

# EASTERN EUROPE

## An Historical Geography 1815-1945

DAVID TURNOCK



London and New York

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## EASTERN EUROPE: AN HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY 1815–1945

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This volume, together with its companion 'The Making of Eastern Europe: from the Earliest Times to 1815', traces the historical geography of Eastern Europe from earliest times to the present day. It draws on indigenous sources which have not been widely studied in the West to provide a wealth of detail about the development of landscape, settlement patterns, towns, political units and economic behaviour and about their interrelationship. The frequency with which political boundaries and other patterns have changed in this area makes the picture that emerges very complex. The region has never achieved political unity and the author accounts for this in terms of internal political, geographical and cultural division and of the importance of external influences and forces at key historical moments.

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To Serban,  
in gratitude for his friendship and  
encouragement

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David Turnock  
Leicester

# Introduction

This book is concerned with the historical geography of a part of Europe which had very limited coherence as a distinct region before 1945 when, as a consequence of the Second World War, Germany and her sphere of influence in Central Europe was split by rival socio-economic and military alignments. A new political barrier appeared which seemed 'from both sides of the fence rather like a frontier in the old Roman sense, separating civilisations that consider each other as barbarian'.<sup>1</sup> Historically however it is convenient to follow the thinking of W.J.Cahnman in recognising two great socio-political fields of east and west, the former defined by the Soviet boundary of 1939 and the latter in terms of the ninth century Carolingian Empire.<sup>2</sup> Between the two fields lies a 'marchland' territory extending from Scandinavia through the North European Plain and south to Pannonia and the Balkans, a belt in which various independent and mutually antagonistic powers have emerged.<sup>3</sup> The term 'shatterbelt' might also be applied, to indicate an area with conflicting state or great power interests.<sup>4</sup> Despite (or perhaps because of) strong cultural stimuli: Frankish and Byzantine (Catholic and Orthodox) or Western and Ottoman, it has never been possible for this region to be unified either within itself or through annexation by-powers in the east or west. As E.Fischer points out, there were forces striving for unity but they never accomplished their goal.<sup>5</sup> A.P.Vlasto thus refers to the 'soft centre' of Europe inhabited predominantly by Slavs through which a frontier between east and west would have to be drawn, a frontier which 'would reflect in its oscillations the relative vitality...of east and west expressed in their bids for the

spiritual allegiance of the Slav people'.<sup>6</sup> In the late ninth century a strong impulse from the east penetrated as far as Moravia but a political frontier could not be drawn so far to the northwest and by early eleventh century the tide had turned. A crown for St. Stephen in 1000 marked Hungary's establishment as a Catholic bastion, subsequently reinforced by the economic importance of Venice and the expansion of German settlement. And after the havoc wrought in Constantinople by the crusading movement in 1204 Latin unity in the Balkans was further frustrated by the rise of the Ottoman Empire under whose wing the Orthodox Church was able to find sanctuary.

Cultural and ethnic anomalies, thrown up by a complex historical evolution, have consistently impeded unification during the Medieval and Modern periods. Since Medieval times the greatest potential for unity has arisen through German leadership, which became most assertive during the nineteenth century with the emergence of an economically powerful German Empire acting in concert with the Habsburg and Ottoman Empires.<sup>7</sup> Yet the simultaneous rise of nationalism in the Balkans, drawing strength from both Russia and the west, posed an overwhelming constraint so dramatically projected by the tragic waste of two world wars. It is interesting to recall that for the German geographer, J. Partsch, 'the threefold belt of the Alps, Middle Mountains and Northern Lowlands dominate the landscape and scenery of Central Europe: wherever one of these elements dies out Central Europe comes to an end'.<sup>8</sup> But the topographical idea, with its transitional landforms and intersecting trade routes, was then lined up with the area of German civilisation and economic penetration. G.G. Chisholm reinforced this view in a thoughtful review of Partsch's book. He saw clearly that unity came not from landscape but rather from German and Austro-Hungarian economic and political interests.<sup>9</sup> It says much for the arrogance of nineteenth century imperialism that F. Naumann could write at the height of the First World War to advocate a massive power bloc embracing over thirteen million square kilometres and extending as far as the Asian frontiers of the Ottoman Empire and the overseas territories of the Netherlands.<sup>10</sup> He rejected any notion of ethnic superiority for Germans or Magyars and emphasised common interests. Although the desired treatment of non-Germans might

differ from that actually meted out by the advancing war machine there was no understanding that the force of nationalism would never allow the German Kernland to integrate with such a vast alien periphery. Chisholm clearly saw the vulnerability of such an edifice to Russian attack.<sup>11</sup> And these words were certainly prophetic, for the Russian advance has duly taken place and apparently destroyed any validity that the notion of Central Europe may have possessed.<sup>12</sup> For the foreseeable future the problem of Central Europe has been resolved and one consequence has been the creation of a tier of eight communist states which on the whole (recognising here the ambivalence of Albania and Yugoslavia) have become associated with the eastern bloc. (Figure 0.1) According to S.B.Cohen this area constitutes part of the domain of Eurasian continental power which stands in a state of dynamic equilibrium with the trade dependent maritime world.<sup>13</sup>

The Russian advance has done more than merely undermine the regional coherence of Central Europe. It has brought a sharp change in foreign policy by the powers of Western Europe. There can be few reappraisals quite as decisive as the one which replaced British and French collaboration with Russia in two world wars with the present ideological and military confrontation. Such a change was clearly anticipated by H.J.Mackinder in the development of the 'Heartland' theory to warn of the danger for the west that would emerge from the union of the Heartland and 'Eastern Europe'.<sup>14</sup> Of course the controlling power is the USSR, rather than Germany as Mackinder supposed, and the prediction that such a union would ultimately lead to the assumption of world power by the Heartland power has not been vindicated. The vulnerability of the Heartland to nuclear attack inhibits any dramatic advance for the time being and provides a technological basis for an effective containment strategy, provided there is the political will in the 'Rimland' to exploit it as a basis for effective negotiation.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless Mackinder was surely right to point out that a solution to the problems posed by the Central Powers would bring more challenging questions to the fore. Unfortunately any conscious effort to act on this advice immediately ran into a great dilemma, for while an alliance with Russia against Germany ran the risk of Russian expansion into

Figure 0.1: The Countries of Eastern Europe Today



Source: Modern atlases.

the centre of Europe and the takeover of the whole of Eastern Europe as Mackinder defined it (that is the area from the Urals approximately to the Lubeck-Trieste line) there was not always a chance that a rupture in relations between Russia and the western powers would precipitate a German attack guarantee that failure to do so would not precipitate a German attack on Russia or else bring about a closer union between them on the lines of the nineteenth century Holy Alliance. Out of the

dilemma has come an Eastern Europe with unprecedented ideological unity. The union may not be entirely harmonious, for nationalism has not been suppressed and serious divisions have occurred in both political and economic matters.<sup>16</sup>

Yet the current view of Eastern Europe has become sufficiently conventional to warrant a historical geography text complementing material already available for both Russia and Western Europe.<sup>17</sup> Such a work is necessary to examine the region's marchland or shatter belt status, both as an exercise in its own right and as a context for studies of the post-1945 period, concerning problems and strategies which often arise directly out of past experience. However in view of the large scale of the project it has been found desirable to divide the work into two volumes. This volume deals with the modernisation of eastern Europe between 1815 and 1945 while the earlier history is dealt with in a companion volume.

### PHYSICAL BASIS FOR MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT (Figure 0.2)

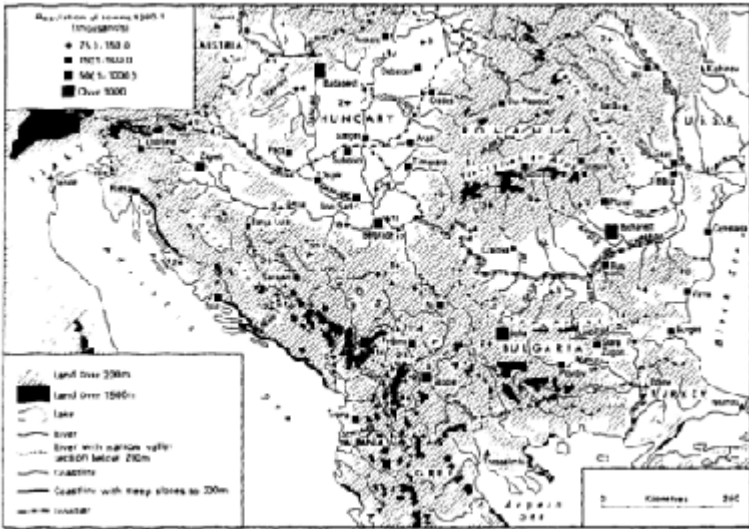
The settlement history of Eastern Europe cannot of course be divorced from the complex physical geography although the significance of the regional environment is not to be measured in simple terms.<sup>18</sup> Table 0.1 reveals that there are substantial areas of high ground. 23.2 percent of the land lies above 500m. with the proportion much higher in the southern part (37.1 percent) than in the north (11.6). However, given the lower latitudes and higher sunshine levels in the south much of the mountain zone has a significant agricultural potential and there are valuable mineral deposits too. The four Balkan countries and the southern half of Hungary have mean July temperatures in excess of 20 degrees centigrade; and with the exception of Baragan, Dobrogea and Moldavia rainfall exceeds 50cm/20 inches. Certainly in Prehistoric times there do not appear to have been any major constraints on settlement. While the Mediterranean with its tideless seas and extensive coastlands, conducive to stock-rearing and arable farming was of the utmost importance in early cultural, economic and political developments it is equally evident that 'the variety of relief, the availability of navigable rivers (particularly the Danube) and above all the

Figure 0.2: Aspects of settlement and physical geography



frequency of either grassland or easily cleared open woodland on loess soils made much of Central Europe and the Balkans a corridor for early movement', clearly separated from the Mediterranean by the Dinaric Alps and associated structures.<sup>19</sup> Migrants found their way into Eastern Europe from the Aegean via the Morava-Vardar corridor or from the Black Sea, with westward movement possible either along the Danube or across the steppe-lands which gave ready access through Silesia towards the Elbe and via the Carpathian passes to Pannonia. Perhaps the amber routes best exemplify the role of Eastern Europe in transmitting new cultural elements across the steppes and North European Plain, thereby nourishing such remarkable responses on the continental periphery as the Scandinavian Early Bronze Age. But with regard to political development it is evident that there have been several distinct natural regions with resources capable of inducing a powerful sense of unity which has complicated the emergence of stable larger units.

However any review of early settlement must acknowledge that the Middle East was the important diffusion centre so that the southern parts of Eastern Europe were the first to be affected by Prehistoric migrations. The northern zone of coniferous and



Source: Modern atlases and statistical yearbooks

deciduous woodlands must have appeared relatively unattractive on account of its peripheral position in relation to many of the early cultural developments. However the Germans and Slavs were eventually able to colonise the whole of Eastern Europe's largest lowland zone and initiate economic developments which emphatically eclipsed the south in Late Medieval and Modern times. This relative revaluation of the resources of the northern and southern parts of Eastern Europe could be seen simply as an accommodation to the emergence of Western Europe as the centre for innovation and the market that could draw surplus primary production most easily from areas immediately adjacent. But it also is evident that the fuel and mineral endowment in the north was particularly suitable for diffusion of the Western European industrial revolution with the hard coal of Moravia and Silesia, the soft coal of Bohemia and Saxony, an abundance of salt and a useful endowment of iron ore and other minerals. In the south light industries were more backward technologically and therefore less competitive, while the relatively high transport costs to west European markets reduced the profitability of international trade and encouraged the persistence of traditional social structures. It is therefore the access between Eastern and Western Europe that is crucial in



Table 0.1: Relief and land use

|                   | Area distributed according to altitudinal zones |               |              |              |                |                | Land use '000 square kilometres: |              |       |       |       |
|-------------------|---|---------------|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|-------|
|                   | Total   | Below<br>200m | 200-<br>499m | 500-<br>999m | 1000-<br>1499m | 1500-<br>1999m | Above<br>1999m                   | Agriculture: |       |       | Other |
| Czechoslovakia    | 127.9   | 15.1          | 68.4         | 40.9         | 3.0            | 0.4            | *                                | 51.7         | 16.9  | 45.4  | 13.9  |
| G.D.R.            | 108.2   | 74.6          | 22.8         | 10.8         | -              | -              | -                                | 50.2         | 12.3  | 29.4  | 16.3  |
| Hungary           | 93.0  | 77.6          | 14.8         | 0.6          | *              | -              | -                                | 53.3         | 12.9  | 15.9  | 10.9  |
| Poland            | 312.7   | 234.2         | 69.1         | 9.1          | 0.3            | -              | -                                | 149.2        | 40.3  | 86.9  | 36.3  |
| NORTH             | 641.8   | 401.5         | 175.1        | 61.4         | 3.4            | 0.4            | *                                | 304.4        | 82.4  | 177.6 | 77.4  |
| Albania           | 28.7  | 7.2           | 6.2          | 7.5          | 5.6            | 1.9            | 0.4                              | 6.0          | 6.2   | 13.5  | 3.0   |
| Bulgaria          | 110.9   | 35.2          | 38.5         | 23.2         | 9.6            | 3.5            | 1.2                              | 53.8         | 18.1  | 38.4  | 10.6  |
| Romania           | 237.5   | 103.8         | 63.9         | 45.9         | 17.8           | 5.1            | 1.0                              | 105.0        | 44.6  | 63.4  | 24.5  |
| Yugoslavia        | 255.8   | 71.8          | 72.0         | 70.1         | 34.0           | 6.9            | 1.0                              | 78.8         | 63.4  | 92.6  | 21.0  |
| SOUTH             | 632.9   | 218.0         | 180.6        | 146.7        | 67.0           | 17.4           | 3.6                              | 233.6        | 132.3 | 207.9 | 59.1  |
| EASTERN<br>EUROPE | 1274.7  | 619.5         | 355.7        | 208.1        | 70.4           | 17.8           | 3.6                              | 538.0        | 214.7 | 385.5 | 136.5 |

\* less than 0.1

Sources: J.Breu 1970, *Atlas der Donauländer* (Vienna: Osterreichisches Ost- und Südosteuropa Institut) and statistical yearbooks.

conditioning development options rather than the resource endowment of Eastern Europe *per se*.<sup>20</sup> Although power was concentrated at the Baltic approaches, the northern areas were much more closely in touch by virtue of the navigable rivers draining to the Baltic and North Sea whereas in the south the Dinaric barrier complicates access to the Adriatic and the Danube, with its many navigational problems, drains southeastwards to the Black Sea which is then some 6000 km. from the great ports of Western Europe. Thus the plight of the Balkans in modern times, as the periphery of an inevitably backward empire, is underlined. The Ottomans, like the Byzantines before, tried to interrupt the trade flows between the Western Europe and the Orient but they were unable to capitalise on their successes and the Ottoman economy drew relatively little benefit from the interaction.

So it is established that while Eastern Europe has always been eminently congenial for settlement and economic development it is handicapped by remoteness from the major shipping lanes of the Baltic and Mediterranean (and even greater inaccessibility in relation to the Atlantic theatre in Modern times). Highly favoured districts capable of functioning as *ecumene* for state development have been compromised by the potentials for continental and global power which usually place Eastern Europe in a marchland position, either between the gates leading the Baltic and Black seas or else between the sea power of the west and the land power of the east. But within Eastern Europe it is clearly relevant to discriminate between north and south, separating the territory of Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary and Poland from the rest. Some basic information is presented here to supply national profiles and also to compare the two regional groupings. [Table 0.2](#) deals with settlement patterns and shows the north as the more densely settled and highly urbanised part of Eastern Europe. And [Table 0.3](#) presents several indicators of social and economic development portraying the south as a relatively backward area.

It is also worth pointing out that for the south (Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia) the popular term 'Balkan' may be used as an alternative label. This is a rather enigmatic regional name, basically derived from a Turkish word indicating

Table 0.2 Settlement patterns 1930-1980

|                | 1930(a) |      |      | 1950(b) |      |      | 1970(c) |      |      | 1980-1(d) |       |      | K     | J   | H      | G    | F   | L       | M    | N |
|----------------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|-----------|-------|------|-------|-----|--------|------|-----|---------|------|---|
|                | A       | B    | C    | A       | B    | C    | A       | B    | C    | D         | E     | F    |       |     |        |      |     |         |      |   |
| Czechoslovakia | 77.4    | 12.6 | 10.0 | 70.4    | 15.6 | 14.0 | 60.9    | 23.3 | 15.8 | 119.5     | 3.02  | 19.8 | -20.6 | 17  | 3.61   | 23.6 | 72  | 2.55    | 16.6 |   |
| GDR            | 48.5    | 24.8 | 26.7 | 51.9    | 27.4 | 20.7 | 46.5    | 31.5 | 22.0 | 154.7     | 3.76  | 22.5 | +18.2 | 22  | 4.93   | 29.5 | 94  | 3.20    | 19.1 |   |
| Hungary        | 67.3    | 18.2 | 14.5 | 60.0    | 17.2 | 22.8 | 53.6    | 20.0 | 26.4 | 115.1     | 3.31  | 30.9 | -68.4 | 12  | 3.49   | 32.6 | 51  | 2.00    | 18.6 |   |
| Poland         | 79.6    | 9.9  | 10.5 | 70.3    | 13.6 | 16.1 | 55.8    | 21.6 | 22.6 | 114.3     | 6.17  | 17.3 | +48.5 | 48  | 11.56  | 32.5 | 144 | 5.36    | 15.1 |   |
| NORTH          | 70.4    | 14.9 | 14.7 | 63.6    | 18.4 | 18.0 | 53.8    | 24.3 | 21.9 | 122.0     | 16.26 | 20.7 | -11.3 | 99  | 23.59  | 30.3 | 361 | 13.11   | 16.7 |   |
| Albania        | 90.9    | 9.1  | -    | 78.8    | 13.4 | 7.8  | 73.6    | 17.8 | 8.6  | 90.2      | 0.58  | 22.5 | +0.1  | 1   | 0.20   | 7.3  | 9   | 0.38    | 13.9 |   |
| Bulgaria       | 84.0    | 11.3 | 4.7  | 70.8    | 17.0 | 12.2 | 49.9    | 26.6 | 23.5 | 79.6      | 1.57  | 17.7 | -24.6 | 13  | 2.83   | 31.9 | 33  | 1.24(e) | 14.0 |   |
| Romania        | 79.6    | 9.9  | 10.5 | 75.4    | 13.0 | 11.6 | 68.0    | 15.5 | 16.5 | 93.5      | 4.22  | 19.0 | -35.2 | 28  | 6.44   | 29.0 | 70  | 2.53    | 11.4 |   |
| Yugoslavia     | 89.5    | 6.5  | 4.0  | 81.4    | 11.1 | 7.5  | 69.5    | 17.8 | 12.7 | 87.4      | 4.71  | 21.1 | +14.4 | 39  | 8.5(f) | 38.1 | 46  | 3.47(f) | 15.5 |   |
| SOUTH          | 85.6    | 9.3  | 5.1  | 77.1    | 13.0 | 9.9  | 65.7    | 18.4 | 15.9 | 88.4      | 11.08 | 19.7 | -28.6 | 81  | 17.98  | 31.2 | 158 | 7.62(e) | 13.6 |   |
| EASTERN EUROPE | 75.8    | 12.9 | 11.3 | 69.0    | 16.2 | 14.8 | 58.6    | 22.0 | 19.4 | 105.5     | 27.34 | 20.3 | -18.7 | 180 | 41.57  | 30.9 | 519 | 20.73   | 15.4 |   |

- A Percentage of total population in settlements smaller than 10,000 inhabitants.  
 B Ditto settlements of 10,000 - 100,000 inhabitants (urban only).  
 C Ditto settlements with more than 100,000 inhabitants.  
 D Population density : persons per square kilometre.  
 E Population of the top ten settlements.  
 F as a percentage of the total population.  
 G Population of the nine largest provincial cities related to the total computed according to the rank-size rule (percent).  
 H Number of towns with population exceeding 75,000.  
 J Total population of H (millions).  
 K as a percentage of the total population of the country.  
 L As H but population 20,000 - 75,000  
 M Total population of L (millions)  
 N M as a percentage of the total population of the country.  
 a Hungary and Yugoslavia 1931, Bulgaria 1934, Albania 1938, G.D.R., 1939.  
 b Yugoslavia 1953, Albania and Hungary 1955, Bulgaria and Romania 1956.  
 c Albania 1965, Romania 1966, G.D.R. and Yugoslavia 1971.  
 d Albania and Bulgaria 1979, Yugoslavia 1981.  
 e Estimate.  
 f Figures inflated by the practice of including large rural hinterlands: thresholds 100,000 and 60,000.
- Source: P.S. Shoup 1981, East European & Soviet data handbook (New York: Columbia University Press) 397-407. Also statistical annuals for individual countries.

Source: P.S. Shoup 1981, East European & Soviet data handbook (New York: Columbia University Press) 397-407. Also statistical annuals for individual countries.

a heavily wooded mountain ridge. It seems to have been first used by A. Zeune in 1789 wishing to avoid both the political label 'European Turkey' and the obvious clinical alternative 'Southeast Europe'. However there has always been a certain imprecision as to the true limits of the Balkans.<sup>21</sup> The mountain core of Bulgaria and Macedonia is rather too restrictive: at least it may be supposed that fairly civilised hill country (with forest

Table 0.3: Socio-economic indicators 1980

|   | Czechoslovakia | G.D.R. | Hungary | Poland | North | Bulgaria | Romania | Yugoslavia | South | Eastern Europe |
|---|----------------|--------|---------|--------|-------|----------|---------|------------|-------|----------------|
| Fuel consumption '000 kg coal equivalent      | 6.5            | 7.4    | 3.8     | 5.6    | 5.9   | 5.7      | 4.2     | 2.0        | 3.5   | 4.8            |
| Steel production '000 kg                      | 1.0            | 0.4    | 0.3     | 0.6    | 0.6   | 0.3      | 0.6     | 0.1        | 0.3   | 0.5            |
| Cement production '000 kg                     | 0.7            | 0.7    | 0.4     | 0.5    | 0.6   | 0.6      | 0.7     | 0.4        | 0.6   | 0.6            |
| Production of television sets (100)           | 2.5            | 3.5    | 3.9     | 2.5    | 2.9   | 0.0      | 2.4     | 2.7        | 2.1   | 2.6            |
| Production of cars (100)                      | 1.2            | 1.1    | 0.0     | 1.0    | 0.9   | 0.2      | 0.4     | 0.8        | 0.6   | 0.8            |
| Meat production '00 kg                        | 0.9            | 1.0    | 1.3     | 0.8    | 1.0   | 0.7      | 0.4     | 0.6        | 0.6   | 0.8            |
| Foreign trade turnover '000 U.S. dollars      | 2.0            | 2.2    | 1.7     | 1.0    | 1.5   | 2.2      | 1.1     | 1.0        | 1.2   | 1.4            |
| Foreign trade deficit '00 U.S. dollars (a)    | +0.2           | 1.1    | 0.5     | 0.5    | 0.5   | +1.3     | 0.8     | 3.5        | 1.6   | 0.9            |
| Annual growth of national income percent      | 3.0            | 4.2    | 3.2     | 0.6    | 2.2e  | 5.7      | 6.3     | 4.6        | 5.5e  | 3.5e           |
| Railway freight transport '000 ton/km         | 4.3            | 3.4    | 2.3     | 3.8    | 3.6   | 2.0      | 3.4     | 1.2        | 2.2   | 3.0            |
| Railway passenger transport '000 passenger/km | 1.2            | 1.4    | 1.4     | 1.4    | 1.4   | 0.9      | 1.0     | 0.5        | 0.8   | 1.1            |
| Radio and television licences                 | 0.6            | 0.7    | 0.5     | 0.5    | 0.5   | 0.4      | 0.3     | 0.4        | 0.4   | 0.5            |
| Hospital beds (1000)                          | 7.8            | 10.3   | 8.4     | 7.1    | 8.1   | 9.1      | 9.3     | 6.0        | 7.9   | 8.0            |
| Doctors (100)                                 | 3.2            | 2.6    | 2.8     | 2.4    | 2.7   | 3.0      | 1.8     | 1.3        | 1.8   | 2.3            |
| Students (100)                                | 1.3            | 0.8    | 0.9     | 1.3    | 1.1   | 1.0      | 0.9     | 1.5        | 1.2   | 1.1            |

Note: All figures are calculated on a per capita basis except where otherwise stated

a 1976-1980 average

b Excluding Albania

e Estimate

Source: Statistical yearbooks.

and meadow) is included because the word dagh would be more appropriate for wild and rocky terrain.<sup>22</sup> However despite Zeune's sense of political detachment there is little doubt that the label has been appropriated for the European possessions of the Ottoman Empire. Connotations of disunity (as well as backwardness) have arisen and may be attributed to incomplete conquest by both the Byzantine and Ottoman Empires and the considerable amount of decentralisation tolerated by the latter, to the point where attempts to overhaul the administration after the Young Turk revolution merely provoked further resistance and the outbreak of the Balkan Wars which reduced the Turkish stake in the Europe to the Istanbul-Adrianople bridgehead. Well might M.I. Newbigin ask in 1919 'where racial purity does not exist (and) where stable nationality has not developed what form of human group is possible?'<sup>23</sup> Since the First World War the link with politics has continued and the famous Yugoslav geographer J.Cvijic (1868-1927) had no scruples about advocating the Danube-Sava-Isonzo line as the northern limit to accommodate the new political realities.<sup>24</sup> Most recent usage has included the Danube plains of Romania and finally, to harmonise with state boundaries, the whole of the latter

country. However the progressive enlargement of 'The Balkans' serves to magnify the disunity of the area (even without considering Greece and Turkey). Despite its geographical centrality there is little prospect of Belgrade playing the same role in future as Sirmium did in the Roman period.

## METHODOLOGY

The chapters cover quite long periods of time so that broad themes can be developed without excessive repetition. The present geography is seen as the outcome of a desperate search by new nations in the marchlands of Europe to organise their defences and accelerate the processes of modernisation. And in turn the belated manoeuvrings of the inter-war years must be rationalised through the tight grip maintained through the nineteenth and eighteenth centuries by Habsburg, Ottoman and Russian imperialism. But failure to modernise is not only the consequence of centre-periphery antagonisms within the empires but more fundamentally of inability to match the progress of Western Europe with unhindered access to the oceans. The study is continued in a companion volume on 'The making of Eastern Europe: from the earliest times to 1815', explaining the change in relations with the west as the overland trade routes were eclipsed by the seaways. Furthermore, the Medieval states are seen as the outcome of Dark Age migrations and the prior transfer of technology from the Middle East. In view of this stripping off of overlays there might be some justification for the organisation of chapters in a regressive sequence, working back from the present deeper and deeper into the past. Some work of this kind has been done in France but in Britain there is a strong consensus against such practice.<sup>25</sup> J.L.M.Gulley found it appropriate to take his readers backwards through time to trace the origins of the various elements making up the Wealden landscape of southeast England.<sup>26</sup> But given the long timespan of most of the periods adopted in this book it seems that the mental leaps required by the reader, to connect the end of one period with the beginning of the previous period, would be too daunting to countenance. And the function of the book as an historical study of Europe's shatterbelt also justifies a conventional sequence of chapters.

Such is the philosophical ferment over 'explanation' in geography today that any writer needs to clarify his position. The view taken here is that established facts must claim priority and to that extent the case for positivism seems fundamentally unanswerable. However human behaviour should be understood as well as explained and to that extent the idealist stance, seeking to relate actions to ideas, is adopted.<sup>27</sup> But it is deployed very much as a critique of positivism and not as an alternative.<sup>28</sup> Arguably it is desirable to go further and recognise the importance of individual initiative in a wider structural context introducing collective values or ideology. Particularly controversial in this context is the Marxist view of socio-economic development related to the three stages of feudalism, capitalism and socialism. Marxism is superficially attractive in the sense that a progressive method is necessary to trace the modernisation of societies in a specific territorial framework evolving through Medieval and Modern times.<sup>29</sup> And it is not unreasonable to deduce through historical materialism a progression from local subsistence to regional and national specialisation on the basis of comparative advantages and to combine with this a pattern of social evolution from feudal interdependence to a more sophisticated relationship between free peoples and welfare states. But the obsession with class conflict as a prelude to revolutionary upheaval not only devalues cultural and political forces of change but burdens the study of past periods with such an awareness of evil and injustice as to inhibit objective appraisal. Furthermore it is quite unacceptable academically to equate Marx's socialism narrowly with the theory and practice of those regimes which claim to act in his name. Hence the perspectives of many East European scholars based on the assumption that the socialism imposed by their ruling communist parties was bound to emerge and that the capitalism sustained under former East European governments was a transient aberration cannot be appreciated.

The crudely negative approach to the pre-socialist periods taken by many East European writers is of course the product of what J.R.Lampe and M.R.Jackson describe as 'the dialectical struggle between the technical mode of production and property relations that puts capital against labour and creates the correspondingly antagonistic classes of bourgeoisie and

proletariat', whose interests it would appear can never be reconciled through negotiation between the parties or through the mediating role of the state.<sup>30</sup> But Marxist perspectives on change in Eastern Europe have also been stereotyped by the assumption that the British experience provides the classical model of development from feudalism to capitalism and that alternative routes to modernisation cannot exist.<sup>31</sup> This tends to result in a selective view of national history with a process of capital accumulation by the bourgeoisie, supported by overtly discriminatory government policies and challenged only by a succession of peasant revolts and factory strikes. And this is to say nothing of the propaganda requirements of East European regimes wishing to project their own 'achievements' over the weight of 'contradictions' accumulated by their predecessors. It must however be conceded that the reduced pressure on East European academics to demonstrate their political awareness has made it much easier for them to write history that balances the inevitable conflicts between different interest groups with impressions of mutual support in reaching specific economic and political goals. Paradoxically perhaps it is now in western countries where the most spectacular examples of historical writing subordinated to the needs of the class struggle can now be found. The structural approach adopted in this book can only be described as pragmatic, recognising the inevitable competition between interest groups as alternately stimulative and demoralising and suggesting elements both favourable and unfavourable to growth in the policies of individuals and institutions.<sup>32</sup> External pressures have often restricted the range of options available to decision makers in Eastern Europe but have never removed entirely the reasonable exercise of choice.

Finally it is always a problem for the geographer to decide on the optimum level of spatial referencing. For this work the prominence of research on broad themes by historians and the lack of familiarity with topographical detail on the part of many readers effectively forces a somewhat generalised approach, compromised only by a judicious sprinkling of case studies. Major topographical features are usually assigned their English labels and this conveniently avoids the need to mention the range of titles used by the various peoples of East Europe through centuries of fluctuating political organisation. For



settlement names the problem cannot be so easily overcome. English names are used for capital cities throughout the book but all other settlements are given the proper name appropriate to the period. However to make for easy linkage with the present nomenclature the present name is also supplied on the first occasion in the chapter that each place is mentioned. Problems of course still arise, as with the multinational empires of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries where the language of the imperial power is usually recognised rather than those of subject peoples.

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# The Century of Peace 1815–1914

# 1

## Political Geography

Following the Napoleonic upheavals it was, as Lord Castlereagh insisted, the duty of politicians to ‘bring back the world to peaceful habits’.<sup>1</sup> Broadly speaking they were successful for further major conflagration was prevented for almost exactly a century. And it proved to be a century of unprecedented change in Europe with the growth of urban-industrial interests at the expense of rural-agrarian society, while transport was revolutionised by steam power applied to both railway locomotives and ships. The old system of dynastic states, largely autocratic in character, gave rise to a new pattern of nation states with elected legislatures: political power became less of a monopoly of hereditary governing classes following the appearance of substantial bourgeois elements (Figure 1.1). Eastern Europe however did not share fully in these important political and socioeconomic developments. To be sure constitutionalism became a reality. Those parts of Poland taken over by Russia were promised a constitutional regime, as a kingdom within the empire under the Congress of Vienna, and through Prince Adam Czartoryski ‘Congress Poland’ obtained as liberal a constitution as any in Europe. Furthermore it was stipulated in 1815 that a constitution, allowing for an assembly, should be provided in all the member states of the German Confederation (a stabilising force set up under Austrian presidency). Shortly after, in 1830, the Romanian Principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia were blessed with constitutions formalising the curious status of these provinces simultaneously under Ottoman suzerainty and Russian protection. Yet mere provision of constitutions (long delayed in Prussia where

Figure 1.1: Political geography, railways and urban development c.1880. Inset: growth of coal and iron production 1840–1900



Source: Historical atlases

Frederick William (Friedrich Wilhelm) III's promise was not fulfilled until 1848) did not guarantee liberalism and democracy. In the great empires dominating Eastern Europe control was exerted by hereditary dynasties entrenched in power and disposed to cooperate with each other in the interest of stability.

For Tsar Alexander of Russia presented European leaders at Paris with his Treaty of Holy Alliance under which rulers would agree to govern their states as branches of the Christian community and render mutual service to each other. Such a symbolic accord was perhaps an understandable reaction to revolution, but this initially secret Russian initiative was deeply mistrusted by liberals, especially when set alongside the agreement of 1815 under which the Habsburg Empire, Prussia, Russia and the United Kingdom agreed to maintain the military alliance for twenty years. Time would show how the 'eastern bloc' would use this arrangement as justification for intervening wherever a threat to the status quo could be detected. Conservative writers like the German theorist Adam Müller saw the state as an organic unity directed by absolute power, a strong reaction to the emphasis placed by Montesquieu, Rousseau and others on the rights of man. Liberalism was contained and only briefly in 1848 did pent-up tensions erupt in a series of revolutionary struggles in different parts of Eastern Europe.

The three eastern powers were largely responsible for redrawing the map of Europe in 1815. The Russians, who had contributed so much to the overthrow of Napoleon, obtained the greater part of Poland (more than had been gained under the eighteenth-century partitions) and held on to Finland and Bessarabia (gained in 1809 and 1812 respectively); while Austria regained Dalmatia and Istria as well as portions of Carinthia and Carniola. Prussia made progress in Saxony as well as the Rhineland, but regained only part of her Polish territory which Napoleon had appropriated for his Grand Duchy of Warsaw. These powers were highly reactionary after 1815 and rightly saw nationalism as a threat to empire. In the Habsburg Empire the 'Metternich System', named after Austria's highly intelligent foreign minister, was based on a frank recognition of conflicting ethnic elements (German, Italian, Magyar, Romanian and Slavic) that only an absolute monarchy could direct successfully: local diets might be acceptable but parliamentary institutions could not be accepted at the highest level. Reaction is perhaps best brought out by the meeting Metternich convened at Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) under the auspices of the German Confederation in 1819: nine principal German states drew up a



series of decrees (later ratified by the Confederation's diet at Frankfurt) to impose press censorship and stricter control of the universities. A further indication appeared at Troppau (Opava) on the occasion of the second meeting of the Quadruple Alliance (actually a Quintuple Alliance with the admission of a now suitably conservative France in 1818): here the three eastern powers issued their protocol, declaring that they would not recognise changes brought about by revolutionary wars and would intervene with force if these changes threatened neighbouring countries.

The policy was implemented almost immediately as the meeting resumed in Laibach (Ljubljana) and authorised the Habsburg emperor to despatch an army to Naples to restore King Ferdinand to an absolutist throne. In the same spirit the Russians coped speedily with unrest in Warsaw in 1830 against the harsher policies of Tsar Nicholas I: the 1815 constitution was replaced by a new statute and Poland was now treated as an occupied country with persecution of rebels and closure of the universities at Warsaw and Vilna (Vilnius).<sup>2</sup> And in 1846, when the peasants of Cracow (Krakow) rebelled, the free city set up under the Congress of Vienna was fully absorbed into the Habsburg Empire.<sup>3</sup> This small state had been one of the curiosities of 1815 and arose simply because neither the Habsburg nor Russian emperor could agree to the other governing it: Russia wanted the ancient capital and was particularly anxious to keep it out of Austrian hands since it would provide a bridgehead on the Russian side of the Vistula. But as the railway lines approached the city from Berlin, Vienna and Warsaw the idea of autonomy for a major international junction became less palatable, especially when a relatively progressive government in the city conflicted with the more conservative regimes outside. However events in the Ottoman Empire followed a less reactionary course. A revolt by Prince Alexander Ypsilanti of Moldavia, inspired by the Greek cultural revival, was put down by the sultan but the savage Turkish suppression of a Greek revolt in the Morea led to intervention (under the Congress System) on behalf of the rebels and the Treaty of Adrianople/Erdine in 1829 brought autonomy to Greece, Serbia and the Romanian Principalities. For in the Balkans it suited Russia to give qualified support to nationalism

as a means to a long-term expansion in the direction of Istanbul and hence a more progressive consensus was reached by the powers in which concessions were made to nationalism in the Balkans, without however threatening the basic integrity of the Ottoman Empire. Russia even signed the Straits Convention in 1841 (closing the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to foreign warships in peacetime) although this curtailed the power (virtually of Ottoman protector) she had previously enjoyed under the Treaty of Unkiar-Skelessi (1833).

Nationalism was nurtured by social reform as in revolutionary France where the destruction of privilege inspired the sense of common purpose among the masses that became an essential ingredient of modern nationalism. Understandably reactionary imperial governments saw a dangerous precedent in this and could hardly welcome such militant expressions of national sentiment as J.Fichte's Addresses to the German Nation at the founding of the University of Berlin (1808), just before the great national uprising under Napoleon. Yet there was another major force in the development of nationalism, albeit one whose potency was not at first recognised. J.G.Herder's ethnographical work among Baltic peasants developed into a lifelong study of German language and culture that led him to associate national identity with culture, and particularly literature. There were idealistic rather than subversive implications to this for the national groups identified through cultural criteria would be parts of the greater whole of humanity. Herder's message was an influential one in Eastern Europe, where the political map had been drawn up in 1815 with dynastic rather than national interests in mind. Even the German Confederation was a poor substitute for a genuine national state. The ethnically anomalous boundaries of the empires remained a source of grievance while attempts to suppress nationalism almost certainly contributed to the cause over the long term. In 1826 scholars at Berlin started publishing a major historical series Monumenta Germaniae Historica, complemented by the work of I.Lelewel (historian) and A.Mickiewicz (poet) for the Poles and of F. Palacky for the Czechs. And it is also relevant to point out that the Greek nationalism which influenced the Balkan peoples in the nineteenth century had a literary source.

Widespread disturbances occurred in Eastern Europe in 1848 when action was apparently triggered off by news of uprisings in Paris.<sup>4</sup> There was no blind rush to copy the French: rather it seems the events in Paris exerted a psychological pressure on Czechs, Hungarians and others to seek remedies for their own problems. Liberal demands for reform were pressed most powerfully by middle-class industrialists and professionals seeking a more influential role in political life. The late 1840s was a time of economic difficulty in both town and country and significantly these were the years that spawned the Communist Manifesto, published in 1848 by K.Marx and F.Engels. In the background stood the force of nationalism, expressed in the Habsburg Empire through wider powers for the local diets. The revolution began with speech making by L.Kossuth at the Hungarian diet meeting at Poszony (Bratislava). The demand for a democratically-elected parliament and other major reforms was echoed by similar action in Prague and, surprisingly, conceded by the emperor who felt obliged to yield after Metternich had fled in panic. In Bohemia a Pan-Slav Congress was convened to demonstrate the unity of Slav peoples in various parts of the empire from Croatia to Galicia. But this meeting was inconclusive since the geographical separation of the various peoples, their cultural and linguistic differences and their political inexperience left them exposed to reactionary nobles who wanted to restore Habsburg authority. In Hungary however there was effective leadership under Kossuth, inspired by the vision of a cohesive Hungarian state: attempts by Vienna to rescind the constitutional reforms brought a declaration of Hungarian independence and it required a concerted military effort including intervention from Tsar Nicholas I to defeat the rebellion and drive Kossuth into exile. It is significant however that Kossuth and fellow reformers such as Count Istvan Szechenyi envisaged a multinational Hungarian state including Croats, Romanians and Slovaks who were expected to accept Magyar authority. At the time this double standard was a weakness since the Croat leader Jellacic supported Vienna against the reforming Hungarians, but it bore fruit later through the constitutional compromise (Ausgleich) that was reached in 1867. Defeat of the revolutionaries in Hungary was followed for a time by absolute rule from Vienna as the Habsburg Empire

became for the first and last time a fully unitary state. But there was still widespread sympathy for Kossuth's idea of a great Magyar Hungary among all sections of the population, including the landowners only a few of whom were expropriated. Thus the capitulation of the Hungarians to the Tsar at Vilagos did not have such reactionary consequences as the defeat of the Czechs at the Battle of the White Mountain two centuries earlier.

In Prussia also news from France provoked demonstrations, in the streets of Berlin. A representative constitution and freedom of the press was promised, followed shortly after by another dramatic statement from the king, Frederick William IV, that Prussia would soon merge itself into a united Germany. There were uprisings in other German states, including Saxony, and these were effective in revamping the German Confederation which now emerged as an assembly of democratically elected representatives at Frankfurt. But these promising developments were again frustrated by subsequent events. In Prussia, as in the Habsburg Empire, the establishment found new reserves of strength and the assembly was abruptly dissolved. The Frankfurt parliament was dominated by the middle classes of a politically unified Germany, seen as a precondition for economic growth because concerted action against foreign competition was needed. But there was disagreement over the power of the new German government (centralised or federal), over the role of monarchy (the radicals were advocating a centralised republic) and the territorial extent of a unified German state: should it embrace just those areas where Germans were clearly in a majority or extend to those parts of Prussia and the Habsburg Empire with a predominance of non-German people? The arguments of the two sides—Kleindeutsch and Grossdeutsch—were both persuasive but the former proved more effective. A little Germany would be ethnically coherent and would respect the rights of non-German nations like the Czechs and the Magyars, whose best hopes lay, according to F. Palacky, in a federation with its focus of power on the Danube rather than in a German national state with a centre of government further north. For Palacky, an ardent Bohemian nationalist, Habsburg leadership was appreciated, for after declining a seat in the Frankfurt parliament he had written that if the Austrian state

had not existed 'we would be obliged in the interests of Europe and even of mankind to endeavour to create it as far as possible'.<sup>5</sup> The Kleindeutsch also contended that exclusion of Habsburg lands would leave Austria free to concentrate on eastward colonisation and on the extension of German civilisation and economic interests. As with the Hungarians so with the Germans there were clear signs of an aggressive nationalism combining the nation state with a pseudo-colonial 'periphery' where German interests would predominate despite non-German ethnic majorities.

However the whole Frankfurt initiative, completed on a Kleindeutsch basis in 1849 in the absence of Austrian representatives, was in effect vetoed when Frederick William IV of Prussia refused the imperial crown, allegedly because it was offered by 'master bakers and butchers' rather than brother monarchs. At the same time Frederick William's own plan of 1849 for a 'Prussian Union' of German states (outside the Habsburg Empire) was upset by the failure of a majority of states to send representatives to a national assembly at Erfurt in 1850. The reason for this failure lies mainly in the determination of the Habsburgs to retain authority of the old German Confederation whose federal diet was summoned to meet at Frankfurt in 1850 by Prince Schwarzenberg who was now directing foreign policy in Vienna. Broadly speaking the revolutionary years 1848–9 projected a spate of liberal and national ideas greeted by a curious mixture of initial panic and stiffening reactionary resolve. Despite the significant advances in constitutionalism and peasant emancipation the imperial governments were able to preserve the spirit of the 1815 accords and stave off a general conflagration. Yet because devolution could not be realised through liberal channels the conservative forces ruling over modernising industrial states were soon confronted by the more ruthless nationalism of the age of Realpolitik.

### COMPROMISE IN THE HABSBURG EMPIRE

Support for German interests was clearly seen in the Habsburg Empire after 1850. The centralised system of A. Bach dispensed with local diets and concentrated a huge German-speaking

bureaucracy in Vienna. German was the only language not only in the army and civil service but in higher education as well (Cracow University for example was Germanised in 1854); even secondary school teaching was chiefly in German with the German language a compulsory subject. In 1859 there was some decentralisation through the establishment of assemblies (Landtage) in the crown lands, which in turn sent delegates to the central imperial council. Yet the method of election to the Reichsrat was such as to give the German-speaking bourgeoisie power out of all proportion to its numbers. This formula was drastically modified in 1867 when, in the wake of a catastrophic defeat by Prussia in a brief seven week war in 1866, the empire was not only expelled from the German Confederation but forced to negotiate with the Magyars led by E. Deak and Count G. Andrassy to transform the state into a dual monarchy (Austria-Hungary).

### Hungary

In Hungary, where King Francis Joseph (Franz Josef) wore the crown of St. Stephen, the Magyars were initially in a majority among Germans, Romanians and Slavs (Croats, Serbs and Slovaks) yet they were able to dominate the majority, free from any control from Vienna in their internal affairs. The main concern of Francis Joseph and his ministers was that Hungary should stick to the terms of the 1867 compromise and not press for further decentralisation (such as the use of Hungarian as a language of command in the Habsburg army, which would clear the way for an independent Hungarian army). Pressure could be placed on the Magyars through the threat to introduce universal manhood suffrage in the Hungarian parliament, for this would have destroyed its oligarchic character and eliminated the higher level of enfranchisement among Magyars. But this tactic could not prevent an aggressive policy of Magyarisation, evident in administration and education, which the non-Magyars could avoid only by emigration. Only the Croats, who had defended the unity of the empire in 1848, won fair representation and some rights or local self-government. Toleration of such discrimination was made possible through some perception of material progress and the lack of any clear alternative to an

imperial structure. Yet the Slavs became increasingly restive and with a total population of 23.6 million of a total of 51.4 million (almost forty six percent) they were a crucial factor in the empire's stability.

Determined efforts to project a national idea arose out of a Magyar renaissance which generated strong literary and political impulses. As in other parts of the empire the period began with German language and culture prominent. The interruption in the growth of Budapest as national capital, combined with the subsequent development of trading centres under Habsburg initiative, created an impression of homogeneity disturbed only by the rural districts with their stronger Hungarian character. A major contribution was made by Széchenyi who founded the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1825 and proposed liberal reforms. By the 1840s Magyar became the official and mercantile language and various public works were executed in Pest to express the Magyars' newly-founded national pride through the built environment. Perhaps inevitably these noble sentiments degenerated 'into selfish chauvinism at the expense of Hungary's sizeable non-Magyar population' for it is arguable that the failure of the 1848 revolution became unavoidable once Kossuth rejected the idea of a multi-ethnic Hungarian state, thereby ensuring that the non-Magyars would back the forces of reaction in Vienna.<sup>6</sup> But the victory which eluded the Magyars in 1848 was achieved in 1867 when the Ausgleich left them free to promote the doctrine of a culturally superior Magyar race with a historic mission to control the southeastern marchlands of Europe against barbarism. Unfortunately the Magyars were not in a majority in 1867 and hence their goals depended on a programme of assimilation which not only could be carried out single-mindedly, in view of the virtual independence which was granted by Vienna in domestic matters, but would have to be strongly pressed against the developing cultural programmes of the principal minorities.

A nationality law passed in 1868 proclaimed all Hungarian citizens as 'Magyar' irrespective of their mother tongue: there was ambivalence over the rights of the minorities to education in their own language and confusion over the cultural and political aspects of non-Magyar nationalism to the point where cultural establishments could be regarded as subversive. At the beginning

of the period the Germans controlled the commercial life of Hungary but in the prevailing climate it was politic to adopt the new Magyar ideal, especially when public careers were sought. The towns grew rapidly, thanks to the encouragement of industry, but their ethnic character changed. In absolute terms the number of Germans in the towns fell significantly while the proportion dropped even more sharply, from three-quarters to one third in Budapest between 1848 and 1880. Only in a few border towns like Sopron and Kőszeg did the German middle class resist Magyarisation. However in the rural areas Magyarisation was not quite so effective. The government made strong efforts through education, with resources put into the establishment of Magyar state schools, while high standards were imposed on the religious denominations which had run virtually all the primary schools before 1867. To maintain standards it was necessary to accept state subsidies and the official interference which came with them, culminating in Count A.Apponyi's law of 1907 which established government control over teachers by declaring them civil servants. The net result was a sharp reduction in the number of primary schools teaching in minority languages, although the situation varied considerably between one minority and another.

The Slovaks were an easy target, because of a relatively weakly-developed culture, while the Germans were seen as a major threat in view of their established position in society: both groups lost nearly four-fifths of their primary schools in the forty years between 1870 and 1910.<sup>7</sup> For the Germans the losses were all the more considerable in view of the fact that the remaining schools were very small in size and hence the great majority of German children attended mixed-language or pure Magyar-language schools. This policy was designed to rend the ethnic ties between the Swabian youngsters and the German-oriented Swabian village environment and to Magyarise them in a systematic organized manner'.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless while there were very strong pressures on migrants to the towns to adopt Magyar ideals there were relatively few pressures in the countryside outside the school environment. In the rural areas even the German minority continued to grow albeit slowly and not sufficiently to offset the decline in the towns. Overall the German minority decreased absolutely from 1.87 million in



1880 to 1.82 million in 1910 (and more sharply in percentage terms from 13.6 to 10.4) although the decline only commenced during the first decade of the twentieth century: from 1880 to 1900 the German population grew by 6.9 percent compared with 12.4 for other minorities combined, whereas over the next decade the German minority was reduced by 9.1 percent while the other minorities continued to grow by 3.9 percent overall (though the Slovaks suffered a 1.6 percent decline). Between 1880 and 1910 the non-German minority increased from 5.51 million to 6.43 million, though the proportion fell from 39.7 percent to 35.1. The Magyar population meanwhile grew absolutely from 6.40 million to 9.34 million and in percentage terms advanced from a minority position against all the minorities combined (46.7 percent) to a majority (54.5). Perhaps a more telling indicator of the Magyarisation policy however is the fact that in 1910 Magyars accounted for 89.4 percent of university graduates (1.64 times their share of the total population) compared with 4.3 percent for Germans (0.41) and 6.3 for the other minorities (0.18).<sup>9</sup> So there can be little doubt that Magyarisation was effective. There was naturally great resentment, but this was not universally felt as the educated classes saw economic and social benefits in conversion to the Magyar cause. This was particularly evident among the Germans who were now torn between their culture and their socioeconomic status. Political attempts by the Germans to counter Magyarisation were largely ineffective, apart from the Transylvanian Saxons. As for the other peoples it is evident that Magyar assimilation policies stimulated Romanians, Slovaks and Southern Slavs to air their grievances at a Congress of Nationalities in Budapest in 1895.<sup>10</sup> Opposition to government policies was maintained for four years when the group broke up due to internal divisions.

### Austria

In Austria the Germans remained a distinct minority with 34.8 percent of the population in 1910, by which time the Magyars in Hungary had achieved a majority of 54.5 percent. The Germans struggled to maintain an ascendancy over the Slavs (Czechs, Poles, Slovenes and Ukrainians) and a significant

Italian element, yet despite their refusal to take other peoples into full partnership there was a large measure of cooperation from the Czechs and Poles in the Reichsrat in Vienna. Indeed Count Taaffe's rule (1879–1893) was based on a combination of Catholic, Czech and Socialist parties against German liberals. The Czechs were astute enough to realise that they could win concessions in return for cooperation, and accommodations over administration and education led them to modify a boycott maintained through the 1870s (and later resumed under T.G. Masaryk).<sup>11</sup> As a nation without a state the Czechs secured an important cultural concession in 1882 with the establishment of a separate university to use the Czech language. This gave the Czechs a measure of equality with Poles who already had universities at Cracow and Lemberg/Lwow (Lvov). Since 1848 it had been possible for lectures in Prague to be given in Czech but only limited progress was made and the matter became a political issue in Vienna during the 1870s. However it was a measure of German intransigence that equality of rights within a single university could not be agreed between Czechs and Germans. The partition solution continued until the Second World War when closure of the Czech university provided a precedent for the similar treatment applied to the German institution in the post-war period.<sup>12</sup> Also of considerable political significance was the Ausgleich reached between Czechs and Germans in Moravia in 1905, although no similar modus vivendi was possible in Bohemia.

While most ethnic groups were tending to emphasise their own cultural heritage and project nationalist aspirations the Jewish outlook was rather different. The Jews had followed first the Greeks and later the Germans into Eastern Europe to participate in the development of trade. They gained a strong position in both commerce and industry in the Ottoman and Russian Empires, with Eastern Europe becoming increasingly congenial to them after the persecution of Jews in the western Mediterranean at the end of the fifteenth century. It seems that migration took place into Germany as well as the Habsburg Empire and Romania, especially in the nineteenth century when the Jewish population increased at a remarkably rapid rate. By 1880 three-quarters of all the world's Jews were living in Eastern Europe (including the whole 'Jewish Pale' of Russia)

compared with only 45 percent in 1800. Although their activities were sometimes restricted in various ways the enterprise of the Jews was an asset which could not be easily discounted. As H.G.Wanklyn points out 'there is no denying the contribution of the Jews to contemporary economics: whether as tax gatherers, distillers, small traders, millers, manufacturers or timber merchants they had a lively sense of the resources of the region and knew in spite of many limitations how to make use of them'.<sup>13</sup> These industrious and innovative people were finally emancipated in Germany and the Habsburg Empire by the end of the 1850s and in escaping from the restrictions of ghetto life adopted the values and life-style of liberal middle-class Gentile society.

Prague experienced a rapid increase in its Jewish population, through migration from other parts of Bohemia (7.7 thousand in 1857 but 14.9 thousand in 1869 and 28.0 thousand in 1910) although even faster growth of the Gentile population meant a fall in proportion from 7.3 percent to 6.0. The last restrictions on residence were removed in 1859 and then Jews moved out of Josefstadt (Josefov), the old Jewish quarter, and into the better sections of the Old Town and some of the inner suburbs where they were joined by Jewish immigrants from the smaller ghettos of Bohemia. By the end of the century the Jewish population was remarkably dispersed (except for parts of Josefstadt where 8 percent of the Jewish population still resided) although there was a tendency for Jewish households to cluster within individual apartment blocks and Jews and Gentiles normally avoided each other in their home life. The more prosperous Jews aligned themselves with German society which in turn was receptive to Jewish support but the less affluent (small shopkeepers and commercial employees) could not identify with such a prestigious elite and so the Jews from the poorest wards tended to hold Czech allegiances. Education was a powerful factor in the process. Joseph II's establishment of schools for Jews used German as the language of instruction and by 1860 German had replaced the Jewish dialect as the principal language of the Jewish communities. Subsequently attendance at German public schools accelerated the secularisation process. However although most Jews were bilingual it is interesting to see that the introduction of census questions about language for

everyday use after 1880 revealed a split between German and Czech which gradually shifted in the latter's favour as the poorer Jews began to identify more and more closely with the Czech majority in the city. It is the position of the Jews between Czechs and Germans that gives the Prague case a particular interest. On the whole the Jews wanted their Jewishness respected as a matter of personal belief but without distinctions in law or political life. But a Zionist group committed to the idea of the Jews as a separate people developed in Prague in 1907 and although it attracted only a small following in the years up to 1914 it reflected mixed feelings about the growth of national movements and the rising expectations of formerly underprivileged minorities. Assimilation seemed inevitable, not only in Prague but throughout Eastern Europe. The only viable alternative was emigration to the New World which gained considerable momentum as a result of the pogroms in Russia.<sup>14</sup>

The Habsburg Empire was placed under great strain in the late nineteenth century as a result of the growth of nationalism. Progress made towards unification in Germany inevitably encouraged the more powerful groups like the Magyars within the empire while the weaker groups came to see the dual-monarchy in a more negative light as an obstruction to their own nationalist ambitions.<sup>15</sup> Even in traditionally loyal territories like Croatia, adjacent to the old Turkish frontier, there was a demonstration of sympathy for the Yugoslav idea through the rising at Rakovica in 1871, although this was triggered primarily by the Ausgleich of 1867 and the ending of the special status of the Croatian Military Border in 1871. On the other hand there was a certain stability arising out of the long continuity of administrative practice. Moreover the scope for successful nationalist movements was limited by the strong support for the empire from Germany and its appreciation by the UK as an important factor in the balance of power. Since the collapse of the empire was inconceivable before 1914 the various ethnic groups worked for suitably limited objectives and the principle of federation was widely supported.<sup>16</sup> However by 1918 support for the principle of an imperial framework to provide security for small nations in Eastern Europe, very strong in Palacky's time, had switched to the radical alternative of

national independence for which there was a growing number of precedents in the Balkans at the turn of the century.

### UNIFICATION OF GERMANY

In the north the second half of the century was dominated by the unification of Germany under Prussian leadership.<sup>17</sup> First of all there was a commercial union known as the Zollverein, which arose out of the measures taken in Prussia in 1818. Abolition of all internal customs barriers was linked with a tariff wall around Prussia, along with a regime of customs duties on goods in transit between different parts of fragmented neighbouring German states. These pressures led ultimately (in 1834) to the customs union of eighteen states with a total population of some twenty million. The Zollverein continued to develop, attracting Baden, Hannover and Oldenburg by 1853 and Holstein, Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Schleswig by 1866, and was a major contribution to the growth of German unity. Free trade within Germany allowed for greater specialisation between the farmers of East Prussia and Posen (Poznan) and the manufacturers of the Rhineland and Saxony. At the same time moderate tariff barriers around the Zollverein helped Germans to compete on foreign markets and incidentally rebuffed such advocates of heavy protection as Friedrich List who published his National system of political economy in 1841. A second forum for German unity existed in the German Confederation. This was initially under Habsburg leadership, but the revolutionary parliament agreed to proceed to unity on a Kleindeutsch basis and the reassertion of Habsburg influence in 1850 was a temporary measure lasting only until 1866.

It is difficult to separate the process of German unification from the personality of Otto von Bismarck, an ambitious administrator who was the Prussian envoy to the diet of the German Confederation from 1851 to 1859 and who came to realise that a conflict with the Habsburg Empire was inevitable. From 1862 to 1890 he was minister-president of Prussia and perhaps the outstanding figure in late nineteenth century East European politics.<sup>18</sup> In the wake of liberal pressure to reduce military spending he made his famous speech about Prussia's role in Germany being determined not by its liberalism but by its

power which resided ultimately in 'blood and iron'. The age of Realpolitik (a word first given currency in a German pamphlet of 1853) meant a blunt assertion of military strength, backed up by new industrial technology, over sentiment and tradition. There appears to have been an underlying presumption that unification was essential for economic advance, to combine a range of complementary resources and generate the economies of scale necessary to compete with the other industrial powers. R.Tilly has argued that the economic factor forced the central German states into the Zollverein and therefore into the Prussian sphere of influence, anticipating the outcome of the Habsburg-Prussian struggle of the 1860s.<sup>19</sup> The Kleindeutsch programme would not only avoid the liability of a rival political centre but renounce the extensive backward areas that the Habsburg Empire would otherwise contribute. George von Siemens is known to have written to his father along these lines in 1866, pointing to a clear economic interest in Bismarckian politics which reached their logical climax in the tariff of 1879, forging the marriage of 'iron and rye'.

In the East European context Bismarck's style can be seen first of all in his desire for good relations with Russia (evidenced through offers of military support in crushing a revolt in Russia's Polish provinces in 1863) and more provocatively in the trial of strength with Austria. He prevailed upon Wilhelm (William) I not to attend a meeting at Frankfurt, to consider reform of the Habsburg-dominated German Confederation in 1863, and went on to propose a sweeping reform of the Confederation by establishing a truly German parliament, recalling the Kleindeutsch movement of 1848-9. Moreover in clear defiance of the Confederation's constitution a secret agreement was reached with Italy whereby the latter would join Prussia in a war with Austria. When the war came the Italians were defeated but substantial Habsburg troops were engaged on the southern front, leaving Prussia to sweep to victory at Königgrätz (Hradec Kralove), thanks to a brilliantly efficient mobilisation that made full use of the developing railway system. The Treaty of Prague brought a German empire much closer to reality because Prussia annexed several German states, giving her a continuous territory from the Niemen to the Rhine and authority over a North German Confederation (twenty-two

states under Prussian presidency) from which Austria was excluded. The Zollverein remained in force since a separate confederation embracing Baden, Bavaria, Hesse-Darmstadt and Württemberg renewed the tariff union with Prussia. The Franco-Prussian War then gave an opportunity to win over the south German states and, with the further addition of the Reichsland of Alsace-Lorraine taken from France, to establish the German Empire with the Prussian king and minister-president as emperor and imperial chancellor respectively. The most powerful national state that continental Europe had ever seen now came into being as the consequence of the most ruthless exercise of Realpolitik and military force.<sup>20</sup> This was just as well since the 1871 frontiers included significant numbers of people who were not fully reconciled to the new state. Among them were the Poles from the eastern regions whose representatives were regarded with much suspicion in the Reichstag. One of the following studies will investigate the attitude of the German government to this important minority problem.

Bismarck's appetite was satiated by the events of 1871 and peace was maintained throughout Europe until the First World War, apart from relatively localised wars in the Balkans. Yet industrial growth and greatly improved military preparedness, along with nationalist philosophies which brought the destiny of one state into conflict with another, created a distinctly ominous atmosphere. Countries looked for security in alliance systems, cemented to some extent by secret diplomacy. With the trial of strength now resolved, Germany and Austria-Hungary agreed in 1879 to come to each other's aid if attacked by a third party, and this dual alliance became a triple alliance through Italy's adherence in 1882. Serbia was also associated with this defence system in 1881, followed by Romania in 1883.<sup>21</sup> But with this impressive bloc of central powers occupying such a key position in Europe it was perhaps anomalous that Bismarck should draw Russia into the system through a 'reinsurance treaty' of 1887 which provided for 'benevolent neutrality' should either state be at war. Rival ambitions in the Balkans between Austria-Hungary and Russia undermined the Dreikaiserbund or Three Emperors' League of 1872, despite its formal renewal of 1884. The 1887 treaty had little credibility after Bismarck publicly

acknowledged the existence of the alliance with Austria-Hungary the following year. Instead the likelihood of a German attack took Russia into an embrace with France which developed in 1894 into a clear promise of military support in the event of a German attack on either party. The UK then became associated with this rival alliance system in 1904–7.<sup>22</sup> As tension increased at the turn of the century there was heavy spending on armaments to take some 5 percent of national income in France and Germany and 6 in Austria-Hungary and Russia. Germany's encirclement was arguably an inevitable consequence of her rise to great power status and her response to the threat of isolation by land and sea was appropriately resolute. Military planners were forced to adopt the Schlieffen plan for quick, decisive and total victory, especially in the west, and saw in the First World War the stark choice of world power or downfall.<sup>23</sup>

### German colonialism

Although Germany was declared by Bismarck to be a 'satiated power' with no further territorial ambitions, she inevitably became involved in the colonial question through a mixture of cultural and economic motives. By 1871 German merchants and missionaries were hard at work in Africa although Germany did not have a single overseas possession at the time. Precedents were hardly impressive: the Great Elector of Brandenburg did have trading bases in West Africa in the late seventeenth century, an Austrian East India Company had stations in the East Indies in 1721 and Emperor Joseph II held the Nicobar Islands from 1778 to 1785. 'But these commercial colonial ventures failed because of the jealousy of other powers and the lack of strong central government capable of protecting and stimulating overseas trade'.<sup>24</sup> Yet F.List argued in 1841 that colonialism was an essential part of Germany's destiny. So although the government had no overseas ambitions of its own the growth of a spontaneous colonial movement supported his efforts to acquire colonial rights in what became German South-West Africa. Two years later the flag was raised at Lüderitz Bay, named after the merchant who had requested the government's help. Cameroons and Togoland followed later in the year.



A company for German colonisation was founded in 1884 to raise money for colonies in East Africa and the German East Africa Company was formed the following year: in 1885 government established a protectorate there (Tanganyika), following up the commercial deals made between K.Peters and native chiefs. Interests in the Pacific were acquired in 1884–5: Bismarck Archipelago, German New Guinea and the Marshall Islands. By this time there was some official concern about the rate of emigration from Germany to North America and colonial settlement was seen as a more acceptable way of decanting surplus population from Europe. However the colonies acquired were not suitable for large scale white settlement and in any case emigration ceased to be a political issue after 1900 when there was a net influx of people into Germany. Territorially development was rounded off by the Kiao-Chow on the Chinese Mainland (1898) and land ceded by the French in the Congo (1911). Despite the initiative taken by commercial interests the colonies were never profitable. The Germans were inexperienced and the preference for wide powers for chartered companies had unfortunate results in the form of native uprisings and labour problems. Nevertheless the colonial policy was popular at home perhaps because colonies were seen as part of the trappings of empire and even ‘a piece of the German soul’ symbolising the reality of Germany’s cultural and economic offensive on the global scale.<sup>25</sup> Government therefore continued to take its colonies seriously and a new era began in 1907 with a separate colonial office under B.Denburg and greater support for colonial development through railway schemes and special training for colonists (note the special colonial school at Hamburg). There was also backing from a rapidly expanding navy, built up after 1897 by Admiral von Tirpitz. Despite rather limited natural resources there was some success with production of cocoa, copra, hemp, phosphate, rubber and sisal. Trade grew from an average of 148.7 million marks per annum between 1901 and 1906 to 338.4 million between 1907 and 1912, but remained in deficit although exports rose to 69.5 percent of the import level in the second period compared with only 40.9 in the first.

Yet the German colonial societies were complemented, interestingly, by a Pan-German League formed

in 1893 whose members advocated German domination over much of Eastern Europe (and the Low Countries) to achieve a Greater Germany: it was considered regrettable that the 5.5 million Germans who emigrated to the United States in the nineteenth century could not have been held on the eastern and southeastern marches to bolster German economic and political interests. There could be no doubt about the importance of trade with Austria-Hungary and with the Balkans, to say nothing of the Middle East where German businessmen followed up William II's visits to the sultan in 1889 and 1898 by accumulating a collection of railway concessions which opened the prospect of a Berlin-Baghdad Railway at the turn of the century. For after linkage with the European railway system in 1888 construction pressed on to Ankara (which was reached with German assistance in 1893) and, by the Anatolian Railway, to Konia. A convention for an extension of 2.3 thousand kilometres to Baghdad and Basra was signed in 1903. The railway would reopen the old trade route to the Middle East, reaching the Mesopotamian oil deposits and conferring important military advantages. But inevitably these programmes in the Ottoman Empire and further afield brought Germany into conflict with other powers. After the lease of Kiao-Chow and the acquisition of some of the Samoan Islands the attempt to establish a fortified base in the Philippines led to sharp clashes with Japan, Russia, UK and USA. Mistrust generated by the Baghdad Railway was enhanced by Germany's attempts to establish coaling and trading stations on the sea route to India (including Persia and Yemen) and efforts to secure oilfield concessions in Iraq. The rivalry extended through to relations between client states and in view of French involvement in equipping the Bulgarian and Serbian armies in contrast to German reorganisation of the Turkish army the successes of the Balkan states in the war of 1912 were seen as 'Creuzot's victory over Krupp'.

### **Minorities in Germany: the Poles**

The inherent logic of German unification should not obscure a number of potentially troublesome implications which have influenced the subsequent political evolution of Eastern Europe.

Such a demonstration of the power of nationalism could not fail but encourage one and all to consider where their loyalties lay. There were a good many people within Germany who could not identify with a German state: the Poles in Posen and Silesia as well as the Danes in Schleswig and the French in Alsace-Lorraine. The position of the Poles in Germany merits investigation for the light it sheds on the relations between the partitioning powers and on the process of rural migration. It also provides some insights into the change in German historiography in the late nineteenth century when F. Palacky's idea of antagonism between German and Slav was placed in the context of a German mission of Drang nach Osten. The Poles were most prominent in the eastern regions of the German Empire (though they were also present in considerable numbers in Berlin and the Ruhr) and were clearly the largest ethnic minority with 6 percent of the population.<sup>26</sup> Although the Polish peasants were only slightly involved with national struggles and the influential Polish nobility followed a distinctly moderate line, German nationalism in the 1870s tended to view the Poles ambivalently as actual or potential internal enemies of the state (Reichsfeinde). Bismarck reasoned that it was in Germany's interest to maintain good relations with Russia and there was nothing to be gained by encouraging the Poles in Germany as a means of generating agitation across the frontier and forcing some accommodation by Russia to its own Polish population.<sup>27</sup> He was sure that any relaxation of Prussian Polish policies would be seen by Russia as a hostile act whereas a hard line would be a foundation for good relations. 'Thus he approached Prussian (and later German) policy toward her Polish population less as a domestic question than as a foreign policy matter of considerable importance'.<sup>28</sup> Again if Polish nationalism did gain the upper hand it could only threaten Germany, either by enlargement of Germany's Polish territories or else by the loss of territory (including Posen and the lower Vistula) to an independent Poland. Ominously therefore Bismarck asserted that 'Polish nationalism cannot be judged humanistically and impartially by us but only antagonistically'.<sup>29</sup>

Bismarck's first strategy was the Kulturkampf which sought to frustrate the growth of Polish nationalism, through the activities of the Catholic Church. Recognising the church as the

ultimate controller of the national movement, a school supervision law was introduced in 1871: all schools were placed under the supervision of inspectors appointed by the state. In this way the influence of Polish priests was to be contained, although it seems that this provocative legislation succeeded only in mobilising Poles to the national cause and the urban population began to play a much more active role in a movement which had previously been led exclusively by the landed nobility.<sup>30</sup> Additional measures were taken in 1887 when it was decreed that the teaching of Polish in elementary schools was to cease altogether. A further strand of policy arose from the demographic changes in the eastern provinces which showed changes in the ethnic balance in favour of the Poles. A high birthrate amongst Poles was considered a major cause, along with the Polonisation of German Catholics through the influence of the priests. But probably more important was the displacement of small-scale industry by competition with the large urban-based factories whose manufactures could now be cheaply and efficiently distributed by rail. Transit trade was hard hit by the prevailing customs regulations affecting German-Russian trade and the slump in farm prices even depressed the agricultural sector, along with related industries like timber, spirits and wool. Migration from the eastern provinces therefore accelerated. But it was the ethnic Germans who constituted the bulk of the migrants, being in a better position to adjust to life among conationals in the west. By contrast Poles tended to stay only a short time in alien German-speaking areas and usually returned home, perhaps with enough money to buy land. Furthermore the falling profits on the estates led many landowners to replace their labourers with temporary workers (overwhelmingly Polish) from Russia who would accept lower wages. All this resulted in an appreciably faster rate of growth of the Catholic population compared with the Protestant and Jewish population combined (33.5 percent between 1849 and 1885 compared with 20.3).<sup>31</sup>

Bismarck's response came in 1885 with the attempt to expel some 30,000 Russian subjects living in Germany as resident aliens. The action was not entirely effective for many exceptions were made and after two years one third of this large alien work force was still present. For there were many objections, not only

from estate owners who resented the loss of cheap labour, but also from Königsberg (Kaliningrad) merchants who depended on Russian-Jewish middlemen to maintain their trade and Silesian industrialists who employed many workers from Galicia (the Austrian part of Poland). A more positive approach was taken in 1886 through the Settlement Law (Ansiedlungsgesetz) to place German peasants and workers in the east. The aim was to buy Polish estates and replace one rural group (Polish farm workers) with another (independent German peasants).<sup>32</sup> But the German peasant farmers assisted by the act were anxious to use cheap labour and hence the Poles continued to get work, albeit with a change of employer. Rather it was the Polish nobility who were singled out by this legislation: they suffered a considerable loss of morale and attempts to defend their interests through the Ziemski Bank of 1886, providing money to help Polish owners to hang on to their estates did not seriously frustrate the aims of the settlement plan.

By the time Bismarck was replaced by Leo von Caprivi as chancellor in 1890 the strains between Germany and Russia had reached the point where it seemed that Poles might well be an important factor in a future two-front war embroiling Germany with both Russia and France.<sup>33</sup> In addition Caprivi was personally less antagonistic towards the Poles and policies were gradually eased. In 1890 expulsion orders against foreign workers were revoked: there was frankly little alternative assuming that German farm workers could not be compelled to remain in the east and employers could not be made to pay higher wages. Not that the Austrian and Russian Poles were much more interested in harvesting German sugar beet than the Swedes had been earlier. In view of the low pay and the issue of work permits for periods of less than one year (with the Karenzzeit, obliging workers to return home at Christmas) many males preferred the United States or Western Europe, leaving farm work in Germany to the women. In the field of education too there was some softening of measures previously taken against Polish language teaching: public school teachers were no longer forbidden to engage in extra-mural teaching of Polish and school buildings were now made available for this activity.

But these changes were hardly fundamental and the limited reconciliation arose simply because 'both sides were more or less

conscripted into a closer relationship by fear of outside forces'.<sup>34</sup> Ethnic Germans in the east still advocated a radical policy and this is well brought out by the Ostmarkenverein, a society for the eastern marches formed in 1894 as a symptom of the division of the east into two hostile camps. Being extremely sensitive to Polish demographic gains, it wanted the instruction of all children in German, state subsidies for Germans in Polish areas, Germanisation of placenames and an extension to the activities of the Settlement programme. Caprivi would not therefore repeal the Settlement Law but rising land prices and a shortage of suitable German applicants reduced its effectiveness and the gains made by Polish landowners between 1896 and 1914 went a long way to cancel out the losses of some 245,000 ha. from 1861 to 1896. Replacement of Polish civil servants with Germans was frustrated by reluctance on the part of Germans to move east, a disposition only marginally affected by the Hebungspolitik of 1898, a programme of public spending to increase the attractiveness of the eastern regions and particularly Posen. There was much new building in Posen itself, including a Royal Academy (later university) and the Kaiser-Wilhelm Library, and improved communications by both rail and water as the Warta was regulated and Posen port developed. Nevertheless the share of Germans in the towns of the Posen area continued to fall, albeit marginally, from 55 percent in 1895 to 51 in 1910. Meanwhile the Polish urban community increased, although the political implications were moderated by the greatly reduced influence of the nobility in the towns.

Clearly the German government had the will to act but its discriminatory policies were undermined primarily by ethnic Germans retreating from the eastern periphery. The extent of the West-Ost-Gefälle can be seen from statistics dealing with per capita income which show an average for Prussia of 747 marks and the Kingdom of Saxony of 897 in 1913. However the Saxon level is exceeded in some parts of Prussia, notably Berlin (1254) and Brandenburg (962) which contrast with low values for the eastern regions: 465 for Posen, 480 for West Prussia, 487 for East Prussia, 576 for Pomerania and 603 for Silesia. Polarisation on ethnic lines increased through the turn of the nineteenth century and the uncommitted were forced off the fence: the plebiscite in Upper Silesia in 1921 was to see all but 2 percent of

the population expressing their preference for either Germany or Poland.

### THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND THE SUCCESSOR STATES

The Ottoman Empire provides the best evidence of progress towards the formation of nation states. Given the inability of the Porte to hold on to its Balkan territory and the inability of the powers to agree to any substantial partition of Turkish territory in their favour the only way forward lay through new states that would be nominally independent yet economically and politically subservient to the stronger countries.<sup>35</sup> This was also an appropriate solution in view of the developing sense of nationalism in all parts of the Balkans, although the emerging nations were rarely able to realise their territorial ambitions in full since they tended to become mutually antagonistic, to say nothing of claims against the imperial powers which could not be effectively advanced until the Balkan Wars of 1912–1913 and the First World War. In the development of nationalism much depended on the improvements in education but it is very significant that national churches provided cultural, moral and political leadership for national movements in the Balkans. Although individual styles obviously varied there was a basic similarity in the roles played by the Montenegrin *vladike*, the Bulgarian exarchate, the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania under Bishop A. Saguna, the Serbia Orthodox Church of Southern Hungary under Patriarch J. Rajacic and by the Croatian Catholic Church under Bishop J. J. Strossmayer.<sup>36</sup>

#### Montenegro

In the attainment of independence in the Balkans pride of place must go to Montenegro which was the only area to escape Turkish domination through the centuries. This was due to the determination of the tribesmen to exploit the excellent opportunities for guerilla warfare in barren limestone country around Cetinje.<sup>37</sup> But from the late eighteenth century it was also possible for Montenegro to gain advantage from the major struggles between the empires and in 1799 the Ottoman Empire

formally recognised the country's independence and the incorporation of Brda.<sup>38</sup> The extended frontiers of the state were successfully defended against the Turks thereafter, with some gains in the Grahovo area in 1858. But efforts to gain a footing on the Adriatic at Kotor (1815) and Budva (1840) were strongly resisted by the Habsburgs and only in 1878 at the Congress of Berlin did Montenegro gain a narrow strip of coastal territory between Antivari (Bar) and Ulcinj (the latter agreed in 1880), along with further territory in the interior around Niksic. Further gains emerged out of the Balkan Wars as the sancak of Novipazar was partitioned between Montenegro and Serbia and this paved the way for the union movement which was clearly advancing when war broke out in 1914. Montenegro's political and economic achievements were remarkable, considering the meagre resources of the country and the suspicions of certain powers that annexation of coastal territory would result in a Russian naval presence in the Adriatic: hence the stipulation in the 1878 treaty that Montenegrin waters should remain closed to the warships of all nations.<sup>39</sup> The country was fortunate in having four capable rulers who together controlled the country from 1782 to 1918. They developed a sense of national unity, separated the functions of church and state and slowly introduced foreign capital, but the inevitably autocratic style of government encountered opposition with the growth of secondary education in Cetinje and Podgorica (Titograd) and higher education abroad (usually in Belgrade).

### Serbia

Meanwhile in Serbia national feeling was manifest in revolt against Turkish misrule in the very early years of the century already discussed. Important progress was also made in the cultural sphere first by D.Obradovic who championed the idea that the literary Serbian tongue should correspond with vernacular speech and later by V.Karadzic who completely reformed the literary language. Serbia was recognised as an autonomous principality in 1830 with an independent church and hereditary prince (Milos Obrenovic).<sup>40</sup> Russian protection was agreed but a Turkish garrison was maintained in eight towns. Progress towards unification in Italy gave momentum to



the idea of Serbia as the Piedmont of the Balkans, destined to comprise a core around which other Southern Slav territories would coalesce. There was a precedent for this in the Serb state of S.Dusan while Napoleon's 'Illyrian Idea' was a stimulus even nearer to hand.<sup>41</sup> Still more grandiose was the notion of a Balkan League that might draw together Bulgarians, Greeks, Romanians and Southern Slavs into confederation with Belgrade as the appropriate capital. Yet these delusions of grandeur lacked realism as long as Serbia remained a small backward state. Even within the South Slav lands there were rival political ideas, notably in Croatia where a movement towards linguistic self-consciousness took off in the 1830s. For the Croat conception of an association of South Slav peoples, the 'Yugoslav' idea, clashed with the narrow 'Pan-Serb' ideology emanating from Belgrade.<sup>42</sup> And although Croat aspirations were frustrated by the Ausgleich, which consolidated Hungarian influence, leaders like the Catholic Bishop Strossmayer still hoped for devolution in the context of the Habsburg Empire, with a sufficiently enlightened attitude in Vienna to attract the Serbs into the autonomous province.

Subservience to Belgrade would have seemed repellent to relatively developed and westernised Croats, especially in view of the primitive political organisation focussing on the rival Karageorgevic and Obrenovic families. Members of the developing class of rich merchants (charshiya, derived from the Turkish word for market place) would ally themselves with rival politicians to consolidate their privileged position. The persistence of Turkish formulas for government provoked some organised opposition from pro-western factions, like the semi-secret society Omladina of 1867 which attracted many young people to its economic and cultural programme, for at this time neither railway communication nor gas lighting had been introduced. In 1867 the Turks gave up their remaining garrisons in Serbia. Independence and some increase in territory was achieved in 1878. Modernisation went ahead more rapidly although international relations with the Habsburg Empire posed a perpetual dilemma since territorial ambitions always strained relations with Serbia's natural trading partner. Close association under Milan Obrenovic (1868–89) contrasted with growing estrangement under Peter Karageorgevic (1903–14).

The latter's reign consolidated Serbia's independence with effective domestic and foreign policies, but the territorial gains of the Balkan Wars (limited only by the Habsburg support for Albania) had an electrifying effect on the Slavs in Bosnia, Croatia and Dalmatia which precipitated the crisis of 1914.<sup>43</sup>

### Romania

R.R.Florescu had shown how the Uniate Church in Transylvania inspired an interest in Romanian nationalism that was communicated across the Carpathians where the prospects for a Romanian nation state were more encouraging.<sup>44</sup> The diffusion process involved books, published at Blaj and Sibiu, but more significantly lectures in Romanian by G.Lazar who was invited to St. Sava monastery in 1816. He was so successful in drawing students away from Hellenic studies that he was made to leave the country, though a pupil, I.E.Radulescu, later reopened St. Sava as a fully-fledged Romanian cultural institution. Lazar may have contributed a nationalist component to the 1821 rising of T.Vladimirescu which delivered a further blow against Greek influence. In turn this provoked a flight of some Wallachian aristocrats to Transylvania (fearing Ottoman reprisals though possible implication in the rebellion). Now directly in contact with Uniate intellectual leaders they reflected on their country's future and began to think of a nation under which class distinctions could be subsumed. The revolt of 1821 forced the Porte to countenance native rather than Phanariot Greek princes in both Moldavia and Wallachia.

Foreign controls remained strong through the combination of Russian protection and Turkish suzerainty, although the former influence proved progressive to the extent that written constitutions were drawn up in 1830. But from the cultural point of view, the ground was prepared from the growth of nationalism in the middle decades of the century, evident initially in the opposition to Russian tutelage in the 1830s by a 'western' faction that wanted a fully-independent Romania taken out of the Russo-Turkish context which constrained the political evolution of the principalities hitherto.<sup>45</sup> British support for the Ottoman Empire at the time prevented immediate progress and the events of 1848 did not bring radical change.<sup>46</sup>

However, the removal of Russian influence after the Crimean War in favour of British and French support for separate parliaments created conditions in which the Romanians could act decisively.<sup>47</sup> By electing the same prince (A.I.Cuza) in both principalities the ground was prepared for a union (Moldo-Wallachia) in 1861 based on the Wallachian capital of Bucharest.<sup>48</sup> Cuza's radical reforms ultimately brought his downfall in 1866 and western mediation was then important in discouraging Turkish intervention while simultaneously restraining more radical action by the Romanians like a premature declaration of independence. It was under the Hohenzollern Prince Carol that Romanian independence was recognised in 1878 and a stable modernising regime held sway for the remainder of the period.<sup>49</sup>

In the case of Romania the issue of Jewish settlement was intertwined with the independence question. Movement of Jews into Moldavia accelerated greatly during the reign Mihai Sturdza (1834–1847) as people sought a haven from discriminatory policies of the Habsburg and Russian governments (and the local administrations in Bessarabia, Bucovina and Galicia).<sup>50</sup> Delicate problems arose over dual nationality, though there appears to have been some ambivalence on the part of the authorities (whether they wanted the Jews as citizens of the principality concerned) and the Jews themselves (whether they wanted such citizenship as opposed to protection from outside). Such ambivalence was deepened by the continuing immigration, making Jews a prominent element in some north Moldavian towns like Botosani and Iasi (with 4,000 and 6,500 respectively in 1860) and their resistance to assimilation: 'their presence constantly reminded the Romanians that they were a different and an unassimilated minority active in their country's life'.<sup>51</sup> Hence it was understandable that restrictions against the Jews should be introduced, as in 1852 when they were temporarily prohibited from residing in the countryside and obtaining vineyards, or in 1861 when measures were passed to control Jewish activities as tenant farmers. A solution was found after 1856 when the Jews seem to have made up their minds that they wanted political and civil rights so as to become part of the new state, an attitude which found an echo among certain Romanian politicians who saw

advantages in the involvement of an active minority in national life. The Jewish campaign intensified in 1863, with support from the Paris-based Alliance Israélite Universelle. The Jewish case was accepted by Prince Cuza who sought international recognition of his election as Prince of both Moldavia and Wallachia, leading to the Civil Code of 1864 which was ‘one of the most progressive measures granted to the Jews regarding political and civil rights at that time, especially for any East European country’.<sup>52</sup>

### Bulgaria

Bulgarian nationalism was constrained by the domination of the patriarchate by Greek bishops. Bulgarians in the church hierarchy were able to stimulate some cultural progress (a history book in Bulgarian was published in 1762) but it was only in 1870 that Russian pressure was able to stimulate the formation of a Bulgarian exarchate within the Orthodox Church.<sup>53</sup> The appointment of a national leader of the church outside the authority of the Greek patriarch seems to have led to greater political activity. The risings of 1876 carefully organised and, through the severity of the Turkish response, brought about a Russian invasion, supported by the Romanians. The operation was entirely successful and the Treaty of San Stefano provided for a large Bulgarian state.<sup>54</sup> This settlement was unacceptable to the other powers, despite considerable sympathy for the Bulgar cause. So the Congress of Berlin reduced the scale of Ottoman losses and divided Bulgarian territory into two states (Bulgaria and Eastern Rumelia) that would not pose such a grave threat to Serbia or provide Russia with such a great opportunity to influence Balkan affairs.<sup>55</sup> In the event Russian tutelage was resented and the Bulgarians were able to make surprisingly rapid progress in pursuit of an independent course, combining their state with Eastern Rumelia in 1885 (despite violent opposition from Serbia).<sup>56</sup> A stable regime was established under Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg in 1887 and Bulgaria was led into the First World War on the side of the Central Powers, with the hope of territorial gains that would help to re-establish the frontiers of the early Medieval Bulgarian empires.

## Albania

Several relatively small ethnic groups in the Balkans developed a growing sense of identity during the nineteenth century but claims to nationhood were generally overlooked in order to satisfy the stronger aspirants already discussed.<sup>57</sup> However there was one notable exception, through the emergence of Albania as an independent state. This development calls for careful examination, especially in view of the fact that Shoiptar (Albanian) national consciousness was slow to develop. For a long time the preservation of a distinct Albanian culture was a consequence of religion rather than nationalism. In the north Catholic clergy preserved the faith through works written in Albanian and in the south a modern translation of the bible was available for Orthodox Albanians in 1866. But it was among the Muslims of Korce that revolutionary intellectuals first emerged in the 1840s thanks to the Greek schools which helped to reduce cultural isolation. The idea of preserving Muslim Albania in the context of a reformed Ottoman Empire seems to have given way, in the face of strong Hellenisation during the 1870s, to an alternative conception of an Albania nation (komb) that would have to secure its future on the basis of language and national literature through a process of struggle accompanying the collapse of the empire. 'A generation of Albanian patriots, when forced to identify either on the basis of language or religion came to the conclusion that the survival of the komb ultimately depended on the survival of the language'.<sup>58</sup>

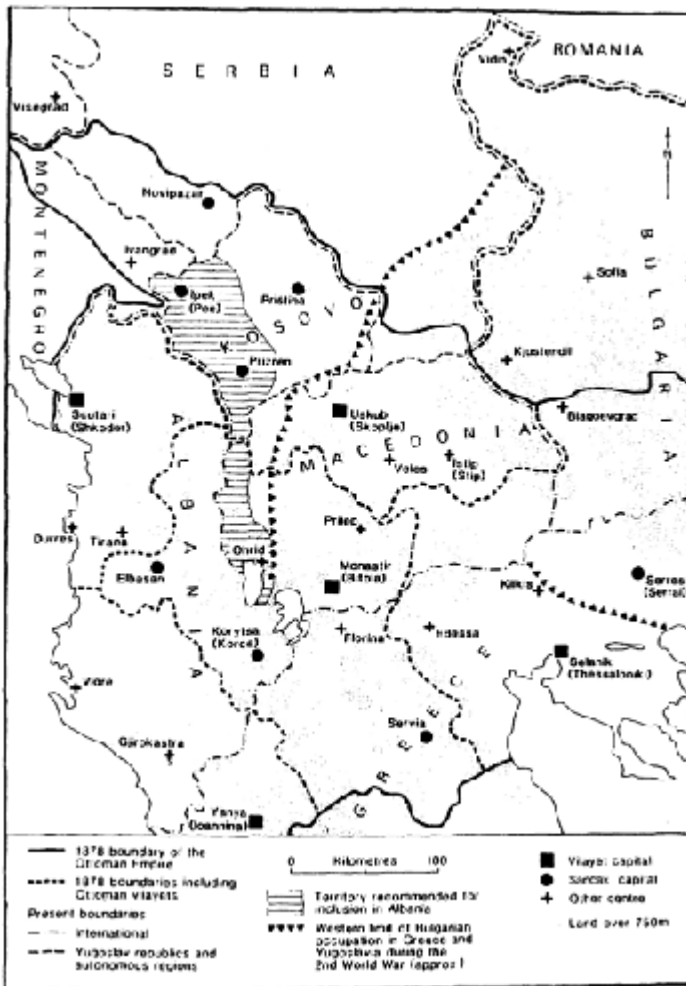
But there was no standard written language and in response to a chaotic situation at the end of the nineteenth century, when no two writers were using the same spelling, the Turkish government approved the efforts of S.Frashëri to devise a new alphabet of latin characters free of diacritical marks. This 'Istanbul Alphabet' of 36 letters was widely adopted among the Tosks in the south and a significant output of text-books brought about its use among Albanian colonies abroad. Albanian culture thus became clearly distinct from neighbouring Greek and Slav lands. Meanwhile however the Gëgs in the north had been using a spelling devised by a Jesuit priest L.de Martino in 1881 which was less phonetic but more easily printed: it became known as the 'Alphabet of the Union' (the name of a

patriotic library and political society). The move towards unity went a stage further in 1908 when an All-Albania Congress in Monastir (Bitola) agreed to a modified form of the Union Alphabet. This was to be used concurrently with the Istanbul Alphabet, although the latter died a natural death some years later as the last publication to use it was dated 1915.

Nevertheless the really critical period for Albanian nationalism did not begin until the Young Turk revolution. This brought an upsurge of national sentiment in Albania with schools, societies and newspapers founded. However the new constitution removed all recognition of ethnic groups by declaring that citizens were Osmanli and this insensitivity, compounded by the arrogance of the new administrators, transformed the cultural movement into a revolt, significantly among the Catholic Malissori on the frontiers of Montenegro.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless the Albanians had to tread carefully because assistance from neighbouring countries was not geared to the creation of an independent Albanian state. Montenegro helped the Malissori with the expectation of inheriting further territory from the Turks while the Greeks showed enough sympathy to embarrass the Turks without however instigating revolt in the south that would conflict with her territorial ambitions in Epirus.<sup>60</sup> The Albanians had to walk a tightrope. They worked with the Turks if it seemed that autonomy could be conceded, as it was in 1912 when an Albanian administration was accepted for an area embracing the four vilayets of Yanya (Ioannina), Kosovo, Monastir and Scutari (Shkodër), but also developing a strong autonomous position in case Turkish rule in the Balkans collapsed altogether (Figure 1.2).

When the time came for a final Turkish withdrawal after the Balkan War of 1912 it was largely because of Austrian and Italian insistence that the growth of Serbia (and to a lesser extent Greece) should be curbed that a separate Albania was recognised by the powers, although arguably without any basis in Albanian nationalism this policy might not have appeared a viable option. Serbia was denied direct access to the sea but Albanian territory was partitioned to allow the Serbs to return to Kosovo and Skopje as integral parts of the Medieval Serb state of Rasca which had fallen to the Turks as a result of the fighting on Kosovo polje.<sup>61</sup> The new Albanian state had never

Figure 1.2: The problem of Macedonia



Sources: H.C.Darby (ed.) 1944 and E.Kofos 1964

existed as a compact administrative area under the Ottoman Empire: the vilayet of Scutari was amalgamated with parts of the neighbouring provinces of Monastir and Yanya, the latter was split between Albania and Greece while Monastir was divided into three sections with Serbia as an additional beneficiary. Only in the north was the frontier not entirely new,

for there the Albanian-Serb boundary followed the old division between the provinces of Scutari and Skopje. The position could have been even more complicated for in 1912 Bulgaria and Serbia reached a secret agreement over Macedonia whereby the two states would earmark the territory respectively south and north of Skopje: Skopje itself and the territory extending southwestwards of Ohrid was left as a disputed zone.<sup>62</sup> However Bulgaria's defeat in the Balkan Wars prevented this agreement being implemented. Nevertheless the whole frontier was most unsatisfactory from the Albanian point of view. Not only did it leave extensive areas with an Albanian majority outside the new state but it isolated Albanian districts from their market centres, most notably in the vicinity of Dibra and Prizren. It also prevented the Albanians from using the Turkish road from Santi Quaranta (Sarandë) to the interior because the important fork where the Korçë and Yanya routes diverged was left on the Greek side of the frontier. Several writers argued unsuccessfully for a modified frontier that would add the coastal area of Ulcinj along with interior districts like Ohrid, Pec, Prizren and even Yanya.

Of course these difficulties would not have been so important had there not been a long history of strained relations between Albanians and Serbs. P.F.R. Artisien has explained how the Albanian chieftains readily accepted Turkish suzerainty and saw Islam as a further defence against Serbia's territorial expansion.<sup>63</sup> Inevitably the Serbs identified the Albanians with the Ottoman ruling elite and naturally took advantage of every opportunity to gain territory at the expense of the empire at the turn of the nineteenth century. The occupation of Kosovo during the Balkan Wars began a settling of scores as Slav settlers from Montenegro and Serbia came in to cultivate land taken from the Albanians. The fears of the Albanians were conditioned by the history of Ottoman decentralisation for 'the Sultan channelled any potential threats to his power into inter-ethnic rivalry' and the success of this was plainly evident in the years immediately before the First World War.<sup>64</sup> The Young Turk Ottomanisation policy of 1908 eventually drove the Albanians to revolt in 1911 but Montenegrin support was then tinged with ambivalence and minor concessions drawn from the Turks were not backed by the promised guarantees. When the



tension generated by this compromise helped to spawn the Balkan War of 1912 there was no doubt that the Montenegrans regarded the struggle as a Holy War that would see them in Prizren. Their advance was halted outside Scutari which fell only at the very end of the war when the powers had made it clear that an Albanian state would be created.<sup>65</sup> But atrocities committed by both Montenegrans and Serbs against Muslim Albanians both during and immediately after the war (only mildly restrained by threat of Habsburg occupation of Montenegro) pointed to the genocidal instincts that lay at the grass roots. Albania's problems were not however confined to external relations. In the struggle for mastery of the country the rival northern and southern traditions were in conflict and it was the Geg leader Ahmed Bey Zogolli who used his hereditary authority to triumph over his Tosk rival, the revolutionary intellectual Fan Noli. It was the same man as Zog 'King of the Albanians' (an oblique reference to Kosovo) who went on to lead the country through the inter-war years with a pragmatic compromise of the traditional and the modern. It was only after the Second World War that the Tosk intellectuals gained the upper hand: the Geps disarmed by M.Shehu and the communist regime consolidated its hold over the whole country.

## CONCLUSION

Eastern Europe made dramatic progress during the nineteenth century and for many people there was a definite improvement in living conditions with regard to both income and security. War was by no means absent but engagements were relatively brief since the greater ease of deployment of troops during the railway age allowed for a rapid and decisive outcome to most hostilities. And while there can be no grounds for satisfaction over the welfare services available in the great cities of the north and the Balkan countryside, the reduced incidence of epidemics contributed to substantially higher rates of natural increase. On the face of it Eastern Europe achieved a remarkable unity, with Germany and the Habsburg Empire together extending their economic links with the rest of the region and giving some credibility to the notion of Eastern Europe as a zone of German

influence. The railway contributed greatly once again, since overland transport of raw materials and manufactures increased many times over the level achieved by the 'Greek' traders in the course of their weary treks. The Berlin-Baghdad concept reflected a reality which attracted tacit acceptance from the great powers, all of which could find adequate opportunities for colonial expansion in different parts of the world. However the Balkans was always a sensitive area. Both the western powers and Russia had strategic interests in the Ottoman Empire, while the cause of nationalism the Balkans attracted attention both from western liberalism and Russian Pan-Slavism. However the balance was maintained until the turn of the century. The Congress of Berlin may be seen as a triumph of diplomacy, acknowledging the complete independence of Montenegro, Romania and Serbia as well as the occupation of Bosnia-Hercegovina and the sancak of Novipazar by Austria-Hungary. Thereafter the Ottoman Empire's territorial integrity was undisturbed in the Balkans for thirty years.<sup>66</sup>

But Balkan events in 1908 were quite momentous for in the wake of the Young Turk movement and the Bulgarian declaration of complete independence, Bosnia-Hercegovina was fully annexed by the Habsburg Empire (and jointly administered by Vienna and Budapest) while Turkey regained the sancak of Novipazar.<sup>67</sup> This fait accompli was much deplored by Montenegro and particularly Serbia who coveted the adjacent Slav territories. The Russians also resented the rebuff to the aspirations of a Slav country although it was inappropriate for them to intervene in the immediate aftermath of the Russo-Japanese War. A chain reaction of events can then be discerned in which colonial rivalries in Africa led to Italian intervention against Turkey at Tripoli in 1911 to counterbalance a stronger French hold on Morocco. Bulgarians, Serbs and Greeks then launched a concerted attack on the remaining Balkan lands of the Ottoman Empire. The victors agreed to a division of the spoils of 1913, under the Treaty of London, but clearly with some misgivings.<sup>68</sup> Bulgaria unleashed a further round of fighting, which brought about her defeat and some loss of territory while Serbia's expansion, constrained by the granting of independence to Albania at Habsburg insistence, was not

sufficient to prevent continued support for nationalist movements in Bosnia.

A consequence of this was the Sarajevo assassination: Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the Habsburg throne, was killed by G.Princip and fellow Bosnian students with evident Serb complicity. There was no certainty of war as a result of this outrage since Serbia agreed to most of the points raised in an Austrian ultimatum. However Austrian arrogance (with a token bombardment of Belgrade) and German ambivalence brought a fateful decision in Russia to mobilise as a precaution. This in turn brought a German mobilisation and implementation of a long-standing strategy for a two-front war which began with an attack on France through Belgium. The threat to Belgium was then the issue that inevitably brought the United Kingdom into the struggle.<sup>69</sup> Other states joined in as their territorial aspirations dictated. Interest in Serb territory in Macedonia was a prime factor determining Bulgarian support for the Central Powers in 1915 (although the failure of the Dardanelles project and Russia's offensives made this action all the more logical.<sup>70</sup> By contrast Romanian interest in Transylvania dictated action on the Allied side, along with Montenegro and Serbia. Although with cooler judgement war could have been avoided it seems unreasonably optimistic to envisage continued freedom from any major conflagration, given the competition between the major powers and the increasingly potent force of nationalism.

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## 2

# Economic Development: Germany and the Habsburg Lands

Eastern Europe was by no means unaffected by the rapid growth of factory industry so evident in the western ‘core’ of Europe.<sup>1</sup> The great improvements in transport, through steam power on shipping lanes and railways, increased scope for foreign trade in each country’s economy and boosted earnings from staple exports that could be used to finance industry. The Habsburg Empire for example imported cotton yarn, machinery, iron goods and textiles in exchange for wool, timber, livestock and grain. Industry was all the more appropriate in view of technological change which provided new options for growth and the imperative of effective security at a time of growing conflict between the major powers of Europe which was an important stimulus to the development of certain types of industry, just as modest consumer demand from upper and middle classes encouraged others (Table 2.1). Since the state carried responsibility for defence and often played a prominent role in railway development (seen as having important security implications) it was logical that it should also take a lead in industrialisation, especially since the rising costs of job creation (through the factory plant required) often made it quite impossible for the private capitalist to bridge the technological gap in the late nineteenth century.

Much of Eastern Europe fell within the German, Habsburg and Russian empires whose main industrial centres lay largely outside the region: for example the Ruhr, which was the crucial element in the commercial growth of the Zollverein, and later the German Empire, vis-à-vis the Habsburg lands. The Ruhr, with its rich mineral endowment and efficient waterway

connections with the coastal ports, found no parallel in Eastern Europe. But there were secondary industrial areas that lay within the region. In Germany the Silesian coalfield was tied by both rail and water transport with Berlin and it is very likely that Silesia would have experienced much more rapid development but for its frontier position and its poverty in iron ores compared with the Ruhr. Bohemia and Moravia (the Czech Lands) had coal and iron to supplement a textile tradition and Bohemia at any rate was accessible by water from the North Sea by way of Hamburg and the Elbe (Labe) river. However connections with Vienna were made by the railway and the binding together of the Czech Lands with Lower Austria was the dominant strategy. In Hungary the major navigable river, the Danube, was again inconveniently aligned for trade (though its use increased after late nineteenth century improvement) and it required the railway to focus the raw materials of Croatia, Slovakia and Transylvania on to Budapest. Railways also connected Hungary, with some difficulty in the case of the Dinaric Alps, with the Adriatic ports of Fiume, Rijeka and Split, although it was with Austria that most trade was done. Hungary in fact was a success story for late nineteenth century industrialisation because the country's primary economic role as food supplier to Austria (in return for the latter's industrial products) was complemented by a significant amount of manufacturing. Some of it was associated with food production (brewing and milling) but the rest emerged from a new potential revealed by the railway system in combining individually modest resource bases.

It is useful to consider the industrial progress made by Eastern Europe in the nineteenth century in the context of A.Gerschenkron's contrast between a self-generated industrial revolution in the UK and developments on the continent which required the assistance of investment banks and, where the problems of backwardness were greatest, the state.<sup>2</sup> Some textile industries were able to keep abreast of modern technology by ploughing back their profits, but by and large the intervention of the banks can be seen as crucial in modernisation: thus the conversion of the Skoda plant in Bohemia to armaments production was financed by Bodencreditanstalt and Böhmische Escompte-Bank. Again in Bohemia the Zivnostenska Bank was

Table 2.1: Fuel consumption 1890–1910

|          | Population(a)<br>(millions) |       | Coal and Lignite |        | Crude Oil |        | 1910  |       | 1910  |       |
|----------|-----------------------------|-------|------------------|--------|-----------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
|          | 1890                        | 1910  | 1890<br>A        | B      | 1890<br>A | B      | A     | B     | A     | B     |
| Austria  | 23.71                       | 28.57 | 864.0            | -163.5 | 9.4       | +278.0 | 47.3  | -14.5 | 47.3  | -14.5 |
| Bulgaria | 3.15                        | 4.34  | 7.9              | -      | 4.1       | +15.9  | 5.1   | +5.1  | 5.1   | +5.1  |
| Germany  | 49.43                       | 64.93 | 1816.3           | +10.6  | 13.4      | -87.2  | 17.6  | +15.6 | 17.6  | +15.6 |
| Hungary  | 17.58                       | 20.89 | 184.7            |        |           |        |       |       |       |       |
| Romania  | 5.96                        | 7.23  |                  | +40.4  | 7.1       | +33.5  | 102.9 | -80.5 | 102.9 | -80.5 |
| Serbia   | 2.16                        | 2.91  |                  |        |           | +95.2  |       |       |       |       |

A Total consumption metric tonnes per '000 of population

B Trade element: net export shown as negative; net import as positive  
a Bulgaria 1888 and 1910; Romania 1899 and 1912.

Source: B.R.Mitchell (1980) *European historical statistics 1750–1975*  
(London: Macmillan) 383–93, 430–41.

well supported by the local population and developed close links with the sugar industry. The banks moreover had close foreign connections and that meant considerable foreign participation in several major developments, quite apart from direct foreign investment such as the French interest in the development of the Tatabanya coalfield in Hungary in the 1890s.<sup>3</sup> Yet it is difficult to separate the role of the banks from that of the state, for governments in all continental countries had to remove obstacles to self-generated development and, in many cases, play an active role in the development of the railways. Decisions over tariff policy could also be critical and it is probably for this reason (as well as good contact with the German market) that the Habsburg Empire followed military defeat (by Prussia in 1867) with an economic boom that lasted until 1873.

### ADVANCED AND BACKWARD ECONOMIES

Levels of industrialisation varied very considerably within Eastern Europe. The advantage of an early start was very great and conversely a low level of industrialisation brought increasingly severe penalties as the nineteenth century progressed. The more developed economies were better able to introduce new technology and thereby further increase their competitiveness. The German chemical industry expanded very rapidly. It derived its sulphuric acid (a very important intermediate product) cheaply from non-ferrous metallurgical industries as a by-product, whereas in the Habsburg Empire the small size of these industries meant continued dependence on Spanish pyrites and hence relatively high costs for sulphuric acid production. Industrial progress, expressed through the incomes of entrepreneurs, managers and workers, meant heavier domestic demand for manufactured goods and so the more developed nations enjoyed the benefit of a more stimulating home market. German industry was able to thrive with the support of a dynamic home market and to organise itself in such a way as to win considerable business abroad. Industries in the Habsburg Empire were just as prominent as their German counterparts in the early nineteenth century but were not so well nourished by domestic consumers: despite a rapid growth of

population most of the consumers were rural dwellers working small peasant farms or labouring on the estates for low wages. Evidently a population surplus may place a brake on industrial progress, although this point was not clearly recognised until the inter-war years. Allied to this was the higher level of urbanisation in Germany and rising demand for a range of municipal services (gas, electricity, tramways) all of which created further demand for manufactured goods.

Backward areas could be attractive through their abundance of cheap labour, but in a wider political entity the advantage might well be offset by limited local raw materials and by high transport costs to markets outside the region; and such markets would very likely be indispensable in view of limited local market in the backward area itself, where low wages would necessarily mean low demand for manufactures. Where the backward area comprised an entire economy, with autonomy in such areas as taxation and trade policy, then state support could create industries protected by tariff barriers. But the modest size of the home market restricted the scale of development and ensured that the new industries would generate a small advanced region (probably in and around the capital city or chief port) surrounded by a relatively backward countryside. This can be seen in Hungary and Romania where the important raw material and energy resources were used by the governments concerned as a basis for national industrialisation. Industrial regions emerged in the Budapest area (including Diosgyör, Györ, Salgotarjan, Tatabanya etc.) and around Bucharest (extending to Cîmpina, Ploiesti and the Danube ports of Galati/Braila). It was less evident in Bulgaria, Montenegro and Serbia which lacked important staple exports to generate capital and service foreign loans. The Balkan countries were easily intimidated for it was only gradually that the powers extended full recognition to the successor states of the Ottoman Empire and even after Bulgaria won her independence the restrictions on autonomous tariff policy previously imposed on Turkey were kept in force. Moreover dependence on capital and expertise from developed parts of Europe made it all the more necessary to minimise conflict over economic policy.

A further point here is the conservative outlook of an elite whose power based on the landed estates which generated the

food surpluses in a system of international specialisation involving industrial and agrarian countries. However an impression of excessive polarisation between an all-powerful landowning class and a poverty-stricken peasantry subjected to a regime of neo-serfdom must be tempered by some recognition of a disposition to industrialise in the National interest' to support the army, reduce unemployment and gradually improve living standards. Thus while the elites of southeastern Europe initially favoured low tariffs in order to push the agricultural surpluses of their estates into more developed parts of Europe (and to maintain good relations with the powers) stagnating grain prices in the 1880s undermined the credibility of an industrial policy linked to agricultural exports (all the more so in view of some agricultural protectionism in some developed countries) and forced a general extension of tariff barriers. The industrialising efforts of the Balkan countries are invariably subjected to scornful dismissal by economic historians. Yet there was a yawning technological gap and continuing political instability with considerable risks of war that imposed heavy defence burdens. Moreover there were no favours from the developed countries. The Balkan states had to accept procedures used by their advanced neighbours even though they might constrain independent action, as in the case of central banking. Although protected by a nominally 'autonomous' metallic standard which did not automatically subordinate the weaker nations to the pulls and pushes of the advanced economies as a 'managed' currency might have done, the peripheral countries had still, as debtors and future borrowers, to trim their sails to the wind from London or Paris. This was clear both to countries like Romania which tied their currencies to the bi-metallic franc and to those aligned with 'neutral' gold, the system used in London. 'Central banks of the Balkan states were totally hamstrung by their overriding obligation to the foreign creditors to keep their countries linked to the gold standard'.<sup>4</sup> Balkan governments may well have 'floundered' between a mixture of policies combining state-sponsored schemes with encouragement of foreign investment, yet the resulting combination was effective in maintaining industrial growth and subsequent development in the area has not used significantly different methods.<sup>5</sup>



## TARIFF POLICY

All the states of Eastern Europe were in their own ways sorely tried over the question of tariff protection. The problem arose out of the strong British competition after 1815. However the low tariffs in Prussia dating back to 1818 were adopted by the Zollverein from 1834. Broadly speaking there was a conflict of interest between industrialists who wanted high tariffs to protect them against more efficient foreign producers and agrarians who believed that high tariffs for manufactures would lead to retaliatory measures which could be harmful to cereal exports. Hence a compromise position of low tariff levels in the Zollverein, incidentally reciprocated by the Habsburg Empire in 1850 when Metternich's policy of high tariffs was modified with the aim of joining the club. The tendency towards free trade was strengthened when Germany repealed the remaining duties on iron in 1873, but only for a dramatic reappraisal to follow later in the decade through a cyclical downturn in the economy and growing competition from American and Russian grain, even in the German domestic market. Thus when protection was quickly reintroduced in 1879 it was through an alliance between 'rye and iron'. High tariffs then became the norm and the attempt in 1891 by Bismarck's successor Caprivi to negotiate simultaneous tariff reductions between Germany, the Habsburg Empire and some western neighbours (followed by Serbia and Romania in 1893, and Russia in 1894) generated strong opposition and removed the new chancellor from office. When the 'Central European' system came up for renewal in 1903 the scheme was allowed to lapse and tariffs resumed their upward trend, particularly in the Balkans. Bulgaria's high rates of 1883 were progressively raised in 1897 and 1904 while both Romania and Serbia raised industrial tariffs in 1906: Serbia's move gave rise to bitter conflict with her main trading partner the Habsburg Empire.

The tariff debate in Germany raged furiously through the 1890s. The agrarians were now strong supporters of protection since the new world trading patterns in grain meant that the Junker farmers were no longer competitive and faced a continual run-down of cereal growing on the eastern estates if the home market could not be protected. The case for an

Agrarstaat rather than a pure Industriestaat was argued out on the basis of a physically-fit rural population with a high birth rate that was more useful for the defence of the country than the physically inferior populations crowded into industrial towns. Autarky would also remove the risk of military weakness arising from dependence on imports. But the protagonists of this school, A.Wagner and M.Sering, came into conflict with liberal free traders like F.Naumann and M.Weber who felt that this formula would be more conducive to rising incomes and the introduction of social welfare programmes. The latter's cause has been shown by subsequent history to be the more convincing and it is difficult to separate from protectionist arguments the special pleadings of vulnerable groups and classes. But undoubtedly at the time the landowners in the eastern regions had the power to press their case and Germans therefore paid a relatively high price for food in order to defend the estate economy. It is important to note that Eastern Europe did to some extent manage to keep up with the challenge from America and Russia in respect of grain with Romania perhaps the best example of a crash development based on a suddenly-opening foreign market, foreign investment, large estates and ruthless exploitation of the peasant.<sup>6</sup> In 1910–13 Romania exported on average 1.45 million tons of wheat per annum, and was the world's fourth largest wheat exporter with just over eight percent of the total.

## GERMANY

Germany's economic performance in the half century before the First World War was truly remarkable. There was relatively rapid growth of both the total population and the work force, to levels exceeded in Europe only by the Russian Empire. Germany accounted for 15.7 percent of world manufacturing (14.0 for UK), including outputs of steel, chemicals and electricity that were the highest in Europe.<sup>7</sup> Indeed the competitiveness of many of her consumer goods caused a degree of hysteria among her rivals.<sup>8</sup> The total volume of trade grew considerably from 1.96 million dollars in the 1880s to 5.21 million in 1913 and the excess value of imports (55.6 percent and 51.6 respectively) was more than cancelled out by earnings from shipping and foreign

investments. The latter were especially strong in other parts of Eastern Europe: chemical and electrical engineering in the Habsburg Empire, metallurgy and oil drilling in Romania and steel making in Russian Poland (Siedlice and Warsaw). The trade performance reflects an unusually close connection between industry and banking: by 1914 about twenty-five business banks were active in promoting industry and trade, encouraging the formation of cartels and subsidising foreign trade (especially in the case of concerns like Deutsche Orientbank of 1906).

There was a generally high level of technical training for the workforce as Germany purposefully combined its industrial raw materials with the scientific skills of universities, technical schools and commercial institutes. Research activity can be seen not only in the brilliant work of leading chemists like R.W.Bunsen and J.Liebig and electrical engineers like E.Rathenau and W.von Siemens but in the activities of the hundreds of trained scientists employed by the leading German firms. Illiteracy was almost unknown and certainly affected less than one percent of the population by 1914. To be sure there were conflicts between labour and capital and Marx's predictions about the destruction of capitalism through revolutionary violence inspired the Social Democratic Party through the 1880s and 1890s despite Bismarck's bitter opposition.<sup>9</sup> Yet by the end of the century there were calls, notably from E.Bernstein, for a constitutional approach using the parliamentary system to achieve a cooperative scheme of production and with such a reformist programme the Social Democrats became the largest single party in Germany in 1912. Cartelisation was a particular feature of German industry and followed from a less-committed belief in the virtues of competition and an instinctive preference for the ethos of the pre-industrial state bureaucracy. The cartels might inhibit innovative action in the short term but 'in the long run they could function as a further stimulus to economic development by sustaining the level of profit or by facilitating further technological innovation'.<sup>10</sup> They may also have been responsible, at least in part, for the relatively steady economic growth in Germany after 1880, because of the way in which the domestic market was regulated.

As regards German industry in Eastern Europe then Berlin must take pride of place through the concentration of engineering firms, especially electrical engineering. Municipal lighting and transport systems opened up enormous markets for electrical engineering firms: the rapidly growing city of Berlin itself generated considerable demand (with electric tramways and railways) but there were opportunities in other German cities (five of which had grown beyond 500,000 population by 1914) and as the domestic market became saturated then business was found elsewhere in Europe and overseas. A.S.Milward and S.B. Saul emphasise the connection between the electrical engineering firms and the rapid rate of urban development:

that they were bigger than in other developed European economies and that they grew so rapidly may be explained by the fact that nowhere else in the same period except in the Mid-West of the United States did so many large cities grow so quickly to such a size.<sup>11</sup>

The industry in Berlin was dominated by 1914 by two giants: Allgemeine Electricitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) and Siemens-Schuckert. The latter originated in the cable and telegraph business started by W.von Siemens, a former Prussian army officer, and it gave Germany an impressive lead in the industrial application of electrical energy, with several notable innovations including the manufacture of the first dynamos.<sup>12</sup> Siemens was not so active in harnessing electrical energy for domestic and industrial consumers and it was to cover this important aspect of the industry that the merger took place in 1903 between Siemens' firm and Schuckert which was concerned with current distribution, using the patents of T.A.Edison and others. The opportunities here had also been taken up by E.Rathenau whose company, AEG, was one of the biggest electrical firms by 1890, far larger than Siemens before the 1903 merger. Both firms had branches all over Germany and employed thousands of workers abroad as well, but Berlin remained the core in each case and Siemens stamped its identity on a particular suburb of the city appropriately named Siemensstadt.

Other branches of engineering were well represented in Germany. The building of steam engines was already well-established at the beginning of the period, especially in Berlin and Magdeburg.<sup>13</sup> Berlin's industry was greatly enlarged by additional firms in 1837 (A.Borsig), 1842 (J.F.L. Wöhlert) and 1844 (T.Hoppe), while in Magdeburg the establishment in 1838 of repair shops and later building facilities by Vereinigte Hamburg-Magdeburger Dampfschiffahrts Com. at Buckau was followed in 1862 by works in the same suburb established by a former Hamburg-Magdeburg employee, R.Wolf, who established a reputation for agricultural engines. Some other eastern locations emerged: most of them were developed by private companies: Elbing (Elblag) in 1837 (F.Schichau), Neubrandenburg in 1840 (E. Alban), Chemnitz in 1847 (R.Hartmann), Stettin-Bredow (Szczecin) in 1851 and Landsberg a.d. Warthe (Gorzow) of unknown date. But all these developments were preceded by Seehandlung at Breslau (Wrocław) in 1833. Some interesting linkages may be mentioned: while steam engine building linked backwards to textile machinery in the case of Hartmann who built his first engine for internal use, there is a forward link with locomotives and shipbuilding. In Berlin Borsig built its first locomotive in 1840 followed by Wöhlert in 1846 and several others later, notably Schwartzkopft (Berliner Maschinenbau). Shipbuilding was well represented by Schiekau in Danzig (Gdansk) and Elbing. In the aircraft industry Germany was without doubt the major producer in Eastern Europe and apart from the small Lloyd factory in Budapest-Aszod virtually all production was in Germany.<sup>14</sup> Two major engineering companies had aircraft departments: AEG and Gothaer Waggonbau while specialist aircraft builders were established at Halberstadt (Halberstadt), Leipzig (Deutsche Flugzeugwerke), Schwerin (Fokker) and Staaken (Zeppelin) before or during the First World War. The industry was greatly reduced in peacetime and factory space was converted to other uses: cars at Gotha (after failure to re-enter the railway industry) and agricultural machinery at Halberstadt.

All this development was part of a policy evident almost throughout German engineering to diversify and thereby seek orders from a large number of domestic and overseas customers: the high level of specialisation and standardisation prevailing in

the American engineering industry was not considered appropriate in Germany at the time. Even the agricultural engineer R. Sak of Leipzig made many different types of plough to cope with farming conditions in different parts of Europe, and although J. Zimmerman (later Chemnitzer Werkzeugmaschinenfabrik) standardised the production of machine tools they were still making steam engines to order in 1913. Lacking as large a home market as American competitors, German firms could not prevent a substantial inflow of machine tools, agricultural machinery and typewriters which offered good value for money in view of the feasibility of mass-production methods. Not that progress was made everywhere in German industry: the textile industry in Silesia which first assumed commercial importance in the sixteenth century did not develop like its Rhineland counterpart as a major factory-based activity. During the critical mid-century years both coal and iron cost considerably more at the factory gate in Silesia than in either the Rhineland or northern England: 'bad transportation, the absence of social overheads, the almost total lack of supporting industry... rendered the marginal efficiency of investment in the textile sector very low'.<sup>15</sup> Closer to the core of Germany Vogtland continued to diversify and to mechanise, as with the assimilation of the Heilmann embroidery machines from Switzerland in the 1850s.

German agriculture played its part in what was undoubtedly an economic 'miracle', through a steady process of intensification during the second half of the nineteenth century. It is widely believed that the grain tariff of 1879, substantially increased in 1885 and 1887, was a key factor because of the protection it offered against cheap imports. But J.A. Perkins places more emphasis on the desire of German farmers, many of whom were owner-occupiers, to maintain the value of their land. This led them to take up the option of higher technological inputs in the intensive arable areas.<sup>16</sup> The progress was most evident in root crops, particularly potatoes and sugar beet, which increased their share of the arable land from 13.7 percent in 1878 to 19.7 in 1913. In sugar beet Germany was a world leader with 21 percent of the sown area but 30 percent of the production. And while yields in Germany were 13 percent higher than in France and 25 percent higher than in Austria-

Hungary the raw sugar yield was superior by even larger margins (38 percent and 31 percent respectively). Sugar beet was the principal basis of the high capital and labour inputs. Calculations over labour requirements suggest a demand between five and ten times greater than was involved under the three field system with extensive pasture. But the labour was required on a seasonal rather than a permanent basis and consequently the Instleute system arose, whereby cottagers were provided with a smallholding in return for the labour of the holder and one other person when needed.<sup>17</sup> Intensification however eventually required the return of these holdings to the landlord and a system of wage labour related to seasonal migration.

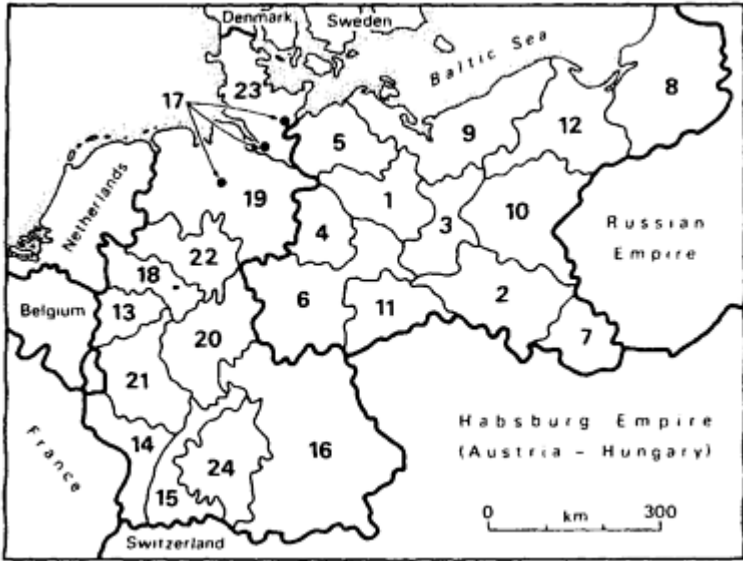
Peasants from the Eichsfeld district near Erfurt first went to work on the sugar beet farms of Halle and Magdeburg in the 1840s but by the end of the century the habit of Sachsengängerei ('going to Saxony') was common not only in central and eastern Germany but also in parts of Austria-Hungary (Galicia), Italy, Russia (Congress Poland and White Russia) and Scandinavia: in 1914 there were some 430,000 seasonal agricultural workers migrating to Germany across international frontiers (more than a quarter of them Russian Poles), to say nothing of the internal migrations for farm work within Germany itself. Some farms were extremely large with close integration between production and processing. For example the Nagel farm near Halle, which started in the 1840s when two brothers gave up their craft as stonemasons and purchased a 100 ha. of land (extended to 1414 ha. by the mid-1880s when the brothers died), was integrated with a sugar factory, flourmill and distillery producing alcohol from potatoes and molasses. Growth continued under new management to reach 2146 ha. in 1900 by which time a second sugar beet factory was working on the estate. Management problems on such complex units seem to have placed a brake on further expansion, in preference for a system of large sugar factories (benefiting from economies of scale) working in conjunction with a number of separate farms, but either way it is clear that the Junkers who were politically so powerful in Germany before the First World War were not reactionary survivors of some bygone feudal age but efficient managers of successful businesses.

An important element in the new farming system was artificial fertiliser, for although the supply of sugar beet pulp as a cattle feed resulted in a considerable manure output from the farm this would have been insufficient to maintain high yields on a large area of cropland. Since crops did not have to be tied closely to manure production artificial fertilisers allowed greater flexibility, almost a *freie Wirtschaft* (free economy) after the constraints of traditional open field farming. The availability of potash in central Germany, initially a waste product from salt mining, helped to make the Magdeburg area a leader in the agricultural revolution. Potash sales rose sharply, after Liebig discovered their value as fertiliser in 1861, to reach 0.3 million tons in 1870 and 0.7 million in 1880 and 8.0 million in 1910. But in addition supplies of nitrate came from Chile while domestic industry yielded ammonium sulphate from coke ovens and phosphate (basic slag) from metallurgical works. Fertiliser dressings per hectare rose from 3.1 kg. in 1878–80 to 15.6 kg. in 1898–1900 and 42.0 kg. in 1913–4: during the latter period 18.9 kg. was superphosphate, 16.7 kg. potash and 6.4 kg. nitrogen.

Considerable detail on regional variations in late nineteenth century Germany has been supplied by F.B.Tipton whose statistics have been used for the summary views presented in [Fig. 2.1](#) and [Table 2.2](#).<sup>18</sup> Regions may be grouped to harmonise with the present division of Germany into its eastern and western sections and the two halves may be compared in respect of a quarter-century of development from 1882 to 1907. Population increased more rapidly in the west (41.4 percent against 31.4) and so did employment (36.2 percent against 27.9), in both cases largely due to migration. Employment in industry increased more rapidly in the west (89.0 percent against 71.9) and so did employment in the tertiary sector (57.1 percent against 45.4). On the other hand the decline in agriculture was greater in the east (8.5 percent against 3.6). This still left agriculture responsible for a slightly lower proportion of the total employment in 1907 (34.5 percent against 35.8), but because a proportion of those leaving agriculture migrated to the west and did not enter non-agricultural employment in the east the fall in agriculture's share of total employment was greater in the west (50.6 percent down to 35.8 as against 48.2



Figure 2.1: Germany: statistical regions



Source: F.B.Tipton

For key to code numbers see [Table 2.2](#)

down to 34.5). Clearly however the great change over the quarter-century was the growth of industry which doubled its importance in relation to agriculture with 1.22 jobs in industry for every 1.00 in agriculture in 1907 whereas there had only been 0.63 in 1882. The figures for the two halves of Germany are little different: 1.24 and 0.66 in the east; 1.19 and 0.61 in the west. At the same time there was a marked structural change in German industry with 1.66 jobs in food processing and textiles (including clothing) for every 1.00 in building materials, engineering, metallurgy and mining in 1882 compared with 0.99 (virtual parity) in 1907. The east was much more involved with the lighter branches with figures of 1.93 and 1.18 compared with 1.47 and 0.85 in the west.

Probably more interesting are the regional variations within the two halves of Germany. The western districts are not of direct concern but it may be noted that two regions (Düsseldorf-Arnsberg and the Hanse Cities) showed a growth of population and employment far greater than the average, while a third

region (Münster-Minden) joined the other two in registering a relatively rapid growth of employment in industry. In the east Berlin-Potsdam dominated the picture with 2.9 times the average growth of population, 3.5 times the average growth of employment and exactly double the average growth of employment in industry. Magdeburg, Merseburg, Oppeln and (especially) Saxony showed up well but all other regions were well below average on all three criteria. The impression is one of powerful migration currents within the eastern regions focussing on Berlin. Migration into Berlin was equivalent on average to 11.6 percent of the resident population each year from 1876 to 1890 and then 4.2 percent between 1891 and 1905. These figures must be taken in conjunction with information for Potsdam into which area the city was spreading: again migration was positive, averaging 2.6 percent between 1876 and 1890 and then 11.9 from 1891 to 1905. Negative rates applied to all other eastern regions of Prussia, although with smaller losses in the more industrialised areas of Prussian Saxony (•1.7 percent) and Silesia (•1.9) than in Frankfurt a.d. Oder (•3.8), Pomerania (•4.7), East Prussia (•4.8), West Prussia (•5.2) and Posen (•5.6). Some industries in the east were able to achieve the benefits of scale economies and supply not only the domestic market in the east but also the growing Russian market as well. Saxon competition may have destroyed the cotton weaving industry in Berlin after the Zollverein was formed, but the capital had a very important stake in the clothing industry. The heavy chemical industry was progressively relocated to the lignite field in Merseburg but there was a rising demand for cosmetics, pharmaceuticals and photographic materials which Berlin firms were able to specialise in. The railway network facilitated massive shipments of food and raw materials to Berlin and equally provided an efficient means for the distribution of manufactures. Some regions like Magdeburg and Saxony were able to develop their engineering industries based on the requirements of agriculture and food processing but this was not generally the case. 'The east developed no processing centres comparable to Chicago or Kansas City in the United States, nor did Berlin seem willing or able to fill this role'.<sup>19</sup> Ratios of industrial to agricultural jobs yield values of only 0.36 in East Prussia, and Posen, 0.45 in West Prussia, and 0.54 in

Table 2.2: Regional economic trends in Germany 1882-1907

|  | Industrial |      |            |      |         |       |          |      |      |      |
|--|------------|------|------------|------|---------|-------|----------|------|------|------|
|  | Population |      | Employment |      | Ratio I |       | Ratio II |      |      |      |
|  | A          | B    | A          | B    | 1882    | 1907  | 1882     | 1907 | 1882 | 1907 |
| <u>Eastern regions</u>                           |            |      |            |      |         |       |          |      |      |      |
| 1 Berlin-Potsdam                                 | 28.20      | 31.4 | 12.60      | 27.9 | 5.40    | 71.9  | 0.66     | 1.24 | 1.93 | 1.18 |
| 2 East Prussia                                   | 4.51       | 92.5 | 2.16       | 98.8 | 1.11    | 147.0 | 1.83     | 4.17 | 2.04 | 1.01 |
| 3 Frankfurt a.d. Oder                            | 2.00       | 3.9  | 0.88       | -1.7 | 0.18    | 36.0  | 0.23     | 0.36 | 2.40 | 1.41 |
| 4 Lower Silesia                                  | 1.20       | 9.6  | 0.57       | 6.1  | 0.21    | 56.9  | 0.42     | 0.77 | 2.62 | 1.65 |
| 5 Magdeburg-Anhalt                               | 2.94       | 14.5 | 1.42       | 8.2  | 0.57    | 41.3  | 0.60     | 1.03 | 2.21 | 1.32 |
| 6 Mecklenburg-Schwerin<br>& Mecklenburg-Strelitz | 1.57       | 31.5 | 0.70       | 26.0 | 0.29    | 73.3  | 0.75     | 1.17 | 1.42 | 0.86 |
| 7 Merseburg, Erfurt & Thuringia                  | 0.75       | 11.0 | 0.31       | 7.5  | 0.09    | 26.8  | 0.46     | 0.60 | 2.13 | 1.36 |
| 8 Pomerania                                      | 3.32       | 29.6 | 1.44       | 26.2 | 0.70    | 63.7  | 0.83     | 1.44 | 1.50 | 0.91 |
| 9 Posen (Poznan)                                 | 1.70       | 12.1 | 0.74       | 9.3  | 0.21    | 39.2  | 0.38     | 0.54 | 1.41 | 1.42 |
| 10 Saxony  | 1.96       | 17.9 | 0.82       | 9.4  | 0.18    | 62.7  | 0.21     | 0.36 | 2.41 | 1.57 |
| 11 Upper Silesia/Oppeln (Opole)                  | 4.59       | 47.7 | 2.02       | 52.8 | 1.29    | 73.3  | 2.41     | 4.94 | 2.80 | 1.88 |
| 12 West Prussia                                  | 2.06       | 43.5 | 0.82       | 25.3 | 0.38    | 96.9  | 0.51     | 1.18 | 0.62 | 0.34 |
|  | 1.60       | 17.7 | 0.69       | 12.9 | 0.17    | 60.4  | 0.27     | 0.45 | 1.70 | 1.18 |
| <u>Western regions</u>                           |            |      |            |      |         |       |          |      |      |      |
| 13 Aachen & Köln                                 | 33.51      | 41.4 | 15.49      | 36.2 | 6.62    | 89.0  | 0.61     | 1.19 | 1.47 | 0.85 |
| 14 Alsace-Lorraine                               | 1.83       | 48.9 | 0.79       | 43.8 | 0.41    | 86.8  | 1.02     | 2.20 | 1.23 | 0.88 |
| 15 Baden   | 1.82       | 18.2 | 0.93       | 20.3 | 0.37    | 47.2  | 0.67     | 1.09 | 2.10 | 1.22 |
| 16 Bavaria                                       | 2.06       | 51.4 | 1.05       | 29.8 | 0.42    | 99.1  | 0.45     | 1.00 | 2.13 | 1.22 |
|  | 5.70       | 24.1 | 2.98       | 23.2 | 0.91    | 84.8  | 0.37     | 0.60 | 2.02 | 1.18 |

|  | Industrial |      |            |      |            |       |         |       |          |      |
|--|------------|------|------------|------|------------|-------|---------|-------|----------|------|
|  | Population |      | Employment |      | Employment |       | Ratio I |       | Ratio II |      |
|  | A          | B    | A          | B    | A          | B     | 1882    | 1907  | 1882     | 1907 |
| 17 Braunschweig, Hannover<br>& Oldenburg | 3.80       | 34.0 | 1.74       | 27.7 | 0.63       | 73.6  | 0.48    | 0.86  | 1.42     | 0.91 |
| 18 Bremen, Hamburg & Lübeck              | 1.29       | 86.1 | 0.59       | 98.7 | 0.29       | 115.7 | 5.83    | 11.56 | 1.96     | 1.14 |
| 19 Düsseldorf                            | 5.33       | 95.9 | 2.10       | 91.2 | 1.43       | 126.9 | 2.43    | 5.85  | 0.87     | 0.45 |
| 20 Hesse, Hesse-Nassau<br>& Oberhessen   | 3.35       | 35.4 | 1.48       | 34.7 | 0.64       | 84.7  | 0.67    | 1.31  | 1.59     | 0.92 |
| 21 Koblenz, Rheinpfalz & Trier           | 2.59       | 34.6 | 1.17       | 27.9 | 0.47       | 80.8  | 0.49    | 0.93  | 0.81     | 0.56 |
| 22 Minden & Münster                      | 1.78       | 51.3 | 0.77       | 41.4 | 0.35       | 135.4 | 0.49    | 1.59  | 2.98     | 1.23 |
| 23 Schleswig-Holstein                    | 1.55       | 37.5 | 0.69       | 32.3 | 0.25       | 69.2  | 0.61    | 1.07  | 2.05     | 1.15 |
| 24 Württemberg-Hohenzollern              | 2.41       | 19.0 | 1.19       | 22.2 | 0.46       | 101.8 | 0.41    | 0.86  | 2.25     | 1.30 |
| Germany                                  | 61.71      | 36.7 | 28.09      | 32.3 | 12.02      | 80.9  | 0.63    | 1.22  | 1.66     | 0.99 |

A Total 1907 (millions)

B Percentage growth 1882-1907

Ratio I: Jobs in industry per job in agriculture

Ratio II: Jobs in heavy industry for each job in light industry

Source: F.B.Tipton (1976).

Pomerania, all of them below 0.60 (for Bavaria) which is the lowest value in the west in 1907.

### HABSBURG EMPIRE

Throughout the period under review the Habsburg Empire was industrialising, although the growth overall was modest by German standards (Table 2.3). By the First World War scarcely more than a fifth of the working population was employed in industry (22.1 percent in 1910 compared with 55.1 for agriculture).<sup>20</sup> Growth was particularly rapid after 1880 with recovery from the depression of the mid-1870s and a strong trade connection with the dynamic German economy. The average rate of growth of industrial production from 1880 to 1914 was a fraction over 4 percent compared with only 3 percent between 1840 and 1880. The industrial structure was quite diverse but there were significant changes during the nineteenth century. Textiles were most prominent in mid-century (indeed the empire's cotton industry was then greater than that of the Zollverein) but the share of total production was restricted to about a quarter by 1910 in view of the growing strength of chemicals, metallurgy and engineering at the turn of the century which together accounted for about one-third of all industrial production in that year. This arose from the ambitious railway and public works programme under the premiership of E.von Koerber and the discovery of oil in Galicia where production rose from 0.03 million tons in 1880 to 2.00 million in 1909. Food processing also made a modest net advance to account for another quarter of the total. Nevertheless the heavy industries were less prominent than in France, Germany and UK and the empire might therefore be seen as transitional between the more advanced economies of Europe and the agrarian states of the Balkans in terms of both the strength and structure of industry. The reference to 'strength' covers not simply the level of employment in industry but its competitiveness: for in some respects Habsburg industry was protected and its potential was very much dependent on the buoyancy of the domestic market. This was evident from the early nineteenth century when domestic textile industries, which had changed to cotton and mechanised under the continental system, raised tariff barriers to fight off the flood of cheap British exports which threatened to capture the domestic market after the peace of 1814. Labour was cheap and machinery could be taken into Bohemia from

Table 2.3: Economy of the Habsburg Empire in 1841

|                                   | Economic criterion |              |                   |                    |                    |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
|                                   | A                  | B            | C                 | D                  | E                  |
| Bucovina & Galicia                | 52.0               | 38.5         | 74.0              | 110.0              | 1.84               |
| Coast & Dalmatia                  | 15.4               | 10.1         | 65.6              | 25.4               | 1.43               |
| Carinthia & Carniola              | 23.0               | 15.5         | 67.4              | 26.0               | 0.98               |
| Czech Lands                       | 220.7              | 172.9        | 78.3              | 288.7              | 1.14               |
| Hungary                           | 100.0 <sup>e</sup> | 60.1         | 60.1 <sup>e</sup> |                    |                    |
| Lombardy-Venetia                  | 196.4              | 136.9        | 69.7              | 55.2 <sup>a)</sup> | 1.01 <sup>a)</sup> |
| Lower/Upper Austria<br>& Salzburg | 139.7              | 103.1        | 73.8              | 134.1              | 0.83               |
| Military Frontier                 | 11.1               | 6.1          | 55.0              |                    |                    |
| Styria, Tyrol &<br>Vorarlberg     | 48.3               | 33.4         | 69.2              | 58.5               | 1.05               |
| Transylvania                      | 28.1               | 16.4         | 58.4              |                    |                    |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>834.7</b>       | <b>593.4</b> | <b>71.1</b>       |                    |                    |

A Industrial production '000 florins

B Ditto large-scale industry

C B as a percentage of A

D Agricultural production '000 florins

E Share of agricultural production related to share of industrial production where latter equals 1.00

<sup>a</sup> Venetia only

<sup>e</sup> estimate

Source: N.T.Gross (1968) 'An estimate of industrial production in Austria 1841' *Journal of Economic History* 28, 80-101. Data is abstracted from *Tafeln zur Statistik der oesterreichischen Monarchie*.

Saxony, but the pace of mechanisation in all branches of textiles was leisurely and productivity remained low. Separation of spinning and weaving, through different locations and different companies also reduced efficiency. Exports of cotton yarn (much of it to the Balkans) and cloth were almost entirely balanced out by imports of higher quality products.

### Bohemia and Moravia (Czech Lands)

Bohemia enjoyed a large share of the empire's cotton industry in the middle of the nineteenth century. Most of the spinning capacity was outside Eastern Europe in Lower Austria, Vienna

and Vorarlberg: Bohemia continued to take some of its yarn from these parts of the empire even though much of the material passed through the province as raw cotton from Hamburg moving south by the Elbe waterway. However cotton weaving and finishing were much more strongly represented. In 1835 hand spinning was reduced to just 10,000 people, only a quarter the level of 1800, but there were still 100,000 domestic weavers, most of them in the Friedland (Frydlant), Leitmeritz (Litomerice) and Reichenberg (Liberec) areas of north Bohemia, but some in the south around Tabor. Even in 1848 B.Schrells was still employing a thousand domestic weavers in the Braunau (Brounov) area. There were large print works in Leitmeritz and in Prague which was the great finishing centre for the Bohemian cotton industry, accounting for half the total amount of cloth printed in the region in the mid-nineteenth century. The origins lay back in 1766 with F.A.Sänger's mill on the Moldau, but the great expansion came after 1825 with the new mills built outside the walled city in Karolinenthal (Karlín) and Smichow (Smichov) by 1830 and in Ovenec (Bubenec) and Liben by 1850. The growth process only came to a halt later in the century through the raw cotton crisis of the 1860s followed by the collapse of the Vienna banks in the following decade. Hand working survived longest in the wool trade and only in the 1880s did mechanised spinning and weaving become more important than the traditional methods. Brünn (Brno) was the leading centre, with the Soxlett mill in the town already employing a thousand workers in 1841, and Reichenberg was also prominent. Local wool supplies were fully stretched and imports from Hungary and Poland were needed.

It is evident too that the Czech Lands did not want for capable entrepreneurs and the aristocratic owners of early textile manufactories, lacking the skill and technical knowledge to keep up to date with progress in Western Europe, were usually able to find middle-class partners on whom complete responsibility eventually devolved.<sup>21</sup> F. Römheld, with long experience in cotton mill management, became joint proprietor and manager of the Count Wallenstein cloth factory at Oberleutensdorf (Horní Litvínov) in 1919: the factory was fully modernised by Römheld and a steam engine provided by H.A.Luz of Brünn in 1826. A further example concerns the clothier J.Liebieg who

built up a cotton and wool empire in Reichenberg during the 1830s and 1840s with a complex of mills using water power and also a steam engine (installed in 1838 when the water power proved inadequate). His career as an industrial entrepreneur began in the late 1820s when he took over a technically-backward dyeworks originally set up in 1806 by Count C.C.Clam-Gallas. But the stimulating business climate attracted independent initiative from merchants and artisans. This was evident even in the late eighteenth century with the approval given to the Vienna merchant J.M.Schmidt for a woollen factory on the Neugelein (Nova Kdyne) estate in southern Bohemia in 1768: by 1825 the 540 factory workers were complemented by 5,900 outworkers (7,000 in 1838). And there is the even more celebrated case of the journeymen J.J.Leitenberger who married the daughter of a Wernstadt (Vernerice) dyer and took over his father-in-law's works in 1764: printing was then related to cloth supplied by independent domestic spinners and weavers, but Leitenberger brought the outworker system under his control and gradually introduced factory working to all stages of production. The Leitenbergers had a reputation for quality and were among the early prize winners at industrial exhibitions held in Prague from 1828. They were also innovators as initial use of British cylinder printing machines and French panel printing methods gave rise to E.Leitenberger's own machine of 1836 which would print between six and eight colours simultaneously. The family interest was maintained throughout the nineteenth century and one of the Leitenberger factories, the printworks of Josefsthal (Josefuv-Dul) is still working today. On a smaller scale J.G.Berger, starting as a cotton/linen wholesaler in the 1770s, purchased a bleaching/fuling mill at Reichenberg in 1793 and extended into spinning and weaving, finishing up with an efficient integrated business at his death in 1810: it was his manager, F.Römheld, who subsequently took over Count Wallenstein's business. And finally there is the case of L. and M.Porges who moved from the ghetto of Prague to join the ranks of the richest industrialists within a single generation: as successful merchants they were able to buy a printing factory at Smichow in 1815 and by taking care to employ the most capable managers and workers were able to extend



their business into spinning and weaving instead of buying-in their cloth. They also made use of Leitenberger's new print machinery. However not all initiatives were successful. State encouragement for the production of linen spinning machines inspired P.de Girar who supplied equipment to Bohemian factories. But the cost of the machine spun yarn was too high to compete with the hand spinners until the perfection of the wet spinning process in the UK in 1825. The Austrian initiative was also undermined by financial shortcomings on the part of both Girard and the government.<sup>22</sup>

A.Klima has demonstrated a close connection between the textile and engineering industries, because it was through small workshops set up inside textile factories to maintain machinery that some of the specialist engineering firms developed.<sup>23</sup> One workshop at Slapanice near Brünn was started in 1821 by two Germans J.Reiff and H.A.Luz. A steam engine was built in 1824 for the Offermann factory in Brünn and in 1836 the business was relocated in the town as an independent concern. In another instance a group of mechanics, including the Britons D.Evans and J.Lee and the Czech C.Danek, all with experience at the Breitfeld mill, set up their own engineering business in Karolinenthal (Prague). In the case of the two brothers E. and J. Thomas and another Briton, T.Bracegirdle, there is no record of previous experience in supervising textile factory maintenance shops, but E.Thomas did help install a steam engine at the Kittel mill at Markersdorf (Markvartice) and he went on from this and similar jobs to start his own factory at Reichenberg in 1829. This factory was very successful and turned out a wide range of machines as well as steam engines and water wheels. After a few years the business was relocated as the Taylors moved to Karolinenthal in 1832, taking over an old spinning mill in a place that gave them a more central position in Bohemia and closer proximity to iron supplies. This works became the largest machine building plant in Bohemia in the first half of the century with a wide range of products including a rolling mill supplied to an ironworks at Beraun (Beroun) in 1842. Later it became part of the Prague Engineering Company (Prazka strojirenska akciová společnost) and eventually passed to Skoda. Meanwhile Bracegirdle set up his own plant not far from Reichenberg at Gablonz (Jablonec) in 1835, exploiting a good

site for water power. His looms became a speciality and he moved to Brünn in 1843, perhaps encouraged by personal associations with Offerman and the prospect of cornering the Moravian market. For in the 1840s the steam engines installed in the Czech Lands were grouped into two concentrations: one in the north covering Kladno, Prague and Reichenberg and another in the south at Brünn and Mährisch-Ostrau (Ostrava). Bracegirdle now went on to build steam engines, installing his own foundry and rolling mill. Interestingly these examples show links going forward to the major engineering companies of the Czech Lands. The Danek and Taylor factories, both in Prague, eventually became parts of the Ceskomoravska-Kolben-Danek (C-K-D) and Skoda enterprises respectively while in Brünn a merger in 1872, seven years after Bracegirdle's death, gave rise to Erste Brünnner Maschinenfabrikgesellschaft (Prvni brenska strojirna). It is significant that foreigners and particularly British people played such a prominent part in the development of engineering in the Czech Lands, a fact clearly acknowledged by Czech historians back in 1850. There were other cases too, such as R.Holmes who was in charge of machine shops at Neudek (Nejdek), J.Park at Beraun and L.Thomas at Graslitz (Kraslice).

Linkages with textiles are also evident in the chemical industry which was well represented in Prague. D.Hirsch established his factory to provide acids for calico printing in 1835. F.X.Brosche was similarly engaged although his product range extended to paints, printing inks and pharmaceuticals. The first important chemical producer was J.D.Starck whose sulphuric acid plant near Zwittau (Svitavy) dates back to 1810. Over the next forty years the firm became a multi-plant enterprise with a wide product range, including superphosphate in the 1840s at Kaznau (Kasnejov) and a private source of coal from the Falknov (Sokolov) Basin.

The iron industry was well represented in the Czech Lands, with further contributions from Austria and the Southern Slav lands. Charcoal furnaces in Bohemia were often important features of the rural estate economy and the supply of metal was an early stimulus to engineering. The Waldstein ironworks turned out steam engines, Blansko produced spare parts and Friedland turned out boilers. A larger scale of industry grew out of these early charcoal furnaces. Thus in 1826 the Archbishop of

Olmütz (Olomouc), as owner of the Friedland iron works, decided to build blast furnaces and puddling plant on the Mährisch-Ostrau coalfield at Witkowitz (Vitkovice). The first furnace (lit in 1830) used charcoal but coke was used in additional furnaces built in 1836 and 1837. By this time the project had attracted the attention of the Rothschilds, a Vienna banking family who saw the value of the works in connection with the railway contract for the Vienna-Bochnia line (Nordbahn). In this case the importance of the banker in stimulating industrial progress is brought out by the support given by Rothschilds to Prof. Riepl of Vienna Polytechnic who visited Britain in 1830 and was then to use British experts when puddling began at Witkowitz. The Rothschilds eventually bought the works outright in 1845 and increased their stake in the industry through purchase of the Marieuthal (Marianske Udoh) iron mines and associated manufacturing plant. Viennese capital also found its way into the Nucice iron mines and the blast furnaces and puddling plant at Kladno where the Prague Iron Company introduced coke smelting in 1856. Kladno was a long-established centre of iron working but it was overtaken by the Mährisch-Ostrau area with its excellent coking coal and close connections with the railway industry. The contrast was underlined by the presence of a purely Czech labour force at Kladno and the retention of small-holdings while Mährisch-Ostrau experienced immigration from Galicia and Silesia.

Both centres continued to modernise, for Bessemer converters were introduced at Witkowitz in 1866 and Kladno nine years later, encouraged by the railway demand for steel rails. However there were problems with the local ores until the Gilchrist Thomas dolomite lining was available (in 1879 at both places) and heavy reliance was placed on the non-phosphoric ores of Styria. In the late 1870s therefore one of Kladno's two blast furnaces was using Styrian ore to produce pig iron for the Bessemer converters while the other used a mixture of ores (including some local phosphoric material) to turn out forge iron. However it was only at Teplitz (Teplice), where Bessemer converters were installed in 1873, that reliance on 'imported' ores was total. Transfer of ore from Styria to the Czech Lands was balanced by the return flow of coal, the transport cost being acceptable in the context of a protected home market. A surge in

railway demand in the 1880s stimulated further growth of steel production in the empire which exceeded two million tons in 1913. The Czech Lands gradually increased their share and profited from the dolomite lining (which increased the value of the local ores, especially Nucice) and the Siemens-Martin open hearth furnace which permitted charges of scrap as well as pig iron. However the level of demand was too great for Styrian ores to be dispensed altogether (especially at Wilkowitz) and total production costs were therefore in excess of those prevailing in Lorraine. The charcoal furnaces were progressively phased out during these late nineteenth century years although it is remarkable that until the end of the 1870s they still accounted for more than half the iron produced in the Czech Lands. The important consideration seems to have been the persistence of the estate connection which was only belatedly eliminated by the joint stock companies. Thus the Fürstenberg interest in the Kladno area was only taken over in 1880 by Böhmische Montan Gesellschaft and rationalisation of production triumphed over the forces of inertia no longer fortified by the linkages with various facets of the estate economy. Likewise members of the aristocracy (notably Count Larisch and Baron Wilczek) long remained prominent in the coal industry of Mährisch-Ostrau.

In some respects Habsburg industry in the Czech Lands was quite innovative by wider European standards. A large scale of organisation was evident in the Bohemian brewing industry where Pilsen (Plzen) was the main centre. Steam power was applied and important improvements in the production of chilled lager helped the town to become one of the great European producers. But the record in sugar beet refining is even more distinguished. The diffusion process was discovered at Seelowitz (Zidlochovice) in Moravia by J.Robert, the son of the founder of the first sugar beet factory in the Czech Lands. Within a few years the process was taken up by some twenty-five other factories and for a time sugar refining machinery was exported to both France and Germany. Particularly successful was the Prague engineering firm of C.Danek (founded in 18.54) which eventually became part of the massive C-K-D enterprise already referred to: the merger of 1927 combined Danek's factory with the Prvni Ceskomoravska machine factory, which started supplying mining machinery and metallurgical plant in

1871, and with the works founded in 1896 by E.Kolben to produce power station equipment. The Skoda company of Pilsen also started off as manufacturers of sugar refining plant in 1859 (then known as the Wallenstein engineering works) but went on to make armaments in 1890, using their own steel from plant installed in 1889. The company became a major supplier to the armed forces of the empire and after the First World War served the Czechoslovak state and its allies (first the Little Entente and now the Warsaw Pact), not to mention the Axis during the Second World War.

### Slovenia and Bosnia-Hercegovina

Some industrial successes were registered in Slovenia in the nineteenth century for once the Napoleonic blockade ended it was possible to envisage the growth of a cotton industry in the hinterland of Trieste where Egyptian cotton was landed. Hence the Aidussina (Ajojscina) cotton spinning mill built in 1828 (with a steam engine to supplement the water power in 1843) which represents the start of modern industry in the province.<sup>24</sup> An integrated spinning and weaving mill in Laibach (Ljubljana) followed in 1837, associated with the British entrepreneur W.Moline. Cane sugar refining began in Laibach in the 1830s but it was undermined by Czech beet sugar in the last quarter of the century while forest industries were compromised by the iron industry's switch from charcoal to coal which boosted the potential of the Czech Lands. However the paper industry (which started in 1843) and other forms of wood processing offered some compensation for the decline of the charcoal industry. Most important perhaps was the continuation of iron and steel working despite the concentration of effort on the Donawitz orefield of Styria. For the railways to Trieste gave prominence to small coalfields in traditional areas of production which now lay on the supply line to Italy. The coal of Trifain (Trbovlje) developed first by the capital of Laibach and Trieste businessmen and by the French after 1880, was not suitable for coking but it could be used in the puddling process. This process was introduced first near Gulenstein (Store) in 1836 (with coal displacing charcoal in 1840) and later at Ravne near Celli (Celje). Some plant was dismantled at Gulenstein in 1898 and

transferred to Donawitz but other units survived at both locations and a new works emerged at Assling (Jesenice) through the consolidation of a scattered iron industry in the upper Sava valley by the Carniolan industrial corporation using German capital, following the completion of the railway through the district in 1870. By 1891 all operations were concentrated in a single integrated iron and steel works. Exhaustion of local ores resulted in a transfer of pig iron production to Trieste in 1897 (a more appropriate location in the context of imported ores) but other capacities were inherited by the Yugoslav government in 1918 and although peripheral in the context of the new domestic market the Alpine situation meant that the new technology of electric steel making, based on hydro power, could be applied. The large hydro-power potential was tentatively exploited by a power station on the Sava (envisaged as part of a chain of developments) and the Fala project on the Drava was realised by Swiss capital during the First World War.

Outside capital, dominated by the Vienna banks, clearly took over in Slovenia after 1870 yet Hocevar argues strongly that the undoubted economic strength of the 'Austrian-Czech complex' should not imply a dual economy situation in enclaves like Slovenia. For local initiative remained strong and a cooperative successfully mobilised local savings. This reflected considerable political development amongst the Slovenes for local political parties supported the cooperative credit system and it was a Slovene mayor of Laibach I. Hribar who took the lead in founding the local Creditbank (Ljubljanska kreditna banka) in 1900. With a majority in almost all rural districts of Carniola and most of the towns Slovene parties achieved a majority in the Landtag in 1883 and gained ground in Gorizia, Istria and even Trieste, all of which helped in resisting outside economic pressures.

Bosnia-Hercegovina also stands in contrast to the general backwardness of the Habsburg periphery for there was quite sustained state involvement in industry in the late nineteenth century.<sup>25</sup> A peasant rebellion against the Turks in Hercegovina, which threatened to attract a Serb takeover, led to pre-emptive action by Vienna. The occupation of 1878 and the institution of a protectorate led to the full annexation of the province into the

empire in 1908. State involvement in the economy arose from the need to pay the costs of administration, bearing in mind that the absorption of a large Slav population was a controversial act and seen by both Germans and Hungarians in the empire as a threat to their supremacy. There was considerable scope in forestry and mining and the Minister of Finance became virtually a dictator of the province initiating or licensing all commercial and industrial projects. Thanks to a suitably worded Ottoman law passed in 1868 all forests became state lands and the scale of exploitation increased. There was already some production of oak barrel staves geared to the French wine industry: the staves were carried in panniers by horses to the nearest suitable river for floating to the Sava. But now large concessions were awarded to entrepreneurs like the Bavarian O. Steinbeis who gained control of 45,000 ha. of woodlands in the triangle between Drvar, Jajce and Doberlin in 1892. Transport was provided by roads and forest railways which made contact with the principal narrow gauge lines and gave an outlet through Doberlin and Banja Luka as well as through Sebenico (Sibenik) where the company maintained its own wharves. Steinbeis also ran his own sawmills with more specialised plant at Doberlin for woodworking and Drvar for cellulose. Elsewhere there was a match factory at Dolac, a unit producing wood alcohol at Teslic and short-lived paper mill at Zenica.

An iron furnace was built at Vares in Bosnia in 1891 because there was a plentiful supply of timber to smelt the local ore: local coal was of poor quality and suitable alternative fuel would have required a long and expensive rail haul. In addition to metallurgy there was a chemical industry involving production of calcium carbide at Jajce and soda at Luka vac, the latter supplied with brine from the salt deposits of Donja and Tuzla. Fuel for industry came from the Kreka coalfield. A range of food processing industries appeared: tobacco factories, canneries, breweries, distilleries and tanneries, not to mention a short-lived sugar mill at Usoara. In at least one case the incentives offered to developers were sufficient to attract industrialists interested in export to other provinces: thus the oil refinery at Bosanski Brod imported its crude and then geared production to Hungarian territory on the opposite side of the

Sava. However there was no fully integrated programme embracing all sectors of the economy and transport remained a problem. The province stood aloof from the main lines of communication through the Balkans in view of the failure of the plan for a railway through the mountains from Banja Luka, Sarajevo and Novipazar into Macedonia, and also to some extent from the lack of any outlet through Split which Budapest preferred to retain exclusively for her own needs. Nevertheless the results were considerable and the new transport system was complemented by a network of financial institutions.

### Hungary

Hungary boasted a textile industry which could meet 70 percent of home demand in 1913 but the food processing industry turned out to be a major export. Sugar refining was taken up in Hungary but the greatest success came in flour milling with Budapest as the main centre.<sup>26</sup> The catchment area extended over the plain and some cereals imported from Romania were also processed. The first mill was built in 1839 and another ten were opened by the time of Ausgleich. The mills were large by European standards, but of course neither Budapest alone nor Hungary as a whole had a complete monopoly of flour milling in the empire. It was only around 1900 that more than half the wheat exported by Hungary was shipped out as flour. But the level of specialisation was nevertheless substantial in view of the earlier prominence enjoyed by the Austrian Lands. The mills created a local demand for machinery that helped to stimulate the engineering industry. Indeed there is a parallel between Danek in Prague and A.Ganz in Budapest, for the latter was a flour mill employee of Swiss origin who eventually set up his own factory to manufacture milling machinery. He diversified to produce electrical machinery in 1878 and by the 1880s had become a prominent manufacturer of turbines, most of them for export. As Ganz-Mavag the firm remains one of the most important in Hungary.

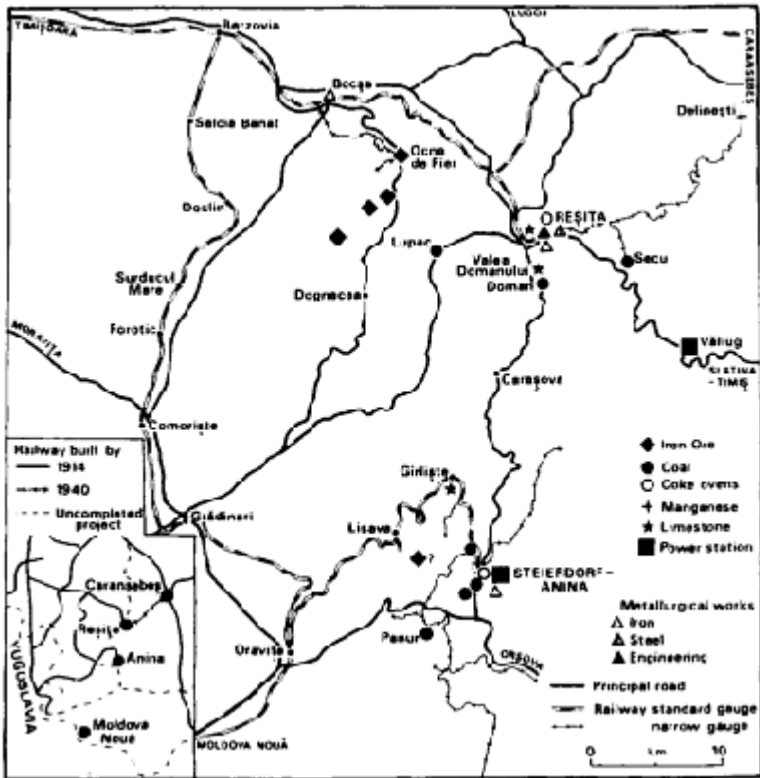
Heavy industry was also sustained by the upsurge in railway building after the Ausgleich. There was immediate government support for a steel mill at Diosgyör (using Siemens-Martin open hearth furnaces) in 1868. This became part of a large state iron



works, Hungary's second largest steel producer in 1913. The main producer was a works at Resiczabanya (Resita) in the Banat Mountains, owned by the Staatseisenbahngesellschaft (Figure 2.2). Founded originally as an iron producer using local iron ore and charcoal the works switched to coke smelting c. 1840 and started steel production with Bessemer converters in 1868 and Siemens-Martin open hearths in 1876. Mention should also be made of another pre-1867 company, the Rimamurany works founded in 1852 through the amalgamation of three small foundries at Ozd with the Salgotarjan works. Open hearth furnaces were later installed at Ozd while Salgotarjan was responsible for the finished products. Small ironworks were later opened up at Zolyombrezo (Podbrezova) in Slovakia and Vaidahunyad (Hunedoara) in Transylvania using local iron ores with coal from Mähr. -Ostrau and Petroszeny (Petrosani) respectively. Except at Resiczabanya there was no great emphasis on engineering and the various iron and steel producers forwarded metal to engineering works in Budapest. There was a particular interest in transport equipment (related to the railways and Danube shipping (Erste Donau Damfschiffahrtsgesellschaft). Mention should be made of the state railways' machine works which produced its first locomotive in 1873, and the steamship company's shipyards in the capital. Other branches did emerge, as is clear from the example of Ganz, and also of Weiss Manfred a producer of tinned food (1884) that went on to become an important armaments manufacturer.

The proportion of the working population employed in industry in Hungary almost doubled after the Ausgleich from 8.6 percent in 1870 to 17.1 in 1910, as the government intervened increasingly to stimulate those industries it considered most appropriate. A law for the encouragement of industry was passed in 1881 in response to growing concern over the high level of emigration. The stimulus of tax exemption prompted a burst of investment by the Budapest banks and was followed up by interest-free loans (1890), tax rebates (1899) and shareholding (1907). There was help too in providing infrastructure such as housing and services for workers which would otherwise have placed heavy burdens on the shoulders of entrepreneurs. These incentives went a long way towards making Hungary

Figure 2.2: The industrial complex of Resiczabanya (Resita)



Source: I.Pasarica (1935) *Monografia Uzinelor de Fier și Domeniilor din Resita* (Bucharest: Imp. Centrala).

more self-sufficient in manufactured goods and the employment generated was of the greatest social and economic importance at a time when the mechanisation of agriculture was generating serious rural unemployment. The policy was economically irrational in the context of the empire as a whole because there was a deteriorating balance of payments situation after 1900 as the dual monarchy ceased to be self-sufficient in food and yet increased imports of industrial plant and raw materials. But thanks to this highly-motivated regional interest within the common market Hungary was able to set out on the road to separate economic development and despite the complication of

boundary changes (with many Budapest firms cut off from their supplies of raw materials and intermediates) there was a solid economic base for the fully-independent state that emerged after the First World War.

A useful statistical review of Hungary's development in comparison with Austria's is provided by J. Komlos who sees the 1870s as the decisive period not so much because of the political consolidation after 1867 but rather due to the influx of Austrian capital after 1873 depression (Table 2.4). 'Without Austrian capital as a catalyst the beginnings of industrialization in Hungary would have been unthinkable in the 1870s because the rate of domestic accumulation was insufficient'.<sup>27</sup> As regards the contribution of industry to national product a threefold increase from 7.8 percent in 1850 to 25.0 in 1913 was registered. Industrial production was equivalent to only 16 percent of the Austrian output in 1841, but reached 30 percent in 1914. Industrial growth rates in Hungary were consistently above the Austrian rate after 1886 (though mining faltered between 1898 and 1907) and with this creditable growth Hungary 'ameliorated to a considerable extent her relative backwardness'.<sup>28</sup> Specialisation was quite emphatic. Flour production was generally greater than in Austria after 1886 and sugar production reached half the Austrian level by 1913 whereas textile industries, both cotton and wool, remained relatively small. So the progress of Hungary's industry at the end of the century was considerable.

Trade with Austria continued to emphasise an exchange of Hungarian food for Austrian manufactures but trade patterns with the rest of the world were almost the reverse. Indeed this might suggest that Hungary's progress was impeded by the common tariff which meant higher prices for both grain and manufactures and placed a burden on consumers in all parts of the empire. Certainly Hungarian industrialists and Austrian farmers fought against the common tariff. So did small farmers because they could not benefit from the high grain prices: they could not deliver standard lots of uniform quality grain and their enterprises had to revolve increasingly around livestock and livestock products, although prices were not so advantageous. But nevertheless there seems to have been a consensus that a break was neither possible nor desirable. While

Table 2.4: Hungarian economic performance 1830–1913

|      | Manufacturing |     |     | Mining & Manufacturing |       |     | Industrial sector:- |     |      | Cotton |      |     | Wool |     |       | Flour |      |       | Coal |      |      |      |      |  |
|------|---------------|-----|-----|------------------------|-------|-----|---------------------|-----|------|--------|------|-----|------|-----|-------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|--|
|      | A             | B   | C   | A                      | B     | C   | A                   | B   | C    | A      | B    | C   | A    | B   | C     | A     | B    | C     | A    | B    | C    | D    | E    |  |
| 1830 |               |     |     |                        |       |     | 2.4                 | 0.2 | -    | -      | -    | -   | -    | -   | -     | -     | -    | -     | -    | -    | -    | -    | -    |  |
| 1847 | 1.3           | 0.5 | 1.3 |                        |       |     | 5.2                 | 0.2 | *    | *      | 2.6  | *   | -    | -   | -     | -     | -    | 46.0  | 0.9  | 0.3  | 0.4  | 0.4  | 0.4  |  |
| 1864 | 2.2           | 0.8 | 2.2 | 0.7                    | 21.2  | 0.5 | 0.8                 | 0.2 | 3.1  | *      | 3.1  | *   | -    | -   | -     | -     | -    | 52.5  | 0.9  | 0.4  | 0.5  | 0.5  | 0.5  |  |
| 1873 | 1.4           | 0.4 | 1.4 | 0.4                    | 29.2  | 0.2 | 0.9                 | 0.1 | 2.7  | *      | 2.7  | *   | -    | -   | -     | -     | -    | 62.0  | 1.0  | 3.4  | 2.4  | 2.4  | 2.4  |  |
| 1886 | 5.5           | 3.1 | 5.5 | 2.3                    | 45.7  | 3.9 | 3.6                 | 0.2 | 14.5 | *      | 14.5 | *   | -    | -   | -     | -     | -    | 45.4  | 0.7  | 6.8  | 9.5  | 9.5  | 9.5  |  |
| 1898 | 3.4           | 1.5 | 3.4 | 1.2                    | 91.0  | 0.3 | 10.0                | 0.2 | 27.2 | *      | 27.2 | *   | -    | -   | -     | -     | -    | 108.1 | 1.1  | 8.6  | 15.7 | 15.7 | 15.7 |  |
| 1907 | 2.2           | 1.3 | 2.2 | 0.6                    | 103.9 | 0.3 | 18.6                | 0.4 | 42.2 | *      | 42.2 | *   | 18.0 | *   | -     | -     | -    | 102.3 | 1.2  | 12.4 | 42.1 | 42.1 | 42.1 |  |
| 1913 | 3.2           | 1.1 | 5.9 | 1.8                    | 165.9 | 0.4 | 37.5                | 0.5 | 46.9 | 0.1    | 38.0 | 0.2 | 38.0 | 0.2 | 140.7 | 1.0   | 13.2 | 151.0 | 1.3  | 12.7 | 64.9 | 64.9 | 64.9 |  |
|      |               |     |     |                        |       |     |                     |     |      |        |      |     |      |     |       |       |      |       |      |      |      |      |      |  |

A Growth rate per annum over the previous period percent

B Ditto as a ratio of the Austrian rate where the latter equals 1.0

C Production for the year million crowns

D Anthracite output: units of 10,000 tons

E Ditto lignite

- Nil

\* Less than 0.1

Source: J.Komlos (1981) (note 27).

Hungarian industry might have grown faster there is no guarantee that the important agricultural and milling sectors could have adjusted easily to the loss of free access to the Austrian market.<sup>29</sup> A serious problem for Hungarian industry was the lack of self-sufficiency in fuel. Whereas total coal consumption rose by 11.5 percent per annum between 1851 and 1873 and by 5.5 percent per annum from 1871 to 1913 production increases were 11.3 and 4.5 percent respectively. By contrast Austrian production growth of 10.3 percent per annum for 1851–73 and 3.7 percent for 1871–1913 was very close to the growth of consumption of 10.4 and 3.8 percent respectively.<sup>30</sup> Over the earlier period, when Hungary consumed on average 0.56 million t. of coal per annum, imports accounted for 12.7 percent; whereas over the later period, with an average consumption of 3.83 million tons, import levels rose to 29.6 percent (and 32.2 percent for the post depression years 1896–1913). By contrast over the earlier period Austria needed to import only 3.4 percent of its average annual consumption of 3.34 million t., falling to 1.9 percent later when average consumption was 17.58 million t. (though 5.2 percent for 1896–1913). Indeed the coal shortage, particularly acute in coking coal, has been seen as a sign of failure by the Monarchy to make a concerted and united effort in industry: crippled as it was by national tensions and a lack of determination even among the German-speaking middle-class elements to seek transformation of the empire's institutions.

### Agriculture

1848 brought the abolition of serfdom in the Habsburg Empire and it is important to consider the effects of this action on the agricultural landscape.<sup>31</sup> There had already been considerable progress in commuting feudal services into cash payments. This was very much in the interest of the progressive landowner because it yielded capital which could be used in farm modernisation. But a complete elimination of traditional practices allowed to the estate farms to be cultivated outside the common field system. In Hungary such farms were already quite clearly separated from peasant land. There was less pressure to modernise in this relatively backward part of the empire and

landowners were happier with the status quo involving the use of servile labour. The 1848 reforms were therefore different in the two parts of the empire. In Austria there was no Bauernlegung (peasant clearance) because the majority of those emancipated gained security of tenure over lands they had previously cultivated (while landowners were compensated by both the peasantry and the state for the loss of labour services). The nobility were not allowed to purchase peasant lands because the large domains were subject to only light taxation. The effect was to help preserve the peasant class and inhibit the formation of large capitalist farms, because when peasants sold their land it had to go to other peasants. However as a result of the emancipation the three field system was replaced by consolidated peasant holdings. This affected settlement patterns because a looser form was now appropriate, with farmhouses standing on the newly-enclosed holdings that were laid off from the roads. In some cases virtually all trace of the original village core has disappeared although it usually remains intact as one element in a more complex structure. But in Hungary less than half the peasants received any land apart from their plots, while the landowners were fully compensated for the surrender of feudal dues by government funds alone. This arrangement also applied in Bucovina and Galicia. It was very favourable to the landowners because their estates were kept largely intact and the presence of a large number of peasants with only tiny holdings (or with no holdings at all) meant that wage labour for the estates could be readily available. This was a crucial point in the whole reform programme. The peasants gained their personal freedom and this was important in an age which embraced new concepts of social justice. But both lord and peasant were relieved of obligations and under the terms of the settlement in Hungary the peasants were then left with little option but to seek employment on the estates at low wage levels.

In the more backward parts of the empire the social relationships of the old regime proved durable because of the economic reality: 'once they were dissolved peasant and lord alike had to recreate them in new forms'.<sup>32</sup> One such form was share-cropping where estate owners did not have enough capital to provide equipment and wages: peasants could thereby work part of the landlord's land, in addition to their own personal

holding, and would take a share of the proceeds. But the gain to the peasant was often no greater than it had been under serfdom. And peasants might still render considerable labour services in lieu of rent for their houses. Under this system of neo-serfdom landowners were guaranteed a steady income without needing to take any significant interest in their land and they could retreat to comfortable town houses to live a life of leisure with the day-to-day management of their estate left to agents. However the feudal arrangements were not abolished in all parts of the empire, for on the Military Frontier (with the Ottoman Empire) settlers were initially required to provide military service in return for their land and land tenure was only gradually demilitarised between 1869 and 1886. In 1878 the Habsburgs took over Bosnia-Herzegovina and inherited a territory where the Turks had similarly organised land on a military basis, with the peasants obliged to finance the military activities of both the muslim landlords and the Turkish overlord (Beg). This obligation accounted for about one third of farm output and so is comparable with most orthodox feudal obligations. From 1879 these tenures were gradually changed to freeholds, but once again modern landholding systems rested rather uneasily on a traditional base. Local custom had brought together the various peasant (kmet) households (usually about ten of them) on each small estate to form a kinship group (zadruga) with the cultivation of small plots carried on a communal basis. The conversion of this pattern into one of consolidated family farms required a revolution which could not be brought about simply by legislation. Considerable investment was required to reorganise the zadruga and even when credits were more easily available (through the founding of an agrarian bank in the province in 1909) as many as a third of the peasants continued to farm within the traditional structure.

The contrast between centre and periphery in the empire was very strong (Table 2.5).<sup>33</sup> The Czech Lands undoubtedly comprised an important part of the core and here agriculture was extensively modernised on the Prussian model. Bohemia and Moravia lay adjacent to German provinces of Saxony and Silesia, while physical conditions were similar and economic intercourse was close by virtue of the Elbe waterway. The structure of landholding was more satisfactory than in many

parts of the empire with a relatively large number of farms in the 20–50 ha. category and consequently less polarisation into estates and smallholdings. The medium farms, which may have emerged in part because of legislation preventing subdivision below a minimum size, meant that their production potential was great enough to justify capital investment and so achieve higher yields. But it is also evident that the estates were for the most part progressive and the availability of cheap labour (from smallholders) was not simply exploited by landowners to win a high standard of living without any obligation to modernise and innovate. Nearly one fifth of the land in Bohemia and Moravia consisted of holdings of 200–500 ha. However the accent on agricultural improvement was not conditioned simply by ethics, but rather owed much to the industrial development of the region which created a strong local demand for output to supply both private households and food-processing factories. The industrial build-up also meant that infrastructure was relatively well-developed in terms of both road and rail transport. The prominence of hops and sugar beet in the Czech Lands resulted from the establishment of breweries and sugar refineries and the introduction of these crops in the first place was financed in part by the industries concerned. Apart from some early cultivation at the time of the continental blockades, sugar beet growing really began in the 1830s with the opening of the first refinery at Seelowitz in 1837. Tariff barriers against imported sugar stimulated progress but probably more important were the compensatory payments received by landowners over the abolition of serfdom since capital reserves were built up which enabled the larger estates to build sugar refineries. By the 1870s sugar production was roughly similar to Germany's, although the relatively low consumption levels resulted in a considerable export surplus. In turn the need to compete in foreign markets was a spur to increase efficiency and profits were ploughed back into research to improve quality and reduce costs. Germany ran into a clear lead in the 1880s and thereafter but the Habsburg Empire was still a major world producer.

It would be wrong to suppose that these various industrial crops dominated agriculture in the Czech Lands, because bread/fodder cereals and potatoes were far more important in areal terms. But they certainly symbolised the highly productive



Table 2.5: Population and employment in Austria-Hungary 1786–1910

|                                | Population-<br>1786-1828 |       | 1869    |         | 1910 |       | Employment structure<br>1910 |        |      |      |      |  |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-------|---------|---------|------|-------|------------------------------|--------|------|------|------|--|
|                                | A                        | A     | B       | A       | B    | A     | B                            | C      | D    | E    | F    |  |
| Austria                        | 11.52                    | 15.40 | 3.37    | 20.39   | 3.25 | 28.57 | 4.01                         | -5.80  | 48.4 | 26.5 | 25.1 |  |
| Bucovina & Galicia             | 3.28                     | 4.44  | 3.55    | 5.96    | 3.42 | 8.83  | 4.81                         | -13.81 | 72.9 | 9.6  | 17.5 |  |
| Coast & Dalmatia               | 0.71                     | 0.76  | 0.19    | 1.06    | 3.85 | 1.54  | 4.56                         | -2.41  | 61.3 | 14.8 | 23.9 |  |
| Carinthia & Carniola           | 4.28                     | 5.80  | 3.56    | 7.67    | 1.17 | 0.92  | 1.47                         | -12.92 | 57.3 | 19.3 | 23.4 |  |
| Czech Lands                    |                          |       |         |         | 3.23 | 10.18 | 3.26                         | -8.86  | 34.4 | 39.9 | 25.7 |  |
| Lower/Upper Austria & Salzburg | 1.69                     | 2.05  | 2.09    | 2.88    | 4.07 | 4.60  | 5.97                         | +15.04 | 24.4 | 37.1 | 38.5 |  |
| Styria, Tyrol & Vorarlberg     | 1.50                     | 1.63  | 0.84    | 2.03    | 2.43 | 2.54  | 2.53                         | +0.09  | 52.4 | 22.1 | 25.5 |  |
| Hungary                        | 9.11                     | 13.83 | 5.18    | 15.51   | 1.22 | 20.89 | 3.47                         | -6.07  | 64.5 | 17.1 | 18.4 |  |
| Croatia, Fiume & Slavonia      |                          |       | 6.52(a) | 1.86    |      | 2.67  | 4.37                         | -5.04  | 77.4 | 10.4 | 12.3 |  |
| Pannonia & Slovakia            |                          |       |         | 11.50   |      | 15.54 | 3.51                         | -6.52  | 61.0 | 18.8 | 20.2 |  |
| Transylvania                   | 1.42                     | 1.86  | 3.14    | 2.15    | 1.57 | 2.68  | 2.44                         | -4.50  | 71.7 | 14.1 | 14.2 |  |
| Austria-Hungary                | 20.63                    | 29.23 | 4.17    | 35.90   | 2.29 | 49.46 | 3.77                         | -5.92  | 55.2 | 22.5 | 22.3 |  |
| Bosnia-Hercegovina             |                          |       |         | 1.16(b) |      | 1.93  | 6.68                         |        | 85.6 | 5.4  | 9.0  |  |

A Total (millions)

B Average annual growth over previous period percent

C Migration per thousand of the population over the whole period 1880–1910

D Agriculture and forestry: percentage share of total employment

E Ditto manufacturing

F Ditto tertiary sector, including armed services

a Military frontier only

b 1879

Source: W.R.Lee (ed.) (1979) European demography and economic growth (London: Croom Helm)

agriculture of these advanced provinces where uncultivated land was reduced to insignificance during the second half of the nineteenth century and where yields for all cereals were well above the average for the Austrian section of the Habsburg Empire as a whole (by more than 20 percent for wheat, barley and maize in 1902–5). The development of industry was undoubtedly the main cause of agricultural prosperity, but arguably the abolition of serfdom was an essential precondition, despite the surprisingly negative assessment of J. Komlos who denies that the reforms could have been ‘a sufficient or necessary condition for the rapid transformation of the countryside’.<sup>34</sup> It is also difficult to overlook the lack of any serious population pressure on the land. For the natural increase of population was relatively low, with a relatively high marriage age for females perhaps conditioned by primo-genitural inheritance law (subdivision of peasant farms in Bohemia being forbidden before 1869). The growth of industry not only attracted many rural dwellers to the towns but sustained relatively high incomes which could hardly fail but stimulate the farmer. In such an environment almost all sections of the agricultural population had an interest in the elimination of serfdom and the removal of checks to a capitalist mode of production.

In sharp contrast to the Czech Lands stood the overpopulated provinces of Bucovina and Galicia which maintained the custom of early marriage through an era of falling mortality rates.<sup>35</sup> Early marriage was also usual among the Southern Slavs, for the system of kinship groups meant that men did not need independent resources before they started a family of their own. But the lack of important raw materials and natural lines of communication tended to limit manufacturing to local demands. The towns could not therefore absorb many people from the countryside and this limited scope for short-wave migration placed more pressure on agriculture and suppressed rural incomes in general and the capacity to stimulate manufactures in particular. Furthermore the railways allowed local demands to be met by distant producers working to a larger scale of production. The cheapness of rural labour could not be exploited to much advantage because of low productivity arising from traditional practices and lack of mechanisation. In 1902 farms of less than five hectares accounted for 80.3 percent of all

holdings in Galicia, 85.7 in Bucovina and 87.4 in Dalmatia, and their incomes were kept small by the heavy subsistence demands of large families and the lack of opportunities for the production of industrial crops on the same scale of the Czech Lands. Following the phylloxera crisis in Italy Dalmatia began to increase its wine production, but the disease spread eastwards by 1890 and undermined this promising initiative. Other cash crops like oil seeds and tobacco did not prosper to any extent. With such a poor performance and no easy way of increasing output there was little incentive to borrow money for carrying out farm improvements. In view of their unsatisfactory financial situation peasants were penalised by high interest rates imposed by private money lenders while established credit societies tended to support the larger holdings which were able to mechanise. Given the prevailing social patterns, with low incomes which prevented large scale emigration to the New World until the turn of the century, the only solution lay in seasonal work either in the 'core' provinces of the Habsburg Empire or in Germany.

An intermediate situation can be seen in Hungary where a distinctly backward agriculture was transformed by the railways which, in the context of free trade within the empire, allowed Hungarian farmers to bypass local markets and export to Austria.<sup>36</sup> The demand however was mainly for grain (wheat and maize) which was eminently reconcilable with a landholding system of large estates. Indeed it could be argued that after the suppression of the Hungarian revolution the establishment of a free-trade system was inspired in part by a desire to perpetuate Hungary's status as a primary producer, a function which was further consolidated by the legislation abolishing serfdom in such a way as to ensure that the estates would be well-compensated and fully supplied with cheap labour. Given such encouragement the Hungarian landowners were able to keep a tight political grip on the country and promote legislation (for agricultural export subsidies and rural credit facilities) to help create a modern commercial agriculture. The free trade between Hungary and Austria went hand in hand with tariff barriers against outside producers and, although the low cost of New World and Russian grain increasingly ruled out Hungarian exports to Western Europe, the maintenance of high prices with

the Habsburg Empire was a great comfort. Further income came through the development of large flour milling in Hungary.

There was genuine development effort on the part of the landowning aristocracy, with the oft-quoted example of Count Széchenyi (a pioneer of stockbreeding, mechanisation, agricultural banking and rural transport) coming immediately to mind, but arguably the country's social development was constrained by the grip of the estates. With falling land prices in the late 1870s holdings were squeezed between the large properties on the one hand and peasant smallholdings on the other. Estates over 5750 ha. (10,000 hold), like the massive Eszterhazy properties, accounted for 2.26 million ha. in 1867 (8.4 percent of the total) but 5.46 million in 1914 (19.4). The growth took place, at a time of stagnating cereal prices, at the expense of medium-sized farms (115–5730 ha.) which accounted for 12.03 thousand ha. in 1867 (44.9 percent) but only 8.92 million in 1914 (31.6). Perhaps surprisingly the smaller farms (below 115 ha.) remained quite stable with 12.53 million ha. in 1867 (46.7 percent) and 13.85 (49.0) in 1914. However while the practice of equal division of property among heirs guaranteed proliferation of small farms (and meant that the concentration on large holdings was less marked than in Austria and Germany) there was a rapid turnover among farming population which undermines the notion of apparent stability. The situation was basically similar in all parts of Hungary but the proportion of land in large and medium farms was generally above the national average along the Danube and Tisza and below it on the Danube-Tisza interfluve, along the eastern edge of the Pannonian Plain and in Transylvania.<sup>37</sup>

With strong political backing Hungarian agricultural output grew steadily by about 2 percent per annum between 1867 and 1913. Yields increased and so did the cultivated area (at the expense of woodland and pasture). Much of the credit for this must go to small farms (below three hectares) because their stocking levels were much higher than on large holdings (above 350 ha.) for pigs (3.60 animals per ten hectares compared with 0.41), cattle (2.67 and 0.35) and horses (0.75 and 0.06), although levels were identical for sheep (1.39).<sup>38</sup> But the social costs in Hungarian agriculture as a whole were considerable because the smallholders and farm labourers (many of them

landless) failed to prosper: thanks to the indifferent price levels of the last quarter of the century, the increasing mechanisation which reduced labour demands at harvest time (steam-driven machines could be easily deployed on the plains), and the belated industrialisation drive. Employment was generated by the rapidly-expanding railway network and by land improvement schemes. And emigration further reduced population pressure with 1.3 million people leaving between 1869 and 1910 (one fifth of the natural increase). But this was insufficient to prevent conflict as low wages and heavy seasonal unemployment brought action through harvest strikes. The stresses did not erupt in any full-scale peasant revolt such as was experienced in 1907 in Romania, a country which adopted many elements of the Hungarian model. It may be significant that Hungarian agricultural exports did diversify after 1880 with meat and poultry (significant for the smallholder) rising to equal grain and flour by the First World War.

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## Economic Development: The Russian and Ottoman Empires

### RUSSIAN POLAND

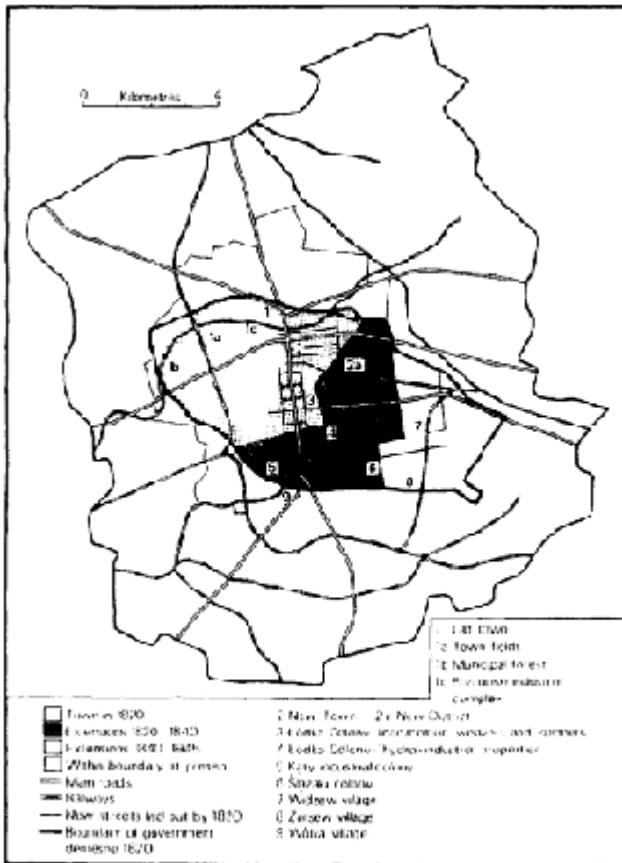
Russian Poland was closely studied by the anthropologist J. Obrebski who noted the changes in peasant society at the time of emancipation.<sup>1</sup> As in other parts of Eastern Europe the upper classes and the peasantry seemed to live in different and mutually exclusive cultural worlds. While the former enjoyed their urban contacts and continued to experience quite rapid cultural change, in sympathy with trends in the continent as a whole, the peasantry 'was atomized into a number of closed independent village communities each of which independently had to undergo the slow and cumbersome process of breaking its social and cultural isolation, of adopting and assimilating the national institutions (and) finding ways to participate in the life values and activities of the nation'.<sup>2</sup> Of course serfdom did not restrain all movement from the village entirely, for there were pilgrimages to holy places such as Czestochowa and some seasonal labour was required in the timber industry for wood cutting and rafting. Migrant labourers remained at the margins of village society and were not subject to conventional morality, but they were appreciated for the information they carried and provided a precedent for the later migrations to the industrial cities and the New World. Emancipation in 1864 was a great event for the villagers were now freer to assimilate innovations brought in from the towns.<sup>3</sup> Opportunities in the towns drew more migrants away from the countryside but there were also the 'push' factors which emerged through the growth of

population and the consequent reduction in the size of the family plots allocated in 1864. Equally important was the reappraisal of the woodland, as a result of the growth of the railway system, for whereas the landlords had first welcomed peasant efforts in land clearance and reclamation (against a share of the crops) they now rationalised the woodlands and saw the peasant agrarian and pastoralist as the greatest enemy to young forest. 'His penetration was stopped, his free access refused, his legal titles questioned, his customary rights denied and his utilization of the land ordered to comply strictly with the law'.<sup>4</sup>

The industrialisation process was linked with rising market demand during the middle decades of the nineteenth century as the estates invested more in the land and increasingly demanded rents in cash.<sup>5</sup> Industry developed behind tariff barriers which were high enough to protect the new enterprises without creating difficulties over the import of capital goods. Industrial development in turn encouraged further developments in agriculture with the abolition of serfdom and intensification of both cropping and livestock under a system of peasant freeholds as demanded by radical politicians: the result was a supply of labour and of food for the growing towns. This process of mutual reinforcement slowed down in the face of competition from American agriculture, but industrial growth continued because of the market opportunities in other parts of the Russian Empire. Rising tariff barriers ruled out any chance for Polish industry to compete in western markets, but there were tremendous opportunities in the east since the technical lead of several decades, enjoyed by the Kingdom of Poland by virtue of its relatively early industrialisation, gave its manufactures a competitive edge, especially when German entrepreneurs crossed the frontier and set up textile and iron industries in Łódz and Sosnowiec respectively.

The most remarkable industrial centre in Russian Poland was Łódz. The town was associated most closely with cotton, but a woollen industry also graduated to a factory scale of operation around 1870, sustained by the migration of workers from Saxony, and it employed about as many workers as the cotton trade by 1900 (about 50,000). This was a considerable achievement since the woollen industry was relatively small in

Figure 3.1: Growth of the textile city of Łódź



Source: M.Koter (1969) 'Origin of the spatial pattern of industrial Łódź Polish Academy of Sciences Institute of Geography Studies in Geography, 79—in Polish with English summary.

Russia as a whole. It seems that the development of Łódź started with the founding of a number of industrial settlements on state demesne land between 1820 and 1840 (Figure 3.1). Linen cloth was produced from flax grown on the smallholdings and the first factories appeared on the Jasien river where corn-milling sites were taken over. A woollen industry also emerged with centralised spinning and finishing (partially mechanised) and a putting-out system for weaving. The skilled labour of the area

was then attractive to German industrialists who wanted to jump the tariff barrier and produce cotton cloth in Poland for the Russian market. The steam-powered cotton mills induced a large urban complex with the formerly separate villages fused together and a main thoroughfare provided along the traditional axis of movement from the old market centre of Łódź to the bridges over the Łódź and Jasien rivers. The concentration was remarkable and seems to have arisen from the desire of the entrepreneurs to remain in close proximity (for infrastructural and social reasons) in an area where growth was still restricted to the state demesne (large sections of which were rendered unsuitable for development through poor drainage or forest cover). Dispersal did take place, to Pabianice, Zgierz and other places, but it was restrained and may have been restricted by lack of suitable labour outside the area affected by the early nineteenth century government initiative in Congress Poland.

Also of great importance to the industry of Russian Poland was the eastern section of the Silesian coalfield (Dąbrowa) with its mining and metallurgy. However the lack of iron ore and good coking coal meant that imports of pig iron were needed and steel mills were often built by foreign entrepreneurs who had their own supplies of pig in Germany and wished to penetrate the Russian market. Moscow industrialists of course made propaganda out of this German influence in Polish industry and they waged a 'Moscow-Łódź War' with their competitors in the ministries of St. Petersburg in the mid-1880s.<sup>6</sup> A formal customs barrier could not be erected between one part of the empire and another, but Polish cotton producers were penalised by a significant increase in import duties on raw cotton, in response to which there appears to have been some development of the industry just across the border of the Kingdom of Poland in Białystok. On the whole Poland was able to keep its share of total Russian industry largely intact.<sup>7</sup> While the value of production of Russian industry rose from 1.12 thousand million roubles in 1887 to 2.90 thousand million in 1900 and 4.58 thousand million in 1908 the Polish share fell only slightly from 14.7 thousand million to 13.0 thousand million and 12.6 thousand million: along with Moscow, St. Petersburg and Ukraine it comprised the industrial 'core' of the empire. The final stimulus from the Russian market was the

growth in demand in foundry work and engineering just before the First World War. Statistics presented by A. Jeziarski illustrate the developments very early. Foreign trade per capita in US dollars rose only slowly from 2.8 in 1820 to 7.6 in 1864, during the period of largely autarkic industrial growth and then reached a figure of 81.6 in 1910.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile the share of trade with the Russian Empire which rose from 17.2 percent in 1820 to 42.0 in 1864, reached 67.0 in 1910.

### SERBIA

The economic situation in Serbia was inevitably conditioned by Ottoman regulations and since much of the country remained an integral part of the empire until the Balkan Wars the ambivalent attitude of the authorities towards craftsmen and traders, including controls against free movement, prevailed. The Islamic prohibition on usury was not absolutely enforced but it was strong enough to delay the development of commercial banking and credit until the second half of the nineteenth century. The imperial Ottoman bank was established in Istanbul in 1863 but this was mainly to meet the requirements of the state and banks serving more general requirements only became prominent in the 1890s. Moreover the immediate economic effects of the Serbian uprising were negative. The siege of Belgrade killed off the transit trade with the Habsburg Empire while banditry and the imposition of illegal local tariffs disrupted the trade southwards towards Thessaloniki. Plague and disease resulting from war took a heavy toll while further losses of population arose through migration to Vojvodina. The Habsburgs tried to exploit this population so as to gain influence over the Yugoslav nationalist movement. The international trade that was such a prominent feature in the Romanian Carpathians was inhibited in Vojvodina by local animosity to immigrant merchants and government controls over smuggling. However the Serb livestock trader Milos Obrenovic put his commercial skills to good political use by negotiating an end to the rebellion against the sultan in 1815 and then arranging for the formal grant of Serbian autonomy in 1830. While the financial resources that were so important in bribing Ottoman officials into acquiescence were generated through various internal

irregularities, the generous scope for such malpractices was a reflection of the livestock trade with the Habsburg Empire with Serb exports of pigs more important than consignments from Hungary. Obrenovic was able to manipulate the powers given to him by the Porte under the autonomy agreement to control most of the income from the trade in the 1830s (despite increasing involvement by peasants who sold animals to middlemen across the river from Belgrade) and thus built up capital for the modernisation of the country.

In contrast to the initiative of the alien plenipotentiary Kiselev in the Romanian Principalities, here in Serbia the native Obrenovic established a bureaucracy, nourished by rising taxes (all now payable in cash which in turn pushed the peasantry into trade), and began to make internal travel more secure (although significant improvements to the primitive road system did not come until 1845). However as an illiterate Obrenovic did not appreciate the importance of education and the first high school in Belgrade did not open until after his abdication in 1839. This was just one year after the promulgation of a constitution (ustavobranitelj) which had been drawn up under Russian pressure on the Romanian model. The towns were small, with Belgrade only 18,000 in 1834 and Uzice (Titovo Uzice) with 12,000, but there was nevertheless a significant migration of Serbs to take over the commercial functions previously discharged by Greeks who were not displaced by discrimination over the issue of trade passports. Subsequently Jews were compromised by barriers to Serbian citizenship and permanent residence in Belgrade in the 1840s. Macedonian and Tsintsar (Vlach) traders were still prominent but even here Serbian partners were being accepted. Further growth in the towns was restrained by the virtual freeing of trade in 1838 which prompted a rapid growth of shops, inns and fairs in the countryside. Nevertheless the record of progress up to full independence was by no means insignificant, with a modernisation of the administration and the economy that was backed by Habsburg credit, but as in the Romanian Principalities, without official Habsburg penetration.<sup>9</sup> And there was a large group of precani Serbs trained in the Habsburg lands whose return home was crucial for the progressive enlargement of the bureaucracy.

There was no immediate surge forward after independence. Serbia inherited a textile industry involving braid, hemp rope and woollen cloth manufacture in the Leskovac and Nis areas as a result of the annexations of 1878. But it was essentially an offshoot of the Bulgarian industry and depended on free access to the Bulgarian market which was closed as a result of the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885–6: subsequently the export of textile machinery from Bulgaria to Serbia was banned and imports of goods from the latter was subjected to high tariffs. The rope industry of Leskovac was well-founded on local raw material but opposition to modern methods by the urban artisans frustrated most attempts at modernisation through investment of foreign capital. The few native entrepreneurs who were able to effect a transition to a factory system tended to migrate to Belgrade. Food processing made some progress but in modern mills turning out fine white flour there was a tendency to overcapacity as exporting proved difficult. The Belgrade klanica (meat-packing plant) opened by the Serb engineer M.Savcic in 1897 was a success but the high prices paid for live animals in Vienna discouraged processors elsewhere in Serbia. Building materials were needed for urban construction but progress in engineering (very important for defence and the railway programme) was constrained by the low level of technical education and the need to import metal.

The political strength of the peasantry may conceivably have constrained industrial development in Serbia by placing increasing tax burdens on the non-agricultural population after c. 1890.<sup>10</sup> On average the non-farmer paid 2.2 times as much tax as the farmer in 1862–6 but the difference widened to 6.8 times in 1902–6. This may be related in part to the growth of indirect taxation which was common in all parts of Europe in the late nineteenth century, for the peasantry was able to prevent the introduction of such indirect taxes as would seriously affect them. Instead commercial substitutes for home-produced goods (kerosene for tallow candles and cooking oil for hog lard) were highly taxed as urban luxuries. Again the tobacco monopoly was never so complete that it destroyed the subsistence sector in the countryside while peasant purchases of salt, a commodity carrying a high tax, tended to fall as cropping replaced stockraising. While the tax burden does not appear to

have been a major issue among industrialists it did fall heavily on the artisans and labourers, and the increasing level of taxation correlated with a decline in urban crafts and indeed with a decline in urban population, relieved only by the growth of Belgrade which benefited most from government spending and its multiplier effects. It has even been suggested that the protection of the agrarian population was a deliberate act by the state to avoid proletarianising the peasantry by holding it in tutelage through low taxes. But reference to ideological reasons seems excessive: 'it was under the radicals that the peasants made their biggest gains but the latent strength of peasant power in opposition blunted attacks on their interests and prevented the reversal of their gains'.<sup>11</sup> Of course there can be no guarantee that a policy of squeezing the peasantry would have had desirable economic effects. Greater resources to establish state industries under protection might have been generated at the expense of declining peasant morale which could have affected agricultural exports and increased rural-urban migration. But this was not an option open to the Serbian government in the post-feudal age and it is possible that in other Balkan countries too (Bulgaria at any rate) it was the small non-farm population which supported the rising cost of government. Nevertheless industrial growth in Serbia was most impressive after 1906: in that year a tariff war was initiated by Austria with the aim of subordinating the Serb economy. But the Serbs found other markets for their livestock and then growth of domestic manufacturing reduced their dependence on the empire still further. Over four hundred manufacturing enterprises were established between 1906 and 1914.

## BULGARIA

In contrast to both Serbia and the Romanian Principalities the whole of Bulgaria remained an integral part of the Ottoman Empire through the first half of the nineteenth century and so experienced the frustrations of unsuccessful reform during the Tanzimat era. But the record was not by any means entirely negative, for there was growing trade with the rest of Europe and the need to increase agricultural exports to pay for imported manufactures. This should in theory have strengthened the



ciftlik system but in fact the rising tax burden, coupled with more efficient collection procedures, led to the transfer of a lot of land to Bulgarian peasants. Momentum increased through mid-century since the reform decree of 1839 quickly did away with the once strictly-enforced Ottoman grain monopoly and the first Bulgarian wheat exports to Western Europe arrived in 1842. The demand of the Ottoman army for meat and leather made for a buoyant livestock trade. The peasantry were not entirely satisfied since the harvest tithe rose from 10 to 12.5 percent in 1858 and traditional corvée labour obligations were extended into the railway age when major construction projects were undertaken. And further animosity was stirred up by the reform of administration in the large vilayet of the Danube (comprising northern Bulgaria) under the 1864 reform of provincial government. Unfortunately the main task of the Pomak (Bulgarian Moslem) governor Midhat Pasha was to increase tax revenues in a wealthy province disrupted by the migration of Circassians from the Crimea in 1862–3.<sup>12</sup>

Rising tribute brought little benefit to the Bulgarian peasants and increased their sympathy for the national movement in the following decade. But there can be little doubt about the increasing Bulgarian involvement in their regional economy. This can be seen in commerce, for the 1839 decree allowed Bulgarian merchants to trade freely throughout the empire and therefore the large Bulgarian business community in Bucharest (numbering as many as 10,000) was able to enjoy even wider opportunity and so help to establish a more sophisticated money market in Bulgaria. Subsequently the Turks showed some preference for Bulgarian community leaders (chorbadzhiia) as mayors and tax collectors in each town and small councils were established to represent different interest groups, notably the craftsmen and merchants. These innovations were stimulating, especially because the chorbadzhiia were closely associated (as tithe collectors) with the Phanariot Greek hierarchy of the Orthodox Church and could therefore apply pressure from the commercial/industrial community for improved education facilities in the Bulgarian language which contributed to cultural and economic development as well as the rise of national consciousness.<sup>13</sup>

Despite imports of manufactures there was a significant amount of artisan industry which it has been argued 'gave the Bulgarian lands an economic and perhaps a political advantage over the Macedonian and northern Greek lands several decades before the creation of a Bulgarian state in 1878'.<sup>14</sup> Many Pomaks were active in the Rhodope and elsewhere exploiting the local wool supply and water power for fulling. But in the towns there were 60,000 artisans among a total urban population of 200,000 (1866) and merchants were outnumbered three to one. Unfortunately while some craft industries managed to expand on a factory basis the majority were undermined by a flood of cheap manufactures from the more developed states during the 1870s and 1880s. The demise of the urban craftsmen in Bulgaria was particularly rapid after independence with the loss of Ottoman markets, the emigration of the conservative Turkish population and changes in taste among the Bulgarians. However the upland town of Gabrovo had an important meat and footwear trade and was also busy in the production of rough woollen cloth (aba) and braid (gaitan): the entrepreneurial skills of one gaitan artisan, I. Kalpazanov, in investing profits from lucrative war-time trading in modern machinery gave rise to Bulgaria's first mechanised textile factory in 1882. Karlovo also had an important gaitan industry with foot-powered looms introduced into domestic workshops early in the century (although no large-scale factory industry ever emerged) and Koprivshitsa made progress in building a clothing industry based on aba cloth brought in from Pazardzhik.

Most remarkable however was the cloth mill at Sliven opened by D.Zheliazkov in 1834. He was able to put his training in Russian industry to good use largely because Ottoman officials singled him out for financial support in order that shortfalls in cloth deliveries to the Ottoman army from Plovdiv and Thessaloniki should be made good. Information for the period up to the Crimean War suggests that steam engines were imported from the United Kingdom for spinning while weaving was carried out in domestic workshops. Finally Plovdiv developed a clothing industry (1848), although more importance was attached to the organisation of domestic workers who made coarse cloth for the Istanbul market right up to the First World War, despite the complication of tariff barriers after

independence. But on the whole the quality of Bulgarian textiles was poor and it was not until 1906 that a Bulgarian entrepreneur gained technical expertise from the Czech Lands to open a small woollen mill in Sofia and compete with imported cloth more effectively. Cotton cloth made some advances, though the slow spread of cotton cultivation prevented any significant backward linkage into agriculture, while flour milling was embarrassed by the inefficiency of shipping between Ruse and the Istanbul market that resulted in a loss of quality and reduced profit margins. There was also an iron industry at Samokov south of Sofia, linked with the production of agricultural implements, although the failure to replace charcoal with coke led to an increasing switch of capital from industry to banking and commerce in the 1850s and 1860s.

By and large therefore Bulgaria's industrialisation was disappointing and there were political repercussions as radical movements sprang up during the 1890s, nourished by populist ideas from Russia. The main thrust came from bourgeois elements but the peasants were responsive because, although the creation of the Bulgarian state led to the expropriation of ciftlik lands and the creation of smallholdings, living conditions declined through low prices and heavy tax burdens.<sup>15</sup> Government insensitivity over rural welfare (altering the method of taxation payment between cash and kind to gain maximum advantage from cereal price fluctuations) and the poor harvest of 1899 led to the formation of the National Agrarian Union (Bulgarski Zemedelska Narodn Soiuz with which Alexander Stamboliski was closely associated).<sup>16</sup> It has been argued that the Bulgarian government missed a golden opportunity at this time to promote railway construction to stimulate growth in the metallurgical and engineering industries.<sup>17</sup> However a fatal flaw in this speculation is the limited endowment in coal and iron ore which has made the modern iron and steel industry in Bulgaria heavily dependent on imports from the Soviet Union. Bulgaria had little option but to import the bulk of the manufactured goods required, mainly from Germany (and to a lesser extent Austria-Hungary).<sup>18</sup> The banks of these countries provided loans to Bulgaria in order to encourage trade and travellers were most assiduous in learning the language and customs of the country before they went out to sell. The Germans were well

placed to accept agricultural products from Bulgaria whereas Austria-Hungary maintained high tariff barriers. According to figures published by M.L.Falningam total Bulgarian trade with Austria-Hungary between 1907 and 1913 was 75.2 million dollars compared with 48.1 million for UK and for Germany 61.7 million (the Austrian superiority arising largely through German re-exports). The German performance was particularly impressive because during the previous seven years (1900–1906) total trade was only 30.9 million dollars. Much of the growth arose through railway contracts which not only created demand for German metal and metal products in Bulgaria but, by completing the railways to the ports of both Burgas and Varna, stimulated overseas trade as well.

## ROMANIA

D.Chivot has looked carefully at Romania from the point of view of modern colonialism and sees an important change taking place in the 1820s through the weakening of Ottoman control.<sup>19</sup> Although suzerainty over the Principalities was retained until independence in 1878 this power was little more than symbolic. In the political sphere Russia was strong by virtue of its right to protect Christian subjects of the sultan, while economically the powers of Western Europe gained an important footing through the Treaty of Adrianople in 1828. Modernisation owes much to Count P. Kiselev who was appointed plenipotentiary in both Moldavia and Wallachia during a five year Russian occupation. It was the Russian intention to bring the landowners under political control and evolve a more moderate and stable regime for the peasantry. His great works were the Organic Statutes (Regulamente Organice) which provided the Principalities with a constitution for the first time. Progress with agrarian reform was another aspect of Kiselev's work which went a long way to modify the view of Russian influence as one tantamount to requisitioning of grain and livestock for marauding armies.<sup>20</sup> There was a rapid growth of commerce, both internally (within and between the Principalities) and externally. Development of ports along the Danube, especially Braila and Galati, reflected the growth of overseas trade. But at first the most rapid growth seems to have

been with the Habsburg Empire and in contrast to delays in improving navigation on the Lower Danube work went ahead in 1838 to improve the road from Bucharest across the Carpathian frontier to Brassó (Brasov) in Transylvania. In response to the commercial opportunities there was a substantial movement of Jews from Polish and Russian lands into Moldavia, which Kiselev was powerless to prevent: he did however ensure that Jews would not own rural land and would not become involved in manufacturing, thus restricting them spatially to the towns and occupationally to commerce. Industry was not very prominent at first, although the village craftsmen and urban-based artisans were numerous and some stimulation of large-scale production through tax exemptions and monopoly privileges anticipated the more elaborate schemes for state encouragement of industry at the end of the century. This kind of initiative was the result of the establishment of six government ministries under the Organic Statutes. A permanent police force was established along with a postal system and a small standing army. Reference may also be made to progress in public health outside the capital and in the diffusion of more progressive agricultural techniques involving rotations and new crops.

Large-scale industry, was almost completely absent before 1850. Attempts by the princes of Moldavia and Wallachia to introduce factory industry to Iasi and Bucharest in the late eighteenth century were frustrated by the backward war-torn environment for which the monopolies and tied labour forces could not compensate effectively. From the 1830s food industries appeared at Braila and Galati, but Bucharest saw the greatest development. The Gh. Assan milling, oil-pressing and brandy distilling enterprise of 1853 was the most impressive development in mid-century and was one of the first to use steam power. Import substitution was the main objective and it is interesting to note the efforts made in Moldavia to reduce dependence on Transylvania (then part of the Habsburg Empire) for paper and iron. However the paper industry established at Piatra Neamt in 1841 was a short-lived venture while a visionary scheme for an iron industry using local ores and charcoal in the same area (Bistrita Valley) was upset by lack of financial backing. Heavy industry did not make an appearance

until after the unification of the Principalities. In 1859 the Mehedinteanu refinery opened near Ploiesti for the production of kerosene while the 1860s saw considerable progress in foundry and engineering industries with the Freud, Lemâitre and Wolff factories all established in the Dîmbovita, for the suburbs on the lowest river terrace attracted most of the development until the railway arrived at Filaret on the higher ground to the south. Bucharest was the obvious location for large industries in view of its administrative and local market importance, not to mention its proximity both to the Danube and the oil-producing districts of Buzau and Prahova. On the other hand there were locations in the Carpathian zone which offered greater security and reservoirs of skilled labour and these considerations took the Kogalniceanu military clothing factory to Tîrgu Neamt in 1858. The Neamt monastery had a considerable reputation for woollen textiles which resulted in a diffusion of skills throughout the district. Numerous domestic workers were integrated into the factory system with its various sections from carding through spinning and weaving to dyeing and finishing. Monastery equipment was taken over after the secularisation of church lands in 1863, and additional machinery was brought in from Galati, despite the atrocious road conditions. The industry did not survive beyond the 1880s, but the potential of the Carpathian valleys, draining into the main north-south corridor of the Siret, was increased by commercial exploitation of oil in the Bacau district and by the development of the railways in the 1870s. Since then large-scale industry has been a permanent feature of the eastern Carpathians.

Industrial growth was constrained in the 1870s by the lack of high tariff barriers to defend Romanian manufacturers from foreign parts. But policy was reversed in the following decade in response to falling cereal prices and a protectionist stance towards farmers in some of the more developed countries. After introducing special measures to encourage paper and sugar industries in 1881–2, the Romanian government went on to raise tariffs in 1886 (sparking off a tariff war with Austria-Hungary which lasted five years) and to introduce stimulative measures for large-scale industry (industria mare) as a whole. The results can be seen through an official industrial survey

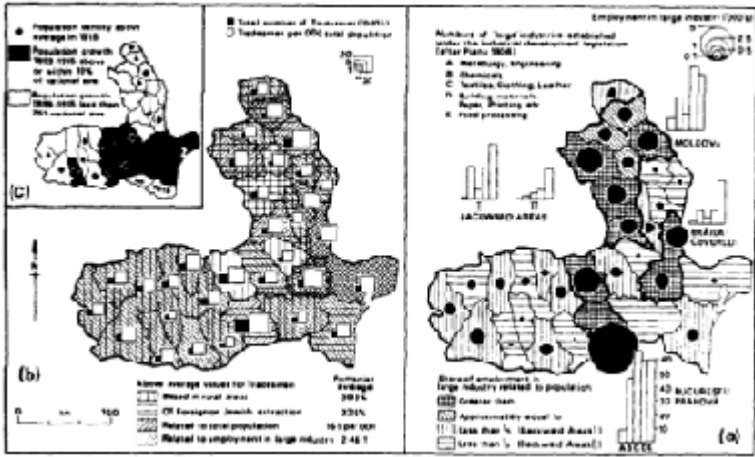
(anceta industrială) of 1901–2 and another survey, of firms receiving state encouragement, carried out by N.I.Pianu in 1906. The results were substantial and J.R.Lampe contrasts the 1911–13 per capita output in manufacturing and mining in Romania (111 lei) with Serbia (77 dinars) and Bulgaria (45 leva). For agriculture and forestry however Serbia recorded the highest value with 320 dinars compared with Romania (274 lei) and Bulgaria (209 leva).<sup>21</sup> Romania's relatively impressive performance in industry is attributed to various factors including the rich raw material endowment, good access to the main lines of communication in Europe and a large domestic market. There was a considerable migration of Romanians from the Habsburg Empire after independence and this provided an important reservoir of skilled labour especially in Bucharest, to say nothing of the commercial skills of the Jews. In addition there was a Liberal Party committed to industrial development: many invested personally in industry while the party as a whole worked for government support of national industry. And with such policies dating back to 1886–7 (and the sugar production subsidy before that) Romania was well placed to go forward during the 1890s, a decade blessed for the most part with high cereal prices. Banking institutions developed considerably. With a monetary system tied to the French franc (as in Bulgaria and Serbia) the foreign banks channelled in outside capital.<sup>22</sup> But native banks played a prominent role in industry like Banca Marmarosch-Blanc which encouraged the Vienna-based Goetz timber company to extend its operations to Romania after 1873. Yet the momentum showed signs of flagging after 1900: living standards ceased to grow as the once virgin cereal lands filled up and world prices stagnated. The saturation of the home market with domestically-produced manufactures (though not so much in textiles where import levels were still high) meant that an industrialisation policy based on import-substitution had largely run its course. Cartelisation (very evident in cement, flour and sugar industries) discouraged initiative while the exhaustion of the supply of immigrant labour resulted in a shortage of skilled workers. And the Liberal policy of national industry had a bearing here for the antipathy to foreign interests, particularly Austro-Hungarian and German, extended to the skills of

immigrants who formed such an important part of Romania's growth potential.

The geography of industry was highly uneven.<sup>23</sup> There were three areas where the share of employment in large-scale industry exceeded the share of population (Figure 3.2). The first was Ilfov-Prahova and covered a relatively well-developed zone extending from the Danube at Giurgiu to the Hungarian border at Predeal. Rail communications were available along this axis, with international connections at both ends. Bucharest supported a wide range of activities (including engineering, textiles and food processing industries) while Ploiesti shared with Cîmpina the oil refining and oilfield engineering business of the Prahova oilfields. Giurgiu had a ship repairing business and a sugar factory while Comarnic produced cement, Azuga attracted brewing and clothing and Busteni acquired textile and wood processing units. A second region covered a block of counties in north Moldavia, extending from the plateau in the east to the Carpathians in the west. The Siret corridor offered international rail connections, ample industrial water supplies and a range of raw materials from complementary lowland and mountain environments. Food processing was represented (sugar at Roman and Sascut near Adjud and flour milling at Botosani) along with textiles (Bacau, Buhusi and Iasi), paper, cellulose and sawmilling (Bacau and Piatra Neamt) and oil refining (Moinesti). The third region covered the two counties of Braila and Covurlui, including the Danube ports of Braila and Galati, with engineering, flour milling and sawmilling industries (also cement and textiles at Braila). Altogether the three regions accounted for 77.5 percent of all employment in large-scale industry. Ilfov-Prahova was particularly dynamic after 1900 with a growth of population well in excess of the national average and an inflow of foreign capital to the oilfields. However small-scale peasant industry remained an essential component of the industrial geography. The anceta industrială of 1901–2 reveals that 61.8 thousand small enterprises employed 132.7 thousand workers, nearly four times the employment generated by just 410 large enterprises (35.5 thousands). The small businesses were most numerous in the more developed regions and were more prominent in the towns than in the villages in such areas. By contrast in the backward



Figure 3.2: Industrial region in Romania 1902



- A 'Large' industry
- B Tradesmen (artisans and craftsmen)
- C Population change

Sources: Romania Statistical annuals and G.Zane (1970) *Industria din România în a doua jumătate a secolului al XIX-lea* (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei RSR).

areas where towns were small and large-scale industry almost completely absent the small-scale industry was based largely in the villages.

Industrial development had an important bearing on the nineteenth century debate over landholding in Romania. The servile status of most Romanian peasants was confirmed under Kiselef's governorship. The Russians needed local elements to run the economy and they were also anxious to develop the food producing capacities of the Principalities: hence the constitutions drawn to respect the privileges of the elite.<sup>24</sup> Neither the events of 1848 nor the subsequent Crimean War affected the position of the *boieri* but after the unification of the Principalities Prince A.I.Cuza attempted a radical modernisation of landholding in 1864. This was done by confirming the landlords as owners of at least one third of their estate while the abolition of serfdom left the peasants as owners of their small plots. But while the reform was well-intentioned it left the peasants with nothing more than a smallholding and the additional income available through labour on the estates became less and less attractive as

**Table 3.1:** A comparison of landholding structure in Romania and Serbia 1905

|                             | Landholdings<br>Below 10 ha. | 10-100 ha.   | Above 100 ha. | Total          |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| <b>Romania</b>              |                              |              |               |                |
| Number of holders '000s     | 920.9 (95.4)                 | 38.7 (4.0)   | 5.4 (0.6)     | 965.0 (100.0)  |
| Area '000 ha.               | 3153.6 (40.0)                | 862.8 (11.0) | 3810.4 (49.0) | 7826.8 (100.0) |
| Average size of holding ha. | 3.4                          | 22.3         | 705.6         | 8.1            |
| <b>Serbia</b>               |                              |              |               |                |
| Number of holders '000s     | 327.6 (88.7)                 | 41.3 (11.2)  | 0.4 (0.1)     | 369.3 (100.0)  |
| Area '000 ha.               | 118.7 (13.1)                 | 712.4 (78.7) | 74.6 (8.2)    | 905.7 (100.0)  |
| Average size of holding ha. | 0.4                          | 17.2         | 186.5         | 2.5            |

Sources: M.Palairt 1979, 'Fiscal pressure and peasant impoverishment in Serbia before World War One' *Journal of Economic History* 39, 725; D.Turnock (1980) *Human geography of the Romanian Carpathians* (Nottingham Geographical Field Group) 46.

world wheat prices were affected by the low production costs of the American farmer (Table 3.1). There was little scope for more intensive agriculture since the Austro-Hungarian market was closed to Romanian cattle exporters in 1882. While further reform of landholding and labour contracting was certainly needed the inevitability of continuing rural overpopulation gave most credibility to the strategy of industrialisation and protective tariffs were raised during the 1880s.<sup>25</sup> However the jobs in the factories could not be created quickly enough to ease pressure on the land and hence the demand in agrarian circles for tariff reductions that might (with reciprocation from the Habsburg Empire) improve the condition of the peasant over the short term. A radical agrarian programme was drawn up by V. Kogalniceanu in a pamphlet of 1906, demanding a new regime of labour contracts and stronger banks that could purchase estates and allow for division of the land into peasant farms. Differences in outlook were fundamental in all cases of rural overpopulation but they were particularly clear in Romania where industrial development was making good progress and also where a flagging latifundia system was being manipulated by rapacious estate managers (*arendasi*) seeking cheap peasant labour. A battle of wills over leasing arrangements at Flamînzei near Botosani led to violence that spread rapidly through the country and gave rise to the last great peasant revolt in Eastern Europe.<sup>26</sup> It led to some concessions by way of financial support for a modest land purchase programme to create new smallholdings but the estate system remained basically intact until the land reform of 1921. And then, as the Liberal party had anticipated at the turn of the century, the land problem was revived in the form of non-viable peasant farms from which escape has only been possible through a continuing industrialisation programme, reaching its climax in the post-period.

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## 4

# Transport and the Railway Age

For both its economic development and its wider security governments in Eastern Europe were obliged to invest in the new technology available for water and rail transport. The idea of freedom of navigation on the major rivers gained ground after 1815 and new arrangements, including the reduction of tolls, were made for the Danube in 1856 and the Elbe in 1863. Plans to connect the major navigable rivers by canals were given more serious consideration in view of the growing economic needs related to the distribution of domestic and imported raw materials as well as manufactured goods. There was also a strategic value, through scope for the development of naval forces by the great continental powers. Heavy capital demands and serious technical problems limited development in the first half of the century but after the Crimean War great progress was made on the Lower Danube and this use of available technology, in the face of economic and political stimuli, constitutes a worthwhile case study. However it was the railway that dominated transport planning in the late nineteenth century. A cast iron plateway was laid at a mine at Claustal in the Harz Mountains around 1775 and short mineral lines worked by horses must also have existed in the Silesian coalfield because a locomotive was supplied to work one such system at Königshütte (Chorzow) in 1815. But efficient steam locomotives were required before long distance public railways could be contemplated and hence the effective baseline was George Stephenson's demonstration of the multi-tube boiler with the locomotive 'Rocket' at the Rainhill Trials near Liverpool in the UK in 1829. Four years later the German economist F.List

proposed a railway system for all Germany based on Leipzig and radiating out to the other major German towns. The plan was not considered feasible but nevertheless Eastern Europe's first long distance steam railway opened in 1839 between Leipzig and Dresden. And after some initial caution governments became favourably disposed to railway construction in view of economic and strategic benefits arising from fast transport. Once again the network reflects the balance of economic and political pressures with the Balkans an area of particular complexity.

### WATERWAYS

Foundation work on the waterway system was carried out in the eighteenth century particularly in the north. Under Prussian initiative connections were made between the Elbe, Oder and Vistula rivers through the Havel/Finow and Bromberg (Bydgoszcz) canals in the period 1743–85. Further east a canal triangle linked the Vistula and Bug with the Pripet and connected both these systems separately with the Niemen during the first half of the nineteenth century. Meanwhile Berlin benefited from the Oranienburg Canal (1831–8), the Landwehr/Louisenstadt Canal (1845–50) and the Berlin Ship Canal (1849–58), which improved contacts with the ports (thereby giving access to British sea coal) as well as other parts of Germany. Steam power increased the value of the waterways: steamboats of the Sächsische Dampfschiffahrtsgesellschaft linked Bohemia with Saxony in 1826 and domestic services in Bohemia between Prague and Melnik began in 1841.<sup>1</sup> Germany led the way after unification and although most developments lay outside Eastern Europe (notably the foundations of the Mittelland system) an interrelated group of developments east of Berlin, following from the projects mentioned above, yielded a Berlin-Stettin (Szczecin) Canal for 600 t. barges by 1914.

Outside Germany the financial and technical problems were too great for rapid progress to be possible. In the Habsburg Empire a commission was appointed in 1896 to improve the Elbe between Prague and Aussig (Usti) for vessels of 800 t. and build a new port in Prague at Holesovice. More significantly a Black Sea-Baltic Sea canal was suggested in 1901 after some

earlier abortive initiatives: a basic Oder-Danube Canal through the March valley would throw off links to both the Elbe and Vistula while a second major canal would run from the Danube (at Linz or Vienna) to meet the Moldau (Vltava) near Budweis (Ceské Budejovice) with the Moldau canalised downstream to Prague. Thus the distribution costs of Silesian coal would be reduced and industry in the empire would compete more effectively with German manufactures. But the scheme did not rest on solid economic foundations and the Canal Act was in fact a brilliant political initiative by Austrian Premier E.von Koerber who sought a close community of interest among the nations of the empire by implementing public works. Koerber was appointed in 1898 during a period of particularly severe national strife in Bohemia. Efforts to appease the Czechs through concessions over their language, giving parity with German, were resisted by Germans while a division of Bohemia into Czech and German sections was opposed by the Czechs because it destroyed the historic unity of the province. Koerber hoped that preliminary work on the canal would be complete by 1904 and that the project would be implemented over the following twenty years. Only minor preparatory work was done up to 1918, thanks to a successful *dilatorische Taktik* by the Finance Minister who was wary of escalating expenditure that might follow a major scheme that had not been adequately researched and which threatened to compete with state-owned railways (in particular the new *Tauernbahn* which was meant to improve rail links between Bohemia and the port of Trieste).<sup>2</sup> Other abortive projects included the canalisation of the Vistula at Cracow (Krakow), leading in turn to a further canal link between the Vistula and Dniester. Some thought was given to canals in Hungary but projected links to ports on the Adriatic (Fiume (Rijeka) and Trieste) and Aegean (Thessaloniki) were not proceeded with.

### The Danube

Resettlement of Pannonia and the growth of cash cropping in the Balkans in the eighteenth century meant increased local traffic on the Danube and its tributaries: Tisza and Sava. But there was some awareness of the scope for large scale shipping



along the Danube in the intrigues of a skilful merchant A.L.Adamich, who was able to react positively to frustrations over Napoleon's Continental System. He not only supplied the Illyrian Provinces with salt but arranged for the wearisome overland routes to the Habsburg Empire (from Prussian or Russian Baltic ports to Brody in Galicia, or from Thessaloniki through Macedonia and Bosnia to Brod on the Military Frontier) to be developed by shipping on the Black Sea and Danube to projected 'free ports' at Brod, Orsova, Semlin (Zemun), and Zagrab (Zagreb).<sup>3</sup> The project was however upset by the fall of Napoleon and the end of the Continental System. But the amount of traffic on the Danube began to increase in the 1830s since Turkish acceptance of through shipping from Pannonia was given real significance by steamships which could make relatively easy progress upstream against the strong current. Water mills still created difficulty and vessels had to cope with the 'boat bridges' linking Buda and Pest. There was also the need for lightering at the Iron Gates where the Romans had previously found it necessary to construct a towing path. Attempts to blast a deeper channel were unsuccessful in the 1830s and improvement was restricted to road building between Moldova Noua and Orsova by Count Széchenyi between 1834 and 1837. Only after the Congress of Berlin in 1878 authorised taxes to finance new works was it feasible to build the Sip Canal and avoid the most dangerous rapids. Financial difficulties delayed the start of operations and it was not until 1893 that a 4.5 km. channel was blasted out at the Iron Gates. The depth was adequate for barges of 700 t. but there were no locks and upstream traffic still had to contend with strong currents: hence the towing service provided by a winch steamer, replaced after allied seizure during the First World War by a locomotive running on an isolated section of railway along the canal bank and retained, thanks to the more powerful conventional steamers coming into service, until the completion of the Iron Gates hydro-electric project. The Sip Canal was one of six improvements, the others being Stenka (1.9 km.), Kozla (Cozla) (3.8 km.), the Szvinica (Svinita) Canal at Greben (4.0 km.), which enjoyed the services of the winch steamer when it was released by the allies at the end of the First World War, Jucz (1.3 km.) and Prigrada (2.2 km.).<sup>4</sup>

### The Lower Danube

In the development of maritime trade one of the more impressive developments occurred on the Lower Danube at a time of expanding cereal exports to Western Europe.<sup>5</sup> The Romanian Principalities were able to produce cereals cheaply and were free to trade on world markets, once the constraint of the Ottoman monopoly was removed by the Treaty of Adrianople (1829). However the only ports available to the Romanians were on the Danube at Braila (for Wallachia) and Galati (for Moldavia), the Black Sea region of Dobrogea being under Ottoman occupation until 1878 (Figure 4.1). And the shipping lane along the Danube upstream to the twin ports was a hazardous one because the Danube distributaries were tortuously winding and complicated by shoaling, with even greater hazards at the estuary through very shallow water over the bar and sudden exposure to strong easterly winds. The greatest depth of water was usually found at Sulina and hence this channel was normally used in preference to the Chilia and Sf. Gheorghe rivers, but even here the depth was sometimes reported to be less than four metres.<sup>6</sup> Hence loaded vessels had to reduce their draught in order to cross the bar and for this reason Sulina developed an important lightering business, largely in the hands of Greek sailors who accounted for the majority of Sulina's thousand or so inhabitants in the early 1850s. But the lightering system was highly unsatisfactory, partly because of the dishonesty of the lightermen and partly because of the strong winds that could easily disrupt the reloading operation beyond the bar: when such conditions arise 'the vessel must get up her anchor, or slip it, and stand out to sea if she can; and if she cannot do that she must go on shore as has occurred more than once. The lighters in the meantime must find the best way into the river again and in doing so they are sometimes lost with all the grain they contain'.<sup>7</sup> On one December night in 1855 a terrific gale sent twenty four sailing ships and sixty lighters ashore off the mouth and more than three hundred men were lost.

The British engineer C.Hartley graphically described the Sulina entrance as 'a wild open seaboard strewn with wrecks, the hulls and masts of which, sticking out of the submerged

sandbanks, gave the manners the only guide where the deepest channel was to be found'.<sup>8</sup> However the physical problems were overshadowed by political issues. For centuries the Lower Danube lay deep in Turkish territory and the river remained completely closed to foreign shipping until late in the eighteenth century when the first concessions were made in Austria's favour. The Russians were also in contention and they were able to supplement the right to navigate the Black Sea and the straits (first conceded by the Ottomans in 1744) with control of the Lower Danube: this arose through the advance of the Russian frontier to the northernmost distributary, the Chilia (through the Treaty of Bucharest 1812), then to the Sulina in 1817 (under a protocol, confirmed by the Treaty of Cetatea Alba (Belgorod) in 1825) and finally to the Sf. Gheorghe in 1829 (Treaty of Adrianople).<sup>9</sup> The latter treaty allowed the Russians to operate a quarantine station at Sulina to ward off plague epidemics from Bulgaria. But it was widely believed that the system was operated unfairly in order to divert shipping towards Russia's own port of Odessa. For the quarantine station was opened at precisely the time that grain shipments to the west began to increase and some political commentators gave prominence to the way in which Russia was interfering with British commercial interests. The issue was all the more sensitive in view of the principal of free navigation on the major rivers of Europe enunciated by the Congress of Vienna (1815): although the Danube was not internationalised at the time any artificial restrictions tended now to become important areas of conflict.

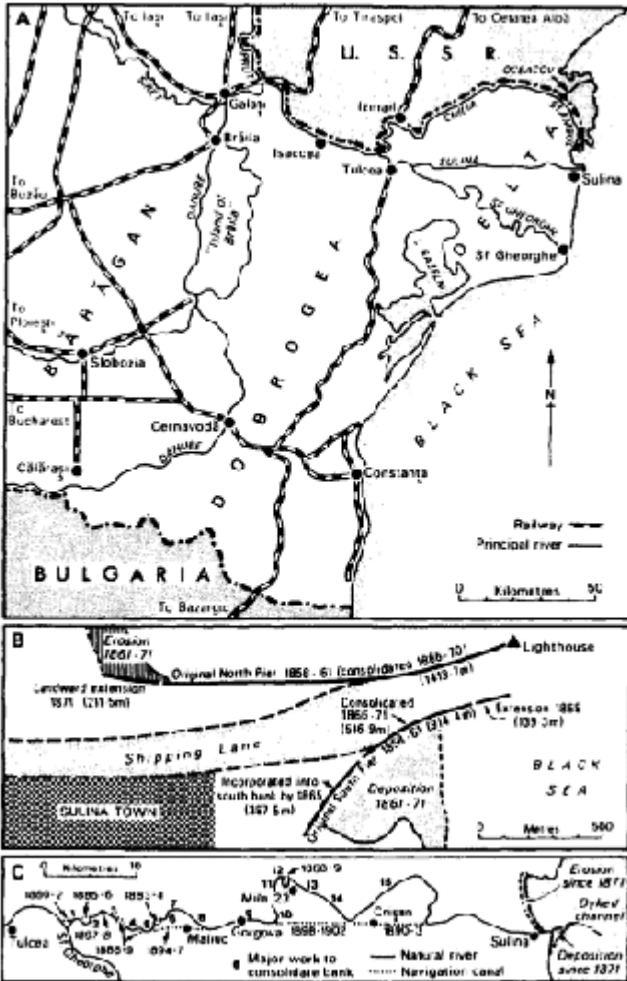
The commercial difficulties were brought into stark focus by grain shipment costs to England of 80p per quarter for Galati contrasting with 42.5p for Odessa and were a constant source of irritation underlying the rupture of the British-Russian entente and the deterioration in relations leading to the Crimean War.<sup>10</sup> It is very much a matter of speculation how far the Russians deliberately obstructed navigation through the quarantine station. It is also uncertain how far they deliberately neglected to dredge the shipping lane over the bar by abandoning the simple Turkish method of attaching a rake to the stern of ships leaving Sulina. If there was neglect and inefficiency this could easily have arisen from the difficulties of administration in a remote corner of the empire. But the issue was hotly-debated in Britain

Figure 4.1: Navigation in the Danube delta

A Gneral map of Dobrogea

B The dykes at Sulina

C Cut-offs in the Sulina distributary



Source: C.A.Hartley (1873) (note 8); C.H.L.Kuhn (1881) and 1888 (note 15); C.Rosetti and F.Rey (eds) (1931) *La commission européenne du Danube et son oeuvre de 1856 a 1931* (Paris: n.p.).

and deliberate obstructionism was more readily supposed than was the presumption of technical and administrative problems that the Russians were unable to solve. The Russians were apparently sufficiently in control to ensure that protection money paid to the Russian embassy in London was effective in preventing excessive local interference. There was an alternative route to the Black Sea, by land across Dobrogea. A canal was considered in the late 1840s and some road traffic developed during the Crimean War. Eventually the Turks granted a concession to a British company for a railway from Cernavoda to Constanta opened in 1860.<sup>11</sup> But the railway had only limited capacity and did not seriously detract from the all-water route through the Danube delta. This was a subject of great interest after the Crimean War, which had broken out in no small measure because of frustration over Russia's control over the lower Danube. Her frontier was now pushed back well clear of the Danube and to prevent any other single power from imposing another stranglehold the delta was internationalised under the Treaty of Paris.<sup>12</sup>

An international commission was given the task of improving navigation but the problems proved so serious that the initial life-span of two years was progressively extended. Ultimately the commission was seen as a major force for stability in the Balkans and in 1883 it was perpetuated for an indefinite period. By that time the area of the commission's authority had been extended upstream from Isaccea to Braila; and in addition to its jurisdiction over the river it had authority in Sulina town and on *Insula Serpilor* where a lighthouse was maintained. The European Commission of the Danube was initially required 'to designate and to cause to be effected the works necessary below Isaccea to clear the mouths of the Danube and the neighbouring parts of the sea from the sands and other impediments which obstructed them so as to put that part of the river and the said parts of the sea in the best possible state for navigation'. But it was quickly found that merely raking the river bed (the Turkish practice allegedly abandoned by the Russians) did no good and that dredging was equally ineffective. More elaborate works were needed and the ECD had therefore to decide what kind of action was needed and, interestingly from the geographical point of view, select one of three major distributaries. The Chilia channel was not a strong candidate for although conditions

were good as far as Vilkov they deteriorated further downstream as the river divided into at least twelve separate channels which only fishing boats could navigate. The bulk of the water was discharged through the Chilia (63.0 percent compared with 30.0 for Sf. Gheorghe and 7.0 for Sulina), but that meant that the growth of the delta through deposition of sediment (42.6 million t. per annum in the 1860s but now 67.5 million) was particularly rapid and any enclosed seaway built over the bar would have to be progressively lengthened. Interest therefore shifted to the other two distributaries where the delta was advancing only slowly. Sf. Gheorghe would require a longer entrance channel but because it 'occupied an advanced geographical position with respect to the coast on either side and as its frontage was swept and kept comparatively steep by littoral current...it was clear that the prolongation of works necessary to keep pace with the new deposits would be less considerable than at any other mouth'.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore the river channel through the delta was thought to be much better than the Sulina river, for the meandering channel had ample width and depth and short canals could easily be cut to straighten the course and shorten the distance (ten kilometres of canal would reduce the distance by 27km.). Finally the Sf. Gheorghe channel, being the most southerly of the three, offered the shortest journey for vessels heading for the straits.

However it was clear that the Sulina channel was the one being used most often and in bowing to strong pressure for short-term improvements the ECD agreed to carry out provisional works at Sulina, with Sf. Gheorghe to be developed through a more elaborate scheme later. There is also the enigma of the Russian attitude to consider: the Sulina river would be more convenient to St. Petersburg but opposition to the Sf. Gheorghe option may also have been tinged by a desire to head-off major developments which would offer particular benefits to the maritime powers. As for the nature of the works there was again controversy but the balance of opinion favoured the construction of walls to contain the natural river channel over the provision of canals which avoided the natural outfalls altogether. The work was carried out between 1858 and 1861 and was immediately successful because the more rapid flow of water increased the scouring effect and the depth of water over

bar rose not only to the 4.9m. desired but even to 6.1m. 'which the most sanguine never ventured to predict when the works were begun'.<sup>14</sup> Sulina now became one of the best commercial harbours on the Black Sea coast. Some minor developments were needed to maintain an acceptable depth of water and prevent sedimentation arising from offshore currents but the solid success of the temporary works was great enough for the Sf. Gheorghe plan to be abandoned in favour of consolidation at Sulina. Plans were approved in 1866 and the work was carried out between 1878 and 1881. Once again the work was entirely successful and the minimum depth of water over the bar continued to increase slowly, reaching 7.0m. in 1911.

The decision to abandon the Sf. Gheorghe plan may have been affected by financial difficulties and by misgivings about the Cernavoda-Constanta railway as well as by the great success of the provisional works at Sulina. But the outcome was in some ways unfortunate because although money was saved at the outfall it was lost through elaborate works needed to improve the Sulina river between Tulcea and Sulina. Some particularly difficult sections prone to shoaling were dealt with by dredging and by construction of groynes and training walls, with work continuing into the 1880s. Yet it was also found necessary to shorten the river by cut-off canals, which also helped to reduce the sharp bends that were increasingly unacceptable in the age of steamships with vessels increasing in both size and number.<sup>15</sup> The first canal was built in 1868–9, with a cut of just 0.6 km. to shorten the river by 1.8 km. and remove several particularly dangerous bends, but a spate of further canal building took place between 1880 and 1898 and the work was rounded-off by 'second generation' canals at Papadia (1894–7) and 'Great M' (1890–1902) which cut-off some earlier canals as well as winding sections of the natural channel. The river was shortened from 83.8 km. to 62.6 between Tulcea and Sulina and the only remaining loop was then at Tulcea where diversion of the river would have damaged the commercial life of the town. The scale of the works was cumulatively quite vast with a total volume of 25 million cubic metres of material removed to provide the straight channel with a depth of at least six metres. The cost was probably considerably in excess of the total amount required to develop the Sf. Gheorghe channel, but the price paid for the

piecemeal approach could easily be met from toll revenue. Traffic grew continually up to the First World War in terms of the tonnage of shipping (averaging 1.9 million tons during the decade 1905–14) if not the total number of ships (which actually declined during the 1890s). Trade involved basically an exchange of primary products for manufactures, the former dominated by cereals and timber although meat products were significant for a time as evidenced by British Army interest in a Galati port cannery and in pig farms at Calafat and elsewhere. For the shipping companies the expenditure in tolls was more than offset by the elimination of the lightering system and falling insurance costs as the number of wrecks was reduced (3.9 wrecks per thousand ships in 1855–60, but only 0.8 in the 1860s and 0.2 in the 1870s).<sup>16</sup>

The story must be rounded off by considering subsequent developments on the Cernavoda-Constanta route. The railway opened in 1860 was not particularly efficient in view of the zig-zag layout used to take the line down the face of the steep bluffs which fringe the coast at Constanta. When the Romanian government purchased the line in 1882 a debt of £113,000 owing to the Ottoman authorities had to be shouldered. The Romanian takeover followed the annexation of Dobrogea in 1878 (in compensation for the loss of southern Bessarabia which was then restored to Russia) and was part of a project by the newly-independent state to establish a port independent of the ECD. There was always an understandable ambivalence on the part of the Romanians towards the Commission, for the benefit of improvements to navigation and the stabilisation of the Danube frontier against Russian encroachment had to be set against injury to national pride through an international authority having jurisdiction on Romanian territory.<sup>17</sup> Before 1878 the Romanians had drawn up plans for a harbour in Bessarabia outside the ECD's sphere of activities but now with the territorial changes the idea was transferred south to Dobrogea. The Turks had made considerable use of Constanta although the facilities in 1878 were still poor and heavy investments were needed to extend the quays and reduce exposure to strong winds. The scheme went ahead slowly and the port was fully opened only in 1909. Meanwhile the railway was realigned at both ends: at Cernavoda the 'Carol I Bridge'



designed by A. Saligny and built between 1890 and 1895 linked the railway with the line built from Bucharest across the Baragan steppe to Fetesti, while at Constanta the railway was taken down through a tunnel from the plateau surface to sea level, thereby eliminating the zig-zags which had so complicated operations on the original railway.<sup>18</sup>

The Constanta scheme was quite remarkable considering that Romanian commerce did not really need all this new capacity. Braila's established importance for cereals was hardly challenged and Constanta's main business was in exporting oil, assisted here by a pipeline as well as a railway from Ploiesti.<sup>19</sup> It has however been demonstrated that 'consideration of economic feasibility were clearly overridden by technological and political ambition' for Constanta was a symbol of Romania's independence and the technical vanity of project leaders may have led them to advocate a large scale approach.<sup>20</sup> The Constanta scheme stands in sharp contrast to the Danube route in building optimistically for the future, without concern for short-term cost-benefit consideration, and in reflecting a vibrant national interest in distinction to a more sedate international consensus. However while the vested interests of the trading community and the ECD made it difficult to divert traffic from the Danube before the First World War there was always a possibility that the Romanian government might press the state railways to introduce concessionary rates to benefit Constanta against Braila and Galati. Certainly their railway programme emphasised Constanta with the direct lines from Fetesti to both Buzau and Ploiesti put in hand (and the former proposed for extension to Tecuci which would provide a direct link with Moldavia). Hence the possibility that the canal building on the Sulina river, while certainly appropriate through the increasing size of vessels, may have been spurred on by a sense of competition.

## RAILWAYS

It has already been noted that List's ideas were too radical for immediate fulfilment and developments were initially piecemeal as certain individual commercial centres took the lead. Most remarkable here was the historic market town of Leipzig which

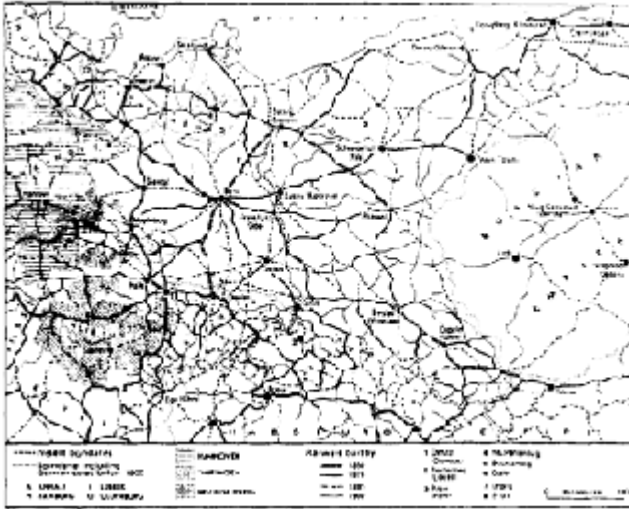
had been unable to maintain its commercial role during an age of canal building: lacking a satisfactory water route it sought a railway to the Elbe at Dresden and this was opened in stages between 1837 and 1839, over a distance of 115 km. It was incidentally a link provided for in the List scheme but a route through Riesa was preferred to Meissen in order to simplify the engineering works, given the constraint of a ruling gradient of 1:300: even so it required a 0.5 km. tunnel near Leipzig, a job on which several miners from Freiberg were employed. By 1849 Leipzig was linked northwards with Magdeburg and the first Prussian railway was open from Berlin to Potsdam. The Prussian government was favourably disposed towards railway construction and the Berlin radial routes progressed rapidly over the next decade. There was a link with Bremen and Hamburg ready in 1846 as was another with Breslau (Wrocław) via Frankfurt a.d. Oder, extended two years later to the Austrian frontier at Oderberg (Bohumin), providing the first through service to Vienna. 1851 saw another route open to Vienna via Dresden, Prague and Brünn (Brno). Meanwhile by 1847 the first railway to the Ruhr was open, via Braunschweig, Hannover and Minden and connections were available to Aachen and Antwerp. In 1853 Berlin was linked with its far northeastern frontier at Königsberg (Kaliningrad) with the exception of the Vistula bridge at Dirshau (Tczew) which was not ready for another four years (Figure 4.2). A direct line from Berlin to Leipzig was opened through Bitterfeld in 1859 while Silesia was reached by way of Görlitz in 1867.<sup>21</sup>

Later developments included links with the Baltic ports: Stralsund via Neubrandenburg in 1878 and Rostock-Warnemünde via Neustrelitz in 1886 (the latter financed by the Norddeutscher-Lloyd shipping company which wanted to increase interest in its steamer services to Denmark). Further improvements to the Scandinavian routes were evident not only with the Warnemünde-Gedser ferry of 1903 but the Sassnitz-Trelleborg service of 1909: the approach to the ferry terminal involved not only a steep gradient into the station but a train ferry across Strelasund, replaced by a bridge across to the island of Rügen in 1935. Of course the tremendous increase in capacity required by Germany's late nineteenth century explosion of population and economic growth required the doubling or even

quadrupling of certain tracks, but it also led to some duplication of routes in order to reduce journey times and some construction of cut-offs to allow radial routes to have their origins in Berlin rather than a junction some distance away. Examples of the former include the new line westwards to Lehrte near Hannover via Oebisfelde and the route to Dresden via Elsterwerda opened in 1875. A direct route to Sühl across the Thuringian Forest was built in 1884, involving the three kilometre long Brandleite Tunnel. The latter type of development can also be seen in the re-routing of Königsberg trains first from Stettin to Frankfurt a.d. Oder and Küstrin (Kostrzyn) in 1857 and second to Küstrin direct in 1867. Then in 1873 Königsberg trains avoided Bromberg thanks to the direct line from Schneidemühl (Piła) to the Dirschau bridge, the same year that an even longer section of new railway gave direct access to Insterburg (Chernyakovsk) from Bromberg and Thorn (Torun): from Insterburg there was already a line to the Russian frontier at Eydtkuhnen and another line northwards to Tilsit (Sovetsk) and Memel (Klaypeda) was ready in 1875. Provision of a cut-off can also be seen on a less dramatic scale on the line to Braunschweig and Hannover. Braunschweig built one of the earliest railways in Germany (in fact the first 'state railway' from Braunschweig city south to Wolfenbüttel in 1838, and later to Borssum in 1840). A problem arose when the first line from Berlin ran by way of Oschersleben to Wolfenbüttel (1843) while the Hannover line was built westwards from Braunschweig city: a direct line to Braunschweig through Magdeburg was then built in 1872.

A significant factor in early railway construction was the individualism of the various German states, for parochial attitudes persisted despite the facade of commercial unity thrown up by the Zollverein. The first line from Berlin to Hamburg had to enter the territory of either Hannover or Mecklenburg once it passed beyond Wittenberge. The former option was ruled out by the insistence of Hannover that the terminal should be in Harburg, on the opposite side of the Elbe from the Free City of Hamburg. But in adopting the latter it was necessary to accommodate Mecklenburg's wishes for the railway to provide a convenient launching pad for a branch to the state capital of Schwerin: the line therefore went northwards beyond

Figure 4.2: Railway building in Germany and adjacent areas to 1900



Sources: R.E.H.Mellor (1979) and T.Kraus et al. (1959) Atlas östliches Mitteleuropa (Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing).

Wittenberge and proceeded to Hamburg by way of Hagenow in preference to an easier route closer to the Elbe. It is also worth noting that acquisition of land in the then Danish-held Duchy of Lauenburg obliged the company to carry traffic on a branch line from Buchen to Lauenburg free of charge, this being the Lauenburger Privileg which survived until 1935. Lack of accord between Prussia and Hannover is again seen in the provision of railways to other western parts of Germany: the first railway was built through Hannover itself (Berlin-Oschersleben-Wolfenbüttel-Braunschweig-Minden) but was followed up by 1853 by a longer alternative route through Erfurt, Kassel, Altenbecken and Paderborn, avoiding Hannoverian territory altogether. However with the cooperation of Braunschweig the same objective was achieved over a shorter distance by following the latter's state railway of Wolfenbüttel and then building a new line through hilly country to reach Altenbecken through Kreiensen in a detached portion of Braunschweig. Subsequently access to this route was simplified by the cut-off avoiding Wolfenbüttel already noted. This could be

contemplated after the unification of Germany when the old state boundaries ceased, to be a factor in decision-making: in this case the small salient of Saxon territory no longer mattered. Nevertheless there were some surviving anomalies because despite increasing consolidation of ownership separate state railway companies (Länderbahnen) continued until 1920. Until the First World War many trains from Berlin to Köln continued to use the Kreiensen-Altenbecken route although it was longer and slower than the direct line through Hannover. And the legacy of rivalry between Prussia and Saxony lived on in the decision to improve sections of the Berlin-Halle-Saalfeld-Nürnberg route and switch traffic from the Saxon route via Leipzig, Vogtland and Hof.

The change after 1870 was all the more dramatic because in the preceding war with the Habsburg Empire the railway demonstrated its usefulness to the point where the hostilities of 1866 became referred to as the Eisenbahnkrieg. The Franco-Prussian War also made use of railways but a number of shortcomings left the German government determined to improve the network for strategic reasons. Hence the Imperial General Staff was strongly in favour of the Berlin-Oebisfelde-Lehrte line already mentioned and pressed for a purely military railway from central Germany to the Rhine, to be part of a so-called Kanonenstrasse connecting the eastern and western frontiers of the Reich. This involved some new construction to complete the route west from Blankenheim on the flanks of the Harz Mountains towards the Lahn valley. To train special railway troops a purely military railway was built from Berlin-Schöneberg to Zossen and Jüterbog, close to the Berlin-Dresden main line: it was opened between 1875 and 1897. Going hand in hand with this awareness of a strategic role was an interest in nationalisation and state control. In fact there was never any political desire to encourage competition between private companies as a way of avoiding monopoly. However Bismarck's dream of a fully unified railway administration (Reichseisenbahnen) was not realised until 1920 with the formation of Deutsche Reichsbahn. Mixed systems developed in the individual German states with state and private lines, the latter prone to take-over when economic difficulties arose. The state element therefore tended to grow stronger and in Prussia

the decision to complete nationalisation was taken in 1876 and largely achieved by 1886. Prussia also took over the railways of Braunschweig in 1885 and amalgamated with those of Hesse in 1896.

### **Railways in the Habsburg Empire and the Balkans**

Further south railway building can again be seen initially as a series of isolated lines conceived as extensions to waterways rather than as parts of an interconnected railway system. The earliest example is the 53km. line from Budweis built in 1829 and worked by horses until 1860. By connecting the Moldau with the Danube this in effect opened up a through route from Hamburg to Vienna. It was financed by the Vienna banks and was worked by horses until 1854. The first railway in Hungary was built in 1846 from Budapest to Vac while the Crimean War increased interest in rail connection between the Steyerlakanina (Anina) coalfield in the Banat Mountains and the Danube port of Bazias.<sup>22</sup> The line from Bazias reached Oravicza (Oravita) in 1856 and Steyerlakanina in 1863. Portage railways, connecting the Danube with the Black Sea more directly than the meandering delta channels, were built between Cernavoda and Constanta in 1860 and six years later between Ruse and Varna. This rather surprising duplication seems to have arisen largely out of a Turkish administrative experiment in setting up an administrative region (*vilayet*) for the Danube with its centre at Varna, although the port there was better than at Constanta in terms of both size and exposure.<sup>23</sup> A railway connected Bucharest with the Danube port of Giurgiu in 1869 and other examples can be seen in the link between Pristina in Macedonia and the port of Thessaloniki (1873). The first railway building on Montenegro connected Virpazar on Lake Scutari with the Adriatic port of Antivari (Bar) in 1909, part of a grand scale 'portage' railway from the Adriatic at Antivari or San Giovanni di Medua (Shëngjini) to the Danube at Kladovo, suggested in 1901 and given further discussion below. These lines stimulated migrations by temporary/seasonal workers of various nationalities, as on the Constanta project where 'stations warehouses and cottages for the staff were built by teams of

Albanian carpenters and masons who walked across the Balkan peninsula every spring looking for work of this kind',<sup>24</sup> And leading politicians found ways of influencing railway routes to their advantages: thus the Bucharest-Giurgiu line bends anomalously through Comana because the bridge there was decided upon while M.Kogalniceanu (who owned an estate at Comana) was in power as Prince Cuza's chief minister.

Creation of an integrated railway system came relatively quickly in the Habsburg Empire with the Nordbahn connecting Vienna with the German and Russian networks through Bohumin in 1848. The initial aim was to connect Vienna with the salt mining area of Bochnia and throw off branches en route to places like Brünn (Brno), Olmütz (Olomouc) and Troppau. The Olmütz branch was extended to Prague in 1845 and continued north to meet the Saxon system at Tetschen (Decin) in 1851. The Nordbahn represented an important coup of the Rothschild bank and fitted in well with the Witkowitz (Vitkovice) ironworks which could supply the rails. The line proved to be an important stimulus to industry in the Czech Lands and handled cereals, coal, iron and timber in addition to salt. Also of interest to Eastern Europe was the Sudbahn to Trieste via Marburg (Maribor) and Laibach (Ljubljana) in 1850. A line from Budapest reached Marburg in 1860 while Zagrab was first connected with Laibach in 1862 and then obtained a separate line to the Adriatic at Fiume in 1875. Construction was very brisk until the stock market crash of 1873 and by this time all the main towns of the empire, except those on the Adriatic coast, had been reached. At this point in time the state began to take over from the banks as the main driving force behind railway building. Railways were now seen as strategically and economically important, and furthermore investment in public works could help to allay the fears of some national groups in the empire that they were being neglected. Development after 1873 was particularly rapid in Hungary and the rapid growth of Budapest was supported by a radical system of main lines which reached out to all parts of the country, including the port of Fiume in 1875. There were also connections with the Balkan countries.

### The Balkan problem

The Ottoman Empire showed some interest in long-distance railways from Istanbul to Belgrade and Ruse in the 1850s, but no progress was made. The more ambitious plan of 1869 to construct a line to Sofia, Pristina and Sarajevo to meet the Austrian system at Doberlin, for Sissek (Sisak), Zagrab and Vienna, was aborted by the death of Ali Pasha in 1871. Branches were intended from Adrianople to Dedeagach and Yambol, from Plovdiv to Burgas and from Pristina to the Serbian frontier. The Turks did however start work at each end: the southern line penetrated as far as Yambol and the Bulgarians eventually extended it to Burgas (instead of the original Turkish intention to drive over the mountains to Ruse) while at the northern end Doberlin was linked with Banja Luka, yielding an isolated length of standard gauge track to be taken over by the Habsburg Empire after 1878. It was only in 1887 that a railway was completed all the way to Istanbul, via Belgrade, Nis and Sofia. Until the Nis-Sofia section was complete services were routed from Vienna and Budapest into Romania by way of Temesvar (Timisoara), Turnu Severin, Craiova, Bucharest and Giurgiu from where river boats gave access to one or other of the portage railways across Dobrogea, with the final leg of the journey accomplished by steamer from Constanta or Varna. Development was held up by disagreement over the route that should be followed through the Balkans. Each country naturally wanted its own national railway company and wherever possible its own port, tied in firmly with the national territory by railways. Bulgaria therefore could not accept the Sofia-Plovdiv-Istanbul line as the logical one for her international commerce and sought a separate line to Stara Zagora, Yambol and the Bulgarian port of Burgas. For some time there was conflict with the western powers who owned the Orient Railway Company, operating to Istanbul, and did not want to see traffic diverted to a new line. Only in 1889 did Bulgaria manage to raise funds for the Burgas line. Habsburg hostility to Serbia caused problems over the Belgrade route but was eventually accepted by a convention representing the interested powers (Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, Serbia and the Ottoman Empire) in 1881.



The conflicting interests of the powers continued to dominate Balkan railway building. Italy's greater involvement in Balkan affairs was sought by both Montenegro and Serbia as a counter to Habsburg influence but whereas Italian interests favoured railways penetrating eastwards into the Balkans from the Adriatic coast Habsburg ambitions related to lines running southwards from Pannonia. Italian commercial interests can be seen first in Montenegro in 1903 when the government set up a state tobacco monopoly to be administered for fifteen years by an Italian company. This led to the establishment of plantations with skilled labour brought over from Italy and a factory at Podgorica (Titograd), not to mention the resentment of Montenegrans who had previously sold tobacco cheaply on the local markets.<sup>25</sup> A more grandiose concept then emerged with Montenegro as a bridgehead for Italian economic penetration of the Balkans, including the Ottoman Empire which was anxious to diversify its foreign relations. Basic to this strategy was a railway crossing the peninsula from the Adriatic coast in the direction of the Danube, first suggested in 1901 between Scutari (Shkodër), Podgorica and Kladovo, a Danube port from which access could be gained across the river to Turnu Severin and both the Romanian and Russian railway systems.<sup>26</sup> A different route from Antivari to Nis through Prizen and Pristina was suggested by the prince of Montenegro: it would also involve crossing the Danube but near Vidin which would offer a link with the Romanian railways at Craiova.

However such railways were exactly the reverse of the line the Habsburg government wished to construct from Sarajevo to Mitrovica (Kosovska Mitrovica) to outflank the ports on the upper Adriatic in which Italy had an interest. Habsburg support for this Sandschakbahn (named after the sancak of Novipazar) seems to have contributed to a spectacular burst of interest in railway projects to help modernise the area and overcome racial and religious animosity: as von Koerber had envisaged in the Czech Lands everyone might unite around public works projects that would intensify local interaction and also place the Balkans in closer touch with other parts of the continent.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately the interests of the capitalists could not be reconciled. The Antivari Company made an agreement with Montenegro in 1906 for a railway inland to Virpazar on Lake

Scutari. This was opened in 1909 along with port facilities and an embryonic industrial zone in Antivari. Meanwhile a broader Danube-Adriatic consortium emerged to further the 'Slav Railway' through Montenegrin, Ottoman and Serb territory to the Danube at Kladovo. And the Habsburg proposal was renewed in 1908 by Count A. Aerenthal who wanted to develop political links with Balkan states and open up shipping routes to Egypt and the Far East.<sup>28</sup> By this time the Sandschakbahn had become more feasible on account of the completion of a narrow gauge line from Sarajevo to the Bosnian frontier at Uvac in 1906. There was a difference in gauge between Mitrovica and Uvac but any extension into Turkish territory would assist economic penetration and generate more traffic for the Uvac line. The line would be even more important if the existing Bosnian system, with branches to the northwest (Jajce) as well as the southeast (Vardiste) of Sarajevo were to be used for a link between Uzice (Titovo Uzice) in Serbia and Split. None of these projects succeeded since plans were upset first by the Young Turk upheavals of 1908, followed by the Balkan Wars and the First World War. When economic planning resumed in the 1920s the political-territorial situation was transformed.

Although the international routes in the Balkans were slow to develop rapid progress was made through the turn of the century as each of the nation states attached a high priority to railway building. As well as reaching Burgas in 1890 the Bulgarians pushed railways to Pernik (1893) and Varna (1897). Access to the ports from Sofia was improved by the link from Plovdiv to Stara Zagora and the Trans-Balkan line previously contemplated by the Turks was built in 1913 between Stara Zagora and Gorna Oryakhovitsa. It is worth adding that in many parts of Eastern Europe the nineteenth century railway system was rounded off by narrow gauge lines which were relatively cheap to build and operate, and therefore more suitable than standard gauge railways in areas with rugged terrain or limited economic potential. Most remarkable here was the Bosnian narrow gauge system which took off from the standard gauge Zagrab-Belgrade railway at Slavonski Brod and reached Sarajevo in 1879. It then continued eastwards to Visegrad and southwards to Dubrovnik, reaching both these destinations in 1906, though the latter line paused for some

years at Metkovic (1890), a port on the Neretva improved to accommodate vessels of 700 t. in 1882. North of Dubrovnik a branch led off to the naval base of Zelenika on the Bay of Kotor. A connection with Split was contemplated but this proceeded no further than Bugojno (1894) due to lack of funds. Meanwhile the Serbs were building narrow gauge lines to Uzice and Zajecar in 1912. After the First World War and the creation of a Yugoslav state these narrow gauge systems were extended across former international boundaries (Vardiste-Uzice 1925) to connect Sarajevo with Belgrade (1928) by narrow gauge throughout, with new sections needed at Cacak-Lajkovac (1922) and Obrenovac-Belgrade (1928) via Visegrad and also with the Montenegrin towns of Niksic and Podgorica (Titograd) by way of Mostar. The First World War also gave rise to some narrow gauge railway building in the Balkans. The link along the Struma Valley from Radomir to Damirhasar was later rebuilt to standard gauge but the branch from Skopje to Tetovo and Ohrid has remained narrow gauge ever since.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised that certain parts of the Balkans languished in a state of extreme backwardness to the extent that even the most modest modernising achievements were major undertakings. This applies especially to the borders of Montenegro and Serbia with the Ottoman Empire where there was no compelling economic potential and where grandiose projects with a political inspiration were not backed strongly enough to ensure a success. There was of course plenty of business for the horse caravans operating from railheads like Mitrovica and Uvac distributing imports from Thessaloniki and Trieste respectively and stimulating a limited amount of local trade as agricultural products (cattle, cheese, honey, skins and wool) as well as timber and wax were exchanged for cereals, coffee, salt, sugar and tobacco. And the disposition of the few railway branches to penetrate the Dinaric Triangle also ensured the continuing eclipses of the ancient trade routes across the mountains to the Adriatic ports of Dubrovnik, Durrës and Vlorë and provided some justification for the alignment of the Albanian frontier. The roads were modernised in some areas to handle wheeled traffic and so make up for the lack of railways. Montenegro was connected by road with Kotor by way of Niksic, Podgorica and Cetinje, with branches to Antivari via

Virpazar and Plavnitsa (Lake Scutari), and a projected link to Andrijevica and Pec. In Albania the Via Egnatia from Durrës inland towards Monastir was bad but Shkodër had its link with the coast (San Giovanni di Medua) and the Turkish interest in connecting their main administrative centres with the coast led to a serviceable road from Santi Quaranta (Sarande) to Monastir (via Korçë) and Yanya (Ioannina). Again in southern Bulgaria the Turkish military road from Khaskovo south to Komotini was improved after the Balkan Wars and there were important road links from Sofia to the Aegean via the Struma valley and also with Skopje via Kyusdendil and Kumanovo: these latter routes were considered in connection with the 'Bulgarian Railway' to connect Romania and Bulgaria (by bridge at Calafat-Vidin or Turnu Magurele-Svishtov) with Thessaloniki, though the Turks were reluctant to agree to the section from Kumanovo to the Bulgarian frontier at Guyetsevo because it might encourage expansion into Macedonia.

It is instructive to examine the contemporary literature for the reports they contain of the expeditions of contemporary travellers.<sup>29</sup> The German geographer K. Hassert was active in Albania and Montenegro and he emphasised the acute difficulty and discomfort of travelling: 'for weeks the clothing cannot be changed and the traveller is obliged to spend the nights without a bed and exposed to the torture of innumerable insects'.<sup>30</sup> There was also real insecurity on account of the bandits operating on Albanian (i.e. Turkish) territory 'who frequently lie in ambush and treacherously shoot down their victims'.<sup>31</sup> Much the same point was made by W.H.Cozens-Hardy who saw the dangers not only to the private travellers but more generally to the economy, for the trade of local centres of light manufacturing (like Prizren) was restricted and the emergence of a commercial timber trade effectively ruled out. However the 'old idea that every occupation except fighting is beneath the dignity of a man' was given every encouragement by shortcomings over the delimitation of the Montenegrin-Turkish (i.e. Montenegrin-Albanian) frontier after 1878, including the failure to use such clear physical features as the Cujevina gorge. The proposed transfer of certain Albanian territories to Montenegro greatly exacerbated tensions in the area and forced certain ad hoc modifications.<sup>32</sup> Travellers also paint a rather

depressing picture of living conditions. The inhabitants of the barren karst depended on dirty melted snow from the previous winter (stored in petrol cans) for their water supply during the summer season and the agricultural potential of the lowlands around Lake Scutari was largely unused on account of the unhealthy fever-ridden swamps, perpetuated by the regime of annual flooding of the basin. The problem of malaria in Macedonia was also highlighted: the native population might develop immunity but indolence was seen as the result.<sup>33</sup> Movement was normally quite limited. The zadruga persisted in the Novipazar area with small units of society almost totally self-contained: groups of two or three such units might be found situated in small basins and plains or at valley heads, though people would occasionally congregate in large numbers at the monasteries for religious festivals or join in the moba (communal agricultural work).<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile population appears to have been rising, judging by figures quoted from the Turkish census for the sancak of Novipazar: 152,000 in 1892 rising to 220,000 in 1911, an increase of some 45 percent in barely twenty years!<sup>35</sup> The growth was apparently more pronounced among Moslems than Christians since the former accounted for 53 percent in 1892 but 59 in 1912. Small wonder therefore that the powers should have looked to railways as a force for economic and social development provided they could be reconciled with the strategic interests of the sponsors.

### The impact of the railways

The impact of the railways was of course very considerable, although this was an inevitable consequence of the status of the railway as the principal means of transport throughout Eastern Europe towards the end of the century. There was a functional link between the railway and virtually every element of economic, political and social fabric of the region. The strategic importance of the railways can be seen most significantly in the vicinity of the Three Emperor's Corner' (Dreikaiserecke) where the frontiers of the German, Habsburg and Russian empires converged. The great entrenched camps constructed at Crakow by Austria, Posen (Poznan) by Germany and at both Ivangorod (Deblin) between Dublin and Radom and Novo Georgievsk

(Zakroczyn) near Warsaw by Russia were all conveniently situated on the railway. The same applies to the lesser fortresses built in Galicia by Austria at Czernowitz (Chernovtsy), Lemberg (Lvov) and Przemyśl and connected with major installations across the Carpathians by separate railways and with each other by the axial route from Cracow to Czernowitz. The German fortresses were at Breslau, Danzig (Gdansk), Glogau (Głogów), Königsberg and Thorn while the Russians had installations to complete a quadrilateral at Brest Litovsk and Goniadz (Grodno).<sup>36</sup> The main bastion of the Romanians was at Bucharest where the largest entrenched camp in Eastern Europe lay at the heart of the railway system with a constellation of outer forts connected by a ring railway.<sup>37</sup> The importance of the railways to Romanian defence is also seen in the construction of lines close to the eastern frontier along the river Prut (though out of artillery range) from Dorohoi and Botosani to Iasi, Bîrlad and Galati. The Ottoman Empire looked at railways essentially in military terms and the line north from Thessaloniki to Mitrovica, completed just before the stock market crash of 1873, was intended as a means of quelling disorders in Macedonia: the link with the Serbian railways was agreed in 1888 but connections across the Bulgarian and Greek borders were not permitted. Equally the railway was a focal point for cultural policies by virtue of the need for efficient communication in a vast company structure. In Hungary the railways were inevitably drawn into the Magyarisation campaign and in 1907 a bill was presented to make Hungarian the sole language of the national railway system, even in Croatia. It has been argued that this created enough consternation among the Croats for some of them to favour a link with Serbia which in turn prompted Vienna's somewhat alarmist identification of Serbia as the 'Piedmont of the South Slavs'.

The construction of railways to suit imperial and national requirements inevitably meant that regional interests were in some cases overlooked. Thus the interest of both Austria and Hungary in direct communication with the Adriatic ports ruled out a railway line along the Sava which would link Semlin (Zemun) with Fiume and replace the less efficient river and road route. The tendency for development to emphasise links with the

outside world was certainly born out widely in the Balkans since foreign capital was interested in international trade flows rather than domestic integration. The railway has therefore been seen as 'a factor in international specialisation and as such tended to keep the area in its state of backwardness'.<sup>38</sup> However opting out of the modernisation process has hardly ever been seriously perceived as a viable option and it is arguable that the more complex rail networks that emerged later in the century, as the state railway companies were formed (Romania 1882, Bulgaria 1884, Serbia 1889) to counteract private monopoly powers and generate economies of scale, provided considerable opportunity for regional development in both advanced and backward areas. In Bohemia the construction of direct links between Vienna and the various industrial districts, like the railway through Znaim (Znojmo), Iglau (Jihlava), Kolin and Numburg (Nymburk) to Jungbunzlau (Mlada Boleslav) and Böhmische Leipa (Ceska Lipa) begun in 1868, did not prevent the emergence of a complex radial system based on Prague which was well-placed to be included on major international routes such as Berlin-Vienna and also to generate linkages with industries throughout the region. Prague's demand for coal gave rise to the Bustchrad line through Kralup (Kralupy) to Kladno while for similar reasons Brünn was quickly connected with Rosice (1856) and Teplitz (Teplice) with Aussig (1858).

As regards the more backward areas there has been some interesting research to throw light on the situation in the eastern regions of Germany, where the railways developed rapidly after 1881. In East Prussia, Pomerania, Posen and West Prussia, together comprising 34.8 percent of Germany, there was only 4.09 thousand km. of railway in 1881-2, or 20.4 percent of the total (20.0 thousand km.), but 10.28 thousand km. or 27.6 percent of the total (37.2 thousand) in 1912. By contrast more developed areas in Eastern Europe (Brandenburg, Saxony and Silesia, comprising 30.2 percent of Germany) suffered a relative decline at the turn of the century with 7.08 thousand km. of railways in 1881-2 (35.4 percent of the total) but 11.80 thousand in 1912 (31.7 percent).<sup>39</sup> Moreover in the backward regions the railways came to be more prominent than population shares (24.1 in 1881-2 and 19.7 in 1912) merited, while in the more developed areas (with population shares of 35.

6 in 1881–2 and 36.2 in 1912) the position deteriorated from near parity in the earlier year. The effect of this development on the urban centres was however contradictory. The better integration of the eastern regions led to a rapid growth in the leading centres. Königsberg and Posen became important nodes in the system and so their production and trade functions were greatly strengthened. However the smaller towns did not have any great potential.

#### Railways and economic development

The improved transport system had an important bearing on economic development. Faster and cheaper services made it easier for a region to distribute the products of its 'base' industries. But in turn the region became more accessible to outside producers with the result that competition intensified. Hence the net result was that industries that were particularly favoured by virtue of raw materials or by labour/entrepreneurial skills prospered from widening markets while activities that were less efficient for whatever reason were now likely to contract once the protection previously afforded by high transport costs was lost. Of course the cheapness of railway transport can be exaggerated and high construction costs meant that freight rates had to be set well above the mere operating costs. It cost more to send cotton yarn to Bohemia from Vienna by rail than from Manchester by water and agricultural products were charged more for a short overland journey to the Danube than for transfer along the river over a distance fifteen times as great. Nevertheless, the railway may be seen as an important catalyst for modernisation and industrialisation in particular. Until 1840 the ruling elite in Prussia was clearly hostile to industrial development and even railway projects received scant support. The Zollverein, according to this analysis, would tie up with German power politics rather than economic policy.<sup>40</sup> However R. Tilly argues that in the following decade the economic and strategic role of railways was appreciated and a regime of subsidies and interest guarantees was introduced in 1842: even the possibility of government-owned railways was contemplated.<sup>41</sup> The railway construction boom of the 1840s continued into the 1850s and created a solid



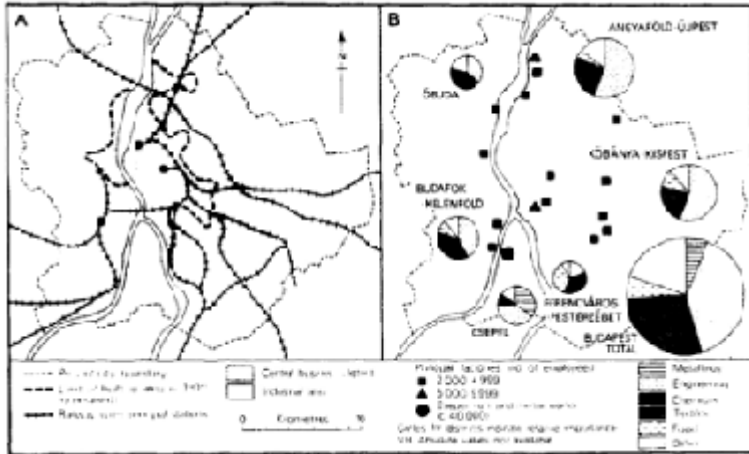
base for further industrial progress by the 1860s. The proportion of total government spending related to commerce, which rose only slowly from 16 percent in 1821 to 19 percent in 1847, reached 31 percent in 1866. The change of attitude was underpinned by the events of 1848 which cleared up latent political tensions by cementing a progressive alliance of aristocratic and middle class forces with a common interest in economic development allied with containment of the proletariat. It would be unreasonable to see the railway as the sole cause of this transformed political climate, but clearly there is an interaction between economic and social development processes, with the state as intermediary, and the railway as an important new element in this dynamic functional system.

Various studies have explored the economic impact of the railways. It is significant that in Germany and the Habsburg Empire industrial growth was most rapid in percentage terms during the middle decades of the century at the beginning of the railway era. This has been demonstrated through coal output by N.T.Gross who compares annual average increase for Germany, Austria and Hungary over two periods: 1851–71 and 1871–1913. The first period's figures are 8.7, 9.0 and 11.6 respectively, compared with 4.5, 3.2 and 2.0 for the second.<sup>42</sup> The same applies in the case of lignite production in Austria and Hungary with 9.0 and 11.6 percent during the first period compared with 4.5 and 6.5 for the second, when an almost inevitable decline in percentage figures is emphasised by the depression which according to Gross started in 1873 and did not finally lift until 1896. Then in the case of Germany R. Fremdling notes the stimulus to the engineering and metallurgical industries. Between 1838 and 1845 only 29.1 percent of the 175 locomotives purchased by the Prussian Railways were manufactured domestically; all the rest were imported from Belgium, UK and USA. But over the next eight years (1846–53) import substitution made rapid progress and 82.9 percent of requirements (554 locomotives in all) were met by German industry.<sup>43</sup> Again whereas only 10.2 percent of the stock of rails on the Prussian Railways was of German origin in 1843 the proportion rose to 48.4 percent in 1853 and 85.4 in 1863 (the balance accounted for by Belgium and the UK). However it is worth adding that the success of the iron and steel

producers in Germany came in part through cartelisation, especially marked in the later decades. Vertical integration became popular because it allowed manufacturers to get their inputs at cost rather than the higher cartel price; it also increased efficiency and lowered the riskiness of introducing capital-intensive methods.<sup>44</sup> It was again the stimulus of the railway to domestic industry (backed up by an obligation to use home manufactures wherever possible) that led S.M.Eddie to suggest that 'the activity of the state in promoting railroads was more important to the growth of Hungarian industry in the late 1880s and the 1890s than was any direct industrialisation programme either at that time or later'.<sup>45</sup>

The significance of the railway for the growth and siting of industry can be seen very clearly in big cities like Budapest where manufactures showed a clear preference for lineside sites and neighbourhoods with railway stations in close proximity (Figure 4.3). A radial network embraced the whole country, easing the flow of foodstuffs and raw materials into the capital as well as the distribution of manufactured goods sent out to the provinces. By contrast extension of the railway system to remote districts could make it very difficult for local industries to compete with the larger units in the capital. Such were the differences in opportunities which developers in the peripheral areas had to recognise. A provincial administrator in Danzig, G.von Gossler, belatedly attempted to channel government funds into industrial projects during the 1890s with the emphasis on local linkages and local technical training and research. He was successful with his plan for a technical university in Danzig achieved in 1904 but the prior failure of the steel works in 1901 was a severe blow. Meanwhile East and West Prussia were even further behind. Saxony was in a stronger position: raw materials were relatively plentiful and where there was a long-standing tradition in metal-working and textiles. The policy of the state government in Saxony was more sympathetic than its Prussian counterpart to the construction of railways to stimulate local industry and as in Bohemia a widely-dispersed engineering industry emerged. 'All the towns of the Ore Mountains (Erzgebirge) show a rapid growth in population beginning with the year of their connection to the railway system'.<sup>46</sup> Towns at railway junctions seem to have developed

**Figure 4.3:** Evolution of industrial zones in Budapest in relation to the railways



A Location of industrial zones 1870–1970

B Industrial structures c. 1970

Source: I.Bencze and E.V.Tajti (1972) Budapest: an industrial-geographical approach (Budapest: Hungarian Academy of Sciences).

most rapidly, for example Aue where the line from Chemnitz (Karl Marx Stadt) built in 1875, intersected the earlier link between the coalfield of Zwickau and the ironworkings of Schwarzenberg. The successful textile machinery works of E.Gessner was joined by other enterprises many of them started by former Gessner employees: in 1905 there were twelve engineering firms in the town employing nearly two thousand people.

On the whole railways permitted industrial linkages over considerable distances and then enabled the producers who could generate economies of scale to distribute their products over a very wide area. Perverse rate fixing, as in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where basic charges were much higher than in Hungary and increased disproportionately with distance, was fortunately rare. Slovenia provides an interesting example of the variable impact of the railway on local industrial prospects as resources had now to be appraised in a wider context.<sup>47</sup> A cotton textile industry started in 1828 as a result of the import

of Egyptian cotton through Trieste, but the opening of the Vienna-Trieste Sudbahn in 1854 exposed the industry to competition from the Czech Lands, with negative effects that were also seen in the local glass industry dating back to 1824. However the railway provided the opportunity for woodcutting on a large scale and the papermaking industry around Laibach became profitable enough to attract Viennese as well as local capital and so modernise its operations in the 1870s. Again, the local coal was sufficient to resuscitate the traditional iron industry on the basis of raw material from the Styrian orefield and markets in the Trieste shipyards. The major development was the Assling (Jesenice) steelworks in 1891, but there was also some modernisation and expansion of the Trifain (Trbovlje) coal mines which had remained in a depressed state since the decline of the sugar refining industry. In 1873 a joint stock company was formed with the assistance of Wienerbankverein and the railway became the most important customer. And as a result of the coal supply the glass-blowing industry was able to switch from potash to gas.

It is also worth noting that the construction of the Nordbahn arose out of the desire by the Rothschilds' Creditanstalt of Vienna to link up with the metallurgical industries of Moravia and the salt mines of Silesia. The same concern later struck out eastwards to Transylvania in order to stimulate industry in a province where the lack of navigable rivers had previously inhibited large scale development and forced the farmers to concentrate on the export of livestock. The railway reached Karlsburg (Alba Iulia) in 1857 and from this trunk line a branch was thrown off from Deva to the coal mines of Petroseny (Petrosani) which began their rapid growth. The railways allowed some local linkage of coal and iron ore and furnaces at Calan, Nadrag, Ohaba Bistra (Otelu Rosu) and Vaidahunyad (Hunedoara), some with histories stretching back into the charcoal era, were able to produce on a large scale for the Budapest steel mills and engineering works. The Rothschilds' railway enterprise Staatseisenbahngesellschaft (STEG) was also involved in the Resiczabanya (Resita) metallurgical works which developed steel making and engineering branches. In fact this is an interesting example of the importance of the railway for an individual plant.

Development at Resiczabanya, on the basis of local field and raw materials, meant initial marketing difficulties. Some 1,500 peasants were employed in carting finished goods (metal and engineering products) as well as the iron ores obtained at Vasko (Ocna de Fier) near Bogsan (Bocsa). In the 1872 Resiczabanya's first steam locomotive was despatched to Vienna for exhibition with the aid of twenty-four pairs of oxen. The engine was hauled across rough country to Oravicza on the railway built to connect the Steyerlakanina coalfield with the river Danube at Bazias. In 1873 however a narrow gauge line was built to Bogsan from where a standard gauge connection led on to Temesvar and Budapest: the Bogsan-Resiczabanya line was converted to standard gauge in 1909, although narrow gauge lines were still needed locally to bring coal from Secu and manganese from Delinesti directly to the works and to take the iron ore of Vasko to the main line at Bogsan. With this network of local industrial lines as well as the connections with the outside world the importance of carting declined. The same evolution pattern applied to links between Resiczabanya to Steyerlakanina as the estate road leading directly south to Steyerlakanina through Krassova (Carasova) was supplemented by a devious rail link through Ovavicza (a distance of 125 km. compared with 25 km. by road). And around Steyerlakanina itself a network of narrow gauge railways was put together to handle the mineral and timber traffic.

## NOTES

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# 5

## Settlement Geography and a General Assessment

### POPULATION AND SETTLEMENT

It is by no means easy to establish the population of Eastern Europe during the nineteenth century. Reliable figures for the Balkans are not available before the last quarter of the century and the figures presented in [Table 5.1](#) cover substantial areas outside the region (the western sections of Austria and Germany) while excluding Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Russian Poland. Furthermore comparable figures for specific years can only be obtained in some cases based on adjustments of census figures according to natural increase. But tentatively it may be claimed that the population of the region increased by 18.2 percent between 1870 and 1890 and by 26.6 percent over the following twenty years. For both periods the rates of growth in the Balkans were higher than in Austria-Hungary and Germany, though not by large margins. The fall in mortality resulted in rising rates of natural increase which reached 18.3 per thousand in Bulgaria and 15.8 in Serbia between 1900 and 1909. In all countries except Bulgaria the birth rate fell from 1880–9 to 1900–9 but not rapidly enough to match the falling death rate ([Table 5.2](#)). The demographic transition began earlier in the north.<sup>1</sup> In Upper Silesia for example the mortality level declined around 1860 and mortality peaks were greatly reduced, thanks to progress in controlling certain infectious diseases. However rates of fertility and natural increase remained high for some time and the delayed response by the birth rate to falling mortality levels seems to have had an

Table 5.1: Population growth, 1870–1910

| Country/<br>Group                        | Population (millions) in: |                |                | Growth (percent): |               |
|--|---------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
|  | 1870                      | 1890           | 1910           | 1870-<br>1890     | 1890-<br>1910 |
| <u>Germany &amp;<br/>Austria-Hungary</u> | 76.95*                    | 90.72          | 114.39         | 17.9              | 26.1          |
| Austria                                  | 20.38*                    | 23.71          | 28.57          | 16.3              | 20.5          |
| Germany                                  | 41.06                     | 49.43          | 64.93          | 20.4              | 31.4          |
| Hungary                                  | 15.51                     | 17.58          | 20.89          | 13.3              | 18.8          |
| <u>Balkans</u>                           | 9.04*                     | 10.93*         | 14.28*         | 20.9              | 30.6          |
| Bulgaria                                 | 2.75*                     | 3.27*          | 4.34           | 18.9              | 32.7          |
| Romania                                  | 4.60*                     | 5.50*          | 7.03*          | 19.6              | 27.8          |
| Serbia                                   | 1.69*                     | 2.16*          | 2.91*          | 27.8              | 34.7          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                             | <b>85.99*</b>             | <b>101.65*</b> | <b>128.67*</b> | <b>18.2</b>       | <b>26.6</b>   |

\* Calculated from the nearest available census figure on the basis of natural increase figures. Emigration is not taken into account.

Source: B.R.Mitchell (1980) European historical statistics 1750–1875 (London: Macmillan).

economic basis. Non-agricultural employment in the towns induced rural-urban migration to such an extent that fertility controls were not needed: migration from the Silesian countryside was great enough to induce a rise in agricultural wages until 1900. The urban areas showed higher rates of fertility and natural increase than the rural districts and the growth in the labour supply encouraged further industrial development.

### Migration

Population movement thus appears fundamental for the late nineteenth century. All over Eastern Europe people were leaving the rural areas. Rural-urban migration developed within the various city-regions but there was considerable long-wave migration too, reflecting the variations in the rate of urban-industrial growth and the continuing scope for rural colonisation in the steppelands of Baragan and Dobrogea.

N.Todorov has described the migrations from the Balkan Mountains, Macedonia and Thrace by people wishing to take up farming in Dobrogea or to engage in commerce at the famous Bazargic fair.<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere some growth of rural population was achieved when people were able to take up seasonal work in factories, forests and mines and retain their home in the countryside. Indeed a little-explored feature of industrial development at this time was the way that it continued to integrate with a rural way of life despite the factory system. New technology made it appropriate to substitute servile labour for free wage labour, quite apart from reformist pressures with a humanitarian inspiration. Landowners could no longer afford to maintain a mix of agricultural and industrial enterprises by exploiting their feudal privileges even assuming managerial skills and access to capital. Peasants could not be coerced into performing transport services with their own draught animals but they could still take on such work in return for wages. W.Długoborski remarks that in transport of mining-smelting products 'the owners of mines and iron works used almost exclusively hired peasant draught-horse service' and for some peasants this activity became their main source of income, relegating agriculture to a secondary role.<sup>3</sup> Meanwhile landless peasants or smallholders who did not possess their own draught animals would tend to take up work in the mines and factories themselves in view of the higher wages and better conditions of employment compared with labouring on the large agricultural estates. Initially the employment opportunities would be greatest in close proximity to the new industrial installations but with the improvements in transport and particularly with the arrival of the railways the labour catchment increased. Thus in 1848 76.5 percent of workers in the Mährische-Ostrau (Ostrava) coalfield came from an area within fifty kilometres, compared with 17.0 percent for adjacent regions and 6.5 for other regions of Austria, but in 1879 the comparable figures were 38.0, 28.5 and 33.5 respectively. With these greater distances there would have to be migration (weekly, seasonal but also permanent) to the place of work where the demand for new accommodation would generate employment in service industry and increase the flow of workers from agriculture.

Table 5.2: Natural increase of population, 1820–1909

|           | Austria |      |      | Bulgaria |      |      | Germany |      |      | Hungary |      |      | Romania |      |      | Serbia |      |      |
|-----------|---------|------|------|----------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|---------|------|------|--------|------|------|
|           | A       | B    | C    | A        | B    | C    | A       | B    | C    | A       | B    | C    | A       | B    | C    | A      | B    | C    |
| 1820-1829 | 39.5    | 28.2 | 11.3 |          |      |      | 38.3    | 25.0 | 13.3 |         |      |      |         |      |      |        |      |      |
| 1830-1839 | 38.2    | 32.6 | 5.6  |          |      |      | 36.1    | 27.9 | 8.2  |         |      |      |         |      |      |        |      |      |
| 1840-1849 | 38.3    | 33.0 | 5.3  |          |      |      | 36.0    | 26.8 | 9.2  |         |      |      |         |      |      |        |      |      |
| 1850-1859 | 37.7    | 32.1 | 5.6  |          |      |      | 35.4    | 26.6 | 8.8  |         |      |      |         |      |      |        |      |      |
| 1860-1869 | 38.5    | 30.4 | 8.1  |          |      |      | 37.0    | 26.4 | 10.6 | 41.3    | 32.8 | 8.5  | 32.7    | 26.5 | 6.2  | 44.6   | 30.4 | 14.2 |
| 1870-1879 | 39.2    | 31.5 | 7.7  |          |      |      | 35.2    | 27.3 | 7.9  | 43.4    | 40.7 | 2.7  | 34.6    | 30.3 | 4.3  | 40.9   | 34.5 | 6.4  |
| 1880-1889 | 38.0    | 29.5 | 8.5  | 36.7     | 18.1 | 18.6 | 37.0    | 25.3 | 11.7 | 44.3    | 33.3 | 11.0 | 41.3    | 28.2 | 13.1 | 45.0   | 25.8 | 19.2 |
| 1890-1899 | 37.1    | 27.0 | 10.1 | 39.8     | 25.9 | 13.9 | 36.1    | 22.5 | 13.6 | 40.8    | 30.4 | 10.4 | 40.6    | 29.6 | 11.0 | 41.5   | 27.1 | 14.4 |
| 1900-1909 | 34.9    | 23.7 | 11.2 | 41.4     | 23.1 | 18.3 | 33.6    | 19.3 | 14.3 | 37.1    | 25.8 | 11.3 | 39.8    | 25.7 | 14.1 | 39.4   | 23.6 | 15.8 |

A Births per thousand of the population: annual average

B Ditto deaths

C Ditto natural increase

Source: B.R.Mitchell (1980) European historical statistics 1750–1975 (London: Macmillan) 114–29.

On the other hand peasants in villages situated near to mines and factories could remain in agriculture, even after the railway had reduced the opportunities for carting, by renting rooms to factory workers and by supplying goods to the expanding local markets. For as the population of the industrial centres increased there were stronger local food markets for the farmers to supply: the peasant economy could compete with landowners as well as with traders who brought in rural products over greater distances. However the possibilities for continuing agriculture near to industrial settlements were reduced by pollution and by opportunities for a change in land use. Where the land contained limestone, fire clay, gravel or some other material the peasant could open his own quarry or sell the land to another operator. More generally the growth of factories and their infrastructure increased land prices in the immediate vicinity, thus making sale of land for urban development difficult to resist. So the peasantry became the proletariat, but still not a homogenous class: landless peasants became industrial workers but 'rich peasants found their place in new society as independent craftsmen, lower middle-class merchants, tenement-house and restaurant owners'.<sup>4</sup> The peasant producer might survive further from the settlement if he could compete with food brought in by rail from further afield by turning to dairying or vegetable growing. But it was only in the main industrial centres where a radical economic and social change took place and throughout Eastern Europe there are cases of 'industrial-agricultural regions where farming could still profit (from) being very close to industrial works of small to medium size which would not become a threat to farm existence and where slow progress in (the growth of the) railway system helped to establish the local products' market'.<sup>5</sup> Yet stagnation in industry could lead to overpopulation of villages and so impede development of the peasant economy.

However the dominant trend was the movement of younger people into the towns, often taking advantage of the newly-won freedom to work for their own benefit. The importance of the social stimulus may have been all the greater, judging by Obrebski's perceptive comments about village life in Poland where innovations were often resented. For example the group reaction to urban dress was clearly negative.<sup>6</sup> Of course certain improvements in housing did pass through the collective filter

system and became accepted as an enrichment of the traditional cultural pattern. The process of change was hardly painless and elderly people perceived an open revolt by the young against old traditions and despaired at their disappearance: particularly traumatic was the breakdown of the authority of parents and elders and the erosion of the extended household that had previously been the hallmark of the traditional patriarchal family. The father was no longer a symbol of the family group's economic potential and social importance: seasonal migration for wage labour gave independence to individual members and inevitably introduced new social values. The social conflicts of the village in turn may have stimulated a preference for town life and the severing of all links with the village. Advancement in the towns was not constrained by stifling conventions and young people with a peasant background could rise to the middle classes, given suitable education and sponsorship, and so fraternise with elements of the former landowning class whose economic position had been undermined by the loss of serf labour necessitating a transfer to menial employment in the towns. Obrebski's perceptive comments thus provide a sociological perspective which can be set against the much more widely studied economic record of the last hundred years. The unification of urban and rural culture was plainly obstructed by serfdom (making civilisation in Eastern Europe increasingly distinct) but adjustment to the opportunities offered by emancipation has been a long-term process, conditioned by peasant perceptions of the rural milieu as opposed to the urban way of life and by government policy: this has wavered between support for the peasantry, through improvement of their smallholdings and recognition of their culture as the essence of national identity, and incitement to migrate by large scale industrialisation in the towns linked with a collectivisation of agriculture.

### **Emigration**

At the highest level there is the international migration which has already been discussed with reference to the Jews and Russian Poles. In addition however there was some movement into Eastern Europe of Italian decorators and stoneworkers,

many of them finding work in the Habsburg Empire and Romania. Immigrants appear to have acquired skills in the construction industry so as to harmonise employment opportunities with migration preferences. In the other direction there was the flow of emigrants to the New World. J.D.Gould has made a thorough survey of emigration from Europe in the nineteenth century.<sup>7</sup> He sees the constraints inhibiting migration being gradually reduced in the years up to 1914. Particularly important here was the cost and time of travel. The average time taken for the Atlantic voyage in the mid-nineteenth century was 44 days for sailing ships and 14 for steamers, but steamer services continued to accelerate and the fastest times came down to 9.7 days in 1875, 7.6 in 1890 and 4.5 in 1914. There was a saving in cost to say nothing of reduced 'opportunity cost' through loss of work during the voyage, and also the value of reassurance arising from reliable steamer schedules after the uncertainties of voyages by sailing ships with all the hardship and boredom arising from long delays due to bad weather. Information came to a large extent from printed material which was being distributed to an increasingly literate population; it also arose through overseas contacts developing as a result of trade. On all these counts (publishing, literacy and trade) it would be reasonable to suppose that the higher income countries would export a larger proportion of their population and hence the tendency of the emigration phenomenon to follow the process of modern economic growth across the face of Europe. In Eastern Europe knowledge of New World opportunities was quite limited until late in the century, while village communities remained strong and administrative impediments could make it difficult to obtain passports. However there were considerable variations in the extent of emigration even in the years immediately before the First World War when some countries were still not as 'emigration saturated' as some western countries had been decades earlier. Also the rate of return migration was relatively high in some parts of Eastern Europe. Some two-thirds of all Bulgarians, Serbs and Montenegrans in the United States were temporary sojourners rather than long-term settlers (compared with nearly one half for Austria, one third for Hungary and only one fifth for Germany). East European settlers found it hard to identify

culturally and linguistically with the New World while the more limited opportunities for seasonal migration within Europe meant an Atlantic crossing even for a short spell of work away from home. Although the bonds of the village community loosened in the late nineteenth century the importance of peasant farms ensured a strong link with the land, except in Romania where the greater prominence of estates may account for the lower level of return migration: just 18 percent.

In Hungary J. Puskas has identified a period of 'full-fledged mass migration' from 1899 to 1913 which developed out of the preparations made over preceding decades.<sup>8</sup> The average annual rate (per thousand of the total population) was 2.7 for 1899–1903, 6.4 for 1904–8 and 4.5 for 1909–13. However only in one year (1905) was emigration heavy enough to cancel out all the natural increase, and except for the peak years of 1904–8 the loss of natural increase ranged from a third to a fifth. It seems that emigration fever developed most strongly in peripheral parts of the country, especially Slovakia, followed by western Croatia and southern Transylvania. These emphases cannot be correlated with variations in the population/resource ratio. Rather it seems that the areas far from the industrial pull of Budapest were most prominent. But this is only a credible argument if it is seen as a reluctance to move to an urban life-style and a preference for a country home which was thought to be attainable with money earned through a temporary stay in America with its relatively high wages. It is also likely that emigration was strongest in some peripheral areas because of contacts across the frontier with Czechs, Germans and Poles who had been keen to emigrate at an earlier date. However the emigration habit gradually became more widespread because the eight districts that accounted for half the migrants in 1900–1 generated only one fifth in 1910–11 after a decade when the total number of migrants rose by 70 percent. But the peripheral bias was still quite strong if only because passports were more difficult to obtain in lowland regions where cheap wage labour was wanted by the estates. In fact it was largely because of the fears of industrialists and landowners over labour supply that politicians were inclined to talk emotively of 'ghost villages' and the progressive feminisation of rural communities. Even if the migrants returned home they might be corrupted by the



international ideal of the New World and so become 'the incendiaries of passions and disaffections'.<sup>9</sup> Yet in view of the failure of industrialisation to keep pace with the demographic boom emigration helped to reduce poverty and the money sent home was of great economic importance. There was no case for the restriction of migration, which had been common under mercantilism, and the governments of Austria and Hungary aimed at supervising the emigration process with an emphasis on Fiume (Rijeka) rather than Bremen and Hamburg. Nevertheless there was some feeling of failure at the volume of emigration and more thought was given by political leaders to the problems of the landless agrarian proletariat.

### Urban growth and town planning

There was a rapid growth in the population of the towns arising from industrial development and the growth of commerce in the late nineteenth century. The traditional country fairs continued, although they tended to become more specialised as merchants dealt in specific products of the peasant economy and marketed these goods at fairs up and down the country throughout the year. Local weekly market trade also prospered, for it was quite crucial for the supply of foodstuffs to the growing cities: the problem of high food prices noted in Buda and Pest in 1852 was dealt with by providing new market places and removing the restrictions which limited the trading to two days per week. Peddling also persisted through the turn of the century. Slovaks would market linen cloth from their home villages right across the central and southern parts of Hungary and in some cases crossed the frontiers of the Habsburg Empire to sell their wares in Romania and the Russian Empire. A relatively new development however was specialised trading from fixed shops. There was evidently some such trade in exotic goods (dyes, spices and sugar) in the eighteenth century but the late nineteenth century shows a marked increase in scale with emphasis on foodstuffs and on four groups of industrial products: textiles; steel and iron-mongery; pottery china and glass; and haberdashery and fancy goods. Several factors account for this trend. First of all the truck system was losing ground in the nineteenth century and eventually it was

prohibited outright. Agricultural labourers ceased to be paid in kind and hence there was a growing demand for shops selling groceries and miscellaneous goods. 'Small shops appeared with resilient promptitude where they were needed by the population which they could then serve regardless of the weather and the time of day'.<sup>10</sup> There would be a considerable increase in the number of general stores in the towns and the appearance of shops in villages where there had been none before. Secondly however the introduction of mass-production techniques in industry paved the way for an increase in specialised trading. Merchants were no longer involved in the production process (traditionally in finishing) and the increasing availability of standardised products, branded and packaged ready for sale, meant that the trader needed relatively little expertise in manufacturing. Special shops therefore tended to replace small industries which had previously been in direct contact with consumers. Finally the great improvements in transport, with railway systems complemented by country carriers, made it relatively easy for goods to be distributed from a factory or agricultural district to a chain of retail outlets. Of course the provision of retail trade establishments showed considerable variations and data for the different parts of the Habsburg Empire in 1902 indicates a much better level of provision for the Czech Lands than for more backward parts of the empire such as Bucovina, Galicia and especially Dalmatia. And the disparities tend to be rather greater for specialised shops than for shops dealing in foodstuffs and miscellaneous items.

#### Railways and urban development

The railway was an important factor in the uneven process of urban development since the best-placed cities would, arguably, be able to increase their size and influence as the railway handled industry's new materials and finished products more efficiently than before and made medium—and long-distance passenger movements to large cities more feasible. Empirical work in Poland demonstrates that towns at nodal points on the railway system invariably developed quite rapidly while small towns served by a single link were less dynamic.<sup>11</sup> This point can be expressed in more sophisticated terms through the

disproportionate growth of the main regional centres which were the focal points for the evolution of the railway system in the first place. Thus the railway development in the eastern regions of Germany was drawn to Königsberg (Kaliningrad) and Posen (Poznan) whose production and trade functions were greatly strengthened as the east became more closely integrated into the German economy. By comparison the smaller towns did not have any great potential. The small agricultural centres (Ackerburgstädte) that emerged in the early nineteenth century became increasingly less dynamic as the century wore on. Urbanisation levels were quite low in the east as a whole: 26.9 percent in 1816, falling to 22.9 in 1840 (after a rapid growth in the rural population) and then advancing slowly to 24.2 in 1871 and 33.7 in 1910.<sup>12</sup> These figures yield values of only 96, 84, 73 and 71 respectively in relation to the Prussian average of 100. This relative inferiority also applied to the spacing of towns, for the area of land per town exceeded the Prussian average by 26 percent in 1816 and 1840 but by 28 percent in 1871 and 33 in 1910, and in average size values of 84, 74, 65 and 53 emerged.

At the same time the railway could be used for suburban movements and hence the outward spread of the great cities was stimulated. And in a sense of course the railway necessitated such a suburban explosion through the heavy demands made on land in city centres for construction of stations, yards, depots and warehouses. In the case of Berlin the change was all the more dramatic because improvements in urban transport had for long been delayed by a restrictive monopoly on carriage operation. Horse-drawn omnibuses were introduced in the 1840s but even so 'the size of the city seems to have been pressing against the limits of the technologies of local transportation'.<sup>13</sup> The railways showed little initial interest in commuter traffic but a Ringbahn was completed in 1877 and supplemented by the Stadtbahn in 1882. The main line Dresdener and Nordbahn companies also started to stimulate commuter traffic in the late 1870s through the construction of suburban stations following the precedent of Lichterfeld station, built by the promoter of the surrounding suburb. Of course for suburban transport there was hardly a railway monopoly as the network was rarely developed specifically for suburban services while the priority for long-distance trains made the railway

inconvenient for cross-city movements until rapid transit systems were built. The link between transport services and suburban growth is to be seen much more clearly through the tramways. This theme has been explored by F.W.Carter in the context of Prague and the changing distribution pattern of workers' residences brought out for one of the city's leading employers.<sup>14</sup>

In view of the emergence of a considerable middle-class population in the commercial and industrial centres the railway was also able to modify the urban geography through increased access to the holiday resorts. Although there is not the same emphasis on coastal resort towns as in Western Europe the mountain climatic stations and health resorts experienced considerable growth. One example is the old mining and metallurgical centre of Zakopane in the Tatra. This was already quite well-established before the railway arrived from Cracow (Krakow) and Neumarkt (Nowy Targ) in 1899. In 1873 one Dr. T.Chatubinski of Warsaw began what turned out to be annual visits 'bringing many distinguished friends for rest, recreation and the simple life'.<sup>15</sup> Sanitary conditions were not at first suitable for invalids but convalescents were recommended to make the journey to Zakopane and, as further interest developed through the promotion of the Tatra through picture and prose, Zakopane was given the status of health resort under the control of a municipal council with power to levy rates. The railway allowed the potential to be more fully exploited and the early twentieth century years saw Zakopane established as a important tourist resort and as a curative centre for pulmonary and tubercular diseases. The road network improved and hotels and cafes multiplied, many of the buildings adopted a distinctive local style of architecture developed by S. Witkiewicz from the traditional Gorale cottage. A water supply was organised in 1906 and a hydro-electric generating station at nearby Kuznice began to supply current in 1920.

Railway building also affected the port towns, for those which were first to benefit from rail communications had the opportunity to capitalise on what was at the very least a short-term advantage over their rivals. One such case involves the Adriatic coast where Dubrovnik continued its relative decline on account of the delay in opening up the hinterland by railways, in

contrast to Fiume and Trieste. Railways reached Sebenico (Sibenik) and Spalato (Split) from Bosnia and Serbia via Prijedor (narrow gauge) and from Croatia via Ogulin (standard gauge). But the most important links were even further north. The railway brought rapid growth to Trieste, but more important for Eastern Europe was the expansion at the now-Yugoslav port of Fiume (Rijeka), with a ten-fold increase in its export trade between 1870 and 1910. It is doubtful if this commercial and industrial boom would have taken place if the Magyars had not been intent on developing their own rail system in preference to linking up with the Sudbahn for Trieste. A link between Fiume and Trieste was eventually completed but high freight rates limited its importance. The railway eventually arrived in Dubrovnik (1906) but it was only a narrow gauge line, part of the Bosnian system, and quite inadequate to allow Dubrovnik to recapture its once extensive Balkan and Pannonian hinterland. Nevertheless a number of shipowners continued to be based in Dubrovnik and in terms of shipowning the harbour at Gruz, adjacent to the Medieval port, emerged as Yugoslavia's leading port. However it was reduced to second place by Ploce on the Neretva, a modern port built in 1937 and provided with a railway connection in 1940 (now converted to standard gauge and electrified). There is still one shipping company based in Dubrovnik and the range of industries processing local raw materials (both agriculture and fishing) is considerable, but increasingly the town's maritime and commercial skills are related to the tourist industry.

It remains a major task to investigate the development of the urban network in Eastern Europe through census searches and numerous calculations to allow for changes in boundaries and status through time. Even monographs dealing with individual countries are few and far between.<sup>16</sup> But a broad impression may be gained from the list prepared by E.Reclus for the third volume of his Nouvelle géographie universelle published in Paris in 1878. The census sources all date to c.1870. Berlin was the only million city (1.08), followed by seven cities with a population exceeding 100,000: Warsaw (0.34 million), Budapest (0.30), Bucharest and Breslau (each 0.24), Prague (0.22), Dresden (0.20) and Leipzig (0.13). Another fifteen cities fell into the 50,000– 100,000 bracket: in descending order—Danzig

(Gdansk), Iasi, Halle, Stettin (Szczecin), Galati, Chemnitz (Karl Marx Stadt), Brünn (Brno), Szeged, Posen, Szabadka (Subotica), Cracow, Łodz, Pilsen (Plzen), Reichenberg (Liberec) and Sarajevo. Then 37 towns registered a population between 25,000 and 50,000. Thus the number of large towns was small: only 23 with a population exceeding 50,000 of which the majority (18) were in the north. In areas where the railway had made an appearance the main administrative and commercial centres were many times larger than the smaller towns in the same province: despite industrial growth towns like Łodz and Reichenberg were small compared with their regional capitals—Warsaw and Prague respectively.

Primacy was not caused solely by the railway of course, for in Serbia in 1866 Belgrade was the largest town (24.8 thousands) and despite its peripheral position it was already nearly four times larger than Pozarevac (6.9), Sabac (6.5) and Kragujevac (6.4). But differences increased later in the century and some interesting evidence of differential rates of change comes from Croatia-Slavonia where the population of the seventeen towns almost doubled from 144.7 thousands in 1869 to 221.3 in 1910 (Table 5.3)<sup>17</sup> However the towns with more than 20,000 population in 1910 (Osceck and Zagrab) grew by 174.5 percent while the four towns in the lowest category (below 5,000) managed only a 21.0 percent increase. The performance of the largest city, Zagrab, was particularly impressive with a 3.7 fold increase: it was 2.6 times larger in population than the second city in 1910 whereas in 1869 the factor was only 1.2. Indeed Zagrab's tendency to exhibit primate city tendencies is underscored by the fact that in 1869 the sixteen other towns in the province were in total 45.7 thousand (94.0 percent) larger than expected according to the rank-size rule whereas in 1910 they were 31.2 thousands (21.3 percent) smaller. In general the shares of employment in industry, commerce and other non-agricultural occupations fell from Group 4 to Group 1 whereas for agriculture the pattern was reversed. Also it is evident that the larger towns had the higher proportions of ethnic minorities (Germans, Hungarians and Jews) and the higher proportions of people with religious affiliations other than Catholic and Orthodox.

Table 5.3: Urban structure of Croatia-Slavonia 1869-1910

|   | Urban groups(a): |      |      |       | Total |
|---|------------------|------|------|-------|-------|
|   | 1.               | 2.   | 3.   | 4.    |       |
| Total population 1869 (thousands)               | 11.9             | 18.3 | 46.9 | 37.6  | 114.7 |
| Total population 1910 (thousands)               | 14.4             | 31.2 | 72.5 | 103.2 | 221.3 |
| Percentage growth 1869-1910                     | 21.0             | 70.5 | 54.6 | 174.5 | 92.9  |
| Employment in industry and crafts (percent)     | 36.8             | 29.2 | 31.7 | 36.9  | 34.1  |
| Employment in commerce, finance and trade       | 15.3             | 15.3 | 16.1 | 20.3  | 17.9  |
| Employment in agriculture                       | 22.9             | 24.7 | 25.8 | 7.4   | 16.8  |
| Native language not Serbo-Croat (percent)       | 13.2             | 15.7 | 26.3 | 29.0  | 23.2  |
| Religion other than Orthodox and Roman Catholic | 4.2              | 5.1  | 7.0  | 8.6   | 7.4   |

All figures are percentages except where otherwise stated a Constitution of Groups as follows:

Group 1: towns with population below 5,000 in 1910: Buccari (Bakar), Kreuz (Križevci), Peterwardein (Petrovaradin), Zeng (Senj).

Group 2: towns with population between 5,000 and 7,999 in 1910: Belovar (Bjelovar), Karlowitz (Sr, Karlovci), Petrinia (Petrinja), Pozega (Pozega), Sissek (Sisak).

Group 3: towns with population between 8,000 and 19,999 in 1910: Brod, Karlstadt, (Karlovac) Kopreinitz (Koprivnica), Mitrovitz (Sr. Mitrovica), Semlin (Zemun), Varasdin (Varazdin).

Group 4: town with population of 20,000 and over: Eszek (Osijek), Zagrab (Zagreb)

Source: I.Karaman (1979) (note 76).

The frontier town is a theme worth investigating in the East European context. While such towns stood to benefit from international trade and military garrisons these functions did not normally compensate for the restriction of the hinterland for normal commercial dealings. The transformation in the fortunes of cities like Brasso (Brasov) and Cracow since the First World War provokes curiosity over the constraints imposed by the imperial frontiers before 1918. Cracow was once the Polish capital but fell under Austrian occupation, with the Russian frontier only ten kilometres away, as a result of the Polish partitions. As a Free City (1815–1846) Cracow became an important centre for international trade while the emphasis on Polish culture brought young students from Warsaw and caused a number of monasteries from the Prussian and Russian parts of Poland to relocate in the city. The absorption of Cracow into the Habsburg Empire in 1846 had an adverse effect initially but the system of local government worked out in 1866 was conducive to a further upsurge in the city's religious and cultural role, attracting a steady stream of pilgrims and tourists. Growth was constrained by a lack of industry. There was substantial manufacturing capacity south of the river but within the city limits the secondary sector was concerned with small factories and workshops for food processing, paper/printing and textiles/clothing, the latter being particularly prominent in the Jewish area of Kazimierz. The political climate was not really conducive to industry because the city was populated with Polish landowners and officers rather than entrepreneurs. There were few opportunities for local peasants to swell the ranks of the proletariat and most migrants from the countryside went abroad to Germany or America. There were few openings in administration since Lemberg (Lvov) rather than Cracow was the centre of the province of Galicia. However the main difficulty, which also had a bearing on the modest industrial establishment, was the acute shortage of space in the city because of the Austrian decision to maintain Cracow as a major military fortress with a three-storey vertical limit to building and substantial loss of land through the accommodation of the railway within the city walls. Only in 1910 was there a dramatic change with a growth in the administrative area from just six square kilometres to 45, so that population more than doubled to 200,000 by 1914. Garden suburbs were laid out to balance



the congestion in the core and the social structure was modified, although the bourgeois character of Cracow did not disappear entirely, continuing to exert an influence in Polish politics to the present. Clearly there is scope for more profiles of individual cities to bring out the full complexity of the urban geography.

#### Town planning

Although few studies are available in English there is no reason to suppose that the structural development of the East European city significantly differed from the western pattern, with the emergence of residential areas homogenous in status and the growth of city centre land uses which required the redevelopment of slum properties and the displacement of the population to suburban locations. The role of the railway was very important through the redevelopment directly triggered off by its own land demands and through the attraction of industry to certain areas where reasonably cheap land lay adjacent to the tracks (already noted for Budapest). However the principal agents of urban development were the local authorities and their activities in controlled expansion have attracted much attention from students of planning history. In Germany the rational development of the street system was facilitated by the expropriation law (Enteignungsgesetz) of 1874 and the law on street lines (Fluchtliniengesetz) of 1875. New main streets could be laid out on the desired alignments with building, draining and lighting costs falling to the owners of the frontage sites, but there was no provision for the compulsory building of side streets and private developers were therefore free to line the new streets with tenement blocks (Mietskasernen), rising to the maximum height permitted under the building regulations and extending well back from the streets through a succession of courtyards.

In his epic work Moderne Stadterweiterungen of 1876 (providing a handbook for the emerging profession of town planning, combining the interests of architects, engineers and public health experts) G.Baumeister shows that during the five year period 1868–72 population increased by 4.6 percent while dwellings increased by only 2.4 percent and the built-up area by just 1.0. He also drew attention to the insanitary conditions

prevailing in the Mietskasernen and the inadequate areas of open space with five metre square courts prescribed in the interests of fire-fighting without regard to the need for daylight and ventilation. It was common for the heights of buildings to be determined by street widths which set the vertical limit. Therefore wider streets allowed more massive tenements. The tenements thus became a feature of working class areas of rapidly growing industrial towns and they contrasted sharply with the villa colonies (Villenkolonien) provided for the wealthy in suburbs like Grönwald in Berlin.<sup>18</sup> Occasionally inspired designs were adopted in Germany and elsewhere as a result of competitions, although these were usually for public buildings and commercial developments as at Pest in 1838 (flood protection works), Berlin in 1858 (town hall and shops) and Karlsbad (Karlovy Vary) in 1861 (colonnades). Some town plans were also sought by competition with the Gross-Berlin plan of 1910 by R.Eberstadt and others the crowning work in a series which also involved Brünn (Brno) in 1861, Budapest (1871), Dessau (1888) and Dresden (1978).

It is notably however that in Silesia the subsidence problem ruled out tall buildings and purchase of large estates by colliery companies (to avoid claims for structural damage) led to a readiness to pander to agrarian instincts and accommodate miners in two storey houses with allotment gardens. More generally the smaller towns were content with two or three storey buildings (Bürgerhauser) which accommodated six families in separate apartments. Dissatisfaction over working class housing was one of the forces leading to the growth of socialist parties in the late nineteenth century and local authorities responded through new policies of environment control. Concern over public health also required the curbing of the worst excesses of the Mietskasernen although the stipulation of minimum densities prevented the ideal of the single family house from being realised until differential building regulations in the 1890s (following pressure from housing reformers and advocates of more aesthetic approach to planning) allowed lower densities in the outer zones. Furthermore there was no general acceptance of the need to ensure minimum provision of open spaces and public buildings like churches and schools. The progressive urban development law (allgemeine Baugesetz)

passed in Saxony was not copied in Prussia, where the Landtag resolutely ignored the demands of the reformers. 'By 1914 a great gulf had opened up between the more enlightened towns and those which remained in the grip of property-owning interests'.<sup>19</sup> Berlin posed serious problems through the grip of land speculators and the lack of unified local government over Greater Berlin until 1920. In view of dissatisfaction over government regulations the garden city movement made its appearance and stimulated a number of model projects. In Dresden craft workshops were provided by K.Schmidt in 1898 and this initiative was extended along garden city lines through the relocation of the workshops and housing accommodation to Hellerau in 1907, where four districts were laid out with industry, housing and community facilities.<sup>20</sup> A new community movement (Neue Gemeinschaft) was started in Berlin in 1902, exactly half a century after V.A.Huber had failed with the first cooperative housing reform association in Germany: Berliner gemeinnützige Bau-Gesellschaft. Experience at Hellerau was then used by a cooperative building association in Berlin for the housing project for Falkenberg.

Probably the greatest urban transformations occurred in the Ottoman provinces for at the start of the period there were few signs of modernisation even in the major cities. Bucharest, with a population of some 80,000 in the 1830s, had its wide paved streets and fine houses (usually built of brick plastered over and roofed with sheet iron) 'but a close detailed inspection discovers to the eye many disgusting and mean objects' including miserable huts, shabby outhouses and streets still paved with logs of wood covered with dust and dirt and virtually impassable in wet weather.<sup>21</sup> Water was a great problem for the supply from both local wells and the river Dîmbovita was bad despite the use of filtering stones: nevertheless it was distributed across the city in barrels carried in carts and only the rich could afford to buy water from springs an hour's distance away. However the rise of independent states in the Balkans inevitably meant a growing urban emphasis, particularly evident in the capitals and provincial centres. The growth of a bureaucracy was rapid and its presence was all the more noticeable since national pride required the construction of modern public buildings along spacious boulevards. The towns were agents of

modernisation and national revival. Not only did they increase in number and size but their employment structure showed a tendency to polarise on the secondary and tertiary sectors. Between 1887 and 1910 the share of the active population of Bulgarian towns working in agriculture and forestry decreased from 46.3 percent to 26.6. By contrast industry and building increased from 23.2 percent to 29.2, trade and banking from 2.9 to 6.1, the other professions (including the armed forces and administration) from 7.1 to 10.8.

But impressive public and bank buildings, European-style universities, hotels and theatres, paved streets with electric lights and trams, along with running water and sewer systems constituted just one side of the coin: the other involved intense over-crowding in the poorer districts with few services and generally insanitary conditions. The proportion of the total population living in towns advanced slowly and quite uniformly in all Balkan countries to reach one fifth in Bulgaria and Romania in 1910 and one seventh in Serbia. Yet there were important variations between the Balkan capitals, for in 1910 Bucharest was far larger than either Belgrade or Sofia (341,000 compared with 90,000 and 103,000 respectively) and absorbed a higher percentage of the total urban population (28.5 percent compared with 18.6 and 12.4). A decade earlier the disparities were even greater: Bucharest was 3.9 times the size of Belgrade in 1900 (3.8 in 1910) and 4.1 times the size of Sofia (3.3. in 1910) and in 1890/C.1880 greater still: 4.1/6.6 times the size of Belgrade and 4.9/8.8 times the size of Sofia. The contrasts were further exaggerated by the lower density of settlement in Bucharest, partly a function of the Dîmbovita flood plain in the centre of the city. With 56.1 square kilometres Bucharest was 5.1 times more spacious than Belgrade (10.9 square kilometres) and 8.5 times more than Sofia (6.6). The variations may be attributed largely to the earlier start enjoyed by Bucharest and the more rapid development of a railway network and a complex of modern industries. Sofia was a long-established administrative centre but population fell through plague and the departure of many of the Turks so that its selection as capital of an independent Bulgaria (in preference to Turnovo) was by no means inevitable. And although there was some coal and iron nearby the distance from navigable water and the slow

development of a modern transport system inhibited industrial growth. Belgrade on the other hand was situated on navigable water at the confluence of the Danube and Sava, but it was a border city: 'this precarious location pushed the main railway yards south to Nis and kept the military arsenal with its equally great demand for metal manufacture in Kragujevac',<sup>22</sup>

### GENERAL ASSESSMENT

It does not require great insight to perceive deep contradictions in the geography of Eastern Europe on the eve of the First World War. The application of new technology throughout the economy gave rise to unprecedentedly high levels of output and greatly improved living standards. Yet the improvements in the quality of life were felt most unevenly, for variations in potential resulted in considerable polarisation of investment to bring out growth areas in certain parts of each state and, at a higher level, in some favoured parts of Europe. At the national level the exalted position of Bucharest and the oilfields of the Prahova Valley, within Romania, may be contrasted with the more limited investment in Oltenia and parts of Moldavia: this is reflected in employment opportunities and consequent variations in the price of labour. At the international level the prosperity of Western Europe is evident, although relatively high levels of industrialisation also applied to parts of the northern half of Eastern Europe (especially the Jena-Łodz-Budapest triangle) which could arguably represent an extension of the 'core' of Europe (although statistics are inadequate to delimit a core in terms of investment, production or wage levels with great accuracy). But if cores are inevitable, since potential undoubtedly varies and agglomeration economies encourage concentration in any case, it is a sad reality that peripheries are equally unavoidable. In 1914 parts of Eastern Europe were still protected by relatively poor communications and a strong subsistence element in their agriculture, yet others were well integrated, as in East Prussia and Posen where persistent out-migration (especially of Germans) and run-down of local industry could be seen. There were of course some government programmes to stimulate the periphery (for example in Posen, to make it a more attractive city for Germans to live in) but the

most determined attempts to grapple with economic and social problems of peripheries have been made since the First World War. However the source of the regional development problems in many parts of Eastern Europe, peripheral in both national and international contexts, is to be found in the nineteenth century. The post-1815 rebuff to liberal ideas may have produced a temporary stability but only at the cost of a widening class divide as the elite was required to share power only with a modest middle-class element which prospered under capitalism. The relatively scant rewards for labour meant deprivation for the millions who comprised the rural peasantry and urban proletariat whose bargaining position was for long constrained by overpopulation and reactionary social policies. Since liberals and Utopian socialists made little headway towards creating a harmonious society in European Europe through more enlightened self-interest it is hardly surprising that Marx's community theory of revolution should have envisaged the violent overthrow of the capitalist system. There has been a social revolution in the Eastern core with the growth of organised labour and the concept of the welfare state, and it is in the East European periphery where radical change in the twentieth century has claimed a Marxist inspiration.

An interesting quantitative picture emerges from the GNP estimates provided by P. Bairoch for the period 1860 to 1913 (Table 5.4).<sup>23</sup> Total GNP in the five countries (excluding the Ottoman Empire and Russian Poland) increased more rapidly than in Europe as a whole with 'Eastern Europe's' share increasing from 26.8 percent to 31.2. However this improvement was due entirely to growth in Germany (19.4 percent of European GNP after 14.0 in 1860 and 12.4 in 1830) which more than cancelled out a relative decline in Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Serbia (Romania experienced a very slight improvement). The widening gulf between Austria-Hungary and Germany is worth underlining, for in 1830 both countries accounted for 12.4 percent of European GNP yet over the following eighty years Austria-Hungary's share fell by almost one fifth while Germany's increased by more than half. It is also disturbing to see the combined GNP share for the three Balkan countries slipping from 1.92 percent to 1.72 between 1860 and 1913 when the value of exports from these countries

Table 5.4: Gross national product 1860–1913

|                 | 1860 |       |     |       | 1913 |       |     |       |
|-----------------|------|-------|-----|-------|------|-------|-----|-------|
|                 | A    | B     | C   | D     | A    | B     | C   | D     |
| Austria-Hungary | 10.0 | 10.98 | 288 | 92.9  | 26.0 | 10.14 | 498 | 93.3  |
| Bulgaria        | 0.6  | 0.65  | 210 | 67.7  | 1.3  | 0.49  | 263 | 49.2  |
| Germany         | 12.8 | 14.02 | 354 | 114.2 | 49.8 | 19.37 | 743 | 139.1 |
| Romania         | 0.8  | 0.92  | 200 | 64.5  | 2.4  | 0.95  | 336 | 62.9  |
| Serbia          | 0.3  | 0.35  | 220 | 71.0  | 0.7  | 0.28  | 284 | 53.2  |

A GNP '000 million US dollars

B Percentage share of European total

C GNP per capita US dollars

D Ditto but related to the European average=100

Source: P.Bairoch (1976).

rose from 18.5 million dollars in 1850 (1870 for Bulgaria) to 196.2 million in 1913. Such an anomaly provides encouragement to those who stress the clearly positive role of foreign investment in Hungary, as an impetus to economic development so much so that three-quarters of the country's capital needs came from domestic sources after 1900. Thus Hungary avoided the situation in the Balkans where foreign capital tended to create 'enclaves' linked more closely with foreign markets than with other components of the Balkan economy. The per capita calculations are still more disturbing with Germany's improving position, well above the average for Europe, contrasting with stability in Austria-Hungary and Romania and decline in Bulgaria and Serbia, where growth in per capita GNP was only 0.5 percent per annum compared with 1.0 in Europe and 1.4 in Germany. The polarisation of growth is most impressive and offers some contrast with the years since the Second World War which have seen more movement towards greater equality. For agriculture Eastern Europe as a whole emerged with relatively high stocking levels in relation to crop land, but for crop yield

Germany was consistently above the European average, while Austria came very close to the average (and just exceeded it for barley and wheat) and the other countries were well behind, except in the case of wheat where Hungary was just below and Romania just above (Table 5.5).<sup>24</sup>

In the Balkan countries development was severely handicapped by a formidable range of constraints. Although handicrafts emerged as ancillary activities to agriculture, as they had done in the mountains of Bohemia and Saxony, they showed little sign of moving on to a factory system with full-time employment. In some branches of textiles it is possible to see a spontaneous transition from the domestic scale to workshops and factories, yet with little experience of mechanisation and grave difficulties over power supply it was an uphill task to compete with imported cloth even with the help of tariff protection. The home markets of Balkan countries were not very stimulating because of the small population and low incomes. Yet there was some progress to be made through import substitution even if the change was only a shift from imported cotton cloth to imported yarn. Brewing, flour-milling and sugar production expanded, as did leather-working, footwear and cement although in some cases it was difficult to improve the quality of domestic raw materials. For more than forty years before the First World War Balkan governments tried to encourage manufacturing. In 1873 tax exemptions were granted in Romania and Serbia and these first measures later grew into more comprehensive schemes to stimulate industry including free building land, customs-exempt imported raw materials, concessionary railway freight charges and perhaps production subsidies. Usually there were stipulations over the scale of mechanisation (to ensure a significant level of production), number of employees (usually a 20–25 minimum) and training of native workers. Romanian legislation along these lines dates back to 1887 (Bulgaria in 1897 and Serbia in 1898). The action could not work wonders overnight even if there had been proper coordination of industrial development and tariff policy, for the state had only limited resources and was usually hard-pressed to develop the railway system and the armed forces as well as encourage industry. But in the context of small nation states it represented a significant beginning.



The condition of the rural population of the Balkans was highly unsatisfactory in many ways. Even the more successful peasant families found basic agricultural equipment a heavy drain on their resources and were not immune from falling living standards and from disease like pellagra caused by malnutrition. The long-established pecalbarstvo (seasonal migration to work in the building trade) in Bulgaria and Macedonia was one aspect of the problem of supplementing agricultural incomes which increased through stagnating commodity prices and natural disasters like the phylloxera epidemic. Governments had the option of concentrating more on agriculture, with gradual industrialisation stimulated by rising consumer demand linked with a prosperous agriculture, but it was not a viable strategy. Time was not on the side of the Balkan nations. Strategic considerations necessitated rapid modernisation while commodity price trends offered no guarantee that a more intensive agriculture would generate more valuable export surpluses. Not all countries were suffering acute land hunger and population pressure, for some 350,000 Turks left Bulgaria between 1877 and 1912 while overpopulated provinces like Galicia eventually generated a flood of New World emigrants, but no governments could have been too sanguine about the prospects of agriculture providing higher incomes, for a growing population after allowing for military, transport and welfare programmes.

Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the whole Balkan problem is the deluge of critical comment that usually flows from the pens of economic historians deploring the limited progress. With this eternally negative attitude everything has to be wrong. Yet there was much to impress contemporary observers and the fact that the Balkans remained at the bottom of the per capita income league with high agricultural employment (80 percent compared with 50 in Austria-Hungary and 23 in Germany) does not mean a standstill in any absolute sense. Feudal and non-progressive attitudes are frequently invoked, as in the case of I.T.Berend and G.Ranki who concede that the incentives for development in backward areas were by no means equal but claim that 'responsiveness to the stimuli differed even more radically'.<sup>25</sup> But such implications of gross neglect by national or regional elites are difficult to demonstrate.

**Table 5.5:** Crop yields and stocking levels related to the European average 1909–1913<sup>(a)</sup>

|           | 1909(a)      |      |          |       |        |        | Livestock related to population: |       |       |  |
|-----------|--------------|------|----------|-------|--------|--------|----------------------------------|-------|-------|--|
|           | Crop yields: |      |          | Wheat | Cattle | Horses | Pigs                             | Sheep |       |  |
|           | Barley       | Oats | Potatoes | Rye   |        |        |                                  |       |       |  |
| Austria   | 1.01         | 0.85 | 0.87     | 0.93  | 1.06   | 1.13   | 0.63                             | 1.33  | 0.23  |  |
| Bulgaria  | 0.71         | 0.18 | 0.35     | 0.66  | 0.83   | 0.70   | 0.53                             | 0.72  | 5.34  |  |
| Germany   | 1.38         | 1.31 | 1.20     | 1.22  | 1.67   | 1.09   | 0.70                             | 2.00  | 0.24  |  |
| Hungary   | 0.87         | 0.74 | 0.70     | 0.79  | 0.98   | 1.20   | 1.14                             | 2.15  | 1.09  |  |
| Romania   | 0.68         | 0.63 | 0.75     | 0.62  | 1.01   | 1.29   | 1.15                             | 0.83  | 1.95  |  |
| Europe(b) | 15.0         | 15.0 | 114.4    | 14.9  | 12.8   | 285.0  | 99.0                             | 169.0 | 374.0 |  |

a European average=100. Russian Empire excluded

b Actual values: quintals per hectare for crop yields; animals per '000 of population for livestock

Source: S.M.Eddie (1968) (note 24).

It is refreshing that A.S.Millward and S.B.Saul should acknowledge that 'in the last resort the responsibility for the failure of economic development in the Balkan countries rested not only with their heritage of economic backwardness but with the failure of the major European economies to create in their own interests an international economic system which would have helped such small economies towards economic growth and development'.<sup>26</sup> This was done briefly in the inter-war period by Germany and after the Second World War by the Soviet Union and while the self-interest of both these powers is only too clear the stimulus to the Balkans is equally undeniable.

### NOTES

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3. W.Długoborski (1975) 'Peasant economy in the coal and smelting regions of Middle-East Europe before and during the early period of industrialization' Studia Historicae Oeconomicae, 10, 125–32 (quote p. 129).
4. Ibid, 131.
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# The Era of World War 1914–1945

## 6

# Political Geography

Although a relatively short period, the years from 1914 to 1945 witnessed major upheavals. The political map was transformed by the emergence of nation states which replaced the imperial system, while the necessity of close government involvement with the modernisation process was even more strongly underlined than it had been in the nineteenth century and post-1945 central planning was in a sense anticipated. Eastern Europe continued to absorb influences from both Russia and the west but the prescription for rapid economic advance offered by the Soviet Union was based on a totalitarian communist regime that clashed with the democratic ideals embraced by the west. And despite the liberal-mindedness of the bourgeoisie the necessity to modernise under pressure made for strong central government under monopoly parties.<sup>1</sup> This was becoming clear before the Second World War (well before the Soviet Union imposed its own style of government to enhance security on its vulnerable western frontier) and may perhaps be seen in historical perspective as inevitable. Equally the perpetuation of the Russian Empire as a territorial structure has constrained the freedom of action of the various peoples of Eastern Europe but the pattern of alliances which now binds most of the East European states with their superpower neighbour might well have taken a different form had Germany succeeded in defeating all her enemies of 1914 and so exerted unchallenged control over the Eurasian 'heartland'.

## GERMANY'S WAR AIMS

The Central Powers enjoyed considerable success in the First World War and large areas were occupied in Belgium and France as well as Romania, Russia and Serbia.<sup>2</sup> It is certainly worth considering the political pattern that might have resulted from their total victory. Some of the great powers were drawn into the war to defend the status quo in the Balkans, and envisaged net gains for themselves on a rather pragmatic basis as the hostilities unfurled, but Germany evolved a clear set of 'war aims' which determined her strategy right up to the end of the fighting in 1918. Her ambitions in Western Europe were relatively modest, though nevertheless totally unacceptable to the countries concerned and only capable of realisation through military might. In France, Germany proposed to consolidate the 1870 gains in Alsace-Lorraine with acquisition of the iron ore basin of Longwy-Briey (and ideally to be followed up with a commercial treaty giving Germany access to other French raw materials including bauxite, chromium, nickel and phosphate). Commercial factors were again prominent in Belgium where a customs union and other economic agreements would bring 'a land blessed agriculturally and industrially' into the German power sphere. Colonial interests proposed that the grip on Africa should be extended with the benefit of production from the relatively well-developed Niger and Senegal basins. These could provide surpluses that would help open up Angola and the Congo and lead to a dramatic extension of German territory in South West Africa. German East Africa would be enlarged through the northern part of Mozambique along with Kenya, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Uganda. This represents some modification of original 1914 aims which envisaged German territory stretching continuously from Kenya and Uganda to Lake Chad and Senegal. Additional trading bases would be sought in the Cape Verde and Comoro islands, Djibuti (a counter-weight to Aden) and Madagascar. Elsewhere the consolidation of the Far Eastern interest in New Guinea by North Borneo was considered as was the island base of Reunion in the Indian Ocean. Stronger commercial links with China, Japan and South American countries rounded off the global perspective.



However it was in Eastern Europe and beyond that Germany's war aims were particularly impressive. P. Rohtbach's book Deutschland unter den Weltvölkern raised the general issue of the adequacy of Germany's European base to hold an overseas empire and this question was answered by R.Kjellen's geopolitical perspective: Die Grossmächte der Erden, advocating a federation in Europe under German leadership. It attracted a great deal of interest in academic and political circles before 1914. But for concrete action it is necessary to recall efforts to counteract high American protective tariffs through economic associations that would prepare the ground for an economic unification of Central Europe (Mitteleuropa). The conferences of the Central European Union (Mitteleuropäischer Wirtschaftsverein) were first limited to German and Austria-Hungary but it was intended that the scope would progressively widen to embrace France, Switzerland, Romania and other countries. A broader basis in Europe was seen as a necessary foundation for German world policy and support came from leading figures in German industry as well as agriculture, banking and shipping. In 1912 W.Rathenau, a leading personality in Allgemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft, secured the agreement of Chancellor T.von Bethmann Hollweg for the direction of German policy towards a customs union and the idea was to have a decisive effect on the policy of the German government during the war. Mitteleuropa would be rounded off by the adherence of Greece and Sweden and cemented with the colonial sphere already discussed through naval bases on the Suez-Red Sea route and in West Africa. The net result would be a power greatly in excess of Bismarck's empire and definitely on a level with the UK and USA. Her raw material supplies would have been huge for, to the oil of Galicia, would be added that of the Caucasus, Mesopotamia and Romania while in addition to the iron ore imports from Sweden there would be deliveries from Austria, Caucasus, Katanga, Longwy-Briey, Poland, Turkey and the Ukraine. Foodstuffs from Africa, the Balkans, the Caucasus and the Ukraine would greatly augment existing supplies.

There were great opportunities for the Central Powers after Russia collapsed under military pressure and social revolution. The Bolsheviks gained power with the slogan of peace, yet while

they needed an immediate end to hostilities, they could not accept peace at any price. The German government saw the Bolshevik's dilemma and decided to exploit it ruthlessly, in order not only to secure the comprehensive solution in the east for which it had so long been working, but also, by concluding a separate peace with Russia, to decide the issue in the west and thus achieve the whole of their war aims'.<sup>3</sup> Territorial expansion was envisaged not only in Poland but also in the Baltic (Courland, Estonia, and Lithuania), while economic interests in various Russian raw materials including iron ore (Krivoi Rog) and manganese (Chiaturi) created a desire to dominate Georgia and Ukraine.<sup>4</sup> With the key railways under German control and converted to standard gauge, and access assured to ports like Kherson and Poti, these territories could then be seen as a bridge leading on to Central Asia. Equally, by pushing Russia back from the Black Sea her influence in the Balkans would be reduced and Germany's road from 'Berlin to Baghdad' would be more secure. And all this in addition to the short-term advantage of securing grain supplies needed by the Central Powers and particularly by Austria-Hungary. Here the Germans would exploit the ethnic divisions within Russia. As the various national groups broke away from the empire they would be isolated and linked with Germany: thus the whole Ostraum, with its political and economic unity smashed beyond repair, would become part of Germany's hinterland.

Negotiations went ahead at Brest-Litovsk in late 1917/early 1918 leading to the cession of Courland, Lithuania and Poland and also to a separate peace with Ukraine.<sup>5</sup> Although the Germans could claim that the treaty did not infringe Russian ethnic territory the aggressive nature of their designs is hardly deniable. National liberty would not be conferred on the Baltic but rather these territories would be tied to Mitteleuropa (Germany and Austria-Hungary) by treaties that were only nominally international. Furthermore by the middle of 1918 the Germans had pressed beyond the Ukraine to the Caucasus and were beginning to talk of dividing 'Rump Russia' (i.e. the empire with the Baltic, Caucasus, Poland and Ukraine detached) into separate independent states covering Central Russia, Siberia and the South-East (between the Ukraine and the Caspian). Further concern in the west arose from treaties signed with Finland

(Treaty of Berlin) which brought the country into Germany's economic sphere as a supplier of raw materials and with Romania (Treaty of Bucharest) where economic penetration (including interests in the oilfields and transport facilities: the river Danube and both the railway and port installations at Constanta) would be rounded off by territorial concessions to Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria, relating to the Carpathians and Dobrogea respectively. In return for territory in Dobrogea Bulgaria would be required to make concessions in Serbian territory which it was then occupying: the Bor mines were to be transferred to German ownership along with the railway to Thessaloniki. It became clear to the United States, already disappointed by German rejection of President Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' (1918), that there was no effective opposition in the Reich to a policy based purely on power and self-interest. It was at this juncture that America dropped all hesitation and mobilised every resource to defeat Germany.

It is interesting to speculate whether Germany could have succeeded in her plans if the offensive on the western front had been successful and if America had decided against intervention. For while Germany was undoubtedly the major force among the Central Powers it would be unreasonable to suppose that her allies would have renounced any conflicting war aims of their own. Austria-Hungary wanted revision of the Romanian frontier to give her full possession of the mountain passes, and this was allowed for in the Treaty of Bucharest without compromising German designs. But it was less easy for Germany to accommodate Austrian ambitions in Poland since Congress Poland was of crucial importance for German communications with the Baltic.<sup>6</sup> The Treaty of Brest-Litovsk had already brought friction between the two powers because the Ukrainians were able to use the export of grain as a powerful economic weapon to claim Ukrainian territory from the Habsburg Empire, namely the Chelm district and eastern Galicia. By ceding territory which would otherwise have become part of an Austrian-sponsored Polish state there was a danger that the Austro-Polish solution would hardly be viable. Further scope for conflict arose with Turkey, exhausted by war and heavily in debt to Germany.<sup>7</sup> Maintenance of strong economic links was essential and here Germany had an eye once more on the main

transport routes, including shipping on the Euphrates and Tigris and minerals like the copper of Arghana and oil of Mesopotamia. But what of Turkish territorial ambitions? In the Balkans Turkey modestly sought some rectification of the Maritsa frontier with Bulgaria, while the latter was benefiting from Dobrogean territory taken from Romania, but in the Caucasus a serious clash of interest seemed inevitable in view of the German ambition to expand eastwards through the Ukraine to the Crimea and the Caucasus. Turkey claimed her 1828 frontier, yet after advancing into the Crimea in 1918 Germany hoped to establish a Caucasian state (covering Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia). Turkey could not advance any further than Ardahan, southern Batum and Kars: the port of Batum and the Batum-Baku railway were essential German interests. Equally contradictory was the expectation that such an ambitious economic and political programme could coexist with stable relations with Russia and sure enough in the summer of 1918 in the course of negotiating economic treaties with Russia Germany agreed to return the railway through Belgorod and Rostov to Vladikavkas (terminus of the Georgian Military Highway) and Baku in return for guaranteed deliveries of grain and minerals. Even with such gestures the pax Germanica could provide no lasting peace, negating as it did the historic reality of the Russian Empire.

These conflicts helped to weaken the cohesion of the Central Powers. Although the Germans could justifiably fight a war over the threat of 'encirclement' this moral justification was not so influential among allied peoples and could hardly stand in the eyes of the uncommitted as an inspiring missionary interpretation of the war which could counter enemy propaganda. The left-wing politician F. Naumann offered an enlightened conception of a Central Europe protected by German leadership and providing cultural freedom for individual peoples but this was hardly exemplified by the policies of Gen. Ludendorff and fellow 'annexationists' who envisaged a totally enclosed Poland hemmed in between a German border area running from East Prussia to Silesia and a separate state in Lithuania and Ruthenia rather than a nation state delimited on the basis of self-determination with an independent maritime outlet. Equally it could not be assumed

that other peoples 'liberated' from Russian control would desire permanent separation from Petrograd and accept the German 'overlordship' which alternative economic and security arrangements would inevitably involve.

### INDEPENDENT EASTERN EUROPE

(Figure 6.1, Table 6.1)

In the end however the crucial struggle on the western front could not be won and the outcome in that theatre, somewhat indecisive though it may have been, was enough to ensure that the settlement in the east would be overturned. The defeat of all the major powers which had previously exerted a direct influence over East European territory created an entirely new situation in which political forces could emerge largely free of external constraints. Ethnicity proved to be the most potent political force and the power vacuum was quickly filled by national councils. This spontaneous expression of 'self-determination' was broadly supported by the victorious western powers whose wartime statements implied major changes to the political map in the event of victory. For example one of President Wilson's 'Fourteen Points' envisaged an independent Poland: such a state would include 'all districts inhabited by indisputably Polish populations' and consequently involve not only Russia's Congress Poland but also the Austrian provinces of Galicia and the German territory of Posen (Poznan).<sup>8</sup> Powerful support for self-determination continued at the Paris Peace Conference, reflecting both western values and current political realities in Eastern Europe. The result of the various treaties of 1919–20 (Neuilly-sur-Seine with Bulgaria, St. Germain with Austria and Trianon with Hungary) was to create a belt of political change through the marchlands of Europe.<sup>9</sup> The geopolitical significance of this zone was noted by H.J.Mackinder who stressed the need to keep Germany and Russia apart since the combined strength of their territories

Figure 6.1: Eastern Europe after the First World War



Source: Historical atlases.

(with the marchland states incorporated) would constitute a formidable challenge to the other powers of the 'world island'.<sup>10</sup> No formal alliance system was created to bind the marchland states together with each other and with their western

**Table 6.1:** Profiles of East European countries

(a) Area and population

|                | Area '000 sq.km. |       | Population (millions): |         |         | Annual growth <sup>(d)</sup><br>1920-1940 average<br>(percent) |
|----------------|------------------|-------|------------------------|---------|---------|--|
|                | 1900             | 1920  | 1920(a)                | 1930(b) | 1940(c) |  |
| Albania        | 28.7             | 28.7  | 0.80                   | 1.00    | 1.12    | 0.41   |
| Bulgaria       | 96.7             | 103.1 | 4.85                   | 5.70    | 6.54    | 0.61   |
| Czechoslovakia |                  | 140.5 | 13.61                  | 14.73   | 15.87   | 0.32   |
| Germany        | 540.7            | 470.4 | 63.18                  | 66.03   | 69.46   | 0.35   |
| Hungary        | 285.3(e)         | 93.0  | 7.99                   | 8.69    | 9.32    | 0.26   |
| Poland         |                  | 388.6 | 27.18                  | 32.11   | 35.33   | 0.59   |
| Romania        | 131.0            | 295.0 | 15.63                  | 18.06   | 20.32   | 0.43   |
| Yugoslavia     | 57.3(f)          | 247.5 | 11.98                  | 13.88   | 15.79   | 0.56   |

a Czechoslovakia and Poland 1921, Germany 1925

b Poland 1932, Germany 1933

c Germany 1939, Hungary 1941, Albania 1945. Other figures are estimates based on natural increase

d Periods vary according to census years

e Excludes Bosnia and Hercegovina (51.1)

f Montenegro 9.0 and Serbia 48.3

## (b) Socioeconomic criteria

|                     | Economic criteria: |       |      |       | Social criteria: |        |      |       |      |       |      |      |      |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------|------|-------|------------------|--------|------|-------|------|-------|------|------|------|
|                     | A                  | B     | C    | D     | E                | F      | G    | H     |      |       |      |      |      |
| Bulgaria            | 1.24               | +0.18 | 1.70 | -0.03 | 4.25             | +3.46  | 0.15 | +0.08 | 0.43 | +0.08 | 21.4 | 2.21 | 3.85 |
| Czecho-<br>slovakia | 1.90               | +1.20 | 4.41 | +4.65 | 9.97             | +13.87 | 0.71 | -0.12 | 0.92 | -0.07 | 49.0 | 1.93 | 3.73 |
| Germany             | 0.43               | +0.37 | 0.83 | +0.49 | 2.14             | +0.36  | 0.93 | +0.35 | 0.88 | +0.01 | 35.0 | 1.45 | 2.57 |
| Hungary             | 0.39               | -0.06 | 0.91 | +0.21 | 1.23             | -0.04  | 0.38 | -0.05 | 1.00 | -0.07 | 7.7  | 1.50 | 2.82 |
| Poland              | 0.09               | +0.04 | 0.30 | +0.26 | 1.96             | +0.20  | 0.27 | 0.00  | 0.61 | -0.03 | 5.6  | 1.59 | 2.86 |
| Romania             | 0.05               | +0.11 | 0.56 | +0.13 | 0.86             | +0.33  | 0.28 | +0.02 | 0.72 | -0.05 | 3.2  | 1.06 | 1.94 |
| Yugoslavia          |                    |       |      |       |                  |        |      |       |      |       |      |      |      |

For economic criteria the value for 1930 is given along with the net change (absolute) over the period 1930–1940. For social criteria only the 1930 value is given: the data is too incomplete to calculate subsequent change meaningfully.

A Steel production: '00 tonnes per thousand of population

B Electricity production: '00 Kwh per capita

C Motor vehicles in use per thousand of population

D Railway freight: '000 tonne/km, per capita

E Railway network: kilometres of railway per thousand of population

F Radio licences per thousand of population

G Students per thousand of population

H School teachers per thousand of population

Source: B.R.Mitchell (1980) European historical statistics 1750–1825 (London: Macmillan).



supporters but close bilateral relations developed in many cases and great faith was placed in the League of Nations to defend the new order.<sup>11</sup>

It would be an oversimplification to suppose that the political map of Eastern Europe was clearly anticipated by western leaders. They sympathised broadly with 'nation-state' aspirations but the detailed form of the new pattern was determined by the Eastern Europeans themselves. Lacking any direct military presence in Eastern Europe the powers could only arbitrate in cases of dispute, as was the case in Carinthia and Silesia where plebiscites were held. Inevitably there was resentment by Bulgaria, Germany and Hungary over the loss of territory no matter how logical that transfer might be in the context of self-determination.<sup>12</sup> Loss was all the more grievous however when the ethnic picture was confused. Protracted disputes arose in such cases. One problem erupted on the frontier between Austria and Hungary over Burgenland.<sup>13</sup> The territory was initially Austrian but it was ceded to Hungary in 1647. However at the end of the war three-quarters of the 0.34 million inhabitants of this province were Germans (the rest being Magyar, with some Yugoslavs). Austria claimed to the Burgenland and most of it was awarded to her under the Treaty of St. Germain (1919). The Hungarians resisted the transfer but, although Austria undertook not to use force, relations between the two countries became increasingly bitter as the population was terrorised by the troops of both sides. The controversy was settled by Italy's intervention through the Venice Protocols of 1921. In a sense the Burgenland lay at the centre of a three-cornered contest for in 1918 Czechoslovakia launched its abortive 'Corridor Plan' under which Burgenland and the territory immediately to the south would have become a narrow corridor linking Czechoslovakia with Yugoslavia.

Further dissatisfaction arose when it seemed as if the more powerful of the successor states were allowed to gain unfair advantage. Romania for example not only held on to southern Dobrogea, acquired from Bulgaria in the Balkan Wars, but annexed Bucovina from Austria, Transylvania from Hungary and Bessarabia from Russia. These gains were justified on ethnic grounds, although Transylvania did include substantial German and Hungarian minorities and Hungary could not therefore

accept the permanent loss of the province.<sup>14</sup> Still more provocative however were the frontier alterations at the eastern edge of the Pannonian Plain. Romanian claims for territory as far west as the Tisa/Tisza river were not sustained, despite a military advance towards Budapest and an occupation regime based on Debrecen, but the powers argued that the Romanian claim for a strategically-rational frontier (including the railway line from Timisoara to Arad, Oradea and Satu Mare) should carry more weight than the ethnic consideration of Hungarian majorities in parts of Banat and Crisana.

Difficulty also arose in determining the extent of an independent Poland.<sup>15</sup> Germany and the Habsburg Empire proclaimed a Polish state in 1916 but this was to be created at Russia's expense and could not stand as an attractive solution to those who coveted the territory of the Central Powers. Equally the British and French governments could hardly advocate a large independent Poland as long as the alliance with the Tsar was maintained. The defeat of all the powers with territorial interests in Poland created a more promising situation. However the outcome was a series of territorial disputes which soured relations with virtually all neighbouring countries.<sup>16</sup> The Poles pressed far to the east of the 'Curzon Line', suggested as a reasonable frontier for Poland and Russia. For economic reasons they were interested not only in the belt of dense population and economic growth from Poznan to Warsaw but the complementary belt in the south from Silesia and Krakow to Lwow (Lvov). Although she was a party to the Treaty of Riga (1921) the Soviet Union could not accept the new frontier on a permanent basis. But moreover the conflict of ideas between separate Polish and Lithuanian nation states and a single large unit recreating the old Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth created an insoluble dilemma which effectively prevented good-neighbourly relations after the Poles exploited their military superiority to take the Lithuanian city of Vilna. However the Polish ideal of unified control of the Vistula valley was frustrated by the German majority in the city of Danzig (Gdansk).<sup>17</sup> Hence the compromise of the Free City status which was meant to ensure unfettered use of the harbour by Poland and interest in its development as well as control of the railways. River traffic was not very relevant, because the new mouth of

1840 bypassed the city which now lay on the Tote Weichsel (Dead Vistula), but the port installations (including the outport of Neufahrwasser with 9.1 m. draught) were valuable in the context of rail links with the Polish hinterland. However the compromise was always resented by Germany to say nothing of the loss of territory in Poznan and the Polish Corridor.<sup>18</sup> The German attitude was clear in the decision to recognise the small pieces of the former Posen and West Prussian provinces which remained under German administration as a separate administrative area: Grenzmark Posen-Westpreussen, although it was a discontinuous zone separated by Brandenburg, Pomerania and Silesia.<sup>19</sup> Once again there was no intention of accepting the loss of territory as permanent.

Frontier demarcation was itself a major problem since many of the new boundaries were entirely new and only rarely followed major natural features, like the river Dniester which was adopted as the frontier between Romania and Russia. And in the Balkans there was a certain amount of survey work still outstanding after the Balkan Wars, particularly with respect to the Albanian frontier.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately some of the work was done all too hastily at the peace conferences and vested interests prevented sensible modifications when detailed survey work followed. But inevitably there were major dislocations as new frontiers cut across imperial infrastructures. Perhaps the greatest difficulty arose in the Silesian coalfield where the clearly-marked divide between Germany and Russia was superseded when the new subsequent boundary was drawn across 'a great complexity of intimate associations', to quote the phrase used by R.Hartshorne to emphasise the interaction through passenger and freight transport (rail and road), as well as distribution of electricity, gas and water.<sup>21</sup> Although special arrangements were made initially there could be no guarantee that these would continue indefinitely.

### GERMANY'S RESURGENCE UNDER HITLER

Quite apart from the ethnic anomalies there were good political reasons why the new territorial arrangements were doomed to early collapse. Germany was not gravely weakened by the First

World War. Although she lost some of her eastern lands and saw her share of the Silesia coalfield reduced from 48 percent to only 10, these changes were not economically crucial and, since the war was fought beyond her borders, her industrial and transport system was largely intact. On the basis of ethnicity Germany was inevitably the largest state in Eastern Europe (and the largest in the whole of Europe apart from Russia) while formerly powerful neighbours to the east and south were replaced by weak and mutually-hostile successor states. 'The very existence of the newly independent but highly vulnerable states of East Central Europe, legitimated by the victorious allies, proved on balance a political and diplomatic asset to Germany',<sup>22</sup> She was insulated from the revolution in Russia yet, over the longer term, well-placed to forge an alliance with the Soviet Union on the basis of a common interest in partitioning the newly-independent states. Having sponsored the new order in Eastern Europe the west could hardly accept Soviet hegemony in that area as the price for cooperation from the Russians against any new German threat. The Germans were thus left facing no major challenge to their revisionist pressure. And against Czechoslovakia Hitler could count on the support of Hungary, seeking revisions of her own which would not however pose any threat to German mastery of Eastern Europe as a whole. Magyar ambitions fully justified the misgivings expressed by H.J.Mackinder over the idea of federation in Danubia: there was raw material for a balance of power 'but from the history of the Magyars we can hardly hope that it will be effective'.<sup>23</sup>

The aggressive policies of the Third Reich have been seen as the logical outcome of previous developments in German history. Such a view may be nourished by the blatantly imperialistic conception of the Holy Roman Empire and also by the readiness of Frederick the Great to use Prussian military power to expand into non-German territories. There was a case for some modification of frontiers in view of the implementation of the self-determination principle. But it was Germany's tragedy that the considerable understanding of her grievances should have exploited by Hitler as territorial adjustments on the ethnic principle turned out to be the first stages of a crusade to conquer a large area in the east (Ostraum) and annihilate Jews.

It is all the more remarkable to reflect that both these policies were clearly published in Mein Kampf in 1925 but were assumed by the German electorate to be idle speculation rather than a prospectus for responsible government. Violent national feeling however responded to the prospect of charismatic leadership in the depression years 1930–1933 and the central ideas of the Hitlerite Weltanschauung were for a time obscured.<sup>24</sup> The East European states were able to make certain defence arrangements with each other (notably the Little Entente forged by Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia in 1921) and they could collaborate with the major powers (as Czechoslovakia did through the Czechoslovak-Soviet Pact of 1935) but the overriding fear of communism in the area meant that most governments could be manipulated by Germany.<sup>25</sup> It was quite natural that countries which had gained territory from Russia should feel that any Soviet troops allowed in as part of a collective security system against Germany would be reluctant to leave.

However the Munich Agreement of 1939, which transferred certain border regions of Czechoslovakia to Germany, can be seen as a fatal blow, convincing the Soviet Union of the west's reluctance to act decisively against Hitler and commending a pact with Germany as the best means of buying time. In this final pre-war move, the Nazi-Soviet Pact of 1939, there were monumental misunderstandings as Russia underestimated the UK's determination while the UK in turn was too blinded by ideological considerations to see an alliance with the USSR as a real possibility.<sup>26</sup> The speed of Eastern Europe's collapse seems surprisingly rapid in retrospect. Czechoslovakia did not resist the Munich Agreement and likewise Romania meekly accepted the Vienna diktat of 1940 (handing over Bessarabia and north Bucovina to the USSR, northern Transylvania to Hungary and southern Dobrogea to Bulgaria) and did not deploy armed forces to the defence of the country despite all the resources committed to the army during the inter-war years.<sup>27</sup> Yet no individual state in Eastern Europe (or even a group acting in concert) could realistically expect to neutralise German and Russian pressure, especially when neighbouring countries were eager for a share in the spoils. There may also have been a belief that the western powers would eventually have to abandon

appeasement and embark on an all-out struggle. Eventually there was a declaration of war against Germany in defence of Poland whose independence was destroyed by the joint invasion of Germany and the Soviet Union.<sup>28</sup> The scale of the challenge confronting the west was somewhat modified when Hitler launched his operation Barbarossa against the USSR in 1941 and the USA entered the struggle against Hitler's 'Fortress Europe'.<sup>29</sup> Yet how could Poland's independence be salvaged in a war that now saw Germany and the Soviet Union on opposite sides with an allied agreement to pursue hostilities until Germany's unconditional surrender was obtained?<sup>30</sup>

### NATIONAL PROFILES

Each country in Eastern Europe merits close attention in terms of the internal and external conflicts that generated so much tension during the inter-war years. However discussion will concentrate on Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Albania. All these states did well in the immediate aftermath of the war for Albania retained her independence, in the face of strong covetous neighbours, while Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia emerged as new states with extensive territories. However early successes could not be consolidated and radically different structures emerged during the Second World War. At the same time however, defence of the state idea by ideologically-motivated resistance groups provided a basis for genuinely national communist regimes to emerge during the 1940s.

#### Yugoslavia

In 1918 the problem of adjustment to the new political framework were perhaps greatest in the Kingdom of the Serbs Croats and Slovenes (the official name of the country until 1929). The collapse of the Central Powers along with the heroic resistance of the Serbs and Montenegrans stimulated the Croats and Slovenes to transfer their allegiance. The Germanised Slavs in the Klagenfurt area voted to stay in Austria rather than sever their traditional economic links.<sup>31</sup> But the majority were panicked into a precipitous dash for protection and cover to Serbia's army, dynasty and bureaucracy. No attempt was made

to elicit popular endorsement for this step. Nor was any effort made to use such potential assets as the Habsburg army's still intact Croatian regiments, with their established traditions of military prowess, or the effective Croat-Slovene control of the Habsburg navy as bargaining levers in negotiating the terms of this union with Serbia'.<sup>32</sup> There appears to have been a blind assumption that any relationship with the Serbs would represent an improvement to the limited autonomy previously enjoyed. Yet Belgrade saw the union in traditional pan-Serb terms as the culmination of a movement begun back in 1804 when the first anti-Ottoman assault was mounted. And fortified by their emergence on the winning side in the First World War the Serbs regarded Croatia and Slovenia as liberated parts of the losers' territory upon which they were entitled to impose their institutions. The new state sought as much territory as it could get its hands on and demonstrated its antipathy towards Hungary by refusing to contemplate any frontier revisions proposed by the Boundary Commission: these involved small pieces of territory in Prekomurje and Vojvodina (Horgos) where ethnic and economic factors were favourable to Hungary.<sup>33</sup> In a sense all this was justified for 'only Serbia could contribute a political elite knowledgeable in the art of ruling, not merely of opposing, as well as a comprehensive governmental apparatus' (the Montenegrin system was relatively primitive and patriarchal). Yet great insensitivity was shown towards the relatively sophisticated Croats whose leader S.Radic negatively opted for the politics of abstention, boycott and withdrawal appropriate to 'the righteously-indignant outsider'.<sup>34</sup> Even the left-wing parties, which formed an alliance as the Socialist Workers Party of Yugoslavia and joined the Comintern, failed to take a lead. At their Vukovar Congress in 1920 they called for an implicitly pan-Serb 'Yugoslav Soviet Republic' and were later criticised by Tito for failing to grasp the importance of the national question.

The passage of time brought a will to compromise but only through royal dictatorship which forced the opposing factions underground. The official renaming of the country in 1929 was linked with an administrative organisation which established nine regions. The term banovina used for these new territorial units was derived from ancient Croatian, yet the Croats could

hardly fail to observe that they had majorities in only two of these regions while the Serbs had the edge in six of the remaining seven (there was a Slovene majority in the other). The depths of Croat dissatisfaction were revealed by the flight abroad of A.Pavelic in 1929 (the day after the royal dictatorship was proclaimed) and the foundation of the radical Ustasa (Insurgent) movement which adopted a policy of terror against the Alexandrine regime. The Croats were not the only group offended by the events of 1929, for the Muslims objected to the destruction of Bosnia-Hercegovina while Serb democrats deplored the abolition of democratic institutions, but arguably they now played a key role in the destabilisation of Yugoslavia. A further solution was attempted in 1939 after the fall of Prague to the Germans with the aim of presenting a more united front to the Axis. Under the Sporazum the Croats were offered even more generous terms than they had received under the Nagodba of 1868. The prince regent now overruled those Serbs who had argued that decentralisation would weaken the state (and incidentally marooned those Croats who had cooperated with the regime over the previous decade) by setting up an enlarged banovina for Croatia combining the two regions with a Croat majority with parts of Drina, Dunav, Vrbas and Zeta. This territory of 4.4 million people, embracing 30 percent of the total population of Yugoslavia and furnishing a clear Croat majority (just 0.87 million Serbs, and 0.16 million Muslims), was to have its ban (I.Subasic) and a diet (Sobor) with budgetary and administrative autonomy: only commerce, foreign/military affairs and transport would continue to be central government responsibilities. Yet in the climate of highly-polarised political attitudes this brave attempt failed to purchase Croat loyalty and neutralise the subversive Ustasi. The settlement did not offer enough territory or sovereignty to the radical Croats while Serbs were dissatisfied because of the lack of a similar banovina for them and inadequate safeguards for the Serb minority in Croatia.

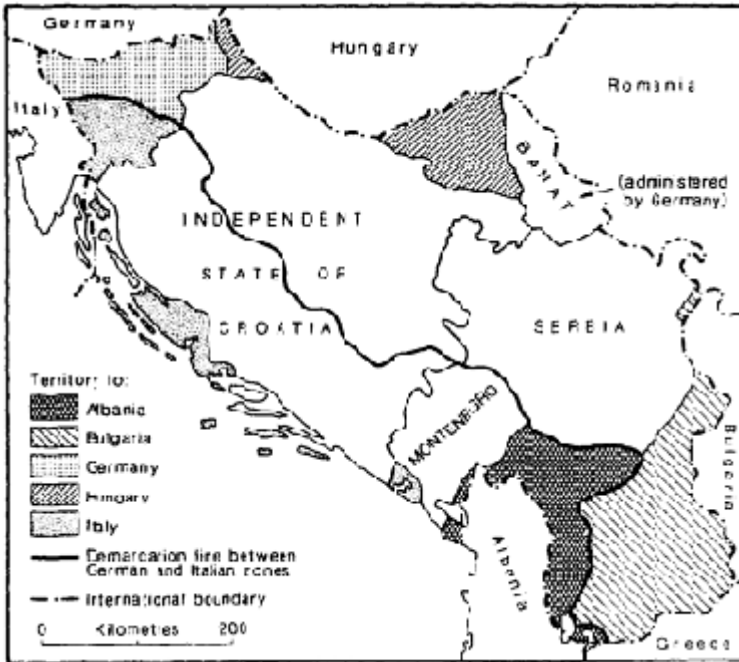
These divisions were then thrown into clearer focus by Prince Paul's acceptance of Hitler's invitation to Yugoslavia to join the Tripartite Pact. Opposition in Serbia to the regent's decision resulted in a coup late in March 1941 which forced Paul into exile and took Yugoslavia out of the Axis camp.<sup>35</sup> Yet the new



course was in turn resented by Croats and Slovenes fearful of the war course on which the country had now been set, and sure enough, despite the costly delay to the scheduled operation Barbarossa against the Soviet Union, Hitler ordered a concentric invasion of Yugoslavia.<sup>36</sup> The campaign was triggered by an understandable desire to corner important Yugoslav mineral deposits and also to control the main north-south line of communication that was to prove important in keeping Rommel supplied in the North African desert. But there was a clear interest in driving a wedge between Croats and Serbs, treating the former as allies and the latter as defeated enemies. In the subsequent partition of the country Serbia (and Slovenia) were dismembered to meet territorial claims from Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Italy and Italian-occupied Albania whereas a large 'Independent State of Croatia' (Nezavisna Drzava Hrvatska) was set up as an Axis satellite under Ustasa leader (poglavnik) A.Pavelic (Figure 6.2). Ethnic strife could only increase in the areas of mixed settlement with one community setting out to eradicate the other. S.K. Pavlowitch has commented that 'by giving new life to, and magnifying, all the old ethnic religious and political feuds the Second World War assumed in central Yugoslavia one of its most primitive aspects. The very idea of Yugoslavia seemed about to die in this conflagration which was already raging in the centre of the country when risings in its eastern half were only beginning'.<sup>37</sup> Croatia certainly enjoyed all the trappings of an independent state whereas in the rump of Serbia the native administration had only a limited range of functions and was in all matters subject to the veto of the German military authorities. Montenegro was seen initially as an independent state and a native Consulta Tecnica was set up, but despite the declaration of independence no regent was ever named and an Italian military governor held power throughout the war years.

It was in south Yugoslavia where the resistance was strongest and it was unfortunate for the future of the state that activity should polarise into two separate groups reflecting both the conservative/radical and Pan-Serb/ Yugoslav outlooks. Strong in support of the monarchy was D. Mihailovic who emerged as leader of a cetnik force.<sup>38</sup> The word cetnik meant a member of an irregular band or company (ceta), first formed under this title

Figure 6.2: Fragmentation of Yugoslav territory during the second World War



Source: S.K.Pavlowitch (1971).

to assist the regular army in the wars of 1912–18. Several such groups had grown up spontaneously in the troubled conditions of 1941 and Mihailovic himself led one such group from Bosnia (where, as chief of staff of a regular army command, he had refused to accept the capitulation order) to the Ravna Gora plateau in Serbia near to the strategic Morava Valley. He then worked towards the ideal of an underground ‘Yugoslav Home Army’ which could act as appropriate against the Germans in what was expected to be a long war. Strength was to be conserved, pending an eventual national uprising (*ustanak*) in liaison with American and British forces, and misery was not to be heaped on the population unless liberation was clearly in sight. But although there were some Croat and Slovene officers present his group was predominantly Serb and, as a Serb rather

than a Yugoslav patriot, Mihailovic was anxious that Serbs should retain their preponderance in Yugoslavia and not allow themselves to be decimated by German or Croat reprisals. By contrast the influence of Josip Broz (nicknamed Tito) over the communists in Belgrade gave rise to a broader Yugoslav concept of resistance and one which favoured more immediate action on the grounds that any opposition to the German and Italian occupiers would assist the Soviet Union for which Tito had an almost fanatical regard. Therefore the loss of Yugoslav, especially Serbian, lives was justified. Tito also had a vision of a socialist Yugoslavia which conflicted head-on with the conservative outlook of Mihailovic.

Differences in outlook were not important at first because the two resistance leaders cooperated over attacks on towns in western Serbia in late 1941. Successes here however 'owed much to a popular enthusiasm, based on a false feeling of security, spurred on politically by a small but determined group of communists and organised mainly by regular officers of the former Yugoslav Army under Colonel Mihailovic'.<sup>39</sup> But relations became uneasy with German advances in Europe confirming the likelihood of a long war and drastic German reprisals against Yugoslav civilians notably the massacre of 7,000 Serbs at Kragujevac in October 1941. Mihailovic's low profile was extended on to the political plane because his loyalty to the monarchy and to the Yugoslav government in exile (in which he was included as an absentee in 1942) prevented any initiatives being taken over the troubled question of inter-communal relations. This meant that he had difficulty cementing relationships outside Serbia, being regarded with suspicion in Croatia as part of the 'pan-Serb' Belgrade establishment—all the more so because his loyalties to Serbia attracted allegiance from independent četnik groups in the south. On the other hand Tito was able to take political initiatives and, untainted by a previous political office, gained wide support for his platform of religious and ethnic tolerance. He behaved with considerable astuteness in Croatia gaining a good reputation among the Catholics and Moslems (through protection against Orthodox retaliation) while building support in Orthodox areas through anti-Ustasa activity which was not however extreme enough to alienate Croats as a whole. And radically-minded Serbs were

impressed by Tito's polemics against Mihailovic as a British agent (arising from the London base of the exiled government and allied recognition of Mihailovic as resistance leader).

On top of all this was the undoubtedly military success of Tito and his partisans who survived the most ruthless and determined counter-attacks. Tito was driven into Novipazar in winter 1941–2 and then to Bosnia in winter 1941–2, but he broke out of encirclement and moved to the Bosnian town of Bihac where an 'Anti-Fascist Council for the National Liberation of Yugoslavia' (AVNOJ) was convened in Autumn 1942. Further German pressure early in 1943 forced him south to Hercegovina where headquarters were established on Durmitor mountain. There followed another dramatic escape to Jajce where a second AVNOJ meeting set up a National Liberation Committee, in fact a provisional government with Tito as premier and one which immediately displayed ambivalence towards the monarchy by using Mihailovic's 'collaboration' with the Germans to argue that a post-war election should decide the country's status, as kingdom or republic. Tito continued to be harried by the Germans and in early 1944 a raid on his headquarters at Drvar forced him to move on to the Dalmatian island of Vis. Yet he was gaining in strength and the weakening in Germany's overall position led many Croats to transfer allegiance from the NDH. He also benefited greatly from allied support in 1943–4, a distinctly questionable move by Churchill who evidently preferred Tito's flamboyant campaigns to Mihailovic's lower profile activities (infiltrating the Serbian government and rescuing allied airmen) and believed that he would modify his hostile attitude towards King Peter.<sup>40</sup>

With the German position now disintegrating Tito was able to concentrate even more single-mindedly on the struggle for mastery of Yugoslavia. He negotiated with former ban of Croatia I. Subasic, premier of the government in exile, for a regency (rather than accept King Peter's immediate return) and was able to resist demands for any significant broadening of AVNOJ: for although it was agreed between Tito and Subasic that the organisation should include members of Yugoslavia's last pre-war parliament who had not subsequently collaborated with the enemy Tito could claim that no-one was eligible

because parliament had been dissolved in August 1939 as unrepresentative. Opposition from Mihailovic was destroyed between the Neretva and Drin as his forces struggled south to oppose the communists in Spring 1945 and intimidation ensured that AVNOJ would then have an overwhelming majority in the election held later that year. The new assembly declared a Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia in January 1946 and named itself a People's Assembly. The country was now well on the way to introducing a Soviet-style government, for AVNOJ's economic council had already started to coordinate economic activities and individual liberty did not extend to any of the 'anti-democratic purposes' identified by the politically-motivated police and judiciary.

### Czechoslovakia

Considerable skill was needed to make full use of the opportunities available to nationalists in the closing stages of the war. Czechoslovakia is an impressive example of a state created through determined and brilliant leadership, after earlier thinking had remained loyal to the concept of a wider federation in order to prevent incorporation into a Greater Germany.<sup>41</sup> Dismayed by the lack of enlightened leadership from Vienna and simultaneously encouraged by allied recognition of their right to independence, the Czechs emerged from the peace conference with all their serious territorial claims realised: not only the historic Czech Lands of Bohemia and Moravia but also Hungarian territory (Slovakia and Ruthenia) and part of Tesin (Cieszyn) which was ethnically Polish, although linked historically with the Bohemian crown. Success was due first to the efforts of exiles like E. Benes and T.G. Masaryk in persuading the western allies that independent nation states constituted a desirable solution to the political problems of Eastern Europe. It was also conditioned by the strong identification of Czechoslovak interests with the west: dependence continued during the inter-war period right up to the Munich crisis when probably 'the worth of Czechoslovakia's armed forces was greater than her political leaders' confidence in them and the nation's readiness for self-reliance greater than the government's willingness to test it'.<sup>42</sup> However Czech claims had first to be

justified and approved. Here the leadership succeeded in maintaining a contradictory stance over their territorial claims for on the one hand 'historic frontiers' were claimed in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia (despite the Germans in Sudetenland and Poles in Tesin) whereas in Slovakia and Ruthenia it was the nationality principle that was all-important. Consistency would have required that either the territorial claims of Germany and Poland be accepted in Bohemia or else that the historic association of Slovakia with Hungary be respected.

Immediately after the declaration of an independent Czechoslovakia in 1918 German deputies from the imperial Reichsrat in Vienna proclaimed 'Deutschböhmen' and 'Sudetenland' as Austrian provinces with provisional governments in Reichenberg (Liberec) and Troppau (Opava) respectively. In its last months of office the Habsburg government had recognised separate Czech and German areas for Bohemia. The latter comprised Budweis (Ceské Budejovice), Eger (Cheb) Leitmeritz (Litomerice), Reichenberg (Liberec) and Trautenau (Trutnov). With the fall of the empire the Germans in the westernmost part declared 'Deutschösterreich' in 1918 and the action in the Czech Lands followed from this lead, clearly with an eye on union with Germany now that the demise of both Habsburg and Hohenzollern dynasties had removed the major internal obstacles.<sup>43</sup> However Czech forces quickly occupied these areas and the claim for historic frontiers was then backed up by such factors as strategic advantage and economic rationality, both of which appealed to western leaders anxious to create stability in the marchlands of Europe. Eventually the intensely nationalistic Bohemian Germans swallowed their pride and accepted a government of Czechs, over whom they had previously felt destined to rule, because they could keep together as a group (avoiding the fragmentation that any territorial compromise would have involved) and would be economically strong through ready access for their manufactures to the Czech home market while German industrialists in the Reich would be hindered by tariff barriers. Separation was delayed until the Munich Agreement of 1938. On the other hand in Slovakia the Czechs were less effective and the Hungarians were able to force them back in 1919. The nationalist argument, that Czechs and Slovaks were two

branches of the same nation, was therefore pressed through diplomacy rather than by military success. Many Slovaks were already identifying with the idea of a single 'Czechoslovak nation'. Dr. M.R. Stefanik must be regarded along with Benes and Masaryk (from Bohemia and Moravia respectively) as a founder of the nation. The Martin Declaration of October 1918 stated that the 'Slovak people are a linguistic and cultural-historical part of a united Czechoslovak nation' and refuted the 'right of the Hungarian government to speak in the name of a people which it oppressed for centuries'.<sup>44</sup> Thanks largely to French support Slovakia was incorporated into a Czechoslovak state and with the province went a Hungarian minority of 0.7 million.

Success was rounded off by the acquisition of Ruthenia, a backward province where a Ukranian peasantry was under the political authority of Hungarians and economic control of the Jews. The peasants were unable to put together a political programme, largely due to a very low educational standard. Ruthenian emigrants in the United States argued for an independent Ruthenia, including Bucovina and eastern Galicia but when this option failed to find support from the powers their leader hammered out an agreement with Masaryk for incorporation into Czechoslovakia. This was approved by a national council in Uzhorod in 1919, by which time the radical Béla Kun government in Hungary had destroyed any remaining support for the link with Hungary. This seemed a logical solution to the powers and it was accepted on condition that autonomy for the Ruthenes was granted. The Prague government however failed to honour its obligation, though it came to appreciate the strategic value of the territory, covering the mountain passes of the central Carpathians, connecting Pannonia with Ukraine and offering a physical link with Romania (another major beneficiary of the post-war settlement with which country Czechoslovakia maintained close economic, military and political relations). Tesin completed the picture in 1920. It was a small territory but important economically through the coal reserves and the railway connections offered between the Czech Lands and Slovakia. Although an attempt to win the territory by military force was rebuffed in 1919 it was handed over in 1920 when the Poles found themselves fully

stretched against the Russians further east. Yet by taking advantage of Poland's temporary embarrassment Czechoslovakia forfeited her friendship and left her disposed to take advantage of the Munich crisis of 1938 so as to gain temporary possession of this small territory. Driven on by the short-sightedness of greedy parliamentarians, the leadership was forced to make issues even out of single villages and Czechoslovakia's territorial growth was not completed until 1924 when her claim to Javorina (Jaworzyna) in the Tatra Mountains was conceded by Poland.<sup>45</sup>

Various implications followed from the generous frontiers of the new state. Relations with Poland were bad but there was serious friction with Hungary where the loss of Slovakia had a strong influence on domestic affairs in the years immediately after the war. The first new government in Hungary, under Count M.Karolyi, introduced land reform in 1919 and hoped to win support for a federal system to combine the highly Magyarised core of imperial Hungary with the peripheral lands where other nationalities were prominent. The measure was defeated by socialist opposition to clauses in the bill indemnifying landowners. But the ensuing territorial losses, coupled with strong partiality by the powers for the claims of Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia through shifting armistice demarcation lines in their favour and maintaining an economic blockade to force Hungarian compliance, discredited the progressively-minded Karolyi and swept Béla Kun's communist government into power.<sup>46</sup> Kun's more belligerent stance won concessions from the allies but not enough to satisfy the new government, which now began to lose support as food requisitions demoralised the peasantry and other supporters of the patriotic stance reflected that the contest with neighbouring states would be followed by a class struggle at home, to say nothing of the chaos created by an ideologically-motivated but inexperienced government.

Militarily Kun's efforts were concentrated against the Czechs in Slovakia for the difficulties of crossing the Tisza inhibited an eastward thrust against the Romanians while the Serbs in Vojvodina were backed up by French troops. However initial successes, backed up by a declaration of a Slovak Socialist Republic by some members of Kun's entourage, were not



sustained and feeble compliance with a French ultimatum to withdraw disillusioned both army and people and drove the government to seek exile in Austria. But perhaps the worst effect of Kun's brief regime (surely a futile gesture in view of the improbability of any Russian assistance) was the erosion of the initially widespread consensus in favour of liberal policies by the argument of the reactionaries that liberalism (a là Karolyi) would lead to communism: social and political change could now be resisted as being incompatible with the Hungarian way of life.<sup>47</sup> The defeated Kun regime had been established on the ruins of the democratic revolution of 1918 as if it were a natural consequence' and so the Horthy regime was able to equate democracy and liberalism with Bolshevism and terror, and dissent with treason.<sup>48</sup> But while Hungary could not resign herself to the loss of Slovakia, especially to the border territories where there were Hungarian majorities, there was also scope for German pressure on the Czech Lands regarding the substantial German minority in the border territories (a majority in many individual areas). Although their economic problems were to some extent caused by German policies (dumping in the Balkans, to displace Czech manufactures, and reduced tourist spending by people from Germany touring in Czechoslovakia), the Sudetenland became an important territorial issue in 1939. Pressures from Germany, Hungary and Poland contributed to the break-up of the state in 1939–40.<sup>49</sup>

Not that the problems were restricted to external relations and minority groups in border areas. The Slovaks were far less critical of the Czechs than the Croats were of the Serbs but there were nevertheless certain issues that conspired to nurture Slovak nationalism.<sup>50</sup> The Catholic Church was a focal point for nationalist activity because of the underlying assumption that its religious function was to save Slovakia from traditional Czech protestantism. There was some ambivalence over the unequivocal stand made by Stefanik in support of Czechoslovakia and one of many theories circulating in respect of his death in an air crash at Bratislava in 1919 implicates more nationally minded Slovak politicians. On economic issues the inter-war record was mixed. On the one hand Slovakia gained from the agrarian reforms, from the great improvement in primary and secondary education and from the establishment of

the Comenius University in Bratislava. But on the other side there was little progress in industry and many existing Slovak industries had difficulty surviving in competition with more efficient Czech factories. Slovakia seemed to be a supplier of raw materials and cheap labour as some 15,000 Slovaks migrated to the Czech Lands each season.<sup>51</sup> Even so there was high unemployment, only partially relieved by emigration abroad by some 200,000 people in twenty years.

So when Hitler set out to destroy Czechoslovakia he could count on a measure of support in Slovakia for a separate state.<sup>52</sup> After Munich the first stage involved autonomy for Slovakia in a reduced state of Czechoslovakia and some favour was shown by the Germans in modifying Hungarian revisionist demands to exclude Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, and Nitra, the historic town where the first Christian church was built in 833. The second stage was more controversial and involved the complete breakdown of the state into a Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia and an independent Slovakia which was nevertheless occupied by German troops.<sup>53</sup> Yet the earlier ambivalence continued and it is evident that Dr. J. Tiso and other Slovak leaders bowed to German pressure with considerable reservations. They were aware that Hitler was merely exploiting their grievances against the Czechoslovak Republic which were hardly great enough to justify complete separation. But assuming that separation was inevitable it could be argued that Slovak cooperation saved the country from the possibility of complete absorption into or occupation by Hungary. Also, while Slovak industry was penetrated by German capital and served German war aims the native bourgeoisie profited from the wartime boom and there were also tremendous developments in national life which made it hard for post-war authors to deny that the creation of the state contradicted Slovak national interests. However that state was absolutely dependent on Nazi fortunes 'and when it became clear that Hitler was losing the war a sense of self-preservation made many Slovak politicians dissociate themselves from the protector who could not even protect himself'.<sup>54</sup> The result was the Slovak National Uprising in 1944, a rebellion against the primitive nationalism of the fascist leadership that was all the more remarkable because it was not fully integrated with

Russian strategy for liberating the country from the east. The rebels were therefore defeated by the Germans, but they did make a deep impression on the Czechoslovak government in exile and won an important point, previously conceded only by the communists, that the Slovaks were a nation. Unfortunately the autonomy that this admission should have secured in the post-war period (and which was envisaged under the Kosice Programme of 1945, drawn up by the Benes government on the newly-liberated territory of eastern Slovakia) was for long resisted on account of the relative weakness of the Communist Party in Slovakia. Slovak communists had to look to the central government in Prague for support and understanding. Only in 1969 was the goal of real autonomy achieved with the federalisation of both party and state.

### Albania

Albania was recognised as an independent state in 1912 yet an effective administration had not been created by the time the First World War broke out and survey work along the frontier was also lacking. The survival of the state hung in the balance because the wartime Pact of London (1915) offered Vlorë and a strategic hinterland to Italy on the understanding that she would not oppose the partition of the remainder between Greece, Montenegro and Serbia. Later however, when the western allies decided to champion a powerful Yugoslavia, Italy moved in favour of Albanian unity and independence under Italian protection in 1917. The Albanians were happy enough with this until 1920 when conference rumours from Paris suggested that partition was in the wind after all. This made the Albanians determined to be rid of all foreigners and hostilities against the Italians in Vlorë forced their withdrawal. Leadership in Albania continued to come from elements connected with the former Ottoman imperial service and government was headed by the northern (Mati) chieftain Ahmed Zogu who was responsible for liberating the country at the end of the war.<sup>55</sup> A more-westernised party with elements from the bourgeoisie and intelligentsia under Fan S.Noli was quickly eclipsed by Zogu in 1924, because of its inability to introduce a land reform and its error in soliciting Soviet support (a move which brought

Yugoslav support for the then-exiled Zogu). Zogu was then able to win over many of the modernising intellectuals and went on to establish himself as president in 1925 and king in 1928 combining the style of tribal chief with Ottoman pasha and modernising despot.

King Zog's modernising policy was by no means ineffective. Land reform was slow since Zog apparently considered landlords, chieftains, bureaucrats and businessmen more essential pillars of his regime than the poorly-educated peasant majority. Illiteracy was reduced only slightly, but education for the elite was greatly improved by high-quality secondary schools feeding successful students into western universities where they were supported by royal scholarships. Since education was fully nationalised the Catholic schools were closed in 1933 and were only allowed to reopen in 1936 when the Franciscans accepted state control and inspection. As with other moves by Zog this control of education was inspired by nationalism: it was 'an assertion of Albanian national pride, specifically *vis-à-vis* Italian and Greek paternalism, as the supervisory and pedagogical staffs of most religious and private schools were citizens of these two states and the ideological thrust of their teaching programmes was felt to be the inculcation of their national values into Albanian children'.<sup>56</sup> Traditional institutions were circumscribed by modern civil, penal and commercial codes (1929–31) to reassure foreign investors and stimulate the native entrepreneur. But the churches remained powerful, although they did become genuinely national institutions as the Albanian Muslims separated themselves from the Caliphate in 1923 and the Orthodox community achieved autocephalous status in 1937. Zog went a long way to inspire unity although the fundamental cultural split, between Geg and Tosk, lingered on. Indeed Zog supported his own northern people and showed particular sympathy towards the Mati tribe which had helped to carry him to power.

Zog's choice of capital however reflected a compromise between north and south. Independence was first proclaimed at Vlorë in 1912 and the town remained the seat of government until 1914 when it fell to insurgent central Albanians. Vlorë's selection was contested by Shkodër which was the largest town in the country at the time and a place of long-standing

administrative importance as the centre of an Ottoman *sancak*. However Shkodër was considered to be too close to the frontier and too vulnerable to Yugoslav artillery. Moreover the south would have been unhappy had the north been given such a favour.<sup>57</sup> So a compromise candidate was found in the centre. Durrës was the seat of the provisional government in 1919 but the final choice was the inland town of Tirana. Tirana in 1930 was an untidy place though the Albanians were making great efforts to transform it from a quaint Turkish town into a capital that looked modern. Its Turkish body with 10,000 inhabitants had put forth straight wide boulevards till it sprawled loosely over two miles and held 32,000 people. More streets were cut through its houses and gardens and mosques, happily leaving the concentrated chaos of the bazaar intact in the very middle.<sup>58</sup> Italian advice was accepted for the general plan but not for architecture where any traditional styles were considered inappropriate for a modern capital.

As the most backward country in Europe Albania faced severe economic problems and foreign assistance was essential. It was equally plain that any outside help would have to seek a reward in strategic rather than economic terms, in view of the poor prospects of immediate profitability for most speculations. Yugoslavia had little to give away and in any case relations were strained over the Albanian population in Kosovo, to say nothing of Yugoslavia's historic ambitions over Albanian territory. Because of the Kosovo anomaly, the most serious in Europe as regards the minority population as a proportion of the total in the mother country of that minority, Albanian national unity was inevitably incomplete. For Italy the position was different: the country was in a position to help and Albania could offer something in return as J.Swire explains. 'The whole story of Albania for thirty years has been influenced by the Gulf of Vlorë which, being at the narrowest' point in the Strait of Otranto and only 47 miles (75 km.) from Italy, is the key to the Adriatic Sea'.<sup>59</sup> Saseno would give Italy command of the Adriatic only if Vlorë remained in friendly hands and so the Italians were anxious to maintain good relations with the Albanians and keep the Yugoslavs out. Yugoslav troops could reach the Albanian coast in a shorter time than it would take the Italians to cross the Adriatic and disembark in strength. 'So the Italians have

worked hard to train the Albanian Army to hold up a Yugoslav advance until Italian forces could land and deploy.<sup>60</sup> Italy charged little interest and tolerated heavy losses on her investments there. Moreover she 'consistently absorbed far higher proportions of Albania's exports than she supplied of her imports, while covering Albania's resultant payments gap with generous though hardly altruistic subsidies'.<sup>61</sup>

However Italian intervention was slow to develop because a treaty of friendship with Yugoslavia ruled out interference in Albanian affairs. For that reason there was no support for Noli who held power in 1924. But when the Yugoslavs showed a clear partiality for Zog there seemed every justification to intervene. Two treaties were signed at Tirana in 1926 and 1927, covering military as well as economic aid. Considerable injections of capital were made in infrastructure (roads and harbours) and industry. The Albanians had ideas of a national iron and steel industry for Durrës based on the iron ores of Pogradec, but it was chrome and oil for export as raw materials that attracted greatest interest. Through Italian help the Albanian National Bank was set up and an Italian was put in charge of the agricultural school at Lushnje. Capital from Germany, the Netherlands and the UK was in evidence: it was for example the British Petroleum Company that began drilling at Ardenitza in 1925 and Patos in 1926, but Italy was plainly the key partner.<sup>62</sup> King Zog's attitude however was one of ambivalence. He believed that modernisation could not be hurried and for this reason he enjoyed the support of those who feared that progress would erode their privileges. But equally important he felt that national pride was offended by excessive foreign penetration. The 1926 treaty was not renewed and a customs union was rejected in 1932. The move against the Catholic schools in 1933, mentioned above, was in some senses an anti-Italian gesture. Italian preoccupation over Abyssinia and Spain meant a peaceful interlude for Zog but Mussolini acted decisively in 1939 in demanding a formal Italian protectorate over Albania and stationing of Italian troops. Lack of immediate compliance brought an invasion which forced Zog into exile.

It has been argued that Italian pressure was suddenly applied in order to forestall any reversal of Yugoslav acknowledgement of Italian hegemony over Albania and to emulate Hitler's

unilateral annexation of territory (the rump of Czechoslovakia). But the failure of the Italians to make headway against the Greeks in a bid to recover 'Albanian' territory in Epirus (followed by a Greek counterclaim to southern Albania, or northern Epirus) precipitated a German advance which doubled Albanian territory through the transfer of certain occupied lands in Greece and Yugoslavia. Yet despite the achievement of a 'Greater Albania' the Italian presence was strongly challenged. Indeed this was the climate that nourished an Albanian communist party, for the underground elements that had survived King Zog's rigorous security controls now emerged with Yugoslav backing and in 1942 a national liberation movement was formed at Peza between the Tosk communists and Geg non-communist patriotic elements: Levizje National Clirimtare. An explicitly anti-communist resistance Balli Kombetar was sponsored by Tosk landowners but the skilful manipulation of this group by the Germans (who replaced the Italians as occupiers in 1943) eroded their credibility. Meanwhile the LNC under Enver Hoxha (who formed a provisional government in 1944) were able to absorb German pressure and the hostility of the BK to regroup in the southern mountains and infiltrate northwards. In this way Hoxha found himself in a very strong position at the end of the war and the LNC now the Democratic Front, was able to eliminate BK leaders and surviving elements of Zog's regime, to win the 1945 election and declare a republic the following year.

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## Economic Geography

From the economic point of view the immediate inter-war years were extremely difficult. Chaos arose from a breakdown in normal trading patterns; partly through continued fighting and partly through the imposition of new frontiers. There were grave shortages of food and fuel, leading to fears of epidemic and revolutionary upheaval (as in Hungary in 1919).<sup>1</sup> Furthermore, inflationary pressures could not at first be contained since currency stabilisation would have meant a sharp reduction in government spending and rising unemployment. Yet continuing borrowing meant that inflation got completely out of hand and in the end wholly new currencies had to be introduced, usually with outside help. The rise in prices in Hungary, a mere 23,000 fold, was modest compared with 2.5 million in Poland (and four billion in Russia). Hungary's currency was stabilised in 1924 with loans supervised by the League of Nations. This was a consequence of the establishment of the Gold Exchange Standard (following the Genoa Conference of 1922) under which poorer countries could base their currencies on holdings of interest-bearing assets of countries on the gold standard rather than on holdings of gold reserves. Yet common sense was not evident in all areas of international finance and the German reparations saga is a case of particularly destructive wrangling which for a time (until settlement under the Dawes Plan of 1924) contributed significantly to the chaos and uncertainty in Eastern Europe. Large sums could not be paid by Germany and could not be accepted by beneficiaries (at least in terms of goods and services) without creating unemployment. In the end Germany's payments were financed by American loans which

were generous enough to allow a considerable margin that Germany could use to modernise her industries and infrastructure, thereby becoming more competitive than the nations that received the reparations!

As the new political pattern emerged it became clear that governments in Eastern Europe were going to take over economic management. Traditional flows of both people and goods would not continue where frontiers now intervened.<sup>2</sup> For the more backward countries were not prepared to countenance heavy dependence on external suppliers of manufactures, nor were they anxious to increase dependence on foreign capital and expertise: they would industrialise by their own efforts—prin noi însine (by ourselves alone) as the Romanians put it. Of course there were considerable resources for industrial advance as the frontier changes brought new combinations of raw materials and skills together in the various countries. And plainly the academic community had an important contribution to make not only through educating the youth but by assisting in national reconstruction and development.<sup>3</sup> However resources were quite inadequate for a policy of anything approaching total import substitution, yet high tariffs were maintained to protect the irrational strategy of small countries duplicating production (Table 7.1). The strategy of import substitution was not without merit but it was pressed to extremes and gave rise to high-cost and inefficient industries protected from consumer discrimination by heavy protection and potentially-corrupting relationships between industrialists and government officials. Rates of growth (GNP per capita) were well below the average for Europe for the whole period, with the one exception of Germany. For the years 1913–38 P. Bairoch has calculated the European average as 0.92 percent per annum. Germany scored heavily with 1.60 while Hungary (0.78), Yugoslavia (0.72) and Czechoslovakia (0.18) were all well below average. Calculations for Poland and Romania relate only to 1929–38 when annual growth rates of 0.67 and 0.42 respectively again compare unfavourably with a European average of 1.81.<sup>4</sup>

Despite the difficult depression years of the early 1930s advocates of extreme economic nationalism were singularly unyielding to pleas for moderation. It was assumed that any

Table 7.1: Tariff levels, 1927–1931

|                | Foodstuffs |       | Semi-manufactures |      | Manufactures |      |
|----------------|------------|-------|-------------------|------|--------------|------|
|                | 1927       | 1931  | 1927              | 1931 | 1927         | 1931 |
| Bulgaria       | 79.0       | 133.0 | 49.5              | 65.0 | 75.0         | 90.0 |
| Czechoslovakia | 36.3       | 84.0  | 21.7              | 29.5 | 35.8         | 36.5 |
| Germany        | 27.4       | 82.5  | 14.5              | 23.4 | 19.0         | 18.3 |
| Hungary        | 31.5       | 60.0  | 26.5              | 32.5 | 31.8         | 42.6 |
| Poland         | 72.0       | 110.0 | 33.2              | 40.0 | 55.6         | 52.0 |
| Romania        | 45.6       | 87.5  | 32.6              | 46.3 | 48.5         | 55.0 |
| Yugoslavia     | 43.7       | 75.0  | 24.7              | 30.5 | 28.0         | 32.8 |

All figures are percentage *ad valorem*

Source: J.R.Lampe and M.R.Jackson (1982) 413.

reduction in protection would be damaging, only bilateral or multilateral reductions could be contemplated. Industrial countries whose exporters were barracaded out of the markets of agrarian countries naturally took measures against the latter's food exports, thereby keeping food prices low in Eastern Europe with returns to farmers inadequate to moderate rural-urban migration. Some governments tried to help farmers through purchasing agencies buying cereals at above world market prices. Such organisations appeared in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia in 1930 and, arguably, marked the beginning of *étatisme* in Eastern Europe since the policy went beyond passive fiscal measures and the actual ownership of certain enterprises. Some limited initiatives were taken by western leaders to deal with the economic problems of the agrarian countries but they were not very effective. A British proposal for a customs union in 1932 embracing Austria and all the East European countries except Albania, Germany and Poland could not offer much promise since the markets of the more industrialised countries in the group could absorb only a small part of the surplus from the Balkans, and no provision for further loans was included in the package which seemed to some observers as a rather weak project to protect existing British investments.<sup>5</sup> Instead Germany



came up with the most effective strategy and it was one which achieved a high level of integration among the East European states. Accounts of foreign creditors could be spent only on German goods (otherwise there would be heavy discounts) yet in return Germany offered what amounted to a guaranteed market for primary produce at reasonable prices (Table 7.2). Since the agrarian states of Eastern Europe were desperate for steady markets for staple exports in the 1930s the closer economic link with Germany proved beneficial. The concept of a 'large area economy' or Grossraumwirtschaft based on the complementarities between a cluster of economic units may be traced back to J.G.Fichte in 1800 and it was revived periodically, notably by F.Naumann in his work on Mitteleuropa in 1918.<sup>6</sup> However the Nazis were to apply their own flavouring with the conception of an economic sphere covering all Europe and parts of Africa (separate from America and East Asia) and with the notion of Germany as the Kernland or directing centre.<sup>7</sup>

The German strategy reached its peak during the 1939–45 war years as much of the economy of Eastern Europe came under direct Nazi control (Figure 7.1).<sup>8</sup> A crucial development was the annexation of Czechoslovakia because that state had considerable investments in the Balkans. For example Ceskoslovenska Zbrojovka had a fifth share in the Romanian munitions company Copsa Mica si Cugir and also acquired a tenth of the stock in the country's largest metallurgical and engineering company at Resita. However German takeover of Czech interests 'dealt a death blow to Romanian efforts at maintaining its military forces outside the German orbit'.<sup>9</sup> The bulk of the new investment in industry was concentrated in the Reich where there was the best infrastructure and where security and supervision posed relatively few problems, although massive transfers of labour were needed. Of course existing capacities elsewhere in Eastern Europe were used and some new developments were implemented where there were valuable fuels (like the Romanian natural gas) and locational advantages in relation to the eastern front, not to mention security from allied bombing later in the war. One notable example was the rocket industry based on the island of Peenemünde near Griefswald. After destruction of the site by allied bombing in 1943 the

facility was relocated in three separate locations of which two were in Eastern Europe, one at Hammerfeld near Nordhausen in the Harz Mountains where 10,000 labourers worked in a vast underground factory for missile manufacture installed in old mine workings and another at Blizna where a site developed for a Polish ordnance establishment on the railway from Krakow to Lwow (Lvov) was first converted into a Heidelager (health camp and training ground) and then extended into a firing range.<sup>10</sup> Nevertheless A.Speer writes of the difficulties in developing armaments production in Poland where chaotic conditions made costly investments largely ineffective.<sup>11</sup> Workers were in poorer health and coal distribution was relatively inefficient. Agricultural production was however intensified in suitably-endowed areas of Fortress Europe. In Yugoslavia the separate occupation regime for Banat was significant from the agricultural point of view because food surpluses were earmarked for Germany and transfer to Serbia was forbidden, despite the shortages in Belgrade. Technical assistance was given to Banat farmers through the German minority's cooperative network and it included irrigation work, animal breeding and construction of silos. A considerable area was devoted to sunflowers.<sup>12</sup> In 1942 Germany's Romanian ally started to draw peasants into joint production without undermining their rights of private ownership. About two hundred associations were formed by 1944, producing according to the government's plan and benefiting from imports of German farm machinery, distributed through the Institutul National al Cooperatiei which also had a monopoly over the purchase and sale of cereals.<sup>13</sup> Such an organisation marked a further stage in the development of central planning and not surprisingly it continued to operate after the war under communist control.

### THE AGRARIAN PROBLEM

Despite a significant level of urban-industrial development in 1918 the problems of the agrarian countries tended to increase through a growth of population which domestic manufacturing and service industries could not wholly absorb. Opportunities for emigration were restricted and even seasonal migration across international frontiers was difficult because of the prevailing

Table 7.2: Direction of trade for Balkan countries, 1929–1938

|            | Eastern Europe(a) |           |           | Germany and Austria |           |           | Italy     |           |           | West(b)   |           |           |      |      |      |      |
|------------|-------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------|------|------|------|
|            | 1929-1933         | 1934-1938 | Exp. Imp. | 1929-1933           | 1934-1938 | Exp. Imp. | 1929-1933 | 1934-1938 | Exp. Imp. | 1929-1933 | 1934-1938 | Exp. Imp. |      |      |      |      |
| Albania    | 17.7              | 19.9      | 18.3      | 28.1                | 0.2       | 7.5       | 0.7       | 8.7       | 65.7      | 44.9      | 29.5      | 17.0      | 1.1  | 12.3 | 1.7  | 15.0 |
| Bulgaria   | 18.6              | 21.8      | 11.9      | 16.6                | 41.9      | 33.3      | 51.4      | 56.3      | 9.2       | 13.2      | 6.7       | 4.8       | 21.6 | 27.3 | 19.8 | 17.3 |
| Romania    | 22.8              | 18.9      | 21.4      | 21.6                | 24.6      | 33.4      | 26.8      | 37.1      | 10.0      | 9.3       | 8.4       | 5.2       | 30.9 | 26.8 | 27.2 | 26.5 |
| Yugoslavia | 27.7              | 26.7      | 21.3      | 22.0                | 29.6      | 32.5      | 36.0      | 34.7      | 24.6      | 12.2      | 11.2      | 9.0       | 10.5 | 16.3 | 19.5 | 18.4 |

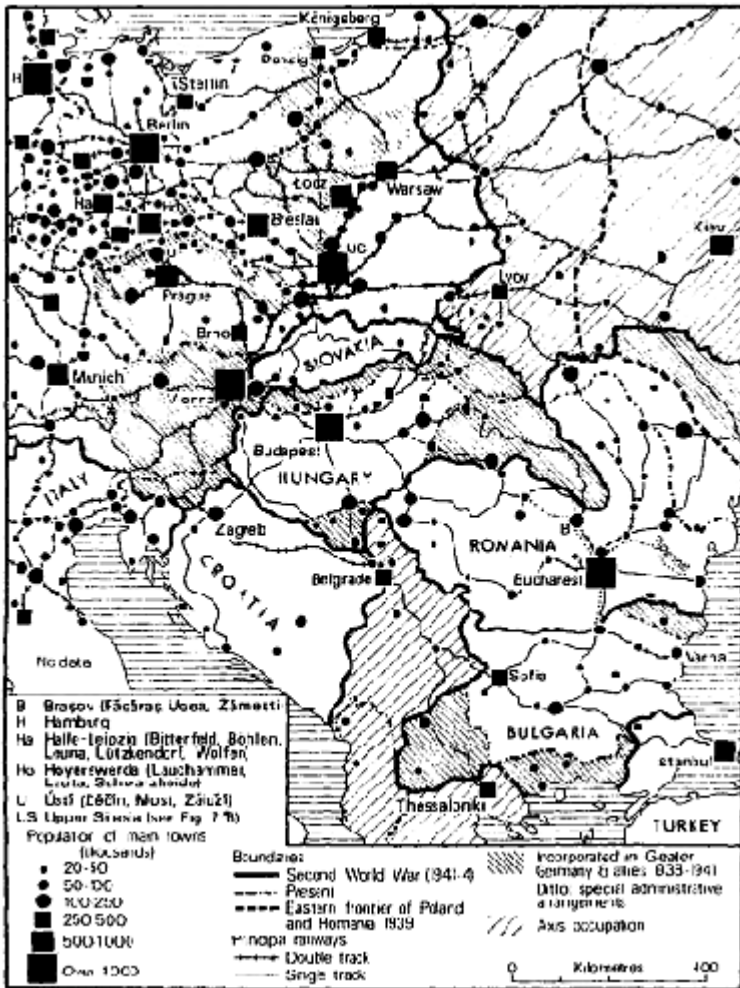
All figures are percentages

a Excludes Germany but includes Turkey

b Includes Scandinavia

Source: J.R.Lampe and M.R.Jackson (1982) 458–60.

Figure 7.1: Eastern Europe during the Second World War



Source: Historical atlases.

policy of autarky, and also because of the modernisation of manufacturing and distribution which reduced the scope for the itinerant peddler and craftsman. Bulgarian market gardeners from the Turnovo area, who had previously travelled all over Europe (as many as 12,000 each season in the late nineteenth century) to grow vegetables, were seen less frequently and the Slovak peddler only rarely penetrated the Danubian countries

with his miscellaneous wares. Rural poverty was however averted to some extent by land reform which greatly reduced the importance of the estates in all the agrarian countries with the exception of Hungary.<sup>14</sup> In Yugoslavia for example the 1919 programme affected one tenth of the total area of the country and a sixth of the agricultural land. Between 1920 and 1938 a total of 2.48 million hectares were expropriated from landlords owning more than 500 hectares of land (or more than 300 ha. of cultivated land).<sup>15</sup> The reform did not affect Serbia and Montenegro where large estates had already been eliminated (or had never existed) and apart from Macedonia where some Turkish landowners were expropriated only the new territories, gained after the First World War, were affected. There were some 637,000 beneficiaries representing about one third of the total number of peasant families, and although politically expedient it was unfortunate that the holdings were often too small for economic viability. A good deal of migration was involved, for government wanted to combine land reform with infiltration of politically reliable Serb and Montenegrin war veterans into areas like Vojvodina where the Yugoslavs were in a minority. Yet even so the problem of rural poverty varied very greatly between regions and it was in the poorer south where the gap between reality and expectation was greatest. The rate of natural increase remained high and the considerable increase in the cultivated area (about one fifth between 1921 and 1938) due to irrigation, reclamation and forest clearance could not keep pace with the growth of a population increasingly burdened by debt. The moratorium imposed on the repayment of debts of 1932 brought some relief but may have been counterproductive in discouraging investment in agriculture, and more flexible arrangements were introduced in 1936.

Land reform gave peasant farmers the option of intensive cultivation of smallholdings. And indeed one expression of the population pressure was relatively intensive cultivation of somewhat marginal land. Although conditions were not as difficult as they had been before the railway age accelerated mobility and allowed for seasonal employment away from home, peasant farming offered striking contrasts with the commercial counterpart in the west. Considerable interest was shown by native academics, many of them trained in French and

German universities. The fundamental importance of agriculture made a functional approach to village settlements somewhat superfluous and research tended to emphasise variations in architecture, building materials, morphology and traditional folk culture. But there were also foreign visitors who noted the seasonal rhythm of agricultural activity including the transhumance that was still carried on by the Carpathian peasants.

In the Tatra a distinction was drawn between the more fertile and accessible of the summer grazings where cattle were herded and where some cultivation was possible and the less fertile and more inaccessible places where sheep grazing was the dominant activity. Polana and hala in Poland find echoes in the conac and stina of Romania.<sup>16</sup> For the Balkans J.H.G. Lebon's study of the Jezera in south-western Yugoslavia describes the beginnings of modernisation in what was formerly a backward corner of Montenegro.<sup>17</sup> The new state nationalised the forests, extended the road system and established schools and police stations. In the principle village, Zabljak, the motor road arrived in 1934 and two modern buildings were raised in stone, with slate roofs: one the school and the other a town hall and police station. Many new houses had been built by local officials and the growth of a tourist industry was anticipated. The basic function of the community was agricultural and new land was still being broken in to support a rising population. Moreover, although the zadruga in its pure form with communal agriculture and concentration of power in the hands of an elderly couple was not perpetuated, there were nevertheless close family links and groups of families, often inter-related, would go out from time to time and establish a new settlement when all the potential arable land had been broken in at the mother village and all the rough grazing fully used. Lebon mentions how thirteen families set out to found a new settlement in the Tara valley, continuing a well-established colonisation procedure for it is recorded that another hamlet had been previously founded by men who fled from Turkish oppression in the Pec area around 1860. 'As their sons grew up farms were created for them by breaking up new land and when, on the decease of the original founders, questions of inheritance arose land was divided into strips so that the best land should not come to one individual'.<sup>18</sup>

Meanwhile in Hungary colonisation was proceeding on a more limited basis. This was partly because the opportunities were restricted by the perpetuation of the estates with only limited land reform to provide plots for the zsellérek (landless peasants) and törpe birtokosok (dwarf landowners). Indeed the dissatisfaction of landless peasants, deepened by clear evidence of reform in neighbouring countries provided by the territorial changes in Hungary's favour in 1940–1, provided as much support for a pro-German posture during the Second World War as did the availability of a reliable market for the agricultural surpluses. Most of the resettlement was association with the partition of common land (hatar) which was prompting a shift from the inner settlement (kültelek) to isolated farmsteads (tanyak). It appears that the allocation of common land in favour of wealthy villagers began in the late nineteenth century when legal constraints were placed on the transfer of permanent residence from the village. But in the inter-war period the settlement on common land gathered momentum, with a considerable amount of illegal squatting, and the isolated farmsteads which had previously been only temporary settlements became permanent homes. Nevertheless the dispersal of rural settlement was complemented by very significant migration flows to the towns and particularly to Budapest. E.D. Beynon points out that the economic incentive of higher income and wider choice of employment was bolstered by the social factor which operated mainly through a sense of greater individual freedom.<sup>19</sup> For women especially the emancipation was sufficient to justify the phrase: Stadtluft macht frei! However the smallholding was a mixed blessing. The labour-intensive nature of farming meant a basic subsistence for millions of rural dwellers but Eastern Europe was disadvantaged in competition with more efficient food producers.<sup>20</sup> Yields were higher than in North America but output per person was relatively poor.<sup>21</sup> Indeed taking into account the prevailing levels of intensification (a function of market demands and capital availability for improvements such as irrigation or consolidation) it was thought that nearly one third of the total agrarian population of the East European countries (excluding Czechoslovakia and Germany) was 'surplus' and could be withdrawn without production being affected (Table 7.3).<sup>22</sup>

Table 7.3: Rural population surplus, 1930

|                           | A     | B     | C    | D    | E    | F    | G    |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Albania                   | 1.00  | 0.80  | 79.8 | 77.7 | 65.3 |      |      |
| Bulgaria <sup>(a)</sup>   | 5.48  | 4.09  | 74.6 | 53.0 | 35.7 | 87.7 | 66.4 |
| Czechoslovakia            | 14.73 | 4.81  | 32.7 | -4.7 | 11.7 | 87.0 | 41.7 |
| Germany <sup>(b)</sup>    | 66.03 | 13.30 | 20.1 |      |      |      |      |
| Hungary                   | 8.69  | 4.47  | 51.5 | 22.4 | 2.9  | 96.9 | 21.2 |
| Poland <sup>(c)</sup>     | 32.11 | 19.35 | 60.3 | 51.3 | 29.4 | 86.3 | 31.3 |
| Romania                   | 18.06 | 13.07 | 72.4 | 51.4 | 23.1 | 92.1 | 48.0 |
| Yugoslavia <sup>(c)</sup> | 13.93 | 10.63 | 76.3 | 61.5 | 38.8 | 88.3 | 55.0 |

A Total population millions

B Agricultural population

C B as a percentage of A

D Surplus agricultural population percent reckoned on the basis of European average *per capita* value of agricultural production.

E Surplus agricultural population on the basis of productivity per hectare in France

F Farms of 0.1 to 10.0 ha. as a percentage of the total (data for various years 1927–1935)

G As F but reckoned as a percentage of the agricultural land

a 1926

b 1933

c 1931

Source: W.E.Moore (1945) (note 22).

## INDUSTRIALISATION: LOCATION TRENDS

The inevitable response to the problem was a greater emphasis on industry to provide more opportunities in the towns, and simultaneously improve the basis for national defence. Contemporary western observers invariably stressed the importance of military orders rather than 'genuine' demand, but the approach has been vindicated by the post-war record which has placed unprecedented emphasis on national industry. Each country had to decide how far it could afford to work along traditional lines through agrarian reform and improvement of farm incomes as a means of stimulating demand for manufactures and when it had to press ahead with rapid industrialisation embracing chemical, engineering and



metallurgical plant— often located in strategically advantageous areas. Germany placed heavy investments in the chemical industry of the Halle-Leipzig area, with its cheap lignite fuel, while Romania's natural gas provided a most acceptable energy and raw material base for a cluster of important developments in chemistry and metallurgy in the heart of Transylvania (Figure 7.2). Locational change was rather less pronounced in Poland and Yugoslavia, where plans for new industrial regions were only partially implemented, and in Hungary where the very limited raw material base of the Trianon state was a serious constraint.

### Poland

In Poland the growth of the economy was geared largely to small scale farming: estates were broken up and peasant holdings consolidated in anticipation of greatly improved yields in former Habsburg and Prussian lands where agricultural development had previously been hampered by the option of importing grain from Hungary and Ukraine respectively. The greater emphasis on self-sufficiency can be seen from the trade figures drawn up by A.Jezierski: foreign trade per capita fell from 81.6 US dollars in 1910 to 14.0 in 1938, while the share of trade with Russia fell from 67.0 percent to 0.4 reflecting autarky in the Soviet Union and the political problems arising from Poland's refusal to accept the Curzon Line as her eastern boundary.<sup>23</sup> Meanwhile Poland developed her light industry and consolidated the heavy industry and mining inherited in the Silesian coalfield. Plans were drawn up by J.Piłsudski in 1929 for a rapid expansion of state-owned industry (armaments, chemicals and steel) and a growth of coal exports but only in the 1930s did the industrial programme get under way, linked with a growth of interest in regional planning. The Association of Polish Town Planners (Towarzystwo Urbanistów Polskich) argued that several fundamental problems needed attention. Some rural areas were overpopulated and subject to soil erosion, the old industrial towns (especially in Upper Silesia) could offer only poor environmental conditions while the infrastructure of the capital city was particularly inadequate (Figure 7.3).<sup>24</sup> After further statistical data had been published the government

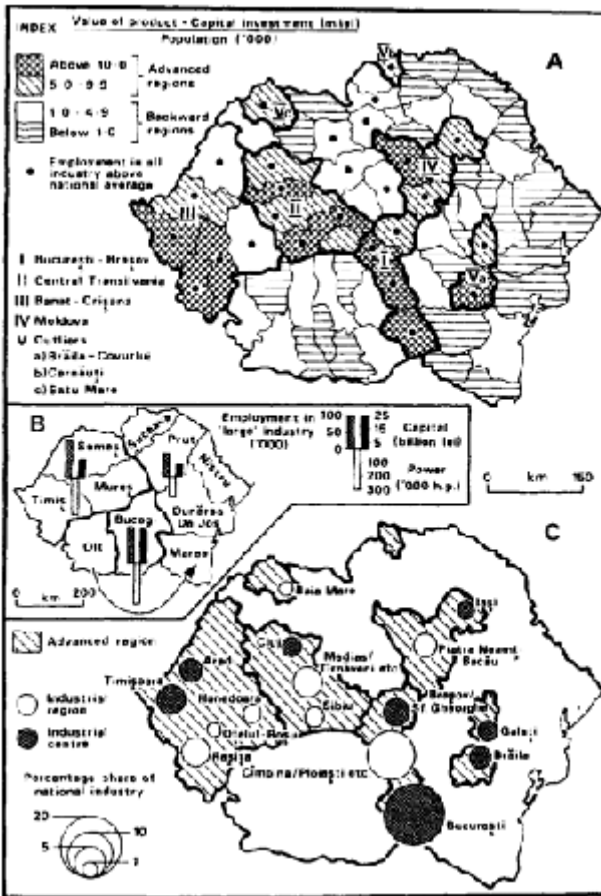
announced a state investment plan to run from 1936 to 1940, with priority to be given to the backward areas of the Vistula (known as 'Poland B', in distinction to the more developed western territories comprising 'Poland A'). Planning studies were to be carried out in twelve special problem areas involving considerable areas in both parts of the country. One of the eastern regions covering the Vistula-San confluence was considered suitable for armaments industries envisaged under the development plan and it was in this 'Central Industrial Region', well to the east of the German frontier, that factory building was pressed ahead. Implementation elsewhere was prevented by the outbreak of war and the combined German-Russian invasion of 1939.<sup>25</sup>

### Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia also tried to create an industrial heartland in the 1930s through the government decision to order new plant from Krupp in Germany for steel making at Zenica in Bosnia. Iron ore was available nearby at Vares (first worked in 1917) which was smelted at Krepuli with imported coke or with charcoal obtained from the Teslic wood distillation plant. Previously Yugoslavia had concentrated on the inherited steelworks in the north of the country at Jesenice, Ravne and Store, feeding them with the iron ores of Ljubija in Croatia, also smelted in blast furnaces at Ljubija itself. Unfortunately, despite substantial iron ore resources, lack of coking coal prevented self-sufficiency in pig iron for output in 1939 was only 84,000 tons compared with 235,000 for steel: imported pig iron and domestic scrap was necessary to close the gap. But Yugoslavia was not in a position to concentrate exclusively on Bosnia. A new steel mill was also built on the Danube at Smederevo.

Important developments also occurred in other branches of mining and metallurgy despite the strong influence of foreign capital.<sup>26</sup> About 60 percent of the capital invested in Yugoslav industry in general was foreign, and four countries (Czechoslovakia, France, Switzerland and the UK) accounted for half of it, but foreign investment was particularly prominent in mining where it accounted for three quarters of the total. Here French and UK capital was most prominent with a share of 88.5

Figure 7.2: Advanced and backward regions in Romania in the 1930s



- A Large-scale industry 1935
- B Large-scale industry 1938 (by tinuturi)
- C Industrial centres

Sources: Anuarul statistic 1939; L.Georgescu (1941) Localizarea si structura industriei romanesti (Bucharest: Cartea Romaneasca); V.Madgearu (1940) Evolutia economiei romanesti dupa razboiul mondial (Bucharest: Independenta)

percent of all foreign capital in the industry (compared with 42.4 in industry as a whole). The story is one of great fluctuations in output in step with world demand: closures in the depression years contrasted with rapid expansion after 1935 when German

Figure 7.3: Urban Development and planning in Upper Silesia



Sources: J.C.Fisher (ed.) (1966) City and regional planning in Poland (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press); N.J.G.Pounds (1958) The Upper Silesian industrial region (Bloomington: Indiana University Press).

influence became stronger with regard to both investment and the direction of trade. In 1939 Yugoslavia ranked first in Europe (excluding the Soviet Union) for antimony and lead, second in chromium and copper, third in magnesium and silver and fourth in bauxite, lignite and zinc. By this time several new smelters had been opened at suitable points on the railway network in relatively backward parts of the country.

The most important copper mine was at Bor in Serbia which also produced some gold and silver: operations began in 1919 with French capital and total output in 1939 approached one million t. It was the largest and most profitable mine in Europe. No refining was done in Yugoslavia until 1936 and imports were needed to satisfy the country's domestic needs for the metal. But the company bowed to pressure from the Stojadinovic government and opened a refinery for electrolytic copper with 12,000 t. capacity in 1938. This unit was large enough to supply Czechoslovakia and Romania as well. The lead-zinc ore workings at Mezica in Slovenia were started before the war by an Austrian company but fell into UK hands after 1918. This operation was however overtaken by the one at Trepcia in south Serbia where UK capital was also involved: the

output of 0.7 million t. in 1939 from the single Stari Trg mine accounted for four-fifths of national lead-zinc output and there were small quantities of pyrites and silver too. Tax concessions and low wages helped to make Trepca lead the cheapest in the world and it was not uncommon for output to be sold four or five years ahead of actual production. Again there was a growth in smelting in the late 1930s and Zvečan (on the railway from Belgrade to Skopje) and Sabac near Belgrade, became the largest of six smelters that supplemented the old Mezica plant. Finished metal could then be exported rather than unprocessed ore and concentrate. Much of Yugoslavia's chrome came from Orasje in Macedonia, belonging to another UK company Allantini Mines, but the Germans also acquired an interest through Jugo-Chrome which became the major purchaser. By the late 1930s however much of the chrome was being diverted to the domestic steel industry and ferro-chrome plants were located on the Adriatic coast near Sibenik and near Maribor in Slovenia. Only small amounts of antimony were produced and smelted at Krupanj in Serbia while pyrites was worked on a modest scale, mainly at Majdanpek and Trepca. But Yugoslavia accounted for a tenth of the world's bauxite production in 1939 the first extensively-worked deposits being at Kalun and Sinj, convenient for railway haulage to the coast at either Split or Sibenik. Most of the output was exported, mainly to Germany where French sources had previously been exploited, but in 1937 the first aluminium factory came on stream at Lozovac near Sibenik. Output was very small however, the peak year of 1940 yielding 2.8 thousand t. of metal compared with a bauxite output of 0.4 million. Another smelter was planned in 1938 for Mostar in Hercegovina, backed by German capital, but the project did not go ahead.

### Hungary

Industrialisation was not immediately a high priority of government but even if it had been Hungary would still have been gravely embarrassed by the loss of raw materials and processing capacities in Croatia, Slovakia and Transylvania.<sup>27</sup> The contrast between the two sets of production figures for 1913 is important in this connection: not only was there a large

proportion of iron and steel production in the lost territories but a much higher one for iron (69.4 percent) than steel (45.0) (Table 7.4). Although new blast furnace capacity was installed in Trianon Hungary, the loss of domestic raw materials called for emphasis on steel produced from scrap or from imported pig iron. The loss of coal deposits (37.0 percent of 1913 production) was quite easily made good, but only through exploitation of low grade lignite. Yet the aluminium industry was slow to develop despite the excellent raw material base. The production of the Gant bauxite mine was exported, by narrow gauge railway to Bodajk and then by the state railways to Leipzig (or Komarom, on the Danube waterway, in the case of the Schwandorf plant near Regensburg). Altogether mining, metallurgy engineering and chemicals fell back initially in the inter-war period (with some distinguished exceptions like electrical engineering), but experienced a revival through the stimulus of rearmament: 34.9 percent of total production in 1929 but 40.7 in 1938 and 49.4 in 1943. On the other hand the textile, clothing and leather industry made good progress with more cotton cloth produced in Trianon Hungary in 1929 than in Imperial Hungary in 1913. Only in 1943 was there a change, due to the dynamism of heavy industry already noted. The employment trends are also revealing. A rapid growth in Imperial Hungary at the beginning of the century was not continued at the same rate, until the late 1930s when employment increased from 0.33 million in 1938 to 0.45 million in 1943, a greater increase in five years than occurred over the ten years prior to 1938. However the wartime boom was highly unstable and ended in disaster with heavy losses of plant, much of it due to removal of equipment to Germany and deliberate destruction by the occupation regime in the face of the Russian advance of

### INDUSTRIALISATION: SCALE OF PRODUCTION

Detailed study of the industrial geography is unfortunately precluded by the lack of comparable regional statistics for all the countries of Eastern Europe. However it is evident that while industrial locations had a clear raw material bias there were

Table 7.4: Changes in Hungarian industry, 1898-1943

| (a) Sectoral change         | Percentage distributions- |       |       |       |       | Value of production |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
|                             | 1898                      | 1913  | 1929  | 1938  | 1943  | 1898                | 1913 | 1929 | 1938 | 1943 |
| Mining                      | 23.1                      | 15.8  | 13.0  | 12.5  | 13.0  | 6.7                 | 5.4  | 4.4  | 5.6  | 5.9  |
| Metallurgy/Engineering      | 25.6                      | 20.6  | 25.8  | 27.7  | 38.5  | 21.6                | 22.1 | 20.3 | 22.5 | 28.9 |
| Chemicals/Paper/Printing    | 7.8                       | 8.6   | 8.2   | 8.9   | 12.8  | 8.0                 | 10.4 | 10.2 | 12.6 | 14.6 |
| Textiles/Clothing/Leather   | 7.4                       | 12.6  | 20.9  | 25.5  | 14.6  | 7.1                 | 10.0 | 19.3 | 20.5 | 18.1 |
| Food processing             | 15.3                      | 14.5  | 12.4  | 10.3  | 9.0   | 44.1                | 38.9 | 34.2 | 28.8 | 23.8 |
| Building materials          | 19.8                      | 25.5  | 17.0  | 13.1  | 10.3  | 10.1                | 10.9 | 7.6  | 5.8  | 5.5  |
| Electricity                 | 1.0                       | 2.4   | 2.7   | 2.1   | 1.8   | 2.4                 | 2.3  | 4.0  | 4.2  | 3.2  |
| Total employment '000s      | 302.1                     | 532.2 | 270.0 | 330.0 | 451.0 |                     |      |      |      |      |
| (b) Production levels       | Imperial Hungary          |       |       |       |       | Trianon Hungary     |      |      |      |      |
|                             | 1900                      | 1913  | 1929  | 1938  | 1943  | 1913                | 1929 | 1938 | 1943 |      |
| Iron million tonnes         | 0.5                       | 0.6   |       | 0.2   | 0.4   | 0.3                 | 0.4  | 0.3  | 0.4  |      |
| Steel million tonnes        | 0.4                       | 0.8   |       | 0.4   | 0.6   | 0.6                 | 0.6  | 0.6  | 0.8  |      |
| Coal million tonnes         | 6.6                       | 10.3  |       | 6.5   | 7.9   | 9.4                 | 12.3 |      |      |      |
| Cotton cloth million metres | 0.3                       | 1.4   |       | n.a.  | 1.6   | 1.8                 | n.a. |      |      |      |
| Iron as a percent of steel  | 111.9                     | 77.5  |       | 43.2  | 64.9  | 50.8                | 56.4 |      |      |      |
| Coal: iron ratio            | 14.0                      | 16.6  |       | 34.2  | 21.4  | 28.5                | 28.0 |      |      |      |

Source: G.Ranki (1964) (note 27).

considerable differences in the scale of production. Some resources attracted a large number of separate developments ranging from substantial capital ventures with heavy investment in infrastructure and processing facilities, to small peasant enterprises with intermittent working and relatively rudimentary equipment. By contrast there were other resources which gave rise to just a small number of very large developments, heavily capitalised and technologically advanced. In each case the response would depend partly on the level of development in the relevant national economy and partly on conditions in the industry concerned. The theme may be illustrated through case studies dealing with highly-contrasting situations: the timber industry in the mountains of Romania and the chemical industry in the Halle-Leipzig area of Germany. The first example is drawn from a relatively backward part of Eastern Europe where industry was labour intensive and frequently assumed a peasant character, by virtue of the inclusion of many forests in the land reform programme and the relatively simple technology of sawmilling and timber transport. But there were capitalist companies at work in some parts of the Carpathians, with large processing units and elaborate timber collection systems, while state enterprise became more evident in the 1930s. On the other hand the chemical industry in Germany called for very heavy capital investment using the latest technology (much of it evolved through research carried out by the companies themselves). Cheap fuel was a great asset and so the industry involved a small number of vertically-integrated enterprises on the lignite fields around Halle and Leipzig.<sup>28</sup> The two geographies, which are partially reconstructed in the following pages, have their clear implications over security, settlement patterns and regional development prospects.

#### **The timber industry in Romania (Figure 7.4)**

Romania has very satisfactory physical conditions for the growth of woodlands and only the relatively small areas of true steppe and alpine mountain environment are ruled out. Different species have tended to occupy specific altitudinal zones as the initial pine forest, developing at the end of the glacial period, was successively invaded by oak, spruce, fir and beech. Given the prevailing climatic conditions the upper limit of forest now varies between 1700m. in the eastern Carpathians to 1850m in



the south. A relevant factor must be the height and breadth of the mountains themselves since local climatic conditions are derived in part from such criteria: the relatively high level of forest in the southern Carpathians results in part from the fact that the mountains here are particularly high and massive. Aspect is also important, with the highest woodlands found on south or southwest facing slopes: in the Retezat the difference in the upper limit between north and south facing slopes is 40–60m. However while physical constraints may be crucial at the upper level, management decisions comprise the key factor lower down. The expansion of agriculture has brought about a substantial reduction of the natural woodland cover, most evident in the plains. Economic pressures of agriculture expansion and wood supply for fuel and construction are almost entirely responsible because natural conditions have remained relatively unchanged. Even in the mountains extensive clearances were made to increase the grazing land available and to allow for some expansion of cropping (accompanied by the terracing of hill slopes) under conditions of heavy population pressure. There was, for example, a transformation of the landscape in the western Carpathians from the late seventeenth century when the building of permanent settlements on the high surfaces was permitted. Landlords encouraged this stabilisation of settlement and the consequent reduction of transhumance, because labour was available for cutting and carting timber. Over the years very large clearings have developed and although permanent settlements are restricted to particularly favourable sites the degree of nucleation within them is very small.

Not that the peasantry took a purely negative view of the woodland cover, for it was appreciated that the agricultural surfaces were best stabilised against erosion by retention of the forest on the steeper slopes while the dependence of the Carpathian peasantry on ancillary non-agricultural occupations made the woodland a valuable resource. Although the recent history of the forests is inevitably bound up largely with the commercial companies it should not be overlooked that until the completion of nationalisation of woodlands in 1948 there were numerous small industries in the mountains working up timber into various products which were distributed by cart in the lowland regions. The Moti from the western Carpathians and

Figure 7.4: Exploitation of Romania's Carpathian forests field work.



Sources: C.C.Giurescu (1980) A history of the Romanian forest (Bucharest: Ed. Academiei RSR);

the Sovejeni from Vrancea were particularly active. Again the use of pine by craftsmen in the Cerna valley and Mehedinti Plateau (for the manufacture of lubricants) made considerable inroads in the local forests. But peasant clearances were modest by comparison with the activities of large companies who obtained important concessions during the second half of the nineteenth century.

### Transport arrangements

Although woodcutting was inevitably a highly dispersed activity, processing showed an element of concentration thanks to the development of transport systems to handle heavy tree trunks. Timber could often be carried by water to the railways operating in the lower reaches of the river basins. Thus logs were floated down the Arges as far as the railhead at Cumpana,

though little remains of the transfer installations because of the recent development of a hydroelectric system. But in the case of the Somes valley, where timber was carried downstream towards the railway at Gilau, redundant installations can still be seen near Racatau. In more difficult situations wooden flumes were occasionally built for the transport of logs, as in the Sebes valley. However there remained the job of hauling timber to the river. Logs might be dragged by horses along rough tracks but where there was a considerable scale of working it might be feasible to construct a greased timber chute (cusca) or tube (igheab) to despatch timber down the steep valley sides. For even larger consignments a cable-operated funicular could be justified, as in cases where timber was taken out over a watershed. This happened, for example, in the Lotru valley south of Sibiu where timber was cut to help supply the Talmaciu sawmill in the adjacent Sadu valley. It is worth adding that there was a measure of cartelisation in the timber industry and individual companies were able to control rational territories taking in whole river basins, occasionally linking up with adjacent valleys which would have been difficult to exploit as separate units. A critical factor here was the generally high altitudinal zone occupied by the more commercially valuable spruce plantations, compared with the beechwoods: therefore extending a transport system over a watershed to tap the valuable stands of timber lying immediately on the other side might well be less expensive than building a separate infrastructure along the bottom of the valley through a considerable expanse of agricultural land or low-value woodland.

Without doubt the most persistent case of the use of water transport concerns the Bistrita river, a tributary of the Siret. Rafting once involved the entire zone from Vatra Dornei downstream to Piatra Neamt and the confluence with the Siret at Bacau, continuing from there southwards to Galati. This controlled method of transporting timber (flotaj dirijat) required the construction of an articulated raft (pluta mladioasa) with three sections: the more slender logs were placed in the leading section and the longest were laid on the outside. This method enabled quantities of timber varying from 60 to 170 cubic metres to be taken down the narrow defile from Vatra

Dornei. During the interwar period most of timber was destined for the sawmills at Piatra Neamt. However while floating timber is an important traditional means of transport, and one which endows the industry with a somewhat colourful and romantic image, it is evident that since the late nineteenth century railways and roads have become increasingly important. They have allowed the opening-up of extensive stands of timber remote from suitable water courses and (because the cheapness of floating is offset by some deterioration in quality and a high rate of loss) they have gradually duplicated most of the old floating routes.

The railway was initially preferred by most timber companies. Using a narrow gauge (frequently 760mm.) the railways were quite cheap to build and operate, for the locomotives could be fuelled with timber and the logs could be secured to simple bogies without the need for elaborate container wagons. The feasibility of the railway was enhanced by the generally downstream flow of timber which meant that, apart from stores and equipment, trains working up the gradient consisted only of empty rolling stock. Forest railway technology was imported largely from Austria where the firm of Orenstein u. Koppel enjoyed a high reputation for wood-burning narrow-gauge locomotives. The standard design adopted after the Second World War and produced at the Resita works in Romania is merely a modification of the traditional Austrian locomotive. Unfortunately the full extent of the forest railway system is very difficult to reconstruct with accuracy. For the network did not develop in a neat progressive manner: some lines still in existence have been in use for the best part of a century while others built at the turn of the century survived only a few decades while the tributary area was being cleared, to be succeeded by other lines newly-built in the 1930s to tap virgin beech wood stands. Furthermore very few maps show forest railways with any consistency (apart from topographical maps of the 1930s) and rounding off the picture is a protracted business depending on local enquiry since there are few technical journals or official records. However it seems that the forest railways were most numerous in the eastern Carpathians where there are extensive stands of fir and spruce. Usually each line ran to an interchange point on the standard gauge state railway

network, the main exceptions being in the far southwest where forest railways ran inland from river ports on the Danube and a few other cases where timber was fed to a road depot. It is also worth noting that while most of the railways were built purely for transporting timber some had other industrial functions (such as the conveyance of salt to Sighetul Marmatiei-Camara from Costuiu and Ocna Sugatag) and many of the railways provided a local passenger service. Some timber companies built forest roads but in the 1920s and 1930s these were almost invariably accessory to the railway system.

### Legislation

Woodcutting must also be seen in a legislative context, because official regulations governing timber operations date back to the eighteenth century in the Romanian lands. At the end of the nineteenth century legislation seems to have been quite effective in terms of the parcelling out of woodlands to ensure regeneration. However the Hungarian law of 1879 and the Romanian forest codes of 1881 and 1910 were not adequate to ensure regeneration in all cases: some commercial companies preferred to forfeit money deposited as security than go to the trouble of using approved methods. Furthermore the law did not restrict the rights of private landowners who could clear a forest completely if they so wished. And legislation tended to overlook small woodlands situated away from the main forest stands which comprised the state's forest fund (fundul forestier). The 1910 code was applied throughout Greater Romania in 1923 and the ambivalence continued, partly out of respect for private property rights and partly because of the legitimate pressures exerted by the expanding farming population through demands for extra grazing land and firewood. C.C. Giurescu claims a sharp decline in the forest area from 7.25 million ha. in 1918 to 5.95 million in 1938, a net loss of 1.30 million ha.<sup>29</sup> Grazing in the mountains could easily be increased since 1.16 million ha. of woodland were allocated to peasants as part of the land reform but in addition there was a law of 1920 which provided more grazing on meadow and floodplain land (especially in the Danube and Prut valleys). Firewood demands could only be moderated as lignite briquettes and natural gas became more

widely available at the end of the period. Considerable inroads for firewood were sanctioned in 1924.

The 1930s brought several progressive developments however. To ensure a more rational exploitation of woodlands an 'Autonomous Fund of State Forests' (Casa Autonomă a Padurilor Statului—CAPS) was set up in 1930. And in the same year legislation provided for afforestation of eroded lands and other areas where mountain torrents needed containment. The programme of shelter belts and protective forests met with some success, notably around the Moldavian town of Bîrlad. The tinut of Dunărea de Jos (embracing much of country's steppe land) launched a plan for nurseries and communal forests which was extended to the whole country in 1941. Unfortunately Romania joined the campaign against Russia later in the year and the plan was not implemented. But the interest revived after the war in order to stabilise heavily eroded slopes, especially in Moldavia, and establish shelter belts in Dobrogea. Finally the recreational value of woodlands was also appreciated. In 1933 300 ha. of Prustnicul forest was provided for the people of Bucharest by the Ministry of Agriculture and two years later a new law provided for protection of woodlands needed for recreation and tourism (especially around the mineral springs at the spa towns) as well as strategic purposes. The Slatioara reserve on the Rarau Massif in the eastern Carpathians was joined by the Retezat park (1935) and others at Cozia in the Olt valley and in the Banat, Bucegi and Fagaras mountains at Domogled, Sinaia and Moldovanu-Capra respectively.

Evidently the legislation was not altogether effective because the preamble to a further act of 1947 referred to the accelerating process of deforestation over the previous quarter century, leaving its legacy in one million hectares of degraded forest land. All stands of woodland larger than 2500 square metres were covered by the new protective legislation but further curbs on the activities of private woodland owners were largely irrelevant because all forests were nationalised in 1948. Such a radical step had been advocated after the First World War as part of the programme of industrial development prin noi înșine, the primary aim being the elimination of foreign timber companies and the establishment of a national syndicate that would maintain high management standards to allow a sustained

production of aurul verde (green gold) and so complement the other staple exports of cereals and oil. However for various reasons the nettle could not be grasped at the time. Nationalisation went against the private property ethos of the land reform while the world market opportunities for timber were hardly bright enough to justify a mammoth administrative upheaval combined with heavy investment in opening up inaccessible forests. The formation of CAPS represented a belated compromise and it was the organisation that dealt with the Germans in 1939, to establish a joint company (with Deutsche Forstung Holzwirtschaftsgesellschaft) covering a 34, 000 ha. stand in the Pîpirig-Risca-Tîrgu Neamt area of the eastern Carpathians. The USSR was able to take over the organisation and create a new joint company (Sovromlemn) and the more realistic expectations of high demand at a time when private capitalism was under threat paved the way for the complete state control that had long been advocated by some economists and conservationists. Further losses had already occurred through the war and the 1945 land reform but the subsequent decline of the forest fund has been slight (6.49 million ha. in 1948 and 6.31 million in 1971).

### Wood processing

Such was the resource base available to the processors. As already noted there were capitalist companies, struggling to cope with dwindling forest stands and difficult world market conditions, and a small-scale peasant sector invigorated by the land reform. Wood processing on a factory scale took the form of quite large sawmills producing constructional timber, mainly for export. Usual locations were small towns on the edge of large tracts of forest and situated either on a main line railway or a branch line (which might well have been built with the timber industry in mind). Reghin was one of several sawmilling towns on the loop railway in central Transylvania threading through the depressions from Tîrgu Mures round to Gheorgheni, Miercurea Ciuc and Brasov. By contrast Nehoiu, Resita and Vatra Dornei were situated on branch lines although in the latter case new construction through the mountains in the late 1930s (to connect Cluj with Cernauti) greatly improved

access. However not all sawmills enjoyed rail access: for example the Baia de Fier sawmill opened by local businessman Gh.Dinculescu in 1930. Timber was floated *in mod salbatic*, pitching individual logs into the rivers Galben and Oltet during the Spring when water levels were highest. Distances of up to twenty kilometres would be covered in transit from forest to factory. Furthermore the finished produce had to be taken by cart to the nearest railhead of Țirgu Carbunesti. Of the various break of bulk points Baia de Fier was the most convenient as an industrial location, minimising the cost of carting. Today of course the state-owned Fabrica de cherestea (which has developed out of the Dinculescu mill, nationalised in 1948) uses motor lorries. There was also some development of sawmilling further away from the forests, at ports such as Galati which could receive their raw material by the floating of logs along major rivers and then forward sawn timber by ship. At the other extreme some sawmills were built deep in the forest, as at Comandau near Covasna. Considerable infrastructural investment (in housing, power and transport) was needed in this remote district and in view of the considerable distance to the standard-gauge railway at Covasna (plus the complication of an inclined plane) it was presumably decided that processing near to the source of timber, increasing the ratio of value to weight and reducing the transport capacity thereby, was preferable to the conventional solution of locating the sawmill at the transfer point between private forest transport system and the state railway. Not all factories were concerned with sawmilling however. The production of furniture was well-established and some towns enjoyed particularly high reputations, notably Pincota near Arad which still exports a large part of its output. There was a wood distillation industry at such places as Margina and Resita and reference should also be made to a chain of paper mills including Bacau in Moldavia, Busteni in Wallachia and Petresti and Prundul Bîrgaului in Transylvania. But diversification has been much more evident in the post-war period.

One important consequence of the emphasis on production of constructional timber was the high demand for fir and spruce trees rather than beech. The latter was less valuable and because beechwood required a different type of saw which processors



were not usually anxious to install this type of material was relatively unused. A further problem lay in heavy weight of the beech trunks which ruled out floating as a means of transport: railways were essential and these were normally too costly to provide unless some high value woodland was to be opened up at the same time. Beechwood was being used for furniture and the production of cellulose (for artificial fibres) during the 1930s but most of the material went for charcoal and firewood. 91.6 percent of the 2.24 million cubic metres of timber produced in 1938 was resinous (i.e. fir and spruce) leaving beech to account for only 4.1 percent and other species 4.3. During the post-war period the share of beech has risen significantly, reaching 15.6 percent in 1955 and 26.3 in 1966, thanks not only to the increased size of the furniture industry but also to the production of chipboard and fibreboard which has been integrated with sawmilling in large wood processing units referred to as Combinat pentru industrializarea lemnului CIL. However the drive to maximise use of beechwood has its origins in the work of CAPS in the 1930s for new railways and sawmills were opened up in beechwood zones such as Stîlpeni near Pitesti.

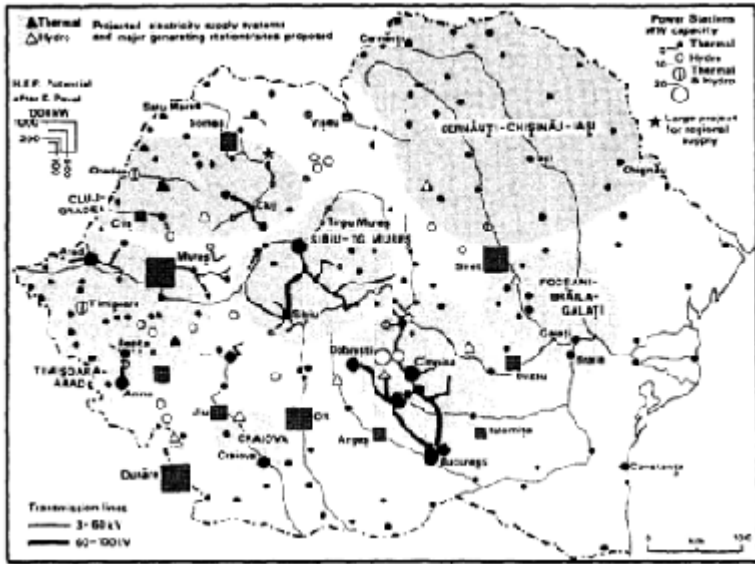
However it is also important to comment on small-scale timber processing which has been going on for centuries, often with the aid of the water power which is abundant in the mountain regions. In many cases the commercial companies built their large mills in areas where there was already processing taking place, albeit on a small scale and in scattered locations. The two scales of production very often continued side by side with the small-scale industry catering for local needs and the steam-driven factories geared for export. In the production of finished goods there was an even stronger caracter mestesugaresc with some craftsmen active full-time in their workshops while many peasants would work seasonally like the Moti already mentioned. Allocation of woodlands to individual peasant farmers under the land reform led to an expansion of small-scale water-powered sawmilling: villagers would have their wood sawn up at the local joagare de apa before offering their goods for sale. Quite sophisticated equipment might be involved for the mills might enjoy sole occupation of a particular site or else take a share of the power available for a local industrial complex that could cover fulling and cornmilling

as well as sawmilling. There were about 1400 water-powered sawmills in Romania in 1940 and the industry was sufficiently buoyant for some local entrepreneurs to graduate to larger premises. Thus the Dinculescu mill in Baia de Fier represents a transition to a larger scale of working in an area where small peasant-owned mills had previously been prominent. With the electricity grid developing (Figure 7.5), nationalisation has virtually eliminated the small units however, for the state naturally favours a very large scale of production and the small-scale operator has been squeezed out by high taxes. A few water-powered mills still work under communal management, to ensure local supplies of constructional timber, while wood carving for the tourist market remains prominent in some areas. And some cooperative farms may retain significant areas of woodland in order to be self-sufficient in the production of boxes for fruit or grapes: this can be seen in Vrancea where wine-growing cooperatives in the Subcarpathians own woodlands in the mountains and find it convenient to retain water-powered sawmilling for their relatively modest needs. The best examples of water-powered sawmills are now to be found in the museums notably Muzeul de tehnice populare in Dumbrava Park, Sibiu where the city's Brukenthal Museum has collected a large number of traditional industrial buildings and erected them on an extensive open-air site.

### **Industrial studies: the German chemical industry**

During the inter-war years the most remarkable industrial concentration on the territory of the present GDR was the chemical complex around Halle and Leipzig (Figure 7.6). As was the case elsewhere in Europe the growth of the chemical industry in Germany was closely associated with textiles which created a demand for bleaching and dyeing materials. Bleaching powder required sulphuric acid the production of which dates back to the seventeenth century in Bohemia and Saxony, the latter famous for its expensive 'Nordhausen Acid' (relating to the town in the Harz Mountains from where it was first distributed). New methods were evolved and experiments reported in Berlin (1768) and Breslau (Wrocław) (1779) gave rise to the lead-chamber process which was widely adopted in

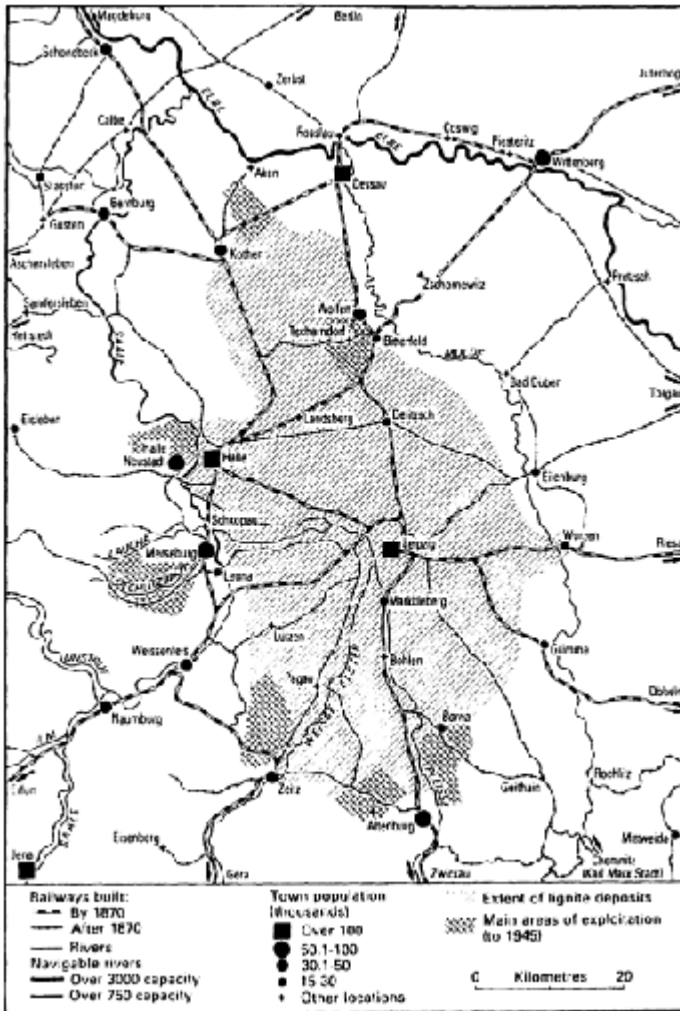
Figure 7.5: Electrification in Romania in the 1930s



Source: N.P.Arcadian et al. (eds) (1938-43) *Enciclopedia României* (Bucharest: Asociatia stiintifica PFR) 3, 108

the nineteenth century. However the importance of coal as a fuel and raw material drew the German chemical industry westwards, and it was here where the principal combines were located at the turn of the century, producing both sulphuric acid and such end products as dyestuffs and soda (using by now the Solvay ammonia-soda process rather than the older Leblanc process of artificial soda production first evolved in the 1790s). Eastern Europe was involved partly because German technology was exported to the Russian Empire; encouraged by tariff barriers a sulphuric acid and alkali plant was built at Sosnowiec in the Dabrowa colfield and another factory (using modern electrolysis of brine method of soda production) opened at Zomkowice near Łódz using salt from Donbass, with dyestuffs at Pabianice, also near Łódz. And in the Habsburg Empire the independent enterprise already noted in Bohemia was expressed not only in the retention of the industry in the Czech Lands (with such colfield locations as Ostrava-Hrusov and Usti nad Labem now prominent) but also through some diffusion to Bosnia, Galicia and Transylvania for sulphuric acid and Leblanc

Figure 7.6: The Halle-Leipzig industrial area of Germany



Source: Topographical maps and statistical handbooks. Also R.E.Dickinson (1944) (note 28) and T.H.Elkins (1957) (note 31).

or Solvay soda. However central Germany was not entirely quiescent at this time. Several works were established in the early nineteenth century around Berlin, notably the Kunheim works which was first established in 1826 and relocated on a

larger site at Kreuzberg c.1850. The Prussian government's soda plant at Schönebeck is also worthy of note.

But all this was modest scale in comparison with the growth which began in the later decades of the century. This was based primarily on the local fuels and raw materials. There was an abundance of lignite in the Halle-Leipzig area which could be produced cheaply by opencast methods and moved to industrial locations on the rivers of the Saale basin which offered industrial water and also ease of movement by virtue of the railway system and the barge traffic on the Saale itself. There were also important salt deposits associated with Stassfurt near Magdeburg. These were discovered only in 1856 but exploitation followed immediately, not only with the Berlin factories in mind but also to supply Bohemia, a foreign market not compromised by any tariff barrier. It is important to add that the salt at Stassfurt lay beneath an overburden of potassium chloride for which there was no immediate demand; however the surplus Abraumsalze was subsequently appreciated by local sugar beet growers and the potential for a major fertiliser industry gradually opened. Work on the purification of the potassium salt was put in hand and output of this initially embarrassing waste material rose from 0.1 million t. in 1865 to 3.0 million in 1900. As further uses were found, in the manufacture of explosives, glass and soap, salt production continued to rise, reaching 16.0 million t. in 1938 (including output from Nordhausen and Magdeburg). It is evident therefore that the value of central Germany as a desirable location for the chemical industry only arose gradually through the developments in technology which made lignite an acceptable alternative fuel to hard coal (thanks to boiler design and suitable quarry machinery) and demonstrated the value of potassium chloride as a raw material. However the whole chemical industry was in a state of technological ferment at the end of the nineteenth century and it was the need to invest heavily in new capacity which made it possible to exploit the new potentials of central Germany which were becoming apparent. It is important to add that the pressure to innovate was increased by the First World War and the consequent emphasis on economic autarky and that in a strategic context central Germany was particularly attractive to the planners

because of the great distances then separating this region from both the eastern and western frontiers.

The technological developments in the chemical industry may be summarised as follows. The importance of electricity to chemistry was demonstrated through the 1880s by the electrolysis of brine as an industrial process for the production of caustic soda and chlorine. In 1892 it was discovered that the heating of lime and carbon in an electric furnace gave rise to the compound calcium carbide which could be readily converted to acetylene; this could be used directly in cutting and welding and as an intermediate for the production of acetic acid and alcohol. Alternatively however the calcium carbide could be used to fix the nitrogen in the air to form calcium cyanide, an intermediate in the production of fertiliser. But yet another chemical route for the fertiliser industry was found through synthetic ammonia, derived electrolytically by the method devised by K. Birkeland and S. Eyde or produced under pressure by the Haber process. Mention must also be made of the growth of electrometallurgy which is evident in the aluminium industry through the electrolytic process of C.M. Hall (1886) for the reduction of alumina to aluminium metal using a bath of molten cryolite as a catalyst; and also for the production of magnesium from magnesium chloride. Another important line of development was associated with coal tar (aniline) and the use of this material as an intermediate in the production of synthetic dyestuffs. Although discovered accidentally (in the course of attempts to synthesise quinine for medical use) the bright colours of aniline dyes were widely appreciated and stimulated much research in a field where students of Germany's advanced system of technical education were able to prosper.<sup>30</sup> After the First World War some further important advances were made. Hydrogenation techniques, to derive motor spirit from coal, were perfected in 1925 by F. Fischer and H. Tropsch, but even more important was the discovery of synthetic solid materials known as plastics. The thermosetting plastic bakelite (which cannot be remoulded after initial application of heat and pressure) was known at the beginning of the century and took advantage of an observation first made in 1872 when a resinous material was formed by mixing carbolic acid (phenol) with formaldehyde. But research into the uses of acetylene carried out

at the turn of the century revealed processes for the preparation of 'elastic plastics masses' (i.e. thermoplastics, which can be reprocessed) through the synthesis of vinyl chloride. Many factors made this work momentous not least the dangerous flammability of first generation plastics like celluloid and the opportunity to derive Buna synthetic rubber from the polymerisation of vinyl chloride. Great progress was made in connection with PVC (polyvinyl chloride) in Germany in the 1930s and in the production of plasticisers great importance attached to the acids and alcohols derived from the Fischer-Tropsch process.

#### Electrolytic processes: development at Bitterfeld and Wolfen

Developments in central Germany began in the 1890s with a cluster of developments at Bitterfeld, then a small settlement on the Mulde, south of Dessau, with plenty of lignite in the immediate vicinity.<sup>31</sup> In 1895 Chemischefabrik Griesheim, previously operating further west, decided to apply the electrolysis of brine at Bitterfeld using local salt and lignite. Potassium chloride was used at first, rather than sodium chloride, because caustic potash was in great demand for the synthesis of indigo. Caustic soda, chlorine and bleaching powder were however produced later. It has been claimed at Griesheim's radical location decision 'was unquestionably the chief force in making this area the centre of the German electro-chemical industry'.<sup>32</sup> Within a few years the company, greatly enlarged by mergers and takeovers (which included the small Elektrochemische Werke at Bitterfeld) and renamed Griesheim-Elektron, concentrated its entire chlorinated hydrocarbon capacity at Bitterfeld and made bleaching powder on a particularly large scale (including a high strength product for use in the tropics which helped the company to capture markets that had hitherto been the monopoly of British manufacturers). There were however two other important elements in the Bitterfeld chemical industry before the First World War. One of the larger mining and fertiliser companies at Stassfurt joined with the Aussiger Verein at Aussig (Usti nad Labem) in order to set up a subsidiary company at Bitterfeld —Tscherndorf for an

electrolytic caustic soda and chlorine plant. And the expanding Kunheim company in Berlin followed up a second relocation in Berlin (to Niederschöneweide in 1885) with construction of plant elsewhere at Grossköschen in Niederlausitz (producing alloys, bricks and certain chemicals) but more importantly at Bitterfeld in 1896. It is significant here to note that in 1867 Kunheim combined with two other Berlin firms to create a small aniline works at Rummelsburg, opened two years later. The company was called Aktiengesellschaft für Analinfabrikation (Agfa) and was extremely successful with its direct cotton dyes and photographic materials when it resumed operations in Treptow after the Franco-Prussian War, so much so that the Bitterfeld project was put in hand, with vertical integration sought by backward linkage into lignite mining. A separate factory for photographic materials was opened at Wolf en near Bitterfeld in 1909. In 1925 the Agfa and Griesheim-Elektron factories were brought into the massive Frankfurt-based dyeing syndicate. Interessengemeinschaft Farbenindustrie. The cartel was actually established in 1916 during the First World War, but in 1924 the eight member firms merged into a single corporation. Although no longer an Interessengemeinschaft the familiar name was retained on account of its worldwide acceptance. As the largest chemical company in the world at the time important agreements were reached with American firms giving the latter monopolies in their home markets while leaving the Germans with a free hand in the rest of the world. And in view of the formidable technical lead built up by the Germans it was not unusual for them to insist on restricting production by partner firms and remaining the sole supplier of intermediates.<sup>33</sup> The takeover allowed the research activity at Wolfen near Bitterfeld to complement the work at Ludwigshafen on the Rhine. And over the years important investments were made at Wolfen which became an important producer of dyestuffs during the 1930s.

#### Fixation of nitrogen and synthetic petrol: the Leuna complex

Central Germany also became involved in the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen. The first application was at Westregeln



near Magdeburg in 1905 but a much larger plant (Leunawerke) was built near Merseburg in 1916 with capacities for sulphuric acid and synthetic ammonia. This arose out of the success of Badische Anilin und Soda Fabrik in 1909 when F.Haber combined the nitrogen of the atmosphere with the hydrogen of water to form ammonia and C.Bosch then applied the technique at the industrial scale at Oppau near Ludwigshafen where mass production of synthetic ammonia began in 1913. The importance of this development for the war effort (through production of explosives rather than fertiliser) was not at first appreciated due to the optimistic assumption that the Central Powers would win a quick victory through Blitzkrieg tactics. However a munitions crisis in 1915, deepened by the German failure to capture the Falkland Islands and so control the nitrate trade from Chile, sent Bosch back to Oppau to perfect a technique for converting ammonia into nitric acid, essential for the production of gunpowder. It was further success in this field that led to the decision to establish a huge Haber-Bosch high-pressure plant at Leuna. The importance of Leuna was further emphasised just after the war when the Haber-Bosch plant at Oppau was threatened by French occupation of the Rhineland, necessitating dismantling and transfer to Leuna which subsequently became known as Ammoniakwerke Merseburg. Along with a further plant in central Germany at Piesteritz near Wittenberg large quantities of fertiliser were turned out.

It was also at Leuna where the first Fischer-Tropsch plant came on stream in 1927 to produce oil from coal by hydrogenation (using hydrogen under pressure). Here again the process was invented before the war (by F.Bergius in 1909); it involved a production route through ethylene to acetylene and the hydrogenation of the latter to yield high grade fuel and lubricants. Further research led to the de-ashing of coal to yield soap substitutes (mersolates) and a coke that could be graphitised. It is worth recalling that the Farben interest in hydrogenation arose out of the belief that loss of the Haber-Bosch monopoly would soon lead to a glut in the supply of synthetic nitrates. A new enterprise was needed and oil production from coal seemed an attractive prospect, especially since 1926, the year when work started on a huge Bergius plant adjacent to the Haber-Bosch installation at Leuna, it was

announced that the US oilfields could only furnish supplies for another six years. This encouraged Farben to begin collaboration with Standard Oil. Unfortunately the depression of the early 1930s combined with the discovery of vast new oil reserves in Texas prevented rapid progress.<sup>34</sup> The cost of synthetic petrol was six times that of natural petrol in 1930. Fortunately for Farben Hitler appreciated the strategic advantages of self-sufficiency in oil and in 1933 he approved expansion at Leuna that would raise capacity to over 0.3 million t. by 1937. The output of motor spirit was stepped up to 1.4 million t. by 1941, the balance of the national output of 3.5 million t. coming from nineteen other plants which included four in central Germany: Magdeburg (1934), Böhlen (1937), Zeitz (1938) and Lützensdorf near Merseburg (1938).

#### Synthetic rubber PVC and related products: the Bunawerke complex

Desire for a high level of self-sufficiency in the event of war also had a considerable bearing on the development of synthetic rubber production. Both Germany and Russia were experimenting at the beginning of the century and under conditions of steeply-rising natural rubber prices, with military hostilities increasing, Bayer claimed some success in 1915. There was a significant production during the First World War and hard rubber was made available for batteries, magnetos and other electrical equipment. Such material was not unfortunately suitable for tyres. Interest lapsed at first after the war but an agreement between Bayer and Farben for further research resulted in the production of the styrene-butadiene rubber (Buna S) in the early 1930s. Production was based at the Bunawerke plant in Schkopau near Merseburg. However the depression undermined the initiative and it was Hitler's concern for self-sufficiency that restored interest in this rather rudimentary substitute. For the military interest in Buna tyres resulted in an enlargement of the Schkopau plant from 200 to 1000 t. per month. This target was not reached and 1937 output was only 3.15 thousand t., but the demands of the Second World War took the level to 40.47 thousand in 1940 and 117.60 thousand in 1943. Schkopau produced the bulk of this (34.9 thousand in

1940 and 67.7 thousand in 1943) with the rest coming from three plants in the west: Hüls (2.2 thousand in 1940 but 34.7 thousand in 1943), Leverkusen and Ludwigshafen.<sup>35</sup> A large factory with an annual production of over 100,000 t. was envisaged for Auschwitz (Oswiecim) but this did not materialise. It is doubtful if so much Buna S would have been used if natural rubber had been available for it was a high cost product which did not give very good results either (tyre life was reduced and repairs using synthetic rubber were not satisfactory). Indeed it is a measure of the wartime difficulty that Hitler agreed to H. Himmler's proposal to develop the economic empire of the notorious Schutzstaffeln by cultivating the kok-saghys plant in Ukraine and the Generalgouvernement because the roots contained 1.5 percent rubber. The 20,000 ha. scheme was however upset by the Red Army advance in 1944 but dandelions were nevertheless considered as an alternative!

A very important advance was made in 1938 with the construction of a plant near Merseburg for the extrusion of PVC (7,000 t. per annum capacity). Because the various grades of material could be used widely for insulation, film making and in leather/rubber substitution there were close linkages forged in the downstream direction.<sup>36</sup> These included Bunawerke of course, which diversified from rubber into plastics. Finally these major sets of developments intertwined in the field of man-made fibres for the textile industry. There was a great increase in the production of artificial silk-like materials (known collectively as rayon) first developed at the turn of the century. Production rested on cellulose which in turn required caustic soda and soda ash. A large plant was built at Bernburg close to the Stassfurt salts to supply intermediates to Deutsche Celluloid Fabrik at Eilenburg. The first fully synthetic fibre (nylon) was produced in the Farben laboratories at Wolf en in 1932 in the course of research on PVC. The result was an artificial silk industry at Wolfen and the production of caprolactam at Leuna which was used for the production of nylon fibre at Landsberg in 1938. For such products as well as others previously mentioned the upsurge of interest was closely connected with the prevailing mood of autarky in Germany. In 1936 Hitler announced at the party congress that 'in four years Germany must be wholly independent of foreign countries in respect of all those materials

which can in any way be produced through German capability through our chemistry engineering and mining industries'.<sup>37</sup> In the resulting Four Year Plan, under the direction of the politically-reliable C.Krauch, Farben had a crucial role to play along with complementary units like the Hermann Göring armaments complex. Never before had an industrial concern been so involved in preparation for a great war.<sup>38</sup> The partnership arose out of mutual interest of course and did not imply support for the Nazi Party by the German business community. Government encouraged autarky while the company needed protective tariffs on oil imports to enable heavy investments in production of synthetics to go ahead. Farben not only diversified into plastics, rubber and synthetic fibres but sought substitutes for explosives, metals, pharmaceuticals and even food. Also marking the extreme of autarky were proposals to obtain fuel from fir tree roots and alcohol from exhaust fumes!

#### Locational spread in Greater Germany

With a substantial fuel and raw material base central Germany was able to make rapid progress in chemistry during a period of rapid technological advance and great concern over strategic aspects of location. However this great concentration of industry which overshadowed all the smaller chemical industries in the rest of Eastern Europe has not retained its dominance. During the Second World War other locations in Grossdeutschland and elsewhere were used, particularly in former Czechoslovak and Polish territory. The perspectives of Farben were enlarged by control of Aussiger Verein at Aussig (Usti nad Labem) in the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia and several dyestuffs companies in Poland. Production at these units increased, but in addition new installations to obtain oil from coal were built at Auschwitz and Maltheuern (Zaluzi) while Blachstadt (Blachownia), Blechammer (Kedzierzyn) and Dyhernfurth (Brzeg Dolny) handled poison gas. Factories to produce explosives were attached to the major plants in central Germany (like Bunawerke) but also dispersed to locations like Auschwitz and Pardubitz (Pardubice).

In addition Auschwitz featured in the plans to increase output of synthetic rubber and projected industrial developments there assumed huge proportions. The location comprised the remains of a former Austrian military barracks on the Vistula and was first used by the Germans as a concentration camp for Polish political prisoners. Farben's projects at Auschwitz started in 1941 and were intended to supply explosives, oil and rubber for the war effort in Russia. The site offered ample coal (from Fürstengrube and Janina mines) and industrial water along with easy railway connections and a likely labour supply through the planning of an adjoining concentration camp. The location suited German military needs and it was also convenient for any large markets in the east that might be opened up after the war. For this reason the Auschwitz plant was funded with Farben capital and not by government finances. The company also decided to establish its own Monowitz concentration camp in 1942. Camp inmates accounted for 26.6 percent of the workforce compared with 55.1 percent for free foreign workers and 18.3 percent regular German workers. Work proceeded through 1941 and 1942 with considerable difficulty however and this resulted in the harshest of regimes for the prison population: Farben 'reduced slave labour to a consumable raw material, a human ore from which the mineral of life was systematically extracted. When no usable energy remained the living dross was shipped to the gassing chambers and cremation furnaces for the extermination centre at Birkenau', which made up the fourth element of the frightful Auschwitz complex.<sup>39</sup> Despite the incalculable 'social costs' no Buna rubber was ever produced and the synthetic oil output was well below planned capacity.

But during 1944 the entire German oil industry was wrecked by allied bombing which made the 'Battle of Leuna' one of the crucial episodes in the Second World War. The entire Halle/Leipzig area became a key target for allied bombing in view of the chemical plants as well as the aircraft factories of Aschersleben, Bernburg and Halberstadt. At the end of the war these installations were lost while other factories were forfeited through frontier changes and by Soviet dismantling in their occupation zone created in central Germany (subsequently to become the GDR). Plant has since been modernised and new

processes introduced but with parallel developments in all the various East European countries in contrast to the emphasis previously given to one. The more extensive spatial spread in the chemical industry has been greatly facilitated by the hydrocarbon base which is now almost universal. Some signs of this change were evident just before the Second World War when Romania began to use her methane gas as a chemical raw material. The Germans eventually encouraged this trend in view of the importance of this contribution to the Axis war effort: the advantage of having a large explosives industry close to the front was strong enough to overrule arguments against dispersal of German technology: the Fagaras ammonia works opened in 1942 and work was under way on another works at Ucea de Sus when supplies of German equipment were cut off by the coup in Romania in 1944. German war needs stimulated a great interest in the Romanian oilfields where the most substantial defences were erected to try and protect 'Fortress Ploiesti' from enemy bombers in North Africa.<sup>40</sup> However a new generation of oil—and gas-based chemical plants has grown up in Eastern Europe in the post-war period. Domestic hydrocarbon supplies have been a great advantage to Romania, but the growing systems of pipelines, rooted for the most part in the Soviet Union, had provided both opportunity and locational flexibility to all East European countries. Many older plants continue to operate with local raw materials and an infrastructure of labour and transport services justifying the extension of pipelines to supply the necessary feedstocks. Thus some of the leading pre-1945 plants Leunawerke at Merseburg (GDR), Oswiecim (Poland) and Zaluzi (Czechoslovakia) all remain active today. But there is considerably more dispersal of plant, nationally as well as internationally, and Leuna with its workforce of some 30,000 is quite exceptional in the degree of vertical integration. Distribution of intermediates has been widely resorted to in order that downstream processes can link up with other necessary inputs and (in the case of commodities like nitrogenous fertilisers) with regional markets. There is also the strong social argument of dispersing employment as widely as possible, a strategy which is much more feasible today given the widespread distribution of electricity by national and international grid systems.

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## Transport Power and Settlement

### INFRASTRUCTURE: TRANSPORT AND POWER

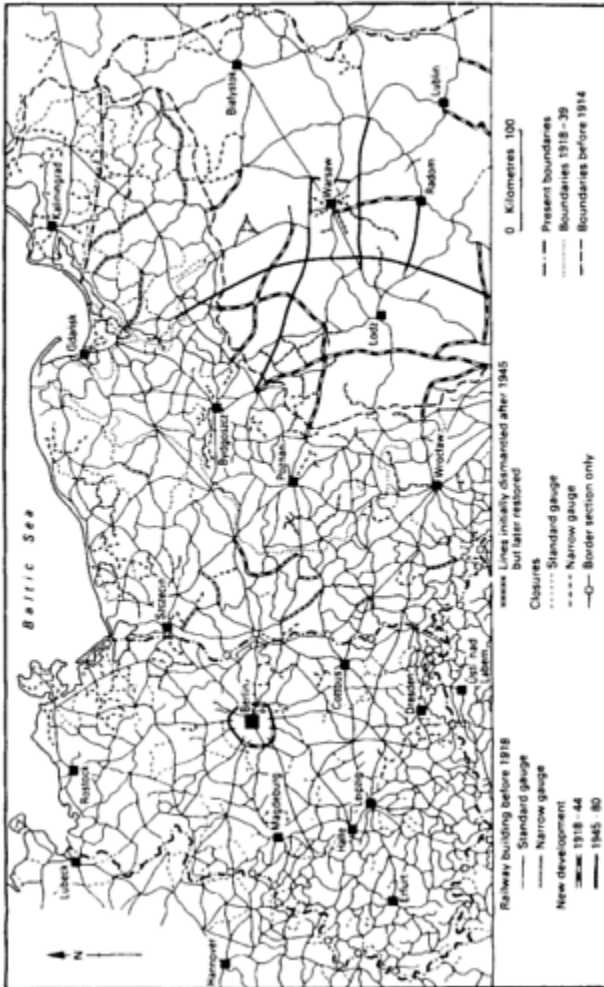
Although the railway system of Eastern Europe as a whole was well-developed in 1914 it was geared to the needs of the various states existing at that time and the network was relatively sparse in the Balkans. So the inter-war period saw contrasting development programmes with some countries concentrating on nationalisation and modernisation of the inherited network while others were obliged to invest heavily in new routes.

#### **Railway development: Germany and Hungary**

These two countries inherited extremely satisfactory railway systems. In Hungary the network focussed on the capital, Budapest, and apart from short branches to new industrial and mining enterprises no new construction was needed. Instead work was put in hand to modernise the system with some doubling of track on heavily-used main lines along with electrification and the provision of diesel railcars for branch line work and for some high-speed intercity services. Such themes may be pursued on a greater scale in the case of Germany. Work was put in hand on a ring railway for Berlin, beginning in 1918, and was eventually completed in 1957 (partly on a revised alignment to avoid entry into West Berlin) but other rationalisation measures were not taken. Thus the gap of some ten kilometres between Rossach and Untermersbach was not

bridged even though it would have provided a more direct route between Erfurt and Nürnberg in preference to the heavily-graded route through Lichtenfels (and so the legacy of the old frontier between Bavaria and Saxony-Coburg-

**Figure 8.1:** Railway development in Germany and Poland since the First World War



Source: Railway maps and timetables.

Gotha has persisted). Again the difficulties arising out of the new frontiers with Czechoslovakia and Poland were solved without new construction. Germany obtained running rights over certain sections of railway in Czechoslovakia around Asch (As) and Warnsdorf (Varnsdorf) while contacts with East Prussia were made by privileged trains crossing the Polish Corridor along two routes. There were long delays however and when relations between Germany and Poland deteriorated after 1935 traffic was diverted increasingly to a special shipping service (Seedienst Ostpreussen) connecting Stettin (Szczecin) with Königsberg (Kaliningrad). However the railways developed in other ways. Some narrow gauge lines were converted to standard, often to help relieve local unemployment. Also efforts were made to forge a single administrative unit: almost complete unification was achieved in 1920 when the eight state railway systems came together, along with some surviving private companies, to form Deutsche Reichsbahn. Vested interests in the old system of Länderbahnen were weakened by the constitution of the Weimar Republic and by the decline of profitability after the war years. Largely through the genius of Julius Dorpmüller considerable progress with rationalisation and modernisation took place. It is particularly relevant to mention the growth of electrification which began on GDR territory with the Bitterfeld-Dessau line in 1911 (and incidentally continued during the war on some heavily-graded lines in the Silesian Uplands). Both these systems were enlarged during the inter-war years the former by completion of the Saxon Ring through Halle and Leipzig and the latter with extensions to both Breslau (Wrocław) and Görlitz. Cheap thermal electricity was an important factor in the decision to improve these important freight lines. Longer electrified lines were achieved in Bavaria, including the link between München and Leipzig via Augsburg, Nürnberg and Weissenfels, and a commuting system was completed in Berlin. Work on the connection between Berlin and Leipzig was well advanced by the end of the war. There was some wartime discussion of an integrated Europabahn, involving a three metre gauge electrified railway capable of moving 10,000 t. freights at speeds of 100 kilometres per hour.<sup>1</sup> But such large scale planning was quite inappropriate in the light of prevailing demands and capital resources.

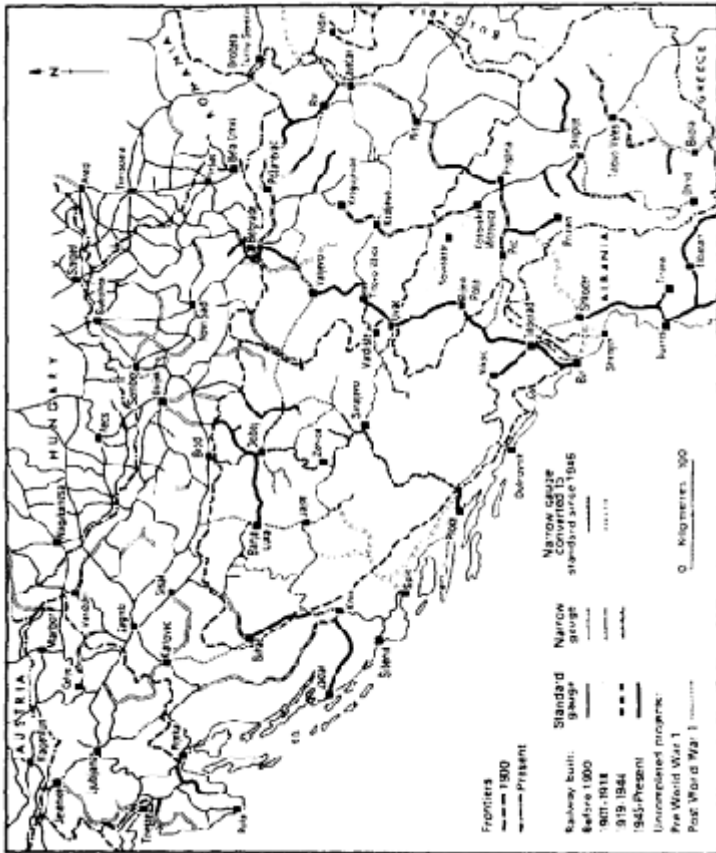
### Network development in Poland and Czechoslovakia

Poland's central regions comprised the western borderlands of the former Russian Empire. Little had been done to develop the railways and forge international connections. Several new lines were needed including a direct link between Warsaw and Poznan. Also very significant was the new line to carry Silesian coal to the Baltic port of Gdynia but more direct links were also needed from Warsaw to Poznan, Radom and Torun. A ring railway for Warsaw was planned but not implemented.<sup>2</sup> In Czechoslovakia the railway provision was generally good but the relatively few links existed between Moravia and Slovakia which had previously looked to Vienna and Budapest respectively. Two new cross links were forged between the northeast-southwest trending lines of Breclav-Prerov-Ostrava and Bratislava-Trencin-Zilina. Also the existing branch lines in central Slovakia were connected together to complete a through route between Trencin, Banska Bystrica and Kosice.

### Network development in the Balkans

The greatest tasks lay in the Balkans.<sup>3</sup> The overhaul of the railway system in Yugoslavia emphasised the importance of the Belgrade-Zagreb axis, one which now handled express passenger services on the new 'Simplon-Orient' route from Paris to Bucharest. To take the Romanian portion over the Tisza a new bridge was required, at Senta (1923), while a more direct link between Belgrade and Bucharest was provided by the Pancevo bridge of 1935. However the old idea of a line across the Danube downstream of the Iron Gates (part of a long distance 'portage' railway between the Danube and the Adriatic) was not built. The line from Zagreb to Susak (formerly the southern end of Fiume Rijeka but now separated from the heart of the city by the Italian frontier) was reconstructed and a service provided to the new port of Bakar some distance to the south. A line from Ogulin to Split was completed (including a redevelopment of the Knin-Split narrow gauge line of 1875). The branch built inland from the Aegean by the Turks as far as Kosovska Mitrovica was more fully integrated into the Yugoslav system by the

Figure 8.2: Extension of the railway system in Albania and Yugoslavia since 1918



Source: D.Arnaoutovitch (1937) *Histoire des chemins de fer yougoslaves 1825–1937* (Paris: Dunod); P. Mardesic and Z.Dagacki (eds) (1961) *Geografski atlas jugoslavije* (Zagreb: Znanje).

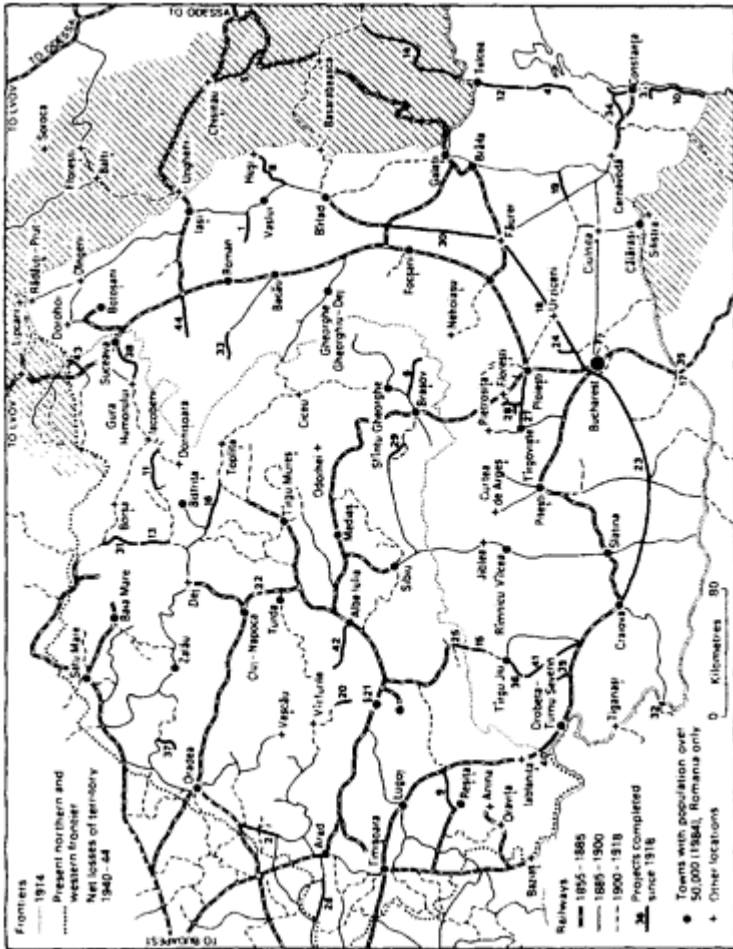
Kragujevac-Mitrovica link of 1931. Considerable lengths of narrow gauge railway were built to connect branches in the former border zone of Bosnia and Serbia and to extend to Bosnian system west of Bugojno towards Split (Figure 8.2).

In Bulgaria work began on a new Trans-Balkan line to give Sofia direct access to Burgas via Kazanlik and Sliven although this was not entirely complete until after the Second World



War. Construction also affected the Arda Valley (Rakovski-Momchilgrad) and the Struma Valley where the narrow gauge line heading south from Radomir to the Greek frontier was converted to standard. A lengthy branch line gave access to Lom and Vidin while a short link connecting Karnobat with Kolarovgrad provided a direct access from Plovdiv to Varna. Romania needed additional railways across the Carpathians to integrate the former state railway with the Transylvanian network inherited from Hungary (Figure 8.3). A connection close to the northern frontier was strategically necessary while in the southwest the minerals and metallurgical products of Banat needed better linkages with Bucharest. Hence the lines from Ilva Mica to Vatra Dornei and from Caransebes to Resita, though the important connection from Petrosani to Tirgu Jiu, to take Jiu valley coal south to the capital, was not completed until after the Second World War and the difficulties of coping with unstable hillslopes have prevented the construction of short links to complete the connection between Deva and Oradea and between Brasov and Buzau right up to the present. A short link line north of Arad completed the railway along the western frontier from Stamora Moravita (frontier with Yugoslavia) to Halmeu (frontier with Czechoslovakia). And a start was made on a new axial railway connecting Iasi with Craiova as construction from Urziceni reached the Bucharest centura, a ring railway built before the war to connect a constellation of military forts. Other construction took place in Dobrogea with a line along the coast from Constanta to Mangalia and another inland from Tulcea south to Tolbukhin and the Bulgarian frontier. Various anomalies in frontier areas remained but the good relations between the member states of the Little Entente allowed Romanian trains to run from Satu Mare to Sighetul Marmatiei and from Bazias to Oravita through Czechoslovak and Yugoslav territory respectively. The Albanians had ambitious plans for railways to connect the coastal settlements and also to penetrate inland and connect up over the frontier with the international network. Durrës would be linked not only with Elbasan, Tirana and Vlorë but also with Korçë and, over the border, with Florina for Thessaloniki, while Shkodër would be linked with Skopje via Prizren. None of these lines were started until after the Second World War though the Italians are

Figure 8.3: Railway projects in Romania since the First World War



Source: Timetables for the Romanian State Railways (CFR).

reported to have started work on projects to link the new harbour of Durrës (1933) with Elbasan and Tirana.<sup>4</sup> Instead roads were improved, like the Shkodër-Kukës Highway of 1939 which allowed the start of chrome exports to Italy in that year.

### Transport by road air and water

The importance attached to roads, especially in Germany where the Autobahnen were being built, created considerable uncertainty in Eastern Europe over the best investment strategy for transport.<sup>5</sup> National airlines were also coming into existence and removing some of the pressure to improve rail links between the major cities and considerable interest was shown in the future of the waterways. The canal system was much improved in Germany, thanks to the Mittelland project which made Magdeburg an important waterway centre. The Oder river was made accessible to 500 t. barges on a more regular basis through the creation of artificial water shortages on tributary streams to overcome the problem of low water at certain times of year and maintain a minimum depth of 1.4m. In 1939 G.R.Crone reported the 140 million cubic metre storage at Ottmachau (Otmuchow) on the Neisse (Nysa) complete, with Turawa on the Malapane (Malapanew) to follow.<sup>6</sup> In the Danube valley mention may be made of work to stabilise the river bed along the Czechoslovak-Hungarian frontier (beginning in 1926) and a start was made in Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia on dyke systems to drain land and thereby increase resources for agriculture which simultaneously reduced the danger of malaria. Such work had previously been carried out by the Hungarians along the Tisza and but the conclusion on the Lower Danube was only reached in the post-war period.

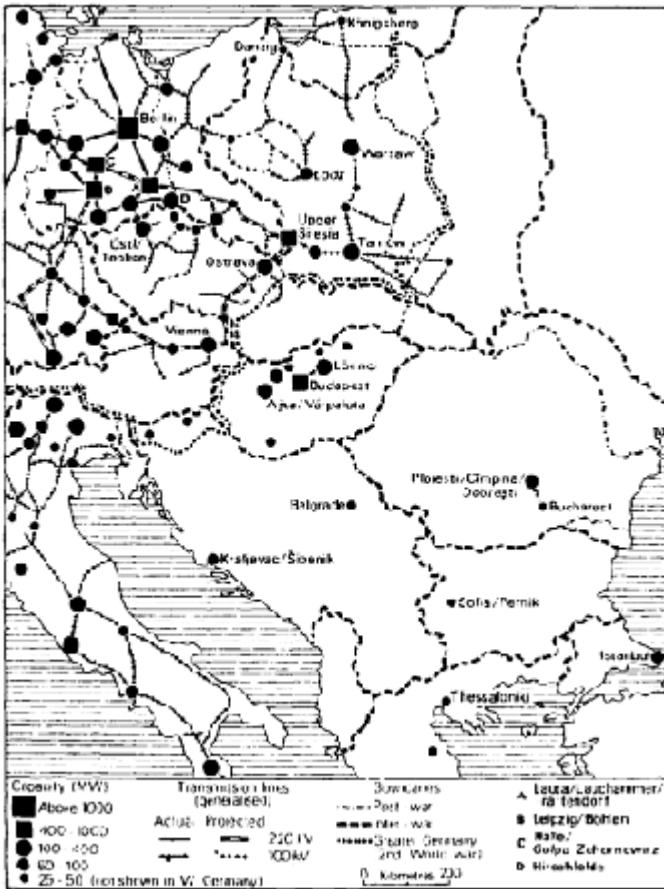
The Danube delta continued to attract attention because of the extension of the Chilia delta and the deposition of sediment at the approaches to the Sulina navigation channel. It was necessary for the European Commission of the Danube to accelerate dredging operations and to extend the dykes at Sulina further out into Black Sea in order to maintain access to Braila and Galati. It seemed that such a solution could not be effective in the long run as the Sulina river was destined to be overwhelmed by sediment drifting south from the Chilia delta where the river deposited most of its water-borne material. In 1943 O. Popper anticipated the closure of Sulina both on account of the physical difficulties which called for 'the constant extension of the dykes into the sea' and the political situation arising from Romania's sensitivities over compromise

of its sovereignty by the ECD: improvement of the Sf. Gheorghe river, first advocated in the mid-nineteenth century, would solve the physical problem though not the political one and therefore a Danube-Black Sea Canal running across Dobrogea from Cernavoda to Constanta was seen as the most appropriate solution.<sup>7</sup> Such a canal would have the advantage of strengthening the position of Constanta port where heavy investments were made by the Romanian government before the First World War and where traffic continued to grow during the interwar years. A canal would also be important in the context of schemes to open waterway connections with cities close to the Danube (Bucharest for example) and provide for navigation on the major tributaries of the Danube. During the 1930s the Danube-Black Sea Canal was considered in an even wider context as one of a number of canals to integrate the major rivers of Eastern Europe and it is thought in some quarters that work began on a modest scale before the Second World War broke out, as was the case with the Oder-Danube project. However no major effort was made until 1949 and even then the scheme was abandoned after four years when it was less than half complete. Work was resumed in 1978 and brought to a successful completion in 1984. But the Danube delta remains open for shipping.<sup>8</sup> And it now seems that, in the light of reduced deposition arising from regulation of the river upstream, the Sulina river can be kept open indefinitely by dredging and by modest extensions to the dykes.<sup>9</sup> Sulina's long-term future is also reflected by the decision of the Romanian government to establish a free port in the town and provide accommodation in a new dock opened in 1980. But overall, despite considerable scope, progress in waterway development in Eastern Europe has remained slow because of the very heavy investments needed and the uncertain returns, given the availability of adequate rail services in most cases. Through most of the inter-war years the disunity of the Danube basin inhibited ambitious schemes of an international character while technological constraints and slow economic growth reduced interest in integrated development schemes.

### Electrification

Electricity came into general factory use in the 1880s and in response to the new technology both Germany and Hungary developed a considerable electrical engineering industry. Power stations remained rather small until the First World War and most schemes involved small hydro or thermal plants, with capacities less than 1.0 MW for essentially local supply. But some larger generating units were appearing in the main cities with 15 MW capacity at Kelenföld (Budapest) by 1917. The inter-war years saw more enlargements to power stations and a corresponding increase in distribution systems. In the 1930s Kelenföld's capacity increased to 179 MW and additional units were provided in the city at Banhida, Csepel and Ujpest. Hard coal from Dorog near Esztergom was brought in but as the grid developed, with a 100 Kv line from Budapest to Győr, it became feasible to burn low grade coal at source and feed the power directly into the distribution network: hence the enlargement of Tatabanya power station. By the end of the Second World War additional lignite-burning power stations were opening at Ajka, Füzfő and Varpalota and work was proceeding at Lörinci near Hatvan. But it was in Germany where development was most impressive for the power stations of Böhlen and Golpa-Zschornowitz both exceeded 300 MW capacity and there were substantial units at Bitterfeld, Leuna and Trattendorf.<sup>10</sup> Capacity in Berlin exceeded 1000 MW in all. Germany also installed a considerable network of 220 Kv distribution lines whereas 100 Kv was the maximum elsewhere in Eastern Europe, at the time. [Figure 8.4](#) brings out a sharp contrast between the northern and southern countries. There were many power stations in the Balkans but practically all were smaller than 25 MW and transmission lines were using voltages lower than 100 Kv. The level of economic development did not justify large generating units (especially the large hydro schemes that provided an answer to the problem of poor coal resources) while the necessary skills and manufacturing facilities were not available. Total capacity in Yugoslavia amounted to 600 MW in 1939 of which one-third was contributed by hydro-plants, (including the 70 MW Kralyevac station on the Cetina east of Split), but that in turn represented only 3 percent of the

Figure 8.4: Electricity generation and transmission, c.1940



Sources: Mainly F.J.Monkhouse et al. (1959) *Atlas östliches Mitteleuropa* (Bielefeld: Velhagen & Klasing).

potential capacity of 7000 MW. Plainly a series of interconnected power stations supporting major industries geared to export could have stimulated smaller scale developments in light industry for the home market located in small towns with power supplies then available. That pattern was not capable of immediate realisation but there is nevertheless a thread of continuity linking the inter-war and post-war experiences.

## POPULATION MOVEMENTS

Most important here was, once again, the migration from the countryside to the towns. Indeed the growing importance of the town as a centre for industry and services was underlined by the growth of geographical studies which anticipated the post-war boom in urban geography. The work was largely concerned with the structure of individual cities but spheres of influence were also investigated, notably in the pioneer studies of V.Mihailescu which mark the beginning of urban geography in Romania.<sup>11</sup> However the progress in urbanisation was made from highly varied base levels. With its heritage of Dual Monarchy Hungary found 11.6 percent of her population living in one city alone (Budapest with 1.01 million in 1930) and the proportion of population in all towns with population exceeding 20,000 was 32.5 (Table 8.1). For Czechoslovakia Prague had a pre-1914 status as a provincial capital rather than a national or imperial centre and its 0.85 million inhabitants comprised only 5.8 percent of the total population, but the overall urbanisation level (for settlements exceeding 20,000) was 16.6 percent, considerably higher than Bulgaria (11.3) and Yugoslavia (11.0). The towns tended to be important centres of trade, progressively more so (taking the share of employment in the tertiary sector) as population increased, allowing for certain exceptions like the agricultural towns of Hodmezovasarhely and Kecskemét in Hungary. There is consequently a degree of correlation between the level of urbanisation and the importance of shops and related trade establishments (Table 8.2). Czechoslovakia had 14.0 such facilities per thousand of the population compared with 9.2 in Poland and 7.8 in Hungary. Further behind came Bulgaria with 6.9 and Romania with 5.0. The high level of provision in Czechoslovakia is particularly impressive and shows a distinct convergence towards the Austrian standard, for whereas in 1902 the Czech Lands had only 81.3 percent of the Austrian value in 1930 this proportion advanced to 89.2 despite the inclusion of the relatively backward provinces of Slovakia and Ruthenia in the latter calculation. However, almost irrespective of the status of settlement or the general level of modernisation attained, retail establishments were small and showed little tendency to increase after the First World War. The first really large

Table 8.1: Large urban settlements, 1930

|                | Total<br>population<br>(millions) | Towns with<br>population<br>over 100,000 |       |      | Towns with<br>population<br>20,000-100,000 |      |      |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------|------|--|------|------|
|                |                                   | A  | B     | C    | A  | B    | C    |
| Bulgaria       | 5.48                              | 1  | 0.21  | 3.9  | 11   | 0.40 | 7.4  |
| Czechoslovakia | 14.73                             | 5  | 1.48  | 10.0 | 32   | 0.96 | 6.6  |
| Germany (1933) | 66.03                             | 58                                       | 23.90 | 36.6 | n.a.                                       | 8.65 | 13.1 |
| Hungary        | 8.69                              | 3  | 1.26  | 14.5 | 42   | 1.56 | 18.0 |
| Poland         | 32.13                             | 11                                       | 3.35  | 10.5 | 57   | 2.08 | 6.5  |
| Romania        | 18.06                             | 6  | 1.17  | 6.5  | 29   | 1.23 | 6.8  |
| Yugoslavia     | 13.93                             | 3  | 0.52  | 3.8  | 29   | 1.00 | 7.2  |

A Number of settlements

B Population (millions)

C Share of total population percent

Source: T.Csato (1977) 404.

department store appeared in Budapest in 1926 and it remained the largest such establishment in the Hungarian capital for fifty years. However the high ratio of small shops throughout Eastern Europe was not necessarily a sign of economic backwardness but rather a reflection of social change through the land reforms which helped to reduce the average size of enterprise and thereby perhaps reduce the scope for large trading firms.

The development of an urban hierarchy is very clear indeed, for the larger towns, like Iasi in the Romanian province of Moldavia (Figure 8.5), also tended to attract a disproportionate share of employment in commerce and industry. The situation in Hungary is fully discussed by T. Csato: Budapest with 11.6 percent of Hungary's population in 1930 included 40.3 percent of employment in trade and finance and 26.5 percent of employment in industry (Table 8.3). Other towns comprised 21.6 percent of the population with employment shares in the relevant sectors of 30.7 and 31.0 respectively. The smaller settlements by contrast had far less employment in trade/finance and industry than their population shares indicated. The disparities between Budapest and the smallest settlements (less than 10,000 population) increased between 1910 and 1930: in 1910 the latter category had 1.57 times the trade/finance employment of Budapest and 2.91 times the industrial



Table 8.2: Trading establishments<sup>(a)</sup>

| Type of Establishment       | Bulgaria |     | Czechoslovakia |     | Hungary |     | Poland |      | Romania |     |      |     |      |     |      |     |      |     |
|-----------------------------|----------|-----|----------------|-----|---------|-----|--------|------|---------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|------|-----|
|                             | A        | B   | A              | B   | A       | B   | A      | B    | A       | B   |      |     |      |     |      |     |      |     |
| Food                        | 18.8     | 2.6 | 67.6           | 3.4 | 107.3   | 2.3 | 45.3   | 7.3  | 122.8   | 4.0 | 65.0 | 2.7 | 23.4 | 3.8 | 57.8 | 2.6 | 42.2 | 3.2 |
| Clothing and textile        | 5.3      | 2.9 | 56.0           | 1.0 | 22.0    | 4.0 | 41.1   | 1.5  | 54.4    | 5.0 | 45.8 | 0.9 | 8.2  | 1.7 | 13.8 | 3.7 | 36.8 | 0.8 |
| Other industrial            | 3.3      | 3.7 | 52.7           | 0.6 | 32.8    | 4.0 | 42.5   | 2.2  | 33.9    | 5.4 | 49.7 | 1.0 | 8.8  | 1.1 | 9.5  | 4.7 | 35.1 | 0.5 |
| Fuel and building materials | 2.1      | 3.3 | 57.3           | 0.4 | 9.1     | 3.3 | 42.3   | 0.6  | 9.5     | 4.2 | 52.7 | 0.5 | 4.2  | 0.3 | 3.6  | 4.5 | 39.4 | 0.2 |
| Others                      | 8.3      |     | 1.5            |     | 35.5    |     | 2.4    |      | 76.3    |     | 2.5  |     | 23.0 | 2.3 | 6.3  | 3.9 | 59.9 | 0.3 |
| Total                       | 37.8     | 3.0 | 64.9           | 6.9 | 206.7   | 3.0 | 47.6   | 14.0 | 296.9   | 4.3 | 63.0 | 7.8 | 67.6 | 9.2 | 91.0 | 3.2 | 41.7 | 5.0 |

A Number of establishments '000s

B Employment per establishment including owners

C Percentage of establishments operated by one person

D Establishments per '000 of population

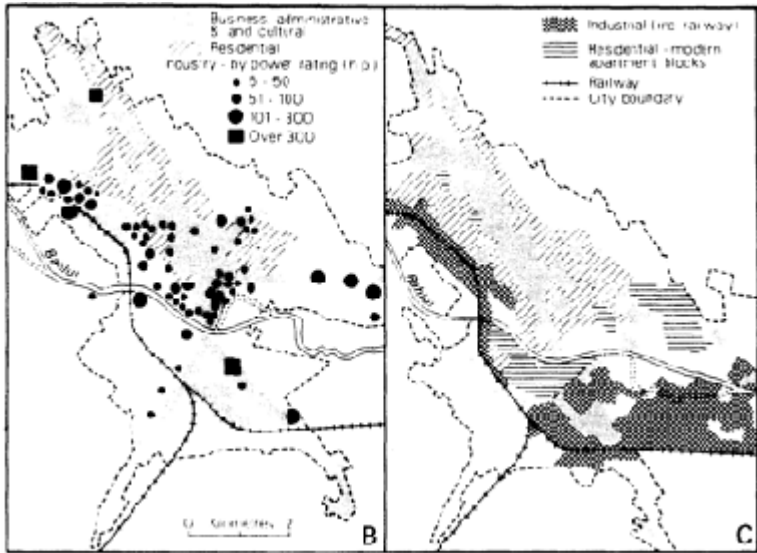
a Data for 1930 (Bulgaria 1926; Hungary 1932).

Source: T.Csato (1977) 423-4.

**Figure 8.5:** Urban structure: the case of Iasi, Romania

A Functional zones 1939

B Functional zones 1970



Sources: N.Lupu (1940) 'Valoarea industrială a oraşului Iasi' *Lucrarile Societatea Geogr.D.Cantemir* 3, 267-85; Q.A.Ungureanu (1972) 'Evoluția comparativă a zonării funcționale a oraşelor Iasi și Galati' *Anelele științifice ale Univ. A.I.Cuza din Iasi Sect. 18*, 75-83.

employment but in 1930 comparable figures were 0.53 and 1.23. However the differences in total population also changed from 15.60 times to 4.92 and when related to total population the concentration of trade/finance and industrial employment does not show significant change. There was in fact an increase in the level of employment in these categories, from 0.75 percent to 0.98 for trade/finance and 4.66 to 5.84 for industry, although the growth was slower than in Hungary as a whole (1.51 to 2.60 and 7.34 to 10.21 respectively) and meant an absolute decline with the fall in total population allowed for. It is however interesting to note that the small villages retained a significant number of craftsmen in 1930, for almost all those enumerated as industrial workers would have been employed in village workshops bearing in mind the lower level of commuting to factory jobs in the towns at that time. 'Indeed the reduced self-sufficiency of the villages created favourable opportunities for the development of the food and clothing branches on a

Table 8.3: Employment trends in Hungary by Settlement type, 1910–1930

|                   | 1910(c) |      |     |      |      |      |
|-------------------|---------|------|-----|------|------|------|
|                   | A       | B    | C   | D    | E    | F    |
| Budapest          | 1       | 4.8  | 7.4 | 23.6 | 24.8 | 16.3 |
| Other towns(a)    | 137     | 15.4 | 3.3 | 33.5 | 14.1 | 29.5 |
| Large villages(b) | 60      | 4.9  | 1.8 | 5.9  | 9.8  | 6.7  |
| Small villages    | 12343   | 74.9 | 0.7 | 37.0 | 4.7  | 47.5 |
|                   | 1930(d) |      |     |      |      |      |
|                   | A       | B    | C   | D    | E    | F    |
| Budapest          | 1       | 11.6 | 9.0 | 40.3 | 23.3 | 26.5 |
| Other towns(a)    | 55      | 21.6 | 3.7 | 30.7 | 14.7 | 31.0 |
| Large villages(b) | 59      | 9.7  | 2.0 | 7.6  | 10.3 | 9.8  |
| Small villages    | 3302    | 57.1 | 1.0 | 21.4 | 5.8  | 32.7 |

A Number of settlements

B Share of total population percent

C Employment in trade and finance percent

D Share of national employment in trade and finance percent

E As C but industry

F As D but industry

a Includes some urban settlements with population below 10,000

b Population over 10,000

c Imperial Hungary less Fiume

d Trianon Hungary

Source: T.Csato (1977) 405.

fundamentally small-industry basis'.<sup>12</sup> of course it must be remembered that the distribution of employment was skewed regionally as well as hierarchically to pick out the metropolitan regions (this would apply in other East European countries as well as Hungary) while Csato's analysis is compromised by the lack of territorial consistency, taking imperial frontiers for 1910 and the Trianon state for 1930: this greatly increased the dominance of Budapest quite independently of the growth of population in the capital.

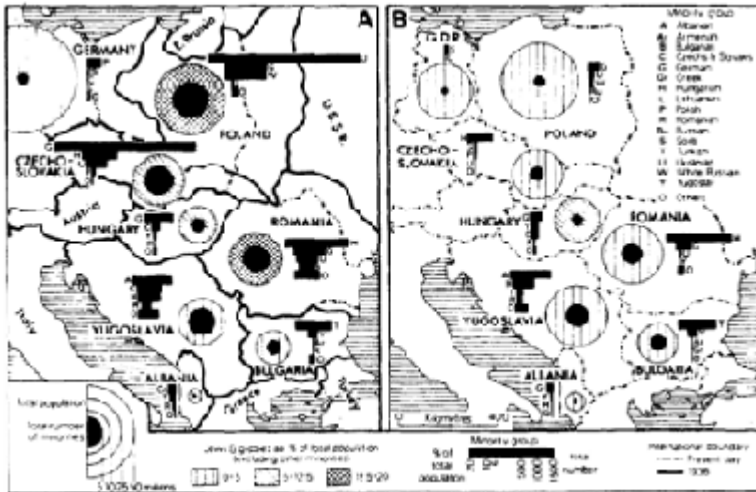
### Ethnic minorities: the Hungarian case

Given the generally inadequate performance in industry in Eastern Europe and the prevailing ethos of the nation state a

Figure 8.6: Population and ethnic minorities

A 1930s

B 1970s



Source: Census returns and estimates.

good deal of movement involved minority groups (Figure 8.6).<sup>13</sup> Paradoxically conditions could be oppressive even when the minority problem was most modest in scale and where the threat to the security to the state was almost non-existent. In Hungary where 92.1 percent of the population was Hungarian the galling political realities of the Treaty of Trianon perhaps inevitably gave rise to an attitude to mind which ruled out any modification of the Magyarisation policy that had done much to ensure the break-up of the imperial state. 'Hence the separate political and cultural facilities made available to the inter-war Hungary's ethnic minorities were stingier than their equivalent in any other country of East Central Europe; even when granted on paper they were still further cramped in administrative practice and whittled away by public pressure'.<sup>14</sup> Magyarisation was pursued as a *leitmotif* by every inter-war government with only modest differences of emphasis: had the nationalities been assimilated more rapidly there would have been no basis for the dismemberment of Hungary! Certainly the Catholic Church

seems to have pressed Magyarisation in the schools even more energetically than the civil service and strongly opposed minority-language schools even for its own ethnic minorities. The German Swabians constituted the largest minority in Trianon Hungary and their proximity to the new national frontiers gave rise to considerable Magyar unease. These inhabitants of Burgenland were not too keen to join Austria because the socialist regime in Vienna offended the ultra-conservative rural Swabians, while other border groups were not particularly anxious to fall under the authority of the East European governments that were seen as culturally inferior to the Hungarian regimes. Ambivalence amongst the Swabians was deepened by 'the struggle between the German-conscious but culturally weak rural masses on the one hand, and the thoroughly Magyarised triumvirate (clergymen, teacher and notary) on the other'.<sup>15</sup> Nevertheless the Magyars were placed in a dilemma: 'if they persecuted or harassed the Swabians they might eventually succumb to alluring propaganda from abroad, especially from Austria or Germany; if the Magyars pacified the Swabians, at the cost of far-reaching political cultural and lingual concessions, they might in time become too powerful and prevent the realisation of a pure Magyar state'.<sup>16</sup> The initial instinct of the Hungarian government was conciliatory and a new programme was drawn up by O.Jaszi, Minister of Nationalities in the Karolyi government of 1918–19. However the provision for the Wilsonian formula of self-determination was negated by the emphasis on territorial integrity which would allow only administrative and cultural autonomy. This was insufficient to attract the Romanians, Slovaks and Yugoslavs who had already defected or to pacify the remaining minorities like the Swabians who were being stirred into opposition by Austria in pursuit of its claim to Burgenland: against the advantage of unfulfilled agrarian reforms lay the probably economic loss of access to seasonal employment in Lower Austria and Styria.

By 1922 it was clear that Hungary would have to accept its Trianon frontiers and the loss of part of the Burgenland, so the conciliation which marked the immediate post-war years gradually deteriorated. Although the ethnic association Ungarländisch-Deutscher Volksbildungsverein aimed at a

cultural identity for the Swabians in the context of loyalty to the Hungarian state, the lack of sympathy shown by the authorities undermined the credibility of UDV leaders and helped to ensure that the Austrian Anschluss in 1938 would provoke expressions of primary loyalty to the German Reich. The Swabians were now a pawn in German-Hungarian relations. At first Hitler's desire for close collaboration with the Gombos government made him indifferent to the fate of the Swabians but this was only a passing phase: after the Anschluss cultural and political autonomy for the Swabians was demanded and the price for Hungary's recovery of part of Transylvania in 1940 was the abrogation of all the anti-German efforts of previous governments. The government now made more genuine efforts to woo the Germans and sponsored a new organisation under the leadership of a churchman Msgr. J.Pehm (subsequently known, after Magyarising his name and gaining promotion in the Catholic hierarchy, as Cardinal Mindszenty) but even so it required heavy pressure from the German government during the war to win concessions and ultimately allow Hungarian Germans in the Hungarian army to fight with German units if they wished.

The position of the Jews in Trianon Hungary was also unsatisfactory. Before the First World War Hungarian-speaking Jews were treated with considerable respect since they contributed to the slender Magyar majority in Ausgleich Hungary (only 51.4 percent in 1900) and made a welcome contribution to industry and commerce. There was some friction before 1914 as increasing Jewish involvement in the profession 'brought them into much more direct and more resented competition with the Magyar déclassé gentry than had pertained in earlier decades', but this increased after the war because there was an unassailable Magyar majority in the new state and jealousy of the Jews was deepened by the migration of former Hungarian civil servants from the lost territories.<sup>17</sup> The depression and the Nazi example gave further boosts to anti-Semitism with the Jews regarded as scapegoats for the country's disasters. A law of 1938 restricted Jewish entry into certain professions and the following year even more draconian legislation excluded Jews from state service and restricted both the number of Jewish-owned businesses (5 percent only of all

businesses) and the level of Jewish employment within them (maximum 12 percent). Expropriation of Jewish-owned land was also authorised. In 1941 a modified version of Germany Nürnbeg Laws of 1935 prohibited marriages and extra-marital sexual relations between Jews and non-Jews and this was followed up in 1942 by prohibitions on conversion to Judaism, obligatory military labour service and expropriation of Jewish-owned farm and forest land. Meanwhile deaths were occurring through deportations to Germany, army massacres in Banat and forced labour service on the Russian front but the final holocaust came with the German occupation of 1944. The net result was the loss of nearly two-thirds of the 725,000 Jews enumerated in the 1941 census. The 260,000 survivors were for the most part strongly Magyarised Jews living in Budapest and protected by conservatively-minded remnants of the old ruling elite.

#### Population transfers of ethnic minorities

Some population transfers took place after the Balkan Wars and the First World War although the most important cases in Macedonia and Thrace do not strictly concern this study.<sup>18</sup> But there was considerable activity over population transfer during the Second World War. The main focus of attention was the German minority in various countries. In total numbers these minorities were quite large at around 10.5 million (excluding Switzerland), of which 6.8 million related to Eastern Europe and a further 1.5 million to the Soviet Union and Baltic States. However as a proportion of the population of Germany, the German minority problem, was not as serious as that of Albania and Hungary. Nevertheless the issue of Auslandsdeutschtum was taken up most actively by Hitler from 1933 onwards and a generally more aggressive stance was taken in defence of German minority interests, under the gospel of Pan-Germanism: every German had a role to play in the formation of a Greater Germany on the basis of self-determination. The propaganda was infectious as other states emphasised the virtues of the nation state. E.Benes had noted immediately after the war that states with ethnic and cultural homogeneity could not be created in Eastern Europe except by major population transfers. But

although there was a precedent for this in the Convention of Adrianople/Edirne of 1913, with Bulgaria and Turkey agreeing to facilitate the voluntary exchange of Bulgarians and Moslems within a frontier zone extending to a depth of fifteen kilometres, the agreement was overtaken by Turkey's entry into the First World War and after this conflagration population transfers seemed to run counter to the idealistic tendencies governing the plans for the new Europe. However minorities were frequently dissatisfied with the treatment received from the governments of states to which they could not extend any genuine loyalty and so they looked forward towards a further political upheaval. 'Swayed by such convictions the irredentist minorities often neglected the duties of their citizenship and continually looked to their powerful co-national states for help, developing eventually into what has come to be known as a fifth column'.<sup>19</sup> Once again therefore the population exchange came to be seen as a desirable solution. Some momentum was provided by Turkish repatriation policy between 1933 and 1940 through agreements with Bulgaria, Romania and Yugoslavia.<sup>20</sup> A Five Year Plan envisaged resettlement of 90,000 people in 1935 and another 173,000 in each of the following four years, making a total of 0.78 million of which 0.65 were to be resettled in Thrace. In fact the resources of the state proved sufficient to accommodate only 155,000 between 1935 and 1939, most of them settled on land vacated by Greek emigrants, and at the outbreak of war it was estimated that some 0.9 million Turks remained in the Balkan states of Eastern Europe.

#### The case of the Germans

The Germans solved their minority problems for the short term at any rate, partly by the creation of Grossdeutschland and partly by population transfers that were arranged although with considerable variation over implementation of the latter. The treaty with Czechoslovakia in 1938 provided for the compulsory exchange of 0.38 million Germans for 0.74 million Czechoslovaks, but the provisions were never implemented because it was thought better for the Germans to remain as a fifth column in the Czech state which briefly survived the Munich Agreement. However the USSR was in a stronger



position to press for a transfer of population and ensure that a German minority in Russia would not be a pretext for German intervention. The German-Soviet Treaty of 1939 stipulated that persons of German ethnic nationality residing in the part of Poland incorporated into the Soviet Union and persons of White Russian or Ukrainian nationality residing in the section incorporated into the Reich were permitted to opt for German or Soviet citizenship respectively. Previous treaties had been made with Estonia and Latvia before the Russian takeover of these countries. Italy was another case where Germany accepted exchange because of the need to demonstrate protection for German minorities while at the same time avoiding conflict with an ally. In the end the bulk of the German settlers in the 1939–45 period came from land occupied by the USSR, either before 1939 (c.210,000) or after (c.430,000, of whom 112,000 were from the Baltic, 128,000 from Poland and 190,000 from Bessarabia and Bucovina). Only some 45,000 settlers came from Eastern Europe as strictly defined, mainly from Dobrogea (affected by the 1940 transfer of territory from Romania to Bulgaria) and Croatia.

Almost all people mentioned were accommodated in former Polish territory now incorporated into the Reich: an area of 36, 117 square miles and a population of 10.7 million, predominantly Polish although much of this territory had previously been subject to the colonising efforts of Bismarck's Ansiedlung-Kommission established in 1886. The Nazis went in for Greuelpropaganda (atrocious propaganda), raising the spectre of Bolshevik invasion and intimidation to drive the Germans westwards. 'This accounts for the really amazing readiness with which they left their former existence and milieu to take illegal possession of the property of others in an alien land during a war that was still being waged and had not yet been decided'.<sup>21</sup> There may also have been a desire to win a more privileged status in society, for it is evident that Germans arriving in the resettlement areas of Poland were usually most anxious to take over farms in the occupied territories rather than settle to labouring jobs in the Altreich: this was noticeable among poor families from Bessarabia, Dobrogea and Galicia who did not have all the qualifications necessary for resettlement in Poland. It was now considered essential for the Warthe (Warta) land to

be Germanised and that required the settlement of the towns as well as the land.<sup>22</sup> For this political reason there had to be an industrial policy embracing lignite mining and the production of agricultural machinery and textiles. Particular importance was attached to Łódz, renamed Litzmannstadt, which was to be a bulwark of Germandom and an important industrial centre for the Warthegau. The plan envisaged the dismantling of Polish-owned industry and transfer of plant to other parts of the Reich, but this destructive policy could not be implemented quickly and there were still 400,000 Poles in the city in 1942 with many mills entirely dependent on Polish labour. More generally there was a policy of replacing Polish and Jewish artisans with Germans for barely 5,000 of 65,000 handicraft establishments in the Warthegau belonged to the local Volksdeutsche at the time of incorporation. Many units under Polish or Jewish management were closed because a total of 33,000 was considered sufficient, but skilled Germans could not be found immediately to take over businesses and officials had to entice settlers from other parts of the Reich rather than recruit artisans from the ranks of migrants from the east. The programme of German settlement at the expense of a native population that was expelled or consigned to reservations was seen as a curtain-raiser for a more ambitious plan for a wide area extending through the Baltic to Leningrad and southwards to the western Ukraine. The Generalplan Ost was started in 1941 and provided for the settlement of ten million Germans over a thirty year period, with the indigenous population displaced to western Siberia. Work on the plan ceased in 1943 due to the increased pressures of war and no moves were made to implement it. Other population transfers took place, most of them related to the temporary extension of Hungary's frontiers. Just over 200,000 Hungarians migrated into the enlarged state, the main flow being from southern Transylvania where 160,000 Hungarians were exchanged for some 220,000 Romanians. There was some tidying up in Dobrogea where 600,000 Bulgarians moved south in exchange for 100,000 Romanians.

### Nazi policies towards the Jews

It was the Jews who experienced the greatest upheavals for although they had lived in Eastern Europe for centuries the inter-war years generated increasing hostility towards them. Rapid population increases, previously relieved by emigration to North America, now had to be accommodated within the new national frontiers and the Jews responded with a very low birth rate.<sup>23</sup> However their established position in commerce, industry and the professions attracted resentment from Gentiles with a good education and rising expectations. The worst trouble arose in Nazi Germany.<sup>24</sup> This is not at first sight easy to explain, for the Jews in Germany (many of them escapees from the east at the time of the Russian pogroms) had done much to identify with the German nation.<sup>25</sup> They increased in number from 0.44 million in 1880 to 0.57 in 1925 but as a percentage of the total population of Germany accounted for only 1.1 and 0.9 percent respectively. Half the Jewish population was found in just six cities: Berlin, Frankfurt a. Main, Breslau, Hamburg, Köln and Leipzig. However Hitler's Weltanschauung involved the application of Darwinian principles to peoples and races rather than individuals to produce the dogma of Aryan superiority along with its right to living space (Lebensraum) at the expense of inferior peoples.<sup>26</sup> There was no necessity to implement all the elements of the Nazi programme but momentum was created by radical thinkers in the party like H.Himmler and the pragmatist could see that the Jew was useful in steering the attention of the lower middle classes away from more genuine grievances, leaving Hitler 'freer to pursue his own non-ideological goals of power in cooperation with groups whose influence he had once promised to weaken or even destroy'.<sup>27</sup> Pressure against the Jews extended from propaganda to such concrete measures as the boycott of Jewish businesses in 1933, discriminatory legislation under the Nürnberg Laws of 1935 and Aryanisisation of Jewish firms in 1937-9 (linked with H.Goering's Four Year Plan of 1936-40). Under these pressures many Jews emigrated but until the Nazi Gleichschaltung was complete in 1938 there was a hope that persecution of Jews would be moderated and that a legal basis for Jewish corporate life would remain.<sup>28</sup> Such hopes were dashed in 1938 by an

intense assault to create a judenrein economy and forcibly expel many sections of the Jewish community.<sup>29</sup> Those who could not leave within the specified time were incarcerated in Buchenwald concentration camp near Weimar while in Vienna A. Eichmann simplified emigration procedures and despatched shiploads of Jews to countries where immigration visas were not required. However the successes of German diplomacy and German military efforts continually deepened the Jewish problem by bringing more and more of them under German administration, ultimately some ten million after the invasion of Russia.<sup>30</sup>

Jews were herded into ghettos following the experiment at Piotrkow in Poland in 1939. Most notorious was the Warsaw ghetto demarcated in 1940 and walled in to contain 0.4 million people (including many resettled from various places in the Warsaw area) with only meagre rations and poor medical services.<sup>31</sup> But this was only one of a whole network of district resettlement centres in Poland and elsewhere.<sup>32</sup> Thus in Bohemia and Moravia ghettos were established at Brno, Hradec Kralové, Klatovy, Kolin, Mlada Boleslav, Ostrava, Pardubice, Prague and Uhersky Brod, in addition to Theresienstadt (Terezin) between Prague and Usti where gassing was later resorted to. This was the hallmark of the ultimate extremist solution to the Jewish problem. Experiments in gassing started in 1941 at Kulmhof (Chelmno) on the Warthe near Koło in the Generalgouvernement and they represented a more sophisticated approach in comparison with the development of special killing squads (Einsatzgruppen) used in Russia in conjunction with the Barbarossa operation. The plan for the final solution (Endlösung) was submitted by R. Heydrich on Goering's orders in 1941.<sup>33</sup> It was approved at the Wannsee Conference in Berlin at the beginning of 1942 and immediately put into effect. Installations were concentrated into the Generalgouvernement although extermination was also reported in Croatia and the Pervomaysk area of Transnistria as well as Bohemia. The largest unit in the Generalgouvernement was at Birkenau (Brzezinka), part of the Auschwitz (Oswiecim) complex, but other units were operating at camps in the Lublin area in 1942: Belzac near Tomaszow, Majdanek near Lublin and Sobibor near Chelm. In this region forced labour had previously been used in frontier defence works on the river Bug between 1939 and 1941. Later

in 1942 Treblinka was opened on the railway from Warsaw to Białystok. A considerable literature is available on the whole frightful operation. As the ghettos of the Generalgouvernement were systematically cleared the hopelessness of the situation evoked minimal resistance but in Warsaw the revolt and subsequent annihilation of Jews in 1943 involved considerable German casual ties.<sup>34</sup> The ghettos in Ostland (notably Minsk, Riga, Rovno and Vilnius) followed as well as Litzmannstadt in the Reich while Jews were also transported by train from the southern parts of Fortress Europe. A total of approximately six million perished.<sup>35</sup>

### Foreign workers in Germany

Another important movement involved immigration to accelerate German wartime industrialisation. The possibility of importing foreign labour was certainly entertained in 1939 but concrete planning and implementation was not undertaken until the strategy of a short war had been discredited. Hitler went into Poland in 1939 anticipating a quick victory: his armament programme had not been completed but he thought incorrectly that France and the UK would not intervene (despite guarantees) and that a rapid victory would allow early re-entry into international markets and so maintain German living standards. In 1939 the only foreign workers recruited were 115,000 Czechs and Italians for agricultural purposes (replacing Poles who would have been preferred but for the political crisis): seasonal workers then comprised less than only 0.8 percent of the labour force. Then the proportion increased sharply to 3.2 percent in 1940 through the employment of 1.1 million foreign workers (two-thirds of them Poles) of which some 30 percent were POWs. However the anomalies of Nazi policy were soon to become clear. The Untermensch philosophy of racial superiority meant that Poland was to be an Arbeitsreich for the German Herrenvolk. But as Poles in the Reich suffered discrimination it became increasingly difficult to recruit further workers. At the same time the Lebensraum concept involved annexation of some Polish territory, to enlarge West Prussia and create the new Gau of Wartheland. Settlement of Germans in these territories had the long-term effect of complicating labour supply within the

Altreich. In late 1941 the total number of foreign workers reached 3.5 million, almost four-fifths of them POWs. There were 1.01 million Poles and 0.11 million Yugoslavs, while Germany's allies in Eastern Europe (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia) furnished another 0.13 million. Some difficulties arose through the reduction in labour in occupied and allied territories and the willingness of Germany's allies to cooperate inevitably waned as it became less likely that Germany would be arbiter of Europe's future.

Inside Germany the foreign workers were a somewhat mixed blessing but nevertheless 1942 brought an intensified industrial effort under the Four Year Plan (biased to 'in depth' armament as advocated by Munitions Minister A. Speer). This required a programme to recruit additional workers and a new minister F.Sauckel, was responsible for this. After the first drive, up to July 1942, the total number of foreign workers increased to 5.12 million, thanks to 1.3 million POWs and other workers from newly-occupied eastern regions and 0.34 million from other allied and occupied territories (of which 0.15 million were from Eastern Europe, including Wartheland). A further three recruitment drives in late 1942, 1943 and 1944 brought in an additional 3.74 million against a quota of 6.70, the shortfall resulting from a disastrous campaign in 1944 which netted only 1.21 million compared with a planned 4.05 million. The maximum number of foreign workers in the Reich was 8.1 million, a fifth of the total workforce in 1944. They must have made a major contribution and probably a crucial one to the maintenance of the German war economy in the last two years of the conflict. It was a remarkable achievement in view of the difficulties. 'Indeed the ability of the Nazi state to recruit and assimilate millions of foreigners into a sophisticated and complex economy is an ominous portent of the efficiency and productive capabilities of a ruthless totalitarian regime'.<sup>36</sup> There was considerable ambivalence shown towards the foreigners, especially those from the east, although economic necessities brought about a subtle change from Untermensch to Gastarbeiter by 1944. 'Every aspect of the foreign worker's life in the Reich reflected this shift in attitude' and in some respects the movements of population proved permanent since almost 0.

75 million foreign workers, mostly from the east, refused repatriation after the war.<sup>37</sup>

Related to the scheme for recruitment of foreign workers was the effort to use the large prison population. The network of concentration camps arose initially out of the need to accommodate political opponents to Nazi regime. As early as 1933 the Nazis were placing people under protective custody (Schutzhaft) and by the time the war broke out about 25,000 were concentrated into a small number of special establishments: Dachau near München (which provided the model for organisation and discipline), Buchenwald near Weimar and Sachsenhausen near Oranienburg. At that time labour was used largely for brickmaking and quarrying. However during the war years the prison camp population increased dramatically to some 225,000 (mid-1943) and the proportion of Germans fell to below 10 percent. Thus the camps may be regarded as a significant factor in the movement of population in Eastern Europe (especially Jews and Slavs). Several new camps were opened in 1940 at Auschwitz, Gross Rosen near Striegau (Strzegom) in Silesia, and Majdanek. The first two were convenient for the large number of people arrested by the security police in Upper Silesia and the Warthegau while the latter was filled with victims rounded up in Warsaw. Auschwitz was a particularly massive complex holding up to 75,000 people. The Schutzstaffeln (who controlled the camps) had wide powers in the Generalgouvernement and were able to clear several villages in order to secure a large site. Labour was used in various plants in Upper Silesia but the manpower was sufficient to attract new enterprises like the IG.Farben synthetic rubber plant.<sup>38</sup> Majdanek also had its industrial significance through Ostindustrie, a group of enterprises relocated from Warsaw and Gross Rosen had its granite quarries.<sup>39</sup> During the war years the camps were seen increasingly as arsenals of forced labour and in this context H.Himmler saw the possibilities for exploiting the system for armaments manufacture to enhance the economic power of the Schutzstaffeln.<sup>40</sup> He wanted to use five camps (Auschwitz, Buchenwald, Neuengamme (near Hamburg), Ravensbruck and Sachsenhausen) for armaments production, involving some 25,000 people altogether. Grave difficulties were encountered with

all prison camp industries (irrespective of management) as people were found to be less productive in a prison environment with security as an additional cost. The subsequent extermination policies against the Jews weakened the whole concept still further.<sup>41</sup> Certain camps were equipped with gas chambers, though Auschwitz had the grim distinction of receiving trainloads of Jews who were subjected to a selektion process, yielding a steady stream of new workers who were systematically exploited in the factories and laboratories. Himmler was only able to proceed to pistol assembly at Neuengamme and carbine production at Buchenwald, the latter connected with Weimar by a new thirteen kilometre railway. However the whole concentration camp programme was significant, aside from its horrific proportions, as a form of settlement policy by a totalitarian regime and one which would probably have been implemented on a much larger scale had the Axis been victorious. Large complexes were envisaged in Africa and in the colonial territories of Russia where a twenty year resettlement programme drawn up in 1942 envisaged fifteen million migrants, many of them civilians from Western Europe and the Americas!

## CONCLUSION

As was appropriate after the misery of the First World War years, the period opened with firm intentions to create a better life in Eastern Europe. But the economic and political problems were sadly underestimated, so the increasing disillusionment in society spawned strong radical factions in all countries of the region during the 1930s. It was particularly unfortunate, though inevitable in the opinion of the more dispassionate observers, that the policies of the peasant parties, inspired by the achievement of land reform, were compromised by rural poverty which peasant proprietors had alleviated but not cured. Without the depression the strategies of the 1920s might have borne fruit, but the depressed state of world markets in the early 1930s made it less feasible to contemplate rural prosperity stimulating demand for manufactures which would bring about structural change. The state would have to take a strong lead and provide both the capital and demand for manufacturing industry. But



the crux of the problem lay in the lack of a security system to replace the Habsburg and Ottoman establishments. The nation states could not take concerted action and, rather than cooperate against stronger powers, were inclined to support the latter in order to satisfy territorial claims. And while German ambitions induced some solid alliances with the Reich during the Second World War there was also the most committed opposition in certain other quarters. Without such aberrations as Nazi racial policies it is just conceivable that some permanent security structure might have emerged in Eastern Europe under German leadership. Yet such an organisation would inevitably have attracted strong opposition from both the western powers and the Soviet Union and, presumably, would have had no prospect of viability except in the context of a Russian defeat and the implementation of policies resembling those previously applied in 1918 before Germany's surrender on the western front. Furthermore, although Mackinder was prepared to countenance a large Eastern Europe dominated by Germany it is very hard to see how Germany could have been successful over the long term, even with the most ruthless policies of genocide and resettlement. In other words there is really no way that Eastern Europe can emerge as a unified and politically coherent section of the continent. This last period prior to the familiar post-war structure of Soviet influence in Eastern Europe shows that despite an economic and strategic rationale for cooperation nation states with mutually irreconcilable territorial objectives cannot easily compromise and that great power leadership cannot be imposed without intervention by rival powers seeking to reenact the Habsburg/Ottoman scenario of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

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# Conclusion

This book has been written to assist students of the geography of Eastern Europe, defined as the eight socialist states which have been influenced by the Russian revolutionary system and, in the majority of cases, become very closely aligned economically and militarily with the Soviet Union. The twin novelties of military alliance with the USSR (involving all states other than Albania and Yugoslavia) and the discipline of central planning have brought great changes in their wake and give rise to curiosity about the conditions that provided the seed bed for such dramatic upheavals. Geographical studies of the region have described and interpreted post-war change quite comprehensively and a prominent theme in all cases has been the backwardness of much of Eastern Europe in 1945 and the consequent need for radical change to bring the area more fully into line with the rest of the developed world.<sup>1</sup> Further encouragement of such an outlook arises from the impressive record of recent economic development which may appear to offer vindication for the abandonment of capitalism and may even seem to furnish proof of the superiority of the socialist system. Of course such a simplistic orientation is fundamentally ahistorical because the two systems have operated at different periods each with unique political and technological attributes, but a wide perspective is constrained by lack of geographical coverage of the historical geography of Eastern Europe, aside from inevitably condensed summaries provided as introductions to post-war studies.

Having now investigated the changing geography of Eastern Europe up to 1945 it may be fitting in conclusion to work

backwards through history and peel off the layers in rapid succession. Such a regressive method is usually inappropriate for a lengthy discourse because it involves mental leaps from the end of one period to the beginning of the previous one but it is more feasible for a summary where the significance of the past on the present is being considered. In 1945 Soviet hegemony in Eastern Europe was clearly not regarded as inevitable, even in the context of Germany's unconditional surrender and the overwhelming military strength of the Russians in the east. But the western allies could appreciate that the manifest injustice of interference in, and still more annexation of, territory to which the USSR could lay no claim on national grounds had to be balanced against legitimate demands for effective security on the western frontier claimed in 1940. The allies were made to face a cruel dilemma which was largely resolved, against their better judgement, by the crucial importance of the Soviet contribution to the war effort (to force Germany's unconditional surrender with minimum American and British losses) and the reality of their advance deep into Central Europe after Churchill failed to win enthusiastic support for an allied drive from the head of the Adriatic through the Ljubljana Gap to Vienna.<sup>2</sup> In order to minimise the damage the controversial 'percentages agreement' was worked out between Churchill and Stalin in 1944: accepting the inevitability of overwhelming Russian influence in Bulgaria and Romania Churchill sought an understanding that would minimise interference in Greece and moderate it in Yugoslavia.<sup>3</sup> Despite the crudity of the measure, and the sheer arrogance of the two leaders in presuming to settle the fate of millions of people in a matter of moments, the agreement was by no means ineffective. The Russians did not get involved in Greece despite the opportunities provided by leftist insurgents and in Bulgaria, where a communist-led Fatherland Front took over government as the Red Army reached the Danube (following the royalist coup in Romania) western pressure was exerted to the point of getting Bulgarian troops out of Macedonia, thereby heading off any possibility of a Soviet-sponsored 'Greater Bulgaria'.

The Americans demanded a full voice in settling all Balkan issues, but they could not ignore the reality of the Soviet advance and in the end were certainly no more successful than the British whose power they eventually replaced. No western

leader seriously contemplated that Russian influence would involve the wholesale destruction of the established political system in Bulgaria, Romania and other countries that were metamorphosed into Soviet satellites by the end of the 1940s. In the case of Poland the refusal by government in exile to accept the Curzon Line as the new eastern frontier with the Soviet Union led simply to the establishment of a pro-Russian 'Lublin Committee' which was able to develop into a provisional government under B.Bierut's presidency.<sup>4</sup> Even in Czechoslovakia, where post-war government began with understanding between exile factions in London and Moscow and an acceptance by communists of the leadership of President Benes, the level of accommodation to Soviet interests was bound to affect the stability of what turned out to be purely transitional arrangements.<sup>5</sup> Yet it was not appreciated either that, even in the absence of direct Russian involvement, there were national communist leaders ready to seek a radical Bolshevik style solution to economic and social problems.

What of the economic problems that might well have justified some borrowing of the Soviet model? Communist regimes have repeatedly stated their intentions of overcoming inequalities inherited from the capitalist past. But despite superficial claims about the formulation of new principles for industrial growth and location there appear to be no fundamental differences in practice between Eastern and Western Europe. Had there been no revolution it is almost certain that post-war governments would have given continuing industrialisation the highest priority in the context of a mixed economy. The cooperative movement in agriculture would probably have gained momentum, although without the surrender of ownership rights. No doubt the friendly relations between the Soviet Union and most of the individual states of Eastern Europe (arising out of liberation by the Red Army, the boundary changes, the division of Germany, as well as long-standing cultural ties between Slav peoples) would have been conducive to close trade relations but without the abandonment of prices related to world market values. And closer association of East European states may also be taken for granted, given some moderation of territorial disputes through the intervention of UN agencies, in view of the



logic of economic specialisation (within branches of industry) and the need for joint investment in infrastructure.

This may appear optimistic in view of the rather patchy economic performance of Eastern Europe in the inter-war period. That record has of course attracted a good deal of unfavourable comment, especially from writers who make superficial comparisons with the record of post-war communist governments. Yet as J.Rothschild reasonably argues, the restrained development of industry was not due to any reluctance on the part of the native elite (such as might justify the elimination of these elements after the revolution) or constraints imposed by foreign powers. There was no really solid basis for rapid progress, especially in the Balkans.<sup>6</sup> In the case of Yugoslavia for example her 'internal market, capital resources, transportation network, skilled labour supply and entrepreneurial experience were all too weak to render her a likely candidate for general industrialisation'.<sup>7</sup> On the question of skills in labour and entrepreneurship a contemporary writer, H.G.Wanklyn, mentions the limited development of specialist craftsmanship in much of Eastern Europe where high transport costs (especially at certain times of year) had traditionally encouraged self-sufficiency and forged a close link between industry and agriculture as village craftsmen produced on a part-time basis for an essentially local market.<sup>8</sup> Bosnian coppersmiths and Bohemian silversmiths enjoyed a high reputation far afield but this was not the normal pattern. The close environmental adjustment manifest by so much peasant industry was remarkable to contemporary social scientists from the west but not an entirely satisfactory basis for a modern factory system. And associated with this was the ethnic factor with much of the commerce and industry traditionally monopolised by Germans, Greeks and Jews to the exclusion of Magyars, Slavs and Romanians. Infrastructure also imposed certain constraints but considerable progress was made in dealing with this problem.

Under the circumstances of recovery from the First World War and the emergence of new nation states the economic record of the inter-war period was not by any means insignificant. But growth was bound to be slow in view of the need to repair war damage and modify the infrastructure to suit the new territorial structure. There was a built-in mismatch

between expectations and realities. Implementation of land reform in some countries increased popular expectation of tangible benefits from the new order, stimulated of course by party political appeals for support on the basis of different programmes for prosperity. The great potential of the new nations had to be emphasised, yet the parties could not deliver, given the depressed state of world markets. Disillusionment nourished the more radical parties. Yet insofar as failure arose from internal shortcomings these may be associated with the backward conditions inherited during the decades leading up to 1918, partly from the Russian Empire (in Bessarabia and Poland) but mainly from the Ottoman Empire. Successor states emerged in the Balkans during the late nineteenth century and took vigorous action over the economy, education and security. Indeed a considerable transformation was made considering that the Ottoman government had often been unable even to maintain peace and security. Nevertheless there were still serious problems remaining in 1918 and industrial development outside the Erfurt-Łodz-Budapest triangle was quite restricted.<sup>9</sup>

The enquiry therefore moves further back in time to reflect on the opportunities available during the nineteenth century. The German economy made remarkable progress and change in the Habsburg lands was also considerable. Of course the acceptance of the status quo by minorities like the Poles, Romanians and Slovaks was by no means unqualified, yet these groups were treated in a civilised manner and their political programmes were formulated in the context of existing state frameworks.<sup>10</sup> The Balkans however present a very different picture. Industrial development made very slow progress because of the tendency for the Ottoman Empire to specialise in the production of raw materials that would be traded for West European manufactures. Ottoman crafts held their own in the early nineteenth century but great damage arose through the trade conventions signed by the Porte with France and the UK in 1838 because low customs duties of only 5 percent were to be levied on goods entering the empire. The Ottoman government appeared to show little sensitivity towards the domestic manufacturer and while other governments were supporting enterprise the emerging capitalists in the empire had to overcome the general hostility of ruling Muslim elite. Guilds

remained an obligatory form of organisation for commodity producers and even new branches of manufacturing had to set up such organisations within which individual capitalists would have to operate. N.Todorov notes the significance of the decision of the Gumusgerdan family to build a woollen mill in the Bulgarian village of Dermendere in 1848: it had plenty of running water to provide power and was the centre of a putting-out organisation for cloth production, but it was also the centre of the ciftlik and had a guild organisation.<sup>11</sup> Cases of positive Ottoman support for factory industry are few and far between. There is the celebrated case of the Sliven mill of 1836, a centre of the aba industry which dominated the Sredna Gora and Rhodope in the early nineteenth century. This grew up out of a workshop started by D.Zheliazkov on the strength of expertise gained in Ekaterinoslav during a brief exile following the Russo-Turkish War of 1828–9. Because the supplies of cloth for army uniforms coming from Salonica were inadequate and because the Sliven voyvoda was the person entrusted to supply aba for military needs, official support was given for what was the first true factory in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire. But many potential entrepreneurs were allegedly discouraged by heavy taxation and the poor infrastructure.<sup>12</sup>

However it is also evident that reluctance to get involved with factory industry arose in part from lack of security. Todorov considers this was ‘one of the greatest obstacles to larger and more permanent investments in industry’.<sup>13</sup> People preferred to move their capital around, and if necessary to take it out of the country. So commerce, money lending and real estate were often preferred outlets for capital. This attitude in turn must relate to the government’s inability to control rebellious Muslim notables and the lawlessness that prevailed. But it also arose from the failure to develop a sense of common citizenship without which the empire could not survive. The Christians had traditionally held an inferior position in Ottoman society. They were not required, and usually not allowed, to join military forces. But they were expected to provide the tax support for the military establishment and for the other functions of state. Hence the heavy impositions made on the production of agriculture and industry which was very much in Christian hands. Now the Ottoman edict of 1856, which marked the beginning of the

Tanzimat (reform) period (1856–76), declared the equality of all Ottoman citizens through the concept of Osmanlilik or Ottomanism.<sup>14</sup> It mentioned ways in which the rights of Christians and Jews would be guaranteed and it marked the beginning of a movement towards the ultimate secularisation of government. Undeniable progress was made in administration, the economy, education and justice. Yet there were misgivings about the wisdom of grafting western institutions on to a traditional Turkish society which retained an entrenched pro-Muslim outlook of superiority over the infidel population.

Even more significantly, the non-Muslim population remained almost totally unimpressed. No reform was radical enough to abolish the millet system and so the fundamental division of society into component parts defied integration at a time when efficient centralised government was badly needed.<sup>15</sup> The millet system originated as a well-meaning concession by a benevolent ruler and one that would allow non-Muslims to enjoy their own local administration but elimination of the system in the interest of Osmanlilik was precluded by the privileged position of Muslims and by the interest of the Christians in moving from a millet consciousness to a nationalist consciousness. By the time significant reforms were contemplated the majority of Balkan peoples, of every nationality and social level, simply wished to leave the state. The government had to attempt reform because the break-up of the empire could not be contemplated but it is 'to be doubted if any programme of reform could have preserved the Ottoman Empire as a multinational state whose citizens would have been content to remain within its control'.<sup>16</sup> The element of success lay in the diplomatic field in winning continued western support for the empire and the sowing of seeds of Turkish nationalism.<sup>17</sup> Further momentum came from the military disaster of 1877, involving a loss of Christian territory and a migration of Turks from Bulgaria back into the empire which destroyed the Muslim/Christian balance.<sup>18</sup> Also from the Young Turk movement with a secularist conception of fatherland (vatan) which forced even the Muslim Arab intelligentsia to shed their loyalties to the Ottoman state.<sup>19</sup>

This thesis would then argue that economic problems in the Balkans arose not simply from a limited mineral endowment but from a failure to encourage manufacturing along the lines later

adopted by the successor states. But that economic progress was in turn constrained by the cultural and ethnic composition of the empire which was too highly fragmented for the Tanzimat reforms to moderate. If this is so the question arises as to the opportunities available in the eighteenth century to lay the foundations for more rapid modernisation. It has been shown that while important reforms were carried out in Prussia and the Habsburg Empire the Ottoman Empire was unable to offer the same positive response to developments in Western Europe. The record was by no means insignificant. There was a breakdown in Ottoman isolation from the rest of the world with the arrival of European diplomats and merchants in Istanbul and the despatch of Ottomans to reside in the capitals of Europe. Furthermore Sultan Selim III implemented important reform in order to create a new army better able to defend the empire against Habsburg and Russian pressure. But the reforms were essentially military with the limited aim of controlling rebel pashas and withstanding foreign invasions. The purely pragmatic approach of the Ottomans has been contrasted with the more radical and sophisticated approach in the Habsburg Empire where attempts were made to alter the political structure. It may be argued that the danger of war made comprehensive reform impossible and that in better times Selim would have gone on from the new army to other reforms. But according to S.J.Shaw the probability was slight since there is no evidence of ability or inclination to take a radical approach.<sup>20</sup>

The period was certainly a testing one involving territorial and economic changes.<sup>21</sup> The loss of territory around the Black Sea destroyed the economic unity of the Black Sea lands focussing on Istanbul while the industrial revolution in the west modified the structure of Ottoman exports as foodstuffs and raw material came to predominate. There could have been much stronger support for Ottoman industry, along the lines adopted in the other empires, but there was no commitment to modernise the economy and immigrant craftsmen who wrought great changes in other parts of Europe through the dissemination of new skills and techniques made an insignificant impact in the Ottoman Empire.<sup>22</sup> Arguably a fatal flaw in the system was the clear division between the Muslim and non-Muslim population, seen not only in local organisation (through

the millet system) and in cultural/religious matters but in economic functions too. For the Muslims were prominent in administration and military activities while the non-Muslims were increasingly prominent in agriculture, commerce and industry. The Muslim establishment therefore gave little priority to economic matters and naturally saw administrative and military reform as the important issues. As the economy changed the non-Muslims became steadily more influential in commerce while the Muslim craftsmen were pushed into menial jobs: western travellers repeatedly noted how economic development was due almost entirely to Christian or foreign activity and that the running of small shops or coffee houses was the limit of Muslim enterprise.<sup>23</sup> Any lingering sense of mutual respect tended to be dissipated as Muslim contempt for infidel values was reciprocated by a non-Muslim inability to accord prestige to the Ottoman elite on the basis of military conquest or enlightened response to revolutionary ideas circulating in Europe at the end of the eighteenth century. But the Ottomans paid a heavy price for their failure to modernise. The division between the Turkish bureaucracy and Christian merchant communities fermented an antagonism that was to become the basis for Balkan nationalism.<sup>24</sup> K.H.Karpat has recognised the role of the Greek merchant colonies as revolutionary vanguards.<sup>25</sup> At the same time the reluctance to safeguard the rights of the non-Muslim population gave the great powers substantial grounds for claiming political protectorates over the Balkan territories. Rights to speak on behalf of Ottoman subjects, which dated back to the Treaty of Karlowitz (Srem. Karlovci), were extended into formal protectorate arrangements through the Convention of Akkerman (Belgorod Dnestrovsky) (1826) and the treaties of Adrianople/Edirne (1829), London (1840) and Paris (1856). And the Christians soon found such great-power involvement a tremendous asset in furthering their independence struggles. Unstinting assistance was expected from the protecting powers although once independence had been achieved the new governments showed a marked ambivalence to outside influence.

So the problems which have dominated East European politics in modern times: economic backwardness and virulent nationalism, can be traced back to the constraints on reform in

the Ottoman Empire which first annexed Balkan territory in the fourteenth century. As the companion volume shows, the Medieval period consigned much of Eastern Europe to an alien pattern of development after a long period of continuous association with the rest of the continent. After all until the Medieval period the whole of Europe could be considered a zone of prosperity, thanks to an ample capacity to innovate (between the sixth and eleventh centuries) in agriculture through new types of plough, horse harness, field system and crop rotation. The positive influence of peoples previously dismissed as barbarians was now evident. The Medieval centuries introduced deep divisions between east and west culturally through the spread of Islam and economically through the colonial interests of the West European powers, and ironically these two developments are related. The ambivalent attitude to Byzantium meant that what was gained by the Crusades, thanks to the element of surprise and the temporary weakness and disorganisation of the Arab world, was lost through the Ottoman conquests in the Balkans. Yet this devastating setback stimulated overseas discoveries, in order to outflank the Turkish blockade in the east, and the possession of exotic products then gave the colonial powers great advantages in trade with the rest of the continent: Eastern Europe became part of Western Europe's periphery.

All this may suggest a colonialist thesis with Eastern Europe consigned to economic oblivion as part of Western Europe's economic system. Yet there was no inevitability that the west would rise to the challenge of Ottoman supremacy in the east. It is easy to look back with the benefit of hindsight and claim that success was inevitable, for contemporary perceptions of Europe's opportunities may well have been plagued by pessimism. Clearly there was readiness to grasp nettles and a disposition to innovate. Perhaps plague in Europe in the fourteenth century provided a motive for the introduction of labour saving devices and, before that, perhaps the fresh outlook of the German people overcame a lack of receptivity to foreign ideas which had, arguably, characterised the later years of the Roman Empire with its condescending attitudes to outsiders as barbarians.<sup>26</sup> The great fascination with mechanical aspects of technology (seen in the development of clocks) evident after the

twelfth century meant that the west had the basic equipment to undertake voyages of discovery. And there were other elements in the situation. From the thirteenth century the Venetians demonstrated advanced business techniques and Byzantine merchants were forced to give way to their new and aggressive competitors. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries such manufactures as glass, soap and textiles which had previously gone from the west from the Middle East were flowing in the opposite direction.

The roots of Eastern Europe's modern problems cannot be related simply to economic issues. The permanent marchland character of the region is outstanding. The major political and cultural achievements of the ancient period took place on the shores and islands of Aegean which provided the site for the first great European civilisation. The Greeks settled on the coast of the Black Sea and the Adriatic but the colonists 'were content to remain on the periphery of the peninsula: they did not attempt to penetrate into the interior to make wide territorial conquests', despite the scope for movement along the Danube and for contact between the Maritsa and Morava-Vardar valleys through the Dragoman Pass.<sup>27</sup> The theme of Greek culture in the Balkans may be followed through the Dark Ages with Byzantium as heir to the Roman imperial idea: the most powerful empire in the western world at its height with its great wealth from trade and the land, its sound bureaucracy and military organisation and its civilisation which provided patterns for culture and government in the Balkans. Yet the peoples who came into contact with the Byzantines could not identify sufficiently with the prevailing imperial idea to adopt any but a thoroughly ambivalent stance so that the empire was threatened by Avars and Slavs as well as Arabs and Persians, to say nothing of the Christian Knights who turned on Constantinople when their objective was supposed to be the recapture of lands taken by the Muslims in the Middle East. Despite the restoration of the empire in 1261, with some Balkan territory, any student must be impressed by the anomaly of this assault on a Christian stronghold compared with latter western support for the Ottoman Empire which, as history has demonstrated, was not capable by virtue of its Muslim ideology of maintaining its position in the Balkans indefinitely!



Thus the southern part of Eastern Europe has historically witnessed tensions between the national and imperial idea. These have not been eased by external interventions although at root they arise from a combination of incomplete colonisation, economic backwardness (in relation to the imperial core) and a perceived territorial basis for an independent national existence evident in the activities of Bulgarians and Serbs in Medieval times. The northern part of Eastern Europe has no history of state development until the Dark Ages but over the last thousand years the growth of German power and influence has triggered off a roughly similar scenario, marked by strong ideological impulses through the Catholic Church and more sustained efforts in colonisation and economic development than were evident in the south. Meanwhile, notwithstanding the Teuton-Slav dichotomy and the ethnic distinction of the Magyars, the territorial basis for national independence has been less compelling. Yet once again the issues have been decisively influenced by external pressures from both Russia and the west. It is a matter of conjecture how far Germany, with a capital advanced deep into the Medieval frontier zone, could have succeeded in integrating both northern and southern parts of Eastern Europe into a single coherent entity—*Mittleuropa*: arguably the task would have been impossible in view of the heavy legacy of history even if the world wars had not been self-defeating in terms of support for some kind of German Commonwealth. But in the end the mutual interest of Russia and the west in frustrating any intervening build-up of power proved decisive. Today Eastern Europe has found an apparent unity based on Russia's Marxist-Communist ideology, yet in view of the stresses within the main international organisations of the bloc and the fact that Albania and Yugoslavia stand apart from them it seems that the historic struggle between nationalism and imperialism continues, while economic difficulties are expressed by the acute dependence of the region on external energy sources. Eastern Europe continues to be an economic periphery with stable political organisation constrained by national antagonisms and great-power interests.

## NOTES

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