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EFFORTS TO REACTIVATE THE UNIATE CHURCH IN LUBLIN REGION IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1875, after many years of preparation, the state authorities liquidated the last Uniate (Greek Catholic) diocese in the Russian Empire. It covered the eastern border region of the Polish Kingdom, aligned with Russia by personal union, which, however, lost its autonomy after the fall of the January Uprising (1863–1864). The lands in question are located on the west side of the middle section of the Bug River. For centuries these dioceses were distinguished by diverse ethnic and religious characteristics. The Polish population, which professed Catholicism in the Latin rite was mixed with the Ruthenians (in today's nomenclature: Ukrainians), who represented Eastern Christian, the Greek religious tradition. The liquidation of union meant integrating the entire physical infrastructure of the Uniate Church and all the faithful to the Russian Orthodox Church. The Uniate population decidedly resisted and in turn the Russian authorities responded with severe repressions. In southern Podlasie (Podlachia) the repression was exceptionally brutal. The persecution of those who did not want to join the Orthodox Church lasted 30 for years.¹ It was only in 1905 that Tsar Nicholas II issued edict of toleration which acknowledge the existence of the resistant Uniates who officially separated themselves from the Orthodox Church. The new

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¹ Józef Pruszkowski, *Martyrologium czyli męczeństwo Unii Św. na Podlasiu* (Woodbridge, NJ, 1983 [reprint]); Józef P. Bojarski, *Czasy Nerona w XIX wieku pod rządem moskiewskim, czyli ostatnie chwile unii w diecezji chełmskiej* (Lwów: Drukiem i nakładem Drukarni Ludowej, 1885).

law, however, did not acknowledge the Greek Catholics as the legal owners of the church buildings and other properties which were previously owned by the Greek Catholics, the decree only acknowledged the legal status of those persons who transferred to the Latin rite. In 1905, and the years that followed, at least 200,000 former Uniates and their descendants from the area of the former diocese of Chełm took advantage of this opportunity.²

With the end of Russian rule in 1915, and the rebirth of the Polish state, many former Uniates who were now Latin Catholics were now allowed to incorporate many of their places of worship, which was confiscated in 1875, into the new the Roman Catholic parishes. These were mainly Orthodox churches, as well as cemeteries, residential and farm buildings, agricultural land and movable equipment of temples. In the interwar period, there were also attempts to bring back to the Catholic Church those who decided to remain in the Orthodox Church after 1905. To this end, a number of Catholic pastoral institutions were established, where Eastern liturgical traditions were cultivated. These initiatives have been called the Neo-Uniate action. It covered the lands of the former Russian Partition belonging to the Second Polish Republic, including the area of the former Uniate diocese of Chełm.

This article aims at presenting the aforementioned activities in the Lublin region in 1918–1939. During the Russian rule, there were two guberniyas: Lublin and Siedlce. In the reborn Poland they were transformed into Lublin Province, which has a similar territory today. However, in terms of the church in this period, these lands were divided between the two Roman Catholic dioceses: Lublin and Podlasie (with its capital in Siedlce). In the mid 1920's, in the eastern deanery of Lublin, as well as in the eastern deaneries of both Catholic dioceses, there were about 140,000 members of the Orthodox Church. At the end of the 1930's the number increased to 200,000 people. About 70 percent of them lived within the borders of the Lublin diocese, while others were in Podlasie. The latter were included in the Catholic Church's missionary work. These events have gone down in history as the neo-union.

² Krzysztof Grzesiak, "Ukaz tolerancyjny z 1905 roku i jego następstwa na Lubelszczyźnie – w stulecie wydarzeń," *Wiadomości Archidiecezji Lubelskiej*, 80 (2006): 785–825.

FIRST NEO-UNION INITIATIVES

There were several postulates necessary to restore the Uniate Church structures in the territories subordinated to the Russian government until 1915. The Holy See expressed great interest in this issue. It is worth noting that the second half of the nineteenth century brought a fundamental change in the relationship of the Catholic Church to the Christian East, marking the beginning of an increased appreciation and promotion of the spiritual and cultural richness of this branch of Christianity. Other liturgical and canonical traditions (apart from Latin) were deemed equal and worthy of preservation and development. There were even attempts by the tsarist government to reunite the Russian Orthodox Christians with Rome. Early converts appeared also, but these came to a halt with the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia.³ The efforts, however, continued in areas belonging to the Polish state under special protection of the Holy See, which had already in the 1920's created a legal basis for the existence of the new church and was given the name of the Byzantine-Slavic rite. In this new rite individual parishes were to be subordinated to local ordinaries of the Latin rite dioceses. It was assumed, though, that after creating the stable network of parishes the structures of the rite at the diocesan level would be formed, and they would be distinct from both Latin and Greek Catholic.⁴

Greek Catholic Archbishop of Lwów, Andrzej Szeptycki (Andrey Sheptytsky), was highly interested in the development of union. Even before the outbreak of World War I, he was known for his far-reaching vision of the union work in Russia and Ukraine. In 1914, he conferred the episcopal ordination on rev. Józef Bocian, who was meant to work in soon-to-be-reactivated Uniate diocese of Łuck. Given that the mission of this bishop in Volyn failed, he was delegated to work in the Lublin area at the beginning of 1918. His task was to coordinate the activities conducted by the Galician Greek Catholic priests, including the military chaplains from the Austro-Hungarian army. These activities were undertaken in Chełm, Lublin, some regions of Podlasie and (bordering on Galicia) in the villages of the Hrubieszów district, however, they did not produce the desired effects. Orthodox

³ Florentyna Rzemieniuk, *Kościół katolicki obrządku wschodniego (neunia)* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 1999), 19 ff.

⁴ Stanisław Stępień, "Nowa unia kościelna. Obrządek bizantyjsko-słowiański," in *Polska-Ukraina. 1000 lat sąsiedztwa*, vol. 2, ed. Stanisław Stępień (Przemyśl: Południowo-Wschodni Instytut Naukowy w Przemyślu, 1994), 141–194.

Christians attended service celebrated by these priests until their own pastors returned from Russia. Galician missionaries got into a conflict with the local Latin Catholics, including those coming from former Uniate families. Such situation occurred for instance in Drelów, Podlasie.⁵ Yet the most scandalous disputes took place in Zamość region. Greek Catholic priests accused the local Latins of taking over former Uniate churches and desecrating Orthodox church utensils. It affected Szczebrzeszyn, Radechnica, Lipsk and Suchowola. The investigation revealed that the allegations were groundless. Please note that this false accusation was carelessly backed by Archbishop A. Szepczycki. In the same period, Latin pastors of Hrubieszów district informed against Greek Catholic priests who performed religious services for the Orthodox Christians residing in the frontier villages. Informers drew attention to the fact that the Orthodox Christians were not required to profess the Catholic faith.⁶

The activities of Greek Catholic clergy in 1918 and 1919 resembled the national propaganda of Ukrainian character. This fact could not remain unnoticed within the Polish and Roman Catholic communities, especially in respect to the ongoing armed conflict between Poland and Ukraine, which covered south-eastern corners of the Lublin region. All these factors biased the community of Lublin diocese, both clergy and laity, against the idea of restoration of the union as supported by the Greek Catholic clergy of Galicia. Under such circumstances, the bishop of Lublin, Marian Leon Fulman, addressed the Greek Catholic Church authorities in Lwów to withdraw the Uniate priests from his diocese.⁷

We should also mention a small number of priests of the former Uniate diocese of Chełm, who did not use to accept the Orthodox faith and escaped to Galicia. In the early twenties of the twentieth century there were still a few such priests. One of them, rev. Teofil Harasowski, submitted a comprehensive memorial to the bishop of Lublin calling for the immediate Uniate action among Orthodox people. He recalled the days of his pastoral work in the Lublin region and lamented that many former Uniates, including his parishioners of that time, were currently outside the canonical jurisdiction of

⁵ Florentyna Rzemieniuk, *Unicy polscy 1596-1946* (Siedlce: Florentyna Rzemieniuk, 1998), 160 ff.; Archiwum Archidiecezjalne Lubelskie (later appearing as: AAL), Rep 61 XII 5, Akta o propagandzie unii na Chełmszczyźnie, 19 ff.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 21 ff.

⁷ Krzysztof Grzesiak, *Diecezja lubelska wobec prawosławia w latach 1918-1939* (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Lubelskiej "Gaudium," 2010), 468 ff.

the Roman Catholic Church. The author of the memorial expressed regret about the fratricidal war in Galicia and called for harmonious co-existence of the two nations and the two Catholic rites. In response, the bishop of Lublin expressed his appreciation for rev. T. Harasowski's good spirit, but also made it clear that the resurrection of the union was currently impossible due to strained political relations. Later, the priest made a similar appeal to the Lublin governor to complain about the lack of understanding of the union within the Latin clergy.⁸

Also lay Catholics seemed skeptical about the initiative of Galician Greek Catholics. Interestingly enough, they mostly included those from former Uniate families. People still remember that Uniate clergy of Galicia were in favour to the Orthodox Church had played an infamous role in the liquidation of the union. Many of them had been brought in by the Russian authorities during the 1960's. Even though half a century had passed, the Galician Greek Catholics were still perceived by the local Uniate descendants as unreliable because of their loyalty to the bishop of Rome. Many testimonies exist which bear witness of the disapproval of restoring the Uniate rite by consecrating Orthodox parishes as places where the Sacred Liturgy in the Latin rite could be celebrated. At the time the faithful submitted such petitions in bulk to the Lublin diocese authorities.⁹

ORIGINS AND FATE OF THE NEO-UNIATE PARISHES

Neo-union in the Republic of Poland is believed to have began in 1925 when the first Neo-Uniate parish was founded. It was located in Hola, the village in the diocese of Podlasie. By the end of the interwar period, several dozen such posts were formed in the eastern dioceses of: Podlasie, Lublin, Wilno, Pińsk and Łuck. Neo-union's history in the Lublin region was not

⁸ AAL, Rep 61 XII 5, 65nn.

⁹ Grzesiak, *Diecezja*, 471; AAL, Rep 60 IVb 9a, Akta parafii Biszczka, Reconciliation protocol of the Orthodox Church in Biszczka; AAL, Rep 60 IVb 87a, Akta parafii Kosobudy, Letter from inhabitants of Szewnia to the bishop of Lublin, 22.02.1919; AAL, Rep 60 IVb 151a, Akta parafii Majdan Sopocki, Letter from inhabitants of Majdan Sopocki to the bishop of Lublin, 29.12.1918; AAL, Rep 60 IVb 67a, Akta parafii Kalinówka (Monastyrek), Letter from inhabitants of Monastyrek to Lublin consistory, 06.07.1918; AAL, Rep 60 IVb 168b, Akta parafii Obsza, Village-mayor testimony.

uniform. The diocese of Podlasie was the scene of a fairly intense union work. On the other hand, in the diocese of Lublin it had a limited scope, and it started only in the 1930's. The attitude of ordinaries from both dioceses was the reason of this diversity. The bishop of Podlasie, Henryk Przeździecki, was probably the biggest enthusiast of the union in the Polish episcopate. However, the bishop of Lublin, Marian Leon Fulman, was rather skeptical about the idea. Yet the notion that he was a strong opponent of neo-union is exaggerated.¹⁰

The network of Neo-Uniate institutions in the diocese of Podlasie was created in the following stages. As you know, the parish in Hola was established on March 25, 1925. In July of the same year parishes in Kijowiec and Stary Bubel were erected, the latter functioning in the neighbouring Stary Pawłów. The parish in Połoski was established in August of that year, while the parish in Terespol in August 1926. The parish in Zabłocie was created in December of the same year. In January 1927, Neo-Uniate parish appeared in Kostomłoty, and in March 1928 the parish in Dokudów came into being. In the second decade of the interwar period, two more parishes were formed. The facility in Szóstka was erected in January 1931, while the centre in Kodeń was set up in 1933. It should be noted that efforts were taken in the thirties to organize the parish in Hołowno and Janów Podlaski although they were unsuccessful.¹¹

The initiative for the creation of new parishes was usually the result of those people who were interested in conversion of the Orthodox Christians, however, the final decision was made by the bishop of Podlasie who almost always gave his approval. The official erection of a parish followed in a relatively short period. The ordinary cared about the material aspect of new facilities, in particular the livelihood of the priests serving therein. Thanks to his commitment these parsons were civil registrars, for which they received a salary from the state. Many facilities were also able to recover some of the land from the former Uniate parish benefices. The priests' income also included offerings of the faithful. These were rather insignificant due to the small number of parishioners.¹²

¹⁰ Krzysztof Grzesiak, Jarosław Roman Marczewski, "Biskup lubelski Marian Leon Fulman wobec ruchu neounijnego," in *Pater Ecclesiae Lublinensis. Studia w 65. rocznicę śmierci biskupa Mariana Leona Fulmana (1866-1945)*, ed. Jarosław Roman Marczewski (Lublin: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Lubelskiej "Gaudium," 2010), 49 ff.

¹¹ Rzemieniuk, *Kościół*, 220 ff.

¹² *Ibid.*, 220 ff.

Establishing the parish was only the beginning of the struggle for its survival. It had to attract as many Orthodox believers in the area as possible. It should be noted that the erection of Neo-Uniate facility almost always elicited negative reactions on the part of those who chose to remain in the Orthodox Church, and above all, the Orthodox clergy. The history of individual centres was different, but it was also very diverse. This was primarily reflected in fluctuations in the number of parishioners. We need to know that in addition to those who officially professed, there were also groups of Orthodox Christians who gravitated towards neo-union, but who ultimately did not abandon their faith. We should keep in mind that the various statistics provided by Catholic, Orthodox, State records of parishioners in the individual parishes in the subsequent years may contain basic inconsistencies.

The parish in Dokudów was by far the most stable unit. Local Uniates were known for their resistance against the Orthodox Church in 1874. Later, although they went to the Orthodox Church, they still considered themselves Uniates. They even maintained some Uniate traditions in the liturgical life. In 1905, many of them accepted the Latin rite. The others, already in 1924, requested the reactivation of the Uniate parish. It was a new Orthodox church built by the diocese in place of the temple which had been burned down during the war. There were around 350 faithful by the end of this period, but the number was slightly smaller in the mid 1930's. The situation in Terespol was similar: the Neo-Uniate parish was located at the former Uniate church, which was recovered by Catholics after the First World War. There were more than 400 parishioners and the number grew slightly. The history of Bubel Stary was a little different. The local Orthodox parish, reconciled by Catholics, was to become its seat. However, the Orthodox inhabitants of the village did not want to accept neo-union. Instead, supporters were found in the neighboring Stary Pawłów. This is where a small church was built along with a new parish. It consisted of about 100 worshipers. Neo-union was also well established within a certain proportion of the population of Kostomłoty and surrounding areas.¹³ In spite of violent Orthodox opposition, who surpassed the number of Neo-Uniates, the latter managed to retain the seventeenth-century Orthodox Church. There were about 250 faithful in the parish. The same applies to parish in Połoski, which owned the post-Uniate church. However, only about 85 people joined neo-union

¹³ Ibid., 220 ff.

here. By contrast, the parish in Szóstka had only about 70 worshipers, who attended church services celebrated in the cemetery chapel.

The remaining parishes experienced rather downward tendency. In the beginning of its existence, the parish in Hola concentrated up to 2,000 worshipers. The facility operated at an old post-Uniate church. In the mid-thirties there was a mass return to the Orthodox faith, so that in 1939 there were only about 500 Neo-Uniates, only a few dozen of whom regularly visited their temple. Neo-union campaign in Kodeń also proved unsuccessful. The local parish, which functioned at the old castle church of the Holy Spirit, had only 60 worshipers in the late thirties, and the number was diminishing. The parish in Zabłocie, which used the cemetery chapel, had originally several dozen neo-union supporters but in 1938 there were just a few. By contrast, the parish in Kijowiec, although formally erected and registered, did not really have any worshipers. In fact, it should be considered fictitious.

Meanwhile, in the diocese of Lublin, until the end of the twenties, there were no pro-union tendencies among Orthodox believers. Isolated initiatives of several Latin parsons from villages bordering on Galicia did not meet with the support of the bishop of Lublin, who feared political consequences of such actions.¹⁴ It was only in 1931 that two Neo-Uniate institutions were created: in Horodło and Grabowiec. They both had a post-Uniate Orthodox churches. The church in Horodło was soon burnt down, but a new temple was built in its place with the help of ecclesial fund. The parish in Horodło had about 250 worshipers and a number of supporters who, after all, did not profess Catholic faith. In Grabowiec there was also initially about 250 neo-union supporters. This number, however, was getting smaller.

It is worth noting that the two hierarchs, of Lublin and Podlasie, applied different strategies on their territory. The bishop of Podlasie regarded the creation of a parish as the first stage of missionary work, or a catalyst of sorts. The bishop of Lublin preferred the opposite model. Thus, the Neo-Uniate facilities in the diocese of Podlasie enjoyed the full rights of the parish, while in the diocese of Lublin they did not have independent character. They were more like branches of Latin parishes, and their priests were also vicars in Latin parishes. These facilities did not have their benefices, nor did they keep a register of births, marriages and deaths. They were also starting points from which the clergy went on missionary expeditions to

¹⁴ AAL, Rep 61 XII 5, 472 f.

various places, mostly to Hrubieszów district (Bohorodyca, Jarosławiec, Kopyłów, Horyszów Polski, Horyszów Ruski, Miączyn, Świdniki, Turkowice, Hołubie, Terebiń, Zaborce, Gozdów, Hostynne, Dobromierzyce). As a result of their activities the curia in Lublin received petitions asking for new Neo-Uniate facilities. However, unlike the bishop of Siedlce, who usually opened a new parish quite instantly, the bishop of Lublin gave his support on condition that a given community had a strong conversion rate, confirmed by an official confession of faith. For the same reason, the bishop of Lublin held off granting the status of independent parishes for Neo-Uniate facilities. For a long time Neo-Uniate services were celebrated in Terebiń, as well as Hołubie where, thanks to local landowners, a chapel was built for this purpose. It should be mentioned that since 1930 a regular service in the Eastern rite was celebrated in Lublin, in the church of St. Josaphat (formerly Orthodox church).¹⁵

CLERGY

The priests who served in the Neo-Uniate parishes during the Second Polish Republic were recruited from several circles. Initially, they were mostly members of the eastern branches of Catholic orders, such as the Redemptorists and Jesuits. Greek Catholic priests from Galicia, both diocesan and monastic (Studite Brethren, Basilian monks), also showed keen interest in Neo-Uniate action. It is worth knowing that Galician priests used a kind of local variant of the Byzantine rite (of Halych), slightly different from the one used in the Russian Orthodox Church, which was also designed for Neo-Uniate facilities (so-called synodal rite). The bishops supervising the action also received applications from the Orthodox clergy, who were ready to accept Catholicism and work in the parishes of the Eastern rite. Ultimately, however, separate pastoral staff was to be formed for the Byzantine-Slavic rite. To this end, the Papal East Seminary in Dubno was established in 1928.

The bishop of Podlasie was open to cooperation with the priests of different provenance. Among the clergy coming from the Latin rite there was, among others, Jesuit Fr. Jan Czornak, who was delegated to Neo-Uniate institutions facing crisis in the second half of the thirties. The monk in

¹⁵ Grzesiak, *Diecezja*, 479 ff.

question was characterized by high moral standards and tact, so that many times he was able to pacify conflicts within parishes. Also Greek Catholic priests, both secular and monastic (Studite Brethren), displayed intense activity. They were usually clear in terms of ethics and intelligence. However, they often combined their pastoral work with commitment to the political and national activities related to Ukraine. This gave rise to considerable concerns among Latin Catholics, but also was the cause of internal disputes among Neo-Uniates. The largest group, however, were the priests from the Orthodox Church who accepted neo-union. In the diocese of Podlasie there were several such converts during the described period. They were generally less educated than other clergy. Also moral condition of many of them raised concerns. Certainly there were priests who accepted Catholicism with conviction and did not cause any scandals. However, there is no denying that many priests abandoned Orthodoxy as a result of conflicts with their superiors, or in the hope that neo-union would satisfy their aspirations, especially in financial terms. They were not free from personal and moral vices (drunkenness, dishonesty in financial matters, roughness in their relations with parishioners). Quite often these priests, not having realized their ambitions, returned to the Orthodox Church. Clearly, these kind of individuals did not win supporters over to neo-union and strongly destabilized parish life.¹⁶

The bishop of Lublin represented different attitude. Knowing the Orthodox clergy from earlier times he had generally negative opinion about them. This view became established in the twenties, when a few Orthodox popes volunteered to engage in union work. Almost all of them had serious moral flaws.¹⁷ Therefore, in the thirties, the bishop M.L. Fulman allowed neo-union in the diocese, but he decided to rely on the Greek Catholic Basilians from Galicia. They were appointed to the two Neo-Uniate facilities in the diocese of Lublin. They also undertook missionary work in nearby localities. They were educated and morally correct, in particular Fr. Jozafat Fedoryk, who served in Horodło between 1931 and 1936. Yet, they were accused of being Pro-Ukrainian.¹⁸ In spring of 1939, during the so-called revendication and Polonisation, state authorities forced the hierarch to dismiss Basilians from both Neo-Uniate parishes. The centre in Horodło was filled by a priest coming from an Orthodox family. As a young layman, he accepted Catho-

¹⁶ Rzemieniuk, *Kościół*, 114 ff.

¹⁷ AAL, Rep 61 XII 5, 82 ff., 127, 133 ff., 142 ff., 176 ff., 206 ff., 212 ff., 274 ff., 280 ff., 334, 368, 430 ff., 400 f., 521 f., 523 ff., 536.

¹⁸ Grzesiak, *Diecezja*, 481 ff.

licism and then graduated from seminary in Dubno. In turn, the post in Grabowiec was taken by the priest of the Latin rite. It should be mentioned that bishop H. Przeździecki in Siedlce resisted similar pressure. He took the position that the state cannot interfere in internal affairs of the Church.¹⁹

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DIFFICULTIES

The analysis of the history of the various Neo-Uniate centers in the Lublin region suggests that the priests were probably the weakest link of the movement, of course, this does not apply to all priests serving in the Neo-Uniate parishes in the interwar period. It should be noted that the number of people interested in accepting Eastern rite Catholicism in particular parishes hardly ever increased. On the contrary, as the years went by, the number often dropped. There is no doubt that it was caused by inadequate lifestyle and service of Neo-Uniate priests. It happened, for instance, in Hoła, Połoski and Szóstka. The involvement of the clergy in pro-Ukrainian work should also be considered detrimental to the development of parishes. In this manner, divisions that existed in local communities were transferred to ecclesial life. A politically active priest made himself popular among supporters of Ukrainianism, but at the same time he fell into disfavour with other parishioners. In all fairness, it should be mentioned that there were also reverse situations, when a priest who committed himself exclusively to pastoral work was the subject of aversion on the part of those who would like to see him as a political leader. Generally, clerics failed to unite all residents of the village. In addition, divisions emerged even among those who became Neo-Uniates.²⁰

Relations between Latin Catholics and Neo-Uniates were not perfect. For example, in Horodło, connections between the clergy and the faithful of both rites were generally good, serving mutual edification. In Grabowiec, though, conflicts arose since the beginning, sometimes in a demoralizing form. It should be noted that most Latin clergy were favourably disposed towards neo-union, even in the mid-thirties when its progress seemed hindered. Serious concerns were caused by attempts to link neo-union with pro-Ukrainian activities, which were often perceived as anti-Polish and chauvinistic.²¹

¹⁹ Ibid., 494.

²⁰ Rzemieniuk, *Kościół*, 220 ff.

²¹ AAL, Rep 61 XII 5, 310 ff., 332, 337, 340 ff., 504, 532 ff.

We should keep in mind that neo-union evolved in very unfavorable circumstances. Virtually all Polish political circles were reluctant to acknowledge the idea. Among Polish politicians it was perceived as a threat to the Polish *raison d'Etat*, something that strengthened the effects of nineteenth century Russification. Neo-union was criticized in terms of social peace. This negative attitude of the authorities intensified in 1938, in the era of revendication and Polonisation. It applied mostly to the territories of the diocese of Lublin.²²

Yet the most determined opponent of the movement was the Orthodox Church, which is hardly surprising, as neo-union was aimed at its worshippers. Erecting new branches aroused the immediate opposition of the Orthodox clergy, who viewed neo-union as a menace. The Orthodox Church, to its advantage, had the network of parishes. Even though the network was greatly reduced as compared to 1915, it was still a solid base for regular pastoral work. Orthodox hierarchy and many other church institutions operated efficiently. Neo-union did not have such a base. Its organizational structure throughout the described period remained *in statu nascendi*. Orthodox Christians had an institutional and psychological advantage over Neo-Uniates. Also, specific steps were taken to fight against neo-union. For example, Orthodox missionary committee was created in 1934.²³ In some places there were conflicts between Orthodox Christians and Neo-Uniates about sacred buildings. Particularly heated dispute took place in Kostomłoty, near the Bug River.

SUMMARY

The events of 1939 and the fall of the Second Polish Republic launched a series of processes that dramatically changed the ethnic and religious character of the lands in question. The history of Neo-Uniate centres was affected by complex fate of the Orthodox Church which was dominated by Ukrainian activists who were ostentatiously supported by the German occupiers.

²² Mirosława Papierzyńska-Turek, *Między tradycją a rzeczywistością. Państwo wobec prawosławia 1918-1939* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1989), 425 ff.

²³ Grzesiak, *Diecezja*, 497; Rzemieniuk, *Kościół*, 87 f.

The centres in Hola, Grabowiec and Terespol ceased to exist due to the influence of Orthodox Christians over the occupation authorities. Despite major difficulties (terror on the part of Orthodox Ukrainians) the following parishes endured: Połoski, Stary Pawłów, Dokudów, Kodeń, Kostomłoty, Szóstka, and Horodło. But it was not for long. In 1945, almost all the Ukrainian population from the area of Lublin diocese was resettled to Soviet Ukraine. The Orthodox believers and Neo-Uniates from the diocese of Podlasie were, in turn, displaced to Recovered Territories. Only in the second half of the fifties did they return to their homeland.

In the described circumstances, Neo-Uniate movement was almost brought to an end. The only place of this rite, as if a relic of neo-union, is the parish of St. Nikita in Kostomłoty, which currently consists of about 150 faithful, scattered in the surrounding villages. The parish is subordinate to the Latin bishop of Siedlce. Services in the Byzantine rite are occasionally celebrated in Stary Pawłów and Horodło, where former Neo-Uniate churches are located. The two villages, though, are not permanent pastoral centres. The temples based therein are used every day by Latins. The same applies to facilities in Połoski, Szóstka, Kodeń, and Dokudów. The temples in Hola and Terespol are the property of the Orthodox Church. The church in Grabowiec has been demolished.

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PRÓBY REAKTYWOWANIA KOŚCIOŁA UNICKIEGO NA LUBELSZCZYŹNIE W OKRESIE MIĘDZYWOJENNYM

Streszczenie

W okresie międzywojennym Kościół katolicki podjął akcję na rzecz pozyskania wiernych Kościoła prawosławnego z zachowaniem ich rodzimego obrządku. Ta akcja nosi nazwę neounii. Jej areną stało się m.in. ówczesne województwo lubelskie. Akcja przebiegała dość intensywnie w północnej części omawianego terenu, w katolickiej diecezji podlaskiej, której biskup był entuzjastą neounii. Z kolei biskup lubelski zajmował stanowisko bardziej ostrożne. Rezultaty podjętych działań były jednak znikome, i to z wielu przyczyn zarówno o charakterze wewnętrznym, jak i zewnętrznym. Powstałe placówki duszpasterskie uległy likwidacji, przeważnie w latach II wojny światowej. Jedyłą istniejącą do dziś jest parafia neounicka w Kostomłotach.

Streścił ks. Krzysztof Grzesiak

Słowa kluczowe: okres międzywojenny, Kościół prawosławny, Kościół unicki, Lubelszczyzna.

EFFORTS TO REACTIVATE THE UNIATE CHURCH IN LUBLIN REGION IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD

Summary

In the interwar period, the Roman Catholic Church took the action for acquiring faithful of Orthodox Church, retaining nevertheless their native rite. This action is called the Neo-Union. The scene of it became, among others, the then Lublin region. The action proceeded quite intensively in the north part of this area, in the Catholic diocese of Podlasie (Podlachia). The bishop of Podlasie was an enthusiast of Neo-Union, while the bishop of Lublin took a much more careful position. For many reasons of internal as well as external nature, the results of taken action were rather slight. Almost all created then pastoral institutions were closed down, mainly during the Second World War. The only existing today is the Neo-Union parish in Kostomłoty.

Translated by Stanisław Sarek

Key words: interwar period, Orthodox Church, Uniate Church, Lublin region.