

Fin de Siècle (Turn of the Century)

POLITICAL

BOER WAR begins with conflict between Dutch and British settlers in South Africa. British finally defeat Boers in 1902 after putting their women and children into concentration camps. Spanish lose their colonies to the United States. Italy conquers Libya (1911-1912) after it failed to take Ethiopia. Germany also claims part of Africa-- its "place in the sun"

BATTLE of TSUSHIMA STRAITS: Japan invaded Taiwan in 1874, expanded into Korea. Russia finished **Trans-Siberian Railroad** through Manchuria (northern China). Japan attacked Russian-controlled Port Arthur in 1904. Russia sent its fleet to Japan. Complete Japanese victory at Tsushima Straits. The effects were immediate:

- Defeat at home led to **Russian Revolution of 1905**. Tsar was weakened and responded with half-hearted reforms. Japan set example for revolt against imperial powers. Russia will hurry to war in 1914 to save face from earlier defeat.

BOXER REBELLION (1900): In China, peasants organize in secret. Society of the Righteous and Harmonious Fists ("**Boxers**") was against all things Western. Encouraged by the Chinese Empress Tzu Qi, they massacred missionaries and revolted. Qing dynasty was overthrown (1911). A new leader, Sun Yat-Sen, inspired a form of socialism and desire to throw off imperial domination.

INDIA/BRITAIN: After the defeat of Russia, India pursued a more radical course and organized under the Indian National Congress. British attempted to divide Muslim and Hindu factions. Britain granted the vote, but still maintained power in India.

TURKEY: Turkish nationalism threatened Ottoman Empire. Turks reclaimed their history, and also, inspired by 1905 Russian defeat, the Young Turks took control of Constantinople (renamed Istanbul). Other groups revolted in Middle East and Balkans.

ROAD TO WORLD WAR I

Alliance System: **Triple Alliance** (or Central Powers) included Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy. **Triple Entente** included Britain and France who formed an *Entente Cordiale* (1904) and then invited Russia to join in. Germany + Austria-Hungary wanted a *Mittel Europa*. Imperial tensions: Wilhelm II of Germany provoked France in First Moroccan Crisis (1905). French and British grew closer. Second Moroccan Crisis (1911) humiliated Germany. French and British made plans to ally in case of war with Germany.

Balkan Crises: Always a hot spot due to Austria-Hungarian vs. Russian intentions, Germans inspired Austria to expand into the Balkans – which they termed *Mittel Europa*. Russia saw itself as a protector of Pan-Slavic interests.

- First Balkan War, the Balkan states gain Macedonia and Albania from Ottomans.
- Second Balkan War, is over the Bulgarian gains in first Balkan War. Serbians were angry and look to Russia for help.

Arms race: Alfred Thayer Mahan's book *The Influence of Seapower Upon History* inspires Naval race: both sides built *dreadnoughts*, huge armies, dynamite, shells and munitions, and created gigantic stockpiles of weapons all tied to national pride.

The Spark: Assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand (June 28, 1914) prompted Austria to declare war on Serbia. Serbia looked to Russia for protection. Germany supported Austria with blank check, while Russia mobilized. A pro-war press and naïve popular support embraced war which erupted in August 1914.

ECONOMICS

MARXISM grew in Germany and Russia. Lenin exiled to Europe and advanced ideas of Communist elite. Party split between Lenin (*Bolsheviks*) and *Mensheviks*. Socialist revolutionaries worked to overthrow government from abroad.

ANARCHY: Sprang out of economic unrest and class/national conflicts. Advocated assassination and violence, killing European leaders, or supporting strikes and sabotage so that change could happen.

RETREAT OF CLASSICAL LIBERALISM: Classical Liberalism (*laissez-faire*) faded. Labor politicians supported National Insurance Act and reduced power of House of Lords. Governments moved to some form of socialism to appease the masses and subjugate labor demands.

RELIGION

JEWES

- Expelled from England (1292) and Spain (1492)
- Pale of Settlement created by Catherine the Great in 1792 segregates Jews in Eastern Russia. Jews lived in *shtetls* (villages)
- Jewish men received right to vote in French Revolution (1789)
- Napoleon extended civil rights to Jews and supports Jewish state
- In Western Europe, Jews became financiers and bankers, Rothschilds, or even English Prime Minister, Disraeli. In Eastern Europe they were impoverished and politically null.
- Unrest in Russia used Jews as scapegoats. Fled under persecution of *pogroms*, vicious murdering attacks by soldiers.
- Social Darwinism defined Jews as inferior race, anti-Semitism grew. Immigration to Americas after 1848.
- Dreyfus affair publicized the extent of public anti-Semitism.
- German/Austrian nationalism feared Jewish domination.
- Theodor Herzl wrote *The Jewish State* that called for creation of Israel. First international Jewish Congress held in 1897.

SOCIAL

Europe's population soared, due to improvements in sanitation and public health. Paris and Berlin pulled down and rebuilt. Actual birth rate was declining. Birth control increased, as did fear over the rising proportion of poor people in the population. Social Darwinism warned about racial fitness. Eugenics favored sterilization of mentally/physically unfit.

Women – Reformers worked to improve women's rights, legalize divorce, support financial independence.

Suffragettes (mostly middle class) continued to fight for right to vote. Emmeline Pankhurst (English) and Susan B. Anthony (American). During World War I, women worked in male occupations. Suffrage granted in 1918-1919 in U.S. and Britain. Divorce laws liberalized.

INTELLECTUAL

Mental complaints led to the Sciences of the mind. Pavlov (1849-1936) examined conditioned reflexes and ways to modify behavior. Famous for salivating dog experiment. **Sigmund Freud** (1856-1939) wrote *Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), introduced ego, id, superego, and created psychoanalysis. Freud now seen as a pioneer, but whose theories were flawed or faked. *Nietzsche* (1844-1900) Advocated *Will to Power*. ("Embrace your inner Superman and rule over the weak"). Part of inspiration for Hitler. SCIENCE: Becquerel discovered radioactivity, Marie Curie isolated uranium. Physicist Albert Einstein proposed **theory of relativity** (1905) $E=mc^2$.

ARTISTIC

Cezanne and Picasso developed **Cubism** (*Les Femmes d'Alger*) with African motifs. *Art Nouveau* (using organic nature motifs) flourished in Paris and spread through Europe.