

ZBIGNIEW OGONOWSKI

ANTITRINITARIANISM IN POLAND BEFORE SOCINUS A HISTORICAL OUTLINE*

1. Early antitrinitarianism in Poland

The first public statements undermining the dogma of the Holy Trinity directly and in no uncertain terms emerged in Poland in January 1556 during the synod of the Małopolska (Lesser Poland) Evangelical Church in Secemin (a town in modern-day Świętokrzyskie Voivodeship, west of Kielce). They were made by Piotr of Goniądz, known as Gonesius in Latin. Because he was to play an important role in the history of early Polish antitrinitarianism, it is necessary to devote more attention to him at this point. We do not know exactly when he was born, estimates place this timeframe (as Konrad Górski tried to establish)¹ between 1525 and 1530. The town of Goniądz, where he was born, lies on the River Biebrza. If one were to draw a straight line on the map between Białystok and Ełk, Goniądz would be almost exactly in the middle. When Peter was born, the town was still part of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. After the Union of Lublin, along with almost all of Podlasie, the city found itself within the borders of the Crown. But its identity as part of Lithuania survived for a long time, and all of Peter's later activities in the

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¹ K. GÓRSKI, *Piotr z Goniądza*, in *Studia nad dziejami polskiej literatury antytrynitarskiej XVI w.*, [Piotr of Goniądz. Studies on the history of Antitrinitarian Polish literature of the 16th century] Kraków, Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1949, pp. 54-57. See also L. Szczucki’s entry on Piotr of Goniądz in «Polski Słownik Biograficzny», XXVI, pp. 398-400.

antitrinitarian movement are connected with the antitrinitarian circles operating in Lithuania rather than in the Crown.

Peter came from a plebeian family, probably a peasant one. His real name was Giezek, but he used a nickname derived from his place of birth in place of his surname. It is unknown when exactly he began his studies at the Krakow Academy. In any case, he clearly marked his presence there in 1550, when he protested publicly and vehemently against the statements of a professor of Hebrew, the Italian Francesco Stancaro (to be discussed later), describing them as heretical (Piotr accused Stancaro of rejecting the veneration of the saints). Piotr was an ardent Catholic then, which was hardly surprising at that time when he was under the care of the then Bishop of Vilnius. It was probably on the bishop's funds that Piotr went to study in Padua, where he found himself at least since early August 1554. Undoubtedly, it was during his relatively short stay in Padua that he came into contact with the clandestine work of Miguel Servet, which was in circulation and much discussed at that time, especially since his spectacular execution in Geneva in 1553. That was probably also where he became acquainted with Servet's doctrine and the ideas of Anabaptism which, as we now know, were familiar to the local scholar community. These ideas were espoused, among others, by the famous lawyer Matteo Gribaldi, who had a significant influence on Piotr. On his way back to Poland, Piotr must have stopped in Moravia, placing him in contact with the local Anabaptist community. He eventually arrived in Secemin from Lithuania, i.e. he had spent some time in his native area, most likely Vilnius (since, in Secemin, he produced letters of recommendation issued by Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black). Although Piotr's antitrinitarian declarations at the Secemin synod electrified the participants, it did not exert much influence. Moreover, the synod was mainly concerned with organizational matters. In any case, the above statement was not disregarded: Piotr, despite fervent appeals and pressure, would not renounce his blasphemous views, and was summarily sent for 'consultation' to the very wellspring of Protestant orthodoxy, Melanchthon. He surrendered and immediately headed to Wittenberg, but soon returned to Poland.

The effect of these peregrinations turned out to be contrary to the expectations of those who had dispatched him there: Piotr's encounter with the citadel of Protestant orthodoxy enhanced rather than eroded his views. Shortly afterwards, Piotr's case was brought back to public attention. At the Synod of Pińczów in April 1556, a mere three months after the one in Secemin, Piotr was officially excluded from the church as a heretic. This was

undoubtedly due to the fact that, shortly after the Secemin synod, he published a clearly antitrinitarian text in Krakow (lost today) entitled *De filio Dei homine Christo Deo*. Under pressure from the clergy, the king issued a strict edict against Gonesius, and the entire print run of the book was allegedly bought out and destroyed at the expense of Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black (the main protector of the Reformation in Lithuania), who would not compromise the Lithuanian and Polish Evangelicals.

The Secemin episode in the history of the Polish antitrinitarian movement was of little significance; Piotr's statements found no audience and were not recapitulated. A true theological ferment, which resulted in the development of an official doctrine and undermined the traditional formula of the dogma of the Holy Trinity, began in the Church of Małopolska a few years later in 1561.

This ferment was mainly orchestrated by two men: Grzegorz Paweł of Brzeziny, a leading activist of the Church, and the Italian thinker Giorgio Biandrata. Both these figures merit our closer attention.

Grzegorz Paweł of Brzeziny² (Latinised as Gregorius Paulus Brzeziniensis, and sometimes incorrectly as Gregorius Pauli) was born ca. 1525 in Brzeziny, then Łęczyca Voivodeship, some twenty kilometres east of the modern city of Łódź. The son of a burgher, his true surname (which he did not use) was Zagrobelny. Between 1540 and 1547, he was educated in Krakow, where he received a master's degree in the liberal sciences. He then studied for two years at the University of Königsberg, a Lutheran school, although he was not into theology at the time. Instead, he dedicated himself to Greek philology there.

In 1549, he was unexpectedly offered the position of rector with St Mary Magdalene School in Poznań. Grzegorz embraced the offer and soon set out for the capital of Wielkopolska. On the way from Königsberg to Poznań, he stumbled upon Calvin's text, whose reading prompted his sudden conversion (most likely, the seed of Calvinist ideas must have fallen on fertile soil that had been prepared during his sojourn at the University of Königsberg). Grzegorz went from a Catholic to an ardent follower of Calvin's teaching – a fact which he could not and most probably would not hide, costing him the position of rector at the Catholic school. The ecclesiastical authorities soon sensed danger and, despite opposition from the City Council, Grzegorz was forced to resign.

² K. GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł z Brzeziny. Monografia z dziejów polskiej literatury ariańskiej XVI wieku* [Grzegorz Paweł of Brzeziny. A monograph on the history of Polish Arian literature of the 16th century], Kraków, Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1929, pp. 5-8.

He subsequently left Poznań for Wittenberg, where he met with Melanchthon. The new convert criticised both Melanchthon himself and the entire Lutheran community as backward, in that it retained too many relics of 'popery'. Upon his return to Poland, he became a minister of the Protestant community in his native Brzeziny. When Jan Łaski, arguably the greatest authority among Polish Protestants, arrived in Poland (December 1556), Grzegorz was able to earn his respect. In June 1557, he became the minister of an Evangelical community in Krakow and thus one of the main activists of the Evangelical Church in Małopolska.

Giorgio Biandrata (or Jerzy Biandrata, as he was called in Poland) was a man of incomparably greater stature³. He was born in 1515 in Saluzzo (Piedmont) in a burgher's family. In 1530, he began medical studies at the then famous Centre of Medical Sciences at the University of Montpellier in southern France. He must have been a diligent student, for soon after graduation, he became renowned as a highly talented doctor. After some time, accounts of his medical skills reached the Jagiellonian court. In the years 1550-1551, at the behest of the Polish court, Biandrata stayed in Poland for the first time, then later in Transylvania, serving as the court physician for Queen Bona and later for her daughter, Queen Isabelle of Hungary.

Following his return to Italy, he stayed in Pavia, but he suddenly left for Geneva in 1557, probably for fear that the church authorities had learnt about his heretical sympathies. In Geneva, Biandrata became a strong supporter of the Reformation, of course in its Calvinist denomination. By publicly proclaiming his full devotion to Protestant orthodoxy, Biandrata also discreetly sought to undermine faith in the dogma of the Holy Trinity. He used an intricate ploy: when speaking with some intelligent people who are well-versed and genuinely interested in theology, he confided his doubts and asked for their help to disperse them. In this manner, he gradually guided the interlocutors towards the conviction that the dogma of the Trinity was meaningless. Biandrata first tested this method on select members of the Italian colony in Geneva, and he then tried to apply it in discourse with ... Calvin. However, the latter quickly realized the crafty doctor's intentions, which he openly and vehemently opposed.

³ GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 48-56; L. SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowicz. Studium z dziejów antytrynitaryzmu polskiego XVI wieku* [Marcin Czechowicz. A study on the history of Polish 16th century Antitrinitarianism], Warszawa, PWN, 1964, pp. 22-25 and *passim*; see also D. CANTIMORI, *Eretici italiani del Cinquecento*, *passim*; A. ROTONDÓ in *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, X, Roma, Istituto dell'Enciclopedia Italiana, 1968, pp. 257-264.

As a result, Biandrata, fearing the same fate as Servet, left Geneva on short notice and went to Poland in 1558. This time, he found himself in a different religious situation in the country. Immediately after his arrival, he became closely associated with the congregation of Małopolska and quickly gained great authority within this community, as evidenced by his election in 1561 as one of the two elders of the congregation. Furthermore, he was selected twice (in 1560 and 1561) as an official envoy of the congregation to Lithuania and to Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black, to discuss in detail certain questions of interest to both congregations. He gained the prince's trust and favours during these missions.

Many factors contributed to the establishment of Biandrata's authority in the Małopolska Church. Apart from the above-mentioned court connections dating back to his first stay in Poland, as well as his unquestionable fame as an excellent physician and a gentleman well-versed in the arcana of theology, his character and behaviour also played a role. In the company of others, he was engaging and tactful, spoke convincingly, and listened patiently, always showing respect to the interlocutors regardless of his own opinions towards their views; he always adjusted his conduct and statements to the demands of the situation. Owing to these qualities, in the first phase of his activities in the Church of Małopolska, Biandrata already gained a strong position and a reputation as an ardent and wholesome supporter of religious renewal in the spirit of the Evangelical Reformed doctrine. The numerous warnings addressed to the leadership of the congregation of Małopolska and to Prince Mikołaj Radziwiłł did not manage to disprove or even undermine this reputation, even though they were issued from none other than the very centres of Calvinist orthodoxy – Zurich and Geneva – and by prominent figures including Calvin himself. In fact, mindful of what had happened to him in Geneva, Biandrata was doubly cautious in Poland and perfected his strategy. He was able to identify influential persons among the Calvinists of Małopolska (who were unaware of their designated role in the situation) and leverage their positions so as to gradually corrode the faith in the trinitarian orthodoxy within this community. Arguably the most important among these individuals was Grzegorz Paweł of Brzeziny. With a gradual consistency, Biandrata carefully instilled religious doubts in Grzegorz, either through direct contact or later via letters written from Transylvania (to which he relocated from Poland at the end of 1562). This led the latter initially to the most benign and in a sense compromised formula of antitrinitarianism, i.e. Trideism. Then, after the doctrine had been adopted by the theologians and activists

of the congregation, he sought the next phase, i.e. consistent antitrinitarianism or Unitarianism.

If Biandrata, since the very beginning of his stay in Poland, had indeed deliberately played this sophisticated game (as proven by Konrad Górski and alleged by another eminent scholar, Marek Wajsblum), he was an unmatched tactician. On the other hand, he found in Grzegorz Paweł a congenial collaborator, who at each stage of his evolution – from Calvinism to Trideism, and later from Trideism to Unitarianism – revealed both passion and unique talent. The latter was especially outstanding in his oral argumentation and preaching, as well as his major publications in Latin and Polish.

Let us return now to the theological ferment, which, as indicated above, appeared in the Church of Małopolska in 1561. The main source of this ferment was Francesco Stancaro's statement expressing doubts about the traditional teaching, which views Christ as an intermediary between God and the faithful; Stancaro presented his ideas to the leadership of the congregation in the spring of 1559, but it was only many months later that they resulted in something which he, an ardent proponent of the Trinity doctrine, had not foreseen – the formation of a doctrine called Trideism. This doctrine, under the pretence of Trinitarian orthodoxy, implied theological conclusions that were irreconcilable with the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity.

In the period of 1562-1565, two factions emerged in the hitherto unified Church of Małopolska: the supporters of fledgling antitrinitarianism – such as Trideists – and those in favour of Calvinist orthodoxy. The religious innovators included the most talented and theologically well-prepared members of the congregation, who were soon supported by equally talented and well-educated followers of the new current from other centres of Poland and Lithuania, namely the Kujawy centre headed by Jan Niemojewski, an Inowrocław judge, and the Vilnius centre gathered around Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black. With the death of Jan Łaski (1560), the eminent leader of the Church and a theologian of substantial stature, the camp of Calvinist orthodoxy supporters lost an important member. Stanisław Sarnicki (1532-1597), an energetic but exponentially less talented and less knowledgeable Calvinist, became the leader of this branch of the Church.

However, Sarnicki relied on the authority of famous Swiss and German theologians, who rushed to his succour through epistolary means. Their letters – including those from Calvin himself – were read aloud at meetings, and some of them were released in print. Despite these efforts, Sarnicki's work and the support given to him by Calvinists from Switzerland and Germany did not divert proponents of Trideism from their views.

In fact, the actual division between the two sides occurred as early as October 1562, when Sarnicki convened an Orthodox Calvinist synod in Krakow without inviting the Trideists present in the city at that time. During the synod, the participants resolutely detached themselves from antitrinitarianism viewpoints, and Grzegorz Paweł's teachings were clearly condemned. The Calvinists very quickly received excellent confirmation of the validity of their accusations against Grzegorz Paweł: in mid-November 1562, Grzegorz Paweł's first letter of clearly antitrinitarian orientation was published in Pińczów. Entitled *Tabula de Trinitate*, no copies of the lost text has survived to date. Nonetheless, its contents could be easily recreated, as Konrad Górski did in his monograph⁴.

It is worth mentioning that, following all the aforementioned events, the two sides attempted to come to an agreement many more times afterwards, but to no avail. The most spectacular instance of such an attempt was the dispute which took place in Piotrków from 22 to 30 March 1565 during a Polish Parliament (Sejm) session in the city. According to the agreed-upon procedure, each party was to have an equal number of appointed disputants, and only they were entitled to speak. The Arian side was represented in this debate by Grzegorz Paweł, Georg Schomann (whom we will discuss later), and Jan Niemojewski, while Sarnicki was the leader of the Calvinists. The dispute aroused great interest in the political sphere. One observer was the prominent political activist, Mikołaj Sienicki (1521-1582): the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies in several previous Sejm sessions, the leader of the nobility movement in favour of 'the execution of rights', and a supporter of religious innovation – a future Arian. Also in attendance were Jan Firlej (ca. 1521-1574) – Grand Marshal of the Crown, Voivode of Lublin, and a distinct Calvinist with regards to religious views – Jan Tomicki, and Castellan of Gniezno, among others. An attempt to reconcile the two warring camps ended in a complete fiasco. From then on, the 'larger church' and the 'smaller church' began to pursue two completely separate lives.

2. *Antitrinitarianism in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania*

I would like to begin this chapter by presenting another important region in which, apart from Małopolska, antitrinitarianism originated and which was in constant contact with Małopolska's 'Arian' circle. I refer here to the

⁴ GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 103-106.

Vilnius community, sponsored (to use a term popular today) by Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black, who has already been mentioned in this text on several occasions. As we noted previously, Mikołaj Radziwiłł was not only a sponsor, but also an initiator and certainly the main protector of the Reformation in Lithuania. Having rejected the Lutheran confession after some hesitation, he became a strong supporter of Calvinism. Taking advantage of the enormous opportunities offered to him by the position of the wealthy and probably most powerful Lithuanian magnates of his time (Grand Chancellor of Lithuania from 1550 and Voivode of Vilnius from 1551), Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black tried to create a material and intellectual basis for the development of the Reformation movement in Lithuania. Although not highly educated himself, he was interested in the theological substance of new religious ideas. It was through his initiative and financial support that two important printing houses, whose main task was to print texts that were conducive to the development of the Reformation, were established in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: the printing house in Brest (ca. 1553), which published the famous Polish translation of the Bible – the so-called Brest Bible – in 1563, and the printing house in Nieśwież, which opened in 1558. Around 1563, Radziwiłł brought an experienced printer, Daniel of Łęczycza, from the Crown to the latter printing house, which would later play a role in the development of antitrinitarianism. It was thanks to the efforts of Radziwiłł the Black that the Vilnius Calvinist Church became an important environment for intellectuals, forming the backbone of the intellectual movement associated with the idea of the Reform. Radziwiłł attracted talented activists who supported the Reformation from all over Poland. From this impressive list of activists, we will mention only three names who were to play a special role in the subsequent development of antitrinitarianism in Poland and Lithuania.

The first among them is Marcin Czechowic. Czechowic⁵ was born in Zbąszyń, Wielkopolska in 1532 to a poor plebeian family, probably of burghers. His mother wanted him to become a priest, so from 1543/44 to 1549, he attended the Lubrański College in Poznań. At the age of 17, he experienced a religious crisis – most likely under the influence of the Lutheran ideas spreading in Wielkopolska – leading him to reject the religion of his ancestors for good. His biographer makes the guarded conjecture (since information on this period of Czechowic's life is scarce) that he might have studied in Königsberg for a time, before enrolling in Leipzig University in

⁵ SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*. We will draw on Szczucki's findings when referring to the details of Czechowic's life.

1554. At any rate, Czechowic must have acquired a thorough knowledge of languages (Latin, Greek, and Hebrew) and theology at that time.

Around 1558, Radziwiłł the Black brought him to Vilnius, where he became a minister and teacher at the local Calvinist school. In this new environment, he was to be known as a clever and educated man, since, as early as July 1561, he was entrusted (on behalf of the prince and the leadership of the Vilnius church) with an important mission: he would travel to Switzerland – to the leaders of Calvinism Bullinger in Zurich and to Calvin in Geneva – with a letter from the prince and the Church authorities. These letters were intended, among other things, to clarify a misunderstanding about Biandrata, whom the recipients accused of harbouring deceitful intentions of leading both the prince himself and the Calvinist churches in Lithuania and Poland astray towards antitrinitarianism. The letters delivered by Czechowic, as their authors firmly stated, were supposed to dispel these mistaken opinions and reassure the reformers of Biandrata's Trinitarian orthodoxy and his excellent merits for spreading the renewed divine truth, i.e. the Evangelical Reformed confession.

Czechowic's mission, however, ended in failure; neither the letters he presented nor his personal statements could undermine the opinions of their recipients, who – as later events would show – turned out to be in the right. After returning to Poland (he was in Krakow in December 1561 and in Vilnius in January 1562), Czechowic became involved in lively dogmatic debates. Neither Bullinger's nor Calvin's letters, which were delivered and read, changed the views of the addressees on Biandrata's role, since the addressees – or at least a significant portion of them, including the prince himself – were within the orbit of Biandrata's elusive influence. Czechowic himself leaned towards new forms of religious belief, although not entirely those to which he tried to direct Biandrata

Apart from Czechowic, another illustrious figure acquired by Radziwiłł for the Vilnius congregation was Szymon Budny⁶. In anticipation of the later narrative, we should mention here that he was to rise to fame in the 1570s and 1580s as the boldest theologian among the Polish Unitarians and as the most critical mind in interpreting the truths contained in the codes of the Bible.

⁶ GÓRSKI, *Szymon Budny*, in *Studia nad dziejami*, pp. 141-196. S. KOT, *Szymon Budny. Der grösste Häretiker Litauens im 16. Jahrhundert*, Graz-Köln, Hermann Böhlhaus, 1956, Sonderdruck aus; *Wiener Archiv für Geschichte des Slawentums und Osteuropas*, Bd. II, *Studien zur älteren Geschichte Osteuropas*, I, Teil, Festschrift für Heinrich Felix Schmid, pp. 63-118; SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*.

Budny, as Stanisław Kot reveals, came from the poor Mazovian nobility. He was born ca. 1530 somewhere in the triangular region marked by Ciechanów, Maków, and Ostrołęka, in which many villages were named Budy or Budne. Kot was unable to ascertain where exactly the future Unitarian theologian was born. It is also worth noting that Budny's birth in Mazury is vehemently disputed by Byelorussian and Russian historians, who claim that he was born in today's Belarus and was originally an Orthodox rather than a Catholic. The arguments put forth in support of the above claim, albeit interesting and noteworthy in their own right, are not fully convincing. Readers who are interested in this matter – of lesser importance for us here and perhaps only tangentially related to our themes – may find further information (along with secondary Byelorussian literature) in Jan Kamieniecki's book on Budny⁷. From 1544 onwards, Budny studied at the Krakow Academy, where he acquired a vast knowledge of languages that he markedly extended on his own. Apart from Latin, he knew Greek, Hebrew, and Old Church Slavonic. It is uncertain when and where he abandoned Catholicism and found himself among the supporters of Protestantism. Radziwiłł brought him to Lithuania at the beginning of 1558 (he was already in Vilnius in January) and soon offered him the post of minister in Kłeck, south of Nieśwież. At this stage, Budny was deeply involved in the promotion of Protestant theology among Orthodox Christians who spoke Ruthenian. He wrote the first Catechism in Byelorussian, published in Nieśwież in 1562, laying down the tenets of the faith which are in line with the Lutheran and Calvinist confession. However, in late 1563, Budny sided with the proponents of antitrinitarianism.

Finally, we must mention Wawrzyniec Krzyszkowski⁸. While he did not measure up to Czechowic and Budny in terms of intellectual prowess and significance, he merits our attention here, owing to his publication in 1564 in Nieśwież (with Budny's assistance) of a text which was not only highly influential at the time but was also clear proof of the Lithuanian congregation's acceptance of antitrinitarianism. Krzyszkowski, a native of Wielkopolska like Czechowic, came into the orbit of Radziwiłł the Black's influ-

⁷ *Szymon Budny, zapomniana postać polskiej reformacji* [Szymon Budny, a forgotten figure of the Polish Reformation], Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2002, pp. 8 and 12-14. Incidentally, we should note that Kamieniecki gave an unfortunate subtitle to his otherwise useful book. Budny was not, as he claims, "a forgotten figure of the Polish Reformation"; for a long time, he was one of the most renowned writers and activists of early Arianism, which is more comprehensively described below.

⁸ See GÓRSKI, *Studia nad dziejami*, p. 115.

ence before 1561 (by January 1561, we know for certain that he was a minister of the Calvinist community in Nieśwież).

In the period between 1562 and 1564, a significant number of Vilnius intellectuals began to take a stance of protest against the traditional formula of the Holy Trinity under the influence of the Church of Małopolska (and also partly of the ideas espoused by other centres of heterodoxy, which will be discussed later). It seems that these activists enjoyed the support of Radziwiłł himself. It is not entirely certain whether Radziwiłł supported the new formulas of Trinitarianism, propagated at the very beginning of this stage by the Małopolska Trideists. The position he took in his correspondence with Calvin on the dispute over the Trinitarian orthodoxy of Biandrata could, admittedly, be attributed to the theological naivety of a magnate who was not well-versed in the arcana of theology. It could also have been a deliberately staged method: when preparing his letters to Swiss theologians, Radziwiłł enlisted the help of his own theologians, who were well-versed in this matter. As far as the substance of the dispute is concerned – i.e. if the difference between the traditional understanding of the dogma of the Trinity and the essentially trideistic formula used by Biandrata and his followers in the Małopolska and Vilnius Church is purely linguistic in nature and does not touch upon the essence of the dogma of the Trinity, or the formula indeed undermines the foundations of the dogma – Calvin who the one in the right. This was not a mere dispute over words, as the prince insisted for some time (under the influence of his theologians) in his correspondence with Swiss theologians.

If, however, it was possible to doubt the intentions of Radziwiłł the Black himself in the initial stages of the dispute, then the later facts lay bare that the prince was already strongly in favour of antitrinitarianism at least since the end of 1563, when the publishing house in Nieśwież of whom he was patron started printing clearly antitrinitarian texts. This important publishing campaign on the part of the Nieśwież printing house bears closer scrutiny here, at least in brief.

In 1564, the publishing house printed the aforementioned text prepared for press by Wawrzyniec Krzyszkowski (in collaboration with Szymon Budny, as Krzyszkowski mentions in the preface). The text *Dialogue with Trypho* was penned by St Justin the Martyr (b. ca. 100 – d. ca. 160), the first Christian apologist. What prompted the editor to publish the work (which was translated into Polish from Latin instead of the Greek original) was the fact that St Justin, when speaking about Christ, consistently used terms and

phrases emphasizing his inferiority to God the Father. The intention of the translator is therefore clear, while the foreword to the translation is even clearer as regards the purpose of the publication. In it, Krzyszkowski openly states that the dispute between the two sides – i.e. between traditional Trinitarian orthodoxy, defended by Calvinists, and Trideism – is not one of words, but a disagreement over essential content, and comparing the two opposing positions, he clearly denounces the dogma of the Trinity in its traditionalistic form⁹. Since late 1563, this particular publishing house had begun printing texts by Grzegorz Paweł, as the author preferred not to publish them in Krakow, a city so close to his heart. Three works by Grzegorz appeared in rapid succession here. It should also be mentioned that, apart from this domestic publishing campaign with Nieśwież in Polish, Grzegorz also published two Latin texts abroad, in Germany. We shall not refer to the contents of these writings here; the interested reader may find an in-depth discussion of them in K. Górski's monograph¹⁰.

Radziwiłł the Black died unexpectedly on 29 May 1565. This fundamentally changed the situation in the Church of Vilnius, as the prince's family did not share his religious sympathies. In fact, Radziwiłł, discouraged by the social radicalism of the Anabaptist movement, had begun to distance himself from his ministers before his death. Thus, the development of antitrinitarianism in Lithuania was halted, not least because the ministers – the drivers of this development – had lost their support and financial assistance. Some simply left Lithuania. This was the case of Marcin Czechowic, who found himself in Kujawy by spring of 1566, where, along with Jan Niemojewski, he was to play the role of an forerunner in the development of ditheism in Kujawy. Budny took a different route. At first, he sought shelter with Radziwiłł the Black's sister, Anna Kiszka (née Radziwiłł). Anna, who was initially a Calvinist, turned in favour of Arianism at the end of 1563, and she established Budny in Chołchło (then Wilejka County). After her death, her son, Jan Kiszka, took care of him. Apart from Radziwiłł the Black, Kiszka was the second Lithuanian magnate to play the role of a powerful protector in the development of the antitrinitarian movement. Like his uncle, Kiszka took a genuine interest in the theological problems raised in discussions by Arian ministers, and although he never became a member of the congregation (he must have been particularly felt alienated by the social and political ideology), he supported the church activists and was on some level interested

⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 116-129.

¹⁰ GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 138-184.

in its problems until his death in 1592. Anticipating the subsequent turn of events, we can say here that Kiszka moved Budny ca. 1574 (after Anna's death) to his residence in Loski, where he founded a printing house, which was to take over the role of the one in Nieśwież. Here, Budny published his texts, which will be discussed at length later on. Kiszka also took care of another well-known antitrinitarian, Piotr of Goniądz. Although he was certainly disgusted by Piotr's socio-political ideas, he nonetheless gave the latter generous support, allowing Piotr to settle in Węgrów (which he took over from his mother, along with the adjacent estates). The printing house that he set up here enabled Piotr to undertake intensive publishing activities, which will also be discussed in later sections.

3. The invasion of Anabaptism: Its role in the Polish and Lithuanian antitrinitarian movement

Hardly had Trideism taken root among antitrinitarians in Poland and Lithuania, when new impulses began appearing in these circles, provoking the revision of new religious views. The influence of these impulses caused the position of Trideism to be regarded as inconsistent and in need of substantial corrections. A new phase in the discourse on the Trinity had begun. This time, such discourse was supposed to effect radical changes in the understanding of the person of Christ. However, before we delve into the results of these discussions, we must address another current which is not directly related to the discussions about the Trinity, but which nonetheless touched upon matters related to Christian ethics – not only individual, but also social – and thus made reference in some way to the existing social and political order. This is the current of Anabaptism. We shall begin by recalling some familiar points. The general term 'ana-baptists', which derives from the Greek word *anabaptizo* ("I baptise again"), was used to denote rather diverse religious groups that emerged in the 1520s alongside the nascent Protestant faith. These sects sprung up mainly in German-speaking areas. They rejected the baptism of infants – or *paedobaptism*, to use a Greek term – as inconsistent with the commandments of the New Testament, and recommended as a precondition the acceptance of baptism in adulthood, i.e. when a person is able to freely and consciously accept Christ's teachings and the obligations imposed by them on the believer. This theological standpoint, sometimes referred to as anti-paedobaptist, was usually connected with radical social-

political views that were also drawn from the New Testament, especially the literally interpreted Sermon on the Mount (*Mt.*, 5-7). These views expressed tendencies towards social egalitarianism and resistance against the state as the guardian of the prevailing socio-political relations, which – according to the Anabaptists – were far from those recommended by Christ in the Gospel. The socio-political ideology of the Anabaptists gained sympathisers and supporters, especially among the plebeian strata. Among the political and ecclesiastical elites, it was perceived, understandably, as a dangerous phenomenon that undermined the foundations of the existing social order. Therefore, the political authorities and local communities regarded the Anabaptists with begrudging acceptance as a rule and occasionally refused them the right of residence or even openly oppressed them.

Although the Anabaptists generally lived in communes isolated from the rest of society, did not try to impose their beliefs on anyone by force, and even stressed the deeply pacifist nature of their religious and social ideology, in some cases, they nonetheless provided the ruling political and ecclesiastical elites with justifications for the policy of brutal persecution. Anabaptist teachings were exploited by instigators of various plebeian movements striving to change the existing order up force. Moreover, during the German Peasants' War (1524-1526), a certain faction (which historians refer to as the 'revolutionary Anabaptists') proclaimed a programme of armed struggle led by Tomasz Münzer for the realization of the Kingdom of God on earth, which they understood as an egalitarian society based on the sharing of goods. Another ideologist and revolutionary Anabaptist, John Beuckelssen (also known as John of Leiden), was the leader of the plebeian riot in Münster (1533-1535); having proclaimed himself the 'king of Zion', not only did he attempt to breathe life into the ideals of an egalitarian society based on a community of goods, but he also recommended polygamy by citing the Old Testament. It should be emphasised that, following the revolutionary trend and in flagrant contrast to the pacifist (evangelical) faction, the Anabaptists emphasised the dependence of their religious ideology on the contents of the Old Testament, and regarded the Pentateuch as a book of law to be enforced in the 'New Jerusalem'.

Both leaders of revolutionary Anabaptism were executed, and their movement was brutally suppressed, but the memories of the Peasants' War – especially the experiences of the Münster commune – were permanently etched in the collective consciousness and consistently recalled as a danger-

ous spectre whenever any group expressed views convergent with certain aspects of revolutionary Anabaptism ideology¹¹.

In Poland, the first Anabaptists appeared in the mid-1530s. In 1535, a group of around 200 people, fleeing persecution in the lands of the Empire, travelled from Silesia via Toruń to Prussia. Upon receiving this news, King Sigismund I issued a strict edict prohibiting their entry into Poland and labelling them as a 'criminal sect'¹².

However, less than thirty years later, the spectre of Anabaptism appeared in Poland and Lithuania. This time, it was no longer tied to the newcomers traversing the country, but appeared among the native inhabitants – the supporters of the newly formed Arian church.

The first to promote the slogans opposing the baptism of children (anti-paedobaptism) among Polish antitrinitarians was Piotr of Goniądz, who is already familiar to us from the earlier discussion. Gonesius's public criticism undermined the legitimacy of child baptism as early as 1558, during the Brest synod, when he combined the slogans of socially radical ethics with anti-paedobaptism. If there was an Anabaptism influence, which there undoubtedly was, regardless of the Servet-related motifs in his teachings, then the character of this Anabaptism was – in the case of Piotr – radically evangelical. From the very beginning, Piotr rejected ideas of physical coercion as contrary to the Gospel and promoted pacifist ideas. He walked with a wooden sword on his belt as a symbolic condemnation of war and any behaviour that led to violence. He proclaimed the need for poverty and the principle of egalitarianism. His speech in Brest in 1558 did not win him many supporters at the time; the synod participants viewed his position as a token of religious exaltation, if not aberration. A mere few years later, the situation changed significantly: in the Church of Vilnius, the issue of child baptism and the attendant question of radical socio-political ideology both became hotly debated. The tenor of these discussions is well illustrated by the recently discovered

¹¹ A fundamental book on the history and ideology of Anabaptism is G. W. Williams's *The Radical Reformation*, 3rd ed. (extended) Kirksville Missouri, Sixteenth Century Journal Publishers, 1992 (Volume XV of Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies); see pp. 148-170. [See also A. STELLA, *Dall'anabattismo al socinanesimo nel Cinquecento veneto. Ricerche storiche*, Padova 1967; U. GASTALDI, *Storia dell'Anabattismo*, Torino, Claudiana, 1972-1981, 2 voll.: 1. *Dalle origini a Münster (1523-1535)*, Torino 1972; 2. *Da Münster (1535) ai giorni nostri*, Torino 1981].

¹² See S. KOT, *Ideologia polityczna i społeczna Braci Polskich zwanych arianami* [The political and social ideology of the Polish Brethren called Arians], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Kasy im. Józefa Mianowskiego, 1932, pp. 5-9 and 11-14. [About the influence of Italian Anabaptism in Poland, Moravia, and Transylvania see at least: D. CACCAMO, *Eretici italiani in Moravia, Polonia, Transilvania (1558-1611)*, Firenze, Le Lettere, 1970, pp. 5-107].

treatise, *Three days of talks...* [*Trzech dni rozmowa...*], written by Marcin Czechowic in the first half of 1564 (but published only in 1578). This treatise, previously considered lost (as Czechowic's monographer Lech Szczucki described in his book as early as 1964), was found by chance in 1982 in... Sweden by Prof. Paulina Buchwald-Pelcowa. The discovery of this treatise and the accompanying report by Szymon Budny about the origins and progress of Anabaptism in Lithuania, albeit an event of interest, does not markedly change the picture painted by historians¹³, including Szczucki and his monograph.

From Lithuania, discussions on child baptism and related problems were shifting towards the Church of Małopolska. At a certain point, this issue began to dominate the deliberations of the synods. This was the case at the June 1565 Brzeziny synod and the December 1565 Węgrów one (Podlasie). We can justifiably name Piotr of Goniądz as one of the leaders of the debate; at the time (ca. 1564), he published a text dedicated to these questions – the now lost *De primatu Ecclesiae Christianae*. Of course, there were external inspirations as well. Incidentally, it was either the case that Czechowic's treatise, *Three days of talks...*, echoed the teachings proclaimed in Piotr's book, or that Czechowic's work was written before Piotr's lost text came out in print.

However, it must be said that the condemnation of the baptism of children was not limited to the view that this rite is to be applied only when a person has reached maturity, which allows them to understand the importance of the act. The demand for adult baptism was connected, first of all, with the demand for a complete change of the ceremony of this ritual. Namely, baptism was to take place not by sprinkling with water (aspersion), but by submersion (hence its followers were contemptuously referred to as 'divers'). Second, a question arose as to whether the postulate of submersion should apply

¹³ It does, however, change the assessment of Czechowic as a person and his role, as the documents incontrovertibly found that Czechowic was already in favour then of the socio-political ideas he laid down much later in the 1575 treatise *Christian conversations* [*Rozmowy chrystyjańskie*]. Moreover, they proved that in terms of dogma (with the exclusion of the question of Christ's existence since the beginning of times), he already held views close to what he put forth in *Christian conversations*. A very learned discussion of this finding can be found in Szczucki, *Szymona Budnego relacja o początkach i rozwoju anabaptyzmu w zborze mniejszym* [Szymon Budny's report on the beginnings and the growth of Anabaptism within the Minor Church], «Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce», XXXI (1986), reprinted in L. SZCZUCKI, *Nonkonformiści religijni XVI i XVII wieku. Studia i szkice* [Religious non-Conformists of 16 and 17th century. Studies and outlines], Warszawa, Wydawnictwo IFiS PAN, 1993, pp. 42-64 (henceforth quoted as Szczucki, *Nonkonformiści religijni*).

only to new members of the church or also to active members who have not been submerged, i.e. the problem of the so-called 'rebaptism'. The prevailing opinion was that all those who had not yet undergone the rite should be subject to it. This was due to the conviction that submersion is not only a symbolic ritual demonstrating the will to join a religious community, but it is also a free and conscious act of sacramental significance: the believer receives divine grace and is internally reborn. If views on the rejection of paedobaptism and the rebaptism of adults through submersion were repulsive to the conservative witnesses of the debates, the accompanying mottos of social egalitarianism, life in poverty, and condemnation of arms [*urząd mieczowy*] also met with opposition (mainly among the nobility) and were most likely a cause of great concern. Although – as indicated – this ideology was strongly associated with pacifism and slogans of evangelical love for one's neighbour, critics did not fail to recount and exaggerate the relationship between this ideology and revolutionary Anabaptism, nor did they overlook the spectres of the Münster commune from the recent history.

It was unsurprising, then, that following Radziwiłł the Black's death, the Reformed Church of Vilnius vehemently opposed radical religious ideology of every ilk. As we indicated above, this halted the spread of antitrinitarianism in Lithuania for a time, but it did not stop the movement completely.

4. *Early antitrinitarianism in Transylvania*

Disputes concerning the dogma of the Holy Trinity, which ultimately led to the development of antitrinitarianism in the Calvinist Polish and Lithuanian churches, had their parallels in neighbouring Transylvania; the emergence of antitrinitarianism began later here compared to Poland, but the radicalisation of dogmatic views took place faster. As was the case in Poland, Giorgio Biandrata was instrumental in the emergence of antitrinitarianism in Transylvania as well. Later, he tried to speed up the radicalisation of antitrinitarian views among Polish Arians in the region. Thus, almost from the very beginning, there was a kind of interaction between Polish and Transylvanian antitrinitarianism, linked not only by the figure of Biandrata himself. The relationship between these circles, although always loose, was to last – to varying extents across different periods of time – until the end of the existence of the Arian Church in Poland. Owing to this fact, any historian recounting the history of antitrinitarianism in Poland should not ignore that of antitrini-

tarianism in Transylvania. A brief glance at the history of this movement, especially in the 1570s and 1580s, is all the more appropriate, since numerous references to antitrinitarianism in Transylvania will appear in the later parts of this book. These references can be fully understood only if the reader obtains at least elementary knowledge of the prevailing confessional and political relations in Transylvania at the time. Therefore, we shall turn to this subject for a moment. For the sake of completeness, we will do so in the form of a holistic sketch, starting with an outline of the historical background.

4.1. Historical background

The prologue of the events to be discussed here took place in 1515. That year, Vienna hosted three men who represent two major European dynasties of the time: Roman Emperor Maximilian I, a representative of the House of Habsburg, and two Jagiellons (both sons of Casimir Jagiellon) – Vladislaus II, King of Bohemia and Hungary, and his younger brother Sigismund I, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. The three concluded an agreement whereby, should the Bohemian and Hungarian Jagiellons die without a male heir, the thrones of the countries would be assumed by the Habsburgs, who were related to the Bohemian and Hungarian Jagiellons through intermarriage. King Sigismund I of Poland renounced all claims of the dynasty to the above thrones.

Upon signing the treaty, there was no longer reason to believe that the male line of the Bohemian and Hungarian Jagiellons would soon exit the stage of history forever. Yet Vladislaus II died in 1516, only one year after the treaty was signed, and ten years later in 1526, his barely twenty-year-old son Louis II died as a result of the defeat of the Hungarian army by the Turks at Mohács.

At the news of Louis's death, the Czechs immediately elected Archduke Ferdinand, the grandson of Emperor Maximilian I (d. 1519) and brother of the new incumbent emperor Charles V, as their king, in line with the Vienna Treaty. In the meantime, another situation took place in Hungary. While some Hungarian magnates also elected Ferdinand as their king, most of the nobility, who were hostile to the Habsburgs, elected to the Hungarian throne – against the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna, no less – a Hungarian magnate and the Voivode of Transylvania, John Zapolya. Zapolya was unable to singlehandedly counter the power of the Habsburgs and sought support in Turkey in defending his right to the crown of St Stephen. While Turkey

agreed to help, Zapolya had to pay a high price to this aid. The sultan readily recognised Zapolya as the King of Hungary and put forth some unique conditions: the Kingdom of Hungary was to be a vassal of Turkey. With Turkey's aid, Ferdinand was soon ousted from Hungary, and for the first time in history, the Turks approached the city walls of Vienna (1529). A few years later, however, the Turks withdrew after learning that Emperor Charles V had gathered a formidable army, and the first compromise was struck between the parties in conflict (1583). The Kingdom of Hungary was to be divided into two. Archduke Ferdinand, who had a hereditary right to the Hungarian crown, received the western and northern part of the kingdom, while Zapolya ruled over the eastern part, which included Transylvania. The latter, moreover, had the right to the title of the 'crowned king of Hungary' until the end of his life.

It so happens that Zapolya, who was married to Isabelle Jagiellon (the daughter of Sigismund the Old and Queen Bona), died two years later (1540). He was survived by his son with Isabelle, the two-week-old John Sigismund. The nobility in the region of Hungary with Zapolya as the king would not yield to the Habsburg dynasty again, and they elected the newborn John Sigismund as the King of Hungary. The Turkish sultan quickly embraced this move, and Turkey emerged victorious from a new war for Hungary. Under the new treaty (1541), the Hungarian Kingdom was once again divided, this time into three parts: the western and northern part, as well as the recognised right to the Hungarian crown, remained in Ferdinand's hands; the central region with Buda as its capital was simply incorporated by the sultan into Turkey; and the eastern part consisting of Transylvania, as the Turkish fief, was awarded to Isabelle Jagiellon and her son John Sigismund, who was crowned the 'elected King of Hungary' until the end of his life.

This compromise, nonetheless, did not put an end to the disputes over Hungary. As a result of renewed pressure from the Habsburgs, Isabelle and her son had to stay in Poland for some time (1551). From there, however, she returned triumphantly under favourable circumstances in 1556 and ruled Transylvania on behalf of her young son. Upon her death in 1559, the then nineteen-year-old John Sigismund ascended the throne. In the late 1560s, the king, seeking a final settlement of the disputes with the Habsburgs, entered into negotiations with them. In exchange for recognising Transylvania's independence from the empire, he renounced the title of King of Hungary (1570). Just as the negotiations came to a successful conclusion, the king – not yet 31 years of age – suffered an unfortunate hunting accident and died

shortly afterwards in 1571. John Sigismund was succeeded as the ruler of Transylvania (but without the right to the title of ‘King of Hungary’) by a Hungarian magnate, well known to us from the history of Poland. The 38-year-old Stefan Batory was one of the few magnates in Transylvania at the time who remained Catholic. After his election as King of Poland (1576), Stefan did not cede his rights to Transylvania, instead appointing his elder brother as his governor. Krzysztof Batory died a few years later in 1581, but he had managed (with Stefan’s consent) to secure the succession of his son Sigismund.

The above historical facts should suffice in painting a general picture, and there is no need to further outline the political history of Transylvania and enumerate its successive rulers. We can now begin to discuss matters more closely related to our subject. First, we will deal with the course of the Reformation in Transylvania.

4.2. Confessional relations in Transylvania

The Reformation appeared here in the 1520s (earlier than in Poland) and made rapid progress. When Queen Isabelle returned from Poland to Transylvania in 1556, Catholics were already a distinct minority in the country. At first, the Reformation was of Lutheran provenance. While the harbingers of the Helvetian orientation were already visible in 1550, any strong development thereof only dates back to the 1560s.

The religious diversity that emerged as a result of the Reformation further complicated the ethno-political situation. The country was ethnically heterogeneous, and significant areas were inhabited by Orthodox Romanians. Mostly peasants, the Orthodox population were not a problem for the political establishment. They neither enjoyed political rights nor participate in state life in any capacity, and their Orthodox religion was traditionally merely tolerated. The problem, however, was the fact that the inhabitants of the country, regarded as its political hosts, were ethnically diverse as well, and they comprised ‘three nations’. Apart from Hungarians, who were mainly nobility and magnates, and the so-called Szeklers (Hungarian *Székely*, Latin *Siculi*), an ethnic group that was slightly different in terms of origin and language from the Hungarians, German-speaking Saxons, who came to this area in the Middle Ages, were also an important part of the population. The development of the Reformation – as we have emphasised – further contributed to this political and ethnic complexity. The Saxons, having adopted Luther-

anism early on, relentlessly stood by their religion, which was only a temporary episode for those of Hungarian origin. The latter, especially the Hungarian nobility, opted for the Helvetic confession in its various forms. Over time, Catholics became a minority group. The collapse of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the seizure of part of the Catholic bishops' property by the ruler prompted the king to promote the Reformation. Moreover, in the organisational and religious vacuum that emerged with the disappearance of the Catholic bishops, the king became a natural secular superior of all the churches created as a result of the Reformation. Under these circumstances, to preserve the unity of the state, Isabelle and later John Sigismund were forced to keep peace between different religious groups. This policy led to royal decrees on tolerance, which were legally sanctioned by the parliament when it adopted subsequent resolutions on religious freedom. In June 1557, the Torda Parliament, at the queen's request, adopted a resolution stipulating that everyone has the right to a faith in line with their conscience and can practice their faith in public; no-one may be persecuted on the grounds of their religion¹⁴. Wilbur stressed that these seemingly magnanimous declarations were by no means proclamations of universal tolerance, since they applied to two denominations only: Catholicism and Lutheranism. Following the death of the queen, the 1563 Diet of Torda confirmed the validity of the 1557 edict, extending it with one new privilege for members of the Evangelical Reformed Church. Finally, to complete our review of the major tolerance acts, we must mention two other events: the first is a resolution adopted by the Torda Parliament in January 1568, which confirmed the earlier one and accepted in practice the legal existence of a religion espousing antitrinitarianism. However, a full legalisation of antitrinitarianism in its Unitarian version, along with its inclusion among the so-called accepted religions (*religiones receptae*), took place only in January 1571 at the Parliament in Marosvasarhely (Latin Areopolis, German Neumarkt)¹⁵.

The death of John Sigismund and Stefan Batory's accession to the Transylvanian throne changed the climate of the religious relations in the country. Although Batory, an avowed Catholic, almost immediately approved the law stipulating freedom of the four existing religions with the blessing of the Diet (May 1572), he simultaneously issued a decree that practically limited this freedom. The motive for this decree (which we will turn to in a moment)

¹⁴ E. M. WILBUR, *A History of Unitarianism in Transylvania, England, and America*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1952, p. 22.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 48.

was probably not Catholic proselytism, but the desire to ensure the religious stability of the country. The decree ruled that, from the moment of its promulgation, freedom of religion is to be granted to the four prevailing faiths on the basis of the status quo, i.e. dogmatic innovations within any one of them are prohibited; only those elements of the religious creed which were in force during the life of the deceased king were allowed¹⁶. Of course, this restriction did not threaten Catholicism in any way, and it only inconvenienced orthodoxy – either Lutheran or Helvetian – to a small extent (if at all). On the other hand, it clearly targeted the radical factions of the Reformation and put a halt to the freedom of public religious discussions among Unitarians, for whom the diversification of views and beliefs had just begun. All in all, these arrangements – while not fundamentally different from the legislative practices of previous years – were implemented with full consistency this time. They would later become one of the reasons for the ideological stagnation among the Unitarians of Transylvania, especially from the late 1570s onwards, i.e. since the trial which was brought on in 1579 by virtue of this very law against Ferenc Dávid, the most eminent leader of Transylvanian Unitarians. We will refer to this at length in a relevant part of the upcoming text.

For now, however, we must turn back a dozen or so years and report on how the rapid development of Unitarianism began in Transylvania and how this Unitarianism tried to influence the course of events in the Church of Polish Brethren in the 1560s.

As we noted earlier, just like in Poland, antitrinitarianism in Transylvania originated in the Helvetian-oriented Church. Similarly, texts whose content raised doubts about the dogma of the Holy Trinity also circulated here since the early 1560s. A final similarity were the foreign religious thinkers here who saw the chance for a safer and more effective dissemination of opinions critical of the outcome of the Reformation (which, in their opinion, ended prematurely) than in Western Europe. Among the foreigners arriving in Transylvania, Giorgio Biandrata assumed the key role in the 1560s.

When Biandrata arrived in Transylvania at the end of 1562 at the personal invitation of John Sigismund, he had already been known to the king for years. After all, John Sigismund must have remembered him from the time when Biandrata had taken care of Queen Isabelle as her physician. Shortly after his arrival in Transylvania, Biandrata became a close advisor to the king – not only on health matters, but also in terms of religious policy and even politics in general. The king entrusted him with important diplomatic

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 57-59.

missions, appointing him an envoy to Emperor Ferdinand. At the king's special request, Biandrata accompanied him to a meeting with the sultan in 1566¹⁷. In short, Biandrata gained an incomparably more important position in Transylvania than he had in Poland. Moreover, he was able to use this position to promote Unitarianism in a very discreet way, because – it must be strongly emphasised – he acted (as a sober and prudent tactician) in moderation and with great prudence.

Shortly before 1564, he grew interested in F. Dávid, and the lives of the two personages intertwined since then. Biandrata must have recognised traits in Dávid that might prove useful for enhancing the incubation of Unitarianism. In other words, Dávid could play a similar role in Transylvania to the one that Biandrata had in mind for Grzegorz Paweł in Poland just moments earlier.

When he first met the Italian physician, Dávid was already 54, and his reputation as an eminent religious activist preceded him. Born in 1510 in Kolozsvár (now Cluj, Romania), he studied at the University of Wittenberg (1545-1548). Since 1555, he was rector of the Lutheran school in his hometown, and was soon elected superintendent of the Hungarian Lutheran Church in Transylvania. He used this position to passionately combat Calvinism of all denominations, until he quite unexpectedly rejected Lutheranism shortly after 1560 and became an avowed follower of the Helvetian doctrine. Before long, he became a leader of the Calvinist Church in Transylvania¹⁸.

Dávid may have had doubts regarding the Holy Trinity even before his encounter with Biandrata. Their meeting and close cooperation were catalysts for the maturation of the former's antitrinitarian views. While we may not know the exact stages of his successive religious evolution, we do know that he was inclined towards Unitarianism as early as 1565. It was in this period that Biandrata entrusted him with an important function at the royal court: Biandrata persuaded John Sigismund to dismiss the court preacher Alesius (a Calvinist) and entrust this position to Dávid¹⁹. This appointment undoubtedly further influenced John Sigismund's religious views, especially with Biandrata's collaboration. The king, who was also interested in reli-

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 28. [There is no monograph on Giorgio Biandrata. The most comprehensive work is: Rotondò, *Biandrata Giovanni Giorgio*, in *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* (see above footnote 3)].

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, pp. 23-28. [For more on Dávid, see *Ferenc Dávid*, ed. by M. Balázs, in *Bibliotheca Dissidentium. Répertoire des non-conformistes religieux des seizième et dix-septième siècles*, ed. by A. Séguenny, t. XXVI, *Ungarländische Antitrinitarier IV*, Baden-Baden & Bouxwiller, Valentin Koerner, 2008].

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 30.

gious issues, in time began to give clear support to the antitrinitarianists. Thus, Zapolya's son – and a Jagiellon on the distaff side – became the only ruler in history who openly sympathised with Unitarianism. These religious preferences, which had already become public knowledge in the late 1560s, undoubtedly contributed to the recognition of Unitarianism as the fourth legalised religion in Transylvania.

Biandrata, who was heavily involved in promoting antitrinitarianism in Transylvania, controlled the situation in Poland and Lithuania and tried to influence the course of events through the only possible means: that of letters. Dávid was his collaborator in this endeavour. Biandrata and Dávid's letters to Mikołaj Radziwiłł the Black from late 1564 are proof of such direct interference. The letters referred, for instance, to the alleged success of antitrinitarianism in Transylvania and indicated that the king himself sided with the ideology. As aptly observed by Lech Szczucki²⁰, such information in these letters was greatly exaggerated. The authors' intention was clear: to generate excitement and encouragement such that Polish-Lithuanian circles would overlook the difficulties that antitrinitarianism was experiencing in Poland (we will provide a broader discussion of this point later) and thereby continue to promote religious reformation. Another, later trace is a letter from Biandrata to Grzegorz Paweł in September 1565 and a letter from the Transylvanian congregations (undoubtedly written on the initiative of Biandrata) to the Polish churches, read during the Węgrów synod in December of the same year. Biandrata's letter made a strong impression on Grzegorz Paweł as well as the leadership of the congregation in Małopolska, and it was probably one of the driving forces behind the evolution of religious concepts towards Unitarianism in the Polish Arian community²¹.

Unitarianism in Poland and Lithuania in the following years (which we will address more broadly when we move from Transylvania to Poland) began to develop so rapidly that, just two years later, Biandrata – along with

²⁰ L. SZCZUCKI, *Polski i siedmiogrodzki unitarianizm w drugiej połowie XVI wieku* [Polish and Transylvanian Unitarianism during the second half of the 16th century], in Id., *Nonkonformiści religijni*, pp. 66-67. Szczucki's article came out first in English as *Polish and Transylvanian Unitarianism in the Second Half of the 16th Century*, in *Antitrinitarianism in the Second Half of the 16th Century*, ed. by R. Dán and A. Pirnát, Budapest-Leiden, Brill, 1982, pp. 231-241.

²¹ For more on this topic, see SZCZUCKI, *Polska i siedmiogrodzki unitarianizm*, pp. 67-68. Biandrata's letter is often quoted in the relevant literature. The first to discuss it extensively was probably Górski in *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 189-191. More recently, it has been addressed at length by the Hungarian scholar M. Balázs, mainly as to the situation in Transylvania; see *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism (1566-1571). From Servet to Palaeologus*, Baden-Baden et Bouxvilles, Editions V. Koerner, 1996 (Bibliotheca Dissidentium, Scripta et studia, VII), pp. 16-19.

Dávid and the Polish Unitarians from the congregation of Małopolska, and more specifically with Grzegorz Paweł – could exploit this fact to arrange the publication of a book which, in the intention of its editors, struck like a thunderbolt out of the blue and showed Europe the existence and activities of a robust international community of Unitarians organised in Churches in Transylvania and Poland. They wanted to demonstrate that this community was a capable alternative to the corruption that was Christianity in Christian Europe. The editors showed that the Reformation initiated by Luther and Zwingli as a significant step forward had sadly halted prematurely. The real drivers of change aimed at cleansing Christianity of ‘errors and distortions’ (here we are deliberately using this anachronistic phrase) were, in their view, primarily Erasmus of Rotterdam and Servet. The book, arguably a manifesto of Unitarianism, was published (with John Sigismund’s consent, no less) in Alba Julia in 1568 under the title *De falsa et vera unius Dei ... cognitione libri duo, Authoribus ministris Ecclesiarum consentientium in Sarmatia et Transylvania...* It was a rather hefty book (of ca. 300 pages), with a preface addressed to John Sigismund, dated August 1567 (a facsimile was released in 1988 in Budapest, with an introduction by Antal Pirnát). The work contained texts by many authors, including Biandrata, Dávid, and Grzegorz Paweł. It received thorough discussion as early as 1929 by Konrad Górski²² and has attracted the attention of numerous scholars. More recently, it has been addressed in depth – with many major corrections to the earlier findings – by the Hungarian researcher M. Balázs in his book *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism*²³.

The following year in Alba Julia, Biandrata and Dávid published the significant work *De Regno Christi et de Regno Antichristi* (1569), which was largely based on Servet’s *Christianismi Restitutio*²⁴. This publication in Latin was accompanied by ample publication in Hungarian (incidentally, *De falsa et vera unius Dei cognitione* was also released in Hungarian in a slightly revised form)²⁵.

²² GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 199-214.

²³ See especially an extensive introduction titled *A joint Polish-Hungarian Antitrinitarian opus and Ferenz Dávid’s Hungarian works*, in *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism* (see note 20), pp. 27-41.

²⁴ Discussed at length in Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism*, pp. 135-151.

²⁵ To conclude the Polish-Hungarian topic, we must indicate a concise study by G. H. Williams demonstrating the similarities and differences between Polish and Hungarian-Transylvanian Unitarianism. It was published as *Unterschiede zwischen dem polnischen und dem siebenbürgisch-ungarischen Unitarismus und ihre Ursachen*, in *Der Einfluss der Unitarier auf die europäisch-amerikanische Geistesgeschichte. Vorträge der ersten deutschen wissenschaftlichen Tagung*

5. *Diversification of antitrinitarian views among Polish Arians in the latter half of the 1560s*

Meanwhile, in Poland and Lithuania in the mid-1560s, the dispersed antitrinitarian church, embroiled in disputes over socio-political ideology and child baptism, was organisationally much worse off than the then thriving antitrinitarianism of Transylvania, which was in a sense sponsored by King John Sigismund himself. In this respect, the situation in Poland was completely different. Sigismund Augustus – if he influenced the course of affairs of the minor church – did so in a restrictive manner. Although the motives of these anti-Arian imperial actions were not, strictly speaking, religious (unlike his Hungarian cousin, the king was not interested in religious speculation at all), they nonetheless intimidated the church activists. Thus, in August 1564, the king issued the Edict of Parczów which, although aimed mainly at foreigners spreading antitrinitarian views, also threatened to severely punish the indigent inhabitants of Poland, namely ‘people of a lower state’ who dare accept the blasphemous teachings spread by foreigners. In a later supplement to this edict, at the beginning of October, any foreigners spreading antitrinitarianism were instructed to leave the country immediately²⁶. Two years later at the parliament session in Lublin, the monarch and a group of senators considered a decree ordering all those who admitted to negating the dogma of the Holy Trinity to leave the country. This intention, however, was not carried out²⁷. Interestingly, neither the Edict of Parczów nor the later, unrealised draft of a much stricter Edict of Lublin were initiated by the king. These actions were inspired by Calvinist magnates, who tried thus to eliminate their opponents who were causing havoc to the operation of the Reformed congregations. In order to convince the king – who did not like to invoke violence in matters of religion – to speak out vigorously against antitrinitarians, Calvinist supporters of the repression against antitrinitarians mainly highlighted the fact that the Arians proclaimed social and political views that threatened the existing state order. While the Catholic clergy clearly opposed both of these Calvinist initiatives, they did not do so on humanitarian grounds, for they saw no benefit to the Church. On the contrary, the bishops

zur *Unitarismusforschung vom 13-14 Juni 1985 in Hamburg*, W. Deppert – W. Erdt – A. De Groot Hrsg., Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 1990, pp. 33-57.

²⁶ J. TAZBIR, *Państwo bez stosów. Szkice z dziejów tolerancji w Polsce XVI i XVII w.*, Warszawa, PWN, 1967, p. 84 (English trans.: *A State without Stakes. Polish Religious Toleration in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, New York, The Kosciusko foundation, 1973).

²⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 86-87.

looked rather favourably upon the religious disputes within the churches emerging from the Reformation, because they thought this weakened the multi-religious camp.

Ultimately, however, neither the Edict of Parczów nor the king's overt intention to issue a new and stricter decree in 1566 did much harm to the Polish antitrinitarians. They merely halted their public activities for a time, and some ministers (including Grzegorz Paweł) rejected their places of residence and sought refuge in the estates of their noble followers. However, as early as 1567, public debates were held on matters of interest to the activists of the minor church. Among other events, theological disputes concerning the Holy Trinity re-appeared. The contents of these disputes must be reported here in a slightly more precise way, without going into the doctrinal details.

Two competing dogmatic trends were already present within the circle of Polish and Lithuanian antitrinitarians by this time. One was Unitarianism, which would go on to triumph in the Church; for the time being, however, it remained a minority religion. Unitarianism, in short, rejected claims of the eternal existence of Christ and viewed him as merely a man born of miraculous means to the Virgin Mary, divinised by God after his passion and resurrection. The Holy Spirit was deemed by this denomination to be the action of God's power in the hearts and minds of His chosen ones.

The second current, Ditheism, was far more diverse at the time. Its followers were called *dwójbożanie* in Polish. To simplify matters at this stage of our reflections, we may briefly surmise that Ditheists at the time, rejecting faith in the Holy Trinity, strongly emphasised their belief in the pre-existence of Christ.

The first public discussions involving clashes between the supporters of these two currents took place in the first half of 1567, first in spring in Łañcut, and later in June in Skrzynno²⁸. The latter synod attracted a large number of participants – a clear indication that the danger of persecution had been eliminated. Since no agreement could be reached between the supporters of the two currents, a joint declaration was issued, which emphasised that the dispute between the parties did not entitle them to slander their opponents. On the contrary, they should be treated as brothers in faith jointly seeking God's truth.

At the synod held in Pełsznica in October 1568, the Unitarianist side had a visible advantage, but the situation was still precarious. This is evidenced, among other signs, by the leadership of the Kuyavian group by two outstand-

²⁸ SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, pp. 74-76.

ing activists, Jan Niemojewski and Marcin Czechowic, described in the protocols of the synod as supporters of Ditheism. A few months later in March 1569, the Bełżyce synod described the group in its documents as a one that admitted to their Unitarianism²⁹.

Thus, at the end of the 1560s there were antitrinitarians of dual theological orientation in various regions of Poland and Lithuania³⁰.

Unitarianism. Its followers included the aforementioned Grzegorz Paweł of Brzeziny (active in the Krakow congregation) and Georg Schomann (introduced here for the first time; he had previously espoused Ditheism). Then we have Stanisław Budzyński and Jan Siekierzyński, Jr., while in Rus there were Jakub Kalinowski and Marcin Krowicki. In Lithuania, a markedly Unitarian group led by Szymon Budny was developing.

Ditheism. Its followers in the Crown included the so-called Kujavians, led by Jan Niemojewski and Marcin Czechowic (who defected to Unitarianism in 1569). In the Lublin region and in Rus we have Jan Kazanowski and Mikołaj Żytno, and in Mordy (near Siedlce) Jan Sokołowski. Among the avowed proponents of Ditheism were two prominent theologians active in Małopolska: Stanisław Farnowski and Stanisław Wiśniowski. They set up a compact antitrinitarian community in the Nowy Sącz region, and their followers are hence referred to in the literature as the Ditheists from Małopolska. Finally, there was a Ditheist centre in Węgrów, on the border between Lithuania and the Crown, headed by one of Poland's most renowned antitrinitarians: Piotr of Goniądz.

Rather significant theological differences existed between the Deithism promoted by Piotr of Goniądz and that practiced in Małopolska. In fact, such differences could be observed among the Ditheists from Małopolska, between the doctrines preached by Farnowski and Wiśniowski.

The division stemming from disputes over the Holy Trinity was additionally compounded by an aforementioned fact, that is, individual groups of Unitarians and Ditheists also differed in their socio-political ideologies. In this regard, the Unitarians of Małopolska generally espoused radical views, referring in one way or another to the teachings of Evangelical Anabaptists, while the Lithuanian Unitarians, centred around Budny, took a clearly conservative – or rather, a traditionalist – stance on these matters. The same applied to the Ditheists. In the early stages of their activities (i.e. before they

²⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 77-78.

³⁰ M. WAJSBLUM, *Dyteiści Małopolscy* [Ditheists of the Lesser Poland], «Reformacja w Polsce», V (1928), pp. 48-49.

merged into one faction with a group of Małopolska Unitarians), the Kujavians were already extreme social radicals. While similar views on this issue were proclaimed from the start by the Ditheist Piotr of Goniądz, the views held by the Ditheists of Małopolska were clearly in line with Budny's traditionalist views. Therefore, as we can see in this very rough sketch, there is a colourful mosaic of views and positions among Polish antitrinitarian communities towards the end of the 1560s.

6. *The establishment of Raków: Contact with the Moravian 'communists'*

Amidst heated debates on theological, social, and political topics, the Arians learned that the Castellan of Żarnowiec, Jan Sienieński, had established a town named Raków in the charter (issued in late March 1567). The name derived from the coat of arms belonging to Sienieński's wife, Jadwiga née Gnojeńska, which depicted a crayfish. The town was located in modern-day Świętokrzyskie Voivodship, south-east of Kielce, on the River Czarna, a tributary of the Vistula. The location charter provided prospective residents with full freedom of religion in addition to economic privileges. This guarantee of religious freedom was not unusual. According to historians (see Tazbir), guaranteeing religious freedom was a matter of fact when establishing new settlements in Poland at that time, and the owners were simply guided by economic interest³¹. In this particular case, however, it can be assumed that economic interest (although certainly very significant) was not the only motivation for the founders. The Sienieńskis (he was a Calvinist and she was an Arian!) must have been familiar with the atmosphere of religious disputes both Calvinist-Arian and within the Arian community; they likely assumed in advance that the small town would become a magnet for these Arian activists and their supporters, who were looking for a place to discuss their favourite topics freely without any embarrassment. In fact, the town quickly attracted the attention of Arians. The gap between the issuance of the foundation charter and the actual creation of a town usually took many years. In the case of Raków, however, this process was significantly accelerated (Tazbir). By mid-1569, the first Arians appeared there, and in the course of August to September of the same year, Raków had amassed many

³¹ J. TAZBIR, *Miejsce Rakowa w ruchu ariańskim*, in *Wokół dziejów i tradycji arianizmu* [The place of Raków in the Arian movement in On the history and tradition of Arianism], studies ed. by L. Szczucki, Warszawa, PWN, 1971, pp. 44-45.

outstanding representatives of this movement – both Unitarians and Ditheists from different parts of the Republic of Poland. Thus began the Arian congregation in Raków.

However, the Raków we discuss here was completely different from the Raków of a later time, in the years 1602-1638³². We tend to regard the latter as an organised and robust centre of culture – the metropolis of an expansive religious movement – which was the subject of substantial and often congenial interest among the liberal Protestant elites in Western Europe. In 1569-1572, Raków became a kind of a ‘new Jerusalem’ for the Arians who settled there – a place of refuge from the hustle and bustle of everyday life and from a world which seemed totally depraved. It was meant to offer refuge to the few who chose the difficult path of a true imitation of Christ.

This period of several years, sometimes referred to as a phase of confusion and chaos in the literature on the subject, was indeed a time of constant religious disputes accompanying the disappearance of all church organisations. Ministers – with the exception of Marcin Czechowic – renounced their offices on the assumption that everyone had the same right to proclaim and explain the Word of God, because the Spirit of the Lord would speak through those whom the Lord himself chose as an instrument of his action. This position, which Szczucki³³ refers to as spiritualist, was accompanied by the rejection of all religious ceremonies, in keeping with the adopted principle of complete egalitarianism. It stipulated that all are equal before the Lord, and thus no-one is worthy of officiating at such ceremonies, unless they have received a special Revelation from Heaven. This mentality soon led to anarchy in the Raków community. Moreover, the old exhortations to fraternal love and tolerance for differently thinking brothers, put forth by the synods held before Raków (i.e. Pelsznica, Skrzynno, and Bełżyce), were forgotten, and violent attitudes began to prevail. Religious disputes gradually turned into rows and confrontations, and foul language and insults replaced calls for leniency and mutual kindness.

After some time, however (ca. 1572), these tensions subsided. Some Arians, dissuaded from this way of life, left Raków for Lublin. The patron of this group was Marcin Czechowic, who was joined by Jan Niemojewski from Kujawy. The pair transformed the Arian congregation that had been operat-

³² See also remarks on this topic made by Tazbir, *ibidem*, pp. 46-47.

³³ L. SZCZUCKI, *Polski i siedmiogrodzki unitarianizm*, in *Nonkonformiści religijni*, p. 73. First refer to the discussion of the Raków situation in ID., *Marcin Czechowic*, pp. 81-83.

ing for a few years in Lublin into an efficient centre³⁴. In Raków, under the aegis of those with a more sober outlook (in particular the Krakow pharmacist Szymon Ronemberg), life in the Arian community was integrated into a certain organisational framework and normalised.

It was during this time that the Arians established closer contact with Moravian Anabaptists, also known as Moravian Brothers, who lived within secluded communities in Slavkov, Moravia. The first contacts began as early as 1568, and a special delegation of Moravian Brothers visited Krakow in 1569 to assess the possibility of the two communities uniting or at least collaborating more closely. A delegation from Krakow later travelled to Raków, and in turn, a delegation from the Arian side was sent to Moravia with the same intent. What drew the Polish Brethren to the Moravian communists was the latter's radical socio-political ideology – a doctrine that rigorously adhered to evangelical ethics, a goal which in fact coincided with the aspirations of a significant proportion of the Arians. Likewise, living together among a community of people united by similar religious and social views, successfully realised (as it was thought in the Arian community) by the Moravian Brothers, was perceived as a very attractive idea in Raków, and it constituted a strong incentive to begin negotiations. However, these negotiations quickly ended in a complete fiasco, and the disappointment was mutual. The Moravians could not come to terms, first of all, with the antitrinitarianism of the Polish Brethren, which the latter of course had no plans to renounce. Meanwhile, the Arians were put off by the meticulously practiced communism, within the Moravian community, i.e. a full community of goods, which, following a close examination of its operations, the Arian delegates presented very disparagingly in their accounts. In the early 1570s, a special document entitled *Traktat nie naprzeciwko społeczności apostolskiej, jakowa była raz w Jerozolimie... i jakową mają mieć między sobą uczniowie Jezusowi, ale naprzeciw takowej, jaką nam chciała zalecić jedna z tych sekt, których się wiele na świecie namnożyło... zową je komunistami na Morawie...* [A treatise not against the apostolic community as it was once in Jerusalem... and which the disciples of Jesus are supposed to have among themselves, but against the one which one of those sects, of which there are many in the world, wanted to recommend us ... they are named communists in Moravia] was written to detail all the unfavourable opinions of the Arians.

³⁴ SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, p. 84ff.

This anonymous treatise was not, however, as Stanisław Kot implies³⁵, written by Stanisław Budzyński. Conversely, following L. Szczucki's informed opinions, it was likely drafted by a member of the Arian left³⁶.

After the Raków episode in 1569-1572, the leading centre of Polish anti-trinitarianism was the Lublin congregation, which was clearly Unitarian at the time. It maintained contact with Grzegorz Paweł and Georg Schomann, who stayed in Raków and took over the position of the minister of the Church of Krakow in 1579. Raków-Lublin Unitarianism would soon start to compete for influence with its Lithuanian counterpart, propelled by Szymon Budny's strong personality. These two centres of Unitarianism would be in dispute with each other through the 1570s and almost until the end of the 1580s. Their arguments were sometimes dramatic, as each party represented a distinct position, in relation to both dogmatic matters and social and political ideologies. While these positions merit a more detailed discussion here, before we proceed, we must return one last time to Ditheism.

7. The birth and decline of Ditheism

Ditheism, which had flourished most dynamically among the Polish Arians and claimed the largest number of followers (Wajsblum) in 1566-1568, declined in the 1580s, although no sign foreshadowed such an end in the early 1570s. On the contrary, 1570 saw the publication in Węgrów of a number of significant texts by Piotr of Goniądz. Together, they contained the principal tenets of the author's doctrine. The most extensive of these texts was in fact four separate treatises entitled *Doctrina pura et clara de praecipuis Christianae religionis articulis*. There is only one extant copy of the work, held at the Bibliotheque Nationale in Paris. According to experts, it must have been written earlier, sometime in the first half of the 1560s. Almost in tandem with this Latin work, Piotr printed three Polish texts in Węgrów which, according to scholars, were later modifications of a Latin text: 1. *O Trzech* [On the Trinity], 2. *O Synu Bożym* [On the Son of God], and 3. *O ponurzeniu*

³⁵ KOT, *Ideologia polityczna*, p. 30; the complete negotiations of Arians with the Moravians are discussed on pp. 24-35.

³⁶ The text of the document *Traktat przeciwko Komunistom Morawskim* [A treatise against the Moravian Communists] was included by L. Szczucki in *Filozofia i myśl społeczna XVI wieku (700 lat myśli polskiej series)* [16th century Polish philosophy and social thought (700 years of Polish thought)]. Texts selected, edited, annotated, and prefaced by L. Szczucki, Warszawa, PWN, 1978, pp. 317-332.

chrystyjańskim [*On baptismal submersion*]. All three were re-published between 1960 and 1962 in the *Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych* series [Library of Reformed writers]³⁷. Three years later, in September 1573, Piotr of Goniądz died of the plague which devastated the area, and his death put an end to the practice of Lithuanian Ditheism. Since then, the current became limited to the area of Nowy Sącz, where it flourished for some time. One of its leaders, Stanisław Farnowski, settled in Nowy Sącz as early as 1567; another, Stanisław Wiśniowski, moved to Lusławice, south-west of Tarnów. Farnowski³⁸ was an eminent philologist who had studied languages in the first half of the 1560s at universities in Heidelberg, Marburg, and Zurich. It is believed that he knew not only Greek and Hebrew, but also Syriac and Chaldean. This perhaps emboldened him to embark on what only two other Polish Arians equally well-prepared for the task, Szymon Budny and Marcin Czechowic, had attempted: namely, around 1573, Farnowski began work on his own translation of the New Testament into Polish. He completed the translation a decade later and was about to have it printed when the sudden death of Stanisław Mężyk, the Starost of Sącz, in 1584 thwarted these plans. Apart from this major translation, Farnowski penned a number of original texts: 1. In 1573, he published *Nauka prawdziwa o karności chrystyjańskiej w zborze Syna Bożego prawdziwym...* [*The true doctrine on the Christian discipline in the true community of the Son of God...*] (no copy of which has survived). 2. The same year, he published another work entitled *O znajomości i wyznaniu Boga zawždy jednego, stwórcy wszystkich rzeczy, i jednego Ducha Bożego* [*On the knowledge and confession of God ever the only One, creator of all things; and of the only Holy Spirit*]³⁹. 3. In 1578, Farnowski's third text (now lost) was to be released; we only know that it was dedicated to Stanisław Szafraniec, the Castellan of Sandomierz and a Calvinist, and that it was polemical to the Unitarians.

³⁷ PIOTR Z GONIĄDZA, *Dziela polskie* [PoG. Polish works], I-III. Editors: H. Górski, K. Górski, Z. Zawadzki, *Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych* [Library of Reformed writers]: vol. 3, *O ponurzeniu chrystyjańskim* [On the Christian submersion], No. 3 (c), Warszawa, Polska Akademia Nauk, 1960; II, *O Synu Bożym* [On God's Son], No. 3 (B), Warszawa, Polska Akademia Nauk, 1961; I, *O Trzech* [On the Trinity], No. 3 (I), Warszawa, Polska Akademia Nauk, 1962.

³⁸ For biographical details, see WAJSBLUM, *Dyteiści Małopolscy*, pp. 54-78. See also biographical notes in *Literatura ariańska w Polsce XVI wieku. Antologia* [Arian Literature in 16th century Poland. An anthology], edited, annotated, and prefaced by L. Szczucki and J. Tazbir, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1959 (henceforth referred to as Szczucki – Tazbir, *Antologia*), pp. 633-635.

³⁹ The sole copy of the work in Polish collections can be found in the Ossoliński Library in Wrocław. An excerpt is reprinted in Szczucki – Tazbir, *Antologia*, pp. 275-286.

Farnowski's friend Stanisław Wiśniowski⁴⁰ was a less prolific but more talented author, who wrote only two works. One was published in 1572: *Okazanie sfalszowania i wyznanie prawdziwej nauki Pana Krysta [The reveal of the forgery and a confession of the genuine teaching of Christ the Lord]*, in which he highlights the demand for religious tolerance, among other issues⁴¹. The other was *Rozmowa o szczerej znajomości Boga Ojca, Syna Jego i Ducha Świętego [A dialogue on the sincere knowledge of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit]*⁴², published in 1575. Wajsblum hails this as the "best and the most intriguing text by the Ditheists of Małopolska"; he is of the opinion that it can be justifiably paired with Czechowic's excellent *Rozmowy chrystyjańskie [Christian talks]*, which was released in the same year⁴³.

For the Ditheists of Małopolska, 1578 was a disastrous year: the owner of Lusławice, Taszycki, adopted Unitarianism. As a result, the Ditheists lost their school and printing house in Lusławice as well as most of their churches. From 1584 onwards, after the aforementioned death of S. Mężyk, Farnowski also dramatically reduced his activities in Nowy Sącz. This spelled doom for Ditheism in Małopolska. While Farnowski died much later ca. 1615, Ditheism ceased to function as a major antitrinitarian current as early as the latter half of the 1580s.

8. Unitarianism before Socinus

As noted above, Unitarianism among the Polish antitrinitarians developed in the latter half of the 1560s, beginning in the Krakow Church. Grzegorz Paweł of Brzeziny was an undisputed leader of the dogmatic changes in this development. In the late 1560s, roughly from the end of 1567 to the latter half of 1569, Grzegorz wrote feverishly with the sole aim of promoting Unitarianism⁴⁴. Of utmost significance was, naturally, his collaboration in the preparation of *De falsa et vera unius Dei cognitione* (1568). The text,

⁴⁰ Biographical details can be found in the note in Szczucki – Tazbir, *Antologia*, pp. 651-653.

⁴¹ WAJSBLUM, *Dytejści Małopolscy*, p. 78. An excerpt is reprinted in Szczucki – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 423-438.

⁴² The one and only copy can be found in the Czartoryski Library in Krakow. An excerpt is reprinted in Szczucki – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 289-315.

⁴³ WAJSBLUM, *Dytejści Małopolscy*, p. 81.

⁴⁴ Grzegorz Paweł's actions during the promotion of Unitarianism are well discussed in Górski, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 185-219.

however, was created under the auspices of the Transylvanian Unitarians – more precisely those of Biandrata and Dávid – and Grzegorz's own contribution to the work was but a fraction of his writings. Up to the second half of 1569, Grzegorz published as many as nine books in Poland, all of them in Polish. These included four translations from Latin and five original texts.

Let us begin with the translations. The most important of these was probably the translation of Faustus Socinus's small treatise, *Explicatio primae partis primi capitis Joannis*, written in Switzerland ca. 1562-1563. This text, regarded today as one of the fundamental writings of nascent Unitarianism, sought to demonstrate that the traditional interpretation of the first chapter of the Gospel according to John – the cornerstone of the dogma of the Holy Trinity – derives from a misunderstanding of the Evangelist's words. Socinus offers a new interpretation (with partial reference to the exegesis of Erasmus of Rotterdam), in light of which the argument of the pre-existence of Christ turns out to be unsustainable. We will return to a broader discussion of the meaning of this treatise in a more relevant part of this book. Grzegorz's translation was entitled *Wykład na pierwszą kapitułę Jana świętego Ewangeliey...* [*A lecture on the first chapter of the John's Gospel*], and it was, as Konrad Górski demonstrates, a paraphrase of Socinus rather than an precise translation⁴⁵. Grzegorz's translation was published nearly in parallel with the first Latin issue of Socinus's text, pressed (as established in 1967 by Lech Szczucki⁴⁶) in a printing house belonging to the Unitarian typographer Rafał Skrzetuski-Hoffhalter in Alba Julia, most likely no later than April–May 1568⁴⁷.

Another translation from Latin, *Okazanie Antychrysta i jego królestwa* [*A reveal of the Antichrist and of his kingdom*], was borrowed from Servet's *Christianismi Restitutio*⁴⁸. Grzegorz translated two other texts (whose au-

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 248-255.

⁴⁶ L. SZCZUCKI, *Ze studiów nad socynianizmem. Nieznane wydanie «Explicatio» Fausta Socyna* [Studies on Socinianism. An unknown edition of Fausto Sozzini's "Explicatio"], «Rocznik Biblioteki Narodowej», IV, pp. 155-164. The article was also published in Italian as *La prima edizione dell'Explicatio di Fausto Sozzini*, «Rinascimento», XVII, 1967, pp. 319-327.

⁴⁷ The date is given in Balázs, *Early Transylvanian Antitrinitarianism*, p. 88. When he was publishing his article, Szczucki defined the time of publication as between 1567 and 1568, closer to 1567. [On the dating of F. Sozzini, *Explicatio primae partis primi capitis Iohannis*, see also V. Marchetti, *La storiografia ungherese nel rapporto tra la critica Antitrinitaria sozziniana e le origini dell'unitarismo transilvano del Cinquecento*, «Archivio Storico Italiano», CXXVIII (1970), pp. 361-405: 402-404 and *passim*].

⁴⁸ GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, p. 254.

thorship K. Górski, following Sandius and Bock, ascribed to Biandrata). The first is *Phrases aequipollentes; known in Polish as Zgodne ... sposoby mów o Jezusie Pomazańcu* [Equivalent ... ways of speaking on Jesus the Anointed], it is Part II, Chapter XIV of *De falsa et vera...*⁴⁹. The second text, *Argumenta quibus Paedobaptismus impetitur...* (Polish title: *Krótkie dowody, które dziecinny Krzest... zbijają* [Brief arguments discrediting the Baptism of children]), was published twice in Transylvania at the time, once in 1568 and again in 1569⁵⁰.

The most interesting of the five original texts by Grzegorz is entitled *O prawdziwej śmierci, zmartwychwstaniu i żywocie wiecznym Jezusa Krystusa i każdego za tym wiernego...* [On the true death, resurrection and eternal life of Jesus Christ, and of everyone who believes in it as well]. Most likely published in the early months of 1568 in Krakow, it was reprinted in 1954 in its phototype version⁵¹. The theses presented here by Grzegorz can be briefly summarised in contemporary language and concepts as follows: at the moment of death, no soul is separated from the body. The soul is nothing more than a set of mental phenomena that constitute the function of the body, while mental phenomena cannot be separated from the body; *ergo* at the moment of death, the whole person dies. God will resurrect a person (as he has resurrected Christ) on Doomsday and grant them a new, indestructible body. The view of an immortal soul that exists independently of the dead body is useful to the Catholic clergy, who derive material benefits from it by selling masses for the dead and indulgences. It is worth noting that similar views on the immortality of the soul were voiced by Szymon Budny.

The extent to which Grzegorz's ideas resulted from his own reflections – possibly inspired by the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians (15:35 – 15:58) – and the extent to which they were inspired by his reading remain open questions⁵².

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 247-248.

⁵⁰ Printed in *Brevis enarratio disputationis Albanæ*, 1568 and *De Regno Christi*, 1569. For a discussion of this translation see GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 242-247. See also BALÁZS, pp. 126-129 on the same subject.

⁵¹ In an edited collection by Górski and W. Kuraszkiewicz in the *Biblioteka Pisarzy Polskich* series, Series B, III, Wrocław, Zakład im. Ossolińskich, Polska Akademia Nauk, 1954, p. 180.

⁵² This work by Grzegorz Paweł was first discussed in detail by GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 234-239. Interesting comments on the subject can be found in L. SZCZUCKI, *Z problemów eschatologii ariańskiej w Polsce XVI wieku (z okazji wydania dzieła Grzegorz Pawła «O prawdziwej śmierci»)* [On some issues regarding the Arian eschatology in 16th century Poland (on the occasion of the edition of Grzegorz Paweł's "On the true death")], «Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Nauki Polskiej», IV, 1956, pp. 135-169. See also L. KOŁAKOWSKI, *Refleksje nefachowe nad*

Three other original works by Grzegorz Paweł (the full titles are provided in the footnote) – *Okazanie i zborzenie...*⁵³, *Rozdział Starego Testamentu od Nowego...*⁵⁴, and *Wykład miejsc niektórych...*⁵⁵ – can be considered original in that they are not translations. All three touch upon the themes addressed in *De falsa et vera unius Dei cognitione*, supplementing or providing an extended commentary on it. *Okazanie i zborzenie* corresponds to Chapter IV (*De Uno Deo Patre*) in the second section *De falsa et vera*, while *Rozdział Starego Testamentu od Nowego* mirrors Chapter II (*De discrimine legis et Evangelii*) in the same section and was (like the original) largely based on motifs taken from Servet's *Christianismi Restitutio* (of which K. Górski was not aware and which was established later). Finally, *Wykład miejsc niektórych* corresponds to Chapter IX of the second part of *De falsa et vera...*

Grzegorz grew silent in the following years of the so-called Raków chaos. The only text that he penned during this period – more specifically, in 1572 – was written in Latin under the name of the Brethren of Raków: *Odpowiedź na pismo Jakuba Paleologa «Zdanie o wojnie»*, which he entitled *Adversus Jacobi Paleologi «De Bello sententiam» responsio*⁵⁶. It was released in print only in 1580 in Łosk. The subject matter of this text and the circumstances in which it was published will be discussed below, parts of which concern Szymon Budny's activities⁵⁷.

Grzegorzem Pawłem i nieśmiertelnością duszy [Non-professional considerations on Grzegorz Paweł and the immortality of the soul], in *Twórczość*, IX (1955).

⁵³ *Okazanie i zborzenie wszystkich wiar od ludzi rozmaitych o Bogu i o Synu Jego nawymyślanych przez prawdziwe, proste i jasne wyznanie z Pisma Świętego ... zebrane* [An exposition and destruction of all the faiths invented by men of all sorts about God and His Son, by means of a true, simple and clear confession taken from the Holy Writ], Kraków 1568.

⁵⁴ *Rozdział Starego Testamentu od Nowego, Żydostwa od krześcijaństwa, skąd łatwo obaczysz prawie wszystkie różnice około wiary* [The separation of the Old Testament from the New, of Hebraism from Christianity, from where one can easily see almost all their differences in matter of the faith] (Kraków) 1568. Excerpts from the treatise are reprinted in L. Szczucki – J. Tazbir, *Antologia*, pp. 224-248.

⁵⁵ *Wykład miejsc niektórych Pisma Starego i Nowego Testamentu, które Antykryst Bogiem, Trójcą i Chrystusem, przed Jezusem zmyślonym, zatrudnił, gdzie i respons znajdziesz na wywody Antykrystusowe o jego Trójcy* [Exposition of some places of the scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments, which the Antichrist made use of, in order to portray God as a Trinity, and Christ as if he had been before Jesus, wherein you may find an answer to the arguments of the Antichrist supporting his Trinity], Kraków 1568. The lengthy text (ca. 250 pages) has not survived and is known only through summaries and quotes.

⁵⁶ This text by Grzegorz Paweł is translated into Polish by L. Joachimowicz in SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 33-58.

⁵⁷ See GÓRSKI, *Grzegorz Paweł*, pp. 270-275. See also WILLIAMS, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 1141-1147. Williams ascribes the Catechism to Schomann.

The last major work co-authored by Grzegorz Paweł and Georg Schomann was the *Catechism (Catechesis et confessio fidei, coetus per Poloniam congregati...)*, published anonymously in Krakow in 1574⁵⁸. This catechism will be addressed more thoroughly in the discussion on Georg Schomann.

We know, furthermore, that Grzegorz wrote a polemical treatise ca. 1578, probably in Polish, against those Arians who continued to defend claims of Christ's pre-existence – most likely the Ditheists of Małopolska. Additionally, in 1579, at the request of Biandrata and Faustus Socinus, he drafted a text against F. Dávid's postulate not to pray to Christ. Grzegorz's final work, allegedly written in 1589, was the treatise *De Regno Christi millenario*, which touched on the ongoing discussions among the Arians of that period, i.e. those concerning Christ's reign on Earth for a thousand years following his second coming. According to Sandius, the treatise remained in the manuscript form, and we can only conjecture about Grzegorz Paweł's position on this matter.

In turn, we shall dedicate a few words to Georg Schomann. An indisputably eminent Polish antitrinitarian activist, he was, however, not a leading Unitarian writer of the period. Nonetheless, he must not be overlooked, in part due to his authorship (or rather, his co-authorship with Grzegorz Paweł) of the so-called 'first *Racovian Catechism*'.

Georg Schomann (1530-1591)⁵⁹ was born in Racibórz (Silesia) to a Catholic Polish-German family (his mother was Urszula Ciachowska). Following his studies in Wrocław, where he embraced Lutheranism, he settled in 1552 in Krakow and lived as a bachelor in various locations. By then, he had been in close contact with the Polish Protestant community. Around 1558, he left for Wittenberg and allegedly befriended Melanchthon. On returning to Po-

⁵⁸ *Catechesis et confessio fidei, coetus per Poloniam congregati, in nomine Jesu Christi, domini nostri crucifixi et resuscitati*, [s.l.] 1574. The English version of the text, translated by Williams (along with critical comments), was published in a 1992 English translation of *Historia reformationis Polonicae*: Stanislas Lubieniecki, *History of the Polish Reformation and Nine Related Documents*, Harvard Theological Studies 34 (Cambridge, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1995). The Catechism was reprinted as Document 6. Both the name "the first Racovian Catechism" and the decisive statement that it was co-authored by Grzegorz Paweł can be found in Krzysztof Sandius's work (*Christophori Sandii Bibliotheca Antitrinitariorum*; Praefatione et indice nominum instruxit Lech Szczucki, Varsoviae, PWN, 1967, *Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych*, VI). It contains the Gregorius Pauli entry on p. 44: "*Catechesis Racoviensis prima, quod ipso auctore (qui Racovianorum tunc antesignanus erat) potissimum concinnata sit, nullus dubito*".

⁵⁹ See L. CHMAJ, *Ślązacy wśród Braci Polskich* [Silesians among Polish Brethren], in L. CHMAJ, *Bracia Polscy. Ludzie – idee – wpływy* [Polish Brethren. Men – ideas – influences], Warszawa, PWN, 1957, pp. 21-25. WILLIAMS, *The Radical Reformation, passim*, especially pages 1144-1147.

land, he became the minister of a then Calvinist congregation, first in Pińczów (1560), then in Książ (1561), and finally – as an Arian minister – in Chmielnik (1567). From the very beginning, he was strongly committed to the emergent antitrinitarianism movement. In March 1565, he took part in the aforementioned Calvinist and Arian dispute as one of representatives of the Arian side. In 1569, on behalf of the Arian synod, he acted as envoy to the Anabaptists in Slavkov, Moravia. During these tempestuous years of incessant synods, he stayed for a short time in Raków. After a short stay in Chmielnik, he moved to Krakow in 1573 and assumed the position of a congregation master, in which he collaborated with the Arian communities in Lublin and Raków. In 1586, he became a minister in Lusławice, which until recently had been a major centre of Małopolska Ditheism, and then resumed the position of minister to Chmielnik (1588), where he died three years later at the age of fifty-one.

Having written little during his lifetime, Schomann was not so much an avid author as an avowed church activist. Only two pieces of his writings remain, both of which are interesting enough to be mentioned here. One is a very small volume: *Testamentum ultimae voluntatis*⁶⁰. In the Polish translation by Irmina Lichońska, it was published in the *Antologia ariańska* by Szczucki and Tazbir⁶¹. Since its contents relate to the issue of tolerance, the reader will find a further discussion in the Views section.

Another, far more significant work is the aforementioned *Catechism*. The importance of the text lies in the fact that it was the first comprehensive yet concise presentation of the *credo* of Polish Unitarians by means of a consistent doctrine. The *credo* was presented here in a catechism manner, i.e. in the form of questions and answers. As mentioned above, Sandius called this text the ‘first *Racovian Catechism*’. It should be noted here that this work is fundamentally different in its theological content from the one that we refer to as the *Racovian Catechism*, and whose subsequent multilingual versions – first Polish, then German, Latin, English, and Dutch – were published in the 17th century, first in Raków, and later in London and Amsterdam. The so-called ‘first *Racovian Catechism*’ (printed in Krakow), unlike the 17th-century Socinian *Racovian Catechism*, was hardly noticed and soon forgotten in its time. Nonetheless, it became a model of sorts for 17th-century edi-

⁶⁰ *Gregori Schomanni Testamentum Ultimae voluntatis, continens vitae ipsius, nec non variorum actuum ecclesiarum, succinctam historiam*, in Sandius, *Bibliotheca Antitrinitariorum*, pp. 191-198.

⁶¹ SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 613-626.

tions of the *Racovian Catechism*: in the articles on the role of Christ, the Socinians borrowed from ‘first *Racovian Catechism*’ the statement that Christ performed a triple mission on earth – that of a prophet, king, and priest. The role and meaning of this detail is well explained by G. H. Williams, who also provides other knowledge of interest concerning Schomann’s *Catechism*⁶².

After 1573, neither Raków with Grzegorz Paweł nor Krakow with Georg Schomann and his collaborator Szymon Ronenberg⁶³ set the tone of intellectual life among the Polish Arians. The principal centre in this regard was the flourishing Lublin congregation, whose leaders, Czechowic and Niemojewski, clearly wished to consolidate the entire movement. Czechowic, moreover, wanted to subordinate other Unitarian communities in Poland and Lithuania in the name of this consolidation. As a result of their aspirations, the conflict between the leadership of this commune and another thriving centre of Unitarian thought developing in Lithuania around Szymon Budny, who had a printing house in Łosk (thanks to the protection of Jan Kiszka), began to escalate rapidly.

While the conflict between the two centres, Lublin and Łosk, was underpinned by personal ambitions, there were also real and important ideological differences between their respective leaders. First, Budny had a different vision for the Unitarian Church compared to his Lublin antagonists. He wanted an open and tolerant Church that would be a federation of loosely linked Unitarian groups (Szczucki) rather than a centralised one with a uniform and precisely outlined doctrine; he also opposed a system with one strong leadership group, which would have the right to condemn and even punish the apostate if necessary by excommunication. Second – and here the divergencies between Łosk and Lublin became most evident – there were serious differences concerning dogmas and views on social ethics, or in terms of socio-political ideology.

Before delving into a more detailed discussion of these differences, however, we need to establish some of the most important facts about the writings of the main actors on the Lublin scene: Czechowic and Niemojewski on the one hand, and their antagonist Budny on the other. It was not without reason that Czechowic enjoyed substantial authority among Polish Arians of

⁶² WILLIAMS, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 1141-1144.

⁶³ Szymon Ronenberg was a burgher in Krakow. A senior of the Krakow congregation for some time, he played a special role there between 1569 and 1579; in 1570, he became a member of the delegation of the Polish Brethren to the Moravian Brothers. For more about him, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic, passim*; WILLIAMS, *The Radical Reformation*, pp. 1093-1094, 1110, 1170-1171.

his time. When he assumed the position of the Lublin congregation minister, he had already produced significant literary output. As mentioned earlier, he completed *Trzech dni rozmowa o dzieciokrzęństwie* [*A three-day talk on the Baptism of children*]⁶⁴ in 1564. Although released in print only fourteen years later, it must have been familiar to in the Arian community even before that. It contains almost all the elements of the doctrine that Czechowic would proclaim in his texts from the 1570s – all except, of course, his view on the eternity of Christ, since he only adopted this view from around 1568 onwards. In 1575, Czechowic published his major work *Rozmowy chrystyjańskie*⁶⁵ in Krakow; it contains the entire doctrine of Polish Unitarianism before Socinus. Far more comprehensive than Grzegorz Paweł and Georg Schomann's short *Catechism*, and moreover written in the familiar Polish instead of Latin, it was much more likely to reach a wider audience. It is certainly one of the most important works of Unitarian literature in Poland at the time. Czechowic's major works include the Latin treatise *De paedobaptistarum errorum origine*⁶⁶, published in Łosk ca. 1582. In fact, it was written much earlier, possibly in the latter half of the 1560s. The treaty, extremely erudite in its historical sections discussing the formation of views on baptism in early Christianity, is a polemic with the position of both Catholic and Calvinist orthodoxy. Czechowic was a natural-born polemicist. His works that furnish a systematic presentation of the Unitarian doctrine – such as *Rozmowy chrystyjańskie* – contain entire polemical sections. This polemic is multidirectional, since the author opposes Catholic or Calvinist orthodoxy as well as any antitrinitarian trends which he considers to be errant.

Apart from the already mentioned texts, Czechowic published at least five other interesting and clearly polemical treatises. They are listed here in chronological order: a polemic with the ideologist of Polish Calvinism Paweł Gilowski (1580)⁶⁷; one with the leader of Ditheists of Małopolska Stanisław

⁶⁴ The full long title is provided by L. Szczucki in the article *Szymona Budnego relacj*, p. 43 (see also footnote 12). The reader can moreover find a discussion of the text, pp. 43-53.

⁶⁵ For the full title, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, Chapter III, p. 260, footnote 15. For a discussion of *Rozmowy*, see *ibidem*, pp. 89-98. Czechowic's *Rozmowy chrystyjańskie* has recently been published with a new critical commentary in *Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych*, XXII, Warszawa-Łódź, PWN, 1989, p. 361.

⁶⁶ For the full title see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, pp. 278-279, footnote 163. Discussion of the content can be found *ibidem*, pp. 138-158. The Polish translation of an excerpt from Czechowic's treatise by J. Płokarz can be found in SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 164-182.

⁶⁷ For the full title, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, on p. 272, footnote 98; discussion of the content can be found *ibidem*, pp. 117-122.

Farnowski (1581)⁶⁸; one with a representative of the Jewish community, Rabbi Jakub of Bełżyce (1581)⁶⁹; one with the Poznań canon and eminent Catholic theologian Hieronim Powodowski (1583)⁷⁰; and finally, a polemic with the Jesuit Jakub Wujek (1591)⁷¹.

This is evidently an impressive collection of writing activities. In 1577 in Krakow, Czechowic published the Polish translation of the New Testament that he had edited. It was not an original translation, but rather a correction of the Polish text of the so-called Brest Bible (1563), made on the basis of a careful comparison with the Greek text⁷².

Jan Niemojewski (b. between 1526 and 1530, d. 1598), a collaborator and most likely friend of Czechowic's, was a senior member of the Lublin congregation. Using a similarly clear yet refined Polish, Niemojewski was second to Czechowic in terms of his writings and theological erudition.

Unlike the aforementioned Arian writers, all of whom (save Budny) were of lowly birth, Niemojewski hailed from a noble family. He differed from Budny, however, in that he was not descended from impoverished nobility but from rich estate owners who settled in Kujawy. Since 1562, he became a land magistrate (*iudex terrestris*) in Inowrocław. In that period, he paid close attention to public matters and assumed the role of a repeated deputy to Polish Sejm and an activist of the party pushing for reforms (i.e. the execution movement). At the same time, he took a serious interest in religious matters, which would soon completely change his way of life. He converted to Calvinism in 1559, but soon – observing the discussions in the Church of Małopolska surrounding the emerging doctrine of Trideism – became a strong supporter of the innovators. Around 1566, possibly under the influence of Czechowic, who appeared in Kujawy then and settled in his farmstead, Niemojewski declared himself to be a follower of Ditheism, but be-

⁶⁸ *Respons na skrypt Stanisława Farnowskiego* [A response to the script of Stanisław Farnowski]; for the discussion, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, pp. 122-125.

⁶⁹ For the full title, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, p. 274, footnote 121; discussion of the content can be found *ibidem*, pp. 126-132.

⁷⁰ On Hieronim Powodowski, see *ibidem*, pp. 158-159; for the title of Czechowic's polemic with Powodowski, see *ibidem*, p. 286, footnote 216; a discussion of content can be found *ibidem*, pp. 164-171. A fragment of Czechowic's polemic is reprinted in SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 405-420 and 473-485.

⁷¹ For the full title, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, p. 291, footnote 19; a discussion of content can be found *ibidem*, pp. 179-184. A fragment of this polemic is reprinted in SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 487-514.

⁷² For more on this topic, see SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, pp. 263-264, footnote 43 (here the full title); a discussion can be found on pp. 98-102.

came an avowed Unitarian around 1569. Much like Czechowic, Niemojewski linked his antitrinitarianism with the approval of a radical socio-political ideology in the spirit of evangelical Anabaptism, and he treated this acceptance very seriously. In line with the tenets of this ideology, he resigned from the office of the land magistrate as early as 1565 (i.e. before he became a Unitarian), sold a large part of his family's property in Kujawy, and distributed part of the money to the poor, designating a further portion of it for the needs of the Arian Church. In 1566, he was once more elected as a deputy to the Sejm convened in Lublin, but here he appeared – to the surprise of the other deputies – in coarse clothing, without a sabre at his side and unattended by servants. It is not certain whether he stayed in Raków in 1569-1570; if he did, it was a rather short sojourn. In any case, from 1570 onwards, he – working alongside Czechowic – devoted the rest of his life to the promotion of Unitarianism⁷³ as a senior of the Church in Lublin.

As is the case with Czechowic, Niemojewski's writings are primarily polemical in character. In particular, Niemojewski responded to allegations and often also to slander directed at the Arian community by Catholic publicists. His most interesting works include *Ukazanie, iż Kościół Rzymski Papieski nie jest apostołski ani święty, ani jeden, ani powszechny* (1583) [*A demonstration that the Roman Papal Church is neither apostolic nor holy, neither the only nor universal*]⁷⁴. Niemojewski's letters to Faustus Socinus, written in Latin, contain arguments that clearly oppose some of Socinus's theological views, which neither he nor Czechowic ever approved⁷⁵. We shall expound more on this topic in the section dedicated to the history of emergent Socinianism.

What remains to be discussed is the work of Szymon Budny, the last of the eminent writers on pre-Socinian Unitarianism, whose intellectual prowess stands above the authors discussed so far due to his independent judge-

⁷³ On Niemojewski, see J. PŁOKARZ, *Jan Niemojewski. Studium z dziejów arian polskich* [JN. A study on the history of the Polish Arians], «Reformacja w Polsce», II, 1922, pp. 74-117. While the study involves outdated places, it nonetheless contains interesting information. See also Szczucki, *Marcin Czechowic, passim*, and SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Jan Niemojewski*, «Polski Słownik Biograficzny», XXIII (1978), pp. 13-16.

⁷⁴ *Ukazanie iż Kościół rzymski papieski nie jest apostołski ani święty, ani jeden, ani powszechny*, [n.p.] 1583. An extensive fragment is reprinted in SZCZUCKI – TAZBIR, *Antologia*, pp. 337-403.

⁷⁵ The letters are published in the Polish translation of T. Bieńkowski in Faust Socyn, *Listy*, I-II, ed. by L. Chmaj, Warszawa, PWN, 1959, *Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych*, II. These are Letter VIII, written in 1581 (vol. I, pp. 59-64); Letter XXXIV from 1587 (vol. II, pp. 7-11); and Letter XXXVI, also from 1587 (vol. II, pp. 21-34). [Some of the letters to and from Niemojewski (in latin) are published in Fausti Socini Senensis, *Opera omnia in duos tomos distincta*, Irenopoli, post annum Domini 1656, vol. I, pp. 397-423 (now also in anastatic printing ed. by E. Scribano)].

ment, criticism, and courageous thinking as well as his willingness to draw very bold conclusions from the biblical material analysed.

In his critical studies on the text of the Bible, Budny reached a position which was widely recognised by Bible scholars only three hundred years after his death⁷⁶, as observed by the U.S. historian of Unitarianism, E. M. Wilbur. This is an exaggerated opinion, most likely developed on the basis of H. Merczyng's interesting yet insufficiently critical *Szymon Budny jako krytyk tekstów biblijnych* [SB as an exegete of biblical texts] (Kraków 1913)⁷⁷. Equally exaggerated is another opinion expressed in Wilbur's text, namely that of all the religious thinkers of the time active on Polish soil, Budny was the one who would have felt most at home with contemporary (i.e. 20th-century) Unitarianism⁷⁸. At any rate, these assessments reveal that the American historian of Unitarianism was in a way fascinated with Budny. Stanisław Kot, who was a friend of Wilbur's⁷⁹, testifies that one of the motivations for the American's excellent mastery of Polish was, among others, his wish to read Budny's texts in their original language⁸⁰.

Kot's views on Budny's oeuvre and its significance evolved over time. When Kot was publishing Budny's book *O urządzie miecza używającym* [*On the office of wielding a sword*] (1932), he did not regard the latter too highly as a religious thinker. In the foreword to this edition, Kot wrote (p. XII) that the theological arguments included in Budny's book "demonstrate neither sharpness nor subtlety". It should be added, however, that Kot – at the time already a great expert in the social and political ideology of Polish Arians –

⁷⁶ "He [Budny] early reached and announced positions in both biblical criticism and doctrine that were not overtaken until three centuries after his time" (*A History of Unitarianism, Socinianism and its Antecedents*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press 1945, p. 378).

⁷⁷ Two approaches presented in the debate on this book by Merczyng, A. Brückner's (1914-1915) and J. Szeruda's (1921), are succinctly discussed by K. Górski in his study of Budny, in *Studia nad dziejami polskiej literatury antytrynitarskiej* [Studies on the history of Polish antitrinitarian literature], p. 141, footnote 1. For Budny's study, see pp. 141-196.

⁷⁸ "Budny was perhaps the ablest, as he was the most fearless and consistent of the thinkers that our movement produced in Polish lands [...] and of all the religious leaders of his period, he is the one that would feel most at home in the Unitarian movement of the twentieth century", p. 378.

⁷⁹ Importantly, Wilbur translated Kot's by now classic monograph *Ideologia polityczna i społeczna Braci Polskich zwanych arianami* (1932) from Polish into English. The English translation was released as an extended version under a slightly different title *Socinianism in Poland. The Social and Political Ideas of the Polish Antitrinitarians in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, Boston, Starr King Press, 1957.

⁸⁰ Kot observed: "Prof. E. M. Wilbur, der kürzlich verstorbene amerikanische Gelehrte und bedeutendste Historiker der unitarischen Bewegung, der eigens polnisch lernte, um unter anderem auch Budnys Werke im Original lesen zu können", in *Szymon Budny, Der grösste Häretiker Litauens im 17. Jahrhundert*, p. 114.

was not yet aware of the theological complexities of the doctrine of Polish Unitarianism. Occasionally, he even made major mistakes concerning these matters⁸¹. Later, Kot grew more conversant with this area and changed his view of Budny's role and significance within the Polish Unitarian movement. He expressed this change of stance a few years later, when he reported in *Anglo-polonica*⁸² the results of his research into the English archives and documents related to the propaganda of Polish Brethren in England. One of the more intriguing documents that Kot came across at the time was Budny's letter from Łosk (dated 4 May 1574) to London. The addressee was John Foxe, an English historian and the author of a text about the persecution of Protestants in England during the reign of Mary Tudor (Basel 1563) – a book which was widely distributed in Europe at that time. The letter was inspired by the Englishman Ralph Rutter, who was staying in Lithuania at that time, and it reached its addressee through him, although we do not know the circumstances under which this took place⁸³.

The text is fascinating in many respects. First, it casts light on the intellect of Budny himself, revealing him to be a man with wide horizons and an openness to the world. At a time when he is engaged in biblical studies and disputes with his fellow believers, he did not lose sight of what was happening in distant regions from the Republic of Poland, in both the East and the West. This Arian minister, who seemingly lived in a far-flung corner of the world – in towns such as Chołchło, Zasław and Łosk, distant from centres of intellectual life – managed nonetheless to keep abreast of what was happening on the River Thames. Rutter was in fact surprised by Budny's thorough knowledge of the political and religious relations in England, which the latter brandishes in his letter to Foxe. Second, the letter showcases his excellent writing skills: in a few pages, the author was able to expertly demon-

⁸¹ Yet, for example, in the foreword discussed above, Kot observes that Budny was excluded from the Unitarian congregation of Małopolska for denying Christ's eternal nature. Negation of Christ's pre-existence was in fact a common position then among all Polish Unitarians.

⁸² *Anglo-Polonica. Angielskie źródła rękopiśmienne do dziejów stosunków kulturalnych Polski z Anglią* [Anglo-Polonica. English manuscript sources for the history of the cultural relations between Poland and England]. Nauka Polska 20, Warszawa, Kasa im. Mianowskiego, 1935. See also *Oddziaływanie Braci Polskich zwanych socynjanami w Anglii* [The influence of the Polish Brethren called 'Socinians' in England], Warszawa 1936 (reprinted from «Reformacja w Polsce», VII-VIII (1935-1936)).

⁸³ *Oddziaływanie Braci Polskich... w Anglii* [The influence of the Polish Brethren called 'Socinians' in England], pp. 5-7; for the full text of the letter printed in the Annex (*Źródła do historii propagandy Braci Polskich w Anglii* [Sources for the history of the Polish Brethren propaganda in England]), see pp. 31-38.

strate the principal tenets of the doctrine of the Polish Unitarians. Third, the letter includes the outcomes of Budny's own reflections on biblical texts, which led him to believe that Jesus was the natural son of Joseph. However, the author – somewhat hypocritically – neglected to mention that his view was not embraced by other Polish Unitarians.

In 1956, when Kot published his small monograph on Budny⁸⁴, he already held a high opinion of the latter as an activist and writer. Perhaps this radical change in view was due (regardless of the researcher's own in-depth studies) to Kot's acquaintance with Konrad Górski's excellent monograph from 1949⁸⁵, in which the author, an eminent expert on the theology of 16th-century Polish antitrinitarianism, thoroughly examines Budny's oeuvre.

We may summarise our preliminary remarks as follows: although we know today that the fascination with Budny, as seen with Wilbur, was based on premises that were not adequately substantiated or even incorrect, we can nonetheless agree with the claim that among the Polish antitrinitarians of the 16th century, Budny was probably the most interesting and certainly the most distant figure from sectarianism. His extensive comparative studies of the biblical codes testify not only to his historical and philosophical erudition, but also to his expertise in the field of Bible studies carried out in the Orthodox Church. In fact, Budny seemed to possess the attitude of a scholar who attempts to grasp – without preconceived convictions – the genuine meaning of the text under study. However, the essential content of the theological doctrine itself, which Budny teaches in *O przedniejszych wiary chrystyjańskiej artikulech* [*On the primary articles of the Christian faith*], his main work devoted to theological matters, does not differ significantly from the Unitarian doctrine espoused by Grzegorz Paweł, Czechowic, and Niemojewski. One difference is that the three authors mentioned above did not accept the claim that Jesus was 'Joseph's progeny'. While this claim was not put forth in a naturalist manner (more on which to follow), it was at any rate deemed unpalatable by the Unitarians of Raków and Lublin in the manner by which Budny proposed it.

The second sphere of views, against the background of which a clash between Budny and the Małopolska Unitarians was bound to occur, were the issues of social ethics. Although Budny zealously embraced the condemnation of child baptism as theological nonsense, he rejected the whole superstructure of Anabaptist origin connected with this view, making reference to

⁸⁴ *Szymon Budny, der grösste Häretiker* (see footnote 86).

⁸⁵ GÓRSKI, *Studia nad dziejami*, pp. 141-196 (see footnote 1).

behaviour in social and political life. Budny was common-sensical in these opinions, which were most likely similar to those espoused by Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski in *De republica emendanda*. Budny admired Frycz and repeatedly expressed this sentiment.

Thus, in summary, since Budny's mentality did not fit in with the Raków and Lublin congregation, conflict was inevitable. We will report on the course and effects of this disagreement in the subsequent discussion of Budny's own texts and editorial work.

Budny's own texts, or the publications to which he contributed but did not pen himself, can be divided into two separate groups. The first (group a) comprises strictly theological writings, while the second (group b) consists of texts addressing socio-political issues. While this is our somewhat artificial attempt at an effective division, it can adequately serve the purpose of facilitating discussion of the subject.

As far as the group of strictly theological writings is concerned (group a), we shall first list the texts that have long been known and discussed. These are, in chronological order:

1. A book about the conception of the Son of God. We do not know its full title or place of publication, for no copy has been preserved. However, we can be certain that it was released in print before 1570⁸⁶. It was here that Budny put forth the idea that Joseph was Jesus's biological father.

2. Edition of the Bible in his own translation, done entirely independently. The printing of this text, which comprised the Old and New Testaments, began in Nieśwież and was completed in Zasław in 1572. However, Budny did not consider this edition to be his own, as the publishers censored parts of the work, omitting – among other segments – the translator's foreword and commentaries to the New Testament.

3. In 1574, Budny published a new edition of the New Testament in Łosk. It contained both the comments that were cut from the previous edition, as well as the translator's preface, in which he made very important remarks on his translation method.

4. In 1576, Budny published his most significant theological text, *O przedniejszych wiary chrystyjańskiej artikulech*. This work contains the theological doctrine concerning mainly the Holy Trinity, as well as polemics with the Ditheists. It is preceded by a concise creed – the quintessence of Budny's Unitarian views. This book, which has been preserved in a unique

⁸⁶ See GÓRSKI, *Szymon Budny*, p. 146, and S. KOT, *Szymon Budny*, p. 74.

copy at the Czartoryski Library, was reissued in 1989 in the series *Biblioteka Pisarzy Reformacyjnych* (XVI) with an introduction by L. Szczucki.

Let us move on to information about Budny's writings encountered as late as the 1970s. His texts were discovered and published in Florence in 1977 by the Italian historian Massimo Firpo, following the path indicated by S. Kot. The sensational details and circumstances of this discovery will be omitted here; the intrigued reader may find them in Firpo's book⁸⁷. Firpo established that, in 1575, Budny published a book in Łosk containing, for instance, his two theological texts. The first one, entitled *Ad Argumenta ... Grochowii, quibus duas in uno eodemque Christo nititur ostendere naturas S. Budnaei brevis ... responsio*⁸⁸, was in fact a scathing criticism of the extensive *De aeterno Dei filio* (1568) by Josias Simler, a renowned Calvinist Zurich-based theologian; it was presented under pretext of a polemic with the arguments of lesser-known Polish theologian Stanisław Grochowski. In his text, Simler combated the tenets of contemporary antitrinitarianism. Budny's other work, *Brevis demonstratio quod Christus non sit ipse Deus qui est Pater nec eidem aequalis*⁸⁹, contains a concise overview of Unitarianism.

The content of this short treatise has been known since 1936, as it was published in the aforementioned source texts on the propaganda of the Polish Brethren in England by

Stanisław Kot⁹⁰. However, the publication of this document at the time was a rather special event, as Kot did not have access to the original text or its copy. He reconstructed its contents entirely on the basis of a book polemicising with Arians, published in Königsberg in 1575 by the Lutheran theologian Johannes Wigand. In the book (*Nebulae arianae...*), Wigand, to facilitate his task, quotes the paragraphs of the criticised text one by one and proceeds to refute them.

One might wonder about the basis on which the Unitarian text, with which some Lutheran theologian from Ducal Prussia argues, was included in the collection of documents relating to the propaganda of the Polish Brethren

⁸⁷ M. FIRPO, *Antitrinitari nell'Europa orientale del '500. Nuovi testi di Szymon Budny, Niccolò Paruta e Iacopo Paleologo*, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1977, pp. 118-120. The book is discussed in depth by L. SZCZUCKI, «Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce», XXIV (1979), pp. 161-171 (text *Antytrynitaryzm w Europie wschodniej* [Antitrinitarian in East Europe]).

⁸⁸ Firpo reprints the text in the abovequoted book, pp. 289-328 and convincingly demonstrates that it is identical to the treatise mentioned by SANDIUS *Libellus de duabus naturis in Christo*, believed to be lost.

⁸⁹ FIRPO, *Antitrinitarii*, reprint pp. 361-364.

⁹⁰ *Oddziaływanie Braci Polskich*, pp. 38-41.

... in England. In fact, the antitrinitarian theses contained in this text were propagated in these areas (e.g. among students at the University of Königsberg) by the Englishman Ralph Rutter. As it turns out, Budny imbued him with his theological theses to such an extent that the Englishman became an emissary of his views. It should be added that Wigand correctly guessed that Rutter was not the author of the text that he was distributing, but the theologian was unable to identify the actual author. Kot easily guessed that the author was none other than Budny, and Firpo's discovery ultimately corroborated this hypothesis.

The book under discussion, which Budny published in the spring of 1575, contained (apart from his own texts) one more treatise, placed in the very middle of the publication. This was a treatise by the renowned Italian antitrinitarian Nicolò Paruta⁹¹, which summarised in eleven theses the theological justification of the Unitarian position. Importantly, Paruta represents a type of radical Unitarianism known as nonadorantism.

Barely three years after the publication of the book, in 1578, Budny released its second edition in Łosk. This time, he added a new treatise to the book, without revealing the identity of the author. This omission was significant and justified. Firpo convincingly demonstrated that the text *Assertionum Josiae Simleri de duabus in Christo naturis confutationes*⁹², completed in Krakow on 30 April 1576, was penned by the famous Greek heretic Jacob Palaeologus⁹³. This incontrovertibly proves the close contact between Szymon Budny and Palaeologus, which was regarded unfavourably by the Małopolska Unitarians.

From the very beginning, Budny was unambiguous as far as social ethics is concerned (i.e. the group b writings); during the synods, he openly opposed the social and political ideology of the Arian radicals. Around 1578, in his disputes with the congregation of Małopolska, Budny gave what he thought to be irrefutable arguments on this subject which had been put forth by ... Palaeologus. The matter that we will turn to shortly has been well

⁹¹ FIRPO, *Antitrinitarii*, pp. 329-360.

⁹² *Ibidem*, pp. 365-399. It may be necessary to explain here where the title of the text in question comes from and why Budny was interested in publishing it. Soon after the publication of the first Italian edition of the book, it was delivered by Polish Calvinists to Simler in Zurich. He almost immediately penned its refutation, focusing almost exclusively on the polemic with Budny. Simler published the refutation in Zurich under the title *Assertio orthodoxae doctrinae de duabus naturis Christi... opposita blasphemis et sophismatibus Sim. Budnaei in Lithuania evulgatis* (1575). Simler's text was noticed by the Unitarian community and provoked an almost immediate, decisive reply in the form of a treatise entitled *Confutationes*, referred to earlier.

⁹³ FIRPO, pp. 167-185; see especially p. 185 for a short conclusion.

known since its broad discussion by Kot in 1932; although it has been widely described in relevant literature since then, we must nonetheless mention it here. We will account for it briefly, referring the interested reader to the secondary sources provided in the footnotes⁹⁴.

As we noted earlier, in 1572, Grzegorz Paweł criticised Palaeologus's text *De bello sententia* in his own treatise, in which he promoted the tenets of his own circles by disproving the Greek writer's claims. Palaeologus subsequently replied with an extensive and scathing critique of Grzegorz's text. The entire polemic (consisting in 1. Palaeologus's *De bello sententia*, 2. the reply to this text by Grzegorz Paweł, and 3. Palaeologus's counter-reply) was not published then, instead circulating in copies which Budny did not have. Having made up his mind, Budny formally applied to the Lublin congregation to make these copies available, laying bare his intention to have them printed. The addressees of his request, uncomfortable with re-issuing the polemic, turned him down. He then turned directly to Palaeologus (who was staying in Moravy at that time) and before long received both the manuscripts and consent for their publication from the author. In 1580, Budny published the entire polemic in Łosk under the title *Defensio verae sententiae...* and arrived triumphantly at the Lublin synod with a copy of the text, wishing to present it to the leaders of the congregation. Neither Czechowic nor Niemojewski accepted the book, citing that Budny had proved to be disloyal and in breach of congregation discipline by publishing it against the official position of the congregation authorities. A copy of the book was gracefully accepted by Faustus Socinus, who did not belong to the congregation but attended the synod as a guest and an observer. The following year, Socinus published a long book in which he sequentially refuted Palaeologus's views from the position of the Raków community. The congregation authorities did not seem to dwell on the matter for too long, especially since Budny agreed to revise some of his theology during the Lusławice synod of 1582 under strong pressure from the discussants. This was possibly a ruse on his part; unbeknownst to them, he was already preparing another surprise. In 1583, he published in Łosk an extensive book in Polish entitled *O urzędzie miecza używającym* (re-published by Kot in 1932), which presents the entire genesis and course of the dispute concerning social ethics among Polish anti-trinitarians. In the book, Budny demonstrates, sometimes in a cunning and derisive manner, that the theses of the socio-political ideology of the Arian

⁹⁴ KOT, *Ideologia polityczna i społeczna*, pp. 36-47 and 55-56; SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic*, pp. 105-106; KOT, *Szymon Budny*, pp. 100-102.

radicals are incorrect – both from a religious position (e.g. erroneous usage of arguments derived from the Bible) and from a socio-political one.

This was more than the leaders of the Raków-Lublin congregation were ready to bear. At the Węgrów synod in 1584, Budny was officially removed from the Church.

It is assumed that the act of excommunication took place only because Budny had lost the support of his protector Jan Kiszka under unknown circumstances. As a result, he was also deprived of access to the printing house in Łosk and it is like that he also found himself in financial trouble.

All these circumstances compelled Budny to ‘go to Canossa’. At the Brest synod in 1588, he expressed repentance and regret, condemned his own publications, and accepted the official position of the Church on matters of both theology and social ethics. A year later, a new edition of his translation of the New Testament was published, one which he amended according to the doctrine enforced by the Church.

A few years later, on 13 January 1593, Budny died in Wiśniewo (south-east of Oszmiany, near Łosk).

These last details – i.e. on the revised New Testament edition as well as the date of Budny’s death – came to light only after the Second World War. An old print containing the new edition of the New Testament was found by accident immediately after the war, in 1946, by Fr Prof. Ludwik Zaleski⁹⁵, and the exact date and place of Budny’s death was established and announced in 1956 by S. Kot⁹⁶.

9. *Radical heterodoxy of the 1570s and 1580s*

Budny’s theological views were by no means extreme at the time. Circles of religious radicals promoted views which – although venerating Jesus as a figure appointed by God to play a more prominent role – denied him any attributes of divinity and contradicted the fact of his resurrection. Under this approach, Jesus became at most one of many prophets and moral teachers. Since these thinkers, who rejected faith in the divine authority of the New Testament, did not in the least question the divinity of the Old Testament, they were labelled Judaizers. This was not always a just label; although a

⁹⁵ *Tajemnica Szymona Budnego* [The riddle of SB], Lublin, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1946.

⁹⁶ KOT, *Ideologia*, pp. 111-113.

few of them did indeed approach Mosaism in their thinking, the vast majority held stances that had little to do with Mosaism.

One influential Judaizer in Poland was Daniel Bieliński (d. 1591)⁹⁷. Having gone through various stages of religious evolution from Catholicism through Calvinism to Unitarianism, at a certain point of this journey, he questioned the credibility of the entire New Testament. In a treatise written in Polish, which circulated in 1574 as a manuscript, Bieliński claims that there are easily discernible, evident contradictions between the Old and New Testaments. These include the fact that the apostles of the Old Testament prophecies, in referring to the Messiah, attempted at all costs and contrary to the facts to match him to the person of Jesus. Moreover, the testimonies regarding the resurrection of Jesus lack credibility.

The New Testament, therefore, cannot be regarded as a reliable source of information arising from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Incidentally, Bieliński did not persist in these radical views; he soon 'revoked' them and returned to the Calvinistic positions.

More interesting and better confirmed are the views of another Silesian, Marcin Seidel of Oława, who, like Bieliński, was associated with the community of the Polish Brethren in the first half of the 1580s. In his letters to the Arian congregation authorities around 1582, Seidel elucidates why he could not accept their religious position despite his high regard for the Polish Brethren movement. In his opinion, this position is based on false premises. It assumes as a well-proven and incontrovertible fact that Jesus is the Messiah promised by the prophets in the Old Testament. Seidel, however, was convinced that this view is profoundly flawed. The Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah were not fulfilled in the person of Jesus, contrary to the Apostles' statements. Therefore, The New Testament, which contains such unreliable accounts and misleading testimonials, cannot be treated as a document of divine revelation, in contrast to the Old Testament.

Moreover, despite recognising its divine authority, Seidel clearly states that he does not accept the Jewish religion. According to him, the religion does not involve faith in the Messiah, "for he was not promised to me, but to the Jews. Nor am I affected by the commandments concerning ceremonies and rituals, because they were given to the Jewish people. Besides, the Jews did not treat them as the essence of divine worship, either, but merely as something to prepare them for that worship. For the true worship of God

⁹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 75; CHMAJ, *Ślązacy wśród Braci Polskich*, pp. 25-29; SZCZUCKI, *Marcin Czechowic, passim*.

consists in keeping the moral commandments, which are indeed easy to find in the Old Testament". However, Seidel himself accepts these directives of moral conduct insofar as they are align with the standard of morality inherent in every human being. Although this norm is sometimes overshadowed in the human mind, it should nevertheless form a benchmark for the truthfulness of religious and ethical teachings⁹⁸.

These radical religious views, which already extend far beyond Christianity, were treated by the leadership of the Arian congregation as a *curiosum* rather than a doctrine that could wear down the ideological coherence of the congregation. The real threat to such cohesiveness, on the other hand, were more moderate views, as these held appeal to the members of the church, especially those who were more critically disposed. The position in question was referred to as nonadorantism, an umbrella term referring to a diverse host of ideas. Its common denominator was that its followers, while they accepted the New Testament as a genuine source of Revelation without reservation, were firmly opposed to offering divine worship in any form or directing their prayers to Jesus as a person. According to these nonadorantists, only God himself can be the addressee of such reverence and worship.

Nonadorantism proved especially attractive among the Transylvanian antitrinitarians. In Poland, as noted earlier, it appealed to Szymon Budny, who was at least suspected of such sympathies. Yet the most vocal proponent of nonadorantism was Jacob Palaeologus, who was mentioned above in another context.

Palaeologus, who was active in some Central European countries (namely Transylvania, Moravy, Bohemia, and Poland), was a broad-spectrum thinker and the creator of a Unitarian system that competed with the Socinians. This latter point, however, will not be discussed here, and the interested reader is kindly asked to refer to the monograph on Palaeologus by Lech Szczucki, which furnishes a comprehensive literature on the subject⁹⁹.

Apart from Palaeologus, who made an indelible imprint on Poland, nonadorantism was also promoted by foreign visitors to the country, mainly

⁹⁸ Ogonowski, *Socynianizm a Oświecenie*, pp. 338-344. [About Martin Seidel, see now M. Seidel, *Origo et fundamenta religionis Christianae. Un tratado clandestino del siglo XVII*, ed. by F. Socas and P. Toribio, Madrid, Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2017].

⁹⁹ L. Szczucki, *W kręgu myślicieli heretyckich* [In the circle of heretical thinkers], Warszawa, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1972. The part dedicated to Palaeologus, *Heterodoksja i polityka (Jakuba z Chios – Paleologa losy i doktryna)* [Heterodoxy and politics (Jacob from Chios – Paleolog's fate and doctrine)], pp. 11-21.

Germans such as Christian Francken¹⁰⁰, Adam Neuser¹⁰¹, and Matthias Vehe-Glirius¹⁰². Their presence also resulted in some publications. However, this theme goes far beyond the subject matter of this book.

Budny's defeat and subsequent revocation were the final victory for the leadership of the Raków and Lublin congregations. However, this triumph could not be fully exploited: at least since the second half of the 1580s, a new allegation of theological disputes arose in the church. This was due to the writing and teaching activities of Faustus Socinus, a guest from Italy, who had previously provided such valuable services to the Raków and Lublin Churches in the polemics of Palaeologus, and partly also to Budny. This guest was treated at first by the church leaders, Czechowic and Niemojewski, as a valuable assistant who supported them with his theological knowledge. He quickly began to win sympathy and respect in the church, and soon gained authority, especially among the younger members. He also grew increasingly bolder in the proclaiming his own views. Admittedly, they fit perfectly within the framework of Unitarianism, but Czechowic and Niemojewski must have noted with regret and horror that this Socinian Unitarianism deviated profoundly from their own standpoints on important matters while giving off the appearance of concurrence. In the polemics undertaken with him by the old leaders of the congregation, the guest from Italy gained a clear advantage, and with it an increasing number of supporters. Sometime in the mid-1590s, Czechowic and Niemojewski resigned themselves to the fact that although they were still the formal heads of the Church, in reality, Socinus was slowly becoming an oracle in theological matters. Niemojewski's death in 1598 finally sealed the case of Socinus's leadership. *Nolens volens*, this fact had to be accepted by the aging Czechowic, who died in 1613, nine years after his last opponent. Polish Unitarianism thus became Socinianism.

Translated by Marcin Turski

¹⁰⁰ See SZCZUCKI, *Filozofia i autorytet (casus Chrystiana Franckena)* [Philosophy and authority (the case of Christian Francken)], in *W kręgu myślicieli heretyckich*, pp. 122-195. [For more on Christian Francken, see also J. SIMON, *Die Religionsphilosophie Christian Franckens 1552-1610? Atheismus und radikale Reformation im Frühneuzeitlichen Ostmitteleuropa*, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz Verlag, 2008; M. BIAGIONI, *Christian Francken e la crisi intellettuale della Riforma*, in C. FRANCKEN, *Opere a stampa*, ed. by M. Biagioni, Roma, Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2014, pp. 1-150].

¹⁰¹ L. SZCZUCKI, *Adam Neuser*, «Polski Słownik Biograficzny», XXII, pp. 696-698.

¹⁰² A fundamental biography was dedicated to him by the Hungarian scholar Róbert Dán (d. 1986), *Matthias Vehe-Glirius. Life and Work of a Radical Antitrinitarian with His Collected Writings*, Budapest Leiden, Brill, 1982 (Studia Humanitatis 4).

ANTITRINITARIANISM IN POLAND BEFORE SOCINUS.
A HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Summary

The paper takes an in-depth look at an early, pre-Socinian stage of Polish antitrinitarianism. First, it outlines the historical reasons for the emergence of antitrinitarianism in Poland. Second, it explains how the early Polish antitrinitarians were able to develop a view substantial enough to provide a basis for Socinianism, a philosophical and religious movement with a pan-European reach. Third, it discusses similarities and differences between the two stages of Polish "Arianism", pre-Socinian and Socinian.

Keywords: Antitrinitarianism; Arianism; Socinianism.

ANTYTRYNITARYZM W POLSCE PRZED SOCYNEM.
RYS HISTORYCZNY

Streszczenie

Artykuł prezentuje dogłębnie wczesną, przedsocyniańską, fazę polskiego antytrynitaryzmu. Po pierwsze, próbuje wyjaśnić historyczne powody, dla których w Polsce pojawił się antytrynitaryzm. Po drugie, wskazuje na racje, dla których ta wczesna faza polskiego antytrynitaryzmu, stała się na tyle mocna doktrynalnie, że mógł się w niej zakotwiczyć socynianizm, ruch filozoficzno-religijny o ogólnoeuropejskim zasięgu. Po trzecie, omawia podobieństwa i różnice w poglądach filozoficzno-religijnych głoszonych w obu fazach polskiego „arianizmu”: przedsocyniańskiej i socyniańskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: antytrynitaryzm; arianizm; socynianizm.