

MAP STUDY



Figure 1.12
Empires of the World, 1900

At the turn of the twentieth century, European nations and the United States believed in building vast empires. Little concern was shown for the peoples actually inhabiting these conquered lands.

Interpreting

1. In 1900, which region of the world was least affected by European empires?
2. Which of these empires is still intact today?
3. Which areas of the world have since gained full independence and political freedom?
4. In your view what are the major arguments for and against the notion of "empire"?

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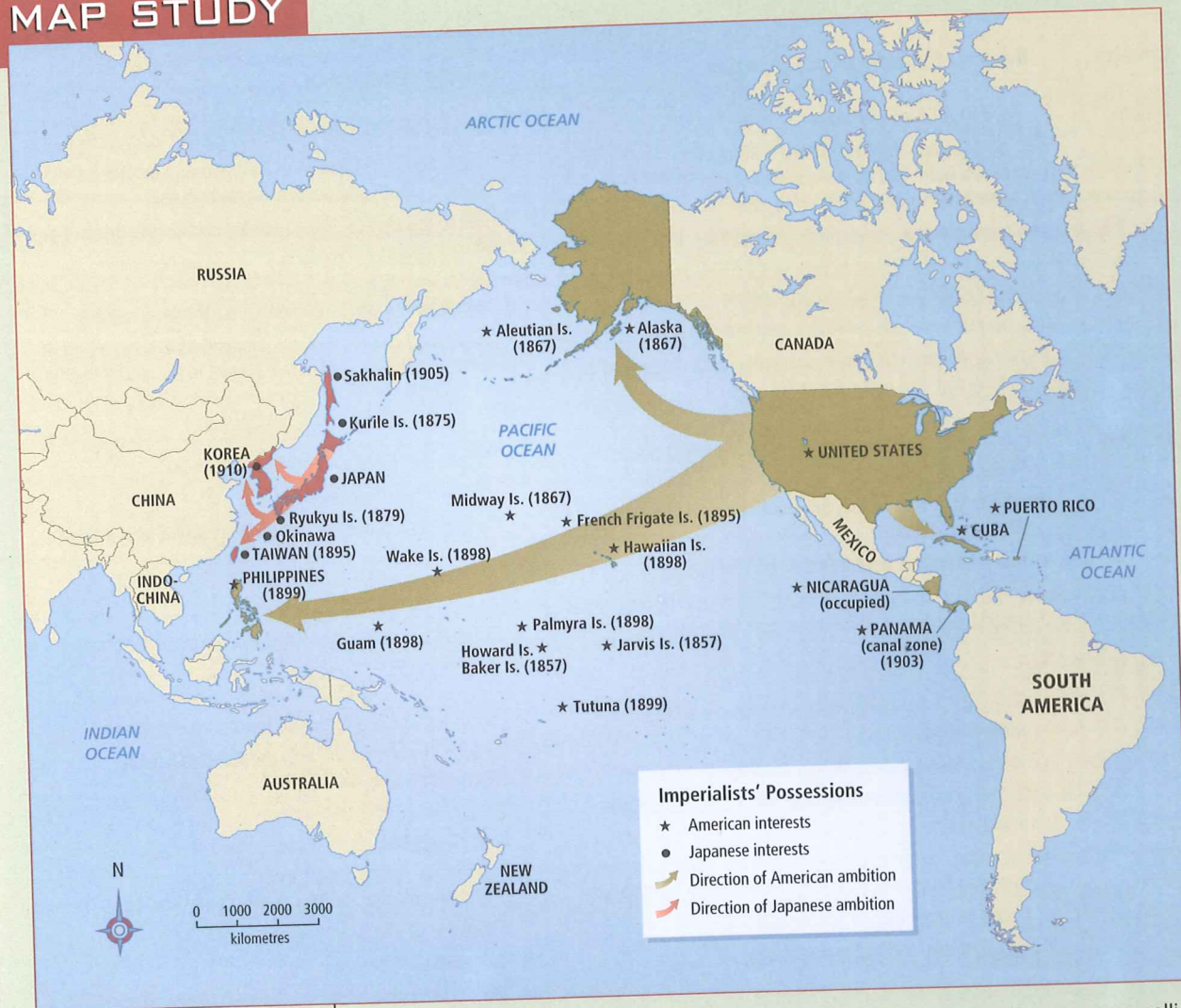


Figure 1.14

The New Imperialists, Japanese and American Possessions, 1910

As the twentieth century opened, the rising nations of Japan and America were on a collision course in the Pacific. The Japanese defeated China during the Sino-Japanese War (1894 to 1895) and the Americans gained the Philippines in the Pacific after their defeat of Spain in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

Interpreting

1. In your opinion, why was the Pacific Ocean so important to the U.S. and Japan?
2. What evidence is there that this imperial competition and national clash of interests would turn violent?

MAP STUDY



Figure 2.3

Europe in 1914

As the new century opened, most nations in Europe were drawn into two armed camps: The Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente. Although naval power was important, the First World War was still primarily a land war.

Interpreting

1. Identify the members of each alliance.
2. Review the map and note what you see as the relative strengths and weaknesses of each alliance in geographic terms.
3. Which nation changed sides during the war?

In Review

1. Summarize the four major underlying causes of the First World War.
2. In your opinion, which of these causes was most important? Why?
3. Which, if any, of these causes of the First World War still exist in our world today? Explain.

MAP STUDY



Figure 2.4

The Balkans in 1914

Unrest in the Balkans became a serious issue for the major European powers. Great powers such as Austria-Hungary and Russia had competing interests in the increasingly volatile region.

Interpreting

1. What alliances did Austria-Hungary and Russia represent?
2. Why might the region be considered so important to European politics?
3. Which Balkan nation was most significant? Why?

MAP STUDY

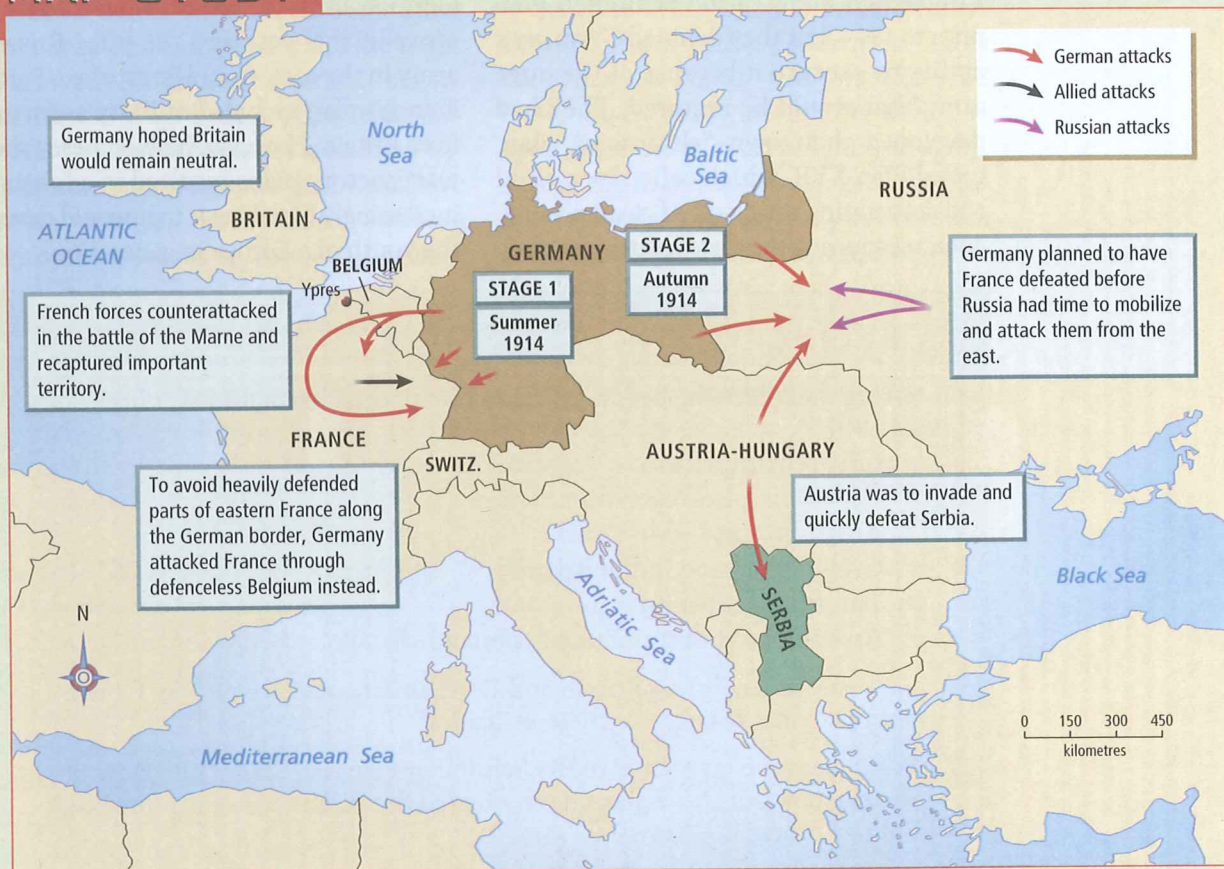


Figure 2.7

The Schlieffen Plan and Ensuing Battles

- The Schlieffen Plan called for the German army to avoid the heavily armed and defended French-German border to the east. The Germans instead attacked France through defenceless Belgium. The objective was to smash across the French border in a rapid hammerhead blow and surround Paris, the capital. The French would be taken by surprise from behind.
- However, the Belgians fought valiantly. The British sent troops into France and German troops were sent to the border with Russia. The German hammerhead slowed.
- French forces made a desperate counterattack in the Battle of the Marne and blunted the German advance.
- Germany moved to capture the towns of Calais and Boulogne but they battled British forces for six weeks at Ypres.
- The German dream of a swift victory was shattered. The war became a deadly struggle of increasingly bloody battles over hundreds of metres of battle-scarred fields. Europe was split by a wall of barbed wire and trenches that snaked across half a continent.

Interpreting

1. In your view what were the key strengths and weaknesses of the Schlieffen Plan?
2. What was the chief result of the German failure to launch a knockout blow?

MAP STUDY

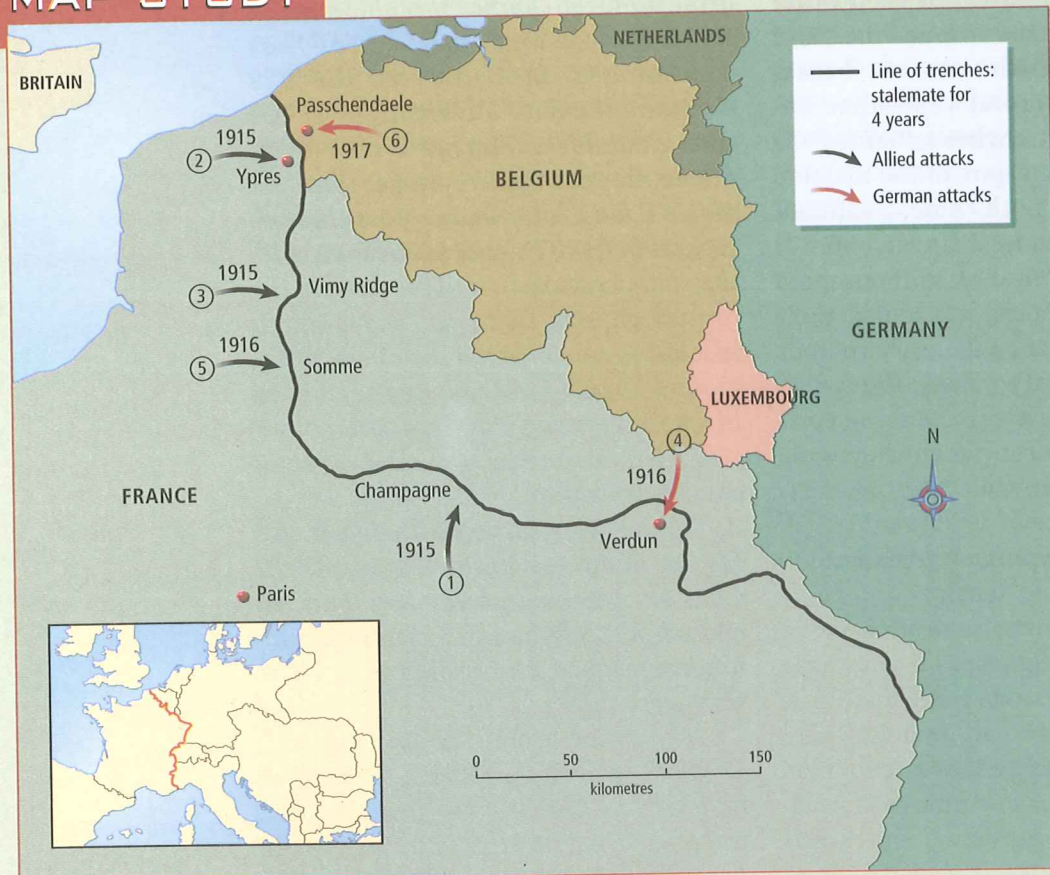


Figure 2.8

The Western Front, 1915 to 1918

1. French troops advance at Champagne, 1915.
2. Second Battle of Ypres, 1915; Germany advances.
3. French troops advance at Vimy Ridge, 1915.
4. Battle of Verdun, 1916; in 6-month battle Germans fail to take Verdun, but French losses total 360 000 dead.
5. Battle of the Somme, 1916; British and French troops advance; death toll exceeds 1 million.
6. Third Battle of Ypres (Passchendaele), 1917; British troops defeat German attack.

The casualty rates for the First World War break down as follows: British Empire, 900 000; France, 1.5 million; Germany, 1.75 million; Austria-Hungary, 1.25 million; Italy, 600 000; Russia, 1.75 million; Turkey, 300 000; and the Balkans, 450 000.

Interpreting

1. What was the result of the stalemate on the casualty rate during the First World War?
2. Why do you think conscription (compulsory enlistment for military service) became such a vital necessity for all countries during the war?
3. Why do you think that a breakthrough was so hard to achieve for both sides during the war?

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Figure 2.10
The Eastern Front and the Treaty
of Brest-Litovsk, 1914 to 1917

Conditions on the eastern front were different. Here there were large-scale battles with considerable movement and huge casualties. The trench system was not nearly as formidable. German forces won tremendous victories against the Russian forces.

By the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, Russia ceded this territory (green stripes) to Germany and allowed German troops to enter and occupy it, including the rich wheat lands of the Ukraine. Thus the German army was more powerful because it had a rich new food supply and entire armies could now be transferred to the Western Front to fight the final battles of the war. For the first time since 1914, Germany was able to concentrate its forces on one front.

Interpreting

1. Why were the Russians unable to contain the German attacks?
2. Why was the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk so important to German hopes of victory?
3. How do you think the Allies regarded the new Bolshevik government of Russia? Why?

MAP STUDY



Figure 2.16

The Price of Defeat: Germany's Losses by the Terms of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty of Versailles redrew the map of Europe and parts of the globe. Compare this map with the map of Europe in 1914 (see page 37).

1. All German overseas colonies lost. Displaced Germans returned to Germany.
2. Saar coalfields placed under French rule for fifteen years.
3. Union between Austria and Germany forbidden.

Interpreting

1. What evidence is there that the principle of national self-determination was violated?
2. What new nations were created in Europe?
3. What impact might this have on political stability in the region? Explain.
4. In your view, were German losses justified? Explain.