

Zbigniew Ogonowski, *Socynianizm. Dzieje, poglądy, oddziaływanie*, Warszawa 2015, Oficyna Wydawnicza Aspra-JR, Instytut Historii Nauki im. Ludwika i Aleksandra Birkenmajerów Polskiej Akademii Nauk, ss. 541

From its emergence in the late-sixteenth century, Socinianism, which had developed out of the ideas of the Italian non-conformists Lelio (1525–1562) and Fausto Sozzini (1539–1604), and which fundamentally reshaped the understanding of Christianity up to that point, was a very controversial religious phenomenon. As the established confessions sought to discredit it intellectually, and as adherence to it was deemed a punishable offence in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation because of its rationalizing and historicising critique of the dogma of the Trinity, Socinianism only succeeded in establishing institutional Church structures in Poland-Lithuania. However, even in the relatively tolerant Polish-Lithuanian Republic of the Nobility, where Socinians constituted roughly one percent of the population in the early-seventeenth century,¹ this blossoming of Socinianism did not last long. The Socinian academy at Raków, which was established in 1602, and the Raków printing press were both closed down by a decree of the Sejm in 1638. The Socinians themselves were expelled from Poland-Lithuania twenty years later, also by a decree of the Sejm. The short period, however, in which Socinianism was permitted to develop in public in a more or less unhindered way in Poland-Lithuania was nonetheless sufficient to let circulate its ideas across the whole of Europe. With the help of Socinian networks, books printed in Raków² spread across the Holy Roman Empire and into the Netherlands and England, where they gave rise to intensive public debates.

The effect these debates had on the intellectual and cultural heritage of Europe explains the interest which the topic has attracted internationally since the emergence of historical-critical research on Socinianism in the nineteenth century. Academic opinion in Germany, the English-speaking world, Italy, the Netherlands and Poland is now in agreement that Socinianism with its emphasis on reason before faith, its undermining of traditional dogma including the concept of original sin, and its emphasis on the idea of tolerance, laid important groundwork for the Enlightenment.³ In the twentieth

¹ W. Urban, “Losy Braci Polskich od założenia Rakowa do wygnania z Polski”, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 1 (1956), pp. 103–139, see pp. 129f.

² On the publications of the Raków printing press, see: A. Kawecka-Gryczowa, *Ariańskie oficyny wydawnicze Rodeckiego i Strenackiego. Dzieje i Bibliographia / Les Imprimeurs des antitrinitariens polonais Rodecki et Strenacki. Histoire et Bibliographie* (Wrocław et al., 1974).

³ See the overview of research literature to date in: K. Daugirdas, *Die Anfänge des Sozinianismus. Genese und Eindringen des historisch-ethischen Religionsmodells in den universitären Diskurs der Evangelischen in Europa* (Göttingen, 2016), pp. 12–39.

century, Polish academics, who in the interwar period devoted increasing attention to the Socinians who had once lived in their country as well as to Polish-Lithuanian Antitrinitarians in general, played a particularly important role in establishing this historical fact. From the 1920s onward, Ludwik Chmaj (1888–1959),⁴ Konrad Górski (1895–1990)⁵, Stanisław Kot (1885–1975)⁶ and the latter's students⁷ laid solid foundations, upon which scholars such as Zbigniew Ogonowski, Lech Szczucki, Janusz Tazbir, Wacław Urban and others were able to build in the post-war period. In the light of this research, Socinianism appeared as a progressive phenomenon that was made possible by the tolerance of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic of the Nobility. It had emerged in Poland-Lithuania out of the ideas of Italian heretics and with its rationalist ideas which emphasized tolerance was to have a marked effect on the European Enlightenment.⁸ Polish research consistently concentrated on systematically closing the gaps that remained in historical knowledge regarding the individual representatives of (late) Socinianism,⁹

⁴ L. Chmaj, *Samuel Przypkowski na tle prądów religijnych XVII wieku* (Kraków, 1927); id., *Bracia Polscy. Ludzie, idee, wpływy* (Warszawa, 1957).

⁵ K. Górski, *Grzegorz Paweł z Brzezin. Monografia z dziejów polskiej literatury arianskiej XVI wieku* (Kraków, 1929); id., *Studia nad dziejami polskiej literatury antytrinitarskiej XVI wieku* (Kraków, 1949).

⁶ S. Kot, *Ideologia polityczna i społeczna Braci Polskich zwanych Arjanami* (Warszawa, 1932); id., "Le mouvement anti-trinitaire au XVIe et au XVIIe siècle", *Humanisme et Renaissance* 4 (1937), pp. 16–58, 109–156; id., "Oddziaływanie Braci Polskich w Anglii", *Reformacja w Polsce* 7/8 (1935/1936), pp. 217–244.

⁷ For example, the influential article by Marek Wajsblum, "Dyteiści małopolscy (Stanisław Farnowski i Farnowianie)", *Reformacja w Polsce* 5 (1928), pp. 32–97.

⁸ Z. Ogonowski, *Socynianizm polski* (Warszawa, 1960), pp. 7f, 107f; id., *Socynianizm a Oświecenie. Studia nad myślą filozoficzno-religijną arian w Polsce XVII wieku* (Warszawa, 1966), pp. 12, 564; id., *Z zagadnień tolerancji w Polsce XVII wieku* (Warszawa, 1958); J. Tazbir, "Stan badań i postulaty w zakresie studiów nad polskim arianizmem", *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej* 6 (1960), pp. 183–198, on this see: p. 190; id., "Polen – die Heimat des Sozinianismus", in: L. Szczucki (ed.), *Socinianism and its Role in the Culture of XVI-th to XVII-th Centuries* (Warszawa et al., 1983), pp. 7–15.

⁹ For example, L. Szczucki, "Aspetti della critica antitrinitaria sociniana (il *De origine Trinitatis* di Tomasz Pisecki)", *Archiwum Historii Filozofii i Myśli Społecznej* 12 (1966), pp. 141–159 (Thomas Pisecki); id., "Socinian historiography in the late 17th century. Benedykt Wiszowaty and his »Medulla historiae ecclesiasticae«", in: F.F. Church, T. George (eds.), *Continuity and Discontinuity in Church History. Essays presented to George Huntston Williams* (Leiden et al., 1979), pp. 285–300 (Benedykt Wiszowaty); id., *Nonkonformiści religijni XVI i XVII wieku. Studia i szkice* (Warszawa, 1993); J. Tazbir, K. Niemirycz. "Studium z dziejów emigracji arianskiej w Niemczech", *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 11 (1966), pp. 101–132; id., *Stanisław Lubieniecki, przywódca arianskiej emigracji* (Warszawa, 1961); id., *Stando lubentius moriar. Biografia Stanisława Lubienieckiego*

its institutions – particularly the academy at Raków¹⁰ – and its demise in Poland-Lithuania in 1658.¹¹ In appraising the contribution of the Socinians to intellectual history, increasing attention was paid to their attitude towards reason and faith, which was examined in greatest detail by the author of the monograph reviewed here.

Indeed, Zbigniew Ogonowski, whose reputation as a historian of philosophy soon extended far beyond his native Poland, displayed a deep knowledge of the ideas of this heterodox grouping from his first longer publications on Socinianism: *Socynianizm polski* (1960) and *Socynianizm a Oświecenie* (1966). Proceeding from the anthropocentric character of the teaching of Fausto Sozzini,¹² which he recognized as adopting a historicising perspective on the Bible,¹³ Ogonowski identified the essential contribution of Sozzini and his successors as lying in their elevation of reason first to the position of judge and subsequently to the position of source of truth in matters of faith. According to Ogonowski, Sozzini had already taken the former step, while the latter step was made during the course of the seventeenth century by Johannes Crell (1590–1633), Joachim Stegmann the Elder (1595–1633) and Andrzej Wiszowaty (1608–1678).¹⁴ Citing the circulation of Socinian books in England as demonstrated by the British Socinianism expert Herbert McLachlan (1876–1958) and parallel developments in the rationalist understanding of religion – which Ogonowski illustrated by comparing the

(Warszawa, 2003); S. Cynarski, “Działalność polityczna i zborowa Jakuba Sienieńskiego”, in: id. (ed.), *Raków, ognisko arianizmu* (Kraków, 1968), pp. 173–194 (Jakub Sienieński); J. Pelc, *Zbigniew Morsztyn, arianin i poeta* (Wrocław et al., 1966).

¹⁰ On Raków and the Raków Academy: L. Kurdybacha, *Z dziejów pedagogiki ariańskiej* (Warszawa, 1958), pp. 38–155; S. Tync, “Zarys dziejów wyższej szkoły braci polskich w Rakowie 1602–1638”, in: Cynarski (ed.), *Raków, ognisko*, pp. 81–172; W. Urban, “Znaczenie Rakowa w siedemnastowiecznym ruchu ariańskim”, in: Cynarski (ed.), *Raków, ognisko*, pp. 195–214.

¹¹ J. Tazbir, “Bracia polscy w latach ‘Potopu’”, in: L. Chmaj (ed.), *Studia nad arianizmem* (Warszawa, 1959), pp. 451–488; id., “Polski kryptoarianizm”, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 10 (1965), pp. 187–211; id., “Die Sozinianer in der zweiten Hälfte des 17. Jahrhunderts”, in: P. Wrzecionko (ed.), *Reformation und Frühaufklärung in Polen. Studien über den Sozinianismus und seinen Einfluß auf das westeuropäische Denken im 17. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen, 1977), pp. 9–77; id., *Bracia polscy na wygnaniu. Studia z dziejów emigracji ariańskiej* (Warszawa, 1977); S. Ochmann, “Sprawa ariańska na sejmach 1661–1662 r.”, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 24 (1979), pp. 109–134.

¹² Ogonowski, *Socynianizm polski*, p. 32: “Jego doktryna jest antropocentryczna.”

¹³ Ogonowski, *Socynianizm a Oświecenie*, pp. 33–51.

¹⁴ Ogonowski, “Der Sozinianismus und die Aufklärung”, in: Wrzecionko (ed.), *Reformation und Frühaufklärung in Polen*, p. 89. On this see also: id., “Teologia naturalna Jana Crella”, *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce* 9 (1964), pp. 139–188.

corresponding discussions by Stegmann, Wiszowaty, Locke and Toland – he argued that Socinianism had made an important contribution to the emergence of the Enlightenment philosophy of religion.¹⁵ He adheres to this evaluation in the study reviewed here,¹⁶ which sets out to provide a comprehensive historical-systematizing overview of the most prominent figures, publications, intellectual developments and effects of Socinianism from its beginnings to the eighteenth century.

Ogonowski begins his account with a “prelude”, in which he outlines pre-Socinian Antitrinitarianism in Poland-Lithuania from its earliest beginnings in the late 1550s to the separation of the three main strands within Antitrinitarianism – the tritheistic strand, the ditheistic strand, and the unitarian strand, the last of which ultimately won out over the others.¹⁷ He starts by sketching the historical context, introducing the most important intellectual and political protagonists in Antitrinitarian developments up to the theologically, socially and politically turbulent phase after the formation of the community at Raków (1569). Of the intellectuals, the author discusses the central figures of early Antitrinitarianism, among whom he includes Petrus Gonesius (Piotr z Goniądza, ca. 1530–1573), Gregorius Paulus Brzezinensis (Grzegorz Paweł z Brzezin, ca. 1525–1591), Giorgio Biandrata (Jan Jerzy Blandrata, 1515 – ca. 1588), Marcin Czechowic (1532–1613), Szymon Budny (ca. 1530–1593), Jan Niemojewski (d. 1598), Stanisław Farnowski (d. 1614), and others. On the political side, particular mention is made of the Lithuanian Grand Chancellor Mikołaj Radziwiłł (1515–1565). He then offers a cross-section of the theological and social-political ideas of pre-Socinian Antitrinitarianism. Building primarily on the insights of Górski regarding theological developments, Ogonowski argues that the pre-Socinian Antitrinitarians were characterized by a religious irrationalism and that they – with the exception of Budny – would also have rejected dialectics.¹⁸ This of course fails to take account of the Latin works of Gonesius, which are characterized by a proto-rationalist hermeneutics developed from nominalism, as well as a mode of argumentation that is carried by syllogisms.¹⁹ Ogonowski describes the social and political ideas of the Antitrini-

¹⁵ Ogonowski, “Der Sozinianismus und die Aufklärung“, pp. 89–112, 147–156.

On this, see also: id., “Wiara i rozum w doktrynach religijnych socynian i Locke’a”, in: Chmaj (ed.), *Studia nad arianizmem*, pp. 425–450.

¹⁶ Z. Ogonowski, *Socynianizm. Dzieje, poglądy, oddziaływanie* (Warszawa, 2015), pp. 249f.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 1–58.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 75f.

¹⁹ See in particular the tract *De Deo et Filio eius* written by Gonesius around 1560, in: I. Dingel (ed.), *Controversia et confessio*, vol. 9: *Antitrinitarische Streitigkeiten. Die tritheistische Phase (1560–1568)*, compiled and edited by K. Daugirdas (Göttingen, 2013), pp. 19–68, 23f; K. Daugirdas, *Andreas Volanus und die Reformation im Großfürstentum Litauen* (Mainz, 2008), pp. 183–192.

tarians by contrasting views which were aligned in a one-sided way with the Sermon on the Mount, as exemplified by Czechowic and others, with the socially conservative position expounded by Budny in his main work on this topic *O urządzie miecza używającym* (1583). The “prelude” concludes with nuanced observations on the issue of tolerance, in which he highlights the intolerant attitude of the socially radical wing of the Antitrinitarians towards Budny on the one hand, and Budny’s plea for the principle of the acceptance of a plurality of views on the other hand.

The rest of the book deals with Socinianism in three steps. First (part I) Ogonowski attempts a person-focused overview of the central Socinian actors and their most significant publications. In the second step (part II), he analyses Socinian views while adopting three focuses – philosophy and theology, tolerance and social-political ideology. The concluding part of the monograph (part III) is a panorama of the enduring effects of Socinian thought in central and western Europe.

The person-focused overview of the central Socinian actors and their most important publications (part I) has the advantage that it makes a new attempt for the first time since the great work of Otto Fock (1819–1872)²⁰ to plot the general historical coordinates for considering the multi-layered conceptual developments in Socinianism over a time period of about 150 years. Ogonowski begins his description of this with an incisive account of the activities of Fausto Sozzini, among whose central works he rightly includes the tracts *Explicatio primae partis primi capituli Ioannis* (ca. 1562/1563), *De Jesu Christo servatore* (1577) and *De statu hominis ante lapsum* (1578) – which he had already written while in Switzerland – as well as the tracts *De sacrae scripturae auctoritate* (1580), *Ad Jacobi Palaeologi librum responsio* (1581), *Praelectiones theologicae* (1592) and *Lectiones sacrae* (1603) – which he wrote in Poland.²¹ Notably in this context, he does not discuss in greater detail Sozzini’s influential response to the Jesuit Jakub Wujek (1540/1541–1597) *Responsio ad libellum Jacobi Wujeki* (1592), which was written in collaboration with Petrus Statorius the Younger (Piotr Stoiński, ca. 1565–1605).

Neither is there any mention of Petrus Statorius the Younger, whom contemporaries referred to as “Sozzini’s apostle”, in the subsequent outline description of the lives of the leading representatives of Socinianism, whose activities Ogonowski divides into three longer periods: the blossoming of Socinianism from 1600 to 1638, the period between the prohibition of activities at Raków in 1638 and the suppression of the Socinian churches in Poland-Lithuania in 1660, and the subsequent activity in exile. Particular mention is

²⁰ O. Fock, *Der Sozinianismus nach seiner Stellung in der Gesamtentwicklung des christlichen Geistes, nach seinem historischen Verlauf und nach seinem Lehrbegriff dargestellt* (Kiel, 1847; reprint: Aalen, 1970).

²¹ Ogonowski, *Socynianizm. Dzieje, poglądy, oddziaływanie*, pp. 95f, 108–110.

made of the contributions of Hieronim Moskorzowski (ca. 1560–1625), Adam Gosławski (ca. 1577–1642), Andrzej Wojdowski (ca. 1565–died 1622/25), Tomasz Pisecki (died 1642), Piotr Morzkowski (died after 1646), Samuel Przyrkowski (ca. 1592–1670), Jonas Schlichting (Jonasz Szlichtyng, ca. 1592–1661), Christoph Ostorodt (died 1611), Valentin Schmalz (1572–1622), Johannes Völkel (ca. 1560–1618), Martin Ruarus (Marcin Ruar, ca. 1588/1589–1657), Johannes Crell, Joachim Stegmann the Elder, Christoph Stegmann (ca. 1598–1646), Andrzej Wiszowaty, Johann Ludwig von Wolzogen (1600–1661), Stanisław Lubieniecki the Younger (1626–1675), Joachim Stegmann the Younger (1618–1678), Daniel Zwicker (1612–1678), Benedykt Wiszowaty (died after 1704), Krzysztof Niemirydz (ca. 1650 – ca. 1710), and Samuel Crell (1660–1747). Ogonowski refers to a whole series of publications which he views as being central works in this context, of which only a small sample can be described here.

For the period from 1602 to 1638, he views the following works as being of fundamental importance: the Raków Catechism; Völkel's compendium *De vera religione libri quinque* with the attached discussion by Crell entitled "De Deo et attributis eius" (published in 1630); Crell's tracts *Ad librum Grotii responsio* (1623), *De uno Deo Patre* (1631) and *Vindiciae pro religionis libertate* (written in 1632 and published in 1637); Stegmann's *Brevis dissertatio* (1633); Przyrkowski's *Disseratio de pace ecclesiae* (1628); Pisecki's tract *De origine Trinitatis* (manuscript); and Schlichting's commentaries on the letters of St. Paul to the Galatians and the Hebrews (published in 1628 and 1634 respectively).²² As the most important publications in the period of the demise of Socinianism in Poland-Lithuania, he identifies Schlichting's works *Confessio fidei* (1642) and *Apologia pro veritate accusata* (1654), Morzkowski's *Politia ecclesiastica* (written around 1646 and published in 1745), Przyrkowski's *Braterska deklaracja* (1646), and Zwicker's *Irenicum irenicorum* (1658).²³ For the phase of exile, Ogonowski makes special mention of *Animadversiones apologeticae in Aculeum Comenii* by Przyrkowski (written after 1660 and printed in 1692), *Stimuli virtutum* (published in 1682) and *Religio rationalis* (published in 1685) by Wiszowaty, *Historia reformationis Polonicae* (published in 1685) and *Compendium veritatis primaevae* (written around 1661) by Lubieniecki, and Samuel Crell's works *Cogitationum novarum de primo et secundo Adamo compendium* (1700) and *Initium Evangelii Johannis* (1726).²⁴

In the subsequent analysis of Socinian perspectives (part II), Ogonowski is completely in his element. He views Fausto Sozzini's thinking as the dawn of religious rationalism, which was guided by two principles: the autonomous composition of religious concepts through human reason and the

²² Ibid., pp. 116–120, 124, 127f.

²³ Ibid., pp. 147, 155, 159f, 169.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 177, 188–195, 199–206, 223–226.

autonomization of morality.²⁵ In his account, the Polish scholar traces with great precision these two fundamental positive goals, which underwent considerable change among Socinians over time. While Sozzini had merely proclaimed the general compatibility of revelation and reason and rejected natural religion, those who came after him modified his ideas to the extent that they reintroduced the concept of a natural religion (Johannes Crell) and elevated human reason to the position of normative arbiter on religious matters (Joachim Stegmann the Elder, Andrzej Wiszowaty).²⁶ The further development within Socinianism of the discourse on the autonomization of morality, which Sozzini had anchored in the absolute freedom of human will, is summarized concisely. Ogonowski's analysis illustrates that Crell in particular became aware of the problems inherent in this religious, and therefore ultimately heteronomous basis for virtue.²⁷

Against this backdrop that aptly depicts the driving force of Socinian thought, Ogonowski discusses the Socinians' critique of dogma and their positive teachings. In his view, the Socinians concentrated on the following points, which they deconstructed by means of rational exegesis: the doctrine of the Trinity, the concept of satisfaction (Christ's atonement for sin), the doctrine of original sin, the concept of predestination, the foreknowledge of God and the concept of eternal punishments.²⁸ A somewhat surprising omission from this list is the critique of the doctrine of the two natures of Jesus Christ, which was generally shared by Christianity from the Council of Chalcedon (451) and which was also a popular target for the attacks of the Socinians.²⁹ As a positive dogmatic concern of the Socinians, Ogonowski identifies specifically unitarian Christology – which is based on the idea that Jesus Christ was a human who serves as a model – and obedience of faith, which essentially is an ethical disposition of believers.³⁰ Also very informative are his observations on the teaching of the Socinians on God and creation, which assume that God has a finite substance located in heaven (Johannes Crell) and that creation occurred out of pre-existing, eternal material (Johannes Völkel). Here Ogonowski also points out how these ideas subsequently influenced the French thinker and crypto-Socinian Noël Aubert de Versé (1645–1714).³¹

Ogonowski devotes a similar amount of space to the development of Socinian concepts of tolerance as he does to their philosophical and theological

²⁵ Ibid., pp. 235.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 235–245.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 250–259, for example p. 257.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 263–282.

²⁹ For example: J. Crell, "De uno Deo Patre" II, 2, 5–8, in: *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum*, vol. 5 (Amsterdam, post 1656), cols. 98b–104a.

³⁰ Ogonowski, *Socynianizm. Dzieje, poglądy, oddziaływanie*, pp. 283, 286.

³¹ Ibid., pp. 297, 300f, 307–309.

positions. Drawing a distinction between civil and church tolerance, he demonstrates that it was primarily Johannes Crell, Samuel Przypkowski and Jonas Schlichting who developed the idea of tolerance in its modern form. While Sozzini had given little consideration to civil tolerance, Crell was primarily concerned with an unrestricted civil freedom of religion, which he justified as a social behavioural norm with religious and moral arguments as well as social and political arguments.³² According to Ogonowski, Przypkowski similarly declared his support for the principle of civil tolerance in his later works, such as *Braterska deklaracja*, and – consequently – also for the separation of church and state. This thought was expanded by Schlichting to the extent that he considered tolerance even for apostates from Christianity, if they remained loyal citizens.³³ The analysis of the views of the Socinians in part II concludes with a brief elucidation of their social and political principles, which exposes the Anabaptist element of withdrawal from political responsibility, which never entirely left Socinianism and which remained strong to the end.³⁴

In his depiction of the influence of Socinian ideas in central and western Europe (part III), Ogonowski first describes the circulation of Socinian literature in the Netherlands and England. In this, he primarily concentrates on the dissemination of various versions of the Raków Catechism and the *Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum*.³⁵ As Ogonowski does not take account of the *Bibliographia sociniana* published in 2004, his description does not adequately reflect the full impact of the Socinian writings in the Netherlands in particular. In the course of the seventeenth century, no less than 150 editions, reprints and Dutch translations of works written by leading Socinians in Poland-Lithuania were published in the Netherlands, as well as 166 Socinian works written in the Netherlands itself and 414 anti-Socinian publications.³⁶ Consequently, the subsequent description of the anti-Socinian reactions of the established Protestant churches in Germany, the Netherlands and England cannot go beyond a brief outline,³⁷ not least because there is an enormous gap in research in this area to date.

Ogonowski illustrates the cautiously sympathetic attitude of so-called liberal Protestantism towards the Socinians by means of a number of examples. In the case of the Netherlands, he cites the Remonstrants and Collegiants in general and Dirk Rafaëlsz. Camphuysen (1586–1627), Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) and Philipp van Limborch (1633–1712) in particular. In the case of England, he gives the examples of the members of the “Tew Circle” around Lucius Cary, 2nd Viscount Falkland (1610–1643),

³² Ibid., pp. 314f, 334–339, 345.

³³ Ibid., pp. 351, 377f, 390f, 399.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 402–405, 412f.

³⁵ Ibid., pp. 423–432.

³⁶ P. Knijff, P. Visser, *Bibliographia Sociniana. A Bibliographical Reference Tool for the Study of Dutch Socinianism and Antitrinitarianism* 2004, pp. 55–216.

³⁷ Ogonowski, *Socynianizm. Dzieje, poglądy, oddziaływanie*, pp. 433–445.

Paul Best (ca. 1590–1657) and the famous “Father of English Unitarianism” John Biddle (1616–1662). Ogonowski also identifies divergent positions with regard to Socinian ideas among the great European thinkers of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. In contrast to Fock and Chmaj, he correctly notes that Socinianism had no discernible influence on Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677).³⁸ In the case of Leibniz, he highlights his good knowledge of, and simultaneous rejection of the most important principles of Socinianism.³⁹ In the case of Pierre Bayle (1647–1706), Ogonowski identifies an objective engagement with Socinian ideas. While Bayle found the positive content of Socinianism to be weak, he thought of their critique of dogma as a convincing one and he shared their understanding of tolerance.⁴⁰ Ogonowski views the thought of John Locke and Isaac Newton’s understanding of God as being very close to Socinianism.⁴¹ The monograph ends with a dense summary of the recognition by German academics in the nineteenth century – such as Otto Fock, David Friedrich Strauss (1808–1874) and Wilhelm Dilthey (1833–1911)⁴² – of the contribution which Socinianism has made to the history of ideas, in a sense bringing the discussion full circle. Together with the third volume of Adolf Harnack’s (1851–1930) *Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte* (first published in 1890), it was the works of these scholars that in no small way prompted Polish researchers like Ludwik Chmaj in the first half of the twentieth century to attempt to understand this immensely influential legacy of the Socinians, who had once called Poland-Lithuania their home.

That research on the legacy of Socinianism continued and achieved greater qualitative depth in the second half of the twentieth century is due in no small part to the important contribution of Zbigniew Ogonowski himself. His numerous works are among the best produced by Polish academics in this area in the post-war period. This applies also to the monograph discussed here, which gives an excellent account of the mechanisms of Socinian thought, its historical contexts and the influence it exerted. In *Socynianizm. Dzieje, poglądy, oddziaływanie*, Ogonowski has produced a synthesizing study of enduring value. As the impressive swansong of a great man of learning, it is to be recommended to everyone who is interested in a deeper understanding of the origins of modern European consciousness.

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³⁸ Ibid., p. 471.

³⁹ Ibid., pp. 473f.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 476f.

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 481 and 487.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 499–510.