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Wkład historiografii polskiej do dziedzictwa światowego

The contribution of Polish historiography to the world's heritage

SUMMARY

To present selected accomplishments in Polish historiography over the last one thousand years the author based on opinions by European and American historians who assessed the contribution of Polish historiography to the world's heritage. The beginnings of Polish historiography date back to the annalist record of 965 informing of the arrival in Poland of the wife of the first historical ruler of Poland, Mieszko: "Dobrava ad Mesconem venit" (Dobrawa comes to Mieszko). In the Middle Ages Polish historiography produced many outstanding hagiographies, annals and chronicles. Of these, the work which was best known in Europe and one that was translated into many languages was the "Chronicon pontificum et imperatorum" of 1277 by Marcin the Pole (Martin of Tropolau) – it became a model for many later works on history. Polish historiography of the Renaissance provided a source of knowledge on the countries and peoples of Eastern Europe. Translated and published in the West were works by Marcin Kromer, Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski and those written by the Polish Arians (Polish Brethren). When historical works began to be published in Polish (17th century), they ceased to be accessible to foreign historians and, with a few exceptions, the body of Polish historical writing no longer formed a recognizable part of Europe's universal cultural heritage. Despite many outstanding works published in the Age of Enlightenment or in the 19th century, until the 20th century Polish historians had remained relatively unknown – the only exception concerned historians who published in foreign languages, such as Joachim Lelewel (who made a major contribution to research on historical geography and the ancillary disciplines of history) or Oskar Halecki (who is considered an American historian), and those émigré historians who found themselves outside Poland during World War II. The research of the founder of Polish economic historiography, for instance, Adam Bujak, was well ahead of the ideas presented by the French "Annales" school, and yet his work was not known, because he published in his mother tongue. Conclusions: In order for Polish historians, many of whom are well respected in world scholarly circles, to regain the high esteem they enjoyed when Latin was the language of the academia, they must publish their innovative works in the so-called congress languages.

Analecta – Studia i Materiały z Dziejów Nauki

[Analecta – Studies and Materials on the History of Science]

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