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Sommario/riassunto	Contrary to popular mythology that upheavals of epic proportions would mark the end of the millennium, the twenty-first century actually dawned far less spectacularly than the doomsayers had predicted. Yet, it proved no less eventful as we all know. In particular, the world has witnessed a number of dramatic changes over the past few decades that have reverberated throughout the globe the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact bloc undoubtedly the most

dramatic. The acceleration of the process of global integration turns out to be equally consequential, especially in the realms of economic flows since roughly the same time as the fall of the Berlin Wall. Stepping into the new century, we also witnessed the unprecedented September 11 terrorist attack upon the USA homeland in 2001 and rising tension between the Islamic and Anglo-American worlds.
