

- 1916
 - FR army = weakened at end 1915
 - Ger focus = bleed FR dry; force surrender
 - Target = Verdun
 - Lay in a “salient”
 - Verdun = historic
 - Heart = citadel w/ double rings of forts
 - 1880s = forts modernized
 - In between = network of “linked” positions
 - Gen Joseph Joffre believes fixed defense = obsolete
 - Verdun slowly stripped
 - Object of Verdun “is not to defeat but to annihilate FR”
 - Falkenhayn’s plan = meat grinder
 - Preparations take 3 months
 - Plan = massive bombardment along 8 mile stretch
 - Bombardment paused as ruse
 - Ground attack began at 4pm
 - At head = *Stoßtruppen*
 - Ger advance = fast, but stalls
 - Commit any more resources

- Ger correctly anticipated FR protect Verdun
- Petain didn't hesitate to sacrifice troops
- Ger attacks & FR counter-attacks continue
- July – Dec slowly drive Ger back
- Battle of Verdun = 11 months
- Falkenhayn's operation almost successful
 - But failure cost him his position
- Joint Brit & FR offensive launched in the Somme
 - NOTE: Haig's target = Flanders
 - Joffre wanted attack at Somme
 - Somme eventually became Brit operation
 - Haig thought Ger strategy lacked imagination
 - Had 18 divisions at start of attack
 - NOTE: 11 divisions from Kitchener's New Army
 - "Big Push"; Gers ready for
 - 1st two weeks = losses high; gains minuscule
 - NOTE: Brits ordered to "walk"
 - In midst of battle, historic event took place
 - Oct, 1914, 1st plan submitted to Brit army
 - » Major Ernest Dunlop Swinton

- » Swinton contacts Lt.Col. Maurice Hankey
- » Hankey tried convincing Lord Kitchener
- » Then tried Committee of Imperial Defense
- » NOTE: 1st Lord of Admiralty Winston Churchill =member
- Original proposal = gigantic steel roller, pushed by tracked tractors
 - » Churchill convinced Prime Minister HH Asquith
 - » BUT, 1st design failed; army rejects
- Opportunity for Churchill
 - » Created “Land ship Committee”
 - » Project nicknamed = “tank”
 - » Sept 1915, first model = Little Willy
 - » Lt/ Walter Gordon Wilson redesigns
 - » Result = “Big Willie”, later Mother – formally Mark I
- 1st 50 tanks shipped to FR in August 1916
 - Planned to terrify Gers
 - Plan vs. reality
 - Result = Too few to impact battle’s outcome
 - » NOTE: FR complained sacrificed secrecy of weapon
- Battle of Somme eventually become war of attrition
- Battle ended in Nov

- Verdun impacts War in East
 - Russia urged to launching offensive
 - Target = Vilna
 - But 1916 same as 1915
 - “Big” offensive = Battle of Lake Narocz
 - Exception = Brusilov Offensive
 - Gen Aleksei Brusilov presented plan
 - Target = Galicia
 - Two main sectors: 1) near Lutsk & 2) river valleys near Romania
 - Sapper trenches dug
 - Attack commenced on June 4
 - Aus-Hun incompetence = clear
 - Ger forced to withdraw forces from West
 - BUT fate intervened - Brusilov = victim of own success
 - Needs General Aleksei Evert to attack Ger around Vilna
 - Brusilov launches second attack on Aus
 - Result = offensive ran out of steam; it = indecisive
 - Romania enters war
 - Waited 2 years; then join Entente
 - Sept thrust into Transylvania

- Ran smack-dab into Falkenhayn
- Falkenhayn launches offensive against Romania
 - It = joint operation w/ August von Mackensen
 - Falkenhayn & Mackensen meet up outside Bucharest
 - Capital falls on Dec 6
 - Ger use “gentle” approach
 - Result = costly for Romania
- On Italian front, progress remained nonexistent
 - Multiple battles for the Isonzo
 - Conrad attempts strike thru Trentino
 - Plan vs. reality
 - Initial attacks successful
 - But, snows melt
 - Plus impact of Brusilov offensive
- Shocking news appears in 1916
 - Johannes Lepsius send report to Berlin
 - Report = *Report on the situation of the Armenian People in Turkey*
 - Armenians = ancient people
 - Thru mid-19th Cen, allowed to prosper
 - Many moved freely throughout empire

- Things changed during 19th cen
 - 1880s & 1890s, isolated accounts of assaults
 - Worst = Oct 1895
 - News of pogroms does not travel far
- In 1908, revolution occurred in Ottoman Empire
 - Movement spearheaded by Young Turks
 - Armenians joined
 - Young Turks experience slow metamorphosis
- In 1913, “triumvirate” seize control of gov’t
 - Enver Pasha = Minister of War
 - Mehmed Talaat Pasha = Minister of Internal Affairs
 - Ahmed Djemal Pasha = Military Governor of Constantinople
- Outbreak of WWI alarms Armenian leaders
 - Feared Ottoman entry in war
 - Pleaded w/ Young Turks to maintain neutrality
 - To Young Turks, this = sign of weakness
 - Begin formulating plans to use “fog of war”
- Early 1915, war going badly for Empire
 - Armenians = made to be scapegoats
 - Process = incremental

- 1st = all Armenians to be disarmed
 - » Both in army & civilians
- Then direct action commences
 - » Deportations begin
 - » Announcement = all “civilians” in “war zones” to be moved
- Reports of attacks by Kurds
- Launching of “eliticide” in Constantinople
- May 27 - “Temporary Law of Deportation”
- Sept 27 - Law of Confiscation & Expropriation
- Soon all of Asia Minor in motion
 - Entire nation melted away
 - Others join in
- Young Turks implement broad-scale mobilization
 - Focus = obliterate memory of Armenian people
 - Made genocide a “popular” event
- Global awareness slow
 - Lepsius wrote 1st report in 1916
 - Others caught wind
 - Ex. JB Jackson wrote to Henry Morgenthau
 - Morgenthau confronts Enver personally

- But no wide spread outcry
- Result = 1.5 million Armenian, 850,000 Greeks, 500,000 Assyrians