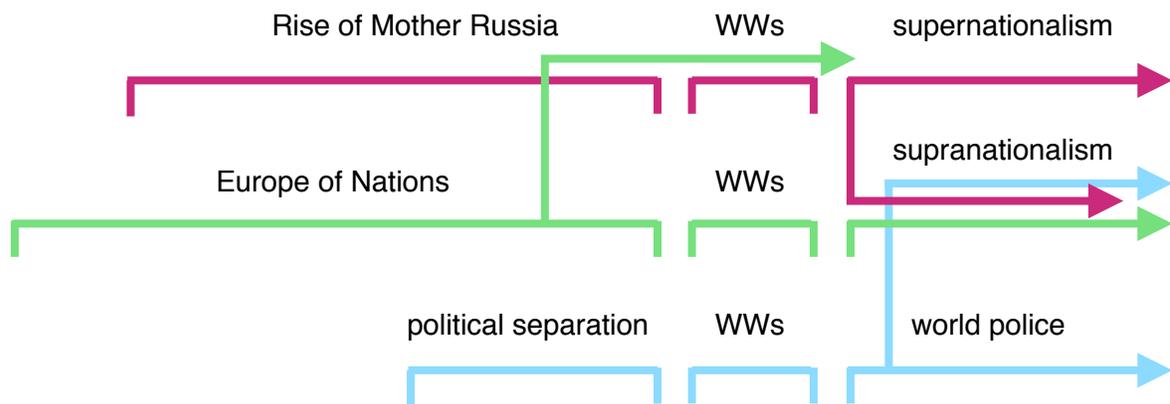


## **VI. The World Wars**

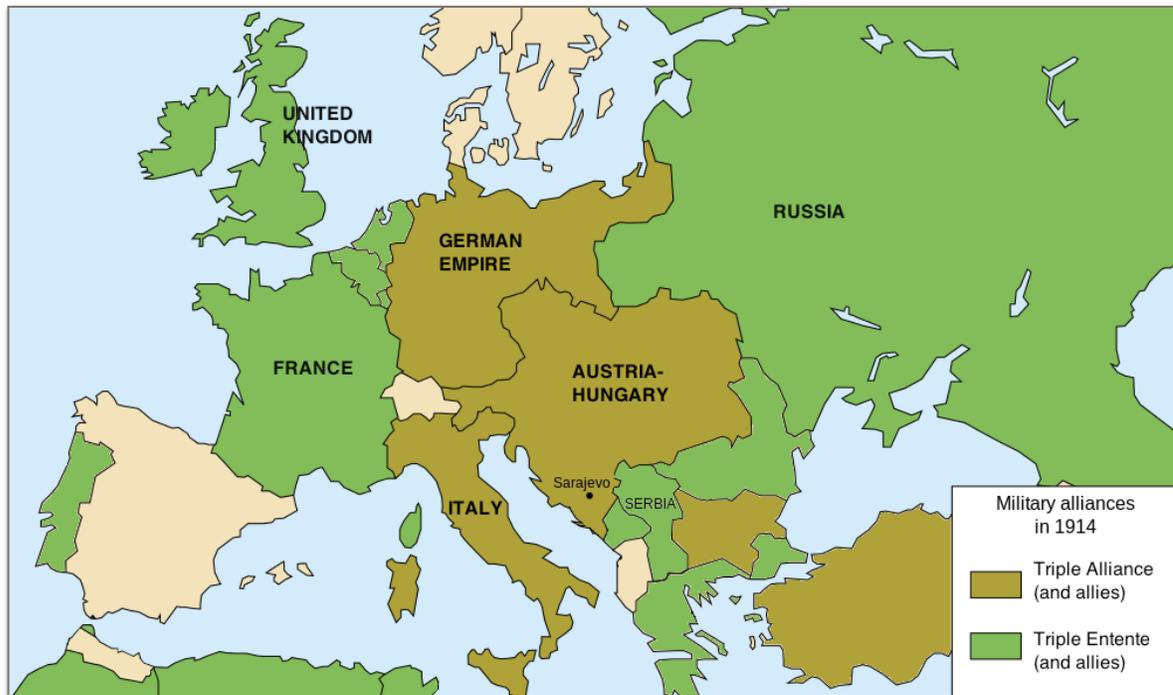
### A. The Most Important Chapter of History

1. The History of the world, and especially the history of Europe, Russia, and America (three of the five cardinal cultures) pivots on the world wars. Each culture changes direction after the world wars and becomes something else.



### B. World War I (1914-19)

1. World War I (1914-19) is the first of the two wars caused mainly by supernationalist Germany.
2. The goal of German leaders after being conquered by Napoleon was to create a powerful, unified German Empire, and they had achieved that goal by 1914 (see map on next page).
3. That Germany did not include Austria. The Austrians became partners with their neighbors the Hungarians, and created a strange empire called “Austria-Hungary,” or the Austro-Hungarian Empire.
4. Austria was afraid of Russia, because both Austria and Russia wanted to conquer southeastern Europe. That part of Europe was populated by Slavs, and Russia wanted to rule them.
5. The Slavs wanted their own countries, and in June of 1914, a Slav murdered the Archduke of Austria, Franz Ferdinand. This was the “spark” that started the war.
6. Austria-Hungary intended to invade Serbia (the main country of Slavs, also on the map on the next page), but Russia warned Austria that it would defend the Slavs.
7. When Austria checked with Germany about their alliance, Germany told Austria that it would support Austria in a war against Russia. Soon Germany declared war on Russia.
8. Germany then invaded all its neighbors, Britain declared war on Germany, and soon most of the world was at war.



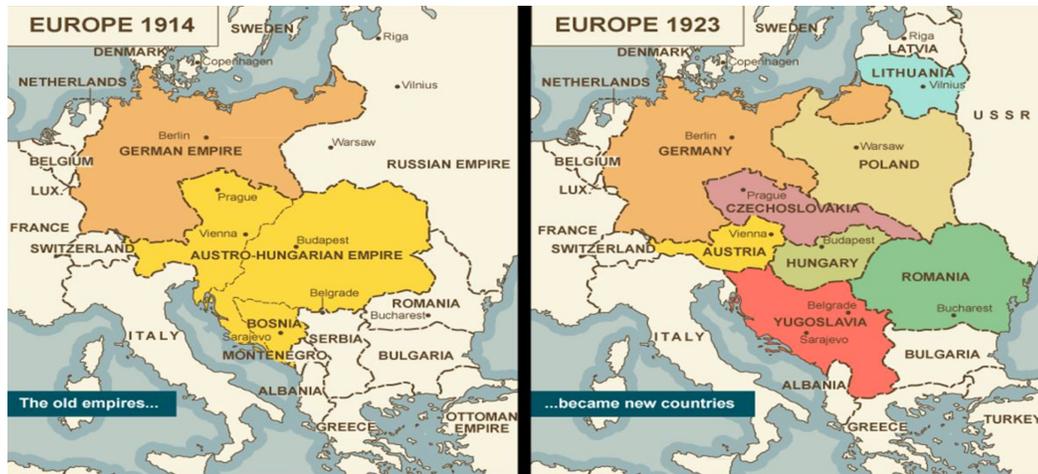
The German Empire established in response to Napoleon’s conquest of Germany, was the driving force behind the “Triple Alliance” in the center of Europe, which is responsible for initiating **World War I (1914-19)**. The war was triggered by the assassination of Austrian Archduke Franz Ferdinand in Sarajevo.

### C. American Intervention

1. Americans greatly valued their political separation. They were so relieved not to be involved in the war that they re-elected the popular president Woodrow Wilson on a platform entitled “He kept us out of war!”
2. But then Wilson said that America should use its strength to make the world a better place. He wanted it to make the world “safe for democracy.”
4. Although Americans were not all convinced that was a good idea, Woodrow Wilson was the president, and he was able to win approval for the idea. Starting in 1917, over two *million* American men were sent to fight in a European war.
5. The positive outcome of this intervention was that Germany and Austria were defeated and the war was brought to an end.

### D. A New Concept for Peace

1. Following World War I, Europe’s leaders said that “imperialism” was to blame. If one looks at a map of Europe before WWI, it’s easy to see how they might think that because it was mainly empires that started it (see map next page):



The German Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Russian Empire were the three empires most responsible for starting the war. Not surprisingly, “imperialism” was blamed for the war, with Germany receiving the bulk of the blame.

2. These same leaders still believed in nationalism, so they tried to reject empires while embracing nations. They also wanted to create a parliament of nations where they could discuss their disputes in a civilized way and wars could be avoided.
3. This idea of political *interconnection* combined with nationalism is known as “internationalism.”
4. To encourage political interconnection, a “League of Nations” was created in **1920**.

#### E. Russia Between The Wars: The Russian Revolution (1917) and Rise of Communism

1. Ever since Peter the Great, Russia wanted to catch up to Europe. By World War I, it still had not achieved that aim.
2. A Russian man named Vladimir Lenin believed he had the answer. He called it “communism.”
  - a) Communism is based on Marxism, which was created by Karl Marx.
  - b) Karl Marx believed that people in advanced societies would live according to the rule: “From each according to his ability, to each according to his need.”
  - c) The problem for Lenin was that although he was a Marxist (a follower of Marx), he was impatient to bring progress to Russia. He didn’t want to wait for Russia to become advanced. He wanted to make Russia advanced right away. That’s why he advocated “communism,” where he could order everyone to create progress.
3. In 1917 Lenin and his supporters took charge of Russia in the Russian Revolution.

#### F. Germany after WWI

1. Germany was forced to accept the blame for starting WWI and the punishments selected by the winners by the Treaty of Versailles of 1919 that officially ended the war.
2. Germany was not allowed to become a “nation” by joining with Austria (where the people all spoke German).
3. It seemed like Germany was going to accept peace when it joined the League of Nations, however, the people refused to accept responsibility for having started WWI and they were angry about the Treaty of Versailles.

#### E. Rise of Hitler and the Nazis

1. The German people believed that not only were they not guilty of doing anything wrong by starting World War I, but they believed that they had not really lost. Instead, it was common for Germans believe that the country had been betrayed. (This is known as the “back stab legend” in German history.)
2. A man named Adolf Hitler wrote a book entitled *Mein Kampf* in which he claimed that it was a people known as the Jews, who were living inside Germany, who were responsible for Germany's defeat and its continuing weakness. (This was a complete lie.)
3. Hitler promised the Germans that he could make the changes necessary to make Germany a great country again, and he became the Chancellor of Germany (the leader of the government) in 1933.

#### G. Meanwhile in America

1. 117,000 Americans died in World War I. It was profound shock, and Americans didn't want to be the world police power yet.
2. In the **1920** presidential election, Americans chose Warring Harding, who offered them a “return to normalcy”—which meant a return to the “normal” policy of political separation.
3. As Hitler rose to power in Germany, and countries like Italy and Japan (both eventual allies of Nazi Germany) began to attack their neighbors and others, Americans were worried about a new war, so they passed a series of “Neutrality Acts,” hoping not to get dragged into another terrible war.