

A stylized black and white graphic of a globe, showing the continents of Europe and Africa. The globe is partially cut off on the left side.

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Historical Cartography of Confessions and Religions in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth: Between Historical Geography and Spatial History

Bogumił Szady

The main purpose of the article is to characterise the major currents in historical cartography of confessions and religions in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and to assess the potential for further development of studies into these issues in the context of changes occurring in geographical-historical research and historical geography itself. The term *Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth* delimits the chronological and territorial scope of the present survey. The 1569 Union of Lublin between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania conjoined two nations of a differing religious structure – the former, despite the 14th and 15th century annexation of Red Ruthenia and parts of Podolia, inhabited by Orthodox populations, was mostly Roman-Catholic, whereas the latter remained largely Orthodox, although the significance of Catholicism as national religion was growing rapidly. The modern period ushered in important changes in the confessional landscape of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. One of them was a direct consequence of the 1596 Union of Brześć between segments of Orthodox clergy in the Commonwealth and the Holy See. The Union process, which lasted until the 18th century, led to the acquisition of the majority of confessional structures of the Orthodox Church in the Commonwealth by the Catholic Church of the Greek rite (Uniate Church). The other element, which played a great part in the changes of the confessional landscape of the Commonwealth, was the Reformation – in its peak in the second half of

the 16th century, Protestant confessional structures came to cover all provinces of the country, i.e. Lesser Poland, Greater Poland and Lithuania. The following two centuries significantly curbed the scope of Protestant confessions. Lasting and compact territorial structures held until the end of the 18th century only in the western and northern parts of the country (Greater Poland, and Prussia and Livonia, respectively). The third factor which determined the confessional situation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was a marked demographic growth of the Jewish diaspora, along with its organizational progress. In the modern period Jews became the third largest confessional group in the Commonwealth, after Roman Catholics and Uniates.

The idea of a spatial approach to institutions, peoples and religious practices has exerted a great influence on Polish geographical-historical thinking. Stanisław Smolka, while sketching out in the 19th century a programme for studies into the Historical Atlas of Poland deemed the reconstruction of old Church divisions a very important and separate issue¹. Historical geography of confessions and religions was first made into a unique and central research task by Jerzy Kłoczowski in the second half of the 20th century². The approach was heavily influenced by the French tradition of socio-historical research, in particular by the work of

¹ S. Smolka, *O przygotowawczych pracach do geografii historycznej Polski*, oprac. J. Kurowiak, "Studia Geohistorica", 1, 2013, p. 9.

² J. Kłoczowski, *Rozwój i problematyka badań nad geografją historyczną Kościoła katolickiego*, "Roczniki Humanistyczne", 11 (2), 1962, p. 5–93.

Gabriel Le Bras. It needs to be emphasised that spatio-geographical sensitivity was one of the prime features of the Annales school³. It is these two currents specifically – the first centred around the Historical Atlas of Poland, at present continued in the Department of the Historical Atlas at the Polish Academy of Sciences, and the second around the Institute founded by Kłoczowski (today's Centre for Research on Historical Geography of the Church in Poland, John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin) – that have greatly shaped geographical-historical research and historical cartography concerned with confessions and religions in Poland in the modern era. There were also many other valuable surveys and source publications of a local and regional character devoted to the problematics of the present article which significantly contributed to the development of research methodology proposed by the two research centres discussed above.

The vast majority of earlier cartographical-historical approaches concerned with the modern history of Poland and Lithuania focused primarily on the Latin Church. Even today historical cartography of the Catholic Church of the Latin rite is much richer than research into other religions and confessions. It partly stems from the fact that Latin parishes played a significant part not only in the Church system but were also important from a state perspective, being in fact additional administrative and fiscal units. Reconstructing borders of parishes, deaneries, archdeaconries, and dioceses of the Roman Catholic Church has been one of the main projects undertaken by the Historical Atlas of Poland. Apart from delineating ecclesiastical borders, subsequent volumes of the Atlas presented the seats of churches, monasteries and abbeys. Naturally, the specific research queries into church structures

conducted within the framework of the Historical Atlas of Poland have undergone various changes and transformations. It needs to be pointed out, too, that this specific research thread was not included in the project's early phases. The oldest depiction of the Ruthenian lands of the Crown from the turn of the 16th and 17th century (1:300,000) prepared in 1904 by Aleksander Jabłonowski did not, in fact, entail church objects and borders⁴. According to Władysław Semkowicz, who in 1922 proposed a schedule for further work on the Historical Atlas of Poland, it was a serious shortcoming, and church divisions "should with all certainty be introduced into the programme of future cartographic research"⁵. It is worth mentioning here that the Ruthenian palatinates of the former Crown have not yet been given a proper cartographic reconstruction of parochial districts, either of the Latin or the Orthodox Church. So far, the greatest merit in that regard has been achieved by Andrzej Janeczek and Zdzisław Budzyński. Janeczek is the author of a number of maps registering the development of the parochial network of the Bełz palatinate, including the changing scope of parochial districts in the region from the turn of the 16th and 17th century⁶. Budzyński, in turn, in two voluminous studies prepared meticulous registers required for a cartographic reconstruction of the territorial structures of all religions and confessions of the Polish-Ruthenian borderlands⁷.

The postulate for introducing sacral objects and borders of religious administration into the Historical Atlas of Poland

⁴ A. Jabłonowski, *Atlas historyczny Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Epoka przełomu z wieku XVI-ego na XVII-sty, dział 2: "Ziemie Ruskie" Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa–Wiedeń 1899–1904.

⁵ W. Semkowicz, *Atlas historyczny Polski (program wydawnictwa)*, in: *Prace Komisji Atlasu Historycznego Polski*, z. 1, Kraków 1922, p. 4.

⁶ A. Janeczek, *Osadnictwo pogranicza polsko-ruskiego: Województwo bełskie od schyłku XIV do początku XVII w.*, Wrocław etc. 1991.

⁷ Z. Budzyński, *Ludność pogranicza polsko-ruskiego w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku. Stan, rozmieszczenie, struktura wyznaniowa i etniczna*, Przemysł–Rzeszów 1993; idem, *Kresy południowo-wschodnie w drugiej połowie XVIII wieku*, Przemysł 2005–2008.

³ A.R.H. Baker, *Geography and History: Bridging the Divide*, Cambridge 2006 (Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography, 36), p. 20.

was fulfilled before the Second World War. Jan Jakubowski's survey map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in mid-16th century (1:600,000) prepared in 1927–1928 still did not include a full reconstruction of religious administration⁸. Like in the previously mentioned map of Ruthenian lands, Jakubowski's map too highlighted only the estates in the possession of the clergy and the Church⁹. It might have stemmed from the fact that historical sources are not good enough to carry out a meticulous reconstruction of church divisions on the entire territory covered by the map¹⁰. This seems further corroborated by the fact that on the map of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania from mid-16th century Jakubowski highlighted only the parishes in Podlachia, whereas on the map of the Grodno district from the 16th century (1:400,000) – parochial and monastic settlements (without reconstructing parochial districts)¹¹. In its entirety, the discussed problematics only made it into graphic representation on the map of the Kraków palatinate of the era of the Four-Year Sejm (1788–1792) (1:200,000), published in 1929 by Władysław Semkowicz and Karol Buczek. The map was accompanied by an extensive methodical commentary¹². The authors acknowledged not only the Catholic churches and monasteries but also Protestant congregations and Jewish kahals. Curiously, Calvinist congregations and Jewish kahals were attributed to

the category *Institutions and Buildings*, along with schools, hospitals, castles and inns. It is difficult to ascertain whether in the case of congregations and kahals what the authors meant were seats of denominational communes or rather places of worship. A fragment of the methodical commentary seems to confirm that the map presents rather the seats of denominational communes: “On the basis of sources acquired by the MWK [Map of the Kraków palatinate – B.S.] it is not possible to reconstruct the location of synagogues, thus, they could not be included in the map”¹³. The relationship between denominational communes and parishes, and places of worship (churches, Orthodox churches, synagogues, mosques etc.) remains ambiguous in its presentation on historical maps of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth¹⁴. At the same time, the characteristic of Catholic temples on the map of the Kraków palatinate was very extensive, with the temples divided according to four criteria: 1. type (chapel, church); 2. parish rights (parochial and filial); 3. construction material (brick, wood); and 4. administrative function (archdeaconries, cathedrals, collegiats, prepositories). Monasteries and abbey were divided into male and female. The signature of a church could sometimes be accompanied by a number – in the case when there were more churches or monasteries in one locality. Apart from places of worship and denominational communes the map of the Kraków palatinate also delineated the borders of parishes, deaneries, archdeaconries and dioceses of the Latin Church. In terms of confessional problematics, it was by far the richest and most varied map in the series of the Historical Atlas of Poland.

⁸ J. Jakubowski, *Mapa Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego w połowie XVI wieku. 1. Część północna, skala 1:1.600.000: objaśnienia do mapy*, Kraków 1928.

⁹ A. Dunin-Wąsowicz et al., *L'Atlas historique de la Pologne. Problèmes de l'histoire de l'église. L'exemple de la Mazovie*, in: *Colloque de Varsovie, 27–29 octobre 1971, sur la cartographie et l'histoire socio-religieuse de l'Europe jusqu'à la fin du XVIIe siècle*, Louvain 1974 (Bibliothèque de la Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique, 61), p. 71–72.

¹⁰ K. Buczek, *Z prac nad Atlasem historycznym Polski*, “Polski Przegląd Kartograficzny”, 4 (26–28), 1929, p. 49.

¹¹ J. Jakubowski, *Powiat grodzieński w w. XVI (mapa z tekstem)*, in: *Prace Komisji Atlasu Historycznego Polski*, z. 3, Kraków 1935.

¹² K. Buczek, *Mapa województwa Krakowskiego z doby Sejmu Czteroletniego (1788–1792). Źródła i metoda*, Kraków 1930 (Atlas Historyczny Polski. Seria A: Mapy Szczegółowe, 1).

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 74.

¹⁴ B. Szady, *Struktury religijne na przykładzie “Atlasu wyznań i religii w Rzeczypospolitej w drugiej połowie XVIII w.”*, “Studia Geohistorica”, 3, 2015, p. 245.

In the post-war period work on the Historical Atlas of Poland continued. Its conception underwent a unification, also with regards to issues concerning confessions. Its scope was also quite markedly broadened towards the inclusion of religious minorities, i.e. the Orthodox Church, Protestant congregations or Jewish denomination. A permanent element of the Atlas was the presentation of church properties, alongside noble and royal possessions. First cartographic publications of the Historical Atlas of Poland which appeared after the Second World War dealt with the Płock palatinate in 1578 (1:200,000) and Royal Prussia in the second half of the 16th century (1:500,000), and focused on the churches, monasteries and administrative structures of the Latin Church (parishes, deaneries, archdeacons and dioceses)¹⁵. However, in comparison to the pre-war survey of the Kraków palatinate, the categorization of temples was much poorer. The 1578 map of the Płock palatinate listed the Płock cathedral church, parochial and filial churches, abbeys and monasteries. Also Jewish synagogues were included. In turn, the map of Royal Prussia – because of its smaller scale – only delineated the borders of Latin parishes and dioceses and parochial churches (the cathedral church received a separate signature). It omitted the borders of deaneries and archdeacons, as well as monasteries and abbeys. Although the authors did acknowledge the phenomenon of Reformation, they didn't include either Protestant congregations or their administrative units.

Ever since 1966 the Historical Atlas of Poland publishes a series of detailed maps (Series A) covering the particular palatinates of the old Crown in the second half of the 16th century. In addition to the

main map in the 1:250,000 scale, each volume contains also a series of problem-focused maps devoted, too, in part or entirely, to confessional and religious issues (property maps, border demarcations, city and town plans). The most modest in that regard is the 1966 volume dedicated to the Lublin palatinate which delineates only the borders of parishes, archdeacons and dioceses, and the seats of archdeacons and parishes, omitting the borders of deaneries, filial churches and chapels, monasteries and abbeys, as well as temples and administrative units of other denominations. The administrative division map from the 1973 Masovia volume includes deaneries and, importantly, introduces an element which from then on features in every successive volume, i.e. a list of church administration units¹⁶. Volumes for the Sandomierz (1993), Łęczyca and Sieradz (1998), and Kraków (2008) palatinates included separate problem-focused maps on church administration divisions and other confessions, and the main map presented also the new category of the parochial village, as well as seats of archdeacons, deaneries, parishes and abbeys¹⁷. The Historical Atlas of Poland also published a separate survey for Silesia in the 18th century – the first volume included two theme maps (1:500,000, and 1:2,000,000) devoted to the dissemination of confessions in Silesia in the first half of the 19th century, whereas in the second volume the main map listed Roman Catholic churches, Evangelical churches, and Jewish synagogues¹⁸.

¹⁶ *Mazowsze w drugiej połowie XVI wieku*, red. W. Pałucki, Warszawa 1973 (Atlas Historyczny Polski. Mapy Szczegółowe XVI wieku, 7).

¹⁷ *Województwo sandomierskie w drugiej połowie XVI wieku*, t. 1–2, red. W. Pałucki, Warszawa 1993 (Atlas Historyczny Polski. Mapy Szczegółowe XVI wieku, 2).

¹⁸ The cartographic presentation of particular confessions was not of a uniform structure. Among Latin churches and monasteries the following were singled out: parochial churches, parochial churches and the seats of arch-presbyterates (deacons), the seats of archdeacons and dioceses, collegiate churches and monasteries. Evangelical churches were divided into parochial churches, parochial churches with the seats of provinces (*Superintendenturen*), inspections (*Inspektionen*) and districts (*Senioraten*)

¹⁵ *Województwo płockie około 1578 r.*, oprac. S. Herbst, Warszawa 1958 (Atlas Historyczny Polski. Seria A: Mapy Szczegółowe, 2); *Prusy Królewskie w drugiej połowie XVI wieku*, oprac. M. Biskup, L. Koc, Warszawa 1961 (Atlas Historyczny Polski. Seria B: Mapy Przeglądowe, 1).

Due to the scale of the map the authors could not carry out a proper reconstruction of parochial districts. The commentary and the index to the survey do not determine a parochial affiliation of localities and do not list units of confessional administration.

In the Historical Atlas of Poland religious and confessional problematics was presented alongside the depiction of borders of secular administration, against the background of advanced settlement network of the particular palatinates which were being cartographed¹⁹. Similar approaches may be detected in many regional or local studies whose purpose was to analyse settlement, demographic and administrative development. Such surveys would frequently be accompanied with attached and/or descriptive maps. Apart from the already mentioned works focusing on Ruthenian lands, other examples include studies by, to name but a few authors, Tadeusz Ładogórski²⁰, Przemysław Szafran²¹, Leon Polaszewski²², Grzegorz Błaszczuk²³, Krzysztof Mikulski²⁴ or Dorota Michaluk²⁵. There are also historical atlases created in neighbouring countries which can be attributed to a similar trend, i.e. those dealing with the historical geography of confessions and religions. The pride of place definitely goes to the 'Big Historical atlas of Belarus', in particular

volumes one and two, which include maps of territorial structures of Orthodox and Uniate churches, Latin Church, Protestant congregations, as well as of Islam and Judaism. Settlement maps of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (1:300,000), though they do not give the scope of particular parochial districts, register the churches and monasteries of the Latin, Uniate and Orthodox Church²⁶.

Historical cartography constitutes an important research method and mode of presenting the state of research for historians collaborating with the Centre for Research on Historical Geography of the Church in Poland (until 2010 – the Institute of Historical Geography of the Church in Poland)²⁷. In contrast to the series published by the Historical Atlas of Poland, the problematics of confessions and religions stood at the forefront of cartographic pursuits and embraced a much wider spectrum of tackled issues. It needs to be stressed that already in 1962 Kłoczowski, the founder and long-term director of the Institute, in his programme resume "Development and problematics of studies into historical geography of the Catholic Church" urged that research should embrace also other confessions apart from the Roman Catholic Church²⁸. Initially, the Institute's research was correlated with the activities of the Commission Internationale d'Histoire Ecclésiastique Comparée (CIHEC), in particular with its cartographic subcommittee functioning from the mid-1950's. The subcommittee's major aim was to prepare an atlas of historical geography of religions and the works proceeded simultaneously on several fields. Material was collected for the bibliography of maps

(as one category), and separately the seats of consistories (*Konsistorien*). *Śląsk w końcu XVIII wieku*, t. 1–2, red. J. Janczak, T. Ładogórski, Wrocław 1976–1984 (Atlas Historyczny Polski: Mapy XVIII wieku, 1–2).

¹⁹ *Historical Atlas of Poland in the 2nd Half of the 16th Century. Voivodeships of Cracow, Sandomierz, Lublin, Sieradz, Łęczyca, Rawa, Plock and Mazovia*, ed. M. Słoń, vol. 1–4, Frankfurt am Main 2014 (vol. 2, p. 212–318: *Church Administration Borders*).

²⁰ T. Ładogórski, *Studia nad zaludnieniem Polski XIV wieku*, Wrocław 1958.

²¹ P. Szafran, *Osadnictwo historycznej Krajny w XVI–XVIII w. 1511–1772*, Gdańsk 1961.

²² L. Polaszewski, *Własność feudalna w województwie kaliskim w XVI wieku*, Poznań 1976.

²³ G. Błaszczuk, *Żmudź w XVII i XVIII wieku: Zaludnienie i struktura społeczna*, Poznań 1985 (Historia. Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu, 125).

²⁴ K. Mikulski, *Osadnictwo wiejskie województwa pomorskiego od połowy XVI do końca XVII wieku*, Toruń 1994.

²⁵ D. Michaluk, *Ziemia mielnicza województwa podlaskiego w XVI–XVII wieku. Osadnictwo, własność ziemska i podziały kościelne*, Toruń 2002.

²⁶ *Вялікі гістарычны атлас Беларусі*, т. 1–3, Мінск 2013–2016.

²⁷ The bibliography of maps and plans prepared at the Institute until 2000 comprises of 1584 items. *Bibliografia map i planów opracowanych w Instytucie Geografii Historycznej Kościoła w Polsce KUL i wydanych w latach 1956–2000*, red. R. Kozyrski, Lublin 2001.

²⁸ J. Kłoczowski, *Rozwój*, p. 59.

and other studies dealing with confessions and religions²⁹; source excerpts from the “Polonia Christiana” were prepared, as well as maps of an inventory, problem-focused and survey character. The Institute’s research query was very extensive, incorporating territorial administration, synods, jurisdiction, collegiates and monasteries, churches and chapels (patronage, titles of churches, construction), oratories, fraternities, sodalities, schools and seminaries, printing houses, hospitals, guilds, pilgrimages, missions, as well as populations and religious practices³⁰. Discussions were underway regarding the inclusion of further matters and phenomena such as material gratification of religious institutions; clergy and religious colleges, prebends and benefices, parochial and monastic libraries³¹.

The research questionnaire of the “Polonia Christiana” series required a wide-reaching source query which meant that it was not possible to prepare detailed maps covering the vast territories of the Commonwealth. The original idea was abandoned and a different approach was assumed, with the main goal being to prepare a more synthetic and survey-like presentation of the history of Christianity in Poland. Between 1969 and 1970 Kłoczowski edited a two-volume study entitled ‘The Church in Poland’ which was accompanied by a separate atlas volume with 27 problem-focused maps dealing with various tenets of socio-religious history up until the end of the 18th century, beginning with the borders of dioceses and parochial network, through maps of seminars, collegiates and monasteries, ending with schools and hospitals³². Two

years later, a study on male religious orders in Poland ca. 1772 was published, with maps for particular congregations³³. At the same time, there were heated debates going on about the actual shape of the ‘Historical Atlas of the Church in Poland’. Two events in particular should be mentioned here – a symposium devoted to the work of the Institute of Historical Geography of the Church in Poland (1966)³⁴ and an international conference on the cartography of socio-religious history (1971)³⁵.

Research activity of the Institute of Historical Geography of the Church in Poland greatly exceeded “mere” cartographic tasks. Publishing series and monographs covered a very broad range of issues and frequently did not enclose a properly cartographic part. The greatest number of maps and atlas surveys can be found in the 1972 series “Materials for the Historical Atlas of Christianity in Poland” and “Historical Geography of the Church in Poland” (published since 2011)³⁶. In 2006, Stanisław Litak prepared the ‘The Atlas of the Latin Church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 18th Century’ which was published within the framework of the ‘Transactions of the Institute of Historical Geography of the Church in Poland’ (Catholic University of Lublin). By far, the publication should be acknowledged as the most significant scientific achievement of the historical cartography of confessions and

²⁹ L. Bieńkowski, J. Flaga, Z. Sułowski, *Bibliographie de cartographie ecclésiastique. Fasc. 2: Pologne*, Leiden 1971.

³⁰ B. Konopska, *Polskie atlasy historyczne – koncepcje i realizacje*, Warszawa 1994, p. 146–149; S. Litak, *Atlas Kościoła łacińskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów w XVIII wieku*, Lublin 2006, p. 15–19.

³¹ S. Litak, *Działalność Pracowni Instytutu*, “Roczniki Humanistyczne”, 16 (2), 1968, p. 130.

³² *Kościół w Polsce*, vol. 1–2, red. J. Kłoczowski, Kraków 1969–1970.

³³ *Zakony męskie w Polsce w 1772 roku*, red. L. Bieńkowski, J. Kłoczowski, Z. Sułowski, Lublin 1972 (Materiały do Atlasu Historycznego Chrześcijaństwa w Polsce, 1).

³⁴ *Ogólnopolska sesja naukowa z dnia 25 listopada 1966 r. poświęcona działalności naukowej Instytutu Geografii Historycznej Kościoła w Polsce*, “Roczniki Humanistyczne”, 16 (2), 1968, p. 123–174.

³⁵ *Colloque de Varsovie*.

³⁶ Recently, a volume on the Lublin diocese has been published in the series “Historical Geography of the Church in Poland”: *Atlas historyczny (archi)diecezji lubelskiej 1805–2010. The Historical Atlas of the Lublin (Arch)Diocese 1805–2010*, red. H. Gapski, Lublin 2011. A complete list of works by the Centre for Research on Historical Geography of the Church in Poland might be accessed online: The Centre’s publications, (http://www.kul.pl/publikacje-osrodka_art_3819.html, access: May 2, 2018).

religions of the pre-partition era. The main map (1:800,000) presents all churches, chapels and monasteries, as well as administrative units of the Latin Church ca. 1772. The volume also includes more than 60 problem-focused maps and an extensive index listing administrative affiliations, types of construction materials, types of patronage and titles of all places of worship included in the volume. What is quite significant and unique, especially with regards to this type of studies, is that each and every index entry gives a precise source basis for the information it refers to. In line with Litak's (deceased 2010) research plan, the investigation into the Latin Church will be extended to embrace also other confessions, which will enable researchers to prepare a thorough atlas of confessions and religions of the Commonwealth in the second half of the 18th century³⁷.

The above-presented synthetic survey of the most important currents of historical cartography dealing with confessional and religious problematics enables us to assess the achievements and developmental potential of this strand of historical thematic cartography. The issue should be analysed in the broader context of the development of historical geography as both a scientific discipline and a research method. Despite significant achievements, historical cartography of confessions and religions has not yet acquired a separate status. One may even risk the statement that it might never actually acquire such a standing. In the long research tradition of the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences and the Historical Atlas of Poland, it certainly constitutes an important component of the historical

cartography of settlement and territorial administration. Also for the works of the Institute of the Historical Geography of the Church in Poland, historical cartography of confessions and religions makes for a vital element of studies devoted to socio-religious history and the history of confessional institutions. The hitherto prepared maps for the most part performed an inventory function and presented research results; they were not particularly useful for explaining and understanding historical phenomena of a religious nature. In this light, it seems that the greatest challenge for contemporary cartography and historical geography is to evolve from a purely material and informative role to that of a research method assisting the interpretation of historical phenomena and processes. The postulate has already been made in the 1960s by Kłoczowski who wrote: "The spatial presentation of a given phenomenon facilitates understanding its versatility and provides ground for comparing it with other phenomena, that is, for looking for correlations [...] Only once we move from collecting and comparing to exploring and analysing will we begin to fulfil the fundamental goals of a more scientific and thorough understanding and explaining the investigated reality". Still, Kłoczowski did not wish to glorify historical geography as the major research method: "On the other hand, limiting oneself exclusively to studies of geographical-historical structures, or downright overrating of thus acquired results, would also be a dangerous mistake and a methodological fallacy"³⁸.

The research programme formulated by Kłoczowski in the 1960s tallies well with what we today call spatial history as "an inclusive form of historical geography that is largely enabled by its use of GIS but includes other spatial technologies

³⁷ S. Litak, *The Atlas of Religious and Ethnic Relations in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the Second Half of the 18th Century*, in: *Churches, States, Nations in the Enlightenment and in the Nineteenth Century: Eglises, états, nations à l'époque des Lumières et au XIX^e siècle*, ed. M. Filipowicz, Lublin 2000. Cf. also: B. Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie w II połowie XVIII wieku*, Lublin 2010.

³⁸ J. Kłoczowski, *Rozwój*, p. 37, 87–88.

as well”³⁹. Historical geography itself is currently at yet another turning point in terms of its meaning and place on the scientific map. In its beginnings, it was regarded mostly as an auxiliary science of history whose major task was to prepare the background for historical events and processes. It was also quite frequently identified with historical cartography and the reconstruction of the natural environment, settlement network, or political and administrative borders. In the 20th century geographers have become more engaged in studies of the past which has significantly affected historical geography in that it found itself astride two major disciplines – history and geography⁴⁰. Despite various regional traditions in the development of historical geography, it was determined mostly by looking for relations between the natural environment and the anthropogenic milieu (possibilism/determinism, landscape scrutiny and division). Also the American variety of historical geography known as “environmental history” grew out of a similar root (with full awareness of the simplification applied here)⁴¹. A deepened theoretical reflection on space and place in the humanities, along with the introduction of new research tools (databases, GIS) have opened up yet another perspective for the development of historical geography understood more as a research approach or an interdisciplinary project⁴². This new approach assumes a more holistic treatment of historical landscape and attempts to look for spatial correlations between various phenomena which

promotes better understanding and more effective explaining of processes taking place in the environment and society.

Crucial for the development of historical geography in its new form (spatial history) is its inclusive, collaborative and multidisciplinary character⁴³. In order to understand its significance for the geography and historical cartography of confessions and religions of the Commonwealth it is vital to go back to the postulates put forth by Stanisław Herbst in the 1960s. during the debates upon the conception of the Historical Atlas of Poland and the Historical Atlas of the Church in Poland. Two of these are particularly important, with both of them being of a more methodological than a substantive nature. The first postulate concerned the necessity of cooperation between scientific communities while composing the historical cartography of the modern era (mostly with regards to the Historical Atlas of the Church in Poland and the Historical Atlas of Poland). Herbst also noticed the possibilities for cooperation with other initiatives of a geographical-historical nature, such as for instance the planned dictionary and atlas of the Reformation in Poland which could replace Henryk Merczyng’s 1904 study⁴⁴. In the second postulate Herbst drew attention to the possibility of applying old cartography as the basis for studies and analyses prepared by geographers and historical cartographers⁴⁵. In light of the new technological advancements ushered in by spatio-temporal databases and the digitalization of historical sources (both written and cartographic), both of Herbst’s postulated take on a new and fresh significance.

³⁹ D. DeBats, I.N. Gregory, D. Lafreniere, *Introduction: Spatial History, History and GIS*, in: *The Routledge Handbook of Spatial History*, ed. I. Gregory, D. DeBats, D. Lafreniere, 2018, p. 2.

⁴⁰ A.R.H. Baker, *Geography*, p. 9–16 (Legacies).

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 79–84; R. Wilson, Graeme Wynn, *Historical Geography, and Environmental History*, “Historical Geography”, 43, 2015, p. 185–187.

⁴² *Betrachtungsansatz* (W. Schenk, *Historische Geographie*, Darmstadt 2012, p. 7); inter-discipline (S. Courville, *Introduction a la geographie historique*, Sainte-Foy 1995, p. 7); interdisciplinary project (A.R.H. Baker, *Geography*, p. 16).

⁴³ D. DeBats, I.N. Gregory, D. Lafreniere, *Introduction*, p. 5.

⁴⁴ *Ogólnopolska sesja*, p. 125 (J. Kłoczowski), 155 (K. Buczek), 160 (J. Tazbir). Cf. H. Merczyng, *Zbory i senatorowie protestancy w dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa 1904; W. Urban, *Projekt słownika geograficzno-historycznego reformacji w Polsce*, “Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce”, 8, 1963, p. 149–156.

⁴⁵ S. Herbst, *Atlas na rozdrożu*, in: S. Herbst, *Potrzeba historii, czyli o polskim stylu życia*, t. 2, Warszawa 1978, p. 466–469.

One problem which still plagues many cartographic-historical studies is the question of integrating the collected source material with particular cartographic works. Once published, the source material used for preparing maps frequently got dissipated which ultimately led to the creation of separate publishing series for source materials and historical-geographical dictionaries. In the case of the Historical Atlas of Poland this resulted in the formation of the Department of the Historico-Geographical Dictionary of Polish Lands in the Middle Ages (1958). In the activities of the Institute of Historical Geography of the Church in Poland a similar role was initially performed by the “Polonia Christiana” series, and then by a whole range of publications of a material and source character, for instance the series “Materials for the Historical Atlas of Christianity in Poland” or “Source Materials for the History of the Church in Poland”. Gathering research material into a uniform structure of a database, along with simultaneously linking information from historical sources (or a digital rendition of these sources) with geographical space opens up a myriad of new possibilities for geographical-historical research. The mode of presenting research results online on the basis of old maps does not pose a major problem today⁴⁶. Due to their relatively low cost, open access and user-friendly search tools, these solutions have now become an invaluable addition to the quite expensive printed atlases and multi-volume dictionaries⁴⁷.

Contemporary technological advances mean that the basis for historical cartography is no longer the traditional map but rather the spatio-temporal database. Of course that does affect the work patterns and research of scholars concerned with geography and historical cartography. Some of the tasks originally reserved for cartographers, such as determining the location of a place or the run of a given border, is now being taken over by historians using GIS applications and databases. The source material collected in databases becomes widely available to experts from outside of the database teams. Geographical-historical databases work on an open access basis, and thanks to the applied standards of data exchange (Open Linked Data) they may easily be correlated and compared against one another. The basis for data integration can be both the geographical space, as well as the standardized scheme and characteristic of the collected information. This in turn facilitates great opportunities for the development of all kinds of comparative and multi-criteria analyses. It can also apply to phenomena from one or many time periods. Sufficiently rich data collections or their proper modelling open up new possibilities for discovering both short- and long-term developmental processes, in a local, regional and global scale.

The separation of the collected source information from the individual historian carrying out the query, and its subsequent perusal by other specialists or entire research teams has led to a peculiar division among historical geographers. To simplify matters slightly, it is possible to distinguish data producers and data consumers. In fact, the division has always been around, but owing to quite a limited access to the collected source information it used to be much less visible. In the cartographic-historical tradition, main maps (workshop maps) have always been more closely associated with data producers,

⁴⁶ T. Panecki, T. Związek, *Materiały do badań nad rekonstrukcją załesienia na Równinie Nowotomyskiej w XVI w.* (<http://atlasfontium.pl/index.php?article=webhauland>, access: November 28, 2017).

⁴⁷ S. Mielnik, *Działalność Ośrodka Badań nad Geografią Historyczną Kościoła w Polsce KUL*, “Archiwa, Biblioteki i Muzea Kościelne”, 95, 2011, p. 130; M. Słoń, *Principia edytorstwa źródeł historycznych w dobie rewolucji cyfrowej*, “Studia Źródłoznawcze”, 53, 2015, p. 155–161; B. Szady, *Spatio-Temporal Databases as Research Tool in Historical Geography*, “Geographia Polonica”, 89 (3), 2016, p. 359–370; idem, *W sprawie metody opracowania repertoriów wizytacji kanonicznych epoki staropolskiej*, in: *Editiones sine fine*, ed. K. Kopiński, W. Mrozowicz, J. Tandecki, Toruń 2017, p. 177–188.

whereas survey maps of problem-focused maps – with data consumers. Today, conference presentations tend to more and more frequently open not with a discussion of the applied source basis, but with a presentation of the list of databases which have provided material for geo-statistical analysis. However, geostatistical analysis is far from being the major problem that contemporary geography and historical cartography face; actually it is the epistemological questions regarding the transformation of data obtained from historical sources and their implementation into databases that pose that the greatest challenge here. It is precisely the modelling of source data into critical information that has a decisive impact on the later utilization of all collected information. Helpful here are field ontologies which represent knowledge from a pre-assigned range, at the same time building schemes, descriptions and relations with the use of formal logic. A deepened reflection upon the described phenomena is necessary for constructing efficient database systems for historical geography.

Historical cartography of confessions and religions will only play its proper part in socio-religious historical research as formulated by Le Bras and Kłoczowski once it has been collated with other components of social, economic and cultural life. This will on the one hand allow for an

assessment of the meaning and status of religious institutions in particular spheres of social life; on the other, it will help to properly interpret the factors which have influenced the development of these institutions and religious practices. The first step along this path might be the evaluation and analysis of the development of parochial networks in relation to the development of settlement networks and ownership relations in the Old Polish period. Such investigations do not need to be limited to just one country or just one administrative unit. Comparative analysis based upon geographical space might also facilitate and make easier the identification of super-state and supernational frameworks of social and religious life. Already the high level of religious and confessional diversity itself is an important distinguishing feature of societies inhabiting Central and Eastern Europe in the modern era⁴⁸. The integration of historical-geographical information on confessional and religious circumstances which is being currently performed in many projects will first enable a fuller understanding and characteristic of this diversity, its level and scope, and subsequently will lead to defining its determining factors on both a local and regional level. ■

Translated by Julia Szoltysek

⁴⁸ W. Kriegseisen, *The Historical Region of East-Central Europe in Research into the History of Religion in the Early Modern Era*, "Kwartalnik Historyczny", 124 (Special Issue), 2017, p. 15–16.

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Summary

Historical thematic cartography devoted to confessional or, in yet broader terms, religious problematic enjoys a stable status in Poland. Religious issues have usually been treated in a two-fold way: 1. as the major subject of historical cartography, 2. as a component of historical cartography concerned with socio-cultural or historical-political problematic. The former embraces the tradition of the Centre for Research on (earlier Institute of) Historical Geography of the Church in Poland (Catholic University of Lublin), whereas the latter – the works of the Historical Atlas of Poland (Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences). Even though the Polish-Lithuanian

Commonwealth was a multi-religious and multi-confessional country (including both Christian and non-Christian faiths), the majority of hitherto cartographic studies was predominantly preoccupied with institutions, peoples and religious practices of the Latin Church, which enjoyed a preferential systemic and socio-economic status in the Commonwealth.

For decades, Polish historical cartography focused on the reconstruction of territorial structures and multi-level administrative divisions. The meticulousness and methodology of these approaches varied greatly, ranging from small-scale schematic maps of dioceses, to very detailed

inventory maps of parochial borders (the “Historical Atlas of Poland” series). Its thematic development Polish cartography of confessions owes to professor Jerzy Kłoczowski who made the geographical-historical method one of the pillars of studies into socio-religious history, strongly influenced by the French “*Annales*” school. The Centre for Research on Historical Geography of the Church in Poland at the Catholic University of Lublin is the only scientific institution in Poland whose research profile and methodology focus on geography and historical cartography of religions and confessions.

The vast cartographic material collected over many decades forestalled a full development of cartographic research methodology and the subsequent evolution from cartographic presentation to analysis and interpretation, which had been advocated by Kłoczowski already in the 1960s. The introduction of innovative technologi-

cal devices to geographical-historical research, specifically databases and systems of spatial information, have opened anew the discussion on the opportunities for integrating data with methods of their analysis. Through its connection to other layers of the landscape of the past historical geography of confessions and religions is now becoming a crucial element of spatial history. Importantly, its inclusive and interdisciplinary character tallies well with the programme formulated by Le Bras and Kłoczowski, within the framework of which institutions, peoples and religious practices should be presented alongside other elements of social, economic and cultural life. Only this may facilitate a proper assessment and description (both quantitative and qualitative) of religious practices, helping to properly interpret factors which have influenced the development of religious institutions and practices. ■

Keywords: Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, confessions and religions, historical cartography, historical geography, spatial humanities

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