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Evangelical burial liturgy in Gdansk and Prussia in the light of unknown liturgical agendas

Summary: We can learn about forms of Evangelical burial liturgy in Gdansk and Prussia from liturgical agendas published in Königsberg, Gdansk and Torun. Over ten editions enable to follow through the development of liturgy and Evangelical doctrine in both Royal and Ducal Prussia. They are also significant for our studies on Polish culture, social life of Polish Protestants and the development of the Polish language. An analysis proves that burial liturgy of Prussian Evangelicals evolved from an austere form conforming to Luther's and Melancthon's teachings to a complex one, resembling Roman Catholic liturgy, including texts from the Bible, Church Fathers and even the poetry of Jan Kochanowski, the greatest Polish Renaissance poet, who was a Catholic. The liturgy was conducted in both German and Polish in Gdansk and Königsberg; in Torun and in the country the Polish language was more frequently used.

Key words: Evangelical liturgy, liturgical agendas, funerals, the development of the Polish language, Royal Prussia and Ducal Prussia.

The expression '*liturgical agenda*' comes from Latin *agere* – act, fulfill in contrast to *credenda*, which is what we should believe in. Throughout history the meaning of the term *agenda* changed. First, it referred to all liturgical activities, then it denoted sacramental liturgy rites (as defined by Pope Innocent I in his *Letter to Decencius*) or celebrating Holy Mass (as defined by Carthage Second Synod, canon 9). According to the Benedictine rule, canon XIII, *agenda* meant breviary prayers, e.g. *Agenda Beate Mariae*, *Agenda Matulina* or *Agenda Mortuorum*. It was only about the 10th century in German speaking countries that the word *agenda* was used in terms similar to its contemporary meaning¹. Andreas Franz made a juxtaposition of the most important agendas at the beginning of the 20th century². In other countries words like: *rytuale*, *obsequiale*, *manuale*, *sacerdotale*, *pastorale* were in use.

¹ W. Schenk, *Agenda*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, v. I, Lublin 1973, c. 172

² A. Franz, *Das Rituale von St. Florian aus dem zwölften Jahrhundert*, Freiburg 1904; also, *Die*

In Poland, liturgical regulations and prayer formulas when celebrating sacraments, *sacramentalia* or processions were scattered over many sources. The earliest Polish liturgical agenda was probably the one from the Warmia Region, dating back to the times of bishop Anzelm, i.e. second half of the 13th century. It contained elements of the rites of the Dominican Order and Teutonic Knights and survived only in part, in later editions of *Agenda communis* (1505, 1512, 1520). Several agendas of the Wrocław (14th c), Cracow (15th c) and Lviv (16th c) dioceses have been preserved in manuscript.

The first agenda in print was published by Baumgarten in Gdansk in 1499. It was compiled by Martin of Radom, a Vilnius canon and contains formulas for general confession and marriage in Polish³.

The development of printing created favourable conditions for publishing numerous agendas which observed traditions of particular dioceses. An analysis of inspections carried out after the Trident Council shows that although each diocese aimed to have its own book of liturgy, they exchanged them and used other books as well.

Since 1533, when the agenda in Poznan was published, a trend to introduce only one agenda for all the Polish dioceses can be noticed. The Warsaw synod of 1561 edited a resolution to publish one agenda for the whole of the Polish province. It was to be drawn up by the archbishop himself but eventually the agenda of bishop Stanisław Karnkowski⁴ of the Wloclawek diocese was accepted at the synod of the Piotrków province.

In protestant churches, however, around 25 agendas were published in the 16th century. The centre of publishing in Ducal Prussia was Königsberg, where – according to Karol Estreicher's 'Bibliography' – they were published in 1544, 1560 and 1571 and over the next centuries in 1615, 1644, 1731, 1741, 1755, 1822, 1828, 1830, 1832 and 1869. Within Royal Prussia there was one that appeared in Torun in 1599 and another in Gdansk in 1637⁵.

Up till now it has been accepted that they included regulations for conducting the main liturgy, i.e. the Eucharist, sacraments, blessings and other services in Protestant churches. It turns out, however, that they cover a far wider subject matter. It may be said that they constitute an important source of knowledge about the development and shape of evangelical liturgy

kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter, v. I, Freiburg 1909.

³ Z. Obertyński, *Agenda wileńska z 1499 r.*, Lwów 1929

⁴ W. Urban, *Agendy katolickie polskie*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, v. I, Lublin 1973, c. 172-173.

⁵ H. Heyden, *Zur Geschichte der ältesten pommerschen Agende*, in: *Gemeinde Gottes in dieser Welt*, Berlin 1961, pp. 14-37.

but, at the same time, they are of great importance for Polish culture and social life, for our understanding of the development of the Polish language, not so much for our knowledge about the art of printing in Prussia.

Therefore, they were mentioned by such historians of literature as Michał Wiszniewski⁶ and Ignacy Warmiński⁷ or scientists dealing with Polish printing, Alodia Kawecka-Gryczowa⁸ and Helena Szwejkowska⁹. Historians from Gdansk and the Pomeranian region have not dealt with this sphere of our cultural heritage.

A block including three evangelical agendas of 1560, 1615 and 1714 has been preserved in the Gdansk Library of PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences)¹⁰. While the last one has not been known before, only one copy of the second has so far been known to exist at the Czartoryski Library.

The rediscovery of the agenda edited in the Polish language by the Town Council in Gdansk is an event of great cultural significance; while only preserved and known documents account for the shape of a nation's culture, the destruction of Polish historical sources made by the Prussians, Germans and Nazis in particular, led to a certain distortion of our knowledge about the past history of Gdansk.

Liturgical agendas shed new light on cultural and everyday life of residents in Royal and Ducal Prussia. On the basis of my approximation I may estimate that two thirds of the population in large Royal Prussian cities were Lutherans while in small towns and villages they constituted about one third. The remaining were mainly Roman Catholics with very few Calvinists. For Lutheran communities, which constituted a majority in Ducal Prussia, the agendas were liturgical books of the greatest importance; they also served as an important source of Church discipline.

The expansion of Reformation in Royal Prussia was stopped by bishop Hieronim Rozrażewski and official Miloniusz. Towards the end of 16th c. they carried out - either personally or through their delegates - a series of visits inspecting the clergy and encouraging patrons and members of the

⁶ M. Wiszniewski, *Historia literatury polskiej*, v. 9-10, p. 199.

⁷ I Warmiński, Andrzej Samuał and Jan Seklucjan, Poznań 1906, p. 472.

⁸ A. Kawecka-Gryczowa, *Drukarze dawnej Polski od XV do XVIII wieku: Pomorze*, Wrocław 1983, p. 392; also, *Zarys dziejów piśmiennictwa polskiego w Prusach Wschodnich*, Warszawa 1946.

⁹ H. Szwejkowska, *Książka drukowana XV-XVIII wieku. Zarys historyczny*, Warszawa 1983, pp. 133-134.

¹⁰ Gd.Lib. of PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences) Ob. 1946

parish council¹¹ to protect Catholic faith. Both communities were tolerant to each other; Catholic clergy demanded only regular payment of established charges for parish priests and churches. Permissions obtained from superiors to marry a person of the other denomination when numbers of suitable candidates among one's own faith were insufficient may serve as evidence of tolerance.

By his conversion to Protestantism Prince Albrecht chose a new faith as fundament to cement his state in accordance with Martin Luther's teachings; this move enforced the use of his lieges' language when establishing new religious order. It was stated on the 8.5 cards of his decree edited in Polish, signed in Königsberg on 25th November 1559. In it he claims that his aim is to teach new faith in a simple and clear way to be easily understood by his subjects; the ideas included in the agenda received the assent of the greatest evangelist theologians: Filip Melancton and Johann Brenencius but that did not mean 'depreciation or abandonment of the books by Luther, Pomoran, Philip, Brenecius, Urban, Rhegius or Wit Theodore'.

He admitted that his aim is also to promote new faith and propagate the 'right' teachings in neighbouring countries. To make the doctrine easy and accessible even to common folk and to contribute to 'unity and peace' and the welfare of churches in his state he comprised the whole doctrine in a single book. He demanded this confession was the light of faith and everyday life for his subjects and the future generations. He explained that the agenda consisted of two parts: the first devoted to evangelical creed and a brief interpretation of its laws, the second to church ceremonies and rites. He complained about too much 'variety' and freedom in liturgical functions, which, according to him, led to 'deterioration' of piety. Therefore, he 'kindly demands' that parish priests and Church servants 'should not do anything peculiar on their own'. He pointed to one fact, namely, that in the agenda of 1560 'crosses and exorcisms as well as making the signs of the cross at evil spirits' were abandoned. Although there was no justification for them in the Scriptures, they had been tolerated because 'such ideas might be helpful to commoners who would think there was a greater harm done to the Devil and his kingdom than through Christ's words (...). In our opinion, judicious Christians cannot be scandalized by

¹¹ Z. Kropidłowski, *Dobra materialne, wyposażenie i dochody parafii, duchowieństwa i służby kościelnej dekanatu puckiego w okresie staropolskim*, Gdańsk 2007, pp. 17-42.

the fact that following certain domestic and foreign Theologians' advice, we wish to introduce pious and proper admonishes and prayers at baptism in place of unnecessary signs of the cross and vows'. Next, he announces that he is going to introduce further changes, if necessary.

He summoned all clergymen to protect the faith against 'any deterioration or untidiness' and asked them to mind that on 'doomsday' they will have to give an account of whether they 'constantly and diligently preached, admonished, punished and pleaded'. As for his lieges, he obliged them to obey their ministers. He hoped that as a result of their good Christian life and pious coexistence with Roman Catholics, evangelicals will move, 'rouse and stimulate to study the word of God many of those who are of idle conscience, of the darkness of Papacy, which reigns around here and in many other areas'. 'They will muzzle dissolute denouncers and mockers (...) and in this way common folk will accept the new faith in a multitude'.

In later editions introductions to the agenda were prepared by bishops of Pomezania and Sambia, Town Councils or the translators and editors themselves.

In the edition of the Duke's mandate of 1560, the first chapter referring to the Church is missing from the table of contents of the first part. The table starts with a chapter 'On the only one being of Deity', then continues with the persons of the Holy Trinity, the unification of the two natures in Christ, creation, the fall of man, the sin, 'the Order', ie the Church, free will of man, the Gospels, 'rightness of the Old and New Testament', 'justification of sinful man,' 'as man before God's judgment will be fair', justification, good deeds, a spiritual battle between good and evil, sins that evict the Holy Spirit, repentance, the sacraments, or 'sanctities', baptism, absolution or forgiveness, anathema, 'Lord's Supper,' congregation of Christian saints, cross and suffering, prayer, Christian liberty, secular suzerainty, the symbol or the apostolic creed, and the creeds of Nice, Athanasius, Ambrose and Augustine¹².

The theological part is followed by formulas of dispensing and the texts of sacraments: ceremonial church baptism and emergency christening, teaching and testing of the catechism, attending sermons, individual and general confession, absolution, types of anathemas and forms of giving absolution from them, Lord's Supper and prayers in recollection of the saints. The Prince determined which days of the week Vespers are to be

¹² Gd.Lib. of PAN (Polish Acad. Of Sciences), c. 1-94.

celebrated, and how many holidays, i.e. days off from work, will be given. The sermon was to be preached in Polish in districts inhabited by Poles or in Lithuanian among Lithuanians¹³. Because of shortage of proper preachers he decided to fund scholarships for six people: Poles, Lithuanians, Prussians, and Sambians¹⁴. He urged the nobles and royal officials to follow his example and support talented young people's education¹⁵.

To improve the quality of preaching he encouraged parsons and preachers to buy the Bible and the agendas so that they would improve their knowledge instead of spending feasts and celebrations on gluttony, unchastity, games, strife and the like misdemeanors¹⁶. In particular, he drew attention to the education of servants' children. After dinner, when the landlords came back from church, young household servants were to go to church for a sermon, religious instruction and exams while their fathers were obliged to teach them prayers and to ensure that children learnt systematically¹⁷. Along with the obligation to participate in church services went a ban on opening inns or allowing marriages in church on Sunday mornings or on holy days¹⁸.

Church weddings were important events. The Prince defined parsons' responsibilities in instructing brides and grooms-to-be, examining their free will, kinship and affinity, religious knowledge, particularly their knowledge of liturgical prayers; he also obliged them to read banns at least on two subsequent Sundays. In case of problems he directed them to turn to the consistory, who was to resolve them and make decisions. He defined the Polish wedding ritual. The copy stored in the Gdansk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences includes handwritten notes and amendments as the printer made a mistake in the numbering of individual actions and several punctuation mistakes. We may assume that the notes were written down in the 16th century¹⁹.

Finally, the prince ordered to record marriages in parish registers²⁰. After the Council of Trent it was also done in the Catholic Church, therefore

¹³ *Ibidem*, c. 160v.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, c. 161v.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, c. 162.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, c. 162.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, c.163.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, c.163v.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, c.169-172.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, c.172.

in mixed parishes within Royal Prussia marriages were recorded in both parish offices.

Following that, Albrecht the Great established ways of dealing with people whose weaknesses led them to sin. Shepherds should point to their sins and the consequent wrath of God, but also remind them of the grace of God's word. 'For their careless and impious lives, there is no absolution without punishment but they should be severely and sternly admonished with the word of God so they are brought to repentance and contrition.'²¹ Preachers had to give absolution if the penitent professed faith, was aware of its dogmas and knew catechism prayers; when giving absolution there were supposed to 'comfort them with the words of the holy Gospel and to exhort to patience and obedience.'²²

After absolution the penitent should kneel before the altar, recite Lord's Prayer, and the minister should transfigure bread and wine that have been prepared earlier using the words of consecration, and give them to the converted sinner. In this way, he would be readmitted to the parish community. The Prince required special care in binding converts with the community of the Reformed Church and obliged the clergy to pray and show great concern for their fate²³.

The agenda comprises also a section on dealing with convicts sentenced to capital punishment. Preachers should particularly admonish them to repent their crimes and sins so that they would not be 'punished and doomed to perdition' by God²⁴. When the preacher was called to visit a convict his primary aim was to find out the reason for execution and encourage him to confess sins, even if - noticed the Prince - some would maintain that they were innocent. He should accompany 'dogged and distressed' prisoners a few hours before the execution and comfort them recalling the attitude of the Good Thief²⁵.

The way of dealing with the sick by God's servants was also defined. First of all, they should draw the attention of 'the feeble' to the fact that the weakness is given to help a man to prepare for death and 'receive the glorious sanctity of Lord's Supper while he is still of sound mind. And then, in the presence of the Church servant, he may die'. The pastor together

²¹ Ibidem, c.174-174v.

²² Ibidem, c. 175v.

²³ Ibidem, c. 177-178.

²⁴ Ibidem, c. 178v.

²⁵ Ibidem, c. 179-180.

with the others should then say 'Our Father' and then the prayer given in the agenda²⁶.

The instruction for the funeral procedure was included in the final part of the agenda. The first agenda in question gives only general directives, namely, that the funeral should be very unostentatious, 'without any other people's erroneous conceptions'. But you could use students to 'go in front of the coffin' to the grave and sing psalms, for example, 'From the depths of my sins'. The family and friends should follow the coffin. At the time of putting the coffin into the grave *Nunc dimittis Ferrum tuum* or 'Let's bury the body here' should be sung. Next the deacon needs to read the collect. If family and friends would wish so, the deacon or a preacher may give 'an admonition to comfort' the living. The speech should not be long or 'offensive'.

The Prince drew attention to the location of cemeteries, so that they were not 'obscene or despised' but 'well maintained'²⁷.

Although this arrangement of the agenda served as a model for ensuing evangelical prints, we may find new forms of worship and prayers, and, especially, a reference to the activities of the Catholic Church and its liturgy, among others in the rituals of funerals.

The agenda published in Torun in 1599, which has been preserved in the Library of the Gdansk Academy of Sciences includes a largely extended burial ritual. On the 14 pages of tightly condensed print with notes on the margins, we find, first of all, a collection of sixteen quotes from the Bible, including seven from the Old and nine from the New Testament to use at the time of the funeral liturgy; there are also many more fragments from the scriptures of the Fathers of the Church, mediaeval saints and even Pope Clement VI, Erasmus of Rotterdam and Jan Kochanowski. A quotation from Song 24 of *The Second Books* must arouse our astonishment at the fact that the text of the Polish poet was used in the book of liturgy, and thus entered cultural circulation in the great Prussian cities. One verse was printed in bold and therefore stands out:

Let no complaining appear at an ordinary funeral,
No lament or grumbling:
Candles and bells to be abandoned or dearly made bier,

²⁶ Ibidem, c. 181v-183.

²⁷ Ibidem, c. 181v-183.

And mournful whining songs!²⁸

This is followed by a description of the funeral ritual, which consists of six parts. First, a sermon lasting thirty minutes should be preached in the house of the deceased, referring to passage 2 Kings, Chapter 2, 4-5. 'Elijah said to him, Elisha! Stay here because the Lord has sent me to Jericho.' He answered, 'On the life of the Lord and on your life, I shall not leave you!' So they came to Jericho. Then the disciples of the prophets who were in Jericho drew near to Elisha and said to him, 'Did you know that Lord is taking your master high up, above you?' He answered, Yes, I know. Be silent.' The second option was to consider the story of Ananias and Saphire, who, having deceived the apostles, died a sudden death; this was recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter 5, 1-11. But the sermon was to concern two issues: what we owe to the dead, and why human bodies are to be buried with appropriate attention.

After the sermon had been heard, the mortal remains were to be taken from the house to the grave, accompanied by three songs: *The man afflicted, I said; From the depth of my sins; Pray thee, good Lord, show us.* When approaching the grave, they sang *Let us, faithful Christians.*

After putting the coffin down by the grave the minister might preach a sermon lasting up to one hour. Several options were given, depending on whose funeral was celebrated. If it was the minister, quotes from Isaiah 57,1,2²⁹ and 2 Tim 4,5-8 were to be used. The agenda also provides some quotes on the death of a senator or captain of horse. What was given on the death of a townsman seems to be of particular significance. These were excerpts from Hi 14, 1-22, Job 19, 25-27, John 2, 1-45, 1 Thessalonians

²⁸ Gd.Lib. of PAN (Polish Academy of Sciences) XX B g 425, *Porządek kościelny...*, Toruń 1599, p. 299.

²⁹ The righteous perish,
and no one takes it to heart;
the devout are taken away,
and no one understands
that the righteous are taken away
to be spared from evil.
Those who walk uprightly
enter into peace;
they find rest as they lie in death.
I give the full text as an example.

4:13-18. Needless to say, there were also indications for the funeral of the deceased's widow, married woman, young man, maid and child³⁰.

The sermon, however, was to be adjusted to the above forms so as to cover the following ten questions: What is death? Who caused the death? On consolation in death. On immortality of the soul. On the 'cunning of death, and a cure for it'. On the 'cruelty of death, and a cure for it'. It is proper and necessary to pray for the dead. About Purgatory, 'which is a Satan's invention', against the word of God, faith, the blood of Christ, 'ancient doctors, not entangled in a maze'. On the ceremonial with which Christians are to be buried and on the location of the grave. Finally, it was added that the minister may also say what 'God prompted him depending on the person, time or place'.

A brief farewell of the deceased brother by family or friends, which commended him to God's care was to follow the sermon. Then they could sing *O Jesus, Thou art man and God* and *All people to behold*.

Next the preacher spoke at length urging the people to fall on their knees and thank God for the life of the deceased and for the fact that he passed away in true faith, and that God summoned him, 'did not prolong his pain, forgave his sins while he was still alive and may have already granted him eternal life'. He also encouraged the living to lead a godly life, and departed from this world in 'divine awareness'.

Then he said the collect, one and a half pages long, in which he - once again, but more solemnly - expressed all requests and placed his hopes in God. Then they started to sing *Oh, vain is all worldly distress*³¹. Another prayer was intended for a child's funeral, which stressed the fact that they deserve eternal life even if they die unchristened as God himself baptizes them with the Holy Spirit.

The service ended in saying the words of Lord's Prayer and singing *Let us bury the body*³².

In the agenda of 1621, the editors, i.e. the bishops of Pomezania and Sambia, stressed that to those who died, 'our services in this world can no longer be of any use'³³. They probably referred to the Catholic liturgy, especially to the lavish funerals of wealthy people. They appealed to the

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 300.

³¹ Ibidem, p. 302.

³² Ibidem, p. 304.

³³ *Ustawa albo porządek kościelny y ceremonie... z niemieckiego języka na polski pilnie przelożone przez Hieronima Maleckiego, plebana leckiego, 1621, c. 102v.*

authority of Jesus Christ, who says in the Gospel of St. John that he is the resurrection and the life, and those who die reconciled to Him benefit from his power and services and do not need anything else. They also referred to the Letter of St. Paul to Philippians, in which he mentions that Jesus Christ will resurrect and raise the human body even if it has been deposited in 'the ground or in water, in air or fire, or anywhere else'³⁴. He admitted that 'nevertheless, we should bury our dead decently, and rightly put into the grave for this reason', so that young people have this engrafted that the bodies are not destined to remain underground but 'will rise chaste on doomsday in great brightness to live in great joy'.

Cemeteries should be located in 'beautiful, well-kept, clean places and are to be maintained and preserved well'. Cattle were not allowed in the cemetery 'so that no filth would be brought in.'

The bishops gave seven rules for the funeral. A choice of suitable time should allow students to lose not more than half a day of learning period, that is, it should be at nine a.m. or three pm and only in exceptional cases at noon. Secondly, the body of the deceased should be buried within 24 hours of death. An exception could be done only for great lords, nobles and respectable people whose friends lived far away, but with the knowledge and consent of superiors and the pastor of the church³⁵.

The funeral could take place only after notifying the pastor or vicar of death; they should then find out how the man died and how he lived and 'ended his life, whether in a Christian or non-Christian way.' The behavior of the servants of the church would depend on this. If the deceased person lived an immoral life and was not repentant before death and did not know the prayers and the word of God, he was to be treated 'as David says, as a dumb beast'. There should be no singing or bell ringing at the funeral and the body should be carried to the grave 'like any other beast's'.

Fourth, it was decided that the parishioners should not avoid participating in the funeral and prayers for the dead who were poor as if they were a plague. They should not slobber through it with just bell ringing; at least some of the schoolchildren should participate in it and sing songs. They were also encouraged to support the poor in their ill fortune. 'What one can give let him give (...); not only payment be made but also brotherly love shown'.

³⁴ Ibidem, c. 103.

³⁵ ibidem, c. 104.

Fifth, they established which songs are to be sung during the funeral procession on the way from the house to the cemetery. They are identical with Catholic songs. The next point refers to a farewell sermon which, if requested, can be preached by the pastor or vicar but should not exceed half an hour. It should always refer to or quote the text of the 1st letter of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, chapter 4, so common people could become acquainted with the mystery of faith in the resurrection of bodies.

Seventh, it was decided that while putting the body into the grave the song *Let us bury the body* should be sung, followed by a preacher saying the collect. As the words of the collect were not quoted and, similarly, some other prayers, which were mentioned when describing the remaining services were missing, we may draw a conclusion that they were widely known or that some other books were in use as well. They may have been said spontaneously, but that is very unlikely.

In conclusion, it was stressed that the superiors in churches are to demand that 'no gluttony or drinking at the funeral is to be observed since then on'. It was also underlined that it was obligatory for parsons and schoolmasters to go to the funeral if they were asked to do so³⁶.

Those disciplinary regulations were followed by a model funeral sermon, which refers to the above mentioned text from 1 Timothy. It stressed that Christians should be aware that no grief on the death of a faithful man is a proper thing and it is only heathens and infidels, who have neither hope nor 'firm ground or assertion in the resurrection of the dead' that may grieve. They think they have lost a friend and there is no salvation for him. Christians believe to the contrary and their hope soothes their grief. This hope does not arise from reasoning but from the words of St. Paul, the most important of which were quoted. And then the preacher addressed the meeting saying, 'Look and consider it my dear friends (...) we will not be abandoned in death but will be brought to eternal life.' And again he relied on the words of the Letter to the Romans (chapter 8) and to the Corinthians (chapter 4) that 'they are not dead, but asleep'.

Further it was argued that 'in truth he who sleeps, he is not dead, but rests after his past deeds so as to awake with new strength and vigor after the time spent on resting. (...) It is no different from those lovely flowers in winter, whose all might, fragrance and beauty goes into the roots (...)

³⁶ Ibidem, c. 104v-105v.

and lie down and sleep and rest until the merry May time rouses them and they sprout with all their wealth, beauty fragrance and might.’

Therefore, mourners should not show sorrow or grieve, because they ‘rest lightly and gracefully’ and gather strength for Lord’s Day, when they will rise from the dead ‘and will glitter and shine like stars and, yes, like the sun itself in the sky in the eternal kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ’. Finally, an advice is given for everyone to bear in mind their death and to prepare for it so that our Lord God will readily receive them and everyone is able to ‘go to sleep happily³⁷’.

At the end of the ritual part of the agendas there are recommendations to keep the established order, which contributes to a better and joyful life, and protects against being deceived by numerous sects and false teachings. ‘Therefore learn he who can learn’ how broad and straightforward way to salvation the adopted church routine provides³⁸.

The fourth agenda published in Gdansk in 1714 by John Zachary Stoll is similar in contents to the previously discussed agendas. Perhaps the City Council adopted the regulations in 1708, and only a certain fragment was printed that year. My assumption is based on the fact that the printed pages evidently finish abruptly while the table of contents is printed in smaller type and squeezed in the free space in the middle of the last page. The texts end with a baptismal rite and include two important documents. The first is *the Litany*, or fragments of the Catholic *Litany of the Saints*, where personal invocations to saints of the Catholic Church have been removed; the other comprises examination rules on the knowledge of the catechism which were to be carried out in Polish.

It shows that the preaching and worship in the Polish language were held in all churches of the city, in some at midday and in others in the afternoon but in all of them the catechesis and examinations were carried out in Polish. It was decided that ‘young people should attend with their tutors and answer ministers’ questions’. Each exam started and ended with singing.

Examinations were held each year in the week after Sunday after St. Michael’s day; at St. Mary’s Church on Friday morning after the sermon, and in other churches after the morning prayers, i.e. at 7.30. On Monday at St.. Bartholomew’s, St. Barbara’s Churches and on *Peterschagen*. On

³⁷ Ibidem, c. 106-108v.

³⁸ Ibidem, c. 108v-109.

Tuesday at the Holy Trinity and in the *Pockenhaus* Hospital. On Wednesday at St. James's and Corpus Christi Church; it was added in brackets that 'in the last one after the catechismal sermon'. On Thursday, at St. John's and St. Catherine's, also after prayers. At the Holy Spirit's Church on Saturday after vespers and at St. Anne's on Sunday afternoon³⁹.

This note is of great significance as other documents giving testimony to the Polish culture in Gdansk have been destroyed; it proves that the liturgy, and sermons in Polish were preached in all churches and hospital chapels in the city. One can assume that the funerals were held in Polish according to the rituals which were in the possession of Gdansk pastors. They have survived in the Gdansk Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences. On the back of the title page we can find a short provision of the Council which refers to God's authority and says its task is to ensure that 'in matters of faith and the Church everything is celebrated properly'. Therefore, after the texts had been co-ordinated with the clergymen the magistrate commended to write them down and observe it diligently that 'the clergy both in the city and the countryside observed inalterably the Augsburg *confession*⁴⁰.

In conclusion we can say that the funeral liturgy in St. John's Church in Gdansk started at the home of the deceased, whose body was carried in the funeral procession to the church. The bier was placed before the altar, the service was celebrated, next the corpse was carried to the crypt, where the people eventually bid farewell and parted with the deceased. The liturgy was celebrated in German or Polish and its splendor depended on the wealth of the family. The funeral ordinances developed by Edmund Kizik⁴¹ were in line with liturgical formulas. The emergence of a new religion in Prussia caused a gradual awakening of religious consciousness. Contacts between the two parts of the province were frequent and with a deep sense of community⁴².

All this overlapped with relationships with the old Catholic confession. The sixteenth century was marked with proselyte activity of evangelicals.

³⁹ *Postanowienie szlacheckiej Rady względem rozporządzenia spraw Urzędu Duchownego i modlitw kościelnych w kościołach ewangelickich luterzańskich Miasta Gdańska publikowane w marcu roku 1708*, ed. by Jan Zachariasz Stoll, 1714, p. 90.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

⁴¹ E. Kizik, *Wesele, kilka chrztów i pogrzebów. Uroczystości rodzinne w mieście hanzeatyckim od XVI do XVIII wieku*, Gdańsk 2001.

⁴² Comp. J. Małek, *Dwie części Prus*, Olsztyn 1987.

Since late 16th century, we note the Catholic reaction which jeopardized the advance of Reformation; since early 18th century the trend originated by the Jesuit, Cistercian and Pomeranian Carthusian monks was reversed. The agendas, which framed the religious life of the Protestants, that is half the community of Prussia and a considerable part of the population of Gdansk, became part of the controversies between the two confessions. They also contributed to the development of the Polish language in the Old Polish period.

Translated by Teresa Ossowska

Ewangelicka liturgia pogrzebowa w Gdańsku i Prusach w świetle nieznanych agend liturgicznych

Abstrakt: Formy ewangelickiej liturgii pogrzebowej w Gdańsku i Prusach poznajemy z agend liturgicznych, które były wydawane w Królewcu, w Gdańsku i Toruniu. Ukazało się kilkanaście wydań, na podstawie których można zbadać rozwój liturgii i doktryny ewangelickiej w Prusach Królewskich i Książęcych. Mają one również duże znaczenie dla badania kultury polskiej i życia społecznego protestantów polskich oraz rozwoju języka polskiego. Z analizy agend wynika, że liturgia pogrzebowa ewangelików pruskich rozwijała się od bardzo surowej, zgodnej z nauczaniem Lutera i Melnchtona, aż do rozbudowanej, podobnej do liturgii katolickiej, w której wykorzystywano teksty Pisma św., Ojców Kościoła, a nawet poezję Jana Kochanowskiego, największego polskiego poety renesansowego, który był katolikiem. W Gdańsku i Królewcu odprawiano ją w języku niemieckim i polskim, w Toruniu i na wsiach częściej w języku polskim niż niemieckim.

Słowa kluczowe: liturgia ewangelicka, agendy liturgiczne, pogrzeby, rozwój języka polskiego, Prusy Królewskie i Książęce.