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Race and Nationality: Discussion

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between the two areas. Despite all these differences, however, we have a unified France.

Some points in the evolution of France and the French nation were discussed by Prof. Fleure in the most interesting paper which he read at the Newcastle-on-Tyne meeting of the British Association, a paper which was afterwards published in the *Scot. Geographical Magazine* (vol. 32, p. 519). In this he shows how many different strands have been interwoven to form the fair fabric of the France of to-day, but he only considers incidentally the nation-making factors, a subject which might be elaborated in detail.

Without attempting here a full treatment we may say generally that the position and relations of the Basin of Paris have been supremely important. Not only is that basin the natural centre of the whole country, but it lies not far from the focal point of a great belt of land through which natural lines of communication have always run. From that belt of land radiate outwards land-routes to central and eastern Europe, while its extremities, touching respectively the Channel and the Mediterranean, bear the termini of the great ocean routes. France has thus, on a greater scale than Scotland, the double advantage that there is a centrally placed area where life is easy, and that from this central area the lines of communication with the world outside radiate in all directions. Thus outside influences tend to come first to the centre, and not to some marginal belt which would thus run the risk of becoming detached from its allegiance. It is not too much to say that if the Gates of Poitou and of Carcassonne had not existed; if Bordeaux had been a good port with a prosperous hinterland instead of a mere outpost on the ocean; if the coastal currents which are always tending to silt up the Biscay ports had not existed—then the unification of France would have been far more difficult.

One might carry the discussion much further, and try to show that modern Germany is not a national unity, but an attempt to substitute a mechanism for a slow product of growth, to eliminate that variability which is the fundamental condition of development; but this is not essential to the immediate purpose.

That purpose may be said to be in the first place to suggest that there is little evidence to prove that racial hatreds and antagonisms are fixed and permanent, in the sense that the physical characters of the primary races are permanent. There is, on the contrary, reason to believe that where place conditions are favourable to the development of a unified nation, these hatreds tend to die away with relative rapidity. Thus there seems hope that it may be possible to find a solution for the problems of the disturbed belt of Europe without having recourse to the terrible solution of the forced emigration of irreconcilable minorities.

Before the paper the PRESIDENT (Mr. DOUGLAS FRESHFIELD) said: I will now ask Miss Newbigin to read her paper on Race and Nationality. She is

the editor of the *Journal of the Scottish Geographical Society*, and she has written, as most of us know, an interesting book on the apparently insoluble problem of the Balkan Peninsula. With that preface, I will ask Miss Newbigin to read her paper.

(Miss Newbigin then read the paper printed above, and a discussion followed.)

Sir THOMAS HOLDICH : I must confess that when I came here I had not the very least idea what Miss Newbigin was going to say. As, however, she has done me the honour of quoting my opinions, may I reply briefly that I think she has entered on a subject which is so large and so intricate that it would be perfectly impossible within the limits of such a discussion as we can have here to-night to ventilate the whole subject thoroughly. I am obliged to her for her good opinion, and I should like very much to have an opportunity hereafter to reply more fully to some of her criticisms. It is certain to happen—I think we can all look forward to that—that at the end of this war there must be a very large redistribution of national territories, and in the course of that redistribution there is no doubt at all that the commercial and racial elements of it will be the first to be considered. I have not myself come across any work of importance dealing with this subject which has not given great prominence to that particular aspect of the final settlement. Very few have referred at all to the geographical side of the question, and I think it is for the Royal Geographical Society now to set to work to train, or at any rate to influence, public opinion, so as to impress, if possible, the high political authorities with the importance of the geographical aspects of this matter, seeing that we consider it as one which affects the peace and security of Europe in the future. It is very very difficult to reconcile the conflicting interests of race and nationality with those of geography. One might quote innumerable instances where the mere fact of dealing only with nationalities and ignoring those principles of geography which ought to determine the territorial limits of nationalities has led almost to disaster. I think myself—I speak with all humility ; Miss Newbigin will correct me if I am wrong—I believe that we have a concrete instance not very far from us, in Ireland. Suppose that towards the end of the seventeenth century certain lands which had been confiscated had not been occupied more or less forcibly by settlers of Scotch and English origin, who were induced to take the place of the people who had left these confiscated lands : I think that had there been a clear idea of the geographical unity of Ireland—which is not, after all, a very large island ; which has very definite boundaries, and which is well enough adapted for the development of a single nationality, but is not big enough for two—had that all been properly taken into consideration at the time, we might have avoided a great deal of trouble now. The fact that there occur really two distinct nationalities in Ireland is just what has led to the trouble. They are within a ring fence, beyond which neither wishes to move. Numerically the Gaelic is in superior force ; economically, I think, and very likely physically, the people of English and Scotch descent in the north are the predominant race. And how it will be settled it would be very rash indeed for anybody at present to attempt to suggest. Various and innumerable problems of a similar character must also necessarily arise hereafter in the course of territorial settlement. It is just this point that I wish to impress on you to-night. It is quite time that the Royal Geographical Society, as a whole, took up its position as a scientific adviser to the Government and to people in high authority on these subjects. It is absolutely impossible to ignore them, and it is only lately that they have begun to be

understood. If I ever undertook to write on these subjects myself, it was simply and honestly in the hope that it might provoke free and fair discussion, and that out of such discussions there might eventually arise a consensus of geographical opinion which would really be sufficient to influence the high authorities who have the settlement of these affairs in future. Therefore I am very much indebted to Miss Newbigin, and should be indebted to any one who would contribute as clearly and in as interesting a manner as she has to the discussion of these matters. I sincerely hope that, in the absence of the more direct geographical interests with which we have always been associated, these high considerations will receive in future more attention from the Society, and that there will hereafter be discussions such as these, leading us to definite conclusions.

Prof. L. W. LYDE : I am grateful to you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity of saying how much I have enjoyed Miss Newbigin's lecture ; every time I hear her lecture she seems to me to be more stimulating and more suggestive ; in fact for some time she has seemed to be much our most stimulating and, I believe, also our most suggestive geographer. To-night she has also been provocative, which is a great thing. I would like to say a word or two about the two words that she uses, "race" and "nationality," and then, if I may, just cross a lance with her on two little points. As to race, it seems to me of vital importance that our greatest modern anthropologists, while stating definitely that race is inherited breed, admit that use or disuse affects inheritance, and that it incorporates its results in the offspring of the people affected. In other words, acquired characteristics are handed down. That is of very great interest to those of us who for years have been studying prehistoric climate in relation to primeval man, and who have been forced to the conclusion that race variety is a response to regional environment. I believe that nationality is exactly the same thing, only judged from a political, not a physiological point of view. It is inherited sentiment, and the link between the two is very close because the racial unit is the best of all natural nurseries of nationality. But while the natural physiological variation is always quite slight over a given area, the normal, occupational or temperamental variation over the same area is nearly always considerable, sometimes very great, because of a contrast which Miss Newbigin implied but did not actually state, the contrast between the coastal and continental conditions. For instance, in the Balkans there are in theory six somatic types, but even experts cannot distinguish between the *average* specimens, except by their dress and such like. But temperamentally there is an enormous difference, and it is the difference very largely between the core and the coast. Coastal peoples everywhere—and it is just as true of the South Sea Islands as of the Greek and the British Islands—tend to develop outlook, initiative, individuality. Continental peoples, the people of the core, tend to develop organization, centralization, discipline. Just because the people of the coast have that individuality, they are intractable material to organize ; and it is just the very easiness with which the Continental people are organized which shows their lamentable poverty in individuality. They believe in close order because they cannot trust their individuals in open order. And the nation which is so concerned to invent fool-proof machinery for every aspect or operation of life is unconsciously showing that they have a superabundance of these people on whom to prove the machine. And that is just why the world owes so much to these little coastal peoples. No amount of machinery, however fool-proof, can make second-rate material into a first-rate power, and Man lacking that individuality, that initiative, is second-rate or

even third-rate material. Therefore the world owes an enormous debt to these small people, and that is why we are interested to-day in the survival and prosperity of small peoples—interested in them and their prosperity even though they may, in certain places, block the larger peoples from the sea. Therefore you see the characteristic stupidity and arrogance of Prof. Naumann's assertions in his 'Central Europe' that "The day of small peoples is done; they may no longer stand in the way of nobler and larger people"—that means the Germans. But he is wrong. Democracy is standing to-day for the individual, whether race or nationality or individual man, and that means that the day of the individual, whether people, race or nationality, is just beginning, not done. To think that the machinery of any particular State can be greater than the common spirit of man is an absurdity. May I now offer you a criticism on one or two points? The first is the idea that, if a certain type comes over the water-parting and overlaps the line you want to make, there is difficulty. I suggest there is no difficulty, if you will accept, to begin with, the principle that where there is a line to be drawn and the people on one side have proved the power to assimilate and the people on the other side have proved the incapacity for assimilation, you will draw the line so as to regard the latter type. That is to me the crux of the whole thing. The people who assimilate are the people who are tolerant, and therefore to embrace that little section of alien blood just because it is on the tolerant side of the line will cause no harm. Secondly, in choosing your new frontiers you should see that people are not on the wrong occupational side of the line. For instance, it is no good allowing a Greek to possess any country that has to be ploughed. He cannot plough; he can prune a tree or trade; he cannot plough or look after cattle. Why put him into a country where he has to do both, or somebody else has to do it for him?

MISS DURHAM: I quite agree with Miss Newbigin that to-night it is better, in talking of the Balkans, not to mention nationalities or their claims. But Miss Newbigin asked at the beginning whether it was entirely the diversity of race that caused the great unrest in the Balkan Peninsula. Very largely it is. But also a very great deal of this unrest has been deliberately caused by outside Powers who have designs upon territories there. I think you would be surprised if you had lived there as many years as I have, to find the enormous amount of propaganda and the deliberate inciting of racial hatred carried on by the so-called Great Powers. My own Albanian dragoman, who was an extremely shrewd and witty old man, was greatly appalled by the conduct of the Powers. He said to me, "O lady, I think these great Powers are really just a band of brigands. In the daytime they quarrel with one another, but when it is dark they all go out robbing together." And I do not think that foreign policy in the Balkans could be better described. Each Balkan people has been used by one or several of the great Powers as a lever or as the leaping-off spot from which they may obtain something for themselves. Whether this could be stopped, and whether these nations after this war will cease using human bait thus to angle for territory, I do not know.

As for future arrangements, these peoples, races, or nationalities are so very diverse in their ideals and aspirations that I do not think any one race can be trusted to govern properly any other. Thus if a portion of race A be incorporated into the state of B, that portion will quite certainly be used by its free relatives beyond the border to stir up trouble in B. I do not approve of forcible emigration of a population; but I do think that in a great many instances voluntary emigration could be arranged, and the various races thus sorted

out. Say, for instance, that a Greek village, owing to the difficulties of frontier drawing, has to be included in Bulgaria, and similarly a Bulgar village included in Greek territory; the inhabitants of either should be given the choice of exchanging villages, and time in which to effect the exchange. In many of these villages there is little difference in the style of house and quantity of land, and the exchange might be a fair one. Hitherto, every time that Balkan frontiers have been changed the annexed population has been largely massacred, the survivors expelled, and their property confiscated. Wherever I have been near frontiers I have found villages where the people said to me that they had settled there after the Treaty of Berlin. Their grandfathers were murdered, their cattle seized, and their houses burned; they had escaped by flight and settled here.

The frontier drawing after the war of 1876-77 was done without any consideration of the needs of the populace. I have ridden along many of those frontiers, and have found instances of the line being drawn between a village and the forest where from time immemorial the villagers had obtained their wood, or between the village and its water-supply. You cannot convince a peasant that he may not fetch water from the spring that belonged to his ancestors. These blunders have caused endless bloodshed, and once you cause bloodshed you start a feud that may last for generations.

The map, shown by Miss Newbiggin with Paris as a centre of civilization is very interesting. But at present such an arrangement cannot be hoped for in the Balkans, for there is no one race qualified more than another to form such a centre. I am aware that each of them would willingly take the office upon itself, but not one is fit for the office. They have to set their own houses in order first.

Prof. Lyde said that there were no Balkan races, as it was impossible to distinguish one from another except by costume. I do not at all agree with him. It is true that in some central districts you get a mixture—a people who have a little of all sorts in them. But in general the types are very strongly marked. In fact, I have correctly picked out Serbs, Albanians, and Bulgars in photographs which showed them in European costume. The curious thing is that, in spite of proximity, these types should have remained so distinct. As for a Balkan centre: up till now the most civilized Balkan men have, one often finds, been educated in Austria. You meet doctors, literary men, artists—all Austrian trained. And the members of Balkan races who form part of Austria, though not entirely content with Austrian rule, have progressed very far ahead of those who have not come under Austrian influence. Unfortunately, Vienna as a Balkan centre is now, I suppose, ruled out.

One speaker remarked that Balkan people going to America speedily lost their national peculiarities and became merged in America. But when they return to their native land it is amazing how soon they revert. I expressed once the intention of going to a great funeral in Montenegro in order to study the peculiar customs. A native just returned after twenty years in America tried to dissuade me, saying, "Don't go to that; it is a damn-fool business." He jeered at national custom. However I went and he came too, and before we had been there five minutes there was my American friend leaping as high as this table, beating his breast and temples, and howling and shrieking like the rest. After the ceremony he was much ashamed. I asked, "What made you do it?" and he could reply only, "I don't know. I couldn't help it!" Such is the force of habit. If it takes several generations to become absorbed in America, the chances of one race being easily absorbed in another in the

Balkans is very remote. Therefore I hope that the boundaries will be drawn as far as possible to separate the different peoples, and that where the mixture of population makes this impossible, the opportunity for reasonable emigration by exchange of villages will be afforded.

Mr. H. CHARLES WOODS: At this late hour and after the brilliant speeches to which we have listened I will not detain you more than a minute or two, but I should like to say that it seems to me that geography must figure prominently in the future of frontiers, and particularly in the future of frontiers in the Balkans. In the past, as Miss Durham has told us, geography has not played the part which it should have done. She has given us one or two amusing instances, and perhaps I may refer very briefly to one or two rather more serious. First of all, there was the boundary drawn between Turkey and Bulgaria after the Balkan Wars, allowing the Turks to retain Adrianople, cutting the railway connection between the main part of Bulgaria and Dedea-gach, and therefore upsetting the communications of all that part of the world. Next we have the question of the Struma Valley, which is the natural outlet for Bulgaria towards the south—a valley the lower part of which was not given to the Bulgarians after the Balkan Wars. To mention another instance, in Southern Albania, when the European Commission drew the frontier they drew it in such a way that the road running in from Santa Quaranta and constituting the only line of approach to Southern Albania, passes through a few miles of Greek territory. That, of course, meant either the construction of a new road or else the existence of one quite useless as a means of communication with a large area. Then in Northern Albania a large number of people were actually cut off from the markets to which they had been accustomed to go. This meant that they had to trek many miles over the hills and go by paths and roads which are often closed in winter.

Miss Newbigin has told us about Scotland; and if I understood her aright she thinks that what happened in Scotland might prove a good example of the way in which difficulties might be got over in the Balkans; that is, that Serbs, Albanians, Bulgars, and Greeks might be brought together and get to live at peace with a little good rule. But unfortunately in the past there has not been good rule; and if it be true to say, as it is, that the Turks think the best way of dealing with the Armenian question is to massacre the Armenians, in order that there may not be an Armenian question, it is equally true to say of the various Balkan peoples that they think the best way of dealing with the Serbian, the Bulgarian, the Greek, or the Albanian question is to massacre their enemies and then there will not be a problem at all. Therefore, it is very difficult, when there is no form of good government in any of these countries, to think that they can be satisfactorily amalgamated. It is not a question which plays a direct rôle in the subject of to-night's discussion, but, as it is entirely about the Balkans that I am talking, it may be said that in this unhappy area there is the all-important religious question, or more correctly the ever vexed political-religious question—the difficulty of reconciling peoples with practically the same religious views, but with a different political religious control. In the Balkans, perhaps more than anywhere else, you have this all-important question fanned and aggravated by the people who have an interest in it. So long as this goes on it is enormously difficult, and I agree with Miss Durham that the foundation of the future should be racial distribution, taking geography and the military conditions as subsidiary, and that there might be either voluntary or compulsory emigration from one country to the other.

The PRESIDENT: The hour has come when I ought to wind up this interesting discussion. It seems to me that in these debates we are rather apt to slip from the general to the particular. Miss Newbigin asks us to consider the general question of how frontiers should be delimited between nations, rather than any particular instance. The main argument that we have had submitted to us to-night is that race is not to be considered as the only or predominant factor in determining national boundaries. That I am fully prepared to admit. But while making this admission we must, I think, take care not to depreciate race too much; we must give it its proper place as one of the more important elements in the constitution of nations. After all, race is soul and all the rest is circumstance and environment. On the other hand, no doubt, soul like the human body is malleable; and very dissimilar races can, under favourable conditions, be made to coalesce and be welded into a prosperous and contented political whole. We have a great example in our own country in which so many races have been welded, while still retaining some of their individual characteristics. A Welshman and a Scotchman remain a Welshman and a Scotchman to this day; and they even like to be called British rather than English. In the United States we watch the same process of the welding of a dozen different nationalities into one whole being carried out on a singularly extensive scale. We have just seen, not without satisfaction, that even the large majority of the Germans in the United States are Americans first and Germans afterwards. It seems to me, therefore, that in constituting and delimiting States a great many facts, of which race is one, have to be taken into consideration. First of all there is need of a just and settled government which gives the various races a chance of coalescing, and makes it their interest to do so. Then you have to consider the physical features and economical conditions. We find sometimes a prosperous state which seems to have no connecting link to hold it together except good government. Look at modern Switzerland. It is inhabited by three or more different races, speaking different languages; and its territory disregards natural boundaries. On the other hand Austria, occupying the great basin of the Danube, in place of uniting its different nationalities displays them at daggers drawn with one another. One of the burning questions of to-day is, What is to be the future of Austria? Take other practical examples: Savoy for instance; there the physical features and language aiding, and there being no very great divergence in the race, the Savoyards are becoming as good Frenchmen as the Provençals. Again, look at Alsace, which has in the Vosges a natural frontier towards France, and where the people speak the same language as their neighbours beyond the Rhine. Yet from a lack of sympathetic and just government Prussia has been absolutely unable to join Alsace to Germany. We recognize in all these questions of frontiers that the problem is a very complex one: it is not only a matter of race and of language, or of natural features that involve economical and strategical problems, but of a combination of these things. Statecraft and sound judgment are needed to deal with problems in which there are so many different elements to be taken into account. Moreover, in each particular case you must reckon one element against the other and decide according to the best of your wisdom. In conclusion I may refer to one specific case mentioned by Miss Newbigin, a district of which I have some knowledge, the Trentino. She pointed out that some Italian writers claim the Alpine watershed as their proper boundary, while the population in the upper valleys south of it is mainly Germanic. I should like to repeat to-night the suggestion I made to you six months ago. There is a current

confusion in the mind of chamber-geographers, both military and political, who do not understand mountains. They take for granted that a watershed is as a rule a racial and strategical frontier. Now, watersheds in many cases are not frontiers, except from the purely physical point of view. (The Pyrenees form a notable exception.) The racial and strategical frontier is apt to lie in the gorges. If you take the map of the Trentino and draw a line along the southern side of the Alps from the east end of the Oertler group through Meran and across the hills towards Brunecken you run nearly level with the racial frontier; that is to say, a fair strategical frontier and the racial frontier are really the same. The Trentino problem is by no means insoluble. Napoleon dealt with it, and an approximation to a reasonable frontier was nearly reached in the negotiations between the Austrian and Italian governments which preceded the war.

I have only one other passing note to add to Miss Newbigin's remarks, that is with regard to the way in which traffic came up from the Mediterranean. I doubt if much of it went over the Côte d'Or. Having come up the Rhône to Lyons, it crossed the hills to the valley of the Loire, and floated down the stream to Orleans. As long as the roads were bad traffic and travellers made all the use they could of river transport.

The society is greatly indebted to Miss Newbigin for a very interesting and stimulating lecture, and for enabling us to hear the various Fellows and visitors who have given us their views on the subject. Whatever tends to bring the various considerations affecting the questions of delimitation to the front and helps us to introduce them into the minds of politicians must be useful both to the Society and to the nation. I am sure I unite all your suffrages in offering Miss Newbigin our best thanks for her lecture.

THE PILGRIMAGE OF SYMON SEMEONIS: A CONTRIBUTION TO THE HISTORY OF MEDIAEVAL TRAVEL

Mario Esposito

IN his valuable and interesting book on the 'Dawn of Modern Geography' (vol. 3, 1906, p. 491) Mr. C. R. Beazley makes a passing reference to a fourteenth-century Irish traveller, Symon Semeonis, "whose narrative is extremely important for the history of European trade in Egypt." As Mr. Beazley was unable to devote any space to the examination of this hardly accessible and little-known document, I have tried in the following pages to bring the subject under the notice of those who are interested in the history of geography, and who may be able to clear up some of the obscurities which I have not succeeded in explaining.

The *Itinerarium* or 'Carnet de Voyage' of the Irish Franciscan Symon Semeonis appears to have been first mentioned in modern times by Thomas Tanner ('Bibliotheca Britannico-Hibernica,' fol., Londini, 1748, p. 702), who met with a MS. of it in the Library of Corpus Christi College at Cambridge. This MS. was accurately described some years later by James Nasmyth ('Catalogus Librorum MSS. in Bibl. Coll. Corp. Christi Cant.,' 4to, Cantabrigiæ, 1777, pp. 384-385), who, realizing the