

## **UNIT 2.- THE WORLD AT WAR**

### **The First World War (WWI or the Great War)**

#### **Introduction**

Some historians, such as Eric Hobsbawm, place the beginning –politically- of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in 1914. From here there was a turning point that left an indelible mark on European history. For a century, there had not been any wars involving all major European powers. Britain and France were busy expanding elsewhere. There was still the quite conservative and semi-feudal Austro-Hungarian empire, that was not to last. The disintegrating Ottoman Empire provoked instability in the Balkans, where subject peoples tried to establish themselves in independent states and had conflict among each other. In 1908, the Austro-Hungarian empire annexed the Ottoman possessions of Bosnia and Herzegovina with the opposition of Russia. The Balkan Wars (1912-1913) divided up the Ottoman empire between Greek and Balkan nationalists, particularly Serbia, posing a threat to Austro-Hungarian possessions in the Balkans. Russia was accused of supporting nationalism in the area.

Already at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, economic and political rivalry among the great powers had hastened the arms race. The political and social role of the army increased: national honour and military reputation became mixed up. Some nurtured aggressive nationalism into public opinion. After the international crisis at the beginning of the century, many expressed the possibility of war, even a world war, but even until the last minute it came as unexpected, as many believed a formula would somehow be found as had happened in the past, to avoid war. Even some politicians thought that in case of war, this would be over by the end of 1914. While governments immersed themselves fervently in the arms race, some civilians foresaw that a future world war would have catastrophic consequences.

Without thinking of possible future consequences, each country looked for alliances to avoid isolation. Those alliances would reflect: a) Maritime rivalry between Britain and Germany –the imperialist race. b) Rivalry between Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the Balkans. Germany, interested in isolating France, started the Triple Alliance (1882, with Austria and Italy). The response was the creation of the Triple Entente (1907) between France, Britain and Russia.

Until 1914, Europe, in full industrial development, had a clear prevalence over the world. International politics were based on the balance of power and conflicts in Europe, also due to colonial expansion. After 1914, the European balance of power was broken, and Europe was relegated in favour of the United States of America and, up to a certain point, Japan. In addition, 1914 started an era of wars of a destructive magnitude never known before.

#### **Causes of the war**

The motives for the rivalry among the European powers and their alignment in two blocks were several and of different nature:

1. **Imperialist rivalry.** When the 20<sup>th</sup> century started, the British empire had expanded over the five continents, while France ruled over large areas of Africa. As capitalism is based on expansion and increasing sales, industrialised countries need to constantly expand their markets. They also needed raw materials at low prices and these two were the main tasks of the colonies. Expansion became a necessity for any European power, as, besides the economic advantages, it gave them splendour. However, a newly strong and industrialised Germany arrived late for their share and only obtained small areas of Africa. This fact increased rivalry between Germany and Britain or France, both of which had already some clashes between them.
2. **Other territorial rivalries.** France lost, to Germany, the border territories of Alsace and Lorraine in the Franco-Prussian war (1871) and wanted these regions back. They were also regions with a powerful iron and steel industry. Italy wanted to finish its national unity with some territories that still were in the hands of Austria. Poland was divided and wanted independence. The Balkans was a constant source of conflict. There were Serb, Czech, Croatian and other nationalists while Austria and Russia held or aimed to hold power over this land. Some of it had ties with Russia and Turkey.
3. **Economic rivalry.** Until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century English industrial supremacy was indisputable. However, from then, Germany appears to be a powerful competitor that entered French, Belgian and Russian markets. They took advantage of their central geographical situation in Europe and established a flexible **loan** system. However, London and Paris continued to be the world financial markets. Germany could not compete placing capitals outside its borders but tried to introduce capitals in Russia and other places.
4. **Nationalism.** Militarism reflected in the armament race was linked with patriotic-nationalistic propaganda in most European countries. State governments insisted on the peril of war and on a patriotic stance, creating a public opinion of proud patriotism in which each would think their country was the best and others should know, that their reasons were fair and others were not, that is, creating little resistance to a possible war among the people.

## Outbreak and Development of the War

The **outbreak** –or immediate cause- of the war occurred when the heir of the Austro-Hungarian empire, Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie, were assassinated on the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia, by a Serb nationalist belonging to a Serbian nationalist secret society called Black Hand. Arguing that Serbian officials were implicated in the assassination, the Austrian government, with the backing of Germany, and after giving an ultimatum to Serbia, decided to destroy Serbia as a political entity, attacking Serbia and, in doing so, starting the war –28<sup>th</sup> of July. Serbia was relying on Russia's help. Russia declared war on Austria two days later. In a few days, the alliance mechanisms, the action force in favour of the war, the haste of commanders-in-chief for mobilising troops before the enemy, led Europe to war. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of August, German troops invaded Belgium, despite being neutral.



Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and Countess Sophie in Sarajevo, 1914  
<http://members.fortunecity.com/mikaelxii/sarajevo.jpg>

In August 1914 both alliances, the Triple Entente and the Triple Alliance were at war, excepting Italy, that declared to be neutral but finally joined the Entente in 1915. Nevertheless, the conflict would keep extending to other areas. In 1917 the USA entered the war and for the first time in history, the war could be considered to have a worldwide effect. Some countries were neutral: the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Switzerland and Spain.

The phases of the war could be divided in mainly three:

1. **The war of advances – war of movement.** This was the first part of the war. Germans took positions. The German army went through Belgium and tried to surround the French army in the East. The battle of the Frontiers, in August 1914, was lost by the allies (Entente) but avoided the surrounding manoeuvre. Nevertheless the state of affairs in France became so difficult, as the Germans arrived to the bank or Marne river, near Paris, that the government moved from Paris to Bordeaux. The First Battle of the Marne, also called the “Miracle of the Marne”, stopped German advance and avoided what could have been a decisive victory for the Germans. Both allegiances initiate a “race to the sea”. In August Japan entered the war with the Entente and Turkey with the Germans. The front stabilised along 800 km from the North Sea to the border with Switzerland .
2. **The trench war.** Since the First Battle of Marne and until 1917, the war was done from the trenches. When after that battle, Germans were forced back, the German commander decided that German troops must hold on to the areas of France and Belgium that they were still in control of. He ordered the troops to dig trenches to give them protection from the advancing French and British troops. The Entente did the same as they could not break through that line. It was a positions and defensive war. Barbed wire and soldiers with machine guns defended the trenches. From 1915 there was a stalemate on both fronts. The burden would fall on front line soldiers, who would live discomforts and hazards –cold, mud, rats, poor nutrition, illnesses... In 1915, the Germans introduced poison gas, and the allies followed them quickly. It caused slow and painful death and it was one of the horrors of the war, although gas masks were created

to thwart the effects. The gases used during the war were mustard, chlorine and phosgene. Tanks were introduced in 1916 by the British and French. Other new weapons were **flamethrowers**, explosives. Along with those, planes and submarines were also new war inventions. All of them contributed to make destruction worse. In addition, it caused violation of international law, as aerial bombardment –in this case over the trenches- and chemical warfare had been outlawed by the Hague Convention in 1907.

In 1915, Italy entered the war, and in 1916 Rumania, both with the allies while Bulgaria enters the Triple Alliance. However, what would prove decisive was the entry of the United States of America into the war in 1917, which would make victory lean towards the Entente, despite the fact that, after the Russian revolution, during the same year, Russia retired from the war and there were riots and uprisings in the front.

3. **The great offensives.** The US entry in the war gave the Entente the economic and financial support that was badly needed while the blockade impeded Germany to get food and raw materials supplies. After the spring German offensive failed, the Entente attained important triumphs on all fronts. In Autumn Turkey collapsed and the Austro-Hungarian empire disintegrated. The armistice was signed in November. In Germany there were uprisings and strikes leading to the abdication of the Kaiser Wilhelm II and the proclamation of the Weimar Republic (9<sup>th</sup> November 1918). The armistice was signed by Germany two days later.

### **Economics and the home front**

At the beginning of the war, and despite the superiority of the Entente, their easier access to maritime routes, and therefore, to raw materials and supplies in general, the central powers (Germany and Austria) had the powerful German industry, a greater and careful preparedness for war and a war plan prepared since 1905 (Schieffen plan). It was a war among industrialised countries, particularly, with a high level of technology and innovations in the weapons industry, excepting Russia.

The start of the war put the economy at a standstill provoking the disorganisation of the industrial and agrarian production and the blockade of the communications systems. Unemployment was high in the first months of the war and the needs of the civil population had to be sorted out. There was the need for the governments of controlling and managing the economy up to a point unknown till then in order to resume industrial and agrarian activities. There was a tendency to a monopolist capitalism from the State, restricting economic freedom and controlling economic forces. Internal reorganisation was based on the defence industry and the cities' supply.



London: woman bus conductor on duty, 1917

[http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/learning/online\\_resources/ecobus\\_omnibus/pg/1914.htm](http://www.ltmuseum.co.uk/learning/online_resources/ecobus_omnibus/pg/1914.htm)

At this stage, women went massively to work in all kind of jobs, including highly dangerous jobs in the munitions industry. Thousands of women also went to the war to work as nurses or did this job back home.

In Britain, suffragettes made a halt in their claims because of the war. The women's movement split in two opposite positions about the war. On one side the Pankhurst family –excepting Sylvia- supported the war and made patriotic claims; on the other side, women were the leaders of the peace movement, and survived despite the intense militarist propaganda campaign. The Women's Peace Crusade made an important contribution to the pacifist side.

In March 1918, the British parliament passed a bill giving voting rights to women over 30 years old.

### **The “Peace” Process: The Treaty of Versailles**

The Peace Conference started in January 1919 and several Peace Treaties were written and signed, the most important of which was the Treaty of Versailles (28-6-1919). The four winning powers, USA, Britain, France and Italy imposed their conditions on Germany, that had not been admitted to the negotiations. In the Treaties, and particularly the Treaty of Versailles, Germany was considered the only culprit of the war. Very hard conditions were imposed on Germany:

- Important territorial losses : Germany lost 13% of its territory (2/3 of its industrial areas), Alsace and Lorraine returned to France; some territories were handed over to other victor countries, Eupen-Malmedy to Belgium, Memel to Lithuania, the Hultschin district to Czechoslovakia, the North of Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark, Poznania, parts of East Prussia and Upper Silesia to Poland –a newly born country, Danzig and Memel, on the Baltic, were declared free cities, occupation and special status for the Saar, coalfield area, under French control; Germany had to hand over all its colonies to the League of Nations as mandates, divided up basically between France and Britain. By other treaties the Turkish empire is distributed between Britain and France; Hungary,

Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are recognised as new countries and the Austro-Hungarian empire disintegrates, Austria is also a new state.

- Military conditions: Demilitarisation and a fifteen-year occupation of the Rhineland; limitation of Germany's army to 100,000 men with no **conscription**, no tanks, no poison-gas supplies, no aircraft, no heavy artillery, no airships and most of the Navy confiscated and locked up in a British military base, establishing a limitation for German vessels size and no submarines allowed.
- War reparations: Germany was obliged to make war reparations to the victors for an amount of 140,000 gold marks, a very huge amount, very difficult to pay off: 52% for France, 22% for Britain, 10% for Italy and 8% for Belgium.
- Others: Germany was forced to accept its exclusive responsibility in the war; there was a ban on the union of Germany and Austria; annexed to the Treaty the League of Nations was established but Germany was excluded from membership.



THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RACE: From ape to ape  
A. Hahn, 1915. <http://www.greatwar.nl/>

The Germans were forced to accept these humiliating conditions and signed the Treaty under protest. They claimed that the peace treaty should be based on USA president Woodrow Wilson's "Fourteen Points" as they thought it would be when they surrendered, and, in fact, the USA refused to ratify the Treaty. The reality of the peace treaty was much harder for Germany in part because of France's attitude. The Versailles Treaty was used by Adolf Hitler to get into power and led to the Second World War.

**Wilson's "Fourteen Points"** were first outlined in a speech given by president Wilson in the US Congress on 8<sup>th</sup> January 1918. Wilson wanted a long lasting peace and in them he was proposing a world based on justice "to all peoples and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak". Wilson mentioned national self-determination, the end of colonialism, open and not secret diplomacy, economic proposals such as freedom of navigation upon the seas or removal of economic barriers. He also made concrete territorial proposals for Russia, France, Belgium, Italy, the Austro-Hungarian empire, the Turkish empire and Poland. Finally, he proposed the creation of the League of Nations to reinforce peace. Only four of the "Fourteen Points" were in the Peace Treaties. One of them the establishment of the League of Nations, a precedent of the United Nations (UN). Nevertheless, the refusal of the US senate to enter it and the exclusion of Germany and the Soviet Union, made it ineffective and failed to accomplish its aims.

Whole text in: <http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/democrac/51.htm>

## **Consequences of the First World War**

The consequences of the war were many and profound:

1. Huge demographic losses in all countries.
2. Important material damage. Economic crisis.
3. The European balance of 1914 was broken. Europe lost its leading position in the world in favour of the USA.
4. New map of Europe.
5. First communist state: the Soviet Union.
6. Crisis of liberal capitalism.
7. Crisis of Western democracies, being attacked from the right and from the left representing popular sectors of society.
8. Crisis of the international workers' movement, unable to offer an alternative to power.
9. Social trauma in all countries. Many soldiers found it difficult to return to civilian life. In some countries, the brutal experience led to the inclusion of it in their national symbolism (like Gallipoli for Australia with Anzac Day).
10. Fascism emerged as an alternative to post-war crisis. The imperialist expansion of fascist powers would be the main cause for World War II.

## **The Interwar Period**

### **The United States of America: the isolationism policy**

After World War I, the USA became the first world power, something that would become much clearer in the next twenty-five years. The swings in the American economy would affect the rest of the world.

From 1920 to 1932 USA presidents were from the conservative Republican party. Before leaving presidency, Woodrow Wilson could not achieve enough votes in



the senate –with Republican majority- for the US to enter the League of Nations. During this period America had a policy of isolation, closed to the external world. Its international policy tried to control the arms trade.

From 1921, quotas for immigration were introduced restricting more and more entries to the country and favouring the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestants) from the North of Europe. There was a natural increase in the population. This was an ambivalent period, with economic growth leading to strong speculation, particularly in the stock market on one side and social and cultural tensions on the other. Consumption industry developed, starting the modern consumer society –production of electrical appliances such as refrigerators... This was the “American Way of Life”. The automobile industry is one of the leading industries having an impact in rural areas with public work extension and migration to the cities. Despite the elation of the “Roaring Twenties”, the growth had some downsides, as there were some industries in crisis such as the railways, the coalmining industry and textiles. The real economic situation was not as good as it was believed. Wages did not grow at the rhythm prices did; primary product prices went down again after a brief recovery; there was overproduction of rural and industrial products, stockpiles were growing. There was the huge gap between the country's productive capacity and people's ability to consume. The conservative presidents defended the self-regulation of the market economy and did not try to supervise or control anything. Later, it was found that there was corruption in power and between banks and **brokers**.

### EVOLUTION OF THE DOW JONES INDEX



The other side of the “**Roaring Twenties**” was the side of social tensions and clashes over issues such as race, immigration or evolution. It was the time of some failed attempts by Woodrow Wilson to introduce voting rights for women, this was finally achieved in 1920 with the Nineteenth Amendment –or Susan Anthony’s Amendment. This was also the era of the prohibition law over alcoholic beverages - National Prohibition Act- that provoked a rise in the activity of the mob and crime –i.e.



Al Capone. This was the period of the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, a racist organisation in favour of a white protestant America, in favour of segregation of Negroes that were considered inferior by them. This organisation started after the American civil war (1865) but expanded in the 1920s not only in the Southern states but also to the North and East, reaching 4,000,000 members in 1925 and became also belligerent against Jews, Catholics, socialists, communists and foreigners in general. Many of them occupied positions as state officials and were rarely convicted for their crimes in Southern states. This is the only period in which Ku Klux Klan had such wide following. This was the time when two Italian anarchist migrants, Sacco and Vanzetti, were condemned to the death penalty for robbery and murder that they did not commit – fifty years later the governor of Massachusetts absolved them. It is also the period when fundamentalist Christians were successful in outlawing the teaching of evolution in schools replacing it with creationism instead, and as a result, a school teacher was tried and fined for teaching evolution in 1925 –the Monkey Scopes trial.

While the USA was experimenting growth, even though with drawbacks, Europe did not have such a clear growth experience. Unemployment rates, that were low in the US, remained very high in Europe, and particularly the German economy was highly vulnerable because of its reliance on American loans and having to pay war reparations. This, along with the Treaties of Locarno in 1925, reducing annual payments and allowing US loans and investments in Germany, that becomes a member of the League of Nations.

### **The Stock Market Crash of 1929, the Great Slump and the New Deal**

In October 1929 the **stock market** crashed, triggering a worldwide depression. While from 1921 to 1929 the Dow Jones index soared from 60 to 400, by 1933 the value of stock on the New York Stock Exchange (the Dow Jones index) was less than a fifth of what it had been in 1929. Business firms closed their doors, factories shut down and banks failed. Farm income fell around 50 percent. By 1932 approximately one out of every four Americans was unemployed. Great innovations in productive techniques during and after the war raised the output of industry beyond the purchasing capacity of U.S. farmers and wage earners. There was overproduction, the demand could not follow the production level –some people talk about low demand in some sectors.

When farmers' stockpiles could not grow anymore, the big supply made rural products prices go down. Farmers could not return their loans and lost their lands and machinery. After them, the same happened to industry. Prices went down, factories had to reduce their production and many went bankrupt.

In addition, speculation on the stock market had developed an artificial roar of shares prices. There were many transactions with no control and many fraudulent companies were formed to cheat on investors. An over-inflated bubble was created, just waiting for disaster to come. Even banks invested their deposits in the stock market, and many people invested their life savings in the stock market expecting to become millionaires.

When news of the real situation of the economy reached people a sense of distrust grew. On the 19<sup>th</sup> of October shares prices started plummeting, affecting, in the first place the New York Stock Exchange, dragging along all the rest. On 24<sup>th</sup> October –

black Thursday- panic took place in the morning hours, share prices plummeted and many people went **bankrupt**. At least eleven market speculators committed suicide upon hearing the news.



Margaret Bourke-White: Bread line during the Louisville flood, 1937, during the Depression  
<http://www.yale.edu/terc/democracy/may1text/images/Bourke-White.jpg>

The policy that ensued following the stock market crash did not help to redress the situation. The conservative government of the US thought that the market would balance by itself and that the crisis would not be long, but they were mistaken. A long and severe depression followed.

The presidential campaign of 1932 was chiefly a debate over the causes and possible remedies of the Great Depression. The Republican Herbert Hoover planned to depend largely on natural processes of recovery, as before, while the Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt was prepared to use the federal government's authority to try experimental remedies. Roosevelt was elected president based on the programme of a new policy, the "New Deal" for the American people.

The New Deal introduced types of social and economic reform familiar to many Europeans and was influenced by the British economist John Maynard Keynes. The New Deal, though, was more successful in their accomplishments than other countries. Roosevelt enacted a number of laws to help the economy recover. During the first 100 days, the US Congress supported all the new laws. New jobs were created by undertaking the construction of roads, bridges, airports, parks and public buildings. The Agricultural Adjustment Act (AAA) passed by Congress in 1933 to provide economic relief to farmers, helped increase farm income. The National Industrial Recovery Act

would introduce collective bargaining to the benefit of workers. One of the most innovative measures was one in which the Tennessee Valley Authority was in charge of the river basin resources. However, throughout the 1930s, and particularly from 1935 to 1938, a severe drought hit the Great Plains states and violent wind and dust storms devastated the plains in what became known as the "Dust Bowl".

The New Deal, then, sponsored a remarkable series of legislative initiatives and achieved significant increases in production and prices, but it did not bring an end to the Depression. In the face of pressures from left and right, President Roosevelt backed a new set of economic and social measures in what was called the Second New Deal. Among these social measures, there were some to fight poverty, to counter unemployment with work and to provide a social safety net. The Works Progress Administration (WPA), the principal relief agency of the so-called second New Deal, was an attempt to provide work rather than welfare. Buildings, roads, airports and schools were constructed. Through the Wagner Act, there was trade union freedom, and through the Wealth Tax Act, tax was higher for rich people. Nevertheless, the most important rule of this New Deal was the Social Security Act of 1935. It created a system of insurance for the aged, unemployed and disabled based on employer and employee contributions. This legislation helped Roosevelt to win an even more decisive victory in 1936 than in 1932. He had the people's support besides Congress support. In 1937 the levels of production of 1929 had recovered, but the recovery of the economy was still far from sight.

As a consequence of the 1929 crash and the Great Depression in the USA, all Europe followed the depression. Banks went bankrupt in Britain, Austria, Germany... International trade came to a standstill. The depression became widespread and unemployment soared.

### **Fascism and Nazism**

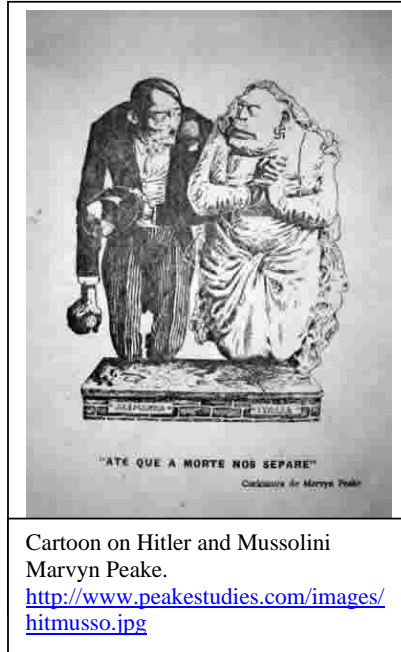
The social and economic situation in Europe after the First World War, with economic crisis and unemployment, hardened in the 1930s with the depression, social conflicts and confrontations. Democracy was linked to capitalism, a fact that led to alternatives from the lower classes, on the left, the revolutionary option, communists and anarchists, particularly. On the other side, the middle classes feared a change in their status by the action of the lower classes, seeing a threat in the possibility of a working class revolution or even in the social advance of the working class. These reacted against liberal democracy from the right, through a conservative or fascist reaction.

The general conditions in which fascism and Nazism grew, generally, was that there was an economic crisis after World War I; unbalance among sectors of production. Instability in capitalist relationships and/or markets; cooperation of the great capital.

Although some people have considered Nazism as different to fascism, in general, Nazism is considered a type of fascism, as was Francoism. Of course, each fascist government had its own particularities, different to the others because of some different influences working on them.



Mussolini and Hitler, 1941-1943  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Benito\\_Mussolini\\_and\\_Adolf\\_Hitler.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Benito_Mussolini_and_Adolf_Hitler.jpg)



Cartoon on Hitler and Mussolini  
 Marvyn Peake.  
<http://www.peakestudies.com/images/hitmusso.jpg>

Basically, though, the characteristics of fascism are:

1. The suppression and contempt of democratic principles. Fascists despise the idea of equality or equity. Only a minority should be in power. The division of powers is replaced by the concentration of power in the hands of the charismatic leader. A terror based dictatorship, the totalitarian state –the absolute power of the state. Benito Mussolini’s **motto** was: “all in the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state”. If there is any kind of electoral call at all, such as a plebiscite or local councillors elections, these are controlled and based on fraud. The result is always overwhelmingly in favour of the government. All opposition to the fascist government are to be prosecuted. That is, no political parties are allowed excepting the state party, that tends to be formed as a mass party. There is an absolute disregard for human rights –they only apply to themselves.
2. The charismatic leader, as head of the state, is at the top of the hierarchy ladder, and their inferiors –the rest- owe obedience to him. His opinions are unquestionable. He is always right. Those leaders received names as “Il Duce” (Mussolini), “Führer” (Adolf Hitler) or “Caudillo” (Francisco Franco). To acclaim the leader when he was in public was compulsory.
3. Nationalism and imperialism. Fascism recurs often to the *fatherland*, the nation, the national race, national symbols, and so on, always considering a part of the population superior to others. From nationalism it is easy to slip to imperialism. The great nation needs more living space to develop, thus it has the right to conquer other, less developed countries. This link was clearly so in Germany and Italy. They organised ritualised mass parades.
4. Racism, xenophobia. Link to the previous items, inequality means there are superior and inferior races, for the Germans the Aryan German race was

superior to the others and the Jews were in the opposite side, being attributed all the flaws and evils. Germany was more based in racism than Italy.

5. Pervasive sexism. Strong patriarchal ideology. Women are restricted to patriarchal gender roles and are strongly discriminated against. Rights such as divorce or abortion are suppressed –many times in connivance with the Church. Homosexuality becomes outlawed. In Nazi Germany, Aryan women were considered to exist to reproduce the race and non-Aryan women were many times sterilised or forced to have an abortion. The place for women was defined with the three K (kinder, küche, kirche) meaning children, kitchen, church.
6. Militarism. The military have a disproportionate amount of power. It is glorified and given a huge part of the national budget.
7. Anti-Marxist, anti-liberal, anti-workers' movement. Fascists consider that political liberalism represented the beginning of European decadence in introducing the ideas of equality, distribution of powers and so on. From there liberalism produced Marxism, one of the greatest evils, according to them. They despise the **Enlightenment** and its rationality. They mistrust reason and adopt anti-rationalist attitudes based on dogmas that cannot be argued such as the infallibility of the leader. They apparently advocate for a third way, between capitalists and workers and establish a corporation system where labour problems are discussed –with the prevalence of capitalists, so strikes and workers' organisations such as trade unions are outlawed.
8. These enemies (Jews, communists or liberals) are a unifying cause to channel people's frustration, and becoming targets to destroy and eliminate, through a process of dehumanisation and vilification of the target people. The rule is to eliminate the enemy and from there a hierarchical scale of violence is organised.
9. Censorship in media and culture in general. The media is controlled by the government and taken over by their sympathisers. They organise a vast propaganda against the "enemies" and **mythologize** the government through basically patriotic or heroic jargon. In order to achieve this, they denigrate and defame the target group, and distort the facts through misinformation, half-truths, concealing real facts and information, creating instead their "facts" through their redesign according to their interests, using pseudo-science, historical revisionism –there were several examples of this in Franco's Spain- or relying on non- reliable sources. They also mix together different groups with no relation (such as the Jewish-Masonic-Communist conspiracy) and might use other groups' arguments and forms of struggle –like Marxists'- to their own benefit, i.e. demonstrations and rallies.
10. Capitalist economy with the control of the government –**corporate state**- in collusion with capitalists –upper bourgeoisie- and the consent of the middle classes, fearful of a change in their status through a workers' revolution or just mere reforms or are greedy to take in other people's wealth –as in the case of Jews in Nazi Germany. Mussolini's Italy went further in regards to the corporate state, creating government institutions to rule the economy. Other countries copied some of those institutions: Franco's Spain –and also during the Miguel Primo de Rivera dictatorship, Oliveira de Salazar's Portugal. Fascism is not at odds with the monarchy (Italy) or the Church (most fascist states had support from the Church and an ex-atheist Mussolini praised the Church in public speeches at least from 1922).
11. Corruption and nepotism is the rule. Government and friends are not liable for possible criminal charges –from appropriating public capital to murder. They



carry it out as if it was their right. Mussolini combated the Mafia and inflicted serious damage to it, but not in the long run. According to some historians this damage was made with their also ruthless and corrupt methods. One mafia combated another mafia. It served as propaganda but there was no defeat.

## **Fascism in Italy**

When the First World War finished, Italy was in a seriously unfavourable economic situation. As in France, Germany or Belgium, Italy had been destroyed by the war, particularly in the North. Many factories closed down and the rate of unemployment was high, prices rose and this led to hunger and strikes. There were also many ex-combatants that came back from the front and were unable to reintegrate into society after their experience –the fact of rising unemployment made it still more difficult. Many were militarists and did not agree with the results of the Peace treaties. They thought they had lost many soldiers –around 700,000- and did not get many results in territorial terms as they expected.

In 1919, the socialist party achieved the majority with more than one third of deputies. In 1920, during a peak crisis, about 500,000 workers, particularly from the North –Lombardy and Piedmont- occupied factories during four weeks to run them on their own. There were also a number of strikes, and a general strike was called.

The threat of revolution alarmed industrialists, landlords, and part of the middle classes. Mussolini took advantage of this process to initiate the fascist movement. He had as a platform the newspaper *Il Popolo d'Italia*, and used similar tactics to the socialists, as he knew them well because he had been a member of the socialist party, probably for opportunistic reasons. He founded the “fascio” in Milan in 1919, with a group of discontented ex-soldiers. They were called “black shirts” because a black shirt and a military cap was part of their uniform. They were armed **squads** that targeted socialists, communists and others and were transformed in 1923 into a national militia. The squads spread terror. Only in 1921, 500 people were killed by the squads. Their precedents were the Sicilian armed squads formed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century against workers. In 1920, fascists concurred in the elections but did not get seats, despite the propaganda using some typical left wing vindications such as universal suffrage –including women, improvement of workers’ conditions and land for the peasants, all of them dismissed later to defend just the opposite. Mussolini’s program was rather ambiguous and demagogical. It lacked coherence. However, political instability and their own greed against workers, led industrialists and landlords to support the fascists. With their support, the National Fascist Party was formed in 1921, led by Mussolini, and in the elections the same year, within a coalition with liberals and nationalists, got 35 deputies from 535, Mussolini among them. Despite the low number of deputies this was considered a success.

From 1919 to 1922 there were five governments in Italy. Despite having competent prime ministers, such as Francesco Saverio Nitti –he was an economist who could have taken Italy out of the economic crisis, they were unable to respond to the fascists and other collateral assaults. Squads was the system to weaken the state authority step by step and to attack and destroy workers organisations. Blind to the danger, liberal politicians in the government, such as the prime minister Giolitti or the historian and Education minister Benedetto Croce, allowed them to take over local

governments, where fascists were proud to carry out local “purges”. At the end of 1919, the writer Gabriele d’Annunzio occupied the Croatian town of Fiume during 15 months, with 2000 soldiers and ex-combatants, proclaiming himself a dictator, defying the peace treaties. This caused a national commotion and he was forced to quit. For many, this case showed the prime minister’s weakness either towards d’Annunzio or towards the allies. He had influence over Mussolini, who considered him a hero and gave him a state funeral at his death. Some of the fascist stage paraphernalia was started by him, such as the Roman salutation, ritual shouts and uniforms.



Italian National Party logo (fasces)

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Italian\\_National\\_Fascist\\_Party\\_logo.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Italian_National_Fascist_Party_logo.jpg)

Now well funded, the fascist membership grew from 20,000 members in 1920 to 300,000 in 1922. When in 31 July and 8 August 1922, the main trade union in Italy called a general strike against fascist violence, the fascist squads, rather than the police, broke the strike causing dozens of deaths. The squads acted as if they were in the army, as they had defied the government that if it did not stop the strike the fascists would replace the government. This is also why they kept transports and other services functioning. Their pressure on the government was getting stronger and stronger. On the 12<sup>th</sup> October, Mussolini announced the “March over Rome” for the end of the month, a militarised mobilisation of all fascist forces from different Italian towns to join in Rome in order to seize power. Despite the fact that the march was not a success –only 26,000 “black shirts” concentrated in Rome- and that there was enough protection of the city by the army, the king, Victor Emmanuel, called Mussolini to form a new government of the 30<sup>th</sup> of October. The monarchy and the army here gave Mussolini the last push. The government, following Mussolini’s announcement, asked for the declaration of a state of emergency, but the king refused to sign this. The king was advised in favour of the fascists but he was no fond of liberal democracy anyway. There were 28,000 soldiers in Rome, but the general in charge, pretending to obey only the king, was implicitly supporting the fascists. The fascists did not have heavy weapons and were ill fed, but they were courted and ushered to Rome by the army.

Mussolini formed his cabinet with four fascist ministers, in a swift political manoeuvre including nationalists, Catholics and right-wing liberals. To prepare his rise as a dictator, Mussolini used propaganda, censorship and police measures for the state to evolve into a fascist state. The *fascios* became a voluntary militia serving the fascist government (Voluntary Militia for National Security). The Great Council of Fascism became part of the state. He began to dismantle the opposition. He passed an electoral law that favoured him. In the early months of 1924 the *ceka* was created in order to



terrify people so that they voted for the fascists. When new elections were due in 1924, this law, plus the use of force by fascist squads intimidating the population with the use of extreme violence, gave the “National list” coalition, supported by the fascists, more than 60% of the seats, from which most were fascists. In votes the coalition had four million votes and the opposition three million.

Italy was heading towards dictatorship. When the parliament convened, the socialist deputy and leader, Giacomo Matteotti, made a speech with a severe critique of fascism that was echoed in all Italy, and accused the fascists of their intimidating tactics and of election fraud. Soon after, Matteotti was kidnapped and murdered by two members of the *ceka*<sup>\*</sup>. There was a big outcry in Italy over this murder and was internationally a discredit for Mussolini. Some non-fascist deputies that were collaborating with Mussolini, moved away from him. Mistakenly, the opposition parties withdrew from parliament –Aventine Secession- as protest, and did not get their seats back again. The government remained paralysed for some months, but the king supported Mussolini and the opposition was unable to unite. Fascist squads went back to the streets and promoted a further explosion of violence, terrorising and spreading terror, more so when a fascist deputy appeared murdered. Mussolini took advantage of this and during his speech on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 1925, assumed dictatorial powers, reinforced at the end of the year through a special law. Political parties and trade unions were prohibited, the press was kept under government control and national newspapers were handed over to fascist proprietors, many books were prohibited and burned in public bonfires. Enemies of the regime –that is, everyone not showing support for the fascists- were mistreated, tortured and murdered. More 10,000 were arrested between 1925 and 1926. In 1926 some laws reinforced still more the dictatorship, the Law of Defence of the State and the “fascistissime” (super fascist) laws. By these laws, all political opposition was definitively outlawed, a new secret police was created –OVRA, plus the Tribunal of Political Crimes and a political police. The death penalty was restored. During this year, Mussolini got rid of elected local councils and nominated prefects and local chiefs of the fascist party to rule the local and provincial administration.

Comentari [IP1]: The *ceka*

In 1928, a law restricted parliamentary elections to one single list made by the Fascist Great Council, and the electorate could only reject or accept the list. But this is just in principle, in reality the elections were a farce. The results always gave almost all votes to the fascists and a tiny percentage against the list. The Parliament’s functions were null. It just acclaimed Mussolini’s legal proposals. After the elections in 1929, he could govern by decrees and transferred to himself complete legislative authority. He appointed and dismissed ministers. In 1938, the Fascist Grand Council abolished the Parliament and replaced it with the Chamber of Fasci and Corporations.

As a result, Mussolini’s obsession for power built a heavy state apparatus under his control, having under him henchmen unwilling to question his decisions.

Mussolini’s expansionism were inspired in the Ancient Roman Empire. He wanted to rebuild a new Roman empire in the Mediterranean and be its Caesar. He had an aggressive foreign policy, that eventually moved him towards war. In 1923, when an international commission was determining the borders between Greece and Albania,

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\* Fascist secret police inspired in the Soviet Union’s *cheka*.

Mussolini provoked what was called the Corfu Incident, bombing and occupying the Greek island of Corfu after an Italian general and four soldiers were found dead near the Albanian border. With international pressure, Italians retired but Greece had to meet Mussolini's demands. In 1924, he obtained the Port Fiume by a treaty with Yugoslavia. In 1935, the Italian army invaded Ethiopia –then, Abyssinia- and in 1939, occupied Albania. He also intervened in the Spanish Civil War on Franco' side, giving him unlimited support from 1936. The same year he formed the Rome-Berlin Axis with Adolf Hitler, and in 1939 the Pact of Steel, an alliance between Germany and Italy, for military help in case of war.

There were at least 300,000 exiles, many of them in France, some were condemned to death and some died in prison, such as communist leader Antonio Gramsci, who was imprisoned in 1926 and died in prison in 1937. Despite the terror, except for squads actions, according to some historians, the number of people “legally” arrested and executed was lower than in Germany and other dictatorships. Nevertheless, according to several sources, during his rule, Mussolini was responsible for the death of 1,000,000 people.

### **Social and economic aspects of fascist Italy**

When Benito Mussolini came to power in Italy in 1922, the moderate social and political reforms of the previous half century started to be systematically dismantled. At an economic level the most important reform of fascism was the creation of the corporate state. The corporate state was presented as a third way between liberalism and socialism: private enterprise with state intervention. The **corporate state** rejects class struggle, nominating the state as a referee between employers and employees. This idea materialised in the “Carta del Lavoro” (Labour Charter), in 1927, organising professions into vertical corporations of employers and employees. In 1934, there were twenty-four corporations. The corporations also had state representatives and were under the supervision of the National Council of Corporations, with Mussolini as chairman. These corporations were supposed to give some protection to workers. Nevertheless, although the fascist state controlled the workers, big companies such as Fiat, followed their own criteria. Corporations were clearly favouring employers against the workers, excepting for the prohibition of lockouts.

Fascist economy was based on autarky, that is, self-sufficiency and extreme protectionism. To attain this, which for him was the road to national prosperity, he had plans with belligerent terms:

- The Battle of Wheat, initiated in 1925, had as an objective to increase wheat production and assure self-sufficiency. Farmers were persuaded to abandon other crops and marginal lands were cultivated. Some of those lands became themselves part of the Battle for Land -such as the Pontine **Marshlands** near Rome, a land infected by mosquitoes- to provide farm-land to peasants and also houses and other infrastructures. However, the Battle of Wheat was anti-economic. The increase in production did not compensate the loss for abandoning other crops, such as profitable vegetable garden crops, that were cheaper to produce for farmers. At the same time, buying wheat from the USA would have resulted cheaper. The price of bread rose and other

agricultural production declined, both hitting the poor. Much more when economy was strongly supported in the agricultural sector.

- The Battle of the lira. Mussolini equated a strong currency with national prestige –as well as his own- and established an excessive high exchange rate for the lira, in parity with the US dollar and the pound Sterling. This reduced exports as Italian products became expensive and small businesses went bankrupted and unemployment grew.
- As for the industrial sector, in 1933 the Industrial Reconstruction Institute (IRI) was created, in order to help industrial companies with financial problems and took control of bank-owned companies by buying their shares in those banks through subsidiary state companies. Italy became the state in Europe with more government-linked companies, but did not nationalise private companies. Through protectionism the state would buy national products although they were higher than products abroad, and limited imports. The industry sector focused on war related industries, in connection with Mussolini's desires for expansionism, while consumers industries were stagnant. In general products were expensive and of mediocre quality.

There was also a significant state investment in public works, particularly near Rome, such as draining marshlands such as the Pontine Marshlands, road building or the development of hydro-electricity. Those works, at first reduced unemployment, and were used for propaganda inside and outside Italy.

The poor results of those policies, together with the so-called Battle of Births, that is, a birthrate policy for population increase, meant lower standards of living for the people. Real wages went down and unemployment soared, reaching in the early 1930s more than ten times the level of the mid 1920s.

In 1938, influenced by Hitler, Mussolini introduced the Racial laws, aimed against the Jews, but also against other considered "inferior" races to avoid, according to the fascists, a hybrid race and the "pollution" of the Italian race.

Mussolini, after having declared himself at first an atheist, changed attitude from 1922. In 1929 he and the Pope, Pius XI, signed the Lateran agreements, settling the dispute the Papacy and the Italian government had had since 1870. According to these agreements, the Pope recognised the Italian state and the Italian government recognised the Vatican state. The Catholic religion became the state religion of Italy, the Vatican was paid a considerable amount of money for the Papal territories lost since 1870 and the Italian state agreed to pay an annuity to the Church. The Pope, Pius XI, became an important supporter of Mussolini, as was his successor, Pius XII –known as Hitler's Pope because of his extensive collaboration with the Nazis, contributing to Hitler's rise to power.

## **Nazi Germany**

### **The Weimar Republic**

At the end of the Great War, a rebellion forced the Kaiser Wilhelm II to abdicate in November 1918. The navy mutinied and started the German Revolution, with rebellions all around the country. In January 1919 the socialist (SPD) Friedrich Ebert

was elected prime minister of the newborn Weimar Republic, a democratic republic that gave the vote to German women. This month also started the Spartacist uprising, the end of the German Revolution, led by the Spartacist League or Communist Party, that had in previous years split from the socialists. The uprising took Berlin, and started despite the fact that their leaders, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, did not agree with it at first. The uprising was repressed by the republican government and the two leaders were imprisoned and died in police custody.

The Weimar Republic began having broad support –the republican parties had more than 76% of the vote, almost 40% for the socialist SPD party- but also started off overwhelmed by serious problems: the humiliation of the Treaty of Versailles and the debt with allied countries, the difficult economic situation after the war, with high unemployment, inflation and depreciation of the German mark, the political opposition from right and left. On the left, the remnants of the German revolution with the murders of Luxemburg and Liebknecht did not favour support for the Republic. However, it was on the right where the greatest opposition to get rid of the democratic system altogether was. They had the support of the establishment, that is, the capitalist elite –industrial and financial high bourgeoisie and the military. The right accused the Republic, and particularly the SPD, of losing the war, and despite the irrationality of this idea, this intensified their hatred against both. In 1920, a coup d'état, called the Kapp Putsch, failed because trade unions organised a general strike against it. The military did not intervene here, while it did in workers' uprisings, which were also more heavily punished by the law than right wing violence, despite the latter being much more significant and notorious.

All these reasons led to that initial broad support to be short lived. In the elections held in 1920, the Weimar coalition lost its majority and would never regain it. The conservative parties in the Reichstag wished to put an end to the Weimar constitution reflecting the disillusion of the middle class with democracy. In 1923 there was a hyperinflation crisis. The cause was that Germany failed to disburse its reparations payments and the Ruhr area was occupied by French and Belgian troops to ensure payment. The government asked the population in the area to stop all industrial activity and, at the same time, started printing excessive money, causing a **hasty** depreciation of the Mark and a rampant inflation. This caused the middle class standards of living to be lowered significantly. Middle class investors went bankrupt and unemployment rose, hitting the poor.

During this year, Adolf Hitler led a nationalist and anti-democratic *putsch* in Munich, trying to seize the city and from there the rest of Germany. However, the coup failed and he was put on trial. This event could have been the end of the Nazi party, but with the trial, he became a national celebrity and was able to save the Nazi party from collapse.

Friedrich Ebert handed over power as chancellor to Gustav Stresemann, who held this position during a few months from November and then became foreign minister. This period, until his death in 1929, is called the Stresemann era. He headed a coalition that included conservatives, the centre and the socialist party. He helped to redress the economy by issuing a new currency and stopping the issue of more currency, correcting the inflation problem. On the other hand, repayments of the war debt restarted, but because of the Dawes Plan, that favoured loans, particularly from the USA

and softened repayments, the economy lived through a period of stability and a relative economic prosperity from 1924 to 1929. In 1929, before his death, Stresemann negotiated the Young Plan, to further help to pay reparations of war lowering the annual amount to pay. It was also during this period that the Locarno Treaties were signed (1925).



Inflation in 1923: A woman filling a tiled stove with money  
© AdsD der Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung  
<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Inflation-1923.jpg>

Nevertheless, when the Stock Market Crash hit America in 1929 and subsequently, the Great Depression started, the crisis immediately reached Germany. Loans made by the USA through the Dawes and Young Plans were recalled and credits on the way were cancelled. The collapse of foreign trade from the USA affected Germany like the rest of Europe. The economy went bankrupt again and in 1932 unemployment reached 40% of the working population.

## **The Rise of Nazism and the Third Reich**

The international crisis following the stock market crash was to be providential for the Nazi party. Some historians agree that, without it, Hitler would have never reached power.

The Nazi party developed around the figure of its leader, Adolf Hitler. Hitler was born in 1889 on the border of Austria and Bavaria. His father, a public servant customs official, was very strict and even cruel, hitting and beating his children. His mother, on the contrary, was warm and often took sides with her son. Hitler did not do well in secondary school and after his father died he left school without qualifying for a secondary school leaving certificate. At the age of seventeen he moved to Vienna, to pursue his dream of becoming an artist, something his father had disapproved of. He applied twice to the Vienna Art Academy but his application was rejected because of having been found insufficiently talented and because of not having a school leaving certificate. Around this time he was also shocked by his mother dying of cancer. It was also around then that he developed his anti-Semitism. He convinced himself that his work at the Art Academy was rejected by a Jewish professor, that his mother died because of a Jewish doctor...and also started to believe in a superior German race, the Aryans, that was in danger by the Jews, that a Jewish conspiracy was responsible for many of the world's problems, and he also irrationally related socialism as part of this supposed Jewish conspiracy, because some of its leaders came from Jewish background. His pathological hatred extended to liberalism, democracy, pacifism and the Habsburg monarchy. According to him, the Austrian monarchy was in decadence and the rest were part of the Jewish conspiracy that was undermining Germany and the purity of blood of the Aryan race. Even syphilis and prostitution were for him part of this supposed conspiracy.

In 1913, he left Austria and went to Munich trying to avoid military service because of his hatred of the "multicultural" Habsburg monarchy. However, the Austrian authorities arrested him and he had a medical examination that found him unfit for service and unable to bear arms –the Gestapo tried to find this document later without success. Nevertheless, when the Great War started, he managed to enrol in the German army –moved by racism and xenophobia- where he was not very popular among the soldiers but received the Iron Cross for bravery, and he only reached the rank of corporal. After the war, he could not accept German defeat and blamed the Jews and Bolsheviks for it.

After the war he started his political career. In the Bavarian army some small factions against the Weimar Republic were created and Hitler was a prominent figure in them. Later, Captain Ernst Röhm asked him to get in touch with the Bavarian German Worker's Party (DAP), in order to determine whether it could be a threat –meaning whether it had Marxist ideas. However, the party, led by Anton Drexler, was profoundly anti-Semitic and Pan-German nationalist. It was a small party, with about forty members. He entered the party at the end of 1919 and later Röhm did as well, helping him to get funds from the military to this party. Soon Hitler had pre-eminence in the party and in 1920, the name was changed to National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), nicknamed the Nazi party. The party published its 25 point programme during that same year, a programme with dominance of nationalists ideas such as equal rights for German citizens only –with the exception of women- meaning German, Aryan

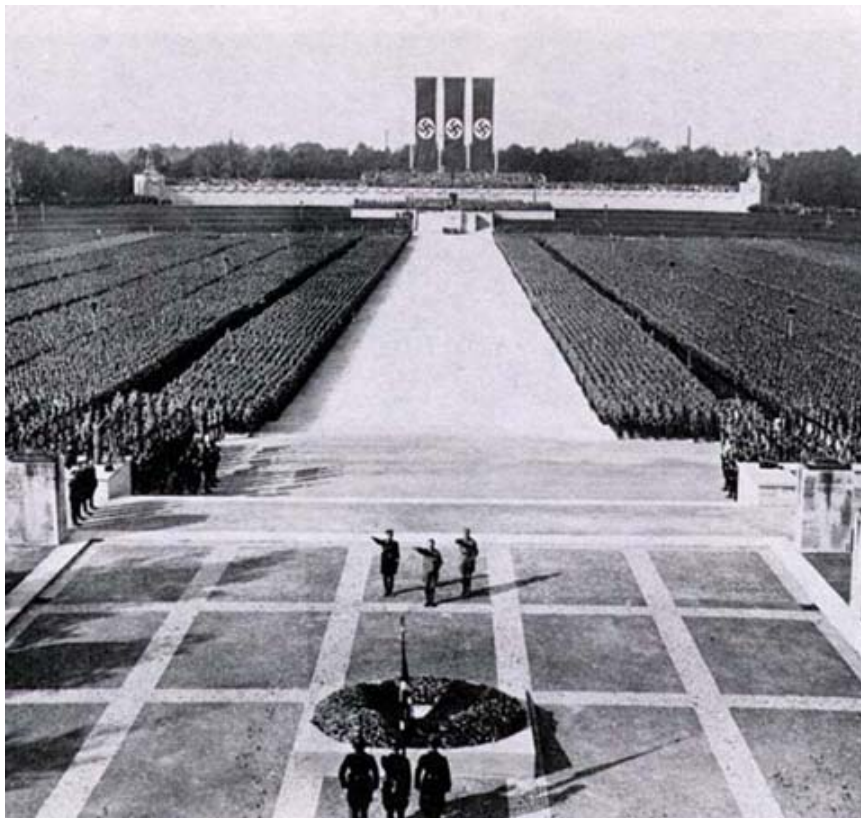
Germans, excluding Jews, who should be denied any rights, along with foreigners. The programme at some point declared to follow the Christian faith. In Fact, most early members of the party, including Hitler, were Catholic, although this was not a requirement. The programme also refused the Treaty of Versailles and called for the unification with Austria, and included some distorted socialist ideas, despite the fact that Hitler had always been anti-socialist, in order to appeal to people in a moment of popularity of such ideas. In 1921, Hitler assumed the leadership of the party and reorganised it. The party grew rapidly and in 1923 had more than 50,000 members. The financial aid of industrialists like Krupp and Thyssen, plus some foreign companies helped the Nazi party to expand and eventually reach power.

From here, propaganda actions multiplied, Ernst Röhm organised the S. A. (Storm Section), paramilitary squads formed by demilitarised soldiers, using violence to threaten and harass their opponents. It became a kind of Hitler's private army. They wore grey jackets and brown shirts. At this time the party also adopted some emblems, like Italian fascism, such as the swastika, the Roman salute, and others. After the failed *putsch* in 1923, Hitler was imprisoned for six months, a period during which he wrote his book *Mein Kampf*. In this work, Hitler set out all his ideas: anti-socialism, anti-democracy, anti-Semitism, the superiority of the Aryan race, the need of a Great Reich for the German race to expand in what he called *Lebensraum* "living space".

After the failure of the attempted coup and the redress of the economy during the Stresemann era, Hitler had to play by the rules, that is, accepting momentarily the parliamentary system. During this time he created the SS, an elite paramilitary corps, under direct command from Hitler. They also were his personal bodyguard. To distinguish them from the S.A., they wore black uniforms. When the Nazi party reached power, the SS, under the command of Heinrich Himmler since 1929, would have key functions in the German state. The SS would become more organised and evil than the S. A. and appeared when the S. A. was becoming too large, thus difficult to control, and Hitler's friend, Captain Ernst Röhm, started to become a problem for him.

The party was organised by dividing Germany in districts and nominating a leader for each district. One of the leaders that stood out was Joseph Goebbels, in the Berlin district. He proved himself to be a demagogic speaker and a violent activist. With small squads, he purged the city of left wing opponents. He was also in charge of political propaganda, manipulating events and defaming opponents in order to discredit them and the Weimar Republic. After 1927 Hitler's dominion in the NSDAP was clear. Hitler created departments of agriculture, foreign affairs and others. The party became a kind of state within the state. Parades and concentrations with Wagnerian pomp and symbolism. Gregor Strasser, representing the left wing of the Nazi party, had to abandon his pseudo-socialist ideas, pressurised by Hitler.





Nazi Party Day. Nuremberg, 1934.

[http://www.orange-papers.org/orange-NaziPartyDay\\_1934e.png](http://www.orange-papers.org/orange-NaziPartyDay_1934e.png)

In 1928 the Nazis did not do well in the elections, with only 12 seats. However, the stock market crash in the USA and the subsequent Depression hit Germany hard, collapsing the economy and with soaring unemployment. The middle classes, fearful of losing their economic status and fearful of the working class, was ready to listen to Nazi demagogues. The financial help of industrialists and press magnates gave the party enormous coverage throughout the nation, while Hitler played well on the feelings of the people, such as national resentment, far from any rational arguments. In the next three parliamentary elections, the Nazi party became the largest party, with 196 seats in the elections in November 1932. The Communist party also rose from 54 to 101 seats. Nevertheless, Hitler never had an elected majority. During this year Hitler obtained German citizenship to be able to run for presidency, as he did in the presidential elections in February 1932, opposing Paul von Hindenburg. In the second round, the centre and socialists voted for Hindenburg, a conservative leader, to avoid Hitler's triumph. Hindenburg formed government with Brüning and later Franz von Papen as chancellors. The latter was close to the Nazis and lifted a ban that his predecessor put on the S. A., also helping the Nazi rise to power, while they were terrorising the streets. Eventually, Papen –and also some industrialists- convinced Hindenburg to nominate Hitler as chancellor in January 1933. An irony of history, Hindenburg, elected president to avoid Hitler reaching power, invested Hitler as chancellor few months later.

When Hitler reached power, he was head of a cabinet that was not completely Nazi, as in Mussolini's case. In the Reichstag, only one third of the seats belonged to the NSDAP. However, soon all opposition was to be wiped out and Hitler would be the dictator –Führer- of Germany. By mid 1933, non-nazi conservatives were forced out of government, trade unions had been prohibited and unionists, communists, socialists and opponents in general persecuted and sent to concentration camps. These camps started functioning in 1933 (Dachau), and socialists and communists were the first to be sent. Hermann Göring would be to become an important figure in all this process. He created the Gestapo, the secret police under the command of the SS, and according to some historians and a witness in the Nuremberg War Trials, he organised the *Reichstag fire* and the *Night of the Long Knives*, two of the three main events in the process to eliminating enemies –opponents- and building a totalitarian power.

New elections were called for the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 1933, following Hindenburg's initiative. Hitler saw those as the last elections to be held. A week earlier, on February 27, the Reichstag was set on fire. A mentally disturbed Dutch young man who was an ex-communist and had some acquaintances in the S. A., was charged. The Nazis, which, according to many historians and other sources, were behind the fire, accused the communists for this criminal action and took advantage of it to persecute opponents, particularly communists, but also socialists and others, as after that Hitler was given special –dictatorial- powers. During the electoral campaign, the opposition parties were terrorised as their meetings were broken up by the S. A. and many were murdered. Propaganda, persuasion, terror, intimidation, were used by the Nazis to win these elections. The non-nazi press was suppressed and there was strong censorship over any written material that led, after the elections, to organised public book burnings of “un-German” books. Despite the terror, Hitler only had nearly 44% of the vote, thus, less than half of the seats.

After the election, in March, the “Enabling Act” was passed, giving Hitler dictatorial powers for a period of four years and the power to enact laws by decree. In order to pass this act he needed two thirds of the parliament votes. The Centre Catholic party voted with Hitler, while communists and socialists could not vote because they, particularly communists, were being persecuted. After this, persecution of opponents was reinforced as explained above. Trade unions were banned and soon after so were the communist and socialist parties. In July 1933, Hitler declared the one-party policy. The NSDAP became the only legal party and all the rest were subject to persecution. Soon after that, Hitler proclaimed the Third Reich, challenging the Versailles Treaty, international law, and putting an end to Stressemann's foreign policy. In August 1934, Hindenburg died and Hitler concentrated powers assuming his position as chancellor as well as president, proclaiming himself *Führer*.

After getting rid of opponents, Hitler purged the Nazi party itself in the so-called *Night of the Long Knives*, in June 1934. His need of complete control, his fear of leaders under him, such as Ernst Röhm, with enough power to challenge his leadership, wherever suspicions were real or not, plus the competition itself among its subordinates, were keys for this move. On the other hand, Hitler wanted a clear support from the army that he did not have. The S. A. outnumbered the army by 1934 and Röhm had expressed his view according to which the army should be absorbed by the S. A., thus, growing concern among the army. Industrialists such as the Krupp family and Fritz Thyssen were also concerned about some pseudo-socialist comments that appeared in the 25

points made by men in the S. A., including its leader. Röhm was also a powerful man, second after Hitler, and other leaders such as Himmler, Göring or Goebbels resented this. Some of these leaders, together with the other circumstances combined, convinced Hitler to finish with Röhm and the S. A. by inventing a conspiracy against Hitler. At the end of June, members of the SS hunted down people they were given in a list and murdered S. A. leaders. Röhm was given the opportunity to commit suicide and was shot when he refused. Strasser was also murdered. The numbers of murders range between 250 and 1000, many of them opponents that had nothing to do with the Nazis in the S. A. One of the excuses given for the murders was that many members of the S. A. were homosexuals. There are no proofs that Röhm, a friend of Hitler's, who provided funds from the army for the party in its early days and had proved his loyalty, or the S. A., that did the dirty work of getting rid of opponents up to then, were conspiring against Hitler. After this, what remained of the S. A. joined the regular army, and the SS, led by Himmler, replaced the S. A. as a leading force.

The third important event against "enemies" of the Third Reich was directed against the Jews. It was the *Crystal Night* in November 1938. Previously there had already been promulgated laws against the Jews. In 1933, Hitler organised a one-day boycott against Jewish shops, using the S. A. to ensure success to this boycott. The population was encouraged to not sell Jews in shops, to not admit them in restaurants. Jewish civil servants –i.e., working in state administration, teachers- were dismissed and Jewish children had problems to be admitted in public schools. People were encouraged not to buy in Jewish shops or buy Jewish products. In 1935, the *Nuremberg laws* forbade marriage and sexual relationships between Jews and Aryans, and denied German citizenship to Jews. In 1938 a law forced Jews to wear identification cards. The *Crystal Night* was a pogrom organised by the NSDAP but presented as if it was a spontaneous reaction by the German people. That night, 7,500 Jewish businesses were destroyed, between 400 to 1,500 synagogues were burnt down or ransacked, close to 100 Jews were murdered and around 30,000 Jews were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Many Jews left the country leaving whatever they owned behind. After the *Crystal night* Jews were forced to give their jewellery, stocks, bonds and other values to the government, ghettos were formed to separate Jewish from the rest of the population and they were subjected to curfew.



Anna Frank, Jewish girl victim of the holocaust who wrote a diary  
[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Anne\\_Frank\\_stamp.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Anne_Frank_stamp.jpg)

Up to this point, Hitler did all he could to force Jews to migrate somewhere else and after came an escalation on discrimination of the Jews until arriving to the “final solution of the Jewish question” in 1941. The final solution is the plan to eliminate the Jewish population and it is referred to as *the Holocaust*, a genocide that cost the lives of about 6,000,000 Jews, men and women, killed in extermination camps, many of them children –about 1,000,000 Jewish children were killed, and often they were the first to die in gas chambers at arrival to the camp.

Nazis also acted against others that considered inferior. Under the “euthanasia” program and others, a total of 275,000 people with disabilities were killed. Gypsies were also held in ghettos and extermination camps and it is estimated that between 250,000 to 500,000 gypsies were killed by the Nazis and its allies.

The Nazis also persecuted homosexuals and assured that feminism and women’s emancipation was an idea of Jewish intellectual women. Nazis forced women out of work although this policy had to be reversed during the war due to men going to the front, although those were mostly replaced by foreign forced labour. Nazis declared that Aryan women had to be at home and bear at least four children each. Several concentration camps were only for women, among them Ravensbrück.

### **Economy in the Third Reich**

Despite problems, the German economy was rooted in more solid bases than Italy. Nevertheless, when Hitler rose to power, the recession had taken its toll, with high unemployment, foreign debt... As for Hitler, German Aryans were a superior race, Germany had to be a world power. In order to achieve this and also to prepare Germany for war, the economic policy was based on autarchy with strong state intervention. To facilitate this, they had the support of wealthy industrialists, particularly from iron and steel industry –Krupp, Bosch. Iron and steel industries were vital for rearmament, another of the bases of Hitler’s policies. Hermann Goering was in charge of the German economy when, in 1936, a Four-Year Plan was established, enhancing the war industries. According to this Plan, Germany had to be self sufficient in raw materials by developing home made substitutes, i.e. by installing factories for the production of synthetic materials. Production quotas and market guidelines were outlined. The economy rapidly developed after large weapons contracts were signed with industrialists. The Nazi economic plan also included a massive public work project.

To confront the foreign debt problem, the Nazi government resorted to strong protectionism by paying creditors with blocked marks, that could only be used in Germany. However, foreign debt remained while foreign trade came to a standstill.

Unemployment was fought with the reactivation of military industries, conscription –compulsory military service and the expansion of the German army, public works, driving some sectors out of the workforce: Women and Jews were banned from working and were not included in the statistics –women working as civil servants, teachers or doctors in state institutions were sacked. By these means, in 1937, Germany had “full employment”. Ordinary workers had job security, but did not have union rights, their wages remain almost still and real wages declined, while their working hours went up to 49 hours a week in 1939 and 60 hours a week in 1945, not counting

overtime. Workers were encouraged to work harder to be rewarded with a cruise and leisure activities were organised. There was propaganda about every German –Aryan- family having a Volkswagen car –Beetle. It cost about what a worker could earn in 35 weeks, and to acquire one, workers went into a hire purchase scheme. With these incentives, despite the worsened work conditions, Hitler expected to buy the average German family man.

The Nazi economy was particularly beneficial for the capitalist elite, from the industrial sector and from the banking sector. There was an accelerated process of concentration of capital in their benefit. The middle classes did not obtain much improvement despite the hopes of some.

Nazi expansionism -*Lebensraum*- also meant the appropriation of the conquered countries resources and the exploitation of their population as forced labourers. German standards of living were maintained by exploiting conquered territories and by **plundering** Jews of their possessions.

### **The Second World War (World War II)**

World War II was an armed conflict on a global scale which lasted from September 1939 to August 1945. It was a total war in two different aspects. First, because civilian populations became an integral part of the war, thus, affecting the whole of society. In fact, civilian population was going to be one of the main war targets and the war's most important victim. Second, the war involved all continents, although it had European origins. This war involved the mobilisation of all possible resources on both sides, whether economic, human or scientific, erasing the distinction between civil and military. It would be the most brutal and inhuman of wars. If World War I was the first experience of war as massacre, this brutality was far more important in the Second World War, where science was used for mass murder. As historian Eric Hobsbawm puts it "the new impersonality of warfare, which turned killing and **maiming** into the remote consequence of pushing a button or moving a lever. Technology made its victims invisible (...) Mild young men, who would certainly not have wished to plunge a bayonet in the belly of a pregnant village girl, could far more easily drop high explosive on London or Berlin, or nuclear bombs on Nagasaki".

World War II is also an ideological war, unleashed by Nazi expansionism. It is a war where the contenders are democracy and socialism against fascism, a civil war in the Axis powers –Germany, Italy, Japan...- and invaded countries, where a resistance movement helped the allies during the war, despite fear of **retaliation** from the Nazis or fascists. Nevertheless, liberal democratic nations, the Allies –Britain, France, USA...- showed also weakness and even hypocrisy in their relationship to fascist powers.

World War II is the largest armed conflict ever in the history of humanity, covering an area of more than 20 million km<sup>2</sup>, mobilising more than 100 million combatants from 61 countries, killing from 54 to 70 million people –depending on the sources- with a majority of civilians. The human and material losses of the war were unknown until then, and so important that it will never be possible to calculate with complete accuracy. The war caused great moral shock. The destruction in Europe was such that Europe's position in the world was never going to be as relevant as it was before, definitely overtaken by the USA, which in self interest helped in the

reconstruction with the Marshall Plan. The war would also lead to the formation of two blocks, the USA and the Soviet Union (USSR), who led the world to an armed peace called *The Cold War*. After the war, all European colonies became independent, in the decolonisation process.

## Causes of the War

The causes of World War II are various and manifold. They can be divided between long-term causes and short-term causes, although all of them are intertwined. Those causes would be:

Long-term causes:

1. **The failure of the Treaty of Versailles and related treaties.** The Treaty was a source of resentment in Germany and was used by Hitler to his own advantage, justifying his policies, particularly his expansionism. The prejudiced treatment of Germany in the Treaty paid its toll, despite being revised in Locarno. In addition, Germany was surrounded by small nation states that became an easy prey for Germany. Some of them were partly populated by Germans.
2. **The Great Depression** –or Great Slump. World War I left Europe economically weakened and politically unstable. The stock market crisis in New York in 1929 and the following depression was catastrophic for the German economy just when it was starting to take off again, and helped Hitler on his way to power. The depression fostered fascism.

Short-term causes:

3. **Failure of the League of Nations.** Originating at the end of World War I to keep the peace, it did not fulfil its aspirations. USA did not become a member, Germany was vetoed at first and did not enter until 1926, but Hitler withdrew from it in 1933. The League vowed to sanction countries attacking others, particularly material sanctions –stopping trade with that country-and military sanctions. The League depended on the member countries to reinforce its decisions and did not have its own international force to make them effective. This is why the League was a failure from the start. In 1931, when Japan invaded Manchuria, in North-East China, the League failed to do anything about it. The League called the Japanese to withdraw but took no further action. In 1935, Italy invaded Abyssinia –now Ethiopia- and again the League failed to act. It voted minor sanctions against Italy that had little consequence. When Hitler rose to power in 1933 and started breaking the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, the League also failed to act. Hitler had the way clear to act.
4. **Appeasement policy and non-intervention.** The appeasement policy is a way in which a country or a group of countries give unilateral concessions to another one to avert a possible military, economic or political threat. In this case European countries tried to appease Hitler, that is, let him do what he wanted in order to avoid war, even when breaking international treaties, just as they did before with Japan and Italy –unresponsive to Hitler's expansionist aims as were already known by, for instance, his book *Mein Kampf*. In this way, expansionist countries got what they wanted at the expense of others, and was going to be a cause for the war, and also a cause of its long duration, as it allowed Hitler's

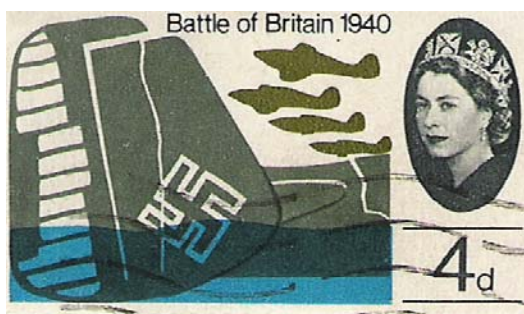
Germany to grow strong. An example of appeasement is the Munich Agreement in 1938, according to which, Britain, France, Italy and Germany agreed to relinquish the Czech area of Sudetenland –with German population- to Germany, with certain conditions that Hitler never observed. Linked to the policy of appeasement would be the non-intervention policy during the **Spanish Civil War** (1936-1939), where Western democracies did not help the Spanish Republic while Hitler and Mussolini supported the military coup against it. It showed the weakness of Western democracies in signing an agreement that knew some signing countries completely disregarded, and although the Spanish Civil War did not lead to the Second World War, it increased the possibilities of war enormously. It made Germany and its rearmament race stronger, appearing to be militarily stronger than democracies, something still far from reality in 1936. Hitler thought he could manipulate despised Western democracies into achieving his own ends, and in fact used the non-intervention policy in this way. Hitler could test new weapons and aircraft and also get raw material supplies, needed for further Eastern expansion. During the Spanish war the Axis alliance was consolidated in October 1936 with the Axis Roma-Berlin –that later was extended to include Japan. In 1936 the Anti-Komintern Pact between Germany and Japan was also signed.

5. **Consolidation of the Nazi regime, rearmament, expansionism.** As noted above, in fascist regimes the military has a disproportionate amount of power. Italian fascists such as Mussolini or Marinetti wrote and made statements vindicating war, and Hitler believed in the “heroic virtues” of war. This means that they considered it natural to use war to achieve their goals. Hitler wanted Germany to become a dominant power in Europe again, and he started to re-arm. In 1935, he established compulsory **conscription** and increased the number of men in the military. He also created an air force and, in 1936 re-militarised the Rhineland, all of this breaching the Treaty of Versailles. He also wanted to create a “Greater Germany” with lands inhabited by German speakers, particularly Austria. The *Anschluss*, or occupation of Austria in 1938 had this objective, as did the occupation of the Sudetenland. The expansionism of the fascist powers included also the occupation of other territories, gaining control over their resources and enslaving or even exterminating their population. Hitler justified this as the need for *Living Space* or *Lebensraum*, and after the occupation of the Sudetenland he invaded the whole of Czechoslovakia in 1939 and Poland later in the year, after signing with USSR a non-aggression pact, so that the USSR would be neutral after the invasion of Poland and in case of war, although Hitler’s plans were to attack Russia in due course. Some historians think that the Second World War was Hitler’s personal war because he did not accept the Treaty of Versailles and the position of Germany after World War I.
6. **Japanese imperialism.** Japan was also hit by economic Depression, much more as it is not rich in natural resources. Unemployment was high and people suffered from starvation, despite being the great power in the East. Recovering from the depression in the mid 1930s, Japan restarted its imperial aims, which dated from the **Meiji era** (end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century) . The territorial expansion aimed to provide Japan with raw materials while at home, democracy and liberalism never rooted and it was easy to install an ultra-conservative military government –who believed that democracy was un-Japanese and defended the military and territorial expansion appealing to the samurai military traditions. At this time, Taiwan had been bought and Korea had already been forced under



Japanese rule. Then, in 1931, Japan invaded Manchuria and installed the puppet state of Manchukuo in 1932. The feeble response from the League of Nations was an excuse for Japan to **withdraw** from it and to start the invasion of North China. Japan annexed areas close to Manchuria and the Northern province of Jehol and incorporated them in the Manchukuo **puppet state**. After a truce, Japan started an undeclared war on China in 1937, and invaded China's Northern provinces reaching Peking, the Chinese capital. In the meantime, in 1936, Japan aligned with the Axis powers with the Anti-Komintern Pact with Germany against the USSR, as Japan considered the Soviet Union as their main enemy in the area. Japan also withdrew from the international Naval Treaty and began to expand its navy, and in 1938, the Japanese government declared the aims of creating a "Greater East-Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" as part of a "New Order" in Asia. The territories Japanese claimed for their area of influence included all East-Asia and European colonies in Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand. The Tripartite Pact signed in 1940 by Germany, Italy and Japan, recognised Japan's aims. The same year, Japan invaded Indochina. As a result, the Japanese, like Germans and Italians, were involved in shocking war crimes. At least ten million Chinese civilians were used as forced labour, 200,000 women and girls, mainly from Korea, were forced as sex slaves for the Japanese army, mass rapes were common by the Japanese army –in Nanking and many other places- and systematic annihilation of the civilian population in many areas, men, women and children, with massacres such as the massacre of Nanking, in December 1937 or the Hong Kong atrocities in 1941. Other war crimes were the torture and execution of prisoners of war and the practice of cannibalism against Allied prisoners of war.

7. **Events.** The events related above among others led to the war:
- The plebiscite held in the Saar region in 1935 where its inhabitants voted to return to Germany.
  - The Rhineland area being re-militarised.
  - The *Anschluss* or annexation of Austria.
  - The invasion of Sudetenland and then, Czechoslovakia.
  - On the 1<sup>st</sup> of September, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland from the West. Britain, France, Australia and New Zealand declared war on Germany. Britain had a pact for mutual assistance with Poland. Two weeks later the USSR invaded Poland through the East, which was then divided between Germany and Russia.



British stamp

## Phases of the War

Despite the declaration of war, Britain and France were not prepared to give any real aid to Poland. France expected to fight a war of defence while awaiting British mobilization with the British Expeditionary Force. Britain was preparing for war: rationing and total blackout was imposed, children moved from the cities to the countryside, gas masks were issued to the population, beaches were mined and protected by **barbed wire**...

### The Dominance of the Axis

Hitler trusted in the surprise factor, changing the techniques of war as known from the First World War, introducing the *blitzkrieg* or lightning war, very mobile and quick advances, based on technology: the panzers or armoured cars and divisions, mobile infantry and coordinated with well equipped airplanes for support –previously destroying communications, key industrial installations and other objectives to prevent the enemy from being able to articulate a coherent defence and creating psychological shock. This technique was first tested by the Germans in Spain, during the Spanish Civil War. This is part of the total war, where civilians become specific targets.



Blitzkrieg over Poland: Warsaw, 1939

<http://www.historycentral.com/aviation/History3/Untitled-1.jpg>

Poland had about the same number of soldiers as Germany, but not the technology, and fell quickly into German control, lacking USSR support, as the soviets invaded the East of the country that at the end of September was virtually divided between the two invaders and finally Warsaw surrendered to the Nazis. This also revealed that Britain and France were unable to help the country they declared war for, and this was going to cause serious political and psychological effects. One part of the territory occupied by the Germans was integrated in the Reich –the Greater Germany- and the other became a German colony.

The Soviet Union seized the opportunity to expand towards Finland, provoking the Finnish-Soviet war, that finished in 1940 with the lost of a province by Finland into Russian hands. The Soviet Union also annexed the Baltic states, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and was expelled from the League of Nations.

Meanwhile, the Germans, in order to assure their provision of iron ore from Sweden and thinking of a naval war against Britain, invaded Norway and Denmark. The idea was to isolate Sweden while maintaining its neutrality but forcing the country to provide them with raw materials. Despite British and French help to the Norwegians, the invasion could not be stopped, particularly after defeats in France forced the Allies to withdraw their troops and the British were unable to intercept German ships. These events led to the resignation of Neville Chamberlain as British prime minister in May 1940, just when the Germans invaded Holland and Belgium as well. He was also responsible for the failed **appeasement** policy and the non-intervention policy –in his conservative views he did not see the danger Hitler could represent while he was suspicious of left-wing parties. Chamberlain was replaced by Winston Churchill, also conservative, but better placed for the job during the war. Churchill stood against Nazism.

Allied units advanced into Belgium when their plans were thwarted by German panzers unexpectedly going through the Ardennes, a hilly forest between Belgium, Luxembourg and France, splitting allied forces in two. Holland and Belgium were occupied and German troops were advancing, posing a threat to France, towards the English channel. The British and French were pushed around Dunkirk, in that area in France. Only the British resisted but finally an important part of the Franco-British troops, that is, around 338,000 men, were rescued in what is called the Dunkirk evacuation –also called Operation Dynamo- in nine days.

After this, the fall of France came soon. Italy declared war on France on June 10<sup>th</sup>, and four days later the German army occupied Paris. The Germans occupied two-thirds of France. Marshal Pétain asked for an armistice and France was divided in two areas: The North, under direct Nazi control and the South, a puppet state led by Pétain and obedient to the Nazis, called Vichy France, because the capital was the town of Vichy. Meanwhile, General Charles de Gaulle, from London, refused to accept the armistice with the Germans and established a government in exile, becoming the leader of the *free French*.

After the defeat of France, only Britain stood in the way of Hitler's expansion aims. Then, Hitler decided to invade the British Isles –operation Sealion- but this meant crossing the English channel, and German generals considered that in order to proceed to the invasion, the Royal Air Force (RAF), name of the British air force, had to be neutralised first, destroying the RAF and the British aircraft industry. This battle for superiority in the air is called the Battle of Britain and it took place during the summer of 1940. The Battle of Britain was the first major defeat of the German army due to the use of radar by the British, but British cities, namely London, Sheffield, Coventry, Birmingham, Liverpool..., suffered from brutal air raids from September 1940 to May 1941 –the Blitz- causing great mortality among civilians and leaving many people homeless, i.e. over half of London was bombed almost every night. The British also stopped the Germans in the Battle of the Atlantic, a submarine warfare.

In the end, Hitler abandoned his attempt to invade Britain or end up with the RAF and restarted with his plans in Eastern Europe, namely Russia. There were also two other new fronts: North Africa and the Balkans. These fronts responded to Italy's



Homeless children in London outside their destroyed house, after a Nazi air-raid. September 1940  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:NA-306-NT-3163V.jpg>

entry in the war and Mussolini's imperialistic aims. He expected to recreate Ancient Rome's Mediterranean empire for which reason he tried ,unsuccessfully, to invade Greece. Italy's entry into the war was a burden for Germany. Germany sent units to help the Italian army in North Africa, weak in comparison to its contenders. However, despite this help, the Axis troops were stopped by General Montgomery and defeated in Tunisia, maintaining North Africa under allied control, from where plans were made for the invasion of Italy later on. Regarding the Balkans, Hitler, on his way towards Greece, brought Romania, Hungary, the Slovak Republic and Bulgaria to be part of the Axis and tried to make Yugoslavia do the same but, when refusing to do so, it was invaded. The Germans initiated a blitzkrieg against Yugoslavia –Belgrade- and Greece and they surrendered in April. Crete also fell into German hands.

### **The Expansion of the War: War in the Pacific, the Tide Turns**

The invasion of the Soviet Union, long planned by Hitler, went finally underway under the name of Operation Barbarossa in June 1941. They thought that through the blitzkrieg technique, they would be able to devastate the Soviet Union and seize Moscow in the Autumn. For sure, devastation was unparalleled to the Western front and as a result, Russian casualties amounted to almost half of all war casualties –about 25

million Soviet citizens died. Stalin's orders also made up for it with his ruthless methods. He used troops and partisan divisions who abused villagers, to defend their positions, also loosing a high number of soldiers. In September the siege of Leningrad – Saint Petersburg- began, which lasted for 900 days –three years- and was finally ended by the Soviet army. The Germans were nearly in Moscow, but found an unexpected enemy: Russia's extreme cold weather. Besides the troops not being used to it, vehicles and weapons could not respond under such weather. The Russian campaign ended with Germany's defeat at the Battle of Stalingrad in February 1943, one of the cruellest battles in the war on both sides, and an inflexion point in the war in favour of the Allies.



Hitler and Stalin and the Nazi-Soviet Alliance. Cartoon by David Low (*Picture Post*, Oct.1939)  
<http://opal.ukc.ac.uk/cartoonx-cgi/cgc.py?mode=single&start=3&search=hitler%20AND%20stalin%20AND%201941>

Japan's aims of continuing expansion after China and Indochina –that is, in Malaya, Burma, East Indies –Indonesia- and the Philippines, was put into question by the USA fleet in the Pacific, located in Pearl Harbour, in the Pacific island of Hawaii. As the US had been rather passive with the invasion of China, they thought that if the US entered the war, it would be for a short and not significant impact, and they would have their way to keep expanding. For this reason they attacked Pearl Harbour on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 1941, without previous declaration of war. The US could have prevented the attack, as they had had some intelligence warnings, but disbelief and incompetence prevailed. Some people have questioned what really was behind Pearl Harbour. Roosevelt wanted to enter the war. Did he know about the attack before it happened?

With the attack, the war extended to the Pacific, with Japan on the Axis side and the US with the Allies.

As stated above, Japanese expansionist aims were to conquer European colonies in Asia, reaching the Philippines and from there Papua-New Guinea as far as Australia and New Zealand, but they were stopped by the American army. After the Japanese defeat in Guadalcanal in 1943 the tide also turned in the Pacific region.

### **The Axis in Retreat and the End of the War**

In North Africa, the Allies' victory in the Battle of El Alamein (1942) was also the start of a favourable balance for the Allies in the war. In 1943 the Allies recaptured Tunisia and started the invasion of Italy from Sicily. In 1944, a conference meeting between Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin planned the Operation Overlord, known as D-Day, which started on the 4 of June 1944, being one of the most complex and biggest operations of this kind in history. Meanwhile, the USSR was leading an offensive on the East of Europe. The Anglo-American army liberated Paris in August that same year and French-American units entered and liberated other French areas: Toulon, Marseille, the Rhone river area and other areas in Provence. In January 1945 Germany was invaded from the East and the West. In May, after Hitler committed suicide, the allies convened in a protocol of peace procedures called the Yalta Agreements. The negotiations were later finished in the Potsdam Conference.

The war continued in the Pacific for some more months, particularly between the USA and Japan, and finished in September, after the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, on 6 and 9 of August 1945, where the disastrous effects of nuclear power could be tested in reality.

After the war, the Nuremberg trials prosecuted war criminals, that is, leaders of nazi Germany that had committed crimes against humanity, by, for instance, being involved in genocides such as the holocaust.



## SOURCES AND ACTIVITIES

### First World War

#### Triple Entente and Triple Alliance



[http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/worldwarone/hq/causes2\\_01.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/worldwarone/hq/causes2_01.shtml)

#### The Christmas Truce in 1914

“The words drifted across the frozen battlefield: 'Stille Nacht. Heilige Nacht. Alles Schläft, einsam wacht'. To the ears of the British troops peering over their trench, the lyrics may have been unfamiliar but the haunting tune was unmistakable. After the last note a lone German infantryman appeared holding a small tree glowing with light. 'Merry Christmas. We not shoot, you not shoot.'

It was just after dawn on a biting cold Christmas Day in 1914, 90 years ago on Saturday, and one of the most extraordinary incidents of the Great War was about to unfold.

Weary men climbed hesitantly at first out of trenches and stumbled into no man's land. They shook hands, sang carols, lit each other's cigarettes, swapped tunic buttons and addresses and, most famously, played football, kicking around empty bully-beef cans and using their caps or steel helmets as goalposts. The unauthorised Christmas truce spread across much of the 500-mile Western Front where more than a million men were encamped.

According to records held by the World War One Veterans' Association, there is only one man in the world still alive who spent 25 December 1914 serving in a conflict that left 31 million people dead (8,5 million), wounded or missing (...)

'I remember the silence, the eerie sound of silence,' he said. 'Only the guards were on duty. We all went outside the farm buildings and just stood listening. And, of course, thinking of people



back home. All I'd heard for two months in the trenches was the hissing, cracking and whining of bullets in flight, machinegun fire and distant German voices.

'But there was a dead silence that morning, right across the land as far as you could see. We shouted "Merry Christmas", even though nobody felt merry. The silence ended early in the afternoon and the killing started again. It was a short peace in a terrible war.'

In some parts of the front, the ceasefire lasted several weeks (...)

Alfred Anderson has spent 90 years trying to forget the war. But it has been impossible. So on Saturday he will look back. I'll give Christmas Day 1914 a brief thought, as I do every year. And I'll think about all my friends who never made it home. But it's too sad to think too much about it. Far too sad,' he said, his head bowed and his eyes filled with tears."

L. Martin, "Last Survivor of 'Christmas Truce' tells of his sorrow". *The Observer*, 19-12-2004

## Traditional song from the First World War

### Green Fields of France

Well how do you do young Willie McBride,  
Do you mind if I sit here down by your grave side,  
And rest for a while **neath** the warm summer sun,  
I've been working all day and I'm nearly done.  
I see by your gravestone you were only 19,  
When you joined the great fallen in 1916,  
I hope you died well and I hope you died clean,  
Or young Willie McBride was it slow and obscene.

#### Chorus:

Did they beat the drum slowly, did they play the **fife** lowly,  
Did they sound the dead march, as they lowered you down,  
Did the band play the last post and chorus,  
Did the pipes play the Flowers of the Forest.

Did you leave **ere** a wife or a sweetheart behind,  
In some faithful heart is your memory enshrined,  
Although you died back in 1916,  
In that faithful heart are you forever 19.  
Or are you a stranger without even a name,  
Enclosed in forever behind a glass frame,  
In an old photograph all torn battered and stained,  
And faded to yellow in a brown leather frame.

Chorus (Did they...)

The sun now it shines on the green fields of France,  
There's a warm summer breeze that makes the red poppies dance,  
And look how the sun shines from under the trees,  
There's no gas, no barbed wire, there's no guns firing now.  
But here in this graveyard it's still "No Man's Land",  
The countless white crosses stand mute in the sand,  
To man's blind indifference to his fellow man,  
To a whole generation that were butchered and damned.

Chorus (Did they...)

Ah, young Willie McBride I can't help wonder why,  
Do all those who lie here know why did they die,  
And did they believe when they answered the call,  
Did they really believe that this war would end wars.  
Well, the sorrow, the suffering, the glory, the pain,  
The killing and dying were all done in vain,  
For young Willie McBride it all happened again,  
And again, and again, and again, and again.

Alternatively, "And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda" can also be used; an antiwar song written in 1972, parallel to the Vietnam War by Eric Bogle. Waltzing Matilda refers to the unofficial anthem of Australia:

**And the Band Played Waltzing Matilda**

When I was a young man I carried my pack  
And I lived the free life of the rover.  
From the Murray's green basin to the dusty outback  
I waltzed my Matilda all over.  
Then in nineteen fifteen the country said, "Son,  
It's time to stop rambling, there's work to be done."  
And they gave me a tin hat and they gave me a gun,  
And they marched me away to the war.  
And the band played Waltzing Matilda  
As our ship pulled away from the quay,  
And amidst all the cheers, flag-waving and tears  
We sailed off to Gallipoli.

And how well I remember that terrible day,  
How our blood stained the sand and the water.  
And of how in that hell that they call Suvla Bay  
We were butchered like lambs at the slaughter.  
Johnny Turk he was waiting, he primed himself well,  
He showered us with bullets, and he rained us with shell,  
And in five minutes flat he'd blown us all to hell,  
Nearly blew us right back to Australia.  
But the band played Waltzing Matilda,  
As we stopped to bury our slain.  
We buried ours, and the Turks buried theirs,  
Then we started all over again.

Now those that were left, well, we tried to survive  
In that mad world of blood, death and fire.  
And for ten weary weeks I kept myself alive,  
But around me, the corpses piled higher.  
Then a big Turkish shell knocked me arse over head,  
And when I woke up in me hospital bed  
And saw what it had done, well, I wished I was dead.  
Never knew there was worse things than dying.  
For I'll go no more Waltzing Matilda  
All around the green bush far and free,  
To hump tent and pegs, a man needs both legs,

No more Waltzing Matilda for me.

So they gathered the crippled, the wounded, the maimed,  
And they shipped us back home to Australia.  
The armless, the legless, the blind and insane,  
Those proud wounded heroes of Suvla.  
And as our ship pulled into Circular Quay  
I looked at the place where me legs used to be,  
And thanked Christ there was nobody waiting for me,  
To grieve and to mourn and to pity.  
But the band played Waltzing Matilda  
As they carried us down the gangway.  
But nobody cheered, they just stood and stared,  
Then they turned all their faces away.

And so now every April I sit on my porch  
And I watch the parade pass before me.  
And I see my old comrades, how proudly they march,  
Reviving old dreams of past glory.  
And the old men marched slowly, all bones stiff and sore,  
They're tired old heroes from a forgotten war,  
And the young people ask, "What are they marching for?",  
And I ask myself the same question.  
But the band plays Waltzing Matilda,  
And the old men still answer the call.  
But as year follows year, more old men disappear,  
Someday no one will march there at all.

Waltzing Matilda, waltzing Matilda,  
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me ?  
And their ghosts may be heard as they march by the billabong,  
Who'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me ?

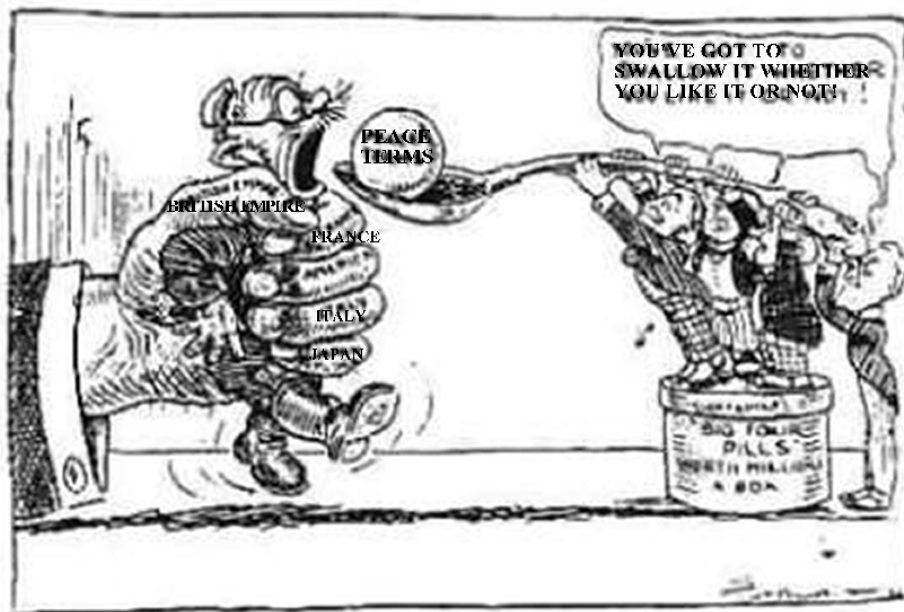
[http://mysongbook.de/msb/songs/r\\_clarke/banplayd.htm](http://mysongbook.de/msb/songs/r_clarke/banplayd.htm)

### Activities:

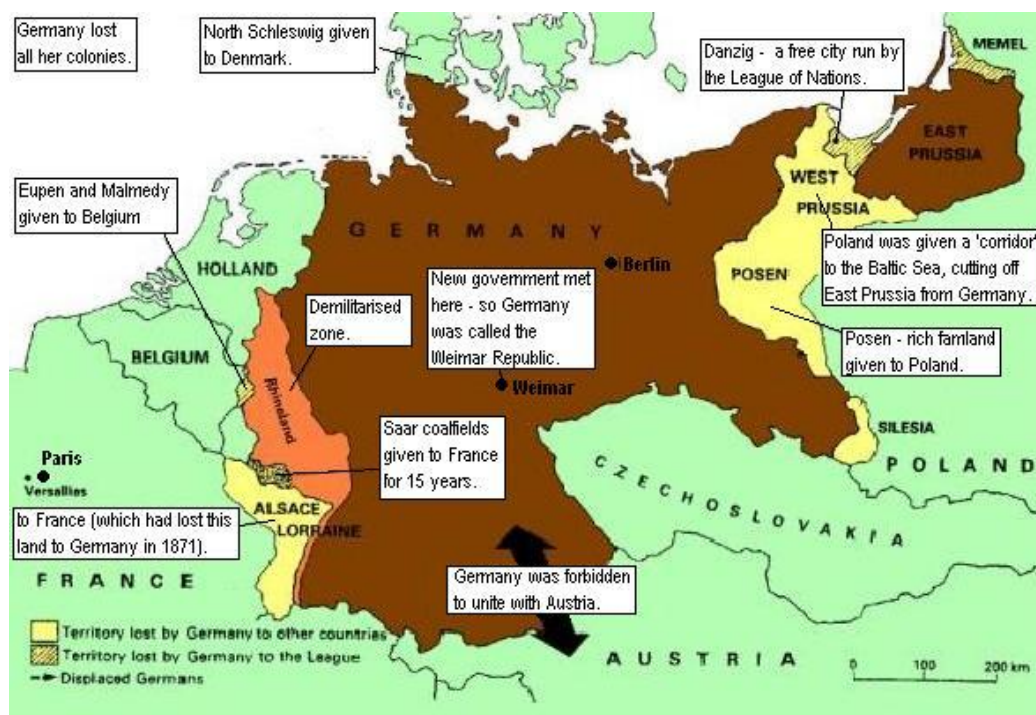
1. Read the map above. Which countries were in the Triple Entente? Which were in the Triple Alliance? Which were neutral?
2. Explain how those alliances were formed and the causes of World War I. Distinguish between root causes and immediate causes (trigger).
3. Who do you think was responsible for the outbreak of the war? Give arguments for your statements.
4. Write the headlines and a short article on the beginning of the war: national patriotism and interests, the Sarajevo assassination..., from the perspective of the Austrian and the perspective of the British or French.
5. Do you think the First World War was an imperialist war? Why or why not?
6. Read the newspaper article and the song –you can listen to the tune as well. What do they have in common?
7. What is a truce? Why was this truce “illegal”? what is the difference the other truces in history?
8. Compare and make a text appreciation.

9. What is the vision they give us about World War I and about wars in general?
10. Why do you reckon Mr. Anderson could not forget the war? Why does he cry?  
Comment on the last verse of the song –paragraph.
11. Which conclusions do you come to after reading those texts?

### Terms of the Treaty of Versailles



<http://www.historyonthenet.com/WW1/versailles.htm>



[http://www.johndclare.net/peace\\_treaties4.htm](http://www.johndclare.net/peace_treaties4.htm)

The treaty set out 440 Articles detailing Germany's punishment. These were the most important:

1-26:	The Covenant of the League of Nations - Germany was not allowed to join.
42:	The Rhineland was demilitarised - the German army was not allowed to go there.
45:	The Saar, with its rich coalfields, given to France for 15 years.
51:	Alsace-Lorraine returned to France.
80:	Germany forbidden to unite with Austria.
87:	Lands in eastern Germany - the rich farmlands of Posen and the Polish corridor between Germany and East Prussia - given to Poland.
100:	Danzig made a free city under League of Nations control.
119:	All Germany's colonies taken and given to France and Britain as 'mandates'.
160:	The German army restricted to 100,000 men.
181:	The German navy restricted to six battleships and no submarines.
198:	Germany not allowed to have an air force.
231:	Germany was responsible for causing all the loss and damage caused by the war.
232:	Germany would have to pay reparations, to be decided later - eventually set at 132 billion gold marks.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/ir1/thetreatyrev2.shtml>

## Opinions of Versailles

### Germany

All Germans hated the treaty:

They were angry that they had not been allowed to negotiate, and because they expected a peace treaty based on Wilson's 14 points.

Count Brockdorff-Rantzau, leader of the German delegation at Versailles said Article 231- the war-guilt clause - was: "a lie". Germany officially denied the war-guilt clause in 1927.

Germany hated reparations. It had to be made to pay in 1921, defaulted in 1923 and eventually Hitler refused to pay altogether.

### Britain

Britain gained some German colonies and the German navy was destroyed **but**:

Many British thought the treaty was too harsh and had too many reparations.

Lloyd George, Prime Minister at the time, said: "We shall have to fight another war again in 25 years time."

The British diplomat Harold Nicholson called it: "neither just nor wise".

The economist John Maynard Keynes prophesied that reparations would ruin the economy of Europe.

### France

France got Alsace-Lorraine, German colonies, harsh reparations and a tiny German army **but**:

Many French people still thought the treaty was not harsh enough. Minister George Clemenceau thought Germany had to be completely smashed to avoid invasion.

Many French people wanted an independent, not a demilitarised, Rhineland and did not think the League of Nations would protect them against Germany.

### **The United States of America**

Woodrow Wilson got the League of Nations, and new nation-states were set up in Eastern Europe **but**:

Wilson thought the treaty was far too harsh.

Self-determination proved impossible to implement - neither Czechoslovakia or Yugoslavia survived as united countries.

Many Americans did not want to get involved in Europe, and in 1920 the American Senate refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles, or join the League of Nations.

### **Italy**

Italians were also unhappy about the results of the Treaty because they could not get the lands they were promised when joining the Allies in 1915.

Remade from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/ir1/opinionsrev3.shtml>

### **Activities:**

1. Analyse the cartoon above and explain its meaning.
2. According to the map and to the following clauses, What were the territorial consequences of the Versailles Treaty?
3. Which other clauses were harmful for Germany?
4. Were the Germans right for being humiliated and feeling betrayed because of this Treaty? Why?
5. Read all the postures on the Versailles Treaty. Make five groups representing a country each and pretend you are part of the negotiations. Expose what you want for your country and how you would like the Treaty to be.
6. Some historians have said the Treaty was unfair for Germany, others said it was fair, while others saw the problem in the fact that some provisions were not enforced. Do you think Germany was treated fairly? Should a defeated country be excluded from negotiation and be harshly punished? What should be the obligations from war victors towards defeated countries? Up to what point would harsh punishment be advisable or not?
7. Analysing every country's reasons to blame the Treaty. Which one do you think had more reasons to protest? Which one had less reasons to protest?
8. Write a short essay –maximum one page- stating whether the Versailles Treaty was a good Treaty or not and its flaws –if any.

## Interwar Period: The Stock Market Crash of 1929, the Great Depression and the New Deal



“Stock prices virtually collapsed yesterday, swept downward with gigantic losses in the most disastrous trading day in the stock market's history. Billions of dollars in open market values were wiped out as prices crumbled under the pressure of liquidation of securities which had to be sold at any price.

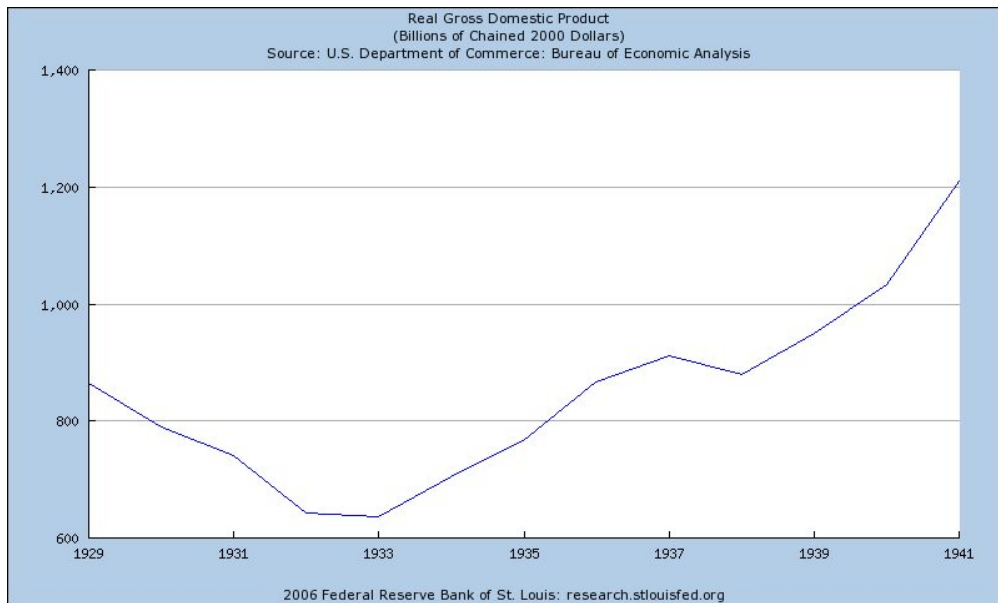
There was an impressive rally just at the close, which brought many leading stocks back from 4 to 14 points from their lowest points of the day.

From every point of view, in the extent of losses sustained, in total turnover, in the number of speculators wiped out, the day was the most disastrous in Wall Street's history. Hysteria swept the country and stocks went overboard for just what they would bring at forced sale.”

*The New York Times*, 30 October 1929

[http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/991029onthisday\\_big.html](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/general/onthisday/991029onthisday_big.html)





<http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Gdp29-41.jpg>



<http://www.tqnyc.org/NYC063370/jobless.jpg>

### Activities:

1. Read the text from *The New York Times*. Put it in context and explain its significance.
2. Compare the graphic about the Dow Jones Index with the US Gross Domestic Product. Relate to the **Roaring Twenties**, the 1929 crash, the Great Depression and any other relevant events.

3. Which were the consequences of the crash for workers? What was the Great Depression?
4. Analyse the picture by Margaret Bourke-White and the one above, *Jobless men keep going*. When were they taken? What do they refer to? Write about the irony in the first one and the slogan "There is no way like the American way".
5. How did president Roosevelt face these problems in the economy?
6. Look for information on John Maynard Keynes.
7. Do you think people in the US abused the use of credit –particularly credit cards? Imagine how a current middle class person, working as a clerk or administrative assistant could find him or herself indebted by abusing credit –think about current consumption for people: cars, televisions and so on. Do you think the 1929 crisis and its aftermath could happen again? Compare to current issues such as the stock market new technologies crisis in 2000-2001 and the mortgage financial crisis in the US.

### **Fascism and Nazism**

"Women were not expected to work in Nazi Germany . In Weimar Germany there had been 100,000 female teachers, 3000 female doctors and 13,000 female musicians. Within months of Hitler coming to power, many female doctors and civil servants were sacked. This was followed by female teachers and lawyers. By the start of the Second World War, very few German women were in fulltime work. However, such was the skills shortage in Germany, that in 1937 a law was passed in 1937 which meant women had to do a "Duty Year". This meant that they could work 'patriotically' in a factory etc (...).

As housewives and mothers, their lives were controlled. Women were not expected to wear make-up or trousers. The dyeing of hair was not allowed nor were perms. Only flat shoes were expected to be worn. Women were discouraged from slimming as this was considered bad for child birth. Women were encouraged to have a well built figure as slim women, so it was taught, would have problems in pregnancy.....Women were also discouraged from smoking - not because it was linked to problems with pregnancies - but because it was considered non-German to do so.

August 12th had been the birthday of Hitler's mother. On this day each year, the Motherhood Cross was awarded to women who had given birth to the largest number of children. The gold cross went to women who had produced 8 children; silver was for 6 children and bronze was for 4 children.

In Nazi Germany it was not considered a social problem if an unmarried woman had a child. In fact it was encouraged. The Nazis established Lebensborn's which were buildings where selected unmarried women could go to get pregnant by a "racially pure" SS man."

From [http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/Women\\_Nazi\\_Germany.htm](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/Women_Nazi_Germany.htm)

### **Activities:**

1. What was the nazis' vision of women, according to the text.
2. Compare the treatment of women by the nazis with the treatment of other groups.
3. Read the main characteristics of fascist movements –including nazism- and explain how and why they would be against human rights.
4. Compare Italian fascism with German nazism.
5. How did Italy and Germany fall into dictatorship?
6. Write a text appreciation.

Game: **The Night of the Long Knives**

<http://www.schoolhistory.co.uk/games/noughtscrosses/longknives.htm>

### **The Nuremberg Trials**

“COL. AMEN: Were all victims, including the men, women, and children, executed in the same manner?”

OHLENDORF: Until the spring of 1942, yes. Then an order came from Himmler that in the future women and children were to be killed only in gas vans.

COL. AMEN: How had the women and children been killed previously?

OHLENDORF: In the same way as the men by shooting.

COL. AMEN: What, if anything, was done about burying the victims after they had been executed?

OHLENDORF: The Kommandos filled the graves to efface the signs of the execution, and then labor units of the population leveled them.

COL. AMEN: Referring to the gas vans which you said you received in the spring of 1942, what order did you receive with respect to the use of these vans?

OHLENDORF: These gas vans were in future to be used for the killing of women and children.

COL. AMEN: Will you explain to the Tribunal the construction of these vans and their appearance?

OHLENDORF: The actual purpose of these vans could not be seen from the outside. They looked like closed trucks, and were so constructed that at the start of the motor, gas was conducted into the van causing death in 10 to 15 minutes.

COL. AMEN: Explain in detail just how one of these vans was used for an execution.

OHLENDORF: The vans were loaded with the victims and driven to the place of burial, which was usually the same as that used for the mass executions. The time needed for transportation was sufficient to insure the death of the victims.

COL. AMEN: How were the victims induced to enter the vans?

OHLENDORF: They were told that they were to be transported to another locality.

(...)

COL. AMEN: How many persons could be killed simultaneously one such van?

OHLENDORF: About 15 to 25 persons. The vans varied in size.”

Nuremberg trials: SS General Otto Ohlendorf. He led a division that killed 90,000 people, primarily Jews, between June 1941 and June 1942. <http://www.courttv.com/archive/casfiles/nuremberg/ohlendorf.html>

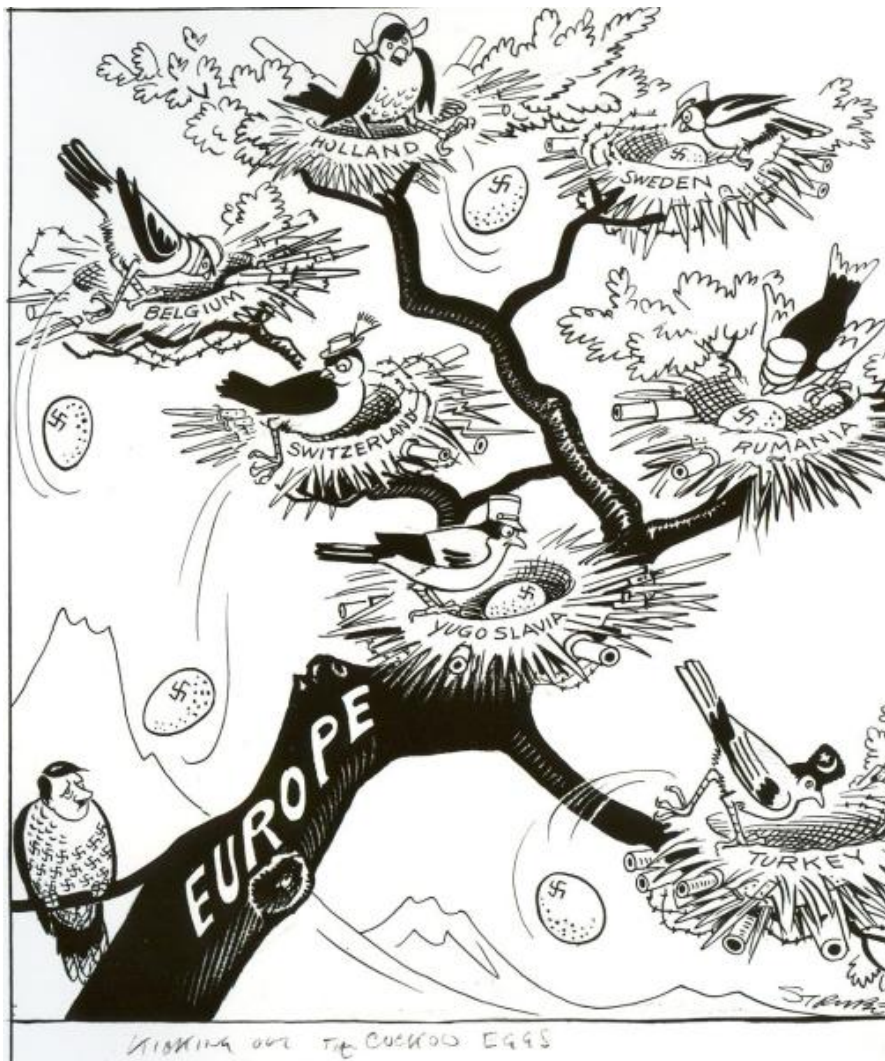
### **Activities:**

1. What is the Holocaust? How did it happen? Explain the evolution from the ghettos to the gas chambers.
2. Search information about how it could be possible that the holocaust could happen. Did German people know and if they did, why did they keep silent?
3. To understand how many people could be inside the killing machine, philosopher Hanna Arendt analysed the case of one of the murderers in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem* where she proposed the idea of the “banality of evil”. Find out who is Hanna Arendt and what is that idea.

## Second World War



<http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERhitlergeorges.JPG>



Kicking out the cuckoo eggs, Sydney 'George' Strube, 22 April 1940

<http://opal.kent.ac.uk/cartoonx-cgi/ccp.py?mode=single&start=277&search=world%20war%202>

### **Activities:**

1. Make four groups in the class. Two will work with each of the cartoons above. A second one will work with the cartoon by Marvin Peake representing Hitler and Mussolini, and a third one will work with David Low's cartoon representing Hitler and Stalin. It is also possible to make four groups using the cartoon by David Low with Franco, Mussolini, Hitler and Stalin in unit 7.
  - Allow each group enough time to complete the analysis of their assigned cartoon. Each group will work on the meaning of the cartoon, context, metaphors used and so on.
  - Each group will share with the class and combine previous work done by each of them.
  - Each group needs to write an editorial which supports the political cartoon. Students should have in mind that the cartoon and the editorial will be placed side by side on the editorial page. Do not write a description.

### **Consult interactive map of D-day in**

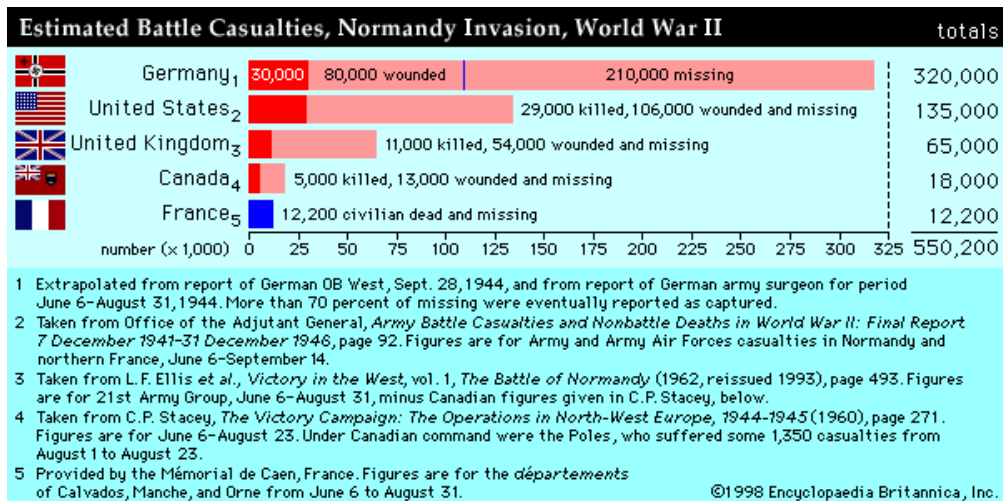
[http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/newspapers/operations/p\\_ddaymap\\_e.html](http://www.warmuseum.ca/cwm/newspapers/operations/p_ddaymap_e.html)

and/or

[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/launch\\_ani\\_d\\_day.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/wwtwo/launch_ani_d_day.shtml)

### **The invasion and the Battle of Normandy**

In the Quebec conference in 1943 it was decided to launch, by spring 1944, a big operation over the European continent called operation Overlord. Disembarking over the shores of the lower Normandy, less fortified than those of Pas-de-Calais, in Northern France, gave the allies the advantage of entering by surprise. Because of the lack of harbours big enough to unload heavy equipment, it was planned to build artificial harbours, one in what would be the British sector and one in the American sector. In order to disorganise the adversary's defence, the air force and the navy were in charge of bombing the Atlantic Wall before the landing of the first troops. At the moment of the attack, tanks were to support the assault. There were also parachute and glider landings in order to take over some key places. The initial operation, called operation Neptune, started on June 6, 1944, called D-Day. It is still the biggest sea borne invasion in history. From 6.30 to 7.30 am, 120,000 men and 20,000 vehicles landed over the five beaches in the plan, and involved in the whole about three million troops crossing from England to France across the English Channel. The Battle of Normandy followed until the German army was defeated in the Falaise Pocket and when, on August 25, the French army was given the honour of liberating Paris. Over 500,000 Allied and German troops were killed, wounded or went missing during the Battle of Normandy.



### Activities:

1. After watching the interactive maps, describe them.
2. How were the troops divided on landing? Which forces played a part and which countries?
3. Why was D-Day and the Battle of Normandy so important for the Allies?
4. Comment on the chart on casualties.

### War Casualties

#### Nagasaki Damage Caused By The Atomic Bomb Explosion

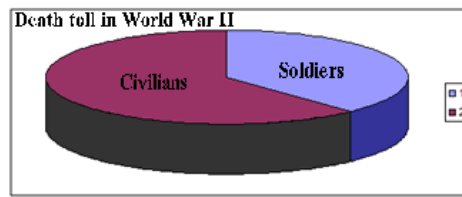
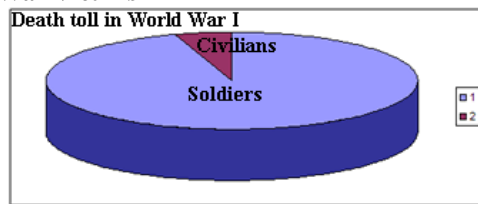
- Levelled Area.....6.7 million square meters
- Damaged Houses:  
Completely Burned -----11,574  
Completely Destroyed-----1,326  
Badly Damaged-----5,509  
Total-----18,409
- Casualties:  
Killed-----73,884  
Injured-----74,909  
Total-----148,793

(Large numbers of people died in the following years from the effects of radioactive poisoning.)

<http://www.csi.ad.jp/suzuhari-es/1000cranes/nagasaki/index.html>



## War Victims



### Activities:

1. Look for information about what a nuclear bomb is and its possible effects on people.
2. Why did the USA bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Do you think this was a justified act at that point? Why?
3. Compare the chart of casualties for D-Day with the chart on Nagasaki. Take into account the different types of fighting, the reasons behind it and civilian casualties.
4. Look at the graphs about civilian and military casualties in both world wars and compare them. Explain why the evolution showed in them happened.

### Other activities:

*Paths of Glory*. Directed by Stanley Kubrick, 1957.

Film. This film is a free version of the real case of five French soldiers executed for mutiny in World War I.

After watching the film answer the following questions:



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:PathsOfGloryPoster.jpg>



1. Make a list of the credits for this movie.
2. Make a summary of the film.
3. What is Stanley Kubrick's vision of the war?
4. How is war in the trenches described in the film?
5. What is colonel Dax's position? How does he feel about orders from above?
6. Why do you think soldiers are sent on a suicide mission?
7. Why is this movie considered an anti-war movie?
8. Explain the scenes with the captured German woman.
9. Write your personal opinion.