



# Imaginations and Configurations of Polish Society

*From the Middle Ages  
through the  
Twentieth Century*

Wallstein

Imaginations and  
Configurations  
of Polish Society

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Yvonne Kleinmann

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From the Middle Ages  
through the Twentieth Century

Edited by

Yvonne Kleinmann, Jürgen Heyde, Dietlind Hüchtker,  
Dobrochna Kałwa, Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov,  
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# Contents

Acknowledgements . . . . .	IX
Note on Transliteration und Geographical Names . . . . .	X
Yvonne Kleinmann	
Introductory Remarks . . . . .	XI
 <b>An Essay on Polish History</b>	
Moshe Rosman	
How Polish Is Polish History? . . . . .	19
 <b>1. Political Rule and Medieval Society in the Polish Lands: An Anthropologically Inspired Revision</b>	
Jürgen Heyde	
Introduction to the Medieval Section . . . . .	37
Stanisław Rosik	
The »Baptism of Poland«: Power, Institution and Theology in the Shaping of Monarchy and Society from the Tenth through Twelfth Centuries . . . . .	46
Urszula Sowina	
Spaces of Communication: Patterns in Polish Towns at the Turn of the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Times . . . . .	54
Iurii Zazuliak	
Ius Ruthenicae in Late Medieval Galicia: Critical Reconsiderations . . . . .	66
Jürgen Heyde	
Migration and Ethnicity in Medieval Poland: »Ethnic Markers« in a Historical Perspective . . . . .	85

## **2. Multiple Loyalties: Coexistence of Political, Territorial and Religious Self-Conceptions in Early Modern Communities**

Yvonne Kleinmann and Tomasz Wiślicz

Introduction to the Early Modern Section . . . . . 111

Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz

The Political Discourse of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth:

Towards an Analysis . . . . . 121

Karin Friedrich

Political Loyalties in the Commonwealth's Borderlands:

Bogusław Radziwiłł (1620-1669) and the Problem of Treason . . . 143

Bogumił Szady

Religious Regionalization of the Polish Crown in the Second Half  
of the Eighteenth Century: A Geographical-Historical Approach 174

## **3. Facing a Fantasy: Concepts of Community in the Imperial Setting of the Nineteenth Century**

Dietlind Hüchtker and Joanna Nalewajko-Kulikov

Introduction to the Nineteenth-Century Section . . . . . 209

Karsten Holste

Reform from Above and Politics from Below: Peasants in the

Prussian Partition of Poland . . . . . 217

Ostap Sereda

On the Frontiers of the Former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth:

Polish Theater in Russian-Ruled Kyiv before 1863 . . . . . 238

Maciej Górny

Identity under Scrutiny:

The First World War in Local Communities . . . . . 261

#### 4. Counter-Narratives of the Twentieth Century?

##### Re-Configurations due to Mobility, Violence and Transformation

Dobrochna Kałwa and Katrin Steffen

Introduction to the Twentieth-Century Section . . . . . 281

Kornelia Kończal

The Quest for German Property in East Central Europe after 1945:

The Semantics of Plunder and the Sense of Reconstruction . . . . . 291

Dietlind Hüchtker

Gender, Youth, and Popular Culture:

Telling Polish History during Socialism . . . . . 313

Olga Linkiewicz

Bearers of Local Stories: Memories of the Eastern Borderlands

and the Grand Narratives of the Polish *Kresy* . . . . . 335

Winson Chu

»Something has destroyed my memory«: Stalingrad and

Karl Dedecius's Second World War . . . . . 355

List of Contributors . . . . . 377



Religious Regionalization of the Polish Crown  
in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century  
A Geographical-Historical Approach<sup>1</sup>

The historical territory of the early modern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, covering the area of almost all of today's Poland as well as Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia and Ukraine, is characterized by religious diversity, which constitutes one of the most significant factors configuring the geographic and demographic landscape of the country. To date, in studies delving into the religious and confessional geography of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth two main methodological trends are evident: the organizational (structural) and the demographic. The works of the first category are based on the assumption that the distribution of churches and buildings of worship are the mirror image of the real geographical distribution of confessions, and correctly represent quantitative proportions of individual denominations.<sup>2</sup> The books and articles using the second approach refer to demographic resources in order to present the overall confessional make-up of the selected territories.<sup>3</sup>

The present article follows mainly the first, the organizational approach, but it partially also has a demographical foundation, taking into account statistical information about the population. Nevertheless, we should recognize that there are no comprehensive demographic sources for the entire territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from before the end of the eighteenth century. The main aim of this article is to present the territorial distribution of religions and confessions in the Crown part of the Commonwealth shortly be-

- 1 The main findings and conclusions presented in this article were originally published in chapter 3 of my book *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie w II połowie XVIII w.* Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2010, but reworked according to the topic of this volume.
- 2 Bieńkowski, »Mozaika religijno-kulturalna Rzeczypospolitej«; Litak, »The Atlas of Religious and Ethnic Relations«; idem, »Mapa wyznaniowa Rzeczypospolitej«; Szady, »Z badań nad mapą wyznań i religii.«
- 3 E.g. Budzyński, *Ludność pogranicza polsko-ruskiego*; Budzyński, *Kresy południowo-wschodnie*.

fore its first partition in 1772. Special importance will be assigned to determining the geographical reach of particular religions and denominations, and to designating religious borderlands in the Crown's territory. It is part of a larger project embracing the whole territory of the former Polish-Lithuanian state in this period.<sup>4</sup>

Any analysis of the territorial and organizational structure of particular religions and denominations should always consider the distribution of basic administrative units. For Christian denominations it was usually the parish; for Jewish communities the *kahal*, and for Muslims the *dzemiat*. In order to conduct a proper geographical and statistical analysis referring to religious administration it is essential to determine consistent criteria for confirming the functioning of basic organizational units. There are, however, deep discrepancies between religions and denominations. Some factors form the Latin parish, others the Protestant community, others yet the Jewish or Muslim community. Within the scope and territorial reach of the present research, it was not possible to analyse thoroughly the status of all units of religious administration functioning at the time. Therefore, it was established that the trace of the permanent existence and functioning of an organized religious group or denomination was almost always a building devoted to performing public prayers and religious rites. Still, this assumption does not comprehensively solve the problem as a sacral building fulfilled different functions in the lives of Christian and non-Christian communities. Due to a lack of sources, it was not always possible to confirm the existence and functioning of a building of worship, particularly in the case of the Jewish community that includes the far-reaching oversimplification that the existence of a *kahal* is concomitant with the functioning of some sort of a place of worship. In this context, the term ›synagogue‹ applied further on will not only refer to a separate building, but will also denote a meeting place for common prayers and studies.

My analysis covers buildings of worship of all religious communities and confessional groups present in the area of the Crown that created organizational structures. The group of Christian churches included Catholic churches of three liturgies (Latin, Uniate and Armenian), as well as Orthodox, Lutheran (Augsburg Evangelical), Mennonite, Calvinist (Reformed Evangelical), and the Unity of the Brethren churches. Among non-Christian buildings of worship, Jewish synagogues took the first place, whereas the number of Karaite *kenesas* and Muslim mosques was small.

4 Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*.

The analysis and its results are presented in two sections. The first and principal section delves into the territorial extension of confessions and religious communities, and the distribution of churches and buildings of worship. In the second, an attempt is made to verify the above-declared assumption on the coherence between the organizational and demographic aspects of the denominational landscape of the Crown Territory. In this approach, results from the analysis of the geographic distribution of buildings of worship, as well as their number and density, are randomly compared with demographic data on the respective confessional and religious communities.

The analysis of the distribution of places of worship representing all confessions and religions over a very large area, together with the strong regional differentiation present, required introducing inner sub-divisions, thereby making it easier to present the actual situation. Narratives available from individual confessional traditions do not enable a full use of the comparative method. Using the administrative divisions of the Latin Church cannot be logically justified as, although it covered the whole territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Uniate Church played a far more important role in the Crown territories of Ruthenia. Furthermore, this would unintentionally create the risk of comparing other confessions to the Latin Church. Hence, it seems that the most appropriate method is to follow the divisions used by the state administration – provinces and voivodships – within which quantitative, structural and geographical analyses of the individual confessions were carried out.

The territory used for geographical and statistical analysis comprises two provinces: *Małopolska* (Lesser Poland) and *Wielkopolska* (Greater Poland). The focus is on the second half of the eighteenth century, before the territorial changes caused by the first partition of Poland-Lithuania. In addition, the areas under fief administration – the Spisz (Spiš) and Drahim crown domains (*starostwa*), as well as the lands of Łębork and Bytów – were taken into consideration. Due to their different administrative structures, collective statistics treat them separately, in that they were not included within any of the 23 Crown voivodships. Warmia, which formally belonged to the Malbork voivodship, was also viewed separately. The total area considered in this study covers 424 358 km<sup>2</sup>, comprising:

*Małopolska* (Lesser Poland) province – 304 390 km<sup>2</sup>

- *Małopolska* – 57 656 km<sup>2</sup> (incl. the Spisz area – 679 km<sup>2</sup>)
- *Ruś Koronna* (Crown Ruthenia) – 235 227 km<sup>2</sup>
- *Podlasie* (Podlachia) – 11 507 km<sup>2</sup>

*Wielkopolska* (Greater Poland) province – 119 968 km<sup>2</sup>

– *Wielkopolska* – 59 842 km<sup>2</sup> (incl. the Drahim area – 651 km<sup>2</sup>)

– *Prusy Królewskie* (Crown Prussia) – 26 452 km<sup>2</sup> (incl. the Łębork and Bytów areas – 1 857 km<sup>2</sup> – and Warmia – 4 316 km<sup>2</sup>)

– *Mazowsze* (Masovia) – 33 674 km<sup>2</sup>.

Due to its huge territorial and documentary scope, this article is based mainly on sources and studies that provide systematic information about the structures and distribution of buildings of worship representing various religions and confessions. Considerable effort was put into creating statistical and cartographic materials, in case they did not exist yet or were outdated. Knowledge about the centralized and well-controlled Latin Church is, without any doubt, the most complete, thanks to the preserved records of canonical visitations, lists of benefices and other types of records necessary for efficient administration.<sup>5</sup> Protestant communities for their part systematically prepared descriptions of their organizational structure, although the importance of the Protestant Church shrank continuously in the eighteenth century.<sup>6</sup> As knowledge about the organization of the Eastern Churches is more limited, the exploration of sources is still the main form of research.<sup>7</sup>

The Jewish communities did not create systematic registers of their buildings of worship, or, if they did, they have not survived. This results from a completely different organizational structure of the Jewish population, whose ritual life was characterized by a lower degree of centralization in comparison to Christian denominations. The first complete list of Jewish *kahals* on the territory of the Polish Crown and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania resulted from the state's undertaking to change the taxation of the Jewish population in the 1760s.<sup>8</sup>

Many regional historical studies and maps also provide important material for the reconstruction of the confessional map showing the

5 Litak, *Atlas Kościoła łacińskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów*; Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*.

6 Merczyng, »Zbory i senatorowie protestanczy w dawnej Polsce«; Kizik, *Mennonici w Gdańsku, Elblągu i na Żuławach Wiślanych*; Klemp, *Protestanci w dobrach prywatnych w Prusach Królewskich*; Kriegseisen, *Ewangelicy polscy i litewscy*.

7 Kołbuk, *Kościół wschodnie w Rzeczypospolitej*; Skochylas, *Heneral'ni vizyatsii Kyivs'koi uniinoi mytropolii*.

8 Spector and Wigoder, *The Encyclopedia of Jewish Life*; Kalik, *Scepter of Judah*.

territorial distribution of churches and buildings of worship in the eighteenth century.<sup>9</sup> The lack of systematic inventories and geostatistical data in many cases forced us to gather the requested information dispersed in both published and unpublished historical sources – mainly in reports of canonical visitations, lists of benefices, court rolls, etc. Apart from the written sources that contributed to the preparation of attributable data for all buildings of worship and administrative units, the cartographic materials (old maps) played a significant role in the process of identification and localization of each analyzed place.<sup>10</sup>

### Geographical coverage of religions and confessions

Among the determinants crucial to the territorial extension of confessions and religious communities, we distinguish three elements:

- political conditions and international relations
- religious and confessional changes
- settlement processes and migrations

In the case of the eastern and southern outskirts of the Crown Territory up to Bukovina (*Bukowina*), the political and administrative frontier with the Russian and Ottoman Empires more or less coincided with the confessional borders of Orthodox and Muslim populations respectively. However, while political borders can be characterized as stable and geographically precise, the confessional frontier became more blurred and fluid in the second half of the eighteenth century as a result of increasing tensions between the Orthodox Church, supported by the Russian Empire, and the Uniate Church, backed by the Polish authorities. Many of the eastern churches situated in the Bracław and Kiev voivodships changed their denominational affiliation two, three or more times during the *Kolijivshchyna* in 1768, a peasant rebellion that had not only socio-economic, but also religious dimensions.<sup>11</sup> Ever since the Union of Brest in 1596, the rivalry between the Orthodox and Uniate Churches con-

9 E.g. Ruprecht and Jähmig, »Die kirchliche Organisation«; Budzyński, *Ludność pogranicza polsko-ruskiego*; idem, *Kresy południowo-wschodnie*.

10 Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 7–16, 255–279.

11 Skinner, »Borderlands of Faith,« 90.

stituted a permanent characteristic of the Ruthenian voivodships of the Crown.<sup>12</sup>

The widest transitional zone, and the most interesting from a confessional point of view, was situated in the territory of the so-called Wild Fields (*Loca deserta*, *Dzikie Pola*). The Russo-Turkish wars in the second half of the eighteenth century had a strong influence on the relations between Uniate Christians, Orthodox Christians and Muslims. In this frontier area, the structures of the Uniate Church abutted on those of the Orthodox Church, which dominated in Zaporizhia (*Zaporoże*), the area between the Southern Bug (*Boh*) and the Dnieper (*Dniepr*). Adherents of Islam prevailed in the territory of the Crimean Khanate, between the Dniester (*Dniestr*) and the Southern Bug.<sup>13</sup>

Political as well as religious elements were decisive factors in the confessional make-up of the Carpathian Foothills (*Pogórze Karpackie*), where Uniate Christians in the southern parts of the Crown Territory met their co-religionists from Transylvania (*Siedmiogród*), Carpathian Ruthenia (*Ruś Zakarpacka*) and Bukovina (*Bukowina*). Some of the Orthodox inhabitants of Carpathian Ruthenia followed the example of the Orthodox bishops in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in recognizing the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Rome in the Unions of Uzhhorod, Mukachevo, and Maramureş in 1646, 1664, and 1713, as did adherents of Orthodoxy in Transylvania in the Union of Baia Mare in 1700.<sup>14</sup> Nowadays, the Lemko, Hutsul and Boyko highlanders can be viewed as a symbol of ethno-confessional continuity of this region.<sup>15</sup>

In the eighteenth century, the western border of the Uniate ecclesiastical structures corresponded with the borders of Orthodox dioceses from before 1596, which in turn coincided with the western border of the Principality of Galicia-Volhynia in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, the development of the Latin Church dioceses from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century reflected the military and political expansion of the Polish state to the east. The geographical range of the Latin Church within the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was definitely more far-reaching

12 Bienkowski, »Organizacja Kościoła wschodniego w Polsce,« 784-785.

13 Fisher, *The Crimean Tatars*, 30, 79-80; Skochylas, »Pivdenna mezha Halits'koi (L'vivs'koi) ieparkhii,« 321-322.

14 Lacko, *Unio Užhorodensis Ruthenorum Carpatiorum cum Ecclesia Catholica*; Pekar, *The History of the Church in Carpathian Rus'*, 18-35; Magocsi, »Adaptacja bez asymilacji.«

15 Magocsi, »The Carpatho-Russyns.«

16 Magocsi and Matthews, *Ukraine*, map 8.

than that of the Uniate Church, which did not manage to create an ecclesiastical organization beyond the areas of dense settlement of the Uniate population (Crown Ruthenia). In contrast, the Roman Catholic Church, despite being rooted in the central and western parts of the Crown Territory, did develop its organizational units to a limited extent in Crown Ruthenia and in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: in 1375, the archdiocese of Lviv was established with six dioceses; in 1636, the diocese of Smolensk was added.<sup>17</sup>

During the early modern era, the political powers of Europe were always directly involved in modeling confessional relations in their dominions. The religious policy of the Polish-Lithuanian state was particularly notable for its strong support of the Union of Brest and of the Latin Church throughout the Counter-Reformation activities of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In the second half of the eighteenth century, with the exception of some areas bordering the Kingdom of Prussia, Protestant communities prevailed primarily in the large cities of Royal Prussia (*Prusy Królewskie*): Gdańsk, Toruń and Elbląg. Just as the political border with the Russian Empire separated the Orthodox inhabitants in the border area of Crown Ruthenia from their co-religionists in the dioceses of Pereiaslav and Chernihiv,<sup>18</sup> the frontier with the Kingdom of Prussia separated Lutherans in the western borderlands of Greater Poland and Royal Prussia from their fellow believers in the Kingdom of Prussia. Other Protestant religious groups – Calvinists and Bohemian Brethren – before the first partition in 1772 were of minor importance and possessed only a few dozen churches dispersed over the whole area of the Crown.<sup>19</sup> The new Protestant branch of the Mennonites settled and developed its communities along the Vistula from the sixteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

Economic factors and migration affecting the geography of religion in early modern Poland are especially notable in the case of the Jewish and Armenian communities as well as the above-mentioned Mennonites. The frontier location along the Dniester River of most Armenian churches indicates the Moldavian and Crimean context of their presence on the territory of the Crown. The Dniester marked the state

17 Müller, »Diecezje w okresie potrydenckim,« 65-74.

18 Titov, *Zapadnaia Rus'*, map; Lastovs'kyi, *Pravoslavna tserkva*.

19 Kriegeisen, *Ewangelicy polscy i litewscy w epoce saskiej*, 57-88.

20 Penner, *Die ost- und westpreussischen Mennoniten*, map: Die Mennoniten-Gemeinden in Ost- und Westpreussen; Kizik, *Mennonici w Gdańsku, Elblągu i na Żuławach Wiślanych*, 128.

border in the eighteenth century and served as an important shipping route from Poland to the Armenians living on the Black Sea coast, thus playing an important role in the Black Sea trade. The Armenians, who had been the first to make Christianity an official state religion in the fourth century, did not acknowledge the dual nature of Christ (monophysitism) and practiced their own Christian faith, separate from both Catholicism and Orthodoxy. In 1635, Armenians inhabiting the eastern rims of the Commonwealth recognized the suzerainty of the Holy See, following in the footsteps of the Orthodox Church, which had already done so in 1596. Lviv, the center of the Black Sea trade, became the capital of the Catholic archdiocese of the Armenian order. After 1715, the archdiocese of Lviv expanded its jurisdiction to include the Moldavian and Transylvanian Armenians,<sup>21</sup> although most Armenians populating territories south of the Dniester remained monophysite and subject to the *Catholicoi* of all Armenians in Echmiadzin.<sup>22</sup>

The entire early modern period – except 1648 and its aftermath – shows a demographic increase in and expansion of Jewish settlements on the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. With the exception of Warmia, Jews – as did Roman Catholics – lived in all areas of the Polish Crown. Of particular importance was the internal colonization to the east and southeast caused by the demographic and economic growth of the Jewish population.<sup>23</sup> In the eighteenth century, strict anti-Jewish policies in Russia (the edicts of 1727, 1742 and 1744), along with more tolerable conditions in Moldavia, the Habsburg Monarchy, and in the Kingdom of Prussia, fostered the direction of trade routes to the west and to the south. One example were the trade relations of Judah Bolechower and his son Ber with Hungarian Jews.<sup>24</sup>

Apart from Christian and Jewish communities, organized groups belonging to two other monotheistic religions, Karaite Judaism and Islam, were also present in the area of Crown Ruthenia in the second half of the eighteenth century. The settlement of Karaites and Tartars in the Polish-Lithuanian territories was situated within the borders of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. Abraham Szyszman developed an interesting thesis relating to the location of these communities. Based

21 Obertyński, »Kościół ormiański«, 478-479.

22 Smirnow, *Katedra ormiańska we Lwowie*, 51.

23 Baron, *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 164-213.

24 Schwarzfeld, »The Jews of Moldavia«, 113-114, 116, 122-123; Vishnitzer, »A Jewish Diarist«, 4-6; Meyer et al., *German-Jewish History in Modern Times*, 102; Ducreux, »Czechy i Węgry w monarchii habsburskiej«, 343.



on geographical analysis, he claimed that for the purpose of military defense, Witold, Grand Duke of Lithuania, intentionally deployed the Karaite colonists along the border with the Livonian Brothers of the Sword (*Zakon Kawalerów Mieczowych*), and the Tartars close to the frontier with the Teutonic Order (*Zakon Krzyżacki*).<sup>25</sup> The cartographic presentation of the territorial range of these minorities is unsatisfactory due to the small number of religious buildings – three *kenesas* and two mosques.<sup>26</sup>

To date, we have to rely on methods of cartographic presentation showing the geographical coverage of confessions and religious communities observed in the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that are limited to small-scale maps. The works prepared by the Institute for the Historical Geography of the Church in Poland at the Catholic University of Lublin (*Instytut Geografii Historycznej Kościoła w Polsce*), for example maps by Jerzy Kłoczowski and Stanisław Litak, present the spatial distribution of denominations in a very general way on a scale of 1:7 000 000.<sup>27</sup> The technical possibilities offered by geographic information systems (GIS) tools and spatial databases in terms of geospatial analysis have enriched the variety of methodological options for studies and visual presentations of discrete phenomena such as churches and buildings of worship.

In fact, there is no possibility of drawing a precise border or line which would express the territorial range of a given religion or confession. Two main factors help to determine the approximate territory of a selected denomination: believers and buildings of worship. As the first general census registering the religious affiliation of the people on the territory of the former Polish state dates from the nineteenth century, a unique method to identify the area occupied by a confession or religious community should refer to the territorial distribution of active buildings of worship. The irregular and complex character of the phenomenon in question impeded the usage of simple functions such as the *convex hull* to specify the area occupied by an individual religious or confessional community. Taking into account a variable distribution of churches and other buildings of worship, more promising

25 Szyszman, »Osadnictwo karaimskie i tatarskie«; Gąsiorowski, *Karaimi w Koronie i na Litwie*, 168-169.

26 Kryczyński, *Tatarzy litewscy*; Tyszkiewicz, *Tatarzy na Litwie i w Polsce*; Gąsiorowski, *Karaimi w Koronie i na Litwie*.

27 Kłoczowski »Stosunki wyznaniowe w Polsce«; Litak, *Atlas Kościoła łacińskiego w Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów*, 168.

results could be achieved by applying the *concave hull* method. However, the level of generalization remains an open problem. Geospatial analysis allows the use of three methods for the creation of a *concave hull* for a group of points: by expansion, by contraction (alpha shapes, alpha hulls), and by density contouring.<sup>28</sup>

Table 1 presents space occupied by particular denominations and religious communities, achieved through applying the concave hull method on the basis of density contouring for particular denominations. The process of density estimation will be described later. To put it simply, territorial range is determined by a *concave hull* the outer rim of which is outlined along the border of a region or regions where sacral buildings were located.

Table 1: Number of buildings of worship and their territorial range on Crown territory in the second half of the eighteenth century.

	Number of buildings of worship	Territorial range (in km <sup>2</sup> )	Share of the total Crown territory (in %)	Average area for one building of worship (in km <sup>2</sup> )
Uniate churches	8 311	263 545	62.1	31.7
Roman Catholic churches	5 720	380 073	89.6	66.4
Jewish synagogues	841	377 379	88.9	448.7
Armenian Catholic churches	22	23 319	5.5	1 060
Orthodox churches	35	35 080	8.3	1 002.3
Lutheran churches	276	60 867	14.3	220.5
Calvinist churches	14	20 480	4.8	1 462.9
Bohemian Brethren churches	10	14 023	3.3	1 402.3

28 De Smith, Goodchild and Longley, *Geospatial Analysis*, chap. 4.2.13.

Mennonite churches	19	14 186	3.3	746.6
Tartar mosques	2	-	-	-
Karaite <i>kenesas</i>	3	-	-	-

Source of information: Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 188-204.

Table 1 illustrates a strong differentiation, both in terms of the number of religious buildings and their territorial range, between the three predominant religious groups. The Uniate Church owned the largest number of churches, while the Roman Catholic Church, followed by the Jewish communities, dominated from the perspective of surface area. The remaining religious communities played a minor role, mostly along the borders.

A territorial perspective on the individual religions, confessions and rites divides eighteenth century Crown Poland into two parts: eastern and western. This regionalization reflects not only the domination of the Latin Church in the west and the Uniate Church in the east, but also the characteristic distribution of religious minorities. We should stress that the Protestant organizational structures did not reach beyond *Wielkopolska* and *Małopolska* proper, just as the eastern denominations (Orthodox, Armenian, Karaite and Muslim) did not cross the borders of Crown Ruthenia.

In addition, note that the outermost borders of all of the above-mentioned confessions and religious communities were situated within a huge territory of 424 358 km<sup>2</sup> – the western reach of the Orthodox Church, the eastern reach of the Latin Church, Protestant and Jewish communities, the northwestern reach of Armenian and Uniate Catholicism – while the borders of the Karaite and Tartar territories were situated within the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

Density of churches and buildings of worship

The analysis presented above provides only a general picture of the range of confessional and religious communities within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the second half of the eighteenth century. Information on the territorial extension and number of buildings

of worship representing the three largest groups enable us to undertake more advanced studies and investigations concerning density differentiation (point pattern analysis). Two cartographical and statistical methods were selected: the quadrant count method and the kernel density estimation. In the first case, the examined territory was divided into squares (25 km by 25 km, surface – 625 km<sup>2</sup>). As for the Jewish communities, because of the lower density of synagogues, the size was quadrupled (surface – 2 500 km<sup>2</sup>). In the next step of the analysis, the quadrants were grouped into classes according to denomination and average surface area of each site. The calculations (table 2) permitted us to compare the density of Roman Catholic, Uniate and Jewish buildings of worship, and to estimate the area of the highest, medium and lowest density of each confession, whereas GIS maps facilitated the spatial interpretation of those coefficients. The kernel density estimation allows us to verify the above-mentioned statistical findings, indicating the geographical centers of the individual denominations. To make geostatistical data comparable, both the search radius (25 km) and the classification method (defined interval) were synchronized for all religious communities. The proposed analytical proceedings can be elaborated upon and extended in relation to each voivodship in the *Małopolska* and *Wielkopolska* provinces.<sup>29</sup>

Table 2: Density classification of buildings of worship on the Crown territory around 1772.

Classes	Average area for one building of worship (km <sup>2</sup> )	Roman Catholic churches	Uniate churches	Jewish synagogues
Quadrant count method (km <sup>2</sup> /percentage share)				
Class I	a. above 1000	63 125 17.66 %	13 125 4.82 %	135 000 30.51 %
	b. 1000-500			87 500 19.77 %
Class II	a. 500-250	106 250 29.72 %	60 000 22.02 %	175 000 39.55 %
	b. 250-100			45 000 10.17 %

29 Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 216.

Class III	a. 100-50	70625 19.76 %	40625 14.91 %	-
	b. 50-25	91250 25.52 %	70000 25.69 %	
	c. 25-10	25625 7.17 %	87500 32.11 %	
	d. below 10	625 0.17 %	1250 0.46 %	

Kernel density estimation  
(km<sup>2</sup>/percentage share)

Class I	a. above 1000	87236 22.96 %	18372 6.97 %	93486 24.78 %
	b. 1000-500			104948 27.82 %
Class II	a. 500-250	108552 28.57 %	46415 17.61 %	135696 35.97 %
	b. 250-100			42740 11.33 %
Class III	a. 100-50	65006 17.11 %	41129 15.60 %	382 0.10 %
	b. 50-25	94155 24.78 %	72944 27.67 %	
	c. 25-10	24304 6.40 %	83751 31.77 %	

Source of information: Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 208.

In the areas where the Roman Catholic Church was present, the most common density level was class II b (around 30 %), where one church served 100 to 500 km<sup>2</sup> on average. Classes III c-d, which embraced regions with a frequency of one church to less than 25 km<sup>2</sup>, accounted for the smallest area. Two centers of Latin Church structures related

to settlement concentration were quite visible: in the latitudinal belt of Cracow bordered by Pilica in the north, Oświęcim in the west, Sącz in the south and Brzozów in the east, as well as in *Wielkopolska* around the cities of Poznań, Gniezno, Pyzdry, Środa and Kalisz. The most uniform pattern, that is to say, one with a regular network of Latin churches, was to be found in the voivodship of Brześć Kujawski – with its whole territory in class III b (one church to an average of 25 to 50 km<sup>2</sup>). The most variable area in terms of church density was the Cracow voivodship, where both natural and political conditions – the Carpathian Mountains and the city of Cracow, respectively – influenced the location of villages and towns, as well as the development of confessional structures.

A similar analysis carried out in relation to the Uniate Church revealed a completely different point pattern – around 60% of the territory with Uniate churches fell into classes III b-d, i.e. regions with one church to less than 50 km<sup>2</sup>. The surface area of classes III c and III d, where there was one church to less than 25 km<sup>2</sup> on average, was several times greater than for the Latin Church. In spite of the fact that the Uniate Church covered a smaller area in comparison to the Roman Catholic Church, its structure was more condensed. The area that stood out as having the highest concentration of Uniate churches was located to the north of Przemyśl, delineated in the north by the villages of Hnatkowice and Trójczyce, by the village of Radochońce in the east, by the small town of Dobromil in the south, and by the villages of Krzeczkowa and Mielnów in the west. In turn, the vast Kiev voivodship was particularly complex with regard to the location pattern of Uniate churches. In the southern region, along the border with the Braclaw voivodship, churches occurred at higher frequencies (class III b) but in the eastern and central districts, as well as those closer to Minsk, the network of churches became less concentrated. The most regular and developed structure of the Uniate Church (60% of the area in classes III c-d) was found in Podolia and in the southeastern parts of the Rus and Belz voivodships.

A lower number of synagogues than of Christian churches renders a comparison difficult to attain with the use of the same classification criteria as those specified above. In the case of Roman Catholic and Uniate churches, the first two classes (I and II) comprising territories with one church for more than 100 km<sup>2</sup> included around 50% and 25% respectively of the area populated by these denominations. As far as Jewish communities are concerned, the same classes covered the whole territory where synagogues were present, except the city

of Lublin, which had the greatest number of synagogues in the early modern era. Hence, Lublin is called »the Jerusalem of the Polish Kingdom«,<sup>30</sup> Taking into account the class pattern in individual regions and provinces, the most concentrated Jewish structures can be found in the *Małopolska* province (Bełz, Lublin, Podolia, Rus and Sandomierz voivodships).

It is interesting that the maximum distance between two neighboring synagogues on the Crown territory – 57.8 km between the synagogues in Chernobyl (Czernobyl) and Braham – was smaller than that calculated in the case of Roman Catholic and Uniate Churches. This is an indication of the high regularity of the *kahal* network. This conclusion can be strengthened by the smaller difference (45.1 km) between the average (12.7 km) and greatest distances (57.8 km) between neighboring synagogues than is true for churches. For Roman Catholic and Uniate churches, which were more developed from a structural point of view, this coefficient has the respective values 66.4 km and 55.5 km. The density of churches had a significant influence on the picture of pastoral work organized by the clergy. The data in table 3 expresses the average distance between religious buildings which, when divided by two, represents the average longest route that any given believer had to cover.

Table 3: Average distance between religious buildings around 1772

Voivodship	Roman Catholic churches:		Uniate churches:		Jewish synagogues:	
	Parish churches (meters)	Parish and filial churches (meters)	Parish churches (meters)	Parish and filial churches (meters)	<i>Kahal</i> synagogues (meters)	Non- <i>kahal</i> synagogues (meters)
Bełskie	8050	5174	2832	2744	10045	10045
Braclawskie	20630	16326	3146	3142	15351	15351

30 Kuwałek and Wysok, *Lublin*.

# Religious Regionalization of the Polish Crown

Brzesko-kujawskie	4479	2879	-	-	13863	13863
Bytów	5898	4476	-	-	-	-
Chełmińskie	4584	3221	-	-	13458	13458
Drahim	20641	3920	-	-	-	-
Gnieźnińskie	4862	2833	-	-	11527	11527
Ino-wrocławskie	4914	3138	-	-	14034	14034
Kaliskie	3934	2448	-	-	11844	11844
Kijowskie	30882	21797	3970	3953	19595	19595
Krakowskie	4036	2094	2905	2650	17176	11307
Lębork	19889	6302	-	-	-	-
Łęczyckie	4985	3249	-	-	13300	13300
Lubelskie	6747	3256	8820	8820	10813	8943
Malborskie	5182	2877	-	-	-	-
Mazowieckie	5757	3939	-	85657	15305	16013
Płockie	5204	3049	-	-	16441	16441
Podolskie	12135	8437	2450	2449	9980	9980
Podlaskie	8067	5328	6789	6621	17508	17006
Pomorskie	7043	4042	-	-	11453	11453
Poznańskie	5028	2706	-	-	13057	13057
Rawskie	4892	3352	-	-	15238	15238
Ruskie	7013	4015	2310	2257	11388	10745
Sandomierskie	4921	2811	3879	3879	11894	10709
Sieradzkie	4801	2754	-	-	20917	20917
Spisz	3687	2129	4934	3068	-	-
Warmia	5298	3322	-	-	-	-
Wołyńskie	13024	8223	3048	3035	13343	13343

Source of information: Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 217.



## Religious homogeneous and heterogeneous territories – the problem of borders and borderlands

The analyses and investigations presented so far have tackled all religious and confessional groups separately. However, a comparative approach requires that the denominations should be examined collectively to describe the confessional regionalization of the Crown in the second half of the eighteenth century. The problem of regionalization is interrelated with the question of confessional borders and borderlands. Let us recall that – from a cartographical point of view – it is impossible to specify the precise limits of confessional boundaries and borderlands,<sup>31</sup> as a linear division between religious communities does not occur in practice. On the territory of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, ethnic, religious and linguistic interpenetration was especially visible, both on a macro and on a regional level in small cities and villages. With reference to the geography of religion on the Crown territory in the eighteenth century, the concept of homogeneous and heterogeneous areas seems more appropriate than that of borderlands. Due to the difficulties in precisely defining the criteria for confessional borderlands,<sup>32</sup> the approach according to which territories are viewed on a variable scale of heterogeneity seems more suitable.

The existence of buildings of worship affiliated to one particular denomination does not imply that the given village or town was homogeneous. However, comparative analysis of confessional structures studied alongside demographical sources confirmed the general convergence of the organizational and demographic aspects of the selected regions. The first case study concerns a number of villages and towns in Crown Ruthenia, where religious variety was particularly apparent. Table 4 contains information on Roman Catholic and Uniate churches as well as on demographic proportions between believers in 34 places in the Rus voivodship. In turn, table 5 presents the confessional proportions in places where the numbers of Latin and Uniate churches were the same. As can be seen from these examples, in villages with one church, except a few cases, the population of the same confession was dominant (over 80%). Consequently, in villages with an equal number of Roman Catholic and Uniate churches, the quantitative proportions between Roman Catholics and Uniates were also more balanced.

31 Manteuffel, »Metoda oznaczania granic w geografii historycznej.«

32 Janeczek, »Między sobą,« 53.

Table 4: Confessional relations in selected places in the Polish-Ruthenian borderland around 1772 (neglecting the Jewish population and its synagogues).

Place name	Confessional affiliation of church	Percentage share of	
		Latin population	Uniate population
Between Jasło and Strzyżów			
Oparówka	Uniate	4.8	93.5
Dobrzechów	Latin	98.8	0.0
Łączki Jagiellońskie	Latin	100.0	0.0
Rzepnik	Uniate	0.0	98.1
Wojkówka	Latin	98.3	0.0
Bonarówka	Uniate	1.8	96.4
Węglówka	Uniate	4.0	94.0
Krasna	Uniate	1.4	96.6
Żyznów	Latin	98.7	0.0
Lutcza	Latin	97.8	0.0
Gwoździanka	Uniate	14.2	83.4
Blizianka	Uniate	5.2	89.1
Niebylec	Latin	88.7	0.0
Konieczkowa	Latin	98.9	0.0
South of Sanok			
Nowotaniec	Latin	83.6	6.6
Nagórzany	Uniate	82.9	15.5
Wolica	Uniate	18.0	74.0
Pobiedno	Uniate	69.1	28.3
Zboiska	Latin	100.0	0.0
Prusiek	Uniate	35.3	63.0
Ratnawica	Uniate	3.3	91.5
Niebieszczany	Latin	91.2	7.4
Poraż	Latin	98.9	0.0
South of Lviv			
Rudno	Uniate	29.1	66.8
Zimna Woda	Latin	81.9	0.0
Obroszyn	Uniate	17.9	80.6
Hodowica	Latin	66.4	32.6
Skniłów	Uniate	13.6	85.4
Sokolniki	Latin	97.6	1.6
Sołonka Wielka	Uniate	1.4	97.0
Zubrza	Latin	97.5	1.2
Sichów	Uniate	54.9	41.0

Krotoszyn	Latin	97.6	0.0
Żyrawka	Uniate	0.5	99.5

Sources of information: Budzyński, *Ludność pogranicza polsko-ruskiego*, vol. 2; idem, *Kresy południowo-wschodnie*, vol. 1.

Table 5: Confessional relations in selected places in the Polish-Ruthenian borderland around 1772 (places with both Uniate and Latin churches; Jewish synagogues are neglected).

Place name	Percentage share of	
	Latin population	Uniate population
Region of Sanok		
Besko	41.6	56.2
Dudyńce	9.3	88.4
Jurowce	36.2	57.8
Trepcza	3.0	94.5
Średnia Wieś	31.5	65.6
Morochów	12.3	84.9
Mrzygłód	64.2	25.8
Leszczawa Dolna	33.0	65.2
Tyrawa Wołoska	31.8	55.7
Nowosielce Kozickie	23.8	74.4
Uherce Mineralne	37.6	56.9
Jasień	29.7	67.6
Wołkowyja	14.8	83.7
Polana	49.5	41.2
Region of Gródek Jagielloński		
Radenice	36.5	61.1
Stojańce	55.1	42.8
Bruchnal	48.6	48.6
Czarnokońce	48.1	48.1
Rodatycze	72.5	25.5
Milczyce	82.3	16.4
Pohorce	48.7	49.9
Malczyce	6.5	90.3
Rumno	34.5	62.8
Siemianówka	82.6	16.3

Sources of information: Budzyński, *Ludność pogranicza polsko-ruskiego*, vol. 2; idem, *Kresy południowo-wschodnie*, vol. 1.

Cartographic methods are also useful for verifying the conclusions about the coherence between organizational and demographical structures. For this purpose, an area of around 4 000 km<sup>2</sup> was selected (near Jaśliska, Sanok and Krosno) which included 306 settlements – villages and small towns – inhabited by Roman Catholics and Uniates. The comparison of maps showing the number of Latin and Uniate believers and the number of churches confirmed our previous assumptions. Additionally, analysis of detailed information for each settlement leads to interesting conclusions regarding the demographic relationships between Latin and Uniate Christians coexisting in this zone. Notably, there was a significantly higher number of Uniate believers than Latin in most locations, where followers of two rites of the Catholic Church lived side by side. There were no Uniate Catholics in the 66 places out of the 108 (61 %) dominated by Roman Catholics. Whereas of the 198 villages and towns with a higher number of Uniate Christians, there were only 57 (28.8 %) with no Latin believers. It was much easier for Roman Catholics to function as a minority than for Uniates, which resulted from their privileged and thus stronger social standing, and the political and economic support they were receiving from the state. At the same time, the Uniate population living together with Roman Catholics frequently underwent processes of Latinization.<sup>33</sup>

The second case study concerns the Catholic-Lutheran borderland in *Wielkopolska*. Data on the organizational structures of the above-mentioned confessions were compared with the information derived from the population census of the Poznań diocese (1765-1769), which was undertaken alongside the 1765 Jewish census.<sup>34</sup> The total number of churches in the diocese gives an approximate image of the quantitative relationships between confessional groups. In fact, the actual advantage of Roman Catholics was not as significant as it appears to be looking only at the statistics on buildings of worship. Regions where the number of Protestant believers amounted to less than 15 % of the population lacked organized Lutheran or Bohemian Brethren communities. Lutheran churches appeared relatively regularly when the percentage share of Protestants in the population grew over 30 %, namely in the westernmost and northernmost part of the Poznań voivodship. Three determinants explain this phenomenon: legal limitations in the

33 Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 105, 241.

34 Mahler, *Żydzi w dawnej Polsce w świetle cyfr*; Kędelski, »Przedrozbiorowy spis ludności diecezji poznańskiej,« 222-235; Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 144-146.

development of Protestant structures, especially after 1717, dispersion of Protestants in small groups incapable of maintaining buildings of worship, and attitudes of the landlords and nobles, who preferred to support the Catholic Church.<sup>35</sup>

Drawing on the assumption about the proportion between the confessional groups and the conclusions relating to the coherence between organizational and demographic structures, I am able to present a differentiation of all religions, confessions and rites on the basis of the density and distribution of buildings of worship. Both the density of buildings of worship and the number of confessions should be taken into account. Methods such as ethnolinguistic fractionalization (ELF), which are applied in contemporary research on ethnic, linguistic and religious differentiation, can also be effectively applied to historical phenomena. With the help of the GIS toolkit (quadrant count method) and a specific mathematical formula, it is possible to specify the coefficient defining the level of religious differentiation in a given area or territory (confessional fractionalization – CF).<sup>36</sup> In this way, based on the confessional affiliation of the buildings of worship, we calculated the CF coefficient for each of the 744 quadrants of 625 km<sup>2</sup> drawn by the GIS application in the territory of the Crown. The results were grouped into the following classes:

I – CF = 0–0.15 – the most homogeneous area

II – CF = 0.15–0.35 – territories of medium differentiation

III – CF = 0.35–0.67 – the most heterogeneous area (borderlands)

Table 6: The Confessional Fractionalization (CF) coefficient on Crown territory around 1772.

Voivodeship	CF coefficient
Warmia	0.00
Sieradzkie	0.06
Braclawskie	0.12
Brzeskokujawskie	0.12
Płockie	0.13

35 Kriegseisen, *Ewangelicy polscy i litewscy*.

36 Fearon, »Ethnic and Cultural Diversity by Country«; Alesina, »Fractionalization«; Campos and Kuzeyev, »On the Dynamics of Ethnic Fractionalization.«

Mazowieckie	0.13
Rawskie	0.15
Łęczyckie	0.16
Kaliskie	0.16
Inowrocławskie	0.19
Kijowskie	0.19
Sandomierskie	0.20
Chełmińskie	0.23
Krakowskie	0.24
Podolskie	0.25
Wołyńskie	0.25
Gnieźnieńskie	0.28
Ruskie	0.33
Drahim	0.34
Bełskie	0.34
Poznańskie	0.35
Lubelskie	0.39
Pomorskie	0.49
Spisz	0.50
Łębork and Bytów	0.50
Malborskie	0.57
Podlaskie	0.60

Source of information: Szady, *Geografia struktur religijnych i wyznaniowych w Koronie*, 232.

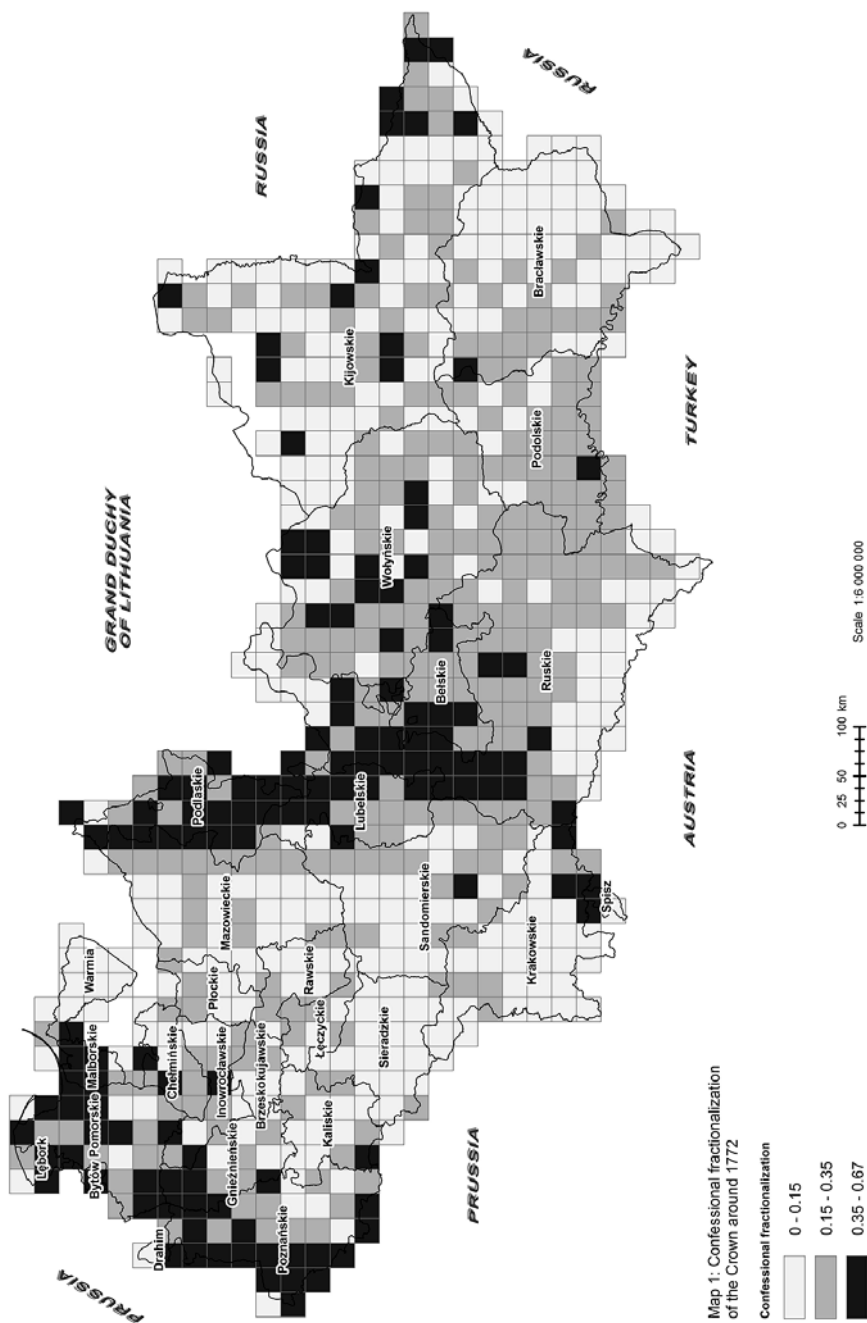
The CF coefficient for the total territory of the Crown amounts to 0.56. In comparison, in present day Poland, it amounts to around 0.17 and is among the lowest in the whole of Europe, which means that Poland can be seen as one of the most homogeneous countries in confessional and, consequently, linguistic and ethnic regards.<sup>37</sup> In the late eighteenth century confessional differentiation (table 6) was evidently the highest in Podlachia and Crown Prussia. The coefficient for each of the Crown provinces was established as:

- Lesser Poland (*Małopolska*): 0.26
- Crown Ruthenia (*Ruś Koronna*): 0.27

<sup>37</sup> Alesina, »Fractionalization,« 187; Campos and Kuzeyev, »On the Dynamics of Ethnic Fractionalization,« 635.

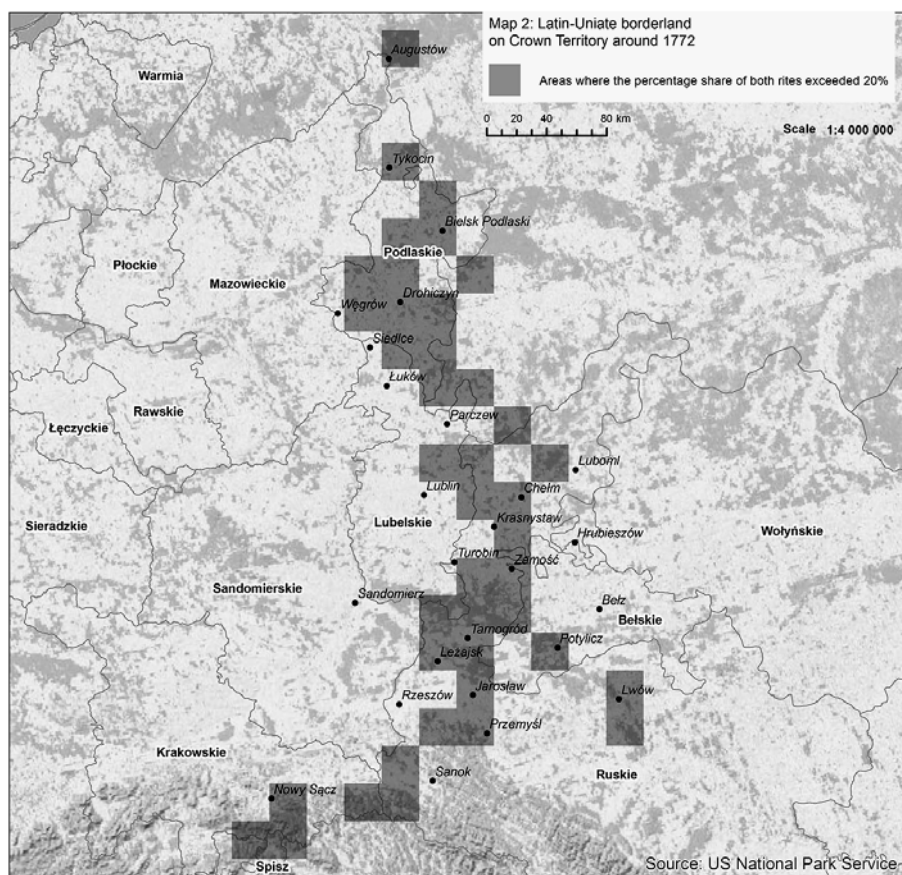
- Podlachia (*Podlasie*): 0.59
- Greater Poland (*Wielkopolska*): 0.22
- Crown Prussia (*Prusy Królewskie*): 0.42
- Masovia (*Mazowsze*): 0.13

The surface area with the most homogeneous characteristics (class I) amounted to 204 375 km<sup>2</sup> (around 44 %) of the total area of the Crown, the quadrants of class II CF (medium differentiated areas) accounted for 175 625 km<sup>2</sup> (around 38 %), and the area interpreted as borderlands (class III CF) covered 85 000 km<sup>2</sup> (around 18 %). Class III CF is comparable to the current situation in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Belarus, Slovakia and Ukraine, where this coefficient comes in above 0.35. In the area of the Crown, two centers of confessional heterogeneity can be clearly distinguished: the first, Latin-Uniate, and the second, Catholic-Lutheran, whereas a third, Uniate-Orthodox center is less apparent.

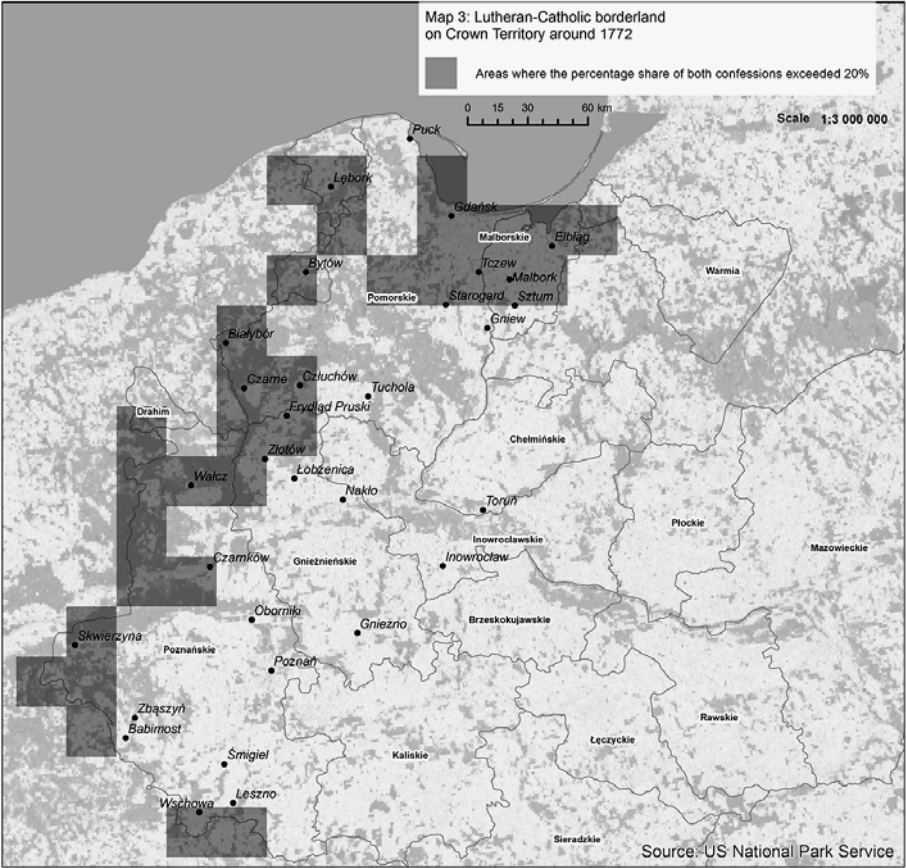




The first borderland, of a 50-kilometre width, ran along the border of the Rus voivodship with the region of *Małopolska* proper (Cracow, Lublin and Sandomierz voivodships). To illustrate this border zone, the quadrants with a percentage share of over 20% in the number of at least two denominations' churches were selected. This allowed us to isolate territories where the Latin and the Uniate Churches were relatively equally represented. West of this zone, Roman Catholic structures were dominant, while in the area stretching east of this region, Uniate churches predominated. The Latin-Uniate borderland ended suddenly (closed, separating) in the west, where the CF coefficient declines rapidly, but was relatively open (transitional, connecting) to the east, where the CF coefficient declines gradually.



The border belt shared by Lutherans and Roman Catholics came into existence because of the confessional, political and social changes in the western and northern part of *Wielkopolska*. The image of this borderland is less distinctive than the one of the Latin-Uniate confessional frontier. This has to be attributed to a wider dispersion and a smaller number of Protestants, and not to underdeveloped organizational structures. The highest percentage share of Protestant churches existed in the triangle formed by Gdańsk, Elbląg and Malbork, where the number of Lutheran churches exceeded the number of Catholic churches.



Confessional fractionalization deals with intensity in religious differentiation. A comprehensive view of this issue should include qualitative elements and the relationship between the CF coefficient and other factors such as type of settlement (village, town) and structure of ownership. There were just over one thousand settlements – predominantly towns and cities (78%) – with buildings of worship representing more than one religion, confession or rite. In the light of the overall number of villages and cities, this indicator confirms a clear tendency towards religious heterogeneity as a town and city phenomenon. Buildings of worship of more than one confession were located in 844 or 59.7% of the cities, and only in 227 villages, a mere 2.2% of the Crown's rural centers.

## Conclusions

The main framework of the spatio-confessional structure of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth took shape during medieval times.<sup>38</sup> The following elements came into play: the territorial extent of the first Christianization of the Slavs, the policy of state authorities, and the international situation, which affected changes not only of political but also of religious borders. In early modern times, the political union of the Polish Crown with the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was of particular importance, as was the Church Union of Brest that changed the religious picture of the Crown by including areas dominated by Eastern churches. The Protestant Reformation also had a significant influence, especially in Greater Poland and Royal Prussia. Jewish self-administration, related to processes of external and internal colonization, was fostered by the development of the *kahal* organization on the community level, as well as the supra-communal Council of Four Lands. Differentiation in the density of buildings of worship was closely connected to the ownership and settlement structure in each voivodship, as well as to the inner organizational regulations of church hierarchies and religious communities.

I conducted geostatistical analysis of 15 253 buildings of worship. This included 8 311 Uniate churches, 5 722 Latin churches, 841 synagogues, 276 Lutheran churches, 35 Orthodox churches, 22 Catholic churches of Armenian liturgy, 19 Mennonite churches, 14 Calvinist ones, 10 belonging to the Bohemian Brethren, 3 Karaite *kenesas*, and

38 Samsonowicz, »Grupy etniczne w Polsce,« 462.

2 mosques. Based on their geographical distribution, the analysis focused on a range of confessions and religions, differentiation in their density, as well as the religious regionalization of the Crown.

When distinguishing areas of varying degrees of religious heterogeneity, several aspects should be stressed:

- Domination of religiously homogenous territories on the Crown territory in the second half of the eighteenth century (class I CF, 44 %) or of territories with a visible predominance of a single group (class II CF, 38 %). Even though this homogeneity was not complete (i.e. 100 %), areas with a predominance of one confession are clearly visible.
- The Latin-Uniate borderland covered a relatively narrow belt of around 50 km in width along the frontier of Lesser Poland and Crown Ruthenia, crossing Podlachia (*Podlasie*). In these areas, both the towns and villages frequently had a mixed profile in terms of religious affiliations of inhabitants.
- The broad western and northern areas of the Crown, dominated by Lutheran structures, were connected with neighboring regions in the west and in the north, where Lutherans enjoyed the status of official state religion, i.e. the Kingdom of Prussia. In this context, the western areas of *Wielkopolska* and Crown Prussia became the transition zone and a *sui generis* link between the Lutherans in Silesia, Brandenburg and Western Pomerania, with their co-religionists in the Duchy of Prussia. This view was confirmed by the actions of Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, when he unified the structures of the Polish Lutheran Church with the ecclesiastical organization of the Kingdom of Prussia, immediately following the first partition of Poland-Lithuania in 1772.<sup>39</sup>
- The political Union of Lublin in 1569 and the confessional Union of Brest in 1596 led to the creation of a Uniate-Orthodox borderland on the territory of Crown Ruthenia. An unstable situation with multiple changes in confessions was caused by the regular development of the Uniate infrastructure at the cost of the Orthodox one as well as by political conflicts. This second aspect merits separate research.
- From a social perspective, the phenomenon called »religious heterogeneity« mainly occurred in towns, whilst from a geographical

39 Hubatsch and Gundermann, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche Ostpreussens*, 220-229.

perspective, it was found in the Latin-Uniate, Latin-Lutheran and Uniate-Orthodox borderlands.

Viewing the problem in most general terms, the towns in the borderlands were the most heterogeneous. There, the Latin Church was losing its dominant position to the east, causing an increase in membership of the Uniate Church, and to the west and north, losing believers to the Lutheran Church. Our geographical-historical analysis points to a religious differentiation of the Crown and its division into two parts, Latin and Uniate, and three distinct borderlands, Latin-Uniate, Latin-Lutheran and Uniate-Orthodox.

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