

- **Central Europe
before and during
WWI**

* International Relationships before WWI

Great powers in the end of the 19th century:

- **USA** - the strongest
- **Germany** (2nd world industrial area), the most powerful state in Europe, strong army, developed economy and culture
- **France** – the bank of the world, 2nd strongest European state, succesful colonial politicis – colonies in Africa and in Asia
- **Great Britain** – the greatest colonial power – its domain included the greatest colony – India,...
- **Austria-Hungary** –cooperation with Germany, its foreign politics focused on the Balkan Peninsula
- **Russia** – economicaly 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
- **Japan** – constitutional monarchy, development of industry, expansive politics

* Formation of two enemy blocks in Europe at the end of 19th 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* + *Great Britain* → **Tripple Entente**

• **Balkan Wars**

- The first conflict in Europe after 40 years
- The Balkan nations were fighting against Ottoman Empire - occupying them
- **1912–1913 - 1st Balkan War** – so called **Balkan League** (Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece and Montenegro) x Ottoman Empire – 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 liberated areas (Macedonia, Thracia) got especially **Greece** and **Serbia** → **Bulgaria** was dissatisfied - military conflict - Greece and Serbia → **2nd Balkan War – 1913**
- Ottoman Empire and Romania joined Greece and Serbia and they were fighting against Bulgaria which was defeated and lost also the areas which obtained after the 1st 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 prepare for the new war – wanted to unify all the southern Slavs – who were living in Austria-Hungary

- **Balkan Wars**



1st Balkan War



2nd Balkan War

• **Central Europe before WWI**

- Since **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
- 2 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 (London Treaty - 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



- European 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 WWI**

- ❑ 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

- Also **naval war** (Pacific Ocean: Japan + Great Britain against Germany, in the Northern Sea – Great Britain against Germany)
- Warfare in the colonies

- **Balkan Front**

- A-H army was not successful in Serbia
- September 1915 – **Bulgaria** entered the war
- During October and November 1915: German+ A-H and Bulgarian troops occupied Serbia
- Spring 1915 – Allied Powers **prepared the operation in Gallipoli** against Ottoman Empire, British troops under the command of **Winston Churchill**, but the operation was not successful
- Then in 1916 the Macedonian Front in Greece was opened
- **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 – **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
- 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** – **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 – 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 – 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 Piave River till 1918 – June 1918 – **Battle of 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 WWI

- 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
- USA - 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
- **3rd November 1918** Austria–Hungary sent a flag of truce to ask for an Armistice and the armistice with A-H was signed in Vila Giusti near Padua
- **11th November 1918** – armistice with Germany signed in railroad carriage near **Compiègne**
- **At 11 a.m. on 11th November 1918 a ceasefire came into effect**

• The Results of the WWI

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 WWI



• 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, Ottoman Empire, 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 Geroge (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 Ottoman Empire)

- **Central Europe during the Interwar
Period**

• 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
- T. G. 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

- First Czechoslovak republic was proclaimed on 28th October 28 1918 in Prague
- Consisted of: Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, Slovakia and Carpathian Ruthenia
- The first Prime Minister – **Karel Kramář**
- 1920 – constitution - plural parliament democracy
- 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 – **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); Little Entente was an idea of Czechoslovak Foreign Minister **Edvard Beneš**
- Since 1925 – economic growth, cultural development x great depression since 1930
- Since 1933 – Czechoslovakia was threatened by Nazi Germany → Border fortification

- **Little Entente**



- **Czechoslovakia +
Kingdom of Serbs, Croats
and Slovenes + Romania**

- **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 Czech lands, they were called Sudeten Germans
- German minority living in Sudetenland demanded autonomy from the Czech government, claiming they were suppressed and repressed by the Czech government
- In 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** – Great Powers did not want to risk world peace for Czechoslovakia, → 1938 - this policy resulted in **Munich Agreement**

- Czechoslovakia



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

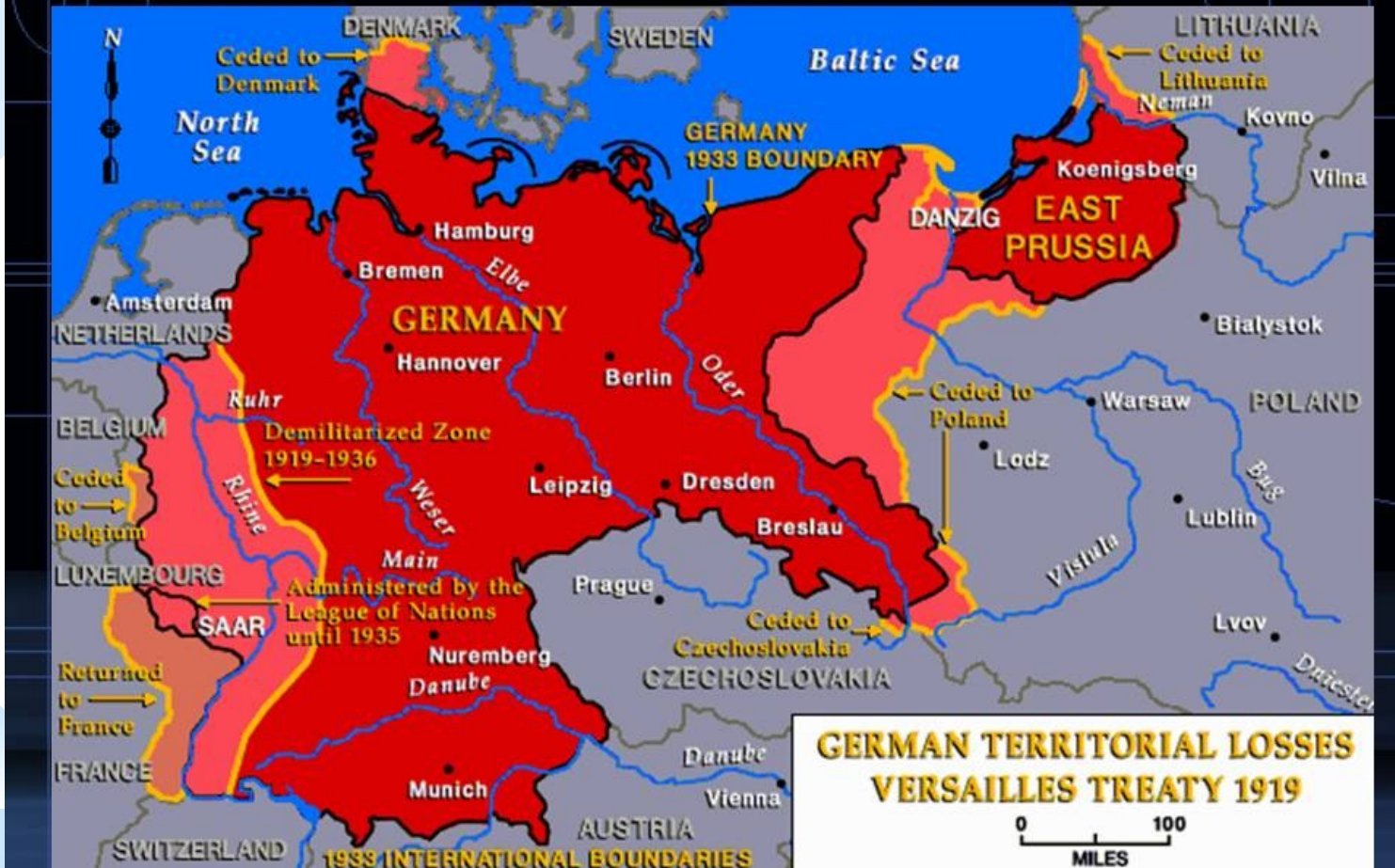
• Czechoslovakia

- *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
- Bavaria – Bavarian Soviet Republic was proclaimed in October, defeated in April 1919
- 1919 – first elections (winner Social Democratic Party)
- **1919 – 1933 – Weimar Republic**, parliamentary republic, federation of 16 states
- 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, Adolf Hitler was arrested and wrote his programme book *Mein Kampf*, his political party NSDAP was banned
- 1925 – second President became **Paul von Hindenburg**

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 – **Adolf 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
- November 9–10, 1938: **Crystal Night** – 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: Republic of Austria, first **Chancellor Ignaz Seipel**, Austria's government was dominated by the Christian Social Party
- Country was unstable, 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, E. Dollfuss was assassinated by Nazi agent who attempted coup d'état in 1934 – July Putsch
- New Chancellor – **Kurt Schuschnigg** – effort to keep Austria's independence
- 1938 – **Anschluss**: 11th March – 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
- Area of Hungary was of only one third of pre-war Hungary – dissatisfaction, attempts to restore the **Great Hungary**
- Rapid rise of power of Hungarian Communist Party: **Hungarian Soviet Republic** was proclaimed on 21st March 1919 – attempt to restore the Great Hungary, the head of this republic was **Béla Kun**, Hungarian communists wanted to connect with Soviet Russia
- Czechoslovakia and Romania were threatened by Hungarian demands → their armies attacked Hungary and the Hungarian Soviet Republic was defeated
- New Government – fascist party of **Admiral Miklós Horthy**
- 1920 – monarchy was restored in Hungary – Miklós Horthy regent
- 1921–1931 – Prime Minister was **István Bethlen** (till 1931)

• Hungary

- Former Emperor of A-H, Charles IV, unsuccessfully attempted to retake Hungary's throne in March 1921
- Hungary's signing of the **Treaty of Trianon** on 4th June 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: 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 **Tripartite Pact** (Germany, Italy and Japan)

• Hungary



• Poland

- Republic of Poland reestablished in 1918
- Several regional conflicts: 1918 – 1919 – **Polish – Ukrainian War** and border conflicts with Czechoslovakia - January 1919 – **Seven day war** broke out → 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** – Poland 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 → **Peace Treaty of Riga** – Poland got parts of Belarus and Ukraine
- 1922 – annexation of Vilnius Region from Lithuania

Treaty of Warsaw 1920



Treaty of Riga 1921



 **Poland**



• Poland

- May 1926 – 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
- 31st March 1939: military guarantees from United Kingdom and France
- 23rd August 1939: non-aggression pact between Soviet Union and Germany: **Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact** with a secret military alliance protocol targeting Poland
- **1st September – 6th October 1939: Invasion of 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