

# Versailles and Rights: A Centenary Appraisal

3.-4. June 2019 at Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies

The conference is organised by the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies and the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland, supported by the ERA.Net RUS Plus project 'Post-imperial diversities – majority-minority relations in the transition from empires to nation-states', part-funded by the Academy of Finland.

The Versailles conference and the founding of the League of Nations in 1919-1920 had, as a major task, the objective of reorganising the territories of Eastern Europe and the Middle East following the collapse of the Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian Empires. While much of the emphasis of the Versailles deliberations (and of subsequent scholarship) was on the new territorial arrangements, the conference also added impetus and international legal significance to discourses about minority rights. Different principles of national rights – self-determination, territorial or personal autonomy, federalism – were brought to the table and debated. The process also borrowed from pre-existing discourses, and fed into broader discussions about Rights at a time when Women's rights and human rights were also achieving significant progress. The discourses about Rights established under the Versailles process set the tone for the policies of the League of Nations, and went on to inform discussions about Rights ever since.

This international conference will revisit the issue of Rights at the Versailles conference itself; the antecedents to Versailles in discussions about rights in the early twentieth century; the implementation of the Versailles principles in the 1920s; and the legacy of Versailles on Rights discussions and policies over the subsequent 100 years.



UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

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# Programme

## Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June

**9:45-10:15**

Registration and Coffee

**10.15-10.30**

Welcome: Tuomas Forsberg (Director, Helsinki Collegium of Advanced Studies)

**10.30-11.20**

Moderator: Jeremy Smith (University of Eastern Finland)

Keynote: Dalia Leinarte (UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Cambridge University and Kaunas University) *From Suffragettes to Women's Human Rights: Eastern European Feminism*

**11.30-13.00**

Moderator: Martti Koskenniemi (University of Helsinki)

Miia Halme-Tuomisaari (University of Helsinki) – *History of Human Rights: the Versailles perspective*

Matthias Koenig (University of Göttingen & Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity) *International law and the politics of religious difference from the 19<sup>th</sup> century to Versailles – a historical sociological perspective*

**13.00-14.00**

Lunch (for speakers, moderators and registered participants)

**14.00-15.30**

Moderator: Carolina de Stefano (University of Eastern Finland)

Georgios Giannakopoulos (Durham University) – *British international thought and minority questions in Eastern Europe: Lessons from Paris*

Wiktor Marzec (Higher School of Economics) *“One of the Oldest States in Europe Has Never Suppressed Any Nation”. Polish Parliamentary Debate on the Minority Treaty and the Foundations of Interwar Polish Politics*

**15.30-16.00**

Coffee

**16.00-17.30**

Moderator: Immi Tallgren (University of Helsinki)

Jane Cowan (University of Sussex/ University of Helsinki) – *International oversight of rights and protections for minorities at the League of Nations: practices, contestations and alliances in a new political field – The case of the WILPF and Bulgarian women's organisations*

Francesca Piana (University of Geneva) – *Women Doctors and the Feminist Separate Sphere. The American Women's Hospitals In Greece, 1917-1941*

## **Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> June**

**9.00-9.20**

Coffee

**9.20-11.00**

Moderator: Ronald Suny, (University of Michigan)

Davide Rodogno and Emmanuel Dalle Mulle (Graduate Institute, Geneva) *Three crossroads: Berlin (1878), Versailles (1919) and Geneva (from 1920 to 1934). How and why humanitarian interventions and minority rights intertwined.*

Laura Robson (Portland State University) *Minorities Treaties and Mandatory Regimes: Sovereignty and Race in the Peace Treaties*

**11.20-12.50**

Moderator: Alexander Semyonov (Higher School of Economics, St Petersburg)

Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark (Åland Islands Peace Institute) – *The Åland Islands Solution in Context*

Steen Bo Frandsen (University of Southern Denmark) – *The Danish-German border: Historical Rights, National Self-determination and Minorities*

**12.50-13.50**

Lunch (for speakers, moderators and registered participants)

**13.50-15.10**

Moderator: Judith Pallot, (University of Oxford/University of Helsinki)

Charlotte Alston (Northumbria University) – *Representing Russia's rights at and around the Paris Peace Conference*

Ivan Sablin (University of Heidelberg) – *The Wilsonian Moment in Siberia and the Far East: Buryat-Mongols and Koreans between the Paris Peace Conference and the Comintern, 1919–1920*

**15.10-15.30**

Coffee

**15.30-16.20**

Concluding roundtable: Rights 100 years after Versailles