

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE GREAT WAR

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649290475

The psychology of the great war by G. R. Stirling Taylor

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

G. R. STIRLING TAYLOR

**THE PSYCHOLOGY
OF THE GREAT WAR**

**THE PSYCHOLOGY
OF THE GREAT WAR**

Nov
T2415p

THE
PSYCHOLOGY
OF THE
GREAT WAR

BY
G. R. STIRLING TAYLOR

LONDON
MARTIN SECKER
NUMBER FIVE JOHN STREET
ADELPHI

1365-40
2/7/15

TO
M. G.
AND THE
LATIN SPIRIT

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. The Factors Involved	9
II. The Foundations of Modern Europe	17
III. Germany	24
IV. France	61
V. Russia	98
VI. Austria and Servia	148
VII. General Conclusions	177

I: THE FACTORS INVOLVED

It is a reasonable assumption that the greater part of Europe, in the month of August 1914, did not get to the work of promiscuous slaughter from any hasty, passing whim. After nearly two thousand years of (somewhat reluctant) submission to the religion of Christian fellowship, the chief European races had been compelled at last to acknowledge that a decision by the sword and the gun was too near the methods of the savage to be adopted by respectable people. It was seen quite clearly that we could no longer pleasantly indulge in superior allusions to the Dark Ages and the Barbaric epoch if our own hands were not comparatively clean of blood and gunpowder. Besides, it was generally agreed that, quite apart from any Christian sentiment of brotherly love, a better method had been discovered of conquering our fellow-men. When the modern man feels the desire of conquest and piracy, he goes into trade, or he becomes a banker. It is safer than the old method, and the profits are higher. It was all very well for the simple-minded Mohammed and the German princes of the Thirty Years War of Religion to preach dominance by the sword. The manufacturers and merchants of Manchester and Chicago, of Berlin and Milan and Petrograd, had decided that their ledgers and banking accounts would get into intolerable disorder if wild men kept shooting through the office windows.

10 PSYCHOLOGY OF THE GREAT WAR

At least such appeared to be the position. Therefore, it seems obvious that no mere scratching on the surface of modern affairs is likely to give any sufficient reason for this volcanic eruption of 1914, just as the travellers to Vesuvius will not get a very correct idea of the mountain's fire by digging in the gardens round Naples.

The basis of this book is the belief that it is impossible to get even the most trivial understanding of the cause and cure of this Great War without a general knowledge of the history of the nations that are fighting it. One very recent event in Germany will show how closely this War is linked with the oldest history of European affairs. A book by Herr Bloem, "Das eiserne Jahr," which has sold by the thousand in Berlin during this year, put into print the statement that France could no longer be regarded as a factor in the politics of the world, and continued: "Rome has fallen, Spain is humbled, Italy is worn out . . . we are in the presence of the bankruptcy of the Romance civilisation"—the modest assumption being that it was now the turn of another stock of ideas, the Teutonic.

Now that statement can only be weighed by a reference to the history of Europe during the two thousand years wherein the Latin or Romance dominance has existed. It is a record which, as a matter of fact, will not be judged by arm-chair philosophers, of however Teutonic a stolidity of learning and research. It is only the Ages that can judge the Ages. Nevertheless, a few of the broadest facts of history may be profitably recalled to the mind of those who are audacious enough to seek the reasons for this stupendous Great War of 1914. The German minds have raised it to the dignity of an empire build-

THE FACTORS INVOLVED 11

ing which is to replace the structure of Rome. Let us take them at their estimate and examine the general evidence.

Beneath the historical evidence, it will quickly be discovered that there is the still older fact of Race. There is no happier hunting-ground for the rash freedom of generalisation than the subject of racial distinctions. Teuton, Celt, Slav and Latin are terms bandied about with a confidence that is by no means always justified by the facts. At the best, the knowledge of the origin and the present distribution of races is a dark, unexplored continent of Science. Probably, every great nation is made up of the most confused mixture of more clearly defined stocks.

It will be necessary to recall in this book that the War of 1914 cannot comfortably be summed up as a great racial struggle between a Teutonic race in the middle, fighting Slavs on the east and south; Celtic-Latins on the west side, and Anglo-Saxons in the north. On closer examination it will be found that there is much Teutonic blood in France; still more Celtic blood in Germany and Austria; there are many Slavs in Germany; while the history of Russia, although not its population, has been dominated by Teutonic blood throughout.

This War is indeed a great clashing of races, but the problem is not so simple as many have hastily assumed. Still more have most failed to realise the close cousinship of the Slav and the Celt. The Slav of Western Russia and Galicia and the Breton peasant are perhaps the purest stocks of Europe; and there is considerable evidence that the two are of closer kinship than anything which binds them to many of their nearer neighbours.