

## EDITORIAL

I respectfully greet the kind reader on the publication occasion of the second volume of our scientific periodical, namely the Central European Papers (C.E.P.), which is a joint project between the Silesian University in Opava, faculty of Public Policy (Czech Republic) and the Kodolányi János University of Applied Sciences (Székesfehérvár, Hungary). The international editors committee decided to achieve the goal of strengthening the Central European identity and thinking, our interdependence, and to acquaint to an even broader professional audience the historical, political, ethnic, geographic, regional, etc affairs of our present and recent past, and the centuries old international relations heritage of the Central European region.

We believe that there is a need for such scientific periodical. Especially because this Central European region – which is defined by several authors as Inter Europe (Zwischen-Europa) – for centuries served as a buffer state between Western Europe and Russia. We have to note that Central Europe is such a historical, geographical, political landscape, and such a natural region formed by diverse geographical, ethnographical, political, cultural factors, which is hardly possible to circumscribe or define geographically.

Therefore the question arises: how should the editors define Central Europe? The answer for us is obvious: we regard Central Europe in the broadest sense possible, which today, from a political and geographical point of view, comprises the alpine states of Europe (Switzerland, Germany, Liechtenstein, Austria, and Slovenia), and the Visegrád states, which comprise Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. At the same time, several other states, or parts of states have strong Central European peculiarities. Therefore we classify the Baltic States, Ukraine, Belorussia, Romania, Croatia, and from certain aspect even Serbia, to be part of these states in a broader sense.

It must be made clear that the above delimited Central Europe is an ethnically diverse, mixed and fragmentized region containing small states, which was subject to several domination attempts by power-centers (Vienna, Berlin, Moscow) during the course of history. Honestly, these mayor powers more or less succeeded in dominating this region. The result of this was that for centuries the Central European region, practically from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but in several cases until the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, four empires (Russia – Soviet Union, Prussia – Germany, Habsburg Empire, Ottoman Empire) used this land as their buffer region, and these empires partitioned this region between themselves. The history of this region, from the national awakening until 1918, was basically defined by the struggle of these nations against the empires who constantly attempted to infiltrate this region. These nations, during their pursuits for national development, had to constantly confront these empires, which infiltrated the Central European region.

Though the settling after the First World War changed this situation, because some of the empires, which dominated and influenced this region, vanished forever from the political

map (Ottoman Empire, Austro-Hungarian Empire), while others temporarily ceased to exist as mayor powers (Germany and Russia). This offered only an interim possibility, two short decades, for Central Europe. The resurgent German and Russian mayor powers, during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, attempted and succeeded in dominating this region again, first by Nazi Germany, and later by the communist Soviet Union. We shouldn't deny that there were disaccords between the Central European states, their national development endeavors often were against each other, which resulted in a series of conflicts in the region.

This is why we regard the publication of the Central European Papers as an important scientific endeavor, and worthy to follow up. This scientific periodical created as a joint Czech-Hungarian endeavor, wishes to give space and opportunity for the Central European historians, politologists, regionalists, ethnographers, and other researchers from parent sciences, to show each other their research results, to be able to connect to each other's scientific projects, and by doing this, they would better know the past of this tormented Central European region. We hope that this will serve as a good basis to jointly understand our common present-day processes, for the successful and more cooperating Central Europe of the future. Trustingly, I would like to propose the second volume of the Central European Papers to the respected readers and to the professional general public.

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