



Holy Trinity and Saviour Monastery

Old Ritualists, Old Believers, also called Philipons did not accept in XVII century patriarch Nikon's reforms initiated in Russian Orthodox Church. Having been persecuted, they were forced to emigrate.

The first Old Ritualists came to Masuria in the twenties of XIX century, at first from the Suwalki-Sejny district, then also from the inland of Russia.

The history of Masurian Old Ritualists is closely connected with the Voynovo monastery. The beginnings of the monastery go back to 1836 when a staretz Lavrentiy Rastropin (1762-1851) set up a small hermitage on the bank of the lake Duś. In 1847 the monastery became a branch of the famous Old Ritualist center in Moscow, called The Transfiguration's Cemetery.

In consequence of intensifying repressions towards Old Ritualists in Russia the Voynovo monastery became a shelter for a great many of the persecuted. The greatest rise of the monastery occurred in the years 1852-67, when Paul of Prussia (Peter Ivanovich Ledniev, 1821-1895) was its hegumen. It was on his initiative that a printing-house in nearly Pisz was established. In 1867 Paul left Masuria, went to Russia, and turned to yedinovyerye which was submitted to the Russian Orthodox Church hierarchy. Paul's departure provoked a severe crisis in the Old Ritualist community. The monastery was on the decline and in 1884 became a property of one of the wealthy Old Ritualists, Ulyan Slovikov.

The Old Ritualist community was gradually growing smaller in favour of yedinovyerye. Old Ritualists undertook a counteractive action sending special emissaries to Moscow. As a result of this action, as early as in 1835 a young nun Eupraksiya (Helena Pietrovna Dikopolska, 1863-1943) was sent to Masuria, who, after some time repurchased the monastery together with the adjacent ground. Around her there gathered nuns who had come from Russia, and those who had survived the fire of women's monastery in Pupy (Spychow), as well as those from a little later founded monastery at Majdan. In 1897 there were already 25 persons in the Voynovo monastery. The women's monastery reached its greatest rise before the outbreak of the First World War. Its activity was hampered by turning of the local Old Ritualists to yedinovyerye. Besides religious practices and hard farming the monastery ploughland by which they earn their living, the nuns also look after old and disabled persons.

The monastery has survived the turmoils of war and today it is, a very interesting relict of religious and traditional culture. Situated in a picturesque land of lakes and forests, it is a monument attracting crowds of tourists. In great part the monastery owes its present state to Antonina Mother Superior who died in 1972.

The last nun died in April of 2006, but the chapel still exists for people who want to pray without looking for liturgy.

