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The US internationalist policy on Upper Silesia in 1918–19

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to examine the position of the United States towards a crucial East-Central European question of Upper Silesia from 1918 to 1919 within the context of the US internationalist design for the post-war European order. The article reveals the approach of the administration of Thomas Woodrow Wilson to the Polish-German dispute over Upper Silesia as a problem of East-Central European and continental dimension, closely affecting both political and economic conditions in Eastern Europe. The US delegation at the Paris Peace Conference sought to establish a kind of international control over Upper Silesia, particularly in economic terms. Instead of 'nationalist' and contentious frontiers, which threatened European security, the United States intended to keep cohesion of Silesian industrial regions that harmonized with the Wilsonian idea of a democratic community of nations. Despite an apparent failure of Wilson's project of a European liberal community after 1919, the internationalist perspective determined the US attitude towards the Upper Silesian question and the Polish-German frontier as crucial East-Central European issues in this period of the twentieth century.

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Introduction

This study examines the role of the United States' internationalist political approach to resolve the question of Upper Silesia, a significant economic area on the Polish-German frontier, which served as a testing ground for President Thomas Woodrow Wilson's policies on Germany, Poland and European peace and stability.¹ It was Upper Silesia that highlighted the ideological dimension of the United States' projection of power over post-imperial territories, where moral principles intersected with political and economic considerations and also with hope to create a universal rules-based order.² This case invites an analysis of how the United States elevated a local dispute in Silesia to an international issue by introducing broader themes of peace, democracy and economic growth into discussions about European order. As claimed by Natasha Wheatley, it was the internationalization of Central European regional questions rather than national self-determination that turned the post-war dissolution of old empires into a new management of post-imperial spatial sovereignty over territories inherited by newly established nation-states.³ It is notable, however, that the most distinctive case of this United States-

inspired internationalist transformation being applied specifically to East-Central Europe was in Upper Silesia.

The paper presumes that the United States' attempt to internationalize Upper Silesia's industrial resources, paired with its advocacy for liberal-democratic self-determination, exemplifies a US vision of 'liberal peace'. The latter idea eschewed the conventional politics of nations in this region committed to borders and territories by prioritizing humanitarian and transnational concerns such as European security, social progress, industrial development and peace for 'humankind', as articulated by Wilson in his 1917 'Peace Without Victory' address.⁴ His theology-like principles suggested that a universal desire of European nations for individual freedom, democracy and prosperity would transcend historical, national or ideological frontiers.⁵ However, Upper Silesia's political dynamics, based on the historical and national identities of Germans, Poles and Czechs, led to a tense relationship with Wilson's liberal notions of common longing for individual freedom, democracy and economic prosperity across boundaries.⁶ Therefore, the Silesian dispute was seen by US policymakers as a potential threat to peace precisely because it contained a potential and unpredictable seed of a renewed European conflict over borders, territories and national identities. This Wilsonian 'internationalism of fear' linking foreign affairs with the United States' domestic condition, according to Frank Ninkovich, translated into ideas of control over European disputes as the only means to create an environment hospitable to liberalism.⁷

Therefore, this US concept of peace seemed detached from the interest of any particular European nation-state, its political body, territory or historical experience. It is exactly within this internationalist perspective that the Upper Silesian question must be examined to comprehend the significance of this region for the United States' vision of democratic self-determination, economic projects, coal issues and general order in Europe. Moreover, the United States' transnational, socio-economic resource-based approach to Upper Silesia may explain the apparent US disregard for the national and historical grievances underpinning the German-Polish-Czech dispute. The study of the US approach to Upper Silesia as the borderland of the East and West of Europe might also reflect a broader idea of reshaping political geography, and delineating the frontiers and territories in this region according to a Western-imagined divide between 'civilization' and 'barbarism'.⁸ An investigation of the United States' distinctive attitude to this region may thus contribute to a better understanding of the internationalist background to US policy in Europe.

It was symptomatic for the United States to subordinate the Polish-German territorial issue over Upper Silesia to the idea of the permanent pacification of Europe, as outlined in Wilson's Fourteen Points statement in January 1918. As the US president believed, this issue bore similarities to the regional crisis in Bosnia and Serbia in 1914, which escalated into a global conflict necessitating an international solution.⁹ Therefore, the promising statement made by Wilson on 8 January 1918 regarding the restitution of Polish statehood based on 'undisputably Polish' lands amounted to a rather obscure frontier project for Poland.¹⁰ This was due to the US conviction that Poland's unlimited right to territorial sovereignty constituted a potential source of a future conflict, one which risked spreading to regions claimed by other nations or ethnic groups, such as the Germans, Czechs or Ukrainians. Indeed, Poland's national programme presented at the Paris Peace Conference

envisaged security based on the most defensible borders extended well beyond the 'indisputably Polish' areas.¹¹ Nevertheless, the restitution of Poland was a decisive factor in the United States' reshaping of East-Central Europe in accordance with the liberal model of interconnectivity and commercial exchange between democratic nations.

As stated by Trygve Throntveit and Larry Wolff, these liberal principles derived from the US political tradition embodied in the common right to 'life, liberty and pursuit of happiness', as well as the liberalization of trade, all supposedly leading to what the US president described as a 'new international psychology'.¹² Consequently, Wilson wished to create a 'world safe for democracy' based on the idea of nations as 'building blocks', instead of absolutely sovereign territorial communities.¹³ A desired 'perpetual peace' could only be secured by a league composed of nations with common democratic traditions, morals and interests, able to educate each other nation to 'bear its share of the burden'.¹⁴ However, the US attitude to frontiers, territory and crucial economic regions like Upper Silesia was hardly consistent with the interests of the newly independent nation-states desperately seeking to secure their own territorial sovereignty. The Wilsonian dream of a community of human aspirations in the area of freedom, justice and economic prosperity seemed irreconcilable with the Polish belief that national independence based on territorial sovereignty must preclude individual liberty.

Notably, this internationalist course of US policy on Upper Silesia has always derived from different public and private voices. But despite their tactical disagreements, they also shared a certain, general body of liberal values and philosophical outlook on world affairs. Internal US divisions over European policy therefore seemed irrelevant in the emerging consensual position of US liberal internationalist notions. Moreover, even the most vocal opponents of Wilsonian internationalism, such as senator William E. Borah, not to mention Herbert C. Hoover or Elihu Root, emphasized a need to maintain 'not territorial boundaries, not territorial integrity, but [...] respect and preserve the sentiments and passions for justice and for freedom'.¹⁵

The historiographical perspective on US involvement in East-Central European territorial conflicts has often downplayed the ideological dimension of Wilson's policies, particularly in Upper Silesia.¹⁶ Scholars like Margaret Macmillan and Arthur Walworth have described this region as a minor issue with little connection to US post-war planning in Europe.¹⁷ For the same reason, according to the conventional historical narrative, during its preparations for the Paris Peace Conference, the United States did not specifically engage with East-Central Europe's territorial problems.¹⁸ Notably, even a major study by Lawrence E. Gelfand on *The Inquiry* only mentions Upper Silesia once in reference to Wilson's contradictory logic in applying the self-determination rule.¹⁹ However, for Americans, Upper Silesia held political and economic importance beyond the context of a regional dispute. Although the United States consistently resisted political obligations towards Europe, Wilson's administration viewed the Polish-German border as integral to general European order.²⁰ Furthermore, earlier studies gave scant attention to the ideological basis of Wilson's view of the Polish-German borderland.²¹ In fact, this dimension of US foreign policy was either entirely absent or severely understated in reference to Upper Silesia. For instance, they made virtually no reference whatsoever to US attempts in 1919 to internationalize the Upper Silesian coal industry. Even a

study by Wesley J. Reisser on the post-war discussion in the United States of European borders omits an analysis of US liberal thought and its impact on the political imagination with regard to Upper Silesia.²²

This article does not attempt to analyse the broad concept of US liberal internationalism. It also avoids revisiting the achievements or failures of Wilson's broader foreign policy, nor does it duplicate previous analysis of the Upper Silesian dispute or Wilson's European post-war designs. Instead, the paper highlights how, despite the 'official absence' of the United States in the Upper Silesian dispute, the US internationalist stance pursued an 'effective presence' through deliberate political goals combining liberal ethics with economic reasons.²³ In other words, it demonstrates that 'Wilson's ethnic self-determination', or particular historical arguments, were less relevant for US policy than economic, moral and humanitarian grounds extending beyond purely geopolitical considerations.

The paper outlines different dimensions of the United States' internationalist approach to Upper Silesia, beginning with a general portrayal of the East-Central European issues as a special theatre of US interest. These include the restoration of Poland, the treatment of the defeated Germany, and the corresponding escalation of the territorial dispute over Silesia. Considering these circumstances, the article reveals the international importance of this region, which was brought to the attention of the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 by Wilson and the US delegation. In particular, the economic attitude of Herbert C. Hoover's project of control over Upper Silesia's coal industry for the alleged benefit of Europe represented the most distinctive indication of the United States' internationalist outlook on this issue.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the primary sources used in preparing this article include both unpublished and published records from the State Department collections of the National Archives at College Park and Foreign Relations of the United States volumes. Although they rarely contain new or sensational facts, this paper aims to exploit those archival sources by eliciting US political thinking on the Upper Silesian issue, thus going beyond a conventional reading of diplomatic history. Since the United States' internationalist policy was never a clearly defined ideology, researching the Upper Silesian issue involves reference not only to the primary records but also to both classic historical works and recent studies related to the scattered evidence of the US perspective on the Silesian question. Accordingly, the methodology applied in this work consists of identifying internationalist references and tracing liberal ideological factors in different US sources dedicated to the problem of Upper Silesia or East-Central Europe. Instead of a purely factual outline of historical and diplomatic developments, which rendered some previous works unrevealing, this paper, by focusing on a single regional case, offers a more reflective reading of the key internationalist context of this crucial period in European history.

The United States' approach to the Upper Silesian dispute

While President Wilson's efforts at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to establish a 'liberal peace' for Europe encountered Polish, Czechoslovak and German national resistance, hardened by concurring Bolshevik threat, the US mission to Silesia also became frustrated by nationalism, anarchy and unpredictability of local conditions, inducing a

US attempt to secure Upper Silesian economic resources in order to pacify growing political tensions.

Even in the period preceding the Armistice, Wilson had already stated that a common 'liberal peace' could only be achieved by the United States by avoiding any formal obligations to local 'territorial issues', Upper Silesia being one such example.²⁴ Consequently, the complex position of Wilson and his scientific advisers concerning the Upper Silesian issue within the context of Polish-German frontier was revealed after the US delegation arrived in Paris, before the opening of the Peace Conference. Accordingly, the American Commission to Negotiate Peace devised a preliminary outline of Poland's national frontiers, drawn along those of the former Congress Kingdom of Poland, unspecified Russian and Austrian 'districts', and including a territorial 'cession from Germany'.²⁵ Although Upper Silesia was not mentioned in this US draft of the peace treaty, some unspecified territories were singled out for separation from Germany upon the decisions of the Allied and Associated Powers. While the US delegation was more specific in the case of the Saar and Rhineland than Silesia, Wilson nonetheless remained opposed to any French annexations at the cost of wrecking Germany's economy.²⁶ Instead of 'passions and rancors of the moment', he called consistently for the same transnational, liberal peace above 'men's hot anger' and 'cries of vengeance' as in the Eastern European theatre.

In fact, only French diplomacy communicated to the US delegation that the entirety of Upper Silesia should be granted to Poland due to its Polish national character, but that this 'cannot be by way of restitution'.²⁷ It is thus interesting to note the apparent similarity of the French attitude with the suggestion made by Robert H. Lord, a historian friendly to Poles, who recommended the annexation of all of Upper Silesia by Poland up to the Oder River.²⁸ Lord belonged to The Inquiry, a team of experts appointed by President Wilson in September 1917 and led by Edward House. Consisting of approximately 150 scientists from the fields of history, geography, law, economy or philosophy, The Inquiry was to prepare materials for the purposes of peace negotiations.²⁹ However, contrary to Reisser's confusing assertion, neither The Inquiry nor any Polish officials ever considered the prospect of Poland controlling the entire historical region of Silesia, which centred on the Lower Silesian city of Breslau (Wrocław).³⁰ Discussions only referred to its eastern, industrialized part: Upper Silesia.

The US proposal for Upper Silesia in favour of Poland was never followed by US opposition to the Czechoslovak armed occupation of the Cieszyn (Teschen) Silesia region from January 1919.³¹ As a result, Polish prime minister Ignacy Jan Paderewski informed the Sejm (Poland's parliament) of the 'great anxiety' of Polish public opinion caused by the government in Prague claiming the 'consent of the Entente powers and the United States' to the Czech invasion of Silesian Cieszyn. This United States' stance on territorial questions, which was largely incomprehensible to Poles, obstructed Paderewski's efforts to receive Wilson's approval for the Polish claims regarding Upper Silesia and other Polish frontiers. In fact, according to Walworth, it was Masaryk, the president of Czechoslovakia, who was more capable of presenting himself effectively to the US president as a leading voice for the collaboration of Central European nations, an idea closer to US liberal philosophy than 'clashing national egos'.³² Accordingly, the United States' inaction in Cieszyn Silesia might have derived from Wilson's conscious support

for Czechoslovakia as the preferred manager of this important coal-producing region for the benefit of European peace.

Despite Wilson's apparent sympathy for the Polish cause, the US delegation at the Paris Peace Conference refused to accept the geopolitical argument put forward by the Polish delegate and nationalist leader Roman Dmowski regarding the whole of Poland's western frontier, including coal-rich Upper Silesia, as a defensive line against Germany.³³ According to the US president's internationalist view, the solution to the East-Central-European territorial disputes was to be grounded in the democratic principle of self-determination through the largely abstract 'will of the people', rather than particular national rights or historical claims. In contrast to the 'national egos' of East-Central Europe, it was the League of Nations that was envisaged as not only halting the Bolshevik threat, but also restraining 'anti-revolutionary nationalism', thus enabling federalization, the reduction of commercial barriers, and changing the 'traditional concepts of economic development', based on exclusively national-interest and protectionist measures.³⁴ In accordance with Wilson's liberal outlook, Central European nations, like most traditionally rooted societies, were driven by 'irrational' ambitions of autocratic governments, which would be replaced by the 'will of the people' only as a result of the last disastrous war.³⁵ Allied concerns regarding the 'immaturity' of the newly independent states led to the creation of a minority-rights clause at the Paris Peace Conference. This reduced Polish and Czechoslovakian sovereignty to a qualified condition applied only to post-imperial East-Central Europe.³⁶

As was the case with disputes among Hungary, Romania and Czechoslovakia, Upper Silesia served the purpose of a particular laboratory of US-inspired social and political progress in this part of Europe.³⁷ By attributing disorder, violence and 'poisonous seeds of intrigue' to East-Central Europe, the United States emphasized its own patronizing notion of the rights of the 'weak nations', assuming that the latter would appeal to Western powers to secure their sovereign existence. This Western imagination of Eastern Europe, framed as a civilizational imbalance between objects and subjects, affected the United States' permanent distance towards Poland, Hungary or Russia, concealed behind a façade of fascination.³⁸ In 1919, in the face of the Bolshevik threat to the Hungarian government of Bela Kun, the Americans emphasized the soft power of relief programmes, representative democracy and the common needs of food, transport and work over military intervention as tools for settling disputes among Hungary, Romania and Czechoslovakia.³⁹ For Wilson, the question of ethnic, historical or economic rights to Transylvania were secondary to the internationalist principle of establishing frontiers permeable to commercial exchange for all nations involved. Although the Allies supported the Romanian takeover of Transylvania as a means to contain the spread of Bolshevism, both Wilson and Lansing remained opposed to creating a 'neutral zone' or fixing the national boundaries there, since such solutions were seen as both 'unjust' and beneficial for the communist advance in East-Central Europe.⁴⁰ As a result, despite his support for the Polish, Romanian and Czech nations as a counterbalance to Bolshevism, Wilson mistrusted the liberated Slavs' alleged predisposition to 'barbarity', which could result in a regional anti-Western block set against any 'progressive' idea.⁴¹ After all, in the context of Germany's war defeat and the threat of the rival internationalist ideology of the Bolsheviks, the United States tended to favour the German perspective in Upper Silesia over that of 'disagreeable' Poles.⁴²

Therefore, the US mission in Silesia in March 1919, directed by the US Field Mission in Germany and led by Captain Robert L. Black and Lieutenant Albert H. Stonestreet, pointed to the Polish and Czech territorial claims as threatening European peace to the same degree as Bolshevik aggression and food shortages.⁴³ The nationalist background of the issue of Upper Silesia and Cieszyn Silesia thus constituted a serious obstacle for the US vision of an economically prosperous and non-revolutionist Europe. For this reason, from January 1919, Archibald C. Coolidge from the US observation mission began to alert the Commission about the Polish-Czechoslovak conflict resulting from the 'recent seizure by the Poles of the disputed territory of [Cieszyn-Teschen] Silesia', as well as Polish concerns about 'Czech imperialism' when the region was taken over soon by Czechoslovak troops.⁴⁴ Still, according to the representatives of the same US mission, it was the Poles who constituted the social and political destabilizing factor in Upper Silesia, since 'the Polish Communists known as the PPS – and the Polish Nationalists' used to organize strikes on the largest scale in the region.⁴⁵ Americans did not even conceal their scepticism regarding Józef Piłsudski, Poland's Chief of State and major political authority, considered by many Poles to be a father of reborn Poland, since Coolidge saw his 'socialist' leadership of Poland as an 'example of inefficiency'. The latter opinion, inspired by the Western powers' general distrust of Piłsudski, seemed to refer not only to his wartime cooperation with the Central Powers and socialist background, but mainly to Piłsudski's ambitious project of a federal union of Central and Eastern European nations that could undermine the political geography designed by the internationalist Wilson administration and the League of Nations. For this reason, Coolidge wished that the Poles would refrain from 'discussing politics and frontiers when the Bolsheviks are practically at our doors and there will soon be no Poland left about which to discuss'. To avoid this feared 'anarchy', Coolidge favoured the establishment of only temporary frontiers within some of the disputed territories, for instance, Upper Silesia, in order to stop these conflicts escalating.⁴⁶ The United States was convinced that the threat of the dismemberment of Upper Silesia and the 'Balkanisation of the former territories of Austria' would become 'a source of woe and peril, not only to the territories themselves but to the rest of the world'.⁴⁷ There was no better description of the US internationalist approach to the Upper Silesian question linked to concerns about European affairs in general.

Since Wilson favoured assimilating different peoples in democratic nation-states, his growing opposition to Polish claims in both Upper and Cieszyn Silesia stemmed from US resistance towards George Clemenceau's strategic concerns, which considered Poland and Czechoslovakia as a counterbalance to Germany.⁴⁸ In April 1919, Secretary of State Robert Lansing tried to arrange Polish-Czechoslovak talks on the division of Cieszyn Silesia, with the aim being to eliminate the influence of 'the French military clique' in this part of Europe, which inspired Poland to undertake anti-German actions in the form of provoking uprisings in the Polish-German borderlands.⁴⁹ At the time, Lansing communicated to Paderewski that the failure of Polish-Czechoslovak negotiations concerning the city of Cieszyn would result in an external intervention in local border conflicts. Even Hugh Gibson, the first diplomatic envoy of the United States in Warsaw, despite his friendly attitude towards Poland, highlighted serious concerns in his letter to Lord, namely that the United States' inconsistent policy might encourage both the Poles and the Czechs to undertake 'lawless acts' by taking military control of their respective

regions of Silesia.⁵⁰ Although he wished success for Paderewski's policy of cooperation with the West, Gibson criticized the Polish attempt to conquer 'a Polish piece of the territory' to the detriment of the rights of neighbouring nations. Gibson's opinion did not diverge thus from Wilson's liberal internationalism, which assumed 'self-control' from the liberated nations, closely combined with a vision of prosperous economic development that would restrain the 'wilderness' of violence and conflicts over territory.⁵¹

It was symptomatic of US evaluations of East-West civilizational divergence that Robert L. Black and Albert H. Stonestreet of the US mission in the Silesian-Galician borderland noted the 'startling contrast' between the industrial development of German-held Mysłowice and the view of a 'miserable Polish village of peasants' with 'hovels surrounded by uncultivated fields' on the other side of the Przemsza River.⁵² In their opinion, Upper Silesian industry was 'totally German', making the integration of these two different worlds seem impossible. The US position thus appeared to oppose any division of Upper Silesia that could disrupt the cohesion of this region, resulting in a 'practical embargo' in Polish and German economic relationships. Moreover, according to the report's assessment, neither the national nor economic structure of the region was favourable for the Poles. Black and Stonestreet would consequently distinguish the category of a nationally ambivalent population described as a 'Silesian Pole or Water Pole' (borrowed from the German 'Wasserpole').⁵³ At the same time, the US field mission would become familiar with the German arguments that a 'Silesian Pole' belonging exclusively to the working class 'has not created a single industry in Upper Silesia', since he is 'utterly incapable of creating or maintaining an industrial organisation'. According to this statement, the Poles in Silesia would constitute the most 'culturally backward' workforce necessary to maintain economic activity while remaining in the hands of the German industrial class.

Notably, although the above simplified picture represented a particular biased opinion of the German Silesian community, it easily aligned with the broader Western imagination of Silesia as a frontier between Europe and Asia, which nonetheless belonged historically to the West, namely Germany, instead of Poland assigned to the East.⁵⁴ It should be noted that General Tasker H. Bliss, a member of the US delegation in Paris, shared this opinion, warning Wilson against 'those cranky people' whose political immaturity pushed them to violence while forcing the intervention of a 'reasonable' external arbiter to set the national frontier for them.⁵⁵ Although Bliss' comment from 31 March 1919 referred to the attitude of the Poles and Ukrainians on the ceasefire in Eastern Galicia, it was addressed to Wilson as defining the unpredictable 'Polish state of mind'. Black ultimately questioned the reliability of the German perspective on Upper Silesia, but he also confirmed that this region was inhabited by 'a strong minority if not a majority of pure Germans' and 'loyal Silesian Poles' implacably opposed to separation from Germany.⁵⁶ Last but not least, the argument that Upper Silesia is 'an essential factor in the German economy' and for the rest of Europe appeared to be convincing to Wilson's mind. Ultimately, although Wilson supported granting most of the industrial region to Poland, he remained hostage to his own principle of self-determination, invoked by Lloyd George and Archibald Coolidge, which required a division of Upper Silesia on terms far less favourable for the Poles.⁵⁷

After all, those conclusions of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace in Paris which affected decision-making on Upper Silesia referred to the need for an 'effective

barrier' against the Bolshevik threat in the form of food relief and economic assistance to sustain territorial integration and the democratization of Germany instead of Poland.⁵⁸ The Commission's intention was confirmed by the communications from the German authorities referring to the 'danger of anarchy' and disruption of supplies connected with the 'unsettled conditions in the east', where the conflict over Upper Silesia and Greater Poland would intensify.⁵⁹ In February 1919, a similarly negative perception of Poland was communicated to the US observation mission by the representatives of German administration in Upper Silesia, claiming that 'the Bolsheviks are gaining complete control of Poland' while 'Poland looks on Upper Silesia as a cow to be milked'.⁶⁰ Pessimism regarding the stability and reliability of Polish statehood practically eliminated any chance of receiving US support to settle the Upper Silesian question in Poland's favour. The United States was convinced that the solution to East-Central-European problems consisted in widespread economic prosperity and political stability in Europe, and not in any Polish-German balance of power. In Wilson's view, 'Bolshevism thrives only on starvation and disorder', hence, economic support from the United States for East-Central-European nations was believed to develop democratic common will and 'sane governments' to contain both 'anarchism' and revolution.⁶¹ However, the utopian US vision of Upper Silesia and other local borderlands as a 'melting-pot of nations' assimilating with one other in universal citizen rights was about to encounter opposition not only from Poland, but also from the German and British position.⁶² Although Wilson's goal was to extend domestic liberalism into foreign affairs, the proposed peace treaty solutions for Germany, Austria-Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia all seemed far from liberal.⁶³

Therefore, it was by no means surprising when, on 7 May 1919, the German delegation in Paris rejected the peace terms presented by the Western Powers.⁶⁴ While this outcome increased the threat of German aggression against Poland, it also inclined Wilson to the idea of conducting a plebiscite in Upper Silesia as a means to determine the authentic 'will' of this region's inhabitants, regardless of their nationality, language or historical tradition.⁶⁵ Moreover, Wilson's support for a plebiscite, which stemmed from his concerns regarding the territorial division of an industrial region, was deliberately supported by the new German Republican government led by Philipp Scheidemann. In mid-May 1919, he warned Ellis Loring Dresel, the US commissioner to Germany, about the loss of Upper Silesian mines, which would 'utterly cripple Germany in an economic sense', making it 'impossible for Germany to pay indemnities'.⁶⁶ For the US delegation in Paris, this was certainly a forceful argument for keeping Silesia's industrial areas within Germany. These disturbing messages were received in Washington with increasing agitation, while the attention of the US food mission in East-Central Europe shifted from assisting the restored Poland and Czechoslovakia to maintaining the 'liquidity' of economic relationships within 'the whole [German] Empire', thereby preventing the disconnection of regions with a 'surplus of food'.⁶⁷

It was within this context of European economic integrity that Wilson was soon startled by the British proposal to burden Upper Silesia with the cost of German reparations, regardless of the region's final national affiliation.⁶⁸ Indeed, international supervision over Upper Silesian industry and the controversies surrounding the plebiscite eventually led to serious discord between Wilson and the British prime minister, David Lloyd George, during the meeting of the Council of Four on 14 June 1919.⁶⁹ The

latter accused the US president of 'loading the dice against Germany' in preparation for the plebiscite by making Upper Silesia exempt from sharing the German burden of reparation if it voted to become part of Poland.⁷⁰ While strongly rejecting Lloyd George's insinuation, Wilson had also previously called for the 'guarantees as to the supply of coal [from Upper Silesia] to Germany',⁷¹ as well as to other European nations, irrespective of the ultimate political affiliation of the region. In line with his internationalist outlook, frontiers in Upper Silesia remained of secondary importance, on condition that 'no restrictions' were imposed on the commercial movement of resources in East-Central Europe. Accordingly, Bernard Baruch, an economic adviser to the US delegation in Paris, summarized this subject by stating that it was primarily 'the economic feature of the Silesian question [that] should be taken up and have special treatment' in matters pertaining to the distribution of Silesian assets, regardless of the Polish national interests in the region.⁷² In other words, the United States sought the solution to the Upper Silesian dispute in commercial rationalism represented by the economic needs of Europe, contingent upon the territorial cohesion of Germany.

Economic internationalization of Upper Silesia?

A proposal lodged by Herbert C. Hoover in 1919 to establish international control over the coal industry in Upper Silesia constituted the ultimate representation of the United States' liberal internationalism in this region. Despite its ultimate failure to 'control nationalism', to overcome political frontiers and to ensure commercial liberty for the benefit of Europe, it confirmed the increasingly important role of the economy, as a non-political factor, in shaping political issues in disputed regions like Upper Silesia and in the broader area of East-Central Europe.

The significance of Upper Silesia's industry for the 'reconstruction' of Europe had already been acknowledged in December 1918, when the United States arranged coal supplies to Vienna in order to sidestep the Czechoslovakian blockade of supplies from Upper Silesia and the Ostrava-Karvina Basin. Meanwhile, the United States conceived of European economic interdependence in terms of its prospective vulnerability to disaster that required systemic (industrial) solutions suppressing national particularism through the integrated and predictable international order of commodity trade.⁷³ For Wilson, modern economic internationalism thus seemed both a promise and a threat to itself. In general, the emergence of new frontiers after 1918 was considered a primary obstacle to sustaining transnational economic interaction in this part of Europe.⁷⁴ Consequently, an escalation of European national disputes only strengthened the United States' belief in the universality of economic assistance as a way to 'neutralize' conflicts over important industrial regions in Europe like Upper Silesia.⁷⁵ It was designed to grant the United States control over economic relations within the entire area between Germany and Russia, which would affect the political order in East-Central Europe. This task was assigned to Herbert Clark Hoover, soon to become chief of the American Relief Administration, whose mission in Poland began in January 1919 and combined providing aid with dispatching food supplies to Poland.⁷⁶ However, it was the post-war Austrian food crisis that provided Hoover and other economic technocrats from Britain and France with the conditions to pursue the international management of 'common economic needs' through 'some sort of economic dictatorship' held formally

by the League, but actually by US financial institutions.⁷⁷ Consequently, Hoover had the more ambitious goal of establishing general US supervision over mining and the distribution of coal within the whole area, including Upper Silesia, the Dąbrowa Basin and the Ostrava-Karvina Basin in Cieszyn Silesia.⁷⁸ Such a 'reintegration' of these economic regions that assumed control over the city of Katowice would lead to the United States having authority over all Czechoslovak, Austrian and Hungarian industries. It was thus wrong for US historian Arthur Walworth to assume that by the summer of 1919 the gospel of internationalism was lost as a political force in US planning for Central Europe. He fails to elaborate on Hoover's extensive designs to use economic and humanitarian issues as the means to enforce stability and 'encourage peoples to turn their armed men into workers [...] producing goods for consumers' instead of 'fighting and killing'.⁷⁹ This message, emphasizing work, organization and commercial exchanges, was essential for the US liberal creed now employed to settle the Upper Silesian dispute.

Unsurprisingly, Hoover's project met with resistance from the French Foreign Ministry, whose representative told Frank L. Polk that 'the German Austrians in the same moment of applying to the Czecho-Slovaks for coal are negotiating with the Poles in Czecho-Silesia, who have seized the mines of that province and are daily sending carloads of coal to Germany'.⁸⁰ This problem of 'coal hunger' in Central Europe was mentioned by the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs when appealing to the representatives of the Allies in Paris for assigning 'the unique competence in matters related to coal' to the appropriate Inter-Allied Commissions in both parts of Silesia.⁸¹ Although the Polish appeal seemed to concur with the position of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace, the latter in fact openly advocated leveraging the United States' economic influence and the authority of the League of Nations in East-Central Europe to 'control nationalism' in the name of a peaceful, post-war order.⁸² Therefore, it remains disputable whether the Polish government was aware of the prospective limits to its own sovereignty resulting from US design.

For the first time, the question of inter-Allied control over the Upper Silesian coal industry became the subject of discussion in the Supreme Economic Council at the Peace Conference in April 1919. Initial proposals included 'the scheme of extended control by the Allies over the railways and mines' in the industrial regions of Poland and Czechoslovakia, since Western supplies to these countries 'justify and necessitate inter-Allied control'. Secondly, 'an early political settlement in Silesia' was required 'to secure supplies from the German Silesian Field for export to the East and South' of Europe.⁸³ It should be noted, however, that only the Polish-claimed part of Upper Silesia was considered for international control, while the United States emphasized the economic character of the Polish-German dispute over territory, national or historical. Accordingly, in early May 1919, Anson C. Goodyear, who had been appointed by the Council as the chairman of the Coal Commission, informed Paderewski about his responsibility for boosting coal-mining capacity, as well as supervising the distribution of coal within the entire area of the 'former Austrian-Hungarian Empire and Poland'.⁸⁴

Notably, Hoover's internationalist economic plan for Upper Silesia followed the liberal political goals espoused by President Wilson, who in June 1919 sought to persuade Paderewski to hold 'a plebiscite under international supervision' together with 'getting the German troops out and any German officials who might be interfering with it'.⁸⁵ He specifically pursued an ideal of fully neutral conditions in this region to obtain 'a truly

free and genuine vote' that remained unfeasible without the complete isolation and depoliticization of Silesia. During the president's session with the members of the Commission to Negotiate Peace in June, he would refer to Upper Silesia as an 'indisputably Polish' territory, despite being under the German 'reign of terror', which made it 'impossible to have a fair plebiscite'.⁸⁶ It was Robert H. Lord who moderated Wilson's vision of the universal right of nations by warning him against the inevitably 'unfair' plebiscite in German Silesia. To maintain an idea of self-determination for this region, it became necessary to create a 'new regime' founded on military occupation by Allied forces combined with the withdrawal of the German authorities, in addition to the long-term 'transformation of political, administrative and religious organisation of Upper Silesia'.⁸⁷ The internationalized economy sought by Hoover thus seemed the ultimate and only means to facilitate the kind of depoliticized transformation that Wilson had envisioned.

Even though Hoover gained the support of the Council for a form of 'internationalization' for Upper Silesia, and the Polish–Austrian–Czechoslovak 'committee of three' was established in June 1919, the final decision at the Paris Peace Conference to organize a plebiscite in Upper Silesia hindered the US design.⁸⁸ Following the adoption of the Paris Peace Treaty on 28 June, Hoover could not hide his regret over the 'breakdown' of the project of the German–Polish–Czech convention for Upper Silesia. Although the treaty marked the beginning of Wilson's withdrawal from direct participation in shaping European order, the United States maintained its interest in the 'economic feature' of Upper Silesia.⁸⁹ In mid-July 1919, General Bliss, quoting Wilson's opinion, advised Hoover against cooperating with the planned Inter-Allied Plebiscite Commission, since he considered the latter to be an ineffective agency in the post-war order in East-Central Europe. Instead, he called for acting beyond the treaty provisions, 'where our interests might be prejudiced', yet focusing on 'commercial questions and trade questions' concerning Upper Silesia.⁹⁰ This way, Bliss advocated US influence over economic decisions, while simultaneously opposing the political responsibilities enshrined in the treaty, such as any US security guarantees for the Polish-German frontier. Accordingly, the US delegation successfully managed to gain approval of the Economic Council for a separate Coal Commission dedicated to the 'coordination of the production and distribution of coal throughout Europe', in close cooperation with the Plebiscite Commission in Upper Silesia, the Teschen Commission and the Reparation Commission for Germany.⁹¹

The unchallenged authority of the United States as a neutral peace-making power encouraged US internationalist designs for Upper Silesia and Central Europe. Since Silesia was considered 'the most important source of coal for Central Europe', Hoover favoured an arrangement among Germany, Czechoslovakia and Poland to appoint an 'American coal dictator', who would have 'full control over the allocation of coal from this whole [Silesian] district to the different sections where it was needed'.⁹² In late July 1919, predicting the inevitable 'economic collapse' in Europe due to energy shortages, Hoover justified the need for 'cold-blooded' US domination of food supplies to Silesia in exchange for increased exports of coal. Notably, Hoover remained pessimistic about the feasibility of 'a complete dictatorship of the whole European coal production' without 'the whole thing reaching the bottom and going up again' in the European economic crisis.⁹³ In his opinion, the United States-led coal arrangement 'was going to pieces' due to the inclusion of an Upper Silesian plebiscite in the terms of the peace treaty, a

provision that in reality only intensified the territorial disputes. The only immediate solution to the Upper Silesian issue concerned frontiers that 'ought to be settled now' top-down, regardless of 'social, racial and religious questions which are beyond the ability of any human soul to settle'. This US insistence on economic means instead of reading Central Europe's complexity in terms of history or national culture definitely foreshadowed the ultimate failure of the United States' internationalist solutions for this region.

Nevertheless, the United States still sustained its authority of liberal power precisely due to its neutral image coupled with the reasonable concerns of Poles over Germany or Russia. As a result, Henry White reported on the apparent desperation of Prime Minister Paderewski, who 'did not wish to make any objection to the [Western] powers taking the matter up', while urging 'the Allies and their numerous troops which they had at their disposal' to 'come in'.⁹⁴ At the time, Paderewski openly encouraged Lansing to send US troops to Upper Silesia, since their presence was believed to have a 'pacifying effect on the population constantly provoked [by the Germans] to organize an uprising'.⁹⁵ In the summer of 1919, as uncertainty over the stability of peace in Europe was intensified by potential uprisings in Upper Silesia, it was Gibson, one of the foreign diplomats most trusted in Warsaw, who effectively warned the Polish government against conducting any military actions without the consent of the Allied Powers.⁹⁶

The First Silesian Uprising broke out in August 1919, bringing the German–Polish political conflict to the forefront, yet the United States' economic designs for Upper Silesia appeared unchanged.⁹⁷ In fact, political and ethnic tensions among Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia had been considered by the US representatives in the Supreme Economic Council as the main obstacles to the goal of East-Central European economic integrity.⁹⁸ Since the strikes in Upper Silesian mines 'threatened the destruction of the entire district', at the Paris Peace Conference, Hoover took advantage of the crisis to enforce the Allied occupation of the region.⁹⁹ Although he claimed that 'the strikes appear more political than economical', still 'the problem was not a question as to who is right or wrong in this [Polish–German] disturbance', but the fact that the Polish uprising 'was jeopardising the life of Europe through the stoppage of coal production'. While deploring the 'failure to create [an] allied plebiscite commission to take charge of the district', he urged Paderewski to appoint an economic council to cooperate with the Coal Commission, which would enable Poland to participate in the solution to 'global problems' of coal production and distribution.¹⁰⁰ Despite Wilson's earlier reservations regarding Polish 'immaturity', Hoover's proposal was rooted in the consistent US internationalist principle of European nations bearing common responsibility for continental coal policy. This concept of international commitment was shared to a considerable extent by Arthur Balfour, the Head of the British Foreign Office, who stressed the need to protect 'a world interest' instead of 'merely German or Polish property', since 'the Silesian coal question affected not merely the comfort, but the very existence of the new states created by the Conference'.¹⁰¹ Both the US and British claims also convinced the French representatives to send the Coal Commission to Upper Silesia and estimate the conditions for deploying Allied forces in this region. It was no coincidence that at that time Wilson attempted to moderate French concerns over another German industrial region – Rhineland – through a promise of a separate security treaty with Paris that could soften French support for Polish claims in Upper Silesia.¹⁰² After all, the conclusions of the Paris discussions corresponded with the earlier considerations at the Supreme

Economic Council to 'secure supplies [coal] from the German Silesian Field for export to the East and South' of Europe.¹⁰³ These inter-Allied debates regarding Upper Silesia's coal clearly confirmed the view prevalent among the Anglo-Saxon powers of East-Central European nations as subordinates in the international system rather than sovereign entities.

At the meeting of heads of delegations in Paris on 21 August 1919, Hoover ultimately proposed Allied control over three industrial regions in 'the very heart of Central Europe': Upper Silesia, Cieszyn Silesia and the Dąbrowa Basin.¹⁰⁴ Since the disputed Silesian districts were so affected by strikes that 'no Commission could bring about a reconciliation between the contending parties', he restated that 'the only possible remedy was an occupation by Allied troops'. At the time of the strikes, Hoover gave up any scenario of a voluntary agreement among Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria, as 'racial animosities' precluded those nations from choosing any 'rational' road to development. Increasingly frustrated at the alleged European disregard for 'essential' common interest in coal distribution, Hoover lamented the German 'high state of emotional nationalism' that involved attempting to 'drive out the Polish workmen', while in Cieszyn Silesia the Poles 'would not work for the Czechs' to such an extent that even 'trades unions divided along the lines of nationality'.¹⁰⁵ Instead of appointing a politically controversial Plebiscite Commission in Upper Silesia, he suggested 'reversing the process' through the gradual takeover of local administration and political decisions by the Coal Commission, which would be equipped with unlimited competencies over mining and distributing Upper Silesian coal in the whole of East-Central Europe. According to his concept, 'the three [Silesian] districts were one', requiring integration contrary to 'the selfish interests of any one nation' that 'must be entirely set aside for the general good of that section of the continent'.¹⁰⁶ Hoover's proposal, which Balfour called 'ingenious', represented the final stage of the United States' internationalist design to bring 'the entire Europe' back to its 'ordinary life' by finally settling the dispute over Upper Silesia. In this sense, internationalization of the Silesian question was seen as a way to ultimately pacify the conflicts in East-Central Europe by leveraging the transnational dynamics of liberal democracy and integrated economy.

Upper Silesia exposed the core of the US approach to global peace, the community of nations, liberal democracy and economic prosperity through the allegedly reasonable and neutral US assessment of Central European frontier disputes. The United States' authority among East-Central European nations, which served as a counterweight to their distrust of Britain and France, was confirmed by Hoover's statement in Paris, following his return from Berlin in September 1919: 'The Germans up there will accept the American occupation in Silesia.'¹⁰⁷ It was hardly surprising that a similar solution had been proposed a few months earlier by the Polish prime minister Paderewski, long known for his sympathy and unwavering belief in the impartiality of the United States towards Poland's frontiers.¹⁰⁸ Although in June 1919 Wilson ruled out deploying US troops to Upper Silesia, the French and Italian forces ultimately moved to the region to oversee the European Allies' plebiscite preparations.¹⁰⁹ This way, the internationalization of the Upper Silesian dispute, followed by a democratic experiment in popular sovereignty in this region, seemed to validate the irreversible impact of US liberalism in this part of Europe, coupled with the growing role of the economy in politics. However, US attempts to depoliticize the Upper Silesian issue remained a rather questionable solution

to the national, historical and cultural complexities of East-Central Europe. US internationalism reached a definitive limit to its liberal tolerance when faced with the national and democratic will of Poles, Germans or Czechs towards the disputed region.

Accordingly, Charles E. Hughes, Lansing's successor as secretary of state, not only refused to support Poland's claims to Upper Silesia after the lost plebiscite in March 1921, but also welcomed the transfer of decision-making in this matter from the Council of Ambassadors to the League of Nations.¹¹⁰ Since the United States had sought to be released from any responsibility for the Upper Silesian frontier settlement, the outbreak of the final Polish uprising in Upper Silesia in May 1921 wrecked the remnants of US understanding of Poland's territorial issues. However, US indifference to the Polish-German border did not seem to alter its interest in the economic condition and cohesion of Upper Silesia (ultimately divided between Poland and Germany by the League), nor this region's significance for the general political stability and security of Europe.

Conclusion

Ultimately, the US design for a liberal solution to the Upper Silesian dispute, which included Hoover's plan of international control over its economic resources, never materialized. Both the Polish and German sense of political security translated Wilson's ideal of 'popular will' into exclusive territorial claims from their respective national communities. Thus, after 1919, all across Europe, a particular notion of sovereignty seemed to prevail over the international one. However, while the United States' internationalist policy in Upper Silesia might have failed, it did endure in the form of an 'effective presence' of the liberal ideal of economic and humanitarian influence, capable of transcending national boundaries and addressing the disputed industrial regions of Europe. This transnational idealism brought a broader international perspective to the politics of East-Central Europe, elevating the Upper Silesian issue from a localized Polish-German territorial dispute to one of international importance. From the US perspective, the Polish-German border in Upper Silesia was secondary to Hoover's objective of ensuring the free exchange of natural resources and goods across national borders. It was not only the League of Nations but the very concept of liberal peace emphasized by the United States that was designed to render disputed territories and frontiers less controversial and ultimately unimportant.¹¹¹ However, by intertwining political power with international economics, morality and the humanitarian concept of a universal 'popular will', the United States imbued local territorial conflicts with a continental and global dimension, thus making them more complex and less solvable.

This new quality of the United States' internationalist policy towards resolving the Upper Silesian dispute went largely unnoticed by scholars like Arno J. Mayer and Lawrence E. Gelfand, who tended to reduce Wilsonian policies to the 'containment of Bolshevism', often with German or Polish involvement, or misunderstood the failures of US policies.¹¹² It is clearly an overstatement that the United States simply retreated into isolationism after 1919. But most of all, it seems inaccurate, as Wesley J. Reisser argued, to view the Wilson administration's approach to Upper Silesia solely as a victory of the national principle over imperialism, which supposedly created modern nation-states.¹¹³ Although democratic and market principles were not universally shared, many US policy-makers remained blind to the political relevance of non-liberal, irrational and

non-economic factors of history, culture, identity and national pride, which inspired the Upper Silesian conflict. The internationalization of regional disputes not only called into question state sovereignty in favour of global governance, as claimed by Wheatley,¹¹⁴ but also unveiled the dangerous constraints and deficiencies of liberal internationalism itself. Despite having a reputation of ‘the only altruistic country’, the United States could hardly prevent any determined power from waging war, as rightly stated by Ninkovich.¹¹⁵ Instead of accepting the limits of internationalism, Walter Lippmann, one of the leading liberal voices in the United States, consistently argued that in Europe ‘national discrimination and prestige should be forgot’ in the name of democracy, both within and across national borders.¹¹⁶ In fact, under this paradoxical logic, the ‘liberal community’ sought to ‘enforce peace through overwhelming force’ to undermine Polish or German control over Upper Silesia’s territory, people or industry, if they pursued policies contrary to the security of peaceful nations. When Central European nations failed to uphold ‘mutual respect’, a key tool in the liberal internationalist arsenal was ‘justice through war’, a point noted by Beck.¹¹⁷ As observed by David A. Lake, it is precisely a liberal state like the United States rather than a non-liberal one which is more likely to develop hegemonic authority over smaller states and extend liberal management systems to the international level due to a dependence on foreign markets coupled with a need to regulate domestic social relations.¹¹⁸ As a result, the assumption that only liberal states are ‘civilized’ and able to represent the abstract ‘people’ – in contrast to territorial state entities fighting over a particular region – led to the delegitimization of any political community that failed to align with the idea of general European stability or democratic ‘humanity’.¹¹⁹ Still, this failure might be explained by the fact that US liberal internationalism has always been primarily a Western and particularly Anglo-Saxon project, as indicated by G. John Ikenberry, while its global ambitions for social and democratic change clashed with cultural diversity of East-Central Europe.¹²⁰ Moreover, the US perspective on Silesia seemed to reflect the two-centuries-old legacy of Western confusion regarding the region’s ambiguous position between the ‘worse, less cultivated, more Slavic’ Eastern and ‘enlightened’ Western Europe.¹²¹ Ultimately, it was through the Upper Silesian dispute that the United States’ liberal internationalism revealed its own illiberal and anti-democratic tendencies.

Therefore, the United States’ reluctance to accept a division of Upper Silesia driven by ‘selfish’ national interests was followed by Washington’s formal withdrawal from the European political order after 1919, for the reason that the established order contradicted Wilson’s vision of post-war Europe. In fact, the Polish–German conflict over Upper Silesia posed an obstacle to the US concept of ‘common liberal peace’ and free trade. However, the US principles of political liberalism and transnational economic cooperation ultimately assumed unequal terms for nations. This affected the Upper Silesian dispute, since Poland was eventually seen as less capable of self-governance and more economically unreliable compared to Germany.

Clearly, the US rejection of the League of Nations and its subsequent political ‘retreat’ from Europe was not caused by the Upper Silesian dispute. It was a general outcome of a peace conference that pitted the unstable order established by the victorious Entente powers against the vanquished Germany, a nation that remained most mistrusted in the United States. As a result, this setback to US internationalist policy in the face of Central European conflicts only reinforced the belief among both Democratic and Republican

representatives that foreign policy, internal politics and sovereignty over certain territories would be determined by economic means, resources, stabilization loans and financial expansion.¹²² The United States-funded international relief efforts for Austria and later Germany in the decade that followed demonstrated a central role for financial capital in advancing both economic and political internationalism.¹²³ Thus, Upper Silesia remained a point of interest for the United States' business and banking entities, since it involved significant political and economic implications for the whole of Central Europe. In the 1920s, US capital investments in Upper Silesia strengthened business ties with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania. These aimed at undermining German competition, while also opening avenues for US economic engagement with Soviet Russia.¹²⁴ However, Wilson's abstract internationalist vision of an East-Central European community of interests continuously clashed with local national tensions, hindering the political and economic cohesion of Upper Silesia. What US business viewed as reasonable non-political economic efficiency was regarded by the Polish, German and Czechoslovak governments as a political struggle for identity and national survival.¹²⁵

In the end, despite the perceived failure of Wilsonian policies in Upper Silesia in the subsequent decades, US liberal ideals in the form of self-determination, popular will, trade, credits, finance and investments contributed to the internationalization of European disputes, thereby profoundly influencing the tragic political fate of Upper Silesia and the wider region. Though initially intended as pacifying measures, the Dawes Plan, debt moratorium and Henry Stimson's 1931 proposal for the revision of Polish territory in favour of Germany all foreshadowed the dramatic escalation of conflicts in East-Central Europe.¹²⁶ The United States' political distance from Upper Silesia may have prevented entanglements in formal commitments, but subsequent US administrations remained focused on expanding into foreign markets and economic spheres through the 'open door' principle, which consistently championed an international 'community of ideals, interests, and purposes' beyond national boundaries.¹²⁷ Consequently, the US form of de-territorialized internationalism, accentuating rootlessness of universal 'humankind', shaped US views of Upper Silesia and the Polish-German frontier during this entire period.

Note

1. For broader outline of Wilsonian internationalism and its impact on US foreign policy, see Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century*.
2. Ikenberry, *Liberal Internationalism and Cultural Diversity*, 141–4.
3. Wheatley, "Central Europe as Ground Zero of the New International Order," 902–4.
4. Wilson, *A Peace That Will Win the Approval of Mankind*, 407–14.
5. Finley, *The Ideology of Democratism*, 59–63.
6. Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers*, 40–9.
7. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century*, 64.
8. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 365–7.
9. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century*, 65.
10. Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem*, 83–4.
11. Wandycz, *The United States and Poland*, 119–21.
12. Throntveit, *Power Without Victory*, 48–71; and Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining of Eastern Europe*, 145.
13. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson and American Internationalism*, 34–42.

14. Beck, *The War and Humanity*, 44–5.
15. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 109–26.
16. Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers*, 421–3; and Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, 804–5.
17. Macmillan, *Paris 1919*, 207–28.
18. Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem at the Paris Peace Conference*, 90; and Lundgreen-Nielsen, “Aspects of American Policy towards Poland at the Paris Peace Conference and the Role of Isaiah Bowman,” 98.
19. Gelfand, *The Inquiry*, 208.
20. Campbell, “The Struggle for Upper Silesia, 1919–1922,” 364. Similar perspective is presented in Polish publications: Winid, *W cieniu Kapitolu*; Wędrawski, *Stany Zjednoczone wobec konfliktów na wchodzie Europy, 1917–1922*; Hauser, *Śląsk między Polską*, 81–2.
21. Wandycz, *The United States and Poland*, 120–2, Pease, *Poland, the United States and the Stabilization of Europe*, 3–9.
22. Reisser, *The Black Book*, 93–100.
23. Petitto, *Against World Unity*, 168.
24. Wędrawski, *Stany Zjednoczone wobec konfliktów*, 40.
25. Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. I, Tyler Dennett and Joseph V. Fuller (eds.) (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), *The Technical Advisers to the Commission to Negotiate Peace to the Secretary of State, Skeleton Draft of the Peace Treaty*, Paris, 30 December 1918, 300, <http://digioll.library.wisc.edu/FRUS/Browse.html> (accessed 6 November 2020).
26. Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers*, 265–9.
27. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, *Proposed Basis for the Preliminaries of Peace with Germany, London, 7 December 1918*, 373. For the French–British conflict related to Upper Silesia see Przewłocki, *Stosunek mocarstw zachodnioeuropejskich do problemów Górnego Śląska w latach 1918–1939*, 16–23.
28. Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem*, 173–4.
29. Gelfand, *The Inquiry*, 32–78.
30. Reisser, *The Black Book*, 98–9.
31. Paderewski, “Telegram to House on Polish-Czech Conflict,” 38–9.
32. Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers*, 96–8, 423–4.
33. Roman Dmowski was the leader of the National Democracy political movement and a head of Polish National Committee in France, by 1918 recognized by Western Allies as the legal representation of the Polish nation. He favoured cooperation with the Allies to restore an independent Poland against Germany, perceived by him as the power most hostile towards Poland. His nationalist vision of Poland emphasized creating a strong middle class, modernization and marginalizing non-Polish ethnic groups. He remained bitter opponent of another major political figure, Józef Piłsudski, the chief of state, one of the fathers of reborn Poland, and an advocate of federal, multi-ethnic state in tradition of Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; Wandycz, *The United States and Poland*, 133–5.
34. Wędrawski, *Stany Zjednoczone wobec konfliktów*, 121.
35. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century*, 67–8.
36. According to Wheatley, the post-imperial international architecture, represented by the League, was apparently designed to rearrange an old imperial, multinational order into more ‘humanitarian’ environment allowing all ethnic groups to assimilate into new sovereign and internationalist dispensation, Wheatley, “Central Europe as Ground Zero,” 906–8.
37. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson*, 49–56, 94–102; and Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining*, 214–16, 103–4.
38. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 364.
39. Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers*, 227–9.
40. Wilson’s estimate of Soviet Bolshevik ideology was ambiguous since he considered some parts of its programme as sound and justified, but was concerned about the popularity of

this competitive, Eastern European form of progressivism, as a 'revolution which is in fashion'; Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy*, 725–6.

41. Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining*, 154–6, Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem*, 401.
42. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson*, 100–1.
43. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XII, Tyler Dennett and Joseph V. Fuller (eds.) (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1947), Robert L. Black, Albert H. Stonestreet, *Report on Economic and Political Conditions in Silesia Prepared by Captain Robert L. Black, Lieutenant Albert H. Stonestreet and Field Clerk A. L. Rosenthal*, 6 March 1919, 52, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/FRUS/Browse.html> (accessed 6 November 2020).
44. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Austria and Hungary, The Coolidge Mission, edited by Tyler Dennett and Joseph V. Fuller, 227–8 (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1942), *Professor A. C. Coolidge to the Commission to Negotiate Peace*, Vienna, 9 January 1919.
45. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XII, Robert L. Black, Albert H. Stonestreet, *Report on Economic and Political Conditions in Silesia*, 60.
46. Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining*, 101.
47. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Austria and Hungary, The Coolidge Mission, *Professor A. C. Coolidge to the Commission to Negotiate Peace*, Vienna, 12 January 1919, 233–6.
48. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson*, 58–9.
49. Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem*, 274–5.
50. Gibson, "List Gibsona do R. Lorda, 29 kwietnia 1919," 83–5.
51. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson*, 108.
52. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XII, Robert L. Black, Albert H. Stonestreet, *Report on Economic and Political Conditions in Silesia, Prepared by Captain Robert L. Black, Lieutenant Albert H. Stonestreet and Field Clerk A. L. Rosenthal*, 6 March 1919, 64–65.
53. *Ibid.*, 62–4.
54. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 169.
55. Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining*, 182.
56. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XII, Robert L. Black, Albert H. Stonestreet, *Report on Economic and Political Conditions in Silesia*, 51–2.
57. Gerson, *Woodrow Wilson and the Rebirth of Poland*, 133–7.
58. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Food Relief, Henry White, *The Commission to Negotiate Peace to the Acting Secretary of State*, Paris, 8 January 1919, 711–12.
59. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Food Relief, Hans Sulzer, *The Swiss Minister (Sulzer) to the Secretary of State*, Washington, 28 November 1918, 640–1.
60. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XII, Robert L. Black, Albert H. Stonestreet, *Report on Economic and Political Conditions in Silesia*, 64.
61. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Food Relief, *The Commission to Negotiate Peace to the Acting Secretary of State*, Paris, 3 January 1919, 698.
62. Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson*, 109.
63. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century*, 72.
64. Hauser, *Śląsk między Polską*, 70–3.
65. Lundgreen-Nielsen, *The Polish Problem*, 350–1.
66. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XII, The Second Dresel Mission, Ellis Loring Dresel, *Conversation with the Secretary of Minister President Scheidemann on May 9th [1919]*, 120–1.
67. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Food Relief, Herbert C. Hoover, *The Food Administrator (Hoover) to President Wilson*, Paris, 20 December 1918, 680–1.
68. Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining*, 222–3.

69. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. VI, Tyler Dennett and Joseph V. Fuller (eds.) (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1946), *Notes of a Meeting Held in President Wilson's House in the Place des Etats-Unis*, Paris, 14 June 1919, 455–6, <http://digioll.library.wisc.edu/FRUS/Browse.html> (accessed 6 November 2020).
70. Wolff, *Woodrow Wilson and the Reimagining*, 222–5.
71. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XI, Meetings of the Commissioners Plenipotentiary, *Stenographic Report of Meeting Between the President, Commissioners and the Technical Advisers of the American Commission to Negotiate Peace*, Paris, 3 June 1919, 209.
72. *Ibid.*, 210.
73. Ninkovich, *The Wilsonian Century*, 66–7.
74. The Austrian neoliberal school emphasizing sovereign 'rights of the capital' across national frontiers seemed to derive from the economic consequences of the fall of the Hapsburg Empire; Wheatley, "Central Europe as Ground Zero," 904–5.
75. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Food Relief, Frank L. Polk, *The Acting Secretary of State to the Commission to Negotiate Peace*, Washington, 6 January 1919, 707–8.
76. "Telegram Komitetu Narodowego Polskiego do I. Paderewskiego przekazujący treść telegramu H. Hoovera o rozpoczęciu amerykańskich dostaw żywnościowych dla Polski, 1919 luty 26, Paryż," in *Archiwum Polityczne Ignacego Paderewskiego*, 49.
77. Clavin, *Men and Markets*, 97–101.
78. Wędrowski, *Wizje i realia*, 157–60.
79. Walworth, *Wilson and His Peacemakers*, 521–3.
80. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. II, Food Relief, Frank L. Polk, *The Acting Secretary of State to the Commission to Negotiate Peace*, Washington, January 6, 1919, 707–8.
81. "Pismo W. Skrzyńskiego do I. Paderewskiego w sprawie trudności zaopatrzenia w węgiel przemysłu i ludności oraz konieczności uregulowania w rokowaniach z Niemcami kwestii dostaw węgla z Górnego Śląska, 1919 lipiec 8, Warszawa," 263–4.
82. For Wilson's concept of internationalism in the project of the League of Nations see Ambrosius, *Woodrow Wilson*, 134–42 and Wędrowski, *Stany Zjednoczone wobec konfliktów*, 98–9.
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92. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XI, Meetings of the Commissioners Plenipotentiary, *Minutes of the Daily Meetings of the Commissioners Plenipotentiary*, 1 July 1919, 260.
93. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. XI, Meetings of the Commissioners Plenipotentiary, *Minutes of Meeting of Commissioners and Technical Advisers of American Commission to Negotiate Peace*, Hotel Crillon, Paris, 23 July 1919, 338.
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97. Przewłocki, *Stosunek mocarstw*, 24.
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101. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. VII, *Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Powers Held in M. Pinchon’s Room at the Quai d’Orsay*, Paris, 18 August 1919, 701
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104. FRUS, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919, Vol. VII, *Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Powers Held in M. Pinchon’s Room at the Quai d’Orsay*, Paris, 21 August 1919, 769.
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108. Winid, *W cieniu Kapitolu*, 31–3.
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110. Pease, *Poland, the United States*, 9–21.
111. Pedersen, *Empires, States and the League of Nations*, 114–15.
112. Mayer, *Politics and Diplomacy*, 21–30; Gelfand, *The Inquiry*, 323–4.
113. Reisser, *The Black Book*, 181–5.
114. Wheatley, “Central Europe as Ground Zero,” 910.
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117. Beck, *The War and Humanity*, 36.
118. Lake, “Dominance and Subordination in World Politics,” 70–4.
119. Bishai and Behnke, *War, Violence and the Displacement of the Political*, 118–19.
120. Ikenberry, *Liberal Internationalism*, 138–40.
121. Wolff, *Inventing Eastern Europe*, 333–4.
122. Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion*, 111–39.
123. Clavin, *Men and Markets*, 108.
124. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 158–9.

125. Concerning the investments of W. A. Harriman and Co. and their political background in Polish Silesia see Pease, *Poland, the United States*, 70–1, 121–3.
126. Pease, *Poland and the United States*, 141–50.
127. Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, 110–27.

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