

Priesthood
in the Teachings
for the Clergy





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Priesthood in the Teachings for the Clergy



On the History of
Religious Reform
in the Kievan Metropolitanate
throughout the 16th and 17th
Centuries

Krakow 2017

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Introduction

In the history of the Polish-Lithuanian state the 16th century was a period of change in many areas: political, social and religious. The change affected all people living in the ethnically diverse and multidenominational country.

The emergence of Protestantism and the break-up of the Western Church and, especially, reforms encompassing changes in the liturgy, expansion of the use of vernacular languages, updating and enrichment of preaching as well as school curricula influenced religious life of both the Catholics and the Orthodox. Both groups of believers saw a need for counteraction; they were redefining traditions and found inspiration in novelties¹. Another challenge for the Orthodox Church – controlled as it was by Catholic rulers and affected by unification with Roman Catholicism – was the need to fight to preserve its identity.

In the period following the Council of Trent the Catholic Church began an intense renewal campaign, although some positive changes in religious culture can be discerned earlier². The situation was similar among the Orthodox, with a shift in time, however. Decided reform action was undertaken by the Ruthenian elites only when

¹ This is the subject of *Między Wschodem i Zachodem. Prawosławie i unia* (vol. 11: *Kultura Rzeczypospolitej w dialogu z Europą. Hermeneutyka wartości*), ed. M. Kuczyńska, Warszawa 2017.

² A. Nowicka-Jeżowa, *Pokolenia trydenckie między tradycją a wyzwaniem przyszłości*, [in:] *Formowanie kultury katolickiej w dobie potrydenckiej. Powszechność i narodowość katolicyzmu polskiego* (vol. 6: *Kultura Rzeczypospolitej w dialogu z Europą. Hermeneutyka wartości*), ed. J. Dąbkowska-Kujko, Warszawa 2016, pp. 21–102.



representatives of Protestantism and then Catholicism, supported by the Tridentine reform programme, had already begun carrying out wide-ranging educational and publishing activities focused on strengthening the Church and attracting new followers. This does not mean, that several decades earlier the intellectual elites of the Eastern Church had not seen a need for reforms. The first renewal programme was formulated in 1509 in the aftermath of the Synod of Vilnius. The Metropolitan of Kiev, Yosyf Soltan, who presided over the meeting, drafter a set of disciplinary and pastoral rules seeking to counteract the problem of simony, facilitate the selection of the right candidates for the priesthood, improve the management of Church property and, in particular, regulate the relations between the Church and its secular patrons³. Yet this plan to strengthen Orthodoxy in the Kievan Metropolitanate was not implemented. It does show, however, that the crisis in Ruthenian culture was a result of stagnation and not degradation. This is also evidenced by grassroots initiatives in 16th-century Ruthenian society, which were manifested, for example in the efforts of the Orthodox to deepen their religiousness through a revival of preaching⁴.

³ The text of the rules, cf. Іосифъ Солтан, *Соборъ, во Богоспасаемомъ градъ Вільни бывшій*, [in:] *Русская Историческая Библиотека*, vol. 4: *Памятники полемической литературы въ Западной Руси*, part 1, Санкт-Петербургъ 1878, pp. 12-13 [hereafter RIB 4]. More on the Council, cf. О. Лотоцький, *Українські джерела церковного права*, Варшава 1931, pp. 112–114; І. Скочиляс, *Галицька (Львівська) єпархія XII–XVIII ст.: Організаційна структура та правовий статус*, Львів 2010, pp. 378-381; A. Mironowicz, *Sobory wileńskie 1509 i 1514 roku*, “*Łatopisy Akademii Supraskiej*” 5, 2014, pp. 71–76; here also more recent literature on the subject, cf. p. 75, fn. 14.

⁴ The scholar’s assertion is based on an analysis of 16th-century hand-written homiliary gospels from the Kievan Metropolitanate, cf. М.В. Дмитриев, *Между Римом и Царьградом. Генезис брестской церковной унии 1595–1596 гг.*, Москва 2003, pp. 64-88. For more on these changes, cf. also Г. Чуба, *Українські рукописні учительні Євангелія*, Львів 2011, pp. 5–33; M. Kuczyńska, *Homiletyka cerkiewna Pierwszej Rzeczypospolitej na pograniczu kultur (do połowy XVII wieku)*, [in:] *Między Wschodem i Zachodem. Prawosławie i unia* (vol. 11: *Kultura Rzeczypospolitej w dialogu z Europą. Hermeneutyka wartości*), ed. M. Kuczyńska, Warszawa 2017, pp. 198–201. The changes which occurred at that time in the content of teaching did not become



A particularly refreshing time in the religious and spiritual life of the Orthodox and Uniate Churches came in the late 16th and early 17th century⁵. The competition between the two denominations provided a natural stimulus boosting the religious revival in those days, after the Union of Brest⁶. The topic – of fundamental significance to the period in question, and combining history and culture – has been studied by scholars representing various research disciplines and methods, who examined both general and specific issues. It is worth mentioning the names of Polish specialists like i.a. Aleksander Naumow, Teresa Chynczewska-Hennel, Antoni Mironowicz, Tomasz Kempa, Marek Melnyk, Marzanna Kuczyńska, Andrzej Gil, Jan Stradomski, Przemysław Nowakowski, Marian Bendza, Włodzimierz Pilipowicz, Denys Pilipowicz, Andrzej Borkowski and Konrad Kuczara; Ukrainian scholars including Natalia Yakovenko, Ihor Skochylas, Ihor Isichenko, Larysa Dovha, Halyna Chuba; as well as scholars from other countries: Ambroise Jobert, Giovanna Brogi Bercoff, Ihor Shevchenko, Sofia Senyk, Boris Floria, Elena Bielakova Mikhail Dmitriev and Margarita Korzo et. al. An attempt to sum up the 16th-century revival movement was made by Borys A. Gudziak in his classic monograph, translated into several languages, *Crisis and Reform: The Kievan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Harvard 1992, first edition). In it he presents the course of the reforms, first undertook in secular circles (by magnates, Orthodox confraternities) and then by Orthodox hierarchs (late 16th century). The reforms encompassed the organization of schools and seminaries, revival of

reflected in printed sermons until the following century, a process that was not without disputes with the followers of the “holy” tradition, M. Kuczyńska, *Ruska homiletyka XVII wieku w Rzeczypospolitej. Ewolucja gatunku – specyfika funkcjonalna*, Szczecin 2004, p. 13. For more on the subject, cf. Chapter One, section *Other works*.

⁵ B.A. Gudziak, *Kryzys i reforma. Metropolia kijowska, patriarchat Konstantynopola i geneza unii brzeskiej*, Lublin 2008; A. Gil, I. Skoczylas, *Wiek XVI – kryzys, kulturalno-religijna odnowa i inicjatywy unijne*, [in:] *Kościół Wschodnie w państwie Polsko-Litewskim w procesie przemian i adaptacji: metropolia kijowska w latach 1458–1795*, Lublin–Lwów 2014, pp. 108–114.

⁶ Н. Яковенко, *Нарис історії середньовічної та ранньомодерної України, видання третє, перероблене та розширене*, Київ 2006, p. 286.



synodal life, as well as writing, translating and editorial activities. The apogee of these actions, launched at the turn of the 17th century, came in the 1630s and 1640s. The process of change, resulting from the religious, educational and cultural work of Petro Mohyla and the scholarly-intellectual circles of the Kiev Pechersk Lavra, has been studied by scholars in great detail, although there are, of course, still many topics requiring exploration or further study.

The focus of the present book is the priests as key figures in the revival of the Orthodox Church as well as topics directly associated with them – the essence of the priestly ministry in the light of new requirements, and the rebuilding of the priestly ethos, authority and the dignity of the entire Ruthenian clergy in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Reform efforts, focused on representatives of the clergy, were to bring about a growth in the religious-spiritual life not only of the priests but also of the faithful, and thus the entire Ruthenian community in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its Church.

An important tool in the entire programme of reforms, including renewal of priesthood, was the printed book – Ruthenian printing houses produced books for schools, but, above all, they satisfied liturgical needs, providing works which the priests were waiting for to be able to correctly celebrate the services, broaden their knowledge and advance their own and their parishioners' spiritual life.

The first chapter of the monograph deals with the sources of educational material for priests and is an overview of the most important works published in the Kievan Metropolitanate with the reform of the clergy in mind. They include particularly functional books, standing out by virtue of their rich theological, ritual, disciplinary and moral content as well as illustrative material. In addition, the chapter focuses on auxiliary teachings within these printed works, teachings found in prefaces, poems, letters of dedication and afterwords. The inclusion of such optional material in a book guaranteed that the message would reach both the clergy and often also the secular reader looking for parenetic literature. The works presented in the chapter differ in terms of their provenance; they are translations or original



works, known earlier from manuscripts or new, taking into account older and more recent traditions.

In particular, I carry out a detailed analysis of those books which hitherto have not been studied by scholars or have been the sources for the study of issues discussed in the following chapters.

In Chapters Two and Three I provide a reconstruction of the work of reformers from the Kievan Metropolitanate seeking to renew and mobilize the Orthodox clergy. I examine the thematic areas of fundamental significance to the renewal of priesthood, areas associated with moral theology, pastoral theology and liturgy.

Chapter Two is devoted to formative works for the clergy disseminated by various individuals – the authors themselves, translators, publishers and patrons of printing. First of all, they promoted books dealing with priestly ordination, requirements to be met by presbyters and bishops, selection for the priesthood (control of the candidates' intellectual potential, morality, degree of substantive preparation for the ministry), obstacles to ordination. These texts promoted the image of an ideal priest as a celebrant, minister of the sacraments, teacher, pastor and guide for the faithful. Significantly, the image was to be found not only in strictly religious works (e.g. nomocanons or hagiographies) but also in occasional literature, e.g. laudatory addresses or poems in honour of patrons.

In this part of the book I also point to the considerable demand for all types of works supporting the work of priests and providing them with role models. I stress the clergy's considerable familiarity with the new demands and expectations of their parishioners, who compared their ministers with those of other denominations, hoping that they would be able to equal them in theological debates or religious polemics.

Chapter Three explores questions concerning the work of priests as servants of the altar, ministers of the sacrament of the Eucharist. This was one of the basic elements of the vocation of priests, guides of the parish community. In this respect I examine, first of all, the problem of appropriate preparation (i.e. spiritual, substantive, disciplinary and organizational) of celebrants for the Divine Service. This



stemmed from an increase in the importance of liturgy in the Catholic Church after the Council of Trent, and in the Ruthenian Church in the 1590s, especially after the Union of Brest. Analyses show that the work of the Ruthenian reformers was a part of a broad context of religious and cultural changes taking place at the time in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The reformers saw the urgent need to introduce order into the Liturgy, which was not only an expression of theology, but also an important element of the cultural and then political identity of the religious community.

The problems tackled in the present book have rarely been explored by scholars, mainly those from other countries. In Poland virtually no research has been carried out in this field. Thus the book should fill the gap in the knowledge of the course and outcomes of Orthodox Church reforms in the Polish-Lithuanian state, and, above all, verify stereotypical ideas about the form and course of the reforms.

* * *

In the case of old prints and their phototypical copies written in Cyrillic in spite of the variety and spelling or syntax inconsistencies of these sources, I leave the records as they appear in the original (i.a. *си естъ/снестъ/снестъ, ѡцѣ/ѡцѣ/ѡцѣ, естъ/естъ*). In the case of Polish-language sources, according to today's rules, I write the vowel *y* (as *i* or *j*) and *o* (*ó*).

In the footnotes and bibliographies, the names of the authors (mostly monks) are given in full.

I would like to thank Margarita Korzo, who provided me with access to her excerpts based on an old print of Vilnius: ΘΕΣΣΣ (1608) of Yosyf Velamin Rutskyi, *Teaching on the Seven Sacraments* (ca. 1618) and the preface to the *Trebnyk* (1621).