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THE MAIN DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH ON THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PARLIAMENTARISM OF THE POLISH-LITHUANIAN COMMONWEALTH AFTER 1989¹

Abstract

The study of the parliamentarism of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, consisting of the interrelated institutions of the Sejm and the sejmiks, has quite a long history, having begun back in the 2nd half of the 19th century. Continued by successive generations of historians, including those during the period of some restrictions in the era of the partition of the state and the communist era 1945-1989, the research, however, to this day is still fragmentary and far from showing a full-scale picture and answering a number of questions that are still relevant. The fate of the parliamentary system, its advantages and disadvantages, its impact on the history of the state and society, as well as its legacy and traditions, many elements of which are still alive today, although not always realized, have also attracted interest in recent decades. This text aims to synthetically show the specifics and main directions of research in Polish historiography after 1989 on various issues of the functioning of the Sejm and the sejmiks, as well as the potential opportunities and serious threats currently facing researchers.

Keywords: historiography, Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, parliamentarism, Sejm, sejmiks.

The political breakthrough of 1989 in Polish historiography did not represent a major change in terms of removing barriers to historical research – apart from the Stalinist period – there was a certain freedom in this respect in Poland. This can also be seen in the case of research into the parliamentarism of the former Commonwealth (Rzeczpospolita), which had been conducted with varying degrees of intensity almost con-

¹ This article was written as part of the implementation of the National Program for the Development of the Humanities, project led by Michał Zwierzykowski, No. 11H 18 0011 86, carried out from 2018 to 2024.

tinuously since its beginning in the second half of the 19th century.² This was definitely a qualitative breakthrough in the form of a change in the state's policy towards research (the launch of various grant programmes available in open competitions, awarded on the basis of scientific rather than political evaluation), and above all the opening up of wide-ranging opportunities to travel and make use of innumerable archival and library resources. This was particularly important in the case of Lithuanian, Belarussian, Ukrainian and (above all) Russian collections, which play an enormous role in 18th century research. Another important factor was the breakthrough in the development of the Internet and the exponential increase in the availability of information and photocopies of prints and manuscripts. Unfortunately, nowadays, due to the extensive consequences of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, Polish historians researching the history of the former Commonwealth face new barriers – the total lack of possibilities to travel to Russia and Belarus, and, due to war, also to Ukraine, puts a question mark over undertaking many topics. For obvious reasons, these collections are not, or only marginally, available in electronic form. This is a serious problem that will in the near future affect the quality and progress of work on parliamentarism as well. For a while yet, it will still be possible to use the resources acquired in various forms over the past thirty years. But what next?

The term “parliamentarism” in the case of the former Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth should also be clarified at this point. From the final formation of the Commonwealth, united by the bonds of the Union of Lublin in 1569, and on the basis of the changes made in the first decades of its existence, the parliamentarism was formed by a complex structure comprising the Sejm and regional assemblies (sejmiks), which elected Sejm deputies, enacted instructions for them and circulated numerous Sejm constitutions, primarily concerning the treasury and the army. In parallel, the sejmiks developed their own powers and structures of territorial self-government.³ It can even be said that the principles of parliamentary systems and self-government functioned in the Republic as two of the fundamental principles of the political system, and both were closely linked.⁴ This relationship, which lasted for almost 200 years, had

² A sort of summary of the achievements of the historiography of parliamentarism before 1989 is a multi-author monograph: J. Bardach, W. Sudnik, (eds), *Parlamentaryzm w Polsce we współczesnej historiografii*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1995.

³ B. Leśnodorski, *Parlamentaryzm w Polsce*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo M. Kot, 1947.

⁴ Recently wrote about the principles of parliamentary system and self-government more extensively in his textbook on the history of the state and law by the eminent historian and jurist from Kraków W. Uruszczak, *Historia państwa i prawa polskiego*, vol. 1, 2nd edn., Warszawa, Lex a Wolters Kluwer business, 2015, p. 210-211, 217-220.

serious consequences for the specific functioning of the Republic and the Sejm – it was only in the second half of the 18th century that the process of separating territorial self-government from the Sejm and the procedures related to the election of the representatives began. Hence, research into the parliamentarism of the past cannot and is not limited to the study of the history of the Sejm.

Moreover, an important peculiarity of this research after 1989, i.e. after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of national states, heirs to the traditions and historical legacy of the former Commonwealth (Latvia, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine), was the intensive development of research by historians from outside Poland, including on the history of parliamentarism. Since then, its historiography has had an eminently transnational, multilateral dimension.

Research on parliamentarism in such a broad sense, conducted by Polish historians since the second half of the 19th century with varying intensity, has already yielded a significant number of monographs, articles and chapters in monographs, as well as – unusually – a considerable number of source editions. When the first balance sheet was taken in 2012, there were already 2,750 bibliographic items, including nearly 200 editions, more than 2000 books and smaller studies, and more than 400 reviews and polemics.⁵ Over the next 10 years, this number has certainly increased by at least several hundred bibliographic items. Statistical analysis, which we will not go into here, indicated that interest in and the number of publications on parliamentarism increased significantly in the early 21st century (about 56 per year), and this trend continues. Importantly, a certain number of publications, far too modest, have been produced in languages other than Polish – dominated by studies in Lithuanian, Belarusian and Ukrainian, as well as English, French and German. Unfortunately, only a few texts have been found in Italian – all of them concerning the 3rd May Constitution and coming from a single publication, from 1995.⁶ These data obviously refer to the entire output of the historiography of the issue, from its beginnings in the fifteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century.

The specificity of the eighteenth century is already somewhat different. When analysing only those publications that can be attributed to a given century, the situation in 2012 was as follows – 18th century was

⁵ For an attempt to compile this body of work, both of Polish and foreign historiography, on the parliamentarism of the old Republic see: R. Kołodziej, M. Zwierzykowski, *Bibliografia parlamentaryzmu Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej / Bibliography of the parliamentary system of the Nobles' Republic*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2012.

⁶ J. Żurawska, (ed.), *La Costituzione polacca del 3 Maggio 1791 e il costituzionalismo europeo del XVIII secolo. Atti del Colloquio italo-polacco 1991*, Napoli, IUO, 1995.

covered by 761 publications (of which only 124 relate to the period of the reign of the Wettin dynasty 1697-1763) – a large part of them focusing on the declining period of the history of parliamentarism, the deliberations of the Four-Year Sejm, 1788-1792, and its key work, the Constitution of 3rd May. As far as the 18th century is concerned, the research and publication output of recent years has not fundamentally changed these proportions.

In principle, research into parliamentarism after 1989 has continued in all the directions initiated earlier, but there has been a change in the number and degree of interest of researchers in particular topics. Studies on the history of the Sejm and sejmiks are being written, and, which should be particularly emphasised, team and international work on the publication of sources on the history of parliamentarism has been intensified – one could even say that the last 30 years have been a period of catching up in the field of parliamentarism with regard to the search for, collection, processing and publication of sources. The fruits of these activities may appear in the next period.

As far as synthetic approaches covering also the 18th century are concerned, the beginning of the period analysed here resulted in two popular scientific studies by Wojciech Kriegseisen, who presented the functioning of sejmiks in the 17th and 18th centuries,⁷ as well as the history of the Sejm up to 1763.⁸ The monography of Lithuanian part of the parliamentarism given by Andrzej Rachuba was also of great importance.⁹ Further publications on the history of the Sejm, which were very synthetic and tended to repeat earlier findings, appeared on the occasion of various anniversaries – in this field the role of the Sejm Publishing House is significant.¹⁰

The recently published book presenting new chronology of the Sejm is an important scholarly endeavour, albeit not without its shortcomings.¹¹ It brings together basic information organising knowledge about individual Sejms, as well as the key surviving sources (Sejm diaries). This publication will certainly facilitate the work of future historians. Unfortunately, the work of Kraków historians of law on a modern edition of the

⁷ W. Kriegseisen, *Sejmiki Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej w XVII i XVIII wieku*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1991.

⁸ W. Kriegseisen, *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej (do 1763 roku). Geneza i kryzys władzy ustawodawczej*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1995.

⁹ A. Rachuba, *Wielkie Księstwo Litewskie w systemie parlamentarnym Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1569–1763*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2002; see also: A. Rachuba, "Parliamentarism of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Fourteenth-Eighteenth Centuries", *The Sejm Review*, No. 6 (167), 2021, pp. 43-83.

¹⁰ The website of the Sejm Publishing House: <https://wydawnictwo.sejm.gov.pl>.

¹¹ L.A. Wierzbicki, D. Kupisz, (eds.), *Chronologia sejmów Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów (1569-1793)*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2021.

Sejm Constitutions, which started back in the 90s of the 20th century, has still not reached the 18th century,¹² and what is worse, the way in which the subsequent volumes have been prepared forces historians to make use of old editions and source prints from the 17th and 18th centuries. However, source editions of the 18th century Sejm diaries have been significantly neglected in the period after the year 1989. Although an attempt has been made to use Internet publications¹³ and a team is working on the publication of a comprehensive diary, documenting one of the key and at the same time most bizarre 1717 Silent Sejm¹⁴ – this is still only a drop in the ocean of needs.

An analysis of the chronology of the Sejms convened in the 18th century leads to the sad and well-known observation that the century was a time of deep crisis for this key institution in the political system, and after 1764 of its gradual, though powerfully constrained by Russian violence, revival. Counting from the Sejm of 1696, after the death of John III Sobieski, until the last Sejm, held in 1793, shortly before the collapse of the Polish-Lithuanian state, 58 Sejms took place or should have taken place (of which 15 since 1764). By 1764, when the pernicious principle of the *liberum veto* was in force, most of the Sejms had been, nearly completely, adjourned – this was particularly evident during the reign of August III Wettin, when only one Sejm (1736) successfully completed its deliberations.¹⁵ This situation partly explains the collapse in the production of monographs of individual Sejms, which was typical of research on the Sejms of earlier periods. After 1989, only a few Sejm monographs for the 18th century were published. These studies also began to deviate more and more from the classical model, covering all stages: from the convocation, the pre-sejm campaign, the deliberations of the Sejm to the discussion of the legislative output.¹⁶ Some of the new studies focus only

¹² *Volumina Constitutionum*, vol. 1-5, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 1995-2022 – these volumes cover the years 1493-1676; work on the next volumes is still in progress.

¹³ See, for example, the attempt at an online edition of the diary of the last Diet of the old Republic, held in Grodno, in 1793: H. Olszewski, (ed.), *Sejm grodzieński 1793*, <https://www.bkpan.poznan.pl/projekty-zakonczone/ELITY/SEJM1793/wstep.htm> (accessed 14 September 2024).

¹⁴ Team grant under the direction of Michał Zwierzykowski, funded by the National Program for the Development of the Humanities (11H 18 0011 86). A recently published multi-author monograph brings together the previous findings of historiography on the subject of the 1717 Silent Sejm: M. Zwierzykowski, (ed.), *Sejm Niemy. Między mitem a reformą państwa*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2019.

¹⁵ L.A. Wierzbicki, D. Kupisz, (eds.), *Chronologia sejmów Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów (1569-1793)*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2021, pp. 209-312.

¹⁶ See, for example, the monograph by W. Filipczak, which is close to the classical model, W. Filipczak, *Sejm 1778 roku*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper,

on selected strands of the political and international history of individual Sejms,¹⁷ or the leading issue under deliberation – the most outstanding example of such an approach so far is the extensive study of matters related to the Catholic Church during the Four-Year Sejm, written by the eminent British historian Richard Butterwick-Pawlikowski (published in English and greatly expanded in Polish).¹⁸ There are several reasons for this change, and for the slackening of the monograph's pace. Firstly, the numerous broken Sejms seem less attractive for research than the earlier ones. Secondly, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth in the 18th century was falling into increasing dependence on foreign powers, particularly Russia, which necessitates in-depth, expensive and time-consuming foreign research – usually difficult to plan in the short time available for writing doctoral dissertations, which in past periods were quite often devoted to just such research. Moreover, the aforementioned emergence of the possibility of queries in foreign archives, where there is a highly dispersed source resource, has raised academic expectations considerably. It is no longer enough today, as it was before, to limit oneself to domestic resources with a few source additions from abroad.

A certain solution to this problem, which has already been applied to the history of the Sejm of the second half of the 17th century, could be the preparation of collective monographs covering a greater number of Sejms¹⁹ – here, however, a much larger and richer source base stands in the way, which is no longer manageable for a single historian, even in the course of many years of research.

Much better in terms of numbers and content is the elaboration of numerous detailed issues in the form of articles and chapters in multi-author monographs, but these are far from solidly filling in the numerous gaps and answering the questions that are still open. An impor-

2000. It is fully represented, among others, by monographs of eighteenth-century assemblies published after 1989: B. Dybaś, *Sejm pacyfikacyjny w 1699 r.*, Toruń, Wydawnictwo TNT, 1991.

¹⁷ See, for example, the monograph by U. Kosińska, *Sejm 1719-1720 a sprawa ratyfikacji traktatu wiedeńskiego*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Semper, 2003.

¹⁸ R. Butterwick, *Polska rewolucja a Kościół katolicki 1788-1792*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo ARCANA, 2012. A much less comprehensive version of this book in English: R. Butterwick, *Polish Revolution and the Catholic Church, 1788-1792. A Political History*, Oxford, University Press, 2012.

¹⁹ Polish historiography of parliamentarism in the seventeenth century can already boast two, relatively new syntheses of the history of the Sejms of the reigns of Jan II Kazimierz and Jan III Sobieski: S. Ochmann-Staniszevska, Z. Staniszevski, *Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana Kazimierza Wazy. Prawo – doktryna – praktyka*, vol. 1-2, Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2000; R. Kołodziej, *“Ostatni wolności naszej klejnot”. Sejm Rzeczypospolitej za panowania Jana III Sobieskiego*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2014.

tant element of parliamentary studies, quite popular in recent decades, is the current of biographical research on individual parliamentarians and senators. There are also more extensive or contributory studies of groups of MPs as part of prosopographical research.²⁰ The latest attempt to review the numerous issues concerning the parliamentarism of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, including those devoted to the eighteenth century, is a special volume, English-language, of the journal *The Sejm Review* from the year 2021, and especially articles by Andrzej Rachuba, Adam Perlakowski, Dariusz Kupisz, Anna Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, Witold Filipczak or Andrzej Stroynowski.²¹

For the study of parliamentarism and the closely related political life of the state, quite popular post-1989 studies of political thought are crucial – they concern both synthetic approaches and studies of specific authors, writings and political discourse in the broadest sense. The key place in this field for the 18th century undoubtedly falls to A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz.²² This author has also prepared the latest excellent edition of the May 3rd Constitution 1791, based on the copy used for the work directly during the enactment of this fundamental piece of legislation.²³

An important direction of research in the field of parliamentarism, one might even say increasingly dominant after 1989, is the study of the second part of this system – the regional assemblies (sejmiks). Thanks to new principles of financing and state support for team editing projects, planned in advance for many years, the work of teams in Poznań, Wrocław, Lublin, Toruń and Warsaw, working on the preparation of new editions of sejmik records (broadly defined), including those so far neglected concerning the 18th century, has started in full swing.²⁴ Some of

²⁰ For an overview of such publications through 2012, see in R. Kołodziej, M. Zwierzykowski, *Bibliografia parlamentaryzmu Rzeczypospolitej szlacheckiej / Bibliography of the parliamentary system of the Nobles' Republic*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo Poznańskie, 2012.

²¹ *The Sejm Review*, 6(167), 2021, edited by Chancellery of the Sejm.

²² Numerous publications by this Author, in particular: A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, *Regina libertas. Wolność w polskiej myśli politycznej XVIII wieku*, Gdańsk, Wydawnictwo Słowo/Obraz Terytoria, 2006.

²³ A. Grześkowiak-Krwawicz, (ed.), *Konstytucja 3 maja 1791, na podstawie Ustawy Rządowej z Archiwum Sejmu Czteroletniego*, Warszawa, Muzeum Łazienki Królewskie, AGAD, 2018.

²⁴ On the history of the editing of sejmik records, see K. Łopatecki, "Edycje źródłowe akt sejmikowych, przeszłość – teraźniejszość – przyszłość", *Miscellanea Historico-Iuridica*, 14 (2015), vol. 2. The post-1989 period saw a tremendous increase in interest in the work of editing teams, resulting in the publication of numerous (though still far from complete) series of volumes of sejmik records for the 18th century. For the Crown part of the Republic: M. Zwierzykowski, (ed.), *Akta sejmikowe województw poznańskiego i kaliskiego. Lata 1696-1732*, Poznań, Wydawnictwo

these efforts are carried out in cooperation with historians from Lithuania and Belarus, and, unfortunately in a symbolic way, also from Ukraine. Research on sejmiks from the Crown area dominates, but work on those from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania has also been solidly launched.²⁵

Editorial work involving many young researchers has given rise to a huge revival in the writing of monographic and detailed works devoted to successive sejmiks, as well as to selected issues and periods of their activity. The great diversity in the forms and principles of functioning of various sejmiks (local governments) within a common parliamentary system, makes it difficult to create synthetic and model approaches. New research in many places modifies the findings of older historiography, especially those relating to the perception of the role and importance of sejmiks in the 18th century, and there is still some way to go before a new synthesis can replace those written in the 19th and 20th centuries.²⁶

An important gap in Polish research into 18th-century parliamentarism is the almost complete lack of comparative studies, with such excellent results as those carried out as late as the 20th century by Polish historians with reference to the systems of Western and Central Europe from the Middle Ages up to the 16th century.²⁷ Their findings included the observation that up to that time the development of Polish

Poznańskie, 2008; M. Zwierzykowski, (ed.), *Akta sejmikowe województw poznańskiego i kaliskiego. Lata 1733-1763*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo DiG, 2015; M. Zwierzykowski, R. Kołodziej, (eds.), *Akta sejmikowe województwa bełskiego. Lata 1696-1772 (1792)*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka, 2021 – all these three in the series edited by M. Zwierzykowski, “Staropolski Parlamentaryzm”. For Grand Duchy of Lithuania we have only two source publications edited after 1989 and concerning the 18th century: H. Lulewicz (ed.), *Akta zjazdów stanów Wielkiego Księstwa Litewskiego*, vol. 1-2, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2006-2009; M. Jusupović, (ed.), *Akta sejmiku kowieńskiego z lat 1733-1795*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Neriton, 2019. Many others are still in development.

²⁵ A comprehensive review of research and especially editorial work on the history of the sejmiks of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was recently presented in a special volume of the journal *Miscellanea Historico-Iuridica*, Vol. 21 No. 1 (2022): *Editions of the source Regional Parliamentary Assemblies (Sejmiks) Records (Past – Present – Future)*.

²⁶ Extensive literature on sejmik issues was recently presented by a historian from Kraków Jarosław Stoliczka, *Sejmiki województw ukraińskich podczas wygnania 1648-1700*, Kraków, Historia Jagellonica, 2023. For the second half of the 18th century, this was done by G. Głabisz, *Sejmiki Wielkopolski w latach 1764-1793*, Poznań, UAM, Wydział Historii, 2022.

²⁷ See, for example, the numerous studies by Stanisław Russocki (including many in foreign languages): H. Dziewanowska, (ed.), *Stanisław Russocki – badacz dziejów ustroju i prawa. W 45-lecie pracy naukowej*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1999.

institutions had not diverged excessively from the main developmental lines of Europe.²⁸ The change that took place in the 17th century, the emergence of the Polish state model, defending itself against the development of centralised and militarised state structures, which failed in the 18th century despite the multidirectional reforms initiated, made comparisons less attractive. Meanwhile, long-standing research into the systems of Western European states, including those modelled as centralised and absolutist, shows how many solutions and institutions there were in which this commonality between the two systems of government remained apparent. Also important is the direction of research which has been conducted in Europe for some time, surprisingly without taking into account the case of the Polish Republic, on the so-called “bottom-up” processes of building the State. This direction has been particularly reinforced by subsequent publications initiated at the 2005 Ascona conference on “Building State from Below” (publication 2009).²⁹

Finally, it is worth reflecting on the value and potential of parliamentary studies concerning the area of the former Commonwealth. In the face of new historiographical trends and challenges, are they still worth the financial outlay and commitment of intellectual forces of successive generations of historians? In relation to the specific parliamentarism, the framework of which we have already mentioned, functioning in a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, geographically extensive and extremely socially diverse state which, despite numerous crises and a huge weakening in the face of centralising and militarising European states, remained to the end cohesive and far from centrifugal tendencies of disintegration, this is still a key issue, as successive generations of Polish historians have continually pointed out.³⁰ In spite of the enormous source material

²⁸ The prominent Kraków historian and expert on the eighteenth century, Józef Andrzej Gierowski, while criticizing the phenomenon of absolutism, which was, in his opinion, “a violation of the continuity of the principle of expanding public participation in government, the development of which could be observed in Europe since the Middle Ages”, at the same time stated that “the Republic of the Nobility was an attempt to continue” this principle: J. Maroń, *Spojrzenie Józefa Andrzeja Gierowskiego na ustroj dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*, in M. Markiewicz, (ed.) *Profesor Józef Andrzej Gierowski jako uczony i nauczyciel*, Wrocław, Instytut Historyczny Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 2008, p. 95.

²⁹ W. Blockmans, A. Holenstein, D. Schläppi, (eds.), *Empowering Interactions. Political Cultures and the Emergence of the State in Europe 1300–1900*, London: Routledge, 2009. See also among others: K. Dørum, M. Hallenberg, K. Katajala, (eds.), *Bringing the People back in. State Building from Below in the Nordic Countries ca. 1500–1800*, London: Routledge, 2021.

³⁰ Much has been written about the achievements of this complex state, united by a union, in a multi-author monograph: W. Uruszczak, Z. Noga, M. Zwierzykowski, K. Fokt, (eds.), *Unie między państwowe – Parlamentaryzm – Samorządność. Studia*

losses, there is still an inexhaustible resource, which, especially thanks to the efforts of the last thirty years, is being increasingly better recognised and elaborated. It allows new fields of research to be discovered and new questions to be posed.

The specific nature of the functioning of the Sejm and sejmiks has produced invaluable sources regularly written throughout the state, which provide insight into strictly political issues, but also into the international, social, religious, fiscal, economic and military affairs of vast areas. They provide an opportunity to learn about the so-called opinions of the numerous citizens in the Republic – to learn about regional differences, but also to observe many strong areas of cohesion. An excellent example of the potential of parliamentary sources can be found in the source edition compiled not so long ago by Lithuanian historians, who have published in print all the surviving sejmik instructions from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, enacted for MPs during the Grand Sejm (1788-1792)³¹ – an edition of the much more numerous instructions from the territory of the Crown is still awaiting its publisher.³²

In the face of the processes and phenomena currently besetting the community of the European Union, both internal and international, the experience of a similar, albeit operating within a different scope and geographical, social, political and economic reality, community of many nations of the former Commonwealth, may still be a source of reflection and ideas. It is important that these should not be based on trite schemes constructed since the 18th century for various internal and international needs, but on the latest findings of historians from the successor states – Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine – also, and perhaps especially, in the field of the history of parliamentarism and political life.

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z dziejów ustroju Rzeczypospolitej Obojga Narodów, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2020.

³¹ R. Jurgaitis, A. Stankevič, A. Verbickienė, (eds.), *Lietuvos Dzidžiosios Kunigaikštystės seimelių instrukcijos (1788-1792)*, Vilnius, Mykolo Romeris universitetas, 2015.

³² In recent years, Poznań-based young historian of parliamentarism Grzegorz Głabisz, from the school of Michał Zwierykowski, has been preparing a project to publish in print all the instructions for deputies to the Great Sejm (1788-1792) with additional materials.

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