

Диалозите на XIX век



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THE POLISH EPISODES OF THE BULGARIAN CHURCH

MOVEMENT IN THE 19TH CENTURY¹

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Статията описва полското участие в борбата на българите за църковна независимост през 19. век. През 1840те оглавяваната от Йежи Адам Чарторски полска организация Отел Ламбер установява сътрудничество с българските водачи Неофит Бозвели и Иларион Макариополски. През 1850те и 1860те агентът на Отел Ламбер Владислав Йордан е сред авторите на проекта за Уния с католическата църква. Също така през 1860те години, когато Унията е пред разпад, поляци се включват в опитите тя да бъде спасена.

Ключови думи: полско-български връзки, Движение за Църковна независимост на България, Българско възраждане, 19 век

This article describes the Polish involvement in the Bulgarian Church Movement during the 19th century. In the 1840s, the Polish organization of Jerzy Adam Czartoryski, Hôtel Lambert, began to cooperate with Bulgarian leaders: Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski. At the turn of the 1850s and 1860s, an agent of Hôtel Lambert, Władysław Jordan, was one of the architects of the Union with the Catholic Church. The Polish people also took part in the efforts to rescue the declining Union in the 1860s.

Keywords: Polish-Bulgarian relations, Bulgarian Church Movement, Bulgarian Revival, history, 19th century

Introduction

During the 19th century, Polish people did not have their own state. They were, however, active players on the political scene in Europe, among others in the Balkan Peninsula and Bulgaria. They took part in the Church Movement – the Bulgarian struggle for a Church independent from the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople, which constitutes one of the most important parts of the Bulgarian National Revival. There were a few meaningful Polish episodes in that struggle. In the 1840s, when the Bulgarian Church Movement became a nationwide matter thanks to the Neofit Bozveli's and Ilarion Makariopolski's activity, the Polish organization of Jerzy Adam Czartoryski, Hôtel Lambert, started a cooperation with

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Bulgarian leaders. At the turn of the 1850s and 1860s, the agent of Hôtel Lambert, Władysław Jordan, was one of the architects of the Union with the Catholic Church, which was used as a leverage against the Patriarchate of Constantinople and Russia. Polish people also took part in the efforts to rescue the declining Union – the second head of the Bulgarian Greek-Catholic Church was Franciszek Malczyński (1861–1867); in 1863, the Polish Resurrectionist Congregation established the school in Adrianople, which aimed to raise the Bulgarian Uniate elites.

Bulgarian-Polish Cooperation in the 1840s

Hôtel Lambert was the conservative-liberal milieu of the Polish emigrants in Paris established after the collapse of the November Insurrection in 1831. Its leader was Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, a Polish nobleman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Imperial Russia in 1804–1806, and President of the Polish National Government during the November Uprising. The organization focused on “foreign policy,” which was an unusual phenomenon in the history of 19th-century diplomacy. The term should be understood as the “system of ideas and efforts taken by the emigration, (...) which tried to rebuild the independence of the [Polish] state by a combination of the Polish activity with the dynamic development of international relation of these times” (Handelsman 1949: 38). The agents of Hôtel Lambert lobbied for the Polish question in the European courts, they tried to trigger conflicts in the Old Continent, which would weaken the occupants of Poland (Russia, Austria, and Prussia), and create the circumstances to regain the national independence. That is why Adam Jerzy Czartoryski was interested in the Eastern Question – he wanted to use the animosities between the Great Powers linked to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to Poland’s advantage. The first step of the plan was to weaken the position of Russia in the region, which Czartoryski tried to accomplish by cooperation with France and Great Britain. Subsequently, the Polish pushed for the war between Russia and Western Great Powers, which would change the balance of forces in Europe and create the chance for Poland to regain the independence. Czartoryski started to send agents to the Balkans at the beginning of 1840s, whose task was to realize that ambitious project. In 1841, Michał Czajkowski was sent to Constantinople, where he supervised the agent network in Serbia, Montenegro, Danube Principalities, and Bulgaria (Kalembka 1971: 253–254; Hahn 1987: 271–285; Cetnarowicz 1992: 20–22; Smohovska-Petrova 1978: 229–238).

One of the goals of Hôtel Lambert in Bulgaria was the Union between Bulgarians and the Catholic Church, as a tool that would weaken the Russian position, connect Bulgarians with the West, and gain the Pope’s support for the Polish question (BCz IV 5413;

Smohovska-Petrova 1973: 72). The first action was linked to the project of establishing Catholic schools in the Bulgarian lands in the cooperation with the French Congregation of the Mission (Lazarites) in 1842 (BCz IV 5404; Bartoszewski-Wnukowski 2007: 33). The results were not impressive, mostly because of the skepticism of Louis Florent Leleu – the Lazarites' provincial supervisor, the limited resources, and the contractions taken by Russia (Widerszal 1937: 26–27; Smohovska-Petrova 1973: 81). However, Hôtel Lambert successfully gathered around the milieu of young pro-Western Bulgarians, who were disappointed by the Russian attitude towards the rebellions in Braila in 1841–1843. The milieu was created in Paris and included Aleksandăr Ekzarh, Teochar Piccolo, Dimităr Kirovich, Gavril Krăstevich, and Stoyan Chomakov (Smohovska-Petrova 1973: 65). Meanwhile, Michał Czajkowski started the cooperation with Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski in Constantinople; Konstantin Ognianovich became his personal assistant. At that time, Czajkowski was in touch with Nikolay Palauzov, Konstantin Fotinov, and Georgi Rakovski as well (Dopierała 1988: 86–87; Skowronek 1983: 250–253).

In September 1844, Bozveli and Makariopolski left Mount Athos, where they had been imprisoned by the Greek clergy, and contacted Poles, mostly because of the disappointment from the Russian support for the Patriarchate of Constantinople (Skowronek 1983: 184). Czajkowski was the one who gained a document for protection for Bozveli, thanks to which he could not be imprisoned again (Dopierała 1988: 87; Józwiak 2008: 56). With the support of Hôtel Lambert's agents the campaigners for autonomous Bulgarian church started sending petitions to the Sublime Porte, which could be recognized as the first Bulgarian nationwide program (BCz, IV 5414; Chudzikowska 1971: 253). There were four main demands:

- Protection of Church activists, which was linked to the earlier arrest of Neofit and Ilarion in 1841;
- Establishment of a Bulgarian independent school system under the support of the Ottoman state;
- Foundation of a church and seminary for the Bulgarian community in Constantinople;
- Appointment of the national representation for liaising with the Sublime Porte.

The authors of the petitions declared loyalty to the Ottoman sultan and emphasized their concern about the Bulgarian community within the whole state as well. They criticized the Constantinople Patriarchate for breaking the law and accused Russia of forced resettlement of Bulgarians to Bessarabia (BCz, IV 5414). The Bulgarian Church activists

wanted to get the rights, which were promised in the Edict of Gülhane of 1839. At that time Bozveli did not think about a separate Church and, even more so, he was not a proponent of the Unionist ideas of his Polish allies (Widerszal 1937: 27; Smohovska-Petrova 1973: 73–74).

In 1845 there were symbolic effects of the cooperation: Ilarion Makariopolski and Konstantin Ognianovich became members of the Educational Commission of the Sublime Porte, some of the Bulgarian emigrants could come back from the Danube Principalities, the Turkish government allowed for a one-off consultation with the representatives of all Ottoman provinces (BCz, IV 5414; BCz, IV 5415; Józwiak 2008: 57; Skowronek 1983: 253).

It was enough for the Constantinople Patriarchate to take serious steps. On August 10th (July 29th old style) 1845, Neofit Bozveli and Ilarion Makariopolski were kidnapped and imprisoned again in Mount Athos. Hôtel Lambert unsuccessfully tried to release them using its influences in the Sublime Porte, Paris and Rome (BCz, IV 5416; Skowronek 1983: 254–255; Smohovska-Petrova 1973: 75–76). As a result of the harsh steps of the Patriarchate, Bulgarians who strived for the religious autonomy started to abandon the cooperation with Polish and once again turned to Russia. The best example of such tactics is that of Aleksandăr Ekzarh. In 1850, he became an editor of the “Цариградски вестник” and occasionally used it to announce warnings against the “Catholic and anti-Russian propaganda of Czartoryski” (Widerszal 1935: 266)².

The Polish People and Bulgarian Church Union

The Church Union was an important episode of the Bulgarian Church Movement, which was an initiative of Dragan Tsankov, an important Revival activist and a prominent politician in liberated Bulgaria after 1878. In 1852, Tsankov established contacts with the Polish emigrational milieu in the Ottoman Empire. He tried to set up a printing house in Svishtov with the help of Klemens Przewłocki, a participant of the Hungarian Revolution of 1848–1849, who had taken refuge in the Bulgarian lands. At that time, the latter was an agent of Hôtel Lambert (Klejn 2005: 15)³. After a failure, with the help of his Polish friends, Tsankov moved to Constantinople and became a teacher in the Catholic Lazarist School in Bebek (Widerszal 1937: 51). With the aid of Michał Czajkowski (at that time known as Sadik Pasha, who had resigned from a cooperation with Czartoryski and worked on his own⁴), Tsankov opened the printing house in the San Benedetto Monastery in Galata. In 1859, he started to publish “България”, a newspaper of the Catholic Congregation for Propaganda of

² More about the Polish-Bulgarian cooperation in the 1840s (Popek 2017: 119–135).

³ More about the Polish emigrants in the Bulgarian lands (Chilingirov 1999).

⁴ More about Michał Czajkowski activity in that time (Zlatanov 2015: 66–78).

Faith in Bulgaria. Hôtel Lambert not only offered contacts with the Lazarists and French diplomats, it was also supporting Tsankov and the “България” newspaper financially. Władysław Jordan, a supervisor of the Czartoryski’s Agency in Constantinople until 1857, got tax exemptions for the newspaper, which was very important in the process of its dissemination among Bulgarians in the whole empire (Widerszal 1937: 119).

It is worth mentioning that there was no unified position of the Polish community in Constantinople in that time. Władysław Jordan wanted to weaken the Russian influences among Bulgarians, even to the degree of “the Polonization of the Bulgarian nation” (sic!). For Władysław Zamoyski, the concept of the spreading of Catholicism had only a religious character. On the other hand, Michał Czajkowski was against the Union and supported the idea of the independent Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Józwiak 2008: 65).

At the end of 1860, Władysław Jordan arranged the negotiations between the Union’s supporters, with Tsankov at the head, and the representative of the Pope in the Ottoman Empire, Paulo Brunnoni. The act of the Bulgarian Union was signed on December 18th (30th), among other by Władysław Jordan (“Balgariya” god. 2, br. 92, 23.12.1860: 1). The Pope Pius IX approved the foundation of the new Uniate Church on January 22nd (10th), 1860 (Kajsiewicz 1863: 48; „Balgariya“, god. 2, br. 107, 5.04.1861:1, 9–10; „Przegląd Poznański”, t. 31, 1861: 388). The Union was criticized by many Bulgarian national activists. One of the harshest critics of the act was Georgi S. Rakovski, who published a series of articles against Hôtel Lambert in the newspaper “Дунавски лебед”. He accused Czartoryski of dividing the Bulgarian nation, and bitingly advised that Polish should first solve their own problems and do not interfere in the Bulgarian questions („Dunavski lebed“, god. 1, br. 24, 7.03.1860: 1).

An example of the importance of the Polish involvement in the Bulgarian Union could be the fact that Franciszek Malczyński (1861–1865), a Polish priest who was a lecturer of seminaries in Croatia, became the second head of the Uniate Church. However, he contributed to the collapse of the Bulgarian Union – after the escape of the first head of the new Church Josif Sokolski, that nomination was decided upon only by Rome, i.e. there were no consultations with Bulgarians. The new community was disappointed, they expected a Bulgarian priest with authority or somebody who was familiar with the Bulgarian problems (Józwiak 2008: 66). In 1865, Franciszek Malczyński was replaced by Rafail Popov, who was well-known as a critic of his predecessor and the opponent of the Polish involvement in the Bulgarian Uniate Church (Semenenko 1998: 21–22; Widerszal 1937: 155–156). Before that, the Union had lost its importance and had become a marginal phenomenon due to the Greek concessions for Bulgarians, the betrayal of Josif Sokolski, and mobilization of the Orthodox

Church Movement. At the beginning of 1861, the number of the Bulgarian Uniates was about 14,500, in 1863, there were only few thousand in the two dioceses in Thrace and two (periodically three) in Macedonia (Kajsiewicz 1863: 53–53; Sprawa bułgarska 1: 5–6; Widerszal 1937: 125)⁵. Poles withdrew from their cooperation with Bulgarians. Until September 1861, Władysław Jordan focused on the Caucasian questions. That was the last episode of Hôtel Lambert's involvement in the Balkan questions (BCz IV 5691; Skowronek 1971: 98)⁶.

However, Polish people still supported the Bulgarian Uniate Church. In April 1863, Polish Missionaries from the Resurrectionist Congregation, Karol (Ignacy) Kaczanowski and Marcin Janus, were sent to Turkey to organize a school for the Bulgarian Uniates in Adrianople and carry out missionary activity in Thrace (among others, in Malko Târnovo, Zornitsa, Akbunar). In 1864, there were 40 pupils in the school, in the 1880s and 1890s, that number grew to about 150 (BCz III 6748; Sprawa bułgarska 2: 5; Kajsiewicz 2009: 55; Józwiak 2008: 42). In 1880–1914, 3,039 students jointly received an education in the Resurrectionist School in Adrianople. They brought up not only the elites of the Bulgarian Uniate Church (the likes of Thracian Vicary Mihail Petkov, Macedonian Vicary Epifaniy Hanov, or Metropolitan Mihail Mirov), but also the representatives of new Bulgarian state's elites as well: teachers, officials, diplomats, officers, judges, mayors of Sofia, Plovdiv, or Stara Zagora (Mleczko 2014: 222–225; Koper 2013: 43–44). However, Resurrectionists' activity was irrelevant to the Bulgarian Church Question. After the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870, the program of the Bulgarian Church Movement was complete. Poles had nothing to offer to Bulgarians on that matter.

Conclusion

Polish emigrants had limited resources compared with the main players of the European political scene in the 19th century. However, they achieved quite impressive results in the field of the Bulgarian Question. Some of the main figures of the Bulgarian movement for independence who cooperated with the Poles later became important public figures of reborn Bulgaria. In the 1840s, Hôtel Lambert participated in the creation of the first program of the Church Movement. The Union of 1860, which was partly a result of the Polish involvement in Bulgarian matters, became an important means of exerting pressure over the Constantinople Patriarchate. These episodes were important stages of the struggle of this

⁵ More about the Bulgarian Uniate Movement (Popek 2014: 103–120).

⁶ More about the Hôtel Lambert activity in Caucasus in that time (Widerszal 2011).

community for an independent Church, which ended with the establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate in 1870 – undoubtedly a crucial moment in the Bulgarian history.

Bulgarian historiography tends to assess ambiguously the Polish involvement in the Church Movement. On the one hand, there is an appreciation of Hôtel Lambert's impact on its development, on the other hand, there is strong criticism against the Czartoryski's agents as troublemakers, who wanted to use Bulgarians for their own purposes (Solak 2009: 222–224).

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