

THE Protestant Reformation ought to be remembered as a truly pivotal moment in the history of Christianity. Its memorable five *sola* (*sola Scriptura, sola fide, sola gratia, solus Christus, soli Deo gloria*) have shaped the theological understanding and have informed the worship imagination of countless Christian communities over the past 500 years. The Reformation rekindled an understanding of “faith” as something real and active – the ingredient that informs and transforms human lives, both private and public. It advocated for the participation of Christian believers and communities in public life. It proclaimed a gospel that addresses the entire reality, under the universal, all-powerful, all-encompassing lordship of Christ.

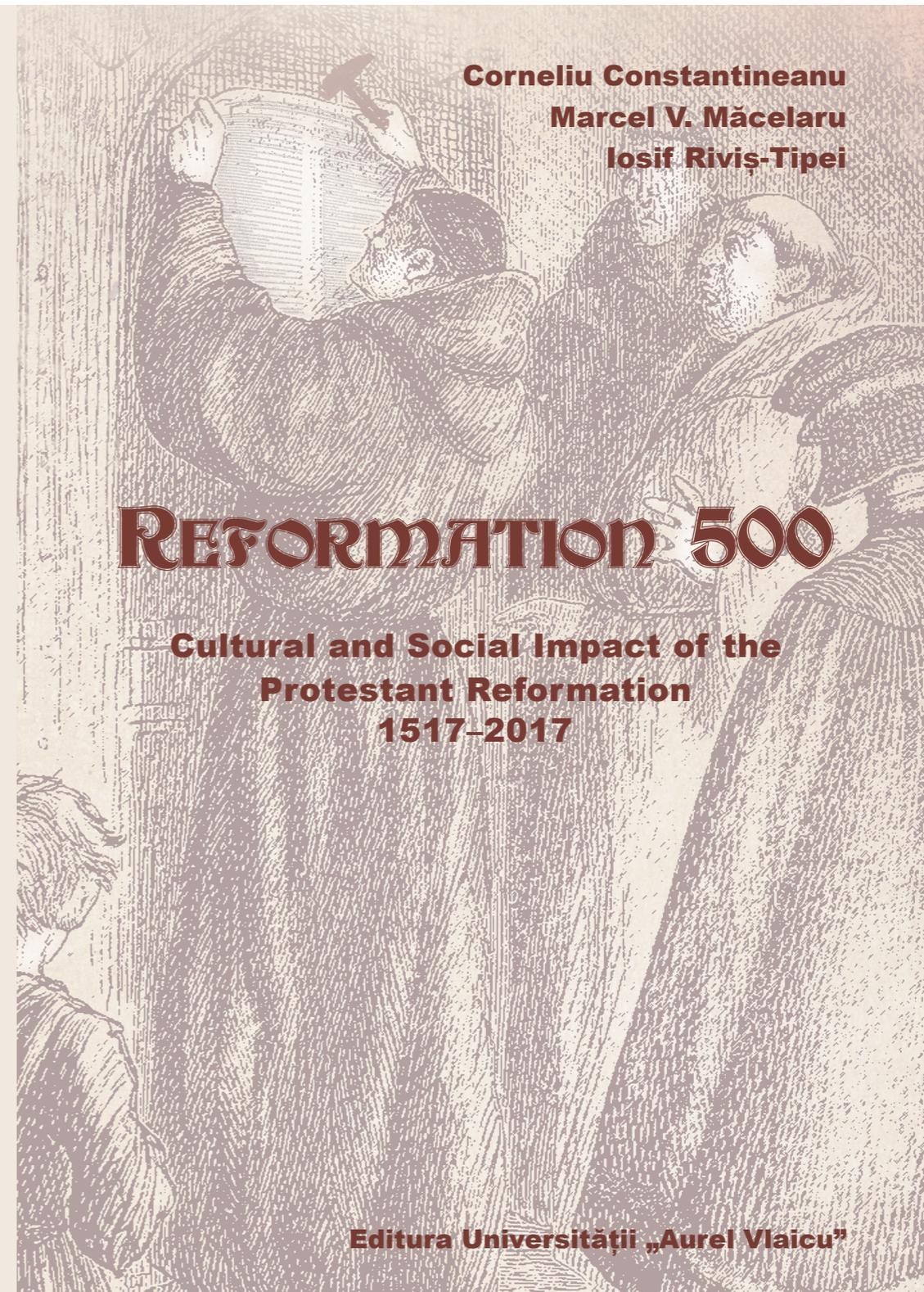
Over the past five hundred years, all these ideas and the model of Christian existence they gave birth to, have also had an undeniable impact on culture and society, in Europe and beyond. The identification, evaluation, and further projection of this impact is the topic of the present volume.

The studies included in this volume were presented at the international conference *Reformation 500: Cultural and Social Impact of the Protestant Reformation, 1517–2017*, organised by the Intercultural and Interconfessional Research Centre, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, “Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad, Romania, during 26-28 April 2017.

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REFORMATION 500

Constantineanu - Măcelaru - Riviş-Tipei



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Marcel V. Măcelaru
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**Cultural and Social Impact of the
Protestant Reformation
1517–2017**

Editura Universităţii „Aurel Vlaicu”

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*Cultural and Social Impact of the
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1517–2017*

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EVANGELICAL PROTESTANTISM AND CIVIL SOCIETY AN OUTLINE¹

Wojciech Szcerba

Reformation and Its Evangelical Outcomes

October 31, 1517 signifies an important moment for churches, communities and organizations derived from a broadly understood Protestant tradition. On this very day, according to the common tradition, Dr. Martin Luther nails 95 theses to the doors of the All Saint's Church in Wittenberg. The theses are critical in their character, refer to the abuses of the Roman Catholic Church at the turn of 16th century and are mainly connected with the procedure of selling indulgences, understanding of penance and the state of overall morality of the Catholic clergy². This way Martin Luther initiates the process of renewal of the western Christianity called the Reformation and theological-ecclesiastical tradition named Protestantism³.

The first Lutheran creed, so called Augsburg Confession (*Confession Augustana*), considered to be some kind of *Protestant manifesto*, was written by a friend and coworker of Martin Luther, Dr. Philip Melancthon. In this Confession, presented June 25, 1530 at the Diet of Augsburg, for the first time can be found references to what later came to define the fundamental theses of Protestantism⁴:

¹ The article has been published in a shorter form in Polish periodical, *Theologica Wratislaviensia* 12 (2007), EWST, Wrocław 2017, <http://theologica.ewst.pl/roczniki-online/rocznik-2017/> (access 01.10.2018).

² http://www.luther.de/95thesen_pl.html (access 3.05.2017)

³ See M. Brecht, *Martin Luther: His Road to Reformation, 1483-1521*, trans. J. Schaaf, Fortress Press, 1985.

⁴ See e.g. E. Brunner, *Dogmatics III, The Christian Doctrine of the Church Faith and the Consummation*, trans. D. Cairns, T.H.L. Parker, Cambridge

- *sola scriptura* – only the Holy Scripture bears the authority in the matters of faith and Christian praxis,
- *solus Christus* – only Jesus Christ as both God and human being is a mediator between God and human beings,
- *sola gratia* – only the grace of God is the basis for justification of a sinner.
- *sola fide* – the act of justification of a person is based in their faith, regardless of the deeds of a person.
- *soli Deo Gloria* – only God is worthy of being worshipped by creation.

Dr. Martin Luther initiated the Reformation on October 31, Anno Domini 1517. However, he has not ended it according to the formula *Ecclesia semper reformanda est*⁵. Referring to the contemporary Protestantism, a usual differentiation is applied between traditional, mainline Protestantism (ger. *Evangelische Kirchen*) and Evangelical Protestantism (ger. *Evangelikale Kirchen*)⁶. Traditional Protestantism is usually associated with the 16th century Reformation of Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli or John Calvin, whereas Evangelicalism is typically connected with successive renewal currents of Protestantism of 17th and later centuries⁷.

Historical roots of Evangelicalism can be found as early as in the Swiss Anabaptist movement, which beginning may be dated to 1523. In that year the group of believers led by Balthasar Hubmaier separated itself from the community of Ulrich Zwingli, after publishing by the Reformer 67 Articles

2002, s. 221nn; J. B. Metz, *The Church and the World*, trans. W. Glenn-Doepel, New York 1969, s. 143.

⁵ T. Mahlmann, *Ecclesia semper reformanda. Eine historische Aufarbeitung. Neue Bearbeitung*, w: Torbjörn Johansson, Robert Kolb, Johann Anselm Steiger, *Hermeneutica Sacra. Studien zur Auslegung der Heiligen Schrift im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Berlin, New York 2010, p. 384-388.

⁶ Further differentiation between Evangelical and Pentecostal Protestantism exceeds the scope of the article.

⁷ See W. Szczerba, *Reformacyjne korzenie ewangelikalizmu*, in: *Ewangelikalizm polski wobec wyzwań współczesności*, Wrocław 2013, p. 13-27. M. Noll, *Protestantism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford 2011.

of Faith, defining the character of Swiss Protestantism and especially its dependence from the state⁸. The Anabaptist movement, which foundations were expressed in so called Schleithem Articles (1527)⁹, gave subsequently birth to the Mennonites and Baptists. Similarly, the British Puritan movement, which developed under the rule of Elisabeth 1st in the second half of 16th century, can be seen as a historical basis for later Evangelical Methodism. John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* constitutes a form of manifesto of historical Puritanism. Finally, German Pietism of 17th century, initiated by Jacob Spenner and August Francke, can be pointed out as a historical foundation of German Evangelical Protestantism. Its very practical outcome was – among many others issues – the complex of social and educational institutions in Halle, established in 1695 as the *Francke Foundations*¹⁰. These theological-ecclesiastical movements together with the waves of European migrants reached the New World of America and shaped the spirituality of American Protestantism in so called Great Awakenings of the 18th and 19th centuries¹¹. They led to the unification of Congregational and Presbyterian churches, unprecedented development of Baptist and Methodist congregations or emerging of new denominations like the Pentecostal Church, grown out of the Holiness Movement of late 19th century.

The above revival movements focused mainly on the restoration of faith of people, according to the witness of the first followers of Christ, through conversion termed as spiritual birth and particular, highly moral quality of life. They called upon people to cast away their sins and transgressions, and to

⁸ <https://www.christianhistoryinstitute.org/study/module/zwinglis-sixty-seven-articles/> (access 04.05.2017). See G. H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, Kirksville 2000.

⁹ <http://www.anabaptists.org/history/the-schleithem-confession.html> (access 04.05.2017).

¹⁰ <https://www.francke-halle.de/> (access 8.10.2018).

¹¹ Por. H. Harry. *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism*; Grand Rapids 1991.

put their trust in Christ. The sign of regeneration should be – at least in the Anabaptist perspective – baptism as a physical mark of the inner renewal of a person. The practical outcome of the spiritual regeneration should be holiness of life of believers. Thus, the pressure was put on the strict moral and ecclesiastical discipline, both in an individual and collective sense. The return to the primal faith was often associated with the postulate to simplify the religious rites, which naturally resulted in minimalistic liturgy and democratic, congregational management of faith communities (e.g. Anabaptism, Puritanism). Additionally, *the Sola Scriptura* thesis led in a natural way to the appreciation of education, especially with reference to the lower social strata, so that the believers could independently read the Bible, teach the catechesis, proclaim and strengthen Christian faith in society, get honored professions and significantly contribute to the development of the society according to Christian values. This way, the mission of the Protestant movements (both in its classical and Evangelical provenience) was naturally formed not only in evangelization and ecclesiastical mode, but also as social and educational pursuit. An example of such an involvement was the activity of William Wilberforce and the movement of British abolitionists, which resulted in the prohibition of the slave trade in 1807¹². The Salvation Army and other Protestant denominations naturally fought for the equal rights of people of various sexes, ages and ethnicities, improvement of work conditions for women and children or better conditions in prison systems¹³. Abraham Kuyper and Dutch reformed Protestantism of Evangelical provenience contributed in the development of democracy in the society of the Netherlands¹⁴. The educational institutions of Halle indicated how important education was

¹² R. J. Hind. *William Wilberforce and the Perceptions of the British People*, in: *Historical Research*, 60 (143), London 1987, p. 321–35.

¹³ <http://www.salvationarmy.org/ihq/history> (access 4 May 2017).

¹⁴ J. D. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist, Christian Democrat*, Grand Rapids 2013.

for the revival movements in the context of pietistic Protestantism¹⁵. It is also worth noticing that some of the American universities established by Protestant churches at the time of Great Awakenings are now considered leading educational institutions in the world e.g. Yale and Harvard (Puritans), Princeton (Presbyterians), Duke (Methodists), William and Mary (Anglicans) or Brown University (Baptists).

Protestant denominations have never formed an administrative unity. The opposite is true. They have always been versatile and in today's world the tendency is even more obvious, especially in the context of western Evangelical Protestantism, where new denominations rapidly multiply and often are associated with the emergence of various independent, non-denominational communities, so called *free churches*, adopting various forms of operation from traditional liturgical rites to internet churches, operating in virtual reality¹⁶. Churches of Protestant heritage are very diverse at least in the administrative sense. However, fundamentally they are – or should be – united by their common post-Reformation theology, which declaratively manifests itself in the tendency to reproduce and maintain the faith of the first Christians, as it is expressed in the Scriptures, put into doctrinal formulas by the first ecumenical councils and summarized in the fundamental theses of the Reformation: *sola Scriptura, sola gratia, sola fide, solus Christus* and *soli Deo Gloria*. Above that Protestantism in its various forms stresses the necessity of a personal relationship of human beings with God, which should result in highly moral life and social responsibility. “Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, *even* the least of *them*, you did it to Me.” (Mat. 25:40, NASB)¹⁷.

¹⁵ <http://www.francke-halle.de/> (access 5 May 2017).

¹⁶ See e.g. D. Estes, *Simchurch*, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2009/october-online-only/in-defense-of-virtual-church.html> (access 5 May 2017).

¹⁷ See W. Szczerba, *Evangelical Protestantism*, <http://www.ewst.pl/centrum-edykacyjne/protestantyzm/> (access 01 September 2018).

Civil Society: An Outline of the Concept

When referring to the concept of civil society, one needs to realize its broad scope of meaning and the fact that the roots of the idea reach the ancient times, whereas the conception itself evolves in a dialectical way through centuries till the present days. It is impossible to fully develop the problem in a focused article like this. So, I will only mention the main milestones of the discourse on civil society in a philosophical context¹⁸. Thus, Aristotle, when sketching the concept *κοινωνία πολιτική*, writes about the community of *polis*, in which free citizens share the same norms, laws and ethos. In a democratic way they shape the character of the city-state (through e.g. such resolutions like *the decree of Diopieithes*¹⁹) and in this communal context they reach the fullness of their humanity as social beings (*ζῶον πολιτικόν*)²⁰. The goal-*telos* of so understood community is common good (*τὸ εὖ ζῆν*), and the aim of human life is to become a good citizen, who builds the well-being of the society. In a similar way Cicero in Roman times renders the problem of *societas civilis* as a type of community of citizens united by one law, to which everyone is subordinated. The state-society constitutes the context, in which people can operate and develop. At the same time the attitude of the citizens, their virtues (*arête politike*) and involvement shape the character and the future of the state²¹.

Marsilius of Padua in the 13th century renders the state in terms of a result of social agreement of free people. The fundamental aim of the state, according to his understanding, is meeting the needs of the citizens, taking care of the social or-

¹⁸ See a broader discussion in e.g. M. Edwards, *Civil Society*, Cambridge 2004; J. Ehrenberg, *Civil Society: The Critical History of an Idea*, New York 1999; J. L. Cohen, *Civil Society and Political Theory*, London 1994.

¹⁹ See R. Garland, *Introducing New Gods, The Politics of Athenian Religion*, Cornell University Press, New York 1992, p. 140nn.

²⁰ Aristotle, *Politics* 1252a1.

²¹ See Cicero, *O państwie, O prawach*, tłum. I. Żółtowska, Kęty 1999, p. 30.

der and settling major conflicts and disagreements between people. The state should provide and maintain peace between people. On the other hand the citizens should produce such a law and establish such a government, which in a democratic or monarchical way would effectively execute administrative, judicial and controlling power. The sovereignty of the citizens is, in Marsilius' understanding, one of the most important principles constituting a modern state²².

In the modern age Thomas More's *Utopia* should be mentioned in a context of civil society. In this treatise the theologian sketches an outline of an ideal state and ideal – in his understanding – social system, based on a regulated ownership of goods, high morality of the citizens, democratically chosen government and limited religious tolerance in a broader theological setting, excluding e.g. atheism²³. In the Anglo-Saxon context the problem of civil society is further developed by such thinkers of 17th and 18th century as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke or David Hume. Their understanding of anthropology and basic sociological principles significantly differs. For example Hobbes believes that human beings are organically wicked and society is utilitarian in its nature, whereas Locke sees humans as good and underlines the fundamental importance of family in the development both of a person and society²⁴. Nevertheless, Hobbes, Lock and Hume together point to

²² S. W. Hahn, B. Wiker, *Politicizing the Bible: The Roots of Historical Criticism and the Secularization of Scripture 1300-1700*, New York 2013, p. 17–59. In the above outline I am leaving aside such important thinkers as Augustine of Hippo with his treatise *De civitate Dei* or Thomas Aquinas referring to the socio-political topics in the number of works, e.g. *Summa contra gentiles*, vol. 3, *Summa Theologica, On Power* or *Commentary to Aristotle's Politics*.

²³ T. More, *Utopia* <http://theopenutopia.org/full-text/introduction-openutopia/> (access 30 April 2017); J. C. Davis, *Utopia and the Ideal Society: A Study of English Utopian Writing 1516-1700*, Cambridge 1983; E. D. S. Sullivan (red.), *The Utopian Vision: Seven Essays on the Quincentennial of Sir Thomas More*, San Diego 1983.

²⁴ J. L. Pfeffer, *The Family in John Locke's Political Thought* in: *Polity*, vol. 33, no.4, Chicago 2001, p. 593-618.

the concept of *social agreement*, a kind of contract between individuals, which determines a general state order. Social power in such an understanding is rendered as an effect of this contract, which ultimately aims to protect the common good. The social order, based on a civil agreement outgrows the natural order and leads to civil society, based on higher values and virtues (Locke)²⁵.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau develops further the idea and underlines the right of a community to self-determination. He understands the concept of a nation as a suzerain, from whom comes the power. The state, in his understanding, should have a developed market economy and citizens should have a number of guaranteed rights, especially the freedom of assembly and the freedom of speech. Certain state institutions should guard and protect these social rights²⁶. In the 19th century Georg Wilhelm Hegel proposes a dialectical model of development of a social system. It evolves from national community, creating certain ethical attitudes, through the state with its institutions of power constituting some kind of rational basis of its operation, to the civil society, closely connected with the market. Such a society is possible, according to Hegel, most of all when the citizens are free²⁷.

In the 20th century the theme of civil society is undertaken among others by Karl Popper in his well-known concept of *open society*. It is understood as an antithesis of totalitarian societies, closed to the ideas not following the official doctrine, to dialog between various parties and political views, to rational analysis of the socio-cultural reality and to changes in

²⁵ See J. Dunn, *The contemporary political significance of John Locke's conception of Civil Society*, in: S. Kaviraj, S. Khilnani, *Civil Society, History and Possibilities*, Cambridge 2009, p. 39-58.

²⁶ See J. J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Wordsworth Editions 1998.

²⁷ See G. S. Jones, *Hegel and the Economics of Civil Society* in: S. Kaviraj, S. Khilnani, *Civil...*, s. 105-131; P. Franco, *Hegel's Philosophy of Freedom*, New Haven 2000; Z. A. Pelczynski, *The State and Civil Society: Studies in Hegel's Political Philosophy*. Cambridge 1984.

political systems if they are needed²⁸. Similarly, in democratic categories, the problem of civil society undertakes Jürgen Habermas²⁹ and Jillian Schwedler, who analyzes the world of the Middle East and asks the question, how far the communities of Muslim provenience can evolve into the direction of civil society. According to her perspective the public sphere and civil communities can appear and grow in this cultural context when individuals and social groups begin to question and subsequently transgress the borders of traditionally accepted or imposed customs and morality. Thus, important are attitudes opposing the ruling regimes and demands to broaden public rights for certain social strata e.g. the right to work for women, the right to vote for women or simply the right to drive cars for women. The attitude of citizens of expectation and demands from the state to meet the emerging social needs in evolving civilizational conditions is crucial for the appearance of civil societies in the Middle East context³⁰.

For this very article, taking into consideration its narrow scope and the main theme, I am adopting a simple, practical definition of civil society, based mainly on concepts of such modern thinkers as Popper, Habermas and Schwedler. I am also setting the discourse in the East-European, post-communist framework³¹. So, I assume that the civil society is an *open society*, in which a dialog is undertaken between various perspectives on social, cultural and economic reality. Civil society is based, in my understanding, on the activity of the citizens, autonomous individuals, who in the process of self-development participate in various spheres of activity of local communities (e.g. districts, villages, towns, cities), which naturally

²⁸ K. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, Princeton University Press, 2013.

²⁹ See H. K. Anheier, S. Toepler, R. A. List, *International Encyclopedia of Civil Society*, New York 2009, p. 412nn.

³⁰ J. Schwedler, *Toward Civil Society in the Middle East? A Primer*, Boulder 1995.

³¹ See e.g. E. Górski, *Civil Society, Pluralism and Universalism. Polish Philosophical Studies*, Washington 2007, p. 7-55.

form a basis for free initiatives of larger scopes of provinces, nations and states. The citizens of civil society are capable of self-organization to fulfill tasks and social projects set by themselves. They acquire and develop abilities to define and pursue accepted aims without the initiative or pressure from the state, ecclesiastical or economic power. Civil society is able – in this sense – to organize itself and act independently from the superior (especially national) institutions. The basic and fundamental characteristic of such a society is its emerging awareness of the citizens concerning the needs of social communities of various levels and common actions towards meeting these needs. The citizens are engaged in the matters of particular communities and society and as such, they feel responsible for its well-being and perceive themselves as co-owners of the public sphere. In a natural way civil society is based on civil values, is practically democratic and is founded on the freedom of belief, speech and judicial independence³². The existence of non-government organizations; broad activity of local councils and governments; developed voluntary service; cooperation of various social groups for the sake of common good; balanced, sustained and well-grounded social growth, constitute the basic signs of modern civil societies in their micro and macro perspectives³³. However utopian the above list may look like at first glance, it is important to notice that more-or-less this is way the communism fell in many countries of Eastern Europe in 80's and 90's of 20th century.

Protestantism and Civil Society: The Role of Martin Luther

Thinking of Protestantism in the context of the development of civil societies in the circle of Western culture, a few funda-

³² See A. Michnik, *W poszukiwaniu utraconego sensu*, Warsaw 2007; *In search of Lost Meaning*, University of California Press 2011.

³³ A. Whaites, *Let's get civil society straight: NGOs and Political Theory*, Development in Practice, 1996.

mental Lutheran and post-Lutheran concepts can be indicated at least as potential contributions to the emergence and development of civil attitudes in the 16th and subsequent centuries³⁴.

Most of all the whole issue of the individualization of faith in the teaching of the Reformer from Wittenberg can be pointed out³⁵. In his treatises Luther definitely opposes the supremacy of the Roman Catholic Pope and criticizes the tendency of the ecclesiastical powers and authorities to control the salvation of human beings. He speaks also against the concept of the church with its hierarchy as a mediator between God and a person. At the same time Luther refers to the Biblical concept of universal priesthood of all believers, according to which every human being is a priest for himself or herself³⁶. Everybody, independently in his or her conscience, is responsible before God for their life. Everybody should also independently listen to God's voice through the individual reading (and communal interpretation) of the Bible accessible to all people in the national languages³⁷. Hence, the education of people, so strongly emphasized by the Reformer and his followers, is of fundamental importance. Salvation, from the Lutheran perspective, is not gained through the mediation of the church, through membership in a particular ecclesiastical institution or through partaking in the holy sacraments. The

³⁴ <http://tamilcanadian.com/article/2075> (access 15 April 2017). See G. M. Simpson, *Toward a Lutheran 'Delight in the Law of the Lord': Church and State in the Context of Civil Society*, in: *Church and State: Lutheran Perspectives*, J. R. Stumme and Robert W. Tuttle (ed.), Minneapolis 2003.

³⁵ See. B. Wannewetsch, *Luther's moral theology*, in: K. McKim (ed.), *Cambridge companion to Martin Luther*, Cambridge 2003, p. 128-135; S. Ozment, *Homo Spiritualis, A Comparative Study of the Anthropology of Johannes Tauler, Jean Gerson, and Martin Luther (1509-16) in the Context of Their Theological Thought*, Leiden 1969, p. 103-11.

³⁶ See *To Christian Nobility of German Nation*, Weimar Ausgabe (further indicated as: WA) VI, p. 47 (19-25); *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* WA VI, p. 564 (6-14). See *The Augsburg Confession*, art. 4, 5, 14 in: *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, R. Kolb, T. Wendert, C. P. Arand (eds.), The Fortress Press 2003, p. 143-159.

³⁷ C. Lindberg, *The European Reformations*, Oxford 1996, p. 91n.

way to salvation is through the decision of faith and the quality of human life, which follows and proves the faith, according to fundamental formula *sola gratia et sola fide*. This way, a human being is considered to be an autonomous individual, the supremacy of the hierarchical church is depreciated and the earthly sphere of human existence is elevated³⁸. Especially the issue of education, associated with the family, congregation and schools is important in the context of the social influence of early Lutheranism³⁹.

Secondly, Martin Luther uplifts the importance and the autonomous character of the secular power⁴⁰. The Reformer underlines the responsibility of the state in *Corpus Christianum* before God and the citizens. In this sense Luther, at least in his early writings, portrays himself as an advocate of the separation of the state and the church and as a critic of the tendency of the ecclesiastical power to dominate over the secular power⁴¹. Luther refers to the thought of Augustine of Hippo and maintains that in the providential governance over the world, God somehow establishes two kingdoms, spiritual and secular, which coexist in the earthly reality⁴². *De facto* the Re-

³⁸ See M. Luther, *On Christian Liberty*, Fergusson Major 2013, p. 4n.; *The Augsburg Confession*, art. 4, 20; M. Luther, *On Good Works* (1519), in: M. Luther, *Pisma etyczne*, seria: Biblioteki Klasyki Ewangelickiej, t. 6, Bielsko-Biała 2009, p. 54-138, <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/418/418-h/418-h.htm> (access 10 September 2018). See M. Uglorz, *Marcin Luter: Ojciec Reformacji*, Wydawnictwo Augustana, Bielsko-Biała 1995, p. 137n., 140-144; *Zarys nauki Kościoła luterńskiego*, in: *Świadectwo wiary i życia. Kościół luterński w Polsce wczoraj i dziś*, Wydawnictwo Augustana, Bielsko-Biała 2004, p. 42-45; B. Milerski, *Miejsce pojednania w soteriologii Marcina Lutra*, in: *Teologia wiary. Teologia ks. dra Marcina Lutra i ksiąg wyznaniowych Kościoła luterńskiego*, ed. M. Uglorz, Wydawnictwo Augustana, Bielsko-Biała 2007, p. 107-120.

³⁹ See H. Schilling, *Martin Luther, Rebel in an Age of Upheaval*, trans. R. Johnston, Oxford 2013, p. 355-375.

⁴⁰ See W. J. Wright, *Martin Luther's Understanding of God's Two Kingdoms, A Response to the Challenge of Skepticism*, Grand Rapids, Michigan 2010; H. Schilling, *Martin Luther...*, p. 405-412.

⁴¹ Later on Luther modifies his perspective. See W. J. Wright, *Martin Luther's...*, p. 113-147.

⁴² See Augustine of Hippo, *City of God*, trans. M. Dodds, CCEL,

former stresses the significance of a strong state and in this context he discusses the importance of the civil life of Christians. The secular powers, in his understanding, are responsible for the moral health and the well-being of the secular society. Hence, their responsibility is – among others – to take care of the social order and the discipline within the society, part of which is correcting the mistakes in human, earthly realm. In this context, Luther also stresses the responsibility of the citizens to obey the civil powers, which are understood as guardians of the secular part of the overall order of things bestowed by God⁴³.

Thirdly, the reader of Luther's writings should note the whole issue of appreciation of the meaning of human work, which the Reformer renders in terms of calling or vocation (*Beruf – Berufung*)⁴⁴. In his interpretation of I Cor 7:20 Martin Luther indicates that human beings are called by God not only for the eschatologically understood salvation but they are also called in the earthly realm providentially governed by God to various kinds of work⁴⁵. In the context of work an individual should fulfill his or her vocation as the integral part of the process of sanctification of a person. Various works are assigned to particular people, as well as various roles, tasks and offices. Nevertheless one cannot talk, in theological sense, of the hierarchy of work. It is also impossible to defend the supremacy of the spiritual ministry over the secular labor, as was

<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf102.i.html> (access 01 September 2018).

⁴³ Por. M. Luther, *The Formula of Concord*, art. 5-6 in: *The Book of Concord*, (eds.) R. Kolb, T. J. Wenger, C. P. Arand, Fortress Press 2000. See H. Schilling, *Martin Luther...*, p. 417-421, 434-449, 487-490.

⁴⁴ See H. Echtermach, *Work, Vocation, Calling*, in: *The Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, J. Bodensieck (ed.) Minneapolis 1965, vol.3.2502-2505, K. Froelich, *Luther on Vocation* in: *Lutheran Quarterly*, vol. XIII, Milwaukee 1999, p. 195-207; G. Wingren, *The Christian's Calling: Luther on Vocation*, Edinburgh 1958.

⁴⁵ See Luther's Commentary to I Cor. 1 in: *Luther's Works, American Edition* (dalej LW), J. Pelikan and H. Lehmann (red.), St. Louis i Filadelfia, 1955nn 28, 45.

often the case in the medieval times⁴⁶. The ministry before the altar is equally important, according to Luther, as the work with the plow. If a person has a heart full of faith, then any kind of work becomes a way of worshipping of God. On the other hand, the human work can be understood as *larvae dei*, a mask of God, an element of discourse between the Creator and the creation⁴⁷.

All people are equal before God; all are also responsible for the health of the church, those, who are holding spiritual offices and those, who are simple believers, the rulers and normal citizens. In this sense, Luther abolishes the traditional division between *sacrum* and *profanum*. *De facto* everything is the sphere of activity of God; everything is a part of the providential order. Hence, everything should be in this sense considered sacred. In this way human beings are sanctified in their earthly existence. Ultimately, is God not working? The *creatio* portrayed in the first chapters of the Book of Genesis clearly shows God as engaged in the process of creation. What is more, God in these chapters demands work from human beings, which – when applying simple hermeneutics – can be rendered as imitation or even continuation of God’s work. This notion significantly appreciates the concept of human work and bestows it a special status⁴⁸.

A particular profession is assigned to a person in an arbitrary way as a facet of spiritual growth or platform for sanctification in the general process of salvation of that being and a broader aspect of God’s providence over the world. As such,

⁴⁶ See *To Christian Nobility of German Nation*, LW, 44:127.

⁴⁷ See M. Hinz, *Teologiczne aspekty ewangelickiego etosu pracy*, https://www.academia.edu/2425520/Teologiczne_aspekty_ewangelickiego_etosu_pracy (access 13 May 2017), p. 6.

⁴⁸ With the assumption of a proper balance between work and rest. See M. Luther, *Large Catechism*, in e.g.: <http://bookofconcord.org/lc-3-tencommandments.php> (access 20 July 2018). With later defined concept of work as a form of continuation of God’s work do not agree e.g. K. Barth i J. Moltmann. See K. Barth, *Church Dogmatics III/4*, Edinburgh 1978; J. Moltmann, *The Right to Work, w: On Human Dignity, Political Theology and Ethics*, Philadelphia 1984, p. 45nn.

work should be accepted and honored regardless how exposed, lucrative or degrading it appears in mere human understanding. Work is God's gift for people and they must not oppose the divine will. It is – with a few exceptions – in the context of work and not outside of the work that people should fulfill their vocation⁴⁹. Yet, when working, people should not strive for earthly profits or promotions. Such an attitude would bring with it the danger of acting at others' expense, sinful greed and the risk of upsetting the divinely imposed social order⁵⁰. Obedience to God's will and accepting one's social position as divine vocation seems to be of highest importance according to Luther's perspective. Consequently, the Reformer opposes the idea of changing jobs by people and perceives it as acting against God's will. He also violently criticizes any social uprisings as distorting God's given order⁵¹.

This standpoint may be somehow determined by the static, feudal context, in which Luther lives, creates and in which he interprets the broad issue of salvation of human beings. Differently the whole issue renders John Calvin, who lives and writes later on in the Swiss bourgeois society, in which the middle-class starts appearing and which is of necessity much more mobile⁵². In his commentary to I Cor. 7:20, Calvin, following Luther's criticism of medieval appreciation of monastic life, indicates the value of any kind of work⁵³. However, against Luther, the Swiss theologian maintains that a person is free in their choice of profession and state. True, the apostle Paul encourages people to stay in the profession, in which they

⁴⁹ Obviously with some exceptions. See *Luther's Commentary to the Book of Genesis* 13, LW 2.

⁵⁰ See M. Hinz, *Teologiczne...*, p. 2-6.

⁵¹ See H. Schilling, *Martin Luther...*, p. 381-449; <http://tamilcanadian.com/article/2075> (access 15 April 2017).

⁵² See J. Guzman, *Eschatological Significance of Human Vocation*, Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte 2004, p. 30n.

⁵³ See e.g. T. Aquinas, *Summa theologica*, 2.2ae.184.3, J. Calvin, *Institutio religionis christianae* 4.3.11. (I am using: *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, J.T. McNeill (red.), Philadelphia 1960.)

became Christians, the “ascribed profession”, yet it is not always possible. In reality, people often discover their vocation through changing a job, especially in case of professions, which are illegal, immoral or demeaning. According to Calvin’s viewpoint, human beings are free in discovering their vocation. In this process a person can change jobs and does not have to worry that by making that kind of choice opposes God⁵⁴.

This way the very conservative view of Martin Luther is modified by later reformers of so-called mainstream (e.g. Calvin) and evangelical (e.g. Meno Simons, William Perkins, Jonathan Edwards) Protestantism. It is a natural outcome of functioning in a different than Luther’s social settings, coping with different challenges and opportunities and in these contexts developing precedential theological concepts of the Reformer from Wittenberg⁵⁵.

Evangelical Protestantism

When it comes to Evangelical Protestantism, growing out of Anabaptist, Puritan and Pietistic movements and the Great American Awakenings, a few key issues should be mentioned in the context of this sketchy discourse on civil society. First of all, the whole issue of further individualization of faith should be indicated. The assumption that a person becomes a Christian – at least phenomenologically speaking – through conversion and not birth or christening in a particular ecclesiastical setting, makes the church or community an institution of a free choice of an individual rather than an inherited religious setting of living and operation⁵⁶. In a free way a person

⁵⁴ *Institutes* 3.10.6.

⁵⁵ The problem exceeds the scope of the article. See e.g. W.R. Ward, *Early Evangelicals: A Global Intellectual History*, Cambridge 2006.

⁵⁶ N. Modnicka, *Polskie społeczności ewangelikalne jako "Kościoły wyboru" w "społeczeństwie losu"*, Warsaw 2004, p. 71nn.

chooses a community of faith and responsibly decides to take care of the development and moral care of this community. This notion is especially important with the postulation of the concept of universal priesthood of all believers, according to which every person is a priest and every person plays a key role in the building of the church understood in biblical terms as a body of Christ. Different parts of the body, as Paul indicates, build the same organism. All are important and crucial for the proper functioning of the whole being⁵⁷.

At times the concept of universal priesthood of all believers is transferred in Evangelical Protestantism into a democratic or quasi-democratic management of the local community, according to the notion that all believers are equal before God, although bestowed with different gifts, talents or offices. Naturally then, all should have a significant voice in the process of deciding the direction of development of the church or community. As the extreme example of such a democratization of the management process may serve the Quaker tradition⁵⁸. The more moderate form presents Baptist congregationalism, assuming that all believers have equal voice in the decisions important for the community⁵⁹.

Additionally, Evangelicalism with its roots in Anabaptism, Puritanism and Pietism, naturally, in its historical form, emphasizes (or at least should emphasize) the importance of education and social mission, often realized in an ecumenical way. The activity of William Wilberforce and British Abolitionists, the Salvation Army, Abraham Kyper's activity, Young Men Christian Association (YMCA), International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES), Wycliffe Bible Translation or

⁵⁷ See I Cor. 12:1-31; Eph. 4:11-16.

⁵⁸ Por. <http://qfp.quaker.org.uk/> (access 5 April 2017); T. D. Hamm, *The Quakers in America*, Columbia 2006, p. 1-13; M. Abbott, M. E. Chijioke, P. Dandelion, J. W. Oliver (ed), *Historical Dictionary of The Friends (Quakers)*, Lanham, Maryland 2003.

⁵⁹ S. Grenz, *The Baptist Congregation*, Vancouver 2002, p. 54nn.

many other more local educational, charitable, cultural or social initiatives may serve as good examples of such a case.⁶⁰

Evangelicalism and proto-Evangelical renewal movements in a western European and American context develop Lutheran and Calvinistic understanding of work. On the one hand they still understand profession in terms of vocation and responsibility before God. On the other hand they accept and often promote social mobility and this way they adjust the traditional teaching to changing social settings and dynamic reality of work. It is already seen in the teaching of Puritans and their instructions when and how a person can or should change a job. For example William Perkins in the second half of 16th century writes about three fundamental principles, which should guide a person when he or she chooses a job. First of all it should be legal. Then, a person should take into considerations their interests and gifts. Finally, with various possible options the best job should be chosen, i.e. a job, which is subjugated to God, which serves other people/community and which leads to personal development⁶¹.

Max Weber refers to the above-mentioned development of theological concepts of work and, however skeptical towards later Protestants, he indicates that e.g. Baptists on the one hand thin down the Calvinistic concept of predestination, yet on the other hand their doctrine becomes a good basis for the development of capitalism. Protestants of the Baptist tradition, according to Weber, go away from, often paralyzing professional activity and Puritan asceticism. They stress the necessary state – church separation and they underline the importance of consciousness in human life, which results in far-reaching honest, moral life⁶².

⁶⁰ See T. Zieliński, *Protestantyzm ewangelikalny. Studium specyfiki religijnej*, Warsaw 2013.

⁶¹ See J. Guzman, *Eschatological...*, p. 34; P. Miller, *The New England Mind: The Seventeenth Century*, Cambridge Massachusetts 1939, p. 44nn; T. Margo, *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order*, Cambridge, 1987.

⁶² See M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethics and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Norton

Conclusions

In the teaching of Martin Luther one can find a number of concepts at least potentially shaping the civil attitudes of believers of Lutheran provenience. Particularly important seems to be the individual perspective on human life and destiny, depreciation of hierarchical and mediatory role of the church, appreciation of secular powers and finally emphasis on the work, education and social activity of believers. These concepts seem to be of fundamental importance in the context of discussion about the development of civil societies in modern Europe. However, regardless how important were the merits of Martin Luther in advancing of civil attitudes, yet one needs to notice that the Reformer still advocated the static, feudal model of society, in which the ultimate obedience to the secular powers and acceptance of the traditional social order are of vital importance⁶³.

The social conservatism of Martin Luther modify later reformers of Calvinistic, Anabaptist, Puritan or strictly Evangelical (e.g. Jonathan Edwards) provenience, functioning in a different than Luther social setting, coping with different than Luther challenges and in their particular contexts developing the theological concepts of the Reformer from Wittenberg⁶⁴. Hence, Evangelicalism in its historical dimension may play a certain role in the process of the development of civil societies with such concepts as individualization of faith, church understood as community of free choice, democratization of the structure of governing of the communities, pressure on education and social mission understood ecumenically. These and related elements of Evangelical Protestantism in a natural way

Critical Edition, New York 2008, p. 102nn.

⁶³ See H. Schilling, *Marcin Luter...*, p. 446-522; <http://tamilcanadian.com/article/2075> (access 15 April 2017).

⁶⁴ See W.R. Ward, *Early Evangelicals: A Global Intellectual History*, Cambridge 2006.

may have contributed and still contribute to creating and strengthening civil attitudes in the societies of Europe, America and other continents.

However, similarly to mainstream Protestantism, Evangelicalism is not free from challenges and at least potential flaws. As a conservative, theological movement, promoting a strict version of *sola Scriptura* doctrine in the interpretation of the reality and striving to reconstruct the faith of the first Christians in various modern societies on the base of a conversion of an individual, it is prone to various fundamentalisms. For example, by accepting the literal or even literalistic interpretation of the Scriptures, Evangelical communities may easily separate themselves from a fast developing world. The literal application of the Scriptures in the lives of the believers may result in a far-reaching criticism of modern and post-modern societies and, as a consequence, narrowing down Evangelicals to their communities and sects. Evangelical emphasis on the eschatological future, understood simply as a compensation of contemporary problems and imperfections, may lead in a natural way to a depreciation of today's reality and to cutting themselves off from the *real life* by believers, at least in their consciousness⁶⁵. Evangelical Protestantism, growing out of the Reformation of 16th century, on the one hand has produced a number of good bases for development of civil attitudes in societies, yet on the other hand it contains a number of potential problems, which may hinder development of such attitudes. The history of Evangelicalism includes examples from both sides of the spectrum⁶⁶.

⁶⁵ Por. np. G. Marsden, *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, Grand Rapids, Michigan 1991; B. Hankins (ed.), *Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism: A Documentary Reader*, London, New York 2008.

⁶⁶ A good, critical analysis of Evangelicalism from Roman Catholic perspective: Bp A. Siemieniewski, *Ewangelikalna duchowość nowego narodzenia a tradycja katolicka*, <http://www.siemieniewski.archidiecezja.wroc.pl/?q=node/35> (accessed 16 May 2017), *Ochrzczeni w jednym duchu. Perspektywy integracji mistycyzmu pentekostalnego z duchowością katolicką*, Wrocław 2002 (http://www.dbc.wroc.pl/dlibra/docmetadata?id=1783&from=&dirids=1&ver_id=&lp=2&QI=) (accessed 16 May 2017).