

Peter Arkoudios (1563–1633): A Greek, and a Herald of Ecclesiastical Unity in Lithuania and Europe¹

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Summary. The present article is a biographical study of the Greek-Rite Catholic priest and theologian Peter Arkoudios (1563–1633). The study employs the theoretical approach of civilisational axes in order to shed more light on the historical significance of this personality, who played a prominent role in the promotion of the ecclesiastical Union of Brest (1596). Data are presented indicating the influence exerted by Arkoudios on both the future bishop Ipatii Potii and on the future martyr Josaphat Kuntsevych. Emphasis is placed on his Greek origin and his profound erudition, i.e., on qualities which could not fail to have an impact on the Ruthenians who traditionally felt a deep respect for Greek theological thought. Questions are raised, the discussion of which will provide a better understanding of the circumstances surrounding why Peter Arkoudios did not pursue an ecclesiastical career in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. From the traces of his cultural activities preserved in Vilnius, it can be seen that Arkoudios contributed to the dissemination of late Byzantine theological thought among both Catholics and Uniates. In belonging to different worlds, primarily Greek and Roman, he played a significant role as an agent of cultural transfer at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th century.

Keywords: Peter Arkoudios (1563–1633); Union of Brest; religious controversy; Vilnius; Greeks.

1. Introduction

The legacy of the Byzantine culture in the context of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania has not yet been sufficiently studied – while, at the same time, it should be noted that some studies have already been carried out. These studies not only represent

¹ This article was prepared as part of ‘*Byzantium and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania: The Interface between the Secular and the Ecclesiastical Spheres in the 14th–15th Centuries*’, a project funded by the Research Council of Lithuania (Contract No. S-MIP-22-15).

the current state of knowledge in this field but also create preconditions for the further development of this research area, which, within its chronological framework, must encompass not just the period of the Byzantine Empire's existence (continuing until 1453) but also the phenomenon of 'Byzantium after Byzantium' (*Byzance après Byzance*), whose impact resonates into our own time.² It should also be emphasised that this field is currently becoming a space for collaboration between Lithuanian and Ukrainian historians, encouraging a better understanding of each other's historiography and shared cultural heritage.³ This article is precisely aimed at contributing to a better illumination of the contribution of 'Byzantium after Byzantium' to one specific episode. Thus, its main objectives are as follows: 1) to introduce the almost unknown and unjustly forgotten figure, Peter Arkoudios, who operated right here, in Vilnius; 2) to highlight Peter Arkoudios' individual approach (*modus operandi*) to forming, and later implementing, the ecclesiastical Union of Brest, declared in 1596; and 3) to present the traces which testify to the long-term impact of his cultural activities. The title of the article was determined by the aim – in the case of this specific individual, to attempt to relate the local level of activity (Vilnius) to the broader one, which should expand in concentric circles to encompass the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, the Kingdom of Poland, the Metropolitanate of Kyiv, and at least touch upon the broader area of Latin and Greek Europe.

Peter Arkoudios, who belonged to the Greek and the Latin world of the Counter-Reformation period, is an interesting and historically important figure precisely because of his role as a mediator between these two different yet partly overlapping cultural circles. He was able to bridge the differing cultural spheres of Roman Catholicism and Ruthenian Orthodoxy, being, himself, a man of Greek culture. For several decades now, it has been common in both Ukraine and Lithuania to assert that our countries exist between the East and the West.⁴ Such a thing seems self-evident. To a certain extent, this approach is entirely correct; but, at the same time, it should be noted that being self-evident is not equivalent

2 D. Baronas, 2000; G. Mickūnaitė, 2002; T. Veteikis, *Graikų kalbos studijos ir graikiškoji kūryba Lietuvoje XVI–XVII amžiuje*, Vilnius: Vilniaus universitetas, 2004 (unpublished PhD thesis); D. Baronas, 2004; K. Svarevičiūtė, 2006; S. Makselienė, 2007; S. C. Rowell, 2007; D. Baronas, 2007; K. Svarevičiūtė, 2011; S. Temčinas, 2013; D. Baronas, 2018; J. Kiaupienė, 2019; G. Mickūnaitė, 2023. Also see: T. Conley, 1994; I. Лильо, 2002; *Reception*, 2016; G. Malinowski, 2019; G. Mickūnaitė, 2023.

3 V. Adadurovas et al., 2017; B. Ададу́ров et al., 2019.

4 I. Ševčenko, 2009; D. Baronas et al., 2011.

to the kind of clarity and depth of understanding which arises from active work with historical sources ('remnants of the past') and rigorous reflection on historiographical works. To begin such work, simple questions are sufficient: *Who?*, *How?*, *Why?*, and *Really?* However, while doing this work, it is essential to strive to provide answers which have the strongest possible explanatory power, which, in turn, should provoke new questions!

So how can we most easily imagine the existence of Lithuanian and Ruthenian lands between the East and the West during the Early Modern period? Russia on one side and Poland on the other. Of course, such a geopolitical perspective is possible. But other points of view are equally possible. In my opinion, the concept of *axes of civilisation*, which could be developed into a *theory of axes of civilisation*, may be particularly useful for gaining new insights and knowledge into the interaction between key, and even very distant civilisational centres (primarily cities). In discussing the era of confessionalisation which emerged within the territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the 16th and 17th centuries, the Rome-Vilnius and Constantinople-Lviv/Kyiv-Vilnius axes can be considered particularly significant vectors of cultural transfer. I believe that the intersection of these axes was the most important factor in shaping the religious landscape of that time, in Vilnius and far beyond.

When using such a civilisational-axes approach, the personality of Peter Arkoudios becomes an extremely interesting case from a cognitive perspective, as a meeting place of different worlds.⁵

2. Peter Arkoudios' Environment: A Path towards Working for Church Unity

Peter Arkoudios was a Greek who was born in around 1562–1563 on the island of Corfu.⁶ The island is part of the Ionian Archipelago, the only Greek area to have

5 Probably the most informative biographical study on Arkoudios was carried out by P. B. Pidru-tchnyj, 1973, p. 254–277. The following texts, written by prominent scholars of the past, continue to retain their relevance: É. Legrand, 1895, vol. 3, p. 209–220 (this text contains lengthy quotations from primary source material: diploma for Arkoudios' title, Doctor of Theology (p. 210–211), *Historia Collegii Graecorum de Urbe* (p. 212–216), etc.); L. Petit, 1923. Also see: M. Ozorowski, 2004, and especially K. Kuczara, 2012, s. 147–157, and others.

6 The exact year of Arkoudios' birth, let alone the precise date, is not known. During the year 1585 visitation of the Greek College, it was noted that he was 22 years old. (*Relazione della sacra visita*

never come under the Turkish rule. From the time of the Fourth Crusade, the island of Corfu was governed by the Republic of Venice (1204–1797), until the end of Republic's existence. In 1815, after the Napoleonic Wars, it was taken over by the British Empire and then ceded to the newly restored Greek state in 1864. The centuries-long Venetian rule in the Ionian Archipelago created and sustained a social climate which resembled, in general terms, the co-existence of the various Christian denominations in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania during the 15th and 17th centuries. This *modus convivendi* was characterised by various forms of interaction – both peaceful and conflictual,⁷ although the latter never reached a scale which would have constituted the phenomenon of the religious wars which marked the history of Western Europe in the 15th to 17th centuries.⁸ With some reservations, we can still assert that peaceful relations between Catholics and Orthodox Christians formed the fabric of everyday life both in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and in the Greek islands under Venetian rule.

For its part, the Roman Curia saw the Greeks of the Ionian Islands as semi-Uniates.⁹ Even without forming a formal, legally binding ecclesiastical union with the Roman Catholic Church, some Greeks on the island of Corfu were favourably disposed towards the Roman Catholics, even though they simultaneously acted as custodians of their own religious, cultural, and national identity. For these Greeks, the general tone of religious life and their close ties with the neighbouring Catholic world, thriving just across the Ionian and Adriatic Seas, created and maintained an environment conducive to deciding to work for ecclesiastical unity with Rome. On the other hand, they had an excellent institutional space within the shelter of the Roman Catholic Church with which to realise such a decision. Despite the challenge posed by the Protestant Reformation, the spirit of renewal derived from the Council of Trent made the issue of ecclesiastical unity a matter of active concern for the Catholic Church's hierarchy, and for a significant portion of the priests, monks, and nuns. The most important institution concerning our

compiuta nel collegio Greco dal vescovo di Piacenza, Filippo Sega, e dal vescovo di Castro, Giulio Ottinelli, nel l'anno 1585, in: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Ms. Vat. lat. 5527, fol. 38r, access online: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.5527). According to this information, he must have been born in 1562/1563; see, for example, P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 255; K. Kuczara, 2012, s. 147. It is sometimes stated that he was born 'verso il 1563'; see: G. Mykoliw, 1962, p. 15 (also accessible at: https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/pietro-arcudio_%28Dizionario-Biografico%29/).

7 W. Kriegseisen, 2016, p. 447–488.

8 N. Housley, 2002.

9 G. Podskalsky, 1988, S. 11–12.



Figure 1. Peter Arkoudios' diploma for his title, Doctor of Theology.

In: Pontificio Collegio Greco Sant'Atanasio (Pontifical Greek College of Saint Athanasius).

topic is undoubtedly the Pontifical Greek College of Saint Athanasius, which began operating in Rome in 1576. It was established by Pope Gregory XIII (1572–1585), the same Pope who founded Vilnius University.¹⁰ Its mission was to educate Greek Orthodox Christians in the spirit of unity with the Roman Church. Initially, its students were predominantly Greeks from the Mediterranean region, but they were soon joined by other Orthodox students, primarily Romanians and Ruthenians.¹¹

10 In historiography, the establishment of the Greek College in Rome is sometimes ascribed to the years 1576 or 1577. This is because the study process began in 1576, while the corresponding papal bull was issued on 13 January 1577; see: 'Cronaca degli allievi del Collegio Greco in Roma (1577–1640)', ed. Jan Władysław Woś, in: *Archivio storico per la Calabria e la Lucania*, 1972, vol. 40, p. 129–130. For more on the significance of the Greek College; see also P. Pierling, 1896, vol. 1, p. 400–401.

11 Among those who studied at the Greek College during the first decades of its existence, it is worth mentioning the following hierarchs, who contributed significantly to the Byzantine Rite Catholic Church: Illya Morokhovsky ('Cronaca degli allievi', p. 162); Yosyf Veliamyn Rutsky

Arkoudios was among the first students of this academy.¹² Even more significant is the fact that, after twelve years of study, he became the first doctor of philosophy and theology at the Greek College in Rome.¹³ Arkoudios received his doctorate on 24 January 1591 (Figure 1). At this time, Bishop Bernard Maciejowski of Lutsk, already concerned with the implementation of the Church Union in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, was visiting the Eternal City.¹⁴ He was in Rome looking for students of the Greek College who could work in his diocese. In December 1590, he made a formal request to Pope Gregory XIV (1590–1591), who, after consulting with Cardinal Giulio Antonio Santorio, chose Arkoudios.¹⁵ At that time, he was already a Catholic priest of the Greek Rite.¹⁶ As we will see further on, those who had recommended Arkoudios as a champion of ecclesiastical unity were certainly right.

3. Peter Arkoudios, between Rome, Brest, Vilnius, and Moscow

With the permission of Pope Gregory XIV, Peter Arkoudios departed for the distant northeast – for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. During the first three years of his life among the Ruthenians, Arkoudios was promoting the idea of the Union. According to the *History of the Greek College in Rome*, we must first be grateful to God and to Arkoudios for convincing the-then Brest castellan (and the future

(*ibid.*); Lev Kreuzza (*ibid.*, p. 166–167); Anastasii Seliava (*ibid.*, p. 170); Hieremia Pochapovsky (*ibid.*); Rafail Korsak (*ibid.*, p. 175); Oleksii Dubovych (*ibid.*, p. 178); Havryil Kolenda (*ibid.*, p. 185). Among the individuals who contributed to the Roman Catholic Church in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, one person of note was an alumnus of the Greek College, Marcyan Tryzna – Bishop Suffragan of Vilnius (1639–1643) (*ibid.*, p. 168); for more about his biographical data, see: N. Ζαχαρίας, 1980, p. 416. A prosopographic study aimed at identifying the Ruthenians (Ukrainians and Belarusians) who studied at the Greek College from 1576 to 1976 provides a list of more than 200 individuals; see: D. Blažejovskyj, 1979, p. 143–192. For the sake of interest, it can be noted that a certain Mercurius Giedroyć (1744–1750) also studied at this college (*ibid.*, p. 192).

12 The first students were admitted to the Greek College in 1576. Arkoudios began his studies there in 1578. See: Relazione della sacra visita, fol. 35v: 'L'anno [15]78 Petro Arcudi di Corfu et e al presente.'

13 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 255.

14 For more about his activities and collaboration with the Jesuits working towards the Union, see K. Chodyncki, 1934, s. 255–256. Also, see: M. B. Дмитриев, 2003, c. 139, 142–143.

15 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 246.

16 It is known that, by 31 May 1588, he had already been ordained a deacon. He received priestly ordination a little later, but before 24 January 1591: É. Legrand, 1895, vol. 3, p. 211.

Bishop of Volodymyr and Brest), Ipatii Potii, of the righteousness of the ecclesiastical Union.¹⁷ By his example, Arkoudios successfully dispelled the unfounded fears and worries among the Ruthenians that recognising the supremacy of the Roman Pope would force them to abandon their liturgical rites, to which they were, as was generally known, especially attached.¹⁸ After several years of activity, factors such as the foreign linguistic environment, his longing for his parents and homesickness, and, last but not least, the unusually cold climate he had to endure as a man from the South, prompted Arkoudios to return to Rome.¹⁹ In the spring of 1594, Arkoudios submitted a request to the Pope for permission to promote Union activities on the Greek islands which were under Venetian control.²⁰ However, the Roman Curia was slow in granting this request, as it was overwhelmed with other matters and, presumably, had different considerations. This delay ultimately benefited the cause of the Union. Thus, when the bishops Kyrylo Terlecky and Ipatii Potii, commissioned by the hierarchs of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv, arrived in Rome on 15 November 1595, they were greatly pleased to meet Peter there. For his part, Peter found this an excellent opportunity to assist them at the Holy See in taking the step which he himself had actively encouraged during his first mission to the lands of Poland and Lithuania.²¹ After Kyrylo and Ipatii swore an oath of allegiance to the Pope, the Union acquired a legal foundation on 23 December 1595.

The ecclesiastical Union of Brest was an event of epochal significance, marking the beginning of a new, unpredictable phase. A significant task awaited, for which

17 Ibid., p. 215: “Porro quod Ipatius Pocieius, ipse legatorum alter, veritatem agnosceret, ac tandem amplecteretur uni fere secundum Deum Arcudio debemus”.

18 Ibid., p. 215–216 (excerpt from *Historia Collegii Graecorum de Urbe*). In his 1597 work on the Brest Synod, Bishop Ipatii Potii emphasised the societal significance of the Greek Liturgy celebrated by Arkoudios: Л. Тимошенко, 2020, с. 600–601.

19 Arkoudios’ first mission among the Ruthenians lasted from March–April 1591 to September 1593 (P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 256). His activity was quickly noticed by his opponents. The Lviv Orthodox Fraternity (who were hostile to the Union with Rome) informed Patriarch Jeremias II of Constantinople that a certain priest, who, in their report, was mentioned alongside “a certain Jesuit from Vilnius, Piotr Skarga”, had been sent from Rome by the Pope. This priest, whose activities caused them concern, was probably our Arkoudios, as was thought, among others, by Fr. Athanasius G. Welykyj, the editor of the Acts of the Union of Brest; see: *Documenta Unionis Berestensis eiusque auctorum (1590–1600)*, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: PP. Basiliani, 1970, No. 5, p. 12–13 (7 September 1592). Also, see: O. Halecki, 1958, p. 246. It is somewhat strange, however, that Arkoudios’ activities during the Brest Church Synod are not mentioned in the report by the Greeks who participated in the parallel synod of the ‘Disuniates.’ See: O. Halecki, 1954, s. 115–136.

20 G. Mykoliw, 1962, p. 16.

21 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 341.

the two Ruthenian bishops prepared diligently. While still in Rome, they sought collaborators, primarily among the alumni of the Greek College, who would help train Ruthenian priests in the spirit of unity with Rome once a seminary had been established.²² It was clear that Arkoudios could not be left out. Although with little enthusiasm, but as a faithful son of the Church, he obeyed the explicit will of Pope Clement VIII (1592–1605) to return to the Ruthenian lands and work for the cause of the Union.²³ This he did with his characteristic diligence. He was assisted by a fellow countryman, Giorgio Moschetti, who was from Crete, and who was also an alumnus of the Greek College.²⁴ During the pivotal year of 1596, Arkoudios, working shoulder to shoulder with Ipatii Potii, prepared the clergy and laypeople of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv for the solemn declaration and ratification of the Union, which took place during the Brest Synod held on 19 October 1596.²⁵ It is noteworthy that Arkoudios, as an educated Greek, could provide an equivalent counterbalance to another Greek, the exarch Nicefor of the Patriarch of Constantinople, who was active on the side of the ‘Disuniates’.²⁶

It is well known that the Union of Brest was rejected by the majority of the faithful in the Metropolitanate of Kyiv, while it was accepted by almost the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy, except for two bishops: Gedeon Balaban of Lviv and Mychailo Kopystensky of Przemyśl.²⁷ A paradoxical situation emerged: the vast majority of Orthodox believers instantly became ‘Disuniates’, who no longer had a full-fledged ecclesiastical hierarchy; while, on the other hand, the *shepherds* who had accepted the Union were left with the meagre remnants of their formerly large flock (the ‘Uniates’). A powerful opposition emerged from among the Disuniates, led by the magnate Konstany Vasyl Ostrogski.²⁸ These Orthodox believers, together

22 The establishment of a seminary for Uniate priests was a concern of the Pope’s from the time the Union of Brest was concluded in Rome in 1595. See: O. Halecki, 1958, p. 340–341. Also see: *Vetera monumenta Poloniae et Lithuaniae gentiumque finitimarum historiam illustrantia*, ed. Augustinus Theiner, Romae: Typis Vaticanis, 1863, vol. 3 (1585–1696), No. 207, p. 275 (9 September 1600).

23 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 257. In March 1596, Arkoudios was paid 500 gold scudi from the treasury of the Holy See for the travel and living expenses he would incur in the country of his new destination. *Documenta Unionis Berestensis*, No. 202, p. 302–303 (5 March 1596) and No. 203, p. 303 (7 March 1596).

24 For more about this personality, see: K. Kuczara, 2012, p. 150.

25 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 361–362, 382; G. Mykoliw, 1962, p. 16; T. Kempa, 2024, s. 456–457, 503–504.

26 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 371–372; B. A. Gudziak, 2001, p. 239–240; K. Kuczara, 2012, s. 157–179.

27 The scholarly literature on the ecclesiastical Union of Brest and the processes it initiated is hard to take stock of. Subjectively selected, I would like to point out the following useful works: O. Halecki, 1958; B. A. Gudziak, 2001; M. В. Дмитриев, 2003; В. Зема, 2020; L. Tatarenko, 2021.

28 T. Kempa, 2024.

with Protestants, began a fierce struggle against the Union in the Diets (*Sejms*) of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.²⁹ It was precisely on this battleground that Arkoudios showed himself to be a true warrior in this spiritual and political struggle. He actively contributed to ensuring that the Roman Catholic bishops of Poland and Lithuania who were members of the Senate began to actively defend the emerging Greek Rite Catholic Church.³⁰

Arkoudios soon received a more stable material basis on which to live, which allowed him to operate more freely within society of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. Bishop Ipatii Potii of Volodymyr granted him the right to use the revenues from the village of Tarakan, which had been assigned to the monastery in Zhydychyn (in 1599).³¹ Two years later, on the recommendation of Uniate bishops and the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lew Sapieha, King Sigismund III Vasa appointed Arkoudios as archimandrite of Lauryshava Monastery.³² Shortly thereafter, on 30 July 1601, when the Uniates were welcoming the ruler at the gates of their cathedral, Arkoudios was entrusted with the task of delivering the welcoming speech.³³ It is possible that both the recommendations and gaining the ruler's attention served as favourable circumstances for Arkoudios in being appointed archimandrite of the monastery in Pinsk in 1602 (Figure 2a), and, soon after, in 1603, of the monastery in Kobryn.³⁴

While fighting for the Union, Arkoudios continued to collaborate closely with Bishop Ipatii Potii, serving as his secretary. It is evident that Arkoudios was

29 This phenomenon is presented in detail by T. Kempa, 2007. For more about the tensions and conflicts which arose in Vilnius as a result of the Union of Brest, see: T. Kempa, 2016, s. 181–371.

30 G. Mykoliw, 1962, p. 16.

31 *Акты, относящиеся к истории Западной России*, Санкт-Петербург: В типографии Эдуарда Праца, 1851, т. 4 (1588–1632), No. 141, с. 195–196 (23 August 1599). It is difficult to estimate how much revenue this estate generated for Arkoudios, as it was continually contested by the Orthodox believers ('Disuniates'). See: T. Kempa, 2007, p. 199, 235.

32 *Акты, относящиеся к истории Западной России*, т. 4, No. 155, с. 241–242 (4 May 1601).

33 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 254, 272; this author also published the Latin version of the welcoming speech, see p. 275–277. It is also noteworthy that, in 1592, Arkoudios wrote an epithalamium for the wedding of King Sigismund III Vasa and Anne of Austria. See: *Corpusculum poesis polono-graecae saeculorum XVI–XVII*, ed. Janina Czerniatowicz, Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1991, s. 27–28.

34 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 259. Although this author provides specific and possibly accurate information about the appointment of Arkoudios to the office of archimandrite of the monastery in Kobryn, he supports this fact with a somewhat inaccurate reference to the source, which makes it difficult to verify. It is also worth adding that Peter Arkoudios held the position of archimandrite in separate monasteries in succession, and *not* simultaneously.

Figure 2a. *Epistolae illustrium virorum in tres libros digestae, opera Reverendissimi Domini D. Stanislai Carncovii, episcopi Wladislaviensis & Pomeraniae, in lucem editae, Cracoviae, 1578* [the inner side of the front cover].

In: Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka, Retų spaudinių skyrius (Vilnius University Library, Rare Books Department), Il 2208.



at the very heart of the most significant ecclesiastical events of this watershed epoch. He played an extraordinarily important role as an intermediary between representatives of different cultural worlds; he was particularly well-suited to this role – or rather his assumed duty and calling – as he himself belonged to different worlds. Being Greek, he felt at home in Rome and called himself a ‘Romano Greco’ (Roman Greek). He was also fluent in Latin and Italian in addition to his native Greek.³⁵ Finding himself among the Ruthenians, he, naturally, entered an environment which was new to him, but not one which was alien to him. The language barrier caused him certain difficulties, at least initially. It is known that he communicated in Latin with Ipatii Potii while the latter was still the Castellan of Brest.³⁶ Communication with other Ruthenian bishops, priests, or laymen must have been more difficult, and, at least at the beginning, interpreters would have

35 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 390.

36 É. Legrand, 1895, vol. 3, p. 214 (a quotation from ‘Historia Collegii Graecorum de Urbe’).

been needed.³⁷ It is not quite clear from the works of historians whether Arkoudios knew the Ruthenian language or not. Although a definitive resolution of this question does not seem possible at the present stage of knowledge, I would still like to offer a few observations. Since it is known from the biographical data of St. Josaphat Kuntsevych that, apart from his native Ruthenian, he only knew the Polish language,³⁸ it is more likely that Arkoudios and Kuntsevych communicated in Ruthenian rather than through an interpreter. It should also be noted that, while in Moscow (1600–1601), Arkoudios seems to have communicated freely with both the Muscovites and the local Greeks.³⁹ Taking these circumstances into account, I am inclined to formulate a working hypothesis that Arkoudios, having spent many years in the Ruthenian environment, learned their language at least at the level of elementary communication (i.e., not active, written communication).

Besides his clearly evidenced high-level linguistic skills in Latin and Italian, another equally important aspect was the Greek identity of Arkoudios and his level of education. It should be kept in mind that the Orthodox believers of the Kyivan Metropolitanate were followers of the *Byzantine Rite*. The faith brought to them by the Greeks from Constantinople was considered to be the purest and most authentic.⁴⁰ This cultural memory endured for centuries and was one of the most stable elements of the Ruthenian religious identity. Thus, it would not be too bold to speculate that for those Ruthenians who were favourably disposed toward the Union with Rome, the words, assurances, and reassurances of this learned and truly erudite Greek must have sounded like an especially authoritative message.⁴¹ And it

37 Cf. P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 256.

38 Cf. M. Krečunas, 2023, p. 37.

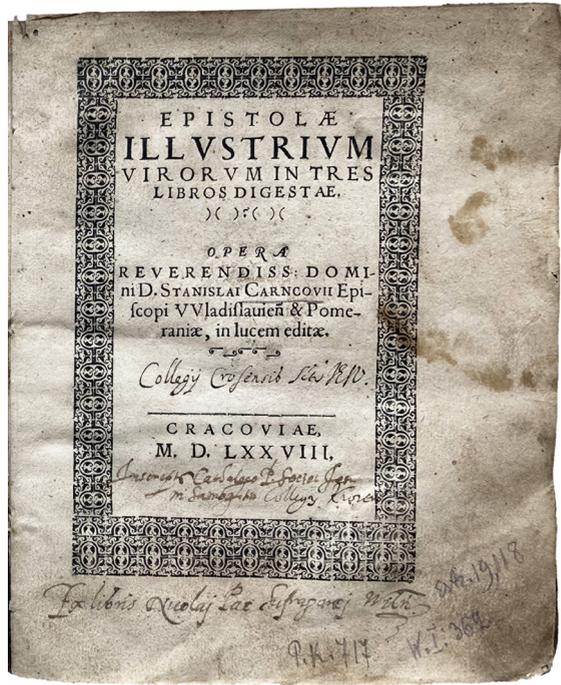
39 Cf. P. Pierling, 1897, vol. 2, p. 376. In addressing the question of Arkoudios' linguistic competence, attention should also be paid to his collaboration with Metropolitan Ipatii Potii and Josaphat Kuntsevych in determining the proper form of prayer for the forgiveness of sins in the Church Slavonic language. See: M. Wawryk, 1967, p. 590–591.

40 The significance of Greek mediation in transmitting the true Christian faith to Ruthenians was recognised and exploited for polemical purposes by the Jesuit Piotr Skarga, as is evident from his apologetic works which were produced for the promotion of the idea of Church Union among them. For more on this, see: D. Baronas, 2013, p. 222–225.

41 Arkoudios is credited with significant merits in persuading the bishops ('prelates') of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv to unite with the Roman Church. See, for example, Cronaca degli allievi, p. 143: "*Pietro Arcudi, da Corfu fù d'indole ottima, il quale, doppo haver finito felicemente il corso di Filosofia e Teologia, gli fù dato il grado di Dottorato; et questo fù il primo che si addottorasse in Collegio Greco, poi fù ordinato Diacono sub titolo Collegii, et alquante volte cantò l'Evangelio in Capella; fatto Sacerdote, fu mandato da Papa Clemente VIII di felice memoria in Polonia da' i Ruteni, quali sono Scismatici, per predicare la verità Cattolica; dove, doppo di esser stato in doi*

Figure 2b. *Epistolae illustrium virorum in tres libros digestae, opera Reverendissimi Domini D. Stanislai Carncovii, episcopi Wladislaviensis & Pomeraniae, in lucem editae, Cracoviae, 1578* [title page recto].

In: Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka, Retų spaudinių skyrius (Vilnius University Library, Rare Books Department), Il 2208.



is here that we see, if not the most important role, then certainly a significant one, being played by Arkoudios. Thanks to his long conversations with Ipatii Potii, the latter was convinced of the righteousness of the Church Union's cause.⁴² Potii later pursued this conviction with such fervour that he no longer needed Arkoudios'

volte vint' anni in circa con haver fatti grandissimi progressi et ridotti tuti quelli Prelati Rutheni all' obediēza del Sommo Pontefice Romano, venne a Roma per negotij di quelle parti. Ha stampato molti Libri delle Controversie fra Greci et Latini; è stato in Collegio dodeci anni con edificazione di tutti et gran frutto della Santa Chiesa, in difesa della quale è stato zelantissimo. Morì nel Collegio Greco et è sepolto nella Chiesa di detto Collegio, al quale lasciò la sua eruditissima Libreria.

42 We learn about this matter from a letter written by Arkoudios himself, addressed to Cardinal Pietro Aldobrandini: *Documenta Unionis Berestensis*, No. 289, p. 448 (25 September 1597). Researchers reasonably speculate that Arkoudios might have exaggerated his importance in this matter. See: M. B. Дмитриев, 2003, c. 143. On the other hand, it is notable, and should be emphasised, that Arkoudios did not attribute such merits solely to himself. This is evident from his testimony that the Bishop Bernard Maciejowski also did his part in dispelling certain doubts which Potii entertained regarding the Union. Cf. O. Halecki, 1958, p. 247, 315. Also see footnotes 17 and 35.

assurances regarding the correctness of his chosen course of action. A similar case can be seen in the biography of St. Josaphat Kuntsevych. From the acts of the beatification process of this saint, we learn that, when he was still quite young, Kuntsevych used to talk about matters of faith with serious men from Vilnius, among whom was Arkoudios.⁴³ There is no doubt that such conversations only strengthened Kuntsevych's resolve to work for the Union.⁴⁴ Of course, we should not imagine that Arkoudios was a miracle worker who could attract everyone to the Union. Not at all. For example, he failed to convince Konstanty Vasyl Ostrogski of the righteousness of the cause of the Union.⁴⁵ Arkoudios was human and did what was possible for a human to do. It is obvious that he was concerned with training new cadres for the Uniate Church.⁴⁶ To that end, he actively contributed to the establishment of the Uniate priests' seminary in Vilnius in 1601, where he himself taught a small group of seminarians for some time. It should be emphasised that, in Arkoudios' opinion, there was no better place for establishing such a seminary than Vilnius, except, perhaps, for Lviv.⁴⁷ Since the history of the establishment and operation of this seminary is shrouded in a thick fog of oblivion due to the scarcity of surviving sources, it is equally difficult to accurately describe the long-

- 43 S. *Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis*, vol. 1: 1623–1628, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: Sumptibus PP. Basilianorum, 1952, p. 174–175: “*Hanc etiam virtutem in illo notavit dictus Pater [i.e. Hegumen of the Basilian Monastery in Polatsk, Genadius Chmielnicki], quod homines leves, otiosos, et maxime licentiosos adhuc iuvenis abominaretur, et nunquam cum illis conversaretur, sed cum devotis, doctis, et virtuosis libentissime conferebat. Testis huius rei esse poterit illustris et admodum reverendus dominus Petrus Arcudius, illustrissimi et reverendissimi domini Cardinalis Burghesii Theologus, qui tunc Vilnae manserat*” (from the 1628-dated acts of the beatification process). S. *Josaphat Hieromartyr. Documenta Romana beatificationis et canonizationis*, vol. 2: 1628–1637, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: PP. Basiliani, 1955, p. 223: “*Schismaticos extremo odio habuit. Cum doctis Catholicis et virtuosis conversabatur, et in particulari cum praedicto piae memoriae Petro Arcudio, viro gravissimo ac doctissimo, et Josepho Metropolita demortuo, cum adhuc saecularem ageret, cum patre Valentino Fabricio Societatis Jesu, concionatore postmodum Sigismundi tertii regis Poloniae ultimo demortui*” (from the 1637-dated acts of the beatification process drawn up in Polatsk on 12 August 1637).
- 44 M. M. Соловій et al., 1967, c. 91; P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 254. For more about the personality of St. Josaphat Kuntsevych, see M. Krečunas, 2023; T. R. Tertula, 2024.
- 45 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 247. Arkoudios' conversations with Duke Konstanty Vasyl Ostrogski are mentioned in ‘Historia Collegii Graecorum de Urbe’, see: É. Legrand, 1895, vol. 3, p. 215.
- 46 It is well known that Arkoudios also contributed to the education of Gennady Chmielnicki, a close associate of Josaphat Kuntsevych and the future hegumen of the Basilian monastery in Polatsk: M. M. Соловій et al., 1967, c. 91.
- 47 *Documenta Unionis Berestensis*, No. 216, p. 316 (20 June 1596).

term impact of these efforts.⁴⁸ Perhaps the most important point to emphasise is that this work – training Uniate priests – took place during the most challenging time for the newly established Uniate Church, when it was taking its first steps.

In his efforts to promote the Union, Arkoudios actively engaged in work which was especially dear to his heart – that of a theologian, and a defender of and writer for the Union. His first work was a polemical book titled *Antirresis–Apologia*,⁴⁹ published anonymously in Vilnius in 1600. It was intended to refute the Orthodox-Disuniates' version of events of the Synod of Brest, which had been published under a pseudonym in the work *Apokrisis*, written by the evangelical reformer Christopher Bronski. With this and other writings (especially letters), Arkoudios made a significant contribution to preserving the factual history of the Synod of Brest for future generations.⁵⁰

As a Greek, he was prepared professionally to present to the faithful of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv those works of Byzantine theologians which, in a spirit

48 The most comprehensive work to illuminate the activities of this seminary is by R. R. Holowackij, 1957. Also see: Л. Тимошенко, 2020, с. 342; L. Tatarenko, 2021, p. 337–339, 343–344.

49 [Peter Arkoudios] *Ἀντίρρησις sive Apologia contra Christophorum Philalethem, qui nuper edidit libros nomine antiquae Russiae religionis graecae, contra libros de Synodo Brestensi scriptos anno Domini 1597*, Vilnae: apud Danielelem Lancitium, anno Domini 1600. It can be noted that this work was republished in 1997, but its authors remained faithful to the outdated and, it seems to me, unproven version that the true author of this (anonymously) published work was Bishop Ipatii Potii, see: *Antirresis abo Apologija przeciwko Krzysztofowi Philaletowi, który niedawno wydał książki imieniem starożytnej Rusi religij greckiej przeciw książkom o synodzie brzeskim, napisanym w Roku Pańskim 1597*, eds. J. Byliński and J. Długosz, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1997, s. 6–7, 29–31; J. Stradomski, 2003, p. 33. Regarding the attribution of authorship of this work to Peter Arkoudios, see: É. Legrand, 1895, vol. 3, p. 221–222; G. Mykoliw, 1963. I would also like to draw attention to the late 18th-century tradition of the Vilnius Basilians, according to which, Arkoudios was indeed the author of this book *Ἀντίρρησις sive Apologia*, 1600 (the handwritten note on the *verso* of the title page. See Figure 3a and Figure 3b). On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that this resolution concerning the authorship issue should not contradict the idea of Potii's influence (Макарий, 1996, с. 412), as it is well known that he and Arkoudios closely collaborated for the benefit of the Union. For this reason, it is worth noting that there is also a Ruthenian version of this work, published in 1599, with the only currently known copy being preserved in the Russian State Archives of Ancient Documents in Moscow: Л. Тимошенко, 2020, с. 231. The parallel text of *Ἀντίρρησις sive Apologia* in Ruthenian and Polish was published at the beginning of the 20th century, see: *Русская Историческая Библиотека*, т. XIX: *Памятники полемической литературы в Западной Руси*, Петербург: Сенатская типография, 1903, cols. 477–1122.

50 Historians have long noted the importance of the letters written by Arkoudios to the Superior General of the Jesuit Order, Claudio Aquaviva, in 1596–1597. See: O. Halecki, 1954, s. 105–107 (20 June 1596), s. 107–110 (10 November 1596), s. 110–112 (20 March 1597), s. 112–114 (25 July 1597). Also see: K. Kuczara, 2012, s. 154–157.

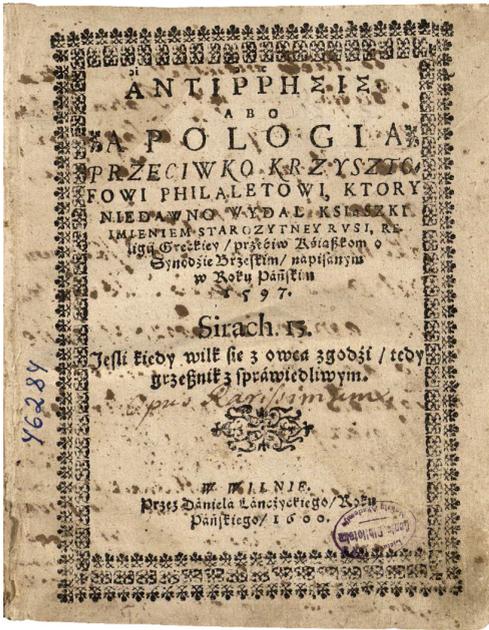


Figure 3a. [Peter Arkoudios], *Ἀντίρρησις sive Apologia contra Christophorum Philalethem, qui nuper edidit libros nomine antiquae Russiae religionis graecae, contra libros de Synodo Bres-tensi scriptos anno Domini 1597, Vil-nae: apud Danielem Lancitium, anno Domini 1600* [title page recto].

In: Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka, Rankraščių skyrius (Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Rare Books Department), L-16/1-10.

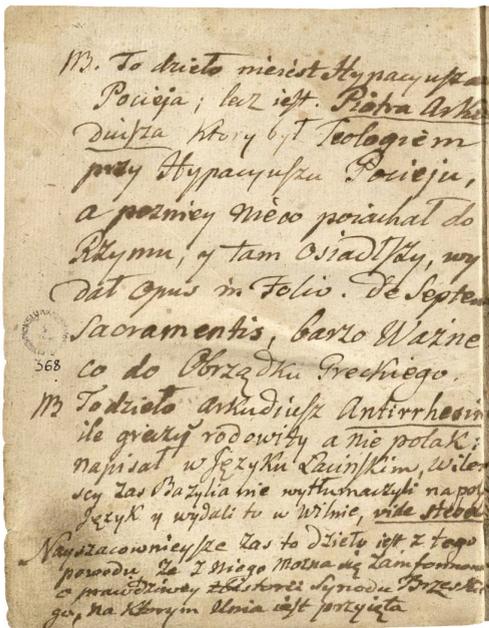


Figure 3b. [Peter Arkoudios], *Ἀντίρρησις sive Apologia...* [title page verso]: “NB. To dzieło nie iest Hypacyusza Pocięja, lecz iest Piotra Arkudiusza, który był teologiem przy Hypacyuszu Pocięju, a później nieco poiachał do Rzymu y tam osiadłszy, wydał opus in folio “De Septem Sacramentis”, barzo ważne co do obrzadku Greckiego. NB. To dzieło Arkudiusz Antirrhesin, ile Greczy(n) rodowity, a nie Polak napisał w języku Łacińskim, wileńscy zaś Bazylianie wytłumaczyli na polski język y wydali to w Wilnie, vide Stebelski. Nayszacownieysze zas to dzieło iest z tego powodu, ze z niego można się zainformować o prawdziwey historii Synodu Brzeskiego, na którym Unia iest przyjęta”.

In: Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka, Rankraščių skyrius (Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Rare Books Department), L-16/1-10.

favourable to the Union, analysed issues which had long caused disagreements and strife between Western and Eastern Christians. In 1602, he translated and published in Kraków a work by Bessarion (1403–1472), the Metropolitan of Nicaea and later Cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church: the *Origin of the Holy Spirit*.⁵¹ The following year, in 1603, he translated and published, again in Kraków, a work by John XI Beccus (1275–1282), the Patriarch of Constantinople, also addressing the same issue of the origin of the Holy Spirit.⁵² By making the works of Byzantine theologians more accessible to both serious local theologians and academic youth, Arkoudios undoubtedly contributed to what we now readily call ‘cultural transfer’.⁵³ But perhaps his greatest contribution to this area of cultural exchange between the East and the West was the publication of his life’s work: *Libri VII De concordia Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis in septem Sacramentorum administratione* (*Seven Books on the Concord of the Church of the West and the Church of the East in the Administration of the Sacraments*, 1626).⁵⁴ Since it is known that he worked on this *opus maius* for about twenty years, it can be assumed that he began this work in Vilnius, where the conditions were possibly favourable. It should be noted that by the second half of the 16th century, Vilnius University, which had just been founded, already possessed such a large collection of Greek books that it was able to arouse the admiration of both foreigners and, of course, intellectually receptive local public.⁵⁵ By this, I want to emphasise that, after the Jesuits established the

51 *Bessarionis Cardinalis, Archiepiscopi Nicoeni, Opusculum de processione Spiritus S. ad Alexium Lascarim Philantropinum. Petro Arcudio Corcyraeo, Collegii Graecorum in Alma Urbe alumno, presbytero graeco, Philosophiae ac sacrae Theologiae Doctore, interprete*, Cracoviae: In Officina Architypografica Lazari, 1602.

52 *Ioannis Becci, Constantinopolitani Patriarchae, Inscriptiones in sententias sanctorum patrum, quas de processione Spiritus Sancti collegit. Petro Arcudio interprete*, Cracoviae: in Officina Typographica Lazari, 1603.

53 For example, I would like to add that the aforementioned work by Cardinal Bessarionis, edited by Arkoudios in 1602, was somewhat later, in 1605, translated into Polish, see *Bessariona Cardinala, Arcybiskupa Nicenskigo, Rzecz O pochodzeniu Ducha S. do Alexego Laszkarego Philantropina. Przez Księdza Piotra Arcudiusza z Korciry Gręka, Philosophiéy y Theologięy Doktora, z Gręckiego na Lacińskié, potym przez X. Jana Januszowskiego, Archidiakona Sadeckiého z Lacińskiého na Polskié przeloziona*, w Krakowie: Drukarnia Łazarzowa. About this translation, see: M. Litwin, 2021.

54 *Petrus Arcudius, Libri VII De Concordia Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis in septem Sacramentorum administratione*, Lutetiae Parisiorum: Apud Sebastianum Cramoisy, 1626. The 1619 edition of this work is known to me only from bibliographic descriptions.

55 The Vilnius Archives of the Jesuit Province of Central Europe, Fr. Paulius Rabikauskas Fonds, F. 149, ap. 7, vnt. 9, fol. 172r: [anno 1570] “18 iulii venit ad collegium vir religiosus, comes metropolitae Thessalonicensis, nuntii patriarchae Constantinopolitani, qui non aliter quam graeca lingua

university in Vilnius, more intellectuals of a pan-European level appeared in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and a relatively good infrastructure was created for their work. In Vilnius, Arkoudios certainly should not have felt that he was on the distant periphery of the civilised world of that time. It is worth mentioning that, from the very first days of their educational activities in Vilnius (October 1569), Jesuit professors began to teach both Latin and Greek.⁵⁶

However, the rhythm of life did not allow Arkoudios to stay in one place. During the years 1600–1601, he was a member of a delegation to Moscow led by the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lew Sapieha.⁵⁷ He also carried out certain diplomatic missions during a period of turmoil in Muscovy in the era of False Dmitry I.⁵⁸ In February–March 1603, Arkoudios represented Bishop Ipatii Potii, who, due to illness, was unable to attend the *Sejm* in Kraków, where he was given the opportunity to be an active defender of the Union.⁵⁹ In the autumn of the same year, Arkoudios travelled to Rome via Kraków, having received assignments from Ipatii Potii, the Metropolitan of Kyiv, and Benedykt Woyna, the Bishop of Vilnius.⁶⁰ This time, his visit to Rome, though unproductive, lasted about a year and a half.⁶¹ In the summer of 1605, upon returning to the Polish-Lithuanian

eaque non corrupta loquebatur. Ostemdimus illi sacellum collegii et hypocaustum pro excipiendis hospitibus; deinde duximus ad bibliothecam, in qua cum multos libros graecos aperuisset, dixit: "Sapientiam omnem iam a graecis ad latinos translata esse". Pontifici etiam Romano ab ipsis primas inter patriarchas tribui testatus est". The transcription was made based on the typescript prepared by Fr. P. Rabikauskas SJ: *Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu*, Pol. 65, foll. 75r–96r ('*Historia Collegii Vilmensis Societatis Iesu*'). The quotation is taken from fol. 82v. I am highly grateful to Liudas Jovaiša and Mintautas Čiurinskas for bringing this piece of evidence to my attention.

56 L. Piechnik, 1984, p. 44. For more about the teaching of Greek in Vilnius (among Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox believers), see: T. Veteikis, *Graikų kalbos studijos*, p. 29–40, 45–64; S. Narbutas, 2010, p. 62–65, 74–75, 88–89.

57 For more on this mission, see: E. Pilgrimovijus, *Didžioji Leono Sapiegos pasiuntinybė į Maskvą, 1600–1601 m.*, ed. Jūratė Kiaupienė, Vilnius: Žara, 2002; P. Pierling, 1897, vol. 2, p. 371–377; P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 260–261; A. Czwołek, 2012, s. 139–157.

58 Cf. P. Pierling, 1901, vol. 3, p. 168.

59 *Litterae nuntiorum apostolicorum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes (1550–1850)*, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: PP. Basiliani, 1959, vol. 2 (1594–1608), No. 731, p. 185–186 (1 March 1603); No. 735, p. 191 (22 February 1603).

60 *Ibid.*, No. 772, p. 217 (18 October 1603); No. 774, p. 218 (1 November 1603); *Litterae episcoporum historiam Ucrainae illustrantes (1600–1900)*, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: PP. Basiliani, 1972, vol. 1, No. 21, p. 25–26 (12 April 1604). See also P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 264; T. Kempa, 2024, s. 581.

61 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 265.

Commonwealth, Arkoudios pleasantly surprised both King Sigismund III Vasa and the Polish senators who had not expected him to return to their country. Arkoudios shared the news from Rome with Sapieha, the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and Woyna, the Bishop of Vilnius.⁶² For the next few years, he continued to work for the benefit of the Union.⁶³ The last records of his activities in Vilnius date back to 1609.⁶⁴ It seems that, in the same year, Arkoudios returned to Rome – and this time for good.⁶⁵

4. The Sunset of Peter Arkoudios' Life in the Eternal City

While living in Rome, Peter Arkoudios carried out a wide range of different assignments: he was a theologian to Cardinal Scipione Caffarelli-Borghese, a scribe at the Vatican Library, and a censor of translated books (from Latin or Italian into Greek).⁶⁶ In 1622, with the establishment of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, Arkoudios was engaged as an expert on Eastern Church affairs.⁶⁷ However, Arkoudios devoted most of his time to his favourite activity, notably, theological studies; he managed to prepare several books before the end of his life.⁶⁸ Even though he was now permanently settled in Rome, Arkoudios did not sever his ties with the Ruthenians of Poland and Lithuania, and continued to maintain a connection with the Basilian Fathers who regularly visited Rome on matters concerning the Uniate Church.⁶⁹ He dedicated his great work *De concordia Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis* to King Sigismund III Vasa, attributing to him

62 Ibid., p. 265–266.

63 Cf. M. M. Соловій et al., 1967, c. 156.

64 There is information that Arkoudios was a direct witness to the struggle between the Uniates and the Disuniates over the possession of the Church of the Holy Trinity in Vilnius, which reached a critical point in 1609. See: M. Harasiewicz, 1862, p. 259.

65 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 266–267. See also the letters of Metropolitan Ipatii Potii to Pope Paul V: *Litterae episcoporum*, vol. 1, No. 34, p. 45 (28 February 1609); No. 35, p. 46 (28 February 1609).

66 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 269.

67 Ibid. In 1623, Arkoudios received permission to move from the Greek Rite to the Latin Rite: *Epistolae metropolitaram Kioviensium Catholicorum: Raphaelis Korsak, Antonii Sielava, Gabrielis Kolenda (1637–1674)*, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae: PP. Basiliani, 1956, vol. 2, No. 2, p. 24 (1624).

68 See: P. B. Pidrutchnyj, p. 269–272. Also see: É. Legrand, 1895, vol. 3, p. 220, 228–232.

69 See, for example, *Litterae episcoporum*, vol. 1, No. 50, p. 70–72 (28 July 1622); *Epistolae metropolitaram*, vol. 2, No. 5, p. 39–40 (10 February 1626); No. 9, p. 48 (1 April 1626); No. 11, p. 55 (18 September 1626).

special merits in bringing the Ruthenians back into unity with the Roman Church.⁷⁰ And, in the preface, he warmly remembered the martyr Josaphat Kuntsevych.⁷¹

Already of an advanced age, Arkoudios became the victim of a traffic accident. In those times, there was a peculiar custom in Rome: wine vendors would recklessly race through the streets with their carts loaded with barrels of wine. In 1627, Arkoudios was struck by one such cart and lost the ability to move his legs. He spent the remaining years of his life in the Greek College library, working there from dawn till dusk. Arkoudios died in 1633 and was buried in the Church of St. Athanasius.⁷² To this day, a part of Arkoudios' library remains in the Greek College, still awaiting a devoted scholar to research it.

5. The Legacy of Peter Arkoudios

Historians eagerly describe the exploits of 'great' men and women; but it seems they too easily overlook those representatives of the mid-level people, who, behind the scenes, ensured the routine operation of institutions and the day-to-day circulation of information. In this respect, Arkoudios does not seem to be particularly unique – and yet, his circle of correspondents seems quite impressive. Among them one can mention the Jesuit superior general, bishops, nuncios, cardinals, and even Pope Paul V. Thus, he was one of the most important people to have sent information to Rome concerning the situation of the Eastern Church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and its neighbouring regions.

As previously mentioned, he maintained close collaborative relationships with representatives of the ecclesiastical and political elite of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of that time. This is evident from the dedications in Arkoudios'

70 P. Arcudius, *Libri VII De Concordia Ecclesiae*, fol. aii verso: "Ac prima quidem, quod quae ad Graecos et Ruthenos pertinent, cui magis convenire debeant, non video quam tibi, Serenissime Rex, qui tuos Ruthenos ut ad Romanam, hoc est veram Dei Ecclesiam se adiungerent, excitasti, ac pene dixerim impulisti. Quocirca tibi uni maxime ex omnibus secundum Deum hoc acceptum referri beneficium debet". The dedication was reprinted by É. Legrand, 1894, vol. 1, p. 206–211.

71 P. Arcudius, *Libri VII De Concordia Ecclesiae*, fol. aiii recto: "Calet adhuc Archiepiscopi Polocicensis, hominis religiosissimi ac sanctissimi, cruor, a desertoribus istis per incredibilem quandam inauditamque barbariem, cum immani trucidatione castissimi cadaveris effusus. Quem tu flagellis, vinculis, crucibus, infamiae nota, sicariorum capite, proscriptionibus ita vindicasti, ut non solum ubique publicas promerueris praedicationes et laudes, verum etiam ab Urbano Sanctissimo Pontifice per litteras et gratiis actis, et honorificentissima commendatione fueris honestatus".

72 P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 269.

books, where we see a gallery of recipients, including the Chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lew Sapieha; the Bishop of Kraków, Bernard Maciejowski; the Archbishop of Gniezno, Stanislaw Karnkowski; and King Sigismund III Vasa.⁷³ It is clear that this was not a conversation among equals, but from other sources we know that he actively collaborated with some of these people for the sake of the Church Union, most notably, Bishop Ipatii Potii, whose secretary he was. He also collaborated with the Bishop of Vilnius, Benedykt Woyna (1600–1615). But what nuances, shades, or perhaps even shadows, might we detect in this collaboration? In my opinion, such questions have not been raised in historiography until now, but it is worth raising them.

If we can judge by the letters of recommendation from the representatives of the elite of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, it appears that they held Arkoudios in particularly high regard. He was a person skilled in establishing both professional and friendly relations.⁷⁴ However, it should be noted that he did not receive any high-ranking positions even within the Uniate Church itself. The highest rank he attained in his professional career within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was that of an archimandrite, a position he held in various monasteries at the very beginning of the 17th century (Lauryshava, Pinsk, Kobryn (?)).⁷⁵ Yet, at the same time (1602), the papal nuncio in Poland, Claudio Rangoni, spoke several times with King Sigismund III Vasa about having Arkoudios appointed to one of the eparchies of the Kyivan Metropolitanate.⁷⁶ The king listened, hesitated, and awkwardly evaded the issue. Evidently, the greatest obstacle to Arkoudios obtaining a bishopric was that he was, after all, not a local person.⁷⁷ Perhaps the appointment was hindered by the insufficient knowledge of local languages

73 Dedicated to the chancellor of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Lew Sapieha: [Peter Arkoudios] *Ἀντίρρησις sive Apologia contra Christophorum Philaethem, qui nuper edidit libros nomine antiquae Russiae religionis graecae, contra libros de Synodo Brestensi scriptos anno Domini 1597*, Vilnae: apud Danielem Lancitium, anno Domini 1600; to the Bishop of Kraków, Bernard Maciejowski: *Bessarionis Cardinalis, Archiepiscopi Nicoeni, Opusculum de processione Spiritus S.*; to the Archbishop of Gniezno, Stanislaw Karnkowski: *Ioannis Becci, Constantinopolitani Patriarchae, Inscriptiones in sententias sanctorum patrum, quas de processione Spiritus Sancti collegit*; and to King Sigismund III Vasa: P. Arkoudios, *Libri VII De Concordia Ecclesiae*.

74 Cf. O. Halecki, 1958, p. 153.

75 See footnotes 32 and 34.

76 *Litterae nuntiorum*, vol. 2 (1594–1608), No. 715, p. 177 (August of 1602); No. 718, p. 178–179 (August–September of 1602); No. 721, p. 179–180; cf. No. 723, p. 180–181 (7 December 1602). Also see: P. B. Pidrutchnyj, 1973, p. 263–264.

77 *Litterae nuntiorum*, vol. 2 (1594–1608), No. 721 p. 180 (8 November 1602).

(Ruthenian, Polish) gained by Arkoudios;⁷⁸ however, it should be noted that this circumstance did not seem to be an obstacle for the nuncios of the Holy See; and, of all people, the nuncio would certainly have had a clear understanding of the qualities and abilities that the candidates for bishoprics needed to possess for the Church during the Counter-Reformation times.

At the same time, it must be acknowledged that, from this chronological distance, the full spectrum of the motives of the figures from that time is not clearly visible or easily understood by us, modern researchers – although it is certainly worth trying. So, without claiming to provide a comprehensive explanation, I would like to draw attention to certain traits in Arkoudios' character. For example, Arkoudios was astonished by the amount of religious freedom in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth of that time.⁷⁹ In his opinion, when confronting the issues concerning the way how to implement the Union's decisions and to enforce ecclesiastical discipline, it was highly commendable to employ the secular arm (*brachium seculare*) in a much more effective way to achieve the desired result. We can easily imagine that if Arkoudios had been appointed bishop, the already turbulent history of inter-confessional relations during the first half of the 17th century would have been even more heated. On the other hand, if he had become a bishop, it is unlikely that he would have written so many books and contributed so significantly to the cause of the Union. It should also be noted that, in his pro-Union stance, he could, occasionally at least, go to extreme lengths thus causing concern even among local Uniate prelates as transpires from the letter of the Metropolitan Veliamyn Rutsky in which he asked the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith not to pass any decision detrimental to the Ruthenians, should something wrong be found in the *Concordia* of Arkoudios.⁸⁰

During the 17th and 18th centuries, his books – and, most notably *The Concord between the Western and Eastern Churches* – were quoted, endorsed, and challenged by both Catholic and Protestant theologians. For them, this work of Arkoudios' was a storehouse of knowledge about the rites of the Greek Church.⁸¹ It is equally important to stress that Arkoudios' books were in demand among

78 Cf. K. Kuczara, 2012, s. 151–152.

79 O. Halecki, 1958, p. 389, 399.

80 Cf. *Litterae episcoporum*, vol. 1, No. 81, p. 149 and p. 151 (September 1627).

81 Modern electronic search tools make it easy to find dozens if not hundreds of works from the 17th and 19th centuries which quote or criticise the great work of Arkoudios *De concordia Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis*.... This phenomenon deserves a separate study, which I cannot undertake here.

both Roman Catholic and Uniate (Basilian) monks who were devoted to missionary activities in the Ruthenian lands.⁸² His books had a lasting impact long after his death.

In summary, it can be stated that Arkoudios was more a man of academic study and written polemics than of action. According to his contemporaries, and later historians and theologians alike, his passionate polemical style likely did a disservice to his scholarly career and broader recognition. This is an important reason as to why he is not counted among the foremost theologians of the early modern period. On the other hand, one cannot overlook the fact that, through his spoken and written words, he complemented such *action-oriented* figures as Metropolitan Ipatii Potii and St. Josaphat Kuntsevych. Perhaps this is where the most important part of Arkoudios' historical significance lies.

6. Peter Arkoudios' Books in Vilnius

As mentioned above, a part of Peter Arkoudios' library has survived to this day in the Greek College in Rome and still awaits a scholar to research it. Having permanently moved to Rome in 1609, he made efforts to have the books which had been left in Vilnius transported to Rome. We do not know how successful these efforts were, but it is clear that not all of them found their way back to their owner. It is not surprising, therefore, that books belonging to Arkoudios can be located in various places. For my part, I am most interested in the remnants of his library in Vilnius.

At least one book which undoubtedly belonged to Arkoudios has survived in the Rare Books Department at the Library of Vilnius University, namely, *Epistolae illustrium virorum* (*Letters of Illustrious Men*), compiled and published by the then Bishop of Włocławek, Stanisław Karnkowski, in Kraków in 1578. This copy has already attracted the attention of researchers, noting that it once belonged to the Jesuit College in Kražiai and, before that, to the Suffragan Bishop of Vilnius, Mikolay Pac (Figure 2b).⁸³ I have only to add that even earlier, at the very beginning of the 17th

82 *Supplicationes ecclesiae unitae Ucrainae et Bielarusjae*, ed. Athanasius G. Welykyj, Romae 1960, vol. 1 (1600–1699), No. 252, p. 175 (a list of books requested by the conventual Franciscan Anthony Terlecky, 1650); No. 369, p. 278 (a list of books requested by the Basilian monk Polikarp Biriukhevych, 1685); No. 370, p. 279 (a list of books requested by the Basilian monk Georgius Jarzebinsky is provided, 1685).

83 D. Antanavičius, 2017, p. 193, No. 1194.

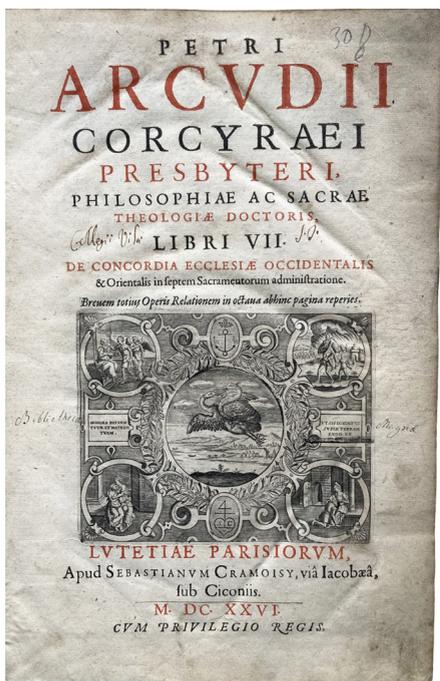


Figure 4. Peter Arcoudios, *Libri VII De Concordia Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis in Septem Sacramentorum Administratione*, Lutetiae Parisiorum: Apud Sebastianum Cramoisy, 1626 [title page].

In: Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka, Retų spaudinių skyrius (Vilnius University Library, Rare Books Department), BAV 10.1.13p.

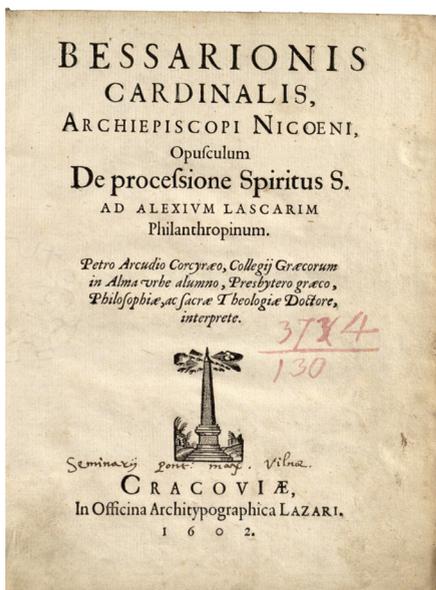


Figure 5. Bessarionis Cardinalis, *Opusculum de processione Spiritus S. ad Alexium Lascarim Philanthropinum*. Petro Arcudio Corcyraeo, Collegij Graecorum in Alma Urbe alumno, presbytero graeco, Philosophiae ac sacrae Theologiae Doctore, interprete, Cracoviae: In Officina Architypographica Lazari, 1602.

In: Lietuvos mokslų akademijos Vrublevskių biblioteka, Rankraščių skyrius (Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, Rare Books Department), XVII/400/1.

century, it belonged to Arkoudios, as indicated by the inscription of his autograph on the inner side of the front cover of the book (Figure 2a). Over many centuries, the Library of Vilnius University has preserved in its collection the 1626 edition of Peter Arkoudios' most important work: *De concordia Ecclesiae Occidentalis et Orientalis* (Figure 4). For its part, the Rare Books Department of the Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences holds (at least) two books translated by Arkoudios: works by Cardinal Bessarion and Patriarch Bekkos on the origin of the Holy Spirit.⁸⁴ The first of these once belonged to the Papal Seminary in Vilnius (Figure 5). The Wroblewski Library of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences holds two editions of a book on purgatory authored by Arkoudios, thus providing us with yet another indication of the demand for his works among the Roman and Greek Catholic population of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.⁸⁵

With these considerations and remarks in mind, I would like to conclude this article about the Greek, Peter Arkoudios – one of Saint Josaphat Kuntsevych's teachers and like-minded colleagues. Although his basic biographical data have only slightly expanded over the past five to six decades, in my opinion, his networking remains insufficiently highlighted within the context of the political and ecclesiastical battles of his time. I should also note that research on the posthumous impact of his works is only just taking its first steps. I am sure that, in the future, interest in Arkoudios and similar figures who bridged different cultural worlds will not wane but, instead, most probably grow.

7. Conclusions

1. Peter Arkoudios (1563–1633) is a figure who has not yet received attention in Lithuanian historiography. This is an obvious gap, as a better illumination of Arkoudios' life path and his widely understood cultural activities would help to better understand how the society of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania functioned under the conditions of the great religious upheaval at the end of the

84 *Bessarionis Cardinalis, Archiepiscopi Nicoeni, Opusculum de processione Spiritus S. and Ioannis Becci, Constantinopolitani Patriarchae, Inscriptiones in sententias sanctorum patrum, quas de processione Spiritus Sancti collegit.*

85 Petrus Arcudius, *Utrum detur Purgatorium et an illud sit per ignem, auctore Petro Arcudio Corcyraeo*, Romae: Typis & impensis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1632; Petrus Arcudius, *Utrum detur Purgatorium et an illud sit per ignem, auctore Petro Arcudio Corcyraeo*, Romae: Typis Sacrae Congregationis de Propaganda Fide, 1717.

- 16th century and in the first half of the 17th century, and also to what extent it was receptive to at least some part of the Byzantine and post-Byzantine legacy.
2. The symbolic weight of Arkoudios in the eyes of the Ruthenian Orthodox believers was undoubtedly increased by the fact that he represented Greek Christianity living in unity with the Roman Church. His activities dispelled the myth, prevalent at the time, that a union with Rome would be a mortal danger to the Byzantine liturgical rite.
 3. The persistent efforts made by Arkoudios to establish a seminary for Uniate priests in Vilnius clearly indicate that he understood how critically important an educated clergy was for the newly forming Uniate Church. The correctness of this idea is evidenced by the later activities of the Basilian Order, to the early formation of which Arkoudios undoubtedly contributed.
 4. It must be acknowledged that although Arkoudios had influential supporters in the highest ecclesiastical and secular circles of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, he did not make a stunning career there. I would argue that the twists and turns of Arkoudios' career – and what I would call networking in contemporary terms – represent an interesting and potentially informative case of horizontal mobility.
 5. It is necessary to emphasise, once again, Arkoudios' pro-Union influence on both the future Metropolitan of Kyiv, Ipatii Potii, and the future Archbishop of Polatsk and saint, Josaphat Kuntsevych. The memory of this influence remained vivid among direct witnesses even many decades later.
 6. The long-term impact of Arkoudios' work is evidenced by the fact that authors representing various confessions from different European countries eagerly used the knowledge found in his writings. It is equally important to highlight that his works were regarded as useful by 17th-century missionaries who were dedicated to spreading the ideas of the Church Union in the lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

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