

11 - A PEACE TO END ALL PEACE - The Treaty of Versailles 90 years later (*A perspective on minorities*)

After „the war to end all war“ they seem to have been pretty successful in Paris at making „a peace to end all peace.“

(Archibald Wavell, British officer who served in the Palestine campaign of the First World War).

Almost a century after one of the most ambitious peace agreements in history, the conflicts it sought to end resonate to this day.

In hindsight, its treatment of minorities and statehood served to pave the way for future strife. This workshop seeks to examine various approaches to the issue of ethnic and religious minorities after the First World War and their still visible consequences from Denmark to Mesopotamia.

Seminars/Case Studies:

1. **Iraq** – the Shia, the Sunnis, the Kurds, the Christians, all in state that was never meant to be? Was the British decision to constitute Iraq in these borders responsible for today's quagmire?
2. **Israel & Palestine** - One of the most enduring conflicts of the 20th century was born during Britain's Mandate in Palestine. From the McMahon-Hussein correspondence to the Balfour declaration, what was the driving force and which processes defined the success the Zionist program?
3. **Central Europe** – How did the Versailles Peace Agreement's handling of minorities in Central Europe affect the onset of World War II? Differences between the effects of referendums (e.i. Denmark, Poland) and decreeing (Slovakia, Transylvania...)
4. **Yugoslavia** – From one „dungeon“ to another - or a dream come true? What did the peoples involved lose and what did they gain? Was Yugoslavia a geopolitical necessity and to what degree was its creation externally influenced?
5. **Russia** – As three empires collapsed around it, the face of the Russian empire changed dramatically, but the substance remained. How did the Soviet need for regime consolidation shape their policies towards other nations and national minorities?
6. **Greece & Turkey** – Two years after the end of World War I the two countries were still in a state of war. The conflict resulted in population exchanges involving some two million people. Controversial by today's moral standards, but effective?
7. **Thomas Woodrow Wilson and the American position** – How were the Wilsonian principles applied in practice and how did they resonate in Europe and in the United States? Were they a realistic set of objectives or an impractical political utopia?