# THE IDEA OF CENTRAL EUROPE

Geopolitics, Culture and Regional Identity

OTILIA DHAND

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'The small states of Central and Eastern Europe are embracing nationalism and populism while losing trust in liberal democracy. Their turn inward reflects disappointment with inefficient governance, economic inequality and a chaotic wave of refugees. In *The Idea of Central Europe*, Otilia Dhand provides a fascinating context for this region squeezed between Germany and Russia. Over the centuries, it has been the battleground of great powers, and an incubator of humanistic values, liberalism and freedom. In modern times, the region has suffered as a victim of World War II, the Cold War and Communist domination. Now, once again, the region is a pivotal area for competing concepts of the world ahead.'

James Hoge, former editor of *Foreign Affairs*

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CENTRAL EUROPE

Geopolitics, Culture and Regional Identity

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'Central Europe is back' – *Timothy Garton Ash, 1986*.

'Central Europe travelled from (economic) neo-liberalism to (political) illiberalism' – *Jacques Rupnik, 2017*.

The opinions cited above are just a sample of a century-old argument about Central Europe. It is a fight over what it is, rather than simply where it is; but, most importantly, over what it means for the rest of the world. The battle for Central Europe has all the drama of high politics: the high-brow underpinnings of classical geopolitics, competing schemes to change the face of the world, and violent clashes of great powers.

Those with 'Central Europe' on their lips invariably have an agenda. And it is an important one. They redraw boundaries of states, zones of influence, or the reach of alliances. They create a regional identity to substantiate their design. Their aim is clear: to change the political map of Europe, if not the world. Central Europe is as often forged with the sword as it is with the pen.

This book untangles the narrative threads of the battle for Central Europe that are tied up with the breaking points of modern history. Central Europe was a pan-German concept intended to dominate Europe in 1914, a plan for a federation between the Baltic and the Mediterranean in 1940, the next best thing after the West in 1990. Did those struggling to take over the definition of its regional identity have any luck fulfilling their agenda? Changing the world is not easy.

1 Introduction: The Puzzle of Central Europe

Something is not right with 'Central Europe'. It is not like Africa or India – something you can outline on a map. It is more like the Orient, or the West. Instead of being a mundane double-page component of world atlases, Central Europe is a notion that appears in books on geopolitics and geostrategy. It is a key component – dare we say, a pivot – of classical grand schemes of how the world works and how great powers clash, underlined by the deterministic nature of geography.

Central Europe is not a place. It is an idea. But an idea of what?

THE EMERGING PUZZLE

In 1986 Timothy Garton Ash made a proclamation: 'Central Europe is back.'[1] A rather unimposing quotation at first sight. However, in the context of the strict geopolitical bi-polarity of 1986, it stands out rather starkly.

In the 1980s, Ash was one of the foremost Western observers of Eastern bloc societies. His research on, as well as contacts with, Eastern bloc dissidents led him to the conclusion that imminent changes were brewing under the thick cover of authoritarian regimes.[2] He took a primary role in the debate printed on the pages of the *New York Review of Books*, which indicated that the abstract notion of 'Central Europe' was shaping among the dissidents as an antithesis to the existing 'East European' regimes. Central Europe was emerging as a synonym for humanistic values, liberalism and freedom – 'anti-politics' in the context of a repressive Communist system. Dissent behind the Iron Curtain was growing stronger just as the myth of the superiority of Communist regimes was crumbling alongside their political legitimacy. Their collapse was for many a question of 'when' not 'if'. The term 'Central Europe' was tiptoeing back into the dictionaries of daily parlance on both

sides of the strict East–West divide of Cold War Europe, as a bridge between minds that thought alike.

The phrase 'Central Europe is back' takes on a whole new dimension if placed within the context of changes brewing under the cover of seemingly stable state-bureaucratic socialism.[3] The return of the 'myth of Central Europe' signalled not only the coming earthquake in the political geography of Europe, but also the fact that conceptualization of the approaching geopolitical future was well under way – and that at least some observers already had a relatively clear idea of what it would bring for the borderlands of the Iron Curtain.

Those who sensed the imminent change, started to hypothesize what might follow. Obviously, Ash was not the first to invoke the notion of Central Europe in the late Cold War period. The discussion started with 'The Tragedy of Central Europe', the now famous essay of Milan Kundera, a Czech émigré novelist, published in the *New York Review of Books* in April 1984.

His emotionally charged piece depicted 'an uncertain zone of small nations between Russia and Germany' as a 'kidnapped West' – a region which lay 'culturally in the West, politically in the East'.[4] In vivid prose, Kundera presented the Western reader with a doomed picture of tragically fated, culturally Western nations that had suffocated under the heavy handed rule of an alien power, desperately seeking a political comeback within their native cultural orbit. He sought to depict an independent and essentially Western cultural and civilizational identity for these, to counter the usual context for the study of the region amid 'footnotes of Sovietology'.[5] And, to a great degree, he succeeded; for, understandably, Western audiences were only too willing to embrace the states emerging from Soviet domination.

On the other side of the Cold War divide, Václav Havel, a Czech dissident playwright, started to embellish his political essays with references to Central Europe. Similar to Kundera, he used 'Central Europe' as a means of cultural approximation to the values of the West. Havel characterized it as a 'spiritual, cultural and intellectual phenomenon ... mysterious, a bit nostalgic, often tragic and even at times heroic'.[6] For Havel, Central Europe was a term tied to spiritual rather than physical territory. It did not have boundaries defined by features of physical geography but, rather, by a claimed common cultural and artistic heritage.

Gyorgy Konrád, a Hungarian novelist and sociologist, went even further and devised an 'alternative history' of Central Europe, which had 'a thousand years ago ... taken out a Western option' but was prevented from exercising it first by the Ottoman, then by the Austro-Hungarian, and later by the Soviet empires.[7] Ignoring many obvious facts of history and geography, Konrád cast Central Europe as a discrete entity that had been prevented from fulfilling its

predetermined fate as part of the West by the machinations and invasions of foreign empires. Now a historically repressed Central Europe was once again calling for help to be relocated in its historically correct geopolitical orbit.

Many other prominent dissident writers were drawn into developing this tragic myth of a deprived Central Europe – a fascinating ahistorical narrative of mystical, heroic nations struggling to break the shackles of alien dictatorship to return into the extended embrace of their freedom- and democracy-loving Western family. This depiction of the history of Central Europe, its characteristics and values, was more an expression of desire than fact, but it captivated the imagination of as many in the West as in the East. Central Europe was back. It was an intellectual project that those who wished the Iron Curtain to disappear subscribed to.[8]

Did it work its magic? Yes, some authors would claim; and in more than one way. The problems of countries emerging from Soviet domination were manifold and fundamental. The complexity of their envisaged transition was not comparable with previous transitions of authoritarian regimes from Latin America and Southern Europe, which provided the empirical basis for the theoretical tenets of the nascent sub-discipline of transitology. The only thing that was clear was the proclaimed direction of transition – towards the West was, in every sense, meant to be taken figuratively.[9]

The transition meant nothing less than the complete rejection and disowning of the very building blocks of society – the system of economic exchange, social hierarchies, political system, the security and economic cooperation structures and, in some cases, the states themselves. Trying to counter the risk of potential relapse back into the Russian sphere of influence, transitive countries raced to establish their Western credentials. The concept of Central Europe, as a kidnapped West 'returning to Europe', presented an ideal means to vocalize their ambitions to be taken swiftly under the aegis of Western economic and security structures.

The idealist character of dissident conceptions of Central Europe that was presented to Western audiences towards the end of the Cold War greatly aided the use of this notion in the early 1990s. It conveyed the idea that the long-suppressed true identity of these countries was finally being translated into their political institutions, society, foreign policy, etc. A recent work of Merje Kuus observes that the Central European narrative was 'extraordinarily consistent'[10] across the region and built on the repetition and reinforcement of themes of Western identity, a chronic existential threat, and the resultant need for integration with the West.

Taking on a shade of tautology, the notion of Central Europe became increasingly identified with the group of countries that was on a shortlist for EU and NATO accession, a vocabulary that promised the candidate

countries a good chance for speedy admission. In itself, this fuelled the efforts of the transitive countries to be perceived as Central European to the degree that Ash glossed: 'Tell me your Central Europe, and I will tell you who you are.'[11] Indeed, Central Europe became a self-fulfilling prophecy and the countries typically associated with the notion would become full members of the EU and/or NATO within less than 15 years of the break-up of the Eastern bloc.

But Central Europe was not only a narrative of foreign policy. In fact, it was a genuine point of self-identification for many transitive countries and their respective populations. Transitions were neither easy nor painless, and the belief in their own Western credentials and promise of destiny helped to justify and bear the pain of the often difficult adjustments in transitive countries.

If the characteristics they wished to forget – authoritarianism, a centrally planned economy, foreign rule and occupation – were identified with the 'East', the institutions they strove to build – democracy, market economy, freedom, full sovereign independence – were identified with the 'West'. And, of course, the 'semantic division of labour',[12] between the negatively contextualized 'Eastern Europe' of old and the new positively associated 'Central Europe', was visible in the works of dissident writers well before the transitions started. Central Europe was thus a ready made point of identity for those who wanted to distance themselves from the negativity of the 'East' and approximate themselves to the ideals of the 'West'. In sum, for many transitive countries and their populations, being Central Europe was the second best thing after being part of the 'West'. It was a kind of 'waiting room' for becoming the West.[13]

Finally, many authors, statesmen and organizations once again began to characterize Germany and Austria as Central European countries, too. Many in Austria were looking for a way to escape Austria's peripheral status by casting it as a natural leader of the emerging region. The West German government employed the concept in a new phase of rapprochement with East Germany, conveying a common regional identity for the two German states.

And this is where the story gets interesting . . . because the original version of the notion of Central Europe was actually the German expression *Mitteleuropa*, which was very far from being a universally acclaimed concept associated with freedom and democracy. Quite the contrary . . . .

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The notion of *Mitteleuropa* had first appeared loosely in German writings during the second half of the nineteenth century, whilst more elaborated

definitions began to emerge in the 1880s.[14] Detailed study of these early conceptualizaions unveils a high degree of disunity among authors as regards the positioning, boundaries and characterization of Central Europe. However, what these conceptualizations had increasingly in common was the belief in a leading role for the German nation in Europe and an underlying drive for conceptualization of the area it should 'naturally' dominate.

This effort found its expression in the seminal work of Joseph Partsch, a renowned German geographer. His *Central Europe* was published in London in 1903 as part of 'The Regions of the World' series edited by Sir Halford Mackinder and became one of the early classics of traditional geopolitics. He positioned Central Europe between the Alpine ridges and the northern seas[15] and insisted that in this area Germans not only comprised 51 per cent of the total population but were also the standard bearers of culture, knowledge and progress for other nations within the region. In order to 'reach greatness', Central European nations had to unify on the common basis provided by German language and culture.[16] Partsch reckoned that Central Europe 'consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, belongs to the sphere of German civilisation'.[17] Only unification under German leadership held the potential to safeguard it from Russian expansionism and British hegemonic ambitions, thereby delivering the promise of peace and prosperity.[18]

Partsch's work introduced some of the main themes that would be carried forward in subsequent conceptualizations of Central Europe in the German tradition: the uniqueness of the German nation and its culture; the need for unification of all areas inhabited by German-speaking populations; the righteous historical mission to rise to greatness; 'natural' German domination of the said area. The notion of *Mitteleuropa* gradually became a synonym for the hegemonic pursuits taken to the extreme by Nazi Germany. It was far from being the notion associated with democracy and an overt Western foreign policy orientation developed from the 1980s onwards. Rather, it was an expression that became part and parcel of German attempts to dominate smaller nations inhabiting the same area.

In sharp contrast to this notion, there was the conception of Central Europe emanating from the Paris Peace Conference, which directly contested Partsch's vision. Sir Halford Mackinder's 'Middle Tier'[19] materialized in the form of the successor states to Austria-Hungary. Was this an inverted power notion of Central Europe, displaying the preference of the world powers for dismemberment of the ailing Austro-Hungarian Empire? Was it the fear of a strong Central Europe under German domination – not to mention a potential alliance with Russia – that led, more than anything else, to the creation of the successor states? Or was it really the result of another reactionary model of Central Europe – the one preferred by Thomas

G. Masaryk, the first president of Czechoslovakia, advocating the right of self-determination for small nations – that would storm the age-old structures of Europe? After all, this synchronized fully with the Wilsonian idealism of the day.

One way or the other, the *Mitteleuropa* concept inspired a strong adverse response among the non-German nations, focused attention upon German ambitions for domination of the area and, ulimately, probably contributed to there being little effective resistance to the fall of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

This book therefore poses a question: How did this understanding of classical notions of Central Europe arise, and what does it have in common with the version being promoted from the end of the twentieth century? Perhaps nothing at all ... in which case how did the same notion come to mean two fundamentally different things in the span of less than a hundred years? How has the meaning of Central Europe been formulated? What were the main factors influencing this process in these two divergent periods? What happened with this notion in between? And above all: What were the implications of these changes?

THE PIVOT OF GEOPOLITICS?

The problem of Central Europe is virtually inscribed into the 'birth certificate' of classical geopolitics in the shape of Sir Halford John Mackinder's enigmatic treatises, *The Geographical Pivot of History*[20] and *Democratic Ideals and Reality*.[21] Mackinder's work combined the geostrategic thinking of Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan[22] with applied geographic determinism, aiming to identify potential threats to the interests of the British Empire. The result was Mackinder's controversial Heartland theory.

Even though in 1904 Mackinder identified Russia ('Heartland') as the main threat to the interests of the British Empire, his 1919 obsession was obviously with Germany ('Strategic Annex of the Heartland'). Partsch's depiction of Central Europe, edited by Mackinder some years earlier, the role of Germany within it and the vision of its future, presented a material basis for Mackinder's insistence that Germany had Great Power ambitions and was actively seeking to undermine the position of the British Empire with German-dominated regional integration.

Reflecting experiences of the war, Mackinder's 1919 nightmare scenario was an alliance between an expanded Germany and Russia. In an effort to prevent such an occurrence, Mackinder suggested the creation of a strip of small nation-states separating Russia and Germany, whose independence would be safeguarded by international guarantees and the region's

accessibility by navigable rivers. The Middle Tier, as he named it, was a direct challenge to the projected visions of a Central Europe under German control. The alarming potential of a Partsch-style Central Europe, and the envisaged effort to counter it, thus lay at the heart of one of the earliest theories of classical geopolitics.

Interestingly enough, the second constitutive part of classical geopolitics was the organic growth theory of Friedrich Ratzel. Ratzel drew upon an earlier political geography of Carl Ritter, infused with the evolutionary theory of Social Darwinism.[23] By projecting this peculiar viewpoint onto the political organization of human beings, Ratzel arrived at his conceptualization of a state as corresponding to a living organism.[24] He asserted that 'the state of man is a form of distribution of life on the earth's surface [. . .] which carries all signs of moving bodies' or animated organisms.[25]

Ratzel's emphasis on the territoriality of the state,[26] with analogies derived from the natural sciences,[27] led him to assert that as states got stronger and more populated they naturally needed additional living space – *Lebensraum*.[28] Conversely, as they got weaker they shrank. The notion of *Lebensraum* provided the advocates of German expansionism with their conceptual cornerstone in the following decades, particularly the body of German geopolitical theorists headed by Karl Haushofer. Ratzel himself presented more than one conceptualization of German-dominated *Mitteleuropa*.[29] He was one of the leaders of *Alldeutscher Verband* (Pan-German League, where he was succeeded after his death in 1904 by Partsch) and a vigorous advocate of German expansion into Africa.[30]

Thus an obsession with Central Europe, Germany and its ambitions for the future, was a trait of both traditions – of both the geostrategic and the organic state theory. Anxiety over the brewing instability in Europe found its focal point in Central Europe, a region that would become the geopolitical battlefield of the Great Powers for decades to come – at least, that is, until the Cold War shifted the main theatres for conflict to areas outside Europe. Debates over conceptualizing *Mitteleuropa* would be a recurring feature of German geopolitics, and their contestation a preoccupation of British and United States political geographers. The following pages will look at how this battle for Central Europe developed.

APPROACHING CENTRAL EUROPE

This book opened quite deliberately with the renaissance of a re-emergent Central Europe from the stark context of East–West European bi-polarity in the late 1980s. It emerged as a powerful vision of shared destiny in the Cold War borderlands; a metaphor subsuming the universal ideals of humanism,

freedom and democracy. Through emphasis on a common culture and history, Central Europe captivated the imagination on both sides of the Iron Curtain and seemingly threw aside decades of ideological enmity. The rise of Central Europe apparently substantiated the proclaimed victory of the liberal democratic order and re-established the basis for a long lost European unity.

Yet, such an idyllic and optimistic picture vanishes rather abruptly when qualified by the contextual legacy of the Central Europe vision and the origins of the notion itself. Central Europe was not new – it was a notion deeply embedded in some of the most tragic vicissitudes of modern European history. Thus, the puzzle of Central Europe starts to take shape in the contrast between its brilliant contemporary image and its murky past.

The meaning of Central Europe has undergone a puzzling number and variety of metamorphoses within the relatively short period of one hundred years – in terms of territory, intention, purpose and underlying philosophy. Its most consistent characteristic seems to have been its often unpredictable shape-shifting. Invoked by a whole spectrum of ideological streams, its only firm connection seems to be with classical geopolitics and its realist variants in international relations.

While this perplexing vicissitude in itself might sound a bit inconsequential in terms of international relations theory, the observed ramifications of these changes make it well worth researching. Divergent interpretations of Central Europe seem to have generated contrasting responses from the very same collective of international actors, contributing to a reshaping of their policies.

While West German political elites had previously been careful to avoid any references to *Mitteleuropa* because of its negative association with the German expansionism of the early twentieth century, the same notion when identified with the intellectual project of 1980s Eastern bloc dissent swiftly became a headline for their *Ostpolitik.* Thus defined, a revitalized Central Europe galvanized Western public support for the countries emerging from the Soviet sphere of influence. Yet another Central European metamorphosis would consequently become instrumental in supporting the integration of these countries into the European Union and NATO. The implications of both recent characterizations were in obvious contrast to the highly negative view, harboured by the Western public and by policy-makers, of a Central Europe perceived as the union between Germany and Austria-Hungary in World War I.

Moreover, there is probably no other notion that offers the same number and divergence of variations in such a short period. Study of Central Europe provides a unique opportunity to analyse the process of formulation, and the implications, of concepts in international relations. Spatialized

identities – 'the West', 'the Middle East' or 'Europe' – arise continually and become a part of mind-sets of policy-makers just as much as of laypeople. Investigating how they come to be, and what is their eventual influence on reality, may hold important insight for studies of regionalism and the geopolitics of Europe in general. It may help us understand the erratic changes in international structure with which Central Europe became intertwined over the past century and, perhaps, even those that are yet to come.

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As noted above, there appears to be a definite purpose to individual theories of Central Europe. Partsch wanted to unify a region, where Germans represented a majority of its population. Kundera wanted to tear down the Iron Curtain. The question is: Did they succeed? If so, how? If not, why not?

The overarching argument of this book is that conceptualizations of regional identity – in this case Central Europe – are exercises in geopolitics which, through definitive discourse of *Self* and *Other*, exert influence upon the behaviour of political actors, thereby impacting international structure.

The first part of this hypothesis stems from a critical viewpoint of definitions of space, which unveils the nature of any such articulations as purposeful conceptualizations mirroring the authors' geopolitical allegiances and convictions. Rather than being impartial descriptions of physical space, definitions of Central Europe typically spell out a set of unifying characteristics. These are then used to substantiate its separate identity from the surrounding world and ascribe it territory purportedly demonstrating these characteristics. Thus, derived concepts then take on the character of a construction of a notion of the *Self*[31] or the *Other*[32] within a particular geopolitical scheme. Here the hypothesis employs a position developed by discourse analysts, a novel feature for the examination of Central Europe, and treats conceptions of Central Europe as linguistic propositions informed by the authors' socially constructed identities and resultant interests.[33] Very much as in Ash's already cited exclamation: 'Tell me your Central Europe and I will tell you who you are.'[34]

The hypothesis also suggests that articulations of Central Europe have real impact on popular perceptions of regional identity and the conduct of political actors. Through the process of definitive discourse, the dominant interpretation of a given notion is derived from the interplay of multiple definitions competing for the support of relevant actors within the discourse. In this process, relevant actors develop or adopt definitions of a notion consonant with their identities and interests and promote them in order to further these interests. Depending on the specifics of the discourse (in this case mutual

construction of the *Self* and the *Other* in international relations), some definitions become so strongly institutionalized that they count as the very meaning of the notion – for example, the notion of Central Europe as a political unit encompassing Germany and Austria-Hungary during World War I.

Should a dominant interpretation of a notion arise, the nature of social interaction based on linguistic proposition then necessitates the actors to mould their behaviour to conform to it. Yet this conformity can demonstrate itself in various forms, even as opposition to the dominant interpretation or as a challenge to the idea it expresses. In the period of World War I, the process of a definitive discourse in regard to Central Europe was dominated by Pan-German authors and gave rise to the above-mentioned interpretation as a plan for a German-dominated territorial entity consisting of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Conformity with this dominant interpretation took the form of endorsement among pan-German circles. In contrast, among the representatives of the small nations of Austria-Hungary it fuelled efforts for national emancipation.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, this enquiry focuses on the question of whether the dominant interpretation of regional identity can have a real impact on international structure. After all, as noted above, the very purpose of theorizing Central Europe appears to be to change the reality on the ground. And this is a tall order.

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From a methodological point of view, this book presents a historical enquiry into geographic ideational constructs and their impact. Building on the above, it comes as a somewhat obvious statement that it operates disciplinarily within critical geopolitics and historical geography, thereby connecting their central concerns.

The book falls into the realm of critical geopolitics because it treats classical geopolitical theories and concepts as an object, rather than a framework of analysis presented. It seeks to deconstruct the very first prominent discourse of classical geopolitics – that of Central Europe – and highlight its implications. The works of Halford Mackinder, Friedrich Naumann and Friedrich Ratzel, are subjected to scrutiny rather than used as a methodological guide. Paraphrasing Gerry Kearns, it could be said that rather than seeing spatialized identities as given, this book focuses on the processes of construction of these 'given' geographical imaginaries and their implications.

The constructivist perception of actors as dynamic units, identification of systems as a changing social concept, and the attention paid to the use of notions and their influence upon socially constructed international structures,

presents a valuable platform for re-examination of classical geopolitical concepts. Constructivism has already found its application in critical geopolitics, and specifically on Central Europe, in the works of Merje Kuus[35] or Richelle Bernazzoli.[36] Recent works of Veit Bachmann and James Sidaway, Mindaugas Jurkynas or Michelle Pace, provide interesting examples of analysis of the construction of non-nation-state identities; yet more has been written on self-images of states.[37] The aspiration of this book is to enrich the constructivist debate of spatialized identities within the discourse of critical geopolitics by tracking the potential effects of articulations of Central Europe in works of early classical geopolitics on the changes of international structure following World War I.

The book operates with some well-established constructivist notions; most notably concepts of *Self* and *Other*, as well as the derivate verb, othering. Scholars in the stream of critical geopolitics often make extensive use of all three concepts,[38] which originated in post-positivist philosophy. Classical geopolitics frequently engages in the reduction of geographical complexities to the simplistic territorial demarcation of inside−outside and friend−enemy binaries,[39] which are, in essence, expressions of *Self* and *Other*. Perhaps the most famous of these simplifications is the conflict between land and sea in the defining work of traditional geopolitics, Halford Mackinder's pivot theory.[40] The fact that classical geopolitics engages in the formulation of such binaries makes the use of *Self* and *Other* an important methodological tool for the analysis of the examined concepts. The concept of *Self* is defined as a sense of the author's own defining features; the *Other* as their polar opposite. The concept of *Self* becomes a basis for referring to identity in this book: an individual's sense of belonging to a nationally, regionally or otherwise determined group sharing the defining features of the *Self*. While the main focus is on a particular regional identity − Central Europe − the analysis presented also operates within national identities (such as German, Czech, etc.), where applicable.

Another much used concept is 'interests'. These are defined as the desired goals, determined on the basis of the given identity and perceived advantages the *Self* should achieve. 'Othering' refers to the gradual development of the independent concept of *Self* and to the distancing from the group or territory that given actors previously considered themselves to be a part of.

The research also operates widely with notions of 'author', 'political actor', 'behaviour' and 'international structure'. By author is meant all individuals engaged in conceptualizations of Central Europe with at least one attributable written work on the topic. Political actor refers to elected officials or civil servants with decision-making powers. Behaviour refers to both recorded perceptions as well as physical acts. International structure is defined narrowly and refers to the system of sovereign states and their territorial extent.

Finally, a few words on the temporal focus of the book. In contemporary scholarship, authors typically pursue one particular interpretation of a given notion, and examine the evidence within its given framework. In sharp contrast, this book will trace changes in our particular notion across its long history since the 1840s; an exercise rarely attempted for any geopolitical concept. Such an approach allows for examination of the contents and the impact of the concept in individual periods of its formulation, avoiding the utilization of any particular and predisposed historical lens.

The long time span, however, necessitated some selectiveness in how deep the research could go. As a result, the book focuses primarily on the notion's key formative period: from the 1880s to 1918. It does so for three main reasons. First of all, this period gave rise to the notion itself and witnessed the process of its original formulation. Second, the period offers ample, and generally as yet unexplored, sources that made primary research viable, especially the provision of archival materials for notionalizing Central Europe – something that is not available for more recent periods. Finally, the nascent notion of Central Europe is distinctively under-researched in the English language, though it held significant implications for the behaviour of several important actors in the international relations of the day.

As a result, the book consists of two distinctive parts. The first part offers an in-depth examination of the notion of Central Europe in the period 1880–1918. This is compartmentalized into three chapters: on Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Britain and the United States. The second part is an extensive, but less detailed, discussion of the same processes in the subsequent periods of the twentieth century and into the present day. The main difference between the two parts of the book is in the use of primary archival sources, which were used extensively in the first part but only sporadically in the second.

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The battle for Central Europe can start now. It will be a clash of various *Selves* and *Others*, which will fight for the definition of regional identity that suits their interests. Central Europe will change hands and meaning, and become a tool to achieve one or another political actor's agenda. Some will fail, and some just may succeed.

2 Germany: Mitteleuropa – Realm of the German Nation

It is often claimed that the first conceptions of Central Europe reach as far back as the early nineteenth century. Such assertions are typically found in works conceptualizing Central Europe during World War I, linking the notion and its rise explicitly with the struggle of German nation-building.[1] Leading German economist, Friedrich List,[2] is often presented as the first proponent of Central Europe, his efforts being followed up by the endeavours of Austrian statesmen Karl Ludwig von Bruck[3] and Felix Prinz zu Schwarzenberg[4] at the constitutional assembly in Frankfurt in 1848–9. Popular orthodoxy holds that this progression culminated with the late nineteenth-century writings of Constantin Frantz.[5] Efforts to create a common German political or economic area are presented as precursors to the rise of Mitteleuropa concepts at the turn of the century, and the invisible extended hand of Bismarck behind these plans is often hinted at.[6]

However, the German intellectual environment was not the sole proprietor of the notion of Central Europe in the nineteenth century – the 1879 article by French economist Gillaume de Molinari presented a well-rounded proposal for an economic union of France, Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Austria-Hungary and Switzerland.[7] Thus, the link between the advocates of the great-German solution of 1848 and the early twentieth-century notion of Central Europe is not necessarily as obvious or direct as often presented.

The roots of the frequent repetition of this somewhat misleading representation are rooted in the fact that the majority of researchers who analysed the notion of Central Europe focused on the early twentieth century. To begin with, in this period Central Europe (in its 'Mitteleuropa' permutation) was equated with plans for a German–Austro-Hungarian customs union

during World War I. Analysts looking into World War I concepts of Central Europe have tended to focus on works that used the notion in this particular sense. Eventually a tautology developed that led to all plans for political economic union in the area being equated with the concept of Central Europe. Furthermore, many World War I authors expended considerable effort in establishing their credentials by linking their own proposals to earlier works by respected authors and historical political leaders.[8] The uncritical re-reading and repetition of these links contributed a reverse situation whereby all plans for political economic union in the area were equated with the concept of Central Europe.[9] Thus, while early twentieth-century authors presented themselves as following in the steps of List and Bruck, later observers often adopted this narrative in their analysis.

Yet the fact that German concepts of Central Europe became so strongly associated with German nation-building in the nineteenth century, warrants an inquiry into how this all happened.

THE NARRATIVE OF GERMAN CENTRAL EUROPE

The year 1806 brought a formal end to the Holy Roman Empire, giving rise to the emergence of a 'German Question'[10] that would persist for decades to come: What kind of replacement political organization were the Germans to put in its place? The immediate reaction of many was to articulate the ambition to unite all territories in which 'the German language is heard'.[11] However, the task of bringing together a myriad assembly of German states of varying sizes and composition was no simple one and a youthful nationalism was rivalled and resisted by age-old dynastic ambitions and traditional allegiances, just as much as it was beset by practical difficulties.

Establishment of the German Confederation at the Congress of Vienna on 8 June 1815 opened a new chapter in the history of the German nation, one that was dominated by a power struggle between its two dominant forces: Austria and Prussia. Significantly, both had vast territorial possessions that extended beyond the area of the confederation. Moreover, many small and middle-sized German states feared the dominance of either power. With meaningfully closer convergence hampered by these rivalries, the confederation remained loose structurally, even though it was institutionalized with a Federal Assembly.

A search for economic consolidation started with the 1818 Prussian drive for abolition of internal customs barriers[12] and the development of a common customs area that embraced the other Hohenzollern territorial possessions. This initiative would eventually become a cornerstone of the *Zollverein*, the German Customs Union, which by 1835 encompassed a majority of the states of the German Confederation.[13] A gradual removal of customs barriers was

associated with accelerated economic progress, especially for the previously overwhelmingly agrarian Prussia – so it won many advocates, the foremost of them being Friedrich List.

As has already been mentioned, List is often regarded as the forerunner in conceptualizing Central Europe. For example, Gerard Delanty claimed that 'the idea of Central Europe was popularised in 1914 by Friedrich List for whom it also included the Low Countries'.[14] Besides the obvious temporal mistake (List died in 1846), such an assertion also misrepresents the contents, tenor and aim of List's work. When suggesting that List was one of the first to theorize Central Europe, Delanty and other authors typically refer to his seminal work, *Das Nationale System der Politischen Ökonomie*, published in 1844. Yet this particular work is concerned with suggesting a continental economic system pitched against the trade supremacy of the British Empire, rather than a proposal for instituting any form of a Central European union.[15] List acknowledged the likely futility of attempting to introduce a continental economic system in Europe at such a point in time – even if Europe's big five powers were getting on rather well – instead suggesting that:

> If, on the other hand, Germany could constitute itself with the maritime territories which appertain to it, with Holland, Belgium, and Switzerland, as a powerful commercial and political whole … then Germany could secure peace for the continent of Europe for a long time, and at the same time constitute herself as the central point of a durable Continental alliance.[16]

While this sentence foreshadows precepts of later conceptions of Central Europe, List proposed no constructs under any such banner. Instead, he suggested that the aforenamed territories be incorporated within a German customs union. List used the adjective of Central European (*mitteleuropäische*) only very occasionally and, even then, in a pronouncedly vague geographical sense. It should not be forgotten that the focal point of List's lifelong project was the German Customs Union and his enthusiasm for the realization of a genuinely national German economy. Thus, describing List as the author or advocate of a defining concept of Central Europe is misleading – for he operated within the notion of Germany and was an advocate of expansion of the Customs Union.

It should be acknowledged that List's works featured some of the cornerstones of later conceptions of Central Europe: the description of Britain as a 'sea-power'; a preoccupation with rivalling Britain's global economic dominance; suggestions for the expansion of German influence towards the Middle East; and an overall firm belief in the superiority of the German

nation.[17] He also suggested that more German settlers should be sent into areas adjoining the Lower Danube to better guarantee that country's access to the Black Sea and Asia Minor.[18] The latter idea was consonant with the historical practice of German settlers across the region; however, by the mid-nineteenth century, it was clashing with growing Hungarian nationalism. Thus List suggested a compromise view, in which Hungarians were portrayed as a constitutional nation of his proposed construct, gradually intermixing with Germans.[19]

Given such hallmarks, it should come as no surprise that German theorists of Central Europe at the turn of the century quoted List as their intellectual inspiration. However, for any careful analyst it merely signalled that these underlying ideas and concepts were present in theorizing the political and economic construct of Germany well before the word 'Mitteleuropa' entered into daily parlance. Contrary to all later propositions for a Central European construct, List – towards the end of his life – would suggest a strategic union of interests between Germany and the British Empire, directed pragmatically against the threat posed by any purported French–Russian alliance.[20]

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The tumultuous 1848–9 revolutionary wave brought a development that redefined the concept of Germany – the Frankfurt National Assembly.[21] The intention was to lay a cornerstone for a future German nation-state. However, the rivalry of Prussia and Austria split the assembly. The main point of contention became the question of whether Austria should be a part of any new union (the *grossdeutsch* solution) or not (the *kleindeutsch* solution). Even Austrian deputies themselves were divided on this question, with some preferring the inclusion of Austria, some against it and some abstaining from this debate completely.[22]

Karl Ludwig von Bruck was a trade minister (1848–51) in the government of Felix Schwarzenberg (1848–52) during the crucial period of the Frankfurt Constitutional Assembly. Bruck is presented, in many Central Europe concepts and their subsequent analyses, as the ultimate forerunner of concepts of Central Europe;[23] however, closer inspection reveals that such accounts typically rely on the works of early twentieth-century German and Austrian authors, who put forward this representation – especially Richard Charmatz in his biography of Bruck.[24]

Interestingly, re-reading Bruck's original works[25] suggests that more than creating a concept of Central Europe, Bruck was presenting essentially practical considerations en route to a customs union between Austria and what he referred to as Germany.[26] In his most significant exposé on the topic,

'Vorschläge zur Anbahnung der Oesterrechisch-Deutschen Zoll- und Handelseinigung',[27] Bruck uses the notion of Central Europe only once – as a reference to the geographical position of Austria within the region in which his proposed customs union would become operative;[28] meanwhile, there are 12 different references to a 'trade' or 'customs union of Austria and Germany'. This fact is often overlooked in works analysing his contributions, including Meyer's notorious *Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action*,[29] as the authors tend to zoom in on that particular sentence employing the word *Mitteleuropa*.[30]

Bruck's characterization of the proposed customs union as German–Austrian[31] suggests the increasing othering of Austria from members of the German Customs Union (*Zollverein*). The binary expression 'German–Austrian' gives away a subtle shift in the identity of the Austrian Germans. While List simply referred to a German customs union, and suggested its gradual extension, Bruck felt it necessary to phrase his plan as a proposal for a union of two equal and separate entities – Germany and Austria.[32] It suggests the unspoken recognition that, by 1848, Austria was growing increasingly detached from the gradually consolidating group of German states to its north-west. In Bruck's view, the German states as a group were different from Austria, and the Germans and Austrians were two separate peoples.[33] The notion of a Germany expressed as *Deutschland* did not seem to cover Austria anymore: Austria was now a separate entity, an equal partner for the new Germany in the proposed union.

Bruck's second memorandum dealt squarely with the customs union with Germany[34] and contained no references to Central Europe. Similarly, a third memorandum actually used the expression *Anschluss Österreichs*, rather than *Mitteleuropa*.[35] The fourth and longest memorandum, more than 28 pages in all, twice mentioned 'Central European continent' contextually, as a reference for the geographical location of Austria within the projected area of the economic union,[36] otherwise operating with the notion of customs union in referring to his proposal. Finally, in his political testament published in 1860, Bruck used the actual expression *Mitteleuropa* only once, and in very similar fashion to his other works,[37] otherwise reverting once again to a 'union with Germany'.[38]

To sum up, in all of Bruck's five works collectively the expression *Mitteleuropa* is employed only four times – and, in all four instances, this is a vague reference to the naturally central position of Austria in the economic life of the continent. While this may suggest use of the vague geographical notion of Central Europe in mid-nineteenth century parlance, Bruck was simply proposing a customs union between Germany and Austria, rather than presenting a theory of Central Europe.

At the Frankfurt Assembly, Bruck served as vice-chairman of its economic committee and argued forcefully for moves towards a customs union that

included the Habsburg Empire.[39] In November 1848 he also became Austrian Minister of Commerce, which, in addition to his business interests – centring on a Trieste-based shipping firm – surely drove and explained his efforts in Frankfurt. His essential proposal focused on protection of an internal market for the Customs Union through the adoption of protective tariffs, while the simultaneous development of Trieste harbour would help to channel and increase trade with the Middle East. He hoped, too, for a Mediterranean port within the territory of the empire to catch British trade stopping off en route to India as well. Austrian Prime Minister Schwarzenberg supported Bruck's proposal, yet with somewhat different underlying motivations. His interest lay in the creation of a larger union, where Austria could balance the influence of Prussia, thereby keeping its power in check.

The Prussian side, as represented by Rudolf von Delbrück (1817–1903), was fundamentally opposed to any such ideas. At stake was the dominant standing of Prussia among the German states. As was apparent from Bruck's separate nomination of Germany and Austria, Prussia had managed to centre the German unification process on itself, and exclude Austria in the process. Bruck's proposal would bring Austria back into the union, balancing Prussian influence. Moreover, Austria was also assigned the key commercial role, with development its priority.

Eventually, Bruck's Frankfurt Assembly proposal was defeated alongside other parallel attempts to create a German customs union with Austria.[40] Later efforts lacked any kind of audience as Austria was excluded from a territorially-consolidating Germany. While *grossdeutsch* sentiment at Frankfurt was initially strong, eventually final settlement favoured the *kleindeutsch* solution. Despite having the Habsburg Empire on board, as embodied in the Bruck–Schwartzenberg plan, the *kleindeutsch* camp at the Frankfurt Assembly prevailed with the pragmatic realization that including Austrian-Germans within any unified national state was so difficult that it would postpone unification indefinitely. Certainly, some compromise ideas had emerged at the assembly, with Heinrich von Gagern's suggestion for a 'narrower and broader confederation'[41] and Julius Fröbel's vision for a greater European confederation.[42] Nevertheless, deliberations at the Frankfurt Assembly ultimately led to the decision to unify Germany without Austria, as embodied in the draft constitution of March 1849.

The Frankfurt Assembly is often held up as a failed attempt to realize *Mitteleuropa*.[43] However, this argument is flawed – the stenographic record of the year-long assembly deliberations barely contains the word *Mitteleuropa* or its derivatives.[44] The Frankfurt Assembly was, indeed, called to resolve the question of Germany, not Central Europe.

The definitive split between Austria and the remainder of the German states was sealed by the Austro-Prussian war of 1866. Defeat in this war forced Austria into its compromise with the Magyar aristocracy, the essential basis of their Compromise of 1867.[45] This finally put to rest any remaining self-portrayals of the Habsburg Empire as an integral part of Germany. Following the proclamation of the German Empire in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles in 1871, only five years after the Battle of Sadowa, a definite answer had been provided to the German Question that had loomed for more than half a century. Germany now encompassed those German states that had been subsumed under the imperial power of the Hohenzollners.

And it is perhaps from this point that the real Central Europe debate emerges. Interestingly, it takes on a different dimension in each empire, so necessitating their separate discussion. Here, we will focus on the development of the notion within the German Empire, leaving exploration of Austro-Hungarian concepts to the following chapter.

SHIFTING IDENTITIES: FROM GERMANY TO CENTRAL EUROPE

The works of German philosopher Constantin Frantz (1817–91) span a period that witnessed the crystallization of the German territories of the former Holy Roman Empire into a coherent German Empire with a separate Austria (and later Austria-Hungary). His writings show a clear shift from detailing the concept of Germany to that of elaborating a Central Europe as a political unit in the space lying between France and Russia – making Frantz's writings a genuine forerunner of conceptions of Central Europe created during World War I.

The sheer volume of Frantz's work makes interpretation complex. A majority of later authors analysing his writing typically isolates and discusses one or two of his concepts, i.e. those which fit into the context of their analyses.[46] Another layer complicating the interpretation of Frantz's concepts is added by the early twentieth-century German advocates of Central Europe and a greater Germany, who purposefully chose to reprint particular works to showcase those proposals of Frantz that fitted the then contemporary discussion.[47] Given the fact that Frantz's influence in his own lifetime was limited and that surviving originals of his works are therefore relatively rare, it is these reprints that are typically quoted in the later literature. For example, Meyer chose to quote Stamm's *Konstantin Frantz' Schriften und Leben* (1907) and Heinrich von Srbik's compilation of Frantz's works, *Deutsche Einheit* (1933),[48] rather than the original volumes.[49] The result is a misrepresentative singular focus on one particular federative conception of Central Europe developed by Frantz in the early 1880s and reprinted by the said authors.

Yet it should not be forgotten that between 1841 and 1891 Frantz published 78 books. In the 1841–8 period alone, Frantz's writings span a variety of topics ranging from philosophy[50] to financial systems.[51] After the opening of the Frankfurt Assembly, where Frantz presented his proposal for a loose federation including Austria,[52] his works concentrate almost exclusively on politics. Frantz continued advocating the inclusion of Austria, regularly publishing works renewing his call for federation of the German states.[53]

These works mirrored the European power context of the period, where 'Prussia unaided could not keep the Rhine or Vistula for a month from her ambitious neighbours'.[54] Frantz was preoccupied with the threat from France. The very starting point of his considerations was an insistence that the very purpose of German confederation was to protect its western borders.[55] The most elaborate presentation of his post-Frankfurt ideas is his 1861 treatise, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze vom Deutschen Bund.* In his view, the German confederation was failing in this task because of insufficient political integration, which was the result of outside imposition (post-Napoleonic wars Congress of Vienna 1815) and not an expression of the political ambitions of the German nation.[56] The only means to ensure its safety was for the German Confederation to become a real power within a European context through the inclusion of both Prussia and Austria.[57] Yet history, politics and cultural differences would preclude Germany from becoming a successful unitary state. Frantz therefore suggested a federative structure that would make the best of the complementary strengths of individual German states.[58] While Frantz observed that such a union would provide necessary protection from both France and Russia,[59] his primary concern remained France. He suggested inclusion of the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland within the proposed federation was essentially in order to keep France in check as fully as possible.[60]

In this work, Frantz dealt with reorganization of the German Confederation, rather than any concept of Central Europe. He did occasionally use the expression as a general reference to the area lying between France and Russia, but the centrepoint of his theorization was still the German Confederation. His purpose was to design a political unit that could provide safeguards against potential French or Russian adventurism. Yet, as the notion of Germany gradually solidified as a shorthand for German Empire, a new expression needed to be found to describe Frantz's desired political unit.

In the post-1871 period, Frantz's writings turned to criticism of Bismarck's policy.[61] He highlighted exactly the same failings that he had observed previously with the German Confederation, dismissing the German Empire – built on its *kleindeutsch* premise – as a mere continuation of the same old mistake.

In a 1879 work with the unwieldy title of *Der Föderalismus als das leitende Prinzip für die soziale, staatliche und internationale Organisation, unter besonderer Bezugnahme auf Deutschland, kritisch nachgewiesen und konstruktiv dargestellt*,[62] Frantz reiterated the need for any federation to include both Prussia and Austria. An overarching concern with the French threat remained a feature of his reasoning.[63] While Frantz continued here to refer to Prussia and Austria, rather than the German Empire and Austria-Hungary, this book introduced the notion of political union under the term Mitteleupäischer Bund,[64] an economic and cultural union of three politically federated and geographically separate regions: Prussia (with Russian Poland and the Baltics); Austria (governing Hungary and the Balkans) and the remainder of the German states. Besides these three core constitutive parts, the union was to be widened to potentially include countries he had earlier considered might form part of a German Confederation[65] – Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland – together thereby comprising the Central European Union.[66] The purpose of the union was to enable the rise of a united power in the space between Russia and France.

In this work Frantz also presented his vision of a future world consisting of large political units such as Russia, the British Empire or the United States. The need for wider union in Europe was substantiated on the grounds of necessary integration to face down the challenges posed by these super-powers in the future. In terms of trade, greater economic areas were to dominate the world. These lines of reasoning were to be picked up by subsequent Central Europe theories.

Interestingly, the work also shows (as compared to his previous pieces) an increased dose of Christian universalism. This is used to substantiate the newly introduced culturalizing role of Germans in their sphere of influence. The language is not dissimilar to the later organic theory of state: for example, the proposed federation was said to be 'vigorous' and the old empire 'reborn'.[67]

If any particular work could be described as the forerunner of World War I conceptions it is this one, shifting smoothly from conceptualizing Germany to theorizing Central Europe.

The final shift in Frantz's theorizing of the space between Russia and France became obvious with his three-volume work of 1882, *Die Weltpolitik*. Besides the further strengthening of organic references to nature, blood and even flesh,[68] this work introduced another familiar feature of early classical geopolitics – the dichotomy between land-based and sea-based power, essentially represented by Germany and the British Empire.[69] Importantly, this was Frantz's only work to display a global reach rather than a regional

focus, here theorizing the space between Russia and France from the grand perspective of world politics.

Its second volume – *Deutschland und Mitteleuropa* – highlighted the 'universal meaning' of Germany in a regional cultural history mediated by the Holy Roman Empire.[70] The federation remains unchanged in its geographical scope;[71] however, there are new explanatory contextual features. Germany has now assumed the historical mission to unify the region.[72] Meanwhile, the previous concern over France is somewhat muted amidst recognition of the perceived need to create a regional federation that might counter the global powers of Russia, Britain and the United States.

In fact, Frantz had even considered inclusion of France within his proposed structure. It was ultimately dropped in recognition of its own historical importance – with Frantz considering that France could not accept any lesser standing than centrality in any new union – yet this role had already been reserved for a Germany expressly defined as the 'land of the middle',[73] around which other nationalities would be united, so that the 'natural order of things' might be realized.[74] The necessity of German protection for Hungary, the southern and western Slavs, is re-emphasized with the invocation of the Russian and Ottoman threats.

More than anything, this last in a long line of major works of Constantin Frantz strongly resembles the works of Central Europe authors during World War I. With the publication of *Die Weltpolitik*, Central Europe inadvertently entered the stage as a replacement notion for Germany, but one which notably did not succeed in encompassing the whole of the German nation. Frantz's Central Europe was an expression of unfulfilled national ambition, mixed with a touch of cultural messianism and nationalist grandeur: all of these characteristics would underpin the many concepts of Central Europe that would follow.

Nevertheless, despite the towering volume of Frantz's works, their impact during his lifetime remained limited. His career in the civil and diplomatic services was cut short by his outspoken opposition to official policy lines in the 1860s and 1870s and his reach was generally limited to journals and newspapers.[75] His works were really only rediscovered when reprinted by advocates of Central Europe in the early twentieth century.

A similar evolution to Frantz can be seen in the works of Paul de Lagarde (born Paul Bötticher). A biblical scholar and an orientalist by education, Lagarde presented his designs for the region in a collection of short works, *Deutsche Schriften*. A first volume was published in 1878 and a second three years later,[76] before both would be revised and amended in 1892.[77] The first proposed the creation of a Greater German Empire, including a lost and floundering Austria, whose *raison d'être* Lagarde reckoned could only be

rekindled by becoming a colony of Germany.[78] While the term Central Europe (in the form of *Mitteleuropa*) itself was not used, Germany is described as Central European. 'Central European' referred to that familiar old designation of space between France and Russia, with each characterized as posing a threat to peace in Europe:

> Only a Germany, which stretches from Ems to Danube's mouth, from Memel to Terst, from Metz to approximately Bug, is in a position to ensure peace in Europe without constant harassment of its nationals, because only such a Germany consummates itself, and only such a Germany with a standing army can beat both France and Russia, with their armies. Because now the whole world wants peace, therefore, the whole world has to wish for this Germany, and view the current German Empire for what it is – a stage on the way to the more perfect, a stage which relates to the final Central European state, as the former North-German Alliance related to the current German Empire.[79]

Demonstrating a speedy shift away from explicit conceptions of Germany itself, Lagarde's second volume expressly employed the notion of 'MittelEuropa',[80] even if his description of the construct closely resembles the one previously provided for Germany:

> It is in every case possible to conceive that Central Europe has to be created, which would instantly guarantee peace for the whole continent, in which Russia would be pushed from the Black Sea and that way from South-Slavs as well; and German colonization – because we are agricultural people – would gain wider space in the East. Moreover, only through this containment of Russia, at least towards the south, can we obtain a powerful position for our natural ally, Austria.[81]

Somewhat more respect is now shown to Austria, too – now characterized as an ally. The threat from Russia is now depicted as more pronounced, while France has pretty much gone missing in any calculations. However, the very purpose of forging a Central Europe is still to bring peace to Europe, as was earlier the case with Germany. The exact delineation of the proposed political unit is missing but it is tentatively identifiable from the vague characterizations he provides – such as when dividing Russia from the South-Slavs.

Lagarde's focal and terminological shift from Germany to Central Europe is often missed or overlooked, as a majority of subsequent commentators – starting with Meyer[82] – utilizes twentieth-century reprints of the 1892

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revised joint edition of both volumes of *Deutsche Schriften*. Yet the original prints of his works clearly suggest that, within the space of three years, Lagarde had moved from using the word 'Deutschland' to 'MittelEuropa'. In parallel, his view of Austria changed from a mere, almost naturally subordinate, appendage of Germany, to a legitimate, separate entity, which should be allied to Germany, rather than its integral part. It was this change of heart over Austria that seemingly explained Lagarde's shift towards elaborating a 'MittelEuropa'. Yet, while Austria was clearly no longer part of Germany in Lagarde's mind, the need to conceptualize the space between France and Russia remained – with the goal of elaborating for Germany a spatial power position that might counter any perceived or emergent threats. A new notion had to be developed to replace the now redundant 'Deutschland', and 'MittelEuropa' must have seemed an obvious choice, since Lagarde had already described Germany as 'mitteleuropäisch'.[83]

So Lagarde provides a parallel to Frantz's dropping of the notion of *Deutschland* in favour of *Mitteleuropa*, proving this was no isolated case and that it was paralleled by other authors in the early 1880s. Yet Frantz and Lagarde in no way constituted the mainstream in German intellectual thinking, and the notion of Central Europe still had a long way to travel to attain the forefront of regional theorization.

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Of course, Lagarde and Frantz fit easily into the common narrative of the emergence of Central Europe – that it developed seamlessly from *Grossdeutsch* ideas and was essentially a replacement notion for a political unit including both Austria and the German Empire, and then achieved its greatest popularity during World War I.

Indeed, it should be underlined that it was those advocates of a Germany inclusive of Austria who made the smooth transition towards employing the term, *Mitteleuropa*. However, one must guard against the impression that this was the only meaning ascribed to the term Central Europe in late nineteenth-century Germany.[84]

Many authors used this term in a connotation completely different from the resurrected *grossdeutsch* project. Indeed, some considered it a basis for conceptualization of a mainland Europe that included France.[85] In fact, neither Frantz nor Lagarde had very much influence during their lifetimes,[86] and a variety of geographical representations (and therefore divergent explanatory bases) of Central Europe had been presented in the 1880s and 1890s. The definitive discourse that gave *Mitteleuropa* its meaning of the

project of political and economic unification of the German Empire and Austria-Hungary, spanned two decades and was hardly straightforward.

For example, the works of Hermann Wagner and Albrecht Penck, both published in the mid-1880s,[87] presented Central Europe in its narrowest spatial expression as extending from the North and the Baltic seas to the north-western Carpathians and the Alps. This aligned with the underlying Germanness of the region, but obviously fell short of the wider area Frantz and Lagarde intended to include. In the same period Lujo Brentano presented a concept that went well beyond *grossdeutsch* ideas – a customs union between the German Empire, Austria-Hungary and a number of Balkan states.[88] This added an economic dimension that was not present in either Frantz's or Lagarde's works.

Yet, a further and significant number of authors included France within their Central European constructs – a vision that lay far from the Francophobic tendencies of Frantz and Lagarde, or the *grossdeutsch* plans of Bruck or List. For instance, Berthold Volz included France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany and the 'upper Danubian basin',[89] while Friedrich Ratzel, in his work *Deutschland: Einführung in die Heimatkunde*,[90] included France within Central Europe. Moreover, in early usage as the notion was increasingly adopted, many authors continued to refer to it as a geographical area rather than any grand political plan. This was the case with Ratzel, for instance, who used the term to designate the wider area within which Germany was located.

In addition to this divergence in concepts, developmental change in the substance of the notion is evident in the 1880s and 1890s. Significant modifications to conceptions of Central Europe[91] appear in the consecutive works of many authors. For example, Hermann Wagner changed his definition in 1900, even including Great Britain and Italy within his widened Central Europe.[92]

Yet the mainstream of works on Central Europe was gravitating towards common characteristics: the belief in a leading role for the German nation in Europe, and an underlying drive for conceptualization of the area it should 'naturally' dominate – a step beyond mere unification! By the end of the century, the notion was gradually permeating daily parlance as well as academic debate. The discourse was gradually shifting towards use of *Mitteleuropa* as a notion that described a political unit encompassing the whole of the German nation and the area of its influence. It was underpinned by organic theorization of the state and prevalent geographic determinism. Put simply, since Germany was a young vigorous state in the middle of Europe, it would grow into a *Mitteleuropa* encompassing the whole of the German nation to dominate the continent, finally giving the German nation

the place among the great powers it naturally deserved. The growth process of the constituent political units of the German nation was thereby presented as a natural development from the small German states, through the North-German Alliance, to the German Empire and now beyond, in the form of Central Europe. So the German nation was to follow its destiny to greatness.

Issues of *Geographische Zeitschrift*[93] from the late nineteenth century amply demonstrate these tendencies. Within its first volume of 1895, a section appears under the title of Central Europe (accompanying a separate section on Europe), containing 39 separate articles and other items and forming a major part of the volume. Everything here was essentially focused on the Germans as an ethnic group, dealing with such issues as the historical Germanization of Lithuania, for instance. The same first volume features an article by Ratzel on the development of states – essentially a more concise version of his organic growth theory.[94] Further organic growth theory articles would appear in the next (1896) volume,[95] with the Central Europe section featuring Belgium, Switzerland and the Baltic, as well as Germany and Austria-Hungary.

The 1898 volume features an article by Ratzel on the question of Central Europe in the context of the rising power of Russia and the global dominance of the British Empire.[96] He predictably defined Central Europe along the lines established in his *Deutschland: Einführung in the Heimatkunde*[97] and – consistent with his social Darwinist convictions – suggested creation of a larger unit in Central Europe as necessary to counter the influence of larger empires. His comparison of France, Austria-Hungary and Germany resulted in the familiar observation that Germany had incomparably more people per square kilometre than other countries and – being culturally strong and swiftly developing – necessarily had to be regarded as expansive. On the other hand, he described France as a country that had stopped growing and was thereby in relative decline.[98] While again falling short of offering any precise proposal for the organization of the central European space, he called for a unification embracing all three regional 'smaller great powers', reminding the reader that 'a whole literature has been written on United States of Europe and on Central European Union',[99] pointing specifically to the works of Albert von Schäffle[100] and Alexander Peez.[101] The article displayed a strong nationalist bent and invoked the image of Germany as the strongest leader in the region, the state with the will and energy to grow and lead. Yet, unlike later nationalist conceptions, as well as the earlier works of Lagarde and Frantz, Ratzel's central Europe definitively included France.

Yet, by the turn of the twentieth century, the issue of geographical delimitation was being seen as less important than its driving vision. Discourse was settling on the understanding and aspiration for Mitteleuropa as an envisaged political unit (with all its distinctive organic reasoning) that

spanned the area of the German nation. For the record, authors continued to differ on what the span of such an area actually was. Much of the definitive discourse of Central Europe was reflected in the *Geographische Zeitschrift*. The articles of Penck, Partsch and Ratzel and others published in the journal carried the main thrust of the gradual formation of the notion not by agreeing on a common definition but more by way of establishing the essential characteristics it carried. Besides identifying Central Europe with the area of German settlement in Europe, other unifying characteristics had emerged from the discourse by the early twentieth century – glorification of the German nation's unique qualities, proclamation of its historical mission as a leader of the region – the aim to cement an intervening political unit between France and Russia, with all the underlying reasoning premised upon organic growth theory and geographic determinism.

NATIONALIST DREAM OR PRAGMATIC CUSTOMS UNION?

An emerging consensus on Central Europe as the region that was inhabited by Germans, however vaguely this might have been defined geographically, was strengthening by the early years of the twentieth century. In the amended reprint of Ratzel's *Deutschland*, published after his death in 1907, Central Europe was presented as consisting of Germany, the Austrian part of the Habsburg Monarchy, German-speaking Switzerland, the Low Countries and Denmark.[102] By this stage, France was clearly and definitively excluded.[103]

The most famous articulation of Central Europe during this period is attributable to Joseph Partsch, a renowned German geographer. His *Central Europe* was published in London in 1903 as part of the Regions of the World Series edited by Sir Halford Mackinder and it quickly became one of the early classics of traditional geopolitics. He positioned Central Europe between the Alpine ridges and the northern seas, describing it as an area defined by a tri-layered belt of the Alps, lesser mountain chains and northern lowlands, stretching from Dunkerque to Sandomirz.[104] It was to include contemporary Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria-Hungary, Serbia, Romania and Bulgaria.

Partsch insisted that not only did Germans comprise 51 per cent of this area's total population, but they were also the standard bearers of culture, knowledge and progress that other nations might aspire to within the region. In order to 'reach greatness',[105] the Central European nations had to unify on the common basis provided by the German language and culture. Partsch reckoned that Central Europe 'consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly, belongs to the sphere of German civilisation'.[106] Only unification under German leadership held the potential to safeguard it from

Russian expansionism and British hegemonic ambitions, thereby delivering the promise of peace and prosperity.[107]

Partsch's work introduced to an international audience some of the main themes that would be carried forward in conceptualizing Central Europe in the German tradition: the uniqueness of the German nation and its culture; the need for unification of all areas inhabited by the German-speaking population; the righteous, fatalistic historical mission to rise to greatness; with 'natural' German domination of the said area. The notion of *Mitteleuropa* gradually became part and parcel of German attempts to dominate smaller nations inhabiting the same area.

About the same time as Partsch's *Central Europe* went into print in 1903, a crucial, emergent aspect was gaining prominence within the discourse – economics. While economic considerations – such as the production of staple crops or industrial production – had also been a feature of the works originating in the 1890s, the idea of a Central European Union wholly substantiated by the economic order of the day was a new feature added after 1900. Growing protectionism and a scramble for markets can be viewed as a new and real influence on the notion of Central Europe, now cast as the vehicle for carving out a greater economic area for Germany in Europe, potentially offering a robust demand for industrial products and a powerful platform for global economic expansion.

In 1902, *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft*[108] brought the thoughts of Albert Sartorius to a wider audience, here summarizing economic assessments of a possible federative future for Central Europe.[109] His article is an epitome of contemporary thought on Central Europe with a novel economic twist.

Sartorius' work shows clear signs of Ratzelien influence – with a country's economy clearly described as an organism and transport as its blood circulation.[110] Similarly, geographic determinism was another obvious hallmark of his methodology, with the claim that the essential preconditions for the achievement of economic greatness are naturally bestowed – the presence of the sea and navigable inland waterways to mediate trade. He built his argument for creating a greater economic area on the assertion that a combination of terrestrial and maritime possessions best afforded the essential preconditions for economic growth.[111] Further influences quoted in his work included Friedrich List, Clement Juglar and Joseph Arthur de Gobineau.

The combination of these influences translated into his reasoning that in anarchic global economic conditions characterized by regular crises, Germany needed to guard against the contingency of withering away by building up a larger economic area, which would provide it with the resources to grow and achieve prosperity. The benchmark to measure up to was, in Sartorius's eyes, the United States.

For Sartorius the main source of domestic economic growth was global trade. He considered the continued existence of a number of small coastal states along the North Sea an 'anomaly of economic geography', suggesting that the main production areas of the Rheinland, Westphalia and other regions of Germany could easily be cut off from world trade routes by a 'political wall'. He maintained that both sides were damaged by perpetuation of a situation he characterized as 'the chaos of small states', whereby Germany depended on mediation of its exports by the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark, while the trade income of these countries depended on production in Germany. Sartorius highlighted the example of the United States and its economic rise after gaining access to the sea in the east and west, immediately facilitating a doubling of access to world trade routes for its vast production areas.[112]

The need to create a greater economic area was justified by observed changes in patterns of world trade, whereby Sartorius saw the 'British principle of laissez-faire' as no longer workable. World trade was, in his opinion, heading towards a system of larger, protected economic areas fenced off from one another by high import duties. In a historical comparative exercise, Sartorius demonstrated that the size of economic zones of individual states was the source of economic inequality among them.[113] He recommended, therefore, that smaller states should build larger economic areas through various forms of alliances. Quoting the research of Clement Juglar, Sartorius demonstrated that such areas (e.g. the United States or the French colonial empire) were better able to withstand global economic crises and survive each other's recessions through protection of their large domestic market.[114]

Central Europe was envisaged as the larger economic area centred on Germany. In an idealized situation, Sartorius would have included France here. However, historical rivalries and conflicts over territory and, more specifically, the ongoing dispute over Alsace-Lorraine, meant this was not a practical possibility.[115] Thus his Central European customs union was to be formed of the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria and eventually Denmark. Belgium was omitted for the political reason of the potential clashes with France its inclusion might unleash. Interestingly, he decided to leave out Hungary since it only 'offered inferior consumer markets'.[116] On the other hand, he suggested that inclusion of Austria would facilitate access to 'the quiet port of Trieste allowing trade to flow through Elbe and railway connections for a wide area from Bohemia to Hamburg'.[117]

Overall, Sartorius likened his proposed customs union to a cartel or alliance, which would stand the region in good stead to deal with the near anarchic global economic conditions he saw coming at the turn of the twentieth century – a vehicle for self-help for all parties involved. While the

nationalist edge was generally not as sharp as with many other contemporaneous works on Central Europe, it surfaced in his Gobineau-inspired assertion that some races and nations were more suited (i.e. Germany) to economic success than others (i.e. the Slavs).

A number of other works pursuing similar arguments for the creation of a customs union or greater economic area on the European mainland led by Germany was published in the same period. Most notable were the works of Josef Grunzel[118] and Julius Wolf,[119] which recognized the absolute centrality of improving the interconnectivity between the German Empire and Austria-Hungary to maximize the potential for economic growth in conditions of increasing global competitiveness. The unifying aspect here is the view of world trade as ever more competitive and escalating, 'brutally' unrestrained and unregulated. The rapacious dictates of organic theory held that those who did not grow would wither away. The logic of such an analysis was that small countries, with their limited economies, could not survive as they would be isolated with their small domestic markets by fast-growing greater economic areas. To ward off such a prospect, Germany had to build its own greater economic area, addressing the conditions that would most likely facilitate further economic growth.

Wolf became the leader of this economic Ratzelien strand of thought. Besides publishing a multitude of articles and books espousing such a position, he took it upon himself to oversee its realization in practice.

The 1903 issue of *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft* carried Wolf's article: 'Ein Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein'.[120] Here Wolf underlined that while 'the idea of a Central European customs union has been about for twenty-five years . . . its realization has not been fulfilled until today'.[121] While he did not specify the countries that should constitute any Central European customs union, he insisted it would need to begin with an economic federation of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The main reason behind the failure to institute a Central European customs union before this time was, in Wolf's opinion, a prevailing lack of appreciation of its potential value but also the systemic resistance of large German industrialists and the threat it posed to their vested interests. Wolf pointed out that similar obstacles must surely have been overcome in the process of creating the German Customs Union back in the nineteenth century and that lessons must have been learned there. For this express purpose, he suggested the creation of a business chamber, *Der Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein*, representing all that was 'healthy and valuable in the idea of an economic union'.[122]

Its purpose was to unite and empower those industrialists and policy-makers who favoured the creation of a Central European Customs Union. It was to foster cooperation and pursue activities that might convince and

convert the reluctant. Following his proposal, Wolf reminded everyone of the possibilities and opportunities that the economic federation of Germany and Austria-Hungary would bring – with waterways under unitary control stretching from the Baltic to the Black seas. He highlighted that German industries should remember that the shortest way to their newly extended sphere of interest in Asia Minor and the Middle East 'certainly does not lead through Gibraltar'.[123]

Within a year, in early 1904, the proposed association had been duly established. The 1907 issue of *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft* carried Wolf's report on its first annual conference, for which a wide array of supporters and important speakers had been assembled.[124] *Der Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein* (MEWV) would become one of the foremost organizations championing the idea of an economic federation between Germany and Austria-Hungary. In addition to contemplating the strategic and nationalist Central Europe concepts of the late nineteenth century, its focus was on addressing practical business and economic interests to help pave the way for the envisaged future union.

Wolf was the most active promoter of Central Europe in the pre-war period, as chairman of the MEWV, as a publisher, an economist and an author. It was mainly through his activities that the economic vision for Central Europe became the prominent strand in the discourse during the early twentieth century. Under his aegis the emphasis had shifted firmly towards actualization of a customs union of Germany and Austria-Hungary as the vehicle by which a sizeable economic bloc would materialize, as well as direct access to eastern markets for German industrialists with the promise of ports on the Adriatic and Black seas.

FRIEDRICH NAUMANN AND WARTIME CONCEPTS

The literature on Central Europe originating between 1915 and 1918 is voluminous, reflecting the peak in popularity that the *Mitteleuropa* concept enjoyed during this period. In alliance with Austria-Hungary and under wartime conditions of blockade, the public became highly receptive to the idea of Central Europe: its overtones of a shared identity, history and mission. Its narrative of uniqueness and preordained destiny of greatness, and its seeming guarantee of future Great Power status: these all lined up with what German society was searching for in acrid conditions of unprecedented war, not to mention the country's encirclement by enemies with nobody but their south-eastern allies to look towards for support. Friedrich Naumann's notorious *Mitteleuropa*[125] would become the centrepiece of the hectic wartime discourse over Central Europe, elevating the notion to international

scrutiny as its key precepts were increasingly regarded as the German design for Europe in the event of victory – now even Germany's enemies were watching!

Friedrich Naumann, a German politician and a Protestant priest, understood Central European space in its widest possible context – as the body of the European continent without its peninsular and insular annexes. However, congruently with Joseph Partsch, he considered the Austro-Hungarian and German empires as the essential inner core of such a region.

Friedrich Naumann published his treatise on how a new political unit in the Central European space might materialize, in a book simply entitled *Mitteleuropa* in 1915.[126] Almost immediately, the book was translated into English[127] and several other languages (e.g. Czech and Hungarian). He was urging the establishment of a Central European union at the end of the war. For him the war would serve as the 'creator' of the mid-European soul, ahead of any corresponding, more formal territorial definition.

The primary purpose of Naumann's Central European union was an economic and political union under the leadership of Germany. The construction of the envisaged economic bloc had to be regarded as inevitable if Germany did not want to become a poorer cousin separating the economic spheres of Russia or Great Britain:

> [T]he world's economic system has become so much more narrow and everywhere the principle of syndicates and exclusion has made conditions very different from what they were in the individualistic atmosphere of the early beginnings of capitalism. . . . He who is alone today will find himself outside to-morrow.[128]

He expected the widespread adoption of protectionist policies by the Great Powers, the levy of tariffs and duties that would prevent German exports reaching their markets. Germany could save itself from bankruptcy only by creating its own customs zone and economic area. The core of this project would ideally comprise the territories of Austria-Hungary and Germany, under the leadership of the German nation.

The establishment of the union was also presented as fundamental for the defence of the Central European nations. According to Naumann, a single state no longer held any significance within the international system by the turn of the twentieth century – only large powers could possess any meaningful sovereign power.

More than just envisaging a mainstream customs union, Naumann famously proposed a union of states (*Staatenbund*), an effective supra-state (*Oberstaat*) with its own institutions. These would eventually provide the basis

of 'something like a Central European central administration'.[129] Yet Naumann also insisted that the union should constitute no one new state[130] – it was proposed as a union of existing states, a confederation with no prospects of becoming a federation. In his discussion of constitutional arrangements, Naumann argued that the organs of union could be established without there actually being any Central European state.[131] The downplaying of the political implications of his proposed plan is perhaps explicable by the need to overcome resistance to the creation of a supra-state unit and, especially, concerns over its domination by the German ethnic group. Unlike previous authors concerning themselves more narrowly with the elaboration of a customs union, Naumann combined arguments of economic and strategic necessity en route to his proposal for a political supra-state union; yet, he was well aware that such a proposal would meet with political opposition. It should not be forgotten that Naumann's emphasis on German leadership of the union made him vulnerable to the critique that he was not looking to establish a Central European Union for the good of all peoples concerned, but to further the economic and wider power interests of Germany.

For this reason, Naumann insisted on the need for the emancipation of all the nations involved in the project. Obviously, however, his comparison of the contemporary challenge of creating a mid-European union with the earlier creation of the German Empire under Prussian leadership implied that his plans would entail a dominant German role in order to come to fruition. He was well aware of the fact that the Austrian and Hungarian Slavs did not expect too much benefit from fraternization with the German Empire. On the other hand, he was convinced that they would prefer continued Austrian rule to the prospect of possible Russian domination. He expected the Slavic nations living between the Russian east and German west to understand the likely impossibility of their survival as independent political units. This should logically lead them to accede voluntarily to the proposed project. The project of a Central European union was essentially premised on an exaltation of German national goals; thus to avoid accusation of hegemonic ambitions, Naumann suggested that Slavic nations should be allowed to fulfill their own national aspirations.

Interestingly, Naumann's book was delivered in a relatively restrained rhetorical fashion, avoiding the repetitive exclamation marks and emotionally charged phrases that were so typical of many of his contemporaries. While the nationalist underpinnings of his book are obvious, Naumann chose to frame them in a less overtly confrontational manner, tweaking the tone to suit his purposes. For example, chapter 4 of his book carries the title 'Das mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsvolk'.[132] While the chapter mainly speaks of Germany's trading expertise and productive virtues, its title was designed

to invoke the picture of an economically productive and cohesive regional powerhouse. Indeed, in earlier chapters of the book, Naumann discussed the individual features of the peoples inhabiting the region, expressing his hope for the future rise of a 'Central European type'.[133] Yet, despite his effort, Naumann failed to enlist substantial support among the small nations of Austria-Hungary. Quite the contrary: their representatives would become the most eloquent opponents of his proposals.

Naumann was not the first commentator to offer a clear vision of the Central European project during World War I – in fact, a significant volume of literature on Central Europe was published in the first year-and-a-half of the conflict.[134] Yet it was Naumann who successfully tapped into the economic and strategic headlines of the day to propose a plan whose timing could not have been more acutely judged: a loose political and economic union of the core Central Powers – Germany and Austria-Hungary – which would be dominated by the Germans and would be extended further, if practicable and expedient. Naumann published the right book at the right time, sparking an unprecedented debate on the topic, unleashing a flurry of articles and books.

Some contributions to the debate were direct responses to Naumann,[135] though an even greater proportion was not. A great variety of authors with vastly diverging points of view raced to publish their particular take on the topic of the day. Both pre- and post-Naumann contributions empathized with greater-German sentiments, portraying *Mitteleuropa* as a necessity. So the underpinning core of the construct shifted firmly towards the union of Germany and Austria-Hungary, with many authors hoping for more – especially what seemed like a potentially unopposable route to the Orient via the Balkans. The wartime body of works broadly comprised a mainstream of narrow concepts premised upon a union between Germany and Austria-Hungary. If this supposedly was meant to herald a new, greater Germany there was also a lesser but significant proportion of published material calling for this core area to provide the defining basis for Germany's own extended sphere of influence to the south-east. While support for the mainstream relied typically on pan-German nationalist rhetoric, and focused practically upon the mechanisms and institutions that could bring it to reality, the sub-stream calling for a more extended regional form held back on the language of German brotherhood, gearing their reasoning towards non-German audiences as well.

For example, Naumann's liberal colleague and expert on the Middle East, Ernst Jäckh, presented his view of Central Europe as a direct consequence of Naumann's book, under the following title: *Das Grössere Mitteleuropa: Ein Werkbund-Vortrag*.[136] He suggested that the narrow economic union envisaged by Naumann was inadequate and, moreover, that a larger Central

Europe was already in place with the then existent alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire.[137] Its continuation and development was portrayed as the only way out of strategic encirclement in Europe for Germany,[138] bordered, as it was, by enemies to the west, north and the east. His justification and articulation bought into the geographic determinism of the previous two decades and was dotted with references to organic growth theories of the state. Interestingly, Jäckh was one of the first authors to quote Rudolf Kjellén and to employ the adjective 'geopolitical' when arguing that Central Europe was not only a necessary political construct for Germany but for others, too: 'The geographical necessity, this "God-given dependency", leads to political necessity, [and] will become a geopolitical compulsion – for Germany and Austria-Hungary – as for the Balkans and the Orient.'[139]

In an effort to reassure his non-Germanic audiences, Jäckh depicted a German historical mission to protect Turkey and Bulgaria's sovereign independence. This would be achieved through German leadership of a Central European bloc capable of fighting off the hegemonic ambitions of Russia, France and Britain. Yet, Jäckh was an editor of the journal, *Das Grössere Deutschland*, and had already commented that, compared to Germany, the smaller nations in the area were 'not yet ready to build a state',[140] here presumably alluding to Austria-Hungary. Thus, his portrayal of Germany as a mere leader of equals within Central Europe was no more convincing than Naumann's.

Another interesting variant on this theme was E. F. Karl's *Vereinigte Staaten von Mittel-Europa! Eine Denkschrift zu Frieden*,[141] though here the focus was more plainly strategic through the prism of German war aims. Again, aimed partially at potentially friendly non-German audiences, Karl outlined his vision for a strategic and political unit stretching from Calais to Lemberg.[142] Eventually, and presuming a German victory, the United States of Central Europe would ideally have been extended to cover all Europe to provide for the security and freedom of all its constituent nations.[143]

By way of contrast, mainstream wartime conceptions of a Central Europe – encompassing just Germany and Austria-Hungary – typically derived their very definition from its ascribed German character. Robert Sieger started from the basis that: '[t]he historical ground on which the German nation has developed and primarily operated, we call Central Europe'.[144]

Such characterization of Central Europe as essentially German was, then, used to reason the need for economic and strategic unification of both empires in order to give unity to the area of the German nation. The realization of such a union would then provide the springboard for Germans to realize their greatness among world nations, recognition of

which was long overdue from a historical and cultural standpoint.[145] Emphasis was typically placed here upon the stock phrases, 'brotherhood of arms' and 'cultural unity'.[146] Other incarnations went a step further, presenting Austria as a mere annex of Germany, or any extended Central Europe in the future as the logical outcome of a protracted German national integration project – a unit encompassing the whole of the German nation.

Basically, all the works just discussed shared the common characteristics discussed earlier, referencing geographic determinism, organic theory, German uniqueness, etc. Yet, there was probably one crucial difference between extended regional conceptions of Central Europe and the mainstream focused solely on Germany and Austria-Hungary. It was the logic that lay behind them.

Broadly speaking, the mainstream theories started from the assertion that all Germans are the same nation regardless of which sovereign part of European territory they happen to reside in and therefore they should be united. This was a clear continuation of the *grossdeutsch* thinking of the nineteenth century. Also, the emphasis these works placed on economic rather than political integration fell in line with the established model of German integration in previous decades.

On the other hand, the broader regional conceptions started by questioning what needed to be done to secure a favourable future positioning for Germany. Within the constraints of organic theory demanding growth from the state to survive, the authors suggested spatial expansion. Their reasoning was underpinned by geographic determinism, and so the concepts aimed to endow the enlarged Germany with navigable rivers, land access to Asian markets, and natural borders where possible.

Perhaps the mainstream authors were trying to articulate a pathway to unity of the German nation and overcome systemic resistance to it, while the less numerous authors advocating a wider geographical Central Europe were considering vehicles that might expand the influence of the German Empire. Generally, we can assume that the two sets of authors understood German identity somewhat differently – the mainstream authors were concerned to address the then contemporary ramifications of their scattered German *Volk*, whilst the second group focused more on interests of an extended German Empire.

While this difference may seem subtle, it has important implications for analysis of the influence of these concepts on the practical conduct of policy. The conclusions will demonstrate that German policy-makers were more concerned with the interests of the empire than with the German *Volk*.

UNSUCCESSFUL AGITATORS VS. UNIMPRESSED GOVERNMENT

It has been suggested time and again that conceptions of Central Europe exercised an overwhelming influence on the practical policies of the German government. However, evidence for such influence seems thin at best.

Various authors mention the iconic chancellor of the German Empire himself – Otto von Bismarck – when seeking to evidence support for the profound influence of Central European conceptions during the late nineteenth century.[147] Works such as Bascom B. Hayes' *Bismarck and Mitteleuropa*[148] convey the impression that Bismarck helped to foreground German concepts of the World War I period.

Any serious review of Bismarck's policies and actions, however, must conclude that the *Mitteleuropa* idea had virtually no impact upon them. If there was any influence to be identified, it is only in the negative sense.[149] Numerous analyses of Bismarck's era in office as the Prussian chancellor observe that his immense political talent was then aimed at maintaining the *status quo* in Europe, rather than challenging it.[150] His foremost interest was to protect and strengthen the German Empire within the existing balance of European power. His distrust of popular nationalism during the late nineteenth century was well known and this applied to German nationalism as well.

The cornerstone of his foreign policy was maintaining the balance of power in Europe, with its most conservative forces (as represented by the German Empire, Austria-Hungary and Russia) jointly keeping a check on France and ensuring continuing British non-involvement in the continent's affairs. Indeed, Henry Cord Meyer observed already in his 1955 *Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action* that a system of balance of power in Europe was significantly more important for Bismarck than potential expansion of the German Empire into an 'all-inclusive' German nation-state[151] – something that would involve the destruction of Germany's closest ally. On the contrary, Bismarck's interest lay in a strong but cooperative Austria-Hungary.

Bismarck dismissed Central Europe-centred ideas on several occasions and in no uncertain terms. He expressed great misgivings over the 'tactless' activities of a bunch of pan-German activists (mainly journalists and academics) who were then publicizing the purported oppression of Germans in Hungary and Transylvania.[152] Hans Rothfels highlighted his 1894 speech to a group of Austrian German nationalists, suggesting that the affairs of Germans in Austria were not a concern Berlin wanted to get involved with.[153] A year later, when speaking to an academic delegation of Austrian Germans, Bismarck argued that one of the strongest pillars of German national strength derived from its alliance with Austria-Hungary and the loyalties of their two

peoples. Efforts to establish a homogeneous nation-state thus went against the interests of the German Empire, as unification would deprive it of a key ally within the Concert of Europe.[154]

Given these unequivocal rebukes, searching for any policy-making influence that theories of Central Europe might have generated in the Bismarck period seems a somewhat stretched idea. However, the notion does surface in the files of the Foreign Office, even if only sporadically.[155] Unsurprisingly, it features in papers related to the attempted renegotiation of German–Austro-Hungarian customs arrangements in the 1880s, yet it appears in the context of an alternative to these bilateral negotiations. It is presented in a vague reference to a potentially wider agreement reorganizing trade relations across Europe,[156] notably including France.

Leon von Caprivi, German Chancellor for the period 1890–4, is sometimes accredited with having made an official attempt to create a Central European Union in the 1890s.[157] Again, however, such an interpretation is questionable, since Caprivi's series of commercial treaties included one concluded with Russia, venturing well beyond the widest boundaries of any of the Central Europe concepts. In fact, Caprivi insisted on the inclusion of Russia within the preference system, against the advice of the foreign trade division of his Foreign Ministry.[158] While the idea of Central Europe had undoubtedly found an audience by the 1890s, rather than using this notion, Caprivi's contemporaries dubbed the New Course represented by his foreign policy as a 'United States of Europe'[159] instead. Caprivi himself tended to employ the notion *zentral-europäisch* rather than *mitteleuropäisch*.[160]

Yet, the notion of Central Europe does occasionally feature in the files of the German Foreign Office from the period of the late nineteenth century. It is presented as a regional context for wider economic cooperation in Europe and appears alongside papers related to the attempted renegotiation of the trade agreement with Austria-Hungary. Unlike the Bismarck period, Central Europe is characterized early in the Caprivi period as expressly embracing France.[161] This shows considerable divergence from notions that were then solidifying in the published literature; however, its presence in the files in the round of things is marginal.

If anything, during the Caprivi era, the German public progressively lost interest in the pan-German cause. Austria-Hungary was gradually becoming a foreign country. Any interest in the Dual Monarchy's internal concerns, including the fortunes of fellow Germans, was withering. As one contemporary observer noted:

> Shortly before the war I had the opportunity of conversing with German
> politicians, among others, with Friedrich Naumann. I was most

disagreeably surprised and astonished at the extent of his ignorance of Austrian conditions and difficulties.[162]

Yet, pan-German thought did not disappear completely and organizations emerged at the turn of century, which resurrected the idea and promoted the concept of Central Europe. The most prominent of these was perhaps the Pan-German League (*Alldeutsche Verband*), whose chairmen included Ratzel and Partsch at one stage or another; as well as the MEWV of Julius Wolf. As discussed previously, the idea of Central Europe was now on the march – finding both new advocates as well as followers.

The idea of an economic alliance with Austria-Hungary resurfaced early in the war.[163] However, rather than being influenced or even triggered by the positive flurry of publications on Central Europe alluded to earlier in this chapter, the government's Central Europe debate had preceded it. Moreover, motivations for and framing of the eventual drive for a customs union with Austria-Hungary were based upon calculations very different to those of pan-German conceptions of *Mitteleuropa*. Rather, the themes underlying the government's decision to pursue the idea of an economic bloc with Austria-Hungary were very similar to those underpinning the rationale for Central Europe on economic grounds.

A letter dated 12 April 1915 from Clemens von Delbrück[164] to Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg[165] sheds light on the German government's regional designs and the debate which surrounded them at the time.[166] Early on in the war, Bethmann-Hollweg had instructed Delbrück to investigate the likely economic relationship of Germany with its enemies and allies at the end of the war.[167] Delbrück observed rather obviously that all trade agreements concluded with Germany's enemies had already been cancelled by this stage. On the other hand, the existing trade agreement with Austria-Hungary was up for renewal again on 1 January 1918, with renegotiation planned to commence during 1916. Delbrück suggested that trade agreements with most of the European and non-European states could be renegotiated to the same date.[168] What Delbrück had in mind was a complete overhaul of Germany's trade relationships with neighbouring countries (which, at that time, were clearly non-existent). The fact remained that the trade agreement with Austria-Hungary, which gave it a privileged relationship with Germany as compared with other countries, was a convenient one as the new agreement could be renegotiated with a wider customs union in mind. The main interest here was to secure European markets for Germany's industrial exports, as opportunities in non-European markets were curtailed through war.

So as to examine the possibilities for German exports in Europe, Delbrück had already established a commission consisting of officials from the relevant

ministries by the autumn of 1914. The commission undertook detailed reviews of Germany's economic relationships with Austria-Hungary, Belgium, France, Russia and Russian Poland; and contemplated a potential customs union with Austria-Hungary and Belgium, as well as compiling a report on the economic capabilities of Russian Poland.[169]

The commission focused on production levels of various articles, and demand for goods in individual categories, as well as pre-war trade agreements and levels. In sharp contrast to the romantic pan-German mood of the day, the commission's files are technocratic in style and devoid of any nationalist language or concepts. The mismatch between the government's wider functional approach and the high-tide of nationalist pan-German concepts of Central Europe that was surging in the public domain at the same time is conspicuous.

In an attachment to his letter,[170] Delbrück summarized the commission's deliberations from November 1914. In their course, six proposals for an economic bloc were put forward,[171] all of them premised on the firm belief that the days of free trade were over and that Germany needed to build a customs alliance to avert the possibility of being shut out from foreign markets after the war. The commission's outcome was a proposal for a customs alliance (as opposed to customs union)[172] of 'Central European states',[173] in the first instance with Austria-Hungary alone but eventually designed to encompass France, Italy and Switzerland. The commission was only too aware that – with the exception of Austria-Hungary – none of these states would enter into alliance with Germany willingly[174] and several of its members therefore expressed scepticism over its plausibility.[175] On the other hand, the commission's evaluation of the projected customs alliance with Austria-Hungary offered a bleak economic picture, mired with forecasts of its likely negative impact upon the German currency[176] and a resultantly low purchasing power for German industrial products. Yet, its ultimate conviction in the overriding necessity of establishing a German zone of economic influence led the commission to recommend the conclusion of a customs alliance with Austria-Hungary,[177] with the potential accession of other named states an issue to be broached during or after the peace negotiations.[178]

A TALE OF WARTIME MITTELEUROPA

At a meeting of governmental officials under the chairmanship of Bethmann-Hollweg on 5 June 1915,[179] several officials, notably Delbrück, spoke against any customs union with Austria-Hungary.[180] Yet the fear of being shut out of foreign markets finally led the commission to conclude that while it would be best to pursue the possibilities afforded by a return to free markets, this path

remained unlikely; thus the option of 'economic rapprochement' (*wirtschaftliche Annäherung*) with Austria should be pursued.

Heinrich Leonhard von Tschirschky, German ambassador to Vienna (and a former foreign secretary), suggested during 1914 that Austrian society was ready for a 'customs-*Anschluss*' with Germany.[181] His letters betray his personal bias in favour of German domination of the Austrian part of the monarchy and pan-German Central European concepts in general. His reportage of the pro-German feelings of the Austrian public and the struggle of German Austrians to maintain predominance in their part of the Dual Monarchy[182] clearly inspired the language of the German memorandum to Austrians proposing closer economic relations.[183]

This memorandum picked up on the received nationalist rhetoric of conceptualizing Central Europe as a political unit dominated by the German nation, speaking of a brotherhood in arms sealed by blood and promising Austrian Germans support in their fight against the impending Slavicization of Austria. A closing sentence that described Austria as an 'eastern Germanic *mark*' (eine germanische Ostmark)[184] was predictably digested none too well by an Austrian side, which refuted such a slur in a sharply worded note of their own.[185] Their response sought to highlight the multinational character of the monarchy and suggested that the growth and flourishing of its non-German national elements was welcomed by the Austro-Hungarian government.[186] When informed about the note, Tschirschky himself observed that the Austrian prosecution of Czech national activists suggested otherwise. He labelled the note as a mere positioning device ahead of the forthcoming negotiations. In his opinion, Austria's categorical refusal to entertain any use of the term 'eastern Germanic *mark*' (border march) hinted at an aim to position Austria-Hungary on an equal footing within the German Empire.[187] Following the spat, this type of nationalist rhetoric would never resurface in official correspondence that was decidedly functional, limiting itself strictly to technical negotiation of tariffs and mechanisms.

The negotiations proved to be tedious. The Dual Monarchy's unique national composition entailed complex domestic calculations, even before unified positions vis-à-vis Germany could be contemplated. The Hungarian Prime Minister, Istvan Tisza, wrote to German Foreign Office State Secretary, Arthur Zimmermann, stressing that while he wished for friendship with Germany, Austria-Hungary could never be its vassal.[188] By this stage, too, the Austro-Hungarian state agreement (the 1867 Compromise) was coming up for renewal and Tisza was determined to negotiate the best conditions possible. This stalled negotiations with Germany, as Tisza insisted that internal relations in Austria-Hungary had to be renegotiated first. So, at the time when public enthusiasm for the concept of Central Europe was at its

greatest, talks were stalled, more than anything by the problems on the Austro-Hungarian side.

Meanwhile, a significant volume of letters of support or opposition to negotiations with Austria-Hungary was accruing in all the relevant governmental offices.[189] While note of all received opinion was taken, there was only a handful of organizations that the German Foreign Office took seriously and whose opinion it followed systematically: namely, the Central European Economic Union (Der Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein, MEWV), the German–Austrian-Hungarian Economic Union (Der Deutsch–Österreichisch-Ungarische Wirtschaftsverein, DÖUWV) and the Working Committee for Central Europe (Der Arbeitsausschuss für Mitteleuropa, AAfME). Yet, even then, there was never any real prospect that advice from these organizations would work into policy formulation. The ministry merely monitored their activities and collected their publications.[190]

The most voluminous material in the archives details the activities of MEWV, spanning three dedicated files[191] as well as more scattered documents in various other files of the German Federal Archive and Political Archive of the Foreign Office. It is clear that the German government was following the activities of the MEWV very closely – it was the most established organization (dating back to 1904) to advocate an economic concept of Central Europe, with many high-ranking Austro-Hungarian politicians and businessmen within its ranks. Its membership included Richard Riedl, Director of the Trade Policy Department of the Austrian Trade Ministry.[192] Thus the MEWV was a convenient, non-official channel for the gathering of intelligence on the mood in Austria-Hungary towards the German Empire as well as spreading the empire's influence.

Yet, the organization evidently exercised little influence on German governmental policy and decision-making beyond meetings with governmental officials or occasional congratulatory 'thank you' letters to MEWV for its reports[193] and memoranda.[194] The high rank of the members in Austria-Hungary was not mirrored on the German side. With the obvious exception of Julius Wolf – a governmental aide during the war– the MEWV did not manage to recruit significant political figures. Perhaps the greatest accreditation MEWV received from government arrived in a letter from Bethmann-Hollweg dated 27 February 1917. Here it is commented that the memorandum sent by MEWV earlier that month was 'a very valuable material for examination of difficult questions of our future economic policy'.[195]

Among individual advocates of Central Europe, the German government maintained by far the most frequent contact with Friedrich Naumann; not surprisingly, since he was himself a liberal member of the parliament.[196]

Yet, even here, the evidence for actual influence is relatively limited. His AAfME had, on paper at least, the best chance of swaying the government, through its influential membership.[197] Again, however, this organization could only claim a limited impact through its reports and memoranda. Naumann himself routinely communicated with Foreign Office Under-secretary Zimmermann and with Bethmann-Hollweg.[198] During the war he also posted several books and memoranda on Central Europe that he had written or co-authored.[199]

Yet, none of the policy or decision-making related documents in the archival evidence suggests that Naumann's memoranda or, indeed, the opinions he expressed in his letters, exerted any direct influence. In fact, towards the end of the war, some influential figures within the government increasingly began to comment that both his publications on Central Europe and his promotional activities were damaging for the interests of Germany.[200]

With renegotiation of the Austro-Hungarian treaty largely resolved by 1917,[201] and talks on duties and customs regimes for 46 individual categories of goods and services well advanced,[202] it was a Polish, rather than any Central European, question that would emerge to complicate the political background to negotiations.

German interest groups in Eastern Prussia, as well as the military, were pressing for Russian-occupied sections of Poland to become a part of Germany.[203] However, Austrian officials were demanding the same territory for the monarchy. The German government was concerned over the potential erosion of Austrian–German power within their part of the dual monarchy, if further Polish sections of the population (and additional members of parliament) were added to the already existing Slav population of Austria-Hungary.[204] So the main German concern remained not just the ability of the Dual Monarchy to maintain control of increasing national tensions but a potential increase in its constituent nationalities.[205] In November 1917 the German government agreed to an Austro-Polish solution, albeit one with several conditions: the constitutional arrangement of the union would be of a purely personal character;[206] in return, Germany's sole rights of influence would be admitted in Romania, as would preferential access to the Adriatic sea, a direct railway connection to Hungary and a port for its fleet at Valona; additionally Austria would abandon any further interest in Belgium.[207]

Yet, by the time the German government had cleared its stance over the Austro-Polish solution and related packages, the conviction had hardened that Austria-Hungary itself was in such deep peril that it would not survive another year.[208] The increasing tensions between its many nationalities and the plainly horrific economic situation described in Ambassador Wedel's many letters further eroded Germany's threadbare confidence in their ally's

potential for stability. The opinion that the economic alliance was simply impracticable (*undurchführbar*) – present in some governmental documents since the beginning of the negotiation process[209] – was now quickly gathering strength.

With the realization that post-war Austria-Hungary could not be a strong and stable trade partner, the preferences of German political and economic circles shifted back to concluding a free trade arrangement.[210] Since the very start of the process, the German government had received reports that its wartime enemies – especially the United States – would not tolerate the creation of any customs union with Austria-Hungary or, indeed, with any other European state.[211] Hopes that Germany could conclude the alliance with Austria-Hungary and then negotiate free trade conditions more widely at or during any forthcoming peace negotiations, were fading.

By 1916, highly publicized talk of a German-dominated greater economic area under the banner of Central Europe was engendering strong opposition from Britain, France and the United States.[212] This realization motivated strong critique of 'Mr Naumann and his friends' among German governmental officials. The November 1917 assessment of progress on negotiations with Austria-Hungary elaborated by the Foreign Ministry blamed Naumann's frenetic Central Europe agitations for blocking any post-war attempts to foster free trade.[213] The whole idea of the customs union, and especially the pan-German tenor of proposals for a German-dominated Central Europe, was fast becoming an impediment to projected post-war economic relations with other countries, most crucially the United States.[214]

As Herman Johannes, a director with the German Foreign Office, observed in his notes dated 7 January 1917:

> The longer the war lasts, the more difficult it will be to rekindle our old export relationships with distant countries, the more we will be for various reasons relying on self-sufficiency, and the more necessary it will be for us to bind ourselves as closely as possible with our neighbours and allies into a Central European Economic Area ... There is no way back anymore; the lobby for Central Europe was already too strong and 'Naumann-like agitation' caused the Allies to take decisions in Paris and significantly complicated the return to a free world trade.[215]

In this context, there was a growing sense among officials that concluding a customs treaty with Austria-Hungary prior to any peace negotiations would bind Germany's hands in negotiating convenient trade conditions with its former enemies.[216] While such negotiations did not appear very likely

and such suggestions might have been nothing more than wishful thinking, the concern was real. The peace negotiations with Russia at Brest-Litowsk confirmed this view, as the constraints of an emerging relationship with Austria-Hungary proved to be an impediment in negotiations.[217] Following Brest-Litowsk, the German preference shifted firmly towards postponing the conclusion of negotiations until after the end of the war.

Indeed, negotiations as such continued, but without much commitment from the German side[218] – the only motivation remaining was the perceived lack of any viable alternatives should, as seemed likely, a post-war return to free trade prove impossible. In 1918, ever worse news was arriving at the German Foreign Office from its embassy in Vienna and its consulate in Budapest concerning the economic situation of the country and prevailing hunger on the streets.[219] Business circles were growing increasingly negative about the prospect of a customs alliance with Austria-Hungary[220] to the extent that Berlin began to look for alternatives, even discussing a union with Poland.[221]

April 1918 saw fallout from the worst scandal to have existed in recent memory between Germany and Austria-Hungary. After a spat with Czernin, French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau published a letter signed by the Austrian Emperor proving that Austria was in secret negotiations towards a separate peace with the Entente.

The fallout from the so-called Sixtus Affair brought about what was hailed as a final coming for Central Europe by its advocates. To placate his ally, Austro-Hungarian emperor Karl I had to undergo the humiliating experience of apologizing to German emperor Wilhelm II in Spa in May 1918. Yet an apology was not enough: Austria-Hungary was now considered an unreliable ally for Germany.[222] The solution was now seen as binding the Dual Monarchy to Germany by both political and economic treaties. These eventually became known as the 1918 Spa Accords.

The minutes of the 11 May 1918 meeting of the Supreme Army Command, held just prior to this meeting of sovereigns, shed light on the decision-making motivations on the German side. As the minutes stated:

> State Secretary von Kühlmann thinks . . . it is now essential to demonstrate both to the domestic population and the rest of the world that Austria-Hungary is willing and compelled to remain on Germany's side.[223]

Chancellor Georg von Hertling had commented that the forthcoming conference of the two emperors would need to deal with the political, economic and military dimensions of alliance. Yet priority would be accorded to top-level political agreement, over economic and military goals. All participants in the meeting (including military command, the German

ambassador to Vienna, the chancellor and representatives of the Foreign Ministry) agreed that the emperors should discuss the principles lying behind these agreements, which would be signed up to by both states, with the actual details of agreement hammered out subsequently. The Polish question featured prominently in the discussions, but the final consensus was that it should be avoided during the emperors' meeting to avoid increasing the potential for failure of the three key agreements under consideration. While it was agreed that any economic alliance should be as close as possible, the chancellor observed that concluding a direct customs union would be difficult due to widespread public opposition in Germany. On the other hand, the military commanders recommended that any military union should be as flexible and pragmatic as possible, given the unresolved structural issues confronting the Austro-Hungarian army.

Along the lines agreed therefore, the three agreements – an overarching political one, an economic one elaborating a tight customs union, and a looser one over military cooperation – were presented to, and signed by, both emperors a week later. The negotiations of the particulars of these had started back in June.

Yet only a month later – during July – the German ambassador to Vienna reported his conviction that Austria-Hungary was going to be dismembered,[224] amidst Hungarians calls for their own sovereign vehicle.[225] By September, Germany's ambassador to Vienna reported that the Austro-Hungarian government itself was convinced that the end was near. Pro-German feelings were all but gone, with even Austrian Germans preferring now to surrender to the British and their allies[226] – so any economic alliance was completely out of the question.[227]

Yet despite and throughout all of this, negotiations at a more junior civil servant level were continuing. The Austrian negotiators were particularly half-hearted, having been instructed by the new Seidler administration to negotiate the loosest conditions possible for any customs union. They lost out to their German counterparts, who were in a much stronger negotiating position and had been instructed with quite the opposite advice. So the 'Guidelines for Customs and Economic Union' were signed in September, stipulating very tight union between the two empires.[228]

By then, however, the proposal was clearly out of touch with reality – Austria-Hungary was on the verge of dismemberment and the German public was now opposed to strengthening ties with what was now an uncomfortable ally. Negotiations never made it past the formulation of guidelines. The idea of Central Europe was finally abandoned in the chaos of a lost war.

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Overall, in governmental use, the term Central Europe appeared only occasionally, in notably vague and variable contexts. In the tentative 1915 draft of the treaty on the customs union between Germany and Austria-Hungary, the contractual parties were described merely as 'customs allies' (*Zollverbündeten*).[229] Central Europe was not used to describe or characterize any alliance with Austria-Hungary by governmental officials. In fact, the only time the notion was used consistently was in Delbrück's report of April 1915,[230] which suggested an economic alliance of Germany with Austria-Hungary, France, Italy and Switzerland.

The language of the files dealing with negotiations with Austria-Hungary is highly technical. It does not resonate with the nationalist language of pan-German Central Europe concepts and shows a remarkable lack of regard for nationalist themes. It is virtually impossible to find any document that highlights the national affinity of Austrian Germans with their imperial brethren, whether ethnic, historical or cultural. The talk is of production of maize, railway tariffs for coal transport, impact on hop farmers in Bavaria and the financing of dams on the Danube, rather than a unique German nation or its historical mission.

This is in stark contrast to the surge of nationalist pan-German concepts overflowing with romanticism and promising unification as a road to greatness for the scattered German *Volk*. The supporting background materials prepared to assist in negotiations did not contain historical studies of German settlement or its cultural reach. Their content was strictly functional, dealing with technical aspects of tariffs for 46 different product categories, filling hundreds of pages with detailed charts and calculations. A pedantic and somewhat mechanical tradition of German officialdom is often stereotyped but, as these documents show, it is perhaps not without an ounce of truth.

Even the overarching political questions were dealt with in a practical, rather than an ideological, manner. For example, in the midst of the complications surrounding internal treaty renegotiations in Austria-Hungary, the debate revolved around issues of convincing the Hungarian government to buy into the process. The German government considered promising to Hungary development of its railways and trade-offs in the shape of offering non-tariff advantages to Hungarian agricultural producers.

While this could all be dismissed as dealing with technicalities while pursuing the aim of establishing a political union of a dissipated German nation, the evidence suggests otherwise. In fact, the files tell a completely different story to the one told by popular pan-German conceptions of Central Europe or their interpretations abroad.[231]

The very first file of material collected by Delbrück's commission focused on patterns of production in surrounding countries and their trade exchanges

with Germany. The countries considered here included France and Russia but any kind of consideration of Germans who lay beyond imperial borders was conspicuously missing. Indeed, the customs union with Austria-Hungary was not recommended, attracting a negative evaluation from the *Reichsbanksdirektorium*.[232]

This is not to say that pan-German nationalist thought was entirely absent from imperial policy-making circles. Indeed, as with anywhere else in German society of the day, this strand of thought was to be found across the board, including politicians too. Memoranda and other documents showing the influence of pan-German thought are scattered across archival files.[233] Yet they tend not to appear in the core decision-making documents – rather as the opinions of relatively peripheral governmental officials.[234]

On the other hand, an example of German government activity that could be interpreted as being influenced by pan-German thought was its obvious support for the maintenance of German domination in Austria. Yet correspondence exchanged between ambassador Tschirschky and the Imperial Foreign Office reveals that rather than supporting German predominance in Austria out of any great nationalist convictions, the main interest of the German Empire was a strategic one. In their view, the growing influence of Slav nationalities would destabilize Austria and draw it away from Germany. Thus, rather than merely preserving the domination of Germans in Austria, it became a strategic imperative for the German Empire to prevent a regional rise of the Slavs. This was indeed the opinion expressed by Tschirschky in his letter to the German Foreign Office dated 20 January 1916,[235] in which – for this very reason – he suggested that Germany should not only help safeguard the predominance of Germans in Austria but, crucially, also that of Hungarians in Hungary.

To sum up, rather than being driven by the dream of any greater economic or political area for a unified German nation, German thought, policy and actions over the question of an economic alliance with Austria-Hungary were clearly the result of more practical considerations. Indeed, the files rarely mention a concept of Central Europe, whose occurrence is largely limited to documents originating in the early months of the war and in documents arriving from outside inner government circles: various letters from Friedrich Naumann, *Mitteleuropa* concepts of Austrian authors and articles from Hungarian newspapers, etc.

The bid for a larger economic area can thus be considered an effort independent of contemporaneous and historical attempts to conceptualize Central Europe. The only set of documents that evidences a consistent employment of the notion Central Europe is Delbrück's initial report in 1915,[236] which suggested a wider economic alliance in Europe, including France, Switzerland and Italy. Yet, the government's drive for such a zone

stemmed from the very same perceived necessities as that lesser strand of Central Europe concepts, which focused on the interests of Germany as a state rather than the interests of Germans as a nation.

CENTRAL EUROPE IN GERMAN IMPERIAL POLICY

To sum up, conceptualizations of Central Europe in the German environment evolved with a definite geopolitical aim: effecting a change in the international structure on the ground. While the aim varied across time and among authors (causing changes in the territorial reach and characteristics of the proposed new arrangement), it eventually coalesced during World War I into a rallying call for the establishment of an economic and political union between Germany and Austria-Hungary, a sense of the new *Self* as defined in relation to the hostile surrounding *Other*, the Entente powers. Yet the German administration had its own well-established functional definition of Central Europe – a continental customs union – and the public discourse clearly exercised very little influence on its decision- making. The 1918 Spa Accords were motivated by the necessity to tie a wavering ally into the German orbit, rather than any special enthusiasm for Central Europe.

The common narratives tracing the concept of Central Europe back to early nineteenth-century German authors, especially Friedrich List and Karl Ludwig von Bruck, are misleading. Both individuals were in fact operating with the notion of Germany rather than Central Europe. While List was theorizing enlargement and development of the Customs Union, Bruck was operating in the conditions of an emerging German nation-state and was conceptualizing Austria's role in it. The need for a replacement notion expressing ambitions for a political and economic unit encompassing all German people, only arose after the process of othering Austria from Germany resulted in its self-identification as a separate entity.

The shift towards the concept of Central Europe is directly observable in the writings of pan-German authors in the late 1870s and early 1880s, demonstrated in the analysis of works by Constantin Frantz and Paul de Lagarde. The notion itself was certainly not invented by these authors – references to Central Europe or descriptions of something being Central European had been present in German and non-German environments alike as generic geographical references well before pan-German political constructs started to emerge. Similarly, they continued to be used as such afterwards.

Gradually, however, the notion began to be associated with the political project of a wider unit lying in the middle of Europe, whether in a pan-German or wider geographical sense. This trend became visible in academic journals and volumes from the 1880s onwards, occasionally appearing in the

relevant governmental documentation as well. In the late nineteenth century, the definitive discourse of the notion was led by pan-German authors and the concept of Central Europe emerged as a political unit, which should be 'naturally' dominated by Germans. The dissipated German nation was presented as having a historical mission to unify the area under its lead. Due to the characteristics of German settlement in Europe, the core of the concept gradually shifted from a German Empire towards the combined territories of Germany and Austria-Hungary. The distinctive features of these concepts were their theoretical underpinnings in geographic determinism and the organic growth theory of the state.

Yet, in the early twentieth century, an added line of reasoning appeared – the economic one. While authors pushing this line of argument readily bought into the existing discourses of Central Europe, they argued that any final borders must be kept flexible and fuzzy. Their thoughts were framed by convictions about the changing nature of international trade and the necessity to build a greater economic area dominated by Germany – if the latter was not to lose out in an envisaged customs duty war with the British Empire, Russia and the United States. While social Darwinist theory and geographic determinism continued to underpin their concepts, economic authors perceived the interests of Germany primarily in terms of establishing a strong European base and securing the requisite structural conditions for success in global trade. Given existing ties between Germany and Austria-Hungary, the centre of gravity remained in their combined territory but the desired extent typically extended well beyond. Austria-Hungary was losing its importance as a trading partner for Germany and, in economic terms, ethnic ties were secondary to the consideration of trade patterns and prospects. The economic line of reasoning was growing in importance as its proponents became active in promoting their concepts through various associations, most prominently the MEWV.

The World War I period witnessed a peak in popularity for concepts of Central Europe. By then, the economic basis of the idea of Central Europe was well established. Yet the war brought about a revival in pan-German thought and shifted the mainstream of theorization of Central Europe back towards strong pan-German nationalism. Broader concepts of Central Europe soon became the minority, pushed by authors whose priority was that of securing a convenient positioning for Germany, rather than unification of any German nation. While the mainstream could now be identified as a continuation of *grossdeutsch* thought and projects of the nineteenth century, the lesser strand had largely resulted from observations of the realities of war – blockade, isolation, and the perceived need to either establish a greater economic area or wither on the vine.

Interestingly, it follows from the archival evidence that the considerations of the Berlin government were remarkably devoid of pan-German underpinnings. Indeed, the rare use that was made of such rhetoric, as evidenced in the Memorandum of November 1915,[237] was seen as a diplomatic blunder and never employed again. The decision to pursue economic alliance with Austria-Hungary was driven by the necessities of the day and a firm belief that the days of free international trade were numbered – here, Germany had to establish a larger economic zone in order to secure survival of its industries after the war. While Austria-Hungary was seen as the inferior partner in any envisaged union, it was also regarded as a stepping stone providing access to the Middle East and the ports on the Adriatic Sea. Equally, and much more pragmatically, Austria-Hungary was for the time being the only neighbouring state that would consider an economic alliance with Germany of its own free will and there already existed a track-record of attempted negotiations towards such arrangements.

So, a distinctive lack of pan-German nationalism set the German government policy apart from the mainstream romantic Central Europe concepts that characterized the peak wartime debate. Governmental considerations had been consonant with pre-war economic concepts of Central Europe and, to a certain degree, the lesser wartime strand. Yet the design put forward by Delbrück's commission, as well as the reasoning that lay behind it, demonstrably lacked the theoretical underpinnings shared by all Central Europe concepts – their social Darwinism and geographic determinism. Instead, it was built on patterns of trade and a practical reading of the contemporary political and strategic situation. While the German government's wartime designs were aligned with economic concepts of Central Europe from the pre-war period, they were constructed on a very different basis – that of economic necessity, rather than that of organic theory.

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It only remains to be commented here that if the idea was to influence policy-makers and change the map of the world, then Central Europe theorists seem to have failed in Germany: not only because the wartime concept of *Mitteleuropa* did not materialize but also because successive German imperial governments had consistently adhered to the bureaucracy's own notion of Central Europe – that of a continental customs union centred on Germany – regardless of tribulations in the public discourse of the notion, and the changing stream of authors and ideas.

3 Austria-Hungary: Pan-German Paper Dreams

The tale of Central Europe in Austria-Hungary is one of competing insecurities. Clashing nationalisms of the day, and emerging political ambitions of the monarchy's many peoples, strained its outdated structure and caused many to doubt its survival. In the environment of permanent constitutional crisis, speculations on alternative structures were rife. Leaders of Germans, Hungarians, Czechs and others all stepped forward to offer their proposals. And Central Europe was centre stage.

THE LEGACY OF 1848: AUSTRIA GOES ITS OWN WAY

As already discussed, considerations of a customs union in the German-inhabited area resurfaced several times in the nineteenth century, with the most prominent of the discussions being the deliberations of the Frankfurt constitutional assembly. Yet these did not feature or elaborate any notion of Central Europe explicitly, operating within the framework of the German Customs Union.

In addition to Karl Ludwig von Bruck, there were other Austrian representatives present in Frankfurt putting forward their proposals for including Austria within the German Customs Union. As in the case of Bruck, their links to later conceptions of Central Europe are at best indirect.

The radical right-wing Viennese representative in the Frankfurt assembly, Eugen Megerle von Mühlfeld, also called for a *grossdeutsch* solution, but with guarantees for the unimpaired sovereignty of Austria. Mühlfeld also proposed federalization of Austria to contain nationalist tensions.[1] In contrast, Count Friedrich Deym, a representative of the Austrian crown-land estates, proposed that the empire should first weld all its nationalities into one state-nation, which would help it to consolidate its power, and only then could a treaty with the German federation be contemplated.[2]

The centre of the political spectrum was represented by Carl Möring and Anton von Schmerling. Möring promoted federalization of Austria on the basis of combined crown-land and ethnic boundaries, and inclusion of the whole federation in a wider German association. Interestingly, he described this final construct as a central European super-power, yet, similar to Bruck, he failed to use this expression consistently or as the main descriptive geographical basis of his proposal.[3] Schmerling favoured inclusion of only those parts of the Austrian Empire that had previously belonged to the Holy Roman Empire within the German federation. In his view, this would suffice to secure Austrian supremacy within the federation as well as guarantee German domination within the Austrian Empire.[4]

Finally, on the left, Franz von Sommarunga, doubting the possibility of a complete inclusion of the whole Austrian Empire within a German federation, proposed a vehicle that had both narrower and wider federal components. The former (a narrower and closer knit federation) was to include Austria's German lands whilst the latter (a territorially wider and looser political construct) would also comprise the remainder of its territorial possessions.[5]

However, the best-known proposals are perhaps those of Julius Fröbel and Heinrich von Gagern, whose conceptions, just like Bruck's, are often linked to later notions of Central Europe.[6] While Gagern presented his proposal orally at the Frankfurt Assembly,[7] Fröbel preferred to put it down on paper.[8] Gagern spoke of the need for unity and a historical mission to spread German culture, language and customs down the Danube River, while Fröbel proposed a confederation encompassing Germany, Poland Hungary, the South Slav territories and Walachia – yet neither of the two individuals used the notion of Central Europe to describe their respective constructs. Both spoke of Germany and Europe, and Austria's future in both.

In fact, in the works of all the above-mentioned authors, with the marked exception of Möring, instead of being a hallmark, any notion of Central Europe is conspicuously absent.

THE PAN-GERMAN MOVEMENT

In defiance of all the *grossdeutsch* projects placed before it, the Frankfurt Assembly effectively excluded Austria from the ensuing integration of German space. Central Europe would replace the notion of an extended Germany as the byword for the shared economic and political union of all Germans.

The key to interpreting the undercurrents of Austro-German thought about Central Europe as a political concept lies in appreciating that while

Austrian Germans viewed the Habsburg monarchy as multinational, they understood it would always be dominated by its German national component. This was not only viewed as an established fact but as historically and culturally justifiable.[9] The Compromise of 1867, which restored the sovereignty of Hungary,[10] seriously challenged this established view. In their own part of the redefined monarchy, Austrian Germans remained in a minority,[11] facing increasing nationalistic pressures from other ethnic groups.

The confidence of Austrian Germans was shaken by the combined tremors of exclusion from German unification, their declining power position and, above all, the virtual loss of half the empire in 1867, as Hungary regained its sovereignty.[12]

The links with their brethren in the German states were also diminishing – the steady, routine flow of immigrants from this source, which had traditionally provided the Austrian intelligentsia as well as its statesmen and businessmen, dried up following the Battle of Sadowa in the mid-1860s.[13] Austrian Germans felt cut off from their kinsmen in a unifying Germany and exposed to the ambitions of rival nationalities within their own unstable empire. With this heightened sense of insecurity, many in Austrian-German society perceived the growing national ambitions and numbers of the Slav social elements as the 'threat of Slavicisation'[14] and started to organize themselves to safeguard their own national interests and traditional privileges.

The first associations that aimed to reconsolidate the diminished position of the Austrian Germans emerged in this context of heightened national anxiety, among them the *Deutscher Volksverein* established in Vienna in 1867 and the *Verein der Deutschnationalen* in Graz in 1869.[15] Austrian German nationalism, which would later take on a form of pan-Germanism, was thus born out of reaction to their changing political and social standing after the decline of Habsburg power.

Yet political activism only developed gradually, in reaction to the changing political landscape of Austria in the following decades. The pan-Germans split from the German Liberal Party in 1879, following the unsuccessful bid of emergent leader, Georg von Schönerer, to propose a customs union with Germany as a central tenet of party policy.[16] The parallel efforts of Count Eduard von Taaffe in the same year to build his cabinet on the support of Slav parties caused obvious consternation amongst Austrian Germans and prepared fertile ground for Schönerer's ideas. The idea that, from then on, Austrian Germans had to rely on their own strength (*Selbshilfe*) rather than government support, resulted in the formation of an increasing number of nationalist associations. One of them was the *Deutscher Klub* in Vienna, led by Schönerer, and aided by Engelbert Pernerstorfer,

Victor Adler and Heinrich Friedjung, all future power-players in Austrian politics.[17]

Within three years, in September 1882, this group, headed by Schönerer, formulated its famed Linz Program. This postulated Austria's complete separation from Hungary and the consolidation of Austrian German political power in Austria by its separation from Polish territories, but advocated the forging of a customs union encompassing Germany, Austria, Hungary and the Balkan states.[18] This proposal was not too different from the concepts of Gagern or Fröbel, presented some 40 years earlier, and heralded the comeback of the idea of bringing Austria back together into a wider union with Germany.

Schönerer's star had dimmed by the late 1880s and early 1890s, as the German National Movement (*Deutschnationale Bewegung*) grew, both in the number of constituent groups and the heightened profile of its leaders. The German National Party was founded in 1891, followed by the German Peoples Party in 1896. The fight for maintaining German national privileges was fought through the German School Association (*Deutscher Schulverein*), the Union of Germans (*Bund der Deutschen*) and other social groups, as antagonism between Slavs and Germans in Austria gained momentum.

Schönerer's day came again with the controversial Badeni Language Laws of 1897, which placed the Czech language at the same level as German. A nationalist explosion followed in the Bohemian crown-lands and Schönerer and his group were expelled from parliament. By the time the Badeni Language Laws were repealed in 1899, it would be too late to placate the outraged Austrian Germans, who felt betrayed by their government. Schönerer launched an outright attack on the monarchy, calling for its dissolution and the unification of the empire's German territories (including Bohemian crown–lands, inhabited mostly by Czechs) with Germany.[19] Schönerer's new *Alldeutsche Vereinigung* heralded a new chapter in Austrian German nationalism and the quest for union with Germany.[20]

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The notion of *Mitteleuropa* with its relatively loose meaning was present in Austrian daily parlance and academic writing well before its political meaning was developed.[21] Central Europe as a concept – if not yet a political project – had started to appear in Austrian academic writing by the 1870s. *A General Map of Central Europe*[22] was produced by the Austrian Military Geographical Institute in 1875. However, its title did not employ the notion of *Mitteleuropa* as yet. *Mitteleuropa* as a notion only started to appear consistently in Austrian writing by the end of the 1870s and into the 1880s,[23]

<center>55</center>

in parallel with the rise of the notion in Germany and temporal proximity to the foundation of the Dual Alliance (*Zweibund*) in 1879.

Austrian geographers were among the first to enter the discourse over Central Europe. Their concepts were not necessarily political and were elaborated in maps, geographical handbooks and school textbooks.[24] On the other hand, the delimitation of Central Europe in these texts was often based on political or economic geography rather than physical criteria. One example using political criteria for delimitation was Ludwig Neumann's description of Central Europe as consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, the Low Countries, Luxemburg and Lichtenstein.[25] An example of economic criteria being used is Ernst Friedrich's delimitation, which spanned approximately the same area.[26]

Yet geographers were significantly outrun in the volume of writing on Central Europe by the pan-Germans (indeed, some authors belonged to both groups at the same time), even though their writing is still limited compared to works published in Germany. Pan-German propaganda was severely restricted by governmental censorship,[27] as the government was careful to cap the simmering conflict of nationalities within the empire. Instead, pan-German pamphlets and books were being smuggled in from Germany, among them those detailing the emerging concept of Central Europe. Moreover, some of the foremost German proponents of the notion lived and worked in Austria-Hungary or visited on a regular basis. Among them, for example, was Albrecht Penck, a geography professor at the University of Vienna. Intellectual exchange was lively and Austrian authors often figured among those contributing to the *Geographisches Zeitschift*, which would carry the thrust of articles arguing for a redefinition of the notion of Central Europe into the early twentieth century. Despite existing censorship, Austrian pan-Germans produced a significant number of political conceptions of Central Europe, the majority of them remarkably consistent in their interpretation of Central Europe as an economic and political union of Germany and Austria even before the end of the nineteenth century.[28] It was both this consistency and prevalence within the definitive discourse that helped to gradually steer interpretation of the notion their way.

One of the authors falling into this category was Alexander von Peez, an Austrian German industrialist and politician. He considered that the strengthening of Austria-Hungary could only be achieved by fostering and protecting the predominance of Germans in the monarchy. He presented his Central Europe project – comprising the states of the Triple Alliance – as the only option to successfully face down the competition from other great powers in the economic field.[29]

Among later entrants into the debate was Albert Ritter – his pamphlet *Berlin–Bagdad: Neue Ziele mitteleuropäischer Politik*, published in 1914, really stood out. The fervently written pamphlet aroused considerable interest and was reprinted several times just before the outbreak of World War I.[30] Ritter considered any concepts defending Germany and Austria-Hungary as outmoded, since they were just two parts of the larger whole – the German nation. He called for the immediate implementation of the Central European project, defined as both the economic and political union of Germany and Austria-Hungary. In line with prevailing organic theories of the state, Ritter insisted that Germans had to either grow or wither away, making creation of Central Europe a matter of their life or death.[31]

Under the influence of its pan-German lead, the notion of Central Europe settled relatively early along the lines of the economic and political union of Austria-Hungary and Germany. It was often employed by the daily press in supporting arguments for a customs union in the 1880s and 1890s.

Thus, while the process of othering after 1848 created a perception of two separate German nations,[32] the end of the century brought them back together in what was, in an Austrian context at least, being presented as a shared strategic, economic, cultural and historical space for all Germans – *Mitteleuropa*. Tellingly, when the Austrian Military Geographical Institute updated its general map of Central Europe in 1903, it would opt this time for the title, *General Karte von Mittel-Europa*.[33]

After *Der Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein* (MEWV) was founded in Berlin in 1904, its first conference met later during the same year in Vienna. Julius Wolf, its founder, had in fact been born in Bohemia, even though he spent most of his life in Germany.

Austrian branches of MEWV promoted the idea of closer economic cooperation by way of the harmonization of regulations, procedures and schemes for trade, transport and communication, rather than by calling for a customs union. In this way, they could avoid the many pitfalls that pan-Germans would fall into, especially censorship, as their proposals did not represent such a threat to Austro-Hungarian sovereignty.

MEWV focused on practical proposals and its propaganda in favour of Central Europe was relatively limited, especially in Austria-Hungary. In fact, Wolf set out rules for MEWV societies, which specifically instructed members of the newly founded association not to conduct political agitation, provoke any suspicion of impinging on the economic sovereignty of any state, or put forward aggressive designs.[34]

The focus on simplification of trade and investment relations between Austria-Hungary and Germany, rather than any agitation for grand political designs, steered MEWV activities towards working out the details of

individual pieces of regulation and tabling proposals for relevant policy-makers. However, their impact was very modest. The practical results of their work were limited to simplification of banking procedures and customs formalities in trade with Germany.[35]

Overall, while the activities of MEWV, unlike the pan-German movement, did not threaten sovereignty of Austria-Hungary and thus avoided censorship, they did not have much impact on policy-making either. As a result, MEWV's infrastructural effect in the monarchy was, in fact, negligible.

THE BELVEDERE CIRCLE

Even though the monarchy was said to be on the verge of collapse for decades,[36] in the early years of the twentieth century the plans of pan-Germans did not attract overwhelming support even among their own followers. In the first elections with general suffrage for men in 1907, the pan-German and radical parties achieved only 2.8 per cent support.[37]

Repetitive outbursts of nationalism by Austrian Germans against their Slav compatriots did not necessarily translate into political support for union with Germany, and Austrian Germans generally remained loyal to the Habsburg sceptre. Nationalist struggle translated itself into support of nationally defined, yet not anti-dynastic, parties. While parliament was deadlocked in national struggles most of the time, calls for dissolution of the monarchy were rarely voiced. For the most part, power struggles focused on petty local issues, and on safeguarding or advancing competing ethnic privileges.

While the pan-Germans conspired and the rest of Europe debated the break-up of the empire,[38] the Austrian government was busy trying to defuse and stabilize a simmering melting pot of national tensions. Pan-German conceptions of Central Europe under a unified German leadership certainly did not align with the efforts of the Austrian government to stabilize its shaky empire.

Discussion of reform under the Habsburg Monarchy was a recurrent theme in the nineteenth century and successive Austrian governments were notoriously unable to keep pace with the increasing pressures for change. The flourishing of modern nationalisms and the ossified, ages-old empire clashed violently. For instance, the 1848–9 revolution could only be suppressed with the help of the Russian imperial army. The 1866 defeat by Prussia shook Austrian power to its foundations. The result was the 1867 Compromise, the only reform that addressed nationalist pressures with some degree of success. The Compromise brought restoration of Hungarian sovereignty and restructuring of the Austrian Empire into a dual monarchy

under a shared monarch and three key ministries. Its likely effectiveness in meeting the pressures of rising nationalisms always seemed questionable, and the regular renegotiation of the Compromise (scheduled every 10 years) predictably brought about renewed constitutional crises.

The pressures posed by the Slav nationalities in the empire were also rising and the Vienna government had increasingly to engage in a fine balancing act to hold the situation under control. It should not be forgotten that Austria was dominated by its German population, who considered it their prerogative to maintain a dominant position. Yet the necessity of placating the Slavs required implementation of reforms in their favour. This, in turn, was sure to result in a negative reaction from the German population. A heightened sense of vulnerability on the part of Austria's Germans led them increasingly to doubt the court's dedication to advancing the interests of their own kin. The reforms thus implemented were partial and often reversed, owing to the competing pressures of national groups on the government.

By the end of the nineteenth century it was clear that tensions between the nationalities of the empire would sooner or later force stronger changes in the empire's structure. The common expectation was that these would arrive with the demise of the elderly Emperor Franz Joseph, placing growing pressures on the heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand d'Este.

The heir to the throne surrounded himself with a group of advisers who analysed, debated and developed proposals for imperial reform. The so-called Belvedere Circle was a heterogeneous collective of young conservatives and representatives of national minorities (chiefly from Hungary), who strove to preserve the empire's threatened position in the face of radicalizing social forces. Their efforts centred on devising a federal structure for the empire, one that would be able to meet the demands of radical nationalisms in the country and, at the same time, preserve the empire as such.[39]

The debate within the circle was significantly influenced by the ideas of Aurel Popovici, a Romanian from Hungary, who joined the group after being exiled for his reformist views.[40] In 1906, Popovici published his *Die Vereinigte Staaten von Grossösterreich*,[41] in which he renounced the Compromise of 1867, proposing instead a federalist structure for the whole of the monarchy. Its territory was to be divided into 15 federal units joined together by strong centralistic elements. His aim was to restore Austria to its former power status, resolve its nationality question and avert the spectre of potential future Russian influence over the monarchy's Slavs. The major challenge here was the implicit degradation of the status of Hungarians and Germans in such arrangements, which was always unlikely to go uncontested.

This broad view was apparently shared by the heir to the throne as well. One of the most interesting works of the Belvedere Circle was its manifesto

for the Austrian people,[42] which was drafted by the director of the Archduke's military chancellery, Alexander von Brosch, and presented as the plan Franz Ferdinand would follow after his succession to the throne.

The basic objective of the plan was to strengthen the cohesive forces of empire, implying a stronger position for the crown and a lesser status of Hungary, now levelled with all other imperial nationalities. Essentially, federalization was to be carried out along ethnic territorial lines, more or less consistent with Popovici's proposal. The federal structure was to be dominated by a strong central power: Franz Ferdinand intended to end the permanent constitutional conflict in the country, restore the empire to its pre-1867 homogeneity and regain Austria's former glory as a great power within the Concert of Europe. To this purpose, a series of legal tricks was concocted to enable the ascending monarch to avoid an oath of loyalty to the Hungarian constitution. Avoiding the oath would allow him to carry out the envisaged reform. Indeed, the manifesto even stipulated the potential use of force, if necessary.

The aim of the Belvedere Circle was to safeguard the monarchy and not the leading role of Germans, as would have been hoped for by the pan-Germans. While Franz Ferdinand's death prevented realization of any such plans, the work of the group evidences quite clearly that rather than striving to maintain a German hold on Austria, the monarchy was striving to maintain Austria's hold on all its nationalities – not just the Germans but the Czechs, Poles, Slovenians and the increasingly confident Magyars. Similar attitudes were apparent across the cabinets of Franz Joseph, which showed a preference for fostering the empire over advancing the interests of the German population.

Pan-German plans for Central Europe would at the very least have made Austria-Hungary a junior partner to Germany, if not annexed altogether. These were demonstrably not in line with the interests and policies of the Austrian throne and government.

THE PAN-GERMAN REVIVAL

In the run up to World War I, the focal point of the debate over Central Europe was Schönerer's *Deutscher Klub* in Vienna.[43] The club became a centre for various groups of German nationalists and on 19 September 1914, at an event organized by the club, the chairman of the *Alldeutschen Verband*, Heinrich Class, introduced his 'Six Point Program' for Austria-Hungary. While many of his propositions evoked a mixed response, point five – advocating customs and economic union with Germany – met with general acclaim.[44] From then on, proposals for actuation of such a union became virtually the sole theme of debates in the club.[45]

The German National Union[46] (*Der Deutsche Nationalverband*) was the first political organization that actively promoted the idea of a Central Europe.[47] In the days after the outbreak of the war, Gustav Gross, the chairman of the union, sent its members a memorandum in which he outlined a comprehensive programme: political union with Germany was to be established and recognized in the constitution, while economic union under a customs parliament was to be created, with the German language elevated to the role of state language.[48] His letter met with enthusiasm from union members, who responded to Gross's memorandum with their own proposals for how the union should be achieved.[49] While the usual problem of reaching consensus over an exact form for Central Europe persisted in this group as well, several members suggested in their written replies that the union should insist on German leadership of Central Europe.[50]

German ambassador Tschirschky reported to his superiors in Berlin on 1 September 1914 that the idea of a customs integration with Germany[51] was gaining traction in Austrian society.[52] Indeed, the proposal resonated not only among the pan-German members of the Viennese parliament[53] but also in the daily newspapers[54] in the early months of the war.

A flurry of pan-German concepts calling for union with Germany was published in this period. The first formulation of the pan-German idea of Central Europe to attract major public attention was Heinrich Class's 'Denkschrift zum deutschen Kriegsziel', published 28 August 1914.[55] In an outburst of feeling based on the new unity to be found between Austria-Hungary and Germany, Austrian pan-Germans called for union on political grounds and not just for economic reasons. Professor Eugen Philippovich, an Austrian German political economist and one of the foremost advocates of closer relations with Germany, wrote: 'We wish for the union not only for economic reasons, but also because it will naturally strengthen the position of the Germans in Austria.'[56]

Some went so far as to claim that political union with Germany was necessary in order to help Austrian Germans 'fight the second war with German-hating Slavs and Magyars'.[57] Joint manifestos on the endangered position of Austrian Germans within their own state were written by pan-German members of parliaments in both countries.[58] The language used was particularly charged: 'The most beautiful state treaty would be one sheet of paper against a Slavic majority and Slavophil orientation of the government in Austria.'[59]

Interestingly, the expression 'Central Europe' did not feature in these documents exclusively, as write-ups typically focused primarily on internal reforms within Austria-Hungary;[60] it appears alongside expressions such as economic union (*wirtschaftliche Vereinigung*), economic rapprochement

(*wirtschafliche Annäherung*) or customs union (*Zollunion*). The necessity of forging the unity and kinship of a German nation divided into two states was over-emphasized. Tediously long expressions using the names of both states were used alongside references to the German nation as one unit. The importance of Austria in such schemes was typically highlighted by assertions that it was 'the bearer of German culture' or 'medium of German supremacy in the East'.[61] Austrian pan-Germans now 'felt German again', and took advantage of a lighter hand from the censor to voice their grievances and reassert their identity.

Many proposals,[62] as suggested above, stemmed from envisaged internal reform of the monarchy: Austria was to reassert its former German character and the Dual Monarchy was to be remodelled to increase Austria's relative power.[63] Closer military and economic alliance with Germany was discussed only after proposals for the reassertion of Austria's German character were laid out and the wider Central European economic area was finally alluded to, highlighting the envisaged role of Austria in the further expansion of influence as the German power in the East.[64] A typical example arrived with the ideas of Alois Brandt, a Bohemian German academic. In his 16-page treatise addressing German demands for the reorganization of Austria after the war, he spent nine pages discussing internal reforms in Austria, devoted two pages to the restructuring of Austria-Hungary, a further two pages on the future relationship with Germany, and two more pages on relationships with neighbouring states, including proposals for a Central European economic area.[65]

On the other hand, an almost equal body of Austrian-German writing on Central Europe fell firmly in line with the definition of Central Europe as the union of Austria-Hungary and Germany, emphasizing its German character; essentially, a replacement notion for 'Deutschland'. Edmund Steinacker's analysis of such proposals during January 1916[66] observed that they typically embraced two elements: military alliance and economic union. Such concepts reasserted the need for a close alliance of the two empires in an envisioned post-war world comprised of enlarged and antagonistic economic areas. Authors were conscious of the lesser economic and military strength of Austria-Hungary compared to Germany and were careful to portray the important role Austria could play in mediating any future alliances radiating to the south-east of Europe or even the Middle East.[67] Sustaining the Dual Monarchy's sovereignty was a non-negotiable condition even for Austrian German writers in the early wartime debate over the concept of Central Europe.

Yet it was only after the publication of Naumann's book that *Mitteleuropa* became a real buzzword. The number of works on Central Europe published

within just a few months soared following publication of this iconic book. Broadly, they can be divided into three groups: works endorsing and building upon Naumann's concept; critiques of his work; and works of authors proposing alternative concepts within the context of the debate that had hereby been triggered.

It was also at this point that the discourse over Central Europe transcended its traditional pan-German boundaries and spilled over into daily parlance. Authors outside this narrow movement entered the discourse in a manner that unsettled the established characteristics of the debate. Central Europe was paired with a multitude of synonyms, such as the above-mentioned economic or customs union. The economic line of argument became particularly pronounced and popular, as it did not contradict Austria's political sovereignty and was considered a necessary addition to the military alliance, with a post-war return to free trade now deemed non-feasible.

Authors in the first category would typically firmly assert their belief in the German character of Central Europe: 'The historical area, in which the German nation developed and primarily operated, we call Central Europe.'[68]

As such, they included Germany and Austria-Hungary within Central Europe and alluded to the option of potentially extending its reach, contingent upon future economic developments. After Naumann, World War I was presented as the instrumental event in forging a future Central Europe.[69]

Some, like Alfred Gürtler, took it upon themselves to elaborate the internal processes of Naumann's construct. Gürtler's work is exceptional for its comprehensiveness and complexity, as well as its legalistic rather political line of enquiry. He focused on the legal underpinnings of the Dual Monarchy, especially the Pragmatic Sanction,[70] the Compromise of 1867 and its later renegotiation, for Gürtler concluded that when these legal norms are analysed and compared to Naumann's proposal, Austria-Hungary already constituted a small version of Central Europe.[71] In his conclusions, he asserted that organizational schemes developed in Austria-Hungary should become the model for Central Europe. Thus Central Europe would offer the solution for the monarchy's chief problem – national tensions – and the monarchy would offer a solution for the chief problem of Central Europe – its organizational structure. Gürtler further elaborated his ideas in later works, proposing a model for the future customs union of Germany and Austria-Hungary built upon existing legal norms in Austria-Hungary.[72]

Yet, not all works building on Naumann were oriented towards putting the concept into practice. Some of them, like Karl Schneider's 1916 *Mitteleuropa als Kulturbegriff*,[73] were also highly academic works, introducing a layer of philosophical reasoning behind the idea of Central Europe.

Schneider started by defining it as a combination of Germany and Austria-Hungary. This central state union (*Zentraler Staatenbund*) was later to be enlarged with the addition of Bulgaria and Turkey.[74] Yet cultural unity first needed to be achieved within Central Europe, as it was not only to be a state union (in the classical nation-state sense) but the 'first line of military defence' in any future fight against Russia. Russia was cast as the polar other when set against Central Europe, determined to extinguish the beacon of pure culture that this new order would represent. Schneider's original gloss for the scheme was his concept for a 'new Christianity', which Central Europe would embody in its role as a new cultural form. Schneider's novel take on the historical mission of Central Europe was otherwise accompanied by relatively repetitive and routine insistences on the central role for Austria-Hungary in mobilizing any new political union to project its power to Asia and Africa. Yet, between the lines, it becomes obvious that for Schneider the value of Austria was in providing a land bridge for further expansion.

Finally, Austrian authors also elaborated practical proposals for implementing the Central Europe idea, aimed at influencing and guiding policy-makers. An interesting addition to this part of the debate was the *Denkschrift aus Deutsch-Österreich*[75] of Austrian historian, Heinrich Friedjung.[76] Friedjung was one of the earliest adherents of Central Europe: in 1880 he had co-authored the programme of the Austrian German People's Party (*Die Deutsche Volkspartei*), which incorporated the idea of a Central European economic union.[77] Proposing a Central European Union between Germany and Austria-Hungary, Friedjung had openly championed Austrian-German preponderance in the Dual Monarchy. Wider union with the German Empire should have been, in the first place, German in its national character. The first step would have been an immediate creation of a customs union for at least 25 years, initiated by the Bavarian king, as a mediator between the Hohenzollerns and the Habsburgs. So as to avoid censorship, the paper was only sent to 200 carefully selected and influential politicians. A unique feature of Friedjung's proposal is the fact that it was the collective outcome of the group of Central Europe theorists led by Josepf Maria Baernreither, a conservative ethnic German legislator from Bohemia, which included Eugen Philippovich, Michael Hainisch and Hans Übersberger. It was also one of very few works on Central Europe by Austrian-German authors that attracted the serious interest of German policy-makers.[78]

CENTRAL EUROPE THE AUSTRIAN WAY

Not all Austrian-German authors agreed with Naumann. The Austrian socialist community was an especially fertile ground for his critics. Foremost

of these was Karl Renner, who usually wrote on Central Europe under his pseudonym, Karl Kautsky. Renner had written on the subject of customs unions, using the notion of Central Europe, even before Naumann's book was published.[79] He rejected Naumann on ideological grounds.

Renner viewed Naumann's proposal as a capitalist plot, one which would certainly not lead to a 'United States of Central Europe';[80] rather, it was just another political construct promoting the interests of large capitalists. He observed that Naumann's starting point was the perceived detrimental effects of high customs duties levied by other countries for German industry. Kautsky insisted that all Naumann really had in mind were the interests of large industries, for whose purpose he devised protection in the form of a larger economic zone, one from which the large industries of other countries would be excluded. Renner reckoned that, by doing so, the larger domestic market would be ring-fenced to the detriment of the population, as large producers would be able to maintain high prices and even monopolies, building trusts and cartels. Thus Naumann's proposal, instead of eliminating the negative effects of foreign capitalist influences, would cement in place the negative effects of domestic ones.[81] He insisted that it was not Naumann but proponents of a 'workers' democracy' who were the true advocates of a 'United States of Europe' and had been for half a century.[82]

In conclusion, his critique suggested:

> Should the Central European State Union ever be realized, it could only be a transitional stage. For the very same tendencies, which facilitate its creation, must bring its further enlargement in the direction of a global union.[83]

Renner had also voiced his critique at a meeting of Austrian and German social democrats in January 1916[84] and many of his colleagues agreed with him. At the meeting, speakers avoided any mention of Central Europe, preferring to refer to an economic rapprochement (*wirtschaftliche Annäherung*), even though they would have used the notion previously; just like Renner. They were now clearly dissociating themselves from the political baggage that the word *Mitteleuropa* now carried.[85]

Renner was not the only critic of Naumann's concept. The most radical pan-Germans were also unconvinced by his scheme and accused Naumann of being insufficiently ambitious and excessively accommodating of the small nations in the region.[86] Conversely, some of his most outspoken critics came from the representatives of the small nations – Tomáš Gariggue Masaryk, to name but one – his *The New Europe: The Slav Standpoint*[87] was pitched directly against Naumann's proposal.

Many authors aired their definitions and visions of Central Europe before the public in the noisy debate following the publication of Naumann's work. While the bulk of the discussion was led by Naumann's supporters and opponents, there were also those who offered visions for Central Europe of their own.

One of these authors was Erwin Hanslik, who argued that Central Europe was not an area with set boundaries but a transitional area between the East and the West. These two anti-poles represented in Hanslik's view opposing geographical, climatic and cultural characteristics, and Central Europe would be the area of their transition. Hanslik contrasted the bourgeois culture of the West and the backward feudal structures of the East; the industrial society of the West and rural society of the East; the maritime climate of the West and the continental climate of the East, etc. The net effect of such transitions delimited his Central Europe in a geographical area whose coastal outposts were Trieste, Odessa and Danzig.[88]

Hugo Hassinger presented a dynamic model for developing a Central Europe as defined by its geographic and socio-political characteristics. His Central Europe consisted of two components – a core defined by Germanic culture (consisting of Germany, Austria-Hungary and Switzerland) and the Low Countries; and a periphery, which, while falling under the influence and supervision of the core, was located around the lower Danube basin and to the south of it. Hassinger, like Gürtel, insisted that Austria-Hungary served as an ideal model for the future political organization of the space, which would drive its future economic prosperity from its positional centrality – allowing access to sea lines of trade as well as controlling a ground route to the Middle East.[89]

However, these independent voices were peripheral to the main discourse of Central Europe, which had by then become firmly associated with the notion of a projected military, economic and political alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary, one that was to be dominated by the Germans and expanded south-east down the Danube, should an opportunity arise.

This association was so strong that Albrecht Penck, at the time a geography professor at the University of Vienna, decided to drop mention of the notion in his geographical works, suggesting that it had now become unfit for the purpose of geographical differentiation.[90]

As negotiations on a customs union between Germany and Austria-Hungary progressed in 1916 and 1917, more and more practically oriented studies of its likely effects, processes of conversion, individual product groups, etc., were undertaken.[91] The conviction that the economic future of Austria-Hungary depended on a customs union with Germany was now

deep-seated[92] and academics as well as politicians now debated the details rather than the principle of such unification.[93] However, these tended to avoid employing the notion of Central Europe, by now firmly associated with characteristics assigned to it in the post-Naumann discourse, instead often opting for replacement terms such as customs rapprochement (*zollpolitische Annäherung*), customs union (*Zollbund*), economic association (*Wirtschaftsverband*) and others.

Economic reasoning behind the idea of an enlarged Central Europe was gathering strength in Austria. Yet, rather than simply endorsing the idea of a customs union, authors promoted Austria-Hungary as a gateway to the East, emphasizing the importance of the Danube and the place of the Balkans in any new customs union. As Dietrich Berl, director of the coal mining company, Berl, wrote in a letter to the German Embassy:

> It goes without saying that everyone, without wanting to be somewhat led by emotional moments, would like to see Germany and Austria-Hungary in one united customs area. It would probably be of still broader significance, if also the Balkan states belonged to this customs union after the conclusion of peace, so that there would be one united customs area from the North and Baltic Seas to the Black Sea.[94]

The weight of Berl's proposal was centred on the 'customs area' ('Zollgebiet') rather than Central Europe. He was also ultimately concerned about the balance of power in the post-war global market and saw forging such an economic bloc as the only chance for Austria-Hungary to rival Britain and France.

In Hungary, where these concepts were far less prevalent, former Prime Minister Ladislaus von Lukács published his concept in *Pester Lloyd* in spring 1916. In his article he suggested that a customs union of Germany, Hungary and Austria was the ideal constellation to counter the likely teaming up of other countries against the Central Powers in the post-war economic arena. Its bottom line was its contained warning against potential future customs duty war:

> It is possible that Allied Powers – through hate they all feel against us – just as in general politics, also in the area of economic policy will be carried away by their own interests in the clashing direction, which pitched them against us, forging an unnatural economic policy union.[95]

Interestingly, while Lukács referred to Central Europe in the title of his article ('Die wirtschaftliche Zukunft Mitteleuropas'), in the text itself he preferred to

use the expression customs union (*Zollunion*). This suggests that he used *Mitteleuropa* as a reference to its geographical area, the site of his envisaged bloc, and *Zollunion* as the title of the proposed construct. He was also careful to highlight that each component state of the customs union maintain its full sovereignty.

This pattern is present in many proposals published during the latter part of the war: emphasis on economic integration in an anticipated future customs war, the highlighting of the role that Austria might play within the construct, and reference to customs union or a derivative notion instead of Central Europe.[96]

One explanation for such term avoidance is political correctness. Given the combustible national mix of Austria-Hungary, escalating tensions during the war, and the longstanding governmental policy of capping nationalist language, this requirement simply precluded the use of Central Europe as soon as it became widely associated with the vision of German domination over Austro-Hungarian non-German nationalities. However, an alternative explanation offers itself as we read through the Austrian-German concepts – the notion was simply not in line with the ambitions of Austrian Germans at the height of the war, when their eyes were set on a south-eastward expansion well beyond what was possible to include under any heading of Central Europe:

> The World War forged together the history of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy and that of the German Empire, outlines that foreshadow future development have already appeared. In the Balkans and the Middle East, new composite parts are already lining up organically to present themselves as a large economic body, whose name 'Central Europe' is already outdated, because its borders already reach further, to Asia.[97]

Austrian-German authors emphasized Austria-Hungary's importance in the envisaged drive to south-east Europe, the Middle East, the Mediterranean or even Africa. The view that the two empires could and should have ambition beyond the boundaries of Europe was widespread in 1916 and 1917; and consonant with prevailing territorial and colonial ambition within Europe generally.

The discussion remained dense along the more technical lines until the last months of the war. The debate revolved around how to model, organize and run the customs and economic union, rather than turning on the questions of a larger philosophical or ideological context for the plan. It also narrowed down in scope as the ambitions of Austrians became more sober in the light of the development of the war. The emphasis shifted back to the partnership

of Germany and Austria-Hungary rather than visionary exploits to the south-east.[98]

In May 1918, when the two emperors signed agreements on military and economic union, Central Europe supporters rejoiced at this progress towards their theoretical schemes. However, only six months later, the outcome of the war reversed the trajectory completely.

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Overall, the debate over the notion of Central Europe during wartime differs from the German experience. Naumann's book, as in Germany, prompted a boom in Austrian publications, whether these were elaborating the practicalities of creating a German–Austro-Hungarian union, examining its philosophical background, criticizing it, or presenting alternatives. Yet employment of the notion was somewhat patchier than was the case in the contemporaneous German debate. Alternative notions used by individual authors included mainly the following expressions: customs union, economic union, and Germany–Austria. The specific characteristics that influenced participants in the Austrian discourse of Central Europe can explain this obvious discrepancy.

First of all, pan-German authors saw in Central Europe a tool to foster and further the German role in Austria-Hungary. Pre-Naumann concepts were, in fact, often intertwined with proposals for the reorganization of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[99] In some cases, they were directly pitched against the Slavs and Magyars.[100] Here, pan-German authors were trying to resolve the longstanding problem of the deteriorating standing of Germans within the monarchy and the growth in parallel national tensions through the assertion of a Central Europe dominated by a German majority character and distinguished by a Germanic character.

Second, the role of Austria as an organizational model, a gateway to south-eastern Europe and a bridge to the Middle East, was highlighted as Austrian authors struggled to establish structural equality with Germany within the envisaged union. Particular attention was paid to highlighting the sovereign preservation of both empires, as 'Central Europe' was often seen – understandably – as a challenge to Austria's independence. It would be relatively easy to dismiss these statements as mere compliance with political correctness and efforts to avoid censorship. However, it seems more plausible that Austrian-German authors actually had ambitions for their empire in the projected union and beyond.

Finally, such reasoning would also help to explain why, later on in the war, references to customs union or economic rapprochement – the negotiations

between Germany and Austria-Hungary – were used in many works instead of *Mitteleuropa*. The notion of Central Europe, influenced by the German (as much as any local) debate, was increasingly interpreted as a project dominated by the German Empire, where Austria was just a junior partner, a sort of German periphery. A strong association was observed here by several authors outside the pan-German movement, who consciously dropped the notion conspicuously because of such attendant baggage.[101] The German mainstream was certainly not in line with the ambitions of Austrian Germans at the height of the war in 1916–17, who saw Austria-Hungary reaching out to the Balkans and beyond.

CHALLENGERS: FROM KRAMÁŘ TO MASARYK

During the early twentieth century, 'Central Europe' also entered the parlance of Austro-Hungarian minorities.[102] However, like many of their German compatriots, national minority writers in Austria-Hungary were preoccupied with a constitutional restructuring of the monarchy rather than with grand designs for enlarged economic areas.

The best known of these authors was obviously Aurel Popovici, whose work has already been discussed. However, there were many others across the decades, from a variety of ethnic backgrounds – from the Czech František Palacký to the Slovene Bogumil Vošnjak.[103] Works of these two writers best demonstrate how the attitude of the leaders of small nations to the monarchy changed over time: while in 1848 Palacký insisted that if Austria did not exist it would have to be invented for the sake of its small nations,[104] Vošnjak openly called for its dismemberment in 1917.[105]

While the minorities did not really make a sizeable contribution to the discourse over Central Europe with any autochthonous concepts, their involvement with the notion is an intriguing and highly significant story, especially since it was their understanding and employment of the term that would essentially shape the subsequent interpretation of the Entente countries.

Karel Kramář was one of the leaders of the Young Czech Party and a member of the Viennese parliament. Kramář was a liberal nationalist and used his strong political connections to pursue a policy of cooperation with the central authorities in Vienna. He resigned as chairman when party policy shifted towards the more radical positions opposing central power in 1914. This did not save him from being tried and sentenced for treason in 1916, only to be released under Emperor Karl I's general amnesty of 1917.

In 1899 Kramář published one of his many articles in *Revue de Paris* to warn against the threat to the sovereignty of Austria posed by any alliance with Germany, potentially resulting in Austria's *de facto* annexation.[106]

In what was the only one of his articles to be published in a foreign newspaper, he highlighted that the empowerment of the Czechs was essential to keeping the spectre of pan-Germanism in check: otherwise 'Germany would become the sole mistress of the destinies of the entire world.'[107]

The archival evidence from his 1916 trial suggests that, through his articles in foreign newspapers, Kramář had become the preferred contact for several foreign journalists covering the Austro-Hungarian and pan-German questions.[108] The most prominent of these was Andre Chéradame, who would later himself become an influential source of information on pan-Germanism and conceptions of Central Europe for Entente policy-makers.[109]

Kramář helped Chéradame from 1897 in gaining essential contacts for his research on pan-Germanism. Correspondence confiscated for the purposes of the trial shows that they were in frequent contact, with Chéradame frequently alluding to their common programme and shared ideas for opposing pan-Germanism. Letters suggest that Kramář was Chéradame's ears on developments inside the monarchy.[110] Chéradame's works, as essential mediations of Kramář, will be discussed in the following chapter, since they were instrumental to Anglo-US policy interpretations of the Central European concept.

Kramář opposed the idea of a German-dominated Central Europe. In May 1914, even before the war started, he had proposed the creation of a Slavic Empire headed by the Russian emperor and stretching from the Pacific Ocean to the forests of Šumava. The Bohemian crown-lands of the Austrian Empire, Prussian Silesia, the Lusatian areas of Saxony, and Slovak districts of Hungary, should have been its westernmost outposts.[111] However, the Russian revolution of 1917 swept away the cornerstone of Kramář's scheme, and he was under arrest at this time. He would eventually go on to become the first prime minister of an independent Czechoslovak Republic in 1918.

The idea of Central Europe as presented by Friedrich Naumann occasioned heightened debate among the leaders of Austria-Hungary's smaller nationalities. Naumann met Slovak politician, Milan Hodža (a former member of the Belvedere Circle), only days after publishing his book. As Hodža later recollected, this was the interaction that pushed him to develop his own idea for Central Europe, one he would later publish during World War II.[112] Yet that is where the positives began and ended – Hodža and Naumann apparently could not agree even on the most elemental aspects of the concept.[113] Hodža's Central Europe was to be a federation of independent, predominantly agrarian, Danube valley states that excluded Germany.

Given the ongoing struggle of Slav nationalities for equality under the monarchy, it would only have been natural for this national component to

oppose a political and economic supra-state agenda that was perceived to foster future German domination.[114] This was, indeed, true, yet there were those who were willing to lend Naumann an ear as his concept ostensibly equally provided for the facilitation of national emancipation within Austria-Hungary.

In Bohemia, for at least two decades, many Czechs had differentiated between 'our Germans' and 'imperial Germans';[115] while they led domestic struggle against the former, the latter were often portrayed as potential political allies. This opinion was broadly replicated among Czech liberals and social democrats, who maintained vibrant links with their imperial German counterparts.[116]

Bohumír Šmeral, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Party in Bohemia, was one such politician.[117] In fact, he and other leading social democrats had been in touch with Naumann even before the publication of his seminal work, expressing an interest in the furtherance of closer ties between Germany and Austria-Hungary.[118] Naumann informed the German Foreign Office about Šmeral's interest in the idea and the latter was invited immediately for a meeting at the German Embassy in Vienna.[119] Šmeral sought publishing opportunities to present his views in Germany, something Naumann and the embassy were happy to help him with. On the one hand, he presented the opinion that rising Czech nationalism was not the only option on the table for his compatriots and there were potential benefits to be sought from the envisaged relationship between the two empires. On the other hand, Šmeral wanted to educate the German public to understand that Czechs were not necessarily their enemies but could work towards common cultural and economic goals. He also called for imperial German members of parliament to influence their Austrian-German partner parties to work towards national harmony in Bohemia.[120]

Naumann visited Prague in April 1916 and held a meeting with several reform-minded Czech politicians, including Šmeral and Zdeněk Tobolka – a member of the Reichsrat and a leader of the Young Czech Party. However, the Czechs left the meeting disappointed. In retrospect, Tobolka recognized that it had been Naumann's visit that convinced the Czechs they could not rely on imperial Germans to help them advance their interests. In his recollection, the Czechs were disappointed that Naumann had little empathy for their national ambitions within the framework of his Central European political construct.[121]

This highlights that reactions to the idea of a German-led Central Europe were not necessarily negative, at least to start with. At least some leaders of nationalities within Austria-Hungary had been prepared to contemplate the idea if it offered them space to further their own interests. But, looked at in

another way, Naumann had spectacularly missed an opportunity to enlist Austro-Hungarian nationalities on his side. In fact, they turned into the bitterest opponents of his idea for Central Europe. And, most crucially, they would be the ones who would be listened to by the Entente governments.

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By the time Naumann's *Central Europe* was published, some of the foremost political leaders of Austro-Hungarian Czechs and Slovaks were already lobbying for complete dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, while exiled to the Entente countries.[122]

Their leader was Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, a member of the Austrian parliament and a professor at Charles University in Prague. Early in the war, and well before the Central Europe movement picked up, Masaryk decided that the dismemberment of the monarchy and establishment of an independent nation-state was the only way to assert the national rights of his nation.[123]

Considering that Britain was likely to wield the most decisive future political influence,[124] he enlisted the help of his friends, Wickham Steed and R. W. Seton-Watson, to try and win support for an 'independent Bohemia'.[125] In a secret meeting in Rotterdam during October 1914 he outlined his arguments to Seton-Watson for the first time.[126] The reasoning behind dismemberment of Austria-Hungary was still relatively crude at this stage but Masaryk was already maintaining that '[t]o weaken or crush Austria-Hungary is the effectual way of weakening Germany'.[127] Seton-Watson wrote up a memorandum for the Foreign Office,[128] although this did not gain much traction at the time.

It was the developing debate over Central Europe that allowed Masaryk to reframe his argument in a language more conducive to attracting the attention of British policy-makers. Essentially, Masaryk bought into the discourse of Central Europe from the other side: i.e., he presented his plan for an independent Bohemia as the perfect antidote to schemes for a German-dominated Central Europe,[129] presented either as a remorseless *Drang nach Osten* or the 'Berlin–Bagdad axis', which the British establishment was already all too familiar with. Both notions implied a challenge to the interests of the British Empire. Masaryk consistently used this inherent, if intermittent, threat to support plans for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary in communication with the British government. For other audiences, as discussed below, he varied his nuances to target their individual concerns.

Shortly after his exile to London, in March 1915, Masaryk produced his first concise document written specifically for the Foreign Office.

A memorandum entitled *Independent Bohemia*[130] foresaw the respective creation of independent Polish, Czechoslovak and Serbo-Croat states as collectively constituting a barrier against any 'German march on Constantinople and Bagdad'. Identifying Germany as the continental power – opposed to England's sea-based power[131] – he argued that:

> As a Continental, overpopulated, Power Germany presses constantly on Austria and uses her. Bismarck's policy towards Austria is the diplomatic and political formulation of the constant pressure of the Prussian North on the Austrian South. Lagarde, the father of modern Pan-Germanism, formulated the German programme: 'Colonisation of Austria by Germany.' By colonising Austria Germany aspires to colonise the Balkans and thus to reach Constantinople and Bagdad. This 'Drang nach Osten' explains the policy of Berlin towards the Magyars, towards Roumania, towards Bulgaria, and towards Turkey. The watchword Berlin–Bagdad denotes the real aim of Germany, the direction of the 'Drang nach Osten'. The alliance with Turkey in the war is the final result of the German invasion in Constantinople and in Asia Minor (financial policy, railways, schools and hospitals, etc.).[132]

Masaryk proceeded to describe Austria, a colony of Germany, as an artificial state destined for progressive dismemberment, from which an independent Poland, Bohemia and Serbo-Croatia should arise. The latter two would then be interconnected by a corridor running between Austria and Hungary, one which would possess economic as well as military significance. Thus a 'Slavic barrier coincident with the interest of the allies in Asia'[133] would be formed to stop the eastward march of the German Empire. The employment of 'Central Europe' was not yet pronounced in the document, with the elected emphasis placed rather upon *Drang nach Osten*. The boom of the Central Europe debate later on in the year would eventually better facilitate Masaryk's argument, as it provided a direct and imminent antithesis to his proposals.

In his next memorandum, *At the Eleventh Hour*,[134] published in November 1915 just after Naumann's book, Masaryk called for a clear strategic plan to counter plans for a pan-Germanist Central Europe: it was suggested that the Entente should present its own Central European plan involving the forging of a series of independent nations between Germany and Russia. In this work, Masaryk used the notion of Central Europe to describe and characterize 'the German political programme'[135] that might result in a Berlin–Baghdad axis, warning that Germany was close to achieving such an aim:

> This grand scheme of Berlin Baghdad was drawn up and elaborated by the Pan-German politicians; there are numerous authors of untiring energy, who popularised these political aspirations realised finally in the present war, for Germany controls practically at this moment the area of the Pan-German 'Central Europe'.[136]

The only way to prevent the materialization of such a plan and German world domination was, in Masaryk's view, to create a line of independent Slav states: Poland, Bohemia and Greater Serbia.[137]

When addressing the French government, in 1916, Masaryk employed a somewhat different, but rather more refined, portrayal of an independent Bohemia as the polar opposite to plans for a pan-German Central Europe. In preparation for his meeting with Aristide Briand in February of that year, Masaryk penned his *L'Europe centrale pangermanique, ou une Bohême libre?*,[138] which painted the threatening picture of a unified pan-German Central Europe as the future neighbour of France, a prospect that had to be thwarted. As the only real alternative, an independent Bohemia, together with Poland and a Yugoslav state, would help France contain this aggressive prospect through their constitution of an 'effective barrier against Prussia ... from which the Allies would profit politically as well as economically'.[139] Finally, he asserted that in its fight against Germany, 'Bohemia is disposed towards close alliance with France and Russia'.[140]

Finally, in communication with US President Woodrow Wilson, Masaryk yet again tailored his portrayal of the spectre of Central Europe to suit that constituency. Masaryk actually finalized his *New Europe* (first printed in 1918) *en route* to the United States. In this version, any realization of an enlarged Central Europe was represented as a negation of the rights of small nations to self-determination[141] – a notion cherished and promoted by Wilson. So the realization of independent nation-states in lieu of any pan-German Central Europe could only be regarded as the ultimate exaltation of such a principle. Masaryk argued vigorously that, as per Wilson's self-proclaimed principles, he had to recognize that a continued existence of Austria-Hungary was a negation of the freedom of nations: 'an ordinary president must not know that, but Wilson as President is bound to express in his war program the moral judgement of history'.[142]

In all three of these lines of presentation, the argument is constant and consistent; it is just the emphasis that changes. For example, we can locate the threats posed by the Berlin–Baghdad railway plan in the memorandum tailored for the French government,[143] as well as in communications with United States officials,[144] but the focus was on the aspect that Masaryk considered closest to the heart of his audience. In the case of the French, this

was the looming threat of a large enemy bloc on its borders; when addressing United States officials, he focused on the strategic advantages Germans would gain at the expense of a US-allied British Empire, all the time playing to the logic of the self-determination rights of nations advocated by President Wilson.

In summary, Masaryk portrayed a negative image of a pan-German Central Europe to argue that dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was the only alternative that would safeguard the vital interests of the allies. This message was augmented by the delivery of a coordinated, supporting narrative from other members of the Czech independence movement in communication with the allied governments. The same stark contrasts – between a dark, expansionist pan-German Central Europe and a bright assembly of aspiring small nations within the imperial rump of Austria-Hungary – are articulated in the memoranda[145] sent to the British Foreign Office by Emanuel Voska,[146] Edvard Beneš and Štefan Osuský.[147] Close coordination is a hallmark of these works, with many including exactly the same maps of the intended future Bohemian state.[148] Milan R. Štefánik[149] also used the same basis of articulation in his communication with the Italian government,[150] as did Beneš with the French.[151]

However, none of the allied governments was actually that keen on the binary choice presented to them by Masaryk and his colleagues. Sure, the allies would have preferred to detach Austria-Hungary from Germany and see its development as a European counterweight. But the efforts of Masaryk and his wingmen, especially Edvard Beneš,[152] only gained the genuine support of the allies in the latter stages of the war.

Masaryk's fortunes changed after negotiations broke down with Austria-Hungary in the spring of 1918. In May 1918, Beneš wrote a letter to the Foreign Office in which he reacted to the aftermath of the Sixtus Affair[153] and the announcement of a military and economic alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary: 'The definite plan of the Central Empires is at last clear to the whole world!'[154] Proclaiming the alliance a 'new system of oppression, which places Austria-Hungary under the control of Germany',[155] he reiterated the Czech vision for the reorganization of the region. Beneš characterized it explicitly as a 'Pro-Entente Central Europe: against a German-Magyar Central Europe', underlining that if the allies were to win the war, they would need to adopt a 'policy favourable to the oppressed nations of Central Europe'.[156]

The actual effectiveness of pushing the anti-Central Europe line of argument as the most likely means of breaking up the Austro-Hungarian Empire might reasonably be questioned. Looking at the timeline of decision-making in Paris, London and Washington, it seems that by far the more

persuasive argument in Masaryk's toolkit was the existence of a sizeable army of Czech and Slovak deserters and prisoners-of-war. Its units were located in France, Italy and Russia. By the end of the war, the United States government, especially, remained unconvinced about the desirability of introducing a system of small, independent nation-states, while both Masaryk and Beneš presented their own visions for a federative Central or Mid-Europe.[157] Chapter 5 will discuss these interactions in more detail; however, the bottom line of these considerations was the observation that allied leaders were not convinced that dismemberment of Austria-Hungary was the best way to counter the threat presented by a German-led Central Europe.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

Finally, to round up this part of the story, conceptions of Central Europe gained significant traction in the Hungarian half of the multinational monarchy during the war. The 1916 Hungarian translation of Naumann's *Mitteleuropa* was printed at the height of a debate engaged in by more than 100 articles in leading Budapest newspapers that had been published since its original German publication six months earlier.[158] The Hungarian discourse on Central Europe has been well documented, especially in the works of Károly Irinyi,[159] and provides an interesting point of view as Hungarian cooperation was essential to the plan.

While many leading politicians were predictably suspicious about the proposition, seeing Naumann's Central Europe as a vehicle to establish German supremacy over Hungary, there were adherents to the concept to be found in fringe political movements. The so-called civic radicals,[160] especially, showed some enthusiasm for Naumann's proposal. Oszkár Jászi, who would later publish several theories espousing regional reorganization himself,[161] belonged to this group, believing that Hungary had much to learn from Germany. In their opinion, the union would ensure the transfer of German know-how in terms of organization of industrial production, scientific research and technology; and Hungary would benefit from an implantation of German discipline and its strong sense of duty.

On the other side of the political spectrum, Ervin Szabó, a leading social democrat, suggested that realization of the union with Germany would help shake up Hungary's ossified social structures, strengthening the influence of the bourgeoisie and sidelining the traditional feudal elites. A union would also serve as a guarantee against alleged pan-Slavist pressures and the advancing influence of Russia.[162]

Guyla Andrássy the Younger, a Hungarian liberal and nationalist, who had held various Hungarian cabinet positions and would go on to be the last

foreign minister of the Dual Monarchy in 1918, saw Naumann's scheme as potentially both economically advantageous and militarily significant[163] and suggested that such a union could offer its constituent states adequate protection as well as promise a post-war balance of power for Europe.[164] Another supporter of Central Europe in Hungary was Albert Apponyi, the former Hungarian Education Minister (1906–10), who had become notorious for implementing a policy of Magyarization in the Hungarian educational system.[165]

Economic lobby groups were divided. While industrial unions supported the idea of a common market, agrarian groups opposed it, since their very prosperity depended on artificially high prices for agricultural produce – a practice that would not be sustained once any customs union had been put in place. Both supporters and opponents of the plan focused their reasoning on the economic aspects of any Central European project, rather than on its political implications. General preference lay in fostering a pragmatic relationship with Germany that would see the introduction of a system of preferential custom duties, as proposed by Josef Szterényi, later to become Hungarian Trade Minister,[166] or the continuation of some form of internal customs duty to protect the internal Hungarian market and its youthful industrial sector.[167]

Yet most Hungarian authors were to reject the idea of Central Europe, warning against the pan-German threat and highlighting that in any form of union with Germany, Hungary would lose out since it could only ever play a subordinate role. This position was expressed, for example, by Péter Ágoston, the future Foreign Minister of Hungary (1919), in many of his articles penned for the *Népszava* newspaper.[168] The aim of the majority of Hungarians was to safeguard their kingdom's sovereignty, not to fall under German domination.

A WINDING PATH TO A DEAD END

The bitter disputes of 1848–9 had left Austrian Germans out in the cold, as their German brethren were gradually heading for economic and political integration. The first trade agreement between Austria and what was to become the German Empire was signed in October 1853.[169] Karl Ludwig von Bruck interpreted this event as a turning point, from which the full integration of Austria into the customs union would ensue.[170] This was certainly an optimistic assessment – any relationship between Prussia and Austria was bound to get much worse before it got better. The Austro-Prussian war in 1866 resulted only in Austria's expulsion from the customs union. However, following the foundation of the German Empire, the idea of a customs union with Austria was discussed several times in the 1880s and

1890s.[171] By the end of the century, the idea of a customs union with Germany was a familiar one in an Austro-Hungarian context but so, too, were its recognized risks.

Tschirschky had been correct in recognizing that the Austro-Hungarian government was ready to discuss a customs union with Germany in the early days of war.[172] The political calculations made in Vienna were very similar, if less structured, than those made in Germany. The Austrian policy-makers also looked to establish a strong economic bloc as a base to further project their power to the south-east. A baseline expectation was that the post-war global market would be divided into larger economic areas and the widest possible territorial footprint was needed to gain the necessary edge in any such environment. However, as had been the case in 1848, Austria was not prepared to surrender its sovereignty to Prussia, which had only become even more powerful in its latest imperial reincarnation.

If, indeed, they were ready to discuss a customs union with Germany, the Viennese ruling circles were not necessarily supportive of the idea of a German-led Central Europe, as proposed by the pan-Germans. In fact, conceptions and promotion of the idea of Central Europe were subject to official censorship imposed by the government of Prime Minister Karl von Stürgkh.[173]

From Stürgkh's point of view, the pan-German version of Central Europe was dangerous for two reasons. First, the insistence on the leading role of Germans, and the definition of Central Europe as the final unifying fate for all Germans, attracted the strong resentment of the monarchy's non-German nationals and had the potential to exacerbate already escalating national tensions. Second, Central Europe presented a threat to Austrian sovereignty, as it would likely lead to domination by the German Empire.

Stürgkh also strove actively to limit promotion of the idea of Central Europe in political circles. Stürgkh's master-stroke was his neutralization of Gustav Gross's initiative, by which the latter proposed his Central Europe programme to members of the German National Union in August 1914.[174] The letter, and the union membership's enthusiastic response to it,[175] was in marked contrast to the lack of any real effort to put such ideas into practice, despite the strong parliamentary position of the union (105 of a total 514 seats). At Stürgkh's behest, Gross not only dropped promotion of Central Europe, he also started to prevent the rest of his group from doing so in September 1914, i.e. within a month of the formulation of his Central Europe programme. Joseph Maria Baernreither[176] noted in his diary that Gross blocked all efforts for organization of proper internal discussion on various sketches of Central Europe presented by the members of the union, preventing formulation of

a common programme. Baernreither's suspicion was that Gross's change of heart had been due to his links with Stürgkh.[177]

While the official archival documentation held in the Austrian State Archive does not provide direct evidence to support Baernreither's suspicions, Gross was admittedly a close confidant of Stürgkh's. The prime minister had spoken to him to express concerns that open political discussion of Central Europe might galvanize the opposition of smaller national groups and cause upheaval in the monarchy.[178] Baernreither speculated that Gross then blocked all activity in this direction out of regard for the concerns of his close friend.[179] In his letter to the union membership on 26 October, Gross did indeed use the very same arguments to dissuade internal debate on the topic,[180] providing circumstantial evidence to support Baernreither's words.

Baernreither decided to take things into his own hands – for while Gross could block official union debate he could not stop individual members from discussing proposals for Central Europe in fora outside the union.

Baernreither and Gustav Marchet took the leadership in advocating Central Europe. The founding chairman of the German Club and a departmental director at the Trade Ministry, Richard Riedl joined Baernreither and Marchet in their efforts, as did several German National Union members of the parliament – including Robert Freissler, Stephan Licht, Joseph Redlich, Karl Urban, Heinrich Janotta and Otto Lecher. Yet rather than debating and refining its conception, the group ended up promoting the general idea of Central Europe and trying to enlist support for it in political circles.

The efforts of this group are well documented in the diaries maintained by Baernreither and Redlich,[181] especially the contacts made with political circles and decision-makers in Berlin. Early on in the war, during November 1914, Baernreither travelled to Berlin to sound out support for the idea of Central Europe. While he observed that the idea of a larger economic area was well entrenched in Berlin political circles, he was relatively pessimistic about the potential for any early rapprochement between the two empires. In his view, the interests of both Austrian and German industry clashed with the idea of a customs union, while German policy-makers had little understanding of Austrian power interests.[182] Moreover, he was already aware that the Germans were bent on a larger Central European economic area, rather than expressly landing themselves with a weak and crisis-ridden Austria-Hungary.[183] It was clear that Austria-Hungary was to be, but as one of Germany's junior allies rather than its equal partner; a position hard to accept for Vienna.

In the first six months of the war, dozens of Austrian advocates of Central Europe made the trip to Berlin – among them Riedl, Max von Tayenthal

(chairman of the Viennese Trade Chamber), and even Gross.[184] Many approached German ruling circles with definite plans in mind: for example, Richard Riedl openly suggested a customs union, with his detailed proposal for double tariffs and differential external duties.[185] However, in the absence of proper debate early in the war, these proposals tended to differ from one another quite widely. The cacophony of Austrian pro-Central Europe voices frustrated the German Foreign Office fairly quickly, with its officials suggesting that Austrian Germans should first make up their own minds at home and come up with a single proposal.[186]

At the same time, the acts and attitudes of these Austrian advocates of a Central Europe and their overtures towards Berlin irritated the Austrian government. The counsellor of the Austrian Embassy in Berlin, Gottfried zu Hohenlohe-Schillings, protested verbally against this 'second channel of diplomacy', in his meeting with German Foreign Minister Jagow.[187] However, these protests did not have much effect in stopping these 'Berlin pilgrimages' by Central Europe enthusiasts.[188] At the same time, their influence was not far-reaching: German governmental officials saw their visits as a valuable source of information but little more.[189]

By November 1914, Richard Riedl, a departmental head at the Trade Ministry, had elaborated his plan for the union of Germany, Austria-Hungary, Switzerland, Romania and part of Serbia.[190] This proposal was in line with his (already mentioned) preference for the concepts of Austrian authors awarding Austria-Hungary a role in projecting the union's power to the south-east. However, his enthusiasm for Central Europe was not necessarily shared by a majority of core members of the government in the early days of the war. Indeed, while Stürgkh's ministry looked to project its power towards the south-east and to Poland, its approach to negotiating a closer union with Germany was considerably more cautious. As demonstrated above, Stürgkh was wary of the idea of a German-led Central Europe to the point of making it a subject of censorship and personal interventions. The prospect of curbs on Austrian sovereignty, coupled with likely escalations in the conflict with non-German nationalities, was an uncomfortable one for the Vienna government.

On top of this, Stürgkh also had Hungary to take into account. There, a heightened sense of national interests dictated attitudes to the concept of Central Europe as a German-led larger political and economic entity.

István Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister in 1903–5 and 1913–17, was in favour of a customs union with Germany, but could not bring himself to agree with the idea of Central Europe as presented by Naumann: in his view, such a union would undermine Hungary's sovereignty and economic interests. He likened it to 'a larger version of Austria', which he certainly did not wish for.[191] Interestingly, Mihály Károly, Tisza's longstanding opponent, shared

his opinion on the issue. In Károly's view, Naumann's Central Europe was not a union of equals; on the contrary, it would make Hungary a vassal of the German Empire and turn it gradually into a colony.[192] Károly, a supporter of full Hungarian sovereignty, was thus never likely to favour a plan that, in his view, would place his country in yet another unequal constitutional relationship.

Prevailing opinion in Hungary was always going to be an important factor in the realization of Central Europe, whatever form it might take. Therefore the main proponents of the idea had to make an effort to get Hungarians on board. Friedrich Naumann conducted talks with prominent Hungarian politicians long before the publication of his iconic book: upon his visit to Budapest in February 1915, he discussed his ideas with Tisza and Andrassy, as well as Apponyi.[193] While Naumann's project found support from Andrassy and Apponyi, he decidedly failed to convince the most important of the three – Prime Minister Tisza. A renegotiation of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 was due in 1916 and its successful renewal became a pre-requisite for any further negotiations with the German Empire.

The first draft of the customs union treaty had been prepared as early as March 1915[194] but negotiations between Austria-Hungary and Germany got off on the wrong foot. German reports from Vienna just days before the first scheduled negotiations early in November 1915 suggested that the Austro-Hungarian government – and especially Prime Minister Stürgkh – was preoccupied with the political influence Germany would acquire within the monarchy through this deal.[195] Reports observed the 'distrust and antipathy' of the Austrian government towards Germany and even cautioned that, in the foreign policy arena, the monarchy might turn against Germany once the war was over.[196] Zöllner wrote that the Austrian court continued to maintain links with royals in enemy countries and still cherished the possibility of allying the monarchy with France, England and Russia, rather than Germany.[197]

The available archival evidence does not provide a satisfactory explanation as to why the German government disregarded such warnings[198] and proceeded to bet on the language of pan-German brotherhood in the Memorandum of 13 November 1915.[199] The Viennese government was, indeed, reportedly furious at being reduced to a 'German mark in the East' in the text of that memorandum.[200]

On the other hand, as poignantly noted by Tschirschky,[201] Vienna did not possess any viable alternatives to closer ties with Germany, so negotiations continued; however, these were characterized strictly as trade agreement negotiations by the Austrians. The files relating to the process remain archived under the classification of 'trade agreement' (*Handeslvertrag*)

negotiations,[202] while in the German archives the corresponding folders are to be located under the category of Central European Economic Federation[203] or even the European State Federation.[204] The titles of files holding corresponding documents in the Austrian State Archive avoid any reference to Central Europe or any hint of political implications in negotiations with Germany. They keep strictly to labelling these records as pertaining to the customs union negotiations, painting a functional picture of ordinary trade agreement negotiations on harmonization of trade and tariffs, etc. The Austrians actually harboured many of the same concerns as Germany – it was the opinion of many that, after the war, free market arrangements would not be restored and the world would divide into larger, mutually exclusive economic areas.[205] So, Austria-Hungary needed to take action to secure future markets for itself and the most obvious step here was to ally with Germany and secure the likely projection of economic power as far as Poland and the Balkans.[206]

The potential strengthening of economic ties with Germany was the topic of the Joint Ministerial Council on 18 June 1915, with Tisza denouncing the idea – suggesting that Germany was only interested in driving Austria-Hungary into ever greater financial and economic dependence, with further political strings attached, undermining the sovereignty and Great Power status of the monarchy.[207] This is not to say that the Central European project would have had no supporters in the Austrian government under Stürgkh – indeed, there were those who, like Richard Riedl, thought that the customs union represented the only possibility for survival of the monarchy.[208] Yet, as late as July 1915, the Stürgkh government maintained that discussion over Central Europe was undesirable and talk of a customs union premature.[209] In fact, Stürgkh's opposition to Central Europe resulted in a failed attempt to oust him, to which purpose Marchet, Baernreither and Friedjung tried, and failed, to enlist the support of the high army command in late July 1915.[210]

Records in the German archives confirm that Vienna was performing a delicate balancing act between the competing interests within the monarchy to maintain its own stability and position vis-à-vis its stronger partner in Berlin. Bethmann-Hollweg was warned not to push too hard for recognition of German superiority in the relationship, which would likely challenge the sovereignty of the Viennese court. This might have led to further destabilization of the already tense situation in the monarchy[211] and upset the balance of power in the wake of crucial renegotiations of the 1867 Compromise.[212] These renegotiations – reconvened every 10 years – were vital, as they would necessarily specify the internal and external customs policy of the monarchy.[213]

Besides having to manage its relationship with Hungary, Austria was increasingly conscious of the growing alienation of its Slavic minorities. Vienna was not unaware of the ativities of Masaryk and Beneš in London and Paris.[214] Stephan Burian, the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Minister, reportedly contemplated appeasing the Slavic minorities by emancipating their status, thus curbing the power of the Hungarians.[215] Fostering the monarchy through internal reorganization was an aim of many patriotic officials, who, once again, dusted down old plans of the Belvedere Circle.[216] Conversely, the Hungarians were sure to defend their privileges, and were probably set on asking for further advantages or concessions.[217] A successful renegotiation of internal questions between the two parts of the monarchy was the necessary precondition for progress in negotiations with Germany.[218]

In the end the Austrian government decided to proceed with negotiations towards a customs union and closer economic ties with Germany after several sector ministers[219] spoke in favour of its institution at a special ministerial conference called by Stürgkh on 24 August 1915.[220] Their arguments were linked to concerns and interests served by their respective governmental departments (industry, trade, transport, etc.): the potential advantages for Austro-Hungarian industry from the itinerant transfer of technology, an ability to participate in a wider market for producers, and better possibilities for modernization of the railway network.

<center>***</center>

In November 1915, Alexander Spitzmüller, an outspoken advocate of the Central European project, became Trade Minister in Stürgkh's government and things immediately looked up for the plan.[221] However, not only did Stürgkh continue to frustrate Spitzmüller's effort to mobilize speedy negotiations[222] but the opposition of Hungary still remained to be overcome as the main precondition to inaugurating negotiations with Germany.

Many proponents of Central Europe noted in 1915 that, after it had been linked to the renegotiations of the 1867 Compromise, the project of closer union between the monarchy and Germany was essentially stalled.[223]

The renegotiations of the Compromise started in late January 1916. Stürgkh's baseline was the maintenance of the *status quo* and a 20-year duration period for any resultant new treaty, so as to provide a more stable basis for negotiations with Germany.[224] Tisza pushed for more effective Hungarian autonomy, changes in agreed internal duties and quotas, as well as the formal attachment of Bosnia-Herzegovina to Hungary – conditions that Austrian negotiators saw as an opening gambit in negotiations rather than a realistic demand.[225] Both sides fell under German pressure to conclude the

negotiations as soon as possible;[226] however, given the gap in both trust and demands between the two sides, this was always unlikely. So it was that both Tisza and Stürgkh agreed that negotiations with Germany could be pursued parallel to the Compromise renegotiations.[227]

This allowed commencement of preliminary German–Austro-Hungarian negotiations in late April 1916. The agreement on a customs duty scheme was achieved within a month.[228] The negotiated scheme was to be taken into account in renegotiations of the Compromise as well. However, this first success in negotiations was not to be the vanguard of things to come.

Renegotiations of the 1867 Compromise were not the only issue that complicated dealings with Germany: another hurdle was the question of Poland, which had been a point of contention since early on in the war.[229] German officials expressed their concern that if Russian Poland was awarded to Austria, the strengthening of the Polish ethnic group would further erode the standing of Austrian Germans within the monarchy.[230] Moreover, Austria demanded influence in the Balkans.[231] Yet Germany now also was demanding power in the Balkans and a strong strategic case was made in Berlin for attaching Russian Poland to Germany.[232] The issue frustrated negotiations in the period[233] leading up to the November 1916 declaration of a future Polish state on the initiative of the Germans. However, the issue of what form such a Polish state should take, was never really resolved. This issue continued to be point of tension in German–Austrian relations, even though a year later, in November 1917, Germany essentially agreed that Austria could have an upper hand in Poland in exchange for the admission of German influence over Romania.[234]

The end of 1916 brought with it events that promised to speed up the negotiating process. After Stürgkh's assassination in October 1916, Ernst von Koerber – an advocate of Central Europe – became his successor, followed shortly in January 1917 by Heinrich von Clam-Martinic, whose cabinet included several Central Europe enthusiasts in key positions.[235] Germany's invitation to the main negotiations followed almost immediately and Foreign Minister Czernin wasted no time in accepting it.[236]

In February 1917 the Compromise renegotiations were finally concluded,[237] with the Austrians achieving their desired 20-year duration for the renewed Compromise and the Hungarians winning a reduction in contributions to a common budget. Moreover, the governmental crisis in Hungary in May 1917 brought to power the foremost Central Europe advocate in Hungary – Sándor Wekerle, the chairman of the Hungarian Central European Economic Union (MEWV). With Wekerle now prime minister, many supporters of the Central European project rejoiced at the prospect of a speedy conclusion to negotiations.[238]

However, the new Compromise treaty entailed changes in the levy of customs dues – such as livestock duties or various protective industrial duties – that were directed decidedly against German competition. It was these changes in duties that set a very high hurdle for the main negotiations of the customs union with Germany.[239] These would be hurdles that were almost impossible to overcome in the context of faltering support for the customs union in Germany and rising opposition to the plan in Austria.

Clam-Martinic fell from grace due to his perceived inability to handle the intensifying nationalist tensions in the empire, lasting only a little more than five months in the office. This short period brought substantial and visible progress in the negotiations of the alliance with Germany, but many Central Europe advocates lost their decision-making powers and much political access with the downfall of Clam-Martinic. Only Czernin and Riedl managed to hold on to their positions.

The alliance was gradually souring by the winter of 1917–18, as German peace negotiations with Russia pushed the question of German–Austro-Hungarian ties into the background. The haggling over Poland, the growing personal animosity between officials on both sides,[240] and finally the Sixtus Affair in April 1918, were indicative of an increasingly difficult relationship between Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Austrian government was aware of changing attitudes in Germany. Burián, now a finance minister, opined that Germany would readily abandon the plan, should there be a realistic prospect of return to free trade after the war.[241] While Czernin, as foreign minister, insisted that closer ties with Germany were essential for the monarchy, the weakening strategic, economic and internal position of the Austrian government increasingly exacerbated concerns over a loss of independence in the relationship with Germany.[242] These concerns were exacerbated when Germany raised a whole host of new conditions in exchange for agreeing to Austria having the upper hand in Poland in late 1917.[243]

The Sixtus Affair fatally undermined Emperor Karl's authority and he eventually submitted to the political, as well as economic and military, union with Germany in May 1918.[244] The set of agreements was hailed by the concept advocates as the definitive fruition of Central Europe. Though there was no denying its significant political weight, the Austrian emperor had committed to a project he essentially did not agree with only in the aftermath of his failed negotiations of a separate peace with France. The capitulation of Austria-Hungary to German domination seemed all but complete.

Politically at least, Central Europe advocates might have regarded their dreams fulfilled. Yet Germany's priority was now very obviously to renew the pre-war *status quo*. The union with impoverished and internally unstable

Austria-Hungary might have been forsaken, should it complicate the peace negotiations.

As discussed in the previous chapter, by early 1918 enthusiasm for economic union with Austria-Hungary was gradually abating in Germany, with many starting to argue that any return to a free international market would be more convenient for Germany than union with an impoverished neighbour, a proposal that was attracting stark opposition from the Allies. Yet, the return to a *status quo ante* looking at any post-war global market seemed unlikely. So negotiations continued, but with much less enthusiasm on the German side.

Ironically, enthusiasm for union with Austria-Hungary had declined considerably by the time Emperor Karl signed the much trumpeted and celebrated agreements with Emperor Wilhelm II. The monarchy was becoming increasingly unstable internally and Germany's preference returned to renewing pre-war free trade levels and aspirations. Moreover, this political gesture still needed to be followed up with a final conclusion of the negotiations towards a customs union agreement, which had been dragging on for a good year or so.

Despite the signing of agreements in May 1918, the position of the new Austrian government under Ernst Seidler, who was in office from June 1917 to July 1918, was in favour of a more limited system of preferential custom duties, rather than the originally envisaged fully fledged customs union.[245]

The last talks over the projected customs union took place during the summer of 1918 in Salzburg. The Austrian side was led by Gustav Gratz and Richard Schüller. Agreement was ultimately reached in the form of a document, 'Guidelines for Customs and Economic Union', that stipulated the closest possible economic and customs union between the two empires.[246] Richard Riedl led a parallel civil servant's conference in Vienna and noted that Austria-Hungary had no real alternative other than to enter this union.[247] Yet, only three months later, an alternative would offer itself in a form that represented the worst possible outcome for the monarchy – its very dissolution!

STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS OF THE OTHER

The Austro-Hungarian part of the story of Central Europe advances the argument presented in the second part of the hypothesis: that conceptualizations of regional identity do exercise an impact on the behaviour of political actors and that perceptions of the *Self* and the *Other* play a major role in this.

The narrative presented shows a mostly negative impact on decision-makers in Vienna, who perceived the notion of Central Europe as the concept

that would likely formalize Austria's subservience to the German Empire. Pan-German authors pushing the concept were viewed as representatives of the *Other* rather than the *Self* by Stürghk and his government. In sharp contrast – and with no little irony – the shortlived government of pro-Central Europe enthusiasts in early 1917 provided a substantial boost to customs negotiations. This period marked the high tide of influence of the Central Europe proponents. Yet the plans for the close alliance of the German and the Austro-Hungarian empires were ultimately quelled by the outcome of World War I. As a result, the evidence of the concept's impact on the international structure remains ambiguous.

To sum up, conceptualizing Central Europe in Austria and its imperial environs clearly developed in parallel to the shaping of the discourse in Germany. The main thrust of the formulation of the notion in the late nineteenth century was carried by the pan-German movement, which presented Central Europe as a replacement notion for *Deutschland* itself, an area belonging by rights to the greater German nation, whose branches needed to be brought together in one economic and political unit. However, the Austrian debate was necessarily moderated by specific socio-political conditions in Austria-Hungary.

First of all, the proposed union with Germany was characterized predominantly as an economic one and the assured sovereignty of Austria-Hungary within such a bloc was over-emphasized. The idea of an economic union seemed natural, given the history of a customs union build-up of German states in the nineteenth century. After Austria was ousted from the process in 1866, the possibilities for a customs union resurfaced several times, especially in the 1880s and 1890s, when its contextualized mention was frequently labelled 'central European' by the Austrian media. The problem of maintaining Austrian sovereignty had been the main issue in 1848 and, of course, remained the main concern of Austrian policy-makers involved in negotiations with Germany, even going into World War I. Such insecurities had only increased, however, as the German Empire was infinitely more intimidating to a declining Austria-Hungary at the time of World War I than Prussia had been in the days of the Frankfurt Assembly.

Second, as was highlighted in the short analysis of wartime Austrian German concepts, many authors preferred to employ alternative notions to Central Europe. It was important to show, if only nominally, that Austria-Hungary was an equal partner to Germany in the proposed economic union. Similarly, the capacity and presumed responsibility of the Dual Monarchy in projecting the power of the union towards the Middle East was highlighted. The censor's hand would come down heavily on any publications that might suggest, let alone admit, subjugation of Austria to the German Empire, a fate many of the pan-German authors privately aspired to. As Central Europe was

being increasingly interpreted as the new articulation of the pan-German project, many authors went to great lengths to avoid depicting such an image; on the other hand, they highlighted ambitions they naturally held for their own country.

Third, Austrian-German conceptions of Central Europe also betrayed a preoccupation with a perceived decline in the socio-political standing of Germans within the monarchy and consideration of the likely painful implications of any internal reforms that were required for its survival. Central Europe was presented as a union that would foster the standing of Austrian Germans in their own country and, moreover, present them with the upper hand in its reform.

However, the Franz Josef governments did not necessarily strive to foster the German social element within the empire: their foremost concern was to ensure the survival of empire itself. While they could rely on Austrian Germans to be their most loyal and reliable subjects, changing demographics and the increasing national consciousness of Slavs had to be addressed, at least partially, to avoid an inevitable exacerbation of tensions. And that was to say nothing of the Magyars, who had won virtual sovereign recognition back in 1867. The undertones of Central Europe as a German-dominated union were sure to upset the delicate equilibrium, and successive governments understandably strove to keep public discussion to a minimum, especially since a surge in pan-German empathy and increasing calls for union with Germany had largely coincided with the outbreak of war. The exhaustive efforts of Stürgkh and Tisza to keep a lid on things illustrate this delicate predicament only too well.[248]

Significantly, archival research has unveiled Stürgkh's concern that the leading role of Germans in conceptualizing Central Europe was likely to mean a leading role for the German Empire in practice, curbing Austrian sovereignty. This realization resulted in a strong personal opposition to negotiations on the express topic of Central Europe and also made him weary of customs union negotiations. The German memorandum portraying Austria as an eastern Germanic *mark* (border march) certainly worked only to increase such concerns. Emperor Franz Josef also considered the Central European plan a danger to the sovereignty of Austria-Hungary – claiming that proposals for a *Nationalverband* would reduce the standing of Austria even below Bavaria,[249] a concern that had been shared by his successor Karl, who was set against the customs union, never mind any grander political scheme. Moreover, Burián was convinced that the Entente would use *Mitteleuropa* as a pretext for an economic offensive, depicting it as another hostile move.[250]

As regards the influence of Central European advocates in Austria-Hungary, Baernreither himself noted that, with regard to the mindsets of

either Prime Minister Stürgkh or his Foreign Minister Burián, it was negligible.[251] Both of them, as well as Tisza in Hungary, were keen to block public debate on Central Europe. The U-turn in the level of their influence came with Stürgkh's assassination in late 1916, leading to the fated Clam-Martinic government in early 1917. Clam-Martinic's cabinet included several of the foremost advocates of Central Europe, most importantly Baernreither and Riedl. At the same time, another Central Europe enthusiast, Wekerle, came to power in Hungary. Such a formidable concentration of power in hands of the leaders of the Central European movement led immediately to the restart of talks. However, this was soon stalled by the problem of aligning the renegotiated Compromise (due to complex internal customs duties) with the envisaged customs union, as well as the Polish question and faltering interest on the German side. Yet, this period marks the high point of the Central Europe movement in Austria, when its advocates were directly in policy-making positions. That is, it was briefly empowered.

The break in negotiations, at the time considered the final moment of the creation of Central Europe, was the signing of the agreements on the economic and military union by the two emperors in the aftermath of the Sixtus Affair during May 1918. The context of the Spa Accords suggests it was Austria's capitulation to German conditions of alliance rather than anything else. On the German side, rather than any Central Europe enthusiasm, it was the necessity to tie in a wavering ally that motivated the move. Only three weeks later, this political gesture was challenged, as the Seidler government decided to push for a preferential customs agreement rather than a full customs union. This clearly showed a lack of government commitment to the political agreements signed by the emperor. Yet Austria-Hungary lacked viable alternatives to closer alliance with Germany and reluctantly continued negotiations throughout the summer 1918.

The *coup de grâce* for a project that none of the parties really wanted to participate in but nevertheless felt compelled to progress, was dealt by the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary in October 1918, less than six months after the Central European enthusiasts celebrated the realization of their dreams.

Finally, one interesting line in the story of Central Europe in Austria-Hungary remains to be discussed: the opposition to the notion and the use of Central Europe in agitation of small nations for the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. Most of all it was Masaryk, who portrayed Central Europe as a threat to what he considered the interests of individual allies. It has already been noted that, despite the sophistication of this argumentation, it did not work too well – in the following chapter, we will discuss whether this was because the allies did not find Central Europe threatening, or otherwise.

4 Britain and the United States: What the Enemy Covets

Previous chapters examined how the notion of Central Europe emerged and developed in countries that were to be a part of it. The process was haphazard, its course changeable, and the practical implications limited at best. However, from the outside, it looked somewhat different. It looked like the enemy had a plan and went hard after it.

'SEAT OF WAR'

British academics started to gravitate towards identification of Central Europe as consonant with the then contemporary German Empire and Austria Hungary in the mid-1890s. In the years preceding World War I, the concept of Central Europe adopted in Britain essentially had been defined by the pan-German movement: a political project for unification of the area 'naturally' dominated by Germans. This interpretation found its way into the strategic considerations of policy-makers and, as this chapter documents, influenced policy choices made during the war.

Yet British cartographers started to employ the notion of Central Europe in a consistent manner as early as the 1860s. The Austro-Prussian war of 1866, as well as the heightening Franco-Prussian tensions that culminated in their war of 1870–1, brought about a boom in the printing of maps carrying the label, 'Central Europe'. No less than 34 such maps were printed between 1866 and 1874, as evident in the holdings of the British Library.[1] Typically these were maps documenting or related to the conflicts of 1866 and 1870–1; indeed, representations of the Franco-Prussian battlefields dominate the content.

However, this boom in the consistent cartographic representation of Central Europe was relatively short-lived, relating squarely to the conflicts

just mentioned and not surviving long after their resolution. The majority of the maps were published between 1866 and 1873 and, unsurprisingly, at least two of these maps carry the expression 'The Seat of War' as a suffix to their title alongside the specification Central Europe.[2] The purpose of these maps had obviously been to visualize Germany's expansionist ambitions and the increasing military threat they posed. This somewhat simplistic focus is also evident in later British depictions of Central Europe — its cartographic expression and their volume always seem connected directly to German activities and perceptions of Germany's aspirations. An examination of 1 is instructive.

British atlases — as opposed to individual topical maps — display three different tendencies in their treatment of Central Europe: they either present no map of Central Europe at all;[3] they feature maps of 'Central Europe and the Mediterranean Sea/Countries'; or else 'Central and Southern Europe'.[4] Interestingly, all the atlases in the last group feature maps prepared by the same cartographer — John George Bartholomew. Other than this sole, if very influential source, there was very limited exposure for the term 'Central Europe' in the bound cartographic volumes of the time. Loose individual maps offered more variety in their depictions of Central Europe with their correspondingly greater diversity of authorship.

The number of printed maps of Central Europe dropped significantly between the mid-1870s and the outbreak of World War I, as the concept itself seems to have shifted. Before the turn of the century, a majority of cartographic works depicted Central Europe to frame the 1866 and 1870–1 wars, focusing upon the German Empire and its neighbours to the west and south.[5] However, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the maps tended to depict the whole of mainland Europe as 'Central Europe'.[6] This tendency to
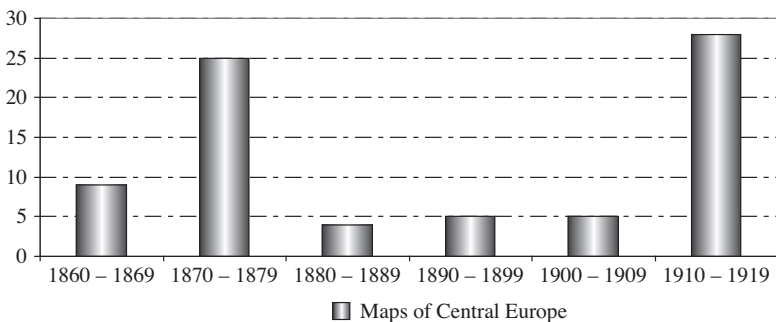
1. Maps of Central Europe, 1860–1919, in the holdings of the British Library.
Source: the author.

'zoom out' from the previous focus on the conflict-prone Franco-German borderlands is apparent in the cartographic productions of several authors.[7]

An explanation for this phenomenon can perhaps be drawn from analysis of successive map and atlas editions published by Bartholomew,[8] probably the richest source material for tracing the development of Central Europe as depicted cartographically. Bartholomew's maps reveal that its location gradually shifted eastwards in the early twentieth century. His earliest map of Central Europe focused on France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Germany.[9] Bartholomew's 1910 map is extended to cover Austria-Hungary as far as Budapest[10] and then in 1915 to cover much of this empire.[11] Moreover, at the onset of World War I, Bartholomew chose to present a wider continental view of the area, covering the full territorial extent of Austria-Hungary.[12]

This depiction of Central Europe should be seen in the context of needing to map the possible extent of German territorial ambitions. The progressively full inclusion of Austria-Hungary on these maps reflected increasing perceptions of a strong link between the two empires and the later final 'zooming out' to a continental scale was consonant with the outbreak of World War I, whereby a much wider map frame was needed to provide a visual context for its many battlefields.

Such visualization linked the notion to conflicts in mainland Europe, but, essentially, Britain displayed no autochthonous conceptualization of the notion in the pre-World War I period. Its perceptions and representations were all derived from observations of Germany, and later, from the translations of the German works on the topic. The importance of Joseph Partsch's 1903 volume *Central Europe*, published under the editorship of Halford Mackinder, has already been described in detail. Partsch presented his British readers with a vision for Central Europe, a region that would be 'willingly or unwillingly' dominated by the Germans.[13] The work drew detailed commentary in countless reviews and was often criticized for its less than subtle hints of a wider political agenda and was generally regarded as not constituting a serious geographic work.[14] Yet, with this book, the vision of a German-dominated Central Europe became the key interpretation transplanted into the British environment. Although alternative interpretations were available,[15] it was Partsch's portrayal of Central Europe as a sphere of ambition for the German nation that resurfaced in the British policy-making environment during World War I.[16]

SHIFTING THREAT PERCEPTIONS

The perception of Germany and Austria-Hungary as a threat to British interests developed gradually. At the turn of the century, the British

government's first and foremost concern was the potential threat of Russia to its imperial possessions and interests.[17] Germany was also perceived as a source of potential threat and concerns over its growing ambitions, military might and naval capabilities were rising. Yet, it was generally considered as but one of a number of potential sources of threat to the empire.

Indeed, Britain's relations with Germany were not openly hostile at least until the First Moroccan Crisis of 1905. After all, the Salisbury government had approached Germany with offers of alliance over Far Eastern issues twice during 1900.[18] Given that Austria-Hungary presented no real challenges for the British Empire – and was surrounded to the west and north by much greater security concerns – this country rarely entered into the government's strategic considerations in this period. The Great Game was clearly still dominating the strategic outlook at Whitehall. In fact, concerns over Germany itself in foreign policy circles only built up incrementally, as reports of increasing German ambitions gradually coagulated into perceptions of a threat to the interests of the British Empire.[19] There would be a growing sense that German ambitions posed a challenge to Britain in the Middle East and, potentially, even in India.

At a popular level, Germanophobia erupted fairly regularly in Britain in the early years of the twentieth century – generally over suspected connivery in complicating Britain's relations with its allies[20] but ranging to outright scaremongering over a potential invasion.[21] The intensity of suspicions towards Germany had increased in the popular press for at least two decades prior to World War I. These popular expressions of fear certainly did not go unnoticed in Germany[22] and were largely mirrored in the Berlin press. Yet, the strong language of their own daily presses was not reflected in British or German government policy until the last five years or so before the outbreak of war in 1914.

Mackinder is surely the most famous British theorist of European regional reorganization, with his Middle Tier rivalling conceptions of German-dominated Central Europe. Mackinder's Middle Tier of small independent countries was designed to divide two formidable rivals of Britain: Russia and Germany. It became synonymous with his famous dictum implying that whoever ruled this region, ruled the world.[23] Yet, this particular theory was not published until after World War I. In fact, the first version of his heartland theory, published in 1904, displayed a surprising lack of concern over Germany.

Mackinder's 1904 pivot thesis[24] addressed the strategic concerns of Britain as a global power rather than just a European country. He clearly focused on any threat that might emanate from an area inaccessible to British naval power, the regions of continental and arctic drainage in

Eurasia.[25] At the time of writing, this looked most likely to originate from the Russian Empire.[26]

Germany only appeared in his essay four times – and these mentions were all on the same page. The third[27] is perhaps the most interesting for our purposes and also in light of Mackinder's future theorizing.[28] Here Mackinder attested that:

> The oversetting of the balance of power in favour of the pivot state, resulting in its expansion over the marginal lands of Euro-Asia, would permit of the use of vast continental resources for fleet-building, and the empire of the world would then be in sight. This might happen if Germany were to ally herself with Russia.[29]

From this quote it follows that Germany would only be considered a threat if aligned with an expanding Russia, since this would lend fleet-building capacities as well as an oceanic outlet to the land-based power. Moreover, Germany was not the only power of the inner crescent that Mackinder considered dangerous if interconnected with the pivot area – for his references to China are unmistakable.[30]

A preoccupation with the German threat, so typical of his later works, and the emphasis on territorial measures to keep Germany and Russia apart, are both missing in Mackinder's 1904 essay. In fact, the fourth mention of Germany in the 1904 text hinted that Germany should be allowed to develop its influence in South America.[31]

It only remains to be commented that in this earliest version of the heartland theory, there was nothing inevitable about the forging of any alliance between Germany and Russia against the British Empire. Germany was not characterized within the geographical pivot of history and, indeed, did not even figure as a major independent threat to the British Empire. While Mackinder had acknowledged Germany's rising power in his previous writings,[32] in this essay urging a fostering of unity for the global British Empire,[33] 'the [European] seat of war'[34] was not as important as 'the natural seat of power'[35] in the heart of Eurasia. Central Europe was not at all Mackinder's preoccupation in his 1904 thesis.

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The notion of Central Europe entered the British diplomatic record early in 1906 with Reginald Tower's[36] letter of 24 January to Secretary of State Edward Grey, detailing the growing influence of the pan-German movement in Germany. Tower also described pan-German conceptions of Central Europe

as visions for a unified economic zone spanning all Germans in Europe, with a distinct anti-British edge.[37]

More than with any pan-German Central Europe designs, the British Foreign Office was preoccupied with the related notion of a German *Drang nach Osten* – a generic term for ambitions to expand power east of its international borders – and, more specifically, the Berlin–Baghdad railway, which had become a bone of contention from 1897, when Germany ousted Britain from the project. Henry Lansdowne[38] thought that the project might afford Germany a threatening predominance in Asia Minor, rendering the scheme a challenge to British interests.[39] By the mid-1900s, these perceptions were hardening with a clearly observable German naval build-up.

Amidst growing mutual suspicions, tensions between the two countries rose, if only gradually. While in 1906 Fairfax Cartwright, a British diplomat in Vienna,[40] considered that any differences between Britain and Germany could be settled without too much difficulty,[41] the same individual reported only two years later that the 'foreign policy of the German government ... seems to prefer to use crooked ways to attain its aims' – considering that it was now almost impossible to bring about an entente between the two countries.[42]

By the end of the decade, the German press was openly anti-British, typically characterizing Britain's opposition to its naval build-up as hypocritical and an obvious effort to maintain its undue advantage on the seas.[43] These charges were typically levied by the liberal and pan-German national newspapers, then the main contemporary proponents of the idea of Central Europe.[44] By 1912 the tension was obvious[45] and Lord Richard Haldane, Secretary of State for War, openly demanded 'retardation of the rate of construction' of German battleships[46] as Berlin was now clearly considered a significant threat to the British Empire.

At the same time, from approximately 1910, increased attention was beginning to be paid by British diplomats to the relationship developing between Germany and its allies – namely, Italy and Austria-Hungary. Edward Goschen, British ambassador to Germany at the time, observed that Italy was an increasingly unreliable member of the Triple Alliance and that only 'political reasons' were preventing it from breaking away completely.[47] The relationship with Austria-Hungary also was not without its tensions and occasional shows of mistrust by the German public.[48] Speculation that Britain was trying to detach Austria-Hungary from Germany was floated for the first time as early as 1909, when King Edward VII visited Emperor Franz Jozef in Bad Ischl.[49]

The official line on the British relationship with Austria-Hungary in the late nineteenth century had been one of close associations and cooperation in the complex situation arising from the Ottoman Empire's faltering grip on

the Balkans. The failure of Anglo-German talks in 1901 was a major disappointment for the Austrian government, which hoped that cooperation between Britain and the Triple Alliance could be established.[50] In the early years of the twentieth century, British diplomats were also convinced that the Austrian government remained keen on maintaining a friendly relationship with Britain[51] and that Austria was solely concerned with maintaining the *status quo* in the region.[52]

A deterioration in relations was effected with the conflicting policies pursued by both countries in Macedonia during 1906–8 and, most notably, in their treatment of the Bosnian Crisis in early 1909.[53] Interestingly, following the Bosnian Crisis, opinion shifted on Austria-Hungary within the Foreign Office. While, until then, it had been perceived as a weakening Empire, the Bosnian Crisis convinced many that Austria-Hungary was actually displaying signs of renewed strength[54] and an ability to emancipate itself from German influence.[55] As Fairfax Cartwright, now ambassador to Vienna, opined: 'A strong Austria-Hungary means an independent Austria-Hungary; a weak one means an Empire dependent for guidance upon Germany.'[56]

This premise would remain the essential guideline for British policy-makers for years to come. British conduct in the wake of the Balkan Wars in 1912–13 suggested that it saw a vested interest in maintaining a balance of power on the continent for fear of undermining Austria-Hungary.[57] The particulars of the outbreak of World War I showed that Britain had no direct quarrel with Austria-Hungary.[58]

However, concerns were raised by Cartwright over the role that Austria-Hungary would play as an ally in German designs to expand their influence eastwards.[59] British diplomats had started to employ the notion of Central Europe as shorthand for Germany and Austria-Hungary since well before World War I,[60] with their growing references to Berlin's *Drang nach Osten*.[61] In their view, Austria-Hungary was a vital piece in any German expansion strategy and only a strong, detached Austria-Hungary could stop the German march eastwards. But the dual monarchy was deeply dependent on its larger and stronger ally. As Cartwright put it, Austria was 'completely supplanted by Germany'.[62] It was with these impressions that British policy-makers entered the turmoil of World War I.

THE FOREIGN OFFICE AND MASARYK'S DISMEMBERMENT PLAN

Very early into the war, the British government was approached by the leaders of the small nations comprising Austria-Hungary with a suggestion that the dismemberment of the dual monarchy would be to Britain's advantage.

In addition to Masaryk,[63] a number of Polish and Yugoslav representatives and organizations contacted the Foreign Office during the autumn of 1914.[64]

However, at this early stage, no great note was taken of any such representations. Similar contemporaneous suggestion by Hungarian opposition representatives was acknowledged and its possibilities investigated further; however, with no great affect.[65] Suggestions that the break-up of Austria-Hungary be encouraged were rebuffed in spring 1915, even though consultations with representatives of small nations would continue thereafter,[66] providing the British government with valuable intelligence.[67]

The supposed threat that the concept of Central Europe represented for the interests of the British Empire became a shared tactical tool. Alongside Masaryk, Yugoslav representatives, most consistently the Croat leader Franjo Supilo, used it when advocating the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in their communications with the British government fairly early into the war.[68] Eventually, Polish representatives picked up on the topic as well.[69] However, in the first two years of the war, the Foreign Office thought that the break-up of the empire was well beyond practical consideration.[70] Or at least, this was a stance of George Clerk,[71] at that time a senior clerk at the Foreign Office and a member of the de Bunsen Committee,[72] who was the primary point of contact with the small nations' representatives. The so-called Tyrrell–Paget report in 1916 was the first governmental document to suggest break-up of the empire as a possible basis for post-war territorial settlement in Europe; however, the report did not gain much traction.[73]

The argument that break-up of the Austro-Hungarian empire would spell an end to the imperial designs of Germany did not seem to work. The British government seemed concerned that its break-up would simply result in the creation of small, weak and quarrelling nation-states or 'Balkanization' of the region, which would thus become even more susceptible to German influence and dependent on Austria-Hungary. Yet, this did not signify that governmental officials necessarily held positive views about Central Europe as it was then understood, i.e. as a notional blue-print for German expansion.

A memorandum, 'What Germany Covets',[74] was issued by the Foreign Office in 1916, using André Chéradame's famous 'Map showing the German schemes of Central Europe and Central Africa'.[75] The text accompanying the map explained that Germany planned a world conquest. For this purpose, Gemany needed to build a sufficiently strong territorial base to intimidate the British Empire:

> For this project, Germany must obtain domination over Austria, Serbia, Roumania, Greece, European Turkey and Asiatic Turkey. The scheme is termed 'Mitteleuropa'.[76]

A recognition of the threat posed by Central Europe to Britain's imperial interests was certainly present within the Foreign Office, yet the envisaged solution to prevent its rise would differ from the one offered by Masaryk.

The notion of Central Europe that regularly appeared in the dispatches and reports of the Foreign Office[77] was a response to the context provided by Germany's *Drang nach Osten* and its Berlin–Baghdad railway project. Central Europe was presented as only the starting point of any German envisaged expansion to the east and as threatening to the interests of the British Empire. Austria-Hungary was considered the key to countering such plans; however, it was the Austro-Hungarian Empire's detachment from Germany, rather than its break-up, that the Foreign Office decision-makers saw as their preferred enabler.

The Foreign Office under-secretary Robert Cecil's[78] comments on the Tyrrell–Paget report offer an insight into the thinking behind the British government's reluctance to aid the break-up of the empire. In his view, any break-up would leave a collective of small, independent and weak states exposed to the potential overlordship of Germany, something they would not be able to resist. In contrast, should the allies manage to secure Austria's defection from its alliance with Germany, this would greatly enhance their chances of victory in the war.[79] The idea was to convince Austria-Hungary to desert Germany and sign a peace treaty with the allies – its so-called 'separate peace' strategy. This would, of course, only be achieved if Austria was promised protection of its continued existence.

At the beginning of the war, British officials insisted that 'it was notorious that His Majesty's Government was engaged in the struggle to a large extent for the rights of the smaller nations'.[80] Yet, this did not mean that the British government was supporting dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. In fact, by 1916 the possibilities for detachment of Austria-Hungary from Germany had risen to prominence in policy circles, as a way to deprive Germany of a key ally and win the war. Austria was increasingly viewed as suffering from war fatigue and internal tensions, and therefore more likely to respond to offers of a separate peace.[81] Emperor Karl, who replaced Franz Josef in 1916,[82] was seen as inclined to such thinking,[83] an assertion proved with exposition of the Sixtus Affair in 1918.

The tradition of securing the balance of power, which had underpinned the system of European Concert in the hundred years leading up to the war, was also a strong influence here. For decades the main guarantee of peace in Europe had lain with the striking of power balances through alliances and efforts to isolate members of the system who might potentially represent a danger – but the idea of removing an important member of this system from the political map altogether seemed destabilizing at best.[84] The volatile and

vulnerable Balkans of the early twentieth century was highlighted as an illustration of what could happen should a collective of small weak nations arise to replace Austria-Hungary. Masaryk's idea of forging a 'barrier' against German expansion to the east did not gain as much traction as his later one of Austria acting as a 'counterweight' to Germany after the war – perhaps significantly, Masaryk's later postulation was much more aligned with any policy-maker's notion of how European power relations worked.[85]

Moreover, Britain itself was an empire and its enemies could use the same tactics – promises of dismemberment and emancipation should Britain lose the war – to encourage its constituent nations to sabotage the war effort. Perhaps the best illustration was a series of Foreign Office minutes that likened CNC to Sinn Fein.[86]

Finally, the group of politicians who rose to prominence in David Lloyd George's 1916–22 cabinet was not necessarily positively predisposed to the rise of small nation-states. Described by some as 'new imperialists', this group led by Leo Amery and Alfred Milner strongly believed that the world was developing towards larger multinational political units rather than smaller nation-states.[87] In their view, the way to counter any potential German rise was to detach and restructure Austria-Hungary into a federal unit. Even as late as October 1918, when the demise of the dual monarchy was imminent, Amery argued that:

> The fact is that 'Middle Europe' is an inevitable and necessary outcome of this war whatever the actual issue of the struggle or the terms of peace imposed by the victors.[88]

His suggestion was to join German Austria, Bohemia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania and Bulgaria in 'a new Danubian Confederation'.[89] He was pragmatic about its likely political geographic orientation:

> [T]hat such a union would largely work in co-operation with Germany is also a fact which we should accept with a good grace. The cooperation will be of a very different character from the league between Hapsburg and Hohenzollern in the past.[90]

This idea was eventually dismissed by his colleagues,[91] but not before the suggestion had been widely aired, considered as it was by the War Department as well as the Political Intelligence Department.[92] This episode demonstrated the following: while any German-led Central Europe pitched against Britain would obviously be opposed, fears of a Central European 'Balkanization' and any resultant disruption to traditional regional power

balances were so strong as to lead to contemplations of a British-designed federation, even if it would 'co-operate' with Germany.

In light of the above, it is not surprising that Masaryk's seemingly binary choice between allowing development of a launch pad for the German conquest of the world and enabling the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not convince many. Among the few who got on board with his arguments were members of the Political Intelligence Bureau of the Department of Intelligence led by Lewis Bernstein Namier.

But within the Foreign Office, key decision-makers remained unimpressed. The sceptics even included George Clerk, who was in frequent contact with many representatives of small nations.[93] Instead, the government worked towards achieving a separate peace with Austria-Hungary. In these negotiations, assurances of its non-interference in internal affairs were actually communicated to the Austrian government, suggesting that Austria-Hungary might become a stabilizing power in the region once liberalized.[94]

The idea of conducting separate negotiations with the Austrian government had first been raised in the summer of 1916[95] and, by the end of the year, Lloyd George himself had become convinced that it was this strategy that possessed the strongest chance of success, as he learned about the new emperor's negotiations with France.[96] Talks with Austria-Hungary were conducted for much of 1917 and early 1918,[97] although they would ultimately fail to deliver the separate peace that was being aimed for. The idea was to detach Austria-Hungary from Germany and develop a post-war counterweight to its east in Europe. It became clear during May 1918 with the announcement that new military and economic treaties had been concluded between the German and Austrian emperors that this idea would not materialize and Austria-Hungary would be tied firmly into the German orbit.[98] As reported by the British ambassador to Switzerland, Horace Rumbold, the treaties on economic and political union represented 'a step to the *Mitteleuropa* scheme'[99] which 'might become a serious reality'.[100]

Only at this point, when the materialization of Central Europe as a union of Germany and Austria-Hungary seemed possible, did the voices and demands of its composite small nations start to gain traction. The Foreign Office now turned to a strategy of weakening Austria-Hungary by any means, and the allies stepped up their support to small nations capable of actively weakening the monarchy, mainly in terms of propaganda and battle groups.

Throughout the war, the Foreign Office supported any disruptive efforts of the small nations in order to weaken Austria-Hungary and therefore Germany. Yet, as has already been discussed at some length, their preference was for a reorganization of the empire – mainly by increasing the political

clout of the Slavs – that would end up weakening any alliance with Germany, rather than effecting rupture.[101]

The ability of national representatives and their networks to disrupt enemy ranks through wholescale desertions[102] and targeted propaganda[103] impressed the allies. Valuable intelligence was supplied[104] as sizeable companies of men ended up fighting on the side of the allies,[105] and this motivated a growing sense of obligation on the part of British policy-makers.[106] Yet, even in the last stages of war, many Foreign Office officials wanted to keep the door open for the potential survival of Austria-Hungary, if at all possible. On 5 September 1918, almost a month after recognizing CNC, Robert Cecil minuted:

> Our recognition of the Czechs was very carefully worded and though it would undoubtedly be consistent with the dismemberment of Austria it does not in fact bind us to that solution.[107]

What finally convinced the British government to grant CNC recognition was the armies that the CNC controlled in Siberia, which had become central to allied plans to deal with Bolshevik Russia.[108] There was also the question of recognition by other allied states.[109] Beneš demanded recognition in return for the continuing involvement of Czech battle groups on the allied side in Siberia,[110] and he eventually got it.[111] Masaryk's narrative of Central Europe did not seem to have made much of an impact.

The realization of an anti-British Central Europe stretching down to the Middle East would certainly have been a nightmare of British policy-makers; however, they did not ultimately believe that the break-up of Austria-Hungary would prevent it; quite the contrary, they believed it would leave Germany as the only great power in the region and enable it to dominate the region even more easily. Anyway, the crumbling of Austria-Hungary would come from within. The British government would have preferred establishment of a new federation in the area,[112] but the emerging regional picture was perceived as too unstable to predict or manage. So they chose not to bind themselves to any particular design or cause and essentially let things take their own cause.[113]

THE VIEW FROM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC: THE INQUIRY

As compared to the UK, cartographic expression of Central Europe was all but missing in the United States, with perhaps one sole exception – the works of Arnold Henry Guyot, a Swiss-American geographer and cartographer.[114] While his 1866 publication *Guyot's Geographical Series* made no mention of

Central Europe, instead discussing a German Confederation[115] separate from Prussia and Austria,[116] Guyot did publish a wall atlas of Central Europe only four years later.[117] Presumably, this development was consonant with the pronounced spike in map-printing of Central Europe during the Franco-German conflicts at the turn of the 1870s; yet, Guyot's map did not show the same characteristics as British maps. It offered a wide continental view stretching from Madrid to St Petersburg. Other cartographic expressions of Central Europe originating in this period in the United States are rare – world atlases printed in the United States before 1900 do not feature Central Europe at all.[118]

While its cartographers largely ignored the term 'Central Europe', United States academics in other relevant disciplines did not share the tendency of their British counterparts to gradually focus on the German Empire and Austria-Hungary. Rather, United States authors seemed to perceive a loose identification of Central Europe with the mainland of the continent, with France featuring as a prominent Central European country.

Only a handful of works from the turn of the century referred to Central Europe in the sense of an alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary. An example was a 1900 publication called *World Politics at the End of the Nineteenth Century* by Paul S. Reinsch,[119] who was Professor of Political Science at the University of Wisconsin. Reinsch viewed the idea of 'central Europe under the hegemony of Germany' as the result of an anticipated future 'struggle for existence on the field of commerce and industry'.[120] He contextualized the concept within the commonly observed tendency towards emergence of ever larger political units, such as the British Empire.[121] Reinsch concluded that rather than moving towards conflict, Britain and Germany were heading for an accommodative relationship since both now had a vested interest in the emergence of a global free trade order.[122]

Similarly, American reviews of, and responses to, Joseph Partsch's *Central Europe* were more neutral and much less alarmist than the British ones. For example, Robert E. Peary, the polar explorer, evaluated Partsch's book very positively and praised his writing style. Unlike his British counterparts, Peary did not ponder over the intentions of the writer, but focused on his methodology, highlighting Partsch's geographic determinism and his focus on economics, offering a well-rounded review of the work itself rather than a judgment of the author' proclivities.[123]

Yet, coverage of the concept in journals, and even the daily media, became more negative in the run-up to the war. Albert Shaw's article 'Progress of the World: Militarism in Central Europe'[124] pointed to the strategic threat that alliance between Germany and Austria-Hungary presented:

> Germany and Austria-Hungary have become so closely allied as to be virtually, for all military purposes, one and indivisible. Austria continues to build her Dreadnoughts, and they become part of the defensive and offensive force of which Germany is the leader.[125]

A year later, Homer Lea seemed convinced of the inevitability of conflict between Britain and Germany, reasoning that Berlin had not yet realized its destiny of national exaltation and was only about to begin such a quest, which 'must of necessity result in a struggle with the Saxon race'.[126]

Finally, the war itself solidified interpretations of Central Europe as embodied by the German–Austro-Hungarian alliance, as had been observed in Britain. The material existence of the wartime alliance, the influence of British thought and writings on the subject, with translations of seminal European works,[127] went a long way towards explaining the adoption of this interpretation. Appendix 12 shows an example of the prevailing under-standing of Central Europe as depicted in Jacob Schapiro's *Modern and Contemporary European History*,[128] edited by James Shotwell.

Central Europe appears in the correspondence of wartime US policy-makers[129] as well as the staff of government departments and special commissions. Most remarkable was the frequent use of the expression by members of the Inquiry. The Inquiry was an analytical unit that served as President Woodrow Wilson's personal staff, preparing materials necessary to support American participation in the anticipated peace conference. It was constituted in September 1917 under the supervision of Wilson's confidante, Colonel Edward Mandell House.

In his account of the events of the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, House stated that:

> The bulk of the work of The Inquiry dealt with Mittel Europa, indeed, with the distracted areas of Central Europe and the Near East on either side of the much-heralded Hamburg–Baghdad Railway, stretching from the North Sea and the Baltic to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean . . .[130]

This view of what Central Europe meant, and where it was headed, was also projected in the very first document the Inquiry[131] submitted to President Wilson – this became instrumental in formulation of his Fourteen Points speech.[132]

In the Inquiry papers, Central Europe features interchangeably with '*Mittel-Europa*',[133] Middle Europe[134] and the Mid-European Economic Union,[135] while Mid-Europe[136] also figures quite frequently, typically in

connection with contemplation of Germany's *Drang nach Osten*[137] and the Berlin−Baghdad railway scheme.[138]

Interpretations of Central Europe carried in the Inquiry Papers were typically premised on a re-reading of pan-German writings and interactions with opponents of the German−Austro-Hungarian alliance, namely Chéradame,[139] Masaryk[140] and Seton-Watson.[141] It was, in fact, Masaryk who provided the Inquiry with a recherché on pan-German literature dealing with Central Europe.[142] Those involved in the project observed considerable staffing problems, as America lacked experts on the politics of the region and the Inquiry had to rely on experts from other fields − such as archaeology − and recent immigrants from Europe, the former lacking crucial insights, the latter burdened with biases. Reportedly, almost a half of all reports produced by the Inquiry were outsourced.[143]

A significant body of reports and memoranda featuring the notion of Central Europe in the Inquiry Papers comes from the pen of R. J. Kerner, the Inquiry's Austria-Hungary expert. Kerner displayed a strong pro-Slav bias[144] and passed negative comment on United States' policy towards the Slavs in his reports.[145] His portrayal of Mid-Europe, as he preferred to term it, was one of a pan-German plan to dominate and destroy Slavs.[146]

Kerner presented his 'nightmare scenario' of Central Europe in 'The German and Austrian Solutions to the Near Eastern Question', submitted in March 1918.[147] In this document he outlined a German plan to gradually dominate Austria-Hungary, Finland, former Baltic provinces of Russia, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, Romania, Yugo-Slav lands and, finally, Russia itself. The only obstacles to the 'virtually complete domination of Europe' by Germany in such a Mid-European Economic Union were the Czecho-Slovaks and the South Slavs.[148] Kerner considered that the formation of such an 'economic colossus' would hold dire consequences for the whole continent − Russia would become Central Europe's economic vassal, Italy also, while France would only keep its status due to its colonial empire, but only 'in a third rate economic position'.[149]

Besides Kerner's memoranda, analogous Inquiry Paper documentation projecting this particular view of Central Europe − i.e., as a pan-German plot (quoting from Chéradame 'What Germany Covets') to dominate Europe − was submitted by representatives of the small nations in the United States. Most prominent was the memorandum submitted by the Bohemian National Alliance in America, which warned against Central Europe and Germany's *Drang nach Osten*, somewhat predictably suggesting that any resultant 'Bohemian-Slovak state [would be] a strong barrier against German aggression'.[150]

After the war, House insisted that 'Bohemia was looked upon as a bulwark against a resuscitated Germany, which might sometime in the future plan a new drive to the east';[151] however, the actual events of the last months of the war suggest otherwise.

THE STILLBORN MID-EUROPEAN UNION OF 1918

In fact, the Inquiry members could not agree on what to do with Austria-Hungary. Rather than opting for dismemberment, even Kerner had called for federalization of Austria-Hungary, as in the self-determination he saw a danger, if not a German plot, that the small nations might be drawn into the German economic and political orbit under a bracket of Central Europe.[152] Seymour preferred trialism, and the overall lack of consensus resulted in the Inquiry operating with a set of scenarios for Austria-Hungary rather than any concrete policy preferences.[153]

Yet, this was not because United States policy-makers somehow failed to understand the dangers of Central Europe portrayed by Masaryk and other small-nation representatives,[154] quite the contrary: Wilson, House and his Inquiry were convinced that an eastwards expansion built on the foundations of pan-German Central Europe plans was exactly what Germany was after.[155] House informed Wilson as early as February 1916 that Frederic C. Penfield, the United States ambassador to Austria-Hungary, had

> [. . .] confirmed our belief that Austria-Hungary and Turkey are now but little more than provinces of Germany. The Central Empire runs from the Baltic to the Dardanelles and beyond.[156]

Some core members of the Inquiry were well versed in the idea of Central Europe, too; Isaiah Bowman, one of the key members of the committee, was a Ratzel enthusiast and for a period of time served as an assistant to Albrecht Penck.[157]

Indeed, the first draft memorandum of the Inquiry submitted to the president started with a detailed analysis of how Germany had already created a Berlin–Baghdad axis, which would eventually – if successful – make it the master of Europe and Asia. However, measures to counter this situation – deemed as dangerous to the interests of the United States – did not focus on carving independent states out of Austria-Hungary. Instead, the recommendation was for the control of both ends of the axis by friendly powers, neutralization of the Turkish Straits and increased democratization of Germany. As far as Austria-Hungary was concerned, the draft recommended its federalization and extrication from German domination.[158]

The memorandum was delivered to Wilson by House on 4 January 1918, and the two individuals spent the following two days hammering out the president's famous Fourteen Points speech.[159]

Wilson's speech differed from the Inquiry's recommendations on several counts[160] and did not mention Central Europe or the Berlin–Baghdad axis; yet we know the Inquiry's draft was considered, as Wilson personally asked for it[161] and added notes to the margins of the document, reformulating its recommendations.[162] At odds with what is often maintained,[163] Wilson did not champion the independence of small nations in his speech. While he did call for a unified Poland – which was also a plan of German and Austria-Hungary – and evacuation of Belgium, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, with regards to 'the peoples of Austria-Hungary' he suggested only that they 'should be accorded the freest opportunity to autonomous development'.[164]

If the Masaryk group was bitterly disappointed, the fact remains that Wilson actually gave Austria-Hungary assurances against dismemberment[165] and expressed his approval that Britain had also delivered similar assurances during the Smuts mission only days before his speech.[166] This was to remain the president's position until the summer of 1918.

Masaryk had to face down Wilson's rebuff in May 1918, despite the fact that the meeting was arranged by Richard Crane,[167] assistant of the Secretary of State Robert Lansing. Let alone Masaryk's propaganda based on othering from Central Europe, Wilson was not even convinced by the reports he had received from his own officials. The United States liaison officers[168] and ambassadors[169] lobbied for official United States recognition of the CNC as a provisional government of the future Czechoslovakia, reporting on the impact of small-nation propaganda and forces on the course of war, or the role of Czech forces in Siberia. The United States only recognized the CNC on 3 September,[170] following recognition by Britain. While the later peace note response to Austria-Hungary demanded independence for its nationalities,[171] Wilson's policy preference remained on the side of regional federation rather than realization of new independent states.

The staff of the Inquiry, like Colonel House – and, for that matter, Wilson himself – feared for the survival of a group of small independent nation-states and feared a 'Balkanization' of Central Europe.[172] Their concerns and preference for a larger political unit in the region mirrored the position of London. This double insistence on wider regional union pushed national leaders to acquiesce to the idea of a federation, provided they were first guaranteed independence.[173] In late 1918, Masaryk wrote to Beneš:

> House, in his heart, is a pacifist, but he understood our program and accepted it ... he is interested in Mid-European Union: the

dismemberment of Austria is just a destruction for them, they demand positive construction.[174]

The 'positive construction', as phrased by Masaryk, should have been the Mid-European Union, a regional structure that would become a 'wall of free peoples against the German *Drang nach Osten*'.[175] The project, which was intended to bring about a regional federation of small peoples, was supported by House, the Inquiry and the Committee on Public Information – the official United States agency for wartime propaganda – and launched in September 1918, bringing together representatives of 12 different nations. The idea was hailed by the press as 'a Safe Mitteleuropa ... instead of the grandiose, imperialistic and predatory Mitteleuropa of which the two Kaisers dreamed'.[176] However, the venture was in fact stillborn.[177]

At its first meeting, in September 1918,[178] the objective of the union was formulated as

[...] a united front against the Central Empires, application of the doctrine of self-determination, the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary, and a Mid-European federation of nationalities.[179]

However, only a month later, on 26 October, the *Declaration of Common Aims of the Mid-European Nations*, signed at a rather pompous inaugural event at the Independence Hall in Philadelphia, called only for self-determination and merely pledged coordinated efforts to safeguard liberty.[180] The very use of the word 'Mid-European' met with resistance from some delegates[181] and the idea of federation was watered down into article 5, which stated:

[We] believe our peoples having kindred ideals and purposes should co-ordinate their efforts to insure the liberties of their individual nations for the furtherance of their common welfare, provided such a union contributes to the peace and welfare of the world.[182]

Pushed by the United States government as an outside actor, the whole venture only enlisted a half-hearted commitment on the part of nations that were supposed to partake centrally within it. The project soon fell apart owing to the ongoing clashes between individual national representatives.[183]

Yet, the United States government remained concerned over the viability of the new successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and especially the much territorially reduced Austria. The possibilities for a 'Danubian Federation'[184] were explored once again in late 1918 but unavailingly, owing to the opposition of the former small nations of the dual monarchy.[185]

THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE OTHER

In both Britain and the United States, Central Europe was conceptualized from outside, as the *Other*, so to speak. This essentially negative and defensively conceived concept had clearly exercised substantial influence on the minds of policy-makers. However, Masaryk's ultimate failure suggests that the dark shadow, which Central Europe had cast on politicians' minds, had only a very limited impact on actual international structure.

Yet, the United States effort to establish a 'Mid-European' union in the aftermath of the break-up of the Dual Monarchy suggests that policy-makers may have had the ambition to bring territorial constructs, however theoretical, to fruition. In this case, such efforts were frustrated by contradictory realities on the ground. Yet again, the notion had failed to change the world map.

In the English-language environment, original conceptions of Central Europe were few and far between. Moreover, their definition and cartographic depictions differed from one another quite widely. In Britain, the notion started to coagulate into shorthand for Germany and Austria-Hungary considerably earlier than was the case in the United States, clearly evident in cartographic works. Publication of Partsch's *Central Europe*[186] introduced into the British environment a pan-German interpretation of the notion as a region to be 'naturally' dominated by Germans. Policy circles started to take note of the notion in similar vein by 1906, with reports of growing ideological support for the pan-German movement. While seminal points of departure in the United States are not as clear as they were in Britain, the same interpretation of Central Europe seems only to have been settled upon during the war, despite the fact that it had been visible in American writing from the beginning of the century.[187] The evidence of the German role in moulding the understanding of Central Europe among British and United States policy-makers, academics and journalists is their frequent parallel use of the German term *Mitteleuropa* in English-language texts.

In both environments, a negative view of the notion gradually developed as it was considered a challenge to the interests of both the British Empire and the United States. This threat perception was built on the presumption that the notion served as a political plan to form a strong continental base for wider German expansion, loosely defined as a march to the east (*Drang nach Osten*). The ultimate strategic concern of both Britain and the United States was the envisaged plan of Germany to expand its influence along the so-called Berlin–Baghdad axis.

Yet, despite the fact that concern over Central Europe was pronounced in both countries, Masaryk's strategy of portraying the dismemberment of

Austria-Hungary as the only way to prevent its rise did not really work. None of the allied powers was that keen on breaking up the Austro-Hungarian Empire.[188] Their preferred tactic was to detach Austria-Hungary from Germany, federalize it to increase the influence of the Slav element and turn it into a counterweight for Germany in the region. In fact, they feared the break-up of the empire, the recent destabilization of the Balkans in the wake of Ottoman decline being fresh in the memory. 'Balkanization' and the ultimate demise of small nation-states in the face of Germany was the envisaged risk, if Austria-Hungary unravelled.

To sum up, both British and United States policy-makers preferred to resolve the dilemma of Central Europe within the established framework of balance of power equations within the European continent. Even after the collapse of the Dual Monarchy, officials in both governments sought to federalize the successor states, but these initiatives failed due to the opposition of the newly independent nations.

5 Central Europe 1880–1918: Unsuccessful Exercises in Geopolitics

By late 1918, Central Europe was in disarray. Germany had been decisively defeated, the Dual Monarchy had fallen apart, Austria was impoverished and Hungary was descending into chaotic and uncertain political disorder. Meanwhile, conflict was looming between newly established Czechoslovakia and Poland over the border town of Teschen.

The 'Central Europe' that Naumann had dreamt of only three years earlier had thereby collapsed in the worst possible way. United States and British policy-makers still hoped for its ultimate replacement by a regional federation, with Mackinder optimistically foreshadowing his Middle Tier. But the successor states were not interested. Their hard-won sovereignties were evidently to be fostered, not diluted, in any new regional construct.

If, indeed, the purpose of theorizing Central Europe was to bring about a new regional identity and structure, it had demonstrably failed. The question is, does this story negate the hypothesis set out at the beginning of this book?

Conceptualizations of regional identity are exercises in geopolitics, which through the definitive discourse of 'self' and 'other' exercise influence upon the behaviour of political actors, thereby indirectly impacting international structure.

To examine the validity of the hypothesis, we first need to return to the definitive discourse of Central Europe and outline its dominant interpretations.

THE BATTLE FOR DEFINITION

The oft-repeated myth that theories of Central Europe in the form presented by German authors during World War I reach as far back as the early

nineteenth century has been largely dispelled through the research presented here. It was demonstrated that, not just Karl Ludwig von Bruck but also Friedrich List – along with significant other purported Central Europe theorists – were in fact rather theorizing a notion of Germany.

While the expression Central Europe was present in daily German parlance during this period, it was a generic and vague geographical reference more than anything else. The political entity under construction in the period before March 1849 was Germany itself and all concepts that would later be interpreted as precursors for Central Europe only really entailed the *grossdeutsch* programme for Austria's inclusion within Germany. While many conceptions of Central Europe were essentially a continuation of this *grossdeutsch* programme, it does not mean that *grossdeutsch* theorists had been developing Central European concepts themselves. Yet the link was considered strong enough to allow later theorists of Central Europe to draw upon the historical authority of the *grossdeutsch* authors. Many commentators on Central Europe also adopted this misleading narrative, positioning *grossdeutsch* authors as theorists of Central Europe.[1] The original writings of these authors examined has suggested otherwise.[2]

Central Europe was chosen as a replacement notion for Germany by the *grossdeutsch* authors after the founding of the German Empire, with Austria obviously now a definitive, separate entity. Austria's parting with the rest of the German states was not a sudden event. In fact, it happened gradually and certain levels of othering were already apparent by 1848, especially in Bruck's writing. The widening gulf between Austria and other German states, the solidifying structures of the *Zollverein*, the war of 1866 and, finally, the year 1871 brought the realization that Germany as a notion had come to mean the German Empire, not any wider area of German-speaking settlement. The need for a replacement notion therefore arose with authors now advocating the need for alliance between Austria and a separate Germany – this became the new Central European project.[3]

Yet, contrary to the version insisted upon in so many later analyses, Central Europe as a notion did not follow directly from the works of these two authors. Neither Constantin Frantz, nor Paul de Lagarde, was a mainstream author during his lifetime. Their works were rather rediscovered and thrust into the spotlight by Central Europe advocates during the early twentieth century. Many German authors of the late nineteenth century conceptualized the notion but on widely varied bases.[4] The definitive discourse crystallizing Central Europe as an overarching political project aiming to unite Germany and Austria-Hungary took at least two decades to develop and was not necessarily linear.

The discourse was increasingly shaped by the broader influences of German geography, political science and philosophy – geographical determinism, the organic growth theory of the state[5] and imperial rivalry.[6] Christian universalism translated into a belief in the historical mission of the German nation.[7] Romantic nationalism added conviction that nations should be unified under one political roof,[8] the idea of German exceptionality[9] and the narrative of Germany as the land of the middle,[10] fostered by self-concentrated cartographic visualizations.

The result of this debate was still a fairly vaguely delimited Central Europe, broadly positioned between France and Russia, but with relatively settled characteristics: it was identified with the area of German settlement, where Germans would supposedly fulfil their historical mission to organize and lead other nations by virtue of their superior civilizational qualities and organizational vigour. Put simply, since Germany was a young vigorous state in the middle of Europe, it would expand into a *Mitteleuropa*, encompassing the whole of the German nation, thereby dominating the continent.

An integral part of theorizing Central Europe became its definition as a larger political unit as well as distancing from other empires of the day. In one go, authors presented an imperial construct for Germany and delimited it positionally by referencing other empires – it was to lie between Russia and France, rivalling the global domination of Britain. Virtually all Central Europe authors envisaged a place for Germany among the great imperial nations of the day, and, what is more, a privileged place among them. The theoretical frameworks underpinning Central Europe – the belief in a future world organized into large territorial units, German exceptionality and the organic theory of state – called for such an outcome. The ideal being aimed for was the United States: a continental political union stretching from one ocean littoral to another. Such a continental extent would allow Germany to take advantage of the diverse and more robust production afforded by a larger economic area, buttressed by a greater variety of naval transport routes to facilitate global trade. Corresponding political clout was envisaged to come with increased economic power.

Strong economic lines of reasoning had entered into conceptions of Central Europe by the early years of the twentieth century.[11] The main reasoning behind the plan to unify a still vaguely defined territory was the economic interest of Germany. It was envisaged that the future of the world lay in ever fiercer competition between larger economic areas, partitioned from one another by high customs duties barriers. The construction of an economic zone beyond German borders came to be seen as a vital economic necessity, drawing upon the earlier inspiration provided by the customs union of German states in the nineteenth century. Theories retained their original

underpinnings but economic considerations gained predominance in the discourse – evidenced not only by the multitude of written works espousing their significance, but also the materialization of a variety of organizations aiming to realize such plans. The most prominent among them was the Central European Economic Union (*Der Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein*, MEWV) initiated by Julius Wolf. Conceptualizing Central Europe economically blurred its boundaries once again, stretching it to the west to cover the main German river mouths. The authors were also convinced that it would be difficult to imagine any of the countries involved – except for Austria-Hungary – willingly joining any German economic bloc. Yet the addition of this economic line of reasoning helped to extricate Central Europe from the narrow confines of a pan-German discourse and thereby potentially communicate the notion to a wider public.

Economic theorizing of a Central Europe would be the norm until the outbreak of World War I, but its popularity always remained relatively limited. The breakthrough for Central Europe as a genuinely popular concept only came with the experiences of war, the consequent economic blockade and political alliance with Austria-Hungary. The overtones of shared identity, historic mission, narrative of unique destiny and the vision of the future Great Power status all lined up in the early period of the war. Pan-German nationalism would make its inevitable comeback in a situation when Germany and Austria-Hungary were surrounded by enemies. Central Europe became synonymous with a plan to break out of encirclement and project German power to the south-east, perhaps as far as the Persian Gulf, providing an attractive alternative prospect centring on expansion. In the difficult realities of war, Central Europe provided a vision of purpose, victory, conquest and future power status. Of course, it was Naumann's *Mitteleuropa* that would become the centrepiece of the hectic wartime discourse over Central Europe.

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The discourse of Central Europe in Austria-Hungary was intertwined with shifts in the dynamics of the relationship between its nationalities. Austrian Germans felt cut off from their brethren in the ascending German Empire – with the 1867 Compromise having reduced their kingdom territorially by half, they remained a minority in the reconstituted monarchy. Austrian German nationalism was born out of the feeling of insecurity, and was repeatedly irked by the perceived lack of support from the side of the court, which had to balance the interests of its growing Slav population at the expense of the traditionally dominant position of its Germans, who in

turn viewed it as an attack on their natural rights. Self-help clubs mushroomed and a pan-German movement quickly emerged.

The notion of Central Europe as a political concept rather than just a vague geographical reference materialized in Austria-Hungary at the same time as it did in Germany: from the late 1870s to the early 1880s. While various groups of authors entered the discourse over the notion, it was relatively swiftly subsumed by the pan-German movement. The Viennese government had considered pan-German ideas a challenge to Austria's sovereignty as well as a clear potential threat to the country's fragile ethnic balance, so publications that emanated from such quarters were subjected to strict censorship. Thus, the formation of the notion was heavily influenced by pan-German publications smuggled in from Germany, through those of Austrian authors in German journals and through the direct international influence of prominent German authors themselves.[12]

Pan-Germans essentially presented Central Europe as a shared strategic, economic, cultural and historical space and vision for all Germans. It was to be brought together under one political and economic umbrella to overcome its unnatural divided state, thereby providing the basis for realizing German nation's Great Power potential. The main underlying concepts (nationalism, romanticism), theoretical frameworks (organic theory of state, geographical determinism), as well as the envisaged purpose of Central Europe (to unify the German nation and provide for expansion of its influence) basically copied the pan-German discourse in Germany. Allowing for some exceptions in the literature,[13] Central Europe came to mean the combination of Germany and Austria-Hungary for Austrian pan-Germans. This is consistent with their efforts to re-establish and safeguard German predominance in the Dual Monarchy, or at least Austria. Such conceptualization of Central Europe provided for a German majority within the envisaged political and economic construct and addressed underlying grievances, painting a cosy picture of natural German leadership and romanticizing a historical mission to lead the region and achieve greatness.

The near complete domination of pan-Germans in the discourse effected a relatively swift settlement on a notion of Central Europe along these lines. It was often employed by the daily press to describe attempts to finalize a customs union during the 1880s and 1890s.

Yet, until World War I, the pan-German movement remained essentially fringe and Austria's citizens of all national denominations stayed relatively loyal to the throne. The influence of the economic line of Central European theorization would be felt through the activities of MEWV; however, baseline definitions remained focused on Germany and Austria-Hungary. Just as with the case of Germany, the war represented a big breakthrough for Central

Europe, when the notion transcended its relatively narrow discourse boundaries and became a household term within society.

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British cartography presented the first consistent depictions of any designated Central Europe in the period of the late 1860s and early 1870s, focusing on Germany. The underlying purpose of these maps was to provide visualization of Germany's ambitions in its contemporary wars. Later cartographic representations of Central Europe demonstrate a shift to coverage of larger areas of Europe and a significant eastwards shift to cover Austria-Hungary, documenting wider, changing perceptions of how Central Europe was perceived, and basically linking the two empires together. In the United States, maps of Central Europe were virtually non-existent before 1900, reflecting a pronouncedly lesser concern about developments on the continent as compared to Britain.

The Central Europe discourse was properly introduced to English-speaking audiences with Partsch's *Central Europe* in 1903. This work also remained the single most important English-language treatise, guiding interpretation of Central Europe in Britain until at least the start of World War I. Partsch presented Central Europe as a region to be 'willingly or unwillingly' dominated by the Germans,[14] feeding into the popular Germanophobia of the day, seemingly confirming Germany's expansionist ambitions. Interestingly, Mackinder, who was an editor of Partsch's volume, did not pay much attention to Germany in his celebrated essay of 1904.

Early United States reviews of Partsch's work were somewhat more neutral and dispassionate than their British counterparts. Eventually, the limited coverage devoted to the Central Europe debate in Germany also turned into something altogether more negative, reflecting rising militarism and expansionism in the run-up to the war.

Overall, the narrow discourse over Central Europe in existence in the Anglo-Saxon environment entirely reflected interpretations of the notion as it was developing in Germany. It was a mirror to the new *Self* being constructed in Germany. Alternatively, it could be seen as observations of the emerging *Other*.

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It follows from this discussion that the discourse was very obviously dominated by German authors, who used it as a concept to articulate growing German ambitions. While the notion first appeared as a simple replacement term for 'Germany' reacting to the unsuitability of the latter for any

pan-German project after the establishment of the empire, German authors forwarded a wide array of definitions for the notion in the following two decades; and a variety of influences besides nationalism underpinned its development. Rather than a mere continuation of *grossdeutsch* ideas, Central Europe gradually coalesced as a project articulating the German ambition to assume its place among the leading imperial nations.

Meanwhile, in Austria-Hungary, pan-German authors had led the discourse since its inception. Central Europe had been built on *grossdeutsch* ideas, drawing on the growing insecurity of Austrian Germans, and their feelings of exclusion and their hope that a closer relationship with Germany might shore up their dominant, but withering, position. Austrian authors eagerly bought into the developing discourse in Germany by the end of the nineteenth century, pushing their definition of Central Europe as Germany and Austria-Hungary combined, underlining the position of Germans as the leading nation.

This definition and vision of Central Europe was directly transplanted into the Anglo-Saxon environment with Partsch's *Central Europe*.[15] The book presented its readers with a concept that centred on the possibilities for German domination of vast swathes of the European mainland and fitted well with the then contemporary Germanophobic mood. The economic discourse in the early twentieth century naturally placed a stronger emphasis on the economic interests of the German Empire, rather than the supposed national ambitions of all Germans, but other characteristics remained broadly the same. With the boundaries of the concept widening to cover strategic areas on the basis of economic complementarity, Austria-Hungary became more of a transit territory than the sole strategic ally. Yet, perceiving their own vulnerability, Austrian pan-Germans bought into this concept as well. They aimed at restoring their power position within the Dual Monarchy, and union with Germany would confer a strategic advantage in the form of strength in numbers.

At the outbreak of World War I, the dominant and largely pragmatic definition of Central Europe that was in place was one of a German-led customs union, providing the basis for the further expansion of the German economy. The war would signal a sudden comeback for pan-German awareness and aspirations.

CENTRAL EUROPE EQUALS PAN-GERMAN EUROPE

The Central Europe discourse during World War I transcended its previously limited boundaries and became part of a much wider social debate about war aims. While earlier on, the discourse had been dominated by pan-German

authors and later economists, now a great variety of authors entered into a debate that was carried widely in European daily parlance.

This development spelled not just a wider variety of Central European concepts but a huge increase in authorship. Two broad streams are clearly identifiable. First, a narrow mainstream of strategic and economic concepts arguing for a union of Germany and Austria-Hungary built on pan-German nationalist rhetoric focusing on the elaboration of institutions and mechanisms of any envisaged future union. And second, a lesser assembly of wider concepts, where Germany and Austria-Hungary represented only a core of Central Europe and the basis for the future expansion of Germany's influence; generally couched in notably more muted nationalist rhetoric.

Both streams showed the influence of themes developed earlier in the Central Europe discourse from the late 1870s onwards: the organic growth theory of the state, geographic determinism, nationalism, a belief in historical mission and the superiority of the German nation, the vision of a future world composed of large economic and political units, as well as an economic line of reasoning. Many of these themes themselves echoed ideas already developed by the mid-nineteenth century, as witnessed in the writings of Friedrich List and others. Both streams constructed an identity for Central Europe to contrast with the various *Others*: Imperial Russia, France and Britain. In fact, the othering from these three was often presented as a very reason substantiating the need to constitute Central Europe: so as to withstand and counterweight their pressures.

The difference between the two streams lay in a subtle alteration in interests, which individual authors followed in their conceptions of Central Europe. Mainstream authors essentially returned to the pan-German project, aiming for unification of the German nation through the union of Germany and Austria-Hungary. In contrast, the authors of the wider concepts generally sought to further the interests of the German Empire within the development of a core Central Europe bloc and its subsequent expansion and projection southeastwards towards the Middle East.

In the mainstream of definitions that prevailed in the discourse, Central Europe became identified with a plan for the military, economic and political unification of Germany and Austria-Hungary. Germans would reach the final stage of their unification by reasserting control over the smaller nationalities of the Dual Monarchy and achieve Great Power status within an increased territorial power base. Friedrich Naumann's concept became the embodiment of the dominant definition, driving perceptions of what Central Europe was about among the Entente powers as well as the small nations of Austria-Hungary.

Yet the lesser stream also played its role in shaping perceptions of Central Europe among its adversaries – concepts which suggested that German

expansion to the Middle East sat well with the strategic concerns of imperial rivals, especially the British Empire. However, interestingly, both streams ultimately exercised remarkably little influence upon political decision-making in Germany itself.

A flurry of pan-German Central Europe conceptions calling for union with Germany started to be published as early as August 1914. In an outburst of empathetic proclamations between the two German empires, Austrian pan-Germans called for union in order to help re-establish their internal dominance. There again, two streams of theorization developed.

In the first one, internal reform of Austria occupied the major parts of essays, and Central Europe was discussed only subsequently. The names of both states were used to highlight their nominal equality. Yet, revealingly, the German nation was considered to be one unit and the role of Austria as 'a bearer of German culture' or the 'medium of German supremacy in the East' was repeatedly underlined.

The second one was fully in line with the established understanding of Central Europe as a replacement notion for Deutschland. Much less attention was devoted to internal reforms of Austria-Hungary but its sovereign status and role within the envisaged military and economic unit was duly emphasized. The reasoning behind the necessity of the realization of Central Europe was the envisaged future of a world consisting of larger economic areas and political units.

While, generally, the second stream copied the discourse in Germany, the first one was unique to Austria. As was the case with Germany, a clear distinction could be drawn between the identities of authors in both streams – those seeing themselves as primarily Austrian or German in the first instance. Authors in the first stream strived to re-model Austria to reassert its German character through their enactment of Central Europe, drawing on the strength in numbers that would be realized through union with Germany. Authors in the second stream were simply continuing a pan-German project, with some concessions made to provide for the interests of the Austrian throne and government.

Publication of Naumann's *Mitteleuropa* somewhat derailed the Austrian discourse: the number of works published on the topic soared and many bought into Naumann's specific plan for elaboration and implementation. Naumann's proposal aligned with the ambitions of many Austrian Germans since it provided a well-reasoned basis for the creation of a political and economic union for a strong majority of the German population, while at the same time being at least on the surface attuned to the sensitivities of the other nations of the Dual Monarchy. Naumann's concept had a profound impact on the Austrian discourse and pushed alternative proposals to the fringe.

Naumann's followers enumerated key figures in the Austrian Central Europe movement, including Josef Maria Baernreither, assuring its continued prominence within the discourse. Under his influence, the Central Europe discourse spilled over into wider society and became equated with a plan essentially for economic union between Germany and Austria-Hungary. Highlighting the economic foundations of the plan, Central Europe was firmly paired with synonyms such as economic union (*wirtschaftliche Vereinigung*), economic rapprochement (*wirtschafliche Annäherung*) or customs union (*Zollunion*).

Naumann's concept was opposed from some notably diverse points of view. Karl Renner rejected it due to his alternative vision of Central Europe, pan-German radicals for being an insufficiently ambitious proposal, Austrian Slavs for the very idea of such a construct. Albrecht Penck even refused to use the notion from then on. Nonetheless, even these critics engaged with Naumann's concept, thus entering into the very same discourse. The dominant interpretation of Central Europe until the end of war was to be tied with the plan for economic and then political union of Germany and Austria-Hungary, as portrayed by Naumann.

Hungarians as well as Slavs took a mostly negative view of Naumann's plan, even though they were willing to listen to him at first. One of the very few Hungarians convinced of the usefulness of the plan was Sandor Wekerle, who would, crucially, later become the Hungarian prime minster in 1917. But among Slavs, the idea of Central Europe would become the anti-pole of what was desired. For them, Central Europe presented a plan for the perpetuation of German domination as opposed to strived-for equality.

Evidently, the leader of the Czechs, Tomáš Masaryk, made good use of the Central European hype following publication of Naumann's book. He adopted the dominant definition of Central Europe as the union of Germany and Austria-Hungary and skilfully used its various portrayals to depict the dangers such a plan would present for allied interests. He used these narratives to try to convince allied governments that Austria-Hungary should be dismembered, if their interests were to be safeguarded from the danger that Central Europe presented. This consistent narrative was also broadcast by several other members of his group in communication with various governments. Polish and Yugoslav representatives occasionally used the same argument in their efforts, too. To what degree of success, we will discuss below.

The concept of Central Europe prevalent in Anglo-Saxon environments was derived from translations and interpretations of contemporary German writing. Friedrich Naumann's *Mitteleuropa* was published in the English language in 1917 and was preceded by translations of André Chéradame's

works – all of which highlighted the dangers of the concept as a plan for German expansion across Europe.

In both Britain and the United States, interpretations of Central Europe thus solidified along the lines of a German–Austro-Hungarian alliance, whose purpose was to provide the basis for an increased role and presence for the German nation in the world. In Britain, the concept was viewed as directly opposed to the interests of the British Empire, as it sought to challenge the existing *status quo* in Europe. Moreover, Central Europe was understood to comprise the basis for a wider German plan to expand influence into the Middle East (*à la* the Berlin–Baghdad railway project), posing a direct threat to British interests there.

The United States view of the concept might have been somewhat less alarmist but was certainly no more favourable. Many viewed it as a continuation of the Prussian expansionism of the nineteenth century and the notion had predominantly negative connotations. Central Europe, in many aspects, became the negative *Other* that Britain and later also the United States fought against in the unprecedented conflict that was World War I.

<p style="text-align:center">***</p>

The outbreak of the war brought about a resurgence of pan-German feelings, giving Central Europe a new momentum and vesting it with a new cloak of German solidarity. Pan-German plans for the union of Germany and Austria-Hungary, to be forged through the tested means of a customs and military union, quickly overtook the remnants of any pre-war economic debate over wider union in Germany. In Austria-Hungary, the definition of Central Europe was firmly linked to this new interpretation, while two strands formed in its theorization, depending on the primary loyalties of authors. Overall, Central Europe came to mean an alliance of the two 'Germanic' empires, which was to be brought about by the war, with an ambition to eventually project its power further, especially to the Middle East.

Friedrich Naumann's book clearly dominated the wartime discourse and definitively became 'the concept of Central Europe', a centrepoint for any debate. The book brought Central Europe to the peak of its popularity, various authors in Germany and Austria-Hungary engaging with it by suggesting details for its possible implementation, either proposing alternatives to or outright opposing Naumann's blueprint. It was published in allied countries as the articulation of the ultimate war aims of Germany. Masaryk portrayed Central Europe negatively, tailoring its description to match the strategic concerns of the British, French and United States

governments so as to maximize threat perceptions and thereby further the prospects for independent nation-states to take the place of Austria-Hungary.

It now remains to be explored what impact the discourse and dominant definition of the notion had on policy-makers on both sides of the fence.

CENTRAL EUROPE IN POLICY-MAKERS' MINDS

While Bismarck was certainly not the passionate advocate of Central Europe he is often depicted as, the files of the *Auswärtiges Amt* showed that the notion of Central Europe found application in policy-making considerations during the 1880s and 1890s. However, it was different to the pan-German concepts produced by Frantz and Lagard, for the German Foreign Office associated Central Europe with the plan for a wider customs union in mainland Europe, then pitched as an alternative to bilateral arrangements with Austria-Hungary. It was a proposal for the reorganization of the European trading relationship, with specific ambition to include France. The same use of the notion can be traced in the Caprivi period as well. Owing to a multitude of barriers, this idea was never realized.

Central Europe resurfaced in the early months of the war. Crucially, it was again connected with the question of reorganization of trade relations in Europe after the war. Delbrück's commission observed that many trade relations had been either severed or significantly reduced due to the events of war and could be renegotiated at the same time as the expiring trade agreement with Austria-Hungary.

The use of the notion thus remained aligned with the idea of a wider customs union for mainland Europe, and Delbrück's commission explored the possibilities for trade and cooperation with several of its neighbours, including France and Russia. The considerations of the commission were remarkably devoid of any pan-German language, and the value of Austria-Hungary for customs or economic union was actually estimated to be very low, if not negative. The commission's final proposal, presented to Bethmann-Hollweg in April 1915, was for a customs alliance of Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Italy and Switzerland. The creation of this Central European union was to start with a customs alliance with Austria-Hungary, as the only state that would join it willingly; later to be expanded with the inclusion of other states at the time of peace negotiations.

The members of the cabinet were not too impressed with the idea, with many of them, including Delbrück, opposed to any alliance with the Dual Monarchy. Yet, the omnipresent conviction that the days of free global trade were over and that Germany would be shut out from all markets if it failed to build its own larger economic zone became the decisive guidelines in any

argument. Eventually, the government decided to pursue negotiations for economic rapprochement with Austria-Hungary.

Negotiations were kept to a technical discussion level and their record remains remarkably devoid of any nationalist language. The only manifestation of resurgent pan-German thought arrived with a memorandum of 13 November 1915, which, ironically, did not go down well with the Austrians.[16] This memorandum was likely motivated by the advice of Tschirschky, who was himself a pan-German Central Europe advocate. However, the sharp rebuff delivered to such language by the Austrian side discouraged further use of the same rhetoric in following communications. The language of a pan-German Central Europe was apparently not successful, even as a rhetorical exercise.

The evidence that even the most famous proponents of Central Europe exercised any influence on the German government is at best limited. Naumann's advances towards the German government only received the odd, occasional appreciative letter. Quite contrary to his Central Europe being a contemporary guiding force for German foreign policy, many in the government started to think that his activities actually damaged Germany's external interests. As the alliance with Austria-Hungary started to look like an increasingly bleak prospect, a preference for a return to free trade conditions resurfaced. German ruling circles were only too aware that the proposals for a German-led customs union were viewed negatively among the allies[17] and that the aggressive pan-German rhetoric of many Central Europe concepts was fostering the view that such a bloc would present a threat to their interests. At least one member of the cabinet openly expressed his opinion that the activities of 'Mr Naumann and his friends' blocked any potential return to free trade.[18]

The one organization the government followed closely was Julius Wolf's MEWV.[19] This is in line with observation that the government files use the notion of Central Europe as a reference to the plan for a customs union in the territory of mainland Europe, akin to pre-war economic concepts. This would align well with the timeline of the considerations of Delbrück's commission, as this was set up before the pan-German mainstream wartime interpretation of Central Europe started to take shape in 1915.

Government files used the notion as a label extensively in this early period. For example, the file classification, 'Central European State Union'[20] was inaugurated. However, the notion rarely appeared in subsequent files recording actual negotiations with Austria-Hungary, since Central Europe was associated with a wider customs union. This is consistent with pre-war economic conceptions of Central Europe, which sought to establish a wider union starting with Austria-Hungary. The German government's aims were

also in line with this particular understanding of Central Europe. While trade and customs unions were being negotiated, the German government was clearly interested in striking a deal that would bolster the transport capacities of the Danube and Austro-Hungarian railways looking south-east to Asia Minor and eventually, perhaps, the Middle East.

However, none of the governmental considerations shows a significant influence of geographic determinism or organic growth state theory, so prominent in all conceptions of Central Europe originating in the pre-war economic discourse. In fact, the only shared characteristic is the belief in the future organization of global trade into mutually exclusive and protectionist larger economic zones. Moreover, the notion of Central Europe is relatively consistently associated with the idea of a wider customs union in the governmental files starting in the 1880s.[21] Therefore, it would be difficult to insist that the use of the notion in the early wartime period was in some way motivated by the pre-war economic discourse of Central Europe.

Rather, it is likely that the formation of the interpretation of the notion was parallel to the economic discourse in the early years of the twentieth century, and may even have predated it, placing the first use of Central Europe within the late nineteenth century,[22] when its use in the wider public sphere was relatively unsettled, but among other things associated with such a plan.

This would place the institutional definition of Central Europe within the German Foreign Office in the lesser stream of the wartime discourse, as an independent concept developed on the basis of earlier institutional interpretations reaching back at least three decades. Consequently, the German Foreign Office was an independent, if fringe, contributor to the debate, rather than being influenced by the discourse and its dominant definition of Central Europe. The notion of Central Europe developed as a proposal for a multilateral customs alliance in Europe and resurfaced several times in the 1880s, 1890s and early 1900s, until it was finally fully utilized in the early days of World War I.

Thus, in direct contrast to what outside observers and commentators assumed, the German government was under very little, if any, influence from 'Mr Naumann and his friends'.[23]

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Following its defeat in 1866, Austria-Hungary was in decline, torn by clashing ethnic ambitions and increasingly conscious of its seemingly ever stronger neighbour to the north-west. The main preoccupation of the Viennese throne was to safeguard the sovereignty of its now Dual Monarchy and keep a lid on simmering national tensions. Central Europe, a notion

appropriated by the pan-German movement, was thus necessarily viewed negatively, because it was designed to enhance the standing of the Germans at the expense of the Slavs and almost certain to cause a backlash among them.

From the 1880s the government firmly associated Central Europe with contemplation of a closer relationship with Germany, in which Austria-Hungary would clearly become a junior partner. In this sense, the idea of Central Europe worked head on against the interests of the throne – it would curb Vienna's sovereignty and upset the fragile national peace balance at the same time. Thus, if the Austrian government took account of Central Europe, it was in a negative sense. In fact, the heir to the throne was plotting a comprehensive internal reform, which would see Austrian German and Hungarian standing significantly reduced.

Prime Minister Stürgkh and his Hungarian counterpart Tisza both imposed strict censorship and actively sought to limit debate on the topic within political circles during the early days of World War I. The government was unsuccessful in stopping 'pilgrimages' of Central Europe enthusiasts into Berlin, but it was successful in stifling any brewing internal debate. The lack of coordination was the key to their inability to formulate common proposals and engage meaningfully with the Berlin government.

Stürgkh's government drew a clear distinction between the contemplated customs union and the idea of Central Europe as a virtual union with Germany.[24] Several cabinet ministers voiced sharp opposition even to the idea of a customs union because they perceived that this would drive Austria-Hungary into ever deeper dependency on Germany. Naumann personally tried – and failed – to convince the Hungarian prime minister, Tisza, who remained one of the staunchest opponents of the plan. Finally, practical considerations, and a persistent belief that the world was heading for a global system of large exclusive economic zones, motivated the reluctant agreement of the government to the commencement of negotiations with Germany in August 1915. The label 'Central Europe' was purposefully avoided and replacement notions, such as economic rapprochement, were employed in the official documentation instead.

It was only under the shortlived cabinet of Heinrich von Clam-Martinic (1916–17) that the Central Europe programme got any kind of head start and could be seen to exercise a strong influence on policy-making. Clam-Martinic's cabinet featured a notable group of strong Central Europe enthusiasts, including Baernreither, Riedl and Czernin. Stalled negotiations were immediately reopened. At the same time, Sándor Wekerle, the chairman of the Hungarian branch of MEWV and the foremost of Central Europe advocates in Hungary, became Hungarian prime minister in May 1917.

However, Clam-Martinic's cabinet fell after only six months, in the aftermath of rising nationalist tensions in the reopened Austro-Hungarian parliament.

The subsequent Seidler cabinet retained some of these Central Europe advocates in its inner core (especially Czernin, who held on to his foreign policy portfolio); however, their success in realizing any idea of Central Europe must be questioned carefully. The accords signed by two of the emperors in May 1918 represented a political capitulation of Emperor Karl I to Emperor Wilhelm II, rather than the summit of successful negotiations. Czernin was sacked in June 1918 and the Seidler government started to immediately press its preference for a customs arrangement rather than full union. The *coup de grâce* for the ill-fated project was dealt by the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary during late 1918.

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The notion of Central Europe appeared in British governmental correspondence as early as 1906. It was presented as a distinctively anti-British pan-German plan to unify Germany and Austria-Hungary, and expand German influence to the south-east.[25] Many adopted the use of the notion in its German original – '*Mitteleuropa*' – using it in English-language texts. '*Drang nach Osten*' and '*Berlin–Baghdad*' swiftly became bywords for Central Europe, as British officials identified it with a perceived strategic threat to the British Empire, even to its government of India. From the British point of view Austria-Hungary was a key link in this plan, and detachment from its stronger ally would hopefully ruin any prospects for its materialization. A strong and independent Austria-Hungary was, from the British point of view, by far the best safeguard against expansion of German influence into the Middle East.[26]

This premise remained the British policy baseline well into the war, even though there was little doubt that the Dual Monarchy was firmly under the influence of Germany. Masaryk's proposals for dismemberment thus fell on deaf ears in many quarters. The first official consideration of dismemberment was the Tyrrell–Paget report;[27] however, this proposal did not gain much traction. The main concern was that the break-up would leave behind a group of small states exposed to German overlordship. In contrast, Vienna's defection would greatly enhance the chances of an allied victory and provide a counterweight to German influence after the war.

These assessments were based on prevailing concepts of the balance of power and rooted in the pre-war system of the European Concert. The idea of Austria-Hungary as a counterweight to Germany was better aligned with policy-makers' mindsets than Masaryk's proposal of a Slav barrier. Moreover,

the group of New Imperialists in the cabinet of Lloyd George also believed the world would in future develop towards larger political units, not small nation-states. Their preferred tactic was to detach Austria-Hungary from Germany, ensure its restructuring − to give equal status to all nationalities, thereby weakening the German ethnic element − and turn the area of the formal empire into a regional counterweight against Germany. The British government believed that Austria would be willing to agree to such a solution, due to its perceived war weariness and its attempts to negotiate a separate peace.

It was only the material signature of protocols on economic and military union between Germany and Austria-Hungary of May 1918 that convinced British policy-makers that this scenario was dead. Horace Rumbold, British ambassador in Switzerland, interpreted the protocols as a step towards *Mitteleuropa*,[28] warning that it could become a reality. As a result, the Foreign Office switched gears and started supporting the propaganda activities of the small nations of the Dual Monarchy to destabilize it.

However, this did not imply a commitment to dismemberment. It was not any concrete fear of an emergent Central Europe that convinced the British government to recognize the Czech National Council as the provisional government of a future Czechoslovak state. A much more convincing argument lay in the army that the CNC controlled and the allies needed. Even after recognition, as late as September 1918 Robert Cecil was convinced that Britain should not bind itself to dismemberment;[29] however, the Dual Monarchy would anyway ultimately collapse of its own accord. The Foreign Office was anxious to avoid Balkanization of the region and considered supporting the creation of a regional federation but ultimately decided to stay out of the matter and let matters take their own course.

In the United States, Central Europe featured in the writings of key policy-makers, typically as '*Mitteleuropa*'. In the Inquiry Papers, it appears interchangeably with '*Mittel-Europa*', 'Mid-Europe' and 'Mid-European Economic Union', along with 'Drang nach Osten' and 'Berlin−Baghdad'. The Inquiry's interpretation of Central Europe was built upon the re-reading of pan-German writings and its interactions with significant opponents of the plan (Chéradame, Masaryk, Seton-Watson). The key analysts of the Inquiry (Kerner, Seymour) adopted the view of Central Europe put forward by Masaryk − i.e., it represented a German plan to dominate the Slavs and make headway eastwards to establish its rule over vast swathes of Europe. Masaryk presented the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary and the establishment of a collective of independent Slav states as a potential bulwark against the future spread of German influence. After the war, House asserted that the United States government had always believed that an independent Bohemia could be

considered such a bulwark. However, the evidence suggested otherwise. In fact, it took a long time to convince the United States government to recognize the CNC at all and, even after the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, American representatives insisted on the formation of a new regional union.

House claimed that the bulk of the Inquiry's work focused on '*Mitteleuropa*', which he defined as stretching from the North and Baltic seas to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, identifying it with a purported Berlin–Baghdad plan of German expansion; this had been a view undoubtedly adapted from re-reading works such as Chéradame's *The German Plot Unmasked*,[30] and from interactions with British policy-makers and activist opponents of the concept. This view was also presented in the very first document of the Inquiry, which became instrumental to the formulation of the famous Fourteen Points speech of President Wilson.

However, the Inquiry was not keen on dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. In fact, the Inquiry was disunited over the question of what should be done with the Dual Monarchy, leaning towards its federalization in general terms. Just like the British government, the Inquiry did not believe small nation-states could resist Germany, considering that these would eventually be drawn into its orbit under some Central European pretext.

Already, in 1916, both House and Wilson believed that Germany hankered after a stable continental base, which would help it to project power towards the Middle East. Since the plan was deemed a threat to United States interests, the Inquiry proposed democratization of Germany and the federalization of Austria-Hungary as the best safeguard against it.[31] Dismemberment was evidently not on the cards and Wilson actually delivered assurances of the continued existence of the empire after the war to the Austrian government. His Fourteen Points speech did not call for the break-up and establishment of independent nation-states. History generally takes House's post-war line: that the United States was a supporter of Czech independence.[32] Yet, in point of fact, Wilson had actually refused to see Masaryk as late as May 1918. Even after recognition was extended to the CNC on 3 September, the United States preference remained for regional federation.

To this end, the government offered to finance an initiative for a Mid-European Union, adapting the notion to cover its own regional reorganization plan. Masaryk confirmed that it was the United States establishment that had put forward the very idea of the regional federation.[33] Yet the attempt to realize a 'safe Mitteleuropa' was a stillborn plan: this federative concept imposed by another outside actor – the United States government in this case – did not even find support among the very nations it was supposed to unify.

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To sum up, the German government maintained its own definition of Central Europe – one that it had used fairly consistently from the 1880s. This was of a wider customs union in continental Europe, often cast as the alternative to a closer relationship with Austria Hungary rather than something likely to foster it. This definition of Central Europe was also projected into the German governmental debate in the early days of the war. The government's considerations were largely unscathed by the nationalist discourse developing in wider society. The fact that the outcome of the internal debate – relating to the opening of negotiations on a customs union with Austria-Hungary – coincided with the public discourse of Central Europe, was a result of the observed necessity to start a build-up of the envisaged bloc as soon as was practically possible. The only country that would be willing to join it was the Dual Monarchy, even though its value as a market for Germany was highly doubtful.

On the other hand, the conduct of the top Austrian and Hungarian politicians was profoundly affected by the Central Europe discourse. In these state territories, the notion was developing as a pan-German notion, presenting a challenge to both the sovereignty of the Dual Monarchy and its fragile national and ethnic balance. Both Stürgkh and Tisza imposed strict censorship on debating Central Europe, clamping down on even internal pan-German debates through their personal connections with Central Europe proponents. The government consented to negotiations towards a customs union with Germany but drew a clear difference between the two concepts. There were many powerful advocates of Central Europe in Austria-Hungary, but it took Stürgkh's death and Tisza's resignation to bring about a breakthrough in their influence on policy-making. The shortlived cabinet of Clam-Martinic included several of the foremost advocates of Central Europe, together directly in key positions. This six-month episode represents the highest degree of influence on policy-making the notion of Central Europe had ever affected. The Seidler government muffled somewhat the influence of Central Europe enthusiasts but some of them remained in influential positions, working towards the conclusion of negotiations. Unfortunately for them, their term in office coincided with the faltering commitment of Germany.

Policy-makers in the allied countries also kept the notion of Central Europe in view. In both Britain and the United States, Central Europe was equated to the Berlin–Baghdad project, represented as the springboard for German expansion to the Middle East and beyond, and considered a strategic threat. The notion was derived from observations of the discourse in Germany and its interpretations by authors opposing the notion. In fact, Central Europe often appeared in governmental correspondence in its German original,

'Mitteleuropa'. However, policy-makers in both countries refused to accept Masaryk's insistence that it could only be countered by dismemberment of Austria-Hungary. Dismemberment did not sit well with the United States and British policy mindsets rooted in pragmatic balance of power conceptions and underlined the persistent belief that small countries could not resist German pressure. Instead, after the Dual Monarchy collapsed, sections of policy-making circles in both countries put forward their own concepts for Central Europe, which would have seen the construction of a new federation from the successor states of Austria-Hungary. Eventually, the British government decided to turn down Leo Amery's proposal of just such a construct. The United States government pushed ahead with its Mid-European Union; an attempt doomed to failure by the lack of commitment of those it was supposed to unify.

To sum up, somewhat ironically, key policy-makers in all countries examined here, except for the German government, were affected by the wartime discourse and the dominant interpretation of Central Europe as a pan-German plan to expand its power. Yet, overall, the concept of Central Europe as an attempt to define regional identity failed to exert an influence on international structure in either a positive or negative way, as discussed below.

SMART PROPAGANDA THAT FAILED

To start with, the German government had a different idea of Central Europe from that represented in the dominant public discourse stipulated, and – to state the obvious – it lost the war. Imperial Germany failed to change the international structure as desired, but there is little to conclude from this outcome in regards to the notion of Central Europe, because its public discourse did not drive Berlin's policy in the first place.

In Austria, the influence of the notion varied. The Stürgkh cabinet opposed the notion vigorously, resorting to censorship to curb the public debate. The one point at which the notion truly drove the policy was in the period of Clam-Martinic's government, which, fell apart before it could bring the negotiations with Germany to completion. Central Europe enthusiasts in the Seidler cabinet might have rejoiced temporarily at the signing of the accords in May 1918, yet, after Czernin's resignation, the government changed its course profoundly and negotiated a much looser customs arrangement. Sovereignty and protection of a hard-won internal bargain ultimately took precedence over pan-German brotherhood.

However, from the ouside the situation looked different. British diplomats interpreted the May 1918 accords struck between the two emperors as the long-promised arrival of Central Europe, and policy changed accordingly.

Support lent to the propaganda activities of small nations gained momentum, though the British government could not bring itself to support a dismemberment of Austria-Hungary until it fell apart on its own. The recognition of CNC certainly boosted confidence in the rebels lined up against Vienna but, of itself, did not bring about the break-up of empire.

The story of Masaryk in all of this is curious. He operated with a complex definition of Central Europe – invoking German domination of the region, the suppression of self-determination rights and the possibilities for a Berlin–Baghdad axis – tailored to its chosen audience, to induce a threat perception in ruling circles of the Entente countries. Central Europe was presented as an emerging regional identity harmful to the interests of individual allied countries, one that could only be countered by the break-up of Austria-Hungary. This negative othering failed, too. While Masaryk's portrayal of Central Europe was broadly in line with perceptions of his intended audiences, the remedy he suggested to this threat was not. He won recognition of CNC due to his POW army, not his portrayal of Central Europe.

The two governments he was most keen to get on his side – the United States and the British – devised their own versions of Central Europe by the war end. In Britain, Amery's extraordinary proposal that Britain should accept a German-friendly Central Europe defined as a federation of successor states, was turned down. The United States initiative, which heralded a creation of a Mid-European Union as a federation pompously announced at the Independence Hall, fell apart within less than two months. This failure to construct a new regional identity was due to the lack of commitment on the part of the nations involved.

Thus the concept of Central Europe failed completely. There is no doubt that the pan-German advocates of the notion, the German government and the small nations of Austria-Hungary, had a change of international structure in mind, but all of them fell short of seeing their ambitions delivered. The Austro-Hungarian government was torn between the protection of its sovereignty and the pan-German ideas, only to be torn apart by nationalist tensions. The United States government failed miserably in its attempt to engineer a new Central Europe.

This succession of failures came down to the fact that each and every actor in this game pushed for interests diametrically opposed to their intended partners. Pan-German Central Europe advocates were out of synch with the German government and clashed head on with Austrian interests in the early days of the war. In 1915, the Austrian government was not interested in being a vassal of Germany. Later on, when pan-Germans took power in Vienna, the German government was not interested in taking on responsibility for a

troublesome Austria. Masaryk pushed for a solution that was alien to United States and British policy-makers, while the United States government was intent on acting directly against the wishes of the would-be successor states.

Overall, it seems that the narrative of Central Europe fulfilled the whole hypothesis we started with, except for its final part: the structural changes. The discussion above has shown how Central Europe was an exercise in geopolitics, which influenced the behaviour of varied political actors through definitions of 'self' and 'other'. However, this influence did not translate into structural changes.

Yet, had the set-up been only very slightly different, one of the Central Europe concepts might have come to fruition. Had Clam-Martinic's cabinet been in place at the beginning the war, and had Wekerle been the Hungarian prime minister instead of Tisza, the story might have been very different. But instead of constructing alternative histories, it seems more profitable to examine the later development of the notion in order to establish whether Central Europe at any point impacted existing international structures during the twentieth century.

6   Variations in Time and Space

The story of Central Europe recounted thus far is but its beginning. The pan-Germans may have invented and then popularized the notion of Central Europe, yet it lived on after the concepts of World War I had long been buried. In fact, the pan-German incarnation was just the first of many for Central Europe, which keeps on returning into the public debate at times of sweeping structural change.

INTERWAR DISCOURSE: FROM DANUBIAN FEDERATION TO REICH, 1919–39

In 1919, the Central Powers were defeated and so was the idea of *Mitteleuropa*. Instead of a multinational union, the Austro-Hungarian Empire was broken up into smaller nation-states. Austria was established as an independent state separate from Germany and four-and-a-half million Hungarians found themselves living outside Hungary proper. The feeling of differential treatment was aggravated by a disproportionate division of economic resources – again to the significant disadvantage of Austria and Hungary. Mutual suspicion and resentment was pervasive among the successor states. Hungary was left internally unstable and Austria impoverished, Czechoslovakia jealously guarded its 'armed national sovereignty', while an enlarged Romania was struggling with internal integration.

A multitude of problems and their pervasive character soon began to challenge the wisdom of the nation-state system in the area, and projects for a federation in Central Europe were soon back on the table.

The term Central Europe was used by British and American authors of the early interwar period as a shorthand for the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It appeared in the works of Malbone W. Graham,[1] Kenneth L. Roberts,[2] George A. Schreiner,[3] Pantcho Doreff[4] and many others,[5] typically in a negative light. The creation of small isolationist

nation-states was blamed for a deterioration of the economic situation and persisting instability in the region.[6] The earlier fears of 'Balkanization' seemed to have come true. Central Europe was fast becoming a synonym for post-war chaos, impoverishment and continuous petty clashes between the nascent nation-states. Many authors called for revision of the settlement and for increased cooperation among successor states but stopped short of suggesting a more concrete form for such cooperation.

The most colourful representation of a condemnatory view of the dismemberment and its implications came from the pen of British journalist and war correspondent, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett. The title of his 1923 book, *The Tragedy of Central Europe*,[7] suggested a thing or two about its contents and the views presented. In several places within the book, he openly wrote that the dismemberment of the empire was

> [...] a mistake ... committed in an atmosphere of hate before the violent passions produced by the War had cooled down and before economic facts could be considered dispassionately and separated from the primitive instincts of revenge.[8]

Ashmead-Bartlett warned that the desperate impoverishment of Austria and Hungary would fuel hatred among the successor states, resulting eventually in further conflict. Even though his statements are sometimes confusing and contradictory,[9] his conclusions were surprisingly close to what was to transpire some 15 years later. Quite aptly, Ashmead-Bartlett highlighted the pattern and eastward direction of German territorial ambitions and the mortal danger it presented to both Czechoslovakia and Poland.[10] He posited that as soon as Germany was able to emerge from its economic ruin, millions of Germans in Czechoslovakia would strive to be 'restored to the Motherland'.[11] Austria, well beyond the economic point of no return in his view, had to be either incorporated into Germany or further subdivided among the surrounding states, 'if she [was] to save her people from complete ruin'.[12] Yet of Hungarians he said they would 'never rest until they have regained some portion of their lost territories and wealth, which have been filched by their neighbours'.[13]

In short, Ashmead-Bartlett thought that the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary was ill-conceived and a grave danger to the European peace. He called for revision of the settlement in order to avoid otherwise inevitable future conflicts.[14] In the early 1920s this was the view held by many at the Foreign Office as well.

The fortunes and political career of the foremost of British analysts of Central Europe, Robert W. Seton-Watson, document the shifting attitudes to

successor states in the early 1920s. Seton-Watson was a vigorous champion of the cause of the small nations of former Austria-Hungary and a resident expert of the British Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference. Unlike Ashmead-Bartlett, Seton-Watson opposed any calls for the revision of the borders of successor states. With rising concerns about the viability of the settlement established in the aftermath of the war, his standing with the British Government diminished dramatically. His lenient view of especially Czechs and Romanians caused much damage to his prestige as one of the foremost experts on the area.[15] Even though he did return to active work within the Foreign Office between 1939 and 1942, his influence on policy was limited by a lack of access to decision-makers.

Halford Mackinder's career followed a similar path.[16] His impact on the foreign policy of Great Britain in the interwar period was limited,[17] going little beyond his official duties as chairman of the Imperial Shipping Committee and short service as a privy councillor.[18] British politician and historian, Richard Grayson, demonstrated that Britain's cold relationship with the Soviet Union was based on mutual distrust and occasional clashes in the nineteenth century, rather than Mackinder's interpretation of history.[19] Moreover, the British government showed a growing preference for the formation of regional union in Central Europe[20] and an appeasement policy towards Germany, in direct contradiction to Mackinder's 1919 treatise. As was to be seen, the Middle Tier would also fail to prevent the resurgence of Germany and its alliance with Russia.

Records in the National Archives in Kew show considerable Foreign Office preoccupation with issues surrounding the successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in the five years following the Paris Peace Conference.[21] The diplomats were preoccupied with the situation in troubled Austria. Contemplation of the potential consequences of a possible *Anschluss*[22] were intertwined with questions over the state of Austrian finances,[23] controversies in relations with Hungary[24] and the implications of the formation of the Little Entente. Overall, the Foreign Office was greatly concerned about nationalist tensions,[25] the economic situation and the general instability in the area, all brought about by the dismemberment of the former empire.

Whitehall advocated removing obstacles to international trade in the region as a way to foster economic recovery and much needed stability.[26] Some sources suggest that formation of a federation under the leadership of Czechoslovakia was also proposed.[27] However, isolationism, nationalist rivalries, occasional skirmishes and internal instability of many successor states hampered any such efforts. The impression left by the recorded communication between the Foreign Office and its representatives is that of

diminishing patience of the British government with the leaders of the successor states and their turf wars.

After the controversy of the French-sponsored Autonomous Government of the Palatinate in 1924, the attention of foreign policy-makers turned almost exclusively towards Germany. It seemed that His Majesty's Government lost all enthusiasm for attempting to resolve the issues of successor states. From 1927 the main concern of the British government shifted back to the larger picture of security within Europe, Britain's relations with other powers, and developments in Germany. Central Europe only resurfaced as a major theme of British foreign policy concerns with the *Anschluss* in 1938.

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Henry Cord Meyer noted that in the early post-World War I period 'the term *Mitteleuropa* for a time lost its broader emotional appeal' in Germany.[28] This was hardly surprising, for Germany was humiliated, devastated and impoverished. Contemplations of the creation of a regional unit headed by Germany could not have been seriously undertaken until the country's situation could be at least stabilized. As a result, the forging and prioritization of the discourse of Central Europe and its prominence in the foreign policy debates in Germany, resembles an inversion of the image just painted for interwar Britain. In a see-saw like manner, with the diminishing interest of Britain in successor states, contemplations of Central Europe started to reappear in Germany.

This process is demonstrable in the numerous concepts of Central Europe published in Karl Haushofer's geopolitics journal, *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*, during the interwar period.[29] The journal was published for the first time in 1924 – the year that British foreign policy-makers started to lose interest in Central European issues and projects. The ascendancy of revisionist writers bent on the creation of a German-dominated political unit in Central Europe was epitomized by Martin Spahn's famous *Volk und Reich* of 1925.[30] The new project of *Mitteleuropa* was conceived of as a way to reinstate Germany to its major power position through the unification of Germany and the former Austro-Hungarian territories.

The new *Mitteleuropa* was to be a way out of the strategic catastrophe suffered by Germany in World War I. The debate started with broad contemplation of the results of the war and discussion of the standing of Germany in the emerging new European economic and power structure. This discussion established the building blocks of subsequent conceptions of *Mitteleuropa*: geographic determinism, organic theory of state, German cultural uniqueness and historical mission, union with Austria, need for

economic autarchy, Versailles treaty revisionism, and portrayal of successor states as a historical mistake and France as a threat.

Some of these themes were foreshadowed by Walther Vogel in the following paragraph:

> The internationalization of German rivers, especially the Rhine, imposed by the blackmail of the Versailles Peace, is in its present form unsustainable for long. France is a foreign body on the Rhine and it must naturally pursue intentions harmful to navigation on the Rhine. On the other hand, the relative right to life of this state entity on the Danube was clearly demonstrated right after the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. In their own best interest, the states on the banks of Danube cannot permanently remain in the state of mutual suspicious resentment. The full geopolitical power of Rhine and Danube will only develop once they have been connected by an effective channel . . . .[31]

This passage essentially encompassed the idea of Central Europe that would be presented in succeeding volumes of *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*. The unjust and unsustainable Versailles settlement had to be countered by the construction of a strong organic political unit in Central Europe. Defined by features of natural or human geography, the new *Mitteleuropa* would consist of Germany and the territories of the former Austria-Hungary, and become a major power in world politics.

Overall, themes present in the *Mitteleuropa* concepts published in *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* were to a great extent a continuation of themes established by earlier German traditions. The organic theory of the state, as well as geographic determinism, stemmed from Ratzelian tradition. The German cultural uniqueness and historical mission to unify the area were well vested in World War I concepts of *Mitteleuropa* and reached back to the romanticism of the nineteenth century. So was the focus on economic considerations and the suggested extent of the future union. A certain level of adaptation to the older idea of unification with Austria-Hungary was necessary given its dismemberment. The questioning of the viability of successor states and an emphasis on Anschluss Österreichs became expressions of such adaptation. Bitterness towards France was surely rooted in contemporary experiences; however, such tradition can be traced back into nineteenth-century Germany as well.[32] The only original theme seemed to be the revisionism of the Versailles Peace Treaty, obviously tied to the specific post-World War I situation.

Yet, at the very heart of all *Mitteleuropa* concepts lay the aim of reinstating Germany as a major power. Therefore, the main themes were continually

developing with the changing situation in Germany as well as the perceived international context. The gradual change in attitude the authors took was striking.

The 1920s articles mostly possessed a descriptive and exploratory character.[33] They focused on contemplating the adverse effects of the Paris Peace Conference settlements on the economic and strategic position of Germany and the situation within the area of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire. Emphasis was laid on suggesting a model for alleviating such grievances through regional cooperation. Articles highlighted the uniqueness of the German nation and presented it as a unifying force of a multinational Central Europe.[34] Geographically and economically substantiated concepts stretched the spatial notion of *Mittleuropa* from the north-western corner of Germany towards the Balkans, by accentuating the role of the Danube and surrounding areas for achievement of economic autarchy.

However, by the early 1930s, the accent changed, and conceptions of Central Europe were increasingly presented as blueprints for unification[35] of a scattered German population[36] and as expressions of a natural right of the German nation[37] to 'living and breathing space, and equal rights'.[38] The Anschluss was portrayed as the first step in creating a *Mitteleuropa* that encompassed the realm of the German nation. *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* introduced a section dedicated to Central Europe in 1932 and articles under this section put forward suggestions for the creation of a geographical unit designed to accomplish German national ambitions, rather than to alleviate grievances caused by the aberrations of the Paris Peace Conference.[39] From 1933 onwards, articles took a marked anti-liberalist turn and emphasized the unique German form of society, as opposed to both Western liberalism and Eastern despotism. Militarist thought appeared the same year,[40] accompanied by numerous references to Adolf Hitler and the National Socialist German Workers' Party *(Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, NSDAP).

Finally, the journal's 'Mitteleuropa' section was replaced by 'Area of the Germans' (*Raum der Deutschen*) in 1935. The areas of successor states were openly ascribed to the future rule of the German nation and divided into units defined on a geomorphologic basis, such as 'Danube area' (*Donauraum*) or 'Alps area' (*Alpenraum*), much in a way one would approach contemplations of sub-national units, rather than regional integration of sovereign states.[41]

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Early analysts of the German school of geopolitics ascribed a high public profile for *Mitteleuropa* concepts to the close affinity existing between Karl Haushofer and leading proponents of National Socialism.[42] Geopolitics was

described as the 'court theory' of the Nazi regime. However, later commentators challenged this view and suggested National Socialists merely exploited geopolitical concepts for their own ends, or disregarded them and went well beyond them whenever suitable.

However, the truth was probably somewhere in between. Jürgen Elverts suggested that geopolitical concepts, and especially the idea of Central Europe, achieved their extraordinary popularity by simply being in line with wider philosophical and social developments in Germany.[43] The above discussion of themes present in German conceptions of *Mitteleuropa* suggests very similar conclusions.

A majority of themes stemmed from earlier German traditions and their combination, and was present in World War I conceptualizations as well. The only new themes were the ones connected to the specifics of the Paris Peace Conference settlements. Indeed, the presented development of themes within concepts and a gradual change in overall character of concepts, can be linked to ascending Nazi ideology in Germany during the period. This is not to say that all authors of *Mitteleuropa* concepts were Nazis: it only demonstrates that *Mitteleuropa* was being constructed within wider discussion in German society.

Mitteleuropa gained prominence as a possible means out of hostile encirclement, towards possible restoration of the mythical German Empire and its rightful place as a world power. The idea of restoration of the greatness of the German nation won support from all levels of society. Politicians both left and right of centre endorsed various concepts presented. But such links worked both ways and concepts were in turn influenced by the changing mood of the public and the growing ambitions of the politicians. *Mitteleuropa* was a popular concept mirroring changes in popular mood.

A growing ambition for the German Reich, rather than a dream of pluralist Central Europe, shaped the concepts with increasing intensity. Contemplations of the role of rivers as state-building features changed into perceptions of space as a weapon. *Mitteleuropa* changed into a *Raum der Deutschen*. Following the Nazi rise to power, *Mitteleuropa* became an expression of Nazi ambition for hegemony over Europe. Eventually, it would be supplanted by a new term – the *Reich*.

Interestingly, the oft-mentioned guidance of Halford Mackinder in the German geopolitics of the time seems to have exercised much less influence on concepts of *Mitteleuropa* than previously thought. Direct references are scarcely found beyond the works of Karl Haushofer, and all the major themes that could be ascribed to his influence (e.g. geographical determinism or overwhelming concern with the territory east of the German borders) can be more reasonably ascribed to traditions already present in German thought.

The interwar *Mitteleuropa* concepts were largely exaltations of German national ambition and based on a heritage of original German thought, rather than foreign geostrategic concepts.

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Conceptions of Central Europe in Austria were developing very much along the main lines of the German concepts presented in the previous section. Indeed, many of them were printed in *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik*. One such example came from Ernst Streeruwitz, Austrian Chancellor in 1929.

Streeruwitz's article entitled 'Austria's mission in Europe' (*Österreichs Mission in Europa*)[44] portrayed Austria as a bridge between Germany and the scattered German-speaking population in the former Austro-Hungarian territories.[45] It built on a limited historical analysis of the movement of nations from Asia to Europe, concluding that the German nation was weakened in comparison to the French nation by the incursion of the Slavic nations, which split the German population. Streeruwitz avoided the issue of a North-German Confederation and the exclusion of Austria from it, and instead focused on the earlier historical role of Austria in its fight against the Ottomans. The familiar theme of condemnation of the dismemberment of Austria-Hungary carried the reader through to paragraphs vilifying any French-backed initiatives such as potential Danubian (Con)Federation or Pan-European Union. Finally, building on the organic theory of state he suggested that a unified Germany and Austria would become a core of Central Europe, which would grow further.[46]

Streeruwitz's article presented the mainstream Austrian idea of Central Europe, which portrayed a unified Germany and Austria as the core area of the future strong economic and political unit, an area that would eventually expand to include surrounding areas on the basis of historical links as well as economic cooperation. This is not suprising, as the most pressing issues in the Austria of the day stemmed from economic impoverishment following the loss of territory, industry and virtually all economic links after the post-World War I settlements. Streeruwitz's considerations were thus well vested in the practical problems of the country. In essence, the Austrian theorists of Central Europe saw it as a tool to achieve the very same aim as their German counterparts – alteration of the situation in which Austria found itself following the Paris Peace Conference. The notion of Central Europe became the new framework, which would help to renew the lost links and raise Austria from its ashes, even if it would be within a German-dominated structure.

In fact, the idea of one great German nation with Central Europe as its exaltation permeated geopolitical thought in Austria with relative ease.[47]

A *Mitteleuropa* discussion was widespread in Austrian intellectual circles. A volume edited by Josef Nadler and Heinrich von Srbik contained the essays of 16 well-known Austrian authors, presenting various aspects of the role of Austria in the history and future of Central Europe.[48] All of them plotted the historical mission of Austria in the context of *Deutschtum*, as did the works of Alois Jaschke,[49] Karl Wache[50] and many others.

On the other hand, there were those in Austrian society who chose not to pin all their hopes on Germany. Among them was an arch enemy in the eyes of German geopoliticians – Count Richard von Coudenhove-Kalergi. He viewed the future of global politics as belonging to five major powers: Pan-America, the British and Russian empires, the East-Asian bloc (Japan and China) and Europe. Coudenhove-Kalergi proposed gradual unification and federalization of Europe beginning with periodical conferences dealing with issues of common interest, through customs union, to the fully realized form of the United States of Europe. The process was to be started by the countries of the Little Entente and the borders of this bloc were to be the borders of Europe itself – cultural in the east and natural in all other directions.[51]

His concept – much detested by German geopoliticians as a covert attempt by France to gain hegemony over Europe – attracted widespread interest among European leaders.[52] However, the devotion of the European leaders to construction of a United States of Europe was only half-hearted. Even though Coudenhove-Kalergi's plans inspired the Kellogg–Briand Memorandum,[53] the goals of a Pan-European Movement were more distant in 1939 than they had been in 1923, as the European powers were yet again on a collision course rather than one of reconciliation.[54] Germany would absorb Austria in the run-up to World War II, on 12 March 1938.

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Hungarian emigré society also cherished the idea of Central Europe as a way to alleviate the conditions imposed on Hungary by the Paris Peace Conference. However, their Central Europe was somewhat different to German and Austrian notions of *Mitteleuropa*. Instead of Central Europe, Hungarian writers developed the idea of a Danubian Confederation. Central Europe as a notion was negatively associated with the wartime proposals and, not surprisingly, Hungarian interwar concepts tended to leave the German element out.

The best-known proponent of the idea for a Danubian Confederation was Oszkár Jászi, who laid out a plan for its creation for the first time in 1918 in his book *The Future of the Monarchy: The Fall of Dualism and the United States of Danubia*.[55] In his original concept Jászi had suggested the creation of

a United States of Danubia consisting of Hungary, Austria, Bohemia, newly united Poland and Illyria, i.e. South-Slav regions under Croatian leadership. However, his plans were disrupted by the results of the Paris Peace Conference and Jászi was compelled to gradually reformulate his concept and its basis, which he would repeat several times in the following decades.

In the 1920s, Jászi criticized the successor states for their efforts to reach economic autarchy, their growing isolationism and particularly for their policies towards national minorities. Indeed, one of Jászi's primary concerns were the fortunes of Hungarian minorities in the successor states, which together accounted for 4.5 million people or about a third of all Hungarians. In his view, the mixed nationalities of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire territories simply required something other than a nation-state solution, and only a settlement that would respect the cultural autonomy of all nations in the area could bring lasting peace.[56] He also argued against the severance of economic links that adversely affected Hungary and argued in favour of mutual economic cooperation, especially in the field of agriculture.[57] The goal of his concept was to overcome the notion of small states in Central European space and 'to break down economic isolation while protecting a perfect political and territorial sovereignty of the new states'.[58] Ideally, the settlement of his new Danube Union of Nations would resemble the constitution of Switzerland, with separate concepts for nationality and citizenship. In 1922 Jászi looked towards the countries of the Little Entente to take a lead in creating such a unit.[59] However, he soon became disillusioned with their attitude to Hungarian minorities.[60]

Another vocal call for the peaceful revision of the Treaty of Trianon[61] came from the socialist writer Joseph Diner-Dénes in the form of his book *Hungary: Oligarchy, Nation, People* (published in French as *La Hongrie: Oligarchie, Nation, Peuple*).[62] Diner-Dénes suggested that France should promote friendship between Hungarians and their Slavic neighbours and inspire the conclusion of a series of bilateral treaties creating a mutual bond between the successor states. He also struck another note popular in French intellectual circles by hinting that such a conglomerate could become a building block for a future pan-Europe, a structure guaranteeing peace on the continent.

Many other concepts of some form of Central European unit were presented by Hungarian authors and intellectual groups in the interwar period.[63] However varied these concepts might have been, their common denominator was an attempt to uphold some form of unity of the Hungarian nation now scattered across several states. The injustice of the Treaty of Trianon for the Hungarian nation was decried and a renewal of the historical links between the nations in the area was called for. Nominally, concepts were presented to

be in the interests of all successor or even European states, as regional cooperation should ideally promote economic prosperity and build a sustainable peace.

However, Regent Nicholas {Miklós} Horthy, who ruled the re-established Kingdom of Hungary from 1920 to 1944, would soon adopt a pro-German course and this friendship would win the revision of territorial adjustments of Trianon in a manner that could hardly have been presented as in the interest of all successor states. Close links with Nazi Germany secured Hungary territorial gains at the expense of Czechoslovakia through the First Vienna Award in 1938 and at the expense of Romania through the Second Vienna Award in 1940, in exchange for its alliance with the Axis powers.

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In the interwar period, the interests of Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania, and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, lay first in safeguarding their independence and borders against possible Hungarian or German revisionism. Therefore, it is not surprising that the efforts of their intellectuals as well as statesmen were directed towards this aim rather than the construction of a supra-national unit in Central Europe.

Only a few politicians advocated the necessity of regional cooperation. Milan Hodža, a former member of the Franz Ferdinand d'Este's Belvedere Circle, and a popular Czechoslovak agrarian, was one of them. In his lecture *Czechoslovakia and Central Europe*,[64] Hodža outlined a new geopolitical ground-plan for the troubled region, starting with increasing agricultural trade cooperation and eventually leading to closer economic and political links. His conception of Central Europe included the successor states and the Balkans, but he excluded Germany, which in his opinion belonged in the West European political and economic context. This obviously irritated the German geopoliticians of Haushofer's group, who had just reached the peak of their popularity.

In discussion with these authors, Hodža refined his concept of regional political federation, the backbone of which was to be the Visla–Danube–Vardar–Thessaloniki corridor. Central Europe would thus consist of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece – a belt of states between Russia and Germany spreading from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea and the Adriatic. He was to present this concept in his book *Federation in Central Europe*[65] during World War II. Interestingly, even though the title of his book carries the notion of Central Europe, Hodža often chose to refer to the 'Danubian Federation' in order to distinguish his conception from interwar German *Mitteleuropa* projects.

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Another interesting project was the Polish leader Jozef Pilsudski's resurrection of the idea of an *Intermarium*, stretching from north-west Poland to the Black Sea.[66] The concept had originally been developed by Prince Adam Czartoryski in the nineteenth century and brought back to life in the early efforts of the Second Polish Republic to incorporate Lithuanian territories. But this idea was stillborn, given the regional rivalry of Poland and Lithuania and the Bolshevik ambitions to the east.

This is not to say that the successor states did not initiate or enter into regional cooperation at all: quite the contrary. However, the aim of this envisaged regional cooperation was not to create a federal unit but, rather, to ensure the continued existence of nation-states. To create regional links that would guarantee the upholding of the peace treaties, Czechoslovakia, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes signed a series of military agreements, which established the Little Entente in 1920–1. The primary purpose of the Little Entente was to create a coalition against potential Hungarian revisionism.[67] Additionally, Poland's links with Romania and Czechoslovakia provided for mutual assistance in case of unprovoked attack from the east. Finally, a set of bilateral agreements of individual successor states with France was designed to establish a coalition against possible German resurgence.

Many diverse groups and statesmen, ranging from Hungarian emigré circles to advocates of Pan-European Union, looked upon the Little Entente as the cornerstone of a future integrated regional unit. However, rather than a starting point of any regional integration process, the Little Entente had essentially been designed to safeguard the national sovereignties of its members. Moreover, it soon became clear that its anti-Hungarian bias would most likely prevent any suggestions of a closer integration with the country at its midst.

Economic cooperation between the successor states was further hampered by their enormous differences in economic strength and the value of their currencies.[68] Regional rivalries, mutual suspicion and efforts to build autarchic economies added more barriers than it was possible to remove. The situation was further complicated by the agrarian crisis of the late 1920s as well as the Great Depression, inducing 'run-for-your-life attitudes'.[69]

To sum up, the limited number of concepts that sprung up in the non-revisionist successor states was stalled either by their rivalries and deep differences, or the fear of revisionism, and a determination to maintain their 'armed national sovereignties'.[70] Nevertheless, the experiences of the interwar period and the failure of successor states to safeguard their independence would fuel talk of regional integration between exiled governments during World War II.

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Outside the region, French diplomats became avid, if unlikely, advocates of construction of a new supra-national unit in Central Europe. Their motivations were rather transparent: to prevent any possibility of German resurgence and unification with Austria. Even as the concept of independent nation-states was still being pushed through the negotiations of the Paris Peace Conference, the Paris government was working towards creation of a supra-national union of successor states.[71] Avoiding the discredited notion of Central Europe, the term Danubian Confederation was selected to describe the proposed regional structure, designed to facilitate regional cooperation and provide a safeguard against German resurgence.

Similarly, French scholars also argued that Central Europe was a non-entity, only existing in the minds of conquerors and likeminded writers.[72] Instead, they wrote of Danubian basin successor states, using these notions interchangeably in a non-political context.[73] However, besides favouring some form of Danubian Confederation, the French policies did not possess a coherent aim. Successive general secretaries of the Quai d'Orsay favoured at one time a pro-Hungarian approach then a pro-Czechoslovak one.[74] As a result, France failed to convince either side of the viability of such a project. By 1921, it had become clear that the successor states would reject any form of political integration.[75] The Little Entente became a backbone of French policy towards the region, which it remained until the fateful year of 1938.

However, plans for a French Danubian Confederation 'gave rise to dark suspicions' in Rome.[76] Italy suspected a Habsburg link behind the whole plan and was ultimately worried that the Danubian Confederation might just be a new name for the old Austro-Hungarian Empire. In an effort to protect its territorial gains and regional positions, Italy worked tirelessly to prevent even the distant possibility of its formation: Italian manoeuvres complicated negotiations over restoration of trade links between the successor states, frustrated the transfer of agreed territories to Hungary, blocked economic help to Austria, etc., all to the significant irritation of the Allies, especially Great Britain.[77]

A rare Soviet view of the aspects of potential integration in the Central European area was published by V. I. Khorvatskij in 1933 as *Pan-Europe and the Danube Federation (Pan-Evropa I Dunaiskaya Federatsiya)*. The volume focused on discussion of the contemporary situation, persisting problems and aspects of various integrative plans, upholding the Soviet internationalist view specially applied to questions of agricultural production and trade.[78] However, in the interwar period, Soviet policy-makers had yet to enter the story of Central Europe.

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To sum up, all the actors in this story were following interests based on their own identities. Britain, far remote from the area, was attempting to wash her hands of the complicated situation on the continent. It seemed that the best way out was to establish regional cooperation and help the impoverished countries help themselves. France was attempting to build a strong circle around Germany to prevent its resurgence, by encouraging the creation of a federation of states on its eastern and south-eastern borders. Italy was safeguarding its territorial gains, while the countries of the Little Entente were guarding their national sovereignty. Meanwhile, the hands of Austria and Hungary were tied by peace treaties and a need for foreign help, yet calls for revisionism among large sections of society and the political spectrum were apparent. And, of course, Germany had embarked upon the quest of reinstating its position as a major power.

In this story, Central Europe started off as a notion connected to plans for unification between Germany and Austria-Hungary. The actors took their respective positions to it based on whether such a plan benefited or damaged their interests. France favoured the building of federation in the area, but both excluding and against Germany. French diplomats and academics chose to refer to a Danubian Confederation, as they addressed successor states opposed to the idea of Central Europe. Hungarian revisionists also avoided Central European reference and promoted the Danubian connotation, as it placed Hungarians at its heart and left out Germany. Italy dreaded having a strong neighbour who could challenge its recent territorial gains and opposed any integration in the area, however it was termed – Central Europe or Danubian Confederation. Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes adopted a similar stance for their own reasons – safeguarding their national independence. But for Germany and some elements of Austrian society, Central Europe was the very embodiment of their ambitions.

Therefore the discourse of the notion of Central Europe was driven by the German line of theorising just as the French, Hungarian and other lines were diluted by references to the Danubian Confederation or a complete opposition to any integration in the area. As a result, Central Europe in the interwar period was most of everything associated with the political project of exaltation of German national ambitions.

This meaning of the notion of Central Europe would be challenged during World War II; ironically by concepts put forward by those who had been its most outspoken opponents in the interwar period.

WORLD WAR II: RETURN OF THE MIDDLE TIER, 1939–45

In early 1938, the revision of the *status quo* established by the Paris Peace Conference started with the *Anschluss*. Germany embarked upon its second campaign of the *Drang nach Osten* within 25 years. The height of appeasement was famously marked by the Munich Conference in September 1938, when Neville Chamberlain and Edouard Daladier endorsed German annexation of the Sudetenland in exchange for a promise of no further territorial adventurism by Hitler. A false promise, indeed. The fate of Czechoslovakia was sealed in March 1939 when Hitler pushed Slovakia into a unilateral declaration of independence[79] and proclaimed Bohemia as a German Protectorate. Following the invasion of Poland and the acquisition of the Memel territory, German territorial advances and its newly proclaimed vassals were approaching the borders of *Mitteleuropa* envisaged by the contributors of *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*.

The stage was set for World War II … and backstage some had already started to plot an alternative Central Europe all over again.

The new debate, which started at the outbreak of World War II, was very much a 'governmental' undertaking. The main contributors to the debate were the members of governments in exile of the occupied countries located in London. Also very much involved were the Foreign Office, special offices and working groups established by the United States government, and influential groups of emigré politicians and diplomats. The single most important driver of these efforts was the fact that none of the successor states had managed to safeguard its sovereignty and independence in the face of the resurgent German expansionism. It became a widespread conviction that in order to protect their independence in future, creation of a larger and stronger federative union was necessary – provided, of course, that Germany did not win the war.

Milan Hodža, the former Czechoslovak prime minister and at the time in exile in London, elaborated his concept of regional cooperation in the early war days, publishing it in 1942 as *Federation in Central Europe*.[80] Facing both German and Russian expansionism, the freedom and security of small nations in Central Europe could, according to him, only be guaranteed by their association in some sort of a federative unit.[81] In his view, establishment of a strong union of nation-states, even at the cost of giving up a part of sovereignty to the new union, was a better option for small states in the area than the enduring danger of being taken over by one or another power. When talking about the envisaged bloc, Hodža characterized it in the first instance as a regional economic association of agrarian states,[82] which would gradually develop into a political unit. Its members should be

Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia and Greece. He provided a detailed description of how his Central European Commonwealth should be constituted and how its institutions would operate.

In contrast, another former Czechoslovak prime minister and president (also in exile in London), Edvard Beneš, thought that 'it would be premature to deal with the question of Central Europe in all its details' before the war was over.[83] Writing in 1941, he pointed out that all successor states, with the exception of dismembered Czechoslovakia and occupied Poland, were in collaboration with Germany. Therefore, it would be hard to outline their future association, but:

> It would be in the interests of Europe if in the region between Germany and Russia there were created a large political formation of a federative type, powerful from the military point of view, which would yet have great political, economic, and cultural possibilities. Through co-operation between the Poles and the Czechoslovaks there would emerge a political unit with a sufficiently large population, and adequate industrial and economic wealth, a unit, which would become an important factor in the post-war political equilibrium of Europe.[84]

Beneš suggested that this Polish-Czechoslovak union could become the core of a future Central European Federation, which could include Austria, Hungary, Romania and possibly more 'small peoples of Central Europe'.[85] In more general terms, he called for establishment of a post-war order in Europe on the basis of national and religious freedom, and economic and social justice,[86] but refused to elaborate specifics, such as structures or mechanisms of the future union.

Whatever their differences, both Beneš and Hodža were working actively towards the foundation of a Polish–Czechoslovak confederation. A declaration on the intent of future collaboration to this end was signed by both exiled governments in London as early as 11 November 1940.[87] The Protocol on Polish–Czechoslovak Confederation was signed on 19 January 1942[88] and set out the basic structural characteristics of the future union. This confederation was to be complemented by a similar structure in the Balkans[89] that the exiled governments envisaged in their plan for the post-war reconstruction of the region. However, Soviet pressure, especially on Beneš, prevented its realization.

The Polish–Czechoslovak plans did not please Moscow. The Soviet foreign minister, Vyacheslav Molotov, expressed opposition to the plan during his meeting with Beneš in 1942.[90] In 1943 Beneš made a second attempt

to obtain the Soviet blessing for the plan, which finally crashed with the establishment of the Soviet-sponsored puppet government in Lubin.

Oszkár Jászi also contributed to the wartime debate over Central Europe. In his 1941 article (published just days before the German attack on the Soviet Union), he considered various possible outcomes of the war and their potential implications for the region. The first possibility, in his view, was a victory for the German–Russian alliance,[91] which might result in a condominium of these two powers over Central Europe. On the other hand, a victory for the French–British alliance could lead to three different scenarios. The first would be the restoration of the *status quo ante*, which would be 'absolutely necessary for a healthy new order in the Danube basin'.[92] The second option was restoration of the Habsburg monarchy, which 'none of the nations in question would accept voluntarily'.[93] A final possibility was a democratic federal structure built of restored nation-states, which would guarantee 'national autonomy for all the minority groups inside of the various states, the final elimination of the feudal estates, and the creation of a progressive and cooperative peasantry'.[94] Only the last option could bring lasting peace to the Central European region and Europe as a whole. Jászi avoided making specific recommendations beyond this general principle but underlined that without the wholehearted cooperation and support of Germany, the problem of Central Europe could not be resolved.[95]

Jászi's scenarios were, like many other wartime conceptions of Central Europe, dictated by the realities of an interwar period of rising nationalism, the isolationism of successor states, their economic difficulties, respective turns to authoritarianism and, finally, recurrent German and Russian expansion. Two motives dominate all Central Europe concepts deriving from the pens of successor state authors: first, the nations of Central Europe were unwilling to live in one multinational unit; second, small divided nation-states could not guard their independence against German and Russian expansionism. Therefore, a majority of authors proposed some form of compromise – a federation or confederation in the Central European area, based predominantly upon economic cooperation.[96]

At an early stage of the war, caution was an inevitable hallmark since reorganization of Central Europe was obviously dependent on the result of the war.[97] However by the end of 1942, concepts had evolved into structured plans for the creation of a Central European federation, premised upon expectations of an Allied victory.[98] The compartmentalization of Central Europe into two or three federal units according to cultural and national affinities was also proposed.[99] Even though some still advocated a return to the *status quo ante*, with minor modifications to facilitate regional trade,[100] the

consensus of successor states scholars over the necessity of some form of political integration was clear. Even Austrian exile groups endorsed plans for regional federation on the stated basis of historical, cultural and economic links.[101]

An interesting report on a future Central and South-East European Union was published by a leftist emigré group, the Danubian Club, in October 1943.[102] The union would have consisted of Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia.[103] The plan specified detailed workings for the future union, including an electoral system, mechanisms for a bi-cameral parliament, power sharing between the union and states, a system of checks and balances, a rotational presidency, judiciary system, citizens' rights, etc. The distinguishing feature of the plan was its emphasis on friendly relations with the Soviet Union[104] and its prescription for a planned economy, for the plan envisaged central planning, agricultural cooperatives, centrally coordinated extensive industrialization and controlled international trade – all modelled on the practices of the Soviet Union. Given the leftist leanings of members of the club, these features are not surprising but even this, essentially socialist, plan could not possibly satisfy the Soviets themselves.

As became clear when considering Polish–Czechoslovak collaboration, it was becoming increasingly obvious that the post-war organization of the Central European area would depend upon 'the relation between the Western democracies, Soviet Russia and Germany',[105] rather than the wishes of governments or populations in the area itself. Specifically, it would depend 'far more on the aims and methods of Russia than on those of the United States and the British Commonwealth'.[106] To continue the futile story of efforts towards a Polish–Czechoslovak confederation, the Soviets agreed to include the Polish government within the Czechoslovak–Soviet friendship and alliance treaty of 1943, thus potentially providing the basis for future confederation. However, they never said which Polish government it would be.

Appeasing the Czechs, the Soviets put this matter aside until the opportune moment arrived with the establishment of a Soviet puppet government in Poland on 1 January 1945.[107] By the end of the month, the Czechoslovak government in exile would, in any case, have severed diplomatic relations with the Polish government in exile in London, and recognized the Soviet-sponsored provisional government instead. The ousting of the Polish government in exile finally terminated any prospects for a wartime Polish–Czechoslovak confederation. Following this development, many authors writing on the issues of Central European political integration started to observe that the Soviet leadership had no desire to see regional groupings in

Central Europe[108] for the reason that they might be strong enough to resist their intended post-war dominance of the region.

However, there were those who refused to recognize the inevitability of Soviet dominance and called for federation in Central Europe even after the Iron Curtain had fallen firmly across Europe.[109] Their calls would fall upon deaf ears for decades to come, of course.

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As is apparent from the evolution of the discussions of the 1920s and 1930s, concepts of *Mitteleuropa* in German discourse were increasingly replaced by the concept of the 'Area of the Germans' (*Raum der Deutschen*), the 'Realm' (*Reich*) and the 'great-German Europe' (*Grossgermanische Europa*).[110] Despite the fact that many advocates of *Mittleuropa* held key posts in the Nazi government prior to World War II,[111] by 1939 it had become obvious that the realization of any such economic or political unit was not an aim of Nazi foreign policy. With gradual German advances well beyond any previously envisaged borders of Central Europe, these outdated concepts lost their appeal and *Mitteleuropa* was now just loosely understood as a synonym for the living space of the German nation and the bedrock of a future Europe under future German leadership. *Reich* rather than *Mitteleuropa* became the expression of German political ambitions.

Factual evidence for this assertion is voluminous – for example, the failure of Hermann Neubacher's[112] 1943 effort to reverse and steer Nazi policies towards a more constructive solution. He suggested that areas of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire should be organized and governed along the lines of earlier conceptions of Central Europe, emphasizing German leadership of a multicultural area rather than a racially pure dominion. Despite the fact that Nazi fortunes were already declining by this time, Hitler rejected any such plan.[113]

So the *Mitteleuropa* plans all but disappeared. While, during World War I, Naumann's concept of *Mitteleuropa* had represented the exaltation of the German nation's ambition for political unification by joining Germany with Austria-Hungary, there was no need for such a project during World War II. As already commented, the notion itself was increasingly being supplanted by such expressions as 'the great-German Europe',[114] 'new Europe',[115] or even simply 'Great-Germany' (*Grossdeutschland*).[116] As the emphasis shifted from politics towards economics, especially the question of structuring the future economic system of the enlarged economic area,[117] the territory under German domination did not need to be conceptualized in political terms anymore in order to justify expansion. The expansion was

a *fait accompli* and theorizing now focused on organization rather than definition.

Even though geopolitics was coined the 'court science' of Nazi Germany, subsequent analyses showed that geopolitical theories were used for propagandist rather than policy-making purposes. Even those few articles published in the early 1940s which maintained the notion of *Mitteleuropa*, lent this concept a new meaning defined by the Nazi expansion. Hassinger stretched its geographical remit along the entire flow of the river Danube and in a north-eastern direction by the inclusion of the Baltics.[118] Nazi ideological indoctrination was pervasive. Schäfer accused all earlier German authors of building their concepts of *Mitteleuropa* on the basis of undesirable liberal ideas, rather than natural spatial and organic theories.[119] Overall, the 'influence of all these theories on the making of Hitler's personal foreign policy was nil'.[120] Rather than informing the Nazi policy-making, the new, rather mindless, concepts of *Mitteleuropa* followed in its tracks.

For example, the attack on the Soviet Union was in direct contradiction with Karl Haushofer's concept of the 'Continental bloc' (*Kontinentalblock*).[121] Haushofer, the father of German *Geopolitik*, viewed the future of the world in terms of Pan-Ideas, political units of continental character. He understood *Mitteleuropa* simply as a living space for the German people and identified it with the former Austro-Hungarian Empire unified with Germany. Perhaps overestimating the influence of his role model – Halford Mackinder – he viewed the successor states as a mere strip of territories made independent for the sole purpose of preventing cooperation between German and Russian nations, due to the threat that this would pose to the interests of the British Empire. Should Germany gain the two main navigable rivers of Europe – the Rhine and the Danube – under its territorial control, it would form a strong continental unit with global strategic significance. Such a political unit would then become a core of the Pan-Idea of Europe, stretching its influence over northern Africa. Its neighbour would have been Pan-Asia, with its core in the Soviet Union.[122] However, in the 1941 revision of his theses, Haushofer completely dropped the area originally assigned for the Soviet Union and split it between zones belonging to Germany and Japan.[123] His profound change of heart followed fairly blatantly the change in Nazi policy and the attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941.

It must be concluded therefore that *Mitteleuropa* concepts changed into one of many propagandist tools of the Nazi regime. Their interchangeability with notions such as the Great-German Europe suggests that *Mitteleuropa* was little more than yet another euphemism for German domination of areas delineated as living space of the Germans. It lost its emotional appeal in favour of *Reich*,

what was essentially a culmination of processes of changing ambitions of theorists as well as politicians in the 1930s.

Nevertheless, the notion of *Mitteleuropa* – however vague its meaning during the war – was strongly associated with Nazi propaganda and fell into disgrace following the Nazi defeat. Even 40 years later, Timothy Garton Ash wrote that, in Germany, the word *Mitteleuropa* could only have been whispered if one did not want to be accused of harbouring expansionist ambitions.[124]

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After the war broke out in 1939, British and American writers started to analyse its causes and to suggest steps to safeguard peace in the future. Halford Mackinder updated his theory of the clash of sea power and land power in an article for *Foreign Affairs* in 1943.[125] More importance was assigned to an Inner Crescent surrounding the Heartland, and Mackinder advocated the necessity of British–Russian–United States cooperation in order to prevent the growth of Germany in the area. Now it was the cooperation of the sea- and land-based powers that was presented as crucial in order to prevent the rise of a hostile power in the Inner Crescent area and thereby safeguard world peace.

Given the fact that both world wars broke out in the same area, featuring the same malefactors, it does not come as a surprise that neutralization of Germany was the preoccupation of researchers in the West. Due to the eastwards pattern of the *Reich's* expansion, many scholars made the association between neutralizing Germany and stabilzing the former territories of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as preconditions for any sustainable peace of the future.

To resolve the question of how this might best be effected, Robert Dickinson, then the Reader in Geography at University College London, compiled an unusually elaborate enquiry into the problem of Central Europe. Dickinson not only explored various definitions of *Mitteleuropa*/Central Europe/ *Europe Centrale* that had been published in German, English and French literatures, he also contrasted them with the notion of 'living space' (*Lebensraum*), 'Germany' (*Deutschland*), territory of the realm, the people and the culture (*Reichs-*, *Volks-* and *Kulturboden*). The focus of his enquiry determined the character of his work and its conclusions, as Dickinson's book was one of very few wartime Anglo-Saxon conceptions of Central Europe that avoided taking up Mackinder's Middle Tier theory as the basis of the proposed solution.

In his view, Central Europe could be divided into three parts: West Central Europe (Germany, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, Switzerland and Austria),

Vistula Central Europe (Poland and the Baltic states) and Danubian Central Europe. He viewed Bohemia as a sort of crossroads among these distinctive parts. Denouncing German domination, he also asserted that thereby to advance the creation of a federal union in Central Europe was admittedly 'necessary, but quite inadequate' because of the internal fault-lines between nations and cultures.[126] Dickinson insisted that such a solution could not ensure a lasting peace. So, instead, he suggested this creation of three federative units consisting of sovereign national states in each of his respective parts of Central Europe.[127] It comes as a disappointing conclusion to an otherwise excellent analysis that Dickinson failed to resolve the problem of Bohemia, as he could not decide into which one of the regional units it should be included.[128] Similarly, he refused to delineate the borders of individual units more precisely, as he asserted it would all depend on the outcome of the war.

George Harrison and Peter Jordan's 1943 pamphlet *Central Union*[129] was written at a much lighter level, as regards the evidence presented to the reader. On the other hand, it seemed much more confident in suggesting what needed to be done. Harrison and Jordan identified a 'Middle Zone' comprising Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Albania and Greece.[130] The basic idea behind their Central Union was its proclaimed ability to resist any future aggression by Germany, cast very much along the lines of the 'Divided we fall – United we stand' idiom.[131] Harrison and Jordan suggested that the previously problematic 'German wedges' of Silesia and East Prussia within Middle Zone countries should be removed. This simply meant the assignment of both areas to Poland and repatriation of 'only about one and a half million Germans'.[132] They viewed the creation of their Central Union as a strategic goal for European security, whose importance

> [w]ould be twofold: (1) It would collaborate actively with the democratic and peaceful powers (2) by its very existence the Central Union would prevent any would-be conqueror from seizing the most vital strategic area of Europe.[133]

An emphasis was laid on modelling the Central Union after the United States and making it a vanguard of European democracy. Even though the threat of Russian aggression was not spelled out explicitly, the maps and illustrations spoke almost as loudly. Harrison and Jordan denounced Danubian federative plans, as they could 'never be a complete solution of the problem'.[134] The argument ran along traditional Mackinderian lines, even though the authors avoided referring to Russia as a potential enemy and the necessity of

keeping it apart from Germany. However, references to Poland as the keystone of the union and a country of 'utmost political and strategic importance' since it was 'the only country in the Middle Zone to have both Germany and Russia for neighbours'[135] clearly show the underlying basis of their thinking. The volume went to great lengths in seeking to assure Russia that the Central Union would be an asset for her, featuring deliberately over-emphatically titled subchapters, such as the 'Central Union – the friend of Russia'[136] or 'Russian doorways to the world'.[137]

Overall, Harrison and Jordan's treatise feels like a propagandist piece of literature published at the height of the war. It was built on Mackinder's original Middle Tier concept, but with a federative twist, given the glaring failure of the nation-state solution to prevent German resurgence. Despite its best efforts, the treatise betrays the view of Russia as potential enemy, present of course in Mackinder's original concept.

An article by Reginald Lang, 'Central Europe and European Unity',[138] published in 1946, is quite different both to Dickinson's academic volume and the heavily illustrated political pamphlet of Harrison and Jordan. Dealing with the realities of post-war Europe, the argument is empirical and factual. Central Europe was again defined along Mackinderian lines, with conclusions presented to tackle both the underlying principles and pragmatics of a suggested Central Europe. Lang had warned on earlier occasions of the dangers of keeping Europe divided along national lines. In his view, only a united Europe could be a guarantor of peace. Specifically, he pointed to Poland and Czechoslovakia, suggesting they would either fall into the Soviet sphere of influence or face recurring future conflicts, if Europe remained divided.[139] Only a unified Central Europe could bring unity to Europe as a whole and thus guarantee sustainable peace. He concluded his article as follows:

> As long as Central Europe is disjoined, there can be neither unity in Europe nor peace in the world. When Central Europe is united with Western Europe in a European Federation, there will be unity in Europe and peace in the world.[140]

Lang's article would be one of the last academic contemplations of Central Europe for decades to come. In the post-war period, British writing on the topic of Central Europe shifted away from suggestions for political reorganization, towards the views epitomized by Felix Gilbert, who argued that rather than a political reality 'the term Central Europe is a descriptive, geographical concept, designating the area between Germany and Russia from Poland's Baltic coast south to the Mediterranean'.[141] He reserved expression

of any political aims to the underlying aims of the German notion of *Mitteleuropa* and stated that Central Europe had a purely geographical connotation. Given the situation on the ground, with the Iron Curtain now a depressing reality, it was not surprising that many writers placed a politicized Central Europe on the shelf of history.

In the United States, the wartime period witnessed a boom-time for geopolitics. The perception was that its main thought had been proven right by two world wars. Its prominence in the foreign policy of Nazi Germany led United States researchers to renew their study of geopolitical theory. Many authors therefore became interested in Central Europe during the course of World War II, analysing earlier German concepts, as was the case with Henry Cord Meyer. In his paper, 'Mitteleuropa in German Political Geography',[142] Meyer dealt with various concepts originating between 1880 and 1939. As Meyer himself admitted, his and other similar papers published during the same period, were more like 'autopsies' of what had been written before rather than new treatises on Central Europe.[143]

A marked exception were the works of Feliks Gross,[144] who focused on proposals for the reorganization of Central Europe as presented and conceived by exiled government groupings in the United States and the Great Britain. His elaborate record of what was being proposed, planned and done in reality constitutes an invaluable source of information on the practicalities of federative plans. Gross favoured creation of an inclusive federation, stretching from the Baltic to the Aegean Sea.[145] He suggested that Austria had to be included in order to prevent any future *Anschluss* and that the union had to observe federative and democratic principles. In Gross's view, the model should not have been the United States, as suggested by a number of other proposals, but rather the Swiss Confederation or the British Commonwealth. Gross's application was based upon Mackinderian lines, with the addition of the federative principle, but contained assurances for the Soviet Union that the East-Central European Federation would effectively work as a bridge between the USSR and Europe.[146] Finally, Gross placed his East-Central European Federation within a wider system of federations across the whole of Europe.[147]

With the defeat of Germany, of course, the United States emerged as a global power. The geographical scope of strategic policy was extended from the western hemisphere to cover all possible theatres of global conflict. And the Soviet Union was expanding its influence over Central Europe and elsewhere, as foreshadowed again by Halford Mackinder. Classical geopolitics seemed to be the tool of choice for the United States policy-makers searching for an effective analytical yardstick to make sense of a complicated post-war international situation.

However, United States political geographers other than Gross did not conceptualize Central Europe. The focus was on the reconstruction and regional integration of Western Europe, as countries to the east and south-east of occupied Germany and Austria went Communist and the envisaged buffer zone went to the Soviets. Political geography in the United States now took a strategic turn with its conceptualization of global super-power rivalry, future potential conflict zones and the means of countering threat – only very few still believed the Middle Tier, now under Soviet domination, could be one of them.

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The threat and reality of Hitler's New Order had finally convinced the quarrelling politicians of the former successor states that in order to resist future threats, the creation of some form of union in the region was necessary. With Reich, rather than *Mitteleuropa*, being the synonym for the new international nightmare, Central Europe could be theorized and ascribed independent characteristics and qualities. With the introduction of Reich, Central Europe could be theorized in other than a pan-German context and new conceptions started to emerge. Through the discourse driven by exiled governments and emigré politicians from occupied countries based in London and New York, a new vision of Central Europe was forming. It would designate a future partnership of equal nations along the area designated as the Middle Tier by Mackinder, either within one or more federations. Its professed characteristic features would be freedom, democracy, and respect for national identities, peace and cooperation.

The discourse of Central Europe differed from the interwar one in its much greater emphasis upon practical steps towards the realization of federative plans. Exiled governments, emigré politicians and academics were busy elaborating the basis for compatibility in respective national systems of education, agriculture, transport, etc. Journals such as *New Europe* and the *Journal of Central European Affairs* were printing report after report, proposal after proposal, towards this end. Agreements were being signed on partial areas of cooperation, especially agriculture[148] or education,[149] as serious planning of the post-war reorganization of Europe got under way on both sides of the Atlantic. These efforts, of course, assumed that Germany would not win the war.

As Feliks Gross, now Secretary of the Central and Eastern European Planning Board, observed, the proposed projects generally fell into three categories:

(1) One inclusive federation of states from the Aegean Sea to the Baltic;
(2) Two federations: in the north a Polish–Czechoslovak union; in the south a Danubian federation of Austria, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece and Albania;
(3) Three federations: (a) in the north a federation of Poland and Czechoslovakia; (b) in the middle a Danubian federation of Austria, Hungary and Romania; (c) in the south a union of Balkan States.[150]

Gross posited that the all-inclusive federation was the most desirable option for the majority of exiled politicians and academics involved.[151] The other two options were only to be considered, should the one inclusive union prove unattainable. All official exiled governments' work towards regional integration was being conducted with one union in mind.

In the United States, the first concrete steps were taken at the International Labor Organization's meeting in November 1941, when delegations of the exiled governments of Czechoslovakia, Greece, Poland and Yugoslavia issued a common declaration on regional solidarity.[152] Based on this agreement, the Central and Eastern European Planning Board was formed, consisting of representatives of these countries. This body restricted itself to producing research, reports and plans on economic, social and educational questions,[153] while the London-based officials of the governments in exile were busying themselves with overarching questions of the future Polish–Czechoslovak and Greek–Yugoslav federations. It was envisaged that these two base federative components would expand over time to cover an area stretching from Poland to Greece.[154] Representatives of Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Poland and Yugoslavia were also included in the processes of the planned regional integration and took part in research, discussions and preparation of plans focusing on individual areas of future cooperation.[155] Research and planning work was conducted both in London and New York, with the financial and administrative help of the United States Government.[156]

At first sight, it might seem that the British Government was also in favour of federation in Central Europe. Winston Churchill expressed his support for the idea in his speech to an American audience on 21 March 1943.[157] The Foreign Office started up a Foreign Research and Press Service, tasked to analyse the ethnic, economic and political conditions of the successor states. Interestingly, the FRPS was the first body to designate the area as Eastern, rather than Central Europe. An FRPS report, *The Reconstruction of Eastern Europe II: International Relations*, published in 1941, favoured the three-federations solution.[158] However, the FRPS soon changed its mind after consultations with the exiled governments and in August 1942 published another report, this time entitled *Confederations in Eastern Europe*.[159]

This favoured the creation of only two units in Central Europe. Finally, in 1943, FRPS published the so-called Macartney Memorandum,[160] officially entitled *The Settlement of Eastern Europe*, envisaging four possible scenarios: permanent Russian control, permanent German control, an independent Eastern Europe on either a selective or comprehensive basis. Despite its title, the report was not a suggestion for settlement, as the previous ones had been. Rather, it presented contemporary context and suggested possible future scenarios, running essentially along familiar Jászi-like lines.[161] However, none of this confusing and incoherent mesh of memoranda and reports was actually implemented as British policy. Power politics would take precedence over federalist idealism.

Feliks Gross maintained as late as March 1944 that members of the Central and Eastern European Planning Board in New York possessed very little information on the attitudes of the Soviet Union towards their work:

> There is no official statement in this respect, but an opinion is expressed in a Moscow periodical, *War and the Working Class*, where an unfriendly attitude to any federal idea in Europe is taken by the author, Mr. Malinin.[162]

Conversely, the exiled governments in London, especially the Czechoslovak one, had more direct and specific knowledge of Moscow's opinion on the matter. Eduard Táborský published Beneš' diary notes taken during meetings with Vyacheslav Molotov and Alexander Bogomolov, during which it became obvious that Moscow was opposed to the proposed Polish–Czechoslovak confederation.[163] However, continuing to inform the British Government and the exiled Polish government about their dealings, the Czechoslovak government also worked on plans that ought to have been much more to the potential liking of the Soviet Government, for, in 1943, Beneš put forward another proposal, which envisaged the basis of confederation in a system of bilateral treaties of friendship tying both Czechoslovakia and Poland to the Soviet Union. The Soviets suggested agreement to this proposal in principle.[164] Táborský noted somewhat bitterly that it might have been just a Soviet deception to appease Czechs, while planning for instalment of their own puppet government for Poland.[165]

No matter how focused, organized and practically oriented the work on federative plans was, the reality at the height of the war dictated that Germany had to be defeated before any kind of non-German dominated Central Europe could be created. For this purpose, the cooperation of the Soviet Union was vital. And the Soviets had nothing to gain from a federative

Central Europe. Quite the opposite: they logically wanted to keep the countries on their western and south-western border divided and weak. All the hopes and effort put into the planning of a future federation in Central Europe in the West notwithstanding, the Moscow (October 1944) and Yalta (February 1945) conference deals sealed the fate of Central Europe, where the Soviets were dealt an upper hand.

Spheres of influence were soon to be divided by an Iron Curtain, cutting Europe into East and West. There was no space left for Central Europe.

COLD WAR: A NON-EXISTENT CONCEPT, 1945–84

Talking a long view, the Cold War was a peculiar chapter in the history of Central Europe. Following all the feverish work on the plans for Central European federation during World War II, the geographic notion almost vanished in the following decades. As the following section documents, the cause of all this was the bi-polar structure of the post-war world.

However, the same processes identified in the construction of the notion in earlier periods – formulation of identities, interests and actions – were equally complicit in its disappearance from daily parlance. The Soviet drive for domination of the region was in direct contradiction to any Central European integration project. Even a suggestion of such ambition met with fierce reprisal. On the other hand, new concepts of Central Europe continued to be formulated in the emigré communities in the West, mostly in the form of a neutralized federation of buffer states between the East and the West. These plans failed to gather substantial support among Western policy-makers as they were not willing to risk a conflict with the Soviet Union over this issue. Indeed, Soviet domination of the area was recognized in the period of détente, where acknowledgement of respective spheres of influence became a precondition for any talks of limitation of the nuclear arms race. Thus the Central European projects of regional federation met with direct Soviet opposition and lack of support in the West at the same time. As a result, any concepts produced in the period were stillborn.

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Soviet opposition to regional integration on its outlying flanks was real and fierce. In fact, it would trigger the first major split and a tidal wave of purges that swept across Communist parties in the region.

For, in 1947, Josip Broz Tito picked upon his wartime plan for a Balkan federation consisting of the six Yugoslav republics and Bulgaria. Tito also

signed a string of treaties with other countries of Communist Europe[166] and approached the Bulgarian leader, Georgij Dimitrov, with an offer to establish closer links and cooperation in the Balkans. Soviet suspicions over the nature and extent of Tito's proposals were laid bare with Dimitrov's statement at the press conference in Sofia in January 1948. He revealed that their talks by now did not consider whether a union stretching from Poland, to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece should be constituted, but that it was more of a question of when and how.[167] Yet it was obvious from his statements that no actual arrangements for such a comprehensive union had yet been made. However, the stated intention was bad enough in Stalin's eyes.[168]

The Soviet reaction was furious. The Bulgarian and Yugoslav leaders were summoned to Moscow immediately. Dimitrov was brought to heel, but Tito had sent a delegation headed by Milovan Djilas, Secretary of the Yugoslav Communist Party's Politburo, instead. Djilas's recollections of a showdown highlight that Stalin had spelled out that 'no relations between the peoples' democracies were permissible that were not in the interests and had not the approval of the Soviet government.'[169] The non-compliant Yugoslav Federation would be outlawed by Comintern in June 1948 and all countries of the Soviet bloc followed by denouncing existing treaties with Belgrade. Dimitrov mysteriously died upon his next visit to Moscow and all other leaders who had showed signs of support for the plan were hit by an ensuing purge aimed at the 'international Titoist clique'. Lucretiu Patrascanu, Laszlo Rajk, Traycho Kostov[170] and many others paid with their lives.[171] There was no space for alternative structures within the Soviet bloc!

The fate of Tito's plan suggested the very same thing to the West as it had to the East – that the Soviet leadership was afraid of the regional integration of their European vassals, as this might challenge their domination of the area. The idea was picked up on almost immediately.

A 1948 special edition of the Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, entitled *Looking toward One World*, featured two articles promoting federative plans for Central Europe from the pen of European emigrés. In his contribution to the volume, Joseph Rouček, a political scientist of Czech origin, pointed out that there were only two options – a divided Central Europe under Soviet rule, or a federative Central Europe integrated with the West. Rouček pointed out that Soviet rule was being tightened by the day (referring to the Soviet opposition to plans revealed by Dimitrov) and pointed to the danger of a gradual Communist takeover in other European countries, especially France and Italy. He posited that the key safeguard against the spread of Communism

in Europe was the liberation of countries of Central Europe from the Soviet zone of influence and the building of a strong bulwark by their federalization. Arguing along distinctively Mackinderian lines, Rouček advised that:

[T]he safety of America depends on her ability to defeat efforts of any powerful European nation to establish an imperialistic control over central-eastern Europe and subsequently over the whole continent.[172]

Even though Rouček did not present his own concept of what a desirable federal unit should look like or how it should work, his references to the wartime efforts of exiled government groupings in London and the Central and Eastern European Planning Board in New York are unmistakeable. Rouček did take part in the work of the CEEPB during the war and his article showed a desire to return to these plans. In an attempt to sell the idea to the American scholarly public, Rouček made good use of the then popular concepts in political geography and presented the creation of Central Europe as a strategic interest for the West.

Similarly, an article by Oscar Halecki, a historian and a director of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, called for a return to wartime considerations of federative plans, starting with the Polish–Czechoslovak union.[173] Focusing on the history of efforts for federalization of the region, his goal was to turn readers' attention to

[T]he right of the peoples of east-central Europe, who have suffered so much in the past, finally to organize their political existence according to their own wishes.[174]

Criticizing the Soviet veto of federative plans, Halecki called for the support of the West in the fight to win such a right.

In another American journal, the *Proceedings of the American Philosphical Society*, our 'developmental optimist',[175] Oscar Jászi, wrote in August 1948, that the Soviet domination of the region was unlikely to hold for long. 'I doubt that this experiment will be successful,' claimed Jászi,[176] reasoning that:

[D]issatisfied nations and suppressed nationalities are opposing the new state systems forced upon them. They revolt against the superstate which gives its orders to all the states and which protects or expels national units. Is there a possibility of avoiding a new catastrophe? I see only one. And this is the Marshall Plan, if duly supplemented ...

Federalism is the only possible means of reconciling state and nations and of liberating national minorities.[177]

Although still prioritizing the theme of national minorities, Jászi made a radical departure from his usual Danubian concept and suggested a federal union of the United States with all beneficiary states of the Marshall Plan. Such a federation would then 'also give help to those unfortunate small nations who would like to federate, but who cannot, impeded by power politics'.[178] In this way, Jászi not only brought the outside power into his Central Europe concept but also contextually linked it to what was to become 'the West' during the Cold War period.

All three articles suggested, of course, that the discourse of Central Europe had become bi-polar. The multiple options for the future of Central Europe typical of earlier periods premised upon a number of competing concepts suddenly became an either/or question of belonging to either to the East or to the West – a zero sum game, if you like. Central Europe was not seen in its own terms as an entity that might deliver the best for all nations in the area by linking trade and building upon other potential complementarities. The threat and indeed leadership of Germany was out of the equation completely. Now, Central Europe was portrayed as a strategic safeguard for the West in its fight against the East. All three articles had been written by emigrés from the area and asserted that the new Soviet satellites had been placed into the Soviet sphere of influence, whereas in fact they would prefer to be and rightly belonged on the other side of the Iron Curtain. Quite intriguingly, this was the very same theme that would be picked up 35 years later. Moreover, Rouček's line of argument – that an embrace of Central Europe into the bosom of the West was a strategic imperative – would also resurface in post-Cold War discourse.

Rouček's reasoning did not fall on entirely deaf ear in the United States. However, the United States establishment was not willing to risk yet another war over Central Europe. The uncompromising Soviet reaction to Tito's plan for federation sent a clear message that, for Stalin, prevention of such projects was a cause worth killing for ... even his own comrades.

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From 1948 onwards, the notion of Central Europe was slowly disappearing from daily parlance. 'East-central', 'Central-eastern' or even 'Central-Eastern-Balkan'[179] Europe entered the stage. Federalist plans published in the West could be represented as inconsequential outcries from emigré groups for 'liberation from the Soviet and Communist yoke'.[180] Even though occasional

mentions of Central Europe were still appearing in the British press,[181] the notion of Eastern Europe appeared ever more frequently, referring to all European countries on the other side of the Iron Curtain.[182]

In his article on the meaning of the geographical term 'Central Europe', Karl Sinnhuber[183] noted that 'in view of the great changes in the political boundaries and cultural landscape of Europe which have taken place during the recent past, we may need to modify our ideas as to the extent of Central Europe'.[184] He asked whether it would 'not be better to cease using this term altogether'.[185] Sinnhuber, indeed, concluded that even though Central Europe remained a relevant topographical term and physical region, it had 'at least for the moment [...] ceased to exist' as a political notion.[186]

However, the vitality of Central Europe seemed to draw fresh breath, if not particularly strongly, in the late 1950s, as the debate over potential superpower disengagement in Europe filled the pages of the daily presses and academic journals alike. Central Europe briefly appeared to possess potential as a demilitarized zone between the Eastern and the Western bloc in Europe.

This was the thrust of an article by James Warburg and Wilhelm Grewe, published in 1959, which suggested the disengagement of both the Soviet Union and the United States from the area, for the sake of German unification and easing of the tension between the blocs in Europe. They posited that in order to prevent a superpower confrontation in Europe, Central Europe would need to be neutralized, demilitarized and its countries forbidden from entering into military alliance with one or the other superpower.[187] In Warburg and Grewe's article, Central Europe as a concept independent of both East and West was effectively resurrected and restored to its role as Mackinderian buffer; minus
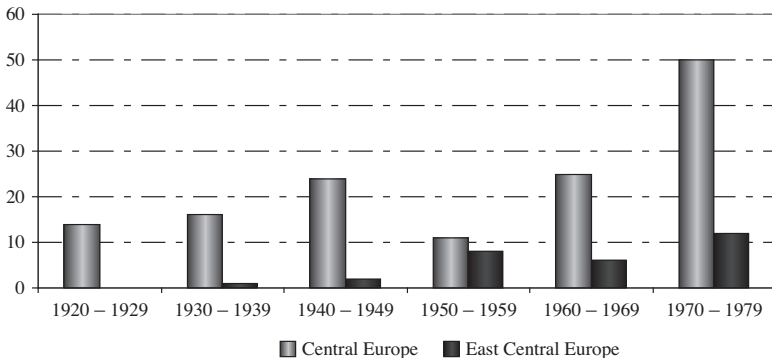
2. Number of books featuring 'Central Europe' and 'East Central Europe' in their title in the collections of the British Library, 1920–1979. Source: the author.

the previously defining problem of Germany, of course. Similarly, Central Europe also featured as a potential buffer zone in an article by David Dallin, who warned that 'caution is necessary in any plan of disengagement in Central Europe, for a weak Germany would permit the expansion of Russian power over Germany and France'.[188] Dallin maintained that withdrawal from Central Europe should be undertaken simultaneously by the West and the East and very carefully considered by the West, in order to prevent the spread of Communism. If this could not be assured, disengagement might bring more dangers than it would obviate, damaging the interests of the West.

Dallin's views were of limited significance as neither of the superpowers was ready or willing to surrender its position, for recognition of the division of Europe into Eastern and Western was near universal by the late 1950s and Central Europe was now considered a political concept of the past. The wartime division into spheres of influence was confirmed and fostered by the creation of security and economic structures on both sides of the Iron Curtain respectively. There was no space left for Central Europe. In the words of Saul B. Cohen: 'Europe outside of Russia is divided into two parts: West and East. Central Europe is no more. It is a mere geographical expression that lacks geopolitical substance.'[189]

A significant drop in usage of the term suggests that Cohen's opinion was shared by many. A simple, quantitative comparison of the number of publications that feature the notion of Central Europe in their title in the collections of the British Library during the period 1950–9 with earlier and later periods, shows that use of the notion in the 1950s halved as compared to the 1940s and even dropped below pertaining levels in the 1920s. On the other hand, use of the notion of East-Central Europe was in ascendancy in the 1950s, having been non-existent before the late 1930s. However, this rise and a doubling in the number of publications featuring this notion in the 1970s might be misleading, as pointed out below.

A qualitative comparison of the contents of books featuring both notions shows another interesting pattern. Only one book featuring Central Europe in the title was published in the 1950s dealt with the potential reorganization of the regional power politics – Hubert Ripka's *A Federation of Central Europe*.[190] In contrast, out of 24 books featuring Central Europe in the 1940s, nine elaborated detailed concepts, while seven works were devoted to analysis of the post-war situation in the area. In the 1950s, the notion of Central Europe featured predominantly in books on the history of the region and the fate of the European Jews both before and during World War II.

Occasionally, the odd study on economics or a regional bibliography was published. Some solitary and somewhat obscure conceptions of federations in Central Europe did indeed appear under alternative names, such as Danubian

Federation, however, without much recognition or even correlation to reality. For example, the work of Ferdinand Miksche, emigré Czechoslovak army officer, completely ignored the fact of Soviet domination and insisted that the only obstacle to the creation of a federation in the area was Czechoslovakia, which resisted integration projects.[191]

East Central Europe as a notion appeared during the late 1930s in the works of authors of Polish origin, who sought to counter the notion of Central Europe established by contemporary German discourse (*Mitteleuropa*), attempting thereby to construct an independent identity for the region of Mackinder's Middle Tier and to emphasize the exclusion of Germany from such a context.[192] The early Cold War period revived this notion in reference to countries that had fallen under Soviet domination. So East Central Europe was a term preferred by authors writing about the post-war expansion of Communism and United States foreign policy.

The total number of volumes – 25 – in the British Library collections featuring Central Europe in their title that were published in the 1960s might suggest a resurgence of the notion. However, 11 volumes focused on the subjects of history and archaeology and dealt mainly with pre-history and with the Middle Ages rather than the recent past. A further five volumes contemplated Communist takeovers and institutional design. There were also four atlases featuring divergent delineations of the area but no new conceptions of Central Europe. Understanding of Central Europe as a political entity or project was completely diluted. Instead, the notion was being used in a very loose geographic manner by authors writing on subjects unrelated to its earlier use (such as the typology of Baroque churches or survey of sites, where Roman coins were discovered). Even the notion of East-Central Europe was losing its political appeal in the 1960s and it featured in titles of books dealing with ecology, geology or agriculture.

This pattern was even more pronounced in the 1970s, when seven out of 11 books featuring East-Central Europe in their titles were on history, two on foreign trade, two on aspects of early twentieth-century United States diplomacy, and one on urbanization. As for Central Europe, 25 out of 50 books were again works on history and archaeology. The next highest category involved consideration of the characteristics of the balance of power in the area (five volumes), closely followed by works in zoology, botany and geology (each three volumes). The appearance of strategic considerations should be put into the context of the ongoing SALT I and II negotiations and other efforts to curb the superpower arms race. It should not be forgotten that substantial conventional forces were deployed by both sides in the wider borderlands of the Iron Curtain and the strategic considerations of Central Europe appearing in the 1970s dealt precisely with such matters.
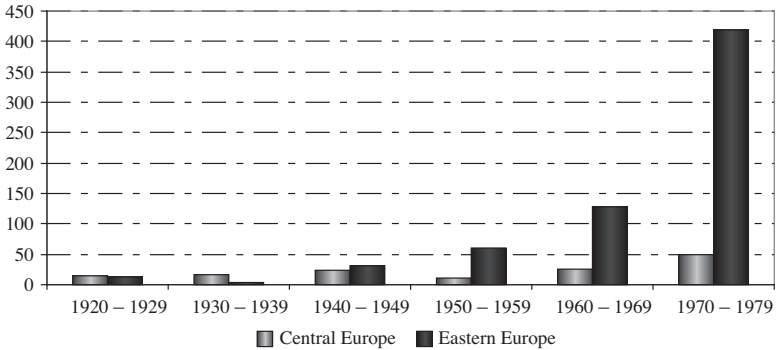
3. Number of books featuring 'Central Europe' and 'Eastern Europe' in their title
in the collections of the British Library, 1920–1979.
Source: the author.

Rather than suggesting neutrality of the region or a change in political organization, they focused on the challenge of ameliorating the prospects of an East–West stand-off in the area.

As is apparent from the following chart, the region was increasingly being conceptualized in terms of bi-polar power struggles, and references to Eastern Europe rocketed from three in the 1930s to 419 in the 1970s. The notion of Central Europe now trailed significantly behind references to Eastern Europe.

Even though this short survey cannot claim to be representative of the whole volume of publishing, it does offer an idea of how usage of the notion changed in comparison to earlier periods. While in the 1940s actual conceptions of Central Europe accounted for almost 40 per cent of all works published, and considerations of the political situation in the area for another 30 per cent, this type of work would all but disappear in the following two decades.

The drop in use of the notion of Central Europe, the short-lived rise in the number of East Central European references and the changing pattern of use of both suggest that even though references to Central Europe were increasing in the academic literature, they were not tied to any political concept. In fact, and allowing for some exceptions, they were not tied to politics at all. Understanding of Central Europe as a political concept was marginalized. Instead, it became increasingly associated with history and arts produced within a vaguer geographic identity.

Lacking the political support for reinvigoration on both sides of the Iron Curtain, Central Europe was just a political chimera of the past. However, contrary to Cohen's assertion that Central Europe was no more, it would

perhaps be more appropriate to say that it now was in a deep coma and only being maintained by hopeful emigré groups.

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As is apparent from the discussion above, there were significant changes in the debate over Central Europe in the early Cold War period. First of all, its continuation had been limited to the works of emigré authors (Rouček, Halecki, Jászi). Second, argumentation in favour of the creation of a new Central Europe was cast within the prevailing global bi-polar conflict rather than a regional context. Central Europe was referred to as a part of the West that was by mistake on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain, a strategic buffer against the Soviet Union or a safeguard against the spread of Communism rather than a significant regional context in its own right. Third, published concepts were designed to influence mainly the United States academic and public establishment, as the decision-making power over the destiny of the region now lay in the hands of superpowers rather than local politicians. Fourth, concern over a defeated Germany disappeared.

Initially, the idea of a Central Europe being included within the Western sphere of influence enjoyed the support of the United States government.[193] Continuing within a wartime pattern of cooperation with the United States government, and imitating World War I the Mid-European Union initiative, emigré representatives in the United States signed *The Declaration of Liberation* in Philadelphia's Independence Hall in 1951.[194] Signed by 'exiles from Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia loyally united and single in thought',[195] the declaration called for the liberation of these countries from the Soviet sphere of influence and their inclusion into the integration processes under way in Western Europe.[196] The declaration was sponsored by the National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE), an American anti-Communist organization founded by Allen Dulles, which supported nine further panels examining the preconditions and actions necessary to achieve it. The activities sponsored by NCFE intentionally aimed not only at the creation of a Central European union of some form, but at the inclusion of these countries within a common European union.[197] The declaration also portrayed the Soviet-designated European countries as 'captive countries' for the first time – thus introducing two major themes that would be heavily picked up at the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s – the 'kidnapped West'[198] concept; and the need, even right, for a speedy integration into the Western structures.

But declarations, the formation of assessment panels and the establishment of Radio Free Europe, would be the limits of official United States support for

the cause of Central Europe. As peaceful transition from Communism failed to materialize and the Soviet Union tightened its control of European satellites following unrest in East Germany in 1953 and in Poland and Hungary in 1956, the support of the United States government dissipated.

Indeed, to the great frustration of emigré groups, even the shortlived renewal of the debate over the topic of Central Europe as a demilitarized zone failed to galvanize more robust support, as neither of the superpowers was willing to unilaterally cut its military presence in the area. One of the very few federalist initiatives remaining was the project of Hungarian emigré groups in the United States – in the shape of their *Studies for a New Europe* journal. The journal articles gravitated towards concepts envisaging a Swiss-type canton confederation and neutrality, later suggesting a buffer role between the East and West and UN supervision of the area.[199] Another similar medium with a wider range of contributors was the *New Europe* journal, effectively the continuation of the periodical started by Seton-Watson during World War I.

However, a further disappointment for emigré groups would come in the form of superpower détente from the mid-1960s. The United States government would now abandon projects that could potentially cause irritation to the Soviets for the sake of establishing a dialogue aimed at maintaining global peace. The early Cold War Western claim that Soviet satellites in Europe would be used as a springboard for aggression against the West started to look like overstretched propaganda. The threatening image of the USSR in the West would be minimized and President Johnson pragmatically accepted the existence of spheres of influence in Europe as a projected starting point for any dialogue.[200]

Reality, and the Western recognition of this *Pax Sovietica*, frustrated any hopes of Western support in bringing about the creation of Central Europe as a political reality. The limited writing on the topic during the period shows how the geopolitically charged argumentation introduced in the early Cold War was dropped in favour of a return to older interwar themes. For example, Hungarian emigré authors returned to the criticism of the Trianon Treaty and contemplation of issues of Hungarian minorities in successor states of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Only two volumes considered the future reorganization of Central Europe during the 1970s in the English language.[201] Both of them were edited volumes featuring the works of Hungarian emigré academics. Concepts picked up on themes resonant in 1920s Hungarian writing on Central Europe, such as the injustice of the Trianon settlement,[202] the problem of Hungarian minorities[203] and the need for a solution other than the nation-state regional reorganization.[204] A certain level of traditional

'Greater Hungarian' bias is evident in some contributions in the volume edited by Julius Varsanyi. On the other hand, concepts were rooted in the Cold War context – the 'liberation' of captive nations and their necessary integration into West European structures. Rather than suggesting why the West should support the creation of Central Europe in one or another form, both volumes built their respective cases on the specific discussion of regional context, the commonalities among countries and their shared history. While a minority of authors still advocated neutrality for their constructed Central European union,[205] a majority anchored it firmly in the Western camp.[206] In both cases, the call for liberation of these Western-oriented nations from alien Eastern domination was loud and clear.[207]

However, these were rare and lonely voices in defence of Central Europe as a political concept. The lack of support for such plans in the West and the complete ban on their contemplation on the other side of the Iron Curtain muffled any possibility of a realistic debate of Central Europe in political terms.[208] Instead, Central Europe acquired the character of a loosely defined geographical notion, applied apolitically most usually to history and arts. In conditions of *Pax Sovietica*, it was the notion of Eastern Europe that experienced a steep ascendancy in discourses within international relations.

BREAKING ICE: THE ANTI-POLITICS OF CENTRAL EUROPE, 1984–9

So, towards the end of the Cold War, emigré proponents of the idea of Central Europe had found their cause abandoned by the West for the sake of peaceful coexistence. By the early 1980s, the advocates of Central European (con)federation and constructors of helvetized neutrality had all but died out.

One of the last to advocate such a federative solution was Stephen Borsody in 1980.[209] However, he was also quick to observe that those on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain were not as ready as those on the Western side to accept the 'European status quo as final'.[210] Now, dissidents in the East would seize the discourse of Central Europe from the hands of the emigré groups in the West, who had dominated it for the previous 30 years. Divorce from the idea of neutral buffer was now obvious and decisive:

> The idea of neutrality or, potentially, a neutral zone in Central Europe is absurd, though not conspicuously. It is just about as inconspicuously absurd as an attempt to resolve neutrality between the concept of the Ark and the threat of the Flood by strict prohibition of swimming courses.[211]

Instead of offering definitions and blueprints for those who hoped to challenge the *status quo*, Central Europe turned into an intellectual refuge of despair, a metaphor of anti-politics.

To return to the discussion foreshadowed in the Introduction, in April 1984 the *New York Review of Books* published an English translation of an article entitled 'The Tragedy of Central Europe' by Milan Kundera,[212] originally published in the emigré journal *150 000 Words*.

Kundera defined Central Europe as 'a culture or a fate' with 'imaginary' borders, containing 'an uncertain zone of small nations between Russia and Germany'.[213] He picked up on the Cold War depiction of Central Europe as an area of small nation-states 'culturally in the West, politically in the East',[214] desperately seeking a political comeback into its native European cultural region. However, Kundera did more than that. He recast this depiction in a new light. His language was not that of the academic conceptualizing the historical and political facts of the Cold War, but rather that of an artist depicting the unbearable suffering of his native region under a foreign yoke.

Kundera's essay was tailor-made for a Western audience, aiming once again to raise support for repressed nations under Soviet domination. He employed crude civilizational and cultural overtones and painted a doomed picture of tragically fated nations condemned to the heavy-handed rule of an alien power. Interestingly, Kundera counted the Jews among the native nations of Central Europe. He described the Jewish nation as a 'Central European nation par excellence', delving deeply into their recent historical fate, and drawing a vivid parallel between their suffering and the fate of other nations in the area.[215] This emotional portrayal of the highly cultured and civilized nations of a 'kidnapped West',[216] suffocating from Soviet rule, engendered a strong response from the educated public, especially in the United States. Even though Kundera's essay was criticized for its exaggerated emotionality and lack of serious argumentation, it is widely credited for bringing the notion of Central Europe back into everyday parlance.

However, Kundera did not start a new discourse over Central Europe. Rather, he utilized the idea already present in underground dissent within the Eastern bloc[217] and gave it a popular, artistic form, which captivated the imagination of his Western audience. Indeed, dissident writers were critical and sceptical of many aspects of Kundera's article, especially his depiction of Central Europe as a bridge between the East and the West.[218]

When the Czechoslovak *samizdat* journal *Střední Evropa* was established in 1984, it was not under Kundera's influence, but rather from the perceived need of dissident intellectuals to define their own vision of Central Europe to

counter Kundera's depiction.[219] The introduction of the first issue summarized the alternative notion of Central Europe:

> Let us define Central Europe as a spiritual territory with shifting boundaries. If we want to define it, we are at the same time looking for our place in Europe, for which we put a cultural claim in ... This anthology does not see Central Europe within any strict borders. Rather, it defines it instinctively ... we do not have any synthetic idea of Central Europe to start with.[220]

As is apparent from this quote, Czechoslovak dissidents had by now abandoned the federative programs or projects of neutrality typical of World War II and the early Cold War period. Now they turned to an abstract idea of Central Europe as an independent cultural unit within a (Western) European civilizational context. Art, literature and music became common denominators of any 1980s dissident definition of Central Europe.[221] Scepticism, mysticism and irony were its hallmarks, for Central Europe was a fictional territory of liberty, cosmopolitan culture and all-human ideals. Central Europe was a fate. Moreover, an unrealized, aspirational fate. Central Europe was not *where* they wanted to be, but *who* they wanted to be.

Central Europe thereby became a metaphor of anti-politics,[222] an intellectual outcry for change in the existing systems within the Eastern bloc as well as for the deliverance from the overbearing dullness and restraint of the Eastern bloc itself. György Konrád wrote openly that Central Europe was nothing more than a dream, a cultural-political *Antihypothesis*.[223] Yet others maintained that the dream they harboured could become reality.[224] But this dream was not a neutral, 'neither East nor West' federative structure in Cold War context: it was an abstract cultural concept increasingly connected with what the notion of West stood for – democracy and freedom.

The departure from a project aiming at neutrality between the two blocs was associated with the spreading belief – or perhaps just wishful thinking – that the days of the Eastern bloc were numbered. Milovan Djilas, a Communist himself, famously published an article entitled 'Decay of Communist Systems', where he highlighted notorious corruption, inefficiency and weakening of ideology in Communist states.[225] In his view, the Soviet dominion over its European satellites was coming to an early end and its fall was the precondition of their revival.[226]

Observing the weakening grip of the Soviet Union on its European satellites, Zdeněk Mlynář asserted that the future of Central Europe depended directly upon its inclusion within the Western European integration processes and upon a willingness to extend Western economic structures over the whole

of Europe. Still sceptical about the Soviet reaction towards such a possibility, he advised military neutrality for the Central European countries, while pursuing economic integration.[227]

Yet others, such as Miroslav Kusý, argued that the polarity of Western and Eastern Europe actually did not exist. Kusý substantiated this claim by demonstrating the superficiality of integration within the Eastern bloc, reminding the reader of the region's long 'European past'.[228] He asserted that Central Europe only started to move away from a European identity when its nations turned their backs on their common heritage and interests; namely, when the Austro-Hungarian Empire had been dismembered, falling prey to one or other of the expansionist powers to the West and East.[229] An early return to the (Western) European civilizational context was thus not only desirable, but also natural and inevitable.

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The romantic fiction of Central Europe as denoting an abstract, borderless and free community connected by a shared history and culture, often found its personification in the idealistic imagination of Austro-Hungarian society in the 1980s.

Idealization of the cosmopolitan culture of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire was implicit in many Czech, Polish and Hungarian texts contemplating Central Europe in the twilight years of the Warsaw Pact. Ferenc Fejtö, a Hungarian socialist living in France, even suggested that the dismemberment of the empire had been an 'incorrigible mistake'[230] and praised the achievements of the 'often enlightened Habsburg governments'.[231] This aspect of dissident writing was often criticized for its selective take of history. It was suggested that the imagined past was just a mirror of the aspired future.[232]

Of course, not all dissident writers were longing for reinstatement of the old monarchy. Indeed, some authors were highly critical of the legacy of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. These included Slovenian author Viktor Blažić,[233] Hungarian Péter Hanák[234] and Mostar-born Predrag Matvejević.[235]

On the other hand, there were those who took the imperial hangover a step further still and dreamt of a reinstatement of the pre-Versailles order. András Hegedüs presented his concept for a Carpathian Basin federation, which would include all regions inhabited by the Hungarian population, essentially reviving the Great Hungarian ambitions of some elements of Hungarian society. This was in certain respects a continuation of ideas cultivated by emigré Hungarian groups in the 1960s and 1970s and of interwar revisionists

before them. And Hegedüs was not the only individual embarking upon such endeavours in the 1980s. With the declining legitimacy of official state ideology, nationalism was on the rise in all countries in the region. In Hungary, concepts and manifestations of Greater Hungary began to spring up, some of them even making it into manifestos of nascent political parties. One such example would be the Great Hungary Plan of the Patriotic Popular Front presented in the mid-1980s.[236] However, these and similar concepts were marginal within the wider context of the Central Europe discourse.

Defying its tainted connections with German expansionism, *Mitteleuropa* was revived in Austria. Austrian discourse over the notion shared many characteristics of the dissident vision that has been commented upon above. It was largely an intellectual endeavour driven by writers and artists, promoting Central Europe as a concept expressing regional cultural affinity. In spatial terms, Central Europe was identified with the general territorial shape of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, with Vienna depicted as its unifying focal point. Peter Bender's quote of Vienna's mayor: 'Vienna is Central Europe and Central Europe is Vienna',[237] speaks for itself. Vienna was portrayed as a natural centre of a region with shared history and cultural heritage, artificially divided by the Iron Curtain. References to former empire were unmistakeable.

Given the connotations of the discourse rising east of the Iron Curtain, a certain level of Austria-Hungary linked 'k.u.k. nostalgy'[238] in 1980s Austrian contemplations of Central Europe was probably inevitable. Writers in the countries that used to belong to the Austro-Hungarian Empire were themselves idealizing its cosmopolitan past and the same theme would resonate in Austrian writing.[239] While the negatives of the old monarchy could not really be denied, they were usually both admitted and condemned. Even though some imperial ideas appeared in the margins, the emphasis was typically placed on art and culture, resulting in a modification of the old imperial abbreviation to '*K.u.K. – Kunst und Kultur*', referring to art and culture.[240]

Austrian interest in the Central Europe debate was defined in terms of its ambition to move from the position on the periphery of Europe into a position of regional centre. In his introduction to the anthology *Aufbruch nach Mitteleuropa* Erhard Busek asserted:

> We have to use our interconnection with Central Europe and our geopolitical position to actively shape our fortunes. Should we renounce this opportunity, we will remain the remotest of provinces.'[241]

A number of independent organizations sprang up to support the idea of Austria becoming a centre of revived regional cooperation. For example, 'Club pro Wien' established in 1986 had the specific goal of contributing to Vienna becoming a 'metropolis of Central Europe, a metropolis of minds'.[242]

However, some authors were deeply sceptical about Austria's ability to become a focal point and a future leader of the region.[243] They were also pointing out that should Central Europe come to shake off its Eastern yoke, it would need to think long and hard about its relationship with accelerating processes of European integration, rather than historical and cultural ties.[244] Nevertheless, Austrian corroboration of the dissident narrative of Central Europe reinforced its fundamental tenets of cultural affinity. Moreover it also offered an outside endorsement of the concept as well as additional channels for its construction and promotion.

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West German writers were understandably very conscious about the past connotations of the term *Mitteleuropa*. They pointed out that it was not a historically innocent notion and observed its linkage with the earlier hegemonic ambitions of Germany.[245] Nevertheless, they chose to view it in a more pragmatic and contemporary context, in this case with a meaning constructed by the dissident authors in the Eastern bloc.[246] Of course, it was also a useful instrument for ongoing German unification efforts.[247] The espoused version of Central Europe included a divided Germany, and contemplations of Central Europe were predominantly centred on its problems.

Karl Grobe-Hagel and Egon Schwartz reviewed the history of *Mitteleuropa* in a German-speaking environment and highlighted its strong association with expansionist policy and aggression in the past.[248] Grobe-Hagel observed that given the then contemporary geopolitical situation, there was no space for Central Europe as an independent bloc.[249] West Germany had already been incorporated into Western economic and security structures and Grobe-Hagel saw both its future and that of a unified Germany and Central Europe in this context.

Schwartz on the other hand noted that Central Europe in its latest incarnation did not look for construction of a territorial unit, rather it was a programme of:

> [U]niversalism, anti-racism, sympathy for all ethnic, linguistic, and religious differences, the right to criticize, the renunciation of aggression, the abandonment of ready-made ideologies, respect for the human being, the control of harmful illusions in oneself, the spiritual resistance against lies and hypocrisy ... protection of the environment ... social justice,

equality between men and women, raising living standards of the Third World, support and propagation of the cultural activities.[250]

These were all essentially the values ascribed to the notion of the West, and Schwarz suggested that such a value-defined programme was relevant and plausible. So what both Grobe-Hagel and Schwarz were saying was that there was no space for Central Europe as a territorial unit. However, Schwarz claimed that in the European countries of the Eastern bloc, associations of the wider public with a value-based abstract definition of Central Europe would give it '*ipso facto* the power of existence'.[251] What they were not saying, but clearly had in mind, was that should these countries ever emerge from Soviet influence, they would become the part of the West.

A cautious approach was typical of the West German authors of the day, who resented the Austrian enthusiasm for a new Central Europe.[252] Several authors, with a touch of Cold War paranoia, suspected that the whole Central Europe debate revival could just be a Soviet deception to neutralize parts of Western Europe, weaken their links to the rest of the Western bloc, and then establish their own dominance. Joseph Rovan wrote that: 'Central Europe is today a weapon against Europe'[253] and warned that the risk that West Germany could fall into the hands of the Soviets was still the same as at the beginning of the Cold War. On the other hand, he also suggested that a Central Europe aligned to the West could weaken the Soviet position. Rovan therefore suggested that these countries should be swiftly embraced within the West European structures, should such a chance arise.

More pragmatic writers also observed that the new Central Europe debate would aim at delivering Eastern bloc countries, and especially East Germany, straight into the arms of the West.[254] However, they came to the very same conclusion as sceptical authors of Rovan's persuasion – inclusion into Western structures should be favoured over any kind of neutral bloc in Central Europe. An obvious reason for such assertions was the fact that West German authors were primarily interested in Central Europe in the context of German unification. Given the fact that West Germany harboured no intentions of leaving Western structures, Central Europe (or at least a unified Germany) would need to be included within them as well. Moreover, some authors saw the Central Europe project as a convenient framework for fostering Germany's future role in Europe and a tool for emancipation from American influence.[255]

Whatever their reasons, the verdict of German authors was almost unanimous – Central Europe, as an intellectual project, was designed to lead the countries it contained into West European structures.

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The development of the story of Central Europe in the 1980s is somewhat puzzling in the context of earlier debates. The new phase in the construction of meaning represented a decisive break with the political bloc-building projects of the past. Instead, Central Europe as a notion shifted to an abstract level.

Those who seized control of the discourse were almost invariably writers and intellectuals of dissident Eastern bloc groups and their attitude to the notion was very different to the one taken by exiled governments or emigré politicians of the past. The idea of a buffer zone or a neutral bridge between the East and the West was losing its appeal, but above all its relevance, as it increasingly seemed that there might not be anything to buffer or bridge. Instead, authors writing of Central Europe aimed at fostering an abstract cultural identity that interlinked it with the West.

The narrative of Central Europe that would dominate the discourses of the 1980s had been developing, especially in the Czech intellectual environment, since the late 1970s. The interest behind this effort was one of othering from whatever the East stood for – Soviet domination, imposed regimes, the dullness or the uniformity. Central Europe was being constructed as a distinct cultural identity expressing dissociation with the political realm of the Eastern bloc. Originally built on an idealized past with overtones of self-proclaimed uniqueness, Central Europe was being increasingly cast in values typically ascribed to the West – freedom, liberalism, individuality, etc. Following the success of Kundera's article, this aspect of the Central European narrative was intentionally cultivated as a means of approximation to the West. The message was clear – Central Europe was yearning for its lost freedom. In simple binaries of the divided Europe, this was associated with becoming a part of the West.

Central Europe found many enthusiasts in Austria, as it offered a way out of the peripheral role it had played in Europe since the end of World War II. The concept of Central Europe identified to a high degree with former Austria-Hungary, a device that would allow Austria to reinvent itself as a regional leader. Austrians were keen to embrace it.

Less enthusiastic, and a bit more suspicious than the Austrians, German politicians also saw Central Europe as a useful concept: in their case, in efforts at German unification. The uncertain borders of an increasingly abstract Central Europe became an advantage, as dissident writing contemplating Germany allowed it to buy into the concept. *Mitteleuropa* became a motto of the new phase of Ostpolitik introduced by the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) in 1986.[256] Indeed, non-German authors were suspicious of German motivations in the revived use of the term *Mitteleuropa*.[257] However, it was exactly the addition of the German question into the equation that ensured that Central Europe was talked about as a natural part of the West,

due to the West German interest in unification and its obvious unwillingness to sacrifice its Western links.

So Timothy Garton Ash seemed to be on to something when in 1984 he proclaimed that Central Europe was back. However, it did not return from obscurity in the form of the academic federative concepts typical of earlier periods. It was revived as an abstract lament of intellectuals and artists against the totalitarianism of the Soviet-dominated countries.

The difference between the discourse over Central Europe and its earlier versions is striking. As compared to, for example, the World War II period, it differed in terms of the main actors shaping the discourse, their motivations, the nature of concepts put forward, the audiences addressed, the aims and the envisaged reconstruction of Central Europe; while during World War II the discourse was in the hands of exiled governments working towards the creation of political union to safeguard their countries from expansive neighbours. Research on the integration potential of systems of education, transport and agriculture was carried out for the purpose of future federal planning. The main partners in the discourse were the United States and the British governments, who were viewed as guarantors of the realization of these plans. As a result, Central Europe was clearly defined along the lines of ongoing federalization plans.

In contrast, at the end of the Cold War, Central Europe was being constructed predominantly by writers and intellectuals who were being persecuted by uniformly authoritarian regimes and yearning to see their fall. The aim was to assert values of individuality, creativity, independence, freedom and high culture against the uniformity, dullness, restraint and domination of the authoritarian regimes and the Soviet Union. The audience was the foreign public as much as the domestic one. Central Europe was the means of othering from purportedly alien and implanted (Eastern) political regimes and asserting a largely imagined authentic (Central European) culture.[258] Central Europe was an abstract cultural entity with, often intentionally, blurred geographical boundaries.[259]

So it would seem that the construct of Central Europe in the 1980s could not get any more far removed from what the notion meant in the interwar or early Cold War period. Did it have anything at all in common with any of its precursors?

At first sight, it did not. Comparing the characteristics of the discourse and its results would suggest that 1980s Central Europe had hardly anything in common with the Central Europe of earlier periods. However, analysis of the antecedents of ideas expressed by dissident writers brings a surprising result. The discourse of Central Europe driven by Eastern bloc authors drew on essentially the same sources as the first German conceptualizations of Central Europe in the late nineteenth century.[260] Moreover, there was a recurrence in

underlying ideas and the pattern of their employment in the construction of Central Europe.

Some theorists[261] have claimed that this was in large part due to the prominence of Czech authors in the construction of 1980s Central Europe. Vladimír Macura pointed out that the Czech romanticists of the nineteenth century were obsessed with the myth of a 'middle' as the ideal between the extremes in all forms: geographical, cultural, linguistic, etc. Being middle or in the middle, meant achievement of the ideal – the best of both extremes without their negative excesses. It was one step further to the perception of the middle as a mediator of values, influences and culture. Yet another step to the perception of this mediator as unique and central to everything.[262]

Macura[263] suggested that this self-perception of an idealized central uniqueness devised by the nineteenth-century romaniticists was fairly faithfully replicated in Kundera's *Tragedy of Central Europe*. The very same theme of the ideal of the centre is present in the German romanticist tradition, from which the first proto-ideas of Central Europe drew their origins, replacing the notion of *Deutschtum*. The notion of 'the central nation' (*Mittelvolk*) appeared in German writing in the early nineteenth century as a synonym for the German nation.[264] Such parallels are numerous and include perceptions of the West, a radical othering from Russia, an emphasis on culture (as different from civilization), and a suspicious attitude to modernity.[265] The search for a shared identity seems to be a common denominator of both periods in the formulation of their abstract, culturally-defined Central Europe.

Therefore, despite all the differences between the meaning of Central Europe in the 1980s and in earlier periods of the twentieth century, it is to be concluded that rather than being independent of these discourses, the Central Europe of the 1980s returned to their very fundamentals.

We might speculate that it was the return to the shared narrative of the middle that induced a general support of the 1980s version of Central Europe, but it seems more likely that many just found the narrative convenient and flexible enough to further their own interests. The real opportunity to do so would come with the much anticipated breakdown in the Soviet control of its European satellites.

A BRAND NEW GAME: INTEGRATION TAUTOLOGY, 1989–2004

In 1999, Robin Okey posited that the notion of Central Europe as conceived by 1980s dissident intellectuals failed a decade later because it had no instrumental value for the emergent transitive countries.

Not surprisingly, the anti-politics of this Central Europe of the mind had little to contribute to the real politics that broke out after November 1989.

The nationalist masses have spoken, but not about Central Europe. They share with the intellectuals of the 1980s a commitment to the idea of Europe but it is a commitment that needs no Central European mediation, whether as power bloc, federal or cultural pluralist model, or Viennese metropole.[266]

However, in this statement, Okey seems to be mixing two very different approaches to Central Europe – the intellectual project of the 1980s and the political programmes of earlier periods. More plausible seems to be Peter Bugge's analysis, in which he identified the utility of the construct of Central Europe, in terms of identity building, bloc building and means of othering.[267] His conclusion was that:

> [I]f perceived as a tool for escaping from 'Eastern Europe' (from the Soviet grip of course, but also from the stigmatizing connotations of the label), Central Europe certainly served its purpose.[268]

To some degree, the intellectual project of Central Europe started to be realized with the fall of the Berlin Wall, yet, following the break-up of the Eastern bloc, no Central European political unit was constituted. Okey considered it a betrayal of the strong revival of the notion in the 1980s and its past regional integrationist connotations. Bugge pointed out that realization of Central Europe as a political entity was never really on the agenda in the 1980s.

In every case, when the Central European Free Trade Area, the Central European Initiative and many other intergovernmental organizations came into being in the 1990s, they covered different areas and countries. Frustratingly for Bugge, Okey and other researchers, none of these organizations became a personification of the political project of Central Europe envisaged in earlier decades of the twentieth century.

As discussed above, not only did the Central European discourse in the 1980s represent a marked departure from the project of political bloc building, but it also increasingly steered its context towards ongoing Western European integration processes and structures. The very point of employing the notion of Central Europe was in an effort to differentiate oneself from the 'Eastern' context. Claims that the notion failed to create a regional bloc[269] because it was not in line with the wishes of the masses[270] seem to be missing this point.

For it seems fair to say that, following the fall of the Iron Curtain, those who took part in the construction of the notion in the 1980s behaved in a way that suggested that they took the existence of Central Europe – however fuzzily delineated it may have been – as a fact. The 1990 volume of *Střední Evropa* was not a *samizdat* anymore. It was printed as a publication of the
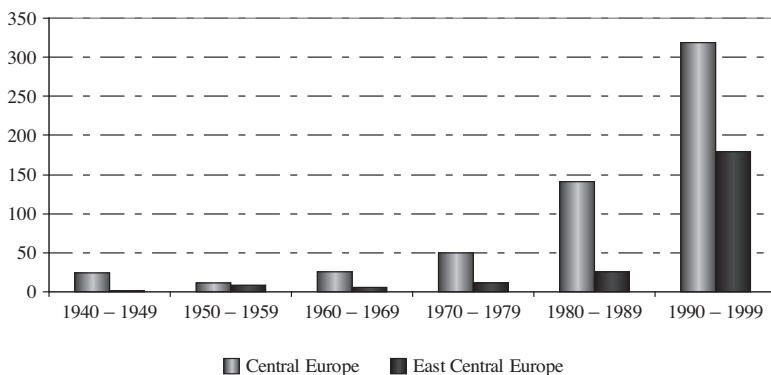
4. Number of books featuring 'Central Europe' and 'East Central Europe'
in their title in the collections of the British Library, 1940–1999.
Source: the author.

Institute for Central European Culture and Politics. It did not feature any
more contemplations of Central Europe. Instead, it presented articles on
histories of Czechoslovakia, Germany, Lithuania and Slovenia; translations of
works by Francis Fukuyama and Zbigniew Brzezinski; and contemplations of
the scale of forthcoming economic, social and political transitions. In short,
the volume printed articles on various aspects of a Central Europe that was
presumed to exist.

The mythical contemplations of Central Europe typical of 1980s dissident
writing disappeared as the need for assertion of cultural identity was clearly
diminishing. Their place was taken by the much more practical theorizing of
transition, internal reforms and the foreign policy direction of post-
Communist countries. As is apparent from the following chart, references to
Central Europe more than doubled in the 1990s. This increase is to be
explained by Central Europe's new found centrality in EU and NATO
integration.

But, as has already been mentioned, the concept of Central Europe in the
immediate post-Cold War period essentially remained fuzzy and confusing for
many. First of all, it did not designate any kind of politically or economically
unified area, or even connote a recognized group of independent countries.
Second, the definitions of Central Europe presented by hundreds of authors
varied from one another wildly. Robert Jervis and Seweryn Bialer defined
Central Europe as consisting of Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia and
Hungary.[271] The editors of *Střední Evropa* conceived of it in terms of former
Austro-Hungarian territories, while Csaba Kiss's Central Europe extended
from Finland to Greece and from Germany to Ukraine.[272]

In practical terms, Central Europe was treated by academics, statesmen and journalists from the transitive countries as an existing concept, aligning their countries to the West. Invocations of cultural and historical proximity became instrumental in their efforts to achieve speedy inclusion into Western economic and security structures.[273] Central Europe was also used as a point of internal self-identification, as a means of othering from the 'East European' past and affirmation of the new quality of society. This understanding of Central Europe is clearly a continuation of the 1980s theme of othering, but with a more pronounced practical than philosophical twist.

Yet, the question remained, whether the 'West' thought Central Europe was, or should become, a part of it . . . and what the 'East' had to say about it. Discourse over Central Europe had to an extent been placed back in the hands of geopolitical theorists and a Western audience.

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As Fukuyama-like euphoria over the global predominance of the liberal order soon evaporated in the West, conceptualizations of future geopolitical confrontation started to appear. Confrontation on a global scale was said to be a persisting feature of the new international context. Consolidation of Western gains in Europe became an imperative. 'Central Europe' had to become part of the West, as a requisite safeguard against a future global confrontation. Thus, after decades of Cold War silence, Central Europe was again the topic of the day in geopolitical considerations.

Zbigniew Brzezinski, formerly national security advisor to President Jimmy Carter and a known quality in geostrategy, proposed measures that would anchor the post-Communist countries in Europe firmly within the democratic camp. To ensure penetration of the sea power (the West) within the inner parts of Eurasia, the Western world ought, in his view, to take advantage of the land power's retreat and incorporate the abandoned territories within its own structures.

The main goal of the United States in Europe is to strengthen the American bridgehead on the Eurasian continent, so an enlarging Europe could become the springboard for the penetration of an international order based on democracy and cooperation into the Eurasian mainland.[274]

However, Brzezinski questioned the ability of the European nations to achieve this goal on their own, arguing for an enduring need for American protection. The expansion of the European Union into vacated space of the former Eastern bloc should therefore be institutional by an enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The eastern borders of NATO and the EU should, according to Zbigniew Brzezinski, be fully consonant.

Thus the transitive countries would simultaneously become part of the economic, political and defence structures of the democratic bloc, thus ensuring its enduring international orientation towards the West. Needless to say, it would also better foster an enduring United States influence over European affairs.

Brzezinski defined Central European space loosely, as the 'historic area of constructive German cultural influence [...] the area of German urban and agricultural colonization',[275] thus extending the limits of this influence well into the territory of the Russian Federation. Hence Brzezinski positioned Germany firmly within his Central Europe and Central Europe firmly under the influence of Germany. He identified Germany as the most reliable and unflinching ally of the United States in Europe, striving to achieve historical rehabilitation and pose as a model European country. This effort would logically impel Germany to extend the highest possible level of support to Central European countries pushing for membership of the European Union. Consequently, Brzezinski saw 'Germany in the role of patron of the final formal incorporation of this new *Mitteleuropa* into the European Union and NATO'.[276] Under the leadership of Germany, Central Europe would thereby be securely included in the Western camp through its economic and security ties.

Despite the criticism Brzezinski's ideas received for their overt promotion of United States hegemony, they were enthusiastically received by the establishments of Central Europe, even academia itself, since the message was consonant with the Central European aims of achieving membership of EU and NATO. His writings became a starting point for many subsequent definitions of Central Europe produced in the area itself.

Another work eagerly embraced in the transitive countries was the somewhat 'unorthodox' geopolitical essay of Samuel Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilisations'.[277] In his opinion, the world was comprised of dynamic civilizations defined as 'the highest cultural groupings' of people.[278] These included Western, Confucian, Japanese, Islamic, Hindu, Slavic-Orthodox, Latin American and, possibly, African civilizations. The differences among civilizations for him were not only real, but were basic, and would inexorably lead to confrontation. The fault lines between the civilizations that replaced the political and ideological boundaries of the Cold War would become flashpoints of crises and bloodshed.

Owing to Western civilization's extraordinary power relative to other civilizations, the assertive promotion of its basic values and its self-portrayal as a global culture, other civilizations would inevitably become opposed to it and the pattern of future conflict would be 'the West against the Rest'. In this global fight launched by 'the Rest', the Central European space would occupy

a crucial strategic location in the borderlands of the Western and Slavic-Orthodox cultures. According to Huntington, as the Cold War ideological division of Europe disappeared, so a historical-cultural division mirroring the lines of the limits of Western Christianity in the sixteenth century might logically re-emerge. Such a line could separate Finland and the Baltic States from Russia, then cutting through Belarus and Ukraine, separating Transylvania from the rest of Romania, and Croatia and Slovenia from the rest of the former Yugoslavia. Countries to the west and north of this line would lay within Western culture, characterized by Protestantism or Catholicism, a common experience of European history and a higher degree of economic development, thus separated from the Orthodox and Muslim populations on the other side.[279]

Moreover, this region was identified as the only place where Western civilization shared land boundaries with Muslim and Slavic-Orthodox civilizations, suggesting that its control was critical. Re-emergent patterns of violent interaction between the three cultures (Muslim, Slavic-Orthodox and Western) along the fault-line were, according to Huntington, likely to manifest themselves in the twenty-first century. On the grounds of what happened in Yugoslavia at the beginning of the 1990s, he predicted a future of bloody conflict for the region along this boundary. The only way to avoid it would be to promote the greater cooperation and full integration of the Central European space into Western culture; and, concomitantly, to build a cooperative relationship with Russia.[280]

Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations' did not go uncontested; however, his view of Central Europe was received favourably in the region itself and adopted as a standard textbook on international relations in many post-Communist countries. His civilizational narrative was a convenient concept for those attempting to forge new Western identities for states striving to join Western economic and security structures.

Brzezinski and Huntington had sought to reinstate Central Europe within Western geopolitical conceptualization. Whether it was Brzezinski's strategy of moving into no-man's lands or Huntington's unorthodox civilizational concept, Central Europe formed an integral part of their updated takes on the global power struggle. Meanwhile, the Mackinderian take on Central Europe would be most dutifully resurrected in emergent Russian geopolitics.[281]

Alexandr Dugin, a guru of Russian geopolitics, applied Mackinder's 1904 theses directly to a contemporary setting. He identified the United States as the embodiment of a sea power and forecast the re-establishment of Russia as its opposing land power, in alliance with Germany. He envisioned an early rupture of the modern European alliance with the United States and Great Britain, because of unspecified antagonism of European continental

integration and British interests.[282] Russia would seize the opportunity presented by such a scenario to prepare the conditions for building a new Eurasian empire. This continental empire, counter-balancing the global sea power of the United States, would consist of three different axes of continental power: Moscow–Berlin, Moscow–Teheran, Moscow–Tokyo.[283]

Within this grand design, Central Europe represented a distinctive geopolitical entity, united strategically, culturally and politically. Within the Central European space Dugin included all the nations of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire, Germany, with some areas of Poland and Ukraine. Dugin argued that the consolidating power here had always been Germany and the Central European 'geopolitical conglomerate' ought naturally to fall under its control. It was not only the natural tendency but also the historic duty of the region to unify around this traditional core. Acknowledging ongoing processes of European integration, a German-led Central Europe, in alliance with France, might create a European vector that was strong enough to offer Eurasia protection from potential attack by the sea powers.

All the integration processes in the European arena would have one basic aim: to foster a Berlin–Moscow axis. This axis would ensure the genuine autarchy of a Eurasian Empire and its superpower standing. Dugin wrote:

> Today, Germany is an economic giant and a political dwarf. Russia is the exact opposite – a political giant and an economic cripple. Axis Moscow–Berlin heals maladies of both partners and lays foundation for the coming prosperity of Great Russia and Great Germany.[284]

The strategic logic of a German sphere of influence and also the alliance with Russia had its original basis in Mackinder's concept, where it was identified as a region holding the key to world hegemony. The Berlin–Moscow axis suggested by Dugin corresponded to the alliance warned against by Mackinder. In fact, Dugin's application of Mackinder's thesis seems to be the least modified of all contemporary grand geopolitical theories. It lent a convenient theoretical basis for Dugin's intended characterization of a Eurasian Empire pitched as the antithesis of Western liberal society. He portrayed Russia as the heir of Mackinder's land-based power with its traditionalism, hierarchism, Russian Orthodox Church – and status!

Vladimir Kolossov and Rostislav Turovsky observed that Dugin and post-Cold war Russian geopolitics more generally, have drawn heavily on the traditional geopolitics of the early twentieth century, and accentuated the roles of physical space, natural resources and direct control of territory 'as though the world has been frozen in a Haushoferian time warp'.[285] The pivotal role of the area of Central Europe in its original

deterministic sense has thus been embraced a good century on. Similar themes can be found in German New Right circles, with geopolitical theory built on similar deterministic tenets including a desire for future regional arrangements between Russia and Germany.[286] However, the events of the post-Cold War decades will, of course, highlight that actual developments in the region followed Brzezinski's prescriptions much more closely than Dugin's.

The European Community introduced its PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies) programme as early as 1989 to assist in the transformation of the centrally planned economies of Poland and Hungary into market economies. This programme was later extended to cover Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. In the early 2000s, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Macedonia dropped out of the PHARE programme, which became the main tool of pre-accession help for countries with good prospects for early membership of the European Union. By the mid-1990s, all of the countries remaining in the programme would have applied for membership of the EU, joining in 2004 and 2007.

The integration of Central European countries into the EU was foreshadowed by their inclusion in NATO. The Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland joined NATO in 1999, followed by Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia in 2004. The latest round in the enlargement of NATO involved Croatia and Albania in 2009. Brzezinski's vision certainly seems to be being realized – more so than the visions of his contemporaries.

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Geopolitics has been on the rise in the transitive countries as well and theorization of the notion of Central Europe has mirrored the mainstream grand theory of Western geopolitics. Predictably, authors usually chose to incorporate their concept of Central Europe into either Brzezinski's or Huntington's vision. Two exceptional examples are the writings of Zoltán Pásztor, a Slovak historian of Hungarian origin and Oskar Krejčí, advisor to the last Communist government of Czechoslovakia and generally acknowledged as the highest authority in Czech geopolitics.

Pásztor defined Central Europe on the basis of morphological characteristics.[287] It consisted of areas formed by Hercynian and Alpine-Carpathian folding. His Hercynian Europe extended from Calais to Lviv and from the Jutland peninsula to Basel; while the Alpine–Carpathian area stretched from the western foothills of the Alps to the eastern ridges of the

Carpathians. Pásztor's definition embraced all the states located in the outlined region, and the borders of his Central Europe coincided with the current national borders of these states.[288] Thus his concept interlinked what was commonly understood as Western Europe and the post-Communist countries, establishing a geographic claim for their closer integration.

In support of this definition, Pásztor laid great emphasis on characterizing the cultural identity of Central Europe and dealt with specific characteristics of, and stages in, the historical development of the region at length. In an effort to define the unique features of Central Europe, he engaged with a lengthy analysis of German historical context and its legacy, relying heavily upon historical determinism. The result was a geopolitical approach that saw Central Europe cast as a 'boundary culture', based on geographical data and historical evidence. He saw the future of Central Europe within the European Union and under the regional stewardship of Germany.[289] The last pages of his book showcased two main characteristics of contemporary regional writing on Central Europe – the emphasis on identity and culture, and a Huntingtonian vision of the future.

Krejčí observed that in the 1990s the contemporary definition of Central Europe crystallized along the lines of integration and globalization processes.[290] He presented a fusion of an intellectual project of the 1980s and earlier territorially defined conceptions, characterizing Central Europe as a notion encompassing 'both objective geographic and power characteristics as well as spiritual judgements'.[291] Interestingly, Krejčí used the very same approach as Mackinder in defining Central Europe by its accessibility from the sea through navigable rivers.[292] Then he divided Central Europe into: (a) northern zone – a Central European or Polish–German lowlands, extending into the East European Plain, surrounded to the south by the Czech and Slovak mountain chains; (b) inner zone – a Carpathian–Alpine zone, its borders defined by the Bohemian forest, the Czech and Slovak mountain chains, and the Prut, Kupa, Sava and Danube rivers; (c) southern zone – the Balkans, including Greece and the European part of Turkey.[293]

Krejčí excluded Germany from Central Europe and, essentially, kept more strictly to Mackinder's Middle Tier area. Krejčí characterized the area of his enquiry as East-Central Europe, even though the title of his book was the *Geopolitics of Central European Space*. Yet, he followed a similar path to Pásztor in arriving at conclusions about the mid-term future of Central European space and also saw the future of his East-Central Europe as heavily under the influence of Germany; however, very much within Brzezinski's framework.[294] In Krejčí's view, it was a necessary and desirable development, one that would firmly anchor East-Central Europe into the orbit of the West.[295]

These two examples document how very different the basic tenets of concepts of Central Europe in post-Cold war period could be and yet how similar their conclusions usually were. Myriad other definitions and theories arose in the period;[296] however, they all shared some peculiar distinguishing features. Allowing for the occasional nationalist or pro-Russian concept, theorists generally viewed the future of their countries within the EU and NATO. As a consequence, very few new conceptions of Central Europe as a political unit have emerged and the writing has generally focused instead on descriptive treatises exploring the positioning of the region in regard to its intended integration context.

In many respects, this was a continuation of the intellectual projects of the 1980s. For, being included within Central Europe meant positioning oneself on the right track for speedy membership of the West. The process of othering from the Eastern European legacy continued as theorists busily established the Central European credentials of their countries to ensure they were not left out of the concept. These feverish efforts to demarcate Central Europe according to one's particular interests, led Timothy Garton Ash to comment: 'Tell me your Central Europe, and I will tell you who you are.'[297]

As suggested in the Introduction, the main part of the discourse over Central Europe would not be found on the pages of dense academic volumes but was present in daily parlance. Use of the notion became the tool that academics, statesmen and journalists of post-Communist countries alike used to express the new democratic quality of their governments, the liberal openness of their societies and the Westwards orientation of their foreign policy. Central Europe, loose and undefined in its territorial definition but well crystallized in its contextual aims, became a measurement of approximation to the Western liberal ideal. It appeared in the daily media, journal articles and countless books, as well as the names of regional organizations, institutes and NGOs.

The work of Merje Kuus, an Estonian scholar living and working in Canada, offers a worthy retrospective analysis of how Central Europe was conceptualized during this period. Central to Kuus's work are the notions of identity and otherness. Europe derives its self-identification from being different from the East. In her words:

> [M]uch of East European studies [during the Cold War] represented not an engagement with but a disengagement from the complexities of East Central Europe in favour of simple binaries such as West versus East.[298]

The situation changed with the fall of the Eastern bloc, when the post-Communist countries raced for the support of the West in their transition

towards hoped-for integration within Western international structures. Central Europe became the expressed means of approximation to the 'Western' ideal and was invoked predominantly in the context of integration. Central Europe was then, in turn, associated with the group of post-Communist countries racing for membership of EU and NATO.

The concept of Central Europe, as presented here, is thereby the product of a deliberate effort of East Central European countries to differentiate themselves from 'the East' in order to identify with (Western) Europe. On the other hand it is also a product of the EU's and NATO's eastward enlargement that has 'fuelled a threefold division of the continent into the European core, the Central European applicants – not yet fully European but in tune with the European project –, and an eastern periphery effectively excluded from membership'.[299]

This characterization of Central Europe is very flexible in identifying 'various shades of Easterness and Europeness', as evidenced by Kuus's conspicuously functional move to extend her original Central Europe – Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Slovenia – by two more countries – Romania and Bulgaria – following their accession to the EU in 2007. However, the bottom line for use of the notion was to express how 'Western' European the countries were becoming, by labelling them 'Central', rather than 'Eastern'. Kuus posited that Central Europe was like a waiting room for inclusion into Western economic and security structures. The notion of Central Europe became tautological: being called Central Europe meant the country was perceived to be a good way along to achieving all the necessary benchmarks for either EU or NATO integration, and countries perceived as being some way down such a trajectory were called Central European.

The tautological character of the Central Europe narrative was enhanced by the use of the notion in the West. Jason Dittmer's research of the use of the notion between 1993 and 2003 suggests that journal articles used designation of 'Central European country' for those countries that were viewed as being a good way to joining either NATO or the EU. For example, no article in the researched database designated Romania or Bulgaria as Central European in the period from 1994 to 1997, but up to 15 of them do so between 1998 and 2003, when it became obvious that both countries would soon join the EU.[300] Even more peculiar was the case of Slovakia, which managed to fall out of the Central European group in articles on NATO expansion following the decision of the alliance not to include it in the first round of expansion.[301] While it was often designated as Central European between 1993 and 1997, it disappeared from lists afterwards. Thus, Central Europe worked in reverse as well – those

countries, which were not approximating themselves to the Western ideal fast enough, were left out.

Even though Dittmer's research was limited by its exclusive focus on English-language newspaper articles contemplating issues of either NATO or EU integration, it offered a valuable insight into how Central Europe was being constructed in the daily parlance. It documents how the post-Cold War notion of Central Europe became a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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The above discussion has documented how Central Europe became a major preoccupation for those who were trying to conceptualize the geopolitical implications of the collapse of bi-polar global power structures, as well as those who were trying to find their place within the new ones. The discussion represents to varying degree the interests of the various involved parties – the transitive countries were striving to be included within the economic and security framework of the West, Russia was coming to terms with loss of empire, while the United States was attempting to foster and secure the position of a hegemon. Within these tensions, however, Central Europe again became a battlefield of competing concepts, its contemporary positioning was more or less agreed– it was to be included into structures shared by countries of Western Europe.

The post-Cold war discourse of Central Europe in the post-Communist countries carried forward the theme of othering developed in the 1980s. With it went a lack of territorial exactness. As a means of othering from the East and approximating to Western Europe, Central Europe became intertwined with efforts to integrate within its structures. Innumerable definitions of Central Europe were put forward by academics as well as politicians in the transitive countries. Their common denominator was the positioning of Central Europe as an area that should be included in a Western context whatever the justification afforded by geography or history,[302] and whatever the contemporary political situation of individual countries provided.[303]

The reformulation of classical geopolitics provided a handy tool and often a framework for analysis of emergent concepts. Hungtington and Brzezinski offered superpower endorsement for the inclusion of Central Europe into the Western realm; Dugin provided a necessary other to distinguish from with his contemporary inversion of Mackinder.

In the context of the daily politics of integration, Central Europe became a virtual tautological designation for countries that had reached the set benchmarks for inclusion within EU and NATO. Dittmer's research showed that a designation of Central Europe as those countries that were well on their

way to join either NATO or the EU was widespread. Not only could countries be included within the concept, they could also fall out.

Germany and Austria were rarely talked about as Central European in the context of integration, but both of them were often included in various presented concepts of Central Europe. In the end, it was the perceived connection with either one of them that gave substance to the very idea of Central Europe in the 1980s. Lack of inclusion of Germany in the Central European integration debate is understandable – East Germany became a part of both NATO and the EU in 1990 through unification with West Germany. Austria never attempted to join NATO due to its neutral status, but joined the EU in 1995 with Finland and Sweden. This singled Austria out of the common integration context of post-Communist countries. Moreover, Austria had been perceived as a part of the West and did not need the narrative of Central Europe in the context of its inclusion within the EU. However, both Germany and Austria were referred to as Central European in other than integration contexts.[304]

Overall, discourse over Central Europe was dominated by processes of European economic and security integration. Therefore the association of the notion with an uncertain regional group of countries, who were becoming Western, was widespread. This association also meant that once the given countries were included within EU and NATO, the rising tide of writing on Central Europe suddenly subsided.

One could argue that a certain parallel with the period of the early Cold War could be drawn. The need as well as opportunity to conceptualize the near future of the region diminished following the Communist takeovers of
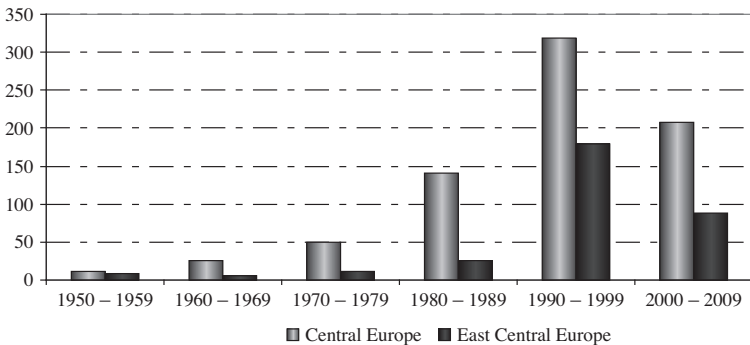
5. Number of books featuring 'Central Europe' and 'East Central Europe' in their title in the collections of the British Library, 1950–2009.
Source: the author.

the late 1940s, as it did in succeeding waves of EU and NATO integration at the turn of the millennium. The volume of writing on Central Europe markedly diminished after 2005, suggesting that the immediate future of the region is regarded as settled for the time being. However, it is hardly the end of Central Europe as a notion.

THE EBBS AND FLOWS OF THEORIZING

At the end of World War I, Central Europe was a notion closely associated with the shattered plans for union between Germany and Austria-Hungary. The Paris Peace Conference confirmed the sovereignty of the nationally defined successor states that would replace the dismembered Austro-Hungarian Empire. However, the solution would soon prove to be far from ideal – instability, national tensions and economic impoverishment plagued the region, and caused many to think of alternatives.

The erratic interwar period gave rise to a multitude of new conceptions for multinational union in the area, springing from the most diverse sources. Notion of a Danubian Federation appeared as a competing term developed by authors wishing to leave Germany out of their framework. However, the newly independent successor states resisted any real efforts for their integration despite growing indications that they might not be able to safeguard their national sovereignties. Indeed, the consolidation of Germany in the mid-1920s brought with it a new wave of theorizing Central Europe along earlier lines – again involving Germany and the successor states to Austria-Hungary. But with the hardening of German national ambitions in the early 1930s, the original concept would be moulded into an ever more pronounced programme for domination of the area by the German nation. This tendency continued until a term better suited for such a purpose was introduced – the *Reich*. The rise of this notion, better suited to express German ambitions at the end of 1930s, made Central Europe redundant.

The beginning of World War II brought a virtual U-turn in the theorizing of Central Europe. Treated as a mere tool of propaganda in Nazi Germany, Central Europe had ceased to be the primary term associated with German expansionism, and now was replaced with the term *Reich*. Exiled leaders of the successor states, now finally convinced of the need for a stronger multinational union to counter the German threat, were thus free to develop the notion to denote their own plans for the federalization of a strip of countries between Germany and the Soviet Union. Encouraged and supported by the British and the United States governments, they signed a series of treaties establishing the basis of such future union and worked towards their implementation. However, power politics took precedence over promises extended to exiled

successor-states politicians, and the Western Allies yielded influence over Central Europe to the Soviets. This decision dealt a devastating blow to any plans for federation in the area, as the Soviet leadership was fiercely opposed to any integration that might strengthen its new satellites. When Yugoslav plans for a Balkan federation surfaced in 1948, the reprisals were fierce and uncompromising.

In the early Cold War period, some emigré thinkers living in the West presented plans for neutralization of an area to buffer the spread of Communism; in line with the geopolitically substantiated paranoia of the time. However, the Western allies were not willing to risk yet another war over Central Europe and this new vision failed to gather substantial support. For more than three decades Central Europe was not talked about, save for some emigré theorists returning to the interwar discourse themes, since the division of Europe into East and West made it redundant.

However, Central Europe made a surprise comeback in the 1980s. But the form in which it re-emerged seemed far removed from the Central Europe of earlier periods. In contrast to previous territorially defined political projects, the Central Europe of the 1980s was an abstract, culturally defined conception. Formulated and promoted by dissidents of the Eastern bloc, Central Europe was a spiritual escape, represented as the antithesis of authoritarian regimes, a negation of the Easternness ascribed to their countries. An idealized Austro-Hungarian past was invoked as a model of cosmopolitan culture and associated with all that was supposedly Central European – artistic creativity, cultural uniqueness, and humanistic values. Such a definition of Central Europe was enthusiastically embraced by a Western audience attuned to the grievances of Eastern dissidents. Central Europe became an intellectual project for those who wished the Iron Curtain would disappear.

And disappear it did. From the moment the Berlin Wall was torn down, an imaginary mythical Central Europe came to being in the eyes of its 1980s architects. It became a narrative of cultural approximation to the West, a means of othering from the East European past. As grand geopolitical theories assigned the region to the German sphere of influence in the post-Cold War period, Central Europe was on its way to becoming part of the West. Central Europe became principally used in the context of European integration and associated with the group of countries that were on the right track to achieve speedy inclusion into Western economic and security structures. In this context, the notion became tautological in itself: Central European countries on their way to becoming members of the EU and NATO and countries on their way to becoming members of the EU and NATO were Central European. Indeed, since the bulk of post-Communist countries joined NATO and the EU, the frequency of the use of the notion substantially declined.

It seems as if, once again, Central Europe had been made partially redundant by its inclusion, this time into the West.

In all cases, Central Europe was conceived of as a regional identity, which had a particular geopolitical aim: the change of an international structure to accommodate interests embodied in the notion. In the interwar period, these were the interests of resurgent and aggrandizement-seeking Germany, which shifted with the growing ambitions of the Nazi regime, finally outgrowing the notion itself. During World War II, Central Europe was conceived of as a regional federation, protecting the interests of countries that fell prey to Germany and its allies. In the early Cold War, it was theorized as a neutral buffer between the East and the West. In the 1980s, the idea clearly was the escape from Soviet domination for its European vassals, while in the 1990s the case was made for their speedy inclusion in NATO and the European Union.

Thus, Central European concepts are definitions of a regional *Self*, seeking to replace that which already exists with something that is desired – a humiliated Germany with a new, larger and stronger German-led entity rivalling the declining empires of its peers; a patchwork of weak isolated states with a federation offering safety in numbers; the East with the West. Yet, what evidence is there to support the idea that definitive discourses of Central Europe as a *Self* or the *Other* have had an influence on political actors and international structure?

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The influence of successive conceptualizations across the eras of the turbulent twentieth century varied. In the interwar period, geopolitics followed the whims of policy-makers rather than the other way round. However, during World War II, the idea of Central Europe as a federated strip of countries separating Germany and Russia was both developed by the top politicians of their exiled governments and followed through by them (with obvious material support from the United States government) with the clear intention of changing the international structure. Treaties of federation were signed by the Czechoslovak and Polish governments in exile, as well as by the Greek and Yugoslav ones. Yet, such plans remained unrealized because of pressure from the Soviet Union. Their opposition to any such structure was fierce indeed. The story of 'the Titoist clique' underlined the fierce opposition of the Soviet leadership to such a regional structure. Stalin would go as far as to dispose of leaders even remotely supportive of the plan, unleashing an international witchhunt for traitors and expelling Yugoslavia from the bloc.

It would seem that the concept of Central Europe exercised influence upon policy-makers where their interests were in line with those served by the

concept (e.g. the exiled governments in the period of World War II, or United States support for the idea of a buffer zone in the early Cold War), but also maybe where they were deemed to be in direct opposition (e.g. Stalin's reaction to Dimitrov's announcement in 1948). However, when the concept became an inconvenience to the interests of policy-makers, it would fall upon deaf ears (e.g. in late 1930s Germany).

The strongest evidence for such a lack of interest and influence was the period of the Cold War. In a starkly bipolar world, there was no interest among policy-makers on either side in any version of Central Europe and the concept was understandably proclaimed as redundant.[305] In an unexpected reverse, the concept was picked up in redefined form by the German government in pushing for re-unification at the end of the Cold War. Central Europe would serve as a symbolic hallmark for the integration period that followed, a notion found on the tip of the tongue of any regional statesman.

Yet, for all the variations in time and space and its supposed purpose of changing the international structure, Central Europe consistently fell short of the ambitions it represented. The only exception was the integration period of 1990–2007, and perhaps, to a more limited degree, the late Cold War.[306]

In the 1990s the notion was used to articulate and express the proximity to the region it hoped to become part of – the West. The ambition was to amend international structure by the inclusion of former Eastern bloc countries within the economic and security structures of the West. This ambition was certainly achieved. However, the role that the notion of Central Europe played in bringing this result about will need to be confirmed by primary archival sources, once they become available.

It follows from these observations that for Central Europe to succeed as a regional identity, a more significant and sustainable confluence in the interests of political actors in the region or involved with its shaping will need to be observable than was the case for any of the definitive points examined. Only in the 1990s were regional politicians, NATO and EU policy-makers agreed on a shared identity for the region, with crucially no significant actor opposing it,[307] creating the conditions for the new identity's realization.

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Central Europe started the twenty-first century on an optimistic note – or at least when compared to the most of its previous history. The concept has become an equivalent to a drive for freedom, economic growth and international integration. Yet, it is unlikely that this will be Central Europe's final iteration. The very moral of the story recounted here is that each and every dominant definition is just a node in the ever-flowing discourse of the notion.

7 Conclusions: Central Europe and Beyond

Central Europe's metamorphoses took several surprising turns over the twentieth century. It is an overarching argument of this book that individual definitions of the notion depended on shifting identities and the interests of those who chose to theorize it. The dominant definition and influence of the notion depended on whose interests the concept met, what was their prominence in the discourse and access to power. Yet finally, the question of whether the concept succeeded in bringing about real change depended on whether the notion met with the approval of the policy-makers of the key stakeholders and, crucially, no significant opposition.

THE FORGING OF CENTRAL EUROPE

The first part of this argument suggests that conceptualizations of Central Europe were indeed constructions of regional identity conducted as exercises in geopolitics. The notion was defined by individual authors based on their interests and perceived needs, which were in turn informed by their socially constructed identity.[1]

Naumann theorized Central Europe to bring Germany and Austria-Hungary under one roof to create a larger economic area. Austrian German authors put forward the idea of Central Europe as a larger German-led entity in an attempt to counter the relative decline in the standing of this dominant, if waning, national group within their own empire. Masaryk defined Central Europe as a German plot to tighten domination over the smaller nations of Austria-Hungary and painted this as a threat to the strategic interests of the Entente countries, whose support for an independent Czech nation-state he was trying to gain.

They theorized Central Europe from their distinctive positions as German members of parliament, insecure Austrian Germans, or disgruntled leaders of small nations, attempting to further their distinctive interests. All these concepts had a definite purpose – changing realities on the ground and furthering the interests that a given author was following. In this sense, concepts defining the notion of Central Europe were exercises in geopolitics, envisaging future changes in international structure. As has been observed several times in this book, the notion was ascribed with certain characteristics, with the actual territory in question usually serving as a dependent variable.

The same processes were at work in following periods of the conceptualization of Central Europe, pinpointing the shifting identity and interests of authors as the main drivers of visibly erratic changes in definitions of the notion. Yet what remained constant was that all proposals for a Central European regional identity were in all instances effectively proposals for a change in the geopolitical situation in the region. During World War II the proposal had been to replace nation-states with a regional federation; in the late 1950s it was to institute a neutral buffer between the East and the West; in the 1980s it was an intellectual project of othering from the dullness and restraint of the Soviet bloc.

The theorization of Central Europe does not comprise a series of isolated pieces of writing: it was the process of a definitive discourse of *Self* (in Germany and Austria-Hungary) or *Other* (in Britain and United States). Definitive discourse was the workshop in which the essential features of Central Europe were hammered out over time. The discourse in Germany was the most instructive in this regard, perhaps because it was also the most robust. The interplay between individual propositions gradually helped to construct a dominant definition of the notion. The definition of Central Europe forged through this process was based on geographical determinism, organic growth state theory, belief in historical mission and superiority of the German nation, the vision of a future world organized into larger territorial units, the narrative of Germany as the land of the middle, and economic considerations. The development of the discourse also showed that the dominant definition of Central Europe had shifted over time, as some lines of argument gained more influence in the discourse than others. The entry of a multitude of economists into the discourse in the early 1900s and their intrinsic lead in the public promotion of the regional construct fostered the economic line of Central Europe theories, the dominant discourse until the outbreak of World War I. The pendulum only shifted back to its pan-German dimensions as the war started with an inevitable nationalistic surge.

Observations of the Central Europe discourse confirmed that the relative strength of the dominant definition depends on how closely it coincides with

the interests of participants in the discourse.[2] This process accounts for the sudden surge in popularity of the notion of Central Europe as well as a decisive swing back to a pan-German line early in the course of the war. The dominant definition shifted to an understanding of Central Europe as a customs and military union of Germany and Austria-Hungary, underpinned by strong pan-German nationalistic rhetoric and often accompanied by an ambition to project its influence further to the south-east. This portrayal of Central Europe, especially the somewhat hybridized version advanced by Friedrich Naumann, was adopted into discourses in Austria-Hungary, Britain and United States.

Again, similar processes can be identified in more recent periods. Evolving definitive discourses, shifting dominant definitions as construction of *Self* or *Other*, were traced and their relative influence assessed. Two periods stood out as end-points of the scale to measure the impact of the concepts. First, the Cold War period, when discourse over Central Europe could be measured at no more than a couple of entries per decade. In this period, concepts put forward fell completely flat as they were not aligned with the interests of any relevant actor. Second, the 1990s integration period, when Central Europe surged to the top of its historical popularity and seemed to be in line with the interests of everyone but a crumbling Russia.

Finally, one outstanding question remains: Did the definitive discourse of Central Europe as *Self* or *Other* exercise an influence over the behaviour of political actors, thereby indirectly impacting upon international structure?

Interestingly, the most likely suspect, a largely pragmatic German government, displayed a significant degree of isolation from the definition of Central Europe that dominated the press. In fact, the government itself thus participated in the definitive discourse of the notion, even if it remained on its fringes. It is interesting to observe that as a consequence, the influence of the foremost proponents of Central Europe on the government's interpretation of the notion or policy-making was only very limited.

On the other hand, the Austro-Hungarian government showed both extremes in its reaction to the dominant definition of Central Europe – first a heavy censorship was imposed on the merest public mention of the notion under Stürgkh and Tisza; then, after Clam-Martinic had packed his cabinet with pan-German advocates of the notion, the government effected a swift volte-face and worked rapidly towards its fruition. Alas, they were quickly timed out by events.

Finally, the United States and British governments were also influenced by the dominant definition, considering Central Europe a threat to their own interests. However, their concession to the dismemberment of the

Austro-Hungarian Empire was driven by pragmatic military considerations rather than the fear of their constructed *Other*. Interestingly enough, the United States administration actually attempted to create an alternative Central Europe, the Mid-European Union, which was doomed to failure by the very processes named above. None of the leaders of its constitutive nations was actually interested in the union's success.

It appears that successive Central Europes, of whatever vintage, failed to bring about their intended changes on international structure. In all cases, there was a significant actor whose interests were opposed to what the particular concept of Central Europe represented.

However, there was at least one period in which we can plausibly argue that the concept of Central Europe might have contributed to the change in international structure – the 1990s integration period. The concept of Central Europe showed influence on policy-makers in other periods as well: a federative plan motivated exile governments to start working on its preparation, Dimitrov's announcement of a similar structure infuriated Stalin, the United States government supported the neutralization plan in early Cold War. But none of these plans was eventually brought into reality, bar the Central Europe of the 1990s.

CENTRAL EUROPE IS BACK. AGAIN!

It seems that Cohen was wrong.[3] Central Europe is still there, even now. While references to the notion declined significantly in the years following the 2004 expansion of the EU, Central Europe has recently resurfaced in the world media.

The familiar context of an economic crisis, the search for redefinition of a *status quo*, with Germany in the middle of it, all returned in 2011 – in the form of the Eurozone sovereign debt crisis. Germany took a leading role in convincing unwilling European governments to employ policies of austerity and give up another slice of their sovereignty to establish common fiscal frameworks and banking supervision.

As France elected a leftist government in early 2012, German Chancellor Angela Merkel was left alone to bat for these unpopular policies. In the absence of any other large European Union state supporting her, she found herself surrounded by a very familiar group of supporters – the fiscally disciplined governments of the small states lying to the east of Germany's borders. The reaction of political analysts to this new incarnation of Germany driving polices, and Central Europe accepting them, was almost immediate. Douglas Rediker and David Gordon wrote the following:

In many ways, 'new Europe' harks back to the old 'Old Europe.' The newfound centrality of Central Europe is a return to the Concert of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with the continent's geographic core setting the tone for the periphery. It bears reminding that the last European transnational currency to collapse was the Austro-Hungarian crown after World War I, which eventually set in motion the geopolitical dynamics that led to the euro. Stresses on the eurozone could reorient Europe back toward Mitteleuropa, leaving the Visegrád countries as the crisis's surprising winners.[4]

Others were quick to follow. The BBC's Andrew Little described Central Europe as a new driver of European integration centred on Germany,[5] and similar references started to appear in media and political commentaries across the board.

However, 2015 brought a serious challenge to this emerging integrationist concept of Central Europe in the form of the largest wave of refugees to Europe since World War II. Germany's Merkel sent out a welcoming message to those fleeing conflict in the Middle East and clashed head on with the Visegrád countries. First, Hungary closed its southern borders and built a fence of barbed wire. Slovakia flatly rejected taking in refugees, blocking the consensual decision-making of the bloc and raising a court challenge to quotas passed without its approval. The four countries, including Poland and the Czech Republic, started to hold special meetings to coordinate their positions. The situation started to look a lot more like a return to the Middle Tier than *Mitteleuropa*.

Soon enough, political mood among the populations in the region has shifted, too. Populism, nationalism and Euroscepticism became increasingly associated with Hungary and Poland, and by extension with the region. External observers noted slipping democratic standards and increasing distancing in core values between these countries and their Western European peers. In late 2017, Jacques Rupnik noted that 'Central Europe travelled from (economic) neo-liberalism to (political) illiberalism'.[6]

As political ground shifts, academic debate on Central Europe has also picked up again. Central Europe is now said to be politically in the West and culturally in the East – the exact opposite of its 1980s identity.[7]

While spatialized identities cannot take hold unless key stakeholders are on board, the rise in theorizing of Central Europe suggests that structural changes in European politics are brewing. Are we ready for what could be the defining political shift of our generation?

8   Postscript: Beyond Central Europe

Central Europe is not the only spatialized identity conceived with a geopolitical agenda in mind.

For example, separatists in eastern Ukraine in summer 2014 coined the notion of Novorossia. The separatists revived the notion in the middle of the war in the Donbass, as purportedly a region that was dominated by a Russian ethnic population whilst forcibly a part of an alien state of Ukraine. They called for littoral regions of the country to join their separatist cause and form a confederation allied with Russia under a new name. Supporting the separatists, President Vladimir Putin started using the term Novorossia in his speeches and, with the Kremlin's sponsorship, political institutions of the new confederation were created in May 2014. However, just like the 1918 Mid-European Union, Novorossia was also stillborn. The envisaged rebellion of the southern regions of Ukraine did not materialize. The population, as well as local business and political elites, remained loyal to Kiev. Eventually, Putin dropped the use of the notion, and the very initiators of the confederation proclaimed the project dead in January 2015.[1]

Later on in the same year, a new nationalist establishment in Poland revived the notion of Intermarium, a federation between the Baltic and the Black Sea led by Warsaw. Alienated from Berlin and feeling threatened by Brussels, the Warsaw government has sought to increase its weight in the European context and become a regional power in the space between Germany and Russia. Upheaval in Ukraine and the lingering crisis of the EU – which has started to question its own future after Britain's decision to leave the bloc in 2016 – facilitated high interest in rethinking the regional context. Soon enough journalists and academics caught on, putting forward their thoughts on Intermarium. However, as with other regional identities, Intermarium appears unlikely to materialize unless its intended participants and powers

with active policy in the region all favour it. Given Russia's interest in keeping Ukraine in its own orbit, and the lack of enthusiasm regarding Poland's leadership among its neighbours, Intermarium appears to be a paper dream, at least for now.

These two recent examples document how spatialized identities are a tool used by a variety of actors seeking to change the existing international structures and boundaries. Perhaps the study of Central Europe presented here can offer insights into these ideational constructs and the agendas behind them.

Appendix 1   'Tshirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 1 September 1914

KAISERLICH
DEUTSCHE BOTSCHAFT
IN
WIEN.

№ 285.

Wien, den 1.September 1914.

Nach vertraulichen Unterredungen, die ich mit den massge-
bendsten hiesigen Persönlichkeiten (Graf Stürgkh, Graf Tisza,
Graf Hoyos, Herrn von Körber, Fürst Montenuovo, Minister von
Hochenburger, Chefredakteur Benedict) über die polnische Fra-
ge gehabt habe, beehre ich mich über die in diesen Kreisen
herrschende Auffassung Nachstehendes zu berichten:

Zunächst darf ich hervorheben, dass Graf Stürgkh und
Fürst Montenuovo übereinstimmend erklärt haben, Seine Maje-
stät Kaiser Franz Josef habe bei Berührung der polnischen
Frage folgende zwei Punkte als massgebend aufgestellt: Zu-
nächst müsste die völlige Beendigung des Krieges abgewartet
werden, und die Neuregelung der polnischen Verhältnisse müsse
dann im engsten Einvernehmen mit dem verbündeten Deutschland
erfolgen. Eine Reibung zwischen den beiden Verbündeten müsse
unter allen Umständen vermieden werden. Graf Berchtold hat
sich - wie bereits gemeldet - jetzt auch dieser Anschauung
im allgemeinen angepasst.

Die Sorge, Galizien auch in Zukunft bei der Monarchie
zu halten, steht bei der Frage der Regelung der polnischen
Zukunft hier überall an erster Stelle.

Die allgemein vorherrschende Ansicht geht hier dahin,
dass dieses Ziel nur erreicht werden kann, wenn Galizien mit
wenigstens einem Teile Russisch-Polens vereint, der öster-
reichischen Reichshälfte in irgend einer, die völlige Autono-
mie dieses Reichsteiles sicherstellenden Form angegliedert
wird.

Im

Seiner Exzellenz
dem Reichskanzler
Herrn von Bethmann Hollweg.

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Im einzelnen wird hierzu folgendes ausgeführt:

Graf Stürgkh bemerkte, man täusche sich hier nicht über die eigentliche Gesinnung der Polen. Die Polen seien und blieben eben »Polen«. Als solche ständen sie in keinerlei innerem Verhältnisse zu Oesterreich, höchstens könne m... sagen, dass sie ein gewisses persönliches Verhältnis mit d... gegenwärtigen Träger der Habsburgischen Krone verbinde. Ei... selbständiges Polen, ob Fürstentum oder Republik, an der Grenze Galiziens würde die österreichischen Polen mit unwi... derstehlicher Gewalt an sich ziehen und keine Regierung in... Oesterreich würde stark genug sein, auch nur auf kurze Zei... dieses Ueberlaufen zu verhindern.

Auch der kerndeutsche Justizminister Herr von Hochenburger äusserte sich in gleichem Sinne. Er ist der festen Ueberzeugung, dass die Schaffung eines selbständigen Pole... notwendig den Verlust Galiziens für die Monarchie nach sic... ziehen müsse. Ihm würde als wünschenswerteste Lösung die Schaffung eines polnischen Pufferstaates, mit einer politi... und wirtschaftlich möglichst engen Anlehnung an beide Rei... Deutschland und Oesterreich-Ungarn, erscheinen. Er setzt übrigens voraus, dass, im Falle des Sieges, Deutschland ei... nen Teil der Ostseeprovinzen, wenigstens bis nach Riga, annektieren würde.

Graf Hoyos wiederholte die Euerer Exzellenz durch di... von der Oesterreichisch-Ungarischen Botschaft in Berlin übergebene Notiz bekannten Argumente für obige Auffassung... Ein selbständiges Polen würde der Spielball russischer und anderer politischer Intriganten werden. Bei einer Anglied... rung Russisch-Polens an Galizien würde diese Gefahr fortfallen, und Oesterreich-Ungarn würde gleichzeitig die Mit... tel in der Hand haben, die auf Preussisches Gebiet gerich...

polnische...

polnische Attraktion wirksam zu verhüten. Oesterreich-
Ungarn komme es an sich nicht auf Landerwerb an, und man
würde natürlich damit einverstanden sein, wenn auch Deutsch-
land zur Verbesserung seiner Grenzen die Angliederung gewis-
ser polnischer Gebietsteile für notwendig halte.

Auch Graf Tisza hat sich mir gegenüber dahin ausge-
sprochen, dass er eine andere Lösung als diejenige einer
Bildung eines Gross-Galiziens mit Teilen Russisch-Polens,
und dessen Angliederung in irgend einer autonomen Form an
Oesterreich augenblicklich nicht sehen könne.

Wenn hiernach, vorläufig wenigstens, - und wie auch
Herr von Mühlberg nach seinen Besprechungen mit dem Prinzen
Schönburg bestätigt - hier keine Gneigtheit besteht, ein
selbständiges Polen zu schaffen, sondern die Angliederung
eines Teiles Russisch-Polens an Cisleithanien in einer et-
wa dem Verhältnisse Kroatiens zu Ungarn entsprechenden
Form als wünschenswert gilt, so ist man sich andererseits
an allen Stellen klar darüber, dass die Stellung der Deut-
schen in Oesterreich dadurch keine Einbusse erleiden darf;
dass vielmehr gerade in einer Stärkung des Deutschtums
ein Gegengewicht gegen den polnischen Einfluss geschaffen
werden müsse. Man ist hier, auch an massgebenden Regie-
rungsstellen, zu der Erkenntnis gelangt, dass der Verseu-
chung des österreichischen Beamtenkörpers durch slavische
Elemente Einhalt getan werden müsse, wenn das Gefüge des
Staates und die Autorität der Regierung intakt gehalten wer-
den sollen.

Die übereinstimmende Meinung, und auch der Wunsch
national deutscher Kreise, geht dahin, diese Stärkung des
Deutschtums in Oesterreich auf dem Wege zu erzielen, dass
das neu zu schaffende Gross-Galizien aus dem eigentlichen
österreichischen

österreichischen Verwaltungsbereich und damit auch aus dem
Reichsrat ausgeschieden wird. Der Reichsrat zählt jetzt
516 Mitglieder, davon entfallen auf Galizien 106. Von den
nach Ausscheidung Galiziens verbleibenden 410 Stimmen wür-
den die Deutschen die knappe Majorität haben. Es müssten
dann noch wirksame Kautelen dafür geschaffen werden, dass
die Vorherrschaft des Deutschtums im eigentlichen Oester-
reich unter allen Umständen gesichert bleibt. Den polni-
schen Landesteilen würden ihrerseits eine weitgehende Auto
nomie mit eigenem Parlament und eigenem Ministerium zuge-
standen werden und an den gemeinsamen Angelegenheiten (Aeu
sseres, Heer und Reichsfinanzen) würde Gross-Galizien
durch eine Vertretung in der Art der bisherigen Delegation
die aber weitgehende legislatorische Befugnisse erhalten.
und gemeinsam - nicht wie bisher getrennt-tagen müssten,
teilnehmen.

Graf Stürgkh, Herr von Hochenburger, Graf Hoyos und
Herr Benedict haben sich übereinstimmend in diesem Sinne
ausgesprochen. Herr von Hochenburger und Herr Benedict als
berufene Vertreter der Interessen der Deutschen traten be-
sonders für diese Lösung ein. Die Deutschen würden, wenn
sie im Reichsrat nicht mehr der steten Gefahr der Bildung
von Koalitionsmajoritäten durch opportunistische Minister-
präsidenten ausgesetzt sein würden, wieder natmen können,
und der Zusammenhalt mit Deutschland würde gegenüber et-
waigen Sonderbestrebungen, die sich mit der Zeit in Gross-
Galizien regen könnten, an der deutschen Majorität im
Reichsrat eine feste Stütze haben. Was die Mayaren anlangt
die wie Graf Tissa hier kategorisch erklärt hat, den 1867
Ausgleich als ein noli me tangere angesehen wissen wollen,
so glaubt man hier, dass diese mehr und mehr zu der Erken
nis

nis kommen werden, dass sie nur im Anschluss an das Germa-
nentum bestehen und sich entwickeln können. Ob diese An-
nahme nicht allzu optimistisch ist, wird die Zukunft lehren.

Von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung für die Sicherung einer
dauernd führenden Stellung des Deutschtums in Oesterreich
wird die Art der Lösung der wirtschaftlichen Beziehungen
Oesterreichs zu Deutschland sein. Je enger dieser Anschluss,
umsomehr Kraft wird das Deutschtum hier gewinnen. Für die
Deutschen als hauptsächliche Träger von Industrie und Ge-
werbe würde ein Zollanschluss an Deutschland von der aller-
grössten Wichtigkeit sein. Ob sich ein solches enges wirt-
schaftliches Verhältnis Oesterreichs und Deutschland mit un-
seren Interessen verträgt, ist eine andere Frage. Dass damit
das germanische Element in der deutschen Ostmark wirksam ge-
stärkt und fest an uns gekettet werden würde, halte ich für
zweifellos. Der Gedanke einer Zollunion mit uns gewinnt hier
mehr und mehr Anhänger, wie man denn überhaupt, jetzt we-
nigstens, sich hier bewusst zu werden beginnt, dass Oester-
reich im Falle unseres Sieges noch mehr als bisher der Füh-
rung Deutschlands sich werde unterstellen müssen. Man legt
hier, besonders auch in deutschen Kreisen, hohes Gewicht
darauf, dass das neu zu schaffende Gross-Galizien sowohl
mit Oesterreich als mit Deutschland zu _einem_ wirtschaftli-
chen Gebiete vereinigt werde. Abgesehen davon, dass das pol-
nische Land dadurch an beide Kaiserreiche fesgekettet würde,
würde es sich zu einem günstigen Absatzgebiete für die In-
dustrien beider Reiche entwickeln.

von Tschirschky

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Notes

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION: THE PUZZLE OF CENTRAL EUROPE

1. Ash, T. G. (1986), 'Does Central Europe exist?', *New York Review of Books*, 9 October, available at: http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/1986/oct/09/does-central-europe-exist.
2. Ash joined the group of academics, who argued that the collapse of the Eastern bloc was not as sudden as other contemporary observers portrayed. In fact, it was long in the making. Valerie Bunce offered an elaborate explanation of the evolving social, political and economic environment within the Soviet bloc following the death of Joseph V. Stalin. Gradually, the myth of the superiority of the socialist system was fading away with declining economic efficiency, to the point that it was obviously challenging regime legitimacy. The delegitimization of regimes by the mid-1980s was pervasive, and attentive observers noted that the social contract negotiated in the de-Stalinization period – where the population consented to low-level dictatorship in exchange for economic security, low inflation and minimalist work norms – was not only outmoded but on the verge of collapse. See Bunce, V. (1999), *Subversive Institutions: The Design and the Destruction of Socialism and the State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: p. 38.
3. Hodges, D. C. (1981), *The Bureaucratization of Socialism*, University of Massachusetts Press, p. 114; Blatt, J. (1997), 'The international dimension of democratization in Czechoslovakia and Hungary', in Pridham, G. (ed.) (1997), *Building Democracy: The International Dimensions of Democratization in Eastern Europe*, London: Leicester University Press, p. 81; Whitehead, L. (2001), *The International Dimensions of Democratization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 357.
4. Kundera, M. (1984), 'The tragedy of Central Europe', *New York Review of Books*, 26 April, pp. 33–8, p. 35.
5. Ash, 'Does Central Europe exist?'
6. Havel, V. (1985), The Anatomy of a Reticence: Eastern European Dissidents and the Peace Movement in the West, Stockholm: Charta 77 Foundation.
7. Konrád, G. (1984b), *Antipolitics: An Essay*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & Jovanovich.
8. Indeed, there also existed other ideas of what Central Europe meant. One of them was the Great Hungary vision of the Patriotic Popular Front presented in the mid-1980s. For more details, see Scott, J. W. (2006), *EU Enlargement, Region Building and Shifting*

Borders of Inclusion and Exclusion, Aldershot: Ashgate. The discourse shaping the meaning of Central Europe was a complex mixture of streams and ideas competing with each other for the attention of their target audiences and the relevant international actors.

9. Whitehead, *International Dimensions*, pp. 366−7.

10. Kuus, M. (2007b), *Geopolitics Reframed: Security and Identity in Europe's Eastern Enlargement*, Basinstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 17.

11. Ash, T. G. (1999), *History of the Present: Essays, Sketches, and Dispatches from Europe in the 1990s*, London: Allen Lane, p. 384.

12. Ash, 'Does Central Europe exist?'.

13. Kuus, *Geopolitics Reframed*, p. 16.

14. Evans, R. J. (2006), *Austria, Hungary, and the Habsburgs: Essays on Central Europe, c.1683–1867*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 236.

15. Partsch, J. (1903), *Central Europe*, London: Heinemann, pp. 2−3.

16. Ibid., p. 141.

17. Ibid., p. 142.

18. Ibid., p. 159.

19. Mackinder, H. J. (1919), *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, London: Constable.

20. Mackinder, H. J. (1904), 'The geographical pivot of history', *Geographical Journal*, 1904, vol. 23, pp. 421−37.

21. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals*.

22. Mahan, A. T. (1890), *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660 – 1783*, Boston: Little, Brown & Co.

23. Jones, M., Jones, R. and Woods, M. (2004), *An Introduction to Political Geography: Space, Place and Politics*, London: Routledge, p. 5.

24. Ratzel, F. (1897), *Politische Geographie*, Munich: R. Oldenbourg Verlag, pp. 1−2.

25. '... der Staat der Menschen [ist] eine Form der Verbreitung des Lebens an der Erdoberfläche ... der ... trägt alle Merkmale eines beweglichen Körpers ...', Ratzel, *Politische Geographie*, p. 3.

26. 'Der Staat muss vom Boden leben' – The state has to live from the soil. Ratzel, *Politische Geographie*, p. 4.

27. 'Es gibt Algen und Schwämme, die als organisierte Wesen ebenso hoch stehen wie der Staat der Menschen.' – There exist algae and sponges, which as organized existence stand as high as the state of the men. Ratzel, *Politische Geographie*, p. 9.

28. 'Das Volk wächst, indem es seine Zahl vermehrt, das Land, indem es seinen Boden vergrössert, und da das wachsende Volk für seine Zunahme neuen Boden nötig hat, so wächst das Volk über das Land hin.' – The nation grows by increasing its numbers, the land grows by extending its territory, and as the growing people needs new territory for its surplus, it takes over the land. Ratzel, F. (1898), *Deutschland: Einführung in die Heimatkunde*, Leipzig: Fr. Wilh. Grunow, p. 115.

29. Compare Ratzel, *Deutschland* (1898) with the later edition: Ratzel, F. (1907), *Deutschland: Einfuehrung in the Heimatkunde*, Berlin: Verlag von Walter de Gruyter.

30. Buttmann, G. (1977), *Friedrich Ratzel: Leben und Werk eines deutschen Geographen*, Stuttgart: Wissenschaftliche Verlagsgesellschaft, p. 126.

31. E.g. Naumann, F. (1916), *Central Europe*, London: P. S. King & Son.

32. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals*.

33. Rorty, R. (1999), *Philosophy and Social Hope*, London: Penguin, p. xxvi.

34. Ash, *History*, p. 384.

35. Kuus, *Geopolitics Reframed*; Kuus, M. (2007), 'Ubiquitous identities and elusive subjects: Puzzles from Central Europe', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 90−101; Kuus, M. (2004), 'Europe's eastern expansion and the reinscription of otherness in East Central Europe', *Progress in Human Geography*, vol. 28, no. 4; etc.

36. Bernazzoli, R. (2010), '"The End of Autocracy": Analysing representations of the Austro-Hungarian dissolution as the foundation of US hegemonic discourse', *Geopolitics*, vol. 15, no. 4, pp. 643−66.

37. Veit Bachmann and James Sidaway presented a critical enquiry into the geopolitics of the European Union as a global power, Mindaugas Jurkynas examined shared identity of the Baltic states, and Michelle Pace focused on the Mediterranean. See Bachmann, V. and Sidaway, J. D. (2009), '"Zivilmacht Europa": A critical geopolitics of the European Union as a global power', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 94−109; Jurkynas, M. (2007), *How Deep is Your Love? The Baltic Brotherhood Re-examined*, Vilnius: Institute of International Relations and Political Science; and Pace, M. (2007), *The Politics of Regional Identity: Meddling with the Mediterranean*, London: Taylor & Francis. Yet more works have been published on the topic of the self-images of states that define them 'in relations to equivalence and antagonism to other actors in world affairs' (Atkinson, D., Jackson, P., Sibley, D. and N. Washbourne (eds) (2005), *Cultural Geography: A Critical Dictionary of Key Concepts*, I.B.Tauris, p. 68). The contributors to this debate include David Atkinson, David Newman, David Campbell and Matthew Sparke, and their works focus on questions of the construction of dominant interpretations of the notion of given nations, their underlying historical myths, and institutionalization through state bureaucracy. See Sparke, M. (2003), *Hyphen Nation-States*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; Atkinson, D. (2000), 'Geopolitical imaginations in modern Italy', in Dodds, K. and Atkinson, D. (eds) (2000), *Geopolitical Traditions: A Century of Geopolitical Thought*, London: Routledge, pp. 93−117; Newman, D. (2000), 'Citizenship, identity and location: The changing discourse of Israeli geopolitics', in Dodds, K. and Atkinson, D. (eds), *Geopolitical Traditions*, pp. 302−31; Campbell, D. (1992), *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

38. Kuus, M. (2010), 'Critical geopolitics', in Denemark, R. (2010), *Companion to Human Geography*, Blackwell, vol. II, pp. 683−701; Toal, G. and Agnew, J. (1998), 'Geopolitics and discourse: Practical geopolitical reasoning in American foreign policy', in Toal, G., Dalby, S. and P. Routledge (1998), *The Geopolitics Reader*, London & New York: Routledge, pp. 78−91; Dalby, S. (1998), 'Rereading Robert Kaplan's "Coming Anarchy"', in Toal, G., Dalby, S. and P. Routledge (1998), *The Geopolitics Reader*, pp. 197−203.

39. Kuus, 'Critical geopolitics', p. 689.

40. Mackinder, 'Geographical Pivot'.

CHAPTER 2 − GERMANY: MITTELEUROPA − REALM OF THE GERMAN NATION

1. Brechtefeld, J. (1996), *Mitteleuropa and Germany Politics: 1848 to the Present*, New York: St Martin's Press, p. 12.

2. Friedrich List (1789−1846), German economist, politician and journalist.

3. Karl Ludwig von Bruck (1798–1860), Austrian politician (though born in Elberfeld, Germany), member of the Frankfurt Parliament in 1848–9 and later Minister of Commerce and Finance.

4. Felix Prinz zu Schwarzenberg (1800–52), Austrian diplomat and statesman, Minister-President of the Austrian Empire in 1848–52.

5. Müller, A. (2001), *Zwischen Annäherung und Abgrenzung: Österreich-Ungarn und die Diskussion um Mitteleuropa im Ersten Weltkrieg*, Vienna: Tectum Verlag, p. 14.

6. Bascom, B. H. (1994), *Bismarck und Mitteleuropa*, London: Associated University Presses; Mommsen, W. (1995), 'Die Mitteleuropaidee und die Mitteleuropaplanungen im Deutschen Reich vor und während des Ersten Weltkrieges', in Plaschka, R. (1995), *Mitteleuropa-Konzeptionen in der Ersten Hälfte der 20 Jahrhunderts*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

7. Molinari, G. (1879), 'Union douanière l'Europe Centrale', *Journal des Economistes*, vol. 5, February 1879, pp. 309–18.

8. For example, Gaertner, A. (1911), *Der Kampf um den Zollverein zwischen Österreich und Preussen von 1849 bis 1853*, Strasbourg: Herbersche Buchhandlung, pp. 11–12.

9. This narrative can be traced back to interwar period German analysts (e.g. Heller, E. (1933), *Fürst Felix zu Schwarzenberg: Mitteleuropas Vorkämpfer*, Vienna: Militärwissenschaftl. Verlag), but has been repeated in subsequent periods in publications of widely varied authors and organizations, and can often be found in contemporary publications, too (Cook, C. and Stevenson, J. (2005), *The Routledge Companion to European History since 1763*, London: Routledge, p. 349).

10. Geiss, I. (1997), *The Question of German Unification, 1806–1996*, London: Routledge, p. 16.

11. Arndt, E. M. (1813), 'Was ist des Deutschen Vaterland', available at: http://gutenberg. spiegel.de/buch/2227/8.

12. Friedrich Seidel estimated that there had been more than 1,800 customs barriers in existence within the German-speaking areas of the Holy Roman Empire in 1800, almost 70 of them within Prussia alone. See Seidel, F. (1971) *Das Armutsproblem im deutschen Vormärz bei Friedrich List*, Köln: Forschungsinstitut für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte an der Univ. zu Köln.

13. Much earlier, in 1819, the Grand Duchy of Baden put forward a proposal for the creation of a customs union organized through the confederation. However, it failed to secure support of the Frankfurt-based Federal Assembly.

14. Delanty, G. (1995), *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, p. 103. Perhaps the 1916 book by Heinrich Theodor List, *Deutschland und Mittel-Europa: Grundzüge und Lehren unserer Politik seit der Errichtung des Deutschen Reiches*, is responsible for this confusion.

15. List, F. (1844), *Das Nationale System der Politischen Ökonomie*, Stuttgart: Gotta'scher Verlag, p. 558.

16. 'Würde dagegen Deutschland mit den dazu gehörigen Seegestaden, mit Holland, Belgien und der Schweiz sich als kräftige kommerzielle und politische Einheit konstituieren . . . so könnte Deutschland dem europäischen Continent den Frieden für lange Zeit verbürgen und zugleich den Mittelpunkt einer dauernden Continentalallianz bilden.' List, *Nationale System*, p. 559.

17. List, *Nationale System*, p. 573.

18. List, F. and Häuser, L. (eds) (1850), *Gesammelte Schriften*, Stuttgart and Tübingen: J. G. Cottascher Verlag, vol. V, p. 547.

19. List and Häuser, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. III, pp. 474–80.

20. List and Häuser, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. III, pp. 267–96.

21. 'Frankfurter Nationalversammlung', 18 May 1848–31 May 1849.

22. Katzenstein, P. (1976), *Disjointed Partners: Austria and Germany since 1815*, London, Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press.

23. Krejčí, O. (2005), *Geopolitics of the Central European Region: The View from Prague and Bratislava*, Bratislava: Slovak Academy of Sciences; Stirk, P. (ed.) (1994), *Mitteleuropa: History and Prospects*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, p. 7; Brechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 16; Henderson, W. O. (1939), *The Zollverein*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 202.

24. Charmatz, R. (1916), *Minister Freiherr von Bruck*, Leipzig: Verlag von S. Hirtzel.

25. Bruck published four memoranda contemplating reorganization of economic life in the region: Bruck, K. L. (1849a), 'Vorschläge zur Anbahnung der Oesterrechisch-Deutschen Zoll- und Handelseinigung', *Wiener Zeitung*, 26 October, no. 255, pp. 1–2; Bruck, K. L. (1849b), 'Wien', *Wiener Zeitung – Abend-Beilage*, 9 November, no. 268, pp. 1–2; Bruck, K. L. (1849c), 'Denkschrift des keiserlich österreichischen Handelsministers über die Anbahnung der österreichisch-deutschen Zoll und Handelseinigung', 30 December, reproduced in Charmatz, R., *Minister Freiherr von Bruck*, pp. 163–77; and Bruck, K. L. (1850), 'Denkschrift des kaiserlichen österreichischen Handelsministers über die Zollverfassung und Handelspolitik der zollvereinten Staaten von Oesterreich und Deutschland', 30 May, reproduced in Charmatz, R., *Minister Freiherr von Bruck*, pp. 177–204. One additional concept is included in Bruck's political testament written in 1859, shortly before his death: Bruck, K. L. (1860), *Die Aufgaben Oesterreichs*, Leipzig: Verlag von Otto Wigand.

26. Bruck used the expression 'Zollvereinigung von Oesterreich und Deutschland'.

27. Bruck, 'Vorschläge'.

28. 'Durch das handelspolitische Zusammenfassen Mittel-Europa's wird Oesterreich vermöge seinen zentralen Lage zum Westen und Osten, zum Süden und Norden und der freien Entwickelung seiner Natur- und Geisteskräfte ....' – Through the trade-political unification of Central Europe will Austria capitalize on its central position to the west and the east, to the south and the north, and free development of its natural and spiritual forces. Bruck, 'Vorschläge', p. 1.

29. Meyer, H. C. (1955), *Mitteleuropa in German Thought and Action, 1815–1945*, The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, pp. 16–17.

30. For example, Brechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 18.

31. Bruck used the expression 'Oesterreichisch-Deutsche Zoll- und Handelseinigung'. Bruck, 'Vorschläge', p. 1.

32. The separate identities are apparent, for example, in this sentence: 'Deutschland und Oesterreich werden unermesslich wachsen auf Wohlfahrt und Kraft.' – Germany and Austria will grow immeasurably to welfare and power. Bruck, 'Vorschläge', p. 2.

33. This separation is obvious, for example, in this sentence: 'Die Tarifreform wird hier mit eben so viel Umsicht und Energie, als mit grossartiger Auffassung der Lage und Bedürfnisse der Oesterreichischen und Deutschen Völker betrieben.' – The tariff reform will be conducted here with as much care and energy, as with a greater view of the situation and needs of the Austrian and German peoples. Bruck, 'Vorschläge', p. 1.

34. Bruck, 'Wien', p. 2.

35. Bruck, 'Denkschrift über die Anbahnung', pp. 164, 166.

36. Bruck, 'Denkschrift über die Zollverfassung', pp. 188, 204.

37. 'Österreich bildet in Mitteleuropa die grosse Wasserscheide zwischen der atlantischen und der pontisch-mittelländischen Abdachung und deren beiderseitigen Flusssystemen ...' – Austria builds in Central Europe the great watershed between the Atlantic and

Pontic-Mediterranean slopes and their respective river systems. Bruck, *Aufgaben*, pp. 263–4.

38. Bruck, *Aufgaben*, p. 250.
39. Stirk, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 7.
40. This was mostly a result of Austria's own reluctance to accept the proposals put forward and a disregard for the assembly itself (e.g. the execution of the assembly member Robert Blum, despite the granted immunity). The last nail in the coffin of *grossdeutsch* plans was Schwarzenberg's speech at the All-Austrian Assembly at Kremsier on 27 November, in which he declared his determination to build a truly unified Habsburg monarchy. This act convinced many members of the Frankfurt Assembly that Austria had no intentions of conceding to a larger union with the German states.
41. Wigard, F. (1848–50), 'Stenographischer Bericht uber die Verhandlungen der deutschen constituirenden Nationalversammlung zu Frankfurt am Main, Frankfurt: Johann David Sauerländer', pp. 2,894–6.
42. Fröbel, J. (1848), *Wien, Deutschland und Europa*, Vienna: Druck und Verlag for Joseph Keck und Sohn.
43. Perraudin, M. and Zimmerer, J. (2011), *German Colonialism and National Identity*, Oxford: Routledge, p. 14; Konstantinović, Z. (1999), 'Variationen der Mitteleuropaidee 1848 und danach', in Timmermann, H. (1999), *1848 Revolution in Europa*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, p. 367; Hayes, B. B. (1994), *Bismarck and Mitteleuropa*, Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, p. 35.
44. Wigard, 'Stenographischer Bericht'.
45. The Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 transformed a unitary Habsburg Empire into a dual monarchy by re-establishing Hungarian sovereignty. The two parts of the country had two separate parliaments and prime ministers, and were unified in the person of the monarch. They also had three common ministries – foreign affairs, defence and finance.
46. For example, Brechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*; or Meyer, *Mitteleuropa.*
47. For example, Eugen Stamm's edited collection of Frantz's essays entitled *Das Grössere Deutschland*. See Frantz, C. and Stamm, E. (eds) (1935), *Das Grössere Deutschland*, Breslau: Wilh. Gottl. Korn Verlag, and also Stamm, E. (1907), *Konstantin Frantz: Schriften und Leben*, Heidelberg: C. Winter.
48. Srbik, H. (1933), *Deutsche Einheit*, Munich: Bruckmann.
49. Meyer, *Mitteleuropa*, pp. 26–7.
50. Frantz, C. (1844), *Über die Freiheit*, Berlin: Ferdinand Schneider.
51. Frantz, C. (1848a), *Die Hypothekenbanken*, Darmstadt. Essay, no publisher identified.
52. Frantz, C. (1848b), *Polen, Preußen und Deutschland: Zur Reorganisation Europas*, Halberstadt: Verlag von Robert Frantz.
53. Frantz, C. (1851), *Von der deutschen Föderation*, Berlin: Ferdinand Schneide; Frantz, C. (1858a), 'Der deutsche Dualismus und Pangermanismus', *Berliner Revue*, vol. 14, pp. 321–6; Frantz, C. (1858b), 'Preußen und das europäische Gleichgewicht', *Berliner Revue*, vol. 14, pp. 365–71; Frantz, C. (1861), *Drei und Dreißig Sätze vom Deutschen Bund*, Berlin: Ferdinand Schneider; Frantz, C. (1865), *Die Wiederherstellung Deutschlands*, Berlin: Ferdinand Schneider.
54. Meyer, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 27.
55. 'Sicherung der deutschen Westgrenze ist der vornehmste Zweck des deutschen Bundes.' – Securing the German western border is the chief purpose of the German Confederation. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*, p. 43.
56. '[. . .] der deutsche Bund und die deutsche Nation zwei sehr verschiedene Dinge sind. . . . Der deutsche Bund ist nicht aus der deutschen Nation entsprungen, sondern

von den europäischen Mächten gemacht worden, man kann sagen, in Paris . . .' – The German Confederation and the German nation are two very different things. The German Confederation did not spring from the the German nation, but it was made by the European powers – one could say – in Paris. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*', p. 9.

57. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*', pp. 22, 126.

58. 'Foederalismus ist eben so positive als aktiv, und synthetisch im hochsten Grade'. – Federalism is as positive as it is active, and synthetic to the highest degree. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*', p. 126.

59. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*', p. 28.

60. 'Dazu liegen grade diese Staaten in der Linie, von welcher die Gefahr kommt, und helfen gerade diejenige Seite Deutschlands decken, wo wir selbst am schwächsten sind. Gleich passend und wichtig ist es für den deutschen Bund sich mit diesen Staaten zu vereinigen, als es umgekehrt für diese Staaten selbst passend und wichtig ist, sich mit dem deutschen Bunde zu vereinigen.' – These are precisely the states in line, from which comes the danger, and they would help to shelter that side of Germany, where we are the weakest. It is equally appropriate and important for the German Confederation to unite with these states, as it is, conversely, appropriate and important for these states to unite with the German Confederation. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*, p. 128.

61. Frantz, C. (1871), *Das neue Deutschland, beleuchtet in Briefen an einen preußischen Staatsmann*, Leipzig: Rossberg; Frantz, C. (1873), *Bismarckianismus und Friedericianismus*, Munich: M. Huttler; Frantz, C. (1874a), *Der Bankrott der herrschenden Staatsweisheit*, Munich: M. Huttler; Frantz, C. (1874b), *Die Genesis der Bismarckschen Ära und ihr Ziel*, Munich: M. Huttler; Frantz, C. (1875), *Der Niedergang der Bismarckischen Ära*, Munich: M. Huttler.

62. Federalism as a guiding principle of social, governmental and international organization, with particular reference to Germany; critically examined and constructively demonstrated.

63. Frantz, C. (1879), *Der Föderalismus als das leitende Prinzip für die soziale, staatliche und internationale Organisation, unter besonderer Bezugnahme auf Deutschland, kritisch nachgewiesen und konstruktiv dargestellt*, Meinz: Franz Kirchheim, p. 133.

64. Chapter entitled 'Erweiterung des deutschen Bundes zum Mitteleuropäischen Bund' – Broadening of the German Union into a Central European Union. Frantz, *Föderalismus*', pp. 130–53.

65. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*.

66. Frantz, *Föderalismus*, p. 140.

67. 'Eine lebenskräftige Föderation . . . würde erst die wahre Wiedergeburt des ehemaligen Reiches sein.' – A vigorous federation would be the true reincarnation of the former Empire. Frantz, *Föderalismus*', p. 129.

68. Frantz, C. (1882), *Die Weltpolitik: Unter besondere Bezugnahme auf Deutschland*, Chemnitz: Verlag von Ernst Schmeitzner', p. 37.

69. Frantz, *Weltpolitik*, p. 142.

70. Frantz, *Weltpolitik*, pp. 134–6.

71. See Frantz, *Föderalismus*.

72. 'Ist Deutschland in Europa das Land der Mitte, so ist es auch wie dazu prädestinirt, andere Nationen zu einer Vereinigung heranzuziehen.'- If Germany is the land of the middle in Europe, it is also predestined to bring other nations to unification. Frantz, *Weltpolitik*, p. 161.

73. Frantz, *Weltpolitik*, pp. 161–2.

74. Frantz, *Weltpolitik*, p. 163.

75. Brechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*, pp. 28–9.

76. Lagarde, P. (1878), *Deutsche Schriften*, Goettingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung; Lagarde, P. (1881), *Deutsche Schriften – Zweiter Band*, Goettingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

77. Lagarde, P. (1892), *Deutsche Schriften – Gesammtausgabe*, Goettingen: Dieterichsche Verlagsbuchhandlung.

78. 'Oesterreich hat längst kein existenzprincip mehr: man weiss nicht, warum es da ist. Es gibt keine andere aufgabe für Oesterreich als die, der coloniestaat Deutschlands zu werden. Die völker in dem weiten Reiche sind mit ausnahme der Deutschen und der südSlaven alle miteinander politisch wertlos: sind nur material für germanische neubildungen.' – Austria does not have a reason for existence anymore: one does not know why it is there. There is no other purpose for Austria besides being a colony for Germany. Peoples in the wider Empire are with the exception of Germans and South-Slavs altogether politically worthless; they are only a material for Germanic renewal. Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften*, p. 84.

79. '[...] den Frieden in Europa ohne dauernde belästigung seiner angehörigen zu erzwingen, ist nur ein Deutschland im stande, das von der Ems- zur Donaumündung, von Memel bis Triest, von Metz bis etwa zum Bug erreicht, weil nur ein solches Deutschland sich ernähren, nur ein solches mit seiner stehenden Heere sowohl Frankreich als Russland . . . niederschlagen kann. Weil nun alle Welt Frieden will, darum muss alle Welt dieses Deutschland wollen, und das jetzige deutsche Reich als das ansehen, was es ist, als eine étappe auf dem Wege zu Vollkommenerem, eine étappe, welche zu dem endgültigen mitteleuropäischen Staate sich so verhalt, wie sich der einst bestandene norddeutsche Bund zum jetzigen deutschen Reiche verhalten hat.' Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften*, p. 87.

80. Lagarde, *Zweiter Band*, p. 91.

81. '[Es] ... ist auf jeden Fall möglich, zu begreifen, dass ein MittelEuropa geschaffen werden muss, welches von dem Augenblicke an die Gewähr des Friedens für den ganzen Erdteil bietet, in welchem ist Russland vom schwarzen Meer und damit von dem Südslaven abgedrängt, und deutscher Colonisation – denn wir sind ein Bauernvolk – im eignen Osten einen breiten Raum gewonnen haben wird. Nur durch eine wenigstens nach Süden hin vollständige Internierung Russlands kann uns überdies unser geborener Bundesgenosse, Oesterreich, in leistungsfähigem Zustande erhalten werden.' Lagarde, *Zweiter Band*, p. 6.

82. Meyer, *Mitteleuropa*.

83. Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften*.

84. Discourse on the political unit in the area was also conducted outside the notion, using descriptions such as 'europaeischgermanisches Gebiet'.

85. Le Temps (1890) information on German pamphlet published in Germany under the title *The Future of Peoples of Central Europe*, 4 December, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, A11628.

86. Brechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*, pp. 29, 32.

87. Wagner, H. (1883), *Lehrbuch der Geographie*, Hanover and Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung; and Penck, A. (1887), *Das Deutsche Reich*, Prague: F. Tempsky.

88. Brentano, L. (1885), 'Über eine zukünftige Handelspolitik des Deutschen Reiches', *Schmollers Jahrbuch*, vol. 9, pp. 1–29.

89. Volz, B. (1895), *Allgemeine Geographie*, Leipzig: Reisland.

90. Ratzel, F. (1898b), 'Politisch-geographische Rückblicke, I. Algemeines. Mitteleuropa mit Frankreich', *Geographisches Zeitschrift*, vol. 4, pp. 143–60, p. 220.

91. These modifications do not necessarily develop in a linear manner towards the World War I association of Central Europe with the political unit consisting of Germany and Austria Hungary.

92. Wagner, H. (1900) *Lehrbuch der Geographie*, Hanover und Leipzig: Hahnsche Buchhandlung, 2nd edition, p. 763.

93. *Geographical Journal* (1895–today) was established and edited by Alfred Hettner, a professor at the University of Tübingens. The journal was printed by the publishing house of Teubner in Leipzig. Today the journal is still in print, published by Frantz Steiner Verlag.

94. Ratzel, F. (1895), 'Studien über politische Räume', *Geographische Zeitschrift*, vol. 1, pp. 186–202.

95. For example, Hözel, E. (1896), 'Das geographische Individuum bei Karl Ritter und seine Bedeutung für den Begriff des Naturgebietes und der Naturgrenze', *Geographische Zeitschrift*, vol. 2, pp. 112–131.

96. Ratzel, 'Mitteleuropa mit Frankreich'.

97. Ratzel (1907), *Deutschland: Einfuehrung in die Heimatkunde*, Berlin: W. de Gruyter.

98. Ratzel, 'Mitteleuropa mit Frankreich', p. 147.

99. Ibid., p. 144.

100. Precise work of Albert von Schäffle not identified.

101. Presumably, Peez, A. (1895), *Zur neuesten Handelspolitik*, Vienna: Verlag von G. Szelinski.

102. Ratzel, F. (1907), *Deutschland*.

103. Ratzel presented two conceptualizations of German-dominated *Mitteleuropa* (in the 1898 and 1907 editions of *Deutschland*). He was one of the leaders of *Alldeutscher Verband* (Pan-German League), succeeded by Partsch after his death (in 1904) and a vigorous advocate of German expansion into Africa.

104. Partsch, F. (1903), *Central Europe*, London: Heinemann.

105. Ibid., p. 141.

106. Ibid., p. 142.

107. Ibid., p. 159.

108. *Journal for Social Science*, published 1898–1921 by Julius Wolf, later founder of *Der Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein* (Central European Economic Association, 1904).

109. Sartorius, A. (1902), 'Beiträge zur Beurteilung einer wirtschaftlichen Foederation von Mitteleuropa', *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft*, vol. 5, pp. 557–70, 674–704, 765–86 and 860–94.

110. 'Der Verkehr ist also eine Bethätigung der Volkswirtschaft wie die Blutzirkulation eine Funktion des lebenden menchlichen Körper ist.' – Transport is thus an exertion of the economy such as blood circulation is a function of the living human body. Sartorius, 'Beiträge', p. 558.

111. Ibid., p. 675.

112. Ibid., p. 676.

113. Ibid., p. 564.

114. Ibid., p. 772.

115. Ibid., p. 881.

116. Ibid., p. 880.

117. Ibid., p. 677.

118. Grunzel, J. (1901), 'Die handelspolitische Beziehungen Deutschlands und Oesterreich-Ungarns', in *Beiträge zur neusten Handelspolitik Österreichs, Schriften des Vereins für Socialpolitik*, no. 93, Leipzig.

119. Wolf, J. (1901), *Das Deutsche Reich und der Weltmarkt*, Jena: G. Fischer; and Wolf, J. (1902), 'Zollvereinigungen oder wirtschaftliche Allianzen?', *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft*, vol. 5, pp. 895–907.

120. Wolf, J. (1903), 'Ein Mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftsverein', *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft*, vol. 6, pp. 232−7.

121. Ibid., p. 232.

122. 'An der Spitze dieses Artikels steht das Wort 'Ein mitteleuropäischer Wirtschaftsverein'. Es bezeichnet einen Plan der, seit einigen Jahren erwogen, Männer der einzelnen hier in Betracht kommenden Staatsgebiete auf sich vereinigt. Der mitteleuropäischer Wirtschaftsverein will, was hier als erforderlich bezeichnet wurde: was gesund und wertvoll an dem Gedanken einer wirtschaftlichen Union, durch das Mittel einer solchen aber nicht zu verwirklichen ist, in andere Gestalt zu retten suchen.' − At the top of this article are the words 'A central European economic association'. It means a plan that unites men from individual respective state entitites. The Central European Economic Association wants what would here be described as necessary: to save in other form, what is healthy and valuable in the idea of an economic union, but not possible to realize through this medium. Ibid., p. 235.

123. Ibid., p. 237.

124. Wolf, J. (1907), 'Die erste Konferenz der Mitteleuropäischen Wirtschaftsvereine', *Zeitschrift für Socialwissenschaft*, vol. 8, pp. 51−9.

125. Naumann, F. (1916), *Central Europe*, London: P. S. King & Son.

126. Naumann, F. (1915), *Mitteleuropa*, Berlin: G. Reimer.

127. Naumann, *Central Europe.*

128. Ibid., p. 193.

129. 'Sobald man sich aber eine gewisse Mehrzahl solcher mitteleuropäischen Kommissionen oder Oberverwaltungen vor Augen stellt, bilden sie zusammen etwas wie eine mitteleuropäische Zentralverwaltung.' − But once you keep in mind a certain number of such commissions or supra-administrations, they form something like a Central European central administration. Ibid., pp. 241−2.

130. Naumann made a distinction between state union (*Bundesstaat*) and a union of states (*Staatenbund*); see for example, Naumann, *Central Europe*, p. 233.

131. Ibid., p. 240.

132. Central European economic people − ibid., p. 102.

133. Ibid., p. 61.

134. See, for example, Ullmann, H. (1915), *Die Bestimmung der Deutschen in Mitteleuropa: Zu den Grundlagen des Deutsch-Österreichischen Bündnisses*, Jena: Eugen Diederich; Jesser, F. (1915), *Deutscher Imperialismus oder mitteleuropäische Interessengemeinschaft*, Prague: Deutsche Arbeit Verlag; or Wolf, J. (1915), *Ein deutsch-österreichisch-ungarischer Zollverband*, Leipzig: Werner Scholl Verlag.

135. For example, Eichhorn, K. (1916), *Eine Stellungnahme zu Naumanns Buch*, Leipzig: Hildesheim; or Jäckh, E. (1916), *Das Grössere Mitteleuropa: Ein Werkbund-Vortrag*, Weimar: Gustav Keipenheuer Verlag.

136. Jäckh, *Grössere Mitteleuropa.*

137. Ibid., p. 6.

138. '... der letzte, einzige Weg Deutschlands in die Welt!' − the last, the only way for Germany into the world! Ibid., p. 7.

139. 'Die geographische Not, diese 'gottgewollte Abhängigkeit' führt zur politischen Notwendigkeit, wird zum geopolitischen Zwang − für Deutschland und Österreich-Ungarn − wie für Balkan und Orient.' Ibid., p. 8.

140. Ibid., p. 7.

141. Karl, E. F. (1917), *Vereinigte Staaten von Mittel-Europa! Eine Denkschrift zu Frieden*, Leipzig: Otto Weber.

142. Karl, *Vereinigte Staaten*, p. 44.

143. Ibid., p. 51, but also, for illustration, he suggested that Italy would fall under British domination if his United States of Central Europe would not provide it with protection. Under Central Europe, Italian independence was to be guaranteed. (Ibid., p. 49.)

144. '[d]er geschichtliche Boden, auf dem sich die deutsche Nation entwickelt und vor allem betätigt hat, heist uns Mitteleuropa', Sieger, R. (1917), *Vom heutigen Deutsch-Österreich*, Munich: Callwey, p. 7.

145. Stern, J. (1917), *'Mitteleuropa' von Leibniz bis Naumann, über List und Frantz, Plack und Lagarde*, Stuttgart and Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, p. 11.

146. Diehl, K. (1915), *Zur Frage eines Zollbündnisses zwischen Deutschland und Österreich-Ungarn*, Jena: Gustav Fischer.

147. Young, W. (2006) *German Diplomatic Relations 1871–1945: The Wilhelmstrasse and the Formulation of Foreign Policy*, Lincoln (New England): iUniverse, p. 76.

148. Hayes, B. B. (1994), *Bismarck and Mitteleuropa*, Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

149. Brechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 31.

150. Steinberg, J. (2011), *Bismarck: A Life*, Oxford: Oxford University Press; Lee, D. S. (2008), *Power Shifts, Strategy and War*, London: Routledge; or Abrams, L. (2006), *Bismarck and the German Empire, 1871–1918*, London: Routledge.

151. Meyer, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 47.

152. Rothfels, H. (1934), *Bismarck und der Osten: Eine Studie zum Problem des deutschen Nationalstaats*, Leipzig: JHC, p. 39.

153. Ibid., p. 79.

154. Bismarck, O. and Schüssler, W. (eds) (1930), *Die gesammelten Werke*, vol. 13, Berlin, p. 568.

155. Reuss, H. (1885), 'Reuss to Auswärtiges Amt', 16 May, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA, Austria 83, R 8690, document no. A7962.

156. Holtz, K. (1885), 'Holtz to Bismarck', 25 August, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, A7046.

157. Stirk, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 11.

158. Theiner, P. (1984), '"Mitteleuropa"-Pläne im Wilhelminischen Deutschland', in Berding, H. (1984), *Wirtschaftliche und politische Integration in Europa im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, pp. 128–48, p. 131.

159. Fischer, F. (1969), *Krieg der Illusionen: Die deutsche Politik 1911–1914*, Düsseldorf: Droste Verlag, p. 30.

160. Vagts, A. (1935), *Deutschland und die Vereinigten Staaten in der Weltpolitik*, New York: Macmillan.

161. Lens, C. (1890), 'Lens to Auswärtiges Amt', 31 October, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, A11627.

162. Zenker, E. V. (1935), *Ein Mann in sterbenden Österreich*, Reichenberg: Sudetendt Verlag, p. 186.

163. Delbrück, C. (1914), 'Abschrift: Die Frage einer wirtschaftlichen Annäherung Deutschlands und Österreich-Ungarns', 7 September, German Federal Archive, R43/403, folios 3–4.

164. Clemens von Delbrück (Vice-Chancellor and the Interior Secretary, 1908–16).

165. Theobald von Bethmann-Hollweg (Chancellor, 1909–17).

166. Delbrück, C. (1915), 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', 12 April, German Federal Archive, R43/404, folio 1b-7.

167. Ibid., folio 1b.

168. Ibid.

169. See German Federal Archive file R43/404, folios 26–304.

170. Delbrück, 12 April 1915, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', folios 1b – 7.
171. R43/404, folios 361–71.
172. Delbrück, 12 April 1915, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', folio 8.
173. Ibid., folio 15.
174. Ibid., folio 17.
175. R43/404, folio 450.
176. Reichsbanksdirektorium (1914), 'Gutachtliche Äuserung des Reichsbanks-direktoriums zür Frage einer Zollunion zwischen dem Deutschen Reiche und Österreich-Ungarn vom währungspolitischen Standpunkte', 13 November, German Federal Archive, R43/404, folios 329–331.
177. The basis should have been the 1853 Prussian–Austrian trade agreement (R43 404, folio 428, overall conclusions by Herman Johannes) as already suggested early on in the war by Delbrück. See Delbrück, C. (1914), 'Abschrift: Die Frage einer wirtschaftlichen Annäherung Deutschlands und Österreich-Ungarns', folio 3.
178. Delbrück, 12 April 1915, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', folio 18.
179. German Federal Archive (1915) no title, minutes from the cabinet meeting, 5 June, German Federal Archive, R 901/3988, folios 75–80.
180. 'Österreich-Ungarn könne uns nicht mehr bieten als was wir durch den Handelsvertrag erhalten haben,' – Austria-Hungary cannot offer us anything more than what we have already achieved through trade agreement. Ibid., folio 77.
181. Tschirschky, L. (1914), 'Tshirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 1 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, not bound, document no. A 20240.
182. Tschirschky, L. (1915b) 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 9 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2, R 2593, E585798–E585800.
183. Jagow, G. (1915), 'Jagow to Baernreither', 25 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8691, A27893.
184. Ibid., E585814.
185. Austro-Hungarian Embassy in Berlin (1915), 'Notiz, 24 November 1915', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2, R 2593, E585860–E585866.
186. 'Die hervorragende Stellung der Deutschen in Oesterreich beruht auf ihren ziffermässigen und spezifischen Geschichte. Die Zuhnahme der Bedeutung anderer Völkerelemente ist eine Folge ihrer zunehmenden Kultur und kann nicht zurückgedrängt, sondern muss im Gegenteil mit Befriedigung begrüsst werden. . . . Monarchie . . . nicht blos "eine germanische Ostmark" ist.' – 'The prominent position of the Germans in Austria is based on their numeral and specific history. The growth of importance of other ethnic elements is a consequence of their growing culture and can not be pushed back, on the contrary, it has to be welcomed with satisfaction. Monarchy is not merely "a Germanic eastern mark".' (Austro-Hungarian Embassy, 24 November 1915, folios E585864 – 865.)
187. Tschirschky, L. (1916), 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 20 January, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2 R 2593, E585901–E585907,.
188. Tisza, I. (1915a), 'Tisza to Zimmermann', 30 December, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2 R 2593, E585894.
189. E.g. German Hop Growers Union (1916), 'Deutscher Hopfenbau-Verein to Kgl. Staatsministerium des Innern (München)', 29 February, German Federal Archive, R 901/3991, folio 14; or Union of German Linen Industrialists (1917), 'Abschrift:

Wünsche der Leinen-Industrie für die Gestaltung des Zolltariffs', 7 July, German Federal Archive, R 901/3995, folio 14. A multitude of such letters can be found in German Federal Archives in Berlin under shelfmarks R901/3988 and R901/3994.

190. The most informative files in this regard are in the collections of the German Federal Archive R 43/405–7 and a special MEWV file 2254, which contain MEWV files and various files on all three organizations within holdings of the German Foreign Office Political Archive – AA PA Germany 180 2593 – 2598 – and the German Federal Archive – R901/3994, 3995 and 3998.

191. German Federal Archive R43/405–7.

192. Delbrück, C. (1915b), 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', 23 April, German Federal Archive, R43/405, folio 1d–1f.

193. For example, MEWV (1916), 'Bericht über die Dresdner Konferenz der Mitteleuropäischen Wirtschaftsvereine', German Federal Archive, R 43/406, folios 72–7.

194. For example, MEWV (1915) 'Denkschrift', 7 September, German Federal Archive, R 43/405, folios 139–51.

195. Bethmann-Hollweg, T. (1917), 'Bethmann-Hollweg to Herrn Presidenten des MEWV', 27 February, German Federal Archive, R 43/407, folio 124.

196. Retallack, J. (2008), *Imperial Germany, 1871–1918*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 160.

197. For example, Max Weber, Prince Eulenburg, or Naumann himself (German Federal Archive, Nachlass Naumann N 3001/29, folio 94).

198. For example, Naumann, F. (1916b), 'Naumann to Zimmermann', 21 March, German Federal Archive, R 901/3990, folios 9–19; Naumann, F. (1916c), 'Naumann to State Secretary of the Foreign Office', 22 June, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2595, E585995–E585999; or Naumann, F. (1917), 'Naumann to Bethmann-Hollweg', 24 May 1917, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 5, R 2597, E569061.

199. For example, Naumann, F., Schiffer, E. and Jäckh, E. (1917), 'Mitteleuropa und Polen', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 5, R 2597.

200. AA PA (1917), 'Über den Stand der Verhandlungen mit Österreich-Ungarn wegen den Abschlusse einen Zoll- und Wirtschafts- bündnissen, in Verbindung mit der polnischen Frage', 11 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 5, R 2597, E569117–E569140.

201. Wedel, B. (1917), 'Wedel to Johannes', 14 April, German Federal Archive, R901/3994, folio 1; Boyé, L. (1917), 'Boyé to Johannes', 29 May, German Federal Archive, R 901/3994, folios 206–7.

202. Schoenebeck, P. (1917), 'Ergebnisse der bisherigen Verhandlungen über die wirtschaftliche Annäherung zwischen Deutschland und Österreich-Ungarn auf zolltarifarischen Gebiet', 15 October 1917, German Federal Archive, R 901/3996, folios 99–126.

203. For example, Lersner, K. (1917), 'Lersner to Auswärtiges Amt', 11 October 1917, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 5, R 2597, E569129–E569131, or Hamburg Chamber of Commerce (1918), 'Handelskammer in Hamburg to Herrn Reichskanzler Graf von Hertling', 31 January, German Federal Archive, R 901/3998, folios 15–17.

204. See files in German Federal Archive R 901/3998, folios 29–58; and AA PA Germany 180 R 2593–7.

205. AA PA (1915c), no title, notes to question of Austro-Polish solution, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2, R 2593, E585763–E585772; Tschirschky, L. (1916), 'Tschirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 20 January, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2 R 2593, E585901–E5858907.

206. Many remained unconvinced. In May 1918, General Erich Ludendorff noted that 'from a strictly military standpoint, there is strong interest in seeing the Austro-Polish solution fail'. See GHDI (1918) minutes, 'The Third Supreme Army Command and German War Aims', May 11, English language translation, available at: http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_document.cfm?document_id=983, accessed on 10 August 2012.

207. AA PA (1917b), 'Aufzeichung über die ergebnisse der am 3. und 4. November 1917 abgehaltenen Beratung über die polnische Frage', 6 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 5, R 2597, E569004–E569113; Johannes, H. (1917b), 'Zur Frage der zu fordernden wirtschaftlichen Garantien bei einer Überlassung Polen an Österreich-Hungarn', no date, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 5, R 2597, E569169–E569172.

208. Treutler, K. G. (1917), 'Treuler to Auswärtiges Amt', 7 August, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 70, R 8552, folio 242; Stolberg, W. (1918), 'Stolberg to Auswärtiges Amt', 7 August, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 27, R 8552, folio 277.

209. Tschirschky, L. (1915a), 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office' 9 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2, R 2593, E585798–E585800; Johannes, H. (1916), 'Aufzeichung', 6 July, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 3, R 2595, E585999–E586001.

210. AA PA 'Über den Stand der Verhandlungen'.

211. Luxburg, K. (1915), 'Luxburg to Bethmann-Hollweg', 25 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2, R 2593, E585937.

212. Kühlmann, O. (1916), 'Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg', 15 May, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 3, R 2595, E585594–E585596.

213. AA PA 'Über den Stand der Verhandlungen', E569131.

214. German Federal Archive (1917), 'Über den Stand der Verhandlungen mit Österreich-Ungarn wegen den Abschlusse einen Zoll- und Wirtschafts- bündnissen, in Verbindung mit der polnischen Frage', 11 November, German Federal Archive, R 901/3996, folio 200–22, folio 207.

215. 'Je lange der Krieg dauert, desto schwerer wird es werden, unsere alten Exportbeziehungen im entfernteren Ausland wieder anzuknüpfen; desto mehr werden wir aus den verschiedenen Gründen auf Autarkie angewiesen sein und desto mehr in die Notwendigkeit kommen uns mit unseren Nachbarn und Verbündeten zu einem mitteleuropäischen Wirtschaftsgebiet möglichst eng zusammen-zuschliessen. [...] Mann könne nicht mehr zurück; die Lobby für ein Mitteleuropa sei bereits zu stark und überdies habe die 'Naumannsche Agitation' die Alliierten zu den Beschlüssen von Paris veranlasst und den Rückweg zu einem freien Welthandel deutlich erschwert.' Johannes, H. (1917), 'Notes dated 7 January', 7 January, German Federal Archive, R 901/407, folio number unreadable.

216. AA PA 'Über den Stand der Verhandlungen', Schoenebeck 'Ergebnisse der bisherigen Verhandlungen'.

217. Koerner, P. (1918), 'Koerner to Auswärtiges Amt', 21 January, German Federal Archive, R 901/3997, folio 163.

218. Hertling, G. (1918), 'Instruktion für die deutsche Vertretung bei den Verhandlungen für den wirtschaftlichen Zusammenschluss mit Österreich-Ungarn', 3 June, German Federal Archive, R 901/3999, folios 82–86.

219. Stolberg, W. (1918b), 'Stolberg to Auswärtiges Amt', telegram, 8 August, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 27, R 9019, folios 11–12, H187367–H187368; Wedel, B. (1918b), 'Wedel to Hertling', 26 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 27, R 9019, H187435–H187441; Fürstenberg, F. (1918), 'Fürstenberg to Auswärtiges Amt', 29 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 27, R 9019, H187442.

220. Various letters in German Federal Archive R 901/3998, folios 6–31, 143–62.

221. AA PA (1918) 'Besprechung über die Verhandlungen mit Österreich-Ungarn', 28 June, German Federal Archive, R901/3999, folios 139–43.

222. Broucek, P. (1979), *Die deutschen Bemühungen um eine Militärkonvention mit Österreich-Ungarn 1915–1918*, Vienna: Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung, p. 463; Krizman, B. (1970), 'Die Tätigkeit der österreichisch-ungarischen Diplomatie in den letzten Monaten vor dem Zusammenbruch', in Plaschka, R. and Mack, K. (1970), *Die Auflösung des Habsburgerreiches. Zusammenbruch und Neuorientierung im Donauraum*, Vienna: Verlag für Geschichte und Politik, p. 102.

223. GHDI 'Third Supreme Army Command', p. 1.

224. Wedel, B. (1918), 'Wedel to Auswärtiges Amt', 2 July, German Federal Archive, R901/3999, folio 113.

225. Fürstenberg, F. (1918b), 'Fürstenberg to Auswärtiges Amt', 24 June, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2598, E586058–E586059.

226. Wedel, 'Wedel to Hertling', 26 September 1918.

227. Fürstenberg, 'Fürstenberg to Auswärtiges Amt', 29 September 1918.

228. Gratz, G. and Schüller, R. (1925), *Die Äussere Wirtschaftspolitik Österreich-Ungarns. Mitteleuropäische Pläne*, Vienna: Hölder-Pichler-Tempsky, p. 93.

229. AA PA (1915b), 'Die gegenwärtigen Bestrebungen für eine engere dauernde politische Annäherung zwischen Deutschland und Österreich-Ungarn', 19 May, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Austria 83, R 8690, document no. A 16487.

230. Delbrück, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', 12 April 1915.

231. For example, Chéradame, A. (1916), 'What Germany Covets', British National Archives, FO 925/30277.

232. Reichsbanksdirektorium, 'Gutachtliche Äuserung'.

233. For example, AA PA (1915d), 'Bemerkungen zur "Denkschrift aus Deutsch-Österreich"', no date, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2595, E586030–E586057.

234. For example, even Tschirschky occasionally displayed such tendencies, as is apparent from the wording of some his official letters (e.g. Tschirschky, L. (1915), 'Tschirschky to Naumann', 26 April, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 101, vol. 35, document no. A 14763); yet, he eventually made policy suggestions that went head on with ideas of German domination of Central Europe (e.g. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 20 January 1916).

235. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office' 20 January 1916.

236. Delbrück, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', 12 April 1915.

237. Jagow, 'Jagow to Baernreither', 25 September 1915.

CHAPTER 3 – AUSTRIA-HUNGARY: PAN-GERMAN PAPER DREAMS

1. Kann, R. (1950), *The Multinational Empire: Nationalism and National Reform in the Habsburg Monarchy 1848−1918*, vol. I, New York: Columbia University Press, p. 76.

2. Deym, F. (2010), *Drei Denkschriften (1848)*, reprint, Whitefish (Montana): Kessinger Publishing.

3. Möring, C. (1848), 'Entweder – Oder!', December 1848, Frankfurt: Fr. Wilman Buchhandlung.

4. Arneth, A. (1895), *Anton Ritter von Schmerling. Episoden aus seinem Leben 1835, 1848−1849*, Vienna: F. Tempsky Verlag, p. 128.

5. Sommarunga, F. von (1848), *Österreichs Zukunft und dessen Stellung zu Deutschland*, Stuttgart: no publisher specified.

6. For example, Meyer, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 21.

7. Wiggard, *Stenographischer Bericht*, pp. 2894−7.

8. Fröbel, *Wien.*

9. Kann, *Multinational Empire*, p. 64.

10. See Seton-Watson, R. W. (1939), 'The Austro-Hungarian Ausgleich of 1867', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, vol. 53/54, p. 123.

11. K.u.k. Statistische Zentralkommission (1915), Allgemeines Verzeichnis der Ortsgemeinden und Ortschaften Österreichs nach den Ergebnissen der Volkszählung vom 31 Dezember 1910, Vienna.

12. See Seton-Watson, 'Ausgleich', p. 126.

13. East, W. G. (1950). *An Historical Geography of Europe*, London: Taylor & Francis, p. 275.

14. Lindström, F. (2008), *Empire and Identity: Biographies of the Austrian State Problem in the Late Habsburg Empire*, West Lafayette (Indiana): Purdue University Press; Vysny, P. (1977), *Neo-Slavism and the Czechs 1898−1914*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

15. Schäfer, H. (2007), *ÖVP, CDU/CSU und der Rechtsextremismus der Nachkriegszeit (1945−57)*, Munich: Grin Verlag, 2nd edition, p. 15.

16. Carsten, F. L. (1985), *Essays in German History*, London: Hambledon Press, p. 223.

17. Cohen, S. (2006), *The Politics of Ethnic Survial: Germans in Prague, 1861−1914*, West Lafayette (Indiana): Purdue University Press, 2nd edition, p. 119.

18. Roman, E. (2009), *Austria-Hungary and the Successor States*, New York: Infobase Publishing, p. 512.

19. Alexander, R. S. (2012), *Europe's Uncertain Path 1814−1914: State Formation and Civil Society*, Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, p. 257.

20. Ingrao, C. and Szabo, F. (2007), *The Germans and East*, West Lafayette (Indiana): Purdue University, p. 172.

21. For excerpts from mid-nineteenth century Austrian newspapers employing the notion as general geographical term, see Gaertner, *Kampf*, pp. 11−12; or *Wiener Zeitung*, 1−10 July 1848.

22. K.u.k. Militärgeographisches Institut (1875), *General Karte von Central-Europa*, Vienna: K.u.k. Militärgeographisches Institut.

23. For example, Woldrich, J. N. (1885), *Die ältesten Spuren der Cultur in Mitteleuropa mit besonderer Berücksichtigung Oesterreichs: Ein Vortrag*, Vienna: Alfred Hölder.

24. For example, Peucker, K. (1893), *Volker- u Sprachen-Karte von Mitteleuropa*, Wien: Artaria & Co.

25. Reprinted in Scobel, A. (1908), *Geographisches Handbuch zu Andrees Handatlas*, Leipzig: Velhagen & Klasing.

26. Friedrich, E. (1907), *Allgemeine und spezielle Wirtschaftsgeographie*, Leipzig: G. J. Göschen.

27. Kann, *Multinational Empire*, p. 99; Müller, *Zwischen Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 159.

28. For example, Vernaleken, F. T. (1898), *Die Zweige des deutschen Volkes in Mitteleu*ropa, Graz: Wagner.

29. Peez, *Handelspolitik*.

30. Meyer, *Mitteleuropa*, p. 108.

31. Ritter, A. [Wintersetten] (1914), *Berlin-Bagdad: Neue Ziele mitteleuropäischer Politik*, Munich: J. F. Lehmann, p. 18.

32. Vernaleken, *Zweige.*

33. K.u.k. Militärgeographisches Institut (1903), *General Karte von Mittel-Europa*, Vienna: K. u.k. Militärgeographisches Institut

34. Wolf, J. (1905), Materialien betreffend den mitteleuropäischen Wirtschaftsverein in Deutschland, Berlin: MEWV: pp. 8–9.

35. Patzauer, H. (1911), 'Die Berliner mitteleuropäische Wirtschaftskonferenz', *Zeitschrift für Volkswirtschaft, Sozialpolitik und Verwaltung*, vol. 19, pp. 683–5.

36. For example, Sorel, A. (1878), *La question d'Orient au XIIIe siècle, les origines de la triple allian*ce, Paris: Plon, or Leroy-Beaulieu, A. (1888), *La France, la Russie, et l'Europe*, Paris: Calmann Lévy.

37. Morgenbrod, B. (1994), *Wiener Großbürgertum im Ersten Weltkrieg. Die Geschichte der Österreichischen Politischen Gesellschaft (1916–1918)*, Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, p. 22.

38. Tille, A. (1895), 'Grossdeutschland', *Die Zukunft*, 10 August, vol. 7, pp. 257–65; Benoist, C. (1897), 'La monarchie austro-hongroise et l'èquilibre européen', *Revue des deux mondes*, vol. 143, pp. 770–93; Hirst, F. (1898), 'A dissolving empire', *Fortnightly Review*, vol. 70, pp. 56–71; Beaumont, W. (1901), 'Y a-t-il une question d'Autriche?', *Revue de Paris*, vol. 4, pp. 201–28; Brooks, S. (1901), 'Correspondence', *Spectator*, 19 January, vol. 86, no. 3786, pp. 12–13; Chéradame, A. (1901), *L'Europe et la question d'Autriche au seuil du XXe siècle*, Paris: Plon – Nourrit et cie.

39. Many of the concepts analysed and developed by the circle can be found in the Austrian National Archives: Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand, Denkschriften und Broschüren, AT-OeStA/HHStA HausA NL Erzherzog Franz Ferdinand, depot Hohenberg, box 14.

40. Castellan, G. (1989), *A History of Romanians*, Boulder (Colorado): East European Monographs, p. 149.

41. Popovici, A. (1906), *Die Vereinigte Staaten von Grossösterreich*, Leipzig: B. Elischer.

42. Eichhoff, J. A. von (1926), 'Die geplannte Gründung der "Vereinigte Staaten von Grossösterreich"', *Reichspost*, 28 March, vol. 31, pp. 1–3. The document was first published in 1926 by J. A. von Eichhoff. It is not dated but historians put its origins between 1908 and 1911. The document carries ideas, whose authorship is ascribed to several members of the group, including Count Czernin, Heinrich Lammasch and Gustav Truba. The manifest is also mentioned by another member of the group, Milan Hodža, in his *Federation in Central Europe* (1942).

43. Samassa, P. (1917), *Die deutschösterreichische Politik während des Krieges*, Graz: Verl. d. Deutschen Vereins-Druckerei, p. 6.

44. Baernreither, J. M. (1914), 'Tagebuch', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Baernreither, folder 6: entries for 19 and 20 September.

45. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 35.

46. *Deutscher Nationalverband* was an umbrella organization for the national and liberal parties established just before the parliamentary elections in 1907. The purpose of the union was to represent political interests of Austrian Germans in the domestic political struggle. By 1911, the union included five parties, which among themselves gained 104 seats in the 514-seat strong Chamber of Deputies, followed by Social Democrats and Christian Social Party.

47. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 28.

48. Gross, G. (1914), 'Gross to "Verehrter Freund"', memo letter to all members of the German National Federation, 23 August, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, folder 'Forderungen der Deutschen Oesterreichs zur Neuordnung nach dem Kriege', no page number.

49. Beurle, C. (1914), 'Beurle to Gross', 16 September, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Gross, folder 4.

50. Dobering, J. (1914), 'Dobering to Gross', 28 August, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Gross, folder 4; Freissler, R. (1914), 'Freissler to Gross', 25 August, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Gross, folder 4.

51. Tschirschky used the expression 'Zollanschluss an Deutschland' (customs attachment to Germany), subconsciously indicating that in his view Austria should be attached to, rather than form equal partnership with, Germany. (Tschirschky, L. (1914b), 'Tshirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 23 October, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, document no. A 28201.)

52. Tschirschky, 'Tshirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 1 September 1914, see Appendix 1.

53. For example, Medlinger, W. (1915), untitled speech in Austrian parliament, 23 March, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, document no. A 19386.

54. Tschirschky, 'Tshirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 23 October 1914.

55. Fischer, *Krieg*, p. 647; Kruck, A. (1954), *Geschichte des Alldeutschen Verbandes*, Wiesbaden: Steiner, p. 71.

56. 'Wir wünschen die Verbindung nicht allein aus wirtschaftlichen Gründen, sondern auch darum, weil dann naturgemäss die Stellung der Deutschen in Österreich gestärkt wird.' Philippovich, E. (1915), 'Philippovich to Tschirschky, via Felix Somary', 6 February, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Austria 83, R 8690, document no. A 5577.

57. AA PA, 'Bestrebungen'.

58. Erzberger, M. (1915), 'Erzberger to Bergen', 10 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Austria 83, R 8691, document no. A 26666.

59. 'Der schönste Staatsvertrag ware ein Blatt Papier gegen eine slavische Majorität und einen slavophilen Regierunskurs in Oesterreich.' Erzberger 'Erzberger to Bergen', 10 September 1915.

60. For example, Philippovich, 'Philippovich to Tschirschky', 6 February 1915.

61. Brandt, A. (1915), 'Forderungen der Deutschen Oesterreichs zur Neuordnung nach dem Kriege', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2593, document no. A 32728, p. 2; Jesser, *Deutscher Imperialismus*, p. 16; Gross, G. (1915), 'Forderungen der Deutschen Oesterreichs zur Neuordnung nach dem Kriege', AAPA Austria 83, R 8691, document no. A 26666b.

62. Austrian Germans were not the only ones obsessed with reform of the monarchy to restore its former Great Power standing. Even though from a different point of view, and with obviously different proposals for internal reform, Hungarian authors were trying to resolve the same problem – to restore the monarchy as the power in the east and equal partner for Germany in a future military and economic union. See, for example, Kristoffy, J. (1916), 'Denkschrift eines ungarischen Politikers', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2595, microfiche no. 16499.

63. Jesser, *Deutscher Imperialismus*.

64. Gross, 'Forderungen'.

65. Brandt, 'Forderungen'.

66. Steinacker, E. (1916), 'Bemerkungen zur Denkschift aus Deutsch-Österreich', AAPA IA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2595, microfiche no. 16500.

67. Rechenberg, A. (1916a), 'Denkschift', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2595, microfiche no. 16500.

68. 'Der geschichtliche Boden, auf dem sich die deutsche Nation entwickelt und vor allem betätigt hat, heisst es Mitteleuropa.' Sieger, *Deutsch-Österreich*, p. 7.

69. 'Österreich-Ungarn und das Deutsche Reich sind durch das Feuer des Krieges zu einer militärischen Einheit zusammengeschmiedet worden.' – Austria-Hungary and the German Empire have been forged together into a military union by the war. Succovaty, E. (1916), *Ein alter Österreicher und Friedrich Naumanns 'Mitteleuropa'*, Graz: Leykam, p. 16.

70. An edict issued in 1713 by Emperor Charles VI to ensure a female heir could inherit Habsburg possessions.

71. Gürtler, A. (1916), *Österreich-Ungarn: Ein Schema für Miteleuropa*, Graz and Leipzig: Leuschner & Lubensky, p. 27.

72. Gürtler, A. (1916b), *Zollgemeinschaft und Pragmatische Sanktion*, Graz and Leipzig: Leuschner & Lubensky.

73. Schneider, K. C. (1916), *Mitteleuropa als Kulturbegriff*, Vienna and Leipzig: Orion Verlag.

74. Ibid., p. 13.

75. Friedjung, H. (1915), *Denkschrift aus Deutsch-Österreich*, Leipzig: G. Hirzel (copies in Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staats Archiv, Nachlass Gross, folder 4, folios 237−94; and in Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA, R2594, doc. no. 368/0, loose attachment in the file).

76. Friedjung was a part of the closely knit community of Central Europe proponents surrounding J. M. Baernreither and Edmund Steinacker. See Steinacker, E. (1937), *Lebenserinnerungen*, Munich: Schick.

77. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 157.

78. Friedjung, *Denkschrift*.

79. Renner, K. (1915), 'Zollunion und Zwischenzoll', *Arbeirter-Zeitung*, 29 July, vol. 27, pp. 1−2.

80. Kautsky [Renner], K. (1916), *Die Vereinigte Staaten Mitteluropas*, Stuttgart: J. H. W. Deitz Nachs, p. 43.

81. Ibid., pp. 24−5.

82. Ibid., p. 43.

83. 'Sollte der mitteleuropäischer Staatenbund je zu seiner Verwirklichung gelangen, so könnte er nur ein Übergangsstadium sein. Denn dieselben Tendenzen, die allein ihn zu schaffen vermochten, müssten nach seiner steten Erweiterung in der Richtung eines Weltbundes bringen.' Ibid., p. 48.

84. Renner, K. (1916), keynote speech in Vorstand der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (1916), *Die Betrefungen für eine wirtschaftliche Annäherung Deutschlands und Oesterreich-Ungarns*, 9 January, pp. 3−19.

85. SDPD (1916), *Die Betrefungen für eine wirtschaftliche Annäherung Deutschlands und Oesterreich-Ungarns*, 9 January, printed by Vorstand der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands.

86. Dodds, K. and Atkinson, D. (2000), *Geopolitical Traditions: Critical Histories of a Century of Political Thought*, London: Routledge, p. 44; see e.g. Spahn, M. (1925), 'Mitteleuropa und das deutsche Volk', *Volk und Reich*, special edition, vol. 25, Berlin: Fr. Heiss.

87. Masaryk, T. G. (1918), *The New Europe: The Slav Standpoint*, London: Eyre & Spottiswoode.

88. Hanslik, E. (1917), 'Österreich', *Schriften des Instituts für Kulturforschung*, vol. III, Vienna: Institut für Kulturforschung, p. 94.

89. Hassinger, H. (1917), 'Das geographische Wesen Mitteleuropas', *Mitteilungen der k.k. Geographischen Gesellschaft in Wien*, no. 60, pp. 437–93, pp. 476–93.

90. Penck, A. (1915), 'Politisch-geographische Lehren des Krieges', *Meereskunde*, vol. 9, pp. 29–40.

91. Matlekovits, A. (1916). 'Vorzugszölle als Mittel der wirtschaflichen Annäherung', German Federal Archive, R 901/3989, folios 150–3; Reichenberg Handels- und Gewerbekammer (1916), 'Bericht des handelspolitischen Ausschusses betreffend die zukunftige Gestaltung unserer handelspolitischen Beziehungen zum Deutschen Reiche', German Federal Archive, R 901/3989, folio 156; Carus, C. G. (1916), 'Zollpolitische Annäherung an Deutschland', German Federal Archive, R 3989, folio 156.

92. 'Unsere ganze wirtschaftliche Zukunft liegt in einem zollpolitischen Annäherung an Deutschland' – Our whole economic future lies in customs-political rapprochement with Germany. Carus, 'Annäherung', p. 2.

93. For comparison with earlier debate on the principle of customs union see Szterényi, J. (1915), 'Die künstige Gestaltung des wirtschaftlichen Verhältnis Österreichs und Ungarns zum Deutschen Reiche: Industriellen Klub Vortrag', 18 November, German Federal Archive, R 901/3898, folio 61.

94. 'Es ist selbstverständlich dass jedermann, ohne sich etwa von Gefühlsmomenten leiten lassen zu wollen, Deutschland und Österreich-Ungarn in einem einheitlichen Zollgebiet vereinigt sehen möchte. Es würde wohl noch von weitergehender Bedeutung sein, wenn auch die Balkanstaaten nach Friedensschluss dieser Zollgemeinschaft angehören wurden, so dass von der Nord- und Ostsee bis zum Schwartzen Meere ein einheitliches Zollgebiet bestünde.' Berl, D. (1916), 'Empfehlungen für den wirtschaftlichen Zusammenschluss mit Deutschland', 16 March, German Federal Archive, R 901/3990, folios 3–6, p. 4.

95. 'Möglich, dass die Verbandmächte durch den Hass, der sie alle gegen uns erfühlt, sich wie in der allgemeinen Politik, so auch auf wirtschaftliche-politischem Gebiete in eine ihren eigenen Interessen zuwiderlaufende Richtung werden hinreissen lassen, was einen gegen uns gerichteten, unnatürlichen wirtschaftspolitischen Bund zur Folge haben würde.' Lukács, G. (1916), 'Die wirtschaftliche Zukunft Mitteleuropas', *Pester Lloyd*, 26 April, pp. 19–21, p. 20.

96. For example, Karl von Frey wrote: 'Wenn ich vom Wirtschaftsbunde oder vom Bunde kurzweg sprechen werde, so verstehe ich darunter: Oesterreich, Ungarn, Deutschland, Bulgarien und die Turkei.' – When I speak of economic union or, shortly, union, I mean Austria, Hungary, Germany, Bulgaria and Turkey. – and he continued on, emphasizing the crucial role the port of Trieste would play in the future of his economic union as a gateway to the East. Frey, K. von (1916), 'Die Aufgaben Tiersts in der kuenftigen Wirtschaftspolitik unter besonderer Beruecksichtigung des Handelsverkehres Oester-reichs mit dem Orient. Vortrag', 4 February, Niederoesterreichischen Gewerbeverein, German Federal Archive, R 901/3990, folios 37–62, folio 38.

97. 'Der Weltkrieg hat die Geschichte der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie und jene des deutschen Reiches aneinander geschmiedet und schon treten die Umrisse vor, welche die weitere Ausgestaltung des neuen Gefüges vorausahnen lassen. Um Balkan und in nahen Osten reihen sich schon organisch neue Bestandteile des grossen Wirtschafts-körpers an, dessen Bezeichnung als 'Mitteleuropa' eigentlich schon überholt ist, da seine Wirtschaftsgrenzen schon weit, nach Asien hinausreichen'. Hassinger, 'Das geographische Wesen'.

98. For example, Lusensky, F. (1918), 'Denkschrift', 25 May, German Federal Archive, R 901/3999, folios 26–8.

99. For example, Brandt, *Forderungen.*

100. For example, Erzberger, 'Erzberger to Bergen', 10 September 1915.

101. For example, SDPD, *Betrefungen*, Penck 'Lehren'.

102. Zunkovic, M. (1904), *Wann wurde Mitteleuropa von den Slaven besiedelt? Beitrag zur Klarung eines Geschichts- und Gelehrtenirrtums*, Kremsier: Druck und Verlag Heinrich Slovak.

103. Vošnjak, B. (1917), *A Bulwark against Germany: The fight of the Slovenes, the Western Branch of Jugoslavs, for National Existence*, London: George Allen & Unwin.; and Vošnjak, B. (1918), *A Dying Empire: Central Europe, Pan-Germanism and the Downfall of Austria-Hungary*, London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.

104. Palacký, F. (1848), 'The Committee of Fifty to the Frankfurt Parliament', 6 April, available at: http://www.age-of-the-sage.org/history/1848/palacky_letter.html, accessed on 12 April 2012.

105. Vošnjak, *Bulwark*, pp. 253−4.

106. Kramář, K. (1899), 'L'avenir de l'Autriche', *Revue de Paris*, pp. 577, 600.

107. Kramář, 'L'avenir'.

108. Abrams, I. (1944), 'The Austrian question at the turn of the twentieth century', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 186−201, p. 192.

109. Kramář also had strong influence over several other foreign publicists, such as a René Henry, a leading opponent of Pan-Germanism in France, and William Lavino, the *Daily Telegraph* and later *The Times* reporter. See, for example, Henry, R. (1900), 'La monarchie habsbourgeoise. Théorie de la dislocation et théorie du partage', *Revue politique et parlementaire*, vol. 23, pp. 42−68.

110. Abrams, 'Austrian question', p. 193.

111. Krejčí, *Geopolitics*, p. 193.

112. Hodža, M. (1942), *Federation in Central Europe*, London: Jarrods.

113. Tobolka, Z. (1937), *Politické dějiny československého národa od roku 1848 až do dnešní doby*, Prague: Československý kompas, p. 84.

114. Kořalka, J. (1995), 'Anpassung oder Widerstand? Zu den tschechischen Reaktionen auf die deutsche Mitteleuropaidee vor und nach dem Jahre 1914', in Plaschka, R. et al. (1995), *Mitteleuropa-Konzeptionen in der Ersten Hälfte der 20. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 25−37, p. 28.

115. Seckendorff, E. (1899), 'Seckendorff to Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 101, vol. 10, document no. A 10856; Felner, F. (1953), *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs 1908−1919: Das politische Tagebuch Josef Redlichs*, Graz: Kommission für Neuere Geschichte Österreichs.

116. Marek, J. (1991), *Jaroslav Goll: Odkazy osobností naší minulosti*, Prague: Melantrich, p. 272.

117. Bohumír Šmeral was a Czech politician and chairman of the Executive Committee of the Social Democratic Party in Bohemia in 1916−18. Later, he would go on to be one of the founding members of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. See Galandauer, J. (1986), *Bohumír Šmeral: 1914−1941*, Prague: Svoboda.

118. Naumann, F. (1915b), 'Naumann to Zimmerman', 14 April, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 101, vol. 35, document no. A 13139.

119. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Naumann', 26 April 1915.

120. Theiner, P. (1983), *Sozialer Liberalismus und deutsche Weltpolitik: Friedrich Naumann in Wilhelminischen Deutschland 1860−1919*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, p. 241.

121. Tobolka, *Politické dějiny*, p. 84.

122. For other nations of the monarchy, the aims of their national movements were not that clear. Polish demands were during the war placated by the promise of a united kingdom under German or Austrian suzerainty and their political representatives remained disunited in their

demands and loyalties. Serbians, Slovenians and Croatians had a difficulty getting along and especially their exile representatives engaged in much mutual bickering.

123. Hájková, D. and Šedivý, I. (2004), *Korespondence: T. G. Masaryk – Edvard Beneš, 1914–1918*, Praha: Masarykův ústav AV ČR, p. 15.

124. Masaryk, T. G. (1938), *Světová revoluce*, Prague: Čin: p. 79.

125. Wickham Steed used to be *The Times* correspondent in Vienna, and Seton-Watson was an established champion of the cause of the small nations of Austria-Hungary. See Viator, S. [Seton-Watson] (1907), *The Future of Austria-Hungary and the Attitude of the Great Powers*, London: Archibald Constable & Co.; Viator, S. [Seton-Watson] (1908a), *Racial Problems in Hugary*, London: Archibald Constable & Co.; Viator, S. [Seton-Watson] (1908b), *Political Persecution in Hungary: An Appeal to British Public Opinion*, London: Archibald Constable & Co.; Seton-Watson, R. W. (1911a), *Corruption and Reform in Hungary: A Study of Electoral Practice*, London: Archibald Constable & Co.; and Seton-Watson, R. W. (1911b), *The Southern Slav Question and the Habsburg Monarchy*, London: Archibald Constable & Co.

126. Seton-Watson, R. W. (1943), *Masaryk in England*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 21.

127. Ibid., pp. 43–4.

128. The text of the memorandum was later reproduced in Seton-Watson's *Masaryk in England* (pp. 43–7). A copy of the original is stored in the National Archives in Kew as Seton-Watson, R. W. (1914), 'Future of Bohemia: Memorandum of Conversations between Professor T. G. Masaryk and R. W. Seton-Watson, at Rotterdam, on October 24–26, 1914', 5 November, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. no. 67456, folios 113–24.

129. As described by Sidney Mezes, the head of The Inquiry, the analytical unit set up by President Woodrow Wilson to prepare materials for the eventual peace conference. See Unterberger, B. M. (2000), *The United States, Revolutionary Russia, and the Rise of Czechoslovakia*, College Station (Texas): 1st Texas A&M University Press, p. 61.

130. Masaryk, T. G. (1915a), 'Independent Bohemia', dated April 1915, filed on 3 May, British National Archives, FO 371/2241, doc. no. 53 297, pp. 94–103.

131. While Masaryk did not refer to any academic work in his paper, this familiar dichotomy suggests that he was aware of the works of both Alfred T. Mahan and John H. Mackinder.

132. Masaryk 'Independent Bohemia', pp. 4–5; text quoted including grammar and spelling mistakes made by the original author.

133. Masaryk, 'Independent Bohemia', p. 14.

134. Masaryk, T. G. (1915b), 'At Eleventh Hour: A memorandum on the military situation', marked as 'strictly confidential', no date or place of publishing; copy available in the British Library.

135. Masaryk, 'Eleventh Hour', p. 25.

136. Ibid., p. 27.

137. Ibid., p. 29.

138. Masaryk, T. G. (1916b), 'L'Europe centrale pangermanique, ou une Bohême libre?', in Masaryk, T. G. (1930), *La Résurrection d'un État*, Paris: Pion, pp. 103–19. Essay reprinted in Collected Works in 1930.

139. Ibid., p. 116.

140. Ibid., p. 118.

141. Masaryk, T. G. (1920), *Nová Evropa: Stanovisko slovanské*, Prague: Gustav Dubský, 2nd edition, pp. 93–5.

142. Masaryk, T. G. (1918a), 'Masaryk to Lansing', 26 June, Vojenský historický archív (Military historical archive), Prague, ČSNR – Paříž, Odeslaná korespondence, box 3, no page number.

143. Opat, J. (2003), *Průvodce životem a dílem T. G. Masaryka. Česká otázka včera a dnes*, Praha: Ústav T. G. Masaryka, p. 271; Klimek, A. et al. (1994), *Dokumenty československé zahraniční politiky. Vznik Československa*, Praha: Ústav mezinárodních vztahů, p. 13.

144. For example, Masaryk, 'Masaryk to Lansing', 26 June 1918.

145. Voska, E. (1917), 'Memorandum presented to the Rt Hn Arthur J. Balfour', 10 November, FO 371/2864, doc. no. 216 133, pp. 337−48; Beneš, E. (1917), 'Dossier sur la question tchécoslovaque', 9 October, British National Archives, FO 371/2864, folios 270 311; and Osuský, S. (1918), 'Osuský to Clerk', 11 December, British National Archives, FO 371/3136, doc. no. 207 286, pp. 465−8.

146. Emanuel Voska was Masaryk's contact in the United States, where he was in close communication with the United States government. His value for the United States government lay in Voska's personal network of contacts in Austria-Hungary, which he used to obtain valuable intelligence. Voska was also largely responsible for organizing the crucial financing for the Czech independence movement and personal funds for Masaryk. He was reportedly working with André Chéradame on CNC strategy to discredit Austro-Hungarian federalization plans in autumn 1918. See *Czechoslovakia*, p. 107.

147. Osuský was also a member for Masaryk's inner circle and would eventually become the first Czechoslovak ambassador to London.

148. For example, Beneš, 'Dossier' and Voska, 'Memorandum'.

149. General M. R. Štefánik was a member of the three-man leadership of the CNC and later became the first Czechoslovak Minister for War.

150. Štefánik, M. R. (1916), 'Gli Czechi e L'Italia Nella Guarra Attuale', 6 May, FO 371/2602, doc. 86 039, folios 100−1.

151. Beneš, 'Dossier'.

152. Edvard Beneš was the right-hand man of Masaryk, a general secretary of the Czechoslovak National Council in Paris, which would eventually be recognized as an interim government of independent Czechoslovakia in 1918. He would go on to become the first Foreign Affairs Minister and later on a president of Czechoslovakia during World War II.

153. The publication in April 1918 of letters suggesting a separate peace between Austria-Hungary and France, exchanged between Emperor Karl and his brother-in-law, Sixtus de Bourbon, in 1917. The affair led to the humiliating episode for Karl, who was forced to control the damage from the revelations by a visit to the German Emperor and the signing of the agreements, which were designed to place Austria-Hungary firmly in the German orbit.

154. Beneš, E. (1918b), 'Beneš to Foreign Office', 20 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. no. 89 645, folios 125−33.

155. Ibid., p. 127.

156. Ibid., p. 130.

157. Ibid. and Masaryk, T. G. (1918c), 'Masaryk to Lansing', 18 October; US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement I, World War*, vol. 1, Washington: US GPO, doc. 861.00/3124, pp. 847−51.

158. Diószegi, I. (1995), 'Die Reaktion Ungarns auf die deutschen Mitteleuropa-Konzeptionen', in Plaschka, R. et al. (1995), *Mitteleuropa-Konzeptionen in der Ersten Hälfte der 20. Jahrhunderts*, Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, pp. 63−5, p. 63.

159. Irinyi, K. (1963), *A Naumann-féle 'Mitteleurópa'-tervezet és a Magyar politikai közvélemény*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó; and Irinyi, K. (1973), *Mitteleurópa-tervek és az osztrák-magyar politikai közgondolkodás*, Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó.

160. Civic Radicals did not establish themselves formally as a party nor did they have any representation in the parliament; yet, the movement featured many leading intellectuals and public figures of contemporary Hungary.

161. Jászi, O. (1918), *Der Zusammenbruch des Dualismus und die Zukunft der Donaustaaten*, Wien: Manz; Jászi, O. (1941), 'The Future of Danubia', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 1, pp. 127–47; Jászi, O. (1949), 'Danubia: Old and New', *Proceedings of the American Philosphical Society*, vol. 93, no. 1, pp. 1–31.

162. Szabó, E., Litván, G. and Bak, J. (1982), *Socialism and Social Sscience: Selected Writings of Ervin Szabó, 1877–1918*, London: Routledge, p. 136.

163. Baernreither, J. M. (1915d), 'Tagebuch', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Baernreither, folder 6: entry for 31 October.

164. Diószegi, 'Reaktion', p. 64.

165. Heuss, T. (1949), *Friedrich Naumann: Der mann, das Werk, die Zeit*, Berlin: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, p. 376.

166. Szterényi, J. (1915b), *Die wirtschaftliche Verbindung mit Deutschland*, Warnsdorf: E. Strache.

167. Rajnik, B. (1916), *Die wirstchaftlichen Beziehungen zwischen Österreich und Ungarn und die internationalen Interessen*, Berlin: Schwetschke; and Lukács, G. (1916b), *Die deutsch-österreichisch-ungarischen Handelsbeziehungen*, Göttingen: O. Hapke.

168. Diószegi, 'Reaktion', p. 65.

169. Katzenstein, *Disjointed Partners*, p. 81.

170. Beer, A. (1891), *Die Österreichische Handelspolitik im 19. Jahrhundert*, Vienna: Manz: p. 161

171. Auswärtiges Amt (1885), press excerpt on customs union negotiations, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA, Austria 83, R 8690, doc. no. A6846 and A7046; Reuss, H. (1885b), 'Reuss to Bismarck', 22 August, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, document no. A6846; Auswärtiges Amt (1890), press excerpt on customs union negotiations, October – December, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8690, doc. no. A11627, A12709 (10 articles); Reuss, H. (1890), 'Reuss to Auswärtiges Amt ', 21 August, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA, Austria 83, R 8690, document no. R6965.

172. Tschirschky, 'Tshirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 1 September and 23 October 1914.

173. Dobering, J. (1914b), 'Dobering to Gross', 23 December, attached is a copy of k.u.k. government's censorship order, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Gross, folder 2; and Stolper, G. (1915), 'Das Problem der Zensur', *Der Volkswirt*, 20 January, vol. 7, no. 18, pp. 269–71.

174. Gross, 'Gross to "Verehrter Freund"', 23 August 1914.

175. Beurle, 'Beurle to Gross', 16 September 1914; Dobering, 'Dobering to Gross', 28 August 1914; Freissler, 'Freissler to Gross', 25 August 1914; etc.

176. Liberal politician, member of both houses in various periods, twice a minister of trade (1898 and 1907), later minister without portfolio (1916–17), chairman of *Mitteleuropäischen Wirtschaftsverein* and later *Arbeitsausschusses für Mitteleuropa*.

177. Baernreither, '1914 Tagebuch': entry for 20 September.

178. Licht, S. (1914), 'Licht to Baernreither', 9 October, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Baernreither, folder 49.

179. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 31.

180. Gross, 'Gross to "Verehrter Freund", 23 August 1914.

181. Baernreither, '1914 Tagebuch'; Redlich, J. (1953), *Schicksalsjahre Österreichs, Das politische Tagebuch Josef Redlichs*, Graz and Cologne: Fellner Verlag.

182. Baernreither, '1914 Tagebuch': entries for 3–7 November.

183. Baernreither, '1914 Tagebuch': entry for 17 October.

184. Molisch, P. (1926), *Geschichte der deutschnationalen Bewegung in Oesterreich: von ihren Anfängen bis zum Zerfall der Monarchie*, Jena: Fischer Verlag, p. 240.

185. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, pp. 31, 40.

186. Dobering, J. (1914c), 'Dobering to Gross', 29 November, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Gross, folder 2.

187. Delbrück, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', 23 April 1915.

188. Hohenlohe-Schillings, G. (1915), 'Hohenlohe-Schillings to Andrian', 23 November, German Literature Archive, Nachlass Leopold Andrian, folder 2.

189. Delbrück, 'Delbrück to Bethmann-Hollweg', 23 April 1915.

190. Riedl, R. (1914), 'Zollunion', Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Nachlass R. Riedl, folder 61.

191. Tisza, I. (1915), 'Tisza to Burián', 10 April, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, PA I, box 842.

192. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 101.

193. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 144.

194. Riedl, R. (1915), 'Entwurf eines Zollvereinsvertrages, März 1915', March 1915, Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Nachlass R. Riedl, folder 60; also in Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R2593, microfiches E586002–E586021.

195. Hatzfeld, H. (1915), 'non-addressed letter', 7 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R2593, E585774–E585788; and Zöllner, F. (1915), 'Letter to "Your Excellency"', 31 October, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, A 5598.

196. Ibid., folio E585780.

197. 'Es is für Deutschland ein Glück, dass Franz Ferdinand nicht zur Regierung gekommen ist, denn er war der Hauptvertreter der Idee, dass Österreich-Ungarn einen Anschluss an Russland, England und Frankreich, auch auf Kosten Deutschlands, suchen müsse.' – It is lucky for Germany that Franz Ferdinand did not come to power, because he was the main proponent of the idea that Austria-Hungary has to seek alliance with Russia, England and France, at the expense of Germany. Zöllner, 'Letter to "Your Excellency"', 31 October1915.

198. Indeed, the Pan-German propaganda of Austrian Germans was at its height in the autumn of 1915 (e.g. Baernreither, J. M. (1915), 'Baernreither to Jagow', 24 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8691, A27893; or Jagow, G. (1915), 'Jagow to Baernreither', 25 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Austria 83, R 8691, A27893) and Naumann's Central Europe was fresh off the printing press. Moreover, the same reports as quoted above also highlighted that Austrian Germans looked ever more towards Germany for protection of their interests within monarchy. (Zöllner, 'Letter to "Your Excellency"', 31 October 1915). High food inflation, failures in basic services, post, telegraph and railway were highlighted and suggestions floated that only full unification of Germany could help to alleviate situation. (Hatzfeld, 'non-addressed letter', 7 November 1915: folio E585784.)

199. Jagow, G. (1915c), 'Promemoria 13 November 1915', Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, vol. 2, R 2593, E585811–E585814.

200. Austro-Hungarian Embassy, 'Notiz, 24 November 1915'.

201. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Bethmann-Hollweg', 20 January 1916.

202. The files relating to actual negotiations with Germany are in the Austrian State Archive filed as 'Fach 37: Handelsverträge nach Staaten ab 1909, Karton 94: Deutsche Reich'; by contrast, the corresponding files in the German archives are as

'Auswärtiges Amt – Politisches Archiv, Deutschland 180, Geheim, Europäischer Staatenbund'.

203. Bundesarchiv, Imperial Chancellery files R901/403–7.

204. AA PA Germany 180 European State Federation.

205. Baernreither, '1914 Tagebuch': entry for 28 July.

206. Komjáthy, M. (1966), *Protokolle des Gemeinsamen Ministerrates der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie 1914–1918*, Hungarian State Archive publication no. II/10, Budapest: Hungarian State Archive, p. 191.

207. ÖMRP (1915), 'Protokoll des Gemeinsamen Ministerrates, 18 Juni 1915', Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Inneres MR-Präsidium, ÖMRP (Österreichische Ministerratsprotokolle), box 28.

208. Riedl,'Entwurf'.

209. Plener, E. (1915), no title, 20 July, *Fremdenblatt*, vol 69, no. 199, pp. 2–3.

210. Rauchensteiner, M. (1993), *Der Tod des Doppeladler: Österreich-Ungarn und der Erste Weltkrieg*, Graz: Styria Verlag, p. 277.

211. Treuler, K. G. (1915), 'Treuler to Bethmann-Hollweg', 8 November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2593, E585791–E585793.

212. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 9 November 1915.

213. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 110.

214. Erzberger, 'Erzberger to Bergen', 10 September 1915.

215. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 9 November 1915; and Jagow, G. (1915b), 'Aufzeichung über die Unterredungen mit Baron Burian in Berlin am 10. und 11. November 1915', 14 November, AAPA IA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2593, E585802–E585810.

216. Schlitter, H. (1914), 'Tagesbuch', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Schlitter: entry for 3 November; Zöllner, 'Letter to "Your Excellency"', 31 October1915; and Stolzenberg, R. (1916), 'Stolzenberg to Ludendorff', 4 September, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2596, E568979–E568980.

217. Tisza, 'Tisza to Zimmermann', 30 December 1915; Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 20 January 1916; and Auswärtiges Amt (1916), 'Übersicht über den Sachenstand', November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2596, vol. 4, E569003–E569029.

218. Tschirschky, 'Tschirschky to Foreign Office', 9 November 1915.

219. Finance Minister Engel, Agriculture Minister Zenger, Railway Minister Forster and Trade Minister Schuster.

220. Riedl, R. (1915b), 'Protokoll der Ministerkonferenz vom 24. August 1915', Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Nachlass R. Riedl, folder 61.

221. Baumgartner, C. (1967), *Dr. Alexander Spitzmüller, Freiherr von Marmersbach (1862–1953)*, Vienna: University of Vienna, p. 109.

222. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 195.

223. Baernreither, J. M. (1915b), 'Schema der Beratungen', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Baernreither, folder 30; Marchet, G. (1915), 'file 1915/1916', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Marchet, folder 6; and Redlich, *Schicksalsjahre*, p. 14.

224. Burián, S. (1916), 'Burián to Tisza and Stürgkh', 15 January, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Administrativ Registratur, dept. 37, box 90; and Stürgkh, K. (1916), 'Stürgkh to Burián', 18 January, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Admin. Reg., dept. 37, box 90.

225. Gratz and Schüller, *Mitteleuropäische Pläne*, p. 18.
226. Burián, S. (1916b), 'Burián to Tisza and Stürgkh', 29 February, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Administrativ Registratur, dept. 37, box 90.
227. Stürgkh, 'Stürgkh to Burián', 18 January 1916; and Tisza, I. (1916), 'Tisza to Burián', 26 March, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Admin. Registratur, dept. 37, box 89.
228. HHSA (1916), 'Aufzeichung über die am 27. Mai 1916 im Reichsamt des Innern abgehaltene vorläufige Schlusssitzung, betrefend die Arbeiten zur Vereinheitlichung des Zolltarifschemas', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Admin. Reg., dept. 37, box 89, folder 41c.
229. Naumann, *Central Europe*; Jagow, G. (1916), 'Jagow to Tschirschky', 16 February, AAPA IA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2593, E585928–E585929; and Auswärtiges Amt (1916), 'Übersicht über den Sachenstand', November, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AAPA Germany 180 Secret: European State Federation, R 2596, vol. 4, E569003–E569029.
230. Baernreither, J. M. (1915c), 'Tagebuch', Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Baernreither, folder 5: entry for 9 November.
231. Burián, S. (1915), 'Aufzeichnung Burián', 14 November, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, PA I, box 501.
232. Lersner, 'Lersner to Auswärtiges Amt', 11 October 1917.
233. Schérer, A. and Grunewald, J. (1962), *L'Allemagne et les problèmes de la paix pendant la première guerre mondiale, Documents extraits des archive de l'Office allemande des Affaires étrangères, vol. I: Des origines de la declaration de la guerre sous-marine a outrance (août 1914–janvier 1917)*, Paris: Presses universitaire de France: doc no. 227, 251, 261, 267; also Auswärtiges Amt, 'Übersicht'.
234. AA PA, 'Aufzeichung'.
235. The position of Trade Minister was occupied by Karl Urban, Alexander Spitzmüller took Ministry of Finance and Joseph Maria Baernreither became a minister without portfolio. The position of Foreign Minister went to pro-German Ottokar Czernin.
236. Czernin, O. (1917), minutes of the Czernin–Bethmann-Hollweg meeting, 6 January, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA Germany 180 Secret, R 2596, vol. 4, E569036–E569046.
237. Gratz and Schüller, *Mitteleuropäische Pläne*, p. 21.
238. Redlich, *Schicksalsjahre*, p. 232.
239. Müller, *Annäherung und Abgrenzung*, p. 255.
240. Hindeburg was recorded as threatening Austrians with waging war on them, should they oppose German interests in February 1918. (Kühlmann, R. (1948), *Erinnerungen (1873–1918)*, Heidelberg: Lambert Schneider, p. 516.)
241. ÖMRP (1917), 'Protokoll des Gemeinsamen Ministerrates, 5. Juli 1917', Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Inneres MR-Präsidium, ÖMRP (Österreichische Ministerratsprotokolle), box 28.
242. Gratz, G. (1918), 'Tagebuch', Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Nachlass Gratz, box 7: entries for 23 and 26 January.
243. AA PA, 'Aufzeichung'.
244. Broucek, *Bemühungen*, p. 463; Krizman, 'Tätigkeit', p. 102.
245. Gratz and Schüller, *Mitteleuropäische Pläne*, p. 63.
246. Ibid., p. 93.
247. Riedl, R. (1918), 'Protokoll über die am 2. August im HM frotgesetzte Besprechung über die Richtlinien für die wirtschaftlichen Verhandlungen zwischen Österreich-

Ungarn und Deutschland', Austrian State Archive, Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv, Nachlass R. Riedl, folder 'Salzburger Verhandlungen'.

248. In addition to the Gross episode quoted earlier in the chapter, the Austrian government also warned Gustav Marchet that it did not wish for any public debate on Central Europe at that particular point in time, i.e. 1915, when the enthusiasm for such political projects was at its peek in Germany. See, for example, Hohenlohe-Schillings, G. (1915b), 'Hohenlohe-Schillings to Ballhausplatz', 30 March, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Administrativ Registratur, dept. 34, box 67; and Burián, S. (1925), *Austria in Dissolution*, London: Doran, p. 263. Similarly, István Tisza imposed strict censorship on Central Europe debate in Hungary and suggested that activities of private individuals in this regard should be held back as much as possible in both parts of the monarchy. See, for example, Tisza, I. (1915b), 'Tisza to Plener', 17 April, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Nachlass Plener, folder 43; Tisza, I. (1915c), 'Tisza to Burián', 16 Juli, Austrian State Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Admin. Registratur, dept. 34, box 67; Baernreither, '1915 Tagebuch': entry for 19 April; or Stresemann, G. (1916), 'Discussion with Gustav Gratz', no date, Archive of the German Foreign Office, AA PA, Nachlass Stresemann, folder 158.

249. Redlich, *Schicksalsjahre*, p. 91.

250. Kapp, R. (1984), 'The German Reich and Austria-Hungary in Austro-German Discussions of War Aims, 1914–1916', *Central European History*, vol. 17, no. 2–3, pp. 120–39, p. 132.

251. Baernreither, '1915 Tagebuch': entry for 9 February.

CHAPTER 4 – BRITAIN AND THE UNITED STATES: WHAT THE ENEMY COVETS

1. Bacon, G. W. (1866), *Bacon's New War Map of Central Europe*, London: G. W. Bacon and Co.; Bacon, G. W. (1870), *Bacon's Large Scale Map of the Seat of War in Central Europe*, London: G. W. Bacon & Co.; Philip, G. (1870), *Philips' New Map of Central Europe*, London and Liverpool: George Philip.

2. Bacon *Large Scale Map*; Letts, J. (1870), *Letts's General Map of the Seat of War in Central Europe*, London: Letts, Son & Co.

3. Bartholomew, J. G. (ed.) (1895), *The Times Atlas*, London: The Times Printing House; Philip, G. (1902), *Philips' Select Atlas of Physical and Political Geography*, London: George Philip & Son; Bacon, G. W. (1908), *Bacon's Popular Atlas of the World*, London: G. W. Bacon.

4. Campbell, W. C. (1885), *The New Illustrated Geography and Atlas*, Toronto: C. B. Robinson, p. 84; Bartholomew, J. (1890), *The Library Reference Atlas of the World*, London & New York: Macmillan & Co., p. 28; Nelson, T. (1891a), *The English Imperial Atlas and Gazeteer of the World*, London: T. Nelson & Son, pp. 48–9; Nelson, T. (1891b), *The English Imperial Atlas of the World*, London: T. Nelson & Son, p. 48.

5. For example, compare Johnston, W. and Johnston, A. K. (1866), *Johnstons' Commercial Chart of the World*, Edinburgh: W. & A. K Johnston, Glasgow: James Lumsden & Son, London: E Stanford; and Stanford, E. (1895), *Stanford's Map of Central Europe*, London: E. Stanford. Their early maps of Central Europe were printed in mutual collaboration as noted on the Johnstons' print.

6. For example, Cook, T. (1909), *Cook's Map of Central Europe*, London: Thomas Cook & Son; Stanford, E. (1911), *Stanford's Geological Map of Central Europe*, London: E. Stanford; Philip, G. (1914), *Philips' Map of Central Europe*, London: George Philip & Son.

7. For example, compare Stanford's 1895 and 1911, or Philip's 1870 and 1914 versions.

8. John G. Bartholomew (1860–1920) was one of the foremost Scottish cartographers of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Cartographer to the King, co-founder of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society and its honorary secretary. See H. R. M. (1920), 'Obituary', *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 55, no. 6, pp. 483–4.

9. Bartholomew, J. G. (1892), *Bartholomew's Touring Map of Central Europe*, Edinburgh: Bartholomew & Co.

10. Bartholomew, J. G. (1910), *Bartholomew's Contour Motoring Map of Central Europe*, Edinburgh: Bartholomew & Co.

11. Bartholomew, J. G. (1915), *Bartholomew's Orographical Map of Central Europe Showing Political Boundaries*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh Geographical Institute.

12. Bartholomew, J. G. (1914), *Bartholomew's War Map of Central Europe*, Edinburgh: Bartholomew & Co.; Bartholomew's last map of Central Europe shows Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland. The total shift as compared to the 1892 version is more than 11 degree's east. See Bartholomew, J. G. (ed.) (1920), *The Times Survey Atlas of the World*, London: The Times Printing House.

13. Partsch, *Central Europe*, p. 142.

14. G. G. C. (1904), 'Review: Central Europe by Joseph Partsch', *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 242–4.

15. Helmolt, H. F. (1903), *The History of the World*, New York: Dodds, Mead & Co., p. 1; or reviews of various German concepts, such as George Chisholm's review of Alfred Hettner's *Grundzüge der Länderkunde: Europa*. See Chisholm, G. (1907), 'Reviews: Europe', *Geographical Journal*, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 319–22 and Hettner, A. (1907), *Grundzüge der Länderkunde: Europa*, vol. 1, Leipzig: Verlag von Otto Spamer.

16. Foreign Office (1916), 'What Germany Covets', no date, elaborated by A. Chéradame, British National Archives, FO 925/30277.

17. Venier, P. (2004), 'The geographical pivot of history and early twentieth century geopolitical culture', *The Geographical Journal*, vol. 170, no. 4, pp. 330–6, p. 331; see also Green, E. H. H. (2006), *Balfour*, London: Haus Publishing, p. 33; Williams, R. (1991), *Defending the Empire: The Conservative Party and British Defence Policy, 1899– 1914*, London: Ashfield.

18. Williamson, S. R. (1969), *The Politics of Grand Strategy: Britain and France Prepare for War, 1904–1914*, Cambridge (Massachusetts): Harvard University Press, p. 3.

19. Foreign Office (1905), 'Memorandum respecting the relations between Germany and Great Britain, 1892–1904', in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, pp. 193–223; and Sanderson, T. H. (1907), 'Observations by Lord Sanderson on printed Memorandum of January 1907 on relations with France and Germany', date in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, pp. 418–29.

20. Tomes, J. (2002), *Balfour and Foreign Policy: The International Thought of a Conservative States*man, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 134.

21. Fontana, R. and Edwards, J. (1996), *War, Culture, and the Media: Representations of the Military in 20th Century Britain*, Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, p. 39.

22. Lascelles, F. (1905), 'Lascelles to Lansdowne', 12 June, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, doc. 184, pp. 236–7.

23. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals*.

24. Mackinder, 'Pivot'.

25. Ibid., p. 429.

26. Ibid., p. 437.

27. In his first mention, Mackinder remarked how Russia 'in the world at large... occupies the central strategical position held by Germany in Europe'. The second mention identified Germany as a country of 'a great inner crescent'.

28. Mackinder, *Democratic Ideals* and Mackinder, H. J. (1943), 'The round world and the winning of the peace', *Foreign Affai*rs, vol. 21, no. 4, pp. 595–605.

29. Mackinder, 'Pivot', p. 436.

30. Ibid., p. 437.

31. Ibid., p. 436.

32. Mackinder, H. J. (1902), *Britain and the British Seas*, London: Heinemann.

33. Vernier, 'The geographical pivot', p. 333; Heffernan, M. (1998), *The Meaning of Europe*, London: Arnold, p. 55; and Toal, G. (1992), 'Putting Mackinder in his place: Material transformations and myth', *Political Geography*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 100–18.

34. Letts, *Seat of War*.

35. Mackinder, 'Pivot', p. 435.

36. Reginald Tower was a Minister-resident in Munich 1903–6.

37. Tower, R. (1906), 'Tower to E. Grey', 24 January, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, doc no. 213, pp. 274–8.

38. Viceroy of India 1888–94, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1900–5.

39. Lansdowne, H. (1903), 'Lansdowne to Sir C. Scott', 14 April, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, pp. 217–18.

40. Fairfax Cartwright was a Minister-Resident in Munich 1906 – 1908 and Ambassador to Vienna 1908–13.

41. Cartwright, F. (1906), 'Cartwright to Grey', 20 August, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, doc. 238, pp. 312–14.

42. Cartwright, F. (1908), 'Cartwright to Grey: Germany – Annual Report 1907', 8 January, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1898–1907*, London: HMSO, doc. 242, pp. 398–416.

43. de Salis, J. (1909), 'de Salis to Grey', 1 October, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 5, pp. 18–19.

44. de Salis, J. (1909b), 'de Salis to Grey', 8 October, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 7, pp. 20–1.

45. Goschen, W. E. (1912), 'Goschen to Grey: Annual Report, Germany, 1911', 21 February, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1908–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 162, pp. 262–93.

46. Goschen, W. E. (1913), 'Goschen to Grey: Annual Report, Germany, 1912', 19 December, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1908–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 186, pp. 330–62.

47. Goschen, 'Annual Report 1911'.

48. Goschen, W. E. (1910), 'Goschen to Grey', 4 February, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1908–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 20, pp. 54–5.

49. Goschen, W. E. (1910b), 'Goschen to Grey: Annual Report, Germany, 1909', 21 June, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany, 1908–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 38, pp. 83–106.

50. Goluchowski, A. M. (1901), 'Goluchowski to Deym', private letter, 11 April, Austrian National Archive, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Politisches Archiv, Series I, box 476.

51. Plunkett, H. (1905), 'Plunkett to Landsowne', 5 May, British National Archives, FO 7/1362, dispatch no. 106.

52. Goschen, W. E. (1905), 'Goschen to Grey', private letter, 13 December, British National Archives, FO 7/1363, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany 1898–1907*, London: HMSO.

53. Goschen, W. E. (1907), 'Austria-Hungary in 1906–Annual Report', 8 March, British National Archives, Foreign Office Confidential Print 8916, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany 1898–1907*, London: HMSO; Goschen, W. E. (1908), 'Austria-Hungary in 1907 – Annual Report', 11 May, British National Archives, Foreign Office Confidential Print 9268, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, Germany 1908–1914*, London: HMSO; Cartwright, F. et al. (1909), 'Austria-Hungary in 1908 – Annual Report', 1 February, British National Archives, Foreign Office Confidential Print 9418, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, The Habsburg Monarchy 1905–1909*, London: HMSO, pp. 268–92; and Cartwright, F. et al. (1911), 'Austria-Hungary in 1910–Annual Report', 1 January, British National Archives, Foreign Office Confidential Print 9771, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, The Habsburg Monarchy, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO, pp. 74–128.

54. Hardinge, C. (1909), 'Hardinge to Cartwrigth', private letter, 4 May, Hardinge MSS, Cambridge University Library; Cartwright, F. (1910), 'Cartwright to Grey', 7 January, British National Archives, FO 120/874, dispatch 4, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, The Habsburg Monarchy, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO.

55. Cartwright, F. (1909), 'Cartwright to Grey', 15 May, British National Archives, FO 371/600, dispatch 88 in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, The Habsburg Monarchy, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO.

56. Cartwright, F. (1909b), 'Cartwright to Grey', 14 April, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs of Austria-Hungary, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 144, pp. 303–4.

57. Crampton, R. J. (1971), The Diplomatic Relations Between Great Britain and Germany in the Balkans and Eastern Mediterranean from the Agadir Crisis to the Murder at Sarajevo, London, PhD thesis, p. 208.

58. Grey, E. (1914), 'Grey to de Bunsen', 27 July, British National Archives, FO 371/2159, dispatch 124, no folio number.

59. Cartwright, F. (1911a), 'Cartwright to Grey', 7 February, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, The Habsburg Monarchy, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 75, pp. 141–3; and, Cartwright, F. (1911b), 'Cartwright to Grey', 21 January, in Stevenson, D. (1990), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs, The Habsburg Monarchy, 1909–1914*, London: HMSO, doc. 74, pp. 139–41. Interestingly, Cartwright drew much of his information in this regard from Karel Kramář, who was also the major source of information for Chéradame and other authors pointing out the danger of German eastward expansion.

60. Goschen, 'Annual Report 1909'.

61. Cartwright, 'Cartwright to Grey', 7 February 1911.

62. Cartwright, 'Cartwright to Grey', 21 January 1911.

63. Seton-Watson, 'Future of Bohemia'.

64. Spring-Rice, C. (1914), 'Spring-Rice to Grey', 2 November, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. 69 905, folios 90–3; Clerk, G. R. (1914), minute, 'Spring-Rice to Grey', 12 November, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. 69 905, folio 90; and Rodd, R. (1914), 'Jugo-Slav Emigrants', 31 December, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. 88 470, folios 149–50.

65. Elliot, J. (1914), 'Hungary and Separate Peace', 28 December, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. 84 159, folios 143–4; and Foreign Office (1914), 'Hungary', 12 November, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. 70 387, folios 130–1.

66. de Bunsen, M. (1915), 'Future of Austria-Hungary: Conversation with Mr. Masaryk resp. formation of northern and southern Slav States', British National Archives, FO 371/2241, doc. 58 359, folios 105−18; Clerk, G. R. (1915), minute, 'Bohemia', 3 May, British National Archives, FO 371/2241, doc. 53 297, folio 93; and Foreign Office (1915) 'The South Slavs', 12 October, British National Archives, FO 371/2241, doc. 149 001, folios 175−9.

67. Clerk, G. R. (1915b), minute, 'Future of Austria-Hungary: Conversation with Mr. Masaryk resp. formation of northern and southern Slav States', 10 May, British National Archives, FO 371/1900, doc. 58 359, folios 105−18; Foreign Office (1915b), 'Intelligence as to matters in Dalmatia', 18 August, British National Archives, FO 371/2241, doc. 115 057, folios 146−50.

68. For example, Supilo, F. (1915), 'The Southern Slavs', 12 January, British National Archives, FO 371/2241, doc. 4 404, folios 7−15.

69. Dmowski, R. (1917), 'Dmowski to Sharp (United States ambassador to France)', 13 November; US GPO (1931), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1917, Supplement 1*, The World War, Washington: US GPO, pp. 786−90.

70. Clerk, 'Future of Austria-Hungary'.

71. George Russell Clerk was a diplomat and privy councillor, and later an ambassador to the Czechoslovak Republic.

72. The de Bunsen Committee was set up to determine British policy towards the Ottoman Empire. The committee suggested federalization of the empire, a solution which the government also favoured in the case of Austria-Hungary until late in the war.

73. Tyrrell, W. and Paget, R. (1916), 'Suggested basis for a territorial settlement in Europe', September 1916, British National Archives, CAB 29/1, Very secret, folios 94−102.

74. Foreign Office, 'What Germany Covets'.

75. Ibid.

76. Ibid.

77. Beak, G. G. (1917), 'Beak to Langley', 26 August, British National Archives, FO 371/2864, doc. 166 490, folios 39−42; Rumbold, H. (1917), 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 5 December, British National Archives, FO 371/2864, doc. 230 982, folios 170−1; and Clerk, G. R. (1917), minute, 'Beak to Langley', 27 August, British National Archives, FO 371/2864, doc. 166 490, folios 39−42.

78. Robert Cecil was the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for much of World War I (30 May 1915−10 January 1919).

79. Cecil, R. (1916), minute, 'Suggested basis for a territorial settlement in Europe', September 1916, Very secret, British National Archives, CAB 29/1, folio 93.

80. Spring-Rice, 'Spring-Rice to Grey', 2 November 1914.

81. Patterson, H. K. (1916), 'Patterson to Foreign Office', British National Archives, FO 371/2602, doc no. 128 041, pp. 143−6; and Rumbold, H. (1918), 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 11 June, British National Archives, FO 371/3133, doc. 104 207, folios 400−5.

82. Franz Josef I died in November 1916.

83. Rumbold, H. (1918d), 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 13 February, British National Archives, FO 371/ 3133, doc. 24 390, folios 174−80.

84. Amery, L. (1918), 'The Austro-Hungarian Problem', in 'Czecho-Slovak demands', 24 October, British National Archives, FO 371/3136, doc. no. 177 223, folios 305−10.

85. For example, Smuts, 'Report'.

86. Foreign Office (1918), 'Czech Government', 22 July, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 127 473, folios 414−33.

87. Amery, L. (1953), *My Political Life: Volume Two: War and Peace. 1914−1929*, London: Hutchinson, p. 162.

88. Amery, 'The Austro-Hungarian Problem', p. 308.
89. Ibid., pp. 307−8.
90. Ibid., p. 308.
91. Namier, L. B. (1918), minute, 'Czecho-Slovak demands', 24 October, British National Archives, FO 371/3136, doc. no. 177 223, folios 298−300; and Cecil, R. (1918b), minute (b), 'Czecho-Slovak demands', 24 October, British National Archives, FO 371/3136, doc. no. 177 223, folio 300.
92. Cecil, R. (1918a), minute (a), 'Czecho-Slovak demands', 24 October, British National Archives, FO 371/3136, doc. no. 177 223, folio 297.
93. Clerk, 'Bohemia'; 'Future of Austria Hungary'; and 'Clerk to Hardinge', 26 October 1917.
94. J. C. Smuts, who negotiated on behalf of Britain, wrote in his report on negotiations that he assured his counterpart that 'we had no intentions of interfering in [Austria's] internal affairs, but we recognized that if Austria could become a really liberal Empire, in which her subject peoples would, as far as possible, be satisfied and content, she would become for Central Europe very much what the British Empire had become for the rest of the world ... and she would have a mission in the future even greater than her mission in the past.' Smuts, J. C. (1917), 'Report of General Smut's mission', 19 December, British National Archives, FO 371/2864, doc. 246 162, folios 215−48, p. 21.
95. Foreign Office (1916b), 'Separation of Austria-Hungary from Germany', 3 July, British National Archives, FO 371/2602, doc. no. 128 041, various letter exchanges, folios 146−59.
96. Lloyd George, D. (1935), *War Memoirs*, vol. II, London: Nicholson & Watson, p. 1184.
97. Smuts, 'Report'; Rumbold, H. (1918c), 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 4 February, British National Archives, FO 371/ 3133, doc. 21 231, folios 161−3; and Rumbold, 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 13 February 1918.
98. PID FO (1918), 'Memorandum on certain points in the basis for the prospective new Austro-German Alliance', 30 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3443, doc. 98 527, folios 601−9.
99. Rumbold, 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 11 June 1918.
100. Rumbold, H. (1918b), 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 19 June, British National Archives, FO 371/3133, doc. 113 406, folios 406−13.
101. Smuts, 'Report'.
102. Clerk, G. R. (1917b), 'Clerk to Hardinge', 26 October, British National Archives, FO 371/2064, doc. 207 244, folios 312−35, p. 313.
103. Granville, C. (1918), 'Granville to Northcliffe', 9 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 82 126, folios 60−7.
104. Clerk, G. R. (1916), 'Clerk to Hardinge', 11 August, British National Archives, FO 371/2602, doc. no. 157 810, folios 165−6.
105. Cecil, R. (1918c), 'Cecil to Clemenceau', 18 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3443, doc. 89 881, folios 57−62; and Cecil, R. (1918e), minute, 'Czecho-Slovak movement', 20 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc 89 425, folio 101 and reverse.
106. Clerk, 'Clerk to Hardinge', 26 October 1917; Hardinge, C. (1918), minute, 'Jovanovitch to Balfour', 14 June, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 106 348, folio 202; and Lloyd George, D. (1918), minute, 'Recognition of Czecho-Slovak National Council', 6 August, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 135 903, folio 518.
107. Cecil, R. (1918f), minute, 'Agreement between H. M. G. and Czecho Slovak National Council', 5 September, British National Archives, FO 371/3136, doc. 152 102, folio 86.
108. Granville, 'Granville to Northcliffe', 9 May1918; Cecil, 'Cecil to Clemenceau', 18 May 1918; and Cecil, R. (1918d), 'Allied intervention in Siberia', 18 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3443, doc. 89 880, folios 55−6.

109. Foreign Office (1918b), 'Recognition of Czecho-Slovak National Council', 6 August, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 135 903, folios 518−80.

110. Cecil, 'Allied intervention in Siberia'.

111. Foreign Office, 'Czech Government'; Foreign Office, 'Recognition'; and Foreign Office (1918c), 'Gratitude of Czecho-Slovaks', 13 August, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 139 628, folios 589−97.

112. Beneš, aware of the British concerns over the viability of small nation-states, even submitted a proposal for a new 'Pro-Entente Central Europe' consisting of two federations, a plan he would later return to during World War II. See Beneš, E. (1918), 'Pro-Entente Central Europe', 20 May, British National Archives, FO 371/3135, doc. 89 645, folios 130−3.

113. Namier, 'Czecho-Slovak demands'.

114. Indeed, occasional mentions of Central Europe did appear as general and vaguely defined geographical descriptions, such as in a work of A. T. Hadley on railroad transport history. See Hadley, *Railroad Transportation.*

115. Guyot, A. (1866), *Primer or Introduction to the Study of Geography*, Guyot's Geographical Series, New York: Charles Scribner & Co., pp. 85−6.

116. Ibid., p. 89.

117. Guyot, A. (1870), *Central Europe: Wall-Atlas by A. Guyot*, New York: Scribner & Co.

118. Cram, G. F. (1887), *Cram's Unrivaled Atlas of the World*, Chicago (Illinois): Henry S. Stebbins; Grant, A. A. (1887), *Grant's Rail Road & Business Atlas: World Edition*, New York: A. A. Grant; and ELAS (c1899), *New Concise Atlas of the World*, New York: The Equitable Life Assurance Society of the United States.

119. Reinsch, P. S. (1900), *World Politics at the End of the 19th Century*, London: Macmillan.

120. Ibid., p. 292.

121. Ibid., p. 293.

122. Ibid., p. 289.

123. Peary, R. E. (1903), 'Book Notices: Central Europe by Joseph Partsch', *Society*, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 418−19.

124. Shaw, A. (1911), 'Progress of the world: Militarism in Central Europe', *The American Review of Reviews*, vol. 43, January, pp. 28−9.

125. Ibid., p. 28.

126. Lea, H. (1912), *The Day of the Saxon*, New York & London: Harper & Brothers, pp. 132−5.

127. For example, Naumann, *Central Europe* and Chéradame 'What Germany Covets'.

128. Schapiro, J. S. (1918), *Modern and Contemporary European History*, Boston, New York and Chicago: Houghton Mifflin Co.

129. House, E. M. and Seymour, C. (1921), *What Really Happened at Paris*, London: Hodder & Stoughton, p. 3; Seymour, C. (1928), *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, Vol. 2: From Neutrality to War, 1915−1917*, London: Ernest Benn: pp. 148−9; and Lansing, R. (1918), 'Lansing to Morris', 3 September, in US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement 1, The World War*, vol. 1, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72/11343c, pp. 824−5.

130. House and Seymour, *What Really Happened*, p. 5. This statement perhaps expresses House's definition of Central Europe better than the bulk of the work of the Inquiry, as only about 500 items from the total of 1200 in the holdings of the Inquiry archives deal with areas included in this outline and the work focusing on Latin America was somewhat out of proportion to its involvement in the war. See Gefland, L. E. (1963), *The Inquiry: American Preparations for Peace, 1917−1919*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, pp. 46, 185.

131. The Inquiry (1918), 'A Suggested Statement of Peace Terms Revised and Enlarged from the Memorandum of December 22, 1917', 2 January, US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no M1107, Microfilm roll 16, doc. 246.

132. Wilson, W. (1918b), 'Fourteen Points Speech', *New York Times*, 9 January 1918, p. 1.

133. House and Seymour, *What Really Happened*.

134. Appendix 29.

135. Kerner, R. J. (1918d), 'The German and Austrian Solutions to the Near Eastern Question', US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, Microfilm roll 17, doc. 314.

136. Kerner, R. J. (1918c), 'Memorandum: A Brief Sketch of the Political Movement Among Jugo-Slavs Towards the Federalisation or Dismemberment of Austria-Hungary', US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, Microfilm roll 17, doc. 310.

137. Hershey, A. S. and Anderson, F. M. (1918), 'Diplomatic History Since 1870', US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, Microfilm roll 1, doc. 9, pp. 124–5.

138. Beer, G. (1918), 'The Future of Mesopotamia', US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, microfilm roll 5, doc. 52.

139. Chéradame, A. (1918), 'Maintenance of the Austrian Empire', US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, microfilm roll 5, doc. 38.

140. Masaryk, T. G. (1918d), 'Literature of Pangermanism', US National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, microfilm roll 21, doc. 372; and Shotwell, J. T. (1937), *At the Paris Peace Conference*, New York: Macmillan: pp. 10–11.

141. Seton-Watson, R. W. (1918), 'Austrian School Laws and Administration Regulations', United States National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, microfilm roll 21, doc. 383.

142. Masaryk, Literature of Pangermanism'.

143. Gefland, *Inquiry*, p. 132.

144. Kerner, R. J. (1918b), 'Memorandum: A Brief Sketch of the Political Movement of the Czecho-Slovaks Tending Towards the Federalisation or Dismemberment of Austria-Hungary', United States National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, Microfilm roll 17, doc. 305; and 'Memorandum ... Jugo-Slavs'.

145. Kerner, R. J. (1918), 'Czech Minorities in Bohemia: A Statistical Survey', United States National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no M1107, Microfilm roll 17, doc. 307. After the war Masaryk noted the Kerner was working 'on our behalf', see Masaryk, *Světová revoluce*.

146. Kerner, 'Memorandum ... Jugo-Slavs', p. 18.

147. Kerner, 'German and Austrian Solutions'.

148. Ibid.

149. Kerner, R. J. (1918e), 'The Political Effect of the Austrian, Russian, and Buffer-State Solution of the Polish Question upon the Economic Relations of Austria-Hungary with her Neighbors', United States National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, Microfilm roll 17, doc. 312, p. 14.

150. Bohemian National Alliance in America (1918), 'Memorandum', United States National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, microfilm roll 6, doc. 63.

151. House and Seymour, *What Really Happened*, p. 4.

152. Kerner, 'German and Austrian Solutions', p. 10.

153. Gefland, *Inquiry*, pp. 200–3.

154. For example, Dmowski, 'Dmowski to Sharp', 13 November 1917; and League for Liberation of Carpatho-Russia (1918), 'Note', 10 September, United States National Archives, The Inquiry Papers, file no. M1107, microfilm roll 18, doc. 332.

155. Wilson, W. (1917b), 'Flag Day Address, 14 June 1917', available at: http://wwl2. dataformat.com/HTML/30696.htm, accessed on 10 September 2012.

156. House, E. M. (1916), 'House to Wilson', 3 February, in Seymour, C. (1928), *The Intimate Papers of Colonel House, Vol. 2: From Neutrality to War, 1915–1917*, London: Ernest Benn, pp. 148–9.

157. Martin, G. J. (1980), *The Life and Thought of Isaiah Bowman*, Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, pp. 12–13.

158. The Inquiry, 'Suggested Statement'.

159. Hodgson, G. (2008), *Woodrow Wilson's Right Hand: The Life of Colonel Edward M. House*, New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

160. Compare The Inquiry 'Suggested Statement', and Wilson, W. (1918), 'Address of the President of the United States Delivered at a Joint Session of the Two Houses of Congress, January 8, 1918', in United States GPO (1933) *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement 1, The World War*, vol. 1, Washington: United States GPO, doc. 763.72119/1078, pp. 12–17; also see Gefland, *Inquiry*, pp. 134–48.

161. Mamatey, M. (1957), *The United States and East Central Europe*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 173.

162. Gefland, *Inquiry*, p. 139.

163. For example, *Chicago Tribune* (1918), 'Wilson Looms Big in Austrian Fall', 8 November, *Chicago Tribune*, vol. 70, p. 6; or Hacohen, M. H. (2002), *Karl Popper: Formative Years*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

164. Wilson, 'Address'.

165. Wilson, W. (1917), 'Wilson to Page', 8 February, in US GPO (1931), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1917, Supplement 1, The World War*, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72119/483A, pp. 40–1; and Page, N. (1917), 'Page to Lansing', 11 February, in US GPO (1931), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1917, Supplement 1*, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72119/488, pp. 41–3.

166. Lloyd George, D. (1937), *War Memoirs*, vol. V, London: Nicholson & Watson, p. 26; Lloyd George, D. (1918b), 'Address before the Trade Union Conference at London', 5 January, in US GPO (1933) *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement 1*, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72119/1078, pp. 4–12; and Unterberger, *United States*, p. 91.

167. Richard Crane was a son of Charles Crane – American industrialist, sponsor and friend of President Wilson – who was Masaryk's admirer. Richard's sister, Frances, married Masaryk's son, Jan, future foreign minister of Czechoslovakia. Charles Crane also lobbied the president in Masaryk's favour; however, Wilson twice refused to see Masaryk, after reading his memorandum on Russia, which apparently displeased him. See Kalina, A. S. (1982), *Boj o Československo*, Lakewood, Ohio: samizdat (copy available in the British Library).

168. For example, Frasier, C. (1918), 'Frasier (diplomatic liaison officer with the Supreme War Council) to Lansing', 28 May, in US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement 1, The World War*, vol. 1, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72119/1600.

169. Page, N. (1918), 'Page to Lansing', 3 May, in US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement 1, The World War*, vol. 1, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72119/1078, doc. 763.72119/1509; and Stovall, P. A. (1918), 'Stovall to Lansing', 16 May, in US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1918, Supplement 1, The World War*, vol. 1, Washington: US GPO, doc. 763.72119/1660.

170. Lansing, R. (1918b), 'Memorandum on Absolutism and Bolshevism', 28 October, Lansing MSS, Library of Congress, quoted in Gefland, *Inquiry.*

171. Appendix 30.

172. Coolidge, A. C. (1919), 'Coolidge to the Commission to Negotiate Peace', 12 January, in US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919*, vol. 2, Washington: US GPO, doc. 184.01102/7, pp. 233–4; and Heffernan, M. (1999), 'Inaugurating the American century: "New World" perspectives on the "Old" in the early twentieth century', in Slater, D. and Taylor, P. J. (1999), *The American Century: Consensus and Coercion in the Projection of American Power*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 117–35.

173. Masaryk, 'Masaryk to Lansing', 18 October 1918.

174. 'House je v srdci pacifista, ale pochopil náš program a akceptoval. [. . .]má zájem v Mid-European Union: rozbití Rakouska je jim jen negace, žádají pozitivní konstrukci.' – Masaryk, T. G. (1918b), 'Masaryk to Beneš', 31 October, reproduced in Šolle, Z. (1994), *Masaryk a Beneš*, vol. III, pp. 122–3, Prague: Akademie Věd ČR.

175. *New York Times* (1918), 'Cementing the wall', *New York Times*, 13 October, p. 11.

176. *Philadelphia Public Ledger* (1918), 'Born in Philadelphia, a Safe Mitteleuropa', 27 October, *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, p. 3.

177. Similar concepts appeared in the United States press at around the same time. For example, Cram, R. A. (1918), *A Plan for the Settlement of Middle Europe on the Principle of Partition without Annexation*, Boston: Marshall Jones Co.

178. This meeting took place only two days after United States recognition of CNC, supporting the thesis that the recognition and promise of the creation of a regional federation were in fact linked.

179. Miller, H. A. (1918), 'Minutes of the Union, 3 October', 3 October, Miller papers, as quoted in May, A. J. (1957), 'H. A. Miller and the Mid-European Union of 1918', *The American Slavic and East European Review*, vol. 16, pp. 473–88.

180. Mid-European Union (1918), 'Declaration of Common Aims of the Mid-European Nations', 26 October, VHA Prague, ČSNR III – Paříž, propagační odbor – USA, box 51, no page number.

181. May, A. J. (1957), 'H. A. Miller and the Mid-European Union of 1918', *The American Slavic and East European Review*, vol. 16, pp. 473–88.

182. Mid-European Union, 'Declaration'.

183. Masaryk, *Světová revoluce*, p. 289.

184. Coolidge, A. C. (1918), 'Coolidge to the Commission to Negotiate Peace', 31 December, in US GPO (1933), *Papers Relating to Foreign Relations of the United States, 1919*, vol. 2, Washington: US GPO, doc. 184.01102/3, p. 220.

185. House and Seymour, *What Really Happened*, p. 90.

186. Partsch, *Central Europe*.

187. Reinsch, *World Politics*.

188. In France, Beneš's work was aided by the fact that the French public was familiar with the idea of small nations as an ally in their anti-German fight, through the works of Andre Chéradame and other publicists (Abrams 'Austrian question', p. 189; Lefranc, A. [Chéradame] (1898), 'L'empire allemande et les affairs autrichiennes', *Revue de droit public*, January, pp. 32–8; Chéradame, A. (1900), 'Le movement pangermaniste', *Revue hebdomadaire*, in three parts: 17 and 24 March and 7 April; Henry, 'La monarchie habsbourgeoise') and the French government was eager to enlist emigré Czechs and Slovaks to foster her ranks at the front. (See Unterberger *United States*, p. 62.) Negotiations for recognition of supreme authority of the CNC over Czech and Slovak soldiers were opened as early as spring 1917. A letter intercepted by the British

intelligence services suggests that this step was motivated by the fact that CNC offered the French government 40,000-men strong fighting power in summer 1916. See Masaryk, T. G. (1916), 'Copy of a translation of intercepted letter', British National Archives, FO 317/2602, doc: 172 477, 19 August, folios 137–9. Yet, at the same time, the French government, just like the British and the American one, was in secret talks with the Austrian Emperor on the possibility of a separate peace. This would ensure the Empire's survival, likely in the federated form, and frustrate the hopes of Masaryk and his colleagues.

CHAPTER 5 – CENTRAL EUROPE 1880–1918: UNSUCCESSFUL EXERCISES IN GEOPOLITICS

1. For example, Meyer, *Mitteleuropa* andBrechtefeld, *Mitteleuropa*.
2. For example, Bruck, 'Vorschläge', 'Wien' and 'Denkschrift'.
3. Frantz, Föderalismus; Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften–Zweiter Band*.
4. Wagner, *Lehrbuch* (1883 edition); Brentano, 'Handelspolitik'; Penck, *Deutsche Reich*; Ratzel, *Deutschland* (1898 edition); and Volz, *Geographie*.
5. Ratzel, 'Studien'; Hözel, 'geographische Individuum'.
6. Frantz, *Föderalismus*; Ratzel, 'Studien'.
7. Frantz, *Weltpolitik*; Lagarde *Deutsche Schriften–Zweiter Band*; Partsch, *Central Europe*.
8. Ratzel, 'Mitteleuropa mit Frankreich'.
9. Partsch, *Central Europe.*
10. Frantz, *Weltpolitik.*
11. For example, Sartorius, 'Beiträge'.
12. For example, Albrecht Penck himself.
13. For example, Peez, *Handelspolitik.*
14. Partsch, *Central Europe*, p. 142.
15. Ibid.
16. Jagow, 'Jagow to Baernreither', 25 September 1915; Austro-Hungarian Embassy, 'Notiz, 24 November 1915'.
17. Luxburg, 'Luxburg to Bethmann-Hollweg', 25 November 1915; Kühlmann, 'Kühlmann to Bethmann-Hollweg', 15 May 1916.
18. AA PA, 1917.
19. See files in German Federal Archive folder R43/405–7.
20. See files in German Federal Archive folder R 2593–8.
21. For example, see files in the Archive of the German Foreign Office folder AA PA, Austria 83, R 8690.
22. For example, Reuss, 'Reuss to Auswärtiges Amt', 16 May 1885.
23. AA PA, 'Stand der Verhandlungen', E569131.
24. This distinction is also visible in the treatment of the eventual negotiations with Germany, which remain filed as trade agreement negotiations, in sharp contrast to German filing of same documents under 'Central European State Union'.
25. Tower, 'Tower to E. Grey', 24 January 1906.
26. Cartwright, 'Cartwright to Grey', 14 April 1909.
27. Tyrrell and Paget, 'Suggested basis'.
28. Rumbold, 'Rumbold to Foreign Office', 11 and 19 June 1918.
29. Cecil, 'Agreement'.
30. Chéradame, 'What Germany Covets'.
31. The Inquiry, 'Suggested Statement.

32. House and Seymour, *What Really Happened.*

33. Masaryk, 'Masaryk to Beneš', 31 October 1918.

CHAPTER 6 – VARIATIONS IN TIME AND SPACE

1. Graham, M. W. (1924), *New Governments of Central Europe*, London: Pitman & Sons.

2. Roberts, K. L. (1922), *Why Europe Leaves Home: A True Account of the Reasons Which Cause Central Europeans to Overrun America*, Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

3. Schreiner, G. A. (1920), *The Craft Sinister; A Diplomatico-Political History of the Great War and its Causes*, New York: G. A. Geyer.

4. Doreff, P. (1921), *A View on the Policy of Great Britain in the Near East and Central Europe*, London: Waterlow & Sons.

5. In the case of Schreiner and Doreff, the use of the notion of Central Europe is slightly inconsistent at some places; however, in general, they do equate it with the former territories of Austria-Hungary, sometimes including the Balkan states as well.

6. Steiner, Z. (2005), *The Lights that Failed: European International History, 1919–1933*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

7. Ashmead-Bartlett, E. (1923), *The Tragedy of Central Europe*, London: Butterworth.

8. Ibid., p. 295.

9. For example, on page 300 Ashmead-Bartlett wrote: 'each State has, in fact become a water-tight compartment of racial hate and economic ruin and chaos', while he devoted several pages directly preceding this line to description of Czechoslovak economic prosperity and monetary soundness.

10. Ibid., pp. 306, 310.

11. Ibid., p. 296.

12. Ibid., p. 294.

13. Ibid.

14. Ibid., pp. 294, 306, 307.

15. Batonyi, G. (1999), 'Seton-Watson, R. W.', in Boyd, K. (1999), *Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing*, London: Taylor & Francis, pp. 1085–6.

16. Even though both Mackinder and Seton-Watson largely lost their influence on policy-makers, they remained influential in academic circles and within the anti-appeasement camp. See Batonyi, 'Seton-Watson', pp. 1085–6.

17. Toal, G. and Dalby, S. and P. Routledge (1998), *The Geopolitics Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, p. 18.

18. Blouet, B. W. (1987), *Halford Mackinder: A Biography*, Texas: A&M University Press, p. 182.

19. Grayson, R. (1997), *Austen Chamberlain and the Commitment to Europe: British Foreign Policy 1924–1929*, London: Routledge, pp. 253–6.

20. Medlicott, W. N. et al. (1981), *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939*, vol. XXII, London: HMSO, p. x.

21. This constrasts sharply with the lack of interest in the region on the part of the United States policy-makers, where an isolationist stance translated into disengagement with affairs of the small nations on the European continent.

22. Lindley, F. (1921), 'Lindley to Curzon', 1 February, British National Archives, FO 371, C 2034/75/3, telegram no. 27, in Medlicott et al., *Documents*; and Lindley, F. (1921b), 'Lindley to Curzon', 31 May, British National Archives, FO 371, C 11426/1383/3, telegram no. 141, in Medlicott et al., *Documents.*

23. Foreign Office (1921), 'Memorandum: On Reparation Commission's proposals for relief of Austria, and withdrawal from Austria of the Military Mission of Control', 21 January,

British National Archives, FO 371, C 2479/75/3 in Medlicott et al., *Documents*; and Treasury (1921); 'Treasury to Foreign Office', 21 March, British National Archives, FO 371, C 5916/75/3, in Medlicott et al., *Documents*; Geddes, A. (1921), 'Geddes to Curzon', 6 July, British National Archives, FO 371, C 13916/75/3, telegram no. 461, in Medlicott et al., *Documents*; and Curzon, G. (1921), 'Curzon to Balfour', 23 December, British National Archives, FO 371, C 23964/75/3, telegram no. 149, in Medlicott et al., *Documents*.

24. Hohler, T. (1921a), 'Hohler to Curzon', 29 March, British National Archives, FO 371, C 6850/180/21, telegram no. 159, in Medlicott et al., *Documents;* and Hohler, T. (1921b), 'Hohler to Curzon', 22 October, British National Archives, FO 371, C 20161/180/21, telegram no. 348, in Medlicott et al., *Documents.*

25. Clerk, G. R. (1921a), 'Clerk to Curzon', 29 June, British National Archives, FO 371, C 13722/12641/21, telegram no. 156, in Medlicott et al. *Documents*; and Clerk, G. R. (1921b), 'Clerk to Curzon', 24 October, British National Archives, FO 371, C 20367/180/21, telegram no. 133, in Medlicott et al., *Documents.*

26. Chamberlain, A. (1925), 'Mr. Chamberlain, to Lord Crewe (Paris)', 5 March 1925 in National Archive file: FO 371, C 2716/298/3, letter no. 775, in Medlicott et al., *Documents.*

27. Steiner, *Lights*, p. 289.

28. Meyer, H. C. (1946), 'Mitteleuropa in German Political Geography', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, vol. 36, no. 3, pp. 178–94, p. 189.

29. Of course, the discussion of Central Europe in Germany was not limited to this journal. Notable works on the topic were published in other journals and as independent volumes. However, the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* offers the most concise discussion and largest number of the various concepts of Central Europe, allowing a comparison and analysis of the development of the discourse across the interwar period. Moreover, the comparison of the list of authors publishing their concepts of Central Europe in and outside the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* shows a high level of similarity. This suggests that notable authors writing on Central Europe outside *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* would have been invited to present their views in the journal, as it was the leading medium carrying the discussion of the topic.

30. Spahn, 'Mitteleuropa'.

31. 'Die durch die Versailler Friedenserpressung hergestellte Internationalisierung der deutschen Flüsse speziell des Rheins, ist in der bisherigen Form auf die Dauer unhaltbar. Frankreich is am Rhein ein Fremdkörper, weil es … naturgemäss der Rheinschiffahrt durchaus abträgliche Absichten verfolgen muss. Anderseits hat sich an der Donau gerade nach dem Verschwinden der österreichisch-ungarischen Monarchie die relative Lebensberechtigung dieses Staatswesens deutlich gezeigt. Die Donau-Uferstaaten werden im eigenen wohl verstandenen Interesse nicht dauernd im Zustand gegenseitiger argwöhnischer Missgunst verharren können. Ihre volle geopolitische Potenz aber werden Rhein und Donau erst dann entfalten, wenn sie einmal durch einen leistungsfähigen Kanal miteinander verbunden sind …' Vogel, W. (1924), 'Rhein und Donau as Staatenbilder II', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 135–45, p. 144.

32. Frantz, *Drei und Dreißig Sätze*; Lagarde, *Deutsche Schriften – Zweiter Band*.

33. See, for example, Papenhusen, F. (1927), 'Geopolitische Erwägungen zum deutsch-österreichischen Anschlussgedanken', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 319–25.

34. Zillich, H. (1929), 'De kulturelle Aufgabe der Deutschen in Rumänien', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 143–9.

35. Haushofer, A. (1931), 'Ein Volk, ein Staat!', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 1–7.

36. Trampler, K. (1934), 'Deutsche Grenzen', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 15–71, p. 27.

37. Maull, O. (1931), 'Die politisch-geographische Struktur', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 31–44; Steinacker, H. (1937), 'Der österreichischdeutsche Zusammenschluss und das Aussendeutschtum', *Deutschtum und Ausland*, vol. 21, no. 4.

38. Haushofer, K. (1934), 'Atemweite, Lebensraum und Gleichberechtigung', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 1–11, p. 4.

39. See, for example, Kreil, F. (1932), 'Mitteleuropäische Autarkie', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 206–14.

40. See, for example, Haushofer, K. (1933), 'Fromme Wünsche ... Die slawische Idee der Absperrung des Deutschtums von Osten', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 10, no. 4, pp. 330–8.

41. Outside *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* the identification of Austria with an appendix of Germany was also prevalent. See, for example, Srbik, H. (1938), *Mitteleuropa: Das Problem und die Versuche seiner Lösung in der deutschen Geschichte*, Weimar: Bolhaus Nachfolger; Steinacker, H. (1934), 'Die geschichtlichen Voraussetzungen des österreichischen Nationalitätenproblems', in Hugelmann, K. (1934), *Das nationalitätenrecht des alten Österreich*, Vienna: Braumüller; or Schüssler, W. (1937), *Deutsche Einheit und gesamtdeutsche Geschichtsbetrachtung*, Stuttgart: J. G. Cotta'sche Buchhandlung.

42. Rouček, J. (1942), 'German Geopolitics', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 2, pp. 180–9, pp. 183–7.

43. Elvert, J. (1999), *Mitteleuropa! Deutsche Pläne zur europäischen Neuordnung (1918–1945)*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.

44. Streeruwitz, E. (1931), 'Österreichs Mission in Europa', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 26–31.

45. Ibid., p. 27.

46. 'Wenn Österreich und Deutschalnd sich wirtschaftlich zusammenschliessen... wenn dann Deutschland die Brücke zu Frankreich zu schlagen vermöchte und wir Österreicher die altgewohnte Verbindung mit dem Osten herstellen, dann könnte ein natürlich gewachsenes, gesundes Mitteleuropa entstehen, aus dem später Grösseres werden mag.' – When Austria and Germany are economically unified... when then Germany is able to bridge the gap with France and us Austrians able to establish the old link with the East, then the naturally grown and healthy Central Europe can arise, out of which something bigger can grow. Ibid., p. 30.

47. For example, Sieger, R. (1927), 'Grundlinien einer Geographie des Deutschtums', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 4, no. 7, pp. 630–64; or Steinacker, H. (1931), 'Auswirkungen des Raumes in der österreichischen Geschichte', *Zeitschift für Geopolitik*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 44–51.

48. Nadler, J. and von Srbik, H. (eds) (1936), *Österreich: Erbe und Sendung im Deutschen Raum*, Salzburg: Pustet.

49. Jaschke, A. (1934), *Österreichs Deutsches Erbe: Ein Europäisches Raumproblem*, Graz: Moser.

50. Wache, K. (ed.) (1933), *Deutscher Geist in Österreich*, Munich: Parcus.

51. Coudenhove-Kalergi, R. N. (1924), *Pan Europa*, Vienna and Leipzig: Pan-Europa-Verlag.

52. Steininger, R., Bischof, G. and Gehler, M. (2002), *Austria in the Twentieth Century*, London and New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, p. 296.

53. Salmon, T. And Nicoll, W. (1997), *Building European Union: A Documentary History and Analysis*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, p. 6.

54. Coudenhove-Kalergi, R. N. (1939), *Europe Must Unite*, Glarus: Paneuropa Editions.

55. Jászi, *Zusammenbruch.*

56. Jászi, O. (1969), *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Hungary*, New York: Howard Fertig, p. 231.

57. Litván, G. (1999), 'Oszkár Jászi's Danube Federation theories', in Romsics, I. and Király, B. (eds), (1999), *Geopolitics in the Danube Region*, Budapest: CEU Press, p. 233.

58. Ibid.

59. In his 1918 concept he advocated the leadership of Germany and he would return to this approach in 1939. Eventually, during the Cold War, he even advocated the idea that cooperation of Soviet satellite states would bring them closer together and possibly gradually lead to their confederative settlement. While Litván branded him a 'developmental optimist' (Litvan, 'Oszkár Jászi'), Jászi appears simply to have been searching for the best possible protection of Hungarian interests under the most likely regional hegemon in shifting situational contexts.

60. Congdon, L. (1982), 'Trianon and the Emigré Intellectuals', in Király, B., Pastor, P. and Sanders, I. (ed.) (1982), *War and Society in East Central Europe* Vol. VI. *Essays on World War I: A Case Study on Trianon*, New York: Columbia UP, p. 397.

61. Peace treaty between the Allies and Hungary as a successor state of Austria-Hungary, signed on 4 June 1920.

62. Diner-Dénes, J. (1927), *La Hongrie. Oligarchie. Nation. Peuple*, Paris: Impr. Th. Martin.

63. For example, Hantos, E. (1933), *Der Weg zum neuen Mitteleuropa: Die Wirtschaftliche Neugestaltung*, Berlin: Mitteleuropa Verlag; and Hantos, E. (1935), *Die Neuordnung des Donauraumes*, Berlin: Heymann. For more concepts see Király, B. and Romsics, I. (1999), *Geopolitics in the Danube Region: Hungarian Reconciliation Efforts, 1848–1998*, Budapest: Central European University Press, p. 202.

64. Hodža, M. (1931), *Články, reči, štúdie*, vol. II, Prague: Novina.

65. Hodža, *Federation*.

66. Levy, J. (2007), *The Intermarium: Wilson, Madison, and East Central European Federalism*, Boca Raton (Florida): Universal-Publishers, p. 165.

67. Crampton, R. J. (1994), *Eastern Europe in the Twentieth Century*, London: Routledge, p. 37.

68. Schubert, A. (1991), *The Credit-Anstalt Crisis of 1931*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 49.

69. Crampton, *Eastern Europe*, p. 37.

70. Litván, 'Oszkár Jászi', p. 233.

71. Low, A. (1974), *The Anschluss Movement, 1918–1919, and the Paris Peace Conference*, American Philosophical Society, p. 217. As discussed previously, British and US leaders attempted to force such a solution on successor states in the wake of the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in mid- to late 1918; however, without much avail.

72. 'Où commence et où finit l'Europe centrale? . . . Elle n'est en effet ni un Etat ni un assemblage d'Etats. Elle n'a vèçu que dans l'imagination des conquèrants où des ècrivains.' – Where does Central Europe start and finish? It is neither a state, nor a group of states. She only lives in the imagination of conquerors and writers. Aulneau, J. (1926), *Histoire de l'Europe centrale*, Paris: Payot, p. 8.

73. Lhèritier, M. (1928), 'Règions historiques', *Revue de Synthèse Historique*, vol. 45, pp. 43–67, p. 47.

74. Bogdan, H. and Fehérváry, I. (1989), *From Warsaw to Sofia: A History of Eastern Europe*, Santa Fe (New Mexico): Pro Libertate Publishing, p. 216.

75. Low, *Anschluss Movement*, p. 264.

76. Burgwyn, J. (1997), *Italian Foreign Policy in the Interwar Period, 1918–1940*, Greenwood Publishing Group, p. 9.

77. Medlicott et al., *Documents*, pp. vi–vii.

78. See Khorvatskij, V. (1933), *Pan-Evropa i Dunaiskaya Federatsiya*, Moscow: Mezhdunarodnij Agragranij Institut.

79. Domarus, M. and Romane, P. (2007), *The Essential Hitler: Speeches and Commentary*, Wauconda (Illionis): Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, p. 86; Špiesz, A., Čaplovič, D. and L. Bolchazy (2006), *Illustrated Slovak History: A Struggle for Sovereignty in Central Europe*, Wauconda (Illionis): Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, p. 207.

80. Hodža, *Federation.*

81. Hodža, M. (1997), *Federácia v Strednej Európe*, Bratislava: Kalligram, p. 231.

82. Hodža was a leader of the Czechoslovak Agrarian Party in Slovakia between 1918 and 1938.

83. Beneš, E. (1941), 'The New Central Europe', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 1, pp. 1–4, p. 1.

84. Ibid., p. 2.

85. Ibid., p. 3.

86. Ibid., p. 4.

87. Halecki, O. (1948), 'Federalism as an Answer', Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Looking Toward One World, vol. 258, pp. 66–9, p. 68.

88. *Central European Observer* (1942), 'Polish Czechoslovak Protocol, 19 January 1942', *Central European Observer*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 49–50.

89. This was presumably the Balkan Union envisaged by the Greco-Yugoslav treaty signed on 15 January 1942. See *Bulletin of International News* (1942), 'Greco-Yugoslav treaty on Balkan Union, 15 January 1942', *Bulletin of International News*, vol XVII p. 816.

90. Táborský, E. (1949), 'A Polish–Czechoslovak Confederation', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 379–95, p. 389.

91. The German–Russian alliance Jászi referred to came to end with the German attack on the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. Jászi wrote his article before this date though, ironically, it was printed in the July 1941 issue of the *Journal of Central European Affairs*.

92. Jászi, 'Future of Danubia', p. 132.

93. Ibid., p. 133.

94. Ibid., p. 134. Similar compartmentalization of possible solutions appeared in Aurel Kolnai's 1943 'Danubia: A Survey of Plans of Solution' published in the *Journal of Central European Affairs*. However, the potential outcomes under German and Russian domination were, indeed, listed separately. See Kolnai, A. (1943), 'Danubia: A Survey of Plans of Solution', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 4, pp. 441–62.

95. Ibid., p. 137.

96. Beneš, 'New Central Europe'; Jászi, 'Future of Danubia'; Hodža, *Federation*; Feierabend, L. (1942), 'Czechoslovakia and Central Europe', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 2, pp. 357–68; Kulski, W. (1942), 'Poland and Central Europe', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 2, pp. 369–76.

97. Beneš, 'New Central Europe', p. 2.

98. Feierabend, 'Czechoslovakia'; Hodža, *Federation*; Ciolkosz, A. (1942), 'The Atlantic Charter and East-Central Europe', *New Europe*, vol. 2, pp. 192–6; Mühlstein, A. (1942), 'The United States of Central Europe', *New Europe*, vol. 2, pp. 196–208.

99. Feierabend, 'Czechoslovakia'; Vambery, R. (1943), 'Danubian Peace', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 38–51; Pakstas, K. (1942), *The Baltoscandian Confederation*, Chicago: Lithuanian Cultural Institute.

100. Tennenbaum, H. (1942), *Europa Srodkowo-Wschodnia w Gospodarstwie Swiatowem*, London: Kolin.

101. Müller-Sturmheim, E. (1942), *A Plebiscite under Nazi Rule*, London: Austrian Democratic Union.

102. The Danubian Club was a London-based independent organization established by former members of the South-East Europe Committee of the Fabian Society and joined by many leftist emigrés.

103. Danubian Club (1943), *Central and South-East European Union*, London: Lincolns-Prager Ltd., p. 6.

104. Ibid., p. 5.

105. Jászi, O. (1945), 'Central Europe and Russia', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 5, pp. 1−16, p. 3.

106. Ibid.

107. The Soviet-controlled Lubin Committee, or more officially, the Polish Committee of National Liberation, was proclaimed the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland.

108. Jászi, 'Central Europe and Russia'; Gross, F. (1945), *Crossroads of Two Continents: A Democratic Federation of East-central Europe*, New York: Columbia University Press.

109. For example, Kutschera, R. (1948), *Lebenseinheit − Donauraum*, Linz: Dichtl.

110. Elvert, *Mitteleuropa!*, p. 309.

111. Gilbert, F. (1947), 'Mitteleuropa − the final stage', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 7, pp. 58−67, p. 63.

112. Hermann Neubacher was an active supporter of 'Mitteleuropa' concepts throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and an Austrian in charge of political affairs of occupied south-eastern Europe.

113. Ritter, H. (1975), 'Hermann Neubacher and the Austrian Anschluss Movement, 1918−1940', *Central European History*, vol. 3, no. 3, pp. 348−56, p. 349.

114. Blume, H. (1941), *So ward das Reich: deutsche Geschichte für die Jugend*, Frankfurt: Diesterweg.

115. Muck, O. (1940), 'Spiel um Neu-Europa', *Zeitshift für Geopolitik*, vol. 17, no. 1, pp. 21−32.

116. Leibrock, O. (1941), *Der Südosten, Grossdeutschland und das neue Europa*, Berlin: Volk und Reich.

117. Predöhl, A. (1941), 'Grossraum, Autarkie und Weltwirtschaft', in *Gesellschaft für europäische Wirtschaftsplannung und Grossraumwirtschaft*, Dresden: Das Neue Europe; Gablenz, C. A. (1941), 'Die Lufthansa für die Zukunftsausgaben gerüstet', in *Gesellschaft für europäische Wirtschaftsplannung und Grossraumwirtschaft*, Dresden: Das Neue Europa; Funk, W. (1944), *Die Länder des Südostens und die Europäische Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft*, Vienna: Südost-Echo Verlag.

118. Hassinger, H. (1941), 'Mitteleuropa, Donaueuropa, Südosteuropa', *Volkstum im Südosten*, pp. 173− 6, p. 176.

119. Schäfer, O. (1942), 'Die geopolitischen Grundzüge Mitteleuropas', *Geographischer Anzeiger*, vol 43, pp. 58−68, p. 59.

120. Gilbert, 'Mitteleuropa', p. 65.

121. Haushofer, *Geopolitik.*

122. Haushofer, *Geopolitik*, pp. 78−9.

123. Haushofer, K. (1941), *Der Kontinentalblock*, München: Zentralverlag der NSDAP.

124. Ash, 'Does Central Europe Exist?'

125. Mackinder, 'The round world'.

126. Dickinson, R. (1942), *The German Lebensraum*, London: Penguin, p. 210.

127. Ibid., p. 211.

128. Ibid., p. 212.

129. Harrison, G. and Jordan, P. (1943), *Central Union*, London: British Continental Syndicate Publishing Ltd.

130. See Appendix 35.
131. Harrison and Jordan, *Central Union*, pp. 6–8.
132. Ibid., p. 11.
133. Ibid., p. 15.
134. Ibid., p. 25.
135. Ibid., p. 21.
136. Ibid., p. 33.
137. Ibid., p. 35.
138. Lang, R. (1946) 'Central Europe and European Unity', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 21–9.
139. Ibid., p. 27.
140. Ibid., p. 29.
141. Gilbert, 'Mitteleuropa', p. 58.
142. Meyer, 'Mitteleuropa . . . Geography'.
143. Ibid., p. 178.
144. Gross, 'Peace Planning'; *Crossroads.*
145. Gross, *Crossroads*, p. 34.
146. Ibid., p. 81.
147. Ibid., p. 72.
148. *New Europe* (1943), 'The Peasant Program', resolved upon in London on 9 July 1943', *New Europe*, November 1943.
149. CEEPB (1943a), 'Materials Concerned with the Institute on Educational Reconstruction in Central and Eastern Europe', *Documents and Reports of the Central and Eastern European Planning Board*, no. 6, March 1943.
150. Gross, *Crossroads*, p. 29.
151. Ibid., p. 34.
152. Gross, F. (1944), 'Peace Planning for Central and Eastern Europe', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Scienc*e, vol. 232, pp. 169–76, p. 170.
153. Gross, 'Peace Planning', p. 172.
154. Beneš, E. (1942), 'The Organization of Post-War Europe', *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 12–14, p. 12.
155. *New Europe*, 'The Peasant Program'; CEEPB, 'Materials Concerned'; CEEPB (1943b), 'Democratic Trends in the Education of Czechoslovakia, Greece, Yugoslavia and Poland', *Documents and Reports of the Central and Eastern European Planning Board*, no. 7, April 1943.
156. US Committee on Educational Reconstruction (1943), Proceedings of the Institute on Educational Reconstruction in Central and Eastern Europe, 7–8 April 1943, Washington: USCER.
157. UN Information Office (1943), *Inter-Allied Review*, vol. 3, no. 9, 15 April 1943.
158. FRPS (1941), *The Reconstruction of Eastern Europe II. International Relations*, British National Archives, AVIA 38/1126.
159. FRPS (1942), *Confederations in Eastern Europe*, British National Archives, AVIA 38/1126.
160. Named after its chief author, C. A. Macartney.
161. Jászi, 'Future of Danubia'.
162. Gross, 'Peace Planning', p. 175.
163. Táborský, E. (1949), 'A Polish–Czechoslovak Confederation', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 9, no. 4, pp. 379–95, pp. 389–90.
164. Ibid., p. 391.
165. Ibid., p. 393.
166. Meissner, B. (1955), *Das Ostpaktsystem*, Berlin and Frankfurt: Alfred Metzner Verlag, pp. 30–5.

167. Lipgens, W. (1982), *A History of European Integration: 1945–1947*, London: Clarendon Press, p. 454.

168. Meissner, *Ostpaktsystem*, p. 15.

169. Djilas, M. (1962), *Conversations with Stalin*, London: Rupert Hart-Davis, p. 134.

170. Lucretiu Patrascanu was a prominent member of the Romanian Communist Party leadership and Minister of Justice 1944–8. László Rajk was Hungarian Communist leader, Minister of Interior (1946–8) and Minister of Foreign Affairs (1948–9). Traycho Kostov was President of the Council of Ministers and a General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party (until spring 1949).

171. Lipgens, *European Integration*, p. 455.

172. Rouček, J. S. (1948), 'One World versus and Iron Curtain World', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Looking toward One World*, vol. 258, pp. 59–65, p. 64.

173. Halecki, 'Federalism', p. 68.

174. Ibid., p. 69.

175. Romsics and Kiraly, *Geopolitics*, p. 240.

176. Jászi, 'Danubia: Old and New', p. 26.

177. Ibid., p. 27.

178. Ibid.

179. Rouček, 'One World'.

180. Ripka, H. (1953), *A Federation of Central Europe*, New York: Council of Free Czechoslovakia, p. 1.

181. For example, *The Times* (1952), 'Europeans in Exile', *The Times*, 21 January 1952, p. 7.

182. For example, *Manchester Guardian* (1953), 'Eastern Europe', *Manchester Guardian*, 7 May 1953.

183. Sinnhuber, K. A. (1954), 'Central Europe – Mitteleuropa – Europe Centrale: An Analysis of a Geographical Term', *Transactions and Papers (Institute of British Geographers)*, no. 20, pp. 15–39.

184. Ibid., p. 15.

185. Ibid., p. 16.

186. Ibid., p. 37.

187. Warburg, J. P. and Grewe, W. G. (1959), 'The Central European Crisis: A Proposal for Western Initiative', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 324, pp. 16–29, p. 16.

188. Dallin, D. (1959), 'Communist Politics in the Western World', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 324, pp. 1–7, p. 1.

189. Cohen viewed – now foregone – Central Europe as 'lying between the Rhine on the west and Russia and the Balkans on the south and east'. See Cohen, S. (1964), *Geography and Politics in a Divided World*, London: Methuen, p. 218.

190. Ripka, *Federation.*

191. For example, Miksche, F. O. (1953), *Danubian Federation*, Slough: Kenion Press.

192. Gross, *Crossroads*; Janowski, O. I. (1938), *People at Bay*, London: Victor Gollanz; Janowski, O. I. (1945), *Nationalities and National Minorities*, New York: Macmillan.

193. Gross, F. (1957), 'The Future of Mid-European Union', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 353–70, pp. 367, 369.

194. Also called The Second Philadelphia Manifesto in the context with the 1918 Mid-European Union Declaration. See Gross, 'Future', p. 367.

195. NCFE (1951), *The Declaration of Liberation*, New York: Free Europe Committee, p. 12.

196. Ibid., p. 14.

197. NCFE (1954), *Europe: Nine Panel Studies by Experts from Central and Eastern Europe*, New York: Free Europe Committee, pp. 160–85, p. 6.

198. Kundera, 'Tragedy'.

199. Dreisziger, N. F. (1983), 'Central European Federalism in the Thought of Oscar Jaszi and his Successors', in Vardy, S. B. and Vardy, A. H. (eds) (1983), *Society in Change: Studies in Honor of Bela K. Kiraly*, New York: Boulder, pp. 539–56, p. 548.

200. Borsody, S. (1980), *The Tragedy of Central Europe: Nazi and Soviet Conquest and Aftermath*. New Haven: Yale Concilium on International and Area Studies, pp. 225–6.

201. Varsanyi, J. (ed.) (1976), *Quest for a New Central Europe*, Sydney and Adelaide: Australia Carpathian Federation Inc.; Wagner, F. (1970), *Toward a New Central Europe*, Astor Park (Florida): Danubian Press.

202. Kardos, B. T. (1970), 'Problems of Federalism in the Danubian Area', in Wagner, F. (1970), *Toward a New Central Europe*, Astor Park, FL: Danubian Press, p. 161.

203. Gallus, A. (1970), 'Pseudo-national States or Real National Identities in Central Europe', in Wagner, *New Central Europe*, pp. 291–5, p. 294.

204. Koszorus, F. (1970), 'A Safeguard of Peace in East Central Europe', in Wagner, *New Central Europe*, pp. 245–51, p. 245.

205. Wagner, *New Central Europe*, p. 21.

206. Ionescu, S. (1970), 'What is to be done', in Wagner, *New Central Europe*, p. 71.

207. Wagner, *New Central Europe*, p. 5.

208. Borsody, *Tragedy*, p. 225.

209. Ibid., p. 221.

210. Ibid., p. 224.

211. Myšlenka neutrality, popřípadě neutrálního pásma ve střední Evropě je absurdní, ovšem nikoli zjevně. Je asi tak nenápadně absurdní, jako by byl pokus vyřešit neutralitu mezi koncepcí archy a nebezpečím potopy přísným zákazem plaveckých kurzů. – Preisner, R. (1984), *Česká existence*, London: Rozmluvy.

212. Kundera, 'Tragedy', pp. 33–8.

213. Ibid., p. 35.

214. Ibid.

215. Ibid.

216. Ibid.

217. Špetko, J. (1982), 'Stredoeurópska civilizácia (sformovaný útvar či jeho krištalizácia?)', *Proměny*, vol. 19, no. 1, pp. 81–5.

218. Šimečka, M. (1986a), 'Another Civilization? An Other Civilization?', *Střední Evropa*, vol. 3, no. 1; Šimečka, M. (1986b), 'Kudy spět do Evropy?', *Střední Evropa*, vol. 3, no. 1; Jehlička, L. (1986), 'Něžně, ale bez rukaviček', *Střední Evropa*, vol. 3, no. 5, pp. 77–86; Hauner, M. (1989), 'Dopis redakci The New York Review of Books', *Svědectví*, no. 89/90, pp. 380–3.

219. Mlejnek (2009), 'Když jsme s Rudolfem Kučerou a dalšími přáteli zakládali samizdatovou revue Střední Evropa, nebylo tomu tak pod vlivem Milana Kundery – spíše jsme cítili potřebu se vůči němu vymezit. Tak vznikl i můj text o Kunderově eseji nazvaný Hodnota jednoho svědectví. Nemohl jsem mimo jiné souhlasit s Kunderovým konstatováním (z pařížského exilu), že "střední Evropa zmizela". Střední Evropa se pro nás naopak stala ztělesněním určitých návyků, zvyklostí a společného dědictví, které nemohl nikdo jen tak vymazat. . . .' – When we established the samizdat revue Central Europe with Rudolf Kučera and other friends, it was not done under the influence of Milan Kundera – rather, we felt a need to define ourselves in contrast with him. This gave rise to my comment on Kundera's essay, titled 'The Value of One Witness Account'. I could not, among other things, agree with his statement (formulated in Paris exile) that

'Central Europe disappeared'. On the contrary, for us, Central Europe became an embodiment of certain tendencies, traditions and common heritage, which no-one could erase just like that . . .' – Mlejnek, J. (2009), 'Kundera: fenomén střední Evropy', *Reflex*, 24 September 2009, available at: http://www.euroskop.cz/46/13655/clanek/kundera-fenomen-stredni-evropy/, accessed on: 24 May 2010.

220. Vytyčme Střední Evropu jako duchovní prostor proměnlivých hranic. Chceme-li ho vymezovat, hledáme zároveň svoje místo v Evropě, k níž se kulturně hlásíme . . . Tenhle sborník nespatřuje Střední Evropu v žádných rigorózních hranicích. Vymezujeme ji spíš instinktivně. . . Nemáme na počátku žádnou syntetizující ideu Střední Evropy.– Ulrich, J. (1984) 'Úvod', *Střední Evropa*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 1–3.

221. Zagajewski and Kolakowski, quoted in Weidenfeld, W. (1988), 'Mitteleuropa – Traum oder Trauma von der Zukunft Europas?', in Papcke, S. and Weidenfeld, W. (1988), *Traumland Mitteleuropa?*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, pp. 87–95, p. 88.

222. Konrád, G. (1984), 'Der Traum von Mitteleuropa', *Wiener Journal*, no. 45, June 1984, pp. 87–97.

223. Ibid., pp. 90–1.

224. Busek, E. (1988), 'Versuchsstation für Weltuntergänge – Hoffnung auf eine bessere Zeit?', in Papcke, and Weidenfeld *Traumland Mitteleuropa*?, pp. 15–32, p. 17.

225. Djilas, M. (1984), 'Der Verfall der kommunistischen Systeme', *Wiener Journal*, no. 51/52, December 1984, pp. 145–50, p. 150.

226. '. . . und [ich] kam zu dem Schluss, dass diese Systeme zu verfallen beginnen. Und dass sie um so schneller und tiefer verfallend, wenn der Expansionsimus der Sowjetunion gezügelt wird: Der Verfall ist die Vorbedingung von Wiedergeburt und Erneuerung.' – and so I arrived at the conclusion that these systems have started to decay. And that they will be decaying faster and deeper when expansionism of the Soviet Union is curbed: the decay is a precondition of rebirth and renewal. Ibid.

227. Mlynář, Z. (1986), 'Mitteleuropa im Ost-West-Konflikt', *Innsbrucker Universitätshefte*, n. 160/1986, pp. 65–71, p. 71.

228. Kusý, M. (1989), 'We Central-European Eastern Europeans', in Schöpflin, G. and Wood, N. (1989), *In Search of Central Europe*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 91– 6, p. 91.

229. Ibid., p. 95.

230. Fejtö, F. (1989), 'Nenapravitelná chyba: Zničení Rakousko-Uherska', *Střední Evropa*, vol. 6, no. 12, pp. 20–9, p. 20.

231. Ibid., p. 27.

232. Bugge, P. (1999), 'The Use of the Middle: Mitteleuropa vs. Střední Evropa', *European Review of History*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 15–35.

233. Blažić, V. (1989), 'Střední Evropa', *Střední Evropa*, vol. 6, no. 13, pp. 53–64.

234. Hanák, P. (1989), 'Central Europe: A Historical Region in Modern Times', in Schöpflin, G. and Wood, N. (1989), *In Search of Central Europe*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 57–69.

235. Matvejević, P. (1989), 'Central Europe seen from the East of Europe', in Schöpflin and Wood, *In Search of Central Europe*, pp. 183–90.

236. Scott, *EU enlargement*, p. 72.

237. Wien ist Mitteleuropa und Mitteleuropa ist Wien – Bender, P. (1987), 'Mitteleuropa – Mode, Modell oder Motiv?', in Spannenberg, D. (ed.) (1987), *Die blockierte Vergangenheit – Nachdenken über Mitteleuropa*, Berlin: Argon, pp. 85–103, p. 88.

238. 'k.u.k. – kaiserlich und königlich' – imperial and royal – refers to the Dual Monarchy 1867–1914, when the abbreviation expressed the fact that the Austrian Emperor was also a Hungarian king and was used by all joint authorities and institutions, such as the army or the treasury.

239. Busek, 'Versuchsstation'.

240. Ibid., p. 9.

241. Wir müssen die geschichtliche Vernetzung mit Mitteleuropa und unsere geopolitische Position zu einer aktiven Gestaltung unseres Schicksals nutzen. Verzichten wir auf diese Chance, werden wir tiefste Provinz.− Busek, E. (1986), 'Metropole Wien', in Busek, E. and Wilflinger, G. (1986), *Aufbruch nach Mitteleuropa*, Vienna: Wiener Journal Zeitschiriftenverlag, pp. 1−23, p. 9.

242. Ibid.

243. Blažić, 'Střední Evropa', p. 63.

244. Rudolf, H. (1988), 'Ein Stellvertreterkrieg am flaschen Platz', in Papcke, and Weidenfeld *Traumland Mitteleuropa?*, pp. 136−44, p. 143.

245. Rovan, J. (1988), 'Mitteleuropa gegen Europa', in Papcke and Weidenfeld, *Traumland Mitteleuropa?*, pp. 1−14, p. 6.

246. Schwarz, E. (1989), 'Central Europe − What it is and what it is not', in Schöpflin and Wood, *In Search of Central Europe*, pp. 143−56, p. 154.

247. Papcke, S. (1988) 'Mitteleuropa − Kopfgeburt oder politische Chance?', in Papcke and Weidenfeld, *Traumland Mitteleuropa?*, pp. 120−35, p. 133.

248. Schwarz, 'Central Europe', pp. 143−52; Grobe-Hagel, K. (1988), 'Deutschland− Mitteleuropa−Nation(alismus)', in Papcke and Weidenfeld, *Traumland Mitteleuropa?*, pp. 103−19.

249. Grobe-Hagel, 'Deutschland', p. 119.

250. Schwarz, 'Central Europe', p. 154.

251. Ibid.

252. Austrians were mocked as having a 'Friede, Freunde, Eierkuchen jetzt!' (Peace, friends, crumpets, now!) approach to the concept of Central Europe by the more cautious German authors. See Papcke 'Mitteleuropa . . . politische Chance', p. 135.

253. 'Mitteleuropa [ist] heute eine Waffe gegen Europa'; Rovan, 'Mitteleuropa', p. 14.

254. Weidenfeld, 'Mitteleuropa', p. 95.

255. Rovan, 'Mitteleuropa', p. 12.

256. Bugge, 'Use of the Middle', p. 26.

257. Blažić, 'Střední Evropa', p. 54.

258. Bugge, 'Use of the Middle', p. 27.

259. See Ulrich, 'Úvod', p. 3.

260. Bugge, 'Use of the Middle', p. 31.

261. Ibid., and Macura, V. (1997), 'Sémiotika Evropy', in Hahnová, E. (1997), *Evropa očima Čechů*, Praha: Nakladatelstvi Franze Kafky.

262. In Czech and German, both 'middle' and 'centre' are expressed by a single word: in Czech 'střed', in German 'die Mitte'. It is the root of both 'Střední Evropa' and 'Mitteleuropa' − the respective Czech and German versions of the notion Central Europe. 'Centrum' and 'Zentrum' used in Czech and German are derived from Latin, just like 'centre' in English language, but used less frequently. The original versions are preferred in the construction of adjectives and words with the shared root, such as respective words for mediator, medium, means, etc.

263. Macura, 'Sémiotika Evropy'.

264. Jahn, F. L. (1810), *Deutsches Volksthum*, Lübeck:Niemann und Gomp, p. 14.

265. Bugge, 'Use of the Middle', p. 32.

266. Okey, R. (1992), 'Central Europe/Eastern Europe: Behind definitions', *Past and Present*, no. 137, pp. 102−33, p. 129.

267. Bugge, 'Use of the Middle'.

268. Ibid., p. 33.

269. Ibid., p. 33.
270. Okey, 'Central Europe', p. 129.
271. Bialer, S. and Jervis, R. (1991), *Soviet–American Relations after the Cold War*, Durham and London: Duke University Press, p. 159.
272. Kiss, C. (1989), 'Central European Writers about Central Europe: Introduction to a Non-Existent Book of Readings', in Schöpflin and Wood, *In Search of Central Europe*, pp. 125–36, p. 128.
273. Kuus, 'Ubiquitous identities'; Bugge, 'Use of the Middle'; Ash, *History.*
274. Brzezinski, Z. (1997), *The Grand Chessboard*, New York: Basic Books, p. 92.
275. Brzezinski quoted in Krejčí, *Geopolitics*, p. 367.
276. Ibid.
277. Huntington, S. P. (1993), 'The Clash of Civilizations', *Foreign Affairs*, Summer, pp. 22–49.
278. Ibid., p. 23.
279. Ibid., p. 30.
280. Ibid., pp. 48–9.
281. Kolossov, V. and Turovsky, R. (2001), 'The Changing Geopolitics of Eastern Europe', *Geopolitics*, vol. 6, no. 1, pp. 141–64, p. 144.
282. Dugin, A. (1997), *Osnovy Geopolitiki*, Moscow: Arktogeia, p. 221.
283. Ibid., p. 224.
284. Германия сегодня - экономический гигант и политический карлик. Россия с точностью до наоборот - политический гигант и экономический калека. Ось Москва - Берлин излечить эндуг обоих партнеров и заложит основание грядущему процветанию Великой России и Великой Германии. Ibid., p. 228.
285. Kolossov and Turovsky, 'Changing Geopolitics', p. 146.
286. Lohausen, H. J. (2001), *Denken in Völker: Die Kraft von Sprache und Raum in der Kultur- und Weltgeschichte*, Graz: Stocker; Schiedel, H. (1998), ' Europäischer Rechtsextremismus', *Content*, vol. 21, pp. 6–7; for more insight see Bassin, M. (2003), 'Between Realism and the "New Right": Geopolitics in Germany in the 1990's, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, vol. 28, no. 3, pp. 350–66.
287. Pásztor, Z. (2000), *Politické dejiny Strednej Európy I.*, Banská Bystrica: Univerzita Mateja Bela, p. 4.
288. Ibid., p. 5.
289. Pásztor, Z. (2001), *Politické dejiny Strednej Európy II.*, Banská Bystrica: Univerzita Mateja Bela, pp. 239–50.
290. Krejčí, *Geopolitics*, p. 10.
291. Ibid., p. 13.
292. Ibid., p. 20.
293. Ibid.
294. Ibid., pp. 241–2.
295. Ibid., p. 242.
296. Volner, Š. (2004), *Geopolitika pre 21. storočie?: Stret morskej a pozemnej sily ako varovanie pre 21. storočie*, Hlohovec: Efekt Copy spol.
297. Ash, *History*, p. 384.
298. Kuus, 'Europe's eastern expansion', p. 45.
299. Kuus, 'Europe's eastern expansion', p. 475.
300. Dittmer, J. (2005), 'NATO, the EU and Central Europe: Differing symbolic shapes in newspaper accounts of enlargement', *Geopolitics*, vol. 10, no. 1, pp. 76–98, pp. 90–1.
301. Ibid., p. 88.
302. Pásztor, *Politické dejiny I. and II.*

303. Krejčí, *Geopolitics*.
304. Bugge, 'Use of the Middle'.
305. Cohen, *Geography and Politics*.
306. It would be a stretch too far to claim that it was the concept of Central Europe that brought down the Iron Curtain. Yet the concept can perhaps be credited with exercising some influence through new West German *Ostpolitik* or debate of the notion in leading Western media.
307. Of course, Russia would have opposed, but was politically impotent at the time.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSIONS: CENTRAL EUROPE AND BEYOND

1. This is in line with theory put forward by of Rorty, *Philosophy*, p. xxvi.
2. Bowker and Star, *Sorting Things*, p. 108.
3. Cohen, *Geography and Politics.*
4. Rediker, D. and Gordon, D. (2012), '12 Signs of Europocalypse', *Foreign Policy*, 12 June, available at: http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/06/12/12_signs_of_the_europocalypse?page=0,3&wp_login_redirect=0, accessed on 20 October 2013.
5. Little, A. (2012), 'Germany, Poland and the shifting centre of European Union power', *BBC News*, 18 December, http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-20717943.
6. Rupnik, J. (2017), 'Evolving or revolving? Central Europe since 1989', available at: http://www.eurozine.com/evolving-or-revolving-central-europe-since-1989/, accessed on 21 January 2018.
7. Moskalewicz, M. and Przybylski, W. ed. (2017), *Understanding Central Europe*, London: Routledge, p. 1.

CHAPTER 8 – POSTSCRIPT: BEYOND CENTRAL EUROPE

1. At the time of writing, January 2018, the Donbass region was still a separatist-controlled area of Ukraine.

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