

State Boundaries.

Those state boundaries which existed in Central Europe about 1930, in the time of collecting our material, have been washed off during the execution of our work by the storms of the Second World War. These boundaries had, for the most part, no historical past: they had been fixed in 1919-20. In these regions the state boundaries have formerly and recently as well, undergone many changes, except those running along the Carpathians which have proved to be, even from political point of view, an excellent frame throughout the thousand years which have passed since the formation of the European states. This natural basin has been a coherent state territory throughout seven centuries: the territory of the Hungarian state. The Hungarian boundaries running along the Carpathians, as well as at the feet of the Alps and the northern borders of the Western Balkan highlands have proved to be the political demarcation lines not only of Central Europe but of the entire continent as well.

The relief map gives a natural explanation of this phenomenon. The Carpathian Basin is a spacious and diversified region suitable for subsisting a strong and independent state. The favourable linking of its portions to each other, as well as its excellently located central focus created a coherent system of settlements, and facilitated the work of organisation and administration. Its natural boundaries running almost without any interruption around, provided at the same time a frame and protection to the splendid body and separated this territory and the settlements from the other neighbouring areas. Such a good state territory cannot be found in Central Europe elsewhere. There are some other smaller natural compartments, but here strong and independent states could not develop; however, these natural frames rendered just as steady provincial boundaries around them, as the state boundary around the Carpathian Basin. /The area and boundaries of Bohemia and Wallachia/

Among the state boundaries of 1910 the one running at the eastern feet of the Alps and along the Carpathians is in accordance with the thousand year old historical frontiers of Hungary. That section of boundary running along the southern line of the Sava is of a new origin. /XVIII. Century./ The boundaries of the Austrian Empire surrounding the Carpathian Basin from the west and the north were good natural boundaries, while the outer ones were but in their smaller parts. /some sections of the Alps and around the Bohemian Basin. /The German-Russian frontier between Upper Silesia and Little Poland was running on a natural watershed; further on to the north through the Polish territory it was an artificial line. Roumania - with the exception of the small portion of Southern Dob-

rudja - had natural boundaries everywhere in 1910: to the west and north the ridges of the Carpathians and great rivers in the east and south. Serbia included the most important compartment of the Balkan Peninsula: the Morava Basin and possessed almost entirely natural boundaries.

The boundaries of 1930 of our territory include a longer line than those of 1910. They are, for the most part, artificial dividing lines avoiding the natural boundaries. The northern frontiers of the long and narrow Czecho-Slovakian territory are good, as they correspond to those of the former Austrian Empire and some frontier-sections of Hungary. The southern boundaries of the new state, however, from the Moravian Basin as far as the Northeastern Carpathians to the head-water area of the Tisza are prototypes of drawing the boundary line in contrast with nature. This section of boundary of a length more than 1000 kilometres cutting through a great number of roads, railways, and rivers, is running in the immediate neighbourhood of larger and smaller centers, and cuts in two densely populated regions being economically closely connected with each other. Besides, they do not follow the ethnical boundary almost anywhere either. The eastern frontier of Roumania shifted from the Pruth to the Dniester, while in the south it kept the Danube line. Towards the west, however, leaving the natural boundaries, the vast ramparts of the Carpathians, and even the western highlands of Transylvania it shifted to the Great Hungarian Plain. This boundary - of a length more than 1000 km - has been just as bad as the southern frontier of Czecho-Slovakia in the Carpathian Basin. The boundaries of Jugoslavia had run in their major part on natural lines of demarcation. Only her northern frontier had been artificial. At the Drava-Danube estuary, and as well as across the Great Hungarian Plain the new frontiers had been hardly tolerable. These boundaries had been a great hindrance to communication and prevented the function and development of the larger economical and population centers.

The new boundaries drawn in 1919-20 have caused many troubles in the Carpathian Basin and disturbed the life of the most important region of the Basin, that of the Great Hungarian Plain. These boundaries had no historical past at all. They did not coincide with the boundaries of the Turkish period /XVI-XVII. century/ either, which were unnatural lines of demarcation just as well.

The recent boundaries fixed in 1938-41 are not represented by us. They have come into being in war time, and have been artificial boundaries in their major part, drawn without taking into consideration the geographical and economical interests.

RELIEF AND POLITICAL BOUNDARIES



LOCALITIES

