About a decade ago, researchers assessing the significance of the First World War to Polish society were writing, and possibly over-generalising, that the war had been ‘forgotten’.¹ In 2014, two Polish historians, Włodzimierz Borodziej and Maciej Gór-ny, in a book devoted to the First World War and published in Warsaw, tried to go beyond this approach, by stating ‘It was our war.’² This statement was not just a voice in the wilderness. In fact, it characteristically illustrated the trend in changing an approach to the meaning of the Great War as manifested in most East-Central European countries. The reconsideration of the role of that war, and especially its political, cultural and social impact, is greatly stimulated by the centenary of the events of 1914–1918. Reconsideration acquires different forms. Some countries in the region, such as Croatia, have gone so far as to make political decisions on the formation of special war memorial commissions. In other countries, the anniversary is an occasion for holding scientific conferences. Poland is undoubtedly a country where the trend has also been observed, reflected not merely by the publication of the above-mentioned book, but also by a significant increase in the number of books and scientific events devoted to the Great War. Whether the boost will turn into a qualitative turning point that will change the Poles’ concept of the significance of the First World War to their nation and their culture is evidently a question that cannot yet be given an unambiguous answer. One thing is clear: an abundance of different research initiatives relating to the actualisation of the war certainly creates favourable conditions for it.

Initiatives of this kind included three conferences organised by the historians of Białystok University, in 2006, 2008 and 2012, devoted to a discussion of different aspects of the Great War. The first conference, dealing with Polish society’s sentiment and views, and their change during the war, focused on ‘the maturation of independence’. The second was devoted to the significance of the year 1918 to East-Central