Chapter 37

New Conflagrations: World War II
The Second World War

- Allies vs. Axis Powers
- Italy, Germany and Japan form Axis
- “Revisionists:” wished to revise post-World War I peace treaties
- Allies initially follow policy of appeasement
- War erupts 1939, global by 1941, over 1945
Axis Rally in Tokyo
Japan’s War in China

- Conquest of Chinese Manchuria 1931-1932
- Full-scale invasion in 1937
- The Rape of Nanjing
  - Ariel bombing of urban center
  - 400,000 Chinese used for bayonet practice, massacred
  - 7,000 women raped
  - 1/3 of all homes destroyed
- Japan signs Tripartite Pact with Germany, Italy (1940), Non-Aggression Pact with USSR (1941)
Chinese Resistance

- Japanese aggression spurs “United Front” policy between Chinese Communists and Nationalists
- Guerilla warfare ties down half of the Japanese army
- Yet continued clashes between Communists and Nationalists
  - Communists gain popular support, upper hand by end of the war
Italian Aggression

- Benito Mussolini invades Ethiopia with overpowering force
  - 2,000 Italian troops killed, 275,000 Ethiopians killed
- Also takes Libya, Albania
Germany

- Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) withdraws from League of Nations
- Remilitarizes Germany
- *Anschluss* ("Union") with Austria, 1938
- Pressure on Sudetenland (Czechoslovakia)
Munich Conference (1938)

- Italy, France, Great Britain, Germany meet
- Allies follow policy of appeasement
- Hitler promises to halt expansionist efforts
- British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain (1869-1940) promises “peace for our time”
- Hitler signs secret Russian-German Treaty of Non-Aggression (Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, August 1939)
Invasion of Poland and France

- September 1, 1939
- *Blitzkrieg*: “lightning war” strategy
  - Air forces soften up target, armored divisions rush in
- German U-boats (submarines) patrol Atlantic, threaten British shipping
The Fall of France

- 1940: Germany occupies Denmark, Norway, Belgium, France
- Hitler forces French to sign armistice agreement in same railroad car used for the armistice imposed on Germany in 1918
The Battle of Britain

- Air war conducted by the German Luftwaffe
- “The Blitz”
- 40,000 British civilians killed in urban bombing raids
  - Especially London
- Royal Air Force prevents Germans from invading
Operation Barbarossa

- *Lebensraum* ("living space")
- June 22, 1941 Hitler double-crosses Stalin and invades USSR
- Stalin caught off-guard, rapid advance
- But severe winter, long supply lines weakened German efforts
- Soviets regroup and attack Spring 1942
- Turning point: Battle of Stalingrad (ends February 1943)
High tide of Axis expansion in Europe and North Africa, 1942-1943
US Involvement in WWII before Pearl Harbor

- US initiates “cash and carry” policy to supply Allies with arms
- “lend-lease” program: US lends war goods to Allies, leases naval bases in return
- US freezes Japanese assets in US
- US places embargo on oil shipments to Japan
- Japanese Defense Minister Tojo Hideki (1884-1948) plans for war with US
Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941)

- FDR: “A date which will live in infamy”
- Destroyed US Navy in the Pacific
- Hitler, Mussolini declare war on the US on December 11
- US joins Great Britain and the USSR
Wreckage from Pearl Harbor

Wreckage of naval station at Pearl Harbor
Japanese Victories

- Japan dominates south-east Asia, Pacific islands
- Establishes “Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere”
Defeat of the Axis Powers

- Key factors: personnel reserves, industrial capacity
- US joining the war turned the tide
  - Shipbuilding, automotive production especially important
Allied Victory in Europe

- Red Army (USSR) gains offensive after Stalingrad (February 1943)
- British, US forces attack in North Africa, Italy
- D-Day: June 6, 1944, British and US forces land in France
- US, Britain bomb German cities
  - Dresden, February 1945: 135,000 Germans killed in shelters
- 30 April 1945 Hitler commits suicide, 8 May Germany surrenders
Turning the Tide in the Pacific

- US code breaking operation *Magic* discovers Japanese plans
  - Battle of Midway (June 4, 1942)
- US takes the offensive, engages in island-hopping strategy
- Iwo Jima and Okinawa
  - Japanese *kamikaze* suicide bombers
  - Savage two-month battle for Okinawa
Japanese Surrender

- US firebombs Tokyo, March 1945
  - 100,000 killed
  - 25% of buildings destroyed
- Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, August 1945
- Emperor Hirohito (1901-1989) surrenders unconditionally September 2, 1945
Hiroshima after the Bomb

Hiroshima after the atomic explosion
Varieties of Wartime Occupation

- Independent States with enforced alliances
  - Thailand, Denmark
- Puppet States
  - Manchukuo, Vichy France
- Military Administration
  - Indochina, Poland
Collaboration

- For some, opportunity for social mobility under conquerors
- Sometimes considered a lesser evil than military administration
Resistance

- Military forms of resistance
- Intelligence gathering
- Protecting refugees
- Symbolic gestures
- German, Japanese policies of collective punishment
Nazi Genocide and the Jews

- Jews primary target of Nazi genocidal efforts
  - Other groups also slated for destruction: Roma (Gypsies), Homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses
- Nazis initially encouraged Jewish emigration
  - Few countries willing to accept Jewish refugees
- Aborted plans to deport Jews to Madagascar, reservation in Poland
The Final Solution

- *Einsatzgruppen* (mobile killing squads) follow German army into USSR with Operation Barbarossa

- Round up of Jews and others, machine-gun executions of 1.4 million

- Later in 1941 decided on “Final Solution:” deportation of all European Jews to Death Camps

- Plans solidified at Wannsee Conference, January 1942
The Holocaust

- Jews deported from ghettos all over Europe in cattle cars, spring 1942
- Destination: six specially designed Death Camps in Eastern Europe
- Technologically advanced, assembly-line style of murder through poison gas (Zyklon B)
- Corpses destroyed in crematoria
- Estimated number of Jews killed: 5.7 million
The Holocaust in Europe, 1933-1945
Jewish Resistance

- German policy of collective punishment, generations of life as a minority hamper Jewish resistance efforts
- Yet ghetto uprisings, armed conflict nevertheless
  - Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, spring 1943
- Jews in partisan guerilla units
Women and the War

- WAVES (Women Appointed for Volunteer Emergency Service)
- US, Great Britain bar women from serving in combat units
- Soviet, Chinese forces include women fighters
- Women very active in resistance movements
Women’s Roles

- Women occupy jobs of men away at war
- Also take on “head of household” duties
- Temporary: men returning from war displace women
  - Yet lasting impact on women’s movement
“Comfort Women”

- Asian women forced into prostitution by Japanese forces
- 20/30 men per day, in war zones
- “Comfort Houses,” “Consolation Centers”
  - Killed when infected with venereal disease
- Large-scale massacres at end of war to hide crimes
  - Social ostracism for survivors
Deaths During World War II (millions)

- USSR: 20
- China: 15
- Germany: 6
- Japan: 6
- Poles: 6
- Britain: 4
- US: 2
- Jews: 0.4
- Other: 0.3
Origins of the Cold War

- US, USSR, Great Britain unnatural allies during World War II
  - Tensions submerged until close of war
- Yalta and Potsdam Conferences (1945)
  - Stalin, Churchill, Roosevelt
  - Decided on USSR declaration of war vs. Japan, setting up of International Military Tribunal
  - Free elections for Eastern Europe
- Stalin arranges pro-communist governments in Eastern European countries
- 1946: “Iron Curtain” descends
The Truman Doctrine (1947)

- World divided into free and enslaved states
- US to support all movements for democracy
- “containment” of Communism
- NATO and the Warsaw Pact established
  - Militarization of Cold War
The Marshall Plan

- Named for George C. Marshall (1880-1989), US Secretary of State
- Proposed in 1947, $13 billion to reconstruct western Europe
- USSR establishes Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), 1949
- The United Nations formed (1945) to resolve international disputes