

УДК 94 (477)

**RELIGIOUS POLICY OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE IN GALICIA ON THE EVE OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR****Baran. I. V. / Баран І.В.***c.h.s., as.prof./ к.і.н., доц.*

ORCID: 0000-0002-3936-0439

*L'viv National Environmental University,**L'viv-Dubliany, V.Velykogo str., 1, 80381**Львівський національний університет природокористування,**Львів-Дубляни, В. Великого, 1, 80381*

**Abstract.** *The article examines the anti-Ukrainian activities of representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church in the territory of Eastern Galicia on the eve of the First World War. Cooperation between the church and the imperial authorities is well-founded and proven. The cooperation of church leaders and Russian politicians is shown.*

**Key words:** *Eastern Galicia, Russian Orthodox Church, anti Ukrainian politics*

**Анотація.** *У статті розглянуто антиукраїнську діяльність представників Руської православної церкви на території Східної Галичини напередодні Першої світової війни. Обґрунтовано і доведено співпрацю між церквою та імперською владою. Показано співпрацю між церковними діячами та російськими політиками.*

**Ключові слова:** *Східна Галичина, Руська православна церква, антиукраїнська політика*

At the beginning of the XX-th century, Eastern Galicia became the center of the Ukrainian national movement thanks to its achievements in educational, religious, and cultural life. In contrast to Russia, where a chauvinistic, great-power policy of merciless oppression and eradication of everything non-Russian was constantly carried out, there were laws banning the Ukrainian language, literature, and publishing (Valuevsky Circular of 1863, Emsky Act of 1876), which denied the right of the Ukrainian people to exist in general.

The Ukrainian movement acquired the status of an interstate problem, and its weight began to approach the international problem of Eastern Europe. The political parties of Galicia, whose ultimate goal was the creation of a Ukrainian state, waged an active struggle against the Poles and Muscophiles. Realizing that the creation of a free, independent state is not on time, they outlined practical ways to implement this task.

The political elites of Russia, preparing for war, masked their aggressive plans, covering themselves with false slogans about the protection of the Slavic brothers and their liberation from the foreign yoke. The party of the Russian liberal bourgeoisie, the Cadets, especially actively supported the imperial government. Their leader P. Milyukov wrote that one of the Russian political parties, which found support in one of the political parties of Galicia, the so-called "Moscophiles", had long sought the "reunification" of Eastern Galicia [1].

Through Muscophile organizations, the Russian government had the opportunity to carry out not only anti-Ukrainian propaganda among Galician Ukrainians, drawing them to its side, but also anti-state propaganda - with the aim of joining Russia with all the Ukrainian ethnographic lands that were part of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy.

In Russian society, the opinion about the importance of Galicia for Russia's internal and, especially, foreign policy was increasingly established. It was noted that Galicia is a "real "Russian" Carpathian citadel, a border stronghold, a sentinel regiment of Russia that clears the way ahead and covers the rear, and is an important pillar of Orthodoxy.

A few months before the start of the war, during a conversation with the French ambassador in St. Petersburg, M. Paleolog, a deputy of the Russian State Duma stated: "First of all, we must annex Galicia. Our Minister of War, General Sukhomlinov, convinced me the other day that possession of Galicia is necessary for the security of our western border." The ambassador informed the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France Delcasse about this.

The Ukrainian national movement in Galicia became dangerous for the Russian Empire. Practically all of Russian society - from chauvinists to leaders - saw in him a threat to the integrity of the "united and indivisible". Regarding the problems that may arise before the Russian Empire in connection with the further development of the Ukrainian movement, Count V. Bobrinsky wrote: "If the "Russian" spirit will be completely broken, and Eastern Galicia and Bukovina will be completely Ukrainized, then the force of the enemy's onslaught will be aimed at our Little Russia, and Ukrainian propaganda in our country will be significantly strengthened. Therefore, it is clear that the defense of the "Russian" cause on the Dniester and Syan will become its defense on the Dnieper and, working in Galicia, we are working for our national self-defense, regardless of the issue of the state reunification of Red Russia with us [2].

In addition to the struggle of two states, there was also a struggle of ideologies. In this struggle, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church clashed. The emperor, ministers, political figures and higher clergy considered the transfer of faithful Greek Catholics to the bosom of the Orthodox Church as a kind of foundation for a complete and solid "state unification of Galicia with Russia."

On the eve of the First World War, the Russian authorities portrayed the religious situation in Galicia as being oppressed by the Orthodox in Austria-Hungary. It is known that books were sent to the military units of the Russian army, which were supposed to aggravate the religious situation in Galicia, to create in Russian soldiers thoughts about the need to protect the Orthodox in the neighboring state [3].

The struggle on confessional grounds was supposed to cause disunity among the faithful of the Greek Catholic Church on religious grounds. In order to later lead to change on a national basis. Not stopping at any crime for the sake of the lofty goal of reunification, tsarism spared no money to bribe Galician Muscophiles.

The Holy Synod entrusted the management of the process of conversion of Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy to Archbishop Evlogiy Georgievskii, who had a successful experience of converting the Ukrainians of the Kholm region to Orthodoxy, an active supporter of the convergence and planting of Orthodoxy in Galicia, the initiator of the policy of national and religious unification of Galicians with the "Russian people".

Before leaving for Galicia, in St. Petersburg, Yevlohiy met with the Chief Prosecutor of the Holy Synod and Tsar Nicholas II. They assured him that the military command, which was sent to conquer Galicia, would consult with him in everything.

For the Russian government, the Orthodox faith and the Church were not a spiritual value, in itself, as the greatest treasure for man and people, but served as tools in the political interests of the Russian state.

Ukrainian politician K. Trylovsky noted that the majority of the Ukrainian people live in Russia without any rights to their cultural development and there is absolutely no prospect for anything to change. Instead, Ukrainians in Galicia and Northern Bukovina have the opportunity for cultural development. This is where the "National Piedmont" of Ukraine was created, which has an influence on our brothers who are under the yoke of tsarism. And it is precisely this "Mazepin Kubal" that the tsarist government fears and hates! Therefore, Russia wanted to use the international commotion created as a result of the liberation wars of the peoples in the Balkans against the Turks, to attack Austria and, above all, to destroy the "nest of the Mazepyns". She temporarily failed to do this, but she is waiting for the right moment to carry out her heartfelt plan [4].

Therefore, with the approach of the war, the Ukrainian factor became more and more important. The Ukrainian issue has gained international importance. Galician Ukrainians turned into a self-aware community, the goal of which was an independent political life.

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Статья отправлена: 09.05.2023 г.

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