

Reading Guide for *The Age of Walls*  
by Tim Marshall

**Introduction**

1987 Ronald Reagan's famous 1987 speech in front of the Berlin Wall: "Mr. Gorbachev—tear down this wall!" Click on this link to see an excerpt of the speech:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WX00QkvK-mQ>



What is **Globalization**? **Economic globalization** is how countries are coming together as one big global economy, making international trade easier. In the late 20th century, many countries agreed to lower tariffs, or taxes on goods that are imported from other countries.

How has that era of openness and internationalism given way to a "**Fortress Mentality**"? What does that mean? **A situation in which a group of people feel they are under attack and therefore refuse to listen to any criticism or views that do not fit with their own position and aims.**

What is Nationalism? **Identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, especially to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations.**

The collapse of communism in 1989 was a major development in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

The use of Terrorism, beginning with the attacks of September 11, 2001, changed all sorts of things.

"At least 65 countries have built barriers along their borders; half of those erected since World War II sprang up between 2000 and now."

"...we are divided in many ways—in wealth, race, religion, and politics."

"...The primary purpose of the walls appearing throughout Europe is to stop the wave of migrants...[but they] say much about wider divisions...within [the European Union's] member nations."

**European Union** -- A political and economic union of 28 member states that are located primarily in Europe.

Humans tend to group themselves into tribes...a narrative of "us and them."

The Sunni-Shia split in Islam—"Muslims killing Muslims." "Yes, but the Iranians are not Muslims." —an Egyptian journalist (Egypt is a majority Sunni Muslim nation)

Problems arise "when you claim that what you think is the only truth."

"In a time of fear and instability, people will continue to group together, to protect themselves against perceived threats. Those threats don't just come from borders. They can also come from within."