

## THEMATIC REVIEW SHEET #10: 20th Century - War & Peace / Resistance & Revolution / Global Order & Disorder

- In the 20th century, conflicts among European nation states reflected in imperialist rivalries in the non-European world twice led to global war.
- This competition / conflict created a political environment in Europe in which **war was viewed as an instrument of state policy used to maintain the balance of power and to protect national economic interests.**
- Coalitions were built, dismembered, and rebuilt in response to perceived threats of power concentrated in the hands of one state. **Political power was widely understood from the perspective of alliances and diplomacy.**
- By the 20th century industrialization would also change the nature of warfare and its impact on society --> **mechanization and mass production techniques were applied to the weapons of war.**
  - 1st extensive use of industrial technology was in U.S. Civil War
  - Both world wars expanded the development of new industrial technology on a global scale
- The effects of WW I and the collapse of capitalism in the Great Depression of 1929 transformed disillusionment with **liberal politics -- represented by ideals of constitutional democracy** -- into rejection. In some countries -- such as **Germany, Italy, and Russia** -- the political climate took the form of revolution against the ideals and practices of the 19th century --> leading to the rise of both **fascism and communism.**
- **Japan** rejected parliamentary government and came under the **dominance of the military** in a Japanese form of fascism.
- **WW I** was the end product of industrial and technological changes that **expanded conflict-oriented national rivalry and competition into a global war.**
- Even more than WW I, **WW II was a total war.** It showed how effective **an alliance among industry, science, and nationalism** could be in the creation of a wartime culture and its instruments of mass destruction.
- The dropping of 2 atomic bombs in 1945 marked the end of the world war, but not the end of the perspectives that saw the world in terms of war and peace.
- Between WW I and WW II -- as Europe struggled with political conflicts among nation states and the economic impact of a worldwide depression, their overseas colonies in Asia and Africa began the long, painful, and often violent process that would eventually free them of imperialism.
- Responses to European imperialism varied greatly, ranging from nationalist movements that eventually gained independence (INDIA) to revolutionary movements that overthrew traditional leaders while expelling European and other foreign powers (in AFRICA and VIETNAM).

### EAST ASIA

- In **China** resistance was first aimed at the imperial government, then at Western powers, and finally at the Chinese state under the control of the Nationalists. In each instance the goals of resistance were conditioned by the nature of the oppression:
  - wanted to transform the dynastic state into a constitutional monarchy
  - wanted to overthrow the monarchy and establish a republic
  - demanded the overthrow of the republican state in the interests of the "people"
- **Japan's** emergence after WW II began with the overthrow of the military government that had ruled to some degree for 600 years.

## **LATIN AMERICA**

- Independence movements in the early 19th century had freed Latin Americans from the Spanish Empire, but **independence had not eradicated colonial social structures and economic dependence a century later.**
- The lingering dependencies created **a neocolonial order**, which many resisted through revolutionary action. (CUBA)
  
- Resistance to European and American hegemony took many forms -- from Gandhi's passive nonviolence to the aggressive militancy of the PLO.
- Franz Fanon's "wretched of the earth" developed a common identity and a common determination to end all forms of oppression and injustice. Not only was the presence of any injustice viewed as a threat to all, but the defeat of common enemies brought many causes into a single revolutionary vision --> the "export" of revolutions

## **SOCIAL RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS:**

- resistance in the form of organized labor
- gender resistance in both the colonial context and in the context of 20th-century liberation movements
- resistance rooted in ethnic identity -- African American civil rights movement