

Russia's role in world war one



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Russia played a strong role in WW1 until the treaty of Brest-Litovsk removed them from WW1 and allowed them to focus on the Russian Revolution. WW1 affected Russia in more ways than one. The Russian Empire's many ethnic minorities grew increasingly restive under Russian domination. But it was the government's inefficient prosecution of World War I that finally provided the challenge the old regime could not meet.

Russia's civil wars were affected by foreign troops. The civil war was complicated by Allied intervention in Russia. British, French, and American forces occupied (Mar., 1918) Murmansk and later Arkhangelsk with the stated purpose of protecting Allied stores (*Research in Context* . com) Almost 15 million served in the Russian Army during the First World War. Casualties totalled an estimated 1.8 million killed, 2.8 million wounded and 2.4 million taken prisoner.

The Russian Revolution eliminated Russia as an effective participant in the war, although the Austro-Hungarians were unsuccessful in their attacks on Serbia and Montenegro in the first year of the war. Russia ordered a general mobilization of its armies. The next day Germany sent the tsar an ultimatum threatening war if Russia didn't stop the mobilization within twenty-four hours. When Russia refused, on August 1, Germany declared war on Russia. Germany followed this up with an invasion of Belgium. (*Research in Context* . com)

When World War I broke out in 1914, most elements of Russia (except the Bolsheviks) united in supporting the war effort. However, the repeated

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military reverses, the acute food shortages, the appointment of inept ministers, and the intense suffering of the civilian population created a revolutionary climate by the end of 1916.

The first offensive Russia launched was in August 1914, against Germany in East Prussia. The Russian First Army (commanded by Rennenkampf) aimed straight into the heart of East Prussia (held by the German Eighth Army), while the Russian Second Army (commanded by Samsonov) aimed to cut off the Eighth army's line of retreat. Once Eastern Prussia was secure, the Russian Ministry of War planned to march on Berlin.

On the outbreak of the First World War General Alexander Samsonov was given command of the Russian Second Army for the invasion of East Prussia. He advanced slowly into the south western corner of the province with the intention of linking up with General Paul von Rennenkampf advancing from the north east.

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Russia entered the first world war with the largest army in the world, standing at 1, 400, 000 soldiers; when fully mobilized the Russian army expanded to over 5, 000, 000 soldiers (though at the outset of war Russia could not arm all its soldiers, having a supply of 4. 6 million rifles).

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Treaty of (brÄ•st-lÄtöfskÊ¹), separate peace treaty in World War I, signed by Soviet Russia and the Central Powers, Mar. 3, 1918, at Brest-Litovsk (now Brest , Belarus)..

After the separate armistice of Dec. 5, 1917, long, bitter negotiations were conducted by Leon Trotsky for Russia, Richard von Kühlmann for Germany, and Count Ottokar Czernin for Austria-Hungary (the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria were also represented).

On March 3, 1918, in the city of Brest-Litovsk, located in modern-day Belarus near the Polish border, Russia signed a treaty with the Central Powers (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Ottoman Empire, Bulgaria) ending its participation in World War I (1914-18).

With the November 11, 1918, armistice ending World War I and marking the Allies' victory over Germany, the treaty was annulled. By the terms of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles, Germany was forced to give up its territorial gains from the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk.

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