

### **Timeline 1859-2003**

November 24, 1859

#### **Social Darwinism and Racism**

In 1859, Charles Darwin published "On the Origin of Species" which is about the evolution of all forms of life and the theory of natural selection. He said members of each species are constantly competing to survive; thus, those with the strongest physical traits that could best adapt to the environment could continue surviving and passing on their traits to their offspring. The process is called 'survival of the fittest.'

Some of the thinkers used Darwin's theory of natural selection to support their opinions by applying the concept to war and economic competition, which created Social Darwinism. This extreme idea encouraged racism. Many Western civilizations often claimed their successes according to their white race by the late of 1800s.

October 29 1929

#### **The Great Depression**

Due to the uneven distribution of wealth, many farmers and unskilled workers were in desperate state. After the war, demand and price of raw material and agricultural products dwindled. Meanwhile, an advancement of technology made goods faster, consequently, it led to over production. The factories had to cut the number of workers to sustain their positions.

At the same time, a crisis in finance was severe. The prices of stocks were high and the Federal Reserve increase the interest rate to slow the run of the stock market. In October 29, 1929, the stock prices crashed as people sold their stocks at once due to the financial panic, which called Black Tuesday. The day marked the despair beginning of the Global Depression.

In 1932, a new President, Franklin D. Roosevelt proposed the New Deal to alleviate the impacts of the Great Depression in the United States. The government created new laws to regulate stock market and bank deposits and implemented new Social Security system to provide pensions for elders and others. However, a natural disaster turned the United States into the Dust Bowl. The winds carried topsoil away and the storms damaged crops, land, and equipment. The Great Depression recovered by the late 1930s.

May 8, 1945

#### **Nazis Defeated**

By March 1945, the Allies had successfully crossed into Western Germany while the Soviet armies headed to Eastern region. Adolf Hitler committed suicide when the Soviets fought their ways to Berlin. The official war end in Europe was May 8, 1945 after Germany surrendered in earlier day. The day is called V-E Day. The Axis powers declined due to many reasons. They had to fight many fronts at the same time because of the location of Germany and the Allies. Hitler underestimated the ability of Soviets troops. Moreover, the United States was able to maintain enormous production capacity.

May 3, 1946

### **The Cold War Unfolds**

In May 3, 1946, when Winston Churchill used a term “Iron Curtain,” the tension line between democratic West and the communist East in Europe, it symbolized the beginning of the Cold War. The United States established the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) while the Soviet Union led the Warsaw Pact in Eastern Europe. In 1961, the divided Berlin was actually split by wall, as the Soviet wanted the hopeless East Germans stop escaping to the prosperous West Berlin.

Countries in East Europe were trying to abandon communism such as Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. The earliest protest occurred in East Germany and led to the economic reform in both Poland and Hungary. In Czechoslovakia, the leader introduced greater degree of freedom of expression and democracy. However, all of these countries were being assaulted by Soviet troops who were far more powerful than these nations.

September 15, 1949

### **West Germany's Economic Miracles**

According to the United States Marshall Plan that helped Germany recover from battle ruins, it strengthened West Germany so that it could fight against communist East Germany ruled by the Soviet Union. In September 15, 1949, Konrad Adenauer was elected as West Germany's chancellor. His main aim was to build West Germany into a sovereign democratic nation. He reestablished cities, factories, and trade. The new constructions were highly recognized as modern and effective. Even though West Germany had to pay high taxes for the recovery, the region actually created an industrial economic boom.

March 11, 1985

### **Gorbachev Tries Reform**

In March 11, 1985, Mikhail Gorbachev was elected as General Secretary of Soviet Union. Under his control, he tried to implement reforms due to failing economy and war in Afghanistan. He even avoid Cold-War confrontation as he signed arms control with the United states and retreated troops from Afghanistan. Within the union, he called for glasnost or openness, by ending censorship and discussing problems directly. Moreover, he urged perestroika or restructuring, of government and economy. Politically, he reduced the size of the bureaucracy. For economic aspect, he made factory managers making decisions and allowed farmers to sell their products on free market.

November 1, 1993

### **The European Union Expands**

In 1993, the European Economic Community became the European Union (EU), an economic and political group that encourages a free flow of capital, labor, goods, and services in European region. European nations become one by using euro as a mutual currency and hold EU passports instead of national passports. Currently, the European Union is the world largest economy that could compete with the United States and Japan. Nevertheless, the economies of Eastern European countries do not equal those of the West, which consequently can affect the

overall outlook of the region's economy. Moreover, Turkey desires a full membership in the EU but because of human right issues and large Muslim population of Turkey, they make the EU worry about fast changes, which can lead to instability within the region.

March 19, 2003

### **War in Iraq**

As President Bush claimed that Iraq was secretly producing weapon of mass destruction (WMDs) and was involved in the 2001 terrorist attacks, the invasion in Iraq began. The 2003 invasion in Iraq started from March 19 and ended in May 1, 2003. It is the beginning of the Iraq War. The invasion consisted of 21 days of major combat operations by the troops from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, and Poland. The war concluded with the capture of Baghdad, Iraqi capital by American forces. The mission was to disarm Iraq of weapons of mass destruction, to end Saddam Hussein's support for terrorism and to free Iraqi people. Nonetheless, the attack was widely debated around the world because no WMDs were found after the United States invasion.