Chapter 8, Questions on Europe (20 points)

- **What are the major tongues of the Germanic language family? Which have the most speakers?**

  German (90 million speakers), English (60 million speakers), Dutch & Flemish (20 million), Danish, Norwegian & Swedish (20 million)

- **Trace the evolution of the EU since 1952, noting how its goals and membership have changed. Be prepared to make a map of its membership at different points in time.**

  May 1952: France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg all joined the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)

  March 1957: spurred by success of ECSC, members signed the Treaty of Rome that established the European Economic Community (EEC). EEC created a larger European market that would encourage the free movement of goods, labor, and capital

  1965: Brussels Treaty, EEC turned into European Community (EC) with the intent of adding more political groundwork i.e. council, court, parliament, and political commission

  1991: EC became the European Union (EU) after signing the Treaty of Maastricht, continual economic integration, single currency, discussion of common foreign policies and mutual security agreements

  January 1, 1999: 11 of 15 EU members joined the European Monetary Union (EMU)-cross border business and trade took place in the euro

  January 1, 2002: euro coins and bills became available for everyday use

  July 2002: Euroland-currencies completely replaced by the euro

  May 2004: EU added ten new states-Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus

  January 2007: Bulgaria and Romania added to EU

  Late 2010: Turkey, Iceland, and several Baltic countries have applied for EU membership

- **Discuss the kinds of economic, social, and political changes that have taken place in eastern European countries since 1990.**

  After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, a chaotic period of economic transition ensued for Eastern Europe. Russia stopped supplying natural gas to former Soviet block countries and instead sold it on the global market, this caused havoc as many Eastern European industries were unable to run without Russia’s natural gas (industry fell 35% in Poland and 45% in Bulgaria). As a result, many Eastern European
countries turned away from Russia and instead looked to the EU. Countries such as Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Poland began shifting their economies to a capitalist, free-market model by going through a period of privatization. Unfortunately, many people could not afford the new amount of goods and services from the EU because of years of Soviet government subsidies, but the goal still remains in many Eastern European countries to join the EU.

- Research the fiscal, political, and social changes that had to take place in an eastern Europe country such as Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria or Romania before they became EU members.


- "political criteria: stability of the institutions safeguarding democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities;
- economic criteria: existence of a viable market economy, the ability to respond to the pressure of competition and market forces within the EU;
- the ability to assume the obligations of a Member State stemming from the law and policies of the EU (or the acquis), which include subscribing to the Union's political, economic and monetary aims;
- having created conditions for integration by adapting their administrative structures."

There must also be public support in the applicant state and member states, the EU must also have the capacity to accept the applicant at that point.

Chapter 9, Questions on the Russian Domain (30 points)

- Describe some of the high environmental costs of industrialization within the Russian domain.

Nearly ⅔ of the Russian population live in an environment that is hazardous to their health, nearly 65 million Russians experience chronic poor air quality, and ¼ of the country has unsafe drinking water. Due to decades of Soviet industrialization, Siberian forests have been ravaged (potentially exceeding Brazilian rainforest damage) which may have accelerated the process of global warming in other parts of the world. Nuclear pollution is also rampant among Northeast Siberia and Ukraine, the result of decades of unregulated nuclear testing, nuclear power plants with little or no environmental controls, and abandoned Soviet submarines and other warcraft. Also, the Chernobyl crisis still is impacting the environment around it.

- What are some of the key ethnic minority groups within Russia and the neighboring states, and how have they been recognized in the region’s geopolitical structure?

Karelians, Komi, Mordvinians, Volga Tatars, Yakut, Buryats, and the Evenki. For many years, their traditional lives were challenged by Russification, and continue to be so, for example land ownership and the
right to own herds of reindeer were essentially state controlled during the Soviet Era. Once this era was over, the Evenki were left with practically nothing and became increasingly dependent on the state for help. Many of the groups were given autonomous regions, however the regions were more of a title rather than a legitimate political entity.

• **Briefly summarize the key strengths and weaknesses of the post-Soviet Russian economy and suggest how globalization has shaped its evolution.**

De-centralization of the Soviet economy lead to economic crises for many of the Soviet blocs who had become heavily dependent on state subsidies. However, privatization and a mixed economy did cause some states to eventually be able to pull themselves out of the economic mire, and increased oil and natural gas prices lead to an impressive economic turnaround in Russia in the early 2000’s. The opening of Russian natural gas and oil to the global economy caused economic links between the former Soviet Union and the rest of the world to strengthen, as well as introduce Russian and Eastern European consumers to a wider range of goods and services from Western markets. This has lead to an integration of cultural and economic ties, however does provide a risk given the tense nature of Russian and Western relations.

• **What were some of the greatest strengths and weaknesses of centralized Soviet-style planning between 1917 and 1991? How were Ukraine and Belarus impacted? Why did the system ultimately fail?**

The centralizations of these economies and collectivization of agriculture did cause a boom in production in basic industries, and the government was able to control targets and outputs. This control allowed the Soviet economy to surpass many of the world’s other economies and build infrastructures that remain the basis for today’s infrastructure. The Volga-Dann canal, Trans-Siberian Railroad, BAM railroad link, and Siberian Gas Pipeline all made the Soviet Union’s economy increase to formidable sizes. However, ignoring consumer goods caused manufacturing standards become unable to meet growing Western standards, and its isolation caused the USSR to be unable to compete, or even participate, in the technological revolution that swept much of the world in the 70’s and 80’s. A growing divide between the haves and have-nots also added to the economic troubles; and eventually the USSR became unable to sustain itself. Belarus and Ukraine are both still heavily dependent on the Russian economy. Russia is Ukraine’s largest trading partner, and the extent of Russian influence in Belarus was shown by its facilitation of the formation of a new customs union with Belarus and Kazakhstan.

• **Why is organized crime such a critical problem in this part of the world?**

It controls much of the private and state-run enterprises, and the opening of Soviet markets has allowed it to flourish. High costs and and credit problems make illegal methods of earning revenue attractive to small businesses. The mafia has also gone global and been involved in massive fraud and money-laundering schemes all over the world. The corruption has become so ingrained in the government that many government positions are filled by members of the mafia.