

VISEGRÁD: SOVEREIGNTY IN TIMES OF CHAOS

Petr Rožňák, Pavel Nečas

The scholarly monograph "Visegrád: Sovereignty in Times of Chaos" by Petr Rožňák and Pavel Nečas, published by the renowned Czech publishing house Leges, represents a significant contribution to the discourse on Central Europe's political and security identity. The significance of the work is underscored by its foreword, written by Assoc. Prof. JUDr. Zdeněk Koudelka, Ph.D., a renowned constitutional lawyer at Masaryk University, a professor at AMBIS University, and Deputy Minister of Justice of the Slovak Republic. Associate Professor Koudelka emphasizes that the book is not merely an academic exercise, but an in-depth reflection on the clash between the rigidity of the law and the dynamics of political power in the geographical heart of Europe. From his position as a constitutional official, he views sovereignty not as a theoretical construct, but as the state's practical ability to secure its existential needs - from energy security to digital and physical borders. The concept of the "Visegrád Fortress", which the authors develop, thus does not represent isolationism, but rather a necessary strategic autonomy in a fragmenting global order.

The work is firmly grounded in a clear methodology and identifies two key research questions, which it answers systematically and persuasively throughout the text. The authors ingeniously ground the clarity and vividness of the entire monograph in the legacy of J. A. Comenius and his timeless work "The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart". This literary-philosophical framework helps the reader navigate the chaos of the contemporary world and find firm points of stability within it. The book's internal structure is particularly valuable, as each chapter summarizes the findings in partial conclusions - an approach that facilitates continuous reflection on the information presented and significantly enhances the work's educational value.

The aim of the research was to link the deep historical experience of our nations with modern technologies such as artificial intelligence, drones, and nuclear energy. Central Europe is defined in this text as the "reasonable middle" - a unique place where dynamic modernity meets a deep respect for the sovereign nation-state. At the core of the argument is the utilization of the human and material potential of the V4 countries to implement a "multi-directional" policy that serves the national interest. The central imperative of the monograph is, therefore, the urgent desire for peace and the determination to bring about a diplomatic end to the conflict in Ukraine, which the authors consider a fundamental prerequisite for any further development of the region.

This work is the result of eight years of research conducted in close cooperation between Czech and Slovak research institutions. The text is structured into fourteen thematic sections that trace the development from the Poděbrady efforts at integration to the modern concept of the V4. A significant portion is devoted to the "Ukrainian laboratory" and the analysis of civilizational turning points,

including the clash with Islamic legal and ethical thought. The monograph is also unique in its form and supplementary materials. The appendices are truly exceptional, particularly the section devoted to "Conceptual Issues" with a series of factual entries, which significantly enriches the book's scholarly potential. A multilingual summary in eight languages (CZ, SK, PL, HU, DE, EN, RU, UA) serves as an excellent conclusion, opening the work to a broad international audience of both scholars and the general public.

This publication opens up a wide range of opportunities for further academic work, particularly for law schools and departments of international law, security studies, and political science. The monograph's scholarly contributions give rise to thought-provoking topics for discussion: in the field of law, the transformation of sovereignty in a multipolar world; in the field of security, the transformation of the military and the development of a cyber shield or orbital sovereignty; and in political science, an analysis of the crisis of government legitimacy through a methodological triad. The work thus presents concrete tools for an adequate response to the challenges that will shape our world for decades to come.

This monograph can also be highly recommended as study material for a wide range of students. For **college students**, it serves as a methodologically sound model of scholarly work that teaches data synthesis and critical thinking. For students in **post-secondary programs**, it offers a practical insight into the workings of public administration and security management. For **high school students**, the book serves as an excellent guide to understanding the Slovak Republic's geopolitical position, thanks to its clarity, graphic design, and QR codes (which provide access to audiovisual archives). It develops their ability to navigate complex social processes and find clear answers to questions about the organization and distribution of power in a changing world order.

The book's internal structure is particularly valuable, as each chapter summarizes the key points in sub-conclusions, which allows for continuous reflection on the information presented and enhances the work's educational value.

The focal point of the work is the concept of the "Visegrád Fortress", which the authors develop not as an expression of isolationism, but as a necessary strategic autonomy in a multipolar world. The work is a rational response to the erosion of international structures and the emergence of hybrid threats. The goal of the research was to link the deep historical experience of the V4 nations with modern technologies, such as artificial intelligence and nuclear energy, and to create a space capable of ensuring security, food, and energy regardless of geopolitical upheavals. Central Europe is defined here as a "reasonable middle ground", where dynamic modernity meets respect for the sovereign nation-state.

This scholarly monograph is supplemented by an extensive collection of graphs, tables, and maps, including an innovative integration of QR codes for accessing audiovisual materials. The publication thus offers a broad scope for further academic research, particularly for law schools and departments

of international law, security studies, and political science. The monograph's scholarly contributions provide thought-provoking ideas for deeper exploration in the university setting:

- *In the field of international and constitutional law:* An examination of the transformation of state sovereignty in the context of the "clash of civilizations" and the revision of international treaties in the 21st century.
- *In the field of security studies:* Analysis of the transformation of the military, the decline of mass army doctrines, and the development of a cyber shield and orbital sovereignty.
- *In Political Science and State Theory:* An Evaluation of the Sustainability of Asylum Policy and an Analysis of the Crisis of Government Legitimacy in a Time of Global Chaos Through the "Methodological Triad".
- *In the field of international relations:* A debate on the "multi-azimuth policy" and the limits of loyalty to supranational entities in situations where national interests are threatened.

In the concluding section of the paper, the authors move from theory to practice and present specific recommendations for political leaders, the government, and public administration for subsequent implementation into national policies. They approach this task with a sense of great responsibility and humility, offering a clear vision for those who have the courage to build the Visegrád Group as a pillar of prosperity. The scholarly reflection, synthesis of objectives, and analytical evaluation of research questions are presented at the highest level. This monograph is thus a significant contribution to the debate on the role of Central Europe and its sovereignty in the turbulent third decade of the 21st century.

Information about the publication:

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