

# Europe Since 1970

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## *Spielvogel Chapter 29*

- I. Détente (period of easing a formerly tense situation) – begin 1970s
  - A. 1970s
    1. 1972 – Antiballistic Missile treaty between US & USSR
      - a. Limit arms; no defense
    2. 1975 – Helsinki Accords (Agreements) – 35 nations present
      - a. Recognition of post-WWII political boundaries (what Soviets want)
      - b. Pledge to work for peace and human rights (what West wants)
        - i. Communist countries must give rights
  - B. 1980s – reapplying pressure
    1. 1980 – U.S. (Reagan) begins new arms race
    2. Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) “Star Wars”
      - a. Creation of a satellite-mounted weapons to stop incoming missiles
      - b. Soviets worry about a U.S. that can launch ICBMs but not be harmed by them – violation of Helsinki Accords
- II. *Revolution in the Soviet Union*
  - A. Problems with change
    1. USSR great for military/industry; terrible for people (rights, food)
    2. Significant players in USSR human rights
      - a. 1958 Boris Pasternak – Dr. Zhivago – govt. refuses to let him receive Nobel Prize – exposed Soviet life
      - b. 1970 – Alexander Solzhenitsyn – Gulag Archipelago – terrors of concentration camps – not allowed his Nobel Prize – deported – furor over treatment of Jews
    3. Leonid Brezhnev does not display vigorous leadership or the desire to reform – rely on the old ways
    4. Brezhnev dies 1982 – succeeded by old guard – Andropov, Chernenko – Mikhail Gorbachev takes over 1985
  - B. Mikhail Gorbachev
    1. Perestroika – political and economic restructuring, including decentralization (with limited capitalism)
    2. Glasnost (openness) – free expression - necessary for change
    3. Once let loose, change came more rapidly than expected – took on a life of its own
      - a. Find out life in other places is better
      - b. Denunciation of lack of freedoms
      - c. Individual production encouraged – first time since Lenin’s NEP
    4. Relaxation of totalitarian control unleashed ethnic conflict along its frontier
      - a. Georgia, Moldavia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Baltic States
    5. Gorbachev threatens to clamp down on all the unrest – opposed by Boris Yeltsin 1990-91

6. Gorbachev cannot muster enough support – becomes victim of the revolution he began
7. Boris Yeltsin becomes president of Russia – 1991
8. Oct. 1991 – USSR ceases to exist – becomes Confederation of Independent States (Russia and 15 Republics)

### III. *Revolutions in Eastern Europe*

- A. Poland – growth of Solidarity (non-Communist trade union – fought communism)
  1. Visit by Pope stirred nationalist and religious feelings
  2. 1988 – Solidarity recognized
  3. Elections held – communists lose – first non-communist govt. in 40 years in Soviet Bloc
- B. Hungary loosens controls – guarantees free elections
- C. Germany – East German border opens Nov. 1989 – jubilant public rips down the wall – reunification in 1990
  1. Major economic problems (East drags West down)
    - a. Lack of jobs leads to hatred of minorities, resurgence of neo-Nazi groups
- D. Czechoslovakia
  1. Velvet Revolution
    - a. 1989 – disgusted students begin protest – spreads to others, and eventually becomes a general strike of all Czech citizens
    - b. Communist government realized it can't continue – actually abdicates
  2. Czechoslovakia splits into Czech Republic and Slovakia 1993 – sometimes called Velvet divorce
- E. Bulgaria falls
- F. Romania – very bloody – Nicolae Ceausescu executed – had been brutal – Dictator from 1965-89
- G. People rejoice at new freedoms – new problems arise
  1. Freedom shows failure and corruption of old regime
  2. Breeds ethnic, social, ideological problems

### IV. *The Disintegration of Yugoslavia*

- A. Yugoslavia had been an artificial creation (1919)
- B. Tito dies – 1980
  1. Had kept everything under tight autocratic control
- C. No one can hold it together
- D. Demands for ethnic separation creates new countries (or recreates) – New Nationalism
  1. Slovenia, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Bosnia, Macedonia, Montenegro
  2. Serbs again left out
- E. War in Bosnia (1992-95)
  1. Serbs begin “ethnic cleansing” in Bosnia
    - a. Yugoslavian and Bosnian Serbs trying to eliminate Muslims from Bosnia
  2. Area turned into sectors (like Germany after WWII)
  3. Brought under control by U.N. peacekeeping forces
    - a. No settlement – foreign troops keeping peace
- F. War in Kosovo (1999-2000)

1. Small province in southern Yugoslavia
  - a. Was autonomous (self-governing if not independent – 1974)
  - b. Ethnic Albanians kept their language
2. Had Serbian minority
  - a. Serbs felt area was sacred
  - b. Serbs had defeated Ottomans in 1300s battle defining their history
3. Yugoslavian Serbs try to shut down Albanian autonomy
  - a. Albanians resist
  - b. Serbs begin mass killing
  - c. U.S. & other governments step in

## V. *Modern Western Europe*

### A. Great Britain

1. Problems with Ireland (IRA terrorists) during 1970s creates unrest over government
2. Economic problems from Socialist programs of past lead to Conservative Revolution (Margaret Thatcher)
3. Margaret Thatcher
  - a. England and Europe's first female prime minister (1979-90)
  - b. Known as the "Iron Lady" – not really allowed to act feminine
  - c. Led the conservative movement in Europe
    - i. Reintroduced free market economy – Britain begins improvement
  - d. She and Reagan took a hard line against communism
4. Replaced by John Major – Conservative Party
5. Tony Blair from 1997-2007
  - a. Labour Party
6. Gordon Brown now – he's a historian (Ph.D. in history from University of Edinburgh)

### B. France

1. Economy bad in 1970
2. Francois Mitterrand elected president as extreme socialist – move left
3. Price freezing, more social benefits (minimum wage increase, 5 week paid vacation, higher taxes against the rich)
  - a. Did not solve the problem
4. He reintroduces some private enterprise – France begins a slow recovery
5. Jacques Chirac elected – 1995
  - a. Social and fiscal conservative
6. Nicolas Sarkozy in 2007

### C. European Cooperation

1. 1986 – Single European Act – no restrictions within the community on movement of goods, services, workers, capital
  - a. Much accomplished – check points gone, EC passports, banks accounts, mortgages
2. 1992 – Treaty of Maastricht
  - a. Committed all countries of the EC to achieving true economic and monetary unity – currency – Euro
  - b. Each country must approve – many not sure about giving up national identity and autonomy – treaty approved 1993

3. EC becomes European Union - 1994
4. Major problems plaguing European unity since the fall of the USSR
  - a. Integrating the poorer – less developed areas – Eastern nations
  - b. Hostility toward German domination of the financial system
  - c. Differences in deciding how to deal with the violence in Bosnia – Balkans
  - d. Balance national concerns with European Union

## VI. Modern European Culture

### A. Existentialism

1. basic idea – there is no God
2. humans are supreme
3. humans create meaning for their own lives

### B. Vatican II

1. Religion in general sees international revival in '50s; '80s
2. Catholicism moves to be more inclusive
3. Liturgy in local language, not just Latin anymore
4. broader acceptance of other religions

### C. Toward international culture

1. most dominant popular culture comes from U.S.
  - a. why?
2. Postmodernist philosophy in literature, art, & social sciences
  - a. value tradition – *every* tradition
3. music
  - a. '20s – Jazz
  - b. '40s – Swing
  - c. '50s – Rock 'n roll
    - i. racial past
  - d. '60s-'70s – protest songs
    - i. Britains import, then export American music – Beatles
  - e. '80s – Punk
    - i. again, Britain imports, than exports