


**CENTRAL  
EUROPE BEFORE  
AND DURING  
WWI**

Jana Skerlova, Ph.D.

# UNIFICATION OF ITALY

- ◉ there were 8 smaller states in Italy - rulers - the Habsburgs, the Bourbons, the Pope
- ◉ in the north-western part the most economically developed Kingdom of Sardinia and Piedmont was situated, the home dynasty was ruling there – **the House of Savoy** – king **Victor Emanuel II**



 *The Unification of Italy. By 1860, the majority of the Italian “boot” was under the rule of Piedmont-Sardinia. By 1870, the unification was complete.*

- ◉ 1859 - the war with Habsburg Monarchy
- ◉ at the same time, the revolution in smaller states in central Italy broke out and the local pro-Habsburg rulers were overthrown
- ◉ after the plebiscite these states were connected with Victor Emanuel's state
- ◉ the uprising led by legendary hero **Giuseppe Garibaldi** (1807–1882) – he led one thousand of men in red shirts to Palermo (Sicily), occupied it, in September they entered the city of Naples and defeated the army of king Francis (from the house of Bourbons)
- ◉ then Garibaldi gave his power to Victor Emanuel II and southern parts of Italy were unified with the northern parts

- ◉ March 1861 – **the Kingdom of Italy** was proclaimed in Torino
- ◉ 1866 – after Austrian-prussian war Veneto (the territory around the town of Venice) was connected with the Kingdom of Italy
- ◉ 1870 – the **Papal state** with Rome was annexed by the Kingdom of Italy
- ◉ 1871 – **Rome** became the capital city of Italy
- ◉ Victor Emanuel II ruled till 1878



# UNIFICATION OF GERMANY

- ⊙ between 1849–1866 – the struggle between Austria and Prussia for domination in German states (German Confederation)
- ⊙ in Prussia the king **William I** (1861–1888, since 1871 **the first German Emperor**)
- ⊙ since 1862 – the Prime Minister **Otto von Bismarck** – his target was to unify Germany „*by blood and iron*“ that means by army and military power and make Germany the strongest Empire in Europe
- ⊙ 1866 – the alliance between Prussia and Italy – against Habsburg Monarchy
- ⊙ Not all the German states wanted the unification – e. g. Bavaria - allied with Austria against Prussia

# THE UNIFICATION OF ITALY



Kingdom of Italy in 1859 („the orange area“)



The Kingdom of Italy in 1870.

**DER DEUTSCHE BUND  
1815-1866**





- ⊙ Austro-Prussian war broke out in 1866
- ⊙ July 3<sup>rd</sup> 1866 **the battle of Sadowa** near Königgratz (Hradec Králové), 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest battle in Europe since the Battle of Leipzig in 1813
- ⊙ Austria was defeated and lost some areas in Germany and Veneto in Italy)



- ◉ the German Confederation existing since 1815 was dissolved
- ◉ instead of that **the North German Commonwealth** was constituted – 21 states – customs union, common currency and common foreign policy – the first step to unification
- ◉ Prussian king became the President of this Commonwealth and the commander-in-chief of the army
- ◉ Prussia provoked France to declare war on Prussia in 1870
- ◉ France was defeated at **the battle of Sedan** in September 1870 – French king **Napoleon III** was captured what caused the fall of the French Empire and proclamation of the third republic
- ◉ Paris was besieged since September 1870 till January 1871
- ◉ in January 1871 – **The German Empire was proclaimed**

# UNIFICATION OF GERMANY



# UNIFICATION OF GERMANY



# GERMAN EMPIRE

- ⊙ Germany annexed Alsace and Lorraine what were the richest French provinces
- ⊙ Germany became federation of 25 states (22 states + 3 cities) with its own representatives
- ⊙ each state nominated its representative to the Senate (Bundesrat), the members of the assembly (Bundestag) were voted – the suffrage was universal for all the men since 25 years
- ⊙ Germany became European and world power with strong army and imperial politics
- ⊙ **William II (1888–1918)** – the last prussian king and German Emperor

## *Readings:*

Breuilly, John (ed.): Nineteenth-Century Germany: Politics, Culture and Society 1780-1918. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997 and 2001.

# INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BEFORE WW1

## Great powers at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century:

- ◉ **USA** - the strongest
- ◉ **Germany** (2<sup>nd</sup> world industrial area), the most powerful state in Europe, strong army, developed economy and culture
- ◉ **France** – the bank of the world, 2<sup>nd</sup> strongest European state, succesful colonial politicis – colonies in Africa and in Asia
- ◉ **Great Britain** – the greatest colonial power – its domain included the geatest colony – India, also colonies in
- ◉ in Asia **Japan** – constitutional monarchy, development of industry, expansive politics
- ◉ **Austria-Hungary** –cooperation with Germany, its foreign politics focused on the Balkan Peninsula
- ◉ **Russia** – economically and politicaly the weakest state among the great powers, military-political system, absolute power of the Tsar, no political rights for citizens, social movement, expansion to Asia – conflicts with Japan and Great Britain

# FORMATION OF TWO ENEMY BLOCKS IN EUROPE AT THE END OF 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

- ◉ 1879 – the secret agreement was concluded between *Germany* and *Austria-Hungary* – against France and Russia
- ◉ 1882 – *Italy* joined this pact → **Tripple Alliance (later the Central Powers)**
- ◉ 1893 – *Russia* and *France* made an agreement – they both were isolated and were affraid of strong and aggresive Germany
- ◉ 1904 – so called *Entente Cordial* concluded between *France* and *Great Britain* (affraid of strong Germany)
- ◉ 1907 – *Russia* + *Britain* → **Tripple Entente**

# BALKAN WARS

- ◉ the first conflict in Europe after 40 years
- ◉ the Balkan nations were fighting against Turkey which was occupying them
- ◉ **1912–1913 - 1<sup>st</sup> Balkan War** – so called *Balkan League* (Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro) X Turkey – Turkey was defeated and its European areas were liberated
- ◉ but then the former allies started to fight with each other because of dividing of the liberated areas, Bulgaria had greatest war casualties and invested the most but the deliberated areas (Macedonia, Thrakia) got especially Greece and Serbia → Bulgaria was dissatisfied and declared war on Greece and Serbia → **2<sup>nd</sup> Balkan War – 1913**
- ◉ Turkey and Rumania joined Greece and Serbia and they were fighting against Bulgaria which was defeated and lost also the areas which obtained after the 1<sup>st</sup> Balkan War
- ◉ but also Serbia was dissatisfied with the results of the wars (Serbia was expecting enlargement of its territory and wanted to raise Adriatic coast but instead of that Albania was formed)
- ◉ Serbia started to prepair for the new war – wanted tu unify all the southern Slavs – who were living in Austria-Hungary

# BALKAN WARS



1st Balkan War



2nd Balkan War



# 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 in  
WWI

# 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 1918 –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
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- ⊙ also naval war (in the Pacific Ocean – Japan + Great Britain against Germany, in the Northern Sea – Great Britain against Germany)
  - ⊙ warfare in the colonies

## 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

# 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**

# 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 successful, 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 Ottoman 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>

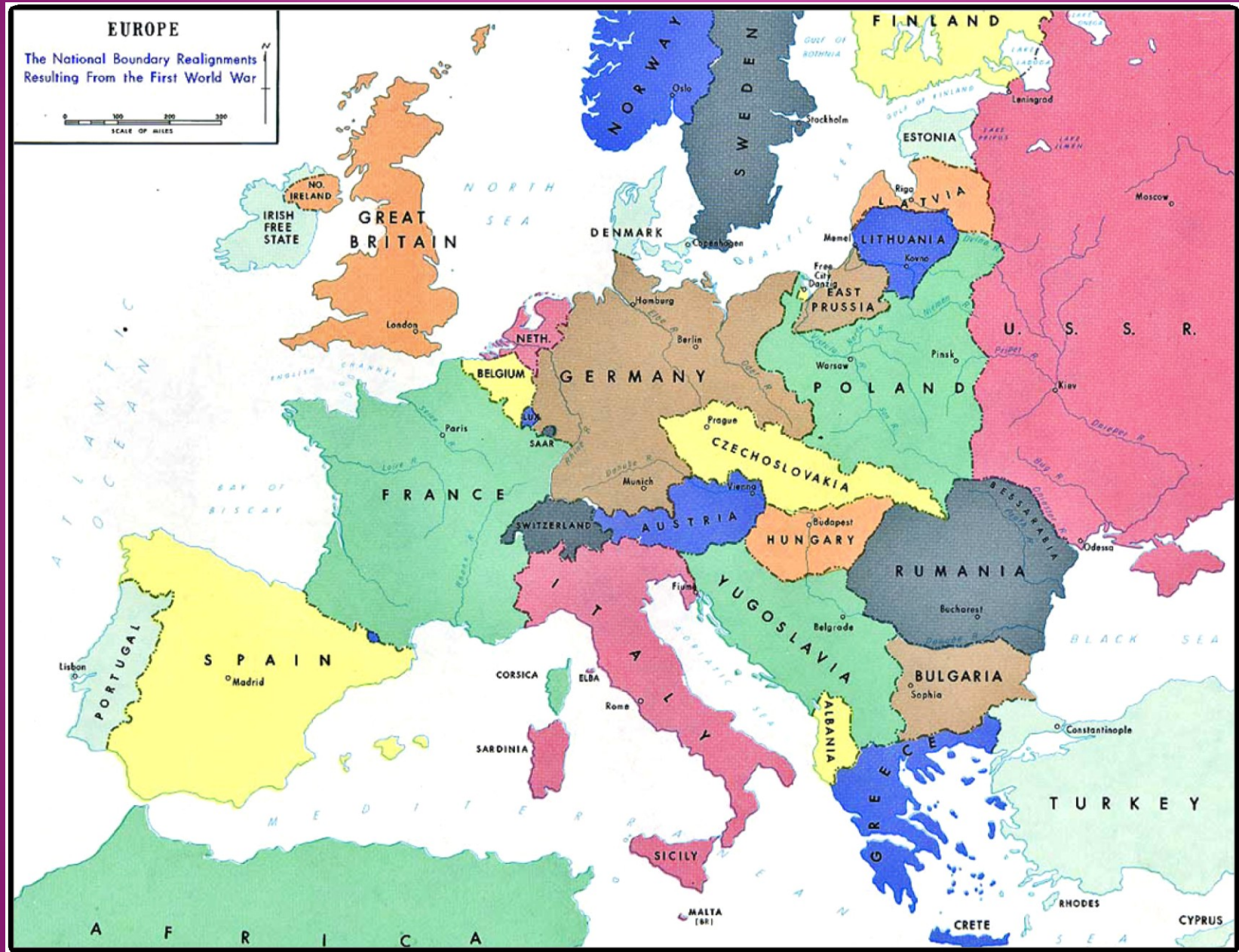
## Economic changes:

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

## Social changes:

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

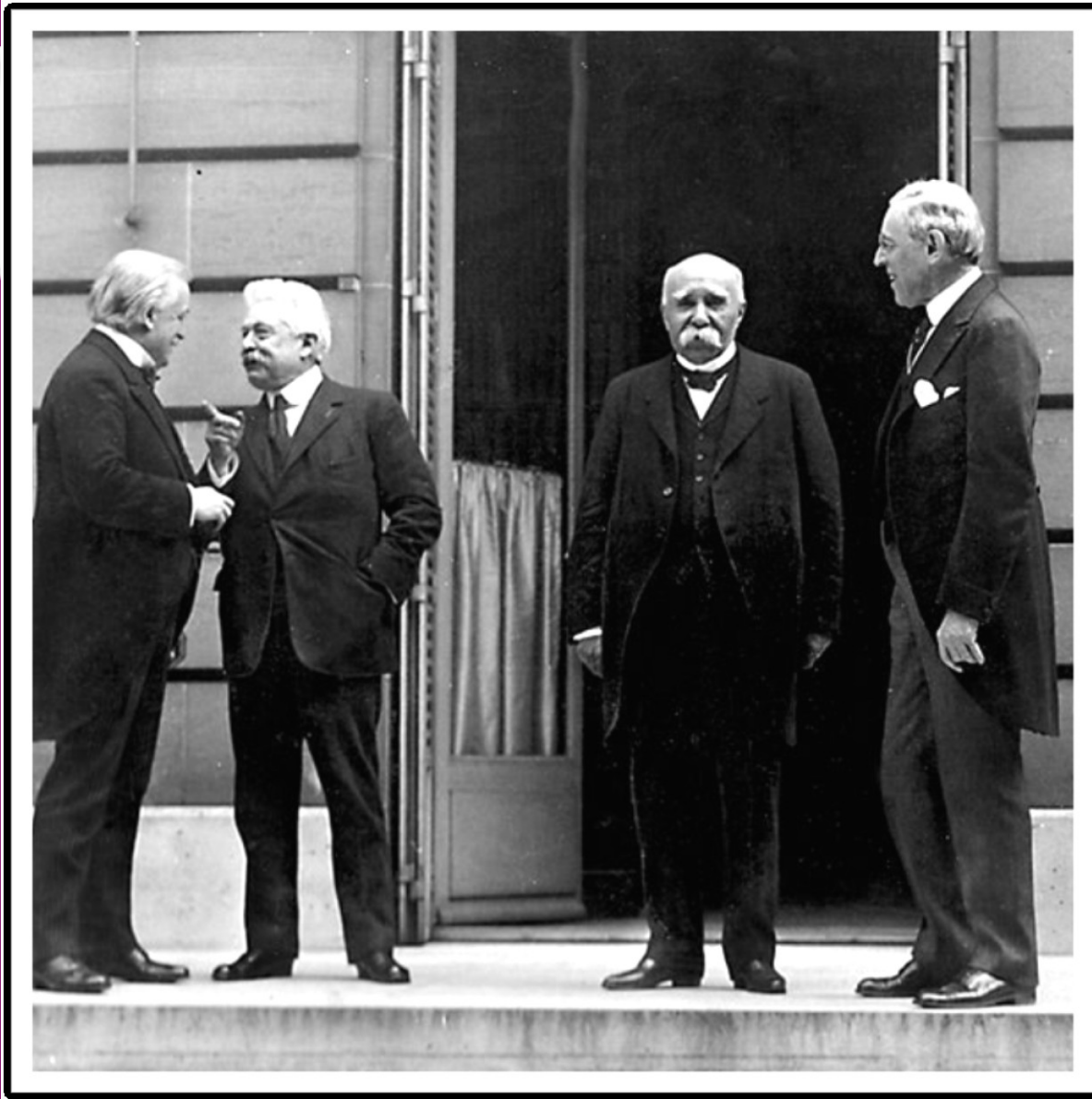
# RESULTS OF THE WAR



# 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)