

History of the Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland

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[with the aid of German/English Dictionary and Microsoft Bing Translator]

Note: Footnote with references to titles of articles and sources will be kept in German since that would be the original language to use in locating any of those quoted documents.

I have placed a page number—example: [page 8]—within the translation to indicate on what page this part can be found in the original book.

Words within [square brackets] are not in the original, but comments by the translator.

Within Protestantism, the word *evangelical* can mean different things to different denominations. Sometimes the word stands alone with the meaning of **Protestant**. But it can also mean those who proclaim the **Gospel**. Other times, it is also used to identify those who profess the **Reformed** theology. At times it is noted as **Evangelical Lutheran**, which means Lutherans who profess the Gospel, but at other times it can refer to a time when there was a merging of the **Reformed and Lutherans**. To avoid confusion, I am going to use the English word **evangelical** whenever that is the German word in the original.

Since this book consists of over 300 pages, I am not going to hold back the release of its translation until all pages have been dealt with. The book contains 17 sections. My plan is to divide the work so that I can make public my progress after every 4 sections.

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by Eduard Kneifel

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Abbreviations for Individual Journals and Calendars

Pos. Ev. Kbl.	=	Posener Evangelisches Kirchenblatt
Die Ev. Diasp.	=	Die Evangelische Diaspora
D. Bl. i. P.	=	Deutsche Blätter in Polen
D. M. i. P.	=	Deutsche Monatshefte in Polen
D. Wiss. Ztsch. F. Polen	=	Deutsche Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift für Polen
U.K.	=	Unsere Kirche
Luthererbe i. P.	=	Luthererbe in Polen
N. Ev. Kztag.	=	Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung
Lodzer Ztg.	=	Lodzer Zeitung
Fr. Pr.	=	Freie Presse
Ev. Kztg.	=	Evangelische Kirchenzeitung
Zw. Ew.	=	Zwiastun Ewangeliczny
Gl. Ew.	=	Glos Ewangelicki
Prz. Ew.	=	Przegląd Ewangelicki
Pos. Ew.	=	Posel Ewangelicki
Str. Ew.	=	Strażnica Ewangeliczna
Hausfr.-Kal.	=	Hausfreund-Volkskalender
Volksfr.-Kal.	=	Volksfreund-Kalender
Kal. Ew.	=	Kalendarz Ewangelicki
Rocz. Ew. 1925	=	Rocznik Ewangelicki 1925
Ref. i. P.	=	Reformation in Polen
Ref. w P.	=	Reformacja w Polsce
Dz. Urz. K.E.=A. w Rz. P.	=	Dziennik Urzędowy Kościoła Ewangelicko-Augsburskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
Luth. Rundschau	=	Lutherische Rundschau
Jahrb. Weichsel-Warthe	=	Jahrbuch Weichsel-Warthe
WuZ	=	Weg und Ziel
Dz. U.R.P.	=	Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
poln.	=	polnisch

Forward

In 1867, the Russian Imperial State Councilor E.H. Busch published his *Contributions to the History and Statistics of the Church and School System of the Evangelical Augsburg Communities in the Kingdom of Poland* (Beiträge zur Geschichte und Statistik des Kirchen- und Schulwesens der Evangelisch-Augsburgischen Gemeinden im Königreich Polen). According to him, valuable material for the writing of the book was provided partly by the parish clergy and partly by the Warsaw Augsburg Consistory. According to the oral testimony of the late preacher Johann Buse, last in Ilow, Superintendent Manitius, who later became General Superintendent, is said to have supported Busch's work with important reports, news and statistics. The work, although long outdated in terms of development and in urgent need of revision and supplementation, has so far been the only coherent, in-depth German publication on the history of the Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland, with special reference to the parish and school system. Busch, who is thus known as the author of similar works in the realm of the Russian state, mentions in the preface to his *Contributions* (Beiträge) that toward the end of the year 1865 he was asked by some of "our co-religionists in the Kingdom of Poland," for a treatise on the Augsburg Church, similar to his *Materials on the History and Statistics of the Church and School System of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregations in Russia* (Materialien zur Geschichte und Statistik des Kirchen- und Schulwesens der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Gemeinden in Russland) to be issued. "In the interest of our Church," he writes, "I felt I could not disregard this request."¹ Despite the large and many gaps of which Busch was fully aware, his work still retains its ecclesiastical historical value. After the irreplaceable loss of the Warsaw Evangelical Augsburg Consistory Archive, which was destroyed in September of 1939 by acts of war, as well as numerous other municipal archives, Busch's work offers a great deal of source material within the framework he himself has drawn.

Furthermore, important for researching the history of the Augsburg Church are the years 1863-1882 and 1898-1914 of the Polish Protestant monthly *Zwiastun Ewangeliczny* (Evangelical Messenger). In my presentation of church history, I deal extensively with the paper and its editors. I owned all the issues of the magazine and knew them very well. Unfortunately, I lost them after 1945 along with my extensive library of church history, as well as several manuscripts of almost completed books, preliminary work on the history of all congregations of the Augsburg Church, as well as on the history of the church itself, among other things. My long-term efforts after 1945 to evaluate the valuable, content-rich monthly magazine *Zw. Ew.*, which contain a lot of material from church history, have not been in vain for my work.

The German publications, such as Angerstein's *Evangelical-Lutheran Church Gazette* (Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenblatt), *Our Church* (Unsere Kirche), *Way and Goal* (Weg und Ziel), *Evangelical Lutheran Vistula Messenger* (Evang.-Luth. Weichselbote), are not on a par with the *Zwiastun Ewangeliczny* from the point of view of church history. Nevertheless, their material is more or less important. The oldest German-Protestant monthly in later Poland was the *Evangelical Church Newspaper* (Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung), founded in 1884 in Bielitz by Doctor of Theology Ferdinand Schur and Doctor of Theology Herman Fritsche and intended for the evangelical congregations. After 1918, it was done by the Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland, and since 1924 it has been edited as the *New Evangelical Church Newspaper* (Neue Evangelische Kirchenzeitung). As its editor, religion teacher Rudolf Czerny in Bielsko put his signature on it, since 1935 with the collaboration of Pastor Gustav Schedler in Lodz (Łódź) for Central Poland. The monthly magazine is also valuable in terms of church history. It was closely connected with the church history of Bielitz and

¹ Page V

with the history of Austrian Protestantism.² [page 8] The November 1934 issue was published as an anniversary issue of the paper on the occasion of its 50th anniversary. It ceased to exist in November of 1940.

After the First World War, the *Rosznik Ewangelicke 1925* (Evangelical Yearbook 1925) appeared in Warsaw in the form of contributions by the Polish Evangelical side. In the field of ecclesiastical history research, it was a welcome and content-rich publication, with the exception of the very brief and incomplete information on the history of the parishes. In a review, Consistory President Glaß described the yearbook as an “Encyclopedia”, but this is to be regarded as an inaccurate, exaggerated definition.³

Prof. Friedrich Siegmund-Schultze gave us an important and comprehensive work in his fifth volume of the *Ekklesia: The Evangelical Churches in Poland* (Die Evangelischen Kirchen in Polen) (A Collection of Self-Presentations of the Christian Churches). Collaborators from the Augsburg Church were, among others: General-Superintendent Doctor of Theology Bursche, Prof. Doctor of Theology Edmund Bursche, Prof. Doctor of Theology Jan Szeruds. In his contribution: *The Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland* (Die Evangelisch-Augsburgische Kirche in Polen), General-Superintendent Doctor of Theology Bursche used on pages 43-72, with certain modifications, in places almost verbatim my material, which I had made available to him according to his wishes.⁴

After 1945, the newspapers published *Way and Goal* (Weg und Ziel), first in Ansbach, then in Hanover, *Homeland Bulletin* (Heimatbote) by Pastor Gerhard Richter in Kiel-Holtenau, *Strażnica Ewangeliczna* (Evangelical Watch), *Posel Ewangelicki* (Evangelical Herald), then the editorship of the *Kalendarz Ewangelicki* (Evangelical Calendar) with articles, reports, necrology, news, among other things, on the history of the Augsburg Church. In the book *The Face of the Banished, Fate and Situation of the Refugee Groups* (Das Antlitz der Vertriebenen, Schicksal und Wesen der Flüchtlingsgruppen), published in 1949 by Prof. Doctor of Theology Herbert Krimm, one of the essays from the pen of Pastor Doctor of Theology Erich Dietrich, now Düsseldorf, from the *Evangelicals from Congress Poland and Volhynia* (Evangelischen aus Kongreßpolen und Wolhynien).⁵ In June of 1953, on behalf of the Relief Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Germans from Poland, its meritorious chairman, Pastor Arthur Schmidt, published the book *German Destiny in Poland* (Deutsches Schicksal in Polen) in Schwabach/Bavaria with a group of collaborators. The publication has a journalistic and popular character. In the *Journal for East Research 1954* (Zeitschrift für Ostforschung 1954), Issue 3, p. 477f., it discussed Doctor Richard Breyer in general terms.

The German evangelical settlements in Volhynia, Lublin and Cholm were rendered lasting services by Dr. Kurt Lück, who wanted to provide them with practical and cultural assistance. His two books on Volhynia and on the Lublin and Cholm lands bear witness to this. Above all, however, he became known for his three major works: *German Reconstruction Forces in the Development of Poland—1934* (Deutsche Aufbaukräfte in der Entwicklung Polens—1934), *The Myth of the German in Polish Folk Tradition and Literature—1938* (Der Mythos vom Deutschen in der polnischen Volksüberlieferung und Literatur—1938), and *German Character and Regulator in the East—1940* (Deutsche Gestalter und Ordner im Osten—1940). Dr. Lück, a child of the Posen [Poznań] region, was killed on 5 March, 1942 near Tscherven.⁶ As early as 1939, Albert Breyer, our meritorious settlement researcher,⁷ died as a

² Kuhn, Walter: *Das Dauere in der Bielitzer Geschichte*. Lippstadt 1961.

³ It has been possible for me to work through the yearbook thoroughly lately.

⁴ In the footnote on p. 46, he also mentions this in a fair way.

⁵ Compare pages 68-74.

⁶ Dr. Ilse Rohode: *Kurt Lück, Stimmen aus dem Osten*, März-Nr. 1952.

Polish reserve officer. At the end of 1940, August Utta, former member of parliament and senator, who also became widely known as an ecclesiastical lay leader and determined opponent of the General Superintendent Dr. Bursche, died in Lodz.⁸ In 1941, our local poet [page 9] Julian Will tragically ended his life.⁹ Dr. of Philosophy Magister Jury (*phil. Mag. iur.*) Oskar Kneifel, the author's youngest brother, wrote about the German school system in central Poland during the First World War. With his death—killed on 6 August, 1943—according to a statement by Dr. Lattermann, German research on the East lost one of its hopes. Research suffered an irreplaceable loss due to the death of Dr. Lattermann, last director of the German University Library in Posen, which fell towards the end of the Second World War (1945).¹⁰ After the collapse in 1945, our poet Sigismund Banek perished in his old homeland.¹¹ The same fate befell Ernst Gollnick, the quiet and prudent head of the library of the Lodz German School and Education Association.¹² In 1957, our cultural historian Karl Ferdinand Grams died in Klein-Gusborn near Dannenberg.

The Calendars fulfilled an important task in our communities. Very popular and widely read in town and country, they were binding agents within the cantorates (*Kantorate*) and parishes (*Parochien*), the dioceses and the church. As such, they strengthened the feeling of togetherness of all co-religionists in the area of the Augsburg Church. From 1883/1884, the *Hausfreunde-Kalender* (Home Friend Calendar, an *Evangelical Lutheran People's Calendar*) published in Warsaw by W. Mietke. From 1890 to 1904, his permanent collaborator was Pastor Josef Rosenberg. During the First World War, the so-called *New Home Friend—Evangelical Lutheran Folk Calendar* (*Neu Hausfreund—Evangelisch-Lutherischer Volkskalender*) was published on behalf of the Warsaw Evangelical Augsburg Consistory. From 1927, the *German-Evangelical People's Friend Calendar* (*deutsche-evangelische Volksfreund-Kalender*) was published in Lodz (publisher Libertas). Since 1887, the evangelical Poles have been editing the *Kalendarz Ewangelicki* (Evangelical Calendar) in Teschen/Schl. And since 1899 the Warsaw *Hausfreund Kalender* (*Przyjacieli Domu*).¹³ Since 1946, only the *Kalendarz Ewangelicki* was published. The *Volhynian Calendar* was also gladly read. All these calendars are valuable in terms of church history.

The German majority of the Augsburg Church had sincere friends and supporters, whose names are mentioned here. From the Evangelical United Church in Posen they were: Superintendent Berthold Herhausen, Superintendent Dr. Arthur Rhode, Dr. Ilse Rhode,¹⁴ Lic. [Academic Degree] Dr. Kammel,¹⁵ Superintendent Steffani (the envisaged successor to General Superintendent Dr. Blau) and Chief Consistory Councilor Nehring. Superintendent Dr. Rhode was the first pastor from Posen, at that time still a German pastor, who was keenly interested in the fate of the evangelical Germans in Congress Poland and wrote a paper about it (see literature).¹⁶ In 1905, he argued with Consistorial Councilor Holtz from Alexandrow in the *Christian World* (*Christlichen Welt*) because of the polonization

⁷ Adolf Kargel und Eduard Kneifel, *Deutschtum im Aufbruch*, S. 294 f.

⁸ *Ibid.* August Utta, p. 282f.

⁹ Julian Will, S. 288. *Volksfr.-Kal.* 1936.

¹⁰ Otto Heiken: *Abschied von Banek und Lattermann*, *Der Kulturwart*, 26. I. 1955. Richard Breyer: *Dr. Alfred Lattermann, ein führender Wissenschaftler unsere Volksgruppe*. *Jahrb. Weichsel-Warthe* 1961, S. 90-93.

¹¹ Same as #10.

¹² *WuZ* 1957, No. 9 and 10.

¹³ Barely 2,000 copies of the *Kal. Ew.* were sold annually by the Warsaw Mietke bookstore. Sales almost always ended with a deficit (*Prz. Ew.*, 1939, No. 6, p. 70).

¹⁴ Harald Kruska: *In memoriam Ilse Rhode*, *Jahrb. Weichsel-Warthe* 1961, S. 44-46.

¹⁵ Ilse Rhode: *Ein Leben fuer Kirche und Volk. Zum Gedenken an Pf. Dr. Richard Kammel*. *Jahrb. Weichsell-Warthe* 1959, S. 57-63.

¹⁶ *WuZ* 1958, Nr. 12: *Ein verdienstvoller Jubilar. Zum 90 Geburtstag von Sup. Dr. A. Rhode.*

tendencies within the Augsburg Church. From the Galician Evangelical Church A. and H.B. [Die Evangelische Kirche Augsburgischen und Helvetischen Bekenntnisses / The Evangelical Church of the Augsburg and Helvetic Confessions]: Superintendent Dr. Zöckler, Lic. Weidauer, “the faithful counselor and career of souls (*Seelsorger*) also of the evangelical Ukrainians.” From the Upper Silesian Evangelical United Church: Church President Dr. Hermann Voß, Kattowice.

[page 10] From the Hanoverian Evangelical Lutheran State Church: Prof. Doctor of Theology Philipp Meyer, the later meritorious South German Church Council (*Oberlandeskirchenrat*) and Lower Saxon church historian. Other warm-hearted patrons were: University Professor Dr. Rendtorff in Leipzig, Prof. Dr. Althaus in Erlangen, Pastor Dr. Bruno Geisler, General Secretary of the Gustav Adolf Association, and Pastor Abner, the long-time director of the Lutheran Church Fund (*Gotteskastens*) for the Poor in Leipzig. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for all your loyalty and encouragement!

Since 1925, I have been engaged in the study of church history. I have been a member of the Posen Historical Society, the Warsaw Association for the Study of the History of the Reformation in Poland, and the Polish Historical Society.¹⁷ At the moment, I am a member of the Historical-Regional (*Landeskundlichen*) Commission for Posen and Germanism in Poland in Marburg on the Lahn. After 1945, I devoted myself to reworking the history of the Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland. The core of my book is the history of the Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland in the form of a summary, to which the literature I use mainly refers. In the annotations, which scientifically underpin and strengthen the whole, the relevant works or journals are mentioned as sources or certain processes are briefly illustrated. Due to the loss of my previously mentioned municipal, settlement, cultural and statistical material, considerable difficulties often arise for my research.

I was born on 14 November, 1896, in Rosterschütz-Władysławow, in the Kalisch region, the son of Eduard Kneifel, a tanner, and his wife Ottilie, née Trankler. From 1907 to 1914, I attended the Russian State Secondary School in Kalisch and then from 1916-18 the German-Polish Gymnasium von Braus in Lodz. In 1919/23, I studied evangelical theology in Leipzig and Rostock. Ordained on 4 November, 1923 in the St. John’s Church in Lodz by General Superintendent Bursche, I worked as vicar at St. Trinitatis in Lodz from 1923-24, then from 1925 to 1939 in the parish of Brzeziny, and finally in Zgierz near Lodz. Since 1953, I have been working in Niedermarschacht on the Elbe. At the end of November 1956, I received my doctorate from the Faculty of Evangelical Theology of the University of Hamburg. The subject of my scientific work was the present story, which I have been able to expand and supplement with new material in recent years. This publication will be followed further by others, the preparatory work of which is already under way.

I would also like to mention that the following come from Rosterschütz: Superintendent and Consistorial Councilor Heinrich Bartsch in Warsaw, Pastor Ernst in Nowydwór, staff member at the *Zw. Ew.*, Prof. Dr. Oskar Bertel, the Polish church historian at the Christian Theological Academy in Chylice near Warsaw, as well as from its predecessor, the former Warsaw Evangelical Theological Faculty. The Evangelical Augsburg Congregation at Rosterschütz-Władysławow was good Lutheran and German.

For reasons of expediency, the footnotes are printed under the text of the book and numbered in sections.

¹⁷ I was admitted to the latter on the recommendation of Prof. Dr. Edmund Bursche. I did not have to apply for membership, nor did I need to fill out certain forms.

The printing of my work was made possible by Prof. Lic. Harald Kruska in Berlin, the Assistance Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Germans from Poland, with its headquarters in Hanover, and the Eastern Church Committee (Ecclesiastical Assistance Committee for the Eastern Banished in Hanover), for which I am sincerely grateful. I would also like to thank Pastor Oskar Krampitz in Bülitz near Lüchow for his kind help with the corrections.

Niedermarschacht on the Elbe, in June of 1962

Eduard Kneifel

Introduction

[Page 11] The Evangelical Church of Augsburg in Poland has grown gradually and continuously. The roots of its beginnings lie in the flourishing time of the Polish Reformation Movement (1550-1560), although it cannot be placed in its great historical context. Since the founding of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Vilnius in 1555, which gave the impetus to the parochial gathering of Lutheran-minded people in the so-called German churches in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and which only after many decades the parishes of Neudorf = Neubruch (1617)¹⁸ and Wengrow (1650), the stream of their historical development was never interrupted. Due to geographical, administrative and political circumstances, a number of congregations, including Vilnius and Neudorf itself, as well as larger ecclesiastical areas, such as Teschen-Schlesien (Těšín-Silesia), were for a long time outside the sphere of life of the Augsburg Church. But the mutual connection was never completely broken.

In all previous depictions of the history of the Church, the preforming and reforming period of Poland is taken into account. This was done, partly for the sake of the uniformity of the religious view of history, but also out of a genuine obligation, because Poland, belonging to the Western European cultural sphere and exposed to its transformations and influences, was simply the mother soil of the religious traditional and the new. In the light of this tension, the development of the Augsburg Church since 1555 stands out all the more clearly and memorably.

The Polish Roman Catholic Church, organized from the West in its origins, gained more and more influence and prestige in the state of partial princes and magnates.¹⁹ Their task of instilling the Polish people with Christian spirit and life was facilitated by the orders of monks, the Teutonic Knights, the Cathedral Chapters (*Domkapitel*), and to some extent also by the medieval German settlement in the East. The Polish scholar F. Bujak tried to deny or trivialize their economic and social merits, which Prof. St. Kutrzeba opposed.

Polish historians, such as Szujkske, Zakrzewske, Bobrzyński, have no proper understanding of the religious and theological questions of the Polish Reformation history in their historical works. In the case of Count Valerian Krasiński, the role of the German element—one thinks not only of the Lutherans, but also of the Socinians, for whom the New Testament was printed in German in Rakow in 1610 (differs from Luther's text)—is overlooked.²⁰ This mistake was retained by General Superintendent Bursche in the new edition of the Krasiński Work. In his publications, Alexander Brückner does not do justice to the Reformation Movement at all in religious terms. For him, it is “passing enthusiasm (*Strohfeuer*)..., the faith of the nobles, a whim of the lords, a particle of freedom, that is, of anarchy.”

¹⁸ Compare Section III 4.

¹⁹ V. Krasinski, *Geschichte des Ursprungs, Fortschritts und Verfalls der Reformation in Polen* S. 1 bis 42 (Gründung und Zustand des Christentums in Polen bis zur Reformation). Leipzig 1841. K. Völker, *Kirchengeschichte Polens*, S. 3f. (Die Einführung des Christentums in Polen) Berlin und Leipzig 1930.

²⁰ K. Völker: *Das deutsche Element in der polnischen Reformation*. Deutsch-Evangelisch III 1912, S. 526-536.

While restricting it only to the religious and cultural spheres, T. Grabowski judges the literature of the 16th and 17th centuries exclusively from a religious point of view [page 12]. Bukowski's presentation is one-sided and unobjective. According to Zivier, the Reformation was a political movement.²¹ Stanisław Kot: *The Political and Social Ideology of the Polish Brethren* (Ref. i. P. 1934) does not take into account the situation "which led to the emergence of social currents in Poland, does not shed light on the social reasons for the division of the dissenters into a larger and smaller community (Kirche). Marek Wajsblum: *The Dithiests of Little Poland* (Ref. i. P. 1928) emphasized that the genesis of the Reformation should not only be sought in foreign influences, but also in the economic and social life of Poland. Z. Kormann: *The Polish Brethren* (Ref. i. P. 1929) tries to explain the anti-Trinitarian Movement from the Polish social-economic conditions. It also emphasizes the differences between the noble and common people adherents of Arianism.²² Even earlier, in the years 1883 to 1900, Lubowicz also emphasized in his works that the Reformation Movement in Poland was the result of social-economic conditions, and that it not only wanted to regulate religious relations, but above all to restructure the Polish state system in the spirit of aristocratic democracy. The president of the Warsaw Consistory, Jakob Glass, was right when he said that the history of the Polish Reformation had to be rewritten. However, without his limitation that only a man "with a Polish brain and a Polish heart" could do this.

Hussitism was far too weak to fill or even renew the Catholic Church from within with its religious heritage. Humanism, on the other hand, was associated with the Polish Reformation Movement. Jan Łaski, Trzeciecki, Lismanini, Abraham Kulva, Wojewódka and others were won over to the Gospel through humanism. In the broad Polish popular strata, Lutheranism was regarded as the German faith, Calvinism as the faith of the nobles, United Brethren (*Brüderunität*) as the Czech faith, and Socinianism as the urban faith. There is no denying that the German population turned to Lutheranism to a greater extent, the Czechs to the United Brethren and the Polish nobility to Calvinism (later also to Socinianism). Nevertheless, the priority was given only to religious and confessional ties, not to linguistic and national ones. Just as Calvinism and Socinianism had German adherents, so did Lutheranism and Polish Brethrenism. The coexistence of linguistically and nationally different groups (Poles, Lithuanians, Germans, Czechs, Italians, Scots, a number of French), the diversity of confessions and church formations testify to the rich abundance of Reformation manifestations in Poland.

Without a doubt, the Reformation Movement was a turning point in the history of the Polish Church. The fact that it failed so quickly and so catastrophically was, of course, due to many factors. In no small part, the Protestants themselves were to blame. With a few laudable exceptions, they lacked the right evangelical life, steadfastness, self-sacrifice, fraternal harmony and cooperation. Moreover, the interest of the nobility in the Reformation was too burdened by class-related, economic, and political aspects, whereby the narrow basis of the new movement was shaken and hollowed out in the long run.²³ It should also be emphasized that Lutheranism did not find any real appeal among the Polish nobility [page 13] because, as a state church, it strengthened the power of the ruler, which the nobility, anxious about its privileges, feared. On the other hand, it did not like the discipline and order of its Bohemian brethren, nor the strict ecclesiastical discipline of Calvinism. The picture of the disintegration of the Reformation is depressingly completed by the anti-Protestant legislation, unfavorable social stratification, by the

²¹ See Literature references.

²² Lukas Kurdyhacha: *Geschichte der Reformation in Polen*. Ref. i. P. 1948—1952, Jahrg. XI, Nr. 41-44.

²³ Edmund Bursche: *Faktoren, die den Verlauf der Reformation in Polen erklären* (poln.). Abdruck aus dem GT. EW. Warschan 1932, 31 S.

incessant oppression of the evangelicals in the Counter-Reformation and beyond until the attainment of religious freedom in 1768/75 and many other things.²⁴

The German colonization, beginning in the 17th century, is a very significant process from the point of view of church history.²⁵ It laid the foundation for the creation of numerous congregations and thus the Evangelical Augsburg Church. The first Lutheran Consistory in Warsaw in 1782 was emphatically called one of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. In many cases, the later Consistories did the same. In its constitutions of 1849 and 1936, the Church professed its allegiance to the U.A.C.

The spirit of brotherly kindness and striving for union was always alive among the Polish Protestants, in spite of the unfavorable conditions. Sandomir's religious discourse in 1570 was exemplary in this respect. On 10 May, 1728, Lutherans and Reformed met in Warsaw under the chairmanship of the Postmaster General von Holtzbring, who was preceded by the reputation of a faithful evangelical, to discuss common concerns and needs. "They unanimously vowed to stand firm by each other, even together, in the future, to call themselves Dissidents, not Reformed or Lutheran, and together to raise the costs of defending their rights".²⁶ This line of union—with full respect for the Lutheran and Reformed confessions—runs from Sandomir in 1570 to the Sielc Union of 1777-1783, then to the Administrative Union of 1828-1849, and to the so-called Vilnius Unification of 1926.

In addition to the striving for union, the synodal principle, which prevailed on Lutheran soil in the East in the 16th century and maintained continuously until the end (1939), is characteristic of our ecclesiastical development. While in Germany the evangelical churches were subordinated by territorialism to the respective sovereign as supreme bishop (*summus episcopus*) and thus lost their independence until the 19th and 20th centuries,²⁷ the synodal principle remained in force in our country as it was before. This expressed the will to let the Church decide all the affairs of the Church herself, as far as possible, and in this way to preserve her independence. In a foreign religious and often hostile environment, the Lutherans were more than ever left to their own devices and were therefore compelled [page 14] to create from the requirements of their ecclesiastical situation the forms and orders that were appropriate and necessary for them (Cantor, Cantor Board, Cantor Congregation, Elders, Church College, Synod).

The lack of faith has always caused the dissidents to break with each other. Since Sigismund III, the oppression increased with a national point [of a joke]: Lutheran and German, Catholic and Polish were equated (Lutheran = Niemiec, Catholic = Polak). The Catholic Church favored this equation. The existence of Protestant Poles was perceived as something disturbing and nonsensical. The common confession of the Protestant Poles and Germans in the country already aroused the hatred of that faith of the Catholic Poles. The antagonism became even greater when Poland was involved in wars with Protestant powers, such as Sweden and Brandenburg from 1655 to 1660. As a result of the partitions,

²⁴ "It is also difficult to agree with a sentence that from the 16th to the 18th centuries the Protestant confessions (in Poland) were warring churches under the cross" (W. Lemański, *Neue deutsche Arbeiten über den Protestantismus in Polen*, Str. Ew. 1960, S. 124; Statement on Adam Schwarzenberg's contribution: "Besonderheiten der polnischen Reformation: in "Kirche im Osten" 1958, S. 52-64). It should be said that the difficult situation of Warsaw Protestantism from 1525 to 1766, the history of the Krakau community, the fate of the Wangrow, Lublin (Piaski!) and Vilnius evangelicals make the cross under which the Protestants in Poland lived more visible than ever. Or were the Reformed or Bohemian Brethren (Comenius!), not to mention the Socinians, not churches "under the cross"? It is really difficult to read the sentence just quoted!

²⁵ Walther Kuhn, *Geschichte der deutschen Ostsiedlung in der Neuzeit*. BD. I. 1955.

²⁶ Similar efforts in 1706, 1715, 1729, 1733, 1755, also in 1719 at the Synod of Kieydany.

²⁷ Kurt Dietrich Schmidt, *Grundriß der Kirchengeschichte*. Göttingen 1954, S. 509f., 532.

confessional and national hatred, which was made worse by the arbitrariness of the administration of justice until the attainment of freedom of religion in 1768/75, experienced a further increase. In the period from 1835 to 1845, more peaceful relations seemed to be emerging between Poles and Germans in the country. But soon after, life together deteriorated again.

The immigrant Lutheran colonists were not always satisfied with their situation. There is a report of a return migration from central Poland, from the Swabian colony of Wilhelmstal or Augustopol near Chodecz, under the leadership of the mentally very agile and active Saxon August Immisch. At that time, by the king's graciousness, the colonists from Alt-Ilvesheim, from Schwentz near Konin and from elsewhere were also supposed to migrate back. The reasons given were: the difficulty of settling in, the suffering after the abolition of Prussian rule, the inadequate church provisions, economic hardship. There were about 1,300 people who were thinking of returning to their old homeland.²⁸

In Volhynia, the church was a popular factor of the first order.²⁹ The church's interest here was anchored in a deep religious feeling. By the co-ordination of Volhynia with central Poland by virtue of the decree of the Ministry of Culture of 31 October, 1921, the Volhynians were, of course, affected in their own life. The spiritual, cultural and national leader of the Volhynian German ethnic group was Dr. Alfred Kleindienst. Born on 4 November, 1893 in Łuzk, he studied evangelical theology in Dorpat from 1912 to 1916. In 1917 he was a vicar in Tsarskoye Sjeło; from 1918 to 1921, he was a pastor in Gałka on the Volga; from 1921 to 1939, he was a pastor in Łuzk; from 1939 to 1945, Chief Consistory Councilor and Spiritual Director of the Consistory Authority in Litzmannstadt (Łódź); from 1945 to 1948, a "war criminal" in captivity;³⁰ from 1949 on, second pastor at St. Anne's Church in Augsburg; and, since 1958, Bavarian Church Council. When he came to Łuzk in 1921, Dr. Kleindienst began to work there as the third pastor in Volhynia (Rożyszcze, Tuczyn and Łuzk). By 1937, there were already eight preachers in Volhynia. According to the Ecclesiastical Law of 1936, the congregations of Dubno and Józefin were to be added to the eight existing congregations (Rożyszcze, Włodzimierz, Tuczyn, Łuzk, Równe, Torczyn, Kostopol and Kowel). In addition, the congregations in Łuzk, Rożyszcze and Włodzimierz were to receive vicars.

The Private School Act of 1932 prompted the Volhynian parishes to rebuild their elementary school system.³¹ Of the 80 Cantorate Schools [page 15] in 1932, only 29 survived. In 1937, there were already 52 seminary-trained teachers working in the Volhynian school system with a number of Cantors. Of the approximately 6,500 school-age children, only 2,251 attended German private schools, about 3,000 children attended Polish state schools, and about 1,285 attended no school at all.³²

In church life, especially in central Poland and elsewhere, Pastor Gustav Schedler came to prominence in Łódź. Born on 23 December, 1893 at Gozdawa near Radom as the son of a teacher and cantor, he

²⁸ D. M. i. P., Sept/Okt. 1936: A. Pokrandt: Deutsche Rückwanderung aus Mittelpolen n. 1815.

²⁹ Alfred Kleindienst, Kirche in Wolhynien..., D. M. i. P. 1937, S. 501f. By the same author: Die evangelische Kirche in Wolhynien, Jahrb. Weichsel-Warthe 1962, S. 70-78.

³⁰ His case is reserved for a later account.

³¹ Reinhold Henke, Die Neuordnung des deutschen Schulwesens in Wolhynien, Volksfr.-Kal. 1936.

³² The reason why the school system is treated so extensively and in detail in this book is that the church and the school were closely connected and worked together. From 1918 to 1939, the German Protestant school system had a difficult time as a result of the pressure from the school authorities to Polonize and declined catastrophically. In the last decade before 1939, General Superintendent Bursche sought to extend his influence to the private higher education system in Germany. Through Polish-Protestant (*polnisch-evangelische*) school directors, he promoted Polish evangelicalism. Through his connections, Polish-Evangelical school councils were sent to districts with a high percentage of German population.

studied theology in Leipzig in the years 1917/21.³³ Afterward, he was religion teacher at the Lodz German Secondary School (*Gymnasium*); in 1924, he was elected as the second pastor of the St. Trinitatis Congregation in Lodz. He worked there continuously until 1945, most recently as its first pastor in 1940. After 1945, he found a new field of activity in Bavaria, where he served as the second pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation in Würzburg until 1962. In 1954, he was also awarded the title of a Church Councilor. He has always had a warm interest in the mission to the Jews.

In the same way as Pastor Gustav Schedler, Pastor Adolf Doberstein in Lodz rendered considerable services to the German majority of the Augsburg Church. He was born on 15 October, 1895, in Michelowo near Bialystok and studied evangelical theology in Göttingen and Leipzig from 1919 to 1923. Ordained on 4 November, 1923 in the Church of St. John in Łódź, he worked here as a deacon from 1925, then as second pastor from 1929, and finally as first pastor from 1940 to 1945. From 1940 to 1945, he was also Superintendent of the Church Circuit (*Kirchenkreises*) of Lodz-Stadt (Litzmannstadt). From 1923 onwards, Pastor Doberstein was particularly concerned with the formation of a rising generation of German-minded theologians.³⁴ He also tried to train teachers for our Łódź German Secondary School. He rendered outstanding services to the establishment of the St. Johannis Hospital in Lodz. In the years 1926/28, he was editor of the monthly newspaper *Weg und Ziel*.

The Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland had a distinctly diaspora character. Its members did not form confessionally closed territorial groups, as for example was the case on a much larger scale in Germany, but lived scattered throughout the country among Poles, Ukrainians, Belarusians, Russians, Jews, Lithuanians and Czechs. The contact with people of different ethnicities and religions, conditioned by the reality of living together in a state and [page 16] by the consequent conflict of relations, also required Lutherans to be considerate of other fellow citizens and to respect their rights and concerns. Growing up in such a national and confessional environment and shaped by it, the life of the Church took place in constant, reciprocal acceptance and giving, in self-assertion and verification, in forms of tolerance and balance. As a numerically weaker minority, the evangelicals were already dependent on peaceful agreement and cooperation with all citizens. And if, among the Polish and German Lutherans, even the linguistic antagonism within the church expanded into a national conflict with all its destructive consequences, this fact can only be explained in principle by the fact that the Augsburg Church became a political issue because of the secular spirit that had broken into it. What was lacking was the pure Christian attitude which, on the basis of the Gospel, would have embraced and cared for both ethnic groups with the same love in the one common Church. It cannot be the task of a church to consciously Polish or Germanize or otherwise assimilate. Rather, it must respect, esteem and take seriously all its members in their language and ethnicity. Any ideological objectives must not be to the detriment of a linguistic or ethnic group, or even to “sanctify” depopulation (*Entvolkung*).

If one surveys the whole development of the Augsburg Church, one cannot avoid the fact that it had been a state church, an ethnic church and also a free church, with its complex structure. She was

³³ During his time as a student in Leipzig, student of theology Schedler founded the Association of German Students Abroad. This provided the impetus for the establishment of the same associations at all universities in Germany. With the then students Karl Thalheim (now Univ.-Prof. in Berlin-West), Eduard Kneifel (author) and Luig (died in a camp after 1945), he founded the Central Association of German Students Abroad in Leipzig.

³⁴ To this end, he taught a number of young men, about 15, in his Lodz apartment and prepared them for later training. Some of them subsequently worked as pastors in the Augsburg Church, others in the same capacity in the Lutheran Free Church or as teachers at the German Secondary School in Lodz.

1. State Church, which, however, in view of the lenient handling of state supervision, almost never led to interference with its inner ecclesiastical life;³⁵
2. Ethnic Church, because, intimately connected with the life of the people of the church, it took an intimate part in their weal and woe, so that belonging to it was a self-evident fact for each of its members.
3. Free Church, because it was maintained mainly by voluntary contributions and its members made great personal sacrifices for the construction of churches, pastor and congregation houses, charities and other institutions, and many others.

In the Evangelical Augsburg Church, the high-ranking military played an important role. Count Alexander Stanislaus von der Goltz was the patron of the Protestants during the time of the partitions. General von Rüdiger earned merit for the dissolution of the Union from 1828 to 1849. Generals held the important office of Consistory President during the Russian period. High officers and administrative officials, for example, in Wengrow (General-Major Baron Nikolaus von Korff II), Radom (the German Balt, Governor Baron von Oppermann), Kielce (General von Tutschek) and others rendered outstanding services to the above-mentioned communities.

The names of all Consistory Presidents are recorded here for posterity: Julius Alexander von Krusenstern, Wirkl State Councilor (1849-1863) (died 1888 in Dojlidy, Lublin Government); General-Lieutenant Rudolf von Minckwitz (1864-1877) (died in St. Petersburg in 1882); Nikolai Karl Gregor Baron von Krüdnder, General of Infantry (1878-1890) (died in Warsaw, 1 February, 1891); General-Engineer Wladimir Burmann (1891-1909) (died 29 March, 1909 in Warsaw); Baron Theodor von der Ropp, member of the Warsaw Court Chamber (1909-1915); Royal Prussian District Administrator von Thaer (1915-1916); Count von Posadowsky-Wehner (1916-1917); Loycke, Royal Prussian [page 17] Senior Government Councilor (1917-1918); Jakob Glass, Judge of the Supreme Court of Poland and Notary (1918-1936); Bishop Dr. Bursche (1937-1939).³⁶

Of the heads of the Chancery of the Consistory, are mentioned among others: State and Consistory Councilor Julius von Kweisser, who behaved impolitely towards the Baptists (died 1874); Consistory Councilor Eduard von Hoerschelmann, who from 1867 to 1899 was “a pillar of our then Consistory” (died 4 January, 1904 in Warsaw); Samuel Mücke, who was completely absorbed in his long-term activity and died shortly after the First World War; Gustav Jeute, the right-hand man of the General Superintendent Dr. Bursche in the external administrative service.

The deliberate repetition of the failed Polish Reformation of the 16th century in modern times was the hallmark of the church’s development from 1863 to 1939. The two exponents of this passionate, tough effort—Pastor Dr. Leopold Otto and General Superintendent D. Bursche—did everything in their power to come closer to this goal. However, the desired repopulation of the German majority of the Church, which was opposed there, burdened national struggles for direction, a secularization and politicization of church life. This was most acutely expressed in the Ecclesiastical Law of 1936.³⁷

³⁵ The short period from 1936 to 1939 does not change the overall judgment. Nor are individual measures taken by Russian authorities.

³⁶ The author refers to him as a bishop because he was confirmed as such by the Polish government. The German majority of the Augsburg Church did not have the opportunity to comment on his candidacy for bishop, that is, to approve or reject it. Compare Sect. XV.

³⁷ Compare Section XV

The evangelical Poles have spoken and written much about the evangelization of their Catholic compatriots. But it was not discussed at a synod or even serious attempts made in this direction. In Galicia, Dr. Zöckler did not politicize. Although the Ukrainians knew that he was German and that his Lesser Poland Church A.u.H.B. was German in national terms, many of them nevertheless turned to Protestantism. They were attracted by the power and truth of the gospel they had come to know and love there.³⁸

The Evangelical Augsburg Church in Poland was numerically the strongest of all the Protestant churches in the country. On 1 January, 1938, it had 481,994 members. In 1936, the United Evangelical Church in Posen and Pomerania had 290,450 souls in 400 congregations with about 200 pastors. The United Evangelical Church in Polish-Upper Silesia has about 30,000 souls in 22 congregations with 22 pastors.³⁹ According to a private estimate, the Evangelical Church A.u.H.B. in Galicia (Lesser Poland) had 33,220 souls in 23 congregations with 30 clergy, 87 evangelical schools with 100 teachers, two secondary schools and the Stanislaw Institutions (500 inhabitants). The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Posen and Pomerania, the so-called Old Lutherans, had a soul count of about 4,000. The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Lodz (with all its affiliated congregations) had a total of 12,000 members.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the Polish Reformed Church in Warsaw had an estimated 10,000 and the Polish Reformed Church in Vilnius, in eleven small congregations, had the same number.⁴¹ The latter was financially more independent than its [page 18] Warsaw sister church and proud of its past (tradition, privileges, and others.) dating back to the time of the Reformation. There was a tense relationship between the two Reformed churches.

In addition to the eight evangelical churches in Poland, the Ukrainian Reformed Church was the ninth. On 15 September, 1935, through impetus of the Ukrainian Alliance in America, the Independent Ukrainian Reformed Church was established in Poland with Wasyl Kusiv as bishop. Thirty-eight congregations with 13 ordained ministers were constituted. The Lutheran Ukrainians placed themselves under the patronage of the Lesser Poland Church A.u.H.B. Superintendent Dr. Zöckler and Lic. Weidauer supported the Ukrainians' turn to the gospel with words and deeds. The division of the hopeful Evangelical Movement among Ukrainians has greatly damaged its further spread.

The Polish Mariavite Church [Independent Christian Church that emerged from the Catholic Church of Poland] numbered 100,000 souls, 77 churches and over 100 preaching stations.⁴² Its founder was Maria Franziska Kozłowska (1862-1921). Jan Maria Kowalski was appointed Archbishop, whose so-called mystical marriages and other transgressions caused much confusion. After being relieved of his duties, Kowalski died in a German concentration camp after 1939. To this day, the religious center of the Mariavite Church is Płozk on the Vistula River. Superintendent Dr. Rhode took care of the Mariavites and wrote a book about them. He was highly respected in their circles. The author personally knew

³⁸ Dr. Zöckler died on 18 September, 1949, at the age of 82, in Stade, where he had been taken after his escape.

³⁹ They are not included in the number of pastors of the Augsburg church.

⁴⁰ According to Pastor Malschner, which was not entirely accurate.

⁴¹ Both churches did not give exact figures. Compare Ekklesia Band V: Die evangelischen Kirchen in Polen, S. 90-94, S. 108/9. In 1957, the Reformed had 5,000 souls in five congregations with five pastors.

⁴² The Mariavites are now divided into two directions and together number 25,000 to 30,000 members in 25 congregations with the same number of clergy. In addition, Methodist 15,000 souls in 100 congregations with 64 pastors; Baptists 2,500 baptized and 3,500 unbaptized in 60 congregations with 40 preachers; Evangelical Christians (Pentecostal Movement, and others.) 5,000 adherents; Old Catholics 35,000 in 48 congregations with 52 priests. Informationsblatt 1957, No. 6; Hanfried Krüger, Die kirchliche Lage in Polen. According to Dr. O. Bartel, Protestantismus in Polen, pp. 10 f., the Methodists number about 6,000 souls, the Adventists as many, the Polish Catholic Church about 60,000, the Greek Orthodox about 400,000.

Bishops Bucholz and Próchniewski. The Polish National Church, which was free of Rome and introduced here by America, and whose exact number of souls is not known at that time, was divided into two directions: a Catholic Church and a Catholic Church sympathetic to the Greek Orthodox Church.⁴³

According to the census of 1931, out of a total population of 32,192,936 inhabitants in Poland (of which 22,208,076 or 69.1% were Polish natives), the proportion according to the denominations was: Roman Catholic 20,670,100 (65%), Greek Catholic 3,336,200 (10.4%), Greek Orthodox 3,762,500 (11.8%), Mosaic (Jews) 3,113,900 (9.8%), Protestants 835,285 (2.6%).

Thus, in 1932, the Roman Catholic Church in Poland numbered about 21 million souls. While it received 21 million złoty [Polish currency] in state subsidies, that is, one złoty per head of its constituents the evangelicals accounted for only one-fifth in the same proportion. Here, too, the Catholic character of the Polish state was clearly evident.⁴⁴

In 1934, the number of evangelical churches in Poland was 827.⁴⁵ For every 1,644 evangelicals, there was one place of worship. The Catholic Church had 5,918 houses of worship and chapels, or an average of one place of worship for every 3,920 Catholics. The Greek [page 19] Orthodox had 2,076 churches, that is, one church for every 1,644 inhabitants. The total number of Orthodox people in the Dioceses (*Eparchies*) of Warsaw-Cholm, Grodno, Vilnius, Polesie and Volhynia, in 1932, was 3,445,000. The number of congregations is 1,428. At present, there are about 400,000 believers, 200 congregations and 207 clergy in Ethnic Poland. The Greek Catholics had 3,151 churches, that is, one place of worship for every 1,145 believers. The Mohammedans had 16 mosques at their disposal.

Nationally, of the 35 million population of Poland in 1939, Poles were 21.5 million, Ukrainians 6.5 million, Jews 3.5 million, White Russians (White Ruthenians) 2.5 million, Germans 1 million. In addition, smaller groups of Russians, Lithuanians and Czechs.

⁴³ For the Polish National Church, the Zwiastun Ewangeliczny (Pastor Michelis) began in easy circumstances. After the death of Pastor Piechocinski, he himself administered his Polish National Church congregation. The new pastor, Naumiuk, was introduced to his office by Michelis, the 2nd pastor of the Augsburg congregation in Warsaw.

⁴⁴ Ludolf Müller, Die katholische Einstellung des polnischen Staates. Beiheft 10 der Zeitschrift "Die Ev. Diasp."

⁴⁵ Pos. Ev. Kbl., 1933/34, S. 470.

I. Poland Pre-Reformation Time

When the Christian mission chose Poland as its field of activity, it emerged from its national darkness into the light of historical reality. In 966, shortly after his marriage to the Bohemian princess Dubrawka, Mieszko I, Duke of Poland, from the Piast dynasty family, allowed himself to be baptized. Soon after, the first missionary diocese was established in Posen with Bishop Jordan at its head. His successor from 982 to 1012 was the German Unger.⁴⁶ While the Bishopric (*Bistum*) of Posen was still dependent for a while on the Archbishopric (*Erzbistum*) of Magdeburg, which was founded in 968, for the Christianization of the Slavs; in the year 1000, [Holy Roman] Emperor Otto III made a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Adalbert in Gnesen (*Gniezno*) and gave rise to the foundation of the Archbishopric of Gnesen and the bishoprics in Krakau (*Kraków*), Breslau and Kolberg (*Kolobrzeg*). This laid the foundation for an independent Polish church with a government political impact.

At the time of Bolesław I the Brave (*Chrobry*) (992-1025), missionary work began among the pagan Prussians (*Pruzzen*).⁴⁷ The second missionary work undertaken for Poland was that of Pomerania in the 12th century, followed by that of Lithuania and Samogitia [ancient Lithuanian name for the region's lowland] as the third. From 1386 onwards, after Władysław Jagiełło's conversion to Christianity, the emissaries of the Church had been proselytizing there.⁴⁸

Chrobry strove for the political independence of his country from the German Empire (coronation in 1025) and ecclesiastical independence through definite alignment with Rome. In spite of this desire, Poland always oriented itself towards the West, from where it had received the new faith and to which it knew itself to belong as the "outer wall of Christianity" and, thanks to its mediating role, formed a bridge between East and West.

Poland's decline in all areas under the partial princes (*Teilfürsten*) provided the impetus for German colonization in the 13th and 14th centuries. Through them, the country, which had been devastated and deserted by Tatar invasions, was restored, villages and cities were founded under German law, and new opportunities for development were opened up for trade and industry. Of the medieval towns, the following were granted German privileges: Losen in 1253, Krakau in 1257 (St. Mary's Church with the famous altar by Veit Stoß, Tapisstry Halls {*Tuchhallen*} [medieval massive structure in the middle of the central market]), Leslau-Włocławek before 1237, Kalisch in 1260 (1282), Lublin in 1317/1342, Sandomir in 1255 (1286), Płozk in 1237, Lemberg [Lviv] in 1356 and Kamenz in Podolia in 1374.

[page 20] As early as 1334, Warsaw was a city under German privilege with a bailiff (*Vogt*).⁴⁹ In 1387, Lodz received German privilege as a village and became a city in 1423. The traces of medieval Germanism can be found in all districts of Poland.⁵⁰

Among the clergy, Gregory VII's idea of religion gained ground, which in turn strengthened his self-confidence immensely and led to a reorganization of relations between church and state. The waves of

⁴⁶ Martin Kage (Karl Grams), *Einiges über die Verdienste der Deutschen um die Christianisierung Polens*. D. B. i. P., 1924, 1. Jahrg., Heft 5, S. 209f. Ferner: Gerhard Sappok, *Deutsche Aufbaukräfte in der Christianisierung Polens*, D. M. i. P., 1936, Heft 6.

⁴⁷ K. Völker, *Kirchengeschichte Polens*, S. 51-59. Berlin und Leipzig 1930.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, S. 85-88.

⁴⁹ Kurt Lück, *Deutsche Aufbaukräfte in der Entwicklung Polens*, S. 31, 35, 37, u.a.

⁵⁰ The German medieval colonization, despite much research, has not yet been fully made clear in its entire development, as well as in its abrupt descent and deterioration. What we know about it so far is still very insufficient.

the German Investiture Controversy also swept over to Poland, where an open conflict broke out between Bolesław II the Bold (1058-1079) and the Bishop of Krakau Stanisław Szczepanowski, who lost his life on 11 April, 1079. There can be no doubt that in Bishop Szczepanowski the church opposed the ruler as a factor of power and asserted its claim to co-determination in the realm of the state.⁵¹ His death as a martyr, as well as his canonization in 1254 and his elevation to national sainthood, greatly enhanced the reputation of the Church.

Under Kasimir I, the monastic and religious system was further expanded. The many settlements date back to the Benedictines. In 1126, the rapidly expanding Premonstratensians founded their first abbey, Kirchdorf near Kalisch. Both Orders were surpassed by the Cistercians, who founded the Monastery of Lond (*Land*) in central Poland in 1145, which remained under German rule continuously until 1553.⁵²

Kasimir the Great (1333-1370), who was assisted by the Archbishop of Gnesen Jarosław Skotnicki, obtained the appointment of Bishop Antonius as Metropolitan of Halicz for the Greek Orthodox population in Rotreußen, which he had conquered in 1349, later Eastern Galicia, from the Patriarch of Constantinople. In doing so, he separated the new acquisition from Moscow in terms of church policy. In 1367, he established the Armenian bishopric in Lemberg, just as he granted tolerance and legal protection to the various religious communities. He continued to represent the interests of the Catholic Church. Consequently, in the Middle Ages, Poland was the only country in which two churches were recognized by state law and had equal rights. He restricted the rights of the firmly established Germans in the Jurisdiction in such a way that he founded an Appeals Court for them in the Royal Castle of Krakau instead of the Foreign Home Courts in Magdeburg and Halle.

With Władysław II Jagiełło, the Jagiełło era in Polish history from 1386 to 1572 began. The union of Lithuania with Poland led to the emergence of a great power in the East, the importance of which radiated far and wide. As King of Poland (after Hedwig's death in 1399) and Grand Prince of Lithuania, Jagiełło tried to solve the difficulties in both parts of the empire by granting new privileges to the nobility. In the Treaty of Vilnius-Radom in 1401, he established the union of his countries in the sense that after his death the succession to the throne was to be jointly regulated by representatives of the nobility of Poland and Lithuania.

The new empire's relations with the Teutonic Order of Knights, which Konrad of Mazovia called into the country in 1226, got worse from year to year. The decisive battle between them ended on 15 July, 1410, at Tannenberg-Grunwald with the terrible defeat of the German Knighthood. The Second Peace of Thorn in 1466 sealed the final demise of the Order. With the loss of its independence [page 21] it lost Pomerania, Kulm, Elbing and Marienburg. Only East Prussia with Königsberg remained as a fief to it. While the bishoprics of Ponesania and Samland were left to it, the bishopric of Ermland [an historical and ethnographic region in northern Poland] came directly under the Polish crown. Danzig [Gdańsk] recognized the supremacy of the Polish king as early as 1454.

Jagiełło earned a lasting merit for the Krakau College (*Hochschule*), which Kasimir the Great had established in 1364 in the form of a general education (*Generalstudiums*). According to the numerical composition of the students, it was a predominantly German university around the middle of the 15th century.⁵³

⁵¹ M. Bobrzyński, Dz. P. w. Z., Bd. 1, S. 148.

⁵² Eduard Kneifel, Die evang.-augsbургischen Gemeinden der Kalischer Diösesse. 1. Bd., S. 248.

⁵³ Franze, Herbert: Herkunft und Volkszugehörigkeit der Krakauer Studenten des 15. Jahrhunderts. D. M. i. P., Juli 1938, S. 16-41.

Religious currents have always been popular in Poland. Thus, the Flagellants (*Geißler*) spread here (1261 and 1349), who supposedly held a synod in Kalisch. In addition to them were also the Waldenses, who had a settlement near Krakau at the beginning of the 12th century, the Brothers of the Free Spirit, the Beguines and the Beguards.⁵⁴ A far greater danger to Catholicism than all these currents was Hussitism. From Bohemia, which was related in language and ancestry, it penetrated Poland and gained sympathy. Jagiełło therefore issued the Wielun Edict of 9 April, 1424, which aimed to eradicate Hussitism. Numerous goblets (*Kelchner*) died a martyr's death in the 15th century. The best known was the case of the Hussite-minded landlord Abraham von Bentschen. The eminent statesman and bishop of Krakau, Zbigniew Oleśnicki (died 1455), stood out as a resolute opponent of the "Bohemian heresy".⁵⁵ Through the interaction of ecclesiastical and state factors, Hussitism was eradicated. But as a religious movement, it primarily stirred up the aristocratic circles and made them receptive to non-Catholic doctrines and concerns. As late as 1499, the cleric Adam from Redziejow was burned at the stake. Jan Ostroróg (died 1501) in his *Monumentum pro rei publicae ordinatione* and Bernhard, from Lublin, were influenced by the Hussite.

Polish Humanism⁵⁶ proved to be favorable to the creation of the conditions for the spread of the Reformation in Poland. In Baron (*Burggrafen*) Johann Boner of Krakau, who was considered the Minister of Finance and advisor to King Sigismund I, and in Bishop Peter Tomicki of Krakau, he found active patrons and promoters. In addition to them, he also had a support in Queen Mother Bona, who attracted Italian artists and scholars to her court in Karkau. In 1490, Konrad Celtes founded a Humanist League in Krakau, the *Literaria Sodalitas Vistulana*. Andreas Trzeciecki's Humanist Circle was formed here in 1542.⁵⁷ Together with Lorenz Corvinus, Celtes committed himself to the study of Greek.

Wittenberg and Basel, where the great humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam worked, were the two popular foreign universities of the Polish youth. Frycz-Modrzewski's works were printed in Basel. From here came to Poland the anti-Trinitarians Ochino, Stancaró and also Sozzini, Laelius and Faustus. A Dłuski studied in Basel, whose mother exchanged letters with Calvin and Bullinger, and Łasicki-Lasitius, the well-known Polish humanist and later historian of the Bohemian Brethren, the sons of the pro-Reformation nobles Jan Ostroróg, Lubomirski, Słupecki, Ossoliński, [page 22] Kiszka, Trecius, and many others. The German artists Veit Stoß, Jakob and Andreas Dürer came, more than likely through the invitation of Boner, to Krakau, the foster-city of Polish Humanism, which can be traced back to Italian and German humanism. Albrecht Dürer seems to have been in Krakau as well. Veit Stoss, who visited the Polish capital for the first time in 1463, settled in Krakau in 1477. The powerful, rich councilors entrusted the Nüremberg master with the execution of the wonderful high altar in St. Mary's Church.⁵⁸

Humanism influenced the spiritual (*geistige*) life of Polish intellectuals. This was clearly expressed in the well-known work of the Posnan Castellan Jan Ostroróg: *Monumentum pro rei publicae ordinatione*. He demanded in it, among other things, the elevation of royal power, the subordination of ecclesiastical power to the state, the taxation of the clergy, and so forth. These demands revealed the internal tensions within Polish Catholicism. As long as Humanism only criticized, it was allowed to happen. But as soon

⁵⁴ Dobrowolski, Kasimir: Die ersten religiösen Sekten in Polen. Ref. i. P. 1924, Nr. 11-12, S. 161-202.

⁵⁵ M. Bobożyński, Dz. P. w Z., Bd. 1, S. 224-227.

⁵⁶ D.B.i.P., 1927, S. 541f.

⁵⁷ Mayer-Kaindl n. Pirchegger: Geschichte und Kulturleben Österreichs. 2. Bd., S. 157-158. Verlag W. Braumüller Wienn-Stuttgart.

⁵⁸ Julius Kohte, Die Bildwerke des Veit Stoß in Polen, Ostdeutsche Monatshefte, 1927, Nr. 12, S. 1091-1101. Ibid: Leo Koszella, Ein Besuch im polnischen Nürnberg, S. 1106-1111.

as he began to advance from the sphere of criticism to that of the practical realization of his demands and proposals, he met with resistance. In any case, he clarified the contradictions within the intellectual circles of Poland, exposed the defects of the Church and prepared the way for critical and autonomous thinking. In doing so, he made an important contribution to the Reformation Movement.

It is characteristic that biblical thoughts always moved hearts here and there in the country even before Luther. Thus, in 1515, the clergyman Bernard of Lublin expressed doubts about the teaching of the Church and called for a return to the Bible.⁵⁹ The dawn of the Reformation in Poland, prepared by Hussitism and Humanism, as well as by the needs and requirements of the overall situation at that time, was proclaimed.

II. The Reformation in Poland

1. Its Development from 1518 to 1573

A. The Beginnings from 1518-1548 to the Emergence of Evangelical Congregations and Churches

The German Reformation also found favorable ground in Poland.⁶⁰ As early as 1518, the former Dominican monk Jakob Knade preached in Danzig against Rome and the Pope. In 1522, the famous Bishop of Posen, Peter Tomicki, the Bishop of Krakau, complained about the penetration of the “Lutheran sect” into Posen. From 1529 onwards, its influence increased even more thanks to the activity of the humanist Christoph Hegendorf (Hegendorfer), who, until 1535, was a teacher at the Academy (*Gymnasium*) founded by Bishop Jan Lubrański in 1519. After his dismissal, which was carried through by his Catholic opponents, he finally became superintendent in Lüneburg, where he died in 1540.⁶¹ In Posen, Andreas Samuel and Jan Seklucian, [page 23] the first publisher of the New Testament in Polish and the author and disseminator of Polish-Evangelical literature, were also zealous in promoting the Gospel. According to the latest research, Seklucian was only the publisher, while Stanisław Murzynowski can be regarded as the first translator of the New Testament into Polish.⁶²

As early as 1525, thanks to the mediation of Albrecht d. Ä (the Elder), the new doctrine was established in Vilnius (*Wilna*), being proclaimed from the pulpit of St. Anne’s Church.⁶³ In many other cities, which also had a strong in agreement German population, parts of the German citizenry joined Lutheranism. Linguistically and ideologically related to it, the German middle class was the bearer of Lutheran ideas and aspirations in the Polish cities in the early period.

In the above-mentioned Royal or Polish Prussia, later West Prussia, with the towns of Thorn, Elbing, and Marienburg, people also leaned towards the Reformation. The development was favored by the privileged position of this area. The German cities in Royal Prussia were more independent and influential, and kept their evangelical congregations even during the Counter-Reformation. In contrast to the aristocratic caste, the legal position of the middle class (*Bürgertums*) was uncertain and unequal.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Pos. Ev. Kbl., 1935/36, S. 24. Ref. i. P. 1934, S. 160/61.

⁶⁰ D.M.i.P., Mai-Nr. 1937: Die Reformation und der deutsche Osten.

⁶¹ Die Pastoren der Landeskirchen Hannovers und Schaumburg-Lippes seit der Reformation. 2. Band, S. 101. Göttingen 1942

⁶² Pos. Ev. Kbl. 193/35/36: K. Völker, Glaubensfreiheit inn den Städten Polens.

⁶³ Weber, Paul, Vilnius, eine vergessene Kunststätte. S. 48. Vilnius 1917.

⁶⁴ The inequality, against which the king and court opposed in vain, was not abolished until 1768.

Defamed and humiliated (Sejm [Lower House of Parliament] Resolutions of 1542), the wealthy middle class tried to ennoble. On the other hand, the aristocratic anti-German influence in the cities favored their Polonization. Symptomatic in this regard is the way in which Sigismund I settled the dispute over the German sermon in St. Mary's Church in Krakau in 1537, which put the German element on the defensive. The national structure of the cities was changed by the undertow of the Polonization process to the detriment of Germanism.

The Polish peasants (*Bauern*), on the other hand, had no rights and were abandoned to the arbitrariness of the nobility. After the Sejm of 1496 had decided to bind the peasants to the soil, it sealed their sad fate for centuries. Belonging to the nobility, vegetating in the most anti-social conditions, the Polish peasantry formed a gray, cultureless and spiritless mass, whose will and striving were directed only to the primitive things and requirements of daily life. The Catholics often complained "that the lords or the clergy (for example, Gliczner) forced the peasants to join the congregation".⁶⁵ Skarga made the same claim in his "Conversation of the Confederacy" (*Gespräch von der Konföderation*) of 1592.

As a determining factor in the life of the state, the nobility saw itself in conflict with the power and legal claims of the Polish clergy. The privileges of the *Schlachta* [legally privileged noble class in the Kingdom of Poland and in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania] and the clergy, which were taken away by force from the crown, could not be settled. The nobility fought passionately against the demands of the clergy for the payment of tithes as early as 1434-1456, against ecclesiastical jurisdiction, against the exemption of the clergy from payments for the defense of the country, against the privileges of the monasteries, against the annual fees paid to the pope, against the dependence of the Polish Church on Rome (national feeling of the *Schlachta*) and other arbitrary rights. In its efforts to transform the kingdom into a republic of nobility, it constantly clashed with the powers of the educated (*hohen*) clergy. Moreover, in view of the decline of the Church, it strove for its fundamental renewal.

[page 24] In Poland, since Kasimir the Jagiellon (1447-1492), the crown, not the cathedral canons (*Dom kapitel*), had the prerogative to propose to the Curia [central body through which the affairs of the Roman Catholic Church are conducted] the candidates for the vacant episcopal seats (*Bischofsstühle*). Queen Bona took advantage of this in a selfish way to making profit out of sacred things (*Simonie*). As a result, the bishop seats were often taken over by unworthy and unspiritual men, who dishonored their high offices through immoral conduct, greed, and ignorance.⁶⁶ Catholic historians, with few exceptions, of course, do not deny this. How secular the Church was at that time is proved, for example, by the fact that it did not object to the secularization of the religious land. The secularization of the Church, the depravity of the clergy, the striving for power of the episcopate, the struggle of the nobility against ecclesiastical privileges, the socio-economic tensions were the main external causes of the Reformation in Poland.

The reluctance of the nobility toward the clergy coincided with the Reformation that was spreading throughout the country. Their sympathy for it grew from year to year, partly because they knew that it was addressed by it, but also because they hoped to gain the dominant political influence in the state with its help, in contrast to the clergy. The Polish youth, who studied in Wittenberg, Frankfurt on the Oder, Königsberg and later also in Switzerland, contributed much to the spread of the new teaching and brought the "poison of heresy" to Poland. And so there was a deep incursion of new ideas into the ranks of the nobility, and caused the defection of large circles from Rome. In Greater Poland, the influential

⁶⁵ Alexander Brückner, *Dzieje Kultury Polskiej*, 2. Bd., S. 142.

⁶⁶ Th. Wotschke, *Geschichte der Reformation in Polen*, S. 8, 9, 26, 32. A Brückner, *Dzieje Kultury Polskiej*, 2. Band, S. 116. K Völker, *Kirchengeschichte Polens*. S. 138f.

families of Górká, Bojanowski, Krotowski, Zborowski, Leszczyński, Ostroróg, among others, were influential families. In Lesser Poland, the Firlejs, Rejs, Oleśnickis, Stadnickis, Lasockis, Filipowskis, and many others who turned to Calvinism advocated the Reformation.⁶⁷ Its leader in Lithuania was Prince Nicholas Radziwiłł the Black, the most powerful and richest man in the Grand Duchy. In Krakau, the country's capital, Lutheran and Swiss influences intersected. Even in the Krakau Cathedral Canon, the new teaching had adherents.⁶⁸

Only in Masowien (*Mazovia*) [mid-NE Poland Province] did the Reformation make almost no progress at all. On 16 March, 1525, the last Piast [first historical ruling dynasty of Poland] prince there, Janusz, issued an edict against them, in which he forbade the residence of heretics in his country and declared them worthy of death. The Mazovian nobility was completely hostile to it. It gained a foothold only among the German citizens of Warsaw. The German mayor of Warsaw, Georg Bornbach (died 1544), seems to have been a follower of Luther.⁶⁹ In 1544, his son Stenzel Bornbach, who later became a chronicler of Danzig, studied in Wittenberg. He was among the students who brought Luther's mortal body from Eisleben to Wittenberg.⁷⁰ The ultra-Catholic character of Mazovia may have prompted the strict Catholic King Sigismund III to move the capital from Krakau to Warsaw in 1596.

[page 25] To an even greater extent than Royal Prussia, the north-eastern part of the Prussian Monastic Order's land with its residence town of Königsberg grew in its evangelical task, which, in 1525, had become a fief dependent on the Polish king under the Grand Master Albrecht the Elder (1490-1568), a sister's son of Sigismund I. Through its transformation into a secular duchy, it developed into a bulwark of Protestantism in the East and a nursery for evangelical literature in the Polish language. The University of Königsberg, founded by Duke Albrecht in 1544, provided the necessary support for the Reformation Movement inside and outside Prussia.

From the end of the 14th century, the Polish state gradually developed into a republic of nobility. However, due to the constant increase in the power of the nobility, the Polish state took a disastrous path. At the change of throne, at the outbreak of wars, at Sejm deliberations, and other occasions, the *Szlachta* almost continuously announced its claims to further privileges. It praised its achievements as "aristocratic freedoms". Nevertheless, it is characteristic enough how much ecclesiastical life in Poland was in need of reform in its head and members, when the Polish nobility also joined the new movement, and indeed as the main bearers. While in Germany, for example, the Reformation Movement could only assert itself with the help of the territorial princes, and in France it could only temporarily assert itself through wars with the monarchy and the Catholic Church government allied with it—the Edict of Nantes in 1598—in Poland, its fate decisively determined the attitude (*Haltung*) of the nobility.

Sigismund I (1506-1548) supported the clergy in their fight against the spreading Evangelical Movement. Above all, he and his advisors wanted to keep young students away from attending colleges suspected of hereticalism. This is amply proved by his Prohibition Edicts of 24 July, 1520, 15 February,

⁶⁷ K. Völker, *Kirchengeschichte Polens*, S. 161.

⁶⁸ Th. Wotschke, *Geschichte der Reformation in Polen*, S. 52f.

⁶⁹ The Bornbachs, who immigrated to Warsaw from the Principality of Oels around 1410, a family of patricians and common people. *Preußische Sammlung*, 1. Band, S. 307.

⁷⁰ Stenzel Bornach was born in Warsaw on January 14, 1530 and attended the Secondary School in Breslau in 1541. 1545 (as a 15-year-old!) in Wittenberg. Later traveled through France, Holland, Brabant [province in Belgium] and Germany. His brother, Johann Bornach, mayor of Warsaw, probably became a Catholic and died there in 1561. In 1578, his son Georg Bornbach was a city treasurer (*Kämmerer*) at Batory and married to Helena Alexandrini, daughter "of the famous Dr. of Medicine Nikolai Alexandrini".

1522, 7 March, 1523, 25 March, 1540, and so forth. Their frequent repetition shows that, given the self-willed nature of the nobles, they could not be carried out everywhere. Heretical trials (1524 against Bartel Baltzer in Uniejów, 1525 against parish priest Stanisław Myko in Wieluń), which led to revocation, house searches, confiscation of property were the result. In 1526, the king tried to crush the Lutheran movement in Danzig by executing the bearers of the new ideas, and with this judgment he sent a warning signal to the whole of Poland. In 1524, an Inquisition Commission was set up in Posen.

In his fight against the Reformation, the king was supported by the Archbishop of Gnesen, Jan Łaski, the first collector and publisher of the Polish Land Laws published in Krakau in 1506, Chancellor Christoph Szydołowiecki, and the aforementioned Bishop and Under-Chancellor Peter Tomicki. Bishop Andreas Zebrzydowski ordered the arrest and execution of the parish priest Nicholas (Martin) of Kurów, who is considered the first evangelical martyr in Poland.

However, the Reformation could not be suppressed in the long run by external means of coercion. In the fourth decade of the 16th century, the struggle for or against them was now fought out at the Imperial Diets. The nobles, at first only adherents and protectors of the new movement, now became its propagators and promoters. But as long as the old King Sigismund I lived, nothing could tarnish his clear Catholic attitude. Nor did the conversion of his son-in-law to the new teaching, the Elector and Margrave Joachim II of Brandenburg. It was not until Sigismund I's death (1548) that new possibilities for the Reformation Movement seemed to open up under his son and successor Sigismund II Augustus.

[page 26]

B. Progress of the Reformation Movement from 1548 to 1573

Foundation of Protestant Parishes (*Parochien*) and Churches. Striving for unity (Koźminek 1555, Sandomir 1570) and Legal Protection (Warsaw Confederation 1573)

Sigismund II Augustus (1548-1572; born 1520) was not much interested in religious questions. One of his most trusted friends was the evangelical leader Nicholas Radziwiłł the Black. Moreover, the Lutheran Duke Albrecht of Prussia was his close relative. Although effeminate and unstable, he did not want to let it come to a break with Rome. He was strengthened in this decision by the unwise attitude of the Protestants, who, under the leadership of Count Andreas Górk, opposed his second marriage to Barbara Gastold, née Radziwiłł, as of inferior rank. Cleverly taking advantage of the situation, the Bishop and Chancellor of Krakau, Samuel Maciejowski, took the King's side. And so, on 7 December, 1550, the Lithuanian prince's daughter Barbaba Radziwiłł was crowned Polish queen in the Krakau Cathedral. In gratitude for this, Sigismund II Augustus joined the Catholic Church even more closely. Nevertheless, the Reformation took a further positive course, not least because of the indecision and composure of the king.⁷¹

The Petrikau Sejm of 1550, which dealt with the case of the cleric Stanisław Orzechowski, had an evangelical majority. Orzechowski zealously opposed celibacy in speech and writing and defended the married pastors Martin Krowicki and Valentin von Chrzczonów. When he himself entered into marriage in 1551 and his excommunication, confiscation of property and expulsion were ordered by the Catholics, he made a Catholic confession at the Diet of 1552, whereby he reconciled the king and the bishops. After renouncing his spiritual benefices, his marriage was recognized. He again approached

⁷¹ E. Zivier, *Neuere Geschichte Polens*, 1. Band, Die zwei letzten Jagiellonen. 1506-1572 (Abschnitt: Sigismund II. August.

the Catholic Church and, owing to his eloquence and literary work, became a dangerous opponent of the Protestants.

The Sejm of 1552 suspended the execution of all sentences passed by the bishops against the leaders of the Reformation Movement. The one of Petrikau in 1555 also had an evangelical majority. The cause of the Protestants continued to develop favorably at the Sejm of 1556 in that a law was passed according to which every nobleman was given the right to hold a Bible-based worship service in his house. The extension of house worship services to the aristocratic estates was only one step. In addition, in the name of the Sejm, Sigismund Augustus demanded from Pope Paul IV the Mass in the Polish language, the Lord's Supper in both kinds, the marriage of priests, the abolition of the first year's revenue of benefice paid to the Pope (*Annaten*) and the calling of a national synod. Pope Paul IV recognized the danger and sent the Bishop of Verona, Aloisius Lipponmani, as Nuncio [A papal ambassador or representative] to Poland, who influenced the Protestants and the fickle king with his game of intrigue. The Sejm of 1563 again passed the resolution to convene a national synod in which all parties would be represented. Even Primate [a bishop of highest rank in a province or country] Jakob Uchański was friendly to the decision. He and Bishops Jan Drohojowski of Kujawien and Leonhard Słończewski of Kamieniec were preceded by the reputation of being reform-friendly pastors. Uchański was even appointed Bishop of Cholm against the will of the Curia. However, the influence of the Papal Legate Commendone prevented the convocation of the national synod. Nevertheless, by 1569, the number of secular Protestant senators was 58, the Catholic 55, plus 15 Roman Catholic bishops and two Greek Orthodox.

[page 27] Also important for the evangelicals was the incorporation of Polish Prussia, which had up to this time only been connected to Poland by personal union, into the Jeciellonian Empire at the Lublin Diet of 1569, which took place against the will of the German cities. For the Protestants in Poland, this incorporation proved to be positive in that it strengthened them numerically and brought the Evangelicals throughout the country closer together. The unification of Livonia with Poland in 1561 was equally favorable. Sigismund II Augustus recognized the existing order there, including the privileges of the inhabitants.⁷²

The spread of the Gospel in Poland did not lead to the formation of evangelical congregations until 1548, after the arrival in Posen of the Bohemian-Moravian Brethren who had been expelled from their homeland.⁷³ The strict ecclesiastical organization of the Brethren, their religiosity, discipline and order caused a sensation and spurred on imitation. And so congregations sprang up in Poland, gathered in three separate evangelical churches: one Lutheran, one Reformed and one Brethren.

The Lutheran Church, which lacked a unified organization, was divided into three groups: Polish-Prussia, Greater Poland and Lithuania. In Polish-Prussia, Sigismund II gave freedom to the Augsburg Confession in August of 1558. Lutheran congregations were founded in Danzig, Dirschau, Thorn (Toruń), Graudenz, Marienburg, Elbing and others. From there, the Lutheran faith spread to Greater Poland. In 1563, the Polish Evangelical community was organized in Posen, which was the center of Polish Lutheranism until 1617. Around 1600, there were 142 Lutheran congregations in Greater Poland, of which 32 were Polish.

⁷² H. Hermelink und W. Maurer, *Reformation und Gegenreformation*. 1931, 3. T., S. 191.

⁷³ V. Krasinski, *Geschichte des Ursprungs, Fortschritts und Verfalls der Reformation in Polen*, S. 60, 131.

In 1555, thanks to relations with Königsberg, a German Lutheran congregation was formed in Lithuania's capital Vilnius, to which the wealthy merchant Morstein (*Morsztyn*) gave a building on his homestead to the church. Its economic basis was secured by bequests and donations.⁷⁴

The Reformed also had three ecclesiastical centers: in Lesser Poland, in Lithuania and in Greater Poland. The fact that the Polish aristocracy oriented itself more towards Geneva than towards Wittenberg was partly due to the conditions at the time, partly also to Calvin's personality, which appeared to the Poles as a symbol of contemporary ecclesiastical progress. The center of the Reformed Church in Lesser Poland was Pińczów. In Lithuania, where Nicholas Radziwiłł the Black introduced Reformed worship service everywhere in Nieśwież on his estates, the nobility tried to be like him in this respect, so those in Pacx, Puzynas, Chodkiewiczzs, Kiszkas, and others. According to the latest research, around the 16th century, Reformed services took place in the former Catholic churches in Lesser Poland at 250 places, in Lithuania at 191 and in Greater Poland at 80 places.

In 1570, the emerging Lesser Poland congregation in Krakau built a house of worship, the ground floor of which, in accordance with the spirit of the Sandomier comparison, was used by the Lutherans and the upper floor of which was used by the Reformed for their religious purposes. Mainly nobles and some middle class, Poles and Germans, embraced the Krakau congregations, whose worship services were bilingual. Other important parishes [page 28] were in Lublin, Pińczów, Sandomir, Włodzisław, Sielec, Koźminek, Baranów and Secymin.

Among the Reformed congregations in Lithuania that were under the protection and assistance of the Radziwiłł of Birzen, and whose number, according to Merczyng, was about 140 before 1655, the following were found: Birże, Śluck, Kieydany, Izabelin, Nowogródek. In Samogitia, the parishes were predominantly or partially Lithuanian.

In Mosovia, which fell to the Polish crown in 1526, a Reformed congregation was organized in Warsaw with the help of the *Starost* [title used for both official and unofficial leadership positions] Georg Niemsta. In 1581, the Catholic clergy and nobility forcibly prevented the church from being built. In 1581, after only three years of activity, Pastor Peter Artomius gave up the care and control of the Protestants in Warsaw. Since the Lutherans in Warsaw saw "that he sided with the Reformed, they did not pay much attention to him."

In addition to the Lutherans and Reformed, the Bohemian Brethren continued to expand their ecclesiastical system in Poland. Their powerful patrons were Counts Górka and Jakob and Stanisław Ostroróg. In the 17th century, Lissa became the largest Czech colony, becoming the center of exiles from Bohemia and Moravia living scattered in Poland, Hungary, Saxony, Holland and others. In Lissa, the governing Seniors of the United Brethren officiated, where they also had their library, archive and printing press. Around 1570, their church system, which was united into a fixed association, comprised 64 parishes.⁷⁵

The founding of evangelical parishes in Poland was accompanied by the striving for agreement and unification of all Protestants. In 1559, the Lutheran, Reformed and Bohemian Brethren met in Vilnius for a synod under their president Simon Sazius. The Synod of 25 June, 1578 at Vilnius, known as

⁷⁴ Magister Juris Ernst Theodor Zundel from Lodz devoted himself to the study of Lithuanian Protestantism. His manuscript, including an extensive card library, as well as two volumes of civil registry records, reports and protocols, were probably lost after 1945. Magister Juris Zundel himself was killed or went missing as a soldier in the war.

⁷⁵ Pos. Ev. Kbl., 1931/32, S. 27f.: Zur Geschichte der Böhmischen Brüder.

Concordia Vilnensis, led to unification among the Lutherans.⁷⁶ It may have been the first important Lutheran synod in Lithuania. The German churches were devoted to the Augsburg Confession here. In the Posen region, according to Dr. Gottfried Smend, the first Lutheran synod was held in Gostyń state in 1564. In Greater Poland, a Lutheran association of churches was organized, which took an eventful, changeable and painful development with its synods.

In 1555, the teaching and partly religious union between the Brethren and the Lesser Poland Reformed came into being in Koźminek. Lesser Poland adopted the confession and liturgy of the Brethren, but retained their special ecclesiastical organization and some customs. The Koźminek's Union was an important step on the way to the consolidation of the evangelical camp in Poland. Further efforts in this direction, such as the recall of Jan Łaskis by the synods of September 1555 and April 1556 to Pińczów and from 26 to 29 January, 1556, to Secymin, took a favorable course.

Jan Łaskis was encircled by an aura (*Aureole*) of being a well-known nobleman and outstanding churchman. Born in Łask near Lodz in 1499, he was the nephew of the same name Archbishop of Gnesen and Primate of Poland. With the support of his uncle, he acquired a thorough education. He was greatly impressed by Erasmus of Rotterdam, in whose house he lived for months and whose library he acquired. In 1524, the great humanist gave Łaski an understanding of the glory of the Word of God. Łaski also came into contact with Zwingli. He climbed the ladder of ecclesiastical dignities until finally the Hungarian king, Jan Zapolya, offered him a Bishop's Chair. However, the Curia, which did not recognize the king, [page 29] did not confirm Łaski as bishop. In the years 1526-1538, his religious beliefs were clarified, until he decided to dedicate his future life, full of struggles and renunciations, to the service of the Gospel. In 1543, he renounced his revenues from ecclesiastical living. His character was by no means altered, despite his oath of purification. The most beautiful testimony was given to him by his teacher Erasmus, who said, among other things: "I have become a better person living with him." Łaski himself was a complicated personality.⁷⁷ After his conversion to Calvinism, he worked in Emden since 1542 as organizer and leader of the Reformed Church system in East Frisia (*Emden Catechism 1546*) and later as superintendent of the three refugee congregations in London. He went there in 1548, gaining a livelihood from Archbishop Cranmer from 1550 to 1553. He had to give up both fields of work, but especially the London one, forced to do so by the circumstances of the time (Interim, Catholic reaction in England). On 19 March, 1557, King Sigismund II Augustus received him in audience in Vilnius, where Łaski was staying with Prince Radziwiłł the Black.

During his brief tenure in Pińczów, Łaski was unable to achieve anything effectively in Poland.⁷⁸ His grand plan to unite all Polish Protestants into one national church could not be realized. He could not win over either the Lutherans or the Bohemian Brethren. He succeeded in consolidating the presbyterial and synodal order in the Lesser Poland Church, as well as in encouraging the laity to cooperate. Thus, he organized the Reformed Church in three units: Greater Poland, Lesser Poland and Lithuania. There is almost nothing left of it. In 1627, the Greater Poland Unit joined the Brethren. In the storms of the Counter-Reformation and the period that followed, the Lesser Poland Unit shrunk to small remnants and finally almost completely disappeared. The Warsaw Unit, with its six small congregations and about 10,000 souls, was founded later, so it is not connected with the Reformation period.⁷⁹ After 1939, it decreased by half. The Lithuanian Unit (*Unitas Lithuanica*) or the Vilnius Evangelical Reformed Church no longer exists.

⁷⁶ A.F.A(admowicz), *Die Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche zu Vilnius*. 1855. VI. Die Synoden.

⁷⁷ *Rocznik Ewangelicki*, 1925, S. 18.

⁷⁸ *Reformiertes Jahrbuch 1927*, S. 25-47: Lic. E. Kochs, Johannes a Lasco, ein Baumeister der reformierten Kirche.

⁷⁹ It was called the Former Lesser Poland Unit, but had only the name in common with the Łaskis Unit.

As long as Łaski lived, the Reformed Church was governed by the clergy. After his death, the preponderance shifted to the side of the secular nobles. His early death on 8 January, 1560 was a heavy blow to Polish Protestantism, which struck it to the core. His mortal body was buried in the parish church of Pińczów. His descendants became Roman Catholics.⁸⁰ The necessity of giving the evangelicals in the country a strong foundations and a powerful effect on wide sections of the population by publishing a Polish Bible was recognized early on. For the translation and printing of the Bible, Prince Radziwiłł the Black (died 1565) donated 5,000 ducats (gold guilders), so that the so-called Brest or Radziwiłł Bible—Brzeska after the place of publication Brześć (Brest on the Bug) or Radziwiłłowska after the publisher's surname—could be published in 1563. It was a joint work on which an average of ten to twelve scholars—among others, Jakob Lubelszyk, Andreas Trzeciecki, Orsatius, Statorius, Thenaudus—worked for several years at the castle of Prince Oleśnicki in [page 30] Pińczów. Thanks to its good, faithful, pictorial rendering of the Divine Word and its beautiful, pure, perfectly formed language, the Brest Bible is to be regarded as an outstanding achievement. Its influence in religious and literary matters must be greatly estimated. It has now become a bibliophile rarity. The effort to bring the Calvinists, Bohemian Brethren and Lutherans closer together and unite in Poland, which Łaski was not destined to realize, was realized at the General Synod of Sandomir of 10-14 April, 1570. On the basis of the *Confessio Helvetica posterior 1566*. The Lutherans proposed the future composition of a new Common Confession, as well as the conclusion of a provisional unification treaty. On this basis, an agreement was reached. And so the well-known Consensus of Sandomir of 14 April, 1570 came about. The contracting parties mutually acknowledged the legality of their confessional writings. The teaching of the Lord's Supper was circumscribed in the form of a compromise, which, however, did not satisfy the Lutherans and created complications. They wanted to emphasize what was positive and common, to manifest the unity of Protestantism over against Catholicism, and thereby to actively influence the winning of the wavering king. The volume of agreement was to form the joint General Synods. They met only three times: in Krakau in 1573, in Petrikau in 1578 and in Thorn in 1598. They deliberately distanced themselves from the Socinians, who were not represented in Sandomir. However, an evangelical national church was not founded. Nor to a unified worship (*Kultus*) and to a common creed of faith. Sigismund II Augustus disappointed the Protestants again this time. In spite of this, the work of unification of Sandomir in 1570, carried by a spirit of conciliation, generosity and love of one's homeland, occupies a place of honor in the Reformation Movement in Poland, indeed—one might say—in the whole evangelical world. It documented the effort to put into practice the basic feature of evangelical universalism peculiar to the Polish confessions of the 16th century.⁸¹ This desire for unification is also clearly and decisively expressed in the *Fraterna et modesta exhortatio* by Bartholomäus Bythner (died 1629). Bythner is concerned only with the mutual recognition of the already existing confessions, that is, not with their uniformity (*ujednostajnienie*), but with union (*zjednoczenie*) for the elimination of the confessional division. His pamphlet, as a manifestation of the "Brethren of the Evangelical Confession in Poland" (Reformed and Bohemian Brethren) represents the idea of Christian ecumenicity.

The favorable legal development of Protestantism reached its conclusion in the Warsaw Confederation of 28 January, 1573. It was decided by a majority of votes at the joint meeting of the educated (*hohen*) clergy that the nobles (*dissidentes*), separated in faith, to mutually assure each other of peaceful coexistence. While the freedom of conscience of the individual nobleman and his unforeseen

⁸⁰ Łaski was married twice and had nine children. He passed away with the last word in his familiar German: "Mein Herr und mein Gott!"

⁸¹ G. Lehmann, *Konfesja Sandomierska na tle innych konfesji w Polsce 16 wieku*, 1937, S. 354-378. W. Bickerich, *Ein Programm des polnisch-christlichen Universalismus*. Further: *Pos. Ev. Kbl.* 1933/34, S. 250f, 306f.

ecclesiastical possessions were recognized by law, no evangelical confession was mentioned in the Confederation, nor was the evangelical church system placed under state legal protection. In the Confederation of 1573, which was based on the Peace (*Religionsfrieden*) of Augsburg in 1555, the provisions were so unclear and ambiguous that they offered state organs a means of taking measures against the Protestants at any time. Later, the “Polish Brethren” (Arians), who were expelled from the country in 1658/60, were not included in the circle of *dissidentes de religione*.

[page 31] For example, the legal situation of evangelical worship service in the cities was also unclear. In spite of all these shortcomings of the Warsaw Confederation or the “*Pax dissidentium*”, which was included in the oath of coronation of the elective kings, the evangelicals in Poland had a certain personal and ecclesiastical legal basis in their “*magna charta libertatum*”. However, it only applied to the nobles, not to the entire people of the state.⁸²

The unification of confessions in the spirit of ecumenicity and fraternal Christian coexistence were the two basic concerns of Sandomir in 1570 and the Peace of Dissidents in 1573. From this point of view, they appear to be the high point of the Reformation Movement in Poland.

2. Its Decline from 1565-1660

The Polish Reformation Movement is characterized by the fact that its blossoming time coincided with its just beginning decline. The year 1565—the Catholic Party in the Sejm—gradually ushered in the decline of the Reformation in Poland. The Protestants are already waging war with each other. Anti-trinitarianism, on the other hand, experienced its rise through Faustus Sozzinin from 1580 to 1620. The estrangement between the Anti-Trinitarians and Calvinists, however, increases from year to year, and finally increases into an unbridgeable gap. In 1565, Pastor Gregor Pauli (Zabrobelyny), who lived in Brzeziny near Lodz, separated from the Reformed Church with his followers and formed the so-called Lesser Church (*Kleinere Kirche / ecclesia minor*). Anti-trinitarian ideas were already advocated by Peter Gonesius at the Synod of Secymin in 1556, and Anabaptist ideas at the Synod at Brest in 1558.⁸³ The rejection of infant baptism was divided into three camps by the anti-Trinitarians (the so-called Tri-theists).

In 1569, the Castellan [governor of a castle] Jan Sienieński founded a Reformed congregation in Rakow near Pińczów, but it soon developed into an anti-Trinitarian one. After 1570, its well-known representatives moved there, led by Gregor Pauli and Georg Schomann, who wrote an anti-Trinitarian Catechism in 1574. Until 1562, Krakau was the focal point and rallying point of anti-Trinitarianism. In 1600, when the new city proprietor (*Stadtbesitzer*) of Rakow, Jakob Sienieński, became its zealous adherent and supporter, it gained the reputation in Poland and beyond of the famous religious-ecclesiastical center of the Lesser Church—“Arian Rome”.

It was Faustus Sozzini (1539-1604) who, with his teachings, gave the Lesser Church the spiritual foundation and equipment and summarized the divergent tendencies in it, so that the anti-Trinitarians called themselves “Socinians” after him.⁸⁴ They also referred to themselves as “Polish Brethren”, but preferably as “Christians”. Their enemies gave them the derisive name of “Arians”. Their Rakow Catechism of 1605 elevated their religious community to a clearly distinguished confessional church,

⁸² Ref. i. P., Nr. 11/12, S. 271-291.

⁸³ V. Krasiniski, Geschichte des Ursprungs, Fortschritts und Verfalls der Reformation in Polen, S. 135.

⁸⁴ H. Hermelink und W. Maurer, Reformation und Gegenreformation, 3. T. S. 274f. — Ref. w P., 1934, Nr. 21-24, S. 300-302.

which numbered about 80 congregations in Lesser Poland, Lithuania and Greater Poland (73 according to Merczyng, over 200 according to W. Urban). Its most well-known parishes were: Rakow, Lublin, Bełżce, Piaski, as well as Schmiegel and Bobelwitz in Greater Poland. Just as the Calvinists depended on the favor of the nobles, so did the Socinians. Their patrons [page 32] were the noble families: Kiszka, Sieniński, Morsztyn, Czaplic, Sieniuta and others.⁸⁵ The Rakow Sozinian School became very famous, at times over 1,000 students attending, the majority of them from other religious denominations. Lubartów was also home to one of its outstanding institutions.

The Socinians not only emphasized dogmatics, but above all placed the greatest emphasis on living according to the Gospel. Among them, the professions of farmer and craftsman were considered honorable occupations. Among its leading representatives were numerous Germans who had left Germany for the sake of their religious convictions and who had partly Polonized themselves in the new conditions.

Calvinism opened up an uncompromising struggle against the Socinians, all the more so because its situation was quite unfavorable. Superintendent Felix Cruziger, who had converted from Lutheranism to Calvinism, was unable to cope with the difficulties caused by Socinianism. In their plight, the Reformed asked the king for help against the “Arians”. Sigismund II Augustus, who in 1550 increasingly professed his father’s anti-evangelical policy, issued the two Edicts of Parczów in 1564, applying them to the anti-Trinitarians and Anabaptists.

If the Sandomir comparison still held a glimpse of hope for the future, it soon became apparent that the Lutherans also completely lacked the understanding of the necessity of sticking together with the Reformed and Bohemian Brethren in the face of Catholicism. The Posen German Pastor Paul Gericke and the Polish Andreas Luperianus, as well as the Thorn Pastor Benedikt Morgenstern (died 1599), passionately fought the Sandomir comparison. The militant and intolerant evangelicals had a mortal enemy in the Jesuit Order, which carried out the Counter-Reformation in Poland.

The Polish youth, who had formerly entered the German and Swiss universities, now filled the Jesuit colleges. Bishop Martin Kromer (1512-1589) may have been the first to interest the Jesuits in Poland.⁸⁶ However, the Polish Catholic Church did not enter a decisive phase until Stanisław Hosius, the “father of the Counter-Reformation”. Hosius (1504-1579), of German origin like Kromer, went to the universities of Krakau, Padua and Bologna. Sigismund II Augustus conferred on him the bishopric of Kulm in 1549 and that of Ermland in 1551. As Shepherd Superior of this diocese, directly subordinate to the Pope, he had a certain independence and greater power than the other bishops. Moreover, he surpassed them all by his spiritual and moral qualities, by his active diligence and his persistent determination. In 1551, he wrote the confessional pamphlet *Confession fidei catholicae christianae*, in which he made a sharp distinction over against the Augsburg Confession. In preaching and pastoral care, through visitations and consultations of the clergy, through influencing the king and tireless attempts at conversion, such as in relation to Duke Albrecht and Prince Radziwiłł, he first put a stop to the rush of the Reformation Movement. In recognition of his merits, the Pope made him a Cardinal in 1561. In 1564, Hosius struck a blow against the Protestants by appointing the Jesuits to his Ermland Diocese, and in 1565, he founded the first Jesuit college in Braunsberg. [page 33] Other colleges were established: in Elbing, 1566 in Pułtusk, 1567 in Vilnius, 1573 in Posen, 1583 in Karkau, Kalisch,

⁸⁵ After Jan Kiszka’s death in 1591, no magnate stood by them. —Compare Statistik der arainaischen Gemeinden bei H. Merczyng, Zbory i senatorowic w dawnej Polsce...S. 18. The numbers of these already small communities are not exactly what H. Merczyng mentions for 1570. They must have been higher.

⁸⁶ Ref. i. P., 1924, Nr. 11/12, S. 203-217: Stanisław Bodniak: Martin Kromer in der Verteidigung der Kirche (poln.

Lublin, 1596 in Thorn, and at other places. In 1569, Hosius moved his residence to Rome, where he died after a decade.⁸⁷

His persistent work yielded tangible results in the ever-increasing number of conversions to the Catholic Church. Around 1570, Nicholas Christoph Radziwiłł, called the Orphan (*Sierotka*), Catholic, the son of Radziwiłł the Black, the Protector of the Reformed Church in Lithuania. If his father had printed the Brest Bible at his own expense, the son had it bought up and destroyed at an even greater expense. He wanted to make amends for his father's religious "error" with this act. In 1593, the Lutheran line of the Górkas counts became extinct; at the beginning of the 17th century, the Firlejs and Zborowskis families converted to Catholicism. The Conversion Movement swelled from year to year and seriously weakened the ranks of the Protestants.⁸⁸

After the death of Sigismund II Augustus (1572) and the extinction of the Jagiellonian dynasty in the male line, Poland sank to a pronounced aristocratic republic with a free elective monarchy (1572-1795). The reign of Stefan Batory (1576-1586) was far too short for him to intervene more strongly in the circumstances of his time. He did nothing against the evangelicals, but he did nothing for them either. However, their situation deteriorated visibly under his successor Sigismund III [house of] Vasa (1587-1632), who lost the Swedish throne due to his clearly Catholic convictions and attitude and oriented the Polish state internally and externally in the same spirit, subordinating its interests to his own wishes and dynastic demands. His unreal plans—personal union with Lutheran Sweden and even with Greek Orthodox Russia under the prospect of winning those countries to Catholicism—failed. The failure, however, had the effect of intensifying the pressure against the Protestants and Greek Orthodox in the country. The masses of the people, fanatical and directed by the Jesuits, now set out on massive attacks against the Protestants.⁸⁹

On 1 May, 1638, due to an incident (dishonoring of a cross by Socinian students), the Senate decided to liquidate the church, congregation, school and printing house of the Arians in Rakow. The Socinians had a bitter opponent in Kasimir Sienieński, who was the proprietor from Rakow and converted to Catholicism. Together with the Jesuits, he sealed the fate of Rakow. 10 July, 1660 was fixed as the final date for the Arians: they were either to become Catholics or to sell their property and leave their fatherland. Hundreds of them made their way to Klausenburg [Cluj-Napoca] in Transylvania. In 1792, their last Polish preacher died there. Others fled to East Prussia, Silesia, Brandenburg, and even to America.

After 1590, Sigismund III conferred high state offices almost exclusively on Catholics, which served as an incentive for the magnate families, but especially for the noble youth, to return to Catholicism.⁹⁰ The conversions, in turn, resulted in the loss [page 34] of numerous houses of worship that were given to the Catholic rite. As a result, the evangelical community shrank from year to year. By 1648, there were only 28 Polish communities (*Gemeinden*) in Greater Poland and about 69 in Lesser Poland, which were maintained by noble families. At the same time, there were still 140 parishes in Lithuania.⁹¹ In the long run, the communities formed by German settlers and the middle class held their own relatively better.

⁸⁷ Joseph Lortz, Kardinal Stanislaus Hosius. Gedanschrift zum 350. Todestag. 1931.

⁸⁸ H. Merczyng, Zbory i senatorowie...S. 9 f.

⁸⁹ W. Sobieski, Nienawiść wyznaniowa tłumó za rządów Zygmunta III. 1902. Dazu A. Brückner: Dzieje Kultury Polskiej, 2. Band, S. 494. Ebenda (Abschnitt: Verfolgung der Nicht-katholiken).

⁹⁰ The German Ursula Meyer (d. 1635) played a not insignificant role at court, for whose favor even Skarga courted. "The Jesuits—so she says—drew them over to their side and used them as a willing tool for their ends." (Enzyklopedja Orgelbranda, 10. Bd., S. 122.

⁹¹ H. Merczyng, Zbory i senatorowie...Vergl. Statistik der Gemeinden in Kleinpolen, Großpolen und Litauen.

In the persecution of Protestantism, attention was also paid to the confiscation of the churches in the royal cities, which had been hereditary with the funds of the Communes. As long as the cities had a purely German population, their ecclesiastical property remained untouched. If, however, Catholics settled in them, then the city churches, such as in Fraustadt (Wschowa), where the pastor and hymn writer Valerius Herberger officiated (died 1627), were expropriated for Catholic purposes.⁹² In addition to Herberger in Fraustadt, the hymn writer Johann Heermann, where he had fled from Silesia (died 1647), worked in Lissa in the last decade of his life. Georg Tranoscius, the “Slavic Luther”, was born in Teschen (Těšín). For several years he was a German town clerk in Bielitz. Expelled from there by the Counter-Reformation, he moved to the Waag River valley (died 1636).

The local persecution of the evangelicals was intensified by the Confederation of Sandomir in 1605, led by Calvinist Janusz Radziwiłł and Nikolaus Zebrzydowski of Krakau. This was the first armed revolt (*rokosz*) of the League of Nobility that rose up against Sigismund III. Although the Confederation failed, it aroused great discontent in wide circles against the Protestants, if only because of the person of its evangelical noble Marshal Radziwiłł. Increasingly, Protestantism suffered heavy losses. Its decline was strikingly reflected in the proportions of the Senators. While around 1570, out of 73 secular senators, 38 were non-Catholics, in 1648 there were only eleven evangelical senators out of 71.⁹³

In his court preacher Peter Skaraga (1536-1612), the ultra-Catholic King Sigismund III found the man who, saturated with the spirit of Jesuitism, fought the Protestants tenaciously and ruthlessly. As an eloquent and religious writer, as an apologist and polemicist, he was zealous for the restoration of faith and church unity. His Sejm sermons, which outline the political reform program of Sigismund III and his followers, are famous. Skarga took part in the unsuccessful efforts of Jesuit Antonio Possevino, who wanted to include the Greek Orthodox Russians in the sphere of influence of Rome through the Greek-Catholic (*Unierten* = united with Rome) of Poland, as well as in the enterprise of the false Demetrius [impostor to the throne in Moscow]. Other important Protestant fighters were: Jakob Wujek (1540-1597), the creator of the famous Polish Catholic Bible; the polemicist Martin Śmiglecki; the later Archbishop Stanisław Karnkowski (1520-1603); Stanisław Reszka, biographer of Cardinal Hosius and others.

As their anti-Poles on the Protestant side are: Nicholas Rej, the royal secretary; Andreas Wolan, the head of the Lithuanian Calvinists and polemicist against Skaraga and the Jesuits; Andreas Trzeciecki, a zealous Calvinist, Bible translator and poet. Of the Socinian apologists and polemicists, the following should be mentioned: [page 35] Valentin Schmalz (died 1622), the author of 52 dogmatic-polemical writings; the pedagogue Albert from Kalisch; Martin Ruar, the head of Sozinian propaganda abroad; the poet and translator Erasmus Otwinowski; furthermore, the historian Andreas Lubieniecki (died 1622); historian and astronomer Stanisław Lubieniecki, one of the most famous Polish Socinians (died 1675 in Hamburg); the lawyer Niemojewski. Jan Crell was a systematist of Arian ethics; Joachim Stegmann a mathematician and follower of rationalism in theology. Andreas Wiszowaty stood out as the most radical rationalist in the time of persecution.

Władysław IV (1632-1648), free from the Catholic fanaticism of his father Sigismund III, took a milder and wait-and-see attitude towards the Protestants. In 1636, he had Princess Anna Vasa (died 1625), his Lutheran aunt, solemnly buried in Thorn according to the Lutheran rite. The Thorn “Colloquium

⁹² Pos. Ev. Kbl., 1926/27, S. 248 f.

⁹³ H. Merczyng, *Zobory i senatorowie...*S. 19. — Die Statistik über die Gemeinden im Reformationszeitalter Polens bedarf einer Neubearbeitung.

charitativum” of 1645, which he favored and which already seemed completely unreal in its presuppositions—reconciliation and unification of Catholics, Reformed and Lutherans—ended in failure. We find a parallel to this in another “religious discourse” that has been more successful for Catholicism. In 1596, in the Union of Brest, the bishops of the south-western Ukrainian Orthodox dioceses of Łuzk, Wladimir, and later also Samborn-Drohobycz and others placed themselves under the jurisdiction of the pope, while respecting their peculiarities (priestly marriage, lay chalice, liturgy in the vernacular).⁹⁴ The broad masses of the people and the lower clergy fought passionately against the Union, which erupted into acts of violence against popes and communities. Thus, in 1623, the Uniate Archbishop Połozk-Witebsk Kuncewicz was murdered. In contrast to the Greek Uniates, the non-Uniate Greek Orthodox (schismatics) in Poland were grouped around their *Metropole* [bishop or archbishop] in Kiev until 1645.

The disagreements and discords among the Protestants, who, despite the Jesuits and the Counter-Reformation, could not agree on a common line of cooperation and resistance, suddenly shed light on the disastrous decline of the evangelical idea in Poland. The wars under Jan Kasimir also had a devastating effect on the existence of the Reformation churches. Due to the devastation of the Cossacks, Swedes, Russians and the fanaticism of the Catholics, numerous evangelical congregations perished, such as those in Lesser Poland almost entirely and in Greater Poland all Lutherans with preaching in Polish.⁹⁵

The Reformation in Poland, with its initially favorable development, collapsed. Around 1660, this became apparent to everyone. What the Protestants had in common was the name “Dissidents”.⁹⁶ From 1632 onwards, this was the name given to the followers of the Reformation, and until 1648, the Socinians also fell under this term. At times, the Greek Orthodox were also referred to as dissidents, although the legislation in this sense was not applied to them. The further decline of Protestantism after 1660 was only a consequence of the almost complete victory of the Counter-Reformation over it.

3. Cultural and Other Spiritual Effects of the Reformation Movement

[page 36] Polish national literature owes its origin to the Reformation. In order to win over the people to the new ideas, the national language, the Polish way of thinking and expressing oneself was used. And so, as a means to an end, Polish literature was created, which, in its colorful and rich variety, received the decisive impulses and inspirations from the Gospel. It was precisely from the ranks of the Protestants that Polish writers came, above all Nikolaus Rej, the “father of Polish literature”. Peter Statorius was the author of the first Polish grammar, published in 1568. Through the refinement and improvement of Polish, it became the written language instead of Latin, which had until then been prevalent in the Jagiellonian Empire. So, the Reformation laid the foundations for the development and growth of a Polish national literature.⁹⁷

Seklucian has already been mentioned. In addition to him, Superintendent Erasmus Gliczner was active as a writer from the Lutheran side, writing as a polemicist against the Arians and Jesuits, defending the

⁹⁴ M. Bobrzyński, Dz. P. w Z., 2. Bd., S. 131.

⁹⁵ According to Wengierski, there were only eight Reformed churches left in Lesser Poland, while, in 1576, there were 122 and, in 1650, there were still 93.

⁹⁶ Przegląd Historyczny, 1926, W. 22-41: Edmund Bursche, A dziejów nazwy “Dysydenci”.

⁹⁷ Pos. Ev. Kbl. 1926/27, S. 102 f.

Consensus of Sandomir, as well as criticizing the upbringing of children, the abuse of dance, and others in his publications. In 1558, he published the first pedagogical treatise under the title *On the Education of Children* (Von der Erziehung der Kinder) With the Radziwiłł Bible of 1563, Protestantism was given a strong defense and weapon. In the same year, the oldest Reformed hymnal at Nieśwież was published, whose editors, such as Czechowic and Budny, were affected by anti-Trinitarian thoughts. In 1606, Pastor Daniel Mikołajewski (1560-1633) translated the New Testament, then, in 1632 with his collaborators Sz. T. Turnowski and P. Paliurus, translated the entire Bible, the so-called Danzig Bible.⁹⁸

The new translation was a revision of the Radziwiłł Bible. Unfortunately, a nasty misprint crept into the Danzig Bible (Matthew 4: instead of tempted “by the devil” [it read] “to the devil...” —instead of, “od”, “do djabla”). Since the Catholics maliciously interpreted the error as blasphemy, they were forced to destroy several thousand copies of the first edition. In the later editions, the error was corrected. For the Arians, Simon Budny (died c. 1596), who was known for his radical religious thoughts, produced the Bible of Nieśwież.. In his New Testament of 1574, he made the first attempt at textual criticism.

As a counterpart to the evangelical Radziwiłł Bible, the excellent Catholic translation of the Bible by Jakob Wujek, the so-called Jesuit Bible, was published in 1599. Its predecessor, the Lemberger (Lviv) Bible of 1561 by the Catholic theologian Jan Leopolda, a translation from the Vulgate, apparently did not satisfy Catholic circles. Wujek also wrote a Catholic Postille [Bible commentary] that contained sharp attacks against the evangelicals. He, like Skarga, Kromer and all other Catholic writers, was active in writing not only from the point of view of polemics against all non-Catholics, but also from the point of view of the religious edification of their fellow-believers. All of them, however, are surpassed in intellectual strength and productivity by Nicholas Rej and Jan Kochanowski, the two creators of Polish national literature.

As a prominent representative of the Reformed Polish nobility, Rej was determined to actively raise the local literature and to show it new ways of development [page 37]. In his *Conversation between the Landlord, the Village Mayor and Priest* (Gespräch zwischen Gutsherrn, Dorfschulzen und Pfarrer), in his *Merchant* (Kaufmann), as well as in the educational trilogy *Biography* (Lebensbild), *Zoo* (Tiergarten) and *Human Mirror* (Menschenspiegel), religious and moral principles come into their own. In his *Apocalypse* (Commentary on the Revelation of St. John) he disputed with the Roman Church and the Catholic clergy. With his *Postille*, he also made a contribution to edifying literature. Despite all his rejection of the papal church and the Arians, Rej strove for a more non-denominational evangelical regional church under the dominant influence of the nobility. His equal was Jan Kochanowski (1530-1584), the “father of Polish poetry”.⁹⁹ His most important works are *Psalter*, *Treny*, *Satyr*, the three books *Fraszki*, the book *Lieder* and the drama *The Dispatch of the Greek Ambassadors* (Die Abfertigung der griechischen Gesandten).¹⁰⁰ Although a Catholic, he was not free from evangelical influences. As a profound and sensitive disposition poet, he proved in expression and form the suitability of the Polish language for poetry. In Nikolaus Rej and Jan Kochanowski, Polish literature reached a remarkable peak in the 16th century. Outwardly, this manifested itself in the spread of Polish cultural influence in the East, where the Polish language and style, practices and customs gained widespread ground.

⁹⁸ The Synod of Belżyce, in 1603, entrusted Mikołajewski with this task, which he resolved before 1615. However, it was not until 1632 that the Danzig Bible was printed (Encyklopedja Orgelbranda, 10. Bd., S. 180.

⁹⁹ Pos. Ev. Kbl. 1929-30, S. 316 f. In Stanisław Kot’s article “Jan Kochanowskis Reisen und ausländische Studien” — in the commemorative publication in honor of Alexander Brückner, Krakau, 1928 — it is mentioned that Kochanowski converted from Protestantism back to Catholicism under the impression of the political turmoil. However, he had subsequently taken a non-denominational point of view (Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte, 1928, 47 Bd., Neue Folge 10, S. 290.

¹⁰⁰ His “Treny” and his drama translated into German by the Krakau Germanist Prof. Dr. Spiridion Wukadinowić.

With the emergence of national literature, the school system was also given new powerful impulses. The evangelical schools were partly intended to root the youth in the new faith, but also to bring them into contact with the spiritual life of the Protestant foreign countries through the choice of material and teaching methods. For example, Christoph Treacy founded a Secondary School in Krakau, whose rector, in 1572, was Johann Thenaud. The Calvinist Grammar School in Pińczów was reformed by the Frenchman Gregor Orsatius. It enjoyed the reputation of an exemplary humanistic educational institution, which cultivated classical languages as well as Polish. Similar schools were established, among others, in Lewartów (Lubartów), Raków, Lublin, Bełżyce, Secymin, Brest, Nieśwież, Słuck, Kiejdany. In the 17th century, Amos Comenius, of European fame, brought the Brethren educational establishment to Lissa in Greater Poland. The Lutherans had a Grammar School in Thorn. In addition, the schools in Gdansk, Elbing and Graudenz were also known. Jakob from Iłża, the younger, professor of the University of Krakau, was the first to express the idea of establishing a vocational school.

In 1579, in Batory's time, the Jesuit school in Vilnius was elevated to the status of a Gymnasium (academy). Its first rector was Peter Skarga. In Braunsberg, the Jesuits founded the Lyceum Hosianum. As an important element of education, the awakening of ambition in the pupils appeared to them to be the driving force for education and advancement in life. In their religious houses and alumni, mutual supervision was strictly administered.¹⁰¹ The whole Jesuit education must be judged unequivocally negatively.¹⁰²

[page 38] The method of teaching of the Jesuits did not meet with unanimous approval in the country. And so, in 1600, Chancellor Jan Zamojski founded an academy for Polish aristocratic youth in his town of Zamość as a private institution. He wanted to create a more free and humanistic plant of higher education from the narrow confines of Jesuit pedagogy, which would have been independent of the University of Krakau, which had fallen in its standard (*Niveau*) and adhered to scholasticism. The famous Academy in Zamość existed until 1722. Zamojski, although he wanted church unity and was himself a Catholic, held back and was sympathetic to the Protestants. The gifted and of high moral worth life's work of Andreas Frycz-Modrzewski (1506-1572), a pioneer of a reform of the Polish state and its church, was based on the same line, but tending more towards Protestantism. In his *Commentariorum de republica emendanda libri quinque*, published in Krakau in 1551, he advocated the idea of the need for reform of the Polish state with regard to the recognition of legal equality for all citizens and the elevation of morality through supervision and control, which suggests Calvinist influences. Proceeding from national, religious and social considerations, he strove for the unification of all citizens of the country in one national church. His mediating evangelical views, in spite of his outward affiliation with the Roman Catholic Church, betray his initial inclination towards Protestantism. As a reformist politician of the Jagiellonian era, rather than a theological writer, although he wrote in Latin, it is impossible to imagine Polish literary and intellectual history without him.

In polemical literature, Martin Krowicki distinguished himself as an advocate of the evangelical camp. He was the first Protestant theologian in Poland to write his polemics against Catholicism in Polish. On the Catholic side, Stanisław Orzechowski, a relative of Rej, was just as skilful and quick-witted as he was.

While Długosz (Longinus), the historian of the 15th century, used the Latin language, as did Martin Kromer in his revised History of Długosz, it was Lukas Górnicki and Martin Bielski who first wrote the

¹⁰¹ K. Völker, Kirchengeschichte Polens, S. 218 f., 226.

¹⁰² Roczn. Ew. 1925, S. 45-67: Paul Hulka-Laskowski, Charakter kultury ewangelickiej (Character of Evangelical Culture)

history of the homeland in Polish. Górnicki as a chronicler in his *Events in the Polish Crown* (Ereignissen in der polnischen Krone), Bielski in his *World Chronicle* (Weltchronik) (published 1548-1554). Waclaw Potocki (died 1696), the author of the *Chocimer War* (Chocimer Krieges), converted to Catholicism in later years.

As early as the reign of Sigismund II Augustus, the resolutions of the Imperial Diets were written down in Polish. In 1565, Jan of Fulsztyn was commissioned to translate the collection of laws into the local language. In 1553, the Krakau town clerk Jakob Przyłuski, who translated the New Testament into Polish and was a member of the Trzeciesk Humanist Circle, carried out the collection of the *Leges seu statuta ac privilegia Regni Poloniae*, in the explanatory notes of which he advocated a national church with the king at its head.

In the words of Alexander Brückner, the Reformation Movement had only rippled the surface of Polish life. But its effects on all areas of Polish intellectual life were unmistakable. It is not for nothing that the 16th century, with its rich abundance of evangelical literature, is called “the golden age of Poland”. This development was made possible by the art of book printing, which experienced a momentum due to the immigration of numerous printers.¹⁰³ In 1491, [page 39] Johann Haller from Rothenburg ob der Tauber [Bavaria] began printing in Krakau. In 1515, Florian Unger printed the first book in Polish here. In addition to Krakau, Vilnius, Pińczów, Nieświcz, Łaszczów, there were temporary or permanent evangelical printing houses in Brest, Słuzk, Wengrow, Lissa, Scharfenort, Schmiegel, Posen, among others. In the 16th century, there were more evangelical than Catholic printing houses.

The Socinians condemned the serfdom of the peasants 300 years before its abolition and demanded equality of all inhabitants before the law. They advocated the prohibition of fighting with arms, when no one else had even remotely thought of peace leagues and similar alliances. They defended the freedom of inquiry and confession, the inviolability of conscience, especially in places where Catholics and Protestants believed they had to use coercion and violence. They exerted a considerable influence on the rationalistic development of the faith in Europe and America.¹⁰⁴ In Germany, they had representatives at the University of Altdorf.

Polish intellectual life, powerfully stimulated and influenced by the Reformation Movement in all areas, pulsated more and more vigorously, and its effects spread far and wide. And Protestant literature played an important role in it.

III. The Immerging New Evangelical Life in the 17th and 18th Century

1. The Rural Colonization

The German colonization movements in the East, beginning with the medieval early and high settlement period, were followed by those of the modern era (1550-1800). It began under Sigismund Augustus and

¹⁰³ Hans Schmidt II, A powerful lever of the intellectual movement in Poland. The first printer Johann Haller (c. 1467-1525), Kurt Lück, *Deutsche Gestalter und Ordner im Osten*, S. 52-57. Also: Martin Kage (Karl Grams), *Die Buchdruckerkunst in Polen*. Volksfr.-Kal. 1936.

¹⁰⁴ Albert Ritschl dealt separately with the Socinians in his main work "Die christliche Lehre von der Rechtfertigung und Versöhnung". Band 3, Seite 65, 77 u.a. Hugo Grotius supported them. His irenic efforts meant that he wanted to join them and become theirs. Adolf von Harnach also commented on them. After 1945, Polish researchers studied the Socinians in great detail, such as J. Tazbir, W. Urban, K. Lepszy, A. Kamińska, Z. Ogonowski and others.

reached its peak under King Władysław IV. The causes that triggered this eastward release were religious, economic and social. The situation of the Protestants in Silesia, for example, was difficult, where they could not rejoice in their faith. The Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) devastated large areas of the German Empire, while Poland remained almost untouched by it. Under the protection of Polish nobles, many of whom were Protestants themselves, it was hoped that they would be able to establish a new existence and live the evangelical faith unchallenged. And so a stream of immigrants poured from Silesia, Pomerania, Brandenburg, the Neumark and other areas into West Prussia and the adjacent Posen region, where new towns and villages were founded and the old places were expanded and populated by immigration.

The waves of this colonization movement also reached central Poland. In 1605, the first German village in the Vistula lowlands was founded as Słońsk. It owes its origin to the Bydgoszcz *Starost* Somogolewski, who had given 25 *Hufen* [approximately 30 *Morgan*; 1 *Morgan* = anywhere from ½ to 2½ acres] to twelve Holländers from the Danzig *Werder* [river island] as a forty-year hereditary lease. As with the old villages under German law, the administration of Słońsk, including jurisdiction, was in the hands of [page 40] mayors, a result of free election. The evangelical villagers were also given the right to practice their religion freely in the “decree” in which the village laws were enshrined, with the explicit assurance that they “shall not be forced to worship differently”. Around 1610, the settlement of Bógpomóż (Gotthelf) on the Vistula was founded near the town of Bobrowniki, the oldest German village in the Dobrzyń region.¹⁰⁵ At this colony, on a small island of the Vistula, there were the ruins of the old knight's castle Beberen (Bobrowniki). In 1630, on the initiative of the *Starost* of Bobrowniki A. Tulibowski, the lowland village of Neu-Bógpomóż was established. In 1625, the colony of Lentzen was founded, then, around 1650, Woluszewo. The German farmers advanced up the Vistula as far as Warsaw. Thus, in 1629, several families settled on 136 *Morgan* on the so-called *Sächsische Kämpe* [Saxon Battle-?]. The colloquial language of the Vistula farmers was Low German (*Plattdeutsch*). In addition to farming, they were engaged in fruit orchards (plums) and some fishing. For centuries they had to contend with high water and floods. According to their origins, the German colonists who immigrated to central Poland in the first half of the 17th century came from the “established colonies” around Thorn, Graudenz, Schwetz, Kulm, Bydgoszcz, Dirschau and from the Large and Small Danzig River Islands (*Werder*). While the German rural settlement movement in the 17th century was limited exclusively to the Vistula lowlands, in the following century it extended to all areas of central Poland.¹⁰⁶

After 1725, German colonization began again to a greater extent. The old villages in the Vistula lowlands created new daughter colonies to the right and left of the river. In 1731, Osieker Lengden was started on the lands of landlord I. Milewski. The founder of Rajszewo, in 1775, was Archbishop Prince Poniatowski. In 1782, the villages of Wiesendorf and Skierdy near the town of Neuhof (Nowydwór) were founded by him. The Mennonite settlement of Kazuń was established by the Hilsen brothers in 1776. A decade later, the Dembina-Holland colony followed near Kazuń. Following the Vistula lowlands, the colonization of the Dobrin Land began. Around 1700, Michael Hieronymus Podoski, castellan of the Dobrin Land, donated Michałki (Michalke) near Rypin. According to the church chronicle of Rypin, there were the villages of Oborki and Tomaszewo in 1719, as well as Kierz and Gaj in 1720. Around 1750, the following were founded: Białowież, Ryszewek, Kotowo and Witkowo. The inhabitants of the Dobrin Land presumably came mainly from West and East Prussia. This is confirmed

¹⁰⁵ Otto Lange, Das Weichseldorf Bógpomóż. Die älteste ländliche Siedlung im Dobrzyner Lande, Volksfr.-Kal., 1929, S. 147 f.

¹⁰⁶ Albert Breyer, Deutsche Gauen in Mittelpolen, 1935, Verlag Günther Wolff in Plauen/Vogtl. D. Wiss. Ztschr. F. Polen 1939, Heft 36, S. 39-61: Dr. Walter Maas, Mittelpolnische Hauländereien.

partly by the places of origin in the marriage and death registers of the evangelical parishes, partly also by the dialect of the colonists.

German settlement activity in Kuyavia began only in the second half of the 18th century. The first German village to be mentioned here was Kamieniec in 1753 with the surrounding villages of Sinki and Koneck-Holland. Over the years, Kamieniec developed into a closed German colony. Around 1770, the Holländer Bycz was established in the area of the Orle estates, which belonged to the Bishop of Kuyavia. At the same time, Gawrony, Broniszewo, Pasieka, Kölsch-Kiejsze, Tymin-Timingen, Kaczyniec and Sinogać were established. Around 1795, there were about 110 German villages in Kuyavia, with an average of less than ten colonists. The settlers came from the districts of Mogilno, Strelno, and others, and used the Pomeranian [page 41] dialect. "As a skilful harvester and clever farmer, the Pomeranian, erroneously called 'Kaschube', proved himself without reservation in the central Polish region."

In the Warthebruch (Warthe marshland), which encompassed the areas from the former Prussian border to Leśnik (south of Uniejów), colonization did not begin until after 1750. In 1767, the landowner and district judge L. Leszczyc-Zielonawski founded the Wenglewer-Hol colony on the Sławsk estates and the Holländer ones: Rumin, Kolno and Sławsk. On 4 September, 1781, King Stanisław Augustus authorized the privileges of the settlement of Majdany, located in the Chełmno Schlüssel. By 1785, there were already the villages of Police, Daniszew and Leszcze.

The settlement of the Kalisch Land began two decades earlier than in the Warthebruch. According to the school chronicle of Czachulec-Schlachtholz, the village of the same name was founded in 1726. In 1746, Paul von Kolno-Prusinski, landlord of Trombczyn, assigned forests and abandoned sites to German farmers for reclamation. They created the colony of Łazinsk Hol on them. After 1770, the following were established: the large settlement of Prażuchy on the estates of the village of Cekow and, in 1775, Zbiersk Hol. In 1782, Martin Wagrowski, landlord of Sobiesenki and Stok, invited Silesian colonists to settle on his estates. Kazimierka Stara was in possession of a charter of foundation from 1782. The owner of Biskupice colonized Adler Hol (Orlina) in 1784. In the immediate vicinity of Kalisch, in contrast to the medieval colonization in this area, there were no closed German villages. The immigrants were Silesians, with the exception of the Pomeranian colony of Wielopole, Józefów and part of Białobłoty.

The settlement of the Gostynin Land came about only in the last two decades of the 18th century. Around 1780, the owner of the Strzelce estate founded the village of Strzelce. Soon after, the owners of Sieraków and Sójki the colonies of Sieraków Hol. and Wierzbie Hol. On the whole, until 1795, the number of evangelical villages in the Gostynin Land was small. The immigrants came from the areas around Schubin, Labischin, Margonin and Wirsitz.

In the vicinity of Lodz, the oldest colony documented in 1782 was Ruda-Bugaj. Its founder was Walenty Chobrzyński, landlord of Brużyca. In the years 1782 to 1789, "Holländisch-Rude" was built. In 1784, another "village establishment" was Pustkowa-Góra, whose founder was Dr. Sokołowska, the [Mother] Superior of the regular female branch of the Premonstratensian Monastic Order (*Prämonstratenserinnen*) at Lentschütz. In 1791, A. Reptowski, Canon (*Domherr*) of the Posen Cathedral Church, gave the settlement of Bróźyczka the "Righteous".

The old German settlers of the Lodz region were Pomeranians from Kujawien [Kuyavia] and Silesians from the Kalisch Land. It was surplus power that the villages of origin gave to their daughter colonies.

From the early history of our colonies, it has been reported that the first pioneers lived in earth huts, suffered from food problems and succumbed to physical exertion or suffered severe health injury. Among the pioneers there were only a few descendants of Holländers who moved up the Vistula from the Danzig Werder area.¹⁰⁷ They were preceded by the reputation of exemplary settlement engineers, who developed special economic forms while safeguarding liberal rights. The name “Holländer” was later transferred to every free German colonist, who was guaranteed certain basic rights when he was appointed for the purpose of clearing forests and abandoned sites. The name “Holländer” was thus not a designation of national affiliation, but rather an expression of a legal status and activity. [page 42]

The colonists in the 17th century and until the end of the 18th century were exclusively Lutherans. During my previous years of research, I did not find any traces of any immigration of German Catholic settlers in central Poland during that period.

In reviewing the German rural colonization in the said period the following is established:

1. Leading secular and spiritual personalities of the Polish people called upon German farmers to cultivate and settle their lands and allotted to them the land which became their new home.
2. By offering them to settle here, they not only gave them contract, but also the legal opportunity to put down roots in their new homeland and become citizens of the Polish state.
3. The colonists repaid the trust placed in them by transforming large areas of Poland into fertile cultivated land, thereby promoting the general prosperity and prosperous development of their new adopted homeland to the best of their ability.
4. In none of the numerous founding documents of our settlements was there a demand for the abandonment of the Lutheran faith and the German mother tongue of the new inhabitants of the country. The Polish landlords took these two facts into account. They took them into the reality of Polish Catholic life, which shaped the country.
5. The German Lutheran farmers brought material benefits not only to the Polish-Catholic landlords, but also to the state itself. In terms of attitude and performance, they were not a negative and destructive element, but rather a state-affirming and constructive element. Their German virtues—industriousness, thrift, and perseverance—coupled with religious activity, cordiality and vigor, carried by cultural will and aspirations, meant for Poland a remarkable increase in the intrinsic values and gifts that the country needed for its development and expansion.

2. The Urban Immigration

In the 14th century, the German old town of Warsaw was joined by a Polish settlement called Neustadt (New Town). Until the end of the 17th century, Catholic Germanism asserted itself in Warsaw, gathering around the Jesuit “Brotherhood of St. Bennoni”. The many German surnames of Catholic Poles bear witness to Warsaw’s Catholic Germanism, which then completely assimilated into the Polish environment, until recently.

In contrast to the Catholic Germans, the evangelical Germans in Mosawien had to put up with difficulties and dangers. In 1525, the last Masawien, Prince Janusz, issued the well-known edict against the evangelicals in his duchy, in which he forbade, on pain of death and confiscation of property, “to have, possess and read the books and false teachings of Luther in any language, or to confess the false

¹⁰⁷ There can be no question of a predominance of the “Holländer element in the earliest settlements”, as Gen.-Sup. Dr. Julius Bursche thinks he can establish in his article on die Evangelisch-Augsburgische Kirche Bd. V (see bibliography) in the “Ekklesia”.

doctrine of the Lutherans themselves and to persuade others to do so". Despite this edict, which could not be carried out, numerous German evangelical families settled in Warsaw. They could engage in economic activity, but could neither publicly profess nor practice their faith. However, the edict was relieved of its strength by placing the immigrant Lutherans, as ancestral relatives of the Warsaw Catholic Germans, under the care of the "Brotherhood of St. Bennoni", founded in 1623. Since then, the stream of Lutheran immigrants [page 43] has flowed unceasingly, interrupted only temporarily by plague (1624-25, 1708), wars, especially by the Polish-Swedish military conflict from 1655 to 1660, and internal turmoil. From 1684 to 1694, the famous sculptor Andreas Schlüter stayed in Warsaw, where he entered the service of King Sobieski.¹⁰⁸

The urban settlement experienced a strong boost during the time of the Saxon kings Augustus II and Augustus III. With the Saxon troops came officers and court officials, craftsmen and merchants. Thus, the Warsaw evangelical population grew. As their prosperity grew, so did their prestige and influence. At the beginning of the reign of King Stanisław Augustus Poniatowski, the number of Lutherans in Warsaw was close to 5,000. In 1789, there were already about 8,000, out of a total population of 89,448 inhabitants. The king, who was well-disposed towards the German character, attracted evangelical nobles and scholars to his court or called them to the civil service. Gradually, all restrictions and disadvantages were lifted.

Around 1650, Prince Janusz Radziwiłł settled German Lutheran craftsmen in his dominion of Wengrow near Warsaw. Their appointment coincided with the formation of the Lutheran congregation. After the death of the prince (1655), Wengrow passed into the possession of his daughter and heiress Anna Marie. In Vilnius, Lublin, Bełżyce and surrounding towns, the German element was represented or strengthened by new immigrants. In connection with this, there will be much more to be said in the following sections.

In 1727, the Kulm castellan Jan Władysław Kretkowski founded Rosterschütz-Władysławow. It received from King Augustus II the city privilege on 26 April of this year.¹⁰⁹ It was the first and oldest German craftsman's town in central Poland. In 1738, the guild of "Züchner, Parchner and Weavers"¹¹⁰ was organized in Rosterschütz. The town of Stawiszyn near Kalisch, where Lutherans of the German tongue settled in the second half of the 18th century, insisted on the same line of development. They were supported by the Starost General of Łuba. After 1750, there were also German Lutherans in Kalisch, but they were not strong in numbers. After 1750, German Lutherans immigrated to Iłow near Sochaczew as craftsmen and farmers. Count Dabski, Wojewode of Kuyavizh-Brest, promoted it. In 1782, Prince Stanisław Poniatowski, the nephew of the former King Stanisław Augustus Poniatowski, founded the town of Neuhof (Nowydwór) between the Vistula and Narew rivers. He settled it with Lutheran clothmakers and craftsmen. Around the middle of the 18th century, on the initiative of Count von Flemming, the factory town of Izabelin near Wilkowyszki was established, where German contractors and craftsmen settled.

A critical examination of German urban immigration in the 17th and 18th centuries leads to the following findings:

¹⁰⁸ Paul Weiglin, Andreas Schlüter, Velhagen und Klasings Monatshefte, 29. Jahrg., 1914/15, 2. Bd., S. 170 f.

¹⁰⁹ E. Kneifel. Władysławow, Luthererbe i. P. vom 23. Februar 1938 (the German translation of the Latin founding document of Władysławow).

¹¹⁰ Translator's addition—Züchner—an old designation for a linen weaver; Parchner/Barchentweber—an historical craft profession where Perch weavers used linen warp and cotton weft to make a dense, lightweight weave with a twill weave.—Wikipedia.

1. The settlement of the cities lacked a unified will directed towards the whole country and was more or less sporadic in character.
2. The initiators and promoters of this immigration were state and other secular representatives of the Polish people.
3. In spite of the different religious confessions, the German Lutherans were drawn to settle in the towns, because they valued their skills and their labor, trusted their achievements, and wanted to serve the state by attracting such forces willing to build up. Warsaw, for example, owes a great deal to the Protestants [page 44]. Its pioneering effectiveness in all fields over the last three hundred years has become an integral part of the development of the city of Warsaw and, beyond that, of the Polish people.
4. The animosity of the Catholic Poles in the cities was initially directed not against the German language, but against the evangelical faith of the immigrants. In Lublin, for example, they agreed to the naturalization of the German Lutherans, but only on condition that they would soon convert to the Roman Catholic Church. In the 19th century, and even more so in the 20th century, the emphasis of rejection shifted from the religious to the national sphere. The Lutheran German, even if he had been a faithful Polish citizen, was everywhere accompanied by the shadow of the German people. It was in this twilight that he was seen and evaluated. And that had to have a disastrous effect in the long run.
5. In the cities, such as Warsaw and others, the Lutheran Germans, closely interwoven in economic and other life, had to deal more directly with the different Polish-Catholic environment than the colonists living in scattered villages left to their own devices. Remaining evangelical and German was exposed to great burdens and challenges here. In national terms, they slowly succumbed to the dynamics of the repopulation process. Beginning in the second half of the 19th century and increasing more and more at the turn of the 20th century, especially since there were almost no counter-effects on the German side, Polish became the language at home, everyday language and church language of the majority of Protestants. The growth of the Warsaw evangelicals into the Polish nationality and the adherence of the Lutheran villagers and subsequently to Germanism in Lodz and in other towns of the later Lodz industrial district, caused the national discord within Lutheranism in Poland to become more and more acute.
6. It was of serious importance that throughout the 19th century the German people, and especially the evangelical Church in the Old Reich, paid almost no attention to the kindred fellow believers in Poland.¹¹¹

3. The School and Cantorate System

When a colony was founded, the construction of a school and prayer house was also considered from the beginning. In the 17th and 18th centuries, and often in later times, it was a simple wooden house, half of which served as a prayer hall and the other half as a school and residence for the teacher and cantor. At that time, the teachers were not seminary trained workers, not even in Germany, but mostly craftsmen or landless farmers or retired soldiers, who pursued an additional occupation in addition to their profession as a schoolmaster and cantor (such as agricultural laborers, shoemakers, day laborers). They were forced to do so because their incomes as “schoolmasters and cantors”, as they were called, were not sufficient to make a living. It is true that here and there the school and cantor positions were endowed

¹¹¹ Univ.=Prof. D. Paul Althaus, Die Entdeckung des Deutschtums im ehemaligen Mittelpolen, Deutschtum im Aufbruch, S. 191 f.

with some land, and also brought in certain additional income for church official acts, but all this only guaranteed a minimum of living.

In 1638., the German school at Schlönks was called into existence in the Vistula lowlands. In the founding document of the Vistula village of Lengden-Osiek, from the year [page 45] 1731, it was said: “They are allowed to build and maintain a school for all time, and to this school they are given two *Morgan* of land, so that they can maintain a schoolmaster from it”. Schools were also established: in 1765 in Witoszyn-Lengden, in 1770 in Bógpomóż, and in 1780 in Rybitwy.

German schools were organized in the Dobrzyn Land: in 1710 in Michałki near Rypin, in 1730 in Kłono, in 1745 in Tomaszewo, in 1747 in the Wolsche Buden; then, in 1765 in Gaj, Iwane, Kierz, Kotowo, Kleszczyn, Klein-Kretki, Seedorf and Zduny. In addition, in 1769 in Bocheniec, in 1774 in Ryszewek, Białowieżyn, and in 1776 in Witkowo.

In Kujawien, until the takeover of the territory by Prussia, there were about 25 German schools, while in the Warthebruch there were ten. German schools were established in the Kalisch region: in 1740 in Władysławow-Rosterschütz, then in Prażuchy, Zbiersk, Danowiec, Zamenty, Zakrzyn, Przespolew, Czachulec, Grodziec, Mycielin, Obory, Białobłoty, Gadowskie Hol., Orlina, Wierzby, Łazinsk. In all, there were 16 schools in the Kalisch region and about ten in the Gostynin district. In addition, schools were established in the Lodz district, including in Dombrowa Hol, Miłeszki, Groß-Bruyca, Klein-Brużyca, Radogoszcz, Kały, Słowik, Swendow, Głogowiec, Domaradzy, Paprotnia Hol. Until 1793/95, that is, until the incorporation of central Poland into the Prussian state, there were almost 125 German-Lutheran schools in the towns.

To a certain extent, this beginning laid the foundation for our school system. While the Polish-Catholic peasant at that time was in a bondage relationship to his landlord and culturally on a low level, the German Lutheran colonist was a free man and, thanks to his schooling and more progressive economy, far superior to him. Only in the towns, but by no means sufficiently, did the Polish population have schools.

In the German village schools, commonly called *Kantorat* schools (religious schools), the teachers—almost until the first decades of the 19th century—taught only in the winter half of the year, that is, from late autumn to spring. But even then, the lessons as well as the school attendance left a lot to be desired. The subjects of instruction—religion, German (writing and reading) and arithmetic—were spent in teaching the bare necessities and mostly did not go beyond the initial grounds of very modest knowledge. Of course, there were also those among the teachers who, in spite of their low level of education, filled in the gaps in their knowledge and made an honest effort to have their schools in every respect, not only to impart knowledge to the children, but also to educate and strengthen their character. In the classroom, the greatest emphasis was placed on religion (Bible, catechism, hymnal). Of course, every school lesson began and ended with singing and prayer.

In addition to their service as teachers, the “schoolmasters” were also cantors, that is to say, readers in the worship service and rural representatives of the pastors. On Sundays and festival days, they held reading services, performed official acts (baptisms and funerals) and also stood in for the pastor in other ways, for example, in confirmation classes. The cantor was responsible for the religious care of several villages, which were united to form the so-called *Kantorat*. Depending on its size, a rural parish consisted of a number of *Kantorats*. Their distance, on average, from five to twenty kilometers [3 to 12.5 miles] and even more distant from the parish town. In consequence of the great distances,

especially in view of the bad road conditions, the pastors visited them only two or three times a year. More regularly and more frequently in the last century. The members of the Kantorate themselves also on rare occasions took part in the services [page 46] in the parish church, only on high festival days, in the confirmation ceremony and on Harvest Thanksgiving. In closed colonies, which gathered around the church, as it were, or from which it was easier to reach, the colonists took a very active part in the life of the congregation (*Gemeindeleben*). In many places, the Lutheran houses of worship were not located in the center of the villages, but rather on their outer edge. In general, there was often no luck in the choice of parish locations, so that the real focus of religious life in the 17th and 18th centuries was in the Kantorates.

The Church Collegium [council] of the Warsaw Lutheran congregation took care of the school system. It eagerly pursued the establishment of schools and advocated German as a teaching language. In 1778, a *Collegium Scholarchale* was constituted, consisting of the local pastor, the president of the Church Collegium and some respected parishioners, including the historian Christian Gottlieb von Friese. The school staff drafted the curriculum and instructions for the teachers, visited and supervised the schools. In addition to the German Lutheran parish school, a Middle (*mittlere*) School for German children was established. In addition to religion and German, the following subjects were taught in this school: Polish, French and Latin languages, general and Polish history, ethics, geography, natural history, mathematics, history of arts and crafts. The school was then converted into a Central Church School, a boys' and girls' school with a four-year course. The Warsaw evangelical Lutheran schools, as well as all other schools of the same denomination in the country, were under the administration of the evangelical Consistory and under the supervision of the Education Commission of Warsaw.

The close connection between the school and the Kantorat in the person of the cantor meant that the Kantorat was also considered to be founded at the same time as the school. The old school communities were therefore identical with the Kantorat parishes. Only where several German schools existed side by side in the immediate vicinity, due to local conditions, did the Kantorats and often also the schools dissolve of their own accord and merge into the largest school and Kantorat community. It follows that in the 17th and 18th centuries our school group was almost equal to that of the Kantorats.

The Kantorate system was an original, vital creation of our colonist people—a religious-cultural self-help organization closely related to the school. In the Catholic-Polish environment, in the vastness of the country, in the village of seclusion and loneliness, it resembled, figuratively speaking, a “city on the mountain” that was visible and accessible to all.

“What full of character, Bible-knowledgeable, respected personalities our Augsburg church had under its cantors! They were men with calloused hands and coarse garments, but often with a fervor of faith, with a firmness of will and readiness to serve, who were second to none. It is not too much to say, therefore, if I emphasize here—which, by the way, I also noted at one of the Cantors' Conferences of the Petrikau diocese in 1931—that our cantors were, as it were, column bearers, who held together the whole structure of our church during its centuries of existence. That is why the testimonies from their history are among the most beautiful and worthy, which tell us of the service and faithfulness of our cantors and, moreover, of the Kantorate System in general”!¹¹²

[page 47]

¹¹² Eduard Kneifel, *Die Bedeutung des Kantors für Gemeinde und Kirche*, Volksfr.-Kal. 1938, S. 114/21.

4. The Evangelical-Lutheran Congregations from 1555 to 1775

Our oldest congregation (*Gemeinde*) was Vilnius in the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania, founded in 1555. It explicitly referred to itself as a Saxon or German congregation, in contrast to the Helvetic, the “Polish parochial”. In sharp contrast to their outwardly favorable situation was their inner distress, caused by the Counter-Reformation since 1570. The persecution and oppression of the Lutherans and Reformed in Vilnius continued almost unabated until the attainment of religious freedom in 1768/75.¹¹³ In 1610, 1624, 1651, 1655 and 1737 the church of the Vilnius Lutherans was partially or completely destroyed by fire or arson. The foundation stone for the construction of their last church was laid in 1739. The funds for the building of the church itself—the last thorough renovation in 1908—were obtained through a collection carried out at home and abroad.

In addition to German members, the congregation also included a small number of Poles, Scots and Dutch. Therefore, from 1578 until the middle of the 18th century, one German and one Polish preacher (sometimes three) officiated here.¹¹⁴

Among the most famous pastors of the Vilnius congregation were: Stanisław Rapelhagen, a pupil of Luther and from 1543 first professor of theology in Königsberg (died 1545); Adam Culvensis (Kulwa), a pupil of Melancton (poisoned in 1545); the former Lutheran superintendent in Greater Poland and then superintendent in Lithuania, Samuel Dambrowski, author of the famous Polish *Postille* of 1621, summoned here from Posen and died of the plague on 5 July, 1625, at the age of 48; Adam Gdacius, an eminent scholar and orator (1642); Andreas Schönfließ, a man from Thorn, published a *Christian Postille according to the Bible and the Doctors of the Church* [Christliche Postille nach der Bibel und den Doktoren der Kirche] emphasizing the faith content of the Augustana; in 1645, Joachim Göbel attended the religious discussion in Thorn; Christoph Hartknoch, the later author of the *Prussian Church History* (1686) [Preußischen Kirchenhistorie], was rector and adjunct here in 1665; Johann Herbinus (Kapusta), who worked in Vilnius from 1673 to 1675, translated the Augsburg Confession into Polish. Also worth mentioning is his historical survey of the plight of Protestantism in Poland on the occasion of a petition to a same faith related country for aid for the construction of a Protestant grammar school in Boanowo (1671).¹¹⁵ From more recent times, the following pastors should be mentioned: Paul Woldemar von Everth, here from 1845 to 1875, the later General Superintendent and Bishop of the Augsburg Church; his son Paul von Everth, adjunct to Vilnius from 1863 to 1867, then second pastor at the Peter and Paul Church in Moscow, and finally general superintendent of the Moscow Consistory District (died 1901); Provost Karl Keuchel, who held the first Vilnius Diocesan Assembly in Białystok in 1885; Provost Ludwig Dobbert in Vilnius, under whose leadership the 25th Diocesan Assembly also met in Białystok in July of 1912 and who published a commemorative book commemorating the diocesan meetings in the Jubilee Year; Paul Tittelbach, who was appointed provost of Lithuania and Belarus by the Courland Consistory in 1916. Andreas Needra (Niedra), former Prime Minister of Latvia, writer and poet (died 1942). The last (the 66th) Lutheran pastor and superintendent of Vilnius was Siegfried Oskar Loppe, prisoner of the Dachau concentration camp (died 1957).

[page 48] In 1630, Peter von Nonhardt founded a small church (branch church) on the Goycieniszki estate, in the wider area of Vilnius, in the district of Lida, which at times also had its own preachers.

¹¹³ In view of the character of this book, the fate of the Reformed congregation in Vilnius cannot be discussed here.

¹¹⁴ A.F.A (damowicz), *Die evangelisch-lutherische Kirche zu Vilnius*. 1855.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

There was also a branch congregation in Szematów, which ceased to exist in 1892, at the same time as Goycieniszki.

In 1616, Count Raphael Leszno-Leszczyński settled 14 families from the Vistula region in Neubruch on the Bug (Neudorf-Neubruch, Schlawatitz, at last renamed Mościce).¹¹⁶ So they were not Pomeranians or even Masuria, as was claimed on the Polish side without any justification. In 1617, the foundation stone was laid for the construction of a church, for which the colonists of Leszczyński received a privilege on 3 June of that year.¹¹⁷ During the invasion of Lithuania and Poland by the Cossacks in 1648/49, the Lutheran church was burned down and the farms of the German peasants were also plundered. Jonas Columbus, a pastor from Neudorf, who was born in Saxony, asked the Synod of Bełżyce in May of 1649 to be allowed to hold Lutheran worship service in a town near Lublin, under the protection of a nobleman. The church of Piaski, three miles from Lublin, was assigned to the people of Neudorf, with the express reservation that they could only use it until the church of Neudorf was rebuilt. In Neudorf itself, a simple wooden chapel was built because no permission was granted to build a church. It was only after 1770 that a spacious wooden church was built with the help of the landlord at the time, Prince Karl Radziwiłł. It was dedicated as Trinity church on 15 November, 1778.

During the tenure of Pastor Johann Georg Abrahamowicz (since 1714), the fact became apparent that the parishioners, especially the young people, no longer spoke German. Although German was still retained as the language of preaching, the youth had to be instructed in Polish. At the beginning of the 19th century, Polish had finally established itself in the parish.

Among the pastors of Neudorf, Martin Oloff, Johann Georg Abrahamowicz and Simon Pusch are praised as faithful shepherds of souls. Oloff, the much-boasted pastor of Wengrow, took office here in 1690. After four years of activity he went to Thorn, where he died on 29 August, 1715.¹¹⁸ Abrahamowicz distinguished himself as a faithful, fearless witness of the Gospel. Simon Pusch from Straßburg in Prussia officiated in Schlawatitz-Neudorf from 1743 to 1776. After a strenuous journey to remote regions that overwhelmed his strength, he died. The Neudorf pastors also served the fellow-believers who settled in smaller groups in Lithuania, Podolia, Volhynia and Galicia. Their regular preaching stations were Piaski and Kobryń. The daughter settlements of Neudorf, the colonies of Zabuskie Hol. and Świerzowskie Hol., were afterwards also administered by the Neudorf pastor, although Volhynia later belonged to the St. Petersburg Consistory District, while the parish of Neudorf belonged to the Courland District. Until the First World War, the parish was called Nejdorf-Nejbrow (Neudorf-Neubruch) in corrupt German.

Among the Lublin Protestants there were Germans, Scots and Poles. Some of the Germans remained Catholic as they were before, so that the two ancestral groups were constantly feuding with each other for religious reasons. In 1627, the mob destroyed the two parishes here, the Reformed and the Socinian, whereupon the Calvinists joined the Reformed congregation at Bełżyce (still in 1726) and the Socinians joined the congregation at Piaski.¹¹⁹ The German element was equally represented in these two groups,

¹¹⁶ Walter Kuhn, Die Anfänge von Neudorf am Bug, D. M. i. P., Januar 1938. (Chronik Neudorf-Neubruch von P. Scheidenmantel).

¹¹⁷ Roczn. Ew. 1925, p. 153, gives 1563 as the year of foundation of the congregation, but this does not correspond to the historical facts. Even in the later Polish publications, this incorrect year is adhered to, despite the existing founding documents.

¹¹⁸ The former professor of the Thorn grammar school, Ephraim Oloff († 1735), author of a *Polnischen Liedergeschichte zu polnischen Kirchengesängen und deren Dichtern und Übersetzern* (published in Danzig in 1744), was his son)

¹¹⁹ Das Buch der Bełżycer Gemeinde, 1652-1692 (polnisch). Handschrift Nr. 1185 der Zamojski-Bücherei in Warschau. Dazu Handschrift Nr. 1386, Urk. 11, in der Łopacinski-Bücherei.

although the Lutherans consciously adhered to the Reformed. However, as early as May of 1638, at the Synod of Biłgoraz, the Lublin merchants of the Augsburg denomination demanded their own Lutheran parish and a pastor with the seat in Bełżyce, though this could not be realized.¹²⁰

In 1643, Adam Suchodolski, a Calvinist, liquidated the Socinian community of Piaski, which had been formed before 1573. Soon after, a small Reformed parish consisting of Polish noble families of the surrounding area was organized here, the patron of which was the aforementioned Suchodolski. In the month of May of 1649, at the Synod of Bełżyce, the Reformed concluded an agreement with the Lutherans in regard to the worship services for the believers of the two confessions in the former Sozinian house of prayer at Piaski. In 1650, the Lutherans received from the patron the privilege to found a congregation and to build a massive church. The privilege was also confirmed by the later owners of Piaski, such as Andreas Suchodolski in 1671, Theodor in 1680, Alexander in 1715 and Ludwika Suchodolska née Stryjenska.¹²¹ For more than 130 years, the Lublin evangelicals made intermittent pilgrimages to Piaski, where they were religiously cared for by the Neudorf pastors. For this reason, the pastors of Neudorf sometimes referred to themselves as “pastors to Neudorf and Lublin”. Since the Lutheran congregation was more prominent in the public eye than the Reformed one, the name Piaski Luterskie (Lutheran Sandbanks) was attached to the village of Piaski Wielkie (Große Sandbänke/Great Sandbanks).¹²² The Reformed congregation in Piaski existed from 1643 to 1819, and there were a total of twelve pastors in it.

In 1552, Pastor Gregor Pauli (Zabrobelny) held the first public evangelical worship service for the Krakau Protestants in Wola Justowa near Krakau. Soon after, Chełmski, a sword-bearer from Krakau, arranged for his house, near the episcopal palace, to be used for religious purposes. This provoked a strong reaction from the Catholic side. In 1570, the evangelical congregation in Krakau came into possession of its own church, which its opponents insistently called “Bróg” (Schober/stack). In it, in the upper community hall, the German Protestants of Krakau, whose number in 1572 amounted to 600, worship services were held in their mother tongue. They also had a German Lutheran private school. Their long-time preacher, initially German and later also Polish, was Jakob Wolff, who took over the congregation in Kiev in 1602. The Krakau church was robbed and burned down three times by students and mobs: on 10 October, 1574, on 8 May (Ascension Day), 1587, and on 23 May, 1591. These acts of violence took place despite the royal privilege of 2 May, 1572, which placed the religious and communal life of the Krakau Protestants under the direct protection of the king. They refrained from rebuilding the church under the pressure of [page 50] circumstances and moved the seat of the congregation to Aleksandrowice near Krakau, where Stanisław Jan Karminski gave them refuge on his estate.¹²³ But here, too, on 14 April, 1613, the fanatical Krakau mob, together with the students and pupils, broke in, demolished and burned the parsonage.¹²⁴ The seat of the Krakau congregation was transferred from Aleksandrowice to the village of Wielkanoc-Langenacht in the Kielce region.¹²⁵ Its owner, Stanisław Wielowiejski, built an evangelical church and other congregation buildings here. From 1637 to 1657, the historian Adalbert Wegierski officiated in Wielkanoc. The pastor of Wielkanoc also served the evangelicals of Łuczanowice near Krakau, where the estate of Stanisław Zeleński was a religious base. In Wielkanoc, where the congregation existed even in 1849, the Protestants were not

¹²⁰ Alexander Kossowski, *Protestantyzm w Lublinie i w Lubelskiem w 16—17 s.* Lublin 1933, Seite 165.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 223, and others.

¹²² A. Schoeneich, *Przyczynek do dziejów Piask Wielkich, Luterskimi zwanych.* *Zw. Ew.* 1899, Nos. 1 and 3.

¹²³ He was a zealous Protestant and died at an advanced age (about 100 years).

¹²⁴ A. Węgiński, *Chronik der evangelischen Gemeinde zu Krakau.* Breslau 1880, S. 61/2, 140.

¹²⁵ In 1636 it numbered 299 persons, 174 men and 125 women. —Dr. Janina Bieniarz u. Dr. Karol Kubisz: *400 lat Reformacji pod Wawelem. 1557-1957.*

spared from the Catholic hatred of the faith. In 1750, the preacher from Neudorf on the Bug came here once a year to preach God's word to the Lutherans of Krakau and to administer Holy Communion. The Krakau congregation was characterized by the fact that it united Lutherans and Calvinists, with each group receiving Holy Communion according to their rite. In the second half of the 18th century, a small group of Krakau evangelicals remained attached to the church in Podgórze.¹²⁶

The Wengrow Lutheran congregation, located in Podlasie, owes its existence to Prince Janusz Radziwiłł, who on 25 June, 1650, granted the German Lutherans who had settled there the privilege of holding Lutheran worship services in the Reformed Church. He also donated the house and garden to the Lutheran pastor and undertook to provide an annual allowance of 300 guilders for its maintenance. The Lutheran parish was primarily intended for the numerous evangelical officers and soldiers recruited in Brandenburg and in Polish service, all the more so because, according to the well-known Edict of 1525, no non-Catholic services were tolerated in Mazovia. The congregation was subordinated to the Pomeranian Consistory in Saalfeld near Mohrungen/East Prussia. The Lutherans and Reformed of Wengrow had a so-called *Simultaneum*, that is, a common place of worship, their own preachers and an orderly sequence of worship services, each according to their rite. Reformed pastors officiated here only until 1779.

Jonas Columbus was appointed as the first Lutheran pastor of Wengrow, previously in Schlawatitz/Neudorf on the Bug. As a Saxon theologian, he introduced the homeland liturgy and church order here, so that the community of Wengrow called itself "Saxon". The patrons of the church were: Prince Janusz Radziwiłł, then his cousin Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł, and later the latter's daughter Louise Charlotte (Ludovica Carolina). According to the oldest church record of Wengrow from 1650, Pastor Columbus died around 1660.

Pastor Johann Tyraeus, the successor of Columbus, could not hold his own in Wengrow for economic reasons and left it after a short time.¹²⁷ The Lutheran parsonage was used as a hospital by the Reformed congregation. And it seemed as if the Lutheran parish would go down in Wengrow. To alleviate the emergency, the Lutherans of Wengrow and Warsaw—the latter also attending [page 51] the worship services in Wengrow—asked Pastor Erdmann Lehmann in Neudorf to minister to them twice a year with the Word of God. Lehmann, who regularly preached for the people of Lublin in Piaski, also visited Wengrow until 1668. However, since his inadequate spiritual care did not satisfy them in the long run, the Warsaw Lutherans asked Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł to call a new preacher to Wengrow and to hand over the former parsonage to him. This was done, whereupon Pastor Matthias Rosentreter officiated here from 1668 to 1672.

After an interruption of several years, Martin Oloff, a native of Wengrow, took up the pastorate in 1677. After two years of activity (1679) he experienced the burning of the church, which was probably caused by Jesuit activities. Now an emergency shed served as a house of prayer, but the Bishop of Łuzk had it closed. As a result, from 1685 to 1689, Oloff held worship services in the parsonage.¹²⁸ As a "preacher under the cross" he had to endure much adversity and suffering from the Catholic side. In 1690, "tired of all persecutions and insults in Wengrow", he left the parish and became pastor of Neudorf.

¹²⁶ A. Węgierski, Chronik...Seite 141-152.

¹²⁷ He may be identical with the former Vilnius cantor of the same name.

¹²⁸ Gotthold Rhode, Brandenburg-Preußen und die Protestanten in Polen (Abschn.: Beistand für die evang.Kirche in Wengrow, 1685-1689.

Since 1700, there was the intension to build a brick church on the site of the dilapidated emergency shed. While Bishop Wychowski of Łuzk supposedly did not cause any difficulties, the Catholic provost of Wengrow prevented the construction of the church by legal means. The situation of the Wengrow pastors deteriorated catastrophically. For example, they were not allowed to wear any clerical official garment, had to discontinue all public funeral ceremonies, register and solve all official acts with the provost, and had to ring the bells later than in the Catholic church. Preachers Jakob Surminski (1700-1714), Johann Georg Abrahamowics and the Pietist Johann Friedrich Bachstrom (1720-1724) learned more than ever to suffer for the sake of the faith in their entire oppressed activity!

One of the most interesting and curious figures among our pastors was Johann Friedrich Bachstrom. Ordained in 1720 by Senior Arnold in Unruhstadt, he worked only four years in Wengrow, where he was severely harassed by the Catholics. After the closure of the Wengrow church in 1723 and the prevention of any religious work, Bachstrom remained in hiding in Warsaw until 1729. In the winter of 1728 alone, he had to change his residence five times because the Catholic law officer (*Häscher*) wanted to get hold of him. In between, he was also a military preacher here. His patron in Warsaw was Jakob Heinrich Reichsgraf von Flemming (died 1728), supreme Minister of State and evangelical Field Marshal of the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. Bachstrom had a solid education and a high level of talent. In 1723, he received his doctorate in medicine from Copenhagen. He was a theologian, a physician, a technician, a chemist, an inventor, a translator, a novelist. He is the author of 17 writings in various fields. He wanted to give women access to a professional education. In 1729, he spent a long time in Constantinople, where he planned to found an academy of sciences and a medical and scientific college. To this end, he was repeatedly received by the Sultan and Grand Vizier. The Jesuits, his fiercest opponents, thwarted the realization of his plans. After his return from Turkey, he was arrested and almost hanged as a “traitor”. In 1736, Bachstrom became closer to the Danish royal family (Christian IV) in Karlsbad. After an eventful life, in 1737, he was put into the service of the Princess Anna Radziwiłł, née Sanguszko, in whose industrial enterprises he was keenly interested [page 52]. Prince Hieronymus Radziwiłł, who did not like Bachstrom, had him imprisoned in the castle prison at Nieśwież on charges of high treason, where he died in 1742 of a mysterious, probably violent death, “laid in irons on hands and feet”.¹²⁹ A later restitution action by the surviving dependents was successful.

Opinion about Bachstrom is divided. While some see him as an adventurer, others see him as “a forerunner and silent collaborator of the humanitarian ideas of our great ones of the 18th century.” He himself said of himself: “All my poetry and striving stands only for the freedom to invent and spread something good”.¹³⁰

Bachstrom’s successor in Wengrow, Pastor Georg Rausch, a native of Transylvania, worked from 1728 to 1762. In addition to his clergyman office, he enjoyed great popularity as a physician. “And that is why,” he said, “he lives in good standing and peace.” He was succeeded by Christoph Grzegorzewski (1762-1774), whose activities were not free from persecution and affliction. In 1769 (not 1669, as is noted in some papers), the first church built in the cemetery went up in flames. It was assumed that the Catholics had a hand in this. In the same year—in 24 hours!—Grzegorzewski built a wooden church out of a granary on the same spot. The permission for the new building was linked to the Jesuit condition that the new church had to be built in one day. On the Catholic side, it was certainly expected that the

¹²⁹ As late as 1739, Prince Jerome, whom he had cured of a speech impediment, gave him a house in Stuzk, where he lived with his family.

¹³⁰ Hermann Ulrich, Johann Friedrich Bachstrom, ein Gelehrtenleben aus der 1. Hälfte des 18. Jahrh., Euphorion, Zeitschr. Für Literaturgeschichte, 16. Bd., 1909, Seite 28-59, 320-349.

evangelicals would not succeed in fulfilling the condition. Grzeforzewski countered the infamous piece with snake-like cleverness.¹³¹ On 16 June, 1767, the Wengrow wooden parsonage burned down, and in the following two years a stone parsonage was built in its place with the help of Warsaw fellow-believers. In 1739, the Lutherans in Vilnius were allowed to rebuild their church. The evangelicals in Biała, widely known for the cloth industry, were granted free religious practice by Augustus II in the Letter of Protection of 15 August, 1730.

In his privilege of 5 April, 1651, Prince Boguslaw Radziwiłł allowed the Lutherans of Warsaw to use the Reformed Church in Wengrow and held out the prospect of leaving it entirely to the Lutherans provided he would build a brick church for the Calvinists. Until then, they should share the church with them. The right of patronage of the Wengrow church was reserved by the Prince. There is no mention of a Warsaw Augsburg community or its administrators either in the privilege mentioned above or in that of 14 April, 1650. In his *Contributions to the Reformation History...* [Beitraegen zur Reformationsgeschichte...], Christian Gottlieb von Friese emphatically denies this. It is completely absurd to assume that the “Augsburg community in Warsaw” existed even before 1650, on the grounds that the evangelical cemetery had already been mentioned in the privilege of King Jan Kasimir from the same year. It should be noted that the immigrant Lutherans in Warsaw received a plot of land for the construction of a cemetery through the mediation of the German-Catholic “Brotherhood of St. Bennoni” (Brüderschalf des St. Bennoni). The reference to the church seal with the inscription: “O sancta Trinitas Salva Nos”, and on the margins of “Varsovia 1651 Societas Augustanae Confessionis” is not at all valid insofar as the seal was not made until [page 53] 1773. To sum up: from 1650 onwards, the Warsaw evangelicals increasingly formed a religious-confessional group with their own elders, but without having been a congregation in the true sense of the word. What they lacked was not only a place of worship, a local pastor and a certain indispensable church organization. Above all, there was a lack of an orderly proclamation of the Word of God and the proper administration of the sacraments. And these are essential moments for a Christian congregation.¹³²

From 1650 to 1775, the Warsaw evangelicals were religiously and ecclesiastically connected with Wengrow. Economically prosperous, they contributed much to the upkeep of the Wengrow congregation. They also provided active help in the construction of church buildings. For them, however, the long journeys to Wengrow, as well as the ministry of the pastor there, were quite difficult and exhausting. The Lutherans benefited from the fact that the Danish Legation in Warsaw had preachers whose German worship services they attended. Thus, in 1701, a certain Vechtman is mentioned as a Danish legation preacher. Furthermore, Garrison preachers were appointed for the Saxon troops stationed in Warsaw. In 1713, there were two, one of whom held worship services in the so-called Brandenburg Court, the seat of the Brandenburg envoy. In the decades that followed, the Wengrow preachers of the Lutheran and Reformed confessions also used this opportunity to take care of their Warsaw fellow believers. In 1732, a chapel was set up in the Greater Polish barracks in Warsaw, in which the military preachers Bachstrom, Rausch, Greven, Haase, Bergen, Sonntag and Giering held worship services for the next three decades, which were also attended by the Warsaw evangelicals.¹³³

Their situation was quite serious and difficult. Thus, until 1768, they had to redeem (*lösen*) all burials in the Warsaw Roman Catholic congregation of St. John’s, that is, pay the fees demanded there. As a result, there was even a fierce dispute between the above-mentioned congregation and the other Catholic congregations in Warsaw, but it did not bring about any changes. But (*nur*) baptisms and marriages had

¹³¹ M. Grüner, Das Kirchlein zu Wengrow, Deutsche Post a.d. Osten, Heft 1, Seit 7-11.

¹³² Michelis, Dreihundert Jahre St.-Trinitatis-Gemeinde zu Warschau (poln.), Kal. Ew. 1953, 159-164.

¹³³ Zw. Ew. 1914, Seite 108-112ff: Erinnerungen des Jakob Ragge-Rogowski.

to be redeemed by the Protestants in the Catholic congregations of Warsaw, within the boundaries of which they lived at that time, namely in the parishes of St. John's, St. Mary's and Holy Cross. The fourth St. Andrew's congregation did not yet exist in that time. These payments ceased only after religious freedom was obtained. It should also be noted that funerals, out of consideration for the anti-evangelical mood of the population, mostly took place at night.¹³⁴

In the Danish ambassador de Saint Saphorin, the Warsaw evangelicals were given a well-disposed and understanding supporter. In 1767, in agreement with his government, he built a house of prayer near the Augsburg church in Warsaw, which was later built on Königsstraße. In 1766, the pastor Johann Jakob Scheidemantel from Erfurt¹³⁵ was appointed preacher of the legation and the Warsaw Lutherans.

In 1771, they wanted to introduce a new church organization and thus bind the Warsaw evangelicals more firmly to Denmark.¹³⁶ This plan was supported by [page 54] Pastor Scheidemantel, Privy Councilor von Friese and later also Lieutenant Colonel von Kaufmann. The Russian ambassador von Saldern, who was elected as the first elder of the Warsaw Lutheran congregation, supported this project. On the other hand, Privy Councilor Michael Gröll was a staunch opponent of the plan, which “was intended to bring the congregation under a foreign jurisdiction”. Gröll, banker Tepper, as well as other elders and members of the congregation put a stop to the project. Ambassador von Saldern was so incensed about this that on 22 September, 1771, he informed the Warsaw elders through Privy Council von Friese that he no longer wanted to have anything to do with ecclesiastical affairs nor to take care of them, “because the commons, or rather the elders who called themselves so, who wanted to introduce a dominion, as it were, would not be worthy of the supreme protection of his most gracious Empress Catherine II”. From the point of view of church history, the fact that the ambassador of a foreign state became an elder of the church in Warsaw is probably unique in this process, in order to pursue a Russian policy of interference in the confessional relations of the country from this basis. His resignation was proof that the Warsaw evangelical citizens did not want to be taken in the tow of Russian politics.

Of the church communities dealt with in this section, the following survived until 1775: Vilnius, Neudorf on the Bug, Piaski-Lublin and Wengrow-Warsaw. In addition, there were almost 125 cantorates and an even larger number of German evangelical villages. In spite of all the persecutions and measures of oppression which hampered the development of the congregations and groups of the “Augsburg denominational relatives in Poland”—as they called themselves and as they were generally called—there were nevertheless focal points of evangelical life in the country which justified hopes for the future.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Pos. Ev. Kbl. 1935/36, Seite 129.

¹³⁶ A.F. Büsching, Neueste Geschichte der Evangelischen beider Confessionen...1768-1783.

IV. Oppression and Deprivation of Rights of Non-Catholics from 1660 to 1775

1. External and Internal Situation of Poland

With the accession to the throne of King Jan II Kasimir (1648-1668), the Jesuit and former cardinal, whom the pope had released from his vows, a disastrous time began for Poland.¹³⁷ In Ukraine, which was included in the Polish state except Kharkov, the Cossacks rose up in 1648 under Bohdan Chmielnicki. Their great revolt lasted almost continuously until the death of Chmielnicki (1657). It is true that Poland won brilliant victories in this struggle, such as those at Zbaraż and Beresteczko. But what good were these victories if they led to the expansion of the war? Dissatisfied with Polish rule in Ukraine, the Cossacks sought help and protection from Moscow and even from Turks and Tatars. This in turn led to a long war with the Russians in 1654, which was only ended by the Armistice of 1667. However, while the Russians occupied Ukraine and Lithuania and the Cossacks advanced as far as Lemberg, Zamość and Lublin, the Second Swedish-Polish War broke out in 1655-1660. Its cause lay on the one hand in the ambition of the Swedish King Charles X Gustav to possess the entire Baltic coast, and on the other hand in the assertion of the claim to the Swedish [page 55] throne by Jan Kasimir. The war, in the course of which Stefan Czarnecki distinguished himself as a partisan and national hero, took the form of a people's war against the Swedes. The praiseworthy defense of the Tschenstochau (Częstochowa) Monastery on the "Bright Mountain" (*Hellen Berge / Jasna Góra*) with the "miraculous image of the Mother of God" played a glorious role in this battle. Augustyn Kordecki, the fearless and deeply religious abbot of the monastery, became a legendary figure of the Polish people. And the victorious resistance of the Swedish superiority appeared as a visible sign of the help that the "Black Mother of God", Poland's patron saint, had given to the defenders. This, in turn, strengthened the reputation and popularity of the Catholic Church among the broad sections of the population.

While the peace with Moscow in 1667 had immensely consolidated Russian power in Eastern Europe, the Peace Treaty of Oliva in 1660 confirmed the sovereignty of the Brandenburg elector in the Duchy of Prussia, which had already been granted in the Treaty of Wehlau in 1657. These two peace treaties laid the foundation for the later greatness of Russia and Brandenburg-Prussia. The Peace of Oliva guaranteed a general amnesty to all members of the Swedish party. The Protestants were to retain their possessions of congregations and churches as they had them before the war. The peace treaty made no reference to the Socinians. They had already been deprived of rights and expelled before.

The time of Jan Kasimir, with all its wars and turmoil, resembled a "deluge", a national catastrophe, which Sienkiewicz portrayed realistically and grippingly in his novel *Potop*. In 1668, Jan Kasimir renounced his kingship and died soon afterwards (1672) as abbot of Nevers in France.

After the short reign of Michael Thomas Korybut Wiśniowiecki, Jan III Sobieski (1674-1696), the victor of Chocim, ascended the Polish throne. He saw the fight against the Turks as his life's work. The brilliant deed, which was also deeply in Poland's interest, was his assistance in the liberation of Vienna from the Turkish crisis in 1683. His memory lives in the Polish people as that of the great savior of Europe and, moreover, of Christendom before the crescent (*Halbmond*)!

Under the Saxon kings Augustus II (1697-1733) and Augustus III (1734-1763), the Polish state system fell into disrepair. The Peace of Karlowitz in 1699 put an end to the Polish-Turkish wars. On the other hand, Poland's position was damaged by the Northern War of 1700-1721, in which it participated with

¹³⁷ M. Bobrzyński, Dz. P. w Z., 2. Bd., Seite 172-181, 183-190.

Denmark on Russia's side through Augustus II. While Russia rose to European power under Peter the Great, Poland's country size declined. In addition to Russia, it had a new adversary—Prussia, whose ruler, Frederick I, became king in 1701. As a further consequence of this war, the increasing influence of the Russians in Poland itself (Russian Party) became apparent from year to year, which was sanctioned by the “Silent Diet” in Warsaw on 31 January, 1717. Surrounded by its two powerful neighbors, torn apart by confederations and feuds, incapable of constructive reforms, Poland was hurrying toward its downfall. To a large extent, internal factors caused its progressive disintegration.

Through the *Pacta conventa* (demands of the nobility in every election of kings), but above all through the *Articuli Henriciani* (named after Henry of Valois in 1573), Poland took a disastrous path. After the death of each ruler, the non-inheritance of the king's throne caused electoral turmoil, favored party strife, the influence of foreign powers, and prevented the continuity of a planned and forward-looking policy.

[page 56] Since certain goals could not be achieved within the framework of the laws of the state, they were achieved by means of confederations, of noble societies. They were formed by the king, the Diet (*Reichstag*) or the noble parties. The Confederations had their own Diets, their own administration, as well as their marshal and responsible local government official (*Hetman*). In contrast to the Sejm, where unanimity was required, the Diets of the Confederation were decided by a simple majority of votes. The latter prepared the ground for anarchy in the country and offered foreign powers favorable opportunities to exert influence.

The Polish nobility, as a privileged class, could claim about itself: “We are the state!” There was, in fact, no one to limit its prevailing influence. The Polish peasant languished in bitter agony. At that time, the middle-class was still weak and insignificant. The Catholic clergy, despite sometimes differing interests, nevertheless found the basis for cooperation with the nobility. The unregulated social conditions lay paralyzed on the nation, whereby neither the aristocratic excesses nor the intolerance and striving for power of the clergy could be resisted. For the Polish state, requirements and necessities did not always coincide with the interests and plans of the Roman Catholic Church.

The situation for the country was made even more tragic by the so-called *Liberum Veto* (free objection). According to the Sejm Regulations, at the end of the Sejm session, all individual resolutions that had already been passed had to be elevated to an overall decision and adopted unanimously by all those present. As early as the 16th century, the view had prevailed in Poland that the Sejm resolutions were only legally binding if they were unanimously approved by all representatives of the people. They trusted the insight and patriotism of the individual messengers that they would submit for the good of the whole and would not uncompromisingly oppose the decisions of the Sejm, which met in Warsaw or Grodno. The objection of a member of parliament was enough to bring down the overall decision of the Sejm and to “tear up” its cadence. Siciński was the first country messenger. In 1652, by his *Liberum Veto*, he vetoed the extension of the parliamentary session requested by the king for the purpose of passing a war tax, declaring the entire decision of the Sejm null and void. The Polish nobility, believing that they had reached the pinnacle of their freedom in the *Liberum Veto*, placed their special rights above the freedom and integrity of their fatherland. Under Augustus III, almost all the Diets were “torn apart” by this right of objection, and the failure to pass resolutions caused the entire state administration to come to a standstill. Needless to say, the *Liberum Veto* allowed the foreign powers to interfere in the life of the Polish state at any time. The money had enough attraction and recruited cheap accomplices of foreign interests. The *Liberum Veto* brought Poland to the brink of ruin.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, the unpleasant and shattered conditions became even more difficult and intolerable by the ruthless treatment of all non-Catholics. Neither the Protestants nor the Greek Orthodox were to be met with understanding or even tolerated. The Counter-Reformation Line was undiminished until 1775: to incorporate all non-Catholics in the Polish state into Catholicism in its entirety. If the Greek Orthodox chose the Union as the way to achieve this goal, they tried to wear down the Protestants by growing pressure and to make them ripe for the Roman Catholic Church. But the fact that the state factors bowed to the striving for power of the Catholic Church, often confused the interests of the country with those of the Papal Curia, overlooked or did not take seriously the foreign policy [page 57] dangers of oppressing all non-Catholics—all this gave an uncomfortable and gloomy impression to the already difficult situation of the Polish people.¹³⁸

2. Persecution of Protestants from 1660 to 1775

Since the time of Sigismund III, Protestant nobles have been passed over in the appointment of high government offices, in the granting of state goods, in the granting of positions of honor, privileges, and many other things. The economic disadvantage, made worse by the influence of Catholic neighbors and relatives, greatly thinned the ranks of the Protestant nobility in Lesser Poland and later also in Kurjawien [a region in Pomerania, north-central Poland, west of the Vistula River and the upper parts of the Netze River]. The economic policy was still accompanied by local measures against Lutheran and Reformed congregations. Parishes that lacked an influential aristocratic protector had a particularly difficult time.

With the increasing number of defections of the nobles, the ownership of churches decreased. In Posen alone, the loss from 1592 to 1627 amounted to almost two-thirds.¹³⁹ The forced return of the houses of worship in the royal cities was justified with the suggestion to avoiding disputes and unrest. Since 1632, no new churches were allowed to be built in these towns.

In Teschen [Těšín]-Silesia, where the Reformation Movement spread in the 16th century, in 1585, Princess Catherine Sidonie, who ruled in the name of the under-aged Prince Adam Wenzel, donated a plot of land to the Protestants of the city of Teschen as a cemetery. There they built a wooden church, which was later bricked. On 21 March, 1654, 49 evangelical churches in the country were closed or taken over by the Catholics, including that of Teschen.¹⁴⁰ This state of affairs lasted until 1707. On his military campaign from Poland to Saxony through Silesia, the Swedish King Charles XII heard of the oppressions and sufferings of the Silesian evangelicals. In the Convention of Altranstadt on 22 August, 1707, he negotiated with the envoys of Emperor Joseph I to return 113 churches in Lower Silesia to the evangelicals. In addition, by virtue of the so-called Execution Compact, they were allowed to erect six clemency churches (*Gnadenkirchen*), namely in Militsch, Sagan, Hirschberg, Landeshut, Freistadt and Teschen (Jesuskirche).¹⁴¹ In addition, Charles XII demanded compliance with the provisions of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. The reversal of the imperial religious policy as a result of the Peace of Altranstadt brought about a noticeable relief to the evangelical position in Lower Silesia and also in Teschen-Silesia.

¹³⁸ Prof. Cl. Brandenburger u. Prof. Dr. M. Laubert, *Polnische Geschichte*, S. 83 f., S. 95 f.

¹³⁹ Ueber die Leiden der dortigen Protestanten Vergl. Rhode, Arthur: *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche im Posener Lande*, S. 60-91, 96-117.

¹⁴⁰ *Rocz. Ew.* 1925, Seite 26 f.

¹⁴¹ The clemency churches in Militsch (Miliez) and Hirschberg (Jelenia Góra) were in Catholic use after 1945, the one in Freistadt (Koźnchow) in Orthodox possession and the heavily destroyed one in Sagan still in evangelical ownership. The damaged, unused one in Kamienna Góra has fallen into disrepair.

In the Polish-Swedish War of 1655-1660, the Catholics accused the Protestants of sympathy for the Lutheran Swedes, which was interpreted as disloyalty to their own fatherland. But not only evangelicals, but also Catholic nobles sided with the Swedes. The assertion that the evangelical congregations have even taken the side of the Swedes is misplaced. On the contrary, the conduct of the Swedes could by no means make them popular among the Polish Protestants [page 58]. Their contributions and other burdens, under which the evangelical population in the cities in particular had to suffer severely, were generally perceived as harsh measures. In addition, it was noted with sadness that the Swedes and the evangelical princes and dignitaries of the Imperial Diet did not have the means of power to implement the provisions of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 in the imperial hereditary lands of Silesia and Bohemia. The only thing Emperor Ferdinand III granted in his Silesian duchies was the construction of only three peace churches in Glogau, Jauer and Schweidnitz [Świdnica]. Although the vast majority of Protestants were anti-Swedish, they were treated as enemies of the country, which was expressed in the burning and devastation of Lissa in 1656, Rawitsch, as well as in the bloody persecution of the “heretics”.

In addition to the German Brethren community, a small aristocratic congregation with preaching in the Polish language was formed in Lissa, and since 1628 a Czech one. In the year mentioned, Lutherans immigrated to the country, mostly from Guhrau, and built a church in 1632. All these Protestants were under the protection of the Leszczyński family of magnates.

A prominent personality of the Lissa Brethren community was Johann Amos Comenius (Komensky). Cosmopolitan by attitude, he was active from 1628 in Lissa, and beyond in Hungary, Sweden, and the Netherlands.¹⁴² In 1648, he became bishop of the Bohemian-Moravian United Brethren, and negotiated with the Swedish statesman Oxenstierna to regain religious freedom for his Union in his old homeland. The Westphalian Peace Treaty disappointed his expectations. Comenius was not only a pedagogue, but first and foremost a theologian. He lived in faith in the imminent return of Christ, but without falling prey to the enthusiasts. In the destruction of Lissa, he lost not only his possessions but also the greater part of his books and manuscripts. He died as a refugee in Amsterdam in 1670 and was buried in the church at Naarden.

Among the evangelical churches in Poland, whose brokenness and weakness painfully affected him, he had a balancing and unifying effect. His successor in Lissa was his foster-son and later son-in-law Figulus. The latter’s son was the Senior Daniel Jablonski, who later became the well-known court preacher to the kings Frederick I and Friedrich William I of Prussia.

As I pointed out earlier, the Swedish-Polish War dealt a heavy blow to Protestantism. Far worse than all the tribulations and devastation was the anti-Protestant sentiment which it created in the country, and which has dominated the Polish people ever since. The consequences of the war were particularly catastrophic in Lithuania, where only 25 of the former 200 Reformed congregations remained. Catholicism was considered a religion loyal to the people and the state. To what extent the hostile sentiment against all non-Catholics decisively influenced and determined the expulsion of the Arians in 1658-60 is difficult to say today. It is well known that they were also accused of high treason. Unfortunately, the other Protestants approved of the expulsion of the Arians. The expulsion order was carried out ruthlessly. Only a small minority renounced their faith for the sake of property or the fatherland. Most of them, however, preferred the unknown (*Fremde*) to the denial of their faith. In Rakow, their stronghold in Poland, not a single Arian lived there after the expulsion. Their printing house was converted into a Jewish inn and their sheltered Grammar School, located on a stream, into a

¹⁴² Staemmler, J., *Der Protestantismus in Polen*. Posen 1925.

watermill. As late as 1747, the Jews of Rakow praised the piety of the Socinians (Arians) and their love for the poor.¹⁴³

[page 59] The expulsion of the Socinians seriously violated the freedom of religion that had been elevated to the status of state law for the nobles in Poland in 1573. The struggle against the Protestants flared up all along the line.¹⁴⁴ In 1661, the reformed Prince Bogusław Radziwiłł was removed from the Sejm. In 1663, the rebuilding of evangelical houses of worship was forbidden. In 1666, the Mazovian deputies requested, albeit unsuccessfully, that the Confederation of 1573 be repealed. In 1669, a law was passed according to which only Catholics by birth or profession (vocatione) could ascend the Polish throne. Supporting non-Catholic candidates for the throne should be punished as high treason and lawlessness. The queen, of course, had to be Catholic. Otherwise, she was to be crowned only after her conversion to Catholicism. The renunciation of the Catholic Church was branded as a crime and prohibited under penalty of expulsion from the country. In 1674, it was forbidden to hold worship services in private homes. The non-promotion of Protestants to high offices and honored positions now became the rule. In 1675, the evangelicals lost a powerful patron in the form of the Reformed Imperial Dignitary Christoph Potocki. From then on, the acts of violence and attacks of the Catholics had free flexibility. In 1693, the Protestant merchants in Lublin were removed from all public offices and forced to take part in the Corpus Christi procession under threat of punishment.

The systematic persecution and deprivation of rights of the Protestants reached its peak at the time of the two Saxon kings, Augustus II and Augustus III. In 1704, King Stanisław Leszczyński (1704-1709)—the adversary of Augustus II and former Posen Woiwode [government administrative officer], grandson of Rafael, later Duke of Lorraine and father-in-law of the French King Louis XV—recognized all rights and freedoms enshrined in the laws of the country to Polish Protestants in the treaty of alliance with Charles XII of Sweden, as well as abolished all restrictions. But his reign was short-lived. After Leszczyński's defeat, they felt all the more strongly the arbitrary action of the Catholics. In 1717, the so-called Silent Sejm adopted the peace treaty forced upon it by Peter I, the provisions of which were directed against non-Catholics. There will be more to say about this in the following section. The Catholic clergy applied the treaty with great zeal on all non-Catholic places of worship. In addition, it forbade their reconstruction after fire or lightning strike, as well as any renovation work. Repairing or even rebuilding a church required not only a lot of patience and effort, but above all great financial sacrifices to the local Catholic clergy and bishops. In some areas, even Catholic marriage laws were extended to evangelicals. A fierce struggle broke out in the country for the youth. The evangelical instruction of children from mixed marriages or their admission to the sacraments was forbidden. In many towns, Protestants had to accompany Catholic processions. They were also deprived of the right of patronage on various estates.

The second and third decades of the 18th century were the darkest and most difficult for Polish Protestants. In 1713, the church in Szczepanowice, east of Krakau, was burned down. At the same time, evangelical worship service was prohibited in Chmielnik, north of Pinczów, in Malice near Sandomir, in Kasice, north of Przemyśl, in Krasnobród, north of Rawa-Ruska and in Rejowiec near Zamość. In 1715, the church in Radzieńczyn in the Lublin region was robbed and even the dead bodies were desecrated. In 1717 and 1733, it was announced that the Protestants were [page 60] deprived of their last political rights: seats in the Sejm (Piotrowski, last deputy), in the Commissions and in the Tribunal. With these acts of violence, the evangelicals were finally removed from public life. The Thorn Blood

¹⁴³ Schultz, Stefan, *Reisen Durch Europa, Asia und Africa...*Halle 1772.

¹⁴⁴ G. Rohode, *Brandenburg-Preußen und die Protestanten in Polen. 1640-1740.*

Court of 1724 shed light on the difficult situation of the evangelicals.¹⁴⁵ Provoked by Jesuit students, a number of evangelicals from Thorn stormed the monastery and the school of the Jesuits, burning altars and images of saints in the street. After lengthy partisan investigations, the Warsaw Court sentenced the mayor of Thorn, Johann Gottfried Rösner, and ten citizens to death. On 7 December, he and nine citizens were publicly executed. The tenth citizen, Deputy Mayor Zerneck, was pardoned on the promise of monetary gifts. Another consequence of the judicial murder was the seizure of St. Mary's Church in Thorn and the city Grammar School.¹⁴⁶

The Thorn Blood Tribunal caused a great stir everywhere.¹⁴⁷ Bogislaw von Schwerin, the plenipotentiary of the Prussian court in Poland, and Kurt Christoph von Schwerin, special envoy to the Polish Diet, proposed to King Frederick William I that Thorn be occupied by Prussian troops. The king rejected this proposal, the real author of which was Pastor Bachstrom. The Polish Jesuits were not unaware of the efforts of Bachstrom, which made their hostility to him even greater.

The systematic Catholic action sought its victims among respected evangelical men, who were either to be forced to defect from Protestantism or to render them physically harmless. The accusation of blasphemy was often used. For example, the Lithuanian nobleman Kasimir Leszczyński was cruelly burned on charges of denying God.¹⁴⁸ In 1713, Captain Kehler, a native of Prussia, was executed in Lublin. To the remark of a Catholic that Luther had not brought a dead dog back to life, Kehler replied that the Pope had not done so either. This statement was sufficient to deliver Captain Kehler up to death for insulting the Pope. The indictments against Sigismund von Unruh in 1715, against the son of Georg Schreck in Lublin in 1716, against von Ebertz and his son in 1719, and against the fabric-maker Namsler in Kempten in 1730 are also known.

The Catholic clergy, who formed a state within a state in Poland, proceeded ruthlessly against the Protestants. King Sobieski, for example, expressed his disapproval of the inquisitorial violence of the clergy, but he could not change it.

3. Fragmentation and Weakness of non-Catholics

The struggle of wearing down and annihilation that was stirred up against the evangelicals did not in any way bring about a new reflection and a willingness to cooperate among the Protestants themselves. The old confessional antagonisms, which, in the 16th century, had so greatly facilitated the efforts of the Jesuits to demoralize and had shaken the fabric of Protestantism, still existed. The orthodox Lutherans upheld the banner of their confession, but they completely overlooked the bitter necessity of unity and co-operation over all that divided [page 61] them. According to this circumstance, only the Brethren approached the Reformed as early as the end of the 16th century. Since then, the Brethren preferred to attend Reformed colleges. In 1627, the Calvinist communities of Kuyavia merged with the Greater Poland Unit. The Reformed Superintendent Mikołajewski became one of the Seniors of the Union. The Swiss Reformed welcomed the approach between the Calvinists and the Brethren.

The Scotsman Duraeus (John Durie) tried to remedy or moderate the differences among the Polish Protestants.¹⁴⁹ Comenius provided the Scotsman with his foster son, and later son-in-law, Figulus.

¹⁴⁵ Pos. Ev. Kbl., 1923-24, Thorner Tragödie 1724, S. 194 f., 221 f., 250 f., 262 f. Ferner Bickerich, Unter dem weißen Adler.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

¹⁴⁷ M. Bobrzyński, Dzieje Polski w Zarysie, Bd. 2, Seite 232.

¹⁴⁸ Busch, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Statistik..., Seite 39.

¹⁴⁹ H. Hermelink und W. Maurer, Reformation und Gegenreformation. S. 351, Tübingen 1931.

Among the orthodox Lutherans, the efforts of Duraeus were unsuccessful. On the other hand, at the Synod of Włodawa in 1634, the Greater Poland Union and the Reformed Churches in Lesser Poland and Lithuania came together more closely. This manifested itself in the adoption of a common Polish Agenda and a Polish hymnal, as well as a strongly harmonized church constitution with general synods and general conventions. Christoph Krainski, who had been the Senior leader since 1598, was indebted to the Lesser Polish Reformed Church for its first Agenda, printed in Thorn in 1599, which was only traceable in two copies before 1939.

In the meantime, the separation of the Lutherans from the Reformed continued to progress. Until then, it had been part of the order established by the circumstances themselves that Lutheran and Reformed pastors officiated side by side in the same churches, but in the 17th century this practice changed to the disadvantage of the Reformed. The Lutherans consistently upheld the principle of strict separation from the Calvinists and put it into practice in Danzig, Thorn, Elbląg and elsewhere. The confessional contrasts were intensified immensely by Abraham Calov, who in 1643 had been appointed senior pastor and rector of the Grammar School in Danzig. Calov, the most famous theologian of the Lutheran Church in the 17th century, exerted all his influence to prevent a merger between Lutherans and Reformed in Poland at all circumstances. He also succeeded in doing so with the help of orthodox Lutherans from abroad.

The short-sightedness and irresponsibility of the Lutherans in the face of the Catholic danger was demonstrated in 1645 at the Thorn Religious Dialogue (Colloquium charitativum). The Lutheran pastors, with their Senior General Johann Faust, were encouraged by Calov to resist any cooperation with the Reformed. The Fraustädt Lutheran Synod of 1645 passed a similar resolution. A similar position was taken by the Wittenburg faculty, whose representative was the not so friendly anti-Calvinist Hülsemann in Thorn. On the other hand, there was a great deal of interest in the unification of the dissidents in Poland, as was shown by the sympathy of the Great Elector, who sent Professor Calixt from Helmstedt to Thorn as his Lutheran representative. The Thorn Religious Dialogue, which lasted from 28 August to 21 November, 1645 and ended unsuccessfully, revealed to the whole world the disunity of Polish Protestantism. The good will and earnest zeal of a Comenius or Calixt could not change this. The Lutherans completely lacked the understanding of the one common task of all Protestants: the gathering and unification of all forces to ward off ruthless Polish Catholicism. That, in addition to the Lutherans, the Calvinists and Bohemian Brethren also lacked a clear view of the seriousness of their situation, they proved it by their lackluster joy at the expulsion of the Arians. In their stubbornness, they did not understand that this was the first draconian measure against all non-Catholics in Poland.

[page 62] At the turn of the 17th century, the disunited and feuding Protestants were given a loyal helper and advocate in the person of the Berlin court preacher Daniel Jablonski (1660-1741). In 1691, he was called to Königsberg as court preacher and in 1693 to Berlin in the same capacity. Following the example of the Consensus of Sandomir in 1570, he sought to bring together the Lutherans and Reformed on the basis of a common representation of interests in the Polish state and to decontaminate their antagonisms. He made valuable contributions to the history of Polish Protestantism: *Historia consensus Sandomiriensis* and *Jura et libertates*.¹⁵⁰

Relations between the Protestants and the Greek Orthodox in Poland, marked by the common danger posed by Catholicism, were of a friendly and positive nature. In 1599, at the initiation of Prince

¹⁵⁰ Kvačala, Johann: Jablonski und Großpolen – Zeitschrift der Historischen Gesellschaft für die Provinz Posen. Bd. 15, S. 1-30, S. 247-320. Bd. 16, S. 1-53.

Konstantin Ostrogskij, the Wojewode of Kiev and leader of the Greek Orthodox, and with the support of the Protestant magnates, of the Woiewode of Kujawisch-Brest Count Leszczyński and the Vilnius Woiewode Prince Christoph Radziwiłł, a general political confederation between the parties of the faith on both sides came about in Vilnius in 1599.¹⁵¹ They assured each other of mutual support against Roman-Catholic attacks and persecutions. An ecclesiastical association, of which Prince Ostrogsky was initially the spokesman, could not be realized because of religious differences. But even the political federation remained without substantial results because of the lack of a right feeling and cooperation between the two parties. Cyrillos Lukaris, Patriarch of the Greek-Anatolian Church since 1620, who became acquainted with Calvinism in Poland in 1595-1602, also took part in the meeting in Vilnius. The attempt to bring his church closer to Calvinism failed, and he himself was strangled by order of the Sultan (1638).

The Brest Union of 1596, which sharply separated the non-Uniates from the Uniates, marked a deep break in relations between Poland and its Greek Orthodox population.¹⁵² In 1607 and 1609, the Sejm confirmed all rights to the Greek Orthodox, who were opposed to the union with Rome. But the Jesuits hindered their validity. The persecution of the Greek Orthodox was therefore continued with such fierceness that uprisings flared up again and again in the regions of Mogilev, Vitebsk and in Ukraine. They were overthrown, but the discontent among the non-Uniates, especially among the Cossacks, who had to protect the border against the Tatars and Turks, did not subside. All that was needed was a push from outside to inflame the masses of the discontented anew to warlike actions. "They (the Cossacks), after the death of Konstantin Ostrogsky (died 1608), took over his role in the preservation and defense of the rights and privileges of the orthodox Ruthenian [Eastern Slavs] Ukrainians, and it was they who also undermined the Confederation (of Vilnius in 1599)".¹⁵³

In all the Cossack uprisings, the burning question of the non-Uniates was in the foreground. This can be seen, for example, in the Treaty of Zborów, which the rebellious Cossacks under Bohdan Chmielnicki had concluded with Jan Kasimir in 1649. After that, [page 63] the Greek Orthodox Metropolitan of Kiev was to become a member of the Senate, occupying the ninth place among the Roman Catholic bishops. It was agreed that all noble officials in the administrative provinces of Kiev, Chernigov and Braclaw had to be of Greek Orthodox faith. It was also agreed to close all Jesuit schools and ban Jesuits from staying in the Ukraine. The treaty and the consideration of the rights of the Greek Orthodox part of the population were mainly advocated by Christoph Arciszewski and Adam Kisiel, who were popular and liked among the Cossacks. The Catholic bishops, however, did not recognize the Treaty of Zborów and declared that they would leave the Senate if the Metropolitan of Kiev took his seat there. The Catholic clergy were not at all interested in settling the differences with the Greek Orthodox. After all, they were aiming to win them over to the Union and thus to Rome. The Treaty of Zborów had no effect. The Cossack uprising flared up again. According to the Treaty of Hadziacz in 1658, which Ataman Wyhowski had concluded with the representatives of the Sejm, Ukraine was granted the same position in the state as the Grand Principality of Lithuania. This was the status of a certain autonomy with the simultaneous granting of new rights to the Greek Orthodox Church. The Metropolitan of Kiev and four Orthodox bishops, whose equality with the Catholic bishops were recognized, were invested with the honored position of Senator. The Treaty of Hadziacz, which seemed to herald a new era of positive peaceful relations between the Polish state and the Greek Orthodox (non-Uniates), did not come to any effect. Moscow now laid claim to Ukraine, especially since Bohdan Chmielnicki had already offered it,

¹⁵¹ Domet Oljančyn, Zur Frage der Generalkonföderation zwischen Protestanten und Orthodoxen in Wilna 1599, Kyrios, 1. Band, 1936, S. 29-46.

¹⁵² Bobrzyński, M.: Dzieje Polski...2. Bd., S. 131.

¹⁵³ Oljančyn, D.: Zur Frage der Generalkonföderation...S. 37.

the Kiev and Chernigov administrative provinces, as annexation areas and the Volhynia and Braclaw administrative provinces as protective areas in the Treaty of Perejaslaw in 1654 at the price of aid against Poland. Muscovite troops, partly supported by Cossacks, invaded Ukraine. The war with Moscow had an unfavorable outcome for Poland, as it lost all Ukrainian parts of the country beyond the Dnieper in the Peace of 1667. Only the Livonia territories and those around Polozk and Witebsk were returned to Poland by Moscow. Immediately after the seizure of Kiev in 1654, the Russian state church gained the venerable metropolis of Kiev. As a result of this loss, the Greek Orthodox element in the Polish state system diminished considerably. Nevertheless, it continued to be the subject of continued attempts at union on the part of the Catholic Church.

The Protestants and Greek Orthodox fought desperately against the tendencies of Catholicism.¹⁵⁴ But from decade to decade, their active property shrank at an alarming rate. Between 1718 and 1754, the evangelicals lost about 30 churches in Greater Poland alone, some of which were destroyed, some of which were also used as Catholic places of worship. The Greek Orthodox fared no better. No wonder the Protestants sought aid and assistance from foreign evangelical powers, while the Greek Orthodox were looking to the Russian Empire. As early as 1726, the Polish Sejm forbade calling on foreign courts for assistance under penalty of death. But it was not in its power to prevent this. The hopeless situation of non-Catholics in Poland was widely known in Europe and did great harm to the Polish state. In Sweden, Prussia, Holland, Denmark, England, and last but not least in Russia, voices were raised for a remedy [page 64] for unheard-of religious intolerance. Certainly, the disunity and weakness of the dissidents was regretted. On the other hand, however, it was fully understood that the Polish state lacked the strength to break the intolerance and domineering of the Catholic clergy and to grant all non-Catholics freedom of conscience and belief of their own accord. And so, of necessity, the initiative and the realization of this fundamental human right had to come from outside.

4. Attainment of Religious Freedom 1768/75

Brandenburg-Prussia had always taken a lively interest in the fate of the Polish Protestants. Through its residents in Warsaw, it tried to alleviate their heavy lot by exerting direct influence. Johann von Hoverbeck, the envoy of the Great Elector, was particularly committed to them. Hoverbeck was a child of the Polish country. His grandfather, of Flemish origin, was moved to Krakau, where many Protestants—Germans, Poles, Scots—settled at the end of the 16th century. In 1591, mobs and students burned down the evangelical church in Krakau, and the seat of the congregation was moved to Aleksandrowice. But even here the Protestants were not free from persecution and war-contributions. In 1606, Johann von Hoverbeck was born in Aleksandrowice, the son of Nikolaus and the Krakau patrician's daughter Ursula Guttheter (Dobrodziejska). In 1607, his father was arrested on charges of conspiring with Janusz Radziwiłł, the head of the Lithuanian Reformed.

After a thorough education—Grammar School in Danzig, University in Oxford and College in Sedan—Hoverbeck entered the service of the Brandenburg elector Georg Wilhelm. According to constitutional law, he was a Polish subject, a German by his mother, a Flemish by his grandfather, and inclined to the German character in his whole way. His wife was a Märkisch [a district in central North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany] noblewoman. Simon Dach dedicated a wedding poem to them. Among other things, he praised Hoverbeck's extensive language skills. In addition to German and Polish, he also spoke Dutch, French, English, Spanish, Italian, Latin and Hebrew.

¹⁵⁴ Th. Wotschke, Glaubensbedrückungen im 18. Jahrhundert, auw Posens kirchlicher Vergangenheit. Jahrbuch des Evang. Vereins für die Kirchengeschichte der Provinz Posen. 5. Jahrg., 1915-16, S. 1-29.

Under Frederick William, Hoverbeck's influence increased even more. As a Brandenburg person in Warsaw, he stood up for the first time in 1648 for his dissident fellow-countrymen.¹⁵⁵ He repeatedly urged the Great Elector to apply for the Polish throne. His activity in Warsaw coincided with the turbulent period of the Cossack uprising, the wars with Moscow, the Swedes, the Turks and the Tatars. From 1664 onwards, he had Lutheran and Reformed worship services held alternately in his so-called Brandenburg Courtyard in Warsaw. The two Wengrow pastors served as preachers. He worked tirelessly for the Polish Protestants, whose situation deteriorated from decade to decade. After Hoverbeck's death (1682), his successors, such as von Schulenburg, the long-time resident Wichert and especially Löllhöfel von Löwengsprung (died 1717), continued the work he had begun.¹⁵⁶ To the active intervention of the latter, the Polish Protestants owed protection and care. It was mainly his initiative that Prussia, Denmark, Holland and England protested against the persecution of the evangelicals in Poland in a solemn audience with King Augustus II in mid-September of 1713. This joint action did not fail to have its effect. In the years 1716 and 1739, even the [page 65] Prussian court offered the Protestants refuge and protection in their lands. As a supremacy of Protestantism, Brandenburg-Prussia was close to the evangelicals in Poland, especially those in Lithuania. This connection, which was still quite alive until the time of Frederick the Great, was due in no small part to the family ties of the Radziwiłłs to the Brandenburg-Prussian dynasty.

During the reign of August III, Russian influence in Poland intensified. The two representatives of the St. Petersburg Court were the ministers of state Brühl and Sułkowski. The Russians were keenly interested in their co-religionists, the non-Uniate Greek Orthodox and also in the Polish Protestants, because this served them as a constant interference in Polish affairs. On 3 November, 1716, Peter the Great concluded a treaty with the Polish king, which deliberately ran counter to the interests of non-Catholics for political convenience. Article 4 of the treaty, which did not allow them to build new churches and recognized the existing ones only if they were built before the laws of the General Confederation of 1632, 1648, 1668 and 1674, caused great annoyance to all non-Catholics. "If, it was said, since then, some churches had been erected in towns, places, villages, and even on noble estates, contrary to the laws, they should be destroyed immediately without any hindrance." Private worship services were only allowed to be held in the houses, but without sermons and singing. The only exceptions to this rule were the envoys of foreign princes, who were allowed to perform worship services in their homes, "but in such a way that other persons fall into the intended punishments (even banishment) if they attend such worship services."

With the treaty approved by the Sejm in 1717, the St. Petersburg Court pursued a twofold purpose: on the one hand, it achieved the internal erosion of Poland and thus its state decay, and on the other hand, it favored the continuation of the oppressions of all non-Catholics, which offered it the possibility of interfering in Polish affairs at any time. Since 1717, therefore, Russian troops have set foot on Polish soil almost continuously. A pretext to justify these measures could always be found. The most unresolved dissident question resembled a lever that was always set in motion when Russian interests demanded it. In the background, however, lurked the intention not only to weaken the Polish state, but to gradually dissolve it by separating its territory. The tactics laid down by Peter the Great in the Treaty of 1716 determined Russian policy towards Poland until its end.

On 11 April 11, 1764, a Defensive Treaty was concluded between Russia and Prussia, in which they agreed on the person of the new king after the death of Augustus III (1763), as well as on the steps to

¹⁵⁵ Max Hein, Johann von Hoverbeck. Ein Diplomatenleben zur Zeit des Großen Kurfürsten. Königsberg/Pr. 1925.

¹⁵⁶ Related to the well-known Polish historian Joachim Lelewel.

regulate religious freedom, and so forth. Stanisław August Poniatowski, the candidate of Empress Catherine II (1764-1795), was elected king.

All efforts to grant religious freedom to non-Catholics were without results in the face of rejection of the Sejm, inspired by foreign money. And so the Empress gave her troops the order to invade Poland. At the same time, under the protection of the Russian ambassador, Prince Nicholas Repnin, the Thorn Confederation was formed. Initially, it was led by Lieutenant General Georg Wilhelm von der Goltz and, after his death, by his brother Lieutenant General Stanidlaus August von der Goltz. 309 confederate Lutheran and Reformed nobles signed a memorandum summarizing all their grievances [page 66] and hardships.¹⁵⁷ For the non-Uniate Greek Orthodox, a confederation was organized in Stuck. Deputies were sent to the foreign courts, which warmed up to the cause of the dissidents. At the request of Russia, the Catholic nobles, who wanted to grant freedom of religion to all non-Catholics in the country, joined together to form the Confederation of Radom. Its Marshal General was Prince Karl Radziwiłł, known as “Panie Kochanku” (Herr Liebchen / Mr. Beloved). In 1767, under the pressure of Russian weapons, the new Sejm took account of the new situation. Shortly before its opening, Prince Repnin told the assembled Catholic bishops that the demands of the dissidents, for which all the European powers are committed, must be met, “since the honor of the Empress would be involved in this matter.” The decisive action of Repnin made an impression. He had two reluctant Polish bishops arrested against all international law and deported to Kaluga. The Sejm immediately set up a commission to clarify and resolve the question of dissidents. The deliberations of the commission were attended by seven representatives of the Protestants, the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Mogilev and the envoys of Russia, Prussia, England, Denmark and Sweden. After several negotiations, it was decided to implement the regulation of religious freedom in the form of a special treaty between Russia and Poland. The Treaty, which guaranteed only limited religious freedom, was signed on 24 February, 1768, and was signed on 5 March of the same year, confirmed by the Sejm as the so-called Warsaw Treaty.

The Warsaw Treaty granted the following rights to Protestants and non-Uniate Greek Orthodox: free and public practice of their faith; ownership of existing churches and schools, institutions and foundations; the construction of new houses of worship, the formation of consistories, the holding of synods; repeal of all laws, orders, provisions, and exceptions issued against them since 1717; non-application of the heretic laws of 1424 and 1436 against them; independence from Catholic jurisdiction; abolition of the stole tax favored by the Catholic clergy; restitution of all churches illegally expropriated since the Peace of Oliva in 1660, if Protestants were still present in the places in question. The cut-off date for all help and claims to the Roman Catholic Church was set at 1 January, 1717. In order to avoid possible disadvantageous, it was also agreed that the houses of worship of non-Catholics and Catholics should not be built closer than 100 *Ellen* / 189 feet [1 Elle = ca. 57.5 cm] in the case of new buildings. In the same way, funeral processions of different faiths should not pass through the streets at the same time in one place. With regard to marriage, mixed marriage was generally recognized as such, whereby the education of the sons was to take place in the confession of the father and that of the daughters in that of the mother's, unless nobles had made a different agreement in the marriage contract. The confession of the bride should be decisive for the performance of the marriage ceremony by the clergyman of the same confession. If the Catholic priest refused to marry a Catholic bride, the non-Catholic priest was allowed to marry the couple. The compulsion to celebrate Catholic feast days and other occasions, which had been practiced many times, was dropped. A court of 17 members was set up to settle disputes, consisting of a president, eight Catholics, eight Protestants and non-Uniate Greek Orthodox. It was to meet in Warsaw for six months of each year for negotiations. It should also be added that the Protestant

¹⁵⁷ The well-known historian Gottfried Lengnich (1689-1770), who died in Danzig, also took part in the Thorn meeting of dissidents in 1767.

and Greek Orthodox nobles could be admitted to state offices and positions of honor, as well as the citizens to city offices and guilds.

[page67] The joy of the Protestants and Greek Orthodox was great about the freedom of religion, although limited, but nevertheless to be positively evaluated in its most important religious-ecclesiastical principles. The Catholics, on the other hand, were emphatically reserved. Even the Sejm adopted the Warsaw Treatise on 5 March, 1768 in silent session. But before it reluctantly accepted it, on 29 February, 1768, the anti-Russian Confederation was constituted at Bar near Mogilev, which sought to preserve the old constitution, depose the king and preserve the rule of the Roman Catholic Church. The Confederation sparked a four-year civil war. As always, the Protestants had to suffer. Among other things, the Polish Reformed pastor Majewski was cruelly murdered in Żychlin near Konin. An attempt by the Confederates on 3 November, 1771 against Stanisław August failed. He was saved by the German Lutheran, Heiduck Georg Heinrich Butzau, who, protecting the king with his chest, “died the death of a hero”.

The civil war, unleashed by the struggle for the religious freedom of non-Catholics, gave rise to the first partition of Poland. It was implemented by the Treaty of 5 August, 1772, between Russia, Prussia and Austria. On 11 April, 1775, the Sejm confirmed the large territorial cessions to the partitioning powers, on the one hand under pressure from the troops advancing further into the country, but on the other hand in clear recognition of the imminent destruction of the Polish state. The Sejm also recognized the Warsaw Treaty in 1768, but with some limited or modified provisions. For example, it excluded the Protestants from the Senate and granted them only three seats in the Sejm. The Court of Arbitration of Legal Disputes was abolished. The prejudging of the support of a non-Catholic candidate to the throne under the aspect of treason was refrained from. All other rights of Protestants and non-Uniate Greek Orthodox remained untouched.

Until 1768/75, there were 48 almost exclusively German Lutheran and seven Brethren congregations in Greater Poland. In Mazovia, a Lutheran and a Reformed parish; in Lesser Poland: two Lutheran and eight Reformed parishes; in Lithuania: five Lutheran and nearly 30 Polish and Lithuanian Reformed congregations; in Polish-Prussia: 92 Lutheran, two Reformed and three Brethren parishes.

The year 1775 brought the hard-fought and finally realized freedom of religion. But the next year passed before the Warsaw Treaty was known and observed throughout the country. In the interval from 1772 to 1775 there were no more persecutions and oppressions. During this period, however, no new houses of worship were built. The difficult economic situation and the uncertainty caused by the presence of foreign troops in Poland may have been decisive. But the damaging thing about the realization of religious freedom was the fact that Poland did not grant freedom of conscience and belief to its Protestant and non-Uniate Greek Orthodox inhabitants of the country out of free choice, not by virtue of the principle of justice and equity, but only under the massive pressure of foreign powers.¹⁵⁸ There is no doubt that this was almost entirely the fault of the intolerant and domineering clergy of the time. For those who had up till then been oppressed, however, the attainment of religious freedom meant a new and promising beginning: the free, energetic and committed beginning and expansion of their religious-ecclesiastical work in all the country.

[Translation Ends for Part 1-4]

¹⁵⁸ E.H. Busch, Beiträge zur Geschichte und Statistik des Kirchen- und Schulwesens der Evang.-Augsburg. Gemeinden im Königreich Polen. S. 44. St. Petersburg und Leipzig 1867.