



CEU DOCTORAL SCHOOL OF HISTORY

The Doctoral Thesis in Comparative History

by

**Mladen Medved**

on

**“Transition to Capitalism in Croatia, Hungary and Austria (1830s-1867/8): A Study in Uneven and Combined Development”**

will be held on

**Thursday, May 16, 2019, at 14:30**

in

**Nador 9, Senate room  
Central European University (CEU)  
Budapest—1051**

Examination Committee

Péter Balázs– Chair (Center for European Neighborhood Studies, CEU)

Susan Zimmermann – supervisor (Department of History, CEU)

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*The doctoral dissertation is available for inspection. Should you wish to access it, please contact  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the transition to capitalism in Croatia, Hungary and Austria in the period between the 1830s and 1867/8 from the perspective of uneven and combined development that theorizes development as intersocietal and multilinear and unifies social and geopolitical modes of explanation. Providing an interpretative framework for the analysis of both contemporary politics of elite-actors and socio-economic development in the period, the thesis demonstrates that this approach is best suited to address a number of deficiencies in the historiography of the Monarchy. Within this framework, the thesis also contributes to closing an empirical gap in the scholarship that has examined the transition to capitalism by providing an analysis of the discourse of political economy in Croatia, Hungary and Austria.

The thesis argues the Hungarian gentry, despite a lower level of development that characterized the country when compared to Austria, was ready to initiate the transition to capitalism in response to its social decline and the geopolitical challenge posed by Austria that was undergoing industrialization. In the process, the gentry relied on readymade ideologies and organizations from social formations on a higher level of development. The specificity of the Hungarian social formation and not its position in the world-system is considered a key factor for explaining strong state structures in Hungary in the period under examination. By contrast, the centralized, authoritarian Austrian state could not mobilize social forces into a more hegemonic project after the revolutions of 1848. The political elites of Croatia and Hungary rejected the Austrian developmentalist and civilizing discourse because the Austrian state was deemed both incapable of developing the peripheries and too authoritarian. Systemic conditions further exacerbated the difficult position of the Austrian state, as changes in international relations left it exposed to considerable strain. The thesis thus explains the emergence of Austro-Hungarian Settlement as a result of the Hungarian revolution, state-society relations in Austria and changes in international relations.

With regard to divergence in socioeconomic development in the Monarchy before 1848, the thesis considers social property relations rather than Austrian tariffs as crucial for generating the economic stagnation of the Croatian and Hungarian social formations. While explaining why the gentry in Hungary was ready to initiate the transition to capitalism, the thesis maintains that Croatia did not have an endogenously driven transition to capitalism despite similarities in social structures with Hungary due to a smaller territorial container. The thesis considers post-1848 economic stagnation in Croatia as caused by the legacy of centuries of extra-economic coercion, uneven development under capitalism, the centralized regime of accumulation in the Austrian Empire and an upswing in the world-economy that did not favor a relocation of economic activities. It maintains that a relatively meager development of Croatia after 1848 cannot be explained with reference to feudal dispositions of the landlords. The thesis claims that the Hungaro-Croatian Settlement, rather than being caused by the Croatian class structure, was more geopolitically determined.

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **EDUCATION**

BA in English Language and Literature; BA in

History University of Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb (Croatia) (2008)

MA in English Language and Literature; MA in History University of Zagreb, Faculty of Philosophy, Zagreb (Croatia) (2012)

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

English teacher, Student Center of the University of Zagreb, Zagreb (Croatia) (Sep 2011-Apr 2012)

Guest editor, *East-Central Europe* (Jun 2017-Jan 2018)

Faculty Associate, School of Politics and Global Studies, Arizona State University (Jan-May 2019)

### **PUBLIC LECTURES**

Network for the Study of Socialist Thought and Movements, University of Glasgow,  
27 Sep 2017: "The Austro-Hungarian Settlement: A Study in Uneven and Combined Development."

Economies, Comparisons, Connections, University of Ghent,  
30 May 2018: "Beyond World-Systems Analysis: The Political Economy of 19th Century Habsburg Monarchy from the Perspective of Uneven and Combined Development."

### **CONFERENCES**

GRACEH, CEU, Budapest, 25-27 May 2013. "Renewal of Marxism: David Harvey's Historical-Geographical Materialism."

Europe and the World, Sciences Po, Reims, 26-28 June 2014. "Passive Revolution and Core-

Periphery Relations under Habsburg Neoabsolutism (1849-1867)."

19th Century World Order: Implications for the Present, CEU, Budapest, 2-3 October 2015.

"Uneven and Combined Origins of the Austro-Hungarian Compromise."

Fifth European Congress on World and Global History, Ruptures, Empires and Revolutions, CEU and Corvinus, Budapest, 31 August - 3 September 2017. "And the Periphery Shall be Equal to the Core: The Austro-Hungarian Compromise from the Perspective of Uneven and Combined Development."

Internal Peripheries in International Comparison, 1500-2000, University of Vienna, 19-21 October 2017. "Overcoming Empire: Developmental Discourse in mid-19th Century Habsburg Monarchy."

## **LANGUAGES**

**Croatian, English, German, French, Hungarian**

## **LIST OF PUBLICATIONS**

(2018) "Introduction: East-Central Europe and the Problematic of the International." East-Central Europe 45, 1: 1-12

(2018) "Trotsky or Wallerstein? Approaching the Habsburg Monarchy in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century." East-Central Europe 45, 1: 39-62

(2018) "A Combined Argument: Beyond Wallerstein?" Historical Materialism 26, 3: 125-142

"Habsburg Empire Strikes Back?" East-Central Europe (forthcoming)

"Between Nation-State and the World-System: Rudolf Bićanić on the Transition to Capitalism in Croatia" In: Zbornik Drage Roksandića. Zagreb: FF Press (forthcoming)

Book: Prijelaz iz feudalizma u kapitalizam (Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism). Zagreb: Srednja Europa (forthcoming).