

The 1915 Treaty of London: Prelude to Fascism

Matthew Boggs

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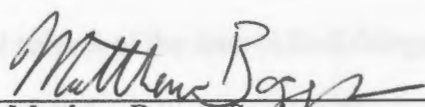
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# The 1915 Treaty of London: Prelude to Fascism

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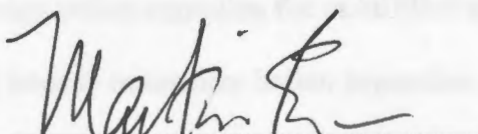
  
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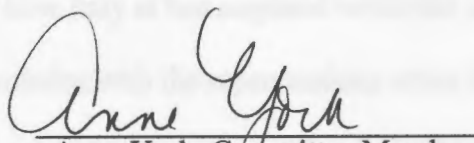
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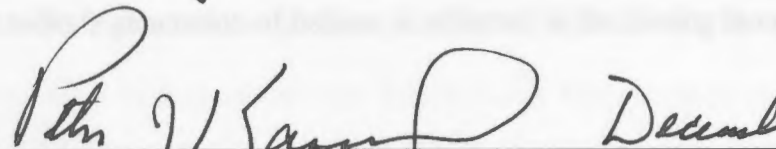
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## Abstract

This thesis examines how the war aims of Italy developed during the First World War as formulated within the Treaty of London, which helped give political birth to Fascism. Emphasis is put on the Treaty itself and the months of negotiations between Italy, France, Russia and Britain that allotted Italy various territorial spoils along the Eastern Adriatic Sea where thousands of Italians lived, giving rise to irredentist claims. The eventual refusal of the inter-Allied delegates to honor the Treaty at the Paris Peace Conference of 1919 resulted in social discontent and a feeling of betrayal among numerous Italians.

The thesis also examines the political transformation of Benito Mussolini from his Socialist origins to being the fascist Premier of Italy. Particular emphasis is placed on how Mussolini used the Treaty of London as a propaganda tool to obtain political power. Fascist foreign policy regarding the unfulfilled articles of the treaty is shown as a prime motivating tenet to rationalize Italian expansion.

Lastly, the formation of the Axis and Italy's entrance into the Second World War illustrate how Italy at last acquired territorial spoils promised in the London Treaty. The work concludes with the repercussions when Italy lost the war and the territories that were gained during the years of Fascism. The Italian defeat and its lasting psychological influence on today's generation of Italians is reflected in the closing thoughts of the work.

## Introduction

The Great War of 1914-1918 was an imperialist struggle that engulfed most of Europe, Africa, the Middle and Near East while involving inhabitants of Australia, North America, Africa and Asia. It left fifteen million soldiers and civilians dead and millions of others maimed, injured and emotionally scarred for life. It was a struggle for superiority, prestige and vanity, and in many respects it was also a race for the earth's most precious resources and strategic holdings. For the industrialists of the British Empire the conflagration of war offered an opportunity to at long last eliminate their most competitive trade rival. The German Empire was regarded with extreme suspicion by the leaders of the Triple Entente (Russia, France, and Britain). German intrigue in the Near and Middle East created numerous anxieties as each member of the Entente had their own future plans for the region. As a result the Entente encircled Germany diplomatically and geographically while preparing for an eventual future conflict with the Triple Alliance. However, there had to be proper justification for armies to be mobilized and for the populations to be fulfilled enough with self-righteousness to declare war on one another.

On June 28, 1914, in the Bosnian city of Sarajevo, an assassin's bullet was the spark that jeopardized Serbian and Austria-Hungary's diplomatic relationship. The murder of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie was a physical and nationalist protest of Austria-Hungary's annexation of Bosnia in 1908. Although Austria-Hungary was correct in its presumptions, that the affair was in part co-sponsored by a few Serbian government officials, their invasion of Serbia prompted the Russians to declare war on Austria-Hungary in defense of the Serbs, thus igniting a larger conflict. The

German invasion of Belgium prompted the British Empire to declare war and thus work to destroy their economic competitors. The resulting war quickly broke down into a war of attrition as no army was able to break through to capture its enemies' capitals.

After nearly a year of war the Entente planned what seemed to be the most decisive diplomatic tactic that would unbalance the deadlock. By luring Italy from its neutrality onto the side of the Entente, the Allies hoped that a military victory would ensue in Southern Europe. The secret Treaty of London, signed on April 26, 1915, was agreed upon by British, Russian, French and Italian delegates. The articles in the treaty promised numerous territories to Italy in the Balkans, Africa, Austria, the Mediterranean and the Near East. As the war continued, the treaty went through some modifications in light of other agreements that guaranteed further lands and spheres of influence as spoils.

With the end of the war in 1918, however, the Treaty of London was mostly rejected and revoked at the Peace of Paris. Wilsonian idealism, anti-Italian prejudice and Allied betrayal combined to violate an international agreement. These unwise actions would give birth in Italy to extreme nationalist resentment of Italy's allies and the Italian diplomats who bowed to the Entente triumvirate of Wilson, Lloyd George and Clemenceau. The day the Treaty of London was agreed upon and signed in 1915 began Italy's participation in the war, but it was also the beginning for a revitalized irredentism, and it would also help give political birth to the career of Benito Mussolini and Fascism.

The nationalist resentment and subsequent rise of Fascism in post-war Italy is rarely associated with the diplomatic actions of the 1915 Treaty of London. Although it is not the only factor leading to the rise of Mussolini, in traditional historiographical interpretations it is the most neglected explanation regarding the origins of Fascism. The

Treaty of London also motivated Mussolini's foreign policy from 1922 through 1940. Its articles were never forgotten or lost in the consciousness of the Italians who fought in the war. Many of them became fascists specifically in order to see the Treaty of London articles all fulfilled in the interwar years. The provisions that brought Italy into the Great War in 1915 were the same ones that brought Italy into the Second World War in 1940, as Mussolini wanted to settle the last few colonial issues with France in Africa. So in the second war, Italy opposed all those powers that had pilfered the Treaty of London from her at Paris. In 1945, the Allies of the Second World War again dismantled all of the gains Mussolini had pursued, as outlined in the Treaty of London.

The 1915 Treaty of London has long been forgotten and buried as a cause for the rise of fascism. This work will enlighten, revise, contribute and revitalize the debate concerning the diplomatic origins of Italian Fascism, to show that it was born, in part, in London.

## Chapter I

### The Makings of War

The policy of alliances, supported by the insane race for armaments, could not fail to lead to war.<sup>1</sup>

Much has been written on the European diplomatic origins and consequences of the Great War. The entanglements of binding alliances were a direct result of the European powers' loathing of one another. The military buildups were a defensive measure resulting from each nation's anxieties and fear of the others.<sup>2</sup> To help ameliorate these suspicions the alliances reassured governments of their friends and foes. If two nations collided, ultimately all would be drawn into the fray. If for example France would be attacked by Germany, British troops would soon be deployed to aid the French, as the secret Grey-Cambon Agreement of 1912 suggested.<sup>3</sup> The Russian war minister Sukhomlinov described the European situation in 1913: "Germany is in a very critical position. It is encircled by enemy forces: to the west France, to the east Russia -- and it fears them."<sup>4</sup>

Each nation aligned with others to safeguard itself defensively against other nations. In one such league, the Austro-Hungarian Empire established an alliance with its erstwhile wartime enemy, Germany, in 1879. Austria-Hungary would declare its neutrality in the event of an attack on Germany by France. In return Germany was bound to assist Austria-Hungary if invaded by Russia. The Italians joined with Germany and Austria-Hungary to create the Triple Alliance at Vienna on May 20, 1882. As European

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<sup>1</sup> Prince Lichnowsky, *Heading for the Abyss*, trans. Sefton Delmer (New York: Payson & Clarke, 1928), xiii.

<sup>2</sup> David G. Herrmann, *The Arming of Europe and the Making of the First World War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 1996.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 176; Douglas Waitley, *The War Makers* (Washington: Robert B. Luce, 1971), 33.; Lichnowsky, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Herrmann, 191.

policies altered, so too did the articles within the Triple Alliance arrangement. As old animosities festered other fences were mended regarding Italy during the strained thirty-two year relationship of the Triple Alliance. The union was seen as a way of improving relations with Italy and Austria. However, a central dispute remained in the alliance that was never solved throughout its history. Millions of Italian irredentists demanded the return of unredeemed lands within the Austrian empire's borders, the homelands of ethnic Italians, particularly the Tyrol and Trentino, and the Istrian peninsula. The treaty was insufficient in subduing irredentism and in retrospect provided it with a further means to grow among the general population.<sup>5</sup>

The key event which led Italy to seek an alliance with Germany and Austria-Hungary was the seizure of Tunisia by France, a colonial land-grab sanctioned by Britain. Tunis had a considerable Italian population who had the option of assimilation or expulsion after the French land-grab. Wrathful at the French, the Italian diplomats turned to France's most hated enemy for an alliance. However, both the German and Austrian diplomatic courts were suspicious of Italian motives. German chancellor Otto von Bismarck particularly disfavored the Italian parliamentary style of government, as the constant changing of political parties in the majority was counter-productive and unstable. The German and Austro-Hungarian empires were in favor of maintaining the monarchical system.

The advantages to Germany of a pact with Italy were even greater than the disadvantages. A German alliance with Italy would put France on guard to its south and distract any plans made by the French to reoccupy Alsace-Lorraine. If war occurred

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<sup>5</sup> Alfred Francis Pribram, *The Secret Treaties of Austria-Hungary* vol ii (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1921), 44.



between France and Germany, Italy, the closest possible major European nation capable of supplying the French military, would be obligated by treaty to remain neutral. Russia's position toward Germany and Austria-Hungary was likewise uncertain in the 1880s. Therefore, by bringing in Italy as an ally, there at least appeared to be a stronger central European geographic coalition in the event of a war with France.

Thus, Italy was admitted into the Dual Alliance despite the protests of the Italians who still lived under Austrian rule. The final draft of the treaty stated that in the event of Russia attacking Austria-Hungary, Italy was to remain neutral. In return if Italy was attacked by France, Germany and Austria-Hungary were to assist Italy. After the conclusion of the treaty, Italy could now be considered a rising power in Europe while gaining new allies in a political atmosphere of uncertainty.

The relationship between the Triple Alliance members after its signing was supposed to be defensive. Under Bismarck, Germany sought to use the alliance for peaceful purposes. However, Italy saw the Alliance as a guarantee of its geographic security in Europe, allowing diplomats, politicians, businessmen and the military to abuse the Alliance for their own imperialist purposes.<sup>6</sup> A key aspiration of Italian post-unification foreign policy concerned expansion in the African continent. Obtaining a foothold within the African interior became a sort of obsession of Italian governments starting in 1869. Port towns were established primarily as trading and commercial outposts, ultimately resulting in a push inland for colonial purposes in disregard of African rights to the lands.

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<sup>6</sup> Sidney Bradshaw Fay, *The Origins of the World War* vol i (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), 86-87.

In 1885 Italy acted contrary to the spirit of the Triple Alliance by occupying the port of Massowah on the Red Sea. Pressure from nationalist groups urged colonial expansion to stimulate the economy. Italian Foreign Minister P. S. Mancini justified the Massowah adventure as a way "...to seek outlets for emigration..."<sup>7</sup> Neither the Austro-Hungarian nor German government was notified prior to this Italian colonial endeavor. Italy's aggressiveness resulted in an alteration upon the Triple Alliance treaty's renewal in 1887. Fearful that Italy would go over to the side of France, Germany and Austria-Hungary agreed to Italian requests for a new Article II that maintained the military status quo: "...in the coasts and islands of the Adriatic and the Aegean Seas and belonging to the Ottoman Empire."<sup>8</sup> This clause gave diplomatic support from her allies for further Italian expansion in Africa. The treaty's next renewal in 1891 gave further privileges in Africa under Article IX: "Germany and Italy engage to exert themselves for the maintenance of the territorial status quo in the North African region of the Mediterranean."<sup>9</sup> Italian colonization gradually moved inland and Eritrea was established as Italy's first African colony in 1889. During the 1890s the Italian Ministry of Francesco Crispi encouraged a further push into the Ethiopian highlands. While making initial progress, a major military defeat occurred at Adowa on March 1, 1896 at the hands of the Ethiopians. The lasting effects of the fiasco gave Abyssinia its independence from Italy and foiled Italian imperialist ambitions in Africa for over a decade.

With Italian colonial ambitions humiliated in east Africa, other outlets were sought for the expression of a nationalistic foreign policy. North Africa, especially Libya, remained a focus for future expansion. The Italian government's allies in Berlin and

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<sup>7</sup> Claudio G. Segrè, *Fourth Shore* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1974), 11.

<sup>8</sup> Pribram, 57.

<sup>9</sup> Bernadotte E. Schmitt, *Triple Alliance and Triple Entente* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1971), 39.

Vienna did not offer much support for such ventures. It also seemed clear that, after the embarrassment of Adowa, the Italian foreign ministry would need to secure the acceptance of the French as the dominant power in North Africa in order to pursue their ambitions.

Around the same time, in 1894, Russia and France created a strategic countermeasure to the Triple Alliance known as the Franco-Russian Alliance.<sup>10</sup> The next plan was to ameliorate relations with the British Empire. The French government appointed Paul Cambon as its new Ambassador in London in 1898.<sup>11</sup> Cambon acted as a peacemaker among the three colonial rivals. His efforts were paramount in distancing Germany and bringing France and Russia into a common union with the British Empire. First the Entente Cordiale was concluded between Britain and France on April 8, 1904.<sup>12</sup> This agreement normalized relations between the two, while putting the Triple Alliance on guard. Ultimately, Russia too seized its chance to mend fences with the British Empire and the three formed the Triple Entente in 1907.

With the establishment of the Entente Cordiale in 1904, Italy was further drawn into the orbit of France and England, as she foresaw the advantages of being cordial with the strongest naval power in the world. The Triple Entente was a military and diplomatic coalition that the Italian government was inclined to cooperate with, despite their alliance with the Germans and Austro-Hungarians. Italy's fear of French attack had diminished. France also appeared to have no further plans to occupy territory that conflicted with Italian desires in Africa, so diplomatic and nationalist animosity toward France gradually

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<sup>10</sup> George F. Kennan, *The Fateful Alliance* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 52-68.

<sup>11</sup> Keith Eubank, *Paul Cambon: Master Diplomatist* (Norman OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 60-62.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

faded away. An example of this change of policy was an agreement in 1896 that exchanged Italian recognition of the French protectorate in Tunisia for French approval of future Italian designs in Tripoli.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore a friendly commercial treaty with France and Italy was concluded in 1899.

In July 1900, King Umberto I of Italy, a great supporter of the Triple Alliance and an opponent of irredentism, was murdered by an anarchist. This brought Umberto's son Victor Emmanuel III to the throne. Just four years prior, Victor had married the Princess of Montenegro, Elena. Victor Emmanuel had nothing to gain financially or in terms of prestige by marrying the princess of a minor European nation with an even younger pedigree than Italy's royal family. However, the Montenegrins had much to gain through a connection to the Italian throne.<sup>14</sup>

Elena's father was King Nikita, of the Petrovich dynasty. Nikita and his daughter were both advocates of pan-Slavic nationalism. Conscious of how unstable his kingdom in the Balkans was, Nikita skillfully arranged the marriages of his daughters. His eldest was married to the future king of Serbia and two others were married to Russian Grand Dukes.

Victor Emmanuel resented the Austrians' hegemony in the Balkans and was sympathetic to the Italian irredentist movement. In this respect, he was a political opposite of his late father. His feelings about Austria-Hungary and Italian irredentists were products of his mother, Margherita, who harbored sympathies with nationalists and the unredeemed lands.<sup>15</sup> Elena's pan-Slavism led her to favor Russian influence and activity in the Balkans. Together, the two Italian royals represented an influential

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<sup>13</sup> Fay, 145.

<sup>14</sup> Gordon Brook-Shepherd, *Royal Sunset* (New York: Doubleday & Company, 1987), 3-17.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 166-167.

undercurrent working to weaken Italy's diplomatic position within the Triple Alliance in the decade to come.<sup>16</sup> The royal marriage foreshadowed an Italian diplomatic rapprochement with Russia and her ally France.<sup>17</sup> These policies did not go unnoticed by Italy's allies.<sup>18</sup>

In January 1902 Italy confessed to a diplomatic infidelity regarding a secret agreement with the French. The Franco-Italian Accord, negotiated secretly over the course of an entire year, dealt with colonial issues in North Africa. Within the arrangement, France formally approved of Italian desires in Tripoli, whereas Italy agreed to accept French interests in Morocco. Speaking on the matter in the German Reichstag on January 8, 1902, Chancellor Bülow remarked: "In a happy marriage the husband must not get angry right off if his wife innocently takes an extra dance with another partner. The main thing is that she does not elope; and she will not elope if she realizes that she is better off with her husband."<sup>19</sup> Bülow's tactics resulted in the Triple Alliance treaty's renewal on June 28, 1902 without any significant alterations, and diplomatic relations between the allies were soon back to normal.

However, this renewal in Italo-German relations was followed by a series of unforeseen events that exacerbated distrust over Italian trysts with the Entente powers. Numerous irredentist demonstrations occurred during the fall of 1903. These outbreaks were very disconcerting as they were propagated by Italian university students who were the nation's future intellectual generation.<sup>20</sup> The next serious event was at the conference of Algeciras in January 1906. This meeting of world powers was held to decide the fate

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<sup>16</sup> William A. Renzi, *In the Shadow of the Sword* (New York: Peter Lang, 1987), 10-11.

<sup>17</sup> Brook-Shepherd, 178-179.

<sup>18</sup> Fay, 148-49.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>20</sup> Pribram, 135.

of Morocco. The Kaiser saw France as endangering German financial interests while at the same time slowly taking over Morocco as a protectorate as they did Tunisia. Germany relied on Austria-Hungary, Italy and the Moroccan Sultan to prevent further French incursions in Morocco. To the chagrin of Bülow, the Italian representatives essentially favored a dual mandate between Spain and France. This betrayal at Algeciras infuriated German diplomats and the Kaiser, who referred to the act as “double-faced.”<sup>21</sup> Lastly, this event drew France and England into a closer diplomatic understanding while they kept an eye on German pursuits in Africa and beyond.

The next crisis that further estranged Italy from her allies was Austria-Hungary’s annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1908. Typically, the allied powers were expected to notify each other regarding territorial alterations made through military actions. The annexation was offensive towards Italy, as she was not consulted beforehand about the extension of Austrian power in the Balkans. This was not a violation of the 1902 renewal of the alliance, however, as Bosnia-Herzegovina was not included at that time. Despite this loophole, in the evolving alliance anti-Austrian irredentism rapidly became more pronounced in Italy. This action was likewise a silent message to Italy that the Eastern Adriatic would be an Austrian lake. As a countermeasure, the Italian Foreign Ministry improved relations with Russia in 1909 at Racconigi with the Tsar and Russian Foreign Minister Aleksandr Izvolsky present.<sup>22</sup> The fruits of their visit resulted in a secret agreement in which Italy supported Russian ambitions in the Dardanelles Straits and Russia supported Italy’s ventures into Tripoli. More importantly the secret Russo-Italian agreement was also directed against further Austrian expansion in the Balkans and Near

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 138.

<sup>22</sup> Fay, 406.



East.<sup>23</sup> Article VI of the arrangement was a direct violation of Italy's commitments to Austria-Hungary within the Triple Alliance and the main reason it was a secret contract: "If Russia and Italy wish to make agreements concerning the European East with a Third Power, beyond those which exist at present, each will do it only with the participation of the other."<sup>24</sup> Austrian officials could only assume that the dealing at Racconigi was anti-Austrian in nature.

In 1909, with the consent of her allies, Italy's diplomats altered the Triple Alliance Agreement by incorporating a supplement known as Article VII. Its purpose was to prevent a future move such as the Bosnia-Herzegovina annexation of 1908 from occurring again without forewarning and compensation to the other parties (Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary) to balance the status quo in the Balkans, Aegean, and Adriatic. The Article read as follows:

Article VII. Austria-Hungary and Italy, having in mind only the maintenance, so far as possible, of the territorial status quo in the Orient, engage to use their influence to forestall any territorial modification which might be injurious to one or the other of the Powers signatory to the present Treaty. To this end, they shall communicate to one another all information of a nature to enlighten each other mutually concerning their own dispositions, as well as those of other powers. However, if, in the course of events, the maintenance of the status quo in the regions of the Balkans or of the Ottoman coasts and islands in the Adriatic and in the Aegean Sea should become impossible, and if, whether in consequence of the action of third Power or otherwise, Austria-Hungary or Italy should find themselves under the necessity of modifying it by a temporary or permanent occupation on their part, this occupation shall take place only after a previous agreement between the two Powers, based upon the principle of a reciprocal compensation for every advantage, territorial or other, which each of them might obtain beyond the present status quo, and giving satisfaction to the interests and well founded claims of the two Parties.<sup>25</sup>

This satisfied all and was followed by a year of relative calm until the status of Morocco once again flared up. In 1911 a crisis occurred in Agadir, Morocco between

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 397.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 407.

<sup>25</sup> Fay, 548-49.

France and Germany. German diplomats compelled the French to agree to spheres of influence in Africa. The French agreed to give Germany territories in the Congo and Cameroon in return for a French protectorate over Morocco.<sup>26</sup> This exchange of African lands motivated Italian politicians to protect their long-term colonial ambitions in Tripoli.<sup>27</sup> Italy demanded that Turkey evacuate Tripoli and Cyrenaica and declared war on September 29, 1911. The Italian government's lack of tact shocked Europe.

The 1911-12 Turco-Italian war further damaged Italian relations with Germany, which had been an advocate of keeping Turkey strong. Despite Italy's actions against the Ottoman Empire she was not acting in violation of the Triple Alliance Agreement. Nevertheless, the Italian offensive forced Germany to take a neutral stance. Aiding Italy would have permanently destroyed relations with the Ottoman Empire, just as siding with Turkey would have put Italy in the Triple Entente. At the conclusion of the war Italy acquired the Dodecanese Islands in the Aegean Sea from Turkey, which created resentment with the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Ministry. According to them, the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese violated Article VII of the Alliance treaty, and they demanded compensation.<sup>28</sup>

Despite Italy's numerous ventures that her allies did not favor, the final renewal of the Triple Alliance occurred on December 5, 1912, at Vienna. The majority of the treaty remained unaltered aside from the recognition of Italian sovereignty over the new African conquests. The prime motivations for Italy's remaining within the outmoded alliance were principally due to events in the Balkans. The Ottoman Empire's hold on the

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 290.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>28</sup> Pribram, 158.



Eastern Adriatic coast was in jeopardy creating a precarious political atmosphere for the Vienna government.

The European alliance system was an exclusively Great Power affair; smaller European nations had no direct part in them. However, that did not keep them from having a major impact on the diplomatic relations between the alliances, often out of all proportion to the size of the crisis they had precipitated. Their loyalties varied and were usually reflective of the mingling of blood lines in their royal families. It was natural that the unstable Balkans would be the initial flashpoint of nationalist fervor. Italy's tactful diplomatic maneuvering during the life of the Triple Alliance shows how she bettered herself by imperialistic pursuits with the assurance of backing from Germany and Austria-Hungary. Italy's relations with her allies appeared to be of the verge of collapse during the time periods between the treaty's expirations. By the fifth and final signing of the alliance in 1912, Germany and Austria-Hungary observed Italy with the same misgiving as a husband observing a spouse guilty of years of infidelity. Unfortunately it was a marriage that would end, predictably with Italy's acrimonious departure from the Triple Alliance household.

## Chapter II

### Italian Neutrality and the Diplomatic Origins of the London Pact

If the Allies take Constantinople, the question of Asia Minor will raise, in a certain sense, the question of the Adriatic for us. And meanwhile we have not yet opened up negotiations in London!<sup>29</sup>

Italy's declaration of neutrality in August 1914 was really not a surprise to the governments of Berlin and Vienna. Much had changed politically since the formation of the Triple Alliance in 1882.<sup>30</sup> The gradual distancing of Italy from Austria-Hungary as an ally was known by all of Europe's great powers. While considered by most as the weak military link of the Triple Alliance, Italy saw its primary purpose as diplomatic, to maintain peace and the status quo in the Adriatic and in African colonial pursuits. This worked on the surface for a limited time, but historical animosities festered between Austria-Hungary and Italy. Over a half million Italians within the Austrian border refused to be incorporated within the Austrian political structure and demanded that the lands in which they dwelled be united with Italy. This irredentism would eventually come forth among the Italian masses within and outside the borders of Italy, and in part, keep the Italians from joining their Triple Alliance partners in their war with the Entente.<sup>31</sup>

Political fringe movements became serious influences regarding foreign policy issues and eventually persuaded Italy to join the Great War on the side of the Entente. A look at the evolution of the Italian Left is necessary to analyze the aspirations of the working class leadership in the decades prior to the war. Significant elements from the left and a new anti-traditional right would develop into Fascism. Among these groups

<sup>29</sup> Sidney Sonnino, Foreign Minister of Italy, speaking on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1915. Quoted in H. James Burgwyn, *The Legend of the Mutilated Victory* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1993), 19.

<sup>30</sup> Schmitt, 17.

<sup>31</sup> Renzi, 1.

were future Fascist leaders who would pursue the fulfillment of the abandoned articles of the London Treaty.

In the 1880s and 1890s Italy suffered from internal political, social, and economic problems. Political unrest among Italian workers in the industrial north and agrarian south was common, though there was a general lack of unity. Divided by mainly regional and political deviations, fringe movements developed in the latter half of the 1800s, motivating the Italian proletariat to action.<sup>32</sup> Parliamentary democracy was viewed by upcoming intellectuals as an institution dominated by the interests of a privileged caste filled with greed and nepotism. Politicians in Rome represented big business, setting out laws for industrialists that were favorable to their goals and profits. This led many to search for new political alternatives from both the far left and right.

On the left, Andrea Costa founded the Revolutionary Socialist Party in Italy and was successfully elected as the first socialist member of the Italian parliament in 1882.<sup>33</sup> The principal aim of the party was to win elections and create class consciousness. The more mainstream Italian Socialist Party (PSI) was founded in 1895.<sup>34</sup> Both parties mimicked the more advanced German and French socialist parties as role models. In the early twentieth century, another group of Italian socialists became enamored of the political writings of Georges Sorel with his emphasis on violence as the engine of social change and extra-parliamentary union organization as the source of that change. The result was a Syndicalist movement that was stronger in Italy than anywhere else in

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<sup>32</sup> Daniel L. Horowitz, *The Italian Labor Movement* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 10.

<sup>33</sup> Gary P. Steenson, *After Marx Before Lenin* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh, 1991), 225.

<sup>34</sup> James Edward Miller, *From Elite to Mass Politics* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1990), 18.

Europe. Among its sympathizers was the young journalist, Benito Mussolini who carefully monitored their activities.<sup>35</sup>

The right-wing of Italian politics during the 1890s was concerning itself with imperialist ambitions in Africa. These goals coincided with the Italian emigration. It was hoped Italians would go to these new lands rather than a foreign nation. The defeat at Adowa in 1896 and the growth of the PSI were serious psychological blows to Italian nationalists.<sup>36</sup> In 1903, Enrico Corradini started *Il Regno* which reflected his aspiration to create a conservative authoritarian government. Numerous articles within the journal embellished the glories of Italy's Roman past. Also there was a positive tone directed at the emergence of Japanese and American imperialism.<sup>37</sup> Most important was the emphasis put on irredentism and the need to retake Italy's allegedly unredeemed territories in the Austro-Hungarian Empire: the Brenner Pass, Trieste, the Istrian peninsula, and Dalmatia.<sup>38</sup>

A formal organization was established in 1910, the Italian Nationalist Association (ANI), which attracted irredentists and syndicalists alike. The predominantly right wing ANI occupied itself with numerous issues that were associated with the Italian left. Italian workers were concerned with issues of emigration, as their friends and families made their way to the Americas, often to experience exploitation and discrimination. The ANI also hated Italy's traditionally corrupt parliamentary politics, epitomized by the dominant Liberal politician of the era, Giovanni Giolitti. By addressing these issues, the ANI found

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<sup>35</sup> A. James Gregor, *Young Mussolini and the Intellectual Origins of Fascism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), 29-50.

<sup>36</sup> Horowitz., 27.

<sup>37</sup> Alexander J. De Grand, *The Italian Nationalist Association and the Rise of Fascism in Italy* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), 17.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

it possible to approach the proletariat and sell the nationalist message. The incorporation of socialist issues and jargon appealed to the workers, breaking down preconceived notions of what the right stood for. An important plank of the ANI's platform was the integration of the proletariat into a unified national syndicate that would eliminate the socialists and all other political groups. In many respects the ANI redefined what the right should become in Italy.

Simultaneous to the growth of the ANI, the Ottoman Empire was rapidly eroding in North Africa and Southeast Europe. Many Italian imperialists, including socialists, syndicalists and nationalists, feared that another European power would take over the Ottoman provinces of Tripoli and Cyrenaica, thus compromising the geographic security of southern Italy from across the Mediterranean. By invading these lands first in 1910, Italy prevented itself from being encircled and secured a stronghold in colonial Africa. Both the French and British governments encouraged Italy's military actions in North Africa according to Giolitti.<sup>39</sup> They hoped that this Italian diplomatic maneuver would create animosity and division within the Triple Alliance, particularly with Germany, which viewed the Ottoman Empire as a convenient buffer state and hindrance to the Russian and British Empires. No serious protest could be raised against Italy due to Article IX of the Triple Alliance Pact. All the Germans and Austrians could do was to encourage a peaceful resolution to the entire affair.<sup>40</sup>

The adventure in Libya was an excellent opportunity to assert Italy's imperial power in Africa. It helped erase public memory of the Adowa fiasco of a decade prior while demonstrating to the world that Italy was a great European power despite its

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<sup>39</sup> Giovanni Giolitti, *Memoirs of My Life* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1973), 262-265.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 266.

internal socio-economic divisions. This territorial expansion also provided an outlet for Italian emigrants, as the government tried to provide colonial farmers with financial incentives to settle across the Mediterranean. The colonial war itself was a training ground and prelude for the Great War. Leading syndicalist A. O. Olivetti saw it as "...a school for revolution."<sup>41</sup> It was also a source of support for the Italian Nationalist Association, as the war prompted membership growth and financial support from prominent industrialists such as Fiat.

This viewpoint was also shared by the leading personality and founder of the Futurist art movement, Filippo Marinetti. Marinetti wrote poetry, made speeches and organized artists in the cause of Italian irredentism, for example against the Austro-Hungarian Empire's control over the ethnically Italian city of Trieste: "You are the purple and violent face of Italy directed towards the enemy, who prepares himself for war, let's not forget this! Trieste, you are our powder-magazine. In you we place all our hopes."<sup>42</sup> The 1912-13 Balkan Wars were admired as the sort of nationalist struggles that the Futurists, the ANI, the right wing and the syndicalists wanted to be a part of. Any form of agitation within the Balkans would bring the unredeemed lands of Italy closer to their historical roots and realignment with the motherland. Speaking on war and revolution Marinetti explained: "In fact, there is no principal difference between the two; both are an expression of the eternal and dynamic phenomenon of rebellion; they are an hygienic bloodshed."<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> De Grand, 33. Despite this viewpoint being made by syndicalists, Mussolini and the majority of PSI membership denounced the Italian government's decision to invade Libya.

<sup>42</sup> Gunter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics* (Providence: Berghahn Books, 1996), 48-49.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

In December 1912 the volatile leaning syndicalist Benito Mussolini became the editor of the official newspaper of the PSI, *Avanti!* During this period Mussolini was able to impose his variant of socialism in numerous articles and reflected “a symbol of a new leadership.”<sup>44</sup> His editorials asserted the need for syndicalist unions and encouraged violence. *Avanti!* also espoused attacks on socialists who had dual loyalties as Freemasons. His statements at times were provocative: “Channeling the vital energies of the Socialist movement into parliament is destroying the vigor and revolutionary potential of the movement.”<sup>45</sup> Mussolini’s tenure as the editor during this period was paramount to his future political career as he became recognized by thousands of people beyond just the PSI rank and file.

In 1912 the Second International boasted twelve million members. Yet many European socialists were supportive of their nations on the eve of war, despite efforts to unite the international socialist movement in opposition.<sup>46</sup> The division between socialists’ loyalties and motivations were intrinsic. Several socialists reminded the doubters that even Marx and Engels supported wars in the past as a way to advance the discontent on the part of workers that would bring about a socialist revolution. Opposition to war among intellectuals came too late for serious redirection. The sudden mobilization of Europe’s greatest powers in August 1914 was the exact sign that many in Italy believed was the path to a greater progression of the political liberation of the proletariat and the unredeemed territories. The government’s hesitation gave these groups

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<sup>44</sup> Miller, 171.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 171.

<sup>46</sup> Ronald N. Stromberg, *Redemption by War* (Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas, 1982), 109. Richard Bosworth, *Italy and the Approach of the First World War* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1983), 77-78.



a reason to speak out against the Austrian actions in Serbia while fanning further irredentist passion.

Having just gone through a prolonged war in Libya, the majority of Italy's population was not in favor of another one. The Italian government's declaration of neutrality on August 3, 1914 disgusted the interventionists. The PSI leadership opposed intervention, creating controversy in the movement. Mussolini's editorials in *Avanti!* became anti-German and anti-Austrian in tone. By late August Mussolini favored intervention and no longer saw the PSI as capable of starting a revolution. His final break and expulsion from the party over intervention meant that he took with him significant numbers of followers and key leading figures.

Gradually, the efforts of Italian interventionists increased general consensus among the populace. British Ambassador to Italy James Rodd described the political diversity of the interventionist lobby in October 1914: "These included not only Nationalists in whose creed the first article of faith was the recovery of the unredeemed provinces, but also Radicals, Republicans and not a few of the Socialists."<sup>47</sup> In the eyes of the syndicalists, irredentists, futurists and neo-nationalists, the war was an opportunity to reclaim the unredeemed territories.

The period of Italian neutrality was in many ways a war of words and random violence against the liberal Giolittians who favored non-intervention. The numerous extreme factions of the left and right were united for war, bound together in their hatred of Giolitti, whose legacy also kept the Triple Alliance alive. The drawn-out months of neutrality became a political struggle as nationalists, syndicalists and other radical groups

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<sup>47</sup> James Rennell Rodd, *Social and Diplomatic Memories 1902-1919* (London: Edward Arnold and Company, 1925), 228.



targeted the pacifist PSI as traitors and agents of the Germans. Entente propaganda filtered into Italy at this time that made a favorable impression on the masses at large. Embellished tales of German atrocities in Belgium were especially effective: "...German horrors in Belgium created a deeper impression in Italy than upon any other neutral people in Europe. Belgium in 1914 brought back the vivid recollection of Italy's own martyrdom under the Teuton..."<sup>48</sup>

The poet and playwright Gabriele D'Annunzio became a prominent spokesman for intervention and irredentism.<sup>49</sup> His novels, poetry and political opinions favored a foreign policy that would return Italy to greatness through territorial acquisition. He saw the Italian people as the superior branch of the Latin European race, destined for a higher calling. Influenced by Nietzsche's 'super-man' theory, D'Annunzio was the most colorful, bombastic headline-grabber among the unofficial figures demanding intervention in 1914 and early 1915. His speeches were emotional attacks on Giolitti. In one he referred to Giolitti as being loyal to Germany: "In your own Rome, they are trying to strangle Italy with a Prussian halter held by that old thick-lipped hangman, whose fleeing heels know only the road to Berlin."<sup>50</sup> While the ANI and Mussolini did not have the emotional luster and mass attraction of D'Annunzio, they took mental notes that would be reflected in their future political endeavors. Most importantly, the efforts of interventionists like D'Annunzio stirred a minority of the Italian population to make enough noise to appear to be representing the majority opinion, while striking fear in the opposition.

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<sup>48</sup> Mario Alberti, et al. *Italy's Great War and Her National Aspirations* (Milan: Alfieri and Lacroix, 1917), 36.

<sup>49</sup> Rodd, 249.

<sup>50</sup> Anthony Rhodes, *D'Annunzio: The Poet as Superman* (New York: McDowell, Obolensky Inc., 1959), 168.

As war hysteria enraptured Europe, Italy was slow to denounce or support anyone openly. The overall uncertainty and consequences of the war took more time to be digested in Italy. The Italian government's decision to declare neutrality on August 3, 1914 was primarily an effort to buy time. Italy was not prepared in any respect, economically or militarily, to take any side in the blossoming war.<sup>51</sup> These major handicaps did not stop immediate negotiations with both the Entente and Central Powers that would prove crucial to the nation's future. In so doing the Italian government attempted to evaluate which side seemed to have the upper hand in battle while they began to mobilize. The German Secretary of State, Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter, predicted:

I do not believe that Italy will simply tear up the treaty of the Triple Alliance; the personality of the King offers security against that. I believe, rather, that Italy will slowly mobilize and play the waiting game, so to speak. If the first decisive battle with France should turn out favorably to Germany, Italy will cooperate against France. If, however, France should score a great initial victory, Italy's attitude toward us might possibly become alarming.<sup>52</sup>

Italy's first immediate issue surrounded the definition of its membership within the Triple Alliance. Was not Italy bound to the German Reich and Austro-Hungarian Empire in their recently updated Alliance agreement? This was the first impediment and inconvenience to be addressed by the Salandra Cabinet.

The ultimatum delivered to Serbia, followed by the Austrian invasion of Belgrade constituted a direct violation to Article VII of the Triple Alliance Agreement. The Article stated that in the event that the status quo in the Balkans was altered, adequate redress

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<sup>51</sup> W. W. Gottlieb, *Studies in Secret Diplomacy during the First World War* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957), 178. Bosworth, 125.

<sup>52</sup> Pribram, 165-66.

would be carried out.<sup>53</sup> Therefore Italy saw itself entitled to immediate compensation, due to the Austrian maneuver against Serbia. Furthermore, Italy was not consulted about the declaration of war against Serbia, another violation of the article. These oversights proved costly to Italy remaining in the Triple Alliance. The Salandra government interpreted the events as a way to abrogate the treaty entirely if necessary. As a result the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Marchese Di San Giuliano told von Baron Ludwig von Flotow, the German Ambassador that: "...a step such as that taken at Belgrade, without previous agreement between the Allies, was contrary to the spirit of the Triple Alliance."<sup>54</sup>

The Salandra government demanded that immediate territorial restitution be made by Austria-Hungary to ensure further Italian neutrality. The interpretation of the article by each power soon became a hot topic. The Austro-Hungarian government claimed that their presence in Serbia was only a temporary action meant to curb the occurrence of future terrorist activity against the realm, and that the suppression of such terrorism was in Italy's interest as well. Italy contended that the *casus foederis* was not in effect, therefore they were not obliged to act militarily against Serbia. Grudgingly, Austro-Hungarian diplomats began to search for a way to compensate Italy with territorial gains.<sup>55</sup> Italy's allies initially did not offer much as they knew that the Italian military was not ready for combat and still recovering from the campaign in Libya which had lasted longer than anticipated. For Austria-Hungary, Italy's neutrality was temporarily beneficial, since Austro-Hungarian military operations were already divided between the

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<sup>53</sup> See page 12.

<sup>54</sup> Prospero Fedozzi, "Denunciation of the Treaty of the Triple Alliance" in *Italy and the War*, trans. Annie Hamilton (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1917), 164.

<sup>55</sup> Renzi, 63.

Serbian and Russian fronts. Vienna was in no hurry to accommodate Italian demands. Thus, talks between Italy and the Entente got underway.

As Belgian resistance faded against the superior German forces, Italy opened negotiations with Britain. On August 11<sup>th</sup> San Giuliano created a nine-point letter, approved by King Victor Emmanuel III and presented to Sir Edward Grey in London the next day. These declarations included numerous conditions that the Italian government expected to receive if they joined the Entente and contributed to the winning of the war. The prompt decision of the Italian government to reach an accommodation with Britain was regarded as an encouraging and welcome diplomatic gesture. The proposals of this document read:

1. The powers agree not to conclude a separate peace;
2. The British, French and Italian fleets will cooperate to destroy Austrian naval power in the Adriatic;
3. In case of final victory Italy will gain the Trentino and Trieste;
4. Albania may be divided between Greece and Serbia, provided that her coastline is neutralized. Valona is to be made into an international city on the model of Tangiers, with all of the Adriatic powers, Italy included, participating in its administration;
5. If Turkish territorial integrity is preserved, Italy will relinquish the Dodecanese. If Turkey is partitioned, Italy will be given her fair share of the Turkish Mediterranean provinces;
6. In any event Italy's concessions in the region of Adalia will be preserved; Dodecanese as a concession to Italian public opinion;
7. For a limited period of time some Italian functionaries will remain in the Dodecanese as a concession to Italian public opinion;
8. Italy will have her fair share of any eventual war indemnity;
9. The powers will agree to maintain the postwar status quo, but this agreement will be pacific and defensive.<sup>56</sup>

This first negotiation to join the Entente created the basis for the Treaty of London that eventually brought Italy into the war. Most of its demands related to long-term irredentist claims that would satisfy Italian nationalism. The acquisition of the port

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<sup>56</sup> Renzi, 92-93.

city of Trieste was a hard proposal for Austrian negotiators to counter because of its commercial and naval utility to Austria.

The city of Valona was to be internationalized, however, which was odd since Italian irredentists had at numerous times asserted that the city was historically Italian.<sup>57</sup> However the point became moot when Italian marines occupied the island of Saseno and the city of Valona in late October 1914. This unexpected military action divided the Entente leaders. Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov thought Albania was to be divided between Greeks and Serbs. Likewise he was opposed to Italian claims in Dalmatia, instructing the Russian Ambassador to England "...to avoid premature promises regarding the Dalmatian coast..."<sup>58</sup> Sazonov would only give Valona to Italy if Italy entered the war effort "immediately."<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, Italian occupying forces stayed in Albania, and further alienated Italy from its erstwhile ally, Austria-Hungary, since the occupation took away the opportunity to offer Italy Valona as treaty compensation.

On the surface, the requests of the nine-point letter were modest and conservative. Yet Grey's response was that Italy must abandon its neutrality before negotiating.<sup>60</sup> British Prime Minister Herbert Asquith regarded Italians in general as "perfidious" and viewed Italian territorial demands with suspicion.<sup>61</sup> This prejudice was reflected among Asquith's cabinet members as well. When hearing of Italy's dispute of the meaning of

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<sup>57</sup> Adriacus, *From Trieste to Valona* (Rome: Alfieri and Lacroix, 1919).

<sup>58</sup> Gottlieb, 207.

<sup>59</sup> René Albrecht-Carrié, *Italy at the Paris Peace Conference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 15.

<sup>60</sup> Gottlieb, 205.

<sup>61</sup> H. H. Asquith, *Letters to Venetia Stanley*, ed. Michael and Eleanor Brock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 125-26. Venetia Stanley's influence over Asquith actually changed his attitude regarding Italy. When the London Treaty was eventually completed he mentioned this to her in a letter dated April 26, 1915: "Nor shall I ever forget your appreciation of what I have done, or tried to do, to bring in Italy." *Ibid.*, 571.

Article VII of the Triple Alliance, Charles Hobhouse described Italian diplomatic machinations as "...dishonest as usual..."<sup>62</sup>

However, the military deadlock following the battle of the Marne on the Western Front provided Italy further leverage to up the ante. Due to the Germans' failed attempt to take Paris the war became one of attrition. Under the circumstances, with Germany and Austria-Hungary surrounded by hostile powers and cut off from world trade due to a British naval blockade, Italian leadership further favored the Entente due to its positioning and abundant resources.<sup>63</sup> The Eastern Front mirrored the Western as Russian advances were repelled and scattered in Poland and Galicia. Initially, the only limited success for the Central Powers was Austria-Hungary's brief occupation of Belgrade. Occupying Serbia, however, was a cumbersome task, as the Austrian army became bogged down in skirmishes against Serbian, Montenegrin, Albanian and Greek combatants. It was from this vantage point that Italy's participation could be regarded as pivotal for either side. Therefore, each additional proposal the Italian government made to the Entente included more and more lands, which caused friction and debate regarding the historical and racial justification for Italian irredentism. The primary opponents of Italian ambitions were the Russians, as they did not want to see Italian intrigue in the Balkans after the war.

Another significant power that the Triple Entente was trying to win over in the early months of the war's outbreak was the Ottoman Empire. Unknown to the Entente, the Ottoman regime signed a secret pact of alliance with Germany, early in August, guaranteeing the Caucasus regions of Russia to Turkey following a victory by the Central

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<sup>62</sup> Charles Hobhouse, *Inside Asquith's Cabinet*, ed. Edward David (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978), 177.

<sup>63</sup> Gottlieb, 177.



Powers. Writing after the war Winston Churchill stated in a pompous tone that Britain did all it could in keeping Turkey out of the war: "She received what seemed to British eyes the most favorable offer ever made to any government in history. She was guaranteed at the price merely of maintaining her neutrality the absolute integrity of all her dominions."<sup>64</sup> These words are a bit hypocritical as it was Churchill himself who requisitioned two battleships built in Britain by the Whitworth, Armstrong, and Vickers Company but paid for by the Ottoman government on the eve of Turkey's entrance into war. Churchill rationalized this piracy as being "...vital to national safety."<sup>65</sup> In an effort to secure the alliance of the Ottoman government and embarrass Britain, Germany gave the Turks two battle cruisers, the *Breslau* and the *Goeben*, on August 10, 1914. This was done in violation of international law as they were received by a presumably neutral nation. Nevertheless, they successfully evaded British patrols in the Mediterranean and sailed into Constantinople soon after.

Despite the British Empire's supposed intention to keep the Ottoman Empire neutral, Turkey attacked Russian ports in the Black Sea and closed the Dardanelles Straits on October 28, 1914. This initiative opened a new front in southern Russia as the German military attacked in the Russian west.<sup>66</sup> Relying on the common bonds of Islam throughout the empire, Sultan Mehmed V called for jihad against the British, Russian and French forces wherever they might be found.

The Russian Empire's desperation in 1915 meant a complete reversal of Britain's Eastern policy concerning the Ottomans. Russian setbacks made a diversion of Germans

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<sup>64</sup> Winston Churchill, *The World Crisis* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1942), 277.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 279.

<sup>66</sup> James Shotwell and Francis Déak, *Turkey At The Straits* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1940), 97-98.

forces vital. Creating another front against the Central Powers would divert troops from other fronts, therefore easing pressure on the Russians in the Caucasus.<sup>67</sup> Drawing Italy onto the side of the Entente rapidly became a pressing necessity.

Prior Russian disapprovals concerning Italian gains in the Adriatic would have to be quelled if the Italians were to be drawn into the war on the side of the Entente. From the Italian perspective the Ottomans' entry into the war was a blessing and morale booster. Italian relations with the Turks since the Turco-Italian War remained unstable. Despite the Ottoman Empire's conceding defeat in the Treaty of Lausanne of October 1912, Italy was still fighting numerous pockets of resistance in the newly acquired territories. Arab revolts in Italian-occupied Ethiopia killed 3,500 Italian soldiers from August 1914 to March 1915.<sup>68</sup> These continued guerrilla actions were suspected of being armed and financed by the Young Turk government.

The remaining months of Italian neutrality were occupied with Italian double-dealing. On the one hand, the Italian government tried to placate their allies in Germany and Austria-Hungary; on the other, talks with Britain, France and Russia continued until a satisfactory agreement was completed with the Entente. After months of haggling the Italian government agreed to the single most important and advantageous document in their nation's history since the Italian Risorgimento, the Treaty of London. The articles within the pact fulfilled the nationalist generation's dreams of a unified Italy with all of her subjects within a common border and free from foreign domination.

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<sup>67</sup> John Laffin, *British Butchers and Bunglers of World War One* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton Publishing, 1989), 39.

<sup>68</sup> Bosworth, 125.



### Chapter III

#### The Treaty of London and the St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement

There were difficulties and delays, but it was essential to the Allies that the negotiations should succeed; conditions were agreed, and Italy entered the war against Austria.<sup>69</sup>

With most theaters of war stalemated in April 1915, the Italian government regarded the situation as an opportune time to enter the Great War. The Italian ambassador to London, the Marquis Imperiali conspired secretly with the foreign ministers of Great Britain (Sir Edward Grey), France (M. Paul Cambon), and Russia (Count de Beckendorff) to join the Triple Entente on April 26<sup>th</sup> 1915 (See Appendix A.1). In taking advantage of the uncertainty of the Entente's military position in Europe, the Italian government was promised upon the successful conclusion of the war, most of which would come at the expense of the partitioning of the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires. Winston Churchill explained the atmosphere:

The Italian negotiators, deeply conscious of our anxiety, were determined to make the most advantageous bargain they could for their country. The territorial gains which Italy was to receive on her frontiers, in the Adriatic, and from the Turkish Empire were tremendous.<sup>70</sup>

After months of bickering with the Entente, the Italian government was promised an immense amount of territory far surpassing the initial request of August 11<sup>th</sup>.<sup>71</sup> Sir Edward Grey was delighted to have finished the grueling nine month ordeal of negotiations. After the treaty was announced to the Asquith Cabinet members late in the day of April 26<sup>th</sup>, they "here-heard [Sic] with hearty appreciation".<sup>72</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Viscount Grey, *Twenty-Five Years* vol ii (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, 1925), 214.

<sup>70</sup> Churchill, 447-448.

<sup>71</sup> See pages 21-22.

<sup>72</sup> Hobhouse, 239.

The first three articles dealt with the arrangement of a future naval and military convention to take place in order to allocate troops and materials among the new alliance. Italy's commitment to wage war against her quondam allies was established. Article IV dealt principally with Italy's territorial interests. The Trentino, Trieste and regions south of Tyrol including the Brenner Pass were all ethnically Italian regions that were incorporated within the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1866. Prior to 1914 the population of Trentino comprised of 347,000 people, of which 338,000 were Italian.<sup>73</sup> As a whole an estimated 800,000 Italians dwelt within Austrian borders.<sup>74</sup>

In Article V, Dalmatia was to be awarded to Italy. This article was very controversial as only an estimated 18,000 Italians resided in the Dalmatia, as compared to 633,000 Slavs.<sup>75</sup> Article VI gave Italy parts of Albania that they already occupied (Valona and the island of Saseno). Article VIII confirmed the Italian claim to the Dodecanese Islands, which Italy had acquired in 1912 as spoils of the Libyan war with Turkey. Article IX stated that Italy would receive Turkish territory in the Mediterranean in the event of any future partition of Turkey. Other compensations would come at the expense of German colonies in Africa in Article XIII. The advancement of a war loan from Britain mentioned in Article XIV cemented the Italian commitment.<sup>76</sup>

Overall the Treaty of London expected to maintain the balance of power in the Mediterranean, Asia Minor, Africa and the Balkans following the conclusion of the war. Italy gained a favorable naval position in the Adriatic while still allowing an outlet for her historical nemesis Austria-Hungary. Yet the Treaty of London was also an invitation

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<sup>73</sup> E. Alexander Powell, *Italy at War* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1919), 42.

<sup>74</sup> Gottlieb, 135.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 328.

<sup>76</sup> Bosworth, 133.

to future conflicts. In no way was it a perfect settlement. Some of the identified regions adjacent to Italy along the Adriatic coast were historically maintained by those who identified themselves as Italian such as the Roman and Venetian Empires, many of the inhabitants were not. It would bring 600,000 Slavs and 230,000 Germans under Italian control.<sup>77</sup>

Despite these facts a deal was consummated after much dispute. Without it Italy might not have joined the Entente, leaving France, Russia and the United Kingdom to fight an even more difficult war. The Italian Sonnino and Salandra governments believed wholeheartedly that their new allies would stand by their words following a successful ending to the war. The immediate result of Italy's entry was the military encirclement of the Central Powers, which raised hopes that Germany and Austria-Hungary would be crushed in a short time (See Appendix A.2). On May 3<sup>rd</sup> Italy removed herself formally from the Triple Alliance. Then on May 24, 1915 war was declared on Austria-Hungary.

An important turn of events during the Treaty of London talks was the change in attitude of the Russian negotiators. Their protests regarding the generous assessment of Adriatic coastal lands to Italy were to no avail as Edward Grey and Asquith knew that they had to eventually cave in due to the urgency of Italy's commitment to the Allied cause.<sup>78</sup> The Russian signatory of the treaty Count Benckendorff, knew that there were errors made: "The faults of the Treaty from the Slav point of view were evident to all, more painfully so to me than to the others..."<sup>79</sup> By acquiring Trieste in Article IV, Italy would prevent the enlargement of Serbia, which Russia favored. From the beginning of the talks the Russian diplomats had made it clear that they favored a sizeable increase of

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<sup>77</sup> Gottlieb, 343.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 343.

<sup>79</sup> Albrecht-Carrié, 31.

territory allotted to Serbia with access to the Aegean Sea. Although the Treaty did not completely erase this possibility, it did tremendously compromise Slavic territorial expansion in the Balkans. After all, were not Pan-Serbism and Russian mobilization at the root of the war's origin?

The answer to the Russian change of heart lay within two other secret arrangements made among Russia, France and Britain. Unbeknownst to Italy, these deals prepared the ground for a detailed partition of the Ottoman Empire: the Constantinople Agreement (April 1915) and the Sykes-Picot Agreement (October 1916).

The Constantinople Agreement was made secretly on April 27<sup>th</sup> 1915 between Russia, France and Britain and in violation of Article IX of the Treaty of London, which at a day old was still wet with ink. The Italian government would not be told of its contents until October 1916. With a stroke of the pen, Slavic interests were pawned for Russian spoils in the Near East. Territorial desires were satisfied for all participants in the arrangement. The agreement gave Russia the city of Constantinople and the Dardanelles Straits, the western banks of the Bosphorus and southern Thrace should a final victory be achieved. This piece of diplomacy would have given the Tsar what for centuries had been the territorial ambitions of the Russian Empire. The French expressed their interest in annexing Syria, portions of Cilicia and the Gulf of Alexandretta while Britain desired portions of Persia. The timing of this is significant as the Entente leaders were planning a beachhead attack on the Dardanelles but did not want to do so until Italy was secured as an ally.

The British War Council Secretary Maurice Hankey believed that the best tactic was to attack Germany from its underbelly: "Germany can perhaps be struck most

effectively and with the most lasting results on the peace of the world through her allies, and particularly through Turkey.”<sup>80</sup> The Dardanelles campaign began with the optimistic objectives of securing the peninsula and the Dardanelles Straits while occupying Constantinople in a swift and decisive blow. However Allied optimism was shattered on at the landing beach at Gallipoli. The Dardanelles campaign ended as a debacle and resulted in the greatest defensive victory in the entire history of the Ottoman Empire. After the final retreat in December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1915, 50,000 soldiers fighting for the Entente were lost in the failed mission.

Later, in May 1916, the Allied powers aside from Italy sat down in Petrograd to formulate their war aims in the Middle and Near East. The result was what is generally known as the Sykes-Picot Agreement. The agreement was regarded as a piece of masterful secret diplomacy. For François Georges-Picot, the appointed French representative, the main objective was the permanent acquisition of Syria as a spoil in a successful war. The treaty as a whole divided the Ottoman Empire into three zones under Russian, British, and French control. Sergei Sazonov, acting as the Russian Foreign Minister, had aspirations of acquiring more lands within Ottoman regions as well. This treaty was in violation of Article IX of the London Treaty which stated: “The interest of Italy shall also be taken into consideration in the event of the territorial integrity of the Turkish Empire being maintained and of alterations being made in the zones of interest of the Powers.”

After the Italian Foreign Ministry discovered the existence of the Sykes-Picot Agreement, a series of fruitless meetings took place in the early months of 1917 between Arthur Balfour, who took over Sir Edward Grey’s post in December 1916, and Italian,

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<sup>80</sup> Alan Palmer, *Victory 1918* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1998), 15.

French and Russian ambassadors in London. Instead of the anticipated rapid turn of events once Italy joined the war, the war remained stalemated, and now on yet another front. Italian war efforts were significant but not successful. In the eyes of the British, French and Russians, Italy's war performance was below par. It was difficult for the other powers to continuously give Italy land rights in the Asia Minor region as they believed she was unworthy to profit from the concluding peace. Whatever territories in Asia Minor were offered to the Italian delegate, Imperiali, it was not enough. It appeared to be a classic case of déjà vu reminiscent of the Treaty of London debates with each side refusing to budge. In April 1917, the former British Prime Minister Arthur Balfour knew how to encourage Italy by mentioning the spreading of her empire. In a letter to Imperiali, Balfour stated, in obsequious terms:

Italy has a large surplus population well skilled in the practice of Mediterranean agriculture. In the south-west of Anatolia, this population will find a soil and climate admirably suited to its needs... If colonialization be one of the main ends which Italian statesmen have in view, there is no part of the world (as it seems to me) could be successfully secured than in the proposed Italian sphere...<sup>81</sup>

This form of enticement worked and Italian Foreign Minister Sidney Sonnino met with Alexander Ribot and David Lloyd George in April 1917 in the French village of St. Jean de Maurienne and signed an agreement (See Appendix A.3). Italy was awarded the Asia Minor region of Smyrna providing Russia agreed to the terms stated in Article IV: "It is understood that the present memorandum shall be communicated to the Russian Government in order to enable it to express its opinion." This would be an important condition and loophole concerning the Agreement's demise.

The lack of a Russian delegate was reflective of the domestic turn of events there in early 1917. The Tsar was deposed and Russia was in a state of semi-anarchy. Lenin

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<sup>81</sup> Michael Llewellyn Smith, *Ionian Vision* (London, Allen Lane, 1973), 70.



had arrived in St. Petersburg in mid-April with the assistance of the Central Powers, and later the Russian Bolsheviks concluded an armistice with the Central Powers which allowed the Central Powers to divert their forces to the western and Balkan fronts. Furthermore the Bolsheviks published the secret diplomatic agreements made by the Allied powers such as the Sykes-Picot Agreement, the Constantinople Agreement and the Treaty of London, much to the embarrassment of the Entente.<sup>82</sup> Even though this Bolshevik tactic was intended to enrage the European proletariat, it was welcome information in Italian irredentist circles. The much speculated and rumored treaty was viewed in some respects as an anti-nationalist compromise. The main grievance surrounded the absence of the port city of Fiume from the treaty, which was viewed as a grave error.<sup>83</sup> Where Italian populations were sparse such as Dalmatia, a rationalization was made for its acquisition: "The supreme interest of Italy is to be able to close the Adriatic between Valona and Brindisi entirely immune from menace."<sup>84</sup> In another irredentist tract, annexation of Fiume and Dalmatia was a necessary "war of liberation."<sup>85</sup> A successful peace without Fiume was viewed by all levels of Italian society as a travesty: "Woe to Italy should she renounce Fiume!"<sup>86</sup> Still unknown to the public at large, the fate of the St. Jean de Maurienne agreement was in a state of limbo as it never received Russian approval, in part due to the revolution.

Prior to 1917, the British Empire had done all in its power to bait the United States into entering the European continental conflict. As German economic

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<sup>82</sup> Seymour Cocks, *The Secret Treaties and Understandings* (London: National Labor Press, 1918). This informative tract included an introduction by Leon Trotsky and was intended to expose the evils of secret diplomacy.

<sup>83</sup> Attilio Tamaro, *The Treaty of London and Italy's National Aspiration* (New York: The Reffes-Sandson Company, 1918), 10-11.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>85</sup> Alberti, 43.

<sup>86</sup> Annie Hamilton, ed., *Italy and the War* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1917), 191.

encroachment within South and Central America alarmed American big business, political relations with Britain fared better than with Germany on the eve of the Great War. American merchants' insistence on continuing normal trade routes in a zone of war created issues in international law as President Woodrow Wilson identified Germany's submarine campaigns as a violation of the rules of war. The sinking of neutral ships by submarines violated American national economic interests while taking lives. The submarine strategy ultimately forced Wilson's hand as he saw no choice but to ask Congress for a declaration of war on April 2<sup>nd</sup> 1917.

The presence of American forces and the subsequent shift of power in the war would take time. Italian operations were at a standstill on the Isonzo River. In October 1917, however, Austrian, Slavic and German troops produced a victory at Caporetto, overrunning thousands of square miles and forcing the Italians to fight a defensive war on their own soil. British and French troops were eventually needed to push back the advances of the Central Powers.

Knowing that American forces were on the way to Europe, the Central Powers mounted Operation Michael on March 21 1918. This offensive pushed the Western front forty miles west by April 24. Despite this gallant effort the Germans could not take Paris and were repulsed by Entente forces. By early autumn of 1918 American forces had arrived in France, and the German army's territorial hold in France slowly started to unravel.

As the war began to wind down and speculation and rumors of the contents of the Treaty of London spread into the Balkans, Slavs became very concerned. On April 8 1918, a congress of oppressed nationalities from the Austro-Hungarian Empire took place



in Rome. Its purpose was to counter the emerging Italian claims and to ensure that a Slavic independence would be respected following the war's conclusion. The congress resulted in the Pact of Rome, a series of declarations that attempted to ensure that the integrity of a Slavic national union would be agreeable to Italy. The pact was an expression of wishful thinking, since no representatives of the Italian government signed the Pact of Rome. By the end of the war, Italian armies occupied Trieste, Vittorio Veneto, Trentino and as far south as the Adriatic coast to Albania. It was a line of occupation that mirrored the provisions in the Treaty of London.

Soon a conflict arose regarding the city of Fiume. Italians and Slavs each claimed it as their own. Days after the armistice was signed, on November 17, Fiume was occupied by French, Vietnamese, British and American soldiers to maintain the peace there.<sup>87</sup> Even more perplexing to the Italian Ministry was the extent of influence Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points seemed to have on Britain and France, with its provisions calling for national self-determination. In Italian eyes, Italy was now a great empire, and would not give back lands to any European ethnic group. The Italian delegates from the Orlando government felt justified in advancing to the Peace Conference in January 1919 with suspicion of their allies' new friend, Dr. Wilson. How was it that this American president knew more about the historical unredeemed territories than the Italians themselves? More importantly, who in Paris would sincerely concur with his utopian visions of a new European order regarding Italy?

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<sup>87</sup> Michael A. Ledeen, *The First Duce* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977), 32.

## Chapter IV Bamboozled at Versailles and Rapallo

It is not enough to end this war; we must at all costs avoid the terrible problems that an imperfect peace would cause.<sup>88</sup>

The Italian delegation at Versailles was headed by Prime Minister Vittorio Orlando and Foreign Minister Baron Sidney Sonnino. The formal Italian claims, delivered to the British, French and American delegates on February 7, 1919, spelled out the territorial claims promised in the Treaty of London, including the port city of Fiume. Negotiations regarding Italian claims began in earnest during the month of April. President Wilson deemed the Treaty of London as a violation of the ninth of his Fourteen Points: "A readjustment of the frontiers of Italy should be effected along clearly recognizable lines of nationality."<sup>89</sup> The American leadership in general looked upon the treaty with disapproval. This attitude was shared by British Prime Minister David Lloyd George. Dramatic changes had taken place since 1915.<sup>90</sup> The Bolshevik revolution resulted in Russia's making a separate peace with the Central Powers. The United States had joined the war and Austrian-Hungarian and Ottoman Empires were partitioned. Under these circumstances, the Treaty of London and the St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement seemed superfluous and anachronistic.

Wilson went further in a letter published on April 24 and directed at the Italian delegates' demands, denouncing the London Treaty and the claim of Fiume.<sup>91</sup> The letter

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<sup>88</sup> Tommaso Tittoni, *Who was Responsible for the War? The Verdict of History* (Paris: Bloud & Gay, 1918), 67.

<sup>89</sup> Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement* vol ii (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1922), 131.

<sup>90</sup> David Lloyd George, *Memoirs of the Peace Conference* vol ii (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), 579.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 546-49.

was widely read in Italy, inflaming the tempers of nationalists and moderates alike. Clearly, Wilson ignored the warnings of Orlando: "...if Fiume is not granted to Italy there will be among the Italian people a reaction of protest and hatred..."<sup>92</sup> Wilson's efforts had influenced Britain and France, prompting the Italian delegates to temporarily leave the peace talks completely. Lloyd George observed Wilson's contempt of the Italians as being "beyond control."<sup>93</sup> The future of Italian war gains was in the hands of diplomats perceived back in Italy as arrogant despots.

The partiality and prejudice of President Wilson at the peace conference would have driven any rational Italian from the talks. In the absence of the Italian delegation, the American/Wilson Line was hastily drawn up, modifying Italy's territorial gains along the Adriatic coast. This line was based on ethnographic data assembled by Americans.<sup>94</sup> The redistribution of lands separated Italy from Dalmatia, numerous islands and the city of Fiume. Wilson's logic was perplexing. For example, how could he raise no objection or comment on turning over 200,000 Germans to Italy in the Tyrol region and be so opposed to giving over Fiume, which had a population with an Italian majority? Apologists for Wilson explain this away as an attempt to "mitigate" the Adriatic gains of the Treaty of London.<sup>95</sup> It was a proposed compromise that neither Orlando nor Sonnino would entertain.

Meanwhile, the French and British simply had no intention of compensating Italy's claims outside Europe. They took full advantage of the rift between Wilson and the Italian delegation, as they divided up Germany's African colonies between

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 536.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 536.

<sup>94</sup> Baker, 145.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 146.

themselves in Italy's absence from the conference. Even more insulting to Italy, mandates were awarded to Japan, Belgium and Portugal. These actions were in defiance of Article XIII of the Treaty of London. Likewise the St. Jean de Maurienne Agreement proved to be nothing more than a ruse to keep Italy in the last years of the war. Rendall Rodd confirmed this scheme years after he was out of the political limelight: "...it was present to the minds of many, who conducted these and other similar negotiations, that the extreme claims advanced would never be realized."<sup>96</sup> No territory was given to Italy in the Middle or Near East, aside from a mandate that ended in 1921. Instead the British and French Empires fulfilled the claims from the Sykes-Picot Agreement. Though most territories were also League of Nations mandates, the French maintained colonial control in Syria for decades to come.

The claims of the Treaty of London were left hanging, figuratively at the conference's end. The French, British, American, and in part Italian, representatives simply divided Europe in a manner that hurt the Central Powers the most, psychologically and physically. The combined geographic and ethnological knowledge of the Allied diplomats was limited. Millions of inhabitants of the Central Powers were incorporated into the new nations of Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia. It was a recipe that created further ethnic tensions and new irredentist claims, one of which would give rise to new conflicts and a future world war.

The port city of Fiume became a big issue at the Paris Peace Conference. The pre-war city was a vital naval outlet of the Austro-Hungarian Empire with a diverse ethnic population. The 1910 census numbers the population at 50,000 residents, many being

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<sup>96</sup> Rodd, 335-336.

Italians at 24,000, and Croats ranking second with 15,000.<sup>97</sup> Even though the Treaty of London left the port of the city to the “territory of Croatia, Serbia, and Montenegro” its omission was a reflection of the treaty’s written generalities and vagueness regarding word and phrase choice. Just prior to the armistice, the city of Fiume’s Municipal Council proclaimed it to be annexed with Italy. Numerous protests and acts of violence occurred in Fiume as rumors of the news regarding the city’s fate filtered throughout Italy’s newspapers. Soon after it was revealed that the proposed American Line gave Fiume to the Slavs, acts of sabotage and vigilantism escalated within the contested city.

To many Italians, including Orlando and Sonnino, the Croats and Slovenes, were seen as an equal enemy to the Germans and Austrians.<sup>98</sup> Several Croats had fought against Italy with the Austro-Hungarian army, and were now to be rewarded for their exploits by Italy’s allies. Istria, Dalmatia and Fiume were now in serious jeopardy of being taken from Italy by coalition forces, whose presence intimidated the indigenous Italians therein. With the region in limbo, the dejected and demoralized Orlando government resigned on June 21, 1919. On June 28, a new one was formed with Francesco Nitti, a former professor of economics, as the Prime Minister.

In the same month, numerous Italian residents of Fiume organized a militia known as the League of Volunteers. On July 6 and 7, nine French soldiers were killed and fifty-eight wounded at the hands of the citizens of Fiume. An Inter-Allied Commission of Inquiry ordered that the League of Volunteers and the National Council of Fiume be dissolved. Not looking for a fight, Nitti agreed to all of the recommendations. The coalition troops would continue to occupy and run the

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<sup>97</sup> Ledeer, 22.

<sup>98</sup> Baker, 137.

administration of the city until the people could govern themselves in a democratic method. A British military force was planned to take over all affairs on September 12.

Their plans were thwarted before being brought to fruition. With an armed group of over a thousand armed Italians, the famous nationalist and poet Gabriele D'Annunzio entered Fiume on September 12 1919, and was received with jubilation, as the Allied peace keepers (American, French and British) fled due to the uncertainty of the chaos. D'Annunzio was hoping to force the hand of the negotiations that had played out at Versailles for annexation of Fiume and the Dalmatian coast. D'Annunzio acted as trustee to the crown while implementing laws and a constitution in the city.<sup>99</sup>

The political maneuver was soon joined and supported by two Italian generals and a military force of 9,000.<sup>100</sup> Numerous Italian military leaders rejected the American Line. Admiral Enrico Millo, the military commander in Dalmatia, reported to Nitti: "I have pledged my word that we will not evacuate the Dalmatia of the Treaty of London..."<sup>101</sup> This blatant defiance against the Nitti government was an international embarrassment. An economic blockade of Fiume was immediately enforced by Nitti which paralyzed the city's industry. The passage of time worked to D'Annunzio's disadvantage as the Italian government prepared to make a separate peace with Yugoslavia regarding territorial boundaries at San Remo.

Numerous attempts at compromise with the Yugoslavs and the Nitti Ministry were made during 1920. No agreement on conditions was in sight as D'Annunzio still remained in Fiume. The Nitti ministry strongly opposed Italians in Dalmatia who

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<sup>99</sup> D'Annunzio was the "trustee" only in his own mind. He did have the public endorsement of the King's cousin, the Duke of Aosta.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

demanded annexation. A protest parade of Italian Dalmatians was brought to a violent halt in Rome, the first signs of governmental brutality and intolerance of irredentism.<sup>102</sup> On May 11, 1920 the Nitti Cabinet was voted out and the emergence of Giovanni Giolitti as the Premier on June 11 took place. As an attempt to neutralize his nationalist opponents he appointed a former interventionist, Count Carlo Sforza, to join the cabinet as the Foreign Minister.<sup>103</sup> Giolitti personally viewed Wilson's attitude relating to the Treaty of London as a "grave error."<sup>104</sup> However he did nothing to achieve the land promised in the treaty. As a career politician he wanted the matter to be done with, and viewed it as a pitfall of a previous ministry. There were more serious issues which needed to be remedied.

Giolitti's foreign policy thus pursued territorial regression. He ordered that Italian troops withdraw from the Albania city of Valona on August 3, 1920.<sup>105</sup> This action defied Article VI of the London Treaty which awarded the city's sovereignty to Italy. In order to satisfy the Greeks, the TITTONI-VENIZELOS Agreement turned over the Dodecanese Islands to Greece, which constituted a violation of Article VIII in the Treaty of London.<sup>106</sup> Giolitti took a more aggressive approach to the Fiume crisis on November 8, 1920, direct talks began with the Yugoslavian government, which resulted in an understanding known as the Treaty of Rapallo.

The main points of the Treaty of Rapallo declared Fiume to be a Free City and restructured the Wilson Line, which Italy had never adopted during the peace conference.

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<sup>102</sup> Mussolini, 106.

<sup>103</sup> Max Gallo, *Mussolini's Italy*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1973), 102.

<sup>104</sup> Giolitti, 405.

<sup>105</sup> Gallo, 103-04.

<sup>106</sup> Burgwyn, 318.



In addition the Yugoslavs agreed to protect the rights of Italians in Dalmatia. Italy was able to obtain some islands (Cherso, Lussin, Lagosta, Lussin) and sovereignty over the city of Zara. The Rapallo talks were concluded and signed on November 22, 1920. It passed the Italian Senate and was signed by King Victor Emmanuel III on December 19. The Municipal Council of Fiume was forced to accept the Rapallo Treaty, and after sixteen months D'Annunzio and his followers left Fiume, disenchanted. Mussolini regarded the events of the Giolitti period as "another phase of defeatism."<sup>107</sup>

The final issue regarding the Treaty of Rapallo was one that only Giolitti and his Foreign Minister Sforza knew of. Unknown to the rest of government, the Porto Baros and Delta were given to the Yugoslavians as a secret amendment to the treaty. The Porto Baros was a man-made basin where the mouth of the Racina River meets the Adriatic. Most importantly, it was the outlet for the suburb of Susak, which was overwhelmingly Croatian. As a result of this deception numerous demonstrations denounced Giolitti's Cabinet and demanded his resignation. Among the protestors, Mussolini demanded that the Treaty of Rapallo be revised and Fiume be annexed to Italy.<sup>108</sup> Soon after this deception was made known to the Italian Parliament, the Giolitti government resigned on June 27, 1921. Italian nationalists were rapidly realizing that they had been bamboozled at Versailles and Rapallo.

The uncertainty of Italy's political situation was typified by the numerous changes of the Prime Minister and their cabinets following the Great War. At a time when the Italian proletariat needed to demobilize, unite and enjoy the promised unredeemed lands, the country was plagued with social disorder and innumerable strikes that froze industry.

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<sup>107</sup> Mussolini, 109.

<sup>108</sup> Mussolini, 129-130.

Socialists who had not gone to war welcomed home veterans with insults and dung. The peace treaties conducted at Paris and Rapallo were to be the final solution to several of Italian problems, which proved to be a mirage. Italy's sacrifices were not fully recognized by her Allies, resulting in the damaging of already battered egos. It was this backdrop that would ignite a spirit of revenge, protest, and street-marching political activism. The individual that would provide a voice for the post-war Italian cohort was Benito Mussolini, politically reborn out of the chaos of political misdeeds and the spoiled peace.

<sup>1</sup> Benito Mussolini, *My Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1928), 200.  
<sup>2</sup> Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa, *The Leopard* (New York: The Modern Library, 1928), 100.  
<sup>3</sup> In 1911 the Italian 22nd Army was sent to Libya and the Italian Army was 100,000 men.  
<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 100.

## Chapter V

### The Fifteenth Victory via Fascism

My object is simple: I want to make Italy great, respected, and feared; I want to render my nation worthy of her noble and ancient traditions.<sup>109</sup>

Like most European nations in the years following the war, Italy was in a poor economic state of affairs. As of March 31, 1921 the Italian deficit was 105 billion lira.<sup>110</sup> The interest from the national debt exhausted the nation's financial resources. The foreign exchange rate of the lira in May 1921 was 19.13 to the United States dollar and 74.30 to the British pound.<sup>111</sup> The effects of depression, demobilization, a diminishing middle-class and swelling unemployment were all contributing to the unrest in post-war Italy. The territorial gains which Italians expected as profit from the Great War were not forthcoming, and neither were the raw material resources those territories promised to contain. This caused further social discontent and a feeling of betrayal about the conduct of Italy's allies at the Peace Conferences, not to mention the government in Rome. The lack of sufficient coal and petroleum refiners hindered the Italian industrial infrastructure. Labor disputes arose as strikes were widespread in Italy with 1,663 in 1919 and 1,881 in 1920.<sup>112</sup> With no employment prospects for the destitute, Italian masses were overall in a depressive state of mind.

<sup>109</sup> Benito Mussolini, *My Autobiography* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), 309.

<sup>110</sup> Tommaso Tittoni, *Modern Italy: Its Intellectual, Cultural and Financial Aspects* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), 185.

<sup>111</sup> In 1913 the lira was 25.40 to the British pound and 5.18 to the American dollar. *Ibid.*, 191.

<sup>112</sup> Gallo, 94.

The emigration problem that had existed in the decades prior to the war re-emerged: 253,000 left in 1919, 614,000 in 1920, and 200,000 in 1921.<sup>113</sup> Many of these people went to the country that had suffered the least of the Great Powers and profited the most from the war, the United States of America. However even America was showing signs of economic recession, and Congress implemented the American Immigration Act of 1921. It restricted the number of Italians permitted to 42,000 per year. Italians no longer had the alternative to escape Italy's social ills, and were forced to face the political situation head on. The climate for a nationalist reaction was ripe.

On March 23 1919, Mussolini laid down the plan of the Fasci di Combattimento at Milan, attracting fifty-four recruits.<sup>114</sup> The rise of Italian Fascism in the 1920s was perplexing and intriguing. One of its ingredients was nationalism, which acted as a bridge to unite people across the social spectrum. Nationalism brought with it elements of social control and the establishment of absolutism. Yet Italian nationalism was dealt a glancing but powerful blow by the abrogation of the Treaty of London. Although on the winning side, and despite the loss of 652,000 Italians in the Great War, Italy's nationalist and imperialist ambitions were soured by Allied betrayal. Many of the territories promised to Italy in the Treaty of London were revoked. This was essential to Fascist propaganda. Early Fascism was solely a constructive protest movement, primarily centered on Fiume and the other land claims in the Adriatic that were forfeited at Versailles and Rapallo.<sup>115</sup> For example the following declarations/demands were put out as leaflets by citizens of Montepulciano, Tuscany in 1919:

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<sup>113</sup> Villari, 41-42.

<sup>114</sup> Mussolini, 67-68.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

A. The Treaty of Versailles revised and modified in those parts which are obviously inapplicable, or whose applications can be the foundations of formidable hatreds and new wars.

B. The effective application of the Treaty of London, the annexation of Fiume to Italy, and the care of Italians residing in the lands included in the Treaty of London.<sup>116</sup>

Several of the first political actions centered on support of D'Annunzio and the return of Dalmatia.<sup>117</sup> Mussolini published D'Annunzio's *Letters to the Dalmatians* in his newspaper, *Il Popolo d'Italia*. Numerous irredentist articles appeared in the paper during the post-war period. Collaboration with the former war interventionists, Nationalists, Futurists and Syndicalists, who were all veterans, was essential to the success of Fascism. The Futurist poet Filippo Marinetti, for example, was a frequent speaker at Fasce di Combattimento meetings.<sup>118</sup> The promotion of the annexation of Fiume and Dalmatia was essential to Mussolini's now budding movement.

The reemergence of Giovanni Giolitti, by the 1920s, a tired old symbol of the corruption of Italian parliamentary politics and the short tenure of the Nitti administration demonstrated further national weakness and territorial regression. Italy was a victorious nation in the Great War, yet it had gained none of the glamour or glory attendant upon a victor, even though such spoils had been explicitly guaranteed by treaty. Thus, the stage was set for nationalist resentment, and the rise of Fascism. By November 1921 the National Fascist Party was formally created with no fewer than 320,000 members strong. On October 28, 1922, the March on Rome occurred and the king asked Mussolini to form his own cabinet two days after the spectacle. For many, the legal Fascist takeover was

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<sup>116</sup> Ion S. Munro, *Through Fascism to World Power* (London: Alexander Maclehose & Company, 1933), 75-76.

<sup>117</sup> Rhodes, 202.

<sup>118</sup> Mussolini, 91.

symbolic of the “fifteenth victory” – there had been fourteen during the war - that was long overdue.

Fascism was also a reaction to the political impact of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution in Russia. Lenin’s seizure of power brought widespread fear to all the western nations. Italian Communists debuted in the 1921 general elections with 305,000 votes.<sup>119</sup> The threat of Communism helped Fascism emerge as an extreme reactionary political movement. Communists were proponents of an inheritance tax and the abolition of private property, and the fear of their platform drew numerous supporters to the right. Having been a Socialist himself, Mussolini knew their rhetoric and weaknesses. While addressing the need for the contributions of Italian workers in the party he stated: “...we are in no way the enemies of the proletariat, whose legitimate demands we recognize and for which we are prepared to do battle.”<sup>120</sup> Mussolini and the Fascists wanted to create a new civilization in Italy, one that would recover the achievements of the Roman past and reconstruct a fascist realm of influence in and around the Mediterranean and Adriatic.<sup>121</sup>

Another element that was ever-present within Italian politics and generally regarded by Fascists as a reflection of the standard party system was the institution of Freemasonry. Mussolini identified Freemasons and their socioeconomic influence as the enemies of Italy’s imperial ambitions. Freemasons were “steeped in political intrigue” and a reflection of the prior decadent governments.<sup>122</sup> Masons within the civic government allegedly often gave each other promotions and were united by secret oaths. Freemasons were likewise seen as the ruling hosts working behind the scenes of several

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<sup>119</sup> Horowitz, 165.

<sup>120</sup> Gallo, 71.

<sup>121</sup> MacGregor Knox, *Mussolini Unleashed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 19-22.

<sup>122</sup> Mussolini, 126.

European non-Fascist governments including Soviet Russia. Mussolini was instrumental in ousting the Freemasons from the PSI prior to the war. Freemasonry was purged and outlawed in Italy in general in 1925.<sup>123</sup> Numerous Freemasonic symbols on historic public monuments were replaced with the fasces.<sup>124</sup> In a sense, the Italian Freemasons became the equivalent of the German Jews after the war, similarly blamed as politicians who betrayed Italian soldiers by losing the war at home. The social disarray of the Weimar Republic provided the environment for the budding of anti-Semitism, which is essential in understanding the popular growth of the German variant of Fascism.<sup>125</sup>

Italian Fascism represented the blending of Syndicalism with Nationalism and the Catholic faith, in reaction to anti-Catholic movements such as Communism and the traditional fear of Freemasonry. Catholic political awareness arose drastically following the war, and the Catholic Popular Party challenged the Socialist and Communist Parties. A common ground was fostered between the Catholic and Syndicalist leadership in their suspicion.<sup>126</sup> Fascist corporatism mirrored the hierarchy of the Catholic Church.

The Nationalists wanted to expand Italian state hegemony to the adjacent Mediterranean regions in which Italians dwelled. They were to be united spiritually, economically and physically, thereby fulfilling unification and complete economic independence. Only after the fulfillment of this objective would Italy be regarded as an equal among the world's major powers. More importantly once this was accomplished by way of the Fascist movement, the Risorgimento would at last be finalized.

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<sup>123</sup> Adrian Lyttelton, *The Seizure of Power* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 278.

<sup>124</sup> William Ebenstein, *Fascist Italy* (New York: American Book Company, 1939), 238.

<sup>125</sup> Richard Bessel, *Germany After the First World War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993).

<sup>126</sup> Herbert W. Schneider, *The Fascist Government of Italy* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1936), 19.



The Treaty of London's historical relevance never died during the Fascist era. Instead, Mussolini's foreign policy was focused on recovering Italian war aims that had been negated by the inter-allied delegates at Paris and Rapallo. The sixteen articles of the Treaty were the cylinders within the engine that propelled future Fascist foreign policy. The failure of six government cabinets to solve the Fiume crisis and fulfill the Treaty of London's articles was a national embarrassment for many. While speaking at the first Fascist Congress in Florence, Mussolini made reference to these errors and demanded "that the treaties of peace should be revised."<sup>127</sup> When regarding the rise of Fascism, we must not underestimate the tenets of foreign policy revision, which provided it with its breath of life. Fascists made reference to the Treaty of London as a rallying cry while the postwar ministries routinely deconstructed its articles. No longer could a foreign entity or individual such as Woodrow Wilson be pointed at as the villain, it was Italians themselves who were destroying the treaty. Senator Vittorio Scialoja correctly observed this point regarding the treaty's demise, that it "has continually been tricked out of force and effect by those who are themselves Italians."<sup>128</sup>

Lastly, the methods used by the Giolitti Ministry in removing D'Annunzio from Fiume shocked Italians nationwide. The military assault of Italians by Italians on Christmas Day was profound.<sup>129</sup> It was a message that the Treaty of London was dying and the government would use violence to kill it if necessary. For Mussolini and those who supported the treaty, the war never really ended in Italy. The bloody Christmas affair was proof of this as Mussolini stated, "They are the latest to fall in the Great War, and it

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>128</sup> Mussolini, 112.

<sup>129</sup> Christmas was decided upon to downplay the events, as no newspapers were published on the holiday in Italy.

is not in vain!"<sup>130</sup> If the march on Rome by Fascists was symbolic of the fifteenth victory  
 Fascist Foreign Policy and the Treaty of London  
 its banners represented the Treaty of London.

A spectacle of imperialism was, I think, far more  
 understood nation Italy by those who did not understand  
 the sign of a revolution which claimed the position of  
 certain areas, not merely circumscribed within the  
 geographical limits of the peninsula, but always regarded as  
 essential outputs, which reveal all the civilization and  
 prosperity they possessed as Italian tradition, atmosphere,  
 and influence.

In evaluating the political movement of the Treaty of London at the time of the  
 Fascist takeover in 1922, historians regard the compromise best described the Italian  
 government's post-war efforts. Through government activities were forbidden and Italian  
 claims on them were abandoned, Italy should have a secure hold on the eastern Adriatic  
 coast as agreed. Mussolini was believed to have his responsibility to receive the terms of  
 the Treaty as he had suffered no real military setbacks. The primary motivation  
 was governmentally linked with the "Bismarckian" compromise. Italy's negotiation was an  
 inherited issue that the Fascists were committed to. It seems this was military non-  
 previous provisions were that will be not be actually served by collaboration thereby  
 keeping the fields of the Italian empire, Italy, to have sphere of influence. However,  
 the Fascists had an important objective that governments had not faced. The  
 American government retained a good record among the admirers of Italian each  
 year to 1914 (to 4,000 in 1924).<sup>131</sup> This positive reputation means for the Fascists to  
 encourage nationalism via every possible government channel. Fascist propaganda  
 efforts were effective and repetitive when regarding the necessity of expansion. In the

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 124. 7,000 Italian were released during the war.

## Chapter VI

### Fascist Foreign Policy and the Treaty of London

A suspicion of Imperialism was, I think, too readily entertained outside Italy by those who did not understand the depth of a sentiment which claimed the reunion of certain areas, not strictly comprehended within the geographical limits of the peninsula, but always regarded as essential outposts; which owed all the civilization and prosperity they possessed to Italian tradition, enterprise, and settlement.<sup>131</sup>

In evaluating the pursuit of the terms of the Treaty of London at the time of the Fascist takeover in 1922, diplomatic regression and compromise best described the Italian governments' post-war efforts. Several promised territories were forfeited and Italian claims on them were abandoned. Italy did not have a secure hold on the eastern Adriatic coast as hoped. Mussolini now believed it was his responsibility to recover the terms of the Treaty as he had alluded in his writings and speeches. The primary rationalization was conveniently linked with the Italian tendency to go abroad. Italy's emigration was an inherited issue that the Fascists were forced to deal with. Of course this was nothing new. Previous generations were faced with it, and was partially solved by colonization thereby keeping the fruits of the Italian workers within the Italian sphere of influence. However, the Fascists had an impediment that other Italian governments had not faced. The American government installed a quota system limiting the admittance of Italians each year to less than 4,000 in 1924.<sup>132</sup> This provided even more excuses for the Fascists to encourage colonialism via treaty revision and eventual conquest. Fascist propaganda efforts were effective and repetitive when regarding the necessity of expansion. In the

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<sup>131</sup> Rodd, 244.

<sup>132</sup> In 1921, 222,000 Italians were admitted into the United States.

view of the Fascist government to do otherwise would have been unnatural and a form of national suicide as explained by Luigi Villari, a Fascist apologist/historian: "...the desire for colonies was not mere greedy imperialism, as unfriendly critics made out, but a compelling necessity for the Italian people, an alternative to unemployment and starvation."<sup>133</sup> This view was accepted by some non-Italian diplomats and scholars alike.<sup>134</sup> The forfeited articles of the Treaty of London now appeared to have a profound relevance to the future of Italian foreign policy. It was the mission of the Fascists to fulfill them by diplomacy and force if deemed necessary.

Article VIII of the Treaty of London was the first one addressed by Mussolini during his first diplomatic mission abroad. The Dodecanese Islands were given to Greece in the Tittoni-Venizelos Agreement of 1919, and was not recognized by the Fascist government. The conclusion of the Greco-Turkish War resulted in the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923. The treaty centered on three issues: the control of Thrace, the status of the Dardanelles Straits and the Aegean Islands. With Mussolini present, Italian interests were safeguarded. Article XV of the Treaty of Lausanne gave Italy the Dodecanese Islands for supporting the Turks against the Greeks during the war. The Article reads as follows:

Turkey renounces in favor of Italy all rights and title over the following islands: Stampalia (Astrapalia), Rhodes (Rhodos), Calki (Khari), Scarpanto, Casos (Casso), Piscopis, Lipsos (Lipso), Simi (Symi), and Cos (Kos), which are now occupied by Italy, and the islets dependent thereon, and also the island of Catellorizzo.<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Villari, 71.

<sup>134</sup> Robert F. Foerster, *The Italian Emigration of Our Times* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924), 524-525. Rodd, 244.

<sup>135</sup> Lawrence Martin, *The Treaties of Peace 1919-1923* vol ii (New York: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1924), 965.

The article affirmed Italian ownership of the islands which began with their occupation in 1912. The influx of Italians moving to the Dodecanese had been on the rise ever since, with 100,198 emigrating in 1917 and 102,669 in 1922.<sup>136</sup> The islands' strategic importance was a fundamental between to the Near East and Central Mediterranean. Numerous tourist resorts also developed, providing luxurious accommodations for the vacationing Italian proletariat during the Fascist years.

Events then prompted another show of assertiveness in foreign policy, this time with a military component. On August 27, 1923, an Italian general, Enrico Tellini, was murdered by Greek guerrillas while participating in a boundary-drawing expedition on the Greek-Albanian border. In response, the Italian navy bombarded the Greek fortress on Corfu. The assault brought down international condemnation, but it also sent a message to the world that the new Fascist government would be an aggressive force in the Mediterranean.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, the conflict ended in a diplomatic victory, as the Greek government paid 50 million lira as an indemnity for Tellini's death.<sup>138</sup>

The next serious revisions that Mussolini sought to adjust required a change in Italian relations with Yugoslavia. Italy viewed the Rapallo Treaty as unsatisfactory and a blatant violation of justice. The experiment of the free city of Fiume was an ongoing source of agitation and resentment among its inhabitants. While most of the major European powers grew tired of the issue, there remained few voices of protest internationally, as Mussolini made known his desire to annex the city. In America, after the passing of Woodrow Wilson, the new Republican President Warren Harding wanted to create positive relations with Italy, as it was perceived as an important buffer against

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<sup>136</sup> C. D. Booth, 318.

<sup>137</sup> MacGregor Knox, *Mussolini Unleashed* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 33.

<sup>138</sup> James Barros, *The Corfu Incident of 1923* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 269.

communism. Without the support of Wilson, the Yugoslavs were no longer in a position to fight for Fiume and were persuaded to settle the sensitive issue once again, diplomatically. On January 28, 1924 the Treaty of Rome was signed. Italy was at long last granted full sovereignty over the city of Fiume. In return Mussolini recognized the secret protocol of Giolitti which awarded Yugoslavia Porto Baross and the Delta. On March 16, 1924 Fiume was officially annexed to Italy. It was a major achievement in Italian foreign policy and a symbolic success for Fascism.<sup>139</sup> Despite international criticism surrounding the Corfu affair, the acquisition of Fiume far excited public opinion in Italy, propelling the Fascist government to re-election. As a final token of appreciation Victor Emmanuel III presented the Collar of the Annunziata, Italy's highest civilian decoration, to the Duce.

Even outside Italy, events conspired to bring foreign policy triumphs to the Fascist regime. The war's outcome added further imperial hardships to an already financially burdened Britain. With the war over, the costs of global imperialism did not bode well with taxpayers at home, with so many soldiers stationed all over the world. The rise of inflation, Ireland's quasi-independence and a rising unemployment rate made it obvious that serious cracks had developed in the Empire. Similar to the United States, a shift in political power occurred in January 1924. The Labour premiership of Ramsay MacDonald represented a complete reversal of British foreign policy toward Europe.<sup>140</sup> MacDonald favored a lenient approach to Germany regarding war reparations, while officially recognizing the new Russian government without prejudice.

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<sup>139</sup> Martin Clark, *Mussolini* (New York: Pearson Education Limited, 2005), 177.

<sup>140</sup> Ramsay MacDonald, *The Foreign Policy of the Labor Party* (Oxford: Fox, Jones & Company, 1923).

Britain was also prepared to end the animosity with Italy and grant the Italians what they wanted in Africa. Understanding that the rift with Italy was due to the postwar peace complications and the British position on the Corfu affair, MacDonald approached the new Fascist leadership eager to make amends. While speaking in the House of Commons on March 27, 1924, MacDonald said he "...was exceedingly anxious to get this cause of irritation between Italy and ourselves removed."<sup>141</sup>

Article XIII of the Treaty of London had stated that Italy should receive compensation in Africa if the British and French acquired German colonies when the war ended. As usual, the claims in this article had not been delivered. In September 1920, the Italian government had demanded the cessation of Jubaland from British East Africa to Italian Somaliland. Lord Alfred Milner and the Italian Foreign Minister Vittorio Scialoja attempted to resolve the matter, but their efforts were rejected by the Lloyd George coalition government of the time. Jubaland thus offered a good opportunity for MacDonald to improve relations with Mussolini. In April 1924, Britain appeased Mussolini with a resolution of the Jubaland cessation. MacDonald dealt personally with Mussolini regarding this issue which resulted in a treaty on July 15, 1924 and the adopted Milner-Scialoja line. The Italian Somaliland frontier was extended beyond the Juba River, while incorporating a small slice of Kenya. Article I of the Treaty of Rome described the new Italian land gains:

From the confluence of the rivers Ganale [Ganale – Dorya] and Daua, along the course of the Daua up-stream to the southern point of the small southerly bend of the latter river in the vicinity of Malka Re [Malca Rie]; thence in a south-westerly direction in a straight line to the centre of the pool of Dumasa [Damasa]; thence in a south-westerly direction in a straight line towards Eilla Kalla (which remains in British territory) to such meridian east of Greenwich as shall leave in Italian territory the well of El Beru [El Beru Hagia]; thence along the same meridian

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<sup>141</sup> George Glasgow, *MacDonald as Diplomatist* (London: Jonathan Cape LTD, 1924), 102.



southwards until it reaches the boundary between the provinces of Jubaland and Tanaland; thence along the provincial boundary to a point due north of the point on the coast due west of the southernmost of the four islets in the immediate vicinity of Ras Kiambone (Dick's Head); thence due southwards to such point on the coast, Ras Kiambone [Chiambone] (Dick's Head) and the four islets above mentioned shall fall within the territory to be transferred to Italy.<sup>142</sup>

At long last official compliance was given to Article XIII of the Treaty of London, a demand which three previous Italian governments had failed to realize. It was another diplomatic victory by Mussolini as he was slowly restoring the shattered Articles of the Treaty of London.

French diplomacy did not show the sympathy to Italian foreign policy goals that British diplomats did. The French government viewed the Treaty of Rome as an anti-French measure. The city of Fiume, which had been envisioned as a military supply base after the war and a logistical foothold for French intrigue within the Balkans, was now in Italian hands. Likewise the old issue of Tunisia was a continued source of friction, as 90,000 Italians still lived there.<sup>143</sup>

Tensions with France were further intensified with Italian Fascist designs on colonial pursuits in Africa. Mussolini wanted to go beyond the existing boundaries that the Italian empire maintained in the 1920s. He believed it was Italy's destiny to expand into the heart of Africa. A massive propaganda effort was underway to justify a sort of reemergence of a Roman Empire.<sup>144</sup> On April 21, 1926, Colonial Day was made a national holiday.<sup>145</sup> Numerous forms of diplomatic pressure were put on the French government to honor their word regarding Article XIII of the Treaty of London. French

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<sup>142</sup> Department of State International Boundary Study, "Kenya-Somalia Boundary," Bureau of Intelligence and Research, 14 May 1973, <[www.law.fsu.edu/library/collection/LimitsenSeas/IBS134.pdf](http://www.law.fsu.edu/library/collection/LimitsenSeas/IBS134.pdf)> (20 August 2005).

<sup>143</sup> Luigi Villari. *Italian Foreign Policy* (New York: Devin-Adair Company, 1956), 31.

<sup>144</sup> Denis Mack Smith. *Mussolini's Roman Empire* (New York: Penguin Books, 1977), 84.

<sup>145</sup> Sergè, 57.

diplomats were evasive about the Article and unwilling to negotiate until the rise of National Socialism in Germany in 1933.

Realizing the extreme punishment imposed on Germany following the Great War, the French government knew that a revitalized Germany would soon be contemplating revenge. France wanted to assure the Italian government of their good faith and future friendship by coming to a rapprochement with Mussolini. It was hoped that Italy recognized the preservation of Austrian independence and would stand beside France in not allowing the German military to fully recuperate and start building armaments.<sup>146</sup> France's Foreign Minister Pierre Laval acknowledged Article XIII of the Treaty of London on January 7 1935:

Considering that the agreements of to-day's date have assured the settlement of the principal questions which previous agreements left outstanding between them, and especially of all questions concerning the application of Article 13 of the London Agreement of April 26, 1915.<sup>147</sup>

Forty-four thousand miles of Tunisian territory was tacked on to Libya's eastern border. The Italian empire also received the island of Doumeirah in the Red Sea and 300 miles was ceded from French Somaliland to Eritrea. The Franco-Italian agreement also put an end to any Italian designs in Tunisia. More importantly to Italy's future intrigues in Africa French Foreign Minister Pierre Laval offered Mussolini a "free hand" in Ethiopia.<sup>148</sup> Laval's alleged approval of a Fascist takeover of Ethiopia pleased the Duce who instructed the Italian military for such an endeavor.<sup>149</sup> Despite Laval's later denying

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<sup>146</sup> George W Baer. *The Coming of the Italian-Ethiopian War*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 72, 75.

<sup>147</sup> René Albrecht-Carrié, "The Present Significance of the Treaty of London of 1915," *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol. 54, no. 3 (1939); 385.

<sup>148</sup> G. Bruce Strang, *On the Fiery March* (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 39.

<sup>149</sup> Anthony Adamithwaite, *France and the Coming of the Second World War: 1936-1939* (Andover, Chapel River Press, 1977), 32-33.

he agreed to an Italian attack on Ethiopia, he preferred that Mussolini financially and politically exploit the region rather than occupy it.<sup>150</sup>

A skirmish occurred on December 5, 1934 at the Italian frontier outpost of Walwal, Ethiopia that Italy viewed as an attack on Italian soldiers. Thirty-two Italians and 150 Ethiopians were killed in the conflict. As tensions rose and the assurance of nonintervention on the part of France was guaranteed, Italy invaded Ethiopia in October 1935. The African land gains received from France and England regarding Article XIII were mere appetizers for what Mussolini had in mind. While speaking on October 2, 1935, Mussolini related the invasion with the failure of France and England giving Italy their just colonial spoils in Africa following the Great War:

When in 1915 Italy united its lot with those of the Allies, how many shouts of admiration and how many promises! But after the common victory...when it came to sitting around the table of the stingy peace, to us were left only the crumbs from the sumptuous colonial booty of others.<sup>151</sup>

It was an enormous gamble that Mussolini made and won by June 1936 with the establishment of Italian East Africa.

The Italian assault on Ethiopia marked a turning point in diplomatic relations with the western democracies. The emergence of the French Popular Front government in 1936 reversed the efforts at reconciliation that Laval achieved with Mussolini. The Popular Front ministry denounced Italy's actions in Ethiopia and the Laval-Mussolini agreement.<sup>152</sup> With Italy's compensation of Article XIII of the Treaty of London in jeopardy and the French government appeasing communism in France and abroad, an

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<sup>150</sup> Baer, 83.

<sup>151</sup> Charles F. Delzell, *Mediterranean Fascism: 1919-1945*, ed. (New York, Walker and Company, 1971), 194.

<sup>152</sup> Strang, 42.

enormous wedge was driven between Italy and France.<sup>153</sup> The actions taken by the Popular Front only reinforced Fascist suspicions that a Judaic-Freemasonic agenda had absorbed the Western Democratic nations. The coincidence of French Prime Minister Leon Blum's being Jewish and the Foreign Minister and Yvon Delbos, being a prominent French Freemason did not help diplomatic matters with Mussolini.<sup>154</sup> Italy would come to a new understanding with Germany.

The German-Italian alliance assured Hitler he could aggressively pursue his strategy of treaty revision concerning Germany's eastern borders and the free city of Danzig another European irredentist claim similar to Fiume. The Versailles Treaty left millions of Germans outside of their borders in the east under Polish governmental authority. The liberation of German irredentists who were allegedly being mistreated would be used as justification by Hitler to invade Poland.

Italy entered the Second World War on June 10, 1940, declaring war on France and Britain. France was not prepared for the German blitzkrieg, resulting in a rapid defeat as an armistice was made on June 24 1940. By October Mussolini was preparing an invasion of Greece. This offensive went against Italy's generals' tactical advice.<sup>155</sup> While Mussolini wanted to impress Hitler with a quick victory over Greece, the exact opposite occurred as the Italians were forced to retreat into Albania and await German assistance. Mussolini's ambitious but disastrous strategy worked as the Achilles' heel of Axis goals in southeast Europe and was essentially counterproductive. The German invasion of Britain was aborted, as the German *Wehrmacht* rapidly became over-extended in Russia,

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<sup>153</sup> Alexander De Grand. *Italian Fascism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 119.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>155</sup> Knox, 210.

Southern Europe and North Africa, in part due to logistical support for Italian military inferiority.<sup>156</sup>

As the war spread into the Balkans the Germans and Italians decided to establish an independent Croatia under Ante Pavelich in May 1941. By doing so it was agreed between Mussolini and Pavelich that Italy was to receive the region of Dalmatia which was promised to Italy in Article V of the Treaty of London.<sup>157</sup> This action concluded Mussolini's restoration of the Articles of the treaty. The remaining aspects of the treaty would have been undoubtedly fulfilled following the Italian-German victory in the war. Although the accomplishment of the Dalmatia annexation was brief, the satisfaction of at long last completing the Italian war objectives of the Great War was gratifying among Italian irredentists, the monarchy and Fascists that had dreamed of it since 1919 despite the unpopularity of the war among Italy's population. By 1943, Mussolini's popularity was at an all-time low in Italy and was now viewed as a pawn of Hitler's policies in a vain struggle against tremendous odds.

<sup>156</sup> MacGregor Knox, *Hitler's Italian Allies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>157</sup> Jozo Tomasevich, *War and Revolution in Yugoslavia, 1941-1945* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 235.

## Conclusion

The reunification of Italy in the 1860s marked a change in the balance of power among the European nations. Unity meant that Italy was no longer only a geographic expression, but rather a common people. Political and social realities prompted the necessity for Mediterranean expansion. The Italian peninsula was no longer sufficient to maintain the rising population therein. By joining the Triple Alliance these endeavors could be achieved gradually with the consent of Germany and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After nearly two decades of political maneuvering and colonial expansion, the voices of the Italian irredentists within the borders of Austria-Hungary weighed heavily on Italian leaders prior to the Great War. Once this unnatural symbiotic relationship showed signs of stress, it was predictable that Italy would cross their allies and declare war against them for the redemption of the abandoned lands and peoples. The Trieste and Eastern Adriatic coastal regions were seen as essential strategic components for a future Italy. It was principally for that reason that the Treaty of London was established in 1915. When the day of victory arrived Italian efforts were essential in bringing the Austro-Hungarian Empire to ruin.

Blinded by inter-allied arrogance and Italian prejudice, the Treaty of London was only accepted with severe limitations and conditions at the conclusion of the Paris Peace Conference. The historic goal of uniting the irredentist sons and daughters of Italy was thwarted. Due to Italy losing the diplomacy of the peace, the re-emergence of the interventionists, D'Annunzio and Mussolini after the war emphasized the feeling of betrayal to the Italian masses. As the Italian post-war governments further deconstructed

the Articles of the Treaty of London it barely resembled its original composition, which only added to the rhetoric of the Fascists. By the time of the 1922 March on Rome, Fascism promised to revise the peace treaties, and reconstruct the Treaty of London.

The Fascist government's foreign policy efforts regarding the revision of the Treaty of London were very effective. The city of Fiume, the Dodecanese Islands and African spoils from Britain and France are all examples of the peaceful diplomatic efforts made to appease Italy in obtaining her objectives and prestige. The conquest of Ethiopia marked the turning point of friendly relations with the British and French Empires. Tensions were further heightened following the 1939 incorporation of Albania as an Italian colony.

Once Fascist Italy entered the Second World War, Mussolini's ego could not be contained. His decision to attack Greece was a critical error that had severe consequences for Axis military strategy. Even though the annexation of the Dalmatian coast coincided with the Treaty of London, it was poor timing as numerous Italians no longer wanted war. Likewise Hitler's dumbfounded attack on Stalin was a move that would seal the doom of Fascist Germany and Italy.

The peace following the Second World War sent Italy reeling, with her African colonies stripped and the Articles of the Treaty of London once again destroyed. The most profitable Italian territory, Libya, contained the last remnants of Italian economic activities during the 1950s and 1960s. In 1970 Libya's new leader, Muammar Qaddafi confiscated all Italian properties and forced thousands of Italians out of the country



indefinitely.<sup>158</sup> This was the final act of castration imposed on Italy, as the United Nations remained deaf regarding Qaddafi's acts of domestic terror policies.

Like most European nations the birthrates have dwindled, while across the Mediterranean the Islamic nations of Africa have more than doubled since the Second World War's end. Due initially to the loss of manpower to rebuild Europe, thousands of people journeyed to Western Europe for work from Europe's former colonies. Just as the European Powers colonized Africa, since the 1960s Africa has slowly colonized Europe. It is with bitter irony that Italy is now dependent on non-Italian labor with a serious illegal immigration problem currently occurring.

In Italy, the government continues to give their former colonies forms of reparations for the actions of Fascism. In April 2005 Italy spent 7.7 million dollars returning the Axum Obelisk, which was taken from Ethiopia in 1937. Sixty years following the war's end, Ethiopia has been wracked with civil wars and starvation while continuing to demand humanitarian aid from Italy and other nations of wealth. The question remains, how much longer will an Italian government pay for their Fascist misdeeds? More importantly how much longer will Italians be willing to compromise via taxation for the political actions of their grandparents? The war guilt clauses imposed on Italy were psychologically damaging and, have haunted Italy's post-war generations. Continued reminders and demands of war reparations from the former African colonies will prove to be counter-productive and only irk Italians who were not even alive during the reign of Mussolini. Likewise, as today's Italians attempt to understand their nation's past, the simplified explanation of the rise of Fascism while excluding the Treaty of London is unacceptable. Among the numerous books that have been written on the

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<sup>158</sup> Segrè, 180-181.

subject, few give the Treaty of London its proper role. The avoidance of this most likely is due to the uncomfortable fact, that had the inter-allied peace negotiators at Paris in 1919 simply given Italy its just rewards as promised for fighting alongside the Triple Entente, Mussolini might have been a minor political figure in post-war Italy. The further disassociation and avoidance of the Treaty of London with its correlation to the rise of Fascism by historians are guilty of performing a disservice to tomorrow's students.

Article 1. A military convention shall be immediately concluded between the Government of France, the Government of Great Britain, and the Government of Italy, for the purpose of organizing the French, British and Italian forces in the East of Europe, in order to maintain the peace and to prevent any aggression against Germany.

This military convention shall be concluded in the form of an Armistice.

Article 2. The Government of France, Great Britain and Italy, shall undertake for the purpose of organizing very quickly and efficiently, in the East of Europe, all their resources.

Article 3. The Government of Italy shall render active and permanent assistance to the Government of France and Great Britain, and shall have the right to call upon the latter for such assistance as may be required.

A naval convention shall be immediately concluded in this effect between France, Great Britain and Italy.

Article 4. Under the Treaty of Peace, Italy shall obtain the Trentino, South Tyrol with its geographical and natural frontier (the Brenner frontier), as well as Trieste, the counties of Gorizia and Gradisca, all towns as far as the Gorenz and including Volterra and the Italian islands of Corsica and Lampedusa, as well as the small islands of Pelagie, Ustica, Capri, Ischia, Procida, the Punta di Stabia, Anzio, Civitavecchia, and the neighboring islets.

Note: The frontier engaged in accordance with Article 4 hereof shall be fixed as follows: From the Tyrol as far as south of the Brenner, it shall follow the crest of the Rofener Alps up to the mouth of the Adige and the Rienz, then following the Brenner and Brenner mountains and the Ofenau Peak of the Alps. The frontier shall then run towards the coast, cross Mt. Tirolo and join the present frontier of the Italian Sea. It shall follow the Riviera Sea of the Mt. Tirolo and then Mt. Tirolo to the summit of the Julian Alps by the Predil Pass, Mt. Mangia, the Yonina (Tavol) and the mountains of the Predil, Verbania and to the coast. From this point the frontier shall follow a north-south direction through the Karawitz, leaving the entire basin of the Sava and its tributaries (including the Sava) from the following the frontier shall cross down to the coast through the Mt. Carso, and the

<sup>1</sup> J. A. P. French, *World Affairs 1919-1920*, ed. by the Paris Peace Conference (New York: Columbia University Press, 1919), 234-239.

## TREATY OF LONDON AND DECLARATIONS<sup>1</sup>

I. Agreement between France, Russia, Great Britain and Italy, signed at London, April 26, 1915

By Order of his Government The Marquis Imperiali, Ambassador of His Majesty the King of Italy, has the honour to communicate to the Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Grey, His Britannic Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and to their Excellencies M. Paul Cambon, Ambassador of the French Republic, and to Count de Benckendorff, Ambassador of His Majesty the Emperor of All Russias, the following memorandum:

### *Memorandum*

Article 1. A military convention shall be immediately concluded between the General Staffs of France, Great Britain, Italy and Russia. This convention shall settle the minimum number of military forced to be employed by Russia against Austria-Hungary in order to prevent that Power from concentrating all its strength against Italy, in the event of Russia deciding to direct her principal effort against Germany.

This military convention shall settle questions of armistices, which necessarily comes within the scope of the Commanders-in-chief of the Armies.

Article 2. On her part, Italy undertakes to use her entire resources for the purpose of waging war jointly with France, Great Britain and Russia against all their enemies.

Article 3. The French and British fleets shall render active and permanent assistance to Italy until such time as the Austro-Hungarian fleet shall have been destroyed or until peace shall have been concluded.

A naval convention shall be immediately concluded to this effect between France, Great Britain and Italy.

Article 4. Under the Treaty of Peace, Italy shall obtain the Tretino, Cisalpine Tyrol with its geographical and natural frontier (the Brenner frontier), as well as Trieste, the counties of Gorizia and Gradisca, all Istria as far as the Quarnero and including Volosca and the Istrian islands of Cherso and Lussin, as well as the small islands of Plavnik, Unie, Canidole, Palazzuoli, San Pietro di Nembi, Asinello, Gruica, and the neighboring islets.

*Note.* The frontier required to ensure execution of Article 4 hereof shall be traced as follows: From the Piz Umbrail as far as north of the Stelvio, it shall follow the crest of the Rhetian Alps up to the sources of the Adige and the Eisach, then following the Reschen and Brenner mountains and the Oetz and Zikker heights. The frontier shall then bend towards the south, cross Mt. Toblach and join the present frontier of the Carnic Alps. It shall follow this frontier line as far as Mt. Tarvis and from Mt. Tarvis the watershed of the Julian Alps by the Predil Pass, Mt. Mangart, the Tricorno (Terglu) and the watersheds of the Podberdo, Podlaniscam and Idria passes. From this point the frontier shall follow a south-easterly direction towards the Schneeberg, leaving the entire basin of the Save and its tributaries outside Italian territory. From the Schneeberg the frontier shall come down to the coast in such way as to include Castua,

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<sup>1</sup> A. 1 From: René Albrecht-Carrié, *Italy at the Paris Peace Conference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 334-339.

Mattuglia and Volosca within Italian territory.

Article 5. Italy shall also be given province of Dalmatia within its present administrative boundaries, including to the north Lisarica and Tribania; to the south as far as line starting from Cape Planka on the coast following eastwards the crests of the heights forming the watershed, in such a way as to leave within Italian territory all the valleys and streams flowing towards Sebenico - such as the Cicola, Kerka, Butisnica and their tributaries. She shall also obtain all the islands situate to the north and west of Dalmatia, from Premuda, Selve, Ulbo, Scherda, Maon, Pago and Patadura to the north, up to Meleda to the south including Sant' Andrea, Budi, Lissa, Lesina, Tercola, Curzola, Cazza and Lagosta, as well as the neighboring rocks and islets and Pelagosa, with the exception of Greater and Lesser Zirona, Bua, Solta and Brazza.

To be neutralized:

(1) The entire coast from Cape Planka on the north to the southern base of peninsula of Sabbioncello in the south, so as to include the whole of that peninsula; (2) the portion of the coast which begins in the north at a point situated 10 kilometers south of the headland of Ragusa Vecchia extending southward as far as the River Vořussa, in such a way as to include the gulf and ports of Cattaro, Antivari, Dulcigno, St. Jean de Medua and Durazzo, without prejudice to the rights of Montenegro consequent on the declarations exchanged between the Powers in April and May 1909. As these rights apply only to the present Montenegrin territory, they cannot be extended to any territory or ports which may be assigned to Montenegro. Consequently neutralisation shall not apply to any part of the coast now belonging to Montenegro. There shall be maintained all restrictions concerning the port of Antivari which were accepted by Montenegro in 1909; (3) finally, all the islands not given to Italy.

*Note.* The following Adriatic territories shall be assigned by the four Allied Powers to Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro:

In Upper Adriatic, the whole coast from the bay of Volosca on the borders of Istria as far as the northern frontier of Dalmatia, including the coast which is at present Hungarian, and all the coast of Croatia, with the port of Fiume and small ports of Novi and Carlopago, as well as the islands of Veglia, Pervichio, Gregorio, Goli and Arbe. And, in the Lower Adriatic (in the region interesting Serbia and Montenegro) the whole coast from Cape Planka as far as the River Drin, with the important harbours of Spalato, Ragusa, Cattaro, Antivari, Dulcigno and St. Jean de Medua and the islands of Greater and Lesser Zirona, Bua, Solta, Brazza, Jaclian and Calamotta. The port of Durazzo to be assigned to the independent Moslem State of Albania.

Article 6. Italy shall receive full sovereignty over Valona, the island of Saseno and surrounding territory of sufficient extent to assure defence of these points (from the Vořussa to the north and east, approximately to the northern boundary of the district of Chimara on the south).

Article 7. Should Italy obtain the Tretino in accordance with the provisions of Article 4, together with Dalmatia and the Adriatic islands within the limits specified in Article 5, and Bay of Valona (Article 6), and if the central portions of Albania is reserved for the establishment of a small autonomous neutralized State, Italy shall not oppose the division of Northern and Southern Albania between Montenegro, Serbia and Greece, should France, Great Britain and Russia so desire. The coast from the southern boundary of Italian territory of Valona (see Article 6) up to Cape Stylos shall be neutralized.

Italy shall be charged with the representation of the State of Albania in its

relations with foreign Powers.

Italy agrees, moreover, to leave sufficient territory in any event to the east of Albania to ensure the existence of a frontier line between Greece and Serbia to the west of Lake Ochrida.

Article 8. Italy shall receive entire sovereignty over the Dodecanese Islands which she is at present occupying.

Article 9. Generally speaking, France, Great Britain and Russia recognise that Italy is interested in the maintenance of the balance of power in the Mediterranean and that, in the event of the total or partial partition of Turkey in Asia, she ought to obtain a just share of the Mediterranean region adjacent to the province of Adalia, where Italy has already acquired rights and interests which formed the subject of an Italo-British convention. The zone which shall eventually be allotted to Italy shall be delimited, at the proper time, due account being taken of the existing interest of France and Great Britain.

The interest of Italy shall also be taken into consideration in the event of the territorial integrity of the Turkish Empire being maintained and of alterations being made in the zones of interest of the Powers.

If France, Great Britain and Russia occupy any territories in Turkey in Asia during the course of the war, the Mediterranean region bordering of the Province of Adalia within the limits indicated above shall be reserved to Italy, who shall be entitled to occupy it.

Article 10. All rights and privileges in Libya at present belonging to the Sultan by virtue of the Treaty of Lausanne are transferred to Italy.

Article 11. Italy shall receive a share of any eventual war indemnity corresponding to her efforts and her sacrifices.

Article 12. Italy declares that she associates herself in the declaration made by France, Great Britain and Russia to the effect that Arabia and the Moslem Holy Places in Arabia shall be left under the authority of an independent Moslem Power.

Article 13. In the event of France and Great Britain increasing their colonial territories in Africa at the expense of Germany, those two Powers agree in principle that Italy may claim some equitable compensation, particularly as regards the settlement in her favour of the questions relative to the frontiers of the Italian colonies of Eritrea, Somaliland and Libya and the neighbouring colonies belonging to France and Great Britain.

Article 14. Great Britain undertakes to facilitate the immediate conclusion, under equitable conditions, of a loan of at least £50,000,000 to be issued on the London market.

Article 15. France, Great Britain and Russia shall support such opposition as Italy may make any proposal in the direction of introducing a representative of the Holy See in any peace negotiations or negotiations for the settlement of questions raised by the present war.

Article 16. The present arrangement shall be held secret. The adherence of Italy to the Declaration of the 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1914, shall alone be made public, immediately upon declaration of war by or against Italy.

After having taken act of the foregoing memorandum, the representative of France, Great Britain and Russia, duly authorized to that effect, have concluded the following agreement with the representative of Italy, also duly authorized by his



Government:

France, Great Britain and Russia give their full assent to the memorandum presented by the Italian Government.

With reference to Articles 1, 2, and 3 of the memorandum, which provide for military and naval co-operation between the four Powers, Italy declares that she will take the field at the earliest possible date and within a period not exceeding one month from the signature of these presents.

In faith whereof the undersigned have signed the present agreement and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at London, in quadruplicate, the 26<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1915.

(L.S.) E. GREY.  
(L.S.) IMPERIALI.  
(L.S.) BENCKENDORFF  
(L.S.) PAUL CAMBON.

II. DECLARATION BY WHICH FRANCE, GREAT BRITAIN, ITALY AND  
RUSSIA UNDERTAKE NOT TO CONCLUDE A SEPARATE PEACE DURING THE  
COURSE OF THE PRESENT WAR

The Italian Government, having decided to participate in the present war with the French, British and Russian Governments and to accede to the Declaration made at London, the 5<sup>th</sup> September, 1914, by the three above-named Governments,

The undersigned, being duly authorised by their respective Governments, make the following declaration:

The French, British, Italian and Russian Governments mutually undertake not to conclude a separate peace during the course of the present war,

The four Governments agree that, whenever there may be occasion to discuss the terms of peace, none of the Allied Powers shall lay down any conditions of peace without Previous agreement with each of the other Allies.

In faith whereof the undersigned have signed the present Declaration and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at London, in quadruplicate, the 26<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1915.

(L.S.) E. GREY.  
(L.S.) IMPERIALI.  
(L.S.) BENCKENDORFF  
(L.S.) PAUL CAMBON

III. DECLARATION

The Declaration of the 26<sup>th</sup> April, 1915, whereby France, Great Britain, Italy and Russia undertake not to conclude a separate peace during the present European war, shall

remain secret.

After the declaration of war by or against Italy, the four Powers shall sign a new declaration in identical terms, which shall thereupon be made public.

In faith whereof the undersigned have executed the present Declaration and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done at London, in quadruplicate, the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, 1915.

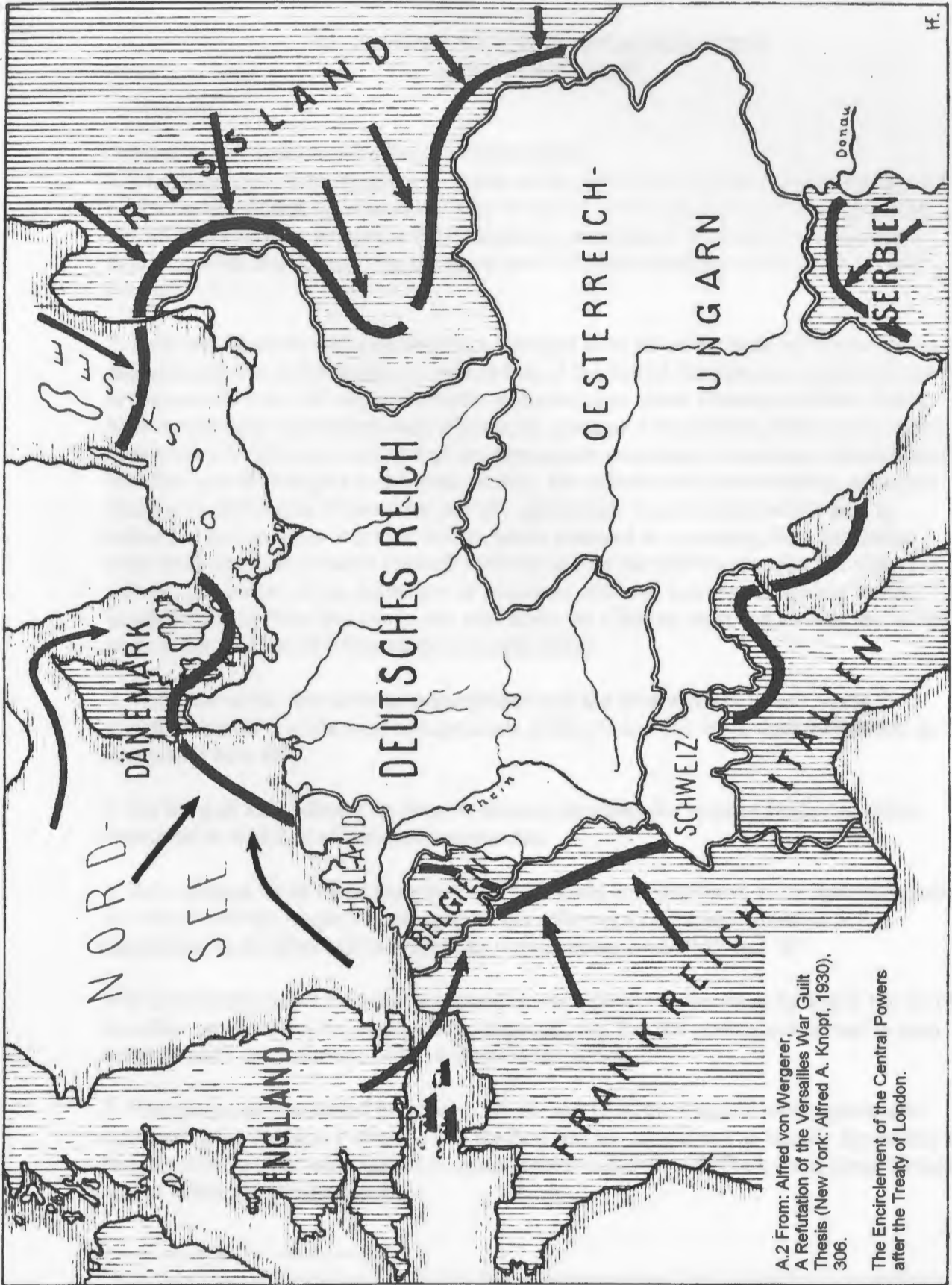
(L.S.) E. GREY.

(L.S.) IMPERIALI.

(L.S.) BENCKENDORFF

(L.S.) PAUL CAMBON





A.2 From: Alfred von Wergerer, A Refutation of the Versailles War Guilt Thesis (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1930), 306.

The Encirclement of the Central Powers after the Treaty of London.

**ST. JEAN DE MAURIENNE AGREEMENT**  
**APRIL 19-21, 1917<sup>1</sup>**

Subject to the consent of the Russian Government:

1. The Italian Government gives its assent to the provisions contained in Article 1 and 2 of the Franco-British agreements of May 9 and 16, 1916. On their part the French and British Governments recognize Italy's rights-on an identical basis as to conditions of administration and interest – to the green and "C" zones indicates in the map attached hereto.
2. Italy undertakes to make of Smyrna a free port in so far as the trade of France, her colonies and her protectorates, as well as that of the British Empire and its dependencies, is concerned. Italy will enjoy the rights and privileges which France and Great Britain have reciprocally guaranteed each other in the ports of Alexandretta, Haifa and of Saint Jean d'Acre (Akka) by Articles 5 of the agreements mentioned heretofore. Mersina shall be a free port with regard to the trade of Italy, her colonies and protectorates, and there shall be no difference of treatment nor any advantages in port duties which may be refused to Italian ships or goods. Italian goods destined to or coming from the Italian zone shall obtain free transit through Mersina and on the railway crossing the vilayet of Adana. There shall be no difference of treatment, direct or indirect, as against Italian goods on any railway line nor in any port along the Cilician coast and serving the Italian zone at the expense of Italian ships or merchandise.
3. The form of the international administration in the brown zones, which forms the object of Article 3 of the said arrangements of May 9 and 16, 1916, shall be decided in agreement with Italy.
4. On her part Italy adheres to the provisions concerning the ports of Haifa and Akka contained in Article 4 of the same agreements.
5. Italy adheres, in so far as the green and "C" zones are concerned, to the two paragraphs of Article 8 of the Anglo-French agreements referring to the custom system to be maintained in the blue and red zones, as well as in the zones "A" and "B".
6. It is understood that interests possessed by each power in the zones falling to the lot of the other powers shall be scrupulously respected, but that the powers concerned in such interests shall not make use of them for political action.
7. The provisions contained in Articles 10, 11 and 12 of the Anglo-French agreements concerning the Arabian Peninsula and the Red Sea are considered as equally applicable to Italy as if that power were named in those articles together with France and Great Britain and as of the contracting parties.

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<sup>1</sup> A.3 From: René Albrecht-Carrié, *Italy at the Peace Conference* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1938), 345-346.

8. It is understood that, in case it should not be possible at the conclusion of the war to secure to one or more of the said powers the whole of the advantages contemplated in the agreements concluded by the Allied Powers concerning the allotment to each of them of a portion of the Ottoman Empire, the maintenance of the Mediterranean equilibrium shall be fairly taken into consideration, in conformity with Article 9 of the Pact of London of April 26, 1915, in any change or arrangement affecting the provinces of the Ottoman Empire as a consequence of the war.

9. It is understood that the present memorandum shall be communicated to the Russian Government in order to enable it to express its opinion.

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