

Notes: WWI

Spielvogel Chapter 25

I. The Road to World War I

A. Nationalism

1. The early 19th century hope that the nation-state system would lead to international brotherhood backfired
 - a. Instead of cooperation it became competition
 - b. Rivalries over colonial and commercial interests grew
 - c. Alliances had formed
2. Sad reality – govts that exercised restraint to avoid war are humiliated – those who were willing to go to the brink of war for national honor were praised
3. Each state demanded its sovereignty
4. Nationalism left some ethnic groups behind
 - a. Slavs in Balkans and Austrian Empire
 - b. Irish in British Empire
 - c. Poles in Russian Empire
5. Internal state problems were covered up by focusing on external problems
 - a. Eg – socialist labor strikes and class divisions

B. Militarism

1. European state armies doubled between 1890-1914
 - a. Size of military is obvious measure of strength – brought on by Bismarck's creation of Germany
 - b. Russia largest but most poorly trained and equipped
2. Military leaders gain more political power and influence
 - a. Orientation toward war is inevitable

C. Outbreak of War

1. Second Balkan Crisis
 - a. Hatred between Serbia and Austria at a high
 - b. Russia and Austria at odds because of Serbia
2. Archduke Franz and Ferdinand and wife assassinated June 28, 1914 in Sarajevo, Bosnia by member of Black Hand terrorist organization – **immediate cause** of war
 - a. Austria makes harsh demands on Serbia that would end its sovereignty
 - b. International negotiations for peace continue for a month
 - c. Austria declares war on Serbia July 28
 - i. Serbia supported by Russia
 - ii. Russia mobilizes for War – July 30
 - d. Germany declares war on Russia – August 1st
 - i. Austria is supported by Germany
 - e. Germans convinced France would help Russia – the dreaded “war on two fronts” (Bismarck) would befall them
 - i. Germany puts the “Schlieffen Plan” into effect
 - a. Germany would invade France – knock her out of the war before Russia could fully mobilize
 - ii. Germany asks France what its intentions were – France replies – we'll do what we want when the time comes

- iii. Germany declares war on France – Aug 3, 1914
- f. British claim neutrality but Schlieffen Plan has the invasion of France going through Belgium
 - i. Britain will not allow Belgian territory invaded
 - ii. Aug 4 – Britain declares war on Germany
- 3. Europe is at war – everyone excited – would becomes a disaster
 - a. Central powers – Germany, Austria, Ottomans, Bulgaria (old Triple Alliance)
 - b. Allied powers – England, France, Russia, Italy, USA by 1917 (old Triple Entente)

II. The War

A. 1914-15: Illusions and Stalemate

- 1. Beliefs
 - a. Everyone believed their own nation had a just cause to fight (propaganda) – enthusiasm
 - b. All thought it would be short (Bismarck's had been) – home for Christmas
 - c. Hope of national patriotic rebirth
 - d. People were bored with a world grown “old, cold, and weary.” Would be a glorious adventure
- 2. The western front
 - a. Germans drive through Belgium and Luxembourg into France
 - b. Plans to take France frustrated by though resistance from Belgians, quick arrival of British, French resistance, dividing German army east and west
 - c. Schlieffen Plan fails to work (most important consequence – stalemate)
 - d. Germans stopped along Marne River (First Battle of the Marne – Sep. 6-12 – 1914) – changed character of the war – German retreated
 - e. Trench warfare from North Sea to Switzerland – 300 miles
 - f. Battle for weeks or months for a few yards or miles
- 3. The eastern front
 - a. Russia invades East Prussia – 1914 – some trenches – more territorial gains & losses - mobility
 - b. Germans and Austrians hold the line – Battle of Tannenberg (Aug. 1914)
 - i. Russians trounced by General Paul von Hindenburg
 - c. Russia too weak to be effective by 1915 – begin retreating – no guns, ammo, food
 - i. Continue to fight – Germany must keep some troops on eastern front
 - d. Russian revolution begins 1917
 - i. Russia pulls out of war early (1918)

B. 1916-17: The Great Slaughter

- 1. Success in east allow Germans to move more troops to western front
- 2. War bogs down to ugly war of attrition or total war (who would get tired and quit first?)
 - a. Required tremendous manpower – hand to hand – bayonets – after artillery softening – poison gas (1915)
- 3. Machine guns took heavy toll – Germans try to take French fortress at Verdun (Feb-July 1916)
 - a. Legendary for French resistance after 6 months – lost 350,000 men (450K Germans) – no victory
- 4. Commanders on both sides would try again and again – no one gaining decisive advantage

- a. Had lost touch with men in the field – were trying to satisfy political leaders who wanted victory at any cost
- b. Opposing soldiers develop their own survival agreements – live and let live idea (don't attack certain areas (latrines, mess tents)
- 5. Battle of the Somme – (July-Nov. 1916) no major gain (7-mile allied advance) – 500,000 Gers, 400,000 Brits, 200,000 Fr. – first use of tanks, Britain used to counter machine guns – 18 used – British army had drug feet on development

C. The Widening War

- 1. U.S. entry
 - a. Attempts at Neutrality
- 2. May 1916 – Battle of Jutland – British and German navies – Germany cannot advance against British – Germans return home and don't come back
- 3. Allies set up blockade of German coast – sea war more shipping and blockade rather than fighting
 - a. Ships are stopped and searched
 - b. Angers neutral countries – especially U.S.
 - c. Causes shortages in Germany
- 4. Submarine warfare is new weapon – 1915 – U-boats – developed by an American – U.S. didn't want to use it.
 - a. Germans declare English and French coasts a war zone
 - b. Sub thought barbaric – international law says ships to be evacuated before sinking – if subs surfaced they were shot and sunk
 - c. Several ships sunk including American
 - i. Most memorable – Lusitania May 1915 (1,000 die, 100+ Americans)
 - d. U.S. protest causes Germans to limit sub use
- 5. Blockade put up to starve Germany
- 6. 1917 – Germany starts unlimited sub warfare again – needed to starve out British before U.S. could mobilize – violation of freedom of the seas
- 7. U.S. enters war Apr. 1917 – turns the tide – gives allied powers a psychological boost

D. The Impact of Total War

- 1. Social
 - a. Brought an end to unemployment
 - b. Trade unions accepted as part of the production process – collective bargaining – govts. Trying to ensure no production disruptions
 - c. New roles for women
 - i. More clerical jobs
 - ii. Truck drivers, farm laborers, factory workers
 - iii. Male resistance continues – a threat
 - iv. Minimum wage laws help women
 - v. Women gain the right to vote right after the war
 - a. 1918 – Britain, Germany, Austria
 - b. 1920 – U.S.A.
 - vi. Women's gains short lived
 - a. Expected to return to normal at war's end
 - vii. Many women remained more independent – smoking in public, short dresses, boyish hairdos
 - 2. War became the great equalizer – narrowed the gap between upper and lower classes

III. The Russian Revolution

- A. Russia totally unprepared for WWI
 - 1. 6-8M soldiers K-W-C between 1914-16
 - 2. Lost its will to fight
- B. Political parties challenging the tsar
 - 1. Social Revolutionaries
 - a. Most popular – believed in “land socialism”. Government gives to each peasant the amount of land he can cultivate
 - b. Equality of Russians and non-Russians
 - c. Their appeal was to poorer peasants and non-Russians – mostly non-violent but had some extremists who used terrorism
 - 2. Social Democrats (from Marx – 1875)
 - a. Marxist – believed Russia must be industrialized before a social revolution could take place
 - b. Industrialization – overthrow of tsar – bourgeois democracy – proletariat overthrow – communist state – must be dominated by an elite group
 - c. Key leader – Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov – Lenin
 - d. Lenin’s followers in SD party – Bolsheviks – Mensheviks were less radical
- C. Weakness of the Govt.
- D. Unrest in Russia caused by:
 - 1. Shortage of land – peasant inheritances subdivided generation after generation – individual holdings smaller
 - 2. Rapid industrialization – no leadership to bring about needed changes in lives of peasants and workers
 - 3. WWI showed inefficiency in military machine – poor transportation, no supplies, outmoded warfare techniques, soldier morale dropped so low it supported revolution
 - 4. Rasputin
 - a. Tsar Nicholas II weak and ineffective – influenced by wife determined to maintain autocratic govt. – gets help from Grigori Rasputin (Siberian monk, ignorant and evil; had empress under his spell – seemed to be healing her diseased son)
 - b. 1915 – Nicholas II goes to front lines to direct troops – mostly to get away from wife and Rasputin
 - c. Able ministers dismissed (Rasputin becomes unbearably despotic)
 - d. 1916 – group of high nobles assassinate Rasputin – faith in Tsar’s govt. cannot be reestablished
- E. The February (March) Revolution
 - 1. Late Feb.- early March (1917), revolution begins without any real plan or leadership – like 1905
 - 2. Petrograd bread lines, workers strike, demand food
 - a. Nicholas orders Duma home – refused – orders police to fire on strikers – like 1905 – didn’t work this time – soldiers defect to other side
 - b. Duma sets up committee to stay in session – and soldiers set up Soviets (councils) of workers and soldiers deputies
 - c. Ordinary people look to these two groups for leadership
 - d. Soldiers patrol streets, Duma tries to create govt.
 - e. March 15 – Nicholas abdicates – provisional govt. begins (300 years of Romanov rule is over)
 - 3. Provisional govt. weak due to difficult circumstances

4. Alexander Kerensky – leader – belonged to Social Revolutionary Party – conservative member – not in tune with the majority
 - a. Wanted orderly western style govt. – civil liberties and voting rights – too ideal
 - b. Peasants and workers wanted peace, worker control of factories, peasant control of land – listened more and more to Petrograd Soviet (Socialist)
 - c. New govt. can't win wide support – Kerensky kept Russia in war
5. April 1917 – Germans help smuggle Lenin into Russia (from exile in Switzerland) – he begins agitating for communism (Germans wanted Russia out of war)
 - a. Lenin's "April Theses" opposes the provisional government
 - i. A step backward from the revolutionary ideas
 - ii. Too much like governments of capitalist nations

F. The Bolshevik (October) (communist) Revolution

1. Kerensky govt. loses control of country
2. Bolsheviks have gained control of Petrograd Soviet
3. Leading Bolsheviks
 - a. Lenin – powerful personality, self assurance, knows way to success, intolerant of opposition – undisputed chief – Revisionist socialist
 - i. Wanted to seize power at once – not wait for bourgeois period espoused by Marx – Justified dictatorship as a transition to dictatorship of the Proletariat
 - ii. Promises "peace, land, and bread" and a quick withdrawal from the war – more appealing to masses than Kerensky's talk of civil rights and votes (also "Worker Control of production" and "all power to the Soviets")
 - b. Trotsky – the strategist who works out details of govt. seizure – highly disciplined
4. (Oct. 24-25) factory militia (Red Guards) and army units of Bolsheviks seize Winter Palace in Petrograd (and other strong places)
5. Next day Lenin declared master of new all-Russian Congress of Soviets
6. Mensheviks and Social Revolutionaries walk out in protest
7. Nov. 7 – world's first communist govt. takes office – attempted since 1848 – France, Germany, Italy
8. Within 3 weeks Bolsheviks get precarious grip on Russia

G. Civil War

1. Mar. 1918 – Russia withdraws from WWI – treaty of Brest-Litovsk
 - a. Lost much land and population (Poland, Finland, Baltic States, Ukraine, areas in Caucasus = 62M people)
 - b. Petrograd too close to foreign border – capital moved to Moscow (1918)
2. Bolsheviks opposed within Russia – govt. seized – not country
 - a. White armies oppose Red Communists
 - b. Many Russians opposed to Bolsheviks – included non-Russians, aristocracy, army officers, clergy, factory owners, landlords, (truly a proletariat revolution)
 - c. Full scale civil war erupts
 - d. Tsar Nicholas and family killed – July 1918
 - e. Red terror made old Jacobin terror of Fr. Rev. look like a Sunday School party
3. Cheka (secret police) formed to become KGB – reign of terror – many killed if not supportive of Bolsheviks

4. Trotsky organizes Red army – fires them with zeal – win or die by 1921 – white armies defeated
 - a. Too many different groups – poorly organized
5. Almost all people above peasants or workers had been killed, jailed, exiled, fled – no place for them in the new Russia – had been sacrificed to Bolshevik Revolution (war communism)
6. Did away with any institution they couldn't control (set standard for 20th century totalitarian state)
 - a. Constitutional convention
 - b. Abolished Zemstvos, destroyed tsarist army
 - c. Anti-religion
 - d. Put education in hands of govt.
7. Retained support of Marxist followers
 - a. Allowed peasants to seize large estates (like great fear) – land would eventually be taken away
 - b. Abolished class privileges (citizen – comrade)
 - c. Created a constitution for workers – peasant soviets – real power with leaders
8. Created the true Marxist Socialist state – communist becomes name of their political party

IV. *Last Year of the War - 1918*

- A. With Russia out, Germany makes one last attempt to win on western front
 1. Lose due to fresh American troops
- B. Germany suffers a mini revolution like Russia
 1. Force Kaiser Wilhelm II to abdicate – set up a republic
 2. Germans sue for peace – armistice – Nov. 11, 1918 (11th hour, etc.)

V. *Revolutionary changes in Germany and Austria*

- A. Germany
 1. Communists led by Karl Liebnecht and Rosa Luxemburg attempt overthrow of German Republic
 - a. Fails – leaders brutally murdered
 2. Creates an overpowering fear of communism in Germany
 - a. The fear will be manipulated by Adolph Hitler
- B. Austria
 1. Empire dissolves – Franz Joseph abdicates
 - a. New nations appear – Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia
 - b. Other areas join
 - i. Italy, Poland, Romania

VI. The Peace Settlement (Paris Peace Conference)

- A. *The Treaty of Versailles*
 1. Key decision makers – “Big Four”
 - a. Woodrow Wilson – U.S.
 - b. Georges Clemenceau – France
 - c. Lloyd George – Britain
 - d. Vitorio Orlando - Italy
 2. Factors influencing the kind of peace to be made
 - a. Hope for better world based on Woodrow Wilson's 14 points
 - i. Denounced secret treaties, interference with freedom of the seas, high tariffs, large armaments – all these lead to war

- ii. Wanted self-determination for all nations – a war for democracy – rulers law vs. rule of law
 - iii. Wanted a league of nations to secure peace
 - a. hoped WWI would be the last war *ever*
 - b. Attitudes of European allies (France & Britain) toward Germany
 - i. People bitter – blamed Germany for causing all the terrible destruction
 - ii. Insist Germans must be punished
 - c. Earlier wartime agreements among allied govts.
 - i. Bound by secret promises written into wartime treaties with each other – winners had secretly plotted to split Europe between them – exposed by Lenin
 - d. 1918 Paris Peace Conference
 - i. Allies represented – no defeated nations represented – Germany and Russia
3. Terms of peace
- a. Germany deprived of important territory
 - i. Alsace-Lorraine – France and coal-producing area of Saar Valley
 - ii. Polish Corridor and upper Silesia to Poland (split away E. Prussia)
 - iii. Lost all colonies to League of Nations. Administered by Allied countries
 - b. Heavy financial burden
 - i. Germany responsible for all war damage
 - ii. No exact amount – became known as “War Guilt Clause”
 - c. Germany forbidden to have military, navy, manufacture weapons, or maintain an army
4. Signed in Hall of Mirrors at Versailles Palace –
- a. déjà vu – creation of the German Empire in 1871
5. Germans detest treaty provisions – can do nothing about it

VII. Other Peace Treaties

- A. Russia loses areas – Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania become independent – many new nation-states emerge in central and eastern Europe
- B. Ottoman Empire gone
 - 1. Lebanon, Syria controlled by France
 - 2. Iraq, Palestine controlled by Britain
- C. U.S. rejects entry into League of Nations – becomes isolationist
- D. No one happy – WWII breaks out within 20 years