

BARBARISM
AND
CIVILIZATION

A HISTORY OF EUROPE
IN OUR TIME

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Preface

‘There is no document of civilization’, writes Walter Benjamin, ‘that is not simultaneously a document of barbarism.’¹ During the past century Europe was the scene of some of the most savage episodes of collective violence in the recorded history of the human species. Yet the same period has also seen incontestable improvements in many aspects of the life of most inhabitants of the continent: human life has been extended, on average, by more than half; standards of living have increased dramatically; illiteracy has been all but eliminated; women, ethnic minorities, and homosexuals have advanced closer to equality of respect and opportunity. These and other changes have been so rapid and convulsive that any effort to distil their essence is a quixotic undertaking. Here is one historian’s tilt at the windmill. This is a long book—necessarily so. Both the theme and the evidence are vast. Yet much has had to be omitted or boiled down: as the painter Max Liebermann put it: ‘Drawing implies leaving out.’²

My primary objective has been to fashion a narrative of the main contours of the political, diplomatic, and military history of Europe in this period as well as to describe and account for the most striking features of demographic, economic, and social change. In the cultural sphere, I have had room to do no more than provide glimpses of areas that, it may be argued, affected society most broadly, such as film, broadcasting, and popular music. I also seek to furnish some basis for understanding the evolution of values in an era during which God has disappeared as a living presence for most Europeans.

Fifteen of the twenty chapters are structured along a linear, mainly political narrative. The other five (1, 6, 9, 15, and 20) seize specific moments (1914, the 1930s, the war years, the 1960s, and the dawn of the new millennium) and embark on a *tour d’horizon* of life in Europe at those junctures.

What are the limits of this enquiry in time and space? First, chronological: Europe in our time is understood as roughly one contemporary lifetime.

That takes us back to the early twentieth century. Of course, that is not the lifetime of most Europeans now living. But this is *our* time, the time of all of us, on the principle, enunciated by Cicero, that ‘not to know what happened before one was born is to remain always a child’.³ An investigation of the history of our time necessarily extends back to the origins of the institutions, the events, the ideas that shape our immediate environment. How far back we must go to attain a mature perspective is a matter of argument. The twentieth century has been called the shortest on record, beginning with the outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 and ending with the collapse of European communism in 1989–91.⁴ The date 1914 has been selected as a starting-point neither conventionally nor arbitrarily. It chooses itself by dint of the profound shock to the European system that was administered by the First World War—an earthquake of which Europe even today still feels the after-tremors. As for the end, although the fall of communism in eastern Europe marks a decisive turn, I have chosen to bring the narrative as close to the present as possible. This enables me to outline the emerging shape of post-Cold War Europe, to examine the violent national conflicts that have appeared since 1989, most notably the Balkan wars of the 1990s, and to discuss problems connected with the enlargement of the European Union.

As for the geographical limits, ‘Europe’ includes, for the purposes of this book, European Russia and European Turkey, as well as the islands adjacent to the European land mass to the north-west and south. To state those inclusions is to expose a nakedness and untidiness: ‘Europe’ for much of the period covered by this book is a fiction. It did not exist as a focus of loyalty or even as a meaningful category for most inhabitants of the continent. To take the cases just mentioned, the British islanders have always thought of themselves as separated from Europe not only by twenty-one miles of water but also by a larger sense of a distinctive identity. British history was for long heavily conditioned by a lingering extra-European imperial role. The Russians and the Turks have lived in an uneasy, ambiguous, and often antagonistic relationship with what they perceived as Europe—very different in the two cases. Russian history does not halt at the Don or the Urals. Consideration of European Turkey makes little sense without reference to Anatolia. All this means that the geographical limitations mentioned above should be taken as no more than roughly indicative.

Two minor vexations of modern European history are the problems of alternative dates and place names. In Russia, the Ottoman Empire, and the

Balkan states in 1914, the Julian calendar had not yet been replaced by the Gregorian. The 'new style' was not adopted in Russia until after the Bolshevik revolution: by a decree of 26 January 1918 (Julian), 1 February 1918 (old style) was declared to be 14 February 1918 (new style). (Hence, the dates 1–13 February 1918 are said to have been the happiest in Russian history, since not a single calamity was recorded!) In other countries the new dating system was introduced at various points between 1915 and 1923. The difference between the two calendars in the twentieth century is thirteen days. To avoid confusion, all dates in this book are rendered in the new style.

The second problem is less easily solved. Many cities and regions, particularly in eastern Europe in the early part of the twentieth century, were known by two or even three names, reflecting mixed populations and changes in sovereignty. For instance, Bratislava, today the capital of Slovakia, contained only a small minority of Slovaks in 1914; at that time the city was under Hungarian rule; its two largest population groups were Germans, who called it Pressburg, and Hungarians, who called it Pozsony. Similarly, Klausenburg in Transylvania, established by Saxon colonists in the late twelfth century, was under Hungarian rule in 1914 and known as Kolozsvár; subsequently it changed hands three times between Hungary and Romania. Since the end of the Second World War it has found itself in Romania and its current name is Cluj.

Other names have changed altogether for political reasons as in the cyclical nomenclature St Petersburg (until 1914), Petrograd (1914), Leningrad (1924), and again St Petersburg (since 1991). In some instances it is impossible to reconcile the competing principles at stake, such as national pride, local usage, and universal recognition. Occasionally inhabitants themselves are at a loss. For example, in Kaliningrad, today a small Russian enclave on the Baltic coast, formerly Königsberg, founded in the thirteenth century as a fortress of the Teutonic knights, later the coronation city of kings of Prussia, the mainly Russian inhabitants were reported in the 1990s to be nonplussed by the problem of what to call their town: they had no desire to cling to a name imposed in 1946 to commemorate a now reviled Soviet politician; on the other hand, the previous historic name had become meaningless in the absence not only of a Prussian king but of the city's entire German population who fled at the end of the Second World War. For want of any obvious alternative, Kaliningrad was thus one of the few city names of the Communist era to remain unchanged—for the time being.

The spelling of names also presents problems. In the early part of this century *Roumania* was the common form; later *Rumania* became the accepted spelling; since the 1960s *Romania* has been generally adopted. Behind the apparently trivial changes in form lies a historico-nationalist ideology—the so-called Daco-Roman theory of the origins of the Romanian people—that remains central to the self-conception of Romanian nationalism to this day.

Total consistency is unattainable in such circumstances—and perhaps undesirable. As a rule of thumb I have used the name that seems most appropriate at the period with which I am dealing. Where there may be ambiguity I have included the alternative form in brackets. In some cases I have used throughout the form that is most familiar to the English reader: *Romania*, *East Germany* (rather than *German Democratic Republic*), and *Fiume*, *Strasbourg*, *Londonderry*, and *Dubrovnik*, rather than *Rijeka*, *Strassburg*, *Derry*, and *Ragusa*. Historically, such choices have often carried a political freight: no such intention should be imputed here.

The epigraphs have been selected from European poets of the period covered by each chapter. Some of these fragments deal with public events and may be read as illustrative documents; others are more personal. They have been chosen with an eye to seizing, if only fleetingly and on the wing, the evolution of civilized sensibilities in this most brutish of ages.

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I 5

Europe in the 1960s

I'd love to turn you on.

*John Lennon and Paul McCartney, London, 1967**

Children, women, and men

In the 1960s, for the first time since 1914, a cohort came of age in Europe that (except in Greece and Hungary) had never known the horrors of war, revolution, or famine. The children of the post-war 'baby boom' were the best-fed, best-educated, healthiest, least sexually repressed, most self-confident generation in European history. A youth cult reigned supreme. It threw overboard deference to convention, tradition, and respect for elders and betters. Western Europe basked in the sun of unprecedented affluence and ease. Eastern Europe groped towards a less repressive form of Communism. Talk of 'convergence' of the two systems was in the air. Men re-examined some of their ingrained prejudices and began to adopt a more egalitarian view of women and of sexual deviants. Capital and corporal punishment disappeared from much of the continent. Even the most conservative of institutions, like the Catholic Church, embraced *aggiornamento* (modernization). As the European imperial powers retreated from their overseas possessions, their societies discarded or modified colonial and racial attitudes of the past. In architecture, literature, music, the arts, fashion, and design, a spirit of freedom and experimentation swept aside congealed styles, canonical standards, and fossilized mental structures. In the overflowing new universities, new subjects, especially the social sciences, replaced the classical curriculum that had changed little since the previous

* From 'A Day in the Life'. The Beatles, *Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* (LP album, released June 1967). The song was banned by the BBC on account of this line.

century. Everything seemed possible. Man walked on the moon. Supermarkets gave out green stamps redeemable, when saved up, for hitherto undreamed-of 'rewards'. Working-class people in northern Europe could afford holidays on the Black Sea or the Mediterranean. Yet in the end, as in all ages, the high optimism of youth dashed against the rocks.

The 1960s marked the start of a secular demographic change. European birth rates declined to, or even below, population replacement level. In Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Bulgaria the fall began in the late 1950s; in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Romania in the early 1960s. In Britain, the number of live births, which peaked in the early 1960s at over a million a year, the highest since the late 1940s, declined to 700,000 by 1975. By the end of the 1960s net reproduction rates in Bulgaria, Hungary, and Romania had fallen below replacement level. The decline was not evenly spread across societies. Some groups, for instance gypsies and Muslims in the Balkans, still maintained disproportionately high birth rates, giving rise to ethno-nationalist concerns among their neighbours.

A number of reasons for the declining birth rate have been proposed: rising levels of women's education, high participation by women in the workforce, a consumerist culture of self-gratification, constricted housing conditions. None of these is fully persuasive. One further reason was undoubtedly the long-term effect of the war. Apart from neutral countries such as Sweden and Switzerland, the demographic shape of much of the continent had been deeply affected by the bloodletting. The impact of the war on the population of the USSR was still visible in the severe imbalances in age distribution and sex ratio recorded in the 1959 census, the first to be conducted there after the war. The shortage of men led to a sharp decline in the proportion of women who were married and in the fertility rate. These trends were particularly felt in the European regions of the USSR, which had been most directly affected by wartime occupation. Government efforts to reverse the trend, for example by honouring 'Heroic Mothers' and issuing 'Motherhood Medals', had no visible effect.

A few countries displayed somewhat different patterns. In France, a post-war marriage boom led, as elsewhere, to a baby boom in the late 1940s (and the other way round too). But it lasted longer there: 846,000 births, a record, were registered in France in 1946 and the number remained above 800,000 every year until 1973. The population grew to 52.7 million by 1975, a gain of nearly one-third since the end of the war and the fastest rate of population growth in modern French history. Not all these children,

however, were planned: according to a survey in French maternity hospitals in 1959–62, a third of pregnancies were unwanted.

West Germany too experienced fast population growth—from 49 to 60 million between 1949 and 1970—though much of this was due to immigration. Both Germanies suffered a fertility decline to well below replacement level from the mid-1960s onwards. East Germany, however, with negative net migration, was the only European state apart from Ireland to suffer absolute population decline in the 1960s: between 1955 and 1961 the population of the GDR fell from 17.8 to 17 million, mainly owing to emigration. The construction of the Berlin Wall put a virtual halt to emigration but not to population loss. The net reproduction rate declined from 1.17 in 1964 to 0.73 by 1975 and never again attained population replacement level (a rate of one equals replacement).

The main reason for the decline in fertility was undoubtedly conscious human choice. Across the continent, couples decided to limit the size of their families. They were aided by the newly invented contraceptive pill. In spite of the rigid opposition of the Roman Catholic Church to all forms of birth control, except the so-called ‘rhythm method’, the pill gained widespread acceptance as the safest and most convenient form of contraception. In 1967 the National Health Service in Britain began prescribing it to unmarried as well as married women. In Catholic and Communist countries its spread was slower. In France provision of the pill was not legalized until passage of the *loi Neuwirth* in 1967, and even then on a restricted basis: only for married women, only by doctor’s prescription, and only upon filling-out of complicated forms. In Italy the Fascist-era prohibition on birth-control information was not repealed until 1971. In Ireland the importation, sale, or advertising of any form of contraceptive remained illegal until 1974. In eastern Europe concern over declining birth rates led governments to restrict availability of the pill. The impact of this first ‘lifestyle’ drug, should therefore not be exaggerated. In 1972 only 6 per cent of French women were taking it. As late as the 1980s, although the great majority of married couples in Europe were using some form of contraception, not a single country recorded a majority of women of reproductive age as relying on the pill. Other devices such as the diaphragm and IUD were popular before the arrival of the pill and continued to be used thereafter, especially after health scares associated with its use. The fertility reduction in much of western Europe in any case antedated large-scale use of the pill, which should therefore be seen as an accelerator rather than an initiator of demographic decline.

Lower fertility was not, as might be imagined, accompanied by growing childlessness. On the contrary, childlessness decreased in most of western Europe (except Germany) between the first and the third quarters of the twentieth century. The fall in number of births was the result not of abstention from bearing children at all but rather of a combination of postponed and reduced childbirth, another indication that it was a matter of conscious decision-making by women, especially given that improved diet was probably leading to heightened biological capacity to conceive.

Illegitimate births, which had fallen in the first half of the century, began to rise again after 1945. Unlike other births, the great majority of these were unplanned. Women, especially where young and poor, had illegitimate children because they lacked the information, means, and legal framework to exercise choice. Already before the First World War at least a third of all women who married in large cities in Germany were pregnant before their weddings. But whereas then illegitimacy was regarded as a social disgrace, in the 1960s there was greater acceptance of sexual activity before marriage and less pressure to marry in haste in order to legitimize offspring. In Sweden 28 per cent of births were illegitimate by 1965. In France in the period 1960–9 55 per cent of women told pollsters they had engaged in intercourse before marriage. This compared with 33 per cent in the 1940s and 1950s. Opinion polls, it seemed, had replaced confessionals, except that most of those talking to them did not seek absolution for what they no longer regarded as sins.

One form of choice that women could now make legally, at least in some places, was abortion. This was not without a struggle, especially in Catholic countries. Unlike Britain, where abortion was legalized in 1968, it remained illegal in Ireland into the new millennium, in Italy until 1978, in Portugal until 1984, and in Spain until 1985; even thereafter the abortion laws in both Portugal and Spain were very restrictive. In France abortions were illegal in the 1960s, although as many as half a million were performed annually and large numbers of women died as a result of botched operations. In 1971 343 prominent Frenchwomen published a *Manifeste des 343* in the left-wing weekly magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur*, in which they publicly stated that each of them had had an abortion. They included the film star Catherine Deneuve and the writers Marguerite Duras and Françoise Sagan. A mass movement developed in favour of legalization. Success was achieved with the passage in 1975 of the *loi Veil*, followed in 1981 by a measure that provided for abortions to be paid for by social security.

The contrast with much of eastern Europe was striking. In the USSR, where abortion was relegalized in 1955, eight million terminations were officially registered annually in the mid-1960s. The decision to permit abortion again seems to have been connected with the general social relaxation of the post-Stalin period. It was also partly a response to popular pressure in the form of very large numbers of illegal abortions. There were more abortions than live births in the Soviet Union throughout the three decades from 1960. Elsewhere in eastern Europe abortion was by far the most common form of birth control until the collapse of Communism. In Romania in 1965 there were four abortions for every one birth. Alarmed at the consequences for the country's population, the government banned abortion except in a limited number of cases, such as incest. The birth rate doubled the following year, then fell back once more as illegal abortionists resumed their trade.

Thanks in part to the larger proportion of births taking place in hospitals, infant mortality rates continued to fall, in many regions below what had, in the inter-war period, been regarded as the 'biological minimum' of around fifty per thousand. In eastern and southern Europe, where the rates were still highest, they fell sharply: in Yugoslavia from 121 per thousand live births in 1950 to 57 per thousand in 1970; in Italy in the same period from 68 to 29 per thousand. Maternal mortality also fell. For the first time in human history, birth was largely shorn of the terror that it would be accompanied or immediately succeeded by death.

Better health meant that the great majority of those born could expect to survive for a complete lifespan. Average life expectancy increased everywhere, in the Soviet Union from forty-seven in 1938-9 to seventy by 1962-3. (This improvement occurred in spite of the fact that Soviet spending on health, 2.8 per cent of GNP in 1968, was far lower proportionately than that of most other European countries.) As fewer children were born and people lived longer, the balance of old and young in the population changed. Paediatric medicine became mainly a matter of prevention of disease while the costs of geriatric care soared. Cleaner public water supplies, an improved diet, and enhanced public health services eradicated diseases that had been scourges of previous generations. New vaccines became widely available: against measles in 1964, mumps in 1967, and rubella in 1969.

The last major polio epidemic in Europe, at Cork in southern Ireland in 1956-7, struck after the Salk vaccine had been developed in the United

States in 1955 but before it had become generally available in Europe. This was the disease that terrified more than any other, perhaps because it attacked children on a seemingly random basis and because it could paralyse for life. The local authorities and the *Cork Examiner*, anxious to prevent a panic that might affect trade and, by causing mass flight, spread the infection further, insisted there was 'no occasion for undue alarm'.¹ Perhaps fifty thousand people were infected, most without realizing it, although only 499 were diagnosed and twenty died.

The nuclear family of the late industrial age, characterized by high levels of female domesticity, low average age of marriage, high marriage and fertility rates, and low divorce and illegitimacy rates, thus began to fray at the edges in much of Europe. Average age of marriage was one exception to the pattern; it fell in western Europe in the 1960s. But it began to rise after 1970 and thereafter reached unprecedented heights. The disintegration of the family correlated in large measure with religion: majority-Protestant and highly secularized countries led the way, Catholic ones followed, and mainly Orthodox south-east Europe occupied the rear.

Whereas divorce rates had remained static in most west European countries in the 1950s, they shot up in the 1960s. One reason was that legal barriers were lowered. Many countries abandoned the concept of the 'marital offence', replacing it with 'no fault' divorce. In England and Wales the number of divorces per annum, already five times as high as in the pre-war period, rose from 25,000 in 1960 to 45,000 in 1968. In France too, in spite of the strictures of the Catholic Church, the rate rose steadily, though until 1975 divorce was granted only in cases of proven adultery or violence. In Italy divorce was forbidden until 1970: in a few thousand cases each year state tribunals granted legal separations; a few hundred church marriages (99 per cent of the total at the time) were terminated after a long and humiliating process of 'annulment'. A campaign spearheaded by the Radical Party finally led to enactment of a divorce law in 1970. In a rearguard action, the Christian Democrats, spurred on by the Vatican, forced a referendum on the issue in 1973: but only 41 per cent of those voting supported repeal of the law. Divorce was commoner in the northern, Protestant countries of Europe than in southern, Catholic ones. In the Soviet Union, the limitations on divorce of the Stalin years were relaxed after 1965 when there was a return to divorce on demand. The divorce rate shot up over the next two decades, becoming the highest in Europe. Male alcoholism was the chief cause, cited in over half of all cases. Elsewhere in

eastern Europe, especially in East Germany, divorce rates also rose and in the region as a whole were much higher than in western Europe.

All these changes in the structure of the European family reflected a transformation in relations between the sexes in the 1960s. The feminist movement, so prominent in the United States, at first mobilized rather weakly in Europe. One reason for its subdued nature in western Europe may have been that the welfare state there typically provided a range of rights and benefits not available in the United States. Simone de Beauvoir's *Le deuxième sexe* (1949), later hailed as a great feminist text, was little noticed upon its first publication. The most influential feminist writers in Europe in the 1960s were mainly non-Europeans like the American Betty Friedan and Germaine Greer, an Australian immigrant to Britain. It was not until the late 1960s that a women's liberation movement, strongly influenced by the example of American feminists, emerged in Europe, especially in West Germany, France, Italy, and Britain. The student revolts of 1968 gave feminism a strong impetus. In West Germany young women radicals revolted against their status as 'brides of the revolution' and asserted autonomous rights and demands.

In eastern Europe feminism was much weaker, no doubt because its contemporary American flavour rendered it suspect, also because autonomous socio-political movements could barely function under Communism, and perhaps also because women in Communist countries had already gained, at least on paper, many rights for which the movement elsewhere fought, including equal pay and easy divorce and abortion. A further reason has been suggested. In the west, feminism was in large measure a reaction to the sexual exploitation to which men subjected women in the 1960s as part of the era's valorization of private pleasure. In the prudish and intrusive societies of Communist Europe, where the principle of individual gratification was not embraced to the same extent, the conditions for this kind of feminist revolt barely existed.

Whereas in the early part of the century the women's movement had been largely political, its aims in the 1960s were different. Female suffrage was no longer a significant issue. Women had gained the vote in France and Italy at the end of the Second World War. In Switzerland they did so at the federal level in 1971 but some cantons continued to refuse women suffrage; the last holdout, the tiny, north-eastern half-canton of Appenzell Inner-rhoden, yielded in 1990 only after an order from the Federal Supreme Court. The right to vote was merely the first step on the long road to sexual

equality. In France, for example, wives until the 1960s were legally analogous to minors, essentially subordinate to their husbands. Until 1965 a married woman had to obtain her husband's permission before going out to work or opening a bank account. A new family law in 1970 recognized spouses as equal but the husband remained legal manager of family property until 1985. Feminists in the 1960s, therefore, aimed at broader legal and social equality which, especially in western Europe, remained lacking in several spheres.

As at the time of the suffragettes, the new generation of feminists encountered hostility on the left only marginally less than on the right. Demands for equal employment opportunities and equal pay and for safeguards against sexual harassment in the workplace were often resisted by male-dominated labour unions, fearful of the effects on their mainly male members. Although article 119 of the Treaty of Rome required 'application of the principle that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work', application was, in fact, withheld for many years. A European Commission report in 1965 stated that not a single member country of the EEC had implemented the article. Although France, which was constitutionally bound by the same principle, supported immediate enforcement, other countries resisted it. Only in the 1970s, as a result of a decision by the European Court of Justice (*Defrenne vs. Sabena*, 1976) and enforcement action by the Commission, was the clause at last translated into social reality.

Women still worked outside the home less than men. In Sweden 45 per cent did so in 1961 but in southern Europe the proportion was much lower. In general, the traditional model of female role segregation remained more prevalent in Catholic than in Protestant societies. As peasants moved to the city, women who had previously worked unpaid on family farms tended to leave the labour force. In Italy non-domestic workers declined from a third to a quarter of the adult female population between 1960 and 1973. Although more jobs opened up to women, they continued to concentrate in certain fields regarded as 'women's work': light industries, the lower ranks of office work, and the 'caring professions', including relatively new and rapidly expanding ones such as social work.

In eastern Europe women were much more fully integrated into the workforce. In East Germany over 70 per cent went out to work in the early 1960s. In Hungary the proportion of women who were 'housewives' fell from 64 per cent in 1952 to just 5 per cent thirty years later. This was partly a

result of a number of government initiatives and incentives. Work hours were made flexible and childcare was provided at some workplaces. A childcare allowance that was introduced in 1967 enabled women to take up to three years' maternity leave from work. But while more women worked than in western Europe, the sexual barriers to promotion to senior positions were no less formidable: in Hungary in 1970 women constituted only 7 per cent of 'managers and directors', 8 per cent of 'leaders in public administration', and only 2 per cent of 'technical managers, chief engineers, and works managers'.²

Although its achievements, when viewed quantitatively, were limited and patchy, the sexual revolution of the 1960s deserves its name. Particularly among the younger generation a decisive change in consciousness worked its way, fitfully, incompletely, but inexorably, through European societies in the course of the rest of the century. The slow speed was partly a consequence of the enduring effects of poor women's education. But in the post-war period sexual inequalities in education decreased in much of the continent. Segregation of girls from boys in separate schools was abolished in eastern Europe under the Communists and declined in western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s. Expansion of secondary and tertiary education particularly benefited females, traditionally excluded from equal opportunity at these levels. In some countries, for example Poland, they came to constitute the majority of students attending the *lyceum* and universities. As women acquired higher qualifications, it became more difficult to discriminate against them in employment.

Another sphere of sexual relations also underwent a drastic change at this time: homosexuality came 'out of the closet' (the phrase, in its restricted meaning, appears to have been imported to Britain from the United States: its first recorded use was by the American-born poet Sylvia Plath, at that time resident in London, in the *London Review* of 16 January 1963). Except in Finland, lesbianism was not illegal anywhere in western Europe but a lengthy struggle was required before male homosexual relations were decriminalized. In this, there was no clear difference between Catholic and Protestant countries, nor between capitalist and Communist ones, nor between northern and southern Europe. Turkey had never had a law against homosexuality. Luxembourg had decriminalized it in 1792, Spain in 1822, Denmark in 1930, and Portugal in 1945. In the Soviet Union, after its recriminalization under Stalin, homosexuality remained illegal until after the fall of Communism. Poland, which had decriminalized homosexual

intercourse from the age of fifteen in 1932, went so far as to legalize homosexual prostitution in 1969. In Belgium homosexuality had never been illegal, save under the German occupation. The same was true in the Netherlands where, by the 1960s, homosexuality found broad public acceptance. Amsterdam became 'not only a magic kingdom for hippies but also a Mecca for homosexuals'. In Britain until the 1950s disclosure of male homosexuality was the stuff of political scandal and social tragedy. But a more tolerant attitude was signalled by the report of the Wolfenden Committee in 1957. The Sexual Offences Act of 1968 permitted homosexual acts in private between consenting adults in England and Wales (but not elsewhere in the UK, not in the armed forces, and not below the age of twenty-one). In both Germanies a law enacted in 1871 that prohibited 'coitus-like acts' between men remained on the statute book after the Second World War; it was abolished in East Germany in 1968 and in West Germany in 1969. In France change came more slowly. One by-product of the radical disturbances in France in 1968 was the foundation of a Front homosexuel d'action révolutionnaire: but it was not until 1982 that homosexual conduct became legal, with the age of consent set, as for heterosexuals, at fifteen.

As in all revolutions, the enemies of sexual emancipation seized on the utterances of militants in order to discredit the movement as a whole. Ridicule was poured on those who maintained that the sex of an individual was determined by social pressures rather than biology and could be redefined by personal decision-making. Feminist Marxists who sought to show that discrimination against women was part of a male-hegemonic, gendered, class system often encountered sneers and ribaldry. Extreme lesbians depicted all heterosexual intercourse as rape and proposed the creation of separatist, all-women organizations and societies. A Frankfurt Women's Committee in 1968 issued a leaflet calling for women to wield an axe against male penises.³ But the women's liberation movement also participated in constructive social action: from the early 1970s onwards it inspired the foundation of battered women's refuges and rape crisis centres, as well as efforts to counter female sexual exploitation and slavery.

The assault on sexual repression inevitably involved a fierce social conflict, both within the state, hitherto its policeman, and within the institution most directly involved in providing an intellectual basis and justification for it: the Church. The ecclesiastical response, as the cases of divorce and abortion illustrated, was primarily one of defensive reaction. But the sexual revolution nevertheless played a major role in the process of spiritual

renovation through which European Christianity, in particular the Roman Catholic Church, confronted the challenges posed by an increasingly secular society.

Faith in the secular society

European Christianity at mid-century was in crisis, as a faith and as a social institution. Some sociologists, such as David Martin, contested the view that modern industrial societies were heading down a one-way street of secularization.⁴ However, much of Martin's evidence was drawn from outside Europe. Statistical data regarding beliefs in Europe before the 1960s are too fragmentary to permit confident generalizations about whether Europeans were indeed, as many other contemporary observers argued, becoming less God-fearing. Nevertheless, if behaviour is any guide to underlying systems of values, then taking Europe as a whole, particularly its Protestant and urban areas, the decade marks a watershed in twentieth-century religion. The creeping secularization of the continent, observable since the Enlightenment, now gained an overwhelming momentum.

Admittedly, the trend was not universal. In many rural Catholic areas such as those of Ireland, Brittany, southern Italy, and the Basque country, more than 90 per cent of the population in 1960 still attended mass regularly. Sites of Christian pilgrimage in Europe, such as Lourdes in south-west France, Knock in Ireland, and the shrine of the Black Madonna at Częstochowa in Poland, continued to attract millions of visitors a year. Most shrines were very old, some dating back to pre-Christian times, but some continued to be founded in the twentieth century: for example, Fátima in Portugal, site of an alleged Marian apparition in 1917. Christian imagery and faith still suffused the calendar of festivities in much of the continent: Easter week processions, such as those at Seville and Assisi, passion plays, especially the one staged every ten years at Oberammergau in Bavaria, the parade of the *gigantes* in front of the cathedral of Burgos on Corpus Christi Day, the Ascension Friday 'Blood Ride' by thousands of horsemen at Weingarten in Upper Swabia, and the annual offering of live snakes to the relics of San Doménico Abate at Cocullo in the Abruzzi mountains of central Italy. In Hungarian villages the annual *búcsú*, or village fete, was still held on a fixed date annually; it was the major social event of the year, though, in deference to the Communist authorities, its religious content was somewhat diluted.

Most of these examples, however, relate to unmodernized, rural areas of Europe. The churches themselves evidently felt that they were confronted by a new and formidable set of challenges to their doctrinal and institutional authority. Their responses were both theological and evangelical.

Among the most influential European theologians of the post-war period were the German Lutherans Rudolf Bultmann and Paul Tillich. They sought to demythologize the New Testament, to reduce the emphasis on the historical Jesus, and to ground theology in human experience. Tillich was much affected by the Jewish thinker Martin Buber, whose *I and Thou* (1923), 'a philosophic poem',⁵ rather than a work of theology, became a best-seller, especially after its publication in English in 1958.⁶ Buber's 'dialogic' spirituality appealed to Christians at least as much as Jews. Bultmann, Tillich, and Buber influenced Anglicans such as John Robinson, Bishop of Woolwich, whose *Honest to God* (1963) sold over a million copies in seventeen languages. The book caused a storm in England with its expression of sympathy with 'those . . . who urge that we should do well to give up using the word "God" for a generation'.⁷ 'I cannot understand how a man can appear in print claiming to disbelieve everything that he presupposes when he puts on the surplice. I feel it is a form of prostitution,' was the response of the popular religious writer C. S. Lewis.⁸

Theological anti-supernaturalism helped feed debate over the 'death of God'. The term had been used by Hegel and popularized by Nietzsche in *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883-5); it was much discussed in the United States in the 1960s and the concept returned to Europe, where it was taken up by radical theologians and by atheists such as the French historian and influential cultural theorist Michel Foucault.

The theologians had a profound effect on the practices as well as the doctrines of the Protestant churches. The World Council of Churches, formed in Amsterdam in 1948 with Protestant and Orthodox members, called for ecumenism and reconciliation among the churches. In 1960 the Archbishop of Canterbury, Geoffrey Fisher, visited Rome for the first encounter between an Anglican Primate and a Roman Pontiff since 1397. The Lutheran and Calvinist churches also set an example in their expressions of remorse for their past commission of the 'sin against God and man' of anti-Semitism.⁹ And even before the rise of the women's liberation movement, Lutherans pioneered a new attitude towards women. This was particularly the case in Scandinavia, where, in spite of near-universal formal membership of the state churches, only a small minority still attended

services regularly. In 1958 the Swedish Lutherans became the first church in Europe to permit women to take holy orders.

In the Roman Catholic Church much of the pressure for change came from France. The progressive Catholic theologian Jacques Maritain applied Thomist metaphysics to contemporary problems, arriving at a theocentric humanism. He too had long called for ecumenism, freedom from authoritarianism, and a clear break with the deeply ingrained anti-Semitic doctrines of the Church. The horrors of the occupation and the supportive attitude of the greater part of the Church towards the Pétainist regime led after the war to a certain introspection and self-criticism among Catholics. This found expression in the social-religious philosophy of left-Catholic thinkers like Emmanuel Mounier, founder and editor of the journal *Esprit*. The 'worker-priest' movement that started in Paris in 1944 was one outcome. But the experiment aroused controversy between conservative and reformist wings of the Church and was terminated in 1959. Meanwhile, the Jesuit mystic palaeontologist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin attempted a 'mega-synthesis' of Darwinism with Christianity. However, his suggestion that the earth had been born '*par un coup de hasard*' ('by chance')¹⁰ aroused the disapproval of his superiors. His works were placed under a ban until his death in 1955. Thereafter they achieved a strange posthumous vogue. All this ferment, which was not unique to the Gallican Church, was but the prelude to a momentous period of reform in the Church as a whole.

The election in 1958 of Cardinal Angelo Roncalli as successor to Pope Pius XII initiated a cascade of change. John XXIII presented a striking contrast with his predecessor. He gave the impression of a warm-hearted village priest rather than a cold diplomat, a simple-hearted soul rather than a sophisticated casuist. Whereas Pius had too often seemed concerned primarily with the survival of the Church as an institution, John's call for *aggiornamento* reinvigorated its spiritual mission. The new Pope's five-year reign was marked by the sweeping away of a number of Vatican traditions, by a quickening of the pace of ecumenical outreach to other churches, and above all by his decision, announced in January 1959, to summon the first Council of the Church since 1870.

The Second Vatican Council, which opened in October 1962, instituted the most fundamental innovations in Roman Catholic doctrine and practice since the Counter-Reformation. The 2,498 councillors from all countries wrested, for a while, effective control of the business of the Council from the mainly Italian Curia, in itself a remarkable political shift. Vatican II

seemed for a time to mark the beginning of the end of the Church's long association with political conservatism in Europe, with refusal to countenance freedom of thought, and with rejection of the democratic ideas of the French Revolution and of 1848. Although John XXIII died in June 1963, the Council continued its work until December 1965 under his more traditional successor, Paul VI. The Council produced sixteen documents whose cumulative effect on the life and doctrine of the Church was little short of revolutionary.

The most profound changes were theological. The 'Dogmatic Constitution of the Church' reformulated Church doctrine with a stress on historical context and the demands of the 'new era'. Growing out of a more universalist and less hierarchical emphasis in theology was a new schema for the government of the Church, according greater authority to the universal college of bishops.

The Council called on all Roman Catholics to work in an ecumenical spirit towards reconciliation with the other churches. In 1964 the Pope met the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras I in Jerusalem and in 1965 the mutual excommunications between Rome and Constantinople, that had sealed the schism between the eastern and western churches in 1054, were lifted. Over the next few years meetings between the Pope and heads of other churches became common occurrences.

The Council affirmed the right of religious liberty for all. In one of its most controversial declarations, issued in its final session in 1965 only after lengthy debate and some watering-down, it stated that 'even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ, neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his passion'.¹¹ The declaration deplored anti-Semitism and called for dialogue with Jews and other non-Christians.

A further product of Vatican II, less noticed at the time, was a new translation of the Bible into Latin, the *Nova Vulgata*, a version that introduced radical changes into the traditional interpretation of the text (compare, for example, the old and new renderings of Lam. 4: 20).

The crowning achievement of the Council was the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes* (Joy and Hope), promulgated by the Pope in December 1965. An impressive summation of humanistic Catholic social outlook and its practical consequences, this, the Council's lengthiest document, redefined the mission of the Church and of

the 'people of God'. As the President of the Commission charged with its drafting stated, it was less a statement of doctrine than 'the Church directing her gaze upon the modern civilization'.¹² It accepted 'the autonomy of earthly affairs' and insisted that 'the Church, by reason of her role and competence, is not identified in any way with the political community nor bound to any political system'. While hardly budging from strict doctrinal certainty on matters such as the indissolubility of marriage, it manifested a readiness for dialogue and a listening rather than a triumphalist attitude.¹³

The decisions of the Council inaugurated a period of turmoil in the Church. Of all the reforms, none, perhaps, hurt the faithful more than change in the liturgy, particularly the use of the vernacular. The Council's sessions themselves were conducted entirely in Latin, without simultaneous translation, in spite of protests by some participants. Latin had been the language of the western Church since the third century when it superseded Greek. The language of the Tridentine mass, established by Pius IV at the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, had come to be regarded by many of the devout as virtually a holy tongue. The Vatican Council's 'Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy' was conservative in form, but it gave an opening to reformers of which they took full advantage: 'The use of the Latin language . . . is to be preserved in the Latin rites. But since the use of the vernacular, whether in the Mass, the administration of the sacraments, or in other parts of the liturgy, may frequently be of great advantage to the people, wider use may be made of it.'¹⁴ Within a few years, use of the daily spoken language of the locality, instead of being permissible, became obligatory. The liturgical reforms aroused distress and resistance among many who loved the Tridentine mass. Paul VI said: 'This rite has become a symbol, like the white flag of the monarchists after the French Revolution—a symbol of opposition to the Council.'¹⁵ Hostility to liturgical change was particularly pronounced in France, where some traditionalists followed Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre's defiant stance on this and other issues, culminating in 1988 in his excommunication from the Church.

The Church's continued refusal to permit artificial contraception (reaffirmed by Paul VI in his encyclical *Humanae vitae* in 1968), as well as its ban on divorce and on marriage of priests aroused further controversy. In western Europe lay Catholics increasingly ignored the first and second prohibitions. In the Netherlands, where many Catholics, both clergy and laity, demanded much more far-reaching reforms in Church doctrine, fierce

disputes broke out over these issues and liberal priests were inclined to wink at the infractions of their flocks. The later years of the pontificate of Paul VI, marked by a slowing of the reformist impulse, disappointed many who had been inspired by Vatican II. The Swiss-born theologian Hans Küng, who had served as an expert consultant (*'peritus'*) for the Council, found himself out on a limb in the late 1960s when he questioned the very basis of papal authority. He was eventually stripped of the right to teach as a Catholic theologian. With bitter overstatement, he later recalled: 'The Vatican authorities, like the political police of the Soviet empire, . . . [are] in fact above the law. . . . It is no exaggeration to say that just as the KGB understands itself as "the sword and the shield of the Party" in order to safeguard its rule, so too, according to a statement which he himself makes, Cardinal Ottaviani [a leading Vatican conservative and Pro-Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, successor to the Inquisition] understands himself . . . as "the old *carabiniere* (policeman) of the church".'¹⁶

Just how far-fetched this comparison was may be gathered from a brief survey of religious life in eastern Europe in this period. In the Soviet Union the 1960s were characterized by renewed official efforts to stamp out, or at least damp down, religion. All religious bodies continued to be controlled by the state, and large numbers of churches, mosques, and synagogues, as well as monasteries and seminaries were closed. The number of Orthodox priests declined from 11,123 to 6,800 between 1959 and 1965. The onslaught encountered some spirited resistance. The country's three million Protestants, mainly Baptists, secretly egged on by western churches and the CIA, persisted in instructing their children in religion and in holding services. The Greek Catholic Church in the western Ukraine also succeeded in maintaining some degree of independence. Jewish religious practice was discouraged and rendered increasingly difficult under Stalin and Khrushchev and all Jewish institutions were subjected to close control by government agents.

Elsewhere in eastern Europe, religious life proceeded with less external interference. Rural areas, in particular, remained devoted to the Church, to the yearly cycle of Church holidays, and to traditional rites of passage, although observance of fast days declined. In Hungary the more relaxed atmosphere after 1956 permitted local initiatives for religious organization. In the village of Tázlár, south-east of Budapest, for example, a new Catholic church was built by voluntary effort, followed in the 1960s by a Reformed chapel. 'Everyone', we are told by an anthropologist who studied the area in

the 1970s, 'but a handful of white-collar communist families, has an affiliation to some denomination and is anxious that his children should grow up with the same affiliation.'¹⁷ At the same time, however, church attendance was slowly declining and participation in voluntary religious instruction in the local school fell from 76 per cent in 1957 to under 50 per cent by the mid-1970s.

Poland offered a striking example of religious persistence. The government after 1956 did not dare to attack the Roman Catholic Church directly. Over 70 per cent of the population in the 1960s regularly attended Sunday Mass, nearly the entire population observed the rite of baptism, and most weddings took place in church. More than ever the Church in Poland furnished a symbolic and institutional basis for national collective identity.

At the other extreme, the most militantly anti-religious country in Communist Europe was Albania, which declared itself 'the first atheist state in the world' in 1967.¹⁸ All places of worship were closed and religious practice was proscribed. The head of the autocephalous Albanian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Damianos of Tirana, was sent to prison, where he died in 1973.

New Europeans

Until around 1960 Europe remained a continent of emigration. During the 1950s the net outflow has been estimated as three million. In the 1960s, however, the balance began to alter: about as many people arrived in the continent as left. The change affected mainly western Europe. Communist countries generally made emigration difficult or impossible, particularly for those deemed useful to the economy. There were a few exceptions: Romania, for example, allowed Germans and Jews to leave in a steady trickle in return for capitulation payments by West Germany and Israel. After the arrival of Communism, as before, eastern Europe attracted few immigrants. Western Europe, by contrast, received large numbers, including, for the first time since the barbarian invasions of the fifth century, many originating in other continents.

Not all the intercontinental immigrants, however, were ethnic aliens. The end of empire and the antagonism of newly independent nations to their former rulers led to the extrusion of former colonists and members of ethnic and religious minorities from Asia and Africa. Not only *pieds noirs*

from Algeria but Italians from Libya, Greeks from Egypt, and Dutch from Indonesia, people whose ancestors had in many cases been settled in those lands for several generations, were expelled and often at the same time expropriated.

Not all migration was intercontinental. France received more immigrants than any other European country in this period (around four million between 1955 and 1974) but after the Algerian influx in 1962 the majority of new arrivals came from elsewhere in Europe, especially the Iberian peninsula and Italy. The creation of the Common Market, with its provision for free movement of labour, led to increased migration between member states. But there was large-scale movement across other borders too. Switzerland, a non-member of the EEC, took in 1.7 million people, mainly from elsewhere in western Europe: relative to its population it was the largest importer of people during the decade. Spain, Portugal, Italy, and Greece were still net exporters. Proportionately the Republic of Ireland was the champion exporter: four hundred thousand people out of its population of only three million left, mainly for Britain, between 1951 and 1960.

Not all immigrants, even after many years of residence, were allowed to become citizens of their countries of settlement. In 1970 3.3 million un-naturalized aliens were living in France (6.5 per cent of the population) and three million in West Germany (4.9 per cent). Many were non-Europeans. The great majority of non-white immigrants to Europe in the 1960s tended to settle in cities, often clustering together in ethnic quasi-ghettos. Their skin colour rendered them vulnerable to discrimination, both in ex-imperial countries, familiar with the 'colour bar', and in others where they were often exotic objects of suspicion and fear. For the first time in modern European history, ethnic hostility within Europe between Europeans and non-Europeans became a major social phenomenon and political issue.

Racial tensions became particularly visible in Britain, in spite of the fact that, throughout the period from 1950 to 1975, more people emigrated than immigrated. Natural increase was well below the European average and, for most of the period, unemployment was at a level where acute labour shortages were felt in some economic sectors. A majority of immigrants in the 1960s were white. But few people in Britain at the time would have recognized any of those facts. On the contrary, the popular conception was that the country was being inundated by a flood of non-white immigrants. Most of the newcomers came from former dependent territories. Of the 1.1 million arrivals during the decade, one-third came from the 'New

Commonwealth', mainly the east and west Indies and east Africa, that is, were black or brown, while a quarter were from the 'Old Commonwealth', that is, were mainly whites (these figures exclude Irish immigration).

What was called at the time 'coloured' immigration to Britain from the former empire had begun on a significant scale in 1948 with the arrival of five hundred West Indians aboard the *Empire Windrush*. They and those who followed them found jobs in the public sector as bus conductors, postmen, railwaymen, and nurses. As their numbers grew so did opposition to their entry. In 1958 the first serious race riots in Britain broke out in Nottingham and in the Notting Hill area of London: mobs of white youths embarked on 'nigger-hunts'. The government had rejected restriction of Commonwealth immigration in the mid-1950s. In the aftermath of the riots it was reluctant to appear to yield to violence. But by 1962 the volume of arrivals and of hostility to immigrants persuaded it to legislate. The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act for the first time limited the right of Commonwealth citizens to settle in Britain. Fuelled by labour shortages, the inflow nevertheless continued: by 1964 there were estimated to be 800,000 non-white immigrants in the country. In 1968 popular feeling against them was given voice by a former Conservative minister, Enoch Powell, in a powerful speech in which he demanded a halt to new immigration and voluntary repatriation of immigrants already in the country. 'Like the Roman,' he warned, 'I see the river Tiber foaming with much blood.' Powell was disowned by the Conservative Party, which he later abandoned, but his message resonated with the public mood. The government had already enacted a law limiting the right of overseas British passport-holders, principally Asians expelled from Kenya and Uganda, to settle in Britain. Later the same year it passed a race relations act banning discrimination in housing, employment, and services. But racial tensions remained high.

The West German economy, with its rapid growth rate, had an even more insatiable demand than the British for labour in this period. Given full employment, the demand could be met only by immigration. The solution, from 1955 onwards, was the so-called *Gastarbeiter* (guest worker) system, whereby workers from southern Europe, especially Italy and Yugoslavia, came to work in West Germany, supposedly on a temporary basis. The drying-up of the influx from East Germany after the erection of the Berlin Wall in 1961 compelled employers to look further afield. In 1961 a *Gastarbeiter* agreement was signed with Turkey. By 1966 there were 1.3 million

guest workers in the Federal Republic. The millionth Turk arrived in 1969: he was presented with a television set. Many of the guest workers returned home after a few years. Others stayed and established homes and families in the country. By 1973 there were nearly four million foreign residents, including 2.6 million guest workers, in West Germany.

Not all migration was international. Everywhere the movement from country to city continued, hastened by high rates of industrial growth. Throughout eastern Europe the heavy industrialization of the 1950s led to a large-scale exodus to towns. In the USSR ten million peasants moved to urban areas during the 1960s. The urban/rural ratio changed from 32 : 68 in 1939 to 54 : 46 by 1967. In Poland, however, where most land remained in the hands of small, inefficient, private farmers, the shift was slower. In western Europe it was particularly marked in Italy where the peasantry shrank from 43 per cent of the working population in 1951 to 18 per cent in 1971. There rural-urban migration also involved continued movement from south to north: in the 1950s 1.75 million people, 10 per cent of the population, left the south. Heavy investment in new industries in the south brought only limited numbers of new jobs. In the 1960s a further 2.3 million people moved north. Poverty drove them away from the countryside; relative prosperity welcomed them to the city.

Consumer society

The 1960s were years of almost full employment nearly everywhere in Europe. Behind the bald statistics, the structure of work was changing. In earlier times, when the majority of people lived and worked on the land, the concepts of unemployment and retirement had hardly existed for the rural masses, who worked, often without limitation of sex or age, in accordance with the rhythms of the seasons and the requirements of their crops and livestock. In the urban environment to which ever-growing numbers of Europeans were translating themselves, most were disciplined into working fixed hours for limited periods of their lives. Strong trade unions operating in tight labour markets were able to restrict weekly working hours, expand annual holiday provisions, and, in some cases, negotiate retirement at the age of sixty or even younger. The extension of secondary education and the start of mass higher education meant that the working life of many in the middle class began only in their early twenties. State pension provision and

longer life expectancy enabled the poor to leave work with a modicum of security and look forward to lengthy retirements. The 'full employment' society of the 1960s was one in which most people worked fewer hours of the week, fewer days of the year, and fewer years of their lives than ever before.

This was a society in which, for the first time in European history, nearly everyone could read and write. Pockets of illiteracy in the early 1960s were to be found only in a few rural areas of southern Europe: in Portugal more than a third of the population and in southern Italy (including Sicily and Sardinia), 16 per cent were illiterate in 1961, though the latter figure was a significant improvement from the 25 per cent recorded a decade earlier. Most illiterates were now old people, though some groups on the edge of organized society, especially gypsies, remained disengaged from formal educational systems and therefore disproportionately illiterate.

The 1950s and 1960s brought massive expansion in educational provision throughout the continent. Until after the Second World War most children in Europe attended only elementary schools. Even many of those who entered secondary schools did not finish them but left in their early teens to enter employment or further training. A series of educational reforms, such as those in Britain in 1944, in Sweden in 1962, in France in 1963, and in the Netherlands in 1968, aimed at widening access to education and improving its quality. School leaving ages were raised and much larger numbers of children received at least some secondary education. Most countries continued to follow the traditional system of distinguishing in secondary education between the selective *gymnasium/lyceum/lycée/grammar school*, which followed a strictly academic curriculum designed for an intellectual elite, and vocational or technical schools for larger numbers of pupils who would not go forward to university. In Sweden, however, egalitarian social philosophy produced a trend towards non-selective, 'comprehensive' secondary schools. Primary and secondary education throughout the continent was generally free and state-controlled, although private schools, often religious ones, continued to function in some areas of western Europe, especially in England, where expensive, fee-charging 'public' schools remained the favoured reserve of the rich.

The role of the Church in education receded, though only slowly. In Germany, traditional segregation in public schools between Catholics and Protestants gave way in the 1960s to non-denominational schools. In Britain all state schools began the day with an 'act of worship', generally Christian,

and religious instruction remained a compulsory part of the curriculum. Educational debates in France were still dominated by the schism between the Church and secularists. Pressure from the Church led in 1959 to the *loi Debré*, whereby private (mainly religious) schools received a number of concessions, including increased state funding.

Higher education greatly expanded in the 1960s. In France the number of university students rose from 150,000 in 1956 to 605,000 in 1968. In Britain, the Robbins report of 1963, recommending expansion of universities, led to the foundation of a number of new institutions, some of which, such as the University of Warwick, attained high distinction. But the universities still catered mainly for the children of the better-off. The Open University, founded by the Labour government in 1969, was an imaginative attempt to democratize higher education by using television for long-distance instruction. Most universities in western Europe were funded mainly by the state and therefore heavily influenced by government policies. Nevertheless, interference with teaching and research was modest in the liberal democracies. In eastern Europe matters were very different. With the single exception of the Catholic University of Lublin, all institutions of higher education in the Communist bloc were state-controlled, Marxism-Leninism was a compulsory part of the curriculum, and the hand of party orthodoxy lay heavy on lecturers and researchers.

The overall growth in education in the 1950s and 1960s failed to narrow the social gap in educational opportunity. Save in a few countries, such as Sweden and the Netherlands, where the educational gap between classes was already small, the middle classes continued to perform significantly better in educational attainment and to gain access much more readily to colleges and universities. Studies of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary show that there too inequalities in educational opportunity were little affected by government efforts to improve access to education for the urban and rural working classes.¹⁹ In Hungary, for example, school fees were abolished in 1949 and preferential scholarships were provided for children of peasant and proletarian origins. In the 1950s a quota system operated whereby at least half of secondary-school and university students had to come from such backgrounds. Yet the results of such policies were disappointingly meagre. Egalitarian policies were subverted by the application of *protekció* (influence) or outright bribes. People from privileged backgrounds reconstructed their family histories to conceal their class origins. The percentage of children from non-manual backgrounds

attending university barely changed. From the 1960s onwards quotas were relaxed and then abolished. Rather than opening space for children from hitherto deprived classes, the Communist system was manipulated by the old middle class and by the 'new class' of bureaucrats to enable their own children to gain privileged access. In East Germany the process was facilitated by defining all offspring of party functionaries as belonging to the working class. The effects on patterns of social mobility in east-central Europe hardly accorded with the regimes' proclaimed social aims. One study in 1972 found 'hard evidence from Czechoslovakia, and it is a fact of common observation in Hungary and Poland, that it is the pre-revolutionary white-collar classes who provide most of today's rich. The old professional classes have probably done less well. Many children of capitalists have come down in the world—and many have not; peasant families continue poor; children of proletarians, the victorious class, have a random relation to the new positions of wealth.'²⁰ Was it for such a 'random relation' that the children of the revolution had been compelled to make immense sacrifices?

Even if distribution, in east as in west, remained unequal, economic growth nevertheless translated into rapidly improved living standards for most sections of society in both halves of Europe in this decade. Progressive taxation and welfare state measures, as well as full employment, resulted in a general trend towards greater income equality, which was embraced by many governments as a deliberate objective of policy. In Britain it was possible, in 1962, for a leading social commentator to suggest that, in terms of public perceptions, 'the wealthy were a disappearing class.'²¹ So too were the very poor. Beggars, a familiar presence in the great European cities between the wars, vanished almost entirely from the streets.

The welfare state reached its highest point in this period of relative affluence. North European countries, notably Sweden and Norway, offered the most generous and comprehensive social payment provisions. By 1965 Portugal was the only west European country that lacked an unemployment insurance scheme. Most Communist countries also had none, since officially no unemployment existed. All European countries had some form of old-age pension scheme, though the size of benefit and the conditions attached varied greatly.

Many governments regarded it as part of their duty of welfare provision to expand public housing, sometimes also to provide incentives for private construction. Housing shortages throughout Europe had been aggravated by the destruction and privations of the war. But it was not until the 1960s

that really large-scale expansion and improvement of the housing stock got under way. In the USSR, where the shortage was most acute, Khrushchev forecast in 1961 that it would disappear within a decade. Under his rule the rate of Soviet housing construction doubled. More housing was built during the five years 1956–60 than in the entire period 1918–46. In the 1960s and 1970s the country built on average 2.2 million units a year, an outstanding achievement. The one-room-per-family, communal apartments in which millions of Soviet city-dwellers had lived since the revolution began to be exchanged for small, modern flats. Average space per person increased by the mid-1970s to 8 square metres (10 in Moscow). But the new apartment blocks were drab, shoddily designed, often jerry-built, and, by any standard, grossly overcrowded. Overall, housing conditions were still ‘the poorest of any industrialized nation’ and in 1974 30 per cent of urban families still shared apartments and an additional 5 per cent (mainly single people) lived in factory hostels.²² Urban conditions were not much better in east-central and southern Europe. Public housing in those countries was often poorly planned, densely inhabited, and far from workplaces or public amenities. In western Europe large-scale ‘slum clearance’ operations were set in motion in many run-down urban areas but too often, as in the Gorbals district of Glasgow, the inhuman tower blocks that replaced the old tenements soon degenerated into a more modernized form of squalor.

By 1960 most homes in Britain, West Germany, and Scandinavia boasted an indoor flush toilet and a bath or shower. But this was still not true elsewhere. In France nearly one in five homes had no running water, two in five had running water only in the kitchen, and only 28 per cent had a shower or a bath. In Belgium under half of all dwellings had an indoor toilet and under a quarter had a bath or shower. In the USSR only one-third of urban households had any indoor plumbing at all. Rural conditions were generally far worse than urban. In Hungary 93.5 per cent of the rural population had no modern conveniences; as for the other 6.5 per cent, we are told, the bathroom, like other prestige items, often remained ‘a spotless receptacle’, either because it could not be heated in winter or because its possessors clung to old habits.²³ In the course of the 1960s and 1970s, however, rapid improvements in such amenities were registered in much of the continent.

In western Europe, especially Britain, the 1960s brought a new stage in the retailing revolution. Self-service supermarkets arrived and their aggressively competitive pricing, particularly in food and household products,

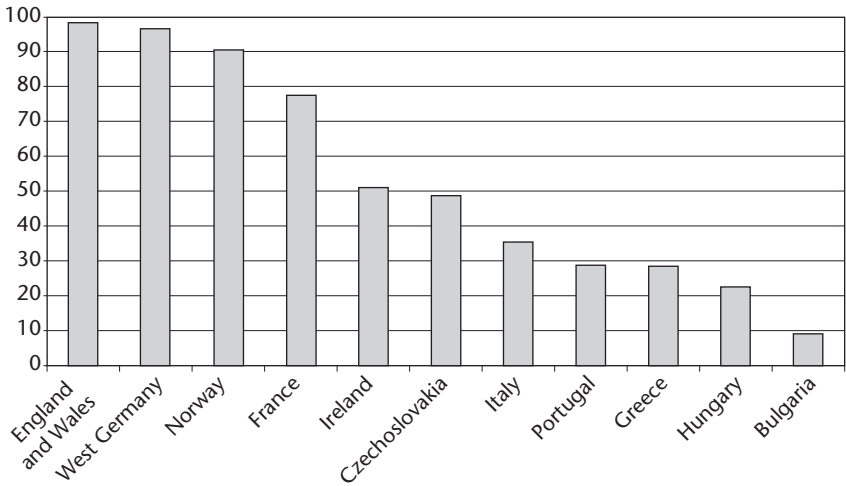


Figure 6. Proportion of dwellings with piped water in selected countries, c.1960

Source: UN Economic Commission for Europe, *A Statistical Survey of the Housing Situation in European Countries around 1960* (New York, 1965).

forced many small shops out of business. ‘Hire-purchase’ (a form of payment over time) became widely used in the sale of durable goods and cars. Credit cards were introduced, although their use at first was not widespread except in Britain. Even in eastern Europe planners began to utilize market research and advertising, consumer goods became more readily available, and women began to be able to indulge tastes for chic fashions and fancy hairstyles.

Cheap ready-made clothing became much more widely available. Distinctions between male and female dress diminished, most strikingly in the leisure attire of young people. Jeans, frowned on for women in the 1950s, became normal casual wear for both sexes. The elastic girdle was displaced by ‘control-top’ pantyhose. Middle-class men stopped wearing shirts with detachable collars and instead bought ‘drip-dry’ shirts or, if they were young, informal, American-style, collarless ‘T-shirts’. For no very clear reason, most men in cities stopped wearing hats in the 1960s.

Household consumer goods, such as refrigerators, washing-machines, vacuum cleaners, and dishwashers, were becoming standard equipment even in many working-class homes. In France, for example, the proportion of homes with refrigerators rose from 17 per cent in 1957 to nearly 90 per cent by 1974. Automation of the home led to a speed-up in housework.

The average time spent on housework and childcare by a non-employed West German woman declined from 58 hours a week in 1952–4 to 42 hours by 1977. Urban styles and fashions penetrated rural areas: factory-made three-piece suites, convertible sofa-beds, coffee tables, and double beds replaced old-fashioned handmade furniture. In village homes in southern and eastern Europe pictures of saints and ‘holy corner’ shrines were yielding pride of place to the new household gods: radiograms and televisions.

In western Europe the telephone was gradually becoming standard equipment in most households. In 1969 Sweden had fifty-two telephones for every hundred people, Switzerland had forty-three, and West Germany nineteen; but France still had only fifteen and Portugal seven. In eastern Europe Czechoslovakia led the pack with twelve for every hundred people; the Soviet Union had only four. The installation of a telephone was generally a long-drawn-out affair, often necessitating the deployment of official connections, and invariably involving application, waiting time, allocation of a line, and rental of standardized equipment. Long-distance calls were expensive, overseas ones prohibitively so. Automatic exchanges were spreading but many calls were still connected by operators, usually female. In Communist countries telephone conversations, like almost all forms of communication, were potentially subject to monitoring and were frequently tapped.

Ownership of motor cars was fast extending down the social scale. In the 1950s few working-class families could afford a car. Between 1961 and 1971 ownership doubled in Britain and France and more than quadrupled in Italy. By 1971 most non-Communist countries in Europe had more than twenty cars for every hundred people. But the poorer countries had fewer: Ireland fourteen, Portugal four, and Greece only two. In eastern Europe private car ownership had not spread beyond the ranks of the *nomenklatura*: East Germany had five cars for every hundred inhabitants, Czechoslovakia four, and Romania only one. The Soviet Union had fewer than five private cars for every *thousand* inhabitants. Russian roads remained appalling and inter-urban highways, with a few showcase exceptions such as the 44-hour Moscow–Crimea motorway, were often below the quality of secondary roads in western Europe. In much of the Russian and east European countryside the horse-drawn cart was still the commonest form of wheeled transport. In western Europe fast motorways and comfortable cars made driving something close to a pleasure and the car overtook the train as the favoured form of inter-urban transport. In east and west alike, the increase

in vehicles led to an epidemic of deaths on the road. Measured in terms of accidents per vehicle mile travelled, France had the worst rate in western Europe. In West Germany too the casualty rate was grim: over eighteen thousand deaths a year were caused by road accidents and over half a million injured.

As travel by road and air increased, passenger railways and shipping fell into decline in western Europe. Dr Richard Beeching, head of British Railways, became an object of national vilification for seeking to rationalize the system: he closed down half the stations, eliminated service on branch lines amounting to one third of the track, and reduced personnel by 70,000. In eastern Europe railways, which remained cheap, carried most passenger traffic between cities. Most freight in Russia was carried by rail even on short journeys. For want of oil pipelines, a large part of Siberian oil production too was still being transported to European Russia by rail.

Air travel, a rich man's luxury in the 1950s, became the chief mode of long-distance travel in the 1960s. Almost every European country established its state-owned airline. Aircraft manufacturing too was gradually consolidated into 'national champion' companies. The first international commercial jet airliner service in the world was inaugurated in 1951 by the British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), when the British-made de Havilland Comet flew from London to Johannesburg. With five stops, it took 23 hours and 34 minutes. But six crashes, resulting in 99 deaths, ended the commercial career of the plane in 1954. In 1957 air overtook sea in volume of transatlantic passenger traffic. A year later the number of air passengers across the Atlantic exceeded a million for the first time. During the 1960s international air traffic multiplied sixfold. European passenger aircraft manufacturing, however, lagged behind American. The US-made Boeing 707 became the best-selling aircraft of the period and dominated international routes for the next decade. The Soviet Union's first jet airliner, the Tupolev 104, entered service in 1956 but only the Soviet and Czechoslovak airlines bought it and it was grounded in 1960.

Planning for a supersonic airliner began separately in Britain and France in 1956. In 1962 the two governments agreed to join forces and produce the plane together. The project was plagued by rows and budget overshoots. Eventually one billion pounds in development costs had to be written off at the expense of British and French taxpayers. The test flight of the prototype Concorde 001 took place in 1969 but the plane entered commercial service only in 1976. Although initial orders were placed for one hundred aircraft,

no more than seven were ever produced. The prohibitive cost of Concorde's operation meant that the only two purchasers were Air France and British Airways. Protests against its loud noise limited the number of airports that would allow it to land. The Soviet supersonic Tupolev 144 entered service in 1977 but faced similar obstacles and was withdrawn a year later. Concorde continued to operate but a crash in 2000 at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris that killed 113 passengers and crew, grounded it. Although it eventually returned to service, Concorde was finally retired in 2003.

Millions meanwhile travelled on turbo-prop and jet airliners in group charter flights from north-west Europe to 'package holidays' on the Costa Brava and Costa del Sol, the Algarve, and the French and Italian Rivas. Yugoslavia and Bulgaria too developed major tourist industries. Old-established holiday resorts elsewhere that catered to nearby population centres began to decline. Deauville, Blackpool, Skegness, and Knokke could not compete in sunshine, social *cachet*, or glamour with St Tropez, Ibiza, or Mykonos. Tourism became Greece's most important foreign-currency-earning industry, transforming once placid islands into vulgar pleasure-dromes and polluting the Aegean and Ionian Seas with effluent from aircraft, shipping, and human waste.

The huge expansion of tourism was merely one aspect of the vast increase in leisure industries of all kinds in western Europe, in the 1960s. Fewer babies, shorter work hours, less housework, and higher incomes meant that men and women could afford to spend more time enjoying themselves. One pastime, in particular, outpaced all others and, at any rate in terms of time devoted to it, became the foremost recreational activity of most European adults—if 'activity' is the proper term to use of such a passive form of entertainment as watching television.

By 1960 every major country in Europe had established a television service; the last to do so were Finland and Norway in 1960 and the Republic of Ireland in 1961. The space race adventitiously aided the spread of television through the use of satellites for relaying signals that, because of the curvature of the earth, could not otherwise be transmitted over long distances. In July 1962 the Telstar satellite caused excitement in two continents when it relayed the first television programmes between the United States and Europe. In 1965, the Soviet Union, with its vast land area stretching across eleven time zones, became the first country in the world to employ satellites for domestic programme distribution. By the end of the 1960s the use of satellites for television relays had become almost

commonplace. The first colour television service in Europe began in Britain in 1967 (CBS had broadcast in colour in the United States since 1953 but used an inferior system). West Germany and France followed soon after. When Americans walked on the moon in 1969, much of Europe (but no Communist countries except Poland and Romania) watched the event live.

By the end of the decade a television could be found in the great majority of homes in western Europe. In West Germany, for example, ownership grew from only 4 per cent of households in 1956 to 77 per cent by 1970. In eastern Europe television owners were still a minority, although there too the audience grew fast. Czechoslovakia was quickest off the mark and had more televisions per head than France in the 1960s, although with the introduction of colour television the proportion of French viewers leapfrogged over the Czechoslovak.

Television programmes in Communist countries were deadly dull, as even the Soviet Communist Party's Central Committee complained in 1960 and 1964. News bulletins omitted mention of untoward domestic events, such as air crashes or other disasters, and reporting about the west frequently had a crude propaganda edge. But viewers generally ignored political programmes and watched sports, quiz shows, or other light entertainment. Classical music broadcasts were frequent. Popular music, however, presented ideological problems. The director of music on Soviet Central Television warned in 1964 against 'evil influences, banality, decadent moods, naturalism, vulgarity, and erotic lyricism'. He added that dancing shown on television must avoid 'exaggerated twisting of the hips, an unnatural stance with the legs astride, and... erotic movements'.²⁴ Reflecting the prudishness and social conservatism characteristic of all Communist societies in the 1960s, the Czechoslovak President, Antonín Novotný, declared: 'All right, let them dance, but we will not allow these modern dances to degenerate into vulgarisms and thus actually cultivate dark lusts in our people.'²⁵ East European populations derived much of their knowledge of the west from images in films and on television. In the 1960s such American programmes as *Bonanza* and *Dr Kildare* and the BBC's adaptation of John Galsworthy's *The Forsyte Saga* were imported. But television viewers in some Communist countries were able to form a more realistic view of life on the other side of the Iron Curtain by tuning in to western stations. Finnish television, for example, could be viewed in Estonia. And West German and Austrian television could be received and were widely watched in much of East Germany, although incompatibility

of systems hampered reception quality. Dresden was in one of the few areas of East Germany unable to receive West German television; hence its derisive nickname, '*Tal der Ahnungslosen*' ('valley of the clueless').

In western Europe, as in the east, television in these years was mainly state owned but not directly state administered. The most common form of organization was the public corporation, often, as in Britain, financed by licence fees paid by television owners. In West Germany there were independent regional broadcasting organizations and in Belgium separate ones for the Flemish and Walloon populations. Italy, Sweden, and Switzerland had publicly regulated private corporations. In several countries proposals for the introduction of advertising led to political rows. In the Netherlands in 1965 debate over the issue became so acrimonious that it led to the fall of the government. In Britain the BBC maintained a monopoly of television broadcasts on its single channel until the introduction of Independent (commercial) Television (ITV) in 1955. No advertisements were permitted on the BBC and the prevalent tone was one of stuffy respectability. ITV's lighter, more populist approach immediately attracted a huge following. Within two years the BBC commanded only a 28 per cent audience share. Under Sir Hugh Carleton-Greene, Director General from 1960 to 1969, however, the BBC, while continuing to resist commercialization, transformed itself from the staid 'Auntie' of the nation into a more adventurous reflector and propagator of new cultural trends. By the end of the decade almost all other European television systems, except those of Scandinavia and the Vatican, carried advertisements. Strangely, all the Communist countries' services except Albania's did so too, although mainly for state-produced goods.

Whereas the British and West German broadcasting organizations were relatively balanced in their political coverage and only rarely succumbed to governmental pressures, the same was not true of their counterparts in some other west European countries. In Italy until 1975 the state-owned monopoly, RAI, operated mainly in the interest of the ruling Christian Democrat Party. Thereafter a carve-up was agreed between the two main coalition parties: RAI-TV 1 was controlled by the Christian Democrats and RAI-TV 2 by the Socialists. In France there was strong criticism of government control of the political content of broadcasting, particularly during the Algerian war. In an effort to meet this, the government created the Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française (ORTF) in 1964. It was supposed to be an independent public institution, similar to the BBC.

Complaints nevertheless continued and the responses were not always wholly reassuring. In 1965, for example, the Minister of Information, Alain Peyrefitte, explained: 'In ordinary times it is not reasonable that the opposition express itself as often as the Government. The Government has something to say, since it manages the nation's affairs. The opposition can only criticise.'²⁶

Cinema attendance declined as television ownership ballooned. In France the number of tickets sold nearly halved between 1960 and 1970. European film-making nevertheless flourished in the 1960s. In Britain a stream of socially realistic films depicted working-class life: Karel Reisz's *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1960), Lindsay Anderson's *This Sporting Life* (1963), and John Schlesinger's *Billy Liar* (1963). In spite of its artistic achievements, the British film industry, unlike those of many other European countries, enjoyed no government subsidy or protection. By the end of the decade the Hollywood invasion had swamped and destroyed most of what was left of British film production. In France, on the other hand, de Gaulle's Culture Minister, André Malraux, instituted the system of *avance sur recettes*, whereby a proportion of all cinema ticket sales was returned to film-makers. The French industry weathered transatlantic competition much better. The 'new wave' directors or 'auteurs' Jean-Luc Godard (*À bout de souffle*, 1959, and *Une femme est une femme*, 1961) and François Truffaut (*Jules et Jim*, 1962) raised cinema to the most influential art form of the decade. In Italy Federico Fellini (*La dolce vita*, 1959, and *8½*, 1963) and Michelangelo Antonioni (*La notte*, 1961, and *Blowup*, 1966) moved beyond realism to explore the limits of representation and expression. In this decade too the German film industry burst in new vitality under the aegis of directors like Rainer Werner Fassbinder and Werner Herzog. But the most enigmatic, also the most influential, director of the late 1950s and 1960s was the Swede Ingmar Bergman. His haunting, allusive, allegorical tales, such as *The Seventh Seal* (1956), dwelt on the problem of 'God's silence' (Bergman was the son of a Lutheran pastor) and penetrated to the heart of painful human relationships with an uncompromising and troubling directness.

Even the ideological straitjacket constricting Soviet film loosened a bit. Joseph Heifitz's charming *The Lady with the Lapdog* (1960), based on the Chekhov story, abstained from any genuflection towards 'socialist realism'. More adventurous was Andrei Tarkovsky's *Andrei Rublev* (1965). Based on the story of a fifteenth-century monkish ikon-painter, it flouted most of the rules of official cinematography and was banned. Released in Paris in 1969 to

great acclaim, it later received restricted showings in the USSR. Like many other Soviet creative artists, Tarkovsky felt crushed by such official interference: he emigrated and died in Paris in 1986. In Russia the majority of films shown tended to be domestic productions or imports from other Communist countries. In the satellite states ideological controls were somewhat more relaxed. Directors like the Pole Andrzej Wajda (*Ashes and Diamonds*, 1958), the Czechs Jiří Menzel (*Closely Observed Trains*, 1966) and Miloš Forman (*The Firemen's Ball*, 1967), and the Hungarian Miklós Jancsó (*The Round-up*, 1965) had greater success in stretching the limits of official complaisance.

But European film's most creative decade was also its swansong. It would take another generation and the advent of new technology before it could begin an uncertain revival.

Contrary to some forecasts, the arrival of television did not similarly hurt radio. Almost every country developed its own interminable, family-centred radio soap opera: in Britain *The Archers*, 'an everyday story of countryfolk'; in Hungary the Szabós, 'a collection of hardworking but not perfect people'; in Poland the Matysiaks, 'the longest-running radio soap opera in the world' (actually *The Archers* started earliest, in 1951; all three were still being broadcast in the next millennium). Although peak-time evening audiences fell, sound broadcasting enjoyed something of a renaissance, partly thanks to the invention of the transistor. Whereas televisions were large, immobile objects, occupying pride of place in sitting-rooms, small portable transistor radios, widely available at cheap prices, could be carried around and heard anywhere. They became a favourite of children and teenagers, who tuned in, sometimes under the sheets after 'lights-out', to commercial popular music stations such as Radio Luxemburg, Radio Monte Carlo, or the 'pirate' station aboard a ship in the North Sea, Radio Caroline. The craze for these stations fed the popular music boom of the 1960s and forced broadcasters such as the BBC and ORTF to devote whole channels to popular music.

The USSR in the 1960s still sought to limit the number of 'over the air' radio sets; as late as 1972 half of all radios in the country were 'wired'. Of course, these could not normally receive the American propaganda stations, Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe, broadcasting to the east from transmitters in central Europe. Such stations, as well as the Voice of America and the BBC, were often jammed by the Russian and other east European governments to prevent reception even by 'over the air' sets.

In east and west alike, television and radio united mass audiences for public events, mass entertainment, and sport. The BBC's broadcast of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 was the most ambitious outside broadcast undertaken by television up to that time. The annual 'Miss World' contest, inspired by the American 'beauty pageants', was broadcast from 1959 by the BBC. It won record international audiences, though it came to be denounced by feminists in the late 1960s as sexist exploitation. Even some eastern bloc states ultimately succumbed to its lure. Mass culture attained an 'ecstatic experience of music and nationalism' in the Eurovision Song Contest, initiated in 1956.²⁷ By 1965 eighteen countries, including Communist Yugoslavia, competed, watched by over two hundred million people. The breathtaking climax of the 1966 football World Cup final between Germany and England (the winner in extra time), attracted one of the largest audiences in sporting history.

Popular entertainment crossed borders and permeated cultures. European television networks tended to buy expensively produced, fast-paced, American programmes rather than one another's products. Legal dramas such as *Perry Mason* and *The Defenders* and musical performers such as Perry Como and Liberace won audiences throughout Europe that few European entertainers could match. France was the country most resistant to what guardians of all things Gallic saw as an Anglo-Saxon invasion. But official quotas on the importation of American television programmes and films could not suppress demand for them. In Yugoslavia the American television series *Peyton Place* was broadcast for two years before it was withdrawn on the ground that it fostered 'petit bourgeois values'.²⁸

Thanks partly to television, a new youth culture, born in Britain, spread throughout the continent. Its most prominent exponents were, in popular music the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, in photography David Bailey, in hairdressing Vidal Sassoon, and in fashion the designers Vivienne Westwood and Mary Quant. The nameless mannequin was transformed into the celebrity super-model: among the first were Jean Shrimpton, popularizer of the mini-skirt, and the 6½ stone (91 lb/40.2 kg) waif 'Twiggy' (Lesley Hornby)—'an x-ray, not a picture', as the cultural critic Marshall McLuhan called her. The use of illegal, hallucinogenic drugs, especially marijuana, confined before the 1960s to fringe groups, became widespread among young people.

Why did Britain lead the way? One reason may have been the abolition of compulsory military service, which still prevailed in almost all other

European countries. The consequent lack of discipline or deference in the youth generation in Britain was new and infectious. Another reason was that English was by now the most commonly understood second language on the continent.

The 'mop' hairstyles of the Beatles and the ultra-short mini-skirts of Carnaby Street were replicated across the continent, even behind the Iron Curtain. In Hungary *galéri* (hooligans), clad in *csöves* (drainpipes), akin to the 'mods and rockers' of 1950s Britain, became a major object of police concern. They were accused of forming gangs, committing petty crimes, and 'entertain[ing] themselves utterly freely, without restraint, according to their own tastes and ideas'.²⁹ Some identified with western 'hippies'. They enjoyed the music of the guitarist Béla Radics whose band, Sakk-Matt, held a beat mass in memory of Rolling Stones guitarist Brian Jones after his death in 1969. The East German regime, particularly allergic to western cultural influences, denounced the 'twist' as 'NATO music' and condemned western jazz and rock and roll as 'the culture of apes'.³⁰ Russia too had its hooligans: *stiliagi* raised hackles among the ideologically correct on account of their interest in western fads and fashions and their predilection for chewing-gum.

Vladimir Vysotsky, a much-loved actor, poet, and troubadour, likened to Georges Brassens in France or Bob Dylan in the United States, became the grainy, unofficial voice of his generation. His songs were unpublished in the USSR in his lifetime but, distributed on *magnitizdat* (unofficial recordings), they became wildly popular. One of the notable differences between the USSR and the west was the virtual absence in Russia, even in Moscow and Leningrad, of the evening entertainment culture that flourished in western Europe. Apart from high cultural events such as ballet, theatre and classical music concerts, there were few restaurants, cafés, bars, dance-halls, or night-clubs. Since there was almost nowhere to go, most Russians stayed at home in the evening. Nor, until the late 1960s, were most of them able to watch television: in 1960 there were still only 4.8 million sets in the country. The better educated read; the rest, at any rate the men, drank. No official figures for alcohol consumption were issued, but informed estimates suggested that the USSR was the largest consumer per head of distilled spirits in the world. Thus Russia became one of the best-read and remained one of the most alcoholic societies in Europe.

In the satellite states Poland headed the league table in consumption of spirits, Czechoslovakia in beer, and Hungary in wine. In western Europe alcohol consumption appeared to be in decline. In 1968 the British drank an

estimated 21 gallons of beer per head, compared with 28 in 1909. Belgian consumption fell from 49 gallons in 1905 to 30. The French downed 25 gallons of wine per head as against 34 in 1905. These apparent declines, however, masked other changes. Britons now drank more wine, and Frenchmen more beer, so that total alcoholic intake probably remained roughly comparable with the earlier period. The striking difference was not in level of consumption but in social attitudes. The temperance movement had disintegrated. Religious objection to drink, strong in many Protestant areas of Europe in the early part of the century, had greatly diminished. Alcoholism, once regarded as a moral failing and a sign of lack of character, was now widely viewed as a disease.

Consumption of the other socially accepted drug of the time, tobacco, reached a peak in the 1960s. Evidence of the link between cigarette smoking and lung cancer, first discovered by Richard Doll, an Oxford medical research scientist, and published in 1960, led to a short-lived dip in tobacco sales. It was to be another generation before smoking became socially unacceptable in parts of Europe.

In the capital cities of east-central Europe a dim residue of the animated cultural life of the inter-war years endured. Something of a theatrical renaissance occurred in Prague, although the plays of many of Czechoslovakia's foremost playwrights could not be performed there, save for a brief period of liberalization in 1968. The tradition of political satire in cabarets had not vanished altogether from Berlin even under the Ulbricht regime. The dissident Marxist singer Wolf Biermann won a huge following in East Germany with his subversive ballads. His work was banned and denounced as 'toilet-stall poetry'.³¹ He became a hit in West Germany too and, upon being allowed to visit Cologne in 1976, found that his East German citizenship had been revoked.

In western Europe the growth of what conservative critics called 'permissiveness' in sexual attitudes and in the arts led to a relaxation of censorship in several spheres. A significant milestone in cultural history was the court case in London in 1960 in which Penguin Books, publishers of D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, vindicated their right to issue the work in unexpurgated form. On the English stage, the iconoclastic and sometimes absurdist spirit represented by playwrights such as John Osborne, Samuel Beckett, and Joe Orton, by directors such as Peter Brook, and by the critic Kenneth Tynan, led in 1968 to the Lord Chamberlain, the theatrical censor, being almost literally laughed off the stage. Film censorship in Britain,

mainly on grounds of sex or violence, was considerably relaxed in the 1960s. In France, on the other hand, it was strictly enforced but primarily political. Films dealing with the Algerian war, including Godard's *Le Petit Soldat* (1960) and Gillo Pontecorvo's *La Bataille d'Alger* (1966), were banned for several years. Not until the 1970s was French film censorship reformed and, save for protection of minors, administered less restrictively. Spanish film censorship was even stricter than French (*Casablanca* and *La dolce vita* were among the films banned). In the course of the 1960s, however, as the Franco regime cautiously opened to the rest of the world, pre-publication scrutiny of books was abolished and newspapers and film-makers were given more breathing space. In Greece right-wing politicians and the Orthodox Church enforced censorship even of some classical writers: a presentation of Aristophanes' *The Birds* in Athens was banned repeatedly in the course of the 1960s on the ground that 'some of its scenes were presented in such a way as to offend the religious sensibilities of the people'.³²

The Taganka Theatre in Moscow, opened in April 1964 by the director Yury Lyubimov, sought, like its Athens equivalent, to fulfil the age-old function of drama by conveying to its audience uncomfortable and taboo-breaching truths. In 1968 the play *Alive*, based on a short story by Boris Mozhayev and depicting a cunning peasant's struggle against the collective farm system, was banned after the Culture Minister, Yekaterina Furtseva, interrupted a rehearsal by shouting 'Does this theatre have a party cell in it or doesn't it?' Wasn't he ashamed to be participating in such a 'dreadful exhibition', she asked one of the actors.³³ Lyubimov was old enough to have known the work of the great Russian directors of the early twentieth century, Stanislavsky and Meyerhold. He stuck it out until 1984 but was then expelled from the USSR (he survived to return to his homeland and see the play performed at the Taganka in 1989).

The cultural life of western Europe was enormously enriched by the arrival of creative and performing artists in flight from the east. After his 'leap for freedom' in 1961, Nureyev performed at Covent Garden with Margot Fonteyn in one of the most celebrated balletic partnerships of the century. Such defections were more than just a cultural drain. Each one advertised the Soviet Union as a country that nurtured but then stifled artistic sensibility and creativity. The Soviet system's failure, both at home and abroad, to overcome this stultifying cultural conservatism contributed, in the late 1960s, to a renewed moral and political crisis in Communist Europe.