

History of the crisis in the balkans history essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

\n \t

1. [II. THE ARM RACE](#) \n \t
2. [Naval Race](#) \n \t
3. [III. THE CRISIS IN THE BALKANS](#) \n \t
4. [The Moroccan crisis](#) \n \t
5. [Second Balkan Crisis](#) \n \t
6. [IV. Death of Arch Duke Ferdinand](#) \n \t
7. [Austria's Ultimatum](#) \n \t
8. [V. Conclusion](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

In late June 1914, Archduke Ferdinand of Austria was assassinated by a Serbian nationalist in Sarajevo, Bosnia. An intensification of threats and conscription orders followed the incident, leading by mid-August to the eruption of World War I, which pitted Germany, Austria Hungary and the Ottoman empire the Central Powers against Great Britain, France, Russia, Italy and Japan the Allied Powers which The United States eventually joined in 1917. The four years of the Great War saw unparalleled levels of bloodbath and destruction, thanks to grueling trench warfare and the institution of modern weaponry such as machine guns, tanks and chemical weapons. By the time World War I ended in the defeat of the Central Powers in November 1918 more than 9 million combatants had been killed and 21 million more was wounded. The treaty of Versailles, signed in 1919, determined post war borders from Europe to the Middle East, creating the League of Nations as a global peace organization and reprimanded Germany

<https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-crisis-in-the-balkans-history-essay/>

for its aggression with reparations and the loss of territory. Dreadfully, the uncertainty caused by World War I would help make possible the rise of the Nazi leader Adolf Hitler and would only two decades later, lead to a second demoralizing international conflict known as World War II.

World War I is significant because of many reasons. First off, it was the First guerilla trench fair war known to man with new modern technology people had access to the most destructive weapons ever made e. g. the machine gun. It was also the First World War known to man and it was the most devastating war at the time with the upbringing technology. There have been many opinions from many different historians and many different views on the precursors that led to the onset of World War I. I believe that it was the rise nationalism that led to the onset of World War I from the years of 1800-1914. I believe that nationalism in Europe led to the illustrious Arm Race of Europe which created tension between European countries which led to my second factor the crises in the Balkans where nationalism was at its strongest because of the Serbs lust of independence and finally The death of the heir to the Austrian Hungarian throne Archduke Francis Ferdinand by a Serbian nationalist secret society known as the Black Hands.

II. THE ARM RACE

After 1871, the war atmosphere produced by the secret unions led to an artilleries race among the powers. The race was particularly serious between 1900 and 1914 which was one of the reasons that the arms race was consider as a precursor in World War I, as the international condition became much inferior than before. There was a major rise in the army and naval approximations of the European powers in these years. All the Continental

<https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-crisis-in-the-balkans-history-essay/>

European powers had accepted the mobilization system since 1870. France had mobilized since the Revolutionary Wars, Austria Hungary since 1868, Germany since 1870, Italy since 1873 and Russia since 1874. Only Britain didn't have conscription. After 1890, the declining political relations amongst the powers augmented their military development programs. Since 1913 to July 1914, Germany amplified her standing forces by 170, 000 men. France elongated her period of military provision from two to three years. Russia extended her period of service from three to three and a half years. Britain did not familiarize mobilization but had prepared her armed forces for both European excursion and for home defenses. In general, all the powers increased their frameworks of arms, produced more contemporary weapons of war and manufactured more premeditated railways.

Naval Race

Other than the land race there was also a naval race. Britain and Germany were the principal contenders at sea. Under Admiral Tirpitz, State Secretary of the Imperial Naval Bureau from 1897, a long term naval building program began. The German Navy Law of 1898 increased the German war ships from nine cruisers to twelve. In 1900 Germany passed a Navy act or law which doubled the German armada. In the while, Britain made her first Dreadnought which meant fear nothing. Dreadnoughts were large, firm and heavily armed battleships with twelve inch guns. They set a new standard in naval weaponries and rendered all previous battleships obsolete. The naval race became extreme. Between 1909 and 1911 Germany produced nine Dreadnoughts while Britain built 18 Dreadnoughts. In 1913, Germany extended the Kiel Canal to allow the easy passage of her Dreadnoughts from

the Baltic to the North Sea while Britain built multiple new naval bases for the Dreadnoughts in northern Scotland.

Both historians David G. Herrmann and David Stevenson break new ground by arguing that army considerations combined with international crises was the factor that pushed Europe into war in 1914. In contrast, historian Martin Gilbert pays little attention to military competition as he advocates the standard view that mainly the naval arms race brought upon the conflicts that foreshadowed the later war. I believe that both the armies and naval forces played equal significant roles in being the precursors that led to the onset of World War I and that the arm race began as an act of nationalism amongst the different countries to see who had the strongest army in Europe.

The arms race was one of the most significant precursors that led to the onset of the World War. The nationalism with European countries brought most competitions of arms, European countries wanted to see who was the most powerful and dominating country in Europe. The effect of the Arm race was the tension and nationalism that it brought upon Europeans countries during the 19th century and this rise of nationalism led to the crises of the Balkans a key precursor in the onset of World War I.

III. THE CRISIS IN THE BALKANS

The rise of nationalism in the nineteenth century had made the Balkan states hungry for independence. The Ottoman Empire and the other European countries had many interest in the area, it had clear access through the Mediterranean for ships and a piece of territory called Bosnia. Russia

promoted itself as the defender of the Slavic people but in truth they wanted to gain control of Constantinople so they could have the right to pass their war ships through the Bosphorus, so came the Buchlau Agreement. Because these countries had interests the Foreign Minister of Austria, Alois Aehrenthal and Russia, Alexander Izvolsky, met in Buchlau in 1908. At the meeting the foreign ministers called for an international conference and at this conference Russia was supposed to announce she favored Austrian annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina while Austria would announce she supported the welcoming of the Bosphorus to the Russian warships but everything went wrong. Without waiting for an international meeting Austria annexed Bosnia. The problem with this annexation was that Bosnia lie next to Serbia which made the Serbs nervous because they also lay claim to Bosnia. The Russian diplomat Izvolsky discovered he was going to have difficulty seeking a safe passageway through the Bosphorus because France and Great Britain refused to support his plans. Back at home, the public knew nothing about Izvolky's deal all they saw was that the Serbs had been taken advantage of by Austria annexation and what ethnicity were the Serbs? They were Slavic, just like the Russians. The important point is that Austria actions in this Balkan Crisis inflamed Russian and Slavic nationalism against the Austrians. The first Balkan crisis dragged on and on, backed up by the Russian Serbia began to make military preparations and so did Serbia. Europe appeared to be on the brink of a full European war but in March 1909, the German government sent a note to Russia demanding it to abandon support of Serbia and recognize Austria claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina. With Russia being too weak to risk a war against the European powers, she gave in and withdrew her support or Serbia. Tough war was

averted by Russia backing down the Bosnian crisis was proved to be significant, it made Germany and Russia direct opponents and ended all ideas of a German-Russian alliance.

The Moroccan crisis

The Moroccan crisis made 1911 one of the most dangerous years before the World War. The second Moroccan crisis was a reaction caused by the appearance of the German gunboat Panther was deployed as an attempt to scare off the French into paying Germany for certain concessions at the Algeiras conference Panther also sparked hostility with Britain because Germany and Britain because Germany had been naval rivals. The British saw panther's deployment as an attempt to settle and established a German naval base on Morocco's Atlantic coast so the British backed up the French which also reflected the Triple Entente. With war fever running high both France and Germany made military preparations. As warships maneuvered around Morocco, England made it clear that she was ready to support France. Looking at the various threats German agreed to negotiate with France. It now seems that the Germans had come to look upon the establishment of a French protectorate in Morocco as inevitable and the panther was largely released for the purpose of making France to compensate Germany in return for freedom to. In result the Treaty of Fez was put into place in November 1911 which stated that Germany had to acknowledge Frances claims in Morocco in return for some French territory. While the crisis had been adverted besides not being compensated they also had to content their self with swamp-land in the Congo. The Germans wanted revenge.

Second Balkan Crisis

The second Balkan crisis happened from 1912-1913. Back in 1908 Russian Foreign minister Alexander Izvolsky and foreign minister of Austria Alois Aehrenthal got together at Buchlau in what is now the Czech republic in order to come up with a secret plan of supported in which Russia would approve of Austrian annexation over Bosnia in return that Austria would allow a free passage of Russian war ships through Bosphorus. Three years later during Italy war with Tripoli Russia made another attempt to secure passage, and in failure Russia encourage Serbia to form a Balkan league of states against Turkey and Austria. In 1912 Serbia and Austria signed a treaty dividing between each other territory still under Turkish rule forming the Balkan league in which Greece later join. The Balkan league understood that none of the members of the members were supposed to start a war against Turkey without Russia consent yet there was no restraining the zealous nationalism of those states. It was as if Russia had started the motor but she couldn't apply the brakes and it was little Montenegro who got out of control. Goaded on by Turkey's humiliation at the hands of Italy on October 8th 1912, Montenegro declared war on Turkey soon amalgamated with Serbia, Bulgaria, and Greece. That was the beginning of the second Balkan war. After six months of fierce and brilliant fighting the Balkan allies surprised Europe by driving the Turks to the gates of Constantinople and forcing them to sue for peace. With the Balkans state loose Austria supported by Italy insisted that the Balkan state should not take matters with their own hands so they set up the independent state of Albania so as to block access to the sea. Serbia was angered and turned to Russia for help but Russia felt the time was not right to encourage a Serbian attack on Austria. As Serbia was

<https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-crisis-in-the-balkans-history-essay/>

forced to yield to the independent Albania their hatred grew for Austria. Since Serbia had been deprived of what was not Albania and their access to sea she asserted that her new found comrade and prior enemy Bulgaria to hand over a part of Macedonia. Bulgaria refused and launched a sudden attack on Serbia on June 16 1913 marking the beginning of the second Balkan war. Greece and Montenegro came to Serbia's help. Romania, Envious of Bulgaria's growing power and longing for more territory joined in as well. Even Turkey hoping to save something from the ruins started combating Bulgaria. After a month of fighting, Bulgaria was forced to yield. The treaty of Bucharest ended the war in August of 1913. Bulgaria relinquished territories to all her neighbors Turkey got Adrianople while Serbia also obtained compensation for the loss of Albania. No matter what sort of reparation Serbia received, nothing could stop the pugnacious spirit that was building upon her territory. This started among Serbians " The first round is won now we must prepare for the second against Austria". By 1912, the main source of international enmity had shifted to the Balkans. An increased in size of Serbia caused much consternation, especially with the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Which felt threatened.

Historian William H Hagen believes that nationalism within the Balkans played a key role as a precursor to the onset of World War I. Other Historian Dwight Lee believes that it was the triple alliance that's was the key to the onset in World War. I believe that there was no true cause or precursor to the War but that the many nationalistic reasons were intertwined together causing the war.

The Balkan crisis, the first one starting in 1908 because Austria Hungary annexation of Bosnia upsetting nearly every one the crisis was avoided in 1909 by the Treaty of Berlin which officially recognize Austria Hungary annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. The crisis ended but relations between Austria-Hungary on the other hand were permanently damage. For that reason, the First Balkan Crisis contributed to the making of World War I. The second Balkan Crisis was a predecessor to World War I in that Austria became deeply alarmed at Serbia's gains through the wars. Serbia's growth in power also worried Germany, who saw Serbia as a pawn of Russia. Serbia rise in power after the two Balkan wars was so significant that the two powers were willing to risk war following the assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria by a Serbian nationalist group The Black Hand.

IV. Death of Arch Duke Ferdinand

Another nationalistic event that caused World War I in 1914 was the death of Arch Duke Ferdinand. Arch Duke Ferdinand was the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne; he was also an inspector in chief of the Austria Hungarian army. In September of 1913 soon after the Balkan war Arch Duke Ferdinand laid plans for an inspection of two Austrian army cops stationed in Bosnia. He decided to go during spring time accompanied by his wife. The inspection ceremony was conducted in Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia on Saturday June 27 1914. The inspection went as plan, after the inspection Archduke and his wife went on a shopping spree they were not in a hurry for they were not schedule to return to Vienna until 5 a. m. on June 29 which was a Monday. After their shopping spree the only thing left for the Archduke to do was the official parade that was going to happen on Sunday morning June 28. As they

left the summer resort the Archduke with his wife and the governor of Bosnia took an open touring car and headed along the main boulevard to the City Hall, where the official greeting were to be exchanged. While heading toward city hall, suddenly a man stepped toward the touring car and threw a bomb but the unexpected happened. The bomb rolled off the Touring car and into the streets it exploded and seriously injured the passengers of the next car. The Archduke got out of his car and made sure that the injured were taken to a hospital, afterward he got back on his car and continued back on his way to the City Hall. Upon leaving city hall Archduke Ferdinand and his Wife decided to visit the passengers that were injured by the bomb. As they were driving their chauffer took a turn down the wrong street when the chauffer stopped to re steer an assassin stepped forward, pulled out a gun and shot both the Archduke and his wife. This assassin was none other than Gavrilo Princip a Serbian student living in Bosnia that was part of a Serbian nationalist group name the Black Hands but Princip murdering the Archduke was a setup. He was acting on the behalf of the Serbian government. It has since been learned that the Serbian cabinet had receive word of the assassination but had not taken the proper steps to warn the Austrian government. This was one of the most nationalistic precursors that caused the war.

Austria's Ultimatum

On July 23, Austria presented Serbia with a strongly worded letter or ultimatum that stated severe terms that Serbia would be bound to refuse. The ultimatum stated six major things. The first thing that Austria asks was that Serbia would officially condemn anti-Austrian publication and

propaganda. The second thing was that Serbia would suppress anti-Austrian societies. The third ultimatum was to bar anti-Austrian teachers and books from their schools, the fourth was to dismiss any government officials that Austria might name, the fifth was to accept help from Austria in checking obnoxious propaganda and the last was that Serbia would allow Serbian officials to assist in the investigation of Archduke Ferdinand. Austria gave Serbia forty eight hours to reply and Serbia did reply, they replied that they were willing to comply with Austria demands. When Kaiser Wilhelm II learned about Serbian reply on Jul 28 he declared that it was a moral victory over Serbia that they did not have to go to war that all Austria needed to do was to occupy Belgrade until the Affair was settled and then removed Austrian troops. The Kaiser instructed the German foreign office to forward his message but Chancellor Bethmann Hollwegg altered the instruction and delayed replied for hours. When he finally sent the message he instructed the German Ambassador in Austria to " avoid giving rise to the impression that we wish to hold Austria back". Then, in his final sentence, Bethmann Hollwegg told the Ambassador. " It is simply a matter of finding a way to realize Austria's desired aim, that of cutting the vital cord of the Greater Serbia propaganda, without at the same time precipitating a world war; but if the world war cannot be avoided in the end, we intend to improve the conditions under which we shall have to wage it". Without hesitation, Austrian officials pronounced the reply inadequate, broke off relations with Serbia, and started to assemble troops. On July 28, 1914, Austria declared war on Serbia, the very same day it received Germany's telegram of " restraint." After Austria declared war on Serbia, every town and city lit up with enthusiasm for the war as people took to the streets to

<https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-crisis-in-the-balkans-history-essay/>

exhibit in its favor. The British ambassador to Austria reported “ This country has gone wild with joy at the prospect of war with Serbia, and its postponement or prevention would undoubtedly be a great disappointment”. Serbia sent many form of proposals to Austria but Austrian officials refused to contemplate any proposal that would have brought peace. War fever had gripped the country. It had gripped the people. And it had gripped the ministers in the government. The day following Austria’s declaration of war, a newspaper in Hungary declared that” Austria-Hungary had burned her bridges, and no power on earth could now change the course, ‘ not even our own will’.

To Austria-Hungary the assignation was the inescapable results of the persistent plotting and propaganda that Serbian secret societies had been carrying among the Slavic population subject to. Whether Austrian or Hungarian it seemed that the very life of dual monarchy was at stake and that drastic steps should be taken to crush all anti Austrian propaganda. On July 5th the Kaiser told Austria she could count on him. He also expressed that while Russia might maintain a hostile posture so she might hesitate before going to war. In any event Germany would stand by Austria, one of the most famous, or infamous blank checks in history. The Kaiser and his advisors did not want to go to war but they knew they risked it by giving Austria a free hand in the Serbian crisis. Later in July Kaiser Wilhelm messaged in which they prevent the Austrians from going to war but his promise of German support had carried the Austrians so far that it had become impossible to draw them back. From the start of the crisis, the German press supported the German government policy out of a spirit of

patriotism. One of the political leading journals said “ There is no better way to localize the war and to preserve the peace of Europe than to show beyond the shadow of a doubt that the German army will mobilize at Russia’s first move against Austria”. The German press focused on Russia. To be a patriotic German meant you had to hate Russia, cast Russia as an evil nation, to depict them as the aggressors, to protect the world from Czarism. Even German socialist were willing to overlook political differences to stand behind Germany in the attempt to hinder Russian aggression. There was no going back.

Historian Mike Dash believed that the death of Arch Duke Ferdinand was the most tragic short term cause of World War I that it was one of the direct causes. While Brian Presland a postal historian who also specializes in the Austrian Hungarian Military I World War I believes that while the death of Arch Duke Ferdinand was one of the most important triggers of World War I he also believes that there were other causes such as the wars in the Balkans. I believe that the death of Arch Duke Ferdinand was the event that triggered World War I because if the Arch Duke didn’t die Austria would had no serious reasons to go to war with Serbia and this would have not dragged the rest of Europe with it.

The death of Arch Duke Ferdinand was one of the major precursors of World War I. The death of Arch Duke Ferdinand brought 6 ultimatums to Serbia from Austria that was so degrading that they had no choice to decline that would send them to war even when Serbia accepted the ultimatums Austria was so fired up with nationalism they still decided to go to war backed up by

Germany they were ready to strike into battle and they went to war, a war with all Europe a catastrophic war known as World War 1.

V. Conclusion

So in conclusion I believe that nationalism was the key onset of World War I in Europe during 1800-1914 and I believe this because Increased in military and naval rivalry directed not only to the belief that war was coming. The German governing group felt that only through a war could Germany become a world power because that through war they could gain more and military preparations strengthened this belief. As a result of the arms race, all of the European powers were prepared for the World War by 1914. The second reason is the Crisis in the Balkans. The Crisis in the Balkans became a predecessor to World War I in that the Serbia wanted to be an Independent country so bad that it caused havoc in Europe to gain it, which made Austria become deeply alarmed at Serbia's gains through the wars Which led to my last factor the Death of Archduke Francis Ferdinand who was killed by a Serbian nationalist which made Austria go to war with Serbia backed up by Germany and later joined by the rest of Europe initializing World War I.