

Volume I: *Among the countries of the North. Culture of Ist Commonwealth towards Teutonic, Slavic and Danube nations: a map of meetings, spaces of dialogue*, edited by Mirosława Hanusiewicz-Lavallee

Tome *Among the countries of the North* that opens the series is also the first part of diptych that is to present synthetic picture of cultural relations between Commonwealth and Europe in XV - XVII century, polarized by division into north and south accordingly to mental map recognized in modern times. The opening paper of Alina Nowicka-Jeżowa describes methodology of the project and the model of research that aim at hermeneutics of values. This volume consists of papers, prepared by an international team of researchers representing ten scientific facilities in Poland, Sweden, Germany and Czech Republic, that present Commonwealth in northern perspective underlining the meaning of Polish-Lithuanian state for Slavic and Danube idea of identity and the role played by common, yet sometimes differently interpreted values, in dialogue with Teutonic and Nordic nations.

In latin *respublica litteraria* it turned out to be possible to temporarily cross religious differences and the humanistic tradition allowed to appreciate ideas of Erasmus, Cicero or Horatio in literature of nations divided by the Reformation. Classical spirit brought recognition for particular political values, mainly republicanism. For Polish culture before the Partitions it became a recognition mark with its specific Roman-Sarmatian interpretation that evoked as much interest as rejection. The stereotype of Jesuitical papist on one hand and anarchistic republican on the other drew a picture of Polish noble known amongst protestant nations of the North. However the ideas of *monarchia mixta* (idea of sovereignty of the nobles from the monarch) presented in Latin political treatises brought much attention, provoked for discussion and interest in concepts of the nation that realised its unique political and cultural project on the outskirts of Europe despite surrounding external criticism. Similarly intriguing were the ideas emerging from Polish-Lithuanian Reformation and pre-Reformation discourse including Polish conciliarism, radical democracy in the Church and both rationalism and tolerance first noticed in religious practices in Commonwealth and later mainly seen in theoretical discourse of Arian exiles. In the North also circulated texts and ideas born

from humanistic spirit of Jesuits, controversial theology, martyrological literature but also didactic, parenetic and rhetorical pieces.

Papers gathered in this tome present those processes of dialogue and sometimes confrontations of values and ideas in early modern times. They stem from fascination with Commonwealth united with northern Europe yet estranged, clearly creating its complex identity.