

REFORMATION AND THE “CONFESSION-BUILDING”
IN EARLY MODERN POLAND:
HISTORIOGRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION
OF THE BASIC RESEARCH AREAS

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Abstract: *The article is an attempt to detect the key stages in the research of the Polish Reformation history and to investigate how these stages changed over time. The main groups of the works in the Polish, German, Russian and American historiography were analysed. Based on the primary conceptual approaches and using the chronological principle five main stages of the Polish Reformation historiography development were defined, within which various concepts for the analysis of the historical phenomenon were used. This paper analyses the main features of the Protestant Reformation historiographical tradition, of the positivist, the modernist and the postmodernist approaches to the Polish Reformation history. The author determined that the change of the main approaches to the issue depended on the ideological context and transformations of the dominant historiographical tradition, which influenced the generally accepted interpretations of the historical phenomenon. The second aim of the current research was to explore new horizons for the future studies on the Polish Reformation history. The author noted that one of the most important current research tasks is to find a suitable set of methodological instruments for the research, combining conventional historiographical approaches with the postmodern “Confessionalization” theory, which is still “under construction”.*

Keywords: *Reformation, Confession, Poland, Historiography, Modern Times, Methodological instruments, Positivist approach, Modernist approach, Postmodernist approach*

Rezumat: *Reformarea și „construirea confesiunilor” în Polonia modernă timpurie: reprezentarea istoriografică a domeniilor esențiale ale cercetării.* Articolul încearcă să identifice etapele esențiale de cercetare a istoriei Reformei poloneze și să investigheze modul în care aceste etape s-au modificat în timp. Au fost analizate principalele grupe de lucrări științifice în cadrul istoriografiei poloneze, germane, ruse și americane. Plecând de la abordările conceptuale de bază și folosind principiul cronologic au fost definite cinci etape de dezvoltare a istoriografiei Reformei poloneze, în cadrul căreia au fost folosite diferite metode de cercetare a fenomenelor istorice. Sunt caracterizate principalele trăsături ale tradiției istoriografice protestante de reformare, ale

abordărilor pozitivistice, moderniste și postmoderniste în cercetarea istoriei Reformei poloneze. S-a constatat că schimbarea principalelor abordări a depins de contextul ideologic și de transformările tradiției istoriografice de bază, influențând, în consecință, interpretarea general acceptată a fenomenului istoric. Al doilea obiectiv al acestei cercetări a fost acela de a identifica noi direcții în cercetarea istoriei Reformei poloneze. S-a remarcat faptul că una din sarcinile de cercetare actuale constă în găsirea unui ansamblu de instrumente metodologice care să combine abordările istoriografice tradiționale cu teoria postmodernistă a „confesionalizării” aflată încă în stadiul de elaborare.

Résumé : La Réformation et « l'établissement de la confession » dans la Pologne prémoderne : la représentation historiographique des domaines de recherche fondamentaux. Cet article est une tentative de déterminer des principales étapes de l'étude de l'histoire de la Réforme polonaise et d'examiner comment ces étapes ont changé avec le temps. Les principaux groupes des travaux de recherche de l'historiographie polonaise, allemande, russe et américaine ont été analysés. En se basant sur les approches conceptuelles dominantes et en utilisant le principe chronologique de cinq principales étapes et en utilisant le principe chronologique, les cinq étapes du développement de l'historiographie de la réformation polonaise ont été définies et ont été utilisés les différents concepts l'analyse des phénomènes historiques. Les principales caractéristiques de la tradition historiographique de la Réforme protestante, des approches positivistes, modernistes et postmodernistes à l'étude de l'histoire de la Réforme polonaise ont été décrites. L'auteur a déterminé que changement des principales approches dépendait du contexte idéologique et des transformations de la principale tradition historiographique qui ont influencé les interprétations communément admises du phénomène historique. Le deuxième objectif de cette étude consistait à explorer de nouveaux axes de recherche de l'histoire de la Réforme polonaise. Il a été indiqué que l'une des tâches les plus importantes consiste à trouver un ensemble approprié d'instruments méthodologiques destinés à la recherche en combinant les approches historiographiques classiques avec la théorie de la professionnalisation post-moderne est « encore en cours d'élaboration ».

INTRODUCTION

The European Reformation originated in wide-ranging transformations in almost all spheres of public life. Each European state was involved in the development of this new phenomenon, defining its place, role, and specificity of relations with other elements of the system. In the second half of the 16th century Poland was one of the largest Eastern European countries, which experienced its real “golden age”, characterized by outstanding political and cultural achievements, which were widely known far beyond the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

The Protestant Reformation was a complex socio-political phenomenon, which was strongly combined with the ideological, social, political and economic determinants. Being an integral part of the 16-17th centuries Eastern European history, the Reformation in Poland formed a unique regional model of its proceeding, which was different from the Western European types. The analysis of the primary source material of this period allows us not only to reconstruct its course but also to determine the scale, nature, and limits of the influence of the Reformation changes in their spatial-temporal parameters.

It should be noted that practically every branch or specialized field of early modern studies that developed in Poland since the second half of the 19th century not only touched upon the Reformation and religious matters but very often due to the significance of the surviving historical documents and archives, totally focused on this subject. It is quite clear that the wide diversity of trends in early modern studies has naturally contributed and continues to provide a better understanding of the Polish Reformation. An important breakthrough in medieval studies in general, including Reformation history, was made by numerous publications of the narrative historical sources and documentation descended from the late 16th century, a project undertaken primarily by the Academy of Learning and the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. The Reformation 500th anniversary celebrations also provided a new impulse to research and reassessment in the very field of the study.

Different approaches of historians to the understanding of the essence of the reformation movement reflect the complexity, diversity, and contradictions of the Reformation epoch. The search for a new, broader interpretation of the Reformation as a historical phenomenon was reflected in the concept of “Confessionalization” formulated by the German historians W. Reinhard¹ and H. Schilling.² The researchers put forward the notion of the typological homogeneity of the reformation and counter-reformation movements, proposed to rename the period of the Reformation to the era of Confessionalization. Among other things that implied the phenomenon of the formation of new Christian confessions in the 16th – 17th century Europe, which existed in close connection with the socio-political processes of the early modern period and passed through

¹ W. Reinhard, *Glaube und Macht: Kirche und Politik im Zeitalter der Konfessionalisierung* [Faith and Power: Church and Policy in the Confessionalization Epoch], Freiburg im Breisgau, Herder, 2004.

² Heinz Schilling, *Early Modern European Civilization and its Political and Cultural Dynamism*, Hanover, University Press of New England, 2008.

three stages of its development: the stage of “internalization of faith” (in Germ. *Bekennnisbildung*), the stage of “confession-building” (in Germ. *Konfessionsbiuldung*), and the stage of “social disciplining” (in Germ. *Sozialdisziplinierung*).

Despite a large number of publications devoted to this issue, there is a necessity to make some generalizations. The European Reformation was interpreted by researchers in different ways. In this article we will focus on the main approaches to the historiographical representation of the reformation movement in Poland in order to highlight the key stages in the development of the Polish Reformation historiography. The main goal is to identify the key approaches and to investigate how these approaches changed over time. The paper also aims at exploring new horizons for future studies in the Polish Reformation history.

Taking into consideration the significant historical influence and the far reaching consequences which the reformation movement has had, many generations of historians turned their attention to its main characteristics. The historical study of the specific features of the Polish Reformation (which started more than five hundred years ago) has already accumulated historiographical heritage consisting of the works of Polish, and to a lesser extent, German, Russian and American historians. Depending on the dominant conceptual approaches and using the chronological principle, it is useful to divide the total array of historical works into five main stages of research development, within which various methods for the analysis of the historical phenomenon were used.

PROTESTANT REFORMATION HISTORIOGRAPHY

The first stage – the middle of the 17th – first half of the 19th century was marked by the process of increasing accumulation of the factual material within the Polish and German historiography. The works of this period are noticeable by their religious and apologetic character, which was enshrined by the Protestant historiographical tradition. The historical analysis of the Reformation movement in Poland was initiated by the Polish Protestant historians of the 17th century A. Węgiński, W. Węgiński, S. Lubieniecki and H. Sandius. Originally created as historical works, the writings of the witnesses of the Reformation epoch perform dual functions, acting as a historical work and as a valuable narrative source at the same time.

The work of the Calvinist author A. Węgiński, entitled *The Historical and Chronological System of the Slavic Churches*, which was first published in 1652 under the pseudonym of A. Regenvolski, deserves our particular attention. During the second reprint which took place in 1679 and was published under the real

authorship, the work was retitled as *The Book of the Slavic Reformation*.³ The specificity of the structural composition of this work was aimed to prove the Slavic origins of the European reformation movement. The work consists of four books, each of which comprises sixteen chapters. Despite the large geographical scale and variability of the problems revealed by the author, the description of the events of the Polish Reformation sets the central place in the text. The religious activity of the Protestant communities, the development of the Protestant education and book-printing are referred to the main achievements of the reformation movement in Poland while political aspects of the phenomenon are mentioned only in passing.

Other influential work related to the Protestant historiographical tradition is *The History of the Reformation in Poland* published by the Arian author S. Lubieniecki in 1685.⁴ The text is arranged in chronological order and focuses on the analysis of the theological views of the confessional groups and communities, identifying common and distinctive features of the different trends of the Polish Reformation, while the historical aspects are presented only as the background of the theological issue. The presentation of the material carried out from the theological standpoint of Arianism omits essential historical data about the Polish Calvinistic and Lutheran communities' development. Highlighting the history of the Polish anti-Trinitarians the author proceeds to disclose the confessional mosaic of the Polish Reformation. In addition to the accumulation of factual material, the main research accomplishments of this work can be summarized as the analysis of the theological foundations of the Polish Reformation and an attempt to determine the leading causes of their evolution.

The dynamics of the development of the Reformation movement in Krakow during 1552-1657 was traced in the work of the Calvinist historian W. Węgierski *Chronicle of the Evangelical Gathering in Krakow*.⁵ Until its first publication in 1817, the work existed only in the manuscript form. Highlighting the course of the inter-confessional confrontation between the Polish Catholics and Protestants, the author emphasizes the aggressiveness of the counter-reform activities initiated by the Catholic Church. The historian also glorifies the Protestant victims of the religious

³ Andreae Wengerscii, *Libri quattor Slavoniae Reformatae* [The Book of the Slavic Reformation], Varsoviae, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1973.

⁴ S. Lubieniecki, *Historia Reformacji Polskiej* [The History of the Reformation in Poland], Warszawa, Uniwersytet Warszawski, 1938.

⁵ W. Węgierski, *Kronika zboru ewangelickiego krakowskiego* [Chronicle of the Evangelical Gathering in Krakow], Kraków, Parafia Kościoła Ewangelicko-Augsburskiego, 2007.

persecution. In general, despite some factual inaccuracy, the work of W. Węgiński, based on the use of a wide range of documentary sources, undoubtedly has an unquestionably high informative value.

An attempt to trace the history of the Arian communities in Poland was presented in the treatise written by the Arian author H. Sandius *Library of the Anti-trinitarians* first published in 1684.⁶ It contains valuable biographical information focused on the lives of the leaders of the Polish Arianism, a list of Arian publishing houses located on the Polish territory and the bibliography of the Arian 17th century books published in Poland. The manner in which the text is organized fully accords with the encyclopaedic style, with a minimal amount of author's comments. The documentary material accumulated by H. Sandius increases significantly the diverse array of the historical sources on the Polish Reformation history.

The final victory of the Counter-reformation in the 17th century Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth resulted in the geographical displacement of the Polish Reformation study outside the boundaries of Poland, mainly to the German lands. The historical essay written by the German author S. Lauterbach entitled *Ariano-socinianism in Poland (1725)*⁷ was based on the collected testimonies of the Polish anti-trinitarians. Deprived of the proper historical sources, the author did not even attempt to make any generalizations of the information provided. Another work that can serve as an excellent historiographical example in that regard is F. Bock's *History of Anti-Trinitarians*⁸ first published in 1774 which was also based on the encyclopaedic principle. The work consists of 350 separate articles covering biographies of the most active followers of Arianism in Poland. The main source of information used by the author was the *Library of Anti-Trinitarians* written by H. Sandius. Certain fragments and text passages of *History of Anti-Trinitarians* are either based on or directly borrowed from other works.

A notable place among the works of German historians of the 18th century belongs to Christian Friese's *Church History of the Polish Kingdom*.⁹ The most important asset of this research was an attempt to outline the Polish reformation movement in all its diversity of denominational manifestations. Despite his

⁶ Christophori Sandii, *Bibliotheca antitrinitariorum* [Library of Anti-trinitarians], Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1967.

⁷ Samuel Friedrich Lauterbach, *Ariano-socinismus olim in Polonia* [Ariano-Socinianism in Poland], Franckfurt, Leipzig, George Marcus Knochen, 1725.

⁸ Friderici Samuelis Bock, *Historia Antitrinitariorum* [The History of Anti-Trinitarians], Regiomonti, G. L. Hartungius, 1779.

⁹ Christian Gottlieb Friese, *Kirchengeschichte des Königreichs Polen* [The Church History of the Polish Kingdom], Wrocław, Wilhelm Gottlieb Korn, 1786.

obvious pro-Lutheran position, Christian Friese did not reduce the content of the Reformation to the activities of the particular religious group. Another notable feature was the study of a wide array of archival sources in search for the factual details. To a certain extent this work played the role of the special milestone in the Polish Reformation historiography, which contributed to the formation of the holistic view on the historical nature of the phenomenon.

In general, the Protestant historiography presented the Polish Reformation in the framework of its confessional dimension. Such one-sided interpretation predetermined a low degree of the research objectivity. On the one hand, it is important to note, that the Protestant historians were not simply trying to create a detailed record of what had happened but to provide historical background as an additional argument for their religious polemics with the representatives of other confessions. Instead of the declared straightforward chronology of events most of the mentioned works were arranged in a much more complicated way, promoting or defending various theological concepts and principles. On the other hand, although rather selective in choosing data, Protestant historians provided the succeeding researchers with vital factual material which was almost exclusively explained in terms of theology within the consciously formulated apologetic doctrines.

POSITIVIST VIEW OF THE POLISH REFORMATION HISTORY

The next stage – second half of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th century was characterized by the dominance of the positivist approach to the study of the Polish Reformation, presented in the works of the Polish, German and Russian authors which tend to a clear empirical orientation, focusing on factual, critical analysis of the primary source information. At the same time, it should be noted that although the observance of the positivist methodology was declared as a given thing, it did not exclude attempts to implement logical generalizations, structuring of the factual material not only on the chronological but also on the problem principle.

As a result, new publications on various aspects of the Polish Reformation were conducted. In particular, a series of works of the Polish historian J. Łukaszewicz devoted to the study of the regional features of the Polish Reformation argued the need for a comprehensive research of all the confessional trends.¹⁰ The author's attention was primarily aimed at highlighting the problems of the

¹⁰ J. Łukaszewicz, *O kościołach braci czeskich w dawnej Wielkiej Polsce* [About the churches of the Czech brothers in the former Great Poland], Poznań, Drukarnia Karola Pompejusza, 1835.

internal development of the Protestant communities, the evolution of their organizational structure and geographic expansion. The political background of the Polish reformation movement remained practically unanalysed. One of the main achievements of Łukaszewicz works was the publication of several manuscripts which contained rich source material from the Archives of the Raczyński Library in Poznan.

The work of the Polish historian W. Zakrzewski *The Rise and Development of the Reformation in Poland* (1870)¹¹ has significantly contributed to the Reformation history research. Covering the genesis of the Polish reformation movement, the author expanded substantially the range of the used historical sources analysing textual and contextual data of the numerous official Polish Sejm Diaries and the Diplomatic Acts of the Apostolic Nunciature in Poland, which were often neglected by other historians. W. Zakrzewski enhanced significantly the level of the scientific research of the Polish Reformation history, focusing on the participation of the Protestants in the political life of Poland in the 16th – 17th centuries. The author himself determined the main purpose of his work as the attempt to represent the historical reconstruction of the main stages of the Polish Reformation history which would make it possible to create the complete picture of the historical phenomenon in a long-term future.

In the second half of the 19th century, the history of the Polish Reformation was analysed in the works of representatives of the Krakow historical school J. Szujski and M. Bobzyński. Referring to the topic of the European Reformation, the adherents of the so-called “pessimistic” concept of the Polish history interpreted the Polish reformation movement as one of the manifestations of the “szlachta” anarchy. The subject matter of the Polish Reformation was totally reduced to the political issue.

From another perspective the history of the Polish Reformation was presented in the work of J. Szujski *Renaissance and Reformation in Poland* (1880).¹² The first edition included the printed versions of the author's lectures which provided a comprehensive picture of the expansion of the humanistic ideas in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the middle 15th– second half of the 17th century. Analysing the existing historiographical base, the historian emphasized the genetic link and ideological continuity between the periods of the

¹¹ Wincenty Zakrzewski, *Powstanie i wzrost Reformacji w Polsce: 1520–1572*, [The Rise and Development of the Reformation in Poland: 1520-1572], Lipsk, Fr. Wagner, 1870.

¹² Józef Szujski, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* [Renaissance and Reformation in Poland], Warszawa, Drukarnia Wieku, 1880.

Polish Renaissance and Reformation, noted the significant contribution of the Reformation to the development of the Polish culture. Despite a certain fragmentation, J. Szujski's work initiated the revision of the strictly negative assessment of the value of the Polish Reformation within the Krakow historical school.

Among the comprehensive studies we should point out a two-volume work of the Polish researcher J. Bukowski *History of the Reformation in Poland*¹³ which was first published in 1883. Contrary to what the title stated, the history of the reformation movement was traced back to 1559. From the geographical perspective, the analysis of the events described rarely goes beyond the borders of the Little Poland region. Written from the standpoint of a Catholic priest, the work contains a significant number of subjective evaluative judgments, which, in general, do not reduce the informative value of the used rich source material. The author's desire to emphasize the connection between political and religious struggle in Poland of the 16th – 17th centuries is absolutely obvious.

One of the first attempts to carry out a comprehensive analysis of the Polish Reformation history was also made by the Polish historian, Count W. Krasieński. Being in exile in London, the researcher published a two-volume work.¹⁴ Despite the problem approach declared in the title the work provides a simple account of the main events of the Polish Reformation. Deprived of the opportunity to use archival primary sources, Krasieński has compiled and systematized the main achievements of his predecessors.

Among the studies of this period, a special place was occupied by Russian historians, who focused on the cause-and-effect relationship between the reformation movement and Polish national history. The work of the Russian professor N. Liubovich entitled *History of the Reformation in Poland: Calvinists and anti-Trinitarians* (1883)¹⁵ aroused as a result of the profound research of the subject matter, based on the Polish and foreign archives. The author analysed the history of the Polish Calvinist confessional split, considering it to be the main reason for the decline of the Reformation in Poland. An attempt to assess the Polish Reformation history in the Pan-European context characterizes the work

¹³ Julian Bukowski, *Dzieje Reformacji w Polsce* [History of the Reformation in Poland], Kraków, Drukarnia Wł. L. Anczyca i Spółki, 1883.

¹⁴ Waleryan Krasieński, *Zarys dziejów powstania i upadku Reformacji w Polsce* [The Outline of History of the Rise and Decline of the Reformation in Poland], Warszawa, Nakładem Zwiastuna Ewangelicznego, 1903.

¹⁵ Н. Любович, *История Реформации в Польше: кальвинисты и антитринитариусы* [History of the Reformation in Poland: Calvinists and Anti-trinitarians], Варшава, Типография Земкеевича и Ноаковского, 1883.

of the Russian historian N. Kareev *Essay on the History of the Reformation Movement and the Catholic Reaction in Poland* (1886).¹⁶ Emphasizing the methodological effectiveness of the comparative research, the historian compared the development of the Reformation in Eastern and Western European countries and asserted the similarity in features between the Polish and French reformation movements. Observing the subject on a broad historical background, the scientist was one of the first to note the national urge in the political struggle of the Polish Protestants against the influence of the Catholic Church.

In general, the study of the Polish Reformation from the standpoint of positivist approach remained a separate line of historical research. Despite the fact that all the mentioned authors regarded themselves as the keepers of the positivist ideals, they differed considerably in their philosophical outlooks and had no generally accepted concept of the Polish Reformation history. The impact of the Reformation on the history of Poland has long been a major concern of the positivist researches. The main issues that continued to be debated were the following: whether Reformation can be considered as one of the causes of the decline of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth; did the Eastern European reformation movements have something in common with the Western European ones; was the Polish Reformation imposed from above or was it popular; did the Polish Reformation differ according to regions and localities; were the Reformation changes the result of deliberate plans or did they come about through bungling confusion? The trend of positivist scholarship stressed the extent of popular conservatism in the Polish Reformation. The process was not seen as irresistible from the reign of Sigismund II onwards, but it was presented of a series of disparate and at the same time reversible events, influenced as much, if not more, by political rather than theological factors as well as marked by various significant political turning-points. At the same time a major result was the establishment of the critical source analysis and publishing of a wide range of historical documents, presentation of the Reformation as a self-sufficient stage of the European and Polish national history.

MODERNIST AND POSTMODERNIST APPROACHES TO THE POLISH REFORMATION HISTORY RESEARCH

The third stage covers the first half of the 20th century and is characterized

¹⁶ Н. Кареев, *Очерк истории реформационного движения и католической реакции в Польше* [Essay on the History of the Reformation Movement and the Catholic Reaction in Poland], М., Типография А. И. Мамонтова и К, 1886.

by the deepening of the thematic specialization of studies in the history of the Polish Reformation as a multidimensional historical phenomenon. The works of this period represent first and foremost the achievements of the Polish historiography, as well as certain accomplishments of German and American historians. Profound changes in the Polish historical science research priorities, observed by the Third Congress of the Polish Historians in Krakow held in 1900, led to the transition from positivism to the ideas of neo-romanticism and modernism, which became the starting point for targeting of the new historiographical areas, in particular the history of Polish culture. The mentioned above features can be overviewed with the help of several concrete examples.

Enhancement of the research interest in the cultural heritage of the Reformation generated a series of new works dedicated to the study of the Polish Protestant literature.¹⁷ Describing the main achievements of the Protestant polemical tradition, Polish researcher T. Grabowski focused on the historical context of its formation, providing his work with essential historical data. Much emphasis was placed on the coverage of the evolution of the doctrinal principles of the Polish Protestantism. The cultural heritage of the Polish Reformation movement attracted the attention of the Polish researcher A. Brückner¹⁸ who devoted his works to the analysis of the Reformation literature as well as the biographical information about the most iconic figures of the Reformation in Poland.¹⁹

The dynamics of the geographical expansion of the Polish reformation movement was traced in the work *The Protestant Communities and Authorities in the Ancient Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth* (1904)²⁰ by the Polish historian H. Merczyng, who summarized the main achievements of his predecessors and presented all the research findings in the most accurate and accessible form. Using an approach based on the statistical analysis, the author attempted to highlight

¹⁷ Tadeusz Grabowski, *Literatura ariańska w Polsce* [The Arian Literature in Poland], Kraków, Akademia Umiejętności, 1908; Tadeusz Grabowski, *Literatura luterańska w Polsce wieku XVI* [The Lutheran Literature in Poland of the 16th Century], Poznań, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1920.

¹⁸ A. Brückner, *Różnowiercy polscy. Szkice obyczajowe i literackie* [Polish Protestants. Sketches on traditions and literature], Warszawa, Nakładem Księgarni Naukowej, 1905.

¹⁹ Idem, *Dzieje literatury polskiej w zarysie* [The Outline History of the Polish Literature], Warszawa, Biblioteka Polska, 1924.

²⁰ H. Merczyng, *Zbory i senatorowie protestancy w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej* [The Protestant Communities and Authorities in the Ancient Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth], Warszawa, 1904.

the quantitative characteristics of the Polish Reformation movement, recognizing the deficiency of the results obtained due to the lack of the full range of sources. Most of the documentary publications in the series of *Monumenta Reformationis Polonicae et Lithuanicae* editions were made on the initiative and financial support of the historian. A brief but informative analysis of the Polish Reformation was presented in the essay of the Polish scholar K. Chodyncki *Reformation in Poland* (1921),²¹ in which making no attempt at a complete research, the author focused on the most significant aspects of the history of the Polish reformation movement, such as the political struggle of the Protestant nobility against the Catholic Church and the idea of initiating Polish National Council.

Analytical approaches of the Polish historiography vividly contrasted with the methods of some German historians of this time. Thus, the work of the German researcher G. Krause *Reformation and Counter-Reformation in the Former Kingdom of Poland*,²² published in 1901, presented simple historical account of events and facts arranged in chronological order shaping the history from theological viewpoints. Theological approach to the historical events was also inherent in a series of monographs of the German historian T. Wotschke *History of the Reformation in Poland* (1911).²³ Interpreting a wide array of source material, the author practically avoided generalizations, supporting the tradition of covering the history of the selected Protestant communities. An excessive focus on the development of the Reformation in Greater Poland Region often interfered with the comprehensive analysis of the Polish Reformation in general. To a certain extent this misleading tendency emerged due to the Greater Poland origin of the documents used, many of which were discovered by the author himself.

The influence of the reformation movement on the peculiarities of the social and economic development of the 16th century Polish state was analysed in the work of the American historian P. Fox *Reformation in Poland: Some social and economic aspects* (1924).²⁴ Explaining the decisive importance of the social and economic factors in the evolution of the Polish Reformation, the researcher

²¹ K. Chodyncki, *Reformacja w Polsce* [The Reformation in Poland], Warszawa, Polska Składnica Pomocy Szkolnych, 1921.

²² G. Krause, *Die Reformation und Gegenreformation im ehemaligen Königreiche Polen*, [Reformation and Counter-Reformation in the Former Kingdom of Poland], Posen, Merzbach Buchdruck, 1901.

²³ T. Wotschke, *Geschichte der Reformation in Polen* [History of the Reformation in Poland], Leipzig, 1911.

²⁴ P. Fox, *Reformation in Poland: Some Social and Economic Aspects*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins Press, 1924.

highlighted main features of the conflict between the Polish nobility and the Catholic Church. Despite the fact that there was a rather limited collection of published sources at the author's disposal, the work of P. Fox in many respects can be regarded as a starting point for the further in-depth study of the problem.

A methodological break with the tradition of unilaterally political coverage of Polish history stimulated the recourse to complex research problems. The study of the Reformation period offered extensive research perspectives which obtained additional emphasis due to the commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the beginning of the Reformation movement in Europe.

Since 1919, the study of the Polish Reformation history was institutionalized around the specially founded Society for the Polish Reformation History Research. In accordance with the Charter the newly established society was aimed at a comprehensive study of the Polish Reformation, publication of historical documents and popularization of scientific knowledge. The official journal of the Society entitled "Reformation in Poland" was launched in 1921. The work on the annually printed edition brought together the efforts of many scholars of the Polish Protestantism, in particular, such remarkable historians as H. Barycz, O. Bartel, O. Halecki, T. Grabowski and S. Kot.²⁵

A large number of works of this period were dedicated to the study of the Polish Arians whose unique socio-political doctrine attracted the attention of social history researchers. At the same time the study of the Polish Brethren movement reflected the search for the specific features of the Polish Reformation on the example of the denomination that originated on the local ground. As a result, the history of the Polish Arianism remained a basic research topic of the Polish historiography several decades throughout.

As an example, we could mention a series of articles *Ex regestis arianismi*:

²⁵ H. Barycz, *Szkice z dziejów Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego* [Sketches on the History of Jagiellonian University], Kraków, Druk W. L. Anczyca i Spółki, 1933; O. Bartel, *Z Dziejów Reformacji w Polsce: walka dogmatyczna w latach 1559–1562* [From the History of Reformation in Poland: Dogmatic Struggle in 1559–1562], Warszawa, Drukarnia P. Wszyński, 1928; O. Halecki, *Zgoda Sandomierska 1570 r.: jej geneza i znaczenie w dziejach Reformacji polskiej za Zygmunta Augusta* [Union of Sandomierz: its Origin and Significance for the Polish Reformation History during the Reign of Sigismund Augustus], Warszawa, Gebethner i Wolff, 1915; Tadeusz Grabowski, *Literatura luterska w Polsce wieku XVI* [The Lutheran Literature in Poland of the 16th Century], Poznań, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1920; S. Kot, *Ideologia polityczna i społeczna braci polskich zwanych arjanami* [The Political and Social Ideology of the Polish Brethren, called Arians], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Popierania Nauki, 1932.

Essays on the History of the Decline of Protestantism in Little Poland (1948)²⁶ published by the Polish historian M. Wajsblum and dedicated to the analysis of the history of the Polish Arians in the second half of the 17th century. The monograph of the Polish historian Stanisław Kot *The Political and Social Ideology of the Polish Brethren, called Arians*²⁷ published in 1932 was devoted to the study of the socio-political views of the radical branch of the Polish Protestantism. The author's attention was focused on the ideas of pacifism, religious tolerance and social equality reflected in the Polish Arians theology as well as ideological aspects of their social and political activities. Most of the historian's conclusions were based on the analysis of the Arian polemic literature, which provided a rich source of historical data.

Thus, the study of the Polish Reformation became the major academic concern of the social historians. Throughout the period under discussion the main sources systematically published by the previous researchers became accessible and more widely available. New documents were thoroughly explored and following the great social upheavals of the first half of the 20th century as well as the fact of restoration of Poland's sovereignty in 1918 social historians began to take an interest in the subject. This had a beneficial influence on the study and produced considerable research and publishing activity. The foundation of the Polish Reformation Research Society also undoubtedly strengthened the multilateral cooperation amongst the Polish scholars in this field. In addition, the obvious focus on social history connected with the modernist historiographical perspective encouraged significant reassessment of the historical past with the goal of replacing the previously generally accepted concepts.

The fourth stage – the 1950s – the second half of the 1960s was marked by the domination of the Marxist approach to the study of the Polish Reformation history. The First Congress of the Polish Science held in 1951 adopted a resolution on the necessity of the implementation of the basic principles of Marxist methodology as a key element of scientific research.²⁸ The organizational and methodological changes introduced in the form of ideological dictatorship had a direct impact on the development of scientific studies in the history of the Polish refor-

²⁶ M. Wajsblum, *Ex regestro arianismi: szkice z dziejów upadku protestantyzmu w Małopolsce* [Ex regestro arianismi: essays on the History of the Decline of Protestantism in Little Poland], Kraków, Towarzystwo Badań Dziejów Reformacji w Polsce, 1937.

²⁷ S. Kot, *op. cit.*

²⁸ Л. Зашкільняк, *Польська історіографія після Другої світової війни: проблеми національної історії* [The Polish Historiography after World War II: National History Issues], Київ, НМК, 1992, p. 36.

mation movement. Among general features of this period it is worthwhile to mention the great influence of the ideological component as well as the low level of the scientific research. Let’s make a brief overview of the mentioned peculiarities.

Held in 1954 Polish Academy of Science Conference dedicated to the problems of the Polish Reformation history triggered a scientific discussion on the topic of the Polish Brethren socio-political views. As a result, the scientific reports emphasized the anti-feudal nature of the Polish Arian ideology highlighting the Reformation history in the context of the so-called “class struggle”.²⁹ The theological views of the anti-Trinitarians were labelled as “inconsistently atheistic”. At the same time, the more moderate trends of the Polish Protestantism were not given a proper analysis.

The research priorities identified during the Conference became generally accepted principles of the Polish Reformation studies. The Commission of the Renaissance and Reformation, headed by historian K. Lepszy, was founded in 1955. One of the official publications of the Polish National Academy of Sciences, yearly periodical entitled “Revival and Reformation in Poland”, was first published in 1956. The adoption of the new research methodology was accompanied by the denial of the previous historical thought and by the ban of any non-Marxist historiography manifestations. Thus, in 1956 the printing of the yearly periodical “Reformation in Poland”, founded in 1921, was stopped, and on June 4, 1963, the Society on the Reformation History in Poland was liquidated by announcing its self-dissolution.³⁰

The basic and practically iconic work which advocated the effectiveness of the Marxist approach in the Polish Reformation studies was *Reformation and the Peasant Problem in Poland of the 16th Century. The Influence of the Class Struggle in the Polish Village on the Formation of the Religious Ideology of the Gentry during the Reformation* (1953)³¹ written by J. Tazbir in the dogmatically Marxist style. The European Reformation received a definition of the broad socio-political movement, which was based on the mechanisms of “class struggle”. Certain radical provisions of the socio-political ideology of the Polish Arians were interpreted by the author as the theoretical basis for the beginning of the anti-feudal revolution. An analysis of the anti-feudal aspects of the Polish Reformation

²⁹ J. Tazbir, *Reformacja a problem chłopski w Polsce XVI wieku. Oddziaływanie walki klasowej na wsi polskiej na kształtowanie się ideologii religijnej szlachty w okresie Reformacji* [Reformation and the Peasant Problem in Poland of the 16th Century. The Influence of the Class Struggle in the Polish Village on the Formation of the Religious Ideology of the Gentry During the Reformation], Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1953, p. 7.

³⁰ Л. Зашкільняк, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

³¹ J. Tazbir, *op. cit.*

found its continuation in the monograph of W. Urban.³²

It should be noted that in the late 1950s some Polish historians initiated a gradual rethinking of the restrictive ideological schemes. The striking discrepancy of Marxist concepts with historical realities prompted a careful revision of author's positions. In particular, such works included the monographs of Z. Ogonowski *On Tolerance in Poland of the 17th Century* (1958)³³ and E. Śliziński *On the Literary Activities of the Czech Brethren in Poland during the 16th – 17th Centuries* (1959).³⁴ The liberalization of historical studies formed a sufficient basis for a qualitatively new level of their development.

The fifth stage, characterized by the domination of methodological pluralism in the study of the history of the Polish Reformation, lasts from the second half of the 1960s to the present. The fundamental changes in the Polish historical science coincided with the new stage in the development of the global historical thought, which found its manifestation in the “intellectual turn”, shifting the emphasis from the social and political history to the benefit of the cultural one. Parallel transformations in the development of the Polish historiography emerged due to a combination of a wide range of internal and external factors which caused significant liberalization of scientific creativity within Poland.

The study of the problems of the Polish reformation movement has become even more international in nature. New alternative approaches to the study of the phenomenon of the European Reformation were used in the works of G. R. Elton *Reformation Europe: 1517-1559* (1963)³⁵ and A. Dickens *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (1963).³⁶ Enrichment with the new theoretical advances of the world science has ensured the progressive development of the Polish historical thought.

More attention was paid to the topics that were previously forbidden. A monograph written by the Polish historian J. Tazbir *A State Without Stakes: Polish*

³² W. Urban, *Chłopi wobec Reformacji w Malopolsce w drugiej połowie XVI w.* [Peasants' Perception of the Reformation in Little Poland During the Second Half of the 16th Century], Kraków, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1959.

³³ Z. Ogonowski, *Z zagadnień tolerancji w Polsce XVII wieku* [On Tolerance in Poland of the 17th Century], Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1958.

³⁴ J. Śliziński, *Z działalności literackiej braci czeskich w Polsce XVI–XVII w.* [On the Literary Activities of the Czech Brethren in Poland During the 16th – 17th Centuries], Wrocław, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1959.

³⁵ G. R. Elton, *Reformation Europe: 1517–1559*, London, Collins, 1963.

³⁶ A. G. Dickens, *Reformation and Society in Sixteenth-Century Europe*, London, Thames and Hudson, 1966.

Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries (1967)³⁷ became one of the first works on the history of the Polish Reformation, written in the light of the new methodological approaches. The researcher selected the phenomenon of religious tolerance in early modern Poland as the object for coverage and analysed the participation of the Polish nobility in the reformation movement, highlighted the process of the adoption of the Warsaw Confederation Act and the implementation of the principles of the agreement in practice, recorded typical examples of its violation. The work was also focused on the issue of the Reformation impact on the Polish mentality formation.

Actualized due to methodological innovations, the problem of religious tolerance has received multifaceted coverage in the writings of Polish historians. An attempt of a comprehensive analysis of the phenomenon of religious tolerance in Poland during the Reformation era was carried out in another monograph by J. Tazbir *The History of Polish Tolerance* (1973).³⁸ The process of the emergence, adoption, and implementation of the Warsaw Confederation Act was analysed in the work *Pearl of Free Conscience: Polemics around the Warsaw Confederation in 1573-1658* (1974)³⁹ written by M. Korolko. The features of the practical implementation of the basic principles of religious tolerance in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were revealed in the writings of M. Kosman *Protestants and Counter-reformation: from the History of Tolerance in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the 16th – 18th Centuries* (1978)⁴⁰ and R. Kościelny *The Problem of the Tolerance of Counter-reformers in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the Turn of the 16th and 17th Centuries* (1997).⁴¹ Historians identified the phenomenon of religious tolerance as the main specific feature of the Polish reformation movement, organically inherent to the Polish mentality.

³⁷ J. Tazbir, *A. State without Stakes: Polish Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Warsaw, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1973.

³⁸ Idem, *Dzieje polskiej tolerancji* [The History of Polish Tolerance], Warszawa, Interpress, 1973.

³⁹ M. Korolko, *Klejnot swobodnego sumienia: polemika wokół konfederacji warszawskiej w latach 1573–1658* [Pearl of Free Conscience: Polemics Around the Warsaw Confederation in 1573-1658], Warszawa, Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1974.

⁴⁰ M. Kosman, *Protestanci i kontrreformacja: z dziejów tolerancji w Rzeczypospolitej XVI–XVIII wieku* [Protestants and Counter-reformation: from the History of Tolerance in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of the 16th – 18th Centuries], Wrocław, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1978.

⁴¹ R. Kościelny, *Problem tolerancji kontrreformatorów w Rzeczypospolitej na przełomie XVI i XVII wieku* [The Problem of the Tolerance of Counterreformers in the

The stated focus on cultural values caused the appeal to the analysis of the cultural heritage of the Polish Reformation. In particular, in 1970 a collection of articles entitled *The Contribution of Protestantism to Polish Culture: on the problems of Protestantism in Poland* was published under the general editorship of T. Wojak.⁴² A. Kawecka-Gryczowa focused on collecting systematic data on the subject of history of the particular Protestant publishing houses in Poland in order to analyse Protestant publishing practices from a variety of widely different perspectives⁴³. The study of certain aspects of the development of Polish Protestant education was represented by the works of S. Tworek *Educational and Cultural Activities of Little Poland Calvinism* (1970)⁴⁴ as well as M. Pawlak's *The History of the Elblong School in 1535-1772* (1972)⁴⁵ and R. Lewanski's *The Role of the Reformation in the Development of Polish Culture* (1990).⁴⁶

Scholar interest towards political history remained topical one but different areas received different scale of attention. The pattern of political struggle was still on the focus of the Polish historians interest. The common political struggle of the Protestant and Orthodox nobility against the harassment of the Catholic Church was traced in the writings of Polish scholars Y. Dziegielewski *On Tolerance for the Vanquished: the Religious Policy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Reign of Władysław IV* (1986)⁴⁷; J. Wołoszyn *Religious Problems in the Parliamentary Practice of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1648-1698* (2003),⁴⁸ T. Kempa

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the Turn of the 16th and 17th Centuries], Szczecin, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, 1997.

⁴² Tadeusz Wojak, *Wkład protestantyzmu do kultury polskiej* [The Contribution of Protestantism to Polish culture: on the problems of Protestantism in Poland], Warszawa, Zwiastun, 1970.

⁴³ Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa, *Ariańskie oficyny wydawnicze Rodeckiego i Sternackiego: dzieje i bibliografia* [The Arian Publishing Houses of Rodecki and Sternacki: history and bibliography], Wrocław, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1974.

⁴⁴ S. Tworek, *Działalność oświatowo kulturalna kalwinizmu małopolskiego: (połowa XVI – połowa XVIII w.)* [Educational and Cultural Activities of Little Poland Calvinism (mid-16th – mid-18th Centuries)], Lublin, Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1970.

⁴⁵ M. Pawlak, *Dzieje Gimnazjum Elbląskiego w latach 1535-1772* [The History of the Elblong School in 1535-1772], Olsztyn, Pojezierze, 1972.

⁴⁶ R. C. Lewanski, *The Role of the Reformation in the Development of Polish Culture*, London, 1990.

⁴⁷ J. Dziegielewski, *O tolerancję dla zdominowanych: polityka wyznaniowa Rzeczypospolitej w latach panowania Władysława IV* [On Tolerance for the Vanquished: the Religious Policy of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the Reign of Władysław IV], Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986.

⁴⁸ J. W. Wołoszyn, *Problematyka wyznaniowa w praktyce parlamentarnej Rzeczypospolitej*

Against Counter-reformation: the Struggle of Protestant and Orthodox Christians for the Freedom of Religion in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 16th and the first half of the 17th Century (2007).⁴⁹ Summarizing increasingly controversial Polish Reformation historiographical heritage, Polish historian J. Wijaczka focused on the role of the Polish King Sigismund II in declining of the Polish reformation movement by rejecting the opportunity to form the Polish national Church which could have reinforced the royal authority.⁵⁰

The causes of the decline of the Reformation movement in Poland were analysed in another work by J. Tazbir, *The Nobles and Theologians: Research on the History of the Polish Counter-reformation* (1987).⁵¹ This study reveals the social and political factors that caused the decline of the Reformation in Poland and explains the nature of the manifestations of Catholic xenophobia. The researcher also focused on the description of the forms and methods of counter-reformation propaganda, provided examples of religious intolerance used as a method to eliminate political rivals. The origins of the triumph of Polish Catholicism, according to the historian, were closely linked to the change in the mood of the political elite of the state. One of the achievements of the Polish historiography became the collection of historical essays by J. Tazbir *Reformation in Poland* (1993).⁵² Built on the problem basis, the work does not claim to be comprehensive representation of the subject, but proposes to consider the author's analysis of the most neglected problems of the history of Polish Reformation history, such as the Slavic sources of the Polish Reformation, its social base, the role of the Germans in the Polish Reformation movement, the Polish Brethren service to Radziwill princely family.

Those issues which were previously neglected by the Marxist historiographical tradition fully appeared in the centre of the contemporary Polish Reformation studies. Thus, religious conversion as one of the most significant

w latach 1648–1696 [Religious Problems in the Parliamentary Practice of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1648-1698], Warszawa, Semper, 2003.

⁴⁹ T. Kempa, *Wobec kontrreformacji: protestanci i prawosławni w obronie swobód wyznaniowych w Rzeczypospolitej w końcu XVI i w pierwszej połowie XVII wieku* [Against Counter-reformation: the Struggle of Protestant and Orthodox Christians for the Freedom of Religion in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth at the end of the 16th and the first half of the 17th Century], Toruń, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, 2007.

⁵⁰ Jacek Wijaczka, *The Reformation in Sixteenth Century Poland: a Success Story or a Failure?*, in "Reformation and Renaissance Review", 2015, Vol. 17, no 1, p. 9-26.

⁵¹ J. Tazbir, *Szlachta i teologowie: studia z dziejów polskiej kontrreformacji* [The Nobles and Theologians: Research on the History of the Polish Counter-reformation], Warszawa, Wiedza Powszechna, 1987.

⁵² Idem, *Reformacja w Polsce* [Reformation in Poland], Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1993.

aspects of the early modern social history was examined in the work of the Polish historian W. Kowalski *From the "Land of Diverse Sects" to National Religion: Converts to Catholicism and Reformed Franciscans in Early Modern Poland (2001)*⁵³. Comparative analysis of the organization of Czech-Brethren and Calvinistic communities in Poland in the middle of the 16th– the second half of the 17th century was accomplished by H. Gmiterek.⁵⁴ D. Rott devoted his work to the cultural heritage of the Czech Brethren Church in Poland.⁵⁵ Comprehensive study of the Czech Brethren role in the Polish reformation movement was carried out in the works of J. Dworzaczkowa.⁵⁶ A. Klemp researched the peculiarities of the development of the Reformation on the territory of Royal Prussia.⁵⁷ M. Luszczynska examined the concept of the so-called "Sacred Community" formation as an instrument to establish confessional identity of the radical currents of the Polish reformation movement⁵⁸. The history of Polish Arianism became the subject matter of new monographic studies. The works of this period are characterized by the shift of research emphasis from the socio-political to philosophical and cultural aspects, increased attention to the coverage of the history of Arian emigration in the second half of the 17th century, an attempt to trace the contribution of the intellectual elite of the Polish Brethren to the development of the new philosophical trends in the Western European countries.

The works of the Western European and American historians took an important place in the development of the Polish Reformation research. In particular, the generalized picture of the course of the Reformation movement in

⁵³ W. Kowalski, *From the "Land of Diverse Sects" to National Religion: Converts to Catholicism and Reformed Franciscans in Early Modern Poland*, in "Church History", 2001, No 70 (3), p. 482-526.

⁵⁴ H. Gmiterek, *Bracia czeszy a kalwini w Rzeczypospolitej: połowa XVI – połowa XVII wieku: stadium porównawcze* [Czech Brethren and Calvinists in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: the Second Half of the 16th – Middle 17th Century: Comparative Studies], Lublin, UMCS, 1987.

⁵⁵ D. Rott, *Bracia czeszy w dawnej Polsce: działalność literacka, teksty, recepcja* [Czech Brethren in the Old Poland: Literary Activity, Texts, Reception] Katowice, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, 2002.

⁵⁶ J. Dworzaczkowa, *Bracia czeszy w Wielkopolsce w XVI i XVII wieku* [Czech Brethren in the Greater Poland in the 16th and 17th Centuries], Warszawa, Semper, 1997.

⁵⁷ A. Klemp, *Protestanci w dobrach prywatnych w Prusach Królewskich od drugiej połowy XVII do drugiej połowy XVIII wieku* [Protestants in the Royal Prussia Private Manors from the Second half of the 16th to the Second Half of the 18th Centuries], Gdańsk, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1994.

⁵⁸ Magdalena Luszczynska, *The Polish Brethren Versus the Hutterites: a Sacred Community?*, in "Journal of Early Modern Christianity", 2017, Vol. 4, No 1, p. 21-46.

Central and Eastern Europe was presented in the work *Sketches on the History of the Reformation in Central and Eastern Europe* (1967)⁵⁹ written by an English historian of Polish origin P. Skwarczyński. The features of the expansion, perception, and development of the Reformation ideas in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth were covered in the work *Sown on the Rocks: the Reformation in Poland and Lithuania* (2000)⁶⁰ by the German historian H. Schmidt. Polish Protestant translations of the biblical texts became the focus of the study of the American historian D. A. Frick *Polish Sacred Philology in the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation: Chapters in the History of Controversies (1551-1632)* (1989).⁶¹ The specific features of inter-confessional relations in Polish society of the early modern period were outlined by another American researcher M. Teter in her volume *Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland: A Beleaguered Church in the Post-Reformation Era* (2006).⁶² The British researcher S. P. Ramet in her work *The Catholic Church in Polish History* (2017)⁶³ draws attention to Reformation history events as important turning points and vital existential challenges in the life of the Polish nation, stating that the Counter-Reformation put the Catholic Church on a firmer foundation in Poland. However, it should be noted that the mentioned works accumulated the results of the previous scientific achievements of the Polish historians and developed mostly from the historiography, rather than from the primary source material basis. For Western European and American historians of the Reformation, trained principally on the trail-blazing studies in social history, the Polish Reformation poses somewhat of a problem. The sociological methodology, which has become a standard part of their tool kit for examining the issue, is not of much use in Poland where there was no such thing as popular Reformation in the German or Swiss sense. Without detailed case studies the long overdue re-interpretation of the history of Reformation in Poland cannot be undertaken.

The close genetic linkage of the Polish Reformation with the development of the Reformation movement in Lithuania and the Eastern Slavic lands of the

⁵⁹ P. Skwarczyński, *Szkice z dziejów reformacji w Europie środkowo-wschodniej* [Sketches on the History of the Reformation in Central and Eastern Europe], Londyn, Odnova, 1967.

⁶⁰ C. Schmidt, *Auf Felsen gesät: die Reformation in Polen und Livland* [Sown on the Rocks: the Reformation in Poland and Lithuania], Göttingen, Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2000.

⁶¹ D. A. Frick, *Polish Sacred Philology in the Reformation and the Counter-Reformation: Chapters in the History of the Controversies (1551-1632)*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1989.

⁶² M. Teter, *Jews and Heretics in Catholic Poland: a Beleaguered Church in the Post-Reformation Era*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2006.

⁶³ Sabrina P. Ramet, *The Catholic Church in Polish History*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was confirmed by the studies of Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian authors, in particular, A. Anushkin⁶⁴, R. Degiel⁶⁵, M. Dmitriev⁶⁶, B. Floria⁶⁷, M. Kosman⁶⁸, M. Leidke⁶⁹, S. Podokshyn⁷⁰, G. Williams.⁷¹ In this regard, the analysis of specific perception of the Protestant movement on the Ukrainian lands of Rzeczpospolita was presented by M. Shkribliak and O. Balukh.⁷² Researchers outlined the interconfessional contacts between Lutherans and the higher Orthodox Hierarchs of the East, emphasizing the reaction of the Orthodox Church to the institutional formation of the early Protestant currents. Exploring the issue, historians also stated that the Roman Catholic Church played a decisive role in shaping the Renaissance paradigm of the Polish national culture development.

⁶⁴ А. Анушкин, *На заре книгопечатания в Литве* [At the Dawn of Book-printing in Lithuania], Вильнюс, Минтис, 1970.

⁶⁵ R. Degiel, *Protestanci i prawosławni: patronat wyznaniowy Radziwiłłów birzańskich nad Cerkwią prawosławną w księstwie słuckim w XVII w.* [The Protestants and Orthodox: Religious Patronage of Birzhan Radziwills Over the Church in Sluck Principality in the 17th Century], Warszawa, Neriton, 2000.

⁶⁶ М. В. Дмитриев, *Православие и Реформация: реформационные движения в восточно-славянских землях Речи Посполитой во второй половине XVI в.* [Orthodoxy and the Reformation: Reformation Movements in the Eastern Slavic Lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Second Half of the 16th century], Москва, МГУ, 1990.

⁶⁷ Б. Н. Флоря, *Реформация и контрреформация в странах Центральной Европы (XVI – середина XVII в.)* [Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Central European Countries (16th – Middle of the 17th century)], in *История Европы с древнейших времен до наших дней*, Москва, 1988, Т. 3, p. 299–306.

⁶⁸ M. Kosman, *Reformacja i kontrreformacja w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim w świetle propagandy wyznaniowej* [Reformation and Counter-Reformation in Grand Duchy of Lithuania from the Perspective of Religious Propaganda], Wrocław, Wydawnictwo PAN, 1973.

⁶⁹ M. Liedke, *Od prawosławia do katolicyzmu: ruscy możni i szlachta Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego wobec wyznań reformacyjnych* [From Orthodoxy to Catholicism: Noble Ruscy and Szlachta of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania Towards Reformation Denominations], Białystok, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu w Białymstoku, 2004.

⁷⁰ С. Подокшин, *Реформация и общественная мысль Белоруссии и Литвы: (вторая половина XVI – начало XVII в.)* [Reformation and Social Thought of Belarus and Lithuania: (second half of the 16th – the beginning of the 17th century)], Минск, Наука и техника, 1970.

⁷¹ G. H. Williams, *Protestants in the Ukrainian Lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth*, Cambridge, Ukrainian Studies Fund, 1988.

⁷² Mykola Shkribliak, Oleksii Balukh, *European Reformation and Distinguishing Features of the Institutional Design of the Early Protestant Currents in the Ukrainian Lands*, in “Codrul Cosminului”, XXIII, 2017, No 1, p. 121-138.

We have to underline that no comprehensive research devoted to the process of Confession-building in Poland has been published so far. Despite a large number of publications, no comprehensive attempt was made to introduce the methodological concepts of “Confessionalization” developed by Wolfgang Reinhardt and Heinz Schilling to the field of the early modern Polish studies. Although “Confessionalization” is still a historiographical concept in dispute, it is manifested as one of the leading modern interpretive historiographical categories which can considerably contribute to our present vision of the Reformation history. As a result, the “Confessionalization” theory itself applied to Polish historical realities can be significantly enriched with the new instruments and factual material which could help to provide better understanding of the controversial aspects and “blind spots” of the “Confessionalization” paradigm in general. Another important question concerns the impact that religious divisions in Poland might have had on Polish republicanism, what model of the relationship between the Church and the state did Polish republican thinkers envisaged. Without proper reconstruction of the Polish Reformation history it is impossible both to understand the religious experience and interconnected multi-layered process of fundamental social and political transformations which can be examined in various ways.

In general, recent studies⁷³ of the Polish Reformation have portrayed it as a multidimensional intellectual, social and political movement. Still there are aspects which merit further research and which have not been subjected to thorough analysis. This can help us to renew our present understanding of the Polish Reformation and relevant historical issues. It should be also mentioned that it is necessary not to conduct this research on Poland-Lithuania in isolation but to discuss this phenomenon from a broader European perspective so that national differences could be established.

CONCLUSIONS

The first aim of the study was to present the key stages in the development of the Polish Reformation historiography and to investigate how these stages changed over time. In general we can note that, based on the dominant conceptual approaches and using the chronological principle, it is useful to divide the total array of historical works into five main stages, within which various methods for

⁷³ Magdalena Luszczynska, *op. cit.*; Mykola Shkribliak, Oleksii Balukh, *op. cit.*; Sabrina P. Ramet, *op. cit.*; Jacek Wijaczka, *op. cit.*

the analysis of the historical phenomenon were used: the first stage – the middle of the 17th – first half of the 19th century which was marked by the Protestant historiographical tradition; the next stage – second half of the 19th – the beginning of the 20th century which was characterized by the dominance of the positivist approach to the research of the Polish Reformation; the third stage which covered the first half of the 20th century and was marked by the deepening of the thematic specialization in the research of the Reformation in Poland as a multidimensional historical phenomenon; the fourth period – the 1950s – the second half of the 1960s which was labelled with the dominance of the Marxist approach within Polish historiography and the fifth stage, characterized by the domination of methodological pluralism in Polish Reformation history research, which lasts from the second half of the 20th century to the present.

The second aim of the current research was to explore new horizons for the future studies on the Polish Reformation history. A brief historiographical analysis shows stable interest of many generations of researchers in the study of the Polish Reformation. At the same time, it should be noted that there are a number of issues that need further detailed analysis. Firstly, most of the existing generalizations on the history of the Polish Reformation, created by both Polish and foreign historians, date from the second half of the 20th century, and for this reason, do not take into account recent research results and a large array of source material. On the other hand, in the contemporary historiography, there are no attempts at comprehensive studies of the Reformation in Poland that would have made it possible to compile a complete picture of the phenomenon at the modern scientific level. Secondly, the basic qualitative parameters of the development of the Polish Reformation remain undeveloped. Insufficiently elucidated are its basic aspects which in most cases are mentioned in passing, or receive traditionally low coverage. Polish Reformation movement still awaits modern scholarly attention and research models that might develop out of the contemporary fascination with intellectual history, history of mentalities, gender history, history of concepts, memory studies, micro history and cultural anthropology. One of the most important current tasks is to find a suitable set of methodological instruments for the Polish Reformation research, namely within “Confessionalization” theory which is of great significance for the study of the European Reformation in general. This needs methodological reassessments which will require a new edition of primary sources including documents never yet published.