

9 – Imperialism and the Causes of the First World War (1870-1914)

KEY TERMS/PEOPLE	Algeçiras Conference	Louis Pasteur/Germ Theory
Surplus Capital	Berlin Conference	Antiseptics
“White Man’s Burden”	Mohandas K. Gandhi	Anesthesia
Social Darwinism	French-Algerian War	Georges Sorel
Sepoy Mutiny	British East India Company	Henri Bergson
Open Door Policy	Dutch East India Company	Colonialism
Suez Canal	Congress Of Berlin	Militarism
The Boxer Rebellion	Pablo Picasso	Balkan Crisis
Meiji Restoration	Max Planck	Pan-Slavism
Zulu Resistance	Marie Curie	Balkan Wars
Opium Wars	Friedrich Nietzsche	Moroccan Crisis
Russo-Japanese War	Quinine	
Dual Alliance		

OVERVIEW

A contemporary definition of imperialism is any instance of a more-powerful nation or group of nations acting, or being perceived to be acting, at the expense of a lesser power, usually when the more powerful nation dominates militarily or economically. Imperialism is therefore used not only to describe overt empire-building policies – such as those of the Roman Empire, the Spanish, or the British – but was also used controversially and/or disparagingly; for example, most of Europe referred to Napoleon’s actions as imperialistic. The colonial power may rule the colony politically or exploit it economically or impose its culture upon it. During the so-called old imperialism of the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, the Europeans did not acquire overseas territories (with the exception of the Americas, where the death of 90 percent of the native population allowed establishment of colonies), as much as they set up trading stations. They largely respected and frequently cooperated with the local rulers in India, China, Japan, the Spice Islands (Indonesia), and the other geographic areas where a flourishing trade developed between locals and European coastal trading centers.

The new imperialism that began in the 1870s colonized Asia and Africa by using military force to take control of local governments, by exploiting the local economies for the raw materials required by Europe’s growing industry, and by imposing Western values to benefit the “backward” colonies. Most of Asia’s rich and ancient cultures were either carved up into economic “spheres

of influence” or colonized outright; virtually all of Africa was taken over by only six European nations; and Latin America was dominated by the United States.

Causes of Imperialism

1. The Search for Markets and for Raw Materials

The rapidly industrializing and competing nations of Europe produced more manufactured goods than their own populations could consume and, since a favorable balance of trade was not possible for all European nations, colonies promised potential markets.

- In the long run, since the non-Europeans lacked purchasing power, the promise of markets far outweighed the reality.
- Studies of foreign trade from 1870 to 1914 show that the best consumers of manufactured goods were other industrialized nations rather than undeveloped colonies.
- As the income level of Western workers rose, so did the profitability of investing surplus capital into domestic ventures.
- Colonies were needed as sources of raw materials to supply newly industrialized Western society.
- They argued that unless their more advanced technologies and business methods were applied to the mining and processing of these materials, not enough would be supplied to the voracious factories.
- They claimed that they had to set up colonies in order to maintain the stability that would protect their investments.

2. Missionaries

A burst of religious revivalism during the mid-nineteenth century in Western Europe and the United States led to development of worldwide missions to convert the people of Asia and Africa to Christianity.

- On rare occasions missionaries were attacked or endangered by locals.
- Religion was used as an excuse to erase cultures and take wealth and power.
- Many medical and technological improvements were made in some colonies (mostly British ones).

3. Military and Naval Bases

Once trade developed, the home (or mother) countries felt compelled to establish a chain of naval bases to protect their overseas interests and military

outposts to stake claims and maintain order. European national rivalries and strategic concerns fostered imperial expansion and competition for colonies.

- This process tended to feed on itself since a competition to acquire colonies developed among the industrialized nations.
- They claimed to want to maintain the international balance of power.
- This was more about international prestige.
- This led to increased tensions when the “haves” (like the British Empire, which had acquired colonies for two or more centuries), clashed with the “have-nots” (like the Germans and Italians, whose late-blooming national unity gave them a slow start in the race).

4. Ideology

Europeans justified imperialism through an ideology of cultural and racial superiority. The so-called “White Man’s Burden” was a form of racist paternalism that preached that the “superior” Westerners had an obligation to bring their culture to “uncivilized” peoples in other parts of the world.

- **Social Darwinism**, a half-baked philosophical application of Darwin’s theory of natural selection, bolstered the idea that some races or peoples were more fit for survival than others and therefore designed by nature for rule.
- Imperial adventures and adventurers appealed to the masses in the industrialized countries who felt part of some great crusade to improve people whose lot was even worse than theirs.
- Imperialism won votes; politicians coddled the voters.

5. Industrial and Technological Developments

Industrial and technological developments (the Second Industrial Revolution) facilitated European control of global empires.

- Advanced weaponry such as the machine gun, the breech-loading rifle, and other gunpowder weapons allowed the Europeans to dominate the natives of all regions and conquer them quickly.
- Advances in communication such as the radio, telegraph, and telephone allowed Europeans to coordinate their efforts to dominate the rest of the world.
- Advances in medicine such as quinine, anesthesia, antiseptics, public health projects, and Louis Pasteur’s germ theory supported European control of Africa and Asia by preserving European lives.

Regions

Africa

- Egypt: after winning autonomy within the Ottoman Empire in the mid-nineteenth century, became a British protectorate in the 1880s.
- The British had invested in the Suez Canal, a vital link to India and Asia. To maintain stability in the region, they helped Egypt take control of the Sudan and set up an Anglo-Egyptian administration for both areas.
- Wealthy industrialist Cecil Rhodes planned to build a railroad that crossed the African continent, but he did not build it.
- South Africa became an important colony to the British, who fought the Afrikaners in the two Boer Wars. Superior British weaponry helped defeat the Afrikaners and also the Zulus.
- The DeBeers family profited by taking natural resources from the north and south of the continent, but they did little to develop the people or any sustainable industry.

Algeria, Tunisia, and most of Morocco fell into French hands right before the First World War, and Libya, once part of the decrepit Ottoman Empire, was taken by the Italians.

- Africa south of the Sahara was terra incognita until the 1870s, when Belgian, German, and French explorers began to lay claims.
- Scottish medical missionary David Livingstone was the first white man to do humanitarian and religious work in south and central Africa.
- He was writing a regular column for London papers and failed to report; his worried readers thought he must be dead.
- In 1871, after six years of no word from Livingstone, American journalist Henry M. Stanley found him in a remote part of East Africa. Stanley's newspaper reports created greater European interest in Africa.
- King Leopold II of Belgium sought the aid of Stanley to dominate the Congo region. Leopold ruled the Congo in a brutal and exploitive fashion and became an example of cruel imperialist masters, ruling with whips and threats.
 - -The Belgian Congo – Congo Free State – was over seventy times the size of Belgium and was ruled privately by King Leopold until 1908.
 - Reports of abuses there resulted in the Congo being taken over by

a Belgian administration, dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, until independence in 1960.

The **Berlin Conference** of 1885, sponsored by Bismarck to prevent disputes among the imperialists, set up rules that diminished squabbles and encouraged the partition of the entire African continent among the major European powers.

Asia

India: In 1857, the **Sepoy Mutiny** in India became the best-known aspect of a wider rebellion of native troops against their British and Indian commanders. The Hindu and Muslim troops objected to disrespectful treatment, and to their bullets being wrapped in animal fat, which was offensive to their faiths.

- The rebellion was put down, but the British East India Company was relieved of its rule over India, and British government administration of the Indian subcontinent began.
- Over the next 90 or more years the Indian people struggled with British rule until the British finally left after the Second World War.

By the mid-1880s the British also took control of Burma, the Malay Peninsula, and North Borneo.

- The British did not interfere with the basic social structure of these colonies.
- They introduced educational reforms and technological advances, especially to India, that smoothed the way for eventual independence.
- Of all the colonial powers, the British proved to be most enlightened.

Other Colonial Holdings

- The Dutch expanded their hold over the Dutch East Indies (the islands of Indonesia).
- The French seized Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos).
- The Germans had small African holdings and occupied islands in the Pacific.
- The Russians set up a sphere of influence (an area under the economic and military control of one imperial power) in Persia (Iran).

China: with its teeming population, vast land area, and incredibly rich and ancient culture, was carved up into spheres of influence by the Western powers after the Opium Wars of the 1840s and 1850s.

- • -Extraterritoriality” made Westerners there subject to their home country’s laws rather than China’s.
- Exclusive trading rights and unlimited governing powers were given to the Western nations.
- The Chinese were forced to cede outlying regions of historical Chinese influence, such as Siberia and part of Manchuria, and Korea, to the Russians and the Japanese, by the late 1800s.
- The Tai-Ping Rebellion from 1850-1864 cost 15-20 million lives and resulted in the Qing dynasty being weakened further by seeking American and British help to end the rebellion.
- The Open Door Policy, implemented by the United States in 1899 In order to open Chinese commerce to imperial latecomers like itself, urged the Europeans to allow free trade within China while respecting its territorial integrity.
- The Boxer Rebellion, a patriotic uprising by Chinese nationalists against Western encroachment, was put down by the imperial powers in 1900.
 - -Since the Dowager Empress, who had seized control of the government, had supported the Boxers, the Manchu dynasty fell into decline until It was overthrown in 1911.
- Sun Yat-sen set up a republic dedicated to modernizing China through three principles:
 - Nationalism, democracy, livelihood.

Japan was the only major Asian power to resist being swallowed up by the imperialists.

- Mid-sixteenth-century Portuguese traders had opened the insular Japanese to commerce and Christianity, both of which were suppressed by the shogun (medieval military ruler).
- U.S. warships, under the command of Commodore Matthew Perry, reopened the islands in 1853 and, unlike China and India, the Japanese rapidly modernized.
- The rule of the shogun was replaced by that of a powerful emperor, Meiji.
- Feudalism was abolished; industry fostered; a central government installed; and education and the military reformed.
- Japan engaged in a modernization movement in which it sent people abroad to learn from other cultures; they came back and rebuilt Japan rapidly, known as the Meiji Restoration.

- Japan became so Westernized, while maintaining its basic social structure, that it jumped on the imperialist bandwagon by going to war with China in 1898 and winning Korea.
 - Japan shocked the West by decisively defeating the Russians in 1905, during the Russo-Japanese War.

The Philippines were taken over by the United States following the Spanish-American War of 1898, which America ostensibly fought to “liberate” the colonies of Spain from the yoke of their colonial master, Spain.

- • The United States was victorious and gained control of **Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines**.
 - -When the United States claimed the Philippines as American territory in January 1899, a revolt of the Filipino people followed within a month.
 - The rebellion was brutally suppressed but lasted several years, with the deaths of 35,000 Filipino fighters and as many as 200,000 civilians.
 - The United States had turned from champion of the oppressed to oppressor within a few months.
- Between actions in Japan, China, Hawaii, and the possessions gained from the Spanish-American War, the United States had entered its own era of being an imperialist power.

The End of Colonialism

Traditional imperialist acquisitions ended before the First World War, when virtually the entire non-Western world was divided among the Western powers.

Colonialism: the control of overseas colonies by imperialist powers, and the idea that Europeans and Americans were superior in culture to the rest of the world and therefore were helping to “civilize” the peoples they conquered, while making a tidy profit. It was shaken by the First World War and collapsed in the decades following World War II.

- Long-term causes for colonialism’s fall were many and included the importance of the hypocrisy of people who wanted to rule themselves with liberty and democracy, but who still ruled colonies whose citizens had no voice in government. Also, the economic and political realities of a post-World War II world as explained below helped cause the end of official colonialism:
 - Westernized educational systems preached the ideals of democracy

- and awakened nationalistic yearnings among the colonials.
- The concept of self determination espoused by the Allies after the First World War.
- The example and ideals of the Russian Revolution and the anti-imperialist dogma of Communism.
- The decline of Europe in the decades after the Second World War.
- The example of Japan's resistance to Western domination after the Meiji restoration.

The British Empire

- India, the “jewel in the crown” of the British Empire, attained independence in 1948.
 - Decades of nonviolent resistance. led by Mohandas K. Gandhi, known as Mahatma, helped prepare the populace for self-rule.
 - Bloody clashes between Hindus and Muslims marred the move to independence.
 - The subcontinent was partitioned by mutual agreement of the British and leaders of India into mainly Hindu India and mainly Muslim Pakistan.
- Britain's colonies in Southeast Asia – Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Burma (Myanmar), Malaya (Malaysia) – and its colonies in Africa attained independence in the two decades after the Second World War.
- Most joined the British Commonwealth of Nations, a loose political grouping that offered economic advantages.
- When the former British mandate. Palestine, was created as a Jewish state in 1948. longstanding rivalries between Westernized Jewish settlers and Muslim Arabs developed into a volatile and ongoing conflict.
 - Wars between Israel and neighboring Arab countries broke out in 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973.
 - Nationalization of the Suez Canal, a waterway vital to British trade, by charismatic Egyptian leader Gamal Abdel Nasser provoked war in 1956 between Egypt and allies Britain, France. and Israel.
 - The area continues to be one of the world's most unstable.

The Dutch Empire

Early in the Second World War, the Japanese drove the Dutch out of the Dutch East Indies (Originally called the Spice Islands by the Europeans, but called Indonesia after independence).

- When the Dutch tried to resume control after the war, nationalists under the leadership of Sukarno (an eventual dictator until his overthrow in 1966) fought a bloody war of resistance and attained total independence in 1954.

The French Empire

After the Second World War, the French colonies in Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) tried, like the Dutch in Indonesia, to take back the possessions they had been driven from by the Japanese.

- After a costly seven-year guerrilla war, nationalists under Communist Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969) attained independence from France in 1954.
 - -The Geneva Accords recognized the independence of Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, and provisionally partitioned Vietnam into northern and southern sectors until nationwide elections would determine leadership.
 - -The agreement broke down into full-scale civil war between the Communist-led North Vietnam and the pro-capitalist South Vietnam.
 - By the mid-1960s the United States had sent massive military forces to aid the south.
- In North Africa, Morocco and Tunisia were granted independence by the French in 1956.
- Algeria, considered by many French to be an integral part of France, was not granted independence.
 - The bitter French-Algerian War led to independence in 1962 and the mass exodus of French settlers.
 - This war drained the French of resources and of their belief in the ability of their forces to win any major conflict in the developing world.

African Independence

In sub-Saharan Africa independence came suddenly, from the late 1950s through the 1960s.

- The process was painful and costly in some places.

- •In the former Belgian Congo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) a legacy of violence and corruption was left by the Belgians who made few infrastructure improvements to their colony.
 - A horrific genocide between the ethnic groups in Rwanda and Burundi (Tutsi and Hutu) occurred as a direct result of Belgian racial policies that enabled the minority Tutsis to rule the majority Hutus.
- Because the Europeans had ignored tribal loyalties when drawing up imperial boundaries, the newly independent states of ten lacked a unified heritage.
- Former British colonies were best prepared for self-rule, since the British had gradually transferred administration to locals and had built the best infrastructure such as roads, railroads, and telecommunications lines.

Impact of the End of Imperialism

The collapse of the European colonial empires was one of the modern world's most revolutionary and sudden developments.

- Within two decades after the Second World War, the European colonies, encompassing more than 25 percent of the earth's population, had disappeared,
- Most of the newly independent states, though, still do not enjoy genuine freedom and democratic rule,
- While they of ten started out with democratic institutions, poverty, ethnic conflicts, and inexperience in self-rule of ten led to military dictatorship or one-party rule.
- Freedom from foreign rule did not guarantee political freedom.
- Many new nations became pawns of the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War.
- The end of imperialism and its messy outcome still causes problems in the world today such as the conflicts in Sudan and Syria as well as the conflict in the Middle East.
- Although imperialism exploited and abused its colonial peoples, it provided them with the technological, industrial, and cultural achievements of the West and linked all the world's peoples.

Modern Thought and Art Emerge

Imperial encounters with non-European peoples influenced the styles and subject matter of artists and writers and provoked debate over the acquisition of colonies. A new relativism in values and the loss of confidence in the objectivity of knowledge led to modernism in intellectual and cultural life. Philosophy, science, the arts, and literature contributed to this crisis of confidence and conscience, but also offered new models to explain and portray humanity.

PHILOSOPHY

- **Friedrich Nietzsche** (1844-1900), a German, attributed the decline of Western Civilization to the slave morality of Christian ethics.
- **Henri Bergson** (1859-1941), a French thinker, argued that intuition and experience are as powerful tools as science and reason for understanding the human condition.
- **Søren Kierkegaard** (1813-1855), a Dane, established the foundations of existentialism, a philosophical school, popularized by Jean-Paul Sartre after the Second World War, that emphasized individual responsibility and the capability for giving meaning to a meaningless universe.

PSYCHOLOGY

- **Sigmund Freud** (1850-1939), an Austrian, portrayed human behavior as the interplay of powerful irrational and unconscious forces.
 - -The id was the driving force of the personality, a reservoir of sexual and aggressive drives.
 - The ego attempts to satisfy the desires of the id rationally and negotiates between the id and the superego.
 - The superego, in the unconscious mind like the id, presented conflicting parental and social values that clashed with the selfish drives of the id.
 - Individual lives and civilization itself were fragile balancing acts to keep these unconscious and potentially destructive forces in balance.

PHYSICS

- The work of **Max Planck** (1858-1947), a German, demonstrated that atoms were not the basic building blocks of the universe.
- **Marie Curie** and her husband discovered radioactivity, and that proved that atoms were 'made of yet smaller particles.
- The work of **Albert Einstein**, a German, revolutionized physics in his

“miracle year” of 1905, in which he published four papers on the photoelectric effect, Brownian motion, special relativity, and the equivalence of mass and energy, which were to vault him to the center of the academic debates in physics.

- Einstein further disrupted the comfortable assumptions of an orderly, rationally discoverable universe that Newton’s 17th-century physics had supported and encouraged relativism in ethics, politics, and worldviews. Thus, the new field of quantum physics emerged.

ART

- **Expressionism**, abstract and nonrepresentational, replaced impressionism and was pioneered by **Vincent van Gogh** (1853-1890), **Paul Cézanne** (1839-1906), and **Paul Gauguin** (1848-1903), who painted with bold colors and images to focus on emotions and imagination.
- **Pablo Picasso** (1881-1973), a Spaniard, invented **cubism**, the depiction of mood through the use of geometric angles, planes, and clashing lines.
- Architecture exemplified functionalism, buildings designed with practicality and clean lines instead of ornamentation.

LITERATURE

- Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* portrayed Africa as a dark continent made darker by the imperialism of Europeans and the horrors brought with it.
- Vladimir Lenin wrote strongly against imperialism in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, as did J. A. Hobson in *Imperialism: A Study*.
- British writer Rudyard Kipling wrote *White Man’s Burden*, and *The Jungle Book*, to portray the superiority of Western thought over that of the “less civilized” peoples of the world.

Timeline of Imperialism

Year Event

Year	Event
1839-1842	First and Second Opium Wars in China in which the British gained the rights of extraterritoriality, to sell opium, to stay in China all year, and to trade with out the co-Hong
1854	Comodore Matthew Perry used “gunboat diplomacy” to open Japan up for trade with the Western world.

- 1854-1856 Crimean War: Russia lost to the Western nations and Turkey, ending its imperialist aims.
- 1857-1858
- Sepoy Mutiny in India was led by Hindu and Muslim soldiers who believed that their ammunition was exposing them to pig and cow fat, contrary to their religions.
 - Sepoys were the 300,000 South Asian soldiers in the British East India Company army.
- 1869 Suez Canal completed with French investment.
- 1871 Diamonds were discovered near Cape Town, South Africa in what became the Kimberley diamond mines.
- 1871 Germany united into one nation.
- 1872 Henry Stanley met David Livingstone in the African jungle.
- 1873 Three Emperors' League formed: Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia.
- 1877 Queen Victoria crowned "Empress of India."
- 1877-1878
- Russo-Turkish War over Romania and Bulgaria in which Russia defeated the Ottoman Empire and gained access to warm water ports in Bulgaria and elsewhere on the Balkan Peninsula.
 - The Congress of Berlin of 1878 was held by Bismarck to host the great powers and avoid problems in the Balkan region after the Russo-Turkish War of 1878 and to establish peace between all powers regarding that region, which was divided between Austria-Hungary; the Ottoman Empire, and the four Balkan states (Greece, Serbia, Romania, and Montenegro).
- 1879 British defeated by the Zulus at the Battle of Isandlwana.
- 1879 Dual Alliance between Austria-Hungary and Germany.
- 1881 Italy joined Dual Alliance forming the Triple Alliance.
- 1884-1885 Egypt declared a British Protectorate.
- 1885
- The Berlin Conference divided Africa between the European nations, but this division is on a map only.
 - The nations did not hold the land they claimed at this point, and there were Africans there who believe that they ruled themselves.
- 1888-1895 Britain and Germany created East, Central, and South African trading companies.
- 1896-1897 Sino-Japanese War in which Japan went from being imperialized in 1854 to being imperialist just 42 years later.
- 1898 Battle of Omdurman in which the British led by General Kitchener killed 10,000 Ansar warriors and injured 13,000 more while losing only 48 men.
- 1898 Ethiopia repelled an attempted Italian invasion.
- 1898 Fashoda Incident in which Kitchener went south "up the Nile," defeated the Muslims, and met the French at Fashoda,
- The French backed down and recalled their general, Marchand.
 - Crisis averted.
- 1899 Rudyard Kipling wrote "The White Man's Burden" to encourage the United

- States to get into the Imperialism business.
- 1899-1902
- Spanish-American War in which the Americans helped win independence for Cuba.
 - Also gained control of Puerto Rico and the Philippines.
 - Spain ended as a colonial power.
 - The Filipinos revolted against the Americans, resulting in a brutal suppression that killed between 100,000 and 500,000 natives.
- 1901
- Boer war in South Africa, in which the British signed up in large numbers to fight for the right to “civilize” the people of Africa.
- This was a turning point in world opinion toward imperialism as the brutal tactics used to suppress the Afrikaners were reported, and Europeans lost some of their zeal for imperialism
 - This was also the first war of the new century as the 1900s began with war and saw the most brutal wars ever fought.
- 1904-1905
- Russo-Japanese War in which Japan defeated the Russian navy completely and demonstrated that an Asian nation could defeat a European one.
- 1905
- Moroccan Crisis in which Germany attempted to prevent France from attaining the colony of Morocco.
- Was settled by the Algeciras Conference in 1906 in which the Germans tried to bully France into again turning against Britain. This brought Britain and France closer together, and the conference resulted in hostile attention from Britain, France, Russia, and the United States toward Germany. This was Wilhelm II getting a wake-up call that he ignored.
- 1911
- Serbian “Black Hand” nationalist group formed that assassinated Archduke Ferdinand in 1914.
- 1911
- The Moroccan Crisis of 1911 saw a German gunboat sent to Morocco to protest French occupation of the city of Fez. Britain supported France again, and Germany backed down in return for minor concessions in equatorial Africa.
- 1914
- Panama Canal opened, reducing the shipping miles from Asia to Europe.
- 1916
- Mohandas K. Gandhi returned from South Africa to India, where he would fight tirelessly for Indian independence, through passive resistance and the Indian Congress Party until independence in 1947.

Long-Term Causes of the First World War

There were four "MAIN" causes of the First World War: Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism, and Nationalism. These four forces converged at a time and place that could only result in war and revolution across Europe.

It is also important to look at two factors NOT covered by the acronym MAIN: socialism and industrialization. The rise of socialism can be seen as a factor because governments in Europe were being led by conservative leaders who wanted to use the war to distract the frustrated working classes (who wanted social changes) by patriotic calls for unity against their enemies. Further, the industrialization of Europe gave countries the ability to conduct massive military buildups as never before. Overconfident military leaders were eager to use their new weapons and tactics and wage war on an industrial scale. Additionally, this war was fought over natural resources needed for industry for the combatant nations.

Militarism

Militarism also emerged as a powerful force at the beginning of the twentieth century. A warship-building race emerged between Great Britain and Germany, with Germany constructing a navy intended to rival the British navy. A massive buildup of arms and weapons-including modern artillery and explosives, machine guns, and rifles-increased pressure for war in Europe.

Alliances

Alliances had held Europe in a balance of power from the time of Charlemagne through Machiavelli and onward, and the complex alliances in place during this period constitute what is referred to as the Bismarckian Alliance System. In this system no one declared war because they knew the alliances would make war too costly.

- The Three Emperors League of 1873 failed when Russia and the Ottomans battled over the Balkans, and Russia was too near to Austria for their liking. Bismarck alienated Russia at the Congress of Vienna (Austria acquired Bosnia-Herzegovina), but he wanted peace and unity in Eastern Europe.
- The Congress of Berlin of 1878 was held by Bismarck to host the great powers and avoid problems in the Balkan Peninsula after the Russo-Turkish War of 1878. Bismarck intended to establish peace between all powers regarding that region, which was divided between Austria, the Ottoman Empire, and the four Balkan states (Greece, Serbia, Romania,

and Montenegro),

- He then created the Dual Alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, which would last from 1879-1918.
- He pressed Russia and Austria-Hungary into the Alliance of the Three Emperors in 1881.
 - Mutual defense pact against the Ottomans in the Balkans and France in the west.
 - Russia refused to renew in 1887.
- In the Triple Alliance (1882-1915) Bismarck tried to tilt the balance of power in his favor at the Congress of Berlin.
 - -Arranged a defensive alliance between Italy, Austria-Hungary, and Germany.
 - Italy withdrew in 1915, because Germany and Austria-Hungary had gone on the offensive.
- Russia exited the Three Emperors League in 1887.
 - Germany, in an attempt to keep peace with Russia, arranged the Russian German Reinsurance treaty in which both promised neutrality if the other was attacked.
 - Kaiser William II did not like this friendly attitude toward Russia and dismissed Bismarck as a result.
 - Refused to renew the policy.
 - France and Russia then became allies.

In 1902, the two imperialist island nations that industrialized first on their respective continents formed an alliance:

- Britain and Japan were firmly committed in the Anglo-Japanese Alliance (1902-1915).
 - -United States was its usual noncommittal self, but followed loyally at Britain's side.
- Anglo-French Entente seemed like a good idea to both sides by 1904.
- Britain was the only great power (Splendid Isolation) that had remained uncommitted to any other country during this time.
- After the Boer War, some countries began to feel threatened and considered an alliance between Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, and Russia against Britain.
 - Britain tried to resolve this problem and remain on good terms

with the other countries.

- France's prime minister, Theophilé Declassé, also wanted better relations with Britain and France and arranged the Anglo-French Entente.
- Settled any outstanding disputes between Britain and France.
- Gave support to Britain if the other countries decided to form an alliance against it.
- At the Algeçiras Conference in 1906, the Germans tried to persuade France to turn against Britain.
 - -This brought Britain and France closer together and the conference resulted in hostile attention from Britain, France, Russia, and the United States toward Germany.
 - This was Wilhelm II getting a wake-up call that he ignored.
- In 1907, the Russians, who recently had lost a fleet, destroyed in battle by the Japanese, asked the British to join an alliance.
 - -Anglo-Russo Alliance began.
 - The Triple Entente would finally emerge with Russia, Britain, and France in 1914.
 - They, along with the United States, would be known as the Allied Powers during THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

Imperialism

Imperialism was also a major factor. Throughout the nineteenth century, each major European country's population pressure, desire for wealth, and pride urged it to gain overseas possessions regardless of its population's desires. Imperialism was also vital to a capitalist economy to expand.

Some examples of how imperialism Increased International tensions follow:

- The Berlin Conference in 1885 marked Germany's late coming to imperialism, which led Bismarck to spearhead the movement to establish rules for carving up Africa.
- The Kruger Telegram in 1902 roused British ire at Germany for congratulating the Boers on their victories over British troops in South Africa.
- The Moroccan Crisis of 1911 saw a German gunboat sent to Morocco to protest French occupation of the city of Fez.

- Britain supported France, and Germany backed down in return for minor concessions in equatorial Africa.

Nationalism

Nationalism caused leaders and countries to do strange things for national pride. Wilhelm II of Germany was building up his navy to attempt to rival the British navy. This forced Britain to build its navy rather than focus on David Lloyd George's "People's Budget."

- German nationalism was looking for another great military victory to bring glory and colonies to Germany.
- Nationalism was tearing the dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary apart.
- A good example of this is the Balkan Wars.
 - In the First Balkan Crisis (1874-1878), Bosnia and Herzegovina rebelled against Ottoman rule, leading to Serbia declaring war on the Ottoman Empire in June 1876. -Russia, a largely Slavic country, like Serbia, had a policy of pan-Slavism, or protecting
 - all Slavic people, and declared war on the Ottoman Empire.
 - Britain, concerned with protecting its Mediterranean interests against Russian movements, supported the Turkish sultan, Hamid I.
 - In 1878, Turkey sought peace.
- Greece and Bulgaria took Macedonia, leading to the Second Balkan Crisis (1885), a conflict between Bulgaria and Serbia over territory.
 - -Russia warned it was ready to occupy Bulgaria if it did not yield to Serbian demands over Macedonia.
 - Austria-Hungary supported Bulgaria, and Germany supported Austria-Hungary.
 - This nationalist pressure ended the Alliance of the Three Emperors.
- In the Third Balkan Crisis (1912-1913), Italy was in conflict with the Ottoman Empire over holdings along the Adriatic Sea.
- In the First Balkan War, Serbia took Macedonia in 1912.
- In the Second Balkan War (1913), Serbia attacked Bulgaria in hopes of gaining a seaport.
 - -Russia, with its policy of pan-Slavism, supported Serbia, while Austria-Hungary still supported Bulgaria.

- Britain and Germany urged peace.
- Serbs were enraged at Austria-Hungary for its support of Bulgaria and its occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- In the end, nationalism directly led to the Third Balkan War, which turned into THE FIRST WORLD WAR.