

CENTRAL EUROPE DURING THE INTERWAR PERIOD

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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

- ◉ foreign policy – headed 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 border fortification

—

Hanička

<http://www.hanicka.cz/>



Czechoslovak border fortification —

Bouda

<http://www.boudamuseum.com/>

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
- ◉ since 1937 – isolation of Czechoslovakia in international politics
- ◉ policy of appeasement – the Great powers did not want to risk world peace for Czechoslovakia
- ◉ 1938 - this policy resulted in Munich Agreement

CZECHOSLOVAKIA



Sudetenland – the areas inhabited by Germans in Bohemia,
Moravia and Silesia

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Readings:

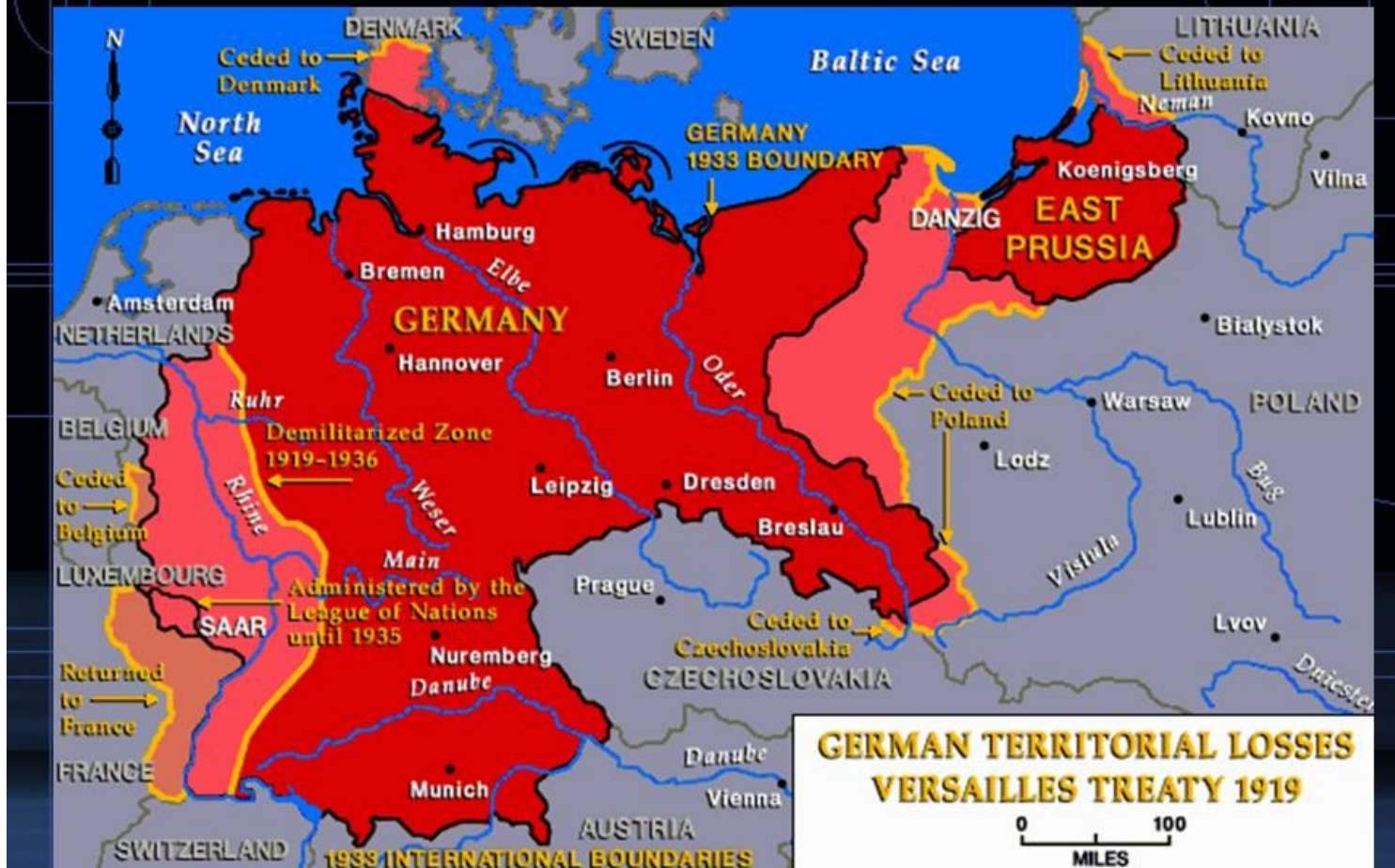
- ⊙ TUMA, Oldrich – JINDRA, Jiri (eds.): *Czechoslovakia and Romania in the Versailles System*. Prague 2006.
- ⊙ LUKES, Igor: *Czechoslovakia Between Stalin and Hitler: The Diplomacy of Edvard Beneš in the 1930s*. New York 1996.
- ⊙ LUKES, Igor – GOLSTEIN, Erich (eds.): *The Munich Crisis, 1938: Prelude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

GERMANY

- ◉ strong revolutionary wave
- ◉ in Bavaria – Bavarian Soviet Republic was proclaimed in October, defeated in April 1919
- ◉ 1919 – the first elections
- ◉ 1919 – 1933 – Weimar Republic, parliamentary republic, federation of 16 states
- ◉ the first President – **Friedrich Ebert** (Social Democratic Party)
- ◉ serious problems – economical crisis, reparations, restrictions of the area, lost of the colonies, restrictions of army, navy and air force
- ◉ March 1920 – right-wing monarchistic **Kapp Putsch**
- ◉ 1923 – the new government – Prime Minister (Chancellor) **Gustav Stresemann** – stabilization of Golden mark, succesful foreign policy
- ◉ 1923 – suppression of **Hitler-Ludendorff Putsch** in Munich, Hitler was arrested and wrote his programme book *Mein Kampf*, his political party NSDAP was banned
- ◉ 1925 – the second President became **Paul von Hindenburg**

GERMANY

Weimar Republic



GERMANY

- ◉ since 1929 – Great Depression – in Germany very serious effects (1932 – unemployment was 44,5 %), the growth of extreme nationalism and revanchism
- ◉ 1932 – NSDAP won the elections, 1933 – **Adolf Hitler** became a Chancellor
- ◉ 1934 – Hitler became a Führer – the head of the state
- ◉ 1935 – Nüremberg laws – anti-Semitism, the Jews excluded from political, economical and public life, had to wear a yellow star
- ◉ 1935 – Germany introduced general military service
- ◉ 1936 – Germany occupied de-militarized zone in Rheinland
- ◉ both were breaching of Versailles Peace Treaty and of Rhineland Pact but only formal protest of great powers
- ◉ 1936 – pact with Italy – Berlin-Rome Axis
- ◉ 1936 – Anti-Comintern Pact – with Japan
- ◉ 1938, November 9–10 – Crystal Night – great pogrom against Jews

GERMANY



Paul von Hindenburg



Adolf Hitler

GERMANY

Readings:

- ⊙ KAES, Anton – JAY, Martin – DIMENDBERG, Edward, (eds.): *The Weimar Republic sourcebook*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994.

http://books.google.cz/books?id=J4A1gt4-VCsC&printsec=frontcover&hl=cs&source=gbs_ViewAPI&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false

AUSTRIA

- ◉ 1919–1934 – the Republic of Austria, first Chancellor Ignaz Seipel, Austria's government was dominated by the Christian Social Party
- ◉ the country was unstable, severe economical consequences of the war
- ◉ many paramilitary forces had been formed during the early 1920s - the clash between right-wing and left-wing paramilitary forces is known as **July Revolt of 1927**
- ◉ 1932 – authoritarian regime of Chancellor **Engelbert Dollfuss**, austrofascism, Dollfuss was assassinated by Nazi agent who attempted coup d'état in 1934 – July Putsch
- ◉ New Chancellor – **Kurt Schuschnigg** – an effort to keep Austria's independence
- ◉ 1938 – Anschluss – March 11 – German troops crossed Austrian frontiers and Austria was occupied by Germany

HUNGARY

- ◉ The official proclamation of democratic republic on November 16, 1918, **Mihály Károlyi** was named as the republic's Prime Minister
- ◉ the area of Hungary was of only one third of pre-war Hungary – dissatisfaction, attempts to restore the Great Hungary
- ◉ the rapid rise of power of Hungarian Communist Party, the Hungarian Soviet Republic was proclaimed on March 21, 1919 – an attempt to restore the Great Hungary, the head of this republic was **Béla Kun**, Hungarian communists wanted to connect with Soviet Russia
- ◉ Czechoslovakia and Rumania were threatened by Hungarian demands → their armies attacked Hungary and the Hungarian Soviet Republic was defeated
- ◉ the new Government – fascist party of **Admiral Miklós Horthy**
- ◉ 1920 – monarchy was restored in Hungary – Horthy regent 1921–1931 – the Prime Minister was **István Bethlen** (till 1931)

HUNGARY

- ◉ the former Austrian Emperor, Charles IV, unsuccessfully attempted to retake Hungary's throne in March 1921
- ◉ Hungary's signing of the Treaty of Trianon on June 4, 1920, ratified the country's dismemberment, limited the size of its armed forces, and required reparations payments
- ◉ 1920s – the white terror - led to the imprisonment, torture, and execution without trial of communists, socialists, Jews, leftist intellectuals, sympathizers with the Károlyi and Kun regimes, and others who threatened the traditional Hungarian political order that the officers sought to reestablish
- ◉ 1932–1936 – the Prime Minister was **Guyla Gömbös** - the radical right's ascendancy in Hungarian politics
- ◉ 1939 – Arrow Cross Party (Hungarian Equivalent of Nazi Party) won the elections
- ◉ 1940 – Hungary joined the Tripartite Pact (Germany, Italy and Japan)

HUNGARY



POLAND

- ⊙ the Republic of Poland reestablished in 1918
- ⊙ several regional conflicts:
- ⊙ 1918 – 1919 – **Polish – Ukrainian War** –
- ⊙ border conflicts with Czechoslovakia - January 1919 – **Seven day war** broke out
- ⊙ a new demarcation line – the western part of the disputed territory was given to Czechoslovakia while Poland received the eastern part
- ⊙ 1919 – 1921 – **Polish-Soviet War** – Poles attacked Russia – they wanted to use Russian civil war to ensure their eastern borders, but later Soviet counteroffensive – they wanted to establish Soviet Republic in Poland
- ⊙ August 1920 – the battle of Warsaw - the Soviet troops were defeated
- ⊙ the Peace Treaty of Riga – Poland got parts of Belarus and Ukraine
- ⊙ 1922 – annexation of Vilnius Region from Lithuania

POLAND

- ◉ 1926 – the May Coup d'État – **Marshall Jozef Piłsudski**, he became most influential politician in Poland and became its de facto a dictator till his death in 1935
- ◉ 1932 – non-aggression pact with Soviet Union
- ◉ October 1938: annexation of Zaolzie, Górna Orawa, Jaworzyna from Czechoslovakia
- ◉ March 31, 1939: military guarantees from United Kingdom and France
- ◉ August 23, 1939: non-aggression pact between Soviet Union and Germany: **Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact** with a secret military alliance protocol targeting Poland
- ◉ **September 1 – October 6, 1939: Invasion of Poland**

POLAND

The Polish nation in 1912, the territorial changes, and the boundaries of Poland since 1920

created by Carter O'Riens



- - - - - Polish claims during Referendum of 1920
- - - - - Boundary of Poland 1923-39
- - - - - Boundary of Poland since 1947
- Polish Catholic minority (20-50%) in 1912
- Polish majority (>50%) incl. Kashubian, Silesian, Mazurian, Goralian, in 1912
- % Referendum for Poland or Germany in 1921 and the results for Poland

Source of statistical data of the Polish nation:
 Mapa Etnograficzno-Statystyczna - S. Orgelbranda Encyklopedia Powszechna z ilustracjami i mapami 1912