

Korean War (1950–1953)

- Background
 - Korea divided at the 38th parallel after Japan's defeat in World War II.
 - North Korea established as a communist state under Kim Il-sung.
 - South Korea established as a capitalist state under Syngman Rhee.
 - Tensions between North and South Korea led to border skirmishes.
- Major Participants
 - North Korea: Soviet Union provided military equipment; China provided troops.
 - South Korea: Supported by the United Nations, with the US providing the majority of troops and military aid.
- Key Events
 - June 1950: North Korea's surprise invasion, capturing most of South Korea.
 - September 1950: Battle of Pusan Perimeter; UN forces held a defensive line.
 - September 1950: Incheon Landing; UN forces turned the tide, recapturing Seoul.
 - October 1950: UN forces crossed the 38th parallel, approaching the Yalu River.
 - November 1950: Chinese "People's Volunteer Army" launched a massive counterattack.
 - 1951-1953: Stalemate and trench warfare along the 38th parallel.
 - July 1953: Armistice Agreement signed at Panmunjom.
- Consequences
 - Armistice established the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), a buffer zone.
 - Heavy casualties and widespread destruction in Korea.
 - Reinforced US policy of containment of communism.
 - Set a precedent for US involvement in Vietnam.
 - Increased Cold War tensions between superpowers.

Nixon's Visit to China (1972)

- Background
 - US-China relations had been hostile since the Chinese Communist Revolution in 1949.
 - The US did not recognize the People's Republic of China (PRC), supporting the Republic of China (Taiwan) instead.
 - Sino-Soviet split in the 1960s due to ideological and territorial disputes.
- Key Participants

- United States: President Richard Nixon, National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger.
- China: Chairman Mao Zedong, Premier Zhou Enlai.
- Key Events
 - 1971: Henry Kissinger's secret trip to China paved the way for Nixon's visit.
 - February 21-28, 1972: Nixon's week-long visit, including meetings with Mao and Zhou.
 - February 27, 1972: Issuance of the Shanghai Communiqué.
 - Both sides agreed to work towards normalizing relations.
 - Acknowledgement of the One China policy, with the US recognizing that Taiwan is part of China.
 - Agreement on opposing "hegemony" in Asia, implicitly targeting Soviet influence.
- Consequences
 - Marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War-era isolation of China.
 - Led to significant shifts in global strategic alliances.
 - Facilitated China's entry into the United Nations and the UN Security Council.
 - Opened China to Western technology, trade, and investment, spurring economic reforms.
 - Strengthened China's position as a global power.
 - Led to the eventual formal establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China in 1979.