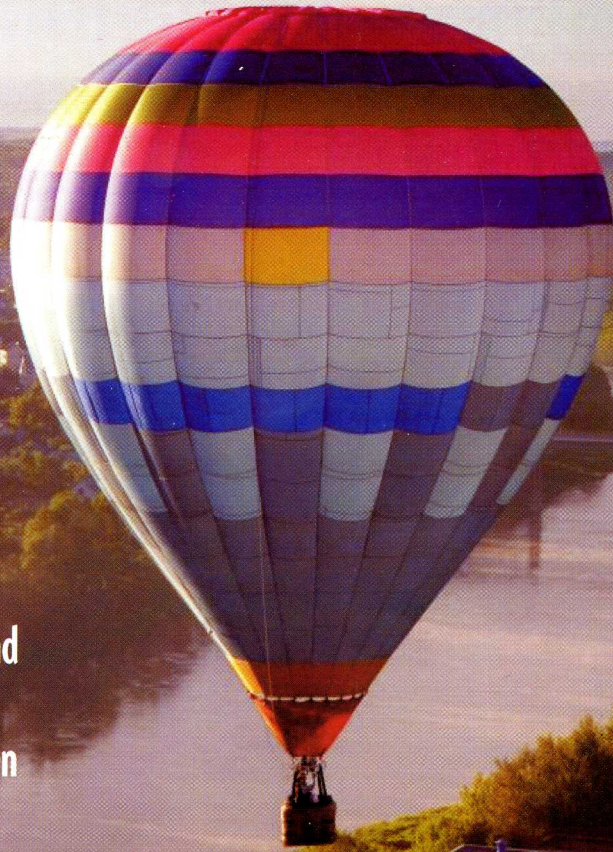


EUROPE

INTEGRATION EDUCATION CULTURE

my little



Land with the bison in background

Lithuanian kitchen



Gothic and Byzantinism in the Great Lithuanian Principedom
of 16th century

Artificial division of Eastern Borderlands

Polish organization in Kaliningrad Oblast



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Dear Readers,



Cultural, national or religious diversity has been recently rediscovered. The accession of Poland and Lithuania to the European Union has reopened the discussion about the mutual history and borderlands of the two nations. In our magazine, which first issue you are reading, one can find historical scientific articles concerning our common past as much as readings related to national minorities in Poland, Lithuania and Kaliningrad Oblast of the Russian Federation. A journey to the lands of Kresy will bring us close to nature and regional cuisine. And at the same time it will show us how the political sphere of the lands of the former Great Lithuanian Duchy has changed.

Have a nice and informative read!

Piotr Sobolewski
Chairman of Amicus Association

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Gothic and Byzantinism in the Great Lithuanian Princedom of 16th century

The Great Lithuanian Princedom – is a state within which borders till 1569 was the greater part of a territory of our interest. Only a small part of the land was within the borders of Monastic State of the Teutonic Order (since 1525 known as Duchy of Prussia).

The majority of population was the Rus whereas the Lithuanians were the minority living in the regions of Aukštaitija (around Vilnius) and Žemaitija/Samogitia (to the north of Vilnius). The division clearly showed the religious dualism of the times. The coexistence of the two Christian traditions and ceremonials has been the vital element of culture of these lands since 14th century.

The special attention deserve well-preserved 16th century monuments of sacral architecture as churches and Orthodox churches of Vilnius, Kaunas, Novogrudok, Supraśl, Synkavichy, Mažeikiai, Zapyškis and Kodeń that combined the elements of Gothic and Byzantine style. St. Anne's Church in Vilnius and Perkunas House in Kaunas are the most delightful examples of this style of architecture. Then the question arises as to what was the mutual relationship between the two architectural styles and what were their historical considerations. Then, here arises the need to discuss the religious history of this territory.

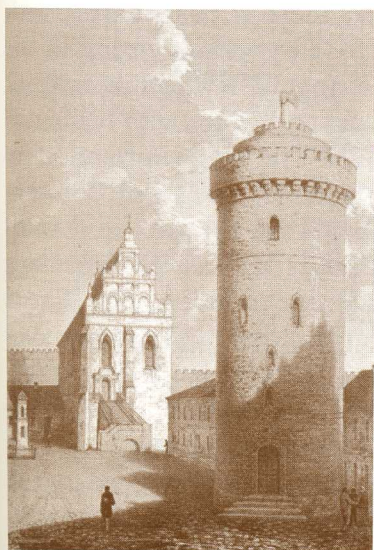


Illustration 1. Lublin. Two-storeyed castle parish of the Holy Trinity from 14/15th century.

Drw by N. Ordy, Lit by A. Misierowicz, 1873-1883.

Christianisation for the Polish Throne

On 14th August 1385, the Lithuanian Prince the Great Jogaila concluded a contract with the Polish delegation. The Polish offered Jogaila the throne and proposed him to marry the Polish Queen Jadwiga. Jogaila agreed to adopt the Catholicism himself and baptize Lithuania in Catholicism. He also agreed to adjoin the Lithuanian Princedom to the Polish Kingdom. In 1386, Jogaila set out for Poland and the Polish delegation set out for Lithuania. They met in Volkovysk to confirm the Union of Krewo (Kreva Act).

Jogaila together with his close kinsmen was baptized in Krakow on 15th February 1386. Ladislaus Jogaila married Jadwiga at the Wawel Cathedral in Krakow on 18th February 1386. Jogaila was crowned King of Poland. In January 1387, Queen Jadwiga went to Red Ruthenia. On Ash Wednesday 1387, Jogaila called the Lithuanians to come to Vilnius where they were encouraged to be baptized.

Later, the places of pagan cult were destroyed, the eternal Perkunas fire was extinguished, the sacred groves were cut down and snakes and adders were killed. The noble and their relatives were baptized individually, whereas the folk in groups. From the very beginning of Lithuanian's conversion to Christianity, the Polish were engaged in the Christianization of the population.

The rulers of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania faced the problem of unifying the church which was a prerequisite to maintain the unity of the state. In order to do so, they could either introduce missions among the Orthodox or conclude the Uniate Church. As a result Gregory Camblak, the Patriarch of Moscow between 1415 and 1420, proposed the union. The Pope rejected the proposal, Vytautas and Jogaila, however, were encouraged to promote the idea of the Uniate Church. Still, the problem was not solved.

The Second Baptisation blasphemes the First One

Hence arose the problem of re-baptization of the Rus. When Jogaila was baptised together with some of his kinsmen, a few of his brothers did not agree to repeat the sacrament. These brothers were baptized according to the Greek Rite.

Jogaila also condemned the re-baptization. Vytautas the Great adopted the same attitude. On 25th August 1417, Jogaila and Vytautas addressed a letter to the Council of Constantinople that cited the opinion of



theologians, which confirmed the validity of baptism according to the Greek Rite and considered the repeated baptism as an insult to the Greek sacrament. The re-baptism was condemned by Papal bulls, however, the Polish Episcopate continued the process. Even though, Jogaila did not approve of the repeated sacrament, the last of his wives, Sophia of Halshany was re-baptised.

On 17th February 1387, Jogaila equipped the Catholic diocese in Vilnius. On 12th March 1388, Poppechose Dobrogost, the Bishop of Poznan, as a papal legate and or-

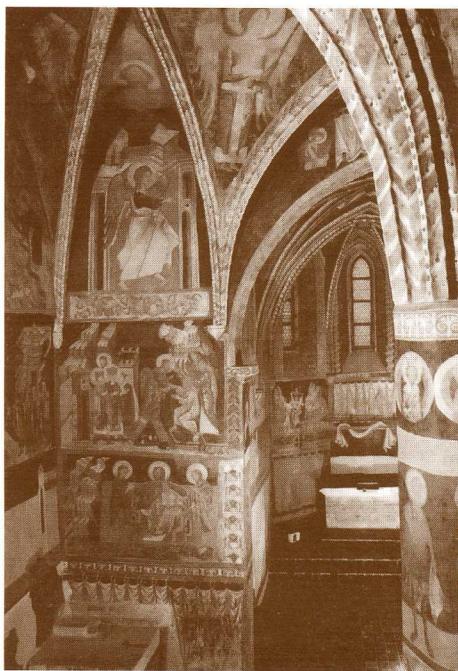


Illustration 2. Lublin. The interior of second storey of the castle parish, polychrome from beginning of 15th century.

Two-floor palace chapel of Holy Trinity. The second floor decorated with byzantine paintings of Jogaila times is a symbol of the King's ecumenical activity. The ground floor used to be used for the Latin Rite and supposedly had the Latin interior decoration which unfortunately did not meet our times.

photos. KOBiDZ Lublin.

dered him to found the diocese and appoint Andrew as its first bishop. The new diocese included the Grand Duchy of Lithuania except for the lands within the Vladimir Diocese, Kamieniec Diocese and later Kyiv Diocese. The Vilnius Diocese from the very beginning was considered as an exempt diocese dependent on The Holy See of Rome, however, not engaged in the conflict between the rival metropolitans of Gniezno and Riga.

The independence of the Vilnius Diocese and strong separatist feelings of Vytautas the Great led to founding the metropolis of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in Vilnius. On 23rd October 1417, Vytautas the Great equipped the Diocese of Samogitia with its cathedral in Miedniki. On 24th October 1417, papal legates founded the diocese under the rule of The Holy See of Rome. Still, the Vilnius Diocese was not established then.

The King of Two Nations, the King of Two Religions

Lublin, situated on the border of united Lithuanian and Polish Princedoms under the rule of Jogaila, was a centre of great importance. Since 1386 the Polish and Lithuanian nobilities were convoking assemblies in Lublin. In 1412, the King erected the church of the Assumption of Mary "de triumphis", a votive cathedral, founded in memory of the victory gained over the Teutonic Order at Grunwald. On 10th August 1418, the interior decorations of The Church of Holy Trinity were finished (the date is inscribed on the lancet arch of the cathedral, though already in 1407 some paint jobs were done in the church and below the portrayal of Jogaila there is the emblem of Piotr Kmita, the Castellan of Lub-

lin since 1409). The works started in 1415. In the meantime, Vytautas the Great laboured for ecclesiastical union between Catholics and Greek Orthodox and declared the Lithuanian Orthodox Church, independent of the Patriarch of Moscow on 15th November 1415. In 1418 he sent Gregory Camblak, Metropolitan of Kiev, to the Council of Constance to conclude the Uniate Church.

The Church of Holy Trinity in Lublin as a unique historical monument due to its status and architectural design. It is a two-storey church. The first storey was built by 1326. Before 1409, Piotr Kmita supported building the second storey. The first storey was further designed by Catholic, whereas the second storey was decorated according to the Byzantine architectural style. The church is the relic of the Uniate Church. The Church frescoes are the examples of Byzantine icon-painting popular in the architectural tradition in the Orthodox Church. In addition, the portrayal of Jogaila was drawn on the lancet arch and in the interior tower sheltering the empora where the King would pray during the mass.

The Founder's Prayer is inscribed on the cross-barrel surface. In the middle, there is Jesus Christ with Mother Mary who is sitting in the throne. Jogaila is kneeling in front of Christ and Mary with his hands in prayer. The king is protected by Saint Nicholas and Saint Constantine the Great, the two most cultivated saints by Eastern Christians of Byzantine tradition. The King is also surrounded by two other companions without halos that represent the two nations – the Polish and the Rus-Lithuanians.

Jan Długosz believed that Jogaila preferred the eastern art to the western one, as he ordered to decorate

his bedroom at Wawel and a few Catholic churches in Poland (e.g. Gniezno and Wawel Cathedrals, collegiate churches in Sandomierz and Wislica, and the benedictian sanctuary in Święty Krzyż).

Conflict over Bernardines Sisters and Helena Ivanovna

Alexander Jagiellon continued the process of uniting the Catholic and Orthodox church, which was introduced and further implemented by Jogaila, Vytautas the Great and Casimir IV Jagiellon. On 15th February 1495, Alexander Jagiellon married Helena, the Tsar's daughter, the marriage was of profound symbolic importance. The monarchs united in marriage unified two rites, thus the King showed his support the Uniate Church and gave his consent to uniting two religions.

On 30th May 1498, Joseph Bolgarinovich, bishop of Smolensk, became the Metropolitan of All Rus. Metropolitan Joseph wanted to invoke the Union of the Coun-

cil of Florence. Moscow Chronicle said that the post of a Metropolitan was promised to Joseph as in incentive for converting Helena to Catholicism and that he collaborated with Wojciech Tabor, Bishop of Vilnius, and the Bernardines in order to convince Helena to be baptized.

The Bernardines Sisters of Vilnius supported the Uniate Church. The indulgence granted to their chapel of St Michael caused Metropolitan Misail to send protest letters against its foundation the letters were sent between 1475 and 1476. Later, also the Rus clergy and nobility sent the letter of protest of to Pope Sixtus IV. Having the knowledge, Alexander Jegiellon decided not to continue with the foundation of the convent himself, it was continued by daughters of Lithuanian nobilities: Anna Radziwiłłowiczówna, sister to a Lithuanian Chamberlain, and Dorota Olechnowiczówna who settled in two houses upon the Vilnia River in Użupis (pol. Zarzecze), Vilnius. The houses were opposite to Bernadine Church.

Helena Ivanovna, the wife to Alexander Jagiellon, was the most desired person in the Catholic Church. It is considered to be the reason for Moscow to launch the war. Helena must have trusted the Bernadines as she deposited her jewels and valuables at the church. John from Komorov, the provincial superior, passed the jewels and valuables to Sigismund I the Old.

On 3rd May 1500, Muscovite-Lithuanian war broke out. Ivan III purported the war as the religious one. On 14th July, Lithuanians were defeated in the Battle of Vedrosha. Only after the defeat did Alexander receive the declaration of war.

The Obedience to the Pope

On 20th July 1500, however, Metropolitan Joseph Bolgarinovich signed the Act of Obedience to the Pope that stated the obedience of the Orthodox of the Great Lithuanian Princedom to the Pope together with the sacramental confession as according the Council of Florence.

Also, Bishop of Vilnius, Wojciech Tabor, and Alexander Jagiellon addressed letters to the Pope. Erazm Ciolek as the envoy to the Pope was ordered to support the obedience on behalf of Alexander Jagiellon. Johannes Sacranus, the rector of Cracow Academy, encouraged by Bishop Tabor published *Flucidarius errorum ritus Ruthenici* in which he explained the flaws in the Orthodox Church. On behalf of Bishop of Vilnius, Ciolek presented Johannes Sacranus' work to the Pope. Ciolek held the obedience speech to Pope Alexander VI on 31st March 1501, in Rome.

The defeat over the Lithuanians in the Battle of Vedrosha undermined the plan to confirm the Uniate Church. On 23rd August 1501, Al-

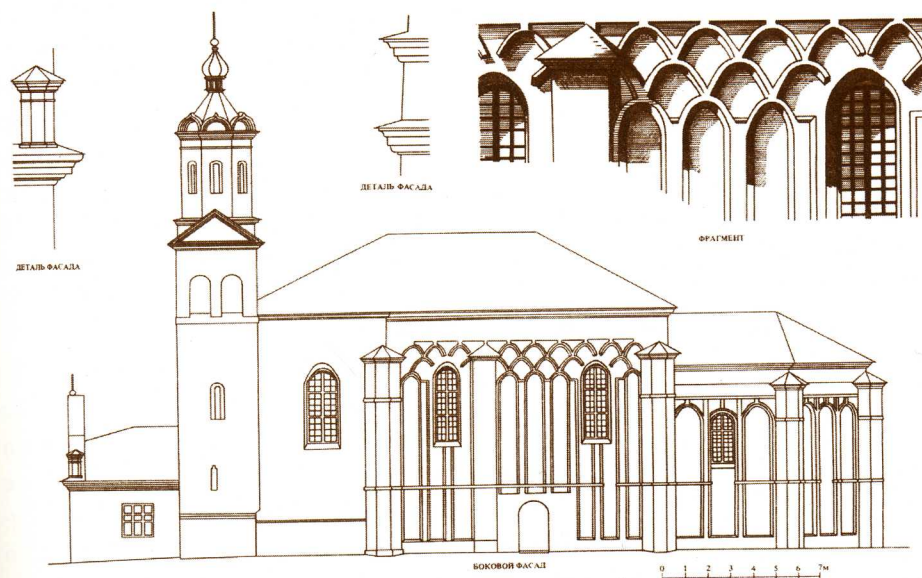


Illustration no 3. Novogrudok. Boris and Gleb Orthodox Church, beginning of 16th century. Exterior walls are decorated with Gothic arcade niches, the interior with rich Gothic vaults. (Atlas pamjatnikov architektury i memorial'nykh kompleksov Belorussii, ed. V. A. Čanturija, Minsk 1988, tab. 3, p. 27)



Illustration no 4. Vilnius. Gate of Dawn, in 16th century it led to the Rus part of the city. There went the triumphal entry of Sigismund I and hetman Konstanty Ostrowski after a victorious battle over the Moscowites in 1514. Then vanished the Monarch's lack of trust towards the Rus population living in the Great Duchy of Lithuania (by Wiktor Adama and Luis Pierre Alphonse Bichebois, Album of Vilnius by J. K. Wilczyński, volume I, unit z.1, 1846, chromolithography)

Alexander VI signed the papal bulla *Altitudo divini consili* addressed to the Bishop of Vilnius, Wojciech Tabor. It stated that the Rus could be accepted in the Catholic Church and that without the repeated baptismation (...)

The Pope treated the idea of the Uniate Church with certain caution. He stated that the union of churches had been threatened by the Satan or dogmatic and hierarchical divisions. The latter ones related to the nomination of Joseph Bolgarinovich by the heretic Patriarch of Constantinople and not by Bishop

of Porto, John, St Angel's Cardinal. Metropolitan Joseph would have been given the consent if only he had agreed to decree of the Council of Florence and Catholicism while maintaining the Orthodox Rite.

The correspondence revealed that Pope Alexander VI had not acknowledged Metropolitan Joseph as united with the Catholic Church and would give his acceptance if Joseph had met Pope's conditions.

The efforts made by King's envoy to the Pope and Bishop of Vilnius brought some immediate results. On 23rd August 1501, Pope

Alexander VI expressed his content about the Rus and other Orthodox inhabitants of the Great Lithuanian Princedom living within the dioceses of Vilnius, Kyiv, Lutsk and Medininkai having converted to the Catholic Rite and thus ordered them to renounce their Orthodox misconceptions as according to the Council of Florence. The Pope, however, acknowledged the baptismation of the Orthodox and Armenian Catholics, thus refraining from the re-baptisation of the Rus. The Pope ordered Bishop of Vilnius to accept the Rus baptized according to the Orthodox or Armenian Rite and allowed making copies of the bull by the notary that were to be sealed either by the Pope himself or by other bishop or prelate.

More Tolerance – Greater Influence of Rome

The Bull *Altitudo divini consili* by Pope Alexander VI dated 23rd August 1501, and the Breve by Bishop Tabor, as much as the letter written by Alexander Jagiellon, as I believe, were of great importance to the revolutionary changes in the religious divisions in the Great Lithuanian Princedom. Roman Catholicism widely spread all over the Great Lithuanian Princedom proves it right. Landlords, church patrons founded Catholic churches for all the inhabitants both of Catholic or Orthodox Rite.

Different directions of religious geography seem to be clear. The administrative division of Eastern Church, in particular, seems to have influenced the new religious geography. The metropolitan diocese, to the north of the Great Lithuanian Princedom, was the Catholic centre, whereas the Vladimir diocese must have been under different religious influences. The process

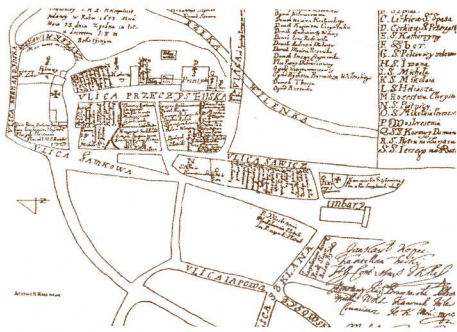


Illustration no 5. Vilnius. Plan of a metropolitan uniati iuridicus in Vilnius, 1672. It shows the location of 14 Orthodox churches destroyed by Muscovites in 1655.

(Akty izdavaemye Vilenskoju Archeograficeskoju-Kommissieju, vol. 20, Vilnius, 1893)

of Catholicisation was implemented together with the Polanisation. The lands where the Poles are settled in large numbers these days must have been within the dioceses under supervision of Pope Alexander's VI. The thesis raised here seems to be of great importance to the history of the Great Lithuanian Princedom needs further examination.

New Parishes for both Rites

The clergymen started to develop the parish structure common for both rites. Historic documents of the church in Ikazn' in the Braclaw Voivodeship dated 28th April 1501 reveal that Pope Alexander VI renewed his permission to build the parish. The permission to build the Church of Saint Spirit in the Diocese of Vilnius was first given on the request of Ivan Sapieha, Alexander Jagiellon's secretary. The Pope allowed to celebrate masses of the Orthodox Rite by the Rus priests, Catholics under the supremacy of Rome. Sapieha did not manage to build the parish of both rites in Ikazn' till 1501, therefore, the Pope permitted to celebrate masses in the consecrated church conducted by both Latin and Rus priests and attended by both Roman Catholic and Rus believers. Still, the masses

and services were to be celebrated according to the Roman Catholic Rite. Moreover, having consecrated the parish the Pope granted 10-year indulgence to all believers who would have attended the church and thus helped to mend, preserve and decorate it.

On 10th May 1501, Pope Alexander VI issued the Breve dilecto fratri Gregorio de Loszko Kyoviensi diocesis, to the converted the light of true understanding and unity of the Roman Catholic Church. The Priest of the Rus Metropoly had not been confirmed, but ordained by Vassian, Bishop of Vladimir Diocese (1492-1512). The ordination was performed litterae dimissoridi during the period of The Vacancy of the Holy See (1497-1498), the Pope allowed for the excuse from the censure and gave the priest dispensation to take holy orders performed by one of Catholic bishops.

The erection of St Anne's Church in Vilnius situated near the Bernardines' Monastery and Church and on the edge of the Rus capital of the Great Lithuanian Princedom

was clearly related to the Union of the churches. On 22nd May 1501, Pope Alexander VI issued the indulgence bull etsi cuncte ecclesiae et loca. The Pope stated that believers would pray for Alexander Jagiellon in this particular church.

The Gothic architecture of the church with the intertwined Gothic arch together with trapezoidal arch (typical for Byzantine architecture) was the symbol of the religious syncretism that was to attract the Rus to the church. The syncretism had a strong influence upon the aesthetic nature of St Anne's Church.

The architecture of the other building might have been under the influence of the religious syncretism as well, though there exists no historical evidence whatsoever. However, the church in Kaunas, from the second half of the 16th century was a Jesuit Mission (later known as Perkunas Hause), might be the example of the syncretic architecture.

*Prof. Józef Maroszek
The continuation of the article
will be printed in the next issue*



Illustration 6. Vilnius, St Anne's Church, Gothic with Byzantine elements from 1501, situated near the gate leading to jurydyka of the Rus Metropolitans built in 1415. In the background, a gothic Bernardine's church from 1469-1525. In the foreground, ruins of belfry of St Anne's Church.

Lithography by Józef Hilary Glowacki. Museum of Fine Arts of Lithuania