

# Summary: European Empires

## The Spread of Nationalism

The late 19th century and early 20th century were a time of change. New ideas were sweeping across Europe.

Nationalism was one of these ideas. People felt great pride for their nation and ethnic group.

During this time, more Europeans than ever before could vote. Kings and queens had held great power for centuries. But Europeans demanded the right to vote for people who would represent them. This would limit the king or queen's power. This kind of government is called a constitutional monarchy. It has a king or queen and a ruling body of elected officials.

Many Western European countries had become constitutional monarchies by the end of the 19th century. Citizens who elected their own lawmakers supported their countries. They were willing to defend their countries.

At the beginning of the 20th century, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Belgium had colonies in Asia and Africa. Colonies supplied raw materials to the ruling countries. These countries needed the raw materials to make goods in Europe. Some of the goods were also sold to people in the colonies.

This period of colonialism brought about changes. Western European nations became wealthy. They spent money building strong armies and navies. Although this was expensive, it was necessary to protect their interests.

Armies and navies helped defend borders in Europe. They also defended their colonies in other parts of the world. Ruling countries sometimes fought one another for control of the colonies and struggled to gain more territory.

Most nations of Western and Northern Europe had developed many industries by the late 1800s. However, most of Eastern Europe, including Russia, continued to rely on agriculture. These countries imported most of the goods they needed from Western and Northern Europe.

At this time, the largest empire in Eastern Europe was Austria-Hungary. Austria-Hungary was a dual monarchy. It had one ruler who ruled over two nations. Austria-Hungary also included part of the present-day countries of Romania, the Czech Republic, and Poland.

## Before You Read

Find and circle each vocabulary word.

**nationalism** *noun*, strong pride in one's nation or ethnic group

**colonialism** *noun*, a system in which a country controls colonies outside its borders

**dual monarchy** *noun*, a government with one ruler who governs two nations

## After You Read

**REVIEW** How does a constitutional monarchy differ from a democracy? Highlight the text that describes what a constitutional monarchy is.

**REVIEW** Why do you think governing a dual monarchy was difficult? Draw a box around the text that describes an example of a dual monarchy.