

Problems With the Peace Treaties

■ 1. National Interests

- France knew that it would bear the burden of security on the continent
 - wanted a weakened and smaller Germany: ex. The detachment of the Rhineland – why?
 - Clemenceau accused Britain of wanting a strong Germany to balance against the French
- Britain and France both wanted to gain possession of German colonies (only victorious powers get Empires?)

A. Background: The Treaty of Versailles

- It didn't make anyone happy!
 - See Howarth, page 41
- War guilt clause 231 - Germans hated it, knew it meant they would have to pay for damages, it justifies reparations:
 - “The Allied and Associated Governments affirm and Germany accepts the responsibility of Germany and her allies for causing all the loss and damage which the Allied and Associated Governments and their national have been subjected to as a consequence of the war imposed upon them by the aggression of Germany and her allies”

B. Economics

- many thought 6.6 billion pounds in reparations too high.
 - British economist Keynes agreed.
 - It could limit German ability to buy British goods

C. Territorial Losses

- German lost territory and resources
 - - lost 13% of territory,
 - 6 million people,
 - 48% of iron production and 16% of coal

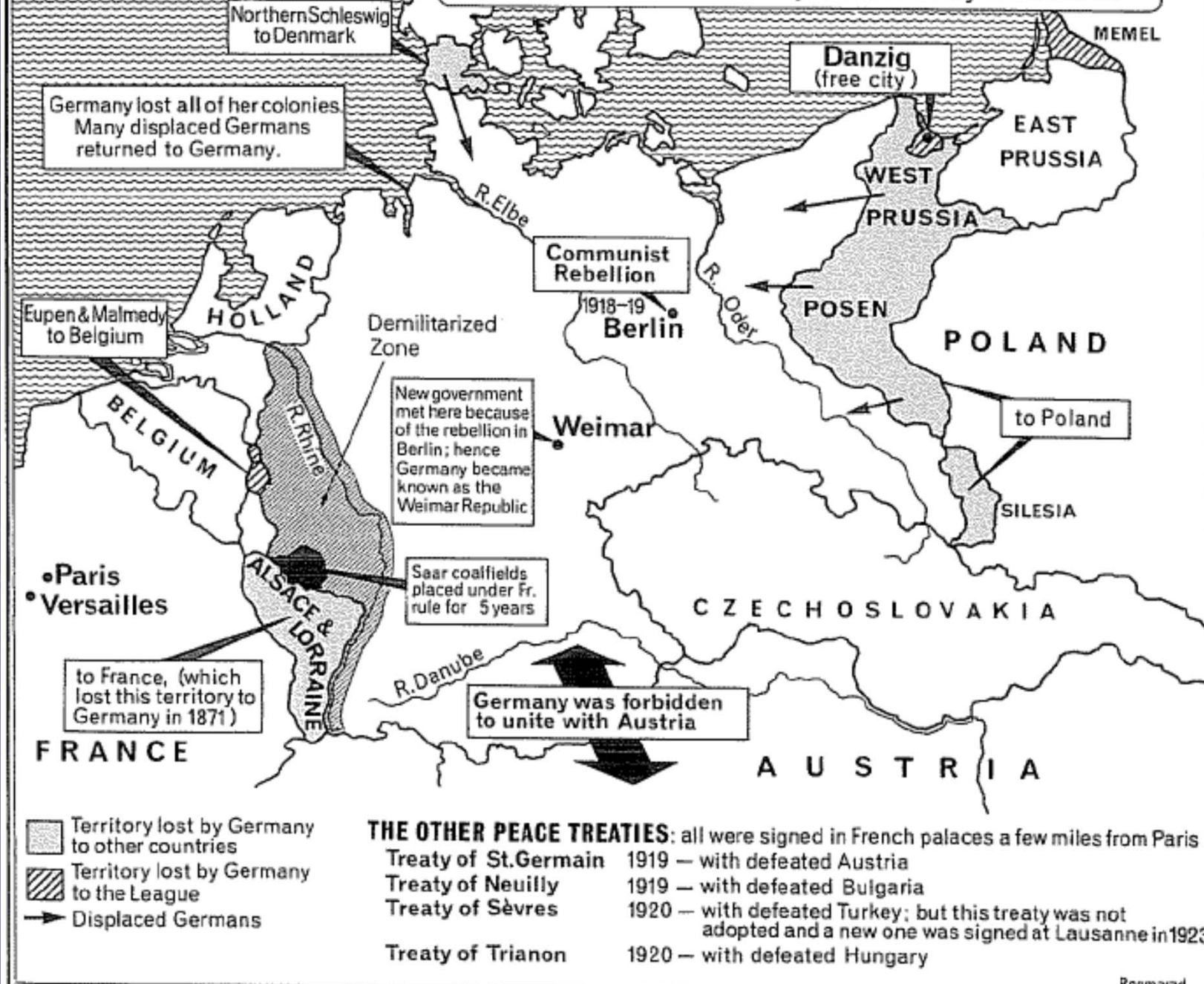


 *European Alliances on the Eve of World War I. Alliance systems divided Europe into two great blocs with few countries remaining neutral.*



THE PRICE OF DEFEAT

Germany's territorial losses by the 1919 Treaty of Versailles

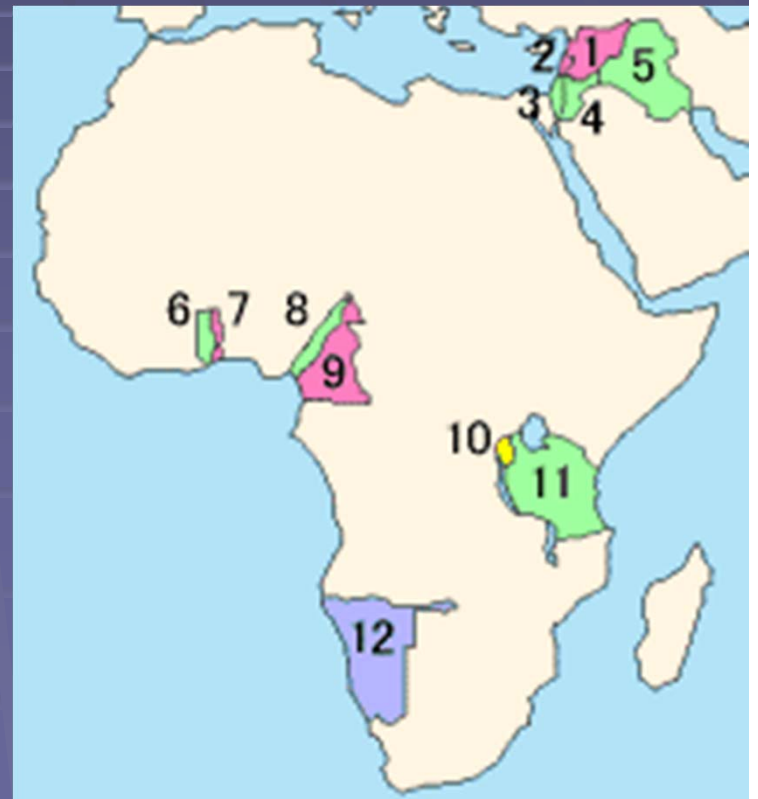


- mandates - former German colonies go to Allies as “mandates” of the League of Nations - empires only bad for beaten powers.

LEAGUE OF NATIONS



SOCIETE DES NATIONS



E. The U.S. Reaction

- US reaction to treaties
 - US didn't sign treaties, not committed to enforce them
- US did not ratify its membership in the League of Nations.
 - The Covenant of the League was included in all peace treaties, binding the support of those countries to the League:
- US Senate tuned them down despite urgings of Wilson
- US wanted to be isolationist,
 - didn't want its actions to be limited by another state.

- US insists allies repay their war loans when they ask loans be forgiven.
- Britain and France broke
 - get the money from Germany in reparations

F. The Principle of Collective Security

- “collective security” weak- British softened their attitude towards Germany, US didn’t sign treaties, only France committed to enforce treaties, yet criticized when they do
- countries continued to grab what they could, there were cracks in the peace
 - Howarth p. 43

G. The Problem With Self-Determination

- Self Determination
 - How do you create countries with national ethnic uniqueness in the diverse regions of Central Europe
- German minorities transferred to other states (Czechoslovakia, Poland)
 - Hitler was later determined to unite the “German people”, including Austria. “Anschluss” – How does this relate to the principles of self-determination?
- Other states had major alterations in their borders.
 - There were 10 successor states created from the wreckage of the Austro-Hungarian and Russian Empires

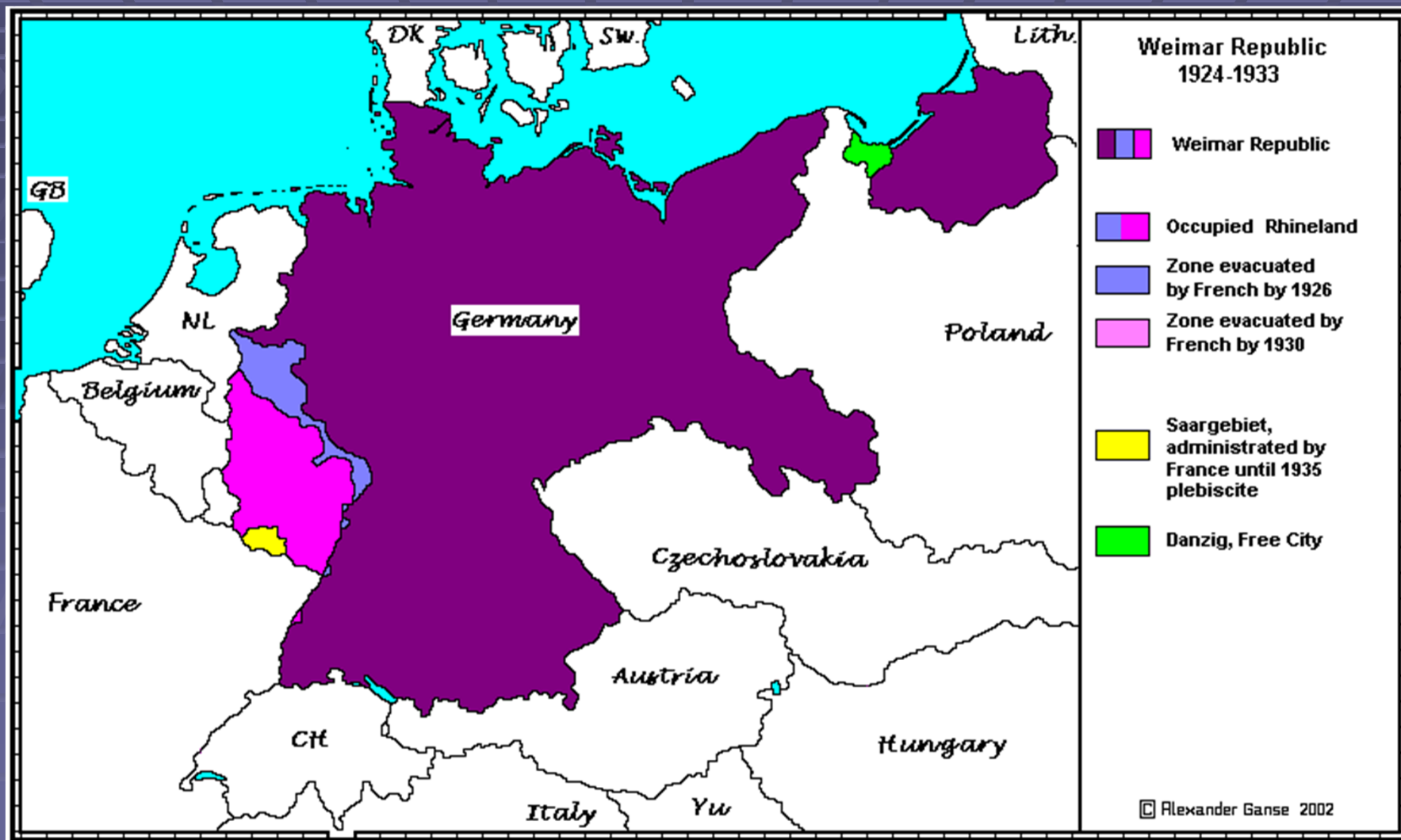
- Economic systems disrupted
 - – infrastructure in Central Europe designed for centralization from Vienna, not for the existence of these new successor states
- Fear of the Spread of Communism
 - lead to the creation of Poland

H. Stabbed in the Back? – The Weimar Republic

- After Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated (The US would not deal with a monarch in negotiations), a republic is set up with the new German capital at Weimar
- Weimar Gov't - new democratic German government
 - discredited in the eyes of many Germans when it was forced to sign the Versailles Treaty.



Kaiser Wilhelm II





The “Stabbed-in-the-Back” Theory - Disgruntled German WWI veterans

