

ABSTRACTS

Géza Jeszenszky

■ ***What the Antall-government (1990-1993) Expected From Europe?***

Keywords: Hungary, Antall-government, Europe

This essay, written by the foreign minister of the government under discussion (a historian by profession) recounts that by the adoption of Christianity in A. D. 1000 the Kingdom of Hungary became an integral part of what was called (until recently) Western Civilisation. During its defensive wars against the “pagan” Ottoman Empire it became a common theme among its inhabitants that they were a bastion (antemurale) of western Christianity – a notion held by many even today.

Economic and political factors explain why the eastern half of Europe fell back in development, leading to a general desire to catch up with the advanced West. Communism, Fascism and Nazism seemed to offer an alternative, but by the 1950s they became thoroughly discredited. “Return to [Western] Europe” was the battle cry in Hungary and throughout Central Europe of the democrats who played an important part in the peaceful dismantling of the Iron Curtain and Communism in 1989/90.

Free elections in Hungary in the following Spring led to the formation of a centre-right coalition led by József Antall and his Hungarian Democratic Forum. The government’s program centred upon integration with the European Community and its values. Antall’s memorable address to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Budapest on the 30th June 1992 was a testimony to Hungary’s traditional dedication to the European ideals. There was a strong hope in Hungary then that

in a united Europe the ill-treatment of people belonging to national minorities in the states neighbouring Hungary, amounting up to three million people, would come to an end.

Béla Markó

■ ***The European Union and its Minorities***

Keywords: Balladur plan, Europe, minorities, minority safeguard

European national minorities – among them, the Hungarians from Romania – turned towards the European Union with great expectations after the regime change, hoping that their situation would become normalized and enhanced. It soon became obvious that the Western interest in this regard was contradictory – often helpful, but other times uncomprehending or suspicious. Undoubtedly, there was an intention to pacify ethnic relations, but no clear solutions were offered – not only in response to the claims for autonomy, but also to demands for language rights or education in general. Respecting and protecting minority rights proved to be an issue that has been and is being interpreted differently by Western leaders to this day. Democracy is clearly important for minorities as well, but it is not enough to protect their identity. This issue resulted in the so-called Balladur Plan – the minorities expected a lot from it, but it turned out to be a disappointment after all. Nevertheless, this plan was the last major EU decision that tried to address regional specificities as a real issue.

Besides this plan, the article also analyzes in detail the Memorandum submitted to the Council of Europe by the RMDSZ in 1993, which took into account, among other things, the minority problems specific for Romania.

László J. Nagy

■ ***From the Montanunion to the European Union***

Keywords: European Economic Community, European Union, Montanunion

The will for peace led intellectuals and then politicians to lay the foundations of the community of European states and to eradicate in this way the possibilities of war within the European continent. After WWII the German question and the Cold War atmosphere resulted in the creation of the so-called Montanunion (European Coal and Steel Community) that based the production of coal and steel on a French-German cooperation. After its success, in 1957, the European Economic Community was created, with the aim of realizing a more and more tight union between Europe's nations. The plan was widely discussed beginning with the 1970s. First, the bases of European identity were discussed. Beginning with the 1980s, in the EEC, already consisting of 12 states, plans referring to the creation of a political union were discussed at a very concrete level. This process resulted after much compromise on every side in the European Union's Treaty in 1993, largely due to the political changes in Eastern Europe.

István Németh

■ ***Central Europe: a German Task? Ideas of Central Europe and their Functionality between 1814-1945***

Keywords: Central Europe, Central European politics, 1814-1945

The political interpretations of the term Central Europe were launched at the Congress of Vienna. After that, the German strategies concerning Central Europe – that were followed between 1814 and 1945 –

took shape more and more as issues of foreign politics. The article analyses different functionalities and periods of these plans. The author discusses in detail the plans for cooperation before and during WWI, then presents the failure of the plans concerning Central Europe. The activity of the German–Austrian–Hungarian economic community (1913–1918) is also discussed.

György Schöpflin

■ ***The European Polis***

Keywords: European polis, European Union, incomplete project, necessary balance

Europe today is a polis, a political community with its own idiosyncrasies, habits, thought patterns, identity or identities and, as with all identity collectives, a mythic narrative of the past and a vision of its future. At the same time, the European Union with all its institutions, the member states, the elites, the civil society ecosystem that surrounds the EU, represents the totality of interaction between these various bodies. This European polis is incomplete, in as much as its constituent members have powers and legal rights in which the polis has no capacities. Europe is structured by asymmetries of power, frequently allowing the stronger to coerce the weaker. Formally all member states enjoy parity of esteem; in reality, this is not so and the large states regularly seek to impose their ideas on the smaller ones.

In sum, the European polis is marked by the same contradictions that are inherent in Europe's diversity. The task for Europe, from the current perspective, is to establish the necessary equilibrium and not to lose sight of it.

Éva Szénási

■ *Utopian Dreamers or Wise Prophets? The History of the Idea of European Unity*

Keywords: idea of European unity, beginnings of European civilization, Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, Pan-Europa

The study maps different versions of the idea of European unity from the beginnings of European civilization to Coudenhove-Kalergi's concept of Pan-Europa. The study focuses primarily on works and turning points that played a significant role in forming the themes of plans about Europe. Also, it highlights plans related to Hungary, namely György Podjebrád's *Tractatus* or the Duke of Sully's "Grand

Design." Briefly, it also addresses work by lesser known authors like William Penn, Jeremy Bentham and the German thinkers Karl Friedrich Krause and Julius Fröbel. The study is concluded by an analysis of Coudenhove-Kalergi's Pan-Europa because of its double significance. Firstly, it provided a succinct account of the situation in Europe; secondly, its suggestions appear in roadmaps for political reconciliation between the two world wars (Briand memorandum). In sum, many institutional, economic, and political initiatives by the "grand prophets" have been realized in the course of European integration.

