



AP EUROPEAN HISTORY

HANDBOOK

U.S. Curriculum | Complete Course Guide



Complete Coverage

All eight major AP European History units



Key Concepts

Themes, timelines, comparisons, and personalities



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1. Renaissance and Exploration (c. 1450–1648)

From the rebirth of classical culture to a divided Christendom and an Atlantic world

Between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, Europe changed deeply. **Renaissance humanists** returned to the writings of Greece and Rome and placed new value on education, language, individual talent, and public life. Artists developed lifelike ways to represent the human body and the natural world. Printers made books cheaper and ideas easier to spread.

Religious unity then broke apart. **Protestant reformers** challenged the authority and practices of the Catholic Church, while Catholic leaders renewed doctrine, discipline, education, and missionary work. At the same time, oceanic voyages linked Europe more closely with Africa, Asia, and the Americas. The result was a new European world shaped by stronger states, competing churches, expanding commerce, colonial rule, and forced labour.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Origins of the Italian Renaissance: Art, Literature, and Humanism
- The Reformation: Causes, Key Figures, and Consequences
- Age of Exploration: European Expansion and Impact on Global Trade
- Key dates, personalities, comparisons, and AP-style practice

THE BIG PICTURE

Renaissance: Classical learning and urban wealth encouraged new styles of thought, writing, art, and political discussion.

Reformation: Religious criticism, print, political rivalry, and popular belief divided western Christianity.

Exploration: Maritime technology and commercial ambition created oceanic empires and a new Atlantic economy.

By 1648: Europe was more culturally creative, religiously divided, politically competitive, and globally connected than it had been in 1450.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Why It Matters
c. 1450	Gutenberg printing press spreads in Europe	Books and arguments circulate faster and at lower cost.
1453	Ottoman conquest of Constantinople	Greek scholars and manuscripts move west; Mediterranean politics shift.
1488	Bartolomeu Dias rounds the Cape of Good Hope	Portugal proves that the Atlantic and Indian oceans are connected.
1492	Columbus reaches the Caribbean	Sustained contact begins between Europe and the Americas.
1494	Treaty of Tordesillas	Spain and Portugal divide overseas claims with papal support.
1498	Vasco da Gama reaches India by sea	Portugal enters the Indian Ocean trade directly.
1517	Martin Luther publishes the Ninety-Five Theses	The Protestant Reformation begins in the German lands.
1521	Diet of Worms	Luther refuses to withdraw his teachings and is declared an outlaw.
1534	English Act of Supremacy	Henry VIII becomes head of the Church of England.

Date	Development	Why It Matters
1545–1563	Council of Trent	Catholic doctrine and discipline are restated and reformed.
1555	Peace of Augsburg	German rulers may choose Catholicism or Lutheranism.
1588	Defeat of the Spanish Armada	England survives invasion and Spain's naval image is weakened.
1618–1648	Thirty Years' War	Religious and political warfare devastates central Europe.
1648	Peace of Westphalia	The war ends and the political independence of European states is strengthened.

Origins of the Italian Renaissance: Art, Literature, and Humanism

The word Renaissance means “rebirth.” It describes the revival of interest in the classical civilisation of ancient Greece and Rome and the cultural changes that followed. The movement began first and most strongly in the wealthy cities of northern and central Italy. It did not suddenly replace medieval culture. Christianity remained central, universities continued to teach scholastic thought, and most Europeans lived traditional rural lives. The Renaissance added new interests and styles to this older world.

Why the Renaissance Began in Italy

No single cause created the Renaissance. Several conditions came together in the Italian peninsula.

Condition	How It Encouraged the Renaissance
Urban wealth	Cities such as Florence, Venice, Milan, and Genoa grew rich through banking, manufacturing, and Mediterranean trade. Wealthy families could support writers, artists, architects, and schools.
Classical heritage	Roman ruins, inscriptions, legal traditions, and Latin texts were visible throughout Italy. Educated Italians felt a special connection with ancient Rome.
Political fragmentation	Italy was divided into rival city-states and principalities. Competition encouraged rulers and elites to display power through palaces, churches, sculpture, and public festivals.
Patronage	Merchants, guilds, popes, princes, and civic governments paid for works of art and learning. Patronage gave creators money and social position.
Social change after plague	The Black Death reduced Europe's population and disrupted older social relations. Survivors sometimes inherited property, wages rose in some places, and people became more aware of the uncertainty of life.
Movement of texts and scholars	Trade and diplomacy brought manuscripts into Italy. The fall of Constantinople in 1453 increased the presence of Greek-speaking scholars, though interest in Greek learning had already begun earlier.

THE ITALIAN CITY-STATES

Florence: Banking, wool production, republican traditions, and Medici patronage made the city a major centre of humanism and art.

Venice: A maritime republic whose wealth came from Mediterranean trade, shipbuilding, and overseas possessions.

Milan: A powerful northern state ruled by families such as the Visconti and Sforza; known for military and court culture.

The Papal States: Territories ruled by the pope. Renaissance popes became major patrons of architecture and art in Rome.

Naples: A large southern kingdom whose politics were closely connected with Spain and France.

Humanism

Humanism was the central intellectual movement of the Renaissance. Humanists studied the language, literature, history, moral philosophy, and rhetoric of classical Greece and Rome. These subjects were known as the *studia humanitatis*. Humanists believed that careful reading and persuasive writing could prepare people for active and responsible lives.

Humanism was not simply a rejection of religion. Many humanists were committed Christians. They hoped that classical learning would improve moral character, education, government, and the Church. What changed was the greater attention given to human actions, choices, talents, and life in this world.

Petrarch and the Recovery of the Classical Past

Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374) is often called the “father of humanism.” He searched monastic libraries for forgotten Latin manuscripts, admired the style of Cicero, and encouraged scholars to read ancient authors in their original form. Petrarch believed that his age stood between the greatness of antiquity and a possible cultural renewal. His letters and poems also gave strong expression to individual feeling.

Civic Humanism

In fifteenth-century Florence, humanism became closely connected with public life. Civic humanists argued that educated citizens should serve their community. They praised republican government, public duty, and political participation. Leonardo Bruni, a chancellor of Florence, used classical history to defend civic freedom. This ideal was attractive to urban elites, even though political participation remained limited to a small part of the population.

Humanist Education

Humanist schools taught grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. Physical training and good manners were also valued. The aim was to form an educated person who could speak clearly, write elegantly, and act wisely in public life. Girls from wealthy families sometimes received humanist education, but most advanced schooling remained designed for boys.

KEY IDEA — INDIVIDUALISM

Renaissance individualism meant a stronger interest in personal talent, reputation, character, and achievement. It did not mean modern political individualism or complete freedom from family, class, religion, and community. Artists increasingly signed their work, authors wrote about their own experiences, and successful people sought lasting fame.

Renaissance Literature and Political Thought

Dante, Boccaccio, and Vernacular Writing

Dante Alighieri wrote the *Divine Comedy* in Italian rather than Latin. Although Dante belonged partly to the medieval world, his work helped establish the Tuscan dialect as a major literary language. Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Decameron* presented a group of young people telling stories while escaping the Black Death. Its tales showed humour, desire, cleverness, hypocrisy, and the variety of urban life. The growth of vernacular literature allowed educated readers outside the clergy and universities to take part in literary culture.

Machiavelli and Power

Niccolò Machiavelli served the Florentine Republic as a diplomat and official. After the Medici returned to power, he lost office and wrote *The Prince*. Machiavelli treated politics as a field with its own rules. A ruler, he argued, must understand fear, force, deception, public image, and changing fortune. He did not simply praise cruelty. His main concern was whether a ruler’s actions preserved the state.

MACHIAVELLI IN ONE SENTENCE

Political success depends less on moral intentions than on effective action, control of circumstances, and the ability to protect the state.

Castiglione and the Courtier

Baldassare Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier* described the qualities of an ideal court noble: education, skill in arms, music, conversation, manners, and graceful behaviour. The courtier should make difficult achievements appear effortless, a quality called *sprezzatura*. The book also discussed the ideal court lady, who was expected to be educated and refined but remained limited by assumptions about female modesty and obedience.

Women and Renaissance Learning

A small number of elite women became respected writers, patrons, and rulers. Christine de Pizan defended women's intellectual and moral abilities in *The Book of the City of Ladies*. Isabella d'Este of Mantua collected art and used patronage to strengthen her court. Vittoria Colonna became known for poetry and religious writing. These examples were important, but they did not remove the legal, educational, and social limits faced by most women.

Renaissance Art

Renaissance artists sought convincing representations of bodies, buildings, emotion, light, and space. They studied ancient sculpture, observed nature, and used mathematics. Religious subjects remained common, but artists placed sacred figures in realistic settings and gave them recognisable human emotion. Portraits, mythological scenes, and images of civic power also became more important.

Feature	Meaning in Renaissance Art
Linear perspective	A mathematical system that creates the appearance of depth on a flat surface.
Naturalism	Closer observation of bodies, movement, plants, landscapes, light, and emotion.
Classical forms	Columns, domes, arches, balanced proportions, nude figures, and mythological subjects inspired by Greece and Rome.
Chiaroscuro	The use of light and shadow to give figures volume and depth.
Human dignity	Figures appear physically present and psychologically individual rather than only symbolic.
Patronage and status	Art communicated the faith, wealth, education, and political authority of patrons.

Early Renaissance Masters

- Filippo Brunelleschi designed the dome of Florence Cathedral and applied classical proportion to architecture.
- Donatello revived free-standing nude sculpture and gave biblical and classical figures strong individuality.
- Masaccio used perspective, light, and solid human bodies to create convincing sacred scenes.
- Lorenzo Ghiberti's bronze doors for the Florence Baptistery showed mastery of perspective and narrative detail.

The High Renaissance

- Leonardo da Vinci combined artistic skill with close observation of anatomy, engineering, nature, and movement. *The Last Supper* and *Mona Lisa* show controlled composition and psychological depth.
- Michelangelo presented the human body as powerful and expressive. His *David*, *Pietà*, and Sistine Chapel ceiling joined classical form with intense religious meaning.

- Raphael became known for balanced, harmonious compositions. The School of Athens presents ancient philosophers in an ideal classical setting.
- Bramante and later Michelangelo helped shape the new St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, a major symbol of papal ambition and Renaissance architecture.

Mannerism

After about 1520, some artists moved away from the calm balance of the High Renaissance. Mannerist works used stretched bodies, unusual colours, crowded spaces, and difficult poses. The style reflected artistic experimentation and, in some cases, the political and religious uncertainty of the sixteenth century.

From Patronage to Cultural Prestige



The Northern Renaissance

Renaissance ideas moved north of the Alps through trade, travel, diplomacy, universities, and print. Northern humanists generally gave more attention to religious reform and moral improvement. Northern artists preserved careful surface detail while adopting Italian techniques such as perspective and classical proportion.

Italian Renaissance	Northern Renaissance
Strong connection with the classical remains and urban culture of Italy.	Strong connection with Christian reform, universities, and a highly literate urban culture.
Greater use of fresco, classical architecture, anatomy, and idealised human form.	Greater use of oil painting, fine surface detail, domestic interiors, landscapes, and symbolic objects.
Writers such as Petrarch, Machiavelli, and Castiglione.	Writers such as Erasmus, Thomas More, and Christine de Pizan.
Patronage by city governments, merchants, princes, and popes.	Patronage by royal courts, prosperous towns, merchants, and church institutions.
Often celebrated civic glory and classical antiquity.	Often joined classical learning with criticism of Christian society.

Erasmus and Christian Humanism

Desiderius Erasmus used knowledge of Greek and Latin to study the Bible and early Christian writings. In The Praise of Folly, he criticised superstition, empty ceremony, clerical ignorance, and social pride. He wanted educated and moral reform within the Church, not a permanent division of Christianity. His Greek edition of the New Testament helped scholars compare the biblical text with the Latin Vulgate.

Thomas More

In Utopia, Thomas More described an imaginary society whose organisation allowed him to criticise poverty, greed, punishment, war, and political corruption in Europe. The work was not a simple plan for a perfect society. It used irony and dialogue to raise difficult questions about property, justice, and government.

Northern Artists

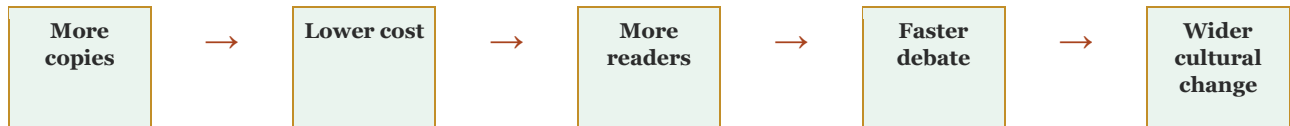
- Jan van Eyck used oil paint to create luminous colour and precise detail in portraits and religious scenes.
- Albrecht Dürer joined Italian studies of proportion with northern printmaking and observation of nature.
- Pieter Bruegel the Elder painted peasants, landscapes, seasons, and biblical scenes placed in ordinary northern settings.

- Hans Holbein the Younger produced sharply observed portraits of rulers, officials, merchants, and humanists.

Printing and the Spread of Ideas

Around the middle of the fifteenth century, Johannes Gutenberg developed a practical system of movable metal type in Mainz. Printing did not create literacy, but it greatly increased the speed and scale of book production. Printers produced Bibles, classical texts, schoolbooks, pamphlets, calendars, maps, news sheets, and popular stories.

The Printing Effect



LIMITS OF THE RENAISSANCE

The Renaissance was strongest among urban elites and educated groups. Most Europeans remained peasants, and social hierarchy continued. Women's opportunities improved only in limited elite settings. Religious belief remained powerful. The movement was therefore a major cultural change, but not a complete break with the medieval past.

Renaissance: Points to Remember

- The Renaissance grew from urban wealth, political competition, classical heritage, patronage, and expanding education.
- Humanism centred on classical languages and literature and encouraged effective writing, moral education, and public service.
- Renaissance culture remained deeply connected with Christianity even when it celebrated worldly achievement.
- Art became more naturalistic and used perspective, anatomy, classical form, and individual expression.
- Printing made cultural and religious debates faster, cheaper, and more difficult to control.
- The Northern Renaissance joined classical study with strong interest in Christian reform.

The Reformation: Causes, Key Figures, and Consequences

At the beginning of the sixteenth century, western Europe officially belonged to one Latin Christian Church under the pope. By the middle of the century, that unity had broken. Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Anabaptist, and other Protestant communities appeared, while the Catholic Church reformed its institutions and restated its doctrines. Religious belief was the centre of the conflict, but politics, print, education, taxation, property, and local power shaped the course of reform.

Causes of the Reformation

Cause	Main Issue
Religious concern	Many Christians wanted clearer preaching, better-trained clergy, moral discipline, and confidence about salvation.
Clerical abuses	Critics attacked pluralism, absentee bishops, poorly educated priests, simony, nepotism, and the worldly lives of some church leaders.
Indulgence controversy	Indulgences were connected with the remission of temporal punishment for sin. Their sale by professional preachers made spiritual benefits appear commercial.

Cause	Main Issue
Humanism	Humanists studied biblical languages and early Christian writings and compared them with later church practice.
Printing	Pamphlets, sermons, woodcuts, songs, and translated Bibles spread arguments rapidly to large audiences.
Political interests	Princes and monarchs wanted greater control over churches, appointments, courts, taxes, and property in their territories.
Economic resentment	Church land, tithes, fees, and payments to Rome caused resentment among rulers, nobles, towns, and peasants.
Existing reform movements	John Wycliffe, Jan Hus, the Brethren of the Common Life, and Christian humanists had already criticised church practices and promoted scripture and moral renewal.

A NECESSARY DISTINCTION

Abuse and doctrine were not the same issue. Catholic reformers could condemn corruption while defending papal authority, the sacraments, and traditional teachings. Protestant reformers argued that important doctrines and sources of authority also had to change.

Martin Luther and the Lutheran Reformation

Martin Luther was a German monk and professor of theology at the University of Wittenberg. His personal struggle concerned sin, justice, and salvation. He came to believe that human beings are justified by faith through God's grace, not by earning salvation through good works. Good works followed genuine faith but did not purchase salvation.

The Ninety-Five Theses

In 1517, Luther challenged the preaching of indulgences associated with Johann Tetzel. His Ninety-Five Theses were written for academic debate, but printers quickly reproduced them. The controversy became much larger than Luther expected because it raised questions about repentance, church authority, papal power, and money.

Luther's Main Teachings

Teaching	Meaning
Justification by faith	Salvation comes through faith and divine grace rather than human merit.
Scripture as highest authority	The Bible stands above popes and church councils when authorities conflict.
Priesthood of all believers	All Christians have direct spiritual dignity before God; clergy do not form a higher spiritual class.
Two sacraments	Luther accepted baptism and the Lord's Supper as clearly established by Christ in scripture.
Vernacular worship and Bible	Preaching, worship, music, and scripture should be accessible to ordinary believers.
Marriage of clergy	Clerical celibacy was not required by scripture; Luther himself married Katharina von Bora.

Diet of Worms and Protection by German Princes

In 1521, Emperor Charles V ordered Luther to appear before the Diet of Worms. Luther refused to withdraw writings that he believed agreed with scripture. The Edict of Worms declared him an outlaw. Frederick the Wise of Saxony protected him at Wartburg Castle, where Luther worked on a German translation of the New Testament. Political protection allowed reform to survive.

The German Peasants' War

In 1524–1525, peasants in parts of the German lands rebelled against labour services, taxes, restrictions on common lands, and noble power. Some used Reformation language to support their demands. Luther first criticised the nobles but then condemned the rebellion and supported its suppression. The revolt showed that religious ideas could combine with social grievances, but it also pushed Lutheran reform toward closer dependence on territorial rulers.

Peace of Augsburg

After decades of conflict, the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 recognised Lutheranism within the Holy Roman Empire. The principle often summarised as *cuius regio, eius religio* meant that each prince could choose Catholicism or Lutheranism for his territory. Calvinism was not yet recognised, and subjects who rejected their ruler's religion were generally expected to move. The agreement reduced immediate conflict but did not create modern religious freedom.

How Lutheran Reform Became Permanent



Other Protestant Traditions

Huldrych Zwingli

Zwingli led reform in Zürich. He rejected practices that lacked clear biblical support, including images in churches, clerical celibacy, fasting rules, and the Mass as a sacrifice. Zwingli and Luther disagreed over the Lord's Supper. Luther insisted on Christ's real presence, while Zwingli understood the ceremony mainly as a memorial. Their failure to agree at the Marburg Colloquy in 1529 prevented Protestant unity.

John Calvin

John Calvin, a French reformer, developed a highly organised Reformed tradition from Geneva. In *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, he presented a systematic Protestant theology. Calvin emphasised the sovereignty of God, the authority of scripture, disciplined Christian life, and predestination—the belief that God had already chosen those who would be saved. Geneva's ministers and lay elders supervised public morality, education, and worship.

Calvinism spread through networks of trained ministers, printed books, refugees, and urban communities. Reformed churches became influential in France, the Netherlands, Scotland, parts of Switzerland, and some German territories.

Anabaptists

Anabaptists rejected infant baptism and baptised adult believers who personally confessed faith. Many wanted a church separate from state control and refused military service or political oaths. Both Catholic and Protestant authorities viewed them as dangerous because religious membership was tied closely to political order. Most Anabaptists were peaceful, though the violent Münster episode of 1534–1535 damaged their reputation. Mennonites later represented a disciplined pacifist tradition.

Tradition	Authority	Sacraments / Worship	Political Pattern
Lutheran	Scripture; territorial church leadership	Baptism and Lord's Supper; strong preaching and music	Often supported by German and Scandinavian rulers
Reformed / Calvinist	Scripture; ministers and elders	Simple worship; strong moral discipline	Spread through cities, refugees, nobles, and organised congregations
Anglican	Monarch and national church	Mixed Catholic and Protestant features	Closely connected with English royal authority and Parliament
Anabaptist	Scripture and voluntary adult faith	Adult baptism; simple congregational worship	Often separated from the state and persecuted by all major confessions

The English Reformation

The English Reformation began through a royal crisis but soon developed a distinct religious character. Henry VIII wanted his marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled because they had no surviving son. Pope Clement VII did not grant the annulment, partly because Catherine's nephew, Emperor Charles V, dominated Italian politics after the Sack of Rome.

Henry VIII

Parliament passed laws that ended papal jurisdiction in England. The Act of Supremacy of 1534 declared the king the "Supreme Head" of the Church of England. Thomas Cromwell directed the dissolution of monasteries, and their land passed to the Crown and private owners. Henry rejected papal authority but kept many traditional doctrines and ceremonies.

Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I

- Under Edward VI, Protestant advisers introduced a more clearly Reformed liturgy, English worship, and the Book of Common Prayer.
- Mary I restored papal authority and Catholic worship. The execution of Protestants made her reign a powerful memory in later Protestant England.
- Elizabeth I established a lasting religious settlement. The monarch became "Supreme Governor," the English prayer book returned, and the Thirty-Nine Articles gave the Church of England a Protestant doctrine with a moderate ceremonial form.

THE ENGLISH SETTLEMENT

The Elizabethan Church attempted to create outward religious unity without demanding complete agreement on every ceremony. Catholics faced increasing pressure, especially after rebellion, papal opposition, and conflict with Spain. Puritans wanted further Protestant reform. The settlement reduced open conflict but did not end religious division.

Catholic Reform and the Counter-Reformation

Catholic renewal had begun before Luther, but the Protestant challenge gave it greater urgency. Reform came through new religious orders, improved education, stricter discipline, missionary activity, spiritual renewal, and clear defence of Catholic doctrine.

The Council of Trent

The Council of Trent met in several sessions between 1545 and 1563. It rejected Protestant teachings on faith alone and scripture alone. It affirmed the authority of scripture and church tradition, seven sacraments, the sacrificial character of the Mass, the importance of good works joined with grace, and the special role of the clergy. At the same time, the council ordered seminaries for priestly education, demanded bishops live in their dioceses, and attacked abuses connected with church offices and indulgence preaching.

The Society of Jesus

Ignatius of Loyola founded the Society of Jesus, approved by the pope in 1540. Jesuits combined strict spiritual training with education, preaching, missionary work, and service to Catholic rulers. Their schools became influential across Europe. Jesuit missionaries such as Francis Xavier worked in Asia, while Matteo Ricci entered learned circles in China.

Women in Catholic Renewal

Teresa of Ávila reformed the Carmelite order and wrote about prayer and spiritual life. Angela Merici founded the Ursulines, who became important in the education of girls. Female religious activity remained controlled by church authority, but women played a major role in teaching, charity, and spiritual reform.

Catholic Reform Measure	Purpose
Council of Trent	Clarified doctrine and corrected major disciplinary abuses.
Seminaries	Improved the education and conduct of parish priests.
Jesuit schools	Strengthened Catholic education and trained disciplined clergy and lay elites.
New and reformed orders	Encouraged preaching, charity, education, missionary work, and personal devotion.
Roman Inquisition	Investigated and judged suspected heresy in Catholic territories.
Index of Prohibited Books	Restricted writings considered dangerous to faith or morals.
Baroque art	Used movement, emotion, light, drama, and rich decoration to communicate Catholic belief.

Religious Conflict in Europe

French Wars of Religion

French Calvinists, known as Huguenots, gained followers among townspeople and sections of the nobility. Rival noble families used religious loyalties in their struggle for influence over the monarchy. The wars began in 1562. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre of 1572 killed thousands of Huguenots in Paris and the provinces. Henry of Navarre, a Protestant claimant to the throne, converted to Catholicism and became Henry IV. The Edict of Nantes in 1598 granted Huguenots limited worship and political protections while keeping France officially Catholic.

The Dutch Revolt

The seventeen provinces of the Netherlands belonged to the Spanish Habsburg king Philip II. Conflict grew over taxation, local privileges, centralisation, and the punishment of Calvinism. Northern provinces formed the Union of Utrecht and developed into the Dutch Republic. Southern provinces remained mainly Catholic and under Spanish rule. Dutch independence was formally recognised in 1648.

Spain and England

Relations between Spain and England worsened because of religion, English support for Dutch rebels, private attacks on Spanish shipping, and the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots. Philip II sent the Spanish Armada in 1588. English ships, poor coordination, and severe weather defeated the invasion plan. Spain remained a major power after 1588, but England's survival strengthened Protestant identity and naval ambition.

The Thirty Years' War

The Thirty Years' War began in 1618 within the Holy Roman Empire after Protestant nobles in Bohemia rebelled against the Catholic Habsburg ruler. The conflict expanded as Denmark, Sweden, Spain, France, and many German princes entered for religious and strategic reasons. Catholic France eventually fought against the Catholic Habsburgs because state interest mattered more than confessional unity.

Armies lived from the land, spreading hunger, disease, displacement, and destruction. Some German regions suffered severe population loss. The Peace of Westphalia in 1648 recognised Calvinism alongside Catholicism and Lutheranism, confirmed the political authority of territorial rulers, and recognised Dutch and Swiss independence. The settlement did not create complete national sovereignty in the modern sense, but it strengthened a European order based on multiple independent states.

Conflict	Main Causes	Settlement / Result
French Wars of Religion, 1562–1598	Religion, noble rivalry, and weakness of the monarchy	Henry IV and the Edict of Nantes
Dutch Revolt, c. 1568–1648	Calvinism, taxation, local privileges, and resistance to Spanish rule	Independent Dutch Republic recognised in 1648

Conflict	Main Causes	Settlement / Result
Anglo-Spanish War, 1585–1604	Religion, Dutch rebellion, privateering, and Atlantic rivalry	Armada defeated; neither side achieved complete victory
Thirty Years' War, 1618–1648	Confessional division, Habsburg power, territorial rivalry, and foreign intervention	Peace of Westphalia

Social and Cultural Consequences

- European religious unity ended. States and communities increasingly defined themselves through confessional identity.
- Governments supervised worship, education, marriage, poor relief, and moral behaviour more closely.
- Literacy expanded as Protestants encouraged Bible reading and Catholics expanded schools and religious instruction.
- Clergy married in Protestant areas, changing the structure of parish life. Catholic clergy remained celibate.
- Both Protestant and Catholic reformers placed stronger emphasis on disciplined households and parental responsibility.
- Religious minorities faced migration, legal restrictions, and persecution. Refugees carried skills, capital, books, and religious networks across borders.
- Fear of disorder and the Devil contributed to witch trials, especially in parts of the Holy Roman Empire, Switzerland, France, and Scotland. Most accused persons were women, though patterns varied by region.
- Religious war increased the power of some states but also showed the limits of rulers who attempted to impose complete confessional unity.

REFORMATION: POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The Reformation grew from sincere religious questions as well as political, social, and economic tensions.
- Luther's survival depended on print and the protection of German princes.
- Protestantism did not remain united; Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, and Anabaptists differed on worship, sacraments, authority, and church government.
- Catholic reform combined doctrinal defence with real institutional renewal.
- The wars of religion were never purely religious. Dynastic ambition, taxation, territory, and state interest were also decisive.
- The Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War and confirmed a politically divided Europe.

Age of Exploration: European Expansion and Impact on Global Trade

European sailors did not “discover” lands that were already inhabited, nor did they enter an empty global economy. African, Asian, Middle Eastern, and American societies possessed their own states, religions, trading systems, and technologies. What changed after 1450 was the sustained arrival of armed European ships in the Atlantic and Indian oceans and the creation of permanent colonial links between Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

Motives for Oceanic Expansion

Motive	Description
Trade	European merchants wanted direct access to spices, luxury goods, gold, and new markets. Maritime routes could reduce dependence on middlemen.
State rivalry	Monarchies used voyages to increase revenue, prestige, strategic power, and claims against rival states.
Religion	Rulers and missionaries wanted to spread Christianity and strengthen it against Islam and rival Christian confessions.
Social ambition	Nobles, soldiers, sailors, merchants, and settlers sought land, offices, wealth, advancement, or adventure.
Knowledge	Renaissance geography, mapmaking, astronomy, travel writing, and curiosity encouraged further voyages.
Technology	Improved ships, navigation, weapons, and knowledge of winds made long ocean voyages more practical.

Maritime Technology and Knowledge

- The caravel was a small, manoeuvrable vessel useful for exploration, while larger carracks carried more cargo and weapons.
- Lateen sails helped ships sail more effectively across changing winds. Square sails remained useful for strong following winds.
- The magnetic compass gave direction at sea. The astrolabe and quadrant helped estimate latitude by observing the sun or stars.
- Portolan charts provided practical coastal information, while printed maps spread and standardised geographical knowledge.
- European sailors learned to use Atlantic wind systems. Portuguese mariners often sailed far west into the Atlantic before turning east toward Europe, a route known as the volta do mar.
- Ship-mounted cannon gave European vessels unusual power against ports and competing fleets, though Europeans still depended on local allies, pilots, traders, and knowledge.

EARLIER FOUNDATIONS

Mediterranean trade, the Crusades, Mongol-era contacts, Marco Polo's travel account, Iberian warfare, Atlantic island settlement, and Portuguese exploration of the African coast all prepared the way for later expansion. European voyages were a new stage in a much older history of interregional exchange.

Portugal and the Route Around Africa

Portugal led the first sustained European movement down the Atlantic coast of Africa. Prince Henry the Navigator sponsored voyages, mapmaking, and commercial activity, though he did not personally sail on the major expeditions. Portuguese traders sought gold, enslaved people, and access to Asian commerce. They also colonised Atlantic islands such as Madeira and the Azores, where plantation agriculture became an important model.

- Bartolomeu Dias rounded the southern tip of Africa in 1488, later called the Cape of Good Hope.
- Vasco da Gama reached Calicut in India in 1498, creating a direct sea connection between western Europe and the Indian Ocean.
- Pedro Álvares Cabral reached Brazil in 1500 while sailing toward India.
- Afonso de Albuquerque captured strategic ports including Goa and Malacca, helping Portugal build a network of fortified trading bases.

The Portuguese Estado da Índia was mainly a sea-based commercial empire. Portugal controlled important ports and tried to tax or regulate maritime trade through passes and armed patrols. It did not conquer most of the large Asian land empires. Its influence depended on naval force, alliances, local intermediaries, and the ability to hold a limited number of strategic points.

Spain and the Atlantic World

After the completion of the conquest of Granada in 1492, Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile supported Christopher Columbus's westward voyage. Columbus reached Caribbean islands and believed he had approached Asia. His voyages opened the way for lasting Spanish colonisation.

Treaty of Tordesillas

Spain and Portugal asked for papal support in dividing their overseas claims. The Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494 drew an imaginary line in the Atlantic. Lands to the east were assigned mainly to Portugal and lands to the west mainly to Spain. The treaty helped Portugal claim Brazil but was ignored by other European powers and by the peoples whose lands were being divided.

Conquest of the Aztec and Inca Empires

Hernán Cortés entered the Aztec Empire in 1519. He succeeded not simply because of European weapons but because he formed alliances with Indigenous enemies of Aztec rule, captured Emperor Moctezuma II, and benefited from the devastating spread of smallpox. Tenochtitlán fell in 1521.

Francisco Pizarro entered the Inca Empire during a civil war. He captured Atahualpa in 1532 and used ransom, violence, alliances, and internal divisions to overthrow central Inca power. Spanish control then expanded through existing roads, labour systems, and local elites. Resistance continued for decades.

WHY SMALL FORCES WON

- Indigenous allies supplied most of the soldiers in many campaigns.
- Epidemic diseases killed large numbers of people who had no previous exposure.
- Internal rivalries and recent conquests weakened imperial unity.
- Spanish steel weapons, horses, firearms, and military experience offered advantages but were not sufficient alone.
- The capture of rulers disrupted political command and encouraged defections.

Colonial Rule and Labour

Spain created viceroalties, royal courts, town governments, bishoprics, and a large administrative system. Colonists received grants of Indigenous labour and tribute through the encomienda. The system was officially supposed to include protection and Christian instruction but often produced coercion and abuse. In the Andes, Spanish authorities adapted the Inca mita into a forced labour draft, especially for the silver mines of Potosí.

Missionaries converted millions of Indigenous people and built schools, churches, and missions. Conversion sometimes involved force and destruction of sacred objects. At the same time, Indigenous communities adapted Christianity to local languages and traditions. Colonial society therefore produced conflict, cultural mixture, and new religious forms.

Bartolomé de las Casas and the Debate over Conquest

Bartolomé de las Casas, a Dominican friar, condemned the brutal treatment of Indigenous peoples and argued that they were rational human beings who should be converted peacefully. His writings influenced the New Laws of 1542, which attempted to restrict encomienda. At the Valladolid debate of 1550–1551, Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda defended conquest using ideas of hierarchy and “natural slavery,” while Las Casas defended Indigenous rights. The debate did not end colonial exploitation, but it exposed moral and legal conflict within the Spanish Empire.

The Columbian Exchange

The Columbian Exchange was the movement of plants, animals, diseases, people, and cultural practices between the Eastern and Western hemispheres after 1492. It transformed diets, environments, populations, and economies on both sides of the Atlantic.

From the Americas to Europe, Africa, and Asia	From Europe, Africa, and Asia to the Americas
Maize, potatoes, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, cacao, tobacco, beans, and new varieties of squash and peppers	Wheat, rice, sugarcane, coffee, bananas, citrus fruits, and grapes
Silver from Mexico and the Andes entered global trade	Horses, cattle, pigs, sheep, goats, and chickens reshaped land use and transport
American crops supported population growth in parts of Europe, Africa, and Asia	Smallpox, measles, influenza, and other diseases caused catastrophic Indigenous mortality
Knowledge of American peoples, landscapes, and products changed European thought	European settlers, African captives, Christianity, European languages, and colonial institutions

DEMOGRAPHIC DISASTER IN THE AMERICAS

The Indigenous population of the Americas fell sharply after contact. Disease was the greatest cause, but warfare, famine, forced labour, displacement, and social breakdown also contributed. The scale and timing differed across regions, so one single percentage cannot describe the whole hemisphere.

The Atlantic Slave Trade

European colonists demanded labour for sugar, tobacco, mining, and other enterprises. Indigenous population loss and the profitability of plantations increased the forced transport of Africans across the Atlantic. African slavery existed before European expansion, but Atlantic demand enlarged, redirected, and racialised the trade on an enormous scale.

European merchants traded textiles, metal goods, weapons, alcohol, and other products for captives supplied through African political and commercial networks. Captives endured the Middle Passage under brutal and deadly conditions. In the Americas, enslaved Africans and their descendants created families, religions, languages, music, and communities while resisting slavery through everyday action, escape, revolt, and preservation of culture.

Atlantic Region	Main Role in the Developing System
Europe	Finance, ships, manufactured goods, imperial administration, and markets for colonial products.
West and West-Central Africa	Major source regions for captives; African states and merchants participated under changing conditions and severe human costs.
Caribbean and Brazil	Large plantation zones, especially for sugar; extremely high demand for enslaved labour.
Spanish America	Silver mining, agriculture, urban labour, and regional plantation economies.
North America	Smaller share of the early trade but growing plantation slavery, especially in tobacco regions.

Silver and the First Global Trading System

Silver from Potosí in the Andes and mines in Mexico became one of the most important commodities in the early modern world. Spanish fleets carried silver across the Atlantic to Europe. From Europe, large amounts moved to Asia to purchase spices, textiles, porcelain, and other goods. The Manila galleons also carried American silver across the Pacific to the Philippines, where it entered Chinese and wider Asian trade.

China's large economy and demand for silver helped pull American bullion across the world. European states gained new access to Asian goods, but they did not control the entire global economy. Asian merchants, producers, states, and consumers remained central.

A Global Silver Circuit



Commercial Revolution and Price Revolution

Commercial Revolution

The Commercial Revolution refers to the growth of long-distance trade, financial institutions, chartered companies, commercial agriculture, and urban markets between the late medieval period and the seventeenth century. It did not create capitalism in one moment, but it strengthened profit-seeking investment and large-scale commercial organisation.

- Banks expanded systems of credit, bills of exchange, deposits, and international payment.
- Marine insurance reduced the risk of long voyages.
- Double-entry bookkeeping helped merchants track complex transactions.
- Joint-stock companies allowed many investors to share the cost and risk of overseas commerce.
- Stock exchanges and commodity markets developed in major commercial cities.
- Antwerp became a leading sixteenth-century market; Amsterdam became the most dynamic commercial and financial centre of the seventeenth century.

Price Revolution

European prices rose steadily during much of the sixteenth century. American silver increased the money supply, but population growth, food demand, war, taxation, and shortages also mattered. People with fixed incomes and wages often suffered. Merchants, commercial farmers, and some landlords could benefit when they sold goods at rising prices. Inflation therefore redistributed wealth and increased social tension.

Mercantilism and Chartered Companies

Mercantilism was a collection of policies intended to strengthen the state through trade and economic regulation. Governments tried to increase exports, limit imports, accumulate bullion, protect domestic production, control colonial markets, and use commercial wealth for war and administration. Mercantilist policy varied by country and was never a single complete theory.

England, the Dutch Republic, and France challenged Iberian control of overseas trade. Chartered companies received monopoly rights and political privileges from governments. The English East India Company was chartered in 1600 and the Dutch East India Company in 1602. These companies could trade, build forts, make treaties, maintain armed forces, and sometimes govern territory.

Power	Main Areas and Features by the Seventeenth Century
Portugal	Fortified trading network in Africa and Asia; Brazil; major early role in the spice and slave trades.
Spain	Large American land empire; silver mining; Atlantic and Pacific connections; Philippines.
Dutch Republic	Commercial shipping, finance, East Indies, Cape settlement, Caribbean and Atlantic trade; powerful chartered companies.
England	Atlantic colonies, privateering, growing plantation trade, and East India Company commerce.
France	Canadian and Caribbean colonies, fur trade, fishing, missionary activity, and later plantation growth.

Effects on European Society and Politics

- Atlantic ports and financial centres gained importance, while some Mediterranean routes lost relative influence.
- Colonial goods such as sugar, tobacco, chocolate, coffee, tea, and cotton gradually changed European consumption.
- Merchants, financiers, shipowners, and commercial farmers gained wealth and political influence in several regions.
- Monarchies received new customs duties, colonial revenues, and loans, but overseas empires also created heavy military costs.
- American silver helped finance Habsburg warfare but did not solve Spain's structural fiscal problems.
- European rivalries became global as states fought over sea routes, colonies, ports, and commercial monopolies.
- Ideas of racial hierarchy developed alongside slavery and empire and were used to justify unequal legal status.
- Knowledge of unfamiliar peoples and environments challenged European assumptions and widened debates about human nature, law, religion, and government.

A BALANCED VIEW OF EUROPEAN EXPANSION

European expansion increased trade and connected distant regions more closely, but it was not a peaceful meeting of equal partners. Conquest, epidemic disease, coerced labour, slavery, land seizure, and cultural destruction were central to the new system. Indigenous and African peoples also negotiated, resisted, preserved traditions, and reshaped the colonial societies Europeans attempted to control.

Age of Exploration: Points to Remember

- Portugal built a mainly maritime network around Africa and into Asia; Spain built large territorial empires in the Americas.
- European conquest depended on disease, Indigenous alliances, local political divisions, and military technology.
- The Columbian Exchange transformed food, population, animals, disease, and environment across the world.
- Atlantic slavery became a central labour system of plantation and colonial economies.
- American silver connected Europe, the Americas, and Asia in a truly global circuit.
- The Commercial Revolution expanded credit, insurance, joint-stock investment, and long-distance trade.
- Overseas expansion strengthened European states but also produced rivalry, war, exploitation, and new racial hierarchies.

Chapter Summary

THE CHAPTER ON ONE PAGE

Renaissance: Wealthy Italian cities, classical heritage, patronage, and humanist education encouraged new literature, political thought, architecture, and art. Printing spread these developments across Europe.

Reformation: Luther's challenge to indulgences became a wider rejection of papal authority and traditional doctrine. Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Anabaptist churches emerged. Catholic reform renewed discipline, education, and missionary work.

Religious conflict: France, the Netherlands, England, Spain, the German states, and foreign powers fought over belief, dynasty, territory, and taxation. The Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War in 1648.

Exploration: Portugal opened a sea route around Africa; Spain built an American empire; Dutch, English, and French rivals followed.

Global impact: Disease devastated Indigenous populations. Colonial labour systems and Atlantic slavery expanded. American crops and silver reshaped world population and trade.

European change: By 1648, Europe had stronger states, competing confessions, expanding commercial institutions, global empires, and a much wider circulation of information.

Three Connected Transformations

Transformation	New Development	Long-Term Effect
Cultural	Humanism, print, naturalistic art, vernacular literature	A wider educated public and new models of learning, authorship, and artistic reputation
Religious	Competing churches and confessional states	Permanent division of western Christianity and closer state supervision of religion
Global and economic	Oceanic empires, colonial goods, silver, and slave labour	An Atlantic economy and expanding European competition across the world

Continuities Across the Period

- Christian belief remained central to European life, even as churches divided.
- Social hierarchy continued; nobles, wealthy urban families, and clergy held most political and cultural power.
- Women remained legally and socially subordinate despite important female writers, patrons, rulers, and religious reformers.
- States relied on taxation, privilege, patronage, and negotiated authority rather than controlling society completely.
- Europe remained connected to older Mediterranean, African, and Asian trade networks even as Atlantic commerce grew.

Major Changes Across the Period

- Printed material greatly increased the speed and reach of ideas.
- Western Christianity divided into permanent confessional traditions.
- Monarchies and territorial rulers gained greater control over churches and administration.
- European activity expanded from regional trade into sustained oceanic empire.
- Colonial conquest, plantation agriculture, and Atlantic slavery created new systems of wealth and inequality.

- Global exchange changed diets, populations, environments, and patterns of consumption.

Key Comparisons

Comparison	Core Difference
Medieval scholasticism and Renaissance humanism	Scholasticism organised knowledge through logic and authoritative texts; humanism concentrated on classical language, rhetoric, history, and moral education. The two often overlapped.
Italian and Northern Renaissance	Italian culture drew strongly on classical urban and artistic models; northern culture more often joined humanism to Christian reform and detailed oil painting.
Luther and Calvin	Both defended scripture and salvation by grace; Calvinism created a more systematic Reformed tradition with stronger emphasis on predestination and church discipline.
Protestant and Catholic reform	Both improved education and discipline; they differed over authority, justification, sacraments, clergy, and the structure of the Church.
Portuguese and Spanish expansion	Portugal relied mainly on fortified maritime trade; Spain conquered large territorial empires in the Americas.
Columbian Exchange and Commercial Revolution	The Columbian Exchange concerns movement of organisms and peoples; the Commercial Revolution concerns institutions and expansion of trade and finance.

Key Terms and Personalities

Renaissance: The revival of classical learning and the cultural developments associated with it, beginning especially in Italian cities.

Humanism: Study of classical languages and literature for moral, educational, and civic improvement.

Studia humanitatis: Grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy.

Patronage: Financial and political support given to artists, writers, architects, scholars, and institutions.

Civic humanism: The belief that classical education should prepare citizens for active public service.

Linear perspective: A mathematical method for creating the appearance of depth in art.

Vernacular: The ordinary spoken language of a region rather than Latin.

Christian humanism: Northern European humanism that used classical and biblical learning to improve Christian society.

Printing press: Movable-type technology that greatly increased the production and circulation of texts.

Indulgence: A remission of temporal punishment for sin after guilt had been forgiven.

Justification by faith: Lutheran teaching that sinners are made right with God through faith by grace.

Predestination: The belief, strongly associated with Calvinism, that God has chosen the saved.

Anabaptist: A member of a movement that rejected infant baptism and emphasised voluntary adult faith.

Peace of Augsburg: The 1555 settlement recognising Catholicism and Lutheranism in the Holy Roman Empire.

Council of Trent: The Catholic council of 1545–1563 that clarified doctrine and reformed discipline.

Huguenot: A French Calvinist.

Thirty Years' War: The destructive European conflict of 1618–1648 involving religion, dynasty, territory, and state rivalry.

Peace of Westphalia: The 1648 settlements ending the Thirty Years' War and recognising a politically plural Europe.

Mercantilism: Policies that used trade regulation and colonial control to strengthen state power.

Columbian Exchange: The movement of organisms, diseases, people, and cultures between hemispheres after 1492.

Encomienda: A Spanish colonial grant of Indigenous tribute and labour, officially linked with protection and conversion.

Middle Passage: The forced Atlantic voyage endured by enslaved Africans.

Price Revolution: The long sixteenth-century rise in European prices caused by monetary and demographic pressures.

Commercial Revolution: Expansion of trade, finance, credit, companies, and market organisation in early modern Europe.

Joint-stock company: A company financed by multiple investors who shared risk and profit.

Personalities at a Glance

Person	Importance
Petrarch	Early humanist who recovered classical Latin texts and celebrated literary self-expression.
Machiavelli	Florentine writer who studied political power in practical and historical terms.
Leonardo da Vinci	Artist and investigator whose work joined observation, technique, and human expression.
Michelangelo	Sculptor, painter, architect, and central figure of the High Renaissance.
Erasmus	Christian humanist who used classical and biblical scholarship to criticise corruption and ignorance.
Martin Luther	German reformer whose teachings created the Lutheran tradition.
John Calvin	Leader of the Reformed tradition and organiser of Protestant Geneva.
Henry VIII	English king who rejected papal jurisdiction and established royal supremacy over the English Church.
Ignatius of Loyola	Founder of the Society of Jesus.
Teresa of Ávila	Catholic mystic and reformer of the Carmelite order.
Christopher Columbus	Genoese navigator whose Spanish-sponsored voyages began sustained contact with the Caribbean.
Vasco da Gama	Portuguese navigator who reached India by sea around Africa.
Hernán Cortés	Spanish conquistador who, with Indigenous allies, overthrew the Aztec Empire.
Bartolomé de las Casas	Critic of colonial violence and defender of the humanity and rights of Indigenous peoples.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

- 1. Which condition most directly supported the development of the Italian Renaissance?**
 - A. The political unification of Italy under one king
 - B. The wealth and competition of independent city-states
 - C. The disappearance of Mediterranean trade
 - D. The end of all religious influence on culture
- 2. Renaissance humanists were most interested in**
 - A. rejecting all classical pagan writings
 - B. replacing education with military training
 - C. studying classical language, literature, history, and moral philosophy
 - D. ending the use of vernacular languages
- 3. Which feature best distinguishes much Renaissance art from earlier medieval art?**
 - A. The complete disappearance of religious subjects
 - B. Greater use of perspective, anatomy, and naturalistic space
 - C. A ban on portraits of living people
 - D. The rejection of ancient Greek and Roman models
- 4. The printing press contributed to the Reformation mainly by**
 - A. allowing religious arguments to circulate rapidly
 - B. preventing rulers from regulating religion
 - C. ending illiteracy throughout Europe
 - D. replacing sermons with visual art
- 5. Martin Luther's central teaching on salvation was that**
 - A. salvation was earned through pilgrimages
 - B. salvation came through faith by divine grace
 - C. the pope could guarantee salvation through payment
 - D. rulers could decide who would be saved
- 6. The Peace of Augsburg recognised**
 - A. complete religious freedom for all individuals
 - B. Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism equally
 - C. the right of German rulers to choose Catholicism or Lutheranism
 - D. the independence of the Dutch Republic
- 7. The English Reformation under Henry VIII began primarily because of**
 - A. a royal marriage and succession crisis
 - B. the English defeat of the Spanish Armada
 - C. a peasant demand for adult baptism
 - D. the decisions of the Council of Trent
- 8. The Council of Trent did which of the following?**
 - A. Accepted justification by faith alone
 - B. Ended the authority of bishops
 - C. Clarified Catholic doctrine and improved clerical discipline
 - D. Made Calvinism legal in the Holy Roman Empire
- 9. The Thirty Years' War demonstrates that early modern wars of religion were also shaped by**
 - A. dynastic and strategic state interests
 - B. the complete absence of foreign intervention
 - C. universal support for Habsburg rule
 - D. the end of taxation and territorial rivalry
- 10. Portuguese expansion in Asia was based mainly on**
 - A. conquest of the entire Asian mainland

- B. a network of ports, forts, and naval power
- C. settlement by millions of Portuguese farmers
- D. an alliance that removed all local merchants

11. The Columbian Exchange most directly refers to

- A. a treaty dividing Europe into Catholic and Protestant states
- B. movement of plants, animals, diseases, and peoples between hemispheres
- C. a Dutch system for buying company shares
- D. the exchange of ambassadors after the Thirty Years' War

12. Which factor was most important in the Spanish conquest of American empires?

- A. European numerical superiority
- B. Complete Indigenous political unity
- C. Disease and alliances with Indigenous enemies of the empires
- D. The immediate support of English and Dutch fleets

13. The Price Revolution of the sixteenth century was connected with

- A. falling population and a shrinking money supply
- B. American silver, population growth, and increasing demand
- C. the abolition of taxes by European monarchies
- D. the end of long-distance trade

14. Joint-stock companies encouraged overseas expansion by

- A. distributing cost and risk among multiple investors
- B. ending government involvement in commerce
- C. prohibiting armed trade
- D. replacing all private merchants with monasteries

15. A major consequence shared by the Reformation and overseas expansion was

- A. reduced competition among European states
- B. the disappearance of religious and racial hierarchy
- C. increased movement of people, ideas, wealth, and conflict across borders
- D. the immediate creation of democratic government

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-C · 3-B · 4-A · 5-B · 6-C · 7-A · 8-C · 9-A · 10-B · 11-B · 12-C · 13-B · 14-A · 15-C

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one condition that helped the Renaissance begin in Italian city-states. Describe one cultural development produced by that condition. Explain one way Renaissance culture remained connected to the medieval past.
2. Identify one cause of the Protestant Reformation. Describe one difference between Lutheran and Calvinist reform. Explain one way rulers shaped the success or failure of religious reform.
3. Identify one motive for European oceanic expansion. Describe one effect of the Columbian Exchange. Explain one way Atlantic commerce changed European society or government.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the extent to which Renaissance humanism represented a break from medieval European culture in the period c. 1350–1550.
2. Evaluate the most important cause of the religious division of western Europe in the period 1517–1648.
3. Evaluate the extent to which European overseas expansion transformed the European economy in the period 1450–1648.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about the causes and consequences of religious reform in sixteenth-century Europe:

- An indulgence preacher's sermon
- A passage from Luther on faith and scripture
- A decree from the Council of Trent
- A letter from a German prince supporting reform
- A Calvinist church ordinance from Geneva
- A report describing violence during the French Wars of Religion
- A political settlement regulating religious practice

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: The Reformation began with disputes over salvation and church authority, but it became permanent because print, territorial politics, and organised confessional churches turned theological disagreement into a new European political order.

Possible groups: Religious doctrine and criticism · Political protection and state power · Social discipline and conflict.

Useful outside evidence: German Peasants' War, Act of Supremacy, Jesuits, Edict of Nantes, Peace of Augsburg, or Peace of Westphalia.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one reason the printing press assisted the Reformation, describe one example, and explain one limitation of print as a cause.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One reason: Printing allowed religious arguments to reach large audiences quickly and at a lower cost than handwritten manuscripts.

Example: Printers reproduced Luther's pamphlets, sermons, and German translation of the New Testament across the Holy Roman Empire.

Limitation: Print alone did not protect reformers or create churches. Lutheran reform survived because territorial rulers provided political and military protection and organised new church institutions.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know why the Renaissance began in Italy and how humanism differed from, but also continued, medieval learning.
- Recognise the main features of Renaissance and Northern Renaissance art and literature.
- Know the central teachings and political settings of Luther, Calvin, Anglican reform, Anabaptism, and Catholic reform.
- Place the Peace of Augsburg, Edict of Nantes, Spanish Armada, Thirty Years' War, and Peace of Westphalia in correct context.
- Compare Portuguese maritime expansion with Spanish territorial conquest.
- Connect disease, Indigenous alliances, labour systems, and Atlantic slavery to colonial expansion.
- Understand the Columbian Exchange, Price Revolution, Commercial Revolution, mercantilism, silver trade, and joint-stock companies.

- Be ready to use specific evidence from each of the three major sections in an AP-style paragraph.

— End of Chapter 1 —

2. Absolutism and Constitutionalism (1648–1815)

From the concentration of royal power to limited monarchy and government under law

After the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, European rulers tried to govern larger territories, collect taxes more regularly, command permanent armies, and reduce the independence of nobles, towns, churches, and provincial assemblies. In several states, this effort produced powerful monarchies usually described as absolute. France under Louis XIV became the most famous model, while Russia and Prussia built disciplined military states through different methods.

England followed another path. Conflict between the Stuart kings and Parliament led to civil war, the execution of Charles I, a republic under Oliver Cromwell, the restoration of monarchy, and finally the Glorious Revolution. The settlement of 1688–1689 did not create modern democracy, but it placed clear legal and financial limits on the crown and strengthened Parliament.

These two developments—absolutism and constitutionalism—were not simple opposites. Every monarch faced practical limits, and every constitutional system remained controlled by privileged elites. Yet the contrast mattered. It shaped taxation, warfare, religion, political thought, and the later revolutionary struggle over sovereignty and rights.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Rise of Absolute Monarchies: France, Russia, and Prussia
- English Civil War and the Glorious Revolution
- Development of Constitutionalism

THE BIG PICTURE

Europe after 1648 became a world of stronger states. France made royal authority visible through Versailles, court culture, intendants, taxation, and war. Russia and Prussia used military reform, bureaucracy, and service to the ruler to transform comparatively weak states into great powers. England’s political crises produced a different settlement in which the monarch governed with Parliament and under law. By 1815, both strong central government and constitutional limits had become permanent parts of European politics.

Essential Timeline

Date	Event	Importance
1648	Peace of Westphalia	Ends the Thirty Years’ War and strengthens the authority of territorial rulers.
1648–1653	The Fronde in France	Noble and parliamentary revolts deepen Louis XIV’s fear of disorder.
1649	Execution of Charles I	England becomes a commonwealth after Parliament puts a king on trial.
1660	Restoration of Charles II	Monarchy returns, but arguments over religion and royal power continue.
1661	Louis XIV begins personal rule	The king governs without a chief minister and builds a court-centred monarchy.
1682	Royal court settles at Versailles	Versailles becomes the political and ceremonial centre of France.
1685	Revocation of the Edict of Nantes	French Protestants lose legal protection; many flee the kingdom.
1688–1689	Glorious Revolution	James II is replaced by William III and Mary II; Parliament defines limits on monarchy.
1689	English Bill of Rights	Bars royal suspension of laws and taxation without Parliament.
1694	Bank of England founded	Supports long-term government borrowing and Britain’s fiscal-military power.
1700–1721	Great Northern War	Russia defeats Sweden and becomes the leading power on the Baltic.
1701–1714	War of the Spanish Succession	European coalition prevents the union of the French and Spanish crowns.
1713	Treaty of Utrecht	Maintains the balance of power and recognises important British gains.
1722	Table of Ranks in Russia	Links status and promotion to service under Peter the Great.
1740	Frederick II takes Silesia	Prussia’s conquest begins its rise as a major European power.

Date	Event	Importance
1756–1763	Seven Years' War	Confirms Prussia's survival and expands Britain's global strength.
1762	Catherine II becomes empress	Russia continues expansion while noble privilege and serfdom grow.
1772–1795	Partitions of Poland	Russia, Prussia, and Austria divide the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.
1789	French Revolution begins	Directly challenges absolutism and spreads constitutional language.
1815	Congress of Vienna	Restores dynasties but cannot remove the constitutional ideas created since 1688 and 1789.

Rise of Absolute Monarchies: France, Russia, and Prussia

Absolute monarchy was a form of government in which the ruler claimed the highest authority within the state. The crown tried to make law, raise taxes, direct foreign policy, control the army, supervise religion, and appoint officials without regular consent from representative bodies. The theory was grand, but the practice was always more complicated. Monarchs still depended on nobles, landowners, officeholders, creditors, churches, and local institutions.

Europe after 1648: The Growth of the State

The wars of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries pushed governments to become larger and more organised. Armies required regular pay, weapons, uniforms, food, fortifications, and transport. To meet these costs, rulers expanded taxation, borrowed money, counted populations, recorded land, and appointed more officials. The result is sometimes called the fiscal-military state: a state organised to collect revenue and sustain war.

Foundation of Power	How It Strengthened the Ruler
Permanent army	Reduced dependence on temporary feudal forces and gave the crown direct military power.
Regular taxation	Provided predictable income for armies, courts, officials, and diplomacy.
Central officials	Carried royal orders into provinces and reported local conditions to the centre.
Royal courts and law	Allowed the monarch to present the crown as the source of justice and order.
Control of nobles	Turned possible rivals into officers, courtiers, pensioners, or servants of the state.
Religious policy	Used a common confession or state-supervised church to strengthen obedience.
Economic direction	Protected manufactures, regulated trade, and connected wealth with state power.
Political ceremony	Palaces, titles, rituals, portraits, and festivals made authority visible and impressive.

ABSOLUTISM DID NOT MEAN UNLIMITED POWER

An absolute ruler stood above representative institutions in theory, but could not simply govern by personal wish. Local customs, courts, noble privileges, tax exemptions, church law, poor communications, and shortage of money limited every monarchy. Absolutism is best understood as a continuing effort to concentrate authority—not as complete control over every person and institution.

France: The Model of Court Absolutism

France was Europe's most populous major kingdom and possessed rich farmland, active towns, and a prestigious court. It also had deep regional differences, separate law codes, local privileges, tax exemptions, and powerful nobles. The Bourbon monarchy became strong not by destroying all these institutions, but by controlling, supervising, and using them.

Richelieu, Mazarin, and the Bourbon Foundations

Cardinal Richelieu served as chief minister to Louis XIII from 1624 to 1642. He aimed to strengthen the monarchy and weaken political forces that could challenge it. He destroyed the independent military position of the Huguenots while allowing them to keep limited religious worship. He also reduced the political power of great nobles, expanded the use of royal commissioners called intendants, and supported France's enemies during the Thirty Years' War in order to weaken the Habsburg dynasties.

After Richelieu and Louis XIII died, Cardinal Mazarin governed for the child Louis XIV. Heavy taxation and resentment of royal centralisation contributed to the Fronde, a series of revolts between 1648 and 1653 involving nobles, judges of the Parlement of Paris, and urban groups. The rebels could not agree on a common programme. Their failure convinced many elites that disorder was more dangerous than strong monarchy, while the young Louis XIV learned to distrust Paris and independent nobles.



Louis XIV and Personal Rule

Louis XIV became king in 1643 and began personal rule after Mazarin's death in 1661. He did not appoint another chief minister. Instead, he attended councils, demanded reports, made final decisions, and carefully controlled access to his person. The statement "I am the state" is probably not an authentic quotation, but it expresses the political image connected with his reign.

LOUIS XIV, 1638–1715

Known as the "Sun King," Louis XIV ruled France for seventy-two years. He treated monarchy as a public performance. Ceremony, architecture, art, religion, military victory, and court etiquette all presented the king as the centre of political life. His system made France the cultural model of Europe, but long wars and unequal taxation left heavy financial problems.

Versailles and the Management of the Nobility

Louis transformed the hunting lodge at Versailles into an enormous palace and moved the royal court there in 1682. Versailles was a home, government centre, theatre, and political instrument. Nobles competed for honour through ceremonies such as attending the king's rising, dressing, meals, and bedtime. Court life required expensive clothing, servants, apartments, and entertainment. Royal pensions and appointments made success depend on access to the king.

Versailles did not imprison the entire French nobility. Many nobles remained on their estates or served as military officers, governors, bishops, and judges. Its importance lay in turning the highest aristocracy away from independent rebellion and toward competition for royal favour. At the same time, provincial administration increasingly depended on officials loyal to the crown.

Government: Councils, Intendants, and Venal Offices

Louis worked through councils responsible for war, finance, foreign affairs, and royal business. Intendants supervised justice, policing, and finance in the provinces. They were often drawn from the noblesse de robe—families whose status came from legal and administrative office rather than old military ancestry. Their presence increased royal information and influence outside the court.

Yet the monarchy also sold offices to raise money. Many offices became property that could be inherited or resold. This gave the crown immediate revenue and tied officeholders to the state, but it also protected privileges and made reform difficult. France therefore combined central direction with a complicated network of purchased rights and local exemptions.

Institution	Function	Practical Limit
Royal councils	Prepared decisions on war, finance, law, and diplomacy.	The king still depended on capable ministers and reliable information.
Intendants	Represented the crown in provinces and supervised taxation, policing, and justice.	Local elites and courts could delay, negotiate, or resist their orders.
Parlements	High courts registered royal laws and heard legal cases.	They were not elected parliaments, but could protest and delay registration.
Venal offices	Raised money and created a class invested in royal government.	Officeholders defended exemptions and treated office as private property.
Provincial estates	Approved or organised taxation in certain regions.	Historic privileges prevented complete administrative uniformity.

Colbert and Mercantilism

Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Louis XIV's chief financial minister from 1665 to 1683, believed that state power depended on a productive economy and a favourable balance of trade. He encouraged high-quality manufactures, inspected workshops, improved roads and canals, supported merchant shipping, placed tariffs on imported goods, and strengthened colonial companies. This policy is associated with mercantilism.

Colbert tried to make taxation more efficient, but he did not remove the privileges of the nobility and clergy. Indirect taxes remained burdensome for ordinary people, and tax collection was often leased to private financiers. His economic gains could not match the enormous cost of warfare and court expenditure.

Colbert's Measure	Purpose	Result or Limitation
Royal manufactures	Produce luxury goods such as textiles, mirrors, and tapestries inside France.	Raised quality and prestige, but required regulation and subsidies.
Protective tariffs	Discourage imports and support French producers.	Provoked retaliation and could raise prices.
Roads and canals	Move goods and armies more efficiently.	Improved internal links, though local tolls and regional barriers remained.
Merchant colonies marine and	Expand overseas trade and reduce reliance on foreign ships.	France gained colonies, but Dutch and English competition stayed strong.
Financial supervision	Increase royal revenue and reduce waste.	Tax exemptions and war spending prevented lasting balance.

Religion and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes

Louis believed that religious unity supported political unity. Catholic clergy praised monarchy and preached obedience, while the king influenced church appointments and defended certain rights of the French Church against direct papal control. Protestants, however, faced growing restrictions.

In 1685, the Edict of Fontainebleau revoked the Edict of Nantes. Protestant churches and schools were closed, ministers were ordered to leave, and laypeople were forbidden to emigrate. Despite this ban, perhaps hundreds of thousands of Huguenots escaped to the Dutch Republic, England, Prussia, Switzerland, and the Americas. France lost skilled merchants and artisans, while rival states gained them. The policy displayed royal power but damaged France's reputation and economy.

RELIGIOUS UNITY AND STATE POWER

Confessional unity could make obedience easier to present, but forced conformity also produced resistance, exile, and economic loss. Louis XIV's treatment of the Huguenots shows both the reach and the cost of absolutist religious policy.

War and the Search for Glory

Louis XIV wanted secure frontiers, dynastic influence, and international prestige. France possessed a large standing army under the war minister Louvois and a strong system of fortresses designed by Vauban. Early victories increased French territory, but repeated expansion frightened other states and encouraged coalitions against France.

Conflict	Main Aim	Outcome
War of Devolution, 1667–1668	Claim territory in the Spanish Netherlands.	France gained several fortified towns but faced foreign opposition.
Dutch War, 1672–1678	Break Dutch resistance and expand toward the Rhine.	France gained territory, but Dutch survival and coalition warfare limited success.
War of the League of Augsburg, 1688–1697	Defend French gains and influence in the Rhineland.	Long, expensive conflict ended with limited territorial change.
War of the Spanish Succession, 1701–1714	Secure the Spanish inheritance for Louis's grandson.	Philip V kept Spain, but the French and Spanish crowns could not unite; Britain gained strategic and commercial advantages.

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 reflected the principle of the balance of power: no single dynasty should dominate Europe. France remained a great power, but warfare left the crown deeply indebted. Because privileged groups paid fewer direct taxes, the burden fell heavily on peasants, consumers, and common taxpayers. The monarchy appeared magnificent while its financial structure remained fragile.

FRANCE: ACHIEVEMENT AND LIMIT

Louis XIV created a powerful army, an influential court, a respected culture, and a monarchy copied across Europe. Yet France never became administratively uniform, noble privilege survived, taxation remained unequal, and war consumed much of the wealth created by Colbert's reforms. The reign was both the height of Bourbon prestige and the beginning of a serious fiscal problem.

Russia: Reform from Above

Seventeenth-century Russia was a large land empire ruled by the Romanov dynasty. It possessed strong traditions of autocracy, an Orthodox Church closely connected with the state, and a service nobility that owed military duty to the tsar. Most peasants were tied increasingly to noble estates. Russia had limited access to warm-water ports and remained less urban and commercially developed than western Europe.

Peter the Great

Peter I became sole effective ruler in 1689 and took the title emperor in 1721. He admired western military technology and travelled through the Dutch Republic, England, and other European lands during the Great Embassy of 1697–1698. Peter did not attempt to copy western constitutional government. He borrowed techniques that could make the Russian state, army, navy, and economy stronger.

Area	Peter's Reform	Purpose and Effect
Army	Created a large standing army, modern drill, artillery, uniforms, and officer training.	Allowed Russia to fight long wars and defeat Sweden.
Navy	Built a fleet and naval bases.	Gave Russia power on the Baltic and later access to wider maritime trade.
Administration	Created a Senate, specialised colleges, provincial divisions, and closer record-keeping.	Made government more regular, though corruption and distance remained serious.
Nobility	Issued the Table of Ranks in 1722 and required state service.	Linked promotion to military or civil service, while noble privilege remained central.
Church	Replaced the independent patriarch with the Holy Synod in 1721.	Placed the Orthodox Church under tighter state supervision.
Taxation	Introduced a poll tax on adult male peasants and expanded state monopolies.	Paid for war but increased pressure on village households.
Economy	Encouraged mines, ironworks, armaments, textiles, and state-directed factories.	Made Russia a major producer of military supplies; many enterprises used forced labour.
Culture	Ordered western dress at court, taxed beards, changed education, and encouraged technical learning.	Westernised elite appearance and skills but widened the gap between nobles and peasants.

The Great Northern War and St. Petersburg

Peter's central foreign-policy goal was access to the Baltic Sea. In the Great Northern War, Russia and its allies challenged Sweden. Russia suffered an early defeat at Narva in 1700, but Peter rebuilt his forces. The Russian victory at Poltava in 1709 broke the power of the Swedish invasion, and the Treaty of Nystad in 1721 confirmed Russian possession of important Baltic territories.

Peter founded St. Petersburg in 1703 on land taken from Sweden and required nobles to build houses there. The city faced the Baltic and symbolised a new orientation toward Europe. Its construction demanded enormous labour and caused many deaths. Like Versailles, it was both a capital and a statement of political purpose.



The Social Cost of Petrine Reform

Peter's reforms were imposed through command, taxation, conscription, and forced labour. Peasant recruits might serve for life, while noble landlords gained stronger control over serfs. State factories sometimes received entire villages whose labour was tied to production. Russia became stronger internationally, but the condition of ordinary rural people often became harsher.

Westernisation was also socially narrow. Noble men learned European manners, military science, and administrative service; elite women appeared more openly at court; and technical schools expanded. Most peasants, however, continued to live within village communities, Orthodox traditions, and a growing system of serfdom. The empire modernised its state without creating social equality.

Catherine the Great

Catherine II came to power in 1762 after a palace coup against her husband, Peter III. A German-born princess, she learned Russian, converted to Orthodoxy, read Enlightenment writers, and corresponded with figures such as Voltaire. She wanted to appear as a rational and civilised ruler, but her power depended on the nobility, army officers, and court factions.

Policy	Enlightened Image	Political Reality
The Instruction, or Nakaz	Discussed law, reason, and opposition to torture and arbitrary punishment.	The Legislative Commission failed to create a new law code.
Provincial reform	Created more regular provincial administration and courts.	Officials remained limited, and noble influence stayed strong.
Education	Supported schools, institutes, publishing, and elite culture.	Education reached only a small share of the population.
Religious policy	Showed greater practical tolerance toward some non-Orthodox subjects.	The Orthodox Church remained an important pillar of the state.
Noble status	Charter to the Nobility in 1785 confirmed corporate rights and exemptions.	Nobles gained greater authority over estates and serfs.
Expansion	Defeated the Ottoman Empire, annexed Crimea, and joined the partitions of Poland.	Military success increased the empire's ethnic and religious diversity.

PUGACHEV'S REBELLION, 1773–1775

Yemelyan Pugachev claimed to be the dead Peter III and attracted Cossacks, serfs, workers, and non-Russian peoples who opposed landlords, taxes, and officials. The rebellion spread widely before the army crushed it. Catherine responded by strengthening provincial control and relying more heavily on nobles. The revolt exposed the deep social weakness beneath enlightened language.

Under Catherine, Russia expanded south toward the Black Sea and west into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The partitions of 1772, 1793, and 1795, carried out with Prussia and Austria, removed Poland from the map. Russian power grew, but constitutional and national questions remained unresolved across eastern Europe.

Russia: Points to Remember

- Peter borrowed western military and technical methods, not western constitutional limits.
- The Great Northern War shifted Baltic power from Sweden to Russia.
- St. Petersburg symbolised western orientation, central command, and human cost.
- The Table of Ranks tied elite status to service, but did not end noble privilege.
- Catherine used Enlightenment language while strengthening noble authority and territorial expansion.
- Russian state power increased alongside serfdom and social inequality.

Prussia: The Army and the State

Prussia developed from the scattered territories of the Hohenzollern dynasty, especially Brandenburg in the Holy Roman Empire and Prussia in the east. The lands were geographically separated, damaged by war, and economically uneven. Their rulers created unity through military organisation, taxation, a disciplined bureaucracy, and cooperation with the landed nobility known as Junkers.

The Great Elector

Frederick William, the Great Elector, ruled from 1640 to 1688. The destruction caused by the Thirty Years' War convinced him that survival required a permanent army. He obtained regular taxation from provincial estates in exchange for protecting noble privileges over peasants. The General War Commissariat collected revenue and supplied the army, becoming an important central institution.

The arrangement was a bargain: the ruler gained taxes and soldiers, while Junkers kept social authority, tax advantages, and control over serfs. Prussian absolutism therefore rested not on the destruction of the nobility, but on a close partnership between crown and landed elite.

Frederick William I: The Soldier King

Frederick William I ruled from 1713 to 1740. He disliked the luxury of court life, reduced many royal expenses, supervised officials closely, and devoted a very large share of state income to the army. He expanded the bureaucracy and expected obedience, punctuality, thrift, and service.

The canton system assigned districts responsibility for supplying soldiers to particular regiments. Peasants served in the army for part of the year and worked the land at other times, while Junker officers commanded them. The system linked rural society, taxation, and military organisation. Prussia's army was much larger than its population or wealth alone would suggest.

Element of the Prussian System	Connection to State Power
Junker officer class	Joined noble honour and landholding to military service.
Canton recruitment	Created a regular supply of trained soldiers from rural districts.
General Directory	Combined financial, military, and administrative supervision after 1723.
Careful taxation and spending	Maintained a large army without the same court expenditure as France.
Religious toleration	Attracted skilled Protestant refugees, including Huguenots.
Serf agriculture	Supported noble estates and recruitment, but kept peasants politically and socially weak.

Frederick the Great

Frederick II, known as Frederick the Great, ruled from 1740 to 1786. He wrote music and philosophy, corresponded with Voltaire, admired French culture, and described the ruler as the "first servant of the state." He promoted religious toleration, improved some legal procedures, encouraged agriculture, and supported education and economic development.

Yet his reputation rested mainly on military success. Soon after taking the throne, he invaded the rich Austrian province of Silesia. Prussia kept Silesia after the War of the Austrian Succession. During the Seven Years' War, Prussia survived against Austria, Russia, France, and other enemies through military skill, British support, and the unexpected withdrawal of Russia after the death of Empress Elizabeth. Survival confirmed Prussia as a great power.

Frederick's Policy	Reform or Achievement	Continuing Limit
Religious toleration	Accepted different Christian groups and Jewish communities when useful to the state.	Tolerance remained practical and unequal rather than a modern right.
Law and justice	Discouraged some judicial abuses and sought more regular administration.	The ruler remained the highest authority and social rank shaped experience.
Agriculture	Promoted drainage, settlement, grain production, and crops such as the potato.	Serfdom remained strong on Junker estates east of the Elbe.
Education and culture	Supported academies, schools, music, and Enlightenment exchange.	Education was still limited and censorship did not disappear.
War and territory	Won Silesia and preserved Prussia in the Seven Years' War.	Military demands dominated finance and society.

PRUSSIA'S CENTRAL CONTRADICTION

Prussia was efficient, disciplined, and open to selected reforms, but its strength depended on an unequal rural order. The crown modernised administration and warfare while preserving Junker privilege and peasant serfdom. This combination made Prussia powerful without making it liberal.

Absolute Monarchies Compared

Feature	France	Russia	Prussia
Main ruler	Louis XIV	Peter the Great; Catherine the Great	Frederick William I; Frederick II
Central method	Court, ceremony, intendants, large army	Command reform, service, taxation, army and navy	Army, bureaucracy, fiscal discipline, Junker cooperation
Nobility	Drawn toward court and royal service; privileges remained	Required to serve; received stronger control over serfs	Served as officers and landlords; core partner of the crown
Economic policy	Colbertian mercantilism and luxury manufactures	State-directed mining, metalworking, and military production	Agricultural improvement, settlement, manufactures, careful finance
Religion	Catholic unity; Huguenot persecution	Orthodox Church supervised by state	Broad practical toleration to attract useful subjects
Military result	Largest and most prestigious army, but costly wars	Baltic and Black Sea expansion; great-power status	Silesian conquest and survival in the Seven Years' War
Main weakness	Debt, unequal taxation, regional privilege	Serfdom, coercion, administrative distance	Small population, militarisation, social inequality

ABSOLUTE MONARCHY: POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Strong monarchies grew from the demands of taxation and war.
- Rulers controlled nobles by service, court life, military command, or partnership.
- France displayed royal power through Versailles and culture; Russia and Prussia relied more openly on military reform.
- Economic regulation served state power, not free trade or social equality.
- Noble privilege survived in all three monarchies.
- The greatest practical limit was money: permanent armies and repeated wars were extremely expensive.

English Civil War and the Glorious Revolution

England entered the seventeenth century with a strong monarchy, an established Protestant Church, common-law courts, and a Parliament that approved taxation. The central question was not whether the king should exist, but whether the crown could govern, tax, and shape religion without Parliament. The Stuart kings defended broad royal authority, while many members of Parliament defended inherited law, property, and the privileges of the House of Commons.

The Stuart Conflict with Parliament

Issue	Royal Position	Parliamentary Concern
Taxation	The king needed revenue to govern and conduct foreign policy.	Taxes required parliamentary consent under established custom.
Law	The crown claimed prerogative powers in emergencies.	Subjects should not be imprisoned or taxed outside due process and statute.
Religion	Kings supported bishops and uniform worship in the Church of England.	Puritans feared a return to Catholic-style ceremony and arbitrary church government.
Army	The crown needed forces for defence and order.	A permanent army under the king could threaten liberty.
Representation	The monarch viewed Parliament as an occasional adviser and tax-granting body.	Members claimed a continuing role in law, grievance, and national government.

James I and the Language of Divine Right

James VI of Scotland became James I of England in 1603. He believed that monarchy came from God and that kings were accountable to God rather than to their subjects. Parliament did not reject

monarchy, but members disliked the suggestion that their legal privileges existed only by royal permission. Disputes over customs duties, spending, monopolies, and religion created mistrust.

James maintained peace for much of his reign, but his financial weakness remained unresolved. Royal income did not rise as quickly as the cost of government. Attempts to obtain money without parliamentary grants made each political disagreement more serious.

Charles I and the Petition of Right

Charles I became king in 1625. Costly and unsuccessful wars against Spain and France led him to demand forced loans and quarter soldiers in private homes. Some subjects who refused payment were imprisoned without a stated cause. Parliament responded with the Petition of Right in 1628, which declared that taxation required parliamentary consent, imprisonment required lawful cause, soldiers could not be quartered arbitrarily, and martial law should not replace ordinary law in peacetime.

Charles accepted the petition to obtain money but soon dissolved Parliament. From 1629 to 1640 he ruled without calling it, a period known as the Personal Rule.



Personal Rule, Ship Money, and Religious Fear

During the Personal Rule, Charles used existing royal revenues and extended ship money, traditionally collected from coastal towns in wartime, to inland counties in peacetime. Many judges upheld the levy, but opponents saw it as taxation without Parliament. The famous case of John Hampden made ship money a symbol of arbitrary government.

Religious policy deepened the crisis. Archbishop William Laud promoted uniform worship, church decoration, and stronger authority for bishops. Puritans believed these practices moved the Church of England toward Catholicism. Fear grew because Charles's wife, Henrietta Maria, was Catholic and because European rulers often connected religious uniformity with absolute monarchy.

Scotland and the Return of Parliament

Charles attempted to impose a new prayer book on Presbyterian Scotland in 1637. Resistance produced the National Covenant and the Bishops' Wars. Lacking money to fight, Charles called the Short Parliament in April 1640, dissolved it after three weeks, and then called the Long Parliament in November.

The Long Parliament removed leading royal advisers, ended several prerogative courts, declared ship money illegal, and required Parliament to meet regularly. Tension rose over who should command the army needed to suppress rebellion in Ireland. In January 1642, Charles entered the House of Commons to arrest five members. They had escaped, but the action destroyed trust. Both sides prepared for war.

The English Civil War

Open war began in 1642. Royalists, or Cavaliers, supported the king; Parliamentarians, or Roundheads, supported Parliament. The division was not a simple struggle of one social class against another. Nobles, gentry, towns, and counties appeared on both sides. Religion, local loyalty, economic interest, and personal ties all mattered.

Side	Sources of Support	Main Strengths and Weaknesses
Royalists	Many nobles, Anglican clergy, parts of the north and west, and supporters of traditional monarchy.	Experienced cavalry and early military success, but weaker access to London's finance and population.
Parliamentarians	London, many ports and commercial regions, Puritan communities, and important sections of the gentry.	Greater financial resources and navy; initially divided over war aims and military organisation.
Scots Covenanters	Presbyterian forces allied with Parliament in 1643.	Provided experienced troops but expected a Presbyterian religious settlement.
New Model Army	A reorganised national force created by Parliament in 1645.	Professional discipline, promotion by ability, strong religious commitment, and effective central command.

The New Model Army and Oliver Cromwell

The New Model Army was organised under Sir Thomas Fairfax, with Oliver Cromwell commanding cavalry. Officers stressed discipline, regular pay, and promotion based more on ability than birth. Victory at Naseby in 1645 destroyed the king's main field army. Charles surrendered in 1646, but negotiations failed because the king tried to use divisions among Parliament, the army, and the Scots.

A second civil war in 1648 convinced army leaders that Charles could not be trusted. Soldiers removed moderate members from the House of Commons in Pride's Purge. The remaining Rump Parliament created a special court that tried Charles for treason against the people of England.

Regicide and Commonwealth

Charles I was executed on 30 January 1649. The monarchy and House of Lords were abolished, and England was declared a commonwealth. The execution was revolutionary because it treated the king as a public official who could be held responsible for violating the law. Most Europeans, including many opponents of Charles, were shocked by the killing of an anointed monarch.

WHY THE EXECUTION MATTERED

The trial did not establish a stable republic, but it changed political argument. It suggested that sovereignty might belong to the community rather than to a dynasty and that rulers could be judged for the use of public power. Later constitutional movements did not need to support regicide to use this principle.

Commonwealth and Protectorate

The republican regime faced war in Ireland and Scotland, royalist resistance, religious division, and disagreement within the victorious army. Cromwell's campaign in Ireland included brutal sieges at Drogheda and Wexford, confiscation of Catholic land, and a long legacy of bitterness. In Scotland, Charles II was defeated at Worcester in 1651.

The Rump Parliament failed to produce an accepted constitutional settlement. Cromwell dissolved it in 1653 and became Lord Protector under the Instrument of Government, England's first written constitution. He ruled with a council and parliaments, but conflict over finance, religion, and the army continued. Major-generals later supervised regions, giving the Protectorate a military character.

Feature	Commonwealth / Protectorate Policy	Importance
Government	Republic after 1649; Cromwell as Lord Protector after 1653.	Showed that monarchy could be removed, but stable republican rule proved difficult.
Religion	Broad toleration for many Protestants, but not full equality for Catholics or all radicals.	Weakened compulsory uniformity and allowed varied Protestant worship.
Economy	Navigation Act of 1651 favoured English shipping and challenged Dutch commerce.	Linked state power, trade, and naval competition.
Ireland and Scotland	Military conquest and political union under the Commonwealth.	Created lasting resentment and exposed the coercive side of the revolution.
Army	Central support of the regime and major part of public spending.	Protected the government but also made civilian constitutional settlement harder.

Cromwell died in 1658. His son Richard lacked military support, and the regime collapsed. General George Monck helped arrange the restoration of Charles II in 1660. The revolutionary experiment ended, but the political memory of civil war, regicide, and military rule remained powerful.

The Restoration and the Exclusion Crisis

Charles II returned as king in 1660. The Restoration brought back monarchy, the House of Lords, and the Church of England. Parliament passed laws known as the Clarendon Code that restricted nonconformist Protestants. Yet the crown could not simply restore the political world of 1625. Parliament met regularly, taxation required parliamentary grants, and fear of arbitrary rule remained strong.

Charles's foreign policy and religion produced suspicion. The secret Treaty of Dover with Louis XIV promised French money and contained a private commitment by Charles to convert to Catholicism. The public never knew all its terms, but pro-French policy and the king's attempt to suspend religious penalties increased distrust. Parliament answered with the Test Act of 1673, which required officeholders to accept Anglican communion and reject Catholic teachings.

Whigs, Tories, and the Exclusion Crisis

Because Charles had no legitimate child, his Catholic brother James was heir to the throne. During the Exclusion Crisis of 1679–1681, opponents tried to exclude James from succession. Supporters of exclusion became known as Whigs, while defenders of hereditary monarchy and the established church became known as Tories. These labels developed into lasting political traditions, although eighteenth-century parties were loose networks rather than modern mass organisations.

Charles defeated exclusion and ruled without Parliament during the final years of his reign. The Habeas Corpus Act of 1679 nevertheless strengthened legal protection against indefinite imprisonment by requiring authorities to justify detention before a court.

James II and the Final Crisis

James II became king in 1685. Many Tories initially supported him because they valued hereditary succession. Fear increased when James maintained a standing army, appointed Catholics to military and university positions, and used royal dispensing power to set aside laws. His Declarations of Indulgence suspended religious penalties for Catholics and Protestant dissenters without parliamentary approval.

The birth of a Catholic son in June 1688 changed the situation. Until then, James's Protestant daughter Mary was expected to inherit. A male heir created the possibility of a permanent Catholic dynasty. Seven leading English figures invited Mary's husband, William of Orange, ruler of the Dutch Republic, to intervene.

The Glorious Revolution

William landed in England with a Dutch army in November 1688. Important officers and nobles deserted James, who fled to France. Parliament declared that James had abandoned the government and offered the crown jointly to William III and Mary II. The change was called “glorious” by its supporters because it appeared to preserve law, Protestantism, and property without prolonged civil war in England.



The Revolution Settlement

Measure	Main Provision	Constitutional Importance
Bill of Rights, 1689	The monarch could not suspend laws, levy taxation, or maintain a standing army in peacetime without Parliament; elections and parliamentary speech received protection.	Defined major abuses of royal power and made parliamentary consent central.
Toleration Act, 1689	Allowed worship by many Protestant dissenters who accepted required oaths.	Reduced religious uniformity, though Catholics and non-Trinitarians remained excluded.
Mutiny Act, 1689	Parliament authorised military discipline for limited periods.	Required regular parliamentary meetings to maintain the army legally.
Triennial Act, 1694	Required frequent elections and limited the life of a Parliament.	Prevented the crown from avoiding Parliament indefinitely.
Bank of England, 1694	A chartered bank lent money to government and helped organise public credit.	Allowed the state to borrow large sums on dependable terms.
Act of Settlement, 1701	Secured a Protestant succession and placed further rules around monarchy and office.	Confirmed that succession could be determined by statute.
Act of Union, 1707	United England and Scotland in the Kingdom of Great Britain with one Parliament.	Created a larger constitutional and commercial state.

The settlement did not make Parliament sovereign in one single moment, and the monarch still appointed ministers, directed diplomacy, and influenced elections. But the crown now depended on statutes, annual finance, and parliamentary support more consistently than before. Government became a partnership often described as the king or queen in Parliament.

A REVOLUTION—BUT NOT BLOODLESS EVERYWHERE

Political change in England involved little fighting after William's landing, but the wider struggle was violent. Williamite and Jacobite forces fought in Ireland, including at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690, and resistance continued in Scotland. The settlement strengthened Protestant political control and deepened Catholic dispossession in Ireland.

The Financial Revolution

After 1688, Parliament's regular taxation and supervision gave lenders greater confidence that government debts would be repaid. The Bank of England, a funded national debt, stock markets, and new financial institutions allowed Britain to borrow at lower rates and over longer periods than France. This did not make taxes lighter; it made state finance more dependable.

The result was a constitutional fiscal-military state. Britain could maintain a navy, subsidise allies, and fight long wars while Parliament approved revenue and creditors purchased government debt. Constitutionalism therefore did not produce a weak state. It created a different method of building state power—through law, credit, and cooperation with property-owning elites.

ENGLISH CIVIL WAR AND GLORIOUS REVOLUTION: POINTS TO REMEMBER

- The Stuart crisis centred on taxation, law, religion, and control of armed force.
- The Petition of Right and resistance to ship money defended government under established law.
- Civil war produced the New Model Army, regicide, Commonwealth, and Protectorate.
- Restoration did not erase the political changes of the 1640s.
- The Glorious Revolution replaced James II and made parliamentary consent a regular condition of monarchy.
- Britain became stronger in war because constitutional finance increased public credit.

Development of Constitutionalism

Constitutionalism is the principle that government operates under recognised laws and institutions rather than the uncontrolled will of a ruler. A constitution does not have to be one written document. In Britain, constitutional rules developed through statutes, court decisions, political customs, parliamentary practice, and inherited principles.

The Main Principles of Constitutional Government

Principle	Meaning in Early Modern Europe
Rule of law	Officials and rulers should act through known law rather than arbitrary command.
Consent to taxation	Representatives of taxpayers approve extraordinary or regular public revenue.
Representative institutions	Assemblies speak for recognised communities, estates, towns, or property holders.
Protected rights	Subjects possess legal claims such as due process, property, petition, or freedom from unlawful detention.
Regular government	Institutions meet and operate according to rules, not only when the ruler chooses.
Accountability	Ministers and rulers may be questioned, removed, or resisted when they violate the constitutional order.
Balanced authority	Power is divided or shared among crown, legislature, courts, provinces, or other institutions.

English Constitutional Foundations

The settlement of 1689 drew on older English traditions. Magna Carta had placed the king within a legal relationship with his subjects. Parliament developed from royal councils and became a body that granted taxes and made statutes. Common-law courts defended procedures and property. None of

these institutions was democratic in the modern sense, but together they created a language of lawful government.

Date / Tradition	Constitutional Contribution
1215 – Magna Carta	The king accepted that taxation and punishment were connected with law and recognised procedure.
Medieval Parliament	Representatives of counties and towns joined nobles and clergy in granting taxes and making statutes.
Common law	Judges developed legal principles through precedent and protected forms of due process.
1628 – Petition of Right	Rejected taxation and imprisonment without lawful authority.
1641 – Triennial Act and parliamentary reforms	Limited the king's ability to govern indefinitely without Parliament.
1679 – Habeas Corpus Act	Strengthened court review of detention.
1689 – Bill of Rights	Made suspension of law, taxation, and a peacetime army dependent on Parliament.
1701 – Act of Settlement	Used statute to regulate succession and reinforce judicial and Protestant guarantees.

Hobbes and Locke

The political conflicts of the seventeenth century changed the theory of government. Thomas Hobbes and John Locke both used the idea of a social contract, but they reached very different conclusions.

Question	Thomas Hobbes	John Locke
Major work	Leviathan, 1651	Two Treatises of Government, published 1689–1690
Human condition without government	A condition of insecurity and fear in which no authority can protect life.	A state of nature governed by natural law, but without a dependable judge.
Purpose of government	Create peace and security by concentrating sovereign power.	Protect natural rights, especially life, liberty, and property.
Source of authority	Individuals authorise a sovereign through agreement.	Government receives power from the consent of the governed.
Right of resistance	Generally rejected because division of sovereignty returns society to conflict.	Permitted when government breaks trust and attacks natural rights.
Political direction	Could justify a very strong monarchy or another undivided sovereign.	Supported limited government and the revolutionary settlement of 1688.

Hobbes was not a simple defender of divine right. His sovereign gained authority from human agreement and the need for order. Locke, by contrast, made government conditional. Rulers were trustees, and political society existed before any particular government. These ideas later influenced Enlightenment and revolutionary arguments.

The Dutch Republic: A Commercial Constitutional State

The Dutch Republic provided another alternative to absolute monarchy. Seven provinces formed a union in which provincial estates held major authority and sent delegates to the States General. The province of Holland was especially influential because of its wealth. The stadholder, usually from the House of Orange, possessed military and political power, but republican regents in the towns also governed.

The system was decentralised and dominated by wealthy merchants rather than by a broad electorate. Yet it protected local privileges, religious diversity, commercial law, and public credit. Amsterdam became a centre of banking, shipping, printing, and global trade. Dutch strength showed that a state without an absolute king could become rich and powerful, although rivalry between Orangists and republican regents sometimes produced instability.

CONSTITUTIONALISM WAS NOT THE SAME AS DEMOCRACY

The English and Dutch systems limited rulers, but political power remained concentrated among property-owning men, nobles, merchants, officeholders, and established churches. Women, labourers, servants, many religious minorities, and colonial subjects lacked equal political rights. Constitutionalism first meant government under law; democracy developed much later.

Britain in the Eighteenth Century

The Hanoverian dynasty began in 1714 when George I inherited the crown under the Act of Settlement. Because the new king depended on ministers who could manage Parliament, cabinet government grew more important. The cabinet was a small group of leading ministers who coordinated policy. It developed through practice rather than through one constitutional law.

Robert Walpole and Ministerial Government

Robert Walpole became the leading minister from 1721 to 1742 and is often called Britain's first prime minister, although the title was not yet an official office. He maintained support in the House of Commons through patronage, alliances, and careful management of royal and parliamentary interests. Ministers increasingly needed both the monarch's confidence and a workable majority in Parliament.

Party politics continued between Whig and Tory networks. The Whigs dominated much of the early Hanoverian period and associated themselves with the Protestant succession, commerce, and the revolution settlement. Tories often defended the established church, landed interests, and a stronger attachment to hereditary monarchy. Both groups belonged to the political elite.

Parliament, Elections, and the Political Nation

Parliament consisted of the hereditary House of Lords and the elected House of Commons. The electorate was limited by property qualifications and varied widely between constituencies. Some small boroughs sent two members despite having very few voters, while growing industrial towns had no direct representation. Patronage, family influence, and open voting allowed powerful landowners to shape elections.

Nevertheless, politics extended beyond Parliament. Newspapers, pamphlets, coffeehouses, clubs, petitions, public meetings, and urban crowds created a wider political nation. Public opinion could affect ministers even when most people could not vote. Eighteenth-century constitutionalism was therefore both restricted and increasingly public.

Public Credit and the Fiscal-Military State

Parliament's control over revenue helped Britain build reliable public credit. Investors believed that taxes approved by Parliament would repay government debt. The state could therefore borrow during war, while the navy protected trade and colonies. Britain combined constitutional government with imperial expansion, commercial regulation, and military power.

British Institution	Political Role	Effect on State Power
Parliament	Approved taxes, statutes, and major public borrowing.	Made revenue dependable and linked policy to propertied elites.
Cabinet	Coordinated ministers and managed support in Parliament.	Created more continuous executive government.
Bank of England	Managed loans and supported public credit.	Lowered borrowing costs and financed long wars.
Royal Navy	Protected commerce, colonies, and supply routes.	Connected trade, empire, and national strategy.
Political press	Spread debate, criticism, and party argument.	Expanded public participation beyond formal voting.

Constitutionalism Beyond Britain

During the later eighteenth century, constitutional ideas moved from the defence of inherited English rights toward broader claims about natural rights and popular sovereignty. The American Revolution used the language of consent, representation, and resistance to reject parliamentary taxation and royal rule. The United States Declaration of Independence in 1776 and Constitution of 1787 created a written republican system with separated powers and federal government.

The French Revolution carried the challenge into continental Europe. The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen in 1789 stated that sovereignty rested in the nation and that law expressed the general will. France's Constitution of 1791 created a limited monarchy, but revolution soon moved toward republic, war, and dictatorship. These events belong fully to the next chapter; here their

importance is that constitutionalism became a claim to universal rights rather than only inherited privilege.

Napoleon preserved some revolutionary principles, including legal equality for men, careers open to talent, and standardised administration, while concentrating power in his own hands. By 1815, constitutionalism could support monarchy, republic, written law, national representation, or civil rights. Its forms differed, but the idea that legitimate government required law and public authority had become impossible to ignore.

Document or Settlement	Central Principle
English Bill of Rights, 1689	Monarchy must operate with Parliament and cannot suspend statute at will.
Locke's Two Treatises, 1689–1690	Government rests on consent and exists to protect natural rights.
American Declaration of Independence, 1776	A people may alter or abolish government that destroys basic rights.
United States Constitution, 1787	Written framework divides powers and creates representative government.
French Declaration of the Rights of Man, 1789	Sovereignty belongs to the nation and citizens are equal before law.
French Constitution of 1791	Attempts to join monarchy with a written constitution and elected legislature.

Enlightened Absolutism and Constitutionalism

Eighteenth-century rulers such as Frederick II and Catherine II adopted selected Enlightenment reforms while preserving central authority. They aimed to govern more rationally, improve administration, promote education, and strengthen the economy. This approach is called enlightened absolutism. It differed from constitutionalism because reform depended on the ruler's decision rather than on enforceable representative limits.

Feature	Enlightened Absolutism	Constitutionalism
Source of reform	The ruler improves the state from above.	Law and institutions limit and direct government.
Role of representatives	Advisory or weak; the monarch makes final decisions.	Assemblies approve taxation, legislation, or government policy.
Rights	Granted or protected by the ruler when useful or just.	Claimed as legal protections that government must respect.
Administration	Centralised bureaucracy serves the monarch and state.	Executive authority operates within statute, courts, and representative consent.
Social order	Noble privilege and serfdom may remain despite reform.	Property privilege also remains, but arbitrary royal power is more restricted.
Main risk	Reform disappears when the ruler changes policy.	Elite control, corruption, limited representation, and slow decision-making.

The Limits of Early Constitutionalism

Group or Issue	Continuing Limitation
Women	Women could petition, publish, manage property in some circumstances, and influence political life, but they had no parliamentary vote and were excluded from formal office.
Workers and the poor	Property qualifications and dependence excluded most labourers, servants, and poor men from voting.
Catholics and dissenters	Religious tests restricted public office and education; toleration was incomplete.
Ireland	Protestant political control, land confiscation, and penal laws subordinated the Catholic majority.
Scotland	Union brought access to empire and Parliament, but Jacobite resistance and Highland repression showed contested legitimacy.
Colonial subjects	British constitutional liberty existed alongside imperial rule, Indigenous dispossession, and Atlantic slavery.
Electoral system	Unequal constituencies, patronage, bribery, and open voting limited representative fairness.

By 1815: Two Traditions of the Modern State

By the end of the Napoleonic Wars, Europe had inherited two powerful political traditions. One was the centralised state: permanent taxation, bureaucracy, standing armies, national law, and executive

command. Absolute rulers helped create this machinery. The other was constitutional government: law above personal command, consent to taxation, representative institutions, protected rights, public credit, and accountable ministers.

Later European governments usually combined elements of both. Even constitutional states needed strong administration and armies; even restored monarchies faced demands for law and representation. The central political struggles of the nineteenth century would concern who controlled the state, who belonged to the nation, and how widely constitutional rights should extend.

THE CHAPTER ON ONE PAGE
Absolute monarchy: Rulers concentrated taxation, military command, administration, religion, and court life. Their power remained dependent on nobles, officials, money, and local privilege. France: Richelieu and Mazarin strengthened the Bourbon monarchy. Louis XIV used Versailles, intendants, Colbertian mercantilism, religious uniformity, and warfare. France gained prestige but also debt and fiscal weakness. Russia: Peter the Great created a western-style army and navy, gained Baltic territory, founded St. Petersburg, and subordinated elite and church service to the state. Catherine expanded the empire and used Enlightenment language while strengthening noble power and serfdom. Prussia: The Hohenzollerns joined a disciplined bureaucracy and large army with Junker privilege. Frederick II won Silesia and made Prussia a great power while preserving the unequal rural order. England: Stuart disputes over tax, law, religion, and the army produced civil war, regicide, Commonwealth, Protectorate, and Restoration. Glorious Revolution: William and Mary accepted a legal settlement that strengthened Parliament, Protestant succession, public credit, and regular government. Constitutionalism: Government under law developed through Parliament, courts, statute, political thought, cabinet practice, and public finance. It limited monarchy but did not create full democracy.

Patterns to Remember

Political Pattern	New Development	Long-Term Effect
Royal centralisation	Standing armies, intendants, service nobility, court management, regular taxation	Stronger executive states able to conduct long wars and supervise wider territories
Noble partnership	Privileges exchanged for military, administrative, or court service	Aristocracies remained powerful inside centralised monarchies
Parliamentary monarchy	Taxation, law, army finance, and succession regulated through Parliament	Government gained legal stability and stronger public credit
Constitutional thought	Social contract, natural rights, consent, resistance, rule of law	Language later used by American, French, and nineteenth-century reform movements
Fiscal-military competition	Taxes, loans, banks, armies, navies, and imperial commerce became connected	European rivalry grew more global and governments became financially complex

Core Comparisons

Comparison	Core Difference
Louis XIV and Peter the Great	Louis used court culture and existing French institutions; Peter imposed military and administrative change more directly on a less urban empire.
Russia and Prussia	Both relied on service, army, bureaucracy, noble privilege, and serf agriculture; Russia was a vast multi-ethnic empire, while Prussia was smaller and more tightly militarised.
France and England	France financed monarchy through unequal taxation and royal administration; England developed regular parliamentary taxation and public credit.
English Civil War and Glorious Revolution	The Civil War produced regicide and republican experiment; 1688–1689 preserved monarchy while defining legal limits.
Hobbes and Locke	Hobbes prioritised undivided authority for security; Locke defended limited government, natural rights, consent, and resistance.
Constitutionalism and democracy	Constitutionalism limited arbitrary power; democracy requires much wider and more equal political participation.
Enlightened absolutism and constitutionalism	The enlightened ruler grants reform from above; constitutional institutions make limits and rights less dependent on one ruler.

Key Terms and Concepts

Absolutism: The effort of a ruler to concentrate the highest lawmaking, military, financial, and administrative authority in the crown.

Divine right: The belief that monarchical authority comes from God and is not created by subjects.

Fiscal-military state: A state organised to collect revenue, borrow money, and maintain permanent armed forces.

Intendant: A royal official in France who supervised provincial justice, policing, and finance.

Noblesse de robe: French nobles whose status came mainly from legal or administrative office.

Mercantilism: State direction of trade and production to increase national wealth and power.

Fronde: The revolts of 1648–1653 against royal centralisation during the minority of Louis XIV.

Versailles: Louis XIV's palace and court centre, used to display monarchy and manage aristocratic competition.

Table of Ranks: Peter the Great's service hierarchy linking military and civil rank to state service.

Junker: A member of the Prussian landed nobility, important as estate owner and army officer.

Canton system: Prussian recruitment arrangement linking rural districts with particular army regiments.

Enlightened absolutism: Monarchical reform influenced by Enlightenment ideas but carried out without constitutional limits on the ruler.

Petition of Right: The 1628 parliamentary declaration against taxation and imprisonment without lawful authority.

Personal Rule: The period 1629–1640 when Charles I governed England without Parliament.

New Model Army: Parliament's professional and centrally organised army created in 1645.

Regicide: The killing of a king; specifically, the execution of Charles I in 1649.

Commonwealth: The English republic established after the abolition of monarchy in 1649.

Protectorate: The regime under Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector from 1653.

Restoration: The return of Charles II and the monarchy in 1660.

Habeas corpus: The legal principle that detention must be justified before a court.

Glorious Revolution: The replacement of James II by William III and Mary II in 1688–1689.

Bill of Rights: The 1689 statute limiting royal power and protecting parliamentary authority.

Constitutionalism: Government under recognised laws and institutions that limit arbitrary power.

Public credit: The government's ability to borrow because lenders trust its legal and financial arrangements.

Cabinet government: Executive coordination by a small group of ministers who manage policy and parliamentary support.

Social contract: The theory that political authority arises from an agreement among individuals or between society and government.

Natural rights: Rights belonging to people by nature rather than by the gift of a ruler.

Balance of power: The principle that international alliances should prevent one state or dynasty from dominating Europe.

Personalities at a Glance

Person	Importance
Cardinal Richelieu	Chief minister who strengthened the French crown, reduced political rivals, and opposed Habsburg power.
Cardinal Mazarin	Minister during Louis XIV's childhood and target of the Fronde.
Louis XIV	French king who made Versailles, court ceremony, administration, and war central to royal power.
Jean-Baptiste Colbert	Minister who promoted manufactures, tariffs, infrastructure, shipping, and colonial trade.
Peter the Great	Russian ruler who reformed army, navy, administration, elite service, and Baltic strategy.

Person	Importance
Catherine the Great	Russian empress who expanded the empire and used Enlightenment ideas while protecting noble privilege.
Frederick William I	Prussian “Soldier King” who built a disciplined bureaucracy and unusually large army.
Frederick the Great	Prussian king who conquered Silesia, survived the Seven Years’ War, and promoted selected reforms.
James I	Stuart king who defended divine-right monarchy and disputed finance and privilege with Parliament.
Charles I	King whose conflicts over taxation, law, religion, and the army led to civil war and execution.
Oliver Cromwell	New Model Army commander and Lord Protector of the English republican regime.
Charles II	Restored king whose reign revived monarchy but left constitutional and religious conflict unresolved.
James II	Catholic king removed during the Glorious Revolution after using broad dispensing power.
William III and Mary II	Joint monarchs who accepted the Revolution Settlement and governed with Parliament.
Thomas Hobbes	Author of Leviathan; defended a powerful sovereign as the answer to disorder.
John Locke	Political thinker who defended natural rights, consent, limited government, and resistance.
Robert Walpole	Leading British minister whose management helped establish cabinet and parliamentary government.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Which development most directly encouraged the rise of absolute monarchy after 1648?

- A. The disappearance of warfare between European states
- B. The cost of maintaining permanent armies and larger administrations
- C. The end of noble landownership
- D. Universal support for religious toleration

2. Louis XIV used Versailles primarily to

- A. replace the royal army with noble private forces
- B. separate France from European artistic influence
- C. make access to the king and court favour central to aristocratic politics
- D. establish an elected national legislature

3. Colbert’s economic programme was based on the belief that

- A. state power could be increased through regulated production and trade
- B. tariffs should be removed from all imported goods
- C. France should abandon colonial commerce
- D. government should avoid involvement in manufacturing

4. The revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 resulted in

- A. legal equality for all religious communities
- B. the political independence of French Protestants
- C. the emigration of many skilled Huguenots
- D. the end of Catholic worship in France

5. Peter the Great’s reforms were designed mainly to

- A. establish parliamentary monarchy in Russia
- B. strengthen Russian military and administrative power

- C. end state supervision of the Orthodox Church
 - D. free all Russian serfs
6. The Table of Ranks linked noble status most directly with
- A. election to a provincial assembly
 - B. ownership of overseas trading companies
 - C. service in the military or civil administration
 - D. membership in an independent church
7. Prussian absolutism depended heavily on cooperation between the crown and
- A. urban guild democracies
 - B. the Junker landed nobility
 - C. Catholic monasteries
 - D. elected peasant councils
8. The Petition of Right of 1628 challenged the Stuart monarchy by opposing
- A. taxation and imprisonment without lawful authority
 - B. the existence of Parliament itself
 - C. all forms of royal taxation
 - D. Protestant worship in England
9. The New Model Army was important because it
- A. restored Charles I to full authority
 - B. created a disciplined national force loyal to Parliament
 - C. abolished religious debate within Parliament
 - D. prevented the trial of the king
10. Which statement best describes the Protectorate?
- A. It was a stable hereditary monarchy under Cromwell
 - B. It combined republican forms with strong military and executive power
 - C. It immediately created universal male suffrage
 - D. It restored Catholic political control
11. The immediate political cause of the Glorious Revolution was concern that
- A. James II would create a lasting Catholic dynasty and rule above statute
 - B. William of Orange planned to restore Charles I
 - C. Parliament intended to abolish property rights
 - D. Scotland had conquered England
12. The English Bill of Rights of 1689 established that
- A. the monarch could suspend laws without consultation
 - B. all adults possessed the vote
 - C. taxation and a peacetime army required parliamentary authority
 - D. England would no longer have a monarchy
13. Britain's financial revolution strengthened the state mainly by

- A. eliminating public debt
 - B. allowing dependable long-term borrowing supported by parliamentary taxation
 - C. replacing the navy with private armies
 - D. ending all indirect taxes
14. Locke differed from Hobbes most clearly in arguing that
- A. government should protect natural rights and could be resisted if it broke trust
 - B. society could exist only without law
 - C. monarchy always rested on divine right
 - D. sovereignty must never be limited
15. Which statement best compares enlightened absolutism with constitutionalism?
- A. Both required universal suffrage
 - B. Enlightened absolutism relied on reform by the ruler, while constitutionalism relied on enforceable institutions and law
 - C. Constitutionalism rejected all central administration
 - D. Enlightened absolutism abolished noble privilege throughout Europe

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-C · 3-A · 4-C · 5-B · 6-C · 7-B · 8-A · 9-B · 10-B · 11-A · 12-C · 13-B · 14-A · 15-B

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one method used by Louis XIV to strengthen royal authority. Describe one limit on his power. Explain one consequence of his foreign or religious policy.
2. Identify one reform introduced by Peter the Great or Frederick William I. Describe one group that supported the reforming monarchy. Explain one social cost of state-building in Russia or Prussia.
3. Identify one cause of conflict between the Stuart monarchy and Parliament. Describe one provision of the Revolution Settlement. Explain one way constitutional government strengthened rather than weakened the British state.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the extent to which European absolute monarchs successfully controlled the nobility in the period 1648–1789.
2. Evaluate the most important cause of the English political revolutions in the period 1625–1689.
3. Evaluate the extent to which constitutional government produced a stronger state in Britain than absolutism produced in France in the period 1689–1815.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about the methods and limits of European state-building in the period 1648–1789:

- A sermon defending divine-right monarchy
- A report by a French intendant on taxation in a province
- A courtier's description of ceremony at Versailles
- A decree by Peter the Great requiring noble service
- A Prussian military or taxation regulation

- A petition from peasants or religious minorities against state policy
- A passage from Locke or the English Bill of Rights on lawful government

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: European rulers greatly expanded military and administrative power after 1648, but they succeeded by bargaining with privileged elites and therefore could not create completely uniform or unlimited states.
Possible groups: Military and fiscal institutions · Management of nobles and officials · Religious and social resistance · Constitutional limits.
Useful outside evidence: The Fronde, revocation of the Edict of Nantes, Table of Ranks, Pugachev's Rebellion, Junker officer corps, Petition of Right, or Bank of England.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one way the Glorious Revolution limited the English monarchy, describe one institution that supported the new settlement, and explain one important limitation of the settlement.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One limit: The Bill of Rights prevented the monarch from suspending laws or levying taxation without Parliament.
One supporting institution: The Bank of England and parliamentary taxation created dependable public credit, allowing the government to borrow for war while remaining accountable for revenue.
One limitation: The settlement was constitutional but not democratic. Voting remained restricted by property, and Catholics, women, most workers, and colonial subjects did not receive equal political rights.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know why war, taxation, armies, and administration encouraged stronger states after 1648.
- Know how Richelieu, Mazarin, Versailles, intendants, Colbert, religious policy, and war shaped Louis XIV's France.
- Know the reforms of Peter the Great and the difference between westernisation and constitutionalisation.
- Know how Catherine the Great combined enlightened language, expansion, noble privilege, and serfdom.
- Know why the army, bureaucracy, canton system, and Junker partnership made Prussia powerful.
- Place the Petition of Right, Personal Rule, Civil War, execution of Charles I, Commonwealth, Protectorate, and Restoration in correct order.
- Know why James II lost support and what changed in the Revolution Settlement of 1688–1689.
- Connect the Bill of Rights, Mutiny Act, Bank of England, Act of Settlement, cabinet, and Parliament to Britain's constitutional state.
- Compare Hobbes and Locke clearly.
- Remember that constitutionalism limited arbitrary rule but did not yet mean democracy.
- Be ready to compare France, Russia, Prussia, England, and the Dutch Republic using specific evidence.

— End of Chapter 2 —

3. The Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment

New ways of understanding nature, society, government, and human freedom

Between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, European thinkers changed the way educated people understood the universe and human society. Astronomers challenged the old belief that Earth stood motionless at the centre of creation. Physicians studied the body through observation and dissection. Mathematicians described motion through numbers. These developments did not happen in a single moment, but together they formed what historians call the Scientific Revolution.

The Enlightenment carried confidence in reason into the study of politics, law, religion, education, and the economy. Thinkers asked whether governments were based on consent, whether religious persecution was reasonable, whether punishments should be humane, and whether inherited privilege could be justified. They did not agree on every answer, but they shared the belief that institutions should be examined rather than accepted simply because they were old.

Scientific and Enlightenment ideas spread through books, academies, salons, coffeehouses, correspondence, and public debate. They influenced rulers and reformers, but their effects were limited. Most European societies remained unequal, censorship continued, serfdom and slavery survived, and women were largely excluded from formal political and scientific institutions. The importance of the period lies in both its new ideas and the struggle to apply them.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Advances in Science: Contributions of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton
- Enlightenment Thinkers: Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Kant
- Influence of Enlightenment Ideas on Political and Social Reforms

THE BIG PICTURE

The Scientific Revolution replaced a closed universe explained mainly through inherited authority with a universe increasingly studied through observation, experiment, mathematics, and natural laws. The Enlightenment applied similar habits of questioning to government and society. Its thinkers promoted ideas such as natural rights, religious toleration, legal reform, education, and public debate. Rulers adopted selected reforms, but usually kept political power and social privilege in their own hands.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Importance
1543	Copernicus publishes <i>On the Revolutions</i> ; Vesalius publishes <i>On the Fabric of the Human Body</i>	Challenges inherited ideas in astronomy and anatomy through new models and observation.
1609–1619	Kepler publishes his laws of planetary motion	Shows that planets move in elliptical orbits according to mathematical relationships.
1610	Galileo publishes <i>The Starry Messenger</i>	Telescopic observations provide strong evidence against the traditional geocentric universe.
1620	Francis Bacon publishes <i>Novum Organum</i>	Promotes organised observation and induction as a path to useful knowledge.
1633	Galileo is tried by the Roman Inquisition	Becomes the best-known conflict over scientific claims, authority, and biblical interpretation.
1637	Descartes publishes <i>Discourse on Method</i>	Defends systematic doubt and mathematical reasoning.
1687	Newton publishes <i>Principia Mathematica</i>	Unites celestial and earthly motion through laws of motion and universal gravitation.
1689–1690	Locke publishes major political and philosophical works	Develops arguments about natural rights, consent, government, and human understanding.
1748	Montesquieu publishes <i>The Spirit of the Laws</i>	Explains how political liberty can be protected through divided powers and balanced institutions.

Date	Development	Importance
1751–1772	Diderot and collaborators publish the Encyclopédie	Collects knowledge and spreads criticism of ignorance, privilege, and intolerance.
1762	Rousseau publishes The Social Contract and Émile	Connects political legitimacy with popular sovereignty and education with natural development.
1764	Beccaria publishes On Crimes and Punishments	Attacks torture, arbitrary justice, and excessive punishment.
1776	Adam Smith publishes The Wealth of Nations	Criticises excessive economic regulation and explains the benefits of division of labour and competition.
1781	Joseph II issues the Patent of Toleration and reforms serf obligations	Shows both the ambition and limits of enlightened reform from above.
1784	Kant publishes “What Is Enlightenment?”	Defines enlightenment as the courage to use one’s own reason.

Advances in Science: Contributions of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton

The Scientific Revolution was a long change in methods, institutions, and ideas. It did not mean that every older belief disappeared or that science immediately became separate from religion. It meant that a growing number of scholars tested claims through observation, calculation, experiment, and public criticism. Nature came to be understood as an ordered system whose regular patterns could be discovered.

The Inherited View of the Universe

Before the sixteenth century, European universities usually taught a model drawn from Aristotle and the Greek astronomer Ptolemy. Earth stood at the centre of a finite universe. The sun, moon, planets, and stars moved around it in perfect circles. Heavenly bodies were believed to be made of a pure substance different from the changing matter of Earth.

This model was supported by everyday appearance: the ground seemed still, while the sun and stars appeared to cross the sky. It also fit many Christian interpretations of creation, although the Bible did not provide a complete astronomical system. Medieval scholars refined the model with complex circles called epicycles so that it could predict planetary positions with reasonable accuracy.

IMPORTANT DISTINCTION

The Scientific Revolution did not begin because medieval Europeans had no science. Universities taught mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and natural philosophy. The change came when scholars increasingly questioned inherited authorities, improved instruments, used more exact measurements, and demanded explanations that could survive observation and calculation.

Why Scientific Change Became Possible

Development	Contribution to Scientific Change
Renaissance humanism	Encouraged the study of Greek and Roman texts, including works that disagreed with Aristotle and Ptolemy.
Printing press	Allowed diagrams, tables, observations, and criticism to circulate quickly and with greater consistency.
Exploration and navigation	Created practical demand for better maps, astronomy, mathematics, clocks, and instruments.
Patronage	Princes, cities, courts, and wealthy individuals supported mathematicians, physicians, instrument makers, and observatories.
Universities and academies	Provided places for teaching and debate, although new ideas often developed partly outside traditional university structures.
Improved instruments	The telescope, microscope, barometer, air pump, and more accurate clocks expanded what could be observed and measured.
Religious division	The Reformation weakened the idea of a single unquestioned intellectual authority and encouraged argument over texts and evidence.

Nicolaus Copernicus and the Heliocentric Model

Nicolaus Copernicus was a Polish church official and mathematician. He studied astronomy and became dissatisfied with the complexity of the Ptolemaic system. In *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres*, published in 1543, he placed the sun near the centre and made Earth a moving planet. Earth rotated daily on its axis and travelled around the sun each year.

The Copernican model offered a simpler overall arrangement of the planets, but it was not immediately more accurate. Copernicus still used perfect circles and epicycles. He also lacked direct physical proof that Earth moved. Many astronomers treated his model as a useful mathematical hypothesis rather than a complete description of reality.

Its deeper importance was revolutionary. Earth was no longer the fixed centre of the universe. The same kind of reasoning could now be applied to both Earth and the heavens. Copernicus opened a problem that later astronomers would solve with better observations, new mathematics, and new ideas about motion.

COPERNICUS AT A GLANCE

Main claim: Earth rotates and travels around the sun.

What remained traditional: Circular orbits, epicycles, and a finite universe.

Immediate weakness: No convincing physics of a moving Earth and no direct observational proof.

Long-term importance: Reorganised astronomy and challenged the special central position assigned to Earth.

Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler

Tycho Brahe, a Danish nobleman, constructed one of Europe's best observatories before the invention of the telescope. He recorded planetary positions with exceptional accuracy. Tycho rejected a fully heliocentric universe and proposed a mixed system in which the planets moved around the sun while the sun moved around Earth. His greatest contribution was the quality of his data.

Johannes Kepler, a German mathematician and assistant to Tycho, used those observations to test planetary models. He discovered that Mars could not be explained by a perfect circular orbit. Kepler concluded that planets move in ellipses, not circles. He also showed that planets move faster when nearer the sun and slower when farther away, and he found a mathematical relationship between the time of an orbit and the planet's distance from the sun.

Kepler removed the ancient assumption that heavenly motion had to be perfectly circular. His laws gave heliocentric astronomy a much stronger mathematical foundation. He believed that the universe reflected a divine mathematical order, showing that new science and religious belief could exist together.

Galileo Galilei: Observation, Motion, and Conflict

Galileo Galilei was an Italian mathematician and natural philosopher. In 1609 he improved a recently invented telescope and turned it toward the sky. He observed mountains and craters on the moon, many previously unseen stars, four moons orbiting Jupiter, the phases of Venus, and dark spots moving across the sun.

These discoveries challenged important parts of the traditional universe. The moon was not a perfect smooth sphere. Not everything revolved around Earth, because Jupiter had its own moons. The full set of phases of Venus could not be explained easily by the Ptolemaic system, but it fit a sun-centred arrangement. The heavens appeared changeable and material rather than perfect and separate from Earth.

Galileo also studied motion. Through experiments and mathematical reasoning, he argued that falling bodies accelerate and that motion continues unless something interferes with it. His idea of inertia helped answer an objection to a moving Earth: objects share Earth's motion and therefore do not appear to be left behind.

The Galileo Affair

Galileo's support for heliocentrism brought him into conflict with church authorities. In 1616, the Roman Catholic Church declared the claim that the sun stood still and Earth moved to be contrary to accepted scriptural interpretation. Galileo was instructed not to defend the theory as physical fact. He later believed he had permission to discuss the issue mathematically and published *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* in 1632.

The *Dialogue* strongly favoured heliocentrism and made the traditional position appear weak. In 1633, Galileo was tried by the Roman Inquisition, forced to reject the claim that Earth moved, and placed under house arrest. His later work on motion continued to influence European science.

The trial was not a simple struggle between “science” and “religion.” Many clergy supported mathematics and astronomy, and Galileo himself was a Catholic. The conflict involved scientific evidence, biblical interpretation, personal rivalry, church authority, and the tense political atmosphere of the Counter-Reformation. Even so, the case became a lasting symbol of the danger of allowing institutions to settle questions of nature by authority alone.

Galileo's Observation or Idea	Challenge to the Traditional View
Mountains and craters on the moon	The heavens were not made only of perfect, smooth bodies.
Moons of Jupiter	Not every heavenly body revolved around Earth.
Phases of Venus	Supported a system in which Venus travelled around the sun.
Sunspots	The sun changed and rotated; the heavens were not entirely unchanging.
Mathematics of falling bodies	Motion could be described by regular quantitative relationships.
Inertia	Helped explain why movement on Earth was compatible with a moving planet.

New Methods: Bacon and Descartes

The Scientific Revolution produced no single scientific method used by everyone. Two thinkers, Francis Bacon and René Descartes, represented different but complementary approaches.

Francis Bacon criticised scholars who relied too heavily on old books or broad theories. He argued that investigators should gather many observations, conduct experiments, compare results, and move carefully from particular facts toward general conclusions. This method is called induction. Bacon also believed that knowledge should improve human life through useful inventions and control over nature.

René Descartes began with systematic doubt. He wanted to accept only ideas that could be known clearly and logically. Mathematics offered his model of certainty. Descartes used deduction: beginning with basic principles and reasoning toward conclusions. He separated mind from matter and described the material universe as a machine governed by mathematical laws.

Thinker	Starting Point	Method	Main Emphasis
Francis Bacon	Observed facts and experiments	Induction	Build general explanations from carefully collected evidence.
René Descartes	Clear first principles and rational certainty	Deduction	Use logical and mathematical reasoning to reach reliable conclusions.
Scientific practice	Evidence, measurement, hypothesis, calculation, criticism	Combination	Modern science developed by joining observation and experiment with mathematical explanation.

Isaac Newton and the Scientific Synthesis

Isaac Newton brought together the work of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and other scientists. In *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*, usually called the *Principia*, published in 1687, he presented three laws of motion and the law of universal gravitation.

Newton argued that every body in the universe attracts every other body. The force depends on the masses involved and becomes weaker with distance. The same laws explain an apple falling toward

Earth, the moon remaining in orbit, and planets moving around the sun. The heavens and Earth were therefore part of one physical system.

Newton's achievement was powerful because it joined observation, experiment, geometry, and calculation. Kepler had described planetary paths; Galileo had studied motion; Newton explained both within one mathematical framework. The universe appeared to operate like an ordered system governed by discoverable laws.

Newton remained deeply religious and believed that studying nature revealed divine design. He also spent much time on theology and alchemy. The later image of Newton as a purely modern secular scientist is incomplete. His importance came from the success of his physical laws, not from abandoning all older interests.

THE NEWTONIAN WORLDVIEW

One universe: Earth and the heavens follow the same laws.

Mathematical order: Motion can be described and predicted through calculation.

Universal law: Natural rules operate everywhere, not only in particular places.

Confidence in reason: If nature has laws, human beings may also discover regular principles in society and government.

Medicine and the Study of the Human Body

Scientific change also transformed anatomy and medicine. Ancient and medieval medicine relied heavily on the writings of Galen, a Roman physician who had dissected animals because human dissection was restricted in his time. Some of his descriptions were therefore inaccurate.

Andreas Vesalius performed human dissections and published detailed anatomical illustrations in 1543. He corrected important errors and insisted that physicians should examine the body directly. William Harvey later demonstrated that the heart pumps blood in a continuous circulation through the body. His work, published in 1628, depended on observation, dissection, measurement, and calculation.

These discoveries did not immediately create effective modern medicine. Knowledge of infection, germs, and safe surgery remained limited. Yet they weakened unquestioning dependence on ancient authority and made direct investigation central to medical study.

Scientific Institutions and the Republic of Letters

New knowledge spread through a network sometimes called the Republic of Letters. Scholars exchanged letters, books, instruments, specimens, and reports across political and religious borders. Scientific journals allowed discoveries to be described and criticised. Public demonstrations made experiments part of educated culture.

The Royal Society of London, founded in 1660, promoted experimental knowledge and published reports through Philosophical Transactions. The French Royal Academy of Sciences, founded in 1666, received stronger direct support from the monarchy. Similar societies appeared elsewhere. These institutions helped establish standards of evidence, priority, publication, and collective checking.

Access remained unequal. Learned societies were controlled mainly by educated men. Women participated through courts, households, correspondence, translation, and private study, but universities and academies often excluded them. Margaret Cavendish wrote about natural philosophy and criticised the claim that only one method could explain nature. Maria Winkelmann made astronomical observations but was denied a permanent position in the Berlin Academy. Émilie du Châtelet translated and explained Newton's Principia in French and contributed to the study of energy and motion.

Science, Religion, and Society

The Scientific Revolution challenged some religious interpretations, especially when institutions treated inherited cosmology as fixed. However, many scientists believed that natural laws revealed the wisdom of God. Kepler, Boyle, Newton, and others understood scientific work as the study of creation. Religious conflict and scientific change therefore cannot be reduced to a single pattern.

A different challenge appeared in the idea of a mechanical universe. If nature operated according to regular laws, some thinkers asked whether miracles or constant divine intervention were necessary. Deism developed from this question. Deists generally believed in a creator who established natural laws but rejected many claims of revelation, church authority, and supernatural intervention.

WHAT CHANGED - AND WHAT DID NOT

Changed: The authority of observation and mathematics increased; the universe became larger, less Earth-centred, and more law-governed; scientific communities grew.

Did not change quickly: Most people still relied on traditional medicine, astrology remained popular, universities changed unevenly, religion remained powerful, and scientific institutions largely excluded women and the poor.

Enlightenment Thinkers: Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Kant

The Enlightenment was an eighteenth-century movement of ideas rather than one organised programme. Its thinkers differed over monarchy, democracy, religion, property, gender, and inequality. They were united less by one set of conclusions than by a habit of criticism. They believed that human institutions could be studied, judged, and improved through reason and experience.

The Main Ideas of the Enlightenment

Idea	Meaning
Reason	Claims should be supported by logical argument rather than accepted only because of tradition or authority.
Natural law	Human society, like nature, may contain principles that can be discovered and applied.
Progress	Education and reform can improve knowledge, institutions, and human welfare.
Toleration	Governments should not persecute people simply for religious belief or honest opinion.
Natural rights	Individuals possess basic rights that rulers do not create and should not violate.
Public opinion	Educated discussion outside the royal court can judge government and social policy.
Utility	Laws and institutions should be measured by whether they promote human welfare rather than by age or ceremony.

John Locke: Experience, Rights, and Government

John Locke was an English physician and philosopher whose ideas developed in the setting of the English political struggles of the seventeenth century. In *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he argued that the mind at birth was like a blank slate. Knowledge came mainly through experience and reflection rather than through a complete set of inborn ideas.

This view encouraged confidence in education and environment. If people were shaped by experience, better institutions and teaching could improve them. Locke did not claim that all people would become identical, but he weakened the belief that social character was fixed entirely by birth.

In the *Two Treatises of Government*, Locke rejected the idea that political authority came from the absolute fatherly power of kings. Individuals in a state of nature possessed rights to life, liberty, and property. They formed governments to protect these rights. Political authority therefore rested on consent, and government operated as a trust.

When rulers violated that trust and attacked the rights they were created to protect, the people had a right to resist. Locke's theory was not modern democracy. He defended property, accepted social hierarchy, and wrote in a world of limited political participation. Yet his language of natural rights, consent, and resistance became central to later revolutionary arguments.

LOCKE'S POLITICAL CHAIN

Natural rights → people create government by consent → government protects rights under known law → rulers who break the trust may be resisted

Montesquieu and the Protection of Liberty

Charles-Louis de Secondat, Baron de Montesquieu, was a French nobleman and magistrate. In *The Spirit of the Laws*, published in 1748, he compared political systems, laws, geography, climate, customs, and economies. He argued that laws should fit the conditions of a society rather than follow one universal design in every detail.

Montesquieu admired what he believed to be the balanced English constitution. Liberty was protected when legislative, executive, and judicial powers were not concentrated in the same hands. His exact description of Britain was imperfect, but the principle of separated and balanced powers became highly influential in later constitutional systems.

Voltaire: Toleration and the Attack on Fanaticism

Voltaire was the pen name of François-Marie Arouet, one of the most famous writers of the Enlightenment. He wrote plays, histories, essays, letters, satire, and philosophical tales. After spending time in England, he praised English religious diversity, scientific achievement, commerce, and relative freedom of discussion.

Voltaire attacked religious fanaticism, clerical intolerance, censorship, torture, and judicial injustice. He supported the rehabilitation of Jean Calas, a French Protestant wrongly convicted and executed after a trial shaped by religious prejudice. Voltaire's *Treatise on Tolerance* used the case to demand fairness and restraint.

Voltaire was not a democrat. He distrusted mass political participation and often preferred a strong, educated monarch advised by philosophers. His importance lies less in a complete political system than in his defence of civil toleration, freedom of thought, and public criticism of abuse.

VOLTAIRE IN ONE SENTENCE

Use reason and public criticism against intolerance, superstition, censorship, and cruel injustice - but do not assume that Voltaire supported democratic rule.

Diderot and the Encyclopédie

Denis Diderot directed the *Encyclopédie*, a large multivolume project published between 1751 and 1772. It gathered articles on science, crafts, technology, philosophy, religion, law, and society. Its contributors included many leading thinkers, though they did not share one position.

The work treated the practical knowledge of artisans and manufacturers as worthy of serious study. It also criticised superstition, censorship, religious intolerance, and inherited privilege. Authorities suspended or condemned parts of the project, but publication continued through complex arrangements. The *Encyclopédie* became both a storehouse of knowledge and a symbol of intellectual independence.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: Freedom, Equality, and the General Will

Rousseau challenged the easy Enlightenment belief that civilisation automatically produced moral improvement. In his *Discourses*, he argued that the growth of property, luxury, competition, and social comparison had increased inequality and dependence. Civilised people might appear refined while becoming less free and less authentic.

In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau began with the claim that human beings are born free but live under social restraints. Legitimate political authority could not rest simply on force or inherited rule. It must arise from an agreement in which citizens form a political community and obey laws expressing the general will.

The general will did not mean the private wish of every individual or the simple command of a ruler. It meant the common interest citizens should seek when making laws for the whole community. Rousseau

believed genuine freedom existed when citizens obeyed laws they prescribed to themselves as members of the sovereign people.

This idea inspired democratic and revolutionary politics, but it also created a difficult question: who can correctly identify the general will? Later governments could use the language of collective interest to justify pressure against dissent. Rousseau's thought therefore contains both a strong defence of popular sovereignty and a potential danger when rulers claim to speak for the whole people.

In *Émile*, Rousseau argued that education should follow the natural development of the child rather than depend only on memorisation and punishment. Yet his educational roles for boys and girls were unequal. Boys were prepared for independent citizenship, while girls were mainly prepared for domestic and supportive roles.

Immanuel Kant: The Courage to Think

Immanuel Kant was a German philosopher whose short essay "What Is Enlightenment?" gave the movement one of its best-known definitions. Enlightenment, he wrote, was humanity's emergence from self-imposed immaturity. People remained immature when they allowed others to think for them even though they were capable of using reason.

Kant's motto was *sapere aude* - dare to know, or have the courage to use your own understanding. He distinguished the public use of reason, in which a scholar addresses the reading public, from the private duties of a person acting within an office. A soldier, official, or clergyman might have to obey rules while performing a role, yet could still publish reasoned criticism as a scholar.

Kant did not call for immediate violent revolution. He believed enlightenment required freedom of discussion, gradual improvement, and legal order. His essay captured the growing importance of an educated public able to debate authority through print.

Other Important Enlightenment Voices

Thinker	Main Contribution
Cesare Beccaria	Argued that laws should prevent crime rather than seek revenge; opposed torture, secret trials, and the death penalty in most cases.
Adam Smith	Explained how division of labour, exchange, and competition could increase wealth; criticised many monopolies and unnecessary trade restrictions.
The Physiocrats	French economic thinkers who believed agriculture created basic wealth and who supported freer trade in grain and simpler taxation.
David Hume	Used sceptical reasoning to examine religion, knowledge, causation, morals, and human behaviour.
Baron d'Holbach	Presented a strongly materialist and openly critical view of organised religion.
Gotthold Lessing	Promoted religious toleration and a broader German literary culture.
Mary Wollstonecraft	Applied Enlightenment ideas of reason and education to women and argued that female dependence resulted largely from unequal upbringing.

The Public Sphere: Salons, Coffeehouses, and Print

Enlightenment ideas spread through a growing public sphere: spaces in which people discussed books, news, politics, science, theatre, and social questions outside direct control of the court. Coffeehouses, reading clubs, Masonic lodges, academies, libraries, newspapers, and lending societies connected readers and writers.

Salons were regular gatherings, often held in the homes of elite women. Salon hostesses such as Madame Geoffrin brought together writers, nobles, diplomats, artists, and officials. Women shaped conversation, patronage, and social networks even though they lacked formal political rights. Salons did not represent all society; they were mainly urban and elite.

Censorship remained important. Writers used anonymous publication, foreign printers, coded language, satire, and manuscript circulation. Forbidden books often entered France from the Dutch Republic, Switzerland, or other printing centres. Government attempts to control ideas could not prevent the expansion of reading and public opinion.

Women and the Enlightenment

Enlightenment arguments about universal reason raised a direct question: if reason was shared by human beings, why should women be denied equal education and citizenship? Many male thinkers did not follow their principles to this conclusion. They continued to describe women mainly through domestic roles and supposed natural differences.

Women nevertheless participated as writers, translators, scientists, salon organisers, patrons, and readers. Émilie du Châtelet worked in physics and translated Newton. Madame de Staël later connected literature and politics across Europe. Mary Wollstonecraft argued in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman in 1792 that women appeared less rational because society denied them serious education and trained them for dependence.

A CENTRAL CONTRADICTION

The Enlightenment often used universal language - reason, rights, humanity, liberty - while European institutions continued to exclude women, the poor, enslaved people, colonial subjects, Jews in many states, and religious minorities. Later reform movements used Enlightenment principles to expose this contradiction.

Major Enlightenment Thinkers Compared

Thinker	Central Question	Main Position	Important Limitation or Tension
Locke	Why is government legitimate?	Consent, natural rights, limited government, and resistance when trust is broken.	Political society remained closely tied to property and limited participation.
Voltaire	How can society resist fanaticism and injustice?	Toleration, civil liberties, criticism, and enlightened rule.	Distrusted democracy and often relied on reform by educated elites.
Rousseau	How can people be both governed and free?	Popular sovereignty and laws expressing the general will.	The common will can be difficult to identify and may threaten dissent if misused.
Kant	What does it mean to become enlightened?	Individuals should use reason publicly and question intellectual dependence.	Favoured gradual reform and accepted obedience within lawful official roles.
Montesquieu	How can political liberty be protected?	Power should be divided and balanced so that no authority becomes arbitrary.	His model rested on an idealised interpretation of the English constitution.

Influence of Enlightenment Ideas on Political and Social Reforms

Enlightenment ideas affected European government in several ways. Officials read new works, rulers corresponded with philosophers, and reformers used the language of reason and utility. Yet rulers chose reforms that strengthened the state or improved administration without surrendering sovereignty. This selective programme is usually called enlightened absolutism.

Enlightened Absolutism

An enlightened absolutist claimed to rule for the welfare of society rather than simply for personal glory or divine right. Such rulers promoted education, religious toleration, legal codification, economic development, and more efficient administration. They often described themselves as servants of the state.

The central contradiction was clear: reforms were introduced from above by monarchs who did not accept popular sovereignty or representative control. They wanted rational government, but they also wanted obedience, taxes, soldiers, and stronger central authority. When reform threatened noble support, military needs, or social order, rulers commonly retreated.

Frederick the Great of Prussia

Frederick II ruled Prussia from 1740 to 1786. He admired French culture, wrote on politics and history, played music, corresponded with Voltaire, and described the ruler as the first servant of the state. He allowed broad religious toleration, supported some educational development, improved legal administration, and encouraged agriculture and settlement.

Frederick also strengthened the army, expanded Prussian territory, and preserved Junker privilege. Serfdom remained deeply rooted on noble estates. His reforms aimed to make the monarchy more efficient and powerful, not to create political equality. He represents both the achievement and the limit of enlightened absolutism.

Joseph II and Reform in the Habsburg Lands

Joseph II ruled alone from 1780 to 1790 after sharing government with his mother, Maria Theresa. He attempted one of the most ambitious programmes of reform in eighteenth-century Europe. He issued the Patent of Toleration, reduced restrictions on Protestants and Orthodox Christians, brought parts of the Catholic Church under greater state control, closed many contemplative monasteries, and redirected resources toward schools, hospitals, and useful clergy.

Joseph abolished personal serfdom, allowing peasants greater freedom to marry, move, and choose occupations. He tried to make taxation more equal, simplify administration, reduce censorship, and replace local privileges with uniform rules. However, he did not immediately remove all feudal dues or give peasants full ownership of land.

His rapid centralisation provoked resistance from nobles, provincial institutions, the church, and communities defending local customs. Revolt broke out in the Austrian Netherlands, and opposition grew in Hungary. Near the end of his life, Joseph withdrew several reforms. His failure showed that rational plans could not easily erase regional identities, privilege, and political resistance.

Catherine the Great of Russia

Catherine II presented herself as an enlightened ruler and corresponded with Voltaire and Diderot. Her Instruction, or Nakaz, of 1767 drew on Montesquieu and Beccaria. It criticised torture, discussed equality before law, and called for rational legal principles. Catherine summoned a Legislative Commission to consider a new law code.

The commission failed to produce a complete code, partly because delegates represented conflicting interests. Catherine promoted education, supported cultural institutions, reorganised provincial government, and secularised some church lands. Yet her rule depended heavily on the nobility.

The Pugachev Rebellion of 1773–1775, a massive uprising involving Cossacks, peasants, and non-Russian peoples, increased her fear of disorder. Catherine strengthened noble control over land and serfs. The Charter to the Nobility of 1785 confirmed noble privileges. Her reign combined intellectual display and administrative reform with empire, social hierarchy, and expanded serfdom.

Enlightened Rulers Compared

Ruler	Important Reforms	Main Limits
Frederick II of Prussia	Religious toleration, legal improvement, economic and educational support, efficient administration.	Preserved Junker privilege and serfdom; expanded military monarchy through war.
Joseph II of Austria	Toleration, church reform, reduced censorship, personal freedom for serfs, administrative and tax reform.	Moved too quickly, ignored regional privilege, faced broad resistance, and withdrew several measures.
Catherine II of Russia	Educational and cultural projects, provincial reform, legal discussion, some reduction of torture.	Relied on nobles, expanded serfdom, suppressed rebellion, and did not create a representative legal order.

Religious Toleration and the Reform of Churches

The Enlightenment weakened the argument that religious unity had to be enforced by persecution. Philosophers defended freedom of conscience, while rulers saw practical advantages in attracting skilled settlers, reducing conflict, and placing churches under state supervision.

Toleration remained incomplete. Frederick II welcomed different Christian groups and Jews when they served the state, but social prejudice continued. Joseph II reduced restrictions on Protestants and Orthodox Christians and later eased some controls on Jews, yet equal citizenship was not fully achieved. In France, the Edict of Versailles of 1787 granted limited civil recognition to Protestants but did not create complete religious equality.

State reform could also reduce church independence. Governments closed monasteries considered economically unproductive, supervised seminaries, censored church publications, and claimed authority over appointments or property. Enlightened policy therefore promoted toleration while also increasing state control.

Legal and Penal Reform

Traditional criminal justice often used torture, secret proceedings, unequal penalties, and public execution. Beccaria argued that punishment should be certain, proportionate, and designed to prevent crime. Torture was unreliable because pain forced both guilty and innocent people to confess. The death penalty, he argued, was usually unnecessary.

Several states reduced or abolished judicial torture, simplified procedures, and attempted more regular law codes. Reform was uneven, and harsh punishment remained common. Still, the principle that law should be rational, public, equal, and useful became an important standard by which governments were judged.

BECCARIA'S REFORM LOGIC

Clear laws → fair and public procedure → proportionate punishment → prevention of crime rather than revenge

Education, Censorship, and Public Administration

Rulers expanded schools because literate subjects could become more useful soldiers, officials, workers, and taxpayers. Maria Theresa introduced important systems of elementary education in the Habsburg lands. Prussia developed compulsory schooling in principle, although attendance and quality varied widely. Russia opened institutions for elite education and some schools for girls.

Censorship was reduced in some places and tightened in others. Rulers welcomed technical, economic, and administrative discussion but feared attacks on monarchy, religion, or social order. The French Revolution later persuaded many governments that unrestricted public debate could threaten the entire political system.

Administrative reform included censuses, surveys, legal codes, trained officials, and efforts to tax land more regularly. These measures reflected Enlightenment confidence in classification and rational order, but they also increased the power of the central state over local communities.

Economic Reform

Enlightenment economic thinkers criticised internal tolls, guild restrictions, monopolies, and controls that blocked production or trade. The Physiocrats argued that agriculture was the basic source of wealth and favoured freer grain markets. Adam Smith explained how division of labour and voluntary exchange could increase productivity.

Smith did not argue that government had no role. He supported national defence, justice, public works, and some education. His main criticism was directed against mercantilist restrictions, protected monopolies, and policies that allowed privileged groups to control trade for private benefit.

Some rulers reduced internal barriers, encouraged settlement, drained land, improved roads, and supported manufacturing. Yet governments remained deeply involved in economic life, especially where military supply and taxation were concerned. The move toward freer markets was gradual and incomplete.

Serfdom, Peasant Reform, and Noble Resistance

Enlightenment criticism of arbitrary power raised questions about serfdom. Reformers argued that peasants would work more productively if they possessed personal freedom and greater security. Rulers also wanted peasants to pay taxes and serve the state rather than remain completely controlled by landlords.

Noble resistance limited change. In Prussia, Frederick protected noble estate power. In Russia, Catherine expanded noble authority after Pugachev’s Rebellion. Joseph II went farther by ending personal servitude, but his effort to change labour dues and taxation faced strong opposition. Across eastern Europe, the needs of the monarchy remained tied to the landed nobility.

Slavery, Empire, and the Language of Humanity

European writers increasingly criticised slavery during the eighteenth century. Religious groups, especially Quakers, joined secular reformers in arguing that enslavement violated natural rights and Christian morality. First-person accounts and abolitionist images made the violence of the Atlantic slave system visible to a wider public.

However, European wealth and consumption remained connected to colonial plantations and slave labour. Thinkers who praised liberty did not always oppose slavery consistently. Some invested in colonial commerce or treated non-European societies through racial stereotypes. Enlightenment universalism therefore existed beside empire and developing theories of racial difference.

The language of natural rights later strengthened abolitionist movements. Britain ended its slave trade in 1807 and abolished slavery in most of its empire in 1833, but these changes belonged to a longer political struggle rather than to Enlightenment thought alone.

The Growth of Reform Movements

Voluntary societies, newspapers, petitions, clubs, and religious organisations turned ideas into organised campaigns. Reformers addressed prisons, hospitals, poor relief, education, slavery, religious restrictions, and criminal law. Public opinion became a political force even where people lacked the vote.

The new language of rights also moved beyond the intentions of many philosophers. Religious minorities demanded equality. Women asked why universal reason did not include them. Enslaved and colonised people used European claims about liberty against imperial rule. Artisans and workers later applied equality to social and economic relations.

From Enlightenment Reform to Revolution

The Enlightenment did not directly cause one single revolution. Political crises, taxation, war, social conflict, and institutional weakness were also essential. Yet Enlightenment language shaped the way people explained these crises. Natural rights challenged inherited privilege; popular sovereignty challenged dynastic rule; public opinion claimed the right to judge government; and written constitutions promised to turn principles into law.

The American Revolution gave European observers an example of colonies declaring independence through natural-right arguments and creating republican constitutions. The French Revolution would carry similar language into a much larger attack on monarchy, privilege, and social order. The next chapter examines how ideas became part of a revolutionary crisis.

The Limits of Enlightenment Reform

Enlightenment Ideal	Continuing Reality
Natural rights	Political rights remained restricted by property, estate, gender, religion, and status.
Religious toleration	Legal improvement occurred, but prejudice and unequal civil rights continued.
Equality before law	Nobles, clergy, towns, provinces, and estates often retained special privileges.
Reason in government	Rulers used statistics and reform while preserving censorship and absolute authority.
Human freedom	Serfdom, colonial rule, Atlantic slavery, and forced labour remained widespread.
Universal reason	Women and non-European peoples were often excluded from education, institutions, and citizenship.
Progress	Reform could improve administration while also increasing surveillance, taxation, conscription, and state power.

Scientific Revolution: Scholars increasingly used observation, experiment, measurement, mathematics, and criticism to investigate nature.

Copernicus: Placed Earth among the planets and proposed a sun-centred system, though he retained circles and epicycles.

Kepler and Galileo: Kepler discovered elliptical orbits; Galileo used telescopic evidence and new ideas of motion to challenge the traditional universe.

Newton: United earthly and heavenly motion through universal gravitation and mathematical laws.

Enlightenment: Applied reason and natural-law thinking to government, religion, law, society, and economics.

Main thinkers: Locke - rights and consent; Voltaire - toleration and criticism; Rousseau - popular sovereignty and general will; Kant - independent public reason; Montesquieu - divided powers.

Reform: Frederick II, Joseph II, and Catherine II adopted selected reforms while keeping absolute authority and social hierarchy.

Central limit: Universal ideas existed beside censorship, privilege, serfdom, slavery, empire, and the exclusion of women.

Patterns to Remember

Pattern	Development	Long-Term Effect
Authority to evidence	Ancient texts remained important, but observation and calculation gained greater authority.	Knowledge became more open to correction and public testing.
One physical universe	The same laws explained motion on Earth and in the heavens.	Nature appeared regular, mathematical, and predictable.
Science to society	Thinkers searched for natural laws of government, economics, and human behaviour.	Political and social institutions became objects of criticism and reform.
Print and public debate	Books, journals, salons, and coffeehouses connected readers beyond courts and churches.	Public opinion became a lasting force in European politics.
Reform from above	Monarchs selected useful Enlightenment policies without accepting popular sovereignty.	States became more efficient, but privilege and absolutism survived.
Universal ideals and exclusion	Rights and reason were described broadly but applied narrowly.	Later movements demanded that universal claims include excluded groups.

Core Comparisons

Comparison	Core Difference
Ptolemy and Copernicus	Ptolemy placed a stationary Earth at the centre; Copernicus made Earth a rotating planet orbiting the sun.
Copernicus and Galileo	Copernicus offered a mathematical model; Galileo added telescopic evidence and a new understanding of motion.
Kepler and Newton	Kepler described planetary motion through mathematical laws; Newton explained why bodies moved through universal gravitation and laws of motion.
Bacon and Descartes	Bacon stressed induction from observation; Descartes stressed deduction from clear rational principles.
Locke and Rousseau	Locke protected individual rights and limited government; Rousseau emphasised popular sovereignty and the common political will.
Voltaire and Rousseau	Voltaire trusted educated criticism and often enlightened monarchy; Rousseau was more suspicious of civilisation and insisted that sovereignty belonged to the people.
Enlightened absolutism and constitutionalism	Enlightened absolutism depended on a reforming monarch; constitutionalism placed durable legal and institutional limits on government.
Enlightenment ideals and social reality	Universal reason and rights challenged oppression, but European societies continued privilege, serfdom, slavery, and exclusion.

Key Terms and Concepts

- Geocentric universe:** A model that places Earth at the centre of the cosmos.
- Heliocentric universe:** A model in which Earth and the other planets travel around the sun.
- Epicycle:** A small circular motion added to a planet’s larger orbit in traditional astronomy.
- Ellipse:** An oval-shaped orbit; Kepler showed that planets move in ellipses.
- Inertia:** The tendency of a body to remain at rest or in uniform motion unless acted on by a force.
- Induction:** Reasoning from particular observations toward a general conclusion.
- Deduction:** Reasoning from general principles toward specific conclusions.

Empiricism: The view that reliable knowledge depends strongly on observation and experience.

Natural law: A regular principle believed to govern nature or human society.

Universal gravitation: Newton's claim that every mass attracts every other mass.

Scientific society: An organised body that supports experiments, publication, discussion, and the checking of discoveries.

Republic of Letters: The international network of writers and scholars who exchanged ideas through correspondence and print.

Deism: Belief in a creator known through reason and nature, often combined with criticism of revelation and organised religion.

Enlightenment: The movement that applied reason, criticism, and ideas of natural law to society and government.

Natural rights: Basic rights believed to belong to individuals by nature.

Social contract: The theory that legitimate political authority arises from an agreement among people or between people and government.

Popular sovereignty: The principle that ultimate political authority belongs to the people.

General will: Rousseau's term for the common interest of the political community.

Separation of powers: The division of government functions so that authority is not concentrated in one institution.

Toleration: Acceptance of religious or intellectual difference without persecution.

Public sphere: The world of discussion through print, clubs, salons, coffeehouses, and associations outside direct state control.

Salonnière: A woman who hosted and guided an intellectual salon.

Encyclopédie: The multivolume work edited by Diderot that collected knowledge and spread Enlightenment criticism.

Enlightened absolutism: Reform by an absolute monarch who uses Enlightenment ideas without accepting representative control.

Laissez-faire: The principle that economic activity should be relatively free from unnecessary government restrictions.

Penal reform: The effort to make criminal law and punishment more public, proportionate, and humane.

Personalities at a Glance

Person	Importance
Nicolaus Copernicus	Proposed a heliocentric arrangement in which Earth rotated and orbited the sun.
Tycho Brahe	Produced exceptionally accurate observations of planetary positions.
Johannes Kepler	Discovered elliptical orbits and mathematical laws of planetary motion.
Galileo Galilei	Used the telescope to challenge traditional astronomy and advanced a mathematical study of motion.
Francis Bacon	Promoted organised observation, experiment, induction, and useful knowledge.
René Descartes	Promoted systematic doubt, deduction, and mathematical reasoning.
Isaac Newton	Unified earthly and celestial motion through laws of motion and universal gravitation.
Andreas Vesalius	Corrected ancient anatomy through direct human dissection.
William Harvey	Demonstrated the circulation of blood through the pumping action of the heart.
Émilie du Châtelet	Physicist, mathematician, and translator who helped explain Newtonian science in France.
John Locke	Defended experience in knowledge and natural rights, consent, and limited government in politics.
Montesquieu	Connected liberty with divided and balanced political powers.
Voltaire	Fought intolerance, censorship, fanaticism, and judicial injustice through public writing.
Denis Diderot	Directed the Encyclopédie and spread critical, scientific, and practical knowledge.
Jean-Jacques Rousseau	Developed ideas of popular sovereignty, the general will, inequality, and natural education.

Person	Importance
Immanuel Kant	Defined enlightenment as the independent public use of reason.
Cesare Beccaria	Called for rational, proportionate, and humane criminal justice.
Adam Smith	Explained division of labour and criticised mercantilist restrictions and monopolies.
Frederick II	Prussian ruler who combined toleration and administrative reform with militarism and serfdom.
Joseph II	Habsburg ruler who attempted rapid reforms in religion, serfdom, administration, and law.
Catherine II	Russian ruler who used Enlightenment language while preserving noble privilege and expanding serfdom.
Mary Wollstonecraft	Applied reason and rights to women's education and independence.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

- The main importance of Copernicus's heliocentric theory was that it
 - immediately proved that the universe was infinite
 - placed Earth among the moving planets rather than at the fixed centre
 - eliminated the use of mathematics in astronomy
 - showed that planetary orbits were elliptical
- Johannes Kepler strengthened heliocentric astronomy by
 - restoring perfect circular motion
 - discovering that planets moved in elliptical orbits
 - rejecting the use of Tycho Brahe's observations
 - proving that Earth did not rotate
- Which observation by Galileo most directly showed that not every heavenly body revolved around Earth?
 - Mountains on the moon
 - Sunspots
 - Moons orbiting Jupiter
 - The brightness of the Milky Way
- The Galileo affair is best understood as a conflict involving
 - only a dispute between atheism and Christianity
 - scientific evidence, scriptural interpretation, institutional authority, and Counter-Reformation politics
 - a rejection of all mathematics by Catholic scholars
 - Galileo's refusal to use telescopic observations
- Francis Bacon is most closely associated with
 - induction from observation and experiment
 - divine-right monarchy
 - the general will
 - elliptical planetary motion
- Newton's major achievement was to

- A. separate heavenly motion completely from motion on Earth
 - B. explain earthly and celestial motion through common mathematical laws
 - C. return astronomy to the Ptolemaic model
 - D. prove that scientific knowledge required rejection of religion
7. Locke's theory of government held that political authority was legitimate when it
- A. protected natural rights through the consent of the governed
 - B. abolished all private property
 - C. placed church courts above civil law
 - D. concentrated power permanently in one ruler
8. Montesquieu believed political liberty was best protected by
- A. ending all written law
 - B. dividing and balancing governmental powers
 - C. creating a single hereditary assembly
 - D. placing courts under direct royal command
9. Voltaire is best known for supporting
- A. religious toleration and public criticism of injustice
 - B. universal male and female suffrage
 - C. the abolition of all monarchy
 - D. the restoration of medieval corporate privilege
10. Rousseau's concept of the general will referred to
- A. the private wishes of the monarch
 - B. the common interest of citizens acting as a political community
 - C. the power of nobles to resist taxation
 - D. the authority of churches over civil government
11. Kant's phrase "dare to know" encouraged individuals to
- A. avoid public debate
 - B. use their own reason rather than depend completely on intellectual guardians
 - C. accept every inherited institution
 - D. replace law with personal opinion
12. The Encyclopédie was important because it
- A. collected practical and intellectual knowledge while spreading criticism of privilege and intolerance
 - B. defended censorship and clerical monopoly over education
 - C. rejected science and technology as inferior subjects
 - D. was written entirely by one author
13. Which reform was most closely associated with Joseph II?
- A. Restoration of unlimited noble control over serfs
 - B. Religious toleration and abolition of personal serfdom
 - C. Establishment of parliamentary sovereignty

D. Destruction of central administration

14. Which statement best describes enlightened absolutism?

A. It gave elected assemblies complete authority over rulers

B. It combined selected rational reforms with continued monarchical sovereignty

C. It abolished privilege and serfdom throughout Europe

D. It rejected education and legal codification

15. A major contradiction of the Enlightenment was that

A. its thinkers opposed all forms of reason

B. universal claims about rights and humanity existed alongside slavery, privilege, and exclusion

C. it had no influence on legal or political reform

D. it was limited entirely to astronomy

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-B · 3-C · 4-B · 5-A · 6-B · 7-A · 8-B · 9-A · 10-B · 11-B · 12-A · 13-B · 14-B · 15-B

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one way Copernicus challenged the traditional model of the universe. Describe one contribution made by Galileo or Kepler. Explain one way Newton created a scientific synthesis.
2. Identify one political idea associated with Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, or Kant. Describe one method by which Enlightenment ideas spread. Explain one limitation in the application of Enlightenment ideals.
3. Identify one reform attempted by Frederick II, Joseph II, or Catherine II. Describe one group that resisted or limited reform. Explain why enlightened absolutism did not create constitutional government.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the most important cause of the Scientific Revolution in the period 1500–1700.
2. Evaluate the extent to which Enlightenment political thought challenged established authority in the period 1680–1789.
3. Evaluate the extent to which enlightened monarchs transformed the political and social order of Europe in the period 1740–1790.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about the extent to which reason and natural law changed European thought and government in the period 1600–1789:

- A passage from Galileo describing telescopic evidence
- A statement by a church official on scriptural interpretation and astronomy
- A selection from Newton on universal natural laws
- A passage from Locke on natural rights and consent
- A satirical attack by Voltaire on intolerance or censorship
- A reform decree issued by Joseph II or Frederick II
- A complaint from nobles, clergy, peasants, or a religious minority affected by reform

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: Reason and natural-law thinking greatly changed elite explanations of nature and created new standards for law and government, but political rulers adopted these ideas selectively and preserved monarchy, privilege, and social hierarchy.

Possible groups: New scientific methods and laws · Criticism of political and religious authority · Reforms adopted by states · Social and institutional limits.

Useful outside evidence: Kepler's ellipses, Galileo's trial, Royal Society, Encyclopédie, Beccaria, Patent of Toleration, Pugachev's Rebellion, or Mary Wollstonecraft.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one major contribution of Newton, describe one way Enlightenment thinkers applied scientific habits to society, and explain one limit of enlightened reform.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One contribution: Newton showed that the same mathematical laws of motion and gravitation explained both falling objects on Earth and the movement of planets and moons.

One application: Thinkers such as Locke and Montesquieu searched for general principles of legitimate government, rights, and political liberty rather than accepting inherited authority without question.

One limit: Enlightened monarchs adopted selected reforms but did not allow popular sovereignty. Catherine II, for example, discussed rational law while strengthening noble control over Russian serfs.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know the main features of the Ptolemaic and Copernican models.
- Know why Tycho's observations and Kepler's elliptical orbits were essential to heliocentric astronomy.
- Know Galileo's main telescopic discoveries, work on motion, and the causes of his trial.
- Compare Baconian induction with Cartesian deduction.
- Explain how Newton united earthly and celestial motion through universal laws.
- Remember the importance of Vesalius, Harvey, scientific societies, instruments, and the Republic of Letters.
- Know Locke on experience, natural rights, consent, government as trust, and resistance.
- Know Voltaire on toleration, Rousseau on popular sovereignty and the general will, Kant on independent reason, and Montesquieu on divided powers.
- Know how the Encyclopédie, salons, coffeehouses, journals, and correspondence spread ideas.
- Compare Frederick II, Joseph II, and Catherine II as enlightened absolutists.
- Know the influence of Enlightenment ideas on religious toleration, criminal justice, education, economics, and serf reform.
- Remember the central limits: censorship, noble privilege, serfdom, slavery, empire, and exclusion of women.
- Be ready to connect Enlightenment ideas with the political crises and revolutions of the late eighteenth century.

— End of Chapter 3 —

4. French Revolution and Napoleon (1789–1815)

Revolution, empire, and the remaking of Europe

The French Revolution began in 1789 as a crisis of monarchy and finance, but it quickly became a much wider struggle over privilege, citizenship, religion, property, and political power. The revolution destroyed the legal structure of the Old Regime, proclaimed equality before the law, and made the nation rather than the king the main source of political authority.

The revolution also became violent. War, civil rebellion, economic hardship, and fear of conspiracy pushed the new republic toward emergency government and the Reign of Terror. After the fall of Robespierre, the Directory tried to preserve the main gains of the revolution, but it remained weak, unpopular, and dependent on the army.

Napoleon Bonaparte rose from this instability. He preserved several revolutionary reforms, including legal equality, careers open to talent, and a stronger central state. At the same time, he ended republican government, censored opposition, crowned himself emperor, and built a European empire through war. His defeat led the major powers to meet at Vienna and construct a new political order based on restoration, balance, and cooperation.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Causes and Key Events of the French Revolution
- Rise and Reign of Napoleon Bonaparte
- The Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy

THE BIG PICTURE

The French Revolution ended feudal privilege and absolute monarchy in France, but it did not produce a stable political system. The revolution moved through constitutional monarchy, republic, terror, and conservative reaction before Napoleon created an authoritarian empire. The Congress of Vienna restored dynasties and rebuilt the balance of power, yet the ideas of citizenship, nationalism, equality before law, and popular sovereignty could not be erased.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Importance
1774	Louis XVI becomes king	Inherits a powerful monarchy burdened by debt, unequal taxation, and political resistance.
1787	Assembly of Notables	Leading nobles refuse major tax reform and demand that broader institutions be consulted.
5 May 1789	Estates-General meets	The fiscal crisis becomes a national political crisis over representation and sovereignty.
17–20 June 1789	National Assembly and Tennis Court Oath	Deputies of the Third Estate claim to represent the nation and promise to write a constitution.
14 July 1789	Fall of the Bastille	Popular action in Paris saves the National Assembly and becomes a symbol of revolution.
4 August 1789	August Decrees	The Assembly attacks feudal privilege and the legal order of estates.
26 August 1789	Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen	Proclaims liberty, equality before law, national sovereignty, and protection of property.
5–6 October 1789	Women march to Versailles	The royal family is forced to move to Paris under closer popular supervision.
1790	Civil Constitution of the Clergy	The church is reorganised under state authority, creating a deep religious division.

Date	Development	Importance
June 1791	Flight to Varennes	The king's attempted escape destroys public confidence in the constitutional monarchy.
April–September 1792	War and fall of the monarchy	Foreign war and internal fear lead to the overthrow of Louis XVI and creation of a republic.
21 January 1793	Execution of Louis XVI	The republic breaks decisively with monarchy and intensifies war with Europe.
1793–1794	Reign of Terror	The Committee of Public Safety uses emergency laws, mobilisation, and executions to defend the republic.
27–28 July 1794	Fall of Robespierre	The Terror ends and political power shifts toward more conservative republicans.
1795–1799	Directory	A property-based republic survives through military success but suffers corruption and instability.
9 November 1799	Coup of 18 Brumaire	Napoleon overthrows the Directory and establishes the Consulate.
1801–1804	Concordat, Civil Code, and Empire	Napoleon settles relations with the church, codifies law, and crowns himself emperor.
1805	Austerlitz and Trafalgar	Napoleon dominates continental warfare, while Britain secures command of the seas.
1812	Invasion of Russia	The Grand Army is destroyed by distance, supply failure, battle, and winter retreat.
1814–1815	Abdication, Hundred Days, and Waterloo	Napoleon falls, briefly returns, and is finally defeated and exiled.
1814–1815	Congress of Vienna	The great powers restore order, redraw borders, and create a system of balance and consultation.

Causes and Key Events of the French Revolution

The revolution did not have one cause. It grew from a combination of social privilege, government debt, political conflict, economic hardship, and new ideas about sovereignty and rights. A poor harvest or an unpopular king alone could not have destroyed the Old Regime. The crisis became revolutionary because the monarchy could neither reform the existing system nor command enough support to preserve it.

The Old Regime

Before 1789, France was a monarchy organised around inherited privilege. Society was legally divided into three estates. The First Estate was the clergy, the Second Estate was the nobility, and the Third Estate included everyone else. This structure did not describe wealth perfectly. Some nobles were poor, some clergy lived modestly, and some members of the Third Estate were rich. Its importance was legal: status affected taxation, offices, honour, and political influence.

Estate	Who Belonged to It	Position Before 1789
First Estate	Catholic clergy: bishops, parish priests, monks, and nuns.	Owned substantial land, collected the tithe, performed social services, and enjoyed corporate privileges. Higher church offices often went to nobles.
Second Estate	Nobility of the sword and nobility of the robe.	Held seigneurial rights, many military and administrative offices, social prestige, and important tax exemptions.
Third Estate	Bourgeois professionals and merchants, urban workers, artisans, and the great majority of peasants.	Carried much of the tax burden and lacked the legal privileges of clergy and nobility, despite major differences of wealth within the estate.

Peasants formed the majority of the population. Many owned land, but they paid royal taxes, church tithes, and feudal dues. They also faced seigneurial rights over mills, ovens, hunting, and local justice. In towns, artisans and wage earners were vulnerable to rising bread prices. The educated middle classes resented barriers to office and the social prestige of the nobility. These different groups did not want exactly the same reforms, but many opposed inherited privilege.

The Financial Crisis of the Monarchy

France possessed great resources, but its tax system was inefficient and unequal. The crown collected taxes through a confusing mixture of royal officials, tax farmers, provincial privileges, and exemptions. Governments borrowed heavily to pay for wars, including intervention in the American War of Independence. By the 1780s, a large share of royal revenue went to servicing debt.

Ministers such as Turgot, Necker, Calonne, and Brienne proposed reforms. They wanted more regular taxation, fewer exemptions, better administration, or new representative support. Privileged groups resisted measures that threatened their position. In 1787, the Assembly of Notables refused to approve Calonne's plan for a broad land tax. The monarchy then struggled with the parlements, especially the Parlement of Paris, which claimed that only the Estates-General could approve major new taxes.

WHY THE FISCAL CRISIS BECAME A REVOLUTION

War debt → need for new taxation → resistance from privileged groups → demand for the Estates-General → dispute over representation → claim that sovereignty belonged to the nation rather than the king.

Economic Hardship and the Harvest Crisis

The immediate setting was severe economic pressure. Poor harvests in 1788 raised the price of grain and bread. Since ordinary families spent a large part of their income on bread, higher prices reduced their ability to buy other goods and increased unemployment among artisans. Hunger did not create a political programme by itself, but it made crowds more willing to act and made government failure visible in everyday life.

Enlightenment Ideas and Political Language

Enlightenment writers did not design the revolution, and many preferred reform under monarchy. However, their ideas gave educated critics a language for attacking arbitrary rule and privilege. Montesquieu discussed limits on power; Voltaire attacked intolerance and injustice; Rousseau placed sovereignty in the people; and natural-rights theories presented government as a human institution rather than a permanent divine arrangement.

The American Revolution provided a practical example of written constitutions, declarations of rights, and resistance to political authority. French officers and writers followed it closely. Yet the decisive cause remained the collapse of the French state's ability to manage its finances and political institutions.

Cause	How It Weakened the Old Regime
Social privilege	Legal distinctions between estates made taxation and access to office appear unfair and outdated.
Fiscal breakdown	Debt forced the crown to seek reforms that privileged groups refused to accept.
Political conflict	Parlements, nobles, ministers, and the king disagreed over who had authority to approve change.
Economic distress	High bread prices, unemployment, and rural insecurity encouraged direct popular action.
New political ideas	Natural rights, popular sovereignty, and constitutional government made old authority easier to challenge.
Weak royal leadership	Louis XVI hesitated between reform and resistance, allowing disputes to deepen and opponents to organise.

From the Estates-General to the National Assembly

Louis XVI called the Estates-General to meet at Versailles in May 1789. Each locality prepared lists of grievances called cahiers de doléances. These documents showed broad support for regular taxation, legal reform, and consultation, although most did not initially demand a republic.

The central dispute concerned voting. The Third Estate received twice as many deputies as before, but if each estate voted as one body, the clergy and nobility could still combine against it. The Third Estate demanded voting by individual deputy. On 17 June, it declared itself the National Assembly, claiming that it represented the French nation. Three days later, locked out of its usual meeting hall, its deputies gathered in an indoor tennis court and swore not to separate until France had a constitution.

The Bastille, the Great Fear, and the August Decrees

As royal troops gathered near Paris, rumours spread that the king planned to dissolve the Assembly. On 14 July 1789, a Paris crowd attacked the Bastille, a fortress-prison that also contained weapons and gunpowder. The prison held only a few inmates, but its fall had enormous symbolic and political importance. It showed that popular force could defeat royal authority and helped protect the Assembly.

In the countryside, fear of aristocratic plots and wandering brigands produced the Great Fear. Peasants attacked manor houses and destroyed records of feudal obligations. On the night of 4 August, deputies announced the end of feudal privilege. Some dues were abolished immediately; others were supposed to be redeemed through payment. Even so, the legal society of estates had been broken.

The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

On 26 August 1789, the National Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen. It stated that men were born and remained free and equal in rights. Sovereignty rested in the nation. Law should express the general will and apply equally. Citizens should enjoy freedom of opinion, religion, and expression, while property was described as an inviolable right.

CORE PRINCIPLES OF 1789

Equality before law · national sovereignty · individual liberty · freedom of opinion and religion · public accountability · taxation by common consent · protection of property.

The declaration was universal in language but limited in application. It did not give equal political rights to women, enslaved people, colonial subjects, or all poor men. These exclusions generated new arguments. Olympe de Gouges answered with the Declaration of the Rights of Woman and of the Female Citizen in 1791, insisting that women should share civil and political equality.

Women and Popular Politics

Women were active throughout the revolution as market sellers, petitioners, writers, club members, spectators, and participants in crowd actions. On 5 October 1789, thousands of women marched from Paris to Versailles demanding bread and political action. The next day, the royal family was brought to Paris. The monarchy now lived under closer public pressure.

Revolutionary governments changed family law by introducing civil marriage and divorce, and daughters gained stronger inheritance rights. Yet women did not receive national voting rights, and women's political clubs were closed in 1793. The revolution widened the language of citizenship without accepting full political equality between men and women.

Church, State, and the Civil Constitution of the Clergy

The Assembly nationalised church lands in 1789 and used them to support a new paper currency called assignats. In 1790, the Civil Constitution of the Clergy reorganised dioceses, made clergy public officials, and required bishops and priests to be elected. Clergy were later required to swear loyalty to the constitution.

Many priests refused the oath, and Pope Pius VI condemned the settlement. France divided between constitutional clergy who accepted the revolution and refractory clergy who rejected it. In many rural communities, loyalty to traditional Catholic practice became connected with resistance to revolutionary government. This conflict helped turn political disagreement into civil war.

Constitutional Monarchy and the Flight to Varennes

The Constitution of 1791 created a constitutional monarchy with a single Legislative Assembly. The king retained a temporary veto, but law-making authority belonged to elected representatives. Voting rights were limited through property and tax qualifications, separating active citizens from passive citizens.

The monarchy had already lost trust. In June 1791, Louis XVI and his family attempted to escape toward the eastern frontier but were recognised and returned from Varennes. Many citizens concluded that the king opposed the revolution and hoped for foreign intervention. The possibility of a stable constitutional monarchy became much weaker.

War and the Fall of the Monarchy

France declared war on Austria in April 1792. Supporters of war had different motives. Some expected war to unite the nation and spread revolution; the king and his allies hoped defeat might restore royal power. Early French military failures created panic and suspicion of treason. Prussia joined Austria, and the Duke of Brunswick threatened Paris if the royal family was harmed.

On 10 August 1792, Parisian militants and National Guards attacked the Tuileries Palace. The monarchy was suspended. During the September Massacres, crowds killed prisoners believed to be enemies of the revolution. A new National Convention met, abolished the monarchy, and proclaimed a republic on 21 September 1792.

Republic, Regicide, and Civil War

Louis XVI was tried for conspiracy against public liberty and national security. The Convention found him guilty and executed him on 21 January 1793. His death made compromise with European monarchies harder. Britain, the Dutch Republic, Spain, and other states joined the war against France.

Inside France, military conscription, religious conflict, economic hardship, and resentment of Paris helped produce rebellion. The most serious uprising occurred in the Vendée, where royalist and Catholic forces fought the republic. Federalist revolts also challenged the authority of Paris after the fall of the moderate Girondins.

The Committee of Public Safety and the Reign of Terror

In 1793, the republic faced invasion, civil war, inflation, food shortages, and political conflict. The Convention created the Committee of Public Safety as an emergency executive body. Maximilien Robespierre became its best-known member, although power was shared among several committees and representatives on mission.

The government introduced mass conscription through the levée en masse, placed parts of the economy under control, and used revolutionary tribunals against suspected enemies. The Law of Suspects widened the categories of people who could be arrested. The guillotine became the most visible symbol of the Terror, although many victims also died through civil war and mass repression outside Paris.

Emergency Measure	Purpose and Effect
Levée en masse	Mobilised citizens, labour, resources, and military service for a national war effort.
Law of the Maximum	Placed controls on prices and wages in an attempt to secure supplies and satisfy urban demands.
Law of Suspects	Allowed broad arrest of people considered enemies of the revolution.
Revolutionary Tribunal	Tried political offences rapidly and imposed severe punishment.
Representatives on mission	Sent deputies into provinces and armies to enforce policy and remove disloyal officials.
De-Christianisation	Local radicals closed churches and promoted secular festivals; the policy divided communities and was not fully controlled by Robespierre.

The Terror cannot be understood only as personal cruelty. It grew from a real emergency and from the belief that extraordinary danger required extraordinary government. Yet emergency laws destroyed legal protections, factional struggles defined opponents as traitors, and political violence became a method of rule. Revolutionary leaders executed former allies, including Hébertists on the radical left and Dantonists who wanted greater moderation.

In February 1794, the Convention abolished slavery in French colonies, partly in response to the successful slave uprising in Saint-Domingue. Napoleon later restored slavery in 1802, though French control over Saint-Domingue collapsed and Haiti became independent in 1804.

Thermidorian Reaction and the Directory

By the summer of 1794, French armies were improving and many deputies feared that they might become the next victims of political purges. On 9 Thermidor Year II, or 27 July 1794, Robespierre was arrested. He and his closest supporters were executed the next day. The fall of Robespierre ended the central phase of the Terror.

The Thermidorian Reaction reduced price controls, weakened radical clubs, and returned power to wealthier property owners. Economic hardship remained severe. The Constitution of Year III created the Directory in 1795, with a two-house legislature and a five-man executive. The system was designed to prevent both dictatorship and direct popular democracy.

The Directory faced royalist opposition, radical conspiracy, corruption, financial weakness, and continuing war. It repeatedly used military force and political coups to cancel unfavourable election results. Its dependence on successful generals created the conditions for Napoleon's seizure of power in 1799.

THE REVOLUTION IN ONE SEQUENCE

Fiscal and political crisis → National Assembly → destruction of privilege → constitutional monarchy → war and republic → emergency government and Terror → Thermidorian reaction → Directory → military coup.

Phase	Political Form	Main Development
1789–1791	National Assembly and constitutional monarchy	Abolition of estate privilege, declaration of rights, nationalisation of church lands, and Constitution of 1791.
1792–1794	Republic and revolutionary government	Fall of monarchy, execution of the king, mass mobilisation, civil war, and Reign of Terror.
1794–1795	Thermidorian Convention	End of the Terror, retreat from economic controls, and reaction against radical politics.
1795–1799	Directory	Property-based republic weakened by war, economic instability, coups, and dependence on the army.

Rise and Reign of Napoleon Bonaparte

Napoleon rose because of personal ability, military success, revolutionary opportunity, and the weakness of the Directory. He did not simply end the revolution. He consolidated some of its central reforms while replacing republican participation with authoritarian government and imperial war.

Early Career and Military Reputation

Napoleon Bonaparte was born in Corsica in 1769 and trained as an artillery officer. The revolution opened promotion to talented officers who might have advanced more slowly under the old aristocratic system. In 1793, Napoleon helped recapture Toulon from royalist and British forces. In 1795, he used artillery to defeat a royalist uprising in Paris, strengthening his connection with the Directory.

His Italian campaign of 1796–1797 made him a national hero. He defeated Austrian armies, forced smaller Italian states to support France, collected money and art, and reorganised territories into French-controlled sister republics. The Egyptian expedition of 1798 failed to weaken Britain strategically, especially after Admiral Nelson destroyed the French fleet at the Battle of the Nile. Napoleon nevertheless controlled the news reaching France and preserved his reputation.

The Coup of 18 Brumaire and the Consulate

In November 1799, political conspirators sought a stronger executive to replace the Directory. Napoleon used troops and pressure to remove the existing government. The Constitution of Year VIII created the

Consulate. In theory, three consuls shared authority; in practice, Napoleon as First Consul dominated the state.

Plebiscites gave the regime an appearance of popular approval, but voting was managed and political choice was narrow. Napoleon centralised administration, appointed officials, restricted the press, and used police surveillance. The Consulate offered order after a decade of instability, which helped it gain support among property owners, officials, peasants, and former revolutionaries.

Domestic Settlement

Policy	What Napoleon Did	Importance
Administration	Created a highly centralised system led by appointed prefects and officials.	Made state authority more uniform and effective across France.
Finance	Improved tax collection, created the Bank of France, and stabilised government finances.	Restored confidence after revolutionary inflation and fiscal disorder.
Education	Expanded state-supervised secondary schools called lycées and trained officials and officers.	Supported careers based partly on ability while strengthening loyalty to the regime.
Religion	Signed the Concordat of 1801 with Pope Pius VII.	Reconciled many Catholics to the state without returning confiscated church land.
Law	Issued the Civil Code of 1804 and related legal codes.	Made legal equality, property rights, and secular civil authority more uniform.
Political control	Used censorship, police, managed elections, and appointments.	Ended open republican politics and limited freedom of expression and opposition.

The Concordat of 1801

The Concordat restored public Catholic worship and recognised Catholicism as the religion of the majority of French citizens, but not as the official state religion. The pope accepted the loss of church lands sold during the revolution. The government nominated bishops and paid clergy. Napoleon gained religious peace while keeping the church under substantial state control.

The Napoleonic Code

The Civil Code, usually called the Napoleonic Code, created a more uniform system of private law. It confirmed equality of male citizens before the law, protected property acquired during the revolution, ended feudal privilege, and supported freedom of contract. It spread across territories controlled by France and influenced later legal systems.

The code was not a charter of full equality. It strengthened the authority of husbands and fathers, reduced the legal independence of married women, made divorce more difficult for women than for men, and restricted workers' organisations. Napoleon preserved civil equality among men while reinforcing patriarchal family authority and employer power.

REVOLUTIONARY PRINCIPLES PRESERVED

Equality before law for male citizens · abolition of feudal privilege · protection of property · secular state administration · careers open to talent · uniform legal rules.

AUTHORITARIAN FEATURES

Censorship · secret police · controlled elections · weak legislatures · appointed officials · dynastic empire · military conquest · restricted rights for women and workers.

From First Consul to Emperor

Napoleon became First Consul for life in 1802. In 1804, he crowned himself Emperor of the French in a ceremony attended by Pope Pius VII. The title linked the new regime to monarchy, but it rested on revolutionary France rather than the old Bourbon order. Napoleon created a new nobility based on

service, wealth, and family connection, while preserving equality before law and the sale of former church lands.

The Napoleonic Empire

Napoleon's armies defeated repeated coalitions of European powers. His military system combined rapid movement, large citizen armies, flexible corps, artillery, and promotion based on ability. France also benefited from the mass mobilisation and administrative changes created by the revolution.

At Austerlitz in December 1805, Napoleon defeated Austria and Russia in one of his greatest victories. In the same year, however, Admiral Nelson defeated the French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar. Britain remained secure from invasion and used naval power, trade, credit, and subsidies to continue resistance.

After defeating Prussia in 1806 and Russia in 1807, Napoleon reached the height of his power. He dissolved the Holy Roman Empire, created the Confederation of the Rhine, reorganised German and Italian territories, and placed relatives or allies on European thrones. Treaties and satellite states extended French influence from Spain to Poland.

Area of Control	Examples	Relationship to France
French Empire	France, Belgium, the Netherlands after annexation, parts of Italy, and parts of Germany.	Directly ruled under French administration and law.
Dependent kingdoms	Kingdom of Italy, Naples, Westphalia, Spain, and others.	Ruled by Napoleon, relatives, or selected allies and expected to support French policy.
Allied or defeated powers	Austria, Prussia, and Russia at different moments.	Forced by treaties to provide territory, troops, money, or cooperation.
Persistent enemy	Great Britain.	Resisted through naval superiority, economic power, coalition warfare, and support for continental enemies.

The Continental System

Unable to defeat Britain at sea, Napoleon tried to weaken it economically. The Berlin Decree of 1806 and later measures ordered European states to stop trading with Britain. This Continental System was difficult to enforce because European economies depended on British goods, shipping, and colonial trade. Smuggling became widespread.

The policy damaged some British trade but also hurt continental merchants, consumers, and ports. Napoleon increased control over allies in order to enforce the blockade, creating resentment. Russia's decision to loosen cooperation contributed to Napoleon's invasion in 1812.

French Rule, Reform, and National Resistance

French rule abolished feudal dues in many territories, introduced legal equality, secularised church property, reorganised administration, and weakened old corporate privilege. For some middle-class reformers and peasants, these changes were attractive. French occupation could appear as liberation from outdated institutions.

Yet French armies also demanded taxes, soldiers, supplies, and obedience. Napoleon placed relatives on thrones and treated subject territories as resources for empire. Resistance increasingly used the language of national identity. The same revolutionary principle that nations should rule themselves could now be turned against French domination.

The Peninsular War

In 1808, Napoleon forced the Spanish Bourbon king to abdicate and placed his brother Joseph on the throne. Spanish resistance combined local guerrilla warfare, regular armies, Catholic loyalty, and regional defence. British forces under Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington, established a major front in Portugal and Spain.

The Peninsular War drained French troops and money. The word guerrilla, meaning little war, became associated with irregular fighters who attacked communications and isolated units. French reprisals and occupation deepened resistance rather than restoring control.

The Invasion of Russia

In June 1812, Napoleon invaded Russia with a multinational Grand Army of more than half a million men. Russian forces retreated, avoided decisive destruction, and left limited supplies. The French won a terrible battle at Borodino and entered Moscow, but the city was largely abandoned and burned. Tsar Alexander I refused to make peace.

Napoleon began a late retreat. Hunger, disease, exhaustion, attacks, and severe cold destroyed the army. The disaster encouraged Prussia, Austria, Russia, Britain, and other states to form a new coalition. At Leipzig in October 1813, the coalition defeated Napoleon in the Battle of Nations.

Abdication, the Hundred Days, and Waterloo

Allied armies entered Paris in 1814. Napoleon abdicated and was exiled to Elba, while Louis XVIII, brother of Louis XVI, restored the Bourbon monarchy. In March 1815, Napoleon escaped, returned to France, and regained power during the Hundred Days.

European powers immediately renewed war. On 18 June 1815, Wellington's allied army and a Prussian army under Blücher defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. Napoleon abdicated again and was exiled to Saint Helena in the South Atlantic, where he died in 1821.

Did Napoleon Preserve or Betray the Revolution?

Napoleon Preserved Revolutionary Change	Napoleon Betrayed Revolutionary Change
Confirmed the end of feudal privilege and legal estates.	Ended republican government and created a hereditary empire.
Protected property purchased during the revolution.	Restricted the press, elections, and organised opposition.
Promoted legal equality among male citizens.	Reduced women's legal status and strengthened paternal authority.
Opened many careers to ability and service.	Created a new nobility and rewarded family members and loyal elites.
Spread legal and administrative reform across Europe.	Imposed reforms through conquest, taxation, conscription, and occupation.
Reconciled the state with religion without restoring the old church.	Used religion, education, and public ceremony to support personal rule.

The best conclusion is that Napoleon institutionalised important social and legal gains of the revolution while ending its experiment in representative republican politics. His rule combined revolutionary state-building with personal dictatorship and dynastic empire.

The Congress of Vienna and Its Legacy

The Congress of Vienna met from September 1814 to June 1815. It was not a single continuous conference with all delegates debating together. Much of the real work occurred through private meetings among the major powers. The settlement had to solve two problems: how to prevent renewed French domination and how to rebuild legitimate government after more than twenty years of revolution and war.

The Main Powers and Diplomats

Power	Leading Representative	Main Concern
Austria	Prince Klemens von Metternich	Preserve the Habsburg monarchy, limit nationalism, and maintain Austrian influence in Germany and Italy.
Britain	Lord Castlereagh	Prevent any one power from dominating Europe and secure a workable balance of power.

Power	Leading Representative	Main Concern
Russia	Tsar Alexander I	Gain most of Poland and increase Russian influence while presenting Russia as guardian of Christian monarchy.
Prussia	Karl August von Hardenberg	Gain territory, especially in Saxony and western Germany, and strengthen Prussia's position.
France	Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand	Restore France as a respected great power by using the principle of legitimacy and divisions among the victors.

Guiding Principles

Principle	Meaning at Vienna
Balance of power	No state should be strong enough to dominate the continent as Napoleon had done.
Legitimacy	Traditional dynasties, especially the Bourbons, should be restored where practical.
Compensation	Powers that had fought Napoleon should receive territory or influence in return for losses and service.
Containment of France	Stronger states and defensive arrangements should surround France without permanently destroying it.
Great-power cooperation	Major states should consult when crises threatened the settlement or European peace.

The Territorial Settlement

The settlement did not return Europe exactly to the map of 1789. The negotiators restored some dynasties, but they also accepted many territorial changes produced by the revolutionary and Napoleonic era. Their main goal was stability, not complete historical restoration.

Region	Settlement	Purpose
France	Returned roughly to its pre-revolutionary frontiers after the final settlement and remained a major state.	Contain France without creating a permanently humiliated and revenge-seeking power.
The Netherlands	The former Dutch Republic and Austrian Netherlands were joined in the United Kingdom of the Netherlands.	Create a stronger barrier north of France.
Piedmont-Sardinia	Restored and enlarged by the addition of Genoa.	Strengthen the south-eastern border of France.
German lands	The Holy Roman Empire was not restored; thirty-nine states formed the German Confederation.	Provide limited cooperation while preventing either complete unity or renewed French control.
Prussia	Received the Rhineland, Westphalia, and part of Saxony, among other gains.	Reward Prussia and create a strong power on France's eastern frontier.
Austria	Received Lombardy and Venetia and gained influence across the Italian peninsula.	Compensate Austria and maintain its central European position.
Russia and Poland	Russia received most of the Duchy of Warsaw as the Kingdom of Poland under the tsar.	Recognise Russian power while limiting its complete control through compromise.
Scandinavia	Norway was joined to Sweden; Denmark lost Norway because it had supported Napoleon.	Reward Sweden and adjust the northern balance.
Switzerland	Its neutrality and independence were recognised.	Create a neutral buffer in central Europe.

Restoration and the Bourbon Monarchy

Louis XVIII returned to France but did not fully restore the Old Regime. The Charter of 1814 preserved equality before law, the Napoleonic Code, and property transfers made during the revolution. It also created a limited constitutional monarchy with a two-house legislature. The restoration therefore combined dynasty with selected revolutionary changes.

The Concert of Europe

The Vienna settlement was supported by a new habit of great-power consultation. Britain, Austria, Prussia, and Russia formed the Quadruple Alliance and agreed to meet when necessary. France joined the great-power system in 1818. This loose arrangement became known as the Concert of Europe.

The Concert was not a permanent international organisation with fixed rules. It was a practice of congresses, diplomacy, and joint management. The powers sometimes cooperated to settle disputes, but they disagreed over intervention in revolutions. Austria, Russia, and Prussia were more willing to suppress revolutionary movements, while Britain increasingly resisted automatic intervention in the internal affairs of states.

The Holy Alliance

Tsar Alexander I proposed the Holy Alliance among Russia, Austria, and Prussia. Its language emphasised Christian principles and monarchical brotherhood. It had less practical importance than the Quadruple Alliance, but it became a symbol of conservative cooperation against revolution and nationalism.

The Conservative Order

Metternich believed that nationalism and liberal constitutionalism threatened the multinational Habsburg monarchy and European stability. Conservative governments monitored universities, censored publications, and acted against secret societies and revolutionary movements. In the German Confederation, the Carlsbad Decrees of 1819 restricted nationalist student organisations and the press.

The Vienna order could restrain political change, but it could not remove the ideas created by the French Revolution. Liberals continued to demand constitutions, civil rights, and representative government. Nationalists argued that peoples sharing language, history, or culture should possess political unity or independence. These forces would shape the revolutions of 1820, 1830, and 1848.

Achievements and Limits of the Settlement

Achievement	Limit
France was contained without being permanently excluded from European diplomacy.	The settlement often ignored national wishes, especially in Poland, Italy, and the German lands.
The balance of power reduced the risk of another single-state domination of Europe.	Great powers used stability to justify repression and intervention against constitutional movements.
Regular consultation created a useful method for managing crises.	The powers disagreed over intervention, colonial interests, and the meaning of legitimate government.
Many legal and administrative changes of the revolutionary era survived.	Political participation remained limited and restored rulers often distrusted liberal reform.
The settlement helped avoid a general European war for decades.	It did not end warfare, imperial rivalry, revolution, or the later rise of aggressive nationalism.

THE LEGACY OF VIENNA

Restored dynasties, but not the complete Old Regime · contained France without destroying it · created a balance of power · encouraged great-power consultation · defended conservative order · left liberalism and nationalism unresolved.

The Chapter on One Page

FRENCH REVOLUTION AND NAPOLEON — 1789–1815

CAUSES: privilege, debt, tax inequality, political conflict, poor harvests, high bread prices, and new ideas about rights and sovereignty.

1789: Estates-General → National Assembly → Bastille → August Decrees → Declaration of Rights → royal family moved to Paris.

1790–1792: church conflict, Constitution of 1791, Flight to Varennes, war, fall of monarchy, republic.

1793–1794: execution of Louis XVI, civil war, Committee of Public Safety, mass mobilisation, Terror, fall of Robespierre.

1795–1799: Directory weakened by corruption, coups, economic problems, and dependence on the army.

NAPOLEON: Consulate, Concordat, Civil Code, central administration, censorship, empire, military domination, Continental System, resistance, Russia, defeat.

VIENNA: legitimacy, balance of power, compensation, containment of France, Concert of Europe, conservative restoration, unresolved liberalism and nationalism.

Major Cause-and-Effect Chains

Starting Point	Immediate Development	Longer Result
Royal debt and unequal taxation	The crown calls the Estates-General.	A dispute over taxation becomes a struggle over national sovereignty.
Popular fear in Paris and the countryside	Bastille and Great Fear.	The Assembly destroys legal privilege and feudal institutions.
Church reform and compulsory oath	Clergy divide into constitutional and refractory camps.	Religion becomes a major source of counter-revolution and civil conflict.
Foreign war and fear of treason	Monarchy falls and the republic is proclaimed.	Emergency government, mass mobilisation, and political violence expand.
Terror and factional purges	Robespierre loses support and falls.	Thermidorian reaction and a more conservative republic follow.
Weak Directory and military dependence	Coup of 18 Brumaire.	Napoleon creates an authoritarian state that preserves selected revolutionary reforms.
Continental conquest and blockade	Occupation, taxation, and conscription increase.	National resistance and coalition warfare undermine the empire.
Napoleon’s defeat	Congress of Vienna.	Balance of power and conservative cooperation shape post-war Europe.

Essential Comparisons

Comparison	Core Difference
Old Regime and revolutionary order	The Old Regime rested on estates and privilege; the revolutionary order proclaimed legal equality and national sovereignty.
Constitutional monarchy and republic	The Constitution of 1791 retained a king with limited authority; the republic abolished monarchy and claimed direct national sovereignty.
Girondins and Jacobins/Montagnards	Girondins were more cautious about Parisian radicalism; the Mountain worked more closely with sans-culottes and supported stronger emergency measures.
Thermidor and the Terror	The Terror used centralised emergency rule and economic controls; Thermidor reduced radical institutions and favoured property owners.
Consulate and Empire	The Consulate presented Napoleon as a republican executive; the Empire made his personal and dynastic authority explicit.
Napoleonic reform and Napoleonic occupation	Reform spread legal equality and administrative efficiency; occupation imposed taxes, conscription, censorship, and French control.
Vienna restoration and full return to 1789	Vienna restored dynasties but retained many territorial, legal, and administrative changes created since 1789.

Important People and Terms

Person or Term	Importance
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Person or Term	Importance
Louis XVI	King whose fiscal crisis, hesitation, and failed escape weakened constitutional monarchy.
Marie Antoinette	Queen associated by critics with court privilege and foreign influence; executed in 1793.
Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès	Clergyman and writer whose pamphlet <i>What Is the Third Estate?</i> argued that the Third Estate was the nation.
Olympe de Gouges	Writer who demanded political and civil equality for women in 1791.
Georges Danton	Revolutionary leader active in the fall of monarchy and early republic; executed during the Terror.
Jean-Paul Marat	Radical journalist influential among popular militants; assassinated by Charlotte Corday.
Maximilien Robespierre	Leading Jacobin and member of the Committee of Public Safety associated with revolutionary virtue and Terror.
Sans-culottes	Urban militants who demanded price controls, punishment of enemies, and a more socially responsive republic.
Levée en masse	Mass mobilisation of citizens and resources for national war.
Thermidorian Reaction	Political turn after Robespierre's fall that ended the Terror and weakened radical institutions.
Directory	Five-man executive government of 1795–1799, weakened by instability and military dependence.
Napoleon Bonaparte	General, First Consul, and emperor who consolidated reform and built a continental empire.
Concordat of 1801	Agreement that restored public Catholic worship while maintaining state influence over the church.
Napoleonic Code	Civil law code protecting legal equality for men, property, and secular authority while strengthening patriarchal power.
Continental System	Economic blockade intended to exclude British trade from Europe.
Metternich	Austrian statesman who defended conservative order and Habsburg interests.
Castlereagh	British foreign secretary who promoted balance of power and great-power cooperation.
Talleyrand	French diplomat who restored France's influence at Vienna.
Concert of Europe	Informal system of consultation among the great powers after 1815.
Legitimacy	Vienna principle favouring restoration of established dynasties and lawful authority.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

- Which problem most directly forced Louis XVI to call the Estates-General in 1789?
 - A movement to unite Italy
 - A fiscal crisis and failure to secure tax reform
 - The defeat of Napoleon in Russia
 - A peasant demand for overseas colonies
- The Tennis Court Oath was important because it
 - restored feudal privilege
 - declared war on Britain
 - asserted that representatives of the nation would create a constitution
 - established Napoleon as emperor
- The August Decrees of 1789 attacked
 - the legal privileges and feudal structure of the Old Regime
 - the use of written constitutions
 - all private property
 - French control of Saint-Domingue

4. Which idea was central to the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen?
 - A. Sovereignty rested in the nation
 - B. Nobility possessed permanent legal privilege
 - C. The church controlled taxation
 - D. Political authority came only from conquest
5. The Civil Constitution of the Clergy contributed to
 - A. reconciliation between all Catholics and the revolution
 - B. division between constitutional and refractory clergy
 - C. restoration of papal control over French taxation
 - D. immediate religious equality for all Europeans
6. The Flight to Varennes weakened the monarchy because it
 - A. proved that the king fully supported the constitution
 - B. suggested that the royal family opposed the revolutionary settlement
 - C. ended foreign concern about France
 - D. created the Napoleonic Code
7. The levée en masse represented
 - A. restoration of noble military privilege
 - B. mass national mobilisation for war
 - C. abolition of the French army
 - D. British control of French ports
8. The Reign of Terror developed mainly in the setting of
 - A. peace, prosperity, and political agreement
 - B. foreign invasion, civil war, economic crisis, and fear of conspiracy
 - C. successful constitutional monarchy
 - D. the Congress of Vienna
9. The Directory was especially weakened by
 - A. its refusal to use the army
 - B. complete economic stability
 - C. political coups, corruption, and military dependence
 - D. universal support from royalists and radicals
10. Which measure best shows Napoleon preserving a major revolutionary change?
 - A. Restoration of legal estates
 - B. Protection of equality before law and property through the Civil Code
 - C. Return of all church lands
 - D. Abolition of central administration
11. The Concordat of 1801
 - A. restored Catholic worship while keeping important state control
 - B. made the pope ruler of France

- C. abolished Christianity in France
 - D. returned all confiscated church property
12. The Continental System was designed to
- A. unite Italy under Austria
 - B. weaken Britain by excluding its trade from Europe
 - C. restore the Holy Roman Empire
 - D. protect Russian trade with Britain
13. Which event was the decisive turning point in the collapse of Napoleon's empire?
- A. Fall of the Bastille
 - B. Invasion of Russia in 1812
 - C. Tennis Court Oath
 - D. Civil Constitution of the Clergy
14. A central goal of the Congress of Vienna was to
- A. spread republican government everywhere
 - B. create a balance of power and prevent renewed French domination
 - C. abolish all monarchies
 - D. establish national self-determination as the only principle
15. Which statement best describes the Vienna settlement?
- A. It restored the map and society of 1789 without change
 - B. It destroyed France as a great power
 - C. It restored dynasties but retained many changes produced since the revolution
 - D. It immediately created a united Germany and Italy

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-C · 3-A · 4-A · 5-B · 6-B · 7-B · 8-B · 9-C · 10-B · 11-A · 12-B · 13-B · 14-B · 15-C

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one long-term cause of the French Revolution. Describe one event in 1789 that weakened royal authority. Explain one way popular action shaped the revolution.
2. Identify one emergency measure adopted by the revolutionary government in 1793–1794. Describe the problem it was intended to address. Explain one consequence of the measure.
3. Identify one reform introduced by Napoleon. Describe one authoritarian feature of his rule. Explain one way foreign resistance weakened the Napoleonic Empire.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the most important cause of the French Revolution in the period 1770–1789.
2. Evaluate the extent to which the French Revolution transformed French society and government in the period 1789–1799.
3. Evaluate the extent to which Napoleon preserved the principles of the French Revolution in the period 1799–1815.
4. Evaluate the extent to which the Congress of Vienna created a stable European order after 1815.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about the extent to which the French Revolution transformed political authority and social order in France between 1789 and 1815:

- A cahier of grievances from the Third Estate in 1789
- A section of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen
- A petition or political statement written by a revolutionary woman
- A decree on church property or the Civil Constitution of the Clergy
- A speech defending emergency measures during the Terror
- A provision from the Napoleonic Code
- A statement by a European opponent describing French occupation

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: The revolution fundamentally destroyed legal privilege, feudal institutions, and absolute monarchy, while Napoleon made many of those changes permanent; however, political participation remained unstable, women were excluded from equal citizenship, and authoritarian government returned under the Empire.

Possible groups: Destruction of the Old Regime · New ideas of rights and sovereignty · Emergency rule and political violence · Napoleonic consolidation and limits.

Useful outside evidence: Tennis Court Oath, Great Fear, Flight to Varennes, levée en masse, Thermidor, Concordat, Continental System, Congress of Vienna.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one cause of the French Revolution, describe one change made during the revolution, and explain one way Napoleon limited revolutionary liberty.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One cause: The monarchy's fiscal crisis forced Louis XVI to seek new taxes, but privileged groups resisted reform and demanded the Estates-General, turning a financial problem into a political crisis.

One change: The August Decrees and later legislation destroyed the legal society of estates and ended many feudal privileges, establishing equality before law as a basic principle.

One limit: Napoleon controlled elections, censored the press, used police surveillance, and weakened representative institutions, so the legal gains of the revolution existed under authoritarian rule.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know the social structure of the Old Regime and why privilege caused conflict.
- Know how debt, tax inequality, political resistance, and the harvest crisis combined in 1788–1789.
- Remember the sequence: Estates-General, National Assembly, Bastille, August Decrees, Declaration of Rights, and October Days.
- Understand the importance of church reform and the Flight to Varennes.
- Know why war led to the fall of monarchy and creation of the republic.
- Explain the causes, institutions, and consequences of the Reign of Terror.
- Distinguish the Thermidorian Reaction from the Directory.
- Know Napoleon's main domestic reforms: administration, finance, education, Concordat, and Civil Code.
- Balance the revolutionary and authoritarian sides of Napoleonic rule.

- Know why Trafalgar, the Continental System, the Peninsular War, and Russia mattered.
- Remember the main diplomats and principles of the Congress of Vienna.
- Explain both the achievements and limits of the Concert of Europe and conservative restoration.

— *End of Chapter 4* —

5. Industrialization and Its Effects (1815–1914)

Machines, markets, workers, and the making of modern nations

Between 1815 and 1914, Europe changed from a mainly rural and agricultural society into an increasingly urban and industrial one. Factories, steam power, railways, new forms of finance, and larger markets transformed production. Goods could be made faster and moved farther than ever before. Industrialisation increased wealth and created powerful new business groups, but it also produced overcrowded cities, unsafe workplaces, long hours, and deep class divisions.

Industrial capitalism changed the relationship between workers and employers. Many people no longer worked on family farms or in small workshops. They earned wages in factories, mines, railways, offices, and shops. Workers organised trade unions and political movements to demand better pay, shorter hours, safer conditions, and voting rights. Socialists criticised private ownership and economic inequality, while governments gradually introduced labour laws and social insurance.

The same period was also shaped by nationalism. Italians and Germans lived in divided political regions after 1815, but nationalist leaders sought unity. Italian unification came through the combined efforts of Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel II. German unification was achieved under Prussian leadership through economic integration, military reform, and the wars directed by Otto von Bismarck. By 1871, the political map of Europe had been permanently changed.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Industrial Revolution: Technological Innovations and Social Changes
- Rise of Capitalism and Labor Movements
- Nationalist Movements and Unification of Italy and Germany

THE BIG PICTURE

Industrialisation created a new economic system based on factories, wage labour, investment, and expanding markets. It increased production and living standards over time, but its early social costs were severe. Workers responded through unions, reform movements, socialism, and political organisation. At the same time, nationalism helped create unified states in Italy and Germany, strengthening the nation-state while also increasing rivalry among European powers.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Importance
1815	Congress of Vienna	Restores a conservative political order and leaves Italy and Germany divided into many states.
1819	Peterloo Massacre in Britain	Shows the conflict between demands for political reform and government fear of popular unrest.
1824–1825	British Combination Acts repealed	Allows trade unions to operate more openly, although restrictions continue.
1830	Revolutions in France, Belgium, and parts of Europe	Strengthen liberal and nationalist movements.
1832	First Reform Act in Britain	Expands representation and strengthens the political position of the middle class.
1833	British Factory Act	Limits child labour and introduces factory inspection.
1834	Zollverein expands	Creates a customs union that encourages economic unity among many German states under Prussian influence.
1838–1848	Chartist movement	Demands political rights for working men in Britain.
1848	Revolutions across Europe	Bring liberal, nationalist, and social demands into open conflict with conservative governments.

Date	Development	Importance
1848	Marx and Engels publish The Communist Manifesto	Presents class struggle and proletarian revolution as central forces in history.
1852	Cavour becomes prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia	Begins the diplomatic and economic strategy that leads Italian unification.
1856	Bessemer process patented	Makes mass production of steel cheaper and supports railways, machinery, and construction.
1859	Piedmont-Sardinia and France defeat Austria	Lombardy passes to Piedmont-Sardinia and Italian unification advances.
1860	Garibaldi's Expedition of the Thousand	Conquers Sicily and Naples and transfers them to Victor Emmanuel II.
1861	Kingdom of Italy proclaimed	Creates a unified Italian kingdom, although Venetia and Rome remain outside it.
1862	Bismarck becomes minister-president of Prussia	Leads the Prussian strategy for German unification.
1864	Danish War	Prussia and Austria defeat Denmark and take control of Schleswig and Holstein.
1866	Austro-Prussian War	Prussia excludes Austria from German affairs and creates the North German Confederation.
1870–1871	Franco-Prussian War	Southern German states join Prussia against France; German unity is completed.
1871	German Empire proclaimed	Creates a powerful new state in central Europe under Prussian leadership.
1883–1889	Bismarckian social insurance	Germany introduces sickness, accident, and old-age insurance.
1889	Second International founded	Coordinates socialist parties and labour organisations across Europe.
1891	Pope Leo XIII issues Rerum Novarum	Recognises workers' grievances while defending private property and Catholic social teaching.
1914	Europe enters World War I	Industrial power and national rivalry contribute to total war.

Industrial Revolution: Technological Innovations and Social Changes

Industrialisation was not a single invention or a sudden event. It was a long process in which new machines, energy sources, business methods, transport systems, and patterns of labour changed how goods were produced. Britain industrialised first, and the process later spread unevenly across continental Europe.

Why Britain Industrialised First

Britain possessed a special combination of resources and institutions. It had large deposits of coal and iron, a strong commercial and financial system, a growing population, access to overseas markets, and a political structure that generally protected property and investment. No single factor was sufficient by itself. Industrial growth resulted from the interaction of agriculture, trade, finance, technology, and labour.

Condition	How It Supported Industrialisation
Agricultural change	Enclosure, crop rotation, selective breeding, and improved tools raised food production and released labour from the countryside.
Population growth	A larger population increased both the workforce and the number of consumers.
Coal and iron	Coal supplied concentrated energy; iron was essential for machines, rails, tools, and construction.
Capital and credit	Merchants, banks, investors, and insurance institutions provided money for factories, mines, canals, and railways.
Overseas trade	Atlantic and colonial trade supplied raw materials and created markets for manufactured goods.
Political stability	Compared with many continental states, Britain offered greater security for contracts, property, and private enterprise.
Transport network	Ports, navigable rivers, turnpike roads, and later canals reduced the cost of moving heavy materials.

Condition	How It Supported Industrialisation
Culture of invention	Skilled artisans, scientific societies, patents, and practical experimentation encouraged technical improvement.

WHY INDUSTRIALISATION BEGAN IN BRITAIN

Agricultural productivity + population growth + coal and iron + investment capital + overseas markets + transport + political and legal support for property and enterprise.

Agricultural Change and Population Growth

The Agricultural Revolution increased the amount of food available. Landowners experimented with crop rotation, drainage, selective breeding, and new tools. Enclosure joined scattered strips and common lands into larger private farms. Supporters argued that enclosure made farming more efficient. Critics noted that it reduced access to common land and placed pressure on small farmers and rural labourers.

Population grew rapidly from the eighteenth century onward. Better food supplies, earlier marriage in some regions, falling death rates, and improved resistance to disease contributed to this growth. A larger population supplied factories with workers and created a wider market for clothing, tools, furniture, and household goods.

The Textile Revolution

Textiles were the first major factory industry. Demand for cotton cloth was high, and inventors developed machines that increased the speed of spinning and weaving. These machines were too large or expensive for most homes, so production moved into mills where power, workers, and supervision could be concentrated.

Innovation	Inventor or Date	Effect
Flying shuttle	John Kay, 1733	Allowed one weaver to produce wider cloth more quickly and increased demand for spun thread.
Spinning jenny	James Hargreaves, 1760s	Allowed one worker to spin several threads at the same time.
Water frame	Richard Arkwright, 1769	Used water power to produce strong thread and encouraged large mills.
Spinning mule	Samuel Crompton, 1779	Combined earlier methods and produced fine, strong yarn.
Power loom	Edmund Cartwright, 1780s	Mechanised weaving and increased factory production.
Cotton gin	Eli Whitney, 1793	Speeded the cleaning of raw cotton in the United States, increasing supplies to British mills while strengthening slave-based cotton production.

The cotton industry connected European industrialisation to the wider Atlantic economy. Raw cotton came largely from plantations worked by enslaved labour in the Americas. European factories transformed it into cloth that was sold in domestic and global markets. Industrial growth was therefore linked to empire, slavery, shipping, and international trade.

Steam Power, Coal, and the Factory System

Coal replaced wood as the main fuel of industrial growth. Early steam engines pumped water from mines. James Watt improved the efficiency of the steam engine in the late eighteenth century, making it useful for factories, mills, mines, and transportation. Steam allowed production to move away from fast-flowing rivers and closer to coalfields, ports, labour, and markets.

The factory system brought machines and workers together under one roof. Employers could control the pace of work, hours, discipline, and quality more closely than in the domestic system. Factory bells, clocks, fines, and supervisors created a strict schedule. Industrial time differed from the seasonal and task-based rhythms of agricultural work.

Domestic System	Factory System
Production took place in homes or small workshops.	Production was concentrated in large buildings.
Workers often owned simple tools.	Employers owned expensive machines and buildings.
Work schedules were more flexible and connected to family life.	Hours and pace were controlled by clocks, machinery, and supervisors.
Merchants supplied raw materials and collected finished goods.	Owners directly organised labour, materials, machinery, and sales.
Output was limited by hand production.	Mechanisation allowed much larger and more regular output.

Iron, Steel, and Heavy Industry

Industrial machinery and transport required large quantities of iron. The use of coke made it possible to smelt iron without depending on charcoal. Henry Cort's puddling and rolling processes improved the quality and supply of wrought iron. In the nineteenth century, the Bessemer process and the Siemens-Martin open-hearth method made steel cheaper to produce in large quantities.

Steel was stronger and more flexible than ordinary iron. It became essential for rails, bridges, ships, weapons, machinery, and urban construction. Heavy industry encouraged the growth of large firms, banks, engineering schools, and industrial regions such as the Ruhr, northern France, Belgium, Silesia, and northern England.

Transportation Revolution

Canals, improved roads, steamships, and railways reduced transport costs and connected local markets. Railways were especially important because they created demand for coal, iron, steel, timber, engineering, and investment. They also moved food and workers, encouraged tourism, standardised time, and strengthened national markets.

Transport Development	Importance
Turnpike roads	Improved road maintenance and reduced travel time in Britain.
Canals	Moved heavy goods such as coal at lower cost before the railway age.
Steamships	Made river and ocean transport faster and less dependent on wind.
Railways	Connected industrial regions, cities, ports, and agricultural markets; stimulated heavy industry.
Telegraph	Allowed businesses, governments, newspapers, and railways to communicate rapidly over long distances.

INDUSTRIAL GROWTH IN ONE SEQUENCE

More food and population → larger labour force and market → mechanised textiles → greater demand for coal and iron → steam power and factories → canals and railways → national and international markets → growth of cities and industrial capitalism.

The Spread of Industrialisation

Industrialisation spread unevenly. Belgium was the first major continental state to industrialise because it had coal, iron, textiles, skilled labour, and access to British technology. France developed more gradually, with a mixture of factories and small workshops. The German states industrialised rapidly after the Zollverein created a larger customs area and railways connected coal and iron regions.

Eastern and southern Europe industrialised later. Russia built railways and heavy industry with strong state involvement and foreign investment, but most people remained peasants. Northern Italy developed industry more quickly than the agricultural south. Uneven industrial growth created regional differences that remained politically important.

Region	Pattern of Industrialisation
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Region	Pattern of Industrialisation
Britain	First industrial nation; strong textiles, coal, iron, machinery, finance, and transport.
Belgium	Early continental industrialiser based on coal, iron, and textiles.
France	Slower and more balanced growth; small workshops remained important beside factories.
German states / Germany	Rapid growth after the Zollverein; strong railways, coal, steel, chemicals, and engineering.
Russia	Late, state-supported industrialisation concentrated in railways, mining, and heavy industry.
Italy	Industrial growth concentrated mainly in the north, increasing the north-south divide.
Eastern Europe	Agriculture remained dominant and industrial centres were fewer and more isolated.

The Second Industrial Revolution

From about the 1870s, industrial growth entered a new phase. Steel, chemicals, electricity, petroleum, and the internal combustion engine became increasingly important. Scientific research was more closely connected with industry. Germany became a leader in chemicals and electrical engineering, while large firms and investment banks played a greater role in organising production.

New Sector	Major Effects
Steel	Supported stronger bridges, railways, ships, weapons, machines, and high-rise construction.
Chemicals	Produced synthetic dyes, fertilisers, medicines, explosives, and industrial materials.
Electricity	Powered lighting, trams, communications, and machinery with greater flexibility.
Petroleum	Provided fuel and lubricants and supported the development of motor transport.
Internal combustion engine	Made automobiles and later aircraft possible.
Mass production	Standardised goods, increased output, and encouraged larger firms and consumer markets.

Urbanisation and the Industrial City

Industrialisation accelerated urban growth. People moved from villages to cities in search of wages. Industrial towns expanded faster than housing, sanitation, policing, and public services. Early factory districts often contained crowded housing, polluted water, open sewers, smoke, disease, and unsafe streets.

Conditions slowly improved during the nineteenth century. Municipal governments built water systems, sewers, paved roads, parks, schools, and public transport. Medical knowledge and public-health reform reduced mortality. By the late nineteenth century, some industrial cities had become healthier and more organised, although poor districts remained overcrowded.

Early Industrial City	Later Nineteenth-Century Improvement
Overcrowded courts and cellar housing	Building regulations and planned working-class housing
Contaminated wells and open drains	Piped water, sewers, and waste collection
Frequent epidemics	Public-health boards, vaccination, and improved sanitation
Walking distance limited where workers could live	Trams, suburban railways, and cheaper transport
Smoke and industrial waste	Some regulation, improved technology, and municipal services, though pollution continued

Class Structure and Social Change

Industrial society did not eliminate older social groups, but it changed the meaning of class. Wealth increasingly came from commerce, industry, banking, and professional work as well as land. The middle classes included factory owners, merchants, managers, lawyers, doctors, engineers, teachers, and government officials. They valued education, respectability, property, self-discipline, and family life.

The working class included factory workers, miners, construction labourers, transport workers, domestic servants, and many casual labourers. Their experiences differed by skill, gender, region, and industry. Skilled workers often had stronger bargaining power and more stable wages than unskilled workers. Domestic servants formed one of the largest groups of employed women.

Social Group	Typical Position and Values
Industrial elite	Large factory owners, bankers, and investors with growing economic and political influence.
Middle class	Professionals, managers, shopkeepers, officials, and smaller employers; valued property, education, and respectability.
Skilled workers	Artisans, engineers, printers, and trained industrial workers; often led unions and reform organisations.
Unskilled workers	Factory hands, labourers, dockworkers, and miners with lower wages and weaker security.
Domestic servants	Mostly women employed in middle- and upper-class homes; long hours and limited independence.
Peasants	Remained numerous in much of Europe, especially east and south, even as cities and industry expanded.

Women, Children, and Family Life

Women and children were central to industrial labour. Employers hired them because they could be paid less and were thought easier to discipline. Women worked in textiles, clothing, food processing, domestic service, agriculture, mines, and home-based production. Children worked in mills, mines, workshops, and street trades.

Industrialisation did not create one uniform family pattern. In poor families, several members often had to earn wages. Over time, reform laws and rising male wages in some skilled occupations reduced child labour and encouraged the ideal of the male breadwinner and the woman as homemaker. This ideal was strongest among the middle class and was never fully achieved by many working-class families.

Issue	Typical Early Condition	Reform or Change
Child labour	Long hours in mills and mines; little schooling.	Factory and mines acts limited ages and hours; compulsory education expanded.
Women’s labour	Low wages, insecure work, and exclusion from many skilled trades.	Some new jobs opened in teaching, nursing, offices, retail, and light industry.
Working hours	Twelve- to sixteen-hour days were common in early factories.	Laws and union pressure gradually reduced hours.
Workplace safety	Machinery, dust, explosions, and mine accidents caused frequent injury.	Inspection and safety rules slowly increased.
Family economy	Entire households combined factory, domestic, casual, and home work.	Later reforms and higher wages reduced, but did not end, dependence on women’s and children’s earnings.

THE SOCIAL EFFECTS OF INDUSTRIALISATION

Growth of cities · new industrial middle class · larger wage-earning working class · decline of some traditional crafts · family wage labour · class conflict · public-health reform · expansion of education · gradual rise in consumption and life expectancy.

Rise of Capitalism and Labor Movements

Industrialisation strengthened capitalism: an economic system in which individuals and companies own productive property, invest capital, hire wage labour, and produce goods for profit. Capitalism encouraged innovation and expansion, but it also exposed workers and firms to competition, unemployment, and economic crises.

Capital, Entrepreneurs, and Markets

Industrial production required money for land, buildings, machinery, raw materials, wages, and transport. Entrepreneurs organised these resources and accepted the risk of loss in expectation of profit. Banks, stock exchanges, insurance companies, and joint-stock firms helped collect and direct investment.

Larger markets encouraged specialisation and mass production. Railways and steamships connected regions, while newspapers, catalogues, department stores, and advertising helped create a consumer culture. Economic growth was not steady. Periods of rapid expansion were followed by financial panics, falling prices, factory closures, and unemployment.

Laissez-Faire and Classical Liberal Economics

Economic liberals argued that markets worked best when individuals were free to produce, trade, invest, and compete. Adam Smith had criticised many mercantilist restrictions and argued that the pursuit of self-interest within competitive markets could increase overall wealth. Nineteenth-century liberals often supported private property, free trade, balanced budgets, and limited government interference.

Thinker	Main Idea
Adam Smith	Division of labour, competition, and freer markets could increase productivity and national wealth.
Thomas Malthus	Population could grow faster than food supply, creating recurring poverty unless checked by restraint, disease, or famine.
David Ricardo	Wages and profits were shaped by competition; he also supported free trade through comparative advantage.
Jeremy Bentham	Utilitarianism judged institutions by whether they produced the greatest happiness for the greatest number.
John Stuart Mill	Defended liberty and representative government but accepted some social reform and greater equality for women.

Classical economists often treated poverty as the result of population pressure or market forces rather than unequal power. Critics argued that unrestricted competition allowed employers to impose dangerous conditions and low wages. As industrial society developed, even liberal governments accepted more regulation in areas such as sanitation, education, factory safety, and public health.

Early Worker Protest

Workers did not passively accept industrial change. Some defended traditional rights, wages, or control over their craft. The Luddites destroyed machinery in parts of the British textile industry between 1811 and 1816. They were not simply opposed to technology; many objected to the way employers used machines to lower wages, weaken skills, and change established working practices.

Food riots, strikes, petitions, friendly societies, and local associations also expressed working-class grievances. Governments often responded with police action, legal restrictions, or military force because they feared revolution.

Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining

Trade unions organised workers to negotiate wages, hours, and conditions. Early unions were often local and based on skilled trades. Employers and governments sometimes treated them as illegal conspiracies. In Britain, the repeal of the Combination Acts in the 1820s allowed unions to operate more openly, although strikes and picketing remained restricted.

During the later nineteenth century, unions became larger and more permanent. National unions collected dues, supported members during strikes, and negotiated with employers. New unions eventually organised less-skilled workers in transport, docks, mining, and mass industry.

Method Used by Workers	Purpose
Friendly society	Provided mutual help during sickness, unemployment, injury, or death.

Method Used by Workers	Purpose
Trade union	Negotiated wages, hours, and workplace rules.
Strike	Withheld labour to pressure employers.
Petition and demonstration	Pressed governments for political and social reform.
Cooperative society	Allowed members to buy or produce goods collectively.
Political party	Sought legislation, representation, and long-term change through elections and parliament.

Chartism and Political Reform in Britain

The Chartist movement developed after the 1832 Reform Act failed to give most working men the vote. The People's Charter of 1838 demanded universal male suffrage, secret ballots, equal electoral districts, payment for members of Parliament, annual parliaments, and the removal of property qualifications for MPs.

Chartism did not immediately achieve its full programme, and its petitions were rejected. However, most of its demands, except annual parliaments, were later adopted. Chartism also demonstrated that working-class political organisation could become national, disciplined, and connected to the press and mass meetings.

Early Socialism

Socialists argued that competition and private ownership produced inequality and insecurity. Early or utopian socialists proposed cooperative communities, planned production, or moral reform. They differed greatly from one another, but all believed society could be organised more fairly than under unrestricted capitalism.

Thinker or Movement	Main Proposal
Henri de Saint-Simon	Society should be organised by productive experts, scientists, and industrial leaders for the common good.
Charles Fourier	People should live and work in cooperative communities called phalansteries.
Robert Owen	Improved working conditions, education, and cooperative communities could reform society.
Louis Blanc	The state should support worker-controlled social workshops and guarantee employment.
Pierre-Joseph Proudhon	Criticised concentrated property and favoured mutual cooperation among small producers.

Marxism and Class Struggle

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels presented a more revolutionary theory of socialism. They argued that history was shaped by conflict between social classes over control of production. Under capitalism, the bourgeoisie owned factories, capital, and productive property, while the proletariat depended on wages.

Marx believed that competition would concentrate wealth, produce recurring crises, and increase conflict between workers and owners. The proletariat would eventually seize political power, abolish private ownership of the means of production, and create a classless society. Marx admired the productive power of capitalism but believed its contradictions would destroy it.

MARXIST VIEW OF INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY
Feudal society declines → bourgeois capitalism expands → factories concentrate workers → class consciousness grows → proletarian revolution → collective ownership → classless society.

Marxism attracted activists because it offered both an explanation of inequality and a prediction of historical change. Yet workers did not become a single revolutionary group. National identity, religion, skill, gender, region, and rising living standards often divided the working class. Many socialist parties later pursued reform through elections rather than immediate revolution.

Anarchism

Anarchists rejected the state as well as capitalist property. Mikhail Bakunin believed that authority and centralised government oppressed human freedom. Some anarchists favoured revolutionary action and spontaneous rebellion; others supported peaceful cooperation. Anarchism became influential in parts of Italy, Spain, Russia, and France, especially among workers and peasants who distrusted central government.

Socialist Parties and Revisionism

By the late nineteenth century, socialist movements created national political parties. The German Social Democratic Party became the strongest example. It used Marxist language but also contested elections, built newspapers and associations, and demanded practical reforms.

Eduard Bernstein argued that capitalism was changing rather than collapsing. Middle classes were not disappearing, workers could win reforms, and democratic institutions could be used to achieve socialism gradually. This revisionist position divided socialists between revolutionaries and parliamentary reformers.

Revolutionary Socialism	Revisionist or Parliamentary Socialism
Expected capitalism to end through class conflict and revolution.	Believed reforms and elections could gradually improve society.
Emphasised seizure of political power by the working class.	Emphasised trade unions, social legislation, and democratic representation.
Viewed the existing state mainly as an instrument of class rule.	Accepted that the state could be used to regulate capitalism and expand welfare.
Associated with orthodox Marxist and later revolutionary movements.	Associated with Bernstein and many social democratic parties.

Labour Reform and the Welfare State

Governments gradually accepted responsibility for industrial conditions. Britain passed factory, mines, public-health, and education laws. Germany under Bismarck introduced health insurance, accident insurance, and old-age pensions. Bismarck hoped to weaken socialism by showing that the state could protect workers, but the measures also created an important model for modern social welfare.

Reform	Purpose
Factory Acts	Limited child labour, reduced hours for some women and young workers, and created inspection.
Mines legislation	Restricted underground work by women and young children and later improved safety.
Public-health laws	Improved sanitation, water supply, housing regulation, and disease control.
Compulsory education	Reduced child labour, increased literacy, and prepared workers and citizens for industrial society.
Legal recognition of unions	Allowed workers to organise and bargain more openly.
Social insurance	Provided limited protection against sickness, accidents, disability, and old age.

CAPITALISM AND LABOUR — THE CENTRAL CONFLICT

Capitalism increased production, investment, and choice, but it also concentrated economic power and exposed workers to insecurity. Labour movements sought to balance the power of employers through unions, political rights, reform laws, social insurance, and socialist organisation.

Nationalist Movements and Unification of Italy and Germany

Nationalism claimed that people sharing a common language, culture, history, or political identity should form a nation and often possess their own state. After 1815, the Congress of Vienna restored dynasties and divided Italy and Germany. Nationalists challenged this settlement, but unity did not come from popular idealism alone. It required diplomacy, war, economic power, and leadership by existing states.

Nationalism After 1815

The French Revolution and Napoleonic rule spread the language of citizenship and national sovereignty. At the same time, French occupation encouraged resistance among Germans, Spaniards, Italians, and others. Romantic writers collected folk songs, legends, and languages, strengthening the idea that each people had a distinct historical spirit.

Nationalism could be liberal, conservative, democratic, or authoritarian. Liberals often linked national unity with constitutions and civil rights. Conservatives sometimes adopted nationalism to strengthen monarchy and state power. Nationalism could unite divided peoples, but it could also exclude minorities or justify expansion against neighbouring states.

The Revolutions of 1848

In 1848, revolutions spread across France, the German states, the Habsburg lands, and Italy. Protesters demanded constitutions, national independence, political rights, and social reform. The revolutions briefly weakened conservative governments, but most were defeated because liberals, radicals, workers, peasants, and national groups had different goals.

Although the revolutions failed in the short term, they showed that the Vienna system could not permanently suppress nationalism. After 1848, unification was increasingly led from above by monarchies, ministers, armies, and established states rather than by democratic revolutionaries.

1848 Movement	Main Goal	Reason for Failure
German Frankfurt Parliament	Create a constitutional and unified Germany.	Delegates lacked military power and disagreed over borders, Austria, and the form of government.
Italian revolutions	Drive out Austrian influence and create constitutional or national governments.	Austrian military recovery and divisions among republicans, monarchists, and regional leaders.
Hungarian revolution	Gain autonomy or independence from Habsburg rule.	Habsburg and Russian forces defeated the movement; ethnic minorities also opposed Magyar dominance.
French revolution	Expand political rights and address social hardship.	Conflict between moderate republicans and workers led to repression and later the rise of Louis-Napoleon.

Italy Before Unification

Italy was a geographical and cultural idea rather than a single state. The peninsula included the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia, the Austrian-controlled kingdom of Lombardy-Venetia, the Papal States, the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and several smaller duchies. Austria was the strongest foreign power in the peninsula.

Italian Region	Political Position Before Unification
Piedmont-Sardinia	Independent constitutional monarchy ruled by the House of Savoy; became the centre of unification.
Lombardy-Venetia	Directly controlled by the Austrian Empire.
Central duchies	Tuscany, Parma, and Modena were strongly influenced by Austria.
Papal States	Ruled by the pope across central Italy.
Kingdom of the Two Sicilies	Large southern monarchy ruled by the Bourbon dynasty.

Mazzini and Young Italy

Giuseppe Mazzini represented democratic and republican nationalism. He founded Young Italy in 1831 and called for a united, independent, republican nation created through popular action. His uprisings failed, but his writings inspired a generation of nationalists and gave Italian unity a moral and popular language.

Mazzini believed nations had duties as well as rights. He connected national independence with democracy and human progress. However, his republican programme alarmed monarchs, landowners, and moderate liberals. Italian unification would eventually occur under a king rather than through Mazzini's republic.

Cavour and Piedmont-Sardinia

Count Camillo di Cavour became prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia in 1852. He was a moderate liberal, not a romantic revolutionary. He strengthened the state through railways, finance, trade, military reform, and cooperation with Britain and France. His aim was to expand Piedmont and remove Austrian influence from northern Italy.

Cavour joined Britain and France in the Crimean War, giving Piedmont a place in European diplomacy. In 1858, he secretly met Napoleon III at Plombières. France agreed to support Piedmont in a war against Austria in exchange for Nice and Savoy. The 1859 war brought Lombardy to Piedmont, although Napoleon III ended the conflict before Venetia was gained.

Garibaldi and the South

Giuseppe Garibaldi was a nationalist soldier with republican sympathies. In 1860, he led about one thousand volunteers, known as the Red Shirts, to Sicily. His forces defeated the Bourbon regime and advanced through southern Italy. Garibaldi then handed his conquests to Victor Emmanuel II rather than risk civil war between nationalists.

This transfer was decisive. It united the popular military campaign in the south with the monarchical and diplomatic leadership of Piedmont in the north. In 1861, Victor Emmanuel II became king of Italy.

Completing Italian Unification

Italy was not complete in 1861. Venetia remained under Austrian rule and Rome was protected by French troops. Italy gained Venetia in 1866 after supporting Prussia in the Austro-Prussian War. In 1870, France withdrew its troops from Rome during the Franco-Prussian War, allowing Italian forces to enter the city. Rome became the capital of Italy in 1871.

Stage	Development
1848–1849	National revolutions fail; Piedmont remains the leading constitutional state.
1852	Cavour becomes prime minister and modernises Piedmont-Sardinia.
1859	War with Austria brings Lombardy to Piedmont.
1860	Central states join Piedmont by plebiscite; Garibaldi conquers Sicily and Naples.
1861	Kingdom of Italy proclaimed under Victor Emmanuel II.
1866	Venetia added after the Austro-Prussian War.
1870–1871	Rome taken and made capital after French troops withdraw.

Limits of Italian Unification

Political unity did not immediately create social or economic unity. The north was more urban, commercial, and industrial, while much of the south remained poor and agricultural. Regional dialects were strong, literacy was limited, and only a small minority could vote. Southern resistance and banditry led to harsh military repression.

The new state also faced conflict with the papacy. Pope Pius IX refused to recognise the loss of the Papal States and considered himself a prisoner in the Vatican. The Roman Question remained unresolved until the Lateran Agreements of 1929.

ITALIAN UNIFICATION — FOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Mazzini supplied the nationalist vision · Cavour supplied diplomacy and state-building · Garibaldi supplied popular military action · Victor Emmanuel II supplied monarchical legitimacy and a political centre.

Germany Before Unification

After 1815, the German Confederation contained thirty-nine states. Austria held the presidency, but Prussia possessed a strong army, efficient administration, and important industrial regions. Many nationalists wanted unity, but they disagreed about whether a new Germany should include Austria.

Economic integration advanced before political unity. The Zollverein removed tariffs among many German states and encouraged trade, railways, and industrial growth. Austria remained outside it. This strengthened Prussian influence and made a Prussian-led Germany more practical.

The Frankfurt Parliament

During the revolutions of 1848, representatives met at Frankfurt to create a liberal German constitution. They debated civil rights, borders, and the position of Austria. A Greater Germany would include German-speaking Austria; a Lesser Germany would exclude Austria and be led by Prussia.

The parliament offered the imperial crown to Frederick William IV of Prussia in 1849. He rejected a crown granted by an elected assembly. Without an army, secure tax base, or support from the major monarchies, the Frankfurt Parliament collapsed. Its failure showed that liberal nationalism lacked the power to unify Germany by debate alone.

Prussia and Bismarck

King William I appointed Otto von Bismarck minister-president of Prussia in 1862 during a conflict over military reform. The liberal parliament refused the full budget requested for the army. Bismarck collected taxes and continued the reforms without parliamentary approval, arguing that the constitution did not explain how to resolve such a deadlock.

Bismarck practised Realpolitik: politics based on practical power, calculation, and achievable goals rather than fixed ideology. He was a conservative who wanted to strengthen the Prussian monarchy. He used nationalism because it could unite the German states behind Prussia and weaken Austria.

BISMARCK'S METHOD

Strong Prussian state + reformed army + economic influence + limited diplomatic goals + isolation of each opponent + short successful wars + nationalism directed from above.

The Danish War, 1864

Prussia and Austria fought Denmark over the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Denmark was defeated. Prussia administered Schleswig and Austria administered Holstein. The arrangement created future tension between the two victorious powers.

The Austro-Prussian War, 1866

Bismarck isolated Austria diplomatically and provoked a dispute over the duchies. Prussia defeated Austria in seven weeks, with the decisive victory at Königgrätz or Sadowa. Bismarck opposed harsh treatment of Austria because he did not want a permanent enemy.

The German Confederation was dissolved. Prussia annexed several northern states and created the North German Confederation in 1867. Austria was excluded from German affairs. The new federation

had an elected Reichstag, but the Prussian king and chancellor retained strong control over the army and executive power.

The Franco-Prussian War, 1870–1871

The final stage required the southern German states to join the northern federation. A dispute over the possible Hohenzollern candidacy for the Spanish throne increased tension with France. Bismarck edited and published the Ems Dispatch in a form that made the exchange between France and Prussia appear insulting. France declared war in July 1870.

The German states united against France. Napoleon III was captured at Sedan, and Paris later surrendered. In January 1871, the German Empire was proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. William I became German emperor, and Bismarck became imperial chancellor.

The German Empire

The new empire was a federal state, but Prussia dominated it through population, territory, the army, and the office of chancellor. The Reichstag was elected by universal male suffrage, yet the emperor and chancellor controlled the executive and did not depend on parliamentary confidence. Germany combined modern mass politics with strong monarchical and military authority.

France had to surrender Alsace and part of Lorraine and pay a large indemnity. The annexation created lasting French resentment. German unification changed the European balance of power by creating a populous, industrial, and military state in the centre of the continent.

War	Opponent	Result for German Unification
Danish War, 1864	Denmark	Prussia and Austria obtain Schleswig and Holstein, creating the issue used in the next conflict.
Austro-Prussian War, 1866	Austria and its German allies	Austria is excluded; Prussia forms the North German Confederation.
Franco-Prussian War, 1870–1871	France	Southern German states join; German Empire is proclaimed at Versailles.

Italy and Germany Compared

Feature	Italian Unification	German Unification
Leading state	Piedmont-Sardinia	Prussia
Leading minister	Count Cavour	Otto von Bismarck
Popular nationalist figure	Giuseppe Garibaldi	Liberal nationalists and the earlier Frankfurt movement; no equivalent single popular conqueror
Main foreign obstacle	Austria, and later French protection of Rome	Austria, followed by France
Economic foundation	Modernisation of Piedmont, but major regional inequality	Zollverein, railways, coal, steel, and rapid Prussian industrial growth
Method	Diplomacy, war, plebiscites, and popular conquest	State power, military reform, diplomacy, and three wars
Political result	Constitutional monarchy with limited participation	Federal empire dominated by Prussian monarchy and army
Main weakness after unity	North-south division, poverty, weak national integration, conflict with the pope	Authoritarian executive, Prussian dominance, minority tensions, and hostility with France

The Wider Effects of Nationalism

Nationalism weakened multinational empires and challenged dynastic rule. It helped create Italy and Germany, supported independence movements in Greece and Belgium, and inspired national demands among Hungarians, Czechs, Poles, Serbs, Romanians, and others. However, national claims often overlapped, especially in eastern and southeastern Europe.

Nation-states promoted common languages, schools, military service, flags, ceremonies, and national histories. These policies strengthened loyalty but could place pressure on minorities. By the late nineteenth century, nationalism was increasingly connected with imperial competition, military prestige, and rivalry among states.

THE DOUBLE EDGE OF NATIONALISM

Nationalism could liberate peoples from foreign or dynastic rule and create political unity. It could also exclude minorities, intensify territorial disputes, strengthen militarism, and increase rivalry between states.

The Chapter on One Page

INDUSTRIALIZATION AND ITS EFFECTS — 1815–1914

INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: Britain industrialised first because of agriculture, population, coal, iron, capital, markets, transport, and supportive institutions. Textiles, steam, factories, iron, steel, railways, chemicals, and electricity transformed production.

SOCIAL CHANGE: rapid urbanisation, new middle and working classes, factory discipline, women’s and child labour, public-health problems, and gradual reform.

CAPITALISM: private property, investment, wage labour, competition, profit, banks, companies, and expanding consumer markets.

LABOUR: unions, strikes, Chartism, socialist thought, Marxism, anarchism, social democratic parties, factory laws, and social insurance.

ITALY: Mazzini’s ideas + Cavour’s diplomacy + Garibaldi’s campaign + Victor Emmanuel II’s monarchy; 1861 kingdom, 1866 Venetia, 1870 Rome.

GERMANY: Zollverein + Prussian army + Bismarck’s Realpolitik + wars against Denmark, Austria, and France; empire proclaimed in 1871.

Major Cause-and-Effect Chains

Starting Point	Immediate Development	Longer Result
Agricultural improvement and population growth	More food, labour, and consumer demand	Expansion of factories, cities, and national markets
Mechanised textile production	Larger mills and greater demand for energy	Growth of coal, steam power, and the factory system
Railways and steam transport	Lower costs and faster movement	Integrated markets, heavy industry, urban growth, and national economic unity
Factory discipline and low wages	Worker protest and organisation	Trade unions, strikes, labour parties, and reform legislation
Industrial inequality	Socialist criticism of capitalism	Utopian socialism, Marxism, social democracy, and welfare reform
Failure of liberal revolutions in 1848	National unity shifts from popular revolution to state leadership	Unification led by Piedmont-Sardinia and Prussia
Zollverein and Prussian industrial power	Prussia gains influence over German states	Economic unity supports political unity under Prussian leadership
Successful wars led by Cavour and Bismarck	Foreign obstacles are removed	Italy and Germany become unified nation-states

Essential Comparisons

Comparison	Core Difference
Domestic system and factory system	Domestic production was dispersed and flexible; factories concentrated machines, labour, supervision, and fixed hours.
First and Second Industrial Revolutions	The first centred on textiles, coal, steam, and iron; the second emphasised steel, chemicals, electricity, petroleum, and mass production.

Comparison	Core Difference
Capitalism and socialism	Capitalism defended private ownership and markets; socialism sought greater social control, cooperation, or collective ownership.
Utopian socialism and Marxism	Utopians designed cooperative models; Marxism explained change through class conflict and predicted revolution.
Revolutionary and revisionist socialism	Revolutionaries expected class overthrow; revisionists used elections, unions, and gradual reform.
Mazzini and Cavour	Mazzini was a democratic republican idealist; Cavour was a monarchical diplomat and state-builder.
Cavour and Bismarck	Both used diplomacy and war, but Cavour depended heavily on allies while Bismarck relied on Prussian military power.
Italian and German unification	Italy combined diplomacy with popular conquest and remained regionally divided; Germany was unified by a powerful industrial state and army.

Important People and Terms

Person or Term	Importance
Industrial Revolution	The shift toward mechanised production, factories, fossil-fuel energy, and expanding markets.
Enclosure	Consolidation of land into larger private farms, improving efficiency but weakening access to common land.
James Watt	Engineer whose improvements made steam power more efficient and widely useful.
Factory system	Production organised in central workplaces with employer-owned machines and disciplined wage labour.
Bessemer process	Method that greatly reduced the cost of producing steel in large quantities.
Zollverein	Prussian-led customs union that promoted German economic integration.
Capitalism	System based on private ownership, investment, wage labour, competition, and profit.
Laissez-faire	Belief that economic activity should face limited state interference.
Adam Smith	Economic thinker who explained division of labour, competition, and freer markets.
Chartism	British working-class movement demanding political reforms listed in the People's Charter.
Trade union	Organisation of workers formed to improve wages, hours, and conditions.
Utopian socialism	Early socialist tradition that proposed cooperative or planned communities.
Karl Marx	Thinker who explained history through class struggle and expected capitalism to be replaced by socialism.
Friedrich Engels	Marx's collaborator and author on industrial working-class conditions.
Proletariat	Wage-earning class that owns no major productive property in Marxist theory.
Bourgeoisie	Property-owning capitalist class in Marxist theory; more broadly, the middle class.
Mikhail Bakunin	Anarchist who opposed both the state and capitalist authority.
Revisionism	Belief that socialism could be achieved gradually through democracy and reform.
Giuseppe Mazzini	Italian republican nationalist and founder of Young Italy.
Count Cavour	Prime minister of Piedmont-Sardinia who used diplomacy, reform, and war to advance Italian unity.
Giuseppe Garibaldi	Popular nationalist soldier whose Red Shirts conquered Sicily and Naples.
Victor Emmanuel II	King of Piedmont-Sardinia and first king of united Italy.
Otto von Bismarck	Prussian conservative statesman who directed German unification.
Realpolitik	Practical politics based on power, calculation, and achievable goals.
North German Confederation	Prussian-led federation created after the defeat of Austria in 1866.
Ems Dispatch	Edited diplomatic message that helped provoke the Franco-Prussian War.
German Empire	Federal state proclaimed in 1871 under Prussian leadership.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Which factor most directly helped Britain industrialise before most continental states?
 - A. Absence of overseas trade
 - B. Access to coal, capital, markets, and improved agriculture
 - C. A ban on private property
 - D. Dependence on imported machinery from Russia
2. The factory system differed from the domestic system mainly because it
 - A. concentrated workers and machines under employer supervision
 - B. ended the use of wage labour
 - C. depended entirely on hand tools
 - D. allowed workers to control their own schedule
3. Which industry was the leading sector of early British industrialisation?
 - A. Automobile production
 - B. Cotton textiles
 - C. Electrical engineering
 - D. Chemical pharmaceuticals
4. Railways contributed to industrial growth by
 - A. reducing demand for coal and iron
 - B. isolating regional markets
 - C. increasing demand for heavy industry and connecting markets
 - D. ending urbanisation
5. The Second Industrial Revolution was especially associated with
 - A. steel, chemicals, electricity, and petroleum
 - B. guild production and watermills only
 - C. the decline of scientific research
 - D. the disappearance of large firms
6. One major social result of early industrialisation was
 - A. immediate disappearance of poverty
 - B. rapid urban growth without adequate housing and sanitation
 - C. universal political equality
 - D. the end of women's paid work
7. The repeal of the Combination Acts in Britain was important because it
 - A. restored feudal dues
 - B. allowed trade unions to organise more openly
 - C. abolished all strikes in Europe
 - D. created the German customs union
8. Chartism primarily demanded

- A. restoration of absolute monarchy
 - B. political rights for working men
 - C. Italian control of Austria
 - D. abolition of industrial machinery
9. Marx and Engels argued that
- A. class conflict was a major force in history
 - B. capitalism would eliminate economic crises
 - C. industrial workers should support feudal privilege
 - D. political change had no connection with property
10. Revisionist socialists differed from revolutionary Marxists because they
- A. rejected all worker organisation
 - B. believed socialism could advance through elections and reform
 - C. defended unrestricted monarchy
 - D. opposed social insurance
11. The Zollverein contributed to German unification by
- A. placing all German states under Austrian tariffs
 - B. promoting economic integration under Prussian influence
 - C. dividing Prussia into smaller states
 - D. creating a democratic republic in 1815
12. Giuseppe Mazzini is best associated with
- A. conservative Austrian rule in Italy
 - B. democratic republican nationalism
 - C. the Bessemer process
 - D. Prussian military reform
13. Cavour advanced Italian unification mainly through
- A. diplomacy, economic modernisation, and alliance with France
 - B. rejection of Piedmont-Sardinia
 - C. alliance with Austria against France
 - D. abolition of monarchy before 1850
14. Garibaldi's most important contribution was
- A. creating the Zollverein
 - B. conquering Sicily and Naples and transferring them to Victor Emmanuel II
 - C. defeating Prussia in 1866
 - D. protecting papal rule in Rome
15. Bismarck's Realpolitik referred to
- A. government based entirely on romantic ideals
 - B. practical use of power and diplomacy to achieve state goals
 - C. refusal to use military force

- D. universal support for parliamentary rule
16. The Austro-Prussian War of 1866 resulted in
- A. Austrian leadership of a united Germany
 - B. Prussian exclusion from German affairs
 - C. Austrian exclusion and creation of the North German Confederation
 - D. French annexation of Berlin
17. The Franco-Prussian War helped complete German unification because it
- A. brought the southern German states into alliance with Prussia
 - B. restored the German Confederation of 1815
 - C. returned Schleswig to Denmark
 - D. placed Austria inside the new empire
18. A major difference between Italian and German unification was that
- A. Italy had no wars while Germany had several
 - B. German unity was led by a stronger industrial and military state
 - C. Italy was led by Austria and Germany by France
 - D. Germany was completed before 1850
19. Bismarck introduced social insurance mainly to
- A. weaken worker support for socialism and strengthen loyalty to the state
 - B. abolish industrial capitalism
 - C. end all government involvement in society
 - D. support anarchist revolution
20. Which statement best describes nineteenth-century nationalism?
- A. It was always democratic and peaceful
 - B. It could promote unity and liberation but also exclusion and rivalry
 - C. It disappeared after 1848
 - D. It had no connection with state power

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-A · 3-B · 4-C · 5-A · 6-B · 7-B · 8-B · 9-A · 10-B · 11-B · 12-B · 13-A · 14-B · 15-B · 16-C · 17-A · 18-B · 19-A · 20-B

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one reason Britain industrialised first. Describe one technological innovation that increased production. Explain one social effect of the factory system.
2. Identify one criticism of industrial capitalism. Describe one method workers used to improve their position. Explain one government response to industrial conditions.
3. Identify one contribution made by Cavour to Italian unification. Describe one contribution made by Garibaldi. Explain one limit of Italian unity after 1871.
4. Identify one way the Zollverein assisted German unification. Describe one war used by Bismarck. Explain one consequence of German unification for Europe.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the most important reason Britain became the first industrial nation.
2. Evaluate the extent to which industrialisation changed the lives of European workers in the period 1815–1914.
3. Evaluate the extent to which labour movements successfully responded to industrial capitalism in the nineteenth century.
4. Compare the methods used to achieve Italian and German unification in the period 1848–1871.
5. Evaluate the most important factor in the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about the extent to which industrialisation transformed European society between 1815 and 1914:

- A factory owner describing machinery and productivity
- A worker testimony about hours, wages, or safety
- A government factory-inspection report
- A middle-class writer describing urban poverty
- A trade-union petition or strike declaration
- A socialist criticism of private ownership
- A public-health map or municipal report on an industrial city

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: Industrialisation fundamentally transformed European society by moving production into factories, accelerating urbanisation, and creating new middle and working classes. However, older rural structures survived in much of Europe, and the benefits of higher productivity were distributed unevenly.

Possible groups: Technology and production · Urban and family change · Class conflict and labour organisation · Government reform and long-term improvement.

Useful outside evidence: spinning jenny, Watt steam engine, railway expansion, Factory Act of 1833, Chartism, Communist Manifesto, Bismarckian social insurance.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one factor that supported British industrialisation, describe one labour response to factory conditions, and explain one political effect of industrial growth.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One factor: Britain possessed accessible coal deposits and a commercial system able to invest capital in mines, mills, canals, and machinery.

One labour response: Workers formed trade unions and used strikes or collective bargaining to demand higher wages, shorter hours, and safer conditions.

One political effect: Industrial growth increased the size and organisation of the middle and working classes, strengthening demands for parliamentary reform, wider suffrage, labour laws, and political parties.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know why Britain industrialised before continental Europe.
- Remember the importance of textiles, coal, steam, iron, steel, and railways.
- Distinguish the domestic system from the factory system.

- Know the main features of the Second Industrial Revolution.
- Explain how industrialisation changed cities, class structure, women's work, child labour, and family life.
- Define capitalism, laissez-faire, trade union, socialism, Marxism, anarchism, and revisionism.
- Know the aims of Chartism and the development of labour organisation.
- Explain how factory laws and social insurance changed the role of government.
- Know the political condition of Italy and Germany after 1815.
- Remember the roles of Mazzini, Cavour, Garibaldi, and Victor Emmanuel II.
- Know the three wars used by Bismarck: Denmark, Austria, and France.
- Compare Italian and German unification and identify the limits of each new nation-state.
- Explain both the unifying and divisive effects of nationalism.

— *End of Chapter 5* —

6. World Wars and Totalitarianism (1914–1945)

Total war, revolution, dictatorship, genocide, and Europe in ruins

Between 1914 and 1945, Europe experienced two world wars, the collapse of empires, revolutionary change, economic crisis, and the rise of totalitarian states. The First World War began as a conflict among European powers but grew into a global struggle involving colonies, overseas empires, and eventually the United States. Industrial technology made the war more destructive than any earlier European conflict.

The war weakened governments and created the conditions for revolution in Russia. The Bolsheviks seized power in 1917 and built the first communist state. Under Joseph Stalin, the Soviet Union pursued rapid industrialisation and forced collectivisation while using terror, censorship, and political purges to control society.

The unsettled peace after World War I, together with the Great Depression, helped extremist movements gain support. Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany rejected liberal democracy and glorified the state, violence, obedience, and national struggle. Nazi racial ideology led to aggressive expansion, World War II, and the Holocaust—the systematic murder of six million Jews and millions of other victims. By 1945, Europe had been transformed politically, socially, and morally.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Causes and Impacts of World War I
- Russian Revolution and Rise of the Soviet Union
- World War II: Fascism, Nazism, and the Holocaust

THE BIG PICTURE

World War I destroyed old empires and weakened confidence in liberal Europe. Revolution created a communist state in Russia, while economic crisis and political fear helped fascist movements rise elsewhere. World War II grew from unresolved tensions, aggressive dictatorship, and failed collective security. The Holocaust showed the extreme consequences of racial ideology, bureaucratic power, and totalitarian rule.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Importance
1914	Assassination at Sarajevo and outbreak of World War I	The July Crisis turns a Balkan conflict into a general European war. Allies and overseas empires make it global.
1915	Italy enters the war on the Allied side	Shows how territorial ambitions could override earlier alliance commitments.
1916	Battles of Verdun and the Somme	Symbolise trench warfare, mass casualties, and industrialised attrition.
1917	Russian Revolutions	The tsarist regime collapses; Bolsheviks later seize power.
1917	United States enters World War I	Adds major financial, industrial, and military strength to the Allies.
1918	Armistice ends fighting	Germany accepts an armistice on 11 November after military and political collapse.
1919	Treaty of Versailles	Imposes territorial, military, and financial terms on Germany and creates the League of Nations.
1922	Mussolini becomes prime minister of Italy	Fascism gains power and becomes a model for later authoritarian movements.
1922	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics formed	Creates a federal communist state under Bolshevik leadership.
1924	Death of Lenin	Begins the struggle for power that ends with Stalin's dominance.
1928	First Five-Year Plan begins	The Soviet state accelerates heavy industrialisation and collectivisation.

Date	Development	Importance
1929	Great Depression begins	Mass unemployment and political crisis weaken democratic governments.
1933	Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany	Nazis rapidly destroy democracy and establish dictatorship.
1935	Nuremberg Laws	Remove German Jews from citizenship and institutionalise racial persecution.
1936–1939	Spanish Civil War	Becomes an international struggle involving fascists, communists, democrats, and foreign powers.
1938	Anschluss and Munich Agreement	Germany expands into Austria and the Sudetenland while Britain and France follow appeasement.
1939	Germany invades Poland	Britain and France declare war; World War II begins in Europe.
1940	Fall of France and Battle of Britain	Germany dominates western Europe but fails to defeat Britain.
1941	Operation Barbarossa and Pearl Harbor	Germany invades the Soviet Union; the United States enters the war.
1942	Wannsee Conference	Senior Nazi officials coordinate the deportation and murder of European Jews.
1942–1943	Stalingrad	A decisive Soviet victory reverses German expansion in the east.
1944	D-Day landings	Western Allies open a major front in France.
1945	Germany defeated and concentration camps liberated	The Nazi regime collapses; Allied armies reveal the scale of mass murder.
1945	Atomic bombs and Japanese surrender	World War II ends and a new nuclear age begins.

Causes and Impacts of World War I

World War I did not result from one cause. It grew from long-term rivalries, military planning, imperial competition, nationalism, alliance commitments, and a series of decisions made during the July Crisis of 1914. The assassination at Sarajevo provided the immediate spark, but the wider European system made escalation possible.

Europe Before 1914

Europe before 1914 was powerful, wealthy, and deeply divided. Industrial growth gave governments greater military capacity. Nationalism strengthened loyalty to states but also created tensions in multinational empires. Imperial rivalry increased competition overseas. Governments built large armies and navies, while military leaders prepared plans that depended on rapid mobilisation.

Long-Term Factor	How It Increased Tension
Nationalism	National pride intensified rivalry among states. In the Balkans, Serbian nationalism challenged Austro-Hungarian rule over South Slavic peoples.
Imperial rivalry	European powers competed for colonies, markets, prestige, and strategic influence, especially in Africa and Asia.
Militarism	Governments expanded armies and navies. Military planning encouraged leaders to see war as possible, useful, or unavoidable.
Alliance systems	The Triple Alliance and Triple Entente divided Europe into armed groups. A local dispute could draw in several powers.
German power	Germany's industrial and military rise unsettled Britain, France, and Russia. Naval competition worsened British-German relations.
French-German hostility	France remained bitter over the loss of Alsace-Lorraine to Germany in 1871.
Balkan instability	The weakening Ottoman Empire created competition among Serbia, Austria-Hungary, Russia, Bulgaria, and other regional powers.
Rigid war plans	German, French, and Russian strategies relied on speed. Once mobilisation began, political leaders found it difficult to stop escalation.

THE ALLIANCE SYSTEM

Triple Alliance: Germany · Austria-Hungary · Italy.

Triple Entente: France · Russia · Britain.

These agreements did not automatically make war inevitable, but they shaped expectations, military plans, and fears during the crisis of 1914. Italy remained neutral in 1914 and later joined the Allies.

The Balkan Crisis

The Balkans were known as the “powder keg of Europe” because nationalist movements, imperial decline, and great-power rivalry met in the same region. Serbia wanted to unite South Slavic peoples. Austria-Hungary feared that Serbian nationalism would encourage Slavic groups inside its empire to demand independence. Russia supported Serbia partly because of Slavic and Orthodox ties and partly because it wanted greater influence in the Balkans.

Austria-Hungary annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908, angering Serbia. The Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 weakened the Ottoman Empire and increased Serbian territory and confidence. Austria-Hungary increasingly viewed Serbia as a threat to imperial survival.

Sarajevo and the July Crisis

On 28 June 1914, Gavrilo Princip, a Bosnian Serb nationalist connected to a network seeking South Slav unity, assassinated Archduke Franz Ferdinand, heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne, and his wife Sophie in Sarajevo. Austria-Hungary decided to use the assassination to weaken Serbia.

Step	Development
1	Germany gives Austria-Hungary strong support, later called the “blank cheque.”
2	Austria-Hungary sends Serbia a severe ultimatum.
3	Serbia accepts most demands but rejects full Austro-Hungarian control of the investigation.
4	Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia.
5	Russia mobilises to support Serbia.
6	Germany declares war on Russia and France.
7	Germany invades neutral Belgium under the Schlieffen Plan.
8	Britain declares war on Germany after the invasion of Belgium and because of broader strategic concerns.

WHY A LOCAL CRISIS BECAME A WORLD WAR

Austro-Serbian conflict → Russian mobilisation → German declarations of war → invasion of Belgium → British entry → mobilisation of European empires and colonies. The war expanded because alliances, military plans, and imperial connections linked many regions.

The Nature of Industrialised War

Many Europeans expected a short war. Instead, the conflict became a long struggle of attrition. Modern weapons gave defenders enormous power. Machine guns, rapid-fire artillery, barbed wire, and trenches made frontal attacks extremely costly. Railways moved soldiers and supplies, while factories produced weapons on a vast scale.

Feature	Importance
Trench warfare	Long defensive systems stretched across the Western Front. Mud, disease, shelling, rats, and fear shaped soldiers’ daily lives.
Artillery	Caused a large share of battlefield deaths and injuries. Heavy bombardments destroyed landscapes and settlements.
Machine guns	Allowed small defensive positions to stop mass infantry attacks.
Poison gas	Used to injure, terrify, and break defensive lines, though protective equipment reduced its effectiveness.

Feature	Importance
Tanks	Introduced to cross trenches and barbed wire; early models were slow and unreliable but later became important.
Aircraft	Used first for observation and later for combat and bombing.
Submarines	German U-boats attacked shipping and contributed to conflict with the United States.
Mass mobilisation	Millions of soldiers served, while civilians became essential to industrial production, food supply, finance, and morale.

Major Fronts and Turning Points

On the Western Front, German forces were stopped at the First Battle of the Marne in 1914. Both sides then built trench systems from the English Channel to Switzerland. Battles such as Verdun and the Somme in 1916 caused enormous losses without decisive territorial change.

On the Eastern Front, armies moved across greater distances. Germany and Austria-Hungary fought Russia, while the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers. The war also spread to the Middle East, Africa, the seas, and colonial territories. Soldiers and labourers from India, Africa, the Caribbean, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and other parts of European empires participated.

Turning Point	Significance
First Battle of the Marne, 1914	Stops the German advance near Paris and prevents a rapid German victory.
Gallipoli, 1915–1916	Allied attempt to defeat the Ottoman Empire fails at great human cost.
Verdun and the Somme, 1916	Show the destructive logic of attrition and industrial warfare.
Russian Revolutions, 1917	Weaken Russia's war effort and lead to withdrawal under the Bolsheviks.
United States entry, 1917	Adds fresh troops, supplies, credit, and industrial strength to the Allied side.
German Spring Offensive, 1918	Makes major gains but fails before American forces arrive in full strength.
Allied Hundred Days, 1918	Forces German retreat and contributes to military and political collapse.

Total War and the Home Front

World War I became a total war because governments attempted to direct national economies and civilian life toward victory. States controlled raw materials, transport, prices, food supplies, and industrial production. They borrowed heavily, raised taxes, sold war bonds, and printed money. Blockades and shortages made civilians direct targets of economic warfare.

Area	Change During the War
Government power	States expanded control over industry, transport, labour, food, information, and public behaviour.
Propaganda	Governments used posters, newspapers, films, schools, and speeches to maintain morale and portray the enemy as dangerous or barbaric.
Censorship	Military losses, dissent, and criticism were restricted to protect morale.
Women's work	Women entered munitions factories, transport, offices, agriculture, and medical services in greater numbers.
Food and rationing	Blockades, labour shortages, and military needs produced rationing and hunger, especially in the Central Powers.
Civil liberties	Governments restricted speech, movement, and political opposition.
Colonial resources	European powers drew soldiers, labour, food, and raw materials from their empires.

WOMEN AND THE WAR

The war expanded women's employment and public responsibility, but it did not produce complete equality. Many women were pushed out of wartime jobs after 1918. Even so, their service strengthened arguments for political rights, and several European states extended women's suffrage during or after the war.

War Weariness and the End of the Conflict

By 1917, soldiers and civilians were exhausted. France experienced army mutinies, while strikes and food protests spread across Europe. Russia collapsed into revolution. Germany faced shortages caused by the British blockade. The United States entered the war after Germany resumed unrestricted submarine warfare and after the Zimmermann Telegram revealed a German proposal for cooperation with Mexico against the United States.

In 1918, Germany launched a final offensive but could not achieve victory. Allied counterattacks, growing American participation, shortages, military defeat, and political unrest forced Germany to seek an armistice. The German emperor abdicated, and a republic was declared. Fighting ended on 11 November 1918.

The Human and Political Impact

The war killed millions of soldiers and civilians, injured many more, and displaced populations. A generation experienced grief, disability, trauma, and economic hardship. The influenza pandemic of 1918–1919 added to the loss of life. The war also destroyed the German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, and Ottoman empires.

Impact	Result
Human loss	Millions were killed, wounded, disabled, displaced, or psychologically traumatised.
Political collapse	Four major empires fell and new states appeared in central and eastern Europe.
Economic damage	Governments carried heavy debts, inflation increased, and European financial leadership weakened.
Social change	Class relations, gender roles, labour politics, and expectations of government changed.
National self-determination	New states were created, but many ethnic minorities remained inside borders they did not choose.
Radical politics	Revolutionary socialism, fascism, and extreme nationalism gained strength amid disorder and fear.
Cultural disillusionment	Many writers and artists rejected pre-war confidence in progress, reason, and heroic nationalism.

The Paris Peace Settlement

The victors met in Paris in 1919. The most influential leaders were Woodrow Wilson of the United States, Georges Clemenceau of France, David Lloyd George of Britain, and Vittorio Orlando of Italy. Their aims differed. Wilson promoted national self-determination and a League of Nations. France wanted security against Germany. Britain wanted a stable balance of power and protection of its empire and trade.

Treaty Provision	Effect
War-guilt clause	Article 231 assigned responsibility to Germany and its allies as the legal basis for reparations.
Reparations	Germany was required to pay for wartime damage; the exact amount was set later.
Territorial losses	Alsace-Lorraine returned to France; other lands went to Belgium, Denmark, Poland, and the League of Nations.
Military restrictions	German armed forces were limited; conscription, tanks, military aircraft, and submarines were forbidden.
Rhineland provisions	The Rhineland was demilitarised and temporarily occupied in parts by Allied forces.
League of Nations	An international organisation was created to promote collective security, though the United States did not join.
New states	Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania emerged or were restored in the post-war settlement.

THE PEACE SETTLEMENT: STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Strengths: ended the war formally · created new states · established the League of Nations · recognised some national claims.
Weaknesses: punished defeated states unevenly · left many minorities outside their preferred nation · depended on cooperation that did not last · excluded Germany and Soviet Russia from the early settlement · lacked reliable enforcement.

Russian Revolution and Rise of the Soviet Union

Russia entered World War I as an autocratic empire ruled by Tsar Nicholas II. The state had modern factories and railways, but most people were peasants, political freedoms were limited, and social inequality remained severe. Military defeat and economic collapse during the war destroyed the monarchy and opened the way for revolutionary movements.

Weaknesses of Tsarist Russia

Weakness	Explanation
Autocracy	The tsar held great power and resisted full parliamentary government after the Revolution of 1905.
Peasant poverty	Most people lived in the countryside and faced land hunger, debt, and low productivity.
Industrial tension	Rapid factory growth created an urban working class with long hours, poor housing, and limited political rights.
National minorities	Poles, Finns, Ukrainians, Jews, Baltic peoples, and others experienced varying degrees of pressure and discrimination.
Political opposition	Liberals, Socialist Revolutionaries, Mensheviks, Bolsheviks, and national movements challenged the regime.
War failures	Poor leadership, shortages, casualties, inflation, and transport breakdown discredited the monarchy.
Court scandal	The influence of Rasputin and distrust of the empress damaged respect for the royal family.

The February Revolution

In March 1917 by the Western calendar—February in the old Russian calendar—food shortages and strikes erupted in Petrograd. Women textile workers joined demonstrations, industrial workers struck, and soldiers refused to fire on crowds. The capital’s military garrison joined the uprising. Nicholas II abdicated, ending more than three centuries of Romanov rule.

Two centres of power appeared. The Provisional Government, formed mainly by liberal and moderate political leaders, claimed formal authority. The Petrograd Soviet represented workers and soldiers. This situation became known as dual power.

Provisional Government	Petrograd Soviet
Wanted a legal, parliamentary political order.	Claimed to represent workers and soldiers directly.
Continued Russia’s participation in World War I.	Issued Order No. 1, which strengthened soldiers’ committees and weakened traditional military authority.
Delayed major land reform until a future elected assembly.	Supported immediate reforms and had influence over transport, soldiers, and urban workers.
Possessed official authority but declining popular support.	Possessed less formal authority but strong practical influence in Petrograd.

Lenin and the Bolsheviks

Vladimir Lenin returned to Russia in April 1917 with German assistance. In his April Theses, he demanded “Peace, Land, and Bread” and “All Power to the Soviets.” He rejected cooperation with the Provisional Government and argued that the Bolsheviks should lead a socialist revolution.

Bolshevik Promise	Popular Appeal
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Bolshevik Promise	Popular Appeal
Peace	Soldiers and civilians wanted an end to the destructive war.
Land	Peasants wanted the estates of landowners redistributed.
Bread	Urban workers faced hunger, inflation, and economic breakdown.
All Power to the Soviets	Suggested government through workers' and soldiers' councils rather than liberal elites.
Worker control	Appealed to factory workers seeking power over management and production.

The October Revolution

The Provisional Government lost support because it continued the war, failed to solve the land question, and could not restore order. After the failed Kornilov Affair, the Bolsheviks gained influence because they appeared willing to defend the revolution. In November 1917 by the Western calendar—October in the old Russian calendar—Bolshevik forces seized key points in Petrograd and removed the Provisional Government.

FEBRUARY AND OCTOBER COMPARED

February Revolution: largely spontaneous mass unrest · ended the monarchy · produced the Provisional Government and dual power.

October Revolution: organised Bolshevik seizure of power · removed the Provisional Government · began communist rule.

Early Bolshevik Rule

The Bolsheviks issued decrees on land and peace, recognised workers' control in factories, and moved toward one-party rule. Elections to the Constituent Assembly gave the Socialist Revolutionaries more seats than the Bolsheviks. When the assembly met in January 1918, the Bolsheviks dissolved it.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk ended Russia's participation in World War I in March 1918. Russia surrendered large territories to Germany and its allies. Lenin accepted the harsh treaty because he believed preserving the revolution was more important than continuing the war.

Civil War and War Communism

From 1918 to 1921, the Bolshevik Red Army fought the anti-Bolshevik Whites, nationalist movements, peasant forces, and foreign intervention. Leon Trotsky organised the Red Army with strict discipline. The Whites were divided by geography, leadership, and political aims, while the Bolsheviks controlled the central industrial region and major railways.

War Communism Measure	Purpose and Effect
Nationalisation	The state took control of major industry and attempted to direct production.
Grain requisition	Armed detachments seized food from peasants to feed cities and the Red Army, causing resistance and reduced production.
Labour discipline	Workers faced strict controls, movement restrictions, and military-style organisation.
Suppression of opposition	The Cheka used arrests, executions, and terror against real and suspected enemies.
Centralised distribution	Private trade was restricted, but shortages and black markets expanded.

The civil war devastated the economy and produced famine, disease, and social breakdown. The Bolsheviks won, but their victory strengthened centralisation, coercion, and one-party rule.

The New Economic Policy and Formation of the USSR

In 1921, Lenin introduced the New Economic Policy, or NEP, after economic collapse and revolts such as the Kronstadt uprising. The state kept control of banking, heavy industry, transport, and foreign trade, but small businesses and private trade were permitted. Peasants paid a tax and could sell surplus produce.

The NEP restored some production and created a mixed economy. In 1922, the Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and Transcaucasian republics formed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In theory, the union recognised national republics. In practice, the Communist Party held central power.

War Communism	New Economic Policy
Emergency system during civil war.	Partial retreat from full state control after 1921.
Grain requisition from peasants.	Tax in kind, later monetary tax; peasants could sell surplus.
Private trade heavily restricted.	Small private trade and business permitted.
Economic output collapsed.	Agricultural and commercial recovery followed.
Strong coercive control.	Political dictatorship continued even while economic controls were relaxed.

Stalin's Rise to Power

Lenin died in 1924. A struggle developed among leading Bolsheviks, especially Joseph Stalin, Leon Trotsky, Grigory Zinoviev, Lev Kamenev, and Nikolai Bukharin. Stalin used his position as general secretary to appoint supporters and build control over the party. He first allied with some rivals against others and then removed his former allies. Trotsky was expelled from the Soviet Union and later murdered in Mexico in 1940.

STALIN'S POLITICAL ADVANTAGE
Control of party appointments + ability to build loyal networks + tactical alliances + use of Lenin's image + opponents' divisions = gradual concentration of power.

Five-Year Plans and Forced Industrialisation

From 1928, Stalin ended the NEP and introduced Five-Year Plans. The state set production targets, directed investment, and concentrated on coal, steel, electricity, machinery, transport, and armaments. Industrial cities and giant projects grew rapidly. The Soviet Union became a major industrial power, but workers faced harsh discipline, shortages, dangerous conditions, and low living standards.

Achievement	Cost
Rapid growth of heavy industry	Consumer goods and housing remained limited.
Expansion of electricity and machinery	Targets encouraged waste, false reporting, and unsafe work.
Creation of new industrial centres	Millions moved under difficult and crowded conditions.
Greater military-industrial capacity	Living standards were sacrificed to state priorities.
Education and technical training expanded	Political control shaped schools, science, culture, and careers.

Collectivisation and Famine

Stalin forced peasants to combine private farms into collective and state farms. The government wanted greater control over grain, more food for cities, exports to finance industrialisation, and the removal of supposedly wealthy peasants called kulaks as a class. Many peasants resisted by hiding grain, slaughtering animals, or reducing production.

Collectivisation involved mass deportation, violence, and confiscation. Agricultural disruption and state grain demands contributed to catastrophic famine in 1932–1933, especially in Ukraine, Kazakhstan, the North Caucasus, and parts of Russia. Millions died. In Ukraine, this famine is known as the Holodomor. Scholars and governments continue to debate aspects of intention and classification, but the scale of state coercion and human loss is clear.

The Great Purges and the Terror State

During the 1930s, Stalin used terror to eliminate real and imagined opposition. Party leaders were tried in public show trials and forced to confess to fabricated crimes. Officers, officials, intellectuals, workers, peasants, and ordinary citizens were arrested. The secret police sent millions to prisons, labour camps, exile, or execution.

Instrument of Control	How It Operated
Communist Party monopoly	No independent political competition was permitted.
Secret police	Surveillance, arrest, interrogation, deportation, and execution created fear.
Gulag system	Forced-labour camps supplied labour for mining, construction, forestry, and remote projects.
Show trials	Public confessions presented repression as legal punishment of traitors.
Censorship and propaganda	Media, education, literature, and art served state goals.
Cult of personality	Stalin was presented as wise, heroic, and essential to Soviet success.
Socialist realism	Artists were expected to portray optimistic images of workers, industry, and communist life.
Control of history	The state rewrote events and removed purged individuals from official memory and photographs.

THE SOVIET UNION UNDER STALIN

Economic transformation: rapid industrial growth and collectivised agriculture.
Political system: one-party rule, secret police, purges, forced labour, censorship, and a personality cult.
Social result: expanded education and industrial employment alongside terror, famine, shortages, and the loss of personal freedom.

World War II: Fascism, Nazism, and the Holocaust

The interwar period did not move directly and inevitably toward another world war. However, the weaknesses of the peace settlement, economic instability, fear of communism, aggressive nationalism, and failures of collective security created opportunities for dictators who promised order, unity, expansion, and national revival.

The Crisis of Liberal Democracy

After 1918, many European states adopted parliamentary constitutions. Yet democracy was often fragile. New governments faced inflation, debt, unemployment, border disputes, class conflict, and political violence. Some citizens associated democracy with military defeat or economic disorder. Conservative elites sometimes supported authoritarian movements because they feared socialism and revolution.

The Great Depression after 1929 deepened these problems. Banks failed, trade contracted, factories closed, and unemployment rose sharply. Democratic governments appeared unable to act quickly. Extremist parties gained support by promising national unity, jobs, strong leadership, and the destruction of political enemies.

Italian Fascism

Italy had fought on the Allied side in World War I but many Italians believed the peace settlement did not reward the country sufficiently. Post-war inflation, unemployment, strikes, factory occupations, peasant land seizures, and fear of socialism weakened the liberal government. Benito Mussolini transformed his movement into the National Fascist Party and organised armed squads known as Blackshirts.

Feature of Italian Fascism	Description
Extreme nationalism	The nation and state were placed above individual rights and class interests.
Leadership principle	Mussolini was presented as Il Duce, the decisive leader who embodied national will.

Feature of Italian Fascism	Description
Anti-liberalism	Fascists rejected parliamentary compromise, individualism, and pluralist democracy.
Anti-socialism	Fascists attacked socialists, unions, cooperatives, and left-wing organisations.
Violence and mass politics	Blackshirts used intimidation and violence while fascist rallies created unity and discipline.
Corporatism	The regime claimed to organise employers and workers into state-controlled bodies, but independent labour power disappeared.
Imperial ambition	The regime sought colonies, military glory, and a new Roman-style empire.
Propaganda and youth control	Schools, radio, newspapers, ceremonies, and youth groups promoted loyalty to the regime.

In October 1922, fascists staged the March on Rome. King Victor Emmanuel III refused to declare martial law and invited Mussolini to become prime minister. Mussolini then dismantled democracy gradually. Opposition parties were suppressed, censorship expanded, and Italy became a dictatorship.

The Lateran Accords of 1929 settled the conflict between the Italian state and the papacy, recognising Vatican City and improving Mussolini's relationship with many Catholics. Fascist economic claims often exceeded actual results. Private property remained, but the state directed labour relations and key priorities.

The Nazi Rise to Power

The Weimar Republic was created after Germany's defeat in 1918. It had a democratic constitution, but it faced hostility from the radical right and left. Hyperinflation in 1923 destroyed savings and weakened trust. Economic conditions improved during the mid-1920s, but the Great Depression produced mass unemployment and political paralysis.

Condition	How It Helped the Nazis
Versailles resentment	Nazis promised to overturn military restrictions, territorial losses, and national humiliation.
Great Depression	Unemployment and fear created demand for radical solutions.
Weak coalition governments	Frequent elections and divided parties made parliamentary government appear ineffective.
Fear of communism	Business leaders, landowners, conservatives, and middle-class voters feared revolution.
Nazi propaganda	Modern campaigning presented Hitler as a national saviour and tailored messages to different groups.
Political violence	The SA intimidated opponents and projected discipline and strength.
Conservative miscalculation	Traditional elites believed they could use and control Hitler within government.
Hitler's leadership	His speeches combined nationalism, antisemitism, anti-Marxism, promises of work, and the idea of national rebirth.

From Chancellor to Dictator

Date or Measure	Effect
30 January 1933	President Hindenburg appoints Hitler chancellor in a conservative coalition.
Reichstag Fire Decree	Suspends civil liberties and permits mass arrests of communists and other opponents.
Enabling Act, March 1933	Allows Hitler's government to make laws without parliamentary approval.
Gleichschaltung	Coordinates institutions under Nazi control; other parties and independent unions disappear.
Night of the Long Knives, 1934	Hitler destroys SA leadership and reassures the army and conservative elites.
Death of Hindenburg, 1934	Hitler combines offices and becomes Führer.
Police state	Gestapo, SS, courts, camps, informers, and surveillance suppress opposition.
Propaganda state	Joseph Goebbels directs mass media, culture, rallies, and the public image of Hitler.

HOW THE NAZI DICTATORSHIP WAS BUILT

Legal appointment → emergency powers → Enabling Act → destruction of parties and unions → control of regional governments and institutions → purge of rivals → leadership cult and police terror.

Nazi Ideology and Society

Nazism combined extreme nationalism, racial antisemitism, anti-communism, dictatorship, militarism, and the pursuit of Lebensraum, or living space, in eastern Europe. Nazis claimed that history was a racial struggle. They imagined an Aryan racial community and defined Jews as a biological enemy rather than simply a religious group.

Area	Nazi Policy
Youth	Hitler Youth and League of German Girls promoted obedience, physical training, racial ideas, and preparation for war or motherhood.
Education	Curricula stressed race, nationalism, military values, and loyalty to Hitler.
Women	The regime praised motherhood and larger “racially valuable” families, though wartime labour needs later drew more women into work.
Workers	Independent unions were replaced by the German Labour Front; leisure programmes and public projects aimed to build loyalty.
Economy	Public works, rearmament, controls, and military spending reduced unemployment and prepared for war.
Culture	Modernist and critical works were condemned; approved art celebrated race, strength, family, countryside, and military heroism.
Religion	The regime made agreements and applied pressure, but churches were not completely controlled and some clergy resisted.
People with disabilities	Forced sterilisation and later the “euthanasia” programme targeted those labelled biologically or economically unfit.

Persecution of Jews Before the War

Nazi persecution developed step by step. Boycotts, dismissals, professional restrictions, propaganda, and public humiliation pushed Jews out of German social and economic life. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935 removed citizenship and prohibited marriage or sexual relations between Jews and people classified as “German blood.”

On 9–10 November 1938, during Kristallnacht, Nazi forces and supporters destroyed synagogues and Jewish businesses, murdered people, and sent thousands of Jewish men to concentration camps. The violence marked a shift from legal exclusion to open, state-directed mass terror. Many Jews attempted to emigrate, but restrictive immigration policies and loss of property limited escape.

Aggression and the Failure of Collective Security

Aggressive Step	International Response or Result
Japan seizes Manchuria, 1931	The League condemns the action but cannot reverse it.
Germany leaves disarmament talks and the League, 1933	Hitler openly rejects parts of the post-war order.
Italy invades Ethiopia, 1935	League sanctions are limited and fail to stop conquest.
Germany remilitarises the Rhineland, 1936	Britain and France do not intervene militarily.
Spanish Civil War, 1936–1939	Germany and Italy support Franco; Soviet aid reaches the Republic; Britain and France follow non-intervention.
Anschluss with Austria, 1938	German expansion occurs without effective resistance.
Munich Agreement, 1938	Britain and France accept German annexation of the Sudetenland in the hope of preserving peace.
Occupation of Czech lands, March 1939	Shows that Hitler’s aims extend beyond self-determination for Germans.

Aggressive Step	International Response or Result
Nazi-Soviet Pact, August 1939	Germany and the Soviet Union agree to non-aggression and secretly divide spheres of influence in eastern Europe.
Invasion of Poland, September 1939	Britain and France declare war on Germany.

APPEASEMENT

Appeasement was the policy of making concessions to avoid another major war. Supporters remembered the destruction of World War I, doubted military readiness, feared communism, and believed some German complaints were justified. Critics argued that concessions strengthened Hitler, weakened smaller states, and allowed Germany time to rearm.

The Course of World War II

Germany used Blitzkrieg—coordinated attacks by aircraft, tanks, motorised forces, and infantry—to defeat Poland and later western European states. Denmark and Norway were occupied in 1940. Germany attacked through the Low Countries, defeated France, and forced British troops to evacuate from Dunkirk. France signed an armistice, and the Vichy regime collaborated with Germany in the unoccupied southern zone until full German occupation in 1942.

Phase	Main Developments
Axis expansion, 1939–1941	Poland defeated; western Europe conquered; Italy enters the war; Britain resists; Axis influence expands in the Balkans and North Africa.
Battle of Britain, 1940	British air defence prevents German air superiority and makes invasion impossible at that time.
Operation Barbarossa, 1941	Germany invades the Soviet Union in a vast ideological and racial war.
Global war, 1941	Japan attacks Pearl Harbor; Germany declares war on the United States.
Turning point, 1942–1943	Allied victories at Midway, El Alamein, and Stalingrad halt Axis expansion.
Allied advance, 1943–1944	Italy is invaded; Mussolini falls; Soviet armies move west; D-Day opens a western front in France.
Defeat of Germany, 1945	Soviet and western Allied forces enter Germany; Hitler dies; Germany surrenders in May.
Defeat of Japan, 1945	Atomic bombs are dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki; the Soviet Union attacks Japanese forces in Asia; Japan surrenders.

World War II as Total War

World War II involved enormous mobilisation of soldiers, workers, industry, science, food, and finance. Civilian areas were bombed, occupied populations were exploited, and racial or political groups were targeted for destruction. The boundary between battlefield and home front became increasingly weak.

Dimension	Example
Economic mobilisation	States directed factories, labour, transport, rationing, and scientific research.
Strategic bombing	Cities and industrial centres were bombed to destroy production, transport, housing, and morale.
Occupation	Germany extracted labour, food, raw materials, and wealth from conquered Europe.
Forced labour	Millions of prisoners and civilians were compelled to work for German industry and agriculture.
Resistance	Underground groups gathered intelligence, sabotaged transport, hid fugitives, and fought occupation.
Collaboration	Some governments, officials, police, businesses, and citizens cooperated with occupiers for ideology, advantage, survival, or coercion.
Women	Women served in industry, agriculture, nursing, auxiliary forces, resistance, and military support roles.
Science and technology	Radar, codebreaking, rockets, synthetic materials, medicine, and atomic research shaped the war.

The Holocaust

The Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million European Jews by Nazi Germany and its allies and collaborators. It developed through exclusion, forced emigration, concentration, deportation, mass shooting, forced labour, and extermination. The genocide was linked to Nazi racial ideology and to the war of conquest in eastern Europe.

Stage	Development
1933–1938: exclusion	Jews are removed from public employment, professions, schools, citizenship, and many areas of social life.
1938–1939: intensified terror	Kristallnacht, arrests, property seizure, and forced emigration increase.
1939–1941: ghettos and occupation	Jews in occupied Poland are concentrated in overcrowded ghettos under starvation and disease.
1941: mass shootings	After the invasion of the Soviet Union, Einsatzgruppen and other units murder Jewish communities, Soviet officials, Roma, and others.
1941–1942: decision and coordination	Nazi leaders move toward the systematic murder of all European Jews; the Wannsee Conference coordinates deportation and administration.
1942–1944: extermination centres	Jews are deported to killing centres including Auschwitz-Birkenau, Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec, Chelmno, and Majdanek.
1944–1945: evacuation and death marches	As Allied armies advance, prisoners are moved under deadly conditions and evidence is partly destroyed.

Victims and Targets of Nazi Persecution

Jews were the central target of Nazi genocide. The Nazi regime and its partners also persecuted and murdered Roma and Sinti, people with disabilities, Soviet prisoners of war, Polish civilians and elites, political opponents, gay men, Jehovah’s Witnesses, and others defined as racial, political, social, or military enemies. The forms and aims of persecution differed among groups, but all suffered under the Nazi system of occupation, terror, imprisonment, forced labour, or murder.

KEY DISTINCTIONS
Concentration camp: site of imprisonment, forced labour, terror, and often death.
Ghetto: confined urban district where Jews were forced to live under extreme deprivation.
Extermination centre: killing site designed mainly for mass murder, usually by gas.
Genocide: intentional destruction, in whole or in part, of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.

Resistance, Rescue, and Survival

Jews resisted in many ways: preserving religious and cultural life, documenting persecution, smuggling food, escaping, joining partisans, and organising armed uprisings. The Warsaw Ghetto Uprising of 1943 became a major symbol of resistance. Prisoner revolts also occurred at killing centres such as Sobibor and Treblinka.

Some non-Jews hid Jews, provided false papers, helped them cross borders, or protected children. Rescue was dangerous and difficult, and rescuers remained a minority. Survival depended on many factors, including geography, local attitudes, occupation policy, family resources, chance, and access to hiding or escape routes.

The End of the War and Its Legacy

By 1945, Europe was physically devastated. Cities, railways, factories, farms, and homes had been destroyed. Tens of millions were dead, including civilians on an unprecedented scale. Refugees, displaced persons, former prisoners, forced labourers, and survivors moved across the continent.

Legacy	Importance
Defeat of fascist regimes	Nazi Germany collapsed, and Mussolini’s regime was destroyed.

Legacy	Importance
Revelation of mass murder	Liberation of camps exposed the scale of Nazi crimes and created demands for justice and remembrance.
Nuremberg Trials	Leading Nazi officials were prosecuted for crimes against peace, war crimes, and crimes against humanity.
Decline of European dominance	European states were weakened, while the United States and Soviet Union emerged as superpowers.
Division of Europe	Wartime alliance gave way to political conflict between Soviet-controlled eastern Europe and the western powers.
Displacement and border changes	Populations were transferred, borders shifted, and millions sought new homes.
Human-rights movement	The experience of genocide and war influenced later international law and institutions.
Nuclear age	Atomic weapons transformed military strategy and global politics.

Chapter at a Glance

Theme	Core Idea
World War I causes	Nationalism, imperial rivalry, militarism, alliance systems, Balkan tension, and the July Crisis combined to create war.
Industrialised warfare	Modern weapons, mass armies, trench systems, factories, and transport produced prolonged and destructive conflict.
Total war	Governments directed economies and civilians while propaganda, censorship, rationing, and labour mobilisation expanded.
Peace settlement	Versailles redrew borders and created the League but left resentment, minorities, and enforcement problems.
Russian Revolution	War and state collapse ended tsarism; Bolsheviks seized power under Lenin.
Soviet state	Civil war and one-party rule were followed by the NEP, formation of the USSR, and Stalin's dictatorship.
Stalinism	Five-Year Plans and collectivisation transformed the economy while terror, famine, purges, and censorship controlled society.
Fascism and Nazism	Dictatorships rejected liberal democracy, glorified authority and national struggle, and used propaganda and violence.
World War II	Axis aggression, appeasement, failed collective security, and expansionist ideology led to a second global war.
Holocaust	Nazi racial ideology and wartime conquest produced systematic genocide and mass persecution.
1945	Europe emerged devastated, divided, and no longer the unquestioned centre of world power.

Key People and Terms

Person or Term	Importance
Archduke Franz Ferdinand	Heir to Austria-Hungary whose assassination triggered the July Crisis.
Gavrilo Princip	Bosnian Serb nationalist who assassinated Franz Ferdinand and Sophie.
Woodrow Wilson	US president associated with the Fourteen Points and League of Nations.
Vladimir Lenin	Bolshevik leader who directed the October Revolution and early Soviet state.
Leon Trotsky	Organiser of the Red Army and later rival of Stalin.
Joseph Stalin	Soviet dictator associated with forced industrialisation, collectivisation, purges, and a personality cult.
Benito Mussolini	Founder of Italian Fascism and dictator of Italy.
Adolf Hitler	Nazi leader and German dictator responsible for aggressive war and genocidal policy.
Total war	Conflict involving mass military, economic, social, and civilian mobilisation.
Attrition	Strategy of wearing down an enemy through continuous losses.
Bolsheviks	Lenin's revolutionary socialist party that seized power in 1917.
War Communism	Emergency civil-war system of nationalisation, requisition, and central control.

Person or Term	Importance
New Economic Policy	Lenin's partial return to markets and small private business after 1921.
Collectivisation	Forced reorganisation of agriculture into collective and state farms.
Gulag	Soviet system of prisons and forced-labour camps.
Fascism	Authoritarian ultranationalist ideology rejecting liberal democracy and socialism.
Nazism	German form of fascism centred on dictatorship, racial antisemitism, expansion, and Aryan supremacy.
Appeasement	Policy of concessions intended to avoid war.
Blitzkrieg	Rapid combined use of air power, armour, motorised forces, and infantry.
Holocaust	Systematic Nazi persecution and murder of six million European Jews.
Final Solution	Nazi policy for the systematic murder of European Jews.
Einsatzgruppen	Mobile killing units that carried out mass shootings in occupied eastern Europe.
Genocide	Intentional destruction, in whole or in part, of a protected human group.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

- Which development most directly transformed the assassination at Sarajevo into a general European war?
 - The immediate collapse of the Ottoman Empire
 - Mobilisation plans and alliance commitments
 - The formation of the League of Nations
 - The Russian withdrawal from the war
- The Schlieffen Plan contributed to British entry into World War I because Germany
 - invaded neutral Belgium
 - attacked Russia through the Balkans
 - used poison gas against Britain
 - sank British ships in 1914
- Trench warfare on the Western Front resulted mainly from
 - the complete absence of artillery
 - defensive firepower exceeding the ability of attackers to advance
 - a shortage of soldiers
 - the refusal of governments to use railways
- World War I is described as total war because
 - only professional soldiers participated
 - governments mobilised economies and civilian populations for the conflict
 - colonies remained outside the war
 - political freedoms expanded without restriction
- One major consequence of World War I was the
 - restoration of the Austro-Hungarian Empire
 - collapse of several multinational empires

- C. disappearance of nationalism
 - D. immediate creation of a stable European federation
6. The Treaty of Versailles attempted to prevent German military recovery mainly through
- A. German control of the Rhineland
 - B. limits on armed forces and demilitarisation
 - C. membership in the Triple Alliance
 - D. abolition of reparations
7. The February Revolution in Russia resulted most directly in the
- A. immediate creation of Stalin's dictatorship
 - B. abdication of Nicholas II
 - C. introduction of collectivisation
 - D. victory of the White armies
8. Lenin's slogan "Peace, Land, and Bread" appealed especially to
- A. soldiers, peasants, and urban workers
 - B. monarchists and foreign investors
 - C. aristocrats and church leaders
 - D. supporters of continued war
9. The Bolsheviks dissolved the Constituent Assembly because
- A. it gave them complete control
 - B. its election produced a majority for another socialist party
 - C. it supported the Treaty of Versailles
 - D. it demanded restoration of the tsar
10. The New Economic Policy differed from War Communism because it
- A. permitted limited private trade and small business
 - B. ended Communist Party rule
 - C. restored aristocratic estates
 - D. eliminated state control of heavy industry
11. Stalin's Five-Year Plans placed greatest emphasis on
- A. consumer luxury goods
 - B. heavy industry and state-directed production
 - C. private farming
 - D. free foreign trade
12. Forced collectivisation was intended in part to
- A. reduce state control of grain
 - B. increase state control over agriculture and finance industrialisation
 - C. return land to the nobility
 - D. encourage independent peasant markets
13. The Great Purges strengthened Stalin's power by

- A. creating a multiparty system
 - B. removing real and imagined rivals through terror
 - C. reducing police authority
 - D. protecting independent courts
14. Italian Fascism gained support after World War I partly because of
- A. fear of socialism and dissatisfaction with the post-war settlement
 - B. complete economic stability
 - C. strong faith in parliamentary coalitions
 - D. rejection of nationalism
15. Hitler was able to establish dictatorship after 1933 mainly through
- A. the restoration of the German monarchy
 - B. emergency decrees, the Enabling Act, terror, and institutional control
 - C. voluntary dissolution of the Nazi Party
 - D. military defeat by France
16. The Nuremberg Laws of 1935
- A. restored citizenship to German Jews
 - B. institutionalised racial exclusion and removed Jewish citizenship
 - C. ended antisemitic propaganda
 - D. ordered the liberation of concentration camps
17. The Munich Agreement is most closely associated with
- A. collective military action against Germany
 - B. appeasement of Hitler's territorial demands
 - C. the Nazi-Soviet invasion of Poland
 - D. creation of NATO
18. Operation Barbarossa transformed the war by
- A. opening Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union
 - B. ending the war in western Europe
 - C. creating the League of Nations
 - D. bringing Italy onto the Allied side in 1941
19. The Holocaust differed from ordinary wartime repression because it involved
- A. only the imprisonment of military prisoners
 - B. a systematic state programme to destroy European Jewry
 - C. no use of bureaucracy or transport
 - D. persecution limited to Germany before 1939
20. Which development best represents a major consequence of World War II for Europe?
- A. Restoration of European global dominance
 - B. Emergence of the United States and Soviet Union as superpowers
 - C. Survival of Nazi Germany

D. End of population displacement

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-A · 3-B · 4-B · 5-B · 6-B · 7-B · 8-A · 9-B · 10-A · 11-B · 12-B · 13-B · 14-A · 15-B · 16-B · 17-B · 18-A · 19-B · 20-B

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one long-term cause of World War I. Describe one step in the July Crisis. Explain one reason the conflict became a total war.
2. Identify one weakness of the Provisional Government. Describe one Bolshevik promise in 1917. Explain one reason the Bolsheviks won the civil war.
3. Identify one goal of Stalin's Five-Year Plans. Describe one method used during collectivisation. Explain one social cost of Stalinist policy.
4. Identify one condition that helped fascism or Nazism gain support. Describe one method used to destroy democracy. Explain one way the regime attempted to control society.
5. Identify one stage in the persecution of European Jews. Describe one form of Jewish resistance or survival. Explain one way wartime conquest enabled the Holocaust.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the most important cause of World War I in the period before 1914.
2. Evaluate the extent to which World War I transformed European society and government.
3. Evaluate the most important reason the Bolsheviks were able to seize and maintain power between 1917 and 1921.
4. Compare the methods used by Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin to establish and maintain political control.
5. Evaluate the extent to which the Great Depression contributed to the rise of authoritarian regimes in Europe.
6. Evaluate the most important reason Britain and France followed appeasement before 1939.
7. Evaluate the extent to which World War II was a continuation of unresolved problems from World War I.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about how European governments expanded their power during the period 1914–1945:

- A wartime rationing notice or propaganda poster
- A soldier's letter describing the front
- A Bolshevik decree or party speech
- A Soviet production target or collectivisation order
- A fascist or Nazi rally speech
- A law restricting civil or racial rights
- A resistance testimony or report from an occupied country

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: European governments greatly expanded their power between 1914 and 1945 by directing economies, controlling information, organising mass politics, and suppressing opposition. Wartime emergency strengthened state authority across political systems, while communist and fascist dictatorships made coercion and ideological control permanent.

Possible groups: Wartime mobilisation · Revolutionary and communist centralisation · Fascist mass politics and police control · Racial policy and occupation.

Useful outside evidence: rationing, War Communism, Five-Year Plans, Enabling Act, Gestapo, Nuremberg Laws, forced labour, and total-war bombing.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one cause of the Russian Revolution, describe one Bolshevik policy after taking power, and explain one way Stalin changed the Soviet economy.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One cause: World War I produced military defeat, food shortages, inflation, and loss of confidence in Tsar Nicholas II.

One Bolshevik policy: Lenin accepted the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk to remove Russia from the war and protect the new revolutionary government.

One Stalinist change: Stalin replaced the mixed economy of the NEP with state-directed Five-Year Plans that concentrated investment on heavy industry and rapidly expanded Soviet industrial capacity.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know the long-term causes of World War I and the sequence of the July Crisis.
- Understand why industrial technology produced trench warfare and mass casualties.
- Explain how total war changed government, labour, propaganda, women's roles, and civilian life.
- Know the main turning points of World War I and why Germany accepted an armistice.
- Remember the political, economic, social, and territorial consequences of the war.
- Know the main provisions and weaknesses of the Treaty of Versailles and League of Nations.
- Distinguish the February Revolution from the October Revolution.
- Know Lenin's major slogans and why the Provisional Government lost support.
- Compare War Communism and the New Economic Policy.
- Explain how Stalin rose to power after Lenin's death.
- Know the goals and costs of the Five-Year Plans and collectivisation.
- Explain the Great Purges, Gulag, censorship, and cult of personality.
- Define fascism and distinguish Italian Fascism from Nazi racial ideology.
- Know how Mussolini and Hitler gained power and destroyed democratic institutions.
- Explain the effects of the Great Depression on European politics.
- Know the main steps of Axis aggression and the arguments surrounding appeasement.
- Remember the major phases and turning points of World War II.
- Understand how total war affected civilians, occupied societies, resistance, and collaboration.
- Know the stages of Nazi persecution and the development of the Holocaust.
- Distinguish ghettos, concentration camps, forced-labour camps, and extermination centres.
- Explain the political and moral consequences of 1945 for Europe and the wider world.

7. Post-War Europe and the Cold War Era (1945–1989)

Reconstruction, division, decolonization, and the long road toward European unity

Europe emerged from World War II physically ruined and politically weakened. Cities, factories, railways, bridges, and homes had been destroyed. Millions of people were dead, displaced, or searching for missing relatives. Food, fuel, housing, and stable currency were in short supply. At the same time, the United States and the Soviet Union had become the strongest military and political powers in the world.

The wartime alliance quickly gave way to the Cold War. Western Europe developed democratic governments, market economies, and close ties with the United States. Eastern Europe came under Soviet influence and adopted communist political and economic systems. Germany and Berlin became the clearest symbols of this division.

During the same period, European empires declined. Nationalist movements in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East demanded independence, while European states lacked the resources and authority to maintain colonial rule. Western European governments also began a new experiment in cooperation. Economic integration, first in coal and steel and later through the European Economic Community, was intended to make another European war less likely and to strengthen recovery.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Reconstruction and the Marshall Plan
- Division of Europe: NATO, Warsaw Pact, and the Iron Curtain
- Decolonization and the European Union

THE BIG PICTURE

After 1945, Europe lost its earlier position at the centre of world power. The continent recovered economically but remained divided between American-supported democracies in the west and Soviet-dominated communist states in the east. Decolonization ended most European empires, while economic cooperation created the foundations of today's European Union.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Importance
1945	Germany surrenders; Yalta and Potsdam shape the occupation of Europe	The wartime alliance begins to divide over Germany, Poland, and the future of eastern Europe.
1945–1946	Nuremberg Trials	Leading Nazi officials are prosecuted for war crimes, crimes against peace, and crimes against humanity.
1946	Churchill describes an “Iron Curtain” across Europe	The phrase becomes a lasting symbol of the political division between east and west.
1947	Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan announced	The United States commits itself to containing communism and supporting European recovery.
1948	Communist takeover in Czechoslovakia	Confirms growing Soviet control in eastern Europe.
1948–1949	Berlin Blockade and Airlift	The western powers supply West Berlin by air and resist Soviet pressure.
1949	NATO established	Western states create a collective defence alliance led by the United States.
1949	Federal Republic of Germany and German Democratic Republic created	Germany becomes formally divided into western and eastern states.
1949	Council of Europe founded	Western European governments promote cooperation, democracy, and human rights.

Date	Development	Importance
1951	European Coal and Steel Community created	France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg place key industries under common control.
1955	West Germany enters NATO; Warsaw Pact formed	Military division of Europe becomes institutionalised.
1956	Hungarian Uprising and Suez Crisis	Soviet force maintains control in the east, while Suez exposes the decline of British and French global power.
1957	Treaties of Rome	The European Economic Community and Euratom are created.
1961	Berlin Wall built	East Germany stops mass migration to the west and turns division into a physical barrier.
1962	Algeria becomes independent	One of the most violent European decolonization struggles ends.
1968	Prague Spring crushed; student protests spread in western Europe	Both eastern and western European societies face challenges from younger generations.
1973	Britain, Ireland, and Denmark join the EEC	European economic integration expands beyond the original six members.
1975	Helsinki Accords	European states accept post-war borders and make commitments on security, cooperation, and human rights.
1979	First direct elections to the European Parliament	European integration gains a wider democratic element.
1980–1981	Solidarity movement challenges communist rule in Poland	An independent trade union becomes a major centre of opposition.
1985	Gorbachev becomes Soviet leader	Reform policies weaken Soviet control over eastern Europe.
1986	Single European Act	Members commit themselves to creating a single internal market.
1989	Communist governments fall across eastern Europe	The Cold War division of Europe begins to collapse.
1989	Berlin Wall opens	The most visible symbol of divided Europe loses its purpose.

Reconstruction and the Marshall Plan

The first task after 1945 was survival and rebuilding. Governments had to restore transport, housing, food supply, industry, public administration, and confidence in money. Recovery was not automatic. It required national planning, foreign assistance, political compromise, and the creation of new institutions.

Europe in Ruins

Problem	Condition After the War
Human loss	Tens of millions had died. Survivors included wounded veterans, widows, orphans, concentration-camp survivors, prisoners of war, and refugees.
Displacement	Millions of people were outside their former homes. Borders had shifted, ethnic Germans were expelled from eastern Europe, and many Jews sought new places to live.
Destroyed infrastructure	Railways, bridges, ports, factories, mines, power stations, and homes had been damaged or destroyed.
Food and fuel shortages	Agricultural disruption, transport breakdown, and severe winters produced rationing and hunger.
Inflation and currency weakness	Black markets expanded because official money often bought little.
Political instability	Communist parties gained prestige from resistance movements, while older political elites had been weakened or discredited.
Moral crisis	Europe faced the destruction caused by total war, occupation, collaboration, genocide, and the use of atomic weapons.

Occupation, Justice, and Political Rebuilding

Germany and Austria were divided into occupation zones controlled by the United States, Britain, France, and the Soviet Union. Berlin, although located inside the Soviet zone, was also divided. Allied authorities began demilitarisation, denazification, and the prosecution of major Nazi leaders. The

Nuremberg Trials established that individuals could be held responsible for crimes committed under state authority.

Across western Europe, democratic institutions were restored or rebuilt. Christian democratic, socialist, and social democratic parties became especially important. Many voters wanted political freedom but also expected governments to prevent unemployment, poverty, and the extreme inequalities associated with the interwar period.

THE POST-WAR POLITICAL COMPROMISE

Western European recovery combined parliamentary democracy with a larger economic and social role for the state. Governments accepted private property and market exchange, but they also supported welfare programmes, public housing, national health systems, state-owned industries, and economic planning.

The United Nations and a New International Order

The United Nations was founded in 1945 to preserve peace, encourage cooperation, and protect human rights. The Security Council gave permanent membership and veto power to the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France, and China. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted in 1948, expressed a broad commitment to civil, political, social, and economic rights.

Institution or Agreement	Purpose
United Nations, 1945	Provide a global forum for security, diplomacy, humanitarian action, and international law.
International Monetary Fund	Support exchange-rate stability and provide financial assistance to member states.
World Bank	Finance reconstruction and development projects.
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, 1947	Reduce trade barriers and encourage international commerce.
European Convention on Human Rights, 1950	Protect fundamental rights through a European legal framework.

The Marshall Plan

In June 1947, United States Secretary of State George C. Marshall proposed a large programme of economic assistance for Europe. Officially called the European Recovery Program, it supplied grants, loans, food, fuel, machinery, and raw materials. Assistance began in 1948 and continued until 1952.

The plan had both economic and political goals. American leaders believed that recovery would revive trade, reduce suffering, strengthen democratic governments, and limit the appeal of communist parties. European recipients had to cooperate in planning the use of aid through the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation.

Goal	How the Plan Worked
Restore production	Aid provided machinery, fuel, food, fertiliser, and raw materials needed to restart industry and agriculture.
Stabilise currencies and trade	Governments coordinated plans and gradually reduced barriers to European commerce.
Strengthen confidence	American support encouraged investment and reduced fear of immediate economic collapse.
Contain communism	Recovery was expected to weaken revolutionary politics and strengthen democratic parties.
Tie western Europe to the United States	Economic assistance deepened political and commercial relations across the Atlantic.

WHAT THE MARSHALL PLAN DID — AND DID NOT DO

It did not rebuild Europe by itself. European labour, national reforms, earlier industrial experience, and pent-up demand were also essential. Its importance lay in providing resources at a critical moment, encouraging cooperation, and linking western recovery to the United States.

Soviet Response and the Eastern European Economy

The Soviet Union rejected Marshall Plan participation and prevented eastern European states from accepting it. Soviet leaders feared that American assistance would weaken their influence. In response, the USSR created the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, commonly called Comecon, in 1949.

Eastern European governments nationalised major industries, introduced central planning, and directed agriculture toward collectivisation. These policies produced rapid heavy-industrial growth in some places, but consumer goods, housing, choice, and agricultural efficiency remained limited. Economic exchange within the Soviet bloc often reflected Moscow's priorities.

Western Europe	Eastern Europe
Marshall Plan aid and access to American markets	Soviet direction and Comecon coordination
Mixed economies with private business and state planning	State ownership and central planning
Greater emphasis on consumer production over time	Priority for heavy industry, energy, and military production
Multiparty parliamentary systems	One-party communist governments
Trade increasingly connected through European integration	Trade concentrated within the Soviet bloc

Economic Recovery and the “Golden Age”

From the early 1950s to the early 1970s, western Europe experienced rapid economic growth. West Germany's recovery became known as the *Wirtschaftswunder*, or economic miracle. France used national planning to modernise transport, energy, agriculture, and industry. Italy also experienced rapid industrial growth, especially in the north.

Reason for Growth	Importance
Reconstruction demand	Destroyed buildings and equipment had to be replaced, creating work and investment.
Modern technology	European industries adopted newer methods developed before and during the war.
American aid and investment	Capital, machinery, and commercial links supported recovery.
Expanding trade	Lower barriers and European cooperation increased markets.
Stable politics	Democratic compromise and organised labour relations reduced the instability of the interwar period.
Young and mobile labour force	Rural migrants, women, guest workers, and immigrants supplied labour for expanding industries.
Consumer demand	Rising incomes increased purchases of cars, appliances, housing, and leisure services.

The Welfare State

Post-war governments expanded social protection. Britain created the National Health Service in 1948. Other countries developed or enlarged health insurance, pensions, unemployment support, family allowances, public education, and subsidised housing. These programmes aimed to provide security from birth to old age and to prevent the poverty and political anger of the interwar years.

SOCIAL MARKET ECONOMY

West Germany's social market economy combined private enterprise and competition with welfare protection, collective bargaining, and government responsibility for economic stability. Similar compromises appeared in different forms across western Europe.

Problems After the Boom

The long post-war boom slowed in the 1970s. The oil shocks of 1973 and 1979 increased energy costs. Many states faced stagflation—a combination of inflation and weak growth. Traditional industries such as coal, steel, shipbuilding, and textiles declined in several regions. Governments debated whether to maintain extensive state control or move toward privatisation and market reform.

Development	Result
Oil-price shocks	Higher transport and production costs, inflation, and pressure on national budgets.
Deindustrialisation	Job losses in older manufacturing and mining regions.
Growth of service industries	Employment shifted toward finance, administration, education, health, retail, and technology.
Neoliberal reform	Leaders such as Margaret Thatcher favoured privatisation, weaker union power, and reduced state ownership.
European coordination	Governments looked increasingly to common European policies and a larger single market.

Division of Europe: NATO, Warsaw Pact, and the Iron Curtain

The Cold War was a long conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union and the political systems they represented. The two superpowers did not fight a direct full-scale war against each other in Europe, but they built rival alliances, armed themselves with nuclear weapons, competed for influence, and supported opposing sides in conflicts around the world.

Why the Wartime Alliance Collapsed

Source of Tension	Explanation
Political systems	The United States supported pluralist democracy and market economics; the Soviet Union defended one-party communist rule and state planning.
Security fears	The USSR wanted friendly governments on its western border after repeated invasions; western states feared Soviet expansion.
Poland and eastern Europe	Stalin supported communist-dominated governments, while western leaders expected free elections.
Germany	The Allies disagreed over reparations, economic recovery, political organisation, and eventual reunification.
Atomic weapons	The American atomic monopoly increased Soviet insecurity and accelerated the arms race.
Mutual distrust	Each side interpreted the actions of the other as aggressive, even when presented as defensive.

The Iron Curtain and Soviet Control of Eastern Europe

Between 1945 and 1948, communist parties gained control across Poland, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and the Soviet occupation zone of Germany. In some countries communists first joined coalition governments. They then gained control of police and interior ministries, removed opponents, manipulated elections, and created one-party states.

Yugoslavia followed a different path. Communist partisans led by Josip Broz Tito had largely liberated the country without direct Soviet military occupation. In 1948, Tito broke with Stalin and pursued an independent communist policy.

THE IRON CURTAIN

The term described the political, military, and ideological boundary separating Soviet-controlled eastern Europe from the western democracies. It was not one continuous wall, but it included guarded borders, censorship, travel restrictions, secret police, and the division of Germany and Berlin.

Containment, the Truman Doctrine, and the Berlin Crisis

In 1947, President Harry Truman asked the United States Congress to support Greece and Turkey against communist pressure. The Truman Doctrine declared that the United States would support peoples resisting armed minorities or outside control. It became part of the broader policy of containment—the attempt to prevent further expansion of Soviet influence.

In 1948, the western allies introduced a new currency in their occupation zones of Germany. The Soviet Union responded by blocking land access to West Berlin. The United States and Britain supplied the city by air for nearly a year. Stalin ended the blockade in May 1949. Soon afterwards, the western zones became the Federal Republic of Germany, while the Soviet zone became the German Democratic Republic.

Cold War Development	Importance
Truman Doctrine, 1947	Turns containment into an openly stated American policy.
Marshall Plan, 1947–1948	Links western recovery to American economic and political leadership.
Berlin Airlift, 1948–1949	Demonstrates western determination without beginning a direct war.
Federal Republic of Germany, 1949	Creates a democratic West German state linked to the western alliance.
German Democratic Republic, 1949	Creates a communist East German state aligned with the Soviet Union.

NATO and the Warsaw Pact

NATO	Warsaw Pact
Founded in 1949	Founded in 1955
Included the United States, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, the Benelux states, and other western countries	Included the Soviet Union and communist states of eastern Europe
An attack on one member was treated as an attack on all	Members promised collective defence under Soviet leadership
West Germany joined in 1955	Created partly in response to West German rearmament and NATO membership
Integrated western military planning and kept the United States committed to Europe	Provided a formal structure for Soviet military control in eastern Europe

THE SECURITY DILEMMA

Each alliance claimed to be defensive. Yet the creation and expansion of one alliance made the other side feel less secure. This encouraged more weapons, larger armies, and tighter political control.

Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence

The Soviet Union tested an atomic bomb in 1949. Both superpowers later developed hydrogen bombs, long-range bombers, missiles, and submarine-based weapons. Europe became a central military front containing American, Soviet, British, and French nuclear forces.

Deterrence depended on the belief that any nuclear attack would produce devastating retaliation. This reduced the likelihood of direct superpower war but created permanent fear of accidental or deliberate destruction. Campaigns for nuclear disarmament gained support, especially in western Europe.

Concept	Meaning
Deterrence	Preventing attack by threatening an unacceptable response.
Arms race	Competition to produce more powerful, numerous, and accurate weapons.

Concept	Meaning
Mutually assured destruction	The condition in which both sides could survive a first strike and still destroy the attacker.
Proxy war	A conflict in which major powers support opposing states or movements without fighting each other directly.
Détente	A period of reduced tension and greater negotiation, especially in the 1970s.

Berlin: The Symbol of Divided Europe

Between 1949 and 1961, millions of East Germans moved to the west, many through Berlin. This migration included skilled workers and educated professionals. In August 1961, East Germany closed the border and built the Berlin Wall. Families and neighbourhoods were divided, and people attempting to escape could be imprisoned or killed.

WHY THE BERLIN WALL MATTERED

It stopped most migration from East Germany and stabilised the East German state, but it also exposed the weakness of a system that had to prevent its own citizens from leaving. The wall became the clearest physical image of the Cold War in Europe.

Challenges to Soviet Control

Event	What Happened	Result
East German Uprising, 1953	Workers protested higher production demands and political conditions.	Soviet troops restored control.
Hungarian Uprising, 1956	Students, workers, and reformers demanded political freedom and withdrawal from Soviet control.	Soviet forces invaded; thousands were killed or imprisoned and many fled.
Prague Spring, 1968	Alexander Dubček promoted “socialism with a human face,” including greater freedom of speech and reform.	Warsaw Pact armies invaded Czechoslovakia and ended the reforms.
Polish Solidarity, 1980–1981	An independent trade union led by Lech Wałęsa demanded workers’ rights and political change.	Martial law suppressed the movement temporarily, but it survived underground.
Dissident movements	Writers, clergy, workers, and activists defended civil rights and truthful public discussion.	Opposition networks weakened the moral authority of communist governments.

The Brezhnev Doctrine

After the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev argued that the Soviet Union had the right to intervene when socialism was threatened in a communist state. This meant that eastern European countries had limited sovereignty. The doctrine remained a major obstacle to reform until the late 1980s.

Détente and the Helsinki Accords

During the late 1960s and 1970s, both blocs sought to reduce tension. West German Chancellor Willy Brandt followed Ostpolitik, which improved relations with East Germany, Poland, and the Soviet Union. The Helsinki Accords of 1975 recognised post-war European borders, promoted economic cooperation, and included commitments to human rights.

Soviet and eastern European dissidents later used the human-rights promises of Helsinki to challenge their governments. Détente therefore reduced some tensions while also providing new language for opposition.

Renewed Tension and the Weakening of the Soviet Bloc

Relations worsened after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and renewed military competition in the 1980s. At the same time, eastern European economies faced debt, shortages, low productivity, and public frustration. Communist governments found it increasingly difficult to match western living standards or justify political repression.

Mikhail Gorbachev became Soviet leader in 1985. His policies of perestroika, or economic restructuring, and glasnost, or greater openness, attempted to reform the Soviet system. He also reduced confrontation with the west and made clear that the USSR would no longer automatically use force to preserve communist governments in eastern Europe.

Gorbachev Policy	Purpose and Effect
Perestroika	Restructure the economy and introduce limited flexibility into central planning.
Glasnost	Allow wider discussion of public problems, history, corruption, and policy failure.
New foreign policy	Reduce military costs, negotiate arms agreements, and improve relations with the west.
End of forced intervention	Eastern European governments could no longer depend on Soviet troops to stop reform movements.

Decolonization and the European Union

The decline of empire and the growth of European integration were connected. As overseas power weakened, western European governments increasingly concentrated on rebuilding their own societies and cooperating with neighbouring states. Decolonization was uneven: some colonies gained independence through negotiation, while others experienced long and violent wars.

Why European Empires Declined

Cause	Importance
European weakness after World War II	War had reduced military power, financial resources, and political confidence.
Colonial nationalism	Educated elites, veterans, workers, peasants, and political movements demanded self-government and national independence.
Wartime experience	Colonial soldiers and civilians saw European vulnerability and expected promises of freedom to be honoured.
United States and Soviet pressure	Both superpowers criticised old colonial empires, although each also pursued its own strategic interests.
United Nations principles	Self-determination and anti-colonial arguments gained international legitimacy.
Economic calculation	Maintaining armies and administrations overseas became expensive.
Moral and political opposition	Anti-imperialist movements inside Europe challenged colonial violence and racial hierarchy.

British Decolonization

Britain often attempted a negotiated and gradual transfer of power, although the process was not peaceful everywhere. India and Pakistan became independent in 1947, but partition caused mass migration and communal violence. Britain later withdrew from Palestine, Ceylon, Burma, Ghana, Nigeria, Kenya, and many other territories.

The Commonwealth allowed many former colonies to maintain voluntary links with Britain. Yet decolonization also produced disputes over borders, minority rights, migration, economic dependence, and the political institutions inherited from colonial rule.

French Decolonization

France initially tried to preserve a strong overseas empire. In Indochina, the French fought the nationalist and communist Viet Minh until defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. The conflict was followed by the division of Vietnam and growing American involvement.

The Algerian War, beginning in 1954, was especially traumatic because Algeria had a large European settler population and was legally treated as part of France. The National Liberation Front fought French forces in a brutal conflict involving guerrilla warfare, terrorism, torture, and political crisis. Charles de Gaulle returned to power in 1958 and eventually accepted Algerian independence in 1962.

THE SUEZ CRISIS, 1956

Britain, France, and Israel attacked Egypt after President Gamal Abdel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal. Pressure from the United States, Soviet Union, and United Nations forced withdrawal. The crisis showed that Britain and France could no longer act as independent global great powers without American support.

Other European Empires

Empire	Pattern of Decolonization
Netherlands	Attempted to restore control over Indonesia after World War II but recognised independence in 1949 after armed conflict and international pressure.
Belgium	Granted rapid independence to the Congo in 1960 with little preparation, contributing to political crisis and foreign intervention.
Portugal	Maintained African colonies until prolonged wars and the Carnation Revolution in Portugal in 1974 opened the way to independence.
Italy	Lost its colonies as a result of defeat in World War II; Libya became independent in 1951.
Spain	Retained some African territories longer but gradually withdrew, including from Spanish Sahara in 1975.

Migration and the Postcolonial Society

Decolonization did not end the connection between Europe and former colonies. Workers and families moved to Britain from the Caribbean, South Asia, and Africa; to France from North and West Africa; and to the Netherlands from Indonesia, Suriname, and the Caribbean. West Germany and other states also recruited guest workers from Turkey, southern Europe, and North Africa.

Change	Effect on Europe
Labour migration	Helped fill jobs during the post-war boom in factories, transport, construction, and public services.
Cultural diversity	Languages, religions, foods, music, and social traditions became more varied.
Citizenship debates	Governments argued over legal status, integration, national identity, and equal rights.
Racism and discrimination	Immigrant communities faced housing inequality, workplace discrimination, hostility, and far-right politics.
Postcolonial memory	European societies debated slavery, empire, colonial violence, and the meaning of national history.

Why European Integration Began

Goal	Reason
Prevent another Franco-German war	Shared control of strategic industries would make secret rearmament and economic rivalry more difficult.
Support economic recovery	Larger markets and lower barriers could increase production and trade.
Strengthen western Europe	Cooperation would improve Europe’s position between the United States and Soviet Union.
Manage German recovery	West Germany could regain sovereignty within a cooperative European framework.
Preserve democracy	Integration was associated with reconciliation, law, and democratic government.
Respond to declining empire	European states increasingly looked toward continental partnership rather than overseas dominance.

The European Coal and Steel Community

French foreign minister Robert Schuman, working with planner Jean Monnet, proposed placing French and West German coal and steel production under a common authority. The European Coal and Steel Community began in 1951 with six members: France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg.

WHY COAL AND STEEL?

Coal and steel were essential for industry and weapons. Joint control made economic recovery easier while reducing the chance that one member could secretly prepare for war against another.

The Treaties of Rome and the EEC

In 1957, the six members signed the Treaties of Rome. One treaty created the European Economic Community, usually called the Common Market. The other created Euratom for cooperation in nuclear energy. The EEC aimed to remove internal trade barriers, establish common external tariffs, allow freer movement, and coordinate economic policies.

Institution or Policy	Purpose
European Commission	Propose and administer common policies.
Council of Ministers	Represent member governments and make major decisions.
European Parliamentary Assembly	Provide debate and limited oversight; it later became the European Parliament.
European Court of Justice	Interpret community law and ensure that members followed treaty obligations.
Customs union	Remove tariffs among members and create a common external tariff.
Common Agricultural Policy	Support farmers, stabilise food supply, and create common agricultural rules.

Expansion and Deepening

Date	Development
1967	The main European communities combine their executive institutions.
1973	Britain, Ireland, and Denmark join the European Communities.
1979	Citizens directly elect members of the European Parliament for the first time.
1981	Greece joins after the restoration of democracy.
1985	Schengen Agreement begins a process toward reduced border controls among participating states.
1986	Spain and Portugal join after transitions from dictatorship to democracy.
1986	Single European Act sets the goal of completing a single internal market by 1992.

Limits and Debates

Debate	Main Question
National sovereignty	How much power should states transfer to common European institutions?
Economic winners and losers	How should richer and poorer regions share the benefits and costs of integration?
Agricultural policy	How could farm support be maintained without excessive cost or overproduction?
Democratic accountability	Were decisions being made too far from ordinary voters?
Atlantic or European identity	Should Europe depend mainly on the United States or develop greater political independence?
Expansion	Could institutions remain effective as more countries joined?

IMPORTANT DATE DISTINCTION

The European Economic Community existed during this chapter. The European Union was formally created later by the Maastricht Treaty, which took effect in 1993. However, the institutions and habits of cooperation developed between 1951 and 1989 formed its foundation.

Social and Cultural Change in Post-War Europe

Economic recovery changed everyday life. Rising wages, shorter working hours, mass education, television, automobiles, household appliances, tourism, and consumer credit created a broader consumer society. Young people developed distinct music, fashion, and political cultures.

Area	Major Change
Family and gender	Marriage and family life remained important, but women gained wider access to education and paid employment. Feminist movements demanded equal pay, reproductive rights, and legal equality.
Religion	Church attendance and religious authority declined in many western European societies, though patterns differed by country.
Education	Universities expanded and admitted a larger share of the population.
Youth culture	Students and young workers questioned authority, war, traditional morality, and consumer society.
1968 protests	Demonstrations in France, Italy, West Germany, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere challenged political and social institutions.
Environment	Industrial pollution and nuclear concerns helped create green politics and environmental movements.
Mass media	Television created shared national experiences and spread global popular culture.

Political Development in Western Europe

Country	Post-War Development
West Germany	A stable federal democracy developed under the Basic Law. Christian democratic and social democratic parties accepted the western alliance and social market economy.
France	The Fourth Republic suffered unstable governments and colonial crises. Charles de Gaulle created the stronger presidential Fifth Republic in 1958.
Britain	Labour governments built the welfare state and nationalised major industries; later Conservative governments reversed some state control.
Italy	A republic replaced the monarchy. Christian Democrats dominated coalition politics, while the Communist Party remained large but outside national government.
Spain and Portugal	Authoritarian regimes survived after 1945 but ended in the 1970s, allowing democratic transition and later entry into European institutions.
Greece	A military dictatorship ruled from 1967 to 1974 before democracy was restored.

CHAPTER IN ONE SENTENCE

Post-war Europe rebuilt through state planning, American assistance, and economic cooperation; remained divided by the Cold War; gave up most of its empires; and created institutions that gradually turned former rivals into partners.

Chapter on One Page

Theme	Essential Points
Reconstruction	War damage, displacement, shortages, democratic rebuilding, welfare-state expansion, and rapid western growth.
Marshall Plan	American aid from 1948; economic recovery, cooperation, containment of communism, and stronger Atlantic ties.
Eastern economy	Central planning, nationalisation, collectivisation, Comecon, heavy-industry priority, and consumer shortages.
Cold War division	Truman Doctrine, Berlin Blockade, two German states, Iron Curtain, rival military alliances, and nuclear deterrence.
NATO and Warsaw Pact	Collective defence systems that formalised the military division of Europe.
Resistance in the east	Hungary 1956, Prague 1968, dissidents, Solidarity, economic weakness, and reform under Gorbachev.
Decolonization	European weakness, colonial nationalism, international pressure, negotiated transfers, and violent wars.

Theme	Essential Points
European integration	ECSC, Treaties of Rome, EEC, enlargement, European Parliament elections, and Single European Act.
Social change	Consumer society, migration, women's movements, youth protest, secularisation, and environmental politics.
1989	Communist governments collapse and the Berlin Wall opens, ending the established Cold War order in Europe.

Key Terms

Term	Meaning
Cold War	Political, military, economic, and ideological conflict between the United States and Soviet Union without direct full-scale war between them.
Containment	Policy of preventing further expansion of Soviet influence.
Iron Curtain	Political and ideological division between eastern and western Europe.
Marshall Plan	American programme of economic aid for European recovery.
NATO	Western collective-defence alliance founded in 1949.
Warsaw Pact	Soviet-led military alliance founded in 1955.
Satellite state	A formally independent state strongly controlled by a more powerful country.
Comecon	Soviet-bloc organisation for economic coordination.
Détente	Reduction of Cold War tension through negotiation and cooperation.
Ostpolitik	West German policy of improving relations with eastern Europe.
Decolonization	Process through which colonies gained independence from imperial powers.
ECSC	European Coal and Steel Community, the first major supranational European community.
EEC	European Economic Community, created in 1957 to build a common market.
Supranational	Authority exercised above the level of individual nation-states.
Welfare state	System in which government provides broad social protection and public services.
Glasnost	Gorbachev's policy of greater openness and public discussion.
Perestroika	Gorbachev's policy of economic and political restructuring.

Comparison Table

Category	Western Europe	Eastern Europe
Political system	Multiparty elections and parliamentary democracy	One-party communist rule
Economic system	Mixed market economies and welfare states	Central planning and state ownership
Foreign alliance	United States and NATO	Soviet Union and Warsaw Pact
Economic organisation	OEEC, ECSC, EEC	Comecon
Public debate	Broad press and political freedom, though not without limits	Censorship, secret police, and restrictions on opposition
Living standards	Rapid consumer growth after recovery	Industrial growth but continuing shortages and limited consumer choice
Reform challenge	Student, feminist, labour, and environmental movements	Reform communists, dissidents, churches, workers, and nationalist movements

Facts to Remember

1. The Marshall Plan was announced in 1947 and operated mainly from 1948 to 1952.
2. The Soviet Union rejected Marshall Plan participation and created Comecon in 1949.
3. The Berlin Blockade lasted from 1948 to 1949 and was defeated by the western airlift.
4. NATO was founded in 1949; the Warsaw Pact was founded in 1955.

5. West Germany and East Germany were created in 1949.
6. The Berlin Wall was built in 1961.
7. Soviet force ended the Hungarian Uprising in 1956 and the Prague Spring in 1968.
8. The Helsinki Accords were signed in 1975.
9. Solidarity appeared in Poland in 1980 as an independent trade union.
10. The Suez Crisis of 1956 exposed the decline of British and French global power.
11. Algeria gained independence from France in 1962.
12. The European Coal and Steel Community was created in 1951.
13. The Treaties of Rome created the EEC and Euratom in 1957.
14. Britain, Ireland, and Denmark joined the European Communities in 1973.
15. The first direct elections to the European Parliament took place in 1979.
16. The Single European Act was signed in 1986.
17. The European Union was not formally created until 1993, after the period covered by this chapter.
18. Communist governments fell across eastern Europe in 1989, and the Berlin Wall opened in November.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. The Marshall Plan was designed primarily to
 - A. divide Germany permanently
 - B. support European recovery and reduce communist appeal
 - C. create the Warsaw Pact
 - D. end all state economic planning
2. Which development best demonstrated the success of western resistance during the Berlin Blockade?
 - A. The Hungarian Uprising
 - B. The Berlin Airlift
 - C. The Suez invasion
 - D. The Prague Spring
3. The Truman Doctrine is most closely associated with the policy of
 - A. appeasement
 - B. containment
 - C. isolationism
 - D. mercantilism
4. The Warsaw Pact was created mainly in response to
 - A. the creation of the League of Nations
 - B. West German membership in NATO
 - C. the Suez Crisis
 - D. British entry into the EEC
5. Which statement best describes the Iron Curtain?

- A. A common tariff among EEC states
 - B. The political and ideological division of Europe
 - C. A British colonial defence system
 - D. The legal name of the Berlin Airlift
6. The building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 was intended mainly to
- A. prevent Soviet troops from entering East Germany
 - B. stop migration from East Germany to the west
 - C. create a common German parliament
 - D. protect West Berlin from NATO
7. The Soviet response to the Hungarian Uprising and Prague Spring showed that
- A. eastern European states enjoyed complete sovereignty
 - B. the USSR would use military force to preserve communist control
 - C. NATO controlled eastern Europe
 - D. the Warsaw Pact had ended
8. The Suez Crisis of 1956 revealed that
- A. Britain and France had regained world dominance
 - B. European colonial powers were increasingly dependent on superpower support
 - C. Egypt had joined NATO
 - D. decolonization had ended
9. Which colony became independent after a long war against France?
- A. Canada
 - B. Algeria
 - C. Norway
 - D. Denmark
10. The European Coal and Steel Community was created mainly to
- A. coordinate Soviet industry
 - B. place key French and German industries under common control
 - C. replace NATO
 - D. restore colonial empires
11. The Treaties of Rome established the
- A. League of Nations
 - B. European Economic Community
 - C. Warsaw Pact
 - D. United Nations
12. A major feature of western European economies after 1945 was the
- A. complete elimination of private property
 - B. combination of market economics with welfare programmes
 - C. rejection of international trade

- D. end of government involvement in social policy
13. Comecon was associated with
- A. western European integration
 - B. economic cooperation within the Soviet bloc
 - C. British decolonization
 - D. nuclear disarmament
14. Which movement most directly challenged communist rule in Poland?
- A. Solidarity
 - B. the Red Brigades
 - C. the FLN
 - D. the Common Market
15. The Helsinki Accords became important to dissidents because they included commitments concerning
- A. colonial conquest
 - B. human rights
 - C. restoration of monarchy
 - D. abolition of elections
16. Ostpolitik was intended to improve relations between West Germany and
- A. Latin America
 - B. eastern Europe
 - C. African colonies
 - D. the Ottoman Empire
17. Which development most directly encouraged western European integration?
- A. Desire to prevent another Franco-German war
 - B. Restoration of absolute monarchy
 - C. Rejection of economic trade
 - D. Expansion of colonial empires
18. The first direct elections to the European Parliament occurred in
- A. 1945
 - B. 1951
 - C. 1979
 - D. 1989
19. Gorbachev's policy of glasnost encouraged
- A. greater openness and public discussion
 - B. return to Stalinist terror
 - C. expansion of colonial rule
 - D. creation of NATO
20. Which event best symbolised the collapse of Europe's Cold War division in 1989?

- A. Construction of the Berlin Wall
- B. Opening of the Berlin Wall
- C. Formation of NATO
- D. Signing of the Treaty of Rome

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-B · 3-B · 4-B · 5-B · 6-B · 7-B · 8-B · 9-B · 10-B · 11-B · 12-B · 13-B · 14-A · 15-B · 16-B · 17-A · 18-C · 19-A · 20-B

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one major difficulty faced by Europe in 1945. Describe one feature of the Marshall Plan. Explain one reason western European economies recovered rapidly.
2. Identify one source of Cold War tension in Europe. Describe one development during the Berlin Blockade. Explain one reason NATO was created.
3. Identify one challenge to Soviet rule in eastern Europe. Describe the Soviet response. Explain one reason communist control weakened by the late 1980s.
4. Identify one cause of decolonization. Describe one difference between British and French decolonization. Explain one effect of decolonization on European society.
5. Identify one early step toward European integration. Describe one purpose of the EEC. Explain one reason integration expanded after 1957.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the most important reason western Europe recovered economically after World War II.
2. Evaluate the extent to which the Marshall Plan changed relations between the United States and western Europe.
3. Evaluate the most important reason Europe became divided into rival blocs after 1945.
4. Compare the political and economic development of western and eastern Europe between 1945 and 1989.
5. Evaluate the most important cause of European decolonization after World War II.
6. Evaluate the extent to which European integration reduced nationalism and conflict between 1951 and 1989.
7. Evaluate the most important reason communist governments weakened in eastern Europe during the 1980s.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about how Europe changed between 1945 and 1989:

- A photograph or government report describing post-war destruction
- A speech supporting the Marshall Plan or containment
- A Soviet statement on eastern European security
- A NATO or Warsaw Pact declaration
- A colonial nationalist speech or independence declaration
- A Schuman Plan or Treaty of Rome extract
- A dissident statement from Hungary, Czechoslovakia, or Poland

PLANNING FRAME

Possible claim: Europe changed from a war-damaged centre of global empires into a recovered but divided continent. American and Soviet power shaped reconstruction and political systems, decolonization reduced Europe's overseas control, and western integration created a new form of regional cooperation.

Possible groups: Reconstruction and economic recovery · Cold War division and military alliances · Decline of empire · European cooperation and resistance to communist rule.

Useful outside evidence: Berlin Airlift, Comecon, welfare state, Suez Crisis, Algerian War, ECSC, Prague Spring, Solidarity, Single European Act, and Gorbachev's reforms.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one purpose of the Marshall Plan, describe one Soviet response, and explain one effect of European economic integration.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One purpose: The Marshall Plan provided resources for European recovery and aimed to reduce the political appeal of communist parties.

One Soviet response: The Soviet Union rejected the programme, prevented eastern European governments from joining, and later organised Comecon.

One effect of integration: The European Coal and Steel Community and the EEC increased trade and tied West Germany to its neighbours, helping reduce the danger of renewed conflict in western Europe.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know the scale of destruction, displacement, and shortage in Europe after 1945.
- Understand the purpose, operation, and limits of the Marshall Plan.
- Explain the difference between western mixed economies and eastern central planning.
- Know how welfare states expanded in western Europe.
- Explain the causes of the post-war economic boom and the difficulties of the 1970s.
- Know why the wartime alliance between the United States and Soviet Union collapsed.
- Remember the Truman Doctrine, containment, Berlin Blockade, and Berlin Airlift.
- Distinguish NATO from the Warsaw Pact.
- Explain nuclear deterrence and the security dilemma.
- Know why the Berlin Wall was built and why it became a Cold War symbol.
- Remember the Hungarian Uprising, Prague Spring, and Solidarity movement.
- Understand détente, Ostpolitik, and the Helsinki Accords.
- Explain how Gorbachev's reforms weakened Soviet control in eastern Europe.
- Know the main causes and different patterns of decolonization.
- Remember the significance of the Suez Crisis and Algerian War.
- Explain how migration changed post-war European society.
- Know why the ECSC was created and why coal and steel were selected.
- Remember the Treaties of Rome and the main goals of the EEC.
- Know the major enlargements and the significance of the Single European Act.
- Remember that the European Union was formally created only after this chapter's period.

- Explain the importance of 1989 and the opening of the Berlin Wall.

8. Contemporary Europe (1989–Present)

Revolutions, integration, globalization, and the struggle to define Europe after the Cold War

The year 1989 marked one of the most dramatic turning points in modern European history. Communist governments collapsed across eastern Europe, the Berlin Wall opened, and the division created after World War II began to disappear. Germany was reunited in 1990, and the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991. Many Europeans believed that democracy, market economics, and peaceful cooperation had won a lasting victory.

The years that followed brought real achievements, but not a simple end to conflict. The European Union expanded across much of the continent, introduced a single currency, removed many internal borders, and created common laws and institutions. At the same time, the breakup of Yugoslavia produced war and ethnic cleansing, economic globalization created both opportunity and insecurity, and the financial crisis exposed deep differences between European economies.

In the twenty-first century, Europe has faced terrorism, migration disputes, demographic ageing, climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, renewed nationalism, Brexit, and Russia’s war against Ukraine. Contemporary Europe is therefore defined by two connected forces: a strong movement toward integration and an equally strong debate about sovereignty, identity, security, and the limits of common action.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Fall of the Berlin Wall and Reunification of Germany
- Globalization and Challenges in the 21st Century
- European Union: Achievements and Current Issues

THE BIG PICTURE

After 1989, Europe moved from Cold War division toward a wider democratic and economic community. The European Union became the continent’s most important experiment in shared government, but it never replaced the nation-state. The central question of contemporary European history is how far Europeans are willing and able to act together while preserving different national interests, political traditions, and identities.

Essential Timeline

Date	Development	Importance
1989	Communist governments collapse across eastern Europe; Berlin Wall opens	The Cold War division of Europe begins to end.
1990	Germany is reunified on 3 October	The German question is settled through democratic choice and international agreement.
1991	Wars begin in Yugoslavia; Soviet Union dissolves	The communist bloc disappears, but nationalism produces new conflict.
1992–1993	Maastricht Treaty is signed and enters into force	The European Union is formally created and economic and monetary union begins.
1995	Austria, Finland, and Sweden join the EU; Schengen border-free travel takes effect	Integration deepens and expands after the Cold War.
1997	Treaty of Amsterdam is signed	EU cooperation grows in justice, foreign policy, and citizens’ rights.
1999	Euro is launched for electronic and accounting use; Kosovo War	Monetary integration advances while Balkan conflict continues.
2001	Treaty of Nice is signed; terrorist attacks in the United States reshape security policy	The EU prepares for enlargement and Europe joins a new security environment.
2002	Euro notes and coins enter circulation	A common currency becomes part of everyday life in participating countries.
2004	Ten countries join the EU, most from central and eastern Europe	The largest enlargement reunites much of the continent institutionally.

Date	Development	Importance
2005	French and Dutch voters reject the proposed EU constitution	Public support for deeper integration proves limited and uneven.
2007	Bulgaria and Romania join the EU; Lisbon Treaty is signed	Enlargement continues and institutions are redesigned.
2008	Global financial crisis reaches Europe	Bank failures, recession, unemployment, and public debt challenge the European model.
2009	Lisbon Treaty enters into force	The EU gains a permanent European Council president and stronger parliamentary powers.
2010–2012	Eurozone debt crisis	Greece and other states require assistance, creating conflict over austerity and solidarity.
2013	Croatia joins the EU	The Union reaches 28 members before Brexit.
2014	Russia annexes Crimea; conflict begins in eastern Ukraine	European security again centres on borders, sovereignty, and relations with Russia.
2015	Large refugee and migrant arrivals; terrorist attacks in Paris	Migration, border control, integration, and security become major political issues.
2016	United Kingdom votes to leave the EU	Brexit reveals the strength of national sovereignty and Euroscepticism.
2020	United Kingdom leaves the EU; COVID-19 pandemic spreads across Europe	The Union falls to 27 members and faces a shared public-health and economic emergency.
2021	EU recovery programme begins distributing pandemic support	Common borrowing marks a major act of financial solidarity.
2022	Russia launches a full-scale invasion of Ukraine	War returns on a large scale and transforms European defence, energy, and enlargement policy.
2024	EU adopts a new Pact on Migration and Asylum	Member states attempt to combine stronger procedures with shared responsibility.
2025	Bulgaria and Romania become full members of the Schengen area	Border-free travel expands further.
2026	Bulgaria adopts the euro	The euro area grows to 21 EU member states.

Fall of the Berlin Wall and Reunification of Germany

The fall of the Berlin Wall did not come from one decision or one leader. It resulted from years of economic weakness, political repression, civil resistance, and changing Soviet policy. By 1989, communist governments could no longer control information, satisfy consumer expectations, or rely with certainty on Soviet military intervention.

Why Communist Rule Collapsed

Cause	How It Weakened Communist Rule
Economic stagnation	Central planning had produced heavy industry but struggled to provide quality consumer goods, modern technology, and efficient services.
Debt and shortages	Several eastern European states borrowed from western banks during the 1970s and then faced debt, inflation, and declining living standards.
Loss of legitimacy	Official claims of worker power conflicted with one-party rule, censorship, secret police, and privileges for party elites.
Civil society	Churches, trade unions, intellectual circles, environmental groups, and underground publications created spaces outside state control.
Western influence	Television, radio, travel, and family connections made the higher living standards and political freedoms of western Europe visible.
Gorbachev's reforms	Glasnost and perestroika weakened fear, while the Soviet refusal to use force removed the military guarantee behind eastern European regimes.
National feeling	Many people associated communist rule with Soviet domination and demanded control over their own national political life.

A PEACEFUL REVOLUTION - BUT NOT EVERYWHERE

Most communist governments in eastern Europe fell with limited violence in 1989. Poland negotiated elections, Hungary opened its political system, Czechoslovakia experienced the Velvet Revolution, and East Germany yielded to mass protest. Romania was the major exception: Nicolae Ceaușescu's regime collapsed after violent clashes, and he and his wife were executed.

Poland and Hungary Lead the Change

Poland provided an early model of organised resistance. The independent trade union Solidarity, led by Lech Wałęsa, survived repression during the 1980s with support from workers, intellectuals, and the Catholic Church. Economic crisis forced the government into Round Table negotiations in 1989. Partly free elections produced a decisive victory for Solidarity candidates, and Poland formed the first non-communist-led government in the Soviet bloc.

Hungary's communist leaders introduced economic reforms and negotiated a transition to multiparty politics. In May 1989, Hungary began dismantling its border fence with Austria. During the summer, thousands of East Germans travelled through Hungary and escaped to the west. The opening of this route weakened East Germany's ability to keep its citizens inside the country.

East Germany and the Opening of the Berlin Wall

East Germany appeared stable, but its government faced a growing crisis. Citizens sought refuge in West German embassies, escaped through Hungary, and joined public demonstrations. Weekly Monday demonstrations in Leipzig demanded freedom of travel, free elections, and political reform. The crowds grew from thousands to hundreds of thousands.

On 9 November 1989, an East German official mistakenly announced at a televised press conference that new travel rules would take effect immediately. Large crowds went to the border crossings. Guards had no clear orders and eventually opened the gates. People from both sides climbed onto the wall, crossed the border, and celebrated together. The wall had lost its power because the government was no longer willing or able to defend it with mass violence.

WHY THE BERLIN WALL FELL

- East Germans had stopped believing that reform under the old leadership was possible.
- Escape routes through Hungary and Czechoslovakia made border control ineffective.
- Large demonstrations showed that fear of the state was weakening.
- Gorbachev would not send Soviet troops to rescue the East German government.
- Confused communication on 9 November turned a political crisis into an immediate opening.

From the Wall to Reunification

The opening of the wall raised a question that had seemed impossible only months earlier: should the two German states reunite? West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl strongly supported rapid unity. Many East Germans initially demanded democratic reform within their own state, but economic uncertainty and the attraction of West Germany's currency, welfare system, and institutions increased support for reunification.

Date	Step Toward Unity
March 1990	East Germany holds its first free parliamentary election. Parties supporting rapid reunification win.
July 1990	A monetary, economic, and social union introduces the West German deutsche mark in East Germany.
August 1990	The Unification Treaty sets the legal terms by which East Germany will join the Federal Republic.
September 1990	The Two Plus Four Treaty is signed by the two German states and the four former occupying powers.
3 October 1990	East Germany joins the Federal Republic of Germany; five eastern Länder are re-created.
December 1990	The first all-German federal election since 1932 is held.

The Two Plus Four Settlement

German reunification required international agreement because the United States, Soviet Union, Britain, and France still held rights dating from the occupation of Germany after World War II. In the Two Plus Four negotiations, the two German states and the four powers settled borders, military questions, and sovereignty. The united Germany accepted the existing border with Poland, limited the size of its armed forces, renounced nuclear weapons under existing obligations, and remained a member of NATO.

Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev accepted reunification in return for financial assistance and guarantees concerning the withdrawal of Soviet forces. The peaceful settlement was possible because the Cold War was ending and because post-war West Germany had built a democratic reputation among its neighbours.

GERMAN UNITY: POLITICAL SUCCESS, SOCIAL CHALLENGE

Political reunification occurred in less than a year, but economic and social unity required decades. East German institutions were absorbed into the western system almost immediately. This created legal clarity and access to a stable democracy, but it also meant that eastern people often experienced reunification as the replacement of their institutions rather than an equal merger.

The Difficulties of Reunification

Challenge	Meaning
Industrial collapse	Many East German factories could not compete in a market economy and closed or reduced employment.
Treuhand privatisation	A public agency sold or closed thousands of state-owned enterprises, modernising the economy but causing resentment and unemployment.
Migration	Many younger and skilled eastern Germans moved west, weakening some towns and regions.

Challenge	Meaning
Infrastructure gap	Large public investment improved roads, telecommunications, housing, and public services in the east.
Different experiences	Eastern and western Germans had lived under different political systems, workplaces, schools, media, and social expectations.
Memory and identity	Debates continued over communist repression, everyday life in the GDR, collaboration with the Stasi, and nostalgia known as Ostalgie.
Political division	Voting patterns and trust in institutions often remained different between eastern and western regions.

The End of the Soviet Union

The revolutions of 1989 weakened the Soviet Union itself. Gorbachev's reforms encouraged public debate but failed to solve economic decline. National movements grew in the Baltic republics, the Caucasus, Ukraine, and elsewhere. In August 1991, hard-line officials attempted a coup against Gorbachev. The coup failed, but Russian president Boris Yeltsin emerged stronger.

In December 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved into fifteen independent states. The Russian Federation inherited most Soviet international responsibilities and nuclear weapons. The end of the USSR removed the main military and ideological rival of western Europe, but it also created economic collapse, political uncertainty, border disputes, and conflicts in several former Soviet regions.

A New Political Map of Europe

Region or State	Result After the Cold War
Czechoslovakia	Separated peacefully into the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993 in the "Velvet Divorce."
Baltic states	Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania restored independence and later joined both NATO and the EU.
Former Soviet republics	Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, and other republics became sovereign states with different political paths.
Former Warsaw Pact states	Most adopted multiparty elections and market reforms; many later joined NATO and the EU.
Germany	Reunification created the largest population and economy within the European Union.
Yugoslavia	The federal state broke apart through violent wars rather than negotiated transition.

The Yugoslav Wars

The breakup of Yugoslavia showed that the end of communism did not automatically produce peace. Yugoslavia contained several republics, national groups, religions, and historical memories. Economic crisis weakened the federal system during the 1980s. Political leaders, especially Serbian president Slobodan Milošević, used nationalism to build support.

Conflict or Development	Importance
Slovenia, 1991	A short conflict followed its declaration of independence.
Croatia, 1991–1995	War involved Croatian forces, local Serb forces, and the Yugoslav army; communities were expelled and towns destroyed.
Bosnia, 1992–1995	Bosniaks, Serbs, and Croats fought for territory. Siege warfare, detention camps, mass rape, and ethnic cleansing shocked Europe.
Srebrenica, 1995	Bosnian Serb forces murdered more than 8,000 Bosniak men and boys in an act recognised as genocide.
Dayton Agreement, 1995	American-led negotiations ended the Bosnian war and created a complex federal settlement.
Kosovo, 1998–1999	Conflict between Serbian forces and Kosovo Albanian separatists led to NATO air strikes and later international administration.
International justice	The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia prosecuted individuals for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

THE LESSON OF YUGOSLAVIA

The Yugoslav wars demonstrated that nationalism could still divide European societies and that international institutions often responded slowly to mass violence. They also encouraged later European efforts to strengthen conflict prevention, human-rights law, peacekeeping, and cooperation with the United States through NATO.

Globalization and Challenges in the 21st Century

Globalization refers to the growing movement of goods, money, information, technology, culture, and people across national borders. Europe had always been connected to the wider world, but after 1989 these connections became faster and more intense. Container shipping, air travel, the internet, mobile communication, and international finance made distant markets and events part of everyday European life.

Economic Globalization

Area	Effect on Europe
Trade	European firms gained access to larger markets but also faced competition from producers in Asia, North America, and emerging economies.
Production networks	Companies divided production among several countries, creating efficient supply chains but greater dependence on distant suppliers.
Finance	Capital moved rapidly across borders. This supported investment but also allowed financial shocks to spread quickly.
Multinational companies	Large firms organised research, production, marketing, and taxation across different jurisdictions.
Labour markets	Workers moved within Europe, while manufacturing jobs declined in some older industrial regions.
Consumer culture	Global brands, entertainment, food, fashion, and online services became widely available.
Regulation	European states increasingly used EU-level rules to influence companies too large to regulate effectively through one country alone.

From Industrial to Post-Industrial Economies

After 1970, employment in coal, steel, shipbuilding, textiles, and mass manufacturing declined in many western European regions. By the end of the twentieth century, services such as finance, education, health care, tourism, retail, media, software, and public administration employed a growing share of workers. Some manufacturing remained highly successful, especially in advanced machinery, automobiles, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, aerospace, and luxury goods.

The transition created winners and losers. Highly educated workers in major cities often benefited from technology and global markets. Former industrial towns could face unemployment, population decline, and a sense of political neglect. These differences helped produce support for parties critical of globalization, immigration, and established political elites.

The Digital Revolution

Development	Historical Importance
Internet and mobile communication	Information, commerce, entertainment, and political organisation became immediate and transnational.
Automation	Machines and software improved productivity but changed the skills required in factories and offices.
Platform economy	Digital companies transformed shopping, transport, advertising, news, and personal data collection.
Social media	Citizens could organise and communicate directly, but false information and political manipulation also spread quickly.

Development	Historical Importance
Cybersecurity	Governments, banks, hospitals, and infrastructure became vulnerable to hacking and hostile state activity.
Artificial intelligence	New systems promise productivity and scientific gains while raising questions about employment, privacy, bias, and regulation.
Digital regulation	The EU increasingly tried to protect privacy, competition, and online safety through common rules.

GLOBALIZATION IS NOT THE SAME AS EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Globalization connects Europe to the entire world through markets, technology, migration, and culture. European integration is a political and legal project created by European states. The EU is partly a response to globalization: it gives European countries a larger common market and more bargaining power, but it also requires them to share some decision-making.

Migration and Multicultural Europe

Post-war migration had already connected Europe to former colonies and southern labour markets. After 1989, migration became even more varied. People moved from eastern to western Europe, from rural areas to cities, and from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America to Europe. Refugees also arrived from wars in the Balkans, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Ukraine, and other regions.

Migration supported economies with ageing populations and labour shortages. It also enriched European food, music, religion, language, business, and urban life. At the same time, integration proved difficult where housing, schools, and employment were unequal. Debates over Islam, secularism, citizenship, border control, asylum, and national identity became central to politics.

Issue	Why It Is Difficult
Economic need	Many European economies need workers in health care, agriculture, construction, technology, transport, and personal services.
Humanitarian duty	European states are bound by refugee law and human-rights commitments to protect people fleeing persecution.
Border pressure	Frontline states face unequal responsibility because geography directs many arrivals toward the Mediterranean and eastern borders.
Integration	Language education, employment, housing, and equal treatment affect whether newcomers become secure members of society.
Public anxiety	Rapid change can create fear about jobs, welfare, security, religion, and cultural identity.
Political conflict	Parties disagree over legal migration, asylum rules, deportation, burden-sharing, and control of external borders.

Population Ageing and the Welfare State

European birth rates generally declined while life expectancy increased. An older population placed pressure on pensions, health systems, long-term care, and public finances. Governments responded by raising retirement ages, encouraging employment among women and older people, supporting families, and using immigration to fill labour shortages. These reforms often caused protest because citizens viewed social protection as a basic achievement of post-war Europe.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEM

A welfare state is easier to finance when a large working population supports a smaller retired population. When the number of retirees rises and the workforce grows slowly or shrinks, governments must choose among higher taxes, later retirement, lower benefits, increased productivity, and more immigration. No single solution is politically easy.

Terrorism, Security, and Civil Liberties

Europe faced several forms of terrorism. Older separatist organisations such as the Irish Republican Army and the Basque ETA declined through political agreements and policing. New jihadist networks carried out attacks in Madrid in 2004, London in 2005, Paris in 2015, Brussels in 2016, and other cities. Some attackers were linked to international organisations, while others were European citizens radicalised at home or online.

Governments increased intelligence cooperation, border databases, surveillance, and protection of public spaces. These measures produced continuing debate about privacy, discrimination, emergency powers, and the balance between security and civil liberties.

The Global Financial Crisis and Eurozone Crisis

The financial crisis that began in the United States in 2008 quickly reached Europe. Banks had invested in risky assets and depended on international credit. Governments rescued financial institutions to prevent collapse, but recession reduced tax revenue and increased unemployment and public debt.

Development	Effect
Banking crisis	Banks faced losses, credit froze, and governments used public funds to stabilise the financial system.
Recession	Production and trade fell, unemployment rose, and young people faced especially weak job markets.
Sovereign debt	Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Cyprus, and Spain faced different combinations of debt, banking, and borrowing problems.
Euro difficulty	Countries shared a currency but retained separate national budgets and different levels of productivity and debt.
Assistance programmes	EU institutions, the European Central Bank, and the International Monetary Fund provided loans in exchange for reforms and spending cuts.
Austerity debate	Supporters argued that spending cuts restored confidence; critics said they deepened recession and placed costs on ordinary citizens.
Political effect	Trust in established parties and EU institutions declined, strengthening radical left, nationalist, and Eurosceptic movements.

WHY THE EUROZONE CRISIS WAS MORE THAN A DEBT CRISIS

The crisis revealed an incomplete monetary union. The euro created one currency and one central bank, but taxation, public spending, banking supervision, and debt remained largely national. Member states therefore shared financial risk without sharing a full federal budget or government. Later reforms strengthened banking supervision and emergency support, but the basic tension remained.

Nationalism, Populism, and Democratic Tension

Many European voters became dissatisfied with established centre-left and centre-right parties. New movements criticised immigration, austerity, globalization, political elites, and EU authority. Some combined economic protection with cultural nationalism. Others demanded direct democracy or stronger national control over borders and law.

Populism is a broad political style that claims to represent “the people” against a corrupt or distant elite. It can appear on the left or right. Its rise reflected real social change, but it also created concern where leaders attacked independent courts, journalists, universities, minority rights, or constitutional limits. The EU struggled to defend common democratic standards while respecting national elections and sovereignty.

Brexit

Aspect	Importance
Long background	Britain had often supported economic cooperation while resisting political union, the euro, and the removal of all border controls.

Aspect	Importance
2016 referendum	A majority voted to leave after a campaign centred on sovereignty, immigration, economic costs, and distrust of institutions.
Political crisis	Parliament and government struggled for several years to agree on the terms of withdrawal and future relations.
Withdrawal	The United Kingdom formally left the EU on 31 January 2020 and left the single market and customs union at the end of that year.
Economic effect	New customs, regulatory, and mobility barriers complicated trade and investment, although the UK retained broad access under a cooperation agreement.
Northern Ireland	Avoiding a hard border on the island of Ireland required special arrangements because Northern Ireland shares a land border with the EU.
Historical meaning	Brexit proved that integration was reversible and that national identity could outweigh expected economic advantages.

Climate Change and the Green Transition

Climate change became a major European political issue as temperatures rose, heat waves intensified, glaciers retreated, droughts affected agriculture, and floods and fires caused repeated damage. European governments developed renewable energy, carbon pricing, efficiency standards, public transport, and targets for reducing greenhouse-gas emissions.

The green transition creates both benefits and conflict. It can reduce pollution, energy dependence, and long-term climate risk. It also requires large investment and can raise short-term costs for households, farmers, transport, and energy-intensive industries. Political success depends on whether governments can combine environmental goals with affordability, employment, and energy security.

The COVID-19 Pandemic

Area	Effect
Public health	Governments imposed restrictions, expanded hospitals, purchased vaccines, and tried to protect vulnerable groups.
Economy	Lockdowns damaged travel, retail, culture, and small business while accelerating online work and shopping.
Borders	Temporary border controls challenged the idea of unrestricted movement within Europe.
EU response	Initial national competition gave way to common vaccine purchasing and a large recovery programme financed through shared borrowing.
Inequality	The pandemic affected workers, students, women, migrants, and regions differently.
Politics	Emergency rules raised questions about expertise, misinformation, protest, and the limits of government power.

Russia, Ukraine, and the Return of Large-Scale War

Relations between Russia and western institutions became increasingly tense after the Cold War. NATO and the EU expanded eastward, while Russian leaders argued that western influence threatened their security and status. Many central and eastern Europeans viewed membership in western institutions as protection from earlier Russian and Soviet domination.

Russia annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 and supported separatist forces in eastern Ukraine. On 24 February 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion. European states imposed sanctions, supported Ukraine with financial, humanitarian, and military assistance, accepted millions of refugees, and reduced dependence on Russian energy. Finland joined NATO in 2023 and Sweden in 2024, ending long traditions of military non-alignment.

Area	European Response or Effect
Defence	European states increased military spending and reconsidered their dependence on the United States.

Area	European Response or Effect
Energy	Governments diversified gas and oil supplies and accelerated investment in renewables and infrastructure.
Refugees	Millions of Ukrainians received temporary protection across Europe.
Enlargement	EU membership for Ukraine, Moldova, and the western Balkans gained new geopolitical importance.
Sanctions	Economic measures demonstrated collective action but also created costs for European consumers and firms.
Political unity	The war strengthened cooperation in some areas while disagreements continued over weapons, negotiations, and the speed of support.
Historical memory	The invasion revived fears of conquest, occupation, and forced border change that had shaped twentieth-century Europe.

THE MAIN CHALLENGES OF CONTEMPORARY EUROPE

- Maintaining democracy and the rule of law while political trust declines.
- Remaining economically competitive during digital and green transitions.
- Managing migration while respecting security and human rights.
- Financing welfare states in ageing societies.
- Balancing national sovereignty with the need for common European action.
- Protecting energy, digital, and military security in a more dangerous world.
- Expanding the European Union without weakening its ability to make decisions.

European Union: Achievements and Current Issues

The European Union developed from institutions created after World War II, but it changed fundamentally after 1989. The end of the Cold War opened the possibility of uniting western and eastern Europe. At the same time, member states decided to deepen cooperation through a common currency, shared citizenship, stronger institutions, and new policy areas.

The Maastricht Treaty and the Creation of the EU

The Treaty on European Union was signed at Maastricht in February 1992 and entered into force in November 1993. It formally created the European Union. The treaty did not abolish the existing European Communities. Instead, it placed them within a broader system that also included cooperation in foreign and security policy and in justice and home affairs.

Maastricht Development	Meaning
European Union	Gave the integration project a new political name and wider responsibilities.
Economic and Monetary Union	Set a timetable and rules for creating the euro and a European Central Bank.
EU citizenship	Gave citizens rights to move, live, vote in local and European elections, and receive diplomatic protection across the Union.
Common Foreign and Security Policy	Created a framework for members to coordinate positions beyond trade and economics.
Justice and Home Affairs	Encouraged cooperation on borders, asylum, immigration, crime, and policing.
Subsidiarity	Declared that decisions should be taken as closely as possible to citizens when national action is sufficient.
Convergence criteria	Required states seeking the euro to meet standards on inflation, debt, deficits, exchange rates, and interest rates.

THE EU IS NOT A COUNTRY

The European Union has laws, a parliament, a court, a central bank for the euro area, a budget, and common policies. Yet member states remain sovereign countries with their own constitutions, armies, taxation systems, welfare states, and national elections. The EU is a unique system of shared sovereignty rather than a traditional federation or a simple international organisation.

How the Main EU Institutions Work

Institution	Main Role
European Council	National heads of government or state set the broad political direction. It does not normally pass laws.
European Commission	Proposes legislation, enforces EU rules, manages programmes, and represents the common European interest.
Council of the European Union	National ministers meet by policy area and adopt laws together with the European Parliament.
European Parliament	Directly elected members debate and pass laws, approve the budget, and supervise the Commission.
Court of Justice of the EU	Interprets EU law and ensures that it is applied consistently across member states.
European Central Bank	Sets monetary policy for countries using the euro and helps supervise major banks.
National governments and parliaments	Implement many EU rules, collect most taxes, and retain authority in areas not transferred to the Union.

DO NOT CONFUSE THESE THREE COUNCILS

- European Council: national leaders who set the EU's general direction.
- Council of the European Union: national ministers who help pass EU laws.
- Council of Europe: a separate international organisation concerned with democracy and human rights; it is not an EU institution.

The Single Market and the Four Freedoms

The single market aims to allow goods, services, capital, and people to move across participating countries with fewer national barriers. Common rules on product safety, competition, consumer protection, professional qualifications, and public purchasing make cross-border activity easier. The market gives European firms access to hundreds of millions of consumers, but it also requires states to accept common regulation and competition.

Freedom	Meaning
Goods	Products can be sold across the single market without internal customs duties, subject to common standards.
Services	Businesses and professionals can provide many services across borders, though national restrictions remain in some areas.
Capital	Money and investment can move more freely between member states.
People	EU citizens may generally live, work, study, and retire in another member state, subject to legal conditions.

Schengen and Border-Free Travel

The Schengen system removed routine checks at many internal European borders while strengthening cooperation at external borders. It made daily commuting, tourism, study, and business easier. Schengen is not identical to the EU: some non-EU countries participate, while not every EU member is fully inside the area. Governments may temporarily restore internal controls during serious security or public-health concerns.

The Euro

The euro began in 1999 as an electronic and accounting currency. Notes and coins appeared in 2002. Participating states transferred monetary policy to the European Central Bank. The common currency removed exchange costs, made prices easier to compare, and became a visible symbol of integration.

Type	Point
Advantage	No exchange-rate uncertainty among member countries using the euro.
Advantage	Easier travel, trade, investment, and price comparison.
Advantage	A large international currency can increase European financial influence.
Limitation	One interest rate may not suit economies growing at different speeds.
Limitation	Countries cannot devalue a national currency during crisis.
Limitation	Fiscal policy remains national, creating conflict over debt and financial responsibility.
Reform after crisis	Bank supervision, rescue funds, and fiscal coordination were strengthened, but monetary union remains incomplete.

Enlargement After the Cold War

Year	Countries or Development	Importance
1995	Austria, Finland, Sweden	The EU expands into previously neutral northern Europe.
2004	Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia	The largest enlargement brings eight former communist states into the Union.
2007	Bulgaria, Romania	Southeastern enlargement continues.
2013	Croatia	A former Yugoslav republic joins after political and legal reforms.
2020	United Kingdom withdraws	Membership falls from 28 to 27.
Current process	Western Balkan states, Ukraine, Moldova, and others pursue different stages of accession	Enlargement is again treated as a security and geopolitical policy.

Why Countries Wanted to Join

Reason	Importance
Democratic security	Membership was seen as protection against authoritarian return and political isolation.
Economic access	Countries gained entry to the single market, investment, development funds, and labour mobility.
Legal reform	The accession process encouraged changes in courts, administration, competition, environmental standards, and minority protection.
Western identity	For many central and eastern Europeans, joining meant a return to Europe after decades of Soviet control.
Geopolitical protection	EU membership, often alongside NATO membership, reduced vulnerability to outside pressure.
Modernisation	Infrastructure, agriculture, education, and regional development received large financial support.

Treaties After Maastricht

Treaty or Development	Importance
Amsterdam Treaty, 1997/1999	Expanded cooperation in employment, justice, migration, foreign policy, and rights; incorporated much of Schengen into the EU framework.
Nice Treaty, 2001/2003	Adjusted voting and institutions in preparation for eastern enlargement.
Proposed Constitutional Treaty, 2004–2005	Attempted to simplify the Union but failed after referendum defeats in France and the Netherlands.
Lisbon Treaty, 2007/2009	Strengthened the Parliament, created a permanent European Council president, expanded majority voting, and gave legal force to the Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Treaty or Development	Importance
Withdrawal clause	Lisbon's Article 50 created a formal process for leaving the Union, later used by the United Kingdom.

Achievements of the European Union

Achievement	Why It Matters
Peace and reconciliation	France and Germany moved from repeated war to close institutional cooperation.
Democratic enlargement	Membership helped anchor democratic government across southern, central, and eastern Europe.
Single market	Common rules and open trade created one of the world's largest economic areas.
Free movement	Millions of Europeans have studied, worked, lived, travelled, and formed families across borders.
Common currency	The euro simplified exchange and created a shared monetary system for most member states.
Regional development	EU funds supported roads, railways, environmental projects, agriculture, research, and poorer regions.
Rights and standards	Common rules influenced consumer safety, labour rights, privacy, competition, and environmental protection.
Global influence	Acting together gives European states more weight in trade negotiations, sanctions, climate policy, and diplomacy.
Education and identity	Programmes such as Erasmus encouraged cross-border learning and a stronger European identity.

The Democratic Debate

Critics often describe a “democratic deficit” in the EU. They argue that decision-making is complex, distant, and difficult for ordinary citizens to understand. The European Commission is not elected directly, and negotiations among national governments can lack transparency. Supporters reply that the Parliament is directly elected, national ministers are responsible to national voters, national parliaments examine legislation, and the Commission must be approved by the Parliament.

The deeper issue is that citizens may want European solutions without accepting the political compromises, costs, or shared authority required to create them. National elections can punish governments for EU decisions that those same governments helped negotiate. This makes responsibility difficult to identify.

Sovereignty and the Limits of Integration

Question	Meaning
Argument for integration	Problems such as trade, climate, migration, technology, finance, and security cross borders and require common rules.
Argument for sovereignty	National governments are closer to voters and reflect different histories, languages, welfare systems, and political choices.
Shared law	EU law can override conflicting national rules in fields where member states have transferred authority.
Opt-outs	Some states remain outside particular policies, such as the euro or parts of justice cooperation.
Unanimity	Sensitive issues such as taxation and much foreign policy often require agreement by every member, slowing action.
Majority voting	It allows decisions without unanimity but can leave a national government outvoted.
Brexit lesson	A state can recover formal control by leaving, but withdrawal also creates new economic and diplomatic barriers.

Rule of Law and Common Values

EU treaties require democracy, human rights, independent courts, and the rule of law. Conflict arises when member governments are accused of weakening judicial independence, media freedom, academic freedom, or minority protection. EU institutions may use court cases, financial conditions, or political procedures, but enforcement is difficult because national governments control many institutions and may protect one another.

WHY THE RULE-OF-LAW DEBATE MATTERS

The single market and mutual cooperation depend on trust that courts are independent, contracts are enforced, public money is protected, and citizens receive equal legal treatment. The issue is therefore not only moral or constitutional; it affects the practical operation of the entire Union.

The EU and the Wider World

Area	EU Role and Limitation
Trade power	The EU negotiates trade agreements and uses access to its market to influence global standards.
Foreign policy	Members coordinate diplomacy and sanctions, but national interests can prevent a single position.
Defence	Most EU members rely on NATO for collective defence; EU defence cooperation is growing but remains limited.
Development and humanitarian aid	EU institutions and member states are major providers of international assistance.
Climate diplomacy	The Union seeks to influence global environmental rules through targets, trade policy, and finance.
Neighbourhood policy	The EU offers trade, aid, and possible membership to encourage stability and reform near its borders.
Strategic dependence	Energy, technology, defence, and critical raw materials reveal dependence on the United States, China, Russia, and global supply chains.

The European Union in 2026

Indicator	Current Position
Member states	27 countries
Euro area	21 EU countries use the euro after Bulgaria joined on 1 January 2026
Schengen area	29 European countries: 25 EU members and four associated non-EU countries
Recent withdrawal	The United Kingdom left the EU on 31 January 2020
Latest EU enlargement	Croatia joined on 1 July 2013
Current strategic concerns	Democracy, security and defence, competitiveness, migration, green and digital transition, and future enlargement

ACHIEVEMENTS AND LIMITS - A BALANCED VIEW

The EU has made war among its core members difficult to imagine, created a vast common market, supported democratic transitions, and given Europeans rights that earlier generations did not possess. Yet it is not a complete political union. National governments still control most taxation, welfare, military power, and political loyalty. The EU is strongest when its members agree that common action serves national interests; it is weakest when those interests sharply divide.

Current Issues

Issue	Central Question
Competitiveness	Europe must raise productivity, innovation, investment, and energy affordability while protecting social standards.

Issue	Central Question
Security and defence	The war in Ukraine and uncertainty in global alliances increase pressure for stronger European capability.
Migration and asylum	Members seek orderly borders and shared responsibility but disagree over distribution, return, and legal routes.
Green transition	Climate targets require changes in energy, transport, buildings, agriculture, and industry.
Digital power	Europe aims to regulate global technology companies while developing its own AI, chips, data, and cybersecurity capacity.
Democracy and rule of law	Disinformation, political polarisation, media freedom, and judicial independence test common values.
Economic inequality	Differences between regions and member states create conflict over budgets, debt, wages, and investment.
Future enlargement	Admitting new members may increase security and influence but requires institutional and budget reform.
Public support	Integration depends on whether citizens believe that common institutions improve daily life and remain democratically accountable.

CHAPTER IN ONE SENTENCE

Since 1989, Europe has replaced Cold War division with wider democracy and integration, but globalization, economic inequality, migration, nationalism, security threats, and disagreements over sovereignty continue to test the European project.

Chapter on One Page

Theme	Essential Point
1989	Communist governments collapse; the Berlin Wall opens.
German reunification	Free elections, monetary union, the Unification Treaty, and the Two Plus Four settlement lead to unity on 3 October 1990.
Post-communist transition	Former communist states adopt elections and market economies, but experience unemployment, inequality, corruption, and political uncertainty.
New conflicts	The Yugoslav wars show the destructive power of ethnic nationalism and the weakness of early European crisis response.
Globalization	Trade, finance, technology, and migration connect Europe more deeply to the world while creating unequal social effects.
Twenty-first-century crises	Financial instability, terrorism, migration, Brexit, COVID-19, climate change, and war in Ukraine reshape European politics.
European Union	Maastricht creates the EU; later treaties, enlargement, Schengen, and the euro deepen integration.
Achievements	Peace, democratic enlargement, the single market, free movement, the euro, common standards, and regional development.
Continuing tensions	National sovereignty versus common action; solidarity versus national cost; open borders versus security; integration versus democratic distance.
Present direction	Europe seeks to remain democratic, secure, competitive, green, and capable of acting in a more unstable world.

Key Terms

Term	Meaning
Berlin Wall	Barrier built in 1961 and opened on 9 November 1989, symbolising both Cold War division and its collapse.
Monday demonstrations	Regular East German protests, especially in Leipzig, demanding political reform and freedom.
Two Plus Four Treaty	Agreement settling the international conditions of German reunification.

Term	Meaning
Treuhand	Agency that privatised or closed most state-owned East German enterprises.
Ostalgie	Nostalgia for selected aspects of everyday life in former East Germany.
Ethnic cleansing	Forced removal of an ethnic or religious population from a territory through intimidation, violence, or murder.
Globalization	Growing worldwide movement of goods, capital, people, information, and culture.
Post-industrial economy	Economy in which services and knowledge-based work employ more people than traditional manufacturing.
Populism	Political approach claiming to defend ordinary people against a corrupt or distant elite.
Euroscepticism	Criticism of or opposition to European integration and EU authority.
Brexit	Withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union.
Austerity	Policies intended to reduce public deficits through spending cuts, tax increases, or both.
Eurozone	Group of EU member states using the euro as their currency.
European Union	Political and economic union formally created by the Maastricht Treaty.
Subsidiarity	Principle that decisions should be taken at the lowest effective level of government.
Single market	Common economic area based on freer movement of goods, services, capital, and people.
Schengen area	European zone in which routine internal border checks are generally removed.
European Council	Institution of national leaders that sets the EU's broad direction.
European Commission	Institution that proposes laws, manages policies, and enforces EU rules.
Council of the European Union	Institution in which national ministers adopt laws with the European Parliament.
European Parliament	Directly elected EU institution that helps pass laws and approve the budget.
European Central Bank	Institution responsible for monetary policy in the euro area.
Democratic deficit	Claim that EU decision-making is too distant, complex, or weakly accountable to voters.
Rule of law	Principle that government is limited by law and independent courts.
Green transition	Shift toward lower-carbon energy, transport, production, and consumption.
Strategic autonomy	Effort to increase Europe's capacity to act without excessive dependence on outside powers.

Comparison Table

Category	Europe in 1989	Contemporary Europe
Political map	Two rival blocs divided by the Iron Curtain	Independent post-communist states; wider EU and NATO membership; renewed tension with Russia
Germany	Divided into West and East Germany	Reunified and central to the European economy and EU policy
Economy	Western market economies and eastern central planning	Predominantly market economies linked through global and European networks
Borders	Strict Cold War borders, especially in the east	Extensive free movement within the EU and Schengen, but stronger concern about external borders
Security	NATO-Warsaw Pact confrontation and nuclear deterrence	NATO enlargement, terrorism concerns, cyber threats, and war in Ukraine
European integration	European Communities with 12 members	European Union with 27 members, a single market, wider powers, and the euro in 21 states
Technology	Television, print, industrial production	Internet, mobile communication, platforms, automation, and artificial intelligence
Main social debate	Class, welfare, nuclear weapons, Cold War ideology	Migration, identity, ageing, inequality, climate, digital power, and sovereignty

Facts to Remember

1. The Berlin Wall opened on 9 November 1989.
2. Germany was reunified on 3 October 1990.
3. The Two Plus Four Treaty settled the external conditions of German unity.

4. The Soviet Union dissolved in December 1991.
5. Czechoslovakia divided peacefully into two states in 1993.
6. The Yugoslav wars included ethnic cleansing and the Srebrenica genocide.
7. The Maastricht Treaty was signed in 1992 and entered into force in 1993.
8. The euro began in electronic form in 1999 and as notes and coins in 2002.
9. The largest EU enlargement occurred in 2004, when ten states joined.
10. The Lisbon Treaty entered into force in 2009.
11. The global financial crisis reached Europe in 2008 and contributed to the eurozone debt crisis.
12. Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022.
13. The United Kingdom voted to leave the EU in 2016 and formally withdrew in 2020.
14. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a major health and economic crisis beginning in 2020.
15. The single market is based on freer movement of goods, services, capital, and people.
16. Schengen removes routine internal border controls among participating countries.
17. The European Parliament and Council of the European Union pass most EU laws together.
18. The European Commission normally proposes EU legislation and enforces common rules.
19. The European Central Bank manages monetary policy for the euro area.
20. The EU currently has 27 member states.
21. The euro area has 21 EU members after Bulgaria adopted the euro in 2026.
22. The Schengen area has 29 participating European countries.
23. The major continuing debate is how to balance national sovereignty with effective common action.

Practice

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Which development most directly allowed East European communist governments to fall in 1989 without Soviet military intervention?
 - A. The creation of the Warsaw Pact
 - B. Gorbachev's refusal to preserve them by force
 - C. The Marshall Plan
 - D. The Suez Crisis
2. The immediate opening of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989 followed
 - A. a confused announcement of new travel rules
 - B. a NATO invasion of East Germany
 - C. a referendum ordered by the United Nations
 - D. the signing of the Maastricht Treaty
3. The Two Plus Four Treaty dealt mainly with
 - A. the breakup of Yugoslavia
 - B. the international conditions of German reunification
 - C. the creation of the euro
 - D. the admission of Britain to the EEC
4. A major economic difficulty after German reunification was
 - A. the restoration of central planning in the west
 - B. the inability of many East German factories to compete
 - C. the abolition of the deutsche mark in western Germany
 - D. the loss of all foreign trade
5. Which post-communist state divided peacefully in 1993?
 - A. Yugoslavia
 - B. Czechoslovakia
 - C. Romania
 - D. Poland
6. The wars in Yugoslavia demonstrated that
 - A. nationalism disappeared after communism
 - B. the end of the Cold War did not guarantee peace
 - C. NATO had been dissolved
 - D. European integration had already created one government
7. Globalization is best described as the
 - A. return of feudal landholding
 - B. growing movement of goods, capital, information, and people across borders
 - C. elimination of all national governments
 - D. replacement of industry by agriculture
8. A post-industrial economy is characterised especially by growth in
 - A. serf labour
 - B. service and knowledge-based employment
 - C. subsistence farming
 - D. state ownership of all factories
9. The eurozone crisis exposed which weakness?
 - A. A common currency without a complete common fiscal government
 - B. The absence of any European central bank
 - C. The use of separate currencies by all EU members
 - D. The end of international finance
10. Brexit refers to the
 - A. division of Germany
 - B. British withdrawal from the European Union
 - C. creation of the Schengen area

- D. expansion of NATO into the Balkans
11. The Maastricht Treaty is most important because it
- A. created the European Union and advanced monetary union
 - B. ended World War II
 - C. created the Warsaw Pact
 - D. abolished the European Parliament
12. Which institution normally proposes new EU legislation?
- A. European Commission
 - B. European Central Bank
 - C. European Court of Human Rights
 - D. NATO Council
13. Which two institutions normally adopt EU legislation together?
- A. European Parliament and Council of the European Union
 - B. European Central Bank and NATO
 - C. European Council and Council of Europe
 - D. Commission and International Monetary Fund
14. The four freedoms of the single market concern the movement of
- A. armies, monarchs, colonies, and churches
 - B. goods, services, capital, and people
 - C. taxes, borders, languages, and constitutions
 - D. oil, coal, steel, and weapons only
15. The Schengen system is primarily associated with
- A. removing routine internal border checks
 - B. creating the euro
 - C. setting interest rates
 - D. prosecuting war crimes
16. The largest single enlargement of the European Union occurred in
- A. 1995
 - B. 2004
 - C. 2013
 - D. 2020
17. Which development most directly challenged the claim that European integration was irreversible?
- A. Erasmus
 - B. Brexit
 - C. The Single European Act
 - D. The Treaty of Rome
18. The term “democratic deficit” refers to concern that EU decision-making is
- A. too dependent on agriculture
 - B. too distant or insufficiently accountable to voters
 - C. controlled entirely by NATO
 - D. based on hereditary monarchy
19. Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 led European states to
- A. abolish all defence spending
 - B. increase sanctions, defence cooperation, and energy diversification
 - C. withdraw from NATO
 - D. restore the Warsaw Pact
20. Which statement best summarises contemporary Europe?
- A. Integration has eliminated national politics
 - B. Europe combines deep cooperation with continuing conflict over sovereignty and identity
 - C. All European states use the euro
 - D. Globalization has affected every region equally

ANSWER KEY

1-B · 2-A · 3-B · 4-B · 5-B · 6-B · 7-B · 8-B · 9-A · 10-B · 11-A · 12-A · 13-A · 14-B · 15-A · 16-B · 17-B · 18-B · 19-B · 20-B

Short-Answer Questions

1. Identify one cause of the collapse of communist rule in eastern Europe. Describe one event connected with the opening of the Berlin Wall. Explain one reason German reunification occurred rapidly.
2. Identify one economic problem created by German reunification. Describe one policy used to integrate eastern Germany. Explain one reason regional differences continued.
3. Identify one cause of the Yugoslav wars. Describe one form of violence used during the conflicts. Explain one effect of the wars on European security policy.
4. Identify one economic effect of globalization on Europe. Describe one social response to globalization. Explain one reason globalization strengthened support for European-level regulation.
5. Identify one cause of the eurozone crisis. Describe one response by European institutions. Explain one political effect of the crisis.
6. Identify one achievement of the European Union. Describe one criticism of EU decision-making. Explain one reason national sovereignty remains important.
7. Identify one cause of Brexit. Describe one consequence of British withdrawal. Explain one broader lesson Brexit provided about European integration.
8. Identify one European response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Describe one change in European security policy. Explain one reason the war strengthened debate over EU enlargement.

Long-Essay Questions

1. Evaluate the most important cause of the collapse of communist governments in eastern Europe in 1989.
2. Evaluate the extent to which German reunification was successful between 1990 and 2010.
3. Evaluate the most important effect of the end of the Cold War on Europe between 1989 and 2004.
4. Evaluate the extent to which globalization improved European society after 1989.
5. Evaluate the most important reason nationalist and Eurosceptic movements gained support after 2008.
6. Evaluate the extent to which the European Union reduced the importance of the nation-state after 1993.
7. Evaluate the most important achievement of European integration from 1989 to the present.
8. Evaluate the most important challenge facing the European Union in the twenty-first century.

Document-Based Question Practice

Use the following document types to plan an argument about how European integration changed Europe after 1989:

- A speech by an eastern European dissident or democratic leader in 1989
- A statement by Helmut Kohl or Mikhail Gorbachev on German reunification
- An extract from the Maastricht Treaty
- A business or labour statement on the single market and globalization
- A speech supporting or opposing the euro
- A migrant or refugee account describing movement into Europe
- A Brexit campaign document

- A European statement on climate, democracy, or security after 2022

PLANNING FRAME

Context: Europe was emerging from Cold War division while earlier economic integration already linked western states.

Possible thesis: Integration transformed Europe by enlarging markets, rights, and democratic cooperation, but its political effects remained limited by national sovereignty, unequal economic outcomes, and disagreements over identity and responsibility.

Evidence groups: economic integration; political institutions and enlargement; social mobility and identity; crises and resistance.

Complexity: distinguish between members and non-members, euro and non-euro states, and achievements in ordinary life versus limits during major crises.

Model Short Answer

Question: Identify one achievement of the European Union, describe one challenge to integration, and explain one reason the nation-state remains important.

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

One achievement of the European Union is the single market, which allows goods, services, capital, and people to move more freely across member states. One challenge is that economic crises affect members differently, creating conflict over whether richer states should support states with greater debt. The nation-state remains important because national governments still control most taxation, welfare spending, education, policing, and political identity, so citizens often expect national leaders rather than EU institutions to solve daily problems.

Final Revision Checklist

- Know the economic, political, and international reasons communist governments collapsed in 1989.
- Remember Poland, Hungary, the Leipzig demonstrations, and the opening of the Berlin Wall.
- Know the main steps from the Wall's opening to German reunification on 3 October 1990.
- Explain the purpose of the Two Plus Four Treaty.
- Understand the economic and social difficulties of German reunification.
- Know why the Soviet Union dissolved and how Europe's political map changed.
- Remember the importance of the Yugoslav wars, ethnic cleansing, Srebrenica, and the Dayton Agreement.
- Define globalization and distinguish it from European integration.
- Explain the shift toward post-industrial and digital economies.
- Know the benefits and tensions associated with migration and multiculturalism.
- Understand population ageing and pressure on the welfare state.
- Explain how terrorism changed security policy and civil-liberties debates.
- Know the causes and consequences of the 2008 financial and eurozone crises.
- Understand populism, nationalism, and Euroscepticism.
- Remember the causes, process, and significance of Brexit.
- Explain the importance of climate change, the green transition, and digital regulation.
- Know the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on European cooperation.
- Explain how Russia's invasion of Ukraine changed defence, energy, and enlargement policy.
- Know why the Maastricht Treaty created a new stage of integration.
- Distinguish the European Council, Council of the European Union, Commission, and Parliament.
- Remember the four freedoms of the single market.
- Distinguish the EU, euro area, and Schengen area.
- Know the main post-1989 enlargements and the importance of the Lisbon Treaty.
- Be able to list major achievements and major criticisms of the EU.
- Explain the central tension between national sovereignty and effective common action.



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