

EUROPE-IN-BETWEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF COHEN AND DUGIN

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Review article

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Abstract

Article offers a comparative analysis of the geopolitical approaches from U.S. and Russian geopoliticians, Saul B. Cohen and Alexander Dugin, in determining the position of Europe-In-Between in contemporary World. The article presents a spatial definition of this term, introduced in the scientific literature by F. Tunjić, and an overview of this area in terms of maritime and continental geopolitics through the reflections of the above mentioned geopoliticians. We are also comparing the current geopolitical moment with the tendencies shown in the papers of these authors to determine the future geopolitical developments in the Europe-In-Between.

Key words: Europe-in-Between, Cohen, Dugin, geopolitics, continental powers, maritime powers

VMESNA EVROPA V OČEH COHENA IN DUGINA

Izveček

Članek prinaša primerjalno analizo geopolitičnih pristopov ameriškega in ruskega geopolitika Saula B. Cohena in Alexandra Dugina k določanju položaja Vmesne Evrope v sodobnem svetu. Prikazana je prostorska definicija termina, ki ga je v znanstveno literaturo uvedel F. Tunjić, in pogled na to območje z vidika pomorskih in kopenskih geopolitik skozi razmišljanja omenjenih avtorjev. Poskušamo tudi primerjati sedanji geopolitični trenutek s tendencami, predstavljenimi v delih teh avtorjev, in določiti prihodnji geopolitični razvoj v Vmesni Evropi.

Ključne besede: Vmesna Evropa, Cohen, Dugin, geopolitika, kopenske sile, pomorske sile

I. INTRODUCTION

The area bordered by the Baltic Sea to the north, the Adriatic and the Black Sea in the south, Germanic world in the west and the Russian expanses in the east, at the political map of Europe stands out with the obvious political fragmentation. Such a political configuration has been a result of specific geopolitical circumstances in times of territorial organization of its component parts. The further analysis of previously geographically delimited area will use the term of *Europe-In-Between*¹ which Filip Tunjić introduced in scientific literature by following the German term of *Zwischeneuropa* and the territorial reorganization of Europe after the World War I. Due to a specific role of this area, the term of Europe-In-Between best illustrates the geopolitical context in which this spatial unit rose and existed throughout the last century. Hence, Europe-In-Between is primarily a geopolitical term that has been developed and spatially defined after the World War I as a buffer zone between Germany and Russia as holders of opposing Germanic and Slavic identities, whose formation was dictated by the Western interests through conclusions of the Versailles Conference and the peace treaties with the defeated countries.

Europe-In-Between was recognized by British geographer Sir Halford Mackinder at the beginning of 20th century as the constant warfare area whose reorganization into so-called ‘cordon sanitaire’ would make a buffer zone separating two opposing forces, Germany and Russia. However, the real fear for Mackinder was the potential cooperation of these two continental powers, which would destroy the balance of continental and maritime powers, particularly the status of United Kingdom as the leading colonial power. Inspired by Mackinder, German geopolitician Karl Haushofer observed the advantages of cooperation of Berlin and Moscow, but he did not get the support of Hitler’s Reich (Pavić, 1973, pp. 361–362). Based on above, the article examines the spatial definition of Europe-In-Between in terms of geographic determinism by stressing the decisive forms of geographic determinism in shaping the geopolitical features of this region.

As the area of penetration of the Rimland into the Heartland² by the eastward expansion of the EU and especially NATO, the importance of Europe-In-Between nowadays takes on a new dimension. Thus, it is necessary to stress the comparative review of view on this area by leading U.S. and Russian geopoliticians, Saul B. Cohen and Alexander Dugin³, by putting their ideas in the context of accepting the theoretical viewpoints of the classics of political geography that geopolitical relationship in the World observe through relationship of maritime powers or the Rimland (maritime geostrategic sphere) and continental powers, or the Heartland (Eurasian geostrategic sphere). As a border zone, Europe-In-Between is discussed by both geopolitical considerations, by the East

1 The term *Europe-in-Between* is translation of Slovenian original term *Vmesna Europa* introduced in the scientific literature by Filip Tunjić in his book titled *Vmesna Evropa: Konfliktnost državnih teritorialnih meja* (2004).

2 British geopolitician Halford Mackinder developed the theory of the Heartland as the Pivot of history. The U.S. author N. J. Spykman opposes the theory of the Rimland which identifies with Mackinder’s Inner Crescent around the Heartland.

3 Notice that some Western authors considered Dugin as a fascist, considering his views hostile to the West.

and the West⁴. Thus, the article seeks to answer the question of the position of this area within the spatial relationships of the Heartland and the Rimland by the opposing geopolitical concepts of Cohen and Dugin. To provide the answers, the methodological approach of the article is based on a comparative analysis of geopolitical interpretation of spatial relationships by these authors, as well as the comparison of impacts of physico-geographic and socio-geographic elements in creating of Europe-In-Between in terms of geographic determinism and the historical method in the review of the genesis and development of this geopolitical unit.

2. SPATIAL FRAMEWORK OF EUROPE-IN-BETWEEN

At the beginning, it is necessary to stress the precise spatial definition of Tunjić's Europe-In-Between and the historical overview of the evolution of territoriality⁵ in this area. Moreover, to understand the location of the region, these terms have to be precisely defined. Pavić says that the geopolitical position is a geographical location with the significant factors for the internal political situation and especially for the foreign policy position of a state. Thus, the geopolitical position includes the combination of geographical and political factors. Moreover, "the geostrategic position (...) represents a kind of geographical and geopolitical location that considers the relevant military and strategic aspects on regional or global strategic level" (Pavić, 1973, pp. 94–95). As pointed out, Europe-In-Between includes border-states from the Baltic Sea in the north to the Adriatic and the Black Sea in the south, separating Germany and Russia, in the wider sense the West and the East. Although this unit should be a stability factor, the following events produced "the space of eccentricity, marginality and crushed peripherality" (Tunjić, 2004, pp. 144–145). This group of countries includes Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus, Ukraine, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and possibly Turkey.

Due to the similarity of terms Europe-In-Between and Central Europe, it is necessary to point out the differences in their meaning. Specifically, Central Europe or Mitteleuropa includes the area of the Holy Roman Empire and Austria-Hungary without the Balkans, geopolitically opposed to the European West and the East (Tunjić, 2004, p. 141). According to above, the overlap of spatial definition of Central Europe and Europe-In-Between is obvious. Europe-In-Between covers the eastern part of Central Europe, but also Southeastern and the parts of Eastern Europe. However, it is hard to find the generally accepted spatial definition of Southeastern Europe. Due to lack of clearly distinguished northern

4 The text will use the first capital letters for the East and the West in the political sense, while the first small letters will be used for east and west as the geographical terms.

5 According to Tunjić, there is a significant difference between the concepts of territory and territoriality: "Territory and territoriality are interdependent and conditioned – territoriality as the activity of conquest, control and defense, as well as the activity of territorial disintegration and integration; and the territory as an area or part of the area, which is defended and which is the subject to competition and requirements versus requirements of the others." (Tunjić, 2004, pp. 26–27).

natural boundaries of Southeastern Europe, or the Balkans, there are various regionalizations of this region. Also, the lack of its natural boundaries to the north and width of the east-west direction are the main reasons for disputing of peninsula features of this region (Pavić, 1973, pp. 129–140). However, considering the Balkans as a geopolitical and cultural region (with an accepted border on the line from Rijeka Bay to Danube Delta), the region is spatially coincident with the contemporary meaning of territorial unit of South-eastern Europe⁶. Meanwhile, during the 1990s a geopolitical term of western Balkans⁷ was formed as a new geopolitical unit within this region with specific status in relation to the Euro-Atlantic integration, which included countries of former Yugoslavia and Albania, but excluded Slovenia (Tunjić, 2004, pp. 245–246). Finally, Europe-In-Between includes parts of Eastern Europe such as Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova, as the countries closely related to their eastern neighbour Russia, that are, using Russian or Dugin's vocabulary, part of the so-called Russian "closer neighbourhood"⁸.

From the above, obviously Europe-In-Between is not a unique geographical unit in terms of geographic determinism. Indeed, while the northern part of the region lies in the Baltic plain, a traditional military corridor between the West and the East, its central part covers the Czech natural fortress followed by the Carpathian arc that surrounds the Pannonian Plain. Finally, with Dinaric and Pindus in the centre, the south of this unit is bordered by the Adriatic Sea in the west and Black Sea in the east. Thus, the fluidity of national boundaries in the north is explicable in terms of physico-geographic determinism, since the boundaries do not generally follow natural barriers, in contrast to the boundaries in the south. However, territorial fragmentation, primarily caused by social factors, is common feature of the whole region, which is the result of continuous fragmentation process of regional or political entities, known as balkanization⁹.

3. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPE-IN-BETWEEN

Europe-In-Between was formed as a need of the West for a sanitary corridor between Germany and Russia after the World War I. This area largely relies on Mackinder's consideration of the strategic security of the West from Russia or even more from eventual Russian-German cooperation. This unit was marginal in a wider temporal coverage. In ancient times the Roman *limes* followed Danube, separating Roman, later Christian,

6 As a contribution, we add the possibility of inclusion of Hungary in the Balkan countries. Recall, Metternich argued that Asia (read Balkans) starts at Vienna train station, which means that areas eastward from Vienna do not share the 'real' European but Asian heritage, whether Ottoman or nomadic steppe tradition as Hungarians (Sowards, 1996).

7 Knowing that 'eastern Balkans' does not exist, obviously the western Balkans is a geopolitical brainchild of the EU, as "the laboratory of European social and spatial integration and disintegration" (Tunjić, 2010, p. 16).

8 Dugin says that this term is "the common name for the countries of the former USSR" (Dugin, 2004, p. 152).

9 The term 'balkanization' signifies a political fragmentation in the part of Europe that once was under the Ottoman rule. The similar term of *Kleinstaaterei* signifies the German political fragmentation within the Holy Roman Empire and the German Confederation. Applying these concepts in the political fragmentation of Europe-In-Between, such a fragmentation makes these small and weak states as the chessmen in a game of great powers (Tunjić, 2004, p. 12).

civilization from the barbarians. In the Balkans, Drina was the border of the Eastern and the Western Roman Empire, the Eastern and Western Christianity. In the following centuries, the border between Christianity and Islam, known as *Antemurale Christianitatis*, in the form of Military Frontier, passed from North Adriatic Sea, through the Pannonia, to the Carpathians and Wallachia. However, this demarcation line was not a classical boundary, but a frontier¹⁰ as a security zone from the Ottoman Empire, especially during its greatest expansion in the early modern period. In the 18th and 19th century frontiers and/or buffer zones disappeared through suppressing the Ottoman Empire from Europe and the Austro-Hungarian occupation and annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also, Prussia, Austria-Hungary and Russia became direct neighbours through the three divisions of Poland.

However, after the World War I and the restoration of Poland, by the ideas of Mackinder and with French support, there was a sanitary corridor established between Germany and Russia, whose core constituted the alliance of Little Entente under the patronage of the West. Moreover, the first division of Germany came up in terms of territorial discontinuity of German state, by accepting of Mackinder's ideas in Versailles and by the status of Gdansk as a free city and the access of Poland to the Baltic Sea, so East Prussia became separated from the rest of Germany. The purpose of this sanitary corridor was the separation of Germany and Russia, not only to prevent new wars, but also to prevent the possible alliance of these two continental powers, which would threaten the Versailles arrangement that guaranteed the supremacy of Western Europe. Also, the sanitary corridor or Europe-In-Between should serve as a barrier of spreading the communism to the west. However, despite the fact that Karl Haushofer clearly perceived the advantages of the German-Russian alliance, the wheel of history has gone in a different direction, so the end of the World War II did not only cause division of Germany as a penalty for the war guilt, but also division of Europe as a whole by the two upcoming great powers.

The serious changes in Europe-In-Between were created by the bipolar division of the World during the Cold War, dividing two ideologically opposed blocks¹¹. In new circumstances former buffer zone between Germany and Russia disappears and becomes a line border between NATO and the Warsaw Pact, whereby the former sanitary corridor (with East Germany) becomes an integral part of the Soviet sphere. In a wider context, outside of this demarcation line, during the Cold War the whole Europe became an inter-space between two opposing superpowers, while the Iron Curtain from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea, as their contact line, became the boundary of the blocks. However, the geopolitical and geostrategic importance of Europe-In-Between raises again after the Cold War and the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact. Despite the Russian opposition, NATO has not only

10 Philippe Moreau Defarges in his *Geopolitical vocabulary* defines the boundary as “a line that indicates where the territories of the two neighbouring countries start and end” (Moreau Defarges, 2006, p. 72). Radovan Pavić says that the boundaries are the lines that divide two sovereignties, while the frontier is as a narrow zone between two sovereignties. It is a zone of dynamic character that moves, expands or narrows as the state strengthens.

11 Within this bipolarity the position of Yugoslavia should be distinguished as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, as well as Albania, a Chinese ally, and neutral Sweden, Finland and Austria.

crossed over the border of former blocks, but also stepped into the territory of the former USSR by the expansion in the Baltic states. Moreover, the integration of Romania and Bulgaria into NATO and the EU has weakened Russian influence in Southeastern Europe, and within it, in so-called western Balkans. Furthermore, persistent refusal of Brussels to apply the Schengen border regime in Romania and Bulgaria is another argument according to which for their access in the EU adjudicated the geostrategic reasons instead of the criteria for membership.

The effects of political fragmentation of Southeastern Europe, primarily of the so-called western Balkans, were predicted by Radovan Pavić, one of the pioneers of political geography in former Yugoslavia, who argued that the process of balkanization would create a series of small, economically and politically weak, and mutually antagonistic states, what would finally result in their insertion in the block structure (Pavić, 1973, p. 143). As a complement to Pavić's visionary interpretation, from the position of the beginning of 21st century Tunjić points out that, through re-territorialisation of Europe, the Balkans did not experienced Europe without borders, but the Balkans with more borders (Tunjić, 2010, p. 57). Such geopolitical configuration nowadays largely formed Europe-In-Between as a inter-space between the West and Russia, for which Cohen notes that it could develop in a gateway to Russia rather than in shatterbelt (Cohen, 2003, p. 186). The western Balkans stands out within this area as shatterbelt or crushed belt (Tunjić, 2004, pp. 161–163).

4. EUROPE-IN-BETWEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF SAUL B. COHEN

At the beginning of his book *Geopolitics of the World System*, in determining of the geopolitical structure of the World for 21st century, Saul B. Cohen emphasizes the importance of the area that we recognize as Europe-In-Between for the West after the World War I, highlighting a danger of availability of this region for Germans and Russians (Cohen, 2003, p. 13). In the contemporary World, Cohen distinguishes three geostrategic realms¹²: the Atlantic and Pacific Trade-Dependent Maritime Realm, the Eurasian Continental Russian Heartland and mixed Continental-Maritime East Asia (Cohen, 2003, pp. 36–38, 63–93), noting the dominance of maritime areas in international trade exchange and the growing economic decadence of the Heartland by reduction of its geostrategic maneuver in the area that the author calls Eastern Europe and that we recognize as the parts of Europe-In-Between (Cohen, 2003, pp. 36–38). Tunjić's Europe-In-Between lies between the Atlantic wing of Maritime Realm and the west wing of the Russian Eurasian Continental Realm. Within the term of *Zwischeneuropa*, but not-associating it with Mitteleuropa from 19th century, Pavić emphasized the key role of Europe-In-Between in the position between the East and the West. Indeed, this region represents “the border land between two worlds” within the contemporary European geopolitical re-territorialisation (Tunjić, 2004, p. 147).

12 Cohen organized three levels of geopolitical structures: the first level is consisted of geostrategic realms as the largest units; the second level is consisted of medium-sized units or geopolitical regions, while the lowest level includes the national states, quasi-states and territorial subdivisions (Cohen, 2003, p. 33).

Cohen pointed out that the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the USSR, with the unification of Germany and the eastward expansion of NATO and the EU, did not only brought changes in the balance between the Heartland and the Rimland, but also within the Rimland, particularly between the U.S. and the EU. In fact, while the Russian Heartland retreated in its continental centre, the EU has made a great spatial and population strengthening. Cohen explains the expansion of the Maritime Europe by putting its socio-economic development in the context of geographical determinism, noting rugged coastline and a maritime façade of Western Europe as a key factor in development of trade in the Mediterranean or the Baltic since the ancient times (Cohen, 2003, pp. 88 and 149–150). However, the eastward expansion of NATO and the EU is unique geopolitical process, whereby, with the political one, this spread has military component for NATO, and the economic one for the EU. Furthermore, Cohen says that the Maritime Europe is not bounded by natural borders only in the east, which is why this border was extremely fluid through the ages. This geographical fact hides the basic geopolitical meaning of Europe-In-Between. In fact, while the USSR shifted that border westward to Elbe after the World War II, the recent expansion of NATO moves it significantly further eastward than ever before.

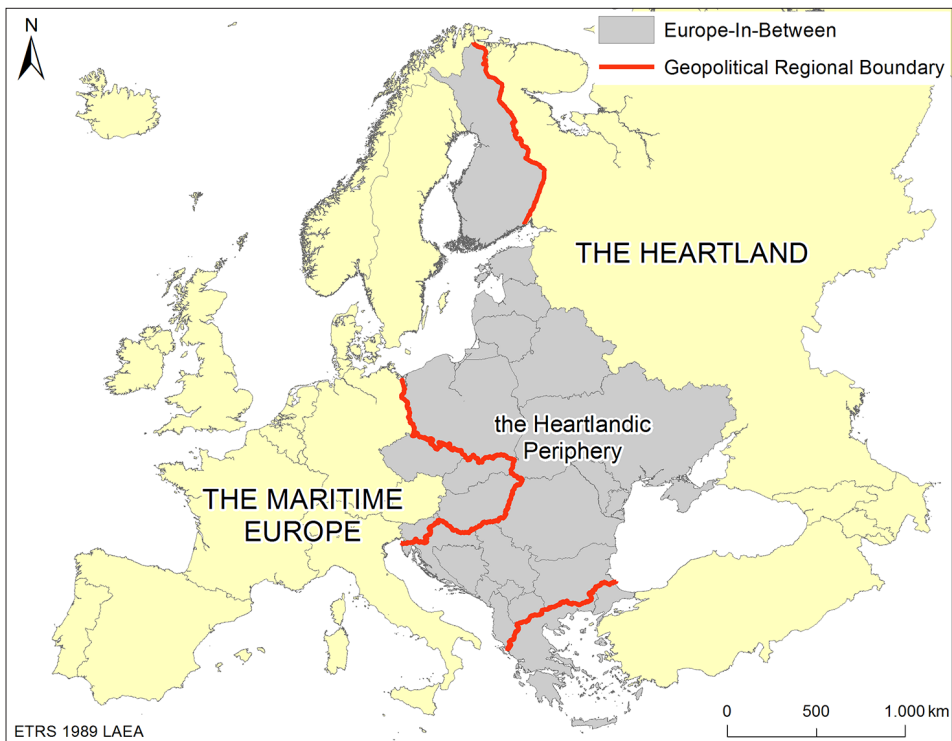
Ratzel says that each state tries to round its borders and to simplify the form of national territory with the aim of better linking of the core and the periphery. Therefore, the border is a fluid term open to constant changes, which implies that the border belt is reality and border line is an abstraction. However, since that border disputes lose their importance within the empire, the inclusion of the countries of Europe-In-Between in NATO and the EU reduces their border conflicts, but increases the importance of new eastern border of the club (Tunjić, 2004, p. 40; 2010, p. 56). Thus, it is not surprising that political geography as a scientific discipline developed precisely in this dynamic area (Ratzel), or on its edge (Kjellén). In new circumstances after the bipolar division, Europe-In-Between (and Europe as a whole) comes back to ‘normality’ as the transitional area or inter-space in the full sense. Thus, in the contemporary era Cohen sees the area “from the Baltic, through Eastern Europe to the Balkans” as a potential shatterbelt, especially if geostrategic expansion of the West ignores Russian concerns about the penetration in its area of interest. Therefore, Cohen adds that “Central and Eastern Europe can develop in the gateway between the Russian Heartland and the Maritime Europe, rather than in shatterbelt, if leading powers treat them as an area of the cooperation instead of the competition” (Cohen, 2003, pp. 53, 152 and 160–161).

According to Cohen, the eastward expansion of NATO affects the position of Germany and Russia, although the author does not consider it as the intention to weaken the strengthening of the reunited Germany to calm Polish fears, but the opposite. Germany is a key stability factor of the alliance by which Poland develops ever closer economic relations (Cohen, 2003, pp. 163–164). Cohen says that the EU’s eastward expansion also affects the balance between the Maritime Europe and the Heartland, and the relations between Germany and Russia. Specifically, by the accession of the countries of Europe-In-Between to the EU, Germany is no longer a peripheral country. Moreover, the reunited Germany in the enlarged EU becomes its central part, which corresponds to the U.S.

interests in the policy of euro-atlantism. Indeed, the role of the U.S., as a protector of the former West Germany from the Soviet threat, in the post-Cold War era has grown into a solid alliance between the U.S. and the reunited Germany whereby the closer cooperation between countries of Europe-In-Between and Germany involves their close cooperation with the U.S. Also, by investments, Germany takes on the role of a sponsor of these countries in their Euro-Atlantic path (Brzezinski, 2001, pp. 67–68). However, the character of the EU as a union of national states could reduce the central importance of Germany by the balance of the maritime England and France¹³ (Cohen, 2003, p. 171). Moreover, as the coordinator among the leading European partners in NATO, the U.S. does not count solely on Germany, but attempts to harmonize the alliance by balancing with other partners through satisfying their individual interests.

Figure 1: Europe-In-Between as seen by Cohen (2003)

Slika 1: Vmesna Evropa kot jo vidi Cohen (2003)



13 Although the author mentions that strengthening of German position in the East puts a French influence in Europe in the shadow and that, therefore, France could slow the eastward expansion of the EU (Cohen, 2003, p. 183), contemporary processes show the establishment of ‘Berlin–Paris axis’, which refers to a kind of auto-redefining of the position of France as not only maritime, but also continental power. Of course, this does not apply to the United Kingdom, which, as a strong U.S. ally, provides a strong counterweight to the German ‘continentalism’.

However, Cohen believes that due to the incompatibility of Eastern and Western Europe exaggerated eastward expansion of the EU is not desirable. The author believes that the Maritime Europe ends at the part of Europe-In-Between, whereby only Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia deserve to be the member states of the EU because of their cultural and economic development, unlike the other countries due to their continental orientation. Finally, Cohen says that the EU's eastward expansion is not justified by the socio-economic, but only by geopolitical aspects (Cohen, 2003, p. 172). Moreover, by the accession of the Baltic states, NATO came directly to the Russian border and encircled Kaliningrad exclave. Also, according to Cohen, the accession of Romania and Bulgaria concerns Russia for unimpeded use of the Black Sea, while the major threat to Russia is eventual expansion of NATO to Ukraine (Cohen, 2003, pp. 163–164 and 218).

Despite its weakened position after the Cold War, Cohen emphasizes Russian mediating role in conflicts, but with strengthening of its own positions in critical areas. In Europe-In-Between, the author highlights Russian mediating role between Ukraine and Romania in the dispute in oil and gas rich areas of the Black Sea. Also, Russia was a supporter of the weakened Belgrade in the conflicts in former Yugoslavia. However, direct NATO neighbourhood threatens the Russian position on the Baltic Sea and re-examines the significance of Kaliningrad district. These circumstances strengthen the relations between Russia and Belarus, a state without a strong identity and economically focused on Moscow, as an important link of Kaliningrad with stem-Russian territory. However, while Belarus' loyalty has been unquestionable, Ukraine is internally split in the ethnically Ukrainian agrarian west and industrial east with a large Russian community, which is a potential source of instability (Cohen, 2003, pp. 213–216).

For so-called western Balkans, Cohen says that it would be the best for the regional stability if Bosnia and Herzegovina falls apart in the way that Republic of Srpska joins to Serbia, the south-western areas inhabited by Croats to Croatia, while small cohesive Muslim Bosnia¹⁴ remains. Furthermore, due to the concentration of Serbs in northern Kosovo, the author advocates the division of Kosovo, but warns on the possibility of destabilizing of Albania and the question of Preševo Valley in Serbia in the context of realisation of idea of Greater Albania. Also, Cohen notes connection of Montenegro with Serbia and especially Russia whose interest in the access to warm seas over these countries is still open (Cohen, 2003, pp. 219–220). Therefore, Cohen designated the area from the Baltic states, through Belarus, Ukraine and Moldova to the Balkans as Eastern Europe or the Heartlandic Periphery. However, many changes have happened since the publication of Cohen's book, from the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU, to the independence of Montenegro and Kosovo, what was against the Russian interest in the Balkans, while the crippled Serbia became a closed continental country.

To conclude, Cohen perceived the area of Europe-In-Between as a region whose position in the geopolitical structure of the World depends on relations between the Maritime geostrategic realm and Russia (the Heartland). According to Cohen, this area has a great

14 Cohen never uses the full name of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Thus he writes 'the southwest Bosnia' instead of Western Herzegovina. Also, instead of Bosniaks, Cohen says the Muslims as was the practice in Socialist Yugoslavia.

opportunity to be a gateway between these two geostrategic realms, but in the case of dialogue absence between them, Europe-In-Between is a prime candidate for conversion into shatterbelt. Let us add that the problem of border position of Europe-In-Between between continental and maritime forces at the example of Bosnia and Herzegovina is very precisely shown by Snježana Musa, who claims that this country in terms of shatterbelt is not able to become a unique country (Musa, 2001, p. 221).

5. EUROPE-IN-BETWEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF ALEXANDER DUGIN

Serbian edition of Alexander Dugin's book *Basics of Geopolitics: Geopolitical Future of Russia* confirms the importance of Serbia in geopolitical concepts of Russia arguing in the preface that "one who controls Serbia, controls the Balkans, and one who controls the Balkans, controls the vast Mediterranean strategic region" (Dugin, 2004, p. 5). The author's introduction, highlighting Serbia as a central part of the Balkans, fits into the old Russian strategy for access to warm seas, whereby NATO's control over the Turkish straits

Figure 2: Europe-In-Between as seen by Dugin (2004)

Slika 2: Vmesna Evropa kot jo vidi Dugin (2004)



makes the Balkans as the logical corridor to fulfil this longing. Dugin advocates the theory of clash of the Land and the Sea, the East and the West, as a geopolitical reality. The author considers geopolitics as a world view, not as a science in the traditional sense. Thus, Dugin develops the theory of telurocracy (the rule of the Land forces) and thalassocracy (the rule of the Sea forces), by comparing the relationship of the USSR and the U.S. with relations of ancient Rome and Carthage (Dugin, 2004, pp. 23–29). Also, similar to Cohen, according to their power, the author highlights the hierarchical position of the countries within the geopolitical complexes of telurocratic or thalassocratic imperial units.

In the relationship of telurocracy and thalassocracy, Dugin argues that the German history from the national revival comes down to ‘non-Eurasian continentalism’. In fact, contrary to Dugin’s natural alliance of Germany and Russia, Germany fought both against the Sea and the Land powers during both World Wars. Dugin explains it noting that Germany, within its central position in Europe, ignored the importance of the central position of Russia in Eurasia and its historical significance (Dugin, 2004, p. 89). However, the author emphasizes the crucial continental orientation of Central European countries, especially Germany (Dugin, 2004, p. 203). Moreover, French theorist Emmanuel Todd also points out that Germany is not a part of the core of the West and that Germany did not contribute to the development of liberal democratic movement in Europe in any way, stating that “Germany produced two worst totalitarian ideologies of 20th century, while England, America and France have been dominated by democratic conditions” (Rising literacy and a shrinking ..., 2012). However, unlike Cohen sees France as an exclusively maritime power, Dugin gives to France the potential to choose its geopolitical orientation, saying that French shift towards thalassocracy implies turning to Anglo-Saxon world, while shift towards telurocracy means cooperation with Germany. Thus de Gaulle developed a thesis of “Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals”, formed in “the spirit of moderate European continentalism” (Dugin, 2004, pp. 96 and 203).

Advocating the restoration of Russian power, Dugin calls for “gathering of the Empire” around Russia-Eurasia to prevent the deterioration of Russian influence in the World. Otherwise, there is a possibility of the pressure on “the geographical pivot of history” from all directions. Dugin sees the Heartland only within the boundaries of the Russian Empire surrounded by the Rimland, stressing that Russia-Eurasia can only be continentally built if the western border of the continental geopolitical block ends with coastline, what does not include the territorial unification, but the alliance of the Eurasian Heartland and the Rimland “against the overseas occupiers” (Dugin, 2004, pp. 149–155). Dugin deems necessary precisely alliance with Germany to achieve Russian geopolitical ambitions, which once was Mackinder’s main nightmare. The author sees Central Europe as “a natural geopolitical creation” which includes “the nations of the former Austro-Hungary, Germany and parts of Poland and western Ukraine”. Hence, Dugin’s Central Europe, seen as part of the Rimland, obviously covers a large part of Tunjić’s Europe-In-Between, whose eastern areas Cohen sees as the Heartlandic Periphery, and western areas as the Maritime Europe. Also, Dugin highlights the importance of the central position of Berlin and the consolidating role of Germany in Central Europe, whose influence can extend to the south (Dugin, 2004, pp. 193 and 369).

Moreover, Dugin stresses the French ability to turn to “the alternative geopolitical flow” by recognizing the comparative advantages of Central Europe in continental geopolitical model, stating that the source of this shift can be traced from de Gaulle and Mitterrand onwards. Dugin adds that such a European Empire cannot achieve the full independence from the Atlantists without “creating of lasting geopolitical and strategic Moscow–Berlin axis” (Dugin, 2004, p. 195). Cohen also predicted the possibility of such a scenario, stating that “the expansion of NATO and the EU” (in Europe-In-Between) “affected the balance of the Maritime Europe and the U.S., as well as the balance of “the Maritime Realm and the Russian Heartland” (Cohen, 2003, p. 88). The central position of Germany in the enlarged EU is obvious in contrast to the previous edge position, what confirms Dugin’s claims about the importance of Berlin in his European Empire. Moreover, Cohen’s balance is also disrupted by two times larger number of the EU population in relation to the U.S. According to Dugin, the Moscow–Berlin axis prevents “the organizing of sanitary corridor in Eastern Europe” (Europe-In-Between), whereby it should “aspirate (...) to break the illusions of inter-states about their potential independence from geopolitically powerful neighbours”, Germany and Russia. Dugin also notes that each bilateral relationship of any of the inter-states with Germany or Russia must include both partners, but without the Atlantists. Dugin adds that by the cooperation of these two countries Russia gets the access to the high technology and economic exchange with Europe, while Germany gets “the strategic protection” and “the independence from the energy reserves of the Third World under control of the Atlantists”. The author concludes that in the existing circumstances “Germany is the economic giant, but political dwarf”, while Russia is “the political giant, but economical cripple” (Dugin, 2004, pp. 198–199).

The independent Ukraine is the great risk for the implementation of Russian continental geopolitics, not so much because of the Black Sea, which, because of NATO’s presence in the Bosphorus, cannot be the substitute for Russian access to the warm seas, but because of the penetration of the western impact on its own territory, manifested through the strengthening of Turkish influence in the south and the threat of further eastward expansion of the atlantism in the former sanitary corridor in Europe-In-Between that can be manifested by Ukrainian joining the alliance. Therefore Dugin claims that “the existence of Ukraine within its present borders and the current status of the sovereign state cause huge geopolitical blow to Russian security, intrusion on its territory” (Dugin, 2004, pp. 303 and 330). Based on the above, Dugin stresses the need of the alliance with Berlin (and Paris) to reduce the impact of NATO and the U.S. in Europe and to prevent the formation of a new sanitary corridor both hostile towards its western (Germany) and eastern neighbours (Russia), and whose potential members are the Baltic states, Poland, Belarus, Ukraine, Hungary, Romania, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Dugin refers negatively to the Catholic states as the supporters of atlantism, saying that from the geopolitical viewpoint, they belong to Central Europe, gathered around unified Germany as a natural centre (Dugin, 2004, pp. 322–327).

Dugin divided the Balkan region into four zones:

- the Bosnian–Croatian (atlantistic, pure Rimland);
- the Serbian (Eurasian, the so-called Russian South);
- the Bulgarian (“the Levantine version of the Rimland” and eurasianism), and
- the Greek one (Orthodox, but atlantistic),

noting Macedonia as a grain of conflict among the Orthodox countries, used by the Atlantists, which should be neutralized with Russian help (Dugin, 2004, pp. 301–302). Moreover, Dugin advocates the establishing of the Balkan Federation, what became unrealistic by the accession of Bulgaria and Romania to the EU. Also, the author says that the unification with the ethnically related Moldova would make Romania as the link between Russia and Slavic Orthodox countries in the Balkans as the corridor to the Adriatic Sea. However, contemporary NATO's Romania does not fit in this scenario (Dugin, 2004, p. 334). Moreover, Dugin stresses the traditional geopolitical orientation of Croats and Slovenes to Central Europe as the Austro-Hungarian heritage, and adds that the dissolution of Austria-Hungary and the creation of the first Yugoslavia was the result of the use of the powers of the East in the fight of the West against Central Europe, which French pragmatic support to the Serbs clearly explains (Dugin, 2004, p. 393). On the other hand, Dugin says that the geopolitical perspective of Serbia is extremely pro-Russian in order to realize the Great Eurasian idea as a kind of ecumenical-continental Orthodox neo-byzantinism. Moreover, Dugin sees the Yugoslav Muslims as the pendant of Turkish atlantistic politics and advocates their turning towards Iran believing that orientation to Turkey strengthens the atlantistic efforts to break the idea of Central Europe. The Macedonians still represent the huge problem as an Orthodox inter-ethnos between Serbs and Bulgarians (Dugin, 2004, pp. 394–396).

From the above, it is evident that Dugin sees the border between mostly Catholic Central Europe (Mitteleuropa) and Orthodox Eastern Europe through the middle of Tunjić's Europe-In-Between. However, Tunjić divides Europe-In-Between in "two strategically peripheral Europe-In-Between". The 'real' or western one was formed in 1918 as a belt between Germany and Russia, the East and the West, as a strategic demarcation between them. In eastern one or 'real' Eastern Europe Tunjić sees "the European part of the former USSR without Russia, the Baltic states and Russian Kaliningrad exclave". Despite this division of Europe-In-Between, Dugin ended with the need for assembling of these two units around its natural centres, Moscow and Berlin, and the establishment of the alliance to resist to the atlantism of Western thalassocracy. In this way, according to Dugin, Europe-In-Between ceases to be a sanitary corridor or Trojan horse of the Western powers, but an integral part of the German-Russian continental alliance.

6. CONCLUSION

Observing the area of Tunjić's Europe-In-Between, which mostly coincides with the former sanitary corridor established after the World War I as a buffer zone between Germany and Russia, the conclusion is that the physico-geographical determinism played a significant role in creating of this region. Specifically, while the absence of relief barriers in the north of Europe-In-Between largely affected the fluidity of the boundaries during the turbulent history, in the south of this geopolitical unit the state boundaries mostly coincide with relief barriers and rivers as a recognizable demarcation lines. Moreover, heterogeneous socio-geographic elements in Europe-In-Between and its position between two opposing powers of various ethnic and religious groups, crucially affected

the geopolitical definition of this area as a buffer zone, frontier, shatterbelt or gateway region, depending on the current relationship of the powers that this unit separates.

The comparative analysis of theoretical approaches of U.S. geopolitician Cohen and his Russian colleague Dugin in case of Europe-In-Between as geopolitical unit located between Germany and Russia, the Rimland and the Heartland, or the West and the East, shows that both authors attach great importance to this area in geopolitical configuration of the contemporary World. Accepting the idea of the geopolitical relations in the World as a permanent competition between continental and maritime powers, or telurocracy and thalassocracy, the categorical stance of both authors is obvious in terms of area from which they come. While Cohen mostly considers Europe-In-Between as a part of the Heartlandic Periphery, Dugin sees this unit as the pure Rimland thus emphasizing the role of Russia-Eurasia as the Pivot of history or the Heartland. Furthermore, Dugin sees Europe-In-Between as a contact area of the German Catholic-Protestant Central Europe or Mitteleuropa with the Russian Orthodox Eastern Europe who must be linked to eliminate the geopolitical subjectivity of the states that lay between the pivotal countries, Russia and Germany, and thus the possibility of establishing a new sanitary corridor and dominance of western alliance. However, nowadays Europe-In-Between has already been largely integrated into NATO and the EU, and thus really exists as an inter-space between Russia and Germany. Therefore, Cohen believes that the final function of Europe-In-Between as a gateway region or shatterbelt is variable according to the relationship between maritime and continental powers, NATO and Russia, and says that if this relationship is based on cooperation, Europe-In-Between acquires feature of the gateway between the East and the West, while Russian feeling of being threatened by NATO's eastward expansion can convert this region into zone of instability or shatterbelt.

Current geopolitical configuration indicates that, by the expansion of NATO and the EU, Europe-In-Between somehow acquires the features of new sanitary corridor, but the European dependence on Russian energy and trade exchange of the EU (especially Germany) and Russia certainly transform Europe-In-Between into a gateway region. The Balkan part of Europe-In-Between still largely exists as shatterbelt open to various influences. However, the accession of Romania and Bulgaria to NATO and the EU, which interrupted the territorial continuity of the Orthodox countries as potential Russian allies, Russian influence in the Balkans has significantly weakened, especially by the independence of Montenegro and Kosovo. Therefore, so-called western Balkans, surrounded by NATO and the EU, becomes the inner courtyard of the West that waits for the political overhaul. Hence, as a result of the political restoration of the region, we can also observe the Croatian accession to the EU which was preceded by joining NATO.

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VMESNA EVROPA V OČEH COHENA IN DUGINA

Povzetek

Prispevek prinaša primerjalno analizo geopolitičnih pogledov priznanih geopolitikov, Američana Saula B. Cohena in Rusa Aleksandra Dugina, na položaj območja Vmesne Evrope v sodobni geopolitični podobi sveta. V prvem delu članek obravnava prostorsko definicijo termina ‘Vmesna Evropa’, ki ga je v znanstveno literaturo uvedel Filip Tunjić, in nato prikaz zgodovinskega razvoja te geopolitične enote. Namreč, prostor med Baltskim morjem na severu ter Jadranskim in Črnim morjem na jugu, ki ločuje Nemce in Ruse, je nastal v duhu versailleskega preurejanja političnega zemljevida Evrope kot posebno tamponsko območje med tradicionalno nasprotujočima si germansko in slovensko identiteto. Poleg vloge Vmesne Evrope kot t. i. sanitarnega kordona med Nemčijo in Rusijo prikazuje prispevek tudi razvoj mejnega položaja tega dela Evrope skozi daljše časovno obdobje, vse od rimskega cesarstva do današnjih dni. Posebno je izpostavljen problem natančnega prostorskega definiranja Balkana oziroma Jugovzhodne Evrope, kot tudi drugih sodobnih geopolitičnih konstrukcij, recimo t. i. zahodnega Balkana. V tem

okviru posveča prispevek posebno pozornost vlogi geografskega determinizma, tako fizično- kot družbenogeografskega, pri nastajanju političnega zemljevida Vmesne Evrope oziroma pri spremenljivosti njenih meja.

V drugem delu članek podrobno predstavlja prostor Vmesne Evrope z vidika pomorske in kontinentalne geopolitike skozi razmišljanja obeh omenjenih geopolitikov, Američana Cohena in Rusa Dugina. Četudi je pri obeh avtorjih prisotna interpretacija geopolitičnih odnosov na prostoru Vmesne Evrope z vidika klasičnega razumevanja spopada med pomorskimi in kontinentalnimi silami, poskuša ta prispevek predstaviti jasno razliko med ameriškim in ruskim pogledom na ta prostor, ki jo lahko prepoznamo predvsem pri njunem določanju meja geopolitičnih regij ravno na prostoru Vmesne Evrope.

Na osnovi predstavljenih stališč Cohena in Dugina poskušamo v članku primerjati sedanji politični trenutek s tendencami, predstavljenimi v delih navedenih avtorjev, in na tej osnovi ugotoviti nadaljnje tendence prihodnjih geopolitičnih gibanj na prostoru Vmesne Evrope. Ob tem je posebna pozornost namenjena Nemčiji in njenemu središčnemu položaju v razširjeni Evropski uniji, zaradi katerega ima izrazito močan vpliv na politične procese v Vmesni Evropi in s tem tudi na definiranje odnosov med Evropsko unijo in Rusijo. V širšem okviru prispevek problematizira pomen širjenja zveze NATO in tudi Evropske unije v kontekstu odnosov med Zahodom in Vzhodom in s tem tudi perspektive geopolitične orientacije držav Vmesne Evrope, s posebnim poudarkom na državah evropskega jugovzhoda.

(Iz hrvaškega jezika prevedel Karel Natek)