

Causes of WWI

Causes of WWI - Overview

- Power Vacuum - Ottoman Empire
- Nationalist movements
- Military strategies
- The New Imperialism
- Militarization & Alliances

Power Vacuum – The Ottoman Decline

- Ottoman Empire – the “Sick Old Man” of Europe
- Greece (1821), Serbia (1817), Hungary (1848), Bohemia (1848), Bosnia (1875)
- “Young Turk” movement – Modernization, Centralization, **Ethnic Cleansing** – The Armenian Genocide

Desert Trek after exile







Armenian Orphans



Armenian Women in Streets



Nationalist Movements

- Romantic influence
- Italy and Germany
- Ethnic groups in multiethnic empires wanted nation-states
- France angry over Franco-Prussian war
- Germany jealous British naval power



Expansionism & New Imperialism

- Competition to expand territory.
- “Scramble for Africa”
- Break-off of Ottoman lands
- Naval power – Coal depots, shipping routes
- Near misses over colonial areas, e.g. France & Germany over Morocco (1905 & 1911)



Jingoism

- war as distraction from social issues
- Anti-Semitism
- Youthful naiveté about horrors of warfare
- Quixotic Idealism
- war profiteers





Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?

Military Strategies

- Germany's "Schlieffen Plan"
- Mobilization of troops → material commitment to war before political will



The Schlieffen Plan



Systems of Alliance


- Alliances e.g. Germany's "Blank Check"
- "The Allies" – Britain, France, Russia, Serbia, Japan, Italy (US after 1917)
- "The Central Powers" – Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey



The Match – Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand

- Franz Ferdinand tours Sarajevo
- Black Hand terrorist organization, assassinated Ferdinand & pregnant wife
- Austrian ultimatum –policing by Austrians
- Germany’s “Blank Check” (alliance system)



 *Linguistic Groups in Austria-Hungary*









Archduke Franz Ferdinand
and his wife Sophie on the
day of the assassination



Daily

NO. 433.

HEIR TO AUSTRIAN THRONE. MURDERED.

ARCHDUKE AND HIS
WIFE SHOT DEAD
IN THE STREET.

DETERMINED PLOT.

BOMB FIRST THROWN
AT THEIR CAR.

SECOND ATTEMPT
WITHIN AN HOUR.

BOY ASSASSIN.



MURDERER
The assassin of the
archduke and his wife.

The assassin of the archduke and his wife was shot dead in the street. The plot was determined and a bomb was first thrown at their car. A second attempt was made within an hour. The assassin is a boy.

WAR

- Russia stepped in to defend Serbs mobilized
- Germany tried to step down the situation, but Russian mobilization was too large-scale to stop
- Other powers alarmed at Russia's mobilization
- German military leaders demanded quick attack to neutralize France (Schieffen Plan), attacked Belgium
- British (who guaranteed the freedom of Belgium) declared war on Germany

Impact of WWI

global war

- 10 million killed, 20 million casualties
- India – 1 million soldiers, 100,000 casualties
- increased exploitation of colonies
- **global flu epidemic** killed 30 million worldwide (20 million Indians)
- Colonial elites given temporary power & then frustrated

Global effects

- Runaway inflation & shortages in colonies
- Increased opportunities for women
- End of European claim to cultural, ethnic, rational superiority



MAJOR WORLD STATES AND COLONIAL POSSESSIONS, 1900

	Belgium		German Empire		Italy		Portugal		United States
	France		Great Britain		The Netherlands		Spain		Other Independent states

Total War

- Society vs. Society,
Economy vs. Economy
- Civilian deaths due to
starvation
- Economies geared toward
war goods and armament
production
- Rationing



Revolution in Russia

- Downfall of Romanovs
- 1917 – revolt in St. Petersburg – general strike
- Troops Mutiny
- Duma dissolved, new Provisional Government established – which stays in the war!
- Revolution pulls Russia out of war

Russian Losses and Withdrawal (1917)



Refugees and Immigrants

- Huge numbers of immigrants fleeing war-ruined areas in need of food, shelter, water, medical care.
- Disease spread through refugee camps
- Immigration to other parts of globe, e.g. North America



Major environmental damage

- Battlefields reduced to craters and mud
- Production of war materials at accelerated pace increased pace of environmental devastation
- Mining, etc. poisoned streams, left “slag” piles, etc.
- Bodies and broken armaments in large numbers -- dangerous
- 10 years to clean up



Source: Dr. F.X. O'Connor Fonds, Queen's University Archives





Fall of Ottoman and Austria-Hungary

- Nationality principle – nations got their own states (in some cases)
- African, Asian colonies turned into “Mandates” administered by the “winners”; A, B, and C categories

Woodrow Wilson's 14 point plan

- US President Woodrow Wilson proposed:
 - Open treaties
 - Freedom of navigation of the seas
 - Equal trade conditions among all nations
 - Reduction in armaments leading to eventual abolition
 - Imperial adjustment of all colonial claims
 - Guarantees of Russian Sovereignty (Russia was in midst of Civil War)



Wilson's 14 points (cont)

- Restoration of Belgium
- **Return of Alsace-Lorraine to France**
- Readjustment of Italian frontiers
- **Assurance for the autonomy of the nationalities of Austria-Hungary**
- **Division of nationality in the Balkans (new states)**
- **Guarantee for autonomy of nationalities under Turkish rule**
- **Independent Poland**
- **Association to guarantee peace (League of Nations)**

The Peace Treaty

- Germany to take full responsibility for war
 - 33 billion mark indemnity to France and Britain
 - Demilitarization of Germany
 - Germany had to sign “War Guilt” clause
 - German colonies turned over to League of Nations (turned into Mandates)
- France and Britain wanted *harshest* settlement for Germany

The Peace Treaty

- Treaty of Versailles (1919) a bad compromise
 - Ignored Japanese assertion of equality of all races
 - Ignored Pan-African Congress led by WEB DuBois
 - Armenian genocide and relocation not adequately addressed
 - Zionists not adequately addressed
 - Germany & Soviet Union could not take part



League of Nations

- Part of US President Woodrow Wilson's "14 point plan"
- Global body designed to prevent wars and protect the sovereignty of nation-states

