

Chapter 19: Technological Advances and Economics in the Global Age: 19-1f Health and Medicine

Book Title: The Earth and Its Peoples: A Global History 7th Edition Update, AP® Edition

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19-1f Health and Medicine

Health and hygiene were part of the cult of modernity. Advances in medicine—some learned on the battlefield—saved many lives. Wounds were regularly disinfected, and [Marie Curie](#) ([Polish-born Pioneer in the study of radiation and winner of Nobel Prizes for physics \(1903\) and chemistry \(1911\); first female professor at the Sorbonne. \(p. 565\)](#)) (1867–1934), the French discoverer of x-rays, organized radiology vans to help army doctors diagnose fractures during the Great War. Cities built costly water supply and sewage treatment systems. By the 1920s indoor plumbing and flush toilets were becoming common even in working-class neighborhoods.

Interest in cleanliness entered private life. Doctors and home economists bombarded women with warnings and advice on how to banish germs. Soap and appliance manufacturers filled women's magazines with advertisements for products to help keep homes and clothing spotless and meals fresh and wholesome. The decline in infant mortality and improvements in general health and life expectancy in this period owe as much to the cult of cleanliness as to advances in medicine.

Section Review

- Rickshaws transformed the transportation systems of cities in East Asia, South Asia, and the Indian Ocean littoral.
- Cinema spread rapidly outside Europe and incorporated local performance traditions.
- Photography also spread, both for artistic expression and for newspaper and magazine articles and advertisements.
- Radio developed commercially in Japan, as it did in the United States; but in most European colonies it was controlled by the government.
- After the Wright brothers' first flight, mail delivery and connection with colonies prompted the organization of airlines.
- In many countries, women gained the right to vote and led reform movements.
- The cult of cleanliness improved health.

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