



## AP<sup>®</sup> European History 2002 Sample Student Responses

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B 4

While many historical trends were slowly and only gradually begin to take shape, the cultural and societal reaction in Europe to World War I was swift and all-encompassing. The ideas of man's inevitable progress, the perfection of science, and the necessity of freedom for peace-ideas that had slowly percolated into the European consciousness since the dawn of the Enlightenment -- shattered in 1914 as they culminated in ~~one of~~ the ~~most~~ most brutal wars Europe had ever seen, where death was ~~not~~ death to many by sophisticated technology such as machine guns and poison gas, yet no gains were ever made in a four-year stalemated war of trench warfare. The war left Europeans ~~shattered~~ profoundly disillusioned with their ideas on life and their fellow man.

This effect of disillusionment can be seen through the way cultural enterprises of Europeans between the wars. The most famous poet of the era, ~~the~~ T.S. Eliot wrote his most important work, "The Waste Land" as the profound lack of connection that Europeans felt with each other and with God, comparing their horror as a condition between death and life, with no faith in it. Philosopher and sociologist Max Weber feared a similar end to nihilism -- what Heidegger referred to as the mixture of Dasein and Being, or the ~~total~~ complete ~~of~~ ~~my~~ ~~purpose~~ dehumanization of man as his purpose is reduced to that of a technological tool - a means to

achieve an end. It is clear that both of these cultural ~~and~~ reactions can be traced to the mar. The scientific method, touting efficiency, had reduced the value of humanity. Consequently, World War I, run by generals ~~and~~ using most profound logic and science to kill as many soldiers as possible; trench warfare necessitated raids of calculated intervals; poison gases represented the highest achievements of technology, became to the poets and philosophers of the era that reason was not enough to save mankind, and that in fact, in meddling in to another region of war, it might be destroyed.

While the intellectuals of the era reacted to their disillusionment by rejecting the Enlightenment and shifting intellectual trends away from reliance on reason, the masses took a far more dangerous approach. ~~That~~ ~~the~~ German society perhaps is the best example. As the ~~inflation~~ inflation skyrocketed and Germany was humiliated into repaying its war debt, Germans grew dissatisfied with the Weimar Republic. Far from enjoying their new freedom, the German people rejected it, looking instead to authoritarian leaders such as Hitler. By seeing their freedom, Germans no longer had to fear what felt like isolation -- ~~and~~ ~~rather~~ rather in a terrifying, powerful world. Nationalism was not of course, limited to Germany. As the German Civil War

ated, societies everywhere entered an what appeared to be an escape from freedom. Authoritarian governments rose in Germany, Italy, Spain, and Russia, and nationalistic sentiment became universal. The people were scared of the ideas of freedom, industrialization, and scientific progress -- ideas they had seen explode in a chaotic war. Hence, they ~~turned~~<sup>turned</sup> to each other and subordinated themselves to a leader who could dominate them and remove all fears of pain.

The first World War turned Monet's blurred waters into Picasso's jagged lines, Debussy's peaceful sounds into Stravinsky's atonal nightmares. World War I disillusioned society, leaving the intellectuals speechless to convert or anything but the vast nothingness they had felt and the society changing to whatever leaders could ease their fears of freedom. Mendeleev's table had culminated in mustard gas, Galileo's levers had culminated in ~~and~~ highly accurate artillery projection tables, and Locke's social contract had bowed men to suffering and dying. The Enlightenment had failed.

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DD-1

As the great war ended, and Europe dusted itself off after the massive conflict, it had noticeable changes. During the inter-war years, Europe would go from ~~the once grand nations~~ a once grand continent to a depression & ravaged land then to an instable region. By 1939, much of old Europe had faded away. The changes in culture and society would mark Europe for years to come.

During the First World War, the economies of Europe had been a "beehive" of activity. The factories ~~produced~~ were active in the armaments industry, miners mined for metals and materials needed for the war effort. ~~As~~ Even farmers produced as much as they could in order to feed the vast armies and populations on ration. When the war ended at Versailles, the various economies of both allied and central power nations were forced to switch immediately over to a peace time setting. The factories began to close because there ~~was~~ were no cannons or bullets to make, and mines closed down due to lack of demand for their materials. ~~As a result~~ Due to these factors, unemployment began to rear its ugly head. Through the inter war period, especially during the 1930's and the era of depression, unemployment became a major problem in European society. Without the armies to support, the workers across Europe began to wander as the factories

closed. The workers began to look elsewhere for answers and would, unfortunately, in nations such as Germany, find their answers in extremist politics.

Politically, ~~the~~ European society became more extremist. Germans, for example, began to blame each other for the problems. ~~During~~ during the inter-war years Communists blamed the conservatives, Nazis blamed the Jews; ~~in~~ <sup>Conservatives</sup> France many problems were blamed on the new ~~the~~ Popular Front government. It seems as though Europe was in search of a scapegoat. Every nation seemed to be divided as the opinions on both sides became more extreme. For Germans, society and culture had suffered due to the Treaty of Versailles. To the French, it was the Germans who destroyed their farmland, bombed their cities and killed their relatives. The effects of the first World War would push the societies to extremes. German society embraced Nazism, Italian society would look to the fascists, Russian society looked to Stalin.

What was one of the greatest ~~the~~ changes in European ~~society~~ society was, however, the new presence of women's <sup>rights</sup> ~~rights~~. During the war, because the men had left to go fight many women went to work in the place of their husbands. When the war ended, the ~~the~~ men came back to their jobs and women were left wondering "what next?" The women's rights movement began to take shape. If a woman could work in a

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factory, why could she not vote? ~~Through the~~ Through the years between the two world wars, women were granted the right to vote ~~the~~ ~~beginning~~ beginning with the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and the U.K. In Western Europe, ~~the~~ ~~suffrage~~ suffrage began to be granted to ~~one of Europe's~~ ~~oppressed~~ oppressed groups.

The first world war ~~was~~ ~~a~~ changed the face of European culture and society forever. Women were now empowered, the governments were forced to deal with unemployment and the ~~events~~ events that would lead to the second greatest world tragedy, ~~the~~ the Holocaust had been set in motion.