

East Central Europe, 1974–2004 *A Forty-Year History*

East Central Europe (<https://ece.ceu.hu/>, <http://www.brill.com/east-central-europe>), a refereed international journal, has an interdisciplinary orientation, combining area studies with history and social sciences, most importantly political science, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies, with a focus on the region “between the Baltic and the Adriatic.” Established in 1974 under the title, *EAST CENTRAL EUROPE/L'EUROPE DU CENTRE EST*, the journal was published by Charles Schlacks Jr. for more than three decades. A term with a longer history, East Central Europe cuts across other, more established concepts of historical regions, such as the older tripartite division between Central, Southeastern, and Eastern Europe (see the works by Oskar Halecki). At the time of its establishment, *East Central Europe* was one of the first signs of the revival of Central European studies in academia: over the years, it has become one of the principal forums of intellectual exchange and debate on the history and society of this region. In its original set-up, the journal provided space mainly for scholars stemming from the region but living overseas and for American specialists of East Central European history. Many of the issues were thematic, ranging from diplomatic history to political thought and Jewish studies to the economic history of the DDR. Among the recurrent authors of this period one can find István Deák, János Bak, Yeshayahu Jelinek, Roman Szporluk, Edward Taborsky, Stanley B. Winters, Eduard Winter, Wilma Iggers, Romuald Misiunas, Lee Congdon, John Komlos, Josef Macek, and James Felak.

Naturally, the disappearance of the Iron Curtain in 1989–1991 redefined the mission of the journal as the participation of scholars actually living in this part of the world became much more regular. The emergence of new topics and academic networks in the region also contributed to the reconfiguration of research. In 1997, the journal was reorganized and the editorial work was moved to East Central Europe, mainly due to the efforts of János Bak, who himself relocated from Canada to his native Hungary. Between 1998 and 2005, the journal was co-hosted by Collegium Budapest and the Central European University, Budapest, and Júlia Szalai from the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences served as editor-in-chief. In this period the journal opened up to various themes of the social sciences reflecting the new

challenges of a region in transition, such as problems of social politics, rule of law, ethnicity, and postcolonialism. Furthermore, it sought to map the existing research traditions and research infrastructures in the region, such as the history of psychoanalysis, the state of the affairs of sociology, or new trends in medieval studies. Among the numerous contributors of this period one can list Ágnes Heller, Ivan Krastev, Csaba Dupcsik, Arpad von Klimó, Jacek Kochanowicz, Jürgen Kocka, Mihály Vajda, and Martin Krygier.

In 2004, upon the initiative of Sorin Antohi, the journal moved once again, finding its host in Pasts, Inc. Center for Historical Studies at the Central European University; a new editorial team was composed as well. Since 2009, while continuing to be hosted by the Center, the journal has been published by Brill, Leiden. In parallel with these changes, the usage of the geopolitical term East Central Europe received a new wind in the wake of the European Union's Eastern enlargement, referring to eight of the ten countries that joined the organization in 2004 (the three Baltic states—Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia; the four "Visegrád countries"—Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Slovakia; and Slovenia in the former Yugoslavia), to which Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia were added once they became EU members in 2007 and 2013, respectively.

During its decade-long activity, our editorial team has continued the tradition of thematic blocs and issues mapping various "hot topics." Thus in the last decade we published special issues, among others, on East Central European "symbolic geographies," the new trends in social and urban history in the region, comparative and transnational history, new approaches to fascism, anti-Semitism, and the Holocaust, musical counter-cultures in late socialism, eugenics, and medical history. Among our contributors during this decade one can mention Paul Weindling, Roger Griffin, Maria Todorova, Maria Bucur, Miroslav Hroch, Roman Szporluk, Philipp Ther, John Connelly, Hans Christian Gerlach, Aristotle Kallis, László Kontler, Jürgen Kocka, Stephen Kotkin, Arnd Bauerkämper, Jerzy Jedlicki, Larry Wolff, John R. Lampe, Vladimir Tismăneanu, Diana Mishkova, and Dennis Deletant.

During the time, our project has been enriched with new components. In 2006, an online Review Database was established, with the long-term goal to provide reliable, quality coverage of recent works in various national historiographies in East Central Europe (see <https://ece.ceu.hu/reviews>). In 2012, a new book series was launched, *Central and Eastern Europe: Regional Perspectives in Global Context* (also with Brill), which publishes disciplinary and interdisciplinary research on various aspects of Central and Eastern Europe in local and global context: history, society, politics, economy, religion, culture, literature, languages, and gender (see <http://www.brill.com/publications/central-and-eastern-europe>).

While seeking new themes and intellectual challenges in an ever-transforming world and searching for new ways to link our region to the global academic exchange, we are extremely proud to recall the prestigious history of our journal which by now can look back on 40 years of continuous existence. This history might, in itself, serve as a principal historical source for reconstructing the multifarious tradition of research on East Central Europe.

At this time of celebration, we would like to thank all members of the editorial board of *East Central Europe* and our colleagues working on the review section, Emily Gioielli and Markian Prokopowych, Mónika Zsuzsanna Nagy, our editorial assistant, as well as the authors for their contribution to the development of the journal. We hope to continue this work in the future and keep *East Central Europe* open to various approaches and perspectives on a region that has not only a notoriously unforeseeable future, but also an equally surprising and often unpredictable past.

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