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TRANSFORMATION OF ASSESSMENT OF THE NEO-UNION MOVEMENT IN VOLHYNIA ON PAGES OF THE LVIV-BASED *DILO* NEWSPAPER

Abstract

In 1924, the Neo-Union project launched by the Catholic Church in order to win over the Orthodox population of the former Russian Empire began to spread in Poland. The next year, the first Neo-Union parish was established in the Volhynian Voivodeship. Since in almost all cases the adepts of the new denomination laid claim to the property of local Orthodox parishes, this led to conflicts, which in turn became the subject of press coverage. One of the most influential Ukrainian periodicals in the interwar Poland was the *Dilo* newspaper published in Lviv, which, among other things, publicised the religious issues in Volhynia. Starting from 1928, *Dilo's* editorial staff began to publish articles on the development of the Neo-Union movement in the adjacent voivodeship. At the same time, the newspaper defended the interests of the Orthodox population, although it was published by and mainly for Greek Catholics. One of the main reasons for that was the exclusion of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic clergy from the process of spreading Neo-Union. In so doing, *Dilo* controlled by the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance was fighting for Orthodox voters in Volhynia. Starting from 1931, after Nicholas Charnetsky's consecration to the episcopacy, *Dilo's* editorial staff changed their opinions regarding Neo-Union, which was now recognised as a positive phenomenon devoid of all the faults ascribed to it by this same paper. No more was the Orthodox population of the region regarded as victims of external aggression, while converts were no longer presented as the least moral members of the local community. The assessment of the authorities' position changed as well. Although in the last years of the Second Polish Republic *Dilo* grew less interested in the Neo-Union issues, on the whole its editorial policy of that period to a greater extent reflected the established

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Greek Catholic views on the subordination of Orthodox Ukrainians to the Pope than it had done before 1931.

Keywords: The *Dilo* newspaper; Neo-Union; 'governmental Union'; Roman Catholic Church; Orthodox Church; Greek Catholic Church; Volhynia; Żabcze

The *Dilo* newspaper was published in Lviv in the period of 1880 to 1939, and it became a daily in 1888. For a long time it remained the most popular Ukrainian periodical in Galicia playing an important role in shaping the mindset of the people who inhabited this region, which once belonged to Austria-Hungary and became part of the revived Poland in 1919. Since its establishment, *Dilo* championed the ideology of the Ukrainophile movement, and from 1925, it was under the influence of the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance (UNDO), which was the largest Ukrainian political party in Poland.¹

Although the readers of *Dilo* were mostly residents of Galicia and thus Greek Catholics, the paper had a strong focus on the issues of the Orthodox Church as well. The editorial board most harshly criticised the Moscovite viewpoint of the Holy Synod of the Polish Autocephalous Orthodox Church (PAOC), but the government received its portion of criticism as well for its unconstructive, in *Dilo*'s opinion, approach to the Orthodox Church in Poland. However, it is without question that, as far as regards the country's religious life, the paper concentrated largely on the Greek Catholic Church (GCC), its editorial staff members being the faithful of this denomination.

With regard to such a focus on religion one might assume that the problem of the expansion of Neo-Union in Poland² since 1924 did not go unnoticed on the

¹ More about the *Dilo* newspaper and UNDO in: Y. Shapoval, «*Dilo*» (1880–1939 rr.): *Postup ukrayins'koyi suspil'noyi dumky*, L'viv 1999; S. Kost', *Zaxidnoukrayins'ka presa pershoyi polovyny XX st. u vseukrayins'komu konteksti*, L'viv 2006; R. Tomczyk, *Ukraińskie Zjednoczenie Narodowo-Demokratyczne 1925–1939*, Szczecin 2006; P. Samuś, *Wicemarszałek Wasyl Mudryj (1893–1966). Ugody polsko-ukraińskiej orędownik daremny*, Warszawa 2017; M. Kuhutyak, *Istoriya ukrayins'koyi nacional-demokratiyi (1918–1929)*, vol. 1, Kyiv–Ivano-Frankivs'k 2002; I. Havryliv, *Zahidna Ukrayina u 1921–1941 rokax: narys istoriyyi borot'by za derzhavnist'*, L'viv 2012.

² More about the Neo-Union in: F. Rzemieniuk *Kościół katolicki obrządku bizantyjsko-słowiańskiego (neounia)*, Lublin 1999; K. Krasowski, *Episkopat katolicki w Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Warszawa–Poznań 1992, p. 182–186; M. Papierzyńska-Turek, *Akcja neounijna i kontrowersje wokół rozumienia polskiej racji stanu*, in: eadem, *Między tradycją a rzeczywistością. Państwo wobec prawosławia 1918–1939*, Warszawa 1989, pp. 404–441; S. Stępień, *Nowa Unia kościelna. Obrządek bizantyjsko-słowiański*, in: *Pol'shha – Ukrayina 1000 rokiv susidstva*, Przemyśl 1996, vol. 2, p. 141–194; Z. Waszkiewicz, *Neounia – nieudany eksperyment?*, in: *400-lecie zwanca Unii Brzeskiej (1596–1996). Materiały z sesji naukowej zorganizowanej w dn. 28–29. 11. 1996*, red. S. Alexandrowicz, T. Kempa, Toruń 1998, pp. 115–146; M. Papyezhyns'ka-Turek, *Vizantynizm chy latynstvo? Dyskusiya v ukrayins'kij presi v Halychyni mizhvoyennoho periodu pro kul'turni cinnosti*, Kovčeg. Naukovij zbirnik z cerkovnoï istorii (2000) issue 3, pp. 403–413; M. Mróz, *Katolicyzm na pograniczu. Kościół katolicki wobec kwestii ukraińskiej i białoruskiej w Polsce w latach 1918–1925*, Toruń 2003, pp. 226–268.

pages of *Dilo*, all the more so as this process caused controversy in different circles from the very beginning. The project that received the blessing of Pope Pius XI was most certainly supported by the Catholic bishops in Poland, who brought Neo-Union to life. At the same time, the methods of its propagation were severely questioned by the Greek Catholic Church, which was excluded from the process, although the GCC in Galicia was an epitome of this pattern of accession to the Roman Catholic Church. It is clear that the idea of propagating Neo-Union was met with a very negative reaction from the PAOC priests whose people were the object of attention of Neo-Union missionaries. The Polish authorities were less than enthusiastic about the new religious confession as well because the concept of Neo-Union did not respond to the government's desires. While Polonisation of the country's peripheries would be the ideal option for the Polish authorities, the Roman rite being certainly instrumental in this process, Neo-Union provided for a caring attitude to the ethnic and cultural legacy of the newly converted, which might indeed turn them into Catholics, but not into Polish people. For this reason, many governmental officials regarded Neo-Union as 'a highly undesirable phenomenon, as it divides and weakens the Latin rite, which is unquestionably Polish in its nature, to the advantage of the Eastern rite, whose Polish character is conventional, and even problematic'³ The government claimed that any kind of church union would lead to the support of Ukrainians by the Holy See and would reveal the impotence of the Polish government. As a consequence, in 1925, Poland's Minister of Foreign Affairs Aleksander Skrzyński went as far as to declare to Pope Pius XI that the state could not recognise the Eastern rite nor give consent to its structural organization.⁴

It was thus evident that the spread of the Neo-Union movement would be accompanied by numerous scandals, which indeed broke in Volhynia following the establishing of Neo-Union parishes in the villages of Jezioro⁵ of the Łuck powiat (1925), Cechów of the Horochów powiat (1926), Dubeczno and Kraska of the Kowel powiat (1927), and Krutniów of the Krzemieniec powiat (1928). In each of these villages, Uniates laid claim to the property of the local Orthodox parish, including the churches, which was the main cause of the conflicts that local authorities could not suppress. None of these problems, however, found coverage in *Dilo*.

That being said, Neo-Union was still mentioned in individual analytical publications. In such cases, it was treated negatively, but at the same time the editorial board misjudged the origin of the movement. To give an example, in October 1928, Volodymyr Ostrovsky.⁶ a *Dilo* correspondent, claimed that Neo-Union was

³ R. Skakun, 'Nova uniâ' u Drugij Reči Pospolitij (1924-1939), Kovčeg. Naukovij zbirnik z cerkovnoï istorii, (2007) issue 5, pp. 204–207.

⁴ Ū. Kramar, *Zahidna Volin' 1921–1939 rr.: nacional'no-kul'turne ta religijne žittâ*, Luc'k 2015, p. 289; Rzemieniuk, *Kościół katolicki obrządku*, pp. 64–70.

⁵ In the paper, the names of cities and localities situated within the administrative borders of the Republic of Poland in the period between the World Wars appear in the Polish spelling regardless; when transcribed directly from the Ukrainian language, they would be different (translator's note).

⁶ The names of Ukrainian politicians, journalists and clergy mentioned in the paper are transcribed directly from Ukrainian, which introduces the roman spellings different from those func-

the ‘invention’ of Minister of Religious Affairs and Public Education Stanisław Grabski and thus dubbed it as a ‘governmental’ one.⁷ The phrase ‘governmental Union’ propagated by *Dilo* became a popular term for Neo-Union, although it was contrary to facts because the government, as already mentioned, not only did not initiate its spread in Poland, but also was wary of it.

The same October of 1928, *Dilo* for the first time covered events which were directly related to the development of Neo-Union in Volhynia. Among other things, the daily gave an account of the reasons hieromonk Seraphime (Yarosevych) of the Pochaiv Lavra, who for a certain time pastored in Lviv, submitted himself to the Bishop of Łuck. The act of the hieromonk (people like him were popularly called *perel’oty*, that is, turncoats) was explained by his resentment for the fact that he had been passed over for an award from the Orthodox Consistory. By contrast, in the new jurisdiction he was awarded a cross, ‘which makes Rev. Yarosevych feel very happy’.⁸ In such a way, the editorial board showed hieromonk Seraphime in a bad light, putting emphasis on doubtful principles of the Orthodox clergymen who converted to Neo-Union.

The second of the two found newspaper pieces was a news story about the events in the village of Żabcze of the Łuck powiat, where the sixth Neo-Union parish in Volhynia was established in the summer of 1928. The editorial story told about an attempt of Żabcze’s Orthodox inhabitants to forcefully regain their church, which had been used by Greek Catholics since summer. While analyzing these events, the text claimed that ‘The means of “converting” Ukrainians and taking over their churches that turned out to be successful in the 17th century will bring no success to the Bishop’s Curia in Łuck now because Ukrainian peasants have gradually learned how to stand for their rights.’⁹ One should admit that this statement of the editorial board was somewhat disputable, since in the 17th c. Ukrainians converted themselves not to Catholicism of the Roman rite, but to that of the Byzantine rite, and Orthodox churches were turned into Greek Catholic ones. Of greater importance, however, is *Dilo*’s conceptual approach to the problem. What was more important for the editorial board was not which jurisdiction the community came under, but the very fact of undermining the foundations of Ukrainian identity, which in Volhynia was manifested through adherence to the Orthodox faith, and the much controversial and thus forceful imposition of a new belief system on peasants, which apparently eroded this identity.¹⁰

For the next few months, *Dilo* did not return to the subject of Neo-Union, but the events that took place in the same village of Żabcze at the end of February not only triggered a reaction from the paper’s editorial staff, but also turned into one of the main topics discussed in its columns in March of 1929. The affair in ques-

tioning in the interwar Poland, but at the same time reflects the more common tradition of spellings their names in English (translator’s note).

⁷ V. Ostrovs’kij, *Pravda pro Holmšinu*, *Dilo*, (1928) issue 225, p. 2.

⁸ *Novinki. Čomu perejšov êromonah Serafim Ârosevič na katolictvo?*, *Dilo*, (1928) issue 230, p. 5.

⁹ *Vmremo za cerkvu*, *Dilo*, (1928) issue 236, p. 4.

¹⁰ Rzemieniuk, *Kościół katolicki obrządku*, p. 195–202.

tion was a several-day stay of a large group of local Orthodox parishioners who locked themselves inside the church and refused to leave despite the freezing cold and hunger unless they would have the church back at their disposal (in October 1928, the authorities sealed the church, which from then on remained unused).

All in all, in March of 1929, *Dilo* covered the events in Żabcze in ten different issues; notably, some articles on the topic were front-page stories. In the first of these texts, which was published on March 7, the editorial board made an attempt to explain the reasons of the religious conflict that went out of control and became known beyond the borders of Poland. For that, *Dilo* placed the blame on, among others, the Catholic Episcopate, which did not want 'to admit Greek Catholic national Ukrainian clergy from Galicia to the Orthodox Ukrainian lands'. This statement can be used to explain the tone of *Dilo*'s coverage of the events related to Neo-Union. In the opinion of the editorial board, if the Ukrainian Greek Catholic clergymen from Galicia had been allowed to undertake missions in Volhynia, the process of converting Orthodox people in Volhynia to Roman Catholicism would have developed according to a different scenario and its results would have yielded much more positive results.

But the authorities were to be blamed as well: 'The events unheard-of in the 20th century are the consequence of inappropriate policy of state administration, which goes as far as to interfere with the religious matters of the Ukrainian people and leads to such dramatic events as those in Żabcze.'¹¹ The idea implied here was that the authorities allowed the interdenominational quarrel over the church and were not flexible enough during the Orthodox laymen's protest to avoid the acute phase of the action that was to be quite severely suppressed by the police.

The next day's issue featured a first-page article by Stepan Baran, one of UNDO's leaders and deputy to the Sejm, who provided an analysis of the events in Żabcze, highlighting obvious historical analogues:

The extraordinary tragicalness of the events that took place recently in the small Ukrainian village of Żabcze, in the gmina of Czaruków in the Łuck powiat in Volhynia, will surely shock the soul of every Ukrainian regardless of their religious affiliation and political outlook, reminding of the times of religious fanaticism and the struggle between the two churches, the Western and the Eastern one, in our land in the 17th century. The similarity is all the more striking as the acting objects – the two churches and the state – are the same factors, except that in relations changed by three centuries and the transformations they have brought about. They say history is the teacher of life, but I guess it has hardly taught anyone, including us and our neighbours.¹²

The deputy to the Sejm also emphasised the painful for the Greek Catholics removal of their clergy headed by Metropolitan of Galicia Andrew Sheptytsky from practical missionary work in Volhynia due to 'political reasons of the Polish national and state interests', which once again confirmed one of the main reasons for the dissatisfaction of Greek Catholics with the development of the Neo-Union movement in Poland. Apart from that, S. Baran gave a frank assessment of turncoats,

¹¹ *Religijna borot'ba*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 50, p. 1.

¹² S. Baran, *İstoriâ povtorâët'sâ*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 51, p. 1.

who were incapable of committed work: ‘Here and there Orthodox priests happen to change their rite, but all these cases, with almost no exceptions, are caused by low, personal self-serving interests. The great idea of Union is completely alien to them!’¹³

Numerous articles in *Dilo* focused on the role of members of the Sejm from the UNDO in solving the Żabcze problem. As far back as the peasants’ stay in the locked church, Żabcze was visited by Deputy to the Sejm Oleksandr Vyslotsky, whose report was published in the newspaper.¹⁴ The daily gave very detailed accounts of the events in the Sejm, where the Ukrainian deputies demanded establishing a parliamentary commission and appealed to the government to take measures to stop the religious crisis in Żabcze. Among other things, the daily published the transcripts of parliamentary speeches on this issue. At the same time, *Dilo* paid attention not only to the position of UNDO, but also to the declarations of the Non-partisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government (BBWR), whose representatives tried to justify the government recognising its actions as appropriate and shifting responsibility primarily to the Orthodox Church authorities. The editorial board focused, among others, on the words of Vasyl Seheida, a BBWR representative in the Sejm, who called the Żabcze issue a minor incident suppressed thanks to tact of the local government but exaggerated by the UNDO for campaigning purposes.¹⁵

It should be admitted that the attitude of *Dilo* – which was controlled by UNDO – did have some features of campaigning for the party and against the BBWR competing with UNDO for the influence over the Ukrainian community. It is quite evident that UNDO tried to make use of the Żabcze case to increase its influence in Volhynia, where the BBWR had by then the support of the largest number of voters. In order to discredit the movement that collaborated with the government, *Dilo* put emphasis on in what in UNDO’s opinion was the wrong voting decisions of the BBWR representatives in matters related to the events in Żabcze. The editorial board convinced the readership that by going along with the government’s line, the BBWR would not get ‘a large portion of love and gratitude from its fictitious voting public’.¹⁶

At the same time, *Dilo* repeatedly emphasised the contrasting position of UNDO, according to which ‘The Żabcze event is not any minor, local, narrow psychological fact out of touch with the entirety of life.’¹⁷ Emphasis was put on how attentive the Greek Catholic deputies to the Sejm were to the problems of Ukrainians in Volhynia:

The difficult experience and laments of peasants from this backwater Volhynian village forsaken of God and man have thrilled the hearts of Ukrainians regardless of their affiliation with any particular church. The Uniate (Greek

¹³ Ibidem.

¹⁴ *Tragediâ Żabčã*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 51, p. 1.

¹⁵ *Na parlâmentarnij arenì*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 60, p. 2.

¹⁶ *Na parlâmentarnij arenì*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 59, p. 3.

¹⁷ V. Ostrovs’kij, *Nedolâ pravoslavnoi cerkvi*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 58, pp. 3–4.

Catholic) deputies have stood up for their Orthodox brothers against ‘Uniates’, although new, so-called ‘governmental’ ones.¹⁸

All of that definitely contained elements of electoral competition between political parties, which in Volhynia was headed, on the part of UNDO, by Volodymyr Ostrovsky, who authored several most straightforward articles in *Dilo*. It was he who provided an analytical summary of the late February events in Żabcze in the March 31 issue of the daily:

The importance of the Żabcze events lies in the fact that although the church is sealed, the peasants have won a moral victory. By their extraordinary deed they have shown that the spirit of our peasants has not dissipated, that they are capable of heroic deeds and great self-sacrifice when it comes to perennial rights of people, that our ‘backward peasants’ cannot be ignored because a great spirit lives in their chest. Those who regarded peasants to be an ignorant mass incapable of fighting for their rights have suffered a defeat... The Żabcze event, although developed on religious grounds, hit peasants’ national feelings and contributed to the awakening of national consciousness. Those who encroach the church of Orthodox peasants did not take into account that the masses treat each such attempt of ‘grabskyism’ [a reference to the Polish politician Stanisław Grabski – translator’s note] as a deed directed against the Ukrainian people... The villagers of Żabcze have won a moral victory over the dead consistory as well as over the metropolis itself... If it had not been for the practice of not listening to the popular cry, the Żabcze event would not have ever taken place. A part of the blame for it surely falls on the Church authorities. After what happened in Żabcze, the Church authorities should radically change their approach to running parishes in Volhynia.¹⁹

By the end of 1929, *Dilo* recalled the case of Żabcze at least five times, covering the further development of events in the village. The editorial board continued to champion the interests of Orthodox villagers and their priest Vitaly Sahaidakivsky. In October, the latter managed to gain an audience with President of Poland Ignacy Mościcki, after which an order was issued to give the church in Żabcze back to Orthodox believers. In this context *Dilo* levelled criticism at Yevhen Bohuslavsky, a BBWR deputy of the Sejm, who came to Żabcze and took the credit for everything.²⁰ The news report about the celebration of the church’s opening, on the contrary, emphasised the fact that a place of honour at the feast had been given to the Sejm member Stepan Bilyak, who received from everyone the sincere thanks addressed to UNDO.²¹

Dilo’s editorial policy did not change in 1930. The paper featured several more mentions about Żabcze, which ‘taught the Ukrainian masses a great lesson how to defend people’s property not in word but in deed’.²² Special attention was given to a court proceeding in Łuck against several Orthodox people who were accused of breach of the peace (what was meant here was celebration of religious

¹⁸ Ibidem.

¹⁹ V. Ostrovskij, *Żabčans’ki pidsumki*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 71, pp. 3–4.

²⁰ *Dopisi. Luc’k (Z fil’mu žittâ)*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 260, p. 6.

²¹ *Za svoû cerkvu*, *Dilo*, (1929) issue 254, p. 4.

²² *Včora’i ’zavtra’*, *Dilo*, (1930) issue 2, p. 4.

services in the village, which was not allowed by the authorities at the time). In the same text, the Uniates of Żabcze, five of whom had criminal records for theft, were dubbed ‘the dubious element’.²³

Keeping its eye on the unfolding story of Rev. Vitaly Sahaidakivsky, *Dilo* paid attention to the village of Dubeczno, to which he was transferred in the beginning of 1930. After the calming of the religious tension in Żabcze, it was Dubeczno that became the place of the harshest conflict between the Orthodox and Uniates in Volhynia.²⁴ Throughout 1930 *Dilo* published three reports on the events in Dubeczno, focusing its attention mostly on the government and local authorities’ attitude to Rev. Vitaly Sahaidakivsky, who was not given permission to conduct pastoral service in Dubeczno neither from the voivodeship administration nor the starosta of Kowel. As in the case of Żabcze, the idea of the church union was promoted by people with criminal records, which also triggered a reaction from the editorial board: ‘Such are the apostles of Union that has become a new fashion in Volhynia; it is for their sake that the right of property of the Orthodox population is violated and the best of the best priests is suffering moral torment.’²⁵

In the beginning of 1931, *Dilo* featured the last article presenting a negative picture of the founding and functioning of a Neo-Union parish in Volhynia. The village in question was Kuśkowce Wielkie of the Krzemieniec powiat, where the police charged Orthodox villagers who quite rightly prevented the Uniates from building their chapel on church land.²⁶

Afterwards, the tone of *Dilo*’s articles covering the topics related to Neo-Union began to dramatically change, although the same Vasyl Mudry was still its editor-in-chief. The most reasonable explanation would be the ordination to the episcopate of Nicholas Charnetsky in Rome, who was appointed Apostolic Visitor for all the Neo-Union parishes in Volhynia and other Polish regions except for Galicia. While the Greek Catholic clergy from Galicia were still kept away from Neo-Union, the fact was appreciated that the Pope appointed a separate bishop for Neo-Union parishes, although the latter remained merely an auxiliary bishop to the diocesan bishop of Łuck, who still controlled the Uniate movement in Volhynia. A large front page article in the April 22, 1931 issue of *Dilo* protected Nicholas Charnetsky from the criticism of those who doubted the wisdom of his ordination to the episcopate and appointment as Apostolic Visitor, since such concerns were ‘based on a completely wrong assumption, namely on the false equation of Eastern church rites with Russian rites and the belief that Bishop Charnetsky is “a Ukrainian by origin and a Russian by conviction”.’ In the opinion of the editorial board, ‘The propaganda of Russianism in the Uniate action of Bishop Charnetsky is out of the question, as this action itself is directed against the Russian spirit that now dominates the Orthodox Church in the Ukrainian Volhynia, Kholm Land and Podlachia and is implanted by the Russian clergy via the Russian language.’²⁷

²³ *Luc'k*, *Dilo*, (1930) issue 4, p. 6.

²⁴ Rzemieniuk, *Kościół katolicki obrzqdku*, p. 177–180.

²⁵ *Dopisi. Kovel'*, *Dilo*, (1930) 67, pp. 5–6.

²⁶ *Z pівnično-zahidnih zemel'. Kremâneččina*, *Dilo*, (1931) issue 31, p. 2.

²⁷ *Shidnij, ale ne rosij's'kij!*, *Dilo*, (1931) issue 86, p. 1.

Accusations of the Russification of the Church levelled against the Neo-Union movement were quite prominent at the time. The Russifying spirit was ascribed, among others, to the Eastern rite seminary that was opened in the town of Dubno. In the second half of 1931, the criticism of this understanding of the seminary's mission was voiced in the columns of *Dilo* by the aforementioned Stepan Baran, who was convinced that the Dubno-based seminary 'does not pursue the anti-Ukrainian denationalization policy'. Welcoming the initiative of Neo-Union on the whole, the well-known social and political activist invited the Pontifical Pro Russia Commission that supervised the issue of Neo-Union on part of the Vatican 'in order to spread Union, to establish a separate diocese on the Ukrainian lands, and a separate one on the Belarusian lands, because in Poland, Muscovites live only as a diaspora; they have no territory of their own and quite quickly and substantially abandon their national identity to the benefit of the Poles'.²⁸

Since then, *Dilo* never expressed doubts about the very sense of the Neo-Union idea, but still occasionally criticised the methods of its implementation. Large analytical articles on this topic were authored by the already mentioned Stepan Baran. At the end of 1932, he presented an extensive analysis of the then-current development of Neo-Union in Poland's eastern borderlands, defining the attitude toward it on the part of different socio-political and religious circles. 'The Uniate action does not display any national motives or rather does not make a proper use of them', Baran wrote, and continued:

This is where we can see a huge tactical error of the Vatican, which does not pay much attention to national differences and ignores the locomotive national power of those whom it wants to win over to Union... The results of the Uniate activity among Orthodox Ukrainians and Belarusians are generally low. Unpleasant events like those in Żabcze are in the past now and do not happen the way they used to, but it is still a long way to go to win broad support for Union. The change can happen only in case when self-sufficient Eastern-rite dioceses independent of the Roman Catholic clergy are set up for Ukrainians and Belarusians, and national needs gain full understanding and support from the present Uniate Church ruling circles. The attitude of the Polish government toward the Uniate action is at the very least moderate, maybe due to national and political reasons for which Orthodoxy is more beneficial to it. The Polish citizens, especially those from the Eastern borderlands, treat Union quite unfavourably and even hostilely as they are afraid that it will propel the national renaissance of non-Polish nations in the East. In this respect the Poles make an almost common front ranging from the National Democracy to the pro-government camp.²⁹

Thus, while earlier *Dilo* regularly characterised Neo-Union as 'governmental', in 1932 it claimed that the government had an unfavourable attitude toward this denomination. At the same time, the daily began to criticise the attempts of the Orthodox clergy to struggle with Neo-Union.³⁰ while a more biting criticism was

²⁸ S. Baran, *Z naših cerkvnih sprav*, *Dilo*, (1931) issue 235, pp. 1–2.

²⁹ S. Baran, *Pol'sa, uniã i indeks*, *Dilo*, (1932) issue 236, p. 1.

³⁰ *Z uspihiv uniï u Kovli*, *Dilo*, (1932) issue 235, p. 3.

directed against the activities of the Catholic bishop of Łuck, Adolf Szelażek, who introduced a two-rite system in his diocese, appointing Roman Catholic priests to Neo-Union parishes as he did not want to accept Greek Catholic priests from Galicia. He was also reproached for refusal to open new Uniate parishes, although it was a necessity in Volhynia. The editorial staff was convinced that the subordination of the Uniates to Roman Catholic bishops is an error the Holy See had to correct: 'If Rome really has a Uniate action in mind, Bishop Charnetsky should be granted jurisdiction to be able to resist private contrivances of bishops Przeździeckis and Szelażeks.'³¹

After 1933 the topic of Neo-Union gradually disappeared from the columns of *Dilo*. That year, the newspaper published several small reports about the development of Neo-Union in different places of Volhynia. Emblematic is the comparison of two short notes about the construction and consecration of a Byzantine Catholic church in the village of Kuśkowce Wielkie.³² From then on, the paper's coverage of the attempts of 'a handful of Uniates' to build a church in this village in 1931 was as negative, as the assessment of the Uniate community was positive.

The only substantial piece about the Neo-Union published in *Dilo* in 1931 was an article analysing a text containing detailed information about Uniate parishes in Volhynia that had appeared in the bimonthly *Oriens* issued by Eastern-rite Jesuits. The editorial board expressed the opinion that 'Any form of Union's existence in Volhynia can be considered as assured and there is no doubt that the idea of Union gains more and more new supporters in this region, but the progress of the Uniate movement's development in Volhynia and, more generally, in the north-western territories is far from what it could be in other circumstances.'³³ *Dilo* asserted that, considering the Orthodox Ukrainians' huge sympathy with Union and the tremendous possibilities of spreading it in the north-western territories of Poland, the movement attracted not more than 25 to 30 thousand people. The reasons behind this included the lack of qualified priests as well as the shortage of churches and funds for their equipment. Although the claim about 'huge sympathy' of Orthodox Ukrainians with the idea of Union was a significant exaggeration, it was fair to assume that the task of spreading Neo-Union in Volhynia was mostly hindered by 'the fact that the whole process is led not by the Ukrainian Uniate clergy, who are naturally meant to work in that field, but by the elements who are alien to our people, who do not know our people's soul, history, sufferings and hopes'.³⁴

In this regard, the claims of *Dilo*'s editorial board were in line with the encyclical *Maximum Illud* promulgated by Pope Benedict XV in 1919, which reconsidered the missionary concept of the Roman Catholic Church concept prioritising, among other things, choosing candidates for the sacred ministry from among local residents. In Volhynia, however, everything was different, as the article stated. It emphasised that 'only a few clergy from Galicia work in that huge territory,

³¹ *Nastup pol's'kogo kostelu*, *Dilo*, (1932) issue 71, p. 2.

³² *Z cerkovnih sprav*, *Dilo*, (1933) issue 238, p. 3; *Uspihy unijnoi akcii na Volini*, *Dilo*, (1933) issue 268, p. 2.

³³ *Rozvitok unijnoi akcii na Volini*, *Dilo*, (1933) issue 170, pp. 2–3.

³⁴ *Ibidem*.

apparently under the control of non-Ukrainians. Truly, even the Uniate bishop of this territory cannot get himself appointed as diocesan bishop with a permanent seat, but has to be subordinate to all the Latin bishops in that territory'.³⁵

During the last five years of the Second Polish Republic's existence, *Dilo* scarcely touched upon the issue of Neo-Union. Within the whole of the five years, it published about ten articles, mostly short ones, informing about Bishop Charnetsky's visits to Rome, the setting up of new parishes, the authorities' pressure on them, etc. It is perhaps only the statistics of Eastern rite parishes in Poland's voivodeships published in 1935 that deserves a special attention.³⁶

Thus, *Dilo's* editorial policy regarding Neo-Union was undergoing change. After not paying any attention to this religious movement until late 1928, that is, during the first four years of its existence in Poland, in March 1929 the editorial board began to heavily criticise Neo-Union in the wake of the notorious events in the village of Żabcze. One can assume that the main reason was the discontent with the exclusion of the Galician-born Ukrainian clergy of the Byzantine Catholic rite from promoting this movement. Emblematic of the period of 1928 to 1930 was presenting Neo-Union as a government-forced project of Polonisation of the country's eastern borderlands, which was not the case. During that period, *Dilo's* editorial board emphasised both UNDO's commitment in supporting the Orthodox people who had suffered from Neo-Union and the disruptive activities of the BBWR in the same field that were an element of political campaigning aiming to gain voters for UNDO in Volhynia. The transformation of the editorial board's views on Neo-Union was concurrent with the episcopal ordination of Nicholas Charnetsky in early 1931. His appointment as Apostolic Visitor for Neo-Union parishes led the editorial board to hope that the movement would be brought into closer association with the GCC, so the daily newspaper stopped condemning Neo-Union, thereafter presenting it as a positive phenomenon. At the same time, the newspaper continued to level criticism at the Catholic clergy, who, the editors believed, had made mistakes in spreading Neo-Union. Attempts by the Orthodox to resist Uniate propaganda began to be condemned, and the government, which was now viewed not as an organiser of Neo-Union, but as its opponent, came under criticism as well. Thus, it is possible to speak about the editorial board's radical change in *Dilo's* coverage of Neo-Union in 1931. This position remained unchanged until 1939.

³⁵ Ibidem.

³⁶ *Skil'ki viznavciv maê uniâ na pìvnično-zahìdnih zemlâh?*, *Dilo*, (1935) issue 211, p. 5.

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Translated by Andrij Saweneć

TRANSFORMACJA OCENY RUCHU NEOUNIJNEGO NA WOŁYNIU NA ŁAMACH LWOWSKIEJ GAZETY „DIŁO”

Streszczenie

W 1924 roku w Polsce zaczęto szerzyć projekt neounijny zapoczątkowany przez Kościół katolicki w celu pozyskania ludności prawosławnej dawnego Cesarstwa Rosyjskiego. W następnym roku na terenie województwa wołyńskiego powstała pierwsza parafia neounijna. Ponieważ niemal we wszystkich przypadkach wyznawcy nowego wyznania rościli sobie pretensje do majątków lokalnych parafii prawosławnych, prowadziło to do konfliktów, o których z kolei było głośno w prasie. Jednym z najbardziej wpływowych periodyków ukraińskich w międzywojennej Polsce była wydawana we Lwowie gazeta „Diło”, nagłaśniająca m.in. kwestie religijne na Wołyniu. Począwszy od 1928 roku, redakcja „Diło” zaczęła publikować artykuły dotyczące rozwoju ruchu neounijnego w sąsiednim województwie. Jednocześnie gazeta broniła interesów ludności prawosławnej, choć wydawana była przez i przede wszystkim dla grekokatolików. Jedną z głównych przyczyn było wykluczenie ukraińskiego duchowieństwa grekokatolickiego z procesu szerzenia neounii. W ten sposób kontrolowane przez Ukraiński Sojusz Narodowo-Demokratyczny „Diło” walczyło o prawosławnych wyborców na Wołyniu. Począwszy od 1931 roku, po konsekracji biskupa Mikołaja Czarnieckiego, redakcja „Diło” zmieniła zdanie na temat neounii, która została uznana za zjawisko pozytywne, pozbawione wszelkich wad przypisywanych jej przez tę samą gazetę. Ludność prawosławna regionu nie była już postrzegana jako ofiara agresji zewnętrznej, a konwertytów nie

przedstawiano jako najmniej moralnych członków lokalnej społeczności. Zmieniła się także ocena stanowiska władz. Choć w ostatnich latach II Rzeczypospolitej „Diło” w mniejszym stopniu interesowało się problematyką neounijną, to w sumie jego polityka wydawnicza tego okresu w większym stopniu odzwierciedlała utrwalone poglądy greckokatolickie na temat podporządkowania prawosławnych Ukraińców papieżowi, niż miało to miejsce przed 1931 rokiem.

Słowa kluczowe: gazeta „Diło”; neounia; unia rządowa; Kościół rzymskokatolicki; Cerkiew prawosławna; Cerkiew greckokatolicka; Wołyń; Żabcze