World War I:
The "Great War"
Part I
Professor Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius

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Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of History, University of Tennessee

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius was born in Chicago, Illinois. He grew up on Chicago's Southside in a Lithuanian-American neighborhood and also spent some years attending school in Aarhus, Denmark, and Bonn, Germany. He received his B.A. from the University of Chicago. In 1989, he spent the summer in Moscow and Leningrad (today St. Petersburg) in intensive language study in Russian. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in European history in 1994, specializing in modern German history.

After receiving his doctorate, Professor Liulevicius spent a year as a postdoctoral research fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Peace, and Revolution at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. Since 1995, he has been a history professor at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and holds the Hendrickson Professorship in the College of Arts and Sciences for 2005–2007. He teaches courses on modern German history, Western civilization, Nazi Germany, World War I, war and culture, 20th-century Europe, nationalism, and utopian thought. In 2003, he received the University of Tennessee's Excellence in Teaching Award. In 2005, he was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for his research.

Professor Liulevicius's research focuses on German relations with Eastern Europe in the modern period. His other interests include the utopian tradition and its impact on modern politics, images of the United States abroad, and the history of the Baltic region. He has published numerous articles, and his first book, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in the First World War* (2000, Cambridge University Press), also appeared in German translation in 2002. His next book project is a larger study of German stereotypes of Eastern Europeans and ideas of a special German cultural mission in the East over the last two centuries, entitled *The German Myth of the East*.

Professor Liulevicius also has recorded another course with The Teaching Company, *Utopia and Terror in the 20th Century*. He lives in Knoxville, Tennessee, with his wife, Kathleen, and their son, Paul.

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World War I: The "Great War"

Scope:

The First World War came as a dreadful surprise to those who experienced it, due to its magnitude, global expanse, unprecedented violence, and shattering impact on Western civilization. This course of 36 lectures explores the continuous series of brutal surprises and shocks that the first example of a "total war" brought, a conflict not limited to armies, but pitting entire societies against each other in mortal struggle. An estimated 70 million men were mobilized and approximately 9 million died. The civilizational impact of an industrial slaughter on this scale was so significant that World War I set the 20th century on its violent course, culminating in a later, perfected total war, World War II.

We combine chronological and thematic approaches for an in-depth look at this conflict's many dimensions, integrating military history with social, political, intellectual, and cultural history. Unlike narratives of World War I that emphasize the Western Front with scant attention to other theaters, this course provides comprehensive coverage of all fronts. Likewise, we consider not only political elites and generals but also the lives of ordinary soldiers and civilians. Major themes include the surprising eagerness to plunge into mutual slaughter; the unexpected endurance of societies undergoing this ordeal; the radically different hopes and hatreds that war evoked, with remarkable contrasts in Western and Eastern Europe; and the way in which the Great War functioned as a hinge of violence, opening the door to the normalization of previously unsuspected levels of violence, including against civilians, a dynamic that hurried Europe toward renewed conflict.

Our first six lectures depict the state of Europe and the world as the 1914 cataclysm approached and then struck. We examine internal politics of the Great Powers and growing tensions among them, reacting to the expansion of German power, as well as important currents of thought (both optimistic and pessimistic) in intellectual life. We examine the slide into the abyss: origins of the July crisis, beginning with an act of terrorism in Sarajevo; historians' debates on the war's true causes and where the main responsibility lies; the striking "August Madness" celebrations; and the breakdown of longstanding military plans for short, decisive war.

The next three lectures—Seven through Nine—cover the Western Front and the surreal trench landscape that emerged there. We examine technological reasons for the stalemate that the trenches represented, desperate and costly attempts to break it, strange patterns of death and life (including tacit truces) developed by ordinary soldiers, and vain and horrific battles at Verdun, the Somme, and Ypres. Lectures Ten and Eleven cover lesser known theaters: the vast, open Eastern Front where Germans battered Russia, even as final victory eluded them, and the Southern Front, including the Alps, the Balkans, and the doomed Allied Gallipoli expedition against Ottoman Turkey.

Lectures Twelve through Fifteen take a closer look at particularly important themes. We survey combatant countries' war aims and the experience of foreign occupation. The suffering of ordinary soldiers is confronted, as we discuss military medicine, psychological traumas, and the experience of 8 million prisoners of war. Although many men broke down under the strain of combat, others exulted in it: elite storm troopers were among them, as well as two men, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, who later became dictators as they sought to recreate wartime experience. This section concludes by investigating rapidly changing technology, as machine guns, poison gas, and tanks were deployed to mass-produce death ever more efficiently.

The next three lectures—Sixteen through Eighteen—return our attention to other theaters: war in the air and at sea and surprises and confounded expectations in each. The war's global reach, its colonial dimension, and the attempt to win sympathy in world opinion are examined in detail.

Our next set of lectures concerns internal home-front politics. In comparative fashion, we note similarities as well as striking differences in how nations reacted. Lectures Nineteen to Twenty-Three reveal centralized state control of economies, societies, and propaganda to create martial enthusiasm. We cover the privations and extraordinary endurance of many societies, as well as growing signs of stress and breakdown, to understand civilian experience. New social divisions arose, threatening cohesion. Dissent could be explosive, and we explore protest and its growth or suppression. By the later years of the war, 1916–1917, a fresh remobilization of energies was needed to continue fighting.

The next five lectures cover dramatic new departures in world history created by total war. The 1915 slaughter of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire launched a series of 20th-century genocides. War's strains encouraged revolts, socialist and nationalist, radically reenvisaging the political future. In the Russian Empire, turbulent events produced the first attempt at total revolution, launching the Soviet Union's communist experiment. America's 1917 entry into the war announced a new, expansive role for the United States in world affairs, while its society was convulsed by mobilization for intervention overseas.

Lectures Twenty-Nine through Thirty-Three cover the war's immediate outcome. After the failure of Germany's last gamble and defeat, the November 11, 1918, Armistice closed the war, even as aftershocks continued: the unprecedented collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Turkish Empires, and the onset of ideological warfare among nationalists, revolutionaries, and counterrevolutionaries, in an atmosphere of European civil war. We analyze the 1919 peace settlement in Paris and the Versailles Treaty.

The last three lectures examine the war's deeper impact on Western civilization. Drawing on rich, recent scholarship in cultural history, we follow the war's echoes (and anguished questions of what it had ultimately meant) in monuments, collective rituals of commemoration, literature and art, and also in poisonous myths and conspiracy theories concerning the war. Most ominously, new and fierce ideological mass movements—spearheaded by Fascists, Nazis, and Communists—were so inspired by the experience of total war that they aimed to restructure politics along military lines and achieve permanent mobilization of state and society. Ultimately, our course concludes with a summation of the Great War's effects, its implications for the rest of the century, and the new world that it created.

Lecture One
The Century's Initial Catastrophe

Scope: This lecture presents the main themes of the course, beginning with the crucial concept of "Total War," with the First World War considered the first example of this modern phenomenon. Total war is not merely a contest between professional armies, but rather represents a clash of entire societies mobilized for total victory, including their economies, political establishments, and intellectual life. Other important themes include the roles that ideology and fervent beliefs had in the war's course and conduct, the meanings that were ascribed to the war while it was going on and in its aftermath (with great contrasts in Western and Eastern Europe), the shock of new experiences and brutalization, and the implications of the Great War for our civilization and our own times.

Outline

I. Envisioning the War

A. From the distance of nearly a century, it is both difficult and compelling to seek to envision the reality of what contemporaries called "The Great War," in part because the war did so much to shape our modern world.

B. One way to begin envisioning the experience of the war is to consider the mixed scenes that accompanied its start and its end.

1. In 1914, the war began with vast, cheering crowds, in an event called the August Madness. Yet there were also quiet leave-takings and individual foreboding.

2. In 1918, as the guns fell silent, unnatural stillness reigned over the cemeteries and battlefields. Yet elsewhere, especially in Eastern Europe, national rebirth and independence were celebrated.

C. It is also difficult to take in the magnitude of the war's scale.

1. Mass armies were mobilized, with an estimated 70 million soldiers participating in the war worldwide, of whom more than 9 million would be killed.

2. This number works out to 6,000 soldiers dying for every day of the war.

3. The precise number of deaths and casualties will likely never be known with precision.

4. Civilian casualties also remain unclear, but some estimates run to 5.95 million.

D. Even the term *World War* was unique.

1. Although earlier wars had had global dimensions, the term "world war" was used to signify the extraordinary reach of this unprecedented conflict.

2. The extent of 19th-century imperialism spread the conflict around the globe.

II. Aims of the Course

A. This course combines a thematic approach with chronological coverage.

B. It surveys cultural, social, and political as well as military history and presents a narrative balanced among all fronts rather than focused almost exclusively on the more familiar Western Front.

III. Main Themes of the Course

A. The Totality of War: Defining *Total War* as a Concept

1. *Total war* was a term coined during the war itself to sum up the all-encompassing nature of this modern industrial conflict.

2. It demanded total mobilization of mass armies, economies, societies, and the hearts and minds of people in the countries at war. In this sense, it was a people's war, not one determined by government cabinets and elites.

3. Increasingly, the stakes of total war were seen as total as well: victory or sheer defeat would be the final outcome, not compromise. The winner would be the last one standing after the drawn-out process of attrition.

4. Total war had other important implications.
    a. Because civilians were mobilized to work for their country's victory on the "home front," civilians were increasingly targets of violence as well.
    b. Total war had a crucial economic dimension, as victory would not be found on the battlefield alone. Thus economic blockades (like the British naval blockade of Germany) were an obvious tool used to deny the enemy resources.
    c. The enormous demands and strains of total war tore at societies.
    d. Gaps could grow between the soldiers in the trenches, the civilians on the home front, and the governments seeking to fight the war. Social tensions often led to the search for scapegoats in one's own midst.
5. Though the term *total war* was new, it came into its own after the war, as participants thought out the implications of what they had lived through. Unfortunately, the term became important in planning for the next war, World War II.
6. The experience of total war affected movements arising out of the ruins of the conflict. These movements were called "totalitarian" because of their total claims: Communism in Russia, Fascism in Italy, and Nazism in Germany.
7. Their ambitions were to produce completely mobilized societies, building on the lived reality of the Great War.

B. The Neglected Role of Ideology
1. World War I has often been depicted as a conflict over geopolitics and the balance of power, as opposed to World War II, which is seen as much more ideological.
2. In fact, ideas and beliefs played a crucial role throughout World War I and need to be understood.
3. Some historians in fact urge us to conceptualize a distinct "war culture" that developed over the course of the conflict. The eagerness that the war elicited was afterwards willfully forgotten.
4. Given such hopes and emotions from the very beginning, what changes followed?

C. "Meanings" of the War
1. How was war understood by those who participated in it and remembered it afterwards?
2. It is crucial to acknowledge that in the experience of contemporaries, there was a multiplicity of wars. For instance, war on the Western Front and the Eastern Front could be distinctly different.
3. Western memory of the Great War focuses on senseless sacrifice.
4. In Eastern Europe's newly independent states, by contrast, the Great War was seen as a purposeful event, producing national independence.
5. Likewise, in a related paradoxical reversal, whereas World War II is regarded as "the good war" in the West, the perspective in Eastern Europe is more ambivalent.

D. The Shock of the New and Brutalization
1. The war presented many novelties that, unfortunately, later became increasingly ordinary.
2. These novelties included new weapons, such as tanks, airplanes, and poison gas; new approaches to war that targeted civilians; genocide (the Armenian massacres); and new powers for the state and strategies for the "population policy."
3. Though extremely difficult to measure, contemporaries felt that a process of brutalization had taken place, hardening sensibilities and altering the value of human life. The war functioned as a hinge of violence in modern history.

E. Implications of the Great War
1. World War I has left its mark on us in this day in ways both small and large.
2. Its traces are in our language (in such words and phrases as *trenches*, *No Man's Land*, *going over the top*); in mundane objects, including wristwatches and trench coats; and in Daylight Savings Time.
3. On the most significant level, the war led to changes in the status of the state, society, and the individual.

4. Paradoxically, the "disillusionment" of the war also produced fierce ideological politics that led to a new "Age of Belief," with ideological choices brooking no neutrality, and culminating in World War II. (The link between the war and its political aftermath is made clear by figures whom we will encounter here and who later played roles in World War II: Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and others.)
5. The war seemingly normalized a massive brutalization of the civilization.
6. The American diplomat and historian George Kennan called it the "seminal catastrophe" of 20th century.
7. In many ways, it has shaped the world we know today: its borders, its perils, nightmares, and hopes.

IV. Overview of Individual Lectures

A. The first six lectures depict the state of Europe and the world in 1914 as the war approached.
1. We will examine the Great Powers and the growing tensions among them.
2. We will explore the causes of the war and the ultimate breakdown of plans for a short, decisive war.

B. Lectures Seven through Nine examine the Western Front and the horrors of trench warfare.

C. Lectures Ten and Eleven cover the Eastern and Southern Fronts, lesser-known but still important theaters.

D. Lectures Twelve through Fifteen look at various aspects of the war.
1. We will study the war aims of various combatant countries and the experience of foreign occupation.
2. We will look at the psychological and medical suffering of ordinary soldiers and the experience of prisoners of war.
3. We will consider the phenomenon of those who exulted in war.
4. We will investigate the technological advances that affected the war, not always for the better.

E. Lectures Sixteen through Eighteen cover the war in the air, at sea, and around the globe.

F. Lectures Nineteen through Twenty-Three concern internal politics.
1. We will look at how different nations reacted to the war.
2. We will examine the effects of propaganda, privation, and stress on the civilian populations of those nations.
3. We also study dissent within those countries and the effort to remobilize in the last years of the war.

G. Lectures Twenty-Four through Twenty-Eight examine dramatic departures in world history brought about by the war.
1. We will cover the Armenian massacres, revolts, and revolutions.
2. We will also consider the entry of the United States into the war and how our participation affected life in America and the outcome of the war.

H. Lectures Twenty-Nine through Thirty-Three cover the war's outcome and aftershocks worldwide.

I. The last three lectures look at the deeper and lasting impact of the war on Western civilization.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*.

A. J. P. Taylor, *The First World War: An Illustrated History*.

Supplementary Reading:

Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Is it possible to measure the brutalization of a civilization? If so, what criteria would track that process?
2. Is *total war* the best concept to define the two world wars of the 20th century?

Lecture Two
Europe in 1914

Scope: This lecture sets the stage for the explosion of the war in 1914 by examining the state of Europe and the world before the cataclysm. We survey the nation-states considered Great Powers (Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia) and other contenders for Great Power status. We examine the diplomatic history of their dynamic interaction, summed up in the concept of the Balance of Power, and the changes that the emergence of the German Empire caused in the international system. Worldwide imperialism, the growing arms race on land and at sea, and increasing international tensions moved Europe, after a century of general peace, toward a general war.

Outline

I. European Society and the New 20th Century

- **A.** At the start of the century, European countries were part of a self-confident civilization.
- **B.** Organized into separate nation-states and empires, Europeans nonetheless in many ways shared a common worldview.
- **C.** Within Western civilization, some states (known as Great Powers) played dominant roles in international affairs, whereas other states aspired to such a role.

II. The Great Powers

- **A.** Great Britain
  1. An industrial and commercial power that had spearheaded the Industrial Revolution, Britain also possessed a world empire that encompassed 20 percent of the world's land mass.
  2. Britain's own population was 45 million.
  3. Dependent on trade, it had made itself the preeminent naval power and preferred to maintain "splendid isolation" from the affairs of the European continent.
  4. A constitutional monarchy, Britain had a liberal government.
  5. London was the banking capital of the world.
- **B.** Germany
  1. Imperial Germany had been created by war in 1870–1871, when the German kingdom of Prussia had led German armies to victory against France.
  2. The "Iron Chancellor" Otto von Bismarck, peerless practitioner of *Realpolitik* (power politics), had engineered German unification around the hard Prussian militarist core by wars against Austria (1866) and against France.
  3. Germany became the strongest power on the continent, with proud Prussian militarist traditions. Its population was 65 million, while its booming economy likewise made it a powerhouse.
  4. The creation of the German Empire was of such importance to international affairs that it was called the "German Revolution." The related "German Question" concerned what role Germany would play in European affairs: Would it be a source of stability or instability?
  5. Bismarck pursued policies that aimed to reassure the other Great Powers of Germany's peaceful intentions.
  6. When the young Kaiser Wilhelm II of the House of Hohenzollern ascended to the throne in 1888, he soon dismissed Bismarck in 1890.
  7. Determined to win respect and status for Germany, Wilhelm II sanctioned an aggressive foreign policy that shortly alienated many powers.
  8. Though it had a parliament called the *Reichstag*, the empire was an uneasy mix of constitutionalism and authoritarianism.
  9. German domestic politics were fragmented along class, regional, and religious lines.
  10. Rapid and late industrialization, however, would also bring social disruption.

11. A new political force was the S.P.D., the Social Democratic Party of Germany. Founded in 1875, the S.P.D. adhered to Marxist ideas and was so well organized that it was a model for other socialists worldwide.

12. To the horror of German elites, the S.P.D. became the largest party in Germany in 1912.

13. Nationalist leagues (the Navy League, the Army League, the Colonial League, and the Pan-German League) agitated for more assertive foreign policy, as a way of escaping internal woes.

14. A mood of crisis and pessimism about the future pervaded German elites.

C. France

1. Once the dominant power in Europe in the 18th century, France had suffered a crucial defeat in its 1870–1871 war with Germany, downgrading its power status.

2. France remained anxious about Germany, whose population overshadowed its own of 35 million, and also longed for recovery of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine annexed by Germany.

3. France was a republic, beset by serious internal divisions among conservatives, republicans, and socialists.

4. France also had a colonial empire, through which it sought prestige to compensate for its losses in Europe.

5. France sought allies with which to oppose Germany.

D. Russia

1. Russia was an enormous multinational empire under the Romanov dynasty, spanning Europe and Asia. With a population of 164 million, it was vast in potential but still backward in development, compared with Central and Western Europe.

2. Tsar Nicholas II ruled over a traditional autocratic system that was already under strain.

3. In 1905, two disasters overtook the empire. It was defeated in the 1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War, and the Revolution of 1905 within its own borders nearly brought the regime down.

4. Russia sought to develop its potential economically and militarily, with ambitious reform plans. As the serfs had only been freed as recently as 1861, there was much ground to make up.

5. A varied revolutionary movement within Russia envisioned the overthrow of the state and the establishment of a new system, by terrorism if necessary.

6. Dissatisfied nationalities (Poles, Lithuanians, Finns, and others) saw Russia as a "prison of nations."

7. The nationalist ideology of Pan-Slavism promoted support for other Slavic nations and a leading role for Russia.

E. Austria-Hungary

1. Also a venerable old empire under the Habsburg ruling house, this multinational state of 50 million was presided over by the aged Emperor Franz Josef, who had ruled since 1848.

2. The empire consisted of twelve major ethnic groups held together by dynastic tradition and power, not nationalism, a force that Austrian leaders had feared.

3. The older empire had been reorganized into a "Dual Monarchy" of shared rule between the German-speaking Austrians and the Hungarian elites in 1867, after defeat by Prussia in 1866.

4. The demands of dissatisfied ethnic groups, underdeveloped industrialization, and anxieties as to the survival of the empire beset its leadership.

5. The Balkans were an area of special concern to the empire, both as a field of activity and potential threat.

6. Austria-Hungary's precarious position forced it into closer and closer partnership with Germany.

III. Other Countries

A. Ottoman Empire (Turkey)

1. Called the "Sick Man of Europe," its decline contrasted with its glorious past as the Islamic sultanate, ruling from North Africa to Persia.

2. Its lagging development, nationalist revolts in remaining Balkan territories, as well as the ambitions of European powers, made its future uncertain. How to deal with its expected demise was called the "Eastern Question" and occupied European diplomats.
3. In 1908, the Young Turk nationalist revolutionary movement came to power with the aim of reviving the empire.
4. Turkey came increasingly under German influence, with military advisors, railway projects, and counsel.

B. Italy
1. Italian lands were unified under the House of Savoy from 1860.
2. With a population of 36 million, Italy had ambitions for Great Power status but faced internal problems of underdevelopment and political disunity.
3. Italian nationalists still longed for territories they called *Irredenta* (unredeemed lands) at the expense of Austria-Hungary. Colonial rivalries with France also created international animosity.

C. Serbia
1. The kingdom of Serbia was a proud state that had gained independence from the Ottoman Empire.
2. Its ambition was to lead a Balkan league uniting South Slavs under Serbian patronage.
3. Russia supported Serbia and signed an alliance in 1903.

D. Japan
1. In a remarkable self-willed transformation, Japan adopted Western technology after the 1868 Meiji Restoration.
2. Determined to become an imperialist contender, Japan went to war with China in 1894 and Russia in 1904, and annexed Korea in 1910.

E. United States
1. Separated by the Atlantic Ocean, the United States did not figure prominently in European affairs.
2. Its industrial development was striking, having overtaken both Great Britain and Germany in steel production by the start of the century.
3. In military terms, its power was potential.

IV. The Balance of Power

A. The *balance of power* is the name given to the dynamic interrelation of the Great Powers.
1. It signifies a balance among powers with none able to dominate the others as a hegemon. Other powers unite in coalitions to resist such a hegemon.
2. Such a balance was inaugurated after the 1648 Treaty of Westphalia and the recognition of sovereign states.
3. The Congress of Vienna of 1815 institutionalized the balance of power as a principle of harmony and conservative solidarity, under the guidance of Prince Clemens von Metternich.
4. This system, the Concert of Europe, broke down with the Crimean War, 1854–1856, and the wars that followed.
5. The result was now a looser and more competitive scene. Whether equilibrium could be maintained depended to a great extent on the new Germany's role.

B. A wave of "High Imperialism" from the 1880s led to a scramble for colonies, carving up Africa and Asia.
1. Britain and France were particular colonial rivals, and Britain and Russia also mistrusted one another in Central Asia.
2. Germany had not participated actively in this colonial competition under Bismarck, a reflection of his policy of restraint in international politics, soon to be reversed by Kaiser Wilhelm II.

C. With growing tensions in imperial contests and with a more aggressive German foreign policy from 1890, arms races resulted.
1. On the seas, Germany built the world's second largest fleet, touching off a naval arms race with the largest fleet, Britain's. At vast expense, a new generation of Dreadnought battleships was launched.

2. On land, mass armies were built up by France, Germany, and Russia. From 1890 to 1914, European armies doubled in size.
3. Hand in hand with increased numbers of men and equipment went carefully calibrated, minute planning for military operations in anticipation of the next war. Railway timetables and speed were emphasized.

Essential Reading:
John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 1–23.

Supplementary Reading:
Annika Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus*.

Questions to Consider:
1. Was the balance of power a good thing or a bad thing? Why?
2. Could the tensions leading up to 1914 have been settled by negotiation? Why or why not?

Lecture Three
Towards Crisis in Politics and Culture

Scope: This lecture probes the deeper forces pushing a previously coherent European civilization toward crisis and world war. We examine first the distinctive ideas and mindsets of the day and then turn to the premonitions noted by insightful contemporaries of coming disaster. In politics, a new orientation toward public opinion and the role of the masses was strengthened. Social Darwinist celebrations of the "survival of the fittest" led to views of war as a form of hygiene. Even trends in socialist thought took on apocalyptic tendencies in expectation of total social upheaval. Last, we turn to examine the illusions of war and peace: misconceptions about the nature of the conflict to come, its alleged promises of glory and transcendence, and heroes "home by Christmas."

Outline

I. Ideas and Mindsets

A. Progress

1. European cultural confidence was based on the prized notion of progress.

2. Enormous visible progress had taken place in the sciences, medicine, and industry.

3. A second wave of industrial advance from 1871, called the Second Industrial Revolution, brought accelerating change.

4. Science also lent prestige to Social Darwinist thought and "scientific" racism, undergirding imperialist domination of non-Western peoples.

5. A proud symbol of technological progress that turned into a troubling portent was the RMS *Titanic*, a ship, which, as a tremendous technical accomplishment, seemed invulnerable, scorning the elements until it hit an iceberg and sank in 1912 with more than 1,500 killed. This example of technology running ahead of understanding would be repeated in World War I.

B. Liberalism

1. An ideology that identified itself with progress was classical liberalism, with origins in the Enlightenment and strongly represented in the middle classes.

2. Liberalism was a faith in individual freedom and individualism, constitutional restraints on a limited state, capitalism and free trade, with progress growing out of competition in the marketplace of ideas and economics.

C. Nationalism

1. An extremely important ideology, nationalism had often turned from its revolutionary and liberal origins to forms that were chauvinistic.

2. Originally a message of liberation, it was used by nation-states to reinforce governmental legitimacy.

3. In places where "submerged peoples" clamored for self-determination, nationalism could be an explosive force, especially in multinational empires like Russia and Austria-Hungary.

4. By the later 19th century, notions of hierarchies of peoples, of "rising" and "declining" races were commonplace.

D. Conservatism

1. Resisting liberal ideologies, but incorporating nationalist ideas when they could, some European regimes and parties championed conservatism.

2. Whereas in Britain this political development took the form of evolutionary conservatism that was open to change, on the continent, meanwhile, aristocratic privilege and caste took pride of place in the empires.

E. Socialism

1. Karl Marx (1818–1883) had promulgated a "scientific socialism," promising an international workers' revolution, the dictatorship of the proletariat, abolition of private property, and a classless utopia to follow.

2. Especially in Germany, a powerful and disciplined Social Democratic movement grew up.
3. Socialism could be either feared or hoped for. The *Internationale*, the anthem of the movement, foretold an imminent "final battle."

II. Politics

A. The effect of politics on the masses bears some consideration.

1. Since the French Revolution of 1789, politics implied appeals to the masses for legitimacy, even if only on the level of rhetoric.
2. Increased participation of larger groups in politics transformed its dynamics.

B. Such participation could lead to acceptance of conflict.

1. The ideologies of liberalism, nationalism, conservatism, and even socialism could all implicitly be used to justify acceptance of competition or conflict.
2. The feared opposite of vigorous competition was decline and degeneration, a besetting anxiety of the age.
3. This anxiety affected views of war.

C. Such views bring us to the topic of militarism.

1. War was often seen as a test of national identity and worth.
2. Militarism, defined as the supremacy of the armed forces' code of virtues over that of civilian society, was visible in many European countries, but especially identified with Germany and its Prussian elite, including Kaiser Wilhelm II.
   a. Historians speak of a feudalization and brutalization of the German middle classes, as they imitated the Junker officer aristocracy.
   b. German students prized dueling scars.
   c. The respect shown to reserve officers emphasized the status of the German military.
   d. Pressure groups and nationalist leagues demanded aggressive foreign policy and increased military expenditures.
   e. The person of Kaiser Wilhelm II, with his love of uniforms, parades, and aggressive rhetoric, symbolized this militaristic tendency best.
   f. Not all Germans subscribed to these militarist values.

D. To some, war appeared as a way out of political crisis or social stalemate.

III. Culture

A. Social Darwinism

1. Disturbing trends in the culture included Social Darwinism, which praised the "survival of the fittest" and the "struggle for survival."
2. Some saw war as a form of social hygiene, condemning peace as enervating.

B. Misconceptions on the Nature of Modern War

1. War was often thought of as short, fast, and glorious. Absurdly romanticized popular depictions seconded this view.
2. At the same time, there were many hints that the future war would in fact take on a very different visage.
3. The Russo-Japanese War of 1904–1905 and the American Civil War had seen trenches, the devastating impact of modern military technologies, and facets of total war.
4. Only racist condescension obscured the dreadful lessons of imperial conquests of non-European peoples. In the 1898 Battle of Omdurman, British forces had annihilated a far larger Sudanese force with Maxim guns.
5. It was also expected that war could be restrained. The Geneva Conventions of 1864 and 1906 and the Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907 outlined rules for "civilized warfare," including protecting civilians and prisoners and banning some new weapons like poison gas.

C. Celebrations and Fears

1. In European popular culture, an extensive speculative literature and pulp fiction forecast "the next war."
2. In Italy, the Futurist movement's 1910 manifesto praised technology, speed, danger, and war as escapes from a boring, orderly world.
3. In Paris in 1913, Stravinsky's ballet *Rite of Spring* shocked the public with its novelty and its startling theme of human sacrifice.
4. Challenging the order and respectability of 19th-century society, the life-philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche (1844–1900) celebrated strength, the will to power, moral adventure "beyond good and evil," toward the goal of evolving the superman, the *Übermensch*.
5. In Germany, the *Wandervogel* movement of back-to-nature hikers spearheaded generational revolt and longed for a world remade by idealism.

IV. Readying for War

A. According to the eminent military historian John Keegan, turn-of-the-century Europe was "pregnant with war."

B. Military planning was increasingly important.

1. In its 1870–1871 victory over France, the Prussian army had seemingly demonstrated the key to military success: universal conscription, large reserves, and scientific precision in planning to achieve speedy mobilization.
2. As a result, military planning in all the Great Powers grew ever more detailed, dominated by railroad timetables. Mobilization increasingly implied war, as, once started, plans had to unfold.
3. If speed was crucial, it underlined the importance of putting the maximum force into the first blow.
4. The German army's secret Schlieffen Plan, sought to deal with the geopolitical problem of Germany's exposed position and the potential for war on two fronts.
5. The plan was crafted by General Alfred von Schlieffen, chief of the German general staff from 1891–1905.
6. Its aim was to knock out France in 42 days by a sweeping movement of armies through neutral Belgium and Holland, plunging through northern France, to encircle French armies and Paris. Afterward, German armies would turn to face the slower Russian foe.
7. Its disregard for political and diplomatic realities made it a clear example of militaristic abstraction.
8. The French Plan XVII projected a victorious reconquest of the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.
9. Russian plans for the attack on Germany were prepared.

C. All of this planning was given further impetus by the cult of the offensive.

1. In a counterpoint to military planning and technocratic organization was the emphasis on the spirit of attack, called the cult of the offensive.
2. Generals and officers argued that fiercely dedicated soldiers could overrun their enemies even against greater odds.
3. Training emphasized bayonet drill and attack.
4. In the French case, the crucial quality of spirit was called "*élan vital*" and implied all-out extreme attack, to compensate for France's smaller population.
5. Once the largest nation in Europe, France by 1914 could field only 60 percent of German potential manpower.
6. The young officer Charles de Gaulle proclaimed in 1913, "Everywhere, always, one should have a single idea: to advance."

Essential Reading:

Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, pp. 1–54.

Supplementary Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 24–47.

Questions to Consider:

1. What forces worked against a readiness for war in Europe?
2. Which aspect of European culture was most problematic and troubling before 1914?

Lecture Four
Causes of the War and the July Crisis, 1914

Scope: Fierce debate has surrounded the causes of the war ever since it took place. In this lecture, we consider first the prehistory of growing tensions in European foreign affairs. Next we analyze the immediate events that led to war, from the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary at Sarajevo in June 1914 to the diplomatic chain reactions that followed in the July Crisis. We weigh the dominant positions in debates on the origins of the war, including the crucial Fischer Debate on Germany's role and intentions in the unleashing of the conflict. Who or what ultimately was responsible for the outbreak of the war?

Outline

I. Analysis of Causes

- **A.** Because tipping over into war in 1914 is a classic case of escalation, it is urgent to understand how it happened.
- **B.** The inquiry has led to one of the most voluminous debates in historical scholarship, with many hundreds of books on the topic.
- **C.** Debates concern questions of whether long-term or short-term factors predominated, the role of individuals versus structural factors, intention versus miscalculation, and clear culpability versus collective responsibility.

II. Prehistory

- **A.** Events unfolding in 1914 built on earlier diplomatic history.
- **B.** German unification in 1871 changed the balance of power.
  - **1.** Bismarck's often secret diplomacy sought to reinforce stability and make Germany indispensable to European order.
  - **2.** The conservative Three Emperors' League that Bismarck crafted in 1873 to join Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia failed.
  - **3.** Bismarck then set up the Dual Alliance with Austria-Hungary in 1879. Joined by Italy in 1882, this became the Triple Alliance.
  - **4.** At the same time, Bismarck also signed a secret Reinsurance Treaty with Russia in 1887.
  - **5.** When Bismarck departed in 1890, this special tie with Russia was dropped.
  - **6.** In 1894, contrary to German expectations, Russia and France entered into a military alliance.
  - **7.** In terms of the balance of power, at this point a German-British alliance would have made most sense.
  - **8.** Britain grew worried by its isolation and sought allies, among them Japan in 1902.
  - **9.** However, Wilhelm II announced a new course called *Weltpolitik* (world policy) in 1897 and began construction of a great fleet.
  - **10.** Britain approached its traditional rival, France, and settled colonial frictions in the 1904 *Entente Cordiale*, from which further cooperation would develop.
  - **11.** German diplomats provoked colonial crises over Morocco in 1905 and 1911, which cemented French and British cooperation and increased suspicion of Germany.
  - **12.** In 1907, Britain and Russia settled their conflicts.
  - **13.** From 1907, increasingly rigid alliances bestrode the European continent: the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) and the Triple Entente (France, Russia, and Britain).

III. Balkan Crises

- **A.** It is sometimes said that World War I started as the Third Balkan War.
- **B.** As Ottoman control receded before the power of nationalist independence movements in Serbia, Bulgaria, and Romania, the region became a power vacuum in which both Austria-Hungary and Russia got involved.

C. Austria-Hungary considered it imperative to impede Serbian ambitions, lest the empire's own South Slavs be drawn to Pan-Slavism.

D. In the 1885 Bulgarian Crisis, Germany supported Austria-Hungary, leading to worsening German-Russian relations and breakdown of the Three Emperors' League.

E. The Balkan Wars then followed, with increased tension.

1. In 1908, Austria annexed Bosnia-Hercegovina, which it had administered since 1878. Serbia, coveting the area, was infuriated, but when Germany supported Austro-Hungary, Serbia and its patron Russia were humiliated and backed down, but resolved not to do so again.

2. In 1912, a Balkan League of Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Greece expelled the Ottoman Empire from most of the Balkans and then fell out over the spoils in the Second Balkan War of 1913, with the former allies fighting with Bulgaria.

3. Serbia's size doubled, but it still lacked access to the Adriatic and wanted union with Serbs in Bosnia.

4. These unresolved conflicts provided an explosive mixture.

IV. July Crisis

A. Sarajevo

1. World War I began due to a terrorist act.

2. Obviously, however, other factors came into play, as earlier assassinations had not led to world wars.

3. On June 28, 1914, the Habsburg heir, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, were assassinated by Gavrillo Princip, an 18-year-old student affiliated with a Serbian underground group, the Black Hand, whose motto was "Union or Death."

4. Although not organized by Serbia's government, the Black Hand was supported by the head of Serbian military intelligence, Col. Dragutin Dimitrijevic, a.k.a. "Apis," a mysterious figure.

5. The Archduke's visit to Sarajevo on the day commemorating the Serbian nationalist anniversary of the 1389 defeat of Kosovo was extremely ill-timed.

B. Ultimatums

1. The Austro-Hungarian government saw the assassination as an opportunity to stage a showdown with Serbia.

2. When Austria-Hungary inquired whether Germany would support a responsive action, the German leadership gave a "blank check" of support on July 5, 1914, although the risk of general war was present.

3. On July 23, Austria-Hungary presented a deliberately unacceptable ultimatum to Serbia, to be accepted in 48 hours.

4. On July 25, Serbia accepted most conditions.

5. On July 28, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia.

6. To support Russia's Serbian ally, Tsar Nicholas ordered full mobilization on July 30.

7. On July 31, Germany sent Russia an ultimatum to stop its mobilization within 12 hours or face war.

8. Events show the importance of military planning: When Kaiser Wilhelm II suggested not going to war in the west as well, his panicked generals, having no other plans, had no response.

C. War Declared

1. On August 1, Germany declared war on Russia.

2. On August 2, Germany delivered an ultimatum to Belgium to allow German troops to pass through its territory.

3. Britain, which had repeatedly proposed mediation or peace conferences, now communicated to Germany that, if Belgian neutrality were violated, Britain would go to war.

4. On August 3, Germany declared war on France and on August 4 invaded Belgium, putting the Schlieffen Plan into action.

5. On August 4, Britain entered the war, officially for "Little Belgium," whose neutrality it had guaranteed in 1839 (which Bethmann-Hollweg called "a scrap of paper"), but also for its importance to the balance of power.
6. Italy stayed out of the war, tending to "sacred egoism."
7. By August 4, 1914, this war had become a general one, which Europe had not seen in a century.
8. The Central Powers (Germany and Austria-Hungary) faced off against the Allies (France, Great Britain, and Russia).

V. Debate on Causes

A. Debate began with the war itself.
1. Governments published "colored books" claiming justification.
2. Scholarly debates have undergone enormous shifts.

B. One key formulation was the War Guilt Clause, part of the Versailles Treaty.
1. The Versailles Treaty at the end of the war claimed in Article 231 that Germany and its allies were solely responsible for launching the war.
2. Reflecting wartime sentiment, the clause also justified reparations.

C. In the 1920s and 1930s, the notion of a collective responsibility became prominent.
1. In the interwar years, as international tensions relaxed, opinions shifted toward the notion of shared responsibility.
2. British wartime leader David Lloyd George suggested that all European states "slithered over the edge" into war.

D. In the 1960s, the Fischer Debate renewed the question of the causes of the war.
1. Renewed debate exploded in 1961 when German historian Fritz Fischer's *Grab for World Power* (published in English as *Germany's Aims in the First World War*) argued that Germany launched the war to become a superpower and developed war aims that anticipated the Nazis.
2. In the furious confrontations that followed, the debate itself changed. Fischer's critics came to argue that Germany miscalculated its gamble, rather than that the country intended world war.
3. In a later book, Fischer claimed Germany had planned war from 1912.

E. Other explanations have also been advanced by historians through the years.
1. Other interpretations stressed different causal factors.
2. Did alliances themselves cause the war? "Secret diplomacy" was denounced after the war as a crucial factor.
3. Did arms races and military planning cause the war by forcing a timetable? Henry Kissinger argues that alliances and mobilization plans created a "Doomsday Machine."
4. Was war an accident, as British historian A. J. P. Taylor argued, turning politicians into "prisoners of their own weapons?"
5. Was imperialism the cause? Although colonial competition certainly poisoned the atmosphere, earlier clashes were negotiated.
6. Was capitalism the cause, as Marxists argued? On the contrary, German industry's dominance grew in peacetime.
7. Though this is not a scholarly theory, were the Balkans to blame (as some hinted during the Balkan wars of the 1990s)? Rather, outside involvement of the Great Powers was the crucial variable.

F. Where does the current interpretation of the causes of the war stand today?
1. Most scholars today see Germany as bearing the main responsibility for the war, as it was willing to risk general war, though not aiming for it.
2. Even as Germany is seen as mainly responsible, some degree of responsibility is shared by other actors in this tragedy.
3. Although Fischer moved the debate forward on war aims, his arguments on intentions are not accepted.

4. The debate continues today.

VI. Fatalism

A. A shared sense of fatalism and misunderstanding as to the true nature of modern war among Europe's political leaders helped *make* the war inevitable, if it had not already been so.

B. The compulsion to think the unthinkable was expressed in the German saying, "Better a terrible end than endless terror." Contemporaries were about to discover that one could have both.

Essential Reading:

Annika Mombauer, *The Origins of the First World War: Controversies and Consensus*.

Supplementary Reading:

Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, pp. 168–217.

A. J. P. Taylor, *The First World War: An Illustrated History*, pp. 13–20.

Questions to Consider:

1. If Wilhelm II had not been Kaiser, would war still have broken out?
2. Was there too much or not enough secret diplomacy before 1914?

Lecture Five
The August Madness

Scope: Turning to the intriguing realm of mass psychology, we seek to plumb the so-called "August Madness," the hysterical celebration of the outbreak of war that took place in European capitals. Crowds paraded in the streets and squares with songs and flags, while young men rushed to volunteer. Historians are now questioning how widespread this emotional outburst really was. We will analyze new research and assess the variety of reactions to the start of the war, including the avowal of domestic truces in an exalted mood of national unity (soon to break down), paranoid waves of spy manias, and tempered anxieties about what was to come.

Outline

I. The Myth of the August Madness

- **A.** By "myth," historians mean not outright falsifications but rather powerful shared conceptions that command belief in a society.
- **B.** The events of late July and August 1914 were mythologized and invoked repeatedly throughout the war and after.
- **C.** In August 1914, with the declarations of war, scenes of jubilant excitement played out in Paris, London, St. Petersburg, Vienna, and especially in Berlin on Unter den Linden Boulevard.
  - **1.** Crowds cheered, waved national flags, and sang national anthems and patriotic songs.
  - **2.** Contemporaries celebrated a feeling of social unity, with internal differences swept away.
  - **3.** In sociological terms, society (*Gesellschaft*) was supposed to have turned into a true community (*Gemeinschaft*).
  - **4.** Many nationalist hopes of achieving true inner unity were vested in cementing these emotions.
  - **5.** Beyond this, the breaking of the feverish anxiety of waiting produced hysterical relief.
  - **6.** For some, war could be a redemption from ordinary life or social crises.
  - **7.** Expectations of heroism and glory played a role.
  - **8.** Some were simply caught up in the mood of excitement.
- **D.** The memory of these events was politically instrumentalized in many different ways afterward as the "Spirit of 1914."

II. Recent Research

- **A.** Recent study has strongly qualified these collective memories.
- **B.** Historians have pointed out that the enthusiasm was strongest among the middle class and elites, students, and in urban centers.
  - **1.** In rural areas and frontier regions, there were more sober reactions and worried anticipation.
  - **2.** Men were more strongly affected than women.
  - **3.** There was also public opposition to the war, so this reaction was not monolithic.
  - **4.** Ethnic minorities in the empires lacked this enthusiasm.
  - **5.** Jaroslav Hasek's comic classic, *Good Soldier Svejk*, lampooned the August Madness.
- **C.** Historian Jeffrey Verhey notes that less than one percent of Berlin participated in the fabled first mass gatherings.
- **D.** Clearly, one needs to speak of a range of reactions to the outbreak of the war.
- **E.** Nonetheless, after qualifications, this outburst, and especially how it was later used, need further investigation.

III. Spontaneous Mobilization

- **A.** Many intellectuals and artists have left testimonies as to how they were caught up in the initial enthusiasm.

1. These people included the psychologist Sigmund Freud, the German historian Friedrich Meinecke, and the British poet Rupert Brooke.
2. The Austrian writer Stefan Zweig, though passionately antiwar, recalled these first hours of war as rapturous.

B. All the warring powers claimed to be acting in self-defense.

IV. Social Reactions

A. Inner Truces

1. In all the combatant countries, "domestic truces" were ceremoniously declared, pledging to put aside internal conflicts in this time of emergency. They were not to last.
2. In France, a *Union Sacrée* ("sacred union") was declared.
3. In Russia, imperial unity was invoked.
4. In Germany, the inner truce was called the *Burgfrieden*, recalling the unanimity of a besieged castle.
5. Kaiser Wilhelm II famously announced that he no longer saw people of different parties or religions, but "only Germans."
6. In the *Reichstag* parliament, the German Social Democratic Party voted for the war by authorizing credits, revealing its own nationalism.
7. In the exalted mood, German Jews participated fully in this mood of nationalism, though they continued to face social discrimination and anti-Semitism.
8. Germany would need this inner truce, as the British naval blockade would begin to bite and grind down the economy, with painful sacrifices required.

B. Inner Paranoia

1. Wartime societies also evidenced strong paranoia about the crisis and feared disruptive forces within. This was a worrying portent of the singling out of minorities.
2. Absurd epidemics of spy chases and a mania for denunciations (called "*Spionitis*" in Germany) set in.
3. Enthusiasts demanded a cleansing of languages from enemy influence.
4. In Russia, German-sounding St. Petersburg was renamed Petrograd.
5. The British royal family (with the German name of the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha) assumed the name of Windsor.
6. Signs on shops became targets.

C. Spontaneous Propaganda

1. It is a truism of research in propaganda that it is most effective when building on things that people already believe.
2. In this case, self-propaganda took place, as an enormous and spontaneous wave of testimonials to the justice of one's own cause arose, at first without governmental urging.
3. The universal claim of going to war in righteous self-defense was an effective rallying cry.
4. In the first months of the war, more than a million war poems were published in German newspapers.
5. Governments would later learn to harness this enthusiastic impulse in systematic ways.
6. The self-mobilizing impulse proved crucial over the next years in sustaining morale and determination.
7. The churches played an ambivalent role in this enthusiasm.

V. The Failure of International Socialism

A. Contrary to expectations, the international socialist movement, which had earlier pledged internationalist unity, broke down with the outbreak of war.

1. At the 1907 Stuttgart conference, the Socialist International promised to stop a capitalist war, perhaps with a general strike.
2. In practice, socialists discovered that their patriotism trumped their earlier ideological avowals.

B. Surprised by the outbreak of war, the Russian Bolshevik revolutionary Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov, known as Lenin, was living in exile in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, where he was disgusted with this socialist failure.

1. Ironically, he was at first arrested as a suspected Russian spy.

2. Lenin was able to leave for neutral Switzerland.

3. Lenin saw the war as the final crisis of capitalism and unsentimentally advocated that the war among the Great Powers be converted into a worldwide civil war of classes.

VI. Mobilizations

A. The Great Powers mobilized and volunteering stations were crowded.

B. Throughout Europe, 20 million men were mobilized.

Essential Reading:

Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, pp. 55–94.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*, pp. 1–82.

Jeffrey Verhey, *The Spirit of 1914: Militarism, Myth and Mobilization in Germany*.

Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday: An Autobiography,* pp. 214–237.

Questions to Consider:

1. What forces worked most effectively against enthusiasm for war?

2. Under what circumstances would Lenin's message become more appealing?

Lecture Six
The Failed Gambles—War Plans Break Down

Scope: The opening stages of the war were marked on all sides by surprises, shocks, and the failure of established war plans. This lecture follows the logic of the plans of the Great Powers, especially the German Schlieffen Plan (a bold blueprint for victory on two fronts, but with disastrous political implications) and the proud French Plan XVII, which aimed to seize the initiative against Germany and win nationalist redemption for lost French territories. Next, we observe the collapse of these military plans in practice, replaced by a desperate defense of France (the Miracle of the Marne River), German atrocities in Belgium and northern France, an improvised "Race to the Sea," and an unexpected German victory in Eastern Europe at the titanic Battle of Tannenberg.

Outline

I. The Plans in Abstract and Surprises

A. The opening stages of the war were marked by tremendous violence and surprises that left commanders baffled.

1. Six million men were rushed into the initial collisions of the war.

2. This Battle of the Frontiers, which lasted from August 14 to September 6, 1914, saw the failure of prepared plans. Some historians consider it the biggest battle in history.

3. German forces were directed by Helmuth von Moltke (the younger). General Joseph Joffre commanded French forces, and the British Expeditionary Force was under Sir John French.

B. Let us look first at the Schlieffen Plan.

1. The plan was developed long before the war, by 1905, by General Alfred von Schlieffen (1833–1913), chief of staff 1891–1905.

2. It was a sweeping, bold plan for victory in a two-front war, which called for first destroying France and then turning on Russia. It called for the violation of Belgian and Dutch neutrality to achieve surprise in the attack on France, arcing around Paris to achieve victory in six weeks.

3. Moltke altered the plan's emphasis on a huge concentration of force on the right flank. Declining to invade Holland, he drew off troops to the Eastern Front and diverted other forces to Lorraine.

4. Debate continues today concerning the practicability of the plan, as troops outdistanced their own supplies and artillery and were expected to march 20–30 miles a day.

C. Now we turn to the French Plan XVII.

1. The French plan, endorsed by Joffre, called for an attack to regain the lost territories of Alsace-Lorraine, avenging the humiliating defeat of 1871.

2. Stressing the cult of the offensive, the plan underestimated German reserves and actually played into the Schlieffen Plan's expectations.

D. In practice, both plans broke down.

1. Launched August 14th, the French plan broke against German defenses, and the French suffered enormous losses of the best officers and men.

2. The Schlieffen Plan at first seemed to be succeeding, but then broke down in the Miracle of the Marne.

II. In Action

A. The Miracle of the Marne

1. On August 4, 1914, German troops invaded Belgium, then France, and by early September were at the Marne River, some 20 miles from Paris.

2. German advance was hampered by Belgian resistance, destruction of railroads, and fear of snipers (leading to atrocities).

3. On August 7, a younger officer named Erich Ludendorff captured the main Liège citadel, as heavy guns demolished other forts.

4. As German armies approached, the French government fled to Bordeaux.

5. Contrary to German expectations, the British Expeditionary Force mobilized quickly and was thrown into battle. After reaching Mons, British and French forces moved back in a fast retreat.

6. A gap opened up between the advancing German armies, the First Army under General von Kluck (which altered its planned direction) and the Second Army under General von Bülow.

7. French and British forces counterattacked on the Marne from September 6–10. The fabled effort included troops brought in taxicabs from Paris.

8. Following an order by Colonel Hentsch, German forces fell back to the Aisne River and dug in.

9. Though these were shallow trenches, German forces could hold off attackers and the war of the trenches began.

B. Outcomes

1. The Schlieffen Plan had failed. Germany would now face war on many fronts.

2. As a result of this failure, Minister of War General Erich von Falkenhayn replaced Moltke as Chief of German General Staff on September 14.

III. "Race to the Sea"

A. The next stage of the war, October–November 1914, was called the "race to the sea," but was actually a series of attempts to turn the flank of the enemy until the front reached the English Channel and the North Sea (Antwerp fell on October 11).

B. At the First Battle of Ypres ("Wipers" to British soldiers), October 18–November 22, British forces repelled German attacks. At the Yser River, Belgians opened sluices, flooding the battlefield.

C. Failed French winter offensives in the Champagne region followed.

IV. Atrocities

A. The German advance through Belgium and northern France was marked by atrocities that were disastrous for German standing in international opinion.

B. German forces panicked at the prospect of civilian resistance and suspected snipers.

C. Confused incidents led to atrocities.

1. Recent research shows that during their invasion of Belgium and France, German troops killed more than 6,000 civilians as suspected guerrilla fighters or in taking reprisals. This total included men, women, and children.

2. The Belgian university city of Louvain, including its library, was burned on August 25–28, 1914, and hundreds of civilians killed.
3. Reims Cathedral was shelled September 19, 1914.
4. The Allies effectively argued that these incidents showed Germans to be "barbarians" and "Huns."

V. Surprise Victories in the East

A. Ironically, as war plans in the West were overturned, unexpected victories resulted on the Eastern Front, after initial disasters.

B. Seeking to aid their French ally, Russian armies moved against East Prussia, as well as against Austria, earlier than German planners had expected. East Prussia had been left lightly guarded, as part of a calculated risk.

1. As the Russian armies occupied German territory, German commanders panicked and prepared for a mass retreat.
2. Two new generals were sent to East Prussia as replacements: the elderly General Paul von Hindenburg and his chief of staff Erich Ludendorff.
3. Together with Lieutenant Colonel Max Hoffmann, these generals scored a vast victory against the Russians at the Battle of Tannenberg, August 26–30, 1914.

C. Hindenburg and Ludendorff were hailed as saviors and became German war heroes (later essentially war dictators).

D. This German victory could not hide the failure of the initial plans for the war. At great cost, Russia had made a vast contribution to the French war effort by drawing away troops from the Schlieffen Plan.

VI. Verdict

A. With the failure of war plans, the war took on unfamiliar forms and patterns.

B. Historians debate whether Germany had already lost the war in a strategic sense, facing a long war on many fronts. In economic terms, the Central Powers were seriously outmatched by the Allies in this industrial war, and the British naval blockade threatened to choke the Central Powers.

C. Tactical victories might not alter the strategic equation.

D. The unfamiliarity of this form of war would have devastating results in practice.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 48–137.

Supplementary Reading:

John Horne and Alan Kramer, *German Atrocities 1914: A History of Denial*.

Jack Snyder, *The Ideology of the Offensive: Military Decision Making and the Disasters of 1914*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How would the war have unfolded if the Schlieffen Plan had been more successful?
2. Why was there no negotiated peace at the end of 1914, when all military plans had failed?

Lecture Seven
The Western Front Experience

Scope: The Western Front was soon frozen into immobile front lines hundreds of miles long, static trench warfare, and a horrific slaughter resulting from attempts to break this deadlock. We outline the reasons for a crucial phenomenon, which contemporaries only slowly came to understand and at great price: the superiority of the defensive position in this war due to the state of military technology. Despite the ways in which the American Civil War and Russo-Japanese War (1904–05) had hinted at this development, commanders in World War I showed appalling incomprehension of the reality unfolding before them and at first blindly ordered frontal attacks against machine guns and barbed wire. To their minds, a breakthrough would at last allow sweeping offensives and glorious cavalry charges: these never came. We survey the horrific record of these initial attacks and the psychology behind them, including the 1914 Battle of Langemarck.

Outline

I. Deadlock Established

- **A.** It was (or should have been) clear that by the winter of 1914–1915, deadlock had descended on the Western Front, stretching some 500 miles, from the Channel to the Swiss border.
- **B.** The Western Front experience that unfolded, though little understood at first, left a decisive imprint on modern consciousness.
- **C.** Though the form of this war was unfamiliar, aspects of the American Civil War (1861–1865) and the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) anticipated this modern industrial conflict.
- **D.** Attempts to break the deadlock led to debate about where decisive victory could be won. Both among the Allies and the Central Powers, "Westerners" and "Easterners" championed very different solutions.

II. The World of the Trenches

- **A.** The trench landscape was marked by increasingly elaborate earthworks and fortifications, but the simple product of barbed wire played an important role.
- **B.** Between the opposing lines of trenches lay a territory called No Man's Land.
  - **1.** It was usually about 275 yards across, but in some places the trenches lay much closer together.
  - **2.** Smaller trenches were dug into this territory for observation, scouting, or launching attacks.
- **C.** Trench lines represented a crucial feature of this war.
  - **1.** The front line was dug in zigzag pattern.
  - **2.** Wooden boards covered the bottom of the trench, and a "fire step" was used for observing and shooting.
  - **3.** Lines were punctuated by machine gun nests, mortar batteries, and concrete pill boxes.
  - **4.** Behind the front line were many other lines: support lines, reserve lines, and retreat lines.
  - **5.** The complexity of these lines required maps or guides.
  - **6.** Bunkers were built to house up to a dozen men.
  - **7.** Further behind these lines were the heavy artillery positions.
  - **8.** Soldiers in the front lines were exposed to the weather, as the trenches were often wet and sometimes flooded. Mud made it difficult to move across the landscape.
  - **9.** Rats and vermin proliferated.
  - **10.** Existence in the trenches was marked by vast boredom, punctuated by acute terror and horror.
- **C.** Gunfire traversed the landscape.
  - **1.** Machine guns, developed in the 1880s, had a range of more than 1,000 yards and fired 600 rounds per minute.
  - **2.** One machine gun crew could hold off masses of enemies.
  - **3.** New recoilless artillery was an important advance.

D. On April 22, 1915, German forces used poison gas at Ypres. The yellowish-green clouds inaugurated general gas warfare, as the Allies soon responded in kind.

E. Soldiers felt their own status was changing.

1. Soldiers themselves became increasingly anonymous, as individual heroism seemed obsolete in industrial war.

2. This trend was illustrated in changes in uniform and in the language of the soldiers themselves.

III. Primacy of the Defensive

A. The key fact of this new warfare was the strength of the defensive, for technical reasons.

B. This fact was discovered only slowly and understood in practice. In practice, this new reality totally contradicted the reigning military doctrine of the cult of the offensive.

C. Mass attacks often turned into massacres, as the defenders enjoyed tremendous advantages.

D. A typical attack makes this clear.

1. A massive artillery barrage would be unleashed, intended to cut barbed wire and "soften up" enemy forces, leaving them in shock.

2. In practice, the barrage would signal the attacker's intentions, losing the element of surprise.

3. After the barrage, attacking troops would go "over the top" with fixed bayonets and advance through No Man's Land and into enemy trenches.

4. As the barrage had torn up the ground, it was difficult to advance and easy to lose one's way. Friendly fire was also a danger.

5. In practice, barrages often did not do their intended work: wire remained uncut, and defenders would emerge from deep bunkers to mow down the attackers. At the Somme, German machine gunners could be back in position in less than three minutes.

6. Even if a breakthrough was achieved, reserves were lacking or could not move fast enough to exploit the gap.

7. By contrast, defenders could use railways to bring up troops as reinforcements, while the attackers advanced slowly on foot.

8. Historian A. J. P. Taylor remarked on the contrasts of fast arrival at the front and slow progress afterward: fundamentally, "defense was mechanized, attack was not."

E. The general's response, however, was to increase the mass of the attack, preceded by ever larger and heavier barrages.

IV. Frontal Attacks

A. For two years, generals tended to show appalling incomprehension of this new reality.

1. Many held to the persistent dream of cavalry breaking through.

2. "Offensive spirit" continued to be a mantra. The British had a special instructor who traveled around preaching the virtues of the bayonet charge.

B. As a result, frontal attacks at the start of the war took a devastating toll.

C. Let us now examine the Legend of Langemarck, the site of one such frontal attack.

1. Langemarck in Flanders, near Ypres, became the site for the creation of a German nationalist myth centered on such a failed attack in November 1914. Poorly trained volunteers had been thrown against British lines, taking some 41,000 casualties.

2. On November 11, 1914, a Germany army dispatch wrote of young units attacking enemy lines, singing the national anthem.

3. The myth, elaborated in propaganda, claimed that German students and *Wandervogel* idealists had shown a sublime spirit of self-sacrifice in this attack.

4. A soldier named Adolf Hitler claimed later that he had witnessed the attack and seen a new spirit forged there. After the war, he would create a party around the idea of war forging a race.

5. The myth in many ways does not bear close examination.

6. The encounter actually took place at Bixchote, where student volunteers made up only 18 percent of the regiments.
7. Those not taken in by the myth spoke instead of a "*Kindermord*"—the slaughter of the innocents.
8. The actual magnitude of losses was not hidden.
9. It is estimated that only a third of the German Wandervogel, or youth movement participants, returned from the war. Similarly, officers experienced especially high casualty rates (six times the ordinary rate at the Somme).
10. The notion of a shared "front community" growing out of these terrible experiences was a potent idea.

D. Allied offensives in 1915 on the Western Front merit our attention as well.

1. The Allies felt a special urgency in retaking lost ground, in particular the French, and in helping to relieve the Russians.
2. The start of the war produced extremely costly engagements, with the French army taking a million casualties in the war's first five months. More French soldiers were killed in 1915 than even in the terrible Battle of Verdun in 1916.
3. A long series of attempted attacks yielded disappointing results: the Battle of Artois on December 17–29, 1914; French attacks in February and March of 1915 in Champagne; the French attack on Saint-Mihiel in April; the Second Battle of Artois from May 4–June 18, 1915; the Third Battle of Artois from September 25–October 14.
4. In 1915, the French suffered 300,000 casualties.
5. In the British attack at Neuve-Chapelle on March 10, 1915, and in the attack at Loos in late September, breaches were created in the German lines but could not be exploited before the front again stalemated.
6. In December 1915, General Douglas Haig replaced General John French as commander in chief of the British army in France until the end of the war.

V. A key question, given this stalemate and futility, is how soldiers were able to endure.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 175–203.

Supplementary Reading:

Olivier Razac, *Barbed Wire: A Political History*.

Denis Winter, *Death's Men: Soldiers of the Great War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What single aspect of the Western Front came as the greatest surprise to contemporaries?
2. Why were the experiences of the American Civil War and Russo-Japanese War not prominently integrated into the popular imagination of war?

Lecture Eight
Life and Death in the Trenches

Scope: The trenches of the Western Front have been imprinted on collective memory as a crucial site of modernity. They were vivid symbols of how this industrial war stripped soldiers of human agency and mocked any concept of heroism. This lecture provides a detailed overview of the trench landscape from the perspective of ordinary soldiers: the increasingly elaborate fortifications, the omnipresence of death, and different national styles of trench construction. Distinctive codes of behavior evolved in the trenches, such as the informal truces of the "live and let live system," the Christmas fraternizations between the trenches in 1914, and elaborate superstitions growing out of the trench experience.

Outline

I. The Trenches

- **A.** The trenches of World War I mark a crucial site of modernity and are imprinted on the Western collective imagination.
  - **1.** Traces of that experience remain in our language, in expressions like "over the top," "in the trenches," or "No Man's Land."
  - **2.** Poems and prose by T. S. Eliot, Robert Graves, Eric Maria Remarque, and others recorded the impact and shock.
  - **3.** Important examples include Wilfred Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth" and Siegfried Sassoon's "They."
- **B.** The trenches are a symbol for the loss of human agency and radically diminished individual heroism.
- **C.** Detailed descriptions of the trenches themselves from the perspective of ordinary soldiers can only approximate the lived reality.

II. Life in the Trenches

- **A.** Life in the trenches was enveloped in what Clausewitz called the "fog of war," obscuring a panoramic view of the battlefield.
- **B.** Soldiers could not have endured unbroken service in the trenches, so rotation systems were created.
  - **1.** Typically, a soldier might spend one week of each month in the front lines, one week in the reserve trenches, and the rest of the time behind the lines and in the rear areas.
  - **2.** The daily routine began with predawn preparations to repel an attack: the ritual of "stand to."
  - **3.** Breakfast, inspections, sentry duty, and the repair of trenches and bunkers would follow.
  - **4.** Nightfall also brought the possibility of an attack.
  - **5.** The trenches produced their own maladies, like trench foot and trench fever.
- **C.** A disturbing feature of trench warfare was the omnipresence of death.
  - **1.** Soldiers were often in close proximity to the remains of bodies, decay, and infestations of rats.
  - **2.** Bodies resurfaced as shells churned up the soil.
- **D.** National styles of trench building emerged during the war.
  - **1.** Trenches took on distinctively different styles.
  - **2.** German propagandists celebrated the domesticity and elaborate care that German soldiers took of their trenches.
- **E.** Coping in this environment was an enormous psychological task.
  - **1.** Letters and diaries written at the time have produced rich, historical sources.
  - **2.** Grim humor was another way in which soldiers tried to deal with horrifying scenes.
  - **3.** Trench newspapers tried to offer a voice to soldiers.
  - **4.** Front theaters and cinemas tried to offer diversion.

F. Paul Fussell argues compellingly that this war's ironies changed the English language forever.

III. The "Live and Let Live" System

A. Not all sectors were equally murderous. Some quiet sectors existed.

B. Soldiers on opposing sides entered into informal truces.

1. These truces could include such conventions as not attacking during breakfast or not aiming at latrines or men walking about the landscape.

2. Soldiers might be careful to make noise on patrol to avoid enemy parties.

3. Such arrangements, when suspected, infuriated commanders.

IV. Christmas Fraternization of 1914

A. The most dramatic instances of informal truces were the scenes of fraternization on the Western Front during the first Christmas of the war, in 1914.

B. German soldiers put up Christmas trees and Christmas hymns were sung on both sides.

1. Meetings and games in No Man's Land were arranged.

2. The truce did not obtain everywhere.

C. Generals were furious at the news and effectively shut down any recurrence.

V. Superstitions

A. Irrational mystical gestures were also attempts to cope, and the war evolved its own folklore.

B. Such gestures and rituals were an attempt to reassert a measure of control in a situation of helplessness.

1. Ordinary soldiers prized amulets.

2. Taboos were developed that persisted long after the war.

C. More elaborate legends also took on a life of their own.

1. At the 1914 Battle of Mons, angels or medieval archers were said to have come to the rescue of British troops.

2. In the Somme, a statue precariously hanging from a church steeple was said to portend the end of the war when it fell.

3. Unfounded rumors, including those of a "Corpse Factory" and of a "crucified Canadian" expressed deeper existential truths about the terrors of the war.

VI. Trench Community

A. The intensity of the front experience produced in many soldiers loyalty focused on comrades and one's immediate group.

B. Propagandists and some soldiers asserted that front soldiers had been changed by their experiences and welded into a "trench community" in which class and regional differences supposedly melted away, producing a true community, property in common, and shared sacrifice.

1. Hatred of officers and resentment of the home front could lead to a feeling of kinship with enemies in the opposed trenches.

2. A gap of experience could lead to alienation from civilian life on the home front.

C. A mythology of a new man and new community forged in the trenches had important political potential.

Essential Reading:

Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*.

Supplementary Reading:

John Ellis, *Eye-Deep in Hell: Trench Warfare in World War I*.

Stanley Weintraub, *Silent Night: The Story of the World War I Christmas Truce*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Was dark humor or superstition more important as a coping mechanism in the trenches?
2. What factors could lead to the breakdown of a "live-and-let-live" informal truce?

Lecture Nine
The Great Battles of Attrition

Scope: Once the new and distinctive dynamics of this industrial war had slowly been recognized, there followed in 1916–1917 a series of huge battles of attrition involving some 5 million men on a hitherto unprecedented scale on the Western Front, intended to grind down the enemy side but ultimately yielding little result beyond mass death and suffering. We examine the months-long battles of Verdun and Somme in 1916 and, in 1917, the French Champagne Offensive and the Third Battle of Ypres, also called Passchendaele. The lecture examines the guiding ideas behind the launching of these failed offensives and how the battles could take on a life of their own, escaping the initial premises of their planners, increasingly invested with dogged national pride and irrational psychological and symbolic importance.

Outline

I. Reasons and Commonalities

A. Both the Allies and Germany planned decisive battles on the Western Front. These turned into disasters of attrition.

1. "Attrition" means a grinding down or draining of the enemy's forces, rather than a decisive victory.

2. These mass battles took on lives of their own, escaping rational control.

3. They became symbols of national pride and assumed vast psychological significance.

B. The battles revealed again the strength of the defensive, the generals' inability to understand how to employ new technology to break the stalemate, the growing callousness toward the expenditure of lives, and the unexpected endurance of ordinary soldiers.

II. Verdun

A. The titanic battle between the Germans and French at Verdun in 1916 illustrated the futility and destructive power of this new war (a lesson repeated at the Somme soon afterward).

1. General Falkenhayn saw Britain as the decisive enemy, which could be beaten by knocking out its main ally, France.

2. Falkenhayn's plans aimed to "bleed white" the French army, exhausting its reserves by drawing it into a "blood mill." The operation was named "*Gericht*" (Judgment).

3. Historic Verdun, surrounded by 19 forts (Fort Douaumont dominating) was targeted because of its symbolic significance for the French. The location formed a salient jutting out into German-held territory (a bulge in the front line) and thus was more exposed and vulnerable to attack on three sides. As the point was to draw in French defenders, the salient did not even need to be taken, but this was not understood or forgotten by German commanders.

4. On the first day, February 21, 1916, German guns fired a million shells: 20 tons of shells per acre.

5. On February 25, German forces took Fort Douaumont.

B. As Falkenhayn had anticipated, the French could not sacrifice Verdun.

1. General Philippe Pétain was brought in to lead the French defense. Unusual in having a defensive strategy, he was ideally suited for this task.

2. Pétain set up a rotation system that moved troops through the battle. Three-quarters of the French army rotated through this meat grinder.

3. Supply was ensured through the "Sacred Road," where 3,000 trucks rode out and returned daily under fire, one every 14 seconds. Pétain vowed: "They shall not pass."

4. The battle fragmented into smaller encounters, like the one in March when Charles de Gaulle was captured.

5. In May, Georges Robert Nivelle replaced Pétain in charge of Verdun.

6. The battle's highpoint was over after June 1916.

7. The Somme offensive, opening in July, also drew off resources from Verdun.

8. The battle drew to a close in November 1916, with French recapture of the forts from October 24 to December 18, 1916.

C. What were the outcomes of this battle?

1. In 10 months of inconclusive combat, 700,000 French and German casualties (nearly even) were sacrificed for a few miles. About 300,000 men were killed (one death every minute).
2. Arguably, this offensive was the only one of the war to take a marginally smaller toll than the defensive.
3. The toll for France was enormous, amounting to about 10 percent of all their war dead. (Throughout the war, one out of every two Frenchmen between the ages of 20 and 30 was killed.)
4. The French army's offensive capacities were shattered.
5. The experience led to changes in military leadership positions.
6. On August 29, 1916, General Hindenburg replaced Falkenhayn as German commander in chief, with Ludendorff as his quartermaster-general.
7. In December 1916, General Nivelle replaced Joffre as commander in chief of the French army. Pétain's reputation soared, and he was made Marshal of France.

D. The aftermath of the battle was remarkable.

1. An estimated 12 million unexploded shells still lie in the Verdun area. They are still being found, and hundreds of defussers have died over the decades.
2. One of the French defenders of Verdun, André Maginot, later became interwar Minister of War. The Maginot Line, which crumbled in World War II, was named after him.
3. Verdun became hallowed ground, with shrines like the famous "Bayonet Trench."

III. Somme

A. The great offensive of the Somme had been long planned as a joint Allied operation.

1. The defense of Verdun drew off French forces, leaving the British to take the lead.
2. The territory chosen was unsuitable, as Germans held strategic heights.

B. The first day opened with disaster.

1. After an intense bombardment of five days, intended to cut the barbed wire, British troops were sent out on July 1, 1916, against the German lines.
2. Expecting breakthrough and advance, soldiers carried about 70 pounds of equipment apiece, slowing their progress.
3. On the first day, there were 60,000 British casualties, of which 20,000 were deaths. This loss was the greatest in one day of any army.

C. Four months of battle ensued.

1. Further assaults also failed.
2. British tanks were used on September 15, 1916, but in insufficient numbers.
3. Overall, by November, some seven miles were won at the cost of 400,000 British casualties. More than one million casualties were counted for the British, French, and Germans.
4. Haig's reputation was battered by this "Great Foul-Up."

IV. Champagne

A. In the spring of 1917, General Nivelle planned a great French-led offensive, combining force and mass of attack.

B. German countermeasures complicated the offensive.

1. General Ludendorff strengthened trench lines and withdrew to a systematically prepared line of defenses called the Siegfried Line (called the Hindenburg Line by the Allies) in February and March of 1917.
2. The Germans subjected evacuated areas to scorched-earth policies and deported civilians.

C. The offensive began with the Battle of Arras on April 9, 1917.

1. Vimy Ridge was taken by Canadian troops.
2. The French attack in the Champagne region was a disaster worsened by extravagant expectations.
3. In late April, mutinies broke out among French troops, protesting their meaningless sacrifice.
4. General Nivelle was replaced as commander in chief by Pétain on May 15, 1917.
5. Pétain managed to restore order, but the French army's offensive capacity was spent.

V. The Third Battle of Ypres—Passchendaele

A. In late July 1917, General Haig launched another British offensive in Flanders, the Third Battle of Ypres.

B. Hopes were heightened by the mining and explosion of Messines Ridge on June 7, 1917.

1. Maps deceptively showed promising positions but proved otherwise.
2. Haig had high hopes of breaking through to open Belgian territory and reaching the port of Ostend.
3. The attack began on July 31, 1917.
4. Rains turned the ground into seas of mud. Tanks sank in the mire.
5. Last attacks on November 6, 1917, reached the village of Passchendaele, the British troops having gained five miles.
6. Some staff officers later repented this venture, which cost 325,000 casualties.

VI. Outcomes

A. These battles became synonymous with the senseless mass death of the Great War.

B. The search for other ways of breaking the deadlock continued, whether through technology, opening other fronts, gaining other allies, or subverting the enemy in other ways.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 274–299.

Supplementary Reading:

John Keegan, *The Face of Battle*, pp. 204–284.

Ian Ousby, *The Road to Verdun: World War I's Most Momentous Battle and the Folly of Nationalism*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did other battles of attrition follow the experience of Verdun?
2. What were the lessons of Verdun, the Somme, and Passchendaele?

Lecture Ten
The Eastern Front Experience

Scope: The war in Eastern Europe was called by Winston Churchill in his histories the "Unknown War," and the Eastern Front is still not as well understood or as familiar as the Western Front. This lecture illuminates the unfamiliar clash of empires in the East, beginning with the Russian invasion of German East Prussia and the ominous disasters of the Austro-Hungarian war effort from its very beginning, leading to growing dependence on its ally, the German Empire. After the German victory against the Russians at Tannenberg in 1914, Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff became popular war heroes in Germany and eventually were elevated to the High Command. The German "Great Advance" of 1915 into Russian territory resulted in the conquest of vast new areas, often devastated by the conflict, which now would be occupied and administered as a new colonial empire.

Outline

I. The "Unknown War"

A. The Eastern Front and its experience for millions has not been imprinted as deeply in the collective consciousness of Western civilization, but its impact was an important one.

1. Winston Churchill entitled his 1931 history of the Eastern Front *The Unknown War*.

2. The Eastern Front differed from the West in its greater mobility, its enormous scale, and in its outcome.

B. The Eastern Front in World War II, by contrast, has been extensively studied and researched. What came before, in the First World War, has remained less familiar.

C. The Central Powers themselves could not agree on priorities. Coordination of fighting by the Germans and Austro-Hungarian forces was spotty until the latter found themselves subordinated to German direction.

II. The Harrowing of East Prussia

A. The war in the East opened with a traumatic event for Germans: the only sizeable incursion into the German Empire, the Russian invasion of East Prussia.

1. Fears of an irresistible "Russian Steamroller," bearing down on Berlin, had been current before the war.

2. Prussia had been left exposed in line with the Schlieffen Plan.

3. Now two Russian armies approached: General Rennenkampf's Vilna army from northeast and General Samsonov's Warsaw army from the south.

4. Russian forces had moved before they were fully ready, to aid their French ally in the hour of crisis.

B. At the Battle of Gumbinnen of August 19–20, 1914, German troops were beaten back and officials prepared to evacuate East Prussia. Russian forces outnumbered German two to one.

C. Russian forces occupied the eastern portions of the province.

D. Colonel-General Paul von Hindenburg and Chief of Staff Major-General Erich Ludendorff arrived to take command.

E. Using plans already prepared by Lieutenant Colonel Max Hoffmann, they took a calculated risk, which yielded a great victory.

III. Tannenberg

A. German forces intercepted Russian wireless messages, giving valuable clues to Russian plans.

B. The German forces were directed against the Warsaw army, whereas only a thin screen of cavalry troops guarded against the Vilna army. Communications between the two Russian armies were poor.

1. German forces surrounded the Warsaw army and smashed it in the battle, which took place August 26–30, 1914.

2. In despair, General Samsonov shot himself.

3. The Germans took 92,000 Russian prisoners.
4. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's historical novel, *August 1914*, describes the events.
5. In the Battle of the Masurian Lakes of September 7–15, the Vilna army was also thrown back.
6. After the winter campaign in Masuria, East Prussia was liberated.
7. The fighting in East Prussia cost Russia a quarter-million men.
8. The Russian attack had, however, drawn two German army corps away from the Western Front.
9. After the battles, German armies were shifted to Poland and to protect Prussian Silesia.

C. Soon the Legend of Tannenberg grew up around this victory.

1. The news of the victory spread like wildfire through Germany.
2. A legend was built up around Tannenberg from the first. Its name was chosen to redeem a famous defeat of the Teutonic Knights by Lithuanian and Polish armies in 1410 (probably, the battle should have been called Frögenau).
3. It was claimed that Hindenburg had planned the battle years ago and had lured the Russians into a trap.

IV. Hindenburg and Ludendorff

A. Hindenburg and Ludendorff became war heroes in Germany at a time of reverses. On November 1, 1914, Hindenburg was appointed Supreme Commander in the East.

B. Very different in character and background, the two men formed a dynamic duo.

C. Their fame helped them rise to the position of war dictators in Germany from 1916.

V. Austrian Fortunes

A. The war began badly for the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

1. The empire fielded three army groups, one against Russia, the other confronting Serbia, with the third shuttling in between.
2. From the start of the war, Austro-Hungarian forces had shelled the Serbian capital, Belgrade.
3. On August 12, 1914, Austro-Hungarian forces crossed the Danube and Sava rivers but four days later were expelled by Serbian forces.
4. The Serbians beat off three Austro-Hungarian invasions in 1914.
5. After an initial advance onto Russian territory towards Lublin in the Polish territories, Austria-Hungary was expelled and lost Galicia.
6. In 1914, Austria-Hungary suffered more than one million casualties.
7. From December 1914 to April 1915, Russian and Austro-Hungarian forces fought in the passes of the Carpathian Mountains (the range between Galicia and Hungary). The Austro-Hungarian forces often lost more casualties from freezing than combat.
8. The Carpathian winter campaign and the fall of the Austro-Hungarian fortress of Przemysl, the main fortress in Austrian Galicia, cost more than 750,000 casualties on the Austrian side.

B. Some breakthroughs did occur for Austria-Hungary.

1. Help from German reinforcements, on which the Austro-Hungarian army would come increasingly to rely, produced the victory of Gorlice-Tarnow on May 2, 1915. A 40-mile gap was smashed in the Russian front.
2. Galicia was regained, the fortress of Przemysl retaken, Lemberg (Lvov) captured, and a quarter-million Russians captured.

VI. The Great Advance of 1915

A. After the success of Tannenberg, Hindenburg and Ludendorff, as easterners, argued for a battle of envelopment against the Russians.

1. Falkenhayn, as a westerner, believed final victory would be won in the West but went on the defensive there in 1915 and turned forces to the Eastern Front.

2. The breakthrough at Gorlice-Tarnow was even greater than had been expected, sometimes considered the only real breakthrough of the entire war.
3. A larger German offensive in the East unfolded and conquered large territories (the size of France) from the Russian Empire: present-day Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia.
4. German armies seized the fortresses of Kaunas, Grodno, Brest-Litovsk, and the cities of Warsaw and Vilnius.
5. Russian armies were pushed back 300 miles, using a scorched earth policy as they retreated.
6. The Russian forces—with 2.5 million dead, wounded, or held captive—were almost knocked out of the war.

B. In a fateful mistake, in September 1915, Tsar Nicholas II took over as Russian commander in chief from Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolayevich. Henceforth, the Tsar would be held responsible for setbacks.

C. The front stabilized by fall, running from just short of Riga on the Baltic all the way south to Romania. Falkenhayn returned his attention to the Western Front, to Verdun.

D. The large territories conquered by German troops needed to be administered, a formidable task, given their devastation and relative unfamiliarity.
1. Poland was given a civil government.
2. The lands north of Poland were consolidated into a military state called Ober Ost.
3. German soldiers were engaged in a daily encounter with Eastern Europe, its nature, and populations.

E. Ludendorff and Hindenburg worked to administer the occupied territories and conspired against Falkenhayn, their superior.

VII. Brusilov Offensive

A. Unexpectedly, in June–August 1916, General Alexei Brusilov launched an offensive (in part to draw Germans away from Verdun) that led to dramatic Russian gains.

B. Russian armies on the southern sectors of the front, Volhynia and Galicia, took a quarter-million Austro-Hungarian soldiers prisoner, as their front collapsed and their spirit was exhausted.

C. These dramatic successes convinced Romania to join the Allies.

D. However, because Brusilov did not receive support in the north, his armies took a million casualties, and this offensive would be the last real success of the Russian army.

E. Three successive offensives by Brusilov were without greater result.

VIII. Seeming Success in the East for the Central Powers

A. By 1917, the Central Powers had scored seemingly impressive gains on the Eastern Front.
1. Bulgaria was impressed enough to join the Central Powers on September 6, 1915.
2. In the winter of 1915, German, Austro-Hungarian, and Bulgarian armies overran Serbia.
3. In December of 1916, the Central Powers also conquered Romania.

B. After the Brusilov offensive, the Russian army was in the process of disintegration. Even a new government in Russia from March 1917 could not halt this process.

C. From July 1917, German and Austro-Hungarian forces attacked again and pushed forward the front, retaking most of Galicia and taking Riga and the Estonian islands of Saaremaa, Hiiumaa, and Muhu.

D. At the end of 1917, Russia left the war and was forced to sign the crushing Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918.

E. To the Central Powers, it seemed that half the war had been won by their side.

Essential Reading:
John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp.143–174.

Supplementary Reading:

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I*.

Denis Showalter, *Tannenberg: Clash of Empires, 1914*.

Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front, 1914–1917*.

Questions to Consider:

1. If Russia had been knocked out of the war in 1915, what effects would that have had on the war as a whole?
2. In what ways did the fighting on the Eastern Front differ from that in the West?

Lecture Eleven
The Southern Fronts

Scope: This lecture examines the Southern Fronts of the First World War in Europe and the factors that made decisive victory elusive here as well. Turkish entry into the war expanded its scope. Allied landings in Gallipoli in 1915 were repulsed by the Turks in a campaign that involved one million men on all sides. Italy at first stayed out of the general war, avowing a policy of "sacred egoism." Secret diplomacy and promises of territorial gains brought Italy into the war on the Allied side in the clandestine Treaty of London of 1915. Alpine warfare and the 12 battles of the Isonzo between Italy and Austria-Hungary are surveyed. Germany and Austria-Hungary succeeded in overrunning Serbia and Romania. A 1915 Allied expedition to Salonika, Greece, proved indecisive.

Outline

I. Widening of the War: Turkish Entry

- **A.** The war took on a southern dimension by the addition of the Ottoman Empire (Turkey), Italy, and operations around the Mediterranean.
  - **1.** Turkey joined the Central Powers by a secret treaty of August 2, 1914.
  - **2.** Led by Enver Pasha, the Young Turk movement, which had controlled the empire since 1909, sympathized with Germany.
  - **3.** Two German battleships, the *Goeben* and the *Breslau*, moved into the Black Sea and shelled the Russian port of Odessa in October 1914.
  - **4.** In November 1914, the Allies declared war on Turkey. Operations now spread around its territories in the Mediterranean and Middle East.
- **B.** Britain discarded an earlier constant aim of its diplomacy and promised Russia the Dardanelles.
- **C.** Turkey attacked Russia in the Caucasus, envisioning a great Pan-Turanian empire extending into Central Asia.
  - **1.** The Turkish winter campaign of 1914–1915 was a disaster.
  - **2.** Turkish soldiers froze to death, and only 13 percent of the force survived.
- **D.** In the wake of this disaster, in spring 1915, Russian forces moved down from the Caucasus into Anatolia, welcomed by some Armenians as liberators.
- **E.** Turkish forces made attempts to attack the Suez Canal, worrying the British.
- **F.** On November 14, 1914, the Turkish Sultan, in his capacity as Caliph, declared holy war (Jihad), hoping to set ablaze Muslim populations under British rule in India and Egypt, and in Central Asia under Russian rule.

II. Gallipoli

- **A.** To relieve Russia, the Allies crafted plans to knock Ottoman Turkey out of the war, beginning with a landing in Gallipoli, the peninsula at the tip of the Dardanelles Straits, and thence to occupy Constantinople to the northeast.
  - **1.** This plan was championed by the British First Lord of the Admiralty, Winston Churchill.
  - **2.** It has been called the only strategic idea of the war.
- **B.** Efforts to force the straits by battleships failed, but they alerted Turkish forces, which, under the leadership of German commander Otto Liman von Sanders, began to mass to repel an assault.
- **C.** The major landing began on April 25, 1915.
  - **1.** Franco-British forces landed at Cape Helles and Australian and New Zealand troops (Anzacs) at Anzac Cove.
  - **2.** An initial window of opportunity to expand beachheads was squandered.

3. Allied forces dug trenches while Turkish troops took positions atop the cliffs. Among them was a young officer, Mustafa Kemal, later Atatürk, leader of a new Turkey.
4. The advantages of the defensive were again demonstrated.
5. The British commander Sir Ian Hamilton renewed assaults in August 1915, with new landings at Suvla Bay to the north.

D. When news of disaster filtered back to Britain, Hamilton was removed and throughout December troops were withdrawn in secret. The successful evacuation was completed by January 9, 1916.

E. The outcomes were notable and long-lasting.
1. Some 200,000 Allied men died in this futile expedition. The fighting involved 1 million men on both sides.
2. Winston Churchill was disgraced, blamed for the misadventure, and lost his position.
3. The Anzac troops suffered very heavy losses. During the war, they took 62 percent of the casualties. The Gallipoli disaster came to be considered the founding experience of independent Australian identity.
4. The failure made clear that a decision would need to be reached on the Western Front.

III. Italy

A. When war broke out, Italy announced it was not bound to the Central Powers by the earlier Triple Alliance and instead would follow what Prime Minister Antonio Salandra called "sacred egoism."

B. A bidding war for Italian participation or neutrality commenced.
1. The Allies won this auction, able to promise enemy territory.
2. The Secret Treaty of London between the Allies and Italy was signed on April 26, 1915.
3. Italy was promised ethnically Italian areas under the Austro-Hungarian Empire in Trentino and Trieste, as well as larger gains in Tirol and the Dalmatian coast, and perhaps even Asia Minor.
4. Contradicting professed Allied war aims, these secret promises would later be a liability.

C. Italy prepared to enter the war.
1. On May 23, 1915, Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary.
2. Italian nationalists, the Romantic poet Gabriele D'Annunzio, and Futurist artists celebrated the war.

IV. Alpine War and Battles of the Isonzo

A. Though Italian participation was thought to be a prize, Italy in fact would require Allied assistance.

B. Italian Commander Count Luigi Cadorna threw one million men into battle against Austria-Hungary on two fronts: toward alpine areas bordering Italy in the north, such as Trentino, and also Trieste, across the Isonzo River.
1. In 11 battles of the Isonzo, Italian forces were unable to break through enemy trenches. In 1916, the Italians took half a million casualties.
2. In the high-altitude fighting in the Alps, guns had to be hauled up by pulleys.

C. The Italian war effort took a turn for the worse with the disaster of Caporetto.
1. In fall 1917, German troops were moved in to help the Austro-Hungarians. Among them was Erwin Rommel, later a famous commander in World War II.
2. In the Battle of Caporetto in October 1917, often called the Twelfth Battle of the Isonzo, Italian lines broke and a massive retreat set in to the Piave River, north of Venice.
3. Entire Italian units surrendered. The Italians lost half a million casualties, and a quarter-million Italian prisoners were taken.
4. Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is about the retreat, though he arrived in Italy six months after it occurred.
5. The retreat was halted as Italian forces regrouped 90 miles west at the Piave River to defend Venice.

D. General Cadorna was replaced as commander in chief by General Armando Diaz, and the crisis passed.

V. Serbia and Romania Overrun

A. Bulgaria had joined the Central Powers on September 6, 1915, and was promised Serbian territory.

B. The conquest of Serbia would ensure lines of communication with Turkey.

C. In the winter of 1915, German, Austro-Hungarian, and Bulgarian armies overran Serbia in two months.

1. Belgrade was captured.

2. The Central Powers invaded Montenegro and moved into Albania in January 1916.

3. An Allied expedition seeking to come to the aid of Serbia found themselves trapped in Salonika in Greece.

D. In a dramatic and costly retreat, the Serbian army marched across the Albanian mountains to the Adriatic and was evacuated by sea.

E. It is estimated that Serbia lost one-sixth of its population in this campaign.

F. Prematurely impressed by Russian advances in the Brusilov offensive, Romania entered the war on the Allied side on August 27, 1916, and was promised enemy territory.

G. Instead of seizing Transylvania, however, Romania was itself invaded a week later by the Central Powers.

H. By December 1916, the Central Powers, with Falkenhayn as one of the commanders, conquered Romania.

I. Romanian oil and agricultural resources now fell to the Central Powers.

VI. Salonika

A. The Allies had sought to aid Serbia by sending a military force through neutral Greece. Forces were moved to Greece by October 1915.

B. Greek politics played a part in this fiasco.

1. The Greek prime minister, Eleuthérios Venizélos, cooperated but was deposed.

2. Venizélos gathered opposition to King Constantine, who was forced to abdicate.

3. As a result of internal politics and Allied pressure, Greece joined the Allies in June 1917.

C. Unable to break the Bulgarian lines to the north, half a million Allied soldiers were trapped and idle in Salonika, which the Germans jokingly called their "largest internment camp."

D. Decision would have to come elsewhere.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 217–256.

Supplementary Reading:

Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli*.

Norman Rose, *Churchill: The Unruly Giant*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What factors made victory elusive on the Southern Fronts?

2. Was Turkish entry into the war a mistake, as some have argued, or inevitable? Why?

Lecture Twelve
War Aims and Occupations

Scope: This lecture first discusses the historical debates surrounding the war aims of the combatant powers. What goals did the Allies and the Central Powers pursue from the outset of the war? How did these goals change and evolve during the course of the conflict? We then turn to examine the experience of military occupation and how it affected civilian populations, including forced labor, deportations, ethnic manipulation, and harsh economic exploitation. The lecture surveys the brief Russian occupation of East Prussia and Galicia at the start of the war and then the longer German control of occupied Belgium and northern France and the atrocities that accompanied their initial seizure. Also surveyed is the Central Powers' rule over Eastern Europe in Poland, the Baltic region, Romania, and Serbia.

Outline

I. War Aims

A. Prolonged warfare demanded the articulation of war aims on both sides that went beyond the initial rallying to a war of self-defense.

1. Even among allies, individual war aims could conflict and threaten cohesion.

2. Aims also changed under the pressure of circumstances.

B. We start by examining the war aims of the Allied Powers.

1. The Treaty of London of September 1914 committed France, Russia, and Britain not to sign a separate peace with the Central Powers.

2. French war aims were seen as existential: as France had been invaded, Germany was to be expelled, the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine regained, and a future Germany weakened to the point that it would not again threaten France. France also envisioned colonial gains in Africa and the Middle East.

3. Russian war aims included plans for an expanded Poland (at the expense of Germany and Austria-Hungary) under Russian control and the fulfillment of a long-standing dream, the control of Constantinople and the Dardanelles, allowing unimpeded movement from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

4. British aims centered on restoration of the balance of power on the continent. Following British traditional strategy, leaders also hoped for colonial gains on the periphery.

5. Italy, with its policy of "sacred egoism" and signature on the Secret Treaty of London of 1915, demanded territory at the expense of Austria-Hungary along the Adriatic and in Asia Minor.

C. Let us now look at the war aims of the Central Powers.

1. As Germany dominated the Central Powers, its war aims took priority.

2. The war aims of Austria-Hungary were vague and simple survival was increasingly the overriding goal. Although Serbia was to be reduced in power, annexations were intensely problematic (as they would further increase the complexity of this diverse empire) and were resisted by the Hungarians in particular.

3. Germany's war aims included significant gains in Western and Eastern Europe.

4. Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg's confidential September Program of 1914 outlined initial war aims (its precise intent is still debated).

5. In Eastern Europe, Poland was to come under German control, with a border strip carved from this territory to give strategic security. Russia was to be pushed back in Eastern Europe.

6. Annexationist plans called for control over the Baltic countries of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia.

7. In the West, annexationists demanded Luxembourg, territory in Belgium, and northern France.

8. An important concept in German war aims was the notion of constructing a unit called "*Mitteleuropa*" (central Europe), a continental economic union dominated by Germany.

9. The British naval blockade of Germany, which threatened to strangle it economically, gave added appeal to the *Mitteleuropa* concept.

10. German aims also included expanded colonial gains in Africa, establishing a *Mittelafrika* as a counterpart to domination of Europe.
11. In the 1960s, the Fischer Debate among historians also concerned questions of the continuity of German war aims in World War I and World War II. Fritz Fischer argued that there were linkages to Nazi goals.
12. However, within Germany itself, the government worried about the impact of open discussion of extreme war aims and tried to silence it.

II. Changing War Aims

A. The British and French agreed in March 1915 to Russian demands for Constantinople and the Dardanelles. This agreement represented a fundamental shift in traditional diplomacy, especially for Britain, which had long resisted this aim.

B. Germany and Austria-Hungary held conflicting views of the future of Poland.

C. In a fascinating and perverse process, some German annexationists increased their demands as the war continued, arguing that this proved the need for larger gains.

III. Occupations

A. In general, occupations of enemy territory increasingly brought total war home to civilian populations.
1. Civilians were exposed to mistreatment, deportation, forced labor, and other trends intensified in World War II.
2. In longer occupations, complex forms of social interaction could grow up between occupiers and occupied.

B. We begin with the Russian occupations of East Prussia and Galicia.
1. The brief Russian occupation of East Prussia in 1914–1915 traumatized the population and was marked by sporadic brutalities.
2. The Russian occupation of Galicia from 1914–1915 saw pogroms against Jews and deportations of civilians, as part of larger plans for the incorporation of the area into the Russian Empire.
3. In both cases, scorched earth policies in retreat took a further toll.

C. Occupied Belgium was a classic case as well.
1. The initial invasion of Belgium was marked by German atrocities.
2. Some 800,000 Belgians fled and lived as refugees or "displaced persons" in France, Britain, or Holland.
3. An electrified fence was erected in an attempt to close off the Dutch border.
4. Economic exploitation through requisitions and forced labor was intense.
5. Attempts to manipulate the Flemish or Wallonian segments of Belgian society failed.

D. France represented another area of occupation in the West.
1. German atrocities had also taken place at the start of the invasion of 1914.
2. Ten French departments fell under German control.
3. Under an occupation similar to Belgium, the French suffered a double agony of foreign rule and isolation from the home country.

E. Eastern Europe under the Central Powers suffered greatly.
1. Poles, living under three empires, found themselves forced to fight on opposite sides (1.5 million Poles served in the different armies).
2. The conquest of Poland was accompanied by the destruction of the towns of Kalisz and Czestochowa.
3. Poland was divided into two governments under the Germans and the Austro-Hungarians.
4. The establishment of a Polish kingdom was declared in November 1916, as the German command hoped to muster a Polish army to fight for the Central Powers, but the result was disappointing.
5. Polish political leaders were themselves divided on which side to favor in the war.

6. A socialist, Józef Pilsudski, at first cooperated with the Austro-Hungarians in creating Polish legions but later resisted growing German control and was imprisoned in 1917.
7. Roman Dmowski, leader of the National Democratic Party, favored the Allies and with the famous pianist Paderewski promoted the Polish cause in the West.
8. In the territory of the Baltic countries and Belarus, a German military colony called Ober Ost was established. In this military utopia, ambitions for control of populations and cultural and ethnic manipulation took on vast proportions.
9. German views of Eastern Europe were conditioned by the devastation of the region. The remnants of the scorched earth policy, disease, ethnic variety, and disorganization were seen as *Unkultur*, which needed to be redeemed by a German cultural mission.
10. Harsh policies of economic control and requisition alienated the native populations.
11. The Central Powers occupied most of Romania in the winter of 1916, and it became a German economic colony, yielding food and oil.
12. Serbian civilians suffered tremendously in the successive invasions by the Central Powers. The country was divided into Bulgarian and Austro-Hungarian zones, which saw armed resistance.

IV. International Relief Efforts

- **A.** International efforts were organized to bring relief and food to Belgium.
  1. An American engineer of great managerial talents, Herbert Hoover, coordinated the Commission for Relief in Belgium.
  2. This organization aimed to feed 10 million people.
  3. These and other efforts brought Belgium more than 3 million tons of food aid.
- **B.** War-torn areas in Eastern Europe were harder to bring assistance to, but efforts were expanded there at the end of the war by the American Relief Administration under Hoover.

Essential Reading:

Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18: Understanding the Great War*, pp. 45–69.

Supplementary Reading:

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity, and German Occupation in World War I.*

Helen McPhail, *The Long Silence: Civilian Life under the German Occupation of Northern France, 1914–1918*.

Questions to Consider:

1. After Germany, which Great Power had the most extensive war aims?
2. Did military occupations differ in Western Europe and Eastern Europe? If so, how?

Timeline

1871	German Empire founded after Franco-Prussian War
1873	Three Emperors' League founded, including Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia
1878	Treaty of San Stefano; Congress of Berlin
1879	Dual Alliance of Germany and Austria-Hungary established
1882	Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy established
1887	Reinsurance Treaty signed by Germany and Russia
1890	Resignation of Bismarck
1894	Russian-French military alliance
1897	German *Weltpolitik* launched
1904	*Entente Cordiale* between Britain and France established
1904–1905	Russo-Japanese War
1905	Revolution of 1905 in Russia
1905–06	First Moroccan Crisis
1907	Triple Entente of France, Russia, and Great Britain established
1908	Bosnian Crisis
1912	First Balkan War
1913	Second Balkan War and London Conference
June 28, 1914	Archduke Franz Ferdinand assassinated in Sarajevo
July 5, 1914	German "blank check" to Austria-Hungary
July 23, 1914	Austrian ultimatum to Serbia
July 28, 1914	Austrian declaration of war on Serbia
July 30, 1914	Russian general mobilization
August 1, 1914	German declaration of war on Russia
August 2, 1914	German ultimatum to Belgium
August 3, 1914	German declaration of war on France; British ultimatum to Germany
August 4, 1914	German invasion of Belgium; British declaration of war on Germany
August 15, 1914	Russian invasion of East Prussia
August 26–30, 1914	Battle of Tannenberg in East Prussia
August 28, 1914	Naval Battle of Heligoland Blight
September 5–12, 1914	Battle of the Marne
September 7–15, 1914	Battle of the Masurian Lakes
October–November 1914	"Race to the Sea"
October 18–November 22, 1914	First Battle of Ypres
November 1914	Battle of Langemarck

November 14, 1914 ..... Holy War declared by Ottoman Turkey

December 24–25, 1914..... Christmas fraternization on Western Front

January 1915..... German bombing of London by Zeppelins begins

April 22, 1915..... German gas attack at Ypres

April 25, 1915..... Armenian massacres in Ottoman Turkey begin

April 25, 1915–January 9, 1916 ..... Gallipoli landings

April 26, 1915..... Secret Treaty of London to bring Italy into the war

May 2, 1915..... Central Powers break through at Gorlice-Tarnow

May 7, 1915..... German submarine sinks the *Lusitania*

May 23, 1915..... Italy enters the war on the Allied side

Summer 1915..... German "Great Advance" into the Russian Empire

September 1915 ..... Tsar Nicholas II takes over as commander in chief of Russian armies

September 6, 1915 ..... Bulgaria joins the Central Powers

Winter 1915 ..... Serbia overrun by Central Powers

February–March 1916 ..... German forces on Western Front withdraw to Hindenburg Line

February 1916..... Sykes-Picot Agreement on Middle East

February 21–November 1916..... Battle of Verdun

April 24, 1916..... Irish Easter Rising

May 31, 1916..... Naval Battle of Jutland

June–August 1916 ..... Brusilov Offensive on Eastern Front

July–November 1916..... Battle of the Somme

August 27, 1916 ..... Romania joins the Allies

August 29, 1916 ..... Hindenburg and Ludendorff replace Falkenhayn in German Supreme Command

December 1916..... Romania overrun by Central Powers; Lloyd George's War Cabinet installed

Winter–Spring 1917 ..... Turnip winter in Germany

February 1, 1917..... Germany declares unrestricted submarine warfare

March 8, 1917..... Women's protest march in Petrograd sparks revolution

March 15, 1917..... Tsar Nicholas II abdicates; Provisional Government takes power

April–May 1917 ..... Nivelle offensive in Champagne region; French army mutinies

April 3, 1917..... Lenin arrives in Russia

April 6, 1917..... The United States enters the war

July–November 1917..... Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele)

October 1917 ..... Battle of Caporetto

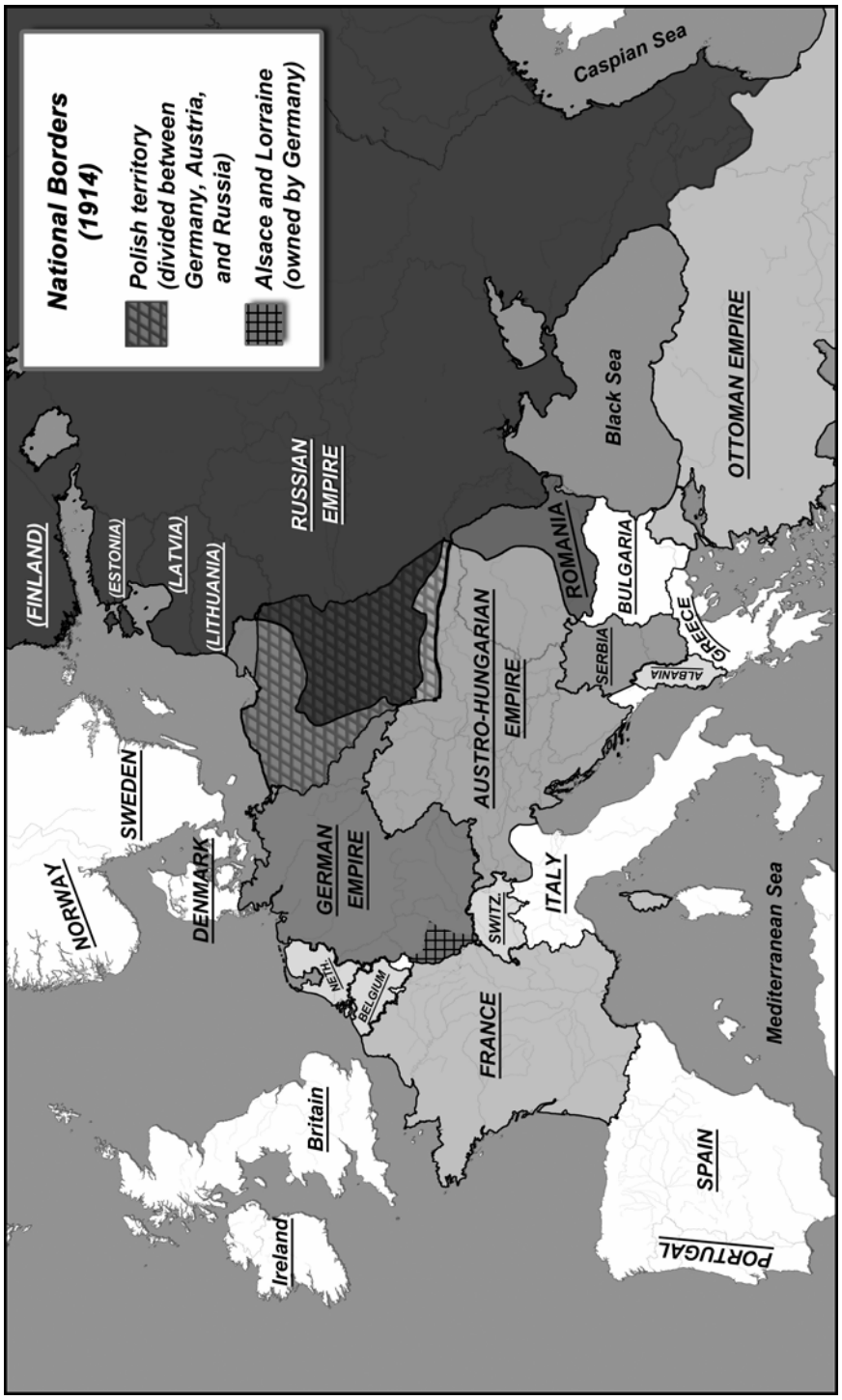
October 31, 1917 ..... Balfour Declaration

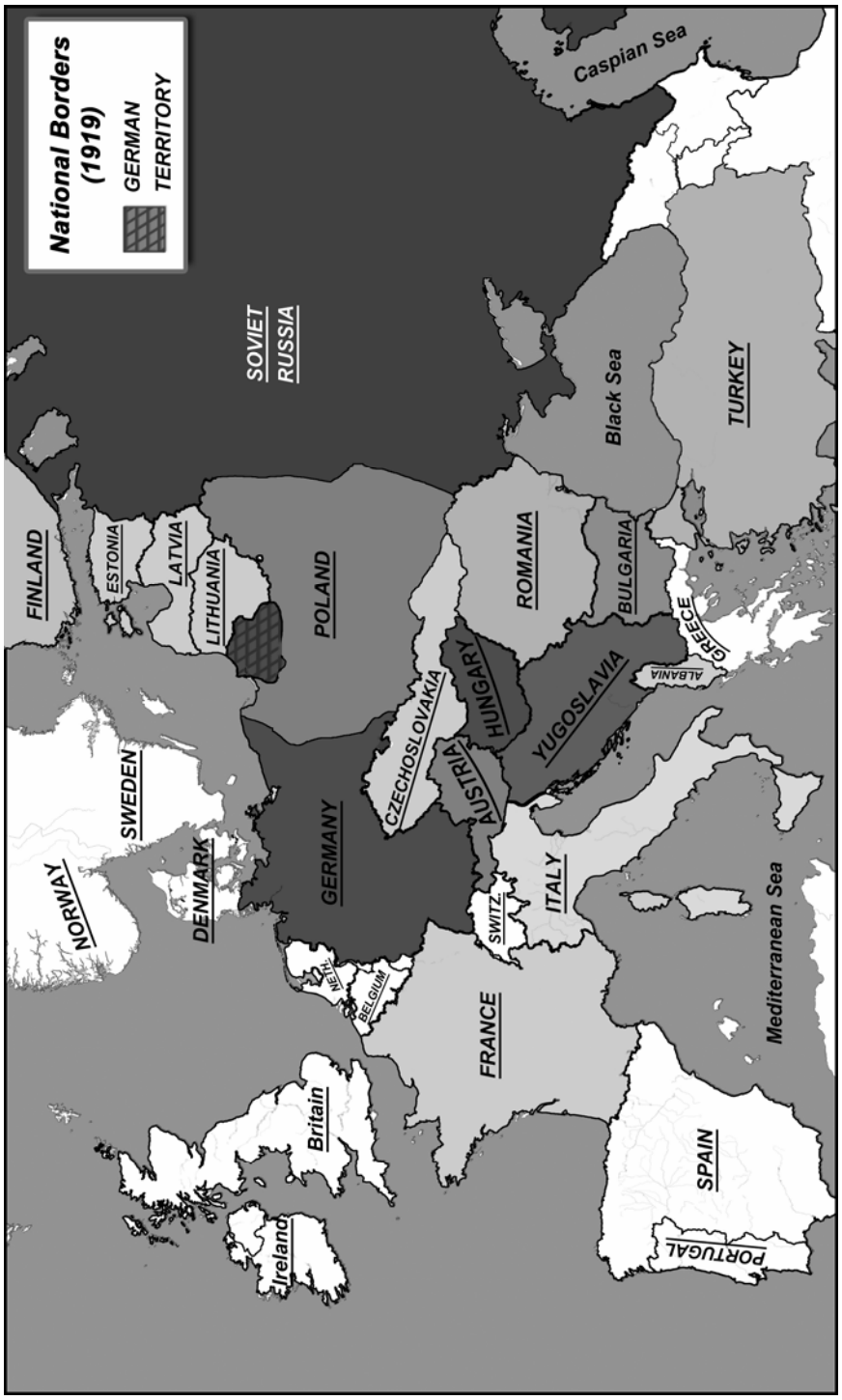
November 1917 ..... Clemenceau is appointed French prime minister

November 6–7, 1917 ..... Bolsheviks overthrow Provisional Government in Russia and take power

December 9, 1917 ..... British forces capture of Jerusalem

January 8, 1918 ..... President Wilson's Fourteen Points speech
March 3, 1918 ..... Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
March 21, 1918 ..... German spring offensive begins on Western Front
August 8, 1918 ..... "Black Day of the German Army"
September–October 1918 ..... Bulgaria and Turkey leave the war
October 3–4, 1918 ..... German government requests armistice
October 24–November 1918 ..... Battle of Vittorio Veneto
November 3, 1918 ..... Austro-Hungarian armistice with Allies
November 9, 1918 ..... Revolution in Germany; Kaiser is overthrown
November 11, 1918 ..... Armistice comes into effect on the Western Front at 11 A.M.
Fall 1918 ..... Influenza epidemic spreads
January 1919 ..... Spartakus uprising in Berlin
January 18, 1919 ..... Paris Peace Conference opens
March 1919 ..... Fascist movement launched in Italy
June 28, 1919 ..... Versailles Treaty signed by German representatives
March 1920 ..... U.S. Senate refuses to ratify Versailles Treaty
1922 ..... Mussolini comes to power in Italy
January 30, 1933 ..... Hitler becomes chancellor of Germany
September 1, 1939 ..... World War II begins





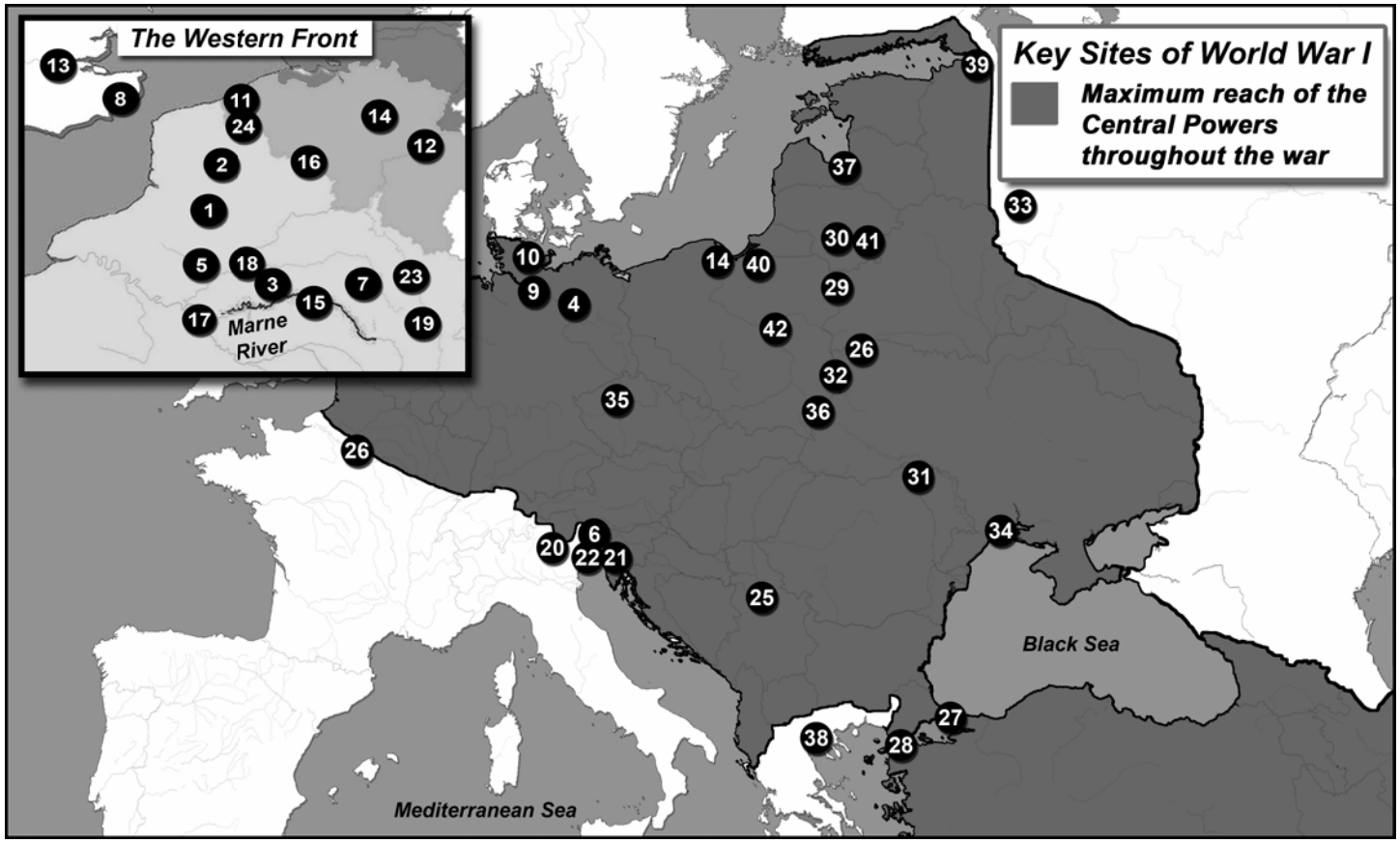
Legend: Key Sites of World War I

Western Front

1. Amiens
2. Arras
3. Belleau Wood
4. Berlin
5. Cantigny
6. Caporetto
7. Champagne
8. Dover
9. Hamburg
10. Kiel
11. Langemarck
12. Liège
13. London
14. Louvain
15. Marne
16. Mons
17. Paris
18. Somme
19. St. Mihiel
20. Trentino
21. Trieste
22. Venice
23. Verdun
24. Ypres/Passchendaele

Other Fronts

25. Belgrade
26. Brest-Litovsk
27. Constantinople
28. Gallipoli
29. Grodno
30. Kaunas
31. Lemberg (Lvov)
32. Lublin
33. Moscow
34. Odessa
35. Prague
36. Przemysl
37. Riga
38. Salonika
39. St. Petersburg
40. Tannenberg
41. Vilnius
42. Warsaw



Glossary

A.E.F.: American Expeditionary Force.

Allies: At first called the *Entente* powers, Great Britain, France, and Russia (later joined by other countries) confronted the Central Powers.

Anzacs: The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps.

Arditi: Italian storm troopers; elite forces at the front.

Armistice: The ceasefire on the Western Front that came into effect on November 11, 1918, at 11 A.M.

Attrition: A key concept related to total war: the wearing down of enemy might rather than outright and decisive victory.

August Madness: Mass celebrations (though not universal) on the declaration of war in 1914.

Balfour Declaration: British declaration of October 31, 1917, offering support for the creation of a national Jewish homeland in Palestine.

Balkan Wars: Two wars in 1912 and 1913, which saw the expulsion of Ottoman Turkey from most of the Balkans, and further fighting among the Balkan states that showed the region's instability.

B.E.F.: The British Expeditionary Force, sent to the Western Front in August 1914; dramatically expanded during the course of the war.

Blockade: A crucial part of economic warfare, the British naval blockade kept raw materials from reaching Germany and exports from getting out.

Bolsheviks: Russian radical socialists led by Lenin who took power in November 1917.

Brest-Litovsk, Treaty of: Signed March 3, 1918; a harsh peace settlement imposed by Germany on defeated Russia.

Burgfrieden: The domestic truce declared in Germany at the start of the war.

Central Powers: Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Turkey, later joined by Bulgaria.

C.P.I.: Committee on Public Information; an agency established in the United States after the country entered the war; charged with producing effective and innovative internal prowar propaganda.

Cult of the Offensive: The prewar doctrines celebrating extreme attack as the moral key to victory.

Dardanelles: Narrow straits separating the Black Sea from the Mediterranean in Turkey; a coveted strategic point.

D.O.R.A.: Law passed in August 1914, giving British government expanded powers in domestic politics.

Doughboy: Archetypal name for the American soldier; its origin is unknown.

Entente Cordiale: 1904 French and British settlement of colonial conflicts.

Ersatz: German word for "substitute," denoting synthetic materials used in war economy or diet.

Fascism: Aggressive political movement founded in Italy in 1919, celebrating the state, leadership, and militarism.

Fatherland Party: German mass political movement founded in fall 1917 to call for war until total victory.

Firestep: Ledge in the trenches for marksmen.

Fourteen Points: U.S. President Woodrow Wilson's announcement of American war aims on January 8, 1918.

Freikorps: Brutal German mercenary units established in the aftermath of defeat in November 1918; they participated in civil war in Germany and adventured beyond its borders.

Frontschwein: Bitter German soldiers' self-designation, meaning "front swine."

Genocide: The extermination of a group of people because of who they are.

Hindenburg Line: Called the "Siegfried Line" by Germans, this was the fortified position to which German forces on the Western Front withdrew in February and March of 1917.

Hindenburg Program: Germany's massive economic and industrial mobilization program in fall 1916 under the wartime dictatorship of Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff.

Irredenta: "Unredeemed territories" craved by nationalists (originally Italian, but the term later applies elsewhere).

July Crisis: The escalating political and military crisis following the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary at Sarajevo in June 1914 that led to the outbreak of the First World War.

Kindermord: Grim German name given to the "slaughter of the innocents" at Langemarck in November 1914; celebrated in official propaganda.

"Live and let live system": Unofficial truces worked out in quieter sectors of the trenches across enemy lines to minimize combat.

Mitteleuropa: German war aim of a continental economic and political union led by Germany.

Nazism: A radical movement espousing "national socialism"; founded immediately after the war in defeated Germany and led to power in 1933 by Adolf Hitler.

No Man's Land: Blasted territory between the enemy trenches on the Western Front; the scene of raids and attacks.

Pacifism: Principled opposition to warfare for reasons of conscience.

Patriotic instruction: German propaganda campaign from summer 1917 for a "victory peace."

Peace Resolution: German parliamentary resolution of July 1917 by the Catholic and Social Democrat parties calling for peace without annexations or indemnities.

Plan XVII: French prewar military plan for invasion of Germany to recover the lost provinces of Alsace and Lorraine.

Poilu: French nickname for an ordinary soldier, meaning "the shaggy one."

Propaganda: The systematic shaping of political opinions.

Reds: Partisans of the international communism heralded by revolutionary Soviet Russia.

Reparations: Payments made by a defeated power in restitution for the damage of the war (all sides expected to make the enemy pay, but Germany ended carrying the burden).

Revolutionizing: Policy practiced on all sides of seeking to subvert enemy populations and disaffected minorities.

Schlieffen Plan: German secret plan for victory on two fronts, completed in 1905 by General Alfred von Schlieffen; it called for an attack on France through neutral territory.

Scorched earth: Policy of leaving an enemy only territory in a state of total devastation, stripped of resources.

Self-determination: The nationalist demand for independence by ethnic groups, endorsed by Woodrow Wilson's war aims.

Shell shock: Post-traumatic stress disorder; a phenomenon only slowly recognized as such during the war.

Socialism: Based on the ideas of Karl Marx; socialists (or social democrats) envisioned a world reshaped by the international supremacy of the working class.

Soviet: Russian word for "council"; such councils were democratic grassroots organizations made up of soldiers and workers and formed in revolutionary Russia.

Soviet Union: A new communist state (also U.S.S.R. for "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics") formed in 1922 from the wreckage of the Russian Empire by victorious Bolsheviks; led by Lenin.

Spanish Flu: Influenza epidemic that began at the close of the war, which killed an estimated 40 million people worldwide before fading in 1919.

Spartakus: A radical wing within the German S.P.D., later forming the German communist party in 1919 and leading a failed revolt.

S.P.D.: Germany's Social Democratic Party of Germany; founded in 1875 and a model for other socialists worldwide.

"Stab in the Back" legend: A German conspiracy theory that gained in popularity after the war, asserting that German troops had not been defeated on the battlefield but were betrayed by elements on the home front.

Storm Troopers: Elite troops (on all sides) using infiltration tactics to break through the trench stalemate.

Sykes-Picot Agreement: British and French secret agreement of February 1916, dividing the Middle East into respective spheres of influence.

Tommy Atkins: The archetypal name for the ordinary British soldier; in numbers, also called "Tommies."

Total war: A concept developed during the war to express the all-encompassing nature of the conflict, drawing in entire populations, economies, and societies.

Treaty of London: Secret agreement between the Allies and Italy, signed on April 26, 1915, bringing Italy into the war with promises of territory.

Trench community: The idea of a perfected model of comradeship allegedly evolving under fire.

Trenchocracy: The claim of front-fighters to a right to restructure politics along military lines because of their service and sacrifice.

Triple Alliance: From 1882, an alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy; when Italy dropped out, Germany and Austria-Hungary formed the core of the Central Powers.

Triple Entente: From 1907, the bloc of France, Russia, and Britain, which became the Allies in 1914.

U-Boats: German submarines, waging unrestricted submarine warfare from 1917.

Union Sacrée: French "sacred union" domestic truce from 1914.

Versailles: Treaty that the Allies signed with Germany on June 28, 1919, with restrictions on German armaments, loss of territory, reparations, and admission of German war guilt.

War Guilt Clause: Article 231 of the Versailles Treaty, by which Germany officially accepted responsibility for unleashing the war.

War Socialism: An ironic term to describe the movement toward increased government control and direction of wartime economies.

Weltpolitik: From 1897, aggressive German foreign policy claiming superpower status.

Whites: Antirevolutionary forces from a range of political orientations fighting against the Bolsheviks and other revolutionaries in Eastern and Central Europe from 1918.

Yellow Canaries: Young women working in British munitions factories, whose skin was discolored by chemicals.

Young Turks: Turkish nationalist revolutionaries seeking to modernize the Ottoman Empire on coming to power in 1908; increasingly coming under German influence.

Zeppelin: German airships developed in 1900 and used for bombing during the war.

World War I:
The "Great War"
Part II

Professor Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius

THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of History, University of Tennessee

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius was born in Chicago, Illinois. He grew up on Chicago's Southside in a Lithuanian-American neighborhood and also spent some years attending school in Aarhus, Denmark, and Bonn, Germany. He received his B.A. from the University of Chicago. In 1989, he spent the summer in Moscow and Leningrad (today St. Petersburg) in intensive language study in Russian. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in European history in 1994, specializing in modern German history.

After receiving his doctorate, Professor Liulevicius spent a year as a postdoctoral research fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Peace, and Revolution at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. Since 1995, he has been a history professor at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and holds the Hendrickson Professorship in the College of Arts and Sciences for 2005–2007. He teaches courses on modern German history, Western civilization, Nazi Germany, World War I, war and culture, 20th-century Europe, nationalism, and utopian thought. In 2003, he received the University of Tennessee's Excellence in Teaching Award. In 2005, he was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for his research.

Professor Liulevicius's research focuses on German relations with Eastern Europe in the modern period. His other interests include the utopian tradition and its impact on modern politics, images of the United States abroad, and the history of the Baltic region. He has published numerous articles, and his first book, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in the First World War* (2000, Cambridge University Press), also appeared in German translation in 2002. His next book project is a larger study of German stereotypes of Eastern Europeans and ideas of a special German cultural mission in the East over the last two centuries, entitled *The German Myth of the East*.

Professor Liulevicius also has recorded another course with The Teaching Company, *Utopia and Terror in the 20th Century*. He lives in Knoxville, Tennessee, with his wife, Kathleen, and their son, Paul.

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World War I: The "Great War"

Scope:

The First World War came as a dreadful surprise to those who experienced it, due to its magnitude, global expanse, unprecedented violence, and shattering impact on Western civilization. This course of 36 lectures explores the continuous series of brutal surprises and shocks that the first example of a "total war" brought, a conflict not limited to armies, but pitting entire societies against each other in mortal struggle. An estimated 70 million men were mobilized and approximately 9 million died. The civilizational impact of an industrial slaughter on this scale was so significant that World War I set the 20th century on its violent course, culminating in a later, perfected total war, World War II.

We combine chronological and thematic approaches for an in-depth look at this conflict's many dimensions, integrating military history with social, political, intellectual, and cultural history. Unlike narratives of World War I that emphasize the Western Front with scant attention to other theaters, this course provides comprehensive coverage of all fronts. Likewise, we consider not only political elites and generals but also the lives of ordinary soldiers and civilians. Major themes include the surprising eagerness to plunge into mutual slaughter; the unexpected endurance of societies undergoing this ordeal; the radically different hopes and hatreds that war evoked, with remarkable contrasts in Western and Eastern Europe; and the way in which the Great War functioned as a hinge of violence, opening the door to the normalization of previously unsuspected levels of violence, including against civilians, a dynamic that hurried Europe toward renewed conflict.

Our first six lectures depict the state of Europe and the world as the 1914 cataclysm approached and then struck. We examine internal politics of the Great Powers and growing tensions among them, reacting to the expansion of German power, as well as important currents of thought (both optimistic and pessimistic) in intellectual life. We examine the slide into the abyss: origins of the July crisis, beginning with an act of terrorism in Sarajevo; historians' debates on the war's true causes and where the main responsibility lies; the striking "August Madness" celebrations; and the breakdown of longstanding military plans for short, decisive war.

The next three lectures—Seven through Nine—cover the Western Front and the surreal trench landscape that arose there. We examine technological reasons for the stalemate that the trenches represented, desperate and costly attempts to break it, strange patterns of death and life (including tacit truces) developed by ordinary soldiers, and vain and horrific battles at Verdun, the Somme, and Ypres. Lectures Ten and Eleven cover lesser known theaters: the vast, open Eastern Front where Germans battered Russia, even as final victory eluded them, and the Southern Front, including the Alps, the Balkans, and the doomed Allied Gallipoli expedition against Ottoman Turkey.

Lectures Twelve through Fifteen take a closer look at particularly important themes. We survey combatant countries' war aims and the experience of foreign occupation. The suffering of ordinary soldiers is confronted, as we discuss military medicine, psychological traumas, and the experience of 8 million prisoners of war. Although many men broke down under the strain of combat, others exulted in it: elite storm troopers were among them, as well as two men, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, who later became dictators as they sought to recreate wartime experience. This section concludes by investigating rapidly changing technology, as machine guns, poison gas, and tanks were deployed to mass-produce death ever more efficiently.

The next three lectures—Sixteen through Eighteen—return our attention to other theaters: war in the air and at sea and surprises and confounded expectations in each. The war's global reach, its colonial dimension, and the attempt to win sympathy in world opinion are examined in detail.

Our next set of lectures concerns internal home-front politics. In comparative fashion, we note similarities as well as striking differences in how nations reacted. Lectures Nineteen to Twenty-Three reveal centralized state control of economies, societies, and propaganda to create martial enthusiasm. We cover the privations and extraordinary endurance of many societies, as well as growing signs of stress and breakdown, to understand civilian experience. New social divisions arose, threatening cohesion. Dissent could be explosive, and we explore protest and its growth or suppression. By the later years of the war, 1916–1917, a fresh remobilization of energies was needed to continue fighting.

The next five lectures cover dramatic new departures in world history created by total war. The 1915 slaughter of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire launched a series of 20th-century genocides. War's strains encouraged revolts,

socialist and nationalist, radically reenvisaging the political future. In the Russian Empire, turbulent events produced the first attempt at total revolution, launching the Soviet Union's communist experiment. America's 1917 entry into the war announced a new, expansive role for the United States in world affairs, while its society was convulsed by mobilization for intervention overseas.

Lectures Twenty-Nine through Thirty-Three cover the war's immediate outcome. After the failure of Germany's last gamble and defeat, the November 11, 1918, Armistice closed the war, even as aftershocks continued: the unprecedented collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Turkish Empires, and the onset of ideological warfare among nationalists, revolutionaries, and counterrevolutionaries, in an atmosphere of European civil war. We analyze the 1919 peace settlement in Paris and the Versailles Treaty.

The last three lectures examine the war's deeper impact on Western civilization. Drawing on rich, recent scholarship in cultural history, we follow the war's echoes (and anguished questions of what it had ultimately meant) in monuments, collective rituals of commemoration, literature and art, and also in poisonous myths and conspiracy theories concerning the war. Most ominously, new and fierce ideological mass movements—spearheaded by Fascists, Nazis, and Communists—were so inspired by the experience of total war that they aimed to restructure politics along military lines and achieve permanent mobilization of state and society. Ultimately, our course concludes with a summation of the Great War's effects, its implications for the rest of the century, and the new world that it created.

Lecture Thirteen
Soldiers as Victims

Scope: Historians estimate that half of the soldiers mobilized were killed or wounded, and some suggest that nearly half of surviving soldiers experienced psychological traumas. Half of the corpses of the war were never found and identified, so that many dead literally remained unknown. Some 18 million survivors were wounded. This lecture seeks to grasp the sheer scale of the carnage of this industrial war, wrought on the bodies of soldiers. We discuss the nature of wounds, military medicine, attempts to restore shattered lives of invalids through prosthetics, and the slowly dawning recognition of the psychological phenomenon of "shell shock." Disillusioned soldiers increasingly felt themselves expendable, trapped in a dehumanized predicament. Capture, with its uncertainties, fears, and shame, was an experience also shared by many soldiers. An estimated 8.5 million became prisoners of war. POWs' experience is discussed, as well as attempts through the Red Cross and international agreements, to improve their conditions.

Outline

I. Carnage

A. Scale

1. Estimates suggest that half of the soldiers who fought in the war were killed or wounded.

2. Several "lost generations" resulted, both those who were killed as well as those who survived, shattered.

3. In the total war, which blurred lines between soldiers and civilians, soldiers who were "really civilians in uniform" (Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker) could be both perpetrators of violence and its victims.

B. Death

1. An estimated 9–10 million soldiers were killed in the conflict.

2. Mass death took on even more anonymity with the disappearance of bodies in the trench landscape.

3. Nearly half of those who died in the war were never found or identified. "Missing" often meant obliterated.

4. The losses were enormous: Serbia lost 37 percent of its soldiers and France lost 16 percent. In the French infantry, one-third of the officers were killed.

C. Wounds

1. Because 85 percent of wounds were from exploding shells, the rate of infections from dirt and mud was extraordinarily high.

2. Shells caused wounds that were especially extensive to bone and muscle.

3. Trench foot was a form of frostbite. Trench fever came from lice carrying typhus.

4. Self-inflicted wounds bespoke the desperation of men who wanted to get away from the front. Such men contracted frostbite willingly on the Eastern Front, shot themselves, or injected various substances into their veins.

5. Gas poisoning had consequences up to decades afterwards for the estimated 1.3 million who experienced it, even if they remained alive. Gassing was feared as an especially dreadful fate.

D. Military Medicine

1. Unlike in earlier warfare, the advances of medicine were mobilized for the care of the wounded.

2. Brave stretcher-bearers carried the wounded to "casualty clearing stations" close behind the front lines.

3. The 10 percent who needed immediate surgery were operated on then and there, while others were evacuated by motorized ambulances and ambulance trains.

4. Advances in wartime medicine included improved antiseptic care, blood transfusions, improvements in anesthetics, and extensive amputations to save lives that hitherto would not have been possible to save. Volunteer female nurses, thanks to their bravery and dedication, gained ever greater recognition.

5. Hygiene became an obsessive concern and included delousing regimes and vaccinations against mass epidemics among the troops. Prostitutes on the edge of armies were medically supervised as well.
6. At the same time, the aim of much medicine was to put men back in the field.

E. Prosthetics

1. Prosthetics, artificial limbs (including fake noses and ears, face masks of rubber or wax), and cosmetic surgery saw tremendous advancements, given the new urgency.
2. None of these advancements, however, could restore normalcy to the mutilated.
3. The figure of the disabled, mutilated veteran was ubiquitous in European societies for much of the 20th century, a visible witness and a reproach.

F. Self-Image of Soldiers

1. The realities of combat, death, and wounds contributed mightily to the growing disillusionment of soldiers.
2. Soldiers on all sides increasingly saw themselves as expendable.
3. Their names for themselves—French *Poilus* ("shaggy ones"), German *Frontschwein* ("front swine"), and British "Tommy Atkins"—accented their anonymity.

II. Shell Shock

A. Historians estimate that nearly half of surviving soldiers experienced psychological traumas.

B. The newly recognized condition was called "shell shock" in 1915 and was not understood for considerable time.

1. Its very name suggested that a physical impact or concussion was the cause.
2. In fact, this malady was psychological.
3. It left even apparently physically healthy or motivated soldiers reduced to mental collapse: crying; trembling; unable to hear orders; screaming; suffering convulsions, amnesia, and sleeplessness.

C. The suspicion that such soldiers were malingering or cowardly led to tragic instances of executions, mostly in the first half of the war.

D. Treatments were at first correspondingly brutal.

1. Some doctors were convinced that all that was needed was the will to snap out of this condition.
2. Shock therapy and solitary confinement were employed.
3. The diagnosis of "hysteria," usually depicted as a female illness, suggested that the men had become denatured.
4. Hypnosis and psychotherapy were also used as treatments.

E. Nowadays shell shock is recognized not as a physical illness but as a psychological one that results from the long endurance of stress. Today the condition is referred to as "post-traumatic stress disorder."

F. Shell shock left a long-lasting impact. Flashbacks and anxiety were common, triggered by sounds or memories.

1. Numerous soldiers went mad, seemingly a rational response in a world of destruction.
2. Approximately 3,000 German soldiers committed suicide in the war.
3. It has been argued that shell shock became the symbol of the human consequences of the war for poets and writers afterward.
4. At the same time, what is also surprising is how many men escaped shell shock.
5. The psychologist Sigmund Freud reflected that he had earlier neglected to explore the "death drive" or "death instinct" at work in human beings, among their other urges.

III. Prisoners of War

A. The Phenomenon

1. Historians Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker speak of a "camp phenomenon" of internment, which it is important to grasp to understand the nature of the war.

2. Capture and imprisonment, with their uncertainties, fears, and shame, were experiences shared by many soldiers on all sides in the Great War.
3. An estimated 8.5 million men became prisoners of war (about 10 percent of all mobilized soldiers).
4. Being taken prisoner was not an easy or safe experience. Killing of prisoners at the moment of capture or immediately after was not uncommon.
5. In some cases, such as among the demoralized Slavic units of the Austro-Hungarian army, mass defections occurred.
6. Ordinary POWs were used as laborers, whereas imprisoned officers enjoyed better conditions. The boredom and squalor could produce a "barbed wire psychosis."
7. Hunger and disease, rather than deliberate extermination, exacted a toll.
8. The contrast between the treatment of POWs in World War I and the genocidal mistreatment of prisoners in World War II by the Nazis is clear.

B. The "Continuity Thesis"

1. Some scholars have advanced the controversial thesis that captivity in World War I, especially in Russia, became a model for later institutions of incarceration (gulags and concentration camps) in the 20th century, sometimes called the "century of the camps."
2. This interpretation has been challenged forcefully.

C. International Agreements

1. Before the war, the Geneva Conventions of 1864 and 1906 and the Hague Rules of Land War of 1899 required the humane treatment of POWs.
2. Many ambiguities remained, however, leaving POWs in an exposed position.
3. Attempts were made to better the conditions of POWs by initiatives of the International Red Cross, the Vatican, and neutral countries.
4. Only exchanges of older POWs were arranged by an agreement in Berne in December 1917.
5. The restraints on mistreatment of prisoners, which were at least attempted through such arrangements, would be lost in the next total war.

Essential Reading:

Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18: Understanding the Great War*, pp. 1–44.

Supplementary Reading:

Joanna Bourke, *Dismembering the Male: Men's Bodies, Britain, and the Great War*.

Alon Rachamimov, *POWs and the Great War: Captivity on the Eastern Front*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What factors were most important in shaping ordinary soldiers' self-image in the war?
2. What reasons explain the contrast between treatment of prisoners in World War I and the frequent mistreatment of POWs in World War II?

Lecture Fourteen
Storm Troopers and Future Dictators

Scope: From attempts to break the immobility of trench warfare there arose a new model of soldier: the storm trooper. Storm troopers, deployed by all sides, used shock tactics and stealthy raids across No Man's Land to surprise the enemy, and in the process felt themselves recovering the possibility of individual heroism. Many styled themselves "princes of the trenches" and grew habituated to the trench landscape to a disturbing degree. We also examine the records of other men who seemed to enjoy the war too much: the future Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, at the time soldiers of the Great War. We investigate how their experiences helped to shape their later careers of destruction.

Outline

I. Storm Troopers

A. This type of assault fighter was developed as an expedient to deal with the stalemate and immobility of trench warfare, to break through with shock tactics.

B. Though all the major combatants in the war eventually groomed their own version of the storm trooper, this type of soldier was a German innovation (*Sturmtruppen* or *Stosstruppen*) making a first appearance in March 1915.

1. Though used elsewhere, German tactics would wield great influence on the Western Front, where they were adopted by the Allies.

2. Originally intending that all German troops be reshaped on the model of the storm troopers, Ludendorff sought to use them to the utmost in his spring offensive of 1918.

C. The storm troopers relied on infiltration and mobility rather than frontal attacks.

1. Their flexible tactics emphasized commando raids, scouting, hand-to-hand combat, aiming for weak spots and pushing forward, and skirting strong points. The aim was to regain speed and mobility.

2. Their weaponry included automatic rifles, light machine guns, flame throwers, grenades, and even daggers, axes, and maces. Hand grenades were worn in sling pouches for easy use.

3. In the German army, these units were made up of men under 25, unmarried, with good sports records. The units would be brought up by truck for special assaults. They were better equipped and fed than regular troops and were often resented for destroying "live and let live" arrangements at the front.

4. Their elite status was underlined by different equipment and personalized uniforms.

D. A storm-troop officer, Ernst Jünger (1895–1998), wrote a memoir of his experiences entitled *The Storm of Steel*, in which he celebrated the aesthetics of violence and hymned the new model of individual heroism embodied in the storm trooper.

1. The war was said to have hardened men of steel in the battle of materiel.

2. Born in 1895, Jünger had run off to join the French Foreign Legion before the war and volunteered for the German army in 1914. His service, during which he was said to have been wounded 14 times, won him the highest decorations from the German government and postwar fame as a conservative nationalist writer.

3. In spite of his glorification of violence and the popularity of his writings among the Nazis, Jünger himself looked down on them and associated with people involved in the 1944 July Bomb Plot against Hitler. During World War II, he was again in the army, stationed in Paris. Jünger died in 1998 at the age of 102.

E. Formed in July 1917, Italian storm troopers were famously called *Arditi* ("the bold ones"), who flaunted their devil-may-care attitude.

F. The storm troopers were celebrated for having regained heroism under dehumanized conditions. Jünger called them "princes of the trenches," who felt at home in the war.

G. After the war, the glorification of the storm trooper would continue, with dark political consequences. The Nazis would take up their name for their street gangs of paramilitary thugs (S.A. = *Sturm Abteilung*).

II. Benito Mussolini

A. Background

1. Benito Mussolini was born in 1883 in poor circumstances in the Romagna region. He was named after a famous Mexican revolutionary, Benito Juarez, by his blacksmith father, a socialist. Expelled from school for violence, Mussolini worked menial jobs in Switzerland, claiming afterward to have met the revolutionary Lenin there.

2. On returning to Italy, he found a position as a school teacher. He became active in socialist politics and edited the socialist newspaper *Avanti*.

3. His radical socialism included the belief that violence was the force that turned "the wheels of history."

B. Reaction to the War

1. In October 1914, Mussolini broke with his socialist comrades who condemned the war. He urged Italy to intervene.

2. For this heresy, he was fired as editor and expelled from the movement. Supported by French secret funds and by Italian industrialists, Mussolini in November 1914 founded a new newspaper that agitated for Italian entry into the war and mobilized a pressure group called a *fascio* (bundle) to make propaganda.

3. Once Italy entered the war in 1915, Mussolini was conscripted in September 1915 (afterward he falsely claimed to have volunteered).

4. Sent to the Austrian front, he performed his duties without extraordinary distinction and by war's end had reached sergeant's rank.

5. During training in February 1917, Mussolini was wounded by an exploding grenade thrower, which killed others around him in an incident later mythologized by the Fascists.

6. Discharged in June 1917 because of his wounds, Mussolini's thoughts turned to dictatorship to redeem Italian failures. He planned a "trenchocracy" (rule by veterans of the Great War).

7. Mussolini shared in the disappointment over Italy's fortunes in the war (half a million dead and disappointed territorial hopes).

C. Fascism

1. In March 1919, Mussolini forged a new political movement in Milan, gathering together bands of veterans.

2. His political movement, powerfully shaped by the war, was called Fascism.

III. Adolf Hitler

A. Background

1. Adolf Hitler was born in Braunau am Inn in Austria in 1889 to a middle-class family.

2. He dropped out of high school to study art in Vienna in 1907 and slipped into a bohemian underworld there, assimilating the darker currents of Viennese life: anti-Semitism, populist mass politics, chauvinistic pan-German nationalism, and racialist thought.

3. To escape military service in the Habsburg army, he moved to Germany.

B. Reaction to the War

1. War at long last gave Hitler a sense of purpose, and he recalled it as the "greatest time of my life."

2. His participation in the August Madness in Munich was captured in a picture by a photographer.

3. Hitler volunteered for service in a Bavarian regiment and served for almost the entire war on the Western Front. He claimed to have participated in the mythic Battle of Langemarck.

4. In the dangerous job of dispatch runner, he distinguished himself enough to win a rare Iron Cross First Class (recommended by a German Jewish officer), but he did not rise dramatically in the ranks.

5. Caught in a gas attack near Ypres on October 13–14, 1918, Hitler was sent to Pasewalk hospital in Germany.

6. While there, he heard the news of Germany's defeat, experienced a breakdown, and claimed to have visions revealing to him a calling of restoring German greatness.

C. Nazism

1. After the war, Hitler passed from continued military service to a leadership role in the National Socialist party (Nazis). Like the Fascists whom they imitated, the Nazis were strongly affected by the war experience.
2. Launching his political career, this obscure man presented himself rhetorically as the living representative of all unknown trench soldiers. In Hitler's leadership cult, it was claimed that his oratory was due to some mysterious alteration of his voice by being gassed in the trenches.
3. Historian Ian Kershaw concludes that, "the First World War made Hitler possible."

Essential Reading:

Ernst Jünger, *The Storm of Steel: From the Diary of a German Storm-Troop Officer on the Western Front*.

Supplementary Reading:

Ian Kershaw, *Hitler: 1889–1936 Hubris*, pp. 73–105.

Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini: A Biography*, pp. 23–40.

Questions to Consider:

1. What political orientations would have been most natural for storm troopers after the war was over?
2. Would Mussolini and Hitler have followed careers as dictators in the absence of the First World War? Why or why not?

Lecture Fifteen
The Total War of Technology

Scope: A tremendously important and dynamic element of the industrial Great War was the role of technology and its expanding destructive potential. The character of World War I was symbolized by impersonal steel helmets (replacing glorious plumed caps) and the mass-produced machine gun, an instrument of mass death. This lecture also examines the evolution of tanks (which would eventually overcome the immobility of trench warfare), the frightening use of poison gas on the battlefield, submarines at sea, and the economic weapon of *ersatz* materials, synthesized substitutes for strategically vital resources. These examples of accelerating rapid scientific advance illustrate the yoking of technological progress to the uses of total war.

Outline

I. Modern War and Technology

A. In this industrialized modern war, technology played a very important role and also evolved with startling rapidity.

1. David Lloyd George spoke of a "war of the engineers."

2. The war was marked by technological races, with quick adoption of enemy innovations by the opposing side.

3. In a fascinating phenomenon, this dizzying technical change would often be overlaid with reassuring older interpretive frameworks.

B. Technology also imposed its own dynamics on the war.

1. Technology played a role in creating the stalemate of the trenches, favoring the defensive at the start of the war.

2. By war's end, technological change seemed to be shifting to favor the offensive.

3. Technological imperatives could trump moral considerations or reconfigure codes of behavior.

C. This lecture will consider several archetypal examples of technological change (aircraft and submarine warfare will be addressed later).

II. Steel Helmets and Uniforms

A. Most emblematic of the war's industrial nature was the replacement of glorious plumed caps by steel helmets.

1. Soldiers now appeared increasingly interchangeable and anonymous, mere "workers" in a huge war machine.

2. With some 85 percent of wounds resulting from exploding shells (shrapnel), greater protection for the head and neck was required.

3. Traditional headgear like the German spiked helmet (*Pickelhaube*) left the head too exposed.

4. In 1915, the French adopted new Adrian helmets, also taken up by the Russians and Italians.

5. Shortly thereafter, the British adopted the Brodie helmet, named after its inventor. The form was modeled on a medieval helmet, evoking associations of the age of chivalry. The United States also adopted the Brodie.

6. From 1916, German forces also moved to the *Stahlhelm* ("steel helmet,") resembling 16th-century designs.

7. The heavy protruding lugs on either side of the German helmet were intended to ventilate and to allow for the attachment of additional metal plates to protect sentries and machine gunners, together with chest plates (an odd return to armor).

B. Uniforms assumed drabber, muddier colors, and were in general plainer and simpler, to attract less attention from the opposing side. This trend had begun earlier, after the Russo-Japanese War, but was now universal.

III. Machine Guns

A. The perfect symbol of the deadliness of the industrialized battlefield was the machine gun.

1. The machine gun had been perfected by an American inventor, Hiram Maxim, in 1884.

2. Traditionalists in the European armies resisted the machine gun, denigrating it as only fit for colonial slaughters (as at the 1898 Battle of Omdurman).

B. The logic of the war of attrition made the machine gun a crucial weapon.

1. Although the famed British marksman could shoot 30 rounds a minute, this feat was no match for the machine gun's intense fire of belts of bullets, at 600 per minute at ranges of more than 1,000 yards.

2. Its mechanized fire again reinforced the strength of the defensive, bolstering the stalemate between the two sides.

IV. Tanks

A. A new weapon, the tank, eventually would break through the trench stalemate, but its importance was only slowly recognized.

B. When still a secret experimental project of the British, the armored tractor was named the "tank," and the codename stuck. Winston Churchill supported the project.

1. The first tanks were not very reliable, prone to breakdown and problems.

2. A few were used at the Somme in 1916, but they were not ready for mass use until the following year.

3. The breakthrough came at Cambrai, on November 20, 1917, when more than 400 British Mark IV tanks tore a hole in the German lines. The advance of five miles, while dramatic, could not be exploited in time.

4. Although the French also built tanks, Germany purposely neglected them, investing resources into submarines instead. By the war's end, Germany had only 20 tanks as compared with the hundreds on the Allied side.

V. Gas

A. Poison gas was an innovation of the First World War and has been with us since, used in the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s.

B. Though proscribed by international convention, the gas was pioneered by the German scientist Fritz Haber, considered the father of chemical warfare.

1. A German-Jewish patriot and brilliant chemist who headed the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, Haber used the resources of the German chemical industry to deploy this new weapon.

2. He supervised the first mass attack.

C. Germans used chlorine gas on the Western Front on April 22, 1915, near Ypres, at the village of Langemarck. Allied defenders ignored revelations of the coming attack.

1. Chlorine poisons the windpipe and lungs, which soon fill up with fluid, drowning the victim. Only crude improvised countermeasures existed.

2. The attack ripped a four-mile gap into the Allied lines, but German commanders were themselves startled by the effect and unprepared to exploit it. If exploited properly and deployed in greater mass, this devastating weapon could have achieved a breakthrough.

D. The Allies condemned the use of gas as German "frightfulness," but they soon moved to replicate its use by September 1915 in a dialectic that would be repeated throughout the war. The British laboratories at Porton Down employed 1,000 scientists to produce the gas.

E. Use and control of poison gas evolved during the war.

1. At first the weapon was very imprecise, wafting back at those who released it.

2. Soldiers grew to hate gas with total ferocity.

3. The use of gas masks slowed down infantry even further, and alarms sapped energy. The gas contributed to the stalemate.

4. On December 19, 1915, Germans used a new gas, phosgene, with a deadly delayed action. The next year, the Allies used the same gas at the Somme.

5. In July 1917, the Germans introduced mustard gas (dichlorethyl sulphide), which blistered the skin and attacked throat and lungs. The chemical also lingered in affected areas and more generally on bodies.

6. Gas was now delivered by shelling. By 1918, 20–30 percent of all shells contained gas. An estimated 66 million gas shells were produced and some 113,000 tons of chemicals employed.

7. At the end of the war, one in six casualties was from gas.

8. In total, 90,000 died from gas (among these were 56,000 Russian soldiers, 62 percent of the total).

9. Among those gassed was Hitler, who during World War II would avoid using gas, apparently sure that the Allies would respond with nerve gas.

10. Recent historical research suggests that the Germans used biological warfare against animals, not humans.

VI. Submarines and Other Weaponry

A. Instead of conventional naval war, submarines and mines took on greater importance.

1. Submarines could not follow the earlier rules of naval warfare, including giving warnings before sinking.

2. As Germany built 380 submarines during the war, their use became a political disaster.

B. Other weapons included flamethrowers, terrifying yet dangerous to employ, and high explosives. Germany's Krupp Works produced monster guns, like the "Big Bertha," and long-range artillery with ranges of more than 70 miles.

VII. Ersatz

A. With Britain's naval blockade of Germany, crucial imports were lost, especially Chilean saltpeter for fertilizer and explosives. The development of *ersatz* (substitute) materials allowed Germany to continue the war.

1. The process of fixing nitrogen from the air was crucial, and without it Germany would have lost almost immediately.

2. Fritz Haber developed the process before the war, winning a 1918 Nobel Prize for it.

B. Other synthetic products were developed as well.

1. Synthetic rubber and other war materials were produced.

2. Germans consumed ersatz food products of poor quality, including war butter and war bread.

3. By 1918 in Germany, there were more than 11,000 ersatz products.

VIII. New Weaponry's Implications

A. These weapons seemingly produced new moralities.

B. At the same time, many older forms of war remained.

1. Despite wireless communications, carrier pigeons were also held ready.

2. Even as transport was mechanized, 1.5 million horses were mobilized, and a third died under fire, from disease, or overwork.

Essential Reading:

John Ellis, *The Social History of the Machine Gun*.

Supplementary Reading:

Robert Harris and Jeremy Paxman, *A Higher Form of Killing: The Secret History of Chemical and Biological Warfare*, pp. 1–38.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did the machine gun meet so much resistance from the military establishment?
2. Was the use of poison gas inevitable by the inner logic of the war, or could it have been more effectively banned?

Lecture Sixteen
Air War

Scope: Though war in the air was not decisive in World War I, it certainly was a frightening portent of what future conflict would hold, after this new weaponry had been pioneered. This lecture surveys the rapid improvement in early airplanes, and the growth of the myth of the fighter ace, treated as the knight of a new order of chivalry, redeeming a model of heroism high above the muddy trenches. We will also follow the evolution of ideas about how air war could be deployed, including the beginnings of bombing from the air, which would later take such a toll on civilian life in World War II.

Outline

I. Before the War

A. The potential utility and terror of airborne weapons was understood well before 1914. After the first airplane flight of the Wright brothers in 1903 in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, writers of speculative fiction imagined a coming war transformed by fighting in the skies, e.g., H. G. Wells's 1908 *The War in the Air*.

B. Balloons had been used for observation in earlier conflicts, and planes had been used in colonial warfare.

C. Experts debated what model of aircraft would be more promising: lighter than air (dirigibles and balloons) or heavier (airplanes).

D. The major powers established air branches before 1914, with France building the most developed. There were about 1,000 planes on all sides when war broke out.

II. Uses and Progress

A. In spite of earlier speculation about usefulness in combat, airplanes were mostly viewed at the start of the war as useful for reconnaissance, replacing the earlier role of cavalry. They also functioned as artillery observers, range-finders.

B. Soon it became important to eliminate the enemy's observers, and the way to air combat and "dogfights" was opened.

C. Air war saw an incredible rate of advance and transformation.

1. By the end of war, a whole range of different planes was developed (fighters, seaplanes, bombers), and new approaches like long-range bombing and use of aircraft carriers were pioneered.

2. The forces expanded enormously. British air forces in 1914 had fewer than 300 officers and around 1,800 men. By 1918, they had more than 27,000 officers and nearly 300,000 men.

3. Production of aircraft also exploded. By the war's end, French industries were building as many planes daily as they owned in 1914. By contrast, Austria-Hungary and Russia fell behind.

4. New types of planes proliferated. Most were biplanes, but experiments with single and triple wings also grew. Models included the French Nieuport and Spad, the British Sopwith Pup and Sopwith Camel, and the German Fokker triplane.

5. Today's German car manufacturer B.M.W. built plane engines during the war, and even today its logo hints at those origins, an abstract image of a white propeller and blue sky.

6. Photography improved steadily, as did wireless technology, to allow planes to communicate their observations to the ground.

7. Weaponry moved from pistols to mounted machine guns. The latter was a formidable engineering problem, as gunners could shoot off their own propellers. At first, metal plates mounted on the propellers deflected bullets, until the Dutch engineer Anthony Fokker, working for the Germans, produced a gear that synchronized the propeller with the guns.

8. This invention gave Germans air superiority in the west for less than a year.

9. Superiority in the air shifted back and forth.

10. This showed the typical dynamic of technological races, with each side's edge quickly imitated, reproduced, or improved on by its enemy.

11. In 1918, the uses of air power took a dramatic leap forward, into attack and long-range bombing on the Western Front (though used on all fronts).

III. Myth of the Fighter Ace

A. Above the muddy trenches, the airmen were seen as daredevil "knights of the air," recovering a chivalric and cleaner form of war, with an emphasis on personal heroism regained (in some ways a parallel to the storm troopers).

B. In a clear paradox, modern technology revived older traditions. Chivalric imagery proliferated, with German planes painted with iron crosses.

C. A powerful myth of the admired fighter ace was used in propaganda.

1. The fighter ace was even said to be a new physical type: thin, quick, showing controlled nervousness and alertness, aristocratic bearing, and valuing fair play in combat. Aces were said to respect their enemies, throwing wreaths down to honor fallen foes.

2. Fighter ace heroes included British aces Edward Mannock and Alfred Ball and the German "Red Baron" Manfred von Richthofen in his red fighter plane, all killed.

3. Richthofen scored the highest number of victories in the war (80) and was decorated with Germany's highest medal, "Pour le mérite."

4. Ironically, his exploits were used for propaganda on both sides, in a public relations campaign.

5. Richthofen was born of an aristocratic Prussian family that had become famous serving in the wars of the 18th century. He entered air service in search of adventure and fame.

6. In trying to increase the number of his kills, he did not always seek out the best among his enemies but instead often looked for the most vulnerable.

7. At age 25, Richthofen was made leader of a fighter wing. His instructional skills were such that many of his pupils became fighter aces.

8. After Richthofen was killed in April 1918, the last leader of his squad was Hermann Goering, later commander of the Nazi air force in World War II.

D. In reality, great dangers accompanied airmen, often imperiled by their own technology, as well as by the enemy, and by accidents in training.

1. Training often lasted only several months.

2. In a sense, fighting in the air was so new that its tactics had to be invented and improvised, and they still form the basis for air war today.

3. British pilots experienced about 50 percent casualties in the war.

4. It is estimated that more than 50,000 airmen were killed in the war.

E. In spite of the myth of lone heroism, in fact massed formations were increasingly important, like Richthofen's "flying circus."

IV. The Beginnings of Bombing

A. Beyond observation, the role of aircraft in bombing expanded.

1. Grenades used at the start of war eventually gave way to bombs weighing thousands of pounds.

2. The aim was not only to damage the enemy's war effort behind the lines, but also to create panic and demoralization.

3. Although very inaccurate, bombing underlined the increasing totality of war, as civilians were targets.

4. Sporadic first uses included German bombs thrown on Paris and Belgian towns in 1914.

B. Horrifying profiles in the sky were those of the Zeppelins.

1. Germans started to bomb Britain in January 1915 by using hydrogen-borne dirigibles called Zeppelins, named after Count Ferdinand von Zeppelin, who built the first in 1900.

2. As the war began, 11 were ready for use but proved vulnerable to enemy fire or weather.

3. During the war, 123 were used, and almost 80 were shot down or collapsed on their own.

4. Zeppelins mounted more than 50 raids on Britain, with the major attacks ending in 1916, after the zeppelins were replaced by planes, like the twin-engine Gotha bomber.
5. Alarm and panic were considerable in Britain, which had not experienced modern war on its own land.

C. Concerted bombing campaigns began in 1917.

1. The German campaign of 1917–1918 targeted London.
2. Some 1,400 people in Britain were killed by the bombings. Although this was a relatively small number, the campaign left a lasting impression on all sides, creating the dictum, "The bomber always gets through."
3. The British responded with attacks against German targets, including Zeppelin bases in Cologne and Düsseldorf and other industrial targets, like gas factories.
4. On April 1, 1918, the British Royal Air Force was founded as the world's first independent air force.
5. The British prepared plans to bomb Berlin, but distances were too great and technology still limited.

D. The terrible legacy of this air war lay ahead, in the mass bomber raids of World War II. The fact that mass bombing had not been tried in World War I ironically made the idea even more appealing to planners.

Essential Reading:

John H. Morrow, Jr., "The War in the Air," in Hew Strachan, ed., *World War I: A History*, pp. 265–277.

Supplementary Reading:

John H. Morrow, Jr., *The Great War in the Air: Military Aviation from 1909 to 1921*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How was the model of recovered individual heroism of the storm trooper different from that of the myth of the fighter ace?
2. What were the perceived "lessons" of the war in the air after 1918?

Lecture Seventeen
War at Sea

Scope: Though the naval arms race before 1914 had contributed heavily to the growing tensions that finally erupted in World War I, the role of the great navies turned out to be deeply ambiguous, also marked by stalemate. The only giant British-German naval clash, the Battle of Jutland in May 1916, was marked by confused sparring and an indecisive result. The naval blockade imposed by the British on Germany was of far greater consequence, an economic weapon choking its industry. We will examine the debate concerning the impact of the blockade on German civilians' diets and health. Germany's shift to unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917 threatened Britain's economy in turn, but fatefully antagonized the United States.

Outline

I. Expectations and Outbreak

- **A.** Many prewar tensions between Britain and Germany had centered on the naval race from 1898 on, but paradoxically the expectations of how the war would unfold on the seas were overturned.
  - **1.** Dreadnought battleships had revolutionized the naval buildup.
  - **2.** Britain's navy was the largest, crucial for defense of its global interests ("Britannia rules the waves").
  - **3.** The German navy was seen as a symbol of the German Empire and its modernity and dynamism.
  - **4.** All nations had large navies, including Austria-Hungary, not usually thought of as a naval power.
- **B.** Naval blockades had been important tools of war in the past (the Napoleonic wars). Germany reckoned with a close blockade of its ports by British forces once war commenced.
- **C.** Submarines were a new weapon being built by all sides.
  - **1.** Germany in 1914 had fewer than Britain, France, or Russia, but newer ones.
  - **2.** Submarines were viewed as defensive weapons.

II. Initial Encounters and Raiding

- **A.** The first task of the British forces was to bottle up the German navy.
  - **1.** The navy was positioned with the British Grand Fleet (stationed at Scapa Flow) between Scotland and Norway (200 miles between) and the Channel Fleet at the Straits of Dover, blocking the Channel's 20-mile expanse.
  - **2.** British forces were also stationed in the eastern Mediterranean (aided by a group of Japanese destroyers), while the French were responsible for the western Mediterranean, keeping Austria-Hungary bottled up into the Adriatic. Russian forces also found themselves bottled up in the Black Sea and the Baltic.
- **B.** British and German commanders showed extreme caution, aware (as the saying went) that an admiral could lose the war in one afternoon.
- **C.** A confused encounter took place in Germany's territory: the Battle of Heligoland Blight of August 28, 1914.
  - **1.** British forces under Admiral Sir David Beatty nearly faced a disaster but ended by defeating the Germans in their own territory.
  - **2.** This defeat made Kaiser Wilhelm II wary of risking battle.
- **D.** The new role of the submarine was demonstrated.
  - **1.** On September 22, 1914, one German sub, the U9, sank three British cruisers in one hour.
  - **2.** British submarines crept into the Baltic and operated from Russian ports.
- **E.** Raiding activity was emphasized instead of massive onslaughts.
  - **1.** Instead of a titanic clash of navies, German forces concentrated at first on commerce raiding and threatening troop shipments.

2. The Mediterranean cruisers *Goeben* and *Breslau* raced to Constantinople and were instrumental in bringing Ottoman Turkey into the war.
3. The East Asian Squadron under Admiral Count Maximilian von Spee, formerly based in the German protectorate of Tsingtau, set off for the Pacific.
4. Spee smashed a British force sent to intercept him off Chile, in the Battle of Coronel on November 1, 1914, the first British naval defeat in a century.
5. Sailing to the South Atlantic, Spee was ambushed in a planned attack on the British wireless station on the Falklands Islands by a British squadron on December 8, 1914. Spee was among those killed.
6. The Allies also caught and sank the remaining raiders: *Emden,* which operated in the Indian Ocean, and *Königsberg*, off East Africa. The cruiser *Karlsruhe*, which raided in the central Atlantic, blew up accidentally.

F. The British gained the secret advantage of reading German code, from code books recovered from a German ship sunk in the Baltic off Estonia. The decoding operation was called "Room 40."

G. On January 24, 1915, the Battle of Dogger Bank yielded a British victory against German forces, who had shelled British coastal towns, though the main German force escaped.

H. Henceforth, Kaiser Wilhelm II kept the navy close to port, and the sea war was stalemated.

III. Blockade

A. Because submarines and torpedoes had changed naval warfare, close blockades were made impossible.

B. Contrary to German plans, Britain imposed a distant blockade.
1. Britain established a ministry of blockade to also prevent neutrals from trading with Germany.
2. The blockade proved to be a formidable economic weapon.
3. In November 1914, Britain declared the North Sea a war zone.
4. Armed British merchant ships patrolled north of Scotland.
5. At first they intercepted only weaponry, but eventually more and more items were added to the list of strategically important materials.
6. German commerce was strangled.

IV. Battle of Jutland

A. German planning hoped to lure a portion of the British fleet into a trap, destroy it, and even the odds.

B. Admiral Reinhard Scheer, commander of the German High Seas Fleet, agitated for aggressive action in 1916.
1. British forces were to be lured to an ambush at the Skagerrak, attacked by subs and fast ships.
2. The Skagerrak is the strait between Norway and Denmark's Jutland peninsula.
3. Having decoded German communications, British admiral John Jellicoe also moved his forces toward Skagerrak.

C. The largest naval battle in history, the Battle of Jutland (called Skagerrak by the Germans), began May 31, 1916.
1. British forces were far larger as the enemies moved closer together.
2. The British lost two ships in quick succession.
3. However, the British managed twice the maneuver called "crossing the enemy's T," threatening the Germans with annihilation.
4. The Germans withdrew, and the British lost them by the early hours of June 1, 1916, rather than pursue them.
5. Arguments raged afterward about whether Admiral Jellicoe let slip the opportunity to crush German naval forces decisively.
6. In November 1916, Beatty succeeded Jellicoe as commander in chief of the Grand Fleet.

7. Because the British lost more ships, the battle has often been considered a German tactical win but not a strategic victory, as their planned ambush had failed. The German conclusion was that more investment in submarines was needed.

V. U-Boat War

A. German admiral Alfred von Tirpitz urged that extensive submarine warfare be used as an offensive weapon.

B. Responding to the British blockade, on February 4, 1915, Germany declared the seas around Britain a war zone, with British ships to be sunk on sight and no guarantee for the safety of neutral shipping. Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg was opposed, sensing the danger to international opinion.

C. In spite of countermeasures against submarines (nets, listening gear, depth charges), they proved massively destructive.

D. Yet that very dramatic destructiveness also horrified public opinion.

1. On May 7, 1915, the British liner *Lusitania,* on its way from New York to Liverpool, was torpedoed, sinking in less than half an hour with the loss of more than 1,000 lives, among them 128 Americans.
2. The *Lusitania* was in fact carrying contraband ammunition, and German officials had issued warnings, but outrage was enormous.
3. German exultation in propaganda made the effect even worse.
4. Sinking of the British liner *Arabic* on August 19, 1915, again off Ireland, heightened the outcry.
5. American protest forced Germany to alter its policy in September 1915 and suspend unrestricted submarine war.
6. Admiral Tirpitz resigned over what he saw as official meekness.

E. Germany felt it had to return to unrestricted submarine warfare.

1. In January 1917, in a gamble resembling the Schlieffen Plan, Germany turned again to unrestricted submarine war at the insistence of Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff.
2. Statistics were at the heart of this gamble, certain to bring America into the war.
3. Submarines were expected to choke off Britain in five to six months, before the Americans arrived.
4. On February 1, 1917, Germany declared unrestricted submarine war.
5. The United States entered the war against Germany on April 6, 1917.
6. German experts estimated that sinking 600,000 tons per month would strangle Britain, and, during the first months, this plan seemed to be working.
7. In the spring of 1917, only one month's grain reserves were left in Great Britain and a quarter of her ships had been sunk.
8. In April 1917, David Lloyd George insisted on the convoy system.
9. By summer 1917, convoys were effective, reducing shipping losses to only one percent.
10. Submarines had failed in their promise.

VI. Navies as Tinderboxes

A. Confinement of German and Russian navies had negative effects on crews idle in ports.

B. Results included mutiny in the German fleet in August 1917 and later participation of sailors in both Germany and Russia in larger revolutions.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 257–274.

Supplementary Reading:

Robert K. Massie, *Castles of Steel: Britain, Germany, and the Winning of the Great War at Sea*.

Questions to Consider:

1. If a decisive naval battle had been fought between Britain and Germany, how might the course of the larger war have been changed?
2. Why did German leaders consider unrestricted submarine warfare a gamble worth taking?

Lecture Eighteen
The Global Reach of the War

Scope: A crucial way to break the stalemate that descended on the war was to expand the conflict, seeking to gain allies, draw in colonial resources, and hem in the enemy on all sides. The global nature of the war involved many theaters, considered in this lecture. We survey fighting in the European overseas colonies, in Asia, Africa, and in the Middle East, as well as the use of colonial troops on the Western Front. The diplomatic sparring for the sympathies of neutral states and international opinion are also examined, from Switzerland's role as a haven for diplomats and spies to attempts to sway American sentiment to favor either side. Finally, the economic dimension of the global war is considered, with increased American loans leading to a tectonic shift in international finance.

Outline

I. Global Nature

- **A.** Earlier wars of the 18th and early 19th centuries had already had a global reach.
- **B.** The intensity of overseas "high imperialism" of the late 19th century intensified the global nature of World War I.
- **C.** The globalization of the modern economy also meant that the war had worldwide effects, even in areas spared fighting.

II. The Colonial Dimension

- **A.** War in the Colonies
  - **1.** The German colonial holdings were attacked immediately. War spread to the colonies in spite of earlier European urgings that natives must not see the imperial powers at war among themselves, undermining colonial prestige.
  - **2.** In Africa, most German forces were quickly overwhelmed by Allied forces (Togo, German West Africa). In Cameroon, they held out until January 1916 against British, French, and Belgian troops.
  - **3.** The significant exception was East Africa, where German and African troops (called Askari) under General Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck held out until after the end of the war in Europe against British forces, costing more than 120,000 deaths on all sides.
  - **4.** In the Far East, Australians, New Zealanders, and Japanese quickly took German Pacific island possessions.
  - **5.** Japan, allied with Britain since 1902, declared war on Germany on August 23, 1914, and attacked Tsingtau, the German protectorate on China's Shantung Peninsula. Defended bitterly by 5,000 Germans, it held out for two months.
  - **6.** Japan then hoped to use the war as an opportunity for imperial gains in China. Japan's Twenty-One Demands of January 1915 would have made much of China a Japanese protectorate, but for British mediation. The suspicions toward Japan of another Pacific power, the United States, were heightened.
- **B.** Drawing in the Empires
  - **1.** Although Germany's colonial holdings were quickly lost, empires were a significant resource for the British and French.
  - **2.** In 1914, Britain declared war on behalf of its entire empire. Troops from Australia, New Zealand, India, South Africa, and Canada fought for the British cause. The dominions and dependencies contributed more troops to the war than did the United States.
  - **3.** Dominion troops made great contributions outside of Europe. Australian and New Zealand troops, the Anzacs, fought in the Middle East, as did the British Indian Army. In New Zealand, 20 percent of all adult males enlisted.
  - **4.** From 1916, conscription was instituted in the British dominions as well. Not all welcomed this move; French Canadians objected, for instance.

5. Recognizing the importance of empire, the British formed an Imperial War Cabinet in 1917 of the prime ministers of the dominions and representatives from India. Though not effective, the cabinet symbolized the promise of a greater role in the future.
6. Many felt an implied promise that their contributions in the war would be rewarded with greater independence and self rule afterward. Expectations were raised, especially in India.
7. Economic aid from the dominions was important in funding the war effort.

C. Use of Colonial Troops

1. Colonial troops provided reservoirs of manpower for the Allies.
2. British Indian troops were brought to the Western Front.
3. France drew in tens of thousands of soldiers from West Africa and North Africa.
4. The colonies provided not only soldiers but also laborers. Asians and Africans were brought to work in France as porters and manual laborers. The Vietnamese Ho Chi Minh was among them.

III. War in the Middle East

A. Ottoman Turkey

1. In the strategically important Middle East, Ottoman Turkey was aided by German advisors and an Asia Corps.
2. Britain needed to protect the vital Suez Canal, twice attacked by Turks, and to control Persian oil wells.
3. Britain annexed Cyprus in November, and, in December 1914, Egypt became a British protectorate.
4. The use of troops from the dominions in the Middle East made clear their importance.

B. Mesopotamia (Iraq)

1. In November 1914, British and Indian forces landed in present-day Iraq and occupied Basra.
2. The campaign ended in a disaster.
3. After a siege of five months, British forces surrendered, to the Turks on April 29, 1916, at Kut-el-Amara. Prisoners were led off on a death march to Anatolia, and, of nearly 12,000, a third died.
4. A second campaign took Baghdad on March 11, 1917. The British also occupied Persia in 1917.

C. The Arab Revolt

1. Thomas Edward Lawrence, an archaeologist, supported the Arab uprising against the Ottomans led by the Hashemite Emir of Mecca. Arab forces took Aqaba in a dashing raid.
2. Winning fame as "Lawrence of Arabia," he became disillusioned with British diplomacy.

D. British Successes

1. On December 9, 1917, General Edmund Allenby, who had launched an offensive from Sinai, took Jerusalem. This much-needed good news was turned into a propaganda campaign.
2. Later, moving further, Allenby took Damascus in October 1918.

E. The Balfour Declaration

1. Wartime diplomacy shaped the Middle East, with consequences down to the present.
2. Zionists organized units during the war to win concessions for the peace.
3. To gain support of Jewish communities, on October 31, 1917, a declaration was issued in the name of British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour that the British government viewed "with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people ... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."

F. Sykes-Picot Agreement

1. In practice, promises about the future of the Middle East were trumped by the secret Sykes-Picot Agreement of February 1916, drafted by Sir Mark Sykes and Georges Picot.
2. This agreement carved out spheres of influence in the Ottoman territories, with Britain controlling Mesopotamia and France controlling Syria and Lebanon.

G. In practice, the promises were in conflict.

IV. Gaining Allies and Sympathy

A. The war's stalemate could perhaps be broken by gaining allies for one's own side to tip the balance.

1. Winning allies also helped in terms of worldwide public opinion, seemingly reinforcing the justness of one's cause.

2. Joining the apparently victorious side promised to give a country a share in the upcoming division of spoils and peace settlement.

B. The sympathies of the United States were clearly a great prize to be won, leading to many attempts to sway American opinion, loans, and involvement.

1. Although the sympathies of American patricians lay with Britain, Irish-Americans and German-Americans were vocally against involvement.

2. President Woodrow Wilson sought to be a mediator and peacemaker from outside.

C. Other allies joined for other reasons.

1. Japan's aims were geopolitical, to seize German holdings and to dominate China, a course of aggression that ultimately ended in World War II.

2. China joined the Allies in August 1917 in response to diplomatic pressure.

3. Portugal joined the Allies hoping to expand its African empire.

4. After the United States entered the war, Latin American and South American nations joined, caught up in the momentum.

D. "Revolutionizing" was a policy practiced by both sides, seeking to subvert the enemy by enlisting discontented minorities.

1. Germany sought to revolutionize by cultivating ties with rebels in Ireland, with revolutionaries in the Russian Empire, and by encouraging the Turkish declaration of holy war.

2. The Allies cultivated the numerous minority nationalists of Austria-Hungary and Ottoman Turkey.

E. Diplomacy in neutral states by both sides sought to sway public opinion. Switzerland offered an ideal setting for international diplomats and spies.

V. Global Economic Dimensions of the War

A. World War I, as a total war, was also clearly an economic war.

B. The war brought an enormous shift in international economic relations.

1. Europe's share of industrial production declined from 43 percent in 1913 to 34 percent in 1923, owing to advances in North America, South America, and Asia.

2. Patterns of loans and debts also were overturned. The United States became a net exporter for the first time and gave out enormous loans to Great Britain, which in turn lent to other Allies.

3. By the end of the war, Britain owed the United States 4.2 billion dollars. New York replaced London as the banking capital of the world.

4. The European powers lost markets and assets overseas.

5. Countries not involved in the fighting directly, like Brazil, Argentina, China, India, and Japan (which participated to some extent, but not as fully as the European powers), experienced an economic boom.

6. In the United States, exports quadrupled from 1914 to 1917.

7. Before 1917, Americans stayed out of the war and "combined virtue and profit" (A. J. P. Taylor).

C. In economics as well as in so many other ways, the world would never be the same after the war.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 204–217.

Supplementary Reading:

John H. Morrow, Jr., *The Great War: An Imperial History*.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what ways might non-Europeans' views of Europe change as a result of the war?
2. What were the most effective ways to gain allies in the war?

Lecture Nineteen
The War State

Scope: Total war put new demands on the state to mobilize populations and economies for victory. The extent of the crisis became clear with shell shortages at the start of the war among the combatant countries, which had not planned for protracted conflict. Reorganization of the state was undertaken by all warring powers, with greater or lesser success. In Germany, war materials were increasingly centrally controlled, and in 1916 the Hindenburg Plan further steered production, in a system that received the ironic label, "War Socialism." France faced serious problems in industrial production, which the government met with energetic intervention, while the French military controlled the war effort. In Britain, Lord Kitchener created a mass "new army," and David Lloyd George, as minister of munitions, sought to rationalize the war effort. Breaking with earlier liberal traditions, special laws gave the government increased power over the economy and political speech and introduced conscription.

Outline

I. Growth of War State

A. A crucial outcome of the war was the development of a new model of government and state power to meet the challenges of victory and survival.

1. The huge economic demands that the war would make were only dimly perceived before 1914.

2. Epidemic shell shortages at the start of the war revealed the problem in all its scale.

3. From immediate expedients and improvised measures, there eventually arose a new vision of the modern state as central and total organizer.

4. States needed to expand to deal with challenges of mobilization, in some countries breaking with traditions of a limited state in classical liberalism.

B. The clearest example of the scale of the demands involved the size of the armies.

1. The need to field and supply mass armies was an obvious priority on all sides.

2. The scale was prodigious. In 1916, Germany had 5.5 million men in uniform.

C. The term "home front" was a perfect expression of a deep truth about total war. The civilian population had to be involved in the war effort through industry, propaganda, and the will to sacrifice.

D. Economic control also proved to be a great challenge.

1. Planned allocation of materiel, production, human resources, and food supply demanded expanded bureaucracies.

2. Price controls, planned economies, rationally organized regulation of economies, nationalization of branches of industry and transport, compulsory employment, and the regulation of labor were the order of the day.

E. No better symbol of the power of the state could be found than the adoption of daylight savings time as a measure to increase productivity.

F. The imperative of mobilization also implied new compromises and political departures.

1. Unions were often enlisted to help, acquiring a new role in the process.

2. In exchange for patriotic pledges not to strike, union leaders were given a voice in consultations and planning.

3. In this spirit of cooperation, socialist political leaders entered the governments in Britain and France.

G. In this mobilization, war states could follow different paths to achieve control, and not all states were equally successful.

II. Imperial Germany

A. Germany had been an uneasy mix of authoritarian rule and democratizing pressures before the war, and those paradoxes affected its war effort.

B. Economically, Germany was unprepared for a long war.

1. Resources had not been stockpiled.

2. Germany was very vulnerable to blockade, as, before the war, it had imported about 20 percent of its food.

C. Walther Rathenau played a key role in helping the German economy.

1. A patriotic German Jewish industrialist, a visionary planner, and head of the German General Electric Company, Rathenau (1867–1922) organized the War Raw Materials Board to coordinate the German economy.

2. Government controls proliferated, including even an Imperial Potato Office.

3. Smaller businesses were shut down and large industries given preference, like the huge chemical combine, I. G. Farben, established in 1916.

D. Paradoxes existed despite this effort.

1. Though the German war effort was marked by authoritarianism, it was often less efficient than believed.

2. The State of Siege Law decentralized aspects of the war effort.

E. The "Silent Dictatorship" of Hindenburg and Ludendorff merits consideration.

1. From August 1916, Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff achieved great power in the Supreme Command in what amounted to a military dictatorship.

2. Kaiser Wilhelm II was increasingly pushed to the margins (while Allied propaganda continued to portray him as an evil mastermind).

3. Although even the mere threat of resignation sufficed for Hindenburg and Ludendorff to win their way, they were able to evade political responsibility.

4. Hindenburg's popularity was symbolized by a wooden idol in Berlin, representing trust in leaders.

5. In autumn 1916, the Hindenburg Plan was launched in an approach later ironically called "War Socialism."

6. The Auxiliary Service Law of December 2, 1916, drafted all men 17–60 for war-important jobs. New goals were set for arms production.

7. Trade union representatives were added to committees and a "corporatist" model introduced.

8. Forced labor from Belgium and Poland was used in violation of international law.

F. Although Germany attempted ambitious centralizing control, this centralization was not always effective or efficient, and Germany gambled by neglecting civilian needs.

III. Great Britain

A. Britain's liberal traditions shaped its war effort.

1. The liberal government of Herbert Henry Asquith was in spirit unsuited to war.

2. Lord Horatio Kitchener was made Secretary of State for War.

3. After a shell shortage scandal, Liberals accepted Conservatives into the cabinet in May 1915.

4. In 1914, Britain did not have conscription, fielding the largest volunteer army in the world, of a million men.

5. War Minister Lord Kitchener created a mass volunteer army, the New Army, to replace the decimated professional army. "Pal's Battalions" answered his call.

6. In spite of expectations that "business as usual" would continue in the economy, it needed to be reorganized.

7. In July 1915, a Ministry of Munitions was established under David Lloyd George (1863–1945), the "Welsh Wizard." He was the people's tribune of the radical wing of the Liberal party.

B. David Lloyd George threw himself into the task of reorganization.

1. The munitions ministry dealt with a shell shortage scandal, built a huge staff of 65,000, and introduced new control and drive.

2. Unions cooperated with the government. Businesses were allowed huge profits but could be shut down if inefficient.
3. Pub closing times were decreed to maximize productivity. Food rationing and rent control regulated living standards.
4. Breaking with longstanding tradition, in January 1916, conscription was introduced.
5. The Defense of the Realm Act (D.O.R.A.), passed at the very start of the war, giving the government extensive new powers to arrest dissenters and shut down offending newspapers.
6. When Asquith's government fell, it was replaced by Lloyd George's coalition War Cabinet, with him as Prime Minister, on December 7, 1916. Lloyd George was 53.

IV. France

A. The French war effort was beset by ambiguities.
1. It was less successful in industrial expansion but was spared the food shortages seen elsewhere.
2. The loss of industry in occupied areas was stunning, including 75 percent of coal production and almost 80 percent of steel-making capacity.
3. The improvised economy was marked by what was jokingly called "System D," meaning to "muddle through."
4. Political divisions of previous decades reasserted themselves.

B. France also reeled from its huge losses at the start of the war.
1. France bore the initial brunt of the German invasion.
2. In the first 16 months, France experienced almost half of its wartime casualties, with more than 600,000 killed.

C. French politics was marked by turmoil.
1. Following the *Union Sacrée*, René Viviani's center-left government expanded to include major parties.
2. The great orator Aristide Briand succeeded Viviani.
3. For the first three years of war, civil and military officials struggled over who would control the war effort.
4. The French army mutinies in 1917 marked a decisive crisis.
5. Extensive reorganization followed in autumn 1917 under Premier Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929), a radical politician and journalist.

V. Less Successful Cases: Russia and Austria-Hungary

A. Not all states managed mobilization for total war, in particular the conservative empires of the East.

B. Such was the case for Russia.
1. Russia could only effectively arm a fourth of its soldiers, and some were sent into battle with instructions to pick up rifles from dead men.
2. In a great mistake, Tsar Nicholas II himself took over the military command from Grand Duke Nicholas. Shortly he would be personally blamed for disasters.
3. By 1917, some 76 percent of Russia's industrial base was devoted to war production yet remained small and inefficient.

C. Austria-Hungary's structural problems resembled those of Russia, though on a smaller scale.
1. A pillar of the empire collapsed with the death of the aged Emperor Franz Joseph on November 21, 1916. He was succeeded by Emperor Karl I, his grand nephew, known as the "people's emperor."
2. Karl I reconvened the parliament in May 1917 after its wartime suspension, but demands for ethnic autonomy by some national groups foreclosed his reform plans.

VI. Liabilities of the War Economy

A. In expectation of reparations from defeated enemies, inflation was allowed to grow in wartime economies. War loan drives were intended to soak up some of the excess.

B. Social and economic realities were transformed, as some groups fared better than others on the home front.

1. Industrial workers were prized and rewarded with rising wages.

2. Middle-class citizens on fixed incomes sank in status.

3. Owners of war industries flourished, winning fortunes.

4. The illegal black market undermined trust in the government and sharpened social tensions.

VII. Overall Result

A. The experience of the war states produced a fundamental break with earlier classical liberal conceptions of the limited role of government.

B. States were increasingly expected to mobilize society and solve problems. The growth of the power of the state was matched by the increased prestige of the ideas of collectivism.

C. Ironically, German ambitions for total mobilization, though flawed in practice, became an ideal for many later planners.

Essential Reading:

Hew Strachan, "Economic Mobilization: Money, Munitions, and Machines," in Hew Strachan, ed., *World War I: A History*, pp.134–148.

Supplementary Reading:

Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914–1918*.

Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War: Explaining World War I.*

Questions to Consider:

1. What, in the final analysis, were the key ingredients for successful war mobilization of the economy?

2. Could the social dislocations of war economies have been avoided? How?

Lecture Twenty
Propaganda War

Scope: Propaganda, the politically instrumentalized attempt to form attitudes and thought, grew to tremendous importance in a time of total war, when hearts and minds were a key strategic resource, just like guns and ships. This lecture examines the varying propaganda styles of the combatant powers and their increasing sophistication, moving away from narrow censorship to effective propagation of entire media campaigns. Governments were slower to understand the potential value of spontaneous propaganda from the populace itself, a phenomenon discussed in detail. Part of a larger "war culture," such voluntary propaganda took the form also of rumors, myths, and stereotypes of the enemy, which could be of great psychological significance. This lecture also critically evaluates the debate about how important propaganda really was to the outcome of key moments in the war as a whole.

Outline

I. The Phenomenon

A. This topic is crucial to major themes of this course: the role of ideology, the totality of the war, the different meanings assigned to the war, and the eagerness with which the war was met.

1. More ideology was involved than is commonly assumed.

2. Paradoxically, the warring powers were themselves slow to understand that the most effective propaganda was that which was spontaneous, or which built on established opinions, beyond censorship or the restriction of news.

3. Censorship was important (as in the classic phrase, "All Quiet on the Western Front," which obscured horrors), but in total war a positive motivating message became crucial.

B. Propaganda was earlier understood to imply top-down manipulation of opinions by elites. It has since been rethought by scholars, who now often speak of a "war culture," in which societies propagandized themselves in a "horizontal" phenomenon.

II. Official Propaganda

A. At the start of the war, all warring sides proclaimed a war of defense.

1. It was essential to motivate the home front to total exertion of effort.

2. Neutral opinion also could be swayed and international sympathies won or lost.

B. There were national differences involved in the challenges faced by individual countries.

1. In France, the defense of national territory against the hereditary foe was a fundamental, grounding theme.

2. In Britain, the national interest needed to be explained in terms of political principle.

3. German propaganda faced internal weaknesses, e.g., arguing for a war of defense even as armies stood on enemy territory. Articulation of war aims could alienate different segments of the society, breaking the *Burgfrieden* (eternal truce).

4. The multiethnic empires of Austria-Hungary and Russia could not without peril frame their appeals in national terms.

C. Propaganda grew in sophistication as the war progressed, with poster campaigns and film companies (the German U.F.A.) systematically deployed.

D. Propagandistic imagery is a fascinating topic.

1. Women were universally used in propaganda to symbolize the home country and the home front.

2. Religious imagery was deployed to portray the war as a crusade against evil or to offer consolation for sacrifices.

E. In this competition, German propaganda in particular often backfired catastrophically.

1. The "Hymn of Hate" of Ernst Lissauer, directed against Britain, was turned against Germany by Allied propaganda as an example of bloodthirsty nonsense.

2. Though a private initiative, a medal coined in Germany to celebrate the sinking of the liner *Lusitania* likewise backfired.
3. More generally, German propaganda stressed less inspiring themes of endurance and holding out.

III. Key Concepts of Civilization and Culture

A. The enemy was increasingly dehumanized in propaganda.

B. The terms of civilization and culture took on great significance in identifying oneself against the enemy.

1. In German rhetoric, German *Kultur* was juxtaposed with Anglo-Saxon and French *Zivilisation*, and it was claimed that Germans were a people of heroes fighting against trader-peoples (*Werner Sombart*).
2. Allied propaganda represented Germans as barbarians and "Huns" (actually borrowed from a speech by Kaiser Wilhelm II), using the ample instances of atrocities in Belgium and the burning of Louvain, as well as fabricated anecdotes.
3. Professors and academics on all sides joined in a furious debate concerning culture.

C. Images of the enemy were sharpened into overwhelmingly negative stereotypes (with racial overtones), cutting off the prospect of compromise.

1. "Kaiser Bill" was demonized in Allied propaganda.
2. Images of the enemy also led to scapegoating of foreigners in one's midst, including a hysterical fear of alleged spies: German stores were looted in Britain and aliens interned on the Isle of Man.

IV. Spontaneous Propaganda and "War Culture"

A. The war unleashed a spontaneous upwelling of sentiment. More than one million war poems were written in the first months of the war in Germany.

B. Rumors could also function as effective propaganda.

1. Stories proliferated concerning German atrocities.
2. Rumors on the Eastern Front concerned scorched earth policies and fears.
3. The story of Russian troops landing in Aberdeen with snow on their boots reinforced hopes for victory.

C. Spontaneous propaganda was part of a larger self-inflicted social pressure.

1. In Britain, young women pinned white feathers on men not in uniform, condemning them as "slackers." This mockery of their manhood expressed social disapproval.
2. In some cases, women pinned a feather on a shell-shocked soldier or a man on leave, to the disgust of the troops.

D. The fervor with which ordinary people embraced the war has led to the term "war culture," with dynamics distinct from those of official manipulation.

1. Older forms of folk art were also enlisted, as in the French *image d' Epinal* or traditional Russian woodcut (*lubok*), connecting to older customs.
2. In a process of trivialization, proliferating knickknacks and souvenirs sought to domesticate the ferocity of war.
3. Heroes like Hindenburg were celebrated with ashtrays, vases, and postcards, as well as with a wooden statue in Berlin.
4. The massive proliferation of such objects suggests the eagerness of an audience for it.

V. Disillusionment

A. With growing war weariness, a distrust set in of propaganda and authority.

B. For soldiers at the frontlines, the radical disjuncture rankled between the propaganda that they read and the experience that they lived.

1. Soldiers' morale was affected by communication with the home front as well.

2. Some soldiers resented what they perceived as unthinking jingoism at home.

C. Propaganda was mocked as "eyewash" or "head-stuffing."

D. It has been argued that an entire vocabulary of words and ideas was ruined in the process, with "honor," "duty," and other terms increasingly tainted with irony.

E. In a paradox, the disbelief with which propaganda was met extended to cases of true atrocities.

VI. Conclusions

A. After the war, Hitler would be convinced that Germany's poor propaganda had helped lose the war and would devote himself to perfecting that weapon. In fact, historians argue that Germany's propaganda had a harder case to make.

B. The democratic Allies had an advantage in harnessing popular energies.

C. The notion of "war culture" is a valuable insight, as it brings to the surface something that disillusioned participants later wished to forget: wartime enthusiasm and participation had been real.

Essential Reading:

Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18: Understanding the Great War*, pp. 92–158.

Supplementary Reading:

Hubertus Jahn, *Patriotic Culture in Russia during World War I.*

Phillip M. Taylor, *Munitions of the Mind: A History of Propaganda from the Ancient World to the Present Day*, 3rd ed., pp.176–207.

David Welch, *German Propaganda and Total War, 1914–1918: The Sins of Omission*.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what ways did the use of propaganda during World War I depart from older uses of this tool?

2. Which country had the most effective propaganda and why?

Lecture Twenty-One
Endurance and Stress on the Home Front

Scope: The home fronts in all the warring countries met privation, shortages, rationing, and surveillance with both endurance and signs of growing stress, outlined in this lecture. Hunger confronted the German population in 1916–1917 as a result of the British blockade. As masses of women entered war industry factories and children experienced militarized educations and increased independence without adult supervision, social roles and moralities buckled. Religious institutions sought to reinforce social stability and underwrite the spiritual war effort. At the same time, a disconnect existed between what was experienced at home and what was experienced in the trenches, often driving a wedge between men and women, civilians and soldiers. Minorities within warring societies could be scapegoated, as evidenced in rising anti-Semitism in Germany.

Outline

I. Physical Life on the Home Front

- **A.** It was part of the logic of total war that civilians would be targets.
- **B.** Life for civilians underwent profound changes and privations.

II. The Blockade of the Central Powers

- **A.** Britain's imposition of the naval blockade was an important form of economic war.
- **B.** After 1915, the economic balance of power shifted to the Allies.
- **C.** The vulnerabilities of Germany's position were increasingly revealed.
  - **1.** Before the war, Germany had imported about 20–30 percent of its food supplies, and these imports were now cut off.
  - **2.** Likewise, the drafting of farmers, the requisitioning of horses, and other factors led to a dislocation of agriculture in Germany, producing food shortages.
  - **3.** In the harsh winter of 1916–1917, the potato crop had failed, and the result was the "Turnip Winter," as this unappetizing root vegetable became a staple.
  - **4.** Food supplies were massively curtailed and caloric intake cut.
  - **5.** According to estimates, whereas the average German had daily consumed 1,350 calories in 1916, this number plummeted to 1,000 in 1917.
  - **6.** Historical dispute continues about how many civilians died as a result of hunger in the blockade and associated diseases. Some historians cite a figure of 750,000 starvation deaths in Germany.
  - **7.** Clearly, civilian mortality rose dramatically.
  - **8.** In a dramatic instance of the changed value of human life in wartime, there are hints that passive euthanasia through neglect took place in mental asylums in Germany during the war, involving perhaps some 70,000 deaths.

III. Economic Life

- **A.** Inflation became a universal phenomenon.
  - **1.** In France, prices roughly doubled during the war.
  - **2.** Most workers' wages did not keep pace with inflation, with Britain as an exception.
- **B.** Standing in lines to buy rationed food became a common feature of the home front and discontent and rumors in these queues could lead to disturbances or riots.
- **C.** The unavoidable nature of the black market tended to erode confidence in authority.
  - **1.** The common figure of the profiteer was hated, but needed.
  - **2.** Private initiative to find food by going to the countryside (*Hamstern* in German) became common.
- **D.** Rural areas were often spared the food shortages of the cities.

IV. Regimentation

- **A.** Ordinary people were subject to increasingly intense conscription, pressure, and surveillance.
- **B.** The skilled industrial worker was valued and often exempted from service at the front, whereas farmers were conscripted.
- **C.** Even as valuable industrial workers gained bargaining power through their importance, attempts continued to militarize their service and stop them from changing positions.
- **D.** Trade unions took on a new role.
  - **1.** The increasing formal role of unions was fraught with paradox: Were they winning acceptance or being domesticated?
  - **2.** The growing influence and militancy of unions led to growing membership.
- **E.** The basis for the welfare state was laid.
- **F.** The churches played an often equivocal role.

V. Changed Roles of Women

- **A.** Women were urged to take an active role, a challenge that was often eagerly accepted.
  - **1.** Earlier suffragette activism and protest ended all at once.
  - **2.** Movement leaders saw war work as opening the way for the vote after the war.
- **B.** Women's roles in the workplace changed.
  - **1.** Women's work in industry was not new, but the influx of women into jobs that earlier were male preserves, like clerical posts, was striking.
  - **2.** In Britain, the number of women in banking increased more than sixfold, and the number of women in other branches of commerce doubled.
  - **3.** In France, 40 percent of the workforce was women. In Vienna, about half the metal workers were women.
  - **4.** Women working in uniforms were a new sight: trolley conductors and police or military auxiliaries.
  - **5.** Women also were more conspicuous in heavy labor, including in munitions factories and other heavy industry. In the Krupp armaments plants in Germany in 1918, 38 percent of the workers were women.
  - **6.** This munitions work was dangerous, as in the case of the so-called "Yellow Canaries" in Britain, the young women who were poisoned by the chemicals that they handled.
  - **7.** These changes in women's roles in the workplace led to friction with resentful men.
  - **8.** The expectation, often shared by many female workers themselves, was that this employment was temporary and would end with the war's conclusion.
  - **9.** However, altered ideas of women's scope of activity and changed manners and dress represented a significant psychological change.
- **C.** In a dramatic fashion, women also played roles in espionage and resistance.
  - **1.** The famed exotic dancer Mata Hari (her real name was Margaret Gertrude MacLeod) was shot by the French as a spy for the Germans in 1917.
  - **2.** Women in German-occupied northern France and Belgium participated in networks that smuggled Allied soldiers out of the country.
  - **3.** In a notorious case later trumpeted in Allied propaganda, in 1915 in Belgium, the Germans executed a British nurse, Edith Cavell, who had helped more than 200 Allied soldiers escape to Holland.

VI. Children

- **A.** Increasing demands for manpower meant that recruits in the armies included young men only coming of age.
- **B.** Even children too young to be recruited were affected by the conflict.
  - **1.** Education in primary schools was militarized in subject after subject.
  - **2.** Children were urged to join in raw material collections drives.

3. Maps, children's books, and outdoor games lured children into psychological involvement in the war.

C. Being orphaned or losing a brother became a common destiny.

D. Historians debate whether a broad social process of brutalization was underway.

VII. Moral Life and Roles Changed

A. Social structures buckled under the pressure of war.

B. A key example of the passing of traditional castes was the decimation of European aristocracies, overrepresented in the officer corps.

1. Junior officers' death rates were often three times higher than those of other soldiers, as they led charges.
2. Some Social Darwinists grew anxious that the war was creating a form of negative selection, as the elites were mowed down.

C. Traditional morality was under strain.

1. Armies ran brothels, afraid of venereal disease.
2. In occupied territories, fraternization was a common reality.

D. Within society, economic burdens were visibly not even. Earlier hierarchies were reversed when skilled workers fared better economically than the middle classes.

E. Social critics agonized over what they saw as symptoms of chaos: women at work (swearing no less), profligate spending, and juvenile delinquency.

1. Outward changes in women's roles were often most visible among the middle class, for other women had long worked outside the home.
2. Changes in the ways that women began to dress and exert independence in their lifestyles (e.g., by living on their own, smoking, and freely disposing of their wages) were criticized.

F. In many countries, women were at last granted the right to vote: in January 1918 in Britain; immediately after the war in Germany and Austria; and in 1920 in the United States after its adoption of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.

VIII. Scapegoating

A. Frequently, vulnerable elements within wartime society were singled out and scapegoated for larger problems.

B. Such was often the case among groups that had ethnic relations across borders: Poles, ethnic Germans, Armenians, and Jews.

1. Poles were considered suspect in Germany's eastern provinces during the war.
2. In Russia's northwest territories, ethnic Germans were deported at the start of the war, suspected of spying.
3. In the Ottoman Empire, the minority Armenian community was considered suspect, allegedly sympathizing with the Russian Empire.
4. As the Russian army met disaster in the first two years of the war, they persecuted Jews as they retreated and withdrew, and ethnically cleansed them from the areas still under military control.
5. In Germany, anti-Semites demanded and got a "Jewish Census" of German Jews serving in the army in 1916, claiming that Jews were shirking their patriotic duty at the front. Though the census results showed this accusation to be a lie, the results were not announced, further feeding hateful rhetoric.

Essential Reading:

Hew Strachan, *The First World War*, pp. 201–221.

Supplementary Reading:

Belinda Davis, *Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin*.

Susan R. Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*.

Maureen Healy, *Vienna and the Fall of the Habsburg Empire: Total War and Everyday Life in World War I.*

Questions to Consider:

1. What long-range effects, if any, would children's experience of war have in the future?
2. Which one change in women's lives was most important?

Lecture Twenty-Two
Dissent and Its Limits

Scope: The tensing of national energies for all-out war reduced social tolerance for dissent, and many who had objected to war in the abstract before 1914 found themselves swept along by the riptide of nationalism. Nonetheless, a range of voices speaking out against the war was heard, often at considerable cost to the dissenters. This lecture discusses the waves of strikes and workers' unrest that expressed growing war-weariness, the quiet protests of pacifists and conscientious objectors, the angry condemnation of the war by the decorated British officer Siegfried Sassoon, and the growing confidence of radical socialists, including Vladimir Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, and Karl Liebknecht, who saw in the war an opening for world revolution.

Outline

I. Growing Unrest

- **A.** After the first two years of the war, growing discontent appeared.
  - **1.** Before the war, strikes had reached a new intensity in Europe.
  - **2.** With the outbreak of war, strike activity was suspended but reappeared in 1916.
- **B.** Strikes increased in the warring countries.
  - **1.** In May 1916, 50,000 German workers in Berlin stopped work for three days to protest the arrest of socialist leader Karl Liebknecht.
  - **2.** Strikes also increased in France and Britain.
  - **3.** In April 1917, 200,000 Berlin workers again went on strike to protest reduced food rations.

II. Limits on Speech

- **A.** Censorship was the rule of the day in the warring powers.
- **B.** Opposition to the war was harshly suppressed.
  - **1.** In France, former prime minister Joseph Caillaux was sent to prison, charged with treason, while a former interior minister was exiled.
  - **2.** Suspect newspaper editors were imprisoned and some executed in France.

III. Desires for Peace

- **A.** Nonetheless, desires for peace were strong enough to find expression at many levels and in many different ways.
- **B.** U.S. President Woodrow Wilson made repeated attempts to find a basis for negotiation among the warring powers.
  - **1.** In December 1916, he made a last, unsuccessful effort to get the opponents to state their war aims.
  - **2.** Wilson's formulation of a suggested "peace without victory" held increasing appeal to ordinary people, though political leaders resisted it.
- **C.** In the case of Austria-Hungary, its increasingly desperate leadership intuited that only immediate peace offered a chance of survival.
  - **1.** Emperor Karl in 1917 made indirect and secret diplomatic advances to the French to test the chances for peace, through an aristocratic relative in the Belgian army.
  - **2.** When a spiteful Georges Clemenceau revealed these overtures, it was an embarrassment to the Central Powers, and Austria-Hungary was forced to grovel before its senior ally.
- **D.** The pope's was another important voice raised at this time.
  - **1.** Pope Benedict XV (1854–1922), who had been elected in the first weeks of the war in 1914, circulated a peace note on August 14, 1917.
  - **2.** The letter was disregarded by all sides.

3. In encyclicals urging peace, Benedict XV maintained a strict neutrality in the conflict and was criticized for this by both sides.
4. Special collections were organized for the relief of war-ravaged areas.

E. In spite of widespread desires for peace, government leaderships felt the need to continue the war, fearing that anything less than victory would be seen as weakness.

1. Victory seemed the only promise of security.
2. Likewise, any expression of readiness for peace by the enemy was viewed as an admission of weakness and, thus, provided all the more reason to fight to a successful conclusion.

IV. Pacifism and Personal Pleas

A. Pacifism was not a single, uniform philosophical stance: It could involve objections to any war, to this war, or simply to the prolongation of the conflict. Reasons could be religious, ethical, or both.

B. When the draft was instituted in Britain in January 1916, "conscientious objectors" (nicknamed "conchies") who protested against service were grilled by examining boards.

1. Of the 16,000 British conscientious objectors, most served in alternative capacities to soldiering.
2. Even when their objections were accepted, they were often vilified at home.
3. The practice of pinning white feathers on men not in uniform underlined this feeling of animosity in Britain.

C. Yet many writers and poets made heartfelt pleas against the war.

1. French writer Henri Barbusse published the novel *Under Fire* in 1916, a realistic portrayal of the war.
2. British poet Siegfried Sassoon, a highly decorated soldier, came to question and then, in an open letter in 1917, to reject the war and throw away his medal. Only a diagnosis of shell shock averted harsh punishment.
3. The British novelist and poet Robert Graves survived the trenches to write *Goodbye to All That*, one of the great memoirs of the war.

D. Writers more remote from the war, including Stefan Zweig and Romain Rolland, mourned the slaughter that they saw was destroying European civilization.

E. In Jaroslav Hasek's comic novel *Good Soldier Svejk*, the title character, without enunciating great principles, protests and resists the war in his own bumbling fashion.

V. Socialists

A. The Socialist movement had experienced a crisis in 1914.

1. The Second Socialist International, founded in 1889, had joined different national parties into a worldwide movement and pledged them to resist capitalist wars.
2. Instead of closing down the war in 1914 with a general strike, socialists had rallied to their individual nations' cause and voted for war.
3. The most prominent socialist party, Germany's Social Democrats, argued that Germany's cause was that of progress, as well as self-defense. Other socialists found similar reasons to support their own state.
4. Government plans in several countries to arrest socialist leaders at the outbreak of war were simply shelved, as they became unnecessary.
5. Socialists entered the governments of Britain and France, evidence of their newfound acceptance.

B. Dissent

1. Not all socialists went to war. Italy's socialist party consistently resisted the war.

2. Radical socialists also denounced the war and argued that international revolution should be the goal instead.

3. In April 1917 in Germany, the Independent Social Democratic party was formed. Members included radicals like Karl Liebknecht (who had refused to vote for war credits in December 1914) and Rosa Luxemburg, who broke with the moderate Social Democrats.

4. The Russian Bolsheviks likewise denounced support for any side in this war.

C. In an attempt to rebuild the fractured socialist unity, socialist representatives met in conferences organized in neutral Switzerland.

1. At the Zimmerwald Conference in September 1915, the splits in the movement were clear.

2. The April 1916 Kienthal Conference failed to resolve the differences. Lenin and radical socialists sought to promote immediate revolution, but the majority emphasized peace.

3. The planned Stockholm Conference of September 1917 failed to bring together the movement.

VI. Lenin: Living the Revolution

A. Lenin was born as Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (1870–1924) into an upper middle class family, but he was radicalized when his older brother was executed as a terrorist in 1887.

1. Lenin took on a new identity as a revolutionary, denouncing religion, liberalism, and the Tsarist regime and espousing radical Marxism.

2. Active as a revolutionary conspirator, Lenin was arrested, deported to Siberia, and lived in exile outside Russia from 1900 to 1917.

3. In 1903, in a split from other Russian Social Democrats, Lenin led a faction called the *Bolsheviks* (meaning "majority" in Russian), representing a new type of party marked by internal discipline, professional revolutionary identity, and central control.

4. As the "vanguard" of the people, the Bolshevik Party would accelerate history and lead the masses into the future.

B. In his theories, Lenin sought to adapt Marxism to Russian conditions, which were inhospitable, given Russia's lagging industrial development.

C. The outbreak of war found Lenin in exile in Austria-Hungary. With difficulty, he fled to neutral Switzerland.

1. While there, he formulated an answer to the theoretical challenges with which he had wrestled.

2. In a 1916 book, *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of World Capitalism*, Lenin argued that the war was an inevitable capitalist crisis. This war among nations could be turned into a civil war between classes.

3. As the weakest link in the chains of the capitalist world system, Russia was ideally suited to start a revolution, growing out of defeat.

4. Russian revolution was not an end in itself, but only the beginning. It would be "internationalized" and spread.

D. In Swiss exile, however, Lenin could only wait for some opportunity for action and sometimes despaired of seeing the revolution.

Essential Reading:

John Horne, "Socialism, Peace, and Revolution, 1917–1918," in Hew Strachan, ed., *World War I: A History*, pp. 227–238.

Supplementary Reading:

Robert Graves, *Goodbye to All That*.

Jaroslav Hasek, *Good Soldier Svejk and His Fortunes in the World War*.

Robert Service, *Lenin: A Biography*, pp. 129–269.

Questions to Consider:

1. What forms of resistance to the war were, or would have been, most effective?
2. Was the breakdown of the Socialist Second International inevitable?

Lecture Twenty-Three
Remobilization in 1916–1917

Scope: The increasing strains taking their toll on wartime societies led to attempts to reinvigorate the war effort in all the combatant powers in the last two years of the war, a "remobilization" of energies for the fight to the finish. As the war dragged on, its disintegrating effects could be seen in the breakdown of the political domestic truces launched in 1914 and in growing waves of workers' strikes. In Britain, a new energetic wartime government under David Lloyd George took power, while in France Georges Clemenceau's new government reasserted civilian control over the war effort. In Germany, the "silent dictatorship" of Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff sought to shore up their popularity with a propaganda campaign of "Patriotic Instruction" and expansive war aims. The strains of the war were most evident in Austria-Hungary and Russia.

Outline

I. Increasing Strains

- **A.** After the first two years of war, in the face of growing strains and weariness, political leaders recognized the need to reconfigure the war effort.
- **B.** The domestic truces of the start of the war were everywhere under strain or breaking down.
- **C.** In this context, democratic countries like France and Great Britain seemed to have the advantage of mechanisms to accommodate these frictions through compromises.
  - **1.** Germany's authoritarian system was at a disadvantage.
  - **2.** Yet the Allies faced crises in precisely this period: Their offensives on the Western Front were defeated, Italian armies had been defeated at Caporetto in October 1917, and Russia withdrew from the war with the Bolshevik coup in November 1917.
- **D.** The period 1916–1917 saw a remobilization to summon revitalized energies to fight the war to a finish.

II. Great Britain

- **A.** Britain's remobilization was driven by David Lloyd George.
  - **1.** A man of immense energy and ambition, he had been called a "one-man Welsh revolution."
  - **2.** Before the war, he had crafted legislation that laid the foundations for the modern welfare state.
  - **3.** The fact that he had cooperated with Conservatives in bringing down Herbert Asquith reinforced critics' mistrust of him: They saw him as a man without convictions.
- **B.** In December 1916, David Lloyd George had replaced Herbert Asquith as prime minister.
  - **1.** Lloyd George replaced the previous large cabinet with a war cabinet of only five persons.
  - **2.** Under his energetic leadership, victory took priority and consultation with Parliament was increasingly disregarded.
  - **3.** A feud between Lloyd George and General Haig intensified, but Lloyd George never succeeding in ousting his opponent.

III. France

- **A.** The *Union Sacrée* of parties progressively broke down.
- **B.** Finally, in November 1917, Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929) was appointed premier by President Poincaré.
- **C.** Though 76 years old at this time, Clemenceau was full of energy and determination and known as "The Tiger."
  - **1.** He was a journalist, former mayor of Montmartre in Paris, and a longstanding presence in French political life.
  - **2.** He established civilian control, with himself at the helm, viewing himself as a war dictator.

3. Clemenceau insisted that "war is too serious a matter to be left to generals."
4. Dissenters were arrested, jailed, or executed.

IV. Germany

A. An increasingly restive *Reichstag* demanded increased parliamentary powers and democratization.

B. The response of the government was symbolic rather than real.

1. In 1916, a German-Jewish firm was hired to carve a slogan on the parliamentary building itself, "To the German People."
2. In his "Easter Message" of April 7, 1917, Kaiser Wilhelm II promised reforms in the voting system and more participation … after the war.

C. Catholic politician Matthias Erzberger called for a peace of reconciliation without winners or losers.

D. The German parliamentary majority of the S.P.D., the Catholic Center Party, and the Progressives passed a Peace Resolution on July 19, 1917.

1. Bethmann-Hollweg, Hindenburg, and Ludendorff all disapproved of the resolution.
2. The resolution endorsed a peace without annexations or indemnities.
3. As a result, Bethmann-Hollweg was fired as chancellor, replaced with former food controller Georg Michaelis, who robbed the resolution of meaning, while the parliament avoided a frontal clash with the Supreme Command.

E. Reactions set in against what German nationalists saw as the "defeatism" implicit in the peace resolution.

1. Reacting against this initiative, a Fatherland Party movement was formed to push for an annexationist peace of victory ("Hindenburg Peace").
2. The Fatherland Party was founded in East Prussia in September 1917 by Wolfgang Kapp and Admiral Tirpitz. In short order, it claimed to have one million members.
3. Historians debate whether this mass movement was a precursor to the later Nazi party, as some members later joined Hitler's movement as well.
4. The government launched a new propaganda campaign in July 1917, called "Patriotic Instruction." It urged holding out just a little longer until final victory, tensing national energies for the last effort.

V. Race to Collapse: Austria-Hungary and Russia

A. The great empires of Austria-Hungary and Russia seemed locked in a death race.

B. Austria-Hungary, in spite of ardent wishes for an escape into peace, had become subordinated to the policy of its larger partner, Germany.

C. From 1914–1916, Russia had suffered horrendous losses: 2 million men killed, 4–6 million wounded or captured, and now its armies were buckling.

Essential Reading:

Hew Strachan, *The First World War*, pp. 233–260.

Supplementary Reading:

John Horne, ed., *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Which country's remobilization was most successful and why?
2. What qualities were most important for a successful civilian political leader in World War I?

Lecture Twenty-Four
Armenian Massacres—Tipping into Genocide

Scope: The First World War formed the backdrop and context for the launching of what is considered the first full-scale modern genocide, the 1915 Armenian massacres in Ottoman Turkey, one of the Central Powers. Between 500,000 and 1,000,000 men, women, and children of the Armenian minority in the empire were killed or died from abuse in the government's resettlement campaign and massacres. The Christian Armenians were considered a suspect population and a liability on the home front. At a time of worldwide suffering, international reactions to these murders were muted. This important example shows how the war itself seemingly normalized mass violence, including the targeting of civilians, and formed a precedent for the later genocides of the 20th century.

Outline

I. Origins and Background

A. The intensity of total war helps make genocidal conditions possible, as mass violence becomes seemingly normal.

B. In World War I, what is often considered the first modern genocide took place in Ottoman Turkey, as somewhere between half a million and one million Armenians were annihilated.

C. Earlier History

1. The Armenians were a Christian community with a long and proud history in the region, and they had been considered an "exemplary minority" in earlier ages.

2. Armenians lived mostly in eastern portions of the empire near the border with Russia (where other Armenian communities were located across the border) and Iran, but also spread throughout the empire's cities as a commercial diaspora.

3. The "Armenian Question" in the late 19th century had been advanced as a premise for the involvement of European Great Powers as protectors of Christian communities and led to Ottoman resentment at outside interference.

4. With the decline of the Ottoman Empire and growing nationalism in reaction, the Armenians fell victim to earlier massacres in 1890s, with an estimated 200,000 casualties.

5. The Young Turks, an elite leadership group growing out of the secret Committee for Union and Progress founded in 1900, pursued plans for the revitalization and reform of the empire. They came to power in 1908.

6. In their ideology, Turkish nationalism increasingly replaced the more inclusive ideals of Ottomanism (loyalty to the state over ethnic identity).

7. When World War I broke out in 1914, state officials feared that the Armenian Christian minority would collaborate with the Russian enemy to achieve independence and ordered measures taken against them.

8. A key figure was Talat Pasha, the interior minister, who directed the police forces and was instrumental in planning.

9. Threatened strategic areas were to be cleansed of minorities, especially Greeks and Armenians, by deportation, a tactic that had a long history in the region.

10. Special security units of the Secret Organization (*Teskilat-i Mahsusa*) were established.

II. The Massacres

A. Killings opened with preparatory actions that indicate that the massacres were not entirely spontaneous.

1. In an earlier step, Armenian soldiers in the army had been disarmed.

2. The first wave of civilian arrests and killings coincided with the Allies' Gallipoli landing of April 25, 1915, creating an urgent sense of crisis.

3. The plans were also spurred by some armed resistance and communal violence. Russia had encouraged some Armenian rebels as part of a program of revolutionizing the group, yet the massacres focused on the Armenian community as a whole.
4. Armenian intellectuals and community leaders in Constantinople itself were the first targets, along with leaders in the provinces. Several hundred were taken out and shot.
5. After their arrests, deportations began, often announced on extremely short notice.
6. Proclamations claimed these measures were being taken for the safety of the Armenians.

B. With men often killed immediately, women, children, and the old were rounded up for what amounted to death marches.

1. Over the next two years, two to three million Armenians were deported from eastern Anatolia and sent toward the Syrian desert.
2. By some estimates, a third of Armenians were massacred, a third perished en route, and a third survived.
3. It is estimated that half a million to one million died, killed outright or from exposure in the desert (some estimates run as high as 1.5 million dead).
4. Men were bludgeoned to death, children thrown into rivers, and young women taken away, forced to convert to save themselves.
5. The Young Turks encouraged these measures, though many historians believe no one single order was issued for the killings.

III. International Reactions

A. In spite of attempts to hide the program (for example, the entire Armenian community of Constantinople was spared), news reached the outside world.

B. In May 1915, the Allies warned Turkey against these crimes against humanity and promised to hold leaders responsible.

C. The anguished American ambassador, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., passed along news of the events, but American neutrality in the war at that date complicated any possible stronger American response. U.S. newspapers carried news of the tragedies.

D. In Germany, Turkish actions did not meet reproof because Turkey was an ally. Voices of conscience urging a stop to the atrocities, like those of the German ambassador to Turkey, Count Wolff-Metternich, or of horrified German missionaries, were brushed aside.

E. World events in this time of war obscured the scale of what was happening, and the fact that the victims were not Europeans probably also reduced concern at the time.

IV. Outcomes and Precedents

A. This first modern genocide seemed to establish a terrible precedent, followed by later instances. A remarkable amnesia seemed to set in as the horrors were forgotten.

B. Immediately after the war, the British insisted that Turkey put perpetrators on trial, but the results were mixed.

C. Among the leaders who had fled, Talat Pasha was living in Germany, where in 1921 he was killed by a young Armenian seeking revenge and publicity for the tragedy. In following years, however, attention faded.

D. The creation of the term “genocide” merits some discussion, as does its legacy.

1. The Armenians had been targeted because of who they were.
2. To find a name for this crime under international law, the term "genocide" was coined by Raphael Lemkin, a lawyer of Polish Jewish origins.
3. The Armenian massacres were not the same as the industrialized murder of Jews, but later they appeared to be a step on the way to larger mass murders.
4. Justifying his destructive plans, Hitler is said to have remarked in 1939: "Who today remembers the Armenians?"
5. To this day, the Turkish government denies the tragedy.

Essential Reading:

Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18: Understanding the Great War*, pp. 64–69.

Supplementary Reading:

Richard G. Hovannisian, *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*.

Norman Naimark, *Fires of Hatred: Ethnic Cleansing in Twentieth-Century Europe*, pp. 1–56.

Samantha Power, *"A Problem from Hell": America and the Age of Genocide*, pp. 1–29.

Questions to Consider:

1. What outside reaction at the time might have helped stop the Armenian massacres?
2. Was the international amnesia that followed the tragedy inevitable? How might that amnesia have been prevented?

Biographical Notes

Bethmann-Hollweg, Theobald von (1856–1921): Devoted Prussian civil servant and German chancellor from 1907 to 1917. His role in the outbreak of the war is strongly debated by historians, as is his September 1914 program of war aims. Any attempts at moderation he exercised were ended when the German general command had him removed from office as insufficiently committed to total victory.

Churchill, Winston (1874–1965): Descendant of a famous British political family, he began his career in politics as a member of the Conservative Party but later became a member of the Liberal Party. In 1911, he was made First Lord of the Admiralty. His support for the 1915 Gallipoli campaign ended in disaster for which he was blamed. Losing his position, he fought on the Western Front before returning to government in 1917. In World War II, Churchill would rally Britain against the Axis Powers.

Clemenceau, Georges (1841–1929): French radical politician nicknamed "The Tiger" for his determination and strength of character. Appointed prime minister of France in November 1917, Clemenceau established control over the war effort on the principle that "war is too important to be left to the generals." He rallied French morale during the war and at negotiations for the Versailles Treaty, took an uncompromisingly hard line against defeated Germany.

Conrad von Hötzendorf, Count Franz (1852–1925): Austro-Hungarian chief of staff from 1906 and a fierce advocate of preemptive war. His war plans at the start of the conflict degenerated into confusion, facing two fronts (Russia and Serbia). As Germany came to dominate the military partnership, assuming command over the Central Powers in September 1916, Conrad was increasingly sidelined and removed in March 1917.

Falkenhayn, Erich von (1861–1922): German general and Prussian minister of war from 1913, replacing General Helmuth von Moltke as German chief of staff after the failure of the Schlieffen Plan in September 1914. Discerning the outlines of the emerging war of attrition, Falkenhayn believed a decision would come on the Western Front. The 1916 Battle of Verdun did not bring the expected results, and as a consequence of this failure and the entry of Romania into the war against Germany, Falkenhayn was replaced (after extensive political intrigues and pressure) by General Paul von Hindenburg in August of 1916. Afterwards, Falkenhayn led German forces in the conquest of Romania and in Turkey and Palestine.

Foch, Ferdinand (1851–1929): Marshal of France and commander in chief of Allied armies. As a military instructor before the war, he was associated with the cult of the offensive. In March 1918, he was made the first commander in chief of Allied armies in France, guiding overall strategy. After the failure of the German spring offensive of 1918, Foch led Allied armies on the march toward Germany.

Haig, Sir Douglas (1861–1928): British field marshal. Still a controversial figure, Haig's training was in the use of cavalry, and his experience before 1914 had been in colonial wars. He was put in charge of the British Expeditionary Force from December 1915. Seeking to achieve a breakthrough, Haig led the British efforts at the Somme (July–November 1916) and at Passchendaele (July–November 1917), with vast losses for little result. Debate continues about his role and decisions.

Hindenburg, Paul von (1847–1934): German field marshal and president. Descendant of an ancient Prussian noble family, Hindenburg had retired from his military career by 1911 but in August 1914 was brought back to lead German forces at the Battle of Tannenberg. This and subsequent victories on the Eastern Front made him a war hero to Germans, who called him the "Savior of East Prussia" and "Terror of the Russians." With his associate Erich Ludendorff, he was elevated to the German high command in August 1916, taking over from Erich von Falkenhayn. Hindenburg and Ludendorff created what was essentially a military dictatorship, increasingly dominating politics and economic direction. When opposed, Hindenburg would threaten to resign. With the collapse of the German war effort in 1918, he denied any responsibility and continued to be popular among Germans. In the postwar Weimar Republic, he was elected president in 1925. Despite his abiding dislike for Hitler, Hindenburg made him chancellor in 1933.

Joffre, Joseph Jacques (1852–1931): Commander in chief of French armies. Already a soldier of long experience, Joffre commanded French forces resisting the initial onslaught of the German armies, who were seeking to enact the Schlieffen Plan. The confrontation ended with the "Miracle on the Marne" in September 1914. Joffre's calm

confidence became legendary and was very much needed at the time. Failures in the defense of Verdun led to his replacement by Nivelle in December 1916.

Kitchener, Lord Horatio (1850–1916): A famed soldier of British colonial wars who was made secretary of state for war in August 1914. After the heavy losses of the British Expeditionary Force, Kitchener appealed for a mass volunteer army. His popularity produced a massive wave of recruitments, and his person came to symbolize for many British wartime determination. Traveling to Russia in 1916, Kitchener's ship was sunk, and he drowned.

Lenin, Vladimir Ilyich (1870–1924): Russian revolutionary leader of the radical Bolshevik wing of the Social Democrats. Lenin championed the concept of a "vanguard party" of professional revolutionaries catalyzing upheaval. The outbreak of the war left him impatient in exile, until German officials intending to "revolutionize" Russia arranged to ship him back to Petrograd in April 1917. Once there, Lenin preached "revolutionary defeatism" and led the Bolshevik seizure of power in November 1917, overthrowing the fragile liberal provisional government. Expecting the imminent outbreak of worldwide revolution, Lenin negotiated peace with the Germans. Disappointed by the delay in global revolution, Lenin built up the Soviet dictatorship. After his death in 1924, his associate Stalin achieved control.

Ludendorff, Erich (1856–1937): A nervous, ambitious, and brilliant German military planner of middle-class origins who represented a new type, the military technocrat with political ambitions. He gained fame for the capture of the citadel of Liège in Belgium and was made second in command to General Paul von Hindenburg on the Eastern Front in August 1914. In the captured territories of Eastern Europe, he constructed a military utopia named "Ober Ost." Elevated to the supreme command with Hindenburg in August 1916, he directed Germany's war effort. With defeat in 1918, Ludendorff denied his responsibility and fled into exile. After the war, he spread the "Stab in the Back" legend and became an associate of Hitler's.

Lloyd George, David (1863–1945): British prime minister. Nicknamed the "Welsh Wizard," Lloyd George was a prominent leader of the radical wing of the Liberal Party in Britain. Appointed to head the new munitions ministry in May 1915, he worked to mobilize the economy for war. Lloyd George became prime minister of a coalition cabinet in December 1916. Through the war, he sparred with military leaders over the conduct of the conflict. Enjoying public popularity, he was reelected in 1918 and played an important role in the Versailles Treaty negotiations, seeking to mediate between France and the United States.

Nicholas II (House of Romanov) (1868–1918): Ill-fated Tsar of the Russian Empire. Nostalgic for the order of autocracy, Nicholas did a bad job of adjusting to the modern challenges increasingly facing his empire. When war broke out, he met it with fatalistic resignation. His royal household fell under the influence of a disreputable holy man, Rasputin. In a crucial mistake, in September 1915, Nicholas II took over personal command of the Russian armies and was afterwards held responsible for their failures. Surprised by the March 1917 revolution, Nicholas abdicated. Captured by the Bolsheviks, the Tsar and his family were executed in July 1918.

Nivelle, Georges Robert (1856–1924): French military commander. After successes at recapturing territory at Verdun, Nivelle replaced Joffre as French commander in chief in December 1916. Promising astonishing results with the Nivelle offensive of April 1917, the disappointment was cruel when these failed. When mutinies spread, the disgraced Nivelle was replaced with Pétain.

Pershing, John Joseph (1860–1948): Commander of the American Expeditionary Force from May 1917, after extensive earlier military experience in Cuba, the Philippines, and Mexico. When American forces were brought to France, Pershing rejected plans for dividing them up as reinforcements for existing Allied armies. Instead, his aim was to keep them as a coherent force, in line with American status as an "Associate Power."

Pétain, Henri-Philippe (1856–1951): French military leader who gained fame and the devotion of French troops for the defense of Verdun from February 1916. Contrary to the cult of the offensive, Pétain emphasized the role of defense and was viewed as a commander who cared for his soldiers. Made commander in chief in May 1917, after mutinies in the French army, he quelled these and reassured the troops. During World War II, Pétain headed the Vichy government in unoccupied France, collaborating with the Germans, and was tried after the war.

Trotsky, Leon (1879–1940): Revolutionary from the Russian Empire, famous for his charisma and oratory. After living in exile in the United States, Trotsky returned to Russia in 1917 and joined Lenin's Bolsheviks. He led negotiations with the Germans at the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and became commissar of war, organizing the Red

Army. In the succession struggle after Lenin's death in 1924, Trotsky lost out to his rival Josef Stalin and was killed in Mexico in 1940 by a Soviet assassin.

Wilhelm II (House of Hohenzollern) (1859–1941): *Kaiser* (Emperor) of Germany and King of Prussia. Wilhelm's bluster and militaristic posturing, likely deriving from personal insecurities, led to the dismissal of Chancellor Otto von Bismarck in 1890, an aggressive foreign policy after 1897, and Germany's growing isolation internationally. His unpredictable character was said to be the perfect symbolic embodiment of the German Empire itself. Though demonized in Allied propaganda as the diabolical "Kaiser Bill," Wilhelm II was in fact increasingly sidelined in German politics by the silent dictatorship of Hindenburg and Ludendorff. With Germany's defeat, he fled to exile in Holland in November 1918 and lived out the rest of his life there despite attempts by the Allies to bring him to trial as a war criminal.

Wilson, Woodrow (1856–1924): American academic, university president, and progressive politician who became President of the United States in 1913. At first pursuing a neutral stance for the United States, Wilson sought to mediate among the warring powers after 1914. Public outrage against Germany, especially in response to its submarine warfare and attempt to start a revolution in Mexico with the Zimmermann Telegram, led Wilson to ask Congress to declare war against Germany in April 1917. The United States joined the Allies as an "Associate Power," to underline its independence, a stance further emphasized in Wilson's Fourteen Points speech on January 8, 1918, outlining American war aims to expand democracy and build a new international politics. Wilson traveled to Versailles to share in the negotiations for the peace treaty and the establishment of the League of Nations, but domestic opposition and his own intransigence led to the failure of his plans.

World War I:
The "Great War"
Part III
Professor Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius

THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of History, University of Tennessee

Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius was born in Chicago, Illinois. He grew up on Chicago's Southside in a Lithuanian-American neighborhood and also spent some years attending school in Aarhus, Denmark, and Bonn, Germany. He received his B.A. from the University of Chicago. In 1989, he spent the summer in Moscow and Leningrad (today St. Petersburg) in intensive language study in Russian. He earned his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in European history in 1994, specializing in modern German history.

After receiving his doctorate, Professor Liulevicius spent a year as a postdoctoral research fellow at the Hoover Institution on War, Peace, and Revolution at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California. Since 1995, he has been a history professor at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville and holds the Hendrickson Professorship in the College of Arts and Sciences for 2005–2007. He teaches courses on modern German history, Western civilization, Nazi Germany, World War I, war and culture, 20th-century Europe, nationalism, and utopian thought. In 2003, he received the University of Tennessee's Excellence in Teaching Award. In 2005, he was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship for his research.

Professor Liulevicius's research focuses on German relations with Eastern Europe in the modern period. His other interests include the utopian tradition and its impact on modern politics, images of the United States abroad, and the history of the Baltic region. He has published numerous articles, and his first book, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in the First World War* (2000, Cambridge University Press), also appeared in German translation in 2002. His next book project is a larger study of German stereotypes of Eastern Europeans and ideas of a special German cultural mission in the East over the last two centuries, entitled *The German Myth of the East*.

Professor Liulevicius also has recorded another course with The Teaching Company, *Utopia and Terror in the 20th Century*. He lives in Knoxville, Tennessee, with his wife, Kathleen, and their son, Paul.

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World War I: The "Great War"

Scope:

The First World War came as a dreadful surprise to those who experienced it, due to its magnitude, global expanse, unprecedented violence, and shattering impact on Western civilization. This course of 36 lectures explores the continuous series of brutal surprises and shocks that the first example of a "total war" brought, a conflict not limited to armies, but pitting entire societies against each other in mortal struggle. An estimated 70 million men were mobilized and approximately 9 million died. The civilizational impact of an industrial slaughter on this scale was so significant that World War I set the 20th century on its violent course, culminating in a later, perfected total war, World War II.

We combine chronological and thematic approaches for an in-depth look at this conflict's many dimensions, integrating military history with social, political, intellectual, and cultural history. Unlike narratives of World War I that emphasize the Western Front with scant attention to other theaters, this course provides comprehensive coverage of all fronts. Likewise, we consider not only political elites and generals but also the lives of ordinary soldiers and civilians. Major themes include the surprising eagerness to plunge into mutual slaughter; the unexpected endurance of societies undergoing this ordeal; the radically different hopes and hatreds that war evoked, with remarkable contrasts in Western and Eastern Europe; and the way in which the Great War functioned as a hinge of violence, opening the door to the normalization of previously unsuspected levels of violence, including against civilians, a dynamic that hurried Europe toward renewed conflict.

Our first six lectures depict the state of Europe and the world as the 1914 cataclysm approached and then struck. We examine internal politics of the Great Powers and growing tensions among them, reacting to the expansion of German power, as well as important currents of thought (both optimistic and pessimistic) in intellectual life. We examine the slide into the abyss: origins of the July crisis, beginning with an act of terrorism in Sarajevo; historians' debates on the war's true causes and where the main responsibility lies; the striking "August Madness" celebrations; and the breakdown of longstanding military plans for short, decisive war.

The next three lectures—Seven through Nine—cover the Western Front and the surreal trench landscape that arose there. We examine technological reasons for the stalemate that the trenches represented, desperate and costly attempts to break it, strange patterns of death and life (including tacit truces) developed by ordinary soldiers, and vain and horrific battles at Verdun, the Somme, and Ypres. Lectures Ten and Eleven cover lesser known theaters: the vast, open Eastern Front where Germans battered Russia, even as final victory eluded them, and the Southern Front, including the Alps, the Balkans, and the doomed Allied Gallipoli expedition against Ottoman Turkey.

Lectures Twelve through Fifteen take a closer look at particularly important themes. We survey combatant countries' war aims and the experience of foreign occupation. The suffering of ordinary soldiers is confronted, as we discuss military medicine, psychological traumas, and the experience of 8 million prisoners of war. Although many men broke down under the strain of combat, others exulted in it: elite storm troopers were among them, as well as two men, Benito Mussolini and Adolf Hitler, who later became dictators as they sought to recreate wartime experience. This section concludes by investigating rapidly changing technology, as machine guns, poison gas, and tanks were deployed to mass-produce death ever more efficiently.

The next three lectures—Sixteen through Eighteen—return our attention to other theaters: war in the air and at sea and surprises and confounded expectations in each. The war's global reach, its colonial dimension, and the attempt to win sympathy in world opinion are examined in detail.

Our next set of lectures concerns internal home-front politics. In comparative fashion, we note similarities as well as striking differences in how nations reacted. Lectures Nineteen to Twenty-Three reveal centralized state control of economies, societies, and propaganda to create martial enthusiasm. We cover the privations and extraordinary endurance of many societies, as well as growing signs of stress and breakdown, to understand civilian experience. New social divisions arose, threatening cohesion. Dissent could be explosive, and we explore protest and its growth or suppression. By the later years of the war, 1916–1917, a fresh remobilization of energies was needed to continue fighting.

The next five lectures cover dramatic new departures in world history created by total war. The 1915 slaughter of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire launched a series of 20th-century genocides. War's strains encouraged revolts,

socialist and nationalist, radically reenvisaging the political future. In the Russian Empire, turbulent events produced the first attempt at total revolution, launching the Soviet Union's communist experiment. America's 1917 entry into the war announced a new, expansive role for the United States in world affairs, while its society was convulsed by mobilization for intervention overseas.

Lectures Twenty-Nine through Thirty-Three cover the war's immediate outcome. After the failure of Germany's last gamble and defeat, the November 11, 1918, Armistice closed the war, even as aftershocks continued: the unprecedented collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Turkish Empires, and the onset of ideological warfare among nationalists, revolutionaries, and counterrevolutionaries, in an atmosphere of European civil war. We analyze the 1919 peace settlement in Paris and the Versailles Treaty.

The last three lectures examine the war's deeper impact on Western civilization. Drawing on rich, recent scholarship in cultural history, we follow the war's echoes (and anguished questions of what it had ultimately meant) in monuments, collective rituals of commemoration, literature and art, and also in poisonous myths and conspiracy theories concerning the war. Most ominously, new and fierce ideological mass movements—spearheaded by Fascists, Nazis, and Communists—were so inspired by the experience of total war that they aimed to restructure politics along military lines and achieve permanent mobilization of state and society. Ultimately, our course concludes with a summation of the Great War's effects, its implications for the rest of the century, and the new world that it created.

Lecture Twenty-Five
Strains of War—Socialists and Nationalists

Scope: The enormous pressures of the world war tore at the structures of established states and empires in a seeming race toward collapse. This lecture explores the growing divisions in wartime societies, sometimes producing revolts, including the 1915 Easter Rising against British rule in Ireland, the French army's mutinies in 1917, and the growing alienation of subject nationalities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, captured in literary form by Jaroslav Hasek's comic hero, "Good Soldier Svejk." These discontents were encouraged by the opposing forces. All sides followed a policy of "revolutionizing" the enemy's populations. In particular, we examine the Arab revolt encouraged by the British in the person of Lawrence of Arabia, the German attempt to subvert the Russian war effort by shipping back Lenin to spread Bolshevism, and the drive for American security (the Zimmermann Telegram).

Outline

I. Weariness

A. The year 1917 in particular was marked by war weariness, as the suspicion dawned that the war might last forever.

B. Nonetheless, the war would be fought on all sides to the end, as the alternative seemed to be internal collapse, as revolutionary pressures, both social and nationalist, grew.

1. Social revolts demanded changes to the structures of authority within society.

2. Nationalist revolts demanded independence and self-determination for submerged ethnic groups.

II. Social Revolts

A. Radical socialists came to favor Lenin's prescription for turning the war between nations into a social revolution.

B. A fascinating subject, the French army mutinies of 1917 could have changed the course of the war.

1. Nivelle's attacks on the Aisne River in April 1917 brought French units to the breaking point.

2. Protests began to grow in the ranks, as some troops went into battle bleating like sheep to the slaughter.

3. Some units refused orders to attack, and the disobedience spread in May and June 1917.

4. Soldiers considered this a patriotic strike, protesting their treatment, and not rejecting the defense of France or the government. Their slogan was, "We'll defend the trenches, but we will not attack."

5. Astonishingly, the Germans did not learn of these mutinies until they were over. They were unable to exploit the situation, which could have produced the breakthrough so long hoped for on the Western Front.

6. The hero of Verdun, Pétain, was brought in to restore order, which he did using a combination of harsh discipline and the assurance that no more senseless offensives would be launched.

7. In demonstrative disciplinary acts, mutineers were court-martialed, but few death sentences were carried out.

8. Rations and leaves for soldiers were increased.

9. Pétain's reputation as a commander who had paternal concern for his troops was crucial.

10. Nonetheless, the offensive spirit of the French army would not recover.

C. Discontent in the German ranks is also noteworthy.

1. Less dramatic but still simmering discontent grew in the German army as well.

2. Many soldiers could sense that the strategic and material balance in this industrial war was turning against Germany.

3. Soldiers from ethnic minorities were distrusted, including Poles and Alsatians.

4. Soldiers from Alsace were left on the Eastern Front when transfers took place, as they were not trusted to fight the French on the Western Front.

5. As more medals were handed out to raise the morale of troops, some felt this cheapened the earlier honor.

III. National Revolt

A. Unrest exploded in Britain's own colonial back yard in the form of the Irish Easter Rising.

1. Just before the war, conflicts over the prospect of Home Rule brought Ireland to the brink of civil war between the Ulster Volunteer Force and the nationalist Irish Volunteers.
2. When the war broke out, the conflict was put on hold and more than 200,000 Irish joined the British army.
3. The revolutionary Irish Republican Brotherhood planned a full-scale revolt.
4. Sir Roger Casement, an Ulster Protestant who had been knighted for his work in the British Foreign Office, joined the Irish nationalist forces.
5. In line with German hopes to revolutionize Ireland, he traveled to Germany to get assistance. He tried to recruit Irish POWs into a brigade.
6. On returning, he was arrested and executed in a London jail in August 1916.
7. A German arms shipment was intercepted by the British two days before the planned uprising.
8. The planned revolt went ahead anyway, intending to galvanize Irish nationalism.
9. On April 24, 1916, the rebels seized the Central Post Office and other parts of downtown Dublin but failed to take Dublin Castle. They proclaimed an Irish Republic.
10. After a week of fighting, they capitulated.
11. The British forces executed 15 leaders and incarcerated other volunteers in camps in Britain.
12. These harsh reprisals affected Irish public opinion, turning it from disapproval to sympathy for those now regarded as martyrs. This nationalist turn later led to independence in 1921.
13. In the most famous poem of William Butler Yeats, "Easter 1916," the act was celebrated as a "terrible beauty."
14. In popular culture, the song "Foggy Dew" memorialized the rebels and bitterly pointed out the irony of a world war fought for the rights of small nations like Belgium, but not for Ireland.

B. Cohesion in the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been crumbling, too.

1. Habsburg armies needed to be "corseted" by German forces.
2. Units and individual soldiers from Slavic nationalities at times defected to the Russians at the front.
3. The stereotype of their disloyalty further undermined ethnic relations. Hasek's comic novel *Good Soldier Svejk* gives ludicrous testimony to this situation.
4. From fall 1917, a Czech Legion was organized from POWs to fight against the Austro-Hungarian forces.
5. Growing nationalism was reflected in the advanced Czech national movement, much of it mobilizing in exile.
6. In Paris, Tomáš Masaryk and other exiles formed a National Council, claiming independence for a Czechoslovak nation.
7. The Allies' recognition of Czech claims imperiled the future existence of the Habsburg Empire.
8. Other nationalities were galvanized to seek independence as well, in a wave of rising expectations.

C. The phenomenon of revolt was also seen in the growing disarray in the Russian Empire.

1. The Russian army was in a state of disintegration.
2. Food riots in Petrograd in spring 1917 led to a revolution in which the Tsarist regime collapsed with incredible speed.

D. A classic case of growing nationalist aspirations was Poland.

1. Poles had been divided among three empires in the late 18th century and grew restless once the future shape of Europe was being decided.
2. Tragically, 1.5 million Poles were recruited into the armies of Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary, facing one another on the battlefield in World War I.

3. The Polish socialist and patriot Józef Pilsudski, from the Vilnius region, planned to establish Polish military forces as the basis for later independence. His legions' slogan became, "We are Poland."
4. In November 1916, Germany and Austria-Hungary declared a Polish kingdom, hoping to create Polish armies to fight on their side.
5. As this plan failed, Pilsudski was arrested and jailed in Germany. He was released only as the war ended, emerging with great prestige to lead Poland and later to become its dictator.
6. Abroad, his rival Roman Dmowski sought to rally support for Poland from the Allies.

IV. Revolutionizing

A. A key example of such a phenomenon was the Arab revolt and Lawrence of Arabia's part in the aftermath.

1. The British encouraged an Arab revolt within the Ottoman Empire with political support and arms.
2. The revolt broke out at Medina in June 1916, led by the family of Sherif Hussein ibn Ali of the Hejaz. An Arab army was rallied to the cause of fighting the Ottoman forces, and the revolt spread through Arabia and to Syria.
3. The young British archaeologist Thomas Edward Lawrence, famed as "Lawrence of Arabia," identified with the Arab cause intensely and championed it and the preeminence of Feisal ibn Hussein, son of the Sherif.
4. In a surprise attack, the Arabs captured the port of Aqaba in July 1917.
5. Significant Turkish forces were pinned down by the revolt, and the rebels coordinated their activity to help British campaigns in the Middle East.
6. News of Allied diplomacy (the Balfour Declaration and the Sykes-Picot Agreement) led to keen disappointment of hopes for Arab independence.

B. German initiatives at this time were fascinating and, in some cases, disastrous.

1. The Zimmermann Telegram of January 17, 1917, was sent by the German foreign minister, Arthur von Zimmermann, to the German ambassador in Mexico, urging action to bring Mexico into the war to regain lost provinces in the United States (Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona).
2. The attempt at revolutionizing ended catastrophically, as it galvanized American opinion for war.
3. The German Supreme Command also sought to use the Russian Bolshevik conspirator Lenin as a revolutionary weapon.
4. Just weeks before the outbreak of the revolution in Russia in March 1917, Lenin was in Swiss exile, despairing that he and his generation might not live to see the great revolution he had prophesied.
5. On the orders of the German command, Lenin and 31 other revolutionaries were transported by train through Germany to Russia in April 1917.
6. As soon as Lenin arrived in Petrograd, he preached Russian defeat and the overthrow of the government. Lenin cheerfully accepted German assistance while pursuing his own plans.
7. The successful revolutionizing of Russia was the greatest success of this policy during the war, but one that German elites came to regret, as revolution spread back to Germany.

V. Outcomes

A. The growing revolts revealed a paradox. To many political leaders, it seemed that the only way to quell dissent was to win total victory because otherwise the social system would be wiped away by revolution in defeat.

B. This dynamic in turn made the conduct of the war more extreme and compromise less likely.

C. In general, as the war drew on, a revolution of rising expectations was taking place.

1. Within Europe, nationalities and ethnic groups hoped to win independence in the postwar order.
2. Outside Europe, effects were seen as well.
3. Colonial troops and colonial laborers (among them the later Vietnamese communist leader Ho Chi Minh) also assimilated the rising expectations.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 322–332.

Supplementary Reading:

Jaroslav Hasek, *Good Soldier Svejk and His Fortunes in the World War*.

T. E. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom: A Triumph*.

Questions to Consider:

1. If the German command had learned of the French mutinies and broken through the front, how might the war have proceeded then?
2. Was revolutionizing ultimately a useful and effective tool or not?

Lecture Twenty-Six
Russian Revolutions

Scope: Historically, wars often bring revolution, and, in a perfect symmetry, in 1917 total war provoked an attempt at total revolution. The Russian Empire was the first to break down under the pressure of the demands of this industrial conflict. In March 1917, its centuries-old tsarist regime collapsed abruptly, replaced by an irresolute, liberal-led provisional government, aiming to give Russia a democratic structure. Mere months later, in November 1917, the radical socialist party of Lenin's Bolsheviks seized power and inaugurated the building of a new communist state and a social revolution to produce a new utopian society. The Bolsheviks signed the humiliating Treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Germans in March 1918, withdrawing from the war to await the expected collapse of all capitalist systems. The Soviet Union would become a radical new player in international relations, dedicated to overthrowing other governments worldwide and ushering in a final world revolution.

Outline

I. The year 1917 would be a crucial one in modern history.

- **A.** The historian A. J. P. Taylor argued that it marked the start of world history, with the Russian Revolution and America's emergence as a world power.
- **B.** Both events clearly injected new ideological energies into the world, changing it.

II. Background

- **A.** The last ruler of Russia's autocracy was Tsar Nicholas II, who came to the throne in 1894.
  - **1.** He was unsuited for the role, and the Tsarina Alexandra, granddaughter of Queen Victoria of Britain and of German origins, worsened matters with bad advice.
  - **2.** In a 1905 revolution, the throne had nearly been toppled.
  - **3.** A grassroots revolutionary movement, centered on the institution of the soviets (councils), had swept the country and the revolutionary Leon Trotsky had gained prominence.
  - **4.** The tsar defused the revolution by granting a parliament (the Duma) but undermined its significance. Attempted reforms from 1907–1911 brought structural improvements but needed more time to ripen.
  - **5.** An active revolutionary movement included the peasant-oriented Social Revolutionaries and the Marxist Social Democrats, of which Lenin's Bolsheviks were a small, radical faction.
- **B.** World War I represented a test of strength that the Russian Empire failed.
  - **1.** In the initial enthusiasm, nationalities pledged loyalty to the regime.
  - **2.** The capital of St. Petersburg was renamed Petrograd to sound "more Russian."
  - **3.** With unrelenting disasters on the battlefield, morale crumbled. The tsar, who had taken over command, was blamed personally.
  - **4.** Ordinary soldiers "voted with their feet" by simply leaving for home.
  - **5.** Within court, a pro-German faction urged leaving the Allies.
  - **6.** Tsarina Alexandra fell under the influence of Gregory Rasputin, a crazed "holy man" and faith healer who, at least in the short term, was able to improve the condition of the sickly heir to the throne.
  - **7.** Scandalized by this inner corruption, a group of nobles murdered Rasputin in December 1916, but he had been a symptom of problems, not their cause.

III. The March 1917 Revolution

- **A.** When the March Revolution broke out, it did so spontaneously and took revolutionaries by surprise.
  - **1.** On March 8 (February 23 by the old Russian calendar), women in Petrograd, clamoring for food, were joined in demonstrations by striking workers from armaments factories.
  - **2.** When the city garrison was ordered to fire on the demonstrators, the soldiers instead joined the crowd.
  - **3.** Tsar Nicholas abdicated on March 15, 1917, ending three centuries of Romanov dynastic rule.

B. A new provisional government was formed by March 15.

1. Made up of former Duma politicians, it subscribed to liberal ideas and pledged to stay in the war.

2. The new government was greeted with relief by the western Allies, as now all the Allied forces were ideologically united behind the banner of democracy.

3. The provisional government ruled increasingly ineffectively for eight months before being overthrown.

4. It faced the rival authority of the soviets. The largest of these, the Petrograd Soviet, was another power center, which claimed to speak for the other soviets established by soldiers, sailors, and workers throughout the country.

5. The provisional government continued the war and prepared for elections and constitutional reforms.

C. A great challenge to this fledgling government came from Lenin in 1917.

1. Lenin read about the revolution in the newspaper in Switzerland.

2. After being transported back to Russia by the Germans in April 1917, he emerged at the Finland Station in Petrograd to declare his "April Theses."

3. The April Theses promised peace, land, and all power to the soviets. Lenin championed revolutionary defeatism.

4. In his call for the overthrow of the provisional government, Lenin shocked even his own associates, but slowly he convinced them.

5. Lenin was supported by a fervent revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, recently returned from New York on news of the revolution, who joined the Bolsheviks in the summer of 1917.

D. The provisional government lingered on but its demise was inevitable.

1. Eventually, the socialist Alexander Kerensky led the government, first as minister of war, later as prime minister.

2. Kerensky prepared an offensive into Galicia, which failed by July 1917 and led to military collapse.

3. When a premature Bolshevik uprising misfired in July 1917, Lenin fled to Finland.

4. The provisional government found itself threatened from left and right.

5. By October 1917, the Bolsheviks had achieved a majority in the Petrograd Soviet and moved to seize power at Lenin's urging.

IV. November 1917 Seizure of Power

A. The Bolsheviks took power in a coup on November 7, 1917, with astonishing ease.

1. Small numbers of Red Guard forces stormed the lightly defended Winter Palace, arrested most members of the government, and took over the capital Petrograd.

2. Bolsheviks later mythologized the "Great October Revolution" (the date was based on the old calendar), depicting it as a mass event in art and film.

3. They announced that they were taking power in the name of the Soviets.

4. Real power was held by the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom).

B. Lenin and his comrades set about establishing their power with a new regime.

1. The Peace Decree announced that Russia was leaving the war. On December 15, 1917, a ceasefire was signed with the Central Powers.

2. The state took over ownership of the land, which the peasants were allowed to seize.

3. The Cheka secret police was established on December 17, 1917.

4. Cheka was an acronym for the "Extraordinary Commission for Combatting Counter-Revolution and Sabotage," and it was charged with "Red Terror" against counterrevolutionaries and class enemies. The beginnings of a concentration camp system were established.

5. One after another rival party was shut down, and newspapers were banned.

6. State control of internal trade, factories, and land was established, drawing on Lenin's admiration for Germany's War Socialism.

7. In elections to the constituent assembly, the Bolsheviks received less than 25 percent of the seats and shut down the assembly in January 1918.
8. On July 16, 1918, the Bolsheviks executed the imprisoned tsar and his family, shooting them in a cellar in Ekaterinburg.
9. The mood of emergency was summed up in the policy of War Communism.
10. Lenin saw the need for dictatorship, which he defined as "authority untrammeled by any laws, absolutely unrestricted by any rules whatever, and based directly on force."

V. Preparing for World Revolution

A. The Bolsheviks felt a special sense of urgency, as they expected world revolution to break out in quick order.

B. Bolsheviks fraternized with German soldiers on the now stilled Eastern Front and sought to spread their ideas.

C. Lenin, who admired German war industry and organization, believed that if German efficiency and Russian revolutionary fervor could be fused into one revolution, a new world would result.

D. To win time for the expected coming revolution, Lenin convinced his skeptical comrades of the need to sign a peace with Germany.

E. After the December 1917 armistice, a strange set of negotiations began at the fortress of Brest-Litovsk on the Eastern Front.

VI. Implications

A. The Bolshevik seizure of power represented a revolutionary event in world politics, introducing a new factor: a new kind of ideologically steered state devoted to the overthrow of all other states.

B. The Bolshevik coup was a pivotal event of the century, for communism did much to shape the ideological discourse of the modern age; states and societies were forced to respond to it.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 332–343.

Supplementary Reading:

Martin Malia, *The Soviet Tragedy: A History of Socialism in Russia*, pp. 1–138.

Brian Moynihan, *The Russian Century: A History of the Last Hundred Years*, pp. 1–77.

John Reed, *Ten Days That Shook the World*.

Robert Service, *Lenin: A Biography*, pp. 253–355.

Questions to Consider:

1. If the Russian Empire had been spared the ordeal of World War I, how might its development have been different?
2. What were the keys to Lenin's success in taking power?

Lecture Twenty-Seven
America's Entry into the War

Scope: With America's entry into the Great War in April 1917, the conflict changed once again, assuming a larger ideological character. Worsening relations between Germany and the United States (in particular over submarine warfare, with the sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915) and growing economic ties between the United States and the Allies finally led America to join the Allies as an associated power. President Woodrow Wilson articulated a revolutionary set of war aims, the Fourteen Points, seeking to make the world safe for democracy. This lecture follows the path to war.

Outline

I. Together with the revolutionary events in Russia, American entry into the war combined to give the year 1917 special significance as a world historical watershed.

II. Let us first examine the record of American neutrality.

- **A.** In the first years of the war, America stood aside from the events unfolding in Europe.
  - **1.** Many Americans of immigrant origin felt grateful to be spared the bloodletting in the Old World.
  - **2.** German-Americans and Irish-Americans felt little sympathy for the Allies.
  - **3.** Elites in the United States, however, felt affinity for the British and the French.
  - **4.** Both the Allies and the Central Powers sought to win American sympathy through propaganda efforts.
- **B.** At the same time, trade and economics helped shape American opinion and decisions.
  - **1.** American trade patterns were disrupted by the war at sea. Though both sides were violating the freedom of the seas, American trade with the Allies grew.
  - **2.** German submarine warfare acquired special notoriety, unlike the British blockade of Germany, which America also considered illegal.
  - **3.** German sinkings of the *Lusitania* in May 1915 and the *Sussex* in March 1916, both with American passengers aboard, provoked protests and led to the growth of a U.S. "preparedness campaign," among private citizens and in Congress, which pressed for an expanded army and navy.
  - **4.** Wilson tried to calm the outrage by praising the stance of being "too proud to fight."
  - **5.** American production boomed, with iron and steel increasing by 76 percent. From 1914–1917, American exports quadrupled.
  - **6.** American loans subsidized the Allied war effort. America went from being a debtor nation to a creditor, as by 1917 the Allies had borrowed $2 billion.
  - **7.** American economic interests increasingly tied the country to the Allies.

III. Woodrow Wilson played a critical role in America's entry into the war.

- **A.** We need to consider the background of this statesman.
  - **1.** A Virginian, Wilson (1856–1924) was an academic (America's only president with a Ph.D.), president of Princeton, a progressive politician in the Democratic Party, and governor of New Jersey.
  - **2.** He became President of the United States in 1913.
  - **3.** He was marked by an extraordinary confidence in his own providential calling, believing that he embodied the will of the American nation. This belief was reflected in his characteristic rhetoric of noble ideals and moral fervor.
- **B.** Wilson's political course during the war bears reflection as well.
  - **1.** At first pursuing a neutral stance for the United States, Wilson sought to mediate among the warring powers after 1914.
  - **2.** There was strong sentiment to keep the United States neutral, and Wilson won reelection in 1916 under the slogan "He Kept Us Out of the War."
  - **3.** Wilson's last attempt at mediation in December 1916 failed.

C. Germany's declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare on February 1, 1917, forced a crisis.

1. The United States broke diplomatic relations with Germany and armed merchant ships.

2. Wilson made public the intercepted Zimmermann Telegram on March 1, 1917.

3. Public opinion mobilized dramatically, with demonstrations in favor of entering the war against Germany.

D. The United States entered the war on April 6, 1917. Wilson announced that the "world must be made safe for democracy."

1. It joined the Allies as an "Associate Power," to underline its independence.

2. Public outrage at German policies, cultural sympathies, and economic ties all contributed to the American entry into the war.

3. American entry changed the nature of the war fundamentally, not only in expanding its scope, but also by injecting a new ideological message.

IV. Wilson's Fourteen Points speech summed up this ideological message.

A. On January 8, 1918, Wilson outlined before Congress the war aims for which the United States would fight.

1. These aims included implicit support for the principle of national self-determination and explicitly called for "open covenants, openly arrived at," disarmament, and a League of Nations.

2. Other demands included freedom of the seas, free trade, freedom for occupied lands, Italian assumption of control over ethnically Italian areas, a free Poland with access to the sea, and free development by the peoples of Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire.

3. The idea of national self-determination directed that all ethnic groups should have their own governments rather than being under foreign rule. This revolutionary principle was enormously attractive to "submerged" nationalities.

B. Clearly these principles represented as well a rejection of Old Europe's traditional balance of power politics, to be replaced by a new democratic statecraft and collective security.

C. The Fourteen Points were intended also as a response to the Bolsheviks, who by then had come to power, and who called for peace and world revolution. An ideological struggle was engaged.

D. Once publicized, the Fourteen Points gained in popularity, and Wilson became a figure of hope for war-weary populations on all sides.

E. Realistic and more cynical European politicians had to tolerate what they considered Wilson's utopian pretensions and rhetoric.

1. Clemenceau quipped that even God had only had ten points.

2. More seriously, the principles enunciated in the speech certainly conflicted with some of the Allies' own policies, imperial ambitions, and secret diplomacy.

V. Americans then prepared to go "Over There."

A. American military might was built up with astonishing speed.

1. Like Britain breaking with liberal tradition, the United States reinstated conscription with the Selective Service Act of May 1917, registering all men 21–30 years of age.

2. By the end of the war, nearly three million American men had been drafted.

3. With volunteers, by war's end, the U.S. armed forces numbered nearly five million.

4. African-American soldiers were relegated to segregated units or given menial tasks in support positions.

B. General John J. Pershing was charged with the command of the American Expeditionary Force (A.E.F.) in May 1917.

1. In short order, the First Infantry Division, nicknamed "The Big Red One," was shipped to France.

2. Pershing now prepared to send a million "doughboys" to France by the spring of 1918.

Essential Reading:
David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*.

Supplementary Reading:
Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, Peace*.

Questions to Consider:
1. In what ways did America's entry into the war resemble that of European nations, and in what ways did it differ?
2. Without Wilson, how would America's role in the war have been different?

Lecture Twenty-Eight
America at War—Over There and Over Here

Scope: This lecture examines the impact of the First World War on American society, affecting life at home as well as America's relationship with the wider world. On the home front, public opinion was energetically mobilized, with dire results for the German-American community. We examine the sophisticated propaganda campaign launched by the Committee of Public Information to rouse a nation to arms, the massive economic mobilization (with the brilliant technocrat Herbert Hoover in charge of the food program), the sensitive role that issues of race played in the war effort, and the encounter of American doughboys overseas with the "old continent."

Outline

I. America organizes for war.

A. Woodrow Wilson knew that popular opinion had to be shaped and cultivated.

1. Without the immediate motive of a defensive war, American participation had to be explained in terms of ideas, chief among them a crusade for democracy.

2. The government also set about organizing enthusiasm.

B. The Committee on Public Information (C.P.I.) was critical to this effort.

1. Wilson charged journalist George Creel with coordinating the C.P.I., an agency that produced effective and innovative propaganda.

2. The C.P.I., with some 150,000 employees, blanketed the country with more than one million publications to fan enthusiasm for the war effort.

3. Tens of thousands of instant orators, called "Four Minute Men," were dispatched to galvanize the masses through short speeches before movies and musical performances.

4. It is estimated that, in 18 months, a million oratorical performances were heard by 400 million spectators in the United States (this number obviously includes people who heard such talks many times over).

5. Movie stars and celebrities helped sell Liberty Bonds.

C. Within American society, a self-propagandizing "war culture" also took hold, as it had in European countries.

1. American universities participated by integrating courses into their curricula to explain the values of Western civilization that were at stake. Originally called "War and Peace" courses, these developed into the Western Civilization courses, a staple of liberal education.

2. German culture was often attacked, with German language courses abolished at some schools.

3. The word *liberty* was substituted in common words that had German associations: the hamburger became the Liberty sandwich, sauerkraut became Liberty cabbage, and German measles were renamed Liberty measles. In many instances, people with German-sounding last names altered them.

4. A once large and vital German-American community, which earlier had established printing presses, newspapers, schools, and other institutions, came under immense social pressure.

5. Other immigrant communities were also affected, as a propaganda message of "100 percent Americanism" urged the dropping of "hyphenated" identities.

II. Economic mobilization was a reality as well.

A. As in European states, the U.S. government energetically intervened in the economy to mobilize for the war effort.

B. In summer 1917, the War Industries Board was founded by the government with investor Bernard Baruch in charge, regulating prices and profits.

1. It used the threat of nationalization to compel cooperation by industry.

2. The mobilization produced an industrial and agricultural boom and great profits.

3. Railroads were nationalized for the duration as strategic assets.

C. The scope of the income tax, instituted in 1913, was expanded enormously, changing the tax structure of the nation.

D. Herbert Hoover (1874–1964), an engineer who had organized the relief effort in Belgium and northern France, was made Food Administrator under the Food and Fuel Act of August 1917, which allowed the government to regulate these resources.

1. Price controls were used to spur production and lower consumption.
2. Instead of rationing, Hoover preferred to emphasize voluntary measures, which had striking successes.

E. As in the European states, organized labor found its role transformed by the wartime "domestic truce."

1. Demand for labor in the boom led to a labor shortage, increasing the bargaining power of workers.
2. Trade union membership rose significantly, doubling from 1914 to 1920.
3. The president of the American Federation of Labor (A.F.L.), Samuel Gompers, was co-opted into the National War Labor Board, which arbitrated labor disputes and protected workers' rights to join unions.

F. German chemical patents were seized.

III. Government control on the home front was tightened.

A. The Espionage Act of June 1917 and the Sedition Act of May 1918 were used to clamp down on speech opposed to the war, with very harsh punishments.

B. In a famed case, the socialist Eugene V. Debs was arrested and given a 10-year jail sentence in June 1918 for a speech in which he defended opposition to the war. Despite appeals, he served nearly three years of the sentence.

IV. Social changes were taking place at this time.

A. Women were at the center of many of these changes.

1. Women participated in the effort on the home front as one million entered the workforce.
2. Almost a quarter of the workers doing war work were women.
3. The fight for women's suffrage now took on strategic significance, and Wilson called it vital to the war effort. Congress passed the 19th Amendment in January 1918, and women's right to vote became law nationwide in 1920.

B. The Great Migration took place during this period.

1. The labor shortages of the war years led to a large African-American migration from the South to the industrial North, reconfiguring America's demographic landscape.
2. Chicago's African-American community grew by almost 150 percent, Detroit's by 611 percent.
3. Those who migrated encountered racially motivated violence, with riots in Chicago, St. Louis, and many other cities.

V. We also need to examine the record of American soldiers in Europe.

A. The first American troops landed in France in June 1917.

1. American soldiers were called "doughboys" (the origin of the term is disputed).
2. Despite the promises of the German navy that no Americans would arrive in Europe, two million American soldiers were brought over by sea without losses.
3. The American force was not overwhelming at first. U.S. soldiers did not take the brunt of the fighting and needed to be equipped with weapons from the Allies.
4. However, their sheer numbers and fresh reserves made clear that the strategic balance was tipping against the Central Powers.
5. For many American recruits, this deployment was their first long trip away from home.

6. One anxiety of those at home was (as a song put it), "How are you going to keep them down on the farm after they've seen Par-ee?" Pershing was horrified at the possible public reaction when his troops were offered the use of French brothels.

B. Among the American officers were Harry Truman, George C. Marshall, and George S. Patton.

C. General Pershing insisted on keeping the A.E.F. together, rather than dispersing the force throughout the Allied lines.

D. The exception to this policy concerned African-American units, which served under French command with distinction.

1. Some 400,000 African-American soldiers served during the war.
2. African-American soldiers, segregated and mistreated by their own commands, encountered sympathetic treatment from the French.
3. The African-American 369th U.S. Infantry, known as the "Harlem Hellfighters," served in the French lines, and the regiment was awarded the Croix de Guerre for its service.
4. The friendly French reception extended to the music of the soldiers, jazz.

E. The American troops encountered their first engagements.

1. The first American attack took place at the village of Cantigny on May 28, 1918.
2. At the Battle of Belleau Wood, American and French troops halted a German advance in June 1918.
3. The A.E.F. went on to a major offensive in St. Mihiel, south of Verdun, in mid-September 1918 and then took part in the Meuse-Argonne offensive from late September 1918.
4. The enthusiasm of the young American soldiers could be costly, with a steep learning curve in this industrial war.
5. Among the heroes of the American effort was a Tennessean, Alvin York, who, though originally a pacifist, became a celebrated warrior. In the Meuse-Argonne offensive, when his unit was pinned down by German fire, his backwoods marksmanship killed 25 German soldiers and caused more than one hundred more to surrender. He received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

F. Approximately 117,000 American soldiers died in combat or of disease during the war.

Essential Reading:

David M. Kennedy, *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*.

Supplementary Reading:

Arthur E. Barbeau, *The Unknown Soldiers: Black American Troops in World War One*.

Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, Peace*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How were American propaganda appeals different from those of the European powers?
2. How did the comparative brevity of American direct engagement in the war shape American experience?

Lecture Twenty-Nine
1918—The German Empire's Last Gamble

Scope: This lecture charts the last wager of the German High Command in the spring of 1918, hoping to press the fighting on the Western Front to a conclusion before the massed arrival of American forces. The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had ended combat on the Eastern Front, freeing the German armies to launch a spring offensive in the West. "Operation Michael" began in March 1918. Using new storm trooper tactics, the Germans achieved impressive advances and approached Paris, which they bombarded with enormous long-range artillery. Despite initial successes, however, they were stopped by an Allied counteroffensive, employing tanks, and were pushed back, having exhausted their reserves.

Outline

I. Last Wager

A. In the spring of 1918, the German command took its last gamble.

B. According to their calculations, time was of the essence.

1. Victory in the East meant that German troops could be massed on the Western Front.

2. The breakthrough needed to be achieved before American troops arrived in numbers sufficient to tip the balance.

C. As with the Schlieffen Plan, Verdun, and unrestricted submarine warfare, the German Empire gambled again, but this time put all its bets on this last throw of the dice.

II. Eastern Triumph: The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk

A. Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

1. After their ceasefire in December 1917, the Bolsheviks and the Germans met to negotiate a peace treaty but had irreconcilable aims.

2. The negotiations had a curious character, as both sides argued about the meaning of self-determination for the peoples of Eastern Europe, although it was a concept about which neither side cared.

3. In reality, the Germans sought control of huge expanses of territory, whereas the Bolsheviks aimed to turn negotiations into a platform for a global propaganda event.

4. Appealing to world public opinion, the Bolsheviks publicized the secret treaties of the Allies found in the Russian foreign ministry.

5. Trotsky was brilliant in stalling for time.

6. When negotiations reached a deadlock, Trotsky announced a new tactic of "neither peace nor war" and left.

7. The German army responded by attacking, meeting almost no resistance. The armies came within a hundred miles of Petrograd.

8. Because the revolution was in peril, Lenin narrowly convinced his comrades to sign the treaty.

9. On March 3, 1918, they signed the harsh Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, which stripped vast territories from the former Russian Empire.

10. By some estimates, Russia lost a third of its territory, a quarter of its population, and three-quarters of its coal and iron. Russia ceded control of Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, Finland, and the Baltic provinces.

B. Despite these reverses and impending civil war within Russia, Lenin breathlessly awaited news of the outbreak of international revolution.

C. Germans exulted at this victory.

1. The wildest hopes of annexationists had been realized.

2. Many felt that half the war had been won.

3. Changed perceptions of Eastern Europe and fantasies of a German colonial empire there would later be taken up and radicalized by the Nazis.

D. Yet the harshness of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk produced liabilities.

1. The Allies' resolve was strengthened by this brutal performance.
2. The one million German soldiers, who had to hold down the occupied territories in the East, might otherwise have been used in the spring offensive in the West.

E. The Treaty of Bucharest of May 7, 1918, with defeated Romania was also harsh and required the vanquished to provide food resources and oil to the Central Powers.

III. The Spring Offensive

A. This last German offensive of spring 1918 also was called "The Kaiser's Battle" and "Operation Michael."

1. It was a conscious wager because, if it failed, there would be no reserves left.
2. With the transfer of some German troops from the East, the Germans achieved a 10 percent superiority over Western forces.

B. The attack began March 21, 1918.

1. Over the course of the next four months of attacks and storm troop tactics, the Germans pushed Allied lines back 40 miles.
2. In this crisis, the French general, Ferdinand Foch, was at last given unified command of Allied forces.
3. German attacks finally petered out. The material abundance of supplies in captured Allied trenches discouraged German soldiers.
4. The Germans were halted 56 miles from Paris.
5. To spread panic, Paris was bombarded by long-range German guns, including the Big Bertha. Around 250 Parisians were killed by the shelling.
6. The gamble had failed.

IV. The Beginning of the German Collapse

A. The "Black Day" of the German Army took place on August 8, 1918.

1. Decisive reverses came for the Germans.
2. An Allied counterattack at Amiens in August broke their lines. The use of tanks overwhelmed discouraged German troops.
3. This breakdown in morale came to be called the "Black Day," as soldiers lost the will to fight.
4. As German armies retreated, the Allies took the initiative and retained it for the rest of the war.
5. The U.S. army went into action independently for the first time and overran the salient at St. Mihiel.

B. Simultaneously, Allied troops launched an attack from their long inactive camp in Salonika in August 1918.

1. Hungry Bulgarian troops withdrew.
2. On September 29, 1918, Bulgarian representatives signed an armistice in Salonika.
3. Bulgaria was the first of the Central Powers to leave the war.

C. In September 1918, a massive Allied offensive was launched at St. Mihiel in the Meuse-Argonne sector and on the Saint-Quentin–Cambrai sector.

D. By the middle of the month, the Germans had retreated back to the Hindenburg Line, whence they had launched their spring offensive.

E. Despite these successes, the Allies warily assumed that the war would continue into 1919.

V. The Breakdown of the Central Powers

A. On September 29, 1918, Ludendorff informed the Kaiser that the war had been lost and that only an armistice could save them now.

B. A desperate attempt at revolution from above was undertaken in the German Empire but came too late to satisfy the Allies or even attract much notice.

1. Prince Max von Baden became chancellor and started internal reforms.
2. The German government appealed to Wilson for peace on the basis of his Fourteen Points on October 4, 1918, but the American President responded by demanding internal change first.

C. Germany's allies fell away.

1. After Bulgaria left the war in September, Turkey followed in October.
2. Allied troops began to move up through the Balkans from Salonika.

D. Austria-Hungary was next on the list.

1. On the Italian front, from October 24–November 2, the Austro-Hungarian army began to dissolve.
2. In trying to go home, many were captured by Italian forces at Vittorio Veneto.
3. On November 3, 1918, Austria-Hungary signed an armistice with the Allies but was already disintegrating.

VI. The Fall of Germany

A. Revolution broke out in Germany, provoked by futile gestures at the war's end.

1. On November 3, 1918, news of orders for a naval "deathride" against the Allies touched off mutinies in the base at Kiel and spread to other port cities.
2. On November 7, revolt broke out in Munich.

B. Ludendorff was fired and escaped abroad in disguise. The scientist Fritz Haber, fearing trial by the Allies, also escaped.

C. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated when told that the German army no longer stood behind him and went into exile in Holland.

D. Turmoil reigned in the capital, Berlin. On November 9, a German democratic republic was declared.

E. On November 8, a German armistice delegation met with the Allied commander, General Foch, and heard the terms.

F. On November 11, 1918, at 11 A.M., the armistice signed at Compiègne in France came into effect. The guns fell silent on the Western Front.

Essential Reading:

Hew Strachan, *The First World War*, pp. 267–300.

Supplementary Reading:

John W. Wheeler-Bennett, *Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace, March 1918*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Could Austria-Hungary have saved itself by leaving the war earlier?
2. If the armistice had not been signed and the front moved onto German territory, how might the outcome of the war have been different?

Lecture Thirty
The War's End—Emotions of the Armistice

Scope: When the guns at last fell silent on the Western Front on November 11, 1918, with the armistice, those who had survived the Great War experienced a tidal wave of different emotions: grief, anger, loss, relief, exaltation, and furious desire for revenge. This lecture explores the range of responses to the conclusion of the war and the divergent hopes vested in the upcoming peace settlement. With the armistice, the hatred built up over years impeded reconciliation, and many Germans found it difficult to accept that they had in fact lost the war. As a crowning horror in the concluding stages of the conflict, a pandemic swept the globe: the Spanish influenza killed an estimated 50 million.

Outline

I. Mixed Emotions

- **A.** As the guns stopped firing on the Western Front, and a great stillness settled on the battlefields, contemporaries had to take stock of the war, the coming peace, and their own emotions.
- **B.** These emotions were mixed: despair and fury for the defeated, celebration and mourning for the victors, and the exaltation of new independence achieved by peoples in Central and Eastern Europe.
- **C.** In point of fact, even with the armistice on the Western Front, the war did not end everywhere: it would continue in aftershocks in Eastern Europe and elsewhere.
- **D.** A premature American announcement of a ceasefire caused great celebration on November 7, 1918.

II. The Great Stillness of the Armistice

- **A.** The armistice was signed at five A.M. on November 11, 1918, in a railway carriage at the forest of Compiègne, near Paris.
- **B.** Terms of the armistice were drawn up to reflect Foch's determination to hinder renewed German war efforts.
  - **1.** Germany had to withdraw from all occupied territory (except on the Eastern Front) and Alsace-Lorraine would be returned to France.
  - **2.** The Rhineland was to be cleared of German troops, and the Allies would occupy strategic bridgeheads at Mainz, Koblenz, and Cologne.
  - **3.** Military materiel and the German high seas fleet were to be turned over to the Allies.
  - **4.** The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk became invalid.
  - **5.** Germany would pay for the damage caused by the war.
  - **6.** The naval blockade would continue while the following negotiations took place.
  - **7.** At first set for 36 days, the armistice was later prolonged indefinitely.
- **C.** The German delegation was led by Catholic Center Party leader Matthias Erzberger (later assassinated for his role in 1921).
  - **1.** Now Germans would have to await the terms of the peace.
  - **2.** They hoped for what they called a "Wilson Peace" of moderate terms, based on the Fourteen Points of January 8, 1918.
- **D.** The ceasefire came into effect at 11 A.M. on November 11, 1918.
- **E.** The war had lasted 52 months.

III. Reactions to the News of the Armistice

- **A.** Reaction in Allied Western Europe was a mixture of sorrow and celebration.
  - **1.** Reportedly, in the front lines of the trenches, the mood was one of quiet exhaustion.
  - **2.** In London, riotous celebrations broke out, and strangers reportedly made love in public.

3. In Paris, as bells rang, crowds paraded down the boulevards and before the statue of Strasbourg; Allied soldiers were carried aloft. Trophy cannon captured from the Germans were pulled down the Rue de Rivoli.
4. At the British gas warfare laboratory at Porton Down, drunken guards released apes that terrorized the region until captured again.
5. In the mood of celebration, even a Belgian beer dedicated to the peace, "PAX," was produced (and is still made today).
6. Among these celebrations, inescapably private sorrows also made themselves felt among widows, orphans, and bereaved parents and siblings.

B. The formal closing of the war had a similarly mixed reception in Eastern Europe.
1. In Poland, November 11 became celebrated as national independence day, a key symbolic fact that shows the meaning attached to World War I.
2. Independent countries throughout Central and Eastern Europe now emerged from the ruins of the fallen empires, celebrating their new existence but also vulnerable to threat amid their fragile beginnings.

C. The reaction of defeated Germany was a different case.
1. Many Germans were glad of the fact that the war was over but incredulous at the news of their defeat.
2. Many were psychologically unprepared for the news, as censorship and propaganda had hidden the true fortunes of the war. Moreover, German armies stood on foreign soil.
3. The sheer momentum of events was hard to take in: the Kaiser had abdicated and a new German democratic republic was declared two days before the armistice.
4. In the humiliation of defeat, for many Germans the new democracy would come to be associated with failure and shame.
5. A "Stab in the Back" legend emerged, claiming that Germany had, in fact, not been defeated on the battlefield but undermined by dark forces.
6. The democratic revolutionaries of 1918 were denounced by nationalists as "November criminals."
7. One obscure soldier, Adolf Hitler, who was recovering at the hospital of Pasewalk after being gassed in Belgium on October 14, 1918, was shattered when he heard the news of Germany's defeat.
8. He went blind and afterwards claimed he had visions instructing him to restore Germany's greatness.

IV. Losses

A. The number of deaths was huge and could not be determined with precision.
1. Germany had lost almost 2 million; Austria-Hungary 1.5 million.
2. Russia lost 1.7 million, France nearly 1.5 million, Britain nearly a million, Italy half a million, and America lost more than 100,000.
3. The generational losses were crushing. In France, 17 percent of those who served were killed.
4. Altogether, some nine million soldiers died.
5. Every dead soldier left behind families and relationships shattered by that loss.

B. Injuries were equally significant.
1. Twenty million were wounded, seven million of these disabled permanently.
2. It cannot be known how many suffered from psychological disturbances long after the war.
3. Even those who survived often considered themselves a haunted "Lost Generation."

C. The economic damage was enormous.
1. A report from 1920 estimated the cost of the war at $337 billion.
2. Besides the immediate losses of the war were the losses of markets to neutral countries, or to the United States, and the plague of inflation.

D. Confidence in progress was another casualty of the conflict.

V. Influenza

A. Even as the war drew to a close, a natural disaster overtook the world, a devastating pandemic, the Spanish influenza.

B. The epidemic seems to have appeared in Haskell County, Kansas, in early 1918.

1. The movement of troops and ships as a result of the war, as well as weakened constitutions of civilians in warring countries, apparently facilitated its spread, according to some interpretations.

2. The disease spread to Europe and other parts of the world, mutating in several waves.

3. Though it originated and spread from the United States, the pandemic came to be called the Spanish flu because in neutral Spain, without censorship, reports of the disease were not downplayed as they were in warring countries.

4. The disease rapidly attacked a victim, often the young and healthy.

C. This virus probably killed another 50 million, mostly in the fall of 1918.

1. Estimates range from 20 million up to 100 million deaths worldwide. Spanish flu killed more people in a year than the medieval plague did over the course of 100 years.

2. Most recent estimates suggest that 17 million died in India and that 2 percent of the entire population of Africa died.

3. In towns in the United States, not enough coffins could be produced for the dead.

D. Curiously, not long after this devastating pandemic, its memory was seemingly effaced from collective consciousness. Why was this?

1. Did the tragedy of the war overshadow this disaster, overloading grief?

2. Was the enormity of the flu's devastation something that people simply could not fathom?

3. Epidemiologists warn that pandemics such as this one could certainly recur in our own time, and they are watching for an outbreak.

VI. Moving Forward

A. On January 18, 1919, in Paris the formal opening of peace negotiations took place.

B. Hatreds built up over the last years of war would impede a peace settlement.

1. French popular opinion demanded that Germany be punished for aggression and French security guaranteed.

2. In Great Britain, in the December 1918 "Khaki Elections" (so named because they were dominated by military issues), Lloyd George and his coalition won (and ruled until 1922) on promises of "making the Germans pay." "Hang the Kaiser" was a common demand.

3. By contrast, many Germans were skeptical that they had indeed lost the war.

C. Even the victorious Allied powers wrestled with the question of what victory might conceivably mean after losses of such magnitude.

Essential Reading:

John Keegan, *The First World War*, pp. 414–427.

Supplementary Reading:

John M. Barry, *The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History*.

Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson: Revolution, War, Peace*.

Stanley Weintraub, *A Stillness Heard Round the World: The End of the Great War, November 1918*.

Questions to Consider:

1. On what basis could a peace of reconciliation have been crafted given the emotions of late 1918?

2. Why was memory of the Spanish influenza seemingly repressed?

Lecture Thirty-One
Toppled Thrones—The Collapse of Empires

Scope: As the war ended in defeat for the Central Powers, their empires and political structures also came crashing down. Total war had led to total defeat. This lecture outlines the startling internal collapse of the Central Powers. In November 1918, a German revolution broke out, following naval mutinies in German ports. Kaiser Wilhelm II fled into exile and a democratic Germany was declared. The young German republic was not unchallenged, however, as a civil war developed in the streets, with fighting between radical socialists and mercenary right-wing *Freikorps* units. The centuries-old Habsburg Empire dissolved into independent states, breaking down along ethnic lines. The Ottoman Empire lost many of its ancient territories and retained only its Turkish core before the onset of a nationalist revival. In the case of each empire, what order would replace the extinct structures was a burning question.

Outline

I. Transforming the Political Map

- **A.** As a result of the war, four great empires came crashing down: the Russian Empire of the Romanovs, the German Empire of the Hohenzollerns, the Austro-Hungarian Empire of the Habsburgs, and the Ottoman Empire.
- **B.** In Europe, republics replaced dynastic kingdoms and nine new national states appeared: Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia.
- **C.** Two key points need to be emphasized about this transformation.
  1. The new states were not created by the negotiators of the Paris Peace Conference. Rather, facts unfolded on the ground with astonishing speed, suggesting the appeal of nationalism and ideas of "self-determination" and associated democratic ideals.
  2. New independence for nationalities in Central and Eastern Europe also made for a different perception of the war, whose end was seen not as senseless tragedy and waste, but as a baptism by fire for national freedom.

II. The German Revolution

- **A.** After naval mutinies and revolts broke out, the attempted "revolution from above" to create a constitutional monarchy failed.
  1. Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated and fled to exile in Holland.
  2. Generals Hindenburg and Ludendorff systematically sought to evade responsibility for the defeat.
  3. Prince Max von Baden offered government power to Social Democratic leaders, who were surprised and unprepared.
  4. Social Democratic leader Friedrich Ebert took over on November 9, 1918, and his colleague Phillip Scheidemann declared a German democratic republic in Berlin.
- **B.** Confusion reigned at first.
  1. One observer commented that Germans had fallen asleep under an empire and woken up under a republic.
  2. Chaos and confusion were rife, as local councils on the model of Russian soviets organized, a socialist republic was declared in Bavaria, separatists mobilized in the Rhineland, 10 million soldiers needed to be demobilized, and the Spartakus revolutionary movement planned the overthrow of the republic.
  3. Karl Liebknecht declared a rival radical socialist republic on the same day.
  4. In a paradox, the S.P.D., which had claimed it wanted revolution, now sought order.
  5. Government leaders fell back on an agreement with the army for mutual assistance and the hiring of brutal mercenaries called *Freikorps* to quell revolts.
  6. A civil war atmosphere pervaded the streets.
- **C.** This atmosphere did not bode well for German democracy as the Weimar Republic was established.

1. The provisional government included the S.P.D., Left Liberals, and the Catholic Center Party.
2. In the elections for the constituent assembly in January 1919, a strong vote of support (76 percent) for these parties gave a mandate for democracy.
3. The constitution, crafted in Weimar, was considered a model of democracy, progressive governance, and enlightened welfare state obligations. It included universal voting rights, a bill of rights, and extensive social commitments.
4. Its system of proportional voting made for a splintered parliament with many parties.

D. The "Stab in the Back" legend took hold even more firmly.

1. In the minds of many, German democracy became associated with defeat and the Versailles Treaty, which Germany signed with the Allies on June 28, 1919.
2. Radical nationalists denounced the government as "November Criminals."
3. When troops returned from the front, Ebert welcomed them in Berlin as "undefeated in the battlefield," which raised the question of how then Germany had lost.
4. The "Stab in the Back" legend, already being circulated as the war was being fought, now proliferated, asserting that Germany's armies had been betrayed by elements on the home front.

III. End of the Habsburg Realm

A. Even before the war's end, Austria-Hungary had been dissolving as national committees were founded by the separate ethnic groups.

1. Exiled politicians abroad agitated the Allies for recognition. The reluctance of the Allies to see the dismemberment of the empire gradually declined.
2. From 1917, with the Russian March Revolution and American entry into the war, a new ideological emphasis on democracy condemned the multinational empire.
3. Wilson's Fourteen Points included the demand for free, autonomous development.
4. By the summer of 1918, the Allies supported national claims to independence and recognized exile committees.

B. The Republic of Czechoslovakia was established.

1. A national committee had de facto been taking over power in the Czech lands, mobilizing one of the best organized national movements in Europe and seeking to make common cause with the related Slovaks.
2. Abroad, Tomáš Masaryk and Eduard Benes cofounded the Czechoslovak National Council in London in Paris in 1915.
3. On October 28, 1918, an independent Czechoslovak republic was declared in Prague.

C. An independent Yugoslavia was also declared.

1. The prewar "South Slav" movement led to the forming of a Yugoslav Committee in London in May 1915, gathering Serbs, Croatians, Montenegrins, and Slovenes.
2. In the Corfu Declaration of July 1917, Serbia and representatives of the other South Slavs agreed to seek a combined Yugoslav state, but its nature remained unclear.
3. On October 29, 1918, an independent Yugoslavia was declared.

D. Hungary also broke from Habsburg rule.

1. As the empire melted away, on October 16, 1918, Hungary split off from Austria, though the two retained a common monarch.
2. On November 16, 1918, an independent Hungarian republic was declared under Prince Michael Karolyi.

E. Austria, too, became independent of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

1. With the empire's collapse, on November 12, 1918, an independent German-Austria was declared.
2. This small country of 7 million was a shadow of its former powerful self—Vienna once had been the capital of an empire of 50 million.

F. The young Emperor Karl, who had sought to save his regime, was crushed.

1. In mid-October 1918, the emperor had proclaimed federal reorganization with autonomy of nationalities in Austria, but it came too late.
2. On November 3, 1918, the Austro-Hungarian armistice was signed for a state that no longer existed.
3. Emperor Karl refused to abdicate and went into exile to Madeira, dying young. His exile marked the end of 600 years of Habsburg rule.

G. Once unified politically and economically, the Danube basin was now torn apart, the empire separated into seven states. In another imperial hangover, five million Germans now lived as minorities outside of Austria.

IV. Independence in Eastern Europe

A. The Russian Empire also had begun its disintegration before the end of the war, during the revolutionary events of 1917–1918.

B. Poland became an independent country.

1. The Haller Army of 100,000 Poles fought in France, winning Allied sympathies.
2. Abroad, nationalist politician Roman Dmowski and the world-famous pianist Ignacy Paderewski agitated for Polish independence.
3. Wilson's Fourteen Points made an independent Poland a key war aim.
4. November 11, 1918, is still celebrated as Poland's independence day.
5. Pilsudski was freed from a German jail and traveled to Warsaw to form a government.
6. Despite personal and political conflicts, Pilsudski and Dmowski (who led the delegation to the Paris Peace Conference) worked together for Poland.
7. Polish borders to the east and to the west remained unclear.

C. The Baltic Republics and Finland gained their independence as well.

1. With the German collapse, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Finland became independent republics.
2. Their independence remained fragile, as some German forces remained, Bolsheviks aimed to regain the lands, and civil war threatened.

D. The Transcaucasian Republic included the former Russian territories of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

V. Ottoman Turkey

A. With Arabia now a separate state and Palestine, Iraq, Syria, and Trans-Jordan under Allied disposition, the remaining parts of the empire came under Allied military occupation.

B. The Young Turk war leaders fled into exile.

C. The new Sultan Mehmed IV cooperated with the Allies.

D. A nationalist movement led by Mustafa Kemal (later known as Atatürk) resisted the government as well as the Allied occupation, eventually abolishing the sultanate and creating a Turkish nation-state.

Essential Reading:

Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, 1914–1923*.

Supplementary Reading:

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Could the Austro-Hungarian Empire have been preserved? Would that have been desirable?
2. Was the growth of the "Stab in the Back" legend inevitable, or could it have been quelled?

Lecture Thirty-Two
The Versailles Treaty and Paris Settlement

Scope: The peace settlements ending the First World War were beset with contradictions. Should the treaties reconcile enemies or punish the defeated? Were they meant to repair the prewar Balance of Power or abolish it? This lecture considers in depth the entire complex of treaties with the defeated Central Powers, which together constituted the Paris Settlement, and the divergent motives of the victors at work in the drafting of the peace. The case of the 1919 Versailles Treaty with defeated Germany brings the paradoxes of the peace into sharp relief, expressing the desire for European reconciliation, while imposing economic and military constraints on Germany, along with reparations for war guilt. Elsewhere in Central and Eastern Europe, in the new republics established out of imperial wreckage, the settlement was celebrated as a ratification of longed-for national independence. Issues left unresolved by the Paris Settlement would soon return to haunt Europeans.

Outline

I. Paris Settlement

A. The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 opened on January 18, 1919, and involved five separate treaties with the defeated powers: Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey.

B. The peacemakers for the Big Four represented France, Great Britain, Italy, and the United States.

1. Premier Clemenceau negotiated with dogged and inflexible determination to defend French interests and security and to win the peace.

2. British Prime Minister Lloyd George, despite his earlier ferocity, tried to compromise where possible but defended British imperial interests.

3. Italian Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando, frustrated by Allied refusal to meet Italian territorial demands on the Adriatic, stormed out of the negotiations on April 24, 1919.

4. Woodrow Wilson came to construct a peace along idealistic lines and met a rapturous welcome on his arrival. No American president spent so much time away from the United States while in office, and his decision to personally lead the negotiations has been criticized by some historians.

C. Different priorities could clash: Wilson's aim was to enshrine a democratic peace with self-determination and a League of Nations, whereas the European powers preferred to emphasize the imperatives of security and the realities of power politics.

D. Germany expected to be included in negotiations as a new democracy but was disappointed in this expectation and had to wait to hear the terms of the peace.

E. Time was a crucial factor on all sides. Facts were being established on the ground, armies were being demobilized, and shifts in relative power were taking place.

F. Negotiators were lobbied furiously by advocates of different causes.

G. The Versailles Treaty, centerpiece of the Settlement, was carved out with compromises and dissatisfactions aplenty but still met the biggest demands in many cases.

II. Terms of the Versailles Treaty

A. Germany was to lose all of its colonies and about 13 percent of its prewar territory (along with 10 percent of its population), including Alsace and Lorraine, lands transferred to Belgium and Denmark, the eastern provinces, the Polish Corridor to the Baltic Sea, and the port of Danzig.

B. Germany's armed forces were to be drastically reduced.

1. With no conscription, the German army would be limited to a volunteer force of 100,000 men.

2. Germany was to have no air force or submarines. Gas weapons were banned.

3. The Rhineland was to be demilitarized along a frontier belt 30 miles wide. The west bank was to be occupied by the Allies for 15 years.

4. France had demanded an independent Rhineland buffer state but eventually dropped this requirement in exchange for British and American pledges of security.

C. Germany would pay an unspecified amount in reparations for the war. (Wilson had resisted this demand but acceded to it eventually.) Later, the sum was set at $32 billion in 1921.

D. Limitations were placed on German industry and commerce.

E. In article 231, the so-called "War Guilt Clause" to establish a legal foundation for claims to reparations, Germany was to accept the blame for the war.

III. German Reactions

A. When the terms of the treaty were announced, the German public was thunderstruck and outraged.

1. No negotiation of the terms was to be allowed. Rather, they were to be accepted or the blockade would continue and war recommence.
2. German naval officers sank the German fleet at Scapa Flow in protest.
3. Nationalists denounced this *Diktat* (dictated peace) and Germany's "bleeding borders."
4. Across nearly the entire political spectrum, German rejection of the terms was unanimous, especially concerning war guilt.
5. In fact, the terms were milder than those Germany had imposed on Russia in 1918.

B. Despite protests, the German delegation signed the treaty on June 28, 1919—five years to the day of the assassinations in Sarajevo—in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

C. Outrage remained strong and poisoned the public's view of German democracy by association.

D. Scientist Fritz Haber sought to extract gold from seawater to pay for reparations. Though he failed, he won the 1918 Nobel Prize for earlier work in synthesizing nitrates.

IV. Other Treaties of the Paris Settlement

A. Under the Treaty of Saint-Germain, September 10, 1919, Austria ceded territories to neighboring states and was forbidden union with Germany.

B. Under the Treaty of Trianon, June 4, 1920, Hungary ceded immense territories to Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania, which evoked fury in the Hungarian public as expressed in the popular slogan, "No, no, never."

C. Under the Treaty of Neuilly, November 27, 1919, Bulgaria ceded territories.

D. Under the Treaty of Sèvres, August 10, 1920, the Ottoman Empire was to be dismembered with Syria and Lebanon to be ceded to France, Palestine and Iraq to Britain, and other territories awarded to Greece and Italy. Kurds and Armenians were to gain autonomy. The treaty was never ratified, however, but was rejected during the nationalist Turkish revolt that ensued.

V. The League of Nations

A. The League had been a key idea of Wilson's, included in his Fourteen Points, and he was willing to compromise in particular instances in exchange for the creation of this institution of collective security.

B. The League was a key part of the Versailles Treaty.

C. The institution, whose aim was to promote peaceful resolution of conflicts, consisted of a General Assembly and a smaller Council.

D. The League was established in Geneva in January 1920.

1. Despite some successes, it ended in failure as the world moved toward World War II (it was dissolved in 1946).
2. Two great powers, the United States and Soviet Russia, were not members.

E. The United States rejected the Versailles Treaty and with it the League of Nations Covenant.

1. Wilson's inflexibility on this question, along with his political miscalculations, forced a showdown.

2. Anxieties included questions of sovereignty, obligations under collective security, disgust at balance of power politics, and prejudices.
3. In campaigning for approval of the treaty, an exhausted Wilson collapsed and never recovered his health.

F. The U.S. Senate refused to ratify the treaty in March 1920.

VI. Verdicts

A. Many expressed dissatisfaction with the peace settlement.
1. Apart from the fury of the defeated, many others were disappointed.
2. Representatives of non-Western peoples under colonial rule had hoped for self-determination but received no hearing. They included the Vietnamese activist Ho Chi Minh and a Pan-African Congress.
3. Proposals for a declaration of racial equality were also ignored.
4. German colonies and Ottoman territories were made "mandates," a term obscuring colonial rule.
5. Italy felt cheated of Dalmatian territories at the head of the Adriatic Sea and denounced this disappointment as a sign of a "mutilated victory."

B. As France sought to build up a strong Poland as a "*cordon sanitaire*" of states in Eastern Europe to contain both Soviet Russia and Germany, conflicts with other states undermined possible solidarity.

C. Many earlier economic unities were destroyed. British economist John Maynard Keynes warned against crippling Germany economically.

D. Minority questions remained.
1. Despite the ideal of self-determination, many minority issues remained in the new countries.
2. Germans pointed out that German minorities had often been denied self-determination in the Tyrol, the Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Austria.

E. The Treaty now had to be enforced, and France felt that it was left "holding the tail of the tiger," facing a future renewal of a German threat.

F. Debate continues on peacemakers' roles and responsibilities.
1. Views of Wilson's role are dramatically opposed.
2. In fact, neither Wilson nor the other peacemakers were omnipotent, as events on the ground unfolded and demanded recognition.

G. Debate continues on the Versailles Treaty, with some contending it was too harsh or not harsh enough, as others argue that it was the best that could be done at the time.

H. Anxieties about its legacy were felt at the time.

Essential Reading:
Margaret MacMillan, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*.

Supplementary Reading:
Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*.

Questions to Consider:
1. If the United States had joined the League of Nations, would a Second World War have been prevented?
2. Was the Versailles Treaty too harsh, not harsh enough, or just right?

Lecture Thirty-Three
Aftershocks—Reds, Whites, and Nationalists

Scope: In the turmoil that followed the end of the war, a new and intense level of ideological conflict followed, prefiguring the Cold War decades later. Partisans of the new international communism heralded by revolutionary Soviet Russia (labeled "Reds") faced off against counter-revolutionary forces (called "Whites"). Across much of Eastern and Central Europe, the battle raged, with Red Terror and White Terror alternating. A violently brutal civil war surged across Russia, with ineffectual Allied attempts at intervention. In the new Baltic Republics, German *Freikorps* mercenaries and the invading Red Army clashed. Radical socialist revolts in Hungary, Finland, and Germany were suppressed. Soviet Russia and independent Poland clashed. New nation-states also collided repeatedly. Even as the Great War ended, fierce new lines of division were being drawn on the map and in European society as a whole.

Outline

I. Hinge of Violence

A. The First World War in fact did not end neatly on November 11, 1918, nor even with the Paris Settlement.

B. In reality, the war continued, especially in Eastern Europe and Europe's rim, in aftershocks. The difficulties of realizing self-determination in areas of mixed population and minorities were now evident.

C. The clashes, wars, and civil strife following in the war's wake made clear that a new level of ideological violence had been reached.

1. These aftershocks pitted revolutionaries against counterrevolutionaries and nationalists of different ethnic groups against one another on complicated, shifting fronts.

2. In its brutalizing effects, the Great War was a hinge of violence, opening out to new vistas of conflict.

II. Civil War in Russia

A. From 1917 to 1920, the Bolsheviks and their Red Army struggled to keep control of Russia during a civil war of incredible ferocity and atrocities on all sides.

1. In the civil war, an estimated 7–10 million died, five times as many as had perished during the empire's engagement in the world war.

2. Some estimates of the total number of Russian deaths by violence, hunger, and disease between the years 1918 and 1922 run to 20 million.

B. The forces confronting the Bolsheviks were called the Russian "Whites," a varied array of forces of tremendous diversity.

1. They included social revolutionaries across Russia, outright monarchists, and supporters of a more democratic provisional government.

2. The military forces of the Whites included General Denikin's southern army, Admiral Alexander Kolchak and his men in Siberia, General Wrangel's troops in the Caucasus, and General Yudenich's forces in the Baltic region.

3. Though their assaults on the Russian central region repeatedly threatened the Bolsheviks, White forces ultimately lacked mutual agreement about strategy or political aims.

4. In November 1920, when General Wrangel was defeated, the civil war drew to a close.

C. Allied intervention lent an international dimension to this internal conflict.

1. To protect military supplies and support the Whites, Allied forces (British, French, American, and Japanese) landed on the empire's edges.

2. In an astonishing epic story, a Czech legion of 40,000 former POWs, seeking to return west, took over the Trans-Siberian Railroad and battled with the Bolsheviks before returning to their homeland.

D. Ultimately, this conflict led to Red victory in Russia.

1. Bolshevik discipline, organization, and determination won out.

2. By late 1920, Allied forces withdrew.

3. The Bolsheviks had centralized government, cementing the beginnings of a total state. In economics, the "war communism" policy of state control of production, banks, and land reflected Lenin's admiration for German "war socialism" during World War I.
4. As war commissar from March 1918, Trotsky organized and led the Red Army from his armored train.
5. The Cheka secret police, in trademark long leather coats, used terror as a political weapon following the September 5, 1918, decree on Red Terror.

E. The former areas of the Russian Empire reconquered by the Bolsheviks became the U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) or Soviet Union in December 1922.

III. Spreading International Revolution

A. The Comintern was created in 1919.
1. Because the Bolsheviks looked for a worldwide revolution, they founded a new organization to export revolt, the Comintern, the Communist (or Third) International, in Moscow in March 1919.
2. Trotsky called it the "General Staff of the World Revolution," and it imposed discipline on all member parties.
3. Worldwide, the Comintern encouraged the founding of communist parties.
4. The French Communist Party was founded in 1920, with Ho Chi Minh among the founders.
5. The Chinese Communist Party was founded in 1921, with Mao Tse-tung attending.

B. In Finland, Red and White forces battled in a civil war in 1918, ending with communist defeat.

C. There were signs of growing militancy among workers in Western Europe as well.
1. As just such a sign, a general strike took place in France on May Day 1919.
2. British dock workers refused to load supplies for Allied intervention in Russia.
3. In northern Italy, strikers seized factories in the fall of 1920.

D. The communists' great sought-after prize was Germany through its Spartakus movement.
1. In Berlin, in January 1919, the communist Spartakus organization staged an uprising.
2. Among the leaders was Rosa Luxemburg (1870–1919), a critic of Lenin.
3. The revolt failed, and government troops murdered leaders Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht.
4. A second uprising in March 1919 also failed, as did communist revolts in 1923 in Saxony and Hamburg.

E. In Bavaria, revolutionary events were creating a mood of turmoil.
1. In November 1918, revolutionary Kurt Eisner declared a socialist Bavaria.
2. After his assassination, his associates declared a communist republic in April, which was suppressed in May 1919.

F. Revolt also broke out in Hungary.
1. Defeated Hungary was imperiled by Czechs, Croatians, Serbs, and Romanians.
2. Béla Kun, a Hungarian communist returned from Moscow, proclaimed a Soviet state on March 20, 1919, which lasted a few months.
3. A policy of Red Terror was instituted along with a deluge of decrees, including state ownership of large estates.
4. On August 1, 1919, Kun was deposed as Romanian forces took Budapest.

G. Such revolts, though unsuccessful, stirred fears among Europe's middle classes and made them susceptible to the appeal of radical movements promising order.

IV. Whites

A. The German *Freikorps* were key in this movement.
1. Germany's democratic government felt forced to employ Freikorps (free corps) mercenaries to suppress challenges from radical socialists and guard the borders.

2. Estimates of the numbers of Freikorps range from 200,000 to 400,000.
3. They put down the Spartakus revolt in Berlin and other uprisings with terrible violence.

B. The Baltic War was also a signal of unrest.

1. Some Freikorps left Germany in disgust to engage in a yearlong rampage in the Baltic lands, hoping to establish a new military state there, before being expelled by December 1919.
2. The Baltic republics regarded their fight against the freebooters as wars of independence.
3. Among the Freikorps were later Nazis, like the future commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Hoess.

C. In Hungary, after the Kun regime was deposed, Admiral Miklós Horthy took power in November 1919 and instituted a policy of White Terror in retribution.

D. The afterlife of the Freikorps could be seen in the death squads in Germany.

1. After the Freikorps had been disbanded, members organized secret terrorist groups that contributed to the atmosphere of political violence in the Weimar Republic.
2. They joined the failed *Kapp Putsch* in 1920 and afterwards formed murder squads who gunned down democratic politicians, including Matthias Erzberger in 1921 and Foreign Minister Walther Rathenau in 1922.

V. Polish-Soviet War

A. War broke out in the borderlands between Soviet Russia and a revived and expansive Poland, which had moved into Ukraine in the spring of 1920.

B. Swift Soviet counterattacks by General Mikhail Tukhachevsky sought to break through Poland and connect with radical movements in Europe, forming a "Red Bridge."

C. After desperate fighting, Soviet forces were halted outside Warsaw ("Miracle on the Vistula River") and peace was signed in 1921.

D. Conflicts continued in Eastern Europe.

1. Both Poland and Lithuania claimed the city of Vilnius. After Polish forces took it in 1920, relations between the two countries remained bitter for years.
2. Poland also came into conflict with Czechoslovakia over the area of Teschen.
3. Conflicts between neighboring countries in the region made it difficult to build collective security against a revival of aggressive powers to the east and west.
4. Interwar Poland's expansive borders also meant that 30 percent of its population consisted of minorities.
5. Pilsudski returned to power in 1926 in a coup and became dictator.

VI. Greek-Turkish War

A. Turkish nationalists reacted fiercely to the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres, imposed by the Allies.

B. Resistance to Allied occupation was led by Mustafa Kemal (1880–1938), later known as Atatürk, "Father of the Turks."

C. In 1919, Greek armies invaded Turkey to fulfill the "Megali Idea" of a Greater Greece. By 1921, the campaign turned into a disaster.

D. In the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, Greece and Turkey agreed on a compulsory "exchange" of populations.

1. Some 400,000 Muslims were moved from Macedonia, and 1.3 million Greek Christians from Turkey were sent to Greece.
2. Although the operation took place under international supervision, massacres and ethnic cleansing took place. Yet the "population transfer" was later hailed by European politicians as a successful model of problem-solving, with ominous results.
3. In the Treaty of Lausanne, earlier promises of autonomy for the Kurds and Armenians were dropped from the agenda and their claims forgotten.

VII. Ireland

- **A.** The Irish War of Independence (1918–1921) flowed naturally from the world war.
  - **1.** Michael Collins led the Irish Republican Army, using guerrilla tactics.
  - **2.** British irregular forces called "Black and Tans" gained notoriety.
  - **3.** The war led to the establishment of an Irish Free State of the southern counties of Ireland.
- **B.** Nationalist dissatisfaction with the outcome led to the Irish Civil War (1922–1923) between the Irish Republican Army and forces of the Free State.

VIII. Europe on the Move

- **A.** With the collapse of empires and the drawing of new borders, 20 million people found themselves ethnic minorities in Europe.
- **B.** Refugees fled continuing conflict, including 1.75 million Russians.
- **C.** Stateless people were castaways without clearly defined rights. Philosopher Hannah Arendt argued that this was the century of the refugee or displaced person.

IX. Legacies

- **A.** Many of these postwar conflicts were forgotten or lost from collective memory.
- **B.** However, these brutal aftershocks contributed to the slide into another abyss and World War II.

Essential Reading:

Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, 1914–1923*.

Supplementary Reading:

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

Marguerite Yourcenar, *Coup de Grace*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Why did communist revolts in Central Europe fail?
2. What were the main factors that made the aftermath of war in Eastern Europe so brutal?

Lecture Thirty-Four
Monuments, Memory, and Myths

Scope: This lecture follows the ways in which grieving contemporaries grappled with the challenge of giving symbolic expression to a tragic event of the magnitude of the Great War. Vigorous and painful debates surrounded the question of adequate memorials and monuments to the millions of the fallen and the efforts of the nation: What was to be memorialized? What, if anything, was to be celebrated? What precisely were the lessons of the ordeal? What role should veterans play in the postwar world returning from the trenches? We will analyze the monuments of Verdun and other battlefields, the ritual of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, the formation of veterans' organizations, and the dangerous, growing power of resentful conclusions in nations unreconciled to the war's outcome: the "Stab in the Back" legend in defeated Germany and the notion of the "mutilated victory" in aggrieved Italy.

Outline

I. Dilemmas of Remembrance

A. Attempts to deal with the many social and economic repercussions of the war were inevitably accompanied by the question of how to remember the war and what it had meant.

B. Even the act of physical reconstruction posed the question of what sort of a future the war had helped create.

C. In destroyed swathes of the fronts, for instance at Verdun, some villages were never rebuilt, and the landscape itself was scarred and hid dangerous unexploded shells.

II. Monuments

A. Vigorous debates took place over how to memorialize the war and with what messages.

1. Many smaller monuments, still to be seen today, were erected. From Knoxville, Tennessee, to French villages, the statue of the soldier was a universal sight.

2. Workplaces and universities bore tablets with the names of the fallen.

3. In the United States, a movement urged the creation of "useful monuments," including auditoriums, as the most suitable form.

B. The notion of a Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was crafted to memorialize the nameless sacrifices of the war.

1. On Armistice Day 1920, the invented ritual of the entombment of the "Unknown Soldier" carried a strong democratic message.

2. In France, an unidentified body from Verdun was selected at random to represent all of the anonymous sacrifices of the war and was buried under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris.

3. Similarly, in Britain an unknown soldier was buried in Westminster Abbey, a pantheon of British notables.

4. One year later, in 1921, the United States followed suit with the burial of an unknown soldier in Arlington National Cemetery.

C. The battlefields took on the quality of sacred ground, none more so than Verdun for the French.

1. In 1919, a trench was discovered near Fort Douaumont in Verdun with bayonets sticking out, and a legend of unflinching defense to the last was created.

2. A monument was erected at the site, and, despite doubts, the story captured the public imagination.

3. The Ossuary was built in Verdun with donations to house the remains of some 130,000 soldiers.

D. In Germany, the war was also memorialized.

1. As most of the war had been fought beyond Germany's borders, German war graves took on a different emphasis.

2. *Totenburgen* (Castles of the Dead) and a huge monument at Tannenberg memorialized the fallen.

E. Battlefield tours, which can still be taken today, were organized.

1. Visitors could observe both the surreal sight of destroyed landscapes and, with time, the equally painful effacement of war wounds as nature began to heal the fields.

2. American mothers were taken on Gold Star tours, as the U.S. government urged that fallen soldiers' bodies remain in France.

3. Sadly, if tellingly, these tours by bereaved American mothers were racially segregated.

III. Memory

A. Countless survivors of the war bore unspeakable memories.

1. "The Great War" was a generational reference point and watershed.

2. Family lives were affected by the traumas of the war, and divorce rates climbed.

3. It is impossible to estimate how many participants in the war remained psychologically scarred.

4. Estimates suggest that every family in Europe had lost a relative or friend.

B. The disabled were vivid memories of the sacrifices of the war.

1. The war left maimed soldiers with shattered lives. Some quarter of a million British soldiers had limbs totally or partially amputated.

2. For years and decades afterwards, war invalids were readily visible in Europe as part of the social landscape and as a reminder.

3. Some soldiers with mutilated faces preferred to live their lives out in secluded hospitals out of sight.

C. Veterans' organizations were founded out of solidarity of shared experiences.

1. In most countries, veterans formed associations to encourage recognition of their sacrifices, recall their ordeal, and advance their interpretation of the larger meaning of the war.

2. The American Legion was formed in 1919 in Paris. It promoted Armistice Day as a national holiday, November 11.

3. In Germany, the *Stahlhelm* (Steel Helmet) organization sympathized with nationalist and right-wing politics. Communist, Social Democratic, and German-Jewish veterans' organizations were also active.

D. Artists and writers grappled with the war.

1. Some felt that only the fragmented perspective of modernism could convey the experience of the war and what it had revealed about human nature and the human condition.

2. The German painters Otto Dix and Georg Grosz unflinchingly drew on their own experience to depict both the war and its human toll, returning repeatedly to the figure of the mutilated veteran, begging in the street, as a central image.

3. War poems ranged from patriotic involvement to absolute disillusionment and fury at the senselessness of the bloodletting. Rupert Brooke, Siegfried Sasson, Robert Graves, and Wilfred Owen were among the poets who memorialized the war.

4. Though he had not been a soldier himself, T. S. Eliot testified to a shattered civilization in his poem *The Waste Land.*

5. War literature came in waves. In 1929, both Erich Maria Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Robert Graves's *Goodbye to All That* appeared. Especially the former unleashed a flood of memoirs and novels by others.

6. A fascinating debate about the cultural impact of the war focuses on whether it was a decisive break or instead was marked by continuities.

7. Literary historian Paul Fussell argues that even our language was changed by the shattering experience of the world of the trenches, so that henceforth words like "honor" or "duty" could never lose the ironic tinge that they had acquired for the Lost Generation.

8. Historian Jay Winter maintains by contrast that, despite the novelties of modernism, continuities and tradition remained, contradicting the idea of a real gulf of experience. In fact, the horrors of the Second World War would be the real break.

E. The intellectual thought of Western civilization was affected by the war.

1. For psychologist Sigmund Freud, the war had revealed a destructive "death drive" or "death instinct" in human nature.
2. In politics, the revelation of what total war was like had to be confronted.
3. For many, that revelation demanded that war be abolished forever.
4. For others, the model of total mobilization was attractive, and they endorsed a militarized politics for the future.

IV. Myths

A. The occult myth of the "return of the dead" arose.

1. A wave of fascination arose about the occult, spirit photography, and séances.
2. The paranormal seemed to offer a way of coping with unbearable losses, hoping for communication with the fallen.

B. The "Stab in the Back" legend continued to fester in Germany.

1. The myth already in circulation that Germany had not lost the war received further endorsement during public hearings held to examine and understand Germany's collapse.
2. The legend was taken up by the young Nazi party.

C. Throughout Europe, disappointed territorial demands and the loss of territories became the focus of nationalist agitations, such as the Italian movement to pursue *Irredenta* or "unredeemed territories."

1. In 1919, the Italian Romantic poet Gabriele D'Annunzio led a raid that captured the contested port of Trieste, in protest of the outcome of the war.
2. His gesture was much admired and provoked emulation.

D. The myth of the "New Man" also arose after the war.

1. In many countries, the myth of the "New Man" argued that the "storms of steel" of industrial war had forged a new model of heroism, an ethos of toughness, and a social model for unity.
2. Advocates of militarized politics proposed a "trenchocracy" with a special leading role for veterans of the war.

Essential Reading:

Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory*.

George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*.

Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History*.

Supplementary Reading:

Samuel Lynn Hynes, *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture*.

Candace Ward, ed., *World War One British Poets: Brooke, Owen, Sassoon, Rosenberg, and Others*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Does it even make sense to speak of "healing the wounds" of a war on the scale of World War I? If so, how?
2. Was the First World War a cultural watershed? Why or why not?

Lecture Thirty-Five
The Rise of the Mass Dictatorships

Scope: The First World War vividly showed the massive power that could be mobilized by states organized for war. In the chaotic aftermath of the war (and especially in those areas most unsettled by the war's conclusion), there arose ideological mass movements drawing inspiration from the model of totally mobilized societies and seeking to recreate that state. These totalitarian movements included Benito Mussolini's Fascism in Italy, Adolf Hitler's Nazism in Germany, and the Communism of Lenin and Stalin in the Soviet Union. This lecture reveals how strongly the imprint of the World War I experience shaped these mass dictatorships and their mental horizons (which saw politics as war and war as politics), setting them on a tragic course to repeat disaster in the form of the Second World War.

Outline

I. The Totalitarian Wave

- **A.** The wave of democratization that had followed World War I was in short order replaced by a wave of dictatorships that were totalitarian in their aspirations.
- **B.** This trend predated the Great Depression, but economic crisis later played a role.
- **C.** The experience of total war had helped shape the ambition for total rule.
- **D.** The term *totalitarianism* merits discussion.
  - **1.** *Totalitarianism* is a term used to describe modern dictatorships that differ from earlier tyrannies in aiming at total control of the individual and society, using terror and ideological faith.
  - **2.** In 1923, the term was used by a journalist critical of the Fascists, but they liked it and began to use it themselves.
  - **3.** The controversial German-Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt (1906–1975) best articulated a theoretical model of totalitarian regimes and how they function.
  - **4.** Her 1951 study, *The Origins of Totalitarianism,* argued that even ideologically opposed regimes like Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union had structural similarities and shared internal dynamics.
  - **5.** Similarities across regimes included the cult of the leader, dynamic claims of ideological infallibility that animated the regimes to constant motion aimed at global domination, use of violence to fulfill ideological prophecies, concentration camps as microcosms of perfected rule, hierarchies of believers and elites, secret police, atomized masses, and monumental art and propaganda.
  - **6.** The theoretical model of totalitarianism remains controversial. After the 1960s, some considered it an artifact of Cold War rhetoric, unsuited to grasp the ambiguities of everyday life under dictatorship, but after the 1990s, the term enjoyed a revival as it was endorsed by Eastern European thinkers as a reflection of their experience.
  - **7.** Apart from the argument on the merits of the theoretical model, the emphasis on the total claims and intent to totally mobilize a society does capture an important quality of these regimes and indicates the linkage to the earlier total war.

II. Mussolini's Fascist Italy

- **A.** War veteran Benito Mussolini, following the ideal of "trenchocracy," organized a new political movement, Fascism, that drew upon the perceived lessons of World War I and sought to fuse revolution with nationalism.
  - **1.** Italy was in a volatile state after the disappointments of the peace settlement, and the onset of strikes, rural conflict, and weak governments.
  - **2.** In March 1919 in Milan, Mussolini organized groups called *Fasci di Combattimento* (Combat Squads).
  - **3.** In Italian, *Fascio* means a league and is also the name of an ancient Roman symbol of the state unity, an axe surrounded by a bundle of sticks.

4. Fascism advocated action, a powerful leader, a strong and warlike state, corporatism, imperialism, and war as hygiene.
5. Black-shirted Fascist squads, often incorporating former *Arditi* storm troopers, brutalized and murdered opponents in the streets.

B. Claiming that he was forestalling a communist takeover, Mussolini led his squads on a "March on Rome" in October 1922 and took power, although this coup had actually been arranged by negotiation behind the scenes.

C. In power, Mussolini solidified his dictatorship, readied Italy for wars of conquest, and was admired and emulated by many would-be dictators in Europe and elsewhere.

III. Hitler's Nazi Germany

A. Among Mussolini's admirers was another veteran of the war, Adolf Hitler.

B. The Nazi Party was originally an obscure political party organized to reach out to the working classes.
1. In January 1919, the German Worker's Party had been founded in Munich by nationalists who had also been involved in the wartime Fatherland Party.
2. Hitler visited a meeting in September 1919 and became a member.
3. Hitler's talents for oratory, and his presentation of himself as an "unknown soldier" of the Great War, propelled him into the leadership, and he reshaped the party and renamed it the National Socialist German Workers' Party.
4. In imitation of Mussolini, the party organized squads of brown-uniformed thugs called *Sturmabteilung,* or S.A., after the storm troopers of World War I.
5. The movement gained attention when it attracted famed figures of the First World War, like General Ludendorff and the fighter ace Hermann Göring.
6. After the Beer Hall Putsch failed to foment revolution in 1923, Hitler decided on a "legal route to power."
7. Nazi propaganda promised a revival of the inner truce of World War I in the form of the *Volksgemeinschaft* (people's community), denounced the Versailles Treaty, endorsed the "Stab in the Back" legend, and blamed Jews for Germany's woes.
8. The impact of World War I on the Nazis could be vividly seen in their hierarchical structure of ranks, military language, rituals, uniforms, and glorification of war.

C. The Great Depression won support for the Nazis' promises of fundamental change and, in January 1933, Hitler came to power in Germany.
1. Hitler prepared for war, partly desiring a replay of the Great War, but this time to end in a "final victory" for Germany—the aims, however, now included a racial empire in Eastern Europe.
2. Germany itself was to be violently cleansed to prevent a repetition of the alleged "Stab in the Back." Euthanasia was among the policies for this purification.
3. The Nazi elite was proud of its ethos of toughness, unsentimental efficiency, and coldness.
4. Paradoxically, Hitler used his own war service to reassure international opinion of his attentions by claiming he wanted peace, but within Germany, the cult-like celebrations of Langemarck emphasized spiritual preparation for the Second World War.

IV. Stalin's Soviet Union

A. By 1927, Josef Stalin had established himself as the heir to Lenin after the Bolshevik leader's death in 1924.

B. From the late 1920s to the 1930s, society was "Stalinized" through the purges of the Great Terror, violent collectivization, and forced industrialization of the country. The process cost millions of lives.

C. In his campaigns, Stalin was able to draw on cadres of supporters who shared an ethos of realism and self-conscious toughness in pursuit of ideological goals.
1. This ethos, historians argue, had shaped a younger Bolshevik generation during the brutal years of the Russian Civil War.

2. It was reflected in the militarized language of Stalinist propaganda, which spoke of "campaigns," "enemies," and "fronts."

D. In Stalin's ideological perspective, a global war similar to that of World War I was on the horizon, as an inevitable crisis in declining capitalism.

1. His goal was to stand aside from the coming war, as Lenin had urged at Brest-Litovsk in 1918, in order to inherit the world in the aftermath.
2. This calculation led Stalin to ally with Hitler in the Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 1939, and to expect to be able to avoid the coming clash.
3. The alliance turned out to be a dangerous miscalculation, as Hitler later attacked his former ally in 1941.

V. The Second World War

A. When the Second World War broke out in September 1939, its origins were linked to the experience of the First World War.

B. In its violence and scope, it would exceed the Great War.

Essential Reading:

Peter Fritzsche, *Germans into Nazis*.

Denis Mack Smith, *Mussolini: A Biography*.

Supplementary Reading:

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

Sheila Fitzpatrick, "The Civil War as a Formative Experience," in Abbott Gleason, Peter Kenez, and Richard Stites, eds., *Bolshevik Culture: Experiment and Order in the Russian Revolution*, pp. 57–76.

Questions to Consider:

1. How might these dictatorships have been resisted most effectively earlier, before the unleashing of the Second World War?
2. How could memories of the experience of World War I have been more effectively organized to work for peace?

Lecture Thirty-Six
Legacies of the Great War

Scope: This concluding lecture confronts the largest and most difficult question of all: What were the true meaning, legacy, and significance of the Great War? In this lecture, we examine the structural impact (economic, social, political) as well as the individual human impact of this disaster. One conclusion powerfully presents itself: inaugurating a cycle of worldwide violence for the rest of the 20th century, the First World War represented a true watershed in the devaluation of human life, the downgrading of individuality in favor of collective power in the hands of the state, a surge in our terrible knowledge of what humans are capable of, and a keener sense of the tragic fragility of human progress, as an entire civilization turned against itself.

Outline

I. Structural Impact

- **A.** Economics changed considerably worldwide.
  - **1.** In the global economy, Europe had lost its earlier centrality, losing markets and taking on debt.
  - **2.** New York became the financial capital of the world, displacing London.
  - **3.** Many non-European economies boomed during the war.
- **B.** In social terms, the demographic impact of the war was huge.
  - **1.** Some 9 to 10 million people were killed and twice that number were wounded, many maimed for life.
  - **2.** It is estimated that the war left 3 million widows and 10 million orphans.
  - **3.** Anxieties about postwar demographic imbalances between the sexes or the notion that the very best individuals had been killed in the war haunted societies.
  - **4.** The conception of women's roles was drastically altered.
- **C.** Politics had been transformed by the experience of the war as well.
  - **1.** The power of the state, what it was expected to do or seen as able to do, increased profoundly.
  - **2.** Doctrines of classical liberalism and the restraint of the state were badly damaged.
  - **3.** The militarization of politics in style, language, and ideology resulted from the war.
- **D.** The international balance of power was unsettled by the war and its outcome.
  - **1.** In terms of geopolitics, the war had not resolved what contemporaries called "The German Problem."
  - **2.** British historian A. J. P. Taylor argued that Germany, in fact, was stronger after the war: Before the war, it had been one of five European Great Powers (Germany, France, Great Britain, Austria-Hungary, and Russia). After the war, it was the strongest of the three remaining European Great Powers (Germany, France, and Great Britain) and likely to economically dominate the continent upon recovery.
  - **3.** France, which faced the problem of confronting an eventually revived Germany, was dispirited by the enormity of the sacrifice it had offered up in World War I.
  - **4.** An unstable German state would again produce crisis.
  - **5.** In general, empires were increasingly called into question around the globe.
  - **6.** Illustrating the changes in imperial mentalities, Australian patriots came to consider the Gallipoli landing the founding moment of independent Australian national identity.
  - **7.** At the same time, the Soviet Union pursued its revolutionary agenda.

II. Human Impact

- **A.** The war had battered earlier common notions of progress and liberal ideas.
- **B.** The growth of the state and its massive potential for coercive power made a mockery of the notion of the private sphere.

C. Contemporaries spoke of their great disillusionment, questioning all "great ideals," faiths, and certainties, and resorting to irony to hide their despair.

D. Historians ask whether a process of "brutalization" had taken place both on individual and collective levels as a result of the enormous violence of the war.

1. This question is tremendously difficult to get at, as one cannot quantify or find conclusive evidence, only suggestive instances.

2. Contemporaries spoke of a hardening of the spirit, of becoming desensitized to the scenes of war, and of perceiving the inhumane increasingly as normal.

3. How human life was regarded and valued changed as a result of the war.

4. Neglect in German asylums during the war had resulted in the deaths of some 70,000 inmates.

5. In Germany, long before the Nazis came to power, euthanasia was being discussed, in part to ration scarce resources.

6. In 1920, a book entitled *Permission for the Destruction of Life Unworthy of Living,* by the lawyer Karl Binding and the psychiatrist Alfred Hoche (who had lost his son at Langemarck), advocated killing the "unfit," reflecting on the experiences of World War I.

III. Ideology

A. In ideological terms, long before the Cold War of later decades of the 20th century, the emerging superpowers of the United States and the Soviet Union represented models for modernity.

B. A contemporary observed that people of his time needed to choose between Wilson and Lenin.

IV. Toward World War II

A. Despite the manifest horrors of the First World War, Europe hurtled toward the Second World War a mere 21 years later but without the naïveté of the 1914 August Madness.

B. The trends of the first total war would now be intensified, with more destructive weaponry, even less inhibited targeting of civilians, and even more total mobilization of energies.

C. Historian Omer Bartov advances a pessimistic but haunting argument: Once invented, industrial war and industrial killing inevitably are repeated and refined. In a dialectic process, genocide represents a perfected form of industrial killing, so that the trenches of World War I and the death camps of World War II are linked by an infernal logic.

D. The lives of many actors of the Second World War had been decisively shaped by the First World War, and their decisions were affected by it.

1. The experience at Verdun of future French defense minister André Maginot helped inspire him to create the massive fortifications to which his name would be given, the ill-fated Maginot Line.

2. Winston Churchill's urgings to aim for the "soft underbelly" of Nazi Europe revived the impulse that had led to the 1915 failure at Gallipoli.

3. The French leader Charles de Gaulle, also a veteran of Verdun, had learned the moral power of resistance and willed greatness against material odds.

4. Though it is not possible to plumb the psychology of Hitler to understand fully how his experience of World War I shaped him, it is important that he recalled it as a time of greatness.

5. Hitler's decision not to use poison gas on the battlefield in World War II was likely borne of his experiences in World War I—not out of humanitarian motives but rather out of fear of Allied retaliation with superior weaponry.

V. Implications for Our Times

A. Beyond its formative impact on World War II, the implications of the Great War continue to reverberate for us today.

B. The ideological dimension of the Great War continues to work itself out in world history.

1. The Cold War, which endured into our own times, actually began in 1917, and we live today with the consequences of that epochal struggle.

2. The claims of nationalism, demands for self-determination, and ethnic aspirations that came to the fore in World War I are present today as well, worldwide.
3. Regional strife in the Middle East, the Balkans, and in former colonial areas is with us still, part of the legacy of fractured empires.
4. Attempts at European unification today are often propelled by the determination to transcend the power politics and nationalism that helped ignite the world wars.

C. The power of the state, which experienced such a dramatic expansion in World War I, retains its expansive role.

D. Total war, once a novelty but now practiced and perfected, is an ever-present apocalyptic dimension to modern life: somehow both unimaginable and yet self-evident.

VI. Lessons

A. Many thinkers have spoken of the world wars as a civil war of Western civilization.

B. The spectacle of a civilization making war on itself paradoxically offers the strange and terrible scene of tremendous resources of creativity, determination, sacrifice, and solidarity being offered up for destruction.

C. One is left with the wish that these inner resources were used to better, more peaceful purpose.

Essential Reading:
Modris Eksteins. *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*.

Supplementary Reading:
Omer Bartov, *Mirrors of Destruction: War, Genocide, and Modern Identity*.

Questions to Consider:
1. Is it justified to consider the two world wars as one modern Thirty Years' War in Europe? What is gained or lost by such a concept?
2. Is the notion of a "European Civil War" useful in thinking about World War I?

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Internet Resources:

The British Imperial War Museum maintains a website with links to collections of photographs and sources: http://www.iwm.org.uk.

Fordham University maintains a fascinating collection of documents and sources on World War I: http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook38.html.

The Western Front Association, founded in 1980 in Britain and with branches in the United States, memorializes the experience of the First World War in Flanders and France: http://www.westernfront.co.uk.