

Resistance to Globalization

The whole of the global economy is based on supplying the cravings of two percent of the world's population.

—Bill Bryson, nonfiction writer (born 1951)

Essential Question: What were the various responses to globalization from 1900 to the present?

While globalization of culture has in many ways raised awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity, the economics of globalization have led to serious concerns. Resistance to globalization has come from non-governmental and governmental sources. A network of opponents to economic globalization promotes equal distribution of economic resources, challenging the lopsided economy described above by author Bill Bryson. Participants contend that corporations and global financial institutions, such as the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** and the World Trade Organization (WTO) work to maximize profit and sacrifice safety and labor conditions, environmental conservation needs, and national independence.

Some countries, such as North Korea, have resisted economic and cultural globalization. Others, such as Saudi Arabia and China, have resisted cultural globalization, particularly through controlling the internet. These countries want goods and money to flow freely among nations, but they are more restrictive of how people and ideas cross borders.

The Roots of Globalization and Anti-Globalization

Globalization affected the relationships among and within nations. After World War II, several organizations contributed to the growth of a global economy. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the European Economic Union, Mercosur (in South America), and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) all formed between 1947 and the early 1990s. These organizations were meant to help economies and expand prosperity. Falling tariff rates eased the movement of goods across national borders.

In 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) took over GATT's operations. The WTO makes rules for more than 90 percent of international trade. The rules and its closed board meetings led people to believe that the WTO did not care for their welfare. (Connect: Compare the economic practices of the 17th century to globalization in the 20th and 21st centuries. See Topic 4.5.)

The “Battle of Seattle” In 1999, protests erupted at a WTO conference in Seattle. The WTO had planned a round of trade negotiations for the new millennium. Then more than 40,000 protesters arrived. Special interest groups, including labor unions, family farmers, student groups, and environmentalists shut down the WTO’s meeting and drew global attention to the issues of the new global economy. Anti-WTO demonstrations took place in dozens of other countries as well.

Many people consider the Seattle protests to be the beginning of the anti-globalization movement. They were also one of the first social movements to be coordinated through the internet. However, the WTO itself remained powerful. China joined in 2001, increasing the group’s territorial and economic reach.



Source: WTO protestors (1999)

The “Sea Turtle” protesters outside the 1999 World Trade Organization Conference in Seattle, Washington.

Why Resist Globalization?

Why did people protest globalization when it made goods and services more freely available? Opponents had different reasons. Many of them centered on the idea that consumers who buy products and services with a few clicks often have no idea who creates those products and services and what the short-term and long-term costs really are. A series of scandals in different parts of the world showed some of the hazards of globalization. Working conditions are especially problematic

- Much of the chocolate that consumers bought in the early 21st century had its origins in **child labor** in West Africa. The largest chocolate companies missed deadlines in 2005, 2008, and 2010 to make sure their suppliers did not use child laborers. In 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor estimated that more than 2 million children took part in dangerous labor in the cocoa-growing regions of the world.



- Working conditions in Western nations could also be harsh. In 2019, employees of **Amazon**'s warehouses described such intense pressure to fulfill orders that workers risked being fired if they took a bathroom break. At the time, Amazon employed more than 600,000 people and another 100,000 at holiday time, though not all of them worked in warehouses.
- In 2013, the collapse of the **Rana Plaza factory**, an eight-story building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, shocked the world. More than 1,000 people died and another 2,500 suffered injuries. Most of the dead and injured were female garment workers who made clothing for Western companies. **Muhammad Yunus**, a Bangladeshi who won the Nobel Prize for Peace, called the disaster "a symbol of our failure as a nation." He suggested that companies worldwide set an international minimum wage.



Source: Wikimedia Commons

The Rana Plaza collapse is considered the deadliest structural failure accident in modern human history, and therefore also the deadliest garment-factory disaster in history.

Environmental Damage Critics of globalization pointed out that the fuel involved in shipping products vast distances increased the amount of greenhouse gases in the environment, thus worsening the climate emergency. Also, in the early 21st century, Brazil cut down thousands of square miles of rainforest each year to make way for cattle farms. The meat was one of the country's most valuable exports.

Proponents of globalization argue that it can help the environment. They point out that Costa Rica and other nations have developed **ecotourism** industries that make profits while showing off the country's natural wonders.

Threats to National Sovereignty Many liberal groups believe that globalization often harms children, workers, and the environment. However, many conservative groups also distrust globalization.

In 2016, 52 percent of British voters agreed to leave the European Union, an international political and economic organization of 28 countries. This British exit was nicknamed **Brexit**. Britain was a founding member of the EU in 1993, but conservative British politicians argued that the EU interfered with Britain's right to govern itself. Many Brexit proponents contended that the EU required Britain to accept too many immigrants.

Negotiations to leave the EU broke down when British prime minister **Theresa May** was unable to craft a deal that was acceptable to her own political party, let alone to the other 27 nations in the EU. May resigned in 2019. Brexit critics believed that leaving the EU would be economically disastrous for Britain, an island nation that depended on imports.

Economic Resistance

Critics of globalization believe that international agreements and institutions can destroy small local businesses. Large corporations could use the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the WTO to achieve their goals, but local individuals and businesses could not. For example, many small businesses and individuals could not cross state lines or national borders. They could not extract the natural resources they needed or use the wide variety of labor sources that big corporations and transnational businesses used. In an attempt to combat globalization, some businesses, especially restaurants, have insisted on providing their customers locally grown or made products.

Globalization critics also distrusted the World Bank, an international organization affiliated with the United Nations. The bank's mission is to improve the economic development of member states. In 1988, about 20,000 people protested meetings of the IMF and the World Bank in West Berlin. Protesters insisted that these agencies favored richer nations over poorer ones. In 2001 and 2002, anti-IMF and anti-World Bank protests took place in 23 countries, including many of the world's poorest nations. In 2014, the World Bank made reforms to its structure and governance, but critics maintained that the world's richest nations controlled the bank.

What Measures Do Anti-Globalists Favor? The anti-globalization movement has grown into a social movement as well. Its followers tend to focus on these issues:

- **Human rights**, which are basic freedoms that every person has, such as freedom from slavery and freedom to express opinions



- **Fair trade**, which is a system that ensures the person who provided the good or service receives a reasonable payment for it
- **Sustainable development**, which means business ventures that allow people and companies to make a profit without preventing future generations from meeting their own needs
- **Debt relief** or **debt restructuring** so that countries that owe huge sums to the IMF do not have to risk economic breakdown

Anti-Globalization and Social Media

Anti-globalization activists have used the internet to perpetuate and spread their ideas in nearly every country on Earth. However, access to global communication through social media outlets has met resistance in some countries. In 2009, more than 1,000 rioters clashed with police in the city of Urumqi, China. The unrest resulted from tensions between members of the Han ethnicity and members of the **Uighur** ethnicity, most of whom are Muslim. Chinese authorities blamed the riots on the growth of social unrest based on Twitter and Facebook and banned both platforms. The government introduced a new platform called **Weibo** as a substitute. It could stream incoming posts while tracking and blocking “sensitive” content. Weibo has become a vehicle of negotiation between the Chinese government and its citizens.

In some other countries, governments allow social media platforms but influence or control their content. For example, critics contend that Saudi Arabian officials use Twitter and Facebook to harass and intimidate citizens. “If the same tools we joined for our liberation are being used to oppress us and undermine us, and used to spread fake news and hate, I’m out of these platforms,” explained **Manal al-Sharif**, a women’s rights activist.

In some parts of the world, resistance to participating in an interconnected society persists. The coming together of economies and cultures threatens some people’s and governments’ sense of autonomy and identity.

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
<p>SOCIETY: Leaders and Thinkers Muhammad Yunus Theresa May Manal al-Sharif</p> <p>SOCIETY: Issues and Problems child labor Rana Plaza factory</p>	<p>ecotourism human rights fair trade sustainable development debt relief debt restructuring</p>	<p>GOVERNMENT: Politics Brexit Uighur</p> <p>TECHNOLOGY: E-Commerce and Social Media Amazon Weibo</p>

Institutions Developing in a Globalized World

We have actively sought and are actively seeking to make the United Nations an effective instrument of international cooperation.

—Dean Acheson, U.S. diplomat, (1893–1971)

Essential Question: How did globalization change international interactions between states after 1900?

In an era of increasing globalization, people formed international organizations to promote useful working relationships among nations. Dean Acheson, a U.S. secretary of state, described how the mission of the United Nations (UN) fit with this goal of maintaining world peace and making international cooperation easier. Working through agencies such as the IMF (International Monetary Fund) and the World Bank, the UN provides technical advice and loans to developing nations. Other international organizations and treaties, such as the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), promote free trade worldwide. However, the United Nations was born of the devastation of world wars and preventing conflict was its primary goal.

The United Nations: A Structure for Peace

Despite ideological differences, the Allies shared a commitment to preventing conflicts from escalating into war. In 1943, representatives of the United States, Great Britain, the Soviet Union, and China discussed the idea of the United Nations. The UN was born on October 24, 1945, a day still honored as United Nations Day. At its founding, there were 51 member states. By 2019, that number had grown to 193.

League of Nations vs. United Nations Countries had tried to create a similar international organization previously. In 1920, at the end of World War I, the Allied powers created the League of Nations. (See Topic 7.3.) Its purpose was to resolve international disputes and prevent another world war. However, the United States never joined the League. Some Americans believed that doing so would undercut U.S. authority. The League disbanded after it failed to prevent World War II. Countries hoped that a new, more powerful organization would

help keep the peace. This time around, all the major powers realized they would need to belong for the organization to have any chance of success.

Assemblies of the United Nations

Within the UN, six main bodies implement its work.

- The **General Assembly** is the only UN body in which all members have representation. It decides important questions on peace and security, admission of new members, and budget. To make a decision, a two-thirds majority of those present and voting must agree. Each member nation has one vote.
- The **Security Council** acts on issues the General Assembly debates. It may even use military force against a country accused of violating UN principles. The Security Council has five permanent members, the leading Allies of World War II: the United States, France, Great Britain, Russia, and China. It elects 10 other members on a rotating basis. Each permanent member has veto power in the Security Council. Granting veto power to these five nations was controversial in 1945. Other nations resented giving them so much power. Conflicts among these five often prevented the UN from taking action to confront problems.
- The **Secretariat** is the UN's administrative arm. The secretary general leads and influences the entire organization. He or she usually comes from a small, neutral nation so one of the more powerful countries cannot have an outside influence on what the UN does. All five permanent members of the Security Council must approve the secretary general's selection. Staffers of the Secretariat must take an oath of loyalty to the UN and are not allowed to receive instructions from their home countries.
- The International Court of Justice settles disputes countries bring to it about international law. The court has no power to enforce its decisions, but the Security Council may make recommendations or take action in response to a judgment. Most countries obey the court's decisions.
- The Economic and Social Council is the largest and most complex part of the UN. It directs economic, social, humanitarian, and cultural activities. In the early 21st century, the council promoted green energy and looked for ways to raise people's wages in poorer countries.
- The Trusteeship Council supervised the governments of trust territories, including land that is now Israel, Papua New Guinea, and Nauru. The council's mission was to help those areas become self-governing and independent. The last trust territory, Palau, became independent in 1994. Since then, the council has suspended its operations. Some people have suggested that the council should become trustees of the seafloor or of outer space.

The UN and Human Rights

One of the goals of the United Nations was the promotion of human rights. The UN adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** in 1948. It included several basic rights and freedoms:

- freedom from slavery, torture, and degrading punishment
- equality before the law
- the right to a nationality
- the right to own property, either individually or with others
- freedom of thought, conscience, religion, opinion, and expression
- equal pay for equal work
- the right to rest and to enjoy paid holidays
- equal rights for children born within and outside of marriage
- the right to adequate food, clothing, shelter, health care, and education

The declaration was a milestone achievement. Individuals from different countries, cultures, and legal traditions came together to draft a document that set standards for all governments and all people. People have translated the declaration into more than 500 languages. Since 1948, the UN has investigated abuses of human rights, such as genocide, war crimes, government oppression, and crimes against women.

Keeping the Peace

Since the end of World War II, the United Nations has been well known for its **peacekeeping** actions. Of primary importance is prevention through diplomacy. The UN sends special envoys to help resolve problems peacefully, mindful that it was formed to prevent “the scourge of war.”

The organization has also frequently sent peacekeeping forces, consisting of civilians, police, and troops from member countries, to try to ease tensions in trouble spots. The first peacekeeping mission was related to the 1948 Arab-Israeli conflict in Palestine. After that, UN peacekeepers served in the Congo, Lebanon, East Timor, and the Balkans.

Expansion in the 1990s In 1988, the UN had only five active peacekeeping operations. By 1993, it had 28. Individual countries supplied soldiers to form UN peacekeeping forces. They came from dozens of countries—including Canada, Venezuela, Ukraine, Egypt, and Bangladesh. The soldiers were usually lightly armed and instructed to return fire only if attacked.

In the 1990s, the United Nations sent peacekeeping missions to hotspots in Africa, Central America, the Caribbean, and Southeast Asia. In Africa, UN troops kept peace while Namibia changed from a South African colony to an independent state. Peacekeeping troops helped end devastating civil wars in



Mozambique, El Salvador, and Cambodia. In Haiti, they maintained peace while a democratic government replaced a military dictatorship.

Some efforts failed. In 1994, UN peacekeepers could not prevent massacres in Rwanda. In 1995, UN forces withdrew from Somalia while a civil war raged there. The struggle to bring order to Bosnia in the former Yugoslavia took years and had mixed results. As a UN officer in Bosnia observed, “It’s much easier to come in and keep peace when there’s some peace around.”



Source: Wikimedia Commons

UN peacekeepers at their headquarters in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, where violent conflicts continue to break out following a civil war (1997–2003) that killed 5 million.

Challenges for Peacekeeping Missions One problem faced by UN peacekeepers has been their slow response. By the time countries agree on the UN mission and send forces, the war might have grown and become hard to control. A second problem happens when people expect the peacekeeping troops to stop the fighting instead of simply monitoring a truce, running free elections, and providing supplies to civilian populations. By 2019, the United Nations was involved in fewer but larger peacekeeping missions. The number of missions had dropped to 15, but the number of troops involved had increased.

Number of UN Peacekeepers Deployed	
Year	Number
2000	30,000
2007	80,000
2014	95,000
2019	102,000

Source: Global Peace Operations Review.

Other UN Priorities

In addition to assemblies and peacekeeping, the UN has other missions.

Protecting Refugees The UN also protects refugees. In times of war, famine, and natural disasters, people often flee their country and seek refuge in a safer location. Working through partners such as NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and the agency of UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), the UN provides food, medicine, and temporary shelter. Among the earliest refugees the UN helped were Palestinians who fled the disorder following the UN partition of Palestine to create the state of Israel in 1948. In 2019, the UN helped refugees who fled Venezuela and Myanmar.

Feeding the Hungry In 1961, the UN established its **World Food Program (WFP)** to provide food aid. Its first missions were in Iran, Thailand, and Algeria in 1962. Since its founding, the WFP has fed more than 1.4 billion people, many of whom were affected by natural disasters or political unrest.

Supporting Education, Science, and Culture Fighting in World War II destroyed schools, libraries, and museums in many European countries. In 1945, the UN created the **United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**. After repairing war damage, UNESCO began to focus on developing literacy, extending free education, and protecting cultural and environmental sites by designating them World Heritage Sites. The United Kingdom, Singapore, Israel, and the United States have all left UNESCO in disputes over politics and priorities. Although the UK and Singapore rejoined the organization, as of 2019 the United States had not.

Other UN Missions The UN also created the World Health Organization, which improves human health by controlling epidemics and providing vaccines. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was created to help children after World War II. After that, the fund provided aid to children in the developing world and at disaster sites. The UN program **Human Rights Watch (HRW)** has monitored human rights abuses in 100 countries. HRW uses the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as its guide and advocates for policies that prevent abuses.

The Global Goals In 2015, the UN General Assembly set 17 goals to accomplish by 2030. These included wiping out hunger and poverty, achieving gender equality, ensuring clean water and sanitation for all, and fighting climate change. On this project, the UN worked with NGOs, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. (Connect: Evaluate the success of the United Nations in handling political crises compared to its success in dealing with other priorities. See Topic 8.5.)

International Financial NGOs

Several NGOs have worked closely with the United Nations on economic issues. Each NGO was independent and caused controversy.

The World Bank Created in 1944, the **World Bank** fought poverty by providing loans to countries. It first focused on dams and roads. Later it expanded its mission to social projects, such as education and disease prevention. Critics charged that the World Bank often ignored how its projects damaged the environment and local culture. For example, a dam might permanently flood many farms. A highway might promote growth, but the resulting profits might all go to investors overseas rather than people living in the region.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Created in 1945, the **IMF** was designed to help a country's economy by promoting stable currency exchange rates. It focused on making short-term loans and providing economic advice to countries. Some economists argued that conditions on IMF loans failed to take into account each country's individual needs. Large, wealthy nations influenced the IMF. It acted on their behalf, critics insisted, even while it claimed to help developing nations.

The IMF and the World Bank worked together to create Pathways for Peace in 2018. This report described how countries could work together to prevent violent conflicts.

NGOs Separate from the UN

Although the UN is well funded and powerful, other NGOs also help maintain world peace and improve communication among countries during a time of globalization. For example, the **International Peace Bureau** was founded in 1891 and won the Nobel Prize for Peace in 1910. It began working for nuclear disarmament in the 1980s. It also lobbied governments to reduce military spending. By 2019, it had 300 member organizations in 70 countries. The chart on the next page lists other international organizations committed to peace and cooperation.



Source: Guinea Red Cross Volunteers

Red Cross volunteers in Guinea go door to door with information about Ebola.



International Organizations for Peace and Cooperation	
Organization	Mission
Center for International Humanitarian Cooperation (established 1992)	Promotes healing and peace in countries affected by natural disasters, armed conflicts, and ethnic violence
International Committee of the Red Cross (established 1863)	Responds quickly and efficiently to help people affected by armed conflict and disasters in conflict zones
Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs (Fordham University) (established 2001)	Trains and educates current and future aid workers at local, regional, national, and international levels
International Development Association (part of World Bank) (established 1960)	Supports a range of development activities, such as primary education, basic health services, clean water and sanitation, agriculture, business climate improvements, infrastructure, and institutional reforms.
International Organization for Migration (established 1951 and became a UN-related organization in 2018)	Mandated to help European governments identify resettlement countries for the estimated 11 million people uprooted by World War II, when it arranged transport for nearly a million migrants during the 1950s. Provides service and advice to governments and migrants.
The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (established 1961)	Shapes policies that foster prosperity, equality, opportunity and well-being

KEY TERMS BY THEME		
<p>GOVERNMENT: Parts of the United Nations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General Assembly Security Council Secretariat secretary-general Economic and Social Council Trusteeship Council 	<p>ECONOMICS: International Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Bank International Monetary Foundation (IMF) 	<p>SOCIETY: International Cooperation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Universal Declaration of Human Rights peacekeeping action World Food Program (WFP) United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Human Rights Watch International Peace Bureau

Continuity and Change in a Globalized World

Today, no country can ever truly cut itself off from the global media or from external sources of information; trends that start in one corner of the world are rapidly replicated thousands of miles away . . .

—Francis Fukuyama, political scientist (born 1952)

Essential Question: How did science, technology, politics, justice, transportation, communication, and the environment change and stay the same after 1900?

One perspective shared by many scholars is that the 20th and 21st centuries were periods of unprecedented change. One factor in bringing about this transformation was the pace of discovery in science and the number of technological achievements made since the turn of the 20th century. These scientific and technological advancements led to changes in society, politics, economics, culture, and the environment. While many outcomes of these advancements were positive, they also included some unintended consequences that had negative impacts. Responses to these outcomes were varied.

Advances in Science and Technology

People made significant advances in understanding the universe and the natural world. These included:

The Origin of the Universe Several scientific theories tried to determine how the universe began. One of the best-known and best-supported theories was the *Big Bang*. This theory, that the universe started with one single cosmic event, led to a better understanding of the universe as well as atomic and subatomic science.

Wave Science Discoveries extended human knowledge and use of radio, light, sound, and microwaves. These breakthroughs led to improvements in radio and cellular communications as well as faster internet service.

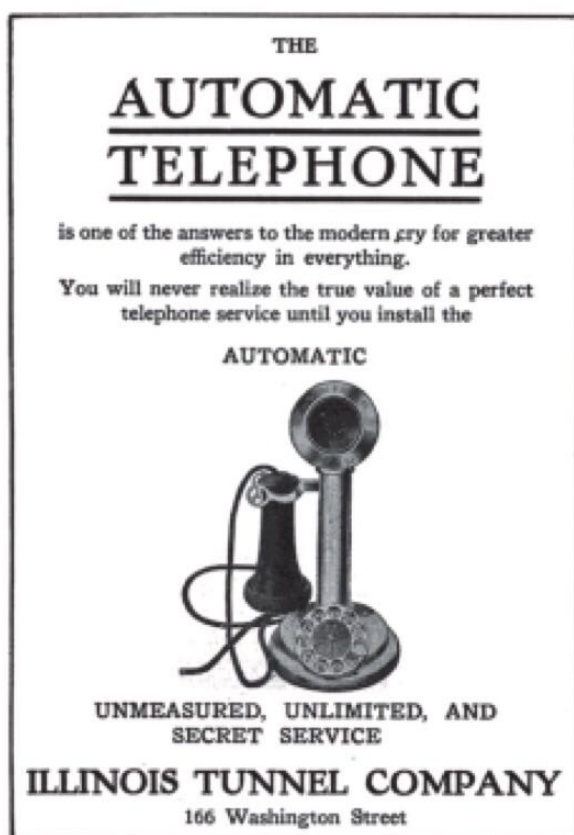
Medical Science Experts made discoveries about germs, viruses, diseases, and the human body. These discoveries led to cures or vaccines for common diseases such as polio, tuberculosis, and tetanus. Experts pioneered



new treatments for chronic diseases such as cancer and arthritis. The discovery of antibiotics, such as penicillin, helped people recover from or prevent infections. Reliable methods of birth control allowed women to control the size of their families. These and other medical advancements meant that people could live longer and better lives.

Energy Technologies Inventors and entrepreneurs made advancements in extracting and producing oil. Nuclear power became a significant source of energy. Renewable energy sources, including wind, solar, and thermal energy, became much cheaper to produce. In 2018, the International Renewable Energy Agency predicted that renewable energy sources would be consistently cheaper than fossil fuels by 2020. The increase in sources of power led to increased productivity, greater production of material goods, and faster transportation.

Communication Technologies In the 20th century, radio and television technology was further developed and telephone coverage increased so that most people eventually had a telephone in their homes. Internet communication and cell phones then replaced the older systems of communication. As a result, the amount and extent of mass communications increased, as did the global transfer of information.



Source: Wikimedia Commons (Left), Getty Images (Right).

Technology advanced from voice communication over wires to massive amounts of data available almost anywhere.

Transportation Technologies Airplanes were invented in the first years of the 20th century. Later, jet airplanes closed the distance between regions of the world. Shipping technology improved, with faster and larger ships carrying prefabricated shipping containers. These ships and planes could transport more goods farther and faster than ever before. Improved transportation technology resulted in the expansion of the global trade network and interactions among cultures.

Agricultural Technologies Scientists produced genetically modified crops that were more resistant to drought and disease and had higher yields. The most significant effect of these advances, known as the Green Revolution, was higher population growth rates, especially within developing countries. Another effect was the decline in biodiversity, as these genetically modified crops began to be cultivated at the expense of local crop types.

Changes in a Globalized World

Partly as a result of the advances in science and technology, the world experienced a number of significant changes to societies, economies, politics, cultures, and the environment.

Social Changes During this period, the world's population grew faster than at any previous time in history. The increase in population meant increasing challenges to existing social orders. The greatest growth rate in population occurred in developing countries, while developed countries saw a slowing of their population growth. In the developing countries, the population growth rate was largest in the lower socioeconomic classes. Improvements in communication and transportation made it easier for people to migrate from less developed countries to more developed ones. That led to a "brain drain" in some countries as more highly educated and skilled people left their home countries to find jobs elsewhere.

Girls and women in this era began to experience an increase in socioeconomic status, especially in the more developed countries. Women in these societies began to enter careers traditionally reserved for men. Their right to vote in elections was finally legalized, and in some cases women held the highest political offices in their nations. Because birth control allowed women to make choices, fertility declined in developed countries. Some women chose to put off having children until later in life or decided to not have children at all. In some countries, though, women saw little improvement in their status as societies resisted the change that was happening elsewhere. (Connect: Analyze changes in the practice of birth control from the mid-20th century to the early 21st century. See Topic 9.5.)

Economic Changes The trend toward economic globalization that started in the 19th century intensified during the 20th and 21st centuries. More developed nations continued to exploit less developed areas of the world, harvesting their raw materials and using the less developed areas as markets for finished goods. However, significant changes to the world economic



order took place. While the West, and especially the United States, was still a dominant economic force in the world economy, its superiority was being challenged by new sources of economic strength. Governments in Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore began policies that led to economic growth. These policies started the trend of Asian economies, which relied on inexpensive labor and high-quality manufacturing, competing against the Western economies to make consumer goods and high-tech products. Because of the modernization policies established after the death of Mao Zedong, which relaxed government control, China eventually became the second-largest economy in the world after the United States and a major exporter of goods to the rest of the world. India became an economic powerhouse by developing a labor force that specialized in software development and engineering.

Economic Policy Initiatives		
Program	Goal	Results
Soviet Union: Lenin's New Economic Policy (1921–1928)	Increase farm production and ease the transition to a communist economy	Peasants could own land. Small businesses were allowed. The Soviet economy began to recover from the Russian Civil War.
Soviet Union: Stalin's First Five-Year Plan (1928–1932)	Rapidly industrialize the Soviet economy	Industrial output grew. Farms were collectivized instead of having individual owners. Massive famines occurred.
China: Mao Zedong's Great Leap Forward (1958–1960)	Rapidly industrialize the Chinese economy	Peasants on collective farms were forced to produce steel using crude furnaces. Massive famines occurred.
China: Deng Xiaoping's Four Modernizations (1970s)	Attract foreign investment and move toward a market-oriented economy	China opened its economy to foreign producers. Industrial output increased, and China's economy grew rapidly.
United States: Roosevelt's New Deal (1933–1941)	Stimulate the economy and provide jobs during the Great Depression	The government hired millions to work on infrastructure projects, enacted Social Security, and regulated investments and banks.
United States: Reagan's Economic Recovery Tax Act (1981)	Stimulate the economy out of recession with supply-side economics	The economy came out of recession. Stock market and income inequality rose.
Great Britain: Expansion of the Welfare State (1945–1951)	Reduce income instability and inequality and provide a social safety net	The government provided citizens with health care, pensions, free education, and help for the poor. It also created huge bureaucracies.
Great Britain: Thatcher's Privatization of Industry (1980s)	Stimulate the British economy and reduce inflation	The economy grew and inflation was reduced, but unemployment rose to record levels.

Political Changes Mass protest movements helped bring about political and social change. Demonstrations in India showed how to effectively use nonviolent resistance and win social and political change. Activists championed civil rights in the United States, Northern Ireland, Canada, and other countries. Anti-war protests erupted in the United States and Western Europe. Women's rights movements emerged in the Western democracies and spread across the globe. Protests against the system of apartheid brought an end to racial segregation in South Africa. Democracy movements led to political protests and revolutions in North Africa and the Middle East called the "Arab Spring."



Source: Wikimedia Commons

Tahrir Square was the focal point of the 2011 Egyptian Revolution against former president Hosni Mubarak and his policies of police brutality. Over 1 million gathered in Tahrir Square on February 9, 2011, demanding the removal of the regime and for Mubarak to resign.

Governments were sometimes slow to respond to these calls for change. In some cases, they persecuted, imprisoned, or attacked the protesters.

During this time period, governments also began to play a larger role in managing or regulating their nations' economies. This increased government intervention in the economy was a change from the free-market, or *laissez-faire*, economics practiced in the previous era.

Cultural Changes Once information (and people) could quickly spread across the globe, the pace of cultural interactions and exchanges intensified. People all over the world consumed Western culture, particularly aspects that originated in the United States, in the form of movies, television shows, and music. Fashion styles that appeared in one area of the world quickly were imitated and adopted in other regions. A consumer culture spread.

One significant change in the process of cultural exchanges from the previous era was that these exchanges were often a two-way street. For instance, while global audiences watched Hollywood movies, cuisine from China, Japan, India, and Latin America often found its way to the plates of Americans and Europeans. Music and art from East Asia found a loyal fan base in the United States. The Internet helped increase the rate and scope of these transfers, and advances in cellular technology made even the most remote areas on Earth accessible to these cultural exchanges.

Environmental Changes In the 20th and 21st centuries, humans attempted to overcome the challenges of their environment in many new ways. With jet airplanes, travel between points on the globe was measured in hours rather than in days, months, or years. New technologies in petroleum extraction meant that sources of energy were cheaper and more abundant than previously imagined. The Space Age broke the terrestrial limits placed on humans by their environment, and space exploration became possible.

However, although humans overcame some challenges, they also harmed the environment. Airborne pollution increased as factories, automobiles, and homes got their power from carbon-based fuels. Water pollution also increased as people and companies dumped waste in rivers, lakes, and oceans. Debates about the sources and causes of climate change developed as average temperatures around the globe increased, polar ice caps began to melt, and more intense and catastrophic weather events occurred.