# Summary


## Central Europe as Discourse: Masaryk, Naumann, Hofmannsthal

The presented study focuses on analyzing the discursive strategies employed within the concept of "Central Europe" (*Střední Evropa* / *Mitteleuropa*) across three seminal texts from the World War I era: Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk's *Nová Evropa – stanovisko slovanské* (New Europe – A Slav Standpoint), Friedrich Naumann's *Mitteleuropa*, and Hugo von Hofmannsthal's essay *Die österreichische Idee*. The core objective of this research is to uncover the specific discursive strategies and uses of the term "Central Europe" and to describe the authors' motivations for forming the region's cultural and political identity.

The study employed the Discursive-Historical Analysis (DHA) method, which views discourse as a form of social action and systematically examines how the historical representation of a concept is constructed. Following the Wodak and Reisigl framework, the analysis focused on identifying central themes and claims, categorizing the specific discursive strategies (e.g., nomination and predication), and analyzing the underlying linguistic means, such as topoi (rhetorical schemes connecting argument to claim) and fallacies (false argumentative schemes). This methodology allowed for a systematic comparison of the authors' distinct approaches.

In terms of historical context, the concept of Central Europe has always been geographically and ideologically fluid, typically defined as the space between Germany and Russia. "*Whoever wants to unravel the tangle of Central Europe must take into account from the beginning that its existence is a state of semantic confusion.*" (H. C. Meyer). The quote captures the fact that every historical actor projected his own ideology into the concept of Central Europe. This phenomenon was aptly named by the aforementioned Timothy Garton Ash: "*Tell me your definition of Central Europe, and I will tell you where you are from*." This region had been essentially freed up for occupation by an imperial power starting in 1806. The First World War was also a definitive turning point for the central European space. Many concepts emerged to define this region in terms of ideology, with the concept of nation states defending their existence in the interwar period ultimately winning out.

The research results from the DHA highlight a fundamental opposition driven by the authors' backgrounds. Naumann and Hofmannsthal, as representatives of the dominant German-speaking elite, frame their arguments by referring to the continuous and natural superiority of the German/Austrian civilizational element. Naumann utilizes the Topos of Economy (detailing practical benefits) and the Fallacy of Emotional Pathos (using shared wartime suffering as justification), promoting a German-centered bloc. Masaryk, however, uses highly polemical and reactionary strategies, employing the Topos of Civilization Conflict and numerous Fallacies of False Dichotomy (Good/Democracy vs. Evil/Imperialism) to simplify the issue for the Allies and justify the dissolution of the Monarchy. The study finds that the concept of Central Europe was not a clear geographic definition, but rather an arena for ideological struggle. Each author (Masaryk, Naumann, Hofmannsthal) projected their own specific political agenda onto the term. The core finding is that these texts are not objective analyses. They are, in fact, highly propagandistic and purpose-driven texts created during World War I to promote distinct political outcomes.

It may be concluded that the way regional identity was described (the discursive construction) was inextricably linked to the author's ideological position. Ultimately, this struggle over meaning and words fundamentally shaped not only the cultural imagination of the region but also the physical borders of post-war Europe.