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BOOK REVIEW

**Anna Triandafyllidou and Ruby Gropas. *What is Europe?* 2nd ed.
Routledge: Francis & Taylor, 2023, pages 278**

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The book under review is written by Anna Triandafyllidou and Ruby Gropas. The book discusses multiple topics like vision, identity, culture, and social dimensions of contemporary Europe. In this edition, new issues like global pandemic, climate change, migration, Eurozone crises, and Russia-Ukraine war are also discussed. It can serve as a reference source for undergraduate and graduate students of European Studies. This book offers updated information to the readers from an interdisciplinary perspective. It will serve as a useful study for readers due to its self-reflective nature of study. It provides vital information to the readers so as to come up with their own answers rather than imposing a conclusion on the reader. This book review will be helpful to better understand the role of European continent in global politics and transatlantic relations.

Europe is a place of knowledge and wisdom where there is immense scope of learning and inquiry. Integration of European Union plays a vital role in understanding the concept of United Europe. The European countries came together under a political and economic mechanism of integration known as the European Union. Contemporary Europe is a place of imagination and exploration for those who are living outside the continent. Europe enjoys a prominent place as the global leader in industrial development and a major player in global trade and commerce. The United States is an important trading partner of the European Union. The US maintains a security alliance, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization NATO, with the European Union. Europe has extensive trade relations with Asian and African countries. The EU provides technical and financial assistance to developing

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countries of Asia and Africa. It interacts with United Nations on peace and security issues under the umbrella of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Western Europe and North America are major trading partners, promoting transatlantic relations.

Europe became Christian as the decline of the Roman Empire weakened pagan belief systems. However, in the later stage, the Christian missionary zeal morphed into overseas colonial mission. This change was due to interaction with other parts of the world. There was also sectarian division. The continent was divided between Catholic and Protestant zones. Another major divide was between Holy Roman Empire and Ottoman Empire. It was an age of discovery and conquest of New World. It was a period marked by Italian Renaissance and European Enlightenment. Then came the age of industrial development and technological innovation. The United Kingdom emerged as a global leader in scientific development.

Europe can be defined culturally on the basis of multiplicity or plurality of European culture. Europe is a civilizational hub of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian traditions. It was also influenced by Byzantine, Slavic, Orthodox, and Islamic traditions. This was possible due to the influence of non-European world on the cultural capital of Europe. Colonization, imperialism, trade, and tourism affected this development and transformation. It was basically mutual exchange of learning experiences between European and other prominent civilizations. The European identity is primarily a cultural identity which is compatible with national identities of modern European nations. Ethnicity and religion also had an impact in shaping the European identity. Nevertheless, cultural and social differences remained a powerful force throughout European history.

The Treaty of Westphalia was a milestone in the European history. Concept of modern nation-state emerged which sanctified political frontiers in Europe. European nations experienced the notion of unity in diversity. European history witnessed remarkable events like French and Russian revolutions. Europe witnessed influential political theories like Communism, Socialism, Nazism, and Fascism.

Contemporary Europe, in the shape of the European Union, promotes free movement of goods, services, ideas, and people among the member countries. The European Union implements common agriculture, finance,

trade, and health policies for member countries. Unity in diversity serves as an integral part of European vision.

China emerged as global economic power and challenge to supremacy of the US in global politics. Beijing's authoritative capitalism clashes with liberal capitalism of the West. The Russian invasion of Ukraine seems to be a direct threat to the peace and security of Western European countries. The Russia-Ukraine War has challenged the security paradigm of Europe.

Covid 19 emerged as a global health threat, particularly in many countries of the European continent. The global pandemic resulted in inflation and unemployment in European countries. Climate change and global warming threatened the wellbeing of European population. The European Union imposed stringent environmental laws to curb environmental pollution. Excessive migration from North African and South Asian countries towards Europe became a serious challenge for the future of European integration. Greece and Turkey became entry points for illegal migration towards Europe.