

EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:
BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC

OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

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René d'Anjou in the Twilight of an Era: Last Prince or a “Roi Imaginé”

ABSTRACT

The launch of the Italian campaigns and the entry of Charles VIII into Naples in 1494 is a traditional political turning point in French history, on the border between the Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. This foreign political expansion was, of course, due to a number of things, one of which was the takeover of the Angevin inheritance, paved by the death of René of Anjou in 1480. However, the lord of Anjou and Provence was not only a great prince of this period, but his life's work often crossed the sometimes blurred line between reality and imagination. The kingdoms of the dynastic legacy of the past, never possessed or long lost by the end of the fifteenth century, were revived again in his hands but in many ways for the last time. The presentation will seek to explore the imaginative elements of René's figure and the extent to which these were perpetuated for a new, “unified” kingdom of France. As he proudly stated in his title: was the King of Jerusalem, Sicily and Hungary really one of the last counts of medieval France or was he already the prince of a new world?

Keywords: René of Anjou, dynastic legacy, prince, “Roi Imaginé”

The history of European countries almost always contains events or specific moments that align with broader European periodization theories. In the case of France, this is most notably represented by the initiation of the Italian Wars (1494). The more than six-decade-long Italian expansion was driven by complex political, legal, and social processes. At the same time, even before these wars began, the French king had already undertaken a significant concentration of power, eliminating a whole series of old feudal or apanage principalities. Among the remnants of the “old world”, we now attempt to highlight one of the last links in the chain. René, Duke of Anjou, lord of Provence and numerous counties, appears in many ways as a fitting example of a transitional ruler. Our analysis focuses on whether René's royal titles should be seen as belonging to a prince of the old feudal-knightly world or as imaginative elements of the emerging Renaissance France that would later take shape in Versailles.

René's figure, actions, and historical significance constitute one of the most studied and documented princely themes in French (and Anglo-Saxon) historiography. This is due to his exceptional and noble character, as well as the complexity of his reign. The key factor in his renown also lies in the significant expansion of available sources. His name marks an era in which France, along with the Loire Valley, gradually freed itself from the burdens of the Hundred Years' War, and Anjou transformed from a devastated land into a well-administered, flourishing duchy from the 1440s onward, experiencing more than three decades of prosperity.¹

René's expenditures rose even more steeply than his revenues, and like many rulers of his time, he was almost constantly struggling with financial difficulties. This necessitated the simplification of fiscal procedures and consultations in both of his key provinces, Provence and Anjou. In the latter, the situation was further complicated by the fact that from the mid-fifteenth century, the French royal authority also emerged as a taxing power. Here, political acumen was required to turn the province's financial reserves to his own advantage.²

This expanding body of sources continues to enable research, particularly into the functioning of late medieval dynastic states. What is already clear is that princely states modeled after the French royal state (*état royal*) – such as Burgundy, Brittany, Berry, and Anjou-Provence – developed to different degrees and took on significant forms by the mid-fifteenth century. It was only a matter of time before these states either gave rise to new political entities (with Burgundy having the greatest potential) or were absorbed into larger, existing structures. The outcome is well known.

In the case of the “Anjou state”, several key aspects must be highlighted, including its highly heterogeneous legal foundations (*pays de droit coutumier* and *droit écrit*, i.e., customary and Roman legal frameworks), vast geographical distances (with 900 km separating Anjou from Provence, and a similar distance to Bar), and naturally, its diverse political foundations. Notably, the Count of Provence was a sovereign ruler, while the Duke of Anjou was not; he remained under the authority of a monarch who retained key prerogatives such

¹ Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves, *L'Anjou des princes*, Paris, 2017. [hereinafter *Anjou des princes*] 380–381.

² Hébert, Michel, “Cum peccuniis indigeamus: politiques fiscales et expédients financiers dans la Provence de René d'Anjou”, In. Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves (eds.), *René d'Anjou (1409–1480). Pouvoirs et gouvernement*. Rennes, 2011. 103–120. 119–120.

as coinage and taxation rights, including extraordinary levies.³ As was often the case, the dynasty itself – primarily René's figure and his prestigious royal titles—served as the unifying thread between these disparate territories.

Let us now take a closer look at these royal titles. It is important to note that all three of René's royal titles were assumed at the earliest possible opportunity, following the deaths of their previous holders in the mid-1430s. His precarious position in Burgundy (where he was effectively a prisoner) did not prevent him from claiming this titles. This means that René bore them from the very beginning of his rule; they were not later, arbitrary additions.

It is also crucial to recognize that the use of royal titles and dynastic construction was not unknown in the Kingdom of France beyond the direct royal line. A surprising aspect, however, is that these titles were exclusively associated with the rulers of Anjou. From as early as the eleventh century, Anjou's status among the royal *paires* of France was distinct, further reinforced by its roles as the hereditary *sénéchal* of France and the protector of the Abbey of Saint-Martin.⁴

Among René's royal titles, the most prestigious was undoubtedly that of King of Jerusalem, which appeared frequently in his coat of arms. This title had been associated with the rulers of Anjou for over 300 years, though its use was far from continuous. The key figure in this legacy was Fulk V, Count of Anjou, who, after lengthy preparations and marriage into the family of Baldwin II, inherited the Kingdom of Jerusalem and remained there 14 years until his death in 1143.⁵ The title of King of Jerusalem – by this time only titular – returned to an Angevin when Charles of Anjou purchased it from Maria of Antioch in 1277 with papal support.⁶ After his son, Charles II "the Lame", the connection with Anjou faded, only to regain prominence during René's reign.

In the case of Jerusalem, the association with the crusading ideal is evident, and this was clearly evident under Charles of Anjou. For René, however, the significance of the title was more complex. Historians agree that René himself was not personally committed to participating in a crusade. In fact, his insistence on maintaining control of Naples effectively led to the failure of his planned crusading efforts in Italy. Nonetheless, as Count of Provence and Lord

³ Anjou des prince, 385–386.

⁴ Guillot, Olivier, *Le comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XI^e siècle*. Paris, 1972. Vol. I. 163–173, 353–370.

⁵ For the reign of Fulk see also: Grousset, René, *Histoire des croisades et du royaume franc de Jérusalem*. Vol II. L'équilibre 1131–1187. Paris, 2006. 11–167.

⁶ Léonard, Émile G., *Les Angevins de Naples*. Paris, 1954. 129–130.

of Marseille, he actively supported those who undertook any form of crusading mobilization.⁷ In René's case, the title of King of Jerusalem was imbued less with military ambitions and more with devotion to the Holy Land, the Passion narrative, passion plays, and his veneration of Mary Magdalene a devotion that had become particularly strong since his captivity in Burgundy.⁸ The cult of relics, including the relics of the Holy Cross in Anjou, also played a key role in giving meaning to this title.⁹

Among René's most frequently used titles, King of Sicily stands out. French chroniclers of his time primarily referred to him by this title, rarely specifying that he was a only titular king. Thomas Basin mentioned this distinction only once,¹⁰ in all other instances, he referred to René simply as King of Sicily. This title clearly reflected René's ambitions in Naples. All this, of course, was based on inherited claims, and from the last years of Louis I, we find it among the ducal titles of Anjou. Yet in another sense, we once again see a parallel with Charles I of Anjou, who, incidentally, was the last of the Anjou dynasty to truly control both Sicily and Naples. René's attachment to the southern Italian kingdom, once unified under the Normans and later ruled by the Hohenstaufens and Angevins until the thirteenth century, aligned with the political patterns of Saint Louis's era.

René's only known herald bore the name "Sicily", and his service can be traced to the late 1430s and 1440s. The name was an unmistakable reference to the royal title, but he later disappeared from historical records.¹¹ Another notable name associated with René's court is that of "Provence", a king-of-arms, and *Ardent Désir*, who was a university-educated courtier (trained in the liberal arts and law) and one of the best-paid officials in René's court.¹²

⁷ Pavot, Jacques, "Le roi René, l'idée de croisade et l'Orient", In: Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves (eds.), *René d'Anjou (1409–1480). Pouvoirs et gouvernement*. Rennes, 2011. 313–324. 314–318.

⁸ Mérindol, Christian de, "L'imaginaire du pouvoir à la fin du Moyen Age. Les prétentions royales", In: Blanchard, Joël (eds.) *Représentation, pouvoir et royauté à la fin du Moyen age*. Paris, 1995. 65–92, 76–77.

⁹ Mérindol, Christian de, *Le roi René et la seconde maison d'Anjou. Emblématique, Art, Histoire*. Paris, 1987. 109–113.

¹⁰ Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII et Louis XI*. Eds. Blanchard, Joël – Collard, Franck – de Kisch, Yves. Paris, 2018. 423.

¹¹ de Mérindol, Christian de "Rois d'armes et poursuivants à la cour d'Anjou au temps du roi René", = *Revue du Nord* 88, 2006, 618–621.

¹² Lecoy de la Marche, Albert, *Extraits des comptes et mémoriaux du Roi René*. Paris, 1873. 51, 262.

Regarding the third prestigious title, King of Hungary, René inherited it through Charles III of Naples (Charles II King of Hungary, died in Visegrád in 1386), but it was only added to his list of titles after the death of Charles's daughter, Queen Joanna II, in 1435. We must add that the use of all three royal titles is rooted in a much earlier practice. Thus, the use of the Hungarian royal title as the last one can be observed in Naples from the late thirteenth century, during the reign of Charles II the Lambe and Mary of Hungary.¹³ Despite numerous references and depictions found in Anjou and Provence – especially in heraldic elements such as the Árpád stripes and the double cross on a triple hill – the Hungarian royal title received significantly less weight compared to the two previously mentioned. René also used it less frequently in his titulature. However, he remained attached to the Hungarian heraldic symbols throughout his life, even granting them a prominent position.¹⁴ Notably, their use became more pronounced around the time of his release from Burgundian captivity (1437),¹⁵ a period marked by his military struggles and presence in Naples until 1442.

Though his rule in Naples was brief, René can be regarded as an Italian prince, a perception reinforced by the literary works dedicated to him, ranging from Janus Pannonius¹⁶ to Giovanni Ludovico de Vivaldi.¹⁷ Let us also mention

¹³ Mária, Prokopp – Zoltán György, Horváth, *Nápoly középkori emlékei a XIII–XV. századból Ricordi ungheresi medievali dei secoli XIII–XV a Napoli*. Budapest, 2014. Recently Kis Káldi Anna examines dynastic representation and the Angevin House's claim to the Hungarian throne, see: Anna, Kis-Káldi, "Claiming by Representation. The Neapolitan Angevins and their Claim to the Hungarian Throne: A Case Study", In: Tünde, Árvai – Csete, Katona (eds.), *Medieviztikai Vándorkonferencia Tanulmányok 2*. Debrecen, 2025. 139–162.

¹⁴ de Mérindol, Christian, *Le roi René et la seconde maison d'Anjou, Emblématique, Art, Histoire*. Paris, 1987. 58–59, 110–111. The first use of Hungarian heraldic elements on René's seal in 1436: de Mérindol, *Le roi René*, 1987. 58. planches XXI n. 78, 79. For further representations on seal, paintings, keystone in castle of Angers see de Mérindol, *Le roi René*, 1987. planches XXVI–XXXIV, XLII–XLVI. René's coats of arms, of course, can also be found in his other domains, such as in Provence. What is striking, however, is that one such example is also known from near Dubrovnik (Ragusa): de Mérindol, *Le roi René*, 1987. 60, planche XXXV n. 144. René's closer connection to Saint Stephen, King of Hungary, is also known from the early period, for example from the Book of Hours of Dijon and on a later example the Book of Hours of Aix. de Mérindol, *Le roi René*, 1987. 206.

¹⁵ Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 134, and note n.1.

¹⁶ Géza, Szentmártoni Szabó, "Du péril de Parthénope: la découverte de la version intégrale du panégyrique de René d'Anjou par Janus Pannonius", In: Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves (eds.), *René d'Anjou (1409–1480). Pouvoirs et gouvernement*. Rennes, 2011. 287–312.

¹⁷ Giordanengo, Gérard, "Un traité de la noblesse dédié au Roi René. Le 'tractatus aureus de nobilitate' de Giovanni Ludovico de Vivaldi", = *Bibliothèque de l'École des chartes* 2007, 7, 165, 415–452.

that René's presence led to the support of certain saint cults, such as that of Saint Bernardino of Siena, whom he knew personally and whose veneration he later "brought home" to Angers. As early as 1453, just a few years after Bernardino's death, René decided that upon his own passing, his heart should be separated from his body and laid to rest in Angers, in the chapel dedicated to his former confessor, the Observant Franciscan. Otherwise, this separation made him unique in the French kingdom during that era.¹⁸

While René's literary achievements did not reach the level of Charles d'Orléans, scholars agree that it was nonetheless significant.¹⁹ In his literary work, René rarely focuses explicitly on royal roles. It is clearly perceptible that, for him, the royal title represents both representation and the exercise of power, but it is by no means mere formal vanity. It serves as a more abstract allegory when René speaks of those mentioned at the entrance to the cemetery of love, and here he does not shy away from examples of ancient rulers. Alongside Julius Caesar, Nero, and Marcus Aurelius, we also find Lancelot and the princes of his own time. Kings, however, are notably absent – David being the only exception – as if the allegories lose their force in this context.²⁰

His book culture and library also deserve special mention. Jean-Michel Matz explored this topic in a dedicated study, arguing that René's library, while not explicitly conceived as a political or governmental tool, reflected his imagined political and cultural world. Additionally, René's account books reveal that he remained devoted to this intellectual and artistic environment until his death. Even years after definitively leaving Anjou, he ensured the transport of his books, tapestries, furniture, and other valuables from Anjou to Provence, sometimes packed in wagons, chests, and even wine barrels.²¹

From his account books and inventories, his love of splendor and receptiveness to distant exotic objects are clearly evident. The inventory of the royal residence in Angers contains a wealth of weapons, knives, quivers, and various other items (bowls, cooking vessels, clothing, hats) described as Moorish, Turkish, or in the so-called Turkish style (*à la faczon*), which were either considered new

¹⁸ Gaude-Ferragu, Murielle, "Tribulations corporelles et inhumation royale: les funérailles de René Ier d'Anjou (1480–1481)", In: Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves (eds.), *René d'Anjou (1409–1480). Pouvoirs et gouvernement*. Rennes, 2011. 373–386. 376.

¹⁹ Chichmaref, Vladimir, "Notes sur quelques œuvres attribuées au roi René", = *Romania* 55:218, 1929, 214–250.

²⁰ René d'Anjou, *Le livre du coeur d'amour épris*. Ed. Boucher, Florence. Paris, 2003. 293–377.

²¹ Marche, Extraits des comptes, 1873. 185, 260–262.

discoveries or exotic acquisitions.²² But of course, we can also mention René's constructions or the tomb he carefully designed over decades²³ in the Cathedral of Saint Maurice in Angers, where the patron saint held special significance in the concept of the royal prince. The knightly tournaments, his own tournament book, his literary works, and the more abstract ideological framework of the Order of the Crescent all speak directly of his own era and, in a certain sense, elevate René to a characteristic figure of later court. Like other rulers of his time, he often maintained royal pomp beyond his financial means.²⁴ Inspired by Italian examples, his love of landscapes and environment,²⁵ as well as his deliberate choices, all reinforce the image of a modern king.

In another respects, despite being considered a failed military leader even by his contemporaries,²⁶ René remained one of the most important figures and shapers of chivalric culture. In this regard, we are dealing with a distinctly novel princely image, fundamentally different from that of the classical feudal-chivalric era. However, he also differs from the model of Charles V, praised by Christine de Pizan and many others – a ruler who likewise did not gain his fame on the battlefield but is nevertheless well associated with the model of reclaiming territory without warfare. René's political success can primarily be linked to his ability to maintain his claims through representation, in which he undeniably served as a model figure. In this sense, René truly played a role that had been accessible among French princes only to the House of Anjou for centuries. He enriched patterns inherited from the earlier feudal world with new elements that aligned with his time.

This leads us to another question: what was the real importance of a symbolic, titular king alongside the King of France?

It is crucial to mention that René was not merely a relative and companion of the French monarch, but in the case of Charles VII, their alliance proved to be particularly close.²⁷ A comparable relationship can only be found in the times

²² Marche, *Extraits des comptes*, 1873. 242–271.

²³ Marche, *Extraits des comptes*, 1873. 45–59.

²⁴ Marche, *Extraits des comptes*, 1873. XIV.

²⁵ Such is, for example, the royal garden established in the proximity of the riverside rock, along with the hermitage, reminiscent of the Sainte-Baume cave and hermitage in Provence, which later became a Franciscan monastery. *Extraits des comptes*. 122–126. For the construction in 1466 of the scarcely used Reculée until then, see Marche, *Extraits des comptes*, 1873. 106–107.

²⁶ Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 325.

²⁷ For their joint expedition to Lotharingia, see: Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 217. His closeness to the king Charles VII and his royal status had also aroused the interest

of Charles of Anjou and later Louis I of Anjou. René frequently participated in the royal court and royal politics. In terms of *Königsnähe* (proximity to the king), no other French prince could compare to him. In heraldic representation and self-presentation, René was, as Laurent Hablot put it, a royal *alter ego*.²⁸ The governance of René's territories aligned with royal models in many respects, complemented by a few inherited privileges, such as the *Grands Jours* (a locally autonomous appellate court under royal authority since 1370) or the increasingly independent ducal council from 1453 onwards.²⁹

Other indicators also support this: René's wife, Isabelle de Lorraine, presided over a court that produced the first recognized royal mistress of the French monarchy, Agnès Sorel. Additionally, the movement of officials between the two courts has become increasingly clear, thanks to nearly three decades of Anjou research. During the final phase of the Hundred Years' War, at the liberation of Normandy (1449), and during the sieges of Rouen and Caen, René was the only prince of the blood, standing alongside the king, expressly named by Basin.³⁰ The friendship and unwavering support between the king and the duke remained striking throughout their lives.

This changed with the death of Charles VII in 1461. His successor, Louis XI, consciously and gradually restricted René's influence. The king's entry into Angers in 1463 – seen by Philippe de Commynes,³¹ as the capture of Angers Castle – René's final departure from Angers in 1471, the establishment of Angers' municipal government in 1475, and the king's control over episcopal power in Angers all indicated the gradual disintegration of an independent

of English diplomacy. Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 191.

²⁸ Hablot, Laurent, "L'emblématique du roi René: outil de pouvoir et de gouvernement" In. Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves (eds.), *René d'Anjou (1409–1480). Pouvoirs et gouvernement*. Rennes, 2011. 327–338. 329.

²⁹ Anjou des princes, 327–330, Comte, François, "Les lieux du pouvoir ducal à Angers au XV^e siècle", In. Matz, Jean-Michel – Tonnerre, Noël-Yves (eds.), *René d'Anjou (1409–1480). Pouvoirs et gouvernement*. Rennes, 2011. 163–194. 164–166.

³⁰ Rouen: "Toutes les troupes anglaises parties, les citadelles évacuées, le roi de France fit sa première entrée dans la ville en compagnie du roi René de Sicile, duc d'Anjou, de beaucoup d'autre princes, entouré d'une nombreuse escorte de soldats et de courtisans". Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 253, For Caen a similar report see: Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 260.

³¹ Philippe de Commynes, *Mémoires*. Eds. Blanchard, Joël – Quereuil, Michel. Paris, 2004. 331. For the misadventures of the city of Angers in the following years, see: Basin, Thomas, *Histoire de Charles VII*, 387–389.

apanage duchy. The same can be observed in the king's increasing oversight of the Loire-based maritime and trading guilds.

Jean de Roye's chronicle mentions René as both a military ally and strategic supporter against the Bretons even in the mid-1460s.³² However, this new conflict soon turned Anjou into a staging ground. Contemporary narrative sources do not immediately reveal this shift. The alliance and kinship between the two kings often outweighed emerging conflicts between them. In René's case, even the incident of Lyon was narrated in a positive way by chroniclers of the time.³³ Nevertheless, René's political missteps in the mid-1470s were not without risks. His final testament revision in 1474 and his rapprochement with the Duke of Burgundy prompted an immediate reaction from Louis XI.

Although, as we have noted, René and the rulers of Anjou were the only princes in the Kingdom of France to bear a royal title, it must be acknowledged that others also harbored similar political ambitions. In the mid-fifteenth century, the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany both attempted – on different foundations – to revive former royal titles. Charles the Bold primarily built his aspirations for a royal title on the revival of the Kingdom of Arles, while Duke John V of Brittany and the Breton policy sought to restore the legacy of the Carolingian tradition.³⁴ However, it is well known that neither effort met with significant success.

It is striking, that the use of royal titles and the pomp associated with them reached their peak in funeral ceremonies for both John V and René – serving as the ultimate expression and final glimpse of their royal identity.

After René's death, a great debate arose over his burial site. Provence and its local nobility laid claim to him just as strongly as Anjou.³⁵

The transfer of his body one year after his death, from Aix-en-Provence to Angers was carried out in a rather adventurous manner. His second wife, Jeanne de Laval, sent a wardrobe chest (*garde-robe*) to Aix, so that his remains

³² Jean de Roye, *Chronique scandaleuse. Journal d'un Parisien au temps de Louis XI*. Ed. Blanchard, Joël. Paris, 2015. 74–75.

³³ Jean de Roye, *Chronique scandaleuse*, 285–286.; Philippe de Commines, *Mémoires*, 330–331. The tension between René and the king is also evident from Roye's chronicle, for example in connection with the planned Burgundian marriage of John of Calabria. Jean de Roye, *Chronique scandaleuse*, 211–212.

³⁴ Johnes, Michael, "‘En son habit royal’: Le duc de Bretagne et son image vers la fin du moyen âge", In: Blanchard, Joël (ed.), *Représentation, pouvoir et royauté à la fin du moyen âge*. Actes du colloque organisé par l'Université du Maine les 25 et 26 mars 1994. Paris, 1995. 253–278.

³⁵ Gaude-Ferragu, *Tribulations corporelles et inhumation royale*, 377–379.

could be secretly transported the 900 km to Angers without attracting attention. Thus, René was exhumed at night and smuggled out of Aix in disguise.

A symbolic tomb was also created for him in Aix: a seventeenth century epitaph was composed by Jean-François de Gaufridi, a parliamentary counselor of Aix-en-Provence.³⁶

René's titles were visibly linked to Naples, yet they extended far beyond it. It is also clear that these titles were often detached not only from reality but sometimes even from their original meanings. Rather than reflecting actual power, they were elements of a fantastical world he had created, designed to entertain, to delight, and to evoke emotions. However, René was unable to build a lasting political legacy upon them. This is why it is particularly interesting that, barely fifteen years after his death, the imaginary world he had maintained for decades formed a visible bridge between the inherited medieval titles of the High Middle Ages and the Italian Wars, which are associated with early modernity.

³⁶ "Aeternae memoriae Renati Jérusalem et Siciliae regis, Andegaviae et Barri ducis, Provinciae et Forcalquerii comitis qui bello simul et pace clarus sed infelix felicem se solum apud Provinciales agnovit, qui externis aequae ac domesticis hostibus impetitus fidem in aliis saepe labantem, incorruptam semper in Provincialibus est expertus, qui *regno pulsus, liberis orbatus, opibus exutus*, omnia in benevolentia Provincialium invenit, qui Provinciales tanta comitate, tanta beneficia cumulavit ut *principem aequissimum, regem mitissimum, patrem optimum, appellarint* et hoc immortale grati animi fidei observantiae monumentum futuris saeculis consecrarintin." Coulet, Noël, "La mort et les obsèques aixoises du roi René: une prolifération narrative tardive" In: Bertrand, Régis – Carol, Anne – Pelen, Jean-Noël (eds.). *Les narrations de la Mort*. Aix-en-Provence, 2005. 89–100.

EAST CENTRAL EUROPE: BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

Aims and Scope

The East Central Europe: Between the Baltic and the Adriatic (ECE) is a peer-reviewed academic journal published by the Institute of History at the Faculty of Humanities, University of Debrecen. As its title suggests, the journal focuses on the history of Central Europe, covering the region between the Baltic and Adriatic Seas. This region was for centuries a crossroads and meeting point where diverse ethnic groups, religions, traditions, and political entities interacted in unique ways. In addition to studies directly examining the history of the region, the editors welcome methodologically and/or theoretically relevant contributions for the analysis of historical processes.

The journal seeks to create an interdisciplinary platform to facilitate dialogue and disseminate new research on the region, whose findings are often limited in international scholarship due to language barriers and the influence of national narratives. To support this goal, ECE is an open-access journal, published at least once annually, available in both print and online formats.

Zielsetzung

Ostmitteleuropa: Zwischen Ostsee und Adria (ECE) ist eine begutachtete wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift, die vom Historischen Institut der Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Debrecen herausgegeben wird. Wie der Titel schon andeutet, konzentriert sich die Zeitschrift auf die Geschichte Mitteleuropas, insbesondere auf das Gebiet zwischen Ostsee und Adria. Diese Region war über Jahrhunderte ein Schnittpunkt und Begegnungsraum, in dem unterschiedliche ethnische Gruppen, Religionen, Traditionen und politische Einheiten auf einzigartige Weise interagierten. Neben Studien, die die Geschichte der Region direkt untersuchen, erwarten die Herausgeber methodisch und/oder theoretisch relevante Beiträge zur Analyse historischer Prozesse.

Die Zeitschrift möchte eine interdisziplinäre Plattform schaffen, um den Dialog zu fördern und neue Forschungsergebnisse über die Region zu verbreiten, deren Ergebnisse aufgrund von Sprachbarrieren und der Prägung durch nationale Narrative international nur begrenzt bekannt sind. Zur Unterstützung dieses Ziels ist ECE eine Open-Access-Zeitschrift, die mindestens einmal jährlich erscheint und sowohl in gedruckter als auch in digitaler Form verfügbar ist.

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