

Chapter 17

THE FIRST WORLD WAR

17.81 THE INTERNATIONAL ANARCHY

Study Questions

1. Why were both the French and the British concerned about German aspirations after 1870? What evidence of Anglo-German industrial competition is revealed by the map and chart on p. 693?
2. Explain how the Continent became divided by 1894 into two opposed camps. What developments led the British to abandon their “splendid isolation”?
3. How were European international relations affected in the years between 1905 and 1913 by the crises over (a) Morocco and (b) the Balkans?
4. What were the consequences of the Balkan wars?
5. How did the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand lead to the outbreak of a war?
6. What do the illustrations on p. 694 and 697 suggest about the causes of the First World War?
7. How would you assess the responsibility of each of the countries involved in the events of 1914? What role did the alliance system play?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. It had long been felt that a unified Germany would revolutionize the relationships of the European peoples; after 1870 these anticipations were more than confirmed.
2. The third Balkan crisis proved fatal because two others had gone before it, leaving feelings of exasperation in Austria, desperation in Serbia, and humiliation in Russia.
3. The mere narration of successive crises does not explain why the chief nations of Europe within a few days became locked in combat over the murder of an imperial personage. Among more obvious general causes, the alliance system and nationalist ideologies should be emphasized.

4. Although it is not true that Germany alone started the war, as its enemies in 1914 popularly believed, it must be granted that its policies had for some years been rather peremptory, arrogant, devious, and obstinate.
5. The world had an international economy but an anarchic system of competing, sovereign national states.

Identifications

Anglo-Russian Convention

Triple Entente

Tangier

Franco-Russian Alliance

Annexation of Bosnia

First Balkan war

Reinsurance treaty

South Slavs

Entente cordiale

Albania

Triple Alliance

Sarajevo crisis

Agadir

Blank check

17.82 THE ARMED STALEMATE

Study Questions

1. What happened to the German Schlieffen Plan when it was put into operation? How did the battle of the Marne affect the character of the war? What does the illustration on p. 703 tell us about trench warfare?
2. How would you summarize the major military campaigns of Germany in 1915 and 1916? What was the general state of affairs at the end of 1916?
3. What does the illustration on pp. 704 suggest of the casualties that the European nations suffered in the First World War?
4. What form did the British naval blockade and the German submarine warfare take?
5. What success did both sides have in finding new allies in 1914 and 1915? Why did Italy join the Allies?
6. How did each side appeal to discontented nationalist groups? Why were the Allies more successful?
7. Why may it be said that the war accelerated prewar imperialist tendencies? In what sense was this true of the Allies? What expansionist aims did the Germans reveal?

8. How would you describe President Wilson's attitude toward the war and toward the two opposing alliances in the early years of the war?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. The First World War lasted over four years, from 1914 to the end of 1918, the United States entering with effective result in the last year.
2. After the failure of the Schlieffen Plan, the war of movement in the West settled into a war of position.
3. The submarine was an unrefined weapon.
4. Each side tampered with minorities and discontented groups living within the other's domain.
5. The war aims of the Germans were even more expansionist than those of the Allies.
6. Although his personal sympathies lay with England and France, Woodrow Wilson saw little difference between the warring alliances.
7. A long war led to the coordination or "rationalization" of production in the interests of the country as a whole.

Identifications

Central Powers	"They shall not pass"	Sir Roger Casement
Zimmermann telegram	Battle of the Somme	Joffre
Twenty-One Demands	Balfour Declaration	Battles of Tannenberg
Battle of Jutland	Armenian deportations	Moltke
Dardanelles	Secret treaty of London	The <i>Lusitania</i>
battle of Verdun	Bethmann-Hollweg	

Map Exercises

1. What does the map in your text on p. 700, The First World War, reveal about the nature of the land fighting during that conflict?
2. Can you locate each of the places mentioned in Section 17.82?

17.83 THE COLLAPSE OF RUSSIA AND THE INTERVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES

Study Questions

1. What effect did revolutionary events in Russia in 1917 have on the First World War? Explain the significance of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk.
2. Why did the American people have differing opinions on joining the war?
3. How successful was the German submarine campaign in 1917 and the countermeasures adopted to meet it?
4. Why did President Wilson change his opinion of the war? Why did he call for American entry?
5. Describe the nature and outcome (a) of the military campaigns on the western front in 1917 and (b) of the German offensive in the west in the spring of 1918. What were the results of the Allied offensive?
6. How did the casualties of the United States compare with those of the other combatants? What was the significance of American participation in the war? How does the illustration on p. 714 reinforce this conclusion?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. The treaty of Brest-Litovsk represented the maximum success for the Germans during the First World War.
2. The fall of tsarism made a great impression.
3. Having made his decision that Germany was a menace, Wilson now saw a clear-cut issue between right and wrong.
4. American assistance came so late, when the others had been struggling for so long, that the mere beginnings of it were enough to turn the scale.

Identifications

Treaty of Brest-Litovsk

Nivelle

Battle of Caporetto

Hindenburg
Ludendorff

Pétain
Passchendaele

Ferdinand Foch

17.84 THE COLLAPSE OF THE AUSTRIAN AND GERMAN EMPIRES

Study Questions

1. What happened to the Austro-Hungarian Empire at the close of the war?
2. What was the consequence of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian empires?
3. Explain the position taken by Ludendorff and the German High Command in the autumn of 1918. What governmental and constitutional changes did they insist upon?
4. Describe the background to the abdication of the Kaiser. How revolutionary were these events?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. The war proved fatal to the German and Austro-Hungarian empires as well as to the Russian Empire.
2. Wilson, unlike Bismarck, really believed in democracy; but in a practical way his position was the same.
3. It was untrue that Germany had been “stabbed in the back” by a dissolving civilian home front.

Identifications

Charles I
Mutiny at Kiel

Prince Max of Baden

National councils

17.85 THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL IMPACT OF THE WAR

Study Questions

1. What impact did the First World War have upon private enterprise and the economy? In what specific ways did wartime governments control economic activities? What special measures of economic control were adopted by Germany and by the Allied countries?

2. What effect did the war have on the entry of women into the labor force?
3. What were the short- and long-run effects of government wartime monetary policies? Of what significance were the national debts that were created?
4. How did the war change the economic and financial status of the United States? How did the war affect the industrialization of countries outside Europe?
5. To what extent did governments during the war attempt to control ideas and with what consequences?
6. What do you learn about the home fronts from the illustrations on pp. 718 and 720?
7. What were some of the most significant cultural reactions to the war? What did those reactions reveal about the nature of the conflict?
8. What was the Dada movement?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. The idea of the “planned economy” was first applied in the First World War.
2. In Germany, government controls became more thorough and more efficient, producing what was called “war socialism.”
3. With Europe torn by war for four years, the rest of the world speeded up its own industrialization.
4. All the belligerent governments during the war attempted to control ideas as they did economic production.
5. During the war, freedom of thought, respected everywhere in Europe for half a century, was discarded.
6. As the war dragged on, much of the earlier patriotism expressed by poets and other writers turned to cynicism, pessimism, and despair.

Identifications

Planned economy	Wilfred Owen	Rationalization
<i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i>	Rupert Brooke	<i>Decline of the West</i>
War socialism	Charles Péguy	W. B. Yeats
Walter Rathenau	Siegfried Sassoon	Tristan Tzara

17.86 THE PEACE OF PARIS, 1919

Study Questions

1. On what principles did Woodrow Wilson desire peace to be established? Why did he hope for a new kind of peace settlement?
2. Describe the personality and political outlook of the Big Four statesmen. Why did Wilson and Lloyd George object to the French attitudes and proposals with respect to Germany?
3. Summarize and discuss the major agreements reached at the peace conference concerning (a) territorial changes, (b) disposition of the German colonies, (c) restrictions on German naval and military power, and (d) reparations.
4. Why was the “war guilt” clause written into the treaty? What objections might legitimately be raised to it?
5. How would you evaluate the success and the wisdom of the treaty of Versailles? How did the treaty set the stage for future troubles?
6. How did the war and the peace treaties change the political structure of Europe? What was the *cordon sanitaire*?
7. What were the socio-political consequences of the First World War?

Key Discussion Sentences

1. To obtain a League of Nations, Wilson made a number of concessions and compromised the idealism of the Fourteen Points.
2. The Germans felt no such responsibility for the war as they were obliged formally to accept under the “war guilt” clause.
3. The other treaties drafted by the Paris conference, in conjunction with the Versailles treaty, laid out a new map for eastern Europe and registered the recession of the Russian, Austrian,

and Ottoman Turkish empires.

4. The most general principle of the Paris settlement was to recognize the right of national self-determination, at least in Europe.
5. For practical purposes the treaty of Versailles, with respect to Germany, was either too severe or too lenient.
6. The League of Nations marked a great step beyond the international anarchy before 1914, but it had its limitations.
7. The war was indeed a victory for democracy, though a bitter one.

Identifications

Lloyd George	Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes
Rhineland	Clemenceau
Orlando	The Saar
Reparations	Fourteen Points
Polish Corridor	Anglo-French-American guarantee
Mandates	Covenant of the League of Nations
Sudeten Germans	War guilt clause

Map Exercises

1. On the outline map, Europe 1923, show Europe's political boundaries after the Paris peace settlement of 1919 and other postwar settlements. How does this map of Europe differ from the one of Europe in 1871 and in 1914? How closely does it conform to the distribution of language groups in Europe? Source: *A History of the Modern World*, p. 730–731.

GENERAL ESSAY QUESTIONS FOR CHAPTER 17

1. What general political and economic circumstances contributed to the outbreak of war in 1914? How did the assassination of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand lead to a European-wide war in so short a period of time? How would you assess the responsibility of each of the great powers for the outbreak of the war?
2. In what ways did the First World War affect the European economy, European society, and European cultural life?



3. In what sense did Woodrow Wilson hope to arrive at a treaty that would be different from earlier diplomatic efforts? How successful was he? What obstacles did he encounter?

4. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Treaty of Versailles.

GENERAL DISCUSSION PASSAGES FOR CHAPTER 17

1. Somewhere before 1914 Europe went off the historical track that was supposed to lead its peoples toward a better future. At the beginning of the twentieth century, most Europeans believed they were heading for a kind of high historical plateau, full of a benign progress and more abundant civilization, in which the benefits of modern science and invention would be more widely diffused and even competitive struggle would work out somehow for the best. Instead, Europe stumbled in 1914 into disaster. (p. 689)
2. The idea that war was bound to break out sooner or later probably made some statesmen in some countries more willing to unleash it. (p. 690)
3. Francis Ferdinand, who would soon have become emperor, was known to favor some kind of transformation of Austria-Hungary, in which a more equal place might be given to the Slavs; but the reformer who makes a system work is the most dangerous of all enemies to the implacable revolutionary, and it is perhaps for this reason that the archduke was killed by the Black Hand. (p. 696)
4. There was no world state to police the worldwide system, assuring participation in the world economy to all nations under all conditions. (p. 699)
5. The alliances, in a world that was in the strict sense anarchic (and seemed likely to remain so), were a means by which each nation attempted to bolster its security; to assure that it would not be cut off, conquered, or subjected to another's will; and to obtain some hope of economic success in the competitive struggle for use of the world's goods. (p. 699)
6. On both sides, Allied and German, the art of generalship had sunk to an all-time low. (p. 703)
7. The circumstances in which the German republic originated made its later history, and hence all later history, very troubled. (p. 716)
8. European society was forced by the First World War into many basic changes that were to prove more lasting than the war itself. (p. 716)
9. War gave a new impetus even to the idea of economic equality, if only as a wartime strategy to enlist rich and poor alike in a common cause. (p. 717)

10. With the insatiable need for troops, drawing in men originally exempted or at first rejected as physically inadequate, great numbers of women poured into factories and offices, and in Britain even into newly organized women's branches of the armed forces. Women took over many jobs that most people had thought only men could do. Women did not remain in the labor force after the war in such large numbers because they often gave way to returning veterans; but the wartime experience in the First and the Second World War was part of the social transition by which the labor force in all countries was enlarged, women's place in modern society was revolutionized, and the lives and outlook of millions of individual women were turned more actively toward public participation in national economies. (p. 717)
11. With Germany entirely out of the world market, with Britain and France producing desperately for their armies, and with the world's shipping commandeered for war uses, the position of western Europe as the world's workshop was undermined. The age of European supremacy was in its twilight. (p. 719)
12. The First World War's most widespread cultural consequence emerged in new forms of cultural pessimism. Even the most sober-minded European authors believed that the war had exposed a sickness in the heart of European civilization. (p. 723)
13. Woodrow Wilson stood for the fruition of the democratic, liberal, progressive, and nationalistic movements of the century past, for the ideals of the Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the revolutions of 1848. (p. 724)
14. There was thought to be something sinister about peace conferences of the past, for example, the Congress of Vienna of 1815. The old diplomacy was blamed for leading to war. It was felt that treaties had too long been wrongly based on a politics of power or on unprincipled deals and bargains made without regard to the people concerned. (p. 724)
15. The most general principle of the Paris settlement was to recognize the right of national self-determination, at least in Europe. (p. 729)
16. Nationalism triumphed as a culmination of the nineteenth-century belief that it went along naturally with liberalism and democracy. It must be added that the peacemakers at Paris had little choice in this matter, for the new states had already declared their independence. (p. 732)
17. The war was indeed a victory for democracy, though a bitter one. It carried further a transformative political and social process as old as the French and American revolutions.

But for the basic problems of modern civilization, industrialism and nationalism, economic security and international stability, it gave no answer. (p. 733)