

# **3. Great power dictates - limited options**

## Required and recommended texts to read

- Bartošek, Karel. Could We Have Fought?: The Munich Complex in Czech Policies and Czech Thinking. In: Norman Stone, Eduard Stouhal (eds.). *Czechoslovakia: Crossroads and Crises, 1918-88*. Palgrave Macmillan Press. 1989
- Bibó, István. The Miseries of East European Small States. Ch. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. In: Bibó, István, and Iván Zoltán Dénes (ed.). *The Art of Peacemaking : Political Essays by István Bibó*. World Thought in Translation. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press. 2015, pp. 130-180.

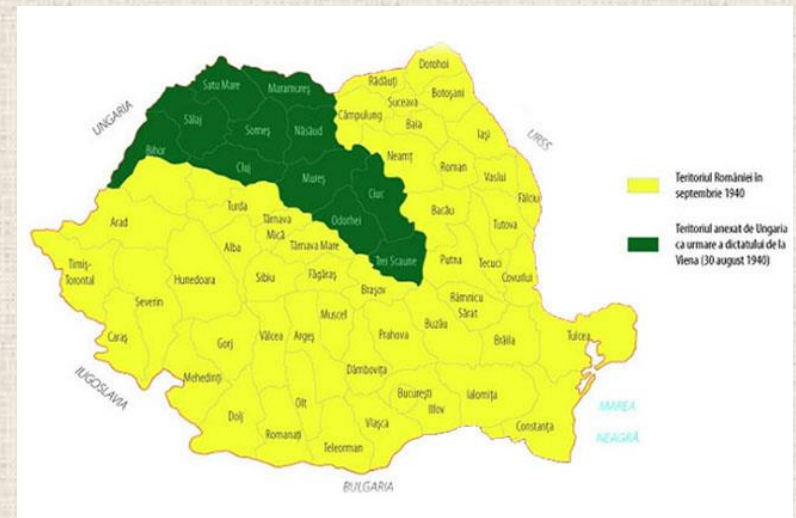
# Peace treaties as peace dictates



“Trianoni békediktátum”, 1920

“Mnichovský diktát/  
Mnichovská zrada”, 1938

“Dictatul de la Viena”, 1940



# Peace treaties to end the Great War

March 3., 1918. Brest-Litovsk (Soviet-Russia and the Central powers)

The Entente with...

Germany	June 28., 1919	Versailles
Austria	Sept. 10., 1919	Saint-Germain
Bulgaria	Nov. 27., 1919	Neuilly
Hungary	June 4., 1920	Trianon
Turkey (Empire)	Aug. 10., 1920	Sèvres
Turkey (Republic)	July 24., 1923	Lausanne



# Territorial losses of the Central powers

Austria

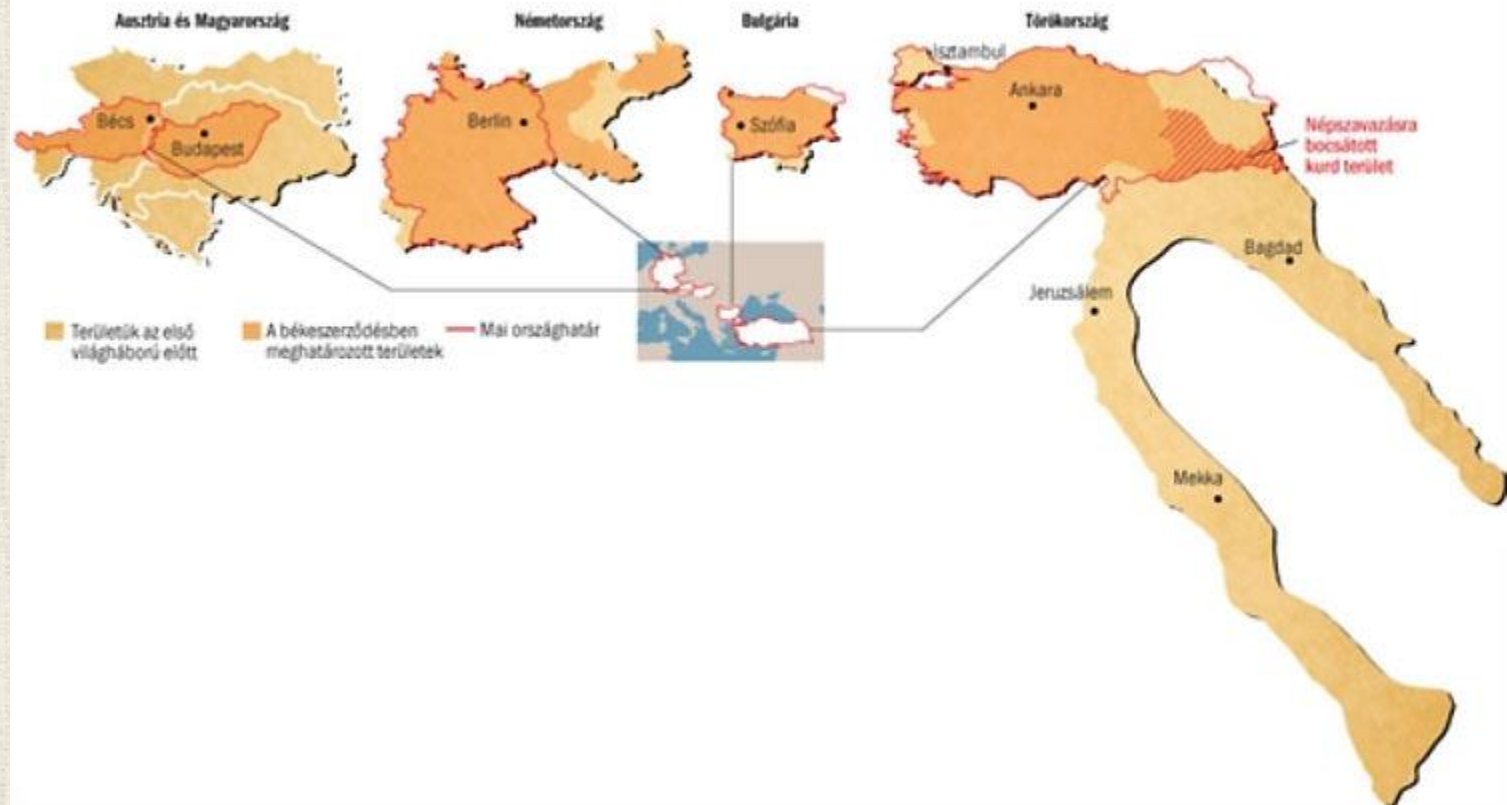
Hungary

Germany

Bulgaria

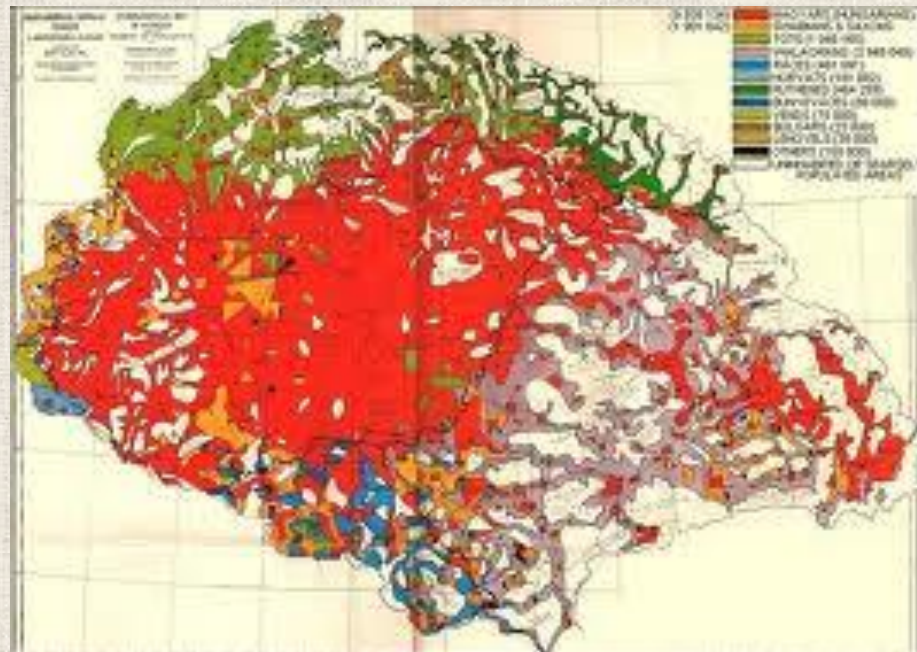
Turkey

Az első világháborúban vesztes államok területi változásai



# What led to Trianon? (contemporary views)

- Internal & external forces (mainstream academic consensus)
- Longue durée approach (Mohács & demographic changes)
- Nationalist revival vs Trianon-legends (speech of Albert Apponyi, punishment for Communism, Freemasonry, pacifist Mihály Károlyi and Béla Linder, Béla Kun)



# Territorial losses of Romania – to the Soviet Union

- August 23rd, 1939 – Molotov-Ribbentrop pact
- May 10th – June 22nd, 1940 Occupation of (the bulk of) France by Germany
- June 28th – July 4th, 1940 Soviet occupation of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina





# Territorial losses of Romania – to Hungary

- August, 1940 – Hungarian-Romanian negotiations about the revision of the Trianon treaty (Hungarian demand: Seklerland, Northern Transylvania to Maros river; Romanian proposal: 14'000 km<sup>2</sup> + autonomous Seklerland)
- Agreement about German-Italian arbitration





# Territorial losses of Romania – to Bulgaria

- September 7, 1940 – Bulgarian-Romanian Craiova treaty about South-Dobrudja (Part of Bulgaria: in 1878-1913, 1940-)
- Acknowledged by: Great-Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Soviet Union, United States



# Dictatul de la Viena: The loss of Northern Transylvania



*„August 30, Ceremony of the signature at the Belvedere. The Hungarians can't contain their joy when they see the map. Then we hear a loud thud. It was Manoilescu, who fainted on the table. Doctors, massage, camphorated oil. Finally he comes to, but shows the shock very much.”*

(The Ciano Diaries 1939-1943)

# Political developments after the „Romanian Trianon”

- In less than three months, Romania loses one third of its territory and population
- Carol II. abdicates, his son Michael becomes king – general Ion Antonescu becomes Conducător
- Political credo of the Antonescu-regime : antibolshevism, anti-Slavism, Anti-Hungarianism
- German (and Hungarian) alliance against the Soviet Union





# Romanian political developments after „Trianon”



*“we have openly showed that the real and final aim of our struggle, even in the east, remains the recuperation of Romania's rights on northern Transylvania ... ”*

(Ion Antonescu)

# Attempts at quitting the Axis alliance



- German Margarethe I and II plans
- March 19., 1944 – German occupation of Hungary
- August 23., 1944 – King Michael’s coup d’état
- October 15., 1944 – Horthy’s cease-fire attempt



# István Bibó and his views on ethno-territorial conflicts in East-Central Europe



1911 –1979

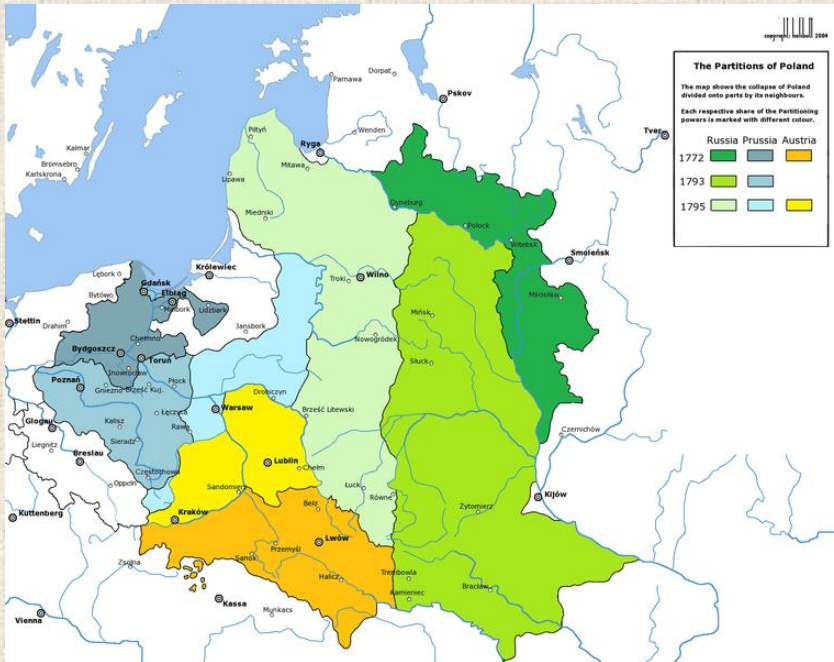
- legal scholar (Geneva), civil servant, political thinker, politician, librarian, Minister of State (1956), prisoner, librarian
- „Political therapist” (use history to find the collective cognitive distortions, „hysterias”, and choose the right path from limited options)
- The Miseries of East European Small States (1946)



# Main factors for Trianon according to Bibó

- belated and interrupted national development (partly because of the Habsburg rule).
- the rise of (linguistic) nationalisms and legitimate demands for self-determination
- erroneous response of the Hungarian elites (denying minority rights)
- Unprincipled great-power peace-making: the democratic principle of national self-determination is not applied systematically (ethnic/linguistic general principle is mixed with strategic, economic, transport, territorial considerations)

# Bibó's lessons and failures



Poland (1772, 1793, 1795, 1815)

*„A historical process long in the making now came to pass in the form of most brutal aggression”*



Czechoslovakia (1938-1939)



Hungary (1918-1920)



# Bartošek, Karel. Could We Have Fought? The Munich Complex in Czech Policies and Czech Thinking

## Munich Complex ~ Trianon trauma



Czechoslovakia (1938-1939)



Hungary (1918-1920)

*At least three times in the recent past, in 1938, 1948 and 1968 (...) we had the opportunity to play an active part in shaping our destiny and take matters into our own hands. (...) In every case there was a catastrophic failure on the part of our political leaders” (Vaclav Benda, 1988)*

*„Why don't we have any Kossuths in Prague, seated on rearing horses with their swords drawn?” (Boumil Hrabal according to Karel Bartošek in the 1960s)*



# War to defend the homeland, (April-July, 1919)



- Successful northern campaign
- Clemenceau-ultimatum
- Romanian army breakthrough => collapse





# Trianon as a symbol



Thank you for your attention!

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