

EAST CENTRAL EUROPE:  
BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC

OSTMITTELEUROPA: ZWISCHEN OSTSEE UND ADRIA

VOLUME / BAND 2

ISSUE / HEFT 1



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The University of Debrecen  
Faculty of Humanities  
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**EAST CENTRAL EUROPE: BETWEEN THE BALTIC AND THE ADRIATIC**  
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**Contact / Kontakt:**

lendulet.unideb@gmail.com

**Journal Manager / Redaktionsmanager:**

Ádám Novák

**Proofreaders / Korrektorat:**

János Sikora

**Technical Editor / Technische Redaktion:**

Sándor Ónadi

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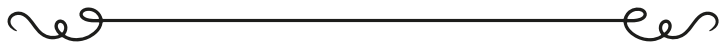
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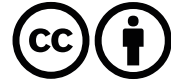
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**EMRE MIRZA GÜNEY**, PhD student, Univeristy of Debrecen

H-4032 Debrecen, Egyetem tér 1.

emremirza3@gmail.com

 ORCID: 0009-0005-1531-375X



## The Relationship Between Central Europe and the Low Countries from the Middle Ages to the Present Day-Conference (University of Debrecen, Debrecen, Hungary, 06–07 Marc 2026)

The conference entitled “*The Relationship Between Central Europe and the Low Countries from the Middle Ages to the Present Day*” was held on 6–7 March 2026 at the Sándor Karácsony Hall of the University of Debrecen. The event was organised by the Faculty of Humanities and the Research Group for Dutch–Hungarian Connections. It brought together scholars examining the historical interactions between Central Europe and the Low Countries from the medieval period to the present, with particular attention to key figures, events, and forms of exchange shaping both regions. The primary aim of the conference was to explore patterns of continuity, change, and interaction within these relationships.

By focusing on two geographically distinct yet historically interconnected regions, the conference highlighted the dynamic nature of cross-regional contacts over the *longue durée*. These interactions were approached from multiple perspectives, including sociocultural, scientific, and political contexts. The papers collectively demonstrated that exchanges between the two regions played a significant role in shaping their respective historical trajectories, while also opening new avenues for scholarly interpretation.

Scientific and intellectual exchange formed a prominent theme throughout the conference. In this regard, Ádám Szabó’s paper, “*A Humanist’s Perspective: Nicasius Ellebodius on the Low Countries and Hungary*,” examined the figure of Nicasius Ellebodius as a key agent of intellectual transfer between the two regions. Ellebodius’s work on classical authors—including Aristotle, Sallust, Aristophanes, and Herodotus—was presented as an important contribution to early modern scholarship through textual emendation and philological

analysis. His extensive travels across Vienna, Italy, and Hungary further facilitated the circulation of ideas, while his surviving correspondence provides valuable insight into contemporary scholarly networks. Szabó's contribution is particularly noteworthy for foregrounding Ellebodius's connections to Hungary, thereby enriching an area that has received comparatively limited attention in modern historiography.

A similarly valuable perspective on intellectual exchange was offered in Áron Orbán's paper, "*Savaria and Szombathely in the Eyes of a Flemish Naturalist-Humanist: Carolus Clusius's Town Description from 1585.*" The presentation focused on Carolus Clusius, whose activities in Central Europe extended beyond his well-known botanical work. Orbán examined Clusius's collection of inscriptions in western Hungary, particularly in Szombathely, situating this material within the broader transmission of antiquarian knowledge to Western Europe. While Clusius has been widely studied in connection with his botanical research, Orbán's approach highlights a less explored dimension of his intellectual activity, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of early modern knowledge exchange.

Cultural interaction was frequently framed within a religious context. Marco de Leeuw van Weenen's paper, "*References to Jan Łaski in the Major Works of Abraham Kuyper,*" explored the influence of the Polish reformer Jan Łaski on the Dutch theologian Abraham Kuyper. Focusing on Kuyper's 1859 essay comparing John Calvin and Łaski, as well as his later writings, the presentation analysed the extent to which Kuyper engaged with and acknowledged Łaski's theological ideas. The paper demonstrated how intellectual traditions originating in Central Europe continued to shape Dutch theological discourse well into the nineteenth century, underscoring the long-term interconnectedness of these regions.

Linguistic interaction between Hungary and the Netherlands was addressed in Roland Nagy's paper, "*How the Dutch Spoke of the Hungarians and the Hungarians of the Dutch: Linguistic Reflections on Hungarian–Dutch Ethnonyms.*" By examining phonological and semantic correspondences, Nagy demonstrated that cultural exchange extended beyond elite intellectual circles into everyday language use. His analysis highlighted the mutual reflection of ethnonyms in Dutch and Hungarian, thereby reinforcing the argument that cross-regional interaction operated on multiple social levels.

Military and political connections were also explored. László Pósz's paper, "*Niederländer in den Türkenkriegen,*" examined soldiers from the Low Countries

who participated in campaigns against the Ottomans in Hungary. Similarly, Zoltán Péter Bagi's presentation, "*From Flanders to the Kingdom of Hungary: Walloon Mercenaries in the Ottoman Wars (1591–1606)*," focused on the role of mercenary forces in these conflicts. Both contributions demonstrated that the involvement of Flemish and Walloon soldiers constituted an important dimension of political and military interaction, which also entailed religious and cultural exchange. Although primarily grounded in military history, these papers offered valuable insights into the broader patterns of interregional connectivity.

Taken together, the presentations illustrated the wide range of interactions linking Central Europe and the Low Countries from the Middle Ages to the present. These connections were shaped by diverse factors, including political circumstances, intellectual networks, and cultural exchange. While certain periods – such as the Ottoman wars – were characterised by intensified interaction driven by external pressures, other forms of contact, including linguistic exchange, developed more gradually over time.

By examining historical processes through the lens of individual actors, intellectual traditions, and specific case studies, the conference made a meaningful contribution to ongoing scholarly discussions. It not only enriched existing research but also encouraged further reflection on the complex and multifaceted relationships between these two regions of Europe.

## **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 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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