

Belle Époque

Mass Culture

- Education

- All countries making effort to bring education to more people
- Education became more secular
 - Contributed to overall secularization of society
 - Church still controlled most schooling though
 - 90% of English schools were religious
- More children went to secondary schools
 - Literacy rate rose
- **Education Act of 1870**
 - Passed by English Parliament
 - Established public schools where Anglican schools not available
 - Secularized education
- Mandatory Education
 - Parliamentary law of 1880 requiring all children ages 5-10 to attend school
 - Eventually rose to 12
 - Primary education became **Free**
 - Some parents demanded supplementary income to make up for loss of income
- **Ferry Laws**
 - Named after French Minister of Education
 - Made French primary schools free, obligatory, and secular for all children aged 3-13
- **Women**
 - Some women began to be educated
 - Viewed as way to make daughters attractive to suitors
 - Home economics classes
 - Marrying up socially
 - Elevate status
 - Making money is a secondary concern
- Number of university students in Europe tripled in late 19th century



- Decline of Organized Religion

- Churches' influence on the state decreased throughout Europe
 - Secular education and nationalism reduced religious influence
- Fewer people went to church
 - Less than 20% of Londoners attended church
 - Marseilles, France
 - 1840 – Over 50%
 - 1901 – around 16%
 - Some French regions and working class districts considered “**missionary areas**”
- Religious revivals did occur in parts of Europe
 - *Great Awakening* in Sweden
 - Cult of Miracles inspired faith
 - Over 1,000,000 people a year visited miracle sites or relics

- Leisure in the Belle Époque

- Money to do for people with money to spend
- Paris set the tone for style in Europe
- Dance Halls, cafes, and other venues were popular settings for performances

- Drama, poetry, music, comedy, etc.
 - Dances became much faster than the conservatives ones of the past
 - Hundreds of thousands went to movies at least once a week
- **Sports**
 - Cycling became first spectator sport
 - Became a sport to participate in and to observe
 - Bicycles accessible to almost all Europeans
 - Women in sports
 - Men complained women in sports attire was “not ladylike”
 - Served as way for women to achieve their own rights in society
 - Team Sports
 - European football and rugby were very popular
 - Professional Football started in 1863 in England
 - More of a lower class sport
 - Rugby more of an upper class sport
 - International competition
 - First modern Olympics held in 1896
 - In Athens
 - Arranged by Baron Pierre de Coubertin
 - French nobleman
 - Tied to strong sense of nationalism during period
 - Social Darwinism applied to sport
 - Racing
 - Very popular
 - First race was in 1894

- **Consumerism**

- Department stores became popular destinations
 - Women with money used **shopping as a hobby**
 - Shopping was an “experience”
 - *Women spent less time at church and more time shopping*
 - Some stores became landmarks
 - Stores were massive with lavish decorations
 - Even tourist destinations
 - Ex. Gum Department store in Moscow
- All classes shopped at department stores
 - Mass production
- Glossy catalogues promoted items in stores
 - People could shop from home
 - Ex. Sears catalogue



Social Changes

- Industrial Workers
 - Industrial Worker Characteristics
 - Depended on their labor for survival
 - Came from proletarian families
 - Proletarian was a state of mind for the working class
 - Received university training for skilled jobs
 - Woman worked in factories and as servants
 - ½ of all working class women were servants
 - Wanted to save enough to have a respectable dowry

- Children worked fulltime after the age of 14
- Industrial Workers Jobs
 - By 1900 more than half of all industrial workers in Britain, Germany and Belgium were employed in firms with more than twenty workers
 - Unskilled workers overtook skilled workers when machines overtook people
 - Statistician
 - Clerks
 - Salespeople Tax collectors
 - Postal workers
 - Food/drug inspectors
 - Engineers
 - Accounts
 - Bookkeepers
 - School teachers
 - Factory Workers
 - Servants
- Working Class Families
 - Moralists denounced working class families
 - They thought family values were destroyed
 - Women were taken away from their reproductive jobs
 - Children were forced to work unmoral jobs
 - Men were left lonely
 - “forced” into the hands of prostitutes
 - Families were ripped apart
 - In fact families were usually separated when the children were 16
 - Children got jobs
 - Daughters got married
 - Parents stayed at home or went back to work
 - Family housing
 - Families would live in tightly packed neighborhoods
 - 1/3 of working class families lived in 1 room
 - Women
 - Women who could afford to do so raised children
 - When children went to work women went back
 - Viewed by moralists as morally depredated promiscuous
 - Forced by economic circumstances into prostitution
 - 10000s were in Paris, London, Berlin and Vienna worked in elegant brothels or in the streets
 - Many were working class married woman who became pregnant and were fired from their job
 - Chronic danger to public health
 - Prostitutes checked for VD
 - Banned brothels and when it was repealed all had to go into red light districts
 - Jack the Ripper
 - Social Mobility

- Clerks working for banks, railroads, utility companies, and insurance companies moved from the working class to above the working class
 - Rags to riches tales were popular
 - Most moved from poor to working class
 - People who saved could move into a different social class that was marked by clothes you wore, and leisure activities.
 - Woman moved up classes more than men
 - Social Segregation
 - Based on class and ethnicities
 - Urban areas became mixtures of ethnicities
 - Especially in United States
 - Some jobs reserved only for members of certain nationality
 - Jews considered outsiders in Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, and Paris (among others)
 - Led to Zionist movement
- Demographic Changes
 - General Trends
 - From 1870 to 1914 population of Europe increased by half
 - Rose from 290 to 435 million
 - Most countries urbanized
 - People living in cities and towns increased
 - Urban births outnumbered deaths
 - Mortality rates fell rapidly
 - Especially among children
 - Dysentery and Diarrhea continued to kill 15 out of 100 infants born
 - White collar positions (clerks, salespeople)
 - Increased factory production altered physical structure of industrial cities
 - Characterized by greater social segregation within their limits
 - Overseas emigration
 - England
 - Big decline in infant mortality after 1900
 - Greater medical knowledge of chest and stomach infections
 - General improvement in the standard of living
 - Poor people afford to eat more nutritious food
 - Lived in warmer, drier accommodations
 - Improvements lagged in large, dirty, and industrial Cities
 - France
 - France unique plunging birthrate
 - Population increased only 15% from mid-century until 1914
 - Southwestern France- birth of a second child was one more mouth to feed
 - Division of farmland into small plots
 - Another child meant another subdivision of land
 - France no longer had primogeniture
 - Social Changes
 - Families
 - Infant mortality reduced
 - Parents sought to control number of children they had
 - Contraception movement
 - Number of families with more than two or three children fell
 - Poor families had more children than upper class

- Upper class limited births to devote more resources to the education and inheritance of each child
- Increase in births to unmarried couples or single mothers
 - Young female migrants to the city were no longer constrained by living with their parents
 - Vulnerable to men promising marriage or nothing at all
 - Unmarried women were common especially in Scotland, Ireland and Brittany in France
- Living standard improved for ordinary people in each industrialized country
 - Standards were higher in northern Europe compared to southern and eastern Europe
 - Greater in Britain than France
 - Britain- real wages continued to go up
- Workers had higher levels of consumption
 - Price of food declined
 - Increase in agricultural production and improved transportation
- Working Class
 - Working class spent half their money on food
 - ¼ less than during past several centuries
 - This left more money to spend on clothes and sometimes with some left over
 - Small-town shops were better supplied
 - Ready-made clothes sold on market with manufactured household appliances
 - Grain and meat
 - Refrigerated ships
 - Reached Europe from Australia, Canada, United States and Argentina
 - Meat was no longer considered a luxury
 - Germans now consumed 105 pounds of meat in 1912
 - From only 60 pounds in 1873
 - Germans also consumed three times more sugar

Migration and Emigration

- Background

- Worldwide movement of men and women
 - Becoming a global labor force
- Migration- permanent and seasonal
 - Italian laborers known as “swallows”
 - Spent 4 weeks a year going to and from Argentina to work the harvests
 - France- industrial workers returned to their villages to help with the harvest
 - Many miners were also part-time farmers
 - Russia- peasant-workers of Moscow and St. Petersburg kept one foot in the rural world
 - Lived on the edge of the cities, dressed like villagers, legal ties to rural commune
 - Responsible for share of commune’s tax quota
 - 1900, peasants made up 2/3 of St. Petersburg
 - City had more than 1.4 million people

- Migration

- Migration was considered a two way street
 - Migrants returned home with stories of their experiences in the cities and towns

- Different ways of speaking, knowledge of birth control, habit of reading, sports, greater political awareness and interest

- Emigration

- Emigration to other countries- social phenomenon of the age
 - Increased dramatically in late 19th century
 - Resulting from agricultural stagnation, religious persecution, and hope of finding a better life
- Peasants and laborers left Europe in search of economic opportunity in the US, Canada and Latin America
 - Ireland, Britain, Germany
 - earlier waves of emigrants
 - “hungry forties” Irish potato famine
- Late 1890’s improving economic times
 - Emigration slowed from Germany
 - Still high from Ireland
 - Increasing from Italy
- First decade of 20th century
 - Emigration from Europe rose to between 1 to 1.4 million people each year
- Many families traveled together overseas
 - Many married men went alone
 - Hoping to send for families or return after making and saving money
- Single men more than single women left
 - Many never saw families again
- “In new homes, migrants forged new collective identities, a process shaped not only by their own ethnic backgrounds and solidarities but also by conditions in their new homelands”



- Great Move to the United States

- Packed themselves on overcrowded steamers to the United States
 - Italians and Irish- New York, Boston, Philadelphia
 - Migrants to US from southern Italy- mostly likely to return again permanently
 - Almost 2/3 eventually go back
 - Russian and Polish Jews to New York’s Lower East Side
 - Portuguese to Providence and New Bedford
 - Germans and Poles to Chicago, Milwaukee, Philadelphia
- 1907
 - Italian emigrants sent back enough money to cover half the commercial deficit of their native country
- Pushed by crop failures and pulled by the US Homestead Act of 1862
 - Guaranteed land in the American West
 - Swedes, Norwegians, Finns emigrated to northern United States
 - Minnesota, and Washington State
 - Reminded them of home

- Jewish Emigration

- 1871-1914, 1.5 million Jews left Russia for US
 - Fleeing poverty and anti-Semitic violence
 - In search of freedom and jobs
- Left their homes with few cherished items and great hopes
 - Tens of thousands of Jews moved westward to European capitals
 - Retained cultural traditions, religion, language
 - Spoke Yiddish as first language