding members of the ECSC: Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany (Algeria was an integral part of French Republic)
- Be ready to explain the Treaties of Rome to the rest of the class. Include a map to explain them.
- Be ready to explain to explain the Treaty of Maastricht and the European institutions to the rest of the class. Then name some of the features of the treaty of Lisbon.
- Illustrate your presentations with videos and pictures with informative captions about the European Union.

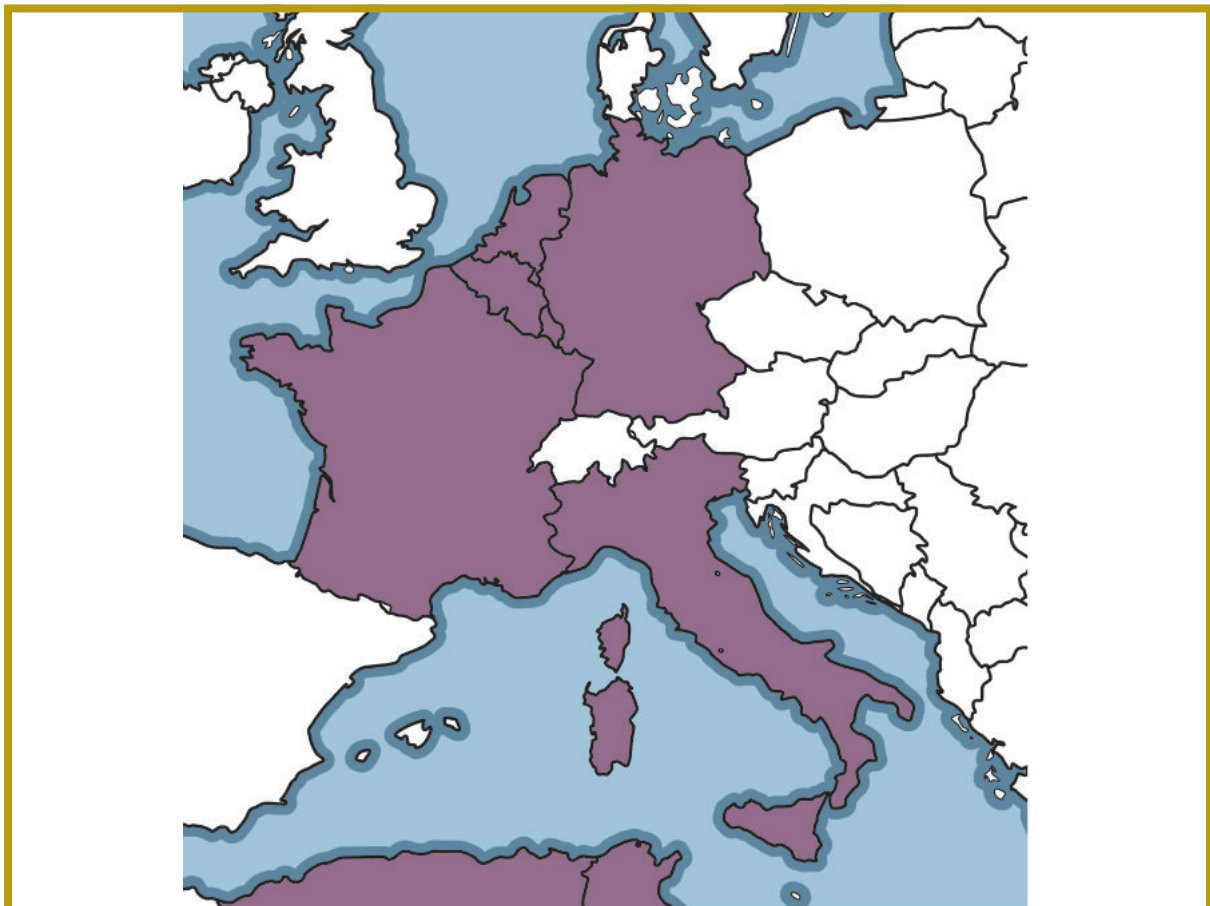
Useful Links

https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/history_en

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XgnXwrsMBUs>

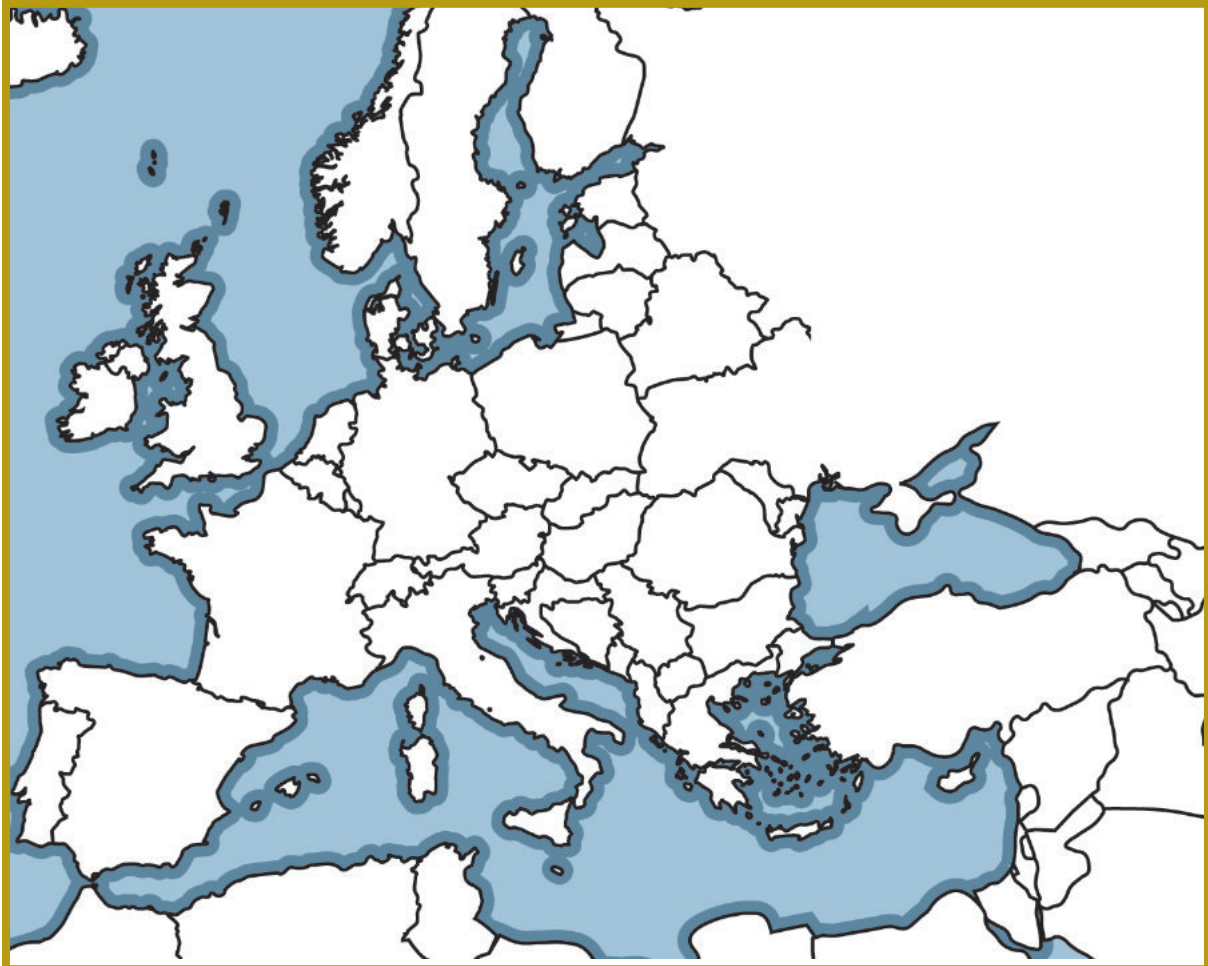
<https://www.thoughtco.com/the-history-of-the-european-union-1221595>

<https://www.thebalance.com/what-is-the-european-union-how-it-works-and-history-3306356>



Maps

Write the name of the different members of the EU and the date of their accession.

**Simulation Game**

We will simulate a session of the Council of the EU on the need to create a recovery fund in order to help the European economies in a financial critical situation. Take into account the rules of procedure and the majority needed to negotiate. Information on their own roles will be taken from the Internet (newspapers and the EU web page).

UNIT 4. Contemporary World

III. Japan and the Asian Tigers

After being defeated in WWII, Japan was occupied by American troops until 1950. The commander-in-chief of the occupation troops general Mc Arthur supported the approval of a new constitution that limited Japanese army and explicitly renounced war.

Afterwards, in the context of the Cold War, the USA assumed the defence of the Japanese territory in order to prevent the expansion of communism in Asia. The Americans supported also the economic recovery through massive financial aid, investments and the elimination of restrictions to Japanese exports.

Thus, Japan started a process of economic growth that transformed an economy in ruins into one of the world leading industrial powers. This process was favoured by political stability, provided by the hegemony of the conservative party (Liberal-Democratic party or LDP). In spite of the existence of formal democratic and parliamentary institutions, the LDP remained unchallenged in government until 1993.

At the beginning, the "Japanese miracle" was based on the promotion of exports of cheap products, due to the comparative advantage of general low wages. But since the '60s the Japanese economy focused on high technology products. The reason of its economic success lies on the combination of several factors: first, State intervention in support of industrial initiatives. Second, the creation of large multinational companies (Sony, Toyota) able to make the necessary investments and to renew production. Third, the interest on education and the availability of a highly skilled labour market.

The Japanese economic model was highly successful. Its Gross Domestic Product is one of the highest of the world; nowadays it is difficult to ignore the presence of all kind of Japanese products, ranging from cars to electronic devices. Nevertheless, since the '90s Japan has gradually entered into a long period of economic stagnation. The reasons are related to the problems created by high prices, increasing salaries, and a weak domestic consumption. The old model is no longer



Emperor Hirohito (Showa), 1929
[Wikimedia Commons](#)



General Douglas MacArthur
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

III. Japan and the Asian Tigers

valid, because these domestic problems have affected the export-oriented industrial production. On the political side, the LDP lost the parliamentary elections in 1993, mainly because of a series of corruption scandals. This fact consequently introduced an additional element for the paralysis of the country.

The Japanese economic model was followed by the so-called "Asian tigers" or "dragons", South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Singapore. In South Korea the dictator general Park reorganized the economy with the support of the USA and Japan. South Korea became an important industrial power based on global corporations (Hyundai, Daewoo, Samsung) and a comparative cheap labour force, which favoured massive exports. Democracy came after popular opposition to dictatorship in 1989.

After being defeated by Communist forces, the nationalists of Chiang Kai Shek founded a new State in Taiwan, a former Japanese territory. The alliance with the USA provided Taiwan with the financial and political support needed for a rapid economic development based on industry and trade. Nevertheless, the government remained for more than thirty years in the hands of Chiang Kai Shek and his successors, although a democratization process started in the 80s. The main question is the reunification with mainland China. Beijing considers Taiwan as a Chinese province, although the majority of the Taiwanese do not accept a Communist rule. Moreover, the USA keeps providing military and diplomatic assistance to Taipei.

On the contrary, Chinese authorities reached an agreement with the United Kingdom on Hong Kong, a British colony. In 1997 Hong Kong returned to China, but for 50 years the territory enjoys political autonomy and a capitalist system. Both Hong Kong and Singapore are the financial centres of South East Asia.

a) Occupied by American troops

- Explain the characteristics of the occupation.
- Show a video or part of it illustrating the situation.
- Show the importance of General McArthur during the military occupation.

b) General McArthur and the approval of a new constitution

- Political scientist Robert E. Ward said: "The occupation of Japan was perhaps the single most exhaustively planned operation of massive and externally directed political change in world history."
- Explain the role played by McArthur and his experts.

c) Changes with the New Constitution

- It was decided that the 1889 Meiji Constitution would not be replaced, but rather legally continued. Thus the 1946 constitution was considered as an amendment to the Meiji Constitution in accordance with the provisions of its Article 73.
- Explain the main changes.

South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore

- Explain their economic development after the war.
- Illustrate your presentation with a map
- Why are they called the Four Asian Tigers?

Useful Links

<https://www.docurex.com/en/four-4-asian-tigers-economy-growth/>

<https://www.idealsvdr.com/blog/the-four-asian-tigers/>

<https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/japan-reconstruction>

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2016/05/the-u-s-and-japan-have-very-different-memories-of-world-war-ii.html>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AuPYzWnT1aA&has_verified=1

UNIT 4. Contemporary World

IV. The USSR and its satellites

a) De-stalinization and its limits

After the death of Stalin in 1953, his successor Nikita Khrushchev denounced the dictatorial methods of the former leader within the 20th Congress of the Communist Party in 1956. With his speech, Khrushchev began a de-Stalinization period, which meant the liberation of thousands of political prisoners and a new direction in the government of the country. Although the 5 Years Plans continued, the production of consumer goods was encouraged in order to improve general standard of living. The government also allowed certain peasant private initiatives in order to boost agricultural production.

Concerning foreign affairs, the Soviet leadership offered a new period of co-existence to the USA and the Western Block. It seemed also that the development of different patterns of socialism were to be tolerated in its European satellites.

Hungary. Nevertheless, Soviet flexibility had limits, above all related to the preservation of the communist rule and the Soviet control of the foreign and military affairs of the Eastern European countries. Encouraged by the new political direction of Moscow, in Hungary the communist leader Imre Nagy moved towards the democratization of the country, announced the Hungarian withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, and declared its neutrality in 1956. As a response, Soviet troops occupied Budapest, executed Nagy and installed a new pro-Soviet government.

The Prague Spring. In Czechoslovakia, also the communist Alexander Dubcek tried to lead a democratic movement, the Prague Spring. In 1968 he showed democratic intentions: the government would remain communist, but it would be responsible before the people (the "democratic socialist revolution"). Besides, a programme of economic de-centralization was implemented ("socialism with a human face"), and also a number of individual rights (such as freedom of speech) were allowed. Nevertheless, troops of the Warsaw Pact put an end to this movement, because it implied a serious risk for the continuity of the communist rule and the control of the USSR. The so-called Brezhnev doctrine established the right to intervene in a communist country when socialist principles were threatened.



Prague Spring, 1968. Photo Reijo Nikkilä
areena.yle.fi

IV. The USSR and its satellites

b) Brezhnev

After the retirement of Khrushchev in 1964, L. Brezhnev had emerged as the leader of USSR in the 70s. Brezhnev insisted on the old communist methods, such as the political monopoly of the communist party, and the State complete control of the economy. As a matter of fact, his government was based on the support of the bureaucracy of the Communist Party, whose members enjoyed economic and social privileges (better housing, consumption goods) unattainable by ordinary people. On the other hand, due to the lack of necessary reforms and the increasing military spending, the Soviet economy entered a period of stagnation. The Soviet standard of living began to decline, and the end of the Communist period witnessed a lack of basic consumer goods and even food shortages.

Queues to get basic products were common at the time. On the other hand, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was the beginning of a long war that ended in a clamorous failure for the USSR –a Soviet Vietnam.



Leonid Brezhnev and Wladyslaw Gomulka, 1967
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

c) Gorbachev and the end of the USSR

The USSR was not able to revitalize its stagnant socio-economic system and to cope with the renewed impetus of the USA. In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev became secretary general of the Communist party, and launched a program of political and economic reform (*perestroika* or restructuring), and openness (*glasnost*). *Glasnost* was aimed to promote public discussions and criticism within the Soviet society. Political dissidents were released, and bureaucratic corruption began to be denounced by a more transparent media. In 1987 the government announced democratic elections for local soviets; although the Communist Party still controlled the country, the path to democracy was open.

The objectives of *perestroika* were to decentralize the economy and to introduce free market elements. State planning was reduced, and small private enterprises were tolerated. With respect to the cold war, Gorbachev tried to stabilize the arms expenditure and to begin a new period of relaxation of tensions with the West. Nevertheless, political openness paved the way for the materialization of nationalist pressures from the different federated republics, above all in the Baltic and the Caucasus.



Mikhail Gorbachov in 1986. Photo Yuri Abramochkin
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

IV. The USSR and its satellites

Gorbachev's reforms were too slow and did not respond to the demands of people. Economic reforms were not enough to reverse the socioeconomic critical trend of the USSR. A quarter of the Soviet population was living below in conditions of poverty. Besides, Gorbachev tried to keep unchanged the political monopoly of the CPSU, although certain personalities had begun to design new political directions. The elected president of the Russian Federation, Boris Yeltsin, resigned from the Communist Party in July 1990. Actually, Gorbachev received pressures from both the conservative sector of the CPSU and those in favour of more radical changes.

In August, a group of members of the Party staged a *coup d'État*, arrested Gorbachev and tried to come back to the old Soviet regime. The coup failed thanks to the resistance offered by Yeltsin. In September 1991, the Congress dissolved the USSR and the different Soviet Republics declared their independence.

Dissolution of the USSR



d) Central and Eastern Europe

At the same time, popular movements led to the fall of the communist governments in Eastern Europe. In 1989 thousands of East Germans went to the West via Hungary and Czechoslovakia, and at the end of the year the borders were open. On 9 November 1989 border controls in Berlin were abandoned, and the Wall began to dismantle. Germany was finally reunified in 1990. In Poland, the government accepted free elections, and Solidarity (a clandestine catholic trade union) became the largest Polish political force. In Czechoslovakia the *Velvet revolution* overthrew the communist government in 1989 (a process that ended in the division of the country into two States, the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993). Afterwards, free elections took place also in Hungary and Bulgaria.

• Nikita Khrushchev

- Make a summary of the changes he introduced and explain them to the classroom (link him with Kennedy in a conflict)
- What happened in Hungary and Czechoslovakia? Explain the Prague Spring.
- Illustrate Soviet intervention in Hungary and Czechoslovakia with 3 pictures and a video.

• Mikhail Gorbachev

- Explain Perestroika (restructuring) and Glasnost (openness).
- What were the consequences of Gorbachev's politics?
- Illustrate your answers with pictures about Gorbachev talking to people about his politics.

Useful Links

<https://www.biography.com/political-figure/nikita-khrushchev>

<https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB76/>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUlXvU_b3pc

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XgLgnpRYw>

<https://www.history.com/topics/cold-war/perestroika-and-glasnost>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_l19PrZC2o

Maps

Show on the map the different republics emerged from the final crisis of the USSR.



UNIT 4. Contemporary World

V. China

After the end of the Japanese occupation of China, Mao Zedong, leader of the Chinese Communist Party, triumphed over the *Kuomintang* –the Nationalist party. In 1949 he founded the People's Republic of China.

a) Transition to socialism

During the '50s, the land was expropriated and redistributed among the peasants. Afterwards, the government launched a collectivization program in order to improve agricultural production and productivity through the creation of collective farms. Nevertheless, peasants were allowed to keep small private plots for their particular use. On the other hand, a Stalinist industrialization model was developed, based on heavy industry and State centralized planning (Five Years Plans).



Mao Zedong and Nixon in 1972
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Since the objectives of collectivization and development were not fully fulfilled, Mao opened a period of discussion on the path to follow –the Hundred Flowers. Nevertheless, criticism reached the Communist Party itself, whose leadership and decisions were questioned.

b) The Great Leap Forward

As a reaction, Mao insisted that the right path was Socialism adapted to the Chinese needs. Collectivization of agriculture intensified, and existing cooperatives were transformed into large communes of 30.000 people or more. These communes organized local life beyond its agricultural function. On the other hand, large industrial projects were abandoned, and instead the communes received funds to undertake small industrial initiatives.

The Great Leap Forward was a failure, because its emphasis on collectivization and lack of individual incentives for production. Between 15 and 20 million people died of starvation, and the commune experiment (but not the structure itself) was abandoned. Mao himself was criticized and relegated, although he kept his position as chairman of the Communist party. Reformers such as Deng Xiaoping tried to introduce individual incentives in order to increase agricultural and industrial production.

c) The Cultural Revolution

In 1966 Mao reacted against what he considered a deviation from the original Marxist doctrine. The so-called remnants of capitalism, including customs and old Chinese cultural elements were to be eradicated. The Red Guards, radical followers of Mao, persecuted those accused of capitalist or traditionalist deviations.



Children holding Mao's Little Red Book, 1968

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

d) Evolution after Mao

After the death of Mao in 1976, a struggle for power started between the conservative Maoist elements (the "Gang of Four") and the followers of a more pragmatic approach, led by Deng Xiaoping. Deng could control successfully the Chinese communist party and began a modernization program (the Four Modernizations, agriculture, industry, technology and national defence). Old restrictions to private initiatives were eliminated: for example a number of peasants received plots of land outside the collective production system. Prices and production increasingly depended on the free market, and consequently, agricultural production rose. On the other hand, the government opened China to international markets: foreign investments and technology imports were accepted, and many students were encouraged to study abroad.

Thanks to these opening measures and the creation of the so-called "market socialism", the economic development of China and its per capita income grew enormously, and also the standards of living improved. Nevertheless, the rapid economic growth created a high inflation (in other words, a weakened purchasing power) and corruption. Moreover, the economic reforms were not followed by a political change towards democracy. In 1989 the student protests asking for democracy became a massive movement in Tiananmen Square. The government sent the army against the demonstrators and crushed the movement (including hundreds of dead, arrests and executions).

Nowadays, China remains controlled by the Communist Party, since no political opposition is tolerated. In spite of certain new measures, the government has underlined the political monopoly of the Communist party and the "scientific view of development", to solve the existing socio-economic problems. The Chinese economic growth is still very high, on the basis of a cheap labour force and an increasing interest on exports (China joined the World Trade Organization in 2001). Nevertheless, economic unbalances remain between the more modernized urban areas at the coast and the poorer rural zones in the west.



Deng Xiaoping and Jimmy Carter, 1979

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

- Explain what happened in China after Mao's death.
- Illustrate your presentation with:
 1. Standards of living improvement
 2. Students asking for democracy (Tiananmen Square)
 3. From Deng Xiaoping to Xi Jinping
 4. Hong Kong protests

Useful Links

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/history/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/china-after-1945>

<https://www.quora.com/What-happened-to-China-after-WW2><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4woMuFZAx88>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-48607723>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4IrynHmeQIU>

Vocabulary. Explain/define the following concepts/ persons/ institutions.

Use your own words

- | | |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| • New Frontier | • Voting Rights Act |
| • J. F. Kennedy | • L. Johnson |
| • Martin Luther King | • Watergate affair |
| • <i>Reaganomics</i> | • Nixon |
| • <i>Star Wars</i> | • Operation <i>Desert Storm</i> |
| • ECSC | • EEC |
| • Euratom | • Treaty of Maastricht |
| • <i>Little tigers</i> | • Chiang Kai Shek |
| • Imre Nagy | • Alexander Dubcek |
| • <i>Prague Spring</i> | • Brezhnev |
| • <i>Perestroika</i> | • <i>Velvet revolution</i> |
| • Solidarity | • The Great Leap Forward |
| • Cultural Revolution | • Mao Tse-Tung |
| • Deng Xiaoping | • <i>Market socialism</i> |

UNIT 4. Contemporary World

VI. Globalization and information society

The term *globalization* is commonly related to the interdependence between the world economies. Market capitalism was consolidated as the only viable economic choice after the fall of the communist regimes of Eastern Europe and the Chinese economic opening. During the '80s and '90s, national governments have liberalized and privatized different economic sectors previously controlled by the State: communications, transports, energy... the strategy was to create the best conditions for trade exchanges. From this point of view, economic efficiency is reached when a country is free to import the products it needs and to produce goods at competitive prices.

Thus the World Trade Organization was created in 1995 to substitute the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), in order to favour the elimination or reduction of restrictions to trade. As a matter of fact, the increasing commercial movements all over the world have been the basis of a strong economic growth during the past twenty years. In the days of crisis, however, world markets seem to come back to protectionist policies.

Moreover, multinational corporations play a leading role in the globalization process due to their enormous resources. Large enterprises operate internationally, since they are able to purchase raw materials in the region of the globe where they are available, to manufacture different products in different countries, and to sell them anywhere.

Nevertheless, the concept of globalization is not limited to economy. Multinational corporations supply the international markets with similar and well-known brands, which are easily identified worldwide (for example a pair of Nike or a can of Coke). Cultural globalization actually concerns the American social and cultural model. Consumer society goes beyond the basic needs of people and takes a socio-cultural aspect, thanks to mass media and global corporations. From fast food (McDonalds, Pizza Hut), beverages (Coca-Cola), clothes (blue jeans, T-shirts) to music, educational models and malls, the existence of common cultural elements is evident everywhere. English has actually become a universal language.

Technological advances since the end of WWII have radically transformed social and cultural relations, above all through the improvement of communications. The creation of the microchip at the end of the 50s made it possible to store a huge amount of data on a reduced space. It paved the way for most of current inventions, such as computers, which simplify all aspects of everyday life, mobile phones that are able to connect virtually the entire globe using a network of satellites, and so on. The Internet, created at the end of the '80s for academic purposes, nowadays allows access to all kind of information sources and the exchange of knowledge. Information and knowledge have become the pillars of the so-called information society, where the economic basis is related to a number of products ranging from education to research and development.

Although universal cultural patterns spread, economic globalization as a model of economic success is restricted to developed countries. Nowadays one billion people are on the verge of

VI. Globalization and information society

famine, are illiterate and/or without access to basic medical or sanitation services. On the other hand, the world trade system has been accused to favour only exports of manufactured goods and not the raw materials or agricultural products exported by the less-developed countries. As a matter of fact, anti-globalization movements reject trade agreements and multinational corporations as instruments of an unfair economic structure.

UNIT 4. Contemporary World

VII. Contemporary conflicts

1. The Palestinian conflict

After the creation of the State of Israel and the first Arab- Israeli war, thousands of Palestinians left their country and created a refugee problem in Jordan and Lebanon, where a civil war begun between Christians and Muslims. The situation worsened with the intervention of Syrian and Israeli troops on Lebanese territory. In 1964 the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) was created as a Palestinian political movement, but military attacks and terrorist activities of Palestinian groups such as *al-Fatah*, led by Yasir Arafat, were promptly followed by Israeli retaliations.

A permanent tension in the region was the outcome of the refusal of the neighbouring Arab States to recognize the existence of Israel⁴. Nevertheless, the Camp David agreement signed by Israel and Egypt in 1978 and supported by the USA meant the starting point of a permanent peace settlement based on the principle of the recognition of the State of Israel in exchange of land devolution. A similar agreement was reached with Jordan. Lebanon seems to recover from civil war after the withdrawal of the Israeli and Syrian troops.

With respect to the Palestinians inside Israel, a popular movement of opposition against the Israeli presence or *intifada* started in the 80s. Nevertheless, in 1993 the Israeli government and the PLO reached an agreement in Oslo, based on the recognition of the State of Israel in exchange of the creation of an autonomous Palestinian authority on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. In spite of the implementation of certain elements of the agreement, the Palestine State has not been recognized.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues because of the reluctance of the Israeli authorities to accept the existence of the Palestine State, above all with Jerusalem as its capital. On the other hand, there is a political division between the Palestinians. Hamas, a radical Palestinian party, considered a terrorist group, controls Gaza, while *al-Fatah*, the party of the president of the Palestinian Authority Mahmud Abbas is strong in the West Bank.



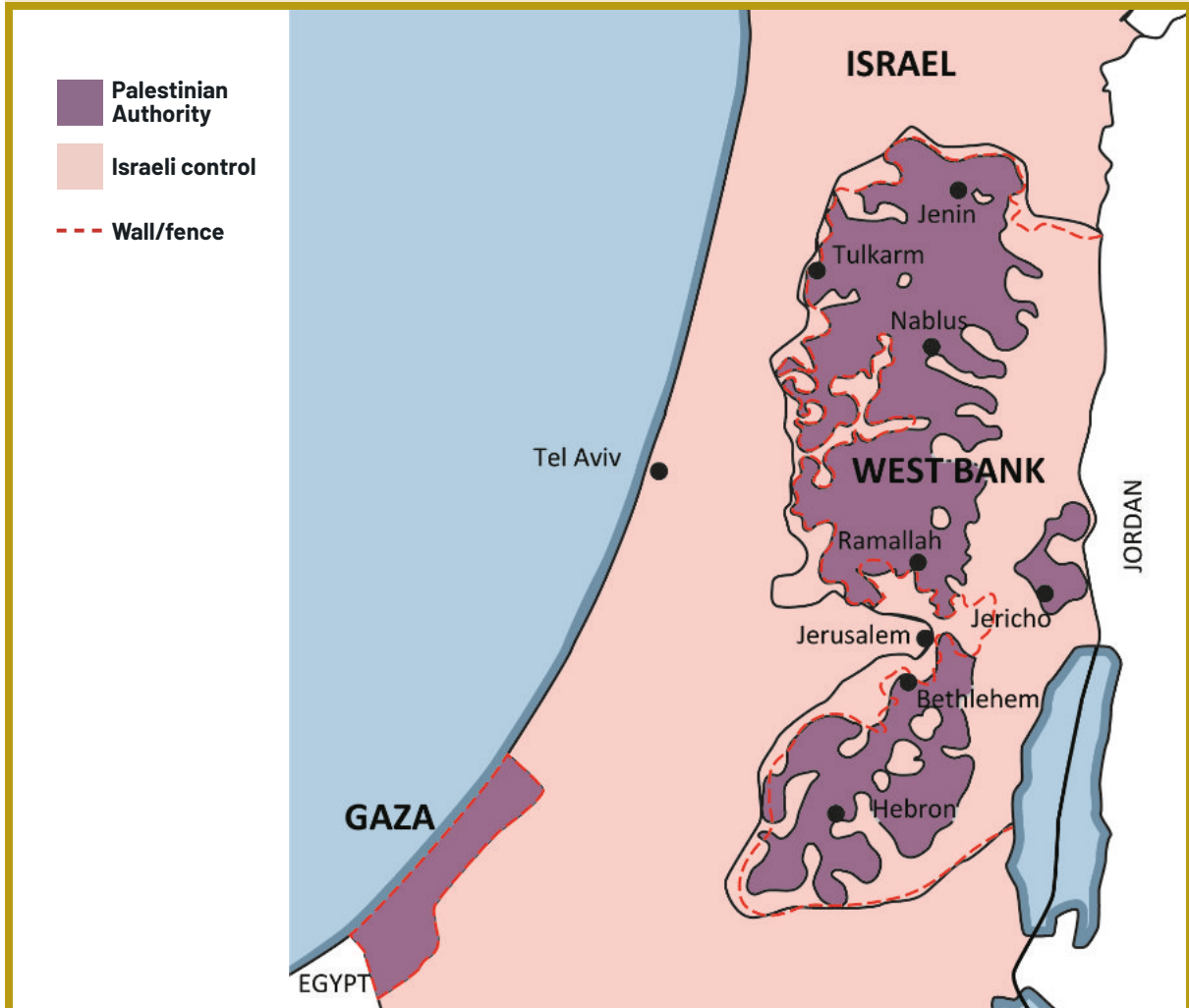
The Nobel Peace Prize laureates for 1994 in Oslo: Yasser Arafat, Shimon Peres and Yitzhak Rabin. Government Press Office, Israel.

[Wikimedia Commons](#)

4. Three more wars broke out between Israel and its neighbours: the second war started when Nasser, the Egyptian leader, nationalized the Suez Canal in 1956. The second was the so-called Six-Day War in 1967, which gave Israel control of the Sinai Peninsula, the Gaza Strip, the West Bank and the Golan Heights. The fourth, or *Yom Kippur War*, started in 1973 and showed definitely the impossibility for the Arab States to defeat Israel.

VII. Contemporary conflicts

Israel and the territories of the PA



2. Cyprus

Cyprus was a British colony until 1960, when it was granted independence. Archbishop Makarios was the first president of a country populated by Greeks and a Turkish minority. In 1963 a civil war took place between Greeks and Turks, and in 1974 Turkey intervened militarily and occupied the North of the island, thus supporting the creation of an independent republic, only recognized by Turkey. Although the frontier was open in 2003 and the following year Cyprus joined the European Union, the situation remains unchanged.

3. Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia was a federation of six republics (Serbia, Montenegro, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia), although their political and ethnic borders were not the same. There were 600.000 Serbs living in Croatia, and 1.300.000 in Bosnia. Actually, the population in

VII. Contemporary conflicts

Bosnia was mixed: 44% were Muslims, 33% Serbs and 17% Croats. After WWII, Marshall Tito kept the country unified and relatively free from the tight control of the USSR. When he died in 1980, a collective presidency took the lead of the State.

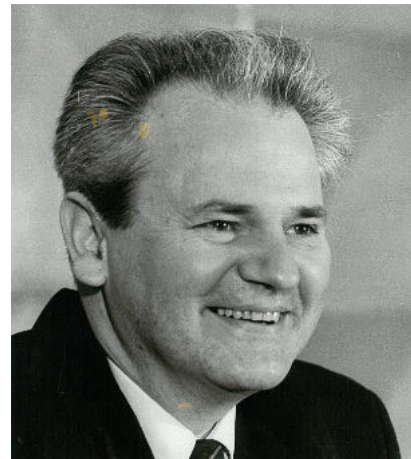
In 1988 Slobodan Milosevic became president of Serbia, and the fall of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the end of the USSR favoured the spread of nationalist feelings. Slovenia and Croatia declared their independence in 1991 against the Serbian intention of playing a preponderant role in a united Yugoslavia. War between Serbia and Croatia broke out and the Serbian army occupied part of the Croatian territory. During the following year UN troops were sent to guarantee the implementation of the ceasefire.

War moved to Bosnia-Herzegovina, which had also been recognized as an independent country in 1992. Nevertheless, Bosnian Serbs were rather in favour of joining Serbia than of recognizing a Muslim leader. Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Serbs, supported by Serbia started to fight while Croatia invaded the Northern part of the country. Ethnic cleansing (the systematic elimination of the antagonist ethnic group) took place during the Bosnian war; the worst of these actions took place in Srebrenica, where 8.000 Muslims were killed by Serbian troops. Sarajevo was besieged by the Serb troops. The UN force was unable even to protect civilians and to ensure the distribution of supplies.

When in 1994 a mortar shell killed a number of people in a market of Sarajevo, NATO intervened and bombarded Serbian positions. As a result, the peace conference of Dayton finished the war in 1995: Bosnia remained as an independent country, although composed of two entities, the Bosnian Serb Republic and the Muslim-Croatian federation. NATO troops watched the fulfilment of the accord.

The last chapter of the war of Yugoslavia was the conflict of Kosovo. Kosovo was a Serbian province, inhabited mostly by ethnic Albanians. The elimination of the Kosovar autonomy by Milosevic paved the way to the formation of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). In 1999 Serb troops intervened, and NATO attacked Serbia, forcing Milosevic to accept the withdrawal from Kosovo. NATO troops were in charge of maintaining the peace and the UN administered the province. In 2008 Kosovo declared its independence.

Slobodan Milosevic was defeated in the presidential elections of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) of 2000. The following year he was arrested and sent to the UN Criminal Court in The Hague, on charges of war crimes and genocide. He died five years later during the trial.



Slobodan Milošević (1941–2006). Photo Stevan Kragujević
[Wikimedia Commons](#)



Vedran Smailović, cello player, in the partially destroyed National Library of Sarajevo during the war in 1992. Photo Mikhail Evstafiev
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

VII. Contemporary conflicts

Ethnic groups and countries for former Yugoslavia



4. The Middle East and the terrorist threat

On 11 September 2001, al-Qaeda terrorists hijacked two planes and crashed them into the World Trade Center in New York. As a reaction, the USA attacked Afghanistan, defeated the Taliban government (an Islamic radical group that supported al-Qaeda) and installed a democratic government headed by Hamid Karzai. Although the Taliban control relevant areas of the country, an international coalition remains in Afghanistan to support the new State.

Al-Qaeda terrorism was not confined to America and the Middle East. Terrorist groups killed 200 people in Bali in 2002, 60 in Turkey in 2003 and another 200 in Madrid the following year.

With respect to Iraq, the 2nd Gulf War started on the basis of the alleged existence of chemical and biological weapons in the hands



11 September 2001: Plane crash into the towers of the World Trade Center in New York. Photo Robert J. Fisch
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

VII. Contemporary conflicts

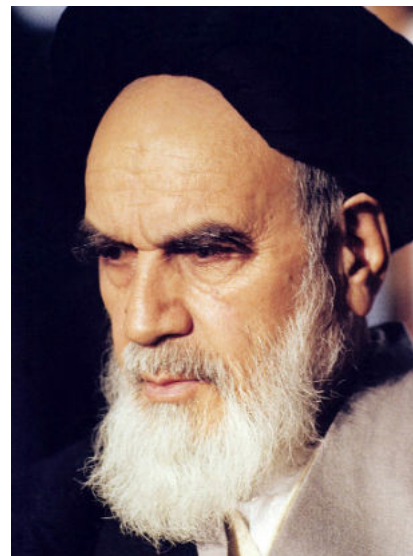
of Saddam Hussein. An international coalition not supported by the UN invaded Iraq and took Baghdad. Although Saddam Hussein was captured and executed, and a democratic government was elected, violence between religious factions and against foreign troops is still common.

Iran became an Islamic Republic after the fall of the shah Reza Pahlevi in 1979. The new leader ayatollah Ruholla Khomeini installed a regime based on the strict observance of the *Shariah* (Islamic law) and the rule of the Islamic clerics or *ulama*. The new State was violently anti-American ("the great Satan"), above all because the support of the USA to the shah and the Israeli State. Moreover, all kind of dissidence was repressed. Successive presidential elections, which have given power to different Iranian factions (moderate M. Khatami in 1997, conservative Mahmud Ahmadinejad in 2005 and 2009, moderate Hassan Rouhani in 2013) had not changed the traditional political guidelines of the country concerning the antagonism with the State of Israel and mistrust with the USA. Recently, the development of an Iranian nuclear program resulted in economic sanctions for Iran. In 2015, an agreement was reached between Iran and a group of countries (China, France, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom, United States) on the nuclear program, called the "Iran Nuclear Deal". However, American president Donald Trump withdrew from the Plan in 2018.

In Syria the situation became increasingly complex. Since 2011, protests against president Bashar al-Assad led to a civil war between the rebel forces (supported by the United States, Turkey and Saudi Arabia) and the government (supported by Russia and Iran). In addition, in 2013 the so-called Islamic State proclaimed a caliphate (Isis or Daesh) under the strict application of the Sharia, and began a military expansion over Syria and Iraq. Extremist attacks in different European countries (Paris, Brussels, London) led to a series of air strikes and the intervention of Turkish and Iraqi troops against the Islamic State, which has virtually disappeared. The conflict, with its international implications, continues between government forces and rebel troops.



Saddam Hussein
[Wikimedia Commons](#)



Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (before 1989)
[Wikimedia Commons](#)

Lessons of World History.
From the Glorious Revolution to Contemporary Conflicts
4º ESO Bilingüe

Este manual se ofrece a los profesores y alumnos de Cuarto de la ESO que siguen el programa bilingüe en inglés como un instrumento de enseñanza fundamentado en el aprendizaje integrado de contenidos y lenguas extranjeras (AICLE/CLIL), sobre la base de varios años de experiencia directa en el aula. Está concebido tanto para proveer los contenidos específicos de

Historia contemporánea universal en este nivel, como para apoyar la adquisición de destrezas y estrategias en inglés. Cada una de las unidades está acompañada de documentos, mapas, resúmenes y actividades creados para consolidar las capacidades del alumno en idioma inglés a través de la Historia, y para facilitar el trabajo docente.

