British, French, and American attitudes and policies towards the rebirth of Poland, 1914-1921

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Short Abstract

This thesis considers how attitudes shaped British, French, and American policy regarding the rebirth of Poland. From the outbreak of war in 1914 to the plebiscite in Upper Silesia in 1921, Allied and American policy-makers first considered whether Poland should be an independent state and then where its borders should be. As they did this, they developed attitudes about these questions, for instance about Poles and the right or ability of the Polish nation to administer a modern state. Such considerations assumed that national character exists and is important in the success or failure of a country. My research draws on literature from social psychology in defining the development of such understandings as consistent with stereotyping, in other words using generalisations about social groups to understand those groups or individuals. Allied and American policy-makers considered Poles to be, for instance, quarrelsome, aggressive, anti-Semitic, pitiable, passionate, or loyal. The thesis begins by examining pre-war attitudes to Poland and the impact of the war on these and on the diplomacy of the Polish question. It then discusses the re-emergence of an independent Poland in 1918 and the impact on policies and attitudes of the Polish delegation's claims at the Paris Peace Conference, of events on the ground, and of the Russo-Polish War. Allied and American decision-making on the rebirth of Poland was central for European diplomacy not only because the attitudes they expressed left lingering grudges on both sides, but also because Poland's frontiers were an irritant throughout the interwar period until Germany and Russia invaded Poland in September 1939. Moreover, the conclusion that attitudes were a factor in decision-making contributes to a growing recognition among international historians and international relations theorists that it is necessary to look beyond individuals' 'rational' motivations.

Long Abstract

British, French, and American foreign-policy-makers were not solely responsible for the rebirth of Poland in 1918, the delineation of its borders, or its subsequent tensions with its neighbours, but they were integral to the process. Allied and American decision-making was central for European diplomacy not only because the attitudes that policy-makers expressed left lingering grudges on both sides, but also because Poland's frontiers were an irritant throughout the interwar period until Germany and Russia invaded Poland in September 1939. Numerous factors influenced discussions of policy during the First World War, the Paris Peace Conference, and the Russo-Polish War. Several historians have traced the influence of some of these considerations, such as the balance of power, the influence of non-state actors like the Polish National Committee, or public opinion on the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth. While previous works have primarily focused on rational factors, these were not the only factors to affect policy: a further factor was the attitudes of the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite about Poles and the rebirth of Poland. This thesis reassesses this crucial event in Polish and international history by drawing from a growing consensus that often attitudes affected policy discussions alongside other factors such as strategic objectives and national interests.

This examination of British, French, and American attitudes regarding the rebirth of Poland adopts an innovative approach for the study of the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth in particular and international history more generally. Many international historians analyse the motivations of historical actors with reference only to rational or objective factors that affect the strategic self-interest of the state. Yet conceptions of rationality are constructed, contingent, and sometimes contested in discussions of future-oriented policy, and in the past two decades, more international historians have accepted the relevance of other factors like attitudes. There is, moreover, substantial evidence from cognitive science to indicate that policy-makers are no different from other people and do not solely

think in terms of rational or objective factors. My research draws on literature from social psychology in defining policy-makers' development of certain specific understandings about the Polish people as consistent with stereotyping, in other words using generalisations about social groups to understand those groups or individuals. Moreover, this thesis adopts a transnational perspective as the three countries examined here ought to be studied together rather than apart. Many forces like ideas do not respect national borders, and moreover British, French, and American policy-makers increasingly consulted each other when considering the Polish question.

Specialist works on British, French, and American diplomacy regarding Poland's rebirth do not consider attitudes in detail or on their own terms. The most significant work, Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen's *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, notes the perspectives of individuals but focuses on how each country's strategic interests affected the solution.[1] Other works, like those by M.B. Biskupski and Titus Komarnicki, do much the same while suggesting that prejudiced views may explain why some Allied and American policies did support the claims made by Polish representatives.[2] This thesis does not intend to duplicate these and other thoroughly-researched narratives of British, French, and American policy. Rather, based on an examination of the same sources, it argues that attitudes are important to examine in the context of other influences and considerations.

The British, French, and American governments did not begin to seriously consider policies regarding the rebirth of Poland until 1917, but the policy-making in that year and after did not begin on a blank slate. The first chapter begins by considering the men who made foreign policy in each country, who were a subset of what D.C. Watt called

[1] Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study of the Policies of the Great Powers and the Poles, 1918-1919*, trans. by Alison Borch-Johansen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1979).
[2] M.B. Biskupski, *The United States and the Rebirth of Poland, 1914-1918* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, 2012); Titus Komarnicki, *Rebirth of the Polish Republic: A Study in the Diplomatic History of Europe, 1914-1920* (London: William Heinemann, 1957).

the 'foreign-policy-making élite'.[3] Though these men were educated and well-travelled, they knew little about Poland or the Poles from personal experience. Their general attitudes, such as vestiges of a liminal orientalism that discriminated against people in eastern Europe, mixed with vague sympathy for those people, including Poles, because they faced various restrictions on the full expression of national culture.

By the end of the First World War, the British, French, and American governments had promised the re-creation of a Polish state. At the outbreak of war more than four years previous, such an event had been unthinkable in practical terms. From 1914-1917, any British and French government involvement in Polish affairs was undertaken within the confines of the alliance with Russia, even though Germany and Austria-Hungary also controlled territories with a Polish majority; the Russian government always asserted that Polish issues were internal matters. The United States retained greater independence in its Polish policy because it remained neutral until April 1917 and never allied with Russia. After the Central Powers conquered Russia's Polish partition in 1915, the belligerent powers competed for the rest of the war to win the favour of the conquered peoples.

The British, French, and American governments had nonetheless considered positions on Polish affairs since 1915, because of the Polish relief campaign in the United States. Britain and France, moreover, worried about the Russian government's dwindling prestige with its former Polish subjects and urged changes in policy. Policy-makers in each country developed attitudes about the Polish people and Poland's independence in the course of these and later policy deliberations. The close examination of the Foreign Office in the second chapter reveals growing sympathy for Polish independence long before world events caused the British government to support Polish self-determination. In all three countries, these positions were urged by Polish émigrés. Interactions with these émigré representatives also affected Allied and American sympathy for independence and

[3] D.C. Watt, *Personalities and Policies: Studies in the Formulation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century* (London: Longmans, 1965), pp. 1–15.

perceptions of the Polish people as quarrelsome, anti-Semitic, or as the victims of a common enemy. Moreover, as the population of Russian Poland was increasingly perceived to comprise primarily nationally-conscious Poles, both sides promised forms of autonomy or independence for Poland to win them over. Changes in policy were mostly contingent on world events, but personal relationships and the development of attitudes about Poles and the rebirth of Poland also played a role.

The influence of attitudes on policies regarding the Polish settlement at the postwar Paris Peace Conference is best illustrated by dividing opinion into two groups. The first group – chiefly the Polish and French delegations but also several American and British delegates – believed that a large Poland would form an eastern counterbalance to German aggression and a barrier against Russian Bolshevism in combination with Czechoslovakia and the continued involvement in the region of the victorious Great Powers. As such, they argued that Poland should be given defensible borders and a sufficient basis for economic security, beginning with humanitarian aid but guaranteed by control of important territories. This meant providing access to the sea at Danzig, control of the rich coal mines and industry of Upper Silesia, and a larger population accruing from control of these and other contested areas. A large Poland would contain a greater number of minorities, but, considering Poland's history of tolerance and its leaders' openness to liberal western values, this group argues that minorities would be better treated in Poland than would Polish minorities in other countries. This perception that the Polish people were in sympathy with western ideals had largely persisted from the wartime conception of the Polish people as victims of Germanic oppression and opponents of the Central Powers. It also reflected to a great degree how the Polish delegation presented the Polish state. Finally, the 'large Poland' group argued that acceptance of these claims would satisfy public opinion in Poland, ensure that the government would survive, and thus Poles would not embrace Bolshevism.

Conversely, some in the British and American delegations resisted this argument for a large Poland. David Lloyd George, the British prime minister, was the most visible member of this group but certain advisors also played critical roles; U.S. President Woodrow Wilson argued forcefully for an independent Danzig and a minorities treaty to protect Poland's Jews. The stability of continental Europe, this group argued, was best achieved by a smaller Poland that contained only those lands that were ethnographically Polish. A smaller Poland would leave fewer minorities in the country; the greatest concern was that should German-majority populations in Upper Silesia, the Polish Corridor, or Danzig be included in Poland, this would create the conditions for future irredentist wars (another 'Alsace-Lorraine' as the peacemakers often said). Poland did not need to have a defensible border because the League of Nations would protect it. The 'small Poland' group also argued that if Germany possessed the industry and coal fields of Upper Silesia, it would be better able to make reparations payments, integrate into a re-established European economy, and provide a basis for European economic reconstruction which would assist Poland's economy. Until then, the group believed, Poland's government would be better off tackling the massive economic and administrative problems that resulted from partition and war. Yet it seemed to the small Poland group that Polish leaders were more interested in settling old scores with political opponents and launching adventurous forays to seize territory. Poland's claims on territory contested by Lithuanian and Ukrainian governments and wars with those governments proposed to bring more minorities under Polish control, but also seeded doubts about how the Polish government would treat minorities. So did pogroms; concerns about Polish anti-Semitism prompted the imposition of the minorities treaty. The problem was, this second group often said, that 'the Poles' were emotional, quarrelsome, and imperialistic, and had historically not been suited to running a modern state. The 'small Poland' group did worry about the impact of such proposals on Polish popular opinion, but its members also regarded Polish opinion as rather volatile in general and attempted to focus Polish leaders on easing

sources of political quarrelling rather than fighting with their neighbours. Yet the influence of this 'small Poland' group over Poland's leaders, especially Józef Piłsudski, the Chief of State, lessened in 1920 as the Russo-Polish War reached its crisis point.

Allied and American attitudes and policies regarding the settlement of the Russo-Polish border reflected significant continuity from the Paris Peace Conference. British and American policy at the conference was to draw the border at the 'ethnographic frontier' so that eastern Poland only included indisputably Polish territories. The French government and the Polish delegation advocated a more favourable border even if it meant including significant minorities within Poland. Of the three governments considered in this thesis, French support for Poland's expansionist aims continued to be strongest in 1920. The 'small Poland' group complained as the Polish government mishandled armistice negotiations with the Bolsheviks and Piłsudski led an ill-advised seizure of Kiev in April 1920. Lloyd George had worried that if Poland's government contravened the principle of self-determination in the east, it would invite Russian irredentism – and then concluded after the Kiev invasion and the Red Army's subsequent advance that his concern had been justified. As the war turned against Poland, the French and American governments also expressed concern about the Poles' expansionist aims. Britain and France resolved to assist the Polish war effort with advisors and munitions, but could not make a stronger contribution by, for example, sending troops. The Polish army's victory at the Battle of the Vistula, the seizure of Vilnius, and the Polish government's relative independence in treaty negotiations with the Bolsheviks illustrated the Allies' lack of power to affect Polish affairs. The Allies had greater influence over the settlement of the Upper Silesian plebiscite, but the process demonstrated the Anglo-French divide regarding the Polish settlement that had dominated the Paris peace conference. Despite the settlement of these last major questions, Poland's borders continued to be contested throughout the postwar period.

These conclusions contribute to the debate in international relations theory between realists and constructivists. While many Allied and American government deliberations on the policy of Poland's rebirth reflected a realist mindset, it is important to acknowledge that varying factors influenced decisions, and the importance of those factors differed according to context and to which individual was analysing the situation. Attitudes about 'the Poles' or about Poland's rebirth, for instance, affected policy in a context in which it was assumed that nations exist with certain characteristics and deserve self-determination at a certain stage of development. In other words, the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth also reflects the assertion by some international relations theorists that the international system is socially constructed. Furthermore, by arguing that attitudes influenced British, French, and American policy, this study adds to the body of work that argues that personalities or the influence of culture do affect the conduct of diplomacy.

The rebirth of Poland was a significant event for both international and Polish history, and this thesis contributes to both while proposing avenues for further research. Attitudes should be viewed as a factor of decision-making: they could influence policy either in favour of the objectives of Polish representatives or against them. Like other factors, the importance of attitudes derived from contingent events. Finally, this thesis has implications both for dominant themes in Polish historiography and contemporary Polish self-understanding. It concurs with those historians who have recently argued that while a nationalist narrative of Polish history served a purpose when that narrative was threatened during the partitions or the Communist period, historians today must put the experiences of Poland and Poles in historical, regional, or global context rather than merely proclaiming the exceptional sufferings of the Polish people.

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Abbreviations

ACNP	Records of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, National Archives and Research Administration Record Group 256, National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD
ARA	American Relief Administration
CAB	Cabinet Papers, The National Archives, Kew
CAD	Centre des archives diplomatiques de La Courneuve
CRB	Commission for Relief in Belgium
CPI	Committee on Public Information
DBFP	Woodward, Ernest Llewellyn, and Rohan Butler, eds., *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919-1939*, 1st series, 10 vols. (London: HMSO, 1947).
FO	Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office, The National Archives, Kew
FRUS	*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States*
FRUS: PPC	*Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919. The Paris Peace Conference*
KNP	Komitet Narodowy Polski (Polish National Committee)
NACP	National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD: refers to any record groups except RG 256
PIC	Polish Information Committee
PID	Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office
PWW	Link, Arthur S., ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson*, 69 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966-94).
WNFS	Sub-Commission on Polish Affairs for the study of the Western and Northern Frontiers

Note on place names

Many cities in central and eastern Europe have different names in different languages. This reflects the different national groups that lived there and political entities that claimed or controlled them. Thus, present-day L'viv, Ukraine was variously called Lwów by Poles, Lvov by Russians, Lemberg by Austrians, and Lemberik by Yiddish-speakers; Vilnius, Lithuania was referred to as Wilno in Polish and Wilna in German; and Gdańsk, Poland was widely known as Danzig. For the sake of consistency I will use the names that Allied and American officials employed, except in cases of well-recognised names like Warsaw or Kraków or where usage varied as with Vilnius. I will indicate alternate versions in brackets after the first mention of a place name. For the most part this terminology tends to reflect German naming conventions, but my use of a particular linguistic version of a city's name does not imply support for national claims to a city or region.

Introduction

When the First World War erupted in 1914, the Austro-Hungarian, German, and Russian empires – the three empires that had partitioned the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth – faced each other with eastern Europe as their battleground. Only a few Poles, including long-time revolutionary leader Józef Piłsudski, predicted that the partitioning powers would collapse by the end of the war.[1] By November 1918, these dreams had been realised: all three empires in eastern Europe had fallen and Piłsudski, now a war hero, had declared the rebirth of Poland. The new state's formation was not yet complete, however, as from November 1918 until the end of 1920, Poland's forces fought its neighbours around the periphery of the new state, with the largest being an existential conflict against Soviet Russia. The Treaty of Riga, which Poland and Russia signed on 18 March 1921, and the division of Upper Silesia between Poland and Germany following a plebiscite on 20 March, finalised the borders of the reborn state of Poland. This thesis will refer to the process whereby Poland became an independent state with defined borders using the general shorthand 'the rebirth of Poland'. The governments of Britain, France, and the United States had come to support the creation of Poland in the First World War and then attempted to define its borders at the Paris Peace Conference and in subsequent negotiations. These governments did not on their own bring about the rebirth of Poland or determine all of its eventual borders, but their attempts to do had lasting consequences. In particular, the process left lingering grudges on all sides throughout the interwar period, until the borders of Poland provided the flash point for the outbreak of the Second World War.

[1] M.K. Dziewanowski, 'Polish Society in World War I: Armed Forces and Military Operations', in *East Central European Society in World War I*, ed. by Béla K. Király, N.F. Dreisziger, and Albert A. Nofi (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1985), p. 467.

The British, French, and American governments increasingly considered the rebirth of Poland as a policy question in the First World War as events increased the likelihood of an independent Poland. They came to recognise that publicly espousing Polish independence could win support from Polish nationals in occupied Russian Poland where the Central Powers were developing their own plans for a Polish state. British, French, and American government support for an independent Poland also appealed to Polish-Americans and segments of domestic opinion which demanded that an eventual peace should correct some of the wrongs of the international system by, among other things, supporting the principle of national self-determination. Before the end of the war, each country had committed to establish a reborn Poland as a war aim. At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the victorious British, French, and American governments deliberated on the borders and composition of the new Poland, much as they did for large parts of the rest of the world. Poland's location between Germany and Russia meant it had strategic importance for the postwar order; the peacemakers[2] wanted most of all to create a stable, viable state. Their efforts were at times disrupted by the Polish government's 'nursery brawls' with neighbouring states.[3] Some of these battles were in self-defence, but in others the government hoped to create *faits accomplis* in contested areas that were often at odds with the peacemakers' intentions. As a result, while the peacemakers set Poland's borders with Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Romania, Polish wars determined the borders with Lithuania, Latvia, and Bolshevik Russia.

This thesis reassesses this crucial event in Polish and international history by drawing from a growing consensus that often attitudes affected policy discussions

[2] The term 'peacemakers' is used here to refer to British, French, and American representatives at the peace conference.
[3] Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland*, rev edn, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), vol. 2, p. 292.

alongside other factors such as strategic objectives and national interests.[4] It considers how attitudes regarding Poland or the Polish people shaped British, French, and American government policy from the outbreak of war in 1914 to the Upper Silesian plebiscite in 1921. In particular, attitudes crystallised around two critical policy questions during this period, which for simplicity's sake will be considered in this introduction as diplomacy regarding the 'rebirth of Poland'. Firstly, during the First World War, policy-makers debated whether to offer public support for the creation of an independent Poland. Secondly, following the end of the war, British, French, and American policy-makers debated Poland's territorial claims, chiefly during the Paris Peace Conference but this continued as the Russo-Polish War intensified in 1920 and threatened to revise the territorial settlement made at the peace conference. From 1914-1921, attitudes about Poland's rebirth pervaded British, French, and American state and multilateral policy discussions and, along with other factors, contributed to many decisions.

The parameters and claims of this thesis must start with an examination of the terms of reference. Discussing the rebirth of Poland requires attention to the nuances of what 'Poland' meant from 1914-1921 and who was considered to be Polish. Today, the state of Poland is overwhelmingly the nation-state of the Polish people, a legacy of the decimation of the Jewish population in the Holocaust and of population transfers at the end of the Second World War.[5] We must not, however, project this unity of national

[4] On the meaning and limitations of 'international history', see Patrick Finney, 'Introduction: What Is International History?', in *Palgrave Advances in International History*, ed. by Patrick Finney (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 1–35, especially pp. 1-4. The term is often assumed to be interchangeable with 'diplomatic history', e.g. Ann Lane, 'Diplomatic History', in *Modern British History: A Guide to Study and Research*, ed. by L. J. Butler and Anthony Gorst (London: IBTauris, 1997), p. 182, but Finney correctly notes the nuances of terminology.

[5] As will be noted below, the understanding of Polishness has always been contested; many Jews considered themselves Polish though some Poles did not extend their national definition to include Jews. On the effect of the Second World War on Poland's population, see Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2012), pp. 313–37; Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 419-25; Hugo Service, 'Sifting Poles from Germans? Ethnic Cleansing and Ethnic Screening in Upper Silesia, 1945-1949', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 88 (2010), 652–80; Alexander Statiev, 'Motivations and Goals of Soviet Deportations in the Western Borderlands', *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 28 (2005), 977–1003.

culture backwards through history. To paraphrase Leszek Kołakowski, a renowned Polish philosopher, it has not always been clear whether Poland was called Poland because Poles lived there, or whether Poles were called Poles because they lived in Poland.[6] The question is important because often British, French, and American decision-makers referred to 'Poland' without thinking specifically about its borders, or to 'the Poles' without always interrogating whether individuals in 'Poland' regarded themselves as Polish. Moreover, policy-makers often failed to specify which Poles they meant, whether leaders, émigré representatives, peace conference delegates, the population of a particular partition, or inhabitants of a city or region (who were often not all Polish). Sometimes this was accidental, but in other cases the conflation of terms implied a judgment about all Poles rather than a specific subset such as the government. Most secondary works on the topic also employ such ambiguous wording. The thesis will therefore clarify where appropriate what is meant by the terms Poland or Poles.

First, further detail regarding the nuances of 'Poles' and 'Poland' is necessary. Few states have 'natural frontiers'; Poland, the territory, does not possess them either, in particular like many of the states located in the 'borderlands' or 'bloodlands' in 'the lands between' Germany and Russia.[7] There was no independent Poland in 1914, but one could speak of three Polands corresponding to territories taken from Poland-Lithuania: these are commonly referred to as Russian Poland, Prussian (later German) Poland, and

[6] Leszek Kołakowski, 'War amongst the Lemurs', trans. by Jacek Laskowski, *Index on Censorship*, 16 (1987), 7–9.

[7] The region between the Black and Baltic Seas defies easy description, though 'bloodlands' has become increasingly common. The term was popularised in Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands* though the book focuses on the mass killings between 1933-45 and makes no claim for extending the term's use beyond that period. In modern history, the region is considered generally to be a zone of contestation between Germany and Russia; see Alexander Victor Prusin, *The Lands Between: Conflict in the East European Borderlands, 1870-1992* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 1–2; Miklós Lojkó, *Meddling in Middle Europe: Britain and the 'Lands Between', 1919-1925* (Budapest: Central European University Press, 2005), pp. 1–9. Other terms include East-Central Europe or Central Europe; see the discussion of relevant literature in Lojkó, pp. 8–9.

Austrian Poland – the last often simply called Galicia.[8] Moreover, despite the long-established fact of the partitions, many people held powerful memories of the past existence of an independent Poland. Young, educated men and women delivered cultural missions to the populace, modelled on religious missions, which specifically inculcated this belief.[9] The political situation changed when the Central Powers seized Russian Poland in 1915 and governed it through local proxies. In November 1916 Germany and Austria promised to create an autonomous Poland that included primarily the Russian partition but also some territory from their Polish provinces, but this plan never came to fruition. In November 1918, Piłsudski proclaimed the rebirth of Poland with its capital at Warsaw. Allied and American leaders understood that the new Poland would comprise territories from all three partitions, but not within the boundaries previously governed by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth before its demise; Lithuanian and Ukrainian nationalists also claimed some of the territory of the former commonwealth. As mentioned above, they debated the country's new borders amongst themselves and with Polish representatives at the Paris Peace Conference. Poland's government meanwhile attempted to create *faits accomplis* on the battlefield to support its aim of an anti-Russian federation of nationalities.[10] When Poland's boundaries were determined in 1921, the country could be called 'reborn' but did not assume the exact shape or government structure of its predecessor, Poland-Lithuania.

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[8] Dariusz Stola, the Director of the new Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, argues in a recent lecture that one could speak of many 'Polands' in the twentieth century alone. Dariusz Stola, 'One Century, Three Polands: The Second Republic, People's Poland, and the Third Republic' (presented at the Programme on Modern Poland seminar, European Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 2015) <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/one-century-three-polands-second-republic-people-s-poland-and-third-republic> [accessed 15 March 2015].

[9] Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 170-4. Similar missions were carried out among Polish immigrants to the United States. See William J. Galush, *For More than Bread: Community and Identity in American Polonia, 1880-1940* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 2006), pp. 104–7.

[10] See especially M.K. Dziewanowski, *Joseph Piłsudski: A European Federalist, 1918-1922* (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1969).

The complicated politics of Polish nationality are not the focus of this thesis but deserve an outline here. Nationally-conscious Poles lived in the territories outlined above, but not exclusively, as many Polish immigrants had settled elsewhere in Europe and in the Americas. British, French, and American policy-makers regularly assumed that 'Poles' were Polish-speaking Catholics, much as they are today.[11] But identities were rarely so easily determined in multi-national central and eastern Europe.[12] Firstly, the understanding of Polishness was contested. By 1914, a long-established, largely élite conception of Polishness as an inclusive identification of freedom-fighters was strongly contested by the growth of a popular, exclusive conception of Polishness as based on certain ethnic or cultural markers such as language and religion.[13] Secondly, Polish identity differed depending on one's partition – or, if one had emigrated, on the struggle to retain old customs but also adapt to new ones.[14] Not everyone who spoke Polish or was Catholic identified as Polish; some Jews or Protestants, for instance, identified as Poles. In some regions, moreover, many people did not identify as either Polish or Catholic. In the lands that Polish nationalists hoped to incorporate into an independent Poland, other national groups – Germans, Czechs, Lithuanians, Belarussians, and Ukrainians, not to mention Jewish groups – made competing claims for territory or for regional autonomy.[15]

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[11] On the identification of Polish national sentiment with Catholicism, see especially Brian Porter, *Faith and Fatherland: Catholicism, Modernity, and Poland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Porter notes that between 90-98% of the citizens of contemporary Poland identify as 'Roman Catholic'; p. 4.

[12] Some general investigations of national identity that have influenced this work include Benedict R. O'Gorman Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Rev edn (London: Verso, 1991); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); Rogers Brubaker and Frederick Cooper, 'Beyond "identity"', *Theory and Society*, 29 (2000), 1–47; Linda Colley, 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument', *Journal of British Studies*, 31 (1992), 309–29; J.M.S. Careless, 'Limited Identities in Canada', *Canadian Historical Review*, 50 (1969), 1–10; Ramsay Cook, 'Identities Are Not like Hats', *Canadian Historical Review*, 81 (2000), 260–65.

[13] On the development of Polish nationalism, see chapter 1.

[14] The millions of Polish immigrants are sometimes termed the 'Fourth Partition'; e.g. M.B. Biskupski, *The United States and the Rebirth of Poland, 1914-1918* (Dordrecht: Republic of Letters, 2012), p. 6.

[15] See Timothy Snyder, *The Reconstruction of Nations: Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Belarus, 1569-1999* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) a very helpful work that examines national

Often national identity intertwined with other identities. In Vilnius province, the landed gentry identified as Polish, but the peasantry spoke Lithuanian; resentment along class lines gradually developed a national dimension. Similar conditions existed in Upper Silesia, but with Polish-speakers in the other position: the urban areas were largely German, but increasingly German-national business owners employed Polish workers, while the rural areas mostly remained Polish. Catholicism, moreover, was not exclusively indicative of Polishness. Jews comprised the majority or a plurality in many cities and towns, but many considered themselves assimilated Poles rather than outsiders. Some Polish nationalists, who had struggled for decades against nationalists and other forces to create ethnic Poles, did not agree.[16] Finally, though recent studies have raised the interesting question of national indifference in Central and Eastern Europe, more research is needed to interrogate the ubiquitous claim, made primarily by Polish nationalists, that all 'Poles' everywhere were nationally aware by 1918.[17]

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movements in the former Poland-Lithuania; on claims by Jewish groups, see Mark Levene, *War, Jews, and the New Europe: The Diplomacy of Lucien Wolf 1914-1919* (Oxford: Littman Library; Oxford University Press, 1992).

[16] Compare with the growth of nationalism in western Europe, e.g. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976); Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 1994); the historiography of national struggles in Bohemia has been well developed, for instance; see Gary B. Cohen, *The Politics of Ethnic Survival: Germans in Prague, 1861-1914* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981); Jeremy King, *Budweisers into Czechs and Germans: A Local History of Bohemian Politics, 1848-1948* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2002); Nancy M. Wingfield, *Flag Wars and Stone Saints: How the Bohemian Lands Became Czech* (Cambridge, Mass; London: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[17] On national indifference, see Tara Zahra, *Kidnapped Souls: National Indifference and the Battle for Children in the Bohemian Lands, 1900-1948* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008); Renaud Morieux, 'Diplomacy from Below and Belonging: Fishermen and Cross-Channel Relations in the Eighteenth Century', *Past and Present*, 202 (2009), 83–125; James E. Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole: Catholicism and National Indifference in a Central European Borderland* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of Michigan Press, 2008) notes that Catholic identity led voters in Upper Silesia to view both German and Polish nationalists with suspicion before the 1921 plebiscite. Indifference to Polish nationalism has not been addressed apart from Bjork's excellent study. David Kaufman, 'Polish-Jewish Relations during the Rebirth of Poland, November 1918-June 28, 1919' (PhD thesis, University of Stirling, 2006), p. 145, for instance, notes the interesting statistic that in the 1921 census approximately 5% of the residents of the Polish region of Polesie considered themselves 'locals' when asked for their nationality. Kaufman makes no comment on this but was writing before such works as the above had been published.

These complicated issues of nationality are important to consider because they frequently intersected with British, French, and American policy regarding the rebirth of Poland. Like nationality, the formulation of foreign policy – the public or private position of the government on an international issue or a series of issues – can be very complicated to reconstruct. Foreign policy is most often intended to reflect the national interest, but how to define the national interest is difficult to determine and contingent. Policy is generally forward-looking, even though it is often based on analysis of the present context or assumptions about the past; it sets the direction for future actions and, to the extent that it defines a course of action, it constrains alternatives.[18] Often, then, a government chooses not to define a policy prematurely in order to keep its options open. As a result of these complexities, discussions about whether to take a position on an issue and what position to take often occur over an extended period and the participants examine the impact of many different variables. While an individual can often mention variables in combination, that does not mean each aspect is accorded the same weight or that decision-makers at various levels will consider them all, especially at the political level where there is not always time to consider the issue in depth. Yet there is increasing evidence from cognitive theory to show that thought is integral and thus attitudes about nationality are necessarily intertwined with geopolitical strategy, for instance.[19]

A variety of factors can affect policy, and an outline of these factors in the case of the rebirth of Poland will help to contextualise the discussion of how the British, French, and American governments approached the issue.[20] First, many of the factors that

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[18] On analyses of the past that have shaped the formulation of policy, see Yuen Foong Khong, *Analogies at War: Korea, Munich, Dien Bien Phu, and the Vietnam Decisions of 1965* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992); Margaret MacMillan, *The Uses and Abuses of History* (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2008).

[19] Frank Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances: How Personal Politics Helped Start the Cold War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), pp. 441–2, note 40.

[20] Many works cited in this thesis weigh the importance of various influences on foreign policy; international historians often do so 'almost by instinct' with little reference to works on international relations theory; Peter Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power: France and the Politics of National Security in the Era of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

influence policy are external to the decision-makers and the structure of policy-making. Some of these factors are domestic, for example the domestic political situation, the related issue of public opinion, or the state's military capacity, economic strength, or political or legal culture can all influence the direction of policy. Other factors are characteristic of the international system, such as the balance of power or the assumptions and laws that govern the world system and the state's position therein.[21] Moreover, the actions of other states, and even (or perhaps especially) the actions of allies can constrain policy.[22] British, French, and American policy regarding Poland developed through a constant interplay between discussion within state government structures and increased outside consultation with allies and associated powers. Furthermore, how states or peoples and their actions are perceived – by other state governments or various publics – are of critical importance. Many recent works in international history, such as Julia Irwin's *Making the World Safe* about the American Red Cross, have also pointed to the influence that non-government organisations, whether domestic or transnational, and

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2013), p. 16. However, two important volumes lay out a number of significant considerations such as those outlined in this paragraph: *Palgrave Advances in International History*, ed. by Patrick Finney (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); *Explaining the History of American Foreign Relations*, ed. by Michael J. Hogan and Thomas G. Paterson, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); see also Paul M. Kennedy, *The Realities behind Diplomacy: Background Influences in British External Policy, 1865-1980* (London: Fontana Press, 1985); *On the Fringes of Diplomacy: Influences on British Foreign Policy, 1800-1945*, ed. by John Fisher and Antony Best (Farnham, Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011); and a classic work on decision-making in foreign policy, Graham T. Allison, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971).

[21] Some major works in international relations theory include: on realism, the principal works include Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948); Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1979); on constructivism, see Alexander E. Wendt, 'The Agent-Structure Problem in International Relations Theory', *International Organization*, 41 (1987), 335–70; Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); see also the useful discussion in Peter Jackson, pp. 10–12; see also William Moul, 'Balances of Power: Analogy, Arguments, and Some Evidence', in *World Politics: Power, Interdependence & Dependence*, ed. by David G. Haglund and Michael K. Hawes (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1990), pp. 56–82. On the use and misuse of history by international relations theorists, see Miriam Fendius Elman, 'International Relations Theories and Methods', in *Palgrave Advances in International History*, ed. by Patrick Finney (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 136–44.

[22] See Glenn H. Snyder, 'The Security Dilemma in Alliance Politics', *World Politics*, 36 (1984), 461–95.

non-state actors can have on policy and events.[23] Various structural influences can also affect the making of policy, such as the influence wielded by a strong leader over the policy-making bureaucracy or whether the structure is impervious to outside influences and pursues its own agenda.[24] Another factor is the subjectivities of those involved, which international historians have variously conceived as 'personalities' or of 'culture'. In other words, the formative influences, conclusions, and path of an individual's life as well as the particular social and cultural group influences upon it, shape that person's perspective. These subjectivities emerge in policy discussions in a contingent manner. As Anna Green notes, 'the interesting issue is not that individuals draw upon contemporary cultural discourses to make sense of their lives, but *which* ones, and *why*.'[25]

This thesis particularly focuses on the importance of attitudes as a factor in policy-making, so these should be defined here. The specific attitudes examined are opinions about policy – the rebirth of Poland – and those affected by it – the Polish people. Such attitudes can include emotional responses such as sympathy or disappointment, as well as attitudes about the expression of emotion, or emotionology.[26] Attitudes are often quite

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[23] Julia F. Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); see also the discussion of the state and transnationalism in Patricia Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', *Contemporary European History*, 14 (2005), 421–39; on internationalism, see especially Glenda Sluga, *Internationalism in the Age of Nationalism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

[24] See Robert Jervis, 'Do Leaders Matter and How Would We Know?', *Security Studies*, 22 (2013), 153–79.

[25] Anna Green, 'Individual Remembering and Collective Memories: Theoretical Presuppositions and Contemporary Debates', *Oral History*, 32 (2004), p. 42. Emphasis in original. On subjectivities, see especially Regenia Gagnier, *Subjectivities: A History of Self-Representation in Britain, 1832-1920* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[26] Historical study of emotions has proliferated in recent years. Two useful surveys of important concepts - and historiography from the United States and Europe - are Nicole Eustace and others, 'AHR Conversation: The Historical Study of Emotions', *The American Historical Review*, 117 (2012), 1487–1531; and 'Forum: History of Emotions', *German History*, 28 (2010), 67–80. On the relevance of emotions for the study of international history, see Frank Costigliola, '"I Had Come as a Friend": Emotion, Culture, and Ambiguity in the Formation of the Cold War, 1943-45', *Cold War History*, 1 (2000), 103–28; Jessica C. E. Gienow-Hecht, *Sound Diplomacy: Music and Emotions in Transatlantic Relations, 1850-1920* (Chicago, Ill; London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), and several other works by those authors. See also *Diplomatic History*'s special issue on emotions: 36, no. 4 (2012). On emotionology, see Peter N. and Carol Z. Stearns, 'Emotionology: Clarifying the History of Emotions and Emotional Standards', *The American Historical Review*, 90 (1985), 813–36; and

vague when expressed, but even vagueness can help us to understand what decision-makers thought about Poles or the rebirth of Poland. Education or culture can create a series of preconceived ideas that later affect policy, but attitudes can also develop on contact with other individuals or peoples.[27] Diplomats, politicians, and businesspeople can serve as conduits of intercultural contact through their interactions with officials of other states; such contact can also occur outside the sphere of international politics as well.[28] Astute politicians and diplomats can reflect the prevailing public attitudes, and politicians especially can mould those attitudes.[29] International politics should thus be understood to be affected by intercultural relations on a broad spectrum.

Stereotypes are an important sub-group of the attitudes considered in this thesis, and the wealth of research on social cognition contributes to a clearer understanding of how attitudes develop and why they proved central to British, French, and American governments thinking about policy questions. The word 'stereotype' has a negative connotation and is often conflated with discrimination – the use of stereotypes or categories to judge others.[30] Most historical works that examine stereotypes do so on this

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Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006), pp. 5–10.

[27] Histories of intercultural contact have increasingly become part of mainstream professional history, but they have existed in historiographies of European settler societies like Canada for much longer. Recent works that have informed the following discussion include John K. Thornton, *A Cultural History of the Atlantic World, 1250-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Kate Lowe, '"Representing" Africa: Ambassadors and Princes from Christian Africa to Renaissance Italy and Portugal, 1402-1608', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 17 (2007), 101–28; Kathleen Wilson, 'Thinking Back: Gender Misrecognition and Polynesian Subversions Aboard the Cook Voyages', in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity, and Modernity in Britain and the Empire, 1660-1840*, ed. by Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); some recent work on intercultural contact is outlined in Thomas Adam, 'New Ways to Write the History of Western Europe and the United States: The Concept of Intercultural Transfer', *History Compass*, 11 (2013), 880–92.

[28] Markus Mösslang and Torsten Riotte, 'Introduction', in *The Diplomats' World: A Cultural History of Diplomacy, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 18–19; Clavin, 'Defining Transnationalism', p. 422.

[29] On public attitudes and diplomacy, see Neal Pease, *Rome's Most Faithful Daughter: The Catholic Church and Independent Poland, 1914-1939* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2009).

[30] David J. Schneider, *The Psychology of Stereotyping* (New York; London: Guilford Press, 2004), p. 29.

basis alone, without even a basic definition of the term.[31] Yet an understanding of stereotypes can be quite useful as a method of analysis because this grounds the actions of historical figures in observable social phenomena. Stereotypes are essentially generalisations that we develop to make sense of the world. David Schneider, whose *The Psychology of Stereotyping* is the standard reference work on the subject, defines stereotypes as 'qualities perceived to be associated with particular groups or categories of people.'[32] A stereotype reflects our prior knowledge and experiences, but what we perceive in the present either confirms or adjusts our pre-existing assumptions.[33] This process, in which vague conceptualisations of Poland or the Polish people gradually became more defined after increased contact, was quite evident in British, French, and American policy-making from 1914-21. It is important to underline that stereotypes – and all the attitudes studied in this thesis – are *perceptions* of people and groups. They may be based on a 'kernel of truth' or perhaps a great deal of it, but this thesis does not examine the correctness of such perceptions.[34]

While there is little disagreement among international historians that attitudes exist, the question of whether they influence policy is more contested.[35] Many international historians believe that decision-makers filter out what they consider to be

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[31] E.g. Glenda Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics, 1870-1919* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); *Vampires Unstaked: National Images, Stereotypes and Myths in East Central Europe*, ed. by André Gerrits and Nanci Adler (Amsterdam; Oxford: North-Holland, 1995); Józef Łaptos, 'Le rôle des stéréotypes dans la formation de l'opinion publique française envers la Pologne au temps de l'Alliance', in *La France et la Pologne au-delà des stéréotypes*, ed. by Maria Delaperrière, Joanna Doberszyc, and Bruno Drzęski (Paris: Institut d'études slaves, 2004), pp. 106–19; important recent examinations of 'perceptions', a vague term conflated with attitudes, do not interrogate even that term or mention social cognition or stereotypes, e.g. David E. Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, 'Introduction', in *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America since 1776*, ed. by David E. Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute, 1997), pp. 1–14; Matthew F. Jacobs, *Imagining the Middle East: The Building of an American Foreign Policy, 1918-1967* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

[32] Schneider, p. 24.

[33] Schneider, p. 120.

[34] On the 'kernel of truth' hypothesis, see Schneider, p. 17.

[35] See, e.g., David Stevenson, *French War Aims against Germany, 1914-1919* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. vi, where the author states that a focus on 'private sentiment' in the formulation of policy 'would require a second book, and a large one'.

irrational opinions like attitudes and make choices based solely on their perception of rational or objective factors that affect the strategic self-interest of the state.[36] This is also a significant trend in the specialist historiography of this subject, as will be discussed in the next paragraph. It is the contention of this thesis, however, that this approach overlooks an important factor in the development of policy.[37] Conceptions of rationality are constructed, contingent, and often contested in discussions of future-oriented policy. While today many consider attitudes about national groups and other states to be politically incorrect, for instance, a century ago many people, including British, French, and American policy-makers, considered such attitudes scientific.[38] There is, moreover, substantial evidence to indicate that policy-makers do not solely consider rational or objective factors. Studying how attitudes were expressed provides greater context about the decision-making process and the people making decisions.[39]

Though many works of international history do not consider non-objective factors, or what are termed here attitudes, in the past two decades such factors have increasingly become accepted by historians of both British and American foreign relations.[40] Their study has, however, adopted a distinct language and focus in each country's historiography. One group, chiefly comprising historians of British foreign relations,

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[36] Fredrik Logevall, 'Presidential Address: Structure, Contingency, and the War in Vietnam', *Diplomatic History*, 39 (2015), p. 3; examples of this approach consulted specifically for this thesis include F. R. Bridge, *From Sadowa to Sarajevo: The Foreign Policy of Austria-Hungary, 1866-1914* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972) esp. p. 384; Henry William Brands, 'Unpremeditated Lansing: His "Scraps"', *Diplomatic History*, 9 (1985), 25–33. Finney, 'What Is International History?', p. 15 asserts that most international historians implicitly accept a 'soft' version of political realism.

[37] The debate about whether policy can be influenced by more than rational considerations goes beyond international history to, for instance, the philosophy of human rights. See Richard Rorty, 'Human Rights, Rationality, and Sentimentality', in *Wronging Rights?: Philosophical Challenges for Human Rights*, ed. by Aakash Singh Rathore and Alex Cistelecan (New Delhi: Routledge, 2012), pp. 107–46.

[38] Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, especially pp. 8-36.

[39] Robert Dean, 'The Personal and the Political: Gender and Sexuality in Diplomatic History', *Diplomatic History*, 36 (2012), p. 764.

[40] The historiography of French foreign relations, especially during this period, has largely focused on realist motives. See Peter Jackson, pp. 3–4. Most historiography in this discipline has focused on American foreign relations; see Finney, 'What Is International History?', p. 25. Finney's edited volume is a notable exception.

argues for the importance of distinct 'personalities' in shaping foreign policy.[41] To distinguish this focus from much older 'Great Man History', these historians argue that individuals can exert some agency within political, social, and cultural structures. Conversely, in the past decade many historians of American foreign relations have sought to incorporate the role of 'culture' in their analyses; that is, how gendered or racialised ideas or other conceptions in society impacted foreign policy, often but not necessarily through the actions of individuals.[42] Though there are significant exceptions to this characterisation of separate British and American approaches, they are distinct enough to warrant mention.[43] They also share similarities such that this thesis, which situates itself within this broader body of work, seeks to reconcile both approaches under the term 'attitudes'.

With this mention of the importance of individuals and the impact of culture upon them, it is important to consider exactly which individuals on whom to focus. A few dozen individuals spent considerable time debating British, French, or American government

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[41] See especially D.C. Watt, *Personalities and Policies: Studies in the Formulation of British Foreign Policy in the Twentieth Century* (London: Longmans, 1965); Zara S. Steiner, *The Foreign Office and Foreign Policy, 1898-1914* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1969). The study of personalities has carried on particularly through numerous works by T.G. Otte and Keith Neilson. See, for instance, Keith Neilson and T.G. Otte, *The Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, 1854-1946* (New York: Routledge, 2009); the perspective is cogently spelled out in Keith Neilson, '"My Beloved Russians": Sir Arthur Nicolson and Russia, 1906–1916', *The International History Review*, 9 (1987), pp. 521–3.

[42] The historiography of this topic has become too massive to give a thorough overview, but the following are some representative examples of the focus on culture. On religion, see Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Anchor Books, 2012); on gender, see Frank Costigliola, 'The Nuclear Family: Tropes of Gender and Pathology in the Western Alliance', *Diplomatic History*, 21 (1997), 163–83, among his other works; and Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 84–131; on orientalism, see Douglas Little, *American Orientalism: The United States and the Middle East since 1945* (London: IBTauris, 2003); the shift towards culture is best outlined in Thomas W. Zeiler, 'The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field', *The Journal of American History*, 95 (2009), pp. 1066–69. Many works relate the shift towards culture to the 'relevance' of international history to other historians, with particular reference to Charles S. Maier, 'Marking Time: The Historiography of International Relations', in *The Past Before Us: Contemporary Historical Writing in the United States*, ed. by Michael G. Kammen (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1980), which argued that diplomatic history was languishing because of stale methodology.

[43] One of many historians who incorporates both perspectives is Frank Costigliola, especially in recent publications that focus on Anglo-American diplomacy, e.g. Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances*; Costigliola, 'Pamela Churchill, Wartime London, and the Making of the Special Relationship', *Diplomatic History*, 36 (2012), 753–62.

policy towards Poland's independence and its potential borders from 1914-21, though only a few of these exerted strong influence over the direction of policy. This larger group falls mostly under the category of what D.C. Watt termed the 'foreign-policy-making élite'.[44] They were politicians, diplomats, officials in the foreign ministry, or outside figures from academia (especially in 1918 and 1919) or public life who made decisions on foreign policy. Their milieu – and its significance for preconceived ideas about the Poles and Poland – is considered further in the first chapter.[45] Most had a common background and outlook, though some of the politicians who exerted influence on policy towards Poland's rebirth and the postwar territorial settlement defined themselves politically as being in opposition to entrenched interests and the establishment represented by their particular foreign offices. Some historians have recently argued that the foreign-policy-making élite shared certain common ideas and approaches on a national or transnational level, but such basic affinities did not predispose them to particular policies.[46] Moreover, a state's approach to policy often reflected the preponderant influence of one individual or group over others. Yet a focus only on certain influential individuals can overlook the perspectives of others and implicitly portray government opinion as monolithic when it is not. It also ignores the practice of international diplomacy, whereby one government's position can sharpen affinities or differences for the members of another delegation. Such

[44] Watt, pp. 1–15 outlines the contours of this group. The existence and attitudes of the foreign-policy-making elite are, however, considered implicitly in many works of international history.
[45] For Britain, see Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*; Keith Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar: British Policy and Russia, 1894-1917* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 3–50; for France, see Peter Jackson, pp. 19–46; M. B. Hayne, *The French Foreign Office and the Origins of the First World War, 1898-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); for the United States, see Robert D. Schulzinger, *The Making of the Diplomatic Mind: The Training, Outlook, and Style of United States Foreign Service Officers, 1908-1931* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1975).
[46] On ideas of a common European foreign-policy-making culture, see Margaret MacMillan, *The War That Ended Peace: How Europe Abandoned Peace for the First World War* (London: Profile Books, 2013), esp. 228-65; Mösslang and Riotte, pp. 11–14; on common conceptions in the national foreign policy bureaucracy, see especially T.G. Otte, *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865-1914* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Historians often assert that countries have their own particular approach in foreign policy in the long term, e.g. George C. Herring, *From Colony to Superpower: U.S. Foreign Relations since 1776* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1–5.

decisions about 'emplotment' are not trivial; they help to differentiate this thesis from previous works which, like this one, are in part a product of the historian's subjectivities.[47] As the following section makes clear, many works reflect a time when historians did not take seriously the influence of attitudes outlined above and thus did not analyse them.

Historiography

This section examines the major works in the specialist historiography, meaning those works that examine the diplomacy of at least one of Britain, France, and the United States regarding the rebirth of Poland. Works relating to minor aspects of these questions, for example those that consider one country's policy towards one of Poland's contested territorial claims in 1919, will be addressed in the body of the thesis, as will the contribution of each of the major works to the subject of a particular chapter. The rebirth of Poland became an issue of growing importance but not primary significance in British, French, and American foreign policy in 1918 and 1919 and so receives minor coverage within larger surveys of these subjects.[48] The place of the rebirth of Poland in broader historiographical context will be considered in further detail in pertinent chapters. An assessment of how the approach employed in this thesis improves upon the historiography will follow the outlines of each of the major works.

One of the most important specialist works remains *The Rebirth of the Polish Republic* published by Titus Komarnicki in 1956.[49] The massive work (748 pages including notes) narrates the international history of Poland's rebirth and is divided into two sections. The first considers the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth during the First World War

[47] For international historians' perspectives on historians' subjectivities, see especially Patrick Finney, 'Hayden White, International History and Questions Too Seldom Posed', *Rethinking History*, 12 (2008), 103–23; Finney, *Remembering the Road to World War Two: International History, National Identity, Collective Memory* (London: Routledge, 2011), especially pp. 6-10; Emily S. Rosenberg, *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory* (Durham, N.C.; London: Duke University Press, 2003).

[48] There are some exceptions to this, in particular in certain works on the Paris Peace Conference; see below, pp. 123-4.

[49] Titus Komarnicki, *Rebirth of the Polish Republic: A Study in the Diplomatic History of Europe, 1914-1920* (London: William Heinemann, 1957).

with reference to the policy of the Allies and the Central Powers and the actions of numerous Polish individuals. The second section examines 'the struggle for the frontiers of the restored Polish state' in 1919 and 1920, with a short section on the Paris Peace Conference and a rather longer one on Allied and Polish diplomacy during the Russo-Polish War.[50] The book relies mostly on newspapers, printed primary sources, and memoirs in English, French, German, and Polish, as the state archives of the relevant countries had not yet been opened. *Rebirth of the Polish Republic* thus covers different periods with varying quality. While many important sources on the Paris Peace Conference and the Russo-Polish War were already available in printed form, internal government files would have considerably enhanced Komarnicki's examination of the diplomacy of the First World War. The book moreover should be considered as a Polish nationalist's defence of the actions of Poles and the Polish government during the period. The actions of Polish individuals and organisations are generally considered without criticism, while those who did not support them are condemned – chiefly successive Russian and German governments but also Britain's policy-makers, with Prime Minister David Lloyd George receiving specific censure. Komarnicki's perspective is unsurprising as he had been a diplomat in inter-war Poland and was writing from exile in the period immediately following Poland's forced incorporation into the Soviet Russian sphere.[51] This approach, however understandable, is necessary to identify as it results in an unbalanced assessment of many aspects of international policy.

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[50] I.e. this section stretches from pp. 397-748.

[51] Komarnicki states in his 'Foreward' that he did not receive 'any grant or subsidy' during his four years of research for the book; p. vii. Such assertions that the author was free from overt outside interference were not uncommon from Polish historians writing outside Poland during the Communist period; see also Wiktor Sukiennicki, *East Central Europe during World War I: From Foreign Domination to National Independence*, ed. by Maciej Siekierski, 2 vols. (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1984). Yet while Komarnicki states optimistically that the work was 'unbiased', it is important to note that this was well before the postmodern consensus that the perspective of the author (regardless of outside interference) was understood to influence the direction of a publication.

Komarnicki's extensive volume was published four years after a much slimmer volume by Louis Gerson, *Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland*.[52] The book's context is important, as it was published after a decade of Polish-American public lobbying to affect the foreign policy of the United States.[53] Gerson argues that Polish-Americans, and particularly Ignacy Paderewski, the famous pianist and their main representative in the First World War, exerted too much influence over President Woodrow Wilson and American foreign policy. This influence, Gerson argues, 'contradict[ed] the national interest of the United States', though he does not attempt to outline how the national interest would have been better served by another policy.[54] Gerson, like Komarnicki, employed the sources available at the time: these were primarily the Wilson and Colonel Edward Mandell House papers and the volumes of the *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States* on the war and the Paris Peace Conference. These remain critical sources for an understanding of American policy regarding Poland's rebirth. State Department files had not yet been opened when Gerson finished his book in 1953, but they shed little new information on the formation of policy. Gerson's focus on individual relations – Paderewski's rapport with Wilson and his advisor House – as the source of American policy is also instructive for this thesis, though his focus is more reminiscent of Great Man History than the present interest in attitudes. Yet Gerson's analysis is frequently suspect as he often makes assertions for which there is dubious evidence, possibly from a desire to further implicate Paderewski as a meddler in foreign politics. Gerson's claim that his book examines the period from 1914-1920 is also incorrect, as his narrative stops in June 1919.

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[52] Louis Gerson, *Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland, 1914-1920: A Study in the Influence on American Policy of Minority Groups of Foreign Origin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953). The book is 139 pages long, thus 'slimmer'.

[53] Beginning in the 1944 election campaign, Polish-American groups fought to have the United States guarantee Poland's independence from Soviet Russian control. Piotr S. Wandycz, *The United States and Poland* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1980), pp. 290–1, 340–1; Costigliola, *Roosevelt's Lost Alliances*, pp. 215–21.

[54] Gerson, p. viii.

Following the opening of state archives in Britain, France, and the United States by the early 1970s, stronger analyses of each country's policy towards Poland's rebirth were completed. The work of five historians in particular is important to note. The first is Kenneth Calder, whose *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe* argues that over the course of the First World War, the British government developed closer relations with Polish, Czecho-Slovak, and Yugoslav émigré organisations.[55] Attention is equally divided between policy relating to each of the three national groups. The book most often relies on the Foreign Office archives, but Calder also effectively uses the private papers of more than two dozen individuals in the British foreign-policy-making élite. Calder often mentions that officials in the Foreign Office sympathised with one or all of the émigré organisations, but he does not analyse such attitudes in any detail.[56] Rather, the book implicitly argues that rational considerations of the national interest in the war led the Foreign Office and the British government to seek ever closer relations with the émigré organisations and eventually to support statehood for those national groups.[57] An examination of the influence of attitudes on policy would therefore supplement Calder's meticulously researched and carefully argued volume.

Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen's work on British, French, American, and Polish policies regarding the rebirth of Poland at the Paris Peace Conference displays similar depth and quality.[58] Lundgreen-Nielsen considers the policies of each of these four countries equally

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[55] Kenneth J. Calder, *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe, 1914-1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976).
[56] See p. 31 below for further detail.
[57] See especially Calder, p. 10.
[58] Particularly Kay Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study of the Policies of the Great Powers and the Poles, 1918-1919*, trans. by Alison Borch-Johansen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1979). See especially Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference: A Study of the Policies of the Great Powers and the Poles, 1918-1919*, trans. by Alison Borch-Johansen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1979) The original edition was published in Danish in 1976. See also Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy towards Poland at the Paris Peace Conference and the Role of Isaiah Bowman', in *The Reconstruction of Poland, 1914-23*, ed. by Paul Latawski (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 95–116, which is based on further archival research; while Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland', in *Woodrow Wilson and a Revolutionary World, 1913-1921*, ed. by Arthur S. Link (Chapel Hill: University of North

and in much detail. His international, decentred focus, buttressed by thorough archival research in the British, French, American, and Polish state archives and the private papers of key individuals, provides a thorough account of how Poland's frontier questions unfolded between November 1918 and June 1919.[59] His research extends back to 1917 and is developed in a useful background section.[60] Like Calder, however, Lundgreen-Nielsen mentions individuals' attitudes about the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth but does not devote sustained analysis of motivations. Rather, he analyses only the rational or objective factors that affected policy and generally exemplifies the 'traditional', empiricist approach to diplomatic history.[61] The book is unfortunately translated in a highly difficult style. Instead, the clearest and most readable summary of Lundgreen-Nielsen's analysis is a later article in which he reconsiders Arno Mayer's depiction of the Polish problem at the peace conference. In this piece, Lundgreen-Nielsen argues that the Polish settlement reflected inconsistent attention to anti-Bolshevism, refuting Mayer's assertion that the peacemakers 'made a host of decisions, all of which, in varying degrees, were designed to check Bolshevism'.[62]

Carolina Press, 1982), pp. 105–26; and Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'The Mayer Thesis Reconsidered: The Poles and the Paris Peace Conference, 1919', *The International History Review*, 7 (1985), 68–102 reintroduce aspects of policy developed in his monograph.

[59] A 'decentred' perspective has more recently been a reason for the rise of transnational histories that do not focus on, and therefore argue for the importance of, the 'West'; see *Rethinking American History in a Global Age*, ed. by Thomas Bender (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 2002); on the relevance of 'internationalisation' for international history, see Michael J. Hogan, 'The "Next Big Thing": The Future of Diplomatic History in a Global Age', *Diplomatic History*, 28 (2004), 1–21. These exemplify concerns in the historical discipline about the consequences of 'emplotment'; see especially Finney, 'Hayden White', pp. 110–1. This debate about insularity and internationalisation has largely taken place among academics in the United States. Historians in Europe have arguably realised the importance of internationalisation earlier; as Lundgreen-Nielsen's work long precedes the discussion, this shows the scale of his achievement. One oft-cited example of a decentred perspective in international history and, as such, a guide for this thesis is Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[60] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 8–12, 31–162.

[61] Finney, 'Hayden White', p. 107.

[62] Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'The Mayer Thesis Reconsidered'; Arno J. Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking: Containment and Counterrevolution at Versailles, 1918-1919* (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), p. 9.

Thirdly, M.B. Biskupski's extensive body of work covers numerous aspects of American diplomacy regarding the rebirth of Poland during the First World War. Biskupski's major works on the subject are his lengthy 1981 doctoral dissertation and his recent monograph, *The United States and the Rebirth of Poland, 1914-1918*; the latter reflects additional archival research and some updating of the specialist literature, especially in Polish.[63] In between these two works, Biskupski has authored numerous articles on the United States and Poles or Poland during and after the First World War, as well as several works on this period in Poland history.[64] Most are outgrowths of his doctoral research and the text of some are repeated – with minor updates – in his monograph. Many of Biskupski's works on United States policy reflect his thorough research and are critical for the historiography. His dissertation relied on important state and private archival collections from Poland and the United States, but by the time of the 2012 publication of his monograph, he had also incorporated additional collections from those countries as well as material from archives in Austria, Canada, France, and the United Kingdom. Biskupski's works share a common dual focus on the decisions of the American foreign-policy-making élite and how the large Polish minority in the United States influenced those decisions. This includes some consideration, chiefly in his dissertation, of Wilson's milieu and its effect on his preconceptions about Poland.[65] Otherwise, while Biskupski mentions attitudes throughout his works, he does not analyse them in any depth. Rather, Biskupski's works respond in part to Gerson's earlier scholarship. Biskupski's works, especially his monograph, present a much more differentiated picture of Polish lobby groups and their limited impact on foreign policy.

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[63] M.B. Biskupski, 'The United States and the Rebirth of Poland, 1914-1918' (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 1981) is 750 pages; Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland* is a more modest 464.

[64] See bibliography for a full list of relevant works.

[65] Biskupski, 'United States and the Rebirth of Poland', pp. 345–51 on Wilson's background before his life in politics; Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 181–5 covers the same ground but with additional references to older (pre-1980) works on Wilson.

They also represent an effort to further Komarnicki's work of a nationalist defence of Polish actions during the First World War. The actions of various states, chiefly the United States but also Britain, that did not seek primarily to help the Polish people out of a sense of altruism, are often criticised as heartless or ignorant.[66] This tendency appears in several works besides Biskupski's and will be examined further below.

Several publications by Norman Davies address different aspects of British policy towards the rebirth of Poland.[67] His research in British official and private papers improves significantly on Komarnicki's examination of the question. Davies' contribution to the historiography rests particularly with his consideration in several articles of British policy during the Russo-Polish War, though he frequently refers to British policy in *White Eagle, Red Star*, his history of the Russo-Polish War.[68] Davies' works are significant for this thesis as they are peppered with the personal opinions of those British politicians and military leaders who dealt with Poland's representatives. Two of his articles focus particularly on how such attitudes affected the views of David Lloyd George and Maurice Hankey. This thesis concurs largely with Davies' assessment in these articles but intends to provide a broader examination of the British, French, and American viewpoint. Like Davies, Piotr Wandycz's works focus mainly on the diplomacy of the Russo-Polish War, though he considers other works as well. His major contribution to the specialist historiography, *France and Her Eastern Allies*, examines France's policy towards

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[66] See especially M.B. Biskupski, 'Poland in American Foreign Policy, 1918-1945: "Sentimental" or "Strategic" Friendship?', *Polish American Studies*, 38 (1981), 5–15; see also his discussion of British policy in Biskupski, 'The Diplomacy of Wartime Relief: The United States and Poland, 1914-1918', *Diplomatic History*, 19 (1995), 431–52.

[67] Norman Davies, 'Lloyd George and Poland, 1919-20', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 6 (1971), 132–54; Davies, 'Sir Maurice Hankey and the Inter-Allied Mission to Poland, July-August 1920', *The Historical Journal*, 15 (1972), 553–61; Davies, 'The Poles in Great Britain 1914-1919', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 50 (1972), 63–89; Davies, 'Great Britain and the Polish Jews, 1918-20', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 8 (1973), 119–42.

[68] Norman Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star: The Polish-Soviet War, 1919-20* (London: Orbis, 1983); On the importance of western policy, cf Jerzy Borzęcki, *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008) which scarcely mentions British, French, or American policy in an examination of the politics and diplomacy of the war. The historiographical debate regarding Allied involvement in the Russo-Polish War is further examined below, on pp. 226-7.

Czechoslovakia and Poland from 1919-25, though there is a marked emphasis on Poland.[69] His work is based primarily on the archives of the Polish foreign ministry as French diplomatic archives were not yet available.

Works by the seven historians mentioned above have been widely cited, but several additional contributions are important to note. Three doctoral projects have also examined the sources thoroughly but are in limited circulation and have had little historiographical impact. Works by Russell Bryant and John Felix Kadlubowski, which respectively examine British and American policy regarding Poland's boundaries at the Paris Peace Conference, provide thorough examinations of the sources from those delegations and will be considered in further detail in Chapter 3.[70] Paul Latawski's 1985 dissertation, 'Great Britain and the Rebirth of Poland', meanwhile, examines most of the sources used by Calder and argues that the British government proved largely unhelpful with Polish émigrés' attempts to secure international support for Polish independence.[71] Aside from Wandycz's work, less attention has been devoted to French policy towards Poland's rebirth, though Komarnicki and Lundgreen-Nielsen do examine it. The only work that focuses solely on the subject is a book chapter by Ghislain de Castelbajac that examines France's wartime policy.[72] Two monographs by Kalervo Hovi also consider France's policy towards Poland's rebirth, in the context of French nationality policy in

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[69] Piotr S. Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies, 1919-1925: French-Czechoslovak-Polish Relations from the Paris Peace Conference to Locarno* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1962); Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations, 1917-1921* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969) which incorporates evidence from British and American government archives; Wandycz, *United States and Poland*, pp. 104–69.

[70] Russell Bryant, 'Britain and the Polish Settlement, 1919' (D.Phil thesis, University of Oxford, 1968); John Felix Kadlubowski, 'The Experts and Poland's Frontiers at the Paris Peace Conference' (PhD Dissertation, University of Maryland, 1977).

[71] Paul Latawski, 'Great Britain and the Rebirth of Poland 1914-1918: Official and Unofficial Influences on British Policy' (Ph.D dissertation, Indiana University, 1985).

[72] Ghislain de Castelbajac, 'La France et la question polonaise', in *Recherches sur la France et le problème des Nationalités pendant la Première Guerre Mondiale (Pologne, Ukraine, Lithuanie)*, ed. by Georges-Henri Soutou, Ghislain de Castelbajac, and Sébastien de Gasquet (Paris: Presse de l'Université de Paris-Sorbonne, 1995), pp. 39–104.

central and eastern Europe and Finland.[73] He argues that the French government adopted its alliance policy the region in late 1917 to replace Russia as the eastern balance against Germany, and continued this policy to 1921. France also sought to strengthen those countries that could form a *cordon sanitaire* against Bolshevism. These three works are based on research in the French diplomatic and military archives and provide an overview of France's actions and the strategic reasoning for them. This is done, however, without attention to attitudes or their influence on policy. Finally, articles by Wandycz and Józef Łaptos outline stereotypes about Polish people in the modern era.[74] These works offer some important directions for in-depth study of attitudes about Poles or the rebirth of Poland and their influence upon policy, but do not analyse in detail the impact of attitudes on policy during the period under discussion.

The specialist historiography outlined above, taken together, provides a thorough understanding of how rational factors affected British, French, and American policy towards the rebirth of Poland. Methodologically, however, most of the key works were published at least three decades ago and could not benefit from more recent work on the entanglement of attitudes and policy.[75] This thesis is thus the only work that analyses the influence of attitudes in any detail, though as mentioned above Norman Davies' articles on Lloyd George and Hankey are useful. Additionally, most works examine only one of the three states considered here and over a shorter period. Only Komarnicki's *Rebirth of the Polish Republic* covers the same period as this thesis.

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[73] Kalervo Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de l'est? The Emergence of the New French Eastern European Alliance Policy, 1917-1919* (Turku: Turun yliopisto, 1975); Hovi, *Alliance de Revers: Stabilization of France's Alliance Policies in East Central Europe 1919-1921*, trans. by Kaija and Gary London (Turku: Turun yliopisto, 1984).

[74] Piotr S. Wandycz, 'Western Images and Stereotypes of Central and Eastern Europe', in *Vampires Unstaked: National Images, Stereotypes and Myths in East Central Europe*, ed. by André Gerrits and Nanci Adler (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1995), pp. 5–23; Łaptos, cited above.

[75] The two key exceptions to this are Biskupski's later works, especially his monograph, and Castelbajac's examination of French wartime policy. Neither historian, however, evaluates their subject with reference to more recent historiographical movements such as the cultural/linguistic or transnational turns.

One additional trend in the historiography is worth mentioning here. It is indisputable that since the first partition of Poland in 1772, people living in those territories have experienced horrors from attempts at cultural assimilation to genocidal mass murder. With this in mind, much writing on Polish history includes a sort of Polish exceptionalism that encodes a nationalist viewpoint, which Biskupski calls the 'martyrological understanding of Polish history': that Polish suffering is evidence that they are a chosen people – a sort of 'Christ of Nations'.[76] The work of Komarnicki, Wandycz, Biskupski, and Latawski in particular display a sort of nationalist grievance against those countries and individuals whom, they believe, could have done more to help Poland.[77] This is also manifested in uncritical acceptance or even defence of the claims of Polish representatives, whether to statehood in the wartime period or to territories claimed or annexed in 1919-20. The perspectives of rival claimants – for example of Ukrainians for contested territory – are usually dismissed as unreasonable. There is, moreover, little reflection on how Polish actions could have negatively impacted representatives' claims to statehood or territory. Such analyses tend to examine British, French, or American policy with relation to those claims only and with little attention paid to the place of that issue within the broader context of Great Power policy and how that context might have constrained policy options.[78] The result is the implication that Poland has been discriminated against, but there is no sustained examination of how such attitudes might

[76] M.B. Biskupski, *Independence Day: Myth, Symbol, and the Creation of Modern Poland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), p. 3.
[77] See also Wandycz, *United States and Poland*; Peter Leśniewski, 'Britain and Upper Silesia 1919-1922' (PhD thesis, University of Dundee, 2000).
[78] Biskupski, for instance, asserts that his dissertation does not consider the Polish question's importance within the context of American foreign policy; Biskupski, 'United States and the Rebirth of Poland', p. iv. The same exclusion is not mentioned in later works but as many of these works closely resemble his original dissertation, the pattern repeats through them. An important exception is M.B. Biskupski, 'Strategy, Politics, and Suffering: The Wartime Relief of Belgium, Serbia, and Poland, 1914-1918', in *Ideology, Politics and Diplomacy in East Central Europe*, ed. by M.B. Biskupski (Rochester, N.Y: University of Rochester Press, 2003), pp. 31–57.

have affected policy.[79] Part of the motivation for this thesis is to consider more thoroughly such claims that bias, prejudice, or other attitudes affected policy. The impulse to defend the Polish viewpoint is understandable, as most of the specialist works were written when Poland was part of the Eastern Bloc, within which those in power attempted to warp Polish national identity. Yet it must be mentioned here as it pervades important works on the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth.

This thesis does not intend to duplicate the thoroughly-researched narratives of British, French, and American policy by Biskupski, Calder, Lundgreen-Nielsen, and others. Rather, based on an examination of the same sources, it seeks to elucidate an important factor that they have overlooked or left unexamined: how the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite developed attitudes about Poland's rebirth and whether – and to what extent – those attitudes contributed to policy amidst other influences and considerations. In the course of examining these questions, the influence of various factors on policy will be examined. As the focus is primarily on internal deliberations and discussions, the archival sources used are those that record those deliberations: the official files of the British Foreign Office, French Foreign Ministry, and American Department of State, which contain those meeting minutes, memoranda, letters, telegrams, and other items that illustrate the decision-making process at a state or multilateral level. This examination has been supplemented by an examination of the private papers of many of the individuals involved in decision-making, as these diaries, letters, and other items provide additional insight into the attitudes of these individuals and the factors that affected British, French, and American policy. The intent is not to magnify the importance of these individuals and governments – as mentioned above the British, French, and American governments generally did not control events in central and eastern Europe – but to critically examine their perspectives. External sources such as

[79] Conversely, Bryant's thesis seeks in part to respond to this argument and is overly sympathetic to the British perspective as a result.

newspaper articles have been considered insofar as they affected decision-making or depicted events, but this study does not examine the contours of public opinion in thorough detail. An examination of the thousands of newspaper articles and other sources from the public sphere that mentioned Poles or the rebirth of Poland during this period would constitute another full study along the lines of Harry Hanak's excellent consideration of British perspectives on Austria-Hungary during the First World War.[80]

This thesis examines British, French, and American policy over a longer time frame than any works in the specialist historiography except for Komarnicki's monograph. This is intended to show the development of attitudes and test their influence on policy in both the wartime and postwar context. Moreover, this thesis adopts a transnational perspective as the three countries examined here ought to be studied together rather than apart. Many forces like ideas do not respect national borders, and as British, French, and American policy-makers increasingly consulted each other on various matters, their policies and attitudes towards Poland's rebirth were developed in this context.[81] The first chapter begins with an examination of the foreign-policy-making élite and understandings of Poland and the Polish people before the outbreak of war in 1914. It then examines the early development of policy-makers' attitudes about the Polish people within the context of wartime policy before the Russian revolution of February 1917. The second chapter considers how, between March 1917 and the end of the war in November 1918, such attitudes impacted the British, French, and American decisions to support an independent Poland. The third and fourth chapters examine British, French, and American policies and attitudes at the Paris Peace Conference. Policies and attitudes regarding Poland's

[80] Harry Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary during the First World War* (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1962).

[81] For reasons of language and to limit the scope of this thesis does not consider other important perspectives, such as those from Russia or Germany. Some Polish sources have been consulted but a preliminary research trip to Polish archives demonstrated that sufficient sources have survived the destruction of the Second World War to require a separate study to thoroughly examine the Polish perspective.

territorial claims are considered in the third chapter, while policies and attitudes regarding questions affecting Poland's domestic affairs are the subject of the fourth chapter. The final chapter assesses policy after the Paris Peace Conference, chiefly during the most intense period of the Russo-Polish War between April and September 1920. Attitudes were an important factor in British, French, and American policy discussions regarding the rebirth of Poland. Though their impact on policy was contingent, sometimes negligible, and nearly always combined with other factors or explanations, they are important to consider. Attitudes contribute to the formulation of foreign policy and are an integral part of the context in which such decisions are made.

The Eastern Front, 1914-18*



* Reprinted with permission from Paul R. Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe* 2nd edition (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002), p. 122.

Chapter One: An 'internal' problem in international relations: 1914-1916

The British, French, and American governments did not begin to seriously consider policies regarding the rebirth of Poland until 1917 with the Russian revolutions and the United States' entry into the First World War. Yet policy discussions of the rebirth of Poland in 1917 and after did not take place on a blank slate; policy-makers had had some experience with Poles and larger issues such as self-determination. It is necessary therefore to examine the period before 1917 to evaluate patterns of change and continuity in policies and attitudes. This chapter traces how British, French, and American foreign-policy-makers first encountered Polish affairs and the attitudes and policies that resulted. It begins by outlining the group of men who made foreign policy in each country and their *mentalités*, regarding both general questions such as national self-determination and specific ones like the rebirth of Poland. Next, it considers British and French wartime positions regarding Polish independence before the February Revolution, and finally how the Polish relief campaign in the United States raised the international profile of Polish issues.

Historiography

The first two chapters divide the wartime diplomacy of Poland's rebirth chronologically, and the specialist historiography of this topic from 1914-18 will be examined here. This approach follows the paradigm of most specialist works that examine British, French, and American policy from 1914-1918. These indicate the change

in conditions in 1917 but do not treat attitudes differently.[1] Allied and American wartime attitudes about the Polish people and Polish independence have often been mentioned in the specialist literature but there has not yet been an in-depth examination of their nature and impact. On Britain, the main work is Calder's *Britain and the Origins of the New Europe*, which is meticulously researched and carefully argued. Calder examines relations between the British government and émigrés representing Polish, Czechoslovak, and Yugoslav (South Slav) groups during the First World War. He concludes that the British government made policy towards these nationalities based primarily on wartime contingencies.[2] While the findings of this chapter in part share this conclusion, Calder's focus differs from that of this thesis as he fails to examine attitudes as a motivating factor in policy. He mentions instances of the emotional aspects of diplomacy like feelings of sympathy or indebtedness, but though he argues variously that these feelings were unimportant or critical, he provides no sustained analysis of these conclusions.[3] Paul Latawski's doctoral dissertation also considers British wartime policy on the rebirth of Poland, but it contributes little to the historiography as it is not as carefully researched or argued.[4] Other works cover only a fraction of Calder's subject. In a 2008 article, Jeffrey Mankoff demonstrates convincingly that the alliance with tsarist Russia meant that Britain and France did not consider the Polish question[5] to be an important matter of high policy.[6] Norman Davies, meanwhile, focuses in a 1972 article on Polish émigré lobbyists and their

[1] The only exceptions to this are Jeffrey Mankoff, 'The Future of Poland, 1914-1917: France and Great Britain in the Triple Entente', *International History Review*, 30 (2008), 741–67 and Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de l'est?*.
[2] Calder, pp. 1–2.
[3] Calder, pp. 10–11, 33, 48–9.
[4] Latawski, 'Great Britain and the Rebirth of Poland 1914-1918.'
[5] The term 'Polish question' is generally used to refer to the problem in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of what to do with the partitions of Poland. The term is problematic as it generally connotes that the situation – partition – was an 'unfinished' solution, though the eventual contours of that solution could not have been foreseen by historical actors. Yet 'Polish question' is used widely in the secondary literature and thus will be employed occasionally here.
[6] Mankoff, 'Future of Poland.'

interactions with the Foreign Office and the British government, information that Calder later examines in greater detail.[7]

As mentioned in the introduction, the works of M.B. Biskupski dominate the historiography of American policy towards Polish independence during the First World War. Biskupski's works are thoroughly researched but suffer from a problem of emplotment: by narrating a history centred on Polish actors, they frequently obscure the fact that the rebirth of Poland was not an American priority during the war. His research has nonetheless made important contributions to historical knowledge. In particular, his examination of American efforts to send relief to Russian Poland is significant as none of the other specialist works examine the topic in any detail.[8] Relief efforts centred in the United States and eventually ended in failure, but this thesis argues that they focused policy-makers' attention on Polish nationals and led leaders to develop attitudes about the Poles, for instance that they were pitiable and deserved aid. Biskupski likewise asserts that '[t]he travails of the Polish people advanced the cause of their national independence. … it can be argued that the very frustrations and failures of efforts to relieve hardship in Poland were themselves the crucial inducements to American support for the Polish cause'.[9] He does not, however, examine in detail the relationship between American policy-makers' support for relief and their later support independence. Rather, the quote above reveals his tendency to write in a Polish nationalist discourse that emphasises redemptive suffering – and on the Allies' insufficient efforts to help the Polish people in various ways, in particular by the full and speedy adoption of pro-Polish policies. This tendency is also common to other specialist works on the subject, particularly those by

[7] Davies, 'Poles in Great Britain.'
[8] Biskupski, 'United States and the Rebirth of Poland', pp. 177–292 contains the fullest narrative, but additional primary and secondary material – especially Polish-language material – has been added for Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 123–58; this incorporates nearly all of Biskupski, 'Diplomacy of Wartime Relief', along with some additional primary and secondary material. Compare with the brief attention accorded to relief in Gerson, pp. 62–3; Calder, pp. 72–3.
[9] Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, p. 123; see also pp. 157-8.

Komarnicki and Latawski, and demonstrates lack of attention to the full context in which Allied and American policy was made.

Biskupski's monograph offers a sharp contrast with the other specialist works on American policy towards Poland's rebirth because it is so thoroughly grounded in a reading of the primary sources. Most of Gerson's short book focuses on American policy during the First World War, and his analysis of Polish influence is based primarily on uncritical reading of Colonel House's diary and exaggerated claims made in Paderewski's official biography.[10] Paderewski did influence House and Wilson, as this chapter will demonstrate, but Gerson overestimates the extent of this influence and characterises it as unbecoming of a group of Americans 'of foreign origin' to promote causes at variance with the United States' national interest.[11] The book moreover contains numerous factual errors. It has, however, often been used to support claims of Polish influence on American wartime foreign policy, likely because until 2012 it was the only monograph on the subject.[12] As with other historians, Gerson's work often includes material demonstrating stereotypes – often negative ones – about Poland. Despite his focus on the role played by individuals, he does not consider the importance of such perceptions except as part of his critique on Polish influence.[13] Finally, several doctoral dissertations have been written

[10] Gerson, pp. 46–100; the book has 137 pages before the bibliography and appendix; Rom Landau, *Ignace Paderewski: Musician and Statesman* (New York: T.Y. Crowell, 1934).
[11] His book begins, 'One of the handicaps in making and administering American foreign policy has been the susceptibility of minority groups among our citizenry to propaganda and purposes to the land of their origin, often contradicting the national interest of the United States. This book is concerned with a striking instance of such weakness.' Gerson, p. vii. The book's subtitle also hints at its orientation. Compare with Biskupski's more nuanced approach: Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, p. 139.
[12] Calder, pp. 74, 229n131; Nicole M. Phelps, *U.S.-Habsburg Relations from 1815 to the Paris Peace Conference: Sovereignty Transformed* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 246; Victor S. Mamatey, *The United States and East Central Europe 1914-1918: A Study in Wilsonian Diplomacy and Propaganda* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 131.
[13] E.g. Gerson, p. 74.

about aspects of the United States' wartime policy regarding Poland, but these offer no new insights and generally rely on limited archival research, even in American archives.[14]

Few specialist works examine France's policy on the Polish question in the First World War. As mentioned above, Mankoff ably covers grand strategy in the period before the Russian February Revolution. Ghislain de Castelbajac argues that French policy, much like British policy, became more open to support for Polish independence after the fall of the tsarist government in March 1917.[15] The lengthy book chapter is the only treatment of France's wartime position on Poland's independence from 1914-18, and modifies the argument in Kalervo Hovi's earlier *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de l'est*. Hovi begins his treatment in late 1917, and it asserts that French government policy regarding the nationalities of central and eastern Europe, and Poland in particular, changed to strong support following the Bolshevik Revolution in November 1917.[16] As in the literature on British and American policy, these works focus on the development of policy but do not consider the development of policy-makers' attitudes.

Komarnicki is the only historian to examine British, French, and American diplomacy and their interaction, but his research on the First World War is distorted by lack of access to government archives and private papers.[17] Most crucial archives – especially the government archives of each country considered here – were not yet open as he prepared his manuscript from 1953-7. Unfortunately he did not use the House and Wilson papers, which were available. As works by Calder, Biskupski, Gerson, and Castelbajac affirm, much of Allied and American government policy on the Polish question took place in secret negotiations or internal discussion. Komarnicki's reliance on

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[14] E.g. David T. Ruskoski, 'The Polish Army in France: Immigrants in America, World War I Volunteers in France, Defenders of the Recreated State in Poland' (PhD Dissertation, Georgia State University, 2006); Pawel Goral, 'Colonel House: The Neglected Link Between the United States Government, the Polish Nationalists, and the Restoration of Poland' (M.A. thesis, The University of Texas at Arlington, 2007).
[15] Castelbajac, pp. 66–70.
[16] Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, p. 73.
[17] Komarnicki, pp. esp. 51–73, 141–222.

newspapers and parliamentary debates makes his First World War section a useful discussion of public opinion. It also leads him to assume, however, that because these sources reflect little knowledge about secret deliberations, the rebirth of Poland was rarely debated at all.

The Polish question does not figure strongly in secondary literature on the diplomacy of the First World War as a whole. This reflects the minor importance of the issue in international strategy, especially before 1917. General studies of the diplomacy of the First World War mention the Polish question as an issue of some importance in 1917 and 1918, devoting a small but appropriate amount of space to its discussion.[18] Some work, however, is noteworthy for its attention to the Polish question or related issues. Works on British or American diplomacy or attitudes regarding the nationalities of the Habsburg Empire are instructive, in particular Harry Hanak's *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary during the First World War*.[19] As those governments considered their position on Czechoslovak independence or the creation of Yugoslavia, similar issues were raised about whether self-determination was viable for creating new states, rather than modifying the borders of existing ones. These questions had important implications for the rebirth of Poland as well. Although the Habsburgs controlled one of the Polish partitions and later occupied part of Russian Poland, some works on diplomacy regarding

[18] E.g. in David Stevenson, *The First World War and International Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), the principal study of wartime diplomacy; Z.A.B. Zeman, *A Diplomatic History of the First World War* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1971), pp. 340–55 provides a longer overview but makes several mistakes, e.g. that Namier was influential in the Foreign Office in 1916-17, p. 352; Arno J. Mayer, *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy, 1917-1918* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959) mentions the Polish question almost exclusively in passing; W.W. Gottlieb, *Studies in Secret Diplomacy during the First World War* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1957), pp. 272–7 situates the Polish question in irritants for the alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary.

[19] For the United States, see Mamatey, *United States and East Central Europe*; Phelps; for Britain, see Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*; Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson, *The Making of a New Europe: R.W. Seton-Watson and the Last Years of Austria-Hungary* (London: Methuen, 1981); Mark Cornwall, 'Great Britain and the Splintering of Greater Hungary, 1914-1918', in *British-Hungarian Relations since 1848*, ed. by Laszlo Peter and Martyn C. Rady (London: School of Slavonic and East European Studies, 2004), pp. 103–22.

Austria-Hungary curiously exclude the Polish question.[20] In 1918, France in particular became intricately involved with the nationalities of central and eastern Europe, especially Poles but also Ukrainians and Finns, not to mention Russian anti-Bolshevik groups from the former tsarist empire. This involvement is extensively covered in the general literature on French diplomacy.[21]

The foreign-policy-making élite and views of Poles and Poland before 1914

As noted in the introduction, most international historians acknowledge that individuals play a role in foreign policy; an examination of these individuals is therefore important. In an influential essay, D.C. Watt outlined the 'foreign-policy-making élite' in twentieth-century Britain, a concept that also applies well to France and the United States in the period of this study.[22] Watt pinpoints four crucial groups that direct foreign policy. The first group is the 'political' division, meaning the prime minister (or president if extended to the United States and France), foreign minister, and the cabinet or at least a few interested ministers. The second, 'diplomatic', comprises the diplomatic corps or ambassadors, consuls, and other officials abroad, as well as those in the foreign office in the capital. The third is 'bureaucratic', which includes those interested civil servants in other departments such as the Treasury who seek to involve themselves in policy. The

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[20] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary* and Mamatey specifically exclude Polish issues; Phelps and Hugh and Christopher Seton-Watson deal with some aspects but not as a central focus. Harry Hanak, 'The Government, the Foreign Office and Austria-Hungary, 1914-1918', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 47 (1969), pp. 175–8; and Wilfried Fest, *Peace or Partition: The Habsburg Monarchy and British Policy, 1914-1918* (New York: St Martin's, 1978), pp. 156–61 consider the Polish question within British policy towards Austria-Hungary, but only discuss the situation in late 1917 and early 1918. Calder's treatment of the subject, which was published after Hanak's article and too late for Fest to use it, is much more informative.

[21] Stevenson, *French War Aims*, pp. 97–110; on French nationality policy in general, see especially Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, pp. 62–135; Michael Jabara Carley, *Revolution and Intervention: The French Government and the Russian Civil War, 1917-1919* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983).

[22] Watt, pp. 1–15. Many studies argue that a common European diplomatic culture existed in the period preceding the First World War, e.g. Mösslang and Riotte; MacMillan, *War That Ended Peace* argues for the existence of a common foreign-policy-making élite culture based on shared assumptions. Though Americans are largely excluded from such conceptions, many American diplomats aspired to European norms; see Schulzinger, p. 6.

final major group is the military, whether leaders like Marshall Ferdinand Foch who consult on grand strategy, or military attachés on missions abroad. Watt also notes a few outsiders who regularly affected policy such as the 'serious' press or parliamentary and extraparliamentary groups that discussed foreign affairs. Individuals and groups representing commercial or financial interests, especially but not exclusively in the United States, could also influence policy.

The foreign-policy-making élite was therefore a professional 'class' rather than a social one. Many within this élite, however, shared the same social origins. In all three countries, the type of man who entered the diplomatic service, which formed the expert core of this group, originated from particular ranks in society.[23] Though some care had been taken in Britain and France especially in the decade before 1914 to widen the pool of applicants and decrease the reliance on the aristocracy, this had only been partly successful. This was both because an entrant to the diplomatic corps required certain means to support himself in the first months or years of application, and because those from outside the milieu of the aristocracy or upper middle class tended not to apply. As Zara Steiner notes, 'Scots, non-conformists, Jews, [and] black men were not welcome as colleagues' in the pre-war Foreign Office.[24] A similar ethic prevailed in France and the United States, and in all three countries women held no key official roles though they could exert influence informally. Most of the men of the foreign-policy-making élite had

[23] Most works that examine the British foreign-policy-making elite do so in the context of Watt's characterisation; see Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*; Zara S. Steiner, 'Elitism and Foreign Policy: The Foreign Office before the Great War', in *Shadow and Substance in British Foreign Policy 1895-1939: Memorial Essays Honouring C.J. Lowe*, ed. by B.J.C. McKercher and D.J. Moss (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1984), pp. 19–55, a reconsideration of some of her earlier views and a defence of others; Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar*, pp. 3–50; Otte, *Foreign Office Mind*; on France, Peter Jackson explicitly grounds his analysis of French security policy in Watt's concept; another important study is Hayne, *French Foreign Office*; the 'foreign-policy-making elite' is not used to describe the system in the United States, though it would provide focus to those works that consider this grouping, e.g. Schulzinger, *Making of the Diplomatic Mind*; Jacobs; Ronald Emil Swerczek, 'The Diplomatic Career of Hugh Gibson, 1908-1938' (Ph.D thesis, University of Iowa, 1972).

[24] Steiner, 'Elitism and Foreign Policy', p. 30; she does note (p. 34) that Lord Rothschild, a Jew, was 'received ... [by] the highest policy circles'.

received a good education. In France a large percentage were lawyers, while in Britain most had gone to an élite public school and the majority hired after 1908 had degrees from Oxford or Cambridge. In the United States most had travelled to Europe and thereby acquired languages. General material about Poland's history such as the partitions would have been part of school curricula, but from 1914-21 policy-makers made no specific references to information learned about Poland in school or university. There were, for instance, no university chairs of Polish history in Britain, France, or the United States before 1914. The importance of education for shaping perspectives should not be discounted but we must assume that educational history had little effect on policy-makers' specific knowledge about Poland or the Polish people.

As James Joll argued, in addition to examining the documentary record, historians must also consider the 'unspoken assumptions' that shape decision-making, those 'instinctive reactions, traditions, and modes of behaviour … which are taken for granted.'[25] In all three countries, the combination of social origins, education, and expertise tended to mean that the makers of foreign policy considered themselves an élite. Often those who did not share the exalted origins of many of their colleagues, like Eyre Crowe in the Foreign Office or Jules and Paul Cambon at the Quai d'Orsay, believed most strongly in the privileges of the foreign-policy-making élite. Of particular importance for this thesis was that many in the diplomatic realm regarded outsiders – even politicians – as interlopers

[25] James Joll, *1914: The Unspoken Assumptions; An Inaugural Lecture* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1968), pp. 6–7; Joll's call for further study of unspoken assumptions proved influential and has seen a resurgence in recent work, e.g. Otte, *Foreign Office Mind*; MacMillan, *War That Ended Peace* especially pp. 228-352. Any discussion of collective mindsets must reference the wealth of works produced on the formation of collective identities, e.g. James Fentress and Chris Wickham, *Social Memory* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992); Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories* (New York: SUNY Press, 1991); studies of mentalités in the longue durée by Annales school historians, e.g. Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. by J.E. Anderson (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); Emanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *Montaillou: The Promised Land of Error*, trans. by Barbara Bray (New York: George Brazillier, 1978); and works by those cultural historians influenced by the Annales School, e.g. Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Vintage Books, 1985); Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1983).

who did not possess the expert knowledge necessary to steer the complicated waters of international diplomacy.[26] This created difficulties during the period of this thesis. Three important figures, Lloyd George, Wilson, and Georges Clemenceau, fall under the 'political' division of Watt's definition but had defined their career in opposition to the establishment that most of this élite formed. Lloyd George had begun his political career as a fierce opponent of landed wealth in Wales, and later as Chancellor of the Exchequer had brought in a controversial landmark budget that introduced government provision of social services.[27] Wilson, the elected champion of the Progressive movement in the United States, came to power in particular because he opposed the stranglehold of trusts and monopolies on American life and attempted to break this hold with a sweeping array of legislation in 1913-14.[28] Clemenceau was a radical and had been an anti-Dreyfusard; he thus defined himself squarely in opposition to supporters of a restored monarchy or of the Catholic Church in France.[29] These three men, like many outsiders, tended to think of other foreign-policy-makers – and especially the diplomatic corps – as ideologically conservative, but this overlooked the range of perspectives in this body. As a group, the foreign-policy-making élite pursued policies in the self-interest of their respective countries and in particular they often perceived that their country had a singular civilising mission in the world and these actions were consistent with it.[30] But they did not always agree on the correct policy or even what the national interest was for reasons that included political differences or personal rivalry.

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[26] E.g. Zara Steiner and M.L. Dockrill, 'The Foreign Office at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919', *International History Review*, 2 (1980), pp. 67–8; Schulzinger, pp. 6–7; Peter Jackson, p. 28.

[27] John Grigg argues that though Lloyd George was not born into the aristocracy, he nonetheless grew up in privilege in his milieu because he was born into the leading classes of the Welsh nationalist movement. John Grigg, *Lloyd George*, 4 vols. (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), vol. 1, p. 17.

[28] Arthur S. Link, *Woodrow Wilson and the Progressive Era, 1910-1917* (New York: Harper, 1963), p. 10; John Milton Cooper, 'Making a Case for Wilson', in *Reconsidering Woodrow Wilson: Progressivism, Internationalism, War, and Peace*, ed. by John Milton Cooper (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008), p. 10; see also John Milton Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2009).

[29] David Robin Watson, *Georges Clemenceau: A Political Biography* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1974); Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, *Clemenceau* (Paris: Fayard, 1988).

[30] Peter Jackson, p. 22; Steiner, 'Elitism and Foreign Policy', p. 31; Schulzinger, pp. 6–7.

What connection did these men have with Poles or Poland before 1914 and how much were they aware of the historical nuances involved with those terms? As noted in the introduction, we can speak of at least three 'Polands' in 1914, corresponding with the three partitions.[31] Prussia had claimed from Poland-Lithuania the most prosperous, densely populated of the partitioned regions – Posen (Poznań) and West Prussia – and a sizeable Polish-speaking minority lived in Upper Silesia (Górny Śląsk), which Prussia seized from Austria in 1740. By 1914 Germany's partition still had the strongest economy, having built up substantial industry. The Russian partition, which was the largest and covered parts of modern-day Poland, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Belarus, was far less economically developed. The term 'Russian Poland' sometimes referred to the entire partition, but more often to 'Congress Poland', later 'Vistulaland', the Russian province predominantly inhabited by Polish-speakers.[32] By 1914, however, Russia's late industrialisation had brought substantial growth to some cities, especially Łódż. The Austrian partition, known as Galicia though its proper name was the Kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria, was economically backward apart from the short-lived oil fields of East Galicia.[33] To distinguish between the partitions, the terms 'Russian Poland' (for Congress Poland), 'German Poland', and Austrian Poland' will be used.

Polish nationalism, which was marked by growing mass participation, existed in all three partitions.[34] Concentrations of Poles usually corresponded with the territories

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[31] On the history of the Polish partitions, see Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 60-120; Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Lands of Partitioned Poland, 1795-1918* (Seattle; London: University of Washington Press, 1974); Anita Prażmowska, *A History of Poland*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 130–58.

[32] Congress Poland is outlined in Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 60-2.

[33] On the Galician economy, see especially Alison Frank, *Oil Empire: Visions of Prosperity in Austrian Galicia* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[34] On Polish nationalism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, see Brian Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate: Imagining Modern Politics in Nineteenth-Century Poland* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); *Nation and History: Polish Historians from the Enlightenment to the Second World War*, ed. by Peter Brock, John D. Stanley, and Piotr Wróbel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006); Miroslav Hroch, *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups among the Smaller European Nations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Peter Brock, 'Polish

outlined above, but not exclusively: Upper Silesia in particular included a large Polish-speaking population but had passed from the Polish crown in 1335, while Danzig (Gdańsk) was predominantly German-speaking yet the Polish crown controlled it until 1793. Polish immigrants in other countries also expressed Polish national sentiment. Biskupski argues, for instance, that the substantial Polish-American community should be considered a fourth major Polish partition.[35] Polish political parties or clubs existed in the parliaments of all three partitioning empires.[36] Yet there were many divisions among Polish nationalists and politicians. Polish nationalists were animated by two[37] competing conceptions of how best to navigate competing mass identities in the multinational partitions, in particular national (German, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarussian, Zionist, Lithuanian) or religious (Catholic, Protestant, Jewish) ones. National Democracy, a right-wing movement with followers in each partition, espoused an exclusive form of Polishness based on markers such as the Polish language and Catholicism, and argued that the mass propagation of this national idea was more important than the independence and reunification of Poland.[38] Others posited an inclusive Polishness that equated a reborn Poland with freedom from oppression, though such idealistic notions tended to be advocated by Polish-speaking landed élites and their descendants like Piłsudski.[39] These idealists also tended to favour insurrections against the partitioning powers, as did socialists who argued that national identification was unimportant amidst the greater

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Nationalism', in *Nationalism in Eastern Europe*, ed. by Peter F. Sugar and Ivo J. Lederer (Seattle; London: University of Washington Press, 1969), pp. 310–72; Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 3-59.

[35] Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, p. 6.

[36] Edward Chmielewski, *The Polish Question in the Russian State Duma* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1970); Jacek Jędruch, *Constitutions, Elections, and Legislatures of Poland, 1493-1993: A Guide to Their History* (New York: EJJ Books, 1998), pp. 249–62.

[37] These two conceptions were the predominant ones across the partitions and are most important for the purposes of this thesis, but other important ideas of Polishness existed, e.g. that of the Galician peasantry; see Keely Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).

[38] On National Democracy, see especially Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate*.

[39] Perceptions of elitism in this Polish project led Ukrainian and Lithuanian nationalists to turn away from it after 1863; see Timothy Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, pp. 31–3, 134.

class struggle.[40] The partitioning powers had at times used a variety of repressive measures in their Polish provinces, ranging from attempts at cultural assimilation through restriction of language and religious rights and control over education to the successful repression of insurrections in 1830-1 and 1863-5. Yet attempts at assimilation had eased by 1914, and in Galicia Poles enjoyed wide political freedoms and were the primary administrators of the province.

As Watt notes, the general composition of the foreign-policy-making élite does not preclude analysis of the origins and outlooks of the men who discussed specific policies, nor of which men actually made decisions.[41] Most of these men would not have been aware of some of the distinctions outlined above, but an examination of the pre-war attitudes of the relevant members of the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite regarding the rebirth of Poland helps to contextualise those policies and attitudes that developed from 1914-21. A particular subset of the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite contributed to policy discussions about the rebirth of Poland between 1914 and 1921. Though this élite were educated and well-travelled, they knew little about Poland or the Poles from personal experience. What they knew did not necessarily determine their viewpoint, though as we shall see, general ideas and assumptions about international politics were also important. There were a few exceptions: Clemenceau had two close Polish friends as a young man, had visited Galicia, and had written sympathetically about the Poles before the war.[42] Of the experts who worked on policy regarding Poland's rebirth, two had extensive prior knowledge about the region's history. The first and most influential was Lewis Namier, who had been born and raised outside Lemberg (Ukrainian: L'viv; Polish: Lwów; Russian: Lvov), a Polish-

[40] Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Repr. of 1948 edn (New York: International Publishers, 2014), p. 43.
[41] Watt, p. 15.
[42] Duroselle, p. 814; in 1913, for example, Clemenceau compared the 'sad pages of [the Poles'] disturbing history' to the German occupation of Alsace-Lorraine. Georges Clemenceau, 'La "Question d'Alsace-Lorraine"', *L'homme libre*, 3 June 1913, p. 1.

majority city in Galicia.[43] During the war, Namier worked with the government's propaganda agency at Wellington House and then the Political Intelligence Department in the Foreign Office, and was an influential advisor to the Paris Peace Conference even though he was not part of the British delegation. The second expert on Polish affairs was Robert Lord, a young Harvard professor and American peace conference delegate who had written about the second partition of Poland. Lord, who served in the Polish section of the United States Inquiry and as a delegate at the peace conference, sympathises with the Poles' suffering in his monograph and some of this came through in his duties.[44]

In an examination of the British foreign-policy-making élite's views about Russia, Keith Neilson notes the existence of a group of men who 'possessed an expertise concerning Russia as a result of various circumstances: long residence, linguistic aptitude, specialized study, business dealings, and so on', and helped to shape British official and public attitudes about Russia.[45] There was no similar group of experts – or level of knowledge – about Poles or Poland's rebirth in British, French, or American public discourse before 1914. This did not mean that no knowledge existed – Britain, France, and the United States had ambassadors to each of the partitioning powers and a consul in Warsaw – but that it was possessed only at a low, less important level of the diplomatic corps and not shared broadly. Aside from Namier, Lord, and Clemenceau, some of the men who debated policy on the rebirth of Poland had met Poles like Joseph Conrad among the many individuals they encountered, but there is no indication that these meetings

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[43] On Namier, see Norman Rose, *Lewis Namier and Zionism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980); Amy Ng, *Nationalism and Political Liberty: Redlich, Namier, and the Crisis of Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004); and Julia Namier, *Lewis Namier: A Biography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971), a sympathetic biography by his wife.
[44] Robert Howard Lord, *The Second Partition of Poland: A Study in Diplomatic History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1915).
[45] Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar*, p. 4.

inspired further interest in the Polish question.[46] Nonetheless it is possible to distinguish attitudes that influenced decision-making about Poland's rebirth.

The remainder of this section thus traces those attitudes and policies of the foreign-policy-making élite and the broader public that touched on Poland's rebirth after approximately 1900. 'Public' here should be distinguished from 'popular', and implies the perspectives of 'educated and influential' individuals who engaged with questions of foreign policy without making decisions on it.[47] In the specialist historiography of the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth, previous examinations of British and American attitudes regarding the Poles in this period have been similarly broad and have tended to deplore the ignorance in those countries about Polish independence and the Polish people generally.[48] This ignorance existed, but it should be understood with reference to the backgrounds of the élite as outlined above and of the place of the Poles and the Polish question in international politics before the First World War. On the other hand, it should not be assumed that the élites therefore had no views on Poland; changing circumstances, especially the prospect of an independent Poland, meant that they were obliged to develop positions during the war.

Partitioned Poland was the intersection-point of the German, Austrian, and Russian borders, and tensions had risen between Russia and Austria in particular in the first years of the twentieth century.[49] But those tensions focused on the situation in the

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[46] See e.g. M.B. Biskupski, 'Spy, Patriot, or Internationalist?: The Early Career of Józef Retinger, the Polish Patriarch of the European Union', *The Polish Review*, 43 (1998), pp. 31–6 which demonstrates that Retinger met informally with influential British leaders.

[47] From Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar*, p. 4. The 'serious press' plays an important role in reflecting and shaping public debate; on its role in Britain and limitations for the study of public opinion, see Watt, pp. 10–13, which also names the 'serious' dailies and weeklies; in the United States, popular opinion had greater influence over certain major questions of foreign policy; see Preston, pp. 8–9; Watt, pp. 19–52, passim.

[48] Latawski, 'Great Britain and the Rebirth of Poland 1914-1918', chap. 1: 'Terra Incognita: British Conventional Wisdom about Poland 1863–1914', 13–62; Biskupski, 'United States and the Rebirth of Poland', pp. 345–51; Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 181–5.

[49] Dominic Lieven, *Towards the Flame: Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia* (London: Penguin, 2015), pp. 57–8. A multitude of excellent works examine the period immediately preceding the First World War. See in particular Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (London:

Balkans, though Russia had massed troops on the border with Austrian Galicia in 1912.[50] Both Russia and Austria began covert campaigns in 1913 in which they hinted that they would support an autonomous Poland in the hopes of gaining support of Poles across the border.[51] The French consul-general in Warsaw in particular kept watch on developments in the Polish partitions, but his primary concern – and presumably that of his government – was that Austrian intrigues would not weaken Russia in a potential war.[52] The British, French, and American governments sought no involvement in the Polish question after 1900. British and French representatives to the partitioning powers made incidental references in internal reports to Polish opinion on occasion, but the attention of their governments was elsewhere. Defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1 still loomed large over Franco-German relations before 1914 and in particular helped to inspire the Franco-Russian alliance, which was signed in secret in 1891.[53] Britain and Russia came to a wary understanding in 1907, while Anglo-German relations worsened after 1900 in the

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Chatto & Windus, 1967); recent works include MacMillan, *War That Ended Peace*, pp. 353–592; Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914* (London; New York: Allen Lane, 2012).

[50] On the foreign policies of the partitioning powers before 1914, see in particular Bridge, *Sadowa to Sarajevo*; Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism, 1860-1914* (London; Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1980); on the Polish question within Russian foreign policy, see Jeffrey Mankoff, 'Russia and the Polish Question, 1907-1917: Nationality and Diplomacy' (PhD dissertation, Yale University, 2006); Ronald Bobroff, 'Devolution in Wartime: Sergei D. Sazonov and the Future of Poland, 1910-1916', *The International History Review*, 22 (2000), 505–28.

[51] Bobroff, p. 510; Mankoff, 'Russia and the Polish Question', p. 743; Russia and Austria made similar promises to Ukrainian nationalists; like Poles, Ukrainians were found on both sides of the border. See Frank, *Oil Empire*, pp. 180–1.

[52] E.g. France. Ministère des affaires étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques français, 1871-1914*, 3e série, 1911-1914, 11 vols. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1930), vol. 8, p. 547. Concerns about whether Russian Poles would be loyal to Russia in an eventual war were raised, albeit tangentially, in several diplomatic dispatches from Warsaw and St. Petersburg beginning around 1909; see also France. Ministère des affaires étrangères, *Documents diplomatiques français, 1871-1914*, 2e série, 1901-1911, 14 vols. (Paris, France: Imprimerie Nationale, 1929), vols. 12–14 in particular.

[53] On French policy, see John F. V. Keiger, *France and the World since 1870* (London: Arnold, 2001); Rachel Chrastil, *Organizing for War: France, 1870-1914* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010); René Girault, *Emprunts russes et investissements français en Russie: 1887-1914 recherches sur l'investissement international* (Paris: A. Colin, 1973). See also *Documents diplomatiques français, 1871-1914*, 2e and 3e séries.

shadow of the naval race.[54] There were also crises in Morocco and the Balkans and lingering tensions between Britain and Russia over Persia. The United States government remained relatively uninvolved in European Great Power politics.[55] While it had begun to take more seriously its potential to be a world power since 1898, this manifested mostly in interventions in Latin America. Foreign policy, moreover, was often not the predominant concern of domestic politics or popular opinion in any of the three countries.[56]

Any discussion of British, French, and American wartime attitudes about the rebirth of Poland should also consider pre-war ideas about international politics, in particular those pertaining to self-determination. Influential theorists like Ernest Renan and Walter Bagehot, among others, had posited that the nation was a psychological reality; by 1914 many still believed that national differences were evident in behaviour and were the result of nature rather than nurture.[57] Whether nations deserved the right to self-determine was another matter. Britain, France, and the United States had supported a handful of struggles in the name of national self-determination, in causes which particularly attracted the support of many liberals. The former two countries in particular had increasingly supported some struggles in Europe, whether for Greek or Bulgarian independence or Italian unification, with reference to the rights of populations.[58] Remnants of these idealist attitudes remained in the wartime rhetoric of liberal and

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[54] On British policy, see Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar*; C.J. Lowe and M.L. Dockrill, *The Mirage of Power: British Foreign Policy*, 3 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972), vol. 1; Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*.

[55] On American policy, see Herring, *From Colony to Superpower*; Walter Russell Mead, *Special Providence: American Foreign Policy and How It Changed the World* (New York: Knopf, 2001); both works assert that the United States was not as isolationist as previous historians have argued; see also Alison Frank, 'The Petroleum War of 1910: Standard Oil, Austria, and the Limits of Multinational Corporation', *The American Historical Review*, 114 (2009), 16–41.

[56] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, p. 9.

[57] Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 61–5, 80–1.

[58] Eric Weitz, 'From the Vienna to the Paris System: International Politics and the Entangled Histories of Human Rights, Forced Deportations, and Civilizing Missions', *The American Historical Review*, 113 (2008), pp. 1317, 1321; see also Carole Fink, *Defending the Rights of Others: The Great Powers, the Jews, and International Minority Protection, 1878-1938* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 3–29.

republican politicians in particular.[59] Yet in many other cases Britain, France, and the United States were indifferent or even hostile to national rights, again with the support or complicity of large segments of the population. The Irish question dominated British politics for decades before 1914; a crisis in Ireland overshadowed Europe's lurch towards war in 1914 until its final few days.[60] Moreover, Britain and France possessed large overseas empires, while the United States had an informal empire and many of African-Americans lacked crucial rights. Social Darwinists argued that the key to independence lay in the character of each nation or race, but less extreme perspectives also concluded that many nations or peoples were not yet ready to govern themselves. These conflicting attitudes about self-determination acquired greater definition in the First World War.

Some public support had existed for the rebirth of Poland, especially in mid-nineteenth-century Britain and France. Revolutionaries, whether socialists or the nationalist followers of Giuseppe Mazzini, usually included Polish independence among their demands.[61] Wider support among the British and French publics in particular had accompanied the Polish insurrection in 1863.[62] Yet this support had been overshadowed by other concerns by the turn of the twentieth century. Newspaper articles about conditions in the Polish partitions – usually the Russian or German partitions – appeared regularly before 1914, though they rarely featured prominently. In general the people of the Polish lands were treated sympathetically. In a December 1907 article, for instance, the liberal *Manchester Guardian* concluded that a successful Polish education program in Warsaw had been oppressed because 'the Russian Government … requires little

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[59] Calder, p. 17; Jerzy Borejsza, 'De Sedan à Versailles (Esquisse des relations franco-polonaises 1870-1919)', trans. by Aleksander Wołowski, *Acta Poloniae Historica*, 24 (1971), p. 73.
[60] MacMillan, *War That Ended Peace*, pp. 543–4.
[61] Mark Mazower, *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (New York: The Penguin Press, 2012), pp. 50–1; Marx and Engels, p. 43.
[62] K.S. Pasieka, 'The British Press and the Polish Insurrection of 1863', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 42 (1963), p. 17; Oscar Halecki, 'Anglo-Polish Relations in the Past', *Slavonic and East European Review*, 12 (1934), p. 659; Kennedy, *Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism*, p. 10.

provocation to give its instincts of indiscriminate repression full play.[63] Several pre-war articles, moreover, mentioned attempts to 'Germanise' the Polish people and colonise their lands.[64] Russian treatment of its Polish minority was rarely discussed in pre-war France, however.[65] Any article about the Polish lands – especially since the term 'Poland' was regularly used – could constitute grounds for sympathy for the Polish people, considering that British newspapers published much less about other subject peoples such as the Czechs or the Slovaks.[66] With the exception of 1905, however, when articles about the revolution in Poland and Russia regularly appeared on the front pages, most articles about Poles or the Polands or in the 'serious press' tended to be short and inconspicuous.

Public attitudes about Poles often revolved around immigration, in particular in France and the United States where there were significant populations of immigrant Poles.[67] Large-scale immigration should also be considered as a factor in pre-war attitudes because of its potential to inspire sympathy regarding Polish suffering or undermine it. Polish immigration to France contributed an important ingredient to the longstanding friendship between the two countries.[68] At least ten thousand refugees fled to France after

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[63] 'Russia in Poland: A Heavy Blow to National Development', *Manchester Guardian*, 30 December 1907, p. 4; other examples include 'The Policy and Condition of Russia', *The Economist*, 28 September 1912, pp. 565–66, which mentions the Polish minority in a scathing article about Russia; for British pre-war perceptions of Russia, see Neilson, *Britain and the Last Tsar*, pp. 52–103. For articles in the American press, see e.g. '50,000 Poles parade, denouncing the Czar', *New York Times*, 6 May 1906, p. 4; on perceptions of Russia, see David S. Foglesong, *The American Mission and the 'Evil Empire': The Crusade for a 'Free Russia' Since 1881* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 1–9.

[64] On colonisation attempts, see 'Prussia's Scheme for the Germanising of Poland', *Manchester Guardian*, 13 May 1903, p. 7; 'German Policy in Poland', *Manchester Guardian*, 2 December 1912, p. 9; Viator, 'The Polish Danger', *The Times*, 3 January 1901, p. 5; on the general situation, see 'Editorial', *Manchester Guardian*, 5 September 1902, p. 4.

[65] Borejsza, pp. 96–7; see also Fiona Tomaszewski, 'The Tsarist Regime's Manipulation of Public Opinion in Great Britain and France, 1906-1914', *Russian History*, 24 (1997), 279–300.

[66] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 6–10.

[67] Some studies of immigration to the United States have also found that immigration creates stronger images of immigrant groups than do 'elite' sources such as school textbooks; see Barclay and Glaser-Schmidt, pp. 12–13.

[68] Among many works on Franco-Polish relations, see Janine Ponty, *Les Polonais en France: de Louis XV à nos jours* (Monaco: Éditions du Rocher, 2008); Bernard Michel, 'France et Pologne: des relations privilégiées', in *Les relations entre la France et la Pologne au XXe siècle*, ed. by Bernard

the Russian army defeated a Polish uprising in 1831; this was called the Great Emigration because the immigrants were widely regarded as representing the élite of Polish politics and society.[69] Many Poles, including Frederic Chopin and Adam Mickiewicz, made a substantial contribution to élite cultural life in Paris, especially between 1830-48.[70] Their influence on the French élite by 1914 had mostly faded, however, though not entirely, as Clemenceau's experiences demonstrate lingering attachments to the Polish cause in radical circles. After 1900, moreover, Polish migrant workers in the coal and agricultural industries in north-western France integrated poorly and thus were not well-regarded by the French people.[71]

Two Polish citizens, General Casimir Pulaski and Tadeusz Kościuszko, had been heroes of the American War of Independence, but large-scale Polish immigration meant that by 1900, American attitudes about Poles had become less positive. Before about 1870, most immigrants to the United States had come from northern or western Europe and were Protestant. Of the 26 million immigrants who arrived in the United States between 1870 and 1920, however, many were Catholics from southern and eastern Europe; among them were approximately two million Poles.[72] Polish immigrants formed large minorities and even majorities in many fast-developing industrial cities in the midwest, such as Milwaukee and Chicago. They were a numerous enough group that

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Michel and Józef Łaptos (Kraków: Eventus, 2002), pp. 13–20; Michel Masłowski, 'Les relations entre la culture française et la culture polonaise', in *Les relations entre la France et la Pologne au XXe siècle*, ed. by Bernard Michel and Józef Łaptos (Kraków: Eventus, 2002), pp. 35–56; Łaptos, 'Le rôle des stéréotypes dans la formation de l'opinion publique française envers la Pologne'; older works tend to romanticise the Polish community in France and exaggerate its importance, e.g. May Czajkowa, *Some Polish Contributions to the Culture of France* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1941); Stefan Włoszczewski, *L'établissement des Polonais en France* (Paris: Librairie Picart, 1936); Alfred Baudrillart, *Pourquoi la France aime et aide la Pologne* (Paris: Flammarion, 1940).

[69] The secondary literature offers varying estimates of how many Poles emigrated after 1831. The highest figure, 25,000, is offered in the detailed study of Włoszczewski, p. 41; the lower figure, 10,000, is more widely accepted. See Yves Lequin, *Histoire des étrangers et de l'immigration en France* (Paris: Larousse, 1992), pp. 315–25.

[70] On the first generation of Poles in Paris, see especially Ponty, pp. 47–53.

[71] Włoszczewski, p. 271.

[72] For a discussion of the various assessments of Polish immigration figures, see James S. Pula, *Polish Americans: An Ethnic Community* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1995), p. 19.

Wilson named them in his 1902 *History of the American People* as a 'coarse crew', and as one of several immigrant nationalities that possessed 'neither skill nor energy nor any initiative of quick intelligence.'[73] Wilson's political opponents in the 1912 presidential election publicised the statement and he quickly disavowed it, but it demonstrates widespread anti-immigrant sentiment. Many 'nativists' in the United States worried that the new immigrants' Catholicism would threaten established Protestant communities and that because of their strange customs, inability to speak English well, and perceived slow-wittedness, they would not integrate into society. Early Polish immigrants largely kept to themselves, but they commonly belonged to several local organisations, usually including fraternal religious societies, mutual aid societies, and sometimes Polish aid societies.[74] This proliferation of societies provided the foundation for wartime attempts to organise and then influence American policy, but by 1914 the existence of a Polish immigrant minority in the United States had not affected the government's approach to foreign policy.

Before 1914, few contacts existed between the British and Polish peoples that would have formed the foundation for British sympathy for independence.[75] This was true for the foreign-policy-making élite who determined the British government's wartime position on Poland's rebirth. 33,000-40,000 Poles lived in Britain in 1911; many were poor and lived in areas like East London. Among them were many Jews, Catholics, and socialists; none of these groups were well-represented in the British foreign-policy-making élite before 1914.[76] British representatives – and their French and American

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[73] Woodrow Wilson, *A History of the American People* (5 vols., New York: Harper, 1908), vol. 5, pp. 212-13.

[74] The best source on the proliferation of prewar Polish organisations in the United States is Galush, pp. 50–65; see also Pula, pp. 20–27.

[75] For a general overview of those contacts that existed, see Latawski, 'Great Britain and the Rebirth of Poland 1914-1918', pp. 13–62; on literature, see Thomas McLean, *The Other East and Nineteenth-Century British Literature: Imagining Poland and the Russian Empire* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[76] On the composition of the Polish immigrant community in Britain, see Davies, 'Poles in Great Britain', pp. 63–66. A few hundred Poles fled to Britain after the 1830-1 insurrection; see Jerzy

counterparts – were likely also influenced by western philosophers like Rousseau and Voltaire who considered eastern Europe to be a liminal space 'between civilisation and barbarism'.[77] Such attitudes persisted in the twentieth century, perhaps reinforced by Social Darwinism, racial hierarchies, or ideologies of imperialism.[78] This liminal orientalism helps to understand the insignificance of the Polish question for the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite as European politics came to crisis in July 1914.

Britain, France, and the alliance with tsarist Russia, 1914-1917

Neither France nor Britain had an independent policy on the Polish question from the outbreak of war until the fall of the tsarist government in March 1917. During that period, the western Allies publicly respected the tsarist government's assertion that the Polish question was an internal matter for Russia. This helps to contextualise British and French wartime interest in Polish issues before the Russian February Revolution. Both governments observed conditions in Russian Poland from the beginning of the war; they received reports from their representatives in Warsaw and Petrograd and from Polish émigrés in London, Paris, and neutral capitals and so had some knowledge of public opinion in the partitions. When they approved of developments in Russian policy, principally to recognise greater autonomy for the Polish people, they did so publicly. The Entente also used these policies as propaganda, especially in the United States. When Russian relations with the Polish people caused concern in the Foreign Office or at the

Zubrzycki, 'Polish Emigration to British Commonwealth Countries: A Demographic Survey', *International Migration Review*, 13 (1979), p. 650.

[77] Larry Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), p. 13; Wolff's study draws heavily from concepts outlined in Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994). Several works on the Balkans have elucidated such attitudes, which Milica Bakič-Hayden refers to as 'nesting orientalisms.' Milica Bakic-Hayden, 'Nesting Orientalisms: The Case of Former Yugoslavia', *Slavic Review*, 54 (1995), 917–31; Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, rev edn (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009); Eugene Michail, *The British and the Balkans: Forming Images of Foreign Lands, 1900-1950* (London; New York: Continuum, 2011).

[78] Andrea Orzoff, *Battle for the Castle: The Myth of Czechoslovakia in Europe, 1914-1948* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 10.

Quai d'Orsay, each country's ambassador raised the issue in private with Sergei Sazonov, the Russian Foreign Minister until July 1916. But Britain and France prioritised other matters in their relations with Russia.[79] Both wanted Russia to stay in the war to take pressure off the Western Front. They also wanted certain guarantees. The British wanted Russia to limit its claims in the Dardanelles, while the French desired a Russian guarantee for their territorial claims on Alsace and Lorraine. Neither government was willing to risk a damaging confrontation with the Russian government over its plans for Poland.[80]

From the perspective of London and Paris, Russia's relations with its Polish subjects during the war began auspiciously.[81] Russian Poles had reason to favour the Austrian government for its their liberal policies in the Polish partition, so it surprised the French consul in Warsaw, Gaston Velten, that the people of Warsaw overwhelmingly supported the Russian war effort in the first few days of the war. In his first wartime dispatch on 11 August, Velten wrote, 'You see this extraordinary display in the history of Poland, Russian regiments cheered in the streets of Warsaw by the Polish population, volunteers enlisting in considerable numbers in Russian forces, Polish demonstrations for the triumph of the Franco-Russian armies, and finally all the Polish press pronouncing

[79] Poland is scarcely mentioned in studies of British priorities before 1917. See V.R. Rothwell, *British War Aims and Peace Diplomacy, 1914-1918* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), pp. 18–58; David French, *British Strategy & War Aims, 1914-1916* (London; Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1986); and on relations with Russia in particular, see Keith Neilson, *Strategy and Supply: The Anglo-Russian Alliance, 1914-17* (London; Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984). The fate of Poland was more important to the French people than to the British during this period but was nonetheless a low priority for the government. On France's general aims to 1917 (specific aims were not specified before then), see Stevenson, *French War Aims*, pp. 9–60; Peter Jackson, pp. 79–132; on Polish policy, see Castelbajac, pp. 42–61; on nationalities policy, see Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, pp. 30–61.

[80] This point is best developed in Mankoff, 'Future of Poland'; on the relative importance of Eastern Europe in British policy during this period, see Calder, pp. 12–107; on press interest, see Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 36–202. For France, see Peter Jackson, pp. 98–9; Stevenson, *French War Aims*, pp. 26–32.

[81] On the tsarist government's wartime relations with its Polish subjects, see Mankoff, 'Russia and the Polish Question', pp. 144–384; Alexander Dallin, 'The Future of Poland', in *Russian Diplomacy and Eastern Europe, 1914-1917*, ed. by Alexander Dallin (New York: King's Crown Press, 1963), pp. 1–77; Bobroff.

unanimously against Germany.'[82] This good feeling was augmented on 14 August, when Nicholas Nikolaevich, the Supreme Commander of the Russian Army and brother of the tsar, proclaimed that 'under the sceptre of the Russian Emperor … Poland will come together, free in faith, in language, and in self-government.'[83] The grand duke's proclamation announced the Russian war aim of annexing the German and Austrian partitions and then granting autonomy to a reunited Poland. This demonstrated both the government's desire to expand Russia's territory and the hope of Sazonov and others that the proclamation would settle the Polish question so that Russia could count on the loyalty of its Polish subjects for the duration of the war.[84] The promises were quickly put to use; when Russia invaded Galicia later in August, propaganda leaflets proclaimed freedom for oppressed Habsburg nationalities, including Poles.[85] Velten reported that the Grand Duke's declaration had made a 'fortunate impression'; the people of Warsaw interpreted it to be a major concession towards self-government and were jubilant at what they perceived to be the end of Russian oppression.[86] Several Polish newspapers hailed the news and some proclaimed in rapturous terms that 'the hour approaches of the resurrection' of the Polish state.[87] In London, Sir Edward Grey, the British Foreign Secretary, recognised that the Russian proclamation could be useful propaganda and ordered it to be cabled in full to American newspapers, where it was widely distributed and well-received.[88] Both the British and French governments recognised the importance

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[82] CAD, Guerre 1914-1918, vol. 713, Velten to Théophile Delcassé, 11 Aug 1914, f. 2.
[83] Quoted in *The Reconstruction of Poland, 1914-23*, ed. by Paul Latawski (London: Macmillan, 1992), p. 196.
[84] Bobroff, p. 512.
[85] Merritt Abrash, 'War Aims toward Austria-Hungary: The Czechoslovak Pivot', in *Russian Diplomacy and Eastern Europe, 1914-1917*, ed. by Alexander Dallin (New York: King's Crown Press, 1963), p. 80.
[86] Guerre, vol. 713, Velten to Delcassé, 25 Aug 1914, f. 14.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Calder, p. 23; Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, p. 80. The proclamation appeared, for example, on the front page of *The New York Times* alongside analysis of the situation in Russian Poland. Adolf Hansen, 'Russia Promises Poland Autonomy', *The New York Times*, 16 Aug 1914, pp. 1-2.

of Polish issues in the neutral United States, as will be demonstrated in further detail below.

Ensuing events complicated Sazonov's plan to reunite the Polish partitions. As the western Allies observed, the people of Russian Poland quickly grew suspicious of the Russian government's intentions. As some noted, the tsar had not signed the proclamation; without his signature and approval, would the decree have any force?[89] In fact, some in the Russian government feared the consequences of giving any more autonomy to Polish subjects, and they successfully halted the implementation of the decree.[90] These difficulties soon paled against the effect on Polish civilians of the Central Powers' victories against the Russian army. Already in October 1914, Velten reported 'a general discontent' among Russian Poles, after the Austrian army 'pillaged' Lublin. The people of Warsaw blamed the Russian army for not defending Polish lands with great vigour and for the wave of refugees that descended on Warsaw.[91] This discontent swelled in 1915. By August the Central Powers had taken Warsaw, and by the end of the year they held nearly all of the lands of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.[92] In the retreat, the Russian army briefly arrested or deported thousands of Polish subjects for supposed pro-Austrian sympathies.[93] It also carried out a scorched-earth campaign that destroyed Polish homes and properties.[94] Meanwhile, abuses such as requisitioning under

[89] Guerre, vol. 713, Velten to Delcassé, 5 Oct 1914, f. 43.
[90] Dallin, pp. 13–14; Mankoff, 'Russia and the Polish Question', pp. 12–13.
[91] Guerre, vol. 713, Velten to Delcassé, 5 Oct 1914, f. 43.
[92] For the military operations, see especially Norman Stone, *The Eastern Front 1914-1917* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1975); also Holger H. Herwig, *The First World War: Germany and Austria-Hungary 1914-1918* (London: Arnold, 1997); Allan K. Wildman, *The End of the Russian Imperial Army*, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1980), I; a useful synthesis is Rudolf Jeřábek, 'The Eastern Front', in *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary: A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. by Mark Cornwall, Rev. and expanded edn (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002), pp. 149–65.
[93] The Austrians carried out similar reprisals against Ukrainians for their perceived sympathy to the Russian Empire. See Prusin, p. 44.
[94] Dallin, p. 26.

the Central Powers' occupation added to civilians' complaints.[95] The devastation caused to the Poles of Russia was reported to diplomats in Britain and France. In a report that was circulated through the British Foreign Office, for example, a mining engineer in Moscow reported that 'the refugees from Poland and Galicia were pouring in … by thousands, one of the saddest sights you can conceive.'[96]

The British and French governments became concerned by 1916 that if the Russian government did not do more to placate the opinion of its Polish subjects, Russian Poles could swell the Central Powers' war effort. The Central Powers had begun setting up an occupation administration to deal with their new territories.[97] Beginning in January 1916, both the French ambassador, Maurice Paléologue, and the British ambassador, Sir George Buchanan, discussed the subject with Sazonov. These conversations continued until Sazonov forbade the topic in meetings with Buchanan and Paléologue in March and April 1916 respectively.[98] Crucially, these discussions were always in private. Neither the British nor French government ever rebuked the Russian government publicly for its treatment of the Polish people, because it was not a priority to dispute the matter.[99] Yet

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[95] The Polish civilian experience during the First World War is best approached through Stephan Lehnstaedt, 'La Première Guerre mondiale en Pologne: simple prodrome à l'indépendance nationale?', trans. by Nicolas Patin, *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société*, 22 (2014) <www.histoire-politique.fr> which examines the historiography in English, French, Polish and German. see also Marceli Handelsman, *La Pologne, sa vie économique et sociale pendant la guerre* (Paris, New Haven: Les Presses universitaires de France; Yale University Press, 1933), though quite dated and based partly on the author's experiences. Material in English is limited, aside from recent work on the German occupation (noted below in note 97 and on p. 79n38). See Sukiennicki, who considers the Polish experience in regional perspective; and Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 279-90.

[96] FO 371/2746/9699, Letter by E.T. McCarthy, 5 Dec 1915. On Polish refugees in Russia, see Peter Gatrell, *A Whole Empire Walking: Refugees in Russia during World War I* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), pp. 154–7.

[97] On the occupation regime, see especially Jesse C. Kauffman, 'Sovereignty and the Search for Order in German-Occupied Poland, 1915-1918' (Ph.D dissertation, Stanford University, 2008).

[98] FO 371/2747/42936, Buchanan to Foreign Office, 5 Mar 1916; FO 371/2747/79517, Buchanan telegram, 26 Apr 1916. Sazonov claimed never to have discussed the issue with Buchanan. Sergei Sazonov, *Fateful Years, 1909-1916* (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1928), p. 311; Komarnicki, p. 57 repeats this as evidence of British disinterest in Polish issues.

[99] Polish issues figure regularly in Paléologue's papers and memoirs but hardly at all in Buchanan's memoirs. George Buchanan, *My Mission to Russia and Other Diplomatic Memories* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1923); Maurice Paléologue, *An Ambassador's Memoirs*, trans. by Frederic Appleby Holt (London: Hutchinson, 1923).

the British and French governments were starting to come under other pressures: humanitarian considerations, the growing interest of the United States in the Polish question, and a successful campaign by Polish émigrés in London and Paris. As policy on the Polish question attracted greater attention in Britain, France, and the United States, each country's foreign-policy-makers began to develop attitudes about the Polish people and their quest for independence.

The Polish Relief

The first time a Polish issue came to the attention of western leaders during the First World War was as a result of the humanitarian catastrophe that occurred in the wake of the Russian retreat and German occupation.[100] This occurred largely before the British, French, or American governments had begun to give any consideration to supporting Polish independence, but it helped to shape their later attitudes. The international Polish relief campaign did not succeed in getting many supplies to Russian Poles through the British blockade, but it did result in public and private campaigns in Britain and the United States to send relief to the people in Russian Poland. These campaigns meant that decision-makers from these countries began to develop ideas about Polish national character and the public began to take notice. These ideas emphasised in particular that the Polish people were an oppressed minority and should be pitied for their fate. Though Russian Poles were the ones suffering, their situation was rarely distinguished from that of Poles in the other partitions. The suffering of the Polish people under the partitions was generally known in Britain, France, and the United States, as outlined above, but the wartime suffering of Russia's Polish subjects helped to create the

[100] The Foreign Office - including Nicolson and Grey - considered a memo from Retinger in late August 1914, but politely dismissed the Polish question as not their business; see Biskupski, 'Spy, Patriot, or Internationalist?', pp. 35–6; Calder, pp. 23–5.

conditions, namely immediate awareness of the Polish situation on the international stage, that paved the way for western governments' later promotion of Polish independence.[101]

The effort to send relief to the people of Russian Poland centred in the United States because of its growing Polish lobby and the public's involvement in humanitarian activities relating to the war. This in turn made Polish relief an international issue; the United States was the most important neutral with its vast reserves of manpower and economic strength and both sides attempted to win its favour through diplomacy and propaganda.[102] Though the United States remained neutral in the war until April 1917, its citizens and its government became involved in the war in various ways from the outset. The public followed events in Europe closely and argued about whether or not to enter the war, companies and financiers supplied both sides (but mainly the Allies), and a few individuals volunteered to fight.[103] In addition, the people of the United States gave a great deal of money and attention to various humanitarian efforts.[104] Polish relief remained a relatively minor issue, subordinated to debates about entry and preparedness, and also to other relief campaigns. The most important relief effort was for the people of Belgium. Beginning in October 1914, the Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB) raised substantial

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[101] As stated above, this statement can be problematic as it is one of the themes of Polish nationalist historiography, e.g. Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 157–8. Yet it does have some truth to it, as this section explains.

[102] Calder, pp. 60–1; this was especially true in the discussion of war aims in late 1916 and early 1917: Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 134–7.

[103] On public interest, see Phillips Payson O'Brien, 'The American Press, Public, and the Reaction to the Outbreak of the First World War', *Diplomatic History*, 37 (2013), 446–75; on the religious perspective, see Preston, pp. 240–6; on economic involvement, see Stuart D. Brandes, *Warhogs: A History of War Profits in America* (Lexington, Ky: University Press of Kentucky, 1997), pp. 129–38; Hew Strachan, *The First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 941–92. Ernest Hemingway was likely the most famous American volunteer, but many Polish-Americans were also eager to enlist. In the first weeks of the war a Polish-American representative tried unsuccessfully to offer the services of 10,000 trained Poles to the French at their embassy in Washington, DC. Guerre, vol. 713, Jusserand telegram, 24 August 1914, f. 8.

[104] Several recent works bring attention to American relief efforts during the First World War. In particular, see Irwin, pp. 55–140; p. 213n2 has a thorough list of recent dissertations and theses on the topic. 'Humanitarianism in the Era of the First World War' was also the topic of a special issue of *First World War Studies*, 5, no. 1 (2014); five articles (by Little, Irwin, Westerman, Granick, and Tanielan) examine U.S. relief during the war. Among older works, see Frank Macy Surface and Raymond L. Bland, *American Food in the World War and Reconstruction Period: Operations of the Organizations under the Direction of Herbert Hoover, 1914 to 1924* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1931).

funds for the Belgian people under the leadership of Herbert Hoover, an engineer. No other relief campaign had a remotely similar profile – and the Polish campaign raised less money than many others, like campaigns for Armenians or Lithuanians.[105] Yet the Polish relief campaign reached beyond the large Polish-American community. Representatives of that community had surprisingly frequent contact with the government, especially with Wilson and his closest policy advisor, Colonel Edward Mandell House. This was significant because Wilson set the direction for foreign affairs, which later in the war included some important pronouncements regarding the independence of Poland.

Calls for the relief of civilians in the Polish partitions sounded shortly after the outbreak of fighting in August 1914. In October, the Rockefeller Foundation sent Ernest Bicknell, an official with the American Red Cross, to investigate conditions in each of the Polish partitions. His report on civilian suffering led these organisations to join with Hoover and the CRB to advocate for a relief effort to Poland.[106] Separately, several Polish-American organisations pursued opportunities for relief, and all efforts grew in prominence in 1915 after the Central Powers' advance caused mass displacement and suffering. Polish-Americans tended not to be involved in politics at any level and had no single nation-wide Polish organisation, though there were a number of small, competing ones.[107] Many of these disparate groups put aside their differences as Paderewski's campaign for Polish relief gained prominence. Born in Podolia in the Russian partition, Paderewski's talents as a pianist led him on hugely popular tours across Europe and North America. The piano had recently become a very popular instrument and more affordable; Wilson's three daughters, for instance, were avid pianists and persuaded Paderewski to play for them on his first visit to the White House.[108] When the First World War broke out,

[105] On the Polish Relief in comparative perspective, see especially Biskupski, 'Strategy, Politics, and Suffering'; and Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, p. 141.
[106] Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 124–7.
[107] Galush, p. 62.
[108] My thanks to Erez Manela for sharing this anecdote.

Paderewski put aside his touring career to promote the relief effort and Poland's independence. He had worked on his English and French before the war as he prepared to advocate for independence, and quickly put his preparation to use.[109] Early in 1915, he led efforts to set up relief committees in Switzerland and Britain before moving to the United States, where his popularity and ardent nationalism made him a beloved standard-bearer for many of the fractious Polish groups of the United States.[110]

He also capitalised on this popularity to raise awareness for his Polish relief campaign. Many Americans viewed Polish immigrants with distrust and likely would have agreed with Wilson's assertion in 1902 that Poles were a 'coarse crew' of rough industrial workers. Paderewski, by contrast, was viewed as more sophisticated and moved easily among the élite. This helped him to make important contacts quickly, and crucially he was taken seriously.[111] In particular, he made an ally out of House.[112] House was based in New York and did not have an official position until late 1915, but he was perhaps Wilson's most important foreign policy advisor and a conduit to the State Department, which Wilson distrusted.[113] House certainly recognised his own importance; shortly after Paderewski had contacted him, the colonel wrote that 'It is the general belief [in the State Department] that I am the only one who can influence [Wilson] to do things, and the only one he gives his mind to freely.'[114] Though Polish relief was never a priority for House, given his influence it was significant that he took interest in the cause after his first meeting with Paderewski on 12 November 1915; the two met several more times before the end of the year. The next day, House raised the issue of Polish relief while meeting

[109] Rom Landau, p. 102.
[110] Adam Zamoyski, *Paderewski* (London: Collins, 1982), pp. 148–50.
[111] Rom Landau, pp. 104, 109.
[112] On Paderewski's influence with House and Wilson, see Gerson, pp. 67–85 especially; cf Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 131–6, 201–8. House's title was a term of courtesy and respect.
[113] On House, see Charles E. Neu, *Colonel House: A Biography of Woodrow Wilson's Silent Partner* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Godfrey Hodgson, *Woodrow Wilson's Right Hand: The Life of Colonel Edward M. House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
[114] Sterling Memorial Library, House Papers, Series II: Diaries [hereafter House Diary], 23 Dec 1915.

with the British ambassador, a crucial player because of the British blockade.[115] Then on the 14th, House wrote to Wilson, asking whether the President thought it worthwhile for him to 'think up some plan along the lines of the Belgian Relief Commission', and two weeks later pursued the question with Wilson in person.[116] He suggested that Russian Poles be included in a relief plan led by the mayor of Cleveland, Newton D. Baker, who was soon to become Wilson's Secretary of War.[117] And he also facilitated Paderewski's access to the president; Paderewski's first meeting with Wilson likely took place in March 1916 on House's introduction, and the two met several more times over the course of the war.[118] Paderewski in turn was quite grateful, writing on 22 December, 'Words cannot express what I feel for you. It has been the dream of my life to find a "providential man" for my country.'[119] House was greatly pleased that his efforts were so appreciated; it was '[o]ne of the most delightful letters I have received in a long time.'[120] Though he occasionally found Paderewski's passion discomfiting, that passion also helped to convince him and Secretary of State Robert Lansing that Paderewski and the Russian Poles deserved government support.[121]

House's advocacy of Polish relief shows also how European Poles were increasingly perceived. The relief campaign raised awareness of the plight of Russian Poles, both at the political and the popular level, not only because of Paderewski's popularity but also because it played successfully to common humanitarian themes. These efforts were not as successful in terms of bringing food and money as were those in Belgium and northern France, but they were effective, as exemplified in House's

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[115] House Diary, 13 Nov 1915.
[116] House Papers, Box 120, House to Wilson, 14 November 1915; House Diary, 28 Nov 1915.
[117] House Diary, 3 Dec 1915.
[118] There is little documentation on the first meeting, which was likely on 7 March but may not have been until summer 1916 as Gerson suggests on p. 69. See the detailed discussion in Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, p. 202.
[119] House Papers, Box 84a, Paderewski to House, 22 Dec 1915.
[120] House Diary, 22 Dec 1915.
[121] Gerson, pp. 76–9. Chapter 4 considers the extent to which Paderewski was viewed as an exemplar of Polish qualities; see especially pp. 192-3, 199-201.

behaviour, in creating sympathy. The campaign spread across the United States and dwelt on the Poles as innocent victims of the world conflict, which many Americans viewed as a pointless struggle. In most cases the term 'the Poles' was used, and while it primarily would have referred to the people of Russian Poland, this was often not mentioned and could also have referred to other Polish civilians who had been affected by the war. Many representations focused particularly on the suffering of women and children, who were considered to be the most innocent and are often the focus of humanitarian campaigns. 'The Poles make the general statement that there are no children under five years of age alive', said one American relief worker, and such statements also appeared in the press.[122] Paderewski, meanwhile, commented in his initial meeting with House that 'there was scarcely a Polish child under eight years of age' due to the terrible conditions in Poland, a comment that House repeated to Wilson in his letter two days later.[123] What is also important to note is that as many Americans accepted the image of the innocent, suffering Poles, so too did their leaders, especially House, who took up the cause to relieve 'the misfortunes of that unhappy people', and raised the issue with Wilson. On 17 December 1915, a Senate resolution calling for a Polish Relief Day wrote of 'the appalling situation in Poland, where practically the entire population today is homeless, and where men, women, and children are perishing by the thousands for lack of shelter, clothing, and food.'[124] In his response, Wilson responded using similarly emotive language: 'I feel confident that the people of the United States during this holiday season will be moved to aid a people stricken by war, famine, and disease.'[125] While the aid was primarily intended for the people of Russian Poland, neither statement distinguished between the suffering Poles of the Russian partition and the Poles of the German and Austrian partitions, who

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[122] Frederick Walcott, quoted in Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 127–8. Regarding the press, see, e.g., 'Poland's Children Dead', *New York Times*, 23 Jan 1916, p. 2.
[123] House Diary, 12 Nov 1915; House papers, Box 120, House to Wilson, 14 November 1915.
[124] Printed in 'Appeals for the Poles', *New York Times*, 21 Dec 1915, p. 4.
[125] Ibid.

were much less affected by the privations of war but had still suffered. The theme of the 'suffering Poles' often returned in later British, French, and American diplomacy regarding the rebirth of Poland.

The relief efforts had little hope of success, despite the sympathy of influential Americans. The chief obstacle to be overcome was the British blockade.[126] The German government was more willing to allow the relief of Poland since, as in Belgium, relief lessened the possibility that the occupied population would rise up against them.[127] The British government, however, was concerned that any provisions sent to Poland could be requisitioned for the German army or used to strengthen Polish workers who would then contribute (or contribute more) to the Central Powers' war effort. British officials had raised similar concerns about providing supplies to Belgium and occupied France, but eventually assented. To convince the British government to make the same concession for the Russian Poles, Frederick Walcott, a representative of the Rockefeller Foundation, lobbied key British politicians, including Prime Minister Herbert Asquith as well as Grey, his foreign secretary. He also visited David Lloyd George and Arthur Balfour, who would replace Asquith and Grey respectively by the end of the year.[128] He also attempted to gain favour in the press, but in an uncanny parallel of 1863, the British press sympathised with the Poles but believed that the government should not intervene.[129] While in London, Walcott met frequently with the editor of *The Times*, Geoffrey Robinson (later Geoffrey Dawson), who expressed his sympathy with the plight of civilians in Russian Poland and helped to introduce Walcott to important politicians like Lord Robert Cecil, the

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[126] On Polish relief in Anglo-American diplomacy, see Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 142–55. In July 1916 France agreed that Britain would speak for them in all international matters relating to blockade and relief; Biskupski, 'Strategy, Politics, and Suffering.'
[127] On the diplomacy of Belgian relief, see Johan den Hertog, 'The Commission for Relief in Belgium and the Political Diplomatic History of the First World War', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 21 (2010), 593–613; and Biskupski, 'Strategy, Politics, and Suffering', pp. 33–7.
[128] Sterling Memorial Library, Frederick C. Walcott Papers, Box 3, Walcott to Jerome D. Greene, 8 Mar 1916.
[129] Pasieka, p. 17.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State.[130] In response to a request from Walcott that *The Times* take a strong stand in favour of relieving Russian Poland through the blockade, however, Robinson replied, 'I am not prepared to make a stir in *The Times* about the Poles, for the simple reason (which I gave to you the other day) that I cannot support your plan on humanitarian grounds if the Government decide on military grounds that they cannot entertain it.'[131]

The British government never seriously considered lifting the blockade for Polish relief. Rather, it attempted to blame the Central Powers for the plight of Polish civilians. This defence was partly intended to shape opinion in the United States where the relief issue was a particular concern. Shortly after the outbreak of war, Wellington House produced pamphlets in English and Polish, which were transmitted from Polish compatriots in London ostensibly acting on their own initiative, to 600 influential Polish-Americans as well as to Polish-American organisations.[132] Similar campaigns were conducted among other Slavic groups in the United States to counteract the anti-Allied influence of Irish- and German-Americans in particular.[133] (The German government conducted similar campaigns.) British attempts to avoid taking the blame for the failed Polish relief campaign, however, involved wider distribution: 13,500 pamphlets were sent and the British point of view was distributed in U.S. press outlets.[134] In a private letter to House, meanwhile, Grey suggested that the relief of Poland could be permissible if Germany ceased its attacks on neutral shipping. [135] This attempt to blame the German government, however, was more likely intended to assuage American opinion.

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[130] Walcott Papers, Box 3, Geoffrey Robinson to Walcott, 5 Mar 1916.
[131] Walcott Papers, Box 3, Robinson to Walcott, 12 Mar 1916; underlining in original.
[132] Calder, p. 57.
[133] See Calder, pp. 49–74. In a few cases the Foreign Office or Wellington House also published refutations to criticisms by Polish-Americans, e.g. FO 395/41/146226, Namier rebuttal of Młynarski's pamphlet, 21 (?) July 1916.
[134] FO 395/41/203802, Butler to Gowers, 11 Oct 1916; FO 395/41/146226, Namier rebuttal.
[135] House Papers, Box 120, House to Wilson, 13 January 1916.

Walcott attempted without success to convince British politicians that relief of Russian Poland was in Britain's interests. He claimed, for instance, that the relief of Poland would prevent 1.5 million Poles from replacing German workers, who could then be sent to the front lines. He quickly realised, however, that 'from the English point of view nothing would be justified that would help to lengthen the war even for one week'.[136] Grey and others also sought to use the importance of home front morale and the fickle nature of public opinion to excuse the government from lifting the blockade. The public, British officials argued, opposed any changes in the blockade; the Foreign Office in particular was very unwilling to challenge this consensus.[137] The British government did not immediately reject American Polish relief plans but first asked for Russian opinions. It was evident that this was merely an effort to delay the inevitable; as Walcott wrote despondently, Russia's 'destruction [of Poland, i.e. in the retreat] was deliberate, and they do not want to undo it now to make it any easier for the Germans.'[138] An eventual British plan for the relief of Russian Poland made relief contingent on a massive and unfeasible civilian relief program in the Balkans.[139] Though Walcott's campaign failed, aid eventually began to flow to Russian Poles in March 1917, when Polish-American organisations began sending money through Switzerland.[140] Limited supplies began entering Russian Poland by the summer of 1917, with the Swiss government guaranteeing the shipments from the French government.[141]

While the British government was unwilling to support the relief effort, it did not mean that individuals did not sympathise at all with the Poles' situation. In Robinson's letter to Walcott, he did note that *The Times* had carried several articles in recent weeks

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[136] Walcott Papers, Box 3, Walcott to Greene, 8 Mar 1916.
[137] House Papers, Box 61, Hoover to House, 23 Feb 1916.
[138] Walcott Papers, Box 3, Walcott to Greene, 14 Mar 1916.
[139] Biskupski, 'Strategy, Politics, and Suffering', pp. 50–1.
[140] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/186, Breckinridge Long to Pleasant Stovall, 21 Nov 1918.
[141] Guerre, vol. 725, Denys Cochin to French embassy in Berne, 1 Aug 1917, f. 1.

about the Poles' plight.[142] Rather, British representatives emphasised the efforts of the occupying German government to take food out of Russian Poland to feed its own people.[143] Both sides used civilian forced labour at various points in the war, but there was evident propaganda value in the British outrage. *The Times* alleged on 2 February 1916 that a censored Reichstag debate provided evidence that the German authorities were taking corn out of Poland to feed their people without replacing it with other foods, while the *Morning Post* published a telegram from Asquith that detailed similar allegations.[144] Other newspapers also followed the theme. On 12 March the *Daily News* carried a story entitled 'Robbing the Corpse of Poland' that alleged further German requisitions in Poland.[145] The sympathetic attitude that the papers took towards the Poles' plight was perhaps best shown in a letter to the editor of the *Morning Post*. In the letter, J.H. Harley, a Polish sympathiser who later wrote a history of Poland and edited *The Polish Review*, a pro-Polish wartime publication, wrote that 'Poland is a nation of many sorrows, but if there is one conclusion that emerges clearly and strongly from all her history of the past, it is her undying hostility to the spirit of Prussianism'.[146] This idea that Poles were suffering under a common enemy and were loyal to the Allies became an important ingredient in British sympathy towards them as the war progressed. Critically, this sympathy arose because of the situation in Russian Poland, but sympathy was often expressed for 'Poland' or 'Poles' without specification, rather than for instance saying that German and Austrian Poles were disloyal. Sympathy for Poles also reflected the British context; it illustrated the generally anti-German tone of public discourse and did not dwell on the negative effects of

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[142] E.g. 'The Starvation of Poland,' *The Times*, 7 Feb 1916, p. 7; 'A Hard Problem,' *The Times*, 23 Feb 1916, p. 9; 'Through German Eyes: Poland under the Germans: The Food Exports', *The Times*, 24 Feb 1916, p. 7.

[143] Walcott Papers, Box 3, Walcott to Greene, 8 Mar 1916; House Papers, Box 61, Hoover to House, 23 Feb 1916.

[144] 'Through German Eyes: Poland under the Germans: The Food Exports', *The Times*, 24 Feb 1916, p. 7; 'Food for Poland: Appeal to the British Government: Mr Asquith's Conditions', *Morning Post*, 7 Feb 1916, p. 6.

[145] 'Robbing the Corpse of Poland', *Daily News*, 11 Mar 1916.

[146] J.H. Harley, 'Poland and Germany', *Morning Post*, 21 Jan 1916; see also J.H. Harley and Ladislas Mickiewicz, *Poland Past and Present: A Historical Study* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1917).

the blockade and the Russian retreat, which Walcott and Hoover believed to be the main cause of the Russian Poles' misfortunes. The plight of the Russian Poles might also have recalled earlier efforts for the relief of Serbia that gained much positive attention in Britain.[147] Such attitudes also served, however, to highlight the Poles' political situation generally. By creating this awareness of and sympathy for the Poles' plight, Paderewski, Walcott, and others laid the groundwork for a campaign for Polish independence.

Conclusion

In strategic terms, the British and French alliance with tsarist Russia meant that the independence of Poland was not a policy issue before 1917. Though Germany and Austria-Hungary also controlled territories with a Polish majority, British and French involvement in Polish affairs was undertaken primarily within the context of the alliance with Russia. Sazonov's fierce reaction to Buchanan and Paléologue when they respectively discussed Polish affairs helped to ensure that the British and French government did not broach the matter again. Yet after the Central Powers' annexation of Russia's Polish province and subsequent efforts to set up an occupation administration, the British and French governments increasingly debated whether to urge Russia to adopt a more beneficial policy towards its Polish minority. They feared that otherwise, Polish antipathy towards the Russian could lead those civilians to cooperate with the Central Powers' war effort. Moreover, the growing effort to provide aid to the Polish civilians of occupied Russia also challenged the British blockade of Germany. The British and French governments did not change their approach to Polish affairs in either case; they believed that other priorities were more central to winning the war.

The relative insignificance of the Polish question in British and French foreign policy did not mean that policy-makers did not develop some attitudes relating to the rebirth of Poland. Before the First World War, vestiges of a liminal orientalism that

[147] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 64–74.

discriminated against people in eastern Europe mixed with vague sympathy for those people, including Poles, because they faced various restrictions, especially on the full expression of national culture. While newspaper articles, especially in publications like the left-wing *Manchester Guardian*, occasionally dwelled upon discrimination against German and Russian Poles, these must be put in context: the attention of the British, French, and American governments and their respective publics was usually focused elsewhere. Those governments monitored Polish opinion from Warsaw, but this was not an important diplomatic post. The suffering of Polish civilians during and after the Russian army's retreat in 1915 brought greater attention to the Poles' situation. Significantly, in Britain and France it promoted a perception of the Polish people as another group who had suffered under Prussian militarism. In the United States, meanwhile, sympathy for the suffering Poles increased as Paderewski became the face of the relief effort and made contact with House and Wilson. As a result of changing circumstances in the war, these attitudes became increasingly important in 1917 as the British, French, and American governments began to develop a policy on the rebirth of Poland.

Chapter Two: Internationalisation and recognition, 1916-18

In an April 1917 Parliamentary debate, Andrew Bonar Law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced that in the official opinion of the British government, 'the creation of an independent Polish State would be a sure guarantee of durable peace in Europe'.[1] The announcement failed to impress those who first heard it. 'How far is Poland from London?', asked Denis Kilbride, an Irish nationalist MP. Kilbride's remark should not be taken too seriously – he was an opponent of the government using the cut-and-thrust of parliamentary debate to score a point – yet it still reveals a crucial truth: the rebirth of Poland remained nearly as far removed from the concerns of the British people and their government as it had been before the outbreak of war. The people of Britain, France, and the United States remained focused overwhelmingly on the events and conditions of the Western Front for the duration of the war.[2] Yet by November 1918, the independence of Poland had become a critical problem of international politics. This chapter focuses specifically on the British Foreign Office, showing how from 1916-17 officials developed sympathy for Poland's independence often before it was strategically possible. Policy decisions were primarily taken to secure Allied and American strategic interests in the world war, but in any policy discussion, officials also developed and demonstrated attitudes about the Polish people and Poland's independence.

This chapter's focus on the Foreign Office helps to see the mixture of personalities and policies and of internal and external influences. Particular attention will be paid to efforts by Polish émigrés to convince the Foreign Office to 'internationalise' the Polish question by making a public statement in favour of an autonomous or independent Poland

[1] United Kingdom, *Hansard Parliamentary Debates*, HC Deb, 26 April 1917, vol 92 c2554.
[2] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, p. 233.

comprising territory from all three partitions. This campaign took place over a sustained period of time in which Polish émigré representatives presented their case before one of the Allies, which offers insight into how key decision-makers formed their views. Polish representatives sent many of the same memoranda to Washington and Paris and had similar access to officials, but the British files – especially those of the Foreign Office – are the most complete and revealing. In 1905, changes in Foreign Office operations meant that each document or issue was enclosed by a 'jacket'; officials signed and dated the cover sheet if they had read the document, and provided comments on this as well.[3] This allows historians an important glimpse of internal discussions and the influences that shaped them. Interactions between the British government and Polish representatives helped to create a perception that Poles, as exemplified by their representatives, were sympathetic to the Allied cause and faced a common enemy. As a result, officials in the Foreign Office developed sympathy for the idea of Polish independence before they considered it possible, because of changes in the wartime situation, to make a public expression of support.

The Foreign Office also provides a useful focus because although Polish émigré representatives carried out a similar lobbying campaign in France, for most of the war the French government felt the constraints of the alliance with Russia to a much greater extent than the British and were unwilling to consider changes in their policy. Part of the reason for this was the *union sacrée* in France that made defence of the country, to which the Russian alliance was deemed essential, the overwhelming priority of French life during the war. The public consensus was also maintained by censorship that for much of the war prevented the type of discussion of war aims that might have changed official policy by challenging the Russian alliance. The French government generally believed that the alliance with Russia needed to be defended at all costs and France had no time to

[3] Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, pp. 79–82.

devote to academic questions.[4] For the most part, French diplomats supported the tsar's plan to unite Poland by taking Posen and Upper Silesia because it would weaken Germany.[5] Though the French government occasionally questioned Russia's policy towards Russian Poles, it did so out of fear that the Poles in the Central Powers' occupied zone might swell the ranks of the German army.[6] Even after the February Revolution, the French government encouraged Poles to remain steadfast with Russia and not to hope for its disintegration. The removal of Russia from European questions, argued Pierre de Margerie in the Quai d'Orsay, would mean that Germany would grow stronger and the Poles' likely fate would be further 'Germanisation'.[7] When the Bolshevik Revolution ended hopes for a continued alliance, the French government nonetheless avoided commitments on Polish independence that would threaten the possibility of a separate peace with Austria-Hungary.[8] Only when that possibility ceased in April 1918 did the French government begin to swiftly demonstrate its preference for Polish independence.

The Foreign Office and Polish émigrés in London

In Britain, attitudes were changing earlier than in France, as several developments in the international strategic situation and in domestic public opinion in 1915 and 1916 inspired the beginnings of sympathy in the Foreign Office for the independence of Poland. At the beginning of the war and from 1914-17, the British government made no commitments to the stateless nationalities of central and eastern Europe. Of these nationalities, émigré representatives of the Yugoslavs, Czechoslovaks, and Poles were most prominent in London, forging links with the Foreign Office and seeking positive press coverage. The British government did not lay out a formal programme of war aims

[4] Stevenson, *French War Aims*, p. 21.
[5] Stevenson, *French War Aims*, pp. 26–7, 32; Mankoff, 'Future of Poland', p. 755.
[6] Stevenson, *French War Aims*, p. 32.
[7] Guerre, vol. 722, Minister of Foreign Affairs to Velten, 23 Mar 1917, f. 26. Though the letter is sent in the name of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, de Margerie notes in a covering letter that he was the author. Guerre, vol. 722, de Margerie to various French embassies, 23 Mar 1916, f. 25.
[8] Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 140–5.

until the beginning of 1917.[9] Nonetheless, it was clear from the beginning that the restoration of Belgium was the government's primary war aim in Europe.[10] In several speeches in early 1914, Asquith proclaimed that Britain fought to protect the rights of the 'small states' of Europe, a phrase he occasionally swapped with 'small nationalities'.[11] It is likely that he meant the only the existing small states of Europe – whom he enumerated in a speech on 25 September – and firstly Belgium.[12] While wholehearted belief in small states may not have been the primary reason why Britain entered and stayed in the war, the rights of small states were consistently emphasised because the point helped to make the moral case for British involvement. Asquith's speeches also emphasised the importance of preventing German hegemony over the continent, but it was convenient that Britain could also portray itself as altruistically helping a small state or states against the aggression of a large one.[13] Senior British officials had mentioned their support for the nationality principle in the past, especially in connection with the Balkan Wars of 1912-13. Yet this support is taken to mean frontier rectifications involving existing states such that national minorities could be reunited with their countries to prevent irredentist war. British leaders had no interest in making promises to support the creation of 'new' states such as Poland.[14] National self-determination had roots in the nineteenth century, but the question of self-determination in central and eastern Europe Europe did not become a pressing one for the Allies until after the Russian revolutions, Wilson's Fourteen Points

[9] On British aims during this period, see Rothwell, pp. 18–58; Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 107–12.
[10] Rothwell, p. 18.
[11] E.g. on 25 Sept and 9 Nov 1914; from *The Times*, 26 Sept 1914, p. 10 and 10 Nov 1914, p. 9; see also Calder, pp. 14–15.
[12] He listed 'Belgium, Holland, and Switzerland, and Scandinavian countries, Greece and the Balkan States'; reprinted in *The Times*, 26 Sept 1914, p. 10.
[13] Strachan, p. 1126; Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 57–61.
[14] Calder, pp. 15–16.

and other orations, and finally in the spring and summer of 1918 when it was decided to use the nationalities 'weapon' to break apart the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[15]

The British government was nonetheless requested to establish a policy on Polish independence by numerous Polish émigrés who communicated with the Foreign Office from the first days of the war. The Foreign Office received memoranda from and occasionally met with Polish individuals throughout the war, but neither Grey nor his permanent under-secretary, Sir Arthur Nicolson, who directed the Foreign Office's activities, dealt significantly with Polish issues before early 1916. Britain's position that the Polish question was an internal affair for the Russian government was rarely discussed in Cabinet or Parliament for the duration of the war, and especially not before 1916. No government official was devoted specifically to Polish affairs before 1918. Those who engaged most regularly with Polish representatives were Foreign Office clerks like Sir George Clerk and J.D. Gregory, both of whom later sympathised with Polish independence.[16] Junior-level clerks like Gregory forwarded important information to their superiors and could offer opinions but had little influence on decisions. A few diplomats abroad also met with Polish representatives extensively; Sir Horace Rumbold, the British Minister in Berne during the war, became known as Britain's 'best authority' on Poland because he dealt with Polish émigrés so frequently.[17] Rumbold and other diplomats submitted reports – often composed by Polish groups – that provided information on morale, economic conditions, and sometimes military matters from behind the Central Powers' lines, but at first these reports received little attention. This offered a further

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[15] On the increasing use of propaganda by all European belligerents in 1917-18, see Mark Cornwall, *The Undermining of Austria-Hungary: The Battle for Hearts and Minds* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000).

[16] A Foreign Office clerk was roughly equivalent to a policy advisor, rather than a stenographer as the term's more common meaning connotes. The importance of clerks in the Foreign Office's bureaucratic system is outlined in Steiner, *Foreign Office and Foreign Policy*, pp. 79–82. On the difference in function between Foreign Office clerks and the diplomatic service, see Steiner, 'Elitism and Foreign Policy', p. 24.

[17] The National Archives of the United Kingdom: Records created or inherited by the Foreign Office (hereafter FO) 371/3000/7684, Lambert Oliphant minute, 4 Jan 1917.

reason why Polish issues received little attention in the first two years of the war. For most of the war, policy (or lack thereof) on the Polish question was dealt with at this low level in the Foreign Office and nowhere else. Nevetheless, it is significant to study the Foreign Office because even though Britain had no independent policy on the Polish question before late 1917, when the Polish question became more significant strategically, the Foreign Office had already developed relationships with the Polish émigrés.

It may have helped Polish émigré representatives that other émigré groups from central and eastern Europe, principally the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs, were carrying on similar campaigns. The Foreign Office, which dealt with most of these individuals and made policy that affected their homelands, did not publicly support self-determination for these peoples until near the end of the war. The flow of information reinforced the nationalities' position, however, and also encouraged personal relationships. As a result, many British officials eventually sympathised with the subject nationalities, including the Poles.[18] The subject nationalities' campaigns were often mentioned in the same breath or reaped the benefits of one another's successes. In the fall of 1914, for instance, large-scale desertions from Czech regiments and Russian and Serbian victories against Austria-Hungary were widely reported in the British press, and all Slavic nationalities benefitted from this positive attention.[19] This was helpful to the Polish émigrés, but on the other hand these other campaigns for self-determination did not impinge on the Anglo-Russian alliance. Moreover, Polish independence did not yet have an effective government lobby to capitalise on good publicity. And campaigns by other nationalities also provided a basis for negative comparisons. The Foreign Office initially developed a negative opinion of Polish representatives, who competed openly with each other for the government's attention unlike the united Czechoslovak and Yugoslav émigrés. As Nicolson noted, 'it is characteristic of Polish politics that several self-styled representatives of Polish feeling

[18] Calder, p. 10.
[19] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 45–46.

have all produced different schemes as to the future of Poland.'[20] In 1915, the Polish representatives who dealt with British representatives in the United States were seen as uncommitted to the Allied cause, unlike the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs.[21] The relative fortunes of different émigré groups are also revealing. The Yugoslavs' lobbying, for instance, won the private sympathy of the Foreign Office, if not the support of the British government, by early 1915.[22] But the importance of such sympathy on policy should not be overstated as diplomats often juggle many competing considerations. The Foreign Office also kept an open mind regarding the eventual territorial settlement in Greater Hungary, for instance, even though officials criticised 'Magyar chauvinism'. Officials recognised that concessions to the oppressed minorities of Greater Hungary like the Romanians or Slovaks might be impossible if the Hungarian government was to be successfully convinced to sign a separate peace.[23]

If Poland, Czechoslovakia, or Yugoslavia were to become states after the war, it would require a massive reconfiguration of the European order. Auspiciously for the independence of Poland, beginning in 1916, elements in the British, French, and American publics came to believe that any peace settlement must improve on the international political system, for example by building international institutions or promoting new norms. The intellectuals whose ideas helped to drive these movements also kept in touch with likeminded associates in co-belligerent countries.[24] In the United States, President Woodrow Wilson proposed a League of Nations while his political opponents proposed alternative methods to avoid another European conflagration.[25] In France, support for a peace without annexations and the League of Nations coalesced around the Comité pour le

[20] Quoted in Calder, p. 25.
[21] Calder, pp. 60, 73–4.
[22] Calder, pp. 33, 46.
[23] Cornwall, 'Great Britain and the Splintering of Greater Hungary', pp. 109, 113–4.
[24] Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 20, 22.
[25] See Stephen Wertheim, 'The League That Wasn't: American Designs for a Legalist-Sanctionist League of Nations and the Intellectual Origins of International Organization, 1914–1920', *Diplomatic History*, 35 (2011), pp. 802–21.

reprise des relations internationales, a left-wing organisation that originated from the trade union movement.[26] In Britain, influential outsiders like R.W. Seton-Watson, a professor of history, and Henry Wickham Steed, the former editor of *The Times*, believed that the British government should practice the ideals it preached in public policy such as support for small states.[27] They and others were able to build on the renewed public support for national self-determination beyond what had existed in the nineteenth century. Seton-Watson and Wickham Steed, who both had important connections with the Czechoslovak and South Slav émigré lobbyists, became increasingly influential after they founded *The New Europe* in October 1916. The weekly journal quickly became popular. Within several weeks it was selling 4000 copies and had received praise from influential individuals as well as other publications like *Punch* and *The Observer*.[28] Articles in *The New Europe* covered questions of war aims and occasionally featured articles on Poles or the Polish question. The journal's general support for national self-determination also focused attention on central and eastern Europe, building on the government's wartime emphasis on the rights of small nations and pre-existing general sympathies.[29] Its anti-German slant also would have helped the Polish émigrés' campaign. Anti-Germanism was rife in wartime Britain; in *The New Europe* several articles by the Czech émigré leader Tomáš Masaryk are noteworthy among those that carried this theme.[30] Masaryk found favour with the *New Europe* group and the British foreign-policy-making élite and was given a lectureship at King's College, London.[31] The success of other émigré campaigns did not

[26] Stevenson, *French War Aims*, p. 19.
[27] On other such support in the press, see Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, p. esp. 50–3.
[28] Seton-Watson, p. 195.
[29] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 50–3, 57–61.
[30] Christopher Clark, *Iron Kingdom: The Rise and Downfall of Prussia 1600-1947* (London: Penguin, 2007), pp. 670–1. Masaryk published articles on the literature of 'Pangermanism' in several issues beginning in the fall of 1916. This followed Tomáš Masaryk, 'Pangermanism and the Eastern Question', *The New Europe*, 1 (1916), 2–19, which was the journal's only article in the first issue.
[31] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 103–4.

directly affect British policy on the Polish question, but it meant that a coherent Polish campaign might find sympathy from the British government.

Though Polish groups and individuals continued to feud openly, a clear champion of the cause of Polish independence emerged when Roman Dmowski arrived in Britain from Russia in November 1915. Dmowski had immediate credibility because he was an influential politician in Russian Poland, but it also helped that Nicolson gave him an introduction to the Foreign Office. Nicolson had come to know Dmowski well when he was Britain's ambassador to Petrograd, and in a 1912 minute he called the Polish nationalist leader 'an exceedingly able and intelligent man'.[32] Nicolson's opinion carried weight because as permanent under-secretary he was the highest authority in the Foreign Office after Grey. Dmowski now possessed status in the Foreign Office that no other Polish émigré had enjoyed previously.[33]

Dmowski established his reputation as a spokesperson and also showed the Russian Poles to be generally pro-Allied and therefore dependable. His memoranda to the Foreign Office inspired the first signs of Foreign Office sympathy for a Polish state, and officials respected him as the spokesman for the Polish people. In March 1916, Dmowski proposed an independent Poland with its own monarch and army. While the Foreign Office did not agree with his proposal, it was examined in close detail; Grey read Dmowski's memorandum and instructed Nicolson to ask the advice of Count Alexander Benckendorff, the Russian ambassador.[34] Dmowski's memorandum went no further; on Benckendorff's advice, the Foreign Office concluded that an independent Poland would 'not be entertained for a moment by Russia.'[35] Dmowski did not raise the idea of an independent Poland again for another year, and only then after the fall of the tsarist

[32] Nicolson served as ambassador from 1906-10; on his tenure and views, see Neilson, '"My Beloved Russians".' *British Documents on the Origins of the War, 1898-1914*, ed. by G. P. Gooch and H.W.V. Temperley, 11 vols. (London: HMSO, 1926), vol. 9, pp. 225-6.
[33] Calder, p. 88.
[34] FO 371/2747/53414, Grey minute, 22 Mar 1916.
[35] FO 371/2747/53414, Hugh O'Beirne minute, 22 Mar 1916.

government. Yet his intervention demonstrates that the Foreign Office had a basic sympathy for his ideas; officials listened to and considered Dmowski's message, even though the government did not yet change its policy.

Dmowski's main reason for coming to London had been to internationalise the Polish question; in other words, to convince the Foreign Office or the British government to make a public statement challenging the Russian claim that Poland's independence was an internal matter. His network of informants, especially Erazm Piltz of the Polish Committee at Lausanne, also passed along information designed to sway Allied opinion. One early report, for instance, noted that the Central Powers were preparing to create a Polish army of up to 800,000 men from the newly-conquered Russian partition.[36] The Central Powers' appeal reflected the reality of the war, because after two years of fighting manpower had grown short on both sides. Both sides therefore attempted to draw upon every possible source while trying to obstruct their opponents' attempts to do the same. The Polish question was of particular concern for the Central Powers, who investigated plans for a Polish army for much of 1916.[37] The Central Powers needed to maintain the loyalty of their new subjects, something which they often attempted by entreaties to the different nationalities – Poles, Lithuanians, Jews, and others – whom they now controlled. These efforts met with varying degrees of success.[38] A Polish army might come about, the British envoy related in his covering letter, only because 'the choice would probably be

[36] FO 371/2746/19318, 'L'avenir de la Pologne Prussienne', n.d. [Jan 1916].
[37] Sukiennicki, pp. 240–60, passim; Max Hoffman, *The War of Lost Opportunities*, trans. by A.E. Chamot (Nashville; London: The Battery Press, 1999), p. 154.
[38] Recent historical interest in civilians at war and collaboration under occupation has brought renewed interest to German occupation of central and eastern Europe. See Vejas G. Liulevicius, *War Land on the Eastern Front: Culture, National Identity and German Occupation in World War I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), which focuses on the Ober Ost military governate rather than the Polish-governed entity. Two recent works have sought to argue that the Central Powers' intentions in setting up occupational governments were genuine and even idealistic, not the result of imperialist attitudes as many in Britain and France assumed at the time: Borislav Chernev, 'Beyond Annexationism: The Central Powers' *Ostpolitik* as Structural Transformation, 1917–18', *The International History Review*, 35 (2013), 723–43; and Kauffman, 'Sovereignty and the Search for Order'.

either to fight against Russia or to be shot.'[39] Such awareness of the situation for civilians under German occupation helped to position the Polish people as oppressed by a common enemy. The Foreign Office also began to take seriously the prospect that the Allies should attempt to win over public opinion in occupied Russian Poland.

Shortly afterward, Buchanan discussed Polish policy with Sazonov in a private meeting in early March 1916. As mentioned above, Sazonov warned Buchanan that Britain should ignore this internal matter and stop listening to the Polish émigrés in London, and the tsarist government maintained this stance until it fell.[40] Yet the incident deserves some additional elucidation here. Sazonov also attempted to prove his sympathy with Buchanan's suggestion, arguing that 'Russia was prepared after the war to satisfy legitimate demands of Poles and promises of autonomy contained in Grand Duke's manifesto.'[41] Notably, the terms of the discussion – to make concessions towards Polish aspirations for statehood – assumed that the people of Russian Poland were nationally-conscious Poles. Buchanan concluded in his report that Sazonov was 'personally most well-disposed towards Poles.'[42] The Foreign Office decided not to mention the Polish question again. It soon appreciated the decision when the French ambassador made Sazonov 'extremely annoyed' by asking about the Polish situation. Sazonov then passed along his 'very deep gratitude and appreciation of the fact that neither His Majesty's Government nor this Embassy had spoken on Polish question. He considered our attitude had shown both delicacy and a sound judgment.'[43] Strategic considerations would have impelled Buchanan's intervention with Sazonov, as the Foreign Office was becoming increasingly aware that the Allies would have to compete with the Central Powers for civilian favour in occupied Russian Poland.

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[39] FO 371/2746/19318, E. Grant Duff to Grey, 27 Jan 1916.
[40] E.g. in FO 371/3000/16233, Pokrovsky to Buchanan, 8 Jan 1917.
[41] FO 371/2747/42936, Buchanan to Foreign Office, 5 Mar 1916.
[42] Ibid.
[43] FO 371/2747/79517, Buchanan telegram, 26 Apr 1916.

Sazonov also feared that the Central Powers would win the loyalty of Russian Poles, and in July 1916 he convinced the tsar to make an announcement granting autonomy to a reunited Poland.[44] It helped that he had the support of several key figures, especially General Alekseev, the tsar's chief of staff, and General Aleksei Brusilov, who had just mounted a successful offensive against the Central Powers. But Sazonov then took a short vacation. When he returned, Nicholas II dismissed him, and the Polish plan was dropped. To his allies, however, Sazonov portrayed their suggestions as an intrusion into Russian domestic affairs. As it became more likely that the Central Powers would promise some sort of Polish autonomy, he protested more vociferously. His protestations proved effective; as neither Britain nor France wanted to endanger the alliance with Russia, they made no further enquiries about the Polish question with the tsarist government.

Sazonov had warned the British government 'against listening to desultory talk' from Polish leaders who had been 'agitating' in London, but the Foreign Office increased their contact with Dmowski and his associates group despite such warnings.[45] This is evidence of some sympathy but also that the Foreign Office doubted the likelihood that anything would come of the Russian government's promises and judged it useful to remain in contact with Polish émigrés. Dmowski benefitted most; his personal connection to the Foreign Office increased as he eliminated potential rivals. Dmowski first used the National Democrats' pro-Allied credentials to marginalise his most powerful rival for the British government's attention, August Zaleski. Zaleski, who had studied at the London School of Economics before the war, had followed a similar path to Masaryk: he took a position at King's College, spoke in public all over Britain, led the Polish Information Committee (PIC) and published a work of Polish history. He also befriended Seton-Watson and encouraged him to sit on the board of the PIC.[46] Zaleski presented himself as tolerant

[44] Bobroff, pp. 521–6.
[45] FO 371/2747/42936, Buchanan to Foreign Office, 5 Mar 1916.
[46] Davies, 'Poles in Great Britain', p. 69.

and liberal and thereby an excellent representative of the Polish people, but upon Dmowski's arrival the National Democrat leader repeatedly mentioned Zaleski's connections to the Central Powers.[47] These were relatively minor but crucially Zaleski was connected with Piłsudski, who at the time was fighting with the Central Powers.[48] Dmowski did hold other advantages over Zaleski: as a major Polish politician, he could credibly claim that he spoke for his people, and Zaleski did not have an introduction to the Foreign Office. But by pointing out Zaleski's connections to the Central Powers and the Council of State that governed during the occupation of Poland, Dmowski curtailed Zaleski's influence. As Eric Drummond, Balfour's secretary, indicated in a minute, 'I think we ought to be very careful of accepting any impressions by M. Zaleski on the war. The Council of State is … a purely Austro-German institution.'[49]

Dmowski faced little opposition from the Foreign Office aside from a memoranda war unleashed by Namier, a Polish Jew working at Wellington House.[50] That Dmowski was also able to overcome Namier's opposition further illustrates the Foreign Office's commitment to the Polish leader and his pro-Allied campaign. Namier later asserted that the anti-Semitism of Dmowski's National Democrats had convinced him, as an eighteen year-old university student in Lemberg, to continue his studies in Switzerland and then in England at the London School of Economics.[51] When war broke out, Namier volunteered for the British army, but after several months he was offered a position at Wellington House. He was the British government's foremost expert on Polish matters, and he read and commented upon Foreign Office materials related to his birthplace.[52] When Dmowski

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[47] Piotr S. Wandycz, 'August Zaleski and His Times', *East European Quarterly*, 24 (1991), p. 413; Calder, p. 84.
[48] Zaleski's travails are further elucidated elsewhere, e.g. Wandycz, 'August Zaleski and His Times', pp. 412–13; Calder, pp. 89–90; Davies, 'Poles in Great Britain', pp. 69–70.
[49] FO 371/3001/147721, Drummond minute, 4 Aug 1917.
[50] On Dmowski's struggle with Namier, see Paul Latawski, 'The Dmowski-Namier Feud, 1915-1918', *Polin: A Journal of Polish-Jewish Studies*, 2 (1988), 37–49; Calder, pp. 88–93.
[51] Rose, p. 3.
[52] Calder, p. 56.

arrived in Britain, Namier criticised the National Democratic leader in several memos, hoping that the Foreign Office would not seek Dmowski's advice. Namier's efforts proved unsuccessful, however. Dmowski obtained a copy of one of Namier's memos and showed it to Nicolson, who warned Namier against including his personal opinion in further press summaries.[53] Dmowski later accused Namier of treason for commenting on an internal Russian issue.[54] This effectively ostracised Namier; the young official continued to comment on Polish items but his comments were rarely read.[55] It did not help that Namier was at Wellington House, physically removed from the Foreign Office. He was well-informed, but providing advice on foreign policy was not his responsibility. Namier did, however, advise other arms of the government on policy despite the efforts of Dmowski and his agents in the Foreign Office. In 1917 Drummond wrote privately to Philip Kerr, Lloyd George's secretary, asserting that 'I profoundly distrust Namier's conclusions and statements and I think it would be very regrettable if you allowed yourself to be influenced by their plausibility.'[56] Kerr did not heed Drummond's warning, and Namier began to write briefings for the Cabinet.[57] Namier was not a good enemy for Dmowski to make; as the next chapter shows, his analysis had an important effect on Lloyd George's opposition to Polish territorial claims at the Paris Peace Conference. Nonetheless, the incident shows the general feeling in the Foreign Office and the extent to which Dmowski had established himself because of his pro-Allied leanings and his connection with Nicolson.

Though Dmowski became the primary representative of Polish opinion to the Foreign Office, neither he nor other Polish representatives had much success in advancing the Polish cause with the wider British public. The National Democrats' strongly Catholic,

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[53] Calder, p. 89.
[54] Calder, p. 93.
[55] Until 1918, most of Namier's minutes in the Foreign Office records appear to have been written last as no one has initialled at a later date.
[56] National Library of Scotland, Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/872/3, Drummond to Kerr, 6 Apr 1917.
[57] Calder, pp. 154–5.

anti-Semitic programme was popular in Poland, but it reflected poorly on Dmowski while in Britain. Edvard Beneš, a fellow émigré petitioner and later President of Czechoslovakia, recalled in his memoirs that Dmowski 'often exhibited rather ostentatiously' his anti-Semitism.[58] This had been a common concern of Namier's, among others.[59] Dmowski's beliefs also did not sit well with Seton-Watson. On 13 September 1917 Seton-Watson warned the Foreign Office that the National Democrats, a party of 'clericalism', would remain influential in Poland 'for many years to come … but the forces of progress lie elsewhere, and our alliance must be with the future and not the past.'[60] Articles in *The New Europe*, moreover, often expressed uncomplimentary views about Poles or reflected on them poorly. On 7 June 1917, for instance, an article entitled 'Poles, Czechs, and Jugoslavs' argued that Austrian Poles were obstructing progress for other oppressed nationalities in the Habsburg Empire because Poles and Austrians were cooperating to preserve their status in Galicia and the empire respectively.[61] Later that month, a pair of articles by 'A Polish socialist' expressed some criticism of the Allies' foreign policy and thus were accompanied with the disclaimer – prevalent today but uncommon in the pages of *The New Europe* – that the views were those of the author and did not necessarily reflect those of the editors.[62] The Poles' poor reputation in *The New Europe* and among its influential creators foreshadowed the troubles that the Polish delegation had at the Paris Peace Conference with similar perceptions that Poles were impractical, anti-Semitic, and interested primarily in their own welfare. Considering *The New Europe*'s influence and Seton-Watson's connections, the journal may have influenced these perceptions.

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[58] Edvard Beneš, *My War Memoirs* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1928), p. 313.
[59] E.g. FO 371/3277/146278, Namier to Tyrrell, 3 Sept 1918.
[60] Quoted in Seton-Watson, p. 231.
[61] Panther, 'Poles, Czechs, and Jugoslavs', *The New Europe*, 3 (1917), pp. 227–9. Authors often published under a pseudonym.
[62] See A Polish Socialist, 'The Rise of Democracy in Poland', *The New Europe*, 3 (1917), 267–77; A Polish Socialist, 'Polish Democracy and the War', *The New Europe*, 3 (1917), 332–42.

Zaleski, meanwhile, was well-liked by the *New Europe* group but also made some catastrophic mistakes. On 5 November 1916, the Central Powers issued the Two Emperors' Declaration, in which they declared their intention to create an autonomous Poland. Zaleski and the PIC believed that this was the time to support Poland's independence publicly, but his stance caused the PIC's advisory council of British citizens to resign in protest. Seton-Watson, who was one of the council members, wrote to Zaleski's colleague Leon Litwinski, 'I have the greatest possible sympathy with Poland … But there are limits to which I am not prepared to go. … I have, with the best will in the world, utterly failed to convince myself that [Polish independence] has any serious prospect of realisation under present conditions in Europe.'[63] When Zaleski promised not to pursue independence again, most of the committee resumed their positions. While the advisory council sympathised with the Poles, Seton-Watson criticised Zaleski's impractical blunder: 'none of us are prepared to lend ourselves to anti-Russian agitation.'[64] This contrasted with his support beginning in spring 1915 for an independent Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia; Russia had no designs on their territory.[65] Dmowski, meanwhile, had realised the importance of the Russian alliance after his initial query about Polish independence in March 1916, which was more respectfully received than Zaleski's announcement but still rejected.

The Two Emperors' Declaration, which had led Zaleski astray, had little impact on Allied policy. Most Russian Poles suspected that the new entity was merely a vehicle for German control and believed that as no borders had been specified, the province of Posen, which was predominantly populated by Poles, was excluded.[66] Plans to create a partly-elected Council of State were hastily drawn up after the announcement as Russian Poles

[63] Quoted in Seton-Watson, p. 188.
[64] Quoted in Seton-Watson, p. 189.
[65] Calder, p. 80; on Russian policy, see Abrash.
[66] Mankoff, 'Russia and the Polish Question', pp. 305–6.

protested the lack of any democratic provision in the original declaration.[67] The declaration nonetheless motivated the Russian government to reconsider Sazonov's failed scheme. The former foreign minister's ideas formed the basis for a Russian declaration on 15 November, but the timing of the announcement, combined with the government's past unwillingness to act on Polish autonomy, meant that this declaration did not sway Russian Poles either. It did not help that Russia no longer controlled any Polish territory. Both Britain and France quickly praised the Russian declaration, but privately they did not expect that it would be fulfilled. Moreover, they continued to respect the tsarist government's desire to treat the Polish question as an internal matter. The Allies' reply to Wilson's peace note of 18 December 1916 declared merely that '[t]he intentions of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia regarding Poland have been clearly indicated in the proclamation which he has just addressed to his armies.'[68] In contrast, the Allied note called for 'the liberation of Italians, of Slavs, of Roumanians and of Czecho-Slovaks from foreign domination', which implied that any support for national self-determination could not extend to Poles or Poland because of the Russian alliance.[69] In early March 1917, the French government agreed to Russia's request for a free hand on their war aims in Poland; in return, the Russian government pledged full support for French claims to Alsace-Lorraine.[70] The agreement was short-lived, since soon after it had been concluded the February Revolution broke out and the tsarist government collapsed. On the eve of the revolution, however, Dmowski's campaign had achieved little aside from closer relations with the Foreign Office.

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[67] Sukiennicki, pp. 267–71.
[68] *FRUS, 1917: Supplement 1, The World War*, p. 8.
[69] Ibid. On the peace note and the Allied reply, see Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 137–8.
[70] Mankoff, 'Russia and the Polish Question', pp. 379–81.

The campaign for independence

The fall of the tsarist government allowed the British and French governments to consider recognising Poland's right to independence. In the meantime, however, both governments tried to determine what was happening in Russia and how they should react. The British and French governments worried that Russia might conclude a separate peace with the Central Powers and drop out of the war, or that the revolution would severely impair Russia's fighting ability.[71] They had worried about Russia's fitness to continue to fight for months already, but the explosion of anti-war sentiment in Russia made a Russian exit seem much more likely. A separate peace would free up vast manpower that the Central Powers could concentrate on Britain and France. The developments in Russia did not solely convince Britain or France to support Polish independence. They needed to be prodded, and here Dmowski renewed his campaign.

The success of Dmowski's initiative indicates that his previous memoranda campaign had successfully laid the groundwork for a campaign in which he again asked the British government to support Polish independence publicly. Here he also employed most of the arguments that he and his colleagues would use for the rest of the war as they sought Allied support. In a memorandum communicated to the Foreign Office 21 March – six days after the tsar's abdication – Dmowski called for the British government to support Poland's independence. 'The opposition to the German schemes in Poland' was in danger of weakening, he noted. While there remained 'irreconcilable enemies of Germany with the National Democrats at their head', many Poles had opposed the Central Powers simply because they had been Russian subjects. The revolution in Russia, he noted, had released Russian Poles from their oaths of loyalty to the tsar: 'the question of loyalty no longer exists, and the latter elements may radically change their position and become conciliated

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[71] David R. Woodward, *Trial by Friendship: Anglo-American Relations, 1917-1918* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2003), p. 69; Carley, *Revolution and Intervention*, pp. 6–7.

to the new state of things created by the Germans'.[72] He argued that if the Russian government were to assert its right to determine the future of a Polish state in the Duma, as was the initial position of Pavel Miliukov, the new Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, it 'would provoke an outburst of indignation among all Poles without exception'. Dmowski implied that Poles were suspicious of Russian intentions and could not trust a Russian government, even a democratic one, to advocate the independence of Poland. As 'all hopes of the anti-German majority were placed in the Western Powers', Dmowski proposed the following solution:

> A declaration by the Governments of the Allied Powers that Poland will be re-united and reconstituted as an independent State under conditions which will enable her to contribute with other nations to the maintenance of the European equilibrium – [this] would satisfy, not only the majority of the Poles who place their hopes in the Allies, but certainly would strongly impress many of those who, through hatred of Russia, took the side of the Central Powers.

He urged the Foreign Office to act quickly before German propagandists could characterise the Allies' inaction as indifference.[73]

The discussions that resulted from Dmowski's memoranda will be examined in detail here because they revealed much about British policy and attitudes towards the rebirth of Poland that was repeated in later discussions. Polish representatives had attempted for more than a year to use the threat of a Polish army under the Central Powers' control to win sympathy from the British government, but as noted above, their efforts led only to private entreaties to the Russian government.[74] The Foreign Office, concerned about the prognosis for the Eastern Front and unsure what was happening there, took action quickly. Its actions demonstrated the importance of a number of factors,

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[72] FO 371/3000/62097, Dmowski memo, 21 Mar 1917. National Democratic organisations made the same assertions to the French. See, for example, a report on Polish press, which was analysed in cooperation with a member of the National Democrat-linked Polish Committee of Petrograd: Guerre, vol. 722, Velten to Ministère des Affaires Étrangères, 24 Mar 1917, ff. 29-30.

[73] Communications with the French government also mentioned the fear that the Poles would come to sympathise with the Central Powers but placed greater emphasis on the friendship between the Russian and Polish peoples rather than the oath to the tsar. See, e.g., Guerre, vol. 722, Erazm Piltz to Prince Lvoff, 22 Mar 1917, which was forwarded to the Quai on 25 March.

[74] See, for example, FO 371/2746/38674, E. Grant Duff to Grey, 19 Feb 1916.

including its officials' sympathy for the Polish people and their desire for independence. The primary factor in taking action, however, was the desire to deny any advantage to the Central Powers. The Foreign Office thus accepted Dmowski's depiction of the situation including the National Democrats' tireless advocacy on behalf of the Allied cause. Balfour met with Dmowski on 21 March, then drafted a letter that night seeking Buchanan's advice from Petrograd. Balfour noted that he had 'said nothing to encourage' Dmowski's idea, but that it 'certainly merits consideration'.[75] Buchanan replied three days later and urged that the British government 'can hardly act except in agreement with Russian Government' but should continue to propose the importance of winning the loyalty of the Polish people.[76] The following day, 26 March, Dmowski submitted another memorandum that placed the creation of an independent Poland within the larger British 'aim of this war [which] was to reduce German power.'[77] While the rest of the memorandum discussed the territories that a future Poland would need to remain politically and economically independent from Germany, the Foreign Office reacted only to Dmowski's depiction of the threat of German power. The need to crush 'Prussian militarism' had been a central theme of the British government's rationale for war since August 1914.[78]

Dmowski's second memorandum incited an urgent debate in the Foreign Office that nearly culminated in a British-led declaration of support for an independent Poland. Clerk minuted on 26 March, the same day on which Dmowski submitted his second memorandum, that if 700,000 Poles bolstered the Central Powers' war effort, it would have a 'disastrous effect'. 'The only way to prevent it', he argued, 'is to give the Poles some assurance, in which they could really trust, that after the war they will be in fact an independent country. No Russian promise will carry this conviction … The Poles must be

[75] FO 371/3000/62097, Balfour to Buchanan, 22 Mar 1917. Balfour composed a handwritten draft on 21 March, but the telegraph was transmitted the next day.
[76] FO 371/3000/63340, Buchanan telegram, 25 Mar 1917.
[77] FO 371/3000/63741, Dmowski memo, 26 Mar 1917.
[78] Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, p. 108; Rothwell, p. 18.

convinced that the Allies have made the Polish cause our own.'[79] Charles Hardinge, who had replaced Nicolson as permanent under-secretary of State, responded that any action must be taken by the Russian government.[80] Balfour, however, proposed a compromise in a telegram to Buchanan on 28 March. Using much the same wording as Clerk's minute, Balfour argued that the Allies, including the Russian government, should make 'some declaration about Polish freedom which would give reasonable satisfaction to the Poles.'[81] Before waiting for Buchanan's response, the Foreign Office also prepared a note to the French ambassador in London that the British would lead an initiative to persuade the Russian government to make a joint Allied declaration on a question that was 'necessarily international' despite Russian protestations that it was a domestic affair.[82] The letter was never sent, however, because events intervened: on 30 March the Russian Provisional Government declared its support for 'the creation of an independent, Polish state comprised of all the lands in which the Polish people constitute the majority of the population'.[83] 'They go further than I had ventured to hope', Buchanan wrote.[84] His colleagues agreed, though Clerk in particular worried that the stipulation that gave power to the Duma to revise the scheme could 'put Poland at the mercy of Russian politics.'[85] With reports from Dmowski in London and Polish representatives in Petrograd and Berne that the declaration pleased the Polish people, the Foreign Office decided not to propose

[79] FO 371/3000/63340, Clerk minute, 26 Mar 1917.
[80] FO 371/3000/63340, Hardinge minute, n.d. [26 Mar 1917].
[81] FO 371/3000/63340, Balfour to Buchanan, 28 Mar 1917.
[82] FO 371/3000/63340, Draft telegram to Paul Cambon (French ambassador to Great Britain), n.d. [28 Mar 1917].
[83] *The Russian Provisional Government, 1917: Documents*, ed. by Robert Paul Browder and A.F. Kerensky, 3 vols. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), vol. 1, p. 322; Komarnicki argues that pressure from Alexander Lednicki, a Polish deputy close to Miliukov, was responsible for the government's declaration. Komarnicki, pp. 155–57. The proclamation later provided the basis for the peacemakers' provisional acceptance in the Treaty of Versailles of the reborn Poland's sovereignty in 'those portions of the former Russian Empire which are inhabited by a majority of Poles'. See *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 13, p. 792.
[84] FO 371/3000/66640, Buchanan telegram, 29 Mar 1917.
[85] FO 371/3000/66367, Clerk minute, 30 Mar 1917.

adjustments to the Russian government's announced policy on the independence of Poland.[86]

Did the Foreign Office's deliberations on the internationalisation of the Polish question reflect its attitudes about Polish independence? Strategic thinking clearly motivated the discussion; as Balfour wrote, the Foreign Office feared that 'pro-German propaganda may make serious progress [in Russian Poland] during the present Russian crisis if nothing is done to counteract it.'[87] This action, moreover, had to be considered within the context of the alliance with Russia, with all involved arguing that the British government should at least urge Russia to make a proclamation. Yet sympathy for Polish independence is also evident in the leaders' actions. First, they listened to Dmowski, and his proposals were considered quickly and at the highest level of the Foreign Office: by Balfour and Hardinge at the top of the department, Clerk a senior official, and Buchanan a well-respected diplomat in a critical location.[88] As mentioned above, very few discussions of Polish matters had yet taken place with such urgency or at this level. Moreover, in their comments, each man expressed some sympathy for the Polish cause. Clerk, who urged a British declaration in favour of Polish independence, expressed it most regularly; Balfour also indicated that an urgent declaration was necessary. When Miliukov asked Buchanan his personal opinion, the ambassador replied that 'if it were possible to comprise in reunited Poland greater part of Posen, independence would be best for all concerned.'[89] Rumbold was asked his opinion in Berne, and he too argued that '[i]t seems urgently necessary that some official statement of a really satisfactory character should be made by [the] New Government.'[90] Even Hardinge, who was the least enthusiastic, did write that

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[86] FO 371/3000/67338, Buchanan telegram, 30 Mar 1917; Clerk minute, 31 Mar 1917; FO 371/3000/70714, Rumbold telegram, 4 Apr 1917.
[87] FO 371/3000/63340, Balfour to Buchanan, 28 Mar 1917.
[88] Cabinet files do not indicate, however, that the issue was discussed at that level. See CAB 23/2/18-27, War Cabinet Conclusions for 21-30 Mar 1917.
[89] FO 371/3000/63340, Buchanan telegram, 25 Mar 1917.
[90] FO 371/3000/66364, Rumbold to Foreign Office, 28 Mar 1917.

despite the constraint of the Russian alliance, Polish independence was 'desirable'.[91] Such support cannot be separated from the officials' belief in the immediate strategic importance of such a move. It also reflects, however, that Dmowski and his conservative allies in Switzerland were central to the discussion: Dmowski's memoranda had initiated the debate, Clerk and Balfour both met with Dmowski in person in London, Clerk delivered Dmowski's second memorandum, and Rumbold based his opinion on a meeting on short notice with Erazm Piltz and an unnamed colleague.[92] Thus personal relationships helped to shape the British response.

That the Foreign Office took Dmowski's memoranda seriously also highlights the British government's increasing preoccupation about whether to use policy to win popular opinion in Russian Poland to the Allied cause.[93] Until the end of the war, the Foreign Office and the British government flirted with concessions to Polish self-determination when they feared that the Russian Poles' sympathies were moving towards the Central Powers. Otherwise, they did not act. Though the dissemination of any such concessions is not discussed in the files, it was implicit that changes in policy should be communicated to the people of Russian Poland as well as to the United States. Such policy would have spread indirectly through speeches and newspapers articles rather than directly, by targeting certain groups.[94] Dmowski and his National Democrat allies also claimed that they were passing on this information.[95] The Foreign Office did realise the importance of propaganda in policy discussion as officials occasionally raised concerns that German propaganda might turn the people of Russian Poland against the Allies.[96] Yet

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[91] FO 371/3000/63340, Hardinge minute, n.d. [26 Mar 1917].
[92] FO 371/3000/62097, Balfour to Buchanan, 22 Mar 1917; FO 371/3000/63340, Clerk minute, 26 Mar 1917; FO 371/3000/66364, Rumbold to Foreign Office, 28 Mar 1917.
[93] E.g. FO 371/3000/63340, Clerk minute, 26 Mar 1917, Balfour to Buchanan, 28 Mar 1917.
[94] On 'direct' and 'indirect' propaganda, see Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 3–4. See below, pp. 113-16, for more on dissemination of propaganda.
[95] FO 371/3000/62097, Dmowski memo, 21 Mar 1917; FO 371/3000/63741, Dmowski memo, 26 Mar 1917.
[96] E.g. FO 371/3001/165785, extract from Parliamentary Debates, 20 Aug 1917.

it is also important to note the separation between policy-makers and propagandists in each government. In the Foreign Office, for instance, most Polish policy issues were dealt with by the War Department, usually by Clerk or officials under his supervision. Clerk also read memoranda from the News Department, which tracked issues in the foreign press and connected officials with foreign newspapers as necessary.[97] The British propaganda agency at Wellington House co-operated with the Foreign Office but their operations were not wholly synchronised. Namier, the Polish expert at Wellington House, appears to have worked well with the News Department judging from their correspondence, but his influence with the War Department was limited.[98] Perhaps equally important, however, was that the Foreign Office's perceptions of public opinion in Russian Poland again demonstrated the assumption that the people of that province were nationally-conscious Poles who desired national independence above all.

The British government was already considering the possibility that a reborn Poland would form part of a reconfigured Europe in a postwar settlement, though this was not mentioned in the policy discussions surrounding Dmowski's memoranda. In particular, two studies carried out at the cabinet level raised the possibility of a reborn Poland. The first instance came when Asquith proposed in August 1916 that a few key individuals submit their ideas for Britain's peace desiderata. Sir William Tyrrell and Sir Ralph Paget, representing the Foreign Office, argued that Poland should be reconstituted as a single, independent state based on the principle of nationality, based on the assumption that a European settlement based on nationality would endure.[99] More importantly, however, the memorandum that Tyrrell and Paget submitted suggests Dmowski's involvement. For instance, they provided a map of ethnographically Polish territories that Dmowski had used in a pamphlet he had written on the Polish Question.

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[97] E.g. FO 395/41/54313, Lord Robert Cecil interview with *New York Tribune*, 21 Mar 1916.
[98] E.g. FO 395/76/65520, News Dept to Namier, 27 Mar 1917.
[99] CAB 24/2/32, Paget and Tyrrell memorandum, 7 Aug 1916.

Balfour, at the time the First Lord of the Admiralty, argued that a federation of Poles and Czechs, allied with a Greater Serbia and a Greater Romania, would weaken the Central Powers by taking away critical resources and (in his estimate) twenty million people.[100] Tyrrell and Paget also suggested a federated Polish-Czech state as an alternative and argued that a reborn Poland would join the Allied nations in believing in 'the rule of right over the rule of might'.[101] Though this idea cannot necessarily be attributed to Dmowski, who never espoused federation in any form, it is likely that his consistent message that the Poles' sentiments were overwhelmingly pro-Allied convinced Tyrrell and Paget that such a country would be a positive force that would enable European stability. Such an argument, moreover, exemplifies the Allied approach to the Polish question during the First World War. As sympathy for Polish independence grew, officials supported independence along strategic lines but also assumed that Poland would be a friendly power in the region. Later British studies continued to suggest that an independent Poland was possible. The 1917 Curzon Commission, under Lloyd George's Imperial War Cabinet, proposed a reborn Poland as one of its five general principles.[102] Moreover, the people who had suggested Poland's independence became increasingly influential. Balfour soon became the Foreign Secretary, while Tyrrell was the British representative on the Commission for Polish Affairs at the Paris Peace Conference.

A British declaration of support for Poland's independence remained on the policy agenda in April 1917 as the United States entered the war on the Allied side. One of the major reasons why the United States entered the war was to reshape the international political system, which Wilson and many Americans believed had led to the war.[103] The

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[100] Erik Goldstein, *Winning the Peace: British Diplomatic Strategy, Peace Planning, and the Paris Peace Conference, 1916-1920* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 13.
[101] CAB 24/2/32, Paget and Tyrrell memorandum, 7 Aug 1916.
[102] Goldstein, p. 16.
[103] Among a wealth of works on American neutrality and entry into the war, see Thomas J. Knock, *To End All Wars: Woodrow Wilson and the Quest for a New World Order* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Justus D. Doenecke, *Nothing Less than War: A New History of America's*

United States entered the war as an 'Associated Power' to emphasise its detachment from the European alliance system. Despite this distinction, Britain and France were obliged to take American policy into consideration when making their own policy, and to a greater extent than they had done prior to American entry. They did so because they needed American loans, supplies, and manpower.[104] This meant that the British and French governments increasingly needed to accommodate Wilson's policy ideas, in particular his ideas for a postwar League of Nations and for territorial reorganisation.[105] Shortly after the United States entered the war, successive British and French missions visited Washington. Balfour led the British mission, which arrived on 22 April. The mission intended partly to win Wilson and the American public to the British view and partly to co-ordinate policy.[106]

In his 'Peace Without Victory' speech on 22 January 1917, which was one of his major statements of foreign policy, Wilson had declared that 'statesmen everywhere are agreed that there should be a united, independent, and autonomous Poland'.[107] This was part of his larger call for a peace without annexations and government with 'the consent of the governed'. Though his statement about Polish independence provided no guidance on how an independent Poland might be created, who should create it, and where its borders would be, the mention of Poland in a major foreign policy speech was a forward leap for

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Entry into World War I (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2011); on the electoral politics of neutrality, see Link, pp. 241–5. Many international relations theorists debate whether American entry was brought on by 'offshore balancing'; see John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton, 2001); a thorough response is Galen Jackson, 'The Offshore Balancing Thesis Reconsidered: Realism, the Balance of Power in Europe, and America's Decision for War in 1917', *Security Studies*, 21 (2012), 455–89.

[104] On American materiel and loans after April 1917, see Brandes, p. 138; on manpower, see Woodward, pp. 44–52.

[105] Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 171–2; on Wilson's policies, see Knock; Lloyd E. Ambrosius, *Wilsonian Statecraft: Theory and Practice of Liberal Internationalism during World War I* (Wilmington, Del: SR Books, 1991); Norman Gordon Levin, *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: America's Response to War and Revolution* (New York; London: Oxford University Press, 1968).

[106] Kennedy, *Realities behind Diplomacy*, p. 163; on Anglo-American diplomacy in 1917-18, see Woodward; also W. B. Fowler, *British-American Relations, 1917-1918: The Role of Sir William Wiseman* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969).

[107] *FRUS, 1917: Supplement 1, The World War*, p. 33.

the cause of Polish independence.[108] The Foreign Office recognised the significance of the statement; as Geoffrey Butler of the News Department commented in a minute that Clerk read, 'it would appear that he considers the Polish question to have a position of special importance.'[109] Butler's memorandum concluded that 'the Polish question may be made an avenue of approach to closer relations'.[110] During the debate over Dmowski's memoranda, Buchanan noted that a British declaration in favour of Polish independence 'would be received with enthusiasm in America'.[111] The Foreign Office also recognised the importance of Wilson's declaration on Polish opinion; Rumbold had reported after Wilson's speech that Poles in Europe were 'enthusiastic'.[112]

As a result, Balfour raised the issue of Polish independence in one of his many meetings with House. Balfour and House agreed that Polish independence was desirable but not necessarily practical, and that it would be important for the new country to have access to the sea.[113] This view reflected in part the nineteenth-century conviction that a nation's power depended considerably on its ability to trade and use the seas.[114] The only acceptable location would be at Danzig, which once had been the bustling seaport of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Wilson and Balfour recognised, however, that as the

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[108] The relationship between House and Paderewski was important in inspiring Wilson's statement, but has been exaggerated in later accounts. This, in turn, has led to the argument that Paderewski promised Wilson that, should the President endorse Polish independence, Paderewski would ensure that he would capture the Polish vote in the 1916 election. Gerson, pp. 55–66; however, as M.B. Biskupski notes, Wilson did not campaign on the issue and made his first major pronouncement of behalf of Polish independence in January 1917 in the 'Peace Without Victory' speech. Moreover, Wilson's advocacy of Polish relief and his unsuccessful veto of language tests for new immigrants likely won him the support of most Poles, many of whom were inclined to vote Democrat anyways. Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 203–4, 239–47; Dorota Praszałowicz, 'World War I in the Milvaukee Ethnic Press: *Germania Herold* and *Kuryer Polski*', in *Ethnicity. Culture. City: Polish-Americans in the USA. Cultural Aspects of Urban Life, 1870-1950 in Comparative Perspective*, ed. by Thomas S. Gladsky, Adam Walaszek, and Małgorzata Wawrykiewicz (Warszawa: Oficyna Naukowa, 1998), p. 295.
[109] FO 395/76/63597, Geoffrey Butler minute, 22 Mar 1917.
[110] Ibid.
[111] FO 371/3000/63340, Buchanan telegram, 25 Mar 1917.
[112] FO 371/3000/28868, Rumbold to Foreign Office, 5 Feb 1917.
[113] *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, ed. by Charles Seymour, 4 vols. (London: Ernest Benn, Ltd, 1926), vol. 3, p. 43.
[114] Discussed further below, pp. 148-9.

city's population was overwhelmingly German, to grant Danzig to an independent Poland 'would leave an Alsace and Lorraine to fester for further trouble, but they saw no alternatives'.[115] No further decisions were taken regarding positions on Poland's independence, but Balfour reportedly also shared one of Dmowski's March memoranda with House.[116] In public, the British government continued to respect its Russian ally's position that the Polish question was an internal Russian matter. But the Balfour Mission represents yet another situation in which British politicians and diplomats expressed their sympathy – albeit privately – for an independent Poland.[117]

For several months after the United States entered the war, the Allied and American governments made no further changes to their public policy on Poland's independence. On the Eastern Front, the Russian army's disastrous July offensive damaged the provisional government's reputation. The Central Powers reaped the rewards of intensified front propaganda and attempted to stimulate further unrest in the Russian hinterland by sending Lenin and other Bolsheviks on the famous 'sealed train' to Petrograd in April 1917.[118] During this period, Polish émigré representatives continued to send regular reports to Allied foreign ministries on conditions under the Central Powers' occupation. These reports did not inspire the Allies to make any more declarations supporting Polish independence. Since the people of Russian Poland already opposed the Central Powers, no further action – such as committing to Poland's independence – was necessary to sustain this state of affairs. Moreover, Allied and American inaction also came during a period when the belligerent powers were considering various possibilities for a

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[115] Seymour, vol. 3, p. 43.
[116] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 33. This file or any mention of it does not survive in the House papers.
[117] Balfour left Washington on 8 May having accomplished his purpose of better relations. British Library, Arthur Balfour Papers, Add. 49865 contains several congratulatory letters and telegrams from members of the American public.
[118] On propaganda, see Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 43–62. Bodleian Library, Sir Horace Rumbold papers, 9th Bart., Rumbold telegram, 13 Apr 1917.

negotiated peace.[119] Allied commitments on Polish independence could threaten any agreement.

Yet émigré reports showed that the people of Russian Poland did not turn to the Central Powers, as Dmowski had suggested they would. Rather, the German high command suspended its plans for a Polish army at the same time that the Foreign Office was debating public support for Polish independence.[120] Later Polish reports detailed that heavy-handed German punishments, an ineffective Polish civilian government, and the disastrous attempt to require an oath of loyalty from the Austrian-controlled Polish Legion aggravated Polish sentiment throughout the partitions.[121] The debacle over the oath resulted in Piłsudski's imprisonment, which proved unpopular enough that even the impotent civilian government resigned as a symbol of protest.[122] Concern that the support from Russian Poles might bolster the Central Powers' war effort had inspired the Foreign Office to consider offering public support for Polish independence in March 1917. But the British policy remained cautious – 'virtually a defensive policy' as Gregory commented later in the year.[123] As long as German blunders meant that the Central Powers were having difficulty with Russian Poles rather than benefitting from their support, the Foreign Office did not consider changing its policy regardless of their growing private sympathy for Polish independence.

Though the Foreign Office was undoubtedly pleased to have information about the Central Powers' difficulties in occupying Russian Poland, it had long been irritated that reports on the situation there continued to arrive from several sources who were often in open competition with one another. Rumbold submitted reports from conservative Poles

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[119] See Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 139–69.
[120] FO 371/3000/73033, Communiqué from Agence Polonaise Centrale, 20 Mar 1917.
[121] FO 371/3000/107523, Rumbold to Foreign Office, 28 May 1917; FO 371/3001/132545, Rumbold to Balfour, 29 June 1917; FO 371/3001/154240, Translation of Council of State proclamation, 3 Aug 1917.
[122] This was also used in propaganda against Polish troops on the Italian front; Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, p. 153.
[123] FO 371/3002/218943, Gregory minute, 18 Nov 1917.

in Switzerland, Buchanan forwarded information from the left-wing Poles who enjoyed the Russian government's favour and Esme Howard reported on his meetings with Poles of all political persuasions at the British embassy in Stockholm. These submissions from abroad were accompanied by a similar range of Polish perspectives in London, where Polish émigrés of many political viewpoints attempted to get the ear of the Foreign Office.[124] 'Things would be so much easier', Howard wrote to Drummond, 'if the various Polish parties would restrain their love of quarrelling among themselves.'[125] In the United States, despite the leadership of Paderewski the government nonetheless heard fragmented reports from different Polish groups and individuals. Such reports undoubtedly contributed to the stereotype of the quarrelling Poles, which became increasingly prominent at the Paris Peace Conference and contrasted starkly with the organised Czechs. This stereotype did not, however, hamper Allied and American relations with the Polish émigré representatives in 1917.

In June 1917, in frustration with the variety of Polish émigré representatives, Wilson endorsed the formation of a single, recognised Polish group to deal with the Allies. The British and French foreign ministries agreed.[126] The resulting Polish National Committee (*Komitet Narodowy Polski – KNP*), which was established in August 1917, was remarkably international; it included representatives in Paris, London, Rome, Petrograd, Washington, and Lausanne. Most of its members had connections to Dmowski and the National Democrats, except for Paderewski in Washington who worked with the KNP but did not want to associate with their anti-Semitic politics. The establishment of the KNP essentially formalised the existing arrangement whereby Dmowski, Paderewski, and their colleagues were already the most trusted of all Polish sources. Other Poles continued to

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[124] On contacts before Dmowski's arrival, see Calder, pp. 19–21, 83–5; Davies, 'Poles in Great Britain', pp. 66–7.
[125] Cumbria Record Office, Esme Howard Papers, DHW 4/Personal/19, Howard to Drummond, 20 Sept 1917.
[126] FO 371/3001/119346, Spring-Rice to Foreign Office, 14 June 1917.

send information but the establishment of the KNP strengthened its connection to Allied governments. Count Ladislas Sobanski, the official KNP representative in London, even had the Foreign Office send his telegrams. British relations with Dmowski and his associates continued to improve, but this had no noticeable effect on policy.

Unbeknownst to the Allies, the KNP did deal secretly with the Central Powers on occasion, but it successfully cultivated its reputation for exclusive loyalty over the course of the war in the hope that it would lead the Allies to accept the KNP as the legitimate Polish government after the war ended. The KNP's many reports were crafted in a way that emphasised the role of the National Democrats in ensuring that the Polish people remained opposed to the Central Powers. The Allies continued to deal with the KNP because, as Gregory wrote in 1918, '[i]ts policy is entirely favourable to the Allied Cause and is constantly directed towards keeping the Poles from any compromise with the Central Powers.'[127] This had been their tactic for most of the war. For instance, near the end of May 1917, Stanisław Kozicki, one of Dmowski's informants, submitted a report on a conference in Stockholm involving the Council of State and the Democratic Conference based in Petrograd.[128] Dmowski forwarded it to the Foreign Office; the note was accepted by George Clerk, who received permission to write a thank-you note to Dmowski.[129] Kozicki's report, Clerk wrote, was a communication 'of great value [which] has been read with interest.'[130] It was seen by a few individuals in the Foreign Office and also passed on to the War Department to be entered into its official files. The report describes the conference and the plans that these Polish organisations had for improving the Poles' status under Central Powers occupation. While Kozicki provided a balanced description of the Council of State, he also noted that the organisation was collaborating with the

[127] FO 371/3277/70004, Gregory minute, 21 Apr 1918.
[128] FO 371/3001/108369, Report on Stockholm Conference by Stanisław Kozicki, n.d. [29 May 1917?].
[129] FO 371/3001/108369, Dmowski to Clerk, 30 May 1917; FO 371/3001/108369, Clerk to War Department, 30 May 1917.
[130] FO 371/3001/108369, Clerk to Dmowski, 2 June 1917.

Germans and the National Democrats were not. The National Democrats, Kozicki noted, were 'the Party most hated by the Council of State and its friends'. Moreover, the National Democrats were so popular that they were really 'an unofficial Polish government'.[131]

For the rest of the war, the KNP used reports to underline that they represented Polish popular opinion and should be trusted. Later reports continued on this theme of the National Democrats' popularity, especially a series of communiques on the elections to the new Polish assembly in mid-April 1918 in which the National Democrats won 37 of 52 seats. By expounding on the National Democrats' seeming popularity among the people of Russian Poland, the KNP was adding another argument to the narrative that it represented the natural postwar governing party of an independent Poland. The Foreign Office debated this internally but never agreed to accept the KNP's claim; nonetheless the KNP's memoranda did improve its relations with the government. In the case of reporting on the April 1918 elections, the KNP ensured that information to the Foreign Office came from several sources to ensure the widest distribution. Its main representative in Switzerland sent a telegram through Rumbold, while in London Sobanski told his friend Gregory the import of the news; the two had developed a strong friendship.[132] These and other reports failed to mention more inconvenient facts. Socialist parties had boycotted the elections, so the National Democrats had only obtained this significant victory because of the absence of their strongest electoral rivals. Moreover, the National Democrats had been co-opted into a Central Powers-controlled government where, as Namier noted, they had very little influence on most decisions.[133] The Allies, who were still receiving

[131] FO 371/3001/108369, Kozicki report.
[132] FO 371/3278/69989, Rumbold to Foreign Office, 19 Apr 1918; FO 371/3278/69989, Gregory minute, 22 Apr 1918. John Duncan Gregory, *On the Edge of Diplomacy: Rambles and Reflections, 1902-1928* (London: Hutchinson, 1929), p. 171.
[133] See FO 371/3277/146278, Namier to Tyrrell, 3 Sept 1918.

unsolicited information from non-KNP sources, had inklings of this.[134] Yet the Foreign Office largely ignored such contradictory information until the last few months of the war.

Making commitments

The KNP's primary purpose, as stated in its act of foundation, was to advocate for a concrete, public recognition not only that an independent Poland should exist, but that the Allied and American governments would commit to recreate it.[135] Such demands had lapsed since the provisional government's 30 March proclamation, but KNP resumed them shortly after the committee was established. Though the Foreign Office did not change its policy on the Polish question for the rest of 1917, officials occasionally indicated their sympathy with the Polish émigrés' demands. Most had come to believe that an independent Poland was, Clerk minuted on 3 October, 'desirable and just in itself'.[136] Perhaps the strongest support at this stage, however, came from Howard, the British minister in Stockholm, and Gregory, who had recently been assigned to add the Polish file to his responsibilities. Both were Catholics – Gregory was nicknamed 'the Jesuit' for his religious convictions – and though this may have inspired their support, the sources provide no specific evidence of this.[137] After conversations with Polish émigrés in Stockholm, Howard argued on several occasions that the Allies needed to make a firmer declaration of support for Polish independence.[138] Gregory became the chief advocate for the KNP within the Foreign Office partly as a result of his friendship with Sobanski. In particular, in December 1917 Gregory advocated the KNP position that the Allies declare

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[134] FO 371/3278/105041, Rumbold to Balfour, 7 June 1918.
[135] See Buchanan's letters to the Foreign Office, FO 371/3001/180634, 15 Sept 1917, and FO 371/3001/183579, 19 Sept 1917.
[136] FO 371/3001/189230, Clerk minute, 3 Oct 1917. See also his comment that the Polish cause was 'just' – FO 371/3001/147721, Clerk minute, 4 Aug 1917.
[137] Gregory, p. 171; B.J.C. McKercher, *Esme Howard: A Diplomatic Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 29.
[138] See the following despatches: FO 371/3002/211205, 26 Oct 1917; FO 371/3002/207473, 29 Oct; FO 371/3002/216593, 12 Nov; FO 371/3002/219884, 16 Nov; and FO 371/3002/234811, 6 Dec

'that one of their war aims is the reconstruction of a united, free and independent Poland with access to the sea.'[139]

Hardinge wrote regarding British policy towards Poland that '[s]o long as it is a pious aspiration it does not much matter what is said'.[140] By October 1917, however, the distinctions of wording that shaped diplomatic strategy had great importance as the KNP pursued an Allied and American commitment to create an independent Poland and the Foreign Office attempted to keep Britain's diplomatic options open. This was clearly shown at a celebration in Russia of the centenary of Polish revolutionary Tadeusz Kościuszko's death, when Buchanan caused a minor scandal. Buchanan spoke after Russian Foreign Minister Mikhail Tereschenko, whose speech included the declaration that 'the creation of a Poland independent and indivisible constitutes one of the conditions of a solid and just peace'.[141] Buchanan then articulated the British government's agreement with these sentiments and went on to express its hope that a 'free and independent' Poland would be created at the end of the war.[142] The speech did not represent a full commitment to recreate Poland, but it did provide public recognition that Britain supported the Russian provisional government's intention to bring about Polish independence. Nonetheless, Balfour believed that Tereschenko had committed to more than the Allies could promise. Buchanan's declaration of support was unplanned, not because it supported Polish independence but because the British government did not want to tie its hands in a future peace settlement. With this in mind, both Balfour and Lloyd George had deleted 'indivisible' from an earlier draft of Buchanan's speech, preferring 'free and independent'.[143] 'Indivisible' reflected more than a 'pious aspiration' that Poland should exist; it could also imply that a new Poland should be reconstituted

[139] FO 371/3002/236695, Gregory memo, n.d. [14 Dec 1917].
[140] FO 371/3001/189230, Hardinge minute, n.d. [3 Oct 1917?].
[141] FO 371/3002/211160, Tereschenko speech, 15 Oct 1917.
[142] FO 371/3002/211160, Buchanan speech, 15 Oct 1917.
[143] FO 371/3001/198716, Balfour to Buchanan, 13 Oct 1917.

from partitioned territory. Balfour seems to have realised this: on being informed that Tereschenko meant 'indivisible … in an ethnographic sense', Balfour replied, '"[i]ndivisible" has no ethnographic sense and was a foolish word to use.'[144] He believed that, because of their alliance, the foreign minister's comments had nearly committed the British government to a definition of the borders of a future Poland. The government's desire to avoid this commitment at this time outweighed any sympathy for Polish self-determination.

Other British representatives abroad took greater care than Buchanan about how they discussed the Polish question. In a revealing exchange, Howard wrote privately to Hardinge for instructions.[145] He complained on 17 November 1917 that in his meetings with Polish émigrés, 'I have never had a word … as to the sort of language I should employ, and I have therefore been thrown back upon my own resources.'[146] Hardinge's reply did not provide precise wording for how Howard should present Britain's position, but he did explain that 'with regard to shaping a big policy there is very little that we can do, unless and until the military situation turns in our favour.'[147] 'It stands to reason', he continued,

> that all the Allies are committed to the principle of an independent and united Poland with access to the sea … But the chances of effecting that by military means as well as the determination of the future Eastern boundaries of the new Polish state are … dependent on the developments in Russia before the close of the war.[148]

The Bolshevik Revolution in early November had thrown the existence of an Eastern Front in severe doubt. Considering the stalemate on the Western Front, Hardinge wrote that the Allies 'would never consent to continue the war' once they achieved their war aims in

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[144] FO 371/3002/205880, Buchanan to Foreign Office, 24 Oct 1917; Balfour minute, n.d. [27 Oct 1917?].
[145] Hardinge had been Howard's mentor in the diplomatic service. McKercher, p. 166.
[146] Howard Papers, DHW 4/Official Despatches/9, Howard to Hardinge, 17 Nov 1917.
[147] Howard Papers, DHW 5/Official and semi-official correspondence/5, Hardinge to Howard, 7 Dec 1917.
[148] Ibid.

Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine'.[149] A piece of German propaganda perhaps expressed the Allies' cautious policy best: 'At most England voices sympathy for Poland, but the Polish cause … does not enter into the sphere of its immediate interests.'[150] This rather bluntly reflected how the British government approached the issue of national self-determination in central and eastern Europe until near the end of the war. When Howard asked four months later about whether Britain should support Lithuanian independence, which had recently been granted by the Central Powers, Balfour responded that 'His Majesty's Government adhered to the principle of self-determination and would not accept any settlement violating this principle as permanent, but it could not recognise the independence of Lithuania, as it was entirely occupied by the enemy.'[151] Though sympathy for the rebirth of Poland remained among British officials, they believed that the military situation did not permit an expression in favour of Polish independence.

World events again turned in favour of Polish independence, however, and led the Allied and American governments to make major commitments in January 1918. The Allies' fortunes in the war seemed bleak in late 1917 after a pyrrhic triumph at Passchendaele and a disastrous Italian defeat at Caporetto.[152] The impetus to develop in public a set of transformational war aims, however, came particularly as a result of developments in Russia.[153] On taking power, Lenin declared the Bolsheviks' support for national self-determination and promised that the Bolsheviks would honour the rights of any of the Russian Empire's nationalities to secede from the empire. This had particular

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[149] Ibid.

[150] FO 371/3002/210520, 'L'Angleterre et la Pologne', 24 Oct 1917. Central Powers propaganda often depicted England as the manipulative power behind the war; Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 44, 89.

[151] CAB 24/145/61, Eastern Report, 27 Mar 1918, f. 2.

[152] Rothwell, pp. 143–4; see also Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, *Passchendaele: The Untold Story* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1996); Mark Thompson, *The White War: Life and Death on the Italian Front, 1915-1919* (London: Faber, 2008), pp. 294–327.

[153] On Bolshevik diplomacy to the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, see Richard K. Debo, *Revolution and Survival: The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1917-18* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1979), pp. 3–169; and John W. Wheeler-Bennett, *Brest-Litovsk: The Forgotten Peace, March 1918* (London: Macmillan, 1938); on its effect on the belligerent powers, see Mayer, *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy*, pp. 245–312; Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 183–205.

relevance for the Polish question: on 28 March 1917 the Petrograd Soviet had proclaimed its support 'for the recognition of national-political self-determination of peoples, and … that Poland has the right to complete independence in national and international affairs.'[154] Such promises reflected communist ideology but were also good strategy. The Bolsheviks hoped to turn the Russian Empire's many nationalities against the provisional government and the White forces that wanted to preserve the Russian Empire. They also believed that the expected international dictatorship of the proletariat would render nationality unimportant, an assumption had informed Marx and Engels' support for Polish independence as well. The Central Powers, aware of the propaganda value of the Bolsheviks' declaration, promoted versions of self-determination for Finns, Lithuanians, Latvians, and Estonians.[155] These developments led France, Britain, and then the United States to respectively pledge their support for an independent Polish state. A close consideration of the wording of these commitments shows sympathy for Polish independence but hesitation about getting involved to bring it about. While the speeches were composed with the current situation in mind, the principles they laid out helped to determine the basis for the postwar order, which included the re-creation of Poland.

On 27 December in the Chamber of Deputies, French Foreign Minister Stéphane Pichon pledged his government's support for an 'independent, indivisible [Poland], with all the guarantees of its free political, economic, and military development.'[156] As mentioned above, the February Revolution had saved the French government from a promise to respect the Russian government's war aims in eastern Europe, which had included control over a reunited Poland. Until late 1917, the French government pursued various secret peace initiatives, intending to draw Austria-Hungary into a separate

[154] Browder and Kerensky, vol. 1, p. 321.
[155] Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, p. 187.
[156] *Receuil des Actes diplomatiques, Traités et Documents concernant la Pologne: La Question Polonaise pendant la Guerre Mondiale*, ed. by Stanislas Filasiewicz (Paris: Section d'etudes et de publications politiques du Comité National Polonais, 1920), p. 309. Pichon specifically referenced 'Poland' elsewhere in the speech.

peace.[157] As the Austrians hoped to wrest control of occupied Poland from the Germans, any French encouragement of Polish independence could jeopardise the peace talks.[158] The French had not been entirely aloof from the Polish cause; it was the principal supporter of a Polish Army in the United States, where from July 1917 it funded recruitment of more than 20,000 Polish-Americans into a special unit and paid their salaries at levels comparable to the French army.[159] In matters of diplomacy, however, the French government remained cautious. In November 1917, domestic changes combined with international events to shift French strategy as Georges Clemenceau formed his second government on 16 November. Clemenceau argued that France must prosecute the war to the fullest, and this encompassed a new approach to foreign policy.[160] Clemenceau increasingly supported a strategy suggesting that the small nationalities of central and eastern Europe, including the Poles, could provide an eastern counterbalance against Germany and fight against the Bolsheviks.[161] French anti-Bolshevism developed rapidly as the Bolsheviks announced that they would not repay the tsarist government's debts, many of which were owed to France.[162] Pichon's statement did not delineate the borders of a future Poland that France would support; the inclusion of Galicia would surely destroy any chance of a separate peace with Austria-Hungary. He did assert, however, that 'we do not separate our cause from [Poland's].'[163] The suggestion that Polish independence was a war aim – that France would fight to attain it – was not made explicit but was still more than the French government had yet promised.

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[157] Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, pp. 60–61.
[158] FO 371/3001/181803, Howard to Foreign Office, 18 Sept 1917; FO 371/3002/216998, Townley to Foreign Office, 13 Nov 1917; Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 139–48.
[159] Ruskoski, p. 42.
[160] David Robin Watson, p. 272.
[161] On the early development of this strategy, see Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, pp. 62–87; Peter Jackson, pp. 168–72.
[162] Carley, *Revolution and Intervention*, pp. 89–90.
[163] Filasiewicz, p. 309.

The first major British government commitment came on 5 January 1918, when Lloyd George spoke to the Trade Union Conference at Caxton Hall in London.[164] The choice of venue reflected the necessity for a war aims speech; the Bolsheviks' calls for national self-determination, open diplomacy, and a peace without indemnities or annexations emboldened advocates of those principles in Britain, chief among whom were representatives of the unions and the Labour Party.[165] The speech, which outlined Britain's war aims, included the following declaration: 'an independent Poland, comprising all those genuinely Polish elements who desire to form a part of it, is an urgent necessity for the stability of western Europe.'[166] Before this point, British policy on the Polish question had almost exclusively been discussed by the Foreign Office, so the mere mention of the rebirth of Poland at the highest political level represented a significant alteration. The Caxton Hall speech also contained the strongest indication yet that Britain supported the creation of an independent Poland. The language of Lloyd George's speech, while suggesting that Poland's independence was a war aim, limited the government's commitment to such an endeavour. Though Lloyd George called an independent Poland 'a necessity', he said nothing about who would carry out the task of giving Poland independence. It was not certain at the time of Lloyd George's speech that British support would mean much for the re-creation of Poland. The Central Powers still controlled the Polish lands, while Russia – especially if the Bolsheviks were overthrown – could reasonably be expected to claim Russian Poland in the future. As Hardinge had written to Howard a month before and as Lloyd George conceded privately, the British people would be unwilling to make the additional sacrifices required to continue the war until Polish

[164] On the speech and its importance, see especially Mayer, *Political Origins of the New Diplomacy*, pp. 313–28; Rothwell, pp. 145–53.
[165] Rothwell, pp. 146–7.
[166] David Lloyd George, *The War Memoirs of David Lloyd George*, 2nd edn, 2 vols. (London: Odhams Press Limited, 1942), p. 1514.

independence had been won.[167] Lloyd George began his speech on the theme of sacrifice, proclaiming that 'When men by the million are … being subjected to sufferings and privations of war on a scale unprecedented in the history of the world, they are entitled to know for what cause or causes they are making the sacrifice.'[168] The most important causes for the British public at the time were the freedom of Belgium and Alsace-Lorraine from German control; Poland's independence still remained a 'pious aspiration'.[169]

The most important of these orations came when Wilson delivered his 'Fourteen Points' address to a joint session of Congress on 8 January 1918. Certainly in later months the Foreign Office regarded Wilson's thirteenth point as the joint Allied and American position.[170] His speech similarly mixed support for Polish independence with caution on the extent of American commitment. Wilson's thirteenth point, which was devoted to Poland, stated as follows:

> An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant.[171]

As with Lloyd George's speech, the thirteenth point was a major indication of American support for Polish independence but limited possible American involvement. Wilson's speech did not, however, outline how the new Polish state would be 'erected', and contains the word 'should' four times. This wording was not accidental: Wilson, like Lloyd George, set out several war aims but also used carefully chosen wording to prioritise among them. 'Belgium … must be evacuated and restored', Wilson declared, mirroring Lloyd George's assertion that Belgian independence was the 'first requirement' of a just

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[167] John Grigg, *Lloyd George*, 4 vols. (London: Penguin, 2003), vol. 4, p. 427.
[168] Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, p. 1510.
[169] Rothwell, pp. 148, 154.
[170] FO 371/3277/46350, Balfour memorandum, 11 Mar 1918.
[171] *FRUS, 1918: Supplement 1: The World War*, vol. 1, p. 16.

peace.[172] With Germany solidly in control in the east, however, and Russian claims on Poland still possible in the future, neither Wilson nor Lloyd George had much influence over the Polish question. Yet support for Polish independence still had the potential to win Poles to the Allied cause and cause trouble for the Central Powers, who still occupied Polish territory and had Poles fighting in their ranks.[173]

The Allied and American public relations campaign carried with it an implicit assumption: that there existed a core of nationally-conscious Poles in all three partitions who desired an independent Polish nation-state. In 1917, Polish émigré representatives and the Foreign Office had forwarded this assertion. Neither politicians nor officials thoroughly considered the possibility that sectors of the public in Russian Poland (or the other partitions) were not nationally conscious, or that they were nationally conscious but did not consider themselves Polish. Allied and American promises at this stage avoided the issue by referring mostly to Polish self-determination and making only vague references to territory. Though the leaders composed their speeches separately, much of Lloyd George's language on nationality matched Wilson's previous statements. Lloyd George had called for national self-determination by the 'people' of Russia, Poland, and Austria-Hungary in an echo of Wilsonian rhetoric, which Lenin also had also adopted in the Decree on Peace.[174] Wilson contended that the new state would comprise 'indisputably Polish elements', meaning that he envisaged an ethnically unitary state rather than a multinational federation like the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Lloyd George's statement that a new Polish state should include only 'genuinely Polish elements' reflected a similar understanding. This was a greater assurance than the 'autonomy' that was afforded the Czechoslovaks and Yugoslavs in Wilson's Fourteen Points.[175]

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[172] *FRUS, 1918: Supplement 1*, vol. 1, p. 15; Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, p. 1513.
[173] Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 214–5.
[174] Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, p. 185.
[175] Both groups eventually heralded Wilson's pledge but were disappointed at first. See Mamatey, *United States and East Central Europe*, pp. 213–4.

Allied and American vagueness on the borders of a postwar Poland caused great difficulties at the postwar peace conference but also demonstrates the limits of the KNP's attempts to win western governments to their ideas. Dmowski, for instance, had laid out fairly specific territorial demands in his memoranda of March 1917. At this point in the war, however, the Allies and Americans preferred to leave territorial questions undecided. Pichon's reference to an 'indivisible' Poland suggested that the new country should incorporate territory from all three partitions. Moreover, he offered French government support for 'Poland', while Lloyd George and Wilson sidestepped the issue by mentioning the Polish people. Wilson had likely discussed the existence of an independent Poland and the problem of access to the sea.[176] But he provided no specifics in his thirteenth point, which resulted in debates at the postwar peace conference on the precise location of Poland's access to the sea. In fact, though many presumed that Wilson advocated national self-determination, he had not yet used the term publicly. He preferred to talk about 'government with the consent of the governed', which rather implied that he was more concerned that postwar Europe be 'made safe for democracy' than with whether certain national groups should gain self-determination within their ethnographic or historical frontiers.[177] The Foreign Office, which doubted the eventuality of a victorious peace, also suspected that Germany could not be made to surrender Posen.[178] In fact, British foreign-policy-making élites rarely discussed the territorial claims by Polish émigré representatives in 1917, except for Namier who as yet possessed little influence.[179] Certainly an independent Polish state would incorporate territory from Russia, but the

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[176] Seymour, vol. 3, p. 49.
[177] Lloyd George also mentioned 'government with the consent of the governed' in his address; Lloyd George, *War Memoirs*, p. 1510; on Wilson's support for national self-determination, see especially the discussion in Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 19–35, which also demonstrates the limits of Wilson's doctrine to Europe.
[178] Rothwell, p. 156.
[179] The British discussion around Dmowski's memoranda of 21 and 26 Mar 1917 did not mention the territorial claims. On Namier, see, e.g., FO 371/3001/107523, Namier minute, 6 June 1917.

British government still hoped for a separate peace with Austria-Hungary and so Galicia might have to be excluded.[180] While the declarations reflect growing willingness to propose Polish independence for strategic reasons, they also demonstrate the British and American determination to proceed cautiously.

The declarations confirmed the importance of the KNP's connections with the Allied and American governments. Polish émigré representatives had cemented the idea that Poles were a nation and sympathetic to the Allies. Yet the organisation had more work to do as it sought a firmer commitment to a reborn Poland, including more specific reference to territory. The KNP established headquarters in Paris, and shortly thereafter Dmowski moved there. Later in the war the KNP pushed successfully to have the Polish Army fight on the Western Front, hoping that its contribution would raise the status of Polish independence with the Allies much as the contributions of the Czech Legion had advanced the cause of Czechoslovak nationhood.[181] Furthermore, unlike the British and American governments, the French government was more supportive of the KNP's position that a new Poland should be established according to its larger, 'historical' frontiers.[182] This support complemented France's developing alliance policy in central and eastern Europe whereby the French government promised moral and material support to those forces – usually belonging to national groups – that proposed to keep the eastern front open against Germany or to fight against the Bolsheviks. The Foreign Office became somewhat disgruntled over the KNP's changing allegiances; London was no longer the centre of the campaign for Polish independence, as it had been for most of the war. In

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[180] Fest, p. 159.

[181] See FO 371/3277/146278, Stephane Pichon to French Ministry of War, 4 May 1918. On the Czech Legion's importance, see Betty Miller Unterberger, *The United States, Revolutionary Russia, and the Rise of Czechoslovakia* (Chapel Hill; London: University of North Carolina Press, 1989); Dagmar Perman, *The Shaping of the Czechoslovak State: Diplomatic History of the Boundaries of Czechoslovakia, 1914-1920* (Leiden: Brill, 1962); and Harry Hanak, 'France, Britain, Italy and the Independence of Czechoslovakia in 1918', in *Czechoslovakia: Crossroads and Crises, 1918-88*, ed. by Norman Stone and Eduard Strouhal (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989), pp. 30–61.

[182] 'Le Comité national polonais et M. Clemenceau', *Le Temps*, 8 Sept 1918, p. 2.

response to a French statement that boasted that, of all the Allies, France was the most favourable to the Polish émigrés, Hardinge grumbled, 'The French are always unscrupulous as to their promises.'[183] France's growing alignment with the Polish cause in early 1918 prefigured the split between the Allies over full support for Poland's territorial claims at the Paris Peace Conference.

Sobanski remained in London, and his reports on Russian Poland continued to emphasise that the German occupiers were unpopular and treated the Poles heavy-handedly. As a result of this – thanks to the work of the National Democrats – the Russian Poles refused to co-operate with the new regime. In March and April 1918, for instance, the German government attempted to negotiate with the Regency Council, the successor to the Council of State, on the terms for including Russian Poland in a German-dominated political and economic union, or *Mitteleuropa*.[184] Rumbold reported, on information from KNP informants, that the 'the Poles were trying by all means in their power to spin out the negotiations, in the hope that the military situation in the West might change to the advantage of the Entente and that the German claims might thereby be mitigated.'[185] This was occurring even though the Central Powers had hand-picked half of the representatives on the council. The Regency Council's obstruction on *Mitteleuropa* followed another political disaster: when the Central Powers signed the 'bread peace' with Ukraine in February 1918, the entire Polish government resigned to protest the cession of Chelm to Ukraine.[186] Such reports did not motivate the Allies to make additional commitments on Polish independence, but they did figure into Allied propaganda on the Italian Front and confirmed the view that the Polish public sympathised with the Allies.[187]

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[183] FO 371/3278/154242, Hardinge minute, n.d. [13-18 Sept 1918].
[184] The union was perhaps more important for Allied propaganda. See Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 95–7; Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, p. 96; Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 217–8.
[185] FO 371/3278/69730, Rumbold to Foreign Office, 15 Apr 1918.
[186] FO 371/3277/29008, Townley to Foreign Office, 14 Feb 1918.
[187] Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 215–6.

The culmination of the KNP's lobbying efforts came as the Allies' fortunes were improving in mid-1918: the German offensive on the Western Front had stalled, American troops were beginning to arrive, and Czech and Russian White forces were battling the Bolsheviks. Interestingly, after the proclamations in January, the growing sympathy for Polish self-determination had become muted in the Foreign Office, though the KNP's self-congratulatory reports continued. The Allied and American governments were paying a monthly subsidy to the KNP from January 1918 and supporting the development of a Polish army.[188] On 3 June 1918, a joint British, French, and Italian statement proclaimed support for Poland in the following declaration: 'The creation of a Poland, independent and indivisible, under such conditions as will ensure her free political and economic development, constitutes one of the conditions of a solid and just peace, and of the regime of right in Europe.'[189] The joint declaration marked the Allies' strongest demonstration of support for Polish independence and was intended to concur with Wilson's thirteenth point. It was also more definite than Wilson and Lloyd George's speeches in January 1918 because it suggested in stronger terms that an independent Polish state was an important war aim. Though the Allies did not specifically promise access to the sea, their statement recognised the importance of Poland's 'free political and economic development', much as Pichon's 27 December speech had done. Yet while it was the Allies' strongest declaration to date and was immediately used in propaganda on the Italian Front, it was nonetheless weaker than text the KNP had been proposing since the previous December:

> the creation of a Polish State under conditions that guarantee her full political, economic, and military independence, that signifies the reunion

[188] FO 371/3277/30343, Gregory minute, 18 Feb 1918.
[189] FO 371/3278/101921, 'Declaration in favour of Poland', n.d. [3 June 1918]. Italy, which also signed the declaration, had in 1915 been the first country to declare in favour of Polish independence. Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/875/2, "The Polish Question in International Politics", [November 1917].

> in a State of all Polish territories including those giving Poland access to the sea, will be set down as one of the conditions of the peace.[190]

The KNP hoped that the proposed declaration would enshrine their desire for the new Poland to retain most of the lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as a non-negotiable element of any peace settlement. In a letter to the Foreign Office on 15 March 1918, Sobanski underlined the phrase 'will be set down as one of the conditions of the peace' to emphasise the point.[191] The Allied declaration of 3 June did not go so far as this. It did not help that the fate of Russian Poland was far from decided; the German offensive on the Western Front may have stalled, but the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had recognised the Central Powers' victory in the east. The Allied and American governments may have sympathised with Polish independence but they made no further commitments and, significantly, did not consider the re-creation of Poland to be a non-negotiable war aim, which if it remained unresolved would motivate them to continue to fight. The Czechs, who had been fighting for the Allies in Russia and in Italy, eventually received the strongest promises. On 29 June the French government recognised the Czechoslovak National Council as postwar Czechoslovakia's rightful government, and on 9 August the British government recognised the Czechoslovaks as an Allied people, primarily because of the efforts of the Czech Legion. When some Polish émigrés requested that the British government recognise the Polish government in Warsaw as the representatives of a legitimate state, Hardinge minuted, 'We really have gone as far as we reasonably can in helping the Poles.'[192]

Allied and American policy must also be considered in the context of the intensifying propaganda war. Propaganda was used to shape opinion of Poles in different

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[190] Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 214–5. FO 371/3278/101921, 'Declaration in favour of Poland', n.d. [3-8 June 1918?].
[191] FO 371/3278/49693, Sobanski to Gregory, 15 Mar 1918.
[192] FO 371/3278/108501, Hardinge minute, n.d. [30 Jun 1918].

situations of the war.[193] The American Committee on Public Information (CPI), for instance, which oversaw the production and dissemination of American propaganda, prepared material to appeal to Polish-Americans. This was part of a larger government effort to develop links with 'foreign-born' groups; after the war the CPI reported the transmission of 159 releases to the 56 Polish-culture newspapers in the United States.[194] The CPI's efforts were mostly aimed at disseminating government information and promoting '100% Americanism' through events such as a Fourth of July celebration in which 'foreign born' groups, including Polish-Americans, participated enthusiastically.[195] Occasionally, the CPI produced domestic material to appeal to specific audiences; one of its weekly films for country-wide distribution included footage of Polish forces marching before French President Raymond Poincaré in June 1918.[196]

The Allies and Americans also used front propaganda in an attempt to undermine the morale of Polish troops already fighting for the Central Powers. The Polish Legion of the Austrian army fought mostly on the Italian front.[197] Most Allied propaganda directed at Polish troops on the Italian Front in 1918 emphasised the struggle of the Polish people against Austro-German oppression.[198] Such material was considered more effective than

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[193] On front propaganda, see Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 358–60, which shows that propaganda aimed at Polish soldiers in the Austrian army tended to be religious or to focus on Central Powers oppression. Aside from Cornwall's book, there are few mentions of the content of propaganda directed at Polish groups. Propaganda towards Polish nationals is not mentioned in such key works as Sanders and Taylor; Gary S. Messinger, *British Propaganda and the State in the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992); Henry Wickham Steed, *Through Thirty Years 1892-1922: A Personal Narrative*, 2 vols. (London: W. Heinemann, Ltd, 1924), vol. 2; James R. Mock and Cedric Larson, *Words That Won the War: The Story of the Committee on Public Information, 1917-1919* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1939), pp. 257–8, 261 briefly discusses U.S. propaganda directed towards the nationalities of the Central Powers but does not mention Poles specifically.

[194] *The Creel Report; Complete Report of the Chairman of the Committee on Public Information, 1917: 1918: 1919*, ed. by George Creel (New York: Da Capo Press, 1972), p. 87.

[195] Creel, pp. 81–3.

[196] Joseph T. Hapak, 'Film in the Service of Polish Independence', *Polish American Studies*, 44 (1987), p. 27.

[197] Leonard Ratajczyk, 'The Evolution of the Polish Army, 1914-22', in *East Central European Society in World War I*, ed. by Béla K. Király, N.F. Dreisziger, and Albert A. Nofi (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1985), p. 443.

[198] Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 215–6, 358–60.

an emphasis on Allied and American promises, though these could be found in propaganda. Propaganda was generally ineffective in convincing Polish troops to desert.[199] Alexander Watson argues, for instance, that an estimated 850,000 Poles would have been conscripted into the German army during the war.[200] Most were used on the Western Front, and though there were reports that some defected to the French side, most were loyal soldiers.[201] Less information is available about any Allied and American propaganda directed at civilians in Russian Poland or the other partitions. The Allies and the CPI directed some propaganda at civilians in Central Powers territories, but the impetus to inspire nationalist revolutions has not been comprehensively examined. Polish-Americans were, however, among several 'foreign-born' groups that sent resolutions to their compatriots in German and Austrian territories in an attempt to inspire solidarity.[202] In the summer of 1918, some hospital patients and soldiers on leave from the Austrian army brought back propaganda material they had received at the front, and some of this might have filtered back to Galicia.[203] The most important efforts, however, likely came from existing networks like the National Democrats that already carried influence with the populace.

As propaganda directed at Polish nationals tended to emphasise the Polish struggle against Austro-German oppression, it could have reinforced the perception of the suffering Pole in the minds of decision-makers in Britain, France, or the United States. It could also have reinforced the perception that Poles were nationally conscious. The evidence on this, however, is at best inconclusive. Diplomats and officials in the Foreign Office had been developing attitudes about Poles since 1916 and these would hardly have

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[199] Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, pp. 214–6.
[200] The German army did not indicate the nationality of conscripts, so Watson's estimate is based on the assumption that Poles were conscripted in the same proportions as the rest of the population. Alexander Watson, 'Fighting for Another Fatherland: The Polish Minority in the German Army, 1914-1918', *The English Historical Review*, 126 (2011), p. 1138n6.
[201] See Alexander Watson, pp. 1165–6; Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, p. 101.
[202] Mock and Larson, p. 257.
[203] Cornwall, *Undermining of Austria-Hungary*, p. 267.

been refined much by propaganda. Rather, these attitudes seem to have become set before the end of 1917, though as the next chapter will show, Lloyd George, his circle of advisors, and Wilson demonstrated different attitudes than these in the changed circumstances of postwar peace negotiations. There is no evidence, however, that any propaganda related to Poland was read by those making policy. Propaganda materials relating to Poland are not evident in any of the collections examined for this study, including the files of Colonel House, who kept nearly all of his papers, and the voluminous *Papers of Woodrow Wilson*. Rather, it appears that the formation of attitudes about the Polish people occurred mostly as politicians and diplomats encountered the campaigns and campaigners for Polish relief and Polish independence.

Conclusion

By the end of the First World War, the British, French, and American governments had promised the re-creation of a Polish state. At the outbreak of war more than four years previous, such an event had been unthinkable in practical terms. The primary explanation for this shift in each country's Polish policy was the change in wartime strategy occasioned by contingency. The Central Powers had conquered Russia's Polish partition in 1915, and for the rest of the war, the belligerent powers competed to win the favour of the conquered peoples. As the population of Russian Poland was increasingly perceived to comprise primarily nationally-conscious Poles, both sides promised forms of autonomy or independence for Poland to win them over. Allied and American policy was cautious to preserve freedom of action, only making such promises as were perceived to be strategically necessary to prevent the spread of Central Powers influence among the people of Russian Poland and, more generally, to win the war.

The British and French governments only pursued an independent policy on Poland's rebirth in the last year of the war. Before the Bolshevik Revolution, they respected the Russian government's primacy in matters of Polish policy. The United States retained greater independence in its Polish policy because it stayed out of the war until

April 1917 and was never allied with Russia. Yet all three countries had considered positions on Polish affairs since 1915 because of the Polish relief campaign centred in the United States. Britain and France, moreover, worried about the Russian government's dwindling prestige with its former Polish subjects and urged changes in policy to rectify this. Officials and politicians in all three countries developed attitudes about the Polish people and Polish independence in the course of these and later policy deliberations. As the Polish relief campaign raised awareness of the plight of civilians in Russian Poland, British, French, and American officials sympathised with such suffering. They believed that the Russian Poles were innocent of such a fate, regardless of whether they believed the ultimate cause was German requisitioning or a combination of the Russian scorched-earth campaign and the British blockade. A close examination of the Foreign Office reveals growing sympathy for Polish independence long before world events caused the British government to support Polish self-determination. In all three countries, these positions were urged by Polish émigrés. Interactions with the émigré representatives also affected Allied and American sympathy for independence and perceptions of the Polish people as quarrelsome, anti-Semitic, or as the victims of a common enemy. Changes in attitudes can be traced in part to these personal interactions, whether Paderewski's good relations with House and Wilson or Dmowski's ties with British officials like Nicolson, Clerk, Gregory, or even Namier. Changes in policy were mostly contingent on world events, but personal relationships and the development of attitudes about Poles and the rebirth of Poland were also an important factor in policy.

Territories of the Polish Second Republic*



* Reprinted with permission from Zara S. Steiner, *The Lights That Failed: European International History 1919-1933* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 262.

Chapter 3: The Polish territorial settlement, 1919

As the First World War ended, the British, French, and American governments began to think about the Polish question not in terms of whether a Polish nation-state should exist, but *where* it should exist. Such a question inevitably had to consider the wider context, especially the claims of neighbouring countries; the fate of Poland was one of the many territorial questions that lay ahead in the wake of the defeat and collapse of the German, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman, and Russian Empires. This chapter examines how the Allied and American governments responded to the Polish delegation's territorial claims at the Paris Peace Conference and Poland's wars for territory along its periphery. It considers how these responses affected the development of Allied policies and attitudes during the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. This is developed particularly in a case study on East Galicia, which comes near the end of the chapter. While this chapter focuses specifically on the settlement of territorial borders, the next chapter considers the peace conference's examination of internal questions like aid to Poland and the new state's treatment of minorities, which also affected the peacemakers' thinking regarding Poland's borders. All of the issues of the Polish settlement at the peace conference were interrelated, but this approach highlights the key themes of the settlement and elucidates the effect of attitudes on policy. The chapter relies primarily on official documents such as meeting minutes, which were produced for all of the conference's committees. Private papers are also used to explore personal attitudes about Polish people and policy. The chapter begins with an explanation of the working of the peace conference, which was the primary place where these issues were considered.

Historiography

Several specialist works focus on Allied and American policy towards the rebirth of Poland at the Paris Peace Conference. All of these works consider territorial questions alongside internal issues of the Polish state. As with the historiography of the Polish question in the First World War, there has not yet been an in-depth examination of Allied and American attitudes about the Polish people and the frontiers of the new country and how these were related to policy. Gerson and Komarnicki wrote the first monographs that discussed the Polish question at the peace conference based on an examination of important sources.[1] Both Gerson and Komarnicki base their narratives on the published sources available at the time. These include the thirteen volumes of *FRUS* pertaining to the Paris Peace Conference, various memoirs, and certain other published sources such as Charles Seymour's volume on House.[2] How they employ these sources, however, differs greatly. Gerson's short examination of the peace conference descends into polemical castigation of Poland's delegation and its territorial claims, while Komarnicki's defence of the Polish position is more strongly grounded in British, French, and American sources. Komarnicki, for example, examines the Council of Four's discussions by comparing the minutes in *FRUS* with those just published by the French interpreter, Paul Mantoux.[3] Though this section of Komarnicki's book is better researched that his chapters on the First World War, it defend Poland's territorial claims entirely. Lloyd George thus receives

[1] Gerson, pp. 111–37; Komarnicki, pp. 275–396.
[2] Seymour, vol. 4.
[3] The notes in *FRUS* are those prepared by Sir Maurice Hankey for the British delegation. *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. vi. Mantoux prepared his own notes for Clemenceau; they somehow survived the Second World War and were published as *Les délibérations du Conseil des Quatre (24 mars-28 juin 1919)* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1955); this thesis relies on the translation, *The Deliberations of the Council of Four (March 24-June 28, 1919): Notes of the Official Interpreter*, ed. & trans. by Arthur S. Link, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992). This is common practice in English-language works on the peace conference.

the strongest criticism; Komarnicki accuses the British Prime Minister of 'bias' for his opposition to the maximal Polish claims.[4]

Two doctoral projects then took advantage of the opening of government archives in Britain and the United States in the 1960s. First, Russell Bryant's 1968 DPhil thesis examines the British position on Polish territorial questions at the peace conference by examining each issue individually.[5] His was the first study of Britain's policy regarding Poland's frontiers that incorporated the newly-opened Foreign Office archives; he also worked extensively from private papers and the thirteen volumes on the peace conference in the *FRUS* series. The thesis is thoroughly researched with a fair approach to all parties. Bryant does, however, occasionally sympathise with the British government's perspective. He states, for example, that 'the British, in particular Lloyd George, felt that the only means to prevent a new partition [of Poland] was to limit her ethnographic boundaries … [there is] no evidence of any other motive'.[6] The statement relies on a very optimistic interpretation of British intentions; as chapters Three and Four show, many in the British delegation had doubts about Polish national character as well, which affected their willingness to accede fully to Poland's territorial claims.

The second work, John Felix Kadlubowski's doctoral dissertation at the University of Maryland, examines the deliberations of the American experts on Poland's territorial questions.[7] The British and French delegations are also included in the topic but receive significantly less attention. Kadlubowski thoroughly examines the minutes of the various commissions and subcommittees dealing with Poland, though he only relies on American sources. Like Bryant, Kadlubowski sympathises somewhat with his subjects and tends to vindicate American motives, perhaps because he relies too heavily on House's diary. Yet

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[4] E.g. Komarnicki, p. 394, where he states 'It was Lloyd George who as usual displayed the most aggressive attitude towards the Poles' and later refers to Lloyd George's 'usual anti-Polish bias'.
[5] Bryant's thesis contains chapters on Danzig, Marienwerder, Upper Silesia, Teschen, Eastern Galicia, and 'Poland-Lithuania-Russia'.
[6] Russell Bryant, p. xxvii.
[7] See also Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy', which focuses on the role of one expert.

these two studies are important for their depth of research even though they examine Poland's frontier questions within the limited framework of national policy. No comparable study exists on French policy regarding Poland's borders at the peace conference. Hovi provides a brief survey of French policy in *Cordon sanitaire or barrière de l'est*; this focuses largely on military and strategic concerns.[8] In *France and Her Eastern Allies*, Wandycz provides the fullest overview of the Polish settlement.[9] This is based however on Polish but not French sources and reflects the kind of Polish nationalist viewpoint outlined in the Introduction.

The most important work on Poland's border issues at the Paris Peace Conference, however, is doubtless Lundgreen-Nielsen's well-researched volume.[10] As mentioned in the introduction, Lundgreen-Nielsen examined nearly all of the important government and private collections in Britain, France, Poland, and the United States, and thus adopts an international, decentred approach to this question.[11] His dense narrative shows his careful research and reconstruction, partly through the inclusion of nearly 200 pages of endnotes and the inclusion of the perspectives of both the leaders and the experts. Lundgreen-Nielsen examines all of the issues relating to the Polish settlement, both internal and external, that the peace conference considered in 1919, and methodically examines each delegation. Yet one of the main shortcomings of this work is that it resolutely stops at the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919. Many of Poland's territorial claims, especially those

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[8] Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, pp. 152–6, 171–6, 190–6. A series of studies, however, examine relations between France and the Polish Second Republic in its first years; see chapter 5, pp. 225-29.

[9] Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies*, pp. 29–48, 104–31 on Poland's western and eastern borders respectively. Given the book's joint focus on Poland and Czechoslovakia (though there is a marked emphasis on the former country), pp. 75-103 is devoted to the dispute between those two countries over Teschen.

[10] While the 1979 monograph is Lundgreen-Nielsen's main work, three later works are also useful: Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland', 'The Mayer Thesis Reconsidered' (1985), and 'Aspects of American Policy' in *The Reconstruction of Poland*, ed. Latawski (1992).

[11] The only major collections that Lundgreen-Nielsen did not examine were the Esme Howard Papers, which were not yet available to the public, several collections at the Hoover Institution in Stanford, California, and the Bowman papers which he examines later in 'Aspects of American Policy'. This thesis considers all of these collections that he could not include (though not every one of the private collections that Lundgreen-Nielsen examined).

regarding Teschen, East Galicia, and Upper Silesia as well as the borders with Lithuania and Russia, had not yet been settled; only Poland's border with Germany (aside from Upper Silesia, Marienwerder, and Allenstein, where plebiscites had been scheduled) and the minorities treaty were finalised in the Treaty of Versailles. The work is so thorough that it is unsurprising that Lundgreen-Nielsen sometimes mentions the peacemakers' attitudes, but he does this sporadically and he does not develop this theme further. Rather, if he mentions attitudes or interesting anecdotes at all, these are almost exclusively found in the extensive endnotes. This, too, demonstrates that Lundgreen-Nielsen believes that such attitudes are unimportant.

The literature on the peace conference often integrates the role of attitudes more effectively. Many of the above specialist works focus too closely on the Polish settlement where inclusion of the wider context of the peacemakers' deliberations provides greater insight into their perspective: how approaches to larger issues like anti-Bolshevism affected the Polish settlement, or how the peacemakers' attitudes to the Polish delegation compared with their attitudes towards other delegations. These more general works provide this context more effectively, which helps to understand how Poland fit into the peacemakers' European and world strategic outlook and how Poles were viewed relative to other nationalities. Two books on the peace conference, Margaret MacMillan's *Peacemakers* and the 1998 edited collection *The Treaty of Versailles*, each provide a dedicated chapter on the Polish settlement that outlines its place in the policies of the victorious powers.[12] The six-volume official history of the peace conference is also noteworthy; its section on Poland is well-informed as it was written by experts from the

[12] Piotr S. Wandycz, 'The Polish Question', in *The Treaty of Versailles: A Reassessment after 75 Years*, ed. by Manfred F. Boemecke, Gerald D. Feldman, and Elisabeth Glaser (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute; Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 313–35; I have been working from the North American edition of MacMillan's book: *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World* (New York: Random House, 2003), pp. 207–28.

British and American delegations, though it is also somewhat partial to their efforts.[13] Other works on the peace conference do not focus on Poland's territorial settlement specifically but do mention aspects of it.[14] Glenda Sluga's book on the principle of nationality at the peace conference is particularly pertinent to this thesis.[15] Though she mentions Poland and the Poles sparingly, her argument that stereotypes of national identity were central to decision-making in Paris corresponds with what this thesis argues in the particular case of Poland. The claims of Poland's delegation are also examined in detail by historians studying the policies of other countries that disputed their borders with the new Poland.[16]

The Paris Peace Conference: structure of decision-making

The Allies' approaches to three main issues defined the strategic framework in which they approached the Polish territorial settlement. The right of a majority nationality to self-determination, for example for Poland to be composed of 'indisputably Polish [majority] populations', was at least nominally the first consideration for the European territorial settlements.[17] This was firstly because, as outlined in the previous chapter, the Allies and Americans made a series of promises in 1918 using the language of national self-determination and embraced the concept for specific cases, including the rebirth of

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[13] *A History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, ed. by H.W.V. Temperley, 6 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1920), vol. 6, pp. 218-310.

[14] E.g. Alan Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement: Peacemaking in Paris, 1919* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991); Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking* argues that the peacemakers' support for Poland's maximal claims resulted from reactionary tendencies in the conference; His argument is overstated as the peacemakers never had consensus regarding how to draw Poland's borders and often ignored claims of the threat of Bolshevism. Cf Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'The Mayer Thesis Reconsidered.'

[15] Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*.

[16] On the Polish-German border, see Harold I. Nelson, *Land and Power: British and Allied Policy on Germany's Frontiers, 1916-19* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1963); and Klaus Schwabe, *Woodrow Wilson, Revolutionary Germany, and Peacemaking, 1918-1919: Missionary Diplomacy and the Realities of Power*, trans. by Rita and Robert Kimber (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); both books primarily examine the Danzig settlement and the Polish corridor, which were the major flashpoints. On the border between Poland and Czechoslovakia, see Perman, especially the detailed examination of the dispute over the duchy of Teschen.

[17] *FRUS, 1918: Supplement 1: The World War*, vol. 1, p. 16; ACNP, 181.213202/1, Report No. 1 of the Commission on Polish Affairs: Frontier between Poland and Germany, 12 Mar 1919.

Poland. Chief among these promises were the Fourteen Points, which were the basis for the armistice with Germany. Wilson's worldwide popularity, as well as the United States' overwhelming financial advantage over its allies, also explains why national self-determination became so central to the peace conference and why the Allies and Americans did not differ over the general importance of the concept.[18] They did, however, disagree over specific cases, as this chapter will show. The increasingly influential conception of an international system based around populations, national groups in particular, rather than kingdoms or empires went beyond Wilson and his worldwide propaganda duel with Lenin and the Bolsheviks.[19] Yet the question remained: self-determination for whom? Nationality was an acknowledged first principle but the experts had difficulty agreeing on how exactly to determine it.[20] Wilson only advocated national self-determination belatedly, using the term first in an address to Congress on 11 February 1918.[21] He preferred to use the phrase 'government with the consent of the governed', which repeats a phrase in the American Declaration of Independence and refers to the basic desire of people for democratic self-government regardless of nationality. The phrase likely was more significant for his American audiences than those abroad, which may be why many across the world misconstrued Wilson's careful wording and believed that he opposed all multinational empires.[22] Wilson's programme of reform,

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[18] On American influence and inter-Allied debt, see Marc Trachtenberg, *Reparation in World Politics: France and European Economic Diplomacy, 1916-1923* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), pp. 54–5; on Wilson's worldwide popularity, see especially Manela; Daniela Rossini, *Woodrow Wilson and the American Myth in Italy: Culture, Diplomacy, and War Propaganda*, trans. by Antony Shugaar (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2008); MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 14–16.

[19] Weitz argues that an international system based around populations was the hallmark of a 'Paris system' that reached its zenith in the peace settlements after the First World War. On the importance of ideas of national difference at the peace conference, see Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 8–36 especially; and Glenda Sluga, 'What Is National Self-Determination? Nationality and Psychology during the Apogee of Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 11 (2005), 1–20.

[20] Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 13–14, 26–9.

[21] Manela, p. 41.

[22] As Manela outlines in his widely acclaimed book, activists from Egypt, India, China, and Korea appropriated Wilson's statements in their unsuccessful independence campaigns.

once debated and finalised in Paris, offered different degrees of self-determination for German, Austrian, Russian, and Ottoman imperial possessions, ranging from independence for Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Lithuania, among others, to different levels of mandates for the Ottoman Middle East and German imperial possessions in Africa, China, and Oceania.[23]

At the peace conference, however, the task of reconciling national groups with state borders proved to be more difficult than supporting the rights of those groups to statehood.[24] Many historians have repeated Keynes' claim that Wilson was 'ill-informed as to European conditions'.[25] Keynes' assertion is correct insofar as the American president naturally did not have time to make a detailed study of every question but increasingly did not listen to his experts either. But as early as April 1917, House, Balfour, and Wilson had discussed the difficulties of reconciling nation and state in any postwar settlement, in particular regarding the question of Poland's access to the sea. Promises like the Fourteen Points, the 1917 Balfour Declaration of a 'Jewish home', and further Allied and American promises to the Czechs and Yugoslavs through 1918 were made in the context of wartime politics. The vagueness of their wording indicates that their makers regarded as optimistic

[23] On ideas about the level of national consciousness that experts believed was necessary to deserve self-determination, see Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 29–31; see Susan Pedersen, 'The Meaning of the Mandates System: An Argument', *Geschichte und Gesellschaft*, 32 (2006), p. 561 for an introduction to the mandates system established in Paris and the literature; on the mandate negotiations at Paris, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 98–106. The mandate system notably did not apply to existing British and French colonial possessions.

[24] The historiography of national self-determination at the Paris Peace Conference and in the postwar world is vast; works that focus on Poland have been noted elsewhere in this chapter. Weitz provides a good introduction to the historiography on the subject though he somewhat overemphasises the importance of politics based on populations at the conference; Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics* is a better guide for ideas about nationality at the peace conference, but lacks clarity regarding how they were applied in practice; Aviel Roshwald, *Ethnic Nationalism and the Fall of Empires: Central Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, 1914-1923* (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 156–217 gives a reasonable overview of the period but is not always reliable on facts; on territoriality and state formation, see Charles S. Maier, 'Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era', *American Historical Review*, 105 (2000), 807–31; George Gavrilis, *The Dynamics of Interstate Boundaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Malcolm Anderson, *Frontiers: Territory and State Formation in the Modern World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1996). Of works on the peace conference, MacMillan, *Paris 1919* best explains the peacemakers' perspectives. On nations and states, see Gellner, pp. 3–7.

[25] John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Howe, 1920), p. 39.

the suggestion that they would easily conform to a territorial settlement after the war and wanted to avoid specific commitments like those to Italy in the 1915 Treaty of London, which caused tension at the peace conference.[26] The Allied and American governments may not have been fully informed of the ramifications of their promises at the time when they made them; their preparations for the peace conference will be outlined below. Nonetheless, the complications of a European territorial settlement based primarily on national self-determination – both drawing borders around mixed populations where possible and otherwise accommodating minority groups – became evident early in the conference. The mixture of peoples within the multinational empires meant that separating Poles from Ukrainians in Galicia, or Czechs from Germans in the Sudetenland, often proved difficult.[27] Yet the peacemakers remained committed to national self-determination in Europe because they honestly believed that creating a few new countries and modifying the borders of others on ethnographic grounds would prevent future wars. As Lloyd George often put it, leaving co-nationals in another country would invite future wars driven by irredentism, or 'Alsace-Lorraines'.[28] As this chapter will show, this view that national self-determination was practical as it could avoid future conflicts was evident throughout the Council of Four's discussions on Poland's borders and in the meetings of various commissions examining the issues.[29] It was not universally applied,

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[26] On the context of wartime promises and their later complications, see especially Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*; on Italy's short boycott of the negotiations, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 279–305. Italy also claimed the city of Fiume (Rijeka) which was Slavic and not included in the Treaty of London.

[27] On the territorial settlement in central and eastern Europe, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 109–42, 207–72 for the territorial settlement of each country (though little attention is given to the Baltic States); Sharp, *The Versailles Settlement*, pp. 130–58; and Temperley, vol. 4 which focuses specifically on central and eastern Europe (excepting Poland and the Baltic States, which are covered in vol. 6, pp. 218-310).

[28] E.g. *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 140.

[29] This was also reflected in other discussions especially regarding Poland's borders, for example between Balfour and House in 1917, as mentioned above, and especially within the British delegation, e.g. Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/884, Kerr to Drummond, 4 Apr 1919, and Churchill College Archives, James Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 0727/19/Danzig, Note on Paper 7593: "Future of Danzig" by Polish Commission, 19 April 1919.

however, and arguments on the strategic, historic, or economic value of territory were also considered.

While the process of reconciling state and nation and balancing economic and strategic interests continued at the peace conference, several countries in central and eastern Europe also attempted to create *faits accomplis* on the battlefield. Small conflicts had broken out across the region after the armistice in November 1918 and continued beyond the signing of the Treaty of Versailles in June 1919.[30] Poland, for instance, fought five wars in its first year. With the Allied and American armies demobilising quickly, the peacemakers in Paris knew that their authority had limits. As British general Henry Wilson complained, 'The Paris writ does not run'.[31] The Polish government's attempts to claim disputed territory, especially on the battlefield but also at the conference table in Paris, began to divide opinion among the peacemakers; some supported the Polish government in all of its endeavours while others increasingly believed that it was grasping for land to which Poles had no ethnographic claim. The peacemakers attempted with some success to use what influence they had to prevent *faits accomplis*. 'The Polish Government should be warned against adopting a policy of an aggressive character', the Supreme Council instructed an inter-Allied mission to Poland. 'Any appearance of attempting to prejudge the decisions of the Conference will have the worst possible effect.'[32] Similar warnings were sent, for instance, to the Czechoslovak and Romanian governments when those countries invaded Hungary in June 1919.[33] The Allied and American peacemakers realised that all of the countries of central and eastern Europe were engaging in skirmishes along their borders. Often, however, this created a baseline for comparison in

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[30] An introduction to these conflicts is Roshwald, pp. 156–217; see also Geoff Eley, 'Remapping the Nation: War, Revolutionary Upheaval and State Formation in Eastern Europe, 1914–1923', in *Ukrainian-Jewish Relations in Historical Perspective*, ed. by Howard Aster and Peter J. Potichnyj, 2nd edn (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, 1990).
[31] Henry Wilson, quoted in MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 30.
[32] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 839.
[33] See especially *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 352, where Wilson noted the similarities between the Romanian invasion of Hungary and Polish actions in East Galicia.

which governments with persuasive politicians in Paris, like those of Greece and Czechoslovakia, explained their case successfully.[34] Other delegations like Hungary's, which was doubly out of favour for fighting with the Central Powers and because of Bela Kun's communist revolution in March 1919, or even Poland's, won over the peacemakers less easily.

The second major issue for the peace conference was how to avoid another war with Germany. In this matter, while the peacemakers considered the right of national self-determination, they weighed other strategic and economic factors as well. France's economy and northeastern lands had been devastated by four years of trench warfare; its government thus pursued a harsh line against Germany.[35] While the government's primary war aim had always been the return of Alsace-Lorraine, it also attempted to punish Germany for beginning the war and to ensure that it was never in a position of such strength again. The French delegation sought reparations from Germany to cover the Allies' wartime expenditure and to pay for the massive destruction France had suffered. It also hoped that Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania would take Russia's place as a counterweight on Germany's eastern border.[36] To this end the French delegation, especially Marshall Ferdinand Foch, pushed for the rapid deployment of the Polish Army, which now comprised former prisoners of war from Italy and France as well as Polish-Americans, to secure critical areas such as Danzig and Posen.[37] It also supported the Polish and Czechoslovak delegations' claims on German territory and coordinated its approach

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[34] MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 229.
[35] On the French approach at the peace conference, see in particular Stevenson, *French War Aims*, pp. 133–97; David Robin Watson, pp. 331–79; Trachtenberg, pp. 29–154; and Peter Jackson, pp. 197–315; on the influence of domestic politics, see Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, pp. 647–72.
[36] See Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*; Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies*; Isabelle Davion, *Mon voisin, cet ennemi: la politique de sécurité française face aux relations polono-tchécoslovaques entre 1919 et 1939* (Brussels: PIE Peter Lang, 2009).
[37] E.g. *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 477-8; ACNP, 181.21301/6, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 14 Feb 1919.

with those delegations in private.[38] Many in the British government, and even more of the public, favoured France's hard line; they too wanted to punish Germany for the war.[39] By the end of March 1919, however, Lloyd George and his advisors became increasingly convinced that the eventual peace treaty would be too harsh on Germany, especially the suggested concessions to Poland. He also would have been aware that such harsh terms would disrupt the balance of power on the continent in favour of France. Wilson often agreed; the United States delegation pursued a peace based on national self-determination, which would deny many of the Polish delegation's claims in disputed areas.[40] The American delegation's major vehicle for peace, however, was the League of Nations. They hoped (as did some within the other delegations like Lord Robert Cecil) that the key to European peace lay in collective security, which would guarantee borders more effectively than spurious land grabs.[41] The other two major allies, Italy and Japan, preferred to concentrate on their own interests. Italian experts participated in commission meetings that discussed Poland's borders but rarely advocated any particular position; Italy's leaders infrequently commented on the Polish settlement and did not impact it. Japanese participation in discussions of the Polish settlement in any form was very rare.[42]

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[38] Georges Chabot, 'La géographie appliquée à la Conférence de la paix en 1919. Une séance franco-polonaise', in *La Pensée géographique française contemporaine. Mélanges offerts au professeur A. Meynier* (Saint-Brieuc: Presses universitaires de Bretagne, 1972), pp. 101–5.

[39] MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 185; on Britain, see M.L. Dockrill and J. Douglas Goold, *Peace without Promise: Britain and the Peace Conferences 1919-23* (London: Batsford Academic and Educational, 1981); *The Paris Peace Conference 1919: Peace without Victory?*, ed. by M.L. Dockrill and John Fisher (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2001); Goldstein, pp. 229–78; MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 36–49 especially; on policy towards Germany, see especially Nelson; on domestic politics, see Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, pp. 133–66, 604–46.

[40] On the United States, see Arthur Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers: American Diplomacy at the Paris Peace Conference, 1919* (New York: Norton, 1986); Inga Floto, *Colonel House in Paris: A Study of American Policy at the Paris Peace Conference 1919* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 3–16 especially; on policy towards Germany, see Schwabe; on domestic politics, see Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, pp. 119–32. See also works on Wilson and his policies in ch. 2, p. 93n105.

[41] *PWW*, vol. 55, p. 243.

[42] See also Kadlubowski, p. 123.

The final major issue that the peacemakers faced was how to deal with Russia. This issue also divided opinion and was a primary influence on the discussion of Poland's eastern frontiers. While the Supreme Council waited to invite the German government to the peace conference, it did not invite any Russian representatives at all, though various Russian groups attempted to involve themselves in discussions. The peacemakers did, however, make two unsuccessful attempts to negotiate with the Bolsheviks.[43] They also tried to uproot them: British, French, American, and Japanese forces launched limited invasions from the north, south, and east and offered limited financial and material support to various factions opposing the Bolsheviks in Russia including nationalist bodies like the Czech Legion and Ukrainian forces.[44] The Allies and Americans imposed a blockade and later carried out a widespread aid campaign intended to strengthen the Russian people so that they could overthrow the Bolshevik government.[45] In the meantime the peacemakers attempted where possible to make policy regarding the territories of the former Russian Empire. In early 1919 many observers believed the Bolsheviks would soon collapse, yet perhaps the greater fear was that the Bolshevik contagion was spreading. The peacemakers feared a Bolshevik invasion of the west but they also feared communist propaganda and the possibility that revolution might erupt

[43] Compared to the problems of national self-determination and Germany, much less has been written about Russian issues at the peace conference. Of the surveys of the peace conference, the most extensive treatment of Russian issues is in Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, pp. 284–346, 410–87, 813–26; cf MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 63–82; and Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 239–41.

[44] The principal works consulted on intervention are David S. Foglesong, *America's Secret War against Bolshevism: U.S. Intervention in the Russian Civil War, 1917-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995); Unterberger; George F. Kennan, *Soviet-American Relations, 1917-1920*, 2 vols. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956); Carley, *Revolution and Intervention*; Richard H. Ullman, *Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917-1921*, 3 vols. (Princeton; London: Princeton University Press; Oxford University Press, 1961); Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War* (Boston; London: Allen & Unwin, 1987); Steiner, *The Lights That Failed*, pp. 131–81.

[45] On the United States' use of food aid to combat Bolshevism in Russia, see Foglesong, *America's Secret War*, pp. 231–71; Bertrand M. Patenaude, *The Big Show in Bololand: The American Relief Expedition to Soviet Russia in the Famine of 1921* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

spontaneously, especially in Germany but also among their own people.[46] Revolution had erupted in Berlin as the war was ending in 1918, while the communist Béla Kun took control of Hungary for nearly six months beginning in March 1919.[47] There was labour unrest in Britain, France, and even sleepy Winnipeg.[48] The peacemakers were thus cautious in their dealings with the Bolsheviks and regarding Russia's frontiers, as will be examined further in chapter 5.

The Bolshevik threat motivated the French government's increasing conviction that Poland must become a linchpin of their *cordon sanitaire* of anti-Bolshevik states separating Russia from Germany and the rest of Europe. Beginning in 1918 the French supported the Finns, the Czech Legions, and Ukrainian forces in their battles against the Bolsheviks. After the end of the First World War, the French government increasingly relied on Poland and Romania. This also motivated the French delegation's support for Poland's territorial claims in the east, though on some other matters like the independence of Lithuania it was more cautious, preferring to wait in case a friendly reactionary government toppled the Bolsheviks and claimed imperial Russia's Baltic territories. Polish representatives often explained to the peace conference that because Polish forces were fighting Bolsheviks among Ukrainian and Lithuanian forces, their territorial claims in those regions should be supported. While the French government agreed, British and American delegates were more cautious; they approved of Polish self-determination in Russia's westernmost territories but only supported such claims as were ethnographically defensible.

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[46] E.g. CAD, Papiers André Tardieu, Box 466, Jusserand telegram, 24 Oct 1918; Churchill College Archives, James Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 727/10/Germany, 'The Situation in Germany' memo, n.d. [c.23 Dec 1918].
[47] On the peace conference and Hungary under Béla Kun, see Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, pp. 521–603, 716–52, 827–52; MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 257–72.
[48] David Robin Watson, pp. 380–4.

Preparations and structure

The major issues addressed at the conference are important to consider, but so is the structure in which decisions were debated and taken. Wartime diplomacy had involved a new and changing situation but was largely done within existing power and bureaucratic structures. The Paris Peace Conference, which opened with its first official plenary session on 18 January, was an event unrivalled in world history. The peacemakers relied in part on existing structures such as their foreign offices to determine the delegation's policies but also created *ad hoc* bodies in which the major delegations – Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States (known collectively as the Big Five) – could discuss questions together.[49] Supplicant delegations like Poland's participated in these meetings when invited. The peacemakers intended the meetings in January to be part of a preliminary conference to determine the terms of the treaty with Germany, so they did not invite the German delegation to respond until the draft peace terms were completed. Quickly the preliminary conference became the main conference and the peacemakers began to make decisions. The leader and foreign minister of each of the Big Five were the main participants at early meetings of the Supreme Council, giving the meetings the moniker the Council of Ten. Dozens of supplicant groups also attended the conference. Poland was permitted two delegates, but others like the Lithuanians or the Vietnamese Ho Chih Minh were denied access to the conference and had to plead their cases informally. Each of the British, French, and American governments brought hundreds of delegates, mostly drawn from politics, the diplomatic corps, and academia. The delegates debated the peace settlement and then socialised together away from the

[49] On the organisation of the conference, see Temperley, vol. 1, pp. 236-77; Sally Marks, 'Behind the Scenes at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919', *The Journal of British Studies*, 9 (1970), 154–80. Many useful memoirs portray the milieu of the conference; see especially Harold Nicolson, *Peacemaking, 1919*, Repr. ed. (London: Constable, 1945); Stephen Bonsal, *Suitors and Suppliants: The Little Nations at Versailles* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1946); and selections from the papers of James Headlam-Morley, arranged in *A Memoir of the Paris Peace Conference, 1919*, ed. by Agnes Headlam-Morley, Russell Bryant, and Anna M. Cienciala (London: Methuen, 1972); see also MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 55–62.

meeting rooms. American geographer Dr Isaiah Bowman noted in his diary for 13 Jan 1919 that he had dined with the family of Emmanuel de Martonne, the French geographer who was now in charge of the Comité d'Etudes.[50] Three days later, Bowman reported in his diary that he and two other American experts dined with British experts; later Lloyd George, Balfour, and other 'bigwigs' came over and 'chatted' with them.[51] Polish delegates, like other representatives like the flirtatious Queen Marie of Romania, attempted to persuade the Allied experts at various social gatherings.[52] The presence of so many representatives who mingled easily made Paris a transnational contact zone where ideas, including those about national character, could spread formally and informally through the delegations.

The Big Five had each examined many questions and devised potential strategy before the conference, so in some cases their views were already partly formed. These preparations, especially those of the American Inquiry, are important because they gathered many of the maps and statistics that the peacemakers used in 1919. Their conclusions also influenced the settlement of some of the territorial questions that the peace conference debated. Moreover, many of the same individuals involved in planning for the postwar peace were chosen as experts on the Polish question, including Dr Robert Lord of the American delegation and Tyrrell of the British. The United States Inquiry undertook the most extensive preparations.[53] Convened in September 1917, the Inquiry comprised approximately 150 experts, among them prominent historians like James Shotwell, Archibald Cary Coolidge, and Charles Homer Haskins and geographers like

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[50] Milton S. Eisenhower Library, Johns Hopkins University, MS 58: Isaiah Bowman Papers, Box 13.2, 'Diaries', [hereafter Bowman Diary], 13 Jan 1919.
[51] Bowman Diary, 16 Jan 1919.
[52] Howard Papers, DHW 1/5, Howard Diary [hereafter Howard Diary], entry for 11 Apr 1919; MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 134.
[53] On the Inquiry, see especially Lawrence E. Gelfand, *The Inquiry: American Preparations for Peace, 1917-1919* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood, 1976); also Neil Smith, *American Empire: Roosevelt's Geographer and the Prelude to Globalization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), pp. 113–38; Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 20–22.

Bowman, who was the director of the American Geographical Society. By the end of the war, the Inquiry had produced nearly 2000 reports and around 1200 maps to serve as background material for the eventual peace conference. Lord, an expert in Polish history at Harvard University, headed the small Polish section that produced several papers on potential borders for the new Poland and conditions in those territories. They also assisted with the preparation of papers that commented on neighbouring regions like the Baltic or East Galicia or countries like Germany. [54]

Britain's Political Intelligence Department (PID), which was established in February 1918 with Tyrrell in administrative control, headed British government preparations. As with the Inquiry, the PID relied on experts from outside the Foreign Office, including historians such as Arnold Toynbee, E.H. Carr, R.W. Seton-Watson, James Headlam-Morley, and Lewis Namier.[55] Though the role of the PID experts was to examine and evaluate the foreign press rather than to consider a peace settlement, several PID members played important roles in the Polish settlement. These included Headlam-Morley and Namier, whose roles will be explained below. Finally, a handful of French academic experts began meeting as early as February 1917 to discuss the contours of a victorious peace.[56] They initially concentrated on France's northern and north-eastern borders and only turned to European questions near the end of the war.[57] Unlike the other

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[54] On the Inquiry and Poland's rebirth, see Biskupski, *United States and the Rebirth of Poland*, pp. 393–417; this updates the information presented in Biskupski, 'Re-Creating Central Europe: The United States "Inquiry" into the Future of Poland in 1918', *The International History Review*, 12 (1990), 249–79.

[55] Lord Edward Gleichen was the PID's titular head. On British preparations, see Goldstein, pp. 9–89; Alan Sharp, 'Some Relevant Historians – the Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office, 1918-1920', *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 34 (1988), 359–68; Steiner and Dockrill, pp. 55–60.

[56] On the Comité, see Olivier Lowczyk, *La fabrique de la paix: du Comité d'études à la Conférence de la Paix, l'élaboration par la France des traités de la Première Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Economica: Institut de Stratégie comparée, 2010); Lowczyk, 'Le général bourgeois, un militaire imposé?: L'influence de l'état-major français sur le Comité d'études en 1917', *Guerres mondiales et conflits contemporains*, 229 (2008); Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 22–4; Gilles Palsky, 'Emmanuel de Martonne and the Ethnographical Cartography of Central Europe (1917–1920)', *Imago Mundi*, 54 (2002), 111–19.

[57] Lowczyk, 'Le général bourgeois, un militaire imposé?', p. 6.

delegations, however, they did not need to leave anyone behind to attend a peace conference in Paris. Georges Chabot, a member of the Comité, later recalled that one of their main tasks in 1919 was to calculate the consequences of the pencil strokes 'that the Four, Wilson, Lloyd George, Clemenceau, and Orlando, meeting in the afternoon … had striped across the map of Europe.'[58]

Although the leaders provided general direction, the commissions initially did 'all the real work of the Conference', according to Harold Nicolson, a British diplomat in Paris.[59] They were tasked with quickly coming to decisions of great weight that could affect the futures of millions of people. Nicolson, who sat on the Czech and Greek commissions, recoiled at the implications of their work: 'my courage fails at the thought of the people whom our errant lines enclose or exclude'.[60] Moreover, the information that was available to them was often inadequate or even misleading. In Dmowski's presentations to the various committees of the peace conference, he often mentioned how Poles had been under-counted in the census data on which his figures were based and offered his own interpretation of the all-important ethnographic statistics from each partition in a way that supported Poland's claims.[61] Of course, statistics worked both ways, and the other delegations whose claims conflicted with Poland's also offered their own interpretation of ethnographic statistics, using language, religion, or culture as necessary to define national identity.[62] The peacemakers knew that the information upon which they relied was not always sound. Chabot recalled that part of his job was to sift through the 'deliberately falsified statistics' submitted by each nationality.[63] Though the experts at the peace conference were generally aware of such problems, they did what

[58] Chabot, pp. 101–2.
[59] Nicolson, p. 220.
[60] Nicolson, p. 219.
[61] ACNP, 181.2132201/2, WNF meeting minutes, 4 Mar 1919; ACNP, F.W. 181.213201/4, Dmowski memo, 'Note sur les frontières occidentales de l'État polonais', 6 Mar 1919.
[62] E.g. ACNP, 181.21301/4, Vsevelod Holubovych to Gen. Berthelemy, 8 Feb 1919. The possibility that some in contested territories were not nationally conscious was not considered.
[63] Chabot, p. 102.

they could with the information they had available. The experts' prominence in the peace settlements endured until the advent of the leaders' Council of Four in mid-March 1919, after which the experts' opinions – on the Polish territorial settlement though not others – were increasingly questioned.

In the first weeks the council heard depositions from representatives on many questions, including Poland's delegates on 29 January. In a five-hour address, Dmowski addressed the situation in Poland before claiming Posen, Upper Silesia, West Prussia and parts of East Prussia, Danzig, part of the Duchy of Teschen, and East Galicia.[64] His approach conflicted with Piłsudski's – the Polish chief of state wanted to establish Poland's boundary further to the east – though Dmowski suggested that as Ukraine and Lithuania were not yet able to govern themselves they should be allied with Poland.[65] The peacemakers then passed the major territorial questions to the experts, with a Commission on Polish Affairs established on 12 February to examine Poland's boundaries and report back for approval.[66] The commission included a representative from each of the Big Five and was primarily responsible for determining the postwar borders of Poland. On specific matters, the Polish commission seconded one expert from each delegation to sit on a sub-commission, such as the Sub-Commission for the Study of the Eastern Frontiers of Poland. Occasionally the Polish commission sat with other commissions, like the Commission on Czecho-Slovak Affairs, to examine questions of mutual importance. Finally, other commissions sometimes examined questions of importance to the Polish settlement; these included the Commission on the Eastern Frontiers of Germany and the Commission on Baltic Affairs. Several missions sent to Poland aided the commissions in their fact-finding. Some, like the inter-Allied mission to Poland, which was the main mission, were joint undertakings that included several

[64] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 778-82.
[65] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 782.
[66] The most thorough examinations of the workings of the commissions are Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference* and Kadlubowski.

representatives from each country. Other missions were unilateral endeavours, such as the Wade Mission that the British government sent to help the Poles establish a national unity government before the peace conference began, or the American Morgenthau Mission later in 1919 that investigated claims of violence against Jews in the Polish lands. The American delegation also received a great deal of information from American Relief Administration (ARA) workers stationed in territories controlled by Poland. Based primarily on these sources of information, the Polish Commission evaluated Poland's claims to disputed territories.

Poland's border wars and territorial claims

Before beginning a discussion of British, French, and American policies and attitudes regarding Poland's territorial claims, a short outline of the situation on the ground in Poland is necessary. Similar examinations of conditions in Poland will continue in chapters Four and Five, prefacing the discussions to which they are most relevant. This section outlines the armistice clauses affecting Poland and those core regions over which the Polish government claimed effective control beginning in 1919. The next chapter will consider Poland's governance and the economy in greater depth along with the peacemakers' policies and attitudes relating to those questions. The fifth chapter will outline the state of Poland's army in 1919 and 1920 as it engaged in increasingly intense conflict with the Bolshevik Red Army.

The Allies and the United States signed an armistice with Austria-Hungary on 3 November 1918 and with Germany on 11 November.[67] Neither armistice mentioned Poland specifically, but each provided conditions under which a Polish state could assert its sovereignty.[68] Each armistice required the defeated power to evacuate its troops from

[67] The versions used are as follows: for the armistice with Austria-Hungary, *FRUS, 1918: Supplement 1: The World War*, vol. 1, pp. 433-5; for Germany, ibid., pp. 463-8 and pp. 494-8.
[68] For an introduction to the principal events of and works about the end of the war, see Christoph Mick, '1918: Endgame', in *The Cambridge History of the First World War*, ed. by J. M. Winter, 3 vols.

territories occupied since the beginning of the war, which included Russian Poland. Yet the terms contained important differences. The armistice with Austria-Hungary required the empire's troops to evacuate 'all territories invaded … since the beginning of the war'.[69] The Austrian government had controlled the southern part of occupied Russian Poland, including cities like Lublin and Kielce; these were now formally free.[70] The terms also permitted the armies of the Allied and Associated Powers free movement across Austro-Hungarian territory and the option to occupy 'strategic points' if necessary.[71] The later armistice with Germany, however, stipulated that German troops remain in territory seized from Russia until the Allies required them to leave.[72] This was intended as a temporary situation; a separate article required the renunciation of Germany's territorial gains in the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Rather, the stipulation reflected the belief that German forces, rather than such local authorities that existed, would be best able to provide order in parts of the German occupied zone, which comprised the northern half of Russian Poland, Ukraine, and the Baltic region. The armistice terms provided representatives of the Allies and United States access to the territories on Germany's eastern frontier through Danzig or the Vistula River (a much more restrictive condition than the total freedom of movement provided in Austria-Hungary), but essentially German troops were expected to secure Russian Poland, Ukraine, and the Baltic region until the political situation solidified and the peace conference decided the fate of those territories.[73]

(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), vol. 1, pp. 133–71. On the armistice negotiations, see Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 221–33; Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, pp. 53–116; Nelson, pp. 53–87; Schwabe, pp. 30–117; on their relevance to Polish claims, see Komarnicki, pp. 223–36.

[69] Article III, p. 433.

[70] On the end of the Habsburg empire, see Mark Cornwall, 'Disintegration and Defeat: The Austro-Hungarian Revolution', in *The Last Years of Austria-Hungary: A Multi-National Experiment in Early Twentieth-Century Europe*, ed. by Mark Cornwall, Rev. and expanded edn (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2002), pp. 167–96; Victor S. Mamatey, 'Legalizing the Collapse of Austria-Hungary at the Paris Peace Conference', *Austrian History Yearbook*, 3 (1967), 206–37.

[71] Article IV, p. 434.

[72] Article XII, p. 496.

[73] Article XVI, p. 466; the article specified that 'The Allies shall have free access to the territories evacuated by the Germans on their eastern frontier, either through Danzig, or by the Vistula, in

The Allied and American governments intended that a Polish state would develop that included not only some of the territory that the Central Powers had occupied during the war but also German and Austrian territory within the pre-1914 boundaries of those countries, but the armistices had not created such a state.[74] In Warsaw, Piłsudski quickly consolidated power and declared himself the provisional leader of Poland on 22 November. Meanwhile, the KNP in Paris claimed to be the *de facto* government of Poland, although only France's government recognized its legitimacy. Piłsudski and the KNP reached a compromise on 12 January, just before the peace conference opened. (The events of this crucial period, and how the Allies and Americans perceived them, are considered in greater detail in the next chapter.) Yet the independence of Poland was not so simply accomplished. In November 1918, the fledgling government in Warsaw began to consolidate effective control over regions that soon formed the territorial core of independent Poland. This core incorporated three key areas. Territory from the Russian partition centred on Congress Poland, while parts of Podlasie, a territory to the east which had formerly been part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, were also included. Białystok – the most important regional city to the east – and its surrounding region were incorporated within a few months. Finally, the government quickly established control over western Galicia, taking power from the Polish Liquidation Committee that formed in Kraków on 29 October just prior to the armistice between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Allies on 3 November.[75]

Yet the government's increasingly effective claim to authority in some areas should not obscure the fact that major problems lay ahead. The country had competing governments in Warsaw and Paris until just before the peace conference, when

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order to convey supplies to the populations of those territories and for the purpose of maintaining order;' p. 496.

[74] Komarnicki, p. 228.

[75] Andrzej Ajnenkiel, 'The Establishment of a National Government in Poland, 1918', in *The Reconstruction of Poland*, ed. Latawski (1992), p. 134.

Paderewski and Piłsudski reached the above-mentioned compromise wherein the former became prime minister and the latter retained his position as head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. Under the agreement, Paderewski and Dmowski were made the delegates for Poland at the peace conference. The government in Warsaw needed to create a unified administration and regulatory and legal framework from the patchwork that remained from the partitions and the occupation administration; despite the early establishment of a national government, the full implementation of essential local services continued into the mid-1920s.[76] Poland faced massive economic challenges, including widespread unemployment and the necessity of implementing land reform. Economic conditions helped to fuel some social unrest and inspired fears that the people might turn to Bolshevism. Social cohesion was also a problem as Polish relations with minorities, especially Jews, proceeded poorly. Finally, elections in January 1919 splintered the Sejm (parliament) into several rival parties who together needed to make a constitution. These internal problems will be covered in greater detail in chapter four, but are raised first here because they are part of the context in which the peacemakers considered Poland's territorial claims. The discussion of these claims at the peace conference – and the Polish government's attempts to create *faits accomplis* in the meantime – will be the focus of the rest of this chapter.

Posen

The Polish Commission's first task was to investigate the boundary between Poland and Germany. Though the Commission considered historical, economic, strategic, and religious claims for territory, its first principle for determining the borders was nationality.[77] Dmowski circulated amongst the Committee and pressed Poland's claims; since Germany had not been invited to the conference, its representatives could not

[76] Janusz Sibora, 'The Origins of the Polish Foreign Ministry: 11 November 1918-January 1919', in *The Reconstruction of Poland*, ed. Latawski (1992), pp. 170–4.
[77] ACNP, 181.213202/1, Report No. 1 of the Commission on Polish Affairs, 12 Mar 1919.

counter him.[78] This probably influenced the Commission's final report, which favoured Poland's claims, but in truth the peacemakers, especially the leaders, made many of these decisions with little input from the interested parties. The peacemakers did not dispute that the province of Posen would eventually be allocated to Poland as the majority of the population was Polish, but the timeline for this handover had not been set.[79] The Polish population there had risen up when Paderewski arrived in Posen city at the end of December 1919, and tensions still lingered. An unofficial Polish regional government was convened in December 1918 under Wojciech Korfanty, a former Reichstag deputy, while his former Reichstag colleagues from the province sat provisionally in the Polish Sejm until elections were held on 15 April.

In February 1919, shortly after Dmowski made his presentation of Poland's claims to the peace conference, tensions broke out in Posen.[80] In response to offenses committed by German troops, local Polish paramilitaries took control of the city of Posen. In communication with the peacemakers, both sides naturally blamed the other. Korfanty told the inter-Allied mission that the Polish population had 'risen up' against 'gangs' and the regular German army.[81] Meanwhile Matthias Erzberger, the head of the German armistice commission, complained to the Supreme Council on 14 February that 'the Poles … have everywhere assumed the offensive militarily'.[82] The peacemakers tended to side with the Polish point of view; the inter-Allied mission in Warsaw warned the peace conference that the unrest was in fact a German 'offensive'.[83] When the Allies renewed the armistice convention with Germany on 17 February, a stipulation was added requiring

[78] Ibid; Kadlubowski, p. 130.
[79] On 27 March, German representatives claimed that Posen had a German majority, presumably in a half-hearted effort to prevent the territory being assigned to Poland; Nelson, p. 176. They also disputed the cession of all of Posen in their 29 May reply to the draft peace terms: see *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 835.
[80] On the uprising, see Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 178–80; Harald Von Riekhoff, *German-Polish Relations, 1918-1933* (Baltimore; London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1971), pp. 13–14.
[81] ACNP, 181.21301/3, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 13 Feb 1919.
[82] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 39.
[83] ACNP, 181.21301/6, Inter-Allied mission telegram to Paris Peace Conference, 14 Feb 1919.

both sides to cease 'offensive operations'.[84] The inter-Allied mission in Warsaw was obliged to go to Posen to investigate further and negotiate a settlement, which was reached by the middle of March. The Polish delegation's claim that the Germans were at fault was generally accepted in Paris, but it helped that at this early point in 1919, the peacemakers were easily convinced of German duplicity. 'Germany had one face towards the West, where she had made peace, and the other face towards the East, where she was organising for war', Dmowski had proclaimed in his presentation to the Supreme Council on 29 January.[85] In another meeting, he proclaimed that 'the Poles do not harbour imperialistic and annexationist tendencies'.[86] German claims that the Polish population of Posen was at fault had evidently failed to persuade the Allies. This negative perception of the Germans was widely shared: 'It is clear that Germans are only playing with us', Howard wrote in his diary just before leaving the negotiations between the Germans and Poles.[87]

Later in the conference, memories of the skirmishes in Posen may have contributed to Poland's developing reputation for skirmishing wilfully with its neighbours, which surfaced especially in the discussions over East Galicia in May 1919. Delegates may have remembered Erzberger's protestations in February and March that the Poles were at fault.[88] 'The Poles seem to have the intention of creating a state of general insecurity to have the pretext of intervention for the sake of re-establishing order', he had protested on 14 February. His proof was that had the greatly admired German forces been prepared for the skirmish in Posen, they would not have lost.[89] His explanation had the ring of truth and, notably, contrasted with Dmowski's claim to the

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[84] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 24.
[85] *FRUS: PPC,* vol. 3, p. 778.
[86] ACNP, 181.2132201/3, WNFS minutes, 6 Mar 1919.
[87] Howard Diary, 18 Mar 1919.
[88] Schwabe in particular argues that the German government proved effective at protecting its interests at the conference, e.g. over Danzig pp. 254-67.
[89] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 39.

Supreme Council that the Germans were organising for war and intended to use a special corps of officers to suppress the Poles.[90] The problem for the Polish delegation was that while the peacemakers generally sided with them on the issue of skirmishes with Germans, when Poland began fighting with other neighbouring states, a pattern emerged of Polish aggression. Even on 22 January, Foch had remarked critically that the Polish government's 'actions at present were divergent and eccentric. They were facing the Bolsheviks on the east, invading Posen on the west, and Galicia in the south. Some of these actions were not in any way forced upon them.'[91] The peacemakers were also frustrated that the Polish government was contributing to, if not solely causing, increased instability in the region. When the Polish population rose up in Posen it was not a coordinated attempt to prejudge the conference but a reaction to local conditions, but the peacemakers soon became irritated by attempts to bring about *faits accomplis*.

Teschen

Poland was involved in another territorial debate that dragged on for months surrounding the duchy of Teschen (Polish: Cieszyn, Czech: Těšín).[92] That neither the Polish delegation nor Poland's government were blamed for hostilities there exemplifies the peacemakers' general frustration with the conduct of the states of central and eastern Europe. Nonetheless, the Teschen dispute continued the pattern, to be repeated to a greater degree later, in which Poland's government claimed a territory and then skirmished over it during the peace conference. Poles formed a majority in the small territory, Dmowski noted to the peace conference, while Czechs comprised only a quarter of the population and were concentrated in one district, which could be given to

[90] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 774.
[91] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 672.
[92] On the Teschen dispute, see especially Perman, pp. 97–120, 228–257, 266–75; and Davion, pp. 37–176; also Russell Bryant, chapter on Teschen; Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 247–51, 273–6; and the historiographical discussion in M.B. Biskupski, 'Wilson, Paderewski, and the Polish Question, 1914-1921: Eugene Kusielewicz's Historical Works', *Polish American Studies*, 56 (1999), 89–98.

Czechoslovakia. This formed the basis of a provisional partition agreement that Polish and Czech representatives in the duchy had completed on 28 October 1918.[93] Moreover, Teschen was the first province outside Poland's 1772 frontiers 'where the Polish national renaissance had begun' thus strengthening Poland's national claim to the territory.[94] The Czech delegation argued, however, that the mining and manufacturing industries concentrated in Teschen were essential to Czechoslovakia's economic survival.[95] It also noted that Teschen had been part of the Bohemian crown lands since the Polish crown relinquished Silesia in the fourteenth century.

The peacemakers made several attempts to divide the territory equitably, but none of the solutions lasted long. Increased tensions between the two nationalities further unsettled the situation. The Czech delegation is widely considered to have been one of the most favoured of the peace conference, with its leaders Masaryk and Beneš saying all the right things about national self-determination, protection of minorities, and their Westernness to ensure maximal borders for their new state.[96] Some of this perception had also probably continued from the wartime period, when Masaryk and Beneš worked assiduously in Allied capitals and then the Czech Legion fought the Bolsheviks in 1918. In the case of Teschen, however, Czechoslovakia received most of the blame for tensions. The peace conference had required the Czechoslovak government to withdraw its troops from the duchy, but at the end of January 1919 Czech troops, acting without orders from their government, attacked Polish forces and forced them to retreat.[97] The offensive was also marked with a curious incident in which Allied officers, pretending to assume the authority of their governments, ordered Polish forces to retreat in order to restore order

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[93] Ajnenkiel, p. 133.
[94] ACNP, 181.213201/4, Dmowski memo, 'Note sur les frontières occidentales de l'État polonais', 6 Mar 1919.
[95] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 783-4.
[96] MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 229; Nelson, p. 286; Orzoff, pp. 136–7.
[97] ACNP, 181.21301/5, Compte-rendu du Gén. Berthelemy, 12 Feb 1919. The report identifies the troops as 'Czech', not 'Czechoslovak'.

to the region.[98] Though Polish troops rapidly telegraphed for Allied help and the fighting stopped, the situation remained tense. On 11 February the inter-Allied mission to Poland stopped briefly in Prague on its journey from Vienna, where Masaryk assured them that the Czechoslovak government would remove its troops from Teschen as agreed.[99] Yet nearly a month later, Howard recorded in his diary that the Czechs were 'still not carrying out [the] Teschen agreement properly.'[100] Back in Paris, the Allied commission on Teschen concluded that the two sides could not be reconciled. '[T]he mutual hatred is intense, never have I come across greater bitterness', wrote Col. Basil Coulson, the British representative on the commission.[101] The French Ministry of Defence had observed similar tensions.[102] Both the Czechoslovak and Polish delegations rejected the commission's recommendation to give the duchy autonomy.

The peacemakers were quite clear to blame the Czechoslovak government for its troops' intransigence, but the public in Poland increasingly worried that policy-makers in Paris supported the Czechs. This helps to explain why Poland's government continued to take matters into their own hands in 1919 and 1920. Despite repeated announcements by the Allies that they did not condone the activities of the Czech troops in Teschen, Polish delegates and the Polish public quickly came to believe that the Czech actions were part of an anti-Polish campaign to take the territory from Poland. After the Allied officers carried out their stunt, representatives from the inter-Allied mission to Poland reported increasing suspicion from the Polish people about Allied intentions in Teschen. French General Joseph Berthelemy, who led a small French military mission to Poland, reported that Polish newspapers were nearly asserting 'that the Czechs had attacked on the order of Marshall Foch'. There were doubts about Paderewski, 'the friend of President Wilson,

[98] ACNP, 181.21301/5, Proclamation par les troupes tchèques à leur entrée en Silésie, 25 Jan 1919.
[99] ACNP, 181.21301/3, Telegram to Peace Conference, 13 Feb 1919.
[100] Howard Diary, 3 Mar 1919.
[101] FO 608/58/5458, Coulson telegram, 22 Mar 1919.
[102] Davion, p. 23.

who has done nothing for the Poles'.[103] Rather, the Allied military and diplomatic missions to Poland, which were responsible for reporting on events on the ground in Teschen, had harsh words about Czech troops. Berthelemy complained about the Czechs' 'tendency to seize by force territories which do not belong to them ethnographically, and the violence and the atrocities committed by their troops', though he did point out that this was done without the sanction of the Czechoslovak government.[104] General Rossi, the Italian delegate, seconded these sentiments, commenting on 'the very bad moral leanings of the Czechs, their ignorance of the decisions of the Entente ... and above all their tendency, which shows itself continually, to extend their borders by violence.'[105] Thus Allied and American attitudes on national character were not limited to Poles.

To the Polish people, it seemed later as though the peace conference sought to reduce their territory not just by the principle of nationality, but by any means they could.[106] Distressed Polish Protestants in Teschen pleaded with Lloyd George and Wilson to ensure that they did not fall under Czech 'oppression'.[107] At the Spa Conference in July 1920, the Allies finally divided the duchy successfully. The Polish government was outraged, however, as Czechoslovakia obtained the coalfields and important railway links. The French government had supported the decision out of a desire to strengthen Czechoslovakia, with which it was also closely tied, but public opinion in Poland blamed the British government. Lloyd George had suggested to the Council of Four that Poland could have Teschen if it provided coal to Czechoslovakia, but it did not improve perceptions of the British government when on 16 April 1919 he declared in the House of

[103] ACNP, 181.21301/5, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 14 Feb 1919.
[104] ACNP, 181.21301/5, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 14 Feb 1919.
[105] ACNP, 181.21301/5, Quoted in letter from Lt Lamarque to Gen Berthelemy, 13 Feb 1919.
[106] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/210, R.H. Hoare to Kerr, 17 Mar 1921.
[107] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/906/6, Rev. Karol Kulisz to the Special Commission of the Peace Conference, 21 Aug 1919. Many letters from the Polish Protestants are in Lothian papers, GD 40/17/906.

Commons that he had never heard of Teschen.[108] While Lloyd George likely knew very well about Teschen and its significance because the issue had come up in several meetings he attended before his infamous remark, it appeared to Polish public as though the British government and increasingly the peace conference were not interested in giving Teschen to Poland. Moreover, even though the squabbles over Teschen may not have directly influenced the peacemakers' solution, they nonetheless contributed to the wider view, which became increasingly prominent, that Poland was constantly squabbling with its neighbours. The reputation of the Czech delegation, meanwhile, remained largely unsullied with the leaders.

Danzig and the Polish Corridor

The status of Danzig was one of the thorniest issues with which the peace conference dealt.[109] The development of the issue exemplifies the general goals and concerns of Britain, France, and the United States regarding Poland's territorial boundaries. It also helps to contextualise the reaction against the Polish commission's recommendations in Lloyd George's Fontainebleau Memorandum. The Polish émigrés' territorial claims during the First World War had always included access to the sea, as they believed that this was the only way for the new state to be truly independent. As Harold Nelson notes, sharing a waterway such as the Vistula and maintaining facilities such as harbours and rail connections is a difficult process even for friendly states. Germany and Poland were unlikely to have friendly relations in the years immediately following the First World War; in fact relations were antagonistic throughout the interwar

[108] Mantoux, vol. 1, p. 229. *Hansard*, HC Deb, 16 April 1919, vol 114, c. 2938.
[109] The issue of Danzig and the Polish corridor was one of the major flashpoints of the conference and as such has been covered extensively. See in particular Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 269–73; Anna M. Cienciala, 'The Battle of Danzig and the Polish Corridor at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919', in *The Reconstruction of Poland*, ed. Latawski (1992), pp. 71–94; Lutz Oberdörfer, 'The Danzig Question in British Foreign Policy, 1918-1920', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 15 (2004), 573–92; Nelson, pp. 145–97; Schwabe, pp. 234–66.

period with trade a particular flashpoint.[110] Allied and American policy-makers understood that access to the sea was necessary to permit international trade links so that Poland's economy could grow and trade could thrive. To remind them of the importance of maritime access for smaller countries they had for instance the example of Serbia, which agitated for access to the Adriatic in the pre-war years.[111] In 1918 the Allies and Americans had committed to ensuring that Poland had access to the sea. Other countries also made successful territorial claims in Paris based on the economic importance of a region. The Czechoslovak delegation was particularly adept at this, notably for Poland in the settlement of the borders of Teschen.[112] The obvious place where the Polish state could have access to the sea was Danzig, which had once been the great port of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. It sat at the mouth of the Vistula River, which made it the easiest place from which to ship goods upriver to the capital at Warsaw or to the many smaller cities and towns along the river. In more recent years a rail line also connected Danzig to Warsaw.

The Polish delegation asserted that to assign Danzig to Poland would be the best way to ensure Poland's economic independence from Germany. German control of the city would allow an unfriendly German government to close off Poland's international trade at will. Though the region had experienced hard times in recent decades, Dmowski proclaimed that it would 'acquire new vigour' as it became the conduit through which all Poland's trade flowed.[113] The Polish delegation also claimed some of the surrounding region to the east; Dmowski argued that Poland should also control the Nogat River, an

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[110] Nelson, pp. 177–8. On Polish-German economic relations after the peace conference, see Anna M. Cienciala and Titus Komarnicki, *From Versailles to Locarno: Keys to Polish Foreign Policy, 1919-25* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1984), pp. 223–76.

[111] MacMillan, *War That Ended Peace*, p. 390. Great Power concerns about control of the seas – as Alfred Mahan advocated tended not to be considered in Poland's case. Polish leaders thought in terms of becoming a European power but the peacemakers did not think this way. Besides, Piłsudski was more interested in Halford Mackinder's theories about land power; the two met in Warsaw several times in 1919-20; see Rumbold Papers, dep. 47, Rumbold to Curzon, 16 Dec 1919.

[112] See Nelson, pp. 282–304 regarding the German-Czechoslovak border.

[113] ACNP, 181.2132201/4, Commission on Polish Affairs, Minutes, 6 Mar 1919.

eastern delta branch of the Vistula, and the city of Elbing (Elbląg) because it too would benefit from trade. Dmowski also hinted that Königsberg (Russian: Kaliningrad, Polish: Królewiec) was already becoming a secondary outlet for Polish trade and might someday see the benefits of a customs union with Poland.[114] The French delegation – and some in the British and American delegations – concurred with Dmowski's position. Yet it conflicted with the position of others, notably Wilson, who called Danzig an 'open question' in an early meeting of the Council of Ten and repeatedly suggested that the city should be internationalised and Poland given rights to use the port and the Vistula.[115]

The reason for Wilson's suggestion was that Poles were the minority in Danzig and the region immediately surrounding it, and Germans were indisputably in the majority. Initially, however, the experts did not consider this to be a problem. Dmowski argued that the Germans of the region would accept Polish sovereignty 'without regret' because under Polish control Danzig and its environs would become prosperous again.[116] He also suggested that the German census had concealed the ethnographic reality; while the statistics said that 3% of Danzig was Polish, it was really closer to 40%.[117] When the Polish Commission assigned three of its members to examine the German-Polish border in closer detail, the sub-commission agreed that Danzig should be part of Poland.[118] Its greater concern was with Polish claims to West Prussia, which was part of what became known as the Polish Corridor. Poles were in the majority there, but there was a large German minority in the entire province and many districts had German majorities. Moreover, the commission considered whether Poland should control the entire stretch of the Vistula as it flowed north to Danzig. Some proposed frontiers cut off portions of the railway between Danzig and Warsaw, which ran through the town of Mlawa, an important junction on the

[114] ACNP, 181.2132201/3, WFNS minutes, 6 Mar 1919.
[115] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 673. On Wilson's views on the Danzig problem, see Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy.'
[116] ACNP, 181.2132201/3, WFNS minutes, 6 Mar 1919.
[117] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 780.
[118] Ibid.

route. Dmowski argued that if Germany obtained any part of the river or the railway, it would easily be able to cut off trade to the rest of Poland. The other difficulty was what lay on the east of the proposed Polish Corridor: the province of East Prussia, which was solidly German. The Polish delegation did not want East Prussia to remain part of Germany, preferring it to be made an independent republic. Dmowski optimistically suggested that it too might someday join Poland in a customs union.[119] The greater fear was again of a German attack; the Poles worried that someday Germany could attack the Polish Corridor from both sides.

The Polish Commission was willing to tolerate some minorities under Poland's control, but the delegations of the Big Three differed on how many. French representatives, who were at least as concerned as the Polish delegation about making sure that Poland would be strong economically and the Polish border defensible against German attacks, did not worry much about German minorities. General Henri Le Rond, the French representative on the border sub-commission, recommended that Poland's western border should run along the Bartsch (Barycz) River because 'the experience of the present war had proved that a water course or even a small canal constituted an excellent line of defence'.[120] His argument proved persuasive, as the Polish Commission eventually assigned the river to Poland.[121] On the eastern side of the corridor, Le Rond worried that 'the frontier envisioned by the British delegate (Lt-Col Kisch) offers no obstacle to a German attack from the East'.[122] He also proposed several modifications to ensure that important railways remained entirely inside Poland. The emphasis on the defensive value of rivers and the general value of railways reflected the importance of

[119] Ibid.
[120] ACNP, 181.2132201/2, WFNS minutes, 4 Mar 1919.
[121] ACNP, 181.213202/1, Report No. 1 of the Commission on Polish Affairs: Frontier between Poland and Germany, 12 Mar 1919.
[122] ACNP, 181.2132201/3, WFNS minutes, 6 Mar 1919.

each in the previous war on the Western Front; the French delegation wanted to ensure that Poland could make maximum use of them in the future.[123]

The frontier that the British delegates proposed granted less territory to Poland. In general, the British and Americans delegates were more concerned than the French about leaving German minorities in Poland.[124] Bowman, the American delegate, contested Le Rond's proposal for Poland's western frontier, arguing for a border that would put more German enclaves within Germany's borders regardless of strategic considerations. Though the process would not be perfect and would leave minorities on both sides, Bowman argued that it would be best if such national enclaves were offset wherever possible by minorities on the other side.[125] Both he and Kisch also proposed that the administrative region of Allenstein (Olsztyn) should have a plebiscite over its future rather than be assigned to Poland, as Le Rond had suggested. Bowman doubted the Polish delegation's claim that the region's people were nationally-conscious Poles. 'These sentiments in favour of a reunion with Poland have been well aired', Bowman noted, 'but by representatives who are not of that region.'[126] Le Rond doubted the efficacy of holding a plebiscite – using arguments earlier employed by Dmowski – but eventually assented as long as the German administration was replaced by a Polish one.[127] The deliberations of the sub-commission were reflected in the report of the Polish Commission on the boundary between Poland and Germany. The Commission's report noted that more than two-thirds of Danzig's population were German, but argued that nonetheless it was necessary to grant Danzig to Poland.[128] The Allies and the United States, the report continued, had publicly asserted that Poland would have access to the sea, and a Polish corridor to Danzig better served the interests of those 25,000,000 citizens of Poland

[123] ACNP, 181.213202/1, Report No. 1 of the Commission on Polish Affairs, 12 Mar 1919.
[124] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 688/1, Headlam-Morley to Howard, 4 Mar 1919.
[125] ACNP, 181.2132201/2, WFNS minutes, 4 Mar 1919.
[126] ACNP, 181.2132201/3, WFNS minutes, 6 Mar 1919.
[127] Ibid.
[128] ACNP, 181.213202/1, Report No. 1 of the Commission on Polish Affairs, 12 Mar 1919.

whose livelihoods would depend on it than 1,600,000 Germans in East Prussia who would be cut off from their country.[129] The Polish Commission's report thus did not accept all of the Polish delegation's territorial claims against Germany, but it considered those claims sympathetically.

The Council of Four

Poland's leaders, especially Piłsudski, wanted to ensure that the peace conference determined Poland's border with Germany.[130] But they also expected that this process would go in their favour; as a result, the Polish delegation's efforts in the Polish Commission did not take into account the coming change in how the conference operated. With so many participants, the Council of Ten had always been an unwieldy instrument, and with the leaders absent for much of February and early March, the commissions did their work but conference business slowed dramatically. As Paul Cambon, a French delegate, complained to his brother Jules, 'We pile commissions on commissions; we agree verbally on everything, but we finish nothing for implementation.'[131] Shortly after Wilson returned from Washington in mid-March, the leaders withdrew to a Council of Four and tackled the major issues of the conference in short order.[132] The move to the Council of Four angered many diplomats, who worried what sort of 'improvised ideas' the leaders were dreaming up.[133] Yet the meetings of the Council of Four quickly covered disparate topics from German reparations payments to the dispute between China and Japan over Shantung. They often discussed Poland's borders as well, since Poland's fate was integral to the European settlement; less controversial decisions tended to be dealt with in commissions or debated by the foreign ministers in what remained of the Supreme Council.

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[129] Ibid.
[130] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 54.
[131] Paul Cambon, *Correspondance, 1870-1924*, ed. by Henri Cambon (Paris: B. Grasset, 1940), p. 309.
[132] On the Council of Four, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 273–8.
[133] MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 274.

The leaders all carried the hopes and needs of their countries with them as they debated policy in the Council of Four, but perhaps the greatest burden lay on Wilson. His popularity at the end of the war meant that he also shared 'the huge responsibility of the destiny of almost the whole world, which fate has placed in his hands'.[134] He arrived in Europe to fanfare and parades, but after scarcely more than a month at the conference, his popularity began to wane.[135] He advanced his plans for a League of Nations, but his stubborn insistence on national self-determination where possible led the Italian delegation to temporarily leave the conference. He also broke with House, long his closest advisor, partway through the conference and afterwards kept his own counsel.[136]

Clemenceau fought for Poland's claims to Upper Silesia, but his silence in the Council of Four over other matters was also significant. Clemenceau had long sympathised with the cause of Polish independence; as mentioned above he had had good Polish friends, had travelled to Galicia, and wrote sympathetically about the Poles in *L'homme libre*, the daily he co-founded in 1913. Nicknamed 'The Tiger' for his fierce nature, he detested Germany and devoted his efforts at the peace conference to weakening it. During the war, he had distinguished himself for speaking out against the government's record. In the first weeks of the war, he criticised the way the government conducted the war in *L'homme libre*, but when the paper was banned for refusing to make changes demanded by the censor, Clemenceau continued publishing his daily under the name *L'homme enchainé*.[137] It was this strength of character and sense of resolve that led his political enemy, President Raymond Poincaré, to name him prime minister in November 1917

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[134] Evelyn Mary Blücher, *An English Wife in Berlin* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1920), p. 252.
[135] Cambon, pp. 309–10; Jan Christiaan Smuts, *Selections from the Smuts Papers* (Cambridge [Eng.]: University Press, 1966), vol. 4, p. 171; Keynes devotes a long section to his criticism of Wilson; see pp. 38-50. He writes, 'It was commonly believed at the commencement of the Paris Conference that the President had thought out, with the aid of a large body of advisers, a comprehensive scheme not only for the League of Nations, but for the embodiment of the Fourteen Points in an actual Treaty of Peace. But in fact the President had thought out nothing.' (39).
[136] Floto, pp. 99–214 provides the most extensive analysis of the split. In particular, on returning to Paris, Wilson believed that House had compromised too much in his absence.
[137] Duroselle, p. 587.

because Clemenceau intended to prosecute the war to the fullest extent. At the peace conference, when Lloyd George demanded changes to the peace treaty on various issues, Clemenceau stood firm on issues central to France's interests like reparations. He also attempted to ensure that the Council of Four made no concessions on the Polish-German frontier, but found this impossible. He needed to ensure British and American support for French desiderata first, and this meant that in most of the key discussions on Polish questions he was 'silent and aloof on the outskirts' while Lloyd George and Wilson debated the situation.[138]

With Clemenceau focused on reparations and Germany's western border and Wilson on the League, increasingly the direction of the Polish settlement reflected the influence of Lloyd George and the people around him. Lloyd George's beginnings as a Welsh nationalist provided him no great experience of Polish history or culture, but it did give him a reference point for understanding Poland's contested claims. Lloyd George had always been an outsider in British politics as a Welshman, a Nonconformist, and having not attending Oxford or Cambridge. This nurtured in him a tendency of being, in his biographer John Grigg's words, a 'relentless fighter against the strong'.[139] He also reserved a special hatred for the landed élite, as the struggle against English landlords was a main focus of Welsh nationalism. The comparison between Polish landlords in East Galicia and Vilnius and the English landlords of Lloyd George's youth, and the growing perception that Poland was bullying its neighbours, affected how the British prime minister came to perceive the Polish settlement.[140] Lloyd George had always been known as a wily politician and earned this reputation again for his performance at the peace conference, where his quick mind helped him to shape the peace to a great degree. In *Economic*

[138] Keynes, p. 28; David Robin Watson, p. 358.
[139] Grigg, *Lloyd George*, vol. 1, p. 54.
[140] Lloyd George used his Welsh heritage to empathise with the situation of small European nations, especially during the war See Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, p. 58. Such references are often contradictory – Lloyd George compared the Poles to the Welsh as well.

Consequences of the Peace, Keynes wrote of Lloyd George's 'unerring, almost medium-like sensibility to every one immediately round him … with six or seven senses not available to ordinary men.'[141] While the description is overdramatic, it does illustrate Lloyd George's reputation: many, both among his supporters and his enemies, attributed his magnetic persona and powerful persuasive ability to some kind of magical abilities. In Poland, where many came to believe that Lloyd George's powers of persuasion were specially directed against them, it was initially argued that he was under the influence of a mysterious 'Jewess'.[142] As the peace conference progressed, however, they came to understand that Lloyd George's opinions were likely the result of two or three close advisors who had opinions on the Polish question.[143]

As mentioned above, Lloyd George disliked the Foreign Office, which he regarded as representing the sort of the establishment against which he had fought during his political career. He therefore turned to a few advisors, most of whom had little connection to the Foreign Office. One of his most important advisors on foreign policy, and undoubtedly the most influential in the Polish case, was his private secretary, Philip Kerr. Born into an élite family, Kerr had been active in Lord Milner's Round Table movement that pursued closer integration of Britain and the white Dominions and was a co-founder of and contributor to the movement's eponymous publication.[144] He joined Lloyd George's retinue in January 1917 and made an immediate impact: within a few days he was not only summarising memoranda, he was providing advice on foreign affairs to the prime minister.[145] By the end of the war, he had become Lloyd George's main intermediary for

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[141] Keynes, p. 37.
[142] Lothian papers, GD 40/17/875/2, 'The Polish question in international politics', n.d. [1917]. The author, who is likely Dmowski, may have been referring to Lloyd George's mistress, Frances Stevenson – though she was not Jewish.
[143] Lloyd George's antipathy to the Foreign Office carried over from the wartime period. See Steiner and Dockrill.
[144] David P. Billington, *Lothian: Philip Kerr and the Quest for World Order* (Westport, CT; London: Praeger Security International, 2006), pp. 1, 6.
[145] John Turner, 'Lord Lothian and His World', in *The Larger Idea: Lord Lothian and the Problem of National Sovereignty*, ed. by John Turner (London: Historians', 1988), p. 7.

foreign affairs. Kerr was well-liked personally, but his proximity to and influence with Lloyd George inspired resentment. Churchill asserted that 'I do not think any man who does not hold a leading position in the state should be permitted to exercise so much influence on important questions of policy.'[146] Lord Curzon, meanwhile, who replaced Balfour as Foreign Secretary in September 1919, cursed Kerr as 'the chosen agent of his master's intrigues'.[147] At the Paris Peace Conference, Kerr worked closely with Headlam-Morley, an historian who had been the assistant director of the PID and was its expert on Germany. Headlam-Morley was a crucial figure for the Polish settlement: he occasionally acted as an advisor for the Council of Four and helped to draft the Polish clauses of the Treaty of Versailles.

While neither Kerr nor Headlam-Morley had had much experience with the Polish question before the First World War, they maintained regular communication with Namier, who influenced their viewpoints and thus the direction of British policy. When Headlam-Morley arrived in Paris, he informed Kerr that he had requested Namier to brief him on Polish issues. '[Namier] is not altogether *persona grata*', Headlam-Morley told Kerr, but 'on the other hand I am sure that his knowledge and his point of view deserve attention.'[148] Namier was not part of the British delegation in Paris but nonetheless he was determined to send his views to Headlam-Morley; after one of his memos was 'suppressed' – in his words – by the Foreign Office, Namier even sent messages privately.[149] Kerr, meanwhile, had known Namier for years and, believing Namier to be 'a very intelligent fellow', first asked for his counsel on Polish affairs in 1917. This arrangement continued until the second half of 1919.[150] Neither Kerr nor Headlam-Morley always concurred with Namier's deep mistrust of 'Polish Imperialism', and eventually

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[146] *The Riddell Diaries 1908-1923*, ed. by J.M. McEwen (London: Athlone, 1986), p. 320.
[147] Quoted in Billington, p. 54.
[148] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 688/2/Kerr, Headlam-Morley to Kerr, 25 Jan 1919.
[149] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 688/2/Namier, Namier to Headlam-Morley, 18 Jan 1919.
[150] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/872/1, Kerr to Drummond, 5 Apr 1917.

both chided Namier for his unrelenting criticism of the Poles.[151] For the majority of the Peace Conference, however, and especially until the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, both Kerr and Headlam-Morley accepted Namier's suspicions about the Polish delegation's claims regarding national minorities. The connection with Namier was important because Kerr in particular had Lloyd George's ear. Though only one of Namier's memoranda remains in Lloyd George's papers, the prime minister did not read memos often. He regularly determined policy in conversation with his advisors, however, so Namier's connection to Headlam-Morley and Kerr proved valuable. In particular, Namier's strong views on East Galicia influenced British policy, as will be shown below.

Shortly after the Four began meeting, Lloyd George and some of his advisors retreated to a small hotel in Fontainebleau, south of Paris, where from 22-25 March they discussed the necessity of a more moderate approach towards Germany. The Fontainebleau Memorandum, which resulted from their meetings, warned of the danger of Bolshevism and argued against a harsh peace with Germany. It was also Lloyd George's strongest declaration yet of a recent effort to revise the proposed Polish border settlement: '[t]he proposal of the Polish Commission that we should place 2,100,000 Germans [under Polish rule] … must, in my judgment, lead sooner or later to a new war in the East of Europe.'[152] The memorandum reflected the concern of Lloyd George and advisors such as Kerr that a harsh peace would lead Germany to 'place her resources, her brains, her vast organizing power' at the Bolsheviks' disposal.[153]

At Lloyd George's instigation, the leaders reopened the Polish Commission's recommendations on Danzig. The Fontainebleau Memorandum proposed that Poland

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[151] Headlam-Morley, Bryant and Cienciala, p. 175.; Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/216, Kerr to Namier, 17 July 1919.
[152] Reprinted in David Lloyd George, *The Truth about the Peace Treaties*, 2 vols. (London: V. Gollancz, 1938), vol. 1, p. 406.
[153] Lloyd George, *Truth about the Treaties*, pp. 407–8. Lloyd George first spoke against the settlement of the German-Polish border at the 19 March meeting of the Council of Ten; see *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, pp. 413-9.

receive the corridor to Danzig but not the city itself, and that the corridor 'be drawn irrespective of strategic or transportation considerations so as to embrace the smallest number of Germans.'[154] Lloyd George preferred that Danzig be autonomous; Polish citizens would be permitted to trade there freely, but they could not control the city. The Council of Four approved this solution one month later.[155] The decision on Danzig reflected the practical view of self-determination that Lloyd George and his close advisors applied to the Polish settlement. They repeatedly stated that they did not want to create additional 'Alsace-Lorraines'.[156] As the Fontainebleau Memorandum stated, 'The maintenance of peace will then depend upon there being no causes of exasperation constantly stirring up the spirit of patriotism, of justice or of fair play to achieve redress.'[157] The Polish delegation was forced to accept the revised frontiers, and it increasingly resented the role Lloyd George had played in the process.

The new direction incited great debate between the delegations, and also within the British delegation where many diplomats still supported the Polish view. This discussion illustrates the continuing concern with Polish public opinion; the peacemakers wanted public support for their decisions just as they had sought support for their war aims. In the days before the Council of Four accepted the changed conditions of Danzig, one British expert, H.J. Paton, warned that 'a wave of indignation and despair' would sweep Poland and threaten 'the foundations of order in Eastern Europe' should the decision be made final.[158] In a separate statement, Paton argued that by isolating East Prussia and denying Poland control over Danzig, the peacemakers intended 'to inflict the maximum of injury and the minimum of benefit.'[159] In a letter to Lloyd George, meanwhile,

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[154] Lloyd George, *Truth about the Treaties*, p. 413.
[155] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 118.
[156] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/1241, Kerr to *The Times*, 28 Mar 1919.
[157] Lloyd George, *Truth about the Treaties*, p. 405.
[158] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/888/3, Paton memo, 17 Apr 1919.
[159] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/890/2, Paton to Drummond, 19 Apr 1919.

Howard predicted 'an explosion of feeling' if Poland did not receive Danzig.[160] Lloyd George never responded to Howard's letter or Paton's memoranda, but this does not mean that the British leader did not hope to appease public opinion in Poland. Headlam-Morley argued that the Danzig settlement was 'proof of the greatest friendship' because it would ensure lasting peace for Poland.[161] He furthermore had petitioned successfully to have potentially provocative wording excised from the treaty, on the grounds that it would offend Polish sentiment unnecessarily.[162] Yet in private, Headlam-Morley wrote that in seeking to control Danzig, '[t]he Poles, a new State, … seem to be aiming at making precisely the same blunder as the Germans made in dealing with Alsace-Lorraine.'[163]

Upper Silesia

The discussion over Upper Silesia provides another example of the reluctance of some peacemakers, especially Lloyd George, to go too far in acceding to the Polish delegation's territorial claims.[164] The region's characteristics made it difficult for the peacemakers to assign part or all of it to Poland or Germany. Upper Silesia was economically important for both countries, with a concentration of industry as well as plentiful supplies of coal and minerals.[165] The territory had not belonged to the Polish crown since the fourteenth century; Prussia had captured the territory (minus the duchy

[160] Howard Papers, DHW 4/11, Howard to Lloyd George, 10 Apr 1919.
[161] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 727/19/Danzig, Headlam-Morley note, 19 Apr 1919.
[162] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 727/19/Danzig, Headlam-Morley to Kerr (for Lloyd George), 19 Apr 1919
[163] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 727/19/Danzig, Headlam-Morley memo, 19 Apr 1919.
[164] On the Upper Silesian issue at the peace conference, see Leśniewski, especially 29-65; it nonetheless contains many inaccuracies and is relentlessly pro-Polish; a similar approach is found in Komarnicki, pp. 341–6; cf Russell Bryant, whose chapter on Upper Silesia defends the British point of view; the treatment in Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 357–61 is concise and stops in June 1919 but is more even-handed.
[165] Silesian coal output advanced after the mid-1890s to a level greater than that of all of France. David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780-1918* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 320.

of Teschen) from Austria in 1740.[166] Lloyd George claimed that it 'had not been Polish territory for 800 years'; this was an exaggeration but underlines his scepticism about Poland's historical claim.[167] The region's mix of Polish- and German-speakers (including many who spoke both languages) and strong Catholicism across language lines meant that no easy definition of its national identity was possible.[168] Dmowski, like many supplicants to the peace conference, exaggerated his population statistics to help his cause, telling the Supreme Council that 90% of the population was 'strongly Polish'.[169] He revised the number downwards in his submission to the Polish Commission, stating that since 67% of the population spoke Polish – though the number was closer to 90% in the central and southern parts and was probably incorrect anyway because of German efforts at assimilation – the entire territory should go to Poland on an ethnographic basis. As proof he noted that Upper Silesian voters had been sending Polish deputies to the German parliament for decades.[170] Though even these numbers were slightly optimistic – later census figures put the number at closer to 65% Polish native speakers in the entire province – his reasoning was convincing as the Polish Commission recommended that Upper Silesia should go to Poland.[171]

Though Upper Silesia had not been mentioned in Lloyd George's initial attempt to revise the German settlement, the region's ethnic mix came under scrutiny as the British leader tried to prevent another 'Alsace-Lorraine' from developing on the Polish-German border. After the German delegation submitted a highly critical reply to the Allies' peace terms on 29 May, Lloyd George pushed for a plebiscite to decide the fate of the region.[172]

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[166] Prussian control of the region was first confirmed in the 1742 Treaties of Breslau and Berlin; the two states fought two further conflicts over it, including as part of the Seven Years' War (1756-63). See Clark, *Iron Kingdom*, pp. 190–210.
[167] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 148.
[168] This point is well-developed in Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*.
[169] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 778.
[170] ACNP, F.W. 181.213201/4, Dmowski memo, 'Note sur les frontières occidentales de l'État polonais', 6 Mar 1919.
[171] Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*, p. 244.
[172] Leśniewski, p. 52.

'All the information I receive from Germany … shows that the question of Silesia is the one that most concerns the Germans', he told the Council of Four.[173] A plebiscite would avoid 'a war of revenge in the future if Upper Silesia had declared itself for Poland.' Lloyd George believed that 'Upper Silesia would vote for Poland' but on this and other issues some of his colleagues in the British delegation believed that the peace was too harsh because it left many Germans outside Germany.[174] Some also recognised that 'the Silesian coalfield [is] a district of the utmost value to Germany', as Balfour had written at the end of the war; its inclusion within Germany would help to restore economic stability to the continent.[175] It was also argued that Upper Silesia's economic potential would be wasted in Polish hands; Lloyd George is said to have remarked that he would no more 'give a clock to a monkey'.[176] Lloyd George's proposal for an Upper Silesian plebiscite was one of several revisions he suggested: Germany should be able to join the League, reparations payments should be lowered, and the many 'pin-pricks' in the proposed treaty should be removed.[177] Wilson was surprised and asked to meet with his delegation to discuss the changes, but Clemenceau voiced his displeasure immediately.

Clemenceau's rebuttal to Lloyd George illustrates the strategic reasoning behind France's support of Poland's claim to the region. 'In England the view seemed to prevail that the easiest way to finish the war was by making concessions,' Clemenceau asserted. 'In France the contrary view was held that it was best to act firmly.' He continued, 'The French people, unfortunately, knew the Germans very intimately and they believed that the more concessions we made, the more the Germans would demand.'[178] Regarding the Polish settlement, he asserted that 'It was possible that some alterations might be made …

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[173] Mantoux, vol. 2, p. 282.
[174] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 140.
[175] Parliamentary Archives, David Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/201/1/1, 'Poland', October 1918. For this economic argument, see Keynes, especially p. 79n2.
[176] Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, p. 291.
[177] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, pp. 140-42.
[178] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 142.

[but] when we spoke of establishing Poland, it must be remembered that this was not done merely to redress one of the greatest wrongs in history. It was designed to create a barrier between Germany and Russia.'[179] It was feared throughout the conference that the two countries might unite. Clemenceau then noted that Erzberger had been quoted in the Paris edition of the *Chicago Tribune* that 'the principal aim of Germany would be to weaken Poland.'[180] (The story was later proven to be false and traced to Polish sources.)[181] Clemenceau concluded dramatically that 'if Germany were to colonise Russia [i.e. through Poland], the war would be lost and not won.'[182] The French position remained that a Poland with a greater population and more economic resources – especially rich Upper Silesia – would become the best counterweight to German power.

The peacemakers' deliberations on Upper Silesia hinged largely on geopolitical considerations but also incorporated understandings of national character. In this case, however, British and French understanding of German national character was central; the leaders then interpreted how Poles stood in relation to Germans. Clemenceau's view of Germany as aggressive, duplicitous, and always looking for more territory became one of his main arguments for assigning Upper Silesia – as well as other small pockets along the Polish-German border – to Poland. Lloyd George, however, increasingly portrayed Germans in a different light.[183] In a later meeting, Lloyd George asserted that 'there was no doubt that the Germans had a higher civilization than the Poles. As a matter of fact they rather despised the Poles. To force a race of that kind against their will under a race that

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[179] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 142-3.
[180] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 143.
[181] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 656.
[182] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 143.
[183] This was true at least in the meetings of the Council of Four; with his own delegation he took a different approach. When Jan Smuts, one of Lloyd George's key advisors during the peace conference, criticised Lloyd George's support for the draft treaty with Germany on national grounds, Lloyd George reprimanded him harshly. To Smuts' suggestion that Upper Silesia should be assigned to Germany, Lloyd George responded, 'Am I to understand that it is your proposal to depart from the principle of nationality and leave great numbers of downtrodden Poles under Prussian rule? That is the only way in which the eastern boundaries of Germany could be thoroughly revised.' Smuts, vol. 4, p. 218.

they regarded as inferior was not to promote peace.'[184] Lloyd George's view eventually prevailed and the plebiscite was set for 1921. Paderewski protested, but Lloyd George reprimanded him sharply. 'Don't forget', the British Prime Minister told his Polish counterpart, 'your liberty was paid for with the blood of other peoples'.[185]

East Galicia

The conflict that Poland fought over the eastern half of the former Austrian province of Galicia was probably the most detrimental for its image at the peace conference.[186] A detailed examination of the issues involved illustrates many of the priorities of Allied policy on Poland; it also demonstrates that despite the multiplicity of commissions, missions, and experts, only a few individuals had much influence over decision-making. As the Allies came to decide the fate of East Galicia, they increasingly referred to Poles as imperialistic, reflecting partly the Polish army's activities in the region and partly the government's involvement in other border squabbles.

The Habsburg kingdom of Galicia and Lodomeria comprised the territory that Austria had taken from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.[187] In 1914 Galicia had been the most economically backward of the three partitions, consisting mostly of peasant farms. The region contained little industry, but the oil fields in the eastern half of the province had become the fourth-largest in the world in the years before the war.[188] Poles had flourished as Austrian rule liberalised in the late nineteenth century. This permitted relatively free national development far beyond what Poles in Russia or Germany enjoyed.

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[184] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 304.
[185] Lloyd George, quoted in MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 220.
[186] See especially Bryant's chapter on British policy; also Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 217–25, 385–99; Taras Hunczak, 'Sir Lewis Namier and the Struggle for Eastern Galicia, 1918-1920', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 1 (1977), 198–210; H.J. Elcock, 'Britain and the Russo-Polish Frontier, 1919-1921', *Historical Journal*, 12 (1969), 137–54.
[187] On Galicia, see Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 102-19; Wandycz, *Lands of Partitioned Poland*; Timothy Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, pp. 134–6; much scholarship on Austrian Galicia perpetuates the myth that it was a multicultural paradise; Larry Wolff, *The Idea of Galicia: History and Fantasy in Habsburg Political Culture* (Stanford, Calif: Stanford University Press, 2010) disputes this assertion.
[188] Frank, *Oil Empire*, p. 4; oil output subsequently fell steeply during the war; see p. 174.

Polish nationals were not the sole inhabitants of Galicia, however, and the Ukrainian majority in the eastern half of the province also began to organise nationally in the late nineteenth century. The region also included a large Jewish minority whose presence dated back hundreds of years and will be discussed further in the next chapter. Yet the parallel development of Polish and Ukrainian nationalism created conflict between the two groups, particularly as Poles occupied most of the local and regional administrative positions in the province. These national rivalries continued in the region through the First World War. The Russian army captured the territory for several months in 1914-15; when it was forced back, Ukrainians suffered terrible reprisals at the hands of the Austrian government for suspected sympathy to the Russian cause.[189] This was after occupying Russian forces had attempted to suppress the Ukrainian nationality.[190] By the end of the war, relations between Galician Ukrainians and the Austrian government had improved, largely owing to the 'bread peace' that the Austrian government made with the Ukrainian national movement.[191] This did nothing to lessen antagonism between Poles and Ukrainians however. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the 'bread peace' ceded territories to the Ukrainian state that Polish nationalists had claimed for their own, and the Regency Council resigned as a result.

Ukrainian and Polish forces began fighting over East Galicia even before the armistice was signed on the Western Front, and the conflict continued for several months.[192] Fighting broke out in the city of Lemberg on 1 November, and Ukrainian nationalist forces took control of the city and declared the creation of a West Ukrainian Peoples' Republic. This naturally had links to the Ukrainian People's Republic that already

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[189] Prusin, p. 44.
[190] Christoph Mick, 'War and Conflicting Memories – Poles, Ukrainians and Jews in Lvov 1914–1939', *Simon Dubnow Institute Yearbook*, 4 (2005), p. 258.
[191] Jeřábek, p. 162.
[192] On the fighting in East Galicia, see Eley; Christoph Mick, *Kriegserfahrungen in einer multiethnischen Stadt: Lemberg 1914-1947* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2010). Mick's monograph is to be released in English translation in November 2015 by Purdue University Press as *Lemberg, Lwów, L'viv, 1914–1947: Violence and Ethnicity in a Contested City*.

existed in Kiev, but it operated as an autonomous unit during its short existence. Polish forces re-entered the city on 22 November. Polish inhabitants of the city rejoiced but in the riotous atmosphere for two days they rampaged through Jewish neighbourhoods; they killed 72 or 73 Jews and pillaged and destroyed much property.[193] West Ukrainian forces again attempted to take the city and maintained a siege for several months. Fighting also erupted over the region's oil fields, which were the other prize for whoever controlled the region.

The Allied and American governments attempted to coerce Polish and West Ukrainian forces to sign a ceasefire, but for months they had little success. During the peacemakers' first attempt to bring the two sides to an armistice in February 1919, French General Joseph Berthelemy, the leader of the mission to Lemberg, worried that the situation was 'nearly insolvable.'[194] Similar sentiments echoed from the rest of the delegation that had travelled to Lemberg to negotiate with the combatants, perhaps because a group of Ukrainian soldiers had shot at their train.[195]

Partly for this reason the mission tended to blame the West Ukrainians for the state of affairs and to depict Polish forces as the victims of Ukrainian oppression. This reflected not only the mission's sympathy with the Polish government's perspective but also the fact that they received most of their information from Polish sources. Berthelemy told the mission that the Ukrainians had initially been working in league with the Austrians when they occupied Lemberg on 1 November. When Polish forces took the city back later in the month, it was because the inhabitants of the city rose up against Ukrainian administration and retook the city 'house by house'. The statement reflected a pro-Polish argument that the sentiments of the local populace favoured Poland, rather

[193] Kaufman, pp. 87–88, note 114.
[194] ACNP, 181.21301/7, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 15 Feb 1919.
[195] Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart, *Happy Odyssey: The Memoirs of Lieutenant-General Sir Adrian Carton de Wiart* (London: Cape, 1950), p. 100.

than the reality that Polish forces had retaken the city from outside.[196] Berthelemy also criticised the Jews, who in his view 'clearly' favoured the Ukrainians; some had shot at Polish troops while others 'shirked' from fighting in the war and profited from hoarding while the rest of the population starved.[197] While the implications of tensions in East Galicia between Poles and Jews will be examined in greater detail in the following chapter, it is important to note that Berthelemy's explanation, which was accepted by the other members of the mission, represents acceptance of the Poles' version of events and support for their position. Allied and American representatives eventually attempted to negotiate a cease fire between Polish and Ukrainian forces for months without success. Lord, the American representative on the inter-Allied mission, travelled to Paris in mid-March to inform the Supreme Council that an armistice could only be negotiated between Polish and Ukrainian representatives in Paris, because another attempt to use the inter-Allied mission to broker a settlement would likely fail.[198] As the Allies stated in a declaration to leaders of the Ukrainian forces in East Galicia, should each side accept the armistice they would be considered fairly; otherwise they would be considered 'disturbers of the peace'.[199]

Crucially, the members of the inter-Allied mission to Poland, who investigated this issue as well, all came to favour Poland's position. Major-General Kernan, the American representative, composed the text of a telegram to Paris that the attack was part of a German 'offensive' and that '[Allied] prestige will suffer strongly in the eyes of the Poles' should they not come to Poland's aid.[200] Howard, the British representative, met many Polish émigrés during his years as British minister in Stockholm. He was, moreover, a Catholic, which eased his transition into Polish society and may have influenced his views

[196] ACNP, 181.21301/7, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 15 Feb 1919; Kaufman, p. 88.
[197] ACNP, 181.21301/7, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 15 Feb 1919.
[198] ACNP, 181.213201/1, Commission on Polish Affairs to Supreme Council, 18 Mar 1919.
[199] ACNP, 181.213201/1, Allied declaration to General Pavlenko, 18 Mar 1919.
[200] ACNP, 181.21301/6, Inter-Allied mission telegram to Paris Peace Conference, 14 Feb 1919.

as well.[201] 'Certainly after 150 years of oppression the Poles show wonderful moderation', Howard wrote in his diary regarding the unrest in Posen.[202] After he returned from Poland, he wrote a long memorandum to Lloyd George in which he urged the prime minister to favour Poland's territorial claims, though it is likely Lloyd George ignored it.[203] The strongest support, however, unsurprisingly came from Joseph Noulens, the French representative on the mission. In this, unlike Kernan and Howard, Noulens was likely representing the full wishes of his government, which desired to help Poland's government to obtain the most territory to form a strong state. He was most often the one to advance or favour Poland's territorial claims in meetings, including a demand that the renewal of the armistice with Germany in February contain a clause requiring the cessation of hostilities in Posen.[204] Yet the mission's evident Polish sympathies began to count against its credibility and limited its effectiveness with those in Paris who were already sceptical about the Polish delegation's expansive territorial claims. 'I understand that the members of the mission to Warsaw have all become pure Poles,' Headlam-Morley wrote to Namier in London.[205]

While communications from the inter-Allied mission consistently favoured the Polish viewpoint, in Paris the Polish and Ukrainian delegations presented increasingly lurid accusations about the other to various commissions and eventually before the Council of Four. The Ukrainian delegation, which claimed that at least two-thirds of the population of East Galicia were Ukrainians, argued that Poles had been their historic

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[201] McKercher, p. 273. McKercher argues that Howard's Catholicism did not lead him to sympathise with the Poles. Yet he did form connections with them easily and a shared faith must have helped. On 9 Mar 1919, for instance, Howard attended mass given by Fr Adamski, the Minister of Finance for Posen, and afterwards the two men and others discussed negotiations regarding Polish control over the region. Howard Diary, 9 Mar 1919.

[202] Howard Diary, 6 Mar 1919.

[203] Howard papers, DHW 4/11, Howard to Lloyd George, 10 Apr 1919. Norman Davies argues that because the letter was 'at the head of all [Lloyd George's] Polish papers', this demonstrates the prime minister's 'real feelings' for Poland – presumably sympathy; Davies, 'Lloyd George and Poland', p. 132. This argument is not persuasive as Lloyd George did not respond to the letter at the time.

[204] ACNP, 181.21301/4, Inter-Allied mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 13 Feb 1919.

[205] Hunczak, p. 202.

oppressors under the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and then the Austrian Empire, and had intensified this oppression since the end of the war. The Ukrainian delegation pleaded for the peacemakers to force Polish forces to stop, especially while Polish forces drove Ukrainian forces back in May and June 1919. In an appearance before the Council of Four on 26 May, Ukrainian representatives reluctantly accepted the inter-Allied mission's armistice plan even though it would leave many Ukrainians under Polish 'subjugation': a ceasefire, they argued, would save their people 'from the Polish menace'.[206] They portrayed themselves as the victims of Polish imperialism: 'The Poles are destroying our country, our fertile fields, the Poles are killing our soldiers fighting in defence of our fatherland, the Poles are ruining our villages, killing our peasants for no other reason than their unwillingness to remain under the Polish yoke.'[207] Polish forces had done this, they argued, after being fed and clothed and given military assistance by the Allied and American governments.[208] The Ukrainian delegates' deposition was designed to encourage the peacemakers to protect them by using images of helplessness, much as had been used in the Polish relief campaign during the First World War.

The Polish delegation, in turn, attempted to portray Ukrainian forces as the aggressors. Since the outbreak of the conflict in November 1918, Polish representatives had used their well-developed connections with Allied and American diplomats to describe the situation in a way that blamed the Ukrainians for events. On 13 November 1918, Count Ladislas Sobanski, the KNP representative in London, wrote to the Foreign Office that the Ukrainian invasion of Lemberg 'was begun by the Ukrainians together with the Austro-Germans with the avowed support of the former Austro-Hungarian monarchy.'[209] The Polish émigrés' initial attempt to blame the Ukrainians proved fruitless after Namier wrote a long rebuttal citing Polish newspaper evidence that the Austrians

[206] *FRUS: PPC* VI, p. 58.
[207] Ibid.
[208] *FRUS: PPC* VI, p. 57.
[209] FO 371/3279/190852, Sobanski note, 13 Nov 1918.

were likely not involved and that Ukrainian troops had imprisoned the military commander and the governor of Galicia.[210] The Foreign Office was increasingly sceptical about the Polish émigrés' version of events; even Clerk, who had been a confidante of Polish émigré representatives during the war, argued that Namier's rebuttal was 'pretty conclusive'.[211] Nonetheless this exemplifies a regular theme: Polish representatives repeatedly linked a group with which they contested territory with one of the Allies' wartime enemies.

The Polish delegation made repeated attempts to cast aspersions on the Ukrainians in this way, with some success. When meeting with the inter-Allied mission in early February, Dmowski argued that Ukrainian forces were selling petrol to the Hungarian army.[212] Although this came before Béla Kun's short-lived Bolshevik Revolution, which essentially blacklisted Hungary at the peace conference, it represents another example of the Polish delegation's attempts to link the Ukrainians to the Central Powers. When Dmowski later gave Poland's full territorial claims to the Polish Commission, he argued that the Ukrainian national movement was merely 'a weapon employed by the Germans against Poland'.[213] The most successful attempt to link the Ukrainians to another blacklisted country, however, was to Bolshevik Russia. Ukrainians, Dmowski argued, were especially susceptible to Bolshevik ideas; the Ukrainian People's Republic in Kiev had essentially succumbed to Bolshevism and similar trends were evident in the East Galician republic, which had close ties to Kiev. Moreover, Dmowski and Paderewski warned the peace conference that the Bolsheviks' army was slowly heading towards Galicia, and Poland was best equipped to stop the Bolsheviks' westward advance. Though the Ukrainian delegation argued that West Ukrainian troops were also fighting the

[210] FO 371/3279/191049, Namier memo, 21 Nov 1918.
[211] FO 371/3279/191049, Clerk minute, 23 Nov 1918.
[212] ACNP, 181.21301/2, Inter-Allied mission to Poland meeting minutes, 5 Feb 1919.
[213] ACNP, 181.213201/4, Dmowski memo, 'Note sur les frontières occidentales de l'État polonais', 6 Mar 1919.'

Bolsheviks, the Polish delegation's argument was more persuasive. Clemenceau, who said little about East Galicia in any of the occasions when it came up in the Council of Four, did malign Ukrainian efforts to defend against the Bolshevik invasion, stating that 'the Ukrainians were more than half Bolsheviks themselves'.[214] His remark reflected the wider French view that Poland should take the lead in defending East Galicia and that they should be given control of the territory as a result. The peacemakers eventually granted short-term military control over East Galicia to Poland in order to control 'Bolshevik bands'.[215]

Yet the peacemakers only acceded to the Polish delegation's point of view after much debate. Their reluctance to support the Polish delegation's claims to and Polish army's battle for East Galicia shows that they were also concerned, as Lloyd George commented, that Polish representatives were 'using Bolshevism as a cloak for their Imperialistic aims'.[216] This was particularly true of the deployment of the Polish army. The combined Polish forces from the Western Front were now under the control of General Józef Haller, who had served in the Austrian army until he resigned in July 1917 instead of signing the oath of allegiance.[217] Much of Haller's Army, as the peacemakers called it, had arrived in Poland in May and immediately proceeded to East Galicia to fight the West Ukrainian forces.[218] The trouble was that Foch had been assigned to telegram the Polish government with strict instructions not to use Haller's Army against the Ukrainians in East Galicia, but the message was never delivered. 'Marshal Foch had, at one time, been exceedingly desirous of sending General Haller's Army to Lemberg', Lloyd George noted darkly, but it was not proven that the oversight was intentional.[219] The Four immediately

[214] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 676.
[215] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 677.
[216] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 781.
[217] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 125.
[218] Haller's Army, and its contribution to Poland's armed forces, is assessed further on pp. 236-9.
[219] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 118. See also Chapter 5, pp. 214-5.

ordered Piłsudski to withdraw Haller's Army from the region, and he complied.[220] Regardless, it is clear that the Council of Four was more concerned about making an equitable peace settlement in East Galicia and was not particularly convinced by the Polish delegation's assertion that the Ukrainian forces there had Bolshevik sentiments.

The Polish delegation's other arguments in favour of its claim to East Galicia also proved unpersuasive. In some cases, the peacemakers accepted the premise of an argument but did not agree with its conclusion: that Poland should control the territory. The Polish delegation generally accepted that Ukrainian nationals comprised the majority in East Galicia – although their figures on the exact difference varied wildly – but argued that for various reasons, Poles were better suited to governing there. Its primary argument was that Polish nationals had always comprised the governing classes in Galicia, whereas Ukrainians were all peasants. 'Whatever wealth and culture exists in East Galicia is Polish', Dmowski stated to the inter-Allied mission.[221] Others were even blunter in their criticisms: one Polish representative told the British delegation that Ukrainians were 'illiterate, drunkards, and awfully lazy, their land badly cultivated', and that 'Ukrainian self-rule is an absurdity so preposterous, that persons knowing Ukraine cannot seriously talk about it'.[222] Dmowski assured the Polish Commission that Ukrainian national rights would be fully respected under Polish governance but that since '91% of the Ruthenian population are small farmers or farm workers … there is no element of the country that can govern it.'[223] Polish representatives always concluded that only a Polish government would be able to bring order to East Galicia and their claim should be accepted on that basis. Nonetheless all of the Polish delegation's attempts to link the Ukrainians to other

[220] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 127.
[221] ACNP, 181.21301/2, Inter-Allied mission to Poland meeting minutes, 5 Feb 1919.
[222] Archiwum Akt Nowych, 2: Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych w Warszawie (Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warsaw), 322/0/5068a, Martyński report, 27 April 1919.
[223] ACNP, 181.213201/4, Dmowski memo, 'Note sur les frontières occidentales de l'État polonais', 6 Mar 1919.

enemies and its general criticisms of Ukrainians increasingly contributed to the impression that it would say anything to get more territory.

On 18 June, Balfour submitted a memo that became the basis for the peace conference's interim settlement of the East Galicia question and represents the degree to which each side was successful in its attempts to sway the Allies.[224] His assessment of the Ukrainian forces' ability to control the territory was bleak: 'The Ruthenian majority is backward, illiterate, and at present quite incapable of standing alone. The urban and educated classes are largely Polish, and when not Polish are Jewish. The whole country is utterly disorganised.'[225] To prevent a Bolshevik invasion of Galicia, he advocated giving Poland temporary military control over the region with 'complete Military freedom – as from a Military point of view they certainly ought to be'.[226] But his proposal that Polish governance should be supervised by a League of Nations High Commissioner, and that the League would decide when Poland should cede control of the territory, also reflects British and American concerns that the Polish government was claiming too much territory with little regard for the rights of the Ukrainians of East Galicia to self-determination.

These concerns reflected in part the influence that Namier had on the British delegation, even though he spent most of the conference in London. Namier had long claimed that Polish nationalists sought to dominate the region and incorporate territories containing non-Polish majorities, but early in 1919 he began to describe 'Polish Imperialism' in particular.[227] The phrase is important because it is an unfamiliar concept to those who, like the British delegation, knew little about the political and social history of the region and would be unlikely to use such a term. After all, before 1919 Poles had

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[224] See Balfour papers, Add. 49750, Balfour memo, 18 June 1919, ff. 221-6.
[225] Balfour memo, f. 222.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Headlam-Morley papers, HDLM 688/2/Namier, Namier to Headlam-Morley, 18 Jan 1919. Namier had also used the phrase in letters to Kerr beginning in 1917: Lothian papers, GD 40/17/874, Namier, remarks on 'The Problems of Central and Eastern Europe', n.d. [Apr 1917].

been looked upon sympathetically because of their experience under imperial oppression. Namier's opinions thus may have influenced Lloyd George, who relied heavily on Kerr's advice and to a lesser extent on Headlam-Morley's. The view of the imperialist Poles, moreover, spread beyond Lloyd George's circle into the British delegation. Reginald Leeper, a colleague of Namier's in the PID and later a British delegate to the peace conference specialising on Balkan issues, wrote to Headlam-Morley:

> To rely upon Poland as a barrier against Bolshevism seems to me absolutely insane. I entirely agree with Namier on this point. The Poles are not only incompetent but are indulging in a mad wave of Imperialism and Chauvinism. They are entirely unreliable, are spreading more lies in Europe at the present moment than the rest of the nations put together, are intriguing against Germany, against Russia, against the Czechs, against the Ukrainians, against the Lithuanians all at the same time.[228]

Leeper had no other involvement in Polish affairs and his opinion indicates that concern about Polish imperialism had spread throughout the British delegation.

Nonetheless Namier's influence on Lloyd George in particular is important because the prime minister not only came to share this view of Polish actions and shaped the peace as a result, he occasionally used phrasing similar to what Namier proposed. As Lloyd George asserted in the Council of Four during a discussion of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, 'it seemed to him that [the] Poles were using Bolshevism as a cloak for their Imperialistic aims.'[229] Lloyd George's concern about Polish imperialism also reflected his growing concern that Poland should comprise only ethnographically Polish areas. He may have come to this opinion partly because of his own background; in another meeting he is quoted as saying that 'In the fight against the Ukraine, Poland is playing the role of a relatively strong state attacking a weaker country.'[230] As mentioned earlier in the chapter, Lloyd George had defined much of his political career by fighting against the strong, beginning with the English landlords in Wales. Since the Poles were the landlords in East

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[228] Headlam-Morley papers, HDLM 688/2/Leeper, Rex Leeper to Headlam-Morley, 26 Feb 1919.
[229] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 781.
[230] Mantoux, vol. 2, p. 86.

Galicia, they offered another parallel with Lloyd George's Welsh background – but it was not helpful for Poland's claims that in this case Poles were equated with oppressive English landlords. As Lloyd George perceived Poland as a coercive power, thanks to what he had observed of their international actions and what he had learned from his advisors, it is unsurprising that he repeatedly used such arguments to caution against Polish control of the region.

The peace conference took up the question of East Galicia again in the autumn of 1919. French delegates continued to argue that Poland should be granted outright control of the territory, while British delegates asserted that it should be autonomous. The British government believed that the best defence against the Bolsheviks would be an alliance between the Polish government and Anton Denikin, who led a major White anti-Bolshevik army. Piłsudski agreed with reluctance, but he carried out the British wishes slowly and in the meantime developed contacts with Symon Petliura, leader of a Ukrainian nationalist army. Concern for the fate of the Ukrainians in East Galicia remained central to British policy. Namier, for instance, sent Kerr two articles from 10 July 1919 that reported the beginning of 'Polonising' efforts in the region. The Polish government, Namier argued, wanted to settle the land in East Galicia to secure its 'Polish character' and to encourage instruction in Polish in the region.[231] Lloyd George in particular may have been sensitive about national assimilation as Welsh had been forbidden in school when he was a child and he had been beaten for using it.[232] Kerr wrote to Lord Curzon on 9 November,

> The Prime Minister considers that under no circumstances should Eastern Galicia be annexed to Poland. Its population is two-thirds Ruthenian and it is inevitable that the question of its relations to the Ukrains (sic) will some day become acute. … He cannot help pointing out that Poland which has suffered so cruelly from oppression and from disregard of its national feelings and traditions and which has now won self-determination

[231] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/905/1, Translation of article in *Kurjer Lwowski*, 10 July 1919; Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/905/2, 'The Polish Diet', 10 July 1919.
[232] Grigg, *Lloyd George*, pp. 20, 32.

> practically entirely through the sacrifices of others, now appears bent on denying to another race the rights it has so long demanded for itself. [233]

Lloyd George and those around him had become increasingly convinced that the Polish government would not treat minorities fairly. As the next chapter will explain, this view was also related to allegations of Polish pogroms.

Eventually, however, Lloyd George accepted that Polish control over the region was the only option for the interim. He proposed that Poland receive a ten-year mandate, after which time the region's electorate could determine its future.[234] At the peace conference, however, the American, French, and Italian delegations were prepared to give East Galicia to Poland. The members of the Polish Commission – except for the British delegate – agreed that a 25-year mandate would be an acceptable compromise, since it would allow time for generational renewal. The American delegate, still concerned that national rights would be respected, supported the idea 'as long as this system should give satisfactory results', with the League being granted the power to intervene if necessary.[235] The matter of the length of the mandate was referred to the Council of Heads of Delegations, where Eyre Crowe, the British representative, accepted the idea of a 25-year mandate on 11 November 1919.[236]

The decision was announced on 8 December 1919, but the news had already leaked in Poland, where the public had been expecting that their government would receive outright control of East Galicia. Sir Horace Rumbold, now the British Minister to Poland, feared the public's reaction to the peace conference's decision. On 4 December, Rumbold urged Curzon to put off the official announcement 'for a few months' out of concern that the news could destabilise Poland. Rumbold argued that publication of the Supreme Council's decision could 'dishearten a portion of Polish army' and threaten its

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[233] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/908, Kerr to Curzon, 9 Oct 1919.
[234] Ibid.
[235] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 9, p. 116.
[236] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 9, p. 100.

successful record of fighting the Bolsheviks.[237] 'Poland has always looked upon Lemberg as the third capital of the country', Rumbold noted, but because Ukrainians were in the majority and the territory would have universal suffrage, the Polish people believed that they would lose their 'third capital' in 25 years' time. He also worried that the news could topple Paderewski's government.[238] His protests were unsuccessful, however, and came too late anyway because the information leaked out on the same day. As one Polish newspaper wrote in the aftermath of the decision, '[t]his in reality decides for us the loss of East Galicia.'[239]

The Polish people and their government were furious and blamed the British government; its opposition to Polish control of East Galicia had been well-publicised.[240] The British government in return attempted to mollify the people of Poland. The manner in which it did this revealed how they perceived the Polish people. Rumbold noted that he had attempted to explain 'all the arguments' for Britain's position, but also noted to Curzon that 'discounting the tendency of this nation to exaggerate and to get excited', the people of Poland felt 'very strongly' about that their country should control East Galicia, especially Lemberg.[241] This nonetheless reflected the longstanding stereotype that Poles were passionate more than, for example, the remarks of Michał Sokolnicki, the Counsellor of the Polish Legation in London, who told Headlam-Morley that 'the matter was one of those things on which a nation feels intensely'.[242] While Rumbold attributed the sensitivity and passion to Polishness, Sokolnicki implied that any group of people would feel disappointed by a similar decision. Rumbold then asked Lloyd George to give the Poles 'a pat on the back' to demonstrate Britain's friendship.[243] Kerr replied that such action was

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[237] *DBFP*, ed. E.L. Woodward and Rohan Butler, (1st ser., vol. 3, London, 1949), p. 903.
[238] Rumbold Papers, dep. 47, Rumbold to Curzon, 4 Dec 1919.
[239] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/909/1, translation of article in *Naprzod*, 5 Dec 1919.
[240] *DBFP* 1st ser., vol. 3, p. 902.
[241] *DBFP* 1st ser., vol. 3, p. 902; Rumbold Papers, dep. 47, Rumbold to Curzon, 16 Dec 1919.
[242] Headlam-Morley Papers, HDLM 688/2/Kerr, Headlam-Morley to Kerr, 19 Dec 1919.
[243] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Rumbold to Kerr, 6 Dec 1919.

unnecessary and that, regardless of Polish opinion, Lloyd George was 'not in the least anti-Polish'.[244] As in Danzig and Upper Silesia, Lloyd George feared that if Poland controlled too many minorities, it would create the conditions for future unrest.[245] A month later, Kerr further expanded on Lloyd George's opinions, telling Rumbold that Lloyd George was the only 'real friend' that Poland had among world leaders, since he had a 'true appreciation' of the long-term dangers of irredentism by Poland's neighbours.[246] Kerr argued that this explained why the prime minister had fought Poland's 'absurd' territorial claims against Germany and Ukraine.[247]

Vilnius

While the peacemakers became quite concerned about the fate of East Galicia, they were less so about Lithuania even though there were many similarities between the two cases.[248] The Bolsheviks had taken Vilnius on 5 January 1919, four days after German troops had withdrawn from the city. Then on 19 April 1919, Polish forces captured the city after two months of sporadic fighting. Poland's ethnographic claim to the Vilnius region was dubious. Much as in the case of Lemberg, the surrounding countryside was heavily Lithuanian except for the landlords, who were Polish. In the city of Vilnius, the 1909 Russian census revealed that Poles and Jews each comprised over one-third of the population and Russians about 20%, while Lithuanians numbered only 1.2%.[249] The census totals did not tell the whole story: national identification was much more fluid,

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[244] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Kerr to Rumbold, 15 Dec 1919.
[245] Ibid.
[246] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Kerr to Rumbold, 30 Jan 1920.
[247] Ibid.
[248] Less has been written about the peacemakers' perspectives on the Polish-Lithuanian dispute than about Poland's other contested territories. It is usually mentioned in passing or as part of a discussion on the Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia) more generally. The best sources to consult are Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*, pp. 159–65; Russell Bryant, chapter on 'Poland-Lithuania-Russia'; Charlotte Alston, *Antonius Piip, Zigfrīds Meierovics and Augustinas Voldemaras: The Baltic States*, Haus Histories (London: Haus, 2010), pp. 47–135, passim. Also see Donatas Kupciunas' '"The Devil's paradise": the Vilnius conflict in European diplomacy, 1919-1923' (DPhil thesis, University of Oxford, in progress), chapter 1.
[249] Timothy Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, p. 306n2.

since Polish was the language of the cultured élite, while most of the churches were Roman Catholic and most of Vilnius city's schools were in the Russian language.[250] But despite the Polish plurality in the city – the Polish population had only recently overtaken the Jewish population of Vilnius – the Polish delegation did not claim the city or the surrounding region at the peace conference and so the army's attack could be expected to raise attention. Yet the invasion of Vilnius incited no recorded comment at any of the major sessions of the peace conference. This was partly because Lithuanians nationalists, while desiring to have Vilnius as their capital, preferred to be occupied by Poland in the interim rather than by the Bolsheviks. Some Allied representatives were also surprisingly positive about the Polish action even though it pre-empted the peace conference's deliberations. Before the invasion, Howard remarked of Piłsudski – who grew up near Vilnius – 'his patriotic love for his own country Lithuania was really touching.'[251] Howard sympathised with the Polish invasion even though he was also considered one of the few steadfast friends of the Lithuanian delegation in Paris. On 23 April he wrote in his diary, 'Poles have taken Wilno … so Piłsudski's dream is accomplished. Isn't that sweet?'[252]

The relative weakness of the Lithuanian delegation to the peace conference offers a partial explanation for this omission. Four separate Lithuanian groups sent delegations to the peace conference, which immediately gave them a reputation for infighting.[253] When the delegation under Augustinas Voldemaras, the former prime minister, finally emerged as the leading one, the peace conference rejected it. That the Estonian and Latvian delegations were similarly disregarded shows a general lack of interest in national claims in the region. This was partly because the peacemakers did not want to carve up the former Russian Empire out of concern that a future, non-Bolshevik Russian government would likely want to reclaim many lost territories. Lithuanian delegates did

[250] Timothy Snyder, *Reconstruction of Nations*, p. 52.
[251] Howard Diary, 30 Mar 1919.
[252] Alston, pp. 67–9. Howard Diary, 23 Apr 1919.
[253] Alston, pp. 62–3.

submit memoranda to the peace conference and met with delegates informally and occasionally formally, as did the Ukrainian delegation, for instance. Charlotte Alston's history of the Baltic States at the peace conference explains the peacemakers' lack of interest in the Lithuanian delegation as the result of British and French 'readiness to accept reports of the "pro-German character" of the various [Lithuanian] delegates'.[254] The Polish delegation had often forwarded such claims. Other developments also encouraged this impression: the Lithuanians had declared autonomy under German occupation during the war, for instance.[255] Nonetheless the peacemakers neither approved of the Polish government's seizure of Vilnius, nor did they scold it for pre-empting the decisions of the conference.

While the Polish delegation did not claim Vilnius outright, Dmowski had proposed that Lithuania be joined in a union with the new Polish state.[256] In private the peacemakers had often proposed that Poland and Lithuania consider some sort of federation, which was also Piłsudski's desire. The Lithuanian leadership was unenthusiastic because the peacemakers often supposed that Poland would be the dominant partner in such a federation.[257] Yet in 1919 the peacemakers continued to consider a Polish-Lithuanian link as perhaps the best option for the region. At the end of January 1919, in a document circulated to the Big Five, the British delegation suggested 'a provisional Polish occupation of Vilna' to prevent 'Bolshevik excesses there'.[258] The plan was never approved, however, and the Polish government acted alone. Though their invasion in April 1919 went generally unnoticed, their second seizure of Vilnius on 9

[254] Alston, p. 64; Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Rumbold to Acton, 29 Dec 1919.
[255] Roshwald, pp. 120–2.
[256] This is noted in Dmowski's official claim, made first to the sub-committee on Poland's western and northern frontiers: ACNP, 181.213201/4, Dmowski memo, 'Note sur les frontières occidentales de l'État polonais', 6 Mar 1919. See also ACNP, 181.21301/2, Inter-Allied mission to Poland meeting minutes, 5 Feb 1919.
[257] E.g. Lloyd George Papers, LG/F/201/1/1, Balfour memo, 'Poland', Oct 1918; Smuts, vol. 4, pp. 26-7.
[258] ACNP, 181.213/7, Opinion of the Political Section of the British Peace Delegation respecting Instructions to be given to Special Delegates for Poland, 27 Jan 1919.

October 1920 did provoke international condemnation, as will be shown in the fifth chapter.

Conclusion

The British, French, and American governments weighed ethnographic, strategic, economic, and historical considerations as they examined the Polish settlement. Would the new Poland comprise all the territories that the Polish Crown controlled in 1772, before it was first partitioned? Was that the just solution because it righted a historical wrong regardless of the present ethnographic considerations, or should the new Poland only include those areas where Poles predominated? The Polish delegation contended that if the peacemakers really wanted Poland to be a strong, viable state, they should give to Poland the territories they sought as well as a free hand to handle minorities. The new country needed access to the sea, which had been promised in several instances including in Wilson's Fourteen Points, but also a strong railroad system, defensible frontiers, and a large population base, all of which would provide some measure of protection against German attack. The peacemakers' deliberations also took into account their own interests in the region. The British, French, and American governments wanted to ensure lasting peace in Europe, but they differed on the means. In general, the French government believed that lasting peace would be ensured if Germany remained weakened, which meant protecting the independence of the new states on Germany's eastern borders. The French delegation also wanted to ensure that Bolshevism was contained in Russia, an objective that they believed could be in part achieved by a strong Poland. The British delegation, meanwhile, pursued a general policy in keeping with their long-time preference for a balance of power on the continent, but also preferred to avoid future 'Alsace-Lorraines' in which territory granted to one country could fuel irredentism. The United States delegation attempted to follow the principle of self-determination closely; nonetheless, when considering the jumble of nationalities in central and eastern Europe, American delegates were often convinced by other arguments.

An examination of Polish territorial questions at the Paris Peace Conference also demonstrates the importance of comparisons between different nationalities. One of the Polish delegation's main tactics at the Paris Peace Conference when contesting a territory with another state was to note the links between that state or national group and the Central Powers or the Bolsheviks; it hoped to make Poland look better by comparison. Other delegations did this as well, such as the Romanians, who used it to forward their territorial claims against Hungary. The Polish delegation, for instance, successfully portrayed the Ukrainians of East Galicia as Bolsheviks but also attempted to connect them to Austria, Hungary, and Germany. The Polish delegation – and the French government, which supported most of Poland's claims fully – also relied on negative perceptions of German aggression to forward claims on German territory. British and American delegates, meanwhile, often compared Poles to other peoples in the region or to other nationalities with which they were familiar. For example, in a discussion about Upper Silesia, Lloyd George noted, 'The Poles, like the Irish, were specially good at propaganda. The Allies were only hearing one side of the case.' To this, Wilson replied, 'the Germans were far more subtle propagandists than the Poles. … As against the Germans he was pro Pole with all his heart.'[259] Lloyd George also frequently compared nationalities with his own people, the Welsh. The comparison was rarely favourable for Poland's territorial claims; usually Lloyd George equated Poles with oppressive English landlords.

For many among the British, French, and American delegations, their perceptions of Poland, the Poles, and the Polish government changed as a result of their postwar interactions and this affected how they framed their economic and strategic considerations as well. For some like Howard or Berthelemy, further encounters with Polish individuals, whether in Paris or on one of the several diplomatic or military missions to Poland in 1919, led them to argue strongly in favour of all of Poland's claims.

[259] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 303.

But increasingly for others, especially those at the Paris conference, a more negative view of Polish national character took hold. One widely held view was that Poles were aggressive and imperialistic. Polish forces were involved in skirmishes along Poland's borders, not just in the west with Germany and Czechoslovakia but also with Lithuanians, Russians, and Ukrainians. Polish forces were not always perceived as the guilty party in these conflicts, and similar quarrels were erupting across central and eastern Europe throughout 1919. Nonetheless, from the perspective of the leaders, who had to adjudicate several quarrels between Poland and its neighbours while attempting to finish the treaty with Germany and establish the League of Nations, doubts began to surface about Poland's fitness to embody the modern ideal of a peaceful liberal state. These doubts began to be employed, in connection with factors, to explain why Poland should not control a particular disputed territory.

Chapter 4: The peacemakers and Poland's domestic affairs

Charles Maier identifies a concern with 'territoriality', which he defines as 'the properties, including power, provided by the control of bordered political space, which … created the framework for national and often ethnic identity,' as a central feature of world history between 1860 and 1960.[1] The Allied and American governments' attention to the Polish settlement at the peace conference supports Maier's assertion that establishing frontiers and controlling or disciplining 'the lands within' was characteristic of this era.[2] In discussions of Poland's territorial claims, British, French, and American policy-makers also considered domestic conditions in the new state and attempted to improve them where possible. Andrea Orzoff writes regarding Czechoslovakia that in the postwar period, 'even the most picayune domestic squabbles in this small country could potentially echo across the entire continent' because many observers believed that 'if Czechoslovakia fell, so too would fall Europe's increasingly rickety postwar peace.'[3] A similar lesson applies in the Polish case. The peacemakers wanted to ensure that, in contemporary parlance, the new Poland would not quickly become a failed state leading to regional instability or German or Bolshevik hegemony. Poland's government faced the gargantuan challenge of combining three political, economic, and social systems. It resented, however, the peacemakers' interventions in internal matters, regarding the minorities treaty imposed on Poland in particular as an insulting infringement upon state sovereignty.[4] This chapter examines British, French, and American attitudes and policies relating to three

[1] Maier, 'Consigning the Twentieth Century to History', p. 808.
[2] Maier, 'Consigning the Twentieth Century to History', p. 816.
[3] Orzoff, p. 4.
[4] See Paderewski's letter of protest to the peace conference of 15 June 1919 in *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, pp. 535-40; also Kaufman, p. 315.

areas of Poland's domestic affairs: governance, economy, and Jewish minorities. In all three areas, growing British and American concerns about Poland's future are evident and shaped the attitudes of those delegations towards the Polish border settlement.

The *liberum veto* in 1919

Wilson travelled to the United States from mid-February to early March 1919 to shore up support for his efforts in Paris. One such example of his efforts was a long explanation of his policies which he delivered to members of the Democratic National Committee on 28 February. In particular, he said the following regarding the peacemakers' opinion about interfering in the Russian civil war:

> I found [i.e. at the conference] that all other men around the conference table had a great respect for the right of revolution. We do not guarantee any state against what may happen inside itself, but we do guarantee against aggression from the outside, so that the family can be as lively as it pleases, and we know what generally happens to an interloper if you interfere in a family quarrel. ... I read the Virginia Bill of Rights very literally but not very elegantly to mean that any people is entitled to any kind of government it damn pleases, and that it is none of our business to suggest or to influence the kind that it is going to have. Sometimes it will have a very riotous form of government, but that is none of our business.[5]

Wilson's comments conform with his wartime advocacy of 'government with the consent of the governed' in the new European order and with various statements during the peace conference. His comments could easily apply to his ideas about how to approach the governance of Poland. But in Poland as in Russia, some of the peacemakers' actions – including ones that Wilson supported – contradicted their insistence on non-interference. The section focuses on two specific areas of Poland's governance about which the Allied and American governments frequently expressed concern: the establishment of a representative national unity government in Poland and the stability of the Polish political system over the course of 1919. These concerns increasingly encouraged a stereotype that

[5] *PWW*, vol. 55, p. 319.

Poles were more interested in quarrelling amongst themselves than meeting Poland's many challenges.

Events of November 1918, and especially the actions of Jozef Piłsudski, have become entrenched in Polish national mythology of independence and celebrations of independence on 11 November, which is a state holiday in contemporary Poland.[6] The German government freed Piłsudski from Magdeburg prison on 9 November and he arrived in Warsaw the following day. That day, he met with representatives from the two existing power centres in Poland: the Regency Council, which had dismissed the partially elected Council of State but still assumed caretaker power over Congress Poland, and a self-proclaimed socialist republic centred on Lublin and led by Ignacy Daszyński. On 11 November both governments designated Piłsudski the head of their respective armed forces. Meanwhile, the Polish Military Organisation (Polski Organizacja Wojskowa or POW) – a Polish military force of about 30,000 men that had grown out of Piłsudski's wartime Polish legions – disarmed German troops in Warsaw, Łódź, and other cities. Most German troops surrendered peacefully in return for safe passage to Germany, though German forces remained in Ukraine and the Baltic region per the armistice agreement. Piłsudski consolidated control over the coming days; by 14 November both the Regency Council and Daszyński's government had transferred their authority to him. On 17 November, Piłsudski submitted a declaration 'to notify the conflicting and neutral governments and nations of the existence of an independent Polish state in all territories of united Poland.'[7] On 18 November, he installed an ally, Jędrzej Moraczewski, as prime minister of the new government. Piłsudski's efforts culminated on 22 November when he declared himself provisional head of state and 'supreme authority' until a legislature could

[6] See Biskupski, *Independence Day*, especially pp. 22-34 for a narrative of Piłsudski's actions; this provides greater clarity than his earlier 'The Invention of Modern Poland: Pilsudski, 11 November, and the Politics of Symbolism', in *Central Europe: Before and After EU Accession*, ed. by Stanislav V. Kirschbaum (London: Palgrave-MacMillan, 2007), pp. 102–22; the wider view is covered crisply in Ajnenkiel.

[7] Piłsudski decree, translated and reprinted in Latawski, *Reconstruction of Poland*, pp. 199–200.

be elected. Piłsudski took care, however, to maintain both publicly and privately that he did not intend to retain his provisional powers.[8]

Within the week, Moraczewski's government announced that elections to the Sejm (parliament) would be held on 26 January 1919. Poland was thus the first of the new states of central and eastern Europe to hold elections, though voting was held only in the core territories outlined in the previous chapter.[9] While much credit is often given to Piłsudski for uniting Poland, he inherited the developing administrative apparatus that had been established under the occupation administration and in the German and Austrian partitions.[10] Moreover, the POW, Piłsudski's Polish Socialist Party, and other left-wing, pro-independence organisations established local committees to replace Austrian and German authority.[11] These local organisations quickly handed over authority to the government in Warsaw once it had been established. Workers' soviets developed in some cities and towns, especially in the Dąbrowa region of German-controlled Upper Silesia that the Polish delegation claimed at the peace conference, but most did not last long.[12] Crucially, though the leaders in Paris occasionally mentioned the threat of 'Bolshevism' in Poland, they never did so with specific reference to these soviets.

Many historians have argued that Polish political leaders and parties sacrificed power and ambition for unity under Piłsudski's leadership, and this may reflect the perceptions of Poland's leadership and popular opinion. Such compromises were not, however, apparent to policy-makers in Britain, France, and the United States, to whom it

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[8] *The Diaries of a Cosmopolitan: Count Harry Kessler, 1918-1937*, ed. & trans. by Charles Kessler (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1971), p. 17; Komarnicki, p. 248.
[9] Ajnenkiel, p. 141.
[10] Jędruch, p. 269.
[11] Biskupski, *Independence Day*, p. 24; Ajnenkiel, p. 135.
[12] Most works consider these soviets to be aberrations that disappeared as the nationalists gained power, e.g. Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*, pp. 71–9. Yet the topic deserves further study to consider contingency and national indifference, especially now as Polish historiography moves beyond the ideological constraints of the Cold War years.

seemed that a power struggle was occurring.[13] Scattered reports described some of the events described above, but these did not capture the full story. First, the elected Regency Council asked the victorious powers to recognise it as the legitimate government of Poland, just days before disbanding under Pilsudski's leadership.[14] At the same time that Piłsudski was declaring the independence of Poland, the KNP petitioned the French government to recognise it as the country's *de facto* government of Poland. The French government agreed, but when it consulted the British government, the latter opposed recognition of the KNP. The Foreign Office, which had staunchly supported the KNP months before, believed that such a policy would be 'dangerous'.[15] The Foreign Office had increasingly become aware that the KNP might be a better wartime ally than a peacetime one, in part because of its tendency to achieve its aims by vindictive policies and in part because of growing concerns that it did not represent majority opinion in the partitions. Moreover, recognition of the KNP, Balfour wrote the French ambassador, 'might risk the definite alienation of general opinion in Poland, whose wishes have never yet reached the Allied Governments in any substantiated form.'[16] Wilson, meanwhile, believed that Poland should have 'any government they damned pleased' and the United States should not interfere in this process.[17] In this case, this meant that the United States government did not act to support the KNP and Wilson believed that the French government was attempting to pre-empt 'the consent of the governed' by supporting Dmowski's organisation. This meant that Poland still had two competing governments. Yet Britain, France, and the United States were preparing to decide Poland's territorial boundaries at

[13] Popular sentiment cannot be properly verified as relevant studies of this period in English and French adopt a top-down perspective. Claims of Polish political and popular unity are found in, among others, Biskupski, *Independence Day*, pp. 25, 31; Jędruch, pp. 269–70; Ajnenkiel, pp. 140–1; Kadlubowski, p. 99; Komarnicki, pp. 247–8. Such a characterisation also ignores the general political and popular disorder in Warsaw in the weeks after the armistice; see the description in Kessler, pp. 15–34. As outlined below the peacemakers were somewhat aware of this unrest although not fully informed.
[14] FO 371/3279/187976, Rumbold to FO, 12 Nov 1918.
[15] FO 371/3277/189331, Clerk minute, 19 Nov 1918.
[16] FO 371/3277/189331, Balfour to Cambon, 30 Nov 1918.
[17] Bowman's notes, quoted in Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy', p. 98.

the peace conference, and hoped that Polish politicians could soon establish a coalition government that represented a wide variety of political opinion.[18]

For the next several weeks, the competing Polish governments in Paris and Warsaw attempted to come to an understanding. Dmowski was the first to act, sending a mission under Stanisław Grabski, a one-time socialist now with the National Democrats, to meet with Piłsudski in Warsaw.[19] Grabski negotiated for a coalition government with a National Democrat majority, but Piłsudski did not agree and the effort failed. Dmowski had also hoped, by sending a mission to conduct negotiations in Warsaw, that he could establish the new government without allowing Piłsudski the opportunity to make contact with the victorious powers. The KNP's main advantage was its relationship with and proximity to the Allies and Americans. Even though the KNP's influence was evidently waning, it remained a proven ally. British, French, and American policy-makers knew comparatively little about Piłsudski, however, except that he had fought with the Central Powers for a time during the war and then been imprisoned for refusing to take the oath of loyalty. Dmowski's strategy failed, however, when Piłsudski sent a mission to Paris under Dr Kazimierz Dłuski. Dłuski passed through Berne on 31 December and met with British representatives there, thus establishing the contact that the KNP had attempted to prevent. When Dłuski reached Paris, negotiations with Dmowski proceeded slowly at first. The United States threatened to withdraw food aid if the division continued, and this convinced Dłuski and Dmowski to agree to a compromise in Paris on 13 January. Paderewski, meanwhile, accompanied a British fact-finding mission to Poland in early January and intended to make a compromise with Piłsudski. Piłsudski and Paderewski concluded an acceptable agreement on 12 January after several days of negotiations – but

[18] FO 371/3279/193949, Drummond minute, 27 Nov 1918.
[19] Given the inadequacies in the historiography as noted above, this paragraph's narrative is indebted to Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 92–124.

on the same day that informal peace conference discussions began in Paris.[20] The Warsaw agreement superseded the accord between Dłuski and Dmowski.[21] Piłsudski remained as chief of state while Dmowski and Paderewski became Poland's delegates to the Peace Conference, and Paderewski became prime minister.[22] Paderewski and Dmowski became Poland's two plenipotentiaries at the peace conference; as Paderewski remained in Poland until April to form his government, Dłuski acted as a substitute but had little importance.

Though the compromise created a solid foundation for a more representative government of Poland, the state's internecine quarrels were not forgotten. The Polish delegation to the peace conference made little effort to disguise the divisions that still existed in their government. Dmowski raised the issue in his speech to the Council of Ten on 29 January: 'The National Council [i.e. the KNP] … felt that a Socialistic Government [Moraczewski's] situated between two extreme Socialistic governments was necessary for the safety of Poland at the time, and it concentrated its efforts on arranging a compromise with the Socialists.'[23] His attempt to appear magnanimous also reads as self-justification, especially as he proceeded to blame Piłsudski for the protracted negotiations that produced Paderewski's premiership. Dmowski argued that most of the Polish people had been 'against' Piłsudski's 'Socialistic' government, which was 'not given much to compromise.'[24] There is no evidence that the assembled delegates responded to this characterisation. The meeting minutes record no interjections as Dmowski delivered his five-hour address first in French, then in English, while Wilson paid little attention, instead admiring the paintings on the wall.[25] Yet Dmowski's failure to disguise the

[20] Discussions began on 12 January but the conference officially opened on 18 January; the creation of the German Empire had been announced on the same day in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles in 1871.
[21] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 104.
[22] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 104–5.
[23] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 775-6. Komarnicki, pp. 247–8 argues that Dmowski had been admitting that Moraczewski's government was 'necessary' but does not include or analyse the evident bitterness in the Polish delegate's speech.
[24] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 775-6.
[25] Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy', pp. 99–100.

disunity in the Polish ranks is nonetheless significant; likely the peacemakers would have been more impressed had he feigned to show common cause with his longtime political opponent.

As mentioned above, Wilson in particular insisted that he did not want to interfere in Poland's self-government, yet the peace conference acted on numerous occasions to prevent Paderewski's government from disintegrating. The peacemakers seemed to like Paderewski personally, but they also preferred him to alternatives. The British, French, and American governments gave official recognition to Paderewski's government after the elections on 26 January; as they had withheld such recognition from Moraczewski's government, this was an indication of the opinion they had of Paderewski. The peacemakers' respect for Paderewski as Poland's leader dated in part to his wartime activities. Paderewski's passionate sincerity in support of wartime Polish relief and Poland's independence had endeared him to politicians and crowds alike. His membership in the KNP – as well as some rumours about his political connections – had linked him to the National Democrats, but the British, French, and American governments tended to view him as being above party politics.[26] It also helped that he communicated his dislike for the National Democrats' intolerant policies and promoted a more inclusive Poland; at the KNP's founding in 1917, he had pushed for a more representative committee that included Jewish members.[27] As the peace conference progressed, Paderewski earned a reputation as perhaps the only Pole whom the peacemakers believed they could trust. As Wilson stated in a meeting of the Council of Four, to no opposition, Paderewski had 'played the game straight throughout' and his government should be supported.[28] The leaders also may have felt more comfortable with Paderewski because he was

[26] Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, p. 115.
[27] FO 371/3001/169054, Paderewski to Horodyski, 28 Aug 1917.
[28] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 677; see also Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland', pp. 115–6.

cosmopolitan, but they nonetheless associated him with Polish qualities, especially by commenting on his passionate and emotional nature.

Despite the peacemakers' admiration for Paderewski, his position at home was precarious and became increasingly so as the conference progressed. Paderewski's cabinet included elements from across the political spectrum, but overall the Sejm was divided. The conservative Polish Peasants' Party 'Piast' won a plurality of seats in the elections of 26 January, with the National Democrats the second-largest party. Several other parties had significant numbers of seats and party success was largely limited to one of the former partitions only.[29] Facing a fragmented Sejm, therefore, Paderewski was in a difficult position when the Polish electorate quickly came to believe that he had compromised too much on important questions like Danzig, Upper Silesia, and the minorities treaties.[30] On several occasions, therefore, the peacemakers considered ways of modifying their decisions to help Paderewski's government survive. In particular, the way in which the peacemakers talked about the Polish prime minister was significant; their support reflected not only their admiration for the man, but also their fear of instability in the country's political system. The peacemakers feared instability in Europe generally, and pursued those avenues that might stabilise Poland and other countries to deny the Bolsheviks a chance to spread their revolution.

One method of stabilising the Polish government and the Polish people was through American food aid. Throughout the peace conference, the United States government often linked its food aid to the maintenance of the political order in Poland, signifying that if the Polish government did their part to maintain political stability, so would the United States. This was not unusual; American food aid to Russia, for instance, was initially given only to anti-Bolshevik forces and as a reward for social stability.[31]

[29] On the results of the first Sejm elections, see Sibora, p. 164; Jędruch, pp. 270–1, 289.
[30] Anita Prażmowska, *Ignacy Paderewski: Poland* (London: Haus, 2009), pp. 100–1.
[31] Foglesong, *America's Secret War*, p. 249.

Occasionally the American government threatened the withdrawal of food aid in response to external aggression by Poland's government, as in the Polish-Ukrainian conflict of May 1919. In most cases, however, provision of food to Poland was tied to internal stability. Even during the Polish-Ukrainian conflict, the importance of aid for Poland's internal stability characterised the debate over its withdrawal. The withdrawal of aid was the suggestion of Herbert Hoover, who as the head of the ARA and a delegate on the Supreme Economic Council was perhaps the most influential person at the peace conference outside the Council of Four. Wilson initially argued against it, however, because he feared that 'if strong action forced the downfall of the Paderewski Government, Poland would turn Bolshevist, as had happened in other cases. As far as he could judge the present temper of the Diet, Poland would become anarchical if any extreme measure should be adopted.' He continued, 'Paderewski's government is like a dike against disorder.'[32] A few days previously, the Sejm had rejected a motion by Paderewski to suspend military operations in East Galicia in accordance with the wishes of the peace conference. Paderewski threatened to step down as a result.[33] Hugh Gibson, the first American minister to Poland, advised 'that unless Paderewski brings back something definite to show that he has been successful in his mission [i.e. to claim territory], there will be an attempt to oust him and his government either by the radicals or by the Dmowski group, or possibly by both.'[34]

Aid was not always used as a threat but also as an incentive. In November 1919, with the Paderewski government in danger of collapse, Poland's government asked for an emergency grain shipment of 100,000 tons. Its request was granted because, as Secretary of State Robert Lansing wrote, 'our Government should do all it can to strengthen Paderewski's hands and it is quite possible that the fall of his Government may bring

[32] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 780; Mantoux, vol. 2, p. 150.
[33] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 676.
[34] Sterling Memorial Library, Edward Mandell House Papers, Gibson to House, 29 Apr 1919.

about a dangerous situation in Poland.'[35] Similar sentiments came a few weeks later from Rumbold in Warsaw. When the peace conference was preparing to declare publicly in early December that Poland had been granted a 25-year mandate over East Galicia, Rumbold urged his government to delay the announcement. Because the Polish people felt so strongly about control of East Galicia, Rumbold feared that Paderewski's government would fall if he had to sign a treaty for a mandate and that the result would be a swing to the left and a short-lived, unstable government. '[I]t is not improbable', he concluded, 'that it would eventually become necessary to establish some sort of dictatorship.'[36] Paderewski's government had already endured weeks of votes of non-confidence because of his willingness to suspend military operations in East Galicia and to consider making peace with the Bolsheviks.[37] It did not survive another week. Leopold Skulski, an ally of Piłsudski's, replaced Paderewski as prime minister.

The concerns of British and American representatives about Paderewski's government also reflected more general fears about the perceived volatility of the Polish people. As Lloyd George stated on 21 May in the Council of Four, 'We are told that the Warsaw mob would overwhelm the Paderewski Government if we took strong steps [i.e. to force an armistice in East Galicia]. If that were so it showed pretty conclusively that the Poles were quite unfitted to govern themselves.'[38] But the greatest concern throughout the peace conference, which British and American policy-makers expressed most frequently, was that Poland's leaders were concentrating too much on settling scores with one another and not enough on getting on with the enormous challenges that faced their new country. As outlined above, such ideological divisions reflected longstanding fissures in Polish political culture, but the peacemakers viewed the conflict in predominantly

[35] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/276, Lansing to Tumulty, 7 Nov 1919.
[36] Rumbold Papers, dep. 47, Rumbold to Curzon, 4 Dec 1919. His warning presaged the establishment of Piłsudski's dictatorship in 1926.
[37] Prażmowska, *Ignacy Paderewski*, pp. 105–6.
[38] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 781.

negative terms because of their preoccupation with rebuilding Poland. They also compared Poland's situation to others; Czechoslovakia in particular had quickly established unified leadership under Masaryk with Beneš as his loyal supporter. The peacemakers were generally concerned that a weak government could collapse and allow a communist takeover, as had happened in Russia in 1917 and then in Hungary in March 1919. They surely also would not have wanted a dictator to stabilise matters, as Admiral Horthy in Hungary did later in 1919 or even like Piłsudski when he seized power in 1926, but fear of a communist takeover was mentioned much more frequently.

Concern about Poland's stability also incorporated an aspect of national characterisation. As Stephen Bonsal, an American journalist attending the conference who was very close to House, noted on 5 January 1919:

> [Piłsudski] does not seem to be on good terms with the [Polish] National Committee (KNP). As a matter of fact, I should say he is on the worst possible terms with its members – in fact everybody is on bad terms with everyone else. All apparently are exercising the liberum veto which brought low the Polish state in the olden days. As I sit and listen to the uproar, I recall an old German saying I heard so often in my student days. It is to the effect that wherever four Poles are gathered together, at least five opinions are held and loudly expressed.[39]

Bonsal's description outlined a perception of the Polish people that quickly solidified as a clear stereotype, that Poles were passionate and quarrelsome and could not restrain themselves when it was necessary or practical to do so. This understanding came to pervade many assessments of Poland's internal politics and helped to explain why some in the British and American delegations in particular opposed Poland's territorial claims. As this stereotype in particular was based on an understanding of past and present actions, each will be outlined below. Despite the importance of Allied and American concerns about Poland's governance, the specialist historiography does not focus on the issue beyond the inception of Paderewski's premiership on 12 January. Yet the question of

[39] Bonsal, p. 118.

whether the Polish government would survive was an important, contested point throughout the peace conference.

Throughout the nineteenth century, one of the main explanations for the demise of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was the *liberum veto* that Bonsal noted; this was the right of any member of the Sejm to veto a course of action. Only with a unanimous decision could the Sejm proceed. The Polish gentry or *szlachta*, the greatest of whom sat in the Sejm, were unwilling to give up the *liberum veto*, which they regarded as a traditional noble privilege to be defended against monarchical power.[40] The veto also allowed foreign powers to meddle in the Polish system, which Russia in particular did throughout the eighteenth century.[41] In the face of advancing Austrian, Prussian, and Russian armies in 1772, the Sejm prevaricated for too long and Poland-Lithuania lost 30% of its territories. As the 1911 edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* explained, '[I]f only the contending factions had been able to agree and unite' in the late eighteenth century, 'the final catastrophe might, perhaps, even now, have been averted.'[42]

The division of the *szlachta* in the face of disaster increasingly became incorporated into a wider stereotype that Poles were quarrelsome by nature. German and Russian historians had used the argument throughout the nineteenth century partly to legitimise their conquest of the Polish lands, an effective tactic as Polish views were marginalised during the partitions.[43] Privately, many Russians, even liberal ones like

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[40] Prażmowska, *History of Poland*, pp. 123–4.

[41] Paderewski, in his argument against the minorities treaty, also argued that 'the intervention of foreign powers' had caused Poland's dismemberment; *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 535.

[42] Prince Peter Alexeivitch Kropotkin and John Thomas Bealby, 'Poland', *Encyclopedia Britannica* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1911), p. 917; emphasis on the structural weakness of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth remains one of the major explanations of its demise, e.g. Jerzy Lukowski, *Disorderly Liberty: The Political Culture of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Eighteenth Century* (London; New York: Continuum, 2010). The *szlachta* finally relented in 1791 and agreed to a new constitution under King Stanisław August, but this did not please Russia, Prussia, and Austria, who initiated a further partition in 1793. In 1794 Tadeusz Kościuszko, a hero of the American Revolutionary War, led a widespread uprising; in subduing it, Austria, Prussia, and Russia partitioned the remaining territory of Poland-Lithuania.

[43] Komarnicki, p. 31. Many educated nineteenth-century Polish nationals – like Russian and German historians – debated the failings of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. For instance, arguably

Sazonov, maintained this opinion as late as the First World War. 'They [the Poles] are without political sense', Sazonov told Paléologue in 1915: 'At all the decisive hours of their existence they have committed an irreparable mistake.'[44] Infighting between Polish émigré groups during the war tended to reinforce this stereotype; as mentioned in the first two chapters, even pro-Polish advocates in the Foreign Office observed and drew conclusions from such quarrelling. As Gregory later recalled, 'No one, not even the Poles themselves, will deny that they are prone to glaring faults: disunion, instability, and jealousy.' This tendency to quarrel seemed ubiquitous: 'Every Pole I ever met, with two exceptions, stood immovably, inflexibly on his "rights" and refused to budge.'[45]

This was not, however, the only way in which the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was interpreted at the Paris Peace Conference. The peacemakers expressed quite clearly on many occasions their conviction that the partition of Poland was a historical crime carried out by three autocratic regimes – 'one of the greatest wrongs in history', Clemenceau had asserted while trying to avoid a plebiscite in Upper Silesia.[46] The Allied and American reply to the German delegation on 16 June, which all of the leaders approved, spoke of the partitions in almost identical terms.[47] Poland's restoration was, Wilson told a crowd in September 1919, 'one of the most noble chapters

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the two most famous nineteenth-century Polish historians, Joachim Lelewel and Michał Bobrzyński, blamed the Commonwealth's nobility and its structure respectively, while others blamed the common people; Lukowski, pp. viii–ix. Moreover the rise of the National Democrats was the result of what Brian Porter calls an 'abandonment of historical time'; the early National Democrats abjured the memory of the Commonwealth and its ideas of multicultural tolerance in favour of the exclusive form of ethnic nationalism that they believed might someday help Poles win independence; Porter, *When Nationalism Began to Hate*, p. 9. Unlike the partitioning governments, however, Polish intellectuals usually did not progress from those debates to an explanation of why their nation was unworthy for statehood.

[44] CAD, Guerre, Pologne, vol 713, Paléologue telegram, n.d., f. 97.

[45] Observations about Polish quarrelling are also mentioned above, on pp. 96-7; Gregory, pp. 174–6.

[46] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 143.

[47] The reply stated that the partitions were 'one of the greatest wrongs of which history has record'; *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 6, p. 945. The Polish minorities treaty also acknowledged 'the independence of which [the Polish nation] had been unjustly deprived'; *FRUS: PPC*, vol. XIII, p. 792.

in the history of the world.'[48] A critical difference existed, however, between declarations of sympathy for the existence of an independent Poland and support for all of its territorial claims and internal policies.[49] Among the experts, in discussions about the border with Germany it was often stated that Poland deserved territory from Germany because of how poorly Poles had been treated during the partitions. This was also one of the Polish delegation's main arguments, and it influenced many at the conference.[50] When meeting with the sub-commission on Poland's western and northern frontiers, Dmowski noted 'the efforts made for more than a century by the Prussian government to colonise the Polish territories east of the Vistula ... The plan failed in spite of the fact that the Germans employed every means, even the most reprehensible.'[51] The commission then awarded generous borders to Poland, influenced partly by strategic arguments but nonetheless bolstered in their belief that they were doing the right thing; they had noted in an earlier meeting the justice of Poland's territorial claims.[52]

Such reasoning did not persuade others who sought to limit Poland's territorial claims in contested areas, like Lloyd George and increasingly Wilson. Wilson often spoke about various elements of Poland's weakness. This was sometimes when he spoke about the importance of supporting Poland with a good European settlement, as when he told a crowd in Boston that the country was 'immature, inexperienced, as yet unorganized, … with a circle of armies around her'.[53] Other times, however, Wilson's concerns about Polish organisation coincided with his questions about Poland's territorial claims, as when

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[48] *PWW*, vol. 63, pp. 24-5. Such arguments were an integral part of the defence of the Treaty of Versailles after 1919, e.g. André Tardieu, *The Truth About the Treaty* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1921), p. 424.

[49] Also noted in M.B. Biskupski, 'The 'Free City of Danzig' and the League of Nations in American Strategic Conception, 1917-1918: A Wilsonian Geostrategic Experiment', in *Gdańsk--Gdynia--Europa--Stany Zjednoczone w XIX i XX wieku: księga pamiątkowa dedykowana profesor Annie Cienciale*, ed. by Marek Andrzejewski (Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, 2000), p. 82.

[50] E.g. in Dmowski's presentation to the Supreme Council on 29 January; *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 774-6.

[51] ACNP, 181.2132201/3, WNFS minutes, 6 Mar 1919.

[52] ACNP, 181.2132201/2, WNFS minutes, 4 Mar 1919.

[53] *PWW*, vol. 55, p. 243.

he told the Council of Four in the long debate on 19 March that '[t]he Allies were creating a new and weak state, weak not only because historically it had failed to govern itself, especially as religious differences were an element in the situation.'[54] It was evident, moreover, that the Czechoslovak government in particular had shown that it was possible to organize a new country properly. Wilson told the Four that while 'Beneš had given a very intelligent and unbiased description of the Teschen question' for their 17 May meeting, they could not come up with population figures for the contested duchy because 'Beneš had told [Wilson] it was impossible for the Poles to agree with the Czecho-Slovaks, as they had been asked to do. The problem was that in Poland it was a party question and no party could afford to give way. This was not the case in Czecho-Slovakia.'[55] Lloyd George pointed to disorganisation in Poland as a reason to limit a particular objective of the Polish delegation. In a discussion of the Council of Ten on 13 March, he disputed Foch's assertion that the Haller Army should be sent to Poland immediately through the port of Danzig: 'the Poles had no idea of organisation; they had no capacity to direct or govern. The Premier was a pianist; the President, an idealist without any practical ideas. The generals of the army were all acting independently'.[56] Foch agreed with this characterization of the Polish government, though he continued to advocate the immediate departure of Haller's Army.[57] Lloyd George then observed in the Council of Ten on 19 March that Poles 'had not had a high reputation as administrators' and should not take territory from Germany that was not 'indisputably Polish'.[58]

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[54] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 418. Wilson's evolving attitude on Poland's territorial claims is best demonstrated in Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy'; this modifies his assertions in Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland' as he was given permission to use the Isaiah Bowman papers in 1988. Lundgreen-Nielsen argues that Wilson's ideas about the Polish settlement changed between 17 and 27 March as Lloyd George attempted to modify the boundaries suggested by the Polish Commission; Lundgreen-Nielsen, 'Aspects of American Policy', pp. 103–4..
[55] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, pp. 677-8.
[56] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 316.
[57] Ibid.
[58] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 415.

If the peacemakers criticized Polish representatives in Paris and Warsaw for failing to come to a practical compromise, they also may have linked this impracticality to perceptions of Polish emotionalism. Paderewski in particular was depicted as an emotional person. During the war Paderewski's flattery (and surely his fame) had won over House, who became the maestro's strongest contact in the American government.[59] House occasionally expressed discomfort, however, with what he perceived as the overly sentimental nature of Paderewski's flattery. After Wilson's Fourteen Points address, House was taken aback by Paderewski's gratitude.[60] Paderewski had greeted House by saying, 'I come to kneel at your feet. You are the noblest man I have ever had the honor to know. You stand by yourself, unapproachable by any means by which ordinary men are reached and influenced.' In his diary, House observed that '[Paderewski] expresses himself in such an extravagant way that I always hesitate to repeat what he says, although I know he must say practically the same things to the President.'[61] Yet while Paderewski's emotional displays may have been somewhat disconcerting, House tolerated them because they were widely believed to be an earnest expression of Paderewski's deep desire for Polish independence. As House wrote in 1917, 'Paderewski is an emotional soul, and I am as tender in my treatment of him as I would be of a highly sensitive child.'[62] In Paris, however, everyone agreed that the new state had major challenges to overcome and wanted Poland to become a stable state as quickly as possible. This meant that the peacemakers wanted Poland's leadership to make compromises across political divisions, make peace with neighboring states without seizing territory that was not 'indisputably Polish', and demonstrate their commitment to look after minorities. When Poland's leadership did not act as they were expected to do, the peacemakers tended to explain this

[59] See, e.g., House Papers, Box 84a, Paderewski to House, 22 Dec 1915, and House's pleasure in it: House Diary, 22 Dec 1915.
[60] *FRUS, 1918: Supplement 1: The World War*, vol. 1, p. 16.
[61] House Diary, 12 Jan 1918.
[62] House Diary, 14 May 1917.

as the result of Polish emotionalism and romantic idealism. Diplomats in Poland often mentioned that Poles were 'very sensitive'.[63] The charge that Poles tended to be impractical stayed with the Polish delegation through the conference, in part because that impracticality was linked to the passionate Polish nature, which tended to manifest itself in passionate disagreement rather than reserved pragmatism. The conclusion as the conference wore on was clear: Poland's leadership did not possess the emotional coolness to make difficult compromises and practical decisions to ensure the survival of their country. This realization wore away at Poland's claims, for instance that Danzig would return to prosperity under Polish rule or that Jews would be respectfully treated.

The British, French, and American governments did not directly install a government in Poland, but claims that they were disinterested about who formed the government in Poland and how it functioned must be considered sceptically. Each country's government observed the Polish political situation carefully, and British and American representatives in particular came to correlate political struggles in Poland with a tendency to be quarrelsome or impractical in the Polish nature. Many of the political struggles in postwar Poland were perhaps natural, and at no time did Poland come perilously close to a radical or Bolshevik takeover as some delegates had suggested it would. Yet quarrelling was a feature of politics in the early Second Republic. Even experienced Polish legislators had only served in opposition and thus had little experience of governing, while the rivalry between the National Democrats and Piłsudski's Polish Socialist Party had long been a defining feature of Polish political culture.[64] These factors did not encourage the kinds of compromises that the peacemakers believed were necessary for Poland to face its challenges. Piłsudski's decision to announce early elections was an admirable sign of commitment to democracy, but democratic systems can often be riven by conflict, as the United States Senate demonstrated later in 1919 as it

[63] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Rumbold to Hardinge, 16 Nov 1919.
[64] Jędruch, p. 273.

failed to ratify the Treaty of Versailles. Britain, France, and the United States, however, were global powers deciding the borders of a small, weak country, and they were less interested in comparative discussions about political systems than in ensuring that the postwar European order survived. Polish history in particular was called upon to support or object to further actions or policies. Different explanations of the partition of Poland supported the arguments of those who argued for Polish territorial claims, and those who argued against them.[65]

Economic stability and American aid to Poland

Attitudes about instability in Poland also incorporated understandings about the weakness of Poland's economy and its potential as a source of general unrest. The First World War era witnessed the development of 'a wider definition of security' that included economic security.[66] Yet how to obtain security through economic strength was debated. One conception held that economic security was a zero-sum game in which states and their allies competed against unfriendly countries for trade and resources. A competing argument was that it was in the collective interest of the international community to ensure the economic well-being of all countries.[67] The economy was also the area of Poland's domestic affairs in which the Allied and Associated governments intervened most extensively in 1919, chiefly through the ARA. While economic difficulties were largely structural and thus evidently not of the Polish government's making, the peacemakers understood that it was primarily the Polish government's responsibility to

[65] An analogous situation can be seen in internal U.S. government discussions about the war in Vietnam; see Khong.

[66] Patricia Clavin, 'The Austrian Hunger Crisis and the Genesis of International Organization after the First World War', *International Affairs*, 90 (2014), pp. 265–6.

[67] This debate continued through the interwar period and is once again relevant for contemporary Europe. The leading perspective became Keynes; competing historical views are outlined in Trachtenberg; Peter Jackson, pp. 247–62; Patricia Clavin, *Securing the World Economy: The Reinvention of the League of Nations, 1920-1946* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Poland's importance in American conceptions of 'stabilisation' is best seen in Neal Pease, *Poland, the United States, and the Stabilization of Europe, 1919-1933* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986). On American 'stabilisation' to Europe, see Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919-1933* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

deal with the problem. An analysis of the economic situation in the 'core' Polish territories also informed discussions about whether contested territories like Danzig, Upper Silesia, or East Galicia ought to be assigned to Poland.

The primary economic base of Poland's accumulated territories was agriculture, except in the German partition where extensive industry had developed.[68] Many small farms operated on a subsistence basis, which meant that especially in Poland's eastern territory there was little evidence of a market economy.[69] Some aristocratic landowners also had large estates, though the Sejm passed land reform bills in 1919 and 1920 that divided the largest of these.[70] Extensive oil deposits in East Galicia had been exploited before the war; production dropped dramatically after 1911 as supply ran out.[71] In addition to industrialised areas in the German partitions there was some industry in the Russian partition, especially in Łódż which was known as 'Polish Manchester' for its rapid growth from a small settlement to a manufacturing centre.

The legacy of the partitions made it difficult to integrate the regions of Poland into an effective national economy. Few rail links had connected the partitions in 1914; the primary market for each partition had been the imperial centres. These were now closed to Polish goods, resulting in widespread unemployment in 1919.[72] Moreover, railway lines in Poland's new territory had varying gauges and rolling stock and could not be easily integrated.[73] Transportation problems thus made the distribution of food and necessary supplies more difficult. Trade was also hampered because five currencies circulated in Polish territories in 1919; this also resulted in inequities in exchange. The new Polish mark became the country's standard currency and the use of other currencies apart from

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[68] On industrialisation in the partitioned lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, see Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 120-30.
[69] Zbigniew Landau, 'The Economic Integration of Poland 1918-1923', in *The Reconstruction of Poland*, ed. Latawski (1992), p. 144.
[70] Jędruch, pp. 378–9.
[71] Frank, *Oil Empire*, p. 174.
[72] Dziewanowski, *Joseph Piłsudski*, p. 64.
[73] Zbigniew Landau, pp. 144–8.

the German mark was outlawed by 1921.[74] Adding to the confusion, private banks had operated according to quite different regulations under the partitions and the Polish government eventually adopted an amalgam of Russian and German regulations.[75] The state bank that the wartime occupation regime had set up in Russian Poland assumed responsibility for the entire country beginning in 1918, while the existing state bank in Galicia continued its operations as well. Hyperinflation was a further problem. In 1918, eight Polish marks were worth one U.S. dollar. Inflation rose steadily even before a period of hyperinflation in 1923 after which one mark was work six million dollars, an increase of nearly 750,000%.[76]

The government also needed to standardise economic regulations, including taxation regimes, between the different regions, though Poland's share of Upper Silesia retained significant autonomy after incorporation into Poland in 1922. The Polish government began to tackle many of these challenges in its first years. Military necessity often inspired changes because of the war with Russia in 1920. For example, a railway improvement programme began in 1920 to aid the military in its war against Russia, while munitions were the first post-independence production order at many civilian factories.[77] But such improvements had not yet begun at the commencement of the peace conference in 1919.

British, French, and American experts documented – often sympathetically – Poland's economic challenges in detail, while the leaders were generally aware that there were challenges.[78] The first American relief workers to arrive in Poland quickly spread

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[74] Zbigniew Landau, pp. 150–1.
[75] On banking, see Zbigniew Landau and Wojciech Morawski, 'Polish Banking in the Inter-War Period', in *Banking, Currency, and Finance in Europe Between the Wars*, ed. by Charles H. Feinstein (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 358–62.
[76] I.e. the mark lost 99.99987% of its value against the U.S. dollar. Zbigniew Landau, p. 152.
[77] Zbigniew Landau, pp. 147–8; the partitioning powers had been careful not to place munitions factories in Polish-majority areas. The only armaments factories that Poland inherited were in Upper Silesia, but the Polish government could not use these facilities until 1922; Sibora, p. 169.
[78] Little historical attention has been paid to western relief of Poland in 1919 and 1920. Three short works provide overviews of the American-led relief programme and are chiefly based on research

word about the conditions there, in emotive terms which added urgency to the relief effort and recalled the language of suffering that had been used during the wartime Polish relief. In December 1918, Hoover sent Walcott, who had been involved in the wartime campaign, to give his opinion of the conditions. Walcott called it a 'catastrophe too vast for private relief'.[79] Dr Vernon Kellogg, a top deputy of Hoover's, followed Walcott to Poland and its contested territories in January. 'In certain cities the misery is terrible,' he reported. 'In Vilna and Lemberg people are dying of starvation.'[80] These testimonials were soon followed by those of other aid workers and diplomats who arrived in the ensuing months. The inter-Allied mission to Poland, which left Paris in early February 1919, stopped in Łódż before proceeding to Warsaw. This was the mission's first opportunity to see the conditions in Poland, and its members were shocked. Howard wrote in his diary, 'The whole population is apparently out of work, + starvation v[ery] bad. These poor people all cheered us as they left the station.'[81] Later, from Warsaw, Howard wrote that 'many have no home their villages having been destroyed. I never saw a more heart breaking sight than those poor people all in destitution + completely ragged. … Lord! It's awful. A little food and no clothing in the country to give them.'[82] Reports on the ground were commonly brought before the Supreme Economic Council of the peace conference, which began

in the ARA archives at the Hoover Institution: Matthew Lloyd Adams, 'Herbert Hoover and the Organization of the American Relief Effort in Poland (1919-1923)', *European Journal of American Studies*, 2 (2009), 2–16; Marvin Rodgers, 'Herbert Hoover and American Relief: A Study of the Relationship between Hoover's American Relief Program and Bolshevism in Europe in 1919' (M.A. Thesis, Fresno State University, 1966); and the editor's introduction in *Herbert Hoover and Poland: A Documentary History of a Friendship*, ed. by Jerzy J. Lerski (Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1977). A narrative of one private initiative is Robert Szymczak, 'An Act of Devotion: The Polish Grey Samaritans and the American Relief Effort in Poland, 1919-1921', *Polish American Studies*, 43 (1986), 13–36. These works provide reasonable overviews of the administration of relief, though the studies by Adams and Lerski in particular nearly amount to hagiographies of Hoover for saving Poland. The above works do not, however, analyse the importance of the relief effort for the Polish settlement or for the peacemakers' perspectives of Poland, and no works among the specialist historiography attempt to elaborate on this.

[79] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/179, Walcott to Hoover, 23 Dec 1918.

[80] Rodgers, p. 19.

[81] Howard Papers, DHW 1/5, entry for 10 Feb 1919.

[82] Howard Papers, DHW 1/5, entry for 17 Feb 1919.

meeting on 8 February 1919.[83] Hoover reported on 21 March, for instance, that Poland had no liquid assets or exportable goods at all.[84] In these circumstances, Poland's situation was often compared with that of other countries in the region. Hoover expected that the first country to recover from the pressures of widespread malnourishment 'will be Belgium, and the second Czecho-Slovakia.' Hoover furthermore hoped 'for the early construction of the Roumanian and other administrations of this character', but did not mention such hopes for Poland, whose needs were considered to be quantitatively similar to Romania's but whose economic base was inadequate to meet them at all.[85]

These reports, and those of the first diplomats to Poland, also included advice on how the Allied and American governments should act. Most representatives on the ground in Poland suggested that the best way to ameliorate suffering would be with a massive food aid programme, such as was simultaneously contemplated for most countries in Europe.[86] In a report on 20 January 1919, Col William Grove, one of the administrators of the planned relief effort in Poland, wrote from Poland that 'Bolshevism will surely result unless some action is taken' to aid the starving Poles.[87] The French government also pressured the American government to begin an aid programme in Poland, arguing that 'it is of the greatest interest to revictual Poland, not only from considerations of humanity but to encourage a disposition in favour of the states and to combat Bolshevist propaganda.'[88] Howard wrote to Kerr and Lloyd George from Warsaw to plead for

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[83] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 10, p. 1.
[84] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 10, p. 94.
[85] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 10, p. 95.
[86] Historians' recent interest in humanitarianism and humanitarian aid during the Great War has also included a number of works on postwar relief efforts, e.g. Irwin, chapter 5; Clavin, 'Austrian Hunger Crisis'; Mary Elisabeth Cox, 'Hunger Games: Or How the Allied Blockade in the First World War Deprived German Children of Nutrition, and Allied Food Aid Subsequently Saved Them', *Economic History Review*, 68 (2015), 600–631. Branden Little, 'An Explosion of New Endeavours: Global Humanitarian Responses to Industrialised Warfare in the First World War Era', *First World War Studies*, 5 (2014), 1–16 focuses on 1914-18 but introduces a few key works on the postwar period.
[87] *Documents of the American Relief Administration European Operations 1918-1922*, ed. by Suda L. Bane, 24 vols. (Stanford: Stanford University, 1932), vol. 18, p. 118.
[88] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/189, Gen. Tasker Bliss telegram, 8 Jan 1919.

'immediate action', warning that widespread starvation might cause the government to collapse.[89]

The economic situation was thus linked with the peacemakers' fears about the Polish political system. Grove's official report in July 1919 noted that food distribution proved difficult, especially beyond the cities, because the government was so weak and the people did not trust authority.[90] But a greater concern was simply the common conception that hunger created Bolshevism, whereas a citizen who was fed would be unlikely to revolt. The point of American food aid to Europe, as Hoover wrote to Wilson in April 1919, was 'to maintain stability by food'; people who were not hungry, they believed, would not start revolutions.[91] Both Hoover and Wilson believed that a short influx of food aid would stimulate a desire for 'self-help' among the recipient peoples.[92] Hoover believed that with a short injection of humanitarian aid, Poland and other countries could be self-sufficient 'in a few months'.[93] The British and French governments also believed that food relief was critical, but they did not have the same resources. Some analyses, however, also discussed the importance of certain territories, especially Danzig but also Teschen, East Galicia, and Upper Silesia, for Poland's economic survival. It would be especially important

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[89] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/879/1, Howard to Kerr, 14 Feb 1919; Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/879/2, Howard to Kerr, 22 Feb 1919.
[90] Bane, vol. 18, pp. 3-4.
[91] *Two Peacemakers in Paris: The Hoover-Wilson Post-Armistice Letters, 1918-1920*, ed. by Francis William O'Brien (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 1978), p. 101. Wilson repeated this often, e.g. *PWW*, vol. 53, p. 709 and vol. 56 p. 127.
[92] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 10, p. 94.
[93] Francis William O'Brien, p. 158. Yet much recent work on international development emphasises that short-term humanitarian aid must be accompanied by long-term development aid to be successful. A good introduction to this field is *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*, ed. by Tim Allen and Alan Thomas, Rev. ed. (Oxford: Open University/OUP, 2000), especially Ben Crow, 'Understanding famine and hunger', pp. 51-74. State reconstructions that incorporate foreign aid have been numerous in the modern era, and the Polish example (as well as the others noted above) show the First World War-era history of these efforts; Thomas, 'Poverty and the "end of development"', in Allen and Thomas, pp. 1-22, outlines the post-1945 global context of such efforts. The reconstruction of Iraq after the U.S.-led coalition's 2003 invasion provided the most prominent recent discussion of state involvement in post-war reconstruction and aid; two perspectives are Andrew Natsios, *Foreign Aid in the National Interest: Promoting Freedom, Security, and Opportunity* (Washington, D.C.: United States Agency for International Development, 2002); Beat Schweitzer, 'Moral Dilemmas for Humanitarianism in the Era of "Humanitarian" Military Interventions', *International Review of the Red Cross*, 86 (2004), 547–63.

for Poland to control these territories if Russia and Germany acted in a hostile manner. The greatest debate revolved over Danzig, as the peacemakers debated whether Poland needed to control its access to the sea in order to export to friendly countries overseas. Wilson in particular did not believe Polish control was necessary, but his experts disagreed. As Lord telegraphed from Warsaw, 'I was strong for [granting Danzig to Poland] in Paris, but I am ten times stronger for it now, after coming here and seeing to what a state this country can be reduced.'[94]

Private aid had already been flowing since March 1917; Polish-American organizations had been sending money back to Poland through Switzerland, and their activities increased as soon as the war was over.[95] The United States government began its aid effort in January 1919, first by permitting Polish-American organizations and individuals to send money and remittances directly to relatives in Poland.[96] Most significant, though, was the creation of the American Relief Administration on 24 February 1919 to bring food to starving Europeans. Of the $100 million originally appropriated for the ARA's operations, an estimated $63 million went to the food effort in Poland, which entailed the shipment of hundreds of thousands of tons of grain as well as clothing and medical supplies over the course of 1919 and 1920.[97] Feeding children was the main goal of the relief effort, as it was considered apolitical and did not constitute support for any territorial claims or political agendas. The aid effort fed more than one million children a day at its height, while those adults who went hungry could have food packages purchased for them by relatives in the U.S.[98] The aid effort was limited in comparison to the deprivation faced by the Polish people, but it was nonetheless a massive program.

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[94] ACNP, 181.21302/70, Lord to Bowman, 9 Mar 1919.
[95] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/186, Breckinridge Long to Pleasant Stovall, 21 Nov 1918.
[96] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/185, William Phillips to Jan Smulski, 20 Jan 1919.
[97] Rodgers, p. 23; Hoover's later claim that the U.S. furnished $176 million 'in credit and charity' is the highest estimate of U.S. assistance. Herbert Hoover, *An American Epic*, 3 vols. (Chicago: H. Regnery Co, 1959), p. 358.
[98] Lerski, p. xi; Adams, p. 5.

Food was not the American government's only concern; the aid effort also encompassed other essentials. In the fall of 1919, the Polish army requested clothing from the United States. State Department counsellor Frank Polk believed that such an offer should come with a warning that the Polish government was 'spending too much on their army', but 'If army [is] not clothed', he warned, 'there is just another dangerous factor in an already highly charged situation. Frankly the chances of a revolution in Poland are very real'.[99] From Warsaw, Gibson echoed Polk's warning when the plan dragged on with few results: 'With advent of snow and intense cold, suffering has become acute … If we wish to avoid collapse of Poland we must make a great effort to equip these people to resist the sufferings of the next four or five months.'[100] This position reflected the common wisdom about the revolution in Russia. It was widely believed that the Bolshevik revolution was simply an extreme reaction to the privation faced under the tsar and during the war. This assumption held that the Bolsheviks would be easily defeated and underlay the Allied and American intervention in the Russian civil war, one purpose of which was to help the Russians throw off the Bolshevik yoke.[101] Even in the American relief of Russia from 1921-23, Hoover expected that once the people were properly fed, they would regain the strength to replace the Bolsheviks with a more sensible government.[102]

Given this assumption, American policy was to use emergency aid to make Poland stable economically and thus politically as soon as possible. This desire for stability reflected more general American hopes for the aid they sent. In April 1919, Hoover proposed to Wilson that a deal with the Bolsheviks that suspended Russian territorial expansion would give the new democracies in eastern Europe a 'breathing spell to build up some stability' and allow them time to prepare to grow crops in 1920.[103] It was hoped

[99] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/271, Frank Polk to Lansing, 8 Oct 1919.
[100] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/278, Gibson to Phillips, 5 Nov 1919.
[101] Foglesong, *America's Secret War*, p. 162.
[102] Patenaude, pp. 42–43.
[103] Francis William O'Brien, p. 132.

that the aid would help these countries to become self-sufficient; and since they could feed themselves, they would avoid Bolshevism. Though Wilson did not attempt to make the deal that Hoover suggested, the idea underlines the crucial importance that the peacemakers placed on the early months of 1919 for Poland's existence. If Poland was to survive, then immediate humanitarian aid would certainly help. So too, however, would political unity and good governance, which Poland would need to proceed on the road to 'self-help'.

The Jewish community in Poland

The difficulties of drawing Poland's borders, as mentioned in the previous chapter, meant that the peacemakers accepted that some communities of Germans, Russians, Ukrainians, Czechs, or Lithuanians in contested areas would need to be incorporated into the new Polish state. Yet regardless of Poland's eventual borders, the country would doubtless include a substantial Jewish minority whose fate increasingly concerned the British and American delegations. This section will present an overview of the peacemakers' discussions of the Polish minorities treaty and Polish-Jewish relations, which have been discussed extensively in other works.[104] As with the rest of the thesis, this section will consider how the 'Jewish question' affected the peacemakers' opinions of Poland and the Polish people.

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[104] These are most thoroughly examined in Kaufman, pp. 186–240; and in Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 302–7, 341–8, 371–85; see also Fink, pp. 133–265; Eugene C. Black, 'Lucien Wolf and the Making of Poland: Paris 1919', *Polin: A Journal of Polish-Jewish Studies*, 2 (1987), 5–36; Mark Levene, 'Britain, a British Jew, and Jewish Relations with the New Poland: The Making of the Polish Minorities Treaty of 1919', *Polin: A Journal of Polish-Jewish Studies*, 8 (1994), 14–41. Other relevant works by these three historians are cited in the bibliography. Neal Pease, '"This Troublesome Question": The United States and the "Polish Pogroms" of 1918-1919', in *Ideology, Politics and Diplomacy in East Central Europe*, ed. by M.B. Biskupski (Rochester, N.Y: University of Rochester Press, 2003), pp. 58–79 examines American public and government perspectives. On Jewish issues at the peace conference, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 410–24. On minorities, see Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (London: Penguin, 1999), pp. 40–76; Mark Mazower, 'Minorities and the League of Nations in Interwar Europe', *Daedalus*, 126 (1997), 47–63.

In the tenth century, Jews had first settled in the lands that the Polish government claimed in 1919. That they endured there made this one of the most stable Jewish communities in Europe; they did not suffer expulsions like other communities in Europe and Russia over the same period.[105] Jews comprised the majority in many towns in 1919, especially in Vilnius province and in East Galicia where they were an important part of the commercial and professional classes. Some considered themselves to be Poles—even if Catholic Poles did not always agree – but most valued their separate identity.[106] Yet despite their important historical place in the lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Jews of the disputed territories around Poland's periphery had reason for concern at the end of the war. The National Democrats may not have led the new Polish government as they had initially desired, but they had a plurality of deputies in the Sejm and a broad reach across the country in general. They were well-known to be anti-Semitic, not least because in 1912 Dmowski had ordered a boycott of all Jewish businesses after an unfavourable election result.[107] Moreover, the National Democrats planned to assimilate all the peoples who came within Poland's boundaries at the end of the war. That the Jews were often viewed as collaborators with the occupying Central Powers armies, who had in general treated them fairly, only increased their fears of what would happen once the war ended. So too did perceptions among Poles that Jews in contested regions who declared themselves neutral in armed conflicts were actually antagonistic to the Polish state.[108]

As with worries about Poles' tendency to quarrel, even during the war the British and American governments worried about how a postwar Polish state would treat its

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[105] On the history of Polish-Jewish relations, see Antony Polonsky, *The Jews in Poland and Russia*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2010); Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 1; and Davies, *God's Playground*, vol. 2, pp. 176-95; Prażmowska, *History of Poland*, passim. The region included the 'Pale of Settlement' to which Jews were limited in late tsarist Russia.
[106] Mick, 'War and Conflicting Memories', p. 257n1.
[107] Black, 'Lucien Wolf and the Making of Poland', p. 10.
[108] Kaufman, p. 318; Mick, 'War and Conflicting Memories', pp. 259–60.

Jewish minorities. Though the organisation claimed to represent all Polish opinion, its members were almost exclusively National Democrats.[109] For this reason, Paderewski had attempted to convince the KNP to add a Jewish member.[110] Meanwhile, Lucien Wolf, a prominent lobbyist for the Anglo-Jewish community, related 'the profound anxiety which [the recognition of the KNP] has caused throughout the Jewish Community.'[111] The Foreign Office thanked Wolf for his information, but took no action at the time, as the KNP favoured the Allies.[112] As these and other complaints trickled in, however, the KNP began to acquire a reputation for anti-Semitism that tarnished how the Allies and Americans perceived Poles in general.

Dmowski's proximity to power worried Jewish groups, especially since he was initially the main Polish delegate at the peace conference while Paderewski established his government in the early months of 1919.[113] While Jews took little action in Poland and contested territories where the Polish army was fighting, they looked to the peacemakers in Paris to provide them with guarantees of safety. In particular, the British and American governments appeared open to establishing guarantees of protection. The form that protection should take, however, depended on the outcome of a long-standing debate between various European Jewish groups. On one side stood assimilationists like Wolf who sought legal protection for Jews so that they could remain in their current settlements if they wished to do so and integrate into Poland or any of the other successor states of central and eastern Europe. The Zionist movement, however, hoped that oppressed Jews could find a safe home in Palestine or remain in Poland but with a great deal of autonomy in their affairs. Wolf in particular campaigned tirelessly for the Jews during the war, but by 1917 the Zionist programme seemed more attractive to the British

[109] FO 371/3001/164526, Horodyski to Paderewski, 21 Aug 1917.
[110] FO 371/3001/169054, Paderewski to Horodyski, 28 Aug 1917.
[111] FO 371/3002/209275, Wolf to Balfour, 31 Oct 1917.
[112] FO 371/3002/209275, Oliphant to Wolf, 9 Nov 1917.
[113] Levene, *War, Jews, and the New Europe*, p. 226; Pease, 'This Troublesome Question', p. 78.

government. Eugene Black writes that the Balfour Declaration, which in late October 1917 committed the government to creating 'a national home for the Jewish people' in Palestine, was the 'least difficult concession' Britain could make.[114] 235,000 Jews had emigrated since pogroms began in Russia in 1880, and the British government did not want further immigration to their shores.[115] Finally, the British government hoped to control a Jewish national home and thus further their imperial ambitions, but the French government also had designs on the region.[116]

While the potential for anti-Semitic governments did not bode well for Jews in territories that Poland's government claimed, they had already experienced flare-ups of violence. Most Jews in Lemberg remained neutral in the fighting between Polish and Ukrainian forces in November 1918. Some did favour the West Ukrainian force, while some inhabitants mobilised a Jewish militia for self-defence.[117] When Polish forces first took the city on 22 November, Ukrainian troops departed while the Jewish militia was quickly and peacefully disarmed. Amidst riotous celebrations of victory, some soldiers, likely including officers, entered the Jewish quarter and exacted 'revenge' for two days.[118] The first stories new stories to reach the west were most dramatic, saying that 3000 had been killed.[119] Within a week the total had been revised to 300-1100. (Historians' careful estimates indicate that 72 or 73 Jews were killed and 437 wounded.)[120] The incident caused shock waves across the west as not only Zionists but also concerned citizens

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[114] Black, 'Lucien Wolf and the Making of Poland', p. 10.
[115] Levene, *War, Jews, and the New Europe*, p. viii.
[116] D.K. Fieldhouse, *Western Imperialism in the Middle East 1914-1958* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 130; MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 418–9.
[117] Eugene C. Black, 'Squaring a Minorities Triangle: Lucien Wolf, Jewish Nationalists and Polish Nationalists', in *The Reconstruction of Poland*, ed. Latawski (1992), p. 26; Fink, p. 109.
[118] See the thoroughly reconstructed narrative of events in Kaufman, pp. 86–92. Soldiers later indicated that they believed they had been ordered – or permitted – to plunder the Jewish quarter upon victory. No evidence of such an order exists but it may have been given verbally; see Kaufman, pp. 91-2.
[119] Fink, p. 112.
[120] Mick, 'War and Conflicting Memories', pp. 259–60; Kaufman, pp. 87–88, note 114.

protested in the streets of major cities and Jewish organisations wrote letters of protests to the British, French, and American governments.

The British and American governments quickly sent official protests to Poland's new government, and the British government urged France to do the same. Stéphane Pichon, the French Foreign Minister, wrote that Lord Derby, the new British ambassador in Paris, had proposed sending 'a serious warning' advising that 'without immediate cessation of pogroms, the future of Poland would suffer at the peace conference.'[121] But Pichon responded as the French delegation would continue to respond throughout the conference: that Jews had collaborated with the Central Powers during the war and that they comprised 'a large number' of the Bolshevik 'agents' sent to Poland. Finally, he suggested that Poles were not to blame anyway; the likely culprits of the mass killing were the Russian, German, and Austrian prisoners who were pillaging Jews and Christians as they crossed the country. Pichon nevertheless agreed to the protest and to a planned Allied investigatory mission, but proposed his own text, which was not as stern.[122] The French government was generally uninterested in listening to tales of Polish wrongdoing as any acknowledgement of this might endanger the large Polish state with which they hoped to form an eastern alliance.

Less than six months later, reports of a pogrom at Pińsk again raised the issue of Polish anti-Semitism. The details of the event are unclear, but it is certain that on 5 April 1919, Polish soldiers in Pińsk pulled nearly three dozen Jews from a gathering and executed them in the public square.[123] The Polish army claimed it had captured Bolsheviks who were preparing to slaughter the army detachment, while Jewish representatives

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[121] CAD, Z-Europe, Pologne, vol. 60, Pichon to Jusserand, 3 Dec 1918, f. 96.
[122] Ibid; Fink, p. 119.
[123] Józef Lewandowski, 'History and Myth: Pińsk, April 1919', *Polin: A Journal of Polish-Jewish Studies*, 2 (1988), p. 55; historians believe that 34-35 Jews died; see the discussion in Kaufman, p. 144n96.

argued that the victims had been sharing the Passover meal.[124] The public reaction to these events was strongest in the United States, where the country's large and influential Jewish community seized on the attacks as a powerful reason not to trust Poland's government or the Polish people. The first newspaper reports had the highest casualty numbers and that this helped to mould public opinion. The American delegation was slow to act but the sustained outcry after the Pińsk massacre forced a change in attitude. The culminating event was a huge protest in New York City on 21 May with hundreds of thousands of attendees. The event attracted nationwide attention, and the main speakers were William Howard Taft, the former president, and Charles Evans Hughes, Wilson's opponent in the 1916 presidential election.

This public pressure led the British and American delegations to consider measures to ensure that future Polish anti-Semitism could be kept in check. On 1 May, Wilson told the other leaders 'that the Jews were somewhat inhospitably regarded in Poland', and declared his intention to create 'certain safeguards' to protect them.[125] Lloyd George and Clemenceau approved Wilson's proposed Committee of New States to examine laws to protect the minorities of central and eastern Europe. That the initiative came just after the Polish Commission's proposals on Danzig had been reversed to Poland's disadvantage was unfortunate for the Polish delegation, which regarded the potential safeguards as a further reverse as it did not want international treaties dictating Poland's internal affairs. Increasingly, Poles believed that the conference had turned against them.

The Committee began by considering the situation in lands controlled or claimed by the Polish government; the laws established to protect Poland's minorities were intended to provide a template for minority protection elsewhere in central and eastern Europe. Its report recommended several safeguards to be inserted in a separate treaty between the Allied and Associated governments and Poland, which came to be known as

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[124] Lewandowski, pp. 55–6.
[125] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 393.

the minorities treaty. While the French delegation remained sceptical that such stipulations were necessary, British and American representatives supported them fully. This support reflected several factors, but one of them was an increasing conviction that Poles were very anti-Semitic. One major influence on the British position was an Anglo-Jewish campaign for the rights of Jews in central and eastern Europe. Wolf, who also acted as an advisor for the Conjoint Foreign Committee which advocated for the rights of Jews outside of Britain, secured two clauses that safeguarded the cultural freedom of the Jewish community in Poland.[126] These clauses did not recur in any of the other minorities treaties. Unlike American Jewish representatives and many Jews in Britain who favoured a Zionist 'national home' in Palestine, Wolf and the CFC lobbied so that Jews could enjoy the same religious, educational, and cultural freedom in central and eastern Europe as they did in Britain.[127] Wolf considered his 'assimilationist' views to require only a moderate commitment from the peacemakers in comparison to the Zionists' demands; so did Headlam-Morley, who asked for Wolf's assistance in preparing the Polish minorities treaty.[128]

The Polish minorities treaty also reflected increasing British and American concerns about Polish anti-Semitism. Wilson worried that 'one of the most dangerous elements of ferment arose from the treatment of the Jews' in Poland.[129] Part of the concern was that it was widely believed, as Wilson noted, that 'the Bolshevist movement was led by the Jews'.[130] The push to establish the minorities treaties was also based on a desire not to repeat the mistakes of the past in Romania. When Romania had become an independent state in 1879, the Great Powers had attempted to constrain potential anti-Semitism by imposing legal restrictions. These proved ineffective, however, and by 1919 Romania also

[126] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 13, pp. 800-1; Levene, *War, Jews, and the New Europe*, pp. 15–17.
[127] Black, 'Squaring a Minorities Triangle', p. 29.
[128] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 678.
[129] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 680.
[130] Ibid.

had a reputation as an anti-Semitic state.[131] The peacemakers believed that the regulations established in 1879 had not been strong enough, and that by improving these regulations they could avoid the mistakes of the past. They also believed that the Polish government and armed forces had shown by their recent actions that Poland would likely follow in Romania's path. The well-known anti-Semitic tendencies shown by Dmowski, the National Democrats, and the KNP were also a factor; many believed, as Eric Drummond wrote during the war, that 'all pure Poles really dislike Jews.'[132] Yet Polish actions in 1919 also deepened this belief. The pogroms in Lemberg and Pińsk were especially important in this regard, but lobbyists like Wolf and insiders like Namier also repeatedly brought damning evidence against Poland's government to buttress newspaper reports. Howard and other diplomats who sympathised with Poland's government explained the pogroms as 'clearly not organised affairs but the result of civil war', but Lloyd George and Wilson did not share this viewpoint.[133]

On 20 May, the Council of Four approved the Committee of New States' proposed minorities treaty for Poland.[134] The Polish delegation was furious, and on 15 June Paderewski sent a strong letter of protest to the Council of Four. He decried both the degree of autonomy granted to the Jews and the indignity of Poland being 'permanently placed under the control of the Powers'.[135] Poland needed to be strong so that it could defend itself against future German and Russian aggression, he argued, but outside interference like the minorities treaty weakened it. The protests had little effect. On 28 June, Paderewski signed the Treaty of Versailles for Poland, thus finalising Poland's border with Germany. Later the same day, he signed a separate minorities treaty with the Allies and the United States.

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[131] Mazower, 'Minorities and the League of Nations in Interwar Europe', p. 52.
[132] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/872/3, Drummond to Kerr, 6 Apr 1917.
[133] Howard Papers, DHW 4/11, Howard to Lloyd George, 10 Apr 1919.
[134] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 733.
[135] Mantoux, vol. 2, p. 489.

Meanwhile, the public firestorm in the United States about the situation in Poland led the State Department to ask Gibson to lead an investigation into the alleged pogroms. Gibson did so but the situation worsened when his confidential reports were made public by the congressional committee examining the issue.[136] Gibson wrote frankly and explained the various reasons why Poles and Jews were antagonistic towards each other, but his summaries were sometimes quite unsympathetic to the Jewish perspective. On 2 June, for instance, he wrote, 'If a Jew is injured it is called a pogrom. If a Christian is mobbed it is called a food riot.'[137] The government turned against Gibson and, after some debate, decided to send an impartial investigatory mission headed by Henry Morgenthau. Morgenthau, who was Jewish, was the former American ambassador to Turkey and the veteran finance director of Wilson's presidential campaigns. Whether the public believed him to be an appropriate representative of the American Jewish community was another matter. American leaders, many of whom perceived Jewish culture as quite alien, preferred that Morgenthau was strongly anti-Zionist and did not make an issue of his Jewish background.[138] For these same reasons, the majority of the pro-Zionist Jewish movement in Paris and the United States disliked him and immediately demanded that he resign. Morgenthau acquiesced, but Wilson and Hoover convinced him to change his mind. This frustrated the American Jewish representatives in Paris, who included Louis Marshall and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis; they sent Felix Frankfurter, a fellow Zionist and later also a Supreme Court justice, to observe Morgenthau's activities and conduct his own report.

Morgenthau and his assistants, Homer Johnson and Gen. Edgar Jadwin, visited dozens of cities and towns in Poland in the second half of 1919, collecting depositions in Yiddish and Polish. The Polish authorities expressed disdain for the panel but allowed it to

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[136] Pease, 'This Troublesome Question', pp. 67–8.
[137] *FRUS, 1919*, vol. 2, p. 758.
[138] Pease, 'This Troublesome Question', p. 70.

do its work; they frequently reminded the mission of the July 1919 race riots in the United States and suggested that perhaps the Polish government could mount an investigation into 'negro pogroms' there.[139] Morgenthau's report, which he submitted in October 1919, did not exonerate the Polish people but emphasised that initial news reports exaggerated the death count. He was careful not to call the events 'pogroms', noting that 'the word is applied to everything from petty outrages to premeditated and carefully organised massacres.'[140] Like Gibson, he also expounded on the underlying tensions between Poles and Jews in the country, even though the topic was outside his brief. These tensions were important, he noted, but 'it would be … unfair to condemn the Polish nation as a whole for the violence committed by uncontrolled troops or local mobs.'[141] Jadwin and Johnson, meanwhile, submitted a separate report the following month exonerating the Polish government; they blamed the fuss on German propagandists instead.[142] Morgenthau won acclaim in the American press for his impartial viewpoint; this included a ringing endorsement from Marshall.[143] Critically, however, the controversy over the pogroms had already died down and the report was met with muted interest. Yet in the United States, public perceptions of Polish anti-Semitism remained.[144]

Conclusion

The influence of attitudes on the peacemakers' policies regarding Poland's frontiers and domestic affairs can be best illustrated by dividing opinion into two groups. The 'large Poland' group advocated that Poland receive all or nearly all of its requested territorial claims, while the 'small Poland' group advocated more limited acceptance of those claims. The 'large Poland' group – chiefly the Polish and French delegations but also

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[139] Pease, 'This Troublesome Question', p. 72.
[140] *FRUS, 1919*, vol. 2, p. 776.
[141] *FRUS, 1919*, vol. 2, p. 781.
[142] Pease, 'This Troublesome Question', p. 75.
[143] Pease, 'This Troublesome Question', pp. 75–6.
[144] Hoover Institution, Hugh Gibson Papers, Box 51, Lord to Gibson, 14 Jan 1922.

several American and British delegates like Lord and Howard – believed that a large Poland would secure long-term European peace primarily by offering an eastern counterbalance to German aggression in combination with Czechoslovakia and the continued involvement in the region of the victorious Great Powers. As such, Poland should be given the military means to defend itself, principally defensible borders and a large population base. It should also have a sufficient base for economic security, beginning with aid but bolstered by the territory that would ensure its independence from Germany. This meant providing Poland with access to the sea at Danzig including control of the Vistula and the entire Danzig-Mlawa-Warsaw railway, control of the rich coal mines and industry of Upper Silesia, and a larger population accruing from control of these and other contested areas. Endowed with economic and military strength and the potential to increase these, Poland would also be able to form an effective barrier against the spread of Bolshevism from Russia. A large Poland would contain a greater number of minorities, but, so the argument went, considering Poland's history of tolerance and its leaders' openness to Western values such as democracy as evidenced in their opposition to Germany and to Russian Bolshevism, surely such minorities would be better treated in Poland than would Polish minorities in other countries. Finally, should the peacemakers approve Poland's territorial claims, this would satisfy public opinion in Poland, ensure that the government would not fall, and thus Poles would not embrace Bolshevism. This general programme was based largely on a realist perspective on world affairs but also assumed the fundamental sympathy of the Polish government and people with western ideals (and western governments), not only in cooperation with France in particular, but also in respect for minorities and ideological opposition to the twin menaces of Prussian militarism and Russian Bolshevism. This perception that the Polish people were in sympathy with western ideals had largely persisted from the wartime conception of the Polish people as victims of Germanic oppression and opponents of the Central Powers. It

also reflected to a great degree how Polish representatives like Dmowski presented the Polish state.

Conversely, some in the British and American delegations resisted this argument for a large Poland. Lloyd George was the most visible member of this group but his advisors were also critical, especially Headlam-Morley, Kerr, and Namier. Wilson, meanwhile, argued forcefully for an independent Danzig and the imposition of the minorities treaty. The security of continental Europe, this group argued, was best served by a smaller Poland that contained only those lands that were 'indisputably Polish', to use the phrase from Wilson's thirteenth point. A smaller Poland would leave fewer minorities in the country; the greatest concern was that should German-majority populations in Upper Silesia, the Polish Corridor, or Danzig be included in Poland, this would create the conditions for future irredentist wars (another 'Alsace-Lorraine' as the peacemakers often said). It did not help that ethnographic statistics were disputed. A minority view at a conference at which economic views were often overlooked was that a smaller Poland would also provide a secure basis for European economic reconstruction. If Germany possessed the industry and coal fields of Upper Silesia, it would be better able to make reparations payments and integrate into a re-established European economy. Germany, after all, had possessed one of the world's strongest economies in 1914.[145] Poland, in this conception, would be better off tackling the massive economic and administrative problems that resulted from partition and war. The country would later benefit from increased European trade; Poland did not need to have a defensible border because the League's power would protect it.[146] Some in the British delegation also hoped that a larger Germany would balance French power on the continent. Poland's claims on territory contested by Lithuanian and Ukrainian governments, moreover, proposed to bring yet

[145] Paul M. Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers: Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000* (New York: Random House, 1987), pp. 199–202.
[146] See *PWW*, vol. 55, p. 317.

more minorities under Polish control, yet Polish wars with Ukrainian forces in East Galicia seeded doubts about how the Polish government would treat minorities. So too did pogroms in those territories, and concerns about Polish anti-Semitism prompted the imposition of the minorities treaty. Finally, the peacemakers were not certain whether a restored 'White' Russia would claim some of the territories on Poland's northern and eastern borders that had been part of the Russian Empire. Limiting Poland's claims in those areas would, it was believed, forestall possible Russian irredentism. The 'small Poland' group did worry about the impact of such proposals on Polish popular opinion, and Lloyd George and Kerr took some measures to mollify Polish outrage regarding the peace conference's decision on East Galicia. They also regarded Polish opinion as rather volatile in general and attempted to focus Polish leaders on easing sources of political quarrelling rather than fighting with their neighbours. Yet the influence of this group over Poland's leaders, especially Piłsudski, lessened in 1920 as the Russo-Polish War reached its crisis point.

The Russo-Polish War, 1919-20[*]



[*] Reprinted with permission from Martin Gilbert, *The Routledge Atlas of the First World War*, 3rd edn (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 151.

Chapter 5: The Allies and the Russo-Polish War

In early May 1919, the *Kurjer Warszawski*, a newspaper that favoured the National Democrats, published an article that particularly attracted Lewis Namier's attention. He was continuing his attempt to demonstrate Poland's imperialistic tendencies to his colleagues, and sent the article to Philip Kerr as evidence that these were deep-rooted. The *Kurjer Warszawski's* correspondent sought to reassure Poles at home that despite the obstacles facing the Polish delegation in Paris over the peace settlement, there was still reason for optimism as Polish forces had made gains both in Lithuania and East Galicia. 'One should not assume', the correspondent noted, 'that here alone in Paris works the diplomatic machine which has a monopoly for carving Europe.'[1] The peacemakers' control over events on the ground was often minimal, despite threats to withdraw food aid or otherwise penalise the offending party because of perceived aggression. As the British, French, and American governments attempted to settle Poland's borders from 1919-21, their lack of control over events on the ground was most evident during the intense period of the Russo-Polish War in 1920. The central focus of this chapter is on British and French attitudes and policies regarding the Polish government and its conduct of the war. United States government policy will also be considered, but the American government had little involvement. The war was an existential struggle for the Polish state but was not the only territory that the Polish government contested in 1920-1; the final section of this chapter will outline the settlement of the Upper Silesian plebiscite and the Polish-Lithuanian border.

[1] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/897/3, 'What about the Eastern Frontiers?', 5 May 1919.

Historiography

Works by three historians have dominated the study of British, French, and American policy regarding the Russo-Polish War. All are to a certain extent apologists for the Polish perspective, which implies two common assertions: that victory in the Russo-Polish War was the work of Józef Piłsudski and the Polish army, and that the Allies offered insufficient assistance to and unfair opposition of Poland's war effort. None of these works consider the importance of attitudes on the development of policy, though all make some reference to comments that reveal the policy-makers' attitudes. Piotr Wandycz has written several works that examine the diplomacy of the war. Of particular importance are his studies of the French government's and, to a lesser extent, the United States government's, relations with the Polish government in 1920, though his study of Polish diplomacy during the war is also useful. These works rely on substantive research in British, French, Polish, and American archival collections, though significantly the French diplomatic archives were not yet open as he researched *France and Her Eastern Allies*.[2] The book focuses particularly on Franco-Polish relations, and argues that while the French government believed the maintenance of a strong Poland and strong Czechoslovakia to be in its own interests, it did not offer sufficient diplomatic and material support to allow this to happen. Norman Davies, meanwhile, has written three articles on British policy while his history of the Russo-Polish War relies partly on British government and private papers and often considers the international situation.[3] The most thorough study of the diplomacy of the war with reference to all sides remains Komarnicki's *Rebirth of the Polish*

[2] Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies*, pp. 118–80; Wandycz, 'General Weygand and the Battle of Warsaw in 1920', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 19 (1960), 357–65; Wandycz, *United States and Poland*, pp. 143–57. See also Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*.

[3] Davies, 'Lloyd George and Poland'; Davies, 'Poles in Great Britain'; Davies, 'Great Britain and the Polish Jews'; cf Elcock, which unlike Davies' articles is a much more general overview; see also Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star: The Polish-Soviet War, 1919-20* (London: Macdonald and Co, 1972).

Republic.[4] As mentioned above, Komarnicki had limited access to archival documents at the time of writing, though he did employ the thorough *Documents on British Foreign Policy*, which is very useful for this period, as well as other printed collections, newspapers, and memoirs.

Most attention on the role of the British and French governments in the Russo-Polish war has focused on responsibility for the 'Miracle on the Vistula', as the Polish army's victory in August 1920 was quickly called. Victory in the Russo-Polish War created an important Polish national myth; the defeat in battle of one of the partitioning powers with little help from other countries represented Poland's ultimate defence of national sovereignty. Yet fierce debates about the authorship of Poland's victory continue. They need not be discussed extensively, but the main contentions should be noted. Most Polish nationalist historians argue that Piłsudski's offensive won the victory. (Piłsudski took the credit in his memoirs.)[5] A competing narrative argues that Piłsudski's actions were increasingly erratic in the days before the battle. In this context, the counsel of the Anglo-French mission, especially General Maxime Weygand, ensured Poland's victory.[6] Weygand, however, never claimed responsibility for the victory. Biskupski argues that Paderewski and the National Democrats are the source of the 'Weygand myth' because they wished to discredit Piłsduski, while Davies implies that French premier Millerand sought to associate Weygand's victory with his own leadership as the presidential election

[4] Komarnicki, pp. 397–748; see also Jan Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland: From Versailles to Yalta* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), pp. 39–54 which covers the same ground as Komarnicki but in a clear and concise narrative.

[5] Wandycz, 'General Weygand'; Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, p. 220; Komarnicki, pp. 699–700; see also Borzęcki, pp. 95–6; Józef Piłsudski, *L'année 1920*, trans. by Charles Jèze and Józef Andrzej Teslar (Paris: La Renaissance du livre, 1929).

[6] Pierre Le Goyet, *France-Pologne 1919-1939: De l'amitié romantique à la méfiance réciproque* (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1991), p. 69; F. Russell Bryant, 'Lord D'Abernon, the Anglo-French Mission, and the Battle of Warsaw, 1920', *Jahrbücher Für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 38 (1990), 526–47 argues that the mission provided much-needed organisation and structure to the Polish army, which had been in disarray. Many of the arguments are spelled out effectively in an edited volume resulting from a colloquium on the subject that included Davies and Le Goyet: *La Guerre polono-soviétique 1919-1920*, ed. by Céline Gervais (Lausanne: Éditions l'Âge d'homme, 1975), pp. 11–48.

approached.[7] Thomas Fiddink, meanwhile, argues that Piłsudski exploited weaknesses in the Russian cavalry formations; operations to the south by General Wrangel, the last remaining White leader, had distracted the Red Army from Piłsudski's counterattack.[8]

The result of this emotional debate is that few works examine British and French involvement beyond this specific episode. The main exception is the third volume of Richard Ullman's *Anglo-Soviet Relations, 1917-1921*, which considers the war in the context of Bolshevik relations with Britain and remains the most thorough examination of British policy regarding Poland in 1920.[9] Also, Kalervo Hovi's *Alliance de revers* argues that the French government continued its earlier attempts to develop in central and eastern Europe a *cordon sanitaire* against Bolshevik Russia and *barrière de l'est* against Germany.[10] Richard K. Debo's analysis of Soviet foreign policy from 1918-21 is based on extensive research in British and French government archives, as Soviet archives were unavailable to him.[11] Debo's researches thus provide a window into British and French perceptions even though they are not the focus of analysis. Finally, two articles by Michael Jabara Carley, author of a history of French intervention in the Russia Civil War, emphasise the close relationship between the French and Polish governments and the former's positions in support of Poland's war effort.[12] This chapter does not intend to materially revise these studies, but to analyse the importance of Allied and American attitudes about 'the Poles' and the delineation of the Russo-Polish border, a theme that none of the above works develop in any detail.

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[7] M.B. Biskupski, 'Paderewski, Polish Politics, and the Battle of Warsaw, 1920', *Slavic Review*, 46 (1987), 503–12; Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, pp. 223–4.
[8] Thomas Fiddick, 'The "Miracle of the Vistula": Soviet Policy versus Red Army Strategy', *The Journal of Modern History*, 45 (1973), 626–43.
[9] Ullman, vol. 3: *The Anglo–Soviet Accord*, pp. 3-59, 135-314.
[10] Hovi, *Alliance de Revers*, p. 11.
[11] Richard K. Debo, *Survival and Consolidation: The Foreign Policy of Soviet Russia, 1918-1921* (Montreal; London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), pp. 55–70, 191–247.
[12] Michael Jabara Carley, 'The Politics of Anti-Bolshevism: The French Government and the Russo-Polish War, December 1919 to May 1920', *The Historical Journal*, 19 (1976), 163–89; Michael Jabara Carley, 'Anti-Bolshevism in French Foreign Policy: The Crisis in Poland in 1920', *The International History Review*, 2 (1980), 410–31.

The Russo-Polish War, and especially its climax at the Battle of the Vistula, is often described with superlatives. It was the 'eighteenth decisive battle of the world', according to Viscount D'Abernon, a British diplomat with the Anglo-French mission in Warsaw. In the most thorough study of Russo-Polish diplomacy, meanwhile, Jerzy Borzęcki claims that the war determined the borders of interwar Europe.[13] Yet little attention is paid to the diplomacy of the Russo-Polish War in general studies of the peace conference and interwar Europe. In particular, many works on American foreign relations mention the war in passing or not at all.[14] Even examinations on interwar American-Polish relations mention little about the war, focusing more extensively on financial interactions beginning in the mid-1920s.[15] This is reasonable, as the American government played a negligible role in diplomatic discussions about the conflict. Though the international history of the Russo-Polish War shows much continuity from the Paris Peace Conference, works on the conference devote little attention to it as many conclude their narratives at the signing of the Treaty of Versailles on 28 June 1919.[16] Some international history overviews of interwar Europe that mention the Russo-Polish War in passing attribute the conflict to the

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[13] Edgar Vincent Viscount D'Abernon, *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of the World: Warsaw, 1920* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1931); Borzęcki, p. xiii in particular. It is necessary here to note – as Borzecki does not – that the 'borders of Europe' have always been culturally constructed and contested and are not an objective geographic entity. See Norman Davies, *Europe: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), pp. 7–16; also the more general point about the construction of continental identities in Martin W. Lewis and Kären E. Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley; London: University of California Press, 1997). Moreover, the concept that Poland is the eastern frontier of European civilisation is a construction common to Polish nationalists that defines Russia as 'eastern' and un-European and thus defends Polish political hegemony in the region. This was a favourite argument of Dmowski's; a more recent iteration is Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, *Intermarium: The Land between the Black and Baltic Seas* (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2012).

[14] The war is mentioned briefly in, for example, Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion*, p. 42; it is omitted in other surveys such as Herring; Wesley M. Bagby, *America's International Relations since World War I* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

[15] E.g. Pease, *Poland, the United States, and the Stabilization of Europe*, pp. 9–10; it is not mentioned at all in Frank Costigliola, 'American Foreign Policy in the "Nut Cracker": The United States and Poland in the 1920s', *Pacific Historical Review*, 48 (1979), 85–105. Wandycz, *United States and Poland* outlines the Russo-Polish War from pp. 143-57, but the American response is judged so meagre that it is only mentioned on pp. 147-8 and 153-6.

[16] E.g. Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*; Schwabe; as mentioned above, this is also true of important specialist works, e.g. Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*; Hovi, *Cordon Sanitaire or Barrière de L'est?*

Polish state's desire to achieve the maximum desirable borders.[17] Only works by Polish historians explain the strategic reasoning behind this objective.[18] Other key surveys of interwar history do not mention the conflict or do not explain it at all.[19] Studies of French and British involvement in central and eastern Europe by Magda Ádám and Miklós Lojkó offer important context by noting French and British involvement in the region. The French government attempted with mixed results to develop a 'Little Entente', while British commercial and financial interests established connections particularly in Prague and Budapest in 1920-1.[20]

After the Treaty of Versailles

The Paris Peace Conference continued to function until January 1920, but its work after June 1919 took place on a smaller scale. While Clemenceau remained to lead the French delegation, Wilson departed for Washington on 28 June 1919 and never returned to Europe while Lloyd George left most of the negotiating to a series of deputies. Some of the experts remained but their ranks thinned as each country returned to the business of government after the extraordinary experience of the peace conference. As one American expert bemoaned, 'the staff of experts is now so small that every one is just struggling and consequently no one has either the heart or the time to really dig into any one subject with

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[17] E.g. Graham Ross, *The Great Powers and the Decline of the European States System, 1914-1945* (London; New York: Longman, 1983), p. 50; Steiner, *The Lights That Failed*, p. 146; Steiner's work does, however, provide a thorough international history of the conflict: see pp. 145-52.

[18] See especially Dziewanowski, *Joseph Piłsudski* but also the works noted above.

[19] E.g. Mazower, *Dark Continent* does not mention the war; Sally Marks, *The Illusion of Peace: International Relations in Europe, 1918-1933*, 2nd edn (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 35 includes it only in a list of postwar conflicts ongoing in 1920; see also Keith Neilson, *Britain, Soviet Russia and the Collapse of the Versailles Order, 1919-1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 43.

[20] Magda Ádám, *The Little Entente and Europe (1920-1929)*, trans. by Mátyás Esterházy (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1993), pp. 47–109 on the formation of the Little Entente. The book mentions Poland on occasion, in particular on p. 52 regarding policy in August 1920; Lojkó, pp. 337–9; a section of the book is devoted to Poland but this examines the broad trends of relations; pp. 259-62 examines the basic points of the war; see also Gábor Bátonyi, *Britain and Central Europe, 1918-1933* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), which does not examine Poland.

the old time enthusiasm.'[21] British and French leaders continued to meet in person in 1920 but they did so in short conferences without American participation. In early 1920 Hoover ran for the Republican nomination for president, and Hugh Gibson, the American minister in Poland, spent several months in the United States. The Treaty of Versailles was languishing in the Senate and Wilson was largely unable to function. As Jan Smulski, a Polish-American banker and community leader from Chicago, wrote in a 5 January 1920 letter, 'There is a feeling that as Americans, we have somehow become so wrapped in our affairs, it is of little moment as to what may happen to the Polish nation.'[22] Polish affairs had also attracted considerable attention before the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, but the attention of western governments turned to other subjects between July 1919 and May 1920.

In the ensuing months after the British, French, and American governments recognised Poland's independence in February 1919, they established official representation in the country. Each country sent a representative at the rank of minister: Rumbold for Britain, André de Panafieu for France, and Gibson for the United States.[23] These representatives generally supported the Polish government's perspective, noting that Poland was an ally and by its ideological affiliations was preferable to an external enemy, in this case the Bolsheviks. This pro-Polish perspective in particularly noteworthy in comments from Rumbold and Gibson, since the Polish government increasingly complained that policy of the British and American governments went against the best interests of Poland. The Polish foreign ministry, meanwhile, had developed from scratch in November 1918.[24] Its representatives lacked formal experience, though many had been

[21] Gibson Papers, Box 23, R. Foster to Gibson, 24 Aug 1919.
[22] NACP, RG 59, 860c.48/299, Smulski to Glass, 5 Jan 1920.
[23] See Martin Gilbert, *Sir Horace Rumbold: Portrait of a Diplomat, 1869-1941* (London: Heinemann, 1973); Piotr S. Wandycz, 'French Diplomats in Poland, 1919-1926', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 23 (1964), 440–50; Swerczek.
[24] On the formation of the Polish Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (Ministry of Foreign Affairs), see Sibora. There is no satisfactory study in English or French on the first years of the MSZ; even

involved in the KNP or other émigré organisations during the First World War. Paderewski served as Poland's foreign minister during his premiership. By the time Stanisław Patek took over in December 1919, Poland had established diplomatic posts in London, Paris, and Washington.

Following the establishment of diplomatic relations and representation, British, French, and American firms and individuals began to seek opportunities to invest in Poland. French firms concentrated in coal and also rushed into the oil deposits in East Galicia, which in 1920 already comprised one-quarter of oil imports into France.[25] Though dreams of oil wealth proved to be a mirage – Galician oil output had peaked in 1909 and declined thereafter – nonetheless more foreign investment in Poland came from France than any other country in the interwar period.[26] British and American firms did not invest heavily in Poland in the period of this study. The United States government did encourage private American investment in Poland as a corollary to its massive aid program there, but this proceeded slowly until after Piłsudski's coup in 1926 and his subsequent economic liberalisation reforms.[27] American firms had done little business in the region before the First World War; one major involvement, a foray by Standard Oil in the Galician oil fields, ended in 1912 because of a combination of Austro-Hungarian economic nationalism and the antitrust lawsuit against Standard Oil in the United States.[28]

The British and French governments began to consider re-integrating Russia into the international system. This became increasingly necessary as by the end of 1919 the Bolsheviks had confounded expectations that they would not survive by defeating most of

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the most thorough studies of Polish foreign policy in this period do not examine it, e.g. Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*; Borzęcki; Cienciala and Komarnicki; nor do surveys, e.g. Roman Dębicki, *Foreign Policy of Poland, 1919-39: From the Rebirth of the Polish Republic to World War II.* (Praeger, 1962); Karski.

[25] Christophe Laforest, 'Les investissement français en Pologne (1919-1939)', in *Les relations entre la France et la Pologne au XXe siècle*, ed. by Bernard Michel and Józef Łaptos (Kraków: Eventus, 2002), p. 109.

[26] Frank, *Oil Empire*, p. 21; Laforest, p. 107.

[27] Costigliola, 'American Foreign Policy in the "Nut Cracker"', p. 94.

[28] Frank, 'Petroleum War of 1910', pp. 37–8.

their enemies. Trade was a main motivation for the British government; as Lloyd George told Parliament on 17 July 1919, 'whatever the future of Russia, we do not want her as a permanent enemy. We need her wheat, flax, hides, and timber, and we need her as a market for our own commodities.'[29] Lloyd George also hoped that access to Russian grain would lessen food shortages and lower the high grain prices that resulted from Europe's dependence on the American market.[30] In January 1920 the British government ended its blockade of Russia and in May began trade talks with Bolshevik representatives in London. The French government was less interested in accommodating the Bolsheviks; it still hoped, as it had since the Bolshevik revolution, that it would be able to recoup Russian debts and French companies could trade in Russia again.[31] Yet France was increasingly isolated in its opposition to the Bolsheviks as Britain and Italy began to consider opening trade relations. Alexandre Millerand, the new French president, reluctantly agreed to a joint statement in London on 23 February 1920 that the Allied governments would no longer support anti-Bolshevik groups and would encourage trade with Russia.[32] The American government, however, did not recognise the Bolsheviks as the government of Russia until 1933 and instead continued food aid to Russia until 1923 in the hopes of inspiring a popular revolt. As a result, while the British and especially the French governments feared the spread of Bolshevism, they also had reason to advocate peace between Russia and Poland and to be frustrated when the Polish government did not see it the same way.

Moreover, the British and French governments had other concerns in 1920 that meant that they preferred a settlement in the centre of Europe rather than contributing supplies or troops to Poland. Britain needed troops to deal with unrest in Ireland, Egypt,

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[29] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/1323/4, 'Towards a National Policy', 17 July 1919. See also Lowe and Dockrill, vol. 2, pp. 330-1.
[30] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/214, Kerr to A.W.A. Leeper, 19 Jan 1920.
[31] Hovi, *Alliance de Revers*, pp. 35–7; Carley, *Revolution and Intervention*, pp. 89–90.
[32] Hovi, *Alliance de Revers*, p. 36.

and Iraq and so did not contribute divisions to the plebiscite commission in Upper Silesia as planned, while an uprising in the newly-acquired territory of Iraq resulted in 90,000 British casualties alone in 1920.[33] The British government's finances were stretched from the war and there was little appetite for another European conflict as most troops had demobilised. Maintaining the security of Poland remained more important for the French government because of its developing system of alliances, but it had its own difficulties at home. The French treasury was also exhausted from a long and punishing war that had devastated France's industry in the north-east. Industrial unrest led to a general strike in much of May and increased concerns of Bolshevism for a time.[34] Other major international crises also required attention. Negotiations with the German government over reparations were continuing without resolution, for instance, while attempts to finalise the territorial settlement in Anatolia were being undermined by the armies of Kemal Atatürk.[35]

While the exchange of diplomatic representatives and the cautious resumption of international trade did indicate some change in the international system, other elements of British, French, and American diplomacy showed continuities. In particular, the public debate regarding the Treaty of Versailles showcased many of the arguments about the rebirth of Poland that had predominated during the war and the peace conference. In Britain and France, critics from the political left believed that the treaty was too harsh on Germany, while many on the political right argued that it was not harsh enough. The defence of the treaty was most damaging in American domestic politics.[36] Though opposition centred on the required American commitment to the League and to European security, many Americans believed that the treaty had been too harsh on Germany while

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[33] Leśniewski, p. 160; Susan Pedersen, 'Getting Out of Iraq—in 1932: The League of Nations and the Road to Normative Statehood', *The American Historical Review*, 115 (2010), p. 978.
[34] Millerand downplayed such concerns at the time, successfully broke the strike, and dissipated the threat of revolution in France. See *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 279; Hovi, *Alliance de Revers*, p. 39.
[35] On the settlement between Turkey and Greece, see MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 427–55.
[36] On Wilson and the defence of the treaty, see Cooper, *Woodrow Wilson*, pp. 506–34; MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, pp. 487–92.

Republicans chafed at Wilson's unwillingness to consult them.[37] Upon Wilson's return to the United States in July 1919, he embarked on a cross-country tour in support of the treaty. On many occasions, especially in the mid-western states where there were many Polish immigrants, he touted the virtues of the Polish settlement. As he proclaimed in a rally in Indianapolis on 4 September,

> I have no doubt that in this audience there are many men who come from the ancient stock of Poland, for example, men in whose blood there is the warmth of old affections connected with that betrayed and ruined country, men whose memories run back to insufferable wrongs endured by those living in that country. And I call them to witness that Poland never could have won unity and independence by herself. Those gentlemen sitting at Paris presented Poland with a unity she could not have won and an independence which she cannot defend unless the world guarantees it to her. There is one of the most noble chapters in the history of the world.[38]

The British and French governments similarly defended the rebirth of Poland as one of the hallmarks of the peace, though rarely with such romantic language as Wilson used. In Britain, Lord Robert Cecil told the House of Commons that 'an independent Poland' was one of the territorial matters 'on which none of us has any doubt'.[39] In France, Tardieu included the rebirth of Poland first in a list of the beneficial results of the treaty.[40]

Yet as during the peacemakers' deliberations in early 1919, critics frequently pointed to the territories assigned to Poland in the treaty as evidence that the peacemakers had erred. Debate crystallised around the publication of John Maynard Keynes' *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* in December 1919. Keynes had served as an economic expert in the British delegation before leaving in disgust in early June 1919.[41] The book became instantly popular; it sold 100,000 copies in six months and was

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[37] Pease, *Poland, the United States, and the Stabilization of Europe*, p. 9.
[38] *PWW*, vol. 63, pp. 24-5.
[39] HC Deb 21 July 1919 vol 118 c984.
[40] France. Assemblée nationale, *Journal officiel de la République française. Débats parlementaires. Chambre des députés* (Paris: Impr. du Journal officiel, 1919), p. 4098.
[41] On Keynes' history and his time at the peace conference, see Stephen A. Schuker, 'J.M. Keynes and the Personal Politics of Reparations: Part 1', *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 25 (2014), pp. 453–65.

translated into twelve languages.[42] Many people were convinced by Keynes' polemical description of the vindictive peacemakers who wanted above all to make Germany pay. Keynes was particularly critical of Clemenceau, the old warrior, and of Wilson's naiveté.[43] Keynes wrote little about Poland, focusing mostly on the Franco-German settlement, but what he did write was dismissive. 'Poland is an economic impossibility with no industry but Jew-baiting', he asserted, echoing discussion at the peace conference about Poland's economic backwardness and Polish anti-Semitism.[44] Moreover, Keynes argued that Poland's territorial ambitions were too great and exemplified France's desire to control the continent. Chief among these concessions was the potential loss of Upper Silesia (the plebiscite was still being prepared), which he believed would gravely injure the German economy. 'Whereas the Silesian mines are essential to the economic life of Germany, Poland does not need them', Keynes claimed. 'Even without any supply from Upper Silesia and Czecho-Slovakia, Poland could probably meet her requirements by the fuller exploitation of her own coalfields which are not yet scientifically developed.'[45] Keynes' arguments were central in the interwar discussion about whether the border with Poland and Germany should be revised in the latter's favour.[46] They are also an important part of the context for the Russo-Polish War, as the leaders debated whether an expansionist Poland should be supported in its territorial claims to the east.

Furthermore, there remained significant differences between British and French aims in central and eastern Europe. Following the Versailles treaty, the French

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[42] On the effect of Keynes' book, see Sally Marks, 'Mistakes and Myths: The Allies, Germany, and the Versailles Treaty, 1918–1921', *The Journal of Modern History*, 85 (2013), 632–59; Trachtenberg, pp. 108–10.
[43] Keynes, pp. 28, 38–39.
[44] Keynes, p. 273.
[45] Keynes, p. 79n2.
[46] Revision of the German-Polish border became a major concern beginning in 1926 and continued until the outbreak of war in 1939; see Karski; Von Riekhoff. Yet many arguments in favour of revision developed during the peace conference and after; see, e.g., Antony Lentin, *Lloyd George and the Lost Peace: From Versailles to Hitler, 1919-1940* (New York: Palgrave, 2001); Marks, 'Mistakes and Myths' focuses on the 'Anglo-Saxons', i.e. British and Americans, but argues that a German campaign also affected opinions. See also Cienciala and Komarnicki.

government continued to develop its links with the several small states, including Poland, that occupied the territory of central and eastern Europe roughly 'between' Germany and Russia.[47] As mentioned in previous chapters, France wished to use those states to replace Russia as its eastern balance on German power, and increasingly as a *cordon sanitaire* separating Bolshevik Russia from Germany and the rest of Europe. As a result, the French government sought alliances with those individual countries, concluding one with Poland in 1921.[48] France also sought to federate those states in a sort of economic or political union, though as Magda Ádám notes, these efforts were not always successful and inspired separate negotiations for a 'Little Entente' between the governments of Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Romania.[49]

Strengthening Poland's army so that the country could fulfil its role in France's eastern security scheme had thus been a project of the French government's since the opening of the peace conference. In the Supreme Council on 22 January 1919, Marshall Foch asserted that the Haller Army be sent to Poland 'for the purpose of stiffening Polish resistance against the Bolsheviki'.[50] Notably, however, when Balfour asked him whether he had information about a specific Bolshevik attack – presumably from Russia – he did not mention one.[51] His plan was to send the troops to Danzig by sea and then along the Danzig-Thorn railway, as the armistice permitted. Foch agreed with the Polish government's assessment that the German government would oppose this. The Polish government had also requested that the Allies occupy the railway to forestall German opposition, and Foch suggested that two Allied divisions be sent for this purpose.[52] Wilson

[47] On terminology for this region, see p. 4n7.
[48] The classic work on France's alliance policy is Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies*, pp. 27–185; see also Hovi, *Alliance de Revers*; Davion, pp. 37–126; Peter Jackson, pp. 364–70. Ádám, pp. 47–109 revises some of Wandycz's conclusions on the effect of France's policy, albeit with little reference to Poland.
[49] Ádám, pp. 90–3.
[50] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 684. The debate over the transport of the Polish divisions is considered in detail in Lundgreen-Nielsen, *Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, pp. 125–61.
[51] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 672.
[52] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 670-1, 684.

disagreed strongly with the plan, arguing that '[w]ith the object of sending Polish troops into Poland we were going to prejudge the whole Polish question.'[53] The leaders agreed to study the issue before taking action, and dispatched the inter-Allied mission to Poland. The mission's representatives and the Polish Commission – which were both generally sympathetic to the Polish government – agreed that the Polish divisions should be sent as soon as possible.[54] Wilson renewed his objections, however, and became frustrated because of his frequent battles with the French delegation over this and other issues.[55] The leaders eventually decided to send the Polish divisions by train through Germany, for which Foch secured the permission of the German government.[56]

The French government had trained and equipped Haller's Army, which is generally considered to be the most formidable force among those divisions that the Polish government cobbled together in 1919. Historians' estimates of the Polish army's manpower vary widely.[57] When the socialist government of Lublin and the Regency Council gave Piłsudski control of their respective armed forces on 11-12 November 1918, this meant that the nascent Polish state controlled the Central Powers' Polish army, which numbered about 9000, and perhaps 30,000 volunteers from the POW.[58] Other experienced soldiers joined later; Polish units formed during the First World War slowly returned from the Balkans, Murmansk, and Siberia, while individual soldiers crossed Russian lines into Poland.[59] Haller's Army numbered about 50,000 troops when it returned from the Western Front. Davies estimates that the Polish government had 170,000 serving soldiers by the beginning of 1920. The government also introduced

[53] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, pp. 673.
[54] ACNP, 181.21301/6, Inter-Allied Mission telegram to peace conference, 14 Feb 1919; ACNP, 181.213201/1, Polish Commission minutes, 20 Feb 1919.
[55] See e.g. *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 315; *PWW*, vol. 56, p. 127.
[56] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 40.
[57] On the army's formation and composition, see Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, pp. 41–6; Adam Zamoyski, *The Battle for the Marchlands* (Boulder, CO: East European Monographs, 1981), pp. 16–35; M.B. Biskupski, 'The Military Elite of the Polish Second Republic, 1918–1945: A Historiographical Review', *War & Society*, 14 (1996), pp. 53–5, 57–69.
[58] Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, p. 41; Biskupski, *Independence Day*, p. 24.
[59] Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, pp. 41–2.

conscription in March 1919 which approximately doubled the number of soldiers available for service. The peacemakers in Paris, however, received demonstrated widely different understandings of the Polish government's manpower. In February 1919, the inter-Allied mission estimated that the Polish government controlled about 105,000 troops.[60] The previous month, however, Paderewski had asked for enough munitions for an army of 600-000-800,000.[61]

These forces, however, had inconsistent training and insufficient supplies and required central organisation. The peacemakers were aware of these flaws in part because Foch mentioned them frequently. Poland 'had no bases, no outlets, no communications, no supplies, no army', he told the Supreme Council on 22 January.[62] The partitioning powers had been careful not to establish armaments factories in their Polish territories, so the new state did not possess domestic armaments manufacturing before 1920.[63] Lack of armaments plagued the Polish army until the end of the war with Russia. Other basic necessities were also in short supply; in February 1919 the inter-Allied mission gave alarming reports of Polish soldiers without proper clothing for winter weather.[64] These problems were further complicated by general lack of organisation. The armed forces comprised generals and troops from the armies of all three partitioning powers and also some who had received French instruction. Lloyd George said that according to Lt-Col Adrian Carton de Wiart, who led the British military mission in Poland, 'The generals of the army were all acting independently; they had no notion of training the 500,000 troops they were raising or of co-ordinating the various units constituting the army.'[65] Foch agreed that 'the Poles really had no army organisation of any kind, except perhaps at Posen, where German methods were still being followed. In Galicia the Austrians were in

[60] ACNP, 181.21301/5, Inter-Allied Mission to Poland, Procès-verbal, 14 Feb 1919.
[61] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 673.
[62] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 674.
[63] Noted in p. 204n77.
[64] ACNP, 181.21301/5, inter-Allied mission to Poland, procès-verbal, 14 Feb 1919.
[65] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 316.

command of the Polish forces, but (and that was typical of the Austrians) they were on bad terms with the civilian population and had only introduced disorder into the army. At Warsaw, there was no organisation of any kind.'[66] As a result the peace conference sent General Paul Henrys and hundreds of officers, including a young Charles de Gaulle, to Poland to train the Polish army. De Gaulle criticised the 'chaotic operation' of the Polish army, which operated 'without any method', while army officials complained continuously that Polish officers were uninterested in their help.[67] French officials could not understand such prideful behaviour and believed it impractical. Foch, Howard, and others such as Winston Churchill argued that the aid that Britain and France were sending was insufficient.[68] The American government, meanwhile, continued to fund its child-feeding effort but only because humanitarian relief was perceived to be apolitical and thus did not imply support for Polish or Russian territorial claims.[69] With few arms and little materiel supplied by their western allies, therefore, the Polish army relied mostly on old equipment in the war with the Bolsheviks.[70]

The Russo-Polish War in 1920

Though fighting between Polish and Russian forces began during the peace conference and continued for long afterwards, it did not especially concern the peacemakers in Paris.[71] The Bolsheviks made threatening moves that winter when they took Kiev and Vilnius, while Poland's occupation of Eastern Galicia and the seizure of Vilnius in April 1919 set the stage for a future confrontation. For most of 1919, however,

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[66] Ibid.
[67] Quoted in Lt. Col. Frédéric Gelton, 'Le capitaine de Gaulle et la Pologne (1919-1921)', in *Les relations entre la France et la Pologne au XXe siècle*, ed. by Bernard Michel and Józef Łaptos (Kraków: Eventus, 2002), p. 124.
[68] Cumbria Record Office, Esme Howard Papers, DHW 1/5, entries for 5 & 8 Mar 1919; Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, pp. 84–5, 92.
[69] Adams, p. 5.
[70] Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, p. 45.
[71] The principal work on the war is Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*; see also Zamoyski, *The Battle for the Marchlands*. Two works of diplomatic history also examine the war in significant detail: Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*; also Borzęcki.

both sides were busier with other problems than with each other. The Red Army consolidated the Bolsheviks' hold on power with successful military campaigns against a variety of enemy groups, including ineffective Allied intervention. Poland's government, meanwhile, focused on rebuilding and on skirmishes with its many neighbours.

The Polish army's skirmishes with Russian Bolshevik troops did not have the sanction of the Supreme Council; even the fervent anti-communist Foch criticised Poland's 'divergent and eccentric' policy of fighting enemies on all sides.[72] The peacemakers did not, however, specifically censure the Polish government for these skirmishes as they had done in other instances, they were focused on other pressing matters. This notably differed not only from the peacemakers' censure of the Polish government's campaign against 'Bolsheviks' in East Galicia, but also from the support given to the Czech Legion in Russia and the anti-Bolshevik Ukrainian forces that the French government subsidized. The Polish delegation to the peace conference sought to benefit from the absence of a Russian delegation and gain territory. The peacemakers, however, were quite cautious about dividing the territories of the former Russian empire. 'In the discussions everything inevitably leads up to Russia,' Headlam-Morley wrote in his diary. 'Then there is a discursive discussion; it is agreed that the point at issue cannot be determined until the general policy towards Russia has been settled; having agreed on this, instead of settling it, they pass on to some other subject.'[73] The peacemakers suspected that any decisions needed to prepare for Russia's eventual resurgence, and thus they should not give away territory that contained an ethnic Russian majority. The committee on Poland's eastern frontiers noted this in its first meeting as a general principle for guiding its deliberations, while also observing the Allies' vague pledge to ensure that Russia remained inviolate.[74] The Polish minorities treaty recognised that 'the Polish State … now in fact exercises

[72] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 3, p. 674.
[73] Headlam-Morley, Bryant and Cienciala, pp. 7–8.
[74] ACNP, 181.2132101/1, Sub-Commission for the Study of the Eastern Frontiers of Poland, Minutes, 22 Mar 1919.

sovereignty over those portions of the former Russian Empire which are inhabited by a majority of Poles', but added no specifications.[75] After much procrastination, on 8 December the peace conference permitted Poland to administer the territory inside a provisional border with Russia. The border was drawn to include only indisputably Polish areas; it also corresponded closely with the frontiers of Russia after the third partition of Poland in 1795.[76]

In light of later events, the Supreme Council's decision reads as an abrogation of responsibility for deciding the Russo-Polish border. This was not the intention at the time, as both the British and French governments hoped to delineate the frontier later and soon attempted to do so. The British government continued its attempt to ensure that Poland did not seek territories beyond the 8 December line. On 26 January 1920, Lloyd George met in London with Patek and demanded that Poland make peace with Bolshevik Russia. Peace was in Poland's interest, Lloyd George argued, since Poland was the Bolsheviks' only remaining opponent.[77] Moreover, Lloyd George insisted that the Polish government needed to make a genuine effort to come to 'fair terms' with the Bolsheviks. This meant ceding those territorial gains that were 'far beyond the racial boundary'. Should the Polish government refuse to do so, Lloyd George asserted that British public opinion would not support a war with the Bolsheviks on Poland's behalf.[78] This remained the British government's position throughout 1920. When Lloyd George later discussed the meeting with the cabinet, however, it was concluded that 'we have neither the men, the money, nor the credit' to fight the Bolsheviks, 'and public opinion is altogether opposed', but the

[75] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 13, p. 792.
[76] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 9, pp. 446-7; Karski, p. 43.
[77] CAB 23/20/7, Telegram to Rumbold, 27 Jan 1920, f. 73. Lloyd George evidently was not considering General Wrangel, whose forces continued to battle the Bolsheviks throughout 1920.
[78] CAB 23/20/7, Telegram to Rumbold, 27 Jan 1920, ff. 73-4.

government would 'continue our policy of giving material support to enable the Border states to defend themselves if attacked by the Bolsheviks.'[79]

Lloyd George's intervention does not demonstrate any knowledge about the secret peace talks between the Bolsheviks and the Polish government that had been ongoing since autumn 1919.[80] On 28 January 1920 these negotiations entered the realm of public diplomacy when the Bolsheviks extended a peace offer.[81] The Bolsheviks had won respect in international public opinion for publishing the secret treaties and the proceedings of their peace negotiations with Germany, and again attempted to use public opinion to their advantage in negotiations with the Polish government. The British government expected that Lloyd George's stance would convince the Polish government to make peace with the Bolsheviks, though Rumbold wrote privately that the Bolsheviks' offer was either motivated by 'something rotten in [the Bolshevik] state, unless, of course, they are laying a trap for the Poles.'[82] Patek and the Polish government wanted to negotiate, but Piłsudski, who controlled foreign policy, remained suspicious.[83] The Polish government's early experiences of negotiating had taught it that the Bolsheviks were 'devoid of any honour or scruples' and might break an agreement if it suited them.[84] They also feared that if the Bolsheviks were overthrown, the regime that replaced them might not honour any prior agreements.[85] The Bolsheviks rejected the Polish government's counteroffer as too severe and, since they considered the exchange a public relations victory, felt no need to continue to negotiate.[86] The Polish government, however, had little experience with public

[79] CAB 23/20/7, Conclusions, 29 Jan 1920, f. 68.
[80] On these discussions, see Borzęcki, pp. 21, 36–48; Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations*, pp. 136–45.
[81] On the negotiations, see Borzęcki, which makes excellent use of both Polish and Russian archival sources. Other works, e.g. Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations* use Polish archival sources effectively but were written without access to Soviet Russian archives.
[82] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Rumbold to Hardinge, 1 Feb 1920.
[83] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Rumbold to Curzon, 14 Apr 1920; Borzęcki, p. 53.
[84] Rumbold Papers, dep. 47, Rumbold to Curzon, 2 Feb 1920.
[85] Ibid.
[86] Borzęcki, pp. 56–7.

diplomacy and handled the exchange awkwardly; its apparent unwillingness to negotiate contributed to the perception that it still retained expansionist aims.

The Polish government's lack of concern about international opinion regarding its policies may have passed with little comment had subsequent events not continued to establish a perception of Polish imperialism. In April 1920, with the Bolsheviks preparing to strike on Poland's northern frontier, Piłsudski led a surprise offensive towards Kiev. He intended to stop eight miles west the city, but the Red Army withdrew on 6 May and he decided to press the advantage. The stunning victory cheered the Polish people and was intended to be a strategic masterstroke that allowed Piłsudski to focus on the assault from the north with his eastern flank secure.[87] Instead, the seizure of Kiev was a major miscalculation that underestimated the importance of public opinion in Russia and the rest of the world. Lenin and Trotsky used the Polish offensive to rally their people, claiming that the Polish army had provocatively seized historically Russian territory. With renewed support from the flagging populace, the Red Army counterattacked fiercely on 26 May, and by 5 June it had forced the Polish army to retreat from Kiev.

Allied and American leaders were furious and condemned the seizure of Kiev; to them, this was another example of the Polish government's insatiable hunger for territory. This attitude persisted for the rest of 1920. Poland was 'a danger to Europe', Lloyd George said privately.[88] American intervention, meanwhile, was already unlikely; since the Senate rejected the Treaty of Versailles on 19 November 1919, the United States government had retreated rapidly from European affairs. Nonetheless, at the Paris Peace Conference, many American diplomats and politicians had come to view the Polish government as imperialistic, and the invasion of Kiev seemed to confirm this view. As Wilson stated in a 27 September 1920 interview, 'The Poles are too impetuous. My natural sympathy is all with the Poles but by invading Russian territory, the Poles give Lenine (sic) and Trotsky

[87] Borzęcki, p. 65.
[88] McEwen, p. 313.

their greatest possible strength.'[89] The British and American governments still believed that the best settlement of the Russo-Polish frontier would be the 'ethnographic' line established on 8 December 1919. The French government's response came later, but it too criticised Piłsudski's advance; France had previously supported Poland's claims to territories beyond the 8 December line, but never as far as Kiev.[90] Millerand told Panafieu to relay to the Polish government that his government advised restraint. 'We desire a strong Poland', Millerand wrote. 'That is why we caution it against all adventurous policy that … makes precarious its existence.'[91]

Criticisms of Poland's actions in the war with Russia in 1920 increasingly focused on Piłsudski, conflating his policies with the actions of the Polish state and the characteristics of the Polish people. Historians have often asserted that the British and American governments always mistrusted Piłudski, largely as a result of the KNP's propaganda campaign during the First World War.[92] Yet Piłsudski's image with western governments had been partly rehabilitated at the Paris Peace Conference. In Paris, the peacemakers were impressed with Piłsudski's popularity, an impression repeated throughout the Russo-Polish War. Piłsudski began his career in the 1890s as a socialist revolutionary who fought against tsarist Russia, though he had moderated his methods by the time he came to power.[93] His revolutionary past and his heroic refusal to take the Central Powers' oath of loyalty meant that he had, in effect, struggled against each of the partitioning powers, which contributed to his broad popularity with the Polish public.[94]

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[89] *PWW*, vol. 66, p. 154.

[90] Some historians have argued that France participated in plans for the April offensive, in particular Le Goyet, p. 26; Carley, 'Politics of Anti-Bolshevism.' Yet they have failed to produce evidence of this collaboration and I have found none to substantiate their claims.

[91] Z-Europe, Pologne, vol. 71, Millerand to Panafieu, 14 May 1920.

[92] E.g. Costigliola, 'American Foreign Policy in the "Nut Cracker"', p. 94, where it is incorrectly asserted that in January 1919 the U.S. government asked the Polish chief of state to resign.

[93] On Piłsudski, see especially Andrzej Garlicki, *Józef Piłsudski, 1867-1935*, trans. by John Coutouvidis, abridged edn (Aldershot: Scolar, 1995); also Dziewanowski, *Joseph Piłsudski*; Wacław Jędrzejewicz, *Piłsudski, a Life for Poland* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1982).

[94] Guerre, vol. 725, Telegram on Piłsudski's arrest, ff. 4-5. See also historians' perspectives on Piłsudski's popularity, assessed above on pp. 187-8.

Both the Foreign Office and the Quai d'Orsay commented favourably on Piłsudski's actions in 1917 and noted the 'violent outbursts at Warsaw and throughout the country' occasioned by his arrest.[95] Dmowski had informed the Supreme Council in January 1919 that the majority of people throughout the new country were 'against' Piłsudski's new government, but western diplomats and politicians often commented on the chief of state's popularity.[96] Piłsudski's image also improved in part because he captivated many of the western diplomats who met him. Howard's first impression was that Piłsudski had 'an extremely interesting and fascinating personality'.[97] Rumbold, who had a more critical eye about Polish matters than Howard, believed Piłsudski to be 'the biggest man in this part of Europe'.[98] Even Namier, though he later criticised Piłsudski's imperialistic policies, commented admiringly on 'his absolutely magnificent energy and daring'.[99] Namier, like many Poles, had idolised Piłsudski the dashing revolutionary as a boy.[100] Nevertheless, there were also concerns about the popular hero; Lloyd George had called Piłsudski 'an idealist without any practical ideas'.[101] These criticisms and others returned when the Russo-Polish War turned in the Bolsheviks' favour.

Throughout 1920, Lloyd George suggested repeatedly that British popular opinion would not support a war against Russia on behalf of Poland. This concern was borne out when in May 1920, London dock workers refused to load munitions onto the *SS Jolly George* on suspicion that the munitions were bound for Poland. The workers' stand created a political storm, and on 17 May the government House Leader, Andrew Bonar Law, was forced to admit publicly that the British government was supplying the Polish

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[95] E.g. FO 371/3001/149032, Howard to Foreign Office, 27 July 1917.
[96] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/879/1, Howard to Kerr, 17 Feb 1919; *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 713.
[97] Howard Papers, DHW 1/5, entry for 13 Feb 1919.
[98] Rumbold Papers, dep. 26, Rumbold to Kerr, 29 Dec 1919.
[99] FO 371/3279/178931, Namier memo, n.d. [Oct 1918].
[100] Ng, p. 100.
[101] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 4, p. 316.

war effort.[102] It was a major embarrassment for the government, since on 6 May Bonar Law had denied that Britain was providing any aid to the Polish war effort.[103] It also provided a major boost to the 'Hands Off Russia' campaign, which sought to convince British leaders to cease any intervention in Russia.[104] Similar campaigns resulted in supplies for the Polish army being embargoed in a Belgian port and on rail through Czechoslovakia. Some workers' representatives in Britain called for a day of industrial action in support of the campaign, and in August 1920 numerous local 'Councils of Action' were formed to ensure that the government did not intervene in the Russo-Polish conflict. These calls met with a lukewarm response, and such support as existed was probably motivated by ideological sympathy for the Bolsheviks and unwillingness to be sent off to another European war.[105] The workers showed little antipathy towards Poles or Poland specifically, though evidently they did not believe the Polish cause worthy of sacrifice. As such, they provided an additional reason for Lloyd George's caution about a more active intervention in the Russo-Polish conflict.

Days before the Bolsheviks recaptured Kiev, Lloyd George predicted a general Polish defeat. 'It would do them good', he told Baron George Riddell, a newspaper proprietor and close confidant, 'as they have become swollen-headed.'[106] Kerr expressed Lloyd George's view in official terms, telling Rumbold that the Prime Minister believed that 'the Poles have put themselves in the wrong … by plunging madly into conquest and adventure in non-Polish areas instead of trying to make peace.'[107] Rumbold duly relayed the message to the Polish government. He also attempted to explain that Poland's position

[102] 'House Of Commons', *Times*, 18 May 1920, p. 8.
[103] *Hansard*, HC Deb, 6 May 1920, vol 128, c2221.
[104] See L. J. Macfarlane, 'Hands off Russia: British Labour and the Russo-Polish War, 1920', *Past & Present*, 38 (1967), 126–52; Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star*, pp. 177–81; Stephen White, *Britain and the Bolshevik Revolution: A Study in the Politics of Diplomacy, 1920-1924* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1980), pp. 41–51.
[105] White, p. 49. The French ambassador in London also noted 'general uncertainty' about Polish matters in British press, public, and government opinion: Z-Europe, Pologne, Vol. 70, P. Cambon to Millerand, 7 May 1920
[106] McEwen, p. 313.
[107] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/915/1, Kerr to Rumbold, 10 June 1920.

was, Rumbold asserted, 'comparable with that of a man inhabiting a house in which some dangerous snake or person with a very infectious disease occupies a room next to his.'[108] His words had little effect, however, as Kerr wrote a fortnight later saying that Lloyd George believed the Polish government to be 'short sighted' and he would only consider an 'ethnographic' Poland and not 'the sort of peace terms which the Poles themselves contemplate'.[109] Lloyd George's actions at this point show that he was firmly convinced that the lands east of the 8 December line were not ethnographically Polish, that the Polish government would not abandon its imperialistic claims on those territories unless forced to do so by outside powers or defeat, and that the Polish government's policy had invited the war with Russia. This represents a continuation of both Lloyd George's attitude and position at the Paris Peace Conference.

These attitudes helped to shape Allied policy. The Bolsheviks advanced rapidly against the increasingly disorganised Polish forces, and by early July they were within striking distance of Warsaw. The Allies observed Poland's retreat but waited to see if the Polish government would request their aid.[110] It eventually did so at the Spa Conference on 9-10 July, at which the new National Democrat prime minister, Władysław Grabski, signed an agreement that essentially conceded to British demands.[111] Grabski agreed that Poland's eastern border should coincide with the 'ethnographic' frontier established at the Paris Peace Conference on 8 December 1919. Even worse for the Polish government, the frontier, now called the Curzon Line after the British foreign secretary, curiously no longer included Lemberg within Poland. The 8 December line had included the Polish-majority city within Polish territory.[112] In the interim, Polish forces would respect armistice lines

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[108] Lothian papers, GD 40/17/915/2, Rumbold to Kerr, 18 June 1920.
[109] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/915/3, Kerr to Rumbold, 4 July 1920.
[110] Ibid.
[111] See Z-Europe, Pologne, vol. 71, 'Engagement signé par W. Grabski', 10 July 1920, ff. 56-7.
[112] This was originally considered an oversight resulting from 'clerical error'; see Witold Sworakowski, 'An Error Regarding Eastern Galicia in Curzon's Note to the Soviet Government of July 11, 1920', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 4 (1944), 1–26. Norman Davies suggests that the

surrounded by a buffer zone and attend peace negotiations in London. The Polish government had wanted to control its negotiations with the Bolsheviks and had in the past dismissed these and similar terms as unworkable. In Warsaw, Patek told Rumbold that the terms amounted to 'capitulation'.[113] In return, however, the Allies pledged to send much-needed military assistance if the Bolsheviks proved unwilling to negotiate. The general peace conference had been Lloyd George's idea, which he pursued for the next several weeks.[114] The Polish government requested an armistice, but the Bolsheviks delayed, hoping that victory on the battlefield would make the question irrelevant. Their eventual reply contained conditions so unpalatable that Lloyd George threatened to renew the blockade of Russia.[115] Eventually the Polish government and the Bolsheviks nonetheless agreed to hold separate peace talks in Minsk in mid-August.

Though the United States government was not a signatory of the Spa agreement, it nonetheless supported the Curzon Line because it represented the ethnographic limits of Poland. Official and public opinion in Washington had turned against Poland following the seizure of Kiev, and this was reflected in policy.[116] In a note that was printed in the press, Secretary of State Bainbridge Colby told the Italian government on 10 August that the United States 'would regard with satisfaction a declaration by the Allied and Associated Powers, that the territorial integrity and true boundaries of Russia shall be respected.

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ethnographic maps of Poland that Lewis Namier had prepared while at the Foreign Office, one of which is in David Lloyd George's files and corresponds to the Curzon Line, could have been the origin of the line; Davies, 'Lloyd George and Poland', p. 145. Yet Howard, who unlike Namier was certainly pro-Polish, proposed a border very similar to the Curzon Line that left Lemberg outside of Poland. Howard had proposed this as only as a minimum, uncontestable border for the Poles and also offered his own more expansive suggestion for Poland's frontiers; both were traced on a map used by the Polish Commission, and Howard's ideas could conceivably also have been used to develop the Curzon Line. See The National Archives, Kew, MPK (Maps and plans from records of the Foreign Office) 1/326, 'Pologne', Feb-Apr 1919.

[113] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/915/4, Rumbold to Kerr, 15 July 1920.

[114] McEwen, p. 319.

[115] Borzęcki, p. 94.

[116] M.B. Biskupski, 'A Very Special Ally"?: Russia and Poland in American Strategy and Opinion Since 1918', in *Studia z dziejów Polski i Europy w XIX i XX wieku: księga dedykowana profesorowi Piotrowi Stefanowi Wandyczowi*, ed. by Janusz Faryś, Roman Nir, and Marek Szczerbiński (Gorzów Wlkp: Sonar, 2004), p. 344.

These boundaries shall properly include the whole of the former Russian Empire, with the exception of Finland proper, and ethnic Poland.'[117] This support for an ethnographic Poland was consistent with the thirteenth point and Wilson's position throughout the Paris Peace Conference. Unlike Britain and France, the United States provided no assurances of military assistance should Warsaw fall. As Colby wrote to the U.S. ambassador in London, 'We do not see what other aid can be given', considering what had already been loaned to Poland.[118] American food aid continued despite the oncoming Bolshevik army, partly because American relief workers were willing to risk their safety. Should the Bolsheviks take over ethnic Poland, Hoover instructed the relief workers, 'it would be [a] fine thing if some of our men would remain with [the] Poles and continue to carry on Childfeeding (sic).' 'I don't know of any service they could perform,' he continued, 'that would be finer and more wonderful character.'[119] The relief workers even negotiated their continued presence with the Bolsheviks, who favoured the idea.[120] These actions signified that while the conditions had changed considerably since the end of the First World War, the general contours of American policy had remained the same: the American government supported Poland internally by stabilising material conditions there, but disapproved of Polish external policy that involved going beyond the new state's ethnographic frontiers.

Later in July, the British and French governments sent a joint mission to persuade the Polish government to complete an armistice with the Bolsheviks. With the Bolsheviks seemingly uninterested in negotiations, however, the Allies again considered providing additional military assistance. The British mission, led by Lord D'Abernon, General Percy de B. Radcliffe, and Hankey attempted to assess the readiness of Polish forces to face the

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[117] *FRUS, 1920*, vol. 3, p. 468.
[118] *FRUS, 1920*, vol. 3, p. 387.
[119] Hoover Institution Archives, American Relief Administration: European Operations Records, Box 707, Folder 5, Hoover telegram, 14 July 1920.
[120] ARA: European Operations Records, Box 707, Folder 5, Childfund telegram, 9 Aug 1920, and Rickard telegram, 11 Aug 1920.

expected Bolshevik assault on Warsaw.[121] When Hankey, a close confidante of Lloyd George's, returned to London after six days in Poland, his report to Parliament implied that Poland had little chance of defeating the Red Army. 'The Polish Government are sincerely anxious to have peace', he wrote, but the army was 'demoralised' and 'widely scattered' after their long retreat. He also worried that because the Poles 'as a nation … are unaccustomed to look facts in the face', delusions of grandeur could lead them to propose unacceptable peace conditions.[122] Even if the Polish government could not achieve a peace agreement with the Bolsheviks and Polish army were defeated, Hankey concluded that the defence of Poland was not worth the lives of British troops.[123] It is possible that Lloyd George knew that Hankey would argue against intervention or indeed had instructed him to do so.[124] Hankey may well have been prejudiced; he had told Lloyd George before the trip that he had 'both dislike and contempt for the Poles', and he was 'doubtful if they are worth saving'.[125] Regardless, his report signifies that the British government remained uninterested in further involvement in the Russo-Polish War.

In the face of looming Polish defeat, Lloyd George, Millerand, and a few of their advisors met at Lympne, Kent for emergency discussions on 8-9 August. 'There appeared to be little prospect of saving the situation', Lloyd George began in the first meeting. 'It was impossible to defend Warsaw, and there was the danger that the Bolsheviks might reach the German frontier.'[126] Both leaders agreed that something needed to be done. As Millerand argued, 'the defence of Poland was in reality the defence of the peace of Europe, and – as Mr. Lloyd George had said – it was essential to prevent the loss of the fruits of victory as enunciated in the Treaty of Versailles.'[127] A Red Army victory might provide

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[121] Stephen Roskill, *Hankey, Man of Secrets*, 3 vols. (London: Collins, 1970), vol. 2, p. 181.
[122] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 11, pp. 429-30.
[123] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 11, pp. 433-4.
[124] Davies, 'Lloyd George and Poland', p. 146.
[125] Quoted in Roskill, vol. 2, p. 181.
[126] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 709.
[127] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 736.

Bolshevik leaders with a 'bridge' to the rest of Europe and especially the connection with Germany that had concerned the peacemakers in 1919. Millerand also worried that the German government might take the opportunity to seize territory in western Poland and thus undermine the peace settlement. Meanwhile, many smaller states governments had declared neutrality in the conflict. The government of Czechoslovakia in particular declared neutrality and was unwilling to permit troops and munitions to travel to Poland through its territory for fear that this would cause internal crisis because of communist agitation.[128] Millerand and Lloyd George concluded that their governments had few means to aid a Polish victory. They quickly agreed that additional munitions should be sent to the Polish army, but further measures would be more difficult to implement; in particular, it was impossible to send troops as public opinion would not support it.[129] Should the Red Army continue to advance without attempting to negotiate further, the British navy could reimpose the blockade of Russia with French assistance, and the British government discontinue its trade negotiations with Bolshevik representatives in London. Though the Bolsheviks were 'quite untrustworthy', the leaders hoped that these measures would induce them to negotiate. As Lloyd George put it, '[t]he only way in which one could get the respect of a highwayman was by holding a pistol at his head.'[130]

The conditions that Allied leaders placed on their assistance to Poland demonstrate the extent to which their attitudes affected how they framed the situation. As Foch asserted, British and French intervention was necessary 'not on account of any love … for the Poles … but it was because it was essential to constitute a buffer State in order to combat Bolshevism and to prevent a union of Germany and Russia.'[131] Churchill had made the same point in the London press just before the summit at Lympne.[132] The eventual

[128] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 11, p. 455.
[129] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, pp. 710, 752.
[130] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, pp. 712, 714.
[131] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 724.
[132] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 742n7.

product of the meetings, a joint declaration to the Polish government, stated that the latter should firstly 'do its utmost to conclude an armistice' at the forthcoming Russo-Polish conference at Minsk. Should the Polish government reject terms that threatened Poland's 'legitimate independence', the Allies would supply the assistance mentioned above, but on conditions: that the Polish government declare its intention to fight to the end, appoint a separate commander-in-chief, and 'accept and act upon' military advice from the Allies.[133] These conditions reflected the Allies' specific concerns about Piłsudski. Reports indicated that Piłsudski had been ignoring advice from French officers, including General Maxime Weygand, the head of the mission.[134] 'Piłsudski's attitude was one of treachery', Millerand declared, and the leaders worried that he might make peace with the Bolsheviks, even promise to 'Sovietise' Poland, to stay in power.[135] The Allied leaders wanted to replace him, but since they assumed he was too popular to be directly removed, they suggested that he choose between his functions as chief of state and commander-in-chief.[136] Other criticisms of the war were made in general terms that likely also included Piłsudski but provided for broader censure, at least of the government's attitude. 'Practically all the present trouble had been brought on Poland by the Poles' own actions' Lloyd George declared, an opinion which Curzon later echoed in a communication to Rumbold.[137] Finally, criticisms were also made about the attitude of the Polish army and citizenry. 'The trouble was', Millerand asserted, 'that the Poles could not be trusted … [and] were putting up no resistance at all.'[138] He had earlier claimed that 'it was hardly possible to deal seriously – he would not say only with the Polish Government, but with the Poles themselves.'[139]

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[133] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 754.
[134] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 713.
[135] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 734; vol. 11, p. 453.
[136] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, pp. 713, 724.
[137] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 733; vol. 11, p. 453.
[138] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 713.
[139] *DBFP*, 1st ser., vol. 8, p. 711.

In Warsaw, Weygand's attempts to provide leadership were only partly successful. On 6 August, he presented a defence plan to Piłsudski that involved falling back and abandoning the Vistula. Piłsudski rejected it and adopted his own offensive plan instead. But within days Piłsudski was busy in the field and neglecting the responsibilities of overall command. The command was thus offered twice to Weygand, on 10 and 13 August, perhaps as a result of the Allies' note, though he refused it on both occasions. Plans for a Minsk peace conference, an Allied intervention, or Weygand's control of the Polish forces soon became unimportant. On 16 August, Piłsudski ordered the counter-attack group with which he had been ensconced to move against the Russian troops. The manoeuvre caught the Russians off-guard; the Polish cavalry encircled the Bolshevik forces and scattered them. For the next several weeks, the revitalised Polish army continued to force the Russian retreat. The Polish victory at the Battle of Warsaw stunned British and French observers, who had been expecting defeat. While these observers were relieved that the Bolshevik danger had passed, it soon became clear that, as Kerr wrote to Lloyd George, 'both the Poles and the Russians will follow their own lines and will not accept the direction of the Allies.'[140] The increasing consensus in Britain, France, and the United States that the Polish government retained aggressive and imperialistic aims had led those countries to attempt to restrain it. As Poland avoided defeat, its government could continue to disregard western opinion and determine the border with Russia without outside interference.

The final territorial settlements

The proposed Minsk negotiations were abandoned and Russian and Polish negotiators reconvened at Riga on 19 September. Both sides wanted a settlement. The Bolsheviks needed peace so that they could appease the Russian people, who were restless from years of civil war. The Polish government still hoped to attain the borders it

[140] Lothian Papers, GD 40/17/1280, Kerr to Lloyd George, 2 Sept 1920.

had claimed at the Paris Peace Conference, but sought to moderate its demands somewhat because it knew that western opinion would oppose a draconian peace.[141] The Bolsheviks made their first offer on 24 September, but both sides remained wary. Jan Dąbski, the head of the Polish delegation, lamented his counterpart Adolf Ioffe, who 'many a time laughs at his own "arguments"; who admits he changes his stand; who sometimes retracts on the next day what he said the day before; … whose morality is entirely different than that of the whole world'.[142] The Bolsheviks, however, knew that the Polish army had the advantage on the battlefield and Piłsudski might be more comfortable pressing the advantage than negotiating.

The Polish army continued its advance during the talks, and the Red Army offered little resistance.[143] Following a major victory at the Battle of Niemen River, Polish general Lucjan Żeligowski staged a mutiny in Vilnius on 9 October 1920 and claimed the city and surrounding region for Poland. The Polish and Bolshevik delegations agreed in principle to the terms of their treaty the following day, with the Russians agreeing on 12 October not to interfere in the Lithuanian-Polish dispute.[144] For the next two months, the two sides haggled over the details of their agreement; the Polish government wanted the return of prisoners of war and Polish treasures as well as a share of imperial Russia's gold.[145] The difficulties were sorted by early 1921, and on 18 March the Bolsheviks and the Polish government signed the Treaty of Riga, which confirmed Poland's vast border with Russia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The treaty confirmed the Polish government's control of most of Poland's historic territories, but it also meant that minorities comprised one-third of the country's population in the interwar period.[146] The Allies protested and only approved

[141] Borzęcki, pp. 108–9.
[142] Quoted in Borzęcki, p. 205.
[143] Debo, *Survival and Consolidation*, p. 28.
[144] Debo, *Survival and Consolidation*, p. 282.
[145] Borzęcki, pp. 177–8.
[146] Stephan M. Horak, *Poland and Her National Minorities, 1919-39: A Case Study* (New York: Vantage Press, 1961), p. 81.

Poland's borders with Russia and Lithuania on 15 March 1923, but their influence over the process had been minimal.

After the Treaty of Riga a few issues remained on Poland's borders, the most important of which was the Upper Silesian plebiscite.[147] The plebiscite was set for 20 March 1921, but since the plebiscite had been announced in 1919 there was periodic unrest in the province as each side worried that the other would gain unfair influence. The German administration had remained in place after the armistice, and German troops and police were required to keep the area secure. The state commissioner treated Poles harshly, however, which sparked the first of three uprisings in the region by Polish paramilitaries in August 1919. The uprising was violently suppressed but nonetheless German administrative power in the province began to wane. First, Polish-national candidates swept local elections in November 1919; in the following February, the Inter-Allied Plebiscite Commission under French general Henri Le Rond sacked the top levels of German administrators and replaced them with commission members. The Allied presence was bolstered by fourteen battalions, ten from France and four from Italy.

The removal of German influence and the Allies' strength increasingly concerned the Germans of Upper Silesia. In August 1920, a German mob lynched a Polish activist in the street, sparking a second uprising from the Polish population. French troops protested little as the Poles took over the region, but as Peter Leśniewski demonstrates, British soldiers and many officials largely shared the German view that the entire episode showed a lack of respect for law and order.[148] Intense campaigning by both sides accompanied the

[147] The most thorough examination of Allied policy is Leśniewski, which is critical of British policy; Patricia A. Gajda, *Postscript to Victory: British Policy and the German-Polish Borderlands, 1919-1925* (Washington, D.C: University Press of America, 1982) offers a narrative overview of British policy with little analysis of motivations, but is more neutral on Britain's role than Leśniewski's account; on French policy, see Wandycz, *France and Her Eastern Allies*, pp. 225–37; other examinations of the international history of the Upper Silesian plebiscite are Von Riekhoff, pp. 39–51; Cienciala and Komarnicki, pp. 41–90; for local perspectives, including ambivalence about the binary choice between nationalities, see the nuanced treatment in Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*, pp. 210–66.
[148] Leśniewski, p. 162.

uprisings. The Polish Plebiscite Commission, established in February 1920 as the Allies arrived, employed more than 2000 people to campaign for the region's incorporation into Poland. Its leader, Wojciech Korfanty, was a popular National Democrat and had led the unofficial Polish government in Posen in 1919. Korfanty's larger-than-life persona made him popular among Poles, but German propagandists portrayed him as a sort of warlord, which undoubtedly fed into their wider message that Poles were not law-abiding and could not be trusted.[149] The German vote, meanwhile, was aided by the arrival of 185,000 'outvoters', or former residents.[150]

In the entire province, 59.6% voted to enter Germany and 40.4% to enter Poland. This had little meaning as the Treaty of Versailles had required the region to be divided based on popular votes in each commune. Vote distribution varied between communes and, in particular, the vote in the central industrial region had split almost evenly between Germany and Poland. For several weeks, Allied leaders debated how to draw the demarcation line; the resulting solution reflected the pre-existing sympathies of each side. Le Rond argued that approximately two-thirds of Upper Silesia, including the crucial industrial region, should go to Poland. The British representative, meanwhile, proposed that most of the territory, including most of the crucial industrial and coal mining areas, be assigned to Germany.[151] The Italian delegate, who attempted to bridge the two perspectives, eventually proposed a solution similar to the British plan. The commission members could not reconcile their differences and submitted both plans together as the commission report. On the night of 2 May, after the Polish Plebiscite Commission circulated rumours that most of the province would be awarded to Germany, a general strike erupted. Tens of thousands of Poles seized German territory in Silesia and attacked German sympathisers; in response, the Germans began mobilising *Freikorps*. About 2000

[149] 'Picnic Atmosphere in Upper Silesia', *New York Times*, 21 Mar 1921, p. 2; Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*, p. 219.
[150] Leśniewski, pp. 265–6.
[151] Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*, p. 253; Gajda, p. 92.

soldiers and another 2000 civilians died, while thousands more fled before the Allies eventually established peace late in the summer of 1921.[152] Crucially, neither the Allied nor the Polish governments offered assistance to the insurrection's leaders.[153]

The eventual Allied decision attempted to compromise between the French and British positions. Poland received most of the industrial triangle and Germany approximately 70% of the territory.[154] The German and Polish governments accepted the border in a treaty in 1922, but the experience of the plebiscite soured relations throughout the interwar period. Though about 100,000 Germans migrated from Polish to German Silesia in the decade after the plebiscite, most inhabitants remained.[155] When the German army swept into Poland in September 1939, the occupation regime referred to Upper Silesia as one of the forgotten territories that should always have been part of the German Reich. Today it is an important part of Poland but also boasts a growing secessionist movement whose roots can be traced to the plebiscite of 1921 and the desire of a mixed region with its own characteristics and dialect not to have to choose between Germany and Poland.[156]

Conclusion

British, French, and American attitudes and policies regarding the settlement of the Russo-Polish border reflected significant continuity from the Paris Peace Conference. British and American policy at the conference was to draw the border at the 'ethnographic frontier' so that eastern Poland only included majority-Polish territories. The French government and the Polish delegation advocated a more favourable border even if it meant including significant minorities within Poland. Of the three governments

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[152] Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*, pp. 255–6.
[153] Leśniewski, p. 363.
[154] MacMillan, *Paris 1919*, p. 221.
[155] Bjork, *Neither German nor Pole*, pp. 260–4.
[156] James E. Bjork, 'Poles and Germans into Silesians: Serial Nationalizations in Late 20th Century Poland' (presented at the Programme on Modern Poland seminar, European Studies Centre, University of Oxford, 2014).

considered in this thesis, French support for Poland's expansionist aims continued to be strongest in 1920. Lloyd George and his foreign policy circle continued to see imperialism in Polish actions, as the Polish government mishandled armistice negotiations with the Bolsheviks and Piłsudski led the ill-advised seizure of Kiev in April 1920. Lloyd George also worried that if Poland's government contravened the principle of self-determination in the east, it would invite irredentism – and then concluded after the Kiev invasion and the Red Army's subsequent advance that his concern had been justified. As the war turned against Poland, Millerand joined Lloyd George in expressing increased concern about the aims of the Polish government and people. Britain and France resolved to assist the Polish war effort with advisors and munitions, but could not make a stronger contribution by, for example, sending troops. The United States also expressed concern about the direction of the Polish government's policies, but aside from the semi-autonomous aid effort, American representatives enjoyed little influence in 1920. The Polish army's victory at the Battle of the Vistula, the seizure of Vilnius, and the Polish government's relative independence in treaty negotiations with the Bolsheviks illustrated the Allies' lack of power to affect Polish affairs. The Allies had greater influence over the settlement of the Upper Silesian plebiscite, but the process demonstrated the Anglo-French divide regarding the Polish settlement that had dominated the Paris peace conference. Despite the settlement of these last major questions, Poland's borders continued to be contested throughout the postwar period.

Conclusion

The return of the independent state of Poland and the delineation of its borders from 1919-21 had lasting consequences for the people of Poland and for Europe generally. During the interwar period, Poland's borders defined the space in which the country's government attempted, among other things, to create a Polish nation-state from the diverse population. Polish culture was at last able to flourish freely. Poland's minorities were not so fortunate, however, and faced limitations on their national expression, though the interwar period seemed idyllic for some after the communist takeover in 1948.[1] Yet problems with minorities characterised the implementation of the 'Paris system' of nation-states in interwar central and eastern Europe.[2] The territorial settlement established at the 1919-23 peace conferences inspired additional tension; Poland's borders continued to be debated through the interwar period. Successive German governments agitated for revision of the Polish-German frontier, especially in Upper Silesia, while Lithuania sought the return of Vilnius. Efforts at border revision culminated in 1939, when Nazi Germany invaded from the west across the border established in 1919 after years of complaints about the treatment of German nationals under Polish rule. Soviet Russia invaded from the east less than three weeks later; the postwar border between Poland and Russia followed the Curzon Line established at Spa in July 1920.

British, French, and American policy-makers had not been solely responsible for the rebirth of Poland, the delineation of its borders, or its subsequent tensions with its neighbours, but they were integral to the process. Numerous factors influenced

[1] E.g. Czesław Miłosz, *The Captive Mind*, trans. by Jane Zielonko (London: Penguin, 2001), pp. 135–8.
[2] Mazower, *Dark Continent*, pp. 51–76; Weitz, pp. 1332–8; perhaps the most significant example of an aggrieved minority were the Sudeten Germans; see e.g. Mark Cornwall, *The Devil's Wall: The Nationalist Youth Mission of Heinz Rutha* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012).

discussions of policy during the First World War, the Paris Peace Conference, and the Russo-Polish War. Several historians have traced the influence of some of these considerations, such as the balance of power, the influence of non-state actors like the KNP, or public opinion on the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth. While previous works have primarily focused on rational factors, these were not the only factors to affect policy: a further factor was the attitudes of the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite about the rebirth of Poland and the Polish people. This last chapter expands on this conclusion in three sections. The first section outlines what attitudes British, French, and American policy-makers expressed about the rebirth of Poland or the Polish people and how these attitudes developed. The second section assesses how these attitudes, along with other factors, affected policy. The final section summarises the historiographical contribution of this thesis and briefly suggests new areas worth exploring.

The development of attitudes

Between 1914 and 1921, British, French, and American representatives developed various attitudes in the course of making policy about the rebirth of Poland. The statements of these representatives indicate that their attitudes about Poles and the rebirth of Poland developed in a relatively consistent pattern. Individuals in the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élite generally knew little about Poles or Poland before 1914, but they learned more as they considered the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth. After an initial period of engagement, attitudes gradually developed in response to events and experiences. Social psychologists note that sometimes experiences can modify or reinforce pre-existing understandings about a person or group.[3] This observation has

[3] Yehuda Amir, 'Contact Hypothesis in Ethnic Relations', *Psychological Bulletin*, 71 (1969), 319–42; Schneider, p. 430.

been asserted in many recent studies of intercultural contact.[4] The case of Poland contrasts with the assertion that the peacemakers in Paris lazily relied on prejudice when they made the territorial settlement because they did not know enough about the world.[5] From 1914-21, Allied and American diplomats and politicians met frequently with Polish representatives, first regarding Poland's independence and then its territorial claims. They developed attitudes based on the claims that Polish representatives made for independence or territory and on how those claims related to their perception of the national or general interest. Another influence was their attitudes about self-determination generally, which evolved during this period in response to events and the lobbying campaigns of other nationalities. Attitudes and stereotypes about Poles or the rebirth of Poland developed primarily, however, through the actions of Polish representatives, either encountered in person on as they appeared on the world stage. Some Allied and American policy-makers befriended Polish leaders, like House with Paderewski, while others like Namier were repelled by Dmowski's anti-Semitism. Attitudes developed, therefore, because of different types of contact with Poland and Poles. This contact occurred because events – the international strategy required for the First World War and then the all-reaching remit of the Paris Peace Conference – required the British, French, and American foreign-policy-making élites to encounter Polish representatives on an increasingly regular basis. These contacts during and after the First World War – rather than the vague knowledge that these élites possessed about Poland and Poles prior to 1914 – helped to define the attitudes that diplomats and politicians expressed on the rebirth of Poland.

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[4] See Mösslang and Riotte, pp. 18–19.

[5] See Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, especially pp. 1-2. Sluga's characterisation points mainly to the decisions made in the discussions of mandates and of the territorial settlement in the Balkans; her expertise is particularly on the latter, which is the subject of her first monograph. Sluga's assertion also rests substantially on Walter Lippmann's criticism of the conference; see Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1922). Lippmann was not involved in any of the Polish territorial settlements.

Though British, French, and American policy-makers often expressed their attitudes about Poles and the rebirth of Poland, this does not imply that a single attitude predominated. In fact, we cannot speak of one 'Poland' or 'the Poles' in this period[6], but policy-makers often did. During the First World War, 'Poland' usually referred to Russian Poland but this was usually not specified, while Poles could be the inhabitants of any of the three partitions, or émigré Poles, especially those in the United States, or those particular émigrés who lobbied foreign governments. After 1918, the peacemakers often referred to the Polish government, its delegation in Paris, or the people of Poland as 'the Poles' without specifying whom they meant. Allied and American diplomats and politicians at different times referred to 'the Poles' as passionate, romantic, idealistic, anti-Semitic, proud, vain, pitiable, quarrelsome, imperialistic, oppressed, devious, and loyal, or as some combination of those qualities. These stereotypes, which reflect the personality characteristics of an individual applied on a societal level, were reinforced both by understandings of Poland's actions in European history and interactions with Polish representatives. The participants rarely observed either that these stereotypes often conflicted with each other or that the Poles' perceived nature could be used to support any number of positions on Poland's boundaries.

Despite this ambiguity, as a group British, French, and American policy-makers mainly understood the rebirth of Poland with reference to two general, conflicting attitudes comprising multiple stereotypes about Poles. The first held that Poles shared western values: they were liberal, democratic, and strongly opposed to the Central Powers, whose governments tended to be depicted as opposed to these principles. Moreover, the Poles had endured horrible treatment at the hands of wartime enemies Germany and Austria-Hungary, both during the partitions and the recent wartime occupation. Because of the British and French alliance with the Russian Empire and then

[6] See the discussions on pp. 3-7, 44-6 especially.

uncertain relations with its successors, Polish suffering under Russian imperialism was not mentioned with similar frequency. Nonetheless, it was primarily attention to Russian Poland and its inhabitants that provoked these attitudes about the rebirth of Poland during the war. British, French, and American policy-makers eventually developed widespread sympathy for Polish independence, which became perceived as part of the 'rule of right' including self-determination that ought to be established after the war.[7] While the British, French, and American foreign-policy élites expressed this attitude regularly from 1916-21, changed conditions after the end of the war led some representatives, especially Lloyd George, to express more negative attitudes about 'the Poles' and the new Poland. Poland was beset by internal divisions, in particular because of the political division between National Democrats and Piłsudskiite leftists and the legacy of the partitions. These divisions, combined with the ravages of war, meant among other things that the economy was in tatters. Yet Poland skirmished or warred with most of its neighbours in 1919-20, in conflicts that often spilled over into pogroms against Jews as at Lemberg and Pińsk. As some Allied and American representatives observed how 'the Poles' interacted with each other and, after November 1918, with their neighbours, they increasingly viewed Poles as quarrelsome, anti-Semitic, aggressive, and unreliable. Their arguments contested the earlier, more positive view, which other policy-makers still held. The longer focus of this thesis thus allows for an understanding of the development of attitudes and the importance of contingency therein.

Poles were not the only people about whom the Allies and Americans developed attitudes. Lack of knowledge was only part of the reason why stereotypes were central to Allied and American attitudes; British, French, and American élites were much more familiar with Germans and Russians, for example, but often used stereotypes to describe those national groups as well. For instance, 'Germans' – the term for the people again

[7] CAB 24/2/32, Paget and Tyrrell memorandum, 7 Aug 1916.

often conflated with military and political authorities – were regularly suspected of engaging in duplicitous activity and of being militarist and imperialist by nature. Policy-makers also understood other national groups in central and eastern Europe with reference to some stereotypes. Often Polish representatives helped to shape these stereotypes to forward their territorial claims, much as others such as Czechoslovak representatives were doing to them. The peacemakers in Paris tended to regard Ukrainian and Lithuanian representatives with suspicion, for instance, because of their cooperation with the Central Powers in 1918. They also suspected that these nationalities sympathised with the Bolsheviks. Polish representatives made sure to mention both points. The peacemakers also saw these national groups as generally uncivilised and wondered if they were prepared for the task of self-government because it was uncertain that they had reached the required level of national development. Czechoslovak representatives made a much better impression both during the war and at the peace conference, though Allied and American representatives on the ground in the contested duchy of Teschen criticised Czechoslovak aggression there. Finally, at times Allied and American policy-makers expressed attitudes that lumped together the nations of central and eastern Europe. Western European observers had long viewed the peoples to the east as less civilised, and remnants of this undoubtedly affected Allied and American attitudes.[8] A common view at the Paris Peace Conference emphasised the venality of the peoples of the region; as Lloyd George put it, 'everyone there was agreed to grab all they could'.[9] Yet during the First World War, Polish émigré representatives also benefitted from the positive unofficial discourse about other Slavic groups like Serbs and Czechs.[10] In sum, generalisations by nationality or perceived racial type were a common way in which diplomats and politicians understood the world in the early twentieth century.

[8] Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*.
[9] *FRUS: PPC*, vol. 5, p. 678.
[10] Hanak, *Great Britain and Austria-Hungary*, pp. 45–46.

British, French, and American attitudes and policy towards Poland's rebirth

The existence of attitudes about 'the Poles' and the rebirth of Poland did not determine a clear direction for British, French, and American policy. Rather, individuals defined how certain stereotypes supported a particular course of action. In official policy discussions, policy-makers considered many factors to make the best decision and often expressed attitudes along the way. The wartime discussion in the Foreign Office regarding support for an independent Poland, for instance, combined officials' sympathy for an independent Poland with an awareness of how a public declaration would affect relations with Russia, public opinion in Russian Poland and the United States, and the military strength of the Central Powers. Dmowski's first memorandum in March 1917 had listed several thematic arguments in favour of British government support for an independent Poland that embraced both realpolitik and morality. Attitudes affected policy discussions in some situations more than others. For instance, Allied and American sympathy for an independent Poland during the First World War is an important part of that struggle, but that sympathy had little effect on when those governments decided it was strategically the correct time to declare their support. Yet other situations are impossible to describe without reference to attitudes. In discussions about the Russo-Polish War, British, French, and American policy-makers increasingly expressed frustration about Poland's invasion of Kiev. Meanwhile, the perception in the United States that Poles were anti-Semitic and had been perpetuating pogroms provided a strong motivation for the Polish minorities treaty, which the Polish government strongly protested.

Attitudes were an important factor, but many others factors also influenced British, French, and American policy on Poland's rebirth. Four considerations in particular were raised in policy discussions throughout the period 1914-1921: Germany, Russia, Polish popular opinion, and national self-determination. Support for the aims of Polish representatives always took place as part of a larger discussion of limiting German power on the continent. In the wartime discussion of whether to publicly support Poland's

independence, a chief consideration was the effect that such a declaration would have on German (and to a lesser extent Austrian) military strength and administration of Russian Poland. Following the war, many peace conference delegates, especially the French delegation, agreed with the Polish delegation's claim that a strong Poland could effectively balance German power. As the peace conference wore on, Lloyd George and others contested that the peace needed to be so harsh on Germany and revised Poland's claims to Upper Silesia, Danzig, and the Polish Corridor. Yet France's developing eastern alliance policy, to which Poland was central, meant that the Polish state continued to act as an eastern counterbalance to Germany.

Secondly, British, French, and American policy on Poland's rebirth also tried to accommodate Russia to the extent possible. In particular, during the First World War the western Allies publicly respected the position of both the tsarist and provisional Russian governments that the Polish question was an internal matter. Meanwhile, Allied and American war aims respecting Poland and decisions at the peace conference were made in the understanding that the civil war engulfing Russia was temporary. The peacemakers advocated actions that they hoped would defeat the Bolsheviks, so they left their options open so that the next Russian government could claim those tsarist territories that were not indisputably Polish. This understanding was also contested, with Lansing and Howard among others who argued, like the Polish government and sometimes the French government, that Poland ought to incorporate such territories along its northern and eastern borders as would provide it with defensible frontiers. This tended to be conflated with the fear of Bolshevism and eventually led the peace conference to grant Poland a temporary lease on East Galicia. Yet the British and French governments sought to accommodate Russian claims as the Russo-Polish War came to crisis in the spring and summer of 1920. The Spa Agreement of July 1920 and the imposition of the Curzon line as the desired border between Russia and Poland contravened more expansive Polish claims,

and the British and French governments offered only tepid assistance to Poland's war effort while the United States government offered none at all.

Yet despite the importance of accommodating the two Great Powers of central and eastern Europe, Allied and American policy-makers demonstrated considerable attention to appealing to Polish public opinion. This tendency was clearest in the last two years of the war, as the British government in particular concluded that it was necessary to convince the people of Russian Poland not to aid the Central Powers' war effort. They believed that the most effective way to maintain the loyalty of Russian Poles was to support the independence of Poland. Conversely, when the Foreign Office perceived that German blundering was alienating Polish opinion, it believed that Polish opinion required no further convincing and was unmotivated to act. British, French, and American policy-makers continued to consider the state of popular opinion in Poland after the end of the war. The desire to stabilise Poland against 'Bolshevism' and unrest motivated both the massive American aid programme in 1919 and calls from the peace conference's missions to send additional military assistance. Moreover, Polish delegates often warned of the effect on public opinion of a judgment against a Polish position like the imposition of the minorities treaty or the decision not to grant Poland permanent control over East Galicia. The peacemakers took these warnings seriously even if they did not always do as Polish representatives suggested.

The minorities treaty leads into discussion of the fourth important factor, which was the growing importance of a discourse of national self-determination. A definite shift in Allied and American political thought and practice is evident over the period, though throughout there was an important difference between commitment to the principle of nationality and the more difficult proposition of implementing it. It was believed early in the war that national self-determination could be useful in a limited fashion, essentially to

adjudicate between existing states as in the Balkans.[11] As the war progressed, however, British, French, and American policy discussions reflected the strengthening unspoken assumption that nations exist and that it is the desire of nations at a certain level of development to obtain their own state.[12] As mentioned above, policy-makers increasingly assumed that the best way to secure the loyalty of the Polish public was to pledge support for an independent Poland, a cause to which they had also become sympathetic. British, French, and American declarations of support for Polish independence in 1918 showed that they had embraced the idea of creating new states and disbanding the multinational empires of central and eastern Europe. While national self-determination was nominally the first principle in the meetings of the Polish committees, it proved difficult to implement completely. The peacemakers did not necessarily comprehend the exact meaning of nationality in 1919 and had much difficulty drawing borders to separate the intermingled nationalities around Poland's borders or constructing effective safeguards for its minorities. The argument by Glenda Sluga and Eric Weitz among others that a politics based on the rights of populations reached its apogee at the Paris Peace Conference is borne out by the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth.[13] This 'Paris system' was particularly marked in the peacemakers' insistence that Poland sign a treaty to guarantee protection for its national minorities, who eventually comprised one-third of Poland's interwar population. It was also evident in debates about whether Poland's territorial claims along its northern and eastern borders were valid because Ukrainians and Lithuanians had not yet achieved the level of national development necessary to achieve statehood. Those debates about whether Poland should incorporate more German minorities incorporated this language as well but also reflected the earlier understanding that national self-determination was a practical means to prevent irredentism.

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[11] Calder, p. 16.
[12] Joll, pp. 6–7; on levels of development, see Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, pp. 29–31.
[13] See Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*, especially pp. 8-9; Weitz.

These external influences were important, but an evaluation of British, French and American government policy regarding the rebirth of Poland must also consider the structure in which those three governments debated policy and made decisions. The perceived importance of an issue dictated whether it was examined at a high level by political leaders or lower down by officials or other 'experts'. Some issues, meanwhile, gained traction in the government because they were raised by the 'serious press' or pressure groups like the KNP or the *New Europe* group. Despite the importance of Polish territorial questions for European stability, the fate of Poland was never the first priority of British, French, and American diplomacy, and policy on Poland's rebirth reflected this. Poland's independence was an unimportant issue in 1914 beyond the governments of the partitioning powers, and so was considered only at a low level in the British, French, and American foreign-policy bureaucracy. Its increasing importance during the war meant that senior officials and politicians engaged in policy discussions, although usually briefly. While important British, French, and American public declarations that an independent Poland was a war aim were made beginning in December 1917, policy-makers had developed sympathy for Polish independence much earlier, beginning primarily with the Polish relief campaign in 1915-16. Poland's rebirth continued to grow in importance such that the Polish territorial settlement was a regular topic in the Council of Four's meetings in 1919, while the Russo-Polish War reached a point of international crisis in the summer of 1920. The people in everyday direct contact with Polish representatives – generally 'experts' from foreign offices or academic life – were most sympathetic to Polish representatives' claims for statehood or territory. At the Paris Peace Conference, however, many of these experts bemoaned their lack of influence with their leaders. While the experts often appropriated the Polish point of view, leaders needed to consider the wider context, including situations that were relatively new and unfamiliar like a long total war, unruly populations flirting with Bolshevism, and nationalism and national self-determination.

As the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth grew in importance, policy discussions were increasingly not confined to national foreign offices. Rather, discussions of state policy occurred within a context of extensive consultation, not only of allied and associated governments but also of domestic and international public opinion. As Clemenceau stated in an argument over the Upper Silesian plebiscite, he wished 'to keep a perfect entente with Great Britain and the United States of America.'[14] Polish representatives often motivated these discussions and influenced them. From 1916-18, Polish émigrés like Dmowski and Piltz submitted hundreds of memoranda on how Allied and American policy could win support in occupied Russian Poland, while the Polish delegation to the Paris Peace Conference gave formal depositions to the commissions and met with decision-makers unofficially. This context of outside consultation meant that advocates of each point of view often built on or responded to the positions of external representatives who argued for a particular position. Each government's position should not, moreover, be depicted as monolithic, as each included differing currents of opinion. Some individuals like Howard disagreed with their government's approach to Polish territorial questions and instead advocated a position similar to that taken by another government. The focus of this thesis on all three major victorious powers better illustrates the degree to which this was the case than do those studies that focus on the policy of a single country.

Despite extensive consultation it was possible for a few individuals to shape state or alliance policy. Though this thesis considers the policies and attitudes of the British, French, and American governments, moreover, it does not imply that each country's government played an equal role in deciding collaborative policy on the rebirth of Poland. The allies Britain and France influenced policy in different ways. Both governments respected the Russian government's right to decide the Polish question as an internal matter, but after the Bolshevik Revolution the French government began to support Polish

[14] *FRUS: PPC*, VI, p. 144.

independence and territorial claims, especially through its support for the Polish army. The French government's organisation and preparation was particularly evident in the peace conference committees, where the French and Polish desire for a large Poland generally influenced the recommendations of those committees.[15] The British government's support for Poland's independence during the war is important to note, and contrasts with its later efforts to limit Poland's territorial claims. Though only some of these efforts proved successful – Poland did eventually receive East Galicia but was not granted Danzig and had to submit to a plebiscite in Upper Silesia – they irritated Polish opinion. Yet the government's position concealed the division within the foreign-policy-making élite and instead reflected the preponderant influence of Lloyd George and certain advisors like Kerr and Headlam-Morley, both of whom relied upon Namier's advice. A Polish newspaper dubbed the group 'Prussians on the Thames' because they successfully limited several of Poland's territorial claims.[16] Meanwhile the United States, first as a neutral power and then as an 'associated' one, was the first of the three powers considered here to advocate for Polish rights at an international level, first with the Polish relief campaign and then in Wilson's 'Peace without Victory' speech of 22 January 1917. Wilson's international popularity and the financial position of the United States also helped to give the language of national self-determination such importance in 1918 and 1919, though there were proponents of such ideas in all belligerent countries. Yet aside from Wilson's insistence on a Polish minorities treaty and the independence of Danzig, the United States government rarely played the decisive role in the Polish territorial settlement. Finally, the influence that all three countries exerted over the situation on the ground in Poland was often minimal. While the peace conference did set Poland's borders with Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Romania in 1919-21, the partitioning empires held

[15] This concurs with the overall assessment of the French delegation to the peace conference in Stevenson, *First World War and International Politics*, pp. 246–7.
[16] National Archives of Scotland, Lothian papers, GD 40/17/892/1, Namier to Kerr, 19 April 1919.

political control of Poland for most of the war, and from 1918-21 Polish forces attempted with some success to establish *faits accomplis* before the British, French, and American governments could decide an issue.

These conclusions contribute to the debate in international relations theory between realists and constructivists.[17] Realists argue the existence of an anarchical world order in which states act rationally according to their self-interest. While many Allied and American government deliberations on the policy of Poland's rebirth reflected a realist mindset, it is important to acknowledge that varying factors influenced decisions, and the importance of those factors differed according to context and to which individual was analysing the situation. Attitudes about 'the Poles' or about Poland's rebirth, for instance, affected policy in a context in which it was assumed that nations exist with certain characteristics and deserve self-determination at a certain stage of development. In other words, the diplomacy of Poland's rebirth also reflects the assertion by some international relations theorists that the international system is socially constructed.

Furthermore, by arguing that attitudes influenced British, French, and American policy, this study adds to the body of work that argues that personalities or the influence of culture do affect the conduct of diplomacy. In particular, individuals like Lloyd George, Wilson, Dmowski, and Namier influenced discussions within the structures of state decision-making and international relations. Moreover, the identification of stereotypes as an important component of British, French, and American attitudes is an innovation in international history. As outlined in the introduction, some works do consider the influence of stereotypes in international history, but as none establish a definition for the term, their arguments lack specificity. This is problematic especially as the term

[17] Major works from these theories are listed on p. 9n21.

stereotype generally has a negative connotation and implies ignorance.[18] The nuanced definition of stereotypes established here allows for a more thorough examination of stereotypes in their context.

The rebirth of Poland was a significant event for both international and Polish history, and this thesis contributes to both while proposing avenues for further research. Firstly, the use of attitudes and stereotypes as analytical tools exemplifies the new course that this thesis charts with respect to the specialist historiography and international history generally. By examining the policy of three countries rather than one as do most works in the specialist historiography, the thesis compares experiences or *mentalités* and develops conclusions about how British, French, and American attitudes about the rebirth of Poland influenced each other and affected policy. Attitudes should be viewed as an integral part of decision-making. They could influence policy either in favour of the objectives of Polish representatives or against them. This provides a much more nuanced examination than works by historians such as Komarnicki and Biskupski which allege the importance of bias or negative stereotypes in foiling Polish objectives but do not examine such influences or put decisions in context. It rejects the implication in these works that negative stereotypes played a large role in British, French, and American policy but cannot be understood within a framework that only acknowledges the relevance of rational influences. In fact many international historians focus on individuals but treat them as rational when rationality is a constructed ideal in western society and one that most do not attempt to attain completely.[19] They tend to accept the rational ideal and disregard those statements, such as attitudes about the nationalities or principles involved in the rebirth of Poland, as irrelevant even though mentions of attitudes often pepper their accounts and the source material. This thesis argues that the study of attitudes also offers

[18] This is certainly the implication in the two key works on stereotypes considered in this thesis: Sluga, *The Nation, Psychology, and International Politics*; Wandycz, 'Western Images and Stereotypes of Central and Eastern Europe.'
[19] Stearns and Stearns, p. 816.

important insights. An approach that utilises scholarship in the study of cognition can be applied to many other topics in international history, such as the attitudes of British, French, and American policy-makers about 'Czechoslovaks' and the creation of Czechoslovakia. Further awareness of how humans think is important for historians, not to diagnose past personalities but to offer a better understanding of what can be concluded from sources.

Secondly, this thesis has implications both for dominant themes in Polish historiography and contemporary Polish self-understanding. It concurs with those historians who have recently argued that while a nationalist narrative of Poland and Polish history served a purpose when that narrative was threatened during the partitions or the Communist period, historians today must put the experiences of Poland and Poles in historical, regional, or global context rather than merely proclaiming the exceptional sufferings of the Polish people.[20] Such an approach also makes Polish history more accessible to historians who do not specialise in the region, so that they can better situate the Polish experience in its European and world context.[21] This new perspective also rather undermines nationalist mythology in contemporary Poland. 11 November, for instance, has assumed critical importance in contemporary Poland as what Biskupski calls a 'national holiday of Polish sacrifice and heroism'.[22] Thus while part of the focus of Independence Day stresses Polish agency in the rebirth of Poland, it coincides with the 'martyrological understanding of Polish history' which often stresses how the Polish people have suffered, including when they have been disregarded in international affairs.[23] The Yalta agreement between Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt that sealed Poland's fate as a Soviet satellite after the war is naturally central to this understanding,

[20] See especially Brian Porter, *Poland in the Modern World: Beyond Martyrdom* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014); Prażmowska, *History of Poland*, p. viii.
[21] One prominent example that incorporates 'eastern' and 'western' perspectives in a European narrative is Tony Judt, *PostWar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (New York: Penguin, 2006).
[22] Biskupski, *Independence Day*, p. 163.
[23] Biskupski, *Independence Day*, p. 3.

but perceived Allied and American intransigence to Polish demands after the First World War still inspires passionate debate as well. This is in part incited by comments such as Lloyd George's assertion that it would be better to give a clock to a monkey than Upper Silesia to Poland. This thesis replaces allegations of indifference, paternalism, and many other sins with a fuller understanding of the wide range of attitudes that influenced British, French and American policy towards Poland's rebirth.

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