
Lecture 29 — World War I

This lecture really begins our discussion of the twentieth century. Historians are firmly convinced that the nineteenth century began in 1815 with the fall of Napoleon and the creation of post-Napoleonic Europe, and that it ended in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I and the end of the political system that had been evolving since 1700. You might find it a little odd that we are going to talk about the origins of World War I in the topic on the 19th century and then the war itself in the topic of the twentieth century, but that is really not so hard to figure out. The causes of the war were nineteenth-century causes, but the results of the war were definitely 20th-century results. The First World War really created the 20th century. And that is why we are going to spend a good bit of time on it, because it seemed an event in which Western Civilization tried to commit suicide for no apparent reason.

Terms:

Central Powers

Germany

Austria

Ottoman Empire

Allies

France

Great Britain

Serbia

Italy

Romania

Greece

United States

American Expeditionary Forces

trenches

artillery

machine guns

Sarajevo, Bosnia

Archduke Francis Ferdinand

Sophia

Serbian nationalists

Gavrilo Princip

July Crisis

Sidney Fay

Nationalism

Imperialism

Militarism

secret alliances

Schlieffen Plan

“a fresh and joyous war”

Plan XVII

First Battle of the Marne

the Lusitania

Gallipoli

Verdun

the Battle of the Somme

the Zimmerman Telegram

Armistice

The Treaty of Versailles

Woodrow Wilson

Some Questions for Study:

1. What might European diplomats have done prior to 1914 to avoid war?
2. Study and discuss both the long-range and the immediate causes of World War I. Sidney Fay argued that the long-range contributors ensured that a Europe-wide war was practically inevitable. What did he mean by that statement? Assess its validity.
3. What did many Europeans expect of both the war and its consequences in the spring and early summer of 1914? Did the course of the war and its consequences match their expectations?
4. Discuss the changes in technology that made World War I different, and vastly more destructive, than any of its predecessors? How did new weapons change warfare? (Don't forget submarines.)
5. In 1916 and 1917, as the body count grew on both sides, why didn't either side decide to sue for peace? What strategy did both sides employ in order to win the war? How'd that work out?
6. What were the objectives of the chief Allied participants of the Paris Peace Conference of 1919? Study the course and, especially, the consequences of the Versailles Treaty.

7. Using your Text, study and discuss the war in the “home front.” What was the social impact of the war on the various nations involved. How did the war change the lives of women? What were the economic consequences? Political?

Lecture 30 — The Great Depression

By 1929 Germany was making pretty good strides in returning to normal after its post-war troubles. The same was true of the rest of the western world. After the war ended there was considerable economic upheaval as men returned to civilian life and factories had to re-tool for peacetime markets. That took some time, but from 1925 to 1929 things looked like they were going to be okay. After all, a number of industries had made considerable progress during the war and were well-suited for the peacetime market as well — automobiles and all of the necessary side industries like oil production, gasoline stations, and auto repair places, radios, moving pictures, refrigerators, a new product developed during WWI. But in 1929 it all began to unravel into what is called the Great Depression.

Terms:

mortgages

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Florida land investment

the New Deal

New York Stock Exchange

“Alphabet Agencies”

buying on margin

John Maynard Keynes

Black Thursday

totalitarianism

Some Questions for Study:

1. While the Wall Street Crash is often attributed as a cause of the Great Depression, Dr. Price argues that the Crash was not a cause, but just another symptom of a much more complex set of economic conditions in the West, especially the United States, that began with a depression in the agricultural sector of the economy. Study and discuss the various economic factors — rural economic weakness, changes in investment practices, the use of credit purchasing, and stock-market speculation—that contributed to the Depression.
2. While the rest of the West suffered an extended period of unemployment from 1930 until World War II, German unemployment between 1936 and the war declined to almost 0%. Why? Does Germany’s experience help to explain why authoritarian and totalitarian governments were increasingly in demand in the West as an answer to the problems of the Great Depression?
3. What measures did FDR take to try to alleviate suffering as a result of the Depression in the U.S. In what ways does the New Deal indicate an increase in authoritarian and totalitarian government in the U.S.?
4. Using your Text, study the cultural and intellectual trends of the years between the wars.

Lecture 31 — The Russian Revolution

One of the most earth shattering events of the 20th century is the triumph of Communism in Russia. The Revolution of 1917 instituted a dictatorial regime that endured 70 years and more. It set the stage for the great ideological conflict that dominated the second half of the 20th century, and the decades of “Cold War” between the East and West.

Terms:

Tsar	Gregory Rasputin
“Little Father”	Alexander Kerensky
Nicholas II	Bolsheviks
Alexandra	“Peace, Bread and Land”
Alexis	Bolshevik Revolution
Russo-Japanese War	Red Guards
Bloody Sunday	soviets
St. Petersburg	Treaty of Brest-Letovsk
the Winter Palace	Reds and Whites
October Manifesto	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
Duma	New Economic Policy
Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (Nikolai Lenin)	“state capitalism”
Peter Stolypin	Joseph Stalin
kulaks	Leon Trotsky

Some Questions for Study:

1. What were the causes of the Russian Revolution?
2. In a lot of ways, up to the beginning of World War I, Russia was still stuck in the 18th century. Nicholas II was an absolutist monarch, the social system in Russia was medieval, Russia was essentially unprepared to enter the 20th century. Using your notes and the Text, discuss and explain.
3. In what ways did the disreputable career of one Gregory Rasputin contribute as a cause of the Russian Revolution? Who was he, and how did he rise to power in the Russian state?
4. Discuss the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. How did this small minority manage to gain control of the Russia state?
5. Was the Bolshevik Revolution and its consequences really Marxist? Explain your answer.

Lecture 32 — The Totalitarian Age

The 1930s represented an amazing decade. The great depression alone would have made it truly remarkable, but it also witnessed some fantastic political and social experiments and some truly demonic personalities. This lecture will study three of the leaders of the Age of Totalitarianism— Fascists, Benito Mussolini of Italy and Adolf Hitler of Germany, and Communist leader, Joseph Stalin of the Soviet Union—and we will try to come to grips with the meaning of fascism (a rather slippery subject).

Terms:

Benito Mussolini	Leon Trotsky
<i>Fascio di Combattimento</i>	NKVD
“black shirts”	Adolph Hitler
March on Rome	Vienna
Joseph Stalin	Munich
Lenin	National Socialist German Workers’ Party
Fifteenth All-Union Congress of the Party	NAZI
the Party Line	March on Munich
First Five-Year Plan	<i>Mein Kampf</i>
Five-Year Plans	Aryan race
Politburo	“the blood and the soil”
Great Purge	Ukraine
Sergei Kirov	Nuremberg Laws
	<i>Krystalnacht</i>

Some Questions for Study:

1. Fascism as a movement is pretty slippery. The term was coined by Benito Mussolini, and was embraced by Adolf Hitler and Francisco Franco of Spain (see Text, 837-838). Just what the word stood for is a bit different with each group and leader who embraced the idea (if we can call it that). Explain.
2. Hitler’s semi-autobiography, *Mein Kampf*, presents us with Hitler’s dreams and goals. Hitler’s ideology embodied a great many of the ideologies of the late 19th- and early-twentieth centuries, among them, Romanticism, Progressivism, Socialism, Social Darwinism, and Nationalism. Illustrate and explain.
3. Review and discuss Joseph Stalin’s climb to power in the Soviet Union. What were his goals as leader? How successful was he in achieving them, and what were the costs?

Lecture 33 — World War II

If World War I shaped the first half of the 20th century, the second half was undoubtedly shaped by the truly global struggle against evil, the Second World War. While the reasons for the First World War are complex, the responsibility for the Second War isn't so mysterious. It can be placed squarely on the doorstep of Adolf Hitler. In the years after World War I, most Americans and most Europeans as well, dreaded the possibility of another great war. In 1933 the student body of Oxford University passed a resolution that its members would not fight for their country under any circumstances. The French, in shock from the sacrifices of World War I, approved the construction of an elaborate defensive system on its eastern border facing Germany called the Maginot Line, which, instead of providing security, essentially paralyzed their ability to react to anything the Germans might do militarily.

Terms:

<i>Lebensraum</i>	Moscow
Maginot Line	Kiev
appeasement	Manchuria
occupation of the Rhineland	Stalingrad
Rome-Berlin Axis	Pearl Harbor
Austria	Midway
Greater German Reich	“island hopping”
Sudetenland	Philippines
Czechoslovakia	Gen. Douglas MacArthur
Neville Chamberlain	Resistance movements
Poland	North Africa Campaign
Phony War	Sicily
“Sitzkrieg”	D-Day
Norway	Normandy beachheads
Denmark	Battle of the Bulge
Belgium	Battle for Berlin
Holland	VE Day
<i>Blitzkrieg</i>	Harry Truman
Paris	Okinawa
Winston Churchill	Hiroshima
Battle of Britain	Nagasaki
Invasion of Russia	VJ Day
St. Petersburg	Holocaust

Some Questions for Study:

1. Using the Text and the lectures, study and discuss Adolf Hitler's foreign-policy goals and the steps that he took to attain those goals. Using the Text, do the same for Japanese ambitions. Especially in the case of Germany, how did the West make those goals easier, at least until Hitler's invasion of Poland. How can we account for early German successes?
2. Describe the thinking of Neville Chamberlain and other leaders that have been associated with “appeasement.” How'd that work out for the West? What finally brought about the end of the policy of appeasement in the face of Hitler's aggression?
3. Review the main events, campaigns, battles, of World War II.
4. Using your Text study and discuss the Holocaust.

5. Using your text, study and review conditions on the various Home Fronts. How did societies change in terms of expectations for women in labor, military service, economics, etc. Discuss the differences between the U.S. Homefront and life in those nations in Europe and Asia in which the civilian populations were targets in the conflict—frontline civilians.
6. Using the Text, review the Allied War Conferences — Tehran, Yalta, Potsdam— how did these conferences work out? How did attempts to arrive at a settled peace after the war set the stage for the next conflict, the Cold War?

Lecture 34 — The Cold War

After World War I, the allies met in Paris to see if they could make certain that World War I was the war to end war. But there was no great peace conference at the end of World War II. In fact, practically from the time the war ended, a new rivalry emerged, with the Soviet Union on one side and the United States on the other. This was the cold war, which dominated western civilization from the end of World War II to 1989. The cold war was a contest between ideologies. That had been true of the 1930s as well when Communism and Fascism represented related views of how society should be organized and democracy and Capitalism represented another view. The idea then was that these views were not only incompatible but one had to destroy the other. In this way World War II took on the quality of a religious war, a war between belief systems. This state of affairs persisted into the post-war period as a conflict between despotic Communism in the East and democratic Capitalism in the West.

Terms:

Poland	Leonid Breshnev
Harry Truman	Czechoslovakian Revolt 1968
Winston Churchill	Lech Walesa
Westminster College, Fulton Missouri	Détente
Iron Curtain	Ronald Reagan
Yalta Conference	“Star Wars”
The Big Three	Mikhail Gorbachev
United Nations	<i>Glasnost</i>
General Assembly	“Duck and Cover”
Security Council	deterrence
Berlin Airlift	mutually assured destruction (MAD)
Partition of Germany	proxy wars
“denazification”	Third World
Greece	Korea
Truman Doctrine	Vietnam
George Kennan	Peoples’ Republic of China
“containment”	Mao tse Dung
Marshall Plan	Cuba
Federal Republic of Germany	Fidel Castro
German Democratic Republic	Cuban Missile Crisis
Nikita Khrushchev	John F. Kennedy
Hungarian Revolt 1956	welfare state
	the Beatles

Some Questions for Study:

1. How did Soviet policies affect the history of Eastern Europe from 1945 through 1989?
2. Discuss the Truman Doctrine and its consequences. It could be argued that containment served its purpose until the late 1960s, and that the U.S. experience in Vietnam represents a major turning point? Explain.
3. Study and discuss the treatment of Germany after World War II by the allies.
4. Ponder. Did the arms race and the policy of brinkmanship actually make the world safer? Explain the policy called “mutually assured destruction.”
5. One of the most amazing phenomena of the Cold War period is the end of European colonialism, as European powers gave independence to their colonies in Africa and Asia. Using the text and in-class lecture notes review and discuss independence movements in Africa and Asia. this is not necessarily a happy story? Why? Explain.

6. What set of circumstances led to the fall of the Soviet Union, the end of the Cold War, the failure of Soviet Communism, and the beginning of a “New World Order”? Using all of the class materials available, study and discuss this question.

Lecture 35 — Terrorism and the New World Order

The fall of the Soviet Union made it unlikely that civilization would end with a nuclear bang, but increasingly, the growth of terrorism made it even more likely that civilization might be eroded by a series of terrorist whimpers. So, where did 20th century terrorism come from? This lecture, by its nature, is a bit sketchy. But remember that we are now entering the world of maybe, based on current evidence, and not history. Throughout the 20th century groups of discontented people who had no means of achieving their goals through diplomacy or national warfare, came to rely on acts of terror to get their grievances into the spotlight and achieve their aims. This lecture discusses the rise of terrorism as a tool of policy by various groups from the turn of the 20th century to the 21st.

Terms:

Bosnia	al Qaeda
Gavrilo Princip	9/11
the Irish Republican Army	Hezbollah
Easter Rising	“the weak horse”
Republic of Ireland	Vietnam War
Palestine	Richard Nixon
Zionism	Iran Hostage Crisis
King David Hotel	Beirut Bombing
Irgun	Ronald Reagan
State of Israel	First Gulf War
Shining Path	George H. W. Bush
Basque Separatists	Operation Restore Hope
Earth Liberation Front	Somalia
Yasser Arafat	Bill Clinton
al Fatah	First World Trade Center Bombing (1993)
Palestinian Liberation Organization	U.S.S. Cole
Munich Massacre	Embassy Bombings
Hamas	George W. Bush
Islamic Jihad	Second Gulf War
<i>jihad</i>	Afghan War
Osama bin Laden	

Some Questions for Study:

1. What is the purpose of terrorism? How has it changed over the course of the 20th century?
2. Why, in the past have groups decided to use terrorism in order to attain their goals? Does terrorism work? If not, why do groups persist in employing it as a means of attaining their goals?
3. How do Islamist terrorist groups like Hamas, al Qaeda and Hezbollah differ in terms of their aims and goals from earlier groups who employed terror tactics like the IRA and al Fatah?
4. Discuss bin Laden’s tale of the “weak horse.” What data did he base his account on? How did that work out?