Analyze the major social, political, and technological changes that took place in European warfare between 1789 and 1918. (1981 #3)"

During the time period between 1789 and 1918, most changes in European warfare took place during World War I. Labor unions received greater power as the war governments were preparing for total war. Women began to work in male-dominated fields. Social equality was promoted as men from all classes were enlisted to fight in the war. In this time period, the European government began mobilizing for total war (planned economy or war socialism), which can be defined as a war in which all available weapons and resources are employed by controlling the economic and social life of the country. To get its citizens to agree with its ideals, the government utilized propaganda to gain total support for the war effort. While the major social and political changes took place in World War I, the technological changes in warfare began as far back as the mid-1800s when new innovations like the needle-gun and the steam battleship were developed.

I. Social Changes
A. Labor unions received greater power.
   1. War governments were pushing for total war.
   2. Unions cooperated with the government on work rules, wages, and production schedules in return for real participation in important decisions.
      a. They agreed to refrain from strikes during the war.
         i. Everyone, including socialist leaders, worked to produce weapons for war.
         ii. They believed that their country was in the right and defending itself from aggression, therefore they need to help the country by producing more weapons.
      b. This entry of labor leaders and unions into policy-making councils paralleled the entry of socialist leaders into war governments
   3. Through the union, the government imposed price and wage control, and restrictions on workers' freedom of movement.
      a. This is because there was a great demand for weapons.
B. Role of women changed dramatically — the war greatly expanded the range of women's activities and changed attitudes toward them.
   1. Auxiliary Service Law — passed by German Reichstag in 1916
      a. Requires all males between 17 and 60 to work only at jobs considered critical to the war effort.
      b. The law also forced women to work in factories and war plants, since many men were drafted into the war.
      c. Children were organized into garbage brigades to collect every scrap of useful materials: grease stained from dishwasher, coffee grounds, waste paper, tin cans, metal door knockers, bottle rags, hair, bones, acorns, chestnuts, pine cones, and rotting leaves.
   2. Women began to work in industry, transportation, and offices to fill the spots left vacant by men to go to war.
a. Women became bus drivers, munitions workers, bank tellers, mail carriers, and police officers.

b. At the front women served as nurses and doctors.

3. Immediately after the war Britain, Germany, and Austria granted women the right to vote as a reward for their help.

4. Women also showed a growing spirit of independence. They started to bob their hair, shorten their skirts, and smoke in public.

C. The war also promoted greater social equality

1. In the military
   a. High army positions were not exclusive to aristocracy since the late 19th century.
   b. Mass conscription
      i. Started in France in 1789 and later adopted by all countries during World War I.
      ii. The rich and poor alike were drafted into the army.

2. Food was rationed according to physical needs. Not one class gets more food than the other.

3. Death had no respect for social distinctions.
   a. Both aristocratic officers and drafted peasants and unskilled workers died in the war.
   b. However, death often spared aristocrats of labor, skilled workers and foremen, because they were needed to train the newly recruited women and older unskilled men in factories at home, so they weren't drafted into the war.

II. Political Changes

A. Government controlled economic and social life in order to wage "total war."

1. Laissez faire was abandoned at least for the time being.
   a. Government established priorities and decided what was to be produced and consumed.
      i. This planned economy is also known as war socialism.
   b. Production for civilian use or for luxury purposes was cut to a minimum.
   c. Foreign trade became a state monopoly, in which private businesses operated under strict licenses and quotas.

2. Food was rationed according to physical needs.
   a. Men and women doing hard manual were given extra rations.
   b. Only children and expectant mothers received milk rations.

3. In 1916 German military leaders Hindenburg and Ludendorff decreed an ultimate mobilization for total war. They forced Reichstag to pass the Auxiliary Service Law

B. Government attempted to control ideas in order to maintain popular support.

1. Freedom of thought was discarded.

2. Propaganda and censorship became very effective.
   a. Each side of the war wildly charged the other with having started the war from pure malevolence.
   b. Placards, posters, diplomatic white papers, schoolbooks, public lectures, solemn editorials, and new moving pictures were used.
      i. In allied countries the Kaiser was portrayed as a demon, bent on the mad project of conquest of the world.
ii. In Germany people were taught to dread the day when Cossacks and Senegalese should rape German women and to hate England, which inhumanly starved little children with its blockade.

c. Scholars and professors advanced historical reasons for loathing and crushing the enemy.

III. Technological changes.

A. Tactics

1. Eighteenth century warfare
   a. Strategy took the from of not seeking out the enemy’s main force to destroy it in battle, but of maneuvering for advantages of position, applying cumulative and subtle pressure—just like a game of chess.
   b. Soldiers wear bright uniforms.
   c. Linear formation was used.
   d. Generals hesitated to risk their troops, which took years to train and equip.

2. World War I
   a. Soldiers wear less bright uniforms.
   b. Trench warfare.
      i. Sandbags and rows of barbed wire protected the trenches from attack.
      ii. Basic strategy—charged across No Man’s Land into enemy’s trenches, which are a few miles away.
      iii. No Man’s Land is constantly bombarded by enemy fire, making soldiers from either side to cross it safely—resulting in a stalemate.
   c. Chemical Warfare—Began with the stalemate of trench warfare
      i. Both sides fired tear gas shells in an unsuccessful effort to dislodge their opponents.
      ii. Chlorine gas
      iii. Irritates the eyes, nose and throat
      iv. Blinded some soldiers and caused many others to choke to death
   d. Phosgene gas
      i. Causes soldiers to choke, gasp for air, and suffocate, then die
      ii. 10 times as deadly as chlorine gas
   e. Chloropicrin
      i. Causes nausea and vomiting
      ii. Can penetrate masks
   f. Dichloroethyl sulfide (Mustard gas)
      i. Smells like mustard
      ii. Causes vomiting, severe burns, and temporary blindness
      iii. Gas masks were effective at preventing internal injuries, but the gas could seep into boots and penetrate several layers of cloth, causing huge blisters.

B. Guns

1. Flintlock muskets (18\textsuperscript{th} century)
   a. Loaded at the muzzle
   b. Fire rate= 3 rounds per minute.

2. Needle gun (1836)
   a. Loaded at the breech
   b. Fire rate= 10-12 rounds per minute
   c. Used in Seven Weeks’ War by the Prussians
3. Gatling gun (1862)
   a. Consisted of six barrels mounted in a revolving frame
   b. Fire rate= as fast as you can crank it out (about 300 rounds per minute)
   c. Used in the American Civil War and Spanish American War by the Americans
4. Maxim Machine gun (1885)
   a. Belt-fed
   b. Water-cooled by an attached water container to prevent overheating
   c. Pressing the trigger initiate a stream of bullets
   d. Fire Rate= 750 rounds per minute
   e. Used in World War I by European armies
5. Browning heavy machine gun M1917 (1917)
   a. Belt-fed and water-cooled
   b. Fire rate= 600 rounds per minute
   c. Used in World War I by Americans
6. Browning Automatic Rifle (1918)
   a. 1st machine gun working off the gas produced in firing—this principle is still used today
   b. Its light weight enable it to be fired while moving forward in combat
   c. This leads to the end of stalemate in trench warfare because Allies soldiers could fire at enemies while entering No Man's Land

C. Tank
1. Could crash through barbed wire, lunge over trenches, and smash into machine gun nests.
2. However, they were introduced in such small numbers that they had no effect on the war

D. Navy
1. Steam battleship by Robert Fulton (1813)
   a. Powered by a steam engine working a paddle to move the ship.
   b. Sails were still used when the steam engine malfunctioned.
   c. By 1880s the sails would disappear from ships.
2. Ironclad (1860s)
   a. Consisted of iron-plated hull.
   b. Cannon balls literally bounce off the ship
3. Turret ship (1862)—consisted of heavy guns mounted in rotating turrets, allowing free range of fire
4. Cruiser (1890s)—it was a result of the three ship mentioned above.
5. Dreadnought (1906)—a gigantic all-big-gun high-speed cruiser
6. Submarine (1862)
   a. Used most effectively by Germans in World War I
   b. Many Allied cruisers were torpedoed by the German submarines

E. Air Force
1. In the beginning of the war, airplanes were only used for reconnaissance in good weather.
2. In 1914, the British introduced the “bomber” plane—the pilot would drop bombs over the side of the plane.
3. At first pilots fired pistols and hurled hand grenades and even bricks at enemy planes and troops.
4. By 1916 the machine gun was fitted with interrupter gear. Now, the machine gun would be permanently on to the plane and timed to fire between the blades of the plane's propellers.

Most changes in warfare occurred between 1914-1918 during the First World War. The idea of planned economy was introduced, which would be used again by the countries in the Second World War. Planned economy would later pave the way for Stalin to control the economy in the USSR. As the result of women working in the war plants, many governments grant them the right to vote as a reward for their efforts. The use of chemical warfare led to 1925 Geneva Protocol, which prohibits the use of poison gases and biological agents in warfare. The Browning Automatic Rifle would lead to the development of the infamous “Tommy” gun and the M16 assault rifle used in the military today. The idea of pilots dropping bombs over the side of the plane would later develop into the B-29, which dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima, and the B-2 stealth bomber. The plane equipped with machine gun would pave the way for modern day fighters like the F-15. In conclusion, the time period of 1789-1918 brought about many changes in warfare although the major ones are concentrated in World War I.

Bibliography


