

HISTORY, CULTURAL STUDIES, TOURISM, SPORTS

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**THE CAUSE OF CHURCH UNION AND THE HISTORY OF THE BREST CHURCH COUNCIL
IN 1596 ON THE MATERIALS OF BELARUSIAN DIOCESAN GAZETTE
THE SECOND HALF OF XIX – EARLY XX CENTURIES**

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The article is devoted to the analysis of publications on the history of the unification of the Orthodox and Catholic churches and the Brest Church Council in 1596 on the pages of Belarusian diocesan Gazette, published in Lithuania, Minsk, Polotsk, Mogilev and Grodno Orthodox dioceses in the second half of XIX – early XX centuries.

The problem of the Brest Church Union, of its Genesis, development and elimination is now quite urgent and pressing, in spite of the fact that many historians, culture experts, philosophers, theologians and religious scholars have dealt with this question for centuries. Until today there is no single historical approach to assessing the Union, its influence on religious and cultural life of Belarus of the late XVI – first half of the nineteenth century, although sources on the history of Uniatism are many and varied.

One of such sources on the history of the unification of the Catholic and Orthodox churches is the diocesan Gazette, published in five Belarusian Orthodox eparchies in the second half of XIX – early XX century. On its pages Gazette presents various publications in the form of scientific articles, documentary and biographical materials, devoted to identify the causes of Union, the history of the Brest Church Council in 1596, and in the form of assessing the role and significance of the Greek-Catholic confession in the life of Belarusians.

In Belarusian diocesan Gazette there are materials devoted to the preparatory phase of the entering into the Union. The author of one of the publications mentioned the year of the proclamation of the Union of 1595, when I. Potey and K. Tarletski took the oath of allegiance to the Pope in Rome, both on their own behalf and on behalf of all the bishops of the Commonwealth. Speaking about the preconditions of the entering into the Union the author had the quotation from the letter of Prince K. K. Ostrozhsy to the Vladimir-Volyn Bishop I. Potiy: "a departure from the faith took place because our land did not become teachers and preachers of the word of God, no education, stopped living sermon", in addition, the hierarchs-apostates "were completely alien to rigid religious beliefs" [1, p. 606]. That was the second reason for a compromise with the Catholic world. The third reason that triggered the Union, was the so-called right of patronage – the "distribution of Church hierarchical positions of secular authority in its discretion" [1, p. 609], which reduced the authority of the metropolitans and bishops, which often refused to obey the priests, but desired to obey the leadership of the Orthodox brotherhoods, the patrons and founders of churches and monasteries.

The same author K. Bogdanov [2] attributed the strengthening of the idea of Union to 1577, when the Jesuit P. Skarga published the book "On the unity of the Church of God under one pastor and about Greek from this unity retreat", where he talked about the weakness of the Eastern Church and its canonical errors.

The Belarusian diocesan Bulletin dedicated to the history of the Brest Cathedral the little material, as the Catholic world celebrated the adoption date of the Union "to advocate Romanism," as N. Konoplev noted in the publication [3]. The Unia in the late nineteenth century was still in Galicia, which belonged to Catholic Austria, and the upcoming festivities in memory of the 300th anniversary of the Brest Council in 1596 had to go there. In 1895 the Catholics issued two proclamations, in which they said that thanks to the saints Cyril and Methodius, Princess Olga and Prince Vladimir "faith and the Church of the Catholics in Russia was established" [3, p. 561]. The author of the article expressed sincere bewilderment to this statement, because Russia owed its Christianization thanks not to Rome, but to Byzantium. The only reason to believe these words was that before 1054 there was no official division of the Christian Church. The authors of the proclamations, however, did not deny the fact that the Union "is not peace and peace brought with them, and the blood and the sword" [3, p. 570]. According to N. Konopleva, parishes and departments in the Commonwealth were empty not because all the inhabitants are Uniates and Orthodox Christianity disappeared, but because "Orthodox priests were expelled from there" [3, p. 571]. He agreed that on the eve of the Union the people's moral and religious life in the Commonwealth really were in a state of crisis, but even in this situation the idea of the Union "originated in the minds of only a few bishops" [3, p. 568].

In Polotsk and Lithuanian diocesan Gazette in 1896 an article by A. Kovalnitsky were published [4–5], who believed that celebrating the anniversary of the Union, the poles celebrated as the special event, was largely the reason for the destruction of the Commonwealth. Since all Uniate churches were sanctified for the anniversary in honor of St. I, the only Uniat Kuntsevich, the author of the article, in turn stated the life of the Union-time Orthodox Martyr Athanasius (Philipovich), the birth of which in 1896 was also 300 years old, and proposed a draft of the counter-anniversary, which included prayers for those who suffered from the Union and remained faithful to Orthodoxy [5, p. 694–695].

Such a publication dedicated to the celebration Galitskii Catholics and Uniates of the 300th anniversary of the Brest Union was placed on the pages of "Lithuanian diocesan Gazette" for 1895–1896 [6–14]. All of these brief notes reported that under the welcome address to the Pope people were forced to sign the text without reading it, which "there was concern and distrust" [156, p. 349]. That happened because Uniate priests were afraid that they would put their signs by such conditions that they, having read them in advance, would never consent to [9, p. 422]. In addition, there were the descriptions of the celebrations held in Lviv and Borschiv, which "was purely of ecclesiastical-official character, have passed unnoticed. People reacted to these festivals completely indifferent" [8, p. 435].

The Union of Brest became the subject of scientific debates, in particular, in the Lviv Historical society, where Dr. Prohaska read a lecture on the Union significance in 1896, but his position on this issue was met with various reactions. His opponents said that "the Union did not produce this effect, which attributes its lecturer" [15, p. 481].

In one of the publications [14] there was a call not to support the celebration of the 300th anniversary of the Union, to counter the propaganda of Catholicism and for the Uniate hierarchs to take responsibility for their flock. The author accused not only of the Metropolitan and bishops, but also all the laity in the lack of character and indulgence of the Catholics, in ignorance and apathy, "the greater number of the Russian intelligentsia" in Galicia [14, p. 413]. The Orthodox clergy of Vilna, Kovno and Grodno provinces in contrast to the celebrations in Galicia held in 1896, decided to serve in Vilna Holy Spirit monastery a memorial service for the victims in times of Union for the Orthodox faith [13, p. 421].

The authors of the articles thought a lot what the significance of the Brest Church Union to the Eastern lands was. "Lithuanian diocesan Gazette" published an article where the author believed that the Union was not only religious, but also "national and political" [16, p. 5], which in addition to the full imposition of Catholicism Orthodox population of the Commonwealth, pursued to alienate its sympathies from Moscow.

The other similar article also shows us the relationship that existed between the introduction of the Union and the plans of the government of the Commonwealth "to Annex Lithuania and generally southern - and Western-Russian land" [17, p. 125]. They managed to do it using the Lublin Union of 1569. But it brought only the external unification, which was not strong, however, as an internal link in a new state could only provide religious unity. But the Union in 1596 did not lead to a long-awaited consent, and brought "a number of the terrible persecution of the Orthodox, for their faith from Poland and the same number of bloody uprisings by Orthodox" [17, p. 126]. Changing the faith of the fathers, the Jesuits among the Orthodox were considered as traitors, and the Catholics as "distrust". They got absolutely no material civil, and benefits they hoped for after joining with the Catholics. The aim of the Catholic Church to make the Uniates obedient followers failed too. In the end, the author concluded that "anyone and any good Union has not brought" [17, p. 128].

In 1913, Professor O. V. Shcherbitsky published an article [18] to determine the value of the Greek-Catholicism in the life of the Orthodox population of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and then of the Russian Empire. One of the main reasons for the adoption of the Union was, in the author's opinion, the policy of the authorities, containing the oppression and deprivation of civil rights and privileges of the Orthodox in favor of representatives of Catholic confession. Despite the fact that the Uniates took almost all the conditions proposed by the Latins, the latter still did not accept them as fellow believers, especially when they faced with the persistence of the Uniates in any ritual or dogmatic issues.

In confirmation of the words the author cited two documents. They contained complaints of Metropolitan I. V. Rutsky and A. Selava that Catholics continued to regard them with the same hatred as when the Orthodox and the Uniate clergy could not go without threats to their life to make even preaching at their discretion. The Catholics had their own plans on white Uniate clergy: they planned to convert the congregation to Catholicism gradually, and the Uniate clergy, the bar itself, would have disappeared "useless" [18, p. 180]. It was also assumed that only one of the sons of the Uniate priest was to take his father's place in the parish and to remain unmarried and thus not to join the clergy of the Uniates. The sons of Uniate priests, trained in the Jesuit educational establishments were considered to be of the lowest class. In the end, the author came to the conclusion that, despite the fact that the Uniates were "the most zealous adherents of the Roman rite and were ready to put their soul for the Roman Church, they are always considered below Catholics-Latins" [18, p. 214].

In his article, O. V. Shcherbitsky published another fact [518], confirming his thoughts about the role played by the Union in life of Belarusians Orthodox and the Uniates. Existed in the Polotsk district Gorsplana the Church was founded by landlords Catholics Shantyram that over time, sanctified it without the knowledge of

the Uniate Archbishop of Polotsk in a Catholic Church, and left the priests without livelihood. The latter defended his rights in various ways for 19 years, then was forced to give way to a younger successor who waited 11 years till Chantry landlords would carry out a court order and return the Church to the Uniates.

The question on attempts to unify the Orthodox and Catholic churches for which the period of their separation was eight centuries is raised in the reading of Professor Catanskiy, who came to the conclusion that Orthodoxy and Catholicism were two different body with different spiritual device, "between which it is impossible unanimity and therefore Church unity" [19, p. 118].

Materials of the Belarusian diocesan statements on the history of the Union give an idea of what is Uniatism, how it arose and spread on the territory of the Commonwealth, what was significant for the state and the people. The authors and researchers were critical to the fact of Union with the Catholic Church in 1596, considering its rather tragic for the Belarusian people, than positive, as the Union of the churches did not bring the expected agreement, but caused new, even sharper religious division, which a large number of believers on both sides suffered from.

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A HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF OSVEYA SETTLEMENT

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Osveya is a settlement that possesses a significant historical, cultural and architectural heritage as well as unique recreational natural surroundings. The article observes a historical development of the settlement since ancient times, marks the most important events, which resulted in gaining Osveja its historical, cultural and architectural potential.