WHY WORLD WAR I?

Lee W. Eysturlid, PhD, NBCT
Bryant Gumbel: "What is the Internet?"

What is ".com"?

1994
Is World War I inevitable?

Can only understand 1914 by NOT looking at it from 1915-18.

Suspend all your previous conclusions.

THE ASSASSINATION OF FRANZ FERDINAND, JUNE 1914
Understand:
1. The political situation of 1911-1914.
3. The military and technological realities of 1914.
4. The strategic plans of 1914.
THE CONTRIBUTING FACTORS
STACKING THE DECK?

- Franco-Prussian War, 1871
- Russo-Japanese War, 1905
- First Moroccan Crisis, 1905-06
- German Naval Build-up
- Second Moroccan Crisis, 1911
- Russian “Great Military Programme,” 1912
- Balkan Wars, 1912-1913
ENTENTE VS CENTRAL POWERS

Original
- France*
- Russia
- Great Britain*
- Serbia
- Belgium*

Later
- Italy*
- Romania
- Japan*
- US*

Original
- Germany*
- Austria-Hungary* (Habsburg Monarchy)

Later
- Ottoman Empire (1914)
- Bulgaria
ETHNIC REALITIES?
The SPD, or the German Socialist Party, the first national Party to have open Marxist influence, votes YES! for war in 1914,
NATIONALISM

- First real “nationalist” conflict.
- The romantic, often invented notion of “nation”
- The triumph of “ethnic nationalism over “civic” far more virulent.
VON MOLTKE AND JOFFRE

BORN 1848, 66 IN 1914

BORN 1852, 62 IN 1914
FRENCH “75” – AVAILABLE 1896
Range, 7,440 yards (@ 4 miles)
Shrapnel shell (Now HE and AP)
A WAR OF HEAVY ARTILLERY...
A WAR OF TRAINS...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>resources</th>
<th>Central Powers</th>
<th>Allied Powers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>population (in millions)</td>
<td>115.2</td>
<td>265.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>steel production (in millions of metric tons)</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>army divisions available for mobilization in August 1914</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modern battleships</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RAILROADS

European Rail Network, Major Lines, 1914
WAR PLANS

Concentration Areas and Plans of Attack for European Armies, 1914

- Allies
- Central Powers
- Neutrals
TROOPS IN STANDING ARMIES

STANDING ARMIES OF MAJOR WWI COMBATANTS, 1912-1914
NORTHWEST EUROPE, 1914
WESTERN FRONT, 1914
Schlieffen Plan of 1905 and
Pesch Plan XVII
ELYASIONS IN METERS
0 25 50 75
Scale Line for German Movement
Front Line Areas

LEGEND

In event of German violation of
Belgian neutrality, 7th Army was to
move to the north and Fourth Army
was to move at the Third Army.

RIGHT WING, First and
Second Armies

LEFT WING, Seventh
Armies

SECOND WING, (960,000)

THIRD WING, (460,000)

FIRST WING, (1,290,000)

COUNTERPART, (1,290,000)

CENTRAL FORCE, (1,290,000)

GUNLIR, Fourth and Fifth Armies

RIGHT WING, First and
Second Armies

LEFT WING, Seventh
Armies

GERMAN PLANNING
RAIL DEPLOYMENT OF FORCES WEST, FIRST...
DEPENDS ON GUNS AND...
MARCHING...
FRENCH PLAN, PLAN XVII

NORTHWEST EUROPE, 1914
WESTERN FRONT, 1914
Schlieffen Plan of 1900 and
French Plan XVII

LEGEND
- Thick Line: For German Movement
- Thin Line: For German Movement

In event of German violation of
Belgian neutral, Fifth Army was to
move to southwest and Fourth Army
was to move left of the Third Army.
Artillery...
RUSSIAN PLAN...

[Map of East Prussia, 1914: Tannenberg Campaign. Situation 23 August and Movements Since 17 August 1914.]

**Key Points**
- Konigsberg garrison reoccupied field works after Battle of Stettin and Gumbinnen.
- Samsonov's intended withdrawal, 29 Aug.

**Legend**
- Eighteenth Hindenburg
- First Army
- Second Army
- Tannenberg Campaign
- Situation 23 August and Movements Since 17 August 1914
MODEST ARTILLERY
MORE RUSSIANS...
A BRITISH PLAN?

- Naval Race great concern for British security
- Home Fleet #1 force.
- Army relatively tiny
- Support French, blockade Germans.
BRITISH FLEET... (1911)
BLOCKADE, BUT FEAR OF...
SMS HELGOLAND
AND TO ASSIST THE FRENCH
AE-1, STILL FIGURING THEM OUT...
The Gun, Machine, Vickers .303in Mark 1 on the Mount, Tripod, Mark 4B.
GERMAN USE, OFFENSIVE OR DEFENSE?
MOBILITY WHEN THE TRACKS END...
KURDISH LIGHT CAVALRY, 1914
CONCLUSIONS

And Bibliography
BEING EMPATHETIC

- Remembering that 1914 is NOT 1916.
- Military and Political Leaders products of their time.
- Teaching forward through time means not assuming outcomes.
- New forces, political and technological.
- Re-think World War I as more groping in the dark for solutions.

GREAT COLLECTION OF ESSAYS
Series of essays explaining the reasons for the strategies and tactics of the major combatants. First essay on economic positions.
BIBLIOGRAPHY