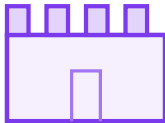


20th-Century Global Conflicts

AP European History ■ Unit 8

AP European History



What we will cover

- 1 Contextualizing 20th-Century Global Conflicts
- 2 World War I
- 3 The Russian Revolution and Its Effects
- 4 Versailles Conference and Peace Settlement
- 5 Global Economic Crisis
- 6 Fascism and Totalitarianism

Contextualizing 20th-Century Global Conflicts

Unit 8 covers c. 1914 to the present as a story of conflict, and four key concepts frame it:

- Total war and political instability in the first half of the century gave way to a polarised state order during the Cold War.
- The stresses of economic collapse and total war produced internal conflicts within European states and **conflicting conceptions of the relationship between the individual and the state** 个人与国家的关系.
- Diverse intellectual and cultural movements questioned the existence of objective knowledge and the authority that had rested on it.
- Demographic change, economic growth, total war, and competing definitions of freedom and justice altered the experience of everyday life.

World War I

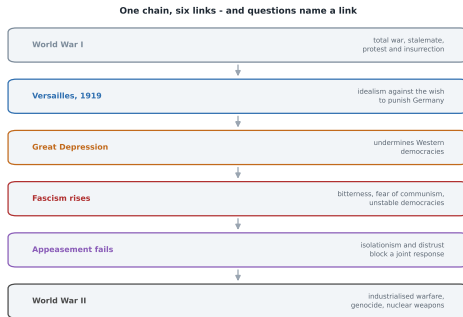
The war was caused by a complex interaction of long- and short-term factors and produced immense losses and disruption. The CED's specific claims:

- New technologies confounded traditional military strategies, leading to **trench warfare** 堑壕战 and massive troop losses.
- The effects of **military stalemate, national mobilisation, and total war** led to **protest and insurrection** 抗议与起义 in the belligerent nations – the war turned inward on the societies fighting it.
- The war spread quickly to non-European theatres, becoming a **global conflict**.
- The relationship of Europe to the world shifted significantly with that globalisation, and with the emergence of new powers.

The Russian Revolution and Its Effects

The **Russian Revolution** 俄国革命 created a regime based on **Marxist-Leninist theory** 马克思列宁主义 – the first state to be founded explicitly on that programme, which is what makes it a turning point rather than a national event.

Versailles Conference and Peace Settlement



The Depression is the pivot: these movements existed before 1929 but could not win power until it came.

the distinction this unit turns on

Versailles Conference and Peace Settlement

The **conflicting goals of the peace negotiators in Paris** pitted **diplomatic idealism against the desire to punish Germany** 理想主义与惩罚德国的意愿, and the resulting settlement satisfied neither aim fully.

Global Economic Crisis

The **Great Depression** 大萧条, caused by weaknesses in international trade and in monetary theory and practice, **undermined Western European democracies** 削弱西欧民主国家 and fostered **radical political responses** across Europe.

The Depression is what turned interwar bitterness into a political opportunity for movements that had existed since before 1914 but had not previously been able to win power.

Fascism and Totalitarianism

The ideology of **fascism** 法西斯主义, with roots in the pre-war era, **gained popularity in an environment of postwar bitterness, the rise of communism, uncertain transitions to democracy, and economic instability.** That four-part environment is the CED's own answer to "why then", and it is better than any single cause.

The CED states the cost explicitly: modernisation came at a **high price**, including the **liquidation of the kulaks** 富农 and a **catastrophic famine** 饥荒.

Europe During the Interwar Period

The failure to prevent a second war has named causes:

- French and British fears of another war, **American isolationism** 美国孤立主义, and deep distrust between Western democratic, capitalist nations and the Soviet communist regime prevented an effective response.
- **Fascism, extreme nationalism, racist ideologies, and the failure of appeasement** 绥靖政策的失败 resulted in the Second World War.

World War II

- Germany's **Blitzkrieg** 闪电战 warfare in Europe, combined with Japan's attacks in Asia and the Pacific, brought the Axis powers early victories.
- American and British industrial, scientific, and technological power, cooperative military efforts under strong leadership, and the Soviet Union's vast manpower and resources eventually defeated the Axis.
- **Military technologies made possible industrialised warfare, genocide, nuclear proliferation** 核扩散, and the risk of global nuclear war.

The Holocaust

Fuelled by **racism and anti-Semitism** 种族主义与反犹主义, Nazi Germany – with the cooperation of some other Axis powers and collaborators – **used industrial technology and bureaucratic structures to carry out the systematic murder of European Jewish people** and other targeted groups.

That is why this topic belongs with the technology and total-war themes rather than standing apart from them.

20th-Century Cultural and Intellectual Developments

- The belief in progress characteristic of much nineteenth-century thought began to break down before World War I and collapsed after it.
- When the war began, Europeans were generally confident in the ability of science and technology to address human needs; the war and then the Depression undermined that confidence.
- The challenge to the certainties of the Newtonian universe in physics opened the door to uncertainty in other fields.
- The war created a **"lost generation"** 迷惘的一代 and fostered **disillusionment and cynicism** 幻灭与犬儒.
- During both wars, women became increasingly involved in military and political mobilisation and in economic production.

Continuity and Change in an Age of Global Conflict

The unit's reasoning skill is **continuity and change**.

Exam tips

- Learn the **chain**: war, settlement, economic collapse, radical movements, failed appeasement, war again. Most questions ask about one link.
- The CED gives fascism a **four-part environment** – postwar bitterness, fear of communism, unstable democracies, economic instability. Use all four.
- The **Depression is the pivot**. Movements that existed before 1929 could not win power until it happened.
- On the Holocaust, the examinable point is the use of the **modern state's own instruments**. State it precisely.
- The **mandate system** is imperial control renamed. Saying so links the settlement to decolonisation.
- The collapse of confidence in **progress and objectivity** connects the political and cultural halves of the unit. Examiners reward that connection.