

WORLD WAR I AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE CENTRAL EUROPE AFTER WW I

Jana Hrabcova

CENTRAL EUROPE BEFORE WWI

- ◉ Since the Crimean War (1853-1856) there was a period without a great war in Europe (only local conflicts)
- ◉ The tensions persisted on the Balkan Peninsula (1908 - the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary, 1912-1913 the Balkan Wars etc.)
- ◉ Pacifist movement - peace conferences in Hague (1898 and 1907) - unsuccessful

- ◉ two blocks of powers at the beginning of the war:
- ◉ **Entente (Allied Powers):** Great Britain + France + Russia
- ◉ **Central Powers:** Germany + Austria-Hungary + (later) Bulgaria + Turkey

- ◉ Italy - firstly neutral, in May 1915 joined the Entente (the London Treaty in April 1915 promised territorial gains to Italy)
- ◉ neutral countries: Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Albania
- ◉ USA - neutral at the beginning of the war, entered the war in April 1917

EUROPE DURING WW I



The blocs of Powers

CENTRAL EUROPE AND WW I



- the pretext for starting the war was the **assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand of Austria** in Sarajevo on June 28, 1914
- July 28, 1918 - Austria-Hungary declared the war on Serbia

THE TARGETS

- ◉ **Germany** - the most aggressive, wanted new colonies and wanted to expand to the Middle East (Berlin-Baghdad railroad), also wanted to rule in the Central, Eastern and South-East Europe (with the help of Austria-Hungary), Germany also wanted some areas in France and Belgium
- ◉ **Austria-Hungary** - wanted to expand into the Balkan Peninsula and defeat the Kingdom of Serbia, which was independent, Serbia was the enemy for A-H also because of Bosnia and Herzegovina
- ◉ **France** - wanted to get back Alsace and Lorraine from Germany + keep its colonial domains
- ◉ **Russia** - wanted Galicia (which was Austro-Hungarian province in those times), Silesia, and some parts of Balkan Peninsula, especially around the straits between Asia and Europe - Bosphorus and Dardanelles
- ◉ **Serbia** - wanted to keep its independence and to form the Balkan federation - with Croats, Slovenes and Serbs living in Austria and Hungary
- ◉ **Great Britain** - wanted to keep its colonies and exclude Germany from world trade, stop its expansion to the Middle East
- ◉ **USA** - wanted to defend democracy in the world and the principle of self-determination of the nations (Woodrow Wilson)

FOUR PHASES OF THE WAR:

- ❑ August - December 1914 - offensive operations
- ❑ 1915-1916 - trench warfare
- ❑ 1917-1918 - the era of total exhaustion
- ❑ March 191 - November 1918 - supremacy of Allied Powers (USA entered the war in April 1917)

FOUR MAIN FRONTS

- ◉ Balkan front (Balkan Peninsula, firstly in Serbia, then in Greece)
 - ◉ Western front (against France)
 - ◉ Eastern front (against Russia)
 - ◉ Italian front
-
- ◉ also naval war (in the Pacific Ocean - Japan + Great Britain against Germany, in the Northern Sea - Great Britain against Germany)
 - ◉ warfare in the colonies

WESTERN FRONT

- ◉ the Germans attacked France according to the so called **Schlieffen Plan** - designed to attack France quickly through neutral Belgium
- ◉ Great Britain declared war on Germany because of breaking Belgic neutrality
- ◉ the German troops were stopped at **the First Battle of Marne** in September 1914 - the offensive war changed into the *trench warfare*
- ◉ March 1915 - **the second Battle of Ypres** - the Germans used *chlorine gas* - 15 thousands of men were poisoned
- ◉ from February till September 1916 - bloody **battle of Verdun** - 600 thousands of casualties,
- ◉ from July till November 1916 the great **battle of the Somme** - totally 1 million casualties during the whole battle, the new British invention was used - *the tanks*

WESTERN FRONT



The Second Battle of Ypres



The Battle of the Somme

BALKAN FRONT

- ⦿ Austrian army was not successful in Serbia
- ⦿ September 1915 - **Bulgaria** entered the war
- ⦿ during October and November 1915 German-Austrian and Bulgarian troops occupied Serbia
- ⦿ in spring 1915 - the Allied Powers **prepared the operation in Gallipoli** against Turkey, British troops under the command of **Winston Churchill**, but the operation was not successful
- ⦿ then in 1916 the Macedonian Front in Greece was opened
- ⦿ the Bulgarians were defeated in September 1918

EASTERN FRONT

- In the east, Russia attacked East Prussia but was defeated by German army at the series of battles collectively known as the **Battle of Tannenberg** in August 1914
- Already in 1914 - the Czech Company in Russian Army - Legions (originally - the Czechs living in Russia, prisoners of war, volunteers)
- summer 1916 - so called Brusilov offensive
- 1917 - the Czechoslovak Corps in Russia - from 38,000 to 70,000 of men
- the Russians were more successful against Austria-Hungary in Galicia (today - western Ukraine)
- Russia occupied parts of Galicia and Bukovina
- July 1917 - so called Kerensky offensive - **the Battle of Zborov** (Galicia) - Czechoslovak Legions won over the Austria-Hungary, the offensive was unsuccessful for Russians
- After the Russian Revolutions the Czechoslovak Legions were fighting against bolsheviks

ITALIAN FRONT

- ◉ Italy entered the war in April 1915 - the Allied Powers promised to Italy Istria with Trieste, Dalmacia and Trentino (Austro-Hungarian provinces), so Italy declared war on Austria-Hungary and later also on Germany
- ◉ but the Italians were not very succesful, their offensives along **the Isonzo River** were repelled by the Austro-Hungarians
- ◉ 1917 - the Battle of Caporetto - Italian troops were defeated by Austro-Hungarian army and the front line was broken through, usage of poison gas
- ◉ during 1916 the front stabilized at the Piave River till 1918 - June 1918 - **the Battle of the Piave River** - participation of Czechoslovak Legions
- ◉ the Austro-Hungarians were defeated in October - **the Battle of Vittorio Veneto** - participation of Czechoslovak Legions again

THE FINAL PERIOD OF THE WAR

- ◉ after the Russian revolutions in 1917 Russia concluded separate peace with Germany in **Brest Litevski** in March 1918
- ◉ General exhaustion - of sources, armies, people in real (lack of labour power - participation of women)
- ◉ April 1917 - USA declared war on Germany - originally USA pursued the politics of non-interventions, but German submarines several times attacked merchant ships and civil ships with American passengers
- ◉ The United States were never formally a member of the Allies but became a self-styled "Associated Power"
- ◉ American troops came to Europe and after the great offensive of Allied Powers in summer 1918 the Central Powers collapsed very quickly
- ◉ On **November 3, 1918** Austria-Hungary sent a flag of truce to ask for an Armistice and the armistice with Austria was signed in Vila Giusti near Padua
- ◉ on **November 11, 1918**- an armistice with Germany signed in railroad carriage near **Compiègne**
- ◉ at 11 a.m. on **November 11, 1918** a ceasefire came into effect

THE RESULTS OF THE WAR

Casualties:

- ❖ 10 million of soldiers died
- ❖ 7 million of civilians died

The map of Europe has changed:

- ❖ **dissolution of four monarchies** (Russia, Austria-Hungary, German Empire and Otoman Empire)
- ❖ after dissolution of Austria-Hungary: **constitution of 5 new states** (Austrian Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes)
- ❖ **Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia** was established, independent and unified
- ❖ **Poland** was renewed
- ❖ <http://www.the-map-as-history.com/demos/tome03/index.php>

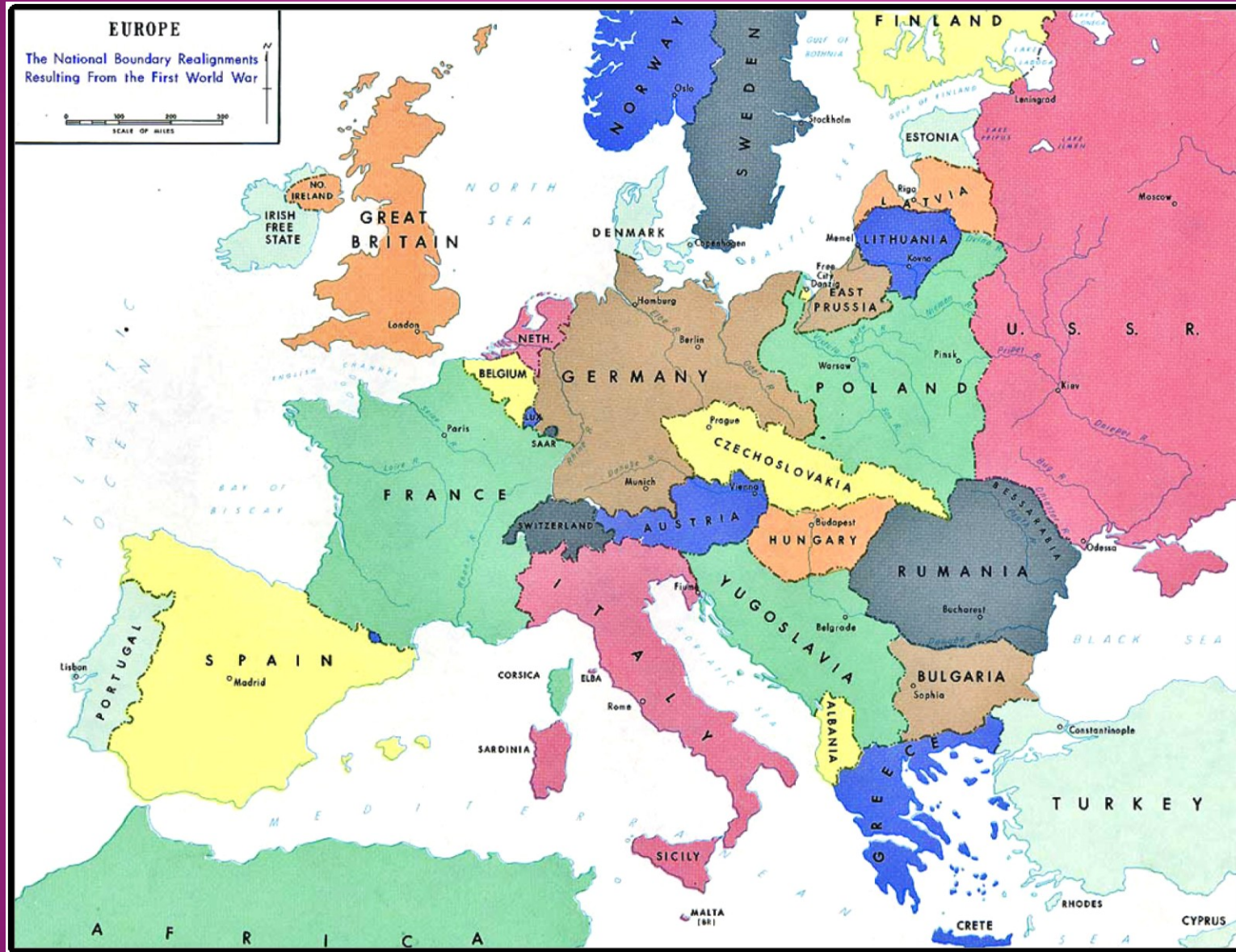
Economic changes:

- ❖ Development of industry (iron and steel, textiles, etc.) and technologies (armament industry, automobiles, aircrafts ...)
- ❖ Firstly the in many countries the war prosperity, later economic deprese

Social changes:

- ❖ Social radicalism - rise of totalitarism, revaschism etc.
- ❖ Social status of women has changed (suffrage)
- ❖ Many veterans - problems with reintegration

RESULTS OF THE WAR

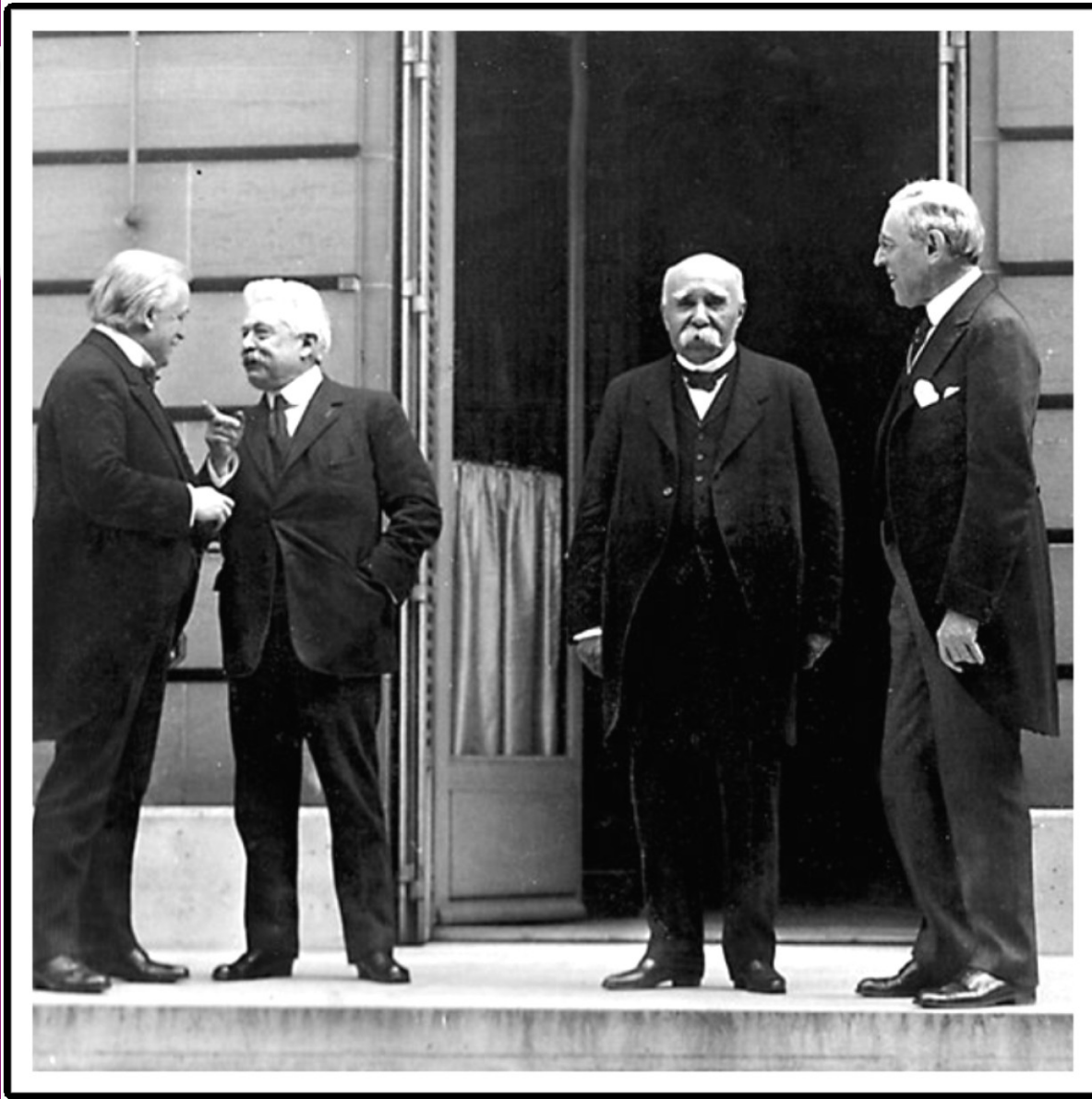


Europe after WW I

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

- ◉ the meeting of the Allied victors following the end of World War I - the aim was to set the peace terms for the defeated Central Powers following the armistices of 1918
- ◉ It took place in Paris in 1919 and involved diplomats from more than 32 countries and nationalities. They met, discussed various options and developed a series of treaties ("Paris Peace Treaties") for the post-war world
- ◉ **the winning powers** - France, Great Britain, USA, Italy, Japan
- ◉ **other fighting states** - Belgium, British dominions, Poland, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, Czechoslovakia, Romania, Greece, Portugal and other non-european states
- ◉ **defeated states** - Germany, Austria, Hungary, Turkey, Bulgaria
- ◉ Russia was not invited to the Paris Peace Conference (bolshevik revolution and civil war in Russia)

PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE



The Big Four -
David Lloyd George
(GB), Vittorio Orlando
(It), George
Clemenceau (Fr),
Woodrow Wilson (US) -
from left to right

PEACE TREATIES

The following treaties were prepared at the Paris Peace Conference:

- ⦿ **the Treaty of Versailles**, 1919, 28 June 1919, (with the German Empire in Weimar Republic form)
- ⦿ **the Treaty of Saint-Germain**, 10 September 1919, (with Austria)
- ⦿ **the Treaty of Neuilly**, 27 November 1919, (with Bulgaria)
- ⦿ **the Treaty of Trianon**, 4 June 1920, (with Hungary)
- ⦿ **the Treaty of Sèvres**, 10 August 1920; subsequently revised by the Treaty of Lausanne, 24 June 1923, (with Turkey)

VERSAILLES SYSTEM

- ◉ The so-called "Paris Peace Treaties", together with the accords of the Washington Naval Conference of 1921-1922, laid the foundations for the so-called Versailles-Washington system of international relations
- ◉ the United States never ratified the Treaty of Versailles, never joined the League of Nations, and signed separate peace treaties with the three countries it had declared war against
- ◉ 1920 - the **League of the Nations** was established
 - ◉ the all over the world organization which goal was to save peace in the World
 - ◉ USA did not join this organization
 - ◉ In fact -useless - did not have any instruments how to enforce its decisions (only resolutions without the real effect)

CENTRAL EUROPE AFTER WWI

Economy

- ◉ 1921-1922 - economic depression as a consequence of the war
- ◉ 1924-1929 - economic boom, liberal economic reforms, technical development, intensification and growth of production
- ◉ 1929, October 24 - the Black Tuesday, New York Stock Market Crash (Wall Street) → The Great Depression - the longest, most widespread, and deepest depression of the 20th century, drop of industrial production, high unemployment, social unrests, crisis of democracy
- ◉ since 1933 - economic development again, but slow

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE CENTRAL EUROPE AFTER WWI

- ◉ unstable peace, effort to avoid conflicts, era of democratism a pacifism
- ◉ April - May 1922 - **Conference in Genova, Italy**
- ◉ also Russia and Germany invited
- ◉ the conference should discuss German reparations - Germany was not able to pay it but France insisted on it → no agreement
- ◉ the result of the conference: meeting of German and Soviet diplomats - they concluded an **Agreement in Rappalo** - Germany was the first state which recognized the Soviet Union de iure
- ◉ 1924 - **the Dawes Plan** - the plan of stabilization of German economy and economical recovery (stabilization of German mark, budget, sequential paying of reparations)
- ◉ The Dawes Plan relied on money given to Germany by the US - high loans

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE CENTRAL EUROPE AFTER WWI

Locarno Conference, Switzerland - October 1925

- ◉ 4 great powers (Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany) - an attempt to overcome the differences between the winners and losers
- ◉ The principal treaty concluded at Locarno was the "**Rhineland Pact**" between Germany, France, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Italy. The first three signatories undertook not to attack each other, with the latter two acting as guarantors
- ◉ the western borders of Germany were guaranteed but the eastern were not - there could come up to some changes - central European countries felt endangered by German imperialism and revanchism
- ◉ Germany's admission to the League of Nations
- ◉ the subsequent withdrawal (completed in June 1930) of Allied troops from Germany's western Rhineland

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS IN THE CENTRAL EUROPE AFTER WWI

- ◉ **Briand-Kellog Pact** - also called the **General Treaty for the Renunciation of War** or the **World Peace Act**) was signed on August 27, 1928 57 states
- ◉ prohibited the use of war as "an instrument of national policy" and as an instrument of settlement of disputes between states
- ◉ the problem was that there were not defined any sanctions in case of breaching the Pact
- ◉ no program of disarmament
- ◉ **The Young Plan** was a program for settlement of German reparations debts after World War I written in 1929 and formally adopted in 1930
- ◉ Germany was not able to pay the huge annual payments, so the amount of the reparation payments was reduced again - to 112 billion Gold Marks, Germany should pay them in next 59 years, 2 billion marks every year

READINGS

- ❑ WWI:

<http://www.firstworldwar.com>

<http://www.the-map-as-history.com/demos/tome03/index.php>

- ❑ 14 point of Woodrow Wilson:

http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc_large_image.php?doc=62

- ❑ MacMILLAN, Margareth: Peacemakers Six Months That Changed the World: The Paris Peace Conference of 1919 and Its Attempt to End War.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8uWgbRd8So>

- ❑ HENIG, Ruth B. (1995). *Versailles and after, 1919-1933*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

- ❑ Treaty of Locarno

<http://treaties.un.org/Pages/showDetails.aspx?objid=08000002801683d0>

CZECH LANDS DURING WW I

- ◉ The Czech lands were constituent part of Habsburg monarchy - no effort to destroy the monarchy till 1917/1918
- ◉ Only a small conspiracy group - *The Maffia* - cooperation with South Slavs
- ◉ Emigrants - **Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk**, **Edvard Beneš** and **Milan Rastislav Štefánik** - 1915 - founded **The Czechoslovak National Council** in Paris
- ◉ army in abroad - Legions (France, Italy, Russia) - during 1918 de facto recognized as the allied army
- ◉ Masaryk travelled around Europe (Geneve, Paris, London), to Russia (summer 1917) and to the USA - looking for the support for the idea of independent Czechoslovak state
- ◉ January 1918 - *The Fourteen Points* of the US President **Woodrow Wilson** - the self-determination of the nations
- ◉ 10th Point: The peoples of Austria-Hungary, whose place among the nations we wish to see safeguarded and assured, should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development.

http://wwi.lib.byu.edu/index.php/President_Wilson%27s_Fourteen_Points

- ◉ January 1918 - Czech politicians in A-H - demand of independence
- ◉ July 1918 - **The Czechoslovak National Comitee** in Prague - **Karel Kramář**
- ◉ October 1918 - the Emperor Charles I (1916-1918) offered the federalisation of Habsburg Monarchy but its nations refused it

CZECHOSLOVAKIA



Tomaš Garrigue Masaryk



Edvard Beneš

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

- ◉ the First Czechoslovak republic was proclaimed on October 28, 1918 in Prague
- ◉ consisted of: Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia
- ◉ The first Prime Minister - **Karel Kramář**
- ◉ 1920 - the constitution - plural parliament democracy
- ◉ in 1920 - **Tomas Garrigue Masaryk (1850-1937)** was elected the first President (reelected in 1925 and 1929, served till 1935), he was a philosopher and politician, very influential personality, his wife was American - Charlotte Garrigue, their son **Jan Masaryk** served later as Czechoslovak Foreign Minister
- ◉ most important and most influential political party - Republican Party of Agricultural and Smallholder People - Peasant party, they usually had a Prime Minister - **Antonín Švehla** in 1920s, **Jan Malypetr** and **Milan Hodža** in 1930s

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

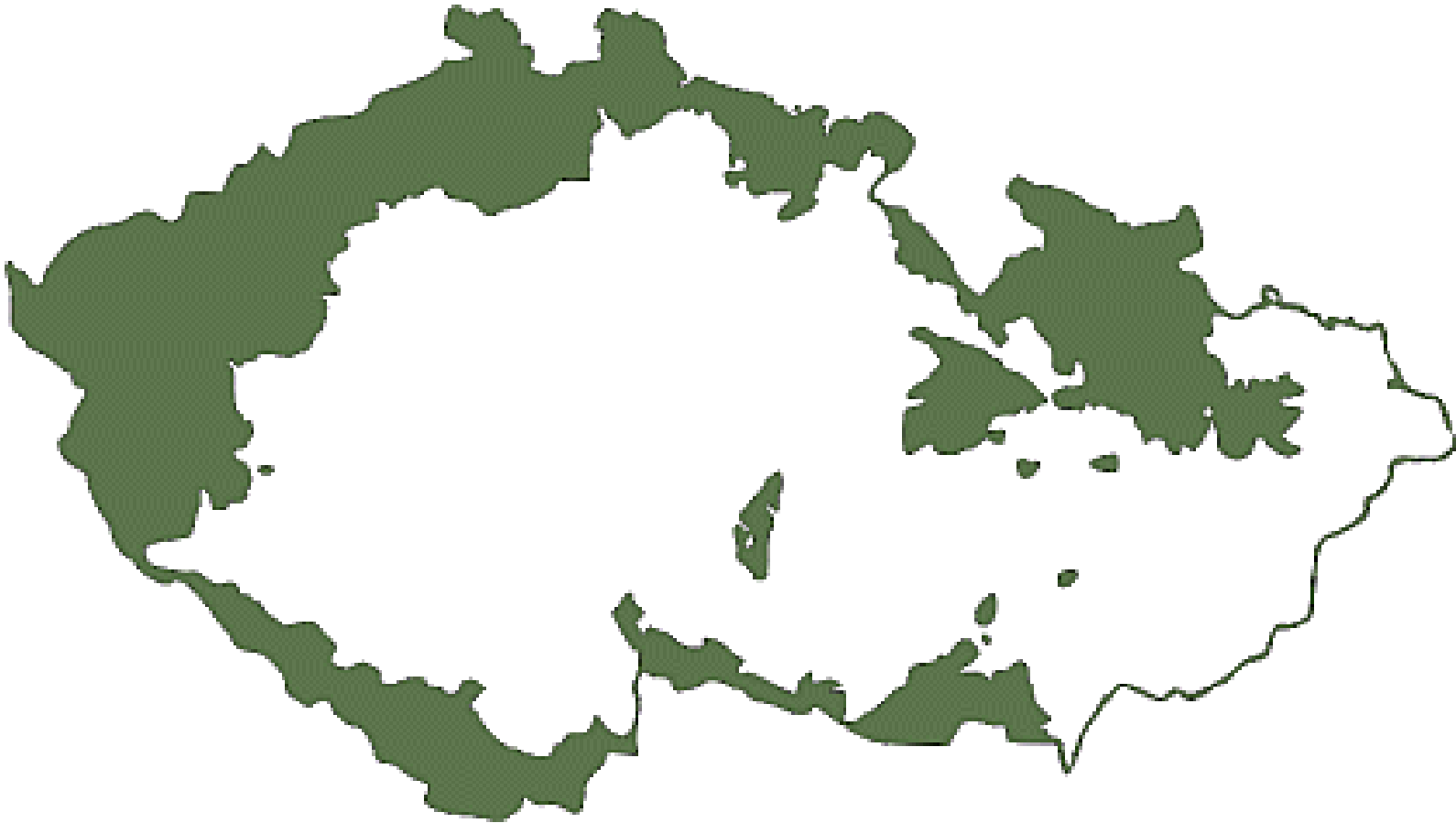


The first Czechoslovak republic consisted of: Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia (Sub-Carpathian Rus)

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

- ◉ *national minorities* - more than 3 million of ethnic Germans were living in Bohemian lands, they were called Sudeten Germans
- The German minority living in Sudetenland demanded autonomy from the Czech government, claiming they were suppressed and repressed by the Czech government
- In the 1935 Parliamentary elections, the newly founded Sudeten German Party under leadership of **Konrad Henlein**, financed with Nazi money, won an upset victory, securing over 2/3 of the Sudeten German vote, which worsened the diplomatic relations between the Germans and the Czechs
- 1938 - Munich Agreement
- ◉ Other national minorities in Czechoslovakia:
 - 750 000 of Hungarians in southern Slovakia
 - 450 000 of Ruthenians in Karpathian Ruthenia
 - 75 000 of Poles
 - Jews, Gypsies

CZECHOSLOVAKIA



- Sudetenland - the areas inhabited by Germans in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia during the interwar period

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

- ◉ foreign policy - led by Minister **Edvard Beneš** from 1918 to 1935 - one of the most important European diplomats during the interwar period, in 1936 he was elected second President of Czechoslovakia
- ◉ 1921 - **the Little Entente** was formed - an alliance of Czechoslovakia, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Romania - against Hungary and its revanchism and against restoration of Habsburgs, Little Entente was supported by France (1924 - Czechoslovak-French Agreement)
- ◉ the Little Entente was an idea of Czechoslovak Foreign Minister **Edvard Beneš**
- ◉ since 1925 - economic growth, cultural development
- ◉ the great depression since 1930
- ◉ since 1933 - Czechoslovakia was threatened by Nazi Germany
- ◉ Border fortification

LITTLE ENTENTE



Czechoslovakia +
Yugoslavia +
Rumania

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Czechoslovak fortification - Hanička
<http://www.hanicka.cz/>



Czechoslovak fortification - Bouda
<http://www.boudamuseum.com/>

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Readings:

- ◉ TUMA, Oldrich - JINDRA, Jiri (eds.): *Czechoslovakia and Romania in the Versailles System*. Prague 2006.
- ◉ LUKES, Igor: *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Beneš in the 1930s*. New York 1996.
- ◉ LUKES, Igor - GOLSTEIN, Erich (eds.): *The Munich Crisis, 1938: Prelude to WWII*. London 1999.