

# The Treaty of Versailles and The Carthaginian Peace



# The Treaty of Versailles and The Carthaginian Peace:

*Peacemaking and Mythmaking  
1918-1919*

By

Antony Lentin

**Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing**



The Treaty of Versailles and The Carthaginian Peace:  
Peacemaking and Mythmaking 1918-1919

By Antony Lentin

This book first published 2025

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2025 by Antony Lentin

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN: 978-1-0364-1463-4

ISBN (Ebook): 978-1-0364-1464-1

To Michael

*namque tu solebas  
meas esse aliquid putare nugas*



*‘Père la Victoire’?*

Clemenceau and his military adviser, General Mordacq, 25 August 1918, in the plain of Mery, Ressons-sur-Matz, near Compiègne, scene of a successful French counter-attack in June.

# CONTENTS

List of Illustrations .....	ix
List of Maps.....	xx
Abbreviations .....	xxii
Foreword and Acknowledgments .....	xxiv
Prologue: Carthage .....	xxvi
Introduction .....	1
The Enchanter: Versailles through the looking-glass	

## **Part One: Peacemaking**

Chapter One. The ‘Big Three’ and the Colonel.....	18
Chapter Two. 1918: Armageddon to Armistice.....	25
Chapter Three. Great expectations .....	44
Chapter Four. ‘A rough and tumble affair’ .....	59
Chapter Five. Three in conclave.....	85
Chapter Six. Reparation and retribution .....	101
Chapter Seven. Pains of peacemaking.....	125
Chapter Eight. Further pitfalls of peacemaking.....	139

**Part Two: Mythmaking**

Chapter Nine. The misfortunes of Count Brockdorff-Rantzau.....	154
Chapter Ten. ‘ <i>Furor teutonicus</i> ’ .....	167
Chapter Eleven. ‘The Carthaginian Peace of Monsieur Clemenceau’? .....	186
Chapter Twelve. World Power and a little island .....	201
Chapter Thirteen. In denial .....	215
Chapter Fourteen. Truth and transfiguration .....	225
Chapter Fifteen. ‘Greater Germany’ .....	241
Epilogue. Memory, myth, motivation.....	250
Notes.....	256
Bibliography .....	275
Select Further Reading .....	285
Index.....	287

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

## *Frontispiece*

Clemenceau and his military adviser, General Mordacq, 25 August 1918, in the plain of Mery, Ressons-sur-Matz, near Compiègne, scene of a successful French counter-attack in June

Fig. Prol-1 ..... xxvii  
Clemenceau as Cato. *Vossische Zeitung*, 30 March 1919

Fig. Intro-1 ..... 1  
John Maynard Keynes

Fig. Intro-2 ..... 5  
Lloyd George. William Orpen

Fig. Intro-3 ..... 6  
'The Tiger'

Fig. Intro-4 ..... 7  
'The Message and the Messenger.' Charles H. Sykes, *Philadelphia Evening Ledger*, 4 December 1918

Fig. Intro-5 ..... 10  
'Woodrow Wilson's Peace, 1920.' Max Beerbohm

Fig. Intro-6 ..... 13  
Hindenburg, Kaiser Wilhelm II, Ludendorff, 9 January 1917

Fig. Intro-7 ..... 13  
Hitler and his generals, summer 1940

Fig. Part 1-1 ..... 17  
Clemenceau, Lloyd George and Wilson after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, 28 June 1919

Fig. 1-1 .....	22
President Wilson and Colonel House, New York, 1915	
Fig. 2-1 .....	27
The Ludendorff Offensive. Stormtroopers advance	
Fig. 2-2 .....	28
Pope Benedict XV	
Fig. 2-3 .....	28
Ludendorff	
Fig. 2-4 .....	30
Versailles, 18 January 1871. Bismarck proclaims Wilhelm I German Emperor in the Hall of Mirrors (Anton Von Werner)	
Fig. 2-5 .....	30
Bismarck dictates peace terms to Jules Favre and Adolphe Thiers (Carl Wagner)	
Fig. 2-6 .....	31
Damage on the first day of the long-range bombardment of Paris, 23 March 1918	
Fig. 2-7 .....	32
Nave of the Church of Saint Gervais, hit by a shell on Good Friday 1918	
Fig. 2-8 .....	32
Rose-Marie Ormond (John Singer Sargent, 1911), killed in the Good Friday attack	
Fig. 2-9 .....	34
<i>Chicago Daily Tribune</i> , 31 May 1918	
Fig. 2-10 .....	36
Prince Max of Baden	
Fig. 2-11 .....	43
German troops withdraw across the Rhine bridge at Cologne, December 1918	

Fig. 2-12 .....	43
British sentries at the limit of the Cologne bridgehead	
Fig. 3-1 .....	45
Ferdinand Foch, August 1918. William Orpen	
Fig. 3-2 .....	45
'And this is no scrap of paper.' William Allen Rogers, <i>New York Herald</i> , 7 November 1918	
Fig. 3-3 .....	48
Woodrow Wilson arrives in Paris, 14 December 1918	
Fig. 3-4 .....	50
Clemenceau in Strasbourg, November 1919	
Fig. 3-5 .....	51
A refugee family returns to Amiens, September 1918	
Fig. 3-6 .....	53
Lloyd George at the Peace Conference	
Fig. 3-7 .....	56
Election poster for Coalition Liberal candidate, 1918	
Fig. 3-8 .....	57
The plaque and letter his mother received in memory of Private Charlie Howells, killed October 1916	
Fig. 3-9 .....	58
Private Charlie Howells with some of his comrades earlier in 1916	
Fig. 4-1 .....	60
Woodrow Wilson by John Singer Sargent, 1917	
Fig. 4-2 .....	60
Colonel House, November 1918, by Herbert Olivier	

Fig. 4-3 .....	68
Foreign Ministers Stephen Pichon and Arthur Balfour, Secretary of State Robert Lansing, and right-hand men to Clemenceau and Lloyd George respectively, André Tardieu and Philip Kerr	
Fig. 4-4 .....	70
Final plenary session of the Peace Conference in the <i>Salle de l'horloge</i> of the Quai d'Orsay, 12 January 1920	
Fig. 4-5 .....	73
Friedrich Ebert, last Chancellor of Imperial Germany and first President of the Weimar Republic	
Fig. 4-6 .....	78
Henry Wickham Steed, editor of <i>The Times</i> , and its proprietor, Viscount Northcliffe	
Fig. 4-7 .....	81
Senators Borah, Henry Cabot Lodge (chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee) and Smoot	
Fig. 4-8 .....	83
'They won't dovetail.' <i>San Francisco Chronicle</i> , April 1919	
Fig. 5-1 .....	86
American journalists at Paris, 1919	
Fig. 5-2 .....	88
The German members of the armistice commission at Trier to meet Marshal Foch for the second renewal of the Armistice, 16 January 1919	
Fig. 5-3 .....	89
British view of Marshal Foch	
Fig. 5-4 .....	89
German view of Marshal Foch	
Fig. 5-5 .....	95
The Big Four (Orlando, Lloyd George, Clemenceau and Wilson) in Wilson's study	

Fig. 5-6 .....	100
Latvian Bolsheviks face a German firing squad, 26 May 1919	
Fig. 6-1 .....	102
'The Fourteen Points'. <i>L'Humanité</i> , 17 June 1919	
Fig. 6-2 .....	104
Map of England and Wales superimposed on a map of France showing the devastated areas	
Fig. 6-3 .....	105
Destruction of Lens	
Fig. 6-4 .....	106
Wilson views the ruined cathedral of Rheims, 26 January 1919	
Fig. 6-5 .....	110
British soldiers gassed and blinded in the Ludendorff Offensive, 10 April 1918	
Fig. 6-6 .....	111
Roehampton military hospital, 1918	
Fig. 6-7 .....	111
French refugee children	
Fig. 6-8 .....	113
<i>Le Matin</i> , 8 April 1919	
Fig. 6-9 .....	113
From the backbenchers' telegram to Lloyd George, 8 April 1919	
Fig. 6-10 .....	114
The destruction of Louvain, 25 August 1914	
Fig. 6-11 .....	115
Four of the 93 signatories of the 'Appeal to the Civilised World,' October 1914	
Fig. 6-12 .....	117
Baron Moritz von Bissing, Governor-General of Belgium, 1914-17	

Fig. 6-13 .....	117
Baron Ludwig von Falkenhausen, Governor-General of Belgium, 1917-18	
Fig. 6-14 .....	117
Friedrich Wilhelm von Bissing	
Fig. 6-15 .....	118
Woodrow Wilson and Cardinal Mercier in liberated Malines, 19 June 1919	
Fig. 6-16 .....	119
Belgian refugees fleeing from besieged Antwerp, October 1914	
Fig. 6-17 .....	120
Clemenceau and Monet on the Japanese footbridge in Monet's garden at Giverny, 1921	
Fig. 6-18 .....	122
'Politics' by John Singer Sargent, 1918	
Fig. 6-19 .....	124
Article 227 of the Treaty of Versailles	
Fig. 7-1 .....	131
<i>The World</i> , June 1919	
Fig. 7-2 .....	133
Clemenceau and Lloyd George squaring up	
Fig. 7-3 .....	133
Clemenceau and Wilson at the palace of Versailles	
Fig. 7-4 .....	137
'The poor old Conference'. Orpen, 22 April 1919	
Figs. 7-5, 7-6 and 7-7 .....	138
Wilson. Three successive images by Orpen	
Fig. 8-1 .....	143
Italian caricature of Wilson posted on a wall in Fiume	

Fig. 8-2 .....	143
Orlando leaves the Peace Conference, 24 April 1919	
Fig. 8-3 .....	144
'European Baby Show.' Bert Thomas, <i>Detroit News</i> , June 1919	
Fig. 8-4 .....	147
Colonel House's draft of the Anglo-American guarantee to France, 19 March 1919	
Fig. Part 2-1 .....	153
'The peace-bell of the Entente'. <i>Kladderadatsch</i> , 1 June 1919	
Fig. 9-1 .....	155
Count Brockdorff-Rantzau leaves Berlin for Versailles, 28 April 1919	
Fig. 9-2 .....	158
Count Brockdorff-Rantzau	
Fig. 9-3 .....	160
Clemenceau addresses German delegation, Trianon Palace Hotel, 7 May 1919	
Fig. 9-4 .....	160
The German delegation awaits the peace terms, 7 May 1919	
Fig. 9-5 .....	163
<i>The New York Times</i> , 1 March 1917	
Fig. 9-6 .....	164
Wilson and Lloyd George at the Trianon Palace Hotel, 7 May 1919	
Fig. 10-1 .....	175
<i>Berliner Lokal-Anzeiger</i> , 8 May 1919	
Fig.10-2 .....	175
Demonstration outside the <i>Reichstag</i> against the <i>Gewaltfrieden</i> , 15 May 1919	
Fig. 10-3 .....	176
<i>Daily Mirror</i> , 8 May 1919	

Fig. 10-4 .....	176
<i>Berliner Volks-Zeitung</i> , 9 May 1919	
Fig. 10-5 .....	177
'The Unfailing Light!' <i>Memphis Commercial Appeal</i> , 10 January 1918	
Fig. 10-6 .....	179
William C. Bullitt	
Fig. 10-7 .....	180
'Woodrow Wilson, where are your Fourteen Points?' <i>Simplicissimus</i> , 17 June 1919	
Fig. 10-8 .....	182
Chancellor Scheidemann addresses the National Assembly in the Great Hall of the University of Berlin, 12 May 1919	
Fig. 10-9 .....	183
Philipp Scheidemann	
Fig. 10-10 .....	183
Bronze medal of Scheideman (obverse) demanding a 'peace of justice', (reverse). The Big Four present a 'peace of coercion'	
Fig. 10-11 .....	185
Count Posadowsky-Wehner, Ludwig Quidde and Konstantin Fehrenbach	
Fig. 11-1 .....	191
From <i>The Times</i> , 6 June 1919	
Fig. 11-2 .....	194
The <i>Hindenburg</i> capsizing at Scapa Flow, 21 June 1919	
Fig. 11-3 .....	194
The <i>Hindenburg</i> resting on the sea bed.	
Fig. 11-4 .....	196
Foch's plan (14 May 1919) for an Allied march to Berlin	
Fig. 11-5 .....	196
German Michel signs the <i>Diktat. Kladderadatsch</i> , July 1919	

Fig. 11-6 .....	198
Programme for the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, 28 June 1919	
Fig. 11-7 .....	198
Clemenceau opens the proceedings in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles	
Fig. 12-1 .....	203
August Hoffmann von Fallersleben, c.1850	
Fig. 12-2 .....	203
The house on Heligoland where Hoffman wrote his <i>Deutschlandlied</i>	
Fig. 12-3 .....	206
The Kaiser, Tirpitz and Moltke aboard the flagship, <i>Friedrich der Große</i> , 1912	
Fig. 12-4 .....	206
The Kaiser inspects naval fortifications on Heligoland, 1913	
Fig. 12-5 .....	208
Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg, 4 July 1914, at the funeral of the assassinated heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne	
Fig. 12-6 .....	213
Heligoland. Dismantling of a heavy gun emplacement under the Treaty, 1920	
Fig. 13-1 .....	216
German troops returning from the front parade at the Brandenburg Gate, 10/11 December 1918	
Fig. 13-2 .....	218
Scottish troops cross the Hohenzollern bridge, Cologne, December 1918	
Fig. 13-3 .....	219
Churchill as Minister of War inspects British troops outside Cologne Cathedral, August 1919	
Fig. 13-4 .....	221
After his brief flight to Sweden, Ludendorff, in civilian clothes, takes a walk in Berlin. <i>Der Weltspiegel</i> , 16 March 1919	

Fig. 13.-5 .....	222
Siegfried stabbed in the back by Hagen	
Fig. 13-6 .....	222
Hindenburg, appearing on 15 November before a parliamentary enquiry into the war, lends his authority to the myth of the 'stab-in-the-back.'	
<i>Kladderadatsch</i> , 30 November 1919	
Fig. 13-7 .....	223
Ludendorff and Hindenburg before the parliamentary enquiry into the war, 15 November 1919. Herbert Rothgaengel	
Fig. 14-1 .....	231
Publication of the 40 volumes of <i>Die Große Politik</i> , Berlin, 1927	
Fig. 14-2 .....	233
The Kaiser in exile c.1920	
Fig. 14-3 .....	235
Reinhold Seeberg on his way to Berlin Cathedral to conduct a memorial service to the University war dead, 24 May 1919	
Fig. 14-4 .....	236
<i>La Libre Belgique</i> , June 1915	
Fig. 14-5 .....	237
Ernst Zitelmann, professor of law at Bonn University, c.1920	
Fig. 14-6 .....	237
Hindenburg and Ludendorff in the Grand' Place, Brussels, June 1918	
Fig. 14-7 .....	238
Woodrow Wilson in the ruins of the University of Louvain, 19 June 1919	
Fig. 14-8 .....	239
Eduard Meyer, professor of ancient history, University of Berlin	
Fig. 14-9 .....	239
Max Weber	

Fig. 15-1 .....	242
Statue of Emperor Wilhelm I toppled in liberated Metz	
Fig. 15-2 .....	243
Deportation of Germans from Alsace-Lorraine	
Fig. 15-3 .....	248
'Territory lost but not forgotten'. Postcard issued by the German National People's Party	
Fig. Epil-1 .....	251
Freikorps recruitment poster	
Fig. Epil-2 .....	251
Freikorps in Berlin	
Fig. Epil-3 .....	253
Hindenburg and Adenauer, Cologne, 21 March 1926	
Fig. Epil-4 .....	254
Hindenburg at the dedication of the Tannenburg monument, 18 September 1927	
Fig. Epil-5 .....	255
Mass demonstration against the Treaty of Versailles in front of Cologne Cathedral, 1929	

## LIST OF MAPS

Map 1.....	26
Territory controlled by the Central Powers at the Treaty of Brest Litovsk, March 1918	
Map 2.....	34
The Ludendorff Offensive, 21 March to 15 July, 1918	
Map 3.....	41
British advance to the Rhine 1918	
Map 4.....	74
Germany and her former colonies	
Map 5.....	126
The Polish-Lithuanian Republic ( <i>Rzeczpospolita</i> ) at its fullest extent in the 17 <sup>th</sup> century	
Map 6.....	126
The Second Polish Republic at its fullest extent 1918-39	
Map 7.....	128
The Polish Corridor (in black)	
Map 8.....	128
Danzig and the Polish Corridor, showing German-speakers and Polish- speakers	
Map 9.....	140
Italy's gains under the Treaty of London, 1915	
Map 10.....	169
Unified Germany in 1871	
Map 11.....	169
Germany after the Peace Treaty of 1919	

Map 12.....	173
Map showing the demilitarised Rhineland	
Map 13.....	173
The demilitarized Rhineland, showing the Allied zones of occupation	
Map 14.....	246
The German-Austrian Republic as it would have been on an ethnographical basis that included the Sudetenlanders	
Map 15.....	246
The German-inhabited areas awarded to the Czech part of Czechoslovakia	
Map 16.....	248
The German diaspora in Europe, 1919	

## ABBREVIATIONS

FRUS	<i>Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States. The Paris Peace Conference, 1919</i> , vols 1-13, Washington, DC, 1942-47
House, diary	Edward Mandell House, diaries, Yale University Library
<i>Journal Officiel</i>	<i>Journal officiel de la République Française. Débats parlementaires</i> , 1918-19
Keynes, <i>Collected Writings</i>	<i>The Collected Writings of John Maynard Keynes</i> , (ed) Elizabeth Johnson and Donald Moggridge, vols 16-17, 1978
Keynes, ECP	J.M. Keynes, <i>The Economic Consequences of the Peace</i> , Labour Research Department, London, 1920
Mantoux	P. Mantoux, <i>Les délibérations du Conseil des Quatre. Notes de l'officier interprète</i> , vols 1-2, Paris, 1955
<i>Nationalversammlung</i>	<i>Verhandlungen der verfassungsgebenden Deutschen Nationalversammlung</i> , Berlin, 1919-20
<i>Peace Proposals</i>	<i>Official Statements of War Aims and Peace Proposals December 1916 to November 1918</i> , (ed) James Brown Scott, Washington DC, 1921

- PWW *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson* (ed) Arthur S. Link, vols 31- 61, Princeton, NJ, 1982-92
- Quellen* *Quellen zum Friedensschluss von Versailles (Ausgewählte Quellen zur Deutschen Geschichte der Neuzeit,* (ed) Klaus Schwabe, Darmstadt, 1997
- Smuts Papers* *Selections from the Smuts Papers,* (ed) W.K. Hancock and J. Van der Poel, vol 4, 1966
- Wilson, *Public Papers* *The Public Papers of Woodrow Wilson,* (ed) R.S. Baker and W.E. Dodd, vol 1, *War and Peace. Presidential Messages, Addresses and Public Papers (1917-1924),* New York, 1927

## FOREWORD AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

On 2 December 1918, two days before leaving America for the Paris Peace Conference, President Woodrow Wilson gave his State of the Union address to Congress. Looking back at the shattering events of the Great War just over, he admitted, with the due modesty of the historian he was, that ‘it is too soon to assess them, and we who stand in the midst of them and are part of them are less qualified than men of another generation will be to say what they mean’.<sup>1</sup> Half a year later, returning to England the day after the signing of the Treaty of Versailles, Prime Minister Lloyd George expressed similar sentiments about the Conference: ‘We do not quite appreciate the importance and magnitude of the events in which we have been taking part.’<sup>2</sup>

John Maynard Keynes, himself a delegate at the Conference, was in no doubt of the significance of the events in which he had taken part. On June 5 1919, his thirty-sixth birthday, three weeks before the Treaty was signed, this ‘angry young man’ of his time resigned from the British delegation. A fortnight later he began work on what was, on his own admission, ‘a violent attack on the Peace Treaty’<sup>3</sup>—the treaty which he denominated ‘the Carthaginian Peace of Monsieur Clemenceau’.

In this further retrospect of those events, in whose shadow we still live, I am indebted to the authors past and present named in the bibliography and to the perceptions of colleagues who have communicated their insights at venues across the years. These meetings of minds include the conferences marking the 75<sup>th</sup>, 80<sup>th</sup> and 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Versailles: at Berkeley, California, in 1994, at the National Archives, Kew, in 1999 and at the National Archives and Lancaster House in 2019. Two stimulating sequels also deserve mention: ‘The Treaty of Versailles 100 Years on’, an antithetical pair of lectures in the manner of a disputation presented by Dr Sean Lang and the late Mr Nicholas Kinloch in October 2019 as part of the Cambridge Festival of Ideas; and ‘The Shape of Modern War. Insights from Twentieth-Century Conflicts’ held at the London School of Economics in June 2024 by the Open University Centre for War and Peace in the Twentieth Century.

Particular acknowledgments are due to Professor Ramu de Bellescize, Professor Michael Cox, Mr Edward Fuller, Mr Ralph Gellert, Dr Pierre Jardin, Professor Paul Lawrence, Professor James Moore, Dr Lutz Oberdörfer, Professor Thomas Otte, Professor Bertrand Patenauk and Professor Patrick Weil. Special thanks are due to Professor Annika Mombauer and Dr Luc-André Brunet for according me honorary associate membership of the Open University Centre for War and Peace in the Twentieth Century, and to Adam Rummens, Amanda Millar and Courtney Dixon of Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Above all, for their close comments and *obiter dicta* drawn from a wealth of expertise, to Professor Alan Sharp and Dr Theo Schulte; and to Dr Philip Webb for his meticulous comments despite strong dissent concerning the role of Germany; and for permission to use the images relating to his uncle, Charlie Howells. Responsibility for errors and misconceptions rests as ever with the author.

*Cambridge, May 2025*

Depending on context, ‘the Allies’ is shorthand for ‘the Principal Allied and Associated Powers’—the United States, Britain, France, Italy and Japan—or simply for Britain, France and Italy.

## PROLOGUE: CARTHAGE

‘He shows how Clemenceau ... determined to impose a Carthaginian peace upon Germany, to destroy Germany utterly. And he proves how successful was Clemenceau in imposing such a peace.’

—William Bullitt, American delegate at the Peace Conference, review of Keynes’ *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* in *The Freeman*, 17 March, 1920

‘Legends harden and petrify with incredible rapidity, they become traditions; what has often been repeated seems indisputable and soon becomes hallowed; a false history is created which obscures the true one.’

—Abel Bonnard

Twenty folio volumes, observed Voltaire, would never bring about a revolution: ‘it is the little 30-sous portable books that are to be feared’.\* The standard *History of the Peace Conference of Paris*, published in six quarto volumes under the editorship of Harold Temperley between 1920 and 1924, remains a monument of scholarship, but a monument more often admired from afar. Its first two volumes, in which sixteen authors contributed to the history of the treaty of Versailles, come to 500 pages each: heavy going for the public, by whom it was ‘very inadequately noticed or read.’<sup>4</sup> Academics commended it for its scrupulous accuracy. ‘It was important’, warned Professor Seymour of Yale, and like Temperley a specialist adviser at the Conference, that the truth should be ‘recorded and made generally known, before the legends that grow up about a great historical event had hardened into the appearance of solid truth’.<sup>5</sup>

The warning came too late. The ‘legends’ to which Seymour alluded, had crystallized into accepted truth ever since December 1919, when *The Economic Consequences of the Peace*, a slim, whirling, poison-tipped arrow, slammed into its target. Appearing in a dozen languages and many editions, *The Economic Consequences* retains its popular standing as a lethal exposé of the Treaty—‘the Carthaginian peace’.

---

\* letter to d’Alembert, 5 April 1765.

‘Carthaginian peace’—there were three such, one after each of the Punic wars, and the expression is ambiguous. Keynes borrowed it from General Smuts, second of South Africa’s delegates at the Conference, who shared his discontent and encouraged him to write the book, though he later had cause for regret. Comparing Versailles to the peace dictated by Scipio the Elder in 202 BC after the Second Punic War, Smuts wrote of ‘this reactionary peace –the most reactionary since Scipio Africanus dealt with Carthage’.<sup>6</sup> That peace, though harsh, still left Carthage capable of resuming the struggle fifty years later.

Keynes, however, —and his readers have followed him—seems rather to have had in mind the final reckoning of 146 BC, when, after the Third and final Punic War, which put an end to the Carthaginian empire, Scipio the Younger, Scipio Aemilianus, laid waste the city of Carthage and sold its inhabitants into slavery or put them to the sword.



*Fig. Prol-1. Clemenceau calls for Germany’s destruction as Cato the Elder called for that of Carthage. Vossische Zeitung, 30 March 1919.*

In Germany the analogy with Versailles was drawn before Keynes' pages were even in proof. On 11 October 1919 he handed over the bulk of his manuscript to the publishers. Four days later Eduard Meyer, professor of Ancient History at the University of Berlin, declared in his rectorial address that recent events would bring 'the name of Carthage to the lips of everyone'.<sup>7</sup>

To the men of 1918-19 Carthage was rich in memories from their schooldays: of Hannibal, of Cato the Elder, who routinely ended his speeches in the Senate by calling for Carthage to be destroyed. Analogies from the Punic Wars were drawn by the Kaiser, by Lloyd George and by Clemenceau. The Speaker of Germany's National Assembly invoked Dido's dying curse, the cry for revenge uttered by the mythical Queen of Carthage, and described the fate of Carthage as mild compared to that of Germany. A dozen years later the same hyperbolic note was sounded by Hermann Göring. 'The destruction of Carthage', he declared, 'was as nothing compared to the shameful peace of Versailles'.<sup>8</sup>

The comparison would prove more apt in 1945 amid the blackened, bombed-out ruins of Dresden and Berlin: when archaeologists excavated Carthage in the nineteenth century, they found its walls feet deep in ash, for the Senate had decreed that 'if there was anything still left of Carthage, Scipio should utterly destroy it'.\*

The photograph which forms the cover-design and frontispiece of this book may give a misleading idea of its significance in the image of Clemenceau triumphant amid the debris of battle. The wasteland over which he tramped was French, not German.

It is recorded that Scipio, as he wandered among the ruins of Carthage, contemplated with horror and forebodings of nemesis the destruction he had wrought. In *The Economic Consequences* Keynes expressed *his* horror at what the peacemakers of 1919 had done—'Was the Treaty really as bad as it seemed?'—and his presentiment of the consequences: 'Vengeance, I dare predict, will not limp'.<sup>9</sup>

The parlour-game of 'Consequences' ends with 'What the world said'. The world, on the whole, has taken its cue from Keynes. William Bullitt, a young American participant, who quitted the Conference in anger shortly before Keynes, was among the first of many to endorse Keynes' account. His biographer, Patrick Weil, recalls Bullitt's verdict of a century ago

---

\* Appian, *Roman History*, book 18, chapter 20.

which heads this Prologue. 'Keynes's book', writes Professor Weil, 'remains the most widely accepted interpretation today of what happened in Paris' in 'his interpretation of the treaty as a Carthaginian peace—a diktat fashioned by Clemenceau'.<sup>10</sup>

