

## Key Understandings for Chapters 23 and 24 – La Belle Epoque

### Section 23-1: The Growth of Industrial Prosperity

- New technologies and means of communication and transportation – including railroads – resulted in more fully integrated national economies, a higher level of urbanization, and a truly global economic network.
  - Mass production
  - Electricity
  - Chemicals
  - Streetcars or trolley cars
  - Telephones
  - Internal combustion engine
  - Airplane
  - Radio
- Volatile business cycles in the last quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century led corporations to try to manage the market through monopolies, banking practices, and tariffs.
- Mechanization and the factory system became the predominant modes of production by 1914.
- Germany underwent rapid industrialization under government sponsorship.
  - Investment in transportation network
  - Adoption of improved methods of manufacturing
- A combination of factors including geography, lack of resources, the dominance of traditional landed elites, the persistence of serfdom in some areas, and inadequate government sponsorship accounted for eastern and southern Europe's lag in industrial development.
  - Lack of resources
  - Lack of adequate transportation
- Class identity developed and was reinforced through participation in philanthropic, political, and social associations among the middle classes, and in mutual aid societies and trade unions among the working classes.
- Socialists called for a fair distribution of society's resources and wealth and evolved from a utopian to a Marxist scientific critique of capitalism.
  - August Bebel
- Workers established labor unions and movements promoting social and economic reforms that also developed into political parties.
- Anarchists asserted that all forms of governmental authority were unnecessary, and should be overthrown and replaced with a society based on voluntary cooperation.
  - Mikhail Bakunin

### Section 23-2: The Emergence of a Mass Society

- Along with better harvests caused in part by the commercialization of agriculture, industrialization promoted population growth, longer life expectancy, and lowered infant mortality.
- With migration from rural to urban areas in industrialized regions, cities experienced overcrowding, while affected rural areas suffered declines in available labor as well as weakened communities.
- Various private, nongovernmental reform movements sought to lift up the deserving poor and end serfdom and slavery.
- By the end of the century, wages and the quality of life for the working class improved because of laws restricting the labor of children and women, social welfare programs, improved diet, and the use of birth control.
- Bourgeois families became focused on the nuclear family and the cult of domesticity, with distinct gender roles for men and women.
- Economic motivations for marriage, while still important for all classes, diminished as the middle-class notion of companionate marriage began to be adopted by the working classes.

- Governments promoted compulsory public education to advance the goals of public order, nationalism, and economic growth.
- Leisure time centered increasingly on the family or small groups, concurrent with the development of activities and spaces to use that time.
- Industrialization and mass marketing increased both the production and demand for a new range of consumer goods – including clothing, processed foods, and labor-saving devices – and created more leisure opportunities.
  - Advertising
  - Department stores

#### **24-1: Toward the Modern Consciousness: Intellectual and Cultural Developments**

- Developments in the natural sciences such as quantum mechanics and Einstein’s theory of relativity undermined the primacy of Newtonian physics as an objective description of nature.
  - Max Planck
  - Marie and Pierre Curie
- Philosophy largely moved from rational interpretations of nature and human society to an emphasis on irrationality and impulse, a view that contributed to the belief that conflict and struggle led to progress.
  - Friedrich Nietzsche
  - Henri Bergson
  - Georges Sorel
- Freudian psychology provided a new account of human nature that emphasized the role of the irrational and the struggle between the conscious and subconscious. (726)
- Charles Darwin provided a rational and material account of biological change and the development of human beings as a species, and inadvertently a justification for racialist theories known as “Social Darwinism.”
- Modern art, including Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, and Cubism, moved beyond the representational to the subjective, abstract, and expressive and often provoked audiences that believed that art should reflect shared and idealized values such as beauty and patriotism.
  - Claude Monet
  - Paul Cezanne
  - Vincent Van Gogh
  - Pablo Picasso

#### **24-2: Politics: New Directions and New Uncertainties**

- Feminists pressed for legal, economic, and political rights for women, as well as improved working conditions.
  - Pankhurst family
- A form of Jewish nationalism, Zionism, developed in the 19th century as a response to growing anti-Semitism in both western and Eastern Europe.
- In Russia, autocratic leaders pushed through a program of reform and modernization, which gave rise to revolutionary movements and eventually the Revolution of 1905.

#### **24-3: The New Imperialism**

- European national rivalries and strategic concerns fostered imperial expansion and competition for colonies.
- The search for raw materials and markets for manufactured goods, as well as strategic and nationalistic considerations, drove Europeans to colonize Africa and Asia, even as European colonies in the Americas broke free politically, if not economically.
- Europeans justified imperialism through an ideology of cultural and racial superiority.
- The development of advanced weaponry invariably ensured the military superiority of Europeans over colonized areas.
  - Minie ball

- Breech-loading rifle
- Machine gun
- Communication and transportation technologies allowed for the creation of European empires.
- Imperialism created diplomatic tensions among European states that strained alliance systems.
  - Berlin Conference (1884-1885)
  - Fashoda crisis (1898)
  - Moroccan crises (1905, 1911)
- Imperial encounters with non-European peoples influenced the styles and subject matter of artists and writers provoked debate over the acquisition of colonies.
  - Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- As non-Europeans became educated in Western values, they challenged European imperialism through nationalist movements and/or by modernizing their own economies and societies.
  - Indian Congress Party
  - Zulu Resistance
  - India's Sepoy Mutiny
  - China's Boxer Rebellion
  - Japan's Meiji Restoration

#### **24-4: International Rivalry and the Coming of War**

- After 1871, Bismarck attempted to maintain the balance of power through a complex system of alliances directed at isolating France.
  - Three Emperors' League
  - Triple Alliance
  - Reinsurance Treaty
- Bismarck's dismissal in 1890 eventually led to a system of mutually antagonistic alliances and heightened international tensions.
- Nationalist tensions in the Balkans drew the Great Powers into a series of crises leading up to World War I.
  - Congress of Berlin in 1878
  - Growing influence of Serbia
  - Bosnia-Herzegovina Annexation Crisis, 1908
  - First Balkan War
  - Second Balkan War