Chapter 24
Diplomacy and World War, 1871–1914

People
Otto von Bismarck: the German Empire was built by its long-serving first minister and his diplomatic policies; forced to retire by emperor Wilhelm.
Wilhelm II: German emperor who attempted to build a great empire and compete with others.
Alfred von Schlieffen: German General who devised the German strategy to cope with a two-front war.
Archduke Francis Ferdinand: heir to throne of Austria-Hungary; his assassination sparked war.
Helmuth von Moltke: the German general who mobilized without informing authorities, causing the First World War.
Woodrow Wilson: President of United States, elected to keep the country out of war, but did get his country involved; his peace plan is basis of surrender.
David Lloyd George: Prime Minister of Britain who negotiated at the Paris Peace Conference.
Georges Clemenceau: French President who wanted revenge against Germany in the peace treaty.
John Singer Sargent: British painter of the First World War, his work depicted the horror and futility of war.
Paul Valéry: a French philosopher who, after the war, saw the world as uncertain and irrational.

Terms
diplomacy: the management of relationships between sovereign states; international contacts.
Triple Alliance: an Alliance made in 1882 between Germany, Austria-Hungary and Italy.
Weltpolitik: a German foreign policy to extend Germany and create an empire; means “world policy.”
Triple Entente: arrangements to connect the diplomatic interests of France, Britain and Russia.
“the aggressor”: the side to initiate conflict by an aggressive act, forcing other into self-defence.
propaganda: systematic efforts to spread opinions, especially by distortion and deception.
Fourteen Points: U.S. President’s public statement of broad principles; basis for peace.
Polish Corridor: strip of land carved out of Germany after the First World War to give Poland access to Baltic Sea.
“war guilt” clause: the statement in the Treaty of Versailles which blamed Germany for war.
reparations: Treaty provisions which required payment of damages by Germany.
1. Diplomacy managed the relations of sovereign states.
   - Until 1914, the “concert of Europe” kept a balance of powers so no one state dominated.
   - Germany replaced France as the supreme power in Europe.
   - Bismarck believed that a balance was essential to maintain peace.

2. • He gave up the Congress System to negotiate treaties, so that Germany would be a decisive power.
   • Coordinated policy:
     – Ally with Austria
     – Control Russia
     – Isolate France
     – Keep Italy quiet
     – “hands off” England’s overseas empire; respect each “sphere of influence”

3. • Wilhelm II was to rule alone.
   • Policy was to build a great empire for Germany:
     – Ended the treaty with Russia (France and Russia made an alliance)
     – Antagonized Britain as Admiral Tirpitz initiated expensive naval race (Britain looked for allies)
     – Europe split in two armed camps: centre versus the fringe.

4. • Balkans were a diplomatic problem:
   – a mix of nationalism, religious hate, and imperialism.
   • Austrian, Ottoman, and Russian empires were all competing.
     – Russians wanted access to the Mediterranean; they won the war, but got nothing after the treaty mix-up.
   • Another Balkan war in 1912:
     – small nations united to defeat the Ottomans, but they argued over dividing spoils: tensions high.

5. • German Schlieffen Plan to fight two fronts:
   – march through neutral Belgium to defeat France quickly and turn to face slower Russians.
   – English and French military had secret “talks” to coordinate defense:
     – English navy in the North Sea, French in the Mediterranean
6.  
   - All claimed self-defence.
   - Germany was blamed in “war guilt” treaty clause.
   - “Fischer thesis” argued Germany intended war
   - Influential conclusion that foreign policy driven by domestic concerns – foreign policy cannot be studied in isolation.

7.  
   - British navy versus German submarines in a war of supply for additional resources.
   - United States was sympathetic to Allies but not involved in Europe. President Wilson was re-elected because “he kept (the U.S.) out of war.”
   - In 1915, the Lusitania was sunk by the Germans, which angered the United States; subs halted.
   - Germans gambled in 1917 unrestricted submarine warfare, and lost.

8.  
   - Home Front crucial to victory on battlefield.
   - Conscription debated (it was new to some countries.)
   - Governments got involved in production.
     - strikes banned
     - wages regulated
     - job changes restricted
     - citizen freedom limited
     - morality imposed
     - women took jobs not open to them before

9.  
   - 1- No secret diplomacy.
   - 2- Freedom of the seas.
   - 3- Free trade.
   - 4- Arms reduction.
   - 5- Fair treatment for colonies.
   - 6- End occupation of Russia.
   - 7- Belgium to be restored.
   - 8- French territory returned.
   - 9- Italy to expand and include all Italian peoples.
   - 10- Austro-Hungarians to decide their own future.
   - 11- Rumania, Serbia, Montenegro restored.
   - 12- Ottomans to give freedom to others & the Dardanelles opened.
   - 13- An independent Poland to be created, with access to Baltic Sea.
   - 14- An internation organization to be created.
10.
- Philosophers saw world as uncertain and irrational.
- Writers captured misery and destruction of war, and some celebrated heroism.
- Europe not dominant — Japan and United States emerged as powers.
- Nationalism in colonies.
- Laissez-faire ideas end.
- Casualties = 37.5 million
- The optimism of the nineteenth century seemed to have been a “grand illusion.”