



The Eastern Front

(from the viewpoint of the Triple Alliance/Central Powers)

Adopted from the PowerPoint, Textbook, and Internet Sources

World War One was known as a two-front war because the Central Powers were effectively fighting on two lines, or fronts, because the allies were on both sides. On the East they were confronted with the Russian Empire, and on the West they were confronted by Great Britain, France, and Italy. This caused an extra strain on the manpower and resources of the Central Powers as a whole as Germany and Austria-Hungary were effectively surrounded. The Ottoman Empire had their



own struggles as they also had to worry about the balkans and the high number of ethnicities that were mixed and living there. The two fronts of the war were named the Western and the Eastern Fronts due to the side that they fell on, in reference to Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The Eastern Front was the front of World War 1 that stretched from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea and involved most of Eastern Europe and parts of Central Europe. The Eastern Front does not have as long or rich of a history as the Western Front however, it does provide a completely different experience for the soldiers in this theatre.

The Eastern Front was much more fluid than its Western counterpart, even leading to a revolution in one of the warring countries. After losing battles in Romania, Serbia, and Albania the Russian Empire took to the offense by invading Prussia in 1914. However, the Central Powers recovered and by midway through 1915 the Russian armies had been driven from East Prussia; in 1916 and 1917, in counterattacks the Russians suffered massive casualties, which undermined the popularity of the czar and his government and helped to eventually give rise to the bolsheviks. V.I. Lenin, when he rose to power in Russia, promised to withdraw Russia from the war (completed in early 1918). This was a huge achievement for the Central Powers as they would now no longer need to fight a two-front war and could focus all of their efforts and troops on the Western Front.

The Eastern Front also saw the battle of Gallipoli as the Ottoman Empire closed off Allied ships from the Dardanelles which was a strategic link to the Black Sea and fellow ally, the Russian Empire. The Allies then sent a massive force to reopen the Dardanelles, but what ensued was a 10 month battle that cost more than 200,000 casualties. The goal of opening the Dardanelles was a complete failure.

The Arab Revolt did not occur on the Eastern Front, but instead took place in the Middle East. The goal of the revolt was to establish a unified and independent Arab state from Syria to Yemen of which the British promised to recognize. They were successful and eventually set up a short-lived monarchy led by Faisal and the French and British would later partition the area into their own territories of control and effectively broke their promise.

The war did not just take place only on land, but it also took place in the skies and in the seas in and around Europe. It was a global war (especially by the end of the war because the United States entered the war) before the United States joined in 1917 because it also took place in Africa. Africa was a theatre of the war because of Imperialism and how Africa had been carved up in the "Scramble for Africa" that took place at the Berlin Conference. At the Berlin Conference the European nations had agreed how Africa would be claimed as imperial possessions and colonies.

As all of these nations had already been industrialized many of the new forms of transportation had become a part of the war as tanks replaced horses and the cavalry, the airplane (first flight by the Wright Brothers) and zeppelin's helped to "spy" from the sky, and submarines helped to bring other nations into the war through unrestricted submarine warfare on the high seas.