

HOW DID WW1 FAN THE FLAMES OF CONFLICT IN EAST ASIA?

Presented by Carol Yarwood

WW1 fought in East Asia: Video transcript

After the Great War, began the great negotiations of peace.

At the magnificent palace of Versailles, the global powers re-drew the world map.

But China was ignored. It was a moment that had a considerable and lasting impact on the nation and the Far East.

At the end of the 19th century, China was weak and divided. Nations took advantage as they gained authority across the country.

Germany's decision to take the port of Tsingtao in 1897 would draw the First World War to the shores of the Far East 17 years later.

In the opening months of the war, the British called on Japan to help them attack the German port.

But when Tsingtao fell in November 1914, the Japanese forces stayed.

In fact the city and wider region would not be given back to China. An emboldened Japan would go on to take even more from its neighbour.

Five years later at the Treaty of Versailles, a Chinese delegation pleaded for their city to be returned. The request was overlooked.

It was in the interest of the West for China to remain broken. Tsingtao would stay firmly in Japanese hands.

One Chinese delegate described the treaty as "a day of sorrow". But it was far more than that. The decision incensed a nation. The Chinese stormed out of Versailles refusing to sign the treaty.

An already poisonous relationship became toxic. China and Japan would be at war two decades later.