

31

The Great War and the Russian Revolutions, 1890–1918

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- Why did competing alliance systems promote war rather than preventing it?
- Why did the Great War become a stalemate between 1914 and 1916?
- What factors led to revolutions in Russia in 1917?
- What were the main reasons for Allied victory in 1918?
- How did the Great War affect civilians?



Over the Top

U.S. infantry goes “over the top,” emerging from a trench on the Western Front of the Great War in 1918. Trench warfare became the most memorable feature of this traumatic, bloody conflict (page 727).

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It was Sunday, June 28, 1914. Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Crown Prince of Austria-Hungary, paid a state visit to Sarajevo (*sah-rah-YĀ-vō*), capital of the Austrian province of Bosnia. As his motorcade entered the city, a terrorist seeking to free Bosnia from Austria threw a bomb at Franz Ferdinand's car. The assassin's aim was off, and the bomb blew up the car behind the Archduke's. Enraged, Franz Ferdinand shortened his visit by several hours. As he was leaving the city, however, his car took a wrong turn and stalled on a small side street. Watching from a nearby café was another assassin, who walked up to the car and murdered the Archduke and his wife with a revolver. Within five weeks all Europe was at war.

At the palace of Versailles in France, precisely five years after the shots at Sarajevo, European leaders met in solemn assembly to sign a treaty formally ending the conflict triggered by those shots, then known as the Great War. It had killed more than nine million people in combat, devastated much of Europe, helped spark momentous revolutions in Russia, and spread fear across the globe. The experience was so horrifying that the peacemakers at Versailles hoped not merely to end the Great War, but to abolish war forever.

Allied and
Associated Powers
(Red)

Central Powers
(Tan)

Neutrals (Green)



The Path to War and Revolution

In 1890 Europe stood at the peak of world power. Industrial modernization and the technologies it generated gave Britain, France, and Germany unprecedented wealth and dominion, with global empires encompassing much of Africa and Asia. Italy and Belgium also gained African colonies, as industrial nations competed for possessions and access to raw materials. But the Russian, Austrian, and Ottoman Empires, for centuries dominant in Eastern Europe and beyond, had been slow to industrialize and had fallen behind. Liberalism and nationalism also threatened these three multinational realms, as their various peoples pressed for greater freedom and autonomy. After 1890 rivalries among all these powers intensified as each sought to improve its status and security. Europe divided into powerful and hostile alliances, leading to a series of crises that eventually culminated in catastrophic conflict.

The Diplomatic Revolution of 1890–1907

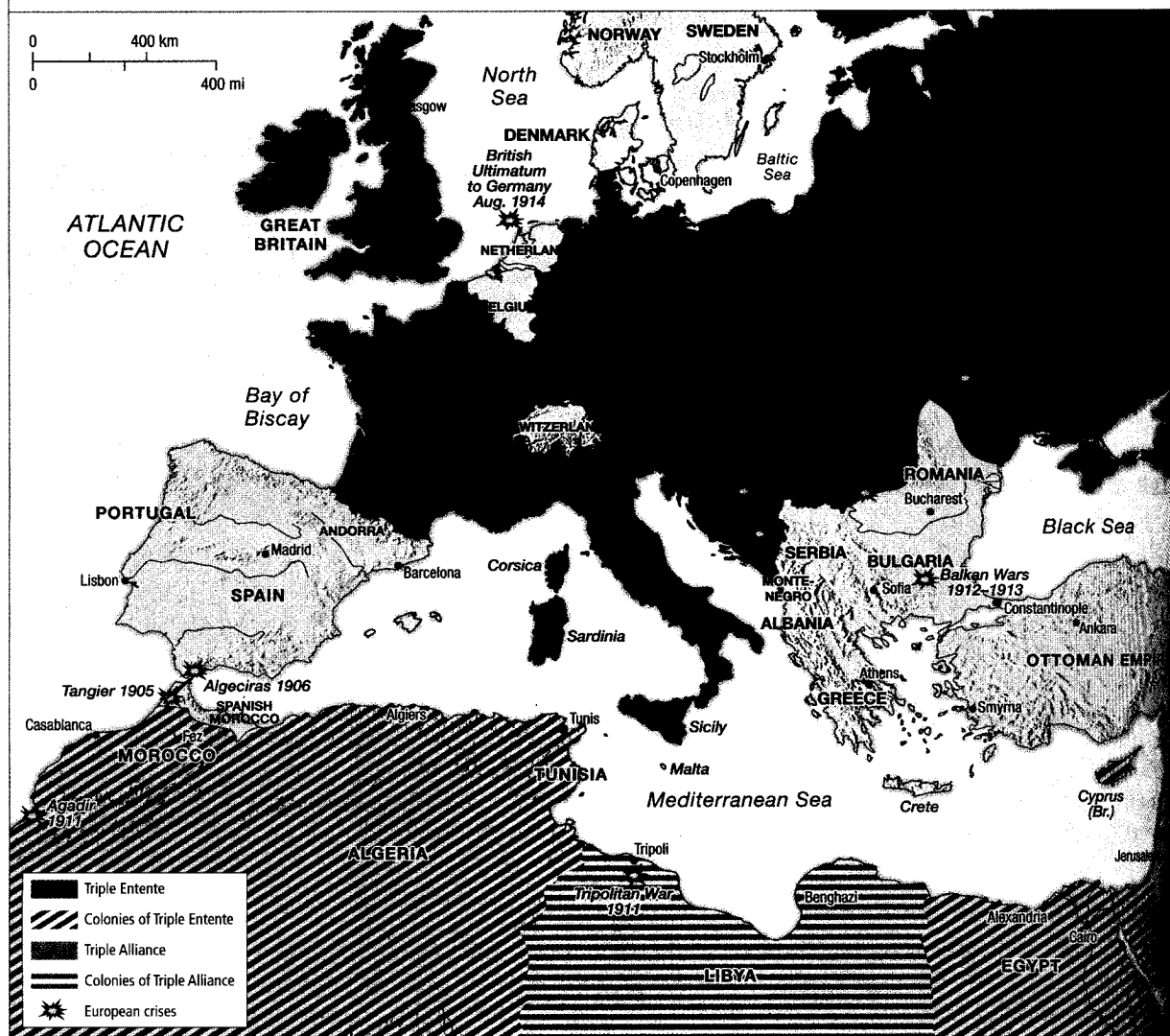
In 1890 Europe was also at peace. The wars of Italian and German unification, fought decades earlier, had altered the balance of power in favor of a newly unified Germany. But under Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, that new nation had emerged as a conservative power, maintaining its position by preserving the status quo. France, humiliated and hoping to regain Alsace and Lorraine, provinces lost to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1870–1871), was kept isolated and powerless by Bismarck's skillful diplomacy. He engineered a series of alliances designed to isolate France and keep Austria and Russia from fighting each other in the Balkans.

Between 1879 and 1882, at Bismarck's initiative, Austria, Italy, and Germany put aside past animosities to sign the **Triple Alliance**, a defensive pact in which each promised to assist the others in the event of unprovoked attack by a third party (Map 31.1). Then, in 1887, a Reinsurance Treaty with Russia gave Germany additional leverage in the Balkans: in the event of war in that region, Germany would oppose whichever nation it considered the aggressor. Since neither Russia nor Austria alone

Bismarck's alliances
maintain peace in Europe

FOUNDATION MAP 31.1 European Alliances and Crises, 1905–1914

The Diplomatic Revolution of 1890–1907 divided Europe into two approximately equivalent alliance systems: the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. Observe that the Triple Alliance occupied a central position on the continent, surrounded by the nations of the Triple Entente. Between 1905 and 1914, a series of international crises, clustered in Southeastern Europe and North Africa, brought Europe ever closer to armed hostilities. Yet between 1905 and 1913, each of these crises was settled peacefully. How did this succession of peaceful resolutions actually make war more rather than less likely in 1914?



William II, Kaiser of Imperial Germany.



could win a war against Germany, Austro-Russian tensions in the Balkans were effectively frozen in place. Moreover, since Italy, Austria, and Russia were each allied with Germany, France was left isolated on the continent with no anti-German allies. These twin pillars of Bismarck's diplomacy—isolation of France and prevention of Balkan war—kept Europe at peace throughout the 1870s and 1880s.

REVERSAL OF BISMARCK'S DIPLOMACY. But starting in 1890, Bismarck's efforts were undone by a new German Kaiser. William I died in March 1888 at age 91; his son Frederick III died three months later of throat cancer. The throne passed to 29-year-old William II,

a brash young man with contempt for German foreign policy.

This prospect was an erratic man who wished to govern in an ill-considered manner. He and his new advisers related the spirit of making it unclear. They therefore

The decision tilted Germany toward nonrenewal of a treaty and compromise possibility, and Russia in the East.

The implications blamed Germany for his mistake. Certain received by other powers so that Germany's colonies, he was that had to importation. The hugely

Abandoning to counter the German Russian expansionist fleet could protect European waters, which these long consult one another.

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RUSSIA AND ITS C problems. Rapid allotments, threatening nationalities, which

a brash young man who dismissed Bismarck in 1890, regarding him as out of touch with contemporary problems. The new Kaiser wanted to play the leading role in German foreign affairs.

This prospect was dangerous for Germany because, although quick-witted, William II was an erratic ruler with no temperament for the hard work required of a monarch who wished to govern as well as reign. Lacking Bismarck's ruthlessness and skill, William took ill-considered actions that quickly compromised Germany's dominant position in Europe. He and his new ministers felt that Germany's Reinsurance Treaty with Russia (1887) violated the spirit of the Triple Alliance of 1882 (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) by making it unclear whether Germany would support Austria or Russia in a Balkan war. They therefore refused to renew the Reinsurance Treaty when it expired in 1890.

The decision for nonrenewal destroyed both of Bismarck's pillars. With one stroke it tilted Germany toward Austria in the Balkans and prompted Russia, which considered nonrenewal a hostile act, to negotiate an alliance with France. This ended France's isolation and compromised Germany's dominant position in Europe. War became a realistic possibility, and if it occurred, Germany would have to fight a two-front war against Russia in the East and France in the West.

The implications of the Franco-Russian alliance were not lost on William II, but he blamed Germany's weakened position on his enemy's intrigues rather than learning from his mistake. Certain of the purity of his motives, he was insensitive to how they were perceived by other governments. Thus in 1898, when he authorized a huge naval expansion so that Germany's fleet could rival Britain's and ensure German access to its overseas colonies, he was astounded to learn that London feared this buildup. As an island nation that had to import food, Britain responded with its own massive increase in naval production. The hugely expensive naval arms race that followed embittered both sides.

Abandoning their historic avoidance of peacetime alliances, the British sought allies to counter the German threat. In 1902 Britain and Japan, both alarmed by German and Russian expansionism in East Asia, concluded an alliance. Now Japan's large Pacific fleet could protect the British Empire in Asia, relieving Britain's Grand Fleet for action in European waters. Even more unprecedented was the Anglo-French Alliance of 1904, in which these longtime enemies agreed to respect each other's African domains and consult one another should a third party (such as Germany) threaten the peace.

Stunned by these developments, but considering Franco-British animosities too deep to permit genuine partnership, German leaders tested the alliance by provoking a crisis over Morocco. But the Anglo-French Alliance held together against German belligerence, and as Germany's international position deteriorated, that belligerence grew. German leaders perceived the empire to be encircled by the Franco-Russian Alliance (which its own diplomatic ineptness had done so much to create), excluded from choice colonies in Asia and Africa that the older British and French empires had already seized, blocked by the British Grand Fleet from access to the colonies it did possess, and barred by British merchants and contracts from markets to which its rapidly expanding industrial might entitled it. Sensing its increasing isolation, Germany became more assertive with each rebuke. Meanwhile, this assertiveness continued to cause other European nations to draw together. In 1907 Britain and Russia, each aligned with France, concluded an accord with each other. This development, unthinkable only a few years earlier, was made possible by dramatic developments in Russia.

RUSSIA AND ITS CHALLENGES. In the early 1900s, Russia suffered from many internal problems. Rapid population growth, which shrunk the average peasants' land allotments, threatened their self-sufficiency. Rising nationalism among non-Russian nationalities, which constituted roughly half the realm's inhabitants, threatened the

Germany unwittingly initiates a Diplomatic Revolution

Mistrust of Germany leads Britain to seek alliances

Germany's sense of isolation intensifies its assertive conduct

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empire's cohesion. Its slowness to industrialize left it lagging behind the West and threatened its great power status. And its ruler, Tsar Nicholas II (1894–1917), rigidly opposed to reforms that would limit his powers, lacked the decisiveness needed to exercise those powers effectively.

Convinced, nonetheless, that Russia must modernize in order to survive, Sergei Witte (*VIT-tuh*), minister of finance from 1892 to 1903, promoted industrialization through government action. He borrowed vast funds abroad (particularly from Russia's new ally, France) to support new enterprises and build railways, especially the monumental trans-Siberian line, which provided access both to Asian markets and to Siberia's abundant resources, including timber and oil. His policies brought impressive increases in Russia's state revenues and industrial output.

But his policies also destabilized Russia. As thousands of peasants moved to cities to work in factories, their dislocation strained the social structure. Uprooted from their villages, crowded into urban slums, and compelled to work long hours at low wages in dangerous, monotonous jobs, Russian factory workers became a powerful force for change. Poor harvests and a weak economy added to the general discontent, as did the empire's efforts to "Russify" its ethnic minorities by forcing them to adopt Russian language and ways.

As social unrest increased, various revolutionary groups emerged. *Liberals* wanted a Western-style parliamentary regime with a constitution and capitalist economy. *Socialist revolutionaries*, rejecting capitalism, wanted a socialist revolution based on the peasant masses. *Marxists*, or *social democrats*, saw the industrial working class as the backbone of a socialist revolution that would transfer ownership of the means of production to the workers. In the early 1900s, growing social unrest was manifested in student demonstrations, industrial strikes, peasant uprisings, and political assassinations that rocked the Russian Empire. Minister of Interior Viacheslav Plehve (1902) and the tsar's uncle, Grand Duke Sergei (1904), were blown to bits by bomb-throwing assassins. Industrial growth, intended to build Russia's wealth and power, seemed to be tearing it apart.

The Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) complicated the unrest. At first Japan's attack prompted a patriotic surge that quieted revolutionary activity. But when military setbacks discredited the tsarist regime, factory workers rebelled against extended work hours and pressures to boost production. In January 1905, a sincere but naive

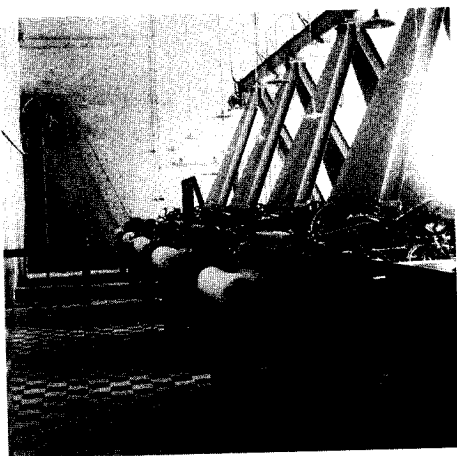
Orthodox priest organized a massive workers' march in Saint Petersburg. The marchers called for shorter workdays, expanded civil rights, and an end to the war. Although they carried icons and sang patriotic hymns, imperial troops opened fire on them, slaughtering several hundred.

Bloody Sunday, as this event was labeled, stunned Russia's people and undermined support for Nicholas II. Within months Russia was engulfed in revolution as strikes and demonstrations spread throughout the land. By October 1905, as massive general strikes—in which all workers, rather than just those in a particular industry, walked off the job—shut down major cities, Saint Petersburg was controlled by a council, or *soviet*, of elected workers' delegates.

Threatened by these events, the tsar ended the war and issued an "October Manifesto," promising a constitution and an elected parliament, or **Duma**. This action satisfied liberals, splitting the opposition and helping to save the regime. Radicals and socialists continued to rebel, but tsarist forces, reinforced by loyal troops returning from the war, eventually crushed the remnants of the revolt.

 **View the Image**
Early Russian Factory
on myhistorylab.com

Russia wrestles with the
dilemma of modernization



A textile mill in Tashkent, Russian Central Asia, around 1900.

The Revolution of 1905
forces Nicholas II to make
political concessions

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The tsar thus survived the Russian Revolution of 1905 by agreeing to share power with the Duma. His new constitution, however, severely restricted this parliament, and his government shut it down when it seemed too radical. In 1907 his prime minister imposed a new electoral system that ensured a loyal majority. The revolution thus did little to limit the regime's power. But it gave Russian workers a brief taste of freedom, taught them how to organize soviets, and provided revolutionaries with experience that they would put to use in revolutions to come.

The war and revolution also helped Russia and Britain overcome their longstanding animosity. Russia's defeat by Japan convinced the British that Russia was less dangerous than Germany, and Russia's reformed government seemed superficially similar to Britain's parliamentary monarchy. Mutually fearful of Germany's growing power, in 1907 the two countries signed an Anglo-Russian Entente, reconciling their claims to colonies and spheres of influence in Asia.

Mistrust of Germany connects Russia and Britain

The Crises of 1908–1913

The Anglo-Russian Entente completed the **Diplomatic Revolution of 1890–1907**, creating a **Triple Entente** (Britain, France, and Russia) to offset the Triple Alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. Europe had moved in 17 years from a continent dominated by Germany to one balanced precariously between competing alliance systems. This development was dangerous not only to Germany but also to European peace. Power relationships among nations are safest when they are *imbalanced*: war is unlikely when one side clearly dominates the other. When equilibrium exists, however, either side may be tempted to test its luck. Such would be the case in Europe after 1907.

The Triple Entente balances the Triple Alliance

In 1908 Austria's decision to annex the Balkan provinces (Map 27.5) of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*her-tseh-gō-VĒ-nah*), which it had administered since 1878 but which technically were owned by the declining Ottoman Empire, provoked a crisis with Russia, which claimed to be the protector of the provinces' Slavic peoples. Germany, supporting Austria, forced Russia to back down by threatening war. This **Bosnian Crisis of 1908–1909** tied Austria even closer to Germany and provoked Russia into funding an immense eight-year military buildup designed to prevent similar humiliations.

In 1911 Germany initiated another crisis, allegedly in an effort to obtain French concessions elsewhere in Africa in return for German recognition of a French protectorate over Morocco. But that aim initially was not clear and war seemed a real possibility. France's ally Britain starkly warned Germany not to treat Britain "as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of Nations." War was avoided when France agreed to the trade, but the crisis frightened Britain and France into concluding a 1912 naval agreement, pledging each to defend the other's interests in case of war. Once again, Germany's belligerence further united its foes.

A series of crises both frightens and reassures Europe

Italy, meanwhile, eager to expand its African holdings, took Tripoli from the Ottomans during a war fought in 1911–1912. Emboldened by the Ottomans' poor performance in this war, four small Balkan nations formed an anti-Turkish alliance. Much to the world's surprise, the Balkan allies drove the Ottomans from the Balkans in the First Balkan War (1912) but then fought among themselves over the spoils in the Second Balkan War (1913). Since the European powers assembled a conference to prevent these wars from spreading and arranged a compromise to safeguard the interests of Austria and Russia, these events actually reassured Europe. By the end of 1913, Europeans felt confident that any future crisis could be managed by negotiation, which had resolved every recent confrontation.

 **Listen to the Audio**
World War I
on myhistorylab.com

Franz Ferdinand's murder provokes a European crisis

Watch the Video
Video Lectures: The Outbreak of World War I on myhistorylab.com

Germany's unconditional support of Austria leads to war in Europe

The Crisis of July 1914

On June 28, 1914, as described at the beginning of this chapter, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, was murdered in Sarajevo by Gavrilo Princip (*PRIN-chip*), a Bosnian assassin trained and equipped in Serbia. Although Franz Ferdinand was not popular in Austria, in a Europe ruled mostly by monarchs the assassination of a crown prince was a very serious matter. The Serbian government was widely considered responsible, and the general expectation was that Austria would somehow punish Serbia.

Austria decided to go to war against Serbia but was uncertain of how Russia, Serbia's protector, might respond, and therefore asked for assurance of German support. Assuming that Tsar Nicholas II would sympathize with the family of the murdered Franz Ferdinand, and therefore considering Russian intervention unlikely, Kaiser William II promised to back any action Austria might take. This guarantee was the infamous “blank check,” a document that would allow Austria to lead Germany and the rest of Europe into war. Austria prepared a ten-point ultimatum, or set of strict demands, the refusal of any one of which would justify Vienna in breaking off diplomatic relations as a prelude to war. The harsh ultimatum was designed to prove unacceptable to Serbia and make war inevitable. But Serbia's reply was conciliatory, impressing even Germany's Kaiser with its effort to keep peace. It fell short of total acceptance, however, so on July 25 Austria broke off relations.

Serbia's moderate response pulled European opinion to the Serbian side. Britain, preoccupied with a dangerous crisis over Irish Home Rule (Chapter 27), assumed that Germany would be receptive to a conference like the one that had contained the Balkan Wars. This time, however, Germany was more interested in confrontation than cooperation. On July 28, Austria declared war on Serbia, and Russia, overcoming any sympathy the tsar may (or may not) have felt for Franz Ferdinand, prepared to rescue the Serbs. France resolved to stand by Russia, and Britain warned the Germans that it might not be able to stay neutral in a Franco-German war. Sobered by these developments, Germany sought on July 30 to restrain Austria, but it was too late. The need to move large numbers of troops on railways placed European armies on rigid timetables. This necessity was particularly pressing in Germany, which, threatened with a war on two fronts, planned to defeat France in six weeks and then turn to deal with Russia, whose less-developed transport system would slow its mobilization for war.

Needing to move before its enemies could prepare, Germany declared war against Russia on August 1 and France on August 3 (Map 31.2). The next day, as Germany's army invaded neutral Belgium on the way to attacking France, Britain, like Germany a guarantor of Belgian neutrality, entered the war on the side of France and Russia. All the great powers of Europe except Italy were now at war.

The July Crisis of 1914, unlike its predecessors, resulted in war for several reasons. Austria wanted to end Serbian ethnic agitation. Germany wanted to back its Austrian ally, assuming it would be better to risk war now than to wait until Russia completed its military buildup. Russia wanted to avoid humiliation like that of 1908–1909. France wanted to avenge the loss of Alsace-Lorraine and support its Russian ally. Britain wanted to avoid a French defeat that would give Germany control of France's ports on the English Channel. And all military leaders wanted to mobilize before their enemies did so. None of these “wants,” however, made war inevitable. European nations had freedom of choice and could have opted against war in 1914. They did not.



Archduke Franz Ferdinand (left) and Emperor Franz Josef of Austria-Hungary.

European powers choose war over peace

MAP 31

The Great War to attack or posture of Germany a

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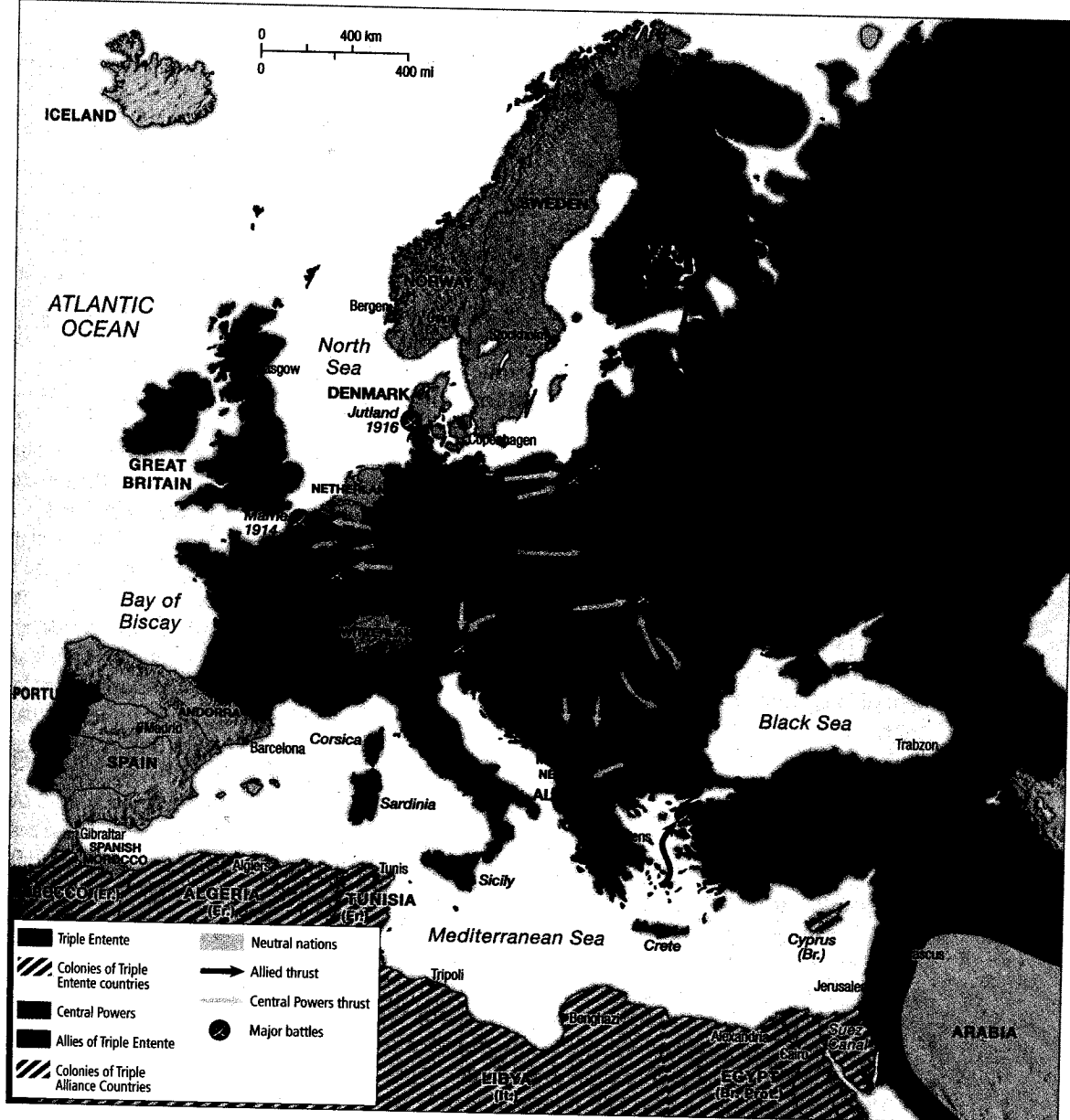
Triple Entente
Colonies of Entente countries
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Allies of Triple Entente
Colonies of Alliance countries

Deadlock

Why didn't the rival alliance win on victory. So the war to d

MAP 31.2 The Great War in Europe and Southwest Asia, 1914–1918

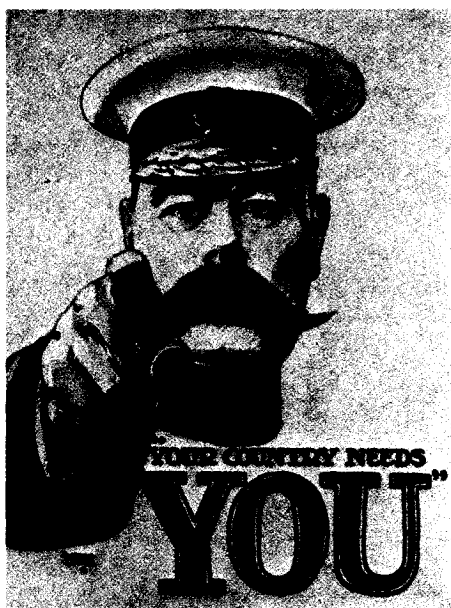
The Great War quickly became a stalemate late in 1914. The Central Powers exploited their central position on the continent to attack on different fronts at different times, but trench warfare, barbed wire, and machine guns all favored the defensive posture of the Triple Entente. Note that German forces conquered an amount of Russian territory equivalent in size to all of Germany and Austria-Hungary combined. Despite this achievement, why did the Central Powers fail to win the war?



Deadlock and Devastation, 1914–1916

Why didn't the European nations decide against war? First, the military capabilities of the rival alliances were so closely matched that each side was willing to take a chance on victory. Second, each nation's leaders expected to win quickly. None of them expected the war to do what it did—come close to destroying European civilization. This helps

Both sides anticipate a short, victorious war



The most famous recruiting poster ever devised, featuring the face of British Field Marshal Lord Kitchener.

explain why they were willing to roll the dice at a time when their forces were so closely balanced. Third, many people in each country actually welcomed the prospect of war as an escape, in the words of poet Rupert Brooke, “from a world grown old and cold and weary,” and believed it would be a purification that would create a stronger, cleaner world. So hundreds of thousands of young men, cheered by their families and sweethearts, marched off to war in August 1914, grateful for the opportunity to prove themselves, rejoicing with Brooke: “Now God be thanked who has matched us with His hour!”

Stalemate on the Western Front

Reality set in quickly, and reality was devastating. Belgian resistance slowed the German army, the British arrived in France more quickly than anticipated, and Russia mobilized with unusual speed to attack Germany in the East. But Germany’s strategy for dealing with a two-front war was unrealistic in any case, as it relied for success on more top-flight combat divisions than the German army possessed. The Kaiser’s forces won some impressive victories, bringing them close to Paris. But at the Marne River, having mobilized the city’s taxis to transport their troops, the French outflanked the Germans and forced them to retreat. By mid-September the opposing armies were deadlocked. Meanwhile, in the East, a premature Russian advance into

East Prussia, designed to relieve pressure on the French in the West, succeeded in doing that but ended in disaster. German Generals Paul von Hindenburg and Erich Ludendorff isolated and destroyed the entire Russian Second Army, ending the threat of invasion and saving Austria, which was being defeated farther south by the Russians.

In just a few months of warfare, losses were appalling. In three months France lost 306,000 soldiers, 3 percent of its military-age males, and more than the United States would later lose during all of World War II. Germany, with a military-age population three times larger than France’s, had lost 241,000 men. Farther east, Russia and Austria had suffered catastrophic losses, with 1.5 million Russian and 1.268 million Austrian troops killed or captured. Russia’s huge population could replace those losses, but Austria’s could not. So the danger to Germany and Austria stemmed not only from Germany’s failure to defeat France quickly but also from the destruction of the cream of the Austro-Hungarian armies. To prevent total collapse on the Eastern Front in 1915, Germany transferred sizable forces eastward and held the defensive in the West.

That defensive gave the Great War its most morbid characteristic: **trench warfare**. From the English Channel to the Franco-Swiss border, the Germans dug an elaborate system of parallel and angled trenches that the French could neither outflank nor pierce. France, perplexed, built trenches of its own. For the next three years, each of these opposing systems prevented any meaningful breakthrough and frustrated generals schooled in attacking rather than defending.

Trenches had been used before. In the American Civil War, Confederate general Robert E. Lee had employed so many of them that his men called him “the King of Spades.” But prior to 1914, trenches had been dug to fortify positions for a battle or siege and then abandoned when it was over. In the Great War, trenches became permanent installations. Their permanence was attributable to barbed wire, which slowed offensives to a crawl, and especially to the machine gun. Capable of firing 11 rounds a second through water-cooled barrels, machine guns swept the entire field in front of a trench, cutting off attackers at the knees. Eventually, offensive technology would be developed to neutralize these factors.

The Western Front stalemated into trench warfare

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DOCUMENT 31.1 Charles Hamilton Sorley, "When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead"

The poetry of the Great War captured in vivid, unforgettable imagery the shocking hopelessness of the gruesome slaughters on the Western Front. Charles Hamilton Sorley was killed in action in 1915, but not before he had written what many have called the saddest poem of the war.

When you see millions of the mouthless dead
Across your dreams in pale battalions go,
Say not soft things as other men have said,
That you'll remember. For you need not so.
Give them no praise. For, deaf, how should they know
It is not curses heaped on each gashed head?
Nor tears. Their blind eyes see not your tears flow.

Nor honour. It is easy to be dead.
Say only this, "They are dead." Then add thereto,
"Yet many a better one has died before."
Then, scanning all the o'ercrowded mass, should you
Perceive one face that you loved heretofore,
It is a spook. None wears the face you knew.
Great Death has made all his forevermore.

SOURCE: Charles Hamilton Sorley, "When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead" (1915).

For the moment, however, bewildered commanders launched repeated attacks "over the top" of the trenches (see page 718), sending soldiers surging into the barbed-wire traps of "no-man's land" between opposing lines in the vain hope of achieving a breakthrough.

Trench warfare consumed soldiers' lives at unprecedented rates, transforming war from violence carrying the prospect of glory into violence of unending degradation (see "Charles Hamilton Sorley, *When You See Millions of the Mouthless Dead*"). Men lived and died in ditches eight feet deep, standing in stagnant water, plagued by rats and vermin, and often living next to the decaying corpses of their comrades. The optimism of the 19th century died on the Western Front, as trenches scarred both the landscapes of northeastern France and the psyches of the men who occupied them.

 Read the Document

Excerpt from *Four Weeks in the Trenches*, Fritz Kreisler
on myhistorylab.com

Efforts to Break the Stalemate

As casualties mounted, each side added allies and sought to break the stalemate. Germany and Austria-Hungary, joined by Bulgaria and Ottoman Turkey in a coalition called the Central Powers, employed mass attacks and artillery bombardments, supplemented on land by poison gas and at sea by German submarine warfare. Britain, France, and Russia, joined by Britain's ally Japan and other nations in a combination called the Allied Powers, relied on mass attacks and a British naval blockade of Germany. Hoping to gain Austrian territory in a peace settlement, Italy joined the Allies in 1915, abandoning its prewar alliance with Germany and Austria.

OFFENSIVES IN THE EAST AND SOUTHEAST. As 1915 began, General Erich von Falkenhayn (*FAHL-ken-hīn*), chief of the German General Staff, argued for a Western offensive. Noting Britain's ability to draw reinforcements from Canada and Australia, he wanted to defeat France quickly. But although Falkenhayn outranked Hindenburg and Ludendorff, they, not he, had won Germany's only decisive victory in 1914, and they demanded an offensive in the East. So in the West, Falkenhayn settled for smaller

 View the Map

Map Discovery: A Typical British Trench System
on myhistorylab.com



Austro-Hungarian soldiers wearing gas masks.

attacks using chlorine gas, a fearsome new weapon that, when inhaled, stimulated fluid production in the lungs to cause death by drowning. Eventually used by both sides, poison gas was limited in its usefulness by shifting winds, which sometimes blew the gas back on the side releasing it, and by the development of gas masks. It nonetheless killed tens of thousands of horses, on which all armies depended for transport, and heightened the impersonal doom of trench warfare.

Hindenburg's insistence on an Eastern offensive was logical. A victory there would prevent Austria's collapse and possibly force Russia, frighteningly short of rifles and artillery shells, to seek a cease-fire. From May to September 1915, the Central Powers' offensive captured more than 750,000 Russian prisoners. This saved the Austrian army, but the Russians withdrew into their vast interior and raised reinforcements to replace their losses, hoping their increasing output of industrial weapons would eventually enable them to expel the Germans. As in France in 1914, Germany won major victories in the East but lacked the overwhelming superiority required to win the war. Italy's entry on the side of the Allies further reduced German prospects, tying down Austrian forces in bloody, debilitating fighting for the remainder of the war.

If the Central Powers could not break the stalemate in the West or East, perhaps the Allies could break it in the southeast. Turkey's entry into the war late in 1914 on the side of the Central Powers closed Russia's southern seaports, since Turkey controlled entry to the Black Sea through the Dardanelles Straits. On April 25, 1915, an improvised landing force of Britons, Australians, and New Zealanders went ashore on the Gallipoli (*gah-LIH-pō-lē*) peninsula, hoping to force the Straits open and knock Turkey out of the war. But it was pinned on the beaches under Turkish artillery fire from defensive positions coordinated by Captain Mustafa Kemal (*moo-STAH-fah keh-MAHL*), who would go on to rule Turkey after the war. The British did not have sufficient troops for a full-scale invasion, and they had underestimated Turkish resistance. By January 9, 1916, the invaders evacuated Gallipoli. Both sides suffered losses in the hundreds of thousands, and the stalemate continued.

THE WAR AT SEA. By the end of 1915, although the Central Powers held a strong position in the heart of Europe, their impressive offensives had failed to defeat any of their enemies.

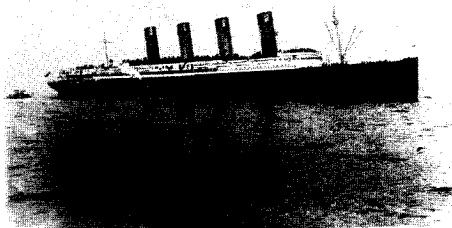
Germany, moreover, was increasingly deprived of food and supplies by a tight British naval blockade. The British Grand Fleet outmatched the German High Seas Fleet in both equipment and seamanship. It could maintain a tight blockade regardless of the number of merchant vessels sunk by German U-boats (submarines), a number that ranged from 50 to 100 per month but failed to stop supplies from reaching Britain.

British naval efforts were primarily defensive, forcing Germany to take the initiative or slowly starve. U-boat warfare raised German hopes but proved frustrating: rules of the sea required that a submarine give warning before launching torpedoes and allow crews and passengers to be rescued. Since this process exposed and endangered these small boats, they often ignored it, casting Germany in the role of an outlaw nation. The sinking of neutral vessels by mistake caused diplomatic crises, as did the sinking in 1915 of the British passenger liner *Lusitania*. That ship was carrying more than a thousand

The Allied landing at Gallipoli fails



Troops from Australia and New Zealand at Gallipoli.



The *Lusitania* while it was still afloat.

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American passengers as well as a cargo of contraband munitions destined for Britain. The heavy loss of life almost forced the United States to break diplomatic relations with Germany, which thereafter temporarily restricted U-boat raids.

U-boat warfare damages
Germany's relations with
the United States

THE VERDUN, SOMME, AND BRUSILOV OFFENSIVES. By early 1916 the balance of forces was shifting to favor the Allies. Tremendous Russian industrial expansion provided adequate modern equipment for the tsar's armies; France mobilized unprecedented numbers of women for factory work, releasing men for combat duty; and Britain, whose army in 1914 had seven combat divisions, now fielded seventy. Made confident by this shift, Allied generals planned a summer offensive of their own, but Falkenhayn struck first, unleashing an offensive against the French at Verdun, a fortress in eastern France.

Verdun was selected for its symbolic significance: as a fortress town since Roman times, it represented France's will to resist. Falkenhayn, not realizing how much French factory work had been shifted to women, believed that France must be running short of military-age men. By besieging Verdun, he meant not to capture it but to force France to defend it by sending in more and more men. Eventually France would either lose Verdun or spread its remaining forces so thin that Germany could break through elsewhere on the Western Front.

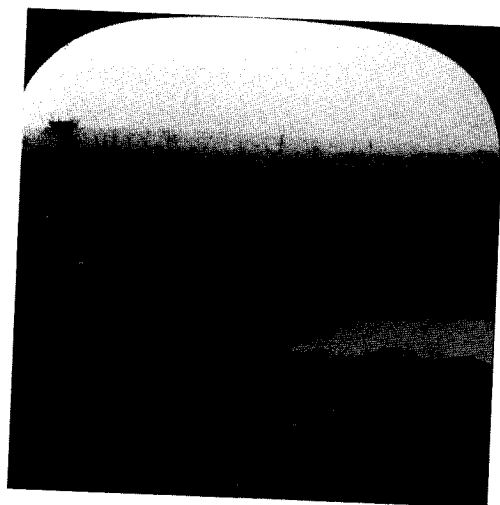
Germany attacked Verdun on February 21 with a bombardment so enormous that the roar of the guns was heard in England. For a few days, it seemed the town would fall, but the French, deciding it must be held, appointed General Philippe Pétain (*PĀ-tan*) to hold it. Pétain entrenched his men in fortifications to wait out the shelling. Eventually, German infantry moved forward and were shot down. By the end of June, each side had lost more than two hundred thousand killed and wounded, and Verdun's crater-scarred landscape resembled the surface of the moon.

The 1916 offensives
devastate the Western
Front

Falkenhayn's failure at Verdun would cost him his command in August, but on July 1 he was still in charge as the Allies opened their offensive on the River Somme in northern France. They, too, placed their faith in overwhelming artillery fire, but they overestimated their own strength and underestimated German defenses. The British Army alone lost twenty thousand dead in the first eight hours, the largest one-day loss in British military history. By August 1 the combatants combined had lost more than 350,000 men, and the front lines had scarcely moved. The Somme offensive finally ended on November 19, with more than 1.2 million men killed or wounded.

Finally the lessons of trench warfare began to sink in. Throwing huge numbers of cloth-clad soldiers at positions protected by barbed wire and machine guns produced carnage without altering the tactical situation in any useful way. The foot soldiers cursed their generals; a popular analysis of the fighting is entitled *Lions Led by Donkeys*. But without technology that could overcome trenches, the generals had few options. Frustrated by their inability to break the stalemate, they could think of nothing more creative than to propel more and more men into the devastation of trench warfare. None of the generals yet advised their governments to seek a negotiated peace, although deadlocked wars in centuries past had been settled by negotiation.

The deadlock in the West did not, however, prevent movement in the East. Falkenhayn had attacked Verdun freely because he thought the 1915 German assault had ruined Russia's offensive capability. He was mistaken. In June 1916, Russian general Alexei Brusilov (*broo-SĒ-loff*) launched the Brusilov offensive, splitting the Austrian Seventh Army in two, taking four hundred thousand



Devastated landscape, northern France.

prisoners, and costing the Central Powers a million casualties. He lacked the rail and road systems to follow up his victories, but he pushed Austria to the brink of collapse. The Central Powers were running out of manpower and resources. It was time for statesmen to find a way to make peace.

The War Against Germany's Colonies

European issues, not colonial issues, caused the Great War. But colonial disputes had contributed significantly to the rising tensions between the new German Empire and the longer-established empires of France and Britain. Once war broke out, Germany fought on two fronts and was unable to defend its overseas possessions adequately. Forces from Britain, France, Belgium, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand picked off those possessions one by one, making the Great War truly global long before the 1917 intervention of the United States.

JAPAN OCCUPIES GERMANY'S PACIFIC EMPIRE. In Asia, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902 obligated Japan to come to Britain's aid if its possessions were attacked by a third party. On August 1, 1914, London informed Tokyo that it did not expect to ask for Japan's intervention. Three days later Japan declared itself neutral, but by August 6 Britain was having second thoughts. The Royal Navy wanted to blockade the German port of Qingdao on China's Shandong Peninsula while hunting German warships and armed merchant ships in order to keep Pacific sea-lanes safe for British commerce. These goals could not be achieved without sending additional British ships to the Pacific, and those ships were needed in the Atlantic. Britain therefore asked Japan for help in capturing or sinking armed German merchant ships, while German warships and the blockade of Qingdao would be handled by the Royal Navy.

This limited collaboration was inconsistent with neutral status. On August 7–8, the Japanese cabinet decided to declare war on Germany and eliminate German influence in China and the Pacific. That frightened China, which feared Japanese more than European expansionism. Britain, recognizing Japan's intent to partition China, urged Japan to remain neutral. But Tokyo argued that Japanese public opinion demanded war with Germany and that the government could not resist the will of the people. Neither claim was fully true, but with Britain preoccupied with Germany in Europe, on August 23 Japan entered the war on its own terms (Map 31.3).

Japan moved at once against the German garrison at Qingdao, ignoring China's neutrality in doing so. Sixty thousand Japanese soldiers, with one British and one Indian battalion, laid siege to the city in early September. Even so, it took until November 7 for the invaders to force the garrison of three thousand German marines to surrender. By that time all of Germany's Pacific holdings had been overrun. New Zealand troops occupied Samoa without resistance on August 29, and on September 15 the Australians accepted the surrender of German New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, where the Germans were led by an artillery captain who had no guns and an equestrian instructor who had no horses. Obviously Germany had never intended to defend the region vigorously. German defenses were no better in the Caroline Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Mariana Islands, and the island of Palau, all of which fell to the Japanese on October 6. Japan's entry into the Great War allowed it to conquer territories that could form an outer defense perimeter for the Japanese Empire in the event of a future conflict with a Pacific power such as the United States.

India's small participation in the siege of Qingdao proved to be only the beginning of a major military commitment made by Britain's most valuable imperial possession. No fighting took place on the subcontinent, but 850,000 Indian soldiers fought beside

Japan's entry creates a global war

India makes an enormous contribution to the Allied war effort

MAP 31.3

When Britain declared war on Germany in 1914, German holdings in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific were Allied war enemies.



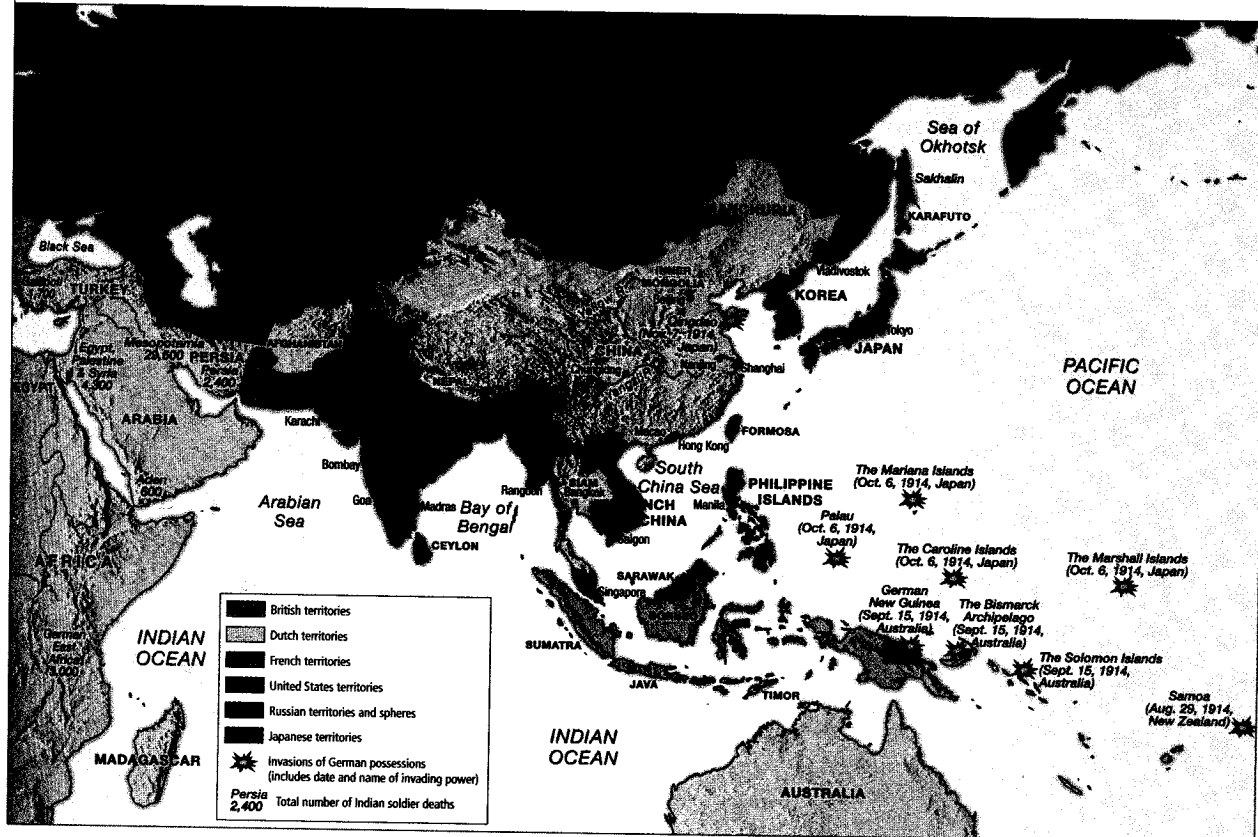
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MAP 31.3 The Great War in Asia, 1914–1918

When Britain asked Japan for assistance in tracking down armed German merchant vessels, Japan took the opportunity to declare war on Germany and occupy German possessions in East Asia and the Pacific. Notice that Australia and New Zealand occupied other German holdings on behalf of the British Empire. Farther west, India made significant contributions in men, horses, and supplies to the Allied war effort. Why was Britain more prepared than Germany to fight a global war on a global scale?



the British in Asia, Africa, and Europe. Nearly 50,000 died in those actions. India also contributed 150,000 horses and mules, 11,000 camels, 75,000 tons of timber, and 550 million rounds of ammunition. The extent of this assistance made Britain's refusal to grant meaningful autonomy to India after 1918 very difficult for Indians to accept.

DEVASTATION IN AFRICA. Germany's African colonies were not particularly valuable in themselves; they were table scraps left to the Germans after the British and French Empires had eaten their fill. But they could serve as staging areas for attacks on British and French interests, and their six important wireless stations could relay messages from Germany to its ships around the world. Britain and France wasted no time in attacking Germany in Africa.

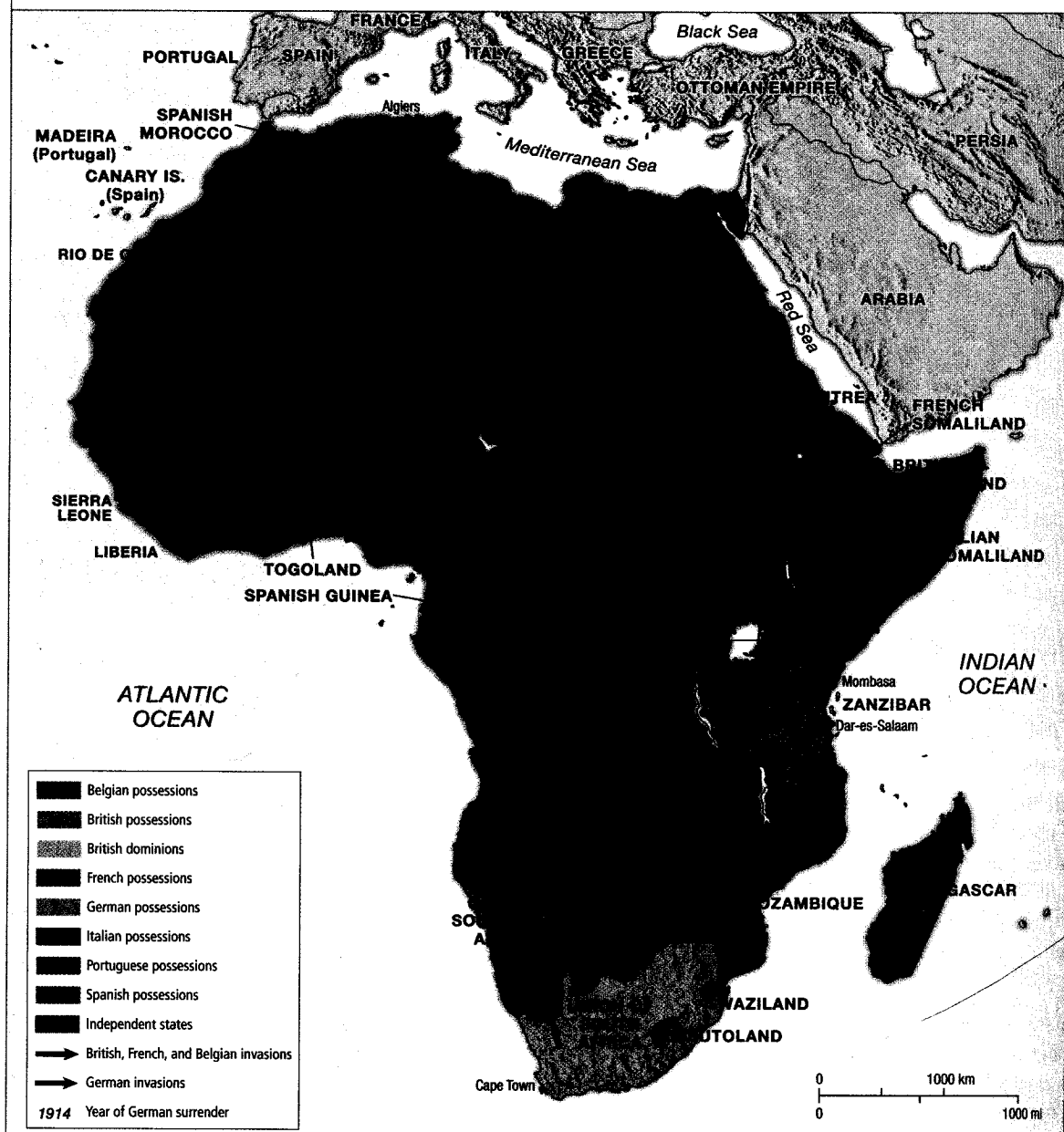
The easiest Allied victory came in the West African territory of Togo (Map 31.4). Surrounded by the British



An ammunition factory in India.

MAP 31.4 The Great War in Africa, 1914–1918

Germany's African colonies were lightly defended and could never have affected the fighting in Europe, but each of them contained at least one wireless station that could relay communications from Germany to German ships around the world. The Allies wanted to destroy these stations, and also to remove these colonies from German control. Observe that the stiffest fighting occurred in German East Africa, where forces under Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck remained in the field until after the armistice was signed in 1918. Why would the Allies have had such difficulty overcoming German resistance in East Africa?



Gold Coast and French West Africa, it fell to a joint invasion on August 27, 1914. The western Central African colony of Kamerun proved harder for the Allies. A combination of skillful German resistance, difficult topography, and the impossibility of fighting during five months of torrential rains delayed Allied victory into 1916. By that time German South-west Africa had already surrendered to a joint force of 60,000 Britons and Boers.

That left a force of fewer than a veteran of the war launched a flag beneath the forces repelled his efforts to collapse in Africa and ended Smuts, a man of the Boer War.

Smuts later British forces soldiers from Lettow, however, who had enlisted his German-again around the world considered his command fought the Battle in France.

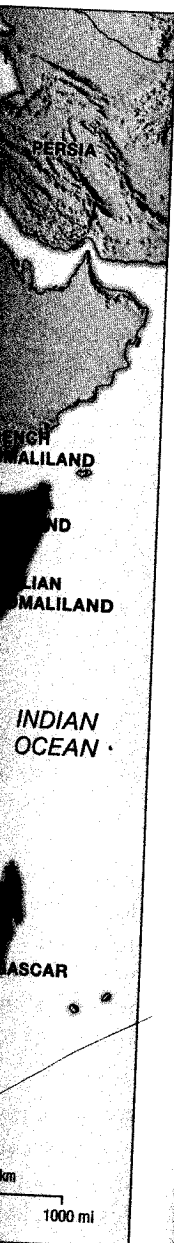
The battle of Kamerun was ravaged by the burned villages of hundreds of thousands of Africans drawn into the global economy. East, West, and South, but to Africa with little more.

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War's hardships in different nations. Millions of raw materials restricted each. Many families often required plants.

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That left German East Africa, a sprawling colony as large as France, with a defense force of fewer than three thousand men commanded by Colonel Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck, a veteran of the Boxer Rebellion who had no intention of surrendering to anyone. Lettow launched raids into British East Africa (Kenya) and Uganda in 1914, raising the German flag beneath Mount Kilimanjaro and causing an uproar among Britain's colonists. His forces repelled a joint British-Indian offensive that November, after which he confined his efforts to guerrilla warfare, fighting and quickly withdrawing. After German resistance collapsed in southwestern Africa, experienced troops from that conflict arrived in East Africa and embarked on a 1916 campaign under the command of General Jan Christiaan Smuts, a master of unconventional warfare who had repeatedly frustrated the British in the Boer War.

Smuts launched a multinational offensive from four different colonies at once, using British forces from Kenya and Nyasaland, Belgian troops from the Congo, and Portuguese soldiers from Mozambique, hoping to encircle Lettow and end the fighting in Africa. Lettow, however, now commanded more than 16,000 men, most of them native Africans who had enlisted in his cause and knew the terrain better than Smuts. Lettow divided his German-African forces, broke out southward into Mozambique, moved northward again around Lake Nyasa, and ended up in northern Rhodesia, where he finally surrendered his command on November 25, 1918. His bloodied but undefeated troops had fought the British as recently as November 12, one day after the Armistice was signed in France.

The battles over Germany's colonies devastated much of Africa. Campaigning in Kamerun lasted two years and wrecked much of the countryside. East Africa was ravaged by the constant fighting between Germany and Britain, which resulted in burned villages, loss of crops and stored food, and the drafting of more than one hundred thousand Africans to serve as soldiers and porters. Nearly 10 percent of Africans drafted died, mostly from malnutrition and disease. To make matters worse, the global influenza pandemic of 1918 killed over 3 percent of the entire population of East, West, and Central Africa. To Europeans, Africa was a sideshow to the main war, but to Africans it was everything they had. By 1918 they responded to the Allied victory with little more than exhaustion and relief.

Germans fight the Allies in
East Africa

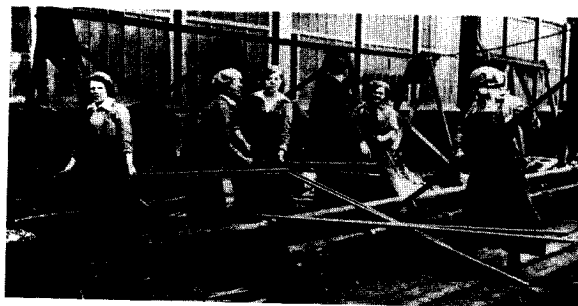
The Great War creates
chaos in Africa

European Civilian Life During the Great War

War's hardship lay heaviest on the soldiers, but noncombatants suffered, too, although in different ways. By the end of 1916, the war had disrupted civilian life in all warring nations. Military needs took precedence in distribution of food, clothing, and critical raw materials. Inevitable shortages at home were handled through rationing, which restricted each person or family to a fixed quantity of each item per month or year. Many families lost members to military service, while those remaining at home were often required to work up to 72 hours a week in war plants.

Since Britain was not invaded, its people suffered least, but their lives were not easy. Britain imported much of its food, and U-boat raids jeopardized both agricultural and industrial imports. The British avoided malnutrition through strict rationing, and Germany's inability to sink the entire British merchant marine allowed imports to reach England, but birth weights declined and vitamin deficiencies afflicted many children. British soldiers were probably the war's best-fed troops, but at the expense of provisions for people at home.

Women workers in a British shipyard.



France uses women in factories and on farms

In France, the huge casualty lists of 1914 led to the drafting of most able-bodied men and their replacement in factories and on farms by women. France lost a higher percentage of men aged 18 to 25 than any other warring nation, leaving many women without spouses and depressing the birthrate for the next two decades. German occupation of northeastern France cost that nation 80 percent of its prewar industry. New factories were established farther south, but the French people suffered severe shortages of manufactured consumer goods for the rest of the war.

Germany suffered tremendously, largely because of the slow strangulation imposed by the British blockade. Having counted on swift victory, the Kaiser's regime had no plans for allocating resources or feeding people at home in a lengthy war. Resource allotment was eventually handled by a central government agency, as the German economy shifted all production priorities to the war effort. More than a million women joined the industrial workforce, leaving children in the care of grandparents or aunts and necessitating rapid overhauling of workplaces—for example, through installation of women's lavatories on factory floors. Long hours of wartime work ruined the health of many malnourished women, unaccustomed to strenuous physical labor.

The British blockade causes malnutrition in Germany

Malnutrition was the principal challenge facing the German home front. Germany in 1913 imported one third of its food supply. The British blockade cut off food imports, and the harvests of 1916 and 1917 were awful because of fertilizer shortages and terrible weather. In the “turnip winter” of 1916–1917, turnips and other vegetables usually fed to livestock became main dishes on German dinner tables. Bread was made from one part flour and two parts sawdust, occasionally mixed with powdered limestone. Rations declined to 1,000 calories per day, although 2,280 is the average required for adult health. About 750,000 Germans died of malnutrition between 1914 and 1918, while many others fell to disease, their immune systems weakened by lack of food, the rationing of soap to one small bar per month, and the rationing of coal, which lowered household temperatures to levels dangerous in Germany's chilly climate.

In Russia, the government encouraged wartime sacrifice by banning the sale of vodka. At first the results were beneficial: criminal cases in Russia's capital declined 80 percent, and the incidence of poverty dropped by 75 percent as savings deposits grew. But consumption of tea and sugar increased tremendously, and by 1916 alcohol-starved Russians were drinking varnish and cologne. Russian farmers kept pace with food demand, but soldiers at the front were fed first. Russia's railway system eventually proved unable to supply both soldiers and cities in a country partially occupied by enemy forces, triggering cataclysmic revolutions in 1917.

Year of Revolution, 1917

The year 1917 proved pivotal for both sides. The Allies gained a long-term advantage with the entry on their side of the United States. But mutinies in France and revolutions in Russia hurt the Allied cause in the short run, giving the Germans the edge going into 1918.

The United States Enters the War

The United States tries to remain neutral

Woodrow Wilson, president of the neutral United States, tried to end the war late in 1916 by asking both sides to state the terms they needed to ensure their future security. The request was modest, but results were disappointing: each alliance presented unpromising demands that were mutually exclusive. Reelected in November 1916 on the slogan “He kept us out of war,” Wilson watched uneasily, fearing that unless the conflict ended soon, he would be unable to keep America out much longer.

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On January 31, 1917, Wilson's apprehensions grew stronger. The Germans, faced with continuing military stalemate and starving from Britain's blockade, resumed unrestricted submarine warfare. The Kaiser's advisors argued that U-boats could strangle Britain and end the war quickly; they minimized the consequences of a break with the United States, whose small army would need months of expansion and training, and whose soldiers would have to be ferried to Europe in troop ships that U-boats could sink. Their argument was desperate rather than logical, but the longer the stalemate lasted, the weaker the Central Powers became and the more willing they were to grasp at any possible solution.

America's reaction to Germany's unleashing of its U-boats startled Berlin. On February 26, 1917, Wilson asked Congress for permission to arm merchant ships. Three days later the U.S. government published the **Zimmermann Note**, an intercepted effort by German diplomat Arthur Zimmermann to bribe Mexico into an alliance against the United States by offering to return Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona, lost in the Mexican-American War of 1846–1848, in the event of German victory. Public outrage over this offer and persistent U-boat attacks against American shipping led Wilson to ask Congress for a declaration of war on April 2, 1917. Congress complied four days later, but not until 1918 did large numbers of U.S. soldiers, transported across the Atlantic by naval convoys for protection against German U-boats, arrive in France. When they did, they brought new energy that helped defeat the Germans.



Anti-German propaganda.

Germany's actions bring the United States into the war

Mutinies in the French Army

In the meantime, however, widespread mutinies rocked France's war-weary armies. Following the failure of an April 1917 offensive, nearly half the units in the French army refused to participate in further attacks.

The French government took the mutinies seriously because they were national in scope, involving civilian as well as military discontent. French soldiers lived in terrible conditions, ate inadequate food, and received almost no leave time. Their families endured high prices, long workweeks, and grinding anxiety over loved ones at the front. Both soldiers and families suffered from the stress of an apparently endless war. The government responded by suppressing strikes at home, naming the controversial, passionately anti-German, 76-year-old Georges Clemenceau (*klā-mahn-SŌ*) as prime minister, and appointing as army chief General Pétain, hero of Verdun. Pétain improved the food, granted regular leaves, and punished thousands of mutinous soldiers. Most important, he suggested that future attacks would be mounted only if they had legitimate prospects of success. Building on his reputation as a general who never asked men to sacrifice their lives needlessly, he gradually restored discipline and ended the crisis.

The French mutinies were a lost opportunity for the Germans. Unaware of the protests, German commanders Hindenburg and Ludendorff, having reoriented German strategy eastward after replacing Falkenhayn in 1916, concentrated on the Eastern Front throughout 1917. That shift may have saved the French army.

France limits the impact of mutinies

The Russian Revolutions

Nothing, however, could save the Russian monarchy, battered by German advances and the breakdown of Russia's wartime food supply system. In March 1917, food shortages sparked a spontaneous revolt that overthrew the tsarist regime. For the next eight

months, an ineffective transitional regime sought vainly to restore order and maintain the war effort, but it was overthrown in November by Marxist revolutionaries, committed to removing Russia from the war and establishing a socialist society.

STRESSES AND STRAINS OF THE GREAT WAR. The Great War was disastrous for Russia from the outset. In the war's first month, as Germany invaded France, the Russians had rushed to relieve their French allies by attacking Germany from the East. By prompting the Germans to divert troops from France, this assault helped the French hold on. But the unprepared and poorly led Russians were badly defeated and never fully recovered.

Russia staggers under the war's burdens

As the war continued and supplies of rifles, munitions, and food ran low, Russia's situation went from bad to worse. Russian forces fought well against Austria, but they were no match for the Germans, whose 1915 offensive pushed deep into the tsarist empire. Huge numbers of refugees, fleeing the German advance on foot, overwhelmed Russian roads and towns, undermining morale and further slowing the flow of supplies.

In August of that year, faced with a series of defeats, Tsar Nicholas II made a fateful decision: he assumed command of Russia's armies himself. His goals were to raise the soldiers' morale with his presence at the front, and to signal that Russia would stay in the war despite crippling setbacks. But the tsar's lack of military expertise soon made him a liability, and his absence from the capital left Russia reliant on his wife, Empress Alexandra, for governmental administration. And she was distracted and increasingly discredited by her connections with a dissolute Siberian "holy man" called Rasputin, who was apparently able to heal her son Alexis, heir to the Russian throne.

THE FALL OF THE RUSSIAN MONARCHY. Alexis had hemophilia, a congenital condition that kept his blood from clotting, so even the slightest cut or bruise could cause him to bleed to death. But Rasputin, apparently through prayer, seemed to be able to stop the bleeding. Seeing him as a savior sent by God, Alexandra came to trust him fully and rely on his advice.

Rasputin and Alexandra prove unable to lead Russia effectively

Unfortunately for the monarchy's public image, Rasputin also led a life of public drunkenness and debauchery. Moreover, Alexandra herself was originally from Germany, the hated enemies' homeland. And to protect her son, his condition was kept secret, so the public did not know why Rasputin enjoyed her favor. As she systematically replaced effective ministers with unscrupulous incompetents favored by Rasputin, Russia's internal order disintegrated. The result was scandal: while the tsar was at the front, it seemed, a treacherous German woman and her depraved friend were ruining Russia.

As the situation deteriorated, even loyal monarchists lost faith in the regime. Despite all efforts, the Duma could overcome neither the blunders of Russian officials nor the skills of German armies. Finally, in December 1916, a reactionary Duma deputy and two relatives of the royal family decided to murder Rasputin. First they fed him wine and pastries laced with cyanide poison. Then, when he remained unfazed, they shot him, clubbed him till he was unconscious, and drowned him in a canal.

The murder changed little. The Germans were still advancing, the inept ministers were still in office, internal order was still breaking down, and the distraught empress continued to hold power. Even as she conducted seances to communicate with her departed advisor, patriotic Russians and dedicated Duma deputies began to look for ways to replace their failing leaders with a more capable regime.

Meanwhile, a far deeper and broader revolt was taking shape among the Russian masses. By this time, runaway inflation, sparked by the printing of excess currency to pay for the war effort, had eroded people's meager incomes, while the hardships of continued conflict had pushed them to the breaking point. In the villages, from which most able men had long since been sent to the front, the remaining overstrained peasants refused to sell their grain in return for worthless currency. Cities ran out of bread, and

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as work hours increased to meet war demands while purchasing power fell, many urban workers went on strike. At the front, where millions of Russian troops had been killed, wounded, or captured, soldiers began questioning both the war and their orders. Pushed beyond all patience, the masses began to move.

Early in 1917 tensions exploded in Russia's capital, renamed Petrograd (Peter's city) during the war because Petersburg sounded too German. On March 8, International Women's Day, exasperated female textile workers started a mass demonstration. They were joined by throngs of women who were waiting in long lines for bread and by striking men from the city's other industries. By the next day, the whole city was on strike, and rioters controlled the streets. Away at the warfront, Nicholas responded by ordering local troops to disperse the demonstrators. On March 11 they did so, shooting into the rioting crowds and effectively clearing the streets. But that night the tormented troops, upset at being ordered to shoot their own people, resolved not to do it again, and some started to mutiny. On March 12 the rioting resumed, but when soldiers were ordered to fire at the crowds they shot their officers instead.

The tsar's authority had evaporated. On March 15, pressed by several Duma deputies and army officers, he renounced the throne for himself and his sickly son. Nicholas's brother, next in line, wisely refused to accept it. The 300-year-old imperial Russian monarchy silently ceased to exist.

DUAL POWER AND THE BOLSHEVIK CHALLENGE. In the midst of the revolution, two important bodies emerged to dominate developments for the next eight months. One was the **Provisional Government**, a temporary cabinet composed largely of Duma leaders, which assumed power until a new constitution could be enacted. Another was the **Petrograd Soviet**, made up of deputies elected by workers and soldiers, modeled on the soviet of 1905.

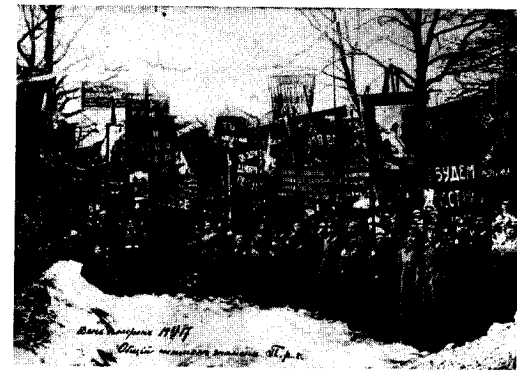
The Provisional Government, led by liberals, proclaimed democratic rights and freedoms for all, and promised to hold elections for a constituent assembly that would decide the future form of rule. But it alienated peasants by postponing major land reforms. It failed to fully restore internal order, or to solve Russia's economic problems. Most disastrously, it kept Russia in the war, determined to press on to victory despite the suffering of the people.

The Petrograd Soviet, led by socialists who believed Russia too economically primitive for a socialist regime, agreed to let the Provisional Government manage matters for the time being. Backed by strong popular support, however, the Soviet sought to shape policy, creating an ambiguous situation that Russians called "dual power." As the Petrograd Soviet called for broad reforms and peace "without annexations or indemnities," local soviets, elected by workers, soldiers, and peasants, sprang up all over Russia.

Following these events from afar was Vladimir Ilich Ulianov (*ool-YAH-noff*), better known as Lenin. Fifteen years earlier, as a rising socialist leader, he had challenged the orthodox Marxist view that industrial workers would eventually create a socialist revolution. The workers, he argued, would not do this on their own: they would merely form unions and settle for better wages and working conditions. Revolution, he asserted, must instead be made by a dedicated group of professional revolutionaries, acting as the workers' "vanguard." His views had split Russian Marxists into two factions: his supporters, who called themselves **Bolsheviks** ("those in the majority"), and their opponents, called **Mensheviks** ("those in the minority"). Having fled Russia to avoid arrest by tsarist police, Lenin had been attending a conference of European socialists in Switzerland when the Great War broke out. Switzerland was neutral in the conflict, and as part of its neutrality, it

The Russian monarchy breaks under the strain of war

 **View the Image**
Soviet Poster, 1917
on myhistorylab.com



Burying the fallen, Petrograd, March 1917.

Dual centers of power cause chaos in Russia



Lenin.

prohibited political leaders and men of military age who were citizens of warring nations from leaving the country. Lenin was trapped in Switzerland along with other Russians in exile.

Now, suddenly, Russia was in revolution, and Lenin could not be part of it. His frustration grew as he learned that Soviet leaders, including some of his Bolsheviks, had let the Provisional Government take power rather than launch a socialist rebellion. In a sealed train provided by the Germans, who helped him return in hopes that his presence would weaken Russia's war effort, Lenin made his way to Petrograd in April. Once there, he stunned his socialist colleagues by demanding an immediate end to the "imperialist war" and the overthrow of the Provisional Government. He also called for the **nationalization** of all Russian land—the forced transfer of private property to state control. Later he simplified his views into slogans appealing to the Russian masses: "Peace!" "Land!" "Bread!" and "All power to the Soviets!"

Lenin's Bolsheviks appeal to ordinary Russians

Although Soviet leaders considered Lenin's ideas too radical, workers found them attractive and support for the Bolsheviks grew. So did their upper ranks. In May, Leon Trotsky, a brilliant Marxist orator and organizer who had helped lead the soviet of 1905, returned from exile in New York. Though a longtime political opponent of Lenin, he now joined him in pushing for immediate revolution, adding immensely to the energy and effectiveness of the Bolshevik leadership.

Confusion followed. In July radical workers and sailors, inspired by Lenin's ideas and angered at the Soviet's refusal to take power, rose in rebellion in Petrograd. Lenin, believing the uprising premature, at first tried to stop it and then reluctantly gave it his support. But the "July Days" revolt failed when Soviet leaders rejected its demands, and forces loyal to the Provisional Government, influenced by rumors that Lenin was a German agent, disarmed the rebels and arrested some Bolshevik leaders. When Lenin himself fled to Finland, it appeared that the Bolshevik movement would collapse.

Read the Document

Bolshevik Seizure of Power, 1917

on myhistorylab.com

THE BOLSHEVIK TRIUMPH. Then, in September, the Bolsheviks were inadvertently rescued by actions of Russian conservatives. Eager to strengthen the Provisional Government and shut down the Soviet, General Lavr Kornilov (*kor-NĒ-loff*), the army's commander-in-chief, began sending troops toward Petrograd. Russia's prime minister, Alexander Kerensky, fearing a right-wing coup, fired the general and called on the people to "save the revolution." Bolshevik leaders, including Trotsky, were released from prison and quickly took charge of the resistance, in which Bolshevik sailors and railway workers defeated the "Kornilov mutiny."

Suddenly the Bolsheviks were heroes. As their support among workers grew, they gained a majority in the Petrograd Soviet and elected Trotsky its chair. Lenin returned in October, and together they planned a new revolution, timed to coincide with an All-Russian Congress of Soviets, convening in the capital on November 7, 1917. Early that morning, Bolshevik Red Guards seized the city's railway stations and other strategic locations. By afternoon, most of Petrograd was in their hands. That evening, with 390 of the 650 delegates, the Bolsheviks took control of the Congress of Soviets. When Mensheviks and others walked out in protest, Trotsky rhetorically relegated them to the "dustbin of history." The next day the Bolsheviks completed their coup by storming the headquarters of the Provisional Government.

Moving quickly to implement their program, the Bolsheviks formed a Soviet government with Lenin at its head. They issued a Decree on Peace, declaring an end to the war, and a Decree on Land, authorizing peasants to divide up nobles' estates. They nationalized banking and foreign trade and urged workers to take control of factories. After several weeks of fighting, they defeated the remnants of the Provisional Government, took charge of Moscow, and spread their power to other Russian cities. In November they

The Bolsheviks take power in Russia

The Bolsheviks move to fulfill their promises

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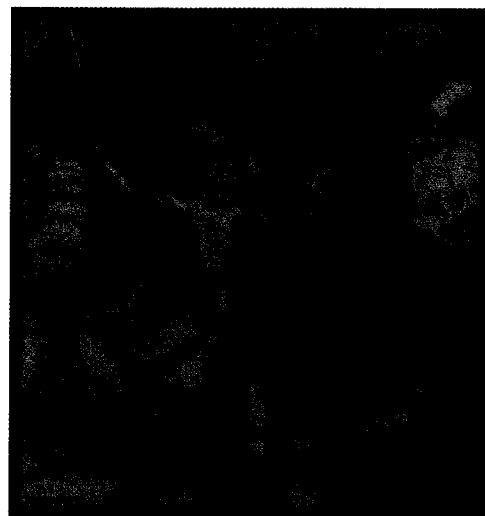
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permitted previously planned elections for the constituent assembly, but when it became clear they could not control the assembly, they shut it down in January 1918 after it met for only one day. They also adopted the Western calendar, moved the capital to Moscow, began to repress the Orthodox Church, and officially started calling themselves Communists.

Further actions by the new regime underscored its radical nature. It declared equal status for all Soviet citizens, without regard to social class or gender, making Soviet Russia the first major country to provide legal equality and full voting rights to all women. It also proclaimed equality for Russia's many ethnic minorities, some of whom, including Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, and Poles, gained independence at the end of the Great War. And, determined to get Russia out of the war and fulfill their Decree on Peace, Russia's new rulers began seeking a separate peace with Germany.



Bolshevik poster extolling the revolution.

Year of Decision, 1918

As 1918 began, the outlook for Germany appeared favorable. The Allies stood to gain eventually from the arrival of fresh American troops, but few had arrived thus far. In the meantime, by making peace with Russia, the Germans could move half a million battle-tested troops from the Eastern to the Western Front, giving them a huge advantage in northern France. It seemed that they might break the stalemate and win the war before the Americans could make much difference.

Barely noticed in all the turmoil was the use in November–December 1917 of a new technology that might favor the Allies. The British sent three hundred ungainly machines into combat at Cambrai in northern France and won a limited but highly significant victory. The perplexed Germans called these machines “power-driven mechanized vehicles on treads that destroy trenches.” The more succinct British called them “tanks.”

Russian Withdrawal from the War

On March 3, 1918, German and Soviet officials signed the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, ending Russia's participation in the Great War. In a calculated risk of dazzling magnitude, the Bolsheviks gave Germany two thirds of Russia west of the Ural Mountains in return for peace. Lacking an army capable of stopping the Germans, and anxious to maintain worker support by keeping his 1917 promises, Lenin explained that the Bolsheviks needed peace to consolidate their power.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk gave the Germans access to huge supplies of timber, oil, and grain from western Russia, but more important, it freed fifty combat-ready divisions for immediate transfer to the Western Front. There Ludendorff and Hindenburg were preparing to batter the Allies into submission. The Americans were starting to arrive in force: three hundred thousand had debarked by March, and 1.3 million would land in France by August. But these raw recruits were not as militarily valuable as the five hundred thousand battle-toughened Germans transferred from East to West. If the war lasted until 1919, the influx of fresh Americans would eventually alter the balance in favor of the Allies, but no such alteration seemed possible in 1918.

The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk enables Germany to fight on one front

The Great March Offensive and Influenza Pandemic

The Great March Offensive began well for the Germans: 76 German divisions overran 28 British divisions, pushing them back toward Paris. Desperate to avoid catastrophe, the British agreed to serve under the French general Ferdinand Foch (*FŌSH*), whose appointment as overall commander of Allied forces on April 3, 1918, saved the situation by giving one man unconditional authority to allocate reserves.

Foch's efforts to stiffen Allied resistance were aided by Americans and by the flu. By late May, German forces stood only 56 miles from Paris, but there they were blocked by inexperienced American troops at Belleau Wood. This unexpected U.S. victory startled the Germans. Driven to the limits of their endurance, they soon fell victim to one of history's deadliest afflictions: the great influenza pandemic of 1918.

This disease, which incapacitated half a million German soldiers in June, was much more deadly than the varieties of flu that today kill more than 36,000 Americans each winter. Sweeping the globe in 1918, it targeted young, healthy people with vigorous immune systems, killing between 70 and 100 million people. Infected with catastrophic fevers and severe respiratory infections, many sufferers literally drowned in their own blood and fluids. Advancing German troops, exposed to the elements in an unusually wet spring and malnourished because of the British blockade, proved far more susceptible than well-fed Allies quartered in trenches, houses, and barns.

Unity of command enabled the Allies to exploit the German plight. On July 18, Foch committed Allied reserves to a surprising counteroffensive. The German lines shuddered and fell back. After four years of brutal war, they lacked the manpower reserves to blunt the Allied assault, and in technological development they had fallen fatally behind. Technology, which in 1914 had favored the defensive, now provided the attacker with the tank as a means of destroying trenches. The Allies had produced more than a thousand quality tanks, while the Germans had built about fifty inferior ones.

Ludendorff tried unsuccessfully to stabilize his front, but German forces were demoralized by defeat, weakened by disease, terrified by Allied tanks, and disheartened by the prospect of continuing American arrivals. Foch threw everything he had into a broad-front assault on September 26; two days later Ludendorff's nerve cracked, and he decided to ask the Kaiser to seek an armistice. One day after that, Germany's ally Bulgaria asked for an armistice on the Balkan Front. With Bulgaria out of the war, Allied forces could drive northwest from the Balkans into Austria-Hungary, defenseless there since it had committed all its troops to the Italian Front. Austria's collapse would open a "back door" into Germany, which lacked sufficient reserves to defend a new front. Bulgaria's surrender was the final blow. The war in Europe was nearly over.

Decision in Southwest Asia

In Southwest Asia, the Great War was ending as well. In entering the war on the side of the Central Powers, the Ottoman Empire had committed itself to more than its limited infrastructure and industrial base could support. An Ottoman attack on Russia through the Caucasus Mountains in December 1914 proved disastrous, as more than thirty thousand Turks died of frostbite and the Russians counterattacked successfully. The campaign was catastrophic not only for the Ottomans but also for their Armenian subjects.

The Russian army's counteroffensive included a division of Christian Armenians, who reportedly massacred the inhabitants of several Turkish villages. This alleged atrocity, coupled with the April 1915 declaration of a secessionist Armenian government backed by the Russians, caused many Turks to doubt the loyalty of people of Armenian

A pandemic of influenza kills many millions throughout the world

Bulgaria's surrender dooms the Central Powers



An Ottoman grenade with a fuse made from rope.

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descent. Between 1915 and 1918, according to many historians, half a million Armenians were deported to Mesopotamia, while more than a million were murdered outright or died of disease and starvation during forced marches across desert regions. The scholarly and political disputes over how many were killed and whether or not these actions constituted genocide, the deliberate and systematic destruction of an entire race or ethnic group, pale beside the immensity of the human tragedy that befell the Armenians.

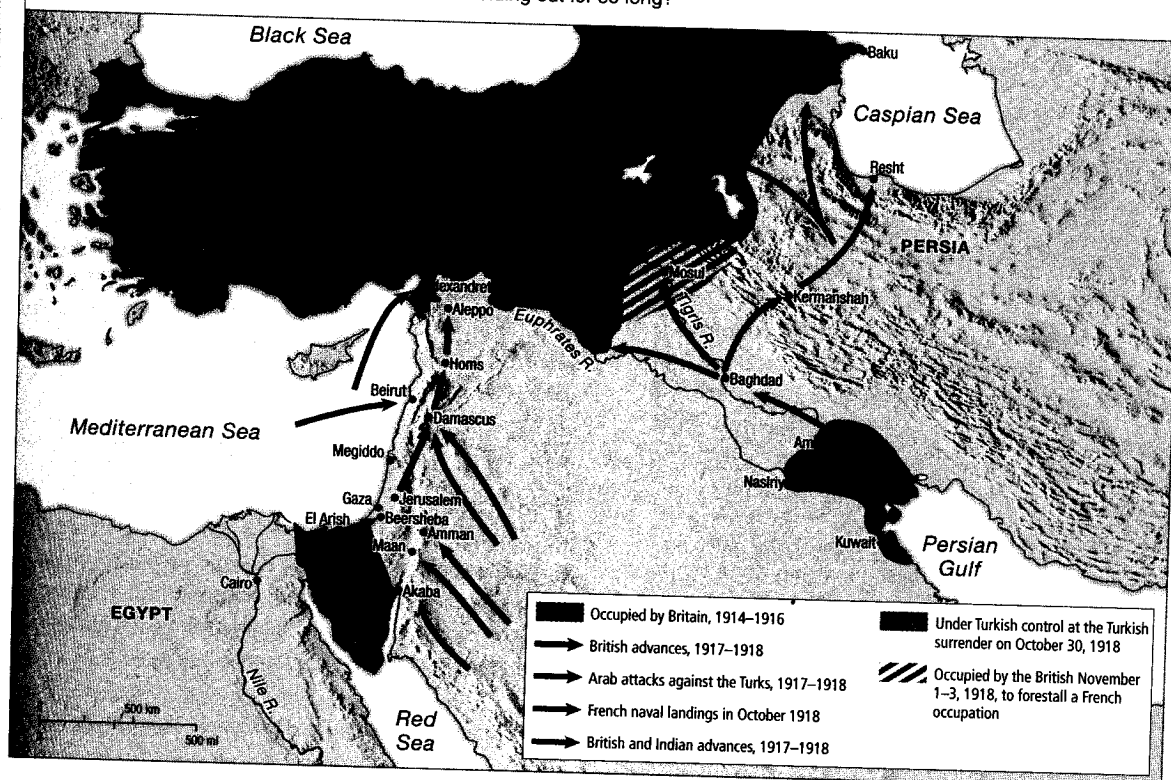
The Turkish victory at Gallipoli in 1915 did not cure the vulnerability of the empire. Continuing warfare in the Caucasus brought many casualties and little gain. In 1916, Hussein ibn Ali, Sherif of Mecca, protector of the Holy Places of Islam, placed himself at the head of an Arab revolt that immediately threatened Ottoman control of Palestine and Arabia. A British liaison officer, Colonel T. E. Lawrence, offered tactical advice to the Arabs and rode into history as "Lawrence of Arabia." But the heavy fighting against the Ottomans was done by an army of Britons, Australians, and New Zealanders based in Egypt, and an army of Indians fighting in Mesopotamia.

Indian and British forces in Mesopotamia took Baghdad in 1917 and Mosul the following year, threatening Ottoman petroleum resources (Map 31.5). In Palestine, the Egyptian-based army of General Allenby took Jerusalem in December 1917 and by September 1918 was confronting Turkish forces at Megiddo, the "Armageddon"

The Ottoman Empire collapses

MAP 31.5 The Great War in Southwest Asia, 1917–1918

The Ottoman Empire, attacked from three sides, finally cracked under the strain in 1918. Note that Indian and British troops, moving up the Tigris and Euphrates valleys, conquered Mesopotamia and compromised Ottoman petroleum supplies. An Arab army in Palestine and Syria weakened the southern flank and helped British forces, moving north from Egypt, to break through at Megiddo and force the Ottomans to capitulate on October 30, 1918. Why did the Ottoman Empire, known for a century as the "sick man of Europe," succeed in holding out for so long?



referred to in the Bible. Allenby's forces won at Megiddo, broke through Turkish lines, and forced the Ottoman Empire to sign an armistice on October 30. Together with Bulgaria's surrender in September, this left Germany and Austria-Hungary isolated and desperate.

The Path to the Armistice

Ending the war formally took until early November. The Kaiser decided to ask for a truce on the basis of the Fourteen Points, a plan for a just peace outlined by Wilson in January 1918 (see "Woodrow Wilson, The Fourteen Points"). But for Wilson, who had led America into the war "to make the world safe for democracy," no government led by an emperor could be sufficiently democratic. On October 16 he issued conditions that implied that the Kaiser should abdicate. William II, outraged, resisted until November 9. By then Austria-Hungary had also surrendered, and Germany's army continued to retreat toward its own frontier.

Now the weakening of German morale proved decisive. Sailors of Germany's High Seas Fleet mutinied when admirals asked them to put to sea to fight the British Grand Fleet and go down with honor. Faced with desertion and civil war, the German High Command informed the Kaiser that the army would no longer defend his regime. Disbelieving to the last, William went into exile in neutral Holland, where he lived quietly until 1941, dying a year after Nazi Germany invaded and subjugated the country that had welcomed him.

DOCUMENT 31.2 Woodrow Wilson, The Fourteen Points

In January 1918, U.S. president Woodrow Wilson outlined what he hoped would be viewed as the foundation upon which a just and lasting peace might be established. His outline became known as the Fourteen Points.

- I. Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at, after which there shall be no private international understandings of any kind but diplomacy shall proceed always frankly and in the public view.
- II. Absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas . . .
- III. The removal, so far as possible, of all economic barriers and the establishment of an equality of trade conditions among all the nations . . .
- IV. Adequate guarantees given and taken that national armaments will be reduced to the lowest point consistent with domestic safety . . .
- VIII. All French territory should be freed and the invaded portions restored, and the wrong done to France by Prussia in 1871 in the matter of Alsace-Lorraine, which has unsettled the peace of the world for nearly fifty years, should be righted . . .
- X. The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and

assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.

XI. Rumania, Serbia, and Montenegro should be evacuated; occupied territories restored; Serbia accorded free and secure access to the sea; and the relations of the several Balkan states to one another determined by friendly counsel among historically established lines of allegiance and nationality . . .

XII. The Turkish portion of the present Ottoman Empire should be assured a secure sovereignty, but the other nationalities which are now under Turkish rule should be assured an undoubted security of life and an absolutely unmolested opportunity of autonomous development . . .

XIII. An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea . . .

XIV. A general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.

SOURCE: Woodrow Wilson, The Fourteen Points (1918).

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Armistice talks were proceeding as William left. Having appealed for a truce on the basis of the Fourteen Points, the German government was appalled at the severity of the terms actually offered. Germany was required to evacuate all occupied territory, abandon German territory west of the Rhine River, repudiate the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, surrender all its ships and massive amounts of military equipment, and agree to **reparations**, payments to compensate the Allies for war damages. These terms were imposed on a nation devastated by the influenza pandemic and literally starving from the effects of the British blockade, a continuing act of war for which no ending date was set.

That condition transformed the truce into an outright surrender. An **armistice** is a temporary cessation of hostilities between warring powers, but the continuing blockade, weakening Germany's ability to resist with each passing day, effectively made it impossible for Germany to resume fighting. When bells rang throughout Europe and America at 11:00 AM. Greenwich Mean Time on November 11—the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918—they tolled not merely an armistice, but the actual end of the Great War.

The Great War is ended
by an armistice

CHAPTER

REVIEW

Putting It in Perspective

With the end of the Great War, later called World War I, Europe's long nightmare seemed over. The conflict's crushing impact had fallen mostly on Europe, which at the close of 1918 lay demoralized, devastated, and in many ways transformed. The royal houses of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Russia had been overthrown, and the Ottoman sultan would soon follow. Austria-Hungary and the Ottoman Empire had broken apart, the former into small national states, the latter into a Turkish national state and regions that became virtual colonies of Britain and France. Marxism had come to power in Russia, frightening capitalist nations everywhere and heightening postwar anxieties. The war toppled dynasties and changed the way in which Europe was organized.

For more than nine million soldiers, the organization of Europe was irrelevant: they were dead. The casualty lists dwarfed even those of the Napoleonic Wars. But for many who had not served at the front, the death toll was less devastating than the living human wreckage. Men without limbs and without faces haunted the cities of Europe, surviving hideous wounds that in earlier wars would have killed them on the battlefield. Tens of thousands suffered from shell shock, a debilitating psychological condition

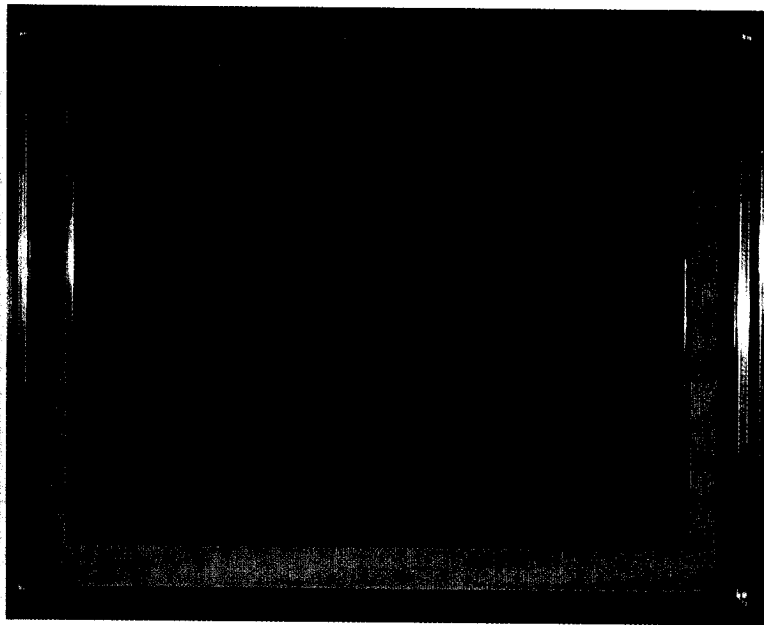
stemming from prolonged exposure to artillery bombardment. Civilians, particularly in Germany, had suffered terribly from malnutrition and exposure, factors that fed the enormous death tolls in the influenza pandemic. The result was a demographic void, an absence of healthy young men between the ages of 18 and 35 that would scar Europe for two generations.

The physical destruction of land and property was unprecedented. Trench warfare wrecked vast areas of northeastern France. Unexploded shells and munitions lay in fields across Europe, maiming curious children into the 1960s. Livestock had been blown to bits or butchered for food in colossal numbers; replacing them would take decades. The task of rebuilding was daunting.

Finally, the prospect of another such war altered the perspectives of traumatized Europeans. Nearly everyone agreed that such a catastrophe must never be allowed to happen again, but how could it be prevented? Could the nations of Europe bury their hatreds along with their dead and learn to work together for stability and peace? The answers to these questions were not immediately apparent, and in the silence created by their absence, the nightmare lived on.

Anxieties and Ideologies of the Interwar Years, 1918–1939

 Listen to the **Chapter Audio** for Chapter 32 on myhistorylab.com



An Age of Anxiety

Anxieties abounded in the interwar years, as long-held standards of behavior, art, and science seemed to disappear. This famous “surrealist” painting, *The Treachery of Images*, proclaims in French that “This is not a pipe”—making the point that perceptions of “reality” are deceiving. It is, after all, a *painting*, not a pipe (see page 751).

- What changes occurred in Western society and culture in the interwar years?
- What challenges disrupted Western societies and how did these societies respond?
- How and why did dictatorships arise in Italy, Russia, Germany, and elsewhere?
- Why and how did new forms of nationalism arise in Africa and Asia?

In December 1918, Woodrow Wilson was greeted in Paris by seas of flags and flowers, and warmly cheered by enormous crowds as he rode in an open carriage. Earlier that year, declaring his objectives in the Great War, the American president had listed Fourteen Points (page 742). They included such idealistic goals as open peace talks, freedom of the seas, free trade, arms control, and **national self-determination**—the right of each nationality to freely decide its own political status. In November, Germany had agreed to a war-ending armistice based on his Fourteen Points. Now, as he arrived for the Paris Peace Conference that would shape the postwar world, Wilson was the man of the hour, a prophet whose idealism fed people's hopes for a fair and enduring peace. The hopes and dreams of a war-weary world rested on his shoulders.

Soon, however, world events dampened these hopes and dreams. At the peace conference, beginning in January 1919, Allied leaders, bent on punishing defeated foes, resisted

Wilson's idealism. Britain and France sought to weaken Germany by imposing huge reparations payments. The Italians

demanding lands secretly promised them when they joined the war, and then went home enraged when Wilson and others rejected their demands. In

April, in Amritsar, India, British-led troops shot hundreds of anti-British protesters, dimming hopes for self-determination in Europe's Asian colonies. In May, Chinese students in Beijing, angered that the conference permitted Japan to take over German claims in China, began a mass movement heralding the rise of Chinese nationalism and Communism. In June, outside Paris, at the

Palace of Versailles, subdued German delegates signed a harsh treaty imposed by the conference, while flags

across Germany flew at half-mast to mark the nation's resentment. In September, back in America, exhausted by futile efforts to

promote the Versailles Treaty there, Wilson suffered a paralyzing stroke.

Animosities enduring from the war—and from the peace imposed at Paris—would contribute two decades later to a Second World War. In the interwar era (1919–1939), nations East and West were torn by cultural and social changes, the global economy was rocked by depression, and radical new ideologies reshaped Europe, Africa, and Asia. So unsettling was this era that later observers called it the Age of Anxiety.

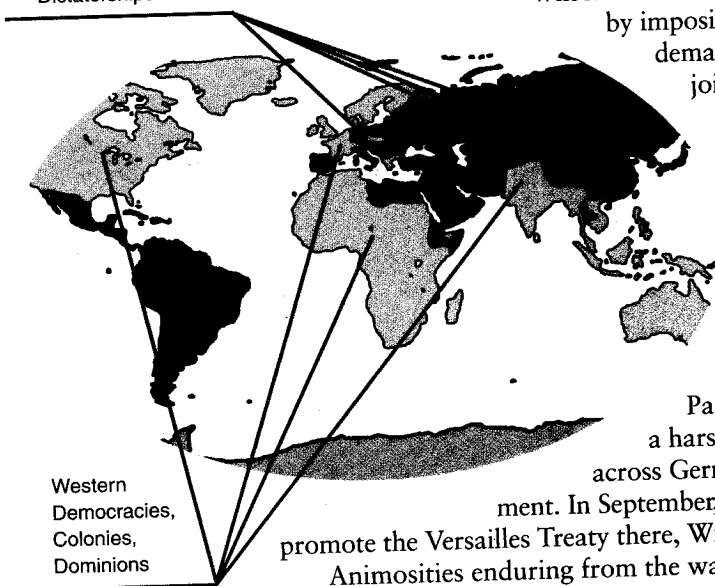
Western Society and Culture in an Age of Anxiety

The Great War devastated Europe, physically and emotionally. The lands where it was fought, strewn with mines and scarred by trenches, would take decades to recover, while the loss in human potential caused by its countless casualties was incalculable. Prewar faith in progress, driven by new technologies, died in the trenches as new technologies helped produce inhuman slaughter. As hope and idealism gave way to fatalism and cynicism, challenging new ideas, combined with social and cultural changes, added to the anxieties of the interwar years.

The Rise of Relativism and Relativity

Especially unsettling was a growing attitude of relativism, the view that truth and morality vary from one person, group, or situation to another. People in the West had long presumed that absolute standards of truth and morality existed, and that human reason,

Dictatorships



Western
Democracies,
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aided by divine revelation, could distinguish fact from falsehood and good from evil. But by the 1920s, with faith in Western ideals shaken by the war, many were coming to feel that all certainties had vanished. Much as “beauty is in the eye of the beholder,” what was true for one person might be false for another, and what was wrong in some cultures or conditions might be acceptable in others.

Some 19th-century thinkers (Chapter 27) had laid the foundations for such relativism. Karl Marx, for example, held that human society was based on class struggle, and that violent rebellion was not a moral evil but a necessary part of that struggle. Indeed, to many Marxists and followers of other ideologies, a statement's truth or an action's morality depended on whether or not it advanced their cause. Herbert Spencer and the Social Darwinists, who applied the notion of “survival of the fittest” to human societies, also saw struggle as essential, but unlike Marxists they claimed that the strong must naturally prey on the weak. To them, the struggle for survival, which justified almost any action advancing one's nation or race, superseded truth and morality. And German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, questioning the existence of objective truth and morality, proclaimed that “God is dead,” by which he apparently meant that modern science and secular society had effectively killed Christianity and its moral values.

In the 20th century, new understandings of human psychology further challenged conventional attitudes about truth and morality. Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud (*FROID*), disputing the idea that human behavior is based on rational decisions, held that people are driven by unconscious instincts and impulses that conflict with the conscious mind. Freud's ideas—including his focus on human drives for sexual pleasure, his rejection of religious scruples, and his concept of a death wish that clashes with self-preservation instincts—suggested that, since human behaviors are induced by unconscious urges, there can be no absolute moral standards.

Another form of relativism revolutionized physics, whose laws had seemed so constant since the time of Isaac Newton. In 1905 and 1916, Albert Einstein, a German scientist of Jewish descent, published his theories of relativity, asserting that measurements of time, space, and motion vary with the perspectives of observers (see “Einstein on Relativity”). To explain his concepts, Einstein used

Relative thinking
challenges traditional
morality



Albert Einstein.

DOCUMENT 32.1 Einstein on Relativity

In the excerpts below, Albert Einstein uses examples based on moving trains to help demonstrate his theories of relativity. How and why did his theories revolutionize science?

It is not clear what is to be understood . . . by “position” and “space.” I stand at the window of a railway carriage which is travelling uniformly, and drop a stone on the embankment, without throwing it. Then, disregarding the influence of the air resistance, I see the stone descend in a straight line. A pedestrian who observes . . . from the footpath notices that the stone falls to earth in a parabolic curve. I now ask: Do the “positions” traversed by the stone lie “in reality” on a straight line or on a parabola? . . . With the aid of this example it is clearly seen that there is no such thing as an independently

existing trajectory . . . , but only a trajectory relative to a particular body of reference . . .

. . . In order to attain the greatest possible clearness, let us return to our example of the railway carriage supposed to be travelling uniformly . . . Let us imagine a raven flying through the air in such a manner that its motion, as observed from the embankment, is uniform and in a straight line. If we were to observe the flying raven from the moving railway carriage, we should find that the motion of the raven would be one of different velocity and direction, but that it would still be uniform and in a straight line . . .

SOURCE: Albert Einstein, *Relativity: The Special and General Theory* (1920) III. “Space and Time in Classical Mechanics”; V “The Principle of Relativity (In the Restricted Sense).”

Einstein asserts that measurements of time and space are relative

Einstein asserts that matter can be converted into energy

New technologies transform Western popular culture

Mass-produced cars and trucks foster regional and global connections

Cars on Florida beach in the 1920s.

illustrations based on moving trains. If a man drops a stone from a moving train, for example, he will see the stone fall in a straight line (ignoring wind resistance), but an observer on the ground will see the stone fall in a curve. Similarly, if a bird flies by in a straight line, the man on the train will see it flying with a different speed and direction than observed by the person on the ground. The stone's path and the bird's speed and direction are thus relative to the location and movement of the two observers.

In his famous formula $E = mc^2$ (energy equals mass times the speed of light squared), Einstein proposed that matter could be converted into energy, asserting that each atom of matter contains enormous energy in its nucleus. By the 1940s, scientists would split the atoms of radioactive elements, such as uranium and plutonium, to release their nuclear energy and develop atomic bombs (Chapter 33). In showcasing science's vast creative and destructive powers, scientists helped to further blur distinctions between good and bad.

All these new ideas added to the age's uncertainties. If truth and morality varied according to one's situation and psychology, if time and space varied according to one's perspective, and if even solid-looking matter consisted of energy particles, how could humans ever trust their judgments? Human judgments, after all, had led to the Great War

Technology and Popular Culture

Meanwhile, as new ideas transformed people's perspectives, new technologies transformed their everyday lives. In the 1920s, especially in the West, the growing use of radios, phonographs, movies, telephones, electric appliances, and automobiles gave rise to whole new forms of popular culture. Radios, for example, enabled sports fans to follow their favorite teams, feeding a growing frenzy for spectator sports. Radios and phonograph records helped millions enjoy new forms of popular music, including blues and jazz. And millions went to movies each week—especially after 1927, when films with sound, pioneered by an immensely popular American movie called *The Jazz Singer*, began replacing silent films.

Telephones, refrigerators, and washing machines made life easier for many, but the most influential new mass-market product was the automobile. To expedite production, American automaker Henry Ford used the **assembly line**, making vehicles by conveying them in a continuous flow through a series of workstations that each performed a single function. This system enabled Ford to mass-produce millions of inexpensive cars, known as Model Ts, at prices affordable to ordinary people.

As other manufacturers, following Ford's lead, used assembly lines to package foods and make appliances, mass-produced goods and vehicles transformed Western societies. Roads were paved and expanded to accommodate cars and trucks, and dotted with gasoline stations, supplying fuel from oil-rich regions such as Texas, the Dutch East Indies, and the Persian Gulf. Rural residents drove cars to town to shop or attend movies, while city people used cars for weekend drives to the countryside or beach. Farmers plowed fields with motorized tractors, while townsfolk ate produce brought daily by motor trucks. Nations were knit together by new technologies, as autos reduced distances and expanded regional contacts, while radio programs, newscasts, movies, and sports reached millions, helping to foster a sense of national culture.

New technologies also were used to build political support. Radio transmitted “fireside chats” by British prime minister Stanley Baldwin and U.S. president Franklin Roosevelt, as well as fiery speeches by Italian dictator Benito Mussolini and Germany's Adolf Hitler. In the 1920s, movies such as *Battleship Potemkin*, by Soviet film pioneer Sergei Eisenstein, rallied support for Communism by exalting Russia's revolutionary past; in the 1930s, films such as *Triumph of the Will*, by German female filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, showcased mass glorification of Hitler.

Changes in

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Changes in the Role of Women

Riefenstahl's filmmaking career was but one example of the new roles played by women in the postwar West. Following the Great War, women in Britain, Germany, Poland, Russia, and America received voting rights, partly in response to decades of activism promoting women's suffrage and partly in recognition of the work done by women who took jobs in industry when the men were off at war. Although most women gave up these jobs after the war, some stayed on to pursue careers in industry and business formerly closed to women, while those returning to the home often did so with a new assertiveness based on their wartime work experience.

Changing women's roles were also reflected in new fashions and behaviors. Freeing themselves from confining corsets that accentuated breasts and hips, some young women became "flappers" (or, in Mexico, "pelonas") sporting short hair, short skirts, and straight-fit styles emphasizing boyish figures. Liberated by automobiles from parental supervision, single young women and men went on dates to movies and dances, smoked cigarettes in public, and in cars engaged in sexual conduct their parents surely would have frowned on.

Expanding roles for women affect fashions and social conduct



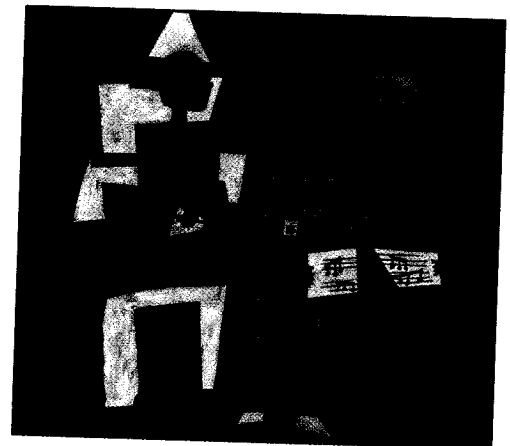
Flapper fashions in 1920s included shorter swimsuits.

Architecture, Art, and Literature

New trends and technologies also affected architecture, art, and literature. By the early 20th century, growing use of cranes, elevators, structural steel, and reinforced concrete helped architects design larger and taller buildings than before. Devising new styles based on simplicity and function, architects such as Germany's Walter Gropius and his Bauhaus (*BOUW-house*) school created elegant but practical structures in cities from America to India. Cities became assortments of cubic structures, from large block-shaped buildings to soaring urban skyscrapers.

New art forms were likewise inspired by new urban realities and by global connections forged in the imperial age. Before the Great War, some European artists, influenced by Japanese art that disregarded perspective and realism, experimented with **impressionism**, depicting impressions made on the painter by scenes from nature and modern urban life. Inspired by cubic urban structures and by African art forms, Spanish-French painter Pablo Picasso created **cubism**, an artistic style using geometric shapes to produce bold images. After the war German artist Otto Dix used ghastly images to capture war's nightmare and postwar social decadence, while Picasso and others embraced **surrealism**—art that sought to challenge perceptions (see page 747) or to portray Freud's unconscious world of drives, fantasies, and dreams. As "modernism" rejected traditional values, and "modern art" depicted subjective impressions instead of objective reality, artistic standards, like moral norms and scientific theories, were revolutionized by relativism.

Global connections and urban realities impact architecture and art



Three Musicians, a cubist painting by Picasso.

New literary methods also violated traditional standards. In his novel *Ulysses* (1922), for example, Ireland's James Joyce used a stream of consciousness technique, later adopted by others, to depict the free and ungrammatical flow of a character's inner thoughts and impressions. And American poet e. e. cummings shunned such conventions as rhyme, meter, and capitalization.

Other writers and poets reflected the age's anxieties. In a two-volume work, *The Decline of the West* (1918 and 1922), German educator Oswald Spengler claimed that Western civilization, having undergone cycles of growth and development like other

Literature and poetry reflect new techniques and global anxieties

great cultures before it, was now in decline and decay. In the 1929 novel *All Quiet on the Western Front*, German author Erich Maria Remarque depicted the ordeals of a group of young men who joined the German army in the Great War expecting to find honor and glory, but instead found only death, degradation, mutilation, and madness. In *The Waste Land* (1922), British-American poet T. S. Eliot provided bleak, grotesque images of desolation, death, and despair. And in *The Second Coming* (1921), Irish poet W. B. Yeats cogently captured the era's pervasive pessimism:

Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

Democracy, Depression, and Dictatorship

Yeats's pessimism proved prophetic. In the interwar years, efforts to achieve an enduring peace proved elusive. Hopes gave way to resentments, prosperity gave way to depression, and democracies gave way to dictatorships—often driven by men and ideologies full of passionate intensity.

The Versailles Settlement

In 1919 the victorious powers—led by U.S. president Woodrow Wilson, British prime minister David Lloyd George, and French premier Georges Clemenceau (*klā-mahn-SŌ*)—dominated the Paris Peace Conference cited at the start of this chapter. Excluded from the conference were the defeated powers, Germany and its allies, as well as the new Soviet Russia. The result was a settlement devised and imposed by the victors.

Although the victors imposed a treaty on each defeated country (Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Ottoman Turkey), the centerpiece of the settlement was the Treaty of Versailles with Germany. A compromise between Wilson, who had promised a just peace, and his allies, who sought retribution from their defeated foes, it blamed the Germans for the war and forced them to pay huge reparations for war damage. Germany also had to reduce its army to one hundred thousand men, surrender land to Belgium, France, Denmark, and Poland, demilitarize its Rhineland region bordering Belgium and France, and give up all its overseas colonies. When the treaty was signed on June 28, 1919, exactly five years after the shots at Sarajevo that triggered the Great War, the starved, exhausted Germans bitterly resented the harsh pact forced upon them.

At Wilson's insistence, the treaties also created the **League of Nations**, an international organization designed to maintain peace by cooperation among its members, intended eventually to include most of the world's nations. It opened in 1920 but was weakened by the absence of Wilson's own country. The U.S. Senate, wary of foreign commitments, rejected Wilson's dream by failing to ratify the Versailles Treaty. The world's richest nation thus did not join the League.

Former German colonies and Ottoman provinces became **League of Nations mandates**, lands entrusted to victorious nations such as Britain, France, or Japan, allegedly to help prepare the people for self-rule. This formula allowed the victors to take over the possessions of the vanquished, including Arab lands in the Middle East, while paying lip service to Wilson's notion of national self-determination.

Great War victors impose harsh treaties on the vanquished

Treaties form League of Nations, but U.S. fails to join

Read the Document

The Covenant of the League of Nations, 1924,
on myhistorylab.com

Britain and France manage former German and Ottoman possessions

Democracy

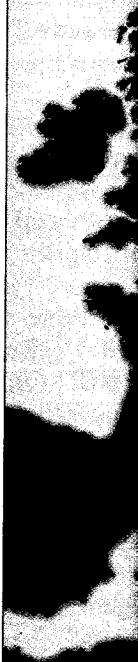
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Democracy and Dictatorship in Eastern Europe

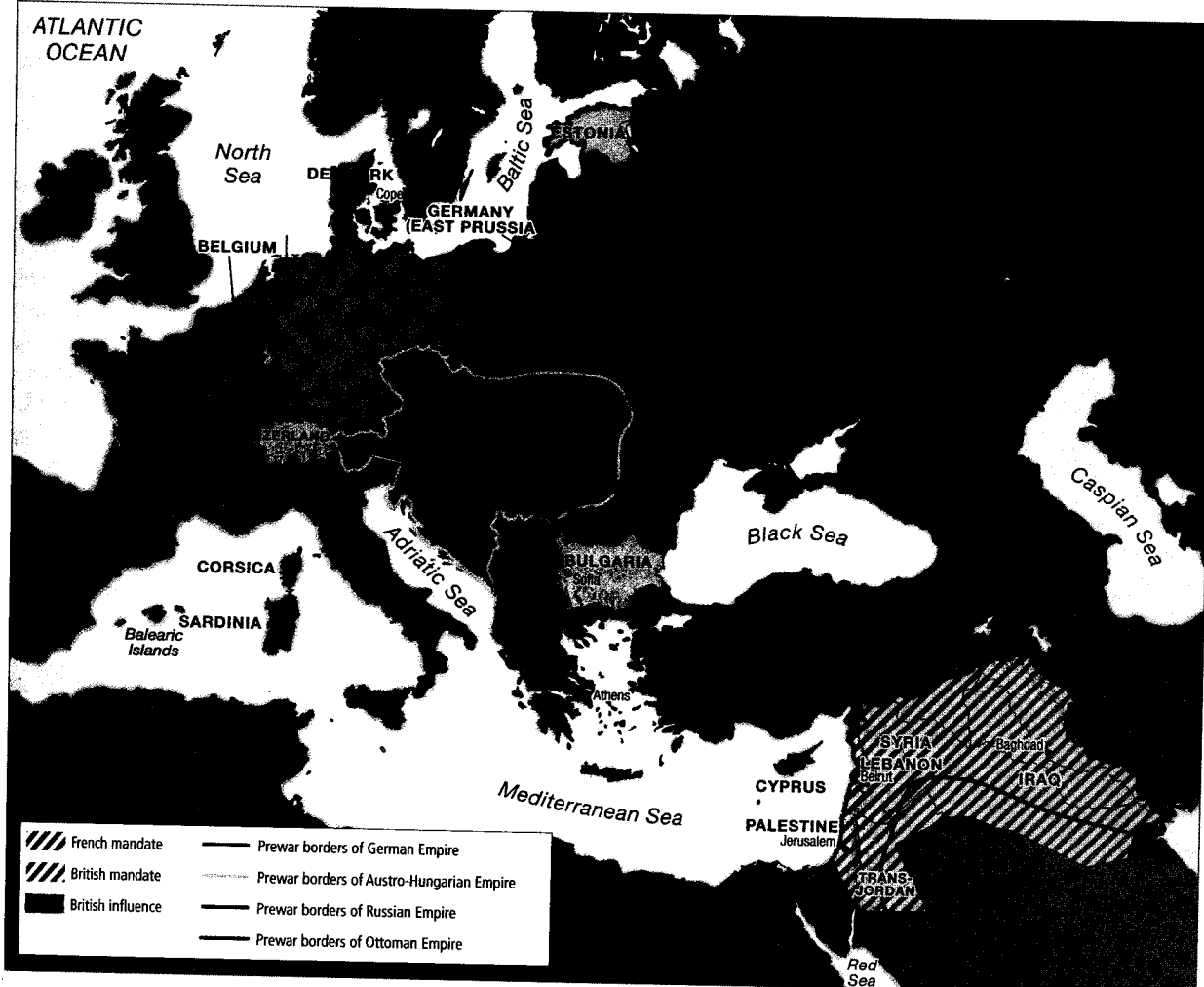
Meanwhile, following the collapse of the Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian empires during the Great War, numerous new nations emerged in Eastern Europe, formed by nationality groups long subject to these realms. The former Russian regions of Finland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania became independent states. The Austro-Hungarian Empire was replaced by the smaller nations of Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia, the last of which united the former empire's southernmost domains with its initial war enemy, Serbia. A new Poland, made up of lands from each of the three old empires, was linked to the Baltic Sea by a "Polish Corridor" that divided East Prussia from the rest of Germany. Prewar Romania doubled its size with territories taken from Russia and Austria-Hungary (Map 32.1).

The rise of these new nations at first appeared a triumph for democracy. All had democratic constitutions and elected parliaments. Even Hungary, after a short-lived

FOUNDATION MAP 32.1

Europe and the Middle East in the 1920s and 1930s

In the wake of the Great War, numerous new nations and territories emerged from the former German, Austrian, Russian, and Ottoman empires, whose prewar boundaries are superimposed on this map. Why were these new nations and territories plagued by political, social, and economic anxieties?



Ethnic unrest and unemployment unsettle new democracies

Fear of Communism aids the rise of dictatorships

Anger at Allied “betrayal” and economic crises unsettle postwar Italy

Read the Document

Benito Mussolini, “The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism”

on myhistorylab.com

Benito Mussolini.

Communist regime in 1919, became a constitutional monarchy, as did Yugoslavia. But all had serious problems that soon subverted democracy.

One major problem was posed by ethnic minorities. Eastern Europe’s nationalities were so intermingled that most of the new nations included many people who differed in language and loyalty from the majority. Poland and Czechoslovakia, for example, each contained many Germans, who often felt more loyal to Germany than to the country where they lived.

Another problem was unemployment, especially among former soldiers, some of whom formed bands of angry outcasts. With few skills other than fighting, they roamed the streets assaulting passers-by and staging periodic protests.

The biggest problem, however, was fear of Communism. Living in the shadow of Soviet Russia, a huge realm that sought to promote Communist revolutions in other countries, most of the new nations soon deemed democracy too weak to combat the Soviet challenge. Fearful of Soviet power, and of Communist inroads among their own working classes, they restricted democratic rights and cracked down on dissent. By the early 1930s, all the new nations except Finland and Czechoslovakia were ruled by dictators, leaders who wielded total control, dominated weak elected institutions, and used the army and police to suppress dissent.

Fascism in Italy

Democracy’s biggest setback in the 1920s came in Italy, a parliamentary monarchy and victor in the Great War. Many Italians felt betrayed by Allied leaders, who had secretly promised Italy some lands ruled by Austria when Italy joined the war, but failed at Versailles to fully honor this promise, on the grounds that secret agreements violated Wilson’s Fourteen Points.

Compounding Italian resentment was an economic crisis. High unemployment, especially among war veterans, led to working-class unrest, which Communists exploited to promote crippling strikes. When Italy’s parliamentary democracy proved unable to control the situation, many Italians supported a new movement pledging to combat Communism and restore order.

This movement’s leader was a former Socialist named Benito Mussolini, who became a rabid nationalist while serving in the Great War.irate at the Allied snub of Italy in 1919, he formed a “fighting band,” or *fascio di combattimento* (FAH-shō dē com-bat-ē-MEN-tō), of former soldiers like himself committed to combating Communism and advancing Italian nationalism. The term *fascio*, a bundle of rods like the ones ancient Romans used as symbols of their power, gave the movement its name. Fascism was an ideology that glorified the nation as an organic collective community under a powerful leader who embodied its will. Stressing military strength and repressing internal dissent, it subjected individual rights to the goals of the nation and its leader.

Mussolini, a bald, burly, swaggering showman, sent his black-shirted fighting squads into the streets to beat up Communists and Socialists. These “Blackshirts” broke strikes and burned labor union headquarters, adding to the public crisis. In October 1922 Mussolini organized a “March on Rome” to intimidate the government. When King Victor Emanuel III, fearing civil war, refused to declare martial law so the army could fight the fascists, the prime minister and cabinet resigned. Anxious to restore order, the king then appointed Mussolini prime minister, confident that Italy’s constitutional structure would keep him from gaining too much power.

The king was soon proven wrong. Granted emergency powers to restore order, Mussolini used them to enact a law giving two thirds of the seats in parliament to the party getting the most votes in an election. In 1924 elections, rigged by fascist



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thugs who threatened to beat up anyone who voted against fascism, his party got the votes it needed to govern alone. By the late 1920s, the fascists were the only party left.

Although he destroyed democracy, Mussolini was very popular. In place of political strife, he offered unity, efficiency, and popular programs. His "corporate state" divided the economy into 22 areas, each supervised by a "corporation" made up of business, labor, and government leaders, thus combining private ownership with state controls. He boasted of making trains run on time—although travelers frequently found them as late as ever. He provided public spectacles, including fiery speeches during which he often stripped to the waist and thumped his barrel chest as crowds chanted "Duce" (*DOO-chā*), Italian for "leader." In the 1930s, as economic depression rocked the world, his fascist methods were emulated elsewhere—most ominously, in Germany.

Mussolini and his fascists exploit crises to gain power

Economic controls and popular diversions sustain Mussolini's dictatorship

The Great Depression and Its Global Impact

By 1929, although suppressed in Italy and most of Eastern Europe, democracy remained strong in Western Europe and America. During the next decade, however, a disastrous economic depression threatened its survival even there.

The Great Depression of the 1930s was triggered by events in America, where an economic boom in the 1920s created an illusion of endless prosperity. Confident consumers bought autos, appliances, and other goods, frequently on credit. As businesses flourished, more and more people bought stocks, or shares in commercial enterprises. Often they did so "on margin," paying 10 percent of the stock's current price, borrowing the rest from their brokers, then selling the stock when prices rose, repaying their brokers and pocketing the profits.

Everyone seemed to make money—as long as prices rose. But in 1929, fears that stocks were overpriced led many investors to sell. The resulting decline in demand drove stock prices down, starting a chain reaction. As brokers lost money, they demanded full payment from their clients for stocks purchased on margin; to get the money, the clients had to sell stocks at a loss, further driving prices down. On October 24 ("Black Thursday") and October 29 ("Black Tuesday"), the bottom fell out of the New York Stock Exchange, with many stocks losing half their value.

The 1929 stock market crash shattered consumer confidence. Shaken Americans simply stopped buying, decreasing demand for goods, so manufacturers cut production and laid off workers—who thus no longer had incomes to buy goods, furthering the downward spiral. Banks were caught in the middle: ruined stock investors and laid-off workers could no longer make payments owed to banks for loans and mortgages, while cash-strapped depositors sought to withdraw all their money. Having loaned that money to others, from whom they could not collect, many banks were forced to close, causing many people to lose their life savings.

Stock market crash shatters American prosperity

Other banks survived by demanding full repayment of loans made to European firms that had borrowed heavily from U.S. banks to finance the Great War and postwar recovery. To come up with the money, these firms laid off workers, resulting in mass unemployment—especially in Germany, where U.S. loans had been used extensively to finance reparations payments to France required by the Versailles Treaty.

Further American actions globalized the Great Depression. In 1930, to protect declining U.S. industries from foreign competition, Congress passed the Smoot-Hawley Tariff, placing huge duties on imports from other countries. Despite a signed appeal from a thousand American economists, warning that this tariff would ruin the world economy, President Herbert Hoover signed it into law. Globally sold goods, such as beef from Argentina, coffee from Brazil and Indonesia, and sugar from Brazil and the Caribbean, thus lost their American markets, causing economic crises in these countries.

American actions globalize Great Depression



Bread line during the Great Depression.

Depression and farming crisis deepen global suffering

 **View the Image**
Migrant Mother, Great Depression

on myhistorylab.com

Depression undermines support for capitalism and democracy

Many regimes responded with **economic nationalism**, erecting tariff walls and trade barriers to protect their industries and products from international competition, and (in Latin America) with “import substitution industrialization,” creating new industries to produce things they previously imported. The results were a further decline of world trade and global economic devastation.

The Great Depression thus became a global calamity. From 1929 to 1932, worldwide industrial production dropped 38 percent. In industrial countries unemployment ranged from 20 percent to 33 percent. Thousands lost homes as banks foreclosed on mortgages unpaid by jobless workers. In America, able-bodied people in the prime of life waited in line for rations of bread or sold apples for nickels on street corners; others committed suicide, or abandoned their families to become wandering, rootless “hoboes.”

The suffering was worsened by a global agricultural crisis. Responding to food shortages in Europe during and after the Great War, North American farmers had expanded their output of wheat and other grains. But in the 1920s, as farming rebounded in Europe and agricultural advances brought higher crop yields, the resulting grain surplus caused prices to fall sharply. Then, in the 1930s, high rates of urban unemployment decreased demand for food, damaging agricultural economies and ruining farmers everywhere.

Capitalism and democracy were shaken. Support for radical movements grew the world over, as desperate people opted to sacrifice freedom for economic stability. Even in places with long traditions of political and economic freedom, people looked to government for solutions.

The New Deal in the United States

In America, where the crisis began, President Hoover was ill equipped to deal with the Depression. A staunch believer in free markets, he refused to support federal unemployment aid or economic intervention. Instead, he sought vainly to restore confidence by promising that prosperity was “just around the corner.” As suffering mounted, he lost the 1932 election to Franklin D. Roosevelt, an engaging idealist who promised “a New Deal for the American people.”

“FDR” proved a tireless activist whose infectious optimism and eloquence, enshrined in such memorable phrases as “the only thing we have to fear is fear itself,” made him one of America’s most effective presidents. Using government programs to relieve misery, increase buying power, and promote economic recovery, he infused new hope and created a consensus on behalf of activist government.

Roosevelt proposed and Congress enacted numerous ambitious measures. A huge public works program, launched to provide jobs for the unemployed, built or rebuilt schools, highways, bridges, and public buildings. Subsidies to farmers helped them leave some fields unfarmed, reducing overproduction, which had undermined farm profits by driving prices down. Banks were regulated, deposits insured by the government, and buying stock on margin prohibited. A Civilian Conservation Corps sent jobless men into rural areas to plant trees and build hydroelectric dams on rivers such as the Tennessee and Columbia. Most enduring of all was the Social Security system, which provided government pensions for the aging and later also the disabled.

The results of the New Deal were mixed. On one hand, it may have saved American capitalism: the crisis was so severe that massive government spending was probably the only way to get money into circulation and reinvigorate industrial production. On the other hand, it did not end the Depression. Slow production gains were reversed by a 1937 recession. What ended unemployment in America was not the New Deal but World War II, which put millions to work producing war materials and serving in the armed forces.

But the New Deal’s impact outweighed its failures. Vastly expanding the federal bureaucracy, it provided a new vision of democratic governance, summarized eloquently



The Civilian Conservation Corps at work, 1937.

Roosevelt uses government intervention to combat Depression

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by Roosevelt himself: "Better the occasional errors of a government that cares about its citizens than the constant omissions of a government frozen in the ice of its own indifference." The New Deal abolished child labor, set minimum wages and maximum work hours, and guaranteed workers the right to bargain collectively. Its measures and methods, which mobilized government in support of the common people, endured and affected American society long after the Depression was over.

Roosevelt was loved and hated to a degree unmatched by other elected leaders. A wealthy man, he was reviled by the rich as a traitor to his class, while inspiring in ordinary people an affection so powerful it transcended politics. He styled himself "the champion of the forgotten man," and that description, endorsed by millions, gave him the moral authority to lead his nation through the Great Depression and Second World War.

Roosevelt's activism
restores American hope

Democracy and Socialism in Western Europe

Unlike America, which before the Depression was averse to government activism and supremely self-confident, Western Europe had a history of social legislation (Chapter 27) and deep insecurities flowing from the Great War. European voters were thus open to socialist experiments.

Britain's new Labour Party, which had socialist ideals and labor union roots, twice won elections in the 1920s under Ramsay MacDonald, illegitimate son of a poor Scottish woman, who became Britain's first socialist prime minister. Assuming that role a second time in 1929, he, like Hoover, had to deal with the Great Depression. In 1931, as the crisis worsened, MacDonald formed at the king's request a coalition government of Labourites, Conservatives, and Liberals, abandoning radical socialism and splitting his own party. The new coalition adopted economic nationalism and cut spending on social programs, but these steps did not end the Depression. In 1935 the British turned to Stanley Baldwin, whose calm manner reassured them, but the economy did not recover until Neville Chamberlain, who replaced Baldwin as prime minister in 1937, increased defense spending, and introduced a military draft.

France in the interwar years, obsessed with recovery from the Great War and fearful of German resurgence, was beset by short-lived governments averaging less than a year. When depression hit in the early 1930s, fascist groups formed across the country, declaring democracy too weak to deal with the crisis, while scandals undermined the government's moral legitimacy.

In response came the Popular Front, a coalition of leftist parties that won the 1936 elections under Socialist Leon Blum. Elated workers launched a series of strikes that forced the new government to grant 12 percent wage increases, paid vacations, and a 40-hour workweek. But these progressive measures backfired, reducing production and scaring investors into withdrawing money from France's economy. The ensuing economic downturn undermined the Popular Front, and in 1937 Blum was voted out by the National Assembly. A series of weak coalition governments followed, leaving France ill equipped to meet the challenge of a resurgent Germany.

Western Europeans try
various methods to restore
prosperity

In Norway and Sweden, depression brought less misery than elsewhere. Elected socialist governments provided "cradle to grave" health and welfare benefits, supported by high taxes. Scandinavian socialism thus presented a viable democratic alternative to dictatorial Communism, practiced in Soviet Russia.

Communism in Russia

When Bolshevik Communists seized power in Russia in 1917, their aim was to spark an international revolution against world capitalism. But when no such upheaval occurred, they slowly transformed Marxist internationalism into Soviet nationalism: rather than

promote a worldwide workers' rebellion, they focused on strengthening Soviet Russia as a socialist fatherland, tying Communism's global goals to Russia's national agenda.

Civil war, won by
Communists, devastates
Russia

THE RISE OF SOVIET NATIONALISM. The first step toward Soviet nationalism came in March 1918 when, ignoring his own party's pleas for an international Communist crusade, Soviet leader V. I. Lenin withdrew Russia from the Great War through the Brest-Litovsk Treaty with Germany. This action, designed to give the Soviets time to consolidate control in Russia, instead set off a Russian civil war. In it, a new "Red Army," created from scratch by Soviet War Commissar Leon Trotsky, fought the "White" armies, a coalition of anti-Communist Russians. The Allied Powers, hoping to get Russia back into the war against Germany, also sent troops to aid the Whites. But the various White armies were unable to coordinate their attacks, and Allied interest in Russia waned once the Great War ended. By early 1921, the Reds had emerged victorious.

But they had little to celebrate. The Great War and Russian civil war had totally ravaged Russia. Since 1913, its industrial output had dropped 80 percent, and farm output had been cut in half. Millions had died from war, disease, and starvation, capped by catastrophic famine in 1921.

Ever the realist, Lenin that year took another step back from global Communist revolution, instituting a New Economic Policy (NEP) that used capitalist methods to strengthen his Communist nation. Although the Soviet state kept control of foreign trade and major industries, which it had nationalized, NEP allowed smaller businesses (which made up most of the economy) to operate as private enterprises. Instead of seizing grain from peasants, as it did in the civil war, the regime imposed a tax in kind—a percentage of the harvest payable in grain. Peasants could sell what was left on the open market, giving them a potent (yet capitalistic) incentive to produce. Communist Russia also opened trade with capitalist Britain and Germany, acting like a traditional state, not a revolutionary regime. Indeed, in 1922, a new constitution created a federal state: the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), or Soviet Union.

That year Lenin, only 52, suffered the first of several strokes that finally took his life in 1924. As he became incapacitated, many saw his most capable colleague, War Commissar Trotsky, as the likely new Soviet leader. But other Communists, annoyed by Trotsky's arrogance and fearful that he might use his control of the Red Army to become a military dictator, formed a coalition against him. It came to be dominated by Joseph V. Djugashvili (*joo-GAHSH-vē-lē*), general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, who called himself the "Man of Steel": Stalin.

Stalin was a crude but effective organizer, good at getting things done. As general secretary, he set the party's agenda, ran its daily affairs, and appointed its local managers. While others grappled with major issues, he dealt with organizational affairs, quietly amassing power by staffing the party structure with his supporters. He also positioned himself as Lenin's heir by creating a cult to the late leader, marked by a marble mausoleum in Moscow and by the renaming of Petrograd (formerly Saint Petersburg) as Leningrad.

In 1925, after defeating and deposing Trotsky, the coalition crumbled. Afraid that Stalin was gaining too much power, his allies turned against him. But they were too late: with his control of the party, Stalin deftly ousted them, and by 1928 he had become a dictator.

Stalin's rise to dictatorship marked the triumph of Soviet nationalism. His defeated foes, as Marxist internationalists, saw NEP as a tactical retreat and were eager to resume the quest for world revolution. But Stalin, as a Soviet nationalist, insisted on socialism in one country, a program that focused on strengthening the USSR, while requiring Communists everywhere to put off world revolution and support the Soviet state.



Soviet poster from 1920s:
"Bridge to a bright
future."

Lenin implements New
Economic Policy to
rebuild Russia

Lenin's illness and death
set off a Soviet power
struggle



Joseph Stalin.

Stalin's rise is a triumph for
Soviet nationalism

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Stalin nonetheless grew impatient with NEP. At first it had been successful, restoring production to prewar levels by the mid-1920s, but by 1928 economic progress had slowed. Fearful that the capitalist powers would soon move to crush his country, with its weak industrial base, Stalin decided that the USSR could not survive without rapid industrial growth.

He also decided that he needed control of the grain harvest. Under NEP, like farmers in the West, Soviet peasants found that an oversupply of grain drove prices down. So rather than sell their grain at a loss, they hoarded it, hoping to push prices back up. This hoarding infuriated Stalin, who needed the grain to feed urban factory workers and to sell abroad for machines to build Soviet industry.

STALIN'S REVOLUTION. His response was the "Stalin Revolution," a mass campaign to reorganize farming and rapidly expand industry. It began in 1928 with the First Five Year Plan, an economic blueprint that set ambitious targets and timetables for industrial and agricultural output. In practice it produced a frenzied and forcible mobilization of Soviet society.

The agricultural reform, called collectivization, created a monstrous catastrophe. To gain control of the grain, Stalin forced peasants onto **collective farms**, multifamily farms supposedly owned by their members but actually run by the state, which took all the grain it needed to support industry. When self-reliant farmers resisted such collectivization, Stalin's regime called them "enemies of the people" and sent troops with machine guns to destroy them. As civil war swept Soviet Ukraine in the early 1930s, millions of resisters were shot or sent to prison camps in Siberia, where they were made to mine that region's resources under inhuman conditions. As the state's need for grain increased, moreover, it took most of the harvest, leaving farmers less than they needed for survival. The resulting forced famine killed five to ten million people.

Appalled by such atrocities, even loyal Communists began to see Stalin as a murderous monster. Fearful they might plot against him, in the mid-1930s the Soviet dictator decided to destroy them. His police arrested numerous Communists and charged them with fabricated crimes, such as collaborating with enemy countries or supporting Trotsky, whom Stalin had driven into foreign exile in 1929. During the **Great Purges**, Stalin's systematic efforts to eliminate opponents in 1936–1938, dozens of party and military officials were placed on trial, forced to make false confessions, and summarily shot. Millions of other people were arrested and shipped to Siberia. Finally, in 1940, a Stalin henchman, using an ice ax, murdered Trotsky in Mexico.

By then, Stalin had both industrialized and terrorized his nation. Through superhuman sacrifices by Soviet workers, combined with machinery purchased abroad using grain taken from the farmers, the USSR had become an industrial giant. But it scarcely resembled the "worker's paradise" envisioned by early socialists. Workers and peasants, in whose name the revolution was made, now lived in fear of the regime, working long harsh hours in factories and collective farms under brutal state control. To make their nation an industrial power, they paid a terrible price.

But to Stalin there had been no choice: in order to survive, the Soviets had to overcome their backwardness at any cost. In a 1931 speech, responding to requests that he slow the pace of industrialization, he used Russian nationalism and fear of foreigners to justify his frantic approach:

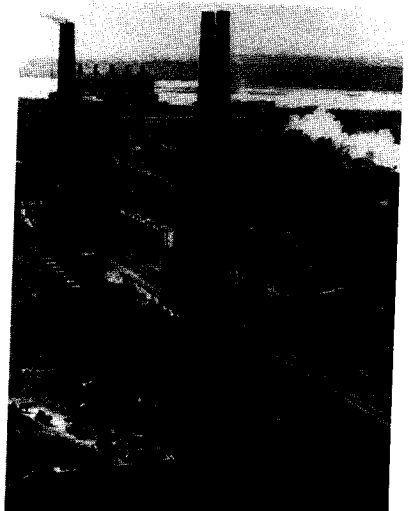
No, comrades . . . , the pace must not be slackened . . . To slacken the pace would mean to lag behind; and those who lag behind are beaten . . . We are fifty or a hundred years behind the advanced countries. We must make good this lag in ten years. Either we do it or they crush us.

Fearing capitalist powers, Stalin opts to industrialize rapidly

Collectivization of farming causes catastrophic civil war and famine

Stalin's industrialization and terror regiment Soviet society

Giant Soviet steel mill of the 1930s.



Stalin's fear of foreign attack proves prophetic

The Soviet dictator was paranoid, obsessed with real and imagined foes, but his speech proved prophetic. Ten years later, in 1941, his newly industrialized nation would face his ultimate fear: a massive invasion by a resurgent Germany.

National Socialism in Germany

Germany's path to dictatorship, like Russia's, was marked by economic woes, fears and resentments of foreigners, and a desire to strengthen the nation against outside interference. After more than a decade of democracy, in the 1930s Germany came under the control of a nationalist, racist, and militarist movement known as National Socialism, supporters of which were called Nazis.

War reparations and multiple parties weakened German democracy

THE FAILURE OF GERMAN DEMOCRACY. German democracy, initiated after the Great War, faced obstacles from the outset. One was an overabundance of political parties, making it hard for any to win a majority of seats in the Reichstag (*RIKS-tahk*), Germany's elected assembly. Governing cabinets thus were usually multiparty coalitions, and the chancellors who headed these cabinets often found it hard to keep their coalitions together. Another was the fact that many Germans detested their new Weimar (*VI-mar*) Republic (named for the city where its constitution was drafted in 1919) for accepting the hated Versailles Treaty and its crippling reparations.

By 1923, unwilling to further offend Germans by raising taxes to fund the reparations, the cash-starved Weimar government had stopped making payments to France. When France responded by occupying Germany's industrial Ruhr Valley, German workers struck in protest; France in turn closed off the region, preventing delivery of food and goods to the striking workers. The government, forced by public opinion to pay the strikers' unemployment benefits, printed vast amounts of paper money, resulting in horrific inflation. By August, a loaf of bread cost millions of times what it had earlier that year, and workers were paid with bales of worthless bills. Millions of Germans thus lost their life savings.

Hitler and Nazis try to grab power during inflation crisis



German woman fuels stove with worthless money during inflation crisis.

During this crisis, an obscure rabble-rouser made a bid for power. Adolf Hitler, an embittered young Austrian who had served bravely in Germany's army during the Great War, had since become leader of the **National Socialist German Workers' Party**, a fringe group later called the Nazis. A spellbinding speaker, he trumpeted the myth that "undefeated" Germany had been "stabbed in the back" by traitors who accepted the peace terms, and he urged Germans to rearm and avenge the humiliation of Versailles. In November 1923 he launched a *putsch* (attempted power grab) in a Munich beer hall, firing a shot into the ceiling to signal the start of his rebellion.

But German democracy survived the 1923 crisis. The "Beer Hall Putsch" was quickly crushed and Hitler was jailed for a year, while the Reichstag found a strong leader in Gustav Stresemann (*SHTRÄ-zuh-mahn*). A pragmatic nationalist, Stresemann raised taxes, cut government spending, revalued the currency, and negotiated long-term low-interest loans from the United States. The inflation ended, payments resumed, and France withdrew from the Ruhr. In 1925 Stresemann negotiated the Locarno Treaties with France, Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, agreeing that Germans would not use force to change the 1918 borders, and in 1926 he brought Germany into the League of Nations. By the time he died in 1929, Germany seemed stable and prosperous, and Hitler's Nazis had faded into insignificance.

Then came the Great Depression. As struggling U.S. banks called in their loans, the German economy collapsed. Millions of Germans, frightened and unemployed, began voting for extremist parties. Hitler's promises to rearm Germany, renounce Versailles,

Great Depression strengthens support for Communism and Nazism

and expelled as did Germany the Nazis when Germany support the Nazis and

HITLER AND soon destroyed burned down Communism Hitler got parties on Third Reich

The Nazis dissolved delegates the suppression rights in Youth (for headed by radio station aspect of

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and expel the Jews, whom he blamed for Germany's suffering, struck a responsive chord—as did German Communist Party promises of a full-employment workers' state. By 1932 the Nazis and Communists were two of the Reichstag's largest parties. In January 1933, when German capitalists and nationalists, terrified of a Communist takeover, opted to support the Nazis as a lesser evil, Hitler was appointed chancellor, heading a coalition of Nazis and small right-wing parties.

HITLER AND THE THIRD REICH. Having come to power by democratic means, Hitler soon destroyed German democracy. In February 1933, when the Reichstag building burned down, he obtained emergency powers to deal with the crisis. Accusing Communists of setting the fire (although some evidence pointed to the Nazis), Hitler got the Reichstag to ban the Communist Party. Then he dissolved the other parties one by one. By July Germany was a one-party state, which Hitler called the Third Reich (Third Empire).

The Nazis then regimented the rest of German society. Labor unions were dissolved into the Reich Labor Front, an association of labor and management delegates dominated by Nazi agents. A “national” Lutheran church was formed with the support of the regime, and a pact was made with the Catholic Church to ensure its rights in Germany if it avoided politics. Dissenting ministers and priests were then suppressed and sent to labor camps. Youth groups were absorbed into the Hitler Youth (for boys aged 9–18) and League of German Girls. A Ministry of Propaganda, headed by Josef Goebbels (*GEH'r-bulz*), took control of newspapers, magazines, radio stations, and film studios. Within months the Nazis controlled almost every aspect of German life.

Although the Third Reich was a dictatorship, with strict controls and concentration camps to confine dissenters, Hitler was popular with Germans. He united them as one, with himself as their *Führer* (leader). He restored their national pride, lost after the Great War, declaring them a “Master Race” descended from ancient Aryans and destined to dominate “subhuman Slavic races” by conquering *Lebensraum* (*LÄ-behnz-raoym*)—living space for Germany's growing population—in Poland and the USSR (see “Excerpts from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*”).

Hitler exploited people's fears by promoting anti-Semitism, anti-Jewish hostility long present in Christian Europe. But his attacks were racial, not religious: he vilified Jews as an impure race that must not be allowed to pollute the German Master Race through intermarriage or illicit sex. Nazi laws deprived Jews of German citizenship and forbade Jews under penalty of death from having sex with “pure” Germans. On *Kristallnacht* (the Night of Broken Glass), November 9–10, 1938, Nazis instigated anti-Jewish riots, burning synagogues across Germany, destroying thousands of Jewish-owned shops, and killing nearly one hundred Jews. Mass Jewish emigration, prompted by such actions and promoted by Nazis seeking to make Germany *Judenrein* (free of Jews), reduced its Jewish population from 560,000 in 1933 to under 300,000 in 1939.

Hitler, meanwhile, restored German prosperity, putting jobless men to work building military equipment and great highways (*Autobahnen*) on which to transport it. He urged women to leave the work force, to free up jobs for men and enlarge the Master Race by having Aryan babies. He financed his costly projects with ten-year government bonds, vowing to repay them by plundering nations later conquered by Germany. His plans were thus based on a new European war to restore German dominance and reverse the “shameful” verdict of Versailles. That conflict, later called World War II, was not long in coming.

Hitler becomes chancellor and destroys German democracy

 **Watch the Video**
Conformity and Opposition
in Nazi Germany
on myhistorylab.com

Hitler promotes nationalism, racism, and anti-Semitism



Synagogue being burned during *Kristallnacht*.

Hitler borrows to build Germany, based on future war

DOCUMENT 32.2 Excerpts from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*

In *Mein Kampf* (My Struggle), which he composed in prison after the failed "Beer Hall Putsch" of 1923, Adolf Hitler set forth his racist ideology. How did he justify hatred of Jews and military expansion at Russia's expense?

... Nature's restricted form of propagation and increase is an almost rigid basic law ...

The stronger must dominate and not blend with the weaker ... Only the born weakling can view this as cruel ...

The fox is always a fox, the goose a goose, the tiger a tiger ... [Y]ou will never find a fox who ... might, for example, show humanitarian tendencies toward geese, as similarly there is no cat with a friendly inclination toward mice ...

No more than Nature desires the mating of weaker with stronger individuals, even less does she desire the blending of a higher with a lower race ...

Historical experience ... shows with terrifying clarity that in every mingling of Aryan blood with that of lower peoples the result was the end of the cultured people ...

[I]t is no accident that the first cultures arose in places where the Aryan, in his encounters with lower peoples, subjugated them and bent them to his will ...

As long as he ruthlessly upheld the master attitude, not only did he really remain master, but also the preserver and increaser of culture ...

... The great leaders of Jewry are confident that ... the Jews will devour the other nations of the earth ...

[T]he Jew knows very well that he can undermine the existence of European nations by a process of racial bastardization ...

And again the National Socialist movement has the mightiest task to fulfill.

It must open the eyes of the people ... and it must remind them again and again of the true enemy of our present-day world ... It must call eternal wrath upon the head of the foul enemy of mankind as the real originator of our sufferings.

It must make certain that ... the mortal enemy is recognized and that the fight against him becomes a gleaming symbol ...

Only an adequately large space on this earth assures a nation of freedom of existence ...

[W]e National Socialists must ... secure for the German people the land and soil to which they are entitled on this earth ...

And so we ... stop the endless German movement to the south and west, and turn our gaze toward the land in the east ...

If we speak of soil in Europe today, we can primarily have in mind only Russia and her vassal border states. Here Fate itself seems desirous of giving us a sign. By handing Russia to Bolshevism, it robbed the Russian nation of that intelligentsia which ... guaranteed its existence as a state ... For centuries Russia drew nourishment from this Germanic nucleus ... Today it ... has been replaced by the Jew. Impossible as it is for the Russian by himself to shake off the yoke of the Jew ... it is equally impossible for the Jew to maintain the mighty empire forever. He himself is no element of organization, but a ferment of decomposition ... And the end of Jewish rule in Russia will also be the end of Russia as a state ...

SOURCE: Excerpts from *Mein Kampf* by Adolf Hitler, translated by Ralph Manheim. Copyright © 1943, renewed 1971 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Used by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

New Varieties of Nationalism in Africa and Asia

While Stalin blended nationalism with Communism, and Hitler combined nationalism with racism, Africans and Asians adapted nationalism to their own conditions and cultures. As a result, in the interwar years, new forms of nationalism arose across Africa and Asia.

Nationalism and Anticolonialism in Africa

The Great War and Versailles settlement aided African nationalism, which was rooted in anticolonialism, or resistance to colonial rule. Taught by their European rulers to use European weapons against other Europeans, and exposed to Wilsonian ideals of

African nationalism arises in resistance to colonial rule

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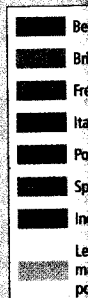
MAP 3

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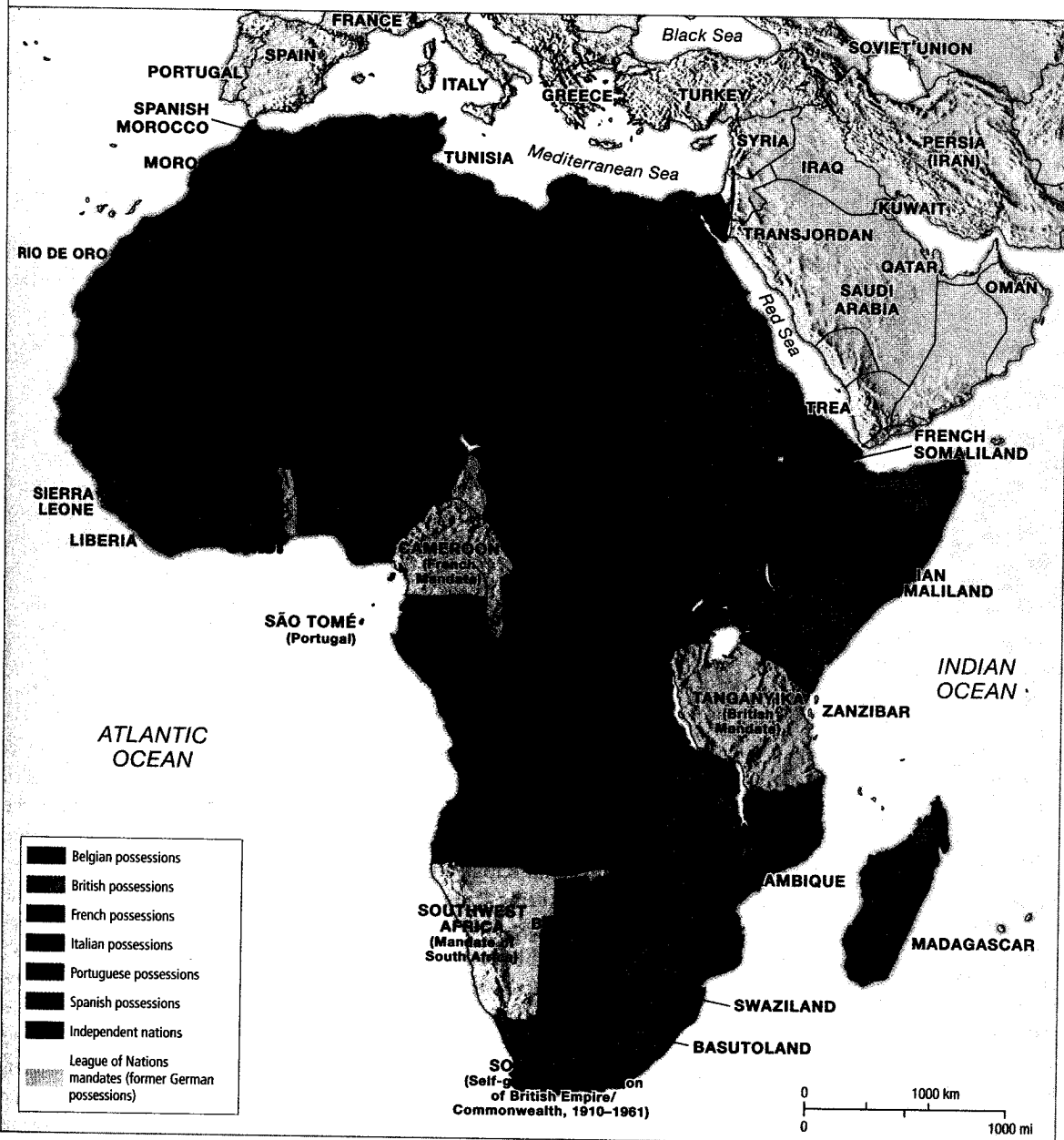
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national self-determination, Africans concluded they could use these weapons and ideals to fight European rule. But Europeans were still better armed, as shown by French slaughter of the Baya people in French Equatorial Africa (Map 32.2), who rebelled against forced railway labor in 1928–1931. So interwar African nationalism aimed for eventual rather than immediate independence.

MAP 32.2 Africa in the 1920s and 1930s

Although nationalism spread among Africans during the interwar years, most of Africa remained under European rule. Note that even Ethiopia lost independence when it was invaded by Italy in 1935–1936. How did the Great War help to promote African nationalist movements? Why did they have limited success in the interwar years?



African workers and farmers strike against Europeans



Marcus Garvey.

Africans devise religious and cultural forms of nationalism



Kemal Atatürk promotes shift from Arabic to Latin script.

Mustafa Kemal fosters modernization and secular nationalism in Turkey

Read the Document

The Six Arrows of Kemalism: The Principles of the Republican People's Party (RPP), 1935
on myhistorylab.com

Watch the Video

Ataturk: Mustafa Kemal
on myhistorylab.com

Reza Shah Pahlavi tries to modernize and secularize Iran

Some African workers and farmers went on strike against European employers. Strikes in British-held regions in the Gold Coast and the Northern Rhodesian copper belt achieved only modest gains, but in the 1930s Gold Coast cocoa farmers forced a significant price increase by withholding their produce from the markets. Nationalists led these protests, learning from them the prospects and limitations of collective action.

In the Belgian Congo, nationalism grew out of religion. Simon Kimbangu (*kim-BAHN-goo*) founded his own church in 1921 and proclaimed himself prophet. He taught that God would free the Congo peoples from Belgian bondage, so they need not pay taxes. The Belgians threw him in prison (where he died in 1951), but his church included future nationalist leaders such as Joseph Kasa Vubu (*kah-sah VOO-boo*), who became the first president of independent Congo in 1960.

Pro-African intellectuals developed other forms of nationalism. In the 1920s Marcus Garvey of Jamaica founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association, advocating “Africa for the Africans” and the end of European rule. Based in New York, Garvey never visited Africa, but his movement inspired several young Africans who led the anticolonial struggle after 1945. A culture-based alternative was offered by the Négritude movement, composed of French-speaking West African and Caribbean writers who celebrated African cultural traditions and their differences from Europe. One such scholar, Léopold Senghor (*SONG-or*), became the first president of independent Senegal in 1960.

In South Africa the African National Congress (ANC), founded in 1912 by educated black professionals to combat white racial repression, made little headway in the interwar years. But after World War II, when anticolonialism swept Africa, ANC became its strongest nationalist organization.

Secular and Islamic Nationalism in the Middle East

In the Middle East, the demise of the Ottoman Empire, in the wake of the Great War, boosted several different forms of nationalism. Turkey, the empire’s main successor state, adopted a Western-style secular nationalism, promoting loyalty to nation above religion, while others in the region sought to merge nationalism with Islamic, and often anti-Western, ideals.

In a 1919–1923 revolt, Turkish nationalists led by war hero Mustafa Kemal ousted the Ottoman sultan, who at Allied insistence had given up most of the realm’s non-Turkish regions, and created a Republic of Turkey in what was left (Map 32.3). As president and virtual dictator until he died in 1938, Kemal revolutionized his country. Determined to reduce the role of Islam and have his people identify as Turks more than as Muslims, he replaced Islamic schools with secular ones and Islamic law (Shari’ah) with Western-style legal codes. He modernized industries, Westernized styles and fashions, and even replaced Arabic script with the Latin alphabet. He abolished the sultanate and caliphate, took the name Atatürk (“father of Turks”), and made Turkey a modern secular nationalistic state.

Equally revolutionary was his emancipation of women, who by 1920 had gained some access to secondary education and factory jobs. Hoping to further economic growth by doubling the talent pool, he vastly expanded women’s opportunities. His reforms banned polygyny, gave women the right to vote and to serve in parliament, granted them equal access to divorce and child custody, and guaranteed their rights to education and employment.

Kemal’s secular policies sent shock waves across the Middle East. In Persia Reza Shah Pahlavi (*PAH-luh-vē*), a military man who took power and reigned as shah (king) from 1925 to 1941, sought to imitate Kemal’s reforms. He built railways and industries, reformed the legal system, and renamed his country Iran (after the ancient Aryans who had settled there). He even sought to end the seclusion and veiling of women, but stiff opposition from the country’s powerful Shi’ite Muslim clerics limited his success.

MAP 3

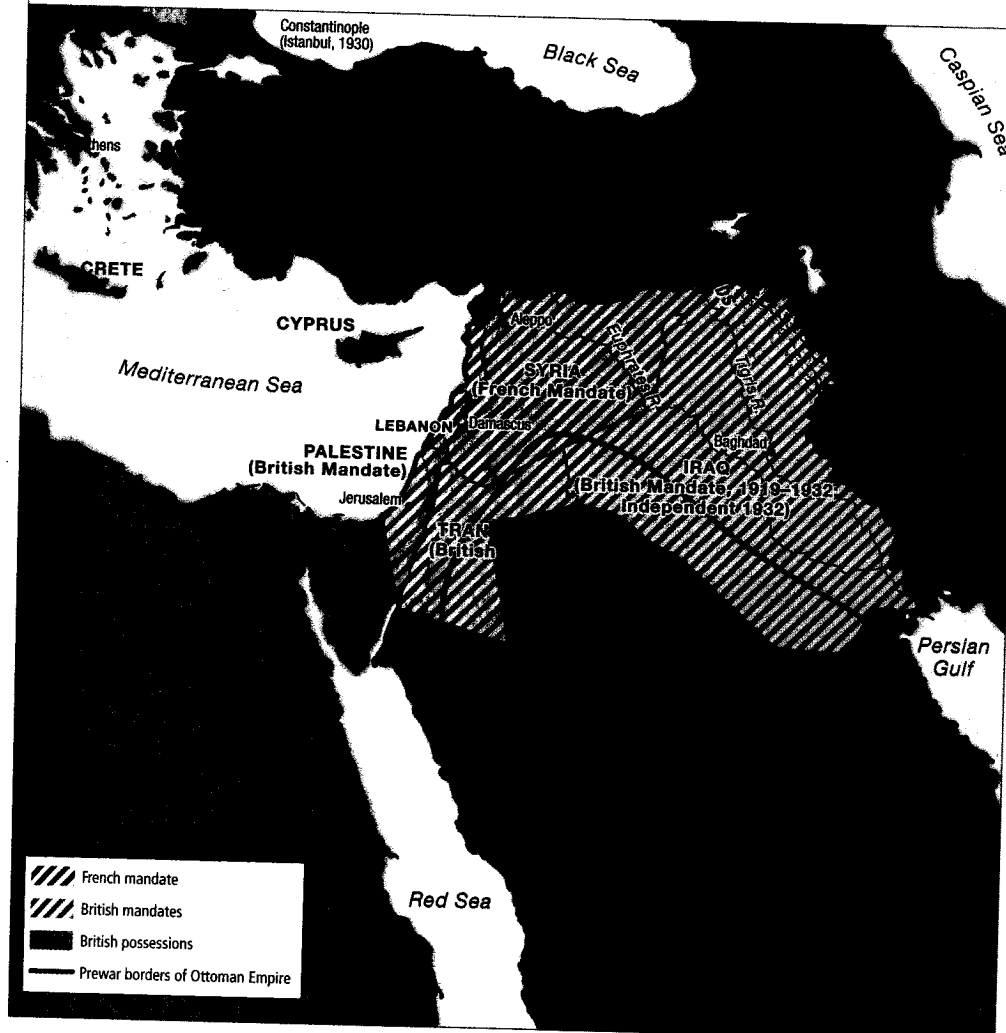
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MAP 32.3 The Middle East in the 1920s and 1930s

In the Middle East, with the Ottoman Empire's demise, some of its lands became French and British mandates, others later became part of Saudi Arabia, and what was left became the Republic of Turkey, with its capital at Ankara. Notice that the old capital, Constantinople, was formally renamed Istanbul in 1930, and that Persia became Iran in 1935. Why and how did different forms of nationalism emerge in different Muslim lands?



Elsewhere other Muslims, offended by such secularism, responded with forms of nationalism tied to Islam. In Egypt, which became an independent monarchy in 1922, the Society of Muslim Brothers, a militant Islamic nationalist group devoted to resisting secularism, emerged in 1928. In formerly Ottoman Syria and Palestine, nationalism took a pro-Islamic, anti-Western tone against France and Britain, which during the war had promised independence but then ruled these regions as League of Nations mandates. France further upset Muslims by carving from its Syrian mandate an area called Lebanon with a large Christian population, hoping to form a Christian-dominated nation. Britain angered Muslims by letting Jews settle in its Palestine mandate, based on the Balfour Declaration, a wartime pledge to help Jews form a national homeland there (Chapter 37).

Other Muslims embrace Islamic and anti-Western nationalism

French and British mandates create problems in Lebanon, Palestine, and Iraq



Faisal at Versailles with T. E. Lawrence "of Arabia" (right) and others.

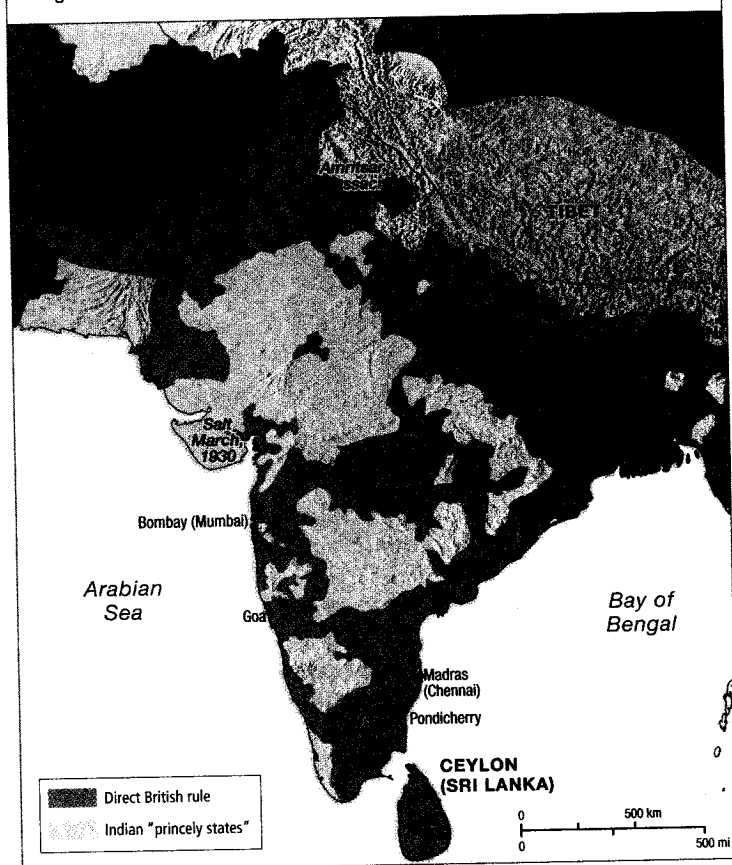
Although Britain and France withdrew in the 1940s, their actions inflamed antagonisms that still plague the region.

In Iraq, made up of three former Ottoman provinces where Britain had a League of Nations mandate, the British tried to create a Muslim nation. After forming a monarchy in 1921 under King Faisal (*Fī-sul*), son of Hussein ibn Ali, Sherif of Mecca, who had led the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans in the Great War, Britain recognized Iraqi independence in 1932. But Iraq's contentious religious and ethnic groups, including Shi'ite Muslim Arabs, Sunni Muslim Arabs, and Kurds, complicated efforts to achieve national unity.

More successful were the efforts in Arabia of Abdul Aziz ibn Saud (*sah-OOD*), leader of a strict Muslim sect called Wahhabism (Chapter 22), who in the 1920s defeated other Arabs and in 1932 formed the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. To create a Saudi national identity in a desert land dominated by Arab tribes, he imposed Wahhabism as the national form of Islam. He also forged connections with each tribe by marrying more than 240 women, divorcing most of them after two weeks, and sending them back to their tribes pregnant and laden with gifts. Ibn Saud was prolific—the House of Saud today has more than 7,000 princes—but his gifts were modest, usually a fine robe and a few goats, since his initial wealth was limited.

MAP 32.4 India Between the Wars, 1919–1939

Indian nationalists between the wars sought independence from Britain. Observe that Britain ruled much of India directly, but other parts indirectly through treaties with "princely states." Why were Gandhi's tactics, including the 1930 Salt March, effective against the British?



Then Charles Crane, head of America's Crane Plumbing Company, sent an engineer to search for underground water in desert Arabia. After 18 months, the engineer reported that Arabia had no such water, then resigned and went to work for Standard Oil of California. He had found not water but oil, which was on its way to surpassing coal as the world's main fuel. Saudi oil reserves would later prove the richest on earth, and Saudi Arabia would become one of earth's richest nations.

Nationalism and Nonviolence in India

Indian nationalism grew out of British rule, which united the diverse subcontinent and created a British-educated Indian elite influenced by Western notions of nationalism and democracy. In 1885, members of this elite had formed the Indian National Congress, a nationalist body advocating self-rule for India (Chapter 29). After Indian troops fought for Britain in the Great War, Woodrow Wilson's call for national self-determination raised hopes that the Allies would grant India self-rule as a matter of both gratitude and principle.

But the British were loath to let their lucrative colony go. They increased the role of Indians in its governance but imposed laws making Indians accused of anti-British activity liable to prison without trial, sparking demonstrations across India. In April 1919 in Amritsar (Map 32.4), a British commander had his Indian soldiers fire repeatedly on unarmed

demonstrations, a massacre, and a rebellion.

At this time, Gandhi (1869–1948), evicted from his law firm in South Africa, returned to India, or "his home," or "his motherland," with opposition to British rule and a leader of the Indian National Congress.

In 1919, Indians were protesting. In 1922, Gandhi was arrested for his politics to force the British to tax on salt. Indians later fought to get the British out, staged a satyagraha where they

When Gandhi saw that the British of India were not for an election, still controlled self-rule.

One aim of the Indian National Congress ("great-society") was to identify the factor that was relied on for continuing British rule was his anti-British Indian nationalism. Indian self-rule.

Gandhi's minority. Indian Nationalism would rely on the leader of the Indian National Congress. But violence was not the path to independence.

Nationalism

China, to the British, from the Indian National Congress. China's

demonstrators, killing at least 379 and wounding more than a thousand. The Amritsar massacre shattered hopes for peaceful transition to self-rule and left India verging on rebellion.

At this point an unusual leader emerged. Son of a Hindu merchant, Mohandas K. Gandhi (1869–1948) had studied law in England and practiced it in South Africa. There, evicted from a “whites-only” train car and barred from “whites-only” hotels, he identified with South Africa’s oppressed minorities. In time he developed *satyagraha* (*sut-YAH-gruh-huh*), or “truth force,” a nonviolent way to combat oppression by refusing to cooperate with oppressors (see “Gandhi on Nonviolent Resistance”). Returning to India, he became a leader of the Indian National Congress.

In 1920, following the Amritsar massacre, Gandhi led a national boycott, urging Indians not to buy British goods, pay British taxes, or participate in British institutions. In 1922, when some of his followers defied him and turned to violence, Gandhi was arrested for inciting insurrection. Distressed, after two years in jail he withdrew from politics to work among the poor. But in 1930, outraged by British imposition of a heavy tax on salt, he reemerged to lead a mass nonviolent resistance campaign. Since most Indians lacked refrigeration, they needed salt to preserve their food, so he urged them to get their own salt from seawater. Under his leadership some fifty thousand Indians staged a sensational Salt March, walking two hundred miles to the seaside salt flats, where they peacefully endured brutal beatings ordered by British officials.

When reports of these beatings prompted an international outcry, British authorities, seeing that their use of force was futile, negotiated with Gandhi. The resulting Government of India Act, passed by Britain’s parliament in 1935, gave India a constitution calling for an elected two-house national legislature. It was not full independence—the British still controlled the government’s executive branch—but it was a major step toward self-rule.

One key factor in Gandhi’s success was his conversion of Indian nationalism from an aim of the elite into a movement of the masses, who affectionately called him Mahatma (“great-soul”). Sparsely dressed in handwoven cloth he spun on a small spinning wheel, he identified with the outcasts and poor, inspiring in them dignity and pride. Another factor was his clever exploitation of Britain’s self-interest. Realizing that imperial rule relied on Indian cooperation, he promoted noncooperation, seeking to show Britain that continuing its control would be more trouble and expense than letting go. A third factor was his aptitude for public relations and seizing the moral high ground. Reports of Indian nonviolence in the face of brutal beatings helped win sympathy in Britain for Indian self-rule.

Gandhi’s success was incomplete, for he failed to calm the fears of India’s Muslim minority. The 1937 elections held under the new constitution gave the Hindu-dominated Indian National Congress most legislative seats. Concerned that Indian independence would result in oppression of Muslims by the Hindu majority, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, leader of an association called the Muslim League, turned it into a separatist movement. But violent clashes between Hindus and Muslims then strengthened British imperialists, who portrayed these clashes as proof that India was not ready for self-rule. Indian independence was delayed until 1947.

Nationalism and Communism in China

China, too, was affected by nationalist reaction against foreign intrusion, by ideas adapted from the West, and by internal divisions. But China’s divisions rested not on religion, as in India and the Middle East, but on ideology, as Nationalists and Communists fought over China’s future.

Amritsar massacre leaves India on brink of anti-British rebellion

Read the Document

Mohandas Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa* on myhistorylab.com

Gandhi leads nonviolent resistance against British rule



Gandhi with spinning wheel.

1935 Constitution gives India a degree of self-rule

Gandhi’s mass appeal and moral standing undermine British rule

Muslim League, fearing Hindu rule, leads separatist movement

DOCUMENT 32.3 Gandhi on Nonviolent Resistance

Gandhi portrayed violence as cowardly and nonviolence as courageous. How did his approach contrast with Hitler's (Document 32.2)? Why was it effective against Britain?

... I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness is more manly than punishment ...

Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from an indomitable will ... We in India may in a moment realize that one hundred thousand Englishmen need not frighten three hundred million human beings ...

I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the ... saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute, and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For *satyagraha* and its offshoots, non-cooperation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering ...

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission

to the will of the evil-doer, but it means the pitting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire ...

Non-violence is not a cover for cowardice, but it is the supreme virtue of the brave. Exercise of non-violence requires far greater bravery than that of swordsmanship. Cowardice is wholly inconsistent with non-violence. Non-violence ... is a conscious deliberate restraint put upon one's desire for vengeance. But vengeance is any day superior to passive, effeminate, and helpless submission. Forgiveness is higher still. Vengeance too is weakness. The desire for vengeance comes out of fear of harm, imaginary or real. A dog barks and bites when he fears. A man who fears no one on earth would consider it too troublesome even to summon up anger against one who is vainly trying to injure him ...

Non-resistance is restraint voluntarily undertaken for the good of society. It is, therefore, an intensively active, purifying, inward force. It is often antagonistic to the material good of the non-resister ... It is rooted in internal strength, never weakness ...

SOURCE: Roger S. Gottlieb (editor) *Liberating Faith*. Copyright © 2003 Rowman & Littlefield. Reprinted by permission.

Sun Yixian forms the Guomindang as Chinese Nationalist Party

Yuan Shikai bans Guomindang and bids to become emperor

Regional warlords rule China after Yuan Shikai's death

Allied snub and May Fourth protests fuel Chinese nationalist fervor

THE RISE OF NATIONALIST CHINA. The father of Chinese nationalism was Sun Yixian (*SUN Ē-shē-AHN*), also called Sun Yatsen, a Western-educated Chinese doctor who had emerged in the early 1900s as a revolutionary leader against the imperial regime. But when that regime fell in 1912, Sun, lacking military support, stepped aside in favor of former general Yuan Shikai, who became president of a new Chinese Republic (Chapter 29). Sun then formed the Guomindang (*GWŌ-MIN-DONG*), or “National People's Party,” a nationalist and democratic organization that won a majority of the seats in 1913 parliamentary elections.

But Yuan Shikai, a military man with imperial ambitions, soon outlawed the Guomindang, shut down the parliament, and schemed to make himself emperor. He was thwarted, however, by rebellion in the south, and humiliated when Japan used the Great War to seize the Shandong peninsula, a key coastal region in northeast China earlier leased by Germany.

When Yuan died suddenly in 1916, China dissolved into chaos. His regime still functioned in Beijing under his former aides, but in the provinces his governors and generals emerged as regional warlords, collecting taxes and commanding armies that fought each other and pillaged the land. China's “Warlord Era” lasted from 1916 to 1928.

Meanwhile, Sun, having fled abroad in 1913, returned to China in 1917 to rebuild the Guomindang. The Russian Revolution, occurring that same year, provided inspiration and support. Lenin's views, equating imperialism with capitalism, and Soviet pledges to

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back Asian nationalist movements, resonated in China—especially after May 4, 1919, when news reached Beijing that the Paris Peace Conference, ignoring China's pleas, had let Japan keep control of the Shandong peninsula. The resulting **May Fourth Protests**, which spread all across China, were directed both against the West (for letting Japan keep Shandong) and the weak Chinese regime (which had earlier acquiesced to Japan's presence there). They energized Chinese nationalism, which continued to grow long after Shandong was returned to China in 1922.

They also energized Chinese Communism. In Shanghai in 1921, Chinese Marxists founded the Chinese Communist Party, aiming to secure with Soviet support a socialist future for China. In 1924, at Soviet urging, the Chinese Communist Party joined the Guomindang, linking Communism with nationalism against capitalism and imperialism in a common effort to liberate China from the warlords and the West. Aided by Soviet agents, Sun reshaped the Guomindang as a Soviet-style revolutionary party with activist groups, or cells, in major cities. He also published an influential work, *The Three Principles of the People*, calling for nationalism, democracy, and "people's livelihood," often equated with socialism.

But after Sun's death in 1925, power in the Guomindang passed to its military wing, led by Sun's disciple Jiang Jieshi (*jē-AHNG jē-EH-SHUR*), also called Chiang Kaishek (*jē-AHNG KĪ-SHEK*). Sun had tapped Jiang, who had studied Red Army methods in Moscow, to form a Guomindang army that could conquer the warlords. In 1926, having trained a large force, Jiang set out on a "Great Northern Expedition," moving north from his party's southern base to unite China under Guomindang rule (Map 32.5). He was backed by both Nationalists and Communists.

In April of 1927, Jiang and his forces arrived at Shanghai. Long a center of Western capitalist commerce, this port city teemed with poorly paid dock and factory workers, living in squalor and working long hours in unsafe conditions. Communists had organized these workers and persuaded them to take over the city to welcome Jiang as a liberator. But Jiang, in collusion with the capitalists, instead stunned the city by using his army to massacre Shanghai Communists.

Jiang had reasons for staging this **Shanghai Massacre**. He was concerned that the Communists, whose numbers were growing, might soon dominate his movement. He was alarmed by recently discovered evidence that the Soviets planned to use his revolution to bring China under Communist control. He was impressed by the power and wealth of Western capitalists, whose help he could use in rebuilding China. And he was shaped by his background as a soldier: like Yuan Shikai, he believed in using force against potential foes.

Jiang resumed the Great Northern Expedition, but his allies and aims had changed. He sided with Western capitalists, married a wealthy American-educated woman, and later (partly to please his new wife's mother) became a Christian. Rather than attack the warlords, he cut deals with them, letting them retain regional rule if they recognized his regime. By 1928, Jiang was China's main leader, heading a new Nationalist regime with its capital at Nanjing.

Despite its parliamentary institutions and Western ties, however, "Nationalist China" was a one-party state with limited strength. Jiang's power came from his army, his ties with the warlords, and appointment of his cronies as key officials to run China's economy. While Jiang focused on his military, these "bureaucratic capitalists" worked to modernize and industrialize China, while also gaining great wealth for themselves.

NATIONALISTS VERSUS COMMUNISTS. Jiang's dominion in China was far from complete. He controlled the cities and army, the standard centers of strength. But the Chinese masses neither lived in cities nor served in the army. Most were peasants who lived in villages

Chinese Communists and Nationalists combine in effort to unite China

After Sun dies, Jiang Jieshi and the army dominate Guomindang

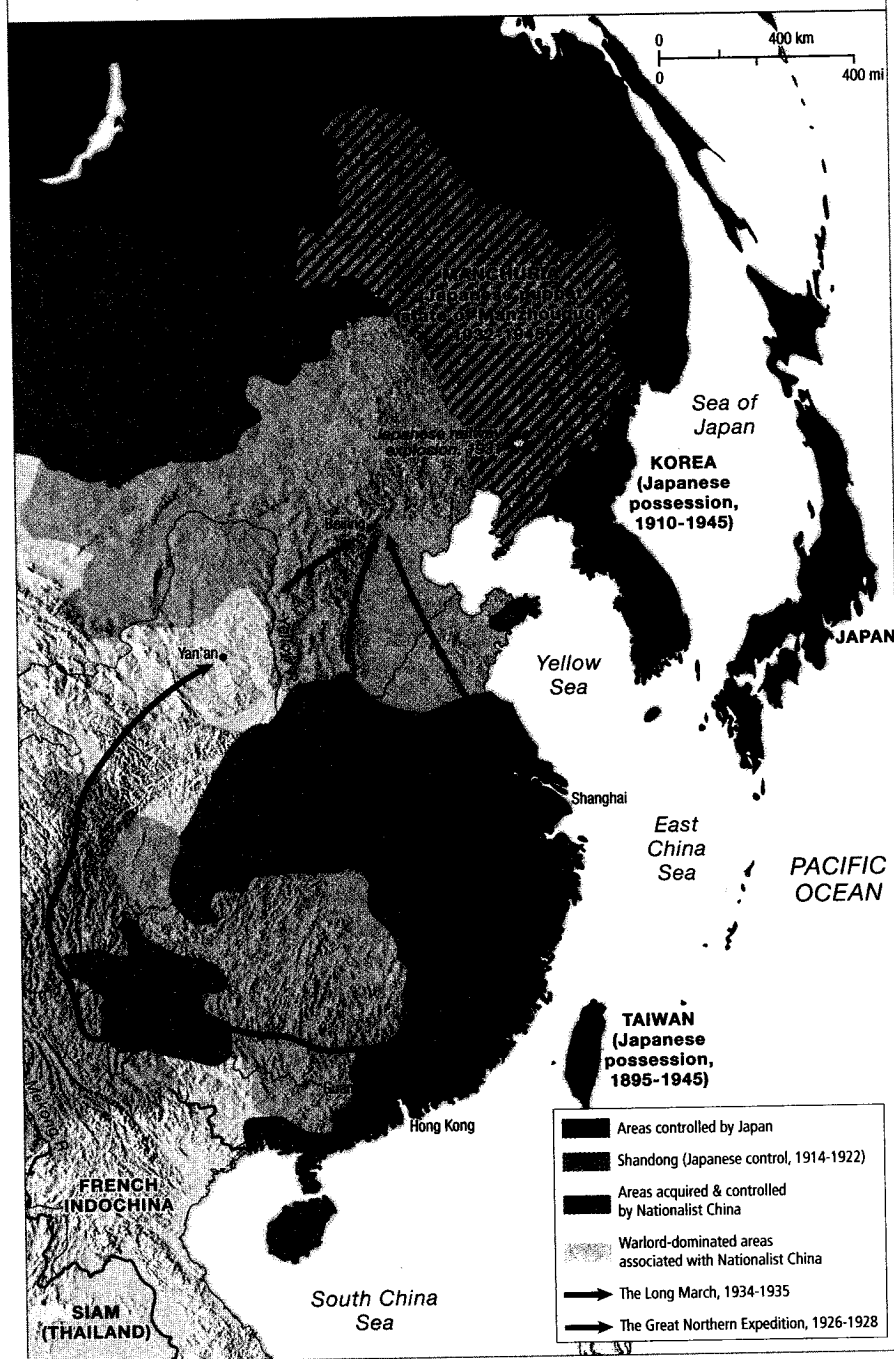
Jiang turns against Communists and massacres them in Shanghai

Jiang "unites" China by cutting deals with warlords and West

Chinese peasant masses wooed by Mao Zedong and Communists

MAP 32.5 Nationalist China and Expansionist Japan, 1926–1937

Chinese turmoil and Japanese expansionism marked the interwar years. Note that Nationalist efforts to unify China failed to dislodge the warlords, who cut deals with the regime, or the Communists, who survived by fleeing to Yan'an on the Long March. Why and how did Japan move into Manchuria?



plains, and rivers to the wilds of the west and north, fighting constant battles in a six thousand-mile retreat, later hallowed in Communist legend as the Long March (Map 32.5).

with their extended families, tilling the soil as peasants had done for ages. China's Communists, shattered by the Shanghai slaughter, turned to these peasants as the basis for a new revolution, inspired by a gifted young Marxist named Mao Zedong (MAOW zuh-DŌNG).

Raised among peasants and influenced by both Sun and Lenin, Mao had become a Communist, but he had trouble relating to urban factory workers. In his native province, however, he saw peasants organize themselves to combat landlords and warlords. Rejecting the orthodox Marxist view that revolution must arise with the urban proletariat, in 1927 he published a radical report claiming that peasants could lead China to socialism. Unlike Jiang, who allied with the rich and strong, Mao looked to the poor and weak to help him transform society. But like Jiang, Mao felt the future must be shaped by force. "A revolution is not a dinner party," he wrote. "A revolution is an insurrection, an act of violence by which one class overthrows another."

In the next several years, Mao and his comrades mobilized peasants in south-central China, forming a "Chinese Soviet Republic" with its own institutions and army. But Jiang then sought to crush this movement with military attacks. Finally, in October 1934, Mao and about a hundred thousand supporters sought to escape. With the Nationalist army in pursuit, they fled on foot across mountains,

A year later, in the northwest.

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A year later, about twenty thousand survivors reached the relative safety of the remote northwest.

There, protected by the region's rocks, hills, and isolation, Mao rebuilt his movement. Based in the town of Yan'an, he promoted socialism among the region's rural people, operating clinics, shops, and schools in caves to shield them from Nationalist attacks. His programs eventually won him broad support among China's peasants. Meanwhile, in 1936, Jiang was forced by one of his warlords to negotiate a truce with the Communists, so China could deal with a growing foreign threat: the military expansionism of imperial Japan.

Communists flee on "Long March" from Jiang's attacks

Mao and Communists rebuild in remote Yan'an

Nationalism and Militarism in Japan

More than any other Asian nation, Japan had imitated the West in focusing on industry and military might. By defeating Russia in 1905, Japan had also emerged as Asia's leading power. But the island nation nonetheless lacked the fuel and raw materials to sustain modern industries and military forces. Japan thus sought dominion over nearby Asian regions rich in resources.

One such region was Korea, occupied by Japan in the Russo-Japanese War and formally annexed in 1910. Mixing modernization with repression, Japan built roads, factories, hospitals, and schools but also exploited Korea's resources and undermined its culture, forcing Koreans to speak Japanese and take Japanese names. Although Korean nationalists declared independence on March 1, 1919, sparking massive anti-Japanese demonstrations, Japan crushed the protests ruthlessly and continued to rule Korea until 1945.

Meanwhile, having joined the Allied Powers in the Great War, Japan seized China's Shandong peninsula, an iron-rich region the Germans had leased, and a number of German-held Pacific islands. Japan also profited commercially from the war, selling materials and supplies to the European Allies. In 1919 the Allies rewarded Japan, recognizing its rights in Shandong (which it kept until 1922) and giving it League of Nations mandates to govern the islands it had taken.

Japan expands into Korea and Shandong to gain resources

Despite a postwar recession and a 1923 Tokyo earthquake that took 130,000 lives, in the 1920s Japan expanded economically. Japanese *zaibatsu*—private industrial empires, such as Mitsui and Mitsubishi, that made and sold products ranging from textiles to steamships—emerged among the world's largest commercial conglomerates. By the 1930s, owing to urban industrial growth, almost half Japan's people lived in cities, up from only 12 percent in the 1890s. And many adopted a new urban culture, ignoring old Shinto and Buddhist values while embracing such modern amusements as movies, magazines, and sports.

Industry and democracy grow in Japan in 1920s

In these years Japan also grew more democratic. In 1925 it extended the vote to all men over 25, quadrupling the electorate, but still excluding women, who did not get voting rights until two decades later. New social legislation lifted restrictions on labor unions, limited work hours, and initiated a national health insurance program. By 1926, at the accession of Emperor Hirohito (1926–1989), Japan seemed to be evolving into a stable capitalist democracy.

But looming on the horizon were threatening clouds. One was a growing population, which rose from 40 million in the 1890s to 70 million in the 1930s, deepening demand for resources and space—thus adding to expansionist pressures. Another was the growth of foreign trade, which made Japan wealthy but also dependent on markets in the West.

Most ominous was the rise of **militarism**, an exaltation of the armed forces that promoted military might as central to the nation's character. Enthused by Japan's victory over Russia and success in the Great War, many Japanese revered their military, expecting it to secure land and resources while stressing traditional samurai values of courage, honor, loyalty, and toughness. Furthermore, as the constitution gave civilian leaders little power over the armed forces, military leaders could often act unhindered on their own.



Japanese youths in samurai dress reflect rising militarism.

Need for resources and space fuels Japanese militarism

Depression, Western tariffs, and crop failure devastate Japan

Japanese army creates puppet state in Manchuria

View the Map

Atlas Map: The Growth of Japan

on myhistorylab.com

Military leaders come to rule Japan in 1930s

Japan exits the League and signs pact with Nazi Germany

Adding to these anxieties was the Great Depression, which devastated Japan. In the early 1930s, as Western nations imposed import quotas and tariffs, Japanese exports steeply declined, undermining industries and causing mass unemployment. In 1931, moreover, disastrous crop failures brought starvation to the countryside. As civilian leaders proved unable to ease their distress, many in Japan looked to the military for solutions.

And the military looked to Manchuria, where Japan had based troops since the war against Russia. A huge Chinese province rich in coal and iron, it had ample land to provide food and space for Japan's growing population. In September 1931, Japanese officers conspired to blow up a Japanese-owned railway in Manchuria and blame the act on Chinese terrorists. Then the Japanese army, citing a need to defend Japan's interests, attacked Chinese forces and conquered Manchuria, creating there in 1932 a Japanese puppet state called Manzhouguo (*man-JOO-gwō*).

The "Manchuria Incident" destroyed Japanese democracy. The civilian government, unable to restrain the military, resigned in futility at the end of 1931. A new prime minister, seeking to restrain the armed forces, was murdered by a militarist the next May. Concluding that only the military could control its own, the emperor then made an admiral prime minister, ending civilian rule. The new regime soon suppressed left-wing parties and eventually all opposition.

The Manchuria Incident also damaged world peace. In 1933, censured by the League of Nations for aggression in Manchuria, Japan quit the League and grew more aggressive. In 1936 it signed the Anti-Comintern Pact, an agreement to collaborate with Nazi Germany against international Communism. The next year, as Japan began a new arms buildup, its forces in Manchuria provoked a war with China. This struggle later merged with conflicts in Europe into a Second World War.

CHAPTER

REVIEW

Putting It in Perspective

During the two decades that followed the Great War, Woodrow Wilson's dream of national self-determination turned into a nationalistic nightmare. The Versailles settlement, a compromise between Wilsonian ideals and Allied retributions, frustrated the hopes of both winners and losers, while cultural changes and new ideologies heightened global anxieties. In the 1920s, faced with economic and political instability, Italy and much of Eastern Europe turned from democracy to dictatorship. In the 1930s, shaken by the Great Depression, America and Western Europe retreated into economic nationalism, depriving other nations of Western markets and globalizing the crisis.

Russia and Germany both became brutal dictatorships, Stalin's based on Soviet nationalism and Hitler's on nationalistic racism.

Meanwhile, anti-Western anxieties and nationalistic ideologies fueled anticolonialism in Africa, secular and Islamic nationalism in the Middle East, nonviolent resistance in India, conflicts between Nationalists and Communists in China, and expansive militarism in Japan. By the late 1930s, it was clear that the Great War had not been "the war to end all wars," as Wilson and others had hoped. Instead, it had only been the First World War, soon to be surpassed in brutality and breadth by a second global conflict.

Review

KEY CONCEPTS

national self-determination, 748
relativism, 748
relativity, 748
assembly line, 748
impressionism, 748
751
cubism, 751
surrealism, 751
League of Nations, 751
League of Nations, 752
dictators, 752
fascism, 752
economic nationalism, 752
socialism in America, 758

KEY PEOPLE

Woodrow Wilson, 752
Friedrich Nietzsche, 752
Sigmund Freud, 752
Albert Einstein, 752
Henry Ford, 752
Sergei Eisenstein, 752
Leni Riefenstahl, 752
Pablo Picasso, 752
David Lloyd George, 752
Georges Clemenceau, 752
Benito Mussolini, 752
Herbert Hoover, 752
Franklin D. Roosevelt, 752
Ramsay MacDonald, 752
Stanley Baldwin, 752
Leon Blum, 752
V. I. Lenin, 752

ASK YOURSELF

1. Why did the war last so long?
2. Why did the war end so abruptly?

Reviewing Key Material

KEY CONCEPTS

national self-determination, 748
 relativism, 748
 relativity, 749
 assembly line, 750
 impressionism, 751
 cubism, 751
 surrealism, 751
 League of Nations, 752
 League of Nations mandates, 752
 dictators, 754
 fascism, 754
 economic nationalism, 756
 socialism in one country, 758
 collective farms, 759
 Great Purges, 759
 Nazis, 760
 National Socialist German Workers' Party 760
 Master Race, 761
Lebensraum, 761
 anticolonialism, 762
 African National Congress, 764
 satyagraha, 767
 May Fourth Protests, 769
 Shanghai Massacre, 769
 Long March, 770
 militarism, 771

KEY PEOPLE

Woodrow Wilson, 748, 752
 Friedrich Nietzsche, 749
 Sigmund Freud, 749
 Albert Einstein, 749
 Henry Ford, 750
 Sergei Eisenstein, 750
 Leni Riefenstahl, 750
 Pablo Picasso, 751
 David Lloyd George, 752
 Georges Clemenceau, 752
 Benito Mussolini, 754
 Herbert Hoover, 755
 Franklin D. Roosevelt, 756
 Ramsay MacDonald, 757
 Stanley Baldwin, 757
 Leon Blum, 757
 V. I. Lenin, 758
 Leon Trotsky, 758
 Joseph Stalin, 758
 Adolf Hitler, 760
 Gustav Stresemann, 760
 Simon Kimbangu, 764
 Marcus Garvey, 764
 Mustafa Kemal, 764
 Reza Shah Pahlavi, 764
 King Faisal, 766
 Mohandas K. Gandhi, 767
 Muhammad Ali Jinnah, 767
 Sun Yixian (Sun Yatsen), 768
 Yuan Shikai, 768
 Jiang Jieshi (Chiang Kaishek), 769
 Mao Zedong, 770

ASK YOURSELF

1. Why did the Paris Peace Conference fail to provide a lasting peace? Why did the Versailles Treaty cause so much resentment?
2. Why was Western culture in turmoil in the interwar years? Why did many new democracies fail to survive?

3. Why did the U.S. stock market crash result in a global depression? What impact did the depression have on political changes in America, Western Europe, Germany, and Japan?
4. How did Mussolini, Stalin, and Hitler gain power? What methods and concepts did each use to control and strengthen his country?
5. What were the origins, ideals, and exploits of interwar nationalist movements in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia? How and why did these nationalist movements differ?

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Key Dates and Developments

1918–1921	Reds prevail in Russian Civil War	1928	Stalin launches First Five Year Plan
1919	Paris Peace Conference formulates Treaty of Versailles	1929	U.S. stock market crash triggers Great Depression
1919	Japan crushes nationalist protests in Korea	1930	Smoot-Hawley Tariff globalizes Great Depression
1919	Amritsar massacre kills hundreds in India	1930	Gandhi organizes Salt March in India
1919	May Fourth Protests fuel nationalism in China	1930–1933	Civil war and forced famine kill millions in Soviet Ukraine
1919–1923	Kemal overthrows Ottoman sultan, creates Republic of Turkey	1931	Japanese army conquers Manchuria
1920	U.S. Senate fails to ratify Versailles Treaty	1932	Ibn Saud forms Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
1921	Lenin initiates New Economic Policy	1932	Iraq granted independence under King Faisal
1922	Mussolini takes power in Italy	1933	Hitler comes to power in Germany
1923	Inflation crisis rocks Germany	1934–1935	Mao leads Long March in China
1923	Tokyo earthquake kills 130,000	1935	Persia is renamed Iran
1925	Reza Shah Pahlavi becomes ruler of Persia	1935	Britain grants India limited constitution
1925	Locarno Treaties stabilize Central Europe	1936	Germany and Japan sign Anti-Comintern Pact
1927	Jiang Jieshi massacres Chinese Communists in Shanghai	1936–1938	Stalin conducts Great Purges in Russia

Reviewing Key Material

KEY CONCEPTS

Triple Alliance, 719
 Bloody Sunday, 722
 soviet, 722
 Duma, 722
 Diplomatic Revolution
 of 1890–1907, 723
 Triple Entente, 723
 Bosnian Crisis of
 1908–1909, 723
 blank check, 724
 trench warfare, 726

U-boats, 728
 Zimmermann Note, 735
 Provisional Government,
 737
 Petrograd Soviet, 737
 Bolsheviks, 737
 nationalization, 738
 genocide, 741
 reparations, 743
 armistice, 743

KEY PEOPLE

Franz Ferdinand, 719,
 724
 Otto von Bismarck, 719
 Kaiser William II, 720
 Tsar Nicholas II, 722
 Sergei Witte, 722
 Gavrilo Princip, 724
 Paul von Hindenburg, 726
 Erich Ludendorff, 726
 Erich von Falkenhayn, 727
 Mustafa Kemal, 728
 Philippe Pétain, 729
 Alexei Brusilov, 729

Paul von Lettow-Vorbeck,
 733
 Jan Christiaan Smuts, 733
 Woodrow Wilson, 734
 Georges Clemenceau, 735
 Empress Alexandra, 736
 Rasputin, 736
 V. I. Lenin, 737
 Leon Trotsky, 738
 Lavr Kornilov, 738
 Alexander Kerensky, 738
 Ferdinand Foch, 740
 Hussein ibn Ali, 741

ASK YOURSELF

1. Why wasn't the Crisis of July 1914 resolved peacefully, as so many earlier crises had been?
2. Why was the Great War so much more protracted than earlier wars in the 19th century? Why was it so much more deadly?

3. How did the strains of modernization and war weaken the Russian monarchy? Why did the Bolsheviks triumph in Russia in 1917?
4. Why did the Allies eventually win the Great War?

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Key Dates

1890–19

1894–19

19

1904–19

19

19

1908–19

19

19

Key Dates and Developments

1890–1907 The Diplomatic Revolution

1894–1917 Reign of Nicholas II in Russia

1904 Anglo-French Entente

1904–1905 Russo-Japanese War

1905 Russian Revolution of 1905

1907 Anglo-Russian Entente

1908–1914 European crises

1914 The Great War begins
Deadlock develops on Western Front

1915 Italy enters the war
Sinking of the *Lusitania*
Landing at Gallipoli

1916 Battle of Verdun
The Somme Offensive
The Brusilov Offensive

1917 Fall of the Russian monarchy (March)
United States enters the war
Mutinies in the French army
Bolshevik Revolution in Russia (November)

1918 Treaty of Brest-Litovsk
Great March Offensive
Global influenza pandemic
Armistice (November 11)



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