

modern weapons of warfare, machine industry, fast communications, industrial organization, efficient taxation and law enforcement, and modern public health, sanitation, and medicine.

But not all peoples participated in this global evolution on equal terms. It was the Europeans, or "Westerners," who reaped the greatest rewards. Elsewhere, tribal societies and massive old civilizations alike began to come apart, reacting to the pressures of modern economic and social changes. Scientific ideas changed ways of thinking everywhere, as they had in Europe. In India, China, or Africa local industries often suffered, and many people found it harder than ever to subsist even at a low level. The building of railways in China, for example, threw boatmen, carters, and innkeepers out of work. In India, the hand spinners and weavers of cotton could not compete in their own villages with the machine-made products of Lancashire. In parts of Africa, tribal groups that had lived by owning herds of cattle, moving from place to place to obtain grazing lands, found white farmers or plantation or mine owners occupying their country and were often forced by the white man's law to give up their migratory habits. Peoples of all races began to produce for export—rubber, raw cotton, jute, petroleum, tin, gold—and hence were exposed to the rise and fall of world prices. A depression tended to become a world depression, dragging all down alike.

Imperialism

Imperialism, or the colonialism of the late nineteenth century, may be briefly defined as the government of one people by another. European imperialism proved to be transitory. It was a phase in the worldwide spread of the industrial and scientific civilization which had originated in Europe's "inner zone." That it was not the last phase became clear as the twentieth century unfolded. The subordinated peoples, forcibly introduced to the West by imperialism, came to sense a need for modernizing and industrializing their own countries and for the aid of Western science, skill, and capital; but they wished to get rid of imperialists, govern themselves, and control the conditions under which modernization and borrowing should take place. In opposition to European empires, subject peoples began to assert ideas learned from Europe—ideas of liberty and democracy, and of an anticapitalism that passed easily into socialism. Many such ideas were derived from the French and American revolutions, or from Marxism, or from the whole modern history of Europe itself, but these ideas were transformed or challenged as they entered into the political and cultural traditions of other civilizations.

The present chapter deals only with the imperialist phase of this global transformation. By one of the ironies of history, the imperialist rivalries of the European powers, while representing Europe's world supremacy, also contributed to the disaster of the First World War, and so to the collapse of such supremacy as Europe had enjoyed.

78. IMPERIALISM: ITS NATURE AND CAUSES

European civilization had always shown a tendency to expand. In the Middle Ages Latin Christendom spread by conquest and conversion to include the whole area from Spain to Finland. Then came the age of overseas discoveries and the founding of colonial empires, whose struggles filled the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and of which the Europeanization of the Americas was the most far-reaching consequence. At the same time European culture spread among the upper classes of Russia. The defeat of Napoleon left only one of the old colonial empires standing in any strength, namely, the British. For 60 years after 1815 there were no significant colonial rivalries. In many circles there was an indif-

ference to overseas empire. Under principles of free trade, it was thought unnecessary to exercise political influence in areas in which one did business. Actually, in these years, the French moved into Algeria, the British strengthened their Indian empire, the Dutch developed Java and the neighboring islands more intensively, and the Western powers "opened" Japan and began to penetrate China. But there was no overt conflict among Europeans, and no systematic program, doctrine, or "ism."

Rather suddenly, about 1870 or 1880, colonial questions came again to the fore. In the short space of two decades, by 1900, the advanced industrial countries partitioned most of the earth among themselves. A world map by 1900 showed their possessions in some nine or ten colors.

The New Imperialism

The new imperialism differed both economically and politically from the colonialism of earlier times. The older empires had been maritime and mercantile. European traders, in India, Java, or Canton, had simply purchased the wares brought to them by local merchants as produced by local methods.

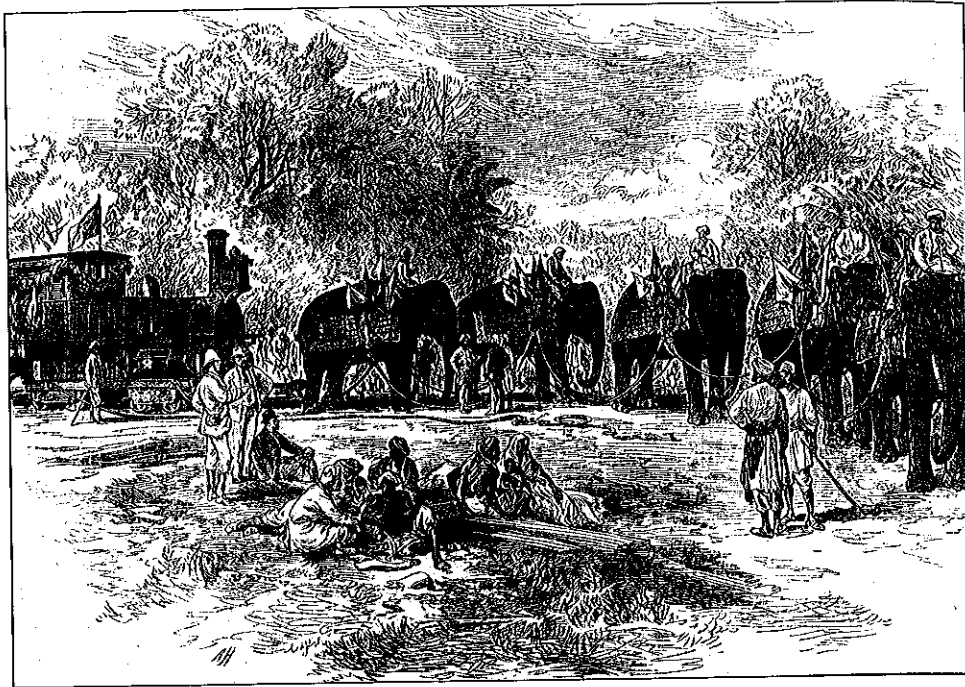
They operated on a kind of cash-and-carry basis. European governments had had no territorial ambitions beyond the protection of way stations and trading centers. To these generalizations America had been an exception. It had neither native states which Europeans respected, nor native industries in which Europeans were interested. Europeans therefore developed territorial claims, and invested capital and brought in their own methods of production and management, especially in the then booming sugar islands of the West Indies.

Under the new imperialism Europeans were by no means content simply to purchase what local merchants provided. They wanted goods of a kind or in a quantity that preindustrial handicraft methods could not supply. They moved into the so-called "backward" countries more thoroughly. They invested capital in them, setting up mines, plantations, docks, warehouses, factories, refineries, railroads, river steamships, and banks. They built offices, homes, hotels, clubs, and cool mountain resorts for European officials and visitors. Taking over the productive life of the country, they transformed large elements of the local population into the wage employees of foreign owners and so introduced the class problems of industrial Europe in a form accentuated by racial difference. Or they lent money to non-European rulers—the khedive of Egypt, the shah of Persia, the emperor of China—to enable them to hold up their tottering thrones or simply to live with more pleasure and magnificence than they could pay for from their usual revenues. Europeans thus developed a huge financial stake in governments and economic enterprises outside the West.

To secure these investments, and for other reasons, in contrast to what had happened under the older colonialism, the Europeans now aspired to political and territorial domination. Some areas became outright colonies, directly governed by white men. Others became protectorates: here the native chief, sultan, bey, rajah, or prince was maintained and guaranteed against internal upheaval or external conquest. A European "resident" or "commissioner" usually told him what to do. In other regions, as in China or Persia, where no single European state could make good its claims against the others, they arranged to divide the country into "spheres of influence," each European power having advisory privileges and investment and trade opportunities within its own sphere. The sphere of influence was the vaguest of all forms of imperial control; supposedly, it left the country independent.

New imperialism
versus old colonialism

Political
and territorial
domination



European access to colonial territories in the period of the “new imperialism” often depended on the construction of new railroads, which carried both people and goods into and out of the interior districts of the European colonies. This picture portrays the arrival of a locomotive that a team of elephants pulled into central India when a new railroad track was built in the region of Indore.

(Picture Collection, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations)

An enormous differential opened up, about 1875, between the power of European and non-European states. Queen Elizabeth had dealt with the Great Mogul of the Indian subcontinent with genuine respect, at least in part because his revenues in the early seventeenth century were some twenty times greater than those of the English monarchy. Even Napoleon had pretended to regard the shah of Persia as an equal. Then came the Industrial Revolution in Europe, iron and steel ships, heavier naval guns, more accurate rifles. Democratic and nationalist movements produced large and unified European peoples, united in the service and financial support of their governments. Seemingly endless wealth, with modern administration, allowed European governments to tax, borrow, and spend without apparent limit. The modern nation-states loomed as enormous power complexes without precedent in the world's history. At the same time it so happened that all the principal non-European empires were in decay. They were receiving a minimum of support from their own subjects. As in the eighteenth century when the disintegration of the Mogul empire had enabled the British to take over India, so in the nineteenth century the decrepitude of the sultan of Turkey, the sultan of Zanzibar, the shah of Persia, the emperor of China, and the shogun of Japan made European intervention remarkably easy. Only the Japanese were able to revolutionize their government in time to ward off imperialist penetration. Even the Japanese, however, were restricted by early treaties that controlled their tariff policies until after 1900.

So great was the difference in the sheer mechanics of power that usually a mere show of force allowed the Europeans to impose their will. A garrison of only 75,000 white troops long held India for the British. Numerous sporadic little wars were constantly fought—Afghan wars, Burmese wars, Zulu wars—which passed unnoticed by Europeans in the home country and were no more like a true national war than the operations of the United States army against the Indians of the western plains. The Spanish-American War of 1898 and the Boer War of 1899 were also wars of colonial type, fought between entirely unequal parties. Often a show of naval strength was enough. It was the classic age of the punitive or minatory bombardment. We have seen how the American Commodore Perry threatened to bombard Tokyo in 1854. In 1856 the British consul at Canton, to punish acts of violence against Europeans, called upon the local British admiral to bombard that Chinese city. In 1863 the British bombarded Satsuma, and in 1864 an allied force including Americans bombarded Choshu—precipitating revolution in Japan. Similarly, Alexandria was bombarded in 1882 and Zanzibar in 1896. The usual consequence was that the local ruler signed a treaty, reorganized the government, or accepted a European (usually British) adviser.

Europeans impose their will

Incentives and Motives

Behind the aggressiveness lay many pressures. The Europeans could not maintain for themselves the style of life to which they had become accustomed except by bringing the rest of the world within their orbit. But many other needs felt in Europe drove people into distant, unknown places. Catholic and Protestant groups sent growing numbers of missionaries to regions increasingly remote and wild. The missionaries sometimes got into trouble with the local people, and some were even killed. Public opinion in the home countries, soon learning of such events by ocean cable, might clamor for political action to suppress such outbreaks of anti-Christian violence. Similarly, science required scientific expeditions for geographical exploration, or for botanical, zoological, or mineral discoveries, or for astronomical or meteorological observations. Wealthy persons traveled more, now that travel was so easy; they hunted tigers or elephants, or simply went to see the sights. It seemed only reasonable, at the close of the nineteenth century, that all Europeans wherever they might choose to go should enjoy the personal security and the orderly legal procedures that European governments sought to provide for the Western people who visited or lived in their overseas empires.

Economically, European life required material goods, many of which only tropical regions could supply. Even the working classes now drank tea or coffee every day. After the American Civil War Europe relied for its cotton increasingly on Africa and the East. Rubber and petroleum became staple needs. The lowly jute, which grew only in India, was used to make burlap, twine, carpets, and the millions of jute bags employed in commerce. The lordly coconut tree had innumerable common uses, which led to its intensive cultivation in the Dutch Indies. Various parts of it could be eaten, or manufactured into bags, brushes, cables, rope, sails, or doormats or converted into coconut oil, which in turn went into the making of candles, soap, margarine, and many other products.

Raw materials

Industrial countries also attempted to sell their own products, and one of the reasons given by imperialists, in support of imperialism, was the urgent necessity of finding new markets. The industrialization of Germany, the United States, Japan, and other countries, after about 1870, meant that they competed with each other and with Great Britain for



Europe's overseas colonies gave European travelers new places to visit and new forms of "exotic" adventure that developed within the social and legal hierarchies of imperial political systems. The Englishwomen depicted here are going into an Asian forest for a picnic, accompanied by servants who carry their food and handle their horses and by escorts whose pith helmets symbolize the heyday of the British Empire.

(Hulton Getty)

Neomercantilism

foreign trade. The slowly declining price level after 1873 meant that a business firm had to sell more goods to turn over the same amount of money. Competition was more intense. The advanced industrial countries raised tariffs to keep out each other's products. It was therefore argued that each industrialized nation must develop a colonial empire dependent on itself, an area of "sheltered markets," as the phrase went in England, in which the home country would supply manufactured goods in return for raw materials. The idea was to create a large self-sufficient trading unit, embracing various climates and types of resources, protected if necessary from outside competition by tariffs, guaranteeing a market for all its members and wealth and prosperity for the home country. This phase of imperialism is often called neomercantilism, since it revived in substance the mercantilism of the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.

The profit motive

Purely financial considerations also characterized the new imperialism. Money invested in the so-called "backward" countries, by the close of the nineteenth century, brought a higher rate of return than if invested in the more industrialized ones. For this there were many reasons, including the cheap labor of

non-European regions, the heavy and unsatisfied demand for non-European products, and the greater risk of losses in half-known areas where European ideas of law and order did not prevail. By 1900 western Europe and the northeastern United States were equipped with their basic industrial apparatus. Their railway networks and first factories were built. Opportunities for investment in these countries became stabilized. At the same time, these countries themselves accumulated capital seeking an outlet. In the mid-century most exported capital was British-owned. By the close of the century more French, German, American, Dutch, Belgian, and Swiss investors were investing or lending outside their own borders. In 1850, most exported capital went to build up Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, or Argentina. By 1900 more of it was going to undeveloped regions in other parts of the world. This capital was the property of individual small savers or of large banking combinations. Investors preferred "civilized" political control over the parts of Asia, Africa, or Latin America in which their railroads, mines, plantations, government loans, or other investments were situated. Hence the profit motive, or desire to invest "surplus" capital, promoted imperialism.

This analysis was put forward by critics like the English socialist J. A. Hobson, who wrote an influential book on imperialism in 1903, and later by Lenin, in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of World Capitalism*, written in 1916. They ascribed imperialism primarily to the accumulation of surplus capital and condemned it on socialist grounds. Argued Hobson especially, if more of the national income went to workers as wages, and less of it to capitalists as interest and dividends, or if wealthy people were more heavily taxed and the money used for social welfare, there would be no surplus of capital and no real imperialism. Since the working class, if this were done, would also have more purchasing power, it would be less necessary to look endlessly for new markets outside the country. But the surplus capital explanation of imperialism was not entirely convincing. That investors and exporters were instrumental in the rise of imperialism was of course very true. That imperialism arose essentially from the capitalists' pressure to invest abroad was more doubtful. Perhaps even more basic was Europe's need for imports—only by enormous imports could Europe sustain its dense population, complex industry, and high standard of living. It was the demand for such imports—cotton, cocoa, coffee, copper, copra, and the like drawn from the colonies—that made investment in the colonies financially profitable. Moreover, non-Europeans themselves often asked for the capital, glad though the European lenders were to lend it at high rates. In 1890 this might mean merely that a shah or sultan wanted to build himself a new palace, but the need of non-Europeans for Western capital was basic, nor was it to decline in later times. Lastly, the imperialism of some countries, notably Russia and Italy, which had little capital and few modern-type capitalists of their own, could not reasonably be attributed to pressure for lucrative foreign investments.

For the British, however, the capitalistic incentive was of great importance. We have seen how the British, in 1914, had \$20 billion invested outside Great Britain, a quarter of all their wealth. About half, or \$10 billion, was invested in the British Empire. Only a tenth of French foreign investments was in French colonies. French investment in the colonial world in general, however, including Egypt, Suez, South Africa, and Asia in addition to the French colonies, amounted to about a fifth of all French foreign investments. Only an infinitesimal fraction of German foreign investment in 1914 was in German colonies, which were of slight value. A fifth of German foreign investments, however, was placed in Africa, Asia, and the Ottoman Empire. These sums are enough to suggest the pressures upon the European governments to assert political influence in Africa, Turkey, or China.

Socialist critics

Foreign economic interests in Russia

In addition, French investors (including small bourgeois and even affluent peasants) had in 1914 a huge stake in the Russian empire. Russia, an imperial power with respect to adjoining countries in the Balkans and Asia, occupied an almost semicolonial status with respect to western Europe. The tsardom in its last 20 years, not unlike the Ottoman sultanate or the Qing dynasty in China, was kept going by foreign loans, predominantly French.

The French in 1914 had lent over \$2 billion to Russia, more than to all colonial regions combined. For these huge outlays the motivation was at least as much political as economic. The French government often urged French banks to buy Russian bonds. The aim was not merely to make a profit for bankers and small investors but to build up and hold together a military ally against Germany.

Politics went along with economics in the whole process of imperialist expansion. National security, both political and economic, was as important an aim as the accumulation of private wealth. So, too, was the growing concern in many quarters over the economic security and welfare of the working classes. The ideas of the British statesman Joseph Chamberlain (1836–1914) illustrated how these motives entered into imperialist thinking.

Joseph Chamberlain

Chamberlain, father of Neville Chamberlain, who was to be prime minister of Britain in the years just prior to the Second World War, began as a Birmingham manufacturer, the type of man who a generation before would have been a staunch free trader and upholder of laissez-faire. Discarding the old individualism, he came to believe that the community should and could take better care of its members, and, in particular, that the British community (or empire) could advance the welfare of Britons. As mayor of Birmingham he introduced a kind of municipal socialism, including public ownership of utilities. As colonial secretary from 1895 to 1903, he preached Britain's need for "a great self-sustaining and self-protecting empire" in an age of rising international competition—a worldwide British trading area, developed by British capital, which would give a secure source of raw materials and food, markets for exports, and a steady level of profits, wages, and employment.

Chamberlain saw with misgivings the tendencies toward independence in Canada, New Zealand, and the Australian Commonwealth. For these dominions he favored complete self-government, but he hoped that, once assured of virtual independence, they would reknit their ties with each other and with Great Britain. Such a reintegration of the empire he called "imperial federation." Britain and its dominions, in Chamberlain's view, should pool their resources not only for military defense but also for economic well-being. The dominions had already levied tariffs against British manufacturers in order to build up their own. Chamberlain, to favor British exports, urged the dominions to charge a lower duty on British wares than on the same wares coming from foreign countries. In return, he even proposed that Great Britain adopt a protective tariff, so that it might then favor Canadian or Australian goods by imposing on them a lower rate. His plan was to bind the empire together by economic bonds, making it a kind of tariff union, or system of "imperial preference." Since Britain imported mainly meat and cereals from the dominions, Chamberlain was obliged to recommend a tariff even upon these—to "tax the people's food," repudiating the very ark of the covenant of Free Trade upon which the British economy had rested for half a century. The proposal was rejected. Chamberlain died in 1914, his goal unaccomplished. But after the First World War the British Empire, or Commonwealth of Nations, followed closely along the lines he had mapped out.

World War I

worker in western Europe did benefit from imperialism. Socially conservative imperialists were joined in this belief by thinkers of the extreme Left. Marx himself, followed by Lenin, thought that the European worker obtained higher real wages through the inflow of low-priced colonial goods. To Marxists this was unfortunate, for it gave European workers a vested interest in imperialism, made the European proletariat "opportunistic" (i.e., unrevolutionary), and blocked the formation of a true international world proletariat of all races.

Another imperialist argument much heard at the time held that European countries must acquire colonies to which surplus population could migrate without altogether abandoning the native land. It seemed unfortunate, for example, that so many Germans or Italians emigrating to the United States should be lost to the fatherland. This argument was purely specious. No European country after 1870 acquired any colony to which European families in any numbers wished to move. The millions who still left Europe, up to 1914, persisted in heading for the Americas, where in the circumstances no European colony could be founded.

The competitive nature of the European state system introduced other almost exclusively political elements. The European states had to guard their security against each other. They had to keep some kind of balance among themselves, in the overseas world as in Europe. Hence, as in the scramble for Africa, one government often hurriedly annexed territory simply for fear that another might do so first. Or again, colonies came to have an intangible but momentous value in symbolism and prestige. To have colonies was a normal criterion of greatness. It was the sign of having arrived as a Great Power.

Diplomacy and Imperialism



A belief in the cultural or religious mission of European civilization led to the establishment of European schools, churches, and hospitals in much of Africa and Asia. The Englishwoman in this photograph, Elizabeth Mort, was a Protestant deaconess at a Christian mission in Fukien,

Britain and France had had colonies for centuries. Therefore the new powers formed in the 1860s—Germany, Italy, Japan, and in a sense the United States—had to have colonies also.

Imperialism as Crusade

Imperialism arose from the commercial, industrial, financial, scientific, political, journalistic, intellectual, religious, and humanitarian impulses of Europe compounded together. It was an outthrust of modern Western civilization, and its advocates claimed that it would bring civilization and enlightenment to those who still sat in darkness. Faith in "modern civilization" had become a kind of substitute religion. Imperialism was its crusade.

So the British spoke of the White Man's Burden; the French, of their *mission civilisatrice*; the Germans, of diffusing *Kultur*; the Americans, of the "blessings of Anglo-Saxon protection." Social Darwinism and popular anthropology taught the racist doctrine that the white races were "fitter" or more gifted than the peoples of other races. Some imperialists argued, more reasonably, that the backwardness of non-Europeans was due to historic, and hence temporary, causes but that for a long period into the future the civilized whites must keep a guardianship over their darker protégés. The psychology of imperialism contained strands of idealism and humanitarianism as well as greed, and numerous Europeans went to the colonies to build schools or hospitals rather than railroads or mines. Young people of good family left the pleasant lands of Devonshire or Poitou to spend long and lonely years in hot, isolated places, sustained by the thought that they were advancing the work of humanity. It was a good thing to put down slave raiding, torture, and famine; to combat degrading superstitions; to fight the diseases of neglect and filth; and to promote the ideas and institutions of legal justice (even though colonial legal systems did not treat the colonizers and native people in the same way). But these accomplishments, however real, went along all too obviously with European self-interest and were expressed with unbearable complacency and gross condescension to the larger part of the human race. As Rudyard Kipling wrote in 1899 (in his exhortation to Americans after their taking over of the Philippines):

Trade missions

*Take up the White Man's burden—
Send out the best ye breed—
Go bind your sons to exile,
To serve your captives' need;
To wait in heavy harness,
On fluttered folk and wild—
Your new-caught sullen peoples,
Half devil and half child.*

79. THE AMERICAS

After the general considerations above, let us examine each of the earth's great regions in turn, and first the Americas, where we must begin our discussion earlier in the century, before the age of the "new imperialism."

In America the breakup of the Spanish and Portuguese empires in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, during and after the Napoleonic wars, left the vast tract from Colorado to Cape Horn very unsettled. Most of the people were Indian or a mixture of Indian

and white (*mestizo*), with clusters here and there of pure European. Nineteenth-century immigration was greatly to increase. In the United States, except in inaccessible spots, the Spanish culture and language were replaced. In the former Portuguese empire, the culture was Portuguese, and independent after 1822, remained a monarchy (or "empire") until 1889. In the former Spanish domains the disappearance of royal authority led to a number of flaccid and shifting republics, chronically engaged in wars with one another. Fortunately for these republics, at the time of independence imperialist imperialism was at a low ebb. We have seen how the Congress of 1823, of returning them to Spain but was opposed by Great Britain and the United States that one of the new republics was first threatened.

The United States and Mexico

Mexico, on becoming independent of Spain, reached almost immediately to the Rocky Mountains. Hardly was it independent when the United States swarmed over its northeastern borders. They brought the cotton so voraciously demanded in industrial England. The United States Republic did not allow slavery. The newcomers proclaimed a new republic, which they called Texas. Agitation developed for Texas to join the United States. Mexico objected, but in 1845 the United States annexed Texas. A war followed, in which Mexico lost to the United States. Texas but the whole region from Texas to the California coast. The loser preserved a longer memory than the winner. It demanded that the United States to possess these regions; in Mexico many a wound was healed. Mexico had lost half its territory to an enemy in the first generation of its independence. Meanwhile, though so many people in the United States justified this vast annexation, arguing that their nation had far better facilities than Mexico.

The next threat to Mexico came from Europe. Mexico, in need of money, contracted large loans on exorbitant terms, the European loans were can credit to be highly unsound. When the liberal president Benito Juárez, at least racially "non-European") repudiated the loans, the United States demanded satisfaction from their governments. The United States Civil War. Great Britain, France, and Spain, which had never accepted the Monroe Doctrine, in 1861 sent combined military forces to Mexico. The British proposed seizure of the customs houses in Mexico to appropriate the custom revenues to pay off the debt (announced in China three years before); but the French had more designs. Unknown both to the British, who wanted only to get to the Spanish, who dreamed of setting up a new Bourbon empire. Emperor Napoleon III had a secret project for establishing a new Mexican empire with the Austrian archduke Maximilian as emperor, which French capital and exports might subsequently develop. The British and Spanish disapprovingly withdrew their forces. Maximilian reigned for some years, but Napoleon's project for the conquest of Mexico was impossible or too expensive. It failed.



These American soldiers in a trench near Manila were part of the armed force that drove Spain out of the Philippines, repressed the Filipino independence movement, and transformed the Philippine islands into a colony of the United States. The annexation of the Philippines and Hawaii in the 1890s made the United States an influential imperial power in the Pacific and East Asia.

(Hulton Getty)

isolation in the vastness of the mid-Pacific. The growth of navigation in the nineteenth century introduced them to the world. Sailors, whalers, missionaries, and vendors of rum and cloth filled Honolulu by 1840. The native ruler, lacking the power to control this new situation, almost accepted a British protectorate in 1843 and in 1875 did accept a virtual protectorate by the United States, which guaranteed Hawaiian independence against any third party, obtained trading privileges, and acquired Pearl Harbor as a naval base. American capital and management entered the island. They created huge sugar and pineapple industries, entirely dependent on export to, and investment by, the United States. In 1891, when Queen Liliuokalani came to the throne, she tried to check westernization and Americanization. The American interests, endangered by her nativist policies, overthrew the queen and set up an independent republic, which soon sought annexation to the United States. It was the story of Texas reenacted. For several years the issue hung in the balance because of lingering disapproval in the United States for such strong-arm methods. But with Japan revealing imperial designs in 1895, the rush of the other powers into China, the Spanish-American War, acquisition of the Philippines, and plans for the Panama Canal, the United States "accepted its destiny" in the Pacific, and annexed the Hawaiian Republic by joint resolution of Congress in 1898. Hawaii became a state in the American union in 1959.

80. THE DISSOLUTION OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

The Ottoman Empire in the 1850s

Of all parts of the non-European world, the Ottoman, or Turkish, Empire was the nearest to Europe, and with it Europeans had for centuries had close relations. It had for long extended from Hungary and the Balkan peninsula to the south Russian steppes and from Algeria to the Persian Gulf. The empire was not at all like a European state. Immense in extent, it was a congeries of religious communities. Most of its people were Muslim, including both orthodox Muslims and such reform sects as Druses and Wahabis; some were Jews who had always lived in the Middle East; many were Christian, principally Greek Orthodox and Armenian, who had also always lived there. The Turks were the ruling class and Islam was the dominant religion. Only Muslims, for example, could serve in the army; non-Muslims were known as *raya*, the "flock" or "herd"—they paid the taxes. Persons of different religion lived side by side, each under the laws, courts, and customs of his or her own religious group. Religious officials—patriarchs, bishops, rabbis, imams, ulemas—were responsible to the Turkish government for their own people, over whom therefore they had a great deal of authority.

Western Europeans had their own special rights. Roman Catholic clergy, living mainly in Palestine, looked to the pope in religion and to France for a mundane protector. Western merchants enjoyed the regime of the "capitulations," or special rights granted by the Ottoman government in numerous treaties going back to the sixteenth century. By the capitulations Turkey could not levy a tariff of more than 8 percent on imported goods. Europeans were exempt from most taxes. Cases involving two Europeans, civil or criminal, could be settled only in a court held by a European consul under European law. Disputes between a European and an Ottoman subject were settled in Turkish courts, but in the presence of a European observer.

The capitulations

The Ottoman Empire, in short, completely lacked the European idea of nationalism or national unity. The European idea of sovereignty and a uniform law for all its peoples were also absent, as was the idea of the secular state, or of law and citizenship separated from religion. The empire had fallen behind Europe in scientific, mechanical, material, humanitarian, and administrative achievements.

Turkey was called the "sick man of Europe," and its long decline constituted the Eastern Question. Since the loss of Hungary in 1699 the Ottoman Empire had entered on a long process of territorial disintegration (see map, p. 632). That the empire lasted another two centuries was due to the European balance of power. But by the 1850s the empire was falling away at the edges. Russia had advanced in the Crimea and the Caucasus. Serbia was autonomous, Greece was independent, and Romania was recognized as a self-governing principality. The French occupied Algeria. A native Arab dynasty, the Sauds, of the Wahabi reform sect, ruled over much of Arabia. A former Turkish governor of Egypt, Mehemet Ali, had established his family as hereditary rulers or "khedives" in the Nile valley. Notwithstanding these changes, the Ottoman Empire in the 1850s was still huge. It encompassed not only the Turkish or Anatolian peninsula (including Armenia and territory south of the Caucasus) but also the central portion of the Balkan peninsula from Constantinople to the Adriatic where many Christians of Slavic nationality lived, Tripoli (Libya) in North Africa, and the islands of Crete and Cyprus. Egypt and Arabia, though autonomous, were still under the nominal suzerainty of the sultan.

The "sick man of Europe"

of trained reserves among the civilian population. Few people wanted war; all but a few sensational writers preferred peace in Europe, but many took it for granted that war would come someday. In the last years before 1914 the idea that war was bound to break out sooner or later probably made some statesmen, in some countries, more willing to unleash it.

Rival Alliances: Triple Alliance versus Triple Entente

Political diagnosticians, from Richelieu to Metternich, had long thought that an effective union of Germany would revolutionize the relationships of Europe's peoples. After 1870 their anticipations were more than confirmed. Once united (or almost united), the Germans entered upon their industrial revolution. Manufacturing, finance, shipping, population grew phenomenally. By 1900, for example, Germany produced more steel than France and

A "place in the sun"

Britain combined, though in 1865 the French alone had produced more than the Germans. People in Germany felt that they needed and deserved a "place in the sun," by which they vaguely meant some kind of acknowledged supremacy like that of the British. Neither the British nor the French, the leaders of modern Europe since the seventeenth century, could share

wholeheartedly in such German aspirations. The French nursed the chronic grievance of Alsace and Lorraine, annexed to Germany in 1871. The British as the years passed saw German salesmen appear in their foreign markets, selling goods often at lower prices and by what seemed ungentlemanly methods; they saw Germans turn up as colonial rivals in Africa, the Middle East, and the Far East; and they watched other European states gravitate into the Berlin orbit, looking to the mighty German Empire as a friend and protector to secure or advance their interests.

Bismarck after 1871 feared that in another European war his new German Empire might be torn to pieces. He therefore followed, until his retirement in 1890, a policy of peace. We have seen him as the "honest broker" at the Berlin Congress of 1878, helping

The Triple Alliance

to adjudicate the Eastern Question, and again offering the facilities of Berlin in 1885 to regulate African affairs. To isolate France, divert it from Europe, and keep it embroiled with Britain, he looked with satisfaction on French colonial expansion. He took no chances, however; in 1879 he formed a military alliance with Austria-Hungary, to which Italy was added

in 1882. Thus was formed the Triple Alliance, which lasted until the First World War. Its terms were, briefly, that if any member became involved in war with two or more powers its allies should come to its aid by force of arms. To be on the safe side, Bismarck signed a "reinsurance" treaty with Russia also. Since Russia and Austria were enemies (because of the Balkans), to be allied to both at the same time took considerable diplomatic finesse. After Bismarck's retirement his system proved too intricate, or too lacking in candor, for his successors to manage. The Russo-German agreement lapsed. The French, faced by the Triple Alliance, soon seized the opportunity to form their own alliance with Russia, the Franco-Russian Alliance signed in 1894. In its time this was regarded as politically almost impossible. The French Republic stood for everything radical; the Russian empire, for everything reactionary and autocratic. But ideology was thrown to the winds, French capital poured into Russia, and the tsar bared his head to the *Marseillaise*.

The Continent was thus divided by 1894 into two opposed camps, the German-Austrian-Italian against the Franco-Russian. For a time it seemed that this rigid division might soften. Germany, France, and Russia cooperated in the Far Eastern crisis of 1895 to

stem the expanding power of Japan. All were anti-British at the time of Fashoda and the Boer War. The Kaiser, William II, outlined tempting pictures of a Continental league against the global hegemony of England and her empire.

Much depended on what the British would do. They had long prided themselves on a "splendid isolation," going their own way, disdaining the kind of dependency that alliance with others always brings. Fashoda and the Boer War came as a shock. British relations with France and Russia were very bad. Some in England, including Joseph Chamberlain, therefore thought that a better understanding with Germany was to be sought. Arguments of race, in this race-conscious age, made the English and Germans feel akin. But politically it was hard to cooperate. The Kaiser's Kruger Telegram of 1896, expressing support for the South African Boers in their conflict with Britain, was a studied insult. Then in 1898 the Germans decided to build a navy.

"Splendid isolation"

A new kind of race now entered the picture, the naval competition between Germany and Great Britain. British sea power for two centuries had been all too successful. The American Admiral Mahan, teaching at the Naval War College, and taking his examples largely from British history, argued that sea power had always been the foundation of Britain's greatness and that in the long run sea power must always choke off and ruin a power operating on land. Nowhere were Mahan's books read with more interest than in Germany. The German naval program, mounting rapidly after 1898, in a few years became a source of concern to the British, and by 1912 was felt as a positive menace. The Germans insisted that they must have a navy to protect their colonies, secure their foreign trade, and "for the general purposes of their greatness." The British held with equal resolution that England, as a densely populated industrial island, dependent even for food upon imports, must at all costs control the sea in both peace and war. They adhered stubbornly to their traditional policy of maintaining a navy as large as the next two combined. The naval race led both sides to enormous and increasing expenditures. In the British it produced a sense of profound insecurity, driving them as the years passed ever more inescapably into the arms of Russia and France.

Naval race

Slowly and cautiously the British emerged from their diplomatic isolation. In 1902 they formed a military alliance with Japan against their common enemy, Russia. The decisive break came in 1904, from which may be dated the immediate series of crises issuing 10 years later in the First World War.

In 1904 the British and French governments agreed to forget Fashoda and the accumulated bad feeling of the preceding 25 years. The French recognized the British occupation of Egypt, and the British recognized the French penetration of Morocco. They also cleared up a few lesser colonial differences and agreed to support each other against protests by third parties. There was no specific alliance; neither side said what it would do in the event of war; it was only a close understanding, an *entente cordiale*. The French immediately tried to reconcile their new friend to their ally, Russia. After defeat by Japan the Russians proved amenable. The British, increasingly uncertain of German aims, proved likewise willing. In 1907

Triple Entente

Britain and Russia, the inveterate adversaries, settled their differences in an Anglo-Russian Convention. In Persia, the British recognized a Russian sphere of influence in the north, while the Russians recognized a British sphere in the south and east. By 1907 England, France, and Russia were acting together. The older Triple Alliance faced a newer Triple Entente, the latter somewhat the looser, since the British refused to make any formal military commitments.

The Germans, who already felt encircled by the alliance of France and Russia, naturally watched with concern the drift of England into the Franco-Russian camp. The entente cordiale was barely concluded when the German government decided to test it, to find out how strong it really was or how far the British would go in support of France. The French, now enjoying British backing, were taking over more police powers, concessions, and loans in Morocco.

Testing the Entente

In March 1905 Kaiser William II disembarked from a German warship at Tangier, where he made a startling speech in favor of Moroccan independence. To diplomats everywhere this carefully staged performance was a signal: Germany was attempting not primarily to keep France out of Morocco, nor even to reserve Morocco for itself, but to break up the new understanding between France and England. The Germans demanded and obtained an international conference at Algeiras (at which the United States was represented), but the conference, which met in 1906, supported the French claims in Morocco, only Austria voting with Germany. The German government had thus created an incident and been rebuffed. The British, disturbed by German diplomatic tactics, stood by the French all the more firmly. French and British army and naval officers now began to discuss common plans. Distrust of Germany also inclined the British to bury the hatchet with Russia in the next year. The German attempt to break the Entente simply made it more solid.

In 1911 came a second Morocco crisis. A German gunboat, the *Panther*, arrived at Agadir "to protect German interests." It soon developed that the move was a holdup; the Germans offered to make no further trouble in Morocco if they could have the French Congo. The crisis passed, the Germans obtaining some trifling accessions in Africa. But a member of the British cabinet, David Lloyd George, made a rather inflammatory speech on the German menace.

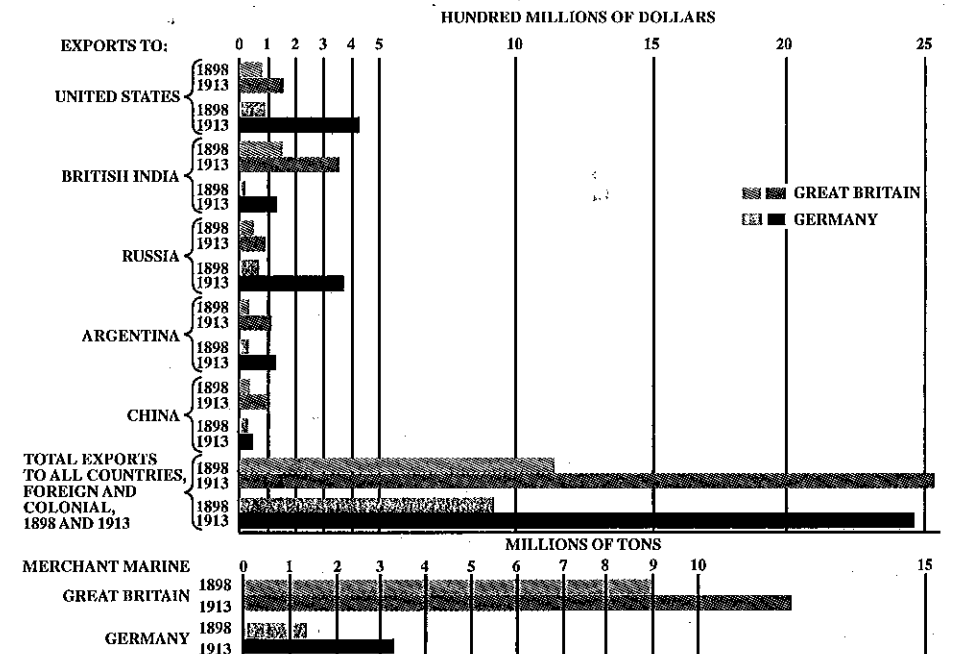
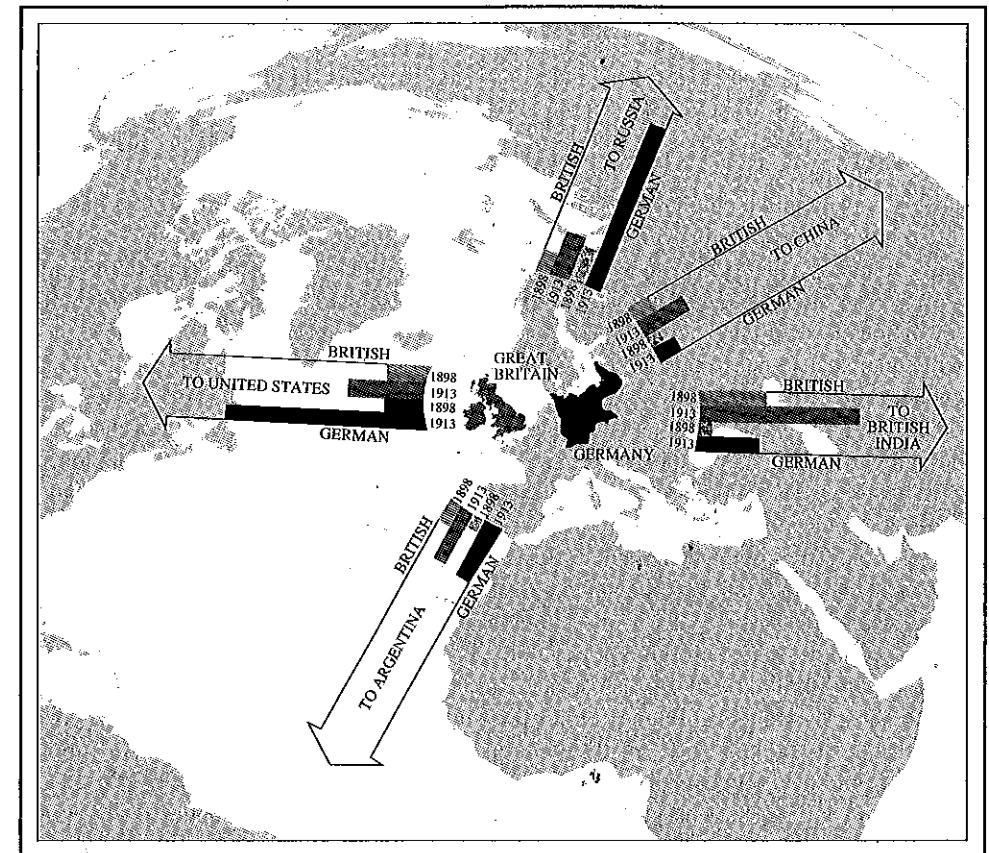
Crises in the Balkans

Meanwhile a series of crises rocked the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire, in an advanced state of dissolution, still held a band of territory from Constantinople westward to the Adriatic (see map, p. 665). South of this band lay an independent Greece. North of it, on the Black Sea side, lay an autonomous Bulgaria and an independent Romania. In the center and west of the peninsula, north of the Turkish belt, was the small, landlocked, independent kingdom of Serbia, adjoined by Bosnia-Herzegovina, which belonged legally to Turkey but had been "occupied and administered" by Austria since 1878. Within the Austro-Hungarian Empire, adjoining Bosnia on the north and west, lay Croatia and Slovenia.

Serbs, Bosnians, Croats, and Slovenes all spoke basically the same language, Serbo-Croatian, the main difference being that Serbs and Bosnians wrote with the eastern or

ANGLO-GERMAN INDUSTRIAL COMPETITION, 1898 AND 1913

This diagram shows the huge increase in world trade in the years before the First World War and also the fact that German exports grew in these years more rapidly than British exports. The exports of both countries together multiplied no less than threefold in these 15 years. The increase reflected a small rise in prices, but it was mainly due to a real increase in volume of business. In 1913, total German exports about equaled the British, but German exports to the United States and Russia greatly exceeded the British. Note how the Germans even gained exports in British India, where the liberalism of British trade policy freely admitted competitive goods. In merchant marine, though the Germans doubled their tonnage, the British continued to enjoy an overwhelming lead.



Ethnic and religious divisions

Cyrillic alphabet while the Croats and Slovenes wrote with the western or Roman alphabet. The difference reflected deep differences in religion. The Slovenes and Croats had long been Roman Catholic, and hence affiliated with Western Europe; the Serbs and many Bosnians were Eastern Orthodox and so closer to Russia; and there were also, especially in Bosnia, large numbers of Slavs who were Muslims, converted during the Ottoman domination. With the Slavic Revival, which emphasized language, many of these peoples came to feel that they were really one people, for which they took the name South Slavs, or Yugoslavs. After the Dual Monarchy was formed in 1867, as we have seen, the Slavs of the Habsburg empire were kept subordinate to the German Austrians and the Hungarian Magyars. By 1900 radical Slav nationalists within the empire had concluded that the Dual Monarchy would never grant them equal status, that it must be broken up, and that all South Slavs should form an independent state of their own. Concretely, this meant that an element of the Austro-Hungarian population, namely, the Croatian and Slovenian nationalists, wished to get out of the empire and join with Serbia across the border. Serbia became the center of South Slav agitation.

This brew was brought to a boil in 1908 by two events. First, the Young Turks, whose long agitation against Abdul Hamid has been noted, managed in that year to carry through a revolution. They obliged the sultan to restore the liberal parliamentary constitution of 1876. They showed, too, that they meant to stop the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire by taking steps to have delegates from Bulgaria and Bosnia sit in the new Ottoman parliament. Second, Russia, its foreign policy in the Far East ruined by the Japanese war, turned actively to the Balkan and Turkish scene. Russia, as always, wanted control at Constantinople. Austria wanted full annexation of Bosnia, the better to discourage Pan-Yugoslav ideas. But if the young Turks really modernized and strengthened the Ottoman Empire, Austria would never get Bosnia nor the Russians, Constantinople.

The first Balkan crisis

The Russian and Austrian foreign ministers, Alexander Isvolsky and Alois von Aehrenthal, at a conference at Buchlau in 1908 came to a secret agreement. They would call an international conference, at which Russia would favor Austrian annexation of Bosnia, and Austria would support the opening of the Straits to Russian warships. Austria, without waiting for a conference, proclaimed the annexation of Bosnia without more ado. This infuriated the Serbs, who had marked Bosnia for their own. Meanwhile, that same year, the Bulgarians and the Cretans broke finally with the Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria becoming fully independent, Crete uniting with Greece. Isvolsky was never able to realize his plans for Constantinople. His partners in the Triple Entente, Britain and France, refused to back him; the British in particular were evasive on plans for opening the Straits to the Russian fleet. The projected international conference was never called. In Russia itself public opinion knew nothing of Isvolsky's secret deal. The known fact in Russia was that the Serbs, the little Slav brothers of Russia, had their toes rudely stepped on by the Austrians by the annexation of Bosnia.

This "first Balkan crisis" presently passed. The Russians, weakened by the Japanese war and by the revolutionary turmoil of 1905, accepted the Austrian *fait accompli*. Austrian influence in the Balkans seemed to be growing. And South Slav nationalism was frustrated and inflamed.

Two Balkan wars

In 1911 Italy declared war on Turkey, from which it soon conquered Tripoli and the Dodecanese Islands. With the Ottomans thus embarrassed, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Greece joined forces in their own war against Turkey, hoping to annex certain Balkan territories to which they believed they had a right. Turkey was soon defeated, but the Bulgarians claimed more of Macedonia than the Serbs would yield, so that the first Balkan war of 1912 was followed in 1913 by a second, in which Al-

bania also, a mountainous region on the Adriatic, mainly Muslim, was the subject of angry discord. The Serbs occupied part of it in the two Balkan wars, but Greeks also claimed a part, and it had also on several occasions been vaguely promised to Italy. Russia supported the Serbian claim. Austria was determined to shut off the Serbs from access to the sea, which they would obtain by annexation of Albanian territory. An agreement of the great powers, to keep the peace, conjured up an independent kingdom in Albania. This confirmed the Austrian policy, kept Serbia from the sea, and aroused vehement outcries in both Serbia and Russia. But Russia again backed down. Serbian expansionism was again frustrated and inflamed.

The third Balkan crisis proved to be the fatal one. It was fatal because two others had gone before it, leaving feelings of exasperation in Austria, desperation in Serbia, and humiliation in Russia.

The Sarajevo Crisis and the Outbreak of War

On June 28, 1914, a young Bosnian revolutionary, a member of the Serbian secret society called "Union of Death" and commonly known as the Black Hand, acting with the knowledge of certain Serbian officials, assassinated the heir to the Habsburg empire, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, in the streets of Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, in the Austrian Empire. The world was shocked at this terrorist outrage and at first sympathized with the protests of the Austrian government. Francis Ferdinand, who would soon have become emperor, was known to favor some kind of transformation of Austria-Hungary, in which a more equal place might be given to the Slavs; but the reformer who makes a system work is the most dangerous of all enemies to the implacable revolutionary, and it is perhaps for this reason that the archduke was killed by the Black Hand.

The Austrian government was determined to end the South Slav separatism that was gnawing its empire to pieces. It decided to crush the independence of Serbia, the nucleus of South Slav agitation, though not to annex it, since there were now thought to be too many Slavs within the empire already. The Austrian government consulted the German to see how far it might go with the support of its ally. The Germans, issuing their famous "blank check," encouraged the Austrians to be firm. The Austrians, thus reassured, dispatched a drastic ultimatum to Serbia, demanding among other things that Austrian officials be permitted to collaborate in investigating and punishing the perpetrators of the assassination. The Serbs counted on Russian support, even to the point of war, judging that Russia could not yield in a Balkan crisis, for the third time in six years, without losing its influence in the Balkans altogether. The Russians in turn counted on France; and France, terrified at the possibility of being some day caught alone in a war with Germany and determined to keep Russia as an ally at any cost, in effect gave a blank check to Russia.

The Serbs rejected the critical item in the Austrian ultimatum as an infringement on Serbian sovereignty, and Austria thereupon declared war upon Serbia. Russia prepared to defend Serbia and hence to fight Austria. Expecting that Austria would be joined by Germany, Russia rashly mobilized its army on the German as well as the Austrian frontier. Since the power which first mobilized had all the advantages of a rapid offensive, the German government demanded an end to the Russian mobilization on its border and, receiving no answer, declared war on Russia on August 1, 1914. Convinced that France would in any case enter the war on the side of Russia, Germany also declared war on France on August 3.

The German decisions were posited on a reckless hope that Great Britain might not enter the war at all. England was bound by no formal military alliance. Even the French

The assassination of Sarajevo

The German "blank check"



Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria meets here with leaders of the Catholic church during his visit to Sarajevo on June 28, 1914. Shortly after this meeting, the Archduke (the tall man with a moustache) and his wife were assassinated by a Serbian nationalist. The ensuing diplomatic crisis mobilized all of the nations in the European alliance system and led to the First World War of 1914–1918.

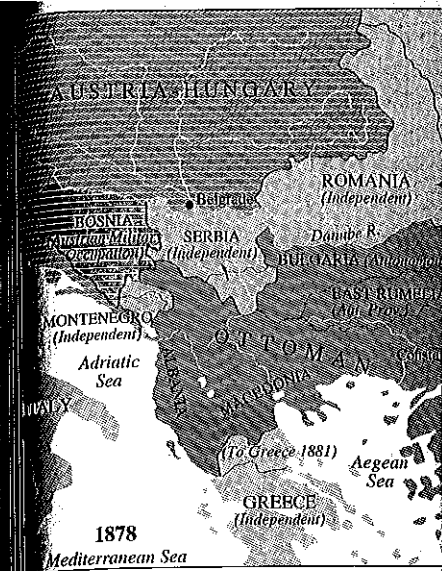
(Hulton Getty)

English Isolation

did not know for certain, as late as August 3, whether the British would join them in war. The British clung to scraps of their old proud isolation; they hesitated to make a final choice of sides; and as the foreign secretary Sir Edward Grey repeatedly explained, in England only parliament could declare war, so that the foreign office could make no binding promise of war in advance. It has often been said that had the German government known as a positive fact that England would fight, the war might not have come. Hence the evasiveness of British policy is made a contributing cause of the war. In reality, the probability that England would fight was so great that to underestimate it, as the Germans did, was an act of supreme folly. The British government was deeply committed to France, especially through naval agreements, but what swept the British public toward the French was the German invasion of Belgium. The German plan to crush France quickly was such that it could succeed only by crossing Belgium. When the Belgians protested, the Germans invaded anyway, violating the treaty of 1839 which had guaranteed Belgian neutrality. England declared war on Germany on August 4.

Causes of the First World War

The mere narration of successive crises does not explain why the chief nations of Europe within a few days became locked in combat over the murder of an imperial personage. Among more obvious general causes, the alliance system may be singled out. Europe was divided into two camps.



THE BALKANS, 1878 AND

Austria and Russia had gradually gained control of the Balkans at the Congress of Berlin in 1878 at a time when Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro as independent principalities within the Ottoman Empire, Greece, and of non-Turkish principalities in the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913. Greece became contiguous to the Balkans. Austria annexed Bosnia, where the Serbian annexation.

Every incident tended to become a crisis as German intervention in the Balkans was settled on its own merits, and the balance of power of the two camps was deemed to be in the balance. The influence in other incidents, of course, was felt that it must stand on its own merits, or power felt that it must stand on its own merits, or lived in the fear of war, of so

The Germans complained that the day when they might have a European-wide war to break their isolation, they were obliged to hold to their one ally, and to support it at its own price. The 40 years had far surpassed the wishes. As for Russia and the Balkans, in 1900, the tsarist regime supported the empire, from chronic national