

World war 1 essays example

[Countries](#), [England](#)



The First World War (World War 1), for a long time, been viewed as a decisive turning point in the European and world history. Over the years, a great deal of knowledge has been made available with regards to the origins, course and consequences that have deepened our understanding about the First World War. A vast amount of literature is available that has enabled us appreciate the war itself, its causes and consequences. This essay would attempt to discuss the First World War in terms of its origin, the course it took and the effects based on evidence found in the book “ The First World War: A Brief History with Documents” by Susan R. Grayzel.

Long before the start of the First World War, the world was being altered with many nations coming into being. Across Europe, the situation was similar with several countries realizing the new political power. The new nations in Europe completely changed the political dynamic of the continent.

Nationalism was a wide growing phenomenon among many countries throughout the nineteenth century. The creations of armies through mass conscriptions enabled people to fight for their countries and defend them against the perceived enemies. Countries fought not only for territorial boundaries and wealth, but also for military supremacy. Wars such as the Crimean war (1853-1856) and the Franco-Austrian war (1859) fuelled the conditions for the war. The further scramble and partitioning of Africa heightened the rivalries between the European nations. There was a growing sense of nationalism among the people of different nations.

Before the war a number of individuals voiced their opinions about the war. Bertha Von Suttner, in her novel Lay Down your Arms, supported the idea of peace rather than war. Filippo Thomas Marinetti in his Manifesto of Futurism,

hailed the prospect of the war as an opportunity to awaken the sleeping manhood of the continent. Concepts in this manifesto portrayed his support of the war. An example is “ we intend to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness” (Grayzel 50), which illustrated his support for the war. Marinetti was a proponent of the incoming war since it offered a way of correcting the social ills. H. G Wells, in his book *The War in the Air* anticipated the horrors of this new war. The war that broke out six years later used airpower just as Wells had envisaged in his book. Wells wrote, “ The special peculiarities of aerial warfare were of such a nature to trend” (Grayzel 48). Here, Wells noted how the impending war was going to be fought using aerial strikes.

The war began in the summer of 1914 with large number of armies spread all over the boundaries across Europe. The war affected people from every corner of the earth and every social class. Crowds assembled in various cities and cheered as it began. Politicians also voiced their opinions in support of the war. Generally, the war was met with great enthusiasm by individual in different nations. Troops from Britain, France and Germany finally met in August 1914 and quickly realized that this was a different form of war given that it was being fought with sophisticated weapons. During the war a number of troops experienced a shortage of ammunition as they advanced the western front. The question of financing the war became evident given that the war was too expensive for many countries. It was necessary to provide adequate shells and military equipment to ensure success in the war. The scope of the war spread to a number of countries with the United States, a neutral power, benefiting economically from the

need of materials by British and France. The war waged on with the Central Powers falling into a political crisis and ultimately losing out.

A number of authors and individuals documented the course of the war and voiced their opinions on the course the war had taken. The Russian poet, Anna Akhmatova, feared for the outset of the war and believed that the war would take a toll on many lives and lead to suffering. In her poem, she wrote “ Horrible times are near” “ Soon we’ll be crowded with fresh graves” (Grayzel 56). Akhmatova was a tough opponent of the impending war. Some poets such as Rupert Brooke offered their support for the war. In his piece “ Peace,” he embraced the war and remarked how it would provide opportunities for the young men. He wrote “ Now God be thanked, who has matched us at this hour” (Grayzel 54). Several posters offered support for the war such as the British war recruitment poster Women of Britain Say Go! (1915)and German war bond poster Help us Triumph (1917). The soldiers who fought the war also communicated with family members and fellow soldiers through letters.

The First World War resulted in many deaths of civilians and military officers alike. It also resulted in tremendous material and property damage across different states. The treaty of Versailles signed in the year June 28th 1919 finally put an end to the First World War. The treaty defined the post-war era (Grayzel 30). A series of agreements also saw the reorganization of the Middle East. The establishment of the League of Nations offered means of disarmament, territorial dispute resolution and supervision of post-war imperialism that could result in conflicts among nations. Member countries had to commit to ensure the promotion of peace. The war affected nations

economically and culturally as these were the main fronts by which the war was fought. Several key authors documented the cultural effects of the war and the impacts it had on different people. The author Erich Maria Remarque's novel "All Quiet on the Western Front" details the experiences of a young German soldier and his comrades. It indicated the generations that came after the war. The novelist Evadne Price responded to Remarque's novel with "Not So Quiet" which focused on the rising feminist movement. Vera Brittain's memoir Testament of Youth (1933) showed the effects of war from a realist perspective.

Works Cited

Grayzel, Susan R. The First World War: A Brief History with Documents. , 2013. Print.