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The Vanishing of In-Between Europe

ABSTRACT: *Over the last few years a number of fundamentally important events have taken place which – given the extent to which they were not unexpected, to which we could prepare for them – make it possible for us to give clear and unambiguous answers to the questions arising from the radical changes in the Central Europen geopolitical situation. The processes of empire-building and institutional collapse have played roles in determining the chances of success for the countries of the region. The author traces these processes back to explain how the meanings of modernization and Westernization have been interpreted in Central and South-East Europe. The following of the Western model is a terribly long and painful process, which is full of breaks and attempts to restart. This must always be taken into consideration when we are trying to understand the current situation of Eastern Europe.*

The comparative approach to the development of Hungary and its neighbors, or, if you like, to their European development, has reached a turning point. Not in the sense that the traditional and necessarily biased national viewpoint must be given up for a wider-horizon regional approach – one which acknowledges the state and national components of the region, and sees their European development as a complex, yet unified process.

Such a turning point had taken place among Hungarian researchers of 'European development' at the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s. Here I am thinking foremost of István Hajnal's study of 1942 on the 'development-research' on small nations or 'peripheral nations'[1], or of Domokos Kosáry and Kálmán Benda's 'Carpathian Europe' study in the one-time Teleki Institute.[2] Jenő Szűcs and Domokos Kosáry's studies of the 1980s may be seen as organic continuations of the above.[3]

Writing in the early 1990s and following the steps of Oscar Halecki[4] and Jenő Szűcs, and combining their 'historical-cultural' East-Central Europe term with the core-periphery model, Piotr S. Wandycz describes the history of the 're-appeared Central-East Europe' (i.e., the Visegrád countries) after the 1989 collapse of the Soviet block. The Polish Yale historian is, however, uncertain about the anticipated results of the Polish, Hungarian, Czech, and Slovakian "post-communist transitional period, which can be seen as the biggest test in their histories." "Will they try to succeed individually, or will regional cooperation give meaning to the term Central-East Europe? Will they take their old places, or will they fight for a new place in Europe, possibly in a united Europe? Only the future will provide an answer, but certainly the past may be the main compass."[5]

Ignác Romsics – summarizing the experiences of the first half of the 1990s – is even more skeptical than his Polish colleague. "The peoples of Central- and Eastern Europe have proven themselves incapable of developing honest relations and effective cooperation over the last four-five years, i.e., they are in a vacuum, lacking the dominance of a great power..." Further, given that European integration and the entire future of the European Union is 'questionable', Romsics feels that "the power vacuum will be filled by geopolitically predestined continental powers." Central- and East-Europe's peoples have lost the spirit of opposition to such a large degree – he writes – that they not only "simply tolerate being 'conquered', they are actually quite happy about it."[6]

Geopolitical Turning Point

Over the last few years a number of fundamentally important events have taken place which – given the extent to which they were not unexpected, to which we could prepare for them – make it possible for us to give clear and unambiguous answers to the questions arising from the radical changes in our geopolitical situation. We can claim that the selective expansion of Western integrative organs – and not the 1989-90 collapse of the Soviet block and communism – is the true historical turning point. This is so from two points of view – one positive and one negative. The positive dimension of the change – which holds true for just some countries – is the

strengthening of Western integration. The negative dimension – which holds for the other countries – refers to the frustration and lack of success in accepting the Western model.

Together, Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic, as full members of the North Atlantic alliance system, became permanent members of the West – in a geopolitical sense – in the spring of 1999. It is worth noting the circumstance whereby this took place. It was an historical moment where the West was ending its 'futile experiments' and was instead trying to 'politically unify' the Western 'sphere of culture' on the civilizational level.[7] As any effective policy, or I might even say any policy at all, is possible only within well-defined borders, it is rather fortunate that we find ourselves newly within the West at a time when its borders are literally becoming political. Istvan Hajnal, the one-time researcher at the Teleki Institute, felt that Hungary, or Carpathian-Europe, was unambiguously Occidental in the historical sense. But at the time, the West – which was in geopolitical suspended animation – was at a great distance not only from us, but from all the peoples of the 'peripheral belt'. And after 1945, as a response to the Russian challenge, it awoke, and distanced itself even further.

From our present point of view, it has become clear that geopolitical borders are also geo-economic. This means that with the introduction of a common currency, the European Union is moving from its period of pre-history to an historic one, and only some of the states of Central- and Eastern Europe will become full members as such. Besides the three new members of the North Atlantic alliance, the likely candidates are Slovenia, Croatia, Slovakia[8], and the Baltic states. (*Figure 1.*)

As such, I have outlined the negative dimension. For many countries the entire attempt at modernization, or, more precisely, 'Westernization', is becoming a failure, or is becoming impossible to complete. The democratization which followed the collapse of communism has, for these countries, become the visible cause of the weakening of the economic capacity and political stability. A unique situation has come to exist, whereby integration into Western geopolitical and geo-economic structures, which could potentially halt or turn around this entropic process, has become impossible. This is so because the viability of the West is precisely dependent on keeping a clear distance from the belt of destabilization and chaos. It is noteworthy that the Romanian philosopher H.-R. Patapievici said "the
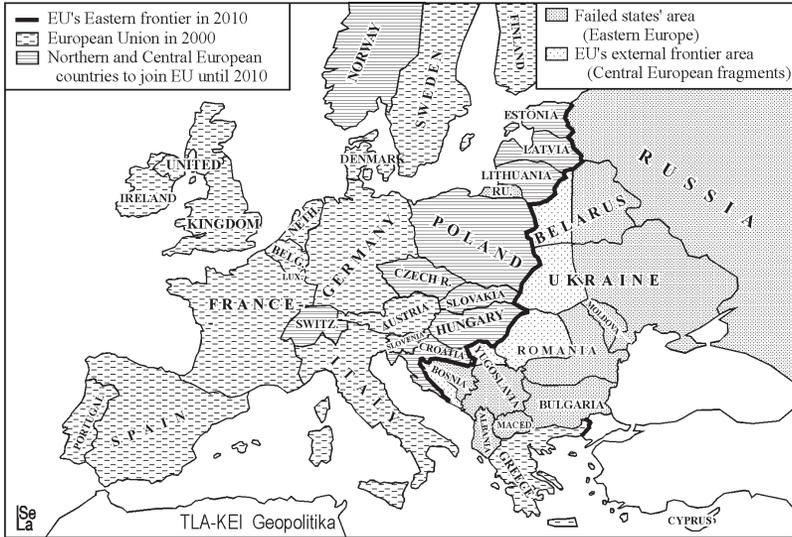
Figure 1. *Europe in 2010 (Molnár, 1998)*

situation in which Romanians now find themselves, ought to keep them awake at night."[9] This quote is from the summer of 1997!

To summarize the above, the historical-typological meaning of the geopolitical turn which matured over the last decade is synonymous with the vanishing of In-Between Europe or East-Central Europe. Europe has been divided into two regions – West and East – since the appearance of Latin Occidentalism.[10] This does not mean that there were two equally ranked geopolitical units or two self-developing sociological models. Jenő Szűcs speaks of an 'incomplete' Eastern Europe which came to exist north of the Black Sea (South-East Europe is consciously left out, but without a proper explanation). This region was made 'complete' by expanding to the Pacific at the same time Occidental Europe expanded across the Atlantic.[11] This approach is not justified in topological nor in typological terms.

First, the nomadic wedge driven through the Ural gates to the steppes of the Eastern and Southern Carpathians and the Hungarian plains, as well as the spread of Catholicism through the Eastern Carpathians and the line of the Vistula, blocked the development of a uni-
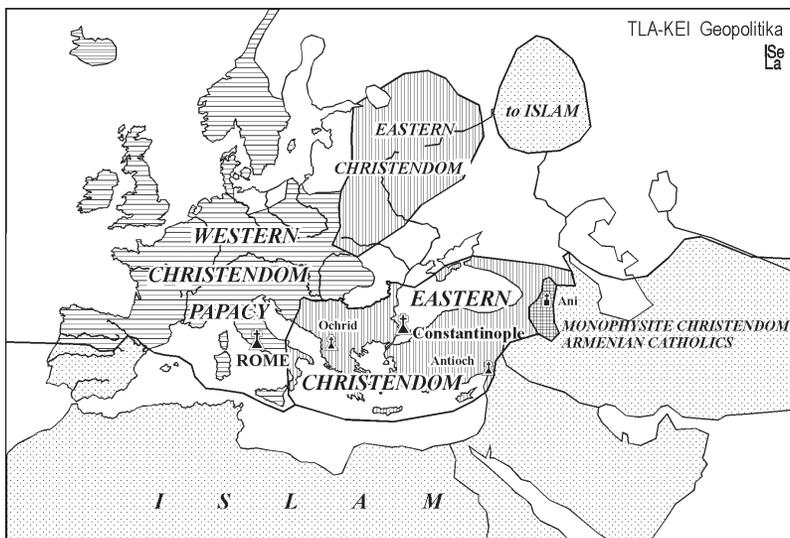
Figure 2. *The Unified West and Divided Eastern Europe in 1000*
(source: Colin Mc Evedy, The New Penguin Atlas of Medieval History, 55.)

fied, single-capital civilizational and geographical Eastern Europe or
'Greek-Eastern Europe'.[12] (*Figure 2.*) Second, from the beginning of the
18th century the Orthodox center (Russia) and the elites of South-Eastern
Europe – who were under Turkish authority but who kept their own
unique political identities (e.g., Romania) – began to turn more and more
to the West, acknowledging its civilizational lead.

By more and more vehemently imitating Western forms in the 19th
and 20th century, so-called divided countries came to exist, as opposed to
new Western countries. Huntington writes: "The dominant culture of
divided countries would have them put into a defined civilization, but their
leaders want them put into another... Those politicians who out of arro-
gance think they can transform the cultures of their societies are doomed
to fail. While they introduce numerous elements of Western culture, they
are incapable of continuously drowning out or eliminating significant ele-
ments of the original culture. At the same time, if the Western virus pene-
trates another society, it is very hard to get rid of. The virus does not spread,
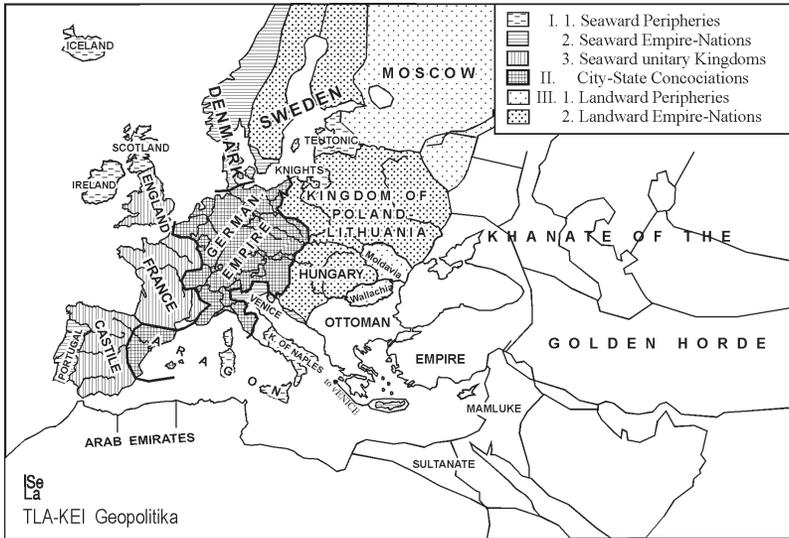
Figure 3. *Types of States in 15th Century Europe (Molnár, 1998)*

and it is not fatal. The patient survives, but will never be healthy again. Political leaders are able to make history, but they cannot escape from it. They establish divided countries, and do not establish Western societies. They infect their countries with cultural schizophrenia, which becomes a continuous and defining characteristic."[13]

Empire-Building and Institutional Collapse in the Outer Belt of the West

Two countries of key importance in the so-called outer belt of the Occident, Hungary and Poland, had to struggle with this virus. A glance at the maps of Figures 3 and 4 – which were planned based on the work of the Norwegian Stein Rokkan – shows how right István Hajnal was when he claimed that outer societies of the Occident were characterized by "dreadfully strong expansion," interchanged with "sinking into insignificance."[14]

At the end of the 11th century the Kingdom of Hungary become an empire in the Western sense. ('Hungary' had somewhat of an antecedent,

given that in the 9th century the nomad state which spread from the Szeret to the Dniester, as a part of the Kazar Empire, took over the latter's structure.[15]) When St. László spread the area of rule of the Hungarian crown, the Croatian state retained its legal status within the Kingdom of Hungary. Within the framework of the Middle Ages Occident, this was exactly what empire meant: an often merely transcendentally valued (but quite real in its effects) superior state, within which one or more publicly and legally attributed legal units, or loyal states, operated.[16]

In the first half of the 13th century, when the geopolitical situation was defined by the powerful spread of the Catholic West compared to that of Orthodoxy (whose pinnacle was the establishment of the Latin Empire in Constantinople), the imperial character of the Kingdom of Hungary became more emphasized in the south and in the north-east, with the conquering of Bosnia and Halics (later Galicia) respectively, and with the establishment of the Bánság and Hercegség south of the Sava and Danube. But nothing illustrates the efforts of the Kingdom of Hungary to fill the geopolitical vacuum caused by the (temporary) collapse of the Byzantine Empire more convincingly than the fact that the Hungarian kings added "King of Serbia, Bulgaria, and Kumania" to their title. The Tatar invasion put a stop to these efforts at expansion for some time, but these were restarted in the following century by the kings of the Anjou dynasty and by Mátyás.

This unique imperial-styled tradition was so strong that when the western part of Hungary and later – after the Turkish occupation – the rest of the Kingdom of Hungary came under Hapsburg rule, Hungary's 'integration' took place through the consideration of the unique legal situations of the countries of the Holy Crown, i.e., Hungary, Croatia, and Transylvania. The latter, though it remained an independent principality, became a part of the Hapsburg Empire indirectly, through remaining under the Hungarian Crown.

Another noteworthy instance of Hungarian empire building could first be seen in the 1830s, and was an idea which was often discussed by the representatives of the independent Hungarian government after March of 1848. According to the idea, the responsibilities of Austria, which was disintegrating and was joining Germany, ought to have been given to Hungary, which had "grown under the rule of the Hapsburg dynasty" and which would be the "inheritor of the middle-ages Hungarian empire." This was
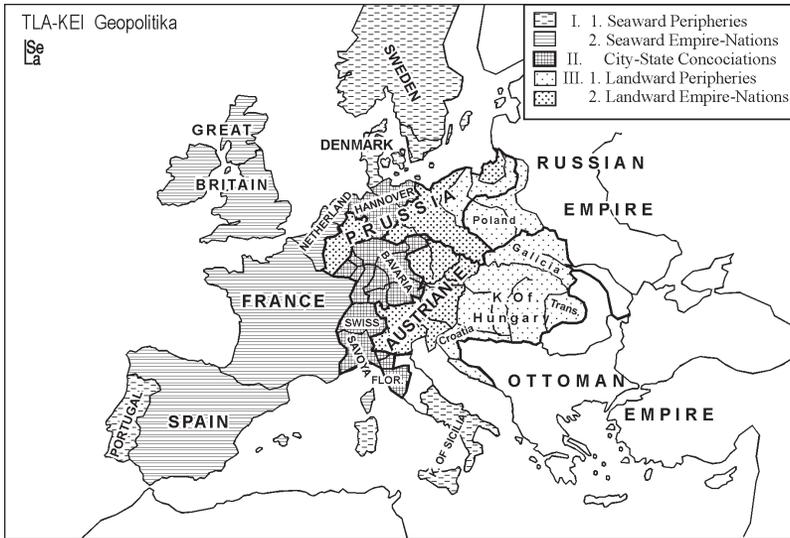
Figure 4. *Types of States Europe, 1815 (Molnár, 1998)*

according to Lajos Kossuth, as written in a letter to Foreign Minister Ferenc Pulszky on June 7, 1848.[17] Given the political situation abroad, this was not entirely unrealistic.

 English agent J.A. Blackwell was the first to put this idea into a coherent form.[18] In his study, which appeared in the London *Athenaeum* in 1837 (*Acts of the Hungarian Diet of 1832-36*), he emphasized that the reform national assemblies took the annexation of former territories of the Hungarian Crown to be of the highest order of the so-called preferential offenses. Blackwell writes, "The reforms, which no doubt will soon be executed, along with those which have already been executed, will turn the country of Hungary into the seed of an empire, which will spread north-south from the Carpathians to the Balkan mountains, east-west from the border of the Czech lands and Bavaria and the coast of the Adriatic to Bessarabia and the Black Sea."

 In his letter of March 28, 1848 to England's ambassador in Vienna, Posonby (but which was to be forwarded to Palmerston), Blackwell concretely outlines "how it would be possible to establish the [now independent

Hungarian] kingdom in a way which best serves English interests." Starting from the premise that the "Austrian Empire has collapsed" and further that "in a few months Italy will be a unified kingdom, and Germany will be a unified empire," Blackwell logically gathered that "the Austrian-Italian states will be annexed by the former, and the so-called hereditary states will be annexed by the latter." It was 'obvious' that a unified Italy and a unified Germany were favorable in terms of British interests, given that Great Britain would no longer need to fear "Europe's two aggressor powers, France and Russia." At the same time it was true that a unified Germany would become "a much more fearsome power than it is at present," and that the Germans "might become a more dangerous competitor than the French." The English observer thought that Hungary, and the new imperial structure which could be organized around it, would alone be capable of serving the unification of Germany and of keeping Germany at bay.

Blackwell thought that Germany could be kept away from the Adriatic and the Balkans only by establishing a "grand Danubian state", a triple monarchy, under Hungarian hegemony. The Kingdom of Hungary would consist of Hungary and Transylvania, the Illyrian Kingdom would consist of Serbia, Bosnia, Dalmatia, Istria, Krajina, Karinthia, Croatia, and Slavonia, and the Dacia Kingdom would consist of Walachia, Moldva, and Bessarabia.[19] Blackwell marked the borders of this 'Danubian Empire' or 'federal state' on a map which unfortunately is not to be found among the documents in the archives of the Academy, but which was familiar to the members of the 1848 Hungarian government. (*Figure 5.*) Bertalan Szemere, for example, in a letter dated May 24, 1848, asked László Szalay, delegate to Frankfurt, to look for Blackwell in London. Blackwell had old plans, in which the Slavic provinces would not melt into one state, but instead "each would be a federal province, with separate languages, separate tongues of local administration, but somewhat connected to us. He has a map of this. He can show it to you."[20]

Given that Blackwell's imperial plans for "Hungary's great future surpasses even the most fantastical Hungarian variations," Hungarian historians, who, with the exception of Jenő Horváth are under the spell of positive Hungarian 'facts', never took Blackwell seriously. This approach is unjustified. Not only because – as stated by István Hajnal – "it is impossible to doubt Blackwell's personal seriousness,"[21] but also because in the
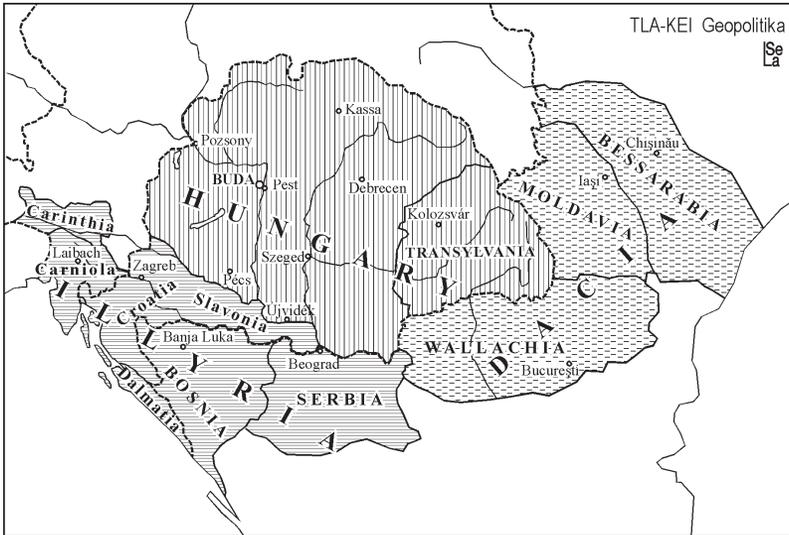
Figure 5. *Balckwell's Concept of the Danubian Hungarian Empire (Molnár, 1998)*

given historical situation the concept of a Hungarian-centered Danubian empire was a quite rational hypothesis. We would likely not be mistaken to think that Kossuth's later idea for a Danubian Confederation was based on this imperial construct. This of course would not have made an 1848 triple monarchy or federal state any more realistic or likely, but it should lead Hungarian historians to state that the drafting of a Hungary with imperial dimensions did take place in the modern age.

What is interesting and characteristic for us is that in the reform age, the modern concept of nation building began in parallel with empire building, and expansion ran aground just like more successful earlier efforts had. In my opinion this too is related to the destruction which comes with executing Western models (in this case that of the French-style nation). The histories which took place in the outer belt, it appears, are characterized mostly by the duality of imperial expansion and disintegration.

Based on the above, the reason for Hungary and Poland's inclusion in Rokkan's paradigm system as *border-empires* and later as land peripheries, becomes understandable.[22] Poland, which had grown massively in the

16-17th centuries, not only ceased to be a border-empire at the end of the 18th century, but at times disappeared from the map. The imperial periods of Austria and Prussia followed, but they did not fare much better: Prussia ceased to exist, while Austria became a modest and insignificant little state. Hungary's history shows three examples of disintegration following empire building (the first and second halves of the 13th century, the end of the 15th century and beginning of the 16th century, and 1848-1918), being an example of a central position within the outer belt and being pushed to the periphery.

What is the reason for the instability of the outer belt, and within this, that of the Hungarian state structure? With the acceptance of Western forms, the goal – be it the 11th, or the 14th-15th centuries, or 1848 – was the construction of an effective governing organ, but this, in the first, decisive phase of model-copying, brought with it 'other things', according to István Hajnal.[23] It was this 'other' that carried the most significance, in both positive and negative ways. The Western 'deep-structures' which became commonplace were actually formative elements which actually led to the destruction of the desired governing structure.

I see regularity here. I would state it in the following way: *in the process of adapting Western institutional forms, the receiving countries regularly experience institutional collapse and the collapse of central authority*.

Nicolae Iorga, the Romanian historian and nationalist ideologist, is right when he writes "neither the Hungarians, the Czechs, nor the Poles can claim to have a complete national life... Here everything came too suddenly, or inorganically and catastrophically, as opposed to Western kingdoms whose inner structures developed organically, slowly, and naturally over time. In the West the monarchy was not a response to social conditions which did not exist in the past, like in the East, where monarchy was not a result of local historical development. Here the monarchy establishes everything, not according to inner legal traditions, but according to external effects."[24] This was truly the case. According to recent research the Hungarian king Béla III, who reigned in the last decades of the 12th century, had an annual income equal to 23 tons of silver, while that of the French king was 17 tons, and that of the English king was 9 tons. The other side of the coin is that "while the income of the Hungarian king was practically the same as that of his country, in the case of Western rulers, income, which

came mostly from collected taxes, was just a fraction of the country's income. Therefore, here the king was the economy, and there the country was the economy!"[25]

This example illustrates the unique fact that in following the Western model, adapting the institution embodying the main authority (the monarchy) generally resulted in stable and powerful structures, while the integration of elements which secured society's inner dynamism and were thus essentially more 'democratic' generally led to disorder and the inability of institutions to operate. Anonymous, the author of the *Gesta Hungarorum*, which was written around 1200, came back to Hungary from the Parisian university convinced that "the king must share his power with his lords, and must establish a decentralized constitutional order."[26] When this 'democratic' principle was expressed in the forcibly obtained Aranybulla (1222) and its later numerous revisions (1231, 1267), the result was not the ordered sharing of power between the king, the lords serving in the court (the so-called *szerviens*), and the barons. Instead of the 'democratization' of power, authority went through a kind of 'wild privatization' where the private authority of the barons increased greatly in opposition to the public authority as represented by the king. The barons, as written in the Rogerius canon, which described the horrors of the Tatar invasion, in practice divided the country among themselves (*per pares diviserant*). "The beneficiaries of the process were the oligarchs, who established their own independent states in the territories which were removed from the supervision of the king's authority," writes the Romanian historian Serban Papcostea, analyzing the reasons for the disintegration of the Kingdom of Hungary at the end of the 13th century.[27]

Rebuilding after the complete institutional collapse that resulted from the dying out of the kings of the House of Árpád (1301) was undertaken during the Hungarian rule of the Anjou kings, who were more organically connected to the West than the Árpáds, and who were of French origin, but could be considered the second national ruling family. Great development resulted from grand institutional, economic, and financial reforms. Data originating from the end of the 14th century indicates that – not counting the provinces beyond the country's borders – there was a population of close to three million people in more than 21 thousand settlements, more than five-hundred city-type settlements, and 49 contemporary cities. The

country's foreign policy playing field was considerably increased and the flowering of foreign trade was assisted by the economic and dynastic cooperation which was established between Hungary, the Czech lands, and Poland in 1335 at the Visegrád Congress by the Hungarian king Róbert Károly.[28] Finally, with the development of city counties which operated under the local self-governing bodies of the orders and lords, a unique innovative basis for the entire institutional structure was established, and the conditions for Western-style autonomous social development, which was free of direct model adaptation, were established.

All this, however, could not stop the new institutional collapse of the 15-16th centuries and the transition from oligarchic 'democracy' to 'national' catastrophe (1526). The Western model continued to not only build, but, by its very nature, to destroy.

The third institutional and economic-financial infusion to arrive from the West was represented for Hungary by the Habsburg House. This made possible the survival of institutions through the 150-year Turkish occupation, and then the two hundred years of continuous development and expansion. The Western-style autonomous social development which began in the Anjou period was completed, and as a result, in the first half of the 19th century, the 'imagined' nation (i.e., it was thought of as such all over Europe), based on Hungary's centuries-old tradition of 'feudal' democracy, was able to execute its own revolution and achieve representative democracy on its own, from its own resources.[29] And this created the conditions for yet another institutional collapse, leading to a (now literal) national catastrophe.

Hungary of 1848 was not a unified state in administrative or legal terms. The county system had not been executed across the entire country, which thus included several Middle Ages, and several Hapsburg-established curious administrative territories. The real problem was caused by the fact that the area of rule of the Holy Crown, which was the symbol of Hungarian statehood and the legal basis of the special status within the Hapsburg Empire, spread across three countries (Hungary, Croatia, and Transylvania), i.e., it spread over a separate Hungarian empire. Within the borders of historic Hungary, which covered the entire sphere of control of the crown, there was an effort to establish a Magyar nation based on the centralized French model, which would cover all citizens. At the same time,

or in some cases with a lapse of a few decades, there began the natural independence-seeking national movements of the Croatians, Serbs, Romanians, and Slovaks began, which all followed the Western model, but which resulted in the division of the country into small pieces. The fact that the collapse was late (in the first part of the 20th century) because of the importance of the Hapsburg monarchy in Europe – or from a different point of view, was early because of the breakout of the First World War – is merely trivial. Sooner or later it surely would have happened.

This was the third – and last – instance when institutional collapse occurred as an inescapable side effect of the progress of Western social development. The effects of the institutional *tabula rasa,* which came from the taking of power by the communists in 1948, were especially damaging and caused the country to fall back for decades, but they could not take root within institution-establishment and within the deep structure of society-building. Thus, after the collapse of communism, the country simply returned to its own political and legal traditions – which formed the outer belt of the Western model.

This 'return' represents a newer – and permanent – period in following Western models, which, as a result, is leading Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic, and some other countries to becoming institutionalized parts of the West. What is important is that the long historical process of integration may be completed without an institutional collapse. If Hungary and Poland's historical catastrophes were caused by the 'overzealous' adaptation of Western freedoms in environments which lacked the necessary social background, or by the effect of the disintegration of traditional power relations, today it is precisely the stability of democratic political institutions and operational economies which make possible privatization in market conditions. And it is the unambiguous existence of a civil society in the 'outer belt' of the West, i.e., the full acceptance of 'Western-ness' as an inner principle of organization, which makes possible the successful completion of integration processes. As a result the states leaving In-Between Europe, which have helplessly suffered the consequences of external effects for the last centuries, will enter the new, postnational periods of their histories as active participants in the West's institutional revolution. As a result of the closing of the thousand-year period of following Western models, these countries will experience the end of

their national-based histories, and begin a new historical adventure, taking on a new historical role – one which they filled once in the Middle Ages, under entirely different circumstances and in a different form.

Following the Western Model in Orthodox Eastern Europe

Western model adaptation in the areas of political and legal institutions in the past and present is entirely different in those countries which began this dangerous process late, in the first half of the 19th century.

The anti-Western elites of the orthodox countries were, and continue to be, convinced that problems began exclusively with the adoption of Western forms, and that before, when political and legal forms were based on their traditional civilizational values, all was good and well. The local adaptations of Byzantine ruling forms and legal principles, first and foremost unlimited – *authentes*, *samoderzhavniy* – main authority, as well as the nomadic methods of taxation[30] undoubtedly made possible the development of the small states of South-Eastern Europe and the Moscow-based Grand Duchy. In the latter case this led to the rise of the Russian empire, but statehood, and generally political institutions and social structures in contact with the main authority, were unstable and insecure in the East-European region.

A few examples serve to illustrate the situation. The situation of the Bulgarian-Vlach empire was uncertain, mostly in geopolitical terms.[31] The new independent Balkan state was born from the uprising of the Vlachs, (who Byzantine historians referred to as 'barbarians') living in the mountains, against the weakened Byzantium in 1186. The north-Balkan Vlachs, who took part in the Monoilosz' 1166 attack on Hungary, demanded that the emperor give them property rights in their home lands, i.e., that they become constituents with full rights in the empire, in exchange for their military services. Given that Byzantium rejected this request, the "depraved and unlawful" Vlachs (Choniates) revolted. After the Bulgarians and the Cunians, who lived together with the Vlachs north of the Haemus practically symbiotically, joined, a unique state, led by Asenids, incorporating the 'ethnic cooperation' of the three groups, was established, continuing the tradition of the first Bulgarian empire.

The kingdom or empire of the Asenids (sources of the period use both terms) joined Latin Christianity, in an effort to break from the wedge established by the Kingdom of Hungary and the Latin Empire established in Constantinople in 1204. Ionita (Kaloioannis), who exchanged letters with Pope Ince III, did not accomplish anything with his geopolitical maneuver, because neither the Kingdom of Hungary, nor the Latin Empire acknowledged the legitimacy of his rule over the north-Balkan lands, which were formerly under Byzantine authority. His subjects wanted no part of adopting the Christianity of Latin rituals. Neither the geopolitical situation nor the obvious conservatism of the true-to-Orthodoxy peoples favored the longevity of the Western geo-political orientation of the Bulgarian-Vlach state. At the same time the renewed spread of Orthodox authority over space brought tangible results, as the re-appearing Byzantium, though weakened, saw only its own imperial borders as legitimate. In this way, it had no interest in strengthening the institutions of the mini-empires which followed its example. (It must be stated that an 'institutional revolution' akin to that in the West, and the organic expansion of Eastern Europe could only have taken place if the ancient model, the East-Roman Empire, had collapsed earlier.)

The real situation of the Balkan states, which could be seen as local adaptations of the Byzantine model, was well reflected in the situation of Bulgaria after the Asenids died out. This history is dominated almost exclusively by the conspiracies of local contenders to the throne against one another. As stated by a recognized American expert on Balkan history, it is "the endless chain of betrayals, violent acts, and murders, the historical significance of which is merely to emphasize: the second Bulgaria, like the first, was an unstable construction."[32]

The situation of Serbia in the Middle Ages was similar. Stefan Nemanjić's 1217 'flirtation with Catholicism' only served to more forcefully turn the Serbs and the developing church organization toward Orthodoxy.[33] Regarding the solidity of institutions, it can be said that the undoubtedly successful state-building activities of certain significant and exceptional kings were, as a rule, followed by long periods of civil war marked by "the spirit of tribal particularism."[34] The Balkan Serbian empire of Dusan, who crowned himself "Czar of the Serbs and Greeks", fell to pieces ten years after the death of the czar in 1355.[35]

It is worth quoting Miklós Oláh's notes on the wisdom of his father, who escaped the murderous madness of the rivaling prince family in Walachia and went to the court of Mátyás. The twelfth chapter of *Hungaria* reads, "King Mátyás decided several times to take him back with arms to his kingdom, but my father… decided to marry my mother, Borbála Huszár, in Transylvania and live as a private man as opposed to living in tyrannical power and exposing himself to a thousand dangers and risk being murdered, as his ancestors did."[36]

István Hajnal sheds light on the reason for this permanent institutional chaos. Given that the Slav peoples (and, along with them, the ancestors of the Romanians, the Vlachs) adapted the Byzantine forms, no synthesis followed, and no new civilized nations developed, as in the West. The gist of the Byzantine model was the existence of rational ruling forms which were the extensions of an "over-ripened, mechanical antique system" and below them existed archaic societies. There was no organic connection between the two, and "the elemental methods of society-building" could not develop. Actually, Orthodoxy was the 'organic connection', but Hajnal did not include it for a reason. He could not have included it, because he was using the language of (Western or Roman) institutional forms, and he could only interpret those things from Byzantium and its civilization which could be described in the language of institutional terms.

Given that the totalizing, unity-establishing strength of Orthodoxy never took on an institutional character, it was in vain that the Byzantine ruling form stood on Orthodox ground to a degree, for the Balkan peoples following the Byzantine model the entire political institution system, in fact everything that was above the level of the local community – in both social and political terms! – remained foreign, "interest-like, and external." In this way the mass of subjects retreated to the "intuitive" structures of the extended family and the tribe-ethnicity.

Byzantium sought to place entire civilizational structures on peoples, but they did not at all affect the archaic structures below the foreign forms. The fundamental difference from the West is best shown by the fact that those Slavs who followed the Western model – as opposed to the Southern and Eastern Slavs, and the Vlachs – were able to overcome the archaic Slavic social forms. Among them, just like among the Hungarians, the "perfect shattering of intuitive ethnic connectedness" followed. Among the peoples

who followed the Byzantine model, pluralism and 'habitual adaptation' became common only on the social-anthropological and folkloric level, and did not become an elemental method on the actual political, society-building level.[37]

Or if it did, it resulted in a kind of negative, feigned society-building, whereby there was an attempt to appear true to the habits of 'contract-abiding Europe'[38] and to show 'feigned good will' (*simulata benevolentia*), of which Johannes Sommer (the humanist from Saxony who later taught at Lublin, then at the Cotnar Latin school, and finally in Transylvania) wrote when describing the habits of the Moldavian Vlachs.[39] The feigned adoption of Western forms – as evidenced by the bloody 1563 Moldavian uprising against voivod Despot's Protestant reforms – were often followed by deep-rooted so-called civilizational fault-line conflicts (Huntington)[40] in Orthodox-majority countries and provinces. These conflicts appear to be more durable than the so-called national conflicts which could be interpreted as the internal civil wars of Western civilization.

Sommer writes that during the uprising against voivod Despot, who was of foreign background and who wished to bring foreign habits, the Moldavians, who were insisting on their Orthodox faith and habits, considered the Latin school in "Cotnari, which was populated by Saxons and Magyars", which was established by the prince for children collected from the area of the entire country, a symbol of 'foreign tyranny' (*externa tyrannia*) as it used 'foreign letters' (*peregrinae literae*).[41] Thus, while the Moldavian chroniclers who attended the Polish humanist schools already valued their peoples' Latin origins, Latin letters became a symbol of foreignness in the country.

<p style="text-align:center">★</p>

The question of border lines within In-Between Europe, which are becoming more and more clear, are, according to many, merely superficial, conjunctural issues, which should not even be discussed, as this would obstruct the quick development of a "unified Europe without dividing lines", which ought to be dependent on merely the appropriate political decisions.

But if we consider the independent historical-sociological and geopolitical differences between the western and eastern parts of the vanishing entity called In-Between Europe, we see that the differences are not decreasing, but in fact are increasing, and that these differences are the result of long historical processes. This is a much more realistic approach. East-Central Europe (or, defined from the other direction, western In-Between Europe) disappeared, or may disappear as an autonomous historical model because it has adopted the social method from the West – through struggling with the Huntington virus for a thousand years – which the East could not adopt from Byzantium, and which it could not adopt from the West because of its late start and because of the old tradition of executing adoption from the top down.

The following of the Western model is a terribly long and painful process, which is full of breaks and attempts to restart. This must always be taken into consideration when we are trying to understand the current situation of Eastern Europe, which is drifting further and further away from us.

NOTES

[1] István Hajnal, "A kis nemzetek történetírásának munkaközösségéről. I–II.," *Századok,* 1942, 1–42., pp. 133–165, and "Magyarország helye az európai fejlődésben," in *Az újkor története.* (Budapest: 1936), pp. 146–160.

[2] Domokos Kosáry, "Sur quelques problčmes dhistoire comparée," *Revue d'Histoire Comparée,* 1943, No. 1–2., pp. 3–32; Aux lecteurs, *Revue d'Histoire Comparée,* 1946. No. 1–2., pp. 3–6; Kálmán Benda, "Lidée dempire en Europe carpathique ŕ la fin du moyen âge," *Revue d'Histoire Comparée,* 1944, No. 1–2., pp. 54–80; Domokos Kosáry "Kárpát-Európa"-kutatás a Teleki Intézetben. Tóth János interjúja," *Valóság,* 1983/9., pp. 32–41; Domokos, "The Idea of a Comparative History of East Central Europe: the Story of a Venture," in Dennis Deletant and Harry Hanak (eds.), *Historians as Nation-Builders: Central and South-East Europe* (London), pp. 124–138.

[3] Jenő Szűcs, *Vázlat Európa három történeti régiójáról* (Budapest: 1983 [1980]). Also: Domokos Kosáry, "Az európai fejlodési modell és Magyarország," and "Az európai kisállamok típusai," in *A történelem veszedelmei* (Budapest: 1987), pp. 7–19, 451-483.

[4] Oscar Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History* (New York: 1950), and *Borderlands of Western Civilisation* (New York: 1952).

[5] Piotr S. Wandycz, *The Price of Freedom. A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present* (New York–London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 5–11.

6   Ignác Romsics, "Közép- és kelet-európai perspektívák," in *Helyünk és sorsunk a Duna-medencében* (Budapest: 1996), pp. 361, 363, 368.

7   István Hajnal, "A kis nemzetek történetírása..." p. 8.

8   After Vladimir Meciar's election defeat in September of 1998, Wolfgang Schüssel, the foreign minister of then EU president Austria, stated that as long as the new government forms properly, "Slovakia's EU integration" would immediately become a negotiable issue. (*Le Monde*, September 30, 1998)

9   H.-R. Patapievici, "Românii încă nu și-au găsit, metafizic vorbind, modul lor propriu de a se instala în modernitate," *Ziua*, 1997, August 14.

10 Mackinder's East and West Europe concepts, see Gusztáv Molnár, "The Geopolitics of NATO-Enlargement," *Hungarian Quarterly*, Summer 1997, pp. 3-16.

11 Jenő Szűcs, *Vázlat...* pp. 14–15.

12 István Hajnal, "A görög-keleti Európa. Az Orosz Birodalom," in *Az újkor története*. pp. 267–283.

13 Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: 1996), pp. 138, 154.

14 István Hajnal, *A kis nemzetek történetírása...* p. 38.

15 Gyula Kristó, "A magyar nomádállam," in *A magyar állam megszületése* (Szeged: 1995), pp. 120-126.

16 Gustav Molnár, "Imperii și pseudoimperii," *22,* Bucharest, 1998. Nov. 10-16.

17 Gábor Erdődy, *A magyar kormányzat európai látóköre 1848-ban* (Budapest: 1988), pp. 61–62.

18 On Blackwell writings from 1846 to 1851, see István Hajnal, *A Batthyány-kormány külpolitikája* (Budapest: 1987).

19 The sources of the Blackwell quotes are: Jenő Horváth, "Blackwell András József angol ügynök magyarországi küldetései. 1843–1848. I.," *Budapesti Szemle*, 213. k., 616. sz.,1929. március, 383–384; III. *Budapesti Szemle*, 213. k., 618. sz., 1929. május, 265–268.

20 István Hajnal, *A Batthyány-kormány külpolitikája,* p. 80.

21 Ibid., p 29.

22 Rokkan, "Dimensions of State Formation and Nation-Building: A Possible Paradigm for Research on Variations Within Europe," in Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), and Rokkan, "Territories, Centres, and Peripheries: Toward a Geoethnic-Geoeconomic-Geopolitical Model of Differentiation within Western Europe," in Jean Goffmann (ed.), *Centre and Periphery: Spatial Variations in Politics* (London: Sage, 1980).

23 István Hajnal, *A kis nemzetek történetírása*, pp. 8, 16, 21.

[24] Nicolae Iorga, "Desvoltarea așezămintelor politice și sociale ale Europei. I.," *Evul mediu. Conferințe la Academia Militară*. București, 1920., p. 143.

[25] Ferenc Makk, *Magyar külpolitika (896–1196)* (Szeged: 1996), p. 219.

[26] Z. J. Kosztolnyik, *Hungary in the Thirteenth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 14.

[27] Șerban Papacostea, "Criza de structură a Regatului arpadian," in *Românii în secolul al XIII-lea. Între cruciată și Imperiul Mongol* (București: 1993), p. 134. On Rogerius see ibid., p 128.

[28] Domokos Kosáry, *Magyarország története* (Budapest: 1943), p. 47. On the Anjou-period, pp. 42–53.

[29] András Gergely, "Közép-Európa parlamentjei 1848-ban," in György Szabad (ed.), *A magyar országgyűlés 1848/49-ben* (Budapest: 1998), pp. 15–63.

[30] On the political institutions of the Romanian principalities, see Dimitrie Onciul, "Originile principatelor române," in *Scrieri istorice, I.*, (București: 1968), pp. 560–715;

[31] On the Bulgarian-Vlach state, see Gheorghe I. Brătianu, "Asenastii," in *Tradiția istorică...* 10–49; and Șerban Papacostea,"Înfruntări politice și spirituale in sud-estul Europei (1204–1241)," in *Românii în secolul al XIII-lea,* pp. 11**–**55.

[32] Ferdinand Schevill, *A History of the Balkans* (New York: 1991), pp. 151.

[33] Károly Szilágyi, "Az államalapítás," in Dénes Sokcsevics, Imre Szilágyi, and Károly Szilágyi, *Déli szomszédaink története* (Budapest: 1994), pp. 25-27.

[34] F. Schevill, pp. 147.

[35] Károly Szilágyi, "A középkori szerb állam széthullása és a török hódoltság."

[36] Miklós Oláh, "Hungária," in *Janus Pannonius – Magyarországi humanisták* (Budapest: 1982), pp. 1076–1077.

[37] István Hajnal, *A kis nemzetek történetírása...* pp. 13–15; 23–24; 32; 39.

[38] Claude Karnoouh, "Societatea civilă," *Dilema* (Bukarest), 1999. Jan. 15–21. Also see the author's work on Romanian identity, *L'invention du peuple*. Chroniques de Roumanie. Essai. Paris, 1990.

[39] Johannes Sommer Pirnensis, "Vita Jacobi Despotae Moldavorum reguli – Viața lui Jacob Despot, Principele moldovenilor," in Johannes Sommer Pirnensis and Antonius Maria Gratianus (eds.), *Viața lui Despot Vodă*, Ed. bilingva, Iași, 1998, p. 74.

[40] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations…*

[41] Johannes Sommer, pp. 46, 50-51, 69.