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**East Central Europe in the historiography of the countries
of the region**

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Lublin 1995 Institute Of East Central Europe

Originally published as: Europa Środkowowschodnia w historiografii krajów regionu, © 1993

This publication was financed by UNESCO

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ISBN 83-85854-14-2

The concept of East Central Europe, currently gaining a more widespread use both in reference to the present and to the past, is a new concept that has only been fully established in the second half of this century. It is also a concept that continues to provoke reflection and discussion. Some simply speak of a Central Europe between the west and east of the continent. In the most general of terms, we mean by it the group of nations and states situated between the Germanic countries and Italy on the one side, and Russia on the other. During the nineteenth century, at a time when historical writing in Europe was rapidly developing in its modern, academic version, the entire region known now as East Central Europe belonged to three, or rather four empires: Russia, Prussian Germany, Habsburg Austria and Ottoman Turkey. Such a situation exerted a decisive influence on the developing scheme of European history. This history was supposed to be of the Franco-Germanic peoples at its core, with the definite addition of Russia in the East only from the seventeenth century. And thus East Central European countries were presented in a biased light and generally marginalized in the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries in the textbooks of historians from the Franco-Germanic countries on the one side, and from the Russian ones on the other. The example of the presentation of the Partitions of Poland, the details of which are much better known at present, should be shown on a broader, comparative background, with the entire region of Europe in mind¹. Only the establishing of the new independent nations after 1918 really led to the serious treatment of their status at present as well as in the past, and this treatment then became normal. New proposals were formulated, scholarly debates and cooperation ensued. In the current article it is my aim to gather the basic data on the entire direction of research that was to become firmly established and which we would now like continue in a new climate and with new proposals. I hope this article shall open the way to more detailed, monographic works. In the future it would be appropriate to encompass the evolution of attitudes expressed in the historiography of countries outside of East Central Europe, starting with Germany and Russia, from the First World War to the present².

I

In the extremely active generation of Polish historians that lived to see the independence of their country after 1918, the need for presenting Polish affairs to an international forum of historians was quickly grasped. A special occasion to realize this aim became the International congresses of historians, which in practice were still predominantly European. A substantial and seriously taken Polish delegation of historians participated in the world congress of historians in Brussels in 1923,

1 The classical book of the young Leopold Ranke (1795-1886), *Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Völker* (1824); on Slavic perceptions of Eastern Europe; F. Graus, „Slavs and Germans”, in *Eastern and Western Europe in the Middle Ages*, ed. G. Barraclough (London 1970), pp. 1542; see also „Slavonic historiography”, *The Blackwell Dictionary of Historians*, ed. J.J. Cannorrio et al (Oxford: Blackwell 1988). p. 381; Marian Henryk Serejski, *Europa a rozbiory Polski* (Warszawa 1970) and „L'aspect europeen de la question polonaise. Les reflexions des hisioriens etrangers sur les pariages de la Pologne”, in *Poland at the 14th International Congress of Historical Sciences in San Francisco* (Wrocław 1975), pp. 135-147.

2 For a good introduction to the topic, mainly from a German perspective, see Klaus Zernack, *Osteuropa. Eine Einführung in seine Geschichte* (München 1977).

where the Germans were not permitted and which was dominated by Henri Pirenne, a Belgian of an exceptionally established scholarly reputation in the world of historians³. The next congress in Oslo in 1928 was also well represented by the Polish faction⁴. The reputation which the Polish historians gained for themselves is signified by the fact that they were given the organization of the next congress. And indeed it did take place in August of 1933 in Warsaw; it was quite meticulously organized and had a much larger contingent of Polish scholars⁵.

Oskar Halecki, a young historian specialising in the Jagiellonian Union, in his paper presented in Brussels in 1923, expressed the problem of conceptualizing a chronology and geography of Eastern Europe⁶. In the following decades, Halecki would frequently return to many of the ideas articulated at that congress. In the Brusselian lecture Eastern Europe was primarily the territory of the former Commonwealth - the lands north of the Carpathian Mountains. Their Christianization in the ninth and tenth centuries constitutes a milestone in European history, and begins the region's period in the history of the continent. This emphatically includes Kievan Rus: a different country-according to Halecki - from the later Russia, as well as from the Ukraine. *Ruthenia* of Latin sources is actually a continuation of the greater Kievan Ruthenia. Muscovite Russia is created on a Finno-Ugric ethnic base, certainly a completely different Slavonic people develops there. The controversy over *Ruthenia*, that is the lands and peoples from Novgorod to Kiev, is in its essence similar to the French-German one over Lotharingia.

Lithuania and its expansion since the thirteenth century constitutes a crucial factor in the history of the region. In the Polish-Lithuanian federation, the Ruthenian element was of the utmost importance. It was in fact a federation of three peoples, a major power between East and West. *Ruthenia* was the principle subject in the struggle between Poland and Russia: Halecki quite forcefully raises the existent systemic contrasts at the level of civilizations here. In his understanding of the matter the division of Eastern Europe into a western part, belonging to Western civilization, and an Eastern one has a fundamental significance. Eastern Europe is a strictly geographical concept, having no connection with divisions at the level of civilization.

Five years later, in Oslo in 1928, Halecki harkened back to his paper in Brussels during two presentations. At Oslo he spoke of the importance of the tradition of the federation on the territory

3 See Oskar Halecki, „V Międzynarodowy - Kongres Historyczny,” *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, Vol. 37 (1923), pp. 258-366. the French delegation was the largest, followed by the British, Polish and American ones. Poles presented thirteen papers and were received very favourably. Apart from the Poles, the participation of Czechs was somewhat more pronounced than previously.

4 See K. Tymieniecki, „VI Międzynarodowy Kongres Historyczny,” *Roczniki Historyczne*, Vol. 4 (1928), pp. 131-138. Polish scholars constituted the third largest group of participants after the French and German delegations. Czechs, Hungarians and Romanians also made their appearance. the proposal to organize the next congress in Warsaw in 1933 was accepted unanimously.

5 See K. Tymieniecki, „VII Międzynarodowy Kongres Historyczny,” *Roczniki Historyczne*, Vol. 9 (1933), pp. 305-312.

6 See Oskar Halecki, „L'histoire de l'Europe orientale. Sa division en époques, son milieu géographique et ses problèmes fondamentaux” in *La Pologne au Ve Congrès International des Sciences Historiques* (Bruxelles 1923, Varsovie 1924), pp. 73-94.

of Rus *Ruthenia* from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and also of the significance of the civilization and cultural spheres in European history⁷. For this reason he opposed calling Western culture the West: the term Europe gives a better idea of European historical reality.

In yet another way a colleague of Halecki from the same university, Marcelli Handelsman, attempted at Brussels to introduce to Europe the Slavonic-Lithuanian world alongside the Latin-Germanic one⁸. He elicits certain common elements in the processes of the development of a medieval order out of the ruins of the classical world. The processes of the development of states which paralleled the spread of Christendom seem to be the fundamental factors involved here. In this way, Handelsman claims, a hypothetical observer looking at Europe from the French perspective at the end of the twelfth century and from the Polish one at the beginning of the thirteenth century, would detect not only differences but definite similarities as well.

Another of the Polish presentations from Brussels in 1923 worth mentioning here is that of Stanisław Kutrzeba on the topic of the parliamentary tradition of the Middle Ages. He postulates wide scale comparative research on this essential subject, taking into account such countries as Bohemia, Hungary, Poland, Lithuania or Sweden⁹.

In Oslo in 1928, where among others Marc Bloch postulated similar research on European societies¹⁰, Kazimierz Tymieniecki and Jan Rutkowski broached the question of societies in their part of the continent touched upon the fundamental problems of the history of the societies of Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages¹¹. By Eastern Europe he meant the regions east of the Elbe, excluding Scandinavia and the Southern Balkans, however. The West for him is primarily the regions settled by the Romans. The Slavonic-Lithuanian-Hungarian East was characterized by far more archaic social institutions. The survival of small estates was a particular instance of this archaism, while the great expansion of Germanic law, town and rural communities represented Western influence. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they reached far into the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. In this manner the great difference between the western and eastern part of Eastern Europe was delineated, the latter not being touched by significant Western influences.

Jan Rutkowski spoke of the origins of corvée in East Central Europe, to which he included East

7 See Oskar Halecki, „La division de l'histoire en périodes chronologiques” m *La Pologne au VIe Congrès International des Sciences Historiques* (Oslo 1928, Varsovie-Lviv 1930), pp. 79-96 and „Le problème de l'Union des Eglises” m *ibidem*, pp. 119-140.

8 See Marcelli Handelsman, “Feodalité et féodalisation dans l'Europe “ Occidentale” in *La Pologne au VIe Congrès*, pp. 95-112.

9 See Stanisław Kutrzeba, „Les origines et le caractère du parlementarisme au Moyen Âge” in *ibidem*, pp. 163-169.

10 See Marc Bloch, „Pour une histoire comparée des sociétés européennes”, reprinted in Bloch *Mélanges historiques*, Vol. I (Paris 1963), pp. 16-40-. The author refers his postulates mainly to Western and Central Europe with which he is certainly more familiar.

11 See Kazimierz Tymieniecki, „L'histoire sociale de L'Europe orientale au Moyen Âge. Les problèmes fondamentaux” in *La Pologne au VIe Congrès International*, pp 233-248.

Germany, Poland, Bohemia and Hungary¹². Toward the end of the Middle Ages, the Elbe River, as it did for Tymieniecki, demarcated a boundary for two different agricultural economies, everywhere employing the vast majority of the population. To the west of the Elbe a money economy remained, in the east a corvée system developed for the gentry on their land.

During the congress in Warsaw a section on the history of Eastern Europe was organized for the first time. Later on we shall return to the discussion that took place there. A more comprehensive evaluation of the input of the Polish historians on International forums, at congresses among other things, has yet to be carried out. It must also be looked at from the comparative perspective of the role of other historiographies of East Central Europe. At any rate it would seem that especially the young academic community in Warsaw undertook the effort of joining the international historical debate over the place of Poland in Europe in a particularly conscious way. Two quite different scholars, yet-it would seem-also working superbly together and in a complimentary fashion, Marcelli Handelsman and Oskar Halecki, were to play an exceptional role in this¹³.

II

Marcelli Handelsman is connected with a particularly fruitful enterprise, namely the foundation of the Federation of the Historical Societies of Eastern Europe on June 29, 1927; *Federation des Societes Historique de l'Europe Orientale*, as it was called in French, the language which the organization adopted. In 1928 the first issue of the Federation's bulletin was published, in it Handelsman presented the organization's principles¹⁴. Eastern Europe in the broadcast sense encompassed the regions from the eastern borders of Germany and Italy as well as the western borderlands of Poland, Bohemia and Austria, all the way to the European boundaries of the Russian and Ukrainian plain; Finland and Greece demarcated the northern and southern borders of the region¹⁵. The tremendous variety of relationships constitutes a distinguishing feature of an Eastern Europe perceived in such a way. The Slavs make up the majority of the population, yet along side them live numerous other nationalities, for example the Germans in Austria or Eastern Prussia. Almost all religion are present in the region.

Up until that time Eastern Europe as a whole had been the subject of Slavonic studies. the

12 Jan Rutkowski, „La genese du regime de la corvée dans l'Europe Centrale depuis la fin du Moyen Age” in *La Pologne au VI^e Congers International*, pp. 211-217.

13 See Aleksander Gieysztor, „Posłowie”, *Średniowiecze polskie i powszechne* (Warszawa 1966); Jerzy Kłoczowski, „Oskar Halecki i jego walka o miejsce Polski w Europie” in *Księga Pamiątkowa E. Raczyńskiego* (Warszawa 1994), pp. 397-406

14 *Bulletin d'infomation des sciences histeriaues en Europe orientale*, (furthermore cited as *Bulletin*) Vol. 1, No. 1-2, Varsovie, Librairie F. Hoesick, 1928. After which. the following were published: Vol. 1. No. 3-4 (1928); Vol. 2. No. 1-2 and No. 3-4 (1929); Vol. 3. No. 1-2 and 3 (1930); Vol.4, No. 1(1931) and No. 2 and 3-4 (1932); Vol. 5 (1933). as well as Vol. 5, supplementary number (1933); Vol. 6, No. 1-2 and M (1934); Vol. 7, No. 1-2 (1935) and No. M (1937); Vol. 8 (1938); Vol. 9, No. 1-2 (1939).

15 *Bulletin*, Vol. 1. No. 1-2 (1928), pp. 5-8, introduction M. Handelsman

Western and American world was familiar with it from the work of German scholars. Now that historical writing in the countries concerned had advanced, it was high time to do everything possible to mutually inform each other of the progress made and present it together to the world. This was the purpose of the Federation's bulletin.

Three teams of different members and for different tasks emerged from the Federation. the executive commission, which started up on June 29, 1927 was headed by professor Jan Bedřich Novak, director of the archives in Prague¹⁶. Jan Rutkowski from Poznań¹⁷ became secretary of the commission, its members were professors: Antoine Florovsky (Prague, a Russian emigrant), Miron Korduba (Lviv, as a representative of Ukrainian scholars), J. Melick (Budapest), F. Šišić (Zagreb) and F. Zakrzewski (Lviv). The same day the commission for the *Information Bulletin* was constituted, with E. Lukinich (Budapest) at its head. Handelsman became the editor of the bulletin, with Tadeusz Manteuffel as its secretary. Members of the commission were: F. Balodis (Riga), Jaroslav Bidlo (Prague), V. Mansikka (Helsinki), Mauzaffer-bey (Istanbul), N. Okounoff (Prague), W. F. Schmid (Graz) and F. Šišić (Zagreb)¹⁸.

In 1928, to the existing commissions was added a third, namely the Commission for the *Dictionary of Slavonic Antiquity* under the direction of Franciszek Bujak¹⁹. The Federation was made up of academies, scholarly societies and university faculties. In 1928 this included a total of twenty-six societies²⁰; in the *Bulletin* of 1938 forty are listed²¹. From among this forty, eleven came from Poland, including the Shevchenko Society of Lviv and the Academic Institute of the University of Warsaw, which represented Ukrainian scholarship; ten were from Czechoslovakia; five from Romania; four from Hungary; it should moreover be noted that listed were also Salonika, Sophia, Belgrad, Riga, Tartu, as well as Rome (Pontificio Istituto Orientale), London (Institute of Slavonic Studies) and Paris (Russian Academic Union, which represented the Russian emigre community). The serious problem of receiving membership dues was endemic in the Federation; for instance the Bulletin from 1938 published a list of twenty societies that did not pay their dues²². It seems that money paid by the Polish side allowed the Federation to function²³. The economic depression was sorely felt. An illustration of this might be the fact that the Executive Commission, which according to plans was supposed to meet every two years, barely managed to meet for the second time—after Warsaw in 1927—in Prague in May of 1932; the meeting, intended to be a full

16 Jan Bedřich Novak (1872-1933), J. Susta writes briefly about him in Bulletin, Vol. 6, No. 1-2 (1934), pp. 7-10. After his death his position was taken over by Jaroslav Bidlo (1869-1937).

17 He resigned from this position and was replaced by prof. M. W. Łopaciński, director of the Public Education Archives in Warsaw, who kept this function till the end of the Federation.

18 Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1-2 (1928), pp. 209-212 and No. 3-4, p. 257.

19 Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 3-4, p. 272.

20 List from Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 3-4 (1928), pp. 257-258.

21 Bulletin, Vol. 8 (1938), pp. 203-204.

22 List from ibidem, pp. 209-210, for the years 1933-1935; altogether 155 dollars was owing. The Hungarian Society owes twenty-five dollars for five years, the Prague historical circle owes fifteen for three years.

23 The dues paid by the Poles were usually two thirds of the total. In 1932' this was six thousand zloties out of 9010, in 1933 it was six thousand zloties out of 9245 (cf. M. Handelsman's report in Bulletin, Vol. 5, No. 3-4 (1932), p. 172).

general congress, was practically a mere session of the three commissions²⁴. It was postulated that from then on congress of the on would only take place every five years in conjunction with great international congresses, starting with the one in Warsaw. And indeed, on August 19-20, 1933 the second general congress of the Federation was held with the participation of forty-six representatives of the institutions that made it up²⁵.

The *Bulletin Commission* worked the most consistently, and the dozens of numbers published in nine volumes in the years 1928-1938 constitute a lasting accomplishment of the Federation²⁶. Handelsman and his closest co-worker, Manteuffel, exhibited exceptional care in their selection of authors and maintaining regularity in the periodical's publication in spite of the mounting difficulties at every step of the way. Aside from current reports of the Federation's and its commissions' projects, the core of the publication was devoted to describing the contemporary historical writing, from 1918 and 1919, in the individual countries; on occasion these reports take into account social disciplines related to historiography. These articles are of course of various quality. Especially important was information on historical writing in the new states, which were just beginning to develop a basis for scholarly knowledge about their own past in independent conditions. Thus, for instance, in the first volume there were articles about Estonia²⁷ and Latvia²⁸, but also about Soviet Belorussia²⁹, where in the twenties there emerged a literature in its own language incomparably greater to anything before 1914. In later years, sizable proportions -approximately those of a separate book-were attained in writing about the historiography of the Soviet Ukraine in the years 1917-1931, which was so new and vital³⁰. Extensive treatment was also given to Soviet Russian historical literature of the years 1917-1931 right up until the complete clamp-down on any work that was not based on official ideology and political conformity³¹. Two articles were devoted to Finnish Historical writing in the years 1922-1931³². A longer article

24 Report in *Bulletin*, Vol. 4, No. 3-4 (1932), pp. 135-178.

25 *Bulletin*, Vol. 5, supplementary number (1933), pp. 152-190.

26 The reports of the Committee's meetings at the beginning of each year give a good idea of the difficulties encountered, as well as the ambitious goals set.

27 PeterTtrieberg (Tartu-Dorpat), „La litterature historique estonienne. Compte rendu 1921-1927”, *Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 3-4 (1928), pp. 223-239; the survey was continued by Hans Kraus (Tartu) „Development et etat actuel des sciences historique estoniennes”, *Bulletin*, Vol. 5 (1933), pp. 13-41.

28 See A. Tentelis, „La litterature historique lettone. Compte rendu 1921-1926,” *Bulletin* Vol. 1, No. 3-4, pp. 240-256.

29 See Vladimir Piceta (Minsk). „La litterature historique Blanceruthene. Compte rendu 1921-1926,” *Bulletin* Vol. No. 3-4 (1928), pp. 213-222. In both issues of volume one there appeared articles on the historical literature of the twenties in Greece, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia as well as that written by Russian emigres.

30 See Miron Korduba (Warszawa), „La litterature historique sovietique-ukrainienne. Compte rendu 1917-1931,” *Bulletin* Vol. 7, No. 3-4 (1937), pp. 133-196 and Vol. pp. 51-97 (1938). the whole text was republished in Munich in 1972 by O. Pritsak who also presented Korduba's biography.

31 See Antoine Florovsky (Prague), „La litterature hisiorique sovietique-russe,” *Bulletin*, No. 34 and Vol. 7, No. 1-2 (altogether 175 printed pages).

32 See A.R. Cedeberg, „La litterature historique finlandaise. Compte rendu 1922-1928.” *Bulletin* Vol. 2, No. 1-2 (1929); Pennti Renvall, “La litterature historique finlandaise. Compte rendu 1928-1931,” *Bulletin* Vol. 4, No. (1932), pp. 61-88.

concerns Czechoslovakian historiography³³, a number of smaller ones deal with Polish³⁴, Hungarian and other literatures³⁵. As a whole, though not without gaps, the *Bulletin* contains an especially valuable survey of the achievements of the twenties. The early impetus and ambitions, most obvious in the first numbers, visibly falter in the thirties. The seventh volume of the *Bulletin* was published in 1935, the eighth one, however, came out much delayed in 1938 and the final ninth one in 1939. The question arises: what factors, economical, political or otherwise led to such a tum of affairs? One gains the impression that the congress in Warsaw had been the culminating point in the Federation's development, after which it slowly began to lose its earlier dynamism.

Polish historians not only initiated cooperation, but in fact were also primarily responsible for carrying it out. The close cooperation of the Czechoslovaks, Hungarians and Poles had the greatest significance, alongside of it the historians of other nationalities were gathered. Quite noticeable was the lack of any cooperation on the part of Lithuania and Lithuanians—an obvious result of the tension between Poland and Lithuania. From among the Baltic nations particularly active in their cooperation were the Latvian historians³⁶. Constant participation was likewise received from Romanian, Yugoslavian, Bulgarian and Greek historians³⁷. H.F. Schmid of Graz, the only representative of German speaking countries, was seriously engaged from the beginning to the end of the Federation's endeavours; as we recall Austria was after all counted in the Federation as a fully privileged member from its inception³⁸. An evident note of discord in the history of the Federation became the withdrawal of the German institute from Breslau (Wrocław)³⁹. Russian emigre historians participated in projects from the onset; efforts at gaining coworkers from the Soviet Union—apart from one exception—were fruitless⁴⁰. Nonetheless they bear witness to the openness of the Federation to engage in the widest possible cooperation.

Cooperation with Western research centres was of little significance, even though after 1918 they were paying more attention to the history of the Slavonic world than before 1914⁴¹.

33 See J. Bidlo, "La littérature historique tchécoslovaque. Compte rendu 1921-1926" *Bulletin* Vol. I, No. 1-2, pp. 122-208.

34 See Jan Dąbrowski for the years 1921-1926 (*Bulletin* Vol. I, No. 1-2, pp. 34-69); 1927-28 (*Bulletin* Vol. 2, No. 34, pp. 143-164) and 1929-1930 (*Bulletin* Vol. 4, No. 3-4, pp. 117-134).

35 See E. Lukinich (*Bulletin* Vol. I, No. 1-2, 19-33 who in fact gave only a concise historiography (the same for the year 1928, *Bulletin* No. 3-4, pp. 121-142. A larger article for Romania was prepared by Nicolas Jorga, *Bulletin* Vol. 3, No. 1-2, pp. 5-24. Greek literature was discussed by Michel Lascaris (*Bulletin* I, 1-2, 9-18 and IV, 1, 5-12).

36 The second meeting of the editors of *Bulletin*, following the meeting in Warsaw, took place in Riga (July 21-22, 1928). Professor A. Spekke replaced F. Balodir in the board.

37 Professor F. Šišić from Zagreb was a permanent member of the *Bulletin* editorial board, N. Jorga from Bucharest joined the board since the second issue of the first volume and J. Ivanoff from Sofia since the second volume.

38 Schmid was the author of an extremely valuable comparative study: *Die rechtlichen Grundlagen der Pfarrorganisation auf westslavischem Boden* (Weimar 1938). first published in volumes 15-20 of *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*, 1926-1931.

39 See a meaningful exchange of letters in the fall of 1932, *Bulletin* Vol. 3 (1938), p. 208.

40 At the meeting in Riga (July 1928) the *Bulletin* editorial board authorized Handelsman to establish contacts with Soviet scholars, especially with Pokrevsky, Preshnikov, Tarle and Piczeta. Piczeta's article about Belarus was the only result of those efforts (*Bulletin* Vol. I, No. 3-4 (1928), p. 265).

41 See J. Matl (Graz), "La littérature en langue allemande consacrée à l'histoire de la monarchie des Habsbourg depuis 1526", *Bulletin* Vol. 3, No 3 (1930), pp. 85-123; A. Eck (Bruxelles), "L'Europe Orientale dans les travaux historiques d'expression française depuis la guerre," *Bulletin* Vol. 4. No. 2 (1932), pp. 89-113; L.I. Wharton,

Considering the sharp antagonisms which then rent Central Europe, the very fact of the cooperation of historians of nearly all the countries of the region deserves stressing, as well as reminding. It undoubtedly constitutes one of the most beautiful accomplishments of the historians of that generation, especially worthy of mention at present.

III

Polish scholars in the twenties stressed that they only accepted the term Eastern Europe from Western scholars in its geographical sense; the division of eastern and western Europe in such an understanding did not concern matters at a deeper level, i.e. its membership in a different civilization, whether in a political or economic way. Already in his programmatic presentation in Brussels in 1923 Oskar Halecki placed strong emphasis on the division of civilisations of Eastern Europe into the western and eastern ones⁴². A debate on the perception of Eastern Europe and its history constituted, one can say, a constant and basic topic for the historians associated in the Federation of Historical Societies of Eastern Europe. Certain doubts appeared from the very beginning. For example E. Lukinich, as chair of the *Bulletin* commission questioned from the Hungarian standpoint the validity of such terms as Eastern Europe or the Slavonic world; according to him a division into Catholic-Protestant, Latin and Russian Orthodox. Greek peoples that could be clearly observed since the Middle Ages was much more significant⁴³. Religion lies at the base of differences in civilization. At present this borderline runs along the frontiers of Soviet Russia, and further through the South-Eastern Carpathians and the Danube-Sava line. Lukinich accepts, however, a border zone between the two areas which requires coordinated research on both sides.

The paper presented by Professor Jaroslav Bidlo, from Prague, at the congress in Warsaw in 1933 initiated a serious discussion; the Czech scholar found his opponents especially in Marcell Handelsman and Oskar Halecki.

In 1927 Bidlo published in Czech *The History of the Slavs written* from a clearly Czech perspective⁴⁴. He divided the history of Slavonic nation states into four periods: emergence by the end of the tenth century, growth until the beginning of the seventeenth century, gradual decline in

„L'histoire de l'Europe orientale dans la littérature anglaise. Compte rendu 1921-1928,” *Bulletin* Vol. 3, No. 1-2. pp. 80-84.

42 *La Pologne au Ve Congrès*. pp. 91-92; „Mais revenant à l'Europe Orientale qui nous occupe ici, son histoire depuis le Xème siècle, donc dans ces cas particulier-depuis ses origines nous confirme d'abord que son territoire se compose de deux grande parties, dans l'une située vers l'est, ne vient s'ajouter à l'autre primitive, qu'au cours de la seconde époque de cette histoire. Elle fait ensuite très bien comprendre la divergence profonde entre ces deux parties, divergence, si formement accentuée aujourd'hui, où l'une d'elles constitue l'union des républiques soviétiques et l'autre se compose son tour de plusieurs états indépendants au régime parlementaire...”

43 *Bulletin*, No. 1-2 (1928), p. 260. in the inaugural address in Riga of the Bulletin Commission, July 21, 1928; „...Les territoires qui appartenaient ou appartiennent encore à la zone d'influence du christianisme occidental ou postérieurement à celle du catholicisme et du protestantisme, forment en dernière analyse une région commune de civilisation, tandis que les états dont le modèle fut au point de vue de idéologie et de la religion l'orthodoxe Byzance du moyen âge, en forment une autre...”

44 J. Bidlo, *Dejiny Slovanstva* (Praha 1922), 2nd edition in 1928.

the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and revival since the end of the eighteenth century. The unsystematic history of Russia, especially in the third period, was explained by the fact that the country was strongly influenced by German elements and the Teutonic spirit. Since that synthetic construct had to give rise to a number of objections Bidlo abandoned it and in 1933 presented a completely different proposal⁴⁵. According to this new concept the European East is supposed to be a more suitable name for Eastern Europe. It comprises the Greek-Slavonic, Russian Orthodox world which can be placed in opposition to the Western Roman-Germanic one. Emphasizing the important role of culture with religious values at its foundation, Bidlo expressed his deepest convictions: as a historian of the Czech Brethren he felt Bohemian religiosity was a feature of primary importance in the whole history of Bohemia⁴⁶. Political events are of secondary importance in such an approach while culture and religion have the longest lasting and broadest base among people. The European East has its profound roots in Byzantium and the knowledge of the Byzantine world is a key to its understanding. Bidlo quotes the opinions of Russian Slavophiles who emphatically oppose the world of their culture to the Western one, at the same time focusing on their close connections and solidarity with such non Slavonic people like Romanians, Georgians or Armenians. From this point of view, the evolutions of Western Europe and Byzantine-Slavonic Eastern Europe should be treated separately until the end of the eighteenth century. The author proposes a chronological periodization of the history of the European East since the establishment of Constantinople in 326 until the present time⁴⁷.

In his polemic with Bidlo, Handelsman expresses in the first place delight that the Slavonic version was abandoned; especially the treatment of Slavs as a separate race and a rather unified culture⁴⁸. What really counts is geography, proximity resulting in various ties. Besides, such notions

45 J. Bidlo, „Ce qu'est l'histoire de l'Orient Europeen, quelle en est l'importance. et quelles furent ses etapes”. *Bulletin*, Vol. 6. No. 1-2 (1934), pp. 11-73; a summary of the article: „Was ist die osteuropäische Geschichte (Deren Inhalt und Perioden)”, in *Resume des communications presentees au Congres de Varsovie 1933, II* (Warszawa 1933), pp. 197-207. His final polemic with his opponents, especially Handelsman, Halecki and J. Pfitzner, a professor of the German university in Prague, was in his article, *L'Europe orientale et le domaine de son histoire* in *Monde Slave* (Paris 1935). p. 150 and passim.

46 M. Handelsman, Jaroslav Bidlo 17 XI 1868 - 1 XII 1937”, *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, Vol. 52 (1938). p. 38 and passim: a very warm memorial to the director of the Federation; Bidlo's seminal book on the Czech Brethren in Poland *Jednota bratska v prvim vyhnanstvi*, Vol. 1-3 (Praha 1900-1909).

47 According to him the following periods can be distinguished: the first six periods cover the history of Constantinople-Byzantium from 326 to its downfall in 1204. The seventh period (13th-14th centuries) brings the greater role of Balkan Slavs and significant changes in Russia. In the eighth period Turks strengthen their position in the southern part of the area while in the northern part territories are shared by the Polish-Lithuanian Union and the Principality of Moscow. The Union also means the dominance of Western civilization „dans la Russie occidentale et sudoccidentale” (p. 64). The ninth period is marked by the increasing significance of Russia in its fight against the Polish-Lithuanian Union. The tenth period starting with Peter the Great brings the Western threat to the European East. The eleventh and final period covers the time of the enormous growth of Russia's power in Europe and dramatic conflicts between East and West within Russia. The southern territories which became liberated from Turkey were getting closer and closer to the West „dans le sens de l'europeanization definitive et penerante (p. 67). Everywhere the old civilization of the 'European East' remained only in Eastern Churches and rural provincial life. From a long perspective the history of the European East can be divided into two main eras: the Constantinople era until 1453 and the Moscow era from 1453 to 1917.

48 See Handelsman, „Quelques remarques sur la definition de l'histoire de l'Europe Orientale,” *Bulletin*, Vol. 6, No. 1-2 (1934), pp. 7481. Earlier Handelsman expressed his ideas in, among others, his article „Monde slave en Europe

like East or West have to be seen as relative terms, depending on the point of view and therefore changeable. From the point of view of Gaul and Rome, the East was identified first with Magdeburg and Vienna, then for a long time with Buda, Cracow and Prague, and finally with Moscow as the centre of Russia. Historically Poland is situated in the middle of the geographic Eastern Europe; its fall at the end of the eighteenth century closes the period of independent states. Consequently, the organizing principle for the whole history of Eastern Europe has to be looked for in the history of Poland.

Oskar Halecki underlines in agreement with Bidlo the significance of the cultural-religious divisions into the Byzantine-Slavonic and Latin worlds⁴⁹. Approaching South-Eastern, post-Byzantine and post-Turkish (Ottoman) Europe, together with North-Eastern Europe as a legacy of Byzantium is well founded. At the same time one has to remember about the large zone in between where like in the Ukraine or Belarus influences from both sides intersected for centuries. Although a special place is taken in these processes by subsequent Church unions, the Russian *zapadnyks* should not be forgotten either. What is of major importance for Halecki is not the division among Christians but the gap between the civilizations of Europe and Asia, so visible since antiquity. He therefore identifies the problem of Russia as that of Eurasia; much as the Turks distanced Byzantium from Europe so the Mongolian influences had a similar effect in Muscovy⁵⁰. For the historian of the Church union the rejection of the Union of Florence by K C Muscovy and Turkish Byzantium played a significant role. In the same sense, according to Halecki the Russian *zapadnyks* have since the times of Peter the Great evoked associations with the Byzantine *latinophones* pro-Latin intellectuals.

The debate on such notions as Eastern or Slavonic Europe revealed even more clearly the great complexity of the problem taught caution, as well as the degree of historic relativism of these terms and the limits of their application. It made historians search for new concepts. And thus in 1935 Hungarians started publishing a journal edited by E. Lukinich and bearing a meaningful name of *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis*⁵¹. It was meant to be the academic organ of the Institute of East European History at the Budapest University. In the introduction the title of the new yearbook was not explained but it can be understood more easily in the light of Lukinich's views. In Halecki's writings the term Central Europe, which, as we already mentioned, was used by Jan Rutkowski in 1928 in Oslo⁵², appears after 1933.

Orientalis?" *Bulletin*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (1930), pp. 124-131.

49 See Halecki, "Qu'est que l'Europe Orientale?" *Bulletin*, Vol. 6, No. 1-2 (1934), pp. 81-93.

50 Ibidem, p. 92: „Plus que le schisme, ces influences asiatiques ont éloigné Byzance de Rome, les séparant enfin par une barrière infranchissable: la conquête de l'Empire d'Orient par les Turcs. Plus que l'Orthodoxie, également la longue domination Tartare a creusé un abîme entre la Russie moscovite et le reste de l'Europe préparant le futur Empire russe à devenir une Eurasie.”

51 See *Archivum Europae Centro-Orientalis*, Vol. 1-7, Budapest 1935. Last volume undated (before 1944).

52 Rutkowski, see footnote 12; Halecki, "Europa Środkowa." *Encyklopedia Nauk Politycznych*, Vol. 2 (Warszawa 1937), pp. 127-129, with reference to such works as J. Partsch, *Zentraeuropa* (Berlin, 1903), F. Neuman, *Mitteleuropa* (Berlin, 1913) or J. Ancel, *L'Europe Centrale* (Paris, 1930).

IV

Oskar Halecki, who from 1940 was based in New York, in the following period was to continue there his work and the themes he had begun in the framework of the Federation of Historical Socialites of Eastern Europe. During the dramatic war years he spoke on behalf of the small countries between Germany and Russia, closely connecting historical reflections with a vision of the future of the region⁵³. In 1943/44 he calls it East Central Europe, broadly understood from Finland to Greece. He defended the right of small nations to their independence, despite, as he wrote, widespread opinions that there are too many of them. Simultaneously he strongly asserted the importance of creating voluntary associations between states, the principle of the Federation with a clear prospect of strong regional links as a part of a world system much more powerful than the League of Nations. A significant historical experiences of East Central Europe was three systems which lasted for centuries: the Jagiellonian, Muscovite and Habsburg ones. For the future it would be important to develop a system that would give security against various forms of external force as well as from internal despotism, Culture - a kind of spiritual background - strongly rooted in history, would have to be at the base of such a regional federation.

Halecki's thoughts on East Central Europe were best developed in the book published in 1950, a book which was to gain worldwide prominence in historical scholarly literature⁵⁴. He wrote it as a historian taking a voice in the great debate on a conception of the history of Europe. However, as he strongly declared in the introduction, he also wrote the book as a man who experienced the shock of both European World Wars and the crises connected with them⁵⁵. The role of Poland in Europe, a problem which for many historians of Halecki's generation was so crucial was in 1950 more than a theoretical one concerning scholarly debate. Yet at the same time Halecki attempts to give a voice to an entire group of nations which after 1945 shared a similar fate.

The book is concerned with the limits and divisions in European history. In ten chapters it deals with the questions: what in fact is European history (chapter 1), where is its beginning and end (2-3), what are its geographical limits and divisions (4-7), its chronological periodization (8-9), and, finally, its most basic problems (10). Its innovative side, as Christopher Dawson pointed out in the introduction, was the perspective of an author well versed in the knowledge of how stale systems in the eastern regions of the continent developed from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries⁵⁶. Halecki opposed the widespread custom of speaking about a Western civilization in a way which excluded the Eastern part of the continent. For instance, in his multi-volume, highly significant and

53 O. Halecki, "East Central Europe in Postwar Organization", *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (Philadelphia, July 1943). pp. 52-59; and his "The Historical Role of Central-Eastern Europe", *ibidem* (March 1944), pp. 9-18. The Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in New York, and directed by Halecki, has paid much attention to the problems central Europe, See the Bulletin. of the Polish Institute from 1942.

54 O. Halecki, *The Limits and Divisions of European History* (London-New York 1950); the translation into *Polish Historia Europy – jej granice i podziały* by Jan Maria Kłoczowski published by the Institute of East Central Europe in Lublin, 1994.

55 *Ibidem*, p. 3: "The crisis of our Times was and is my main source of information".

56 Christopher Dawson in the introduction of *ibidem*, p. IX

inspiring synthesis of European history, the Swiss historian Gonzague de Reynold speaks of Western Europe simply as *Europe europeenne*, and thus really European⁵⁷. Toynbee, in his great synthesis of the civilizations of the world writes only , Orthodox-Russian and Orthodox Southeastern civilizations (in Europe); there is no simply European civilization for him⁵⁸. For Halecki, on the other hand, the history of Europe is the history of all the countries, large and small, and even of some of the smaller regions with their striking wealth of unity in diversity. Ancient Greece and modern Switzerland were, in the eyes of the author, also excellent prototypes of a future Europe which would honour „small” and „great” nations⁵⁹.

In the wider European context Halecki contributes to the debate on the subject of the limits of the various Europes: Western, Eastern, Slavonic. Western Europe is in principle Romance-Germanic; Eastern Europe is in its basic core Slavonic, but above all it is the variety of peoples and nationalities who live there. By the term Eastern Europe Halecki definitely includes Byzantium and the Byzantine tradition, on the other hand he excludes Russia as a separate Eurasian continent, as Eurasia. According to such a conception Eastern Europe is the region between the Holy Roman Empire and Eurasian Russia, composed of the post-Byzantine South-Eastern Europe (beyond Europe for a period of time when under Turkish rule), Europe by the Danube, of Hungary and the Habsburg lands, as well as North Eastern/Europe. At its inception this latter region means Poland and Kievian Rus, later on it is made up of the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth⁶⁰

Apart from such a division of Europe into two parts Halecki introduces the idea of Central Europe, which in the twentieth century has given rise to numerous doubts and has been misused for political reasons but is useful in spite of everything⁶¹. Central Europe comprises on the one hand German lands -they constitute West Central Europe-and the nations situated eastward from Germany which, in turn, constitute East Central Europe⁶². As a matter of fact this East Central Europe encompasses all the States which were independent in the interwar period and are situated between Scandinavia, Germany and Italy in the west, and the Soviet Union frontiers in the east. This area is not uniform in either a geographical or historical sense; it could, for example, be the basis for two or three regional federations. In Halecki's view Poland occupies the crucial position

57 „L'Europe europeenne, l'Europe originaire et originale, c'est l'Occident”, Gonzague de Reynold, *La Formation de l'Europe* (Fribourg en Suisse 1941). Vol. 1. p.55.

58 Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (New York-London 1947); the one volume edition edited by D.C. Somervell.

59 Cf. Halecki's description in *The Limits*. p. 17: „Europe is the community of all nations which, in the favourable conditions of a continent small but full of variety, accepted and developed the heritage of Greco-Roman civilization, transformed and elevated by Christianity, thus giving to the free peoples outside the ancient empire access to the permanent values of the past.”

60 O. Halecki, *The Limits*, p. 118 and passim. As far as Russia is concerned, Halecki refers to the Russian historical school that raises the Eurasian character of the continent state. This school is represented by the emigre scholar Gorge Vernadsky, *A history of Russia* [New Haven: Yale university Press, 1929] Vol. I and others; cf. Charles J. Halperin, Gorge Verdansky, and others, „Eurasianisme, the Mongols and Russia” *Slavic Review*, Vol. 41 (1982), pp. 477-493. At present, the entire problem obviously must be completely rethought.

61 Cf. footnote nr. 53 above; O. Halecki, *The Limits*, p. 12S and passim. The starting point in his discussion is the controversial book by F. Naumann *Mitteleuropa* (1915), demarcating a sphere of central states under the auspice of Germany.

62 O. Halecki, *The Limits*, p. 135.

both geographically and historically due to the fact that in the past, at the time of Jagiellonian reign, it was the centre of a federation for a short time covering almost the whole area of East Central Europe⁶³. Three Baltic countries: Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia belong, according to Halecki's approach, completely to East Central Europe. As for Belarus and the Ukraine, he sees three possibilities: dependence on Russia, independence-in this case they would constitute Eastern Europe proper-and finally the historical ties warranting their inclusion in East Central Europe⁶⁴.

Halecki seems to believe that a division of Europe into four parts (Western, West Central, East Central and Eastern) has some advantages over division into two parts⁶⁵.

The most important issue in Halecki's discussion of Europe is his perception of European culture with its principal idea of freedom, or, more precisely, a peculiar balance between freedom and authority as opposed to anarchy and nihilism⁶⁶. since its beginnings the European tradition has been accompanied by the conviction that freedom has to be organized since otherwise it can turn into anarchy. Christianity brought with it the idea human dignity. Today the balance between freedom and authority assumes respect for democratic independent countries including small ones, and at the same time their union, a federation with efficient executive rule⁶⁷.

Oskar Halecki, one of the outstanding representatives of the generation of Polish historians who experienced optimism resulting from regaining the country's independence, and were later confronted with catastrophe and totalitarian barbarity, presented in his slender book about Europe his thoughts, arguments and impressions based on many years of research. In a way, he concluded the work of the whole movement inspired and organized before 1939 by his university colleague Marceli Handelsman; the latter put a great effort in creating the grounds for the close cooperation between historians of East Central Europe⁶⁸. Future research will show in detail the circumstances and the whole context necessary for understanding Halecki's work and its proper place in both Polish and European historiography. Oskar Halecki's post-war activities and publications had a direct influence upon English language and German historians⁶⁹. Most likely his book on Europe

63 Ibidem, pp. 135-138; „Poland, die largest of the whole group and occupying a key position, both geographically and historically.”

64 Ibidem, p. 137: „If, on the contrary, the Ukraine and Byelorussia should be free from Soviet Russia, these two nations could be considered Eastern Europe proper, although their historical ties with East Central Europe would favour their inclusion in that group.”

65 Ibidem, p. 138.

66 Ibidem, p. 185 and passim. Halecki especially refers to the great British and European historian, Lord J.E. Acton (1834-1902), who worked on his *History and Liberty* for years, although he never completed it. Together with Halecki Bronisław Malinowski wrote the book *Freedom and Civilization* (New York 1944), demonstrating the inseparable relationship between liberty and culture.

67 Ibidem, p. 187 and passim.

68 One has, of course, to take a closer look at both Halecki's and Handelsman's positions in the context of the long controversy among Polish historians concerning their basic orientations. See Andrzej Wierzbicki, *Wschód-Zachód w koncepcjach dziejów Polski* (Warszawa 1984) (until World War I); A.F. Grabski, „La place de la Pologne en Europe. Controverses historiographiques XVIIIe-XXe siècles,” in *L'Europe Centrale Realite, mythes, enjeu XVIIIe-XXe siecle*, ed. G. Beaupretre (Varsovie 1991), pp. 291-297 where among other things he mentions Władysław Gomułka's fierce attack against Halecki's book (p. 296).

69 See the characteristic statesman made by Geoffrey Barraclough, the editor of the collective work *Eastern and*

from 1950 shall be considered particularly significant among his published works. It was somewhat supplemented by the discussion of East Central European history perceived as borderlands, the bulwark of Western civilization (1953)⁷⁰, and then by the presentation of the one thousand history of Europe since its definite emergence in the tenth century until the twentieth century (1963)⁷¹. In spite of all the hardships and adversity he experienced, Halecki remained optimistic and in the epilogue to his history of Europe he wrote about the road to the next millennium via a united Europe Atlantic community of nations and Christian humanism. For the time being the concept of a double Europe, the West and the Slavonic-Soviet East prevails among most historians. Francis Dvornik, a Czech historian and an American exile, also preferred to write syntheses of Slavonic Europe and not East Central Europe⁷². The latter concept has been gaining recognition slowly and with great difficulty.

V

There is a need to evaluate the impressive work done by historians in America, where after 1945 many representatives of East Central European countries were based. This particular group of

Western Europe in the Middle Ages (London 1970) in the introduction (p- 14): „Those who call European civilization 'Western,' Oskar Halecki once wrote 'are inclined to decide in advance one of the most difficult and controversial questions of European history'. Halecki was one of the first and leading proponents of the sort of revision at which this book aims, and it is where my book should wish to dedicate is to him as a tribute to his long efforts to make the history of Eastern Europe better known in the West. No doubt, the contributors to this volume would differ from him in a number of points of interpretation; but I hope nevertheless that it will serve the cause of better understanding between the peoples of Eastern and Western Europe which-all politics apart-he has had so deeply at heart”. Halecki's book was published in German translation (*Europa, Grenzen und Gliederung seiner Geschichte*, Darmstadt 1957). K. Zernack in his *Osteuropa. Eine Einführung in seine Geschichte* (München 1977). p. 25 considers Halecki's book the most important attempt to date at presenting the place of this part of the continent on the historical and geographical map of Europe, an attempt that strongly influenced post-war German historians. Halecki's works are discussed by G. Rhode, „Drei Polnische Historiker - drei Persönlichkeiten der Zeitgeschichte“ (Halecki, Kukiel, Kot), *Jahrbucher für Geschichte Osteuropa*, Vol. 24 (1976), p. 533 and passim. See especially the opinions on East Central Europe as a region which constitutes the most important issue on the international forum (p. 536) In spite of the idealized image of the Jagiellonian union, the volume is “ein bemerkenswerter Diskussionsbeitrag, den man bei allen Fragen der Periodisierung und geographischen Gliederung der europäischen Geschichte heranziehen muss“

70 See Halecki, *Borderlands of Western Civilization. A History of East Central Europe* (New York, 1952); in German translation: *Grenzraum des Abendlandes. Eine Geschichte Ostmitteleuropas* (Salzburg. 1956). The book consists of seven main parts: at the base, the medieval tradition; Renaissance development (15th-16th century); the Eastern wing of the system of the balance of power (17th-18th century); nationalism versus imperialism (19th century), twenty years of freedom (with a separate subchapter on Ukrainians and Byelorussians in the Soviet Union), World War II and its results (the Stalinist system).

71 See Halecki, *The Millennium of Europe* (University of Notre Dame Press, 1963); in German translation; *Das Europäische Jahrtausend* (Salzburg 1966); this synthetic study consists of five parts: the final formation of Europe in the 10th century, the Christian Commonwealth, a Great Transition from the Christian Republic to the Great Republic, the peak and decline of the importance of Europe in the world. Halecki referred to East Central European issues once again in the last years of his life in his posthumously published book *Jadwiga of Anjou and the Rise of East Central Europe*, ed. T. Gromada (New York: Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America, 1991).

72 Francis Dvornik, a Catholic priest from Moravia, a professor in and in the United States after the war. In his book *The Making of Central and Eastern Europe* (London: The Polish Research center, 1949) while discussing the formative processes of Central and Eastern Europe in the 10th and 11th centuries, he regrets that no strong East Central European federation was established between Germany and Russia. Later he published his two volume history of Slavs: *The Slavs, Their Early history and Civilization* (Boston, 1956) and *The Slavs in European History and Civilization* (New Brunswick-New Jersey; Rutgers University Press, 1962); the whole then collected and edited in one volume; *Les Slaves Histoire et civilisations de l'Antiquité avec débuts de l'époque contemporaine* (Paris: Seuil, 1970)

historians were especially sympathetic to the history of that part of the continent. One can also treat their effort as in no small degree a continuation of the directions so clearly taken in those countries before 1939.

The most important project became the attempt at a history of East Central Europe in eleven volumes, aimed at an audience of university students and a broader public⁷³. The first volume, published in 1974, was Piotr Wandycz's dealing with the lands of the partitioned Poland⁷⁴. I shall now discuss the five volumes which have been published to date; the rest are due to come out in the next few years.

The editors-in-chief of the series, Peter F. Sugar and Donald W. Treadgold, have taken as the limits of East Central Europe the territory between the German-Italian linguistic frontier and the political border of Russia, i.e. the USSR⁷⁵. The borders were treated as flexible, which is why peoples such as the Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians, Belorussians or Ukrainians are purposefully treated more superficially and irregularly, and only in times of their independence from Moscow or Petersburg. More systematic and profound treatment was to be given to Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians, Romanians, the Yugoslav peoples, Albanians, Bulgarians and Greeks. A definite southward shift in the centre of gravity of East Central Europe could be seen, among other things, in the characteristic acceptance of the Danube-Sava line as the base for the work's construction: three volumes were to deal with the regions south of this axis, while three concerned the lands to the north and four were for both of these delineated territories. Visible here is the Hungarian option in which Hungary constitutes the primary axis in East Central Europe⁷⁶.

Each volume's author (or authors) had to undertake difficult and at times controversial decisions within this framework. For example, Wandycz concentrated primarily on the Poles, treating other peoples of pre-Partition Poland only in the perspective of their relationship to the former⁷⁷. Joseph Rothschild in his picture of East Central Europe between the two world wars deals with the Baltic countries, independent at that time, as peripheral to the region⁷⁸. He considers Greece as a Mediterranean country and omits it altogether, in spite of the original guidelines of the series.

Southeastern Europe has been covered in two volumes: one treats the period of Turkish rule (1354-1809), the following one the development of the new Balkan states (1809-1918). Peter Sugar in his book on Turkish domination discerns different regions which constitute the core of Turkish rule, while individually treating Moldavia and Wallachia, Transylvania and Dubrovnik, the vassal

73 *A History of East Central Europe*, edited by Peter F. Sugar and Donald W. Treadgold (Seattle and London; University of Washington Press).

74 Piotr Wandycz. *The Lands of the Partitioned Poland 1795-1918* (Boulder Colorado 1974).

75 A short, unequivocal text to this effect signed by both editors acts as a forward to each volume.

76 Such a view point is also evident in, among others, Leslie C. Tihany, *A History of Middle Europe from the Earliest Times to The Age of the World Wars* (New Brunswick, NJ. 1976).

77 Wandycz, op. cit., p. XI.

78 Joseph Rothschild, *East Central Europe between the Two World Wars* (Washington 1974), Vol. 9 of the series.

states⁷⁹. Charles and Barbara Jelavich concentrate on seven nationalities: Albanians, Bulgarians, Croatians, Greeks, Romanians, Serbs and Slovenes⁸⁰. Robert A. Kann and Zdenek David faced a rather difficult task of distinguishing the peoples of the Eastern territories of the Habsburg lands in the years 1526-1918 and decided to devote separate chapters to Croatians, Czechs, Hungarians, Serbs, Slovaks and Slovenes, although neither Czechs or Slovenes lived in the east of the Habsburg empire⁸¹. Poles do not appear there at all-they do however in Wandycz's volume and they will appear in Andrzej Kamiński's volume on the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth-and Ruthenians (they do not write about Ukrainians) are mentioned only in the parts devoted to Carpathian Ruthenia Bukovina (likewise Romanians only in reference to Bukovina).

Each volume would require a separate evaluation. Apart from political history, the social and economic aspects come to the fore; culture is presented in a rather traditional way in a separate chapter at the end. A bibliographical essay evaluates scholarly literature. Beyond doubt is the usefulness of the publication in the English language, so important all over the world today.

Without waiting for the final volumes of the whole series, recently Piotr Wandycz decided to publish a concise one-volume history of East Central Europe under the meaningful title *The Price of Freedom?*⁸². It is no coincidence that the book was partly dedicated to the late Oskar, Halecki for whom freedom, as we have already mentioned, constituted a fundamental European value. East Central Europe in Wandycz's version is limited to three countries: Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, of course with regard to their historical borders. Accepting the arguments for applying the term East Central Europe in reference to the territories between the Baltic, Adriatic, Aegean and Black Seas, he considers the selected area the proper «core» of this part of the continent. He reminds us of the enormous geopolitical significance of the area where two world wars broke out and the possession of which has a crucial meaning for global dominance (according to the British geopolitician H. Mackinder). Frequent references to the most recent historical literature in various languages give Wandycz's synthesis its own unique value. The Middle Ages are discussed briefly while half the volume is devoted to the nineteenth centuries, including the latest struggle for the liberation from Communist dictatorship.

VI

A separate research task which requires serious work and a clear objective evaluation is the

79 Peter F. Sugar, *Southeastern Europe under Ottoman Rule, 1354-1804* (Washington 1977), Vol. 5 of the series.

80 Charles and Barbara Jelavich, *The Establishment of the Balkan National States 1804-1920* (Washington 1977), Vol. 8 of the series.

81 Robert A. Kann, Zdenek V. David, *The Peoples of the Eastern Habsburg Lands 1526-1918* (Washington 1984), Vol. 6 of the series.

82 Piotr S. Wandycz *The Price of Freedom. A History of East Central Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present* (London and New York 1992). The book is dedicated *In memoriam to Oskar Halecki and Hugh Seton-Watson*, the Polish translation is: *Cena wolności* (Kraków; Znak 1995).

treatment of the topic of East Central Europe in the countries of this region under Communist domination since 1945. History was extremely important here, especially the entire recent history concerning the relation of Russia with other countries. The official, widely propagated version presented various countries voluntarily joining each other to form a brotherly socialist community around Moscow as the last stage of a long historical processes⁸³. An East Central European community could not be accepted in that version, the more so that it easily evoked associations with the concept of the «sanitary cordon» against Soviet Russia after 1917. The classic imperial principle of *divide et impera* necessitated isolating the countries as much as possible and to keep up antagonisms under the guise of their official friendship and brotherhood. This policy resulted in the principle of manipulating the history of each country, treated as a political instrument both in the Moscow headquarters and the headquarters of each country. The question arises as to how such a system functioned in reality and how it was transformed in subsequent decades. The intensity and range of historians' opposition at different levels of academia, popular history and education were certainly of enormous importance. Besides, one has to take into account the multitude of various relations both on the international and regional, almost semi-private scale⁸⁴.

Of primary importance were individuals and groups who managed to remain relatively independent and maintain high academic standards, people and circles capable of independent reflection upon and analysis of transformations under way-with-out external pressure, but also without closing themselves up in the shells of their own convictions and simply being offended by the unpleasant reality. Of tremendous importance for some of the countries were the intellectual emigre centres, active and open toward the changes going on in the world and their own countries. It is worth risking the claim that in such circles there slowly emerged a feeling of solidarity in the face of a common threat and an awareness of how crucial it was to reach a consensus, especially an agreement of small and medium sized countries. In the case of East Central Europe this type of awareness in principle required a profound revision of attitudes towards neighbours, eliminating stereotypes, all types of ethnocentrism and aggressive nationalism. People and centres thinking in such a way could be connected with quite diverse ideological and historical roots. In the case of Christians, especially important in this context was an ecumenical spirit; for Catholics so apparent in the deeds of John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council, for instance.

A particularly interesting case is the intellectual oeuvre of the Hungarian Istvan Bibó (1911-1979)⁸⁵, who was a politician, political scientist and philosopher all in one. This was evident in his

83 An excellent example of such a Soviet-Russian reading of history can be regarded the renowned book, translated into many languages, by the French scholar Roger Portal *Les Slaves. Peuples et nations* (Paris 1965), published in the prestigious series *Destin du Monde*, edited by L. Febvre and F. Braudel (who were undoubtedly unaware of this characteristic of the synthesis). Alexandre Bourmeyster, „Le discours russe et soviétique sur l'Europe Centrale”, in *L'Europe du milieu*, ed. M. Masłowski (Presses universitaires de Nancy 1991), pp. 37-47.

84 There is an urgent need to collect reports and memoirs of different kinds as a way of supplementing documentation which, was always manipulated in some way in a totalitarian state. Police documentation, for instance would be a good source.

85 I. Bibó, *Misère des petits états de l'Europe de l'Est* (Paris 1986); a collection of articles written at different times.

sharp critique of Hungarian progress of over a century, in which he questioned the traditional “philosophy” of his country's history. Bibo looks for novel solutions in establishing new relations between the states of the region, especially Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland; he sees a distinct commonality of historical fates of these three small countries of East Central Europe. New forms of European political and psychological coexistence, in which Germany and the Soviet Union-Russia should participate, are also urgently needed. A similar role in Czechoslovakia, it seems, was played by Jan Patočka⁸⁶, who in the new circumstances revived the old subject of the place of his country in Europe. In Poland it would be possible to enumerate many individuals and centres. but a special role here was played by the periodical *Kultura* published in Paris, with Jerzy Giedroyc at its head, which urged with incredible doggedness and power of persuasion from 1945 on of the primary task of coming to terms with all the neighbours⁸⁷. In Poland itself a centre was created around the weekly *Tygodnik Powszechny*, edited from 1945 by Jerzy Turowicz where the postulate of openness towards others resulted from a deep thoroughly modern Christian humanism and the best traditions of an open Polish humanism⁸⁸.

In the complex picture of the historiography of Communist countries, where traditionalism often neighboured with the official ideology and a single method of teaching, groups searching for direct contacts with Western scholarship played a key role. For Poles and Hungarians, somewhat freer than others, those were first and foremost connections with the vanguard of historical sciences in the second half of the twentieth century, the „French School”, especially the „new history” of the Annales school⁸⁹. The new history, concentrating as it did completely on people studies from various aspects by means of an interdisciplinary approach, and always in the context of the long term of historical time, by its very nature led to comparisons to looking beyond the perimeters of small regions or countries, and in this way to a better understanding of one's own past and culture. Against this background there slowly appeared in the language of historians, especially in Poland and Hungary, the term East Central Europe, while Southeastern Europe became the subject of

86 J. Patočka, *L'idée de l'Europe en Bohême* (Grenoble 1986); four articles from the years 1938-1975. For a good introduction to the complex problems of the Czech attitudes to Central Europe, see Eugene Faucher, „Les Tcheques et l'idée du l'Europe Centrale du milieu”, in *L'Europe du milieu*, ed. M. Masłowski, pp. 69-81. In the seventies I had the opportunity to have a long conversation with Patočka in his house in Prague. He spoke of the necessity for a complete revision of Czech attitudes towards Poles and developing closer relations and cooperation between the two peoples. He was of the opinion that despite all the difficulties (the events of the years 1919, 1939, 1968 are significant), a change for the better was taking place, and that presently Czechs simply understand the Polish attitude and position better (he was of course referring to the non-communist one). A criticism of Benes's politics constantly recurred in the talk.

87 There is a pressing need to document and write about the Polish and international role of *Kultura*, which is already difficult to accomplish. An introduction to the topic can be served by Andrzej Miętkowski, „Sąsiedzi i Europa”, in *Kultura i jej krąg 1946-1986. Katalog wystawy Czterdziestolecie Instytutu Literackiego Biblioteka Polska, Paryż 11 XII 1986-10 I 1987* (Paris 1988), pp. 95-105.

88 Here as well a very urgent task is to gather various accounts and reports, in order to depict the role and position of *Tygodnik* on the international scene from the perspective of Polish relations with their neighbours people of various denominations and nationalities.

89 See the data collected by Krzysztof Pomian, „Impact of the Annales School in Eastern Europe,” *Review*, Vol. 1. No. M (1978), pp. 101-118. Subscribers of the Annales in 1976: Poland - 28 copies, Hungary- 23, Czechoslovakia - 9. From among 1434 foreign trips of Polish historians 440 were visits to France, 335 to the Soviet Union and 191 to the DDR.

interdisciplinary comparative research. Medievalists in broadly based studies greatly increased the knowledge of the early Slavonic world and the emergence of states in parts of eastern Europe; for the first few hundred years numerous economic, systemic and cultural ties with the West were demonstrated, and with Byzantium in the east⁹⁰. Likewise historians of contemporary history started using the term East Central Europe in reference to their times⁹¹.

Economic history, which was intensively practised, most obviously led to the conclusion of the inexplicability of economic phenomena within the framework of the history of a single country⁹². The broad framework of Marian Małowist and his pupils' work, inspired by both Marx and contemporary Western historical writing, led to divisions on the economic map of Europe of east central and eastern regions, especially from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries⁹³. The primary factor was the constant socio-economic development of East Central Europe, particularly from the thirteenth century, interrupted only during the sixteenth and, especially in Poland, the first half of the seventeenth centuries. The divisions introduced by Małowist cut through political, cultural and ethnic borders, which in the eyes of this school of history were considered of a secondary nature in comparison with economic ties. He differentiated a Baltic sphere, up until Novgorod; furthermore, a central lowland one with Greater Poland, Mazovia, Lithuania, a large portion of Ruthenia (agriculture and forest products); a highland one from Bohemia and the Carpathian Mountains (various metals, salt); a Western Balkan one, flourishing in the fourteenth and the first half of the fifteenth centuries; and finally a Black Sea one. The backwardness or lagging behind of relation to the West constituted the fundamental dilemma for Małowist and his school. To gain a still better perspective the historian also undertook extensive studies of the African, Asian and Latin-American markets.

It would seem that the American historian Immanuel Wallerstein referred to Małowist's theories,

90 For example monumental works like *Słownik starożytności słowiańskich* initiated by the commission of the Federation of East Central European Historical Societies headed by F. Bujak as well as studies by Kazimierz Tymieniecki, H. Łowmiański, G. Labuda, A. Gieysztor and many others. Hungarian medievalists also produced a number of studies of wider importance.

91 See for example several studies from the seventies: *Dyktatury w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej 1918 - 1939* Conference at the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences, December 1971; W. Balcerek, *Powstanie państw narodowych w Europie Środkowej* (Warszawa, 1974); Janusz Zarnowski, „East Central European Societas 1918-1939, the Polish Example,” in *Poland at the 14th International Congress of Historical Sciences in San Francisco* (Wrocław, 1975), pp. 241-255; Jerzy Chlebowczyk, *Procesy narodowościowe we wschodniej Europie Środkowej w dobie kapitalizmu (od schyłku XVIII do początków XX wieku)* (Warszawa 1975); Jerzy Tomaszewski, „Kwestia narodowa w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej przed I wojną światową,” *Przegląd Historyczny*, Vol. 67, No. 1 (1976), pp. 109-114. In these studies various terms are used but the 'East Central European option' seems to prevail; The Polish tome for the Congress in Bucharest in 1980 (*La Pologne au XV^e Congrès International des Sciences Historiques Bucarest*, ed. S. Bylina (Wrocław 1980) also has a very meaningful subtitle: *Etudes sur l'histoire de la culture de l'Europe Centrale-Orientale*.

92 See W. Kula, *Teoria ekonomiczna ustroju feudalnego* (Warszawa, 1983), p. 149.

93 See Marian Małowist, podziały gospodarcze i polityczne w średniowieczu i w dobie wczesnej nowożytnej,” *Przegląd Historyczny*, Vol. 82 (1991), pp. 233-244 and the bibliography of Małowist's works, Igor Kąkolowski, Krzysztof Olendzki, „Strefa południka 20: Mit czy rzeczywistość? Wokół problematyki badań porównawczych Mariana Małowista nad historią Europy Środkowo Wschodniej,” *Przegląd Historyczny*, Vol. 81, No. 1-2 (1990), pp. 301-311. See also a collection of studies *East Central Europe in Transition from XVth to XVIIIth Century*, ed. A. Mączak, H. Samsonowicz, P. Burke (Cambridge 1985).

by which he raised a worldwide debate concerning the beginnings of the world economic system⁹⁴. He dated it at the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, distinguishing the core states (England, the Netherlands and France), the semi-peripheral countries (among others, Spain, Portugal and Venice) and finally the peripheral ones, to which he included both Americas and the countries of East Central Europe (the corvee system and supplying core states with raw materials). Wallerstein counted Russia among the regions that did not belong to the system of world commerce; once it expanded into Siberia it began to constitute something along the order of its own economical world. Małowist, among others, criticized many points of the American scholar's theory as oversimplifications; it did, nevertheless, poignantly raise the problem of East Central Europe's place not only in Europe, but in the world economy⁹⁵.

Jerzy Kłoczowski attempted an approach to Slavonic Europe, understood strictly in the geographical sense, which was primarily cultural⁹⁶. In such an important territory he distinguished three regions: East Central Europe, South Eastern Europe and Kievan Rus. Of primary significance here were processes of Westernization on the one hand, and Byzantinization on the other. The thirteenth to the fourteen or fifteenth centuries were crucial for these processes and had long term effects in many fields; those centuries were also a period of establishing the basis for national cultures on new grounds and identification with the Christian world. In the Byzantine Slavonic sphere there developed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries a clear divergence in the course taken by Muscovite Russia and that of the Ruthenian lands belonging to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and Poland. In the latter case the cultural encounter of the Byzantine world with the Latin one formed the basis for the emergence of separate Ukrainian and Belorussian nations. Treating East Central Europe solely from the Western perspective fails especially from the point of view of the Polish Commonwealth of many nations; there the meeting of both cultures had enormous significance.

Research on Christian societies seems to lead to particularly vital conclusions, also for attempts at demarcating great cultural regions of Europe. East Central Europe begins to assume an ever more distinct place in different periods. At present, work is being done on a great, ten or more volume history of Christianity which brought about some initial concepts still requiring further research and

94 Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*, Vol. 1-2 (New York, 1978-1980); or his critical comments concerning the term Central Europe (understood as Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland), See „La recomposition perpetuelle des frontieres culturelles percuse: l'Europe Centrale a l'aune d'aujourd'hui in *L'Europe Centrale. Realite, Mythes. Enjeu XVIIIe-XXe siecles*, ed. G. Beuprete (Varsovie: Centre de Civilisation Francaise, 1991), pp. 61-65.

95 See e.g. Małowist's observation in *Podziały gospodarcze i polityczne w Europie*.

96 See Jerzy Kłoczowski, *Europa słowiańska w XIV-XV wieku* (Warszawa. 1984);

earlier, my short article in French was published: „Le developpement de la civilisation en Europe Centrale et Orientale au XIVe et XVe siecles.” *Questiones Medii Aevii Vol. 1* (Varsovie. 1977). pp. 111-138. A volume from the series on the 14th and 15th centuries *Peuples et Civilisations* (Paris: PUF) with my final study “L'essor de l'Europe de Centre-Est et transformations en Europe Orientale aux XIVe-XVe siecles” was supposed to be published more than ten years ago but has not been published so far (presumably it will be published in the midnineties, ed. J. Favier); see also my two papers at the interdisciplinary symposia in Warsaw in *Sztuka i ideologia XIV wieku*, ed. Piotr Skubiszewski (Warszawa, 1978). pp. 17-53.

discussion⁹⁷.

Among a number of initiatives in the eighties, the most mature proposition for encompassing the entire history of East Central Europe was that of the Hungarian historian Jenő Szűcs in a small but succinct and highly inspiring synthesis⁹⁸. Szűcs dedicates his book to Istvan Bibó maintaining that it was the latter who was the source of inspiration for a comprehensive history of Hungary, Bohemia and Poland in the perspective of long term structures.

Ferdynand Braudel in his introduction to the Parisian edition of the book writes with great respect about the methodology of the book which “provokes and challenges to debate, and at the same time to reflection”⁹⁹. For Braudel, Szűcs East Central Europe gives a solid framework: one can see how it sometimes gravitates toward the West, and at other times toward Eastern Europe, how different influences cross through it and how difficult it is for East Central Europe to find its own, independent existence.

According to Szűcs profound Westernization, penetrating basic social and cultural structures from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries, had a decisive impact on the formation of Bohemia, Hungary and Poland; all later changes were not able to shake these foundations. The Western model, developed in the period of intensive development from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries is constituted by, above all, small, self-governing societies and their rights and freedoms; moreover, the model of the lord and vassal relationship joining honour and loyalty, a sense of human dignity (of that time, not in the Classical sense); the contract as a principle governing interpersonal relationships; a political theology accepting the premise that God acts through people and communities (*mediante populo*). The emergence of civically responsible societies (*civilis societas*) was particularly symptomatic of those vitally important transformations. In Braudel's opinion, what Szűcs writes about Western societies should force Western historians to think over and reformulate the way they have become accustomed to view these matters.

In the case of East Central Europe itself, Westernization, the relatively quick assimilation of forms that had taken long to evolve, had a limiting effect; it created a region somehow different from the Western sphere. The deformation of the model had, in the long term, its significant results. Szűcs dedicates a separate chapter on the crises of East Central Europe in the sixteenth to the eighteenth and in the nineteenth centuries in the context of their neighbours, Russia, Prussia and the Hapsburg lands, as well as demonstrating the different solutions and situations of Hungarians, Poles

97 See *Histoire du Christianisme des origines à nos jours*, ed. J.M. Mayeur, Ch. Pietri (and after his death – L. Pietri). A. Vauchez, M. Venard (Paris: Desclée, since 1990). The whole oeuvre is to be comprised of fourteen volumes. Several volumes contain separate chapters on East Central Europe written by Jerzy Kłoczowski (in the medieval ages, also on Northern Europe). Up until 1994 volumes 4, 5, 6, 8 and 12 were published; the remaining volumes are in print or not yet completed. They are simultaneously published in German translation. *Die Geschichte des Christentums* by Herder Publishers. An Italian translation is being prepared. A Polish translation might be published by J. Krupski Publishers.

98 See Jenő Szűcs, *Les trois Europes* (Paris, 1985). A Polish translation by Jan Maria Kłoczowski was published at the Institute of East Central Europe in Lublin in 1995.

99 Ibidem, p.8

and Czechs. In his concluding remarks referring to the present, Szücs primarily stresses a model of grassroots development of democracy and a revolution in human dignity, the essential ingredient of every democracy. In such a sense the return to sources, to the possibilities available in the dynamic model of the West seems to be a necessity totally in accordance with the great tradition of East Central Europe.

VII

The independence of Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary in 1989, to be followed by other countries, presented historians with new tasks and challenges. In the subject that interests us the question arises: how did the new situation affect the international cooperation of historians of the region and the treatment of national histories in the larger framework of East Central Europe and Europe *tout court*? Exchange of Information, theoretically so easy with today's technical means, is a fundamental matter. The state of affairs, however, is for various reasons unsatisfactory to this very day.

In the intellectual circles of the opposition, long before 1989 there existed an awareness of the mutual relations on a scale of the Europe under communist control; this question alone deserves a separate treatment at least as regards its history. Of symbolic stature can be considered the huge international symposium and interdisciplinary session at the end of that memorable June of 1989, in Tyniec and Cracow, dedicated to the past and particularly the present of East Central Europe. The participation of Czechs, Slovaks and Hungarians was especially noticeable¹⁰⁰.

Allow me from now on to concentrate on only one fraction, what might be called the Lublin chapter, of these mutual relations and achievements such as have evolved in the last years. Three closely related initiatives prepared the groundwork for the new situation after 1989. In the Institute for the Geographical History of the Church in Poland at the Catholic University of Lublin, functioning from the academic year 1955/56, a specialized team has worked on a historical atlas of Christianity in Poland and the Commonwealth of many nations. From the very onset they placed great stress on a broad, European context of the presented phenomena¹⁰¹. Active participation in the International Commission for a Comparative History of Churches was of crucial significance¹⁰².

100 The keynote paper of the conference in Tyniec (originally in French): Jerzy Kłoczowski, „Nasza Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia”, *Znak*, Vol. 46, No. 416 (1990), pp. 9-20.

101 From the very beginning J. Kłoczowski has been the director of the Institute; the program for its work was formulated in J. Kłoczowski, „Rozwój i problematyka badań nad geografią historyczną Kościoła katolickiego”, *Roczniki Humanistyczne*, Vol. 11, No. 2. (Lublin 1962), pp. 5-93, The present research program for the socio-religious historical atlas of East Central Europe is the proceedings of the Roman congress of 1990, currently in print.

102 The Polish Commission of CIHEC (Commission Internationale d'Histoire Ecclesiastique Comparee), directed by J. Kłoczowski, was enstated by the Committee of Historical Sciences in 1968. It was officially accepted by CIHEC during the world congress of historians in Moscow in 1970. Due to the Polish initiative in 1971 there was an important international colloquium: sec: „Colloque de Varsovie 27-29 Octobre 1971 sur la cartographie et l'histoire socio-religieuse de l'Europe jusqu'a la fin du XVIIe siecle”. *Miscelanea Historiae*

Hungarian and Czech colleagues, among others, were drawn into close cooperation, and the awareness of the necessity of comparative research on the scale of the three counties emerged ever more forcefully¹⁰³. Towards the end of the eighties the program of the atlas was broadened to incorporate the whole of East Central Europe, as well as the entirety of the religious communities from the first period of Christianization until today. An essential decision was, among other things, to introduce to the project the Jewish community, so vitally important for the entire region from the fifteenth and sixteenth century¹⁰⁴. Searching for permanent and competent co-workers in different countries and organizing meetings and seminars led to the creation of a whole network of centres and people in some way active in realizing the project.

Another initiative is connected with the Lublin Society of Arts and Sciences, in the framework of which it was decided to launch an entire series of academic colloquia under the general theme of *Between East and West*. The point of departure was the borderlands between the Vistula and Bug Rivers, but the subject was immediately broadened and it basically became the enormous problem of the history of Europe: the question of the mutual relations of the two great spheres of the Latin and Byzantine civilizations, which together constitute the great cultural tradition of Europe¹⁰⁵. Subsequent conferences organized initially in the circumstances of the martial law attracted mainly Polish participants from various academic centres. They constituted tangible proof of the readiness of Polish historians to undertake academic cooperation and international dialogue on the key issues of our common heritage.

The third initiative connects Lublin with Rome and the former professor of the Catholic University of Lublin, Pope John Paul II, who shows a great understanding for the topic of East Central and Slavonic Europe seen as integral parts of the whole of Europe. The Catholic University of Lublin and the Lateran University in Rome were the main organizers of a large congress in Rome on November 3-7, 1981 which was devoted to the issue of common historical roots of Christian European nations¹⁰⁶. Polish scholarship was represented by the cream of Polish scholars, especially

Ecclesiasticae, Vol. 5 (Louvain 1974). In 1978 the Polish Commission organized a CIHEC congress with several hundred participants from round the world, proceedings were published in three volumes: *Miscelanea Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Vol. 6. Section 1 and 2. as well as Vol. 9. (Warszawa-Wrocław-Louvain-Bruxelles 1984-1987); only the proceedings concerning the Middle Ages were never published.

103 Among other things, at a world congress of historians in Bucharest in August of 1980 J. Kłoczowski gave the keynote address and chaired the section of CIHEC devoted to the subject: "L'Europe de l'Est (in reality *de Centre-Est, de Sud-Est et de l'Est*), carrefour des civilisations religieuses (1500-1650)", see *Miscelanea Historiae Ecclesiasticae*, Vol. 7 (Bruxelles-Louvain 1985). p. 101 and passim. In September 1996 there is to be a congress of CIHEC in Lublin on the topic: "Christianity in East Central Europe-Between East and West".

104 J. Kłoczowski, "The Place of Jews in the Socio-Religious History of Poland-Lithuania", in *Księga Pamiątkowa J. Gierowskiego* (Kraków 1993).

105 On behalf of the Society J. Kłoczowski has taken on the general direction of the colloquiums and the entire series. To date, the following volumes have been published: *Miedzy Wschodem a Zachodem*, Part 1. ed. J. Kłoczowski (Lublin 1989), p. 9; Part 2, ed. R. Luźny and S. Nieznanowski (Warszawa 1991); further volumes are in print.

106 *The Common Christian Roots of the European Nations. An International Colloquium in the Vatican, Vol. 1: General Sessions*, Vol 2: *Written Contribution to the Twelve Carrefours* (Le Monnier-Florence 1982). Cooperating closely with the main organizer in Rome, Don Vigilius Levi, at that time (he vice-director of *Osservatore Romano*, I made certain of the participation of the best possible Polish scholars, especially historians. Of the long list of international participants I suggested, only a handful were invited, apparently for financial reasons.

historians; unfortunately the Italian organisers did not put enough effort into bringing equally outstanding partners from other countries. However, plenary sessions with papers by Aleksander Gieysztor Jerzy Kłoczowski and Stefan Kieniewicz created the framework for a discussion on Christianity in East Central Europe supplemented later by dozens of more detailed comments and discussions.

In the Polish Institute of Christian Culture of the John Paul II Foundation founded consequently in Rome, the historical program held the principle place in the eighties, and this program concentrated on East Central Europe. Quite fruitful was the international colloquium organized in 1986 under the auspices of the Institute and Ecole Francaise de Rome on the topic: *The Church and Christian Society in East Central and Northern Europe in the 14th-15th Centuries*¹⁰⁷. In the spring of 1988 on account of close cooperation between Poles and Ukrainians two consecutive congresses were organized, first in Ravenna and then in Rome, devoted to the millennium of Kievan Rus' acceptance of Christianity. The great Ukrainian congress in Ravenna which took place April 18-24, 1988 demonstrated excellent organization, participation and planning, concentrating its whole attention on Kievan Rus and its Christianity in a broad European context¹⁰⁸. A few days later, starting on May 3-6, 1988, the congress in Rome under the joint auspices of the Institute of Christian Culture and Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo created a forum for a wide group of outstanding specialists to discuss the following themes: *The Christening of 988 in the Long Term: The Origin and Development of Byzantine-Slavonic Christianity*¹⁰⁹. The proceedings subsequently concentrated on Kievan Rus, Muscovite Russia as well as Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia in the framework of the Polish-Lithuanian state. The concluding round table discussion on the religious culture of Eastern Christianity in the territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, chaired by Ihor Ševčenko, the outstanding Ukrainian scholar from Harvard, raised perhaps the most crucial issues in the millennium of Polish-Ukrainian coexistence¹¹⁰.

An event which somehow closed the several years of Institute activities in Rome simultaneously initiating an extremely fruitful cooperation in the East Central European countries themselves was a convention in Rome on April 28-May 6, 1990¹¹¹. It was the first gathering of outstanding representatives of four nations Belarus, Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine. The convention was

107 *L'Eglise et le peuple chretien dans les pays de l'Europe du Centre-Est du Nord (XIVe-XVe siecles)* (Rome 1990).

108 *Proceedings of the International Congress Commemorating the Millennium of Christianity in Rus-Ukraine*, ed. O. Pritsak, I. Ševčenko and M. Labunka, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 12-13 (1988-1989), (Cambridge, Mass. 1990).

109 *Le origini e lo sviluppo della Christianita Slavo-Bizantina*. red. S.W. Swierkosz-Lenart (Roma 1992).

110 Ševčenko opened the discussion stating among others: "and that it was the 16th and 17th centuries that decided not only about many cultural aspects of Eastern Europe but also about what happened subsequently Poland-Lithuania as a whole is a matter of objective consensus. When we view things, however, from the vantage point of Eastern Europe, we are entitled to the quip, that to be sure, without Byzantium there would be no Ukraine and Byelorussia, on the other hand without Poland would also have been no Ukraine and Byelorussia." (ibidem, p. 461)

111 Belarus, Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine. *The Foundations of Historical Cultural Traditions in East Central Europe*, ed. J. Kłoczowski and others (Lublin-Rome 1994)

attended mainly by historians, including emigre ones, , historical topics took to the fore in both official and private discussions. The most important result of the convention was a decision to maintain an ongoing dialogue in the field of East Central European history¹¹². An organizing committee was established to coordinate further cooperation. This resulted in subsequent meetings called „Romes” by their participants: Rome II took place in Lublin in 1991, Rome III in Kamenets-Podolski in 1992. Rome IV in Grodno in 1993, Rome V in Troki in 1994, and Rome VI shall take place in Rome itself in 1995.

The increasing need for cooperation resulted in establishing the Institute for East Central Europe in Lublin in September 1991, which is meant to be a national institution in the field of history and social studies, focusing on a multidisciplinary analysis of the past and present problems of this part of the European continent¹¹³. A year later, in fall 1992. four similar institutes from Lublin, Budapest, Minsk and Lviv created a Federation of East Central European Institutes. In 1993 in Budapest the star the Federation with its secretariat in Lublin was accepted R search on the common history and historiographical traditions in the world concerning these countries and the whole region is obviously one of the most pressing goals of the Institute program We hope that the advanced studies on the history of Belarus Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine, edited together by scholars from the four countries, will become a model for the remaining countries and areas of East Central Europe. Different projects are considered and worked upon, such as an encyclopaedia of East Central Europe or a history of the region. There is an obvious need for a high quality Information bank concerning works on the region, as well as a good bibliography and journals evaluating the entire world literature dealing with it. Limited financial resources seriously complicate and hamper the realization of such initiatives. Nor is the will to cooperate effectively always there, and this requires additional efforts, overcoming various reservations and miscomprehension of aims. What must nonetheless be noted is the continuity of efforts undertaken over the last seventy years, in spite of all the obstacles, by the historians of East Central Europe for the better understanding of the region's place in the greater Europe. Today there are many indications of an exceptionally fortuitous opportunity at a more comprehensive fulfilment of such a program, and this chance places an even greater responsibility on present and up-and-coming historians.

112 He members of the Committee are as follows: Adam Maldis (Minsk), Anatol Hryckiewicz (Minsk) and Vitaut Kipel (New York) - Byelorussia; Juosas Tumelis and Vitautas Merkeys (Vilnius) and P. Rabikauskas (Rome) Lithuania; Jarosław Isajewicz (Lviv), Jarosław Pelensky (Iowa-Kiev) and Omelian Pritsak (Harvard University-Kiev) - the Ukraine; Andrzej Kamiński (Washington), Jerzy Kłoczowski (Lublin) and Czesław Miłosz (Berkeley) – Poland. Later some changes took place: Jerzy Kłoczowski became the Chairman of the Committee and Andrzej Kamiński the Secretary (with the help of Piotr Gach from the Catholic University of Lublin). Detailed reports from the Committee's activities will be published in the *Bulletin of the Institute of East Central Europe in Lublin* (in print).

113 For the detailed report on the activities of both the Institute and the Federation, see *Bulletin*, ibidem (the statute of the Federation in print, as well).