

**THE LIGHT OF  
THY COUNTENANCE  
GREEK CATHOLICS  
IN HUNGARY**

METROPOLITAN  
CHURCH  
SUI IURIS OF  
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## II.1.1 The Antecedents, Conclusion and Outcome of the Union of Uzhhorod (Ungvár)

Tamás Véghseő

The historical development of Hungary's Greek Catholic Churches began in different periods of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The first union was concluded in the southern portions of the Kingdom of Hungary in 1611 with the Orthodox South Slavs fleeing the Ottoman Turks north.<sup>1</sup> In the middle of the century, communities of Rusyns living in the north-eastern regions of the Kingdom were organised into a Church united with Rome starting with the 1646 Union of Uzhhorod (*Ungvár*).<sup>2</sup> From the final years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Romanians from Transylvania and the Partium would join the Catholic Church in large numbers through the Union of Alba Iulia (*Gyulafehérvár*).<sup>3</sup>

A factor with fundamental consequences for the situation of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Hungary was the division of the country into three parts, a condition that would last from 1541 for as long as a hundred-and-fifty years. After the devastating Battle of Mohács in 1526, the central part of the country would gradually be incorporated into the Ottoman Empire. Western and northern areas were under the authority of the Hapsburgs as kings of Hungary. (This entity is referred to as Royal Hungary.) As a vassal Ottoman state, the eastern part of the country and Transylvania were organised into an autonomous principality. Relations between the Principality of Transylvania and Royal Hungary centred in Vienna were riddled with severe political tensions, culminating in military clashes. The tripartite division of the country would gradually cease to exist from the last decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century: First, the Principality of Transylvania was integrated into the Hapsburg Empire, and, subsequently, as a result of the Ottoman-Hapsburg wars, the territory under Ottoman occupation was also liberated.

Contemporaneously with the Ottoman advance and the division of the country into three parts, the ideologies of the Reformation emerged, gaining ground relatively rapidly in all three sections of the country. Besides the Lutheran, Calvinist and Zwinglian movements of the Reformation, the Radical Reformation also appeared in Transylvania with the creation of the Unitarian Church. By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, as a result of the internal struggles of Hungarian Protestantism, various Protestant

denominations had been formed: The majority was constituted by a uniquely Hungarian version of the Calvinist-Zwinglian movement, institutionalised as the Hungarian Reformed Church. The Principality of Transylvania became their chief stronghold, but they also consolidated their positions in the territories under Ottoman occupation, as well as – thanks to the involvement of a few influential aristocratic families – in Royal Hungary, too. Although a denomination surpassed in size, the Evangelical Church constructed upon Lutheran foundations also became a force to reckon with on account of the Lutheranism cities and towns and endorsement by the aristocracy.<sup>4</sup>

The Catholic Church suffered serious losses. By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, only a mere 10 per cent of the population of the three sections of the country had remained Catholic. At the same time, as a Hungarian peculiarity, Catholic ecclesiastical structures had been left intact. Episcopal sees were not transformed into Protestant church centres. Protestant denominations under formation created completely new ecclesiastical centres. Church estates were mainly expropriated by aristocratic families. A significant proportion of the Catholic lower clergy and of the religious joined one of the branches of the Reformation, whereas the replacement of senior clergy from the new generations was not ensured due to the power struggle over the right of appointment. Late-16<sup>th</sup>-century Catholic conditions are well illustrated by the data that, in 1590, there were as few as three very old bishops in Royal Hungary. The Catholic senior clergy were expelled from the territories under Ottoman occupation and the Principality of Transylvania.<sup>5</sup>

A way out from the hopeless situation of Catholicism in Hungary was represented by the reform programme of the Council of Trent. The leading figure and an iconic character of the Hungarian Catholic renewal was Péter Pázmány, a Jesuit and subsequently Cardinal and Archbishop of Esztergom, who reversed the situation of Hungarian Catholicism during his three-decade long activities, which lasted until 1637. The success of his efforts would be encapsulated by posterity in the

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<sup>1</sup> On union in the Southern Territories of historic Hungary, see: Šimrak, 1931; Horányi, 1936; Džudžar, 1986; Ikić, 1989; Molnár, 2008.

<sup>2</sup> On the Union of Uzhhorod, see: Hodinka, 1909; Lacko, 1965; Véghseő, 2011.

<sup>3</sup> On the development of the Greek Catholic Church in the Partium, see: Ghitta, 2008; Gorun, 2008; Véghseő, 2003, as well as, from the extensive literature on the union of Transylvanian Romanians: Bârlea, 1990; Suttner, 2005; Suttner, 2008.

<sup>4</sup> In more detail: Bitskey, István. *Hitviták tűzében*, Budapest, 1978. On the activities of the Catholic Church in the territories under Ottoman occupation, see: Molnár, Antal. *Magyar hódoltság, horvát hódoltság: Magyar és horvát katolikus intézmények az oszmán uralom alatt* (Magyar Történelmi Emlékek / Értekezések), Budapest, 2019.

<sup>5</sup> For more detail on the 16<sup>th</sup>-century conditions of the Catholic Church, see: Hermann, Egyed. *A katolikus egyház története Magyarországon 1914-ig*, Munich, 1973, 209–229.

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following – no doubt – hyperbolic assertion: ‘Pázmány was born in a Protestant Hungary and died in a Catholic Hungary.’ His name became synonymous with the re-Catholicisation of a number of aristocratic families, the renewal and institutionalisation of priest training, the founding of a university, the laying of the foundations of Catholic theological literature in Hungarian and the restoration of ecclesiastical discipline. He generated a layer of clerics that would be capable of continuing the work of Catholic revival after his death. By doing so, he paved the way for further development, leading to a situation in which Catholics would be the majority within the population of the Kingdom of Hungary in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>6</sup>

Notwithstanding every effort by Pázmány and his successors, the outcome reached in Poland failed to materialise in Hungary: Poland had travelled a similar journey, but, responding to the spread of Protestantism, the Counter-Reformation scored a resounding victory there and created a 100-per-cent Catholic Poland. With the political and military support of the Calvinist Principality of Transylvania, Protestantism in Hungary achieved recognition in a legal sense and would continue to be a consequential factor.

Thus, in the Kingdom of Hungary, it was two major Protestant denominations – Lutheran and Calvinist – as well as the Catholic Church that underwent the process described by the term confessionalisation (German: *Konfessionalisierung*) in historiography. Western-European historiography already defined the characteristics of the process of confessionalisation common to all confessions a decade ago. In brief, these are the following: 1. consciousness of being in exclusive possession of truth leading to Salvation; 2. development of clear creed formulas and repudiation of possibilities of heterodox interpretations; 3. provision of capable representatives for articles of faith (trained priests, ministers and school masters); 4. creation of a confession-specific education system; 5. reorganisation of the education system and endeavour to secure educational monopoly; 6. use of religious propaganda and censorship; 7. development of forms of worship characteristic of the given confession and accentuation of

rites distinct from those of other confessions; 8. evolution of distinctive language use; 9. development of instruments of intra-confessional control (synods, visitations, catalogues, church records) and removal of dissidents; 10. creation of an ecclesiastical structure of its own; 11. symbiosis with state authorities.<sup>7</sup>

As a result of the process of confessionalisation, Hungary’s Catholic Church and Protestant Churches enabled high-quality church life, as well as an ecclesiastical culture and academia with respectable European ties. The latter were based on the relations built in educational centres in Germany in the case of Protestants, while, for Catholics, in Rome.<sup>8</sup> In sum, it may be concluded that the process of confessionalisation was simultaneously a modernisation process as well on the Catholic and Protestant side alike.

Orthodox communities living among Catholics and Protestants in different regions of the Kingdom of Hungary were completely avoided by this modernisation process. While, in their environment, drawing on foreign impulses, the Catholic and Protestant denominations experienced spectacular development in the area of ecclesiastical life, to Hungary’s Orthodox living in the peripheries of Orthodoxy, progress remained out of reach. Both Balkan and Slavic Orthodoxy went through a period of crisis at the time. New impulses or innovative ideas were not to be expected from either region. Moreover, in this period, both the Greek and the Slavic Orthodox elites tended to establish contact with western Protestant communities in an effort to acquire up-to-date reformatory inspirations.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, for Hungary’s Orthodox communities, the query how to open the way to modernity and to a new era in their context was raised as a vital question.

It is at this point that the concept of union needs to be elucidated in the light of the prevailing historical context.

Ecclesiastical union is first and foremost the moment when canonical unity broken by the Schism is restored. In the history of the Church, the most important union, subsequently looked upon as a model, was the agreement made at the Council of Florence in 1439, which was supposed to eliminate the split of 1054 between Rome and Constantinople. In the Union of

<sup>6</sup> On the life and work of Pázmány, see: Bitskey, István. *Pázmány Péter*, Budapest, 1986.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Tusor, Péter. A katolikus felekezetszervezés problémái az 1630–1640-es évek fordulóján (Egy Rómába írt egri püspöki jelentés alapján), in: Szabó, András (Ed.). *Mezőváros, reformáció és irodalom (16–18. század)*, Budapest, 2005, 123–124. For more detail on the process of confessionalisation, see: Reinhard, Wolfgang. *Felekezet és felekezetszerveződés Európában: A tudományos diskurzus fejleményei*, Budapest, 2017.

<sup>8</sup> In the case of Catholics, the German-Hungarian College played a prominent role. Cf. Bitskey, István. *Hungariából Rómába: A római Collegium Germanicum Hungaricum és a magyarországi barokk művelődés*, Budapest, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Florovskij, Georgij. *Vie della teologia russa*, Genova, 1987, 53.

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Florence, urged by the Ottoman threat yet short-lived, a consensus was reached on the questions of papal primacy, the *Filioque*, purgatory and the material of the Eucharist. Although the Union concluded with the Greeks – also signed by Isidore, Metropolitan of Kiev – did not last for long, it would serve as a model for the unity to be attained with the Syriacs, Chaldeans, Copts and Armenians in the years to come.

The Florentine model of ecclesiastical union is essentially based on compromise reached by the opposing parties through negotiations. In post-Tridentine Catholic Church, the definition of union would change, with the understanding that union meant the return of Eastern Christians from a state of schism to the Catholic Church becoming prevalent.<sup>10</sup> Such a return could be made contingent on certain conditions, but it is basically not about an agreement between equal parties but about the Catholic Church readmitting Eastern Christians who became schismatic over time.

Ecclesiastical unions in Eastern- and Central-Europe would be defined by this way of thinking. This attitude may be discerned for the first time in the late-16<sup>th</sup>-century union of the Church of the Ruthenians of Poland, the Metropolitanate of Kiev and the bishoprics under its jurisdiction (Union of Brest, 1596). The Union was advocated by the Ruthenian bishops themselves as they hoped that restoration of unity with the Catholic Church would enable reforms in their ecclesiastical life, ensure their social progress and curb the menace of assimilation, while contributing to the preservation of the Byzantine Rite and their ecclesiastical traditions. However, at the conclusion of the Union, not all of the Ruthenian bishops were in attendance, and a parallel, i.e. Orthodox, hierarchy would soon evolve. Therefore, alongside the Greek Catholic Church known today as Ukrainian, a Ruthenian/Ukrainian Orthodox Church would also remain.<sup>11</sup> At the same time, this exposes one of the most distressing aspects of modern-era ecclesiastical unions as well: Even though targeting the restoration of the unity of the Church, they almost invariably result in divisions in the Eastern-rite Churches concerned.

17<sup>th</sup>-century ecclesiastical unions in Hungary would be modelled upon the Union of Brest. The main difference was though that Orthodox ecclesiastical structure was not by far as well-organised and unified as that of the Ruthenian Church, and the social stratification of the Orthodox population was also simpler than in Poland. The nobility and the middle class were insignificant, and an ecclesiastical organisation properly regulated under public law and acknowledged by the country's legislation was lacking, too. Hungary's Orthodox lived on the peripheries even in two senses: in the frontiers of East-Slavic and Balkan Orthodoxy, as well as on the periphery of Hungarian society. The latter is more relevant since the presence or absence of social integration is by no means an insignificant factor in relation to either everyday existence or ecclesiastical life.

Social groups of Byzantine-rite Christians would for long escape the attention of the majority of society: 'Nobody had their welfare at heart' – as a clerk of the Hungarian Royal Council put it in 1642.<sup>12</sup> As their own internal resources were insufficient, the idea of union as a solution did not originate with the Byzantine-rite communities as it did in the case of the Ruthenians of Poland but much more from the Catholic and Protestant milieu around them.

For, when the process of confessionalisation appeared to come to a close, and dividing lines between the Catholic and Protestant denominations were drawn and consolidated, interest in Orthodoxy increased on the part of Catholics and Calvinists alike. Regarding the reformation and social integration of these church communities, a Catholic and a Protestant alternative was formulated respectively. As the scope of the present discussion does not allow for a treatment of the features of the Protestant alternative, the details of which are still lesser known, it will suffice to note that it was implemented in the Principality of Transylvania and in the estates of the Calvinist ducal family, the Rákóczi, in North-Eastern Hungary, and it aimed to lead the respective Romanian and Rusyn Orthodox communities to Calvinist Reformation through the liturgical and church

<sup>10</sup> On the Florentine and Tridentine models, see: Szabó, Péter. A keleti közösségek katolikus egyházba tagozásának ekkleziológiai elvei és jogi struktúrái az uniók korában, in: Véghseő, Tamás (Ed.). *Rómából Hungáriába: A De Camillis János József munkácsi püspök halálának 300. évfordulóján rendezett konferencia tanulmányai*, Nyíregyháza, 2008, 15–33.

<sup>11</sup> On the Union of Brest, see: Dmitriev, Mihail. Historische Voraussetzungen und die Genese der Union von Brest: Fakten und Deutungen, *Ostkirchliche Studien*, 56(2007), 322–343. For the documents of the Union of Brest, see: Suttner, Ernst Chr. – Zelzer, Klaus – Zelzer, Michaela. *Dokumente der Brester Union*, *Ostkirchliche Studien*, 56(2007), 275–321.

<sup>12</sup> Véghseő, 2011, 33.

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use of the vernacular.<sup>13</sup> The experiment is most important from the point of view of the liturgical introduction of the Romanian language since the use of Romanian in the liturgy began in the Romanian and subsequently Greek Catholic Churches of Transylvania at the encouragement of the Calvinist Princes.<sup>14</sup>

As opposed to the Calvinist alternative, the ecclesiastical union offered by the Catholics – albeit Tridentine in its spirituality – proved to be considerably more attractive from the perspective of guaranteeing the survival of Eastern theology and church traditions, i.e. the Byzantine Rite.

Although the Union of Márcsa in 1611 was chronologically the first one, in significance, it was eclipsed by the union of the Byzantine-rite Christians – predominantly Ruthenians/Rusyns – living in as many as thirteen counties in the north-eastern region of the Kingdom of Hungary. In this region, Byzantine-rite Christianity was introduced by immigrating Ruthenians, appearing in ever greater numbers from the time of the Mongol Invasion.<sup>15</sup> Socially, organised colonisation and spontaneous settlement affected serfdom because Hungary's demesnes of the Crown and private feudal estates were in need of agrarian population. From areas north east of the Carpathian Mountains, frequently entire villages relocated, bringing not only their priests but – in many cases – even their wooden churches with them. A unique case in colonisation history is the settlement of Fyodor Koriatovych, Prince of Podolia, in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century, fleeing to Hungary after his conflict with Vytautas the Great, Grand Duke of Lithuania. He was granted the Demesne of Mukacheve by Sigismund, King of Hungary. This decision would have great importance for the Greek Catholic history of the region. Koriatovych in fact founded a monastery and a church in Mukacheve-Chernecha Hora (*Munkács-Csernekhegy*), functioning as a clan burial place (Picture 1). Although the Koriatovych family failed to give rise to a dynasty, the monastery would remain. Moreover, going through an atypical process of development, the prior (*hegumen*) of the monastery was ranked as bishop as of the late



(1)

15<sup>th</sup> century. In a legal sense, the Bishop of the Monastery of Mukacheve was not considered a hierarch with regular jurisdiction over a specific geographical area. His appointment was not dependent on the monarch, either, but on the private feudal lord owing the Demesne of Mukacheve at the time. It would be appropriate to speak about 'quasi-jurisdiction' exercised as a function of momentary power relations and possibilities.<sup>16</sup> The Bishop himself, the other monastics of the Monastery and the priests working in the area all lived in bondage and did not possess the same rights as the Catholic clergy and later the Protestant church elite had.<sup>17</sup>

At the beginning of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Demesne of Mukacheve was acquired by the Rákóczi, who also obtained the Principality of Transylvania. Thus, the Monastery was placed under Calvinist control. The similarly prominent adjacent Demesne of Uzshorod, however, was possessed by the Homonnai-Drugeths having returned to the Catholic Church. Catholic-Calvinist rivalry in the region encompassed the Orthodox population as well. Jesuits and missionaries of other religious orders operating in the estates of Catholic landowners not only strove to re-convert Calvinists but also attempted to convert Byzantine-rite Christians to

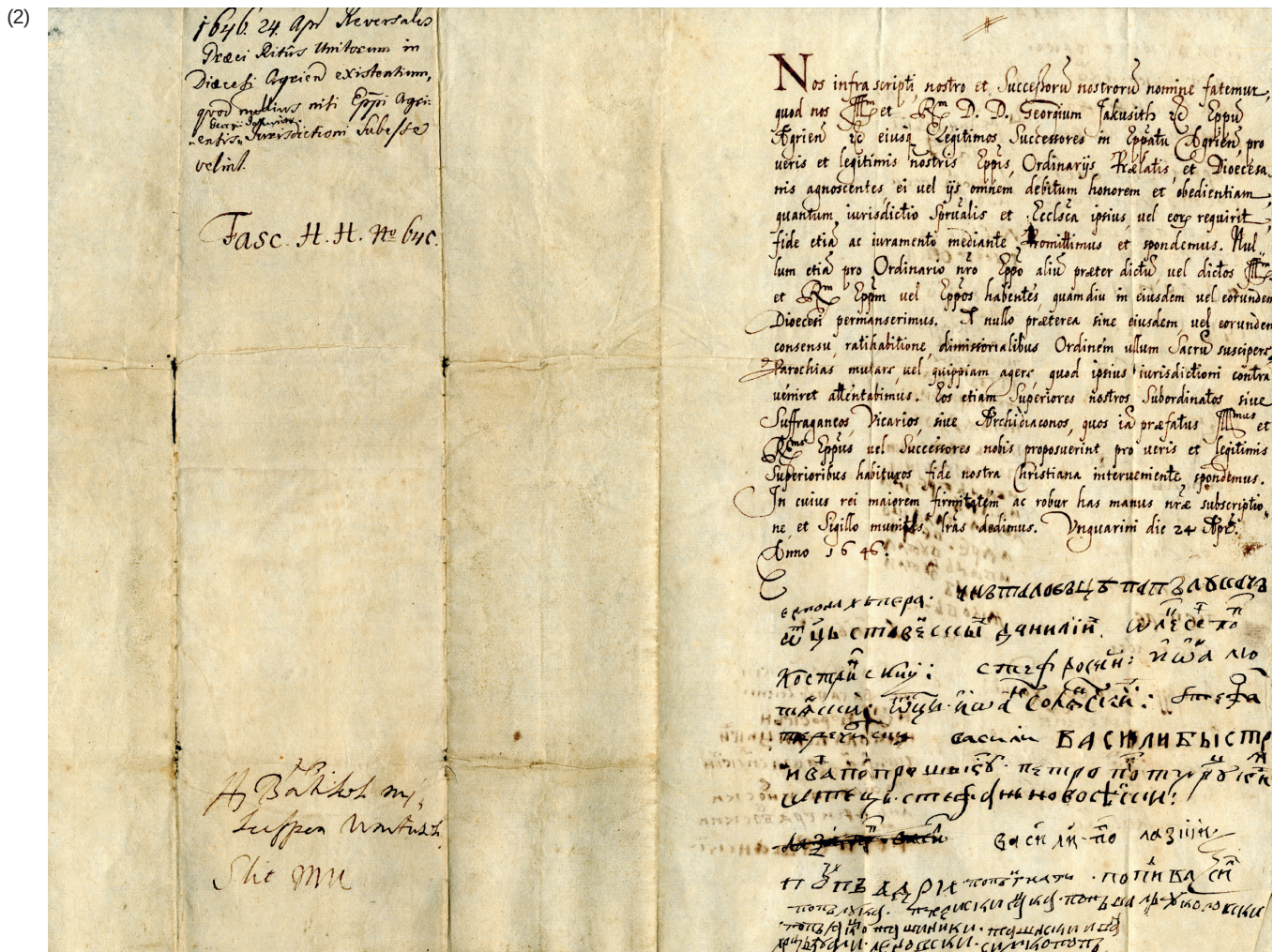
<sup>13</sup> A case in point is the safe-conduct document of John Sigismund Zápolya, Prince of Transylvania, issued to the Monastery of Mukacheve (*Munkács*) in 1570, pledging free practice of religion but also stipulating that the activities of Protestant preachers be hampered by no-one. Hodinka, 1911, 17–19.

<sup>14</sup> For a more recent discussion on the subject, see: Nagy, Levente. Kálvinista és/vagy katolikus unió: A reformáció helyzete az erdélyi románok közt a 17. század végén, *Századok*, 152(2018), 623–650.

<sup>15</sup> On the Ruthenians (Rusyns) in more detail, see: Bonkáló, 1996 and Hodinka, 1923.

<sup>16</sup> For more detail, see: Hodinka, 1909, 90–175.

<sup>17</sup> 'It is an uneducated and simple people, all peasants and villagers. Almost none of them is literate, and only few are adept at the handling of weapons. Nearly all of them deal with farming and animal husbandry' (translated from the Hungarian original) – as György Lippay, Bishop of Eger, describes them. Tusor, 2002, 204.



the Latin Rite.<sup>18</sup> Conversely, on the Calvinist side, efforts were made to create a Byzantine-rite Church with a Calvinist character.

Despite some success in conversion to the Latin Rite, the Homonnai-Drugeths did not approve of this method. As the family also owned lands in neighbouring Poland, they were able to follow the practical implementation of the late-16<sup>th</sup>-century Union of Brest. Union defined as regulated incorporation into the Catholic Church seemed to be substantially more expeditious in the long term than plain Latinisation triggering considerable resistance in the populace. Attempts to adopt the Polish practice were made as early as 1614, when, under the direction of Atanasij Krupeckyj, Bishop of Przemyśl, György Homonnai-Drugeth sought to proclaim union with the Catholic

Church in the Demesne of Uzhhorod. The attempt was a spectacular failure because the Bishop of Mukacheve living under Calvinist control, i.e. the actual leader of Byzantine-rite Christians, was left out of the respective processes.<sup>19</sup>

A breakthrough was enabled from 1633, when Bishop Bazil Taraszovics from Poland was made head of the Monastery of Mukacheve, who was ready for the union. This time, on the Catholic side, he could count not only on the lay Catholic landowner but on the active involvement of György Lippay as well, who entered the Episcopate of Eger in 1637.

Union also endorsed by the Bishop of Mukacheve was to be concluded in December 1640, with Bishop Lippay and Bazil Taraszovics having agreed even on the time and place of the event. However, the Rákóczi

<sup>18</sup> Tusor, 2002, 206.

<sup>19</sup> For more detail on the Krasny Brod (*Krasznibród*) attempt, see: Véghseő, 2011, 30–32.

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obtained knowledge of the clandestine talks, and Bazil Taraszovics was thrown into captivity by the landowner's men in Mukacheve.<sup>20</sup>

Although Bishops of Mukacheve had been subject to similar atrocities by the landowners in the preceding decades, Taraszovics's arrest activated hitherto unknown forces. As he was sent to the dungeon of Mukacheve on account of his intention to join the Catholic Church, the Court, the Bishop of Esztergom and – via the Nunciature in Vienna – even the Holy See would take action to ensure his release. Due to the strong Catholic intervention, the Rákóczis were obliged to free the Bishop but forbade him to return to the Monastery of Mukacheve.<sup>21</sup>

Even though the exposed attempt of Bishop Taraszovics failed, it did signal that the process was unstoppable. He may have been excluded from controlling the flow of events, his attempt nevertheless prompted the Homonnai-Drugeths – especially the wife of Lord Chief Justice János Homonnai-Drugeth, Anna Jakusics – to mount additional efforts. With the involvement of Péter Parthén and Gábor Kossovics, Basilian monks from Poland authorised by Anna Jakusics, following several years of preparations, the event that is known to posterity as the Union of Uzhhorod took place on 24 April 1646 (Picture 2). Much as the actual sequence of what happened awaits clarification even today,<sup>22</sup> it is a fact that, in those years, the Greek Catholic Church was born in the Demesne of Uzhhorod, under the following three conditions:

1. Following the endorsement of the Union, the Byzantine Rite would remain intact; in other words, the Catholic side would not make any attempt at introducing the Latin Rite.

2. The leader of the community would be appointed by way of election, in accordance with centuries-old traditions. The election would be confirmed by the Holy See.

3. Priests accepting the Union would receive the same rights and privileges the Latin-rite priests had.

In return for the fulfilment of these three conditions, the Greek Catholics recognised the supremacy of the Pope and the teaching of the Catholic Church.<sup>23</sup>

The initiative starting in Uzhhorod would spread in the north-eastern regions of the country slowly. In the Demesne of Mukacheve, the Union could be implemented only after 1660, when Prince György Rákóczi died, and his widow, Zsófia Báthory, returned to the Catholic Church. The Monastery became Greek Catholic only in 1664, once Taraszovics's successor, Bishop Péter Parthén, elected in 1651, had been granted permission by Zsófia Báthory to take possession of the Monastery.<sup>24</sup> In the ensuing years and decades, the Union would expand to the south and west alike, but it would only come to a close with the union of the Maramureş (*Máramaros*) region in 1721.

Union in itself represented only the beginning of the integration of Byzantine-rite Christians, and its wider dissemination suffered significant delay owing to a few hindrances. Three of these must be highlighted here:

### **Lack of regulation in the status of Byzantine-rite ecclesiastical organisation under public and canon law**

Under Hungarian public and canon law, the Bishopric of Mukacheve was non-existent. Therefore, the appointment of the Bishop of Mukacheve was also an unresolved matter. As advowee, Zsófia Báthory, insisted on keeping the right of appointment for herself as it had always been

<sup>20</sup> Véghseő, 2011, 43–48.

<sup>21</sup> Véghseő, 2011, 50–53.

<sup>22</sup> The succession of events reconstructed by Antal Hodinka (Hodinka, 1909, 252–319), which would come to be accepted by subsequent scholarship as well (e.g. Lacko, 1965), is fundamentally questioned by the document of the Union of Uzhhorod of 24 April 1646 discovered in 2015. This in fact does not contain the conditions of union but merely a declaration by sixty-three Orthodox priests that hereinafter they would recognise the Bishop of Eger as their hierarch (cf. Gradoš, 2016). The new discovery also allows for new theories. Thus, it would appear legitimate to assume that the clerical meeting on St George's Day (24 April, i.e. the name-day of György Jakusics, Bishop of Eger) was a recurrent occasion in the 1640s. This is also bound to modify the interpretation of the data in the Greek Catholic archdeans' letter to the Pope from 1652 suggesting that the Union of Uzhhorod took place on 24 April 1649. Hodinka regarded the 1649 date as a simple typo, which would be supported by the circumstance that Bishop Jakusics mentioned in the letter by name had died in 1647. However, as on 24 April 1646, the conditions of union discussed in detail in the archdeans' 1652 letter were not specified, it is well conceivable that union was achieved in multiple steps: recognising the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Eger at the St George's Day clerical meeting in 1646 and formulating the conditions of union in 1649. Not only can it not be ruled out but it even seems highly probable that there were such clerical convocations in 1647 and 1648 as well, an 'institution' (i.e. a meeting of the clergy of a particular region in the centre of the respective region) that was evidenced both before and after the Union.

<sup>23</sup> For more detail, see: Hodinka, 1909, 252–319; Lacko, 1965, 91–113; Véghseő, Tamás. Unió, integráció, modernizáció: A Rómával való egység háttere a munkácsi püspökségben (17. század közepe), *Athanasiana*, 32(2009), 9–36; Véghseő, 2011, 53–61.

<sup>24</sup> Véghseő, 2011, 61–68.



one of the rights of the local landowner. By contrast, the argument of the Royal Court was that the Union, i.e. integration into the Catholic Church, had fundamentally altered the situation, making the appointment of the Bishop of Mukacheve a right of patronage. Lack of regulation in the matter entailed that, from 1665 to 1689, i.e. in a period crucial to the spread and consolidation of the Union, the community was not headed by a bishop, but rivaling candidates appointed in Vienna or by Zsófia Báthory would vie for jurisdiction instead.<sup>25</sup> The problem was solved in 1689, when, on the initiative of Cardinal Lipót Kollonich, Leopold I, King of Hungary, appointed János József De Camillis Bishop of Mukacheve (1689–1706), who succeeded in laying the foundations of a Tridentine-type reform of the Greek Catholic clergy.<sup>26</sup> Since the Principality of Transylvania was also incorporated into the Hapsburg Empire in 1690, the right of appointment was unequivocally removed from the scope of advowson thereafter. In agreement with the Holy See, the Viennese Court intended to rectify the unregulated status of the Bishopric under public and canon law by placing it under the jurisdiction of the territorially competent Bishop of Eger. This decision did not cause any problems in the life of Bishop De Camillis because Cardinal Lipót Kollonich ensured free operation for the Bishop of Mukacheve against the Bishop of Eger. Following Rákóczi's War of Independence (1703–1711), however, Gábor Erdődy, Bishop of Eger, took the initiative and appointed De Camillis's successor, Gennadius Bizánczy, as his own Vicar (a so-called 'rite-vicar') in 1715 and demanded that he take an oath of allegiance.<sup>27</sup> From that point, the institution of 'rite-vicariate' would be a source of severe conflicts between the Greek Catholic

clergy and the Bishopric of Eger. Greek Catholics lodging an appeal with the Holy See suffered defeat in 1718 as the Congregation *Propaganda Fide* approved the practice of the Bishops of Eger,<sup>28</sup> who employed the 'rite-vicariate' to hamper the development of the Greek Catholic Church even when Bishop Bizánczy was alive.

#### The difficulties of reinforcing Tridentine-type reforms

One of the most important arguments in favour of regulated integration into the Catholic Church was that the Union would enable the Greek Catholics to share in the benefits accumulated by the Catholic Church thanks to the Tridentine reform. Thus, the Church of Byzantine-rite Christians could also be given a chance to organise itself into a confession in the modern sense and create an ecclesiastical life according to the standards of the period. In this regard, a key component would have been establishing the system of Tridentine-type priest training or, at a minimum, ensuring that Greek Catholic seminarians would have access to places where Latin-rite priest education was provided. The first initiatives producing concrete results happened only about half a century after the Union of Uzhhorod. Bishop De Camillis made the resolution of the issue of priest training a central theme of his episcopal programme. He repeatedly requested help from his advocate Cardinal Lipót Kollonich and the Sovereign to establish a seminary of his own. However, he scored success only during the final years of his episcopacy. Thanks to Kollonich, from 1704, the studies of a few seminarians from the Eparchy of Mukacheve in Trnava (*Nagyszombat*) would be financed from a permanent fund, the so-called Jány

<sup>25</sup> For more detail on the candidates for the episcopate, see: Baran, Alexander. *Quaedam ad Biographiam Josephi Volosynovskij Episcopi Mucacovoensis (1667), Analecta OSBM*, Section II, Volume VIII (XIV), 1–2, 1954, 209–227; Id. *Archiepiscopus Theophanes Maurocordato eiusque activitatis in Eparchia Mukacoviensis, Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 27(1961), 115–130; Id. *Archiepiscopus Raphael Havrilovič eiusque activitatis in eparchia Mukačoviensis, Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, 31(1965), 119–124; Baán, István. A munkácsi püspöki szék betöltése 1650 és 1690 között, in: Véghseő, Tamás (Ed.). *A görög katolikus örökségkutatás útjai: A Nikolaus Nilles SJ halálának 100. évfordulóján rendezett konferencia tanulmányai*, Nyíregyháza, 2010, 161–166; Id. *Theofánisz Mavrogordatosz (1626–1688), paronaxiai metropolita, munkácsi adminisztrátor – Theophanes Mavrogordatos (1626–1688), Metropolitan of Paronaxia and Administrator of Munkács*, Nyíregyháza, 2012; Véghseő, Tamás. „...patriarcham graecum convertit ad unionem...”: A római Német–Magyar Kollégium három egykori növendéke és az ungvári unió, *Athanasiana*, 23(2006), 29–48; Id. A bazilita Kulczycky Porphyrius munkácsi helynök négy levele Kollonich Lipót bíboroshoz 1688-ból, *Athanasiana*, 24(2007), 137–154.

<sup>26</sup> From the currently extensive literature on the activities of De Camillis, see: Fyrigos, Antonis. A khioszi De Camillis János munkácsi püspök tanulmányai és lelkipásztori tevékenysége, in: Véghseő, Tamás (Ed.). *Rómából Hungáriába: A De Camillis János József munkácsi püspök halálának 300. évfordulóján rendezett konferencia tanulmányai*, Nyíregyháza, 2008, 57–114; Baán, István. De Camillis szebasztei püspökké és apostoli helynöké váló kinevezése és felszentelése, in: Véghseő, Tamás (Ed.). *Rómából Hungáriába: A De Camillis János József munkácsi püspök halálának 300. évfordulóján rendezett konferencia tanulmányai*, Nyíregyháza, 2008, 139–148; Véghseő, Tamás. „...melioem ordinem vivendi introducere” – Egy görög katolikus püspök sajátos feladatai és lehetőségei Magyarországon a felekezetszerveződések korában: Hat ismeretlen De Camillis-levele tanulságai, *Athanasiana*, 30(2009), 85–118; Baán, István. *Giovanni Giuseppe De Camillis görög misszionárius és munkácsi püspök (1689–1706) levelei – Letters of Giovanni Giuseppe De Camillis Greek Missionary and Bishop of Munkács (1689–1706)*, Nyíregyháza, 2017.

<sup>27</sup> Hodinka, 1909, 513.

<sup>28</sup> Hodinka, 1909, 541–542.

## II.1.1

Foundation.<sup>29</sup> Compared to the actual demand of the Eparchy, the handful of foundation-supported places was extremely little, but the concomitant result and significance were nonetheless discernible: Practically all the Bishops and Vicars of Mukacheve were educated there.<sup>30</sup> The first institution of locally available priest training was created only in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, on the initiative of Bishop Mánuel Olsavszky in Mukacheve, with Maria Theresa's financial support.<sup>31</sup> Prior to that, village priests would transmit their knowledge to their sons, son-in-laws or other young men from the village themselves. This was also the way they had acquired their knowledge, restricted to the performance of the most essential priestly tasks. It was a rare privilege if a monastery was able to offer some training, similarly limited to the transmission of basic knowledge.

### **Delay in the social and legal emancipation of the Greek Catholic clergy**

Although central royal power was from the outset intent on ensuring that Greek Catholic priests would be extricated from serfdom, this endeavour would be met with massive resistance on the level of counties and demesnes. United under the leadership of Count Miklós Bercsényi, Catholic and Protestant landowners sabotaged the execution of high-level provisions such as the letters-patent issued by King Leopold I in 1692, ordering that the rights of the Greek Catholic clergy be guaranteed.<sup>32</sup> In the letters-patent, the fact that the landowners refused to grant Byzantine-rite priests the rights the clergy were entitled to was labelled scandalous even by the Monarch. While schismatics, they had not proved to be worthy of the protection of the Catholic Church. As Catholics, however, they were to be recipients of the same rights. Therefore, by his royal authority, he ordered that Greek Catholic priests enjoy the same exemptions that were provided for the Latin-rite clergy by law. He declared that whoever would not abide by this ordinance would be subject to the same judgement as if he had infringed the rights of Latin-right priests. He called upon landowners to provide plots for churches, parish buildings, cemeteries and schools. He also extended the rights to priests' male children born in lawful marriage.

The resistance of the local nobility could be explained by economic reasons, as well as by reasons of

principle. Ensuring the rights of the clergy entailed financial burdens as well, for not only would they be deprived of tax receipts but they would also be liable to allot parish lands. However, reasons of principle surpassed economic ones in importance: The position of the counties concerned was that the Monarch did not have the right to decide on matters of such weight without consulting Parliament. As the north-eastern region of the country had a history of opposition to the Hapsburgs, efforts to delay the emancipation of the Greek Catholic clergy would be successful for a long time.

Advance in this respect could materialise only after Rákóczi's War of Independence, with local political and economic relations undergoing a complete overhaul. In consequence of the estate seizures in the wake of the reprisals, the Treasury came to be the greatest landowner in the region, enabling Bishop Gennadius Bizánczy to initiate the reinforcement and execution of the Leopoldian letters-patent at the Court. In response, in August 1720, King Charles III issued his charter by way of reinforcement and ordering execution,<sup>33</sup> gradually bringing about the actual social and legal emancipation of the Greek Catholic clergy.

### **List of pictures**

1. The Monastery of Mukacheve in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Water colour by Sándor Lámfalussy. The Hungarian National Museum, Hungarian Historical Gallery (MNM TK), Inv. No. 56.1576
2. The document of the Union, 24 April 1646. Štátny archív v Prešove, fond Homonnai Drugeth, inv. n. 652, 8/1646.

<sup>29</sup> Hodinka, Antal. Papnövendékeink Nagyszombatban 1722-től 1760-ig, *Zorja-Hajnal*, 1(1941), 18–29.

<sup>30</sup> Šoltés, 2010, 238.

<sup>31</sup> Udvari, 1994, 75–76.

<sup>32</sup> The text of the letters-patent: Hodinka, 1911, 347–350.

<sup>33</sup> Hodinka, 1909, 749–750.