



# UNIT 6

## **ACCELERATING GLOBAL CHANGE AND REALIGNMENTS (1900 to Present)**

*Short Cut*

# Unit 6 Short Cut

---

## GENERAL REMARKS

The twentieth century ranks as one of the most tumultuous eras ever. It was a time of paradox and contradiction, leading the eminent historian Eric Hobsbawm to label it the “age of extremes.” Democratic forms of government were adopted more widely than ever before (and women gained the vote in large parts of the world), but history’s most oppressive dictatorships appeared as well. The 1900s were a time of unprecedented prosperity, but also of striking socioeconomic polarity, as gaps between rich and poor widened. There were tremendous cultural and scientific advancements, but also the worst wars—including the modern form of violence known as **genocide**—and the greatest arms buildups in human history.

The first half of the century was dominated by two mammoth military conflicts: **World War I** and **World War II**, “total” wars characterized by improved military technology and new tactics, comprehensive mobilization of resources, and immense devastation. World War I destroyed several of the nineteenth century’s great empires and sapped Europe’s strength. World War II, the bloodiest conflict humanity has ever experienced—especially in combination with **the Holocaust**—dislodged Europe completely from its position of global mastery.

The interwar years were marked by global economic crisis, culminating in the **Great Depression**, which emanated outward from the United States. This period also saw the rise of powerful dictatorships, such as Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy, and Nazi Germany, and it appeared for a time that **totalitarianism**, not democracy, might be the wave of the future. With the establishment of the Soviet state, **communism** became an influential—although, in the end, seemingly unworkable—alternative to **capitalism**.

During the century’s second half, sweeping trends affected the entire world. One, following the collapse of Europe’s global dominance, was **decolonization**. From the 1940s through the 1970s, parts of Africa, Asia, and the Pacific that had been under European (and U.S.) imperial control became free. This wave of **national liberation** created dozens of new nations. In some cases, decolonization proceeded peacefully. In others, it was attained by force or disintegrated into political chaos.

Another effect of World War II was a new geopolitical alignment, the **Cold War**. In the previous century and a half, world affairs had been determined by the workings of the European balance of power, but political and economic might was now concentrated in the hands of two evenly matched **superpowers**: the United States and the Soviet Union. This bipolar equilibrium persisted for four and a half decades, dividing most of the globe into two hostile camps—although the rise of China as a communist power opposed to the USSR, and the attempt of certain nations to form a **non-aligned movement**, provided diplomatic alternatives.

The twentieth century was an era of rapid modernization. Societies already industrialized when the 1900s began—North America, Europe, and Japan—became even more adept at sci-

entific and technological innovation, and shifted toward **postindustrial** (or **service**) economies during the post-World War II era. Such societies are generally referred to as belonging to the **developed world**. A number of other countries, especially in Asia, have similarly modernized. The **developing** or **nondeveloped world** (or, in Cold War terms, the **Third World**) includes most other regions, which remain in a less-advanced stage of economic and technological progress. In global terms, a wide economic gap—the **north-south split**—opened between richer societies above the equator and poorer ones below it.

The 1980s and 1990s saw the collapse of communism in Europe and the USSR, and with that, the end of the Cold War. The same decades witnessed a wave of democratization in many parts of the world, as well as the increased **globalization** of the world economy. The

greater ease with which ethnicities and traditions mix has stimulated a high degree of **multiculturalism**, and mass communications and transport have, metaphorically speaking, eliminated geographical distance, making the world a much more connected place. This is especially due to the proliferation of computer technology, which has caused an **information** (or **digital**) **revolution**. Entities other than **nation-states**—such as **multinational corporations**, **non-governmental organizations**, and **regional trade alliances**—have had an increasingly large impact on world affairs.

The world's general direction in the twenty-first century remains unclear. Many trends, such as the end of the nuclear arms race, economic globalization, and the spread of popular culture, mass communications, and computer technology, seem to be drawing the world closer together. Other developments threaten to pull the world farther apart, including ethnic violence and genocide, extreme forms of **national-**

**ism**, **religious fundamentalism**, proliferation of **weapons of mass destruction**, potential friction between China and the West, and ongoing tensions between the West and Islamic states. The same is true of **terrorism**, most notably in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. On the planetary level, all modern societies, developed or undeveloped, have had an immensely greater impact on the environment. The most noticeable effect today is **climate change**, popularly known as global warming.

### POSTMODERN ERA

With respect to historical labels, it is common to speak of the modern period (ca. 1800–1945) as ending after World War II, at least in the developed West. The years following are generally referred to by historians as the contemporary or postmodern era, characterized by postindustrial and global forms of economic organization, multiculturalism, the blurring of national lines, and extreme individualism. To what degree this label fits less-developed societies in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere is a matter of debate.

## BROAD TRENDS

State Building, Expansion, and Conflict, 1900 to the Present	
<b>Europe</b>	<p>World War I (1914–1918, trench warfare) and Paris Peace Conference (1919, Treaty of Versailles)</p> <p>Russia's October Revolution (1917, Vladimir Lenin)</p> <p>weakness of interwar democracies (effects of Great Depression) vs. rise of totalitarian dictatorships (Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany)</p> <p>civilian involvement in war (Guernica, Battle of Britain, strategic bombing and Dresden)</p> <p>collective security vs. appeasement in 1930s diplomacy (Munich Agreement)</p> <p>World War II (1939–1945, blitzkrieg, aerial warfare)</p> <p>genocide (Holocaust, ethnic cleansing in Yugoslav wars)</p> <p>Cold War rivalry (arms race and MAD, containment and domino principle, détente, fall of Berlin Wall)</p> <p>"iron curtain" division of Europe (NATO vs. Warsaw Pact, Berlin Wall)</p> <p>social welfare systems and economic union in Western Europe (EU)</p> <p>East European dissidents (Solidarity) and Gorbachev's <i>perestroika</i> in USSR</p> <p>collapse of European communism (1989–1991) and post-communist "shock therapy" (1990s)</p>
<b>Middle East</b>	<p>World War I (1914–1918, Gallipoli)</p> <p>genocide (Armenians in Ottoman Empire)</p> <p>Paris Peace Conference and the mandate system</p> <p>interwar modernization under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and Reza Shah Pahlavi</p> <p>Arab-Israeli conflict (Balfour Declaration, partition of Palestine, Arab-Israeli wars, PLO and Hamas, Camp David and Oslo accords, First and Second Intifadas)</p> <p>OPEC and the geopolitical importance of Middle Eastern oil</p> <p>Gamal Nasser (pan-Arabism) and nationalization of Suez Canal</p> <p>Iranian Revolution (1979, Shah of Iran vs. Ayatollah Khomeini)</p> <p>Iran-Iraq War and Gulf War (Desert Storm)</p> <p>al-Qaeda attacks of 9/11/2001 and U.S.-led "war on terror" (Iraq, Afghanistan)</p> <p>the Arab Spring + Syrian civil war + ISIS</p>
<b>Africa</b>	<p>civilian involvement in war (Italian terror-bombing of Ethiopia, child soldiers, Boko Haram abductions)</p> <p>negotiated vs. violent decolonization in Africa (Ghana and French West Africa vs. Algeria, Congo, and Biafra)</p> <p>Kwame Nkrumah and pan-Africanism (Organization of African Unity)</p> <p>authoritarianism in Africa (Joseph Mobutu, Idi Amin, Muammar Gaddafi)</p> <p>apartheid in South Africa (African National Congress, Nelson Mandela)</p> <p>genocide (Rwanda, Darfur)</p> <p>impact of HIV/AIDS on society and politics</p>

<b>State Building, Expansion, and Conflict, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>East (and Central) Asia</b>	<p>Chinese Revolution (1911–1912, Sun Yat-sen, Chiang Kai-shek, and KMT)</p> <p>Japanese invasion of China (1931+) and World War II (1939–1945, East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere)</p> <p>civilian involvement in war (Nanjing, “comfort women,” Tokyo fire bombing, Hiroshima)</p> <p>Japan’s economic resurgence and Asia’s “little tigers”</p> <p>Mao Tse-tung and People’s Republic of China (1949+, Great Leap Forward, Cultural Revolution)</p> <p>Korean War (1950–1953)</p> <p>Deng Xiaoping (economic reform, Tiananmen Square protests)</p> <p>economic growth and potential superpower status for Communist China</p> <p>nuclear weapons in North Korea</p>
<b>South (and Southeast) Asia and Oceania</b>	<p>national liberation in India (Indian National Congress, Mohandas Gandhi and nonviolence)</p> <p>World War II (1939–1945, East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere)</p> <p>Indochina and Vietnam wars (1945–1975, Ho Chi Minh)</p> <p>Indian and Pakistani independence (1947, Jawaharlal Nehru)</p> <p>Indonesian war of independence (1945–1949, Sukarno)</p> <p>genocide (Khmer Rouge in Cambodia)</p> <p>Indo-Pakistani rivalry and nuclear weapons</p>
<b>Americas</b>	<p>U.S. sphere of influence in Latin America</p> <p>Mexican Revolution (1910–1920, PRI)</p> <p>Cold War rivalry (arms race and MAD, containment and domino principle, détente, fall of Berlin Wall)</p> <p>authoritarianism in Latin America (Juan Perón, Augusto Pinochet, death squads)</p> <p>genocide (Mayans in Guatemala)</p> <p>Cuban Revolution (1959, Fidel Castro, Bay of Pigs, Cuban Missile Crisis)</p> <p>Nicaraguan Revolution (1979, Sandinistas vs. Contras)</p>
<b>Global and Interregional</b>	<p>international organizations (League of Nations, United Nations, GATT/WTO, International Criminal Court)</p> <p>total wars (civilian casualties, economic mobilization, conscription, restrictions on civil liberties)</p> <p>ethnic violence and genocide</p> <p>World Wars I and II</p> <p>global impact of Cold War (proxy wars and brushfire conflicts)</p> <p>decolonization and national liberation</p> <p>rise of terrorism (Black Hand, PLO, IRA, FLQ, Weather Underground, Hamas, al-Qaeda)</p> <p>asymmetrical warfare (WMDs and RMA vs. low-intensity and guerrilla wars)</p> <p>nuclear proliferation (“nuclear club” vs. Israel, India, Pakistan, North Korea, Iran)</p>

## State Building, Expansion, and Conflict

- During the first half of the 1900s, two world wars reshaped global affairs. Europe's position of world dominance was weakened by World War I, and the United States became the world's richest and most powerful nation. World War II completed the dismantling of Europe's global dominance. Both were total wars that required near-complete mobilization of human and economic resources.
- For four and a half decades after World War II, most of the world was divided into hostile camps, led by two superpowers, the United States and the USSR, in a geopolitical struggle known as the Cold War. This involved a nuclear arms race, the largest weapons buildup in world history, and the creation of huge military-industrial complexes.
- From the 1940s through the 1970s, a mass wave of decolonization deprived the European powers of their empires. Sometimes through peaceful negotiation, sometimes through violent separation, former colonies in Asia, Africa, and the Pacific became free. Dozens of new nations were formed.
- Countries that were neither Western nor Soviet-bloc came to be seen as belonging to the so-called Third World. These nations, many recently decolonized, and most relatively backward in terms of economic and technological development, experimented with a variety of political and economic systems. During the Cold War, some sided with the United States or the USSR, while others attempted to remain neutral or even to join together in a non-aligned movement. Some were attracted to Communist China, whose emerging rivalry with the USSR complicated the bipolarity of the Cold War.
- During the late 1980s and 1990s, communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR collapsed, ending the Cold War. The only remaining superpower has been the United States, with China—which remained communist—as a rising power.
- The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, by al-Qaeda began a new global struggle, the U.S.-led war on terror. This sharpened tensions between the West and the Islamic world, and sparked wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Terrorism in general (carried out by groups such as the ETA, the IRA, the PLO, Hamas, and others) has played a significant role in international politics in the 1900s and 2000s.
- New weapons and tactics were constantly developed. Wars became increasingly destructive and caused greater numbers of casualties, especially among civilian populations. They also created larger numbers of displaced persons and refugees.
- Warfare became increasingly connected with racial hatred and campaigns of ethnic violence such as the Holocaust. The term “genocide” was coined during World War II to describe such crises. Conversely, and largely because of this trend, a greater concern for human rights, and wider recognition of the need to safeguard them, arose.
- By the 1990s and early 2000s, the gap between high-tech and low-level warfare had grown wider than ever before in history. The most advanced armed forces possess weapons of mass destruction, precision-guided (“smart”) weapons, and—thanks to what strategists call the “revolution in military affairs”—digitally integrated systems. Much of the rest of the world fights low-intensity or guerrilla wars, using only small arms and hand-to-hand weapons.
- Domestically, the level of popular representation in national governments grew in many countries. Women gained the vote in most Western nations in the early twentieth century, and later in most others.

- Between the world wars, democracies tended to be politically weak and economically depressed. The most dynamic governments of the interwar period were dictatorships, including totalitarian regimes that aimed to control as many aspects of their subjects' lives as possible.
- After World War II, the primary form of political and economic organization in the West (Canada, the United States, and Western Europe) was the democratic state with a capitalist system, although capitalism was modified to varying degrees by social welfare systems.
- A number of regimes, led by the Soviet Union and China, adopted communist economic systems. Their political systems tended to be dictatorial.
- Military and authoritarian dictatorships proliferated throughout the Third World during the Cold War, some of them pro-Soviet, some of them pro-U.S., some of them neutral. Many have democratized during the 1990s and early 2000s, although with varying degrees of success.
- Entities other than nation-states, including regional trade organizations (such as the European Union and NAFTA), non-governmental organizations (such as Amnesty International and the Red Cross), and multinational corporations (such as Coca-Cola, Shell Oil, and McDonalds), began to exert greater influence over world affairs.
- Unofficial actors, including anti-war protesters, civil-rights and freedom activists, and proponents of nonviolent resistance (most famously Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.), affected political events on numerous occasions.

<b>Culture, Science, and Technology, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>Europe</b>	uncertainty and anxiety in high culture (impact of world wars, Freudian thought) mass media (high culture, entertainment, propaganda) sports professionalized and politicized existentialism synthetic spirituality (new age, Hare Krishna) rapid progress in new scientific fields
<b>Middle East</b>	adoption and adaptation of Western high culture mass media (high culture, entertainment, propaganda) sports professionalized and politicized Americanization and Westernization of global culture ("coca-colonization") religious fundamentalism
<b>Africa</b>	adoption and adaptation of Western high culture (Négritude) mass media (high culture, entertainment, propaganda) sports professionalized and politicized Americanization and Westernization of global culture ("coca-colonization") religious fundamentalism

<b>Culture, Science, and Technology, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>East (and Central) Asia</b>	adoption and adaptation of Western high culture mass media (high culture, entertainment, propaganda) sports professionalized and politicized Americanization and Westernization of global culture (“coca-colonization”) synthetic spirituality (Falun Gong) significant progress in new scientific fields
<b>South (and Southeast) Asia and Oceania</b>	adoption and adaptation of Western high culture mass media (high culture, entertainment, propaganda) sports professionalized and politicized Americanization and Westernization of global culture (“coca-colonization”) religious fundamentalism
<b>Americas</b>	uncertainty and anxiety in high culture (impact of world wars, Freudian thought) mass media (high culture, entertainment, propaganda) sports professionalized and politicized existentialism Americanization and Westernization of Latin American culture (“coca-colonization”) rapid progress in new scientific fields synthetic spirituality (new age, Hare Krishna) religious fundamentalism liberation theology
<b>Global and Interregional</b>	modernity vs. postmodernity multiculturalism (Marshall McLuhan’s “global village,” Bollywood, reggae, manga) impact of global conflict on mass culture (James Bond, video games) sports professionalized and politicized (modern Olympics) theoretical physics and atomic science (Albert Einstein) aviation, rocketry, space science medical advances and genetics computers and the digital (information) revolution

## **Culture, Science, and Technology**

- Mass media and mass communications technology transformed the cultural sphere. Cinema, radio, television, and other electronic media have been used to create high art.
- Mass media have also been used to create popular (or mass) culture: music, literature, and so forth aimed at a popular audience for purposes of entertainment.
- Governments increasingly used mass media to produce propaganda, or art with political messages.
- The high art of the twentieth century was characterized by bold experimentation and the distortion, even abandonment, of traditional norms and conventions.

- During the first two-thirds of the 1900s, largely because of Europe’s decline, Freudian thought, and the two world wars, Western high art was marked by uncertainty and pessimism—in contrast to the exuberance and energy of popular, or mass, culture.
- Scientific and technological advancement proceeded at a breathtaking pace and scale. Especially innovative fields were physics, atomic science, biotechnology and genetics, aviation and rocketry, electronics, and computers.
- After World War II, Western culture moved beyond the “modern” period into a newer “postmodern” era.
- Global cultures have mixed, interacted, and blended to an unprecedented degree. This celebration and acknowledgment of different traditions and styles is generally referred to as multiculturalism.
- Since the 1990s, the proliferation of personal computer technology, particularly access to the Internet, has led to an information (or digital) revolution.
- New forms of spirituality, many of them synthetically combining elements of old religions with new beliefs, appeared. Old or new, religious beliefs were in many cases used to advance political agendas. Religious fundamentalism has proven influential in many places throughout this period.

<b>Economic Systems, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>Europe</b>	<p>impact of Great Depression (low exports, mass unemployment)</p> <p>economic intervention: Soviet nationalization (five-year plans), state capitalism (syndicalism) in fascist nations, democracies’ relief-and-welfare programs (Keynesian theory)</p> <p>Bretton Woods system (World Bank, IMF, GATT)</p> <p>Marshall Plan vs. Soviet economic zone in Eastern Europe</p> <p>economic union in Western Europe (European Coal and Steel, European Economic Community, European Union)</p> <p>1970s economic crisis (gold standard, oil embargo, stagflation)</p> <p>1980s free-market reform and economic liberalization (Margaret Thatcher and theories of Milton Friedman; Mikhail Gorbachev and <i>perestroika</i>)</p> <p>globalization in 1990s and 2000s</p> <p>G-7/G-8</p> <p>the EU and the euro (“eurozone”)</p> <p>2007 economic crisis</p>
<b>Middle East</b>	<p>Bretton Woods system (World Bank, IMF, GATT)</p> <p>state intervention: Nasser’s nationalization of the Suez Canal</p> <p>OPEC + petroleum-centered economies</p> <p>1970s economic crisis (gold standard, oil embargo, stagflation)</p> <p>globalization in 1990s and 2000s</p> <p>north-south split</p> <p>2007 economic crisis</p>

<b>Economic Systems, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>Africa</b>	<p>Bretton Woods system (World Bank, IMF, GATT)</p> <p>1970s economic crisis (gold standard, oil embargo, stagflation)</p> <p>globalization in 1990s and 2000s</p> <p>African Free Trade Zone</p> <p>north-south split</p> <p>2007 economic crisis</p>
<b>East (and Central) Asia</b>	<p>economic intervention: state capitalism (zaibatsu) in imperial Japan</p> <p>impact of Great Depression (low exports, mass unemployment)</p> <p>Bretton Woods system (World Bank, IMF, GATT) + Asia's economic "tigers"</p> <p>1970s economic crisis (gold standard, oil embargo, stagflation)</p> <p>G-7/G-8 (Japan)</p> <p>economic intervention: Mao's Great Leap Forward</p> <p>1980s free-market reform and economic liberalization (Deng Xiaoping's limited capitalism in China)</p> <p>Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation group</p> <p>globalization in 1990s and 2000s</p> <p>some nations afflicted by north-south split</p> <p>2007 economic crisis</p>
<b>South (and Southeast) Asia and Oceania</b>	<p>Bretton Woods system (World Bank, IMF, GATT) + Asia's economic "tigers"</p> <p>1970s economic crisis (gold standard, oil embargo, stagflation)</p> <p>globalization in 1990s and 2000s</p> <p>north-south split</p> <p>2007 economic crisis</p>
<b>Americas</b>	<p>U.S. origins of Great Depression (Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act)</p> <p>economic intervention: New Deal (Keynesian theory), Cárdenas's nationalization of Mexico's oil industry</p> <p>impact of Great Depression on Latin America (low exports, mass unemployment)</p> <p>Bretton Woods system (World Bank, IMF, GATT)</p> <p>1970s economic crisis (gold standard, oil embargo, stagflation)</p> <p>G-7/G-8</p> <p>1980s free-market reform and economic liberalization (Ronald Reagan, Augusto Pinochet, and theories of Milton Friedman)</p> <p>globalization in 1990s and 2000s</p> <p>NAFTA + Mercosur</p> <p>2007 economic crisis</p>
<b>Global and Interregional</b>	<p>partial or widespread industrialization of nondeveloped and developing world</p> <p>dominance of postindustrial and service economies in developed world</p> <p>observance of Bretton Woods system by majority of non-communist world</p> <p>growing importance of multinational corporations</p> <p>rise of regional economic associations and free-trade zones</p> <p>transition from GATT to WTO</p>

## Economic Systems

- During the first half of the 1900s, the West (Europe, Canada, and the United States) fully industrialized. Certain other parts of the world achieved significant degrees of modernization and industrialization (such as Japan, parts of Latin America, and China).
- During the 1930s, the Great Depression, emanating from the United States, negatively affected the economies of most of Europe and Latin America, as well as Asia and Africa.
- Fascist and authoritarian regimes typically relied on state-directed forms of capitalism to regulate their economies, with varying degrees of heavy-handedness.
- A number of countries experimented with communist economies (the Soviet Union, Eastern Europe, China, North Korea, Cuba, Vietnam, and others).
- After World War II, the primary form of political and economic organization in the West (Canada, the United States, and Western Europe) was the democratic state with a capitalist system, although capitalism was modified to varying degrees by social welfare systems. During the Cold War, a wide split separated these economic systems from those of the communist blocs led by the Soviet Union and China.
- A different split emerged between the developed world, whose prosperity steadily grew (with a few minor regressions, as during the 1970s), and the nondeveloped or developing (or Third) world, which lagged behind. Because so many nondeveloped and developing nations are located near or south of the equator, this disparity is sometimes referred to as the north-south split.
- Also after World War II, an elaborate system of international economic organizations appeared, influential mainly in the West and in the Third World, including the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- After the 1950s and 1960s, Western economies began to move from industrial production to postindustrial production, based less on manufacturing and more on service, high-tech fields, and computers. This trend continues.
- During the 1970s, a general economic crisis, characterized by oil shortages, recession, and unemployment, struck the capitalist West. A general rise in prosperity—associated with an emphasis on free-market economics, but not necessarily equitably distributed throughout society—took place in Western economies during the 1980s and 1990s. The same was true in China. The Soviet bloc experienced a severe economic downturn.
- The 1980s and 1990s were an era of greater economic globalization, as international trade, economic regionalization (as typified by NAFTA and the European Union), and the clout of multinational corporations became increasingly important. This trend continues.
- A worldwide financial crisis, arguably the worst since the Great Depression, struck in 2007. Its effects still linger.

### Social Structures, 1900 to the Present

<p><b>Europe</b></p>	<p>features of Western and developed societies (transition to postindustrial and service-oriented lifestyles)  rise of BRIC nations  social activism: 1968 global protests, Solidarity and East European anti-communist protests  ethnic violence and anti-immigration sentiment (anti-Semitism and the Holocaust, persecution of Roma, former Yugoslavia, animosity toward “guest workers”)  migration from former colonies and spheres of influence (India, Pakistan, Caribbean, Indonesia, Africa)  extension of vote to women (near-total)  feminism and significant progress toward gender equality (Simone de Beauvoir)  emerging gay and lesbian rights</p>
<p><b>Middle East</b></p>	<p>partial transition to industrial or postindustrial lifestyles  ethnic violence and anti-immigration sentiment (Turkish massacre of Armenians, Arab-Israeli conflict)  extension of vote to women (limited to partial)  limitations on gender</p>
<p><b>Africa</b></p>	<p>partial transition to industrial or postindustrial lifestyles  social activism: anti-apartheid movement in South Africa  ethnic violence and anti-immigration sentiment (Rwanda, Darfur)  extension of vote to women (partial)  limitations on gender equality</p>
<p><b>East (and Central) Asia</b></p>	<p>partial transition to postindustrial and service-oriented lifestyles  rise of BRIC nations  social activism: Tiananmen Square protests  extension of vote to women (widespread)  many limitations to gender equality removed</p>
<p><b>South (and Southeast) Asia and Oceania</b></p>	<p>partial transition to postindustrial and service-oriented lifestyles  rise of BRIC nations  ethnic violence and anti-immigration sentiment (Indo-Pakistani violence)  Indian caste system weakened  end of White Australia policy  social activism: self-immolation of Thich Quang Duc  extension of vote to women (widespread)  some limitations on gender equality</p>

Social Structures, 1900 to the Present	
<b>Americas</b>	<p>features of Western and developed societies (transition to postindustrial and service-oriented lifestyles; full in North America, partial in Latin America)</p> <p>rise of BRIC nations</p> <p>social activism: Jim Crow laws vs. civil rights movement in United States, 1968 global protests</p> <p>ethnic violence and anti-immigration sentiment (Mayans in Guatemala, U.S. “melting pot” ideal vs. nativist impulses)</p> <p>migration from former colonies and spheres of influence (Puerto Rico, Philippines)</p> <p>extension of vote to women (near-total)</p> <p>feminism and significant progress toward gender equality (Gloria Steinem, Betty Friedan, NOW)</p> <p>emerging gay and lesbian rights</p>
<b>Global and Interregional</b>	<p>rapid population growth</p> <p>social equality vs. hierarchy</p> <p>urbanization and suburbanization</p> <p>undeveloped vs. industrial vs. postindustrial lifestyles (north-south split)</p> <p>growing importance of social activism (national liberation, civil rights and racial equality, opposition to war, 1968 global protests, feminism)</p> <p>ethnic violence and anti-immigration sentiment</p> <p>extension of vote to women (widespread)</p> <p>uneven progress toward gender equality</p>

## Social Structures

- In the West, labor unions grew in power during the first half of the century. During the 1920s and especially during the Great Depression of the 1930s, many capitalist societies adopted social welfare policies (the British “dole,” the U.S. New Deal, Scandinavia’s “third way”) to provide a social safety net.
- The middle class became more dominant and numerous in developed societies by World War II, and this trend deepened during the postwar era. In communist societies, class divisions were minimized, at least in theory. In the developing world, class divisions between the elite and the rest of society were very wide.
- Gender equality made great strides during the twentieth century in the developed world. Most women here received the right to vote after World War I. Job opportunities increased, partly due to the world wars, especially World War II.
- The postwar development of reliable contraception, especially birth-control pills, gave women unprecedented control over pregnancy and sexuality. The gradual legalization of abortion, while controversial, did the same.
- During the 1960s and 1970s, a powerful feminist movement, agitating for women’s liberation and equal rights, swept Canada, the United States, and most of Europe. Since then, women’s movements have sought to achieve more than simple legal equality and the right to vote. Their goals have been full cultural and economic equality, and deeper changes in social norms and behaviors.

- Progress toward equal treatment of women has been uneven in other parts of the world.
- Migration has remained as much a global reality in this era as during the 1800s. Work opportunities continue to motivate migration, but refugees and displaced persons have migrated in huge numbers because of war. In addition, many Western nations have allowed significant levels of migration from their former colonies. Anti-immigrant sentiment remains common.
- Racial tensions divided many communities and nations. Racial segregation and ethnic violence—official and unofficial—have plagued societies throughout this era.
- The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the USSR forced a number of countries to make painful social and economic transitions from communism to free-market capitalism.
- Many parts of the West, including the United States, experienced a general rise in prosperity from the 1980s up through the financial collapse of 2007. However, this was accompanied by a growing split between rich and poor, and increased burdens on the middle class.
- Globally, the world still struggles with a north-south split, meaning that economic prosperity and access to cutting-edge technology, medical care, and social stability tend to be concentrated in the developed world, with many parts of the developing world lagging behind and still impoverished.

<b>Humans and the Environment, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>Europe</b>	comprehensive vaccination (eradication of polio and smallpox) diseases associated with lifestyle and longevity (diabetes, Alzheimer's) famine in Stalin's USSR modern environmentalism (recycling, NGOs, green parties) strongest environmental regulations environmental disasters (Chernobyl)
<b>Middle East</b>	oil industry and environmental impact of fossil fuels agricultural impact of Green Revolution Aswan High Dam
<b>Africa</b>	Ebola HIV/AIDS (origination and particular severity) famine in Ethiopia and elsewhere Green Belt movement
<b>East (and Central) Asia</b>	diseases associated with lifestyle and longevity (diabetes, Alzheimer's) famine in Mao's China agricultural impact of Green Revolution Three Gorges Dam environmental disasters (Fukushima)
<b>South (and Southeast) Asia and Oceania</b>	Spanish flu pandemic (particular severity?) famine in India agricultural impact of Green Revolution environmental disasters (Bhopal incident, Southeast Asian tsunami)

<b>Humans and the Environment, 1900 to the Present</b>	
<b>Americas</b>	<p>comprehensive vaccination in North America (eradication of polio and smallpox)</p> <p>diseases associated with lifestyle and longevity (diabetes, Alzheimer's)</p> <p>"dust bowl" crisis in United States and Canada</p> <p>agricultural impact of Green Revolution (Latin America)</p> <p>modern environmentalism (John Muir, Rachel Carson, Earth Day, Greenpeace, recycling)</p> <p>strongest environmental regulations (North America)</p> <p>environmental disasters (dust bowl crisis, Three Mile Island, <i>Exxon Valdez</i>, Hurricane Katrina, Deepwater, Superstorm Sandy)</p>
<b>Global and Interregional</b>	<p>vaccination campaigns</p> <p>Spanish flu pandemic</p> <p>HIV/AIDS pandemic</p> <p>rapid population growth (fastest in nondeveloped and developing worlds)</p> <p>environmental impact of fossil-fuel dependency</p> <p>pollution and ecosystem destruction + ozone depletion</p> <p>species endangerment</p> <p>global warming (Kyoto Protocol vs. climate change denial)</p>

## Humans and the Environment

- Population growth, caused above all by improvements in medicine and public health, reached unprecedented levels and continues to accelerate.
- Medical innovations lengthened lifespans in many parts of the world.
- Escalating industrialization, increased fossil-fuel and resource consumption, massive engineering projects, and the production of toxic, chemical, and nuclear waste have exponentially increased humanity's impact on the environment.
- Diseases associated with poverty, such as malaria, tuberculosis, and cholera, persisted in many parts of the world.
- Better and faster transportation hastened the global spread of new epidemic diseases, such as Ebola and HIV/AIDS, and many new strains of influenza, starting with the "Spanish flu," which killed millions at the end of World War I.
- Diseases associated with sedentary lifestyles and new dietary habits, such as heart disease, diabetes, and obesity, became more common. Extension of longevity placed larger numbers of people at risk of diseases associated with old age, such as Alzheimer's.
- Periodic famines, both natural and human-caused, struck various parts of the world, including the USSR in the 1930s (caused by Stalin's collectivization of agriculture), India in the mid-1940s, China during the 1950s (caused by Mao's Great Leap Forward), and Ethiopia in the 1980s.
- In Canada and the United States during the 1930s, the "dust bowl" crisis—which caused thousands of square miles of fertile soil to be lost to aridity and giant windstorms—severely affected agriculture and added to the stress of the Great Depression.
- Between the late 1940s and the 1970s, a Green Revolution spread advanced agricultural techniques around the world, leading to a huge rise in the production of food. Mexico, where it is considered to have originated, played a key role in this development, and its

impact spread not just through Latin America, but to India, China, and other regions that had previously suffered damaging famines. However, the environmental impact of agriculture increased as a result of the Green Revolution, thanks to greater water consumption, the clearing of more land, and the extensive use of pesticides.

- Habitats like wetlands, rain forests, and polar ecosystems have been badly threatened during this era. Large numbers of species in these and other ecozones faced extinction or endangerment.
- Environmental awareness in the West grew steadily but slowly during the early 1900s, and then expanded after World War II. Green movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) devoted to environmental issues have grown in size and influence.
- Climate change, or global warming, dramatically increased throughout the twentieth century and is thought by most scientists to have been caused by the human-produced emission of greenhouse gases (especially carbon dioxide). It reached unprecedented levels in the 1990s and early 2000s. The best known international effort to reverse this trend is the Kyoto Protocol (1997).
- Warfare in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has had a growing impact on the environment. Examples include radiation from nuclear-weapons testing, biological and chemical warfare between Iran and Iraq during the 1970s, the napalming of forests during the Vietnam War, and the destruction of oil wells during times of armed conflict.
- Natural disasters (Hurricane Katrina, the Southeast Asian tsunami, Superstorm Sandy) and energy-related crises (Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, the Bhopal incident, *Exxon Valdez*, the Fukushima nuclear disaster, the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, the melting of Arctic ice) demonstrate how contemporary societies can still be affected by the environment, and how technology allows them to affect the environment more deeply than before.

## QUESTIONS AND COMPARISONS TO CONSIDER

- Discuss the ways different nations and regions modernized during the twentieth century. Were they industrialized before the 1900s? Did modernization efforts come from the population at large, or were they instituted by the government? Did they have to be put into place by force? Has modernization by force proven effective?
- In what ways did war evolve during this period? Consider tactics, new technologies and weapons, and impact on population.
- What impact did the world wars have on the non-Western world? Compare different regions, such as Africa and Asia. How did the wars affect women?
- Compare two or more of the twentieth century's major revolutions, such as the Russian, Chinese, Mexican, Cuban, or Iranian. Alternatively, compare one or more of these with revolutions in previous centuries. Compare how each affected women and/or ethnic minorities.
- Examine the process of decolonization as it played out in various parts of the world. Be sure to address cases that involved negotiation (India, the Gold Coast) and those that involved violent separation (Vietnam, Algeria, Angola).
- Focus on specific national-liberation, civil-rights, anti-segregation, and anti-war movements. How did they achieve their goals? To what degree did they rely on force (or the threat of force) or nonviolent resistance?
- How has the legacy of colonialism affected cultural identity and patterns of economic development in Africa, Asia, and Latin America?

- How has nationalism in Europe differed from nationalism in decolonizing and decolonized parts of the world, both in character and in its political effects? Be sure to consider xenophobia, anti-immigration sentiment, and Christian-Muslim tension since 9/11.
- How has the rise of Western consumerism and economic globalism affected different societies outside the West?
- How have twentieth- and twenty-first-century technologies and agricultural techniques affected social structures? The environment?
- How have epidemics and other medical crises affected states and societies during this era? How have medical innovations lengthened human lifespans?
- How does ethnic violence in the 1990s and early 2000s compare with the Holocaust?
- What effects have major scientific breakthroughs (genetics, quantum physics, the digital revolution) had on society, politics, and culture during this era? How have they reduced the impact of geographical distance on human affairs? How have certain scientific programs (the space race, for example) interacted with global political and military affairs?
- How have gender and family relations been affected by new social trends? By new technological and medical developments?
- What social trends restricted or increased access to education, career choices, and professional or political roles?