

## 1750-1914

### QUESTIONS OF PERIODIZATION

Very important characteristics that distinguish 1750-1914 from previous eras in world history include:

- **European dominance of long-distance trade** - Whether by "unequal treaties" or colonization, sea-based trade gave European countries control of all major trade circuits in the world.
- **"Have" and "have not" countries created by Industrialization** - The Industrial Revolution gave huge economic and political advantages to countries where it occurs over countries that remained primarily agricultural.
- **Inequalities among regions increase due to imperialism** - Industrialized countries set out to form overseas empires, sometimes through colonization and other times by economic and/or political domination.
- **Political revolutions inspired by democracy and desire for independence** - These revolutions continue to the present, but "seed" revolutions that put new democratic forms of government in place occurred during this era. The "nation" emerged as a new type of political organization.

### CHANGES IN GLOBAL COMMERCE, COMMUNICATIONS, AND TECHNOLOGY

During the 1450-1750 era Europeans had set up colonies in the Americas so that for the first time in world history the western and eastern hemispheres were in constant contact with one another. However, after 1750 the pace of trade picked up dramatically, fed by a series of economic and technological transformations collectively known as the Industrial Revolution.

### THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Remember that to be called a Marker Event in world history a development should qualify in three ways:

- It must cross national or cultural borders, affecting many civilizations.
- Later changes or developments in history must be at least partially traced to this event or series of events.
- It must have impact in other areas. For example, if it is a technological change, it must impact some other major areas, like government, belief systems, social classes, or the economy.

The Industrial Revolution brought about such sweeping changes that it virtually transformed the world, even areas in which industrialization did not occur. The concept seems simple: invent and perfect machinery to help make human labor more efficient - but that's part of its importance. The change was so basic that it could not help but affect all areas of people's lives in every part of the globe.

The Industrial Revolution began in England in the late 18th century, and spread during the 19th century to Belgium, Germany, Northern France, the United States, and Japan. Almost all areas of the world felt the effects of the Industrial Revolution because it divided the world into "have" and "have not" countries, with many of the latter being controlled by the former. England's lead in the Industrial Revolution translated into economic prowess and political power that allowed colonization of other lands, eventually building a worldwide British Empire.

### WHY BRITAIN?

Economic growth in Britain was fueled by a number of factors:

- An Agricultural Revolution - Beginning in the early 1700s, wealthy landowners began to enlarge their farms through enclosure, or fencing or hedging large blocks of land for experiments with new techniques of farming. Farmers pushed out of their jobs by enclosure either became tenant farmers or they moved to cities. Better nutrition boosted England's population, creating the first necessary component for the Industrial Revolution: labor.
- A technological revolution - England also was the first to experience a technological revolution, a series of inventions built on the principles of mass production, mechanization, and interchangeable parts.
- Natural resources - Britain had large and accessible supplies of coal and iron - two of the most important raw materials used to produce the goods for the early Industrial Revolution. Also available was water power to fuel the new machines, harbors for its merchant ships, and rivers for inland transportation.
- Economic strength - During the previous era, Britain had already built many of the economic practices and structures necessary for economic expansion, as well as a middle class (the bourgeoisie) that had experience with trading and manufacturing goods. Banks were well established, and they provided loans for businessmen to invest in new machinery and expand their operations.

- Political stability - Britain's political development during this period was fairly stable, with no major internal upheavals occurring. Although Britain took part in many wars during the 1700s, none of them took place on British soil, and its citizens did not seriously question the government's authority.

## **NEW INVENTIONS**

The earliest transformation of the Industrial Revolution was Britain's textile industry. In 1750 Britain already exported wool, linen, and cotton cloth, and the profits of cloth merchants were boosted by speeding up the process by which spinners and weavers made cloth. Wealthy textile merchants set up the machines in factories, and had the workers come to these places to do their work. At first the factories were set up near rivers and streams for water power, but other inventions later made this unnecessary. Before the late 1700s Britain's demand for cotton was met by India, but they increasingly came to depend on the American south, where plantation production was speeded by Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin, a machine that efficiently separated the cotton fiber from the seed. By 1810 southern plantations used slave labor to produce 85 million pounds of cotton, up from 1.5 million in 1790.

## **TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS**

Once the textile industry began its exponential growth, transportation of raw materials to factories and manufactured goods to customers had to be worked out. New inventions in transportation spurred the Industrial Revolution further. A key invention was the steam engine that was perfected by James Watt in the late 1790s. Perhaps the most revolutionary use of steam energy was the railroad engine, which drove English industry after 1820. Railroads revolutionized life in Britain in several ways:

- 1) Railroads gave manufacturers a cheap way to transport materials and finished products.
- 2) The railroad boom created hundreds of thousands of new jobs for both railroad workers and miners.
- 3) The railroad industry spawned new industries and inventions and increased the productivity of others.
- 4) Railroads transported people, allowing them to work in cities far away from their homes and travel to resort areas for leisure.

## **THE SPREAD OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION**

The Industrial Revolution occurred only in Britain for about 50 years, but it eventually spread to other countries in Europe, the United States, Russia, and Japan. British entrepreneurs and government officials forbade the export of machinery, manufacturing techniques, and skilled workers to other countries but the technologies spread by luring British experts with lucrative offers, and even smuggling secrets into other countries. By the mid-19th century industrialization had spread to France, Germany, Belgium, and the United States.

- After German political unification in 1871, the new empire rivaled England in terms of industrial production.
- Industrialization began in the United States by the 1820s, delayed until the country had enough laborers and money to invest in business. Both came from Europe, where overpopulation and political revolutions sent immigrants to the United States to seek their fortunes. The United States had abundant natural resources -- land, water, coal and iron ore -- and after the great wave of immigration from Europe and Asia in the late 19th century &ndash; it also had the labor.
- During the late 1800s, industrialization spread to Russia and Japan, in both cases by government initiatives. By 1900 Japan was the most industrialized land in Asia, and was set to become a 20th century power.

## **CHANGES IN PATTERNS OF WORLD TRADE**

Industrialization greatly increased the economic, military, and political strength of the societies that embraced it. By and large, the countries that benefited from industrialization were the ones that had the necessary components of land, labor and capital, and often government support. However, even though many other countries tried to industrialize, few had much success. An international division of labor resulted: people in industrialized countries produced manufactured products, and people in less industrialized countries produced the raw materials necessary for that production. In many cases this division of labor led to colonization of the non-industrialized areas. As industrialization increased, more iron and coal were needed, as well as other fibers for the textile industry, and the British Empire grew rapidly in order to meet these demands.

Many countries in Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, south Asia, and southeast Asia became highly dependent on one cash crop - such as sugar, cotton, and rubber - giving them the nickname of "Banana Republics." Such economies were very vulnerable to any change in the international market. Foreign investors owned and controlled the plantations that produced these crops, and most of the profits went to them. Very little of the profits actually improved the living conditions for people that lived in those areas, and since they had little money to spend, a market economy could not develop.

### **THE END OF THE ATLANTIC SLAVE TRADE AND SLAVERY**

From the beginning, as the Atlantic slave trade enriched some Africans and many Europeans, it became a topic of fierce debate in Europe, Africa, and the Americas in the late 18th century. The American and French revolutions stimulated these discussions, since both emphasized liberty, equality, and justice, topics that fed a strong abolitionist movement. Despite the importance of the abolitionist movement, economic forces also contributed to the end of slavery and the slave trade. Plantations and the slave labor that supported them remained in place as long as they were profitable. In the Caribbean, a revolution, led by Toussaint L'Ouverture resulted in the liberation of slaves in Haiti and the creation of the first black free state in the Americas. However, the revolution was so violent that it sparked fear among plantation owners and colonial governments throughout the Caribbean. In the late 18th century, a rapid increase in Caribbean sugar production led to declining prices, and yet prices for slaves remained high and even increased.

Investors discovered that wage labor in factories was cheaper than slave labor on plantations because the owners were not responsible for food and shelter. Entrepreneurs began to see Africa as a place to get raw materials for industry, not just slaves.

### **IMMIGRATION TO THE AMERICAS**

By the mid 19th century European migrants began crossing the Atlantic to fill the factories in the eastern United States. Increasing rents and indebtedness drove farmers from Ireland, Scotland, Germany and Scandinavia to North America, settling in the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys in search of land. The potato famine forced many Irish peasants to make the journey, and political revolutions caused many Germans to flee the wrath of the government when their causes failed. By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, most immigrants to North America were from southern and eastern Europe, fleeing famine, poverty, and discrimination in their countries of origin.

While migrants to the United States came to fill jobs in the developing industrial society, those who went to Latin America mostly worked on agricultural plantations. About 4 million Italians came to Argentina in the 1880s and 1890s, and others went to Brazil, where the government paid the voyage over for Italian migrants who came to work on coffee plantations after slavery was abolished. Others came from Asia, with more than 15,000 indentured laborers from China working in sugarcane fields in Cuba during the 19th century. Chinese and Japanese laborers came to Peru where they worked on cotton plantations, in mines, and on railroad lines.

### **WORKING CONDITIONS**

Industrialization offered new opportunities to people with important skills, such as carpentry, metallurgy, and machine operations. Some enterprising people became engineers or opened their own businesses, but for the vast majority of those who left their farming roots to find their fortunes in the cities, life was full of disappointments. Most industrial jobs were boring, repetitive, and poorly paid. Workdays were long with few breaks, and workers performed one simple task over and over with little sense of accomplishment. Unlike even the poorest farmer or craftsman, factory workers had no control over tools, jobs, or working hours. Factory workers could do very little about their predicament until the latter part of the period, when labor unions formed and helped to provoke the moral conscience of some middle class people.

### **CHANGES IN SOCIAL CLASSES**

A major social change brought about by the Industrial Revolution was the development of a relatively large middle class, or "bourgeoisie" in industrialized countries. With the advent of industrialization, wealth was increasingly based on money and success in business enterprises, although the status of inherited titles of nobility based on land ownership remained in place. Members generally had comfortable lifestyles, and many were concerned with respectability, or the demonstration that they were of a higher social class than factory workers were. They valued the hard work, ambition, and individual responsibility that had led to their own success, and many believed that the

lower classes only had themselves to blame for their failures. This attitude generally extended not to just the urban poor, but to people who still farmed in rural areas.

Social class distinctions were reinforced by Social Darwinism, a philosophy by Englishman Herbert Spencer. He argued that human society operates by a system of natural selection, whereby individuals and ways of life automatically gravitate to their proper station. According to Social Darwinists, poverty was a "natural condition" for inferior individuals.

### **NEW POLITICAL IDEAS AND MOVEMENTS**

In 1750 only England and the Netherlands had constitutional monarchies, governments that limited the powers of the king or ruler. All the other kingdoms of Europe, as well as the Muslim Empires and China, practiced absolutism. Absolutist rulers benefited from the tendency for governments to centralize between 1450 and 1750 because it extended the power they had over their subjects. Most of the rulers reinforced their powers by claiming special authority for the supernatural, whether it be the mandate of heaven as practiced in China, or divine right as European kings declared. Between 1750 and 1914, absolute rulers almost everywhere lost power, and the rule of law became a much more important political principle.

One of the most important political concepts to arise from the era was the "nation-state," a union often characterized by a common language, shared historical experiences and institutions, and similar cultural traditions, including religion at both the elite and popular levels. As a result, political loyalties were no longer so determined by one's attitudes toward a particular king or noble but by a more abstract attachment to a "nation."

### **FORCES FOR POLITICAL CHANGE**

As the Industrial Revolution began in England, the economic changes were accompanied by demands for political changes that spread to many other areas of the world by the end of the 19th century. Two important forces behind the change were:

- The influence of the Enlightenment - The 1700s are sometimes referred to as the "Age of Enlightenment," because philosophical and political ideas were begun to seriously question the assumptions of absolute governments. The Enlightenment began in Europe, and was a part of the changes associated with the Renaissance, the Scientific Revolution, and the Protestant Reformation, all taking place between 1450 and 1750. The Enlightenment invited people to use their "reason" using the same humanistic approach of Renaissance times. People can figure things out, and they can come up with better governments and societies. In the 1600s John Locke wrote that a ruler's authority is based on the will of the people. He also spoke of a social contract that gave subjects the right to overthrow the ruler if he ruled badly. French philosophes, such as Voltaire and Jean-Jacques Rousseau spread the new ideas to France, where they began uproar in a land that epitomized absolutism.
- New wealth of the bourgeoisie - Ongoing commercialization of the economy meant that the middle class grew in size and wealth, but not necessarily in political power. These self-made men questioned the idea that aristocrats alone should hold the highest political offices. Most could read and write, and found Enlightenment philosophy appealing in its questioning of absolute power. They sought political power to match the economic power that they had gained.

### **THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

Ironically, the first revolution inspired by the new political thought that originated in England began in the North American colonies and was directed at England. It began when American colonists resisted Britain's attempt to impose new taxes and trade controls on the colonies after the French and Indian War ended in 1763. Many also resented Britain's attempts to control the movement west. "Taxation without representation" turned British political theory on its ear, but it became a major theme as the rebellion spread from Massachusetts throughout the rest of the colonies. Colonial leaders set up a new government and issued the Declaration of Independence in 1776. The British sent forces to put the rebellion down, but the fighting continued for several years until the newly created United States eventually won. The United States Constitution that followed was based on enlightenment principles, with three branches of government that check and balance one another. Although initially only a few had the right to vote and slavery was not abolished, the government became a model for revolutions to come.

## THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

A very different situation existed in France. No established nobility existed in the United States, so when independence was achieved, the new nation had no old social and political structure to throw off. In contrast, the Revolution in France was a civil war, a rising against the *Ancien Régime*, or the old kingdom that had risen over centuries. The king, of course, had absolute power, but the nobility and clergy had many privileges that no one else had. Social classes were divided into three estates: first was the clergy, second the nobility, and the Third Estate was everyone else. Part of the problem was that the growing class of the bourgeoisie had no political privileges. They read Enlightenment philosophes, they saw what happened in the American Revolution, and they resented paying all the taxes. Many saw the old political and social structure as out of date and the nobles as silly and vain, undeserving of the privileges they had.

Many problems converged to create the Revolution: the nobles' refusal to pay taxes, bourgeoisie resentment of the king, Louis XVI's incompetence, and a series of bad harvests for the peasants. The bourgeoisie seized control of the proceedings and declared the creation of the National Assembly, a legislative body that still exists in France today. They wrote the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, modeled after the American Declaration of Independence, and they set about to write a Constitution for France.

The years after the revolution began were turbulent ones that saw the king beheaded and the government taken over by the Jacobins, a radical group that sought equality through executing those that disagreed with the government. The Reign of Terror lasted for about two years, with thousands of people guillotined and thousands more fleeing the country. The Jacobin leaders themselves were eventually guillotined; the country teetered for several years in disarray, and finally was swept up by Napoleon Bonaparte as he claimed French glory in battle. Democracy did not come easily in France.

## CONSERVATIVE REACTION TO REVOLUTION

Napoleon Bonaparte seized the French Government at a time when no one else could control it. He promised stability and conquest, and by 1812 the French Empire dominated Europe to the borders of Russia. Finally, an alliance of European countries led by Britain defeated Napoleon in 1815 at Waterloo in modern day Belgium. Although Napoleon was defeated and exiled, other countries were horrified by what had happened in France: a revolution, the beheading of a king, a terrorizing egalitarian government, and finally a demagogue who attacked all of Europe. To conservative Europe, France was a problem that had to be contained before their ideas and actions spread to the rest of the continent.

The allies that had defeated Napoleon met at Vienna in 1815 to reach a peace settlement that would make further revolutions impossible. The **Congress of Vienna** reached an agreement based on restoring the *balance of power* in Europe, or the principle that no one country should ever dominate the others. Rather, the power should be balanced among all the major countries.

## REVOLUTIONS IN LATIN AMERICA

From North America and France, revolutionary enthusiasm spread throughout the Caribbean and Spanish and Portuguese America. In contrast to the leaders of the War for Independence for the United States, most of the early revolutions in Latin America began with subordinated Amerindians and blacks. Only in the French colony of Saint Domingue (Haiti) did slaves carry out a successful insurrection.

The rebellion in 1791 led to several years of civil war in Haiti, even though French abolished slavery in 1793. When Napoleon came to power, he sent an army to tame the forces led by Toussaint L'Ouverture, a former slave.

However, Napoleon's army was decimated by guerrilla fighters and yellow fever, and even though Toussaint died in a French jail, Haiti declared its independence in 1804.

Other revolutions in Latin America were led by political and social elites, although some of them had important populist elements.

- Mexico - Father Miguel Hidalgo led Mexico's rebellion that eventually led to independence in 1821. He was a Catholic priest who sympathized with the plight of the Amerindian peasants and was executed for leading a rebellion against the colonial government. The Creole elite then took up the drive for independence that was won under the leadership of Agustin de Iturbide, a conservative military commander. However, Father Hidalgo's cause greatly influenced Mexico's political atmosphere, as his populist ideas were taken up by others who led the people in revolt against the Creoles. Two famous populist leaders were Emiliano Zapata and Pancho Villa, who like Father Hidalgo were executed by the government. Mexico was not to work out this tension between elite and peasants until well into the 20th century.

All in all, constitutional experiments in North America were more successful than those in South America. Though South Americans gained independence from colonial governments during the 19th century, their governments remained authoritarian and no effective legislatures were created to share the power with political leaders. Why this difference?

COMPARATIVE CONSTITUTIONAL EXPERIMENTS: NORTH AMERICA AND SOUTH AMERICA	
NORTH AMERICA	SOUTH AMERICA
Mother country had parliamentary government, so colonial governments had a constitutional model	Mother country governed by absolute monarch; colonial governments had authoritarian model
Colonies had previous experience with popular politics; had their own governments that often operated independently from British control	Colonies had no experience with popular politics; colonial governments led by authoritarian Creoles
Military leaders were popular and sometimes became Presidents (Washington, Jackson), but they did not try to take over the government as military leaders; constitutional principle that military would be subordinate to the government	Had difficulty subduing the power of military leaders; set in place the tradition of military juntas taking over governments
American Revolution occurred in the 1770s; vulnerable new nation emerged at an economically advantageous time, when the world economy was expanding	Latin American Revolutions occurred during the early 1800s, a time when the world economy was contracting, a less advantageous time for new nations

### IDEOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF REVOLUTIONS

The Enlightenment philosophy that inspired revolutions in the United States, France, and Latin America brought about lasting changes in western political ideology, with some people reacting against the chaos that revolutions brought, and others inspired by the values of democracy, liberty, equality, and justice. Three contrasting ideologies may be seen by the early 1800s:

- **Conservatism** - People who supported this philosophy at first advocated return to absolute monarchy, but came to accept constitutional monarchy by the mid-1800s. Generally, conservatives disapproved of the revolutions of the era, particularly the French Revolution with all the violence and chaos that it brought.
- **Liberalism** - Liberals supported a republican democracy, or a government with an elected legislature who represented the people in political decision-making. These representatives were generally from the elite, but were selected (usually by vote) from a popular base of citizens. Emphasis was generally on liberty or freedom from oppression, rather than on equality.
- **Radicalism** - Radicals advocated drastic changes in government and emphasized equality more than liberty. Their philosophies varied, but they were most concerned with narrowing the gap between elites and the general population. The Jacobins during the French Revolution, and Marxism that appeared in the mid 19th century were variations of this ideological family.

### REFORM MOVEMENTS

The political values supported by revolutions were embraced by some who saw them as applying to all people, including women and former slaves. Values of liberty, equality, and democracy had profound implications for change within societies that had always accepted hierarchical social classes and gender roles. Reform movements sprouted up as different people put different interpretations on what these new political and social values actually meant.

#### Women's Rights

Advocates of women's rights were particularly active in Britain, France, and North America. Since gender roles did not change in the immediate aftermath of revolution, social reformers pressed for women's rights in North America and Europe. Americans like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in the United States decided to concentrate their efforts on suffrage, or the right to vote.

#### The Limits of the Abolitionist Movement

Although slavery was abolished in Europe and North America by the late 19th century, blacks did not realize equality within the time period. Blacks all over the Americas tended to have the least desirable jobs, limited educational opportunities, and lower social status than whites.

## **Conservative Reactions to Reform**

During the late 1800s two systems of related political thought emerged among conservatives to justify inequalities:

- **Scientific racism** - This idea system became popular among conservative thinkers in industrialized societies. It used scientific reasoning and evidence to prove its premise that blacks are physiologically and mentally inferior to whites. Scientific racism, then, justified the inferior positions that blacks had in the society and the economy.
- **Social Darwinism** - This philosophy justified not racial differences, but differences between the rich and the poor. It used Darwin's theory of natural selection (living things that are better adapted to the environment survive, others don't) to explain why some get rich and others remain poor. In the competition for favored positions and bigger shares of wealth, the strong, intelligent, and motivated naturally defeat the weak, less intelligent, and the lazy. So, people who get to the top deserve it, as do the people who remain at the bottom

## **Marxism**

Another reaction to the revolution in political thought was Marxism. The father of communism is generally acknowledged to be Karl Marx, who saw capitalism -- or the free market -- as an economic system that exploited workers and increased the gap between the rich and the poor. He believed that conditions in capitalist countries would eventually become so bad that workers would join together in a Revolution of the Proletariat (workers), and overcome the bourgeoisie, or owners of factories and other means of production. Marx envisioned a new world after the revolution, one in which social class would disappear because ownership of private property would be banned. According to Marx, communism encourages equality and cooperation, and without property to encourage greed and strife, governments would be unnecessary. His theories took root in Europe, but never became the philosophy behind European governments, but it eventually took new forms in early 20th century Russia and China.

## **NATIONALISM**

The era 1750 to 1914 saw the creation of a new type of political organization - the nation - that survived even if the rulers failed. Whereas nations' political boundaries were still often decided by military victory, the political entity was much broader than control by one person or family. Nations were built on nationalism - the feeling of identity within a common group of people. Of course, these feelings were not new in the history of the world. However, the force of common identity became a basic building block for nations, political forms that still dominate world politics today. Nationalism could be based on common geographical locations, language, religion, or customs, but it is much more complex than that. The main idea is that people see themselves as "Americans" or "Italians" or "Japanese," despite the fact that significant cultural variations may exist within the nation.

## **NEW EUROPEAN NATIONS**

A major political development inspired by growing nationalism was the consolidation of small states into two important new nations:

- **Italy**
- **Germany**

These new nations altered the balance of power in Europe, causing established nations like Britain and France concern that their own power was in danger. Nationalism, then, was spurred on by a renewal of deep-rooted competition that European nations carried to the ends of the earth. They competed with one another through trade, industrial production, and colonization, setting up worldwide empires to bolster their attempts to outdo all the others.

## **EURASIAN EMPIRES**

The Russian and Ottoman Empires - two land-based powers in Eurasia - suffered the disadvantages of being neighbors to the rising nations in Europe. Russia had its wins and losses during the era yet managed to retain its power, but the Ottomans were in steep decline during most of the period and on the brink of destruction by 1914.

## **THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE**

The Russian Empire turned its attention to the west under the late 17th and early 18th century rule of Peter the Great. Russia in the mid-19th century was a huge, diverse realm that was very difficult to rule from a central location, even with the power granted to an absolute tsar. Its economy remained agriculturally based, with most people as serfs bound to the land that they cultivated.

Russia got into trouble with powerful England and France, when its formidable army attacked the Ottoman Empire to seize access to warm water ports around the Black Sea. Fearful of an upset in European balance of power, England and France supported the Ottomans in defeating Russian troops in the Crimean War (1853-1856). This

defeat clearly showed Russian weakness, and it led Tsar Alexander II to attempt reform by emphasizing industrialization, creating elected district assemblies called zemstvos, and emancipating the serfs. Russia's instability became apparent when Alexander II was assassinated by one of the many revolutionary groups that were growing rapidly within the country. Some of these revolutionary groups were Marxist, and their influence would eventually take over the country in 1917. However, Russia continued on under absolute rule until then, with an intense state-run industrialization program that did modernize Russia by the end of the 19th century.

### **THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE - "THE SICK MAN OF EUROPE"**

The Ottoman Empire reached its peak during the 16th and 17th centuries when they won many of their encounters with European kingdoms, although their attack of Europe was stopped with their unsuccessful siege of Vienna. By the early 1800s the Ottoman Empire had many internal problems, including these:

- Economic problems - the government had problems getting enough revenue to keep the army and government functioning.
- Problems with the Janissaries - The Janissaries originally were Christian boys from the Balkans that had been recruited by the Ottomans to fight in their armies. By the early 1800s, the Janissaries were well established as military and political leaders. They often operated separately from the weakening sultan's court and gained a reputation for brutality and corruption.
- Revolts in the Balkans and Greece - At their heart, these revolts were evidence of nationalism -- Balkan and Greek people who had loyalties to their ethnic identities, not the Ottoman Empire.

The decline of Ottoman power and prosperity had a strong impact on a group of urban and well-educated young men who protested European domination of the empire's political, economic, and cultural life. Inspired by the European nationalist movements, they began to call themselves the Young Turks, and they pushed for a Turkish national state.

### **IMPERIALISM**

Empire building is an old theme in world history. Motivations have been similar - to obtain natural resources, to subdue enemies, to accrue wealth, to win power and glory - but until the rise of the west, most empires have expanded to territories next to their borders. With the combination of sea power, centralized governments, and industrialized economies, European nations set out to build empires all over the world -- driven by the need to provide raw materials for their industrial capacity, and the types of goods exchanged were determined by that need.

### **TYPES OF IMPERIALISM**

In the late 19th century Japan and the United States joined the European nations as an imperialist power. Types of imperialism in the 1800s included:

- Colonial imperialism - This form of imperialism is virtual complete takeover of an area, with domination in all areas: economic, political, and socio-cultural. The subjugated area existed to benefit the imperialist power, and had almost no independence of action. In this era, almost all of Africa and southern and southeast Asia were colonized.
- Economic imperialism - This form of imperialism allowed the area to operate as its own nation, but the imperialist nation almost completely controlled its trade and other business. For example, it may impose regulations that forbid trade with other nations, or imperialist companies may own or have exclusive rights to its natural resources. During this era, China and most of Latin America were subjected to economic imperialism.
- Political imperialism - Although a country may have had its own government with natives in top political positions, it operated as the imperialist country told it to. The government was sometimes a relatively permanent "puppet government," as happened in late Qing China, and other times the control was temporary, as occurred in the Dominican Republic when the United States ran its government until it got out of debt.
- Socio-cultural imperialism - The dominating country deliberately tried to change customs, religions and languages in some of the countries. A good example was British India, where English was taught in schools, Indian soldiers dressed British-style, and western trading rules were set up. Generally, the imperialist countries assumed their cultures to be superior, and often times they saw themselves as bringing about improvements in the society.

## **IMPERIALISM IN AFRICA**

Between 1450 and 1750 Europeans traded with Africa, but they set up very few colonies. By 1850, only a few colonies existed along African coastlines, such as Algeria (French), the Cape Colony (Great Britain,) and Angola (Portugal). In the latter half of the 19th century, dramatic changes occurred, as Europeans began to explore Africa's interior, and by 1914, virtually the entire continent was colonized by one or the other of the competing European countries. The Berlin Conference of 1884-5, in an effort to avoid war, allowed European diplomats to draw lines on maps and carve Africa into colonies. The result was a transformation of political and economic Africa, with virtually all parts of the continent colonized by 1900.

## **IMPERIALISM IN INDIA**

### **The British "Raj" - 1818-1857**

India was under "company" rule for almost forty years, but they were not actually a British colony during that time because the British East India Company was still private, even though the British government supported it. However, the company administered governmental affairs and initiated social reform that reflected British values. The contradictory roles they played eventually erupted in the Sepoy Rebellion of 1857. The Sepoys were Indian Muslims and Hindus who served the British as soldiers in the army that defended the subcontinent. The rebellion took the British by surprise, but they found out that the Indian fury could be traced to a new training technique that the soldiers refused to follow. It required them to put a bullet shell in their mouths that had been greased in either pork or beef fat, with the pork fat being highly offensive to the Muslims and the beef to the Hindu. The British changed the practice, but it was too late because nationalism had reached India, too, and a movement for a country based on Indian identity was beginning. The leaders of the movement would have to wait about 90 years, though, to fulfill their dreams.

### **British Rule - 1857-1947**

The Sepoy Rebellion showed the British government how serious the problems in India were, and they reacted by removing the British East India Company from control and declaring India a British colony. British officials poured into India to keep control of its valuable raw materials for industry and trade, particularly cotton and poppies for opium. They expanded production, built factories in India, and constructed huge railroad and irrigation, and telegraph systems.

### **Rising Indian Nationalism**

With growing industrialization and British controlled trade, a middle class of Indian officials and managers began to rise during the late 1800s. By and large, the British did not allow Indians to own companies or to hold top government positions, but they did provide education for people to fill middle level and professional jobs. Some Indians went to England for higher education, where they absorbed western political values of liberty, equality, and justice, and they began to apply those values to their own situations. The Indian National Congress was formed in 1885, with the goals of promoting political unity and appointing more Indians into higher positions in the British Civil Service. The Congress was controlled by Hindus, and in 1906 another nationalist group was established for Muslims called the All-India Muslim League. Despite tensions between them, by 1914 both groups were demanding Indian independence from the British.

## **IMPERIALISM IN CHINA**

Problems of the Qing Dynasty began to mount during the early 19th century. As the Chinese dynastic cycle was clearly going into decline, Europeans sensed the problems, and began to push for trading rights that China had been reluctant to grant in earlier times.

### **The Opium Wars (1839-1842)**

Trade was very much supervised by Chinese under the cohong system, with specially licensed Chinese firms operating under government set prices. Trade with Europeans was also restricted by the fact that Europeans had very little that the Chinese wanted to buy, even though the reverse was far from true. So the British East India Company, using Turkish and Persian expertise) grew opium in India and shipped it to China. As a result, trade boomed, especially once the Chinese developed addictions to the drug. The weak Qing government failed to act, even after some Chinese officials began to support the trade by accepting bribes. The Opium Wars began after the Qing refused to listen to British protests of the trade ban. Although the British did not take over the government, they forced the Qing to sign a treaty allowing the trade.

### **The Unequal Treaties**

The Treaty of Nanjing, signed by the Chinese after the Opium Wars, was oriented toward trade. The Chinese agreed to allow the trade of opium and open other ports to exclusive trade with Britain. Beyond that, it gave the British control of Hong Kong (near Guangzhou), and it released Korea, Vietnam, and Burma from Chinese control.

This was the first of many unequal treaties signed by Asians with European nations, and they eventually led to "spheres of influence." By the early 20th century, virtually all of China was split into these areas, and the Qing government was virtually powerless.

### **The Taiping Rebellion - 1850-1864**

The Qing Dynasty was significantly weakened by the Taiping Rebellion, a revolt led by Hong Xiuquan. Hong was an unusual leader, believing that he was the younger brother of Jesus, and advocating abolition of private property and equality for women. The Chinese government finally ended the civil war, with a great deal of help from the Europeans, but the cost to the country was about 20-30 million killed in this 14-year struggle.

Although it is difficult to see the Taiping Rebellion as nationalism, its leader's ideas were similar in many ways to the radical political movements in the west. Chinese nationalism was more apparent in the **1900 Boxer Rebellion**, in which a group called the Boxers led an army against the Qing with the express purpose of recovering "China for the Chinese." The group fed on their efforts to rid the country of European interests, and even though the rebellion was unsuccessful, the Boxers laid the foundations for the 1911 Chinese Revolution that finally ended the Qing Dynasty.

## **NEW IMPERIALIST NATIONS**

### **The United States**

As industrialization enriched and empowered the United States in the late 19th century, the country also began to experiment with imperialism. It began with the purchase of Alaska from Russia, and followed with a coup of the native government in Hawaii, a plot sponsored by American planters and growers in the Hawaiian Islands. Both Alaska and Hawaii became territories, and although many questioned the wisdom of the Alaska purchase, the Hawaii takeover clearly had an economic motive.

After a quarrel over Cuban independence, the United States defeated Spain in the Spanish American War in 1898, a fairly easy task since Spain was long past the peak of her colonial power. The peace treaty gave the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and the Pacific island of Guam to the United States as protectorates, as well as considerable economic control of Cuba. To keep their new empire intact, President Theodore Roosevelt advocated the building of a powerful American navy, and the United States sponsored the building of the Panama Canal to allow the new Great White Fleet access to both east and west coasts of the country.

### **Japan**

The Meiji Restoration took advantage of the fact that their geography made them less strategically important than the Chinese, so that the Europeans and Americans tended to leave them alone. They were left to their own devices - to create a remarkable state that built the foundations for Japan as a world power.

The Meiji (meaning "enlightened rule") claimed to have ended centuries of shogun-dominated governments that made the emperor totally powerless. They mystified and revered the position of the emperor, who became a very important symbol for Japanese unity. However, the new state did not give the emperor any real power, either.

Japanese nationalism was built on the mysticism of the emperor, anxiety over the foreign threat, and an amazing transformation of Japan's military, economy, and government. The country was ruled by oligarchs, a small group of leaders who together directed the state. They borrowed heavily from the west to industrialize their country and to build a centralized, strong military. They gradually but systematically dissolved the daimyo and samurai classes, and they placed a great deal of emphasis on building a strong education system.

*The era from 1750-1914 was clearly one of growing European power and domination of the globe. Industrialization created unprecedented wealth, and new western political ideas spawned strong, centralized states that directed empires around the world. However, the new political ideas encouraged nationalism, which on the one hand strengthened the industrialized countries, but on the other hand caused the people that they dominated to resent their control. The potential for worldwide power and riches also intensified the conflict and competition that had long existed among European states. In 1914 these conflicts came to the surface and erupted into a Great War that ushered in the new, very different era of the 20th century.*