Chapter 28
Descent into the Abyss: World War I and the Crisis of the European Global Order

What events led to the outbreak of World War I?
What events led to the involvement of the United States in WWI?

M.A.I.N. Causes of WWI (1914-1918)

- Militarism: New industrial technologies; after Germany began building a navy, all nations began creating more weapons.

- Alliances
  - Triple Alliance (aka Central Powers): Germany + Austria-Hungary + Italy (initially) + Ottoman Empire + Bulgaria.
  - Triple Entente (aka Allied Powers): Russia + France + Britain + Italy (in 1915) + Japan (US later).

- Imperialism: Tensions are high between alliance systems who are in the midst of imperialist rivalries over the few lands still not yet colonized (First Moroccan Crisis)
  - Colonists acted as resource-providers and combatants; hoped to achieve independence after the war and were often promised this

- Nationalism (new Germany; Balkan Independence)

The Coming of the Great War

- Tensions are high between alliance systems who are in the midst of imperialist rivalries over the few lands still not yet colonized

- After Germany began building a navy, all nations began creating more and more weapons.

- With growing labor unrest, the arms race provided employment for Europeans working within industrial sectors.
Ethnic divisions and interstate rivalries in the Balkans added tension to Europe.

In 1914, Gavrilo Princip, a Serbian nationalist, assassinated the heir to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Francis Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo.

Austria-Hungary demanded political and territorial concessions from Serbia; Serbia refused.

Russia supported Serbia, while Germany supported Austria-Hungary; alliances fall into place and no more possibility of regional war.

Germany was worried of fighting a war on both sides.

- Devised plan to attack France first through Belgium before turning east to the backward and slower-to-mobilize Russia.
- Britain entered the war to protect its ally, Belgium.
- Naval allies soon jumped in the war: Japan supports Britain.
Most European nations thought the war would be quick and decisive.

- Germany did not have a quick victory in France.
- German advance was halted by the French on the Marne River and this became the Western Front.
- Trench warfare and stalemate ensued along Western Front for three years.
- In just 1916, Germany lost 850,000 soldiers, and France lost 700,000 soldiers, on the Western Front.

The War in the East and in Italy

- Russia focused on Austria-Hungary and eastern Germany but were easily defeated by Germany troops.
- Austria-Hungary crushed Serbia but did not do as well against Russia.
- Austria-Hungary had inept generals and multiethnic armies whose soldiers' loyalties to Austrian emperor was lukewarm to nonexistent.
- Italy switched from the Triple Alliance to the Triple Entente in 1915.
- Most Italian assaults against Austria-Hungary ended in disaster.
- British and French troops had to be deployed to stop Austrian advance.

The Home Fronts

- Government developed propaganda to promote citizen support for the war and develop patriotism.
- Soldiers felt unsupported and that citizens lacked commitment for or understanding in the war.
- Many aspects of industrialization were taken over by the governments.
- People either benefit from industrialization or are excluded; sparks labor protests.
- Women participated greatly on the home front.
Troops were recruited from colonies, mostly fighting for the Triple Entente.

- Effective British naval blockades ensured Germany would not reach its colonies and they would not have raw materials.
- The British Dominions (Canada, Australia, and New Zealand) contributed resources to Great Britain.
  - Gallipoli campaign, 1915
- Germany’s main support was the Ottoman Empire, who entered WWI in 1915.
- Young Turk leaders assaulted Armenia, and the Armenian genocide ensued.

War Outside Europe, Cont.

- Americans had made money from selling food, weapons and giving loans to the Entente.
- German submarine sank British luxury liner Lusitania, in 1915, killing more than 100 Americans. In 1916, Germany attacks U.S. merchant ships en route to Britain.
- Germany also promised Mexico a gain in territory in exchange for joining Germany, which was intercepted in the Zimmermann Telegram.
- The United States entered WWI in 1917; policy previously was isolationism.

Return of offensive warfare

- After Russia was knocked out of the war, Germany transferred more soldiers to the Western Front; victory seemed near.
- American soldiers stalled German advance in northern France.
- Austria-Hungarian empire abdicated and became separate republics: Austria and Hungary.
- German commanders agreed to an armistice on November 11, 1918.
- WWI claimed 10 million lives and wounded 20 million.
The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 was a meeting of allied leaders to determine peace terms for Europe and how to deal with defeated empires after the armistice.

- There were disagreements amongst the Entente on how to deal with Germany.
- Germany was given no part in drawing the Treaty of Versailles.
- The Austro-Hungarian Empire was dismembered into Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

**Failed Peace**

- Goal: cripple Germany economically so that it could never again rise to power and threaten to invade other sovereign states of Europe

Outcome for Germany:
- Accept blame for the entire war.
- Limit their army to 100,000 soldiers.
- Lost territory to Poland
- Pay $32 billion in reparations to Entente members.
- Wartime promises to Arab leaders in return for their support for Entente in war were forgotten.
- Self-determination: right of people in region to determine whether to be independent or not

**Treaty of Versailles**

- The League of Nations, proposed by Woodrow Wilson, was established after WWI to ensure peace and humanitarian goals.
  - Many nations refused to join it; England and France were hesitant, Germany and Russia originally said no, and the U.S. openly rejected it.
  - The League of Nations was a precursor to the United Nations.
To win support of Western-educated elites and new allies in different regions, the French and British made many promises regarding postwar settlement.

- Created a great deal of postwar strain
- War had cast doubt on claims that Europeans were, by virtue of being white, the fittest of all to rule the globe
- The war gave support to anti-colonial movements in European colonies led by nationalist agitators with key themes.
  - Lead taken by Western-educated elites
  - Importance of charismatic leaders in rallying peasant and urban masses
  - Reliance on nonviolent forms of protest

The National Congress Party led India to independence and governed India through its postcolonial era.

- The NCP was formed in 1885 and was supported by many British officials.
- The NCP gave Indians a sense of identity.
- Indians became concerned over British racism and the budget, where most monies went to the British army and British administrators.

India contributed significantly to World War I as a colony of Great Britain and wartime inflation affected all segments of the Indian population.

- The Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 provided educated Indians with expanded opportunities to vote for and serve on local and all-Indian legislative councils
- British leaders had promised if Indians supported WWI, they would move to self-government once war was over. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 gave Indian provincial legislators increased control.
- However, the Rowlatt Act of 1919 restricted Indian civil rights, such as freedom of the press, which fueled local protest.
Emergence of Gandhi

Mohandas Gandhi emerged as an Indian leader around 1919.
- He preached non-violent but aggressive protest against colonization.
- Gandhi built up a strong following with the middle-class.
- He also combined Western-educated ideas about law with Hindu values and asceticism.
- Nationalist protest surged in 1920s and 1930s.

Egypt and rise for nationalism

The British had occupied Egypt in 1882 after Orabi's revolt.
- Egyptians dissent began in the early 1900's among the middle class, vying to expose the British monopolies and corruption.
- British arrogance and superiority was seen in events like the Dinshawai Incident (1906), leading to inflamed Egyptian nationalism.
- By 1913, British gave in and granted a constitution and representation in parliament.

War and Nationalism in the middle east

After WWI, the Ottoman Empire collapsed (1923) and an independent Turkish republic had been established.
- Britain and France carved up Arab portions of Ottoman Empire, even after promises for Arab independence after WWI.
- Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon were carved out by the League of Nations, and nationalism grew here.
- Dreyfus Affair (1894) spurs Jewish Zionists (movement for a Jewish Middle Eastern holy land). But the Balfour Declaration and British takeover of Palestine will strike Palestinian Arabs as a double betrayal.
During the war, the British defended the Suez Canal and used critical resources from Egypt in the war.

- After protests, British withdrawal began in 1922 and didn’t end until British withdrawal of the Suez Canal zone in 1936.
- Even though Egypt had independence, Egyptian politicians were concerned more with power and wealth than with helping the poor with education, health, or labor.

**KEY TERMS...**

- The Great War: Another name for World War I, used by Europeans until the advent of World War II.
- Kaiser Wilhelm II: German emperor in World War I; his aggressive foreign policy is often blamed for starting the war.
- Triple Alliance: Military and political alliance formed before World War I to counter moves by potential rivals England, France, and Russia; consisted of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.
- Triple Entente: Military and political alliance formed before World War I by England, France, and Russia; created to challenge moves made by the Triple Alliance.
- The Great Powers: The industrialized, colonizing nations of Europe before World War I; includes England, France, Germany, Russia, and Italy; their rivalries led to the war.
- Jingoism: Warlike nationalist sentiment spread to and among the middle and working classes in Europe before the war.
- Dreadnought: Class of modern battleship launched by Britain before the war; triggered naval rivalry, especially with Germany.
- Gavriel Princip: Serbian nationalist, assassin of Archduke Ferdinand.
- Archduke Ferdinand: Heir to Austro-Hungarian throne; his assassination precipitated the events that developed into World War I.
- Sarajevo: Capital of the Bosnian province in Austria-Hungary; site of Ferdinand’s assassination.
- Western Front: War zone that ran from Belgium to Switzerland during World War I; featured trench warfare and massive casualties among the combatants, including Britain, France, Russia, and Belgium; later included the United States.
- Eastern Front: War zone that ran from the Baltic Sea to the Balkans where Germany, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and the Balkan nations fought.
- Tsar Nicholas II: Last emperor of Russia whose poor military and political decisions led to his downfall and Russia’s loss in the war; he and Kaiser Wilhelm II made many moves that led to the start of the war.
- Propaganda: Government-sponsored media coverage of the war designed to disseminate one-sided versions of “friendly” and enemy conduct to gain support for the war among its citizenry.
KEY TERMS

— Alfred Dreyfus: French officer and Jew who was falsely accused of spying for Germany in the late 19th century; his mistreatment spurred Herzl and other Zionists to increase their call for a Jewish homeland.

— World Zionist Organization: Formed by Herzl and other prominent European Jewish leaders to promote Jewish migration to Palestine in advance of the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine.

— Sa'd Zaghlul: Energetic leader of the nationalist-leaning Wafd Party in Egypt.

— Liberal Constitutionalist Party; Labor Party: Rivals to Egypt’s Wafd Party; once in control of their own government, these three parties did little to help the peasantry.

— Gamal Abdel Nasser: Led a military coup in Egypt in 1952, ruled until 1970; established himself as a major Arab force in the Middle East.

— Lord Lugard: Influential British colonial administrator who predicted the rise of African nationalism.


— Pan-Africanism: Movement begun in the 1920s to promote African nationalism and unity; did much to arouse anticolonial sentiment.

— Negritude: Literary movement in France that argued precolonial African societies were superior in many ways to European colonial societies in Africa; writers included L.S. Senghor, Leon Damas, and Aime Cesaire.

— National Congress of British West Africa: Regionalized version of the pan-African movement.

— Armenian genocide: Assault carried out by mainly Turkish military forces against Armenian population in Anatolia in 1915; over a million Armenians perished and thousands fled to Russia and the Middle East.

— Adolf Hitler: Nazi leader of fascist Germany from 1933 to his suicide in 1945; created a strongly centralized state in Germany; eliminated all rivals; launched Germany on aggressive foreign policy leading to World War II; responsible for attempted genocide of European Jews.

— League of Nations: International diplomatic and peace organization created with the Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I; one of the chief goals of President Woodrow Wilson of the United States in the peace negotiations; the United States was never a member.

— Montagu-Chelmsford reforms: Increased the powers of Indian legislators at the all-India level and placed much of the provincial administration in local hands.

— Rowlatt Act: Placed restrictions on key Indian civil rights such as freedom of the press; acted to offset the concessions granted under Montagu-Chelmsford reforms of 1919.

— Hussein: Sherif of Mecca from 1908 to 1917; used British promise of independence to convince Arabs to support Britain against the Turks in World War I; angered by Britain’s failure to keep promise; died in 1931.

— Leon Pinsker: (1821 – 1891) European Zionist who believed that Jewish assimilation into Christian European nations was impossible; argued for return to Middle Eastern Holy Land.

— Wafd party: Egyptian nationalist party that emerged after an Egyptian delegation was refused a hearing at the Versailles treaty negotiations following World War I; led by Sa’d Zaghlul; negotiations eventually led to limited Egyptian independence beginning in 1922.