

“A Renaissance for Eastern Europe”  
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The twin questions of Renaissance periodization and location have plagued historians long enough to indicate that there is no easy solution to the problem. For every novel thesis there appears an inevitable qualification. The Burckhardian model, once presumed infallible, has been punctured repeatedly in our century. Something of its former glory has been restored by Professor Hans Baron, but the blemishes caused by medievalists remain. The fruit of this controversy has been a wealth of serious scholarship all of which reflects the need for a new synthesis.<sup>i</sup>

The term ‘Renaissance’ is taken here to mean an epoch in European history; it is further assumed that if the Renaissance had its roots as far back as the tenth or even only the twelfth century, it became most meaningful with the dynamic changes of the late fifteenth and sixteenth. Italy, however, or even the whole of Western Europe seems much too confined an area in which to place it. There is, of course, no question that Western Europe of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had the qualifications for ‘Renaissance’ in the sense of a ‘transitional’ epoch. Exploration and discovery, religious upheaval, centralization of political authority, economic growth and vitality coupled with feudal decline--all these combined to liberate a shackled Europe from a medieval cage. The suggestion here is that we cease thinking of a Renaissance merely in terms of Western Europe and substitute instead the idea of a Renaissance era for all of Europe. I am simply urging that we look at Europe as it really was rather than shrink it by imposing our own ‘Iron Curtain’ over the lands east of the Elbe and south and east of Vienna.

Too often while depicting this transitory era in terms of its pluralism arising from a shattered medieval unity, historians ignore the coherence which existed for Europe during this epoch. The interplay between Eastern and Western Europe of economic, political, and cultural forces clearly reveals the inadequacy of viewing a Renaissance as merely a Western European phenomenon. The Renaissance epoch, moreover, represented a break in the continuity of Eastern just as it did for Western European history. For better or worse the period marked the beginning of something quite new for both parts of the continent.

For Eastern Europe the age of transition has occasionally been thrust back to the late fourteenth century when the union of crowns in Lithuania and Poland, the golden age' of Charles IV in Bohemia, Serbo-Bulgarian military debacle at Kosovo, and the triumph of the Muscovite Prince Dmitri of the Don at Kulikovo appeared harbingers of a new era. Though appealing, this interpretation neglects the more fundamental socio-economic, cultural, as well as political changes evident by the end of the Quattrocento.

By then the political structure was assuming the form which was to characterize it for centuries to come. The pattern of strong peripheral states encroaching on lesser ones between was already emerging. The Ottoman Empire reached its apogee; Muscovy having gained released from the Tatar began expansion; the Habsburgs, already dominant in Western and Central Europe, laid the foundations for a more durable empire in the East; lastly, the Hohenzollerns secularized the Teutonic Order and assumed sovereignty in Prussia. Concurrent with the rise of these peripheral powers swen the decline of those in their midst. Serbia and Bulgaria had succumbed to the Ottomans at Kosovo; the Hungarians bowed similarly in 1526 to Mohacs, a battle which paved the way for the Habsburg takeover in Bohemia a century later. The culture of Renaissance Poland obscured a gnawing political cancer which

lead to her undoing at the hands of Austria, Prussia, and Russia by the end of the eighteenth century. Not until the end of the First World War was there a distinct reversal of this trend of peripheral aggrandizement against the weaker center.

These developments did not take place in a vacuum but rather had repercussion throughout Europe. Aside from the Turkish impact on South Slav institutions and mores, Ottoman penetration into Central Europe had ;profound consequences for European politics. A good deal has been published lately on the interrelations of Lutheran and Turkish pressures on the Habsburgs; Francis I of France did not hesitate to ally himself with the Porte to check Charles V. This Turkish empire, which extended from the Danube to the Caucasus, exerted an influence on Renaissance Europe well beyond the confines of its remote southeastern corner. In greatness and subsequently in decline, it imposed upon Europe the knotty 'Eastern Question.'

The rise of the Habsburgs may be traced to the late thirteenth century when Rudolph frustrated the imperial intentions of the Bohemian Prince Premysl Otakar. Even though the initial move by the Habsburgs was eastward, the Austrian house was generally blocked, first by the Bohemian Luxemburg and later by the Polish Jagellon, in efforts to continue expansion in that direction. By the sixteenth the Habsburgs appeared to have given up and turned west. The greatness of the empire of Charles V rested on his dynastic holdings in northern Italy Spain and its empire, Germany, and its 'jewel,' Burgundy. Yet that same Mohàcs which imposed the Turkish imperium over much of Hungary, decided forever the Habsburg's orientation.

Until Mohàcs a Jagellonian confederation led by the reigning monarchs of Poland, Hungary, and Bohemia blocked expansion by Muscovy, Habsburg, and Teutonic Order. The Congress of Vienna (1515), superficially a Jagellon-Habsburg rapprochement was in reality a diplomatic surrender by the former resulting from Muscovy's first real participation in the

'modern' European state system. Muscovy's budding alliance with the Habsburgs against Poland-Lithuania forced the Polish king Sigismund to support the Habsburg candidacy to the thrones of Hungary and Bohemia, both occupied by the same Jagellon. Not only did this play for Habsburg support diminish Sigismund's own claims to these crowns, but it enabled the Habsburgs to present their bill after Mohács just eleven years later.

The Habsburg *Drang nach Osten* did not commence immediately after Mohács. Turkish power in Hungary proved too formidable until the end of the next century. Nonetheless the Austrian house did appropriate a western strip of Hungary and laid claim to the crown. It also possessed a much greater staying power than did the princes of Transylvania in whom the Habsburgs also laid the foundation for expansion into the former Hungarian lands of Croatia and the *Voyvodina*, what is now northern Yugoslavia. Austro-Hungarian problems with the south Slavs in 1914 can be traced to these diplomatic and military moves four hundred years earlier.

Nor did the Habsburgs immediately consolidate their power in Bohemia. Although the estates duly recognized Ferdinand, brother of Charles V, as sovereign of that country, they retained the greater power for themselves. A weak succession of Habsburgs for the better part of a century permitted this feudal tendency to continue unopposed. When in 1617 Ferdinand II asserted both autocratic and Catholic views unacceptable to the estates, they proceeded to find a king elsewhere. The issue between Habsburg prince and Bohemian feudality was settled at the White Mountain in 1620. For nearly three hundred years after this military defeat Bohemia silently suffered the severity of Austrian domination.

In the nineteenth century it was not Habsburg Austria but rather Hohenzollern Prussia which succeeded in imposing its will on the Germans and thus giving it a kind of unity. While the growth of Hohenzollern like Habsburg power had a variety of repercussions for

Western Europe, its scope of activity during this formative period was confined largely to the Empire and Poland. During the first days of the Lutheran Reformation Grandmaster Albert of Prussia secularized the Teutonic Order and declare his Prussia a fief of the king of Poland.

This initial subservience to Poland was a gesture to avoid imperial control; moreover, the Jagellons were a good deal more tolerant of Protestantism than the emperor. On several occasions the Polish kings had opportunities to annex this so-called Ducal Prussia, but a singular lack of understanding of Polish national interests by both nobility and royalty resulted in a consistently passive policy. Eventually (1618) Ducal Prussia passed to the Elector of Brandenburg, and shortly after the middle of the seventeenth century the bonds of vassalage to Poland were severed. Renaissance Poland paid dearly for its sluggish policy toward the Prussian Hohenzollerns, who were the first to pounce upon her in the late eighteenth century

Muscovy's initial involvement in general European politics as a sometime ally of the Habsburgs was, of course, directed against Poland-Lithuania. Later in the century Muscovy bid for a greater role in Europe when Ivan IV undertook the conquest of strategic Livonia. Only combined efforts by Sweden, Poland, and Denmark blocked Muscovy's 'urge to the sea' at this time. Muscovy's drive to the west during the Renaissance netted her precious little, but precisely at this time the tsars undertook expansion to the East. This movement was to carry the Muscovites across Siberia to the Pacific in the short span of a century. The vast Soviet empire of today had its inception in Ivan IV's conquest of Kazan in 1552 and Astrakhan on the Caspian four years later. From the Volga Russians moved eastward encountering little opposition. Tobolsk was founded in 1587; Tomsk in 1604; the Bering Straits were reached by the middle of the century. Because, therefore, the Renaissance epoch was both a quest for empire, the era proved fundamental in the periodization of Russian history.

In contrast to the growth of these peripheral powers, the middle states experienced serious internal defects which contributed quite as much to their ultimate fate as the aggression of their neighbors. In Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland the trend by the end of the fifteenth century toward political decentralization was unmistakable. The pattern of kings dispensing privileges in return for aristocratic support was a constant in all three realms. This aristocratic reaction was closely tied to the economic development of Europe at this time. In coping with the depression of the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries seigneurs of Livonia, Poland, Silesia, Bohemia, and Hungary reacted differently from those in the West. Rather than commute peasant labor obligations into dues they had extended the demesne in order to increase production.

When prosperity came to Western Europe in the sixteenth century, the Eastern landowners found themselves in a most fortunate position. The growth of commerce and industry in the West carried increased demands for both forest and agricultural products. The East proved a ready supplier whether in the instance of tapping Russia for cables, cordage, wax, tallow, flax, furs, and hides or procuring timber and wood products from the Baltic. More important yet was the Western demand for grain to feed thriving Antwerp, London, and Amsterdam. A similar pattern of economic interdependence between the commercial West and the agrarian East developed with respect to the Balkans by the seventeenth century. At that time Western demands for maize and Macedonian cotton spurred prices and brought considerable prosperity to Dalmatian cities, especially Ragusa (Dubrovnik).

This line of economic development in Eastern Europe closely paralleled the political already discussed. It was not accidental that the Hohenzollerns in Brandenburg and Prussia used the profits from Commerce in grain to enhance their political position. In Poland the nobility similarly used it as a means of remaining independent of the monarchy. Charles de

Dancay, a French Baltic expert, may have exaggerated when he wrote that he who is master of Livonia can become king of Sweden, Denmark, and Poland; but he convinced many of his contemporaries that he knew what he was talking about. The strategic importance of the region was fundamental in Muscovite imperialism there in the last half of the sixteenth century.

Trade between Eastern and Western Europe had a significant impact on social structure. As the Eastern European seigneur diluted the political authority of his monarch, so did he rise at the expense of 1) the peasants who had lost their protector, the king; and 2) the king who was bereft of his allies, the burghers.

While peasant bondage increased on one hand, the nobles whittled away at the autonomy of the towns and limited the political role of its inhabitants.

Town life with all its implied vitality played a diminishing role in Eastern Europe from the Renaissance until the impact of nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Ottoman Empire followed a similar pattern though it was delayed. While central authority there was strong, the timar landholding system in the Balkans worked well. The fiefholders, scrutinized by the government, could not exploit the peasant for their own gain. As the central authority declined the lure of profits from western trade in grain and cotton had the same feudalizing effect.

Thus, while Renaissance for the West meant growth of absolute monarchy, commerce, and industry; the East took an opposite turn toward political decentralization and an agrarian economy based on peasant bondage, e.g. serfdom. In these contrasts one finds the inherent unity of Europe during this period. The one without the other leaves an unfinished picture. While the rise of serfdom in Muscovy is not related to the general scheme of European history, it falls chronologically between 1550 and 1650 and points again to the importance of this epoch for

Russian as well as European history.

Renaissance normally connotes cultural resurgence, particularly when the inspiration came from Italy. The flourish of Bohemian culture during the age of Charles IV in the fourteenth century produced splendid Gothic Prague and an intellectual and religious climate that found its culmination in John Hus. It is often difficult to separate Czech humanism and religious reformation and distinguish what was medieval and what, Renaissance. Unquestionably, much Czech humanist writing of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries reflected the religious controversy in which Bohemia was engulfed, but the Italian influence was also present. Bohemia had known Italy in Petrarch's day when the poet visited Prague in 1356, but the greatest Italian influences came at the end of the next century by which time religious coloring of literature had receded. Aeneas Sylvius (Pius II) had inspired Czech humanism by his numerous contacts in Bohemia, his voluminous correspondence with humanists there, and his Latin history of the country. The greatest of Czech humanists in the Italian classical tradition was Bohuslav Hasistein of Lobkovice (1460-1510). The long list of others only confirms the degree of Italianization of Czech humanism before the Reformation. After the Lutheran impact Czech humanism took much of its direction from Germany and reverted to its earlier religious preoccupation. In science Tycho Brahe and Kepler played roles comparable to that by Copernicus in Renaissance Poland. The arts drew inspiration from Italy, too. One of the loveliest Renaissance buildings in Prague was the Belvedere built by Italian artists, while Schwarzenberg palace on the Hradcany could have been lifted from Florence itself. Italian architects and builders were also active in the provincial towns of Bohemia and Moravia. In painting, an initial Italian influence was superseded by the German one of Dürer and Cranach in the sixteenth century. Slovakia, a Hungarian province, experienced the same Italian and



German impact as that felt in Hungary proper.

Polish historians usually distinguish between a 'pre-Renaissance' fifteenth and a true Renaissance sixteenth century Poland. That of the fifteenth century tended strongly in the Latin Catholic tradition in literature and Gothic in the arts while in the next century secular Italian influences became more evident. The humanist literature of Poland during this period, not so voluminous as that produced in Bohemia, was of higher quality while Polish Renaissance art, even more than Czech, revealed Italian influence.

Pre-Renaissance Poles had already made their way to Italian universities by mid-Quattrocento. A half century later they supplemented their Italian learning by enrolling in Swiss, French, and German universities as well. The classical mode was evident in Cardinal Olesnicki's Latin style, which is said to have impressed Aeneas Sylvius, while one of the greatest of Polish historians, John Dlugosz, was a conscious imitator of Livy. As a tutor to the sons of Casimir Jagiello at the end of the fifteenth century he must certainly have spurred the Italianate interests of the king's youngest Sigismund under whom the genuine Polish Renaissance came to fruition. Despite incipient Italian influences the cultural milieu of fifteenth-century Poland was basically medieval. Of the works of art produced in this period by far the greatest was the superb altar by the Nuremberger Veit Stoss (Wit Stwocz) in the Mariacki in Cracow.

The abrupt end of Gothic in Poland was dramatically illustrated by the arrival of the first Italian artist, Franciscus Italus, within a decade of Stoss' departure. Franciscus' main achievement was rebuilding in the Renaissance style the magnificently arcaded royal palace on the Wawel. Refurbished also in the new style was the elegant cloth hall in the middle of the great square in Cracow. Excelling both in sheer beauty was the Sigismund Chapel by

Bartolomeo di Luca Berrecci, a work called by the German Essenwein ‘the gem of Renaissance style north of the Alps.’

The reigns of Sigismund the Old and his son Sigismund Augustus encompassed nearly the first three quarters of the sixteenth century. During those years superficial [political stability, economic prosperity, and cultural grandeur obscured inherent weaknesses of the state. The Sigismunds, Queen Bona Sforza, Peter Tomicki, and Jan Zamoyski were generous patrons and devotees of literature, art, and learning. Tomicki, Vice-chancellor of the realm and protector of the Jagellonian University in Cracow, fostered the instruction of Roman law, classical Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and encouraged young Poles to study abroad, especially in Italy.

The Polish reception of the Renaissance served as a powerful impetus both to Latin and vernacular literature. While the Italian schooled Clement Janicki excelled in Latin verse, Jan Kochanowski turned from Latin elegies composed at Padua to writing in his native tongue. His work, a synthesis of folk, Christian and Polish humanist traditions, also retained a devotion to Italian models. This Italianate bias buttressed by a friendship with Ronsard place him squarely in the European Renaissance tradition, while the high quality of his work ranks him only after Mickiewicz in Polish literature.

Sigismund Augustus, even more than his father, personified the polished Renaissance prince. Son of an Italian mother, he spoke her tongue fluently, used Italian models in his diplomacy, collected books and manuscripts, and by his eloquent speeches in the Polish Diet displayed a practical knowledge of classical rhetoric. During his reign Polish students moved in increasing numbers to Italy, to Pada in particular, where the great Renaissance humanist statesman Jan Zamoyski as even rector. In Poland Zamoyski in 1594 founded the new University of Zamosc, where humanist studies prevailed.

The stature of the Polish Renaissance rests not only on assimilation of Western European culture and original contributions by Poles themselves but also in the transmission of their Renaissance into regions which might otherwise have remained untouched by the New Learning. The eastern fringe of the Polish-Lithuanian state, once a part of old Kievan Rus', used the Cyrillic alphabet and was largely Russian Orthodox in religion. Poland's Renaissance ideas flowed from Polock in the north to Kiev in the south where an academy under Moldavian Archbishop Peter Moghila received and perpetuated them. These initial steps proved highly important in the next century, when a good portion of the Ukraine came under the domination of Muscovy. Western letters and arts--notably the so-called Moscow baroque architectural style--penetrated Moscow's 'iron curtain' via this route.

When Polish King Sigismund the Old spent time during his youth at the court of his Jagellon kin in Buda, he reaped in part the cultural bequest of the great Hungarian king Matthias Corvinus. This Renaissance prince, son of the gallant Janos Hunyadi, was the last Hungarian king to achieve some success in limiting creeping feudalism into his realm. As it was, his patronage of the cultural Renaissance had a far more lasting effect.

Hungary's appropriation of Italian culture preceded Matthias' reign. John Vitéz, bishop of Nagyvárad and archbishop of Esztergom, made his bishopric a center of humanist studies. A correspondent with Aeneas Sylvius and Polish humanists and highly regarded for his own Latin style, Vitéz is said to have laid the foundations for Matthias' famous library, the Corvina. Unfortunately neither his university in Pozsony (Pressburg) nor the splendid architecture of Esztergom endured after the onslaught of the Turks. Vitéz' nephew, the Italian-trained poet Janus Pannonius, had ties with the neo-Platonists in Ficino's Florentine Academy. The Platonist circle in Buda transmitted as well as received: the ambassador to Poland, Filippo

Buonaccorsi (or Callimachus), took with him to Cracow some of its ideas. Although both Vitéz and Pannonius were swept from the Hungarian court after involvement in a conspiracy against the king in 1471, the Italian influence there continued through Matthias' marriage to a Neapolitan princess in 1476. In the writing of history, especially, the Hungarians reflected Italian models.

Unquestionably the most heralded achievement of the cultural Renaissance in Hungary was Matthias' Corvina library. In order to implement its growth the king sent his buyers, copyists, and illustrators through Italy and the eastern Mediterranean while in Buda he employed some thirty copyists and illustrators. The Corvina was not only an essay in letters, but in its courtly setting it exalted the Renaissance style. Its colonnade adorned with Verrocchio's fountain reigned supremely, high above the Danube.

The so-called 'Croatian Renaissance' benefitted from its exposure to both Venetian and Hungarian Renaissance currents. Because the Turkish conquest in Croatia and Dalmatia was not immediate, there was time enough for cultural impact, especially from Venice. Many Slavs studied in Italy and synthesized their own folk literature with that of Italian humanism. The poet Marko Marulic' (1450-1524) of Split (Spalato) acquired a European reputation when his Latin verse was translated into Italian and German. The great age of Ragusan poetry--best represented by the poet Ivan Gundulic' (1588-1638)-- came later, at the end of the sixteenth and beginning of the next century. This Croatian Renaissance was identified no less with art than literature. The cities of Dalmatia frequently featured that Venetian Gothic style so familiar in the Doge's palace. Since many Dalmatian artists studied in Italy, Renaissance motifs abounded as well. George da Sebenico, whose work on the Sibenik (Sebenico) cathedral was Venetian Gothic (1441 ff.), later worked on the palace of the rectors in Regusa which conformed to Renaissance prescription.

Even remote Muscovy had contacts with Renaissance Italy although it would be a stretch to call it an 'impact'. The Kremlin has very justly been called 'Italinatè', for when Ivan III sought to fortify his capital he necessarily turned to Italy, which possessed an abundance of architects, engineers, and skilled workers. Moved possibly by his wife, Ivan despatched to Italy numerous missions the first (1475) of which brought back the famous Aristotele Fioravanti of Bologna and some sixty helpers. Fioravanti possessed a European reputation as an architect, engineer, and expert in hydraulics and military fortifications. He and the many other Italians who followed him left an enduring influence on Russian architecture. The walls and towers (though not the superstructures of the latter) of the Moscow Kremlin served as models for numerous kremlins built throughout Muscovy during the sixteenth century. The Italians also performed a lasting service in school the Russian in their art. While the Kremlin churches continued to reflect traditional style, Italian Renaissance motifs and ornament were very much in evidence.

In the arts as in the evolution of political and social institutions the period for Muscovy was a turning point. A dramatic change occurred in architecture when a new National Style replaced what was essentially Byzantine. Largely inspired by the age-old features of Russian wooden architecture, this transformation was best expressed in the early sixteenth-century churches at Kolomenskoe, Dyakovo, and Ostrov--all near Moscow. By the first half of the seventeenth century this wooden style translated into masonry reached its apogee in Iaroslavl' on the Volga, enriched by the Anglo-Dutch trade of which it was an important cog. This cultural renaissance of Iaroslavl' was evidenced as well by a flourish of icon painting there from the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries.

The pervasive character of the Reformation represents one last category illustrating the

unity of European history during the Renaissance. Both in its Protestant and Catholic phases it embraced Eastern as well as Western Europe. In Bohemia, where the Hussite tradition lingered, Protestantism had marked effect. Both radical Ultraquists and the Unity of Czech Brethren appropriated Lutheran ideas while conservative Ultraquists shifted toward the Roman Church. The conciliatory Strasburger Martin Bucer had particular attraction for the Unity though ties with Calvin were also established. King Ferdinand, in an effort to fortify the Catholic Church, introduced the Jesuits into Prague in 1556, for in Bohemia as in Germany religion often had political implications. The feudality found it profitable to form anti-Catholic coalitions as leverage against the Catholic Habsburg. Religious as well as political diversity ceased with the White Mountain. Ferdinand II, Habsburg emperor at that time, determined upon religious conformity no less than undiluted imperial authority.

Poland experienced nothing like a Hussite movement, but Poles did have wider contacts in Europe and consequently drew Reformation impulses from a greater variety of sources, especially through students in Zurich, Geneva, Basel, Strasburg, and Wittenberg. That a Pole was elected rector of the University of Wittenberg in 1554 further evidenced Polish acceptance of Reformation ideas. In Poland as elsewhere abuses existed within the Church; moreover, alien residents such as Lutheran Germans in Danzig contributed in no small way to innovation. Sigismund the Old did not permit complete Reformation in Royal Prussia, but Ducal Prussia became an important base for Protestant penetration of Poland. Neither of the Sigismunds cast his lot with the reformers although for a time the son weighed doing so. Political considerations caused a less hesitant nobility to flock in great numbers to the Protestant side by the end of Sigismund Augustus' reign. They preferred Calvinism to Lutheranism as they had no liking for the latter's state-controlled church which implied greater authority for the prince.

The Polish Reformation probably suffered its gravest setback when it inaccurately became identified with the anti-Trinitarian movement. Zealous Catholic reformers showed no reluctance in imposing the unitarian stamp on one and all of the Protestant factions. That unique spirit of toleration which permitted Protestantism to flourish also provided opportunities for Jesuits. In no area of comparable size in Europe did the Counter Reformation secure such a complete reversal of religious direction. The work of such Catholics as Hosius and Father Peter Skarga was crowned with unqualified success.

Although Lutheran ideas spread among the German population of north Hungary, only after Mohács did Protestantism gain momentum and fuse with politics. The national party which supported Zápolya of Transylvania against the Catholic Habsburgs conveniently buttressed their cause with Protestantism. By mid-sixteenth century the Reformation had deep roots in Slovakia: the German and Slovak populations of Hungary preferred Lutheranism while the Magyars for the most part professed Calvinism. In Hungary as in Bohemia and Poland the Catholic Reformation scored notable success, especially as a consequence of the work of the Jesuit Peter Pazmany. The political failure of the princes of Transylvania also proved costly to the Protestant cause: their demise could only mean Catholic Habsburg triumph.

The less publicized Reformation among the South Slavs of Slovenia and Croatia drew largely on Lutheranism from Austria. A Slovene priest, Primoz<sup>^</sup> Trubar, did such outstanding translating and publishing catechism and Scripture in Slovene that he earned quite as much fame in literature as theology. The German impact on the Slovene Reformation was further evidenced by the publication of the first Slovene Bible in Wittenberg (1584) and by the number of Slovene students who flocked to German universities. The bete noire of the Slovene movement was the same Ferdinand of Styria who dealt so decisively with the Bohemians. His

accession to Inner Austria in 1590 greatly accelerated the Counter-Reformation in that region. Since the Jesuits continued preaching in Slovene, the national spirit continued to grow even after the eradication of Protestantism.

The Reformation passed into Croatia mainly through Austria but partly through Hungary and into Slavonia from both Croatia and Hungary and into Istria mainly from Venice. From Istria Reformation ideas penetrated the Dalmatian cities and even Ragusa. The Croatian Reformation, not so deeply rooted as in Slovenia, was more easily swept away by resurgent Catholicism. In Istria and Dalmatia religious innovation endured only so long as relations between the Papacy and Venice remained strained. By the end of the seventeenth century there were few traces of Protestantism in Dalmatia.

Unmistakably, there was considerable Protestant sentiment in Lithuania, or Western Rus'. Just as Roman priests often proved receptive to Protestant ideas so did Orthodox. Converted ones preached in Vitebsk and Polock though there is no evidence that their views penetrated Muscovy. The Polish Counter-Reformation not only swept away Protestantism but by the Council of Best sought religious unity by bringing the Orthodox as well under Rome. Success here was incomplete, but the efforts of the Council illustrated the extent of the Catholic Reformation.

In conclusion, it need only be restated that this is an essay in integration as well as one in periodization. The Renaissance marked the beginning of a new orientation for both Eastern and Western Europe; and as both embarked along their respectively divergent paths, there was a remarkable degree of interaction. Understanding the subsequently momentous events in Eastern Europe will come only if we reflect on that time in history when Europe in its entirety reached a turning point--and turned. [Notes omitted]



