World War I (Part I)

I. Outbreak
II. Primary Battle Fronts
III. Naval War
IV Air War

No lectures April 8th & 10th.

Catyclismic event. 1st war to span the globe. Reshapes global power structure to & also the way people thought. Great industrial war. Social, industrial & economic aspects of war. Balkans a bone of contention between great powers. June 28th, 1914. Anniversary of Serb war & assination of Arch Duke Ferdinand in Bosnian capital of ~~Sarejeva~~ Sarajevo. Overseas military exercises - raised tensions. Black Hand - terrorist group. Princip - sat in bar & shot Arch Duke & Wife while they were turning their car around. Ignition point for WW I. Austria now has a pretext to attack Serbs. Serbs accept most of Austrias ultimatium. July 1914. Austria declares war on Serbia. Still a local conflict.

Russia goes to Defense of Serbia. Entaggling alliances. Germany supports Austria. Wanted to see Serbs defeated so German interests in Balkans could prevail. Railroad to ~~Bag~~ Baghdad. Russians have huge army that took a long time to mobilize. German plan, # von Schlieffen, called for a rapid victory against France so troops could then move east to confront Russians.

Germans ~~they~~ tried to call off war with Russia, Tsar was weak & could not back down. Germans attack Belgium. Kaiser was worried but buckled under weight of his military. Belgium neutral & important to Britian. Big risk. Kaiser thinks British would not enter war. & Isolation & his relative. Beginning Aug. 1914 - plan is enacted. Belgiums ~~rest~~ resist & Britian enters war. Plan runs into problems. "Fog of war" interscedes. Soldiers move slowly but outruns their supply lines. Belgiums had several large Fortifications. Slows German timetable. Behind schedule, Germans arrive at the River Marne. French mobilize & defend Marne. Prevented German crossing. French have airplanes & balloons for reconnaissance. Germans dig trenches - seen as momentary stalemate. Horrific long term struggle. Little movement & huge cost for years on end. Trenches were wet, cold, terrible environment. Trench Foot & Disease prevalent. Each side tried to break out. Trenches got deeper & more Fortified. Hell & extreme misery.

No mans land- ½ to ⅓ mile wide. Littered with corpses - human & animal. Lots of barb wire. 1915 poison gas used. Germans introduced in at battle of Ypres. Primitive delivery system & weak concentrations. Adds to terror. Was never a break through. All agreed not to use gas again- Geneva convention in 1930's.

Machine guns- Defensive weapon. Heavy & water cooled. Main reason why assaults did not work. Somme - river where British lost 50,000 troops in a few hours. Disillusionment lead to troop mutinys. esp French. British dealt with low morale with more rum rations. Also tried to use soccer to lead soldiers across no mans land. Suffering leads to comraderi of enemy soldiers. Later goes to survival mode. Soldiers at the front for years. Shellshock & insanity. Some soldiers shot themselves but ended up in prison.

Sig. battles fought over forts- Verdun in France. Germans layed siege to Verdun - & more lives lost here. Museum there today. Still nothing grows there. Lots of unexploded shells. Symbol of great loss. Inspiration for Maginot line of WWII.

Campaign in east. Russians poorly lead & equipped. Germans defeat Russians at Tannenberg & Masuria lakes. Lure Russians into bogs & lakes. Hindenberg & Ludendorff- German generals against Russians. Stalemate forms on Eastern Front. German two front war that Bismark sought to avoid.

Southern Front- Austria fights Serbs & Italy. 1915- Italians fight on side of Allies. Germans could not depend upon Austria to fight Russians.

Read Farewell to Arms by Hemingway to understand Italian Front. Graphic descriptions of fighting. Conflict spread to Middle East. Turks allied with Central Powers. British conscripted troops from colonies, Australia, New Zealand, India, Nepal, etc.

1915- Panic sets in - how do we end this war with victory?

Gallipoli - Naval battle. Dardenelles - controlled by Turks. British want to attack Austria & Germany. Churchill underestimated Turkish resistance via mines & large guns. Churchill orders land invasion. Could not get past the beach. Pinned down for months until withdrawn in 1916. Lots of trenches.