

Articles

Hans-Jürgen Bömelburg, The Prussian Lands as an Early Modern Denominational Landscape of European Significance. Confessionalisation, Plurality of Confessions, Denominational Fundamentalism and European Repercussions (1523-1730).

In Western Europe and the USA there has been a renewed reflection upon the historical significance of religious factors, both in the humanities and in the field of cultural studies, with these factors being examined in their entire historical depth. Among the most important themes of Prussian history - one which already attracted the interest of contemporaries but which, in the twentieth century, became neglected or prejudiced towards one particular national-denominational interpretation – is the religious diversity of early modern Prussia. In this article, the author investigates questions of confessional differentiation and the plurality of denominations, inter-confessional conflicts and denominational fundamentalism, examples of co-existence, irenicism, and approaches to the treaties on religious peace, as well as examining the international impact of the Prussian denominational landscape. He calls for the development of a comparative history in Central and Eastern Europe which would consider the impact of religious factors on culture, law and politics.

Hans Poschmann ‚Joy in Suffering‘. The St Jodocus Altar of Sątopy

The red-brick church at Sątopy (Santoppen), which still stands today, was probably constructed in the late-fourteenth and early-fifteenth centuries, and is based stylistically on the collegiate church at Dobre Miasto (Guttstadt). The late-Gothic Sątopy polyptych is counted among ‚the most significant remaining examples of medieval altar art in Warmia (Ermland)‘ (Franz Dittrich). In 1968, Ludomira Brzozowska conducted a thorough analysis of the form and content of the altar’s images. Through its inspection of the four images of St Jodocus, this article highlights the importance of this altar in terms of devotional history.

The four images depict the saint seeking to emulate the life of Christ. The St Jodocus of Sątopy, however, is not someone who takes refuge from the world in solitude, but rather a saint who turns to the world in humility and compassion, and seeks to serve it. The knightly motto, ‚Joy in Suffering‘ (‚In Leiden fro‘), on the depiction of the so-called ‚miracle of the spring‘, can be understood as an invocation strictly to follow Christ’s example.

After the Second World War, the upkeep of the altar was assumed by Polish conservators. The maintenance of the images of the Frankish saint is an obligation of European dimensions.