

Chapter 29 – Protest and Stagnation: Western World, 1965-1985

A Culture of Protest

Though many protests did not immediately succeed, they slowly transformed Western society

A Revolt in Sexual Mores

1920s had experimented with drugs, appearance of pornography, and sexual freedom

affected limited numbers of people – mostly in major cities

more extensive in post-WW II Europe

Sweden took lead in 1960s: esp. with sex education in schools and decriminalization of homosexuality

spread quickly – California gay rights movement reached Britain, France, and Italy by 1970

birth control pills liberated women by the mid-1960s

Amsterdam allowed open prostitution, public sale of pornography

effects on traditional family

Premarital and extramarital sex increased dramatically

Playboy magazine appeared in the 1950s with a message of sexual freedom

Youth Protest and Student Revolt

1960s saw a change in college student culture

marijuana became recreational drug of choice

LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide) encouraged by Timothy Leary, Harvard researcher

Coupled with dissatisfaction with the Second Vietnam War, a youth protest movement erupted

Before WW II, college had been a preserve of privilege; after, reduced tuition spurred a more open enrollment

in France, enrollment went from 4.5% in 1950 to 14.5% in 1965

resulted in overcrowded classrooms, decreased attention to students

students increasingly felt college was not “relevant” for the modern world

particularly in the U.S. because of the war

most famous student revolt was in Paris in 1968

students were influenced in part by Herbert Marcuse’s *One-Dimensional Man* (1964)

a Marxist, Marcuse argued that unindoctrinated students could liberate others from capitalistic control

in Berlin, people sided with the police over violent student protests

student protests peaked in 1968, largely faded by 1972

The Feminist Movement

1960s saw renewed interest in **feminism** (newly called “women’s liberation”)

Betty Friedan in *The Feminine Mystique* analyzed the problems of middle-class women (very popular)

spurred her and others to found NOW (National Organization of Women)

pushed for an Equal Rights Amendment

Antiwar Protests

U.S. war in Vietnam mobilized youths in Europe and America

saw it as aggressive and imperialistic

in the U.S., military draft underscored passions against the war

sit-ins, teach-ins were followed by occupying buildings and eventually radical violence

spawned an aggressive counterattack on youth as “spoiled” lawbreakers

in the U.S. in 1972, Richard Nixon rode on a “law and order” campaign against protests

A Divided Western World

Stagnation in the Soviet Union

little significant change during era of Leonid Brezhnev (1964-1982)

followed dictum “No Experimentation”

Brezhnev Doctrine: right of intervention if socialism is threatened elsewhere

justified use of Soviet troops in Czechoslovakia in 1968

The Brezhnev Years

benefited from **détente**

USSR had achieved rough nuclear parity with the U.S.

overall sense of external security

allowed Western dress, music, art (but still punished dissidents, e.g., Andrei Sakharov)
economy emphasized heavy industry (iron, steel, coal, and cement)
two huge problems

- 1) central bureaucracy discouraged efficiency and productivity
 - 2) guaranteed employment bred apathy, complacency, absenteeism, drunkenness
- in times of trouble, Soviets were forced to buy staples from capitalist countries

Party and state leaders (and army and secret police leaders) received privileges (think: corruption)
by 1980, popular perception was that the Soviet Union was declining
declining economy, increasing infant mortality, deterioration in working conditions
On Brezhnev's death, Yuri Andropov took over – in poor health, died after 3 years
Replaced by “youngish” Mikhail Gorbachev

Conformity in Eastern Europe

result of Polish and Hungarian uprisings in 1956: extending a small measure of reform to insure loyalty
Poland: rise of **Solidarity**, an independent labor movement, led by Lech Walesa
supported by workers, intellectuals, Catholic Church
repeatedly extracted concessions from the government

1981: finally arrested Walesa, outlawed the union, imposed military rule

Hungary: János Kádár legalized small private businesses, established friendly relationships with the West

The Prague Spring

1967: writers (including Václav Havel) protested, leading to resignation of Antonín Novotný

January 1968: Alexander Dubcek was elected first secretary of the Communist Party

Introduced reforms: freedom of speech and press, relaxation of secret police, permitted travel abroad
“euphoria” was called the “Prague Spring”

Red army invaded and crushed the reform government

Repression in East Germany and Romania

East Germany: Walter Ulbricht was a faithful Communist

industry was nationalized, agriculture was collectivized

1961: exodus of skilled labor to West Berlin resulted in the Berlin Wall

Ulbricht was succeeded by Erich Honecker, who used Stasi (secret police) to rule with an iron fist
(relative) prosperity and repression were two mainstays of East German life

Romania: Nicolae Ceausescu (with wife Elena) established a dictatorship

Western Europe: The Winds of Change

after two decades of growth, two recessions in the 1970s

1973: increase in price of oil triggered one

1980s: general recovery

West Germany

1969: Social Democrats replaced Christian Democrats, used coalition to stay in power until 1982

first chancellor was Willy Brandt

1971: met with Ulbricht, signed a treaty that respected “neighbors”

succeeded first by Helmut Schmidt (technocrat) and then Helmut Kohl

Great Britain: Thatcher and Thatcherism

1964-1979: Conservative and Labour Parties alternated in power

neither could solve the problem of IRA (Irish Republican Army) terrorist attacks

IRA opposed to suspension of N. Ireland's parliament, direct rule from London

neither could deal with an ailing economy

industry was decreasingly competitive for lack of modernization

more strikes – caused by conflicts between rival unions

1979: Margaret Thatcher (Conservative) first woman elected British Prime Minister

pledged to lower taxes, reduce gov't bureaucracy, limit welfare, restrict unions, end inflation

upside: controlled inflation, reduced union power, improved the economy of southern England

downside: hurt the economy of the Midlands and the north; undermined British education

foreign policy: a hard-liner (like Reagan)

built up the military, defeated Argentina after it seized the Falkland Islands

restored a sense of British patriotism – but Britain wasn't *really* a world player

Uncertainties in France

Poor economy in the 1970s moved France politically to the left

1981: Socialists were the dominant party, François Mitterand was president
addressed economy by freezing prices and wages, but compensated workers by
increased minimum wage, mandatory vacation to 5 weeks, 39-hour week, tax the rich
went on to traditional socialist policies: nationalize major banks, steel and aerospace industries
having failed, Mitterand turned portions back to private enterprise within 3 years

Confusion in Italy

1991: “tradition” of assembling coalition governments resulted in 50th government in 46 years
even Communism ran Italy (briefly)

1973: oil crisis hit Italy hard, caused a recession
recession caused student unrest, mass strikes, terrorist attacks
Red Brigades (terrorists) kidnapped and killed former prime minister
Mafia, spreading north, was all-pervasive and corrupted government

The European Community

1973: EEC expanded to include Britain, Ireland, and Denmark, renamed itself EC (European Community)
Greece joined (1981); Spain and Portugal joined (1986)

The United States: Turmoil and Tranquility

1968: election of Nixon indicated a political move to the right

1973: withdrew troops from Vietnam

appealed to Southern whites by slowing down racial desegregation, calling for “law and order”

Republicans appealed to Northern whites by opposing court-mandated school integration
politically paranoid, gathering intelligence on opponents

went too far, illegally breaking into Democratic National Headquarters (in the Watergate Apartments)
tried to cover it up; eventually secret recordings proved his involvement

1974: Nixon avoided impeachment by Congress and resigned

Economic Problems

Vice President Gerald Ford became president, but lost to Democrat Jimmy Carter in 1976
1973-mid 1980s experienced “stagflation” (stagnant economy *and* inflation – an unusual combo)
quadrupling of oil prices (by OPEC) was a primary cause; eventually prices rose 20-fold
additionally, kidnapping of 53 Americans by newly radicalized (Muslim) Iran hurt Carter
he was perceived as “weak” and lost to Ronald Reagan in 1980

The Reagan Revolution

Reagan professed that “government wasn’t the solution – it was the *problem*”

cut spending on social programs (food stamps, school lunch program, job programs)

increased spending on the military (largest peacetime buildup in history)

wouldn’t raise taxes to pay for increased spending

championed “supply-side economics,” believing tax cuts for the rich would “trickle down” to everyone

Canada

1963: Pierre Trudeau (Liberal) elected prime minister

supported unity, allowed both English and French to be used in civil service

too much centralization alienated voters, weakened h government

The Cold War: The Move to Détente

The Second Vietnam War

1954: after the French left Vietnam, the country was divided

North was led by Ho Chi Minh, a nationalist supported with Soviet aid

South was led by Ngo Dinh Diem, supported by U.S. financial and military aid

the Diem regime was corrupt and unpopular

Seen by the U.S. as unable to deal with the Vietcong, South Vietnamese Communists

U.S. backed a military coup, but the new government was even less capable

1965: President Johnson authorized bombing N. Vietnam, sending combat troops to S. Vietnam

U.S. saw it as a matter of the domino principle (if one falls, then one by one they all fall)

despite massive superiority, U.S. forces couldn’t defeat either the North or the Vietcong

Vietcong could easily hide or “disappear” among the people
S. Vietnamese so disliked their own government that they were willing to support the Vietnamese
ever-increasing troop numbers with no better results produced a strong antiwar sentiment in the U.S.
feelings for a Europe “independent” of U.S. foreign policy began growing
in France, de Gaulle was most critical, calling the U.S. “the greatest danger in the world today to peace”
1966: protests broke out in France and then spread to the rest of Europe
when scenes of the war reached the U.S. on the news daily, American public opinion finally turned
1973: Nixon reached an agreement with the North
1975: American troops left Vietnam, uniting the country under the rule of Communists from the North

China and the Cold War

Greatest Asian worry for the U.S. was China

It truly believed in a classless, Marxist state (the Soviet Union was far more conservative)

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

Mao believed that only constant vigilance could ensure true Communism

1966: Mao sent the Red Guard (unhappy Party members and discontented youths) out to “cleanse” society
eliminated any trace of capitalism in schools and universities, factories and even government
destroyed temples, foreign books, and Western music; renamed streets for revolutionary heroes
publicly shamed the “guilty”, often beating them – even to death

1976: Mao died, his critics finally adopted a more rational approach to problems

U.S.-China Relations

since 1949, the U.S. distrusted almost every facet of Chinese policy

1972: Nixon, known for his distrust of everything Communist, opened diplomacy with China
through the 1970s the relationship strengthened, in part because of their mutual distrust of the Soviets

The Practice of Détente

1970s: U.S.-Soviet relations warmed up bit: less tension (détente)

1972: the two signed a treaty limiting their respective antiballistic missile (ABM) systems
objective was to make it less likely that either side could “win” a nuclear war
means were to establish “equivalence” between the arsenals

1975: Helsinki Accords recognized the European borders established at the end of World War II
signed by U.S., Canada, and all European nations
acknowledges the Soviet sphere of influence

NOTE: the Helsinki Accords *also* committed to recognizing and protecting human rights

The Limits of Détente

1979: despite desire for continuing détente, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan ruined it

Soviets went in to restore a pro-Soviet regime

in retaliation, Carter canceled U.S. participation in the 1980 Moscow Olympics, embargoed grain

1980: incoming Reagan administration reverted to harsh, distrustful relationship with the Soviets
called it the “evil empire”

restarted the arms race, introducing “cruise” missiles which tested radar defenses

proposed Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), nicknamed “Star Wars” to create a space shield

supported anti-Soviet resistance in Afghanistan, making it an echo of Vietnam

Society and Culture in the Western World

The World of Science and Technology

before WW II, research science and technology were largely separated

during WW II, governments recruited scientists to develop new weapons

Britain: radar; Germany: self-propelled rockets, jet airplanes

in Britain, Alan Turing made a primitive computer to break the German “Enigma” ciphering machines

in U.S., J. Robert Oppenheimer managed the teams developing of the atomic bomb

wartime research created a new model

large organizations with teams of scientists working on highly expensive, complex devices

best example: 1960s space race

1957: Soviets created an orbiting satellite (*Sputnik*)

1961-1969: U.S. caught up and sent men to the moon and back

The Computer

probably the best example of science + technology

COBOL was an early computer language allowing computers to respond to word, not just numbers

Grace Hopper (U.S. naval officer) was instrumental in its development

Transistors and silicon chips – miniaturized parts – allowed faster and faster processing speeds

1971: microprocessors combined thousands of transistors and silicon chips

led to “personal” computers

New Conception of the Universe

breakthroughs of Einstein, quantum theory led to altered conception of reality

no “building blocks” but a complex interrelationship among various parts of a “unified whole”

humans part of the interrelationships, not neutral observers

Newtonian view considered “outdated”

Dangers of Science and Technology

increasingly, science and technology were seen as not strictly beneficial

“advancements” had consequences well beyond their intentions

Small Is Beautiful (1971) was a critique of new science and technology

Biggest issue was environmental effects

The Environment and the Green Movements

by late 1970s, serious ecological problems were obvious

air pollution (NO and SO₂ emissions from cars, power plants and factories) a serious health problem

water pollution, deforestation, disappearing wildlife

1986: nuclear power disaster at Chernobyl (USSR)

Green Parties emerged all over Europe in the 1970s

variety of origins: environmental, women’s, workers’ rights groups

have provided considerable awareness but little direct political effect

Postmodern Thought

generally, postmodernism rejected object truth in favor of relative nature of reality and knowledge

Jacques Derrida posited Western thought is based on binary oppositions

and one tends to be favored over the other

poststructuralism (or **deconstruction**) believed culture is a *construction*

people construct it, therefore there is no universal truth or meaning

Michel Foucault argued that all norms are culturally produced and therefore reflect a power structure

Society creates ideal behaviors and then invents a subclass that does not exhibit those behaviors

Power requires resistance to exist – or it’s meaningless

Example: *society* creates the definition of homosexuality (not homosexuals themselves)

Trends in Art, Literature, and Music

“postmodernism” tends to move away from “modernism” in favor of using elements from “traditional” sources

craftspeople have gained respect

postmodernists tend to borrow from each other and blur distinctions

film, performance, popular culture, sculpture, and architecture

Art

A tendency to reject object-based artwork

performances and “installations” that were too fleeting or large to appear in museums

“happenings” which depended on randomness (including audience participation)

Robert Venturi valued roadside retail architecture as much as historical architecture

Charles Moore placed modern materials side-by-side with historical references

photorealism presented extremely meticulous paintings that were indistinguishable from photographs

subjects could be ordinary people in ordinary settings

Literature

Magic realism, introduced from Latin America, mixed the realistic with the dreamlike or fantastic

1982: *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Gabriel Garcia Márquez) won the Nobel Prize for Literature

fact and fantasy rely on the one’s point of view

1984: *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (Milan Kundera, a Czech)

the human spirit can be lessened but not destroyed

Music

neoclassicists wrote symphonically but some, like Stravinsky, explored atonality and dissonance

major musical trend: serialism

inspired by Schönberg, it predetermined the order of pitch, loudness, and rhythm

once the patterns were set, the music almost “composed itself”

could generate unanticipated musical events

minimalism – much like serialism but with a nod to tonality and harmony

Popular Culture: Image and Globalization

1967-1973: the “Golden Age” of Rock

much experimentation

rock 'n' roll competed with a blues-based rock

non-Western sounds (best example: Indian sitar)

occasionally included social issues, particularly the Vietnam war and materialism

promoted “peace and love”

migration around the world and integration of styles

“punk” moved from New York to Britain (and back)

like rock 'n' roll, it had proletarian roots (tattered clothes, piercings)

early 1980s: MTV promoted music *videos*, elevating image – perhaps even above the sound)

best example: Michael Jackson

technological advances: synthesizers, drum kits, sound looping

late 1970s New York: creation of hip-hop

as with many styles before it, grew out of African-American experience

often included social commentary, particular about the American inner city

The Growth of Mass Sports

Sports became a product of popular culture and the leisure industry

Satellites allowed for global consumption, particularly the Olympics and World Cup

After initially rejecting television, professional sports discovered TV's revenues

TV contracts generated more money than ticket sales

Many sports are wholly dependent on TV revenues – which are generated by advertising

combine the Olympics with the Cold War and sport became highly influential political propaganda

daily medal counts, playing of national anthems

used for other political purposes

1956: six nations withdrew in protest of Soviet crushing of Hungarian uprising

1972: 27 nations threatened to withdraw over South African apartheid

Palestinian terrorists seized 11 Israeli athletes (who later died)

1980: U.S. boycotted Olympics in Moscow over Soviet invasion of Afghanistan

1984: Soviet Union boycotted Olympics in Los Angeles in retaliation

increased popularity of sports led to recognition of pressures and rewards

science addressed concerns

aerodynamic helmets for cyclists, skintight bodysuits for swimmers, widespread improved nutrition

illegal performance enhancement (drugs, blood doping) and resulting testing

Popular Culture: Increasingly Global

1960s: Marshal McLuhan

proposed that mass communications technology would break down cultural barriers

create a “global village”

has been criticized for too benign a view of influence

many have said that Western cultural values have “colonized” the rest of the world

that too has been criticized, saying cultural influence works in both directions