**The Global 1905:**

**Facets of a Year; Facets of an Era**

0.2 – About this Module for Students

**Introduction**

1905 was a year of revolution. It was also a year of minute (and sometimes reversible) change. Often lost in the historical shadow of World War I, the events of 1905 illuminate great developments in global politics and culture, gender relationships, and provocative ideas in our understanding of our world. Mundane things happened, too. There were incremental changes in demographics and economics, and everyday people worked, had families, went to school, and experienced both great joy and sadness, excitement and boredom.

Studying the events of 1905 can give us more than a snapshot of the world at a particular point in time. They can also demonstrate that every year, every day, history happens to people and by people. Looking back, sometimes we will see events that happen earlier as connected to longer term developments. Sometimes we will see them as “dead ends.”

Over the course of the next six lessons, we will not only explore some of the things that happened in 1905, but consider how they were connected to one another, and have come to fit into the stories we tell today about how our world became the way it is. In addition, we will also consider how people experienced these events at the time, as well as how they understood and made meaning of them later on.

We designed this module to require roughly six class lessons and about twice the amount of time spent in class preparing. If it takes significantly more than that, you should talk to your professor. It may be that they can offer some useful guidance to you, or it may be that they can offer some guidance to the *History for the 21st Century* project to adjust the module for future students.

**Format**

In this module, you will work with your instructor and your fellow classmates to cover a series of events and conflicts that illustrate the major contentions of 1905 and the modern ear. Among the things we will talk about are:

* How the Japanese became “modern” very quickly in the late 19th century and surprised everyone by beating the great Russian Empire in the Russo-Japanese war of 1905, and the resulting implications for global geopolitics, the world balance of power, and Russian revolutions.
* How, in Russia, social conflicts merged with debates about the shape of governance and the inclusion of the population in it, producing a new representative political body whose failure foreshadowed further upheaval.
* How women, who had been working towards equal political rights since 1848 in Britain, saw a bill introduced into the Parliament in 1905. The bill wasn’t even allowed to come to a vote, which set off an escalation of women’s efforts that weren’t successful for another sixteen years.
* And how, when the British rulers of India decided to reconfigure the administrative structure of several regions, the Partition of Bengal stimulated the rise of Muslim resistance and broader political awareness by both Muslims and Hindus. And how these developments contributed to a reversal of the policy six years later and the eventual departure of the British.

Along the way, you will analyze sets of primary sources that capture events in the moment, as well as demonstrate how people reflected on that moment later on. In addition, you will have practiced articulating and analyzing a snapshot in a timeline, connecting events across the globe, and examined how “progress” and “modernity” have unfolded—sometimes in big steps, sometimes in small ones, and sometimes going backwards. You will end with preparing a final assignment that explains your findings.

**Learning Goals**

The key learning goals of this module are to:

* Encourage you to consider how people experience and understand events and their significance at the time they occur, and how they reflect on them later on – in essence, to understand the production of history.
* Practice thinking both about the ways the events of this single year were connected to one another, as well as the ways they were illustrative of the broader changes of modernity.

To accomplish these goals, you will also practice skills the following historical skills:

* Analyzing individual primary sources from different perspectives and moments in history.
* Synthesizing multiple historical sources to gain a fuller picture of a particular event.

**Schedule and Readings**

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| **Topic** | **Readings before the class** | **In-class activities** |
| **Before the module** | * About this Module
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| **Lesson 1: Introduction and Theorizing Empires**  | * Reading 1: An Introduction to 1905
 | * Consider the experience of events in the present and in historical memory
* Introduce features of “modernity”
* Introduce module-case-studies and key questions
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| **Lesson 2:** **Early Imperial Strategies**  | * Reading 2: The Russo-Japanese War
* Primary Sources: The Russo Japanese War
 | * Consider the historical context and events of the Russo-Japanese War
* Examine the ways individual contexts shaped interpretations and expectations of the war before, during, and after it had occurred
* Consider how the war reflected trends of the modern era
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| **Lesson 3: A Russian Revolution** | * Reading 3: A Russian Revolution
* Primary Sources: A Russian Revolution
 | * Consider the historical context of the Russian Revolution
* Use diverging accounts of events to reflect on the construction of history

Connect events happening in 1905 in different places in the world to one another, and to the larger trends of modernity |
| **Lesson 4: Women’s Suffrage in Britain** | * Reading 4: Women’s Suffrage in Britain
* Primary Sources: Women’s Suffrage in Britain
 | * Consider the historical context of the women’s suffrage movement in Britain
* Examine the arguments for and against the Women’s Enfranchisement Bill of 1905
* Consider the ways suffragettes reflected back on the significance of the bill after its failure
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| **Lesson 5: The Partition of Bengal** | * Reading 5: The Partition of Bengal
* Primary Sources: The Partition of Bengal
 | * Consider the historical context of the Partition of Bengal
* Compare sources on the partition and its causes and consequences
* Consider the ways the partition reflected the larger trends of modernity
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| **Conclusion** | * Reading 6: Conclusion
 | * Review the key questions and events of the module
* Consider how the events discussed reflect the changes of modernity
* Reflect on the interpretations of 1905 by primary source authors
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