
The Great War

1914-1918 – Five Continents, one War

Five Causes for the Great War

MANIA

■ Militarism

- Aggressive preparation for war

■ Alliance System

- Triple Alliance (Central Powers-1882)
- Triple Entente (Allied Powers-1907)

■ Nationalism

- The idea that regardless of whether it was right or wrong, there was the obligation to the nation to do what needed to be done.

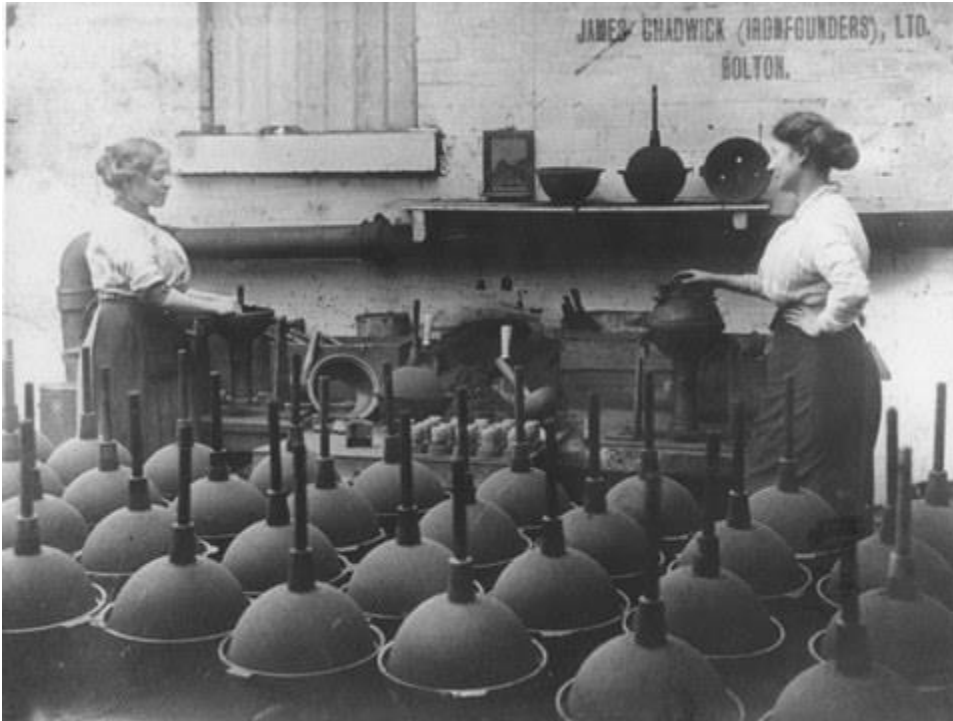
■ Imperialism

- Growing expansion and exploitation of territories created isolated conflicts around the globe.
- These victims of imperialism needed little reason to join the fight against their oppressors.

■ Assassination

- The Spark – The killing of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

Militarism



Female workers filling trench mortar bombs for use during World War I.

- Industrial Revolution results in the massive creation of goods
 - This included weaponry used warfare
- Countries began an aggressive accumulation of supplies in preparation.
- The average size of European armies doubled in size.
- Military leaders began making plans in preparation.

System of Alliances

- Triple Alliance formed in 1882
 - Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy
- Triple Entente formed in 1907
 - France, Great Britain, and Russia
- Countries created these alliances to maintain the peace and balance of power
- Had opposite effect
 - Nations were obligated to stay unified as one country declared war on the other.



Balkan Wars



- 1913-1914 - A series of conflicts involving the Balkan Peninsula and the Ottoman Empire

- First Balkan War

- Four Balkan states (Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece) vs Ottoman Empire
- Ottoman Empire lost

- Second Balkan War

- Bulgaria vs 3 allies + Romania
- Bulgaria was not satisfied with the spoils from first victory. Lost

- Biggest Loser: Ottoman Empire

- Loses bulk of territory in Europe

Serbian Problem



- After the Balkan Wars:
 - Serbia expanded into an independent Slavic state in the Balkans
- Serbia had the support of Russia
- Austria-Hungary want to prevent Serbia's plans.
 - Felt Serbia was a territory that belonged to their empire

The Spark: An assassination

- A Serbian terrorist organization plotted an attack (June 1914)
 - While on a visit to Bosnia, Serbian nationalists assassinated the heir of the Austria-Hungarian throne.
 - Archduke Francis Ferdinand (and his wife).
 - Their goal was to regain control of Bosnia, which was under Austria-Hungary control.
- Austria-Hungary wished to “render Serbia innocuous” [harmless].



The Plot thickens...

- Austria-Hungarian leaders feared Russia would come to the aid of Serbia
 - A-H called upon their German allies
 - Emperor William II of Germany offers his full support
- July 1914, Austria-Hungary declares war on Serbia



Emperor William II of Germany

Russia begins mobilization

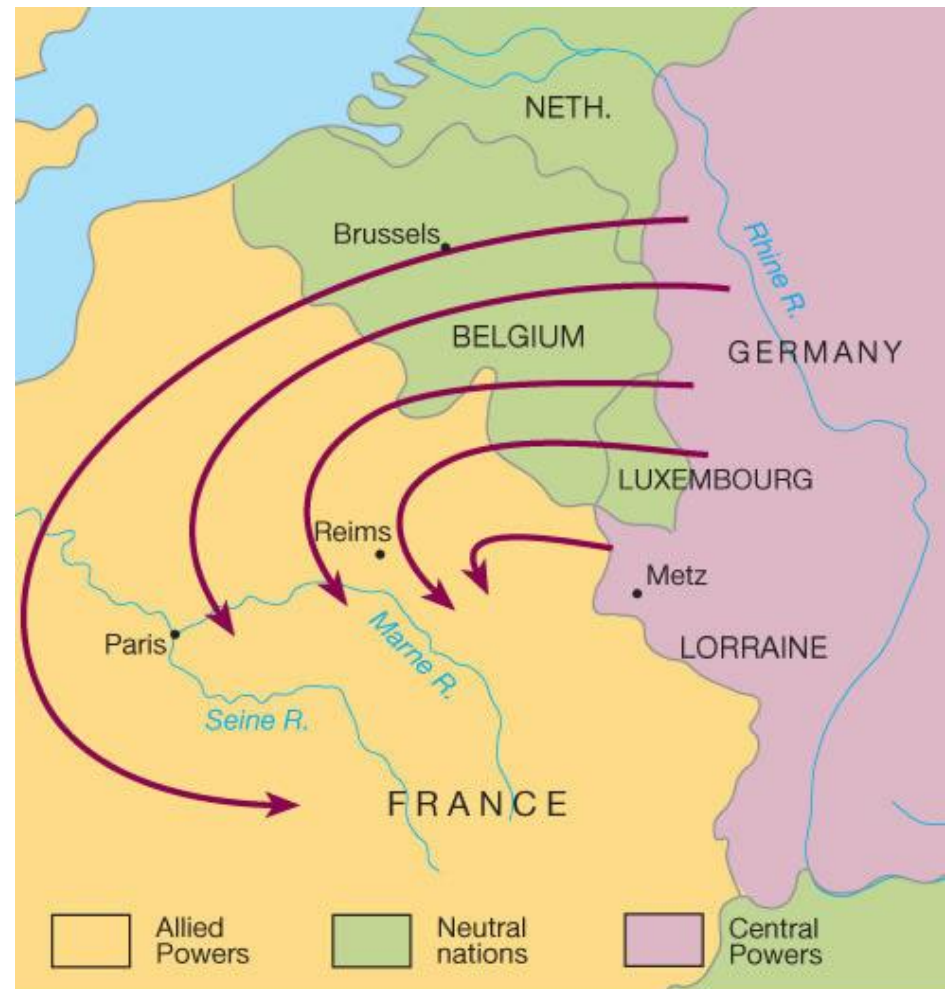
- Mobilization:
 - Is the process of assembling troops and supplies and making them ready for war.
- Czar Nicholas II
 - Orders partial mobilization, but then call for a full mobilization
 - This is seen as a direct act of war!
- Germany demanded Russia withdraw
 - Russia ignored their demands, and Germany declared war on Russia



Russians mobilize troops using railcars (1914)

Schlieffen Plan

- Germans implemented General Alfred von Schlieffen's plan
 - Called for a two-front war. Attack France and Russia
 - First invade France and then move into East Russia.
- Therefore, Germany declared war on France in August 3, 1914.



 The Schlieffen Plan

Belgium Ultimatum

- Germany called for right of passage through Belgian territory
 - However, Belgium was neutral.
- Britain declared war on Germany for violating Belgian neutrality on August 4, 1914.
 - Joined war to put fears to rest.
 - If Triple Alliance won, it would leave Britain with out friends.



The Great War: Eastern Front

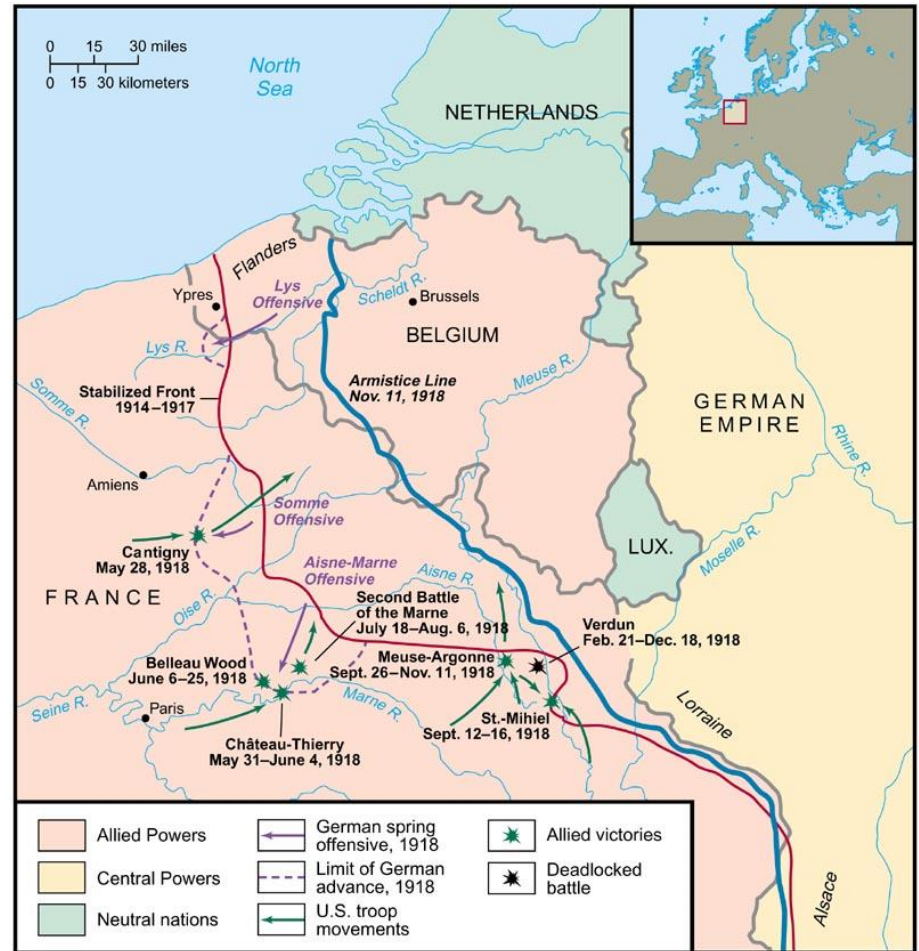
- The War moved at a faster pace
 - Germans prevented Russians invasion.
- Germans aid Austrian and defeat Russians.
 - Nearly 2.5 million Russian are killed, wounded, or captured
- Serbia is eliminated from the War
- New Players!
 - Italy renounced Triple Alliance and joins the “Allied Powers”
 - Bulgaria joins forces with Germany and Austria-Hungary



Russians being taken prisoner by German army

The Great War: Western Front

- Western Front: Germany taking France
 - German push through, but are stopped.
 - The efforts are bogged down in Trench Warfare.
- Maintain the same position for the next four years with little ground gained by either side



THE WESTERN FRONT: U.S. PARTICIPATION, 1918

Trench Warfare



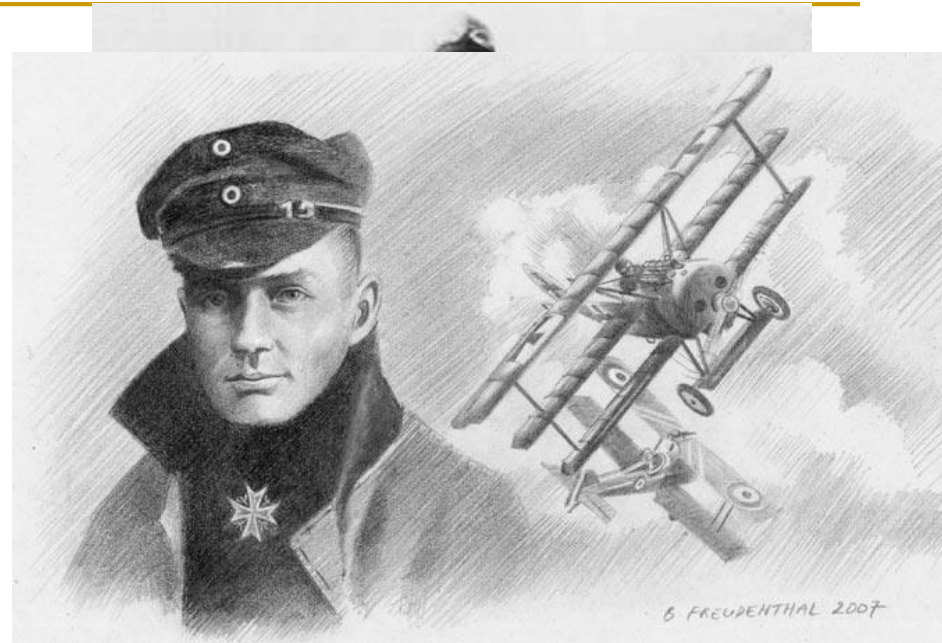
Tactics of Trench Warfare



- New Offensive Strategy for new style of fighting:
 - Order an attack of artillery
 - Flatten enemy's barb wire
 - Leave enemy in a state of shock (shell-shock)
- Mass soldiers would storm "no-man's land" with fixed bayonets
- Usually failed because of the use of...
 - The Machine Gun
 - Resulted in the death of thousands
- Utilized chemical warfare
 - Mustard Gas

War in the Air

- Airplanes used for the first time in 1915
 - Used to spot enemy's position
 - Soon used to attack ground targets
 - Fights in the air (i.e. dogfights) soon followed.
 - Machine guns were attached to the planes
- Famous German Pilot Manfred von Richthofen recorded 80 confirmed victories
 - Also known as the Red Baron



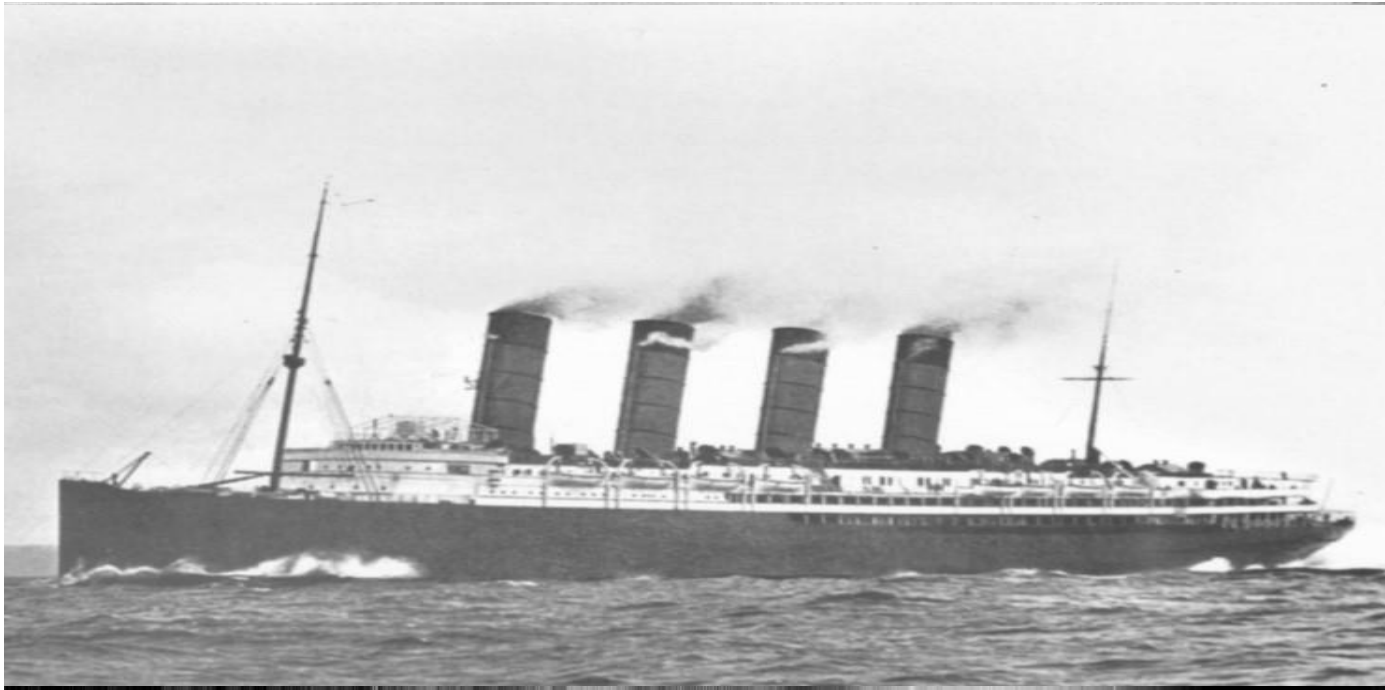
Trench Warfare Stalemate: A call for New Players



- Central Powers (Triple Alliance)
 - ❑ Ottoman Empire joins in 1915
 - ❑ Bulgaria also joins effort
- Allied Nations (Triple Entente)
 - ❑ Italy joins allies with promise of Austrian territory

Entry of the US

- German U-Boats were ordered to sink all British ships to maintain Blockade.
 - U.S. was neutral, but this would change after the sinking of a British passenger ship called the *Lusitania* by German U-Boats (submarines) (believed to be carrying supplies for the war)
 - 1100 civilian deaths, including 100 Americans
 - Germany continued unrestricted submarine warfare
- Zimmerman Telegram
 - German attempt to persuade Mexico to join the war effort against U.S.



United
States
declares
War in
April
1917

War on the Home Front

- People at home were expected to ration (save) items needed for war
- Women were thrust into a new role
 - Filled the position of men who were off to war
 - Worked in factories to produce weapons and supplies for the war effort



Russian Collapse



Czar Nicholas II of Russia

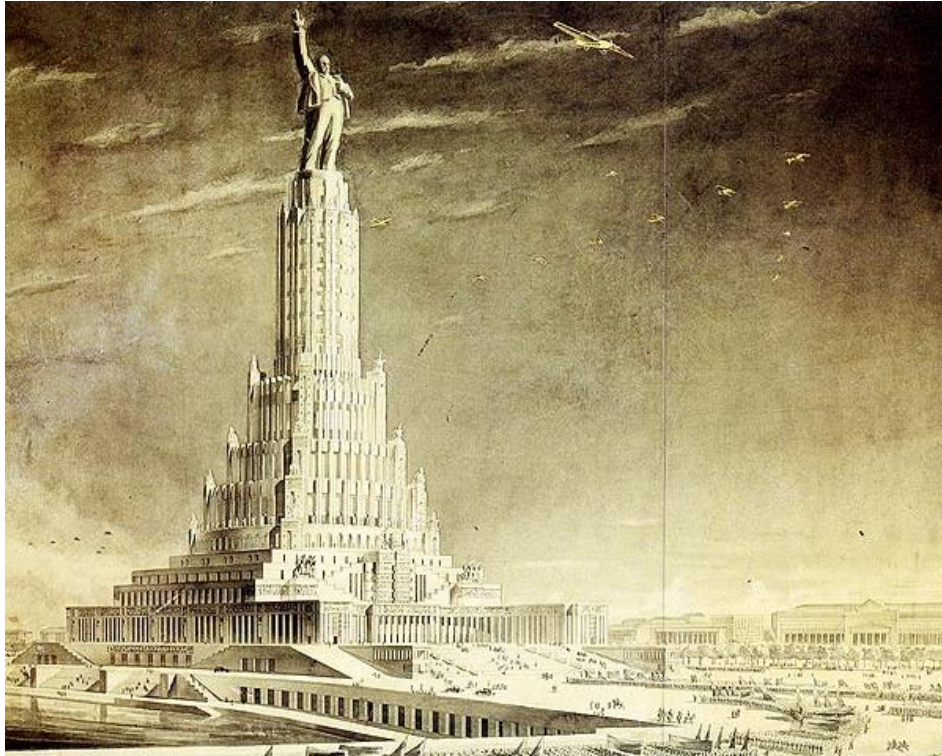
- Russia was not militarily and technologically prepared for the total war.
- Czar Nicholas II lacked military leadership
 - Soldiers trained with broom sticks
 - Were instructed to pick up the weapons from fallen comrades
- Naturally, Russia will suffer heavy losses and be ousted from the War

Russian Collapse

- The power of Nicholas II depended on his military control.
 - A weakened Russian Army left the Czar vulnerable
- March 1917
 - Women march from peace and bread
 - Soldiers sent by the Czar to stop the protest backfires as some join the march
- Some call for the Czar to step down—he agrees
 - Thus ending the 300 year old Romanov dynasty



Rise of the Soviets



Palace of the Soviets

- Russia remains in war to preserve honor
 - BIG MISTAKE!
- Gave way to the rise of the Soviets
 - Councils composed of representatives from the workers and soldiers
 - Made up mostly of Socialists
- Small faction known as the Bolsheviks lead by Vladimir I Lenin came into the spotlight.
 - Hence the start of another Revolution

Vladimir Llyich Ulianov (V.I. Lenin)

- V.I. Lenin
 - ❑ Leader of the Bolsheviks
 - ❑ Pushed for a violent revolution
 - ❑ Goal was to destroy capitalism and bring EQUALITY
 - ❑ Believed the soldiers, workers, and peasants were instruments of power
 - Could be used to overthrow the government
 - ❑ White Russians despised the wealthy
- Bolsheviks promised:
 - ❑ End to the War
 - ❑ Redistribution of all land to the peasants
 - ❑ Transfer of factories and industries from capitalists to committees of workers
 - ❑ Transfer of government power to the Soviets



"Peace, Bread, and Land!" a Bolsheviks slogan!

Bolshevik Power



- Bolsheviks gained control easily and renamed party to Communist.
- Lenin signed Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
 - Gave up much territory, but ended Russian involvement in war
- Russia soon fell into Civil War
 - Partially aided by anti-communist, groups loyal to the Czar, the Allies, and Liberals
 - Civil war was squashed by well disciplined Leon Trotsky Red army and the Red secret police who enforced a “Red Terror.”
 - By 1921, the Communist controlled all of Russia

End to the War...

- Despite a Russian surrender
- The entry of the United States into the War greatly impacted the Germans
 - Fresh troops and supplies caused the Germans to fall back
 - Germans soon felt the need to call for peace



German Communist

- November 11, 1918
 - German government signed an armistice
 - A agreement to end the fighting
- German Communist infiltration
 - Attempted a communist revolution in Germany
 - It was quickly squashed
- By the end of the War, the Austria-Hungary empire no longer existed
 - Formed the Republics of Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia



Reproduction of German Communist Party's poster "The Union of Spartacus"

President Woodrow Wilson



- January 1919
 - 27 victorious Allied nations met in Paris
 - U.S. President Woodrow Wilson outlined the “Fourteen Points”
 - All aimed at restoring peace, eliminating the causes for war, and creating democratic governments

Paris Peace Conference (1919)

- Allies of Europe had two things on their agenda
 - Make Germans pay (reparations)
 - Gain territory from defeated countries
- Compromise
 - Wilson agreed to Allies of Europe's demands as long as a new organization could be created to prevent future wars
 - The League of Nations was created
- Treaty of Versailles
 - Gave European allies their reparations, weakened German military power, and stripped large portions of territory for New Poland
- Left Germany unstable and open to the rise of dictators



Map of Europe after the Great War



Source: *Regional Extensions*, 1999