Aggression and Appeasement

Appeasement
- A series of unfortunate events while the world did nothing
  - Trying to avoid another war
    - Willing to give up some things to avoid war
- Appeasement in Asia
  - Japan a recent industrial power
    - Similar to Germany
      - Looking to exert their influence
      - Perceived racial supremacy
  - Japan begins conquests
    - Manchuria
      - 1931
      - Modern day northeast China
      - Rebuked by League of Nations
        - Alienated selves from former British, French, and American allies
        - Sanctioned
        - Japan withdraws in 1933
  - China
    - 1937
    - Sanctions tightened
      - Materials of war
        - Tin, iron, oil
      - Effectively forces Japan to continue conquests for resources
    - Japanese extremely harsh treatment of Chinese
      - Rape of Nanking

Appeasement in Europe
- Pact of Locarno
  - December 1, 1925
  - Signed by Germany, France, Belgium, Great Britain, and Italy
  - Agreed to uphold peace in western Europe
    - Upheld the established boundaries
      - Arbitration allowed to reassign boundaries
    - Protected Germany, France, and Belgium from invasion
      - Under threat of League of Nations action
- The Axis
  - Diplomatic power plays
    - Germany resigned from League of Nations
      - 1933
      - Hitler distancing himself from injustices of Treaty of Versailles
    - German-Polish Non-Aggression Pact
      - Jan 1934
      - Both fearful of rising tensions with Soviet Union
        - Poland relied on closer nation
          - France too unreliable
        - Germany cancels pact in 1938
- German rearmament
  - Began in 1935
  - Germany found loopholes
“Pocket” battleships instead of dreadnaughts
- Air force made in Russia
  - Tested in Spain
- Rearmed in secret
  - Announced strength higher than it actually was
    - Wanted to scare France and Britain
    - Prevent intervention
- Allies believed Germany would rearm regardless of Versailles
  - Signed new treaties to at least make it legal
    - Would not have to intervene
  - Germany allowed to build navy
    - Including U-Boats

**Rome-Berlin Axis**
- 1936
  - Created connection between Italy and Germany
    - Both Fascist countries

**Anti-Comintern Pact**
- 1936
  - Japan, Germany, Italy
  - Anti-Communist
    - Specifically aimed at Soviet Union
    - Soviets supporting China
    - Hitler and Mussolini hoping to protect “Western values” against communism in the east
      - More so hoping Japan defeats China
      - Soviets would lose a friend

**Pact of Steel**
- 1939
  - Germany and Italy formed Defensive alliance against allies
    - Both distrusted the other
    - Rarely shared plans with each other
      - Forced them to react to others’ decisions
  - Japan joins in 1940

**Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact**
- August 23, 1939
- Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact
- Caught EVERYONE by surprise
- In public
  - Hitler and Stalin pledge to not go to war with one another
    - Stalin did not trust British and French would aid them
    - Stalin did not want to be dragged into a war to save Poland
- In secret
  - Divide Poland between them
    - Stalin wanted Poland just as much as Hitler
  - Uncontested land grabs
    - Italy conquered Ethiopia
• 1935
• Italy invades Ethiopia after failing to do so in 1890
• League of Nations does nothing
  o Imposes sanctions
    ▪ Do not work
  o Showed weakness in League of Nations

- **Saar Valley** reunited with Germany
  • 1935
  • Saar river a tributary of the Rhine
    o Huge coal deposits
  • Territory mostly German
    o Administered by League of Nations
    o French control of coal fields
  • League of Nations allows vote
    o Should territory be French or German
      ▪ All French and German forces forced to clear out
      ▪ 90% vote German
      ▪ March 1st Saarland handed over to Germany

- **Germany re-occupies the Rhineland**
  • 1936
  • Established as a demilitarized zone
    o Germans had negotiated removal of foreign troops in 1930
    o Direct violation of the Treaty of Versailles and Locarno
      ▪ Hitler had denounced both treaties
    o Marches 36,000 soldiers into Rhineland
      ▪ Ordered to withdraw if France makes a move
        • France backs down

- **Anschluss**
  • March 1938
  • Hitler bullies Austrian Chancellor Kurt von Schuschnigg into giving Nazi party greater power in Austria
    o Schuschnigg agrees to avoid invasion
    o Reneges once he gets back to Austria
  • Germany and Austria united
    o Germany effectively *annexes Austria*
      ▪ Marches soldiers into Austria
        • 99.7% of Austrians “Approve” union

- **Munich Crisis**
  • 1938
  • Hitler takes the *Sudetenland*
    o German Czechoslovakia
      ▪ France had signed a defensive pact with Czechs
        • As did Soviets
    o British meet with Hitler
      ▪ Hitler promises this is the last thing he wants
      ▪ Neville Chamberlin negotiates away parts of Czechoslovakia with German majority
- Magyar majority handed to Hungary and Polish Majority handed to Poles
- France and Britain remove support for Czechs
  - Chamberlain returns to Britain believing he has accomplished "Peace for our time"
- March 1939 Hitler occupies rest of Czechoslovakia
  - No resistance...from anyone
- March 1939 Hitler offers ultimatum to Lithuania
  - Give up Memel or face war
  - Lithuania gives up Memel
- Mussolini takes Albania
  - April 1939
  - Mussolini trying to mirror Hitler’s actions in Czechoslovakia
    - Italian movement far more contested
    - Army much more disorganized and ill-trained than Germans
- Germans and Soviets invade Poland
  - September 1st, 1939
    - Finally have gone too far
    - Britain and France declare war September 3rd

Europe in 1939