

Period 6: Accelerating Global Change and Realignments, c. 1900 to present

Key Concept 6.1 Science and the Environment

Rapid advances in science altered understandings of the universe and the natural world and led to the development of new technologies. These changes enabled unprecedented population growth, which altered how humans interacted with the environment and threatened delicate ecological balances at local, regional and global levels.

How did science affect humans' conception of the natural world in the 20th century?

I. Researchers made rapid advances in science that spread throughout the world, assisted by the development of new technology.

- A. New modes of communication and transportation virtually eliminated the problem of geographic distance.
- B. New scientific paradigms transformed human understandings of the world. (such the theory of relativity, quantum mechanics, the Big Bang theory or psychology)
- C. The Green Revolution produced food for the earth's growing population as it spread chemically and genetically enhanced forms of agriculture.
- D. Medical innovations (such as the polio vaccine, antibiotics, and the artificial heart) increased the ability of humans to survive.
- E. Energy technologies including the use of oil and nuclear power raised productivity and increased the production of material goods.

What new technologies and discoveries affected communication, transportation, and conceptions of the world?

How did scientific discoveries affect humans' ability to feed and care for themselves?

What new energy technologies affected the 20th century?

II. As the global population expanded at an unprecedented rate, humans fundamentally changed their relationship with the environment.

How did humans' relationship to the environment change in the 20th century?

- A. Humans exploited and competed over the earth's finite resources more intensely than ever before in human history.
- B. Global warming was a major consequence of the release of greenhouse gases and other pollutants into the atmosphere.
- C. Pollution threatened the world's supply of water and clean air. Deforestation and desertification were continued consequences of the human impact on the environment. Rates of extinction of other species accelerated sharply.

What negative consequences in the 20th century accompanied the benefits of industrialization?

III. Disease, scientific innovations, and conflict led to demographic shifts.

What caused some of the major demographic changes in the 20th century?

- A. Diseases associated with poverty (such as malaria, tuberculosis, or cholera) persisted, while other diseases (such as 1919 influenza epidemic, ebola or HIV/AIDS) emerged as new epidemics and threats to human survival. In addition, changing lifestyles and

increased longevity led to higher incidence of certain diseases. (such as diabetes, heart disease and Alzheimer's disease)

- B. More effective forms of birth control gave women greater control over fertility and transformed sexual practices.
- C. Improved military technology (such as tanks, airplanes or the Atomic Bomb) and new tactics (such as trench warfare or fire-bombing) led to increased levels of wartime casualties. (such as Nanjing, Dresden or Hiroshima)

How did the invention of reliable birth control affect gender roles?

How did new military technology affect wartime casualties?

Key Concept 6.2 Global Conflicts and their Consequences

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a European-dominated global political order existed, which also included the United States, Russia and Japan. Over the course of the century, peoples and states around the world challenged this order in ways that sought to redistribute power within the existing order and restructure empires, while those people and states in power attempted to maintain the status quo. Other peoples and states sought to overturn the political order itself. These challenges to and attempts to maintain the political order manifested themselves in an unprecedented level of conflict with high human casualties. In the context of these conflicts, many regimes in both older and newer states struggled with maintaining political stability and were challenged by internal and external factors, including ethnic and religious conflicts, secessionist movements, territorial partitions, economic dependency and the legacies of colonialism.

I. Europe dominated the global political order at the beginning of the century, but both land-based and transoceanic empires gave way to new forms of transregional political organization by the century's end.

- A. The older land-based Ottoman, Russian or the Qing empires collapsed due to a combination of internal and external factors. (such as economic hardship, political and social discontent, technological stagnation or military defeat)
- B. Some colonies negotiated their independence. (such as India and the Gold Coast from the British empire)
- C. Some colonies achieved independence through armed struggle. (such as Algeria and Vietnam from the French empire or Angola from the Portuguese empire)

How has the world's political order developed since the early 1900s?

Why did older, land-based empires decline and/or collapse?

By what means did imperial colonies achieve independence?

II. Emerging ideologies of anti-imperialism contributed to the dissolution of empires and the restructuring of states.

- A. Nationalist leaders (such as Mohandas Gandhi, Ho Chi Minh or Kwame Nkrumah) in Asia and Africa challenged imperial rule.

What new movements challenged the status quo during the age of imperial rule?

Who helped lead and define these movements?

- B. Regional, religious, and ethnic movements challenged both colonial rule and inherited imperial boundaries (such as Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the Quebecois separatist movement or the Biafra secession movement)
- C. Transnational movements sought to unite people across national boundaries. (such as communism, pan-Arabism or pan-Africanism)
- D. Movements to redistribute land and resources developed within states in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, sometimes advocating communism and socialism.

III. Political changes were accompanied by major demographic and social consequences.

- A. The redrawing of old colonial boundaries led to population resettlements. (such as the Indian/Pakistan partition, the Zionist Jewish settlement of Palestine or the division of the Middle East into mandatory states)
- B. The migration of former colonial subjects to imperial metropolises (such as South Asians to Britain, Algerians to France or Filipinos to United States) maintained cultural and economic ties between colony and metropole even after the dissolution of empires.
- C. The proliferation of conflicts led to various forms of ethnic violence (such as Armenia, the Holocaust, Cambodia and Rwanda) and the displacement of people resulting in refugee populations. (such as Palestinians or Darfurians)

IV. Military conflicts occurred on an unprecedented global scale.

- A. The First and Second World Wars were the first “total wars.” Governments used ideologies, including fascism, nationalism and communism, to mobilize all of their state’s resources, including peoples and resources both in the home countries and the colonies or former colonies. (such as the Gurkha soldiers in India or the ANZAC troops in Australia) Governments also used a variety of strategies to mobilize these populations, including political speeches, art, media and intensified forms of nationalism.
- B. The varied sources of global conflict in the first half of the century included: imperialist expansion by European powers and Japan, competition for resources, ethnic conflict, great power rivalries between Great Britain and Germany, nationalist ideologies and the economic crisis engendered by the Great Depression.
- C. The global balance of economic and political power shifted after the end of the Second World War and rapidly evolved into the Cold War. The United States and Soviet Union emerged as superpowers which led to ideological struggles between capitalism and communism throughout the globe.

What new identities were used to unite populations spread across national borders?

What ideologies were often used to “undo” imperialism?

How were colonial peoples affected by the change of old colonial boundaries?

How were relationships between imperial powers and former colonies maintained after the end of those empires?

What circumstances contributed to genocide and mass refugee populations?

How did the World Wars affect the nature of war and the relationship of the government to their populations?

What ideologies motivated the World War conflicts?

How did the world’s balance of power change during the Cold War?

D. The Cold War produced new military alliances, including NATO and the Warsaw Pact and promoted proxy wars in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

E. The dissolution of the Soviet Union effectively ended the Cold War.

V. Although conflict dominated much of the twentieth century, many individuals and groups—including states—opposed this trend. Some individuals and groups, however, intensified the conflicts.

A. Groups and individuals challenged the many wars of the century (such as Picasso's Guernica, the anti-nuclear movement during the Cold War or Thich Quang Duc's self-immolation) and some promoted the practice of nonviolence (such as Tolstoy, Gandhi or Martin Luther King) as a way to bring about political change.

B. Groups and individuals opposed and promoted alternatives to the existing economic, political and social orders (such as the non-aligned movement which presented an alternative political bloc to the Cold War, the Tiananmen Square protests that promoted democracy in China, the Anti-Apartheid Movement or the global uprisings of 1968)

C. Militaries and militarized states often responded to the proliferation of conflicts in ways that further intensified conflict. (such as the promotion of military dictatorship in Chile, Spain, and Uganda, the United States promotion of a New World Order after the Cold War or the build up of the "military-industrial complex" and arms trading)

D. More movements used violence against civilians to achieve political aims. (such as the IRA, ETA, and Al-Qaeda)

E. Global conflicts had a profound influence on popular culture. (such as Dada, James Bond, Socialist Realism or video games)

What were the Cold War's military consequences?

What caused the Cold War to end?

How did various reactions to the violence of the 20th century compare?

How did the anti-war and non-violence movements respond to the century's many wars?

What alternatives were offered to the economic, political, and social status quo?

How did reactions by governments and militaries affect the degree of conflict during the 20th century?

Why did some movements use terrorism for political purposes?

How was popular culture affected by the global conflicts?

Key Concept 6.3 New Conceptualizations of Global Economy, Society, & Culture

The twentieth century witnessed a great deal of warfare and the collapse of the global economy in the 1930s. In response to these challenges, the role of the state in the domestic economy fluctuated new institutions of global governance emerged and continued to develop throughout the century. Scientific breakthroughs, new technologies, increasing levels of integration, changing relationship between humans and the environment and the frequency of political conflict all contributed to global developments in which people crafted new understandings of society, culture, and historical interpretations. These new understandings often manifested themselves in and were reinforced by new forms of cultural production. Institutions of global governance both shaped and adapted to these social conditions.

What new governmental institutions emerged as a result of the 20th century conflicts?

What made these new institutions possible?

What role did they play in the world during the 20th century?

I. States responded in a variety of ways to the economic challenges of the twentieth century.

- A. In the Communist states of the Soviet Union and China, governments directed the national economies and oversaw the development of industry. (such as the Five Year Plans or the Great Leap Forward)
- B. At the beginning of the century in the United States and parts of Europe, governments played a minimal role in the national economy. With the onset of the Great Depression, governments began to take a more active role in the economy. (such as the New Deal or the Fascist corporatist economy)
- C. In newly independent states after World War II, governments often took on a strong role in guiding the economy to promote economic development. (such as Nasser's promotion of economic development in Egypt or the encouragement of export-oriented economies in East Asia)
- D. At the end of the twentieth century, many governments encouraged free market economic policies and promoted economic liberalization. (such as the United States beginning with Ronald Reagan, Britain under Margaret Thatcher, or China under Deng Xiaoping)

How did states respond to the 20th century's economic challenges?

How did the Great Depression affect governments' relationship to the(ir) economy?

How did newly independent states' governments attempt to influence their economies?

II. States, communities and individuals became increasingly inter-dependent, a process facilitated by the growth of international organizations.

- A. New international organizations (such as the League of Nations or the United Nations) formed to maintain world peace and to facilitate international cooperation.
- B. New economic institutions (such as the IMF, World Bank or WTO) sought to spread the principles and practices associated with free market economics throughout the world.
- C. Humanitarian organizations (such as UNICEF, the Red Cross, Amnesty International, Doctors Without Borders or the WHO) developed to respond to humanitarian crises throughout the world.
- D. Regional trade agreements (such as the European Union, NAFTA, ASEAN or Mercosur) created regional trading blocs designed to promote the movement of capital and goods across national borders.
- E. Multi-national corporations (such as Royal-Dutch Shell, Coca-Cola or Sony) began to challenge state authority and autonomy.
- F. Movements throughout the world protested the inequality of environmental and economic consequences of global integration.

How did new international organizations affect the relationship of states and peoples around the world?

What were the economic effects of new international organizations?

Humanitarian effects?

How did these economic developments affect the distribution of world resources?

III. People conceptualized society and culture in new ways; some challenged old assumptions about race, class, gender and religion; often using new technologies to spread reconfigured traditions.

- A. The notion of human rights gained traction throughout the world. (such as the UN Declaration of Human Rights or the end of the White Australia Policy)
- B. Increased interactions among diverse peoples sometimes led to the formation of new cultural identities (such as negritude) and exclusionary reactions. (such as xenophobia, race riots or citizenship restrictions)
- C. Believers developed new forms of spirituality (such as New Age Religions, Hare Krishna or Falun Gong) and chose to emphasize particular aspects of practice within existing faiths and apply them to political issues (such as fundamentalist movements and Liberation Theology)

What new social and cultural ideologies developed, and what were the consequences and reactions to these ideologies?

How did communities of faith respond to the rapid changes in the 20th century?

IV. Popular and Consumer Culture became global.

- A. Sport was more widely practiced and reflected national and social aspirations. (such as World Cup soccer, the Olympics or cricket)
- B. Changes in communication and transportation technology enabled the widespread diffusion of music and film. (such as reggae or Bollywood)

How did the global nature of culture affect sports, music, fashions, and the arts?