

the interests of Europe and the United States. The open question is where the line will be drawn in the west. This has been a historical question, and it was a key challenge in Europe over the past hundred years.

Russia will not become a global power in the next decade, but it has no choice but to become a major regional power. And that means it will clash with Europe. The Russian–European frontier remains a fault line.

#### EUROPE

Europe is still in the process of reorganizing itself after the loss of its empire and two devastating world wars, and it remains to be seen whether that reorganization will be peaceful. Europe is not going to regain its empire, but the complacent certainty that intra-European wars have ended needs to be examined. Central to this is the question of whether Europe is a spent volcano or whether it is merely dormant. The European Union has a total GDP of over \$14 trillion, a trillion more than the United States. It is possible that a region of such wealth—and of such diversity in wealth—will remain immune from conflict, but it is not guaranteed.

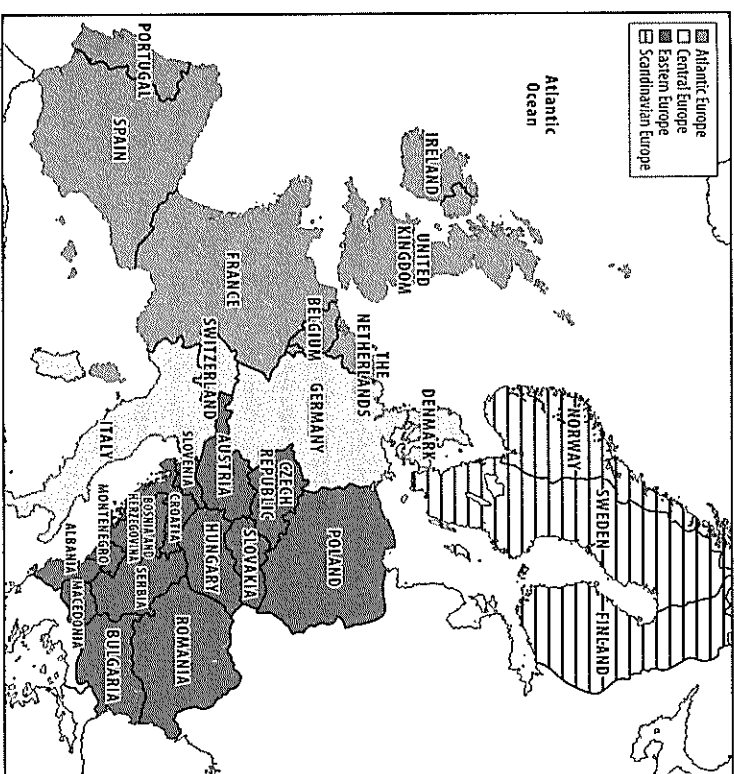
It is unreasonable to talk of Europe as if it were one entity. It is not, in spite of the existence of the European Union. Europe consists of a series of sovereign and contentious nation-states. There is a general entity called Europe, but it is more reasonable to think of four Europes (we exclude Russia and the nations of the former Soviet Union from this list—although geographically European, these have a very different dynamic from that of Europe):

- Atlantic Europe: the nations that front the Atlantic Ocean and North Sea directly and that were the major imperial powers during the past five hundred years.
- Central Europe: essentially Germany and Italy, which did not come into existence until the late nineteenth century as modern nation-states. It was their assertion of national interest that led to the two world wars of the twentieth century.
- Eastern Europe: the nations running from the Baltic to the Black Sea

that were occupied by Soviet troops in World War II and developed their recent national identities from this experience.

- There is, of course, a fourth less significant Europe, the Scandinavian countries.

In the first half of the twentieth century, Atlantic Europe was the imperial heart of the world. Central Europeans were later comers and challengers. Eastern Europeans were the victims. Torn apart by two world wars, Europe faced a fundamental question: What was the status of Germany in the European system? The Germans, frozen out of the imperial system created by Atlantic Europe, sought to overturn that system and assert their



Four Europes