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From 400 BC to 2017: Year by Year

(Best watched in 4K quality and at 0.25 speed, slow motion, to see each year)

Interesting questions one might ask along the way...

What was the Gallic Empire, how long did it last, and why did the Romans gain power there again?

The Gallic Empire was a breakaway part of the Roman Empire that existed from 260 to 274 AD. It was established by Postumus, a Roman military commander, during the Crisis of the Third Century, a period of political instability and barbarian invasions. At its height, the Gallic Empire included the territories of Germania, Gaul, Britannia, and for a time, Hispania.

The Gallic Empire lasted for about 14 years. It came to an end when the Roman Emperor Aurelian defeated the Gallic forces at the Battle of Châlons in 274 AD and reintegrated the territory back into the Roman Empire.

The Romans regained power in the Gallic Empire primarily due to the efforts of Emperor Aurelian, who was determined to reunify the fragmented Roman Empire. Aurelian's military campaigns and strategic prowess allowed him to defeat the Gallic forces and restore Roman control over the region.

Where did the Hunnic Empire come from?

The Hunnic Empire originated from the steppes of Central Asia. The Huns were a nomadic people who first appeared in Europe around the 370s AD. Scholars have long debated whether the Huns were descended from the Xiongnu, a nomadic confederation from the Mongolian steppe that dissolved around 100 CE. Recent genetic studies have shown some connections between the Huns and the Xiongnu, suggesting that some Huns in Europe could trace their lineage back to the Xiongnu elites.

The Huns crossed the Volga River in the 370s and established a powerful, though short-lived, empire in Europe. They conquered various tribes and launched invasions into the Roman Empire, significantly impacting the political landscape of the time.

What does the term steppe mean?

The term "steppe" refers to a large area of flat, unforested grassland. Steppes are often found in regions with a semi-arid climate and are characterized by vast, open landscapes with few trees and shrubs. These grasslands are typically dominated by grasses and other herbaceous plants, making them ideal for grazing animals.

Steppes are commonly found in areas such as Central Asia, Eastern Europe, and parts of North America. They play a significant role in various ecosystems and have historically been home to many nomadic cultures and civilizations.

What triggered the division of the Roman Empire into western and eastern parts?

The division of the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern parts was primarily triggered by the empire's vast size and the challenges of governing such an extensive territory. Here are some key factors that contributed to the division:

1. **Administrative Efficiency:** The Roman Empire had grown so large that it became difficult to manage and defend its vast territories. To address this, Emperor Diocletian decided to divide the empire into two sections in 286 AD to improve administrative efficiency.
2. **Political Instability:** The Empire faced significant political instability, with frequent power struggles and revolts. Dividing the empire allowed for more focused and stable governance in each region.
3. **External Threats:** The Roman Empire was under constant threat from various barbarian tribes and external forces. By dividing the empire, it was easier to respond to these threats and protect the borders.
4. **Economic Disparities:** There were economic disparities between the eastern and western parts of the empire. The eastern part, with its capital in Constantinople, was more prosperous and better fortified, while the western part struggled with economic decline.

The final division occurred in 395 AD upon the death of Emperor Theodosius I, who split the empire between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius. This division marked the beginning of the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire (later known as the Byzantine Empire).

Did the divisions/parts reunite and then divide again?

The Roman Empire experienced periods of reunification and division, but it never fully reunited after the final division in 395 AD. Here are some key points:

1. **Diocletian's Tetrarchy (293 AD):** Emperor Diocletian established the Tetrarchy, dividing the empire into four parts, each ruled by a co-emperor. This system aimed to improve administrative efficiency and address external threats.
2. **Constantine the Great (306-337 AD):** Constantine reunited the empire under his rule after defeating his rivals. He also moved the capital to Byzantium, later renamed Constantinople.
3. **Final Division (395 AD):** Upon the death of Emperor Theodosius I, the empire was permanently divided between his two sons, Arcadius (Eastern Roman Empire) and Honorius (Western Roman Empire). This division marked the beginning of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires.
4. **Western Roman Empire's Fall (476 AD):** The Western Roman Empire faced continuous invasions and internal strife, leading to its collapse in 476 AD when the last emperor, Romulus Augustulus, was deposed.

5. **Eastern Roman Empire (Byzantine Empire):** The Eastern Roman Empire, also known as the Byzantine Empire, continued to thrive and lasted until the fall of **Constantinople in 1453**.

While there were attempts to reunify the empire, such as under Constantine, the final division in 395 AD marked a permanent separation that was never fully reversed.

What triggered the Angevin Empire?

The Angevin Empire was triggered by a combination of strategic marriages, inheritance, and military conquests. Here are the key events that led to its formation:

1. **Inheritance and Titles:** Henry II, the founder of the Angevin Empire, inherited several important titles and lands. He became Duke of Normandy in 1150 through his mother, Empress Matilda, and Count of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine in 1151 through his father, Geoffrey of Anjou.
2. **Marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine:** In 1152, Henry II married Eleanor of Aquitaine, one of the wealthiest and most powerful women in Europe. This marriage brought the vast and prosperous Duchy of Aquitaine under Henry's control.
3. **Claim to the English Throne:** Henry II's claim to the English throne came through his mother, Empress Matilda, who was the daughter of King Henry I of England. After a long civil war known as "The Anarchy," Henry II succeeded Stephen of Blois as King of England in 1154.
4. **Expansion and Consolidation:** Henry II expanded his territories through military conquests and strategic alliances. He brought Brittany into the Angevin Empire when his son Geoffrey married the heiress of Duke Conan IV and became Duke of Brittany in 1171.

The Angevin Empire, at its height, included England, parts of modern-day France (such as Normandy, Anjou, Aquitaine, and Brittany), as well as parts of Ireland and Wales. The empire was a vast and loosely connected network of fiefs that owed fealty to various overlords, including the King of France.

What caused the quick demise of the Rus' Principalities and Novgorod Republic?

The quick demise of the Rus' Principalities and the Novgorod Republic was caused by a combination of internal strife, external invasions, and political changes:

1. **Mongol Invasion:** The Mongol invasion in the 13th century was a significant factor. The Mongols, led by Batu Khan, launched a series of devastating campaigns against the Rus' principalities, culminating in the Battle of the Kalka River in 1223 and the subsequent invasion in 1237-1240. The Mongol conquest led to the subjugation of the Rus' principalities under the Mongol Empire, which weakened their political and military power.
2. **Internal Conflicts:** The Rus' principalities were often engaged in internal conflicts and power struggles. The system of lateral succession, where power was passed among

brothers and nephews, led to frequent disputes and civil wars. This internal fragmentation made it difficult for the principalities to present a united front against external threats.

3. **Rise of Moscow:** The rise of the Grand Duchy of Moscow played a crucial role in the decline of the Novgorod Republic. As Moscow grew in power and influence, it began to assert control over other Rus' territories. In 1471, after the Battle of Shelon, Novgorod pledged allegiance to Moscow. The final blow came in 1478 when Ivan III of Moscow invaded and annexed Novgorod, ending its independence.
4. **Economic and Political Shifts:** The shifting economic and political landscape also contributed to the decline. The Novgorod Republic, which had prospered as a trading hub, faced increasing competition and pressure from neighboring states. The changing dynamics of trade and politics in the region further weakened its position.

These factors combined to bring about the rapid decline of the Rus' principalities and the Novgorod Republic, leading to their eventual absorption into the expanding power of Moscow.

Did Sweden also defeat and control what was Norway in the 1320s?

In the 1320s, Sweden did not defeat and control Norway through military conquest. Instead, the two kingdoms were united through a personal union. This union was established in 1319 when Magnus Eriksson, a three-year-old, inherited the Norwegian throne from his grandfather, King Haakon V of Norway, and was also elected King of Sweden. This union lasted until 1355, with a brief re-unification from 1362 to 1365.

What was the Golden Horde all about?

The Golden Horde was a Mongol and later Turkicized khanate that emerged in the 13th century as the northwestern sector of the Mongol Empire. It was established by Batu Khan, a grandson of Genghis Khan, and it became one of the most powerful and influential states of its time.

Here are some key points about the Golden Horde:

1. **Origins:** The Golden Horde originated from the Mongol Empire and was initially part of the larger Mongol conquests. It was named after the golden tent of Batu Khan, its founder.
2. **Territory:** At its height, the Golden Horde's territory extended from the Carpathian Mountains in Eastern Europe to the steppes of Siberia. It included parts of modern-day Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and other regions.
3. **Capital:** The capital of the Golden Horde was initially Sarai Batu, located on the lower Volga River. Later, the capital was moved upstream to Sarai Berke.
4. **Culture and Religion:** The Golden Horde was a melting pot of cultures, with a mixture of Mongol and Turkic influences. Over time, the Horde became increasingly Turkified and Islamized, especially under the rule of Khan Öz Beg (1312–1341).
5. **Economy and Trade:** The Golden Horde engaged in extensive trade with Mediterranean peoples, particularly their allies in Mamluk Egypt and the Genoese. They also collected tribute from various subject peoples, including the East Slavs, Mordvinians, Greeks, Georgians, and Armenians.

6. **Decline:** The decline of the Golden Horde began in the late 14th century, marked by internal strife, the Black Death, and external pressures. The Battle of Kulikovo in 1380, where Russian forces defeated the Horde's general Mamai, was a significant turning point. The final blow came in 1395 when Timur (Tamerlane) invaded the Horde's territory, destroying Sarai Berke and weakening the Horde's power.

The Golden Horde eventually disintegrated into smaller khanates, such as the Crimean Khanate, Kazan Khanate, and Astrakhan Khanate, among others.

You can find more detailed information on the Golden Horde [here](#) and [here](#).

When did Russia finally come into existence and why or how?

Russia's origins can be traced back to the establishment of the Kievan Rus' in the 9th century, a federation of Slavic tribes under the rule of the Varangians (Vikings). The Kievan Rus' is considered the cultural and political predecessor of modern Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus.

However, the formation of Russia as a distinct entity began with the rise of the Grand Duchy of Moscow in the late 13th century. Here are some key milestones:

1. **Grand Duchy of Moscow (1283-1547):** The Grand Duchy of Moscow emerged as a powerful state under the leadership of the Rurikid dynasty. It gradually expanded its territory and influence, uniting various Russian principalities.
2. **Ivan III (Ivan the Great):** Ivan III (1462-1505) played a crucial role in consolidating Russian lands and freeing them from Mongol rule. He is often credited with laying the foundations of the Russian state.
3. **Tsardom of Russia (1547-1721):** In 1547, Ivan IV (Ivan the Terrible) declared himself the first Tsar of Russia, marking the official establishment of the Tsardom of Russia. This period saw significant territorial expansion and centralization of power.
4. **Russian Empire (1721-1917):** Under Peter the Great, Russia was proclaimed an empire in 1721. Peter's reforms modernized the state and expanded its influence, making Russia a major European power.
5. **Soviet Union (1922-1991):** After the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the subsequent civil war, the Soviet Union was established in 1922. It became a global superpower during the 20th century.
6. **Russian Federation (1991-present):** Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the Russian Federation was established as the successor state.

You can find more detailed information on the history of Russia [here](#) and [here](#).

Did the Tsardom of Russia (1547-1721) extend all the way to the Pacific and Alaska areas by 1721, or even before that?

Yes, by 1721, the Tsardom of Russia had extended its territory all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The Russian expansion into Siberia began in the late 16th century and continued throughout the 17th century. This expansion was driven by the quest for fur, resources, and new territories.

Russian explorers and Cossacks pushed eastward, reaching the Pacific coast by the mid-17th century.

However, the Russian presence in Alaska came later. The first Russian settlement in Alaska was established in 1784, well after the Tsardom of Russia had transitioned into the **Russian Empire** in 1721.

What happened to the Holy Roman Empire and how long did it last?

The Holy Roman Empire was a multi-ethnic complex of territories in central Europe that developed during the Early Middle Ages and continued until its dissolution in 1806. It was established in 800 AD when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as Emperor of the Romans. The empire's power and influence fluctuated over the centuries, with various emperors and political entities vying for control.

The Holy Roman Empire faced numerous challenges, including internal conflicts, religious disputes, and external threats. The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century and the Thirty Years' War in the 17th century significantly weakened the empire's cohesion and power.

The final blow came during **the Napoleonic Wars**. In 1806, after Napoleon's victory at the Battle of Austerlitz, Emperor Francis II abdicated and dissolved the Holy Roman Empire, effectively ending its existence.

Did Crimea merge with Russia in 1774 (2 years before U.S. independence from Britain)?

Crimea did not merge with Russia in 1774, but that year was significant in the process leading to its eventual annexation. In 1774, the Treaty of Küçük Kaynarca was signed following Russia's victory over the Ottoman Empire. This treaty granted the Crimean Khanate independence from the Ottoman Empire but placed it under Russian influence.

The actual annexation of Crimea by the Russian Empire occurred in 1783. Empress Catherine the Great officially proclaimed the annexation on April 19, 1783, after a period of Russian interference in Crimean affairs and a series of revolts by Crimean Tatars.

When did the countries of France, the UK, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Italy and Greece officially come about?

Sure, here are the key dates for the establishment of Portugal through Greece, Italy, and Germany as modern nation-states:

1. **Portugal:** Portugal became a recognized kingdom in 1139 when Afonso Henriques declared himself King of Portugal after the Battle of Ourique. The independence of Portugal was formally recognized by the Pope in 1179.
2. **Spain:** The modern nation-state of Spain was effectively established in 1469 with the union of the Crowns of Castile and Aragon through the marriage of Isabella I and Ferdinand II. This union is considered the foundation of a unified Spain. The conquest of

Granada in 1492 and the first voyage of Columbus in the same year were critical events that further solidified Spain's status as a unified kingdom.

3. **United Kingdom:** The United Kingdom of Great Britain was formed in 1707 through the Acts of Union, which united the Kingdom of England (including Wales) and the Kingdom of Scotland into a single sovereign state. The Acts of Union 1800 further united the Kingdom of Great Britain with the Kingdom of Ireland, creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. In 1922, the Irish Free State gained independence, leading to the current formation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The English/British islands changed rulers and cultures many times from before the Roman Empire to present day.
4. **France:** The medieval Kingdom of France emerged from the western part of Charlemagne's Carolingian Empire, known as West Francia. The Capetian dynasty, founded in 987, played a crucial role in the formation of France as a unified kingdom. The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453) between the House of Valois and the House of Plantagenet further solidified French nationalism and the power of the French monarchy. The **modern** nation-state of France continued to evolve through the Renaissance, Reformation, and various regime changes, including the French Revolution in 1789 and the establishment of the French Third Republic in 1870.
5. **Greece:** Greece officially became a modern nation-state on March 25, 1821, when the Greek War of Independence against the Ottoman Empire began. The independence of Greece was recognized in 1830 with the signing of the London Protocol.
6. **Italy:** Italy became a unified nation-state on March 17, 1861, during the period known as the Risorgimento. This movement aimed to consolidate the various states and territories of the Italian Peninsula into a single kingdom under the rule of King Victor Emmanuel II. The unification process continued until 1870 when Rome was incorporated into the Kingdom of Italy.
7. **Germany:** The modern nation-state of Germany was officially unified on January 18, 1871, following the Franco-Prussian War. This unification was led by Otto von Bismarck and resulted in the proclamation of the German Empire in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles. Prior to this, Germany was a collection of various independent states and principalities.

Many of the other nation-states within current day Europe (and the many more independent colonized nation-states settled around the world) were also established during these same periods in history.

Did WWI somehow result in the formation of Ukraine and/or Crimea as a separate region or country?

World War I played a significant role in the formation of Ukraine as a separate entity, but not directly for Crimea. Here's a brief overview:

1. **Ukraine:** During World War I, Ukraine was part of the Russian Empire. The chaos of the Russian Revolution in 1917 and the subsequent civil war created an opportunity for Ukrainian nationalists to declare independence. In 1918, the Ukrainian People's Republic was established, but it faced numerous challenges, including conflicts with Bolshevik

forces and other factions. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk in 1918 briefly recognized Ukraine's independence, but the subsequent Soviet invasion led to the establishment of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, which eventually became part of the Soviet Union.

2. **Crimea:** Crimea's status was more complex. During World War I, Crimea was part of the Russian Empire. After the Russian Revolution, Crimea experienced a period of political turmoil, with various factions vying for control. In 1918, the Crimean People's Republic was declared, but it was short-lived. The region was subsequently occupied by German and Ukrainian forces, and later by the Bolsheviks. Crimea eventually became part of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and later the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic within the Soviet Union.

So, while World War I and the subsequent events led to the formation of Ukraine as a separate entity, Crimea's status was more fluid and influenced by the broader political changes in the region.

When was the USSR formed and dissolved?

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) was officially formed on December 30, 1922. It was a **federation** of Russia, Belorussia, Ukraine, and the Transcaucasian Federation (which was later divided into the Georgian, Azerbaijan, and Armenian republics).

The USSR was dissolved on December 26, 1991. This dissolution marked the end of the Soviet Union and resulted in the emergence of 15 independent countries, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and the Baltic states.

Did Crimea break away from Russia once or many times?

Crimea has had a complex history with multiple changes in sovereignty. Here are some key points:

1. **1783:** Crimea was annexed by the Russian Empire from the Ottoman Empire.
2. **1918:** see above.
3. **1954:** Crimea was transferred from the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (RSFSR) to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic (Ukrainian SSR) by the Soviet government.
4. **1991:** With the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Crimea became part of the newly independent Ukraine.
5. **2014:** Crimea declared independence from Ukraine (when Obama was president) and was subsequently annexed by Russia. This move was widely condemned by the international community and is not recognized by most countries.

So, Crimea has experienced several changes in sovereignty over the centuries, with the most recent and controversial change occurring in 2014.

What was the security agreement which Ukraine had with some of the NATO nations and Russia which resulted in their nuclear weapons going back under Russian control?

The security agreement you're referring to is the **Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances**, signed on December 5, 1994. This agreement was signed by Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Here are the key points:

1. **Nuclear Disarmament:** Ukraine agreed to give up its nuclear weapons, which it had inherited after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. These weapons were transferred to Russia for dismantling.
2. **Security Assurances:** In return, **Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom provided security assurances to Ukraine.** They committed to respecting Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, **and existing borders**. They also pledged to refrain from the threat or use of force against Ukraine, **except in self-defense or in accordance with the United Nations Charter**.
3. **Economic Coercion:** The signatories agreed **not to use economic coercion** to influence Ukraine's politics or policies.

The Budapest Memorandum was a significant step in nuclear disarmament and aimed to provide Ukraine with security assurances in exchange for giving up its nuclear arsenal. However, the agreement has been a point of contention, especially following Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, which many view as a breach of the memorandum.

Did Russia's invasion of Ukraine violate the terms of the Budapest Memorandum? And does Trump's USA agreement with Ukraine, to eventually set up rare earth mining operations in Ukraine, violate that agreement also?

Yes, Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2014 and the subsequent annexation of Crimea violated the terms of the Budapest Memorandum. The memorandum, signed in 1994 by Ukraine, Russia, the United States, and the United Kingdom, provided security assurances to Ukraine in exchange for its relinquishment of nuclear weapons. The signatories committed to respecting Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and existing borders, and to refrain from the threat or use of force against Ukraine.

Regarding the USA-Ukraine agreement on rare earth mining, it does not violate the Budapest Memorandum. The memorandum primarily focuses on security assurances and the non-use of force. The agreement between the USA and Ukraine on rare earth mining is an economic and investment arrangement, which does not fall under the scope of the Budapest Memorandum.

More notes: [2400-years-of-European-history](#)

Also check this out: [Human Population Throughout Time](#)