

## SUMMARIES

### CENTRAL EUROPE AS A GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL PROBLEM

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After an introductory discussion of the classification of the continents and of the viewpoints applied therein, the study deals with the attempts to make a geographical classification of Europe. These attempts were greatly dependent on the particular political situations prevailing within the European area. Already at an early date, the Holy Roman Empire represented a unit embracing the central part of Europe. It then excluded, however, areas which were later clearly considered to be part of Central Europe, such as, for example, the Vistula region and the Carpathian basin. From the 16th century on, political changes took place which contributed to the acquisition by the above-named areas of closer ties with the Central European area.

In scientific terminology, the concept of „Central Europe“ is a relatively new one. The attempts made by German-speaking geographers to delimit Central Europe led to greatly differing results. Striking is, above all, the difference between geographers from the inland German and the German border areas. Among the first-named group, the Central Europe concept is understood much more narrowly than among the border Germans, who in almost all cases included the Vistula region and the Carpathian basin as part of Central Europe. Where individual works are concerned, special importance is to be attached to Hugo Hassinger's „The Geographical Nature of Central Europe“ in shaping the concept of Central Europe.

In the period after the First World War, the definition of the concept of Central Europe continued to remain a topical problem. In the process it was necessary to come to grips with the overlapping concept of Southeastern Europe. A separate section is devoted to the more recent developments, during and after the Second World War. The question now arises whether in a period where large parts of Central Europe are under the political influence of the Soviet Union, it is still possible to speak of a homogeneous Central Europe. In conclusion, attention is called to the differing position of the Bohemian lands within Central Europe before and after the Second World War.