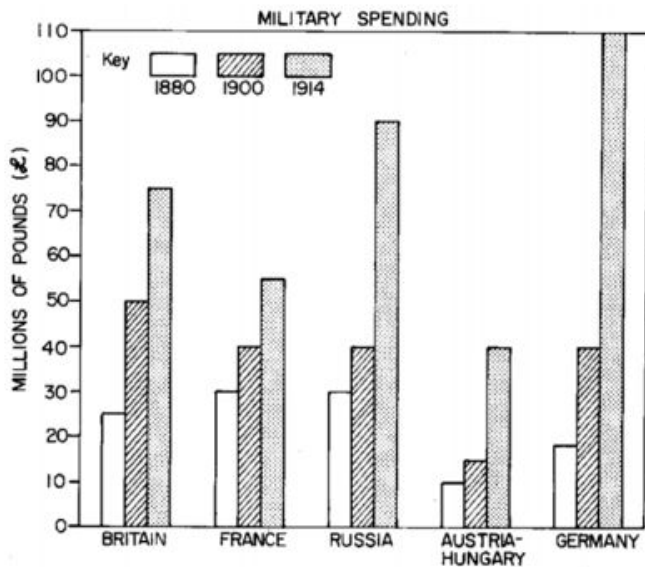


Militarism

Militarism is the belief that a country should have a strong military capability and be prepared to use it aggressively to defend or promote its interests. Leading up to World War I, imperial countries in Europe were strong proponents of militarism. They spent more and more money on military technology, employing more troops, and training their soldiers. They found that to gain colonies it helped to be militarily superior to the people they colonized and the other industrialized countries they were competing with. As tensions in Europe increased leading up to 1914, European countries raised and prepared large armies, navies, and air forces to protect their homelands.



German planes used in WWI.

Source: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:AlbatDIII.jpg>



A battleship squadron of the German High Seas Fleet; the far right vessel is a member of the *Kaiser class*.1917. Source:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Hochseeflotte_2.jpg

Imperialism

European countries competed with each other all over the world in the 1800s and early 1900s. They fought one another at sea and used treaty negotiations to claim colonies and spheres of influence in Africa and Asia. The search for raw materials to fuel industry and markets to buy goods in far-flung corners of the world led to increased tension in Europe.

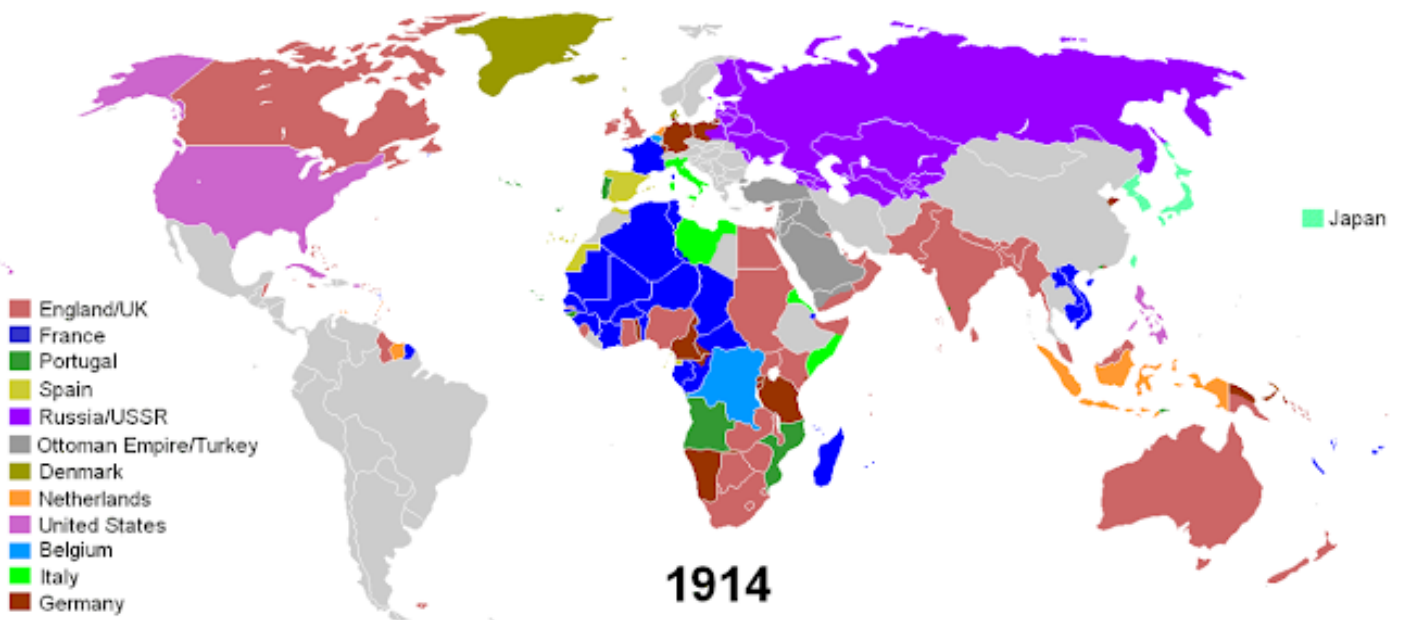
Image to the right:

A French political cartoon from 1898. "China -- the cake of kings and... of emperors" (a French pun on **king cake** and kings and emperors wishing to "consume" China). A pastry represents "Chine" (French for China) and is being divided between caricatures of Queen Victoria of the United Kingdom, William II of Germany (who is squabbling with Queen Victoria over a borderland piece, while thrusting a knife into the pie to signify aggressive German intentions), Nicholas II of Russia, who is eyeing a particular piece, the French Marianne (who is diplomatically shown as not participating in the carving, and is depicted as close to Nicholas II, as a reminder of the Franco-Russian Alliance), and a samurai representing Japan, carefully contemplating which pieces to take. A stereotypical Qing official throws up his hands to try and stop them, but is powerless. It is meant to be a figurative representation of the Imperialist tendencies of these nations towards China during the 1890s.

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:China_imperialism_cartoon.jpg



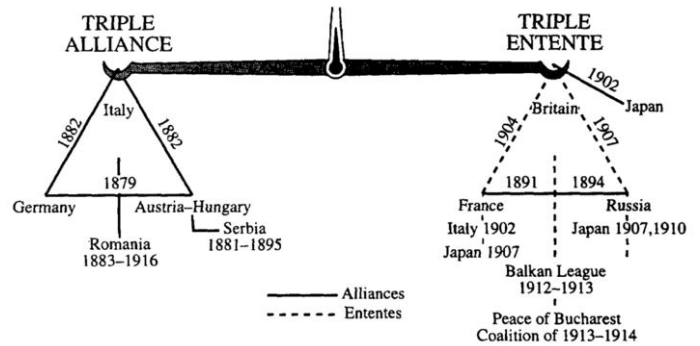
Colonial Holdings in 1914



Source: <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/8/89/Colonisation2.gif>

Alliances

To increase their own nations' security, European powers signed treaties with one another forming alliances. Alliances are agreements between nations stating that each country will assist the other if they are attacked. On the verge of World War I, there were two large alliances. One alliance was called the Triple Entente (French for alliance), sometimes called the "Allied Powers" and it consisted of the United Kingdom (Great Britain), France, and Russia. In addition, Russia was allied with some Slavic countries in the area of Europe known as the Balkans including Serbia. The other was called the Triple Alliance and is sometimes referred to as the "Central Powers" these included Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy. As the war continued, the Ottoman Empire joined this group and Italy left this alliance to join the other Triple Entente.



Map of military alliances of Europe in 1914. (English).

Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_Europe_alliances_1914-en.svg

Nationalism

In the 1700s and 1800s, nationalism brought revolution and unification to Europe. Groups of people with common languages, histories, and cultures like the Italians and Germans fought to create their own countries out of older empires. Leading up to the World War I, people in Europe started to define themselves based on their nation and in opposition to others. Pride in one's country was at an all time high. Some ethnic groups that wanted to unify but were a part of the few empires left in Europe, like the Austrian Hungarian Empire and the Ottoman Empire, created tension by declaring their desire to rule themselves.



British poster encouraging young men to enlist in the army to defend their country.

Source: Fairchild Memorial Gallery, Lauinger Library, Georgetown University. NYS Global History Regents Exam.



German soldiers being cheered in Lubeck during their advance to the front lines in 1914 during World War I. The concept of the "Spirit of 1914" by Johann Plenge identified the outbreak of war as forging national solidarity of Germans.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:IR_L%C3%BCheck_033_-_EB.jpg