THE ART
OF PEACEMAKING

Political Essays by István Bibó

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The Miseries of East European Small States

1. EUROPEAN NATIONS AND THE MAKING OF MODERN NATIONALISM

Nation-building was one of the most important processes Europe as a political community went through. Within this process, the birth of *modern nations* has had a momentous significance. Essentially, this meant that new, very powerful mass movements took possession of the frameworks of existing or newly established nations, and the emotions nations had always engendered now turned into highly charged mass feelings. It is not true that the nation and nationalism as such were born along with the French Revolution or, generally, the bourgeois revolution. The only novelty in this was that the political processes of nations took the form of *mass movements*, and the emotions they had always commanded now became *mass feelings*. This transformation took place relatively smoothly in some nations, but like a blast in others, and it ran or is running its course in major social catastrophes. Some nations have increased in terms of both wealth and morality, some have incurred material losses and were debased morally, and others' entire development has ended up in deadlock. It is the process of the making of modern nations that we wish to examine in what follows.

The nation as a characteristic entity of Europe is the result of fifteen centuries of development. It is a widespread folly to hold that state and national boundaries have been in a state of constant flux for the past fifteen hundred years and that the only constancy or internal law that governed them was power. This view fails to take notice that for all the changes in state borders and the confusion of feudal relations, the national boundaries of Europe have shown a remarkable constancy and extraordinary persistence except for the critical

periods of establishing, locally changing, and partitioning national borders (the fifth through sixth, tenth, fifteenth through sixteenth, and nineteenth and twentieth centuries AD). By the witness of history, nations once established never fell apart due to the weakening of central authority and the growing independence of local power; independent local units became separate nations only when undergirded by powerful or lasting political experiences that grounded their internal self-consciousness and external authority.

It was between the fifth and sixth centuries that European nations started to emerge from the Germanic kingdoms that, under the leadership of powerful dynasties, split the legacy of the Roman Empire among themselves and that, starting out from wayward conquests, took on the shapes of the various territorial units of the Roman Empire after some adjustments and alignments: the Franks fit themselves into Gallia, the Western Goths into Hispania, the Anglo-Saxons into Britannia, and the Lombards into Italy. The Carolingian empire having united the west and later fallen apart, the Italian and the Western Frankish, the French, kingdoms reestablished themselves only to witness the creation of the German kingdom in the ninth century. These were joined by the three Norse states and the three East European Catholic states, Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia. Europe began the zenith period of the Middle Ages with this fixed number of nations. National boundaries looked more diffuse in the areas of eastern Christendom. The House of Rurik united Russia between the ninth and tenth centuries. The Byzantine Empire continued the Greco-Roman tradition; in the Balkans, however, newer peoples—the Bulgarians, the Serbs, and the Croats—established kingdoms on Western models between the eighth and eleventh centuries, the Romanian and Lithuanian principalities being founded somewhat later.

At the Council of Constance in 1414, the five leading nations of Europe—the Italian, French, English, German, and Spanish—appeared as *units* with established characteristics and were consciously recognized as belonging together. It was also at this time that the features of the West and Central European national frameworks began to be distinguished; the French, English, and Spanish kingdoms became increasingly solid and efficient realities, while the German and Italian kingdoms began to lose their substance, turning more and more invisible and symbolic. It was at this point that certain smaller European nations came into being. In the midway area between Germany and France, the Dutch and Belgian nations arose from the political experiences of the Kingdom of Burgundy (subtly spelled out by Huizinga) and the great uniting and splitting experiences of the Dutch Revolt. Though begun earlier, the secession of Switzerland from the German Empire became final at this time. As the Italian

kingdom fell apart, the Glorious Venetian Republic and the Sicilian kingdom showed signs of separate nationhood. The Iberian Peninsula was also reunited at this time but came to be divided into separate Spanish and Portuguese nations, in which the great experience of overseas conquests had no doubt had a role. The first popular nationalist, Jean d'Arc, made the scene at this time; moreover, all the ideas we associate with national consciousness were formulated in this period—the welfare of the nation as the most important community concern; recording and appraising national characteristics; rejecting foreign rule; and even the appreciation of the national vernacular. Linguistic unity, however, was not regarded as a factor in building a nation at this time. Ortega y Gasset poignantly remarked that the states in modern Europe were monolingual not because the people of one language flocked together and established their nation but because the political, cultural, and numerical superiority of a people *made* the existing state and national frameworks be monolingual. To our day, several European linguistic borders have preserved the memory of long-fallen political borders—the French-Walloon and the French-Catalonian linguistic borders, the Danish-Norwegian and Swedish-Norwegian dialect borders, etc.

The national borders established in medieval times, though shifting a little here and there, did not alter significantly. Based merely on feudal or familial relations, political structures that ran across these national borders usually proved fickle, and even if they did survive in some places for longer periods, they finally disappeared without leaving as much as a mark on the borders between the major states. Thus were the English-Norman and later English-French, the Aragonese-Sicilian, the Spanish-Neapolitan, the Spanish-Milanese, the later Austrian-Milanese, the Spanish-Low Countries, the English-Hanoverian, and the almost thousand-year-old Savoy-Piedmont ties unbound, and above all, the Italian-German bond embodied in the Holy Roman Empire. Each of these left mementos behind, but never did they cause any major shift in the national borders concerned.

The modern state system was gradually established in Western Europe between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Central authority, which had been but symbolic, began to hold sway over the political processes of nations, and the intelligentsia in charge of state administration and the middles classes acquired an increasingly prominent role in the national consciousness. Royal seats soon came to be possessed by whole countries, as they became characteristic units in terms not only of politics and law, but also administration and the economy. It was in this context that the French Revolution broke out, one of the main consequences of which was the intensification and democratization of community emotion, the birth of modern patriotism. This is where the rather

perfunctory notion that European nationalism was born alongside the French Revolution springs from. As already pointed out, neither was the nation as a fact nor the related emotion born in 1789; they had come into being centuries, even a millennium, earlier. The difference lies in the fact that the conscious bearer of the nation had been the nobility. The incursion into the nation by the intelligentsia and commoners, the third estate, had been in progress from the end of the Middle Ages, but it now turned into an overnight victorious taking of possession, and this was the experience that gave rise to modern national feeling. Revolutionary democracy, indeed all democracy, however it proclaims the freedom of every man, always puts this freedom into practice within a *given* community, and this experience, far from dampening it, heightens and braces emotions toward that community. The enormous heat and vigor of democratic community feeling derives from its combining of two emotions: the taking possession of the nation by the third estate, the people, everybody, whereas royals and nobles had exclusively owned it with all its historical and political prestige and representative and challenging consciousness, as well as the endowment of the nation with the warm and intimate feelings with which the middle classes surrounded their immediate environments. Middle-class feelings were of course more powerful in this merger, and by the principle of democracy, they very well should be; democracy brought about the victory of the lifestyle of the hard-working and dexterous man over that of the aristocratic man gratifying himself by wielding power and representation. This link between democracy and nationalism is very much a living reality in Western and Northern Europe, where political consciousness did not decline into disturbance or pathological deformation.

2. THE DISRUPTION OF THE TERRITORIAL STATUS OF CENTRAL-EAST EUROPE AND THE RISE OF LINGUISTIC NATIONALISM

When modern democratic nationalism arose in Western Europe at the end of the eighteenth century, there was no doubt as to what framework or country the people intended to take possession of—the *existing state system* of France, Great Britain, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, the Netherlands, etc. Not so in Central-East Europe. The Holy Roman Empire had muddled up the political development of both Germany and Italy, and the conquests of the Ottoman Empire had disrupted previous national frameworks without creating new ones with any degree of constancy or stability. Both factors contributed to the establishment of a disastrous state formation that terminally confounded national development in Central and Eastern Europe. This was the empire of the Habsburgs.

At the time of its inception, the Habsburg Empire was just another inciden-tal, "inter"-national dynastic state association, like the Aragonese-Sicilian or the English-Hanoverian ties, etc. When it came into being, it had nothing to do with what it is now fancied to have been—a "Danubian state." One of its con-stituent parts, the German Empire, which had been forced back into Southern Germany due to the Reformation, brought along all its Italian and West Euro-pean interests; Bohemia had little to do with the Danube, and the Hungarian kingdom, which had withered due to the Ottoman conquest, became a mere military front zone to the east for the German Empire. No genuine intent of unification arose in this union for a long time. Until the middle of the eigh-teenth century no one doubted that the House of Habsburg represented the political weight of German royalty as attached to the title of Roman emperor-ship in Europe. He was "the Emperor" who ruled much of Germany and Italy and also happened to be the king of Bohemia and Hungary. In the wake of the religious wars, however, the German emperor was gradually forced out of Ger-man territories, and as the House of Habsburg cemented its positions in Italy, it began to gain ground also, not at all primarily in the Danube region, managing to conquer the old territories of Hungary from the Turks. In the eighteenth cen-tury, it incurred further losses in Germany. For a time, the War of the Austrian Succession displayed the grotesqueness of the situation; without the title of em-press, Maria Theresa ruled a country without a single name, a conglomerate of the Austrian, Hungarian, Czech, Lombard, Belgian, and Croat nations or fragments of nations, with their different laws, languages, administrations, and self-consciousnesses.

It was only as late as the second half of the eighteenth century that serious attempts were made to forge some kind of "Austrian" consciousness in all the Danubian lands of the Habsburgs. However, before this Austrian consciousness could assert itself, modern democratic nationalism spread with elemental force throughout the region as a result of the French Revolution and created a wholly new situation.

THE RESURRECTION OF OLD NATIONS

The primary question that the democratic movements springing up in this region had to answer was of *which* framework they sought to take possession in the name of the people. Modern democratic nationalism was unable and justly unwilling to fill power structures (the Habsburg Empire, the petty states of Germany and Italy, the Ottoman Empire) with their mighty emotions and their displays of force but turned toward frameworks that existed only in their

vestiges, partly in institutions and partly in symbols and memories (the German Empire, a unified Italy, the kingdoms of Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia, etc.), which, for all their falling into provincialism or anarchy, meant more potent political experiences than the existing, not particularly old or deep-rooted, frameworks. The Ottoman Empire could not advance any national structure among the peoples of the Balkans partly because of the merely military and conquering nature of its organization and partly because of its cultural strangeness to the peoples concerned. The Habsburg Empire, as already noted, had been an occasional union and was capable of weakening the nations that happened to be included in it but could not melt them away. The Austrian consciousness that arose at the turn of the nineteenth century did not lack human and warm feelings, but it had deeper community roots only in the German hereditary lands and matched not so much European national feeling as the provincial emotions of the small German states. This Austrian local patriotism could hardly have engendered a new nation, all the more so because the glory of the German-speaking Austrian hereditary lands arose from the fact that they had for five and half centuries been given to the emperors and rulers of the *German* Empire and were regarded as the land, the Île-de-France, of the German ruling house. Unifying experiences and external prestige wanting, the rest of the small German states never came anywhere near establishing themselves as independent nations in the way the Dutch, the Belgians, and the Swiss did. The small states of Italy had reached a nadir of political impotence and exhaustion by the nineteenth century, and they could no longer counter the idea of national union with any form of separatism. In every direction, the old national frameworks gained ground; it was not Austrian, Bavarian, Sardinian, or Neapolitan feelings but German, Italian, Polish, Hungarian, and Czech national feelings that flared up.

THE PANGS OF REBIRTH AND THE FOLKISH IDEA

This victory, however, proved to be a Pyrrhic victory for each one of them. The new national movements had expended most of their energies on demolishing the existing frameworks and rebuilding their own, and in doing so, they had to face the fact that no one had established a modern state and national organization for them, a process that had taken place elsewhere in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They had no capitals of their own in the modern sense of the word; they had only partially organized state administrations; they had no economic organization that could stand on its own, no unified national culture, no savvy national elites. The Habsburg Empire

and the other frameworks of state power had an adequate supply of these but could give rise only to dull dynastic feelings and limp local patriotism. Thus these new national movements had to prove that they were entities with deeper roots and more vitality in the face of the bankrupt state organizations that were nevertheless endowed with all the means of wielding power. In order to do so, they had to dig deeper than the superficial relations of power to the factor of the "folk." This was how the "people" or *peuple*, implying as it did the dynamic of upward mobility in Western Europe, came to be the bearer of distinct national characteristics *(Volk)* and be seen as upholding the criteria of national belonging, language, custom, etc. more purely than the mixed ruling elite. This is at the heart of the untranslatable emotional difference between the otherwise logically identical words *populaire* and *völkisch*. This was what gave rise to a factor that made the territorial status of this region even more fluid than it had been: linguistic nationalism.

Linguistic nationalism is a Central-East European specialty. Basing themselves on theories of nationalism formulated in this region, we now even have West European proponents of the idea that a nation is born as a people of the same language "combine" and establish themselves as a nation. Now, nowhere on earth has this ever come to pass in this way. The modern concept of nation is preeminently political: at the start, there is a state that the people, through the power of democratized mass emotion, seek to take possession of and own. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, such movements mostly aligned themselves with historical state frameworks and attempted to shake off only rootless state organizations (the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires, etc.); however, with the rise of linguistic nationalism, all the nations in this regions took stock of their situation in terms of the balance of language forces; nations on whose historical borders linguistically related peoples lived or who no longer had historical borders set themselves the aim of uniting their linguistic kin, while nations who had other language speakers within their historical borders started programs to make single-language nation-states. Both programs were driven by the effort to buttress unstable political frameworks with ethnic factors.

This does not mean that linguistic factors create nations and that a nation can be conjured out of a dialect. As everywhere else, nations were brought into existence even here by political factors. Most nations in the region—the Poles, Hungarians, Czechs, Greeks, Romanians, Bulgarians, Serbs, Croats, and Lithuanians—have had their state or semi-state organizations and characteristic political consciousnesses. The few nations that might at first sight seem to have been established on a linguistic basis, through the combination of those speaking

the same language (the Slovaks, Latvians, Esthonians, Albanians, etc.), actually came into existence through historical experience and process. For instance, Slovak national consciousness developed in a series of historical experiences starting with the political and cultural resistance to Hungarian linguistic nationalism, the secession from Hungary and a joining with the Czechoslovak state, the establishment of the independent Slovak state, and the restoration of Czechoslovakia. It is worth noting that a tumbling hither and thither among state communities can be observed in the establishment or reestablishment of some West European smaller nations as well—for example, the Finnish and the Norwegian. It is the series of such experiences that shapes nations. What the advocates of the historical entities of Eastern Europe repeatedly proclaim is therefore true: language is not a nation-constituting factor; only history is. What they want to infer from this, however, does not follow from it; conversely, it is also true that linguistic belonging has become a historical and political factor in the conditions of Central-East Europe, in the territorial separation of existing frameworks, and occasionally in the establishment of new nations.

The ascendance of linguistic nationalism brought about a fluidity in the borders between the nations of Central-East Europe. While historical status quo retained its nation-separating significance in Western and Northern Europe, the borders between the nations of Central-East Europe were either completely lost in the vicissitudes of history (in the Balkans), or if they did survive, they lost their cohesive power (Poland, Hungary, the Czech lands). The gravest problem with this was not that linguistic borders were far too meandering or that they did not conform to geographic and economic expectations but that the historical emotions of these nations, most of them having historical memories, were attached to other and, as a rule, larger areas than the one occupied by the population speaking the appropriate language. Here too, as everywhere else in the world, national feeling not only brings together the members of a group, but also connects them to localities, holy cities, and the historical memories of a territorial entity. These emotions were particularly powerful when the locality concerned was inhabited by a group of speakers of the national language who constituted a minority or were territorially enclosed. The popular movements opposed to historical frameworks had a likewise powerful desire to take possession of city centers. The newly reborn nations were thus soon embroiled in ferocious border disputes with most of their neighbors, sparking several wars and disasters that brought about further destabilizations of territorial statuses. This was the major source of the political hysterias of Central-East European nations.

3. THE DISSOLUTION OF THE THREE HISTORICAL STATES OF EASTERN EUROPE

It is worth dwelling on the disaster that befell the three historical countries of Eastern Europe—Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary. We need to do so because, on the one hand, their fall had a much greater role in the catastrophe of the European state system than we would assume at first sight, and on the other hand, the imbalances in the political consciousness of these nations characteristically demonstrate the causes and nature of the Central-East European quagmire.

It is misleading to focus on the fall of the Habsburg Empire in discussing the confusions of Central-East Europe. It was rather the *existence* of this monarchy that wreaked the turmoil. It is no use enlarging on its collapse because the Habsburg conglomerate of states was an incidental hybrid that had no internal cohesive force and could not have contributed to the stabilization of the region even in more fortunate circumstances. In contrast, there were the three historical states, Poland, Bohemia, and Hungary, which were roughly concealed by the Habsburg monarchy and which came to light after its fall. That they were genuine and living nations they managed to prove, yet they were unable to assume the roles they had fulfilled before the rise of the Habsburgs. It was the internal imbalances of these three states that had a crucial role in the collapse of the European system of states: Hungary represented a gap in the French anti-German defenses after 1918; Czechoslovakia was the point where these defenses collapsed before being put in use in 1938; and Poland was the Archimedean point where German expansionism was able to temporarily undo the solidarity between the west and the east resisting it, and it was through this breach that it could unleash the horrors of World War II on to the entire world.

The troubles of all three states began at the end of the eighteenth century and have been, in the final count, related to the obstacles to the establishment and stabilization of nations in the region.

THE POLISH WOE

The trouble with Poland was that historical Poland had a *Polish half*—Polish homogeneously in the strict sense of the word—and another, *Lithuanian* half attached to it through personal union, the ruling elite of which became almost completely Polishized, but the majority of its population was partly Lithuanian and mostly Russian and Greek Orthodox. In the modern era, this population was increasingly drawn to a rising Russia. Concurrently, there were German expansionist claims on Western Prussia belonging to Poland, but they were far less

well founded either historically or ethnically than the Russians ones. As Poland fell into anarchy and both Russia and Prussia sought to carve parts of it off, there appeared another claimant for the spoils, the hybrid Austria, which had never had any serious claim on Polish territories. Following the first partitioning of Poland, a vastly powerful democratic movement arose, Polish patriots hoping to achieve both an internal and external renewal of their country. The movement brought about significant educational and political reforms, culminating in the 1791 constitution, which created quite a stir throughout Europe. However, the French Revolution drew European political attention away from it. Thus Polish anarchy, certain repercussions of the general European situation and Austrian intervention, created the steps to truncate Poland into full dismemberment.

In Poland's third partitioning, Russia obtained in full the Russian-Lithuanian territories, while Prussia and Austria shared the entirely Polish areas between themselves. The historical lesson Poles should have drawn from this was that they should have behind their backs a Russia that had not put its teeth into strictly Polish areas and so try to reestablish their national existence. However, the Poles were utterly dumbfounded by their dismemberment, which they attributed solely to brutal aggression, and were unable to distinguish between what was historically necessary and what was sheer aggression. Thus they did not relinquish the chimera of a historical Greater Poland, and this was why they grouped around Napoleon. That they were after dreams was demonstrated in 1812, when Napoleon, marching into the Lithuanian Grand Duchy, was nowhere received by the Polish uprising his Polish associates had promised him. The only use of the venture was to arouse the feeling in Russia that *it continued to be threatened by the intact parts of Poland*.

This was what prompted the fourth partitioning of Poland in 1815; it was all the more severe insofar as it ceded major, strictly Polish areas to Russia and thus meant that all three great powers now had an interest in the nonexistence of Poland even in the strictly Polish territories. There was thus no major power in Europe that would or could have supported the restoration of Poland. A full century had to pass, tsarist Russia had to fall, and the Central Powers had to simultaneously collapse before Poland could be reestablished.

The same historical lesson should have been drawn: base national life on *Polish* territories and be able to forfeit regions where there still were many-acred Polish landowners but no Polish masses. The Curzon Line drew the consequences from this situation. Not so Poland. It could not withstand the temptation to take advantage of the embattled situation of Soviet Russia and to cross the Curzon Line in 1920. The Treaty of Riga subjected a 6-million-strong *Russian and Ukrainian minority* to it, a significant factor in Poland's drifting

away from democracy; not being sure of the national emotions of these groups and with the painful memory of the historical catastrophes, it did not have the courage to bind these territories to itself through open-handed and democratic concessions.

Celebrating the Treaty of Riga for attaining the borders of historical Greater Poland, it did not realize that this had been carried out in the most threatening moment for the new Soviet state and thereby only instilled in Soviet minds that it was the symbolic incursion of ill-willed aggression that threatened the new socialist empire from the capitalist world. Twenty years later, in 1939, when German attack threatened its existence again, Poland failed the same historical test for the third time—*the test of confidence with Russia*.

By the end of World War II, Poland found itself in the same mental condition, that "Europe was indebted to it." And when Russia decided to claim the Curzon Line, it did not respond to it as the lesson drawn from the repeated disasters of 150 years, as the only possible solution, but as a *grave* offense that entitled it to major redress. It so happened that the powers in charge of Europe felt that they owed it this remedy. They paid their debt in the form of Silesia and half of Pomerania, with the rider that all the Germans in these areas could be expelled. What rebounds this is going to have cannot yet be assessed; it is to be feared, however, that it is going to become a critical issue of conscience for all Europe, and one day it will dawn on Poland that less of a remedy would have been more.

THE DELUSION OF HISTORICAL HUNGARY

Initially the problem with Hungary was the same as with Poland. A historical state framework was once given that, however, was not entirely Hungarian-speaking, several nationalities sharing it. These nationalities fell into two groups: the nationalities of the *northern areas* had lived through the entire fate of historical Hungary and demonstrated a willingness to participate in maintaining a multilingual Hungarian state with a shared historical consciousness. To the *nationalities of Southern Hungary*, however, the significance of the Hungarian state was lost during the long Turkish occupation, their having expected protection and obtaining liberation not from the Hungarian state but from the Habsburg Empire, and they rejoined Hungary in a closer or weaker relationship under its historical claim over their territories as the Turks were driven out, but this relationship no longer meant anything to them. As the linguistically kin states were established in the Balkans, they immediately drew to them with full force. The members of the Hungarian democratic and nationalist movement

believed that democratic freedom would bring about national unity within the boundaries of historical Hungary. This hope proved to be an illusion. When a spirited Hungarian nation started out on the road to freeing itself from the Habsburg fetters in 1848, it found itself facing the non-Hungarian-speaking nationalities of the country—the Croats, Serbs, and Romanians—whose separatist aspirations it would not recognize. Thus Hungary, fighting for its freedom, had to face the opposition of both the reactionary powers of Europe and its own disaffected nationalities, the end of which was the disaster of 1849.

The political consciousness of the Hungarian nation fixed on two lessons drawn from this disaster: first, Europe left freedom-fighting Hungary in the lurch, and second, the nationalities would use democratic freedom to secede. The first lesson prompted the Compromise of 1867 between Austria and Hungary, the meaning of which was that Hungary forfeited part of its independence in exchange for territorial intactness. The second lesson made Hungary drift away from democratic ideals because the 1849 disaster instilled the anxiety in Hungarian minds that undertaking all the consequences of democracy would inevitably lead to the breakaway of nationality-dominated areas. The lesson that the proponents of historical Hungary should have drawn was that they should try and hold onto the northern parts of historical Hungary and take cognizance of the fact that alienated peoples lived in the south. Instead, a rather small-minded policy came into being that believed it could secure the continued existence of historical Hungary by way of constitutionally limiting the use of the various non-Hungarian languages in the country. The outcome of this was that following the southern nationalities, which had long before awoken to separate national consciousness, the Slovak and Russian[1] populations also gave up the idea of belonging to historical Hungary.

This was the situation in which Hungary was stuck by the collapse of 1918, when it turned out that historical Hungary could no longer be maintained. It was dismembered, however, in such a slapdash manner that not only nationality areas, but also major, wholly Hungarian areas were carved off the county. One consequence of this was a series of domestic political crises that finally brought to power the most blatant reactionary forces, and another was that Hungarian public opinion saw only brutal aggression and hypocrisy on the part of the victors in the entire dissolution of Hungary and was unable to distinguish between the detaching of non-Hungarian areas ripe for separation and the unreasonable and unjust wrenching off of wholly Hungarian territories. As a result, it could not rid itself of the delusion of a historical Greater Hungary and fell into the mental state that Europe was deeply indebted to it for the injustice. Thus, after 1938, it felt it was exempt from all its European obligations, and given the

opportunity of changing the territorial status of the country, it did not stop short of going beyond strictly Hungarian territories but went on pursuing the delusion of a Greater Hungary in proportion to such chances opening up and forged straight ahead toward disaster in 1944. The delusion of a historical Greater Hungary was thus finally ruined, but not even this was enough; Hungary has to face a prospectively final peace that will likewise not ensure ethnic boundaries. Whether it is going to have the internal resolve to suffer this will be the crucial matter of its future democratic development.

HISTORICAL BOHEMIA AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The problem of the third East European country, historical Bohemia, likewise arose from the divergence of historical and linguistic borders. In the geographically confined historical Bohemia of medieval times, two-thirds of the population lived in the center, and the rest, Germans, were settled along the borders. The German population had its own Bohemian-German consciousness, just as the Czechs had their Czech-Bohemian identity. The tensions between the two people sometimes came to a head—for example, the Hussite Wars—and sometimes abated. The Germans tended to tie up with the German Empire, while the Czechs pursued an East European policy, but this was lost in the characteristic clashes of petty medieval interest. With the Habsburgs' rise to power, the German orientation also gained ground, and the independent statehood of Bohemia was obscured by the Thirty Years' War. Nevertheless, the historical framework of the Bohemian state survived, as did the separate German-Bohemian and the separate Czech-Bohemian identity. By the turn of the nineteenth century, the two identities evolved their mass followings and stood pitted against one another, yet each owned and claimed for itself the Bohemian state framework. The language struggles growing ever sharper, both parties departed from the Bohemian state idea, the Czechs seeking a rear-guard action in Pan Slavism and the Germans in the *grossdeutsche Idee*. It was in the name of the Slavic Idea that the Czechs began to turn culturally and politically toward the Slovaks of Northern Hungary, who were increasingly alienated from Hungary and linked up with the Czechs. During World War I, independent Czechoslovak legions were set up, and the autonomous Czechoslovak state was established as the war ended.

Germany collapsing, the new state managed not only to retain historical Bohemia with its mixed population, but also to attach, on the east, the territories of historical Hungary with a Slovak population, as well as significant purely Hungarian areas in the name of territorial rounding off. Its founding principles were contradictory: it included the Czech areas by virtue of historical and ethnic

continuity, the German areas by virtue of historical but not ethnic connections, the Slovak areas through ethnic but not historical relations, and the Hungarian areas by way of neither ethnic nor historical connections.

In this situation the advocates of the Czechoslovak nation sought to base the existence of their state on the ideas of *democracy* and the *territorial integrity of the Versailles settlement in 1919*. What made the Czechoslovak state better qualified for democracy than its East European neighbors was that Czech society was much more advanced, industrialized, and middle-class than the Polish or Hungarian ones, but it was also far more optimistic. The Poles had had to struggle with their disasters since the eighteenth century and the Hungarians since the middle of the nineteenth century, and they had lost their optimism toward democracy at roughly this time. The Czechs, on the other hand, had lived through the century in the shadow of the Habsburg Empire, amid powerful political struggles but with unfaltering hopes, and it was on this confidence that they could base the establishment of democracy between 1918 and 1938—a genuine oasis among all the fascisms and absolutisms.

The Czechs are justified in claiming that it was not at all unbearable to have to live as Germans or Hungarians in the Czechoslovak state. However, the ethnic principle being focal not only at the foundation of the new body politic, but also in the way it was structured, the German population of the historical area found the new state increasingly alien, not to mention the Hungarians, whose inclusion was utterly incidental. Not that they were badly off, but what had they to do in a country of Czechs and Slovaks now tying up with each other in the name of Slavic brotherhood?

The other idea that served as a basis for the Czechoslovak state was the integrity of the Versailles territorial settlement in 1919. As the Czechs began to feel that the idea of democracy could not save their state from centrifugal forces, so they insisted all the more on this settlement, more vehemently and obdurately than even the French, and this die-hardness of theirs also had a role in the catastrophic turn of European politics.

In 1938, as the Hitlerite aggression started toward the German areas of Bohemia, it soon turned out that not only the Germans and Hungarians, but also significant portions of the Slovaks had no sense of solidarity with the Czechoslovak state. The grievances were unserious or puffed up, but estrangement was pervasive. This visible lack of solidarity had its part in the Western powers' acceptance of the principle that in the application of the ethnicity principle, historical Bohemia was also to be divided in two. The way Munich carved up the country also put it at the mercy of Hitler's Germany, which annexed it within half a year's time. What happened to Czechoslovakia was what had happened to Poland and Hungary: a historical process long in the making now came to

pass in the form of most brutal aggression. This made the Czechs blind to the process that had been long under way behind the aggression and in line with East European development. They simply and justly felt that *Europe had forsaken them, the nationalities had stabbed them in the back*, and Europe owed them the restoration of their free state.

At the end of World War II, this debt was duly honored. The Czechoslovak state lifting up its head after the catastrophe, however, wears the indelible mark of catastrophe on its face, as do the mental countenances of the Polish and Hungarian nations. Czechoslovakia likewise no longer expects democracy to forge a united nation out of its multilingual country, just as Poland and Hungary have lost that hope. However, while the disillusionment prompted the latter to implement anti-democratic measures, the small-minded linguistic oppression and denationalization of nationalities, today's Czechoslovakia outdoes these, having opted for a program of expelling all non-Slavic nationalities from within its borders. It is madness but not without logic; the Czechs want democracy, not to be perturbed by nationalities, and an intact territorial stock—in other words, everything at once. This will to have everything, however, is driven not by a sense of power but the fear of the disaster they have been through. This is the point where Czech development and Yugoslav development, which have had many similarities, part ways; in 1938–1939, Czechoslovakia underwent a want of internal cohesion to the extent that even the relationship between state-founding Czechs and Slovaks was shattered; in contrast, Yugoslavia felt its fearful power in 1941–1944, and this experience is going to have a fundamental role in forging a nation out of Serbs and Croats, both originally sharply opposed to each other. The Yugoslavs want much because they feel they are powerful enough. The Czechs want everything because they feel no security is enough and know that up to now Europe still remembers its historical debt toward the Czechs. Indeed, the powers in charge of Europe's fate have succumbed to the Czech claim of expelling nationalities from their territories—at least in respect to the Germans. What we noted concerning Poland, however, holds equally here as well: the issue is showing signs of becoming a severe European crisis, and it is questionable whether insisting on 100 percent territorial integrity is finally worth being part of this moral crisis for Czechoslovakia.

COMMON FEATURES IN THE FATES
OF THE THREE HISTORICAL STATES

It is not difficult to outline the common features of the three historical East European nations. All three were served the lesson of becoming nations—to

be more precise, the transformation back into nations. In its own time, each—Poland in 1772–1794, Hungary in 1825–1848, and Bohemia in 1918–1938—responded to the European democratic and patriotic movement with such vigor that it elicited the highest hopes in West European contemporaries. All three nations had to face the fact that their inherited historical territories, to which they were deeply devoted, could not be drawn into a single national consciousness due to their several languages. For a while, all three believed that the cohesive power of *democracy* and *freedom* would bind their populations, which were gravitating centrifugally. This hope was fostered for all three by the great example of French development, where the tremendous experience of the revolution engrafted other-language minorities into the single French national consciousness. However, the French example had two thousand years of cultural development, fifteen hundred years of national boundaries, a thousand years of central authority, five hundred years of national consciousness, and the prestige of the French Revolution behind it. This was the example these East European states resurrected from their long period of apparent nonexistence and struggle with the difficulties of merely sustaining themselves. Thus their hope of democracy welding together different peoples was naturally dashed and proved unfeasible; *Poland was totally partitioned, the Hungarian War of Independence was crushed in 1849, and Czechoslovakia came to a disastrous fall in 1938–1939.* To top the catastrophe in all three cases, the nations battling with European powers found themselves face to face with their nationalities. All three nations justly felt that Europe had shamefully left them in the lurch. The fall of all three nations—precisely the fivefold partitioning of Poland, the crushing of Hungary in 1849 and its dismemberment in 1919, and Czechoslovakia's tragedy in 1938–1939—occurred amid brutal violence and blatant injustice, and none of them were in a mental state to realize the part historical logic had had behind the brutal aggression at the hands of the powers that be.

Moreover, as a rebound of the violence and injustice, the dogged delusion arose that the historical frameworks as a whole had been dismantled merely as a result of contingencies, factors of power, and brutal aggression and had nothing necessary or undoable about them, and they could be restored without obstruction when the dominion of aggression and injustice collapsed. Attested to by the suffering and woes of oppressed Poles, Hungarians, and Czechs, the images of a bleeding Poland, a bleeding Hungary, and a bleeding Bohemia seemed genuine, but they were actually associated with the dismembered *historical* countries; it was the maps of the historical territories that were bleeding away in people's imaginations, not the actual immediate communities made up of real Poles, Hungarians, or Czechs. The greatest good for these three nations would

have been to carve them up strictly under the principles of self-determination and ethnicity. The dissection would still have hurt for a good while, but the sufferings of their oppressed compatriots would not have troubled them, and it would have been highly sobering for them to note that no serious woes or desires to rejoin their historical frameworks were arising. In this way, the public mood would have had to accept the unavoidability of partial dismemberment and would have sooner or later gotten accustomed to the new borders under-pinned by the power of fact.

But this was not how it came to pass, and all three countries insisted on their historical borders, Czechoslovakia continuing to insist on them to our day. In the wake of its own particular catastrophe, each one of them was disillusioned by the power of democracy to bind together, and when faced with the alterna-tive to be either faithful to the ideals of democracy or insist on their territo-rial claims, none of them had qualms about choosing the latter, flouting the fact that each one of them had, in its own time, been the pride of European democracy. In order to uphold their historical state territories, the Poles and Hungarians experimented with the useless means of minority oppression and denationalization, and, most recently, Poland and Czechoslovakia have taken the wholly radical road of fully expelling their minorities, not even keeping up democratic appearances. Each one of them fell short of the perfect example of democratic wisdom Denmark had set in 1919, declaring that it would have historically Danish territories back only if sanctioned by referenda. Under the shocks befalling them, all three nations fell into a mental state wherein they felt they had only claims on the *world* and no obligations or responsibilities toward it. This was manifest primarily in the lack of inhibitions in the way they all attempted to restore the "status quo" they deemed valid. No less irresponsible were they, having been disillusioned by democratic methods and insisting on their historical status quo, in trying to ensure the use of their single language either by denationalization or expulsion.

To a certain extent, Europe, which had forsaken these three nations in criti-cal situations, did feel it was under obligation for the debt the three brought up ceaselessly. From among the three, Hungary put in its moral bill in the wrong way and at the wrong time—first, during the hopeless period of post-1849 reac-tion; second, in the form of querulous revisionism under the reign of a rigid status quo between 1918 and 1938; and third, as an ally of fascism between 1938 and 1941. In contrast, Poland and Czechoslovakia submitted their bills in 1918 and 1945, moments when Europe sensed and could honor its liabilities.

The fates of the three nations have parted at this point; while Hungary can-not expect to have even its ethnically based boundaries, Bohemia is having its

historical areas purged of minorities with international assistance, and Poland is receiving territories with which it is compensated for the loss of its historical areas, likewise cleansed of minorities. In Hungary, we can therefore expect to encounter a serious mental crisis touching even the future of democracy, while Czechoslovakia and Poland can become participants in a major European crisis of conscience through the expulsion of masses of minorities. The conditions for all three nations to mentally reconcile themselves to their now customary and undisputed borders have thus been relegated to the distant future.

4. THE DEFORMATION OF POLITICAL CULTURE IN CENTRAL-EAST EUROPE

It is common today to hold that the political culture of Central and East Europe—that is, the area east of France, between the Rhine and Russia—suffers from an *original backwardness*. And observers refer to the underdeveloped and anti-democratic social relations; the coarse political methods; and the narrow, small-minded and aggressive nationalisms of the area; to the fact that political power is in the hands of aristocratic estate owners, tycoons, and military cliques, of whom these countries cannot rid themselves on their own; and to the belief that this area is the hotbed of various befuddled, foggy, and deceptive political philosophies.

This way of looking at the matter does have factual grounds, but its final conclusions are gravely misconceived. It nonetheless serves very well in supporting the offhanded avoidance of having to take up the tiring and inconvenient task of consolidating the area and the endorsement of the most contradictory proposals of solution that tally only in being half-baked and dangerous.

These countries are undoubtedly a far cry from the full-fledged and mature democracies of Western and Northern Europe. There is likewise no question that much of this has to do with the givens of their social structure. The institutions that were a preschool for democracy in Western Europe did not work on the society of this area as intensely. Feudalism in the Western sense of the word—that is, a personal, contractual-like system of relations—spread only as far as the Elbe, and beyond that, unvarying serfdom dominated. A middle-class lifestyle and the social methods and intercourse tamed by Christianity and humanism trickled down to the working classes less and less from west to east. Accordingly, the city-dwelling middle classes, the bearers of the revolutionary movements of the modern era, and labor striving upward in their wake had a less organic development in these countries, their numbers were smaller, and they were more isolated than their Western counterparts.

There are numerous advantages to counterbalance these. First, though to a lesser extent, the Christian, humanist, middle-class, and labor-movement precursors of modern social development did exist here as well. In terms of social, political, and economic development, it was differences in degree, not in kind, that distinguished the peoples of Central-East Europe from those of Western Europe; not only are they nearest geographically, but in character also. There were quite noteworthy precursors of the lifestyle of free peasants and political liberty in Eastern Europe, and the great hope of nineteenth-century Europe was the enormous response the idea of liberty elicited in Eastern Europe. This hope was finally not fulfilled apart from Russia, but the fact that this region fell behind Western Europe more than previously cannot be explained away by mere social factors. No doubt there were keen West European observers fifty years ago who noticed the stagnation and lifelessness of Italian political culture; who recognized that for all its cultural and scholarly achievements, Germany had a backward social structure; and who recognized that the idea of liberty was not as profound and deeply rooted in the "freedom-loving" small nations of Eastern Europe as it might have seemed from afar. No one, however, would ever have foreseen on grounds of character that Russia and even Turkey would take a straighter road to social development by the middle of the twentieth century than, for example, Poland or Hungary. This can hardly be explained by other than social development having been halted by historical shock.

Aristocratic estate owners, tycoons, and military cliques wield so much clout and influence in this region that no free-minded country with a healthy development would tolerate it. However, the common opinion that it is the interests of aristocratic magnates, industrialists, and military circles in power that have held their peoples in slavish obedience and distracted from social concerns is gravely shallow and barren. These interests do lurk somewhere in the background and are happy if a political movement turns up to deliver obedient masses. Should this be a decisive factor, we would have no aggressive nationalism, only servitude and bestial backwardness. National feeling, even when mean and small-minded, is a mass feeling closely akin to democracy, and people or groups with vested interests cannot elicit or feel serious crowd feelings. At most, they might try to take advantage of or beef up the misleading or deadlocking effects of the shocks and anxieties the development of their countries undergoes.

It is also true that this region has seen the burgeoning of the murkiest political philosophies and blandest political deceptions, which a society with any healthy development would not only not take in, but also would not think up. It is, however, childish to imagine that muddled philosophies or malevolent instigation can distort the development of political culture. Serious crowd emotion

can only arise out of passion, and passion only out of actual experience. Messy philosophies and the deceptions of propaganda can only influence individuals or communities if intense experiences of fear or shock incline them to believe in lies and connivances because they can thereby justify their self-delusions, entertain vain hopes, fix on false notions, and satisfy passions. Half-truths and the lies of propaganda bounce off a balanced mind. The question is what has thrown the Central-East European mind off balance?

All factors point in the direction of some sort of *political hysteria*. Now any attempt to undo these political hysterias will first have to unearth the historical shocks that disrupted the development and balance of these countries. The shocks stem from the pangs and adversities of *nation-building* in Central-East Europe. We have described how state and national borders diverged due to the fragmentation of Germany and Italy and the establishment of the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires and how this brought into being *linguistic nationalism* and the confusion of national frameworks in the region. This meant that the nations in this region lacked what was self-evidently, clearly, circumscribably, and graspably present in both the reality and the consciousnesses of West European communities—the reality of their own national and state frameworks, their capital cities, their being politically and economically accustomed to one another, a single social elite, etc. The political rise and decline of a country in Western and Northern Europe—its acquiring or losing a role as a major power or its establishing or losing a colonial empire—could remain episodic, distant adventures, pleasant or sad memories, and could be suffered without major shocks because there was something that could not be taken away or questioned. In Eastern Europe, in contrast, the national frameworks were something *to be fashioned, restored, fought for, and be anxious about* not only because of the overpower of the state framework of existing dynasties, but also because of the indifference of certain quarters of its population and the fickleness of national consciousness.

This is the situation that gave rise to a characteristic feature of the unbalanced Central-East European political mentality: *existential anxiety for the community*. East European nations were always overshadowed by alien, rootless state powers either bearing European forms or wielding unbearable pressure, whether they were called emperor, tsar, or sultan, who deprived them of their sons either by offering the most talented ones a career or sending the most upright ones to the gallows or jails. The mismatches between historical and ethnic borders soon brought bad blood among the peoples themselves, and given the opportunity, they tried out on one another what they had learned from the emperors, tsars, or sultans. They all got to know the feeling when alien

powers endangered, seized, or ruled their sacred places of national history and suppressed or governed their people in whole or in part. They all had territories for which they were justified in being anxious or in claiming, and all have been close to partial or full destruction. "The death of the nation" or "the annihilation of the nation" rings empty in West European ears; Westerners can imagine extermination, subjection, or slowly going native, but political "annihilation" overnight is sheer bombast to them, yet it is a *palpable reality* for the nations of Eastern Europe. Here there is no need to exterminate or expel a nation to make it feel endangered; it is enough to *call its existence into doubt* with a sufficiently aggressive rhetoric. This could be done in the hope of success because these nations had vacillating crowds behind them that *had to be won over to* the national idea, or, as it is put in this part of the world, *awoken to national consciousness*.

What meaning could this have in, for example, France or Britain? There the vast majority of people are not consciously British or French, just as they are not consciously *fathers*, *husbands*, *middle class*, *working class*, *or human*; it is at critical moments that they become sharply conscious of their belonging and their duty in the world. In a French or British context, there is no point in continuously keeping national consciousness awake as it will necessarily awaken when needed, and when it awakens, there will be no doubt that it is British or French consciousness, for what else could be awakened? In Central-East Europe, however, everything was disputed; first dynastic, then national frameworks fought their battles for every single soul. As prompted by passion, interest, or prejudice, the local landlord, district administrator, priest, teacher, judge, newspaper reader, and craftsman had their say in the matter, often each saying something quite different. Final riddles of community existence have confronted Hungarian or Slovak peasants day after day—ones their French counterparts would need to answer once a century at most.

When contrasting the quivering consciousness of the East European masses with the ranting of nationalists, the national idea that was made so much of might have seemed grotesquely limited to a very small circle in this region. Hence the quite different appeal of the denial of the national idea by vulgar Marxism in Central-East and Western Europe. In the West, where the national framework meant a long-standing genuine reality, the Marxist position could be seen as one possible, somewhat doctrinaire, nevertheless informative theory. In the East, however, the idea that the *national idea was merely an ideology concealing the interests of a narrow circle of capitalists* could be seen as a deadly danger to national existence because there was something to it in the region. Not that the capitalist middle classes of the area were the prime beneficiaries and movers of the national idea; that was chiefly the so-called national intel-

ligentsia, which had not grown together with, indeed had few links with, the bourgeoisie. What was certainly true was that the great masses of people in whose eyes the national framework did not square with the historically known reality of the dynastic state were initially little moved by the national idea, and the national intelligentsia made immense efforts to *teach the national lesson* to the people. It goes without saying that it was only history that could teach this lesson, but until then, the vulgar Marxist notion that the national idea had narrow group interests behind it was a deadly threat to this "teaching" effort by the national intelligentsia. This was why a veritably psychotic fear of Marxist socialism could be instilled in the minds of even those quarters of the intelligentsia that had no interest relations with the capitalist system whatsoever.

ANTI-DEMOCRATIC NATIONALISM

Existential anxiety for the community has been the decisive factor in making democracy and democratic development waver in these countries. There is one essential requirement for the modern political development of a European community to be harmonious and even—that the cause of the community and the cause of liberty be one cause. In other words, in the revolutionary moment, when great revolutionary shock frees the individual from the psychic pressure of the social forces ruling over him by the grace of God, it should be obviously clear that the liberation of the individual means also the liberation, unfolding, and inner and outer enrichment of the *entire community*.

Democracy and nationalism are movements with the same root, profoundly related, and their imbalance can be the cause of grave confusions. And grave confusions did arise in Central-East Europe. A taking possession of the national community and the liberation of the people did not intertwine; quite to the contrary, these nations experienced historical moments that seemed to prove that the collapse of the oppressive political and social powers of the past and the carrying of democracy unrelentingly to its logical conclusion jeopardized, even brought disaster to the national community. These shocks brought into being the greatest monstrosity of modern European political development: *anti-democratic nationalism*. Sadly, we have become so much used to it that we do not take notice what a squaring of the circle it is to expect and develop the characteristic features of free men, the spontaneous enthusiasm, conscious self-sacrifice, and responsible activism for a community while that community fails to guarantee the elemental conditions for the growth of free men.

In a state of convulsive fear and the belief that the advance of freedom endangers the cause of the nation, the benefits of democracy cannot be made use of.

To be a democrat is first and foremost not to be afraid—not to be afraid of those who have a different opinion, speak a different language, and are of another race; not to be afraid of revolution, conspiracies, the unknown evil intentions of the enemy, hostile propaganda, disdain, and generally all those imaginary dangers that become real because we are afraid of them. The countries of Central-East Europe have been afraid because they are not full-fledged and mature democracies, and being afraid, they were unable to become democracies. The unfolding of an undisturbed, free, and unfearful political life would have run straight against the very anxiety complexes of these nations; it would have upset a war effort, disabled the pursuit of an aggressive foreign policy born of fear, unmasked the sham political construct the national anxiety erects, or provided too great an opportunity for national minorities threatening national unity and feeling alien in or unconcerned or inimical about the national framework, and so on.

Thus what genuine democracies know only in the actual hour of danger became the rule in the permanent anxiety and sense of danger—the curbing of public freedoms; censorship; a search for the "hirelings" of the enemy, the "traitors," excessively forcing order or its veneer at the expense of liberty. An infinite variety of ways of falsifying and abusing democracy came into being, from the most subtle and even unconscious to the most brutal: playing off general suffrage against democratic development; striking coalitions and compromises on unsound and unclear bases; election systems obstructing or falsifying the healthy articulation of community will; rigging elections; coups d'état; and transitory dictatorships.

This course of Central-East European political life brought about a characteristic type of politician: the *phony realist*. Descending from aristocratic heights or ascending on the wings of democratic representation, these politicians, beside their undoubted talents, had cunning and a bent for aggression that made them perfectly suited for running and epitomizing anti-democratic governments and aggressive political pseudo-constructs in the midst of democratic trappings. They thus came to be renowned as "great realists" and could relegate their Western counterparts as "doctrinarians" or "idealists" to the background. Bismarck was the prime example of this type, and the Tiszas, Brătianus, Pašićes, Bethlens, Venizeloses, etc. were its great representatives. Interestingly, though quite logically, all this came to reinforce the power of the heads of state in these countries, which democratic advances had begun to overshadow. Governments had weight insofar as they managed to balance between the two factors of power, but by having systematically corrupted one factor, popular representation, they strengthened the other. Moreover, it was by the authority

of the head of state that faithful subjects expected to be protected against the ravages of government power. This pulverized existing democratic forces and meant a fallback into the pre-democracy condition, when society had expected to be saved from troubles not through law, the efficient control of government, and the political reasonableness of citizens but the graceful goodwill and wise determination of the head of state exercising his personal authority.

The difficulties of nation building in Central-East Europe also contributed to forces, gaining or regaining *social leadership*, who, in turn, diverted sound and democratic political development. In the West, the elite leading democratic and national development consisted primarily of lawyers, civil servants, political authors, leaders in business life, professionals, and trade union leaders. In contrast, Central-East Europe saw a shift in two directions: in opposition to the spirit of democracy, the *ruler*, the *noble*, and the *soldier* again acquired a definitive role, while the so-called *national intelligentsia* assumed a unique function.

The *ruler*, the *noble*, and the *soldier* acquired a central role in Central-East Europe because the shaping of national frameworks required not only an internal political movement, but also a territorial reorganization, changing the European system of states. The dynasty, aristocracy, and military that assumed a role in national unity or independence *temporarily* avoided the preordained fate of the monarchic, aristocratic, and military spirit—gradual or abrupt decadence—and secured a *noli me tangere* status in the struggle of democracy against all wielding of personal power. It was on such a national basis that the public desisted from criticizing certain dynasties (e.g., the Houses of Hohenzollern, Savoy, and Karađorđević) and some aristocracies (e.g., the Prussian, Polish, and Transylvanian) and all national armies. As a result, the *noble-military* component of national feeling—the feelings of dominance, aggression, and representation—prevailed over the other component, the *middle-class* civilized, intimate, and peaceable feelings.

The *national intelligentsias* could not boast the social prestige and past, tradition, and political culture of their Western counterparts but had a much greater importance and responsibility in national existence. The intellectual professions that had to do with defining and cultivating the distinctive features of the national community had a prominent role—writers, linguists, historians, priests, teachers, and ethnographers. This was why "culture" acquired an added political significance in these countries, and it brought about not so much a flourishing but a *politicization* of culture. Because these countries did not "exist" in the West European sense of unbroken continuity, it fell to the national intelligentsias to uncover and cultivate the distinctive and separate linguistic

and popular-folkish individuality of these new or reborn nations, to prove that these popular-folkish frameworks, for all the wants of national life, had deeper roots and were more vigorous than the prevailing dynastic state frameworks—which was indeed true. This was, however, what gave rise to the ideology of linguistic nationalism. In itself, this would not have jeopardized democratic development; in fact, these intellectual layers were often much more democratic than the politically influential capitalist bourgeoisie and lawyers of Western Europe.

This development became the starting point of a fateful deviation because it gave rise to murky political theories and philosophies that would later engulf the political life of these fear-stricken communities. This does not in the least mean that the dynastic, aristocratic, and military-chivalric world in the classical sense lived on in this region. It was only the power and sway over society that the dynastic, aristocratic, and military forces retained; otherwise they adopted the values, aims, anxieties, and desires of the national intelligentsia. Insofar as the mental state of anxiety required certain monarchic, aristocratic, and military dispositions, their sole contribution was the assertion of unity, discipline, order, anti-revolutionism, and respect for authority.

THE DEFORMATION OF THE POLITICAL SELF

The deformation of social structure was followed by the warping of the political self and a hysterical mental condition when there was no healthy balance among things real, possible, and desirable. The characteristically contrary psychic symptoms of the maladjustment between desires and realities can readily be observed among all these peoples: an excess of self-documentation and self-doubt, overblown national vanity and abrupt submissiveness, endless protestations of achievements and a striking devaluation of genuine achievements, moral claims, and moral irresponsibility. The majority of these nations give themselves over to ruminating on former or possible great-power statuses, while they can so heart-sickeningly apply to themselves the term "small nation," which would be utterly meaningless to a Dutchman or a Dane. Should any have managed to achieve their wish-dreams of territory, power, and prestige for a while, pointing out the fickleness and deficiency of the enterprise would immediately incur yelled charges of treason, but depriving them of their unrealized pipe dreams would not be had.

In such a state of mind, political sensibility is confounded; it is a common feature of the primitive states of mind dominated by the struggle for life to relegate values to the background, when the everlasting uncertainties of life and

ways out lacking baffle the system of values. This is why it is a very dangerous vulgar wisdom of existentialism to believe that the condition of danger is fertile and that it is only facing annihilation that awakens the individual and the community to the real meaning of life and that enables them to marshal creative energies ("Stirb und werde!"; "Vivere pericolosamente!") This holds only for mature, balanced, and grown-up minds; the uncertainties of existence will only elicit uncertainties of value from an immature and adolescent individual or community.

This is how these countries came to develop a sort of *national materialism*, a distant deformation of the Marxist social materialism. As labor in the fever of class war had little feel for the subtle values the propertied classes developed in the serenity their property afforded them, so the nations in the fever of establishing themselves did not realize that the greatness of Western nations lay in living their national lives with a self-evident serenity, not wanting to flaunt their achievement as a nation at all cost. While, however, the value system of labor fighting the class war proved to become deeper and richer in proportion as it increased its political weight, as political opportunities opened before them and their hopes were realized, the national mindset of most of the peoples of Central-East Europe, due to a whole series of historical disasters, became increasingly narrow and gave itself over to serious community hysterias. In this way, their national materialism itself proved to be a destroyer of values. All manifestations of national life were subjected to the most furious national teleology; all their genuine or imaginary achievements, from Nobel prizes to Olympic records, lost their spontaneous purpose in themselves and were put in the service of national self-documentation. From forgery to assassination, everything was sacrosanct and inviolable if done in the "name" or "interest" of the nation. Befitting proper materialists, no one was bothered that this would exhaust the basic moral reserves of the nation. One of the greatest deeds of Tomáš Masaryk was to reveal—decades before becoming president—that a document that romantic national self-indulgence had venerated was a forgery. Alas, there were few to follow in his footsteps in the rest of the East European countries.

Throughout the region, including Germany and Italy and the rest of the East European countries, this precipitated a massive body of journalism using hazy and phony categories and turning all the ordinary concepts of European political thought into weapons in this arsenal of self-documentation and self-justification. Simple ideas and more or less correct generalizations became manifestations of the Absolute Good and the Absolute Evil raised to metaphysical rank, mystic essences, and spells, the main duty of which was to buttress

pipe dreams and blur facts the community was not ready to face. Scholars of the "national" sciences set out to establish the historical—or, such lacking, the prehistorical—entitlements of national existence, the "scientific" grounds for territorial disputes, the fundamental principle of national existence, the separate national mission justifying independence, and, moreover, *horribile dictu*, the concept of foreign policy, which, being scientifically established, the nation was to follow.

This use of science, pursued not for itself, not only corrupted the scientific quality of these countries, but also put the elites of these nations in a radically sham relationship with reality; it accustomed them to build not on *reality* but *claims*, not on *achievements* but wants, and to think outside the simple chain of *causes* and *effects*.

If it was to be reckoned that one nation could not get on with another within one state body, *geopolitical givens* would be pointed out that prescribed coexistence and indirectly even who was to take the leading role in it. If asked why they wanted to rule people who wanted none of it and to be superior to those who were not inferior, they would answer by referring to *archaeological finds, folk songs, folk-art motifs, loan words, winged altars, and the effects of their books and institutions*, all of which proved that the people concerned would still be languishing in the darkest barbarism. If they were called to account for their internal disorders, dictatorship and oppression, they would point out the wounds they had suffered from Attila and the Turks in defending European liberty and democracy. If they were reproached for their thoughtless and vain foreign policy, they would invoke the centuries-old, moreover metaphysical, "meaning" of their history, which fatefully defined this or that policy of theirs. Do not let us think that these have remained mere extravagances; in less crude form, they continue to weave through and falsify the most expert, most objective, and most modern trains of thought.

As a joint effect of all these factors, the social and political development of these countries came to a standstill, and if it did continue, it did not demonstrate the evenness and internal authenticity that characterizes the development of both Western Europe and the Soviet Union.

5. THE MISERIES OF TERRITORIAL DISPUTES

The direst consequences of the confusions in the territorial statuses and the deformations of political culture in Central-East Europe were in the relations among the nations. For the distant Western observer, the political life of this region is awash with small-minded and inscrutable territorial differences, with

every nation in the region in a constant state of discord with the others. The first among these rather repugnant conflicts is the incomprehensible and meaningless *language war*. Western Europe also knows disputes over language, but we must be aware of the difference between a Western dispute over language use and an East European language war. The Flemish-Walloon and the Finnish-Swedish disputes over language use are radically different from Czech-German, Hungarian-Romanian, or Polish-Ukrainian language wars. For the participants of Western disputes, democracy is an existing and palpable possession, while the language dispute itself is not a matter of life and death. West and North European language disputes are not really between two peoples but between the two wings of the intelligentsia of one people, and the object of the agitation is that a group of people who have broken off from their vernacular—the Finns speaking Swedish, the Flemish or Bretons speaking French, the Irish speaking English—should return to the original language of their people. The Swedish people in Finland or the Walloons of Belgium might sympathize with the struggle in which one participant happens to be the language they speak but are generally quite aloof from it, and it seldom occurs to them that they should provide a means of suppressing the other language. For most West and North Europeans, persecution for and suppression of language use seems rather strange, and so is the propaganda to revive a vernacular that has been losing out (Irish, Gaelic, Welsh, Breton, Basque, Friesian, Lapp, etc.) when people decide to change their ancient language for one they believe will open up new opportunities for them.

In contrast, the Central-East European language wars are fought by peoples who have lived in the uncertainties of state and national existence and the ensuing anxiety for generations. These peoples want to base their state life on a community of people speaking the same language, and the outcome of the language war will decide on existing or desired state borders, language statistics being believed to determine the fate of their borders or territorial claims. In such a state of mind, it would be meaningless to point out that linguistic proportions cannot be changed in an area or that it is not worth it, that winning over some would result in losing many, and that subduing some would have to be dearly paid for in acquiring many enemies. Of course, a clear-sighted, brave, and democratic public and politics have but one course of action: provide a maximum of opportunities to minorities within the existing framework and, on their own initiative, satisfy the boldest demands those minorities might have—even running the risk of their breakaway; put differently, they would follow a British dominion policy. What this requires of course is that they should not be afraid and not believe that the secession of non-national-language or minority

areas would result in the death of the nation. If they continue to believe this and that the outcome of the language wars is an existential matter, then this implies actual war, the winning of which requires all the furious and final means all nations know as *exceptional* concomitants of a *real* war.

MINORITY OPPRESSION AND GRIEVANCES

It is at this point that the repression and the grievances of minorities begin. The constant debate over who started the conflict, the majority with the oppression or the minority with the seditious agitation, is utterly hopeless. The state of mind of existential anxiety, the fear for life, sifts people with common sense out of the debate, and the situation occurs when the agitation to have minority children learn majority-language folk songs is seen as a cunning and aggressive policy of language expansionism and the contrary agitation, against having children learn and have them sing in their own songs, is deemed an act of sedition. The grievances of minorities have an infinite cornucopia of terms for describing the techniques of oppression, while the majority peoples have a likewise infinite cornucopia of "grievances" for describing an upright and meek people being stirred up by fiendish agitators trained to undermine the state at foreign universities. Grotesquely, all these pseudo-reasonings and delusions turn into their diametric opposites whenever a change in territorial status turns a majority into a minority and vice versa.

One is moved to tears on hearing Hungarians going into raptures about the goodness and meekness of Slovak peasants or the Czechs extolling the noble gravity and civic virtues of Hungarian peasants and can only wonder why living under such good-willed governments and among such gracefully good peasant folk is so unbearable and why so many evil pan-Slavic agitators and no less evil revisionist agitators traverse the land ceaselessly inciting people against their lawful government. Of course, it is difficult to use the terms "lawful government" and "seditious agitator" in their Western sense where yesterday's agitators become today's lawful governments and vice versa. In this muddle of charges and countercharges, it is quite perplexing that reality, instead of gradually deviating from the picture drawn up by the charges themselves, increasingly approaches it. Though born of the imagination, community specters have the horrible characteristic of materializing in the proportion to which they are believed. In the world of good-willed governments and meek and industrious peasants, we first have prophets proclaiming the dangers to the nation or the people and enthusiastic cultural movements; then follows the suspicious watchfulness of minority cultural movements; then comes the buttressing of

majority cultural movements with the police, whereby the seditious mood is established; this then is topped by the authorities' fault-finding in everything; seditious movements gradually arise, only to be followed by incarcerations and gendarme bayonets; conspiracies; the systematic routing of minorities; and finally killings, revolts, and wars of extermination.

Where the situation does not deteriorate as far as this, *minority life* gradually becomes an impossible state of being. Unless basing itself expressly on racial supremacy, the state continually embraces its other-language citizens with a rhetoric of enthusiasm, but should a minority person show any sign of insisting on his language and identity, he will be suspect and treated as such. This will make the situation of a minority person ambiguous and strange even if he belongs to a *historical* minority, but all the more so if the minority was freshly annexed. This strangeness does not really hinge on the civilized or brutal methods of state power. Until 1939, the methods of Czechoslovakia stood high above those of all the rest of Central-East Europe; still it could not count on its minorities any more than other countries on theirs. For if the Czechoslovak Army has a confidential instruction to prefer Czechoslovak to minority firms in its procurements—a perfectly logical measure for a state that considers the speakers of the state language as its basis—then minority businessmen will no less logically conclude that civil equality is but an empty slogan even if no hands have been laid on them. Even under such conditions, but all the more so under more forceful persecution, minority life ceases to be a full human life; it is marginalized and held in constant check and seeks compensation in more or less realistic hopes of reuniting with kindred people. This state of living off hope, if it is not fulfilled soon, results in an endless swinging between vain phantasmagoria and woebegone lethargy.

Existential uncertainty and the corrupting effect of territorial disputes have together brought into being a characteristic Central-East European territorial—*territoriocentric*, so to speak—notion of what the power, strength, and flourishing of a nation consist. This attitude is characteristic primarily of nations with irredentist and territorial claims and reduces them to cultural and political barrenness, but it does not leave the "possessors," the adherents of the status quo, untouched either. When the greatest concern and anxiety of a nation is what territories it is afraid of losing and what territories it claims, national prosperity is sooner or later bound to be associated with territorial status; people begin to represent the fullness of their national pride and desires by drawing maps of their *real condition and their condition-to-be* and stick them up everywhere to be always seen. This is a deeply anti-democratic attitude—deeply because in itself it means neither oppression nor oligarchy, but as an attitude it is wholly

incompatible with democracy. Democracy is the victory of creativity and crafts-manship over conquering and possessing, and its most important teaching is that a nation can multiply and increase in depth and height, much more than any such effort at the expense of other nations. This is not to say that a democracy might not have just territorial claims; obviously, a claim for territory by inhabitants who want to belong politically where their desires and wills lead them cannot be objected to on democratic grounds. However, it is also certain that when a territorial dispute becomes the dominant cause in the life of a nation, it can block a not-yet-democratic community in its democratic development and can even dampen democratic spirit in a community already democratic.

"leadership" claims

Again, it is usually unwarranted territorial claims that are behind the gritty and mutual assertions of Central-East European nations that they are superior to or that they have a mission toward other peoples, primarily those whom or whose areas they want to rule. These include the various theories of the "leader" roles of various nations, their missions in defending or propagating Christianity, culture, or democracy. These are not quite the counterparts of the German *Herrenvolk* concept, which was supposed to be applied against *all* nations. The various entitlements that East European nations allege refer only to limited areas they possess or claim, and their sole aim is to counter the secessionist or separatist aspirations of the minorities, the speakers of other languages. This type of aspiration to "leadership" is a formula bred by constraints and torments; the nations concerned are grieved to see that the territory they possess or claim is not monolingual; were it that, they would be happy to forgo "leadership" or "the spreading of democracy" and would much rather live an "unpretentious" national life in the areas to which their national feelings attach them.

The mental disposition of Central-East European peoples to approach all political matters with a view not to reality and possibility but to grievance and redress has given rise to a characteristically *querulous* notion of territorial matters—a notion basing itself on historical entitlements and the status quo, nevertheless inextricably bound to claims justifiable on the democratic grounds of self-determination. Advocates of this notion essentially declare a territorial status—one naturally more favorable—as valid at a given historical moment. Ostensibly, they claim nothing belonging to anyone else, only what they are entitled to; the unsuspecting observer will be dumbstruck only when he sees what their demands actually include. Two different methods have been used to justify such claims; we can safely call them the *Hungarian* and the *Czechoslovak* methods after their pioneers.

The Hungarian method bases itself on historical antiquity, the thousand years of possession. To ground the historical claim, all the exalted or exaltable events of those thousand years are enlisted—particularly the thesis that had the Hungarians not shed so much blood protecting Europe against the Turkish peril, they would not have grown scarce in their own land, and Europe commits an unforgivable ingratitude in now dismembering it because of its resulting multilingualism. The justification sometimes falls victim to historicizing, medieval saints and kings being marshaled to justify a historical Hungary.

The Czechoslovak justification is radically different and modern, referring to its thousand-year past only insofar as it implies democratic or humane achievement. Nevertheless, it regards the time of the establishment of the international security organization, 1918–1919, as a reference date governing all territorial claims, and since the security organization broke down due to the insistence on various territorial claims in 1938, it holds that the only way to discourage countries bent on aggression is to restore the status quo at the time of the establishment of the security organization. The rest of the East European countries interchange or combine the two arguments, adding to it a third argument, a simple ethnic claim.

For all their differences, the Hungarian and the Czechoslovak arguments are essentially the same. Both believe they are asserting rights in the face of raw aggression, while both are in fact involved in the quixotic struggle of wish against fact. The Hungarian reasoning is gravely unrealistic because it does not take account of the fundamental fact of Central-East European national development: the collapse of historical state boundaries. The Czechoslovak version is likewise gravely unrealistic because it wants to restore the very elements of the security organization that brought about its collapse. Both arguments have an element of conjuring up spirits in them: Hungarians invoke the spirit of St Stephen, the Czechs the spirit of Geneva, and they want them to do wonders they cannot. Should they happen to attain their aims through any occasional support from the great powers, they will not acknowledge this none too glorious fact but will celebrate the "victory of justice" and make thanks offerings at the altar of their protective spirits.

Political consciousness burdened with existential fears was likewise responsible for the fact that the foreign policies of the peoples of Central-East Europe were defined ultimately not by principles, mental dispositions, or even objective interests but their positions vis-à-vis territorial disputes. It was due to territorial issues that Poland, for all its interests to the contrary, fell in line with Germany in 1938; it was territorial issues that made Romania join the German camp in 1941; and it was likewise territorial concerns that led Bulgaria and Hungary, however resolutely they had decided never to join the wrong side again, to slide

into the war of the Germans at the critical moment. The case of Bulgaria is particularly characteristic. Indeed, it would be difficult to claim that imperialism drove the Bulgarians to side with the Germans or that democracy prompted the Serbs to side with the Entente; having like social structures, both peasant countries of the Balkans assumed foreign-policy positions determined by territorial issues. This was how a Bulgaria that had accepted the carving off of its territories with the least racket and uproar among the "revisionist" countries, and even had Russia to back it, at the decisive point moved in the direction wherefrom it hoped to have its territorial claims honored.

No nation in the region could have been able to pursue a foreign policy rising above its territorial interests; not one of them was democratic or fascist of itself, choosing one or the other for the territorial security or gain it might provide.

One of the most disheartening chapters in the deformation of the political culture of Central-East Europe is the spirit of political irresponsibility the countries manifested in their European policies determined by their territorial disputes. Perturbed by anxiety and insecurity, misshapen by historical shocks and grievances, the disturbed mind tends to want to live off not its own being but the claims it has on life, history, and others. In this state, it loses its sense of duty and responsibility toward the community, and the only use he has of moral principles is for them to undergird his claims. The post-1918 overmoralization of European international affairs provided Central-East European nations with a vast arsenal of moralizations for disputes; the side in possession insisted on peace, and the claimant side was adamant on justice. However, this was mere pretense on both sides because they used these categories not in their authentic meaning but in how they could be used in their territorial disputes.

The lack of political maturity was nowhere more blatant than in their dividing nations into goodies and baddies, darlings and rascals. That their desire for peace or justice was insufficiently grounded became evident as soon as a fair peace or mutual justice was brought up. In response, the status quo countries' catchphrase was "Revision means war," which actually meant that "We are ready to go to war if we are expected to surrender what we unjustly possess." The revisionist punch line was, "Justice precedes peace," which amounted in reality to saying, "We are ready to set the whole world ablaze if we do not get what we claim." We might indeed ask with the biblical turn of phrase: if so ye confess, what do ye more than others, and what is the use of the reference to peace or justice? Do not the aggressive and unjust nations conduct themselves in the same way?

Nothing harmed the European prestige of the League of Nations more than the endless and pointless debates, which, disguised as matters of principle, were

only about the chronic lack of permanence in the territorial statuses among Central and East European nations. In the hands of these nations, the entire ideology of Geneva became a hatchet in their disputes against each other. This was how they became increasingly indifferent to the fundamental interests of the European community and irresponsible in the face of its fundamental moral maxims. Everyone knows the depths of the irresponsibility with which National Socialism and fascism thrust Europe down the road of catastrophe. Yet it is no less significant that many attempts at Franco-German rapprochement foundered on the veto of the Petite Entente between 1918 and 1933, a foundering that also meant the perversion of the regional idea proclaimed with ardent hopes, or how a Poland and a Hungary—threatened by the same danger in 1938—could not as much as make a gesture of solidarity in the catastrophe of the Czechoslovak state.

If we look at the politics of the countries between the Rhine and Russia since 1918 in summary, it is difficult not to pass harsh judgment on them. Two reasons caution us nonetheless. One is that these countries have suffered unbearably much. The other is that should we leave them adrift, we will gain nothing because it will only exacerbate the situation of Europe and the world. It seems wiser to ask whether there is a feasible way of consolidating the region and whether there is a possibility of directing the political development of these countries back onto the even road from which they have deviated.

6. RESOLVING TERRITORIAL DISPUTES AND THE CONSOLIDATION OF EASTERN EUROPE

We have described the political miseries of the East European countries that elicit mistrust and exasperation in Western observers: their many territorial disputes; the small-mindedness and aggression of their nationalisms; their willingness to forgo decent political means; their lack of democratic spirit; their bent to political unrealism, to live off not so much their achievements but entitlements and claims, to mutually hate one another, to make gains at the expense of their neighbors, and to be irresponsible in matters of all-European concern; and their political decisions, which are informed not by deep-rooted ideals or serious long-term political concepts, nor their rational self-interest, but their territorial disputes with their neighbors. On these grounds, they draw the conclusion that this region with all its bragging, denunciations, complaints, quarrels, and border issues should be left to its fate because its inherent barbarism is going to stand in the way of its consolidation anyway.

We have painted this region's turn to barbarism with rather strident colors. Nevertheless, the attitude that brushes the problems of this region off the table

because they are irresolvable is based not so much on a thorough knowledge of the region but on convenience and a bad conscience. This area is unable to consolidate not because it is inherently barbaric but because unfortunate historical events have pushed it off the road of European consolidation, and it has not found its way back.

THE POSSIBILITIES OF CONSOLIDATION

What is the final cause of all the contention in Central-East Europe? The fact that the historical states and the borders of the historical nations of the region have been blown up and the borders among its various nations have become subject to dispute. I know no basis for the opinion that the resulting confusion cannot be resolved. For has anyone ever tried to actually consolidate this region? A chance of consolidating the region occurred only in 1912 and 1918, when the two supra-national state formations, the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires, which had been in the way of the final establishment of nation-states in this region, fell apart. Had the peacemakers of 1918 been a little more circumspect and cautious, they could have laid the foundations of consolidating the region by the end of 1919. We know this did not come to pass. Since then immeasurable difficulties, suffering, and barbarism have swamped the region, yet it is still only thirty years ago that there was anything to be consolidated. This is not particularly long. Did Western Europe acquire its final borders in a matter of only thirty years? Obviously not. And if this is the case, we ought not to raise the standard malevolently high for the peoples of this region, who themselves hardly deny that they departed from the straight, unobstructed, and promising road of European democratic development. Even less should we forgo consolidating the region; in the wake of thirty years of terrifying confusion, the way of consolidation clearly transpires. Mutual hatreds, occupations, civil wars, and wars of extermination having receded, and the borders among stabilizing national frameworks are beginning to show up quite plainly. What must be avoided is slapdash and aggressive action that will cause this filthy deluge to return to the region. Apparently, consolidation can be obstructed, for it is not an elemental force that takes possession of an area and overwhelms everything, but it is a delicate, circumspect, and easily wreckable human effort against the forces of fear, folly, and hatred. The emphasis falls on the *possibility* of consolidation in the region.

We base this possibility on the fact that the borders among these nations have begun to take a final shape in the region. All right, one could ask, but who is going to guarantee that the new border system will not fall apart and give way

to the establishment of new nations in this area that lack all permanence in a few decades? The question shows a fundamental obtuseness about the political development of Eastern Europe.

As in Western Europe, the number of nations has little changed in the past one thousand years. In the Eastern Europe of the fourteenth century, the nations that existed were the Polish, Hungarian, Czech, Lithuanian, Romanian, Bulgarian, and Greek. Between 1400 and 1800, two military ventures, the Ottoman and the Habsburg Empires, attempted to create a non-national state in the region. They managed to overwhelm these nations and obstruct their political development, but they were unable to eliminate any one of them or start out on the way toward uniting them and forging them into a new one. Both ventures failed when modern national movements came into being, and the nations of the region, though having suffered major losses, reemerged. If we look around today, we see roughly those same nations in the region as six hundred years ago. There is some degree of change in that the Serbs and Croats have established a single entity, the Yugoslav community drawing to it some Slavic peoples whose national status had been unclear, notably the Slovenes. The Romanian nation became a closer unit than it had been, and the Greek one broke with the continuity of Byzantium. Only four new nations or the like were created in the region. The Slovaks of former Northern Hungary have developed their own national consciousness, and instead of the Hungarians, they have affiliated with the Czechs; the only question any longer is how sharp the dividing line between the Czech and Slovak nations is going to be. Further, the Estonian, Latvian, and Albanian nations were established in various buffers zones; they had their medieval roots as well, though they had the opportunity of founding their own states only at the beginning of the twentieth century. Finally, the Lithuanian, Latvian, and Estonian nations recently joined the supra-national state of the Soviet Union. There is no objective likelihood of any other nation being established in the region. These are rather modest changes, no greater than the changes that took place in the closed number of West European nations since the fourteenth century: the Swiss, Portuguese, Belgian, and Dutch nations were founded, and the English and Scottish have united since then, etc. The change in Eastern Europe was greater in that these nations came to be divided not by historically established but ethnic borders; or, putting it more simply, East European nations are made up of the totality of people speaking the same language. It goes without saying that this does not imply that there can be no language minorities or islands in this region; it only means that the stability of the dividing lines among the nations of the region is to be found not in historical borders, as in Western Europe, but along linguistic boundaries. All attempts to

follow the West European pattern and instill a unified national consciousness into several nations on the basis of a single historical structure—primarily by the Poles, Hungarians, and Czechs—were bound to fail, and they are largely aware of that. Interestingly, there is only one current prospectively successful attempt at a single nation formation that is attractive beyond language borders, but this is based not on historical grounds but on the unifying power of the struggle for democratic liberation: the Yugoslav experiment. The core of nationhood is language here as well, but the role the Yugoslav nation has assumed in the cause of European liberation is an attraction that points beyond language borders today. It is natural that the success of this experiment can be assessed only from a historical perspective; nevertheless, if we contrast the success of this experiment with the failure of the three historical states, we have to agree with Ortega y Gasset, who, contrasting the rise of the British Empire and the decline of the Spanish one, argues that nations are bound together by not only a shared past, but also a future, the perspective giving prestige, optimism, and momentum to the shared aims and ventures of a community.

HISTORICAL STATUS QUO AND ETHNIC BORDERS

Having taken note of these, we now need to find a way of consolidating the region, the principles and methods whereby consolidation can begin and whereby state and nation can again become notions with the same scope. Anyone dealing with the consolidation of this region will sooner or later feel on the verge of madness, lost in the maze of principles and arguments brought to buttress one side or the other. This, however, is only an optical illusion. If we once perceive the decisive political process in this region, we will immediately realize that all genuine border issues in Central-East Europe revolve around the opposition of two approaches: claims based on some historical condition, status quo, or historical sentiment, on the one hand, and on ethnic or language belonging, on the other. The problem arises from the fact that where linguistic nationalism calls into question a given situation, the state borders have to be shifted to the language borders, but this has to be carried out with due consideration for the resistance that historical attachments, emotions, and current situations might bring to bear. Having so reduced the question to its essence, we can exclude the damaging and menacing superstitions with which border issues are befogged.

The first and most widespread superstition in this respect is that no just border can be established in the region because there are so many possible contradictory criteria that some will be bound to be breached. However, there is only

one criterion that needs to be considered: a good border is one that conforms to national belonging, which, in Europe, means either historical status quo or language boundaries. All other criteria are merely alleged; geographic, economic, strategic, rounding-off, transport, and all God-knows-what criteria that are fashionable to bring up in a most irrational swirl are actually quite meaningless, and their vast application is bound to become the source of grave troubles. We must be very careful with these criteria, which seem "practical," "rational," and "objective" at first sight. The absurdities of redefining borders have always been illustrated by new borders cutting through houses and gardens, forcing local villagers to obtain passports to go to the nearest market town. It was the favorite procedure of Hungarian irredentists to take compassionate foreigners to a border and show them how it ran through the kitchen of a house, to which the unsuspecting visitors would immediately say it could not remain like that, and that statement would be presented the next day as a major victory of the Hungarian historical concept of state.

We must not forget that these necessarily occur where a border is established not on the basis of old situations to which life had been accustomed but by drawing the consequences of changed realities. The situation that recurs throughout Central-East Europe is that there is a town on the border of a given language area with a majority speaking that language; its immediate vicinity, however, has come to be dominated by another language group. So a desperate race ensues to tear the town away from its language community in the interest of its surroundings or to tear away those surroundings in the interest of the town. However odd it may sound, the wisest solution is a third option: follow the linguistic boundary and, if necessary, cut the town and its surroundings apart. But even the first two options are better than the neither-fish-nor-fowl concoctions based on squaring ethnic, economic, or other considerations, as in the case of the free town of Danzig. The task is to separate nations; any arrangement, therefore, that does not clearly cede a territory immediately or in the near future to one or the other nation will but present the opportunity for dispute. Rapprochement, which will ensue following the reassuring demarcation of nations, will manage to find the solution to the problem of peasants wanting to go to the nearest marketplace. An excellent West European example to refer to is the city of Geneva, which is surrounded in every direction by French territories, and even God created it to be the capital of Savoy. History, however, ceded it to Switzerland, a situation that has caused a whole gamut of economic and transportation problems, even international legal disputes, but it is not a bone of contention between France and Switzerland. A similar Central European example is Sopron in Hungary, which a plebiscite ceded to Hungary, while the

surrounding German-speaking area, Burgenland, went to Austria. Hungarians acquiesced in the ceding of the German villages because the town, replete with Hungarian historical mementos, remained in Hungary. The result was that though Sopron would be the "natural" capital of Burgenland by all economic and rational criteria, the Austrian-Hungarian border came to be one of the few borders in the 1918–1919 arrangement that were seen as mentally reassuring and balanced. Whether the nations concerned will be appeased or go into desperate disputes with each other will be decided not by the inhabitants of Dustfield having to obtain passports to visit the market of Gloriton but by politicians, history teachers, and pupils in the capital and schools of one country who have no reason to lament the loss of the national monument in the main square of Gloriton, whose population speaks their language, and who in the other country have no reason to bemoan that the children of the ceded villages are forced to learn alien folk songs at school.

This is not meant to be mockery; these sentiments are just as venerable as the emotions of the French attaching them to the cathedral of Chartres or the folksongs of the Auvergne. Our entire train of thought has sought to demonstrate that these are the most important factors that nourish the strifes of Central-East Europe. We have no intention of calling into doubt the truth of the thesis set up by many an eminent and learned author that it is landlords, tycoons, and militarists that generate these strifes ; we only want to add to this deep truth that these ploys can run their course only if history teachers and folksong collectors side with them, without whom monopoly capitalists are but lame ducks. One of the finest examples of this is the Habsburg Empire, the Eldorado of landlords, the joy of monopoly capitalists, and the paradise of the military, which nevertheless fell because history teachers and folksong collectors stood up against it. The "reasonableness" and "practicality" of considering the economic, transport, and similar criteria so often referred to are a mere illusion. In their current size, these countries are far too small to be self-sufficient geographical, economic, strategic, and transportation entities. Beside the enormity of World War II, what military import would shifting the border between two small East European countries from Small Hill to Big Mound have? The likelihood of this acquiring military significance might be, let us say, 10 percent, and that it may be beneficial for the future of mankind cannot be more than 5 percent. But that the grievances of a minority ceded to another country for military purposes will be inflammatory, sowing the seeds of war, is absolutely certain. No want of timber or oil imports is hardly worth not reconciling with one's neighbor. This holds true for any drawing of borders that cedes foreign minority areas to other countries on any practical or rational grounds. A border is important insofar

as it contributes to stability, and, if stabilization does come about, it will not be disastrous if it is due to non-rational geographically or economically absurd factors.

Another superstition, often stated out of conscious bamboozling, is that no just borders can be drawn in this part of Europe because the population is so mixed. In fact, an ethnographic mixture of the populations does not necessarily imply problems. Linguistic islands, particularly those that have come into being due to settlement policies, do not constitute a problem of themselves; problems arise when the linguistic island has some historical possession or claim in its background. In other words, mixture becomes a problem only when the dispute over its belonging brings about the clash or intertwining of the two main criteria, the historical (status quo) and the ethnic principles, and renders the transition from the historical border to the linguistic one or orientation among the historical and linguistic claims difficult. Now, there are but two or three such cases in all Central-East Europe. Such was the Danzig Corridor, and such is primarily the case of Transylvania and the Greek-Bulgarian dispute over the northern shore of the Aegean Sea. In contrast to these, the Serbs and the Romanians established the demarcation between themselves relatively easily. Mixture did not cause any particular problem in the other highly mixed territory of the region, Bessarabia, where the territorial dispute was hardly related to the population mix resulting from the various settlement policies.

No less dangerous a superstition is the thesis that there is no point in undertaking the complexities of drawing new border lines because the answer to the problem is not the resolution of border disputes but the creation of a supranational confederacy where the borders between the nations will ultimately lose their significance. This is a very dangerous concept because the region has been subject to a supra-national confederacy, the empire of the Habsburgs, and it burst apart and thrust the region into instability because it could not draw satisfactory dividing lines between the nations of which it was made up. Like a marriage, confederacy must not be entered into with unresolved problems because it is essentially meant to open up new perspectives (and so creates scores of new problems) and not to avoid having to resolve pending issues. Any future confederacy will be viable only if borders acquire a minimal stability, which is the mental condition of joining the confederacy. Nations join a confederacy only if they all have something to lose that the confederacy can protect.

The example of the Soviet Union is not as straightforward as it might seem at first. It is well worth learning how to tolerate nationalities and set up institutions, but this does not mean that the problem of Central-East Europe is the same as that of the Soviet Union. In Central-East Europe, historically

established nations face one another, and it is in modern times that their borders have become fluid. As nations, they have a long-standing and established historical existence, and for all the similarities in their fate and character, no uniting experience or situation has developed among them. What took place in the Soviet Union is all together different. The historical Russian Empire was a given fact; it had not melted its national minorities into one nation, but state fusion had had significant precedents until 1917. This historically existing empire was blended into a single nation by the shocking historical experiences of the socialist revolution and the Great Patriotic War. After these, this single nation had no qualms about providing linguistic and political autonomy, even the right to secede, to the nations and nation parts it united. It did so with no fear of such an eventuality, like the British Empire did with its dominions. Should such a unifying experience or development take place in Central-East Europe, it would have to face, in spite of the smallness of the region and some exceptions, much more powerful historical realities than the Russian Empire had in the various national minorities and tribal communities.

Political catchphrases are even more damaging than the various misleading theories and principles. The status quo slogan that no border is a good border, and that therefore the existing ones should be stabilized and mental rapprochement should be sought instead, is a damaging superstition; so is the revisionist slogan that life is an unending movement and change, and borders can never be fixed finally. Europe has become fully mature to have its territorial stock stabilized, if not for "ever," then for at least a long period, and this is also the condition of its becoming more unified and for its future peace. In this sense, we must be unrelenting in upholding the "status quo." However, it is only possible to stabilize—moreover quickly stabilize—borders that are reasonable and mentally acceptable, to which people can get accustomed, and that are adjusted to the psychologically and sociologically palpable borders of national entities. It is hopeless to preach appeasement while borders are no good, while "good borders" must be protected from the dynamic of "unceasing change."

Giving territorial disputes a moralizing twist is likewise harmful. If we recognize that the way to consolidate this region is to adjust state borders to shifted national borders, we will also realize that it is not moral justice to be administered but an objective situation to be grasped. The most pressing duty in the territorial disputes of the region is to rule out all moralizing interpretations the peoples of the region have kept expounding to international fora. The moral arsenal of the politically hamstrung peoples, war losers, is made up of pleading justice, appealing to the sublime and customary sense of justice of this or that great power and its magnanimity toward the oppressed and downtrodden, and

requesting that no power policy interests be enforced in concluding the peace. Countries that are better off politically, war winners, or that at least think of themselves as winners, refer to their merits and submit their bills in the form of territorial claims. Both claims to justice and merit are in fact war axes wielded maliciously to obtain an advantage in the disputes between the parties, which are usually but territorial.

The duty of consolidation has to do with neither sublime justice nor imperishable merit. It is an objective task that has to do with recognizing objective political and social facts and with drawing consequences. No doubt justice, moral principles, and merit have their role in deciding border disputes but only insofar as they contribute to the conditions of stabilization. To be more precise: on the one hand, there is a minimal degree of justice without which no stabilization or mental satisfaction can be expected, and it thus cannot be left out of account; on the other hand, there are merits to be considered in the momentary historical and political circumstances that to *a certain extent* all parties recognize as a basis for settlement.

THE SELF-DETERMINATION OF PEOPLES

It is with this in mind that the right of self-determination of peoples should be assessed. The question is not from what we derive it or with what moral arguments we justify it but whether it is capable of tidying up Central-East Europe.

Even at first glance, it is clear that this principle looks for the solution to the confusions of Central-East Europe in the right place. We have already pointed out that nations have become the sum of those speaking one language in the region. Whoever wants to separate these nations well will have to follow not historical but language borders. The right of self-determination in this region is recognition that the characteristic Central-East European situation is that a good number of people have come to belong to historical communities that are not identical with their national belonging. The right of self-determination would have worked to allow the expression of the changes in peoples' national belonging. Unfortunately, the peacemakers of 1919 were unable to consistently apply the principle they had accepted and thereby fix the map of Central-East Europe for centuries. This was due to their weakness, to the simple inability of Western Europe to grasp the characteristic problem of Central-East Europe, the shift from historical borders to linguistic borders. They did understand, however, the right of self-determination of *nations*, which was meaningful for them in respect not to border disputes but to the right of nations to secede or

become independent, such as the establishment of the United States or the secession of Belgium from the Netherlands. On this basis, they were happy to see and approve that Central European nations, such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, which had theretofore not had or lost their independent statehood, established themselves as states. When, however, endless territorial disputes began over these areas, everyone wanting a plebiscite everywhere indiscriminately, West European peacemakers began to get muddled. They had essentially asserted the self-determination of peoples so that entire nations could be liberated and not so that every village or town, if it so wished, could ask for a plebiscite to shift from one nation to another. From a West European perspective, based as it was on the stable establishment of historical state borders, endless plebiscites and the hubbub to which they would give rise were not seen as desirable methods from the point of view of peace. This was the point where the principle of self-determination of nations was not adjusted to the concrete needs for which it ought to have been used in Central-East Europe. The consequent application of the right of self-determination in every respect being burdensome and beyond their powers, the peacemakers of 1919 were glad to forgo it. Violating these principles would have its role in bringing about the German policy of venting grievances and thereby Hitlerism too. The latter referred to self-determination merely as a pretext for a maniacal power policy, and it discredited the entire concept. Its mere mention is not advisable, the ready retort being, "We have heard it all too often from Hitler."

It should be laid down that the self-determination of peoples means not Munich but plebiscites. True, even these are viewed with considerable mistrust. Indeed, if the self-determination of peoples means that plebiscites are a permanent institution of international law that can be invoked at will, then we certainly have no need of it. Consolidation begins when some basic issues cease to be disputed. In international relations, this is primarily the question of borders. It is not at all desirable to be able to dispute them anywhere at any time. This would not be needed even when genuine disputes arise; ethnic or linguistic borders can be established in Central-East Europe on the basis of statistics or comparative statistics without major difficulty. It would be definitely harmful to hold plebiscites in areas where landlords speaking another language and few in number have the clout to influence the voting of their—often backward—majority populations, for the process of becoming a nation undoubtedly hinges on linguistic belonging in Central-East Europe as well. In this regard, the results of plebiscites in Silesia and Eastern Prussia were doubtful, demonstrating overwhelmingly German consciousness in obviously Polish areas under the pressure of German landlords and industrialists, where, in all probability, only

a minority was actually German and the majority were Polish speakers, yet emotionally still unconscious. The real ground for plebiscites is not large, linguistically homogeneous areas but towns on the fringes of linguistic regions whose belonging has come to be disputed. This is all the more important because it is the historical attachment to certain areas, mostly cities, their populations, monuments, and stones, that is most difficult to undo in the transition from historical borders to linguistic borders. In such cases, if the people of a city decide on their belonging in a referendum, whether for or against historical attachments, it will surely help the process of acquiescence and relinquishment.

If we thus think of using plebiscites for stabilizing Europe, we have to be careful about two things; first, plebiscites should be arranged not where linguistic borders are clear but where they are critical; second, plebiscites, it should be remembered, are a means of stabilization, not of causing trouble, and thus should not be used for bringing into dispute stabilized borders and should never be repeated in the same place. If we yield in this, plebiscites will cease to be the means of consolidation and will lose all their advantages.

The recognition that linguistic borders have become the dividing lines between nations in Central-East Europe has brought up a novel and effectively monstrous solution: the exchanges and expulsions of populations. This method was first applied to the Greek-Turkish problem, and it was carried out amid major disorder, tumult, and inhumanity, but its results were surprising and have tempted copying; in a matter of only a decade, it ended Greco-Turkish animosity, which had had a centuries-long past and prospect. During World War II, Hitler used this means to resettle German populations living far off on the German linguistic boundary for the sake of expanding German political boundaries while ejecting the original inhabitants. He brought back Germans from areas where they had caused no minority problem. By settling them on the fringes of the German linguistic area and removing or exterminating the original population, he sowed the seeds of terrible enmity. This kind of resettlement became the source not of stabilization but insecurity.

The consequences of the United Nations' using this Hitler-devised method would be fateful for the future development of Europe. It would mean the end of the last certainty that could be taken for granted in stabilizing European borders—the permanence of the population. Nations would be expecting not to gain certain territories but such advantageous historical moments when they could expel whole populations from the territories they claimed. Population exchange need not be ruled out completely, but if we do not want to turn Europe into a highway of displaced peoples, we must lay down definite principles for using it, drawing lessons from the Greco-Turkish example and the recent

instances of population exchange. The baseline is that population exchange can be justified only when ethnographic borders cannot be physically followed but the historical condition or the status quo cannot be maintained because of heightened tensions. Furthermore, it should be most definitely stipulated that population exchange must be mutual, carried out by way of a resolution and under the supervision of the community of nations, and that it cannot be undone. If these are not clearly provided, the double-edged sword of population exchange will cut its own authors too, the means of consolidating Europe becoming the starting point of the wildest anarchy.

Is it not mere theorizing and utopia, we would be justified in asking, to formulate principles for international consolidation when peacemaking and the establishment of borders is taking place "naturally," according to the interests and balance of forces of power politics? This question leads to the most important issue of international relations: *the ways of making a good peace*.

HOW TO MAKE A GOOD PEACE?

The awesomely difficult and contradictory task of making peace was put most succinctly by the great Italian historian Guglielmo Ferrero: "Any peace implies forcing the vanquished. But the most elemental requirement of conscience is that obligation can arise only out of free assent. . . . A genuine peace . . . can only be made possible through the contradiction that the act of enforcement by nature is blended with enough freedom and the required sacrifice with enough advantage to make the treaty be a moral obligation and be in the interest of the vanquished to keep rather than try and breach." This is what is needed for the vanquished to add the binding power of approval to the sheer condition of being overwhelmed by defeat. Let us not believe that it is easy for the victor to force the vanquished to sign a treaty. We have become far too accustomed to peace dictates and realize neither the odd atavism that we insist on in the contractual forms of concluding a peace treaty even under the conditions of a dictate nor the fact that the dictating victor has to forgo a good many things to force his opponent into accepting the treaty in a contractual way. Indeed, this is an atavism, one belonging to an age that had a more developed culture of foreign relations and diplomacy—the eighteenth century.

Following Ferrero and others, the recognition has gained ground that a type of warfare systematically restricting fighting to professionals and limited areas, sparing life and supplies, became general late in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—a level of humanizing war never reached since. Characteristically, as the British-French wars were raging overseas in the eighteenth

century, travel and scholarly and social exchange between Paris and London went on undisturbed. It might seem scandalous that while soldiers were fighting bloody battles in mud and mire, elegant gentlemen and ladies, refined literati, kept up their conversations amid sophisticated formalities. Yet only a society that has totally eliminated war as such from its life will be revolted by such events. As long as we are unable to do so, we cannot deny that a warfare strictly regulated and restricted to limited theaters of war and fought in the manner of a duel is better than nuclear war. Dueling is a dull-witted medieval residue, but it is a high-minded advance in civilization compared to the law of fists. This dueling, play-the-game and humanized style of war had its counterpart in a system of dispassionate peacemaking that relegated force into the background in the international law and political mentality of the eighteenth century. This was part and parcel of the homogeneous political culture of European monarchy and aristocracy.

This dispassionate warfare and unavenging peacemaking was overturned by the Napoleonic system of reckless and risk-all warfare, which lived off and destroyed operation areas and made terroristic peace dictates. Napoleon's armies ravaged Europe for twenty years, and it took twenty years for legitimate European monarchies to put an end to the confusion. When peace had to be concluded in the wake of the devastations in Paris in 1814 and at the Vienna Congress in 1815, the same mood vibrated in the air that would be so fatal in 1919 and could likewise be grave now in 1946; there was and is far too much anger and exasperation built up against the vanquished monster to avoid the temptation of making the defeated nation pay for all the understandable grievance, regardless of the fact that this would make the peace physically impossible and delusive. Simultaneously, continuing the Napoleonic confusion, the wildest imperialist plans were hatched mostly by second- and third-rate powers jostling behind the victors. The conditions of concluding a peace dispassionately were thus no longer available; there had been too much aggression, pillaging, and dictates in the triumphant march of Napoleon for the idea of revenge not to seem self-evident. As brilliantly portrayed by Ferrero in *The Reconstruction of Europe*, Talleyrand was the one who recognized that it was not enough to build on the common, now declining, aristocratic political culture and that peacemaking should be based on deeper basic *principles*. "To establish something lasting that will be accepted without resistance, we must proceed on the basis of principles. If we have principles, we will be strong and will not meet with resistance, or we will at least be able to promptly tackle it," said Talleyrand, as quoted by Ferrero. Talleyrand found this principle in the concept of legitimacy and managed to get it accepted by the Vienna Congress.

Today, public opinion tends to think of legitimacy as a reactionary concoction, associating it with the Holy Alliance. This is but an optical illusion, however. Legitimacy was the invention of the diplomat and liberal Talleyrand; the Holy Alliance was the making of the fantast Tsar Alexander and the instrument of the reactionary Metternich. As it was conceived, legitimacy was not at all meant to repress liberal ideas but to help stabilize European states fallen into disarray and restore their territorial status. By repeatedly saying in the foregoing that a good border is the historical border for Western Europe, we have said no more than that settling the territorial status of Western Europe needs no more than Talleyrand's principle of historical legitimacy.

Thanks to this principle, Europe swiftly recuperated after the Treaty of Paris and the Vienna Congress, and an accused and defeated France could soon reassume its normal place in the concert of Europe. In domestic politics, the liberal idea was kept at bay for a while, but when it reemerged in 1830 and made stable achievements, it had the lastingness of the international system created in 1815 in its invisible background. This system survived the crises of 1848 and 1871 and lasted until 1914, providing Europe a hundred years in which peace was the regular and war the irregular condition.

The aristocratic Europe that had created the peace of 1814–1815 had rotted away by 1914, fell into the anarchy of World War I, and collapsed in 1918. Total war had stirred up mass emotions, and thus the peace conference commenced in the name of making amends and passing judgment over the criminals. More so than in 1814, the harmful effect of this could only have been counterbalanced by a solid and common basic principle for making peace. It was particularly the territorial issues of Central-East Europe that needed putting right in a way that would ensure stability and ward off another war—the Habsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire, tsarist Russia, and Hohenzollern Germany having simultaneously fallen into ruins. The principle that would have met the needs of the age was given—the self-determination of people, which might be reasonably called the democratic formulation of legitimacy. It was with this in his baggage that President Wilson sailed to Europe to make peace. Its practicalities—that is, that Austria-Hungary had to be dismantled and divided up into nation-states along linguistic borders—were also conceived of correctly. Many have studied, and we ourselves have pointed out above, why this voyage, which took place at a turning point of a new era with an unprecedentedly auspicious start and most unfortunate continuation, ended in failure. Suffice it now to say that 1919 differed from 1815 inasmuch as the peacemakers likewise proclaimed a principle but did not have the power to apply it. They did not give way to obvious unifica-

tion movements, did not liquidate all historical entities ripe for liquidation, and did not take into account historical emotions attached to the territories, while they meticulously considered the so-called geographical, strategic, transportation, and rounding-off criteria; to be more precise, they let the parties bring up purported principles in order to satisfy desires born of anxiety—for example, pushing borders forward to some "natural" protective line far beyond language borders. These gave rise to the most pernicious and pointless border disputes; the peoples of certain territories had neither any living historical contact nor any ethnic contact with their new nation, and no allegiance could be expected or supposed of them. Prior to 1914, there were only a very few instances of this: the Lorrainese French in Germany and the Poles in Prussia and Russia. After 1918, instead of a decrease in the number of such situations, they were multiplied; *this* was why the 1918 settlement was bad, not because its principles were wrong. Its consequences were an immeasurable confusion in thought and disillusionment. This confusion gave rise to, among other things, the monstrous grandchild of Napoleonic nihilism, the maniacal nihilism of Hitlerism.

We went through World War II, the forms of warfare dwarfing all previous experiments in total war. Human savageness outdid all scare news, and the passions it has fostered now threaten to demolish everything wanting to be stable and reasonable. It is under such circumstances that we are waiting on the making of the new peace; the victors and the vanquished have sat down to close the war. The form they have adopted is the agreement-based treaty preserved intact from the eighteenth century. But after hell has been unleashed on the world, what can we do to make the peace revive the eighteenth-century type of peace set on a smoothing out, balance, and loyal performance?

THE DANGERS OF BEING UNPRINCIPLED AND THE PRINCIPLES SHOWING THE WAY OUT OF TODAY'S CONFUSION

The passions stirred up by World War II can be allayed only by an agreement on principles and their application; unprincipled, opportunistic power policy has never before been as threatening as today. If 1919, which had a basic principle, led to a catastrophe because of a failure to draw its practical consequences and implement it consistently, what are we to expect of the current peace conference, which is morbidly afraid of adopting any principle that is plain and binding? In vain are general statements proclaimed on final, human, and democratic aims when there is no practicable principle for resolving the central problem of the peace: territorial dispute. All peace treaties revolve

around disputes over territories because that is where they will have a lasting influence, and they must therefore be made so that they cannot be disputed afterward.

There are two questions that arise at this point. First, where are the principles that could be applied in the current situation? Second, how can those principles be implemented at all in the face of the facts and forces of current power politics?

As far as the first question is concerned, I believe the foregoing discussion have clearly pointed out the basic principles that count and have also shown that these principles are informed not by dogmatism but by practical recognitions ostensibly and unavoidably presenting themselves. The fundamental principle is the democratic form of historical legitimacy, the right of self-determination. In Western Europe, this is roughly identical with historical legitimacy and historically established borders, which it would not be wise to upset on ethnic grounds. In Central-East Europe, however, if we want to establish borders that can be regarded as democratically "legitimate," we must insist on the principle of separating nations from one another on the grounds that actually divide them—linguistic and ethnic borders. We note these are not declarations or new principles but a system of principles that developed historically and organically from one another; 1815, 1919, and 1945 make up a system, each completing and growing out of the earlier one.

It is the questions of plebiscites and population exchange that require an agreement on principles. In respect to both, we have already pointed out that neither should be applied in a way that would create more problems than solve them. In regard to plebiscites, the following should be declared: first, plebiscites are needed only where an ethnic situation is unclear; second, plebiscites are to be held only where a population is politically conscious; third, no plebiscite is to be held on an issue already decided on by a plebiscite. In regard to population exchange, the following should be laid down: first, it is a last resort, when no other solution is available; second, it is to be mutual, not one-sided or disproportionate; third, it shall be carried out only under a resolution of and with the supervision of the community of nations; fourth, if executed, it shall never be undone or repeated.

The second question is apparently more difficult; what are we to do with our beautiful principles in the midst of power politics, or, as it is widely put, how do we think a treaty is going to consider not the forces of power but principles? The answer is quite plain: *no way*. The problem is not that power politics should not assert itself—as it was not the case in 1815 or 1919, so it is not now either. Obviously, a peace can be concluded only if the power concerns at the heart

of war and peacemaking are asserted somehow. What happened in 1815 was not that power politics was disregarded but that it was affirmed *within the limits set out by principles*. If a power ran counter to a principle with a claim, it was satisfied elsewhere where no principle was in its way. It is a misconception to believe that principles hinder concluding a peace; in fact, they enable it. Not that it is easy to adjust motives of power to principles. But it is still much easier than trying to conclude a peace without any principles to follow; that would indeed be a preterhuman and impossible task. In the lack of principles, the parties would come to the verge of madness because every claim could be countered by another claim. "Why not?" would be the slogan of the peace talks. The claims, counterclaims, and solutions will then result in the most unreasonable and strained solutions, monstrosities violating common sense, fact, and international propriety. Nevertheless, they will be convulsively insisted on because even the minutest agreement in an atmosphere defined by anxiety will be reached amid such great pangs that it will seem better to hold on to it for all its absurdity. A solid grounding of principles would help avoid such monstrous "solutions."

We cannot yet tell what the peace treaty being concluded in front of our eyes is going to be finally like. That it has little good to promise is rather obvious. If we ask, "What are the hopes of not immediate but gradual consolidation in such circumstances?" we must again make it quite clear that consolidation cannot be conceived of in Europe, Central-East Europe in particular, without the clearing up of territorial issues on a solid, principled basis. Any talk blurring this central truth is but a catchword, displays an ignorance of the real problems of the region and their causes, or consciously puts up a smokescreen to conceal them. This is not to imply that free reign should be given to the grievance language of irredentism and revisionism—this would only bring further misery to this unfortunate region. The peoples of Central-East Europe must be prevented from continually harassing Europe with their territorial disputes. Europe definitely needs stability; thus irredentist agitation by truncated states must be stopped by the force of arms, just as minority oppression by possessor states must also be stopped by the force of arms.

We must not forget that only good borders to which people can get *accustomed* can be stabilized. This must be asserted with all possible forcefulness in issues where agreement still seems possible within the framework of the treaty—territorial disputes can spark terrible dangers. Nonetheless, should unsatisfactory borders to which people cannot get accustomed and for which they cannot find justification find their way into the treaty, the public opinion of the great powers in charge of the fate of the world must be made aware of the good,

less good, and bad borders and their possible solutions and that these should be considered and studied because, as ever, the political history of the world is going to be made up of the alternations of stable, less stable, and fluid periods even if, as we hope, fluid situations will not end up in war. Again, the nations of this region must be stopped from creating such fluid situations. But should such fluid situations come into being, the public opinion of the world with a clearer grasp of the problem should take advantage of them and establish final consolidation in this most critical area of the world, Central-East Europe.

Though we have limited our forgoing discussion to Central-East Europe and only touched on general political truths, we believe we have treated a central and singularly important question of consolidating the world. This might seem odd at first sight; we have been accustomed to thinking in false universal terms and believing that the matters of a territorially small Central-East Europe are but one among the many major or lesser issues of the Far East, the Middle East, or the West. This is actually the gravest mistake we can fall into. There is but one trifle in which the Central-East European matters differ from the great issues of the Far East, the Middle East, or the West: they sparked off two world wars within but one generation; and, should a third world war break out, God forbid, it is highly unlikely to do so over the issues of Manchuria, the Dardanelles, or Spain; the cause will then again, as before, be the anarchy of Germany and the nations to its east. There is no effort more ludicrous and useless than to extirpate the spirit of aggression alone while escalating anarchy, insecurity, and discontent. This area can also be the cause of war not only insofar as military attack might start out from it but might *conquer* it. Central-East Europe—or, to be more precise, Germany and the countries to its east—however small, remains the greatest threat to world peace as long as it remains the region of the greatest anarchy, insecurity, and discontent.

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