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SIX MONTHS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD:

THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE OF 1919

COURSE GUIDE

Professor Margaret MacMillan
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

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Course Syllabus

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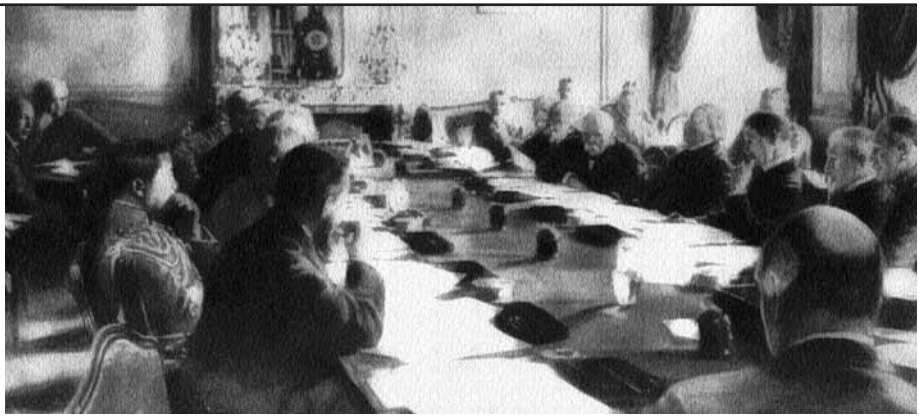
About Your Professor

Margaret MacMillan

Margaret MacMillan is the provost of Trinity College and a professor of history at the University of Toronto. She was an undergraduate at Trinity, earning an Honours BA in 1966 in history. Her graduate work was at the University of Oxford, where she earned a B.Phil. in politics and a D.Phil. on the British in India. She was a member of the History Department at Ryerson from 1975 to 2002 and also served as chair of the department. Teaching areas include Asian history, modern European civilization, and international relations. She teaches a fourth-year seminar on the Cold War in the University of Toronto's International Relations Program. She was editor of the *International Journal* between 1995 and 2002. She has served on the boards of the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library and the Ontario Heritage Foundation and is currently on the boards of the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the Churchill Society for Parliamentary Democracy, and the Atlantic Council of Canada. She has written numerous articles and book reviews for both scholarly and nonscholarly publications. Her books include *Women of the Raj* (1988) and *Peacemakers: The Paris Conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to End War* (2001), published in the United States as *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (2002). In the United Kingdom, the book won the Duff Cooper Prize, the PEN Hessell-Tiltman Prize for history, and the Samuel Johnson Prize for nonfiction. In the United States, the book won the Silver Medal in the Council on Foreign Relations Arthur Ross Book Award. She coedited with Francine McKenzie *Parties Long Estranged: Canada and Australia in the Twentieth Century* (2003). Her latest book, *Nixon in China: The Week That Changed the World* (titled *Nixon and Mao* in the United States) was nominated in January 2007 for a Gelber Prize, awarded annually to the best book on international affairs published in English. Dr. MacMillan appears frequently in the media commenting on both history and current international affairs.

You will get the most out of this course if you have Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2001).



Conferees at the Paris Peace Talks, 1919

Introduction

The world will never see another peace conference like the one that took place in Paris in 1919. For six months, the world's major leaders—including Woodrow Wilson, president of the United States; David Lloyd George, prime minister of Great Britain; and Georges Clemenceau, prime minister of France—met to discuss the peace settlements that were to end World War I. They faced huge issues and, as the weeks went by, their agenda grew. Because Paris saw such a concentration of power, the world's problems came before it and petitioners for political, social, and economic causes came to get a hearing.

The peace conference dealt with, among other things, winding up the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires; punishing Germany; creating Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and Iraq; setting up the League of Nations and the International Labour Organization; regulating international waterways and aviation; and feeding refugees. A great war had just ended and political and social structures were collapsing in parts of Europe and the Middle East. New borders had to be established. The peacemakers in Paris worked under great pressures, including public opinion, forces of revolutionary communism that had been set off by the Russian Revolution of 1917, and ethnic nationalism. They made many decisions, many of which have been criticized ever since. Some have argued that the peace settlements of 1919 led directly to the outbreak of World War II in 1939.

To understand what happened in Paris in 1919 is to understand the twentieth century. The burial requiems for the old world were sung there and the new world made its uneasy start. Much of the world we live in today is shaped by decisions made all those years ago. The peace conference was about many things: punishing the defeated, to begin with, and rewarding the victors. It dismembered old states and created new ones. It was about disarmament, slavery, and child labor. It was about Europe, but it was also about the Middle East, the South Pacific, Africa, and Asia. It was the first truly global international conference. Above all, it was about building a better world. Can there be a peaceful and just international order? The question is still with us today.

Lecture 1:
The Paris Peace Conference of 1919

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (introduction and chapter 1).

Introduction

The Paris Peace Conference came at the end of the worst war Europeans had ever seen. More than twenty-million men had been killed on the battlefields. (Modern war had not yet begun to kill civilians in large numbers.) Russia had collapsed into revolution and civil war and there were fears that anarchy would spread through Europe and the world. Four empires—the Russian, the German, the Austro-Hungarian, and the Ottoman—had collapsed, so new political structures and new borders had to be created. We will look at the circumstances in which the peacemakers met in Paris, the many issues facing them, and the hopes and wishes of the public.

The Setting

Paris in 1919 was still one of the most beautiful cities in the world, but signs of the war were everywhere. For six months, from January to June, many of the world's most important people were assembled there in a peace conference unlike any other.

The Context: World War I

The chain of events leading to World War I started with the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne at Sarajevo in June 1914. Through a series of decisions, in some cases miscalculations, Europe slid into a general war by August. Because of the way in which the war started, there was going to be a debate—which still has not ended—about whose fault it was. While most people expected that the hostilities would be over by Christmas, the war turned into a stalemate, which dragged on until November 1918, consuming huge numbers of lives and tremendous resources. It is often seen as the first "total war." Not surprisingly, it also produced increasingly large war aims.

The Combatants

On one side were the Allies, the British Empire, France, and Russia, later joined by Japan and Italy and several smaller European nations. On the other side were the Central Powers, Germany and Austria-Hungary, and then the Ottoman Empire and Bulgaria.

The Russian Revolution

In 1917, Russia had a series of revolutions culminating in the Bolshevik seizure of power in October. The Bolsheviks under Vladimir Ilyich Lenin immediately sued for peace with Germany and, in March 1918, signed the Treaty of Brest-Litvosk. The Allies feared the military consequences and that Bolshevism would spread across Europe.

The Entry of the United States

In 1917, the United States entered on the Allied side for a number of reasons, but, in the end, they did so largely because the German High Command had decided to attack American merchant shipping. The American president, Woodrow Wilson, did not share all the war aims of the Europeans.

The End of the War

The end of the war came surprisingly quickly in the autumn of 1918. In September, Bulgaria was the first of the Central Powers to ask for an armistice.

The Collapse of Austria-Hungary

Austria-Hungary could no longer fight on. It faced economic and social disintegration and several of its various nationalities were starting to demand independence. On October 7, it asked for an armistice.

Germany's Defeat

German armies had suffered a series of defeats in August and September 1918. On October 3, the German government sent a cable to President Wilson asking for an armistice. This started a series of negotiations that resulted in the armistice of November 11, but which later gave rise to disagreements about what the armistice actually meant and whether Germany had really been defeated. These were to have consequences for the peace.

The End of the Ottoman Empire

On October 20, the Ottoman Empire, which had already lost control of its Arab territories, asked for an armistice. It was unlikely that it would keep the rest, mostly today's Turkey.

Europe in 1919

Europe was a deeply troubled continent in 1919. The war had left a huge loss of lives and war damage, particularly in such countries as France, Belgium, and Serbia.

THE INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC OF 1919

The most destructive world epidemic in recorded history started as World War I (1914–1918) was ending. It caused at least 20 million deaths for certain, twice as many deaths as the war itself, and possibly very many more.

When and where the pandemic began is uncertain, but because Spain experienced the first major outbreak, the disease came to be called the Spanish flu. The virus was exceptionally lethal, with many of the deaths among young adults age twenty to forty, a group usually not severely affected by influenza.

It first appeared in Glasgow in Great Britain in May of 1918, eventually killing some 228,000 people in the British Isles despite desperate government measures such as spraying the streets with chemicals and giving people anti-germ masks to wear.

By the end of December of that year, the toll in the United States reached 450,000. But the worst losses seem to have been in India.

The disease first appeared in Bombay, India's principal port city, now known as Mumbai, in June 1918. The country was caught totally unprepared and was unable to cope with the problem. Many of the country's doctors were serving with the British Army.

In the end, some historians estimate that between June of 1918 and July of 1919, over 160 million may have died from influenza.

The influenza epidemic, economic collapse, and social and political unrest caused even more misery. Ethnic nationalism, in its own way as revolutionary as Bolshevism, was riding high, especially in central Europe.

Pressures on the Peacemakers

The peacemakers brought their own agendas, but they also were under pressure from their own publics and from world opinion. These pressures often were contradictory.

Role of the Press and Public Opinion

The Peace Conference of 1919 was one of the first major international gatherings to take place in the public gaze. Over seven hundred journalists came to Paris. Since almost all the peacemakers came from democratic countries, they had to worry about voters back home.

Demands for Retribution

The war had been so dreadful that there was a widespread feeling that someone should pay for the damage and some people should be punished for starting it.

Hopes for a Better World

Hopes that a better world would come out of the destruction were also widespread. The question was how to do this.

Limits on Power

We often assume that the peacemakers had a free hand. In fact, they were dealing with forces such as Bolshevism and ethnic nationalism, which were difficult to contain. And their own power was shrinking day by day.

Conclusion

Who would be making the peace? The peacemakers brought their own national agendas and their own likes and dislikes to Paris. We must understand both the individuals and the forces with which they had to work to understand how they made the peace settlements.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was the attitude of Americans toward Europe at the end of World War I?
2. What were the human casualty tolls of World War I and how did this affect the population, cultures, and politics of the key countries involved in the peace to come?
3. Consider what is meant by the slogan “a Wilsonian Peace.” What were the key elements of Woodrow Wilson’s plan for peace?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Ferro, Marc. *The Great War, 1914–1918*. Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1973.

Herwig, Holger. *The Outbreak of World War I: Causes and Responsibilities*. 5th ed. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co., 1991.

Stevenson, David. *The First World War and International Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Websites to Visit

1. Documents from World War I (including text of the Treaty of Brest-Litvosk) — www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/
2. Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library — www.woodrowwilson.org

Recorded Books

Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Frank Muller. Recorded Books. 5 cassettes/7 hours.

Tuchman, Barbara. *The Guns of August*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Ian Stuart. Recorded Books. 12 cassettes/17.5 hours.

Lecture 2:
The Peace Conference Meets in Paris

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapter 2).

Introduction

There were many precedents for major international conferences. In 1814–1815, for example, the Congress of Vienna met to wind up the Napoleonic Wars. Much of what the Paris Peace Conference had to deal with was similar: setting the terms for the defeated nations, drawing borders, and establishing the peace. On the other hand, the range of issues was much greater and included much of the non-European world, from the Middle East to Asia and Africa. In addition, public scrutiny and public expectations were now a very real factor in a way that they had not been a century earlier. Here we look at the nature of the peace conference, the major players, and some of the many petitioners and advocates who tried to gain their attention.

Calling a Peace Conference

The precedent that the peacemakers kept in mind was the Congress of Vienna. They expected that they would sit down with the defeated nations and hammer out terms. The Allies decided, however, to meet briefly first and agree on a common approach. What was meant to be a preliminary peace conference gradually turned into the real one. As the weeks went along, the major peacemakers increasingly worked with each other in small meetings.

Personnel of the Peace Conference

Allied leaders came to Paris, along with their foreign ministers, diplomats, military, and financial advisers. This was also the first time that specialists such as bankers and academics played an important role in international negotiations.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE
(32 countries were invited)

United States	Serbia	Haiti
Great Britain	Poland	Greece
Canada	New Zealand	Japan
Uruguay	Portugal	Guatemala
Siam	Panama	Ecuador
France	India	Belgium
Czechoslovakia	Liberia	Cuba
Australia	Italy	China
Rumania	Peru	Brazil
South Africa	Hedjaz	Bolivia

The Participants and Their Agendas

What were the goals of the peacemakers as they met in Paris in January 1919? Each nation brought different aims to the discussions.

The British Empire

Great Britain controlled the world's biggest empire, but it had to consider the wishes of its dominions (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and South Africa) and to a lesser extent India, because all had made very important contributions to the war effort. Britain's power had declined in certain ways during the war while that of its dominions had increased. Nevertheless, the British Prime Minister, David Lloyd George, still played a dominant role both in the British Empire Delegation and at the peace conference. Britain came to Paris in a strong position because it had already gained much of what it wanted, in particular, Germany's colonies and the destruction of the German navy. It was concerned, though, about the growth of American naval power, and this was to lead to tension in Paris with the United States.

France

France had feared Germany since the latter was created in 1871, and had suffered great losses in the recent war. French demands in Paris were largely concerned with getting war damages out of Germany, punishing it, and preventing it from threatening France in the future. The French prime minister, Georges Clemenceau, was the oldest of the Big Three's leaders. He believed that maintaining the alliance with Great Britain and the United States would help to protect France from Germany.

The United States

The United States was a new power on the world scene. It had entered the war because Germany threatened it, not to gain anything for itself. The president, Woodrow Wilson, expressed the hopes of many people around the world, as well as in North America, that a new world order could be built based on principles of fairness and justice. Wilson's ideas are expressed in his famous Fourteen Points and include the notions of national self-determination and collective security through a League of Nations. His decision to lead the American delegation to Paris himself caused controversy at the time and may have cost him political support later on.

In the end, the peace conference had thirty-two nations participating. Some, such as Costa Rica and Portugal, played insignificant roles, but several others are worth noting.

Italy

Italy counted as one of the Big Four and its prime minister, Vittorio Orlando, was included in the exclusive Council of Four that started meeting in March 1919. In fact, Italy was the weakest of the powers. Italian goals tended to focus narrowly on territorial gain; Italy had entered the war in 1916 after weighing the offers from both sides. One area where Italy hoped to make gains was on the east side of the Adriatic, where the disintegration of Austria-Hungary apparently left its territories up for grabs.

Japan

Japan counted as one of the Big Five and, at first, participated in the important meetings of the Supreme Council (or Council of Ten) until these were dropped in favor of the Council of Four. Japan was an Asian power but not yet a world one and was included as a courtesy to its ally, Great Britain. The Japanese had clear territorial goals as well as the one of achieving recognition as the equals of Westerners.

Some Smaller Powers

Belgium and Serbia had both suffered terribly during the war and both hoped for recompense and some territorial gain. Greece had designs on much of the Turkish coast of Asia Minor. China wanted to recover its own territory that had been under German control. Rumania wanted, among other things, a large piece of Hungary.

The Petitioners

Because there was such a concentration of power in Paris for those six months, petitioners came from around the world. These included national groups who wanted their own countries, for example, Poles, Czechs, Armenians, Irish, Kurds, or Ukrainians. They also included interest groups such as women, labor, African-Americans, or peoples from the European empires.

Conclusion

As the Peace Conference opened at the end of January 1918, it already had a long list of issues before it: drawing up peace terms for the defeated nations, sorting out the borders in the center of Europe and the Middle East, rebuilding the war-shattered economy of Europe, and, finally, making a better world.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What are the ways the Paris Peace Conference served as a sort of world government?
2. Are there similarities between the organization of the League of Nations and the United Nations?
3. Besides nationalist groups, what other types of groups came to the peace conference?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Dockrill, Michael L., and J. Douglas Goold. *Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences, 1919–1923*. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1981.

Nicolson, Harold. *Peacemaking 1919*. London: Methuen, 1964.

Sharp, Alan. *The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking in Paris, 1919*. London: Macmillan, 1991.

Websites to Visit

1. A variety of information regarding the Paris Peace Conference, including the speech of the French president at the opening of the conference — www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/FWWversailles.htm
2. Yale Law Library collection of historical documents — www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/avalon.htm

Recorded Books

Smith, Gene. *When the Cheering Stopped: The Last Years of Woodrow Wilson*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Nelson Runger. Recorded Books. 8 cassettes/11 hours.

Lecture 3:
New Forces in International Relations

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapter 6).

Introduction

Woodrow Wilson's ideas about a new world order were not the only ones in the world of 1919. The new rulers of Russia, the Bolsheviks (soon to rename themselves the Communists), were Marxists who believed, among other things, that revolution was going to break out in Europe and then possibly the rest of the world and that, as a result, a new socialist international order would be created in which there would be no more barriers between nations and indeed no more nationalism. The Bolshevik ideas and hopes were challenged not only by Wilson's liberal international order but by the rising tide of nationalism, in particular ethnic nationalism. Here we will look at the peacemakers in Paris as they decided how to deal with these new currents and how to deal with Russia itself.

Russian Bolshevism

Lenin and the Bolsheviks got their ideas from Karl Marx and his European followers who believed that history was governed by immutable laws and was moving in the direction of a classless, communal society—communism. Lenin had given his own twist to these ideas and during the war had seen the chance to move history ahead rapidly. The old Russian regime collapsed in February 1917.

The Russian Revolution of 1917

Russia had a brief but chaotic period of democratic rule after February 1917, but the Bolsheviks were able to seize power in October 1917. A civil war started almost immediately. The Allies watched with concern and sent troops to protect their interests, their supply routes, and a Czech legion that had got itself caught on the Trans-Siberian railway. In March 1918, the new Bolshevik government concluded the treaty of Brest-Litovsk with Germany. This was significant both for the war itself and in shaping Allied attitudes toward Germany when peace finally came.

Allied Intervention in Russia

The Allies—among them Britain, France, Japan and the United States—initially sent troops into Russia to help the war effort, but they increasingly got drawn into the Russian civil war between the Bolshevik Reds and the non-Bolshevik Whites. That had long-term consequences for relations between what became the Soviet Union and the West.

Bolshevik Foreign Policy

Both Leon Trotsky, the Bolshevik now responsible for Russia's foreign relations, and Lenin expected that a worldwide revolution would follow the revolutions in Russia. In 1919, they issued a call for delegates from left-wing parties and unions around the world to come to Moscow to form a new Communist International (Comintern), which would act as the executive coordinator for world revolution. The Bolsheviks had little interest in what they saw as obsolete international relations.

Prospects for World Revolution

Nineteen eighteen and 1919 saw revolutionary outbreaks in Europe and elsewhere. In Germany and Austria, workers and soldiers seized power. There was a communist government briefly in Bavaria and a longer-lived one in Hungary. Most European countries had radical demonstrations, some violent, and strikes. In North America, the International Workers of the World (Wobblies) and the Winnipeg General Strike were signs of turmoil, possibly revolutionary. In Paris, the peacemakers were conscious of the dangers of further revolution. Wilson and his supporters were also aware that the Bolsheviks were holding up an alternative model for a world order. Some petitioners also used the threat of revolution to push their demands.

Allied Policy Toward Russia

There was considerable discussion in Paris over whether to invite Russian representatives to the peace conference. Russia, after all, had been an ally until March 1918. The problem was that it was not clear if it still was an ally or which Russians, White or Red, should be invited. A number of the peacemakers did not want any dealings with the Bolsheviks. It was also not clear that the Bolsheviks would even come if invited. Apart from anything else, Allied troops were still on Russian soil aiding their enemies. Allied policy remained confused throughout the peace conference with an abortive proposal for a conference of all Russians at Prinkipo, a special fact-finding mission by the young American William Bullitt, and a running debate over whether to step up Allied intervention or withdraw Allied troops.

National Self-determination

In the nineteenth century, different groups in Europe had come to see themselves as "nations" united by such factors as a common language, religion, or culture. Once nations emerged, the next step was the demand for a nation-state. Few nations were content to live under the rule of other nations. So in the Balkans, nationalism produced the nations of Greece, Serbia, Rumania, and Bulgaria. In the second half of the nineteenth century, it produced Germany and then Italy. Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, and Russia, all multinational empires, watched with apprehension.

The Role of Woodrow Wilson

Woodrow Wilson has often been said to have created the ethnic nationalisms of the years after World War I. Rather, he gave a spur to what already existed. In his speeches during the war, he helped to popularize the idea of "national self-determination." He himself was not entirely clear what he meant by this,

but most people took it to mean full independence for nations. The idea spread beyond Europe into the Middle East, where groups such as the Arabs and the Kurds began to press for self-determination.

Problems for the Peace Conference

It was not always possible to draw clear ethnic borders, especially in the middle of Europe. The peacemakers set up a series of specialist committees to deal with borders. They tried to deal with the persistence of minorities by making new nations sign Minorities Treaties.

Conclusion

In its first few weeks, it became clear that the peace conference was dealing with a large and expanding agenda. And it had barely begun to deal with major issues such as the peace with Germany. Woodrow Wilson was concerned that his dream of a better world would be shunted to one side so he insisted that the first matter of business for the Big Four should be the League of Nations.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Had nationalism been a factor in international relations before this time?
2. What do you think is the strongest bond that people share to make them a nation?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Link, Arthur S. *Wilson the Diplomatist*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1957.

Mayer, Arno J. *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918–1919*. New York: Knopf, 1967.

Websites to Visit

1. Collection of primary texts relating to the Russian Revolution — http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/modsbook39.html
2. Overview of important dates in Russian history — http://www.departments.bucknell.edu/russian/chrono.html

Recorded Books

Moorehead, Alan. *The Russian Revolution*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Nelson Runger. Recorded Books. 9 cassettes/12.5 hours.

Reed, John. *Ten Days That Shook the World*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Jack Hrkach. Recorded Books. 7 cassettes/10 hours.

Lecture 4:
The League of Nations and Mandates

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapters 7 and 8).

Introduction

A league of nations to keep peace among nations had been discussed in various countries even before World War I. Woodrow Wilson, the American president, is the man most usually associated with its coming into existence after 1918. He insisted that it be put on the top of the agenda at the Paris Peace Conference and he himself chaired the commission that drew up the League's covenant. We will look at Wilson's role, the work of the commission, and the debates over the League's constitution.

Woodrow Wilson and Colonel Edward House

Woodrow Wilson is a complicated and controversial figure. His political career was based on reform at home and peace abroad, yet he led the United States into the war. He was clear, however, that the United States would not play what he saw as the old games of diplomacy, which included secret agreements and the naked exercise of power. He wanted a new world order and the League was at the center of his vision. He did not, however, spell out his ideas clearly before the Peace Conference started. Wilson was also convinced that public opinion, in Europe and in the United States, was with him.

Colonel House was Wilson's right-hand man. He shared the president's ideas and worked closely with him during the war and the peace conference. Like Wilson and many of the other Americans on the U.S. delegation, he felt that European ways were out-of-date and that the United States should use its increased power to pressure Europeans into a new way of doing things. Wilson and House were later to fall out, perhaps over the German terms, perhaps for other reasons.

Historians' Debates

Did Wilson and House come up with the idea of a league as an answer to Lenin's vision of a new communist world? Was there a gulf between the Americans and the Europeans?

Pre-war Ideas and the League

Europeans, particularly in Western Europe, had been discussing many of the ideas that helped to shape the League years before the war. Liberals had long been interested in limiting war, through arms limitations, for example, or conventions, and in finding alternative ways of settling disputes such as arbitration. The left had tried to coordinate unions and political parties to resist war. The Second International had called for a general strike if war should come.

The Negotiation of the League Covenant

The Commission on the League met in House's rooms and managed to draw up the Covenant in under a month. The League was to have an executive council with five permanent members and four elected by League members. It would have a secretariat and a General Assembly. An International Labor Organization, whose structure was also being negotiated in Paris, would also be attached to it.

There were a number of divisive issues including that of whether or not the League should have its own armed forces. The French wanted a permanent military alliance with its own forces; the British and the Americans disagreed. In the end, the League remained without its own armed forces. The covenant, however, provided for a series of sanctions against aggressor nations that could culminate in armed force if League members chose.

Mandates

Another issue that came up in connection with the League was that of mandates. The defeat of Germany left its colonies to be disposed of. Wilson was opposed to giving them out as spoils of war to their conquerors. South Africa, which had taken German Southwest Africa; Australia, which had done the same with German New Guinea and some South Pacific Islands; and New Zealand, with German Samoa, all opposed Wilson. The British, who were caught in the middle, helped to broker a deal under which the territories were nominally under the League of Nations, but in reality remained with their conquerors. Canada also played a role in this. Mandates were also going to be an issue with Japan in China and the north Pacific and for Britain and France in the Arab Middle East.

Mid-winter Break

The statesmen in Paris were finding that the conference was keeping them away from home for too long. In the middle of February, President Wilson went back to the United States on a hasty trip for the opening of the new Congress and to deal with domestic issues. Lloyd George went back to London. The peace conference carried on, however, with House standing in for Wilson and Arthur Balfour, the British foreign secretary, for Lloyd George.

Conclusion

In Paris, the mood turned sour as delegates feared the peace conference would never be done. An attempted assassination of Clemenceau, the French prime minister, brought added worry of revolutionary outbreaks. Although much work had been done, there was still much to do. The German treaty was the most pressing item of business.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Did Wilson come to the peace conference with an already shaped plan for the League of Nations?
2. Do you think Wilson's vision was too idealistic to be fully implemented?
3. From where did Colonel House draw his authority?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Hecksher, August. *Woodrow Wilson*. New York: Charles Scribners' Sons, 1991.

Walworth, Arthur. *Wilson and His Peacemakers: American Diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919*. New York: Norton, 1986.

Websites to Visit

1. Covenant of the League of Nations — http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/leagcov.htm
2. League of Nations statistical and disarmament documents — http://www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/league/background.html

Lecture 5:
Germany

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapters 13 to 16).

Introduction

The German peace treaty—Versailles—remains the single most contentious topic of the peace conference. Germans argued right from the start that its terms were too harsh. Germany lost too much territory, had to pay too much in reparations (or war damages), and was unfairly forced to accept responsibility for the war. In time, many of the Allies, especially in the English-speaking countries, came to share such views, and that was to have serious consequences in the 1930s when Hitler came to power in Germany and began to demand revision of the Treaty of Versailles.

Germany and World War I

In 1919, most Allied opinion held Germany responsible for starting World War I. From Wilson to Clemenceau, Allied leaders condemned German militarism and, in particular, Germany's invasion of Belgium and its attack on France. There was much debate about how to punish those in Germany who were particularly responsible, such as Kaiser Wilhelm II and the German High Command. It was only over the years that doubts began to grow about Germany's responsibility for starting the war. The debate has continued up to the present.

German Attitudes

In Germany, certain beliefs about the war and its ending took hold, which were to have a profound impact on the way in which Germans regarded the Treaty of Versailles and the Allies.

Military Defeat

Although German armies were defeated on the battlefield, the High Command and its supporters pushed the "stab-in-the-back" theory, which argued that Germany was prevented from fighting on by traitors at home. In addition, the Allied decision to accept the armistice when Germany offered it meant that Allied troops only occupied a very small part of Germany. German troops marched home in good order and most Germans never saw an Allied occupation.

Surrender on the Basis of Wilson's Principles

Most Germans felt that by accepting Wilson's offer to help them negotiate an armistice, they had been promised that a peace would be made on the basis of Wilson's new diplomacy. In other words, they would suffer no punitive measures and Germans would have as much right of self determination as

anyone else. In any case, since Germany was now a republic, it should not have to pay for the sins of the old regime. The new German government spent the winter of 1918–1919 preparing for what it felt would be full and fair peace negotiations.

Allied Attitudes

The Allies did not see things the way the Germans did. There was a widespread determination, both among leaders and people, that Germany was guilty and should suffer penalties. The Allies differed, though, over how this should be done. Many French would have liked to see a much smaller Germany with an independent or neutral Rhineland to act as a buffer. Britain and the United States would not go for this. Clemenceau recognized the dangers in being too vindictive and so would have settled for an Allied occupation of the Rhineland.

Issues in German Peace: Punishment and Prevention

Among the issues discussed in Paris were trials for war crimes and limits on the size and composition of Germany's military. The military clauses provided for, among other things, a German army of only one hundred thousand men.

Loss of Territory

This was tied to the issue of punishment and prevention, because a smaller Germany would presumably be less menace to its neighbors. In the West, Germany lost some small pieces of territory—Eupen and Malmédy—along the Belgian border and part of Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark. The Rhineland remained Germany but was to be demilitarized with an Allied occupation for fifteen years. The Saar coal-mining area was to be under League of Nation's administration and France was to have the coal from its mines. Germany was also due to lose considerable territory in the east; that will be discussed later in the context of the central European settlement.

The Anglo-American Guarantee to France

To persuade Clemenceau to accept less than many French wanted, Lloyd George and Wilson offered a guarantee that Britain and the United States would come to France's aid if it was attacked by Germany. The guarantee never materialized, leaving the French resentful and afraid.

Conclusion

By the end of March 1919, many of the German terms had been agreed on, but there was still a major question to be decided. How much should Germany be asked to pay in reparations? A debate had already started between those who wanted to squeeze the maximum out of the defeated enemy and those who argued that destroying Germany would only damage Europe's and indeed the world's economy.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was happening in Germany while the peace terms were being drawn up in Paris?
2. What was the significance of the declining birth rate in France?
3. In what ways was Germany to be punished?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Boemeke, Manfred, Gerald D. Feldman, and Elisabeth Glaser, eds. *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment After 75 Years*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and the German Historical Institute, 1998.

Websites to Visit

1. Collection of materials on World War I — http://www.firstworldwar.com
2. BBC-sponsored site on World War I — http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/war/wwone

Lecture 6:
New Nations

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (part 3).

Introduction

Nationalism, as we have already discussed, was a very powerful force in the world of 1919. The collapse of old ruling structures had left much of Europe and the Middle East in a fluid state and one of the most fluid things of all were borders. Some nations, notably Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, managed to establish themselves even before the peace conference met. Others struggled to be born and failed. We look here at the reasons for both success and failure and at the way the peacemakers helped or hindered the new nations.

Czechoslovakia: Background and History

While there had never been a Czechoslovakia, Czech nationalists could look back at the independent kingdom of Bohemia before it was absorbed into the Austrian Empire. Czech nationalism grew in the nineteenth century with a cultural and political revival. Slovakia, which had been under Hungarian rule for centuries, did not experience a similar revival.

Eduard Benes and Tomás Masaryk

Masaryk became the great spokesman for Czech independence within Austria-Hungary, and Benes, who worked closely with him, helped to win over the Allies to the cause of Czechoslovakia. Masaryk was also successful, or so he thought, in winning Slovak support for the new country.

The Collapse of Austria-Hungary

By the time Austria-Hungary collapsed, Czechoslovakia was well on the way to establishing itself. The peace conference merely provided formal recognition.

Allied Attitudes

The Allies were generally sympathetic to Czechoslovakia. The French, in fact, saw it as a potential ally against Germany. At the peace conference, Masaryk and Benes were treated as allies and not former enemies.

Setting Czechoslovakia's Borders

The new country took in the old Austrian territories of Bohemia and Moravia and Hungary's Slovakia. It now included some three million German speakers—the Sudeten or Southern Germans—but this only caused trouble with Germany later on. Unfortunately, Czechoslovakia had a dispute with Poland over the duchy of Teschen, which helped to poison relations between the wars. Of its neighbors, none were really friendly. Its relations with the other

new state of Yugoslavia were good, but the two had no common border.

Czechs and Slovaks

The peoples of the new country turned out to have language in common, but not much else. Different histories, social customs, and values created tensions in the new state that were going to cost it dearly.

Yugoslavia: The South Slavs

Yugoslavia means the "state of the South Slavs," who are those peoples who speak one of the South Slavic languages, for example, Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, or Bulgarian. South Slavs otherwise are divided by history and religion. The line between the Western and Eastern Roman empires and between Catholicism and Orthodoxy runs through the Balkans so that while Serbs and Bulgarians are mainly Orthodox, Croats and Slovenes are Catholic.

Background

The South Slav lands lay on the east-west dividing line between the Ottoman empire and its religion of Islam and the Christian empire of Austria-Hungary. Many South Slavs lived under Austrian rule but many, at least until the nineteenth century, were under Ottoman rule. In the course of the century, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Montenegro emerged as states inhabited mainly by South Slavs. Slovenia and Croatia, though, remained in Austria-Hungary, which also took Bosnia-Herzegovina from the Ottomans in 1908.

The South Slav Movement

Many of the South Slavs in Austria-Hungary dreamed of a state with all South Slavs. The Serbs of Serbia, however, tended to think in terms of a bigger Serbia.

Impact of the War

The war started when Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia for its part in the assassination of the Austrian heir in Sarajevo. Although the Serbian army fought bravely, it was crushed and the Serbian government went into exile. Its prime minister, Pasic, held talks with Croatians from Austria-Hungary and promised a federal state at the end of the war.

The End of the War and the Formation of Yugoslavia

The sudden end to the war and the collapse of Austria-Hungary left Slovenia, Croatia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina on their own. Although their inhabitants briefly thought of independence, they hastily decided to join with Serbia. From the very start Slovenians, Croatians, and Bosnians believed they were joining the Serbians as partners, while Serbians tended to assume they were taking over the former.

Montenegro and the New State

Montenegro's king hoped to keep his kingdom independent, but he no longer had much support either internationally or within Montenegro. A hasty vote led Montenegro to join with the other South Slavs in Yugoslavia.

Allied Attitudes

The Allies were generally sympathetic to the new state except for Italy, which feared it as a rival in the Adriatic.

Yugoslavia's Borders

Yugoslavia tried unsuccessfully to claim a piece of Albania. It did succeed in gaining some small territories from Bulgaria and a significant piece of southern Hungary. On its western borders, it found itself in a dispute with Italy.

Kosovo

Kosovo was under Serbia's control, but a majority of its inhabitants were Albanian. Albania petitioned the peace conference for Kosovo, and in later years Kosovo Albanians themselves complained about Serbian treatment, but no one in 1919 or later paid attention.

Other States

A number of smaller states also achieved independence in this period. Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania emerged out of the Russian empire. Although the Peace Conference could offer little beyond recognition, those countries managed to maintain their independence until World War II. Ukraine was not so fortunate. Further south, Armenia and Georgia both enjoyed brief periods of independence, which were cut short when Russia to the north and the new Turkey to the south agreed to cooperate.

Conclusion

The peacemakers have often been held responsible for the success or failure of new states. In reality, they often played little part. Conditions on the ground and the strengths or weaknesses of the national movements were more important.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Did the peace conference truly create all of these new nations?
2. What future problems for the new state were foreshadowed at the time of the creation of Yugoslavia?
3. Why was Czechoslovakia favored by the peacemakers?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Dockrill, Michael L., and Douglas J. Goold. *Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences, 1919–1923*. Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1981.

Jelavich, Barbara. *History of the Balkans*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Wandycz, Piotr Stefan. *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919–1925: French-Czechoslovak-Polish Relations from the Paris Peace Conference to Locarno*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962.

Recorded Books

Koestler, Arthur. *Darkness at Noon*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Frank Muller. Recorded Books. 6 cassettes/8.25 hours.

Mazower, Mark. *The Balkans: A Short History*. UNABRIDGED. Narrated by Robert O'Keefe. Recorded Books. 5 cassettes/6.5 hours.

Lecture 7:
Poland

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapter 17).

Introduction

Poland had disappeared from the map of Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, its lands divided up among its three neighbors: Russia, Austria-Hungary, and Prussia (later to be incorporated into Germany). The Poles, despite being divided, and in the case of Russia severely repressed, never forgot their dream of a reconstituted country. The war, which saw the defeat of all three of Poland's oppressors, gave Poles their chance. The problem for the peacemakers in Paris was how big the new Poland should be and how its borders, with its six neighbors, should be drawn.

Background and History

Poland has a long and turbulent history. At its height, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it covered a huge part of the central Europe. In 1795, it vanished as a nation, perhaps, it was thought, for good. In the nineteenth century, Poles lived under three different regimes and societies. Those in Austria-Hungary lived in Galicia, one of of the poorest parts of the empire. Those in Germany became relatively prosperous, while those in Russia, which had taken the largest part of Poland, including the capital Warsaw, suffered under an increasingly repressive regime. The Russian Poles rose up several times only to be crushed. Many Poles went into exile in Europe or further afield to North America.

Persistence of Polish Nationalism

In spite of all obstacles, Polish nationalism lived on in underground societies, exile groups, and in the work of its artists. A complicating factor for Polish nationalism was how to deal with peoples such as Lithuanians and western Ukrainians, many of whom were culturally and linguistically close to Poles, but who were beginning to develop their own sense of nationhood. In addition, about a quarter of the population in the core Polish territories was probably Jewish. Were Jews also Poles (as many of them felt themselves to be) or not?

World War I

The war brought challenges and opportunities. Poles found themselves fighting each other, with Russia on the one side, and Germany and Austria-Hungary on the other. Both sides used promises of Polish independence to win over the Poles. In North America and elsewhere, Ignace Paderewski, the great pianist, worked tirelessly to promote the Polish cause. In Poland itself, Jozef Pilsudski, a revolutionary turned soldier, organized the Polish legions that fought for the Central Powers.

1919: The Rebirth of Poland

At the end of the war, Poland's situation and hopes for independence were dramatically improved. All three of its oppressors—Austria-Hungary, Germany, and Russia—had been defeated. The Allies had agreed that Poland should be independent. Indeed, Woodrow Wilson had included Polish independence as one of his Fourteen Points. Pilsudski arrived back in Warsaw and took command with his Polish legions. He started to build a country.

Debates Among Polish Nationalists

While all Poles were overjoyed at Poland's rebirth, they were divided over what sort of Poland it should be. While Pilsudski argued for a smaller Poland that would contain fewer non-Poles, his great opponent, Roman Dmowski, dreamed of a much greater country that would include large numbers of Lithuanians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians.

Poland at the Peace Conference

Poland did not speak with a single voice in Paris—Dmowski represented Poland at the peace conference while Pilsudski remained in Warsaw. Many of the peacemakers grew exasperated both by quarrels among the Poles and what they saw as excessive Polish demands. The French were the most sympathetic to the Poles, partly because France had traditionally supported Polish nationalism, but also because France wanted a strong Poland on the other side of Germany.

Poland's Borders

Drawing borders for Poland was complicated because of the ways in which Poles and non-Poles were mixed up. Poland's borders were set in two ways: In the west they were determined by the peace conference. In the north and the east, they were largely determined on the ground through war, although all were ultimately ratified by treaties.

Borders with Germany

The Polish Commission, set up by the peacemakers, tried to draw borders that left Poles and Germans on the right side. Nevertheless, some two million Germans ended up under Polish rule, something that was resented bitterly by German nationalists. The commission also had to respect Wilson's promise to give Poland secure access to the sea. The result was the Polish Corridor, which gave Poland routes to Danzig (Gdansk). Danzig, which was largely a German city, was placed under the control of the League of Nations. The Corridor divided East Prussia from the rest of Germany, another source of resentment to German nationalists. In the south, Upper Silesia, with its rich coal fields, was eventually divided between Germany and Poland after a plebiscite conducted by the League.

Borders with the Baltic States

Poland's border with the new state of Latvia was settled relatively easily. The one with Lithuania was only settled after war. Pilsudski, who was prepared to see an independent Lithuania, unlike some Polish nationalists, was determined that Poland should have the Lithuanian city of Vilna (Vilnius). The city

changed hands several times, but Poland ultimately seized it. Lithuania retaliated by seizing part of East Prussia, including the port of Memel (Klaipeda).

Borders in the South

Poland quarreled with the new country of Czechoslovakia over the duchy of Teschen, which was finally divided between the two countries. It also claimed the former Austrian province of Galicia. The Allies agreed that the western half, which was significantly Polish, should go to Poland. Eastern Galicia was more difficult, being claimed not only by Poland, but by Ukraine, which was briefly independent, and by local Catholic Ukrainians or Ruthenians. After much confused fighting, Poland simply seized the territory. The Allies recognized its control in 1923.

Borders with Russia

These were the most difficult of all. Poland had many enemies to its east, from Ukrainians to various factions in the Russian civil war. Their main enemies, though, were the Bolsheviks, who saw the Poles both as trying to take Russian territory and as obstacles to the successful spread of Bolshevism westwards. From February 1919, the war between the Bolsheviks and the Poles spread. Initially the Poles were successful, even getting as far as Kiev. By the summer of 1920, though, the Bolsheviks were outside Warsaw. The Poles beat them off and in the Treaty of Riga (March 1921), Poland gained a border with Russia well to the east of what the peacemakers in Paris had recommended.

Conclusion

Poland is a good example of the force of nationalism in the world of 1919 and of the limits to the power of the peacemakers in Paris. Poland's borders in the east, south, and north were set largely by Poland itself. Poland's rebirth also shows the difficulties in drawing ethnic borders in the center of Europe and how those borders provided fuel for future tensions.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Who really was Polish? Were the Jews?
2. How did the Russian Revolution benefit Polish nationalism?
3. Did nationalism influence the creation of Poland's borders more than the decisions made at the peace conference?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Latawski, Paul, ed. *The Reconstruction of Poland, 1914–23*. London: Macmillan, 1992.

Lieven, Anatol. *The Baltic Revolution: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Path to Independence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.

Websites to Visit

International Affairs Resources — http://www.etown.edu/vl/

Lecture 8:
Italy

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapter 22).

Introduction

Italy entered World War I with clear territorial aims. It joined the Allied side largely because the Allies, in the Treaty of London, offered it more than the Central Powers. By 1919, the country was divided politically and in economic and social turmoil. The Italian delegation to the Peace Conference infuriated its fellow peacemakers by insisting doggedly on Italian demands. Italy's claim to Fiume (Rijeka), a port at the top of the Adriatic, which was not included in territory promised to Italy, became a hot issue and led to a confrontation between the Italians and the Americans that seriously threatened the work of the peace conference as a whole.

Italy in 1914

Italy was a new country with an old history. It was divided politically between right and left and socially and economically between north and south. It was the weakest of the great powers in Europe. Nevertheless, it had extensive territorial ambitions, for parts of Austria-Hungary in the north and across the Adriatic, and in Africa and the Middle East. Before the war, it had taken parts of North Africa in what became Libya, but had suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Ethiopians.

The Decision to Enter the War on the Allied Side

Although Italy was tied to the Central Powers through a defensive treaty, it chose to remain neutral when World War I started. Both sides wooed Italy and the Italian government weighed their offers. The Allies were able to offer more because they were giving away Austrian and Ottoman territory. The Treaty of London, signed in 1915, contained secret clauses, promising Italy territory along its northern border with Austria, in the Istrian peninsula and along the east coast of the Adriatic, in Africa and in the Middle East.

Italy and the War

Italy entered the war in 1916. Italian forces suffered terrible losses, but its Allies, particularly the French, were contemptuous of the Italian contribution to the Allied victory. Its losses fed demands in Italy for large gains.

The Italian Delegation

Italy's delegation to Paris was led by its prime minister Vittorio Orlando and and its foreign minister, Sidney Sonnino. Orlando was seen as less hardline than Sonnino, who made little attempt to negotiate but simply insisted on the Treaty of London plus Fiume. On the various committees, such as the ones drawing borders, the Italians took positions to advance Italian interests.

Allied Attitudes

The Allies grew increasingly impatient with the Italians. Britain and France, however, felt bound by the Treaty of London. The United States did not. Wilson indeed claimed that he had never seen it before 1919. In any case, he disapproved of secret agreements.

Italian Demands

Italy demanded the South Tyrol from Austria to round its borders in the eastern Alps up to the Brenner Pass. Wilson agreed to this, in spite of the fact that the area contained a large number of German speakers. Italy also claimed the Istrian peninsula and much of the Dalmatian coast of the eastern Adriatic and some Adriatic islands on various grounds from historical to ethnic ones. After much debate among the peacemakers, Italy got most of the Istrian peninsula. The Allies, led by Wilson, resisted Italian demands along the Dalmatian coast.

Italy and Albania

Albania was a new state, created in 1912. During the war, its neighbors—Greece in the south, Serbia to the east, and Italy across the Adriatic—moved in on it hoping to take pieces in the subsequent peace settlements. The peacemakers, however, decided that Albania should remain intact, much to the annoyance of the Greeks who wanted the southern part of Epirus and the Italians who wanted the coast including the important port of Vlöre.

Italy and Yugoslavia

While Italian liberals were initially sympathetic to the desire of south Slavs within Austria-Hungary for independence, many Italians regarded the emergence of Yugoslavia with dismay. Italian right-wing nationalists worked to destroy the new state. Relations were further complicated by the fact that Italy was claiming territory Yugoslavia also wanted.

Italy Leaves the Conference

In April 1919, the dispute over Italian claims led to a major crisis at the Peace Conference. Orlando and Sonnino decided to walk out and returned to Rome, where they were greeted with tremendous enthusiasm.

Wilson decided to appeal directly to the Italian people in a public letter. In Paris, the peacemakers feared that the conference would fall apart and there would be no treaty signed with Germany.

Italy Returns

The Peace Conference carried on its work and began to carve up Turkey without consulting the Italians. The Italian delegation finally came back, but relations between the Italians and the Americans in particular never recovered and it proved impossible to get a final settlement of Italy's claims in the Adriatic before Wilson left.

The Final Settlement

Italy dropped its claims to former Turkish territory and in Africa. It did not reach a final settlement of its Adriatic claims until 1920. At this point, it was

clear that the United States was no longer prepared to be involved and that Italy would have to deal directly with Yugoslavia. Italy and Yugoslavia had carried out unsuccessful negotiations in Paris, but in 1920 they signed the Treaty of Rapallo, which gave Italy some more territory in Istria, the Adriatic port of Zara (Zadar), and a few islands.

Conclusion

The Italian crisis showed how difficult it is to hold together war-time coalitions in peace time. It weakened the peace conference at a particularly difficult time. The Italians were left disappointed with the peace settlement. Unfortunately, they were not the only ones.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why did Italy hesitate to give up the Treaty of London?
2. Why did Orlando and Sonnino ignore the agenda of the Italian Colonial Ministry for Africa?
3. What was the true significance of Fiume?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Albrecht-Carrié, René. *Italy at the Paris Peace Conference*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1966.

Stevenson, David. *The First World War and International Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.

Websites to Visit

1. Collection of information on Italy before and after World War I — www.thecorner.org/hists/total/f-italy.htm
2. Information on the background of Vittorio Orlando and Italy's position in the Versailles Treaty — www.learn.co.uk/versailles/countries.italy.htm
3. Collection of the people in power during the first half of the twentieth century — www.newgenevacenter.org/movers/20th_1st2.htm

Lecture 9:
Greece and Turkey

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapters 25 and 26).

Introduction

The Paris Peace Conference dealt with much more than European issues. One of the defeated nations was Ottoman Turkey, which still had a foothold in Europe, in the Balkans, and which also controlled present-day Turkey and much of the Middle East. The Allies assumed in 1919 that the Ottomans were finished and that the Ottoman territories were there for the dividing up. Britain, France, and Italy all had claims, as did Greece. Their plans went wrong, as we shall see, because they had not counted on the Turks themselves resisting.

The Ottoman Empire to 1914

The Ottomans appeared from central Asia in the thirteenth century and started to build an empire in what later became Turkey. In 1453, they took the ancient city of Constantinople (Istanbul). At its height in the sixteenth century, the empire stretched from present-day Hungary and Rumania in the north to the Arabian peninsula in the south and from the coast of present-day Algeria in the west to the borders of Iran in the east. By the eighteenth century, the empire had lost Hungary, and in the nineteenth century, it declined sharply.

The Decline of the Empire

A combination of pressures from its subject peoples within and pressure from European powers without led to the shrinking of the Ottoman Empire during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Of its north-African territories, France took Algeria and Tunisia and Britain took Egypt. In 1911, Italy took Libya. In Europe, Ottoman power receded as one by one the nations of the Balkans—Greece, Bulgaria, Montenegro, Rumania, and Serbia—gained their independence. In 1908, Austria-Hungary formally annexed Bosnia-Herzegovina. In 1912, after two wars in the Balkans, Albania became an independent country. The Ottoman Empire was left with a small European foothold in Thrace.

The Young Turks

In 1908, reformist army officers seized power in Constantinople and tried to arrest the decline of the Ottoman Empire. They encouraged German investment and German officers helped to overhaul and modernize the armed forces.

World War I

The Young Turks who controlled the government decided to support the Central Powers. Turkish forces fought well during the war—notably at

Gallipoli, where they stopped an Allied landing—but by the autumn of 1918 the Ottoman Empire was exhausted. The government sued for an armistice and the Young Turk leaders went into exile, leaving control in the hands of the weak Ottoman emperor.

Allied Plans for the Ottoman Empire

The Allies assumed that the Ottoman Empire would not survive the war. As we shall see, Britain and France made a secret agreement in 1916 to divide up the Arab territories. Russia agreed in return for free passage through the Straits, which led from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean. (When Russia dropped out of the war in 1918, that agreement became void.) Italy protested when it learned about the agreements and was promised territory stretching inland from the coast of Asia Minor. France, which was owed large amounts of money by the Ottomans, put in a claim for part of the south of Turkey.

Great Britain and the Ottoman Empire

In the century before the war, Britain had propped up the Ottoman Empire, partly to block its then enemy Russia from moving into the eastern Mediterranean and partly to safeguard its route through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal out to India. The British did not particularly want to see the French gaining a large part of the Ottoman Empire, either in the Arab Middle East or Turkey itself.

The United States and the Ottoman Empire

During the Peace Conference, the British hoped that the United States might be persuaded to take on responsibility for part of Turkey, perhaps as a mandate from the League of Nations for the area around the Straits and Constantinople and perhaps for Armenia as well. Woodrow Wilson toyed with the idea, but there was little likelihood of American public opinion or Congress supporting such an undertaking.

Greece and the Ottoman Empire

Among the various plans for the Ottoman Empire, the most ambitious was that of Greece. Although Greece was a relatively new and weak country, many Greek nationalists hoped to re-create the glorious Greek past before the birth of Christ, when Greeks controlled much of the Mediterranean, Asia Minor, and the Black Sea.

Venizelos and the Great Idea

Greece's prime minister in 1919 was Eleutherios Venizelos, a native of Crete who had helped to liberate his island from Turkish rule. Venizelos shared the "Megali Idea," the great idea of rebuilding the old Greek empire in the eastern Mediterranean and in Turkey. He was immensely charming and persuasive.

Greece and the War

The Greek king wanted to remain neutral during the war, but Venizelos wished to support the Allies. After a political crisis that saw Venizelos triumph, Greece entered the war in 1917.

Allied Support for Venizelos

In an age when many leading statesmen had received a classical education, there was much sympathy for Greece and for Venizelos among the Allies. His particular supporter was David Lloyd George, the British prime minister.

The Decision to Land Greek Troops at Smyrna

In the spring of 1919, the situation was deteriorating in Turkey. The Italians, already at odds with their Allies, landed troops on the coast to protect, so they claimed, Italian citizens. Reports also came in of clashes between the Turks and the considerable numbers of Greeks who lived along the coast of Asia Minor. In May, while the Italians were still absent from Paris, the Allies gave Greek troops permission to land in Smyrna (Izmir). Venizelos intended to stake out a claim to a huge area of land stretching inland from the port. In the summer of 1920, Greek troops moved inland.

Treaty of Sèvres (1920) with the Ottoman Empire

The Council of Four did not devote much time to the Ottoman peace terms, which were not drawn up until the summer of 1920. By this point, both the United States and Italy had largely lost interest in having a presence there. Britain and France were largely responsible for the terms, which included international control of the Straits area, a French sphere of influence in Asia Minor, and Greek control of Smyrna and its hinterland, as well as Thrace. It also provided for an independent Armenia and possibly a Kurdistan. The treaty did not last.

Ataturk

While the peace conference was discussing the Ottoman Empire, events were moving rapidly on the ground. Turkish nationalism was growing, and it found an outstanding leader in Mustafa Kemal or Ataturk. A distinguished war hero, he issued a declaration in the summer of 1919 opposing any division of the Turkish lands. He built an army and a political movement. The Ottoman dynasty became irrelevant long before he abolished it in 1923. In the summer of 1922, Turkish forces destroyed the Greek armies and Smyrna burned.

Treaty of Lausanne

By 1923, the Allies recognized that they would have to negotiate a new treaty with Turkey. After difficult negotiations at Lausanne, a treaty was signed in 1923 with the new Turkey. Its provisions included the forced exchange of Greek and Turkish populations. Greece gave up its claims to eastern Thrace. There were no mandates or foreign spheres of influence over Turkey.

Conclusion

The peacemakers approached the Turkish settlement as though the Turks themselves had no say in it. They drew up the peace terms to suit themselves and their favorites, the Greeks. What they had not counted on was the force of Turkish nationalism and the leadership provided by Ataturk. They were to approach the Middle East in a similar spirit, but there, at least for a time, they did not have to deal with the same resistance.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What were the European attitudes toward Turkey in the early twentieth century?
2. What were Greece's goals at Paris and why did the Allies support them?
3. What was the impact of the final settlement at Lausanne on the populations of Greece and Turkey?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Avon Books, 1989.

Kent, Marian, ed. *The Great Powers and the End of the Ottoman Empire*. London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1984.

Smith, Michael Llewellyn. *Ionian Vision: Greece in Asia Minor 1919–1922*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1998.

Websites to Visit

1. Information on the threat to Constantinople in 1915—French, British, and Russian roles — www.mondediplo.com/2003/04/07ottomanempire
2. Conference of San Remo following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire — www.kcbx.net/~ied/kmuscx.html
3. Territory remaining of the Ottoman Empire by 1919 — www.wsu.edu:8080/~dee/OTTOMAN/EUROPE.HTM

Lecture 10:
Palestine and the Jewish Homeland

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapter 28).

Introduction

Some of the most fateful consequences of the Paris Peace Conference were its decisions regarding the Middle East. Those decisions involved the Arab territories but they also helped to create a Jewish homeland in Palestine. We see the foundations not only of the modern state of Israel, but of Arab hostility to it.

The Middle East before World War I

As Ottoman power declined, a number of European powers—notably Britain, France, Germany, Italy, and Russia—looked with interest at the Middle East. Their motives were mixed from religion to economics.

Historical and Religious Motives

Christianity had been born in the Middle East and large numbers of Christians of various denominations still lived there. Europeans had an attachment to the holy places and in the nineteenth century it became increasingly easy to visit them. In addition, Western missionaries established missions, schools, and hospitals throughout the Middle East. Certain nations (for example, Russia, in the case of the Orthodox Christians and France in the case of Catholics) used the excuse of protecting Christians to further their own interests in the area.

Strategic Motives

Geography put the Middle East at an important strategic crossroads. Russia wanted access to the Straits for its war fleet in the Black Sea and to the eastern Mediterranean. Britain wanted to protect the Suez Canal (opened in 1869) and its crucial links to India. Germany hoped to acquire territory to build an empire.

Economic Motives

Business interests in the different European powers wanted access to Middle East products and to such projects as railway building. In addition, many European banks and individuals had lent money to the Ottoman Empire itself or to its subordinates, such as the ruler of Egypt.

Oil

Although coal was still the primary fuel for Europe, oil was starting to become important before World War I. The British navy converted its ships to oil shortly before the war. That meant that sources of oil were now important. Middle East oil remained largely undiscovered and undeveloped, but the

British had opened wells in Iran and suspected that there might be oil around Mosul in the Ottoman Empire.

Zionism

Zionists were Jews who wanted to build a Jewish state. The World Zionist Organization looked at a number of areas, including Uganda, but it settled on Palestine, a province of the Ottoman Empire, for religious and historical reasons. Although the Zionist movement was small when it held its first congress in 1897, it grew rapidly.

The Growth of Zionism

About half the world's Jews lived under Russian rule before 1914, many of them in the Polish territories. Life in what was known as the Pale was hard, both economically and because the Tsarist regime was anti-Semitic. Some Jews emigrated to Western Europe or the New World, a few became revolutionaries, and others still became Zionists. In Western Europe, where Jews were by now largely integrated into society, there were still unsettling outbreaks of anti-Semitism, as in, for example, the Dreyfus Affair in France. A few Jews made their way to Palestine and established colonies before World War I.

The Role of Chaim Weizmann

Chaim Weizmann, a chemist by training, played an enormously important role in promoting the Zionist program and in winning over support from influential figures, especially in Britain. He became friendly with Arthur Balfour, prime minister before the war and foreign secretary in 1919, and with Prime Minister David Lloyd George.

Weizmann and other Zionists made presentations to the peace conference. Weizmann resisted pressure from radical Zionists who demanded a Jewish state immediately and asked merely for a homeland. To Weizmann's fury, a French Jew who did not support Zionism also appeared to argue that a Jewish homeland in Palestine would leave Europe's Jews with divided loyalties and would not benefit them in the long run.

The Peace Conference itself did not make a final decision on Palestine; that was left to a later conference at San Remo in 1920, where Britain got a mandate for Palestine whose terms included carrying out the Balfour Declaration. The United States played only a small role; Zionism did not yet have the support of a majority of American Jews. Wilson did, however, insist on sending a fact-finding commission to the area, which found that Palestinian Arabs were opposed to Zionism.

The Balfour Declaration

During the war, Weizmann lobbied for British support for a Jewish presence in Palestine. While both Balfour and Lloyd George were sympathetic to the Jews, they would not have given support if they had not thought it was in Britain's and the Allies' best interests. Support finally came in 1917 in the form of a letter from Balfour to Lord Rothschild, a leading British Jew.

Wording

> His Majesty's Government view with favor the establishment in Palestine of national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavors to facilitate the attainment of this object . . .

The declaration also talked about not prejudicing the civil and religious rights of non-Jewish communities. Although it carefully did not mention a state or a nation, that is how it was understood by Zionists and by the British press.

British Motives

The British government supported Zionism in the Balfour Declaration to win over world Jewish opinion, which was lukewarm on the Allies because Russia was one of their number and because they feared that Germany was about to make a similar declaration. The British also hoped that the declaration would win over influential Jewish bankers in New York and make it easier to arrange much needed loans. Finally, Palestine was close to the important Suez Canal, and a Jewish homeland there under British protection would help to safeguard it for Britain.

Allied Support

The French government, although not particularly committed to Zionism, followed the British lead. The United States was sympathetic, but held back from public support because it never officially went to war with Ottoman Turkey.

The Arab Reaction to Zionism and the Balfour Declaration

Initially Arabs were not aware of the British and French agreement to divide up the Middle East and did not appear concerned about Zionism. Prince Faisal, who had led an Arab revolt against the Ottomans, met with Weizmann in the summer of 1918 and again in London. The two men talked in friendly terms of future cooperation between Jews and Arabs in Palestine and indeed signed an agreement to that effect in January 1919. The agreement did not produce any lasting results. In Palestine itself, relations between Jews and Arabs were deteriorating and the British found that they were being blamed by both sides.

Conclusion

The Balfour Declaration and the subsequent peace settlements laid the foundations for the state of Israel. Unfortunately, they also helped to set a pattern of hostility between Jews and Arabs. As we will see, the Arabs came to associate promises broken by Britain and France with the Jewish presence in Palestine. The Allies made other promises during the war that were going to complicate the postwar situation. Britain and France made a quiet deal to divide up the Arab territories, including Palestine. They also appeared to promise independence to the Arabs.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. With so many ethnic and religious factions vying for a homeland/state during the peace conference, why do you suppose the Jews were successful while others were not?
2. Why did the British support a Jewish homeland in Palestine?
3. What reaction did the Arabs have to the establishment of the Jewish homeland?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Avon Books, 1989.

Sanders, Ronald. *The High Walls of Jerusalem: A History of the Balfour Declaration and the Birth of the British Mandate for Palestine*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1984.

Websites to Visit

Draft of Zionist proposal to the peace conference — www.iea.org.il/blueprint/page025.htm

Lecture 11:
The Arab Middle East

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapter 27).

Introduction

While the Paris Peace Conference is often thought of as dealing with Europe, in fact it had a huge impact on many other parts of the world. In the Middle East, the peacemakers drew the borders that still exist today and they created new countries. We look at how they set in motion the chain of events that led to both the birth of Israel and the hostility between Jews and Arabs.

Background

Before 1914 much of the Arab world was still under the control of the Ottoman Empire, although in North Africa, France had taken Algeria and Tunisia, Britain had taken Egypt, and Italy had taken what became Libya. Elsewhere, Western powers were extending their influence through the Arab world, whether through trade and investment or missionaries. Around the coast of the Arab peninsula, the British had established a series of posts and protectorates to guard the sea route out to India. A weak Ottoman Empire was powerless to help them. To the east of the Ottomans, the British were also moving into the south of Persia, as Iran was known in those days, while the Russians penetrated the north.

Arab Nationalism

In much of the Arab world, nationalism was still dormant. Egypt was an exception; the British takeover of control in the 1880s had provoked large demonstrations and resistance. Elsewhere, in the large cities, such as Damascus, Beirut, and Baghdad, educated Arabs were starting to found discussion groups and newspapers to talk about freeing themselves from Ottoman rule. The assumption of power in 1908 by the Young Turks in Constantinople (Istanbul) with their determination to revive the Ottoman Empire and make it more Turkish stimulated this early Arab nationalism. One important feature of this nationalism is that it generally assumed that there would be a single large Arab state.

World War I

The war affected the Middle East in a number of ways. It destroyed the Ottoman Empire, but it also brought increased attention from outside powers, in particular Britain and France. Russia had been removed by revolution and Germany by defeat from their prewar involvement. The United States, although it had considerable connections through American missionaries, did not yet have a strong interest in the area. Britain and France made a number of promises during the war that proved difficult to fulfill in peacetime.

The Sykes-Picot Deal

Both Britain and France had strong interests in the Middle East. They therefore decided to work out an arrangement to ensure that, if the Ottoman Empire disappeared, they would take over more direct responsibility for the area. The deal, known as Sykes-Picot after the two men who negotiated it, was completed in 1916 but subject to some revisions later in the war. France was originally to have Mosul, but the British, who suspected that it contained oil, persuaded the French to give it up. Lloyd George apparently promised Clemenceau support against Germany in Europe. In its final form, it gave France control of what became Lebanon and Syria and Britain control over what became Palestine (later divided into Palestine and Transjordan) and Iraq. Provision was made for part of the inland territories to be ruled by Arabs who would remain, however, under British or French supervision.

The Arab Revolt

The British and French were extremely concerned that the ruler of the Ottomans in his role as caliph or spiritual leader would call a jihad or holy war of all Muslims against them. They were also worried that Ottoman Turkish troops would attack southwards toward the Suez Canal. Britain tried to knock Ottoman Turkey out of the war with the Gallipoli landings and by attacking northwards into Mesopotamia (today's Iraq). Both campaigns were military disasters. Britain also resorted to an Arab revolt against the Turks. Sir Henry McMahon, High Commissioner in Egypt, in an exchange of letters with Hussein, the Sharif of Mecca, promised Arab independence in return for a revolt. Where that independence would be was left unclear. The Arab revolt, which started in the summer of 1916, was led by Hussein's son, Faisal, who had support from British officers, including T.E. Lawrence.

The Balfour Declaration

As we have seen, the British also made a promise to the Zionists that involved the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, a piece of territory that Britain was to receive under Sykes-Picot, but which the Arabs also assumed was to be part of an independent Arab state.

Self-determination

Reports of Woodrow Wilson's speeches about a new world order made their way to the Middle East, as they did to other parts of the world. The idea of national self-determination was received with enthusiasm. The British and French, reluctantly, took it up to satisfy the Americans. At the end of the war, Britain and France issued a declaration, which they circulated in Arabic, that said their aims had been the emancipation of the subject peoples of the Ottomans and the establishment of national governments.

The Peace Conference

Although there was considerable discussion at the Peace Conference of the Middle East, its settlement was delayed.

Faisal at the Peace Conference

Faisal, with the help of Lawrence, presented demands for a large independent Arab kingdom. The French, who disliked both men, produced other Arabs who asked for French support and involvement.

Allied Attitudes

It was generally agreed that the Arabs were not yet ready for self-government. Partly in response to American pressure, the European powers accepted that they could not simply take colonies in the Middle East but that they would have mandates from the League of Nations. There was some talk of the United States having the mandate for Palestine.

British-French Wrangling

Lloyd George, who had disliked the Sykes-Picot agreement from the start, now tried to wrest more of Syria from the French. In a furious scene in May 1919, Clemenceau threatened to take back Mosul.

Division of the Spoils

By the fall of 1919, Lloyd George was in a more conciliatory frame of mind. The British Empire had been shaken by costly revolts in Egypt, India, and Ireland. He and Clemenceau hastily worked out a deal, which was confirmed at the San Remo Conference in 1920. France got Lebanon and Syria, Britain got Palestine and what became Iraq. The two countries also agreed to share the oil from Mosul.

The New Middle East

The settlement in the Middle East was made largely to suit Britain and France. The United States was withdrawing from involvement by the end of 1919 and Italy abandoned its claims. For the Arabs, 1920 was the year of disaster.

Lebanon

To protect the Christians in Lebanon and to keep Syria a manageable size, the French added Syrian territory to Lebanon.

Syria

To fulfill the promises to the Arabs for their revolt, the British persuaded the French to allow Faisal to have the throne of Syria. The French had no intention of allowing him any independence, and in July 1920 French troops sent him into exile.

Palestine

Britain took the mandate for Palestine. The terms included support for the Jewish homeland. The area east of the Jordan river was turbulent, with fighting Arab tribes. In March 1921, at the Cairo Conference, Britain created a separate state of Transjordan, and to make up for its unfulfilled wartime promises to the Arabs, gave the throne to Abdullah, another son of the Sharif of Mecca.

Iraq

The three former provinces of the Ottoman Empire—Mosul, Baghdad, Basra—had little in common. Their peoples were ethnically diverse with different cultures and religions. The British created Iraq for administrative convenience and they put in Faisal, the deposed king of Syria, to rule it. Gertrude Bell, an extraordinary English woman, helped to create institutions for the new country. The British never found Iraq easy or cheap to run. From the start they had to deal with widespread revolts. Faisal proved to be a good king but, from the British point of view, a too-independent one.

Kurdistan?

The Kurds, who stretched from Turkey across to Iran, were only starting to emerge as a nation. At the Paris Peace Conference there was some talk of an independent Kurdistan, but that was dropped by the time the final treaty was signed with Turkey at Lausanne in 1923.

Conclusion

The consequences of the peace settlements in the Middle East are still with us today. Iraq has been a troubled country since its inception. The pattern of betrayal and manipulation by Western powers, as so many Arabs see it, has left a profound sense of resentment toward the West in much of the Arab world. In addition, the increased presence of Jews in Palestine became, right from the start, a symbol to Arabs of that betrayal and a cause for the wider Arab world.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was the significance of mandates in the Middle East after World War I?
2. What did Britain and France claim their main aims in World War I were for the Middle East?
3. How important a part did oil play in the peace settlements in the Middle East?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Fromkin, David. *A Peace to End All Peace: The Fall of the Ottoman Empire and the Creation of the Modern Middle East*. New York: Avon Books, 1989.

Yapp, M.E. *The Making of the Modern Near East, 1792–1923*. London and New York: Longman, 1987.

Websites to Visit

1. Information on the Middle East on the Verge of World War I — www.mondediplo.com/maps/middleeast1914
2. Chronology of events in the Middle East from 1908 to 2003 — www.middleeastreference.org.uk/Chronology.html
3. Michigan State University, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, website provides information on the Levant — www.h-net.org/~levant/

Lecture 12:
Germany's Allies: Bulgaria, Austria, and Hungary

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapters 20 and 26).

Introduction

The German treaty (Versailles) was the most difficult one to make in Paris. Once it was done, many of its clauses were transferred wholesale to the treaties with Germany's allies in Europe—Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary (the latter now two separate countries of Austria and Hungary). Although all three of Germany's former allies were expected to pay reparations, they were in fact incapable of doing so.

Bulgaria

Bulgaria entered the war on the side of the Central Powers hoping to gain back the territory it had lost in the Second Balkan War of 1913, in particular part of Macedonia, which had gone to Serbia, the Southern Dobrudja, which had gone to Rumania, and the north part of eastern Thrace, which had remained Turkish.

Bulgarian Hopes

The Bulgarians optimistically hoped for gains even after they were defeated on the grounds of self-determination. The population in the areas they wanted may have been majority Bulgarian, although this was difficult to establish.

The Peace Settlement

In the end, the Allies did not want to change borders in the Balkans, which had taken so much bloodshed and trouble to establish. The United States, which initially had supported its claim to the Dobrudja, lost interest. Bulgaria did not gain the Southern Dobrudja and it also lost some small pieces of territory to Yugoslavia and western Thrace. Thus, it was not cut off from access to the Mediterranean. Bulgaria signed its treaty at Neuilly in November 1919.

Austria-Hungary

Austria-Hungary was an ancient multinational empire that incorporated the old kingdom of Hungary (which in turn ruled over territories such as Croatia and Slovakia) and the Austrian territories that included Slovenia, the Czech lands, and present-day Austria. By 1914, the empire was in marked decline. Its various nationalities were pressing for greater independence.

World War I

Austria-Hungary attacked Serbia in August 1914 with the backing of its ally Germany. This set off the general European war. Austria-Hungary fought in the Balkans and along the front with Russia. Although it was successful

against Serbia, it suffered terrible losses against Russia. By 1918, it was clear that the Empire could no longer fight on. Hungary, which had its own parliament, was increasingly going its own way. In addition, various nationalities, among them Poles, Czechs, and South Slavs, were demanding greater autonomy. Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points of January 1918, in which he spoke of the "freest opportunity" for the autonomous development of the peoples of Austria-Hungary, further encouraged their demands.

The Armistice

The new Austrian emperor, Karl, asked for an armistice in the middle of September 1918. While he waited for a reply, his subject peoples one by one declared their independence. On November 3, the armistice was signed. Shortly afterwards, Karl renounced his part in the government of his empire (he never formally abdicated) and went into exile. There was no more Austria-Hungary.

Consequences

New borders had to be drawn between states that were frequently claiming the same territory. With the collapse of the empire, an economic and transportation network also collapsed. This added to the widespread misery in the center of Europe and to fears of revolution.

Austria

Austria was left as a small country of some seven million people with a capital and bureaucracy designed for an empire. The Allies were prepared to be more gentle with it than they were with Hungary. Nevertheless, Austria lost some of its remaining territory and was expected to pay reparations (in the end this proved impossible). Austria signed its treaty at St. Germain in September 1919.

Austria's Borders

Although it was largely German speaking, the South Tyrol went to Italy. Yugoslavia claimed the area around Klagenfurt in the south of Carinthia on the grounds that the inhabitants were a majority of Slovene speakers. In a plebiscite conducted by the League of Nations, the inhabitants voted to remain with Austria.

Anschluss

In its treaty, Austria was prevented from joining with Germany. (A similar clause was put into the German treaty.) The Allies, especially France, did not want a larger Germany. In fact, there was not much enthusiasm for Anschluss in either Austria or Germany.

Hungary

The Allies regarded Hungary as largely responsible for keeping Austria-Hungary in the war. Lloyd George also considered Hungarian society reactionary. When Hungary had a communist revolution in the spring of 1919, that did not help either.

World War I

Hungary had been reluctant to enter the war. As the conflict dragged on, internal strains and tension with Austria grew. In October 1918, Hungary set up an independent government. In November, it proclaimed itself a republic. When the war ended, much of Hungarian territory was occupied by Serbian, Rumanian, or other Allied troops.

The Communist Revolution

In April 1919, the government of Michael Karolyi was overthrown by Bela Kun's Communists. This caused alarm at the peace conference. A mission under General Smuts recommended against negotiations with Kun. Within Hungary, his position grew worse as his reforms created fresh enemies. In July, Kun was overthrown in turn.

Hungary's Borders

Hungary had already lost much of its prewar territory by the time the peace conference opened. Slovakia had gone into the new state of Czechoslovakia and Croatia and some other pieces of territory in the south into Yugoslavia. The important territory of Transylvania, which Rumania claimed, still had to be settled.

Rumania

Rumania, a relatively new Balkan state, had dropped out in 1918 after military defeat but had reentered the war on the Allied side shortly before the end of hostilities. Its prime minister, Ion Bratianu, who came to Paris to present Rumania's case, argued that it had never made a separate peace with the Central Powers. Queen Marie of Rumania also came to help present Rumania's claims, which included Bessarabia from Russia, the Bukovina from Austria, and much of Transylvania.

War with Hungary

In the summer of 1919, Rumanian troops moved into Transylvania and then Hungary proper. Kun's government, which was also under attack by Czech and Yugoslav forces, fell and Rumania occupied much of Hungary, including the capital Budapest.

Transylvania

The Allies ordered the Rumanians to withdraw from Hungary proper, which they eventually did without grace. Although the Allies were now more sympathetic to Hungary, they decided to leave Transylvania with Rumania.

Conclusion

Like Germany, none of the defeated countries were satisfied with their treaties, and this provided grounds for tensions in the interwar years.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. Why was the timing right in Hungary for Bela Kun's seizure of power?
2. What event started the general European war?
3. How and why did Austria-Hungary end?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Macartney, C.A. *Hungary and Her Successors: The Treaty of Trianon and Its Consequences 1919–1937*. London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1937.

Websites to Visit

1. Information on the conflict between Austria-Hungary and Serbia and how it escalated into World War I — www.maxpages.com/ww1
2. Information on the Treaty of Saint Germain and the Treaty of Trainon — www.europeanhistory.about.com/cs/division
3. Information on the chain of events and countries that joined World War I after Austria-Hungary and Serbia began fighting — www4.distinct125.k12.il.us/faculty/pmazzuca/ww1/tsld012.htm

Lecture 13:
The Far East

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapters 23 and 24).

Introduction

China and Japan had both dealt with the challenge of the nineteenth century in different ways. Since Japan was both more successful in modernizing itself and expanding, China increasingly came to see it as a threat. Both countries joined the war on the Allied side to further their own interests.

Asia Before World War I: The European Empires

The European empires dominated much of Asia. Britain held India, Burma, and Malaya. France had taken Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos), the Netherlands held the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), and Russia had taken considerable territory from China. In 1898, the United States took the Philippines. Japan and China were almost the only Asian territories left unclaimed.

China

In the nineteenth century, China had the misfortune to be in a period of dynastic decline and rebellion. Over the century, China lost territory and concessions to foreigners. In response, Chinese nationalism grew. In 1911, China had a republican revolution, which did not, however, arrest its decline. The Chinese fear was that China was about to be carved up. Perhaps only the outbreak of World War I prevented this. That, however, provided an opportunity for one of China's most determined aggressors—Japan.

Japan

The Japanese had met the Western challenge more successfully than China. Japan had modernized itself during the Meiji Restoration and by the 1890s had become an Asian power. In 1895, it went to war with China and acquired Taiwan and Korea (which it annexed formally in 1910). In 1902, it signed a naval alliance with Great Britain. In 1904–1905, it defeated Tsarist Russia and established a strong presence in Manchuria.

World War I

When the war broke out, Japan joined on the Allied side. Japan took a number of German islands in the North Pacific and German concessions, including the port of Tsingtao in the Shantung peninsula. Japan tried to ensure that it would hold on to its gains by signing a secret agreement with Britain and by pressuring the weak Chinese government to accept its conquest in Shantung. The Chinese tried to resist the pressure by joining the war themselves, also on the Allied side. China made a significant contribution to the Allied victory by providing manpower.

China and the Peace Conference

The Chinese delegation came to the peace conference with considerable hopes. The Chinese, who already admired Western democracy, were impressed by Woodrow Wilson's statements about a new and fair world order.

Japan and the Peace Conference

Japan came with clear aims: To keep its wartime conquests and to get recognition for Japanese as the equals of Westerners. Several countries—including the United States and Australia—had discriminatory measures against Asians. The Japanese government feared that if it did make gains in Paris, it would face social and political unrest at home.

Allied Attitudes

While there was sympathy, especially among the Americans, for China, the Allies generally felt that Japan was the more important power in Asia. On the other hand, concern was growing about the spread of Japanese power in Asia and, for example, the activities of the Japanese in Siberia and China.

The Shantung Issue

Both China and Japan put in their claims for Shantung. It was generally felt that Wellington Koo, the Chinese spokesman, had made the better case. The conference took several months to make a decision, during which time both sides lobbied the peacemakers. Colonel House, among others, tried to broker a deal. In the meantime, another issue affecting Japan came up.

The Racial Equality Clause

Japan was not prepared to drop its demands for the German concessions in Shantung partly because it had not succeeded in another of its key demands—racial equality. The Japanese had raised this in discussions at the commission on the League of Nations. Japanese delegates asked for a clause to be inserted in the League Covenant to the effect that citizens should not be discriminated against on the basis of religion or race. This was opposed by the Australians. Woodrow Wilson feared opposition from his own West Coast and that he would lose the votes of key Senators. Colonel House again tried to broker a compromise but failed. Wilson ruled the clause out on a technicality but felt that he owed Japan something.

Shantung Decision

In May 1919, the Big Four decided to award the German concessions in China to Japan. The Chinese delegation refused to sign the peace treaty and in China huge demonstrations broke out. Many Chinese nationalists gave up on the West and turned to the new Soviet Union.

Conclusion

Both China and Japan came away from Paris disappointed, and that disappointment was to have serious long-term consequences for their internal development and for their relations with each other and with the West.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. What was Japan's major request at the peace conference?
2. Why was Shantung so important to China?
3. What country did China turn to after the Allies sided with Japan?

Suggested Reading

MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*. New York: Random House, 2001.

Other Books of Interest

Fifield, Russell. *Woodrow Wilson and the Far East: The Diplomacy of the Shantung Question*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1968.

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1. Collection of the events that took place in China during World War I — www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/comment/chinawwi/ChinaTC.htm
2. Information on Japan at the peace conference and the exclusion of immigration from Japan — www.easyweb.easynet.co.uk/~ppp.f6/Ayumi/JapaneseHistory/Taisyo Period/TaisyoPeriod.html
3. Information on Japan in World War I and its interest in Manchuria, Mongolia, and the Shantung Pennisula — www.kings.edu/histo ry/20c/japan.html

Lecture 14:
The End

The Suggested Reading for this lecture is Margaret MacMillan's *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (chapters 23 and 24).

Introduction

Although the Paris Peace Conference dealt with many parts of the world, it is chiefly remembered today for the settlement with Germany, embodied in the Treaty of Versailles. That treaty has been blamed for the rise of Hitler and the outbreak of World War II. We shall consider that question and also ask what would have happened if the United States had not refused to sign the Treaty of Versailles.

The German Terms

As time went by, it became clear that there would be no full scale negotiations with Germany. Drawing up the peace terms had taken too long and involved too many delicate compromises. Furthermore, there was a danger that other countries besides Italy might walk out. Japan had threatened to leave over the racial equality clause. China was refusing to sign over the Shantung clauses. Belgium was complaining that its needs for war reparations and a share in Germany's colonies were being ignored.

German Loss of Territory

This included all its colonies, the Polish corridor and Danzig, Upper Silesia, and part of Schleswig-Holstein. Germany also had to return Alsace-Lorraine to France, which it had taken in 1871. Altogether, Germany lost about 10 percent of its prewar territory. The Rhineland remained German, but was demilitarized. The Saar was temporarily under League of Nations management. In 1935, its inhabitants voted to rejoin Germany.

Military Clauses

Germany was to have an army of one hundred thousand men and no air force or heavy equipment such as tanks. A more general disarmament was promised, which never occurred and added to German resentment. The problem with the terms was in their enforcement.

Trial of the Guilty

Although this was popular among Allied publics, in the end only a handful of German officers were tried in German courts. The Dutch refused to hand over Kaiser Wilhelm II, who remained in exile in the Netherlands until he died in 1941.

Reparations

These had been the subject of intense debates among the Allies. The United States was for a relatively moderate figure, the French and British for a higher one. The French and British quarreled over the share each should get. Setting the final figure was difficult because estimating damages, for example, in the ruined parts of France and Belgium, would take years and estimating how much Germany could pay was also difficult. Lloyd George, the British prime minister, under pressure from hardliners in Britain, alternated between wanting to be moderate and severe. In the end, he suggested that a final figure not be put in the treaty, but be determined by an independent commission. This was done, but the process added to German resentment. The final figure was set at $32 billion US, to be paid in stages—in-kind and cash.

The War Guilt Clause

Article 231, which was written by John Foster Dulles, was put in to establish Germany's liability. It mentions "responsibility" for the war not "guilt." Article 232 said that reparations had to be based on Germany's ability to pay.

The German Reaction to the Peace Terms

The Germans brought crates of materials to Paris, believing that they would have full-scale negotiations. Instead, they found themselves treated like criminals by the French and told that they could only submit comments on the terms in writing. The German foreign minister, Ulrich von Brockdorff-Rantzau, made a defiant speech when he received Germany's terms. This hardened Allied opinion. The scuttling of the German fleet at Scapa Flow further antagonized the situation.

The German Decision to Sign

The peace terms set off a prolonged political crisis in Germany. The Allies set a deadline for signing, but feared that they might have to invade Germany. At the last moment, the German government managed to get approval and two German delegates were dispatched to Paris.

The Signing of the Treaty of Versailles

The Treaty was signed in the Hall of Mirrors on June 28, 1919.

Reactions to the Treaty in Germany

The Germans never accepted the treaty and the terms were evaded as much as possible. For example, Germany made an agreement with Russia to test heavy equipment there. Reparations remained a bone of contention between Germany and the Allies. Germany was unwilling to pay up, especially as the years went on, and the Allies, at least the British, were increasingly reluctant to enforce the terms.

Elsewhere

In English-speaking countries, opinion grew that the terms were indeed too harsh and that the French were being unreasonable. *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* by the economist John Maynard Keynes, which came out in the autumn of 1919, was an enormously influential attack on the

short-sightedness and stupidity of the peacemakers. Britain, in any case, fell back into its traditional policy of disengagement from the continent and occupied itself increasingly with its empire. The United States also withdrew to a certain extent.

The United States and the Treaty of Versailles

Woodrow Wilson, who was a man of great vision, proved to be a poor politician. He needlessly alienated moderate Republicans, whose support he needed in the Senate. As the treaty started to make its way through the Senate in the fall of 1919, Wilson went on a strenuous speaking tour that proved too much for him. He suffered a massive stroke in October and never played an active part in public again. Behind the scenes, though, he resisted any modification to the treaty and ordered Democratic senators to vote against the version that emerged from the Senate. The treaty was defeated by a combination of Democrats and hardline Republicans. This meant, among other things, that the United States did not join the League of Nations.

Conclusion

We are left with a number of questions. Did the failure of the United States to join the League of Nations weaken the international order fatally in the inter-war years? Were the German terms that harsh, and were they responsible for the rise of Hitler? I would argue that they were not and that Hitler might well have risen to power in any case. In the end, we must also ask ourselves whether, if we had been peacemakers in 1919, we could have done better.

FOR GREATER UNDERSTANDING

Questions

1. For what has the Treaty of Versailles been blamed?
2. How did Germans react to the Treaty of Versailles?
3. Why did the United States not join the League of Nations?

Suggested Reading

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Other Books of Interest

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Websites to Visit

1. Collection of the League of Nations' purpose, plans, and participants — www.library.northwestern.edu/govpub/collections/leagu/background.html
2. Information on Woodrow Wilson and his political roles — www.gi.grolier.com/presidents/ea/bios/28pwils.html

The League of Nations after World War I

The League of Nations was intended to create a global union of independent nation-states agreeing to negotiate and settle disputes with one another; guarantee mutual security; and prevent the recurrence of international conflict by, for example, promoting disarmament. It succeeded in some respects. By December 1920, the League Covenant had been signed by forty-eight states, though it was never ratified by the United States, which therefore never joined. Its members successfully resolved some disputes—namely, small disagreements between Germany and Poland, Italy and Greece, and Greece and Bulgaria. The League also supervised the mandates awarded to countries to administer territories taken from defeated nations and worked to combat such evils as slavery. These successes fed the rising hope that the League would in fact prove capable of maintaining world peace.

Many argue that the League's lack of its own armed forces to protect League members would prove to be its major shortcoming. In addition powerful nations such as Britain and France proved reluctant to use the League's powers. Throughout the 1930s, collective security failed when put to the test. Large powers consistently challenged the authority of the League. Japan did so in 1931, on its way to establishing an empire in China and the Pacific. Italian fascist leader Benito Mussolini had dreams of a new Roman empire in the Mediterranean and Africa, and waged the Abyssinian invasion in 1935. Germany successfully took over Austria in 1938, further demonstrating that collective security was a sham.

At the end of World War II, the Allied leaders rejected notions of restoring the League of Nations. Instead, they created the United Nations, which was intended to be stronger than the League with a Security Council composed of the leading powers of 1945. The Security Council was composed of the traditional powers of Great Britain, France, the United States, the Soviet Union, and China. Many of the goals and methods of the League of Nations were carried over to the new body, including the role of the secretariat and some operations later known as peacekeeping operations. The International Labor Organization and the International Court were also brought under the new organization.

German Discontent after World War I and the Rise of Adolf Hitler

After World War I, the United States suffered economic difficulties—inflation in the 1920s, followed by the 1929 New York stock market crash. In the United States by 1932, stock values plummeted to about 20 percent of their previous value. Eleven thousand American banks had failed by 1933. In the years that followed, unemployment soared to 25–30 percent. As the American economy failed, so too did that of other nations, especially those of Great Britain and Germany, as the United States was the major creditor and financier of Europe's postwar rebuilding efforts. In the midst of financial

depression and national humiliation, Germans looked for a strong new character to lead the country. They ultimately found Adolf Hitler.

The Rise of Adolf Hitler

Adolf Hitler was born in Austria in 1889 and spent his youth as a fledgling artist in Vienna. At that time, Vienna was an economically stratified, multi-ethnic capital. The upper middle class was highly sophisticated and tolerant (for example, of Jews); the smaller bourgeoisie were deeply conservative and predominantly Catholic; and the growing working class was becoming increasingly radical. Hitler diligently kept tabs on the political environment and, like much of the population, grew contemptuous of the Habsburg Empire and of its parliament's paralysis stemming from conflict between rival ethnic and political groups. He also developed a hatred for the Socialist movement, perhaps because he was bent on separating himself from the working class, despite his lowly social position.

Hitler moved to Munich in 1913 to avoid military service for the Habsburg Empire. He joined the German army in 1914 and fought in World War I, earning the award of the Iron Cross First Class. When the war ended, Hitler was resentful of Germany's defeat and deeply embittered about the terms of the peace. He was recruited by the Bavarian Army's Press and Propaganda section to instruct German troops on German nationalism and anti-socialism. He was also sent to watch the German Workers' Party (DAP), where his oratorical skills impressed party members, who soon invited him to join.

Hitler started his political career by becoming a DAP member in Munich in 1919. The DAP held extreme nationalist and anti-Semitic views, which aligned with Hitler's developing world view that Jews were responsible for the nation's economic plight and other ills. By 1921, the party had been reorganized and renamed the Nationalist Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP), later known as the Nazi Party. In July of that year, Hitler took over its leadership. From 1921 to 1923, Hitler's self-confidence grew, due in part to the worshipful support of his followers.

In November 1923, Hitler waged an unsuccessful attempt to start an insurrection, commonly known as the Beer Hall Putsch, against the Weimar Republic. Following the incident, Hitler was sentenced to five years in prison for treason; he served nine months, during which time he wrote his autobiography *Mein Kampf,* a book that became the guide of National Socialism. From 1923 to 1928, the party grew slowly, until the economic collapse of 1929 brought it massive public support.

By 1932, the Nazi Party had become Germany's largest party, and in 1933, President Paul von Hindenburg invited Hitler to become Reich Chancellor. Dubbing himself Führer (leader), Hitler assumed the powers of both chancellor and president when Hindenburg died in 1934. Hitler gained dictatorial powers with the Enabling Act, and successfully suppressed opposition with the help of his longtime supporters, Heinrich Himmler and Joseph Goebbels. In his first few years as Führer, he placed loyal Nazis in positions of power, and also began to translate his anti-Semitic views into governmental action, enacting anti-Jewish measures that would eventually culminate in the Holocaust.

The Dawn of World War II

From his position as Reich Chancellor, Hitler worked to build the "Third Reich"—a successor to the Holy Roman and Hohenzollern Empires—which would last a thousand years and be designed according to his own master plan for European and global domination. Hitler's power permeated German life. State governments lost their powers; the Gestapo, Secret Police, crushed any discontent; and even young people were organized into semi-military groups and indoctrinated in Nazi ideas. But many Germans willingly followed Nazi policies, believing in a rebirth of German strength.

Challenging the Treaty of Versailles

Adolf Hitler both secretly and overtly challenged and violated the Treaty of Versailles. In 1933, he withdrew Germany from the Geneva Disarmament Conference and the League of Nations, and in the mid-1930s, he began to rearm Germany through conscription and the building of munitions factories. Britain was sympathetic to some of Germany's demands and signed an Anglo-German treaty in 1935 allowing for an increase in the size of Germany's navy. Shortly thereafter, Hitler used his new arms to intervene in the Spanish Civil War in the name of anticommunism and remilitarize the Rhineland in 1936. He then began forming the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis with Fascist Italy and Japan.

After taking office on May 28, 1937, the British prime minister Neville Chamberlain initiated a policy of appeasement with Germany that lasted from 1937 to 1939. Chamberlain believed that Hitler's goals were limited to uniting all German-speaking people. In 1938, Hitler formed an *anschluss* (Union) between Austria and Germany by annexing Austria at the bequest of Austrian Fascists. Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, wanted Austria to remain independent. But he was unable to procure the necessary support from France and the Little Entente to oppose Hitler. Shortly thereafter, Hitler demanded self-determination for the largely German areas of Sudetenland in Czechoslovakia, which was lost by Austria in the Treaty of St. Germain. Britain and France negotiated the 1938 Munich Agreement with Hitler to allow Germany to occupy only the Sudetenland. Hitler promised to respect the independence of the remnant of Czechoslovakia. The following year, however, Hitler abrogated the agreement and sent troops into what was left.

While annexing Austria and Czechoslovakia, Hitler formulated plans to take over Poland as well. Knowing that he would face resistance from the Soviet Union, Hitler sought the German-Soviet Nonaggression Pact, which was signed in August of 1939. The Soviet Union had been rebuffed when it previously sought a collective security agreement with Britain and France. The agreement between Germany and the Soviet Union publicly pledged that the two nations would not attack one another. However, its secret provisions allowed for the division of Poland, and gave the Soviet Union control of Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Finland. On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and on September 3, Britain and France declared war on Germany.

Suggested Reading for This Course:

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