

Terms of the Paris Peace Treaties 1919-20: Versailles, St Germain, Trianon, Neuilly, Sevre

1.2.1 The Paris Peace Settlement

- The representatives of 32 countries met in 1919 in Paris to draw up the peace settlement.
- The "Big Three" (France, USA and Britain) leaders were mostly in command of the decision makings and so was Italy but to a lesser extent.
- The settlement was created from five treaties; the Treaty of Versailles, St Germain, Trianon, Neuilly, Sevres/Lausanne.
- The Treaty of Versailles dealt specifically with Germany and was the major discussion during the draw up of the peace settlement whereas the other treaties dealt with the geo-political and economic future of Europe.
- The agreement containing the principles on which the League of Nations was to operate on took into account all five treaties.

1.2.2 The Treaty of Versailles

- June 1919
- Treaty with Germany
- Was signed in the Palace of Versailles
- Germany had to agree to accept full responsibility for the outbreak of the First World War

Territorial loses:

- The Saar administered by the League of Nations
- The creation of an independent Polish state
- West Prussia and Posen were given to Poland
- Alsace-Lorraine was given back to France
- Danzig was appointed as an international city
- Plebiscites in Upper Silesia, West Prussia and Schleswig
- Germany lost colonies and investments

Military Restrictions on Germany:

- Was only allowed a regular army that was limited to 100,000 military personnel
- Was not allowed an air force and only a very small fleet
- End of compulsory enlistment into the armed forces
- Rhineland to be occupied for 15 years by the allied military forces
- All commissions in Germany controlled by the allies until 1927

Reparations:

- Germany to pay £6,600 million (132 billion gold marks)
- Reparations where to be paid in regular instalments, some in gold and some in goods
- The Allies struggled to get payments from Germany from 1921 to 1923
- Dawes Commission 1924
- France took over Ruhr in 1923

League of Nations:

- The USA refused to join which weakened the league
- Collective security
- New mandate principles
- Germany and the defeated nations were at first left out

1.2.3 The Treaty of St Germain

- September 1919
- Treaty with Austria
- Dalmatia, Slovenia and Bosnia were given to Yugoslavia
- South Tyrol, Trentino, Trieste and Istria were given to Italy
- Bohemia and Moravia were given to Czechoslovakia
- Galicia was given to Poland
- Bukovina was given to Romania
- Austria was not allowed to unify with Germany

1.2.4 The Treaty of Trianon

- June 1920
- Treaty with Hungary
- Hungary losses 2/3 of its territory
- Slovakia and Ruthenia were given to Czechoslovakia
- Transylvania was given to Romania
- Burgenland was given to Austria
- Slovenia and Croatia were given to Yugoslavia

1.2.5 The Treaty of Neuilly

- November 1919
- Treaty with Bulgaria
- Western Thrace was given to Greece
- Dobrudja was given to Romania
- Northern Macedonia was given to Yugoslavia

1.2.6 The Treaty of Sevres

- 1920
- Treaty with Turkey
- The Straits of the Dardanelles to be controlled by the allies
- Saudi Arabia became independent
- Turkey lost the rights to Sudan and Libya
- Eastern Thrace and some Turkish Aegean Islands were given to Greece
- Mesopotamia, Palestine and Syria became League of Nation mandates and were to be run by France and Britain.

1.2.7 The Treaty of Lausanne

- 1923
- Treaty of Sevres was altered at Lausanne
- The Greeks were expelled
- Constantinople was given back to Turkey

1.2.8 Paris peace settlement issues

- Germany, Russia and none of the other defeated countries were allowed to take part of the discussions nor attended the Versailles conference
- All the big decisions were made by the Council of four (United States, France, United Kingdom and Italy)
- The aims of the major powers were often contradictory and so compromises had to be made within the treaties

- Terms of the Treaty of Versailles were not soft enough to allow for reconciliation with Germany but not harsh enough to weaken Germany's power

1.2.9 German Response

- Germany had hoped for a softer punishment as it had thought the treaty would have taken in much more of Wilson's Fourteen Points
- Did not think it was fair to have to accept responsibility for the start of the First World War
- Did not think it was fair that it had no say or that it was not part of the discussions
- Did not like the fact that it was forced to sign the treaty without any negotiations of the terms
- It disagreed with the reparations and especially the territorial losses
- It was also angered by the exclusion from the principle of self-determination
- The German population was angered by the treaty and wanted to see it revoked

1.2.10 Discussion and disagreements between the allies

- Some thought the treaty was too harsh, others that it was too lenient
- Those who supported Wilson's Fourteen Points argued that the treaty had failed to create a peaceful world
- John Maynard Keynes argued that Europe would become weaker and poorer as a result of the restrictions, territorial losses and the economic weakening of Germany
- The British people started to recognise that the treaty may have to be reviewed
- The US refused to agree with the treaty as it opposed to Article X of the League of Nations. This was an article under which members of the League agreed to use their powers to resist aggression wherever it might occur.
- The US did not sign the Treaty of Versailles which had a big impact on the League of Nations

The geopolitical and economic impact of the treaties on Europe and the mandate system

1.3.1 The Geo-Political Impacts of the Treaties

Central and Eastern Europe

- Western Europe remained quite similar to what it had been in 1914, only a few territorial changes were made
- Central and Eastern Europe were changed to a great extent. Before the First World War these regions were made up of large multinational empires. (Germany, Russia, Austro-Hungarian and the Ottoman Turks)
- Some of the states that were created: Austria, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia and Yugoslavia
- Self-determination was taken into account in most cases however it was sometimes difficult as different nationalities, racial groups and linguistic groups were scattered across many different areas
- Self-determination allowed common ethnic backgrounds and languages to decide the nature of the state however in some cases this was ignored such as South Tyrol, Sudetenland and the Polish Corridor. A major problem at the time was to create states which were capable of working successfully in terms of communication, economics and security.
- In some cases the ethnic groups were so intermixed that it was impossible to separate them. There was no point in creating an ethnically homogeneous state which then could not survive due to lack of trade routes, natural resources, oceans and rivers. Therefore choices had to be made by the allies about whether self-determination was more important or if it was the economic stability of each state.
- Each state needed to survive and so needed access to natural resources, trade routes, oceans and rivers. This could be complicated as borders sometimes had to be extended which would unite another ethnic group and in doing so it would go against self-determination
- An independent Polish state was created
- The Polish Corridor was created to give Poland access to the Baltic Sea.
- Danzig became a free city to maximize trade opportunities
- Some states contained minorities which could be vulnerable and so the allies asked the new nations to protect the rights of the minorities that resided in their borders
- Also minorities could appeal to the League of Nations which provided a Minorities Commission
- Many problems started to arise straight away with the division of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Before the war, it had been one big economic unit. After the war this no longer existed. Instead there was lots of small states all struggling to survive. There was now trade barriers which beforehand had not existed and this was a serious issue for these states. It also went against the Fourteen Points which stated the removal of trade barriers.
- With the creation of many small states Europe became less stable as it created vulnerable countries that lacked political and economic stability
- Internal tension started to build up within the states and between these states. So many factors were taken into account in the design of these states which could make things complicated. The states were created in a way that where possible they would include same ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups. However this was not the case for many states.
- Poland and Czechoslovakia fought over the Teschen area as it had important rail connections and coal resources
- The tension between these states led to a lack of economic co-operation which made these states weak and vulnerable to Germany and Russia in the future
- Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia realised their vulnerability and so decided to form the Little Entente in 1921
- Originally the Little Entente was created to protect these countries from Hungary which was angry over its territorial losses and wanted to recover some of it. The Little Entente formed economic and military co-operation between these countries.
- The Little Entente could have become a strong area if it had expanded and in the process made all the small states less vulnerable to Russia and Germany. However this never happened due to the tension between these small states. Poland which would have been a good addition to the Little Entente refused to join due to its disagreements with Czechoslovakia over the Teschen area.

Germany

- The Germans were very unhappy about the fact that they were denied self-determination and wanted the treaty revoked
- There were many German minorities outside of Germany that were now part of Czechoslovakia, Poland and Austria
- Germany lost 12% of its population and 13% of its territory

- Alsace-Lorraine which was taken back by France was one of the biggest losses
- Germany was split into two with the creation of the Polish Corridor which gave Poland access to the Baltic sea
- However, Germany was actually stronger now than it was before the war. The creation of many small states eliminated one big empire and since these small states were weak, once Germany regained its strength it could easily take over these

The USSR

- Bolshevik regime
- Russia was very weak after the war as it had suffered civil war and political revolution
- It had lost in the war against Poland and so had also lost significant territory to Poland
- Therefore it did not represent an immediate threat to the small newly founded nations but like Germany could do so in the future

The Treaty of Rapallo

- Treaty between the USSR and Germany in 1922
- Germany and the USSR who both were denied to join the League of Nations got together
- They decided to financially co-operate and trade with each other
- Form a union against Poland as they both had lost territory to it
- Secret military agreements, Germany could test its military equipment on the Russian territory and in doing so it avoided the restrictions placed upon it in the Treaty of Versailles

1.3.2 The Economic Impacts

- It was what the Treaty of Versailles did not do that affected the European economic situation most
- No economic questions were dealt with directly apart from reparations
- It did not find a solution for the problems of allied war debts
- Countries were struggling to pay off their debts and this created bad relations between the debtors and the United States
- This resulted in economic instability and tension
- The debt situation helped contribute to the Ruhr crisis
- A number of international meetings had taken place to try and resolve the debt issue however these had no impact as the United States did not want the debts of its allies canceled.
- This weakened the allied countries as they had to keep demanding reparations from Germany to pay these debts
- After the Ruhr Crisis the United States offered financial help to Germany (Dawes Plan) so that Germany could then pay its reparations to the allied countries which in turn could then pay off their loans to the United States.
- JM Keynes was particularly against the economic terms of the Versailles Treaty. He maintained that by punishing Germany the allies were only punishing themselves. He claimed that the high reparations, territorial losses and loss of resources on Germany would affect Europe negatively as Germany was the economic engine of Europe.
- The United States and Britain started to see the need to revise the treaty
- This created tension between France and Britain as France did not want the German economy to strengthen again and demanded the high reparations that had been imposed on Germany
- Another issue was that the treaty did not create an organization to introduce and promote international trade. Trade barriers were a big issue for the newly created European states. This added to the catastrophic impact of the Great Depression of 1929

1.3.3 The Mandate System

- There was an agreement amongst the allies to create a mandatory system to distribute the colonies of the defeated powers
- This would be supervised by the League of Nations
- The main priority of the mandate system was to ensure the well-being of the people and the development of these territories
- The League of Nations was also responsible for making sure that trade was possible for each territory and that no slavery occurred
- The main purpose was to create independent democratic states and help improve the populations education and ways of life
- Three classes of mandates existed; mandates A, B and C. Each territory was put into a class according to its stage of development and to which extent it was ready to becoming independent.
- The territories which in the near future would be ready for independence were placed in "mandates A". This included Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq and Transjordan.

- The territories that were less advanced and where not going to become independent for quite some time were placed in "mandates B". This included the German colonies in Africa which were distributed to Britain, France and Belgium.
- The territories which had a low population and where underdeveloped fell into "mandates C" and were handed over directly to the countries that had conquered them. Japan, New Zealand and Australia received the German colonies in the Pacific and South Africa received Southwest Africa.
- Some countries like Japan treated its new colonies as an addition to its territory which went against the system
- The mandate system did however create a system in which the countries in power of these colonies had responsibilities to the people who lived there and if these countries' actions went against the system they could be subjected to an international body.
- There was a lot of controversy around the distribution of the mandates especially because most of them went to France and the UK which were already in possession of the world's largest empires
- The Italians were very unhappy as they had been promised territories which they had not received and in addition they were not given any mandates even though they were on the winning side of the war
- The Arabs in the Middle East were also very unhappy about the mandate system as they wanted land and independent status which they were not given despite the fact that they helped the UK conquer the Ottoman Empire
- Another controversy emerged when the British decided to go ahead with the Balfour Declaration of 1917

Enforcement of the provisions of the treaties: US isolationism, the retreat from the Anglo-American Guarantee, Disarmament-Washington, London and Geneva Conferences

1.4.1 Problems with Enforcing of the Treaties

- The United States never joined the League of Nations which weakened the League
- The Anglo-American guarantee never happened
- Germany was angry as it thought the Treaty of Versailles was unfair and harsh and so wanted the treaty revoked
- Italy was angry as it was on the winning side, however it did not receive much territory and so the Italians wanted to revise the treaty in favour of Italy
- Japan was only interested in issues concerning itself and not the issues concerned with the European aspects of the peace settlement
- The United States retreated into isolationism
- The USSR was isolated throughout the 1920's (with the exception of the Treaty of Rapallo with Germany)
- France and Britain disagreed on the strategies concerning Germany

1.4.2 US Isolationism

- The United States never accepted the Treaty of Versailles because they did not agree with Article X and could not accept the agreement of the League of Nations and so it was never part of the League
- The United States did not approve of the Anglo-American Guarantee which was a measure of protection for France if Germany was to attack again
- Isolationism was not new to the United States. It had been a big part of its history
- After the war it returned to its isolationism and did not want to intervene outside its own areas of interest

1.4.3 The Anglo-American Guarantee

- Security was very important to France, was very afraid of another attack from Germany once Germany regained its strength
- France wanted the Rhineland area of Germany to be an independent state to protect itself. This state could either be neutral or under French influence. Wilson and George did not agree with this however they knew that France would not give up unless it got a firm guarantee of military support from the United States and Britain.
- The Anglo-French agreement was signed on the 28 of June 1919

- Wilson campaigned vigorously in the United States between 1919 and 1920 to win support for the ratification of the Treaty of Versailles and for the United States to join the League of Nations
- However the Anglo-American Guarantee was not accepted by the US Senate and so never took place
- When the United States did not accept the Guarantee, Britain withdrew from the agreement as well
- France no longer had a guaranteed military support from the United States and Britain

1.4.4 Rising Tension between Japan and the United States

- Japan wanted to expand its territory and wanted to dominate China
- This could ruin the trade relations China had with other countries
- The United States was not happy about this as it did not want to lose its trade with China and it had possessions in the Philippines that were threatened by Japan
- Japan was unhappy about the fact that the United States did not recognise Japan's position in Asia and it felt threatened by the increasing US fleet
- As tension grew there was talk of a possible war between the two
- The UK was very concerned about this as it had a defensive alliance with Japan
- For this reason the UK supported the Washington Conference on disarmament

1.4.5 Disarmament

- A major contributor to the First World War was the **arms race**
- Reducing the armaments was mentioned in Wilson's Fourteen Points and it was an important target for the League of Nations
- In doing so the goal was to reduce the threat of a future war
- A permanent advisory commission on armaments was appointed

Support for disarmament

- The belief that the arms race was a major cause of the war and so reducing arms would reduce the threat of a future war
- A lot of countries were in debt, the costs of the arms were high, countries wanted to focus on rebuilding their economy

The Washington Conference

- 1921-1922
- It was the most successful of the disarmament conferences
- The major naval powers met in Washington in November 1921
- A number of treaties were signed between December 1921 and February 1922
- There were two reasons for which the conference was called. Firstly, Japan and the UK could not afford the costs of the arms race and the United States wanted to reduce its own costs. Secondly there was growing tension between Japan and the United States in Asia and the United States wanted to avoid conflict which could involve many countries

Terms of the Washington Treaties

- **The Four Power Treaty**

1. USA, Japan, France and Britain
2. The Anglo-Japanese alliance was ended
3. An agreement to recognise each other's possessions in the Pacific and if problems arose there was an agreement to reach a diplomatic solution

- **The Five Power Treaty**

1. USA, Japan, France, Britain and Italy
2. Agreed to maintain a fixed constant ratio of naval armaments
3. No new naval armaments were to be constructed for the next ten years

4. The United States and Britain were not allowed to build new fortresses or naval bases in the western Pacific

• **The Nine Power Treaty**

1. USA, Japan, France, Britain, Italy, China, Belgium, Netherlands and Portugal
2. An open door for trade on China was agreed on so that all countries had equal trading rights with China
3. Agreed to respect China's authority
4. An agreement was also made to discuss problems of common interest

The London Naval Conference 1930

- It was a revision and an extension of the Washington treaty
- US, Japan, Britain, Italy and France met in London
- Ratio of capital ships moved from 5:5:3 for the US, Britain and Japan respectively to 10:10:7
- France and Italy did not take part in this agreement however they did agree to continue to not build new naval armaments for the next five years
- Agreements on the numbers of submarines, cruisers and destroyers that each country could have were made
- Submarine warfare rules were made more strict
- The Treaty was to remain valid until 1936

The London Naval Conference 1935-1936

- The major powers met again in 1935 to discuss the treaty of London (1930) as it was to expire the following year
- Japan wanted equality in terms of ratio of fleets with the US and Britain but this was denied and so Japan walked out of the conference, as did Italy
- France, Britain and the US did agree on limiting the size and number of their naval armament however this collapsed in 1936 with the Japanese and German rearmament programs and the increasing conflicts arising in the world
- All in all, the conference was a failure

The Geneva Conference 1932-1934

- There was an increased demand to revise the Paris Peace Settlement
- A number of crises had occurred in the last few years
- The Great Depression of 1929 had reduced the optimistic outlook and international co-operation
- The United States wanted the elimination of offensive weapons, however there were disagreements to what weapons were offensive and which were defensive
- France was worried about Germany regaining its strength and so it did not want to reduce its military spending unless it got a guaranteed agreement with the other major powers to support France
- The other major powers were not interested in a guaranteed agreement and so France refused to reduce its military spending
- Germany wanted the major powers to either reduce their military spending to Germany's level or Germany should be allowed to increase its military spending to their level
- This was not accepted by the major powers and so Germany walked out of the conference in 1932
- Germany rejoined the conference in 1933
- Adolf Hitler was now chancellor and wanted Germany to have equal treatment to the major powers
- Once again this was denied and so Germany walked out of the conference
- This caused Germany to embark on a rearmament scheme
- France had no choice but to increase its military spending as it did not gain the military guarantee from either the United States or the UK. It was well aware of Germany's larger population and industrial capacity. Decreasing its military spending was not an option for France
- Italy was also not interested in reducing its military spending
- The conference was a failure as no agreement was reached
- Tension was rising in Europe and countries were starting to consider what was best for themselves
- Disarmament was not possible at this point as tension started to rise and there was a potential source of conflict

The League of Nations: effects of the absence of major powers, the principles of collective responsibility, and early attempts at peacekeeping (1920-25)

1.5.1 The League of Nations

- The goal was to create an organisation that would prevent war and resolve conflict by discussing issues in a peaceful manner
- Woodrow Wilson had talked about the League of Nations in his Fourteen Points
- The formation of the League was one of Wilson's most important goals
- Many people supported the idea as they believed it could keep peace between nations
- The League Covenant was written into the Versailles Treaty and so all those who signed the treaty would become members of the League
- The Covenant was made up of 26 articles
- The most important one was Article X which stated that "all members undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and political independence of all members of the League"
- This was the idea of collective security. If one nation was under threat, the others would have to defend it even if it was of no interest to themselves and regardless of the outcome
- This meant that money and military staff would have to be sacrificed if ever one nation was under threat.
- The main goal of the League was to prevent further conflict but it also dealt with humanitarian and economic problems
- There was the mandate commissions, the refugee department, the slavery commission, the drugs department as well as an International Court of Justice and an International Labour Organisation

1.5.2 Effects of the absence of major powers

- USA never joined, USSR and Germany excluded
- USSR and Germany did not support the Versailles Treaty nor the League as they had been excluded from these and Germany was blamed for starting the war. This created tension instead of a reconciliation that Wilson had proposed.
- The USSR was weak after the war but once it regained its strength it would potentially become a major threat due to its exclusion from the League and wanting to recover the territory it had lost
- Since Germany and the USSR were excluded from the League, once they regained strength and sought to recover their lost territory, it excluded the possibility to discuss the terms of the settlement and negotiate a compromise, instead it would lead to an inevitable conflict.
- As soon as the USSR and Germany regained their strength, the new small states in Europe would be under threat
- The exclusion of both of these countries also led to the Treaty of Rapallo which represented a major threat for the League as these two were both major powers that now were co-operating economically and militarily. It also undermined the terms of the Treaty of Versailles as Germany could increase its armament and train military staff in the USSR without the League knowing.
- Since Germany was not producing arms in the USSR, the effectiveness of the disarmament process that the League had worked on was greatly reduced
- Because the League excluded the defeated nations it angered the USSR and Germany and both of these saw the League as an enemy which undermined the goal of peace keeping
- The most important loss for the League was the USA
- The USA was the only country which had emerged stronger after the end of the war
- All other countries were in debt while the USA was wealthy
- The USA had the greatest power to intervene in case of tension between countries which could lead to possible conflicts
- Affected the purpose and power of the League
- Collective security depended on collective action
- The status of the league was greatly diminished
- When the USA refused to be part of the League and provide guaranteed military support to France, Britain also withdrew from the military guarantee
- The USA and Britain went back into isolationism
- France and Britain had very different mind sets about the treaty and Germany, Britain wanted Germany to rebuild its economy for the purpose of trade and France wanted to make it as hard as possible for Germany to recover economically as it was worried about a German attack in the future. This created conflict within the League.

- More important countries dropped out of the League between 1919 and 1939, this included Italy and Japan
- This weakened the League even further

1.5.3 Collective Security

- Article X stated that all members had to protect other members in the event of an aggression
- The idea of collective security was a new one
- In the past alliances had been made between countries with similar interests
- By agreeing to article X, each nation was being forced to defend the other nations from aggression no matter what the costs where and had to do so even if they had no interest in it for themselves
- This was a big sacrifice especially to South American nations who would have little interest in having to go to war for a dispute occurring in central Europe
- The major problems of collective security where that it obliged nations to give up their freedom of action and also nations might be forced to go to war against other nations with whom they might have a good relationship with, profit from their trade or then nations which could be much stronger than themselves and cause a lot of damage
- The absence of three major powers, USA, Germany and USSR meant that collective security had little chance of succeeding
- Also France and Britain who were both part of the League where growing further apart due to disagreement on how to deal with Germany. In an event of an attack there was the possibility that they would disagree on how to react

1.5.4 Early Attempts at Peacekeeping 1920-1925

- The League had a mandate to resolve conflicts between nations so that peace could be maintained
- The League intervened in many conflicts, some in which it did so successfully, others in which it failed to resolve conflict
- The successful interventions include the Greco-Bulgarian War of 1925 and Upper Silesia
- The failed interventions include Vilna, the Russo-Polish War, the Seizure Fiume and the Ruhr invasion
- The successes of the League usually involved small or medium powered nations which wanted to avoid war and so the League managed to enforce a settlement on these disputes
- The failures of the League usually involved major powers who were not interested in keeping the peace or did not agree with the League's settlement and would not submit to it
- Disputes arose within the League itself
- In the conflict between Turkey and Greece of 1920-1923 Britain and France took opposite sides
- France and Britain disagreed on how to deal with Germany which made tension grow between these two members of the League
- Peacekeeping was made increasingly difficult when the members of the League themselves could not resolve their own conflicts