

In this section of the course, we have encountered the relationship between ideology and action, but the relationship between ideas and what actually happened is unclear. If you think about the horrors of imperialism and the atrocities of the Great War you could argue that they revealed the relevance and reality of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. But how much responsibility can we say that ideologies had for imperialism and the Great War? A lot, or a little? What do you think? Did one or more ideologies cause imperialism and the Great War? If so, which one(s)? If not, why not? You choose, but choose you must. Do not try to write about ideologies causing and not causing those events; you simply do not have enough time.

To approach this essay, you may structure your it by focusing on

- (i) an ideology or ideologies which you think can explain imperialism and the Great War,
- (ii) the devastating effects of imperialism on one specific location,
- (iii) one event or strategy during the Great War which reveals its harrowing side, and
- (iv) how Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* can help us understand both events. In your essay, make sure to refer to John A. Hobson's *Imperialism: A Study* and the two sources on the Great War from James Brophy, et al, *Perspectives from the Past*.

The ideal essay will refer to specific historical examples to support the arguments and should have an analytical and critical rather than a descriptive approach. Make sure to have clear and concise writing style along with an organizational structure with an introduction for describing the topic and essay, multiple paragraphs for the different points and a conclusion summing up the argument.

But how much responsibility can we say that ideologies had for imperialism and the Great War? A lot, or a little? What do you think?

Did one or more ideologies cause imperialism and the Great War? If so, which one(s)? If not, why not?

## **Outline**

**Imperialism:** is when one nation extends its power over foreign territories and people. This extension of the outside group's control can occur through military force or without force by gaining control over a nation's economy and resources.

**Nationalism:** Nationalism is an intense form of patriotism or loyalty to one's country. Nationalists exaggerate the importance or virtues of their home country, placing its interests above those of other nations.

The effects of this growing nationalism were an inflated confidence in one's nation, its government, economy and military power. Many nationalists also became blind to the faults of their own nation. In matters of foreign affairs or global competition, they were convinced that their country was fair, righteous and beyond fault.

**The Great War:**

**Causes:**

**Result:**

**John a hobson imperialism:**

**Social Darwinism + Nationalism**

### **Essay:**

World War I wasn't just a conflict between nations, it was a war between empires product of different ideologies and events that at the time were used to justify imperialism, which was one of the key factors and a source of tension between the different powers of Europe. One of main ideologies related to this conflict was nationalism that created new areas of interest over which nations could compete. It was tied to militarism and clashed with the interests of the imperial powers in Europe.

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The European competition for imperial territories caused by nationalistic ideals helped set the stage for the rivalries that played out during the First World War, and the war in turn had a major effect on the balance of imperial power.

In the centuries before the Scramble for Africa, European empires had invaded African coastal nations to capture and enslave people, but mostly hadn't managed to invade farther inland due to navigational difficulties and the threat of diseases like malaria. After the legal abolition of slavery, new technologies like steamboats allowed Europeans to invade much more of the continent.

The European empires that invaded Africa saw colonization as a way to exploit forced labor, extract resources and become more powerful in relation to other European empires, thus leading to imperialism by formal or informal economic and political domination of one country over the other.

The Congo was one of the places affected the most from this expansion of territories and imperialism. The reality can be compared with some of the examples provided by Joseph Conrad's in heart of darkness where we can identify some similarities like the greed of imperialism, the brutality and violence that the people from the Congo experience as well as the exploitation of the people and their resources.

John A. Hobson's Imperialism critiques and affirms that the root of imperialism is created by a capitalistic ideology. But even though for the most part imperialism was devastating specially for

many parts of Africa, it also provided an opportunity to those regions to gain access to new technologies, which might have helped with some development to political advancements and economic gain with improvements in agriculture and transportation.

Although imperialism in Africa wasn't a direct cause of World War I, it helped create an environment in which European empires thought of themselves as rivals who could only succeed at the expense of other empires. And when the assassination of Franz Ferdinand at Sarajevo took place, it created the perfect excuse that the empires needed to start the war. It is important to point out that Ferdinand assassin Gavrilo Princip was affiliated with the Black Hand secret society can that be link with nationalism ideals since they consider Ferdinand as a threat to Serbian independence.

On June 28<sup>th</sup>, 1914, one of the most brutal and darkest events in history. An industrial, chemical, and new strategic kind of war that made use of media, controlling the information provided to the public about issues concerning war described in press reports from the front, some uses of the media were demonstrate superiority over enemies, described atrocities committed only by opponents in order to enlist soldiers, the media also lied about the authenticity of the horrors and hardships that soldiers experienced.

In *The storm of steel: from the diary of a German storm troop officer on the western front*, demonstrated in detail the conditions and events taking at the front, including the horrible and recently implemented military tactics machine guns, shells, chemical warfare as well as its consequences for the soldiers like mental breakdown, the devastation of land and nearby towns, brutality against rivals, sickness, and lack of nourishment.

In the end, there were many events that lead to the Great War driven by different ideologies like the one I focused on this essay which in my opinion explains the development of the events in a chronological order, from nationalism and the idea that a country needs to prove they are the best by occupying, reforming, and establishing a ruling in other territories also driven by capitalism which turned into imperialism, creating conflict within Europe greatest powers that only needed an excuse to unchained their military power and engage in battle.