

Michael J. Lyons and David J. Ulbrich



World War II

A Global History

SIXTH EDITION



World War II

Fully revised and restructured, the sixth edition of *World War II: A Global History* offers students a concise and yet thorough textbook that examines history's bloodiest conflict. The chapters alternate between chronological chapters on Europe and Asia-Pacific and thematic chapters on innovations, home fronts, brutal regimes, and logistics. This textbook includes the following features:

- A lively narrative of facts, events, people, and ideas that incorporates thoughtful analysis
- New material and restructured content on global factors that affected the causes, conduct, and consequences of World War II
- Balanced pace that does not bog readers down in too many details yet gives them sufficient depth and breadth for context
- Chapters, sections, and sidebars arranged in ways that can complement lectures and assignments
- Fifty new photographs that illustrate the human condition and weaponry during World War II.

Global in focus, by blending both geographic and thematic chapters to ensure readers gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the war worldwide, this is the perfect volume for all students of the biggest global conflict of the twentieth century.

Michael J. Lyons is Emeritus Professor of History at North Dakota State University, U.S.A. He is author of the previous editions of *World War II: A Short History* and of *World War I: A Short History*.

David J. Ulbrich directs the online M.A. in Military History Program at Norwich University, U.S.A. He is co-author of *Race and Gender in Modern Western Warfare* and of the second edition of *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*.

“Longstanding as a widely used standard as a main course text for the study of the Second World War, this revised edition brings a classic up to date with authority. Important discussions on such central themes as the diplomacy of war, intelligence, strategic bombing, and the Pacific War help this latest edition do just what a survey is supposed to do: provide students with a sure-footed critical introduction to the breadth, depth and context of the pivotal conflict of the twentieth century.”

Brian P. Farrell, Professor of Military History at the National University of Singapore and author of *The Basis and Making of British Grand Strategy 1940–1943: Was There a Plan?* and *The Defence and Fall of Singapore 1940–1942*

“This sixth edition updated by David Ulbrich promises to bring to undergraduates a more comprehensive account of the Second World War, its origins, and its impact in a more concise length and format. Moreover, Ulbrich has balanced individual agency with the larger forces of history and integrated aspects of the New Military History and Cultural Studies such as life on home fronts. Upper division undergraduates and their professors will also benefit from the extensive supplemental readings lists, as well as the visual aids throughout the work.”

Hal M. Friedman, Associate Chair and Professor of Modern History, Henry Ford College, and author of *Creating an American Lake: United States Imperialism and Strategic Security in the Pacific Basin, 1945–1947*

“In *World War II: A Global History*, David Ulbrich expertly and concisely tells the story of World War II in a way that brings the latest historical research and analysis into our understanding of the twentieth century’s deadliest conflict. This revised edition is a rare example of a textbook that not only captures the global context of the conflict, but also presents a comprehensive timeline of the events that led the world into the cauldron of war.”

Colin M. Colbourn, Ph.D., Lead Historian, Project Recover, and author of *The Marines*

World War II

A Global History

Michael J. Lyons and David J. Ulbrich

Sixth edition

Sixth edition published 2021
by Routledge
52 Vanderbilt Avenue, New York, NY 10017

and by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon, OX14 4RN

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 2021 Taylor & Francis

The right of Michael J. Lyons and David J. Ulbrich to be identified as authors of this work has been asserted by them in accordance with sections 77 and 78 of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

First edition published by Pearson Education, Inc. 1989
Fifth edition published by Pearson Education, Inc. 2010
Fifth edition reprinted by Routledge, 2016

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Lyons, Michael J., 1930– author. | Ulbrich, David J., author.

Title: World War II : a global history / Michael J. Lyons and David J. Ulbrich.

Description: Sixth edition | New York, NY : Routledge, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020057736 (print) | LCCN 2020057737 (ebook) |

ISBN 9780367150952 (hardback) | ISBN 9780367150976 (paperback) |

ISBN 9780429054990 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: World War, 1939–1945—Textbooks.

Classification: LCC D743 .L96 2021 (print) | LCC D743 (ebook) | DDC 940.53—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020057736>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020057737>

ISBN: 978-0-367-15095-2 (hbk)

ISBN: 978-0-367-15097-6 (pbk)

ISBN: 978-0-429-05499-0 (ebk)

Typeset in Bembo
by codeMantra

**In memory of
Dennis E. Showalter (1942–2019) and
Bruce C. Vandervort (1940–2020).
Respected scholars, mentors, and friends.**



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Contents

<i>List of Figures</i>	ix
<i>List of Maps</i>	xiii
<i>List of Tables</i>	xv
<i>Preface to the Sixth Edition</i>	xvii
1 The Great War and the Treaty of Versailles, 1914–1920	1
2 Restoring Normalcies and Rising Threats, 1920–1929	25
3 The Great Depression, the Asian War, and Nazi Germany, 1929–1939	45
4 Innovation and Stagnation of Technologies, 1919–1941	66
5 The Start of the European War, 1939–1940	78
6 Fighting on the Periphery in Europe, 1939–1941	104
7 Brutal New Orders: Germany in Europe and Japan in Asia	133
8 America’s Path to War and Japan’s Tide of Victories, 1939–1942	150
9 Turning the Tide in Asia and the Pacific, 1942–1944	181
10 Turning the Tide in Europe, 1942–1944	209
11 Contesting Logistics in the Air and at Sea	246
12 Total Wars on the Home Fronts	273
13 Winning on Four Fronts in Europe, 1944–1945	294

14	Winning on Four Fronts in Asia and the Pacific, 1944–1945	329
15	From Hot War to Cold War	361
	<i>Appendix A: The Typical Army Rank, Commands, and Infantry Units in 1943–1944</i>	375
	<i>Appendix B: Officer Ranks in the United States Military</i>	377
	<i>Index</i>	379

Figures

1.1	German reservists traveling to the Western Front, August 1914	6
1.2	Tear gas victims from the British 55th Infantry Division during Battle of Estaires in April 1918	10
1.3	“Big Four” world leaders at Paris Peace Conference in 1919	16
2.1	A war invalid and veteran begging in Germany in 1923	27
2.2	Bodies of Chinese communists lie on a street in Guangzhou, China, ca. 1927–1928	33
2.3	Vladimir Lenin (left) and Joseph Stalin (right) in 1922	38
3.1	A grinning Japanese soldier holding a severed head and standing over bodies of murdered Chinese in Nanking, 1937	48
3.2	Adolf Hitler in dramatic oratorical poses	50
3.3	Hunger marches in London	60
4.1	Boeing Airplane Co. unveiled its Model 299, which was eventually designated the Boeing B-17 “Flying Fortress” in the summer of 1935	70
4.2	Japanese Navy battleship <i>Yamashiro</i> (foreground) and most likely aircraft carrier <i>Kaga</i> (background) in Kobe Bay, Japan, prior to a fleet review, circa October 1930	72
4.3	German tanks during a field exercise in 1935	75
5.1	Polish victim of German <i>Luftwaffe</i> action, 1939	82
5.2	German tanks in a victory parade at the Place Clemenceau in Paris, France, in 1940	94
5.3	World War II Blitz Bombing—Londoners camp out for the night at the Tube underground station	102
6.1	A Finnish Maxim M/32–33 machine gun nest 100 meters from Soviet forces during the Winter War, located just north of Lemetti in February 1940	105
6.2	German <i>Luftwaffe</i> and German <i>Afrika Korps</i> fuel supply, circa 1941	115
6.3	First days of the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941	124
7.1	<i>Der Ewige Jude</i> (“The Eternal Jew”)—Nazi propaganda poster	135
7.2	Jewish women and children at Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp in June 1944	138
7.3	Comfort women were women and girls forced into a prostitution corps created by the Empire of Japan during World War II	146
7.4	Japanese working in a laboratory under Unit 731	147
8.1	Franklin Roosevelt signing the Burke-Wadsworth Conscription Act on September 16, 1940	153

8.2	Meeting about the Atlantic Charter aboard USS <i>Augusta</i> on August 9, 1941	155
8.3	British soldiers surrendering to the Japanese Army in Singapore in February 1942	176
9.1	The day after the Battle of Midway, the burning Japanese aircraft carrier <i>Hiryu</i> , photographed shortly after sunrise	188
9.2	Australian soldiers advancing through the mud on New Guinea in September 1942	198
9.3	American marine with a hole in his helmet poses with his M1 Garand on Tarawa in November 1943	205
10.1	Soviet T-34 tank engaging in the battle of Kursk, July 1943	219
10.2	German soldier surrendering to a British soldier at El Alamein in the turning point in the fighting in North Africa	226
10.3	Polish soldiers inside the ruined Monte Cassino Monastery, May 18, 1944	243
11.1	Allied air attack on the cathedral city of Rouen, France, on July 9, 1944, destroyed much of the city, including the major bridges	253
11.2	Incendiary bombs are dropped over the city of Kobe, Japan, from American B-29 Superfortresses in June 1945	256
11.3	American sailors using depth charges being used to sink the German submarine <i>U-175</i> in April 1943	267
11.4	The Japanese merchant ship, <i>Chiyo Maru</i> , sinking after an attack by the submarine USS <i>Tambor</i> in the China Sea, circa 1944	270
12.1	Members of the Nazi youth organization <i>Bund Deutscher Mädel</i> (Band of German Maidens) working in agriculture in September 1939	275
12.2	A young French woman who fraternized with the Germans is shaved and shamed in public, c. August 1944	278
12.3	Her Royal Highness Princess Elizabeth in the Auxiliary Territorial Service standing in front of an ambulance in April 1945	284
12.4	Photograph during wartime India of young female workers in a booming Bombay textile mill, circa 1943	287
12.5	An African-American private in the USAAF checks ammunition belts for the 50-caliber machine guns of a P-51 Mustang in 15th U.S. Air Force in Italy, circa 1944	291
13.1	D-Day beach traffic as photographed from an American bomber on June 6, 1944	300
13.2	Soviet IS-2 tanks near the Brandenburg Gate after the fall of Berlin in May 1945	325
14.1	Members of 72nd Shinbu Squadron	338
14.2	Burmese and Chinese laborers using hand tools to reopen the Burma Road in southwest China in 1944	343
14.3	The remains of Japanese who died, equipment, and caved-in bunkers on “Scraggy Hill” which was captured by 10th Gurkha rifles in fierce fighting in the Shenam area during the Battle of Imphal in mid-1944	344
14.4	Chinese soldiers fighting the Japanese in Hunan Province, c. 1944	346
14.5	A Japanese officer training civilian women on how to use spears in anticipation of an expected Allied invasion of Japan’s home islands	355
14.6	Photograph of the charred remains of Japanese civilians after the March firebombing raid in Tokyo in 1945	357

15.1	Japanese representative Major General Umekichi Okada handing over his sword during the surrender ceremony in Hong Kong, August 15, 1945	362
15.2	Nazi defendants under guard in the dock at Nuremberg War Crimes Trial on February 5, 1946	365
15.3	Demobilized Japanese soldiers board trains at Hiroshima on their way to their homes	368



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Maps

1.1	Europe, 1914–1918	8
1.2	Territorial Settlements in Europe, 1919–1926	19
3.1	Europe on the Eve of World War II, August 1939	62
5.1	The German and Soviet Invasion of Poland, September 1939	81
5.2	The German Invasion of the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, and France in May 1940	88
5.3	The German and Italian Invasions of France, May 10–June 24, 1940	92
5.4	European Theater, 1939–1942	95
5.5	Battle of Britain, July–December 1940	99
6.1	Results of the Soviet–Finnish Treaty of Stockholm, March 1940	107
6.2	The German Invasion of Denmark and Norway, April 1940	109
6.3	The Mediterranean Theater of Operations, 1940–1943	111
6.4	The British Offensive against the Italians in North Africa, December 1940–February 1941	113
6.5	The Axis Conquest of Yugoslavia and Greece, April 1941	118
6.6	Germany’s Operation Barbarossa: Invasion of the Soviet Union, June 22–December 6, 1941	126
8.1	Japanese Expansion, 1941–1942	169
8.2	The Japanese Invasion and Operations on Luzon, December 1941–March 1942	172
9.1	Eastern New Guinea, the Bismarck Archipelago, and the Solomons	190
9.2	Assault on Japan, 1942–1945	195
10.1	German offensive operations in Case Blue, May 1942 to August 1942	210
10.2	German 6th Army Trapped and Destroyed at Stalingrad, January 1943	214
10.3	The Battle of Kursk, July–August 1943	218
10.4	Second Battle of El Alamein, October 23–November 4, 1942	223
10.5	The Allied Pincers in North Africa, October 1942–May 1943	231
10.6	The Battle of Tunisia, December 1942–May 1943	233
10.7	The Sicilian and Italian Campaigns, July 1943–December 1944	237
11.1	Battle of the Atlantic, 1940–1943	259
13.1	Allied Invasions of Europe, 1944–1945	297
13.2	Operation Market Garden, September 17–25, 1944	309
13.3	The German Offensive in the Ardennes, December 16–31, 1944	313
13.4	The Last Battles on the European Fronts, February 1–May 7, 1945	318
14.1	Assault on Japan, 1944–1945	331
14.2	The Battle of Leyte Gulf, October 23–26, 1944	336
14.3	The Burma Theater	342
14.4	Battle of Iwo Jima, February–March 1945	348
14.5	Battle of Okinawa, April–June 1945	351



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Table

15.1	The wartime military personnel deaths and combined civilians and military deaths by nation	363
------	--	-----



Taylor & Francis

Taylor & Francis Group

<http://taylorandfrancis.com>

Preface to the Sixth Edition

The story of World War II did not start in 1941, 1939, 1937, or even 1931. Instead, the roots of the conflict can be traced back to the origins of World War I. Why? Because without careful consideration of that first global conflict's causes, conduct, and consequences, it is difficult to understand why or how World War II happened the way it did. These two conflicts were and are intimately linked. Indeed, they could be considered Europe's second Thirty Years' War. The original Thirty Years' War lasted from 1618 to 1648, entangled all of Europe, and inflicted catastrophic losses on belligerent nations. The religious zealotry underpinning the seventeenth-century conflict also approximated the ideological fanaticism so prevalent in both of the twentieth century's global ones.

World War I dragged on for more than four bloody years, resulting in enormous political and economic upheaval in Europe and sending tremors across the globe. After the fighting stopped in 1918, governments and peoples struggled throughout the 1920s and 1930s not only to resolve the problems created by the conflict but also to avoid the problems that caused World War I. Most of these efforts to mitigate the negative effect failed, and indeed some of those failures contributed directly to the outbreak of World War II. Midway through the three-decade block, a Great Depression started in the United States and spread to the other nations. This economic crisis helped pave the way for the rise of authoritarian regimes that expanded their territories and went to war to achieve their ideological goals.

When taken as an interconnected group with causal relationships, World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II can be considered to be the three great catastrophes in the twentieth century. Before 1914, Europe's great powers had attained incredible levels of wealth and controlled most of the world directly or indirectly. After 1945, however, most of these European nations and their empires were reduced to bankrupt shells of their pre-1914 selves. The adage taken from 2 Samuel 1:19 in the Bible—"Oh, how the mighty have fallen"—is appropriately ascribed to the Western European powers and Japan following three decades of conflict. Europe and Asia then became the battlefields for a Cold War between the two ascendant superpowers—the United States and the Soviet Union.

Scope and Content

This sixth edition stands on the shoulders of the five earlier editions of *World War II: A Short History* written by Michael J. Lyons between 1989 and 2010.

The sixth edition is a survey of events, strategies, battles, motivations, nations, and individuals that influenced the causes, conduct, and consequences of World War II. The coverage of the global events and perspectives aims at creating a more holistic history of the conflict. This textbook is structured to be a baseline for instructors, students, or other

readers. They can explore specific topics by assigning supplement readings or researching additional materials. This sixth edition contains 15 chapters that fit nicely into a typical semester time frame, rather than the 25 chapters in the previous edition. A new set of illustrations provide visual representations of the conflict.

Chapters 1–3, 5–6, 8–10, and 13–14 are written in the voice and style of “traditional military history.” These chapters thus present chronological narratives of periods and regions with analyses interwoven throughout those narratives. The content focuses on operational, strategic, and logistical elements of World War II. In addition to maintaining the tone of the earlier editions, the emphasis on higher echelon perspectives represented a conscious choice in this sixth edition. A few military and political leaders made decisions that reverberated across continents and decades. Nevertheless, the tactical level of warfare also receives attention when individuals or events spiraled upward to affect operations, strategy, or logistics, or conversely, when higher echelon factors shaped outcomes of battles. Examples of these connections up and down the levels of warfare are found in sections on the Siege of Stalin-grad, the Battle of Midway, and the campaign to retake Burma.

Chapters 4, 7, and 11–12 make shifts to thematic and comparative studies of World War II. These chapters use “war and society” methodologies to unravel the effects of ideology, race, society, technology, and other factors on the causes, conduct, and consequences of the conflict. Key topics include the evolution of armor and airpower during the interwar years, the strikingly similar policies of Germany in Eastern Europe and Japan on the Asian continent, and the comparative effectiveness of war efforts on home fronts. Filtering the war through analytical lenses of race, gender, ideology, or technology yields a more complete understanding of World War II, if not also highlighting the complexities, confusions, or contradictions surrounding the conflict.

Lastly, tracking debates about historical interpretations would have added thousands of words to this manuscript. Instead, a sampling of the historiography can be extracted from supplemental reading lists that include seminal sources that have stood the test of time, as well as cutting-edge scholarship published since the fifth edition first appeared in print in 2010. Even so, the sixth edition is deeply informed by historiographic trends in past and current scholarship. Whereas some interpretations in this textbook might be labeled “conventional” or even “dated,” other sections challenge conventions, synthesize divergent opinions, or offer new twists on them.

★ ★ ★

A note on names and ranks: names of cities, provinces, and people use the spellings contemporaneous to the World War II era. For example, the twenty-first-century spelling of Mao Zedong is rendered as Mao Tse-tung, Nanjing as Nanking, Romania as Rumania, Kyiv as Kiev, Volgograd as Stalingrad, Yangon as Rangoon, and Sri Lanka as Ceylon.

★ ★ ★

Many people need to be acknowledged for their assistance in the process of researching and writing the sixth edition of *World War II: A Global History*.

In her role as publisher at Routledge, Eve Setch approached me in early 2018 with the opportunity to revise the fifth edition of Michael J. Lyons’ *World War II: A Short History*. We then interacted with Michael as my book proposal turned into a contracted manuscript. Throughout this process, Eve and Michael have been gracious and supportive. They granted me latitude to restructure chapters and revise content. Even so, much of the feel and substance of Michael’s vision in the early editions remains in the sixth edition. Indeed, the

photograph on the cover pays tribute to Michael's interest in the Eastern Front. Nevertheless, the responsibility for errors or oversights in interpretation or fact in this new edition is mine.

Other people on the Routledge team deserve recognition. Zoe Thomson acquired permissions for photographs and performed many other editorial tasks that helped make this volume possible. Emily Boyd ably copyedited the manuscript and suggested improvements during the process. Zoe, Christopher Taylor, and Martin Shoesmith help created maps for this sixth edition.

Countless conversations with mentors, friends, colleagues, and students yielded insights that influenced sections of this textbook. Co-authoring textbooks with Matthew Muehlbauer and Bobby Wintermute gave me invaluable practice writing about big, complicated ideas in accessible prose. Taking courses from Loren Gannon at the University of Dayton, Phyllis Zimmerman and Kevin Smith at Ball State University, Robin Higham at Kansas State University, and Russell Weigley and Gregory Urwin at Temple University left indelible impressions on me regarding military history and World War II. My experiences in teaching variations of the "World War II" class at Ball State University, Kansas State University, Rogers State University, University of Delaware, Temple University, and Ohio University and co-developing and teaching "Amphibious Warfare" and "U.S. Military History" seminars at Norwich University helped me to better conceptualize what a textbook about World War II should look like. Working at the U.S. Army Engineer School showed me the critical wartime roles played by engineers and reminded me that those men and women at the tip of spear endure injuries visible and invisible.

Several people deserve my gratitude for critiquing drafts of the manuscript. Steven Dieter, Johannes Allert, Pierce Reid, Kathleen Wilson, Seth Givens, and Mary Hall offered helpful feedback on style, prose, and content in several chapters. Colin Colbourn, Hal Friedman, and Brian Farrell also read the manuscript in its near-final form.

My home institution of Norwich University should be recognized for encouraging my ongoing scholarly projects. Jim Ehrman, John "Doc" Broom, and Bill Clements gave me latitude in my work schedule so that I could carve time to write while directing the online M.A. in Military History and History Programs. During many meals and visits, Jim and his wife, Shelly, also chatted with me about the ebbs and flows of the writing process. In addition, Sandra Affenito, Karen Hinkle, Lea Williams, and Cristy Boarman arranged for funding for research leave and conference travel.

My deep appreciation goes to my brother Tom and sister-in-law Pat for always being there with good advice and enjoyable holidays.

Finally, I must also mention my father, Colonel Richard W. Ulbrich, USAF (Ret). Before he passed in 2008, he instilled in me a love for history and an appreciation for good storytelling. Many times in my childhood, he gave me tours of the U.S. Air Force Museum in Dayton, Ohio. He told me about the aircraft, and he related his experiences serving as a lead bombardier in the 376th Heavy Bombardment Group during World War II.

David J. Ulbrich
Montpelier, Vermont

Further Reading

Aterrano, Marco Maria, and Karine Varley, eds. *A Fascist Decade of War: 1935–1945 in International Perspective*. London: Routledge, 2020.

Black, Jeremy. *The World at War, 1914–1945*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019.

Brecher, W. Puck, and Michael W. Myers, eds. *Defamiliarizing Japan's Asia-Pacific War*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2019.

- Churchill, Winston. *History of the Second World War*. 6 vols. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1948–1954.
- Davies, Norman. *Europe at War 1939–1945: No Simple Victory*. New York: Macmillan, 2006.
- Farrell, Brian P., ed. *Leadership and Responsibility in the Second World War*. Ottawa, Canada: Carleton University Press, 2004.
- Ienaga, Saburō. *The Pacific War, 1931–1945: A Critical Perspective on Japan's Role in World War II*. Trans. by Frank Baldwin. 1968. Reprint, New York: Pantheon Books, 1978.
- Keegan, John. *The Second World War*. New York: Viking, 1989.
- Liddell Hart, B.H. *History of the Second World War*. New York: Putnam, 1971.
- Mawdsley, Evan, et al., eds. *The Cambridge History of the Second World War*. 3 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Miller, Edward S. *War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897–1945*. Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1991.
- Muehlbauer, Matthew S., and David J. Ulbrich, eds. *The Routledge History of Global War and Society*. London: Routledge, 2018.
- Muehlbauer, Matthew S., and David J. Ulbrich. *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century*, 2nd ed. London: Routledge, 2018.
- Murray, Chris. *Unknown Conflicts of the Second World War: Forgotten Fronts*. London: Routledge, 2019.
- Murray, Williamson, and Allan R. Millett. *A War to Be Won: Fighting in the Second World War*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- Paine, S.C.M. *The Wars for Asia, 1911–1949*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Peattie, Mark, et al., eds. *The Battle for China: Essays on the Military History of the Sino-Japanese War of 1937–1945*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2010.
- Pike, Francis. *Hirohito's War: The Pacific War, 1941–1945*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015.
- Rogers, Clifford, et al., eds. *The West Point History of World War II*. 2 vols. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2015–2016.
- Roy, Kaushik. *Tropical War in the Asia-Pacific Region, 1941–1945*. London: Routledge, 2018.
- Spector, Ronald. *Eagle against the Sun: The American War with Japan*. New York: Vintage, 1985.
- Symonds, Craig L. *World War II at Sea: A Global History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Weinberg, Gerhard L. *A World at Arms: A Global History of World War II*. Cambridge: University Press, 1994.
- Wood, James B. *Japanese Military Strategy in the Pacific War: Was Defeat Inevitable?* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.

Official Histories

The General Staff Archives. “Official Histories of the Second World War.” <http://generalstab.org/academy/library/official-histories-of-the-second-world-war/>

1 The Great War and the Treaty of Versailles, 1914–1920

Many complex and confusing factors created the atmosphere in 1914 that led to World War I. These factors appeared to make hostilities inevitable in retrospect. Inevitable is likely too dogmatic a word. Nevertheless, those factors created a powder keg primed for an explosion, given the right spark. Several long-term causes primed the powder in the decades leading up to 1914 when short-term causes sparked the explosion. Four years of the bloodiest conflict in history failed to resolve those problems that started the conflict. Instead of providing peace and stabilities, the postwar treaties created political, economic, and social environments that erupted once again into another global war in the 1930s.

The Long-Term Causes of World War I

First came the growth of nationalism throughout the nineteenth century that affected not only the Great Powers—Britain, France, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia—but many smaller countries as well. Early twentieth-century nationalism tended to be myopic, selfish, and strident. An us-versus-them dynamic appeared among nationalists who believed their nations to be superior and looked at other countries with contempt and hostility. Racism and ethnocentrism often exacerbated these notions of the self and the other. Politics also played roles in dividing or uniting segments of populations. People gave political allegiance to leaders, parties, or ideologies that offered them the means to achieve, protect, or expand their influence. Such groups could gather around religious denominations, labor organizations, financial statuses, demagogic personalities, or gender, racial, or ethnic backgrounds, among others.

Collectively, however, many citizens in Europe developed great pride in their nations over time. To be sure, not all people were not so extreme in their outlook, but nationalism could ignite their passions and spread like wildfire across political, social, economic, or religious divisions. Meanwhile, Europe's governments willingly approached the brink of war to maintain their power, safeguard their national interests, or avenge supposed insults to their national honor.

This burgeoning nationalism coincided with large-scale industrialization in much of Western and Central Europe and, to a lesser extent, in eastern portions of the continent. The nineteenth century also saw populations gradually shift from rural and agrarian ways of life to urban and industrial ones. The concentrations of people in cities, development of efficient communications, and expansion of the popular press helped disseminate information, including nationalistic propaganda and other symbols. To some, nationalism became a sort of secular substitute for religion.

In some European nations, representative political institutions emerged alongside nationalism and industrialization in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. At times, clashes between those trying to conserve their power and those seeking power erupted in violence. The extension of voting rights in parliamentary systems gave increasing voice

2 *The Great War and the Treaty of Versailles*

and strength to the poorer and more numerous classes of society. The development of mass public education, at least at the primary level, played an essential role in this democratizing trend. Nevertheless, economic and political power still concentrated in a small percentage of the population. The land-owning aristocracy, having dominated Europe for centuries, retained some influence but tended to merge with wealthy capitalists. Together they controlled industrial production and directed financial institutions.

Modern society held the promise of a better life. Yet for the poorer classes, expectations often went unfulfilled. Although the standard of living rose, millions in Europe remained victims of poverty. Britain and France had become democracies in 1900, for example, the political systems of Germany and Austria-Hungary only exhibited vestiges of democracy but lacked substance; for their elected parliaments that possessed only limited power, while the heads of state and their ministers controlled the formation and implementation of policy. Russia was still ruled by monarchs called tsars.

Many people in the working class turned to labor unions and socialism as ways out of their dilemmas. These movements opposed nationalism and appealed instead to international solidarity of the workers. They also preached the need to preserve peace and opposed expenditures on armaments. Some extreme socialists subscribed to a Marxian doctrine of revolution to overthrow the existing political and economic systems. Yet in practice, most socialists remained moderate and willing to pursue peaceful reforms. Radical parties appealed to some people in the lower middle class, especially small businessmen and independent craftsmen who felt threatened by the power concentrated in large corporations. Others found solace in the emotional stimulus of nationalism, which cut across these class bases.

Second, industrialization accelerated economic and commercial competition among the European nations who vied for markets and raw materials. The great power fraternity included the traditional powers of Britain, France, Spain, Russia, and the recently unified Italian and German nations. The United States and Japan joined the ranks following their respective victories in the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1904–1905. All these nations jockeyed for better positions with their peers as they tried to expand their wealth, power, and territories.

Third, as patterns of trade appeared in Europe and between the continent and other parts of the world, economic rivalries motivated a new wave of European imperialism in the nineteenth century. They scrambled to acquire colonies in Africa, Asia, and other parts of the less-developed world. The empires affected the individual European nations and relations among them, not only in terms of wealth extracted from colonial possessions, but also in terms of perceived prestige derived from the size of those possessions. The governments believed they owned their colonies. They extracted raw materials to feed industries in their home countries and created markets for those products by selling them back to the colonial peoples.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Britain maintained the largest set of colonies in territory and population by a large margin. An adage stated that “the sun never set on the British Empire.” This statement proved accurate because the British Empire included Canada, the Indian subcontinent, Australia, Malaya, Hong Kong, and much of southern and eastern Africa. France ranked second with colonial territories with western Africa and southeastern Asia. Although starting imperialism more recently than others, the Italians and Germans picked up colonies in Africa and the Pacific Ocean. The Russians and Austro-Hungarians contended with too many internal problems to look much beyond their borders for colonial trophies. Spain, once a powerful empire, lost most of its remaining colonies in the Caribbean and the Philippines to the United States in 1898. The upstart Japan—the only non-Caucasian or non-European power—began asserting its claim of hegemony on the Asian mainland when it annexed Korea in the years after defeating Russia in 1905. The fierce imperial competition among the great powers added to their rivalries in other areas.

Fourth, all the great powers started programs to build larger, faster, and more powerful navies. Their competition accelerated after 1906 when the British Royal Navy launched *Dreadnought*. Its revolutionary design and its combination of larger guns, more armor, and greater speed made all existing vessels obsolete. Although the term “dreadnought” was gradually replaced by “battleship” in subsequent decades, vessels created in this style became commonplace. The other European nations, as well as the United States and Japan, followed suit and started constructing dreadnought-style vessels of their own. Soon a naval arms race tested each great power’s economic and industrial capacity. Building ever larger warships bequeathed more prestige and influence on those nations. The Royal Navy maintained its place as the most powerful naval force in the world. However, Germany, France, the United States, and even Japan tried to close that gap.

The arms races did not merely measure the great powers in numbers of warships but also gave rise to competition in ground forces. The nations of Europe, in particular, enlarged their standing armies, created elaborate mobilization plans, and stockpiled new weapons and ammunition, so they could be ready for war. Several localized conflicts should have given the European nations some inkling of what modern warfare would look like. The armies fighting in the Franco-Prussian and Russo-Japanese Wars, for example, utilized powerful new weapons that extended the range, rate, and accuracy of gunfire to levels few believed possible a century earlier. Yet, the political and military leaders of the great powers ignored the destructive potential of rifled artillery pieces, machine guns, poisonous gases, and submarines in the years leading to the start of World War I.

While European powers committed their resources to increasing their military and naval strength, they also devised detailed strategic plans that they intended to set them in motion in case of war. New technology facilitated the creation of weapons of increasing sophistication and destructiveness, and industrialization enabled their mass production. As in the case of their alliances, the powers contended that these military and naval forces were necessary to defend them from aggression. Even so, their staff officers drafted strategic plans that were offensive in character. In the event of war, they intended to activate them as quickly as possible. They considered speed to be essential to victory.

The most famous was Germany’s Schlieffen Plan. Named for its creator the chief of the German general staff from 1891 to 1906, the plan directed the German Army to invade Belgium and then France with the objectives of defeating French forces and capturing Paris. Like the Franco-Prussia War in 1870–1871, the Germans expected to overwhelm France in a matter of weeks. Then, using interior lines of transportation, the German forces would swing 180 degrees around to the east to meet and defeat Russian forces before they could fully mobilize. All of the other European power in both alliances developed similar plans for mobilization and prosecution of hostilities.

Fifth, the two alliance systems divided Europe into two opposing armed camps in 1914. The first of these, the Triple Alliance, resulted from the diplomatic efforts of Otto von Bismarck. He served as minister president of Prussia from 1862 to 1890 and then as chancellor of the Second German *Reich* (Empire) from 1871 to 1890, after he unified several dozen Germanic states into a unified Germany. His so-called “*Blut und Eisen*” (Blood and Iron) speech in 1862 exemplified the Prussian brand of nationalism:

Prussia has to coalesce and concentrate its power for the opportune moment, which has already been missed several times; Prussia’s borders according to the Vienna Treaties [of 1814–15] are not favorable for a healthy, vital state; it is not by speeches and majority resolutions that the great questions of the time are decided – that was the big mistake of 1848 and 1849 – but by iron and blood.

The newly unified Germany emerged as the leading military and industrial power on the continent. The Germans likewise wanted to challenge the position of Britain as the most powerful nation in the world. Bismarck made enemies, however, during the unification process, most notably France. His home state of Prussia won the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1871. This conflict eliminated French resistance to German unification and forced France to give up two eastern provinces, Alsace and part of Lorraine, to Germany.

To provide Germany with security against any French attempt to gain revenge, Bismarck worked to acquire allies. This quest led in 1882 to the formation of the Triple Alliance, a defensive treaty that linked Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. In the event of an attack on one of these aligned nations, the treaty obligated the other two nations to go to war in mutual defense. Bismarck also attempted to maintain a diplomatic relationship with Russia by negotiating a separate treaty with the tsar's government. But after Bismarck was forced into retirement by the newly crowned German emperor Wilhelm II in 1890, his successors allowed the agreement with Russia to lapse, fearing that it conflicted with Germany's other commitments.

The Triple Alliance, in turn, provided France with an impetus to pursue friendlier relations with the Russians. French efforts culminated in 1894 in a defensive alliance that helped satisfy Russia's need for French capital to finance its industrialization program. Britain eventually made separate treaties with France in 1904 and Russia in 1907. Each of these agreements merely settled colonial disagreement, but in subsequent years, Britain drew closer to both countries. This three-cornered relationship became known as the Triple Entente and served as a counterweight to the Triple Alliance.

The British gradually strengthened ties with France because of their shared fear of the ascendant German power. The decision of Germany's Kaiser Wilhelm II and Admiral Alfred Tirpitz to increase the size of the German Navy in 1898 contributed significantly to the British worries. As an island nation dependent on massive imports of food and raw materials, it viewed any threat to its naval supremacy as a danger to its existence. From their perspectives, Wilhelm and Tirpitz considered a large fleet necessary for Germany to maintain his Great Power status, and therefore questioned Britain's self-appropriated right to dictate naval strength.

The five long-term causes created a system with lots of dangers and no safety measures. If a crisis arose in Europe, demands for swift mobilization could create intolerable pressure on civilian officials to resort to war, rather than to wait for the other side to strike first. Most ominously, no means existed to stopping the processes once they started. No calm, disciplined diplomat like Otto von Bismarck came to the fore to provide a moderating influence during the crisis. Instead, arrogant and incompetent leaders, such as Tsar Nicholas and Kaiser Wilhelm, could not conceive of backing down from the fight. They and the other nations' government leaders also maintained supreme faith in the supposed superiority of their respective militaries and navies. Thus, the march of events toward war and tragedy quickly reached the point of no return.

Short-Term Causes for World War I

During the decade leading up to 1914, the European powers paid special attention to the Balkans in southeastern Europe. The Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires had long competed for political and economic influence in the Balkans. The emergence of nationalism among the various Balkan peoples complicated this rivalry. Neighboring national groups had also lived under the rule of the Ottoman Turks for centuries. But during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Ottoman Empire declined to such an extent that it earned the unenviable reputation as the "sick man of Europe." Several Balkan nationalities took advantage of this weakness and gradually won independence. By 1913, the Turks lost all of their Balkan holdings.

Among the emerging states in the Balkans was Serbia. Its existence posed a unique problem to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. A glaring exception in an age of unified nation-states in Europe, the Austrian and Hungarians jointly ruled an artificially contrived “empire” that consisted of many minority groups, each with its ethnicity, language, culture, historical development, and religion. The two dominant nationalities—the Austrians, who were ethnically German, and the Hungarians—comprised less than half the population. The Austro-Hungarian government viewed nationalism as a dangerous force that could lead to their empire’s disintegration into its component national parts.

A Serbian minority group lived in the Austro-Hungarian territory of Bosnia that bordered Serbia. The nation of Serbia’s government hoped to absorb these kinsmen into a greater Serbia. To complicate matters, Russia treated Serbia as a client state in part because the Russians and Serbs were Slavic peoples. In the early twentieth century, Austria-Hungary became obsessed by what it viewed as “the Serbian menace.” This menace materialized with the creation of a secret Serbian nationalist society that took the name the Black Hand. Other groups such as Young Bosnia shared the same goals.

Members of the Black Hand and Young Bosnia worked to create chaos in Bosnia. They hoped Bosnia would leave the Austro-Hungarian Empire and join a unified Serbian and southern Slavic nation in the Balkans. Their goal meant they challenged the power of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The Black Hand employed terrorist tactics to achieve its nationalist goals. A member of the Black Hand assassinated Austro-Hungarian crowned prince, the Archduke Franz Ferdinand, on June 28, 1914. This incident in the remote Balkans set off a chain reaction across Europe that started World War I a few weeks later.

The Austro-Hungarian government responded to the assassination with outrage; however, it could not decide how it should deal with Serbia because of Russian support for the Serbians. At this critical point, Germany pledged to support whatever action the Austro-Hungarians deemed necessary, even if it meant war with Serbia’s protector, Russia. Armed with this “blank check,” Austria-Hungary issued an ultimatum to Serbia that, if accepted, would have reduced the nation to a virtual satellite state to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although the Serbs agreed to comply with most of the ultimatum’s demands, they balked at certain points such as admitted complacency in the assassination of the Archduke. The Serbs felt these demands would end their independence. Austria-Hungary responded by declaring war on July 28, hoping to deal with Serbia in isolation without interference by Russia.

Despite the German threat, Russia rallied to Serbia’s aid by mobilizing its military reserves, an act preparatory to wartime action. Since the Russians assumed that war with Austria-Hungary would also mean conflict with Germany, they had only one plan that provided for mobilization against both countries. Germany, taking for granted that a conflict with Russia would also embroil it in hostilities with France, issued ultimatums to both nations. Germany demanded that Russia cease mobilization and that France declare neutrality in case of war between Germany and Russia. Neither adversaries agreed, and by August 3, Germany went to war against both powers.

Despite its close relationship with France, Britain hesitated at first but entered the conflict when German forces invaded tiny Belgium. This violated an agreement that the Great Powers made decades earlier in 1839 to guarantee Belgium’s permanent neutrality. Germany justified its aggression on grounds of military necessity: the Schlieffen Plan provided for an invasion of France by way of Belgium. The British responded to this action by declaring war on Germany.

Italy refused to support its partners in the Triple Alliance, portraying Austria-Hungary and Germany as the aggressors. The Italians conversely pointed to the fact that their only obligation required them to take action if Germany or Austria-Hungary was attacked. The

Italians remained interested onlookers until April 1915 when they sided with the Triple Entente, now called the Allies, of Britain, France, and Russia. They did so in return for Allied promises of compensation at Austria-Hungary's expense as well as in the Middle East and Africa. Japan also declared war on Germany but confined its efforts to seizing German colonies in East Asia and the Pacific Ocean. Meanwhile, the Central Powers—Germany and Austria-Hungary formerly of the Triple Alliance—managed to lure Turkey and Bulgaria into the conflict on their side.

Meanwhile, civilians and soldiers alike greeted the news of hostilities with nationalist pride and bloodthirsty enthusiasm. To them, war represented a great adventure. Divisions across class and political lines among monarchists, conservatives, liberals, and socialists dissolved into war euphoria. Millions of people lined the streets to cheer and throw flowers to their brave countrymen in uniform as they marched through Berlin, Vienna, Moscow, and Paris. One young German recruit was so overjoyed to be issued his uniform and rifle that he shouted, “War is like Christmas!”

The start of hostilities in the summer of 1914 may not have been inevitable in the strictest sense, but those five long-term causes amounted to fuses leading to a powder keg that, with the right spark, would explode into war. Events following the assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand plunged the continent and the world into the “Great War” by the end of July 1914. While not inevitable, the start of hostilities did become irreversible.

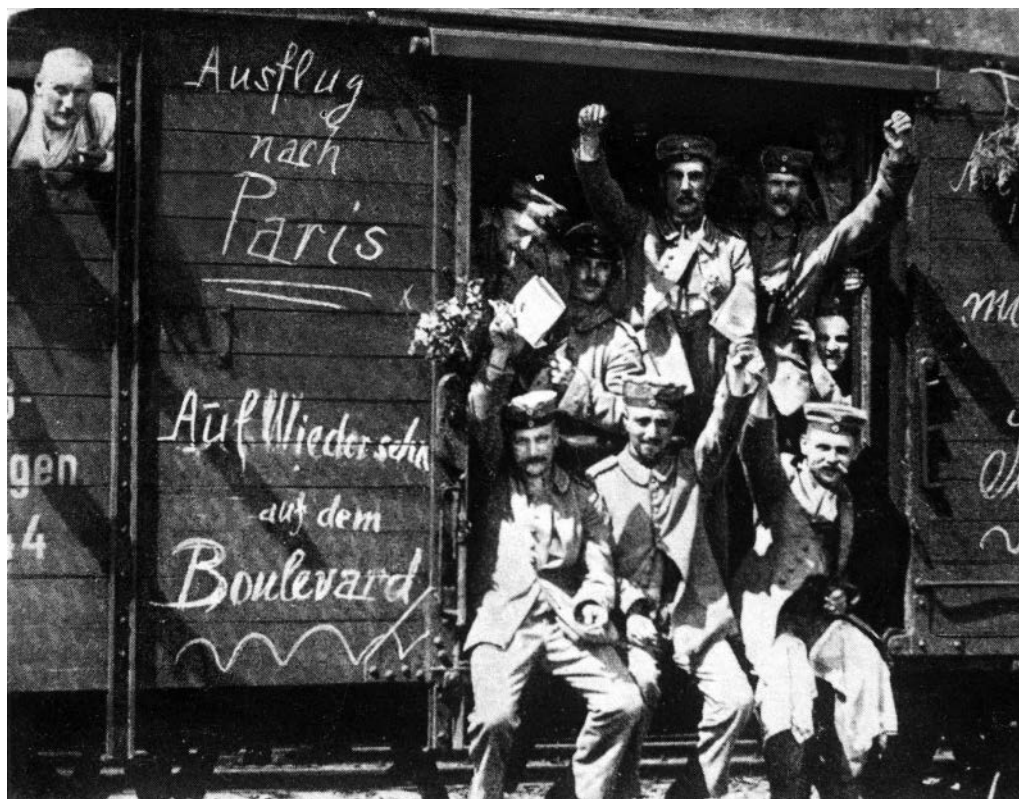


Figure 1.1 German reservists traveling to the Western Front, August 1914. The train bears the inscription: “A trip to Paris – see you again on the boulevard.”

Source: Granger Historical Picture Archive / Alamy Stock Photo

Fighting in a Bloody Stalemate and Resorting to Total War

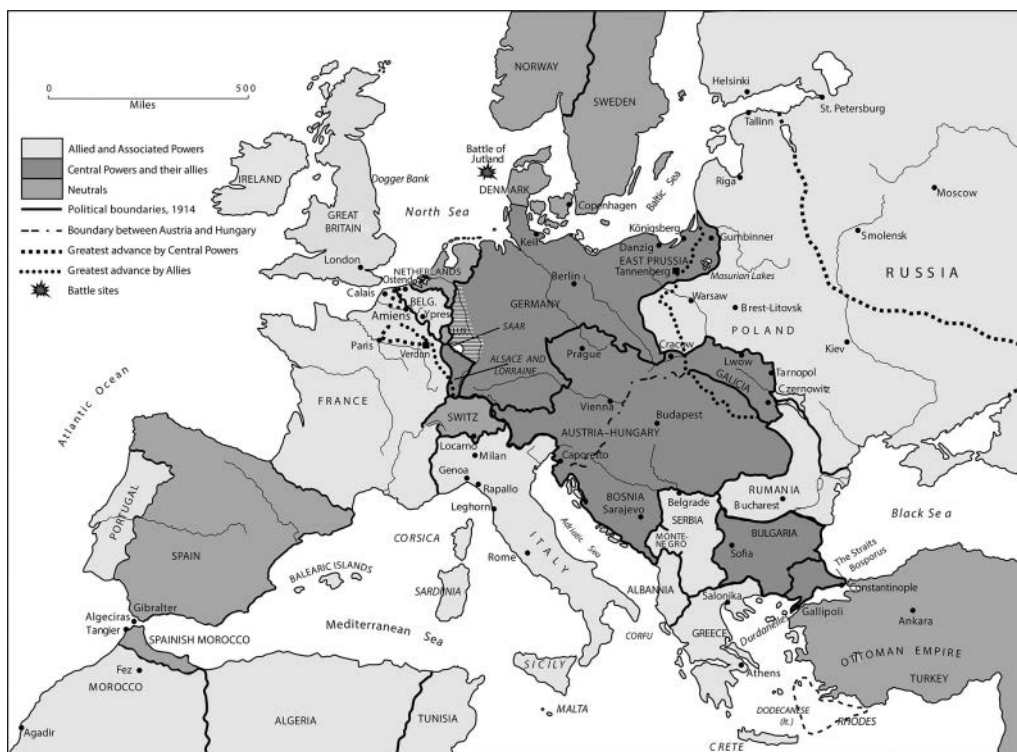
At first, none of the European powers realized the scope of violence that they unleashed on one another. Most leaders underestimated the length of the war, its costs in lives and wealth, and its impact on the foundations of European politics and society. They expected a short conflict, basing their assumption on the fact that, since the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, the European wars lasted only a few weeks or months. They also anticipated that the development and mass production of powerful new weapons in the years leading up to 1914 would give the advantage to the offense rather than the defense. It seemed self-evident that the side possessing the greatest offensive strength would win.

The Central Powers especially counted on a short war because a longer conflict would likely result in defeat. Their Allied adversaries possessed greater manpower reserves and industrial strength. They also used their superior naval strength to impose a blockade that cut off the Central Powers from the foreign trade. The Allies virtually encircled their enemies, with Britain and France on the west, Russia on the east, and Italy on the south. Although German armies operated within the borders of both France and Russia from 1914 to the end of the conflict, the Central Powers remained in effect the besieged nations.

As the most powerful of the Central Powers, Germany took a two-front war for granted in the Schlieffen Plan. They could win such a conflict only if they defeated first France and then wheeled to the east to attack Russia. When the fighting began in August, General Helmuth von Moltke, the new German chief of staff, put the plan into effect. However, it went awry from the start. The Belgians resisted the German invaders longer than expected. Then as the Germans neared Paris by early September, their forces spearheading their advance met the French Army in the desperate struggle of the First Battle of the Marne. The French won this battle because they denied the Germans a quick triumph and condemned them instead to fight a prolonged two-front conflict. The Schlieffen Plan failed in the west.

As the short-war illusion faded, hostilities on the Western Front degenerated into a bloody war of attrition. Neither the Germans nor the French and the British could generate the offensive momentum to achieve decisive war-winning victories in late 1914. The two sides instead settled into defensive postures and constructed opposing systems of defensive trenches, extending across southwestern Belgium and northern France from the English Channel to the Swiss border. Because this “Western Front” had no flanks to turn or envelope, the Allies and Germany spent the next four years repeatedly trying to break the deadlock using direct assaults with millions of men. Unfortunately, the new weapons, developed by Great Powers in the decades before the war, proved devastatingly effective for defense-oriented operations. Vastly improved rifles, automatic machine guns, and long-range artillery pieces offered the defending forces such concentrated firepower that they prevented attacking enemy units from exploiting breakthroughs. These fruitless attacks against enemy trenches resulted in hundreds of thousands of casualties in every offensive launched by either side.

Another deadlock developed on the “Eastern Front,” even though this vast area provided far greater room for maneuver and mobility. After halting Russia’s initial offensive in the great Battle of Tannenberg in August 1914, the Germans started another offensive in 1915 that drove their enemy out of much of their western territory. The Russians suffered appalling casualties, including losing one million soldiers who were captured by the Germans. However, despite this demoralizing setback, the Russian government under Tsar Nicholas refused to make peace. This stubbornness presented the Germans with a strategic dilemma not anticipated in the Schlieffen Plan. Should the Germans continue to advance deeper into the vast expanse of Russia? Or should they limit operations in Russia and concentrate on the Western Front during 1916? After considerable debate, the Germans chose the latter option.



Map 1.1 Europe, 1914–1918

In his role as Germany's new chief of staff, General Erich von Falkenhayn devised a master plan to defeat the Allies during 1916. He envisioned a massive offensive striking the French fortress city of Verdun in the hopes of inflicting such heavy losses that France would be forced to leave the war. This assault, designed to "bleed France white," began in February and continued for 11 months. It did cost the French 375,000 casualties, but the Germans suffered 335,000 as well. Ultimately, France did not make peace. Britain did not stand idly by during 1916. The British started the war with a small number of patriotic volunteers, but then they resorted to conscription early in 1916 to create a mass army. General Sir Douglas Haig, commander of the British Expeditionary Force, opened his offensive along the Somme River on July 1, 1916. However, Haig's hopes for a decisive breakthrough proved as illusory as Falkenhayn's dream of victory at Verdun. The Battle of the Somme continued until November. When it ended, the British had sustained 420,000 casualties, the French 200,000, and the Germans 450,000. This fearful carnage did not make appreciable change in the front lines.

Over the Eastern Front, the Russians also returned to the offensive in the summer of 1916. Under the leadership of General Aleksei Brusilov, they scored impressive early successes against the Austro-Hungarians, but their advance soon stalled. Both sides endured high casualties, with the Russians suffering more with close to half a million dead, wounded, and missing, as well as losing another 400,000 as prisoners of war. Worse still, hundreds of thousands of Russians also deserted. Russia never recovered from these setbacks. Indeed, these events in 1916 put the Russian Army and nation on the road to mutiny and later revolution.

The horrific events of 1916 stunned the belligerent nations. Verdun, although a French victory, left their army demoralized and on the verge of rebellion. Then the newly promoted French commanding general, Robert Nivelle, made plans for yet another offensive against German trenches in early 1917. When orders from Nivelle arrived at front-line units, large-scale mutinies erupted when more than 600,000 French soldiers refused to go over the top and face almost certain death in no man's land beyond. The term mutiny is misleading, however, because those French soldiers did not turn their guns on their commanders, but instead they refused to attack the Germans. No matter the label, the French Army ceased to be a viable offensive force after that. The ensuing punishment of the lead mutineers, including courts martial and selective executions, did nothing to restore the French fighting spirit.

The British shouldered most of the burden during the remainder of the year. The Brusilov offensive had virtually finished both the Russian and Austro-Hungarian armies as factors in the war. Even the proud German Army was never quite the same after Verdun and the Somme. The Germans found themselves stretched too thin in too many places. Whereas the years 1914 to 1916 had been driven by euphoric nationalism, the years 1917 and 1918 devolved into desperate efforts among soldiers to survive the endless, winless conflict.

On the home front, war-weariness increased as the casualties rose higher and higher. Nearly every family in France felt the tragic loss of loved ones. Chairs in dining rooms sat empty or occupied by severely wounded veterans. The term "lost generation" applied to those soldiers killed in World War I. Meanwhile, support for peace swelled among the civilian populations. The winter of 1916–1917 proved to be particularly harsh, adding to the collective angst. Cut off from trade, Germany's civilians languished at subsistence levels while the German military consumed most of the food and other resources. Nations in both alliances toyed with the possibility of a negotiated settlement, but none of them could settle for peace without compensation for the material cost of the conflict, as well as for millions of lives of the killed and wounded. The scales of the stalemate remained balanced despite threats and realities of mutinies and revolutions in 1917.

A new concept of "total war" gradually took shape. The nations focused on streamlining relationships among war and politics, technology and the economy, as they tried to maintain support for both the armed forces on the front lines and the civilian population at home. The militaries introduced fearsome weapons to combat. Among these were poisonous gases released from exploding artillery shells.

The utility of total war varied considerably from country to country. The Western Allies and Germany achieved the most success because they resorted to stronger leaders with complete dedication to victory. In Britain, David Lloyd George, a fiery Welshman, became prime minister in December 1916. The equally combative Georges Clemenceau, who had earned the nick-name "the Tiger," took over as premier of France in 1917. The governments of both nations assumed dictatorial powers and subordinated every industrial, agriculture, economic, and demographic resource to their total war efforts.

In Germany, the military increasingly dominated the civilian government. Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg succeeded Falkenhayn as chief of staff after the failure at Verdun. He and General Erich Ludendorff pressured Chancellor Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg out of office in 1917 when he appeared too receptive to a negotiated peace. Bethmann's successor, Georg Michaelis, proved to be little more than a puppet for Hindenburg and Ludendorff.

All three allocated resources and coordinated production to previously unprecedented levels. The war's insatiable demand for manpower on the battlefield quickly led to a shortage of male workers in munitions plants. Women in growing numbers took their places, especially in France and Britain. The task of large-scale mobilization proved far more difficult for Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Russia. Their less well-developed economies and weaker



Figure 1.2 Tear gas victims from the British 55th Infantry Division during Battle of Estaires in April 1918.
Source: Science History Images / Alamy Stock Photo

governmental structures left them more dependent on aid from their allies. Again, women replaced many male workers in war industries. Russia's isolation from the Western Powers also sharply limited the amount of assistance it could receive.

Armenian Genocide

The modern world's first genocide occurred in the Ottoman Empire in 1915–1916 during World War I. The Turkish leaders in the Ottoman government directed the systematic extermination and deportation programs against two million Armenians in the empire. History has labeled this the Armenian Genocide. The Ottoman government wanted to consolidate Muslim Turkish control over the nation by eliminating the Armenian population. The Ottoman Turks also worried that this Christian minority group might side with an invading enemy force during World War I. The government deported Armenians and sent them to concentration camps. Many died from malnutrition and disease. Tens of thousands of Armenian children were taken from their families and forcibly converted to Islam. The Ottomans also killed Armenians by the thousands in massacres. In all, between 600,000 and 1.5 million perished in a little more than one year. These were not the only such murders committed by the Ottoman government. The Turks also killed Greeks, Assyrians, and Arabs living in their empire. Ongoing abuses lasted for years thereafter when Ottoman military forces invaded Russian-controlled territory and continued their cruel treatment of the Armenians living there.

The French, British, and Russian governments labeled the violence as “a crime against humanity and civilization” in May 1915. Then, as the news spread, other nations condemned Ottoman actions and tried to provide relief for the Armenians. In the United States, the public responded by raising more than \$100 million in aid for refugees and orphans. Yet, despite the international outcries, neither the Ottoman Empire nor the Republic of Turkey that followed the empire’s partition in 1918 felt any recriminations. Indeed, even in the twenty-first century, the Turkish government denies the charges of genocide and dismisses evidence of systematic brutality.

The word “genocide” has its origins in the Armenian mass murders and deportations. The international community needed a term for what the United Nations later defined, in 1948, as “acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.” Other tragedies followed throughout the twentieth century as minority groups, including the Jewish people in Europe, became victims of genocides.

The Territorial Imperative

The European powers had blundered into the conflict so unexpectedly in 1914 that they initially had few, if any, clear war aims. All of them believed they were fighting in defense of their national independence, or at least national interests. None of them considered their respective nations to be the aggressor. Of the major powers, only Italy entered the war with definite aims. Soon after hostilities began, however, other belligerents formulated war aims. With the realization that the struggle was going to be long and bloody, the nations concluded that the war must result in gains that could help justify the terrible slaughter and the strain on their economies.

On the Allied side, France hoped from the start of World War I to regain Alsace and Lorraine. But as time passed, French leaders began to covet Germany’s coal-rich Saar, a small area bordering France in the northeast. They also favored removing German control over the Rhineland, the region west of the Rhine River, and establishing an independent Rhenish state. This would create a buffer between France and Germany. The French also hoped to weaken Germany to such an extent that it would be unable to fight wars in the future. They also intended to absorb German colonies in Africa, as well as Turkish possessions in the Middle East. Britain expected no new territories in Europe but, like France, desired colonial compensations at the expense of Germany and Turkey.

Before the start of the war, Russia expected to oust Turkey from control of the straits. This cherished goal contradicted the strategic interest of Britain and France, both which desired to keep Russian naval power out of the Mediterranean. In 1915, fearing that Russia might make a separate peace, the Western Powers agreed to Russian control over the straits after the war. Italy entered the conflict to obtain territory along the Austrian border and a sizable strip of Austria’s coastline along the Adriatic Sea.

Among the Central Powers, the Austro-Hungarians were confused about what they expected to gain. Hungarian leaders had agreed to war only on the condition that Austria-Hungary would not acquire any Serbian territory. They believed that the absorption of additional Serbs could only create greater internal problems. Early in the conflict, the Austro-Hungarians suffered humiliating defeats at the hands of the Russians and the Serbs. Then, Germany rescued Austria-Hungary with the 1915 offensive against Russia, diverting that nation’s force away from fighting Austria-Hungary. The Germans directed

their soldiers to fight alongside Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria and crush Serbia. However, this supposed salvation ultimately proved fatal to the Austro-Hungarian monarchy because, as the war grew increasingly unpopular with the subject nationalities, their desires for independence also amplified. Austria-Hungary's increasing reliance on Germany transformed the empire into a German satellite. As the war continued, its primary goal became self-preservation, not victory.

Of all the belligerent nations, Germany possessed the most grandiose goals for territorial expansion. The German plans provided for absorption of the iron-rich French Lorraine and the smaller nations of Luxembourg and Belgium. The Germans harbored far greater ambitions in Eastern Europe, such as acquiring provinces on the Baltic Sea, Poland, and Ukraine. The Germans likewise wanted to establish a sphere of influence in the Balkans. They visualized creating a German-dominated European customs union that would make them richer and stronger than ever. Beyond the European continent, Germany intended to take over several French, British, and Belgian colonies in Africa.

The Wildcard: Revolution and Civil War in Russia

As the war dragged on for years, the domestic pressures increased steadily in each of the belligerent nations. Russia was the first to crack under the strain. Although Russians experienced some industrialization before 1914, it could not compete with the Germans and British. The Russian economy proved utterly inadequate to supply the needs of its armed forces and civilian population. Shortages of all kinds occurred early in the conflict and grew more pronounced as the conflict continued. Bad harvests reduced food production and caused starvation among civilians. On the front lines, some Russian infantry units could only provide rifles to one in three soldiers. Their officers told them to kill enemy soldiers and take their rifles. The Russian transportation system broke down under the unprecedented demands of modern warfare. The realities of inadequate armament and supplies caused Russian morale to plummet. To make matters worse, rampant inefficiency, corruption, and unpopularity plagued the government of Tsar Nicholas.

Early in March 1917, a revolt broke out in the city of Petrograd, where civilian demonstrations against the food shortage soon became riots. Workers showed their sympathy by going on strike. The government ordered the city's army garrison to quell the unrest in the streets, but the soldiers refused to obey orders and instead deserted. Revolutionary feelings and actions spread rapidly to other cities, and soon virtually no one would defend the discredited Russian regime. Within a week, Nicholas II bowed to increasing demands for his abdication, ending the 300-year rule of the Romanov dynasty.

The weak Russian parliament next established a provisional government to lead the country until a constituent assembly could draft a new constitution for a permanent political system. This interim government remained reluctant to hold elections for this assembly in the chaotic political atmosphere. Leaders like Alexander Kerensky failed to enact land reforms that could have won support from Russian peasants living in the countryside. The provisional government also refused to seek a negotiated peace that could end hostilities with Germany. This last policy eroded the provisional government's support among the Russian people and thus proved to be its most critical error.

Meanwhile, workers and soldiers increasingly rallied to the Bolsheviks, a violent revolutionary party led by Vladimir I. Lenin and Leon Trotsky. When the chaos began in March 1917, Lenin was in exile in Switzerland. The Germans spirited him back Russia to foment internal strife in April. Lenin believed strongly in a small, tightly organized party composed of professional revolutionaries. He remained faithful to the Marxist doctrine of revolution when others turned to more moderate types of socialism that sought reforms by

working through the established system. However, Lenin departed from Marx's belief that a revolution could only occur in a highly industrialized, capitalist country when conditions were favorable for success. Clearly, Russia's industrialization had not progressed to a point to justify revolution by this standard. Lenin considered it possible to speed up the process, using the party as the vanguard of the revolution and mobilizing the discontented groups in society.

The Bolsheviks quickly seized Petrograd and then Moscow in the fall of 1917. Over the next month, most of the cities of European Russia fell under their control. But once they overthrew the provisional government, the Bolsheviks faced the immense problems of consolidating their power. They likely needed to restore Russia to some semblance of economic well-being after the years of war and revolution. The outbreak of civil war in 1918 created still more chaos.

Lenin promised the Russian people that he would make peace with Germany if the Bolsheviks took power. However, fulfilling this pledge proved difficult when the Germans insisted on exceedingly harsh terms. It was not until March 1918 that the Bolsheviks finally agreed to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. This settlement required Russia to give up most of its Baltic provinces, much of Russian-controlled Poland, and Ukraine. In addition to territorial gains in Eastern Europe, Germany extracted such far-reaching trade concessions that Russia lost commercial autonomy. Nevertheless, Lenin ended hostilities with Germany and gave his revolutionary regime its only chance of legitimacy with the Russian people.

Soon after coming to power, Lenin tried to garner strong popular support for Bolshevik rule by holding elections for the constituent assembly that the provisional government had promised. The elections proved a great disappointment to the Bolsheviks, who gained only 25 percent of the seats in the assembly. Lenin solved the problem by dissolving that body after its first meeting and creating a Bolshevik dictatorship. He and his comrades visualized a temporary dictatorship in keeping with Marxist doctrine. This regime would take over the means of production in the name of society as a whole and provide an equitable redistribution of wealth. It would then create a classless society, where no one would prosper at the expense of others.

Then the outbreak of the Russian Civil War made the survival of his new regime Lenin's only priority, and for a time, it appeared that the anti-Bolshevik (White) forces might prevail. At the low point of the Bolsheviks' fortunes, they controlled only the central portion of European Russia, including the cities of Petrograd and Moscow. Lenin moved the capital from Petrograd to Moscow early in 1918. This desperate situation called for extreme measures. One of these involved the development of an effective military force to fight the White armies. Lenin's brilliant comrade, Leon Trotsky, drove the development of the new Red Army. He utilized the talents of former tsarist officers and noncommissioned officers to train and direct that force. The Bolsheviks also benefited from a lack of unity among the White Russian forces composed of several groups with differing political views. Their military units lacked coordination, and their generals frequently regarded one another as rivals.

Apart from military operations during the civil war, Lenin and the Bolsheviks faced a severe economic dilemma. Fighting in World War I revealed many inadequacies in Russia's industrial and transportation systems. The resulting shortages worsened as the civil war intensified in 1918. Lenin's government needed to provide weapons, equipment, food, and other supplies to the Red Army while also feeding the civilian population as well. To achieve these goals, Lenin resorted to emergency measures known as "war communism" that included forced requisition of grain, livestock, and other commodities from peasants working on farmland taken from landowners during the revolution. Just as significantly, Lenin nationalized Russian industry when his government took control of manufacturing.

Although these actions contributed to victory and the salvation of the regime, they caused confusion and even dissatisfaction among the Russian people. Peasants resented the heavy-handed measures of war communism, and many preferred to burn their crops and slaughter their livestock rather than allow them to fall into Bolshevik hands. In the cities, workers protested the stringent production demands and regimentation imposed on them by the government. Ongoing civil war and civil strife lasted until early 1920 when Lenin and the Bolsheviks defeated the last remnants of the White Russians.

The United States of America: From Neutrality to Victory

Even in 1914, many Americans sympathized with the Triple Entente because they felt closer connections to democratic Britain and France than to monarchies of the Central Powers. Americans reacted in horror at news of the German shooting of Belgian hostages in reprisal for civilian attacks on soldiers, the shelling of the beautiful Gothic cathedral at Reims in France, and the sinking of the British ocean liner *Lusitania* with the loss of over 1,000 lives, including 128 Americans. Allied propaganda proved especially effective at portraying the Germans as barbaric “Huns.” Meanwhile, American loans to Allied powers and sales of American products to them created a significant commercial stake in their victory.

Although those early events and attitudes prepared the United States for war, the primary cause entering the war occurred in February 1917. Germany initiated a policy of unrestricted submarine warfare that resulted in German U-boats sinking several American ships.

This policy represented a calculated risk driving the time and resources. The Germans gambled that they could exploit British dependence on large-scale imports of food and other supplies from the United States before the Americans could mobilize soldiers and send them to Europe to help the British and French. The Germans hoped to starve Britain into submission by sinking large numbers of both Allied and neutral ships in the waters around the British Isles. The gamble failed. Not only did the unrestricted submarines warfare bring the United States into the war, but it also did not have the intended effect on the British.

Despite a large population and great economic resources, America was a negligible military power in early 1917, with only 110,000 men under arms. Before the United States could help in the actual fighting, it had to raise a mass army through conscription, train it, and transport it to France. President Woodrow Wilson did not envision war continuing for long, and in his address to Congress in January 1918 outlined a plan for peace comprised of 14 points. These points outlined the requirements for postwar peace: barrier-free trade among nations, self-determination of nations, unconventional laws of the sea, and the creation of a League of Nations. This new and powerful American force was not ready for action until the summer of 1918. In the months that followed Russia's departure from the war, Germany attempted to defeat the British and French before America became a factor. The Germans unleashed a series of offensives between March and July 1918, but the Allies managed to hold out, and during the last offensive, fresh American divisions began to make a major contribution. After stopping the final German drive, the Allies took over the offensive and applied unrelenting pressure. On August 8, “the black day of the German army,” the whole enemy front began to fall back. German military leaders realized that they had lost the war.

In late October, Italian forces also won a major victory over the Austro-Hungarians in the Battle of Vittorio Veneto. Confronted by these two critical developments, Austria-Hungary's armed forces disintegrated, and the various subject nationalities began to declare their independence. The dual monarchy signed an armistice on November 4. Soon afterward, Charles, the last emperor of the Hapsburg dynasty that ruled Austria since 1276, abdicated.

Germany's position was now hopeless. With its army in full retreat and its allies gone, morale began to crack. Naval mutinies and sporadic civilian revolts broke out. Demand for an end to the war and even to the monarchy grew ever more insistent. Emperor Wilhelm II, realizing the weakness of his position, abdicated and fled into exile in neutral Holland. On November 11, a new republican government accepted an armistice.

The long nightmare was over. But although the Allies had defeated the Central Powers, in a larger sense none of the European belligerents had really won. The war had cost the lives of at least ten million soldiers and had left another 20 million wounded. There were few families that did not mourn the loss of loved ones. An atmosphere of gloom and uncertainty persisted long after the fighting stopped. The war had also seriously disrupted the European economies. Overseas markets were gone, and all the belligerents were deeply in debt. Devastation abounded in many parts of the continent. And although peace had returned, wartime hatreds lingered. So did the questions. How could it have happened? How could the leaders have allowed it to continue for so long? What did it accomplish? Could anything be worth the price? Among the casualties was the old confident Europe, long the focal point of the world. It was gone, perhaps forever.

Although the war had ended, turmoil still afflicted much of Europe. The Austro-Hungarian Empire had vanished from the map. A jumble of small, weak states had taken its place, creating a vacuum of power. In Russia, the Bolsheviks could hardly savor their victory over the provisional government for long because various anti-Bolshevik groups challenged their right to rule, and civil war erupted during the summer of 1918. It continued to rage in the aftermath of World War I. Defeat had reduced Germany to a state of shock, bitterness, and disillusionment. And while Britain, France, and Italy engaged in victory celebrations, mourning for millions of dead, who had paid the price for this triumph, tended to restrain their joy. Now that they were free from the grim reality that haunted them for four long years, Europeans looked to the future with both hope and uncertainty. But hatred of recent enemies persisted.

The Paris Peace Conference and the Treaty of Versailles

Just two months after the armistice, the Allied leaders gathered at the Paris Peace Conference in January 1919 to negotiate a treaty that could reestablish normalcy after years of bloody conflict. Those attending hoped to avert or repudiate the long-term causes that had plunged the world into war in 1914.

This grandiose goal belied the terrible problems of the postwar era and the significant differences among the Europeans. Delegations from 27 nations attended the conference, but leaders from the great powers made all the critical decisions. They started the conference as the "Big Four," including France's Premier Georges Clemenceau, Britain's Prime Minister David Lloyd George, Italy's Premier Vittorio Orlando, and President Woodrow Wilson of the United States. Not long after that, however, an angry Orlando walked out of the conference when the other three leaders refused to grant Italy the territorial compensation along the Adriatic Coast. Italy's performance in the war hardly impressed the other leaders, and Wilson, in particular, opposed giving the Italians territory that contained predominantly Slavic populations. As a result, they agreed to grant Italy only Trentino, Trieste, and Istria. Although Orlando did return later, the Big Three—Wilson, Clemenceau, and Lloyd George—molded what would become the Treaty of Versailles.

Not all the belligerent nations received invitations, however, so the treaty became more of a set of dictated conditions than a balanced settlement. In a decision with consequences that reverberated for the next two decades, the Allies refused to invite either Germany or Russia to attend the conference in Paris. After four years of bloody fighting and catastrophic

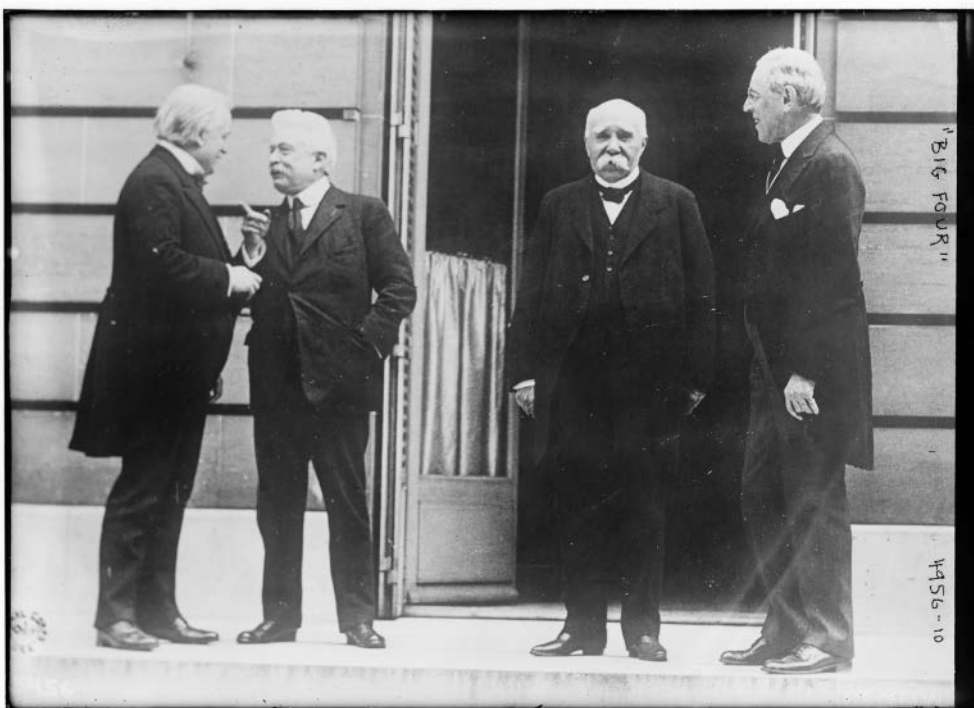


Figure 1.3 “Big Four” world leaders at Paris Peace Conference in 1919. From left to right: Prime Minister David Lloyd George, Premier Vittorio Orlando, Premier Georges Clemenceau, and President Woodrow Wilson.

Source: Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. [LC-B2-4956-10]

casualties, the Europeans, especially the French, had no desire to sit across the table from the despised Germans. From their perspective, the absent Germans could not influence the negotiations regarding their nation’s political, economic, or territorial postwar future. Indeed, they resented the finalized treaty for many reasons, and their bitterness festered until the rise to power of Adolf Hitler and Nazism in the early 1930s.

Resentment over the Bolshevik government’s separate peace with Germany and fear of its ideological goal of world revolution prompted the Allies to bar Russia from participation. The outcome of the Russian Civil War also remained uncertain, and the Allies hoped that the White Russians would win. They intervened in 1918 when British and French military forces landed at Russian ports on the Arctic and Black Seas. They ostensibly wanted to prevent war materiel, earmarked for the provisional government, from falling into the hands of the Germans. The British and French also provided aid to the White Russians. American and European units went ashore at Vladivostok in East Asia to help some Czech prisoners of war escape and join the Allies. Japan also sent troops to Vladivostok to expand its influence in East Asia. These interventions sowed seeds of distrust among the Soviet leaders that persisted through World War II and beyond into the Cold War.

The Treaty of Versailles grew out of a series of compromises between Wilson and Clemenceau and, to a lesser degree, Lloyd George. Heated debates erupted among them over thorny issues of reparations, national sovereignty, wartime culpability, racial equality,

colonial territories, military occupations, and minority group rights. None of the Big Three left the conference satisfied with the treaty's final version.

France's "Tiger" Georges Clemenceau determined to leave Germany a frail shell of its prewar status as a great power. He proposed the harshest terms designed to punish the Germans. Above all else, he wanted to safeguard French security. Clemenceau deprived Germany of territory, reduced the size of the German armed forces, and required hefty reparations for wartime damages. He hoped to bind France, Britain, and the United States in an alliance that would forever protect his country from renewed German aggression.

Britain's David Lloyd George initially advocated harsh terms like Clemenceau, but his position moderated over time. Lloyd George did try to protect his nation's interests, however. He wanted to see a weakened German state but not so weak as to give France uncontested dominance over continental Europe. Lloyd George did not oppose Wilson's self-determination unless it should apply to the British Empire. The prime minister frequently played the part of mediator between the more extreme views of Wilson and Clemenceau. As Lloyd George later quipped, "I think I did as well as might be expected, seated as I was between Jesus Christ and Napoleon Bonaparte."

The United States' Woodrow Wilson desired reconciliation with Germany and the Central Powers, rather than retribution. He wanted Germany to be muzzled yet still a productive member nation in the international community. Thus, he opposed Clemenceau's punitive initiatives. Wilson laid out the American war aims in his "Declaration of War" in April 1917 and his "Fourteen Points" in January 1918. The president believed that the postwar treaty gave him—and the United States—a unique opportunity to lead the world into a new age of peace and democracy. He hoped to build an international system based on liberal capitalism, free trade, and democracy, with a League of Nations dedicated to preserving peace as its cornerstone. He supported the establishment of arms limitations and the guaranteed rights of self-determination and self-government. Many of his goals diverged dramatically from those of the European Allies.

Wilson disapproved of the traditionally cynical attitude of European countries and their system of power politics. Conversely, many of the European Allies saw the Fourteen Points as a starting point for negotiations but not as a complete blueprint for the peace settlement. For its part, Germany's government accepted the armistice in the belief that Wilson could help create a framework for a lenient peace. The German faith in Wilson's ability turned out to be naïve and mistaken. The United States suffered far less during the conflict than did the Europeans. Americans did not seek territorial expansion or other benefits in the postwar era. In retrospect, Wilson enjoyed the luxury of being benevolent and unselfish.

Elements of reality differed from Wilson's idyllic narrative. The United States absorbed markets that the European powers could not support due to their wartime needs. Consequently, the United States achieved a highly favorable balance of trade in the process. America grew rich profiting off the war's insatiable demands. The European Allies also turned to the United States for loans to help them finance their war efforts. The Europeans remained deeply in debt in 1919, whereas the United States emerged from the conflict as the world's foremost creditor nation. Thus, Americans did reap incredible benefits during World War I that remained in the postwar era.

Negotiations at the Paris Peace Conference required Wilson and Clemenceau to yield on some conditions to obtain others they considered essential. Wilson acquiesced to most demands of Clemenceau and Lloyd George, yet he won their approval for his League of Nations. Clemenceau won strict military restrictions on Germany that he considered necessary to safeguard France's security. The British and French also received financial reparations that, in turn, hamstrung Germany's already feeble economy. The give-and-take process among the Big Three played out for the next year until January 1920.

Territory emerged as one key topic during the negotiations. As everyone expected, France regained the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine. Belgium likewise received minor border changes in its favor. In the case of the coal-rich Saar region of Germany, the victorious Allies struck a compromise. Clemenceau wanted to annex the area to France as compensation for the destruction of French coal mines during the war. However, Wilson and Lloyd George withheld their approval. Instead, the three men agreed to place the area under the administration of the newly established League of Nations for 15 years. This arrangement gave the French control of the German coal mines during this period. In a nod to Wilson, the agreement also stipulated that the population, which was solidly German, would have the right to determine the permanent fate of the Saar by plebiscite in 1935.

Another important territorial provision concerned the Rhineland. In keeping with French war aims, Clemenceau favored its separation from Germany and the establishment of an independent Rhenish state. Again, Wilson and Lloyd George refused and another compromise was agreed in which the Rhineland remained part of Germany, but the Allies would maintain soldiers there for 15 years. When this period expired and they withdraw their forces, a 30-mile-wide strip on the Rhine's east bank would remain permanent demilitarized zone thereafter. The Big Three hoped that this solution would provide a buffer shielding France and Belgium from any German invasion in the future. To reconcile Clemenceau to this compromise, Wilson and Lloyd George made a remarkable commitment to safeguarding French security. If Germany attacked France, this "guarantee treaty" bound the United States and Britain to come to France's aid. This concession represented a significant departure from the traditional peacetime policies of both countries.

A more extensive and controversial shift in national territories took place east of Germany. To mollify Polish national aspirations and follow Wilson's Fourteen Points, the Big Three agreed that Germany must surrender a substantial amount of territory to the revived state of Poland. This measure included the province and city of Posen and a strip of land that linked the new Polish nation with the Baltic Sea to the north. Without this "Polish Corridor," Poland would be a landlocked state with its only access to the sea running through German territory. The corridor also divided the bulk of Germany from its province of East Prussia. This territory contained a majority of Poles, although a sizeable German minority lived there as well.

Wilson, Lloyd George, and even Clemenceau found it far less easy to justify the detachment of the large city of Danzig from Germany. As the only major port city in the vicinity of the Polish Corridor, the Poles coveted Danzig's harbor facilities. Another compromise provided a solution of sorts. Danzig and the surrounding area became a free state under League of Nations supervision, but Poland received the right to unrestricted use of the port. No one doubted that this policy would anger the Germans because, for example, Wilson's high-minded principles did not apply to their nation.

The final version of the Treaty of Versailles completely dismantled Germany's overseas empire and the distribution of its colonies to Allied powers as "mandated territories" under League of Nations supervision. To Wilson's mind, those occupying powers should have prepared the mandates' indigenous populations for eventual independence. But in practice, they continued to govern as colonies. Britain and France emerged the principal beneficiaries in Africa, while Japan gained control of the German possessions, including the Marshall, Caroline, and Mariana island chains, in the western Pacific Ocean. The Japanese also pushed hard for its retention of China's Shantung peninsula that it wrested from Germany during World War I.

Beyond making territorial claims on the mainland, the Japanese tried to insert a clause proclaiming racial equality into the Covenant of the League of Nations. This move reflected the Japanese concern over American discrimination against immigrants from Japan.

Although the proposed clause gained a majority of the votes in the committee considering it, Wilson, who served as its chairman, ruled that passage required unanimous support. In doing so, he bowed to British and French opposition to Japan's clause. If approved, Japan's racial equality clause would have discredited colonial claims of Britain and France. Outraged and humiliated by Wilson's rejection, the Japanese insisted on retaining Shantung. They also threatened to leave the conference unless their demand was not granted. In the end, the Japanese won their concession for Shantung, despite violent Chinese protests and inconsistent applications of Wilson's principle of self-determination.

The determined Clemenceau never wavered in his effort to reduce Germany's ability to make war. The other Allies agreed to limit the postwar German Army to a volunteer force of only 100,000 men and to prohibit the existence of reserve forces. They banned the German possession of tanks, artillery, and other offensive weapons. The Big Three dissolved of Germany's general staff and disbanded the military's educational system because they considered these institutions to be breeding grounds for Prussian militarism. The German



Map 1.2 Territorial Settlements in Europe, 1919–1926

Navy did not escape Allied attention. After hearing that the High Seas Fleet would be interned at the British naval base of Scapa Flow, the German commander ordered his sailors to scuttle 52 warships rather than risk them being divided among the Allied navies. Moving forward, the German fleet could only operate six ships displacing less than 10,000 tons, thereby limiting them to cruisers or smaller vessels. In an even more explicit mandate, the Allies forbade Germany to possess U-boats under any circumstances. Finally, the Allies prohibited the defeated nation from maintaining an air force.

Because German forces wrecked so much devastation during the war, the British and especially the French demanded that Germany pay reparations to compensate them for their losses. Requiring reparation payments from defeated foes was a common enough practice. Germany, for example, imposed them on France following the Franco-Prussian War and on Russia in the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Clemenceau and Lloyd George originally asked that, in addition to paying for civilian damages, reparations should reimburse them all war-related expenses. Wilson blocked this proposal as much too extreme, but he did allow the cost of war pensions for Allied military personnel. Wilson also renounced any American claim to these payments.

The Big Three appointed a commission to determine Germany's total reparations payment. In the interim, they demanded that Germany pay \$5 billion in gold and commodities. In its report, the Reparations Commission set the final bill at \$33 billion in gold. Germany would make annual installments of \$500 million from 1921 until 1987. Americans considered the burden to be considerably beyond Germany's ability to pay. The eminent British economist John Maynard Keynes agreed with their assessment. He went further to predict the reparations would unhinge the nation's postwar economy. The Germans criticized the total loudly and bitterly. Although the \$33 billion in 1921 equaled the adjusted total indemnity the Germans imposed on France in 1871, they argued that 1941 amount dashed any hope for their nation's postwar economic recovery. The German people greeted the announcement with protests in the streets.

The Allies, especially the French and the British, tried to justify the German reparations, territorial changes, and disarmament by including Article 231 in the Treaty of Versailles:

The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage to which the Allied and Associated Governments and their nationals have been subjected as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies.

This section took on the ignominious label of the "war guilt clause." The Germans found the indictment to be the hardest pill to swallow. The article did not contain the term *guilt* or specifically blame the Central Powers for starting the war. However, it charged the Germans and their allies with responsibility for the "loss and damage" suffered by the Allies and referenced "the aggression" of Central Powers. The Germans interpreted these words and phrases to mean guilt.

The final version of the Treaty of Versailles contained the Covenant (or charter) that established the League of Nations. Wilson wanted the League to have a General Assembly to which every member nation would belong and exercise voting rights. Although the Assembly could consider any issues, the decision-making power resided in the League's Executive Council comprised of five permanent members—Britain, France, Italy, the United States, and Japan—as well as four temporary member nations selected for limited terms.

The Covenant declared that members must submit all international disputes for investigation, arbitration, and settlement under the League. If a member ignored this obligation

and went to war, the League could mandate that its member states take collective military action against that aggressor nation. No concrete explanation existed for what this action might look like at an operational level. Clemenceau insisted that an international military represented the only means of securing meaningful collective security or enforcing League decisions. Wilson and Lloyd George, however, refused to agree to such a far-reaching commitment. Ultimately, the League's only coercive power rested in its authority to impose economic sanctions that could cut off trade between League members and any aggressor nation. The Big Three likewise refused to allow either Germany or Russia to join the organization. Excluding Germany alienated that nation's people, and ignoring Russia further isolated that nation's Bolshevik government from the rest of the world.

Despite Wilson's dream of the League safeguarding global democracy, the United States never joined the League because the U.S. Senate did not ratify the Treaty of Versailles. A dispute erupted between Wilson and Republican Senator Henry Cabot Lodge who refused to accept the League without guarantees of American sovereignty. Lodge and his fellow Senators did not want the United States to be forced by the League to go to war and fight under the League's flag and auspices. The ever-stubborn Wilson refused to compromise regarding the League, and the Treaty of Versailles failed to obtain the two-thirds majority necessary for ratification in 1920.

The British never shared Wilson's enthusiasm for the League and now saw considerably less reason for optimism. The French viewed the League with outright skepticism. Of far greater concern to them, however, was the failure of the Senate to ratify the treaty. The French could not count on American support if Germany attacked them. The British subsequently used the American rejection as grounds for abandoning its commitment to France as well.

Other Postwar Peace Treaties

After World War I ended, the Austrians and Hungarians severed their imperial ties and created two separate states when they signed the Treaty of St. Germain with Austria and the Treaty of Trianon with Hungary. The disintegration of their empire led to the formation of two other new nations: Czechoslovakia and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later called Yugoslavia). Neither of these conglomerates of diverse languages, ethnicities, and religions offered much hope for solving disputes among their constituent groups.

Czechoslovakia based its independence on a union of the Czechs, who lived in the western provinces of Bohemia and Moravia, with the Slovaks, who inhabited the eastern area of Slovakia. The Czechs enjoyed a considerably larger population and better political and economic institutions, so they dominated the new state. The country also included German, Hungarian, and Ruthenian minorities. Of these marginalized groups, some three million Germans resided in the frontier areas of Bohemia and Moravia in a region known as the Sudetenland.

The Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes of Yugoslavia shared common Slavic ethnicity. Because the Serbs outnumbered the others, they controlled the new state from the start, much to the chagrin of the Croats, the second largest group, who considered themselves culturally superior to the Serbs. Religious differences also increased antagonism between the two peoples. The Serbs were predominantly Orthodox, while the Croats were Catholic.

Another national group, the Poles in Galicia in the extreme northeastern portion of Austria-Hungary, joined their kinsmen to create the independent state of Poland. Before World War I started, the Poles languished under German and Russian domination. Even under the Treaty of Versailles, Poland rested in a vulnerable position between Germany and