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WAS IT REALLY RUSSIA THAT WAS CHRISTIANISED IN 988?

For a few years now, we have been hearing that Moscow is making preparations to celebrate the alleged "Millennium of Christianity in Russia", on which the Orthodox Patriarchate of Moscow is spending huge sums of money. It is both curious and inconsistent with Soviet ideology and religious policy, that the USSR, a declared atheist state, is preparing to celebrate the thousand-year existence of the Christian religion "in Russia", a religion, which this very same state persecutes and destroys in every way possible, saying that there is no God, and that religion is an "opium of the people". In 1984, a luxurious book entitled *The Orthodox Church in Russia* was published with a dedication written by a Prince of the Catholic Church. Among other things, this book talks about the "Millennium of the Christianisation of Russia". Therefore, with the help of God, let us look into this strange matter.

*

On the 16th of September, 1984, the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, visited the Ukrainian community in Winnipeg, Canada. On this occasion, His Holiness spoke the following words:

"Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is a pleasure to be with you today in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Saints Volodymyr and Olha in Winnipeg. I greet you, Archbishop Hermaniuk, my other Brothers in the Episcopate, and all of you assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. With joy I note the representations of the Eparchies of Edmonton, Toronto, New Westminster and Saskatoon. Through you I extend cordial greetings to all the faithful of the Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Byzantine rite and to all the Ukrainian people of Canada. I greet you as a brother Slav, sharing to a large degree in your spirit and heritage. I am especially happy to be with you as you draw near to the solemn celebration of the First Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine. In you I embrace in the charity of Christ all the people of your homeland, together with their history, culture, and the heroism with which they have lived in their faith. Praise be to Jesus Christ!

As Ukrainian Catholics of the Byzantine rite you have inherited a great spiritual tradition, extending back a thousand years to the time of Saint Olha and her grandson Saint Volodymyr. Who could have known then, how that faith would grow so organically with your culture, and how it would have such a major impact on your history as it brought the grace of the Redemption into the lives of your ancestors? So much could be said about this history, which not infrequently was linked with that of my own native land, but since time presses on, I must limit myself to recalling only a few important moments of your difficult yet noble past.

Our meeting today, taking place as it does on the threshold of the solemn celebration of the Millennium of Christianity in Kyiv and the whole of Ukraine, carries our minds and hearts back through the centuries of your glorious history of faith. We feel deep gratitude to God, in a special way, for the grace of fidelity to the Catholic Church and loyalty to the Successor of Saint Peter, which was bestowed on your forebears. As Archbishop of Cracow I came to know and appreciate this precious heritage of the Ukrainian people, as seen particularly in the martyrs of Kholm and Pidlashia, who followed the example of Saint Josaphat, a great apostle of unity, and as seen also in the pastoral zeal of so many of your bishops, down to the present day.

These great men and women of Ukrainian history encourage you today to live in your Catholic faith with equal fervour and zeal. They inspire you, too, to work and pray without easing for the unity of all Christians. In the many and varied ecumenical efforts of the Church, members of the Byzantine rite like yourselves have a special role to play in regard to the Eastern Christians, who are not in full communion with the See of Peter.

You are in a privileged position to fulfil the request of the Second Vatican Council, which is expressed in the Decree on Ecumenism, namely: "Everyone should realise that it is of supreme importance to understand, venerate, preserve and foster the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches in order to faithfully preserve the fullness of Christian tradition, and to bring about reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christians" (*Unitatis Redintegration*, 15). Your Ukrainian heritage and your Byzantine spirituality, theology and liturgy prepare you well for this important task of fostering reconciliation and full communion. May the hearts of all bishops, priests, monks and faithful be filled with a burning desire that the prayer of Christ be realised: "May they all be one, Father, may they be one in us, as You are in me and I am in You, so that the world may believe it was You who sent me" (Jn. 17:21).

But this desire for unity will only be realised if it goes hand in hand



*Monument of St. Volodymyr the Great,
Grand Prince of Kyiv
(Kyiv)*



Cathedral of St. Sophia, Kyiv

with a sincere fraternal love, a love like that of Christ, which is without limit and exception. Such Christian love will open our hearts to the light of divine truth. It will help to clarify the differences, which still divide Christians, foster constructive dialogue and mutual understanding, and thereby further the salvation of souls and the unity of all in Christ. And we must remember that this Christian love is nurtured by prayer and penance.

Dear brothers and sisters: it is good to be with you today. I rejoice to see your children dressed in your beautiful national costumes, and to know that your young people are growing up with a grateful awareness of their ethnic origins and religious roots. I join you in thanking God for the many institutions and traditions, which aid and strengthen the bonds of your families, which are the foundation of the Church and society. May you always preserve with fitting pride the heritage of faith and culture, which is yours. I place this intention, together with all your prayers, before the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Queen of Ukraine, asking her to protect you with her motherly love and lead you ever closer to her divine Son, Jesus Christ the Redeemer of the world. Beloved friends, in the words of the Apostle Peter: 'Peace to all of you who are in Christ' (I Pt. 5:14)".

Above I quoted several excerpts from the Holy Father's sermon in Winnipeg in order to show the reader what he had to say about the alleged "Christianisation of Russia", which has, for several years, been so widely publicised both by the Patriarchate of Moscow and in Soviet publications. However, I could not find even the slightest reference to any such event. The Holy Father spoke only of the christianisation of Ukraine. What is more, he seems purposely to have avoided using Ukraine's ancient historic name, Rus', making exclusive use of our country's modern name, Ukraine, to avoid giving the Russians an opportunity to misinform the free world by saying that this was also the "Christianisation of Russia". Irrespective of this, Moscow still managed to spread its misinformation throughout the West, claiming that the event, which took place in Kyiv, the capital of Ukraine, in the year 988, was the common christianisation of "both the Ukrainian and the Russian people". It is not difficult to misinform people, especially in the West, where almost nothing is known about the religion of the Christian East.

To find the true answer to the question whether it was really Russia that was christianised in 988 one must turn to the old historic sources — the Chronicles. The most important of these is Nestor's *Povist Vremenykh Lit* (The Tale of Bygone Years), which had an enormous influence on Ukrainian history. B. D. Grekov called it "one of the manifestations of human genius, which fate has made endlessly interesting throughout

the centuries”¹. This Chronicle, however, has not been preserved in its original form. As early as 1116, Volodymyr Monomakh² instructed Silvester, the Father Superior of the Vydubyskyi Monastery in Kyiv, to re-write it, which he did signing his own name on it. Since then the *Povist* has been re-written many times. However, it has survived in a form quite close to the original in the *Lavrentian Chronicle* (1376) and the *Hypatian Chronicle*, written at the beginning of the 15th century³.

In the 18th century, mainly in Eastern Ukraine, there appeared many works, which genetically linked the history of the Cossack Hetmans with the era of the Kyivan Rus' Princes. To name but a few, a *Short Description of Little Russia* was published in the 1730s; the *Description of Little Russia*, by Gregor Pokas, came out in 1751; the *Chronicle of Little Russia and its People*, by Alexander Rigelman, was published in 1785-1786; and the *History of Little Russia*, by V. Antonovskiy, appeared in 1799. These works, and many others, proved that the Ukrainian Cossacks were the direct descendants of the “Rus' men”, who had built the great and powerful state of Kyivan-Rus'⁴.

Historiography of the 19th and 20th centuries gives further evidence of the long and deep-rooted traditions of Cossack statehood, which stretch back to the time of the Rus' Princes⁵. Ukrainian historians living abroad, led by M. Hrushevskiy, point to the uninterrupted historical development of Ukraine, and to the distinct and separate historical development of Russia⁶.

Soviet interpretation of Ukrainian history is somewhat different. For instance, the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* describes the development of Ukrainian and Russian history in a different light. According to the *Encyclopedia*, although Kyiv had unified all the Slavic tribes under its control, in the 11th century the Rostov-Suzdal Principality began to separate itself from the centre and to develop its own separate existence. As a result of the Tatar invasion, the population of the southern lands, i.e. Kyiv, migrated northwards and settled in the Rostov-Suzdal Principality. Because the people of Kyiv shared the same territory as the population of Rostov-Suzdal from the 14th to the 16th centuries, this allegedly gave rise to the emergence of the “common” Great-Russian language⁷.

Twentieth-century historians, K. Huslysty, F. Yastrebov and V. Dia-

1 Natalia Polonska-Vasylenko: *Istoria Ukrainy* (History of Ukraine), Vol. I, Ukrainian Publishers, Munich, 1972, p. 14.

2 Grand Prince of Kyiv (1113-1125).

3 Polonska-Vasylenko, p. 14.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 16.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

dychenko, differ from Russian historians of the 1860s. On the basis of their knowledge of the sources, they point out the superiority of the Ukrainian culture of the 17th and 18th centuries and its influence on the culture of Muscovite Russia⁸. However, since the appearance of the *Encyclopedia* the interpretation of East European history expressed in it has appeared in millions of books, which have spread much misinformation about the history of Ukraine⁹. In this way, all the achievements of Ukrainian, as well as some Russian historians, and everything that Ukrainian historiography has contributed, were obliterated by order of the CPSU, without discussion or argument, and Soviet historiography returned to the old ways of traditional Russian historiography¹⁰.

Muscovite writers of the post-Tatar period base themselves on the alleged "Kyivan origins" of the Muscovite dynasty, and claim for Russia not only the political, but also the religious Christian heritage of Kyivan-Rus', despite the fact that there is no direct religious or political continuity between the Muscovite state and its Church, and the Christianity and political order of Rus'-Ukraine. Such continuity, however, did exist on the western territories of Ukraine, which were later incorporated into the Polish-Lithuanian State¹¹.

The first academic work on the history of the Ukrainian Church was written by Julian Pelesch, who became the Bishop of Peremyshl¹². In his book, he only covered the history of the Ukrainian Catholic Church up to the Union of Brest (1596). Bishop Edward Likowski, on the other hand, covered almost three centuries of the history of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in his two works¹³. However, the most useful book on the Kyivan period is E. Golubinskyi's *Istoria Russkoy Tserkvy* (History of the Russian Church), (2 Vols.), Moscow, 1901¹⁴.

The period of the official consolidation of Christianity in Ukraine (10th century) was preceded by several centuries of its unofficial existence. And these centuries were themselves preceded by a long period of development in the early historic life of the Ukrainian nation with its particular civilisation, which greatly contributed towards the development of the specific nature of Kyivan Christianity after the christianisation of Rus'-Ukraine. Eventually, the official acceptance of Christianity

8 *Ibid.*, p. 30-31.

9 *Ibid.*, p. 31.

10 *Ibid.*, p. 32.

11 Mykola Chubaty: *Istoria Khrystyianstva na Rusy-Ukraini* (History of Christianity in Rus'-Ukraine), Vol. I. Rome-New York, 1965, p. 1.

12 Julian Pelesch: *Geschichte der Union der Ruthenischen Kirche mit Rom* (History of the Union of the Ruthenian Church with Rome), Wuerzburg-Wien, 1881-1882 (Zwei Bände).

13 Edward Likowski: *Unia Brzeska* (The Union of Brest), Poznan, 1896; *Dzieje Kościoła Unickiego na Litwie i Rusi* (Annals of the Uniate Church in Lithuania and Rus'), Warszawa, 1906 (Dwa Tomy).

14 Chubaty, p. 2.

as the state and national religion made Rus'-Ukraine the leading political factor in medieval Eastern Europe¹⁵.

Today, "Kyivan Christianity" is a clearly defined academic concept. It is a mixture of both Eastern and Western Christianity based on the pre-Christian culture of Rus'-Ukraine. This formed the distinct spiritual character of the Ukrainian nation, which had already developed its own separate identity before the end of the 11th century. After the collapse of the medieval Ukrainian state in the first half of the 14th century, the Christian Church took the place of the former political authority of the Ukrainian nation, and became the institution, which represented the entire people. As the most powerful bastion of the nation, the Church repelled all foreign invasions aimed at destroying the separate existence of the Ukrainian nation¹⁶. From the 14th to the middle of the 17th century, Ukraine became part of the Polish-Lithuanian-Rus' Commonwealth. As a result of the Cossack uprising against Poland in 1648 under the leadership of Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi, an independent Ukrainian Cossack State became established. However, after the Battle of Poltava (1709), Ukraine was occupied by Orthodox Russia until the fall of the tsarist government in 1917. During the Russian occupation of Western Ukraine at the beginning of the First World War, the Head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi, was arrested and deported to Siberia. When, in 1917, Ukrainian statehood was renewed in the form of the Ukrainian National Republic, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church broke away from the Russian Orthodox Church and formed an independent Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Since then Ukraine has faced the numerous invasions of Communist Russia. After the restoration of independence on June 30th, 1941, Ukraine fought a two-front war against Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia.

In the process of destroying Ukrainian Christianity, the Russians have used not only physical violence, but also modern means of academic and literary propaganda, which have distorted the true historic development of Christianity in Ukraine, for both foreigners and Ukrainians alike. Orthodox Russia of the tsars worked particularly hard to create a fictitious picture of religious development in Ukraine, something, which the atheist leaders of Soviet Russia have continued to the present day. Therefore, still regarding itself as the "Third Rome", Moscow watches very closely the problem of Ukrainian relations with the Holy See and this issue forms the central topic of Moscow's tendentious publications¹⁷. In the opinion of the well-known Russian historian, Fedotov,

15 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

16 *Ibid.*, p. 2-3.

17 B. Ya. Ramon: *Papstvo i Rus' v 10-15 vekakh* (The Papacy and Rus' from the 10th to the 15th Century), Moscow-Leningrad, Academy of Sciences, 1959. Also Chubatyi, p. 3.

who researched the origins and development of Christianity in Rus'-Ukraine, Kyivan Christianity was one of the best examples of the practice of Christian teaching in the whole world. He went on to say that there is no continuity between the Christianity of Rus' and Muscovite Christianity, which was completely different, and, at times, even opposite to the Christianity of Kyiv¹⁸. Byzantine teaching about the inseparability of Church and State eventually reached the north, where it was put into practice in the second half of the 12th century by the younger line of the Monomakh dynasty, beginning with Yuriy Dovhorukyi and Andriy Boholubskiy¹⁹. Thus it was in this northern principality of Rostov-Suzdal — the real cradle of the Russian nation — which had separated itself from the disintegrating Rus' State, that the clearly Byzantine practice of the Church being there to serve the secular authority took root. This principle was completely alien to Kyivan Christianity²⁰.

Church historians say that one thing is definite — that up to the 15th century, despite the presence of Greek Metropolitans in Kyiv, the Ukrainian Church did not assert an official break with the Vatican, but neither did it officially renew its hierarchical dependence on Rome. Direct relations between Kyiv and Rome were the closest in the period immediately after the acceptance of Christianity by Rus'-Ukraine, that is in the reign of Volodymyr and Yaroslav²¹, when the Kyivan Church was administratively dependent on the Byzantine Patriarch. Although Rus', as part of the Eastern Church, was alienated from Rome, at least up to the 13th century, it did not split away from the Holy See²².

A critical event in the history of Christianity in Eastern Europe was the Union of Florence (1439). Faced with various pressure from all sides, Byzantium decided to take advantage of the Ecumenical Synod called in Ferrara, and then in Florence, and also from Pope Eugene IV's invitation to attend. Thus, Patriarch Joseph and Emperor John III managed to bring about an agreement between the two divided Churches. Among the main initiators of this agreement was also the Metropolitan of Kyiv, Isidore, whose seat was still in Moscow, where it had remained from the time of the Mongol invasion. Hoping that Moscow would inherit the leadership of anti-Roman Christianity from the ruins of Constantinople, Prince Basil II of Muscovy found the reconciliation of the Byzantine Patriarch with Rome unacceptable from both the religious and the political point of view. As a result, he imprisoned

18 George Fedotov: *The Russian Religious Mind*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1946, p. 400.

19 Princes of the Rostov-Suzdal lands.

20 Chubatyi, p. 6.

21 Volodymyr the Great was Grand Prince of Kyiv from 980 to 1015, and Yaroslav the Wise ruled Kyiv from 1019 to 1054.

22 Chubatyi, p. 8.

Metropolitan Isidore. In addition to this, for some 200 years, since the reign of Andriy Boholubskyi (1157-1174), the Muscovite people had been fed on Byzantine propaganda against Rome. As a result of this, they considered Rome to be the seat of the “anti-Christ”²³. The people of Ukraine and Byelorussia, on the other hand, responded positively to the Union of Florence. Kyivan Prince Olegko handed over all Church property to Metropolitan Isidore and invited him to take up his seat in Kyiv, as the traditional see of the Kyivan Metropolitans. The bishops of Ukraine and Byelorussia, along with the nobility and townspeople accepted Isidore as their religious leader.

The Soviet historian, Ramm, writes that the Vatican made use of Ukrainian separatism for its own purposes²⁴. The Muscovite rulers realised that a metropolitan residing in Moscow would not be able to administer the dioceses of Ukraine and Byelorussia. Therefore, in 1448, after the election of the new Metropolitan of Moscow, Jona, it was announced that he was the Metropolitan of the Muscovite territories only.

The Union of Florence was not acceptable to Poland either. As Ukraine and Byelorussia became Catholics of the Eastern rite this put an end to Polish hopes of expanding their influence into these territories, and made Poland's Catholic missions unnecessary. Therefore, both Poland and Moscow tried to refute the Union of Florence in Ukraine. The King of Poland, Casimir, made an agreement with Basil II of Moscow in Wilno, by which they bound themselves not to permit Isidore to take the Kyivan seat, and to force the Eastern rite bishops of Ukraine and Byelorussia to recognise the authority of the Muscovite Patriarch, Jona. However, Pope Pius II annulled this agreement, and in 1458, in place of Isidore, he nominated his disciple Hryhoriy as the new Metropolitan. On appointing him as the Metropolitan of Kyiv, the Pope announced that the lands of Muscovy would no longer come under the Kyivan Metropolitanate, because these lands had been declared *terra infidelium* — the “land of infidels”²⁵. Poland did not oppose these decisions any more. However, when the Turks invaded Constantinople in 1453 and the Churches became divided once again, under pressure from Moscow the Kyivan Metropolitan, Joseph II Soltan, was forced to return under the jurisdiction of the Byzantine Patriarch in 1507²⁶.

Let us now briefly examine the origins of Christianity in Rus'-Ukraine. The first known Ukrainian state existed at the time of the Antes from the 3rd to the 7th century A.D., when it was destroyed by the invasion of the Avars. The Ukrainian state with its capital at Kyiv

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁴ Ramm, pp. 241-243. Also Chubatyi, p. 10.

²⁵ Chubatyi, p. 10.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

was restored in the 8th century²⁷. Princes Askold and Dyr greatly developed this new state and increased its power. In later years Prince Oleh²⁸ extended the role of Ukrainian military and economic power beyond the borders of Rus'-Ukraine. The centre of the "Land of Rus'" was the triangle Kyiv, Chernihiv, Pereiaslav and Kyiv became the "Mother of Rus' Cities", growing to become the political nucleus around which the entire neighbouring area was organised into a single great and powerful Ukrainian state. Very soon the Viking princes and soldiers, who had been invited to help defend the Ukrainian state, began to identify themselves with the interest of the Ukrainian land and became its political and military rulers. In time, they strengthened the political organisation of this territory and built up its military defences against both the East and the West. Such was the early course of the history of Rus'-Ukraine in the 10th century, till the reign of Volodymyr Sviatoslavych²⁹.

Oleh brought together under his rule many Eastern Slavic tribes, such as the Poliany, Siveriany, Derevliany, Ulychi, Tivertsy, Radymychi, and the Kryvychi, as well as the Ilmen Slavs. On this base he built the foundations of the future Kyivan empire³⁰.

Although Christianity had been in Rus' for some time, it did not become widespread and firmly-embedded until the reign of Prince Ihor (913-945). That there was already a large number of Christians in Rus' at that time can be seen from the fact that both the Christian and the pagan parties in the state were treated equally and enjoyed equal rights. For instance, during the ratification of Ihor's treaty with Byzantium, concluded in 944, Rus' was represented by both Christians and pagans, who swore their own particular oath (Christian and pagan respectively) to uphold the treaty, showing that both parties were considered to be of equal importance in Rus'³¹. Thus, during Ihor's reign Christianity had reached the heights of society, and made its way to the top rungs of

27 About the state of the Antes see Stepan Mishko: *Narys rannioyi istorii Rusy Ukrainy* (Outline of the Early History of Rus'-Ukraine), New York, 1981, especially the introduction by Oleksander Dombrovskiy; Mykola Chubaty: *Kniazha Rus'-Ukraina ta vynykнення triokh skhidnoslovianskykh natsiy* (Princely Rus'-Ukraine and the Emergence of the Three Eastern-Slavic Nations), New York, 1964; Isidore Nahayewsky: *Starodavnia Ukraina v svilli istorychnykh pamiatnykiv* (Ancient Ukraine in the Light of Historical Monuments), Yorkton, Saskatoon, 1961; several works by M. Yu. Braichevskiy: Yevhen Kramar: "Anty" (The Antes) in *Vyzvolnyi Shlakh* (The Liberation Path), 13 parts, London, March, 1984, to March, 1985. About the origins of the Kyivan-Rus' State see Polonska-Vasylenko, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, Munich, 1972, chapter entitled "The Origins of the Ukrainian State", pp. 93-113; Isidore Nahayewsky: *History of Ukraine*, Philadelphia, 1962.

28 Prince of Kyiv (882-912).

29 A. H. Velykyi, OSBM: *Z Litopysu Khrystyianskoyi Ukrainy* (From the Chronicle of Christian Ukraine), Book I: IX, X, XI century, Basilian Fathers Press, Rome, 1968, p. 53.

30 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

the political hierarchy of the land, as well as the *Viche*, and, thus, got to a position from which it could advise and influence the throne.

Ihor's successor, Princess Olha (945-964), became a Christian around the year 955, and brought Christianity to the throne of Kyiv without internal strife or revolution³². However, she did not force her subjects or her immediate successors to convert to Christianity themselves. Volodymyr the Great, who was a pagan at the beginning of his reign, accepted Christianity after only 10 years of his rule. On taking this fundamental step, the Kyivan State consciously accepted Christianity as the official religion of the land, and with it the great mission of bringing the Christian religion to the whole of Rus'³³.

The process of christianising the Ukrainian state, began by Princess Olha in 955, was completed some 30 years later by her grandson, Volodymyr, the last heir of the state heritage of Sviatoslav³⁴. There was no single motive for the acceptance of Christianity. Volodymyr had a whole series of motives, both political and religious, as well as psychological and personal³⁵. But from the statements of contemporaries one has to accept that at the core of Volodymyr's decision lay his deep conceptual belief in the truthfulness and wholesomeness of the Christian religion. However, he was also influenced by internal and external political motives. For instance, he examined Christianity for its political suitability and usefulness as a state religion, as well as its maturity as a religious doctrine. As regards external politics, the empire of Volodymyr did not have a rival on its territory, and acted completely independently as a sovereign state. Only one political will acted over the whole territory stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea, including the Crimea, and from the Sian and the Vistula to Subcaucasia and the Volga — the will of Volodymyr³⁶. The Kyivan State conducted relations as a political and military equal with the other powerful states of the time, which were already Christian, and so Volodymyr realised that to be completely accepted by the rest of the civilised world, and not to be regarded as a backward barbarian land, Rus'-Ukraine would have to become a Christian state³⁷. Thus, there is one indisputable fact that the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian state were christianised at the end of the 10th century not by any initiative on the part of some external, foreign missionary work, but on the grounds of the internal persuasion of the Prince, the ruling circles, and the people of Rus'³⁸. Thus it was

32 *Ibid.*, p. 56.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 57.

34 *Ibid.*, p. 87.

35 *Ibid.*, p. 88.

36 *Ibid.*, p. 91.

37 Bulgaria accepted Christianity in 864; Moravia — 928-935; and Poland — 962-992.

38 Velykyi, p. 97.

on the basis of a complex series of factors that Volodymyr realised the necessity of basing his nation on Christian ideals.

Preparations for the christianisation of the people would have required a long period of time, and therefore this event cannot be placed before the invasion of Korsun³⁹, because it was necessary to instruct the people in the teachings of the Christian faith, and to destroy the pagan idols. All this required much religious and psychological preparation, and the lack of any serious upheavals or rejection of the new religion proves that the ground for the nation's conversion to Christianity was well-prepared.

Kyivan legends claim that the mass baptism of the people of Kyiv took place on the city's main street. However, historians (especially Golubynskyi) connect this event with the mouth of the River Pochaina where it flows into the Dnipro. Obviously this event had to take place somewhere nearby, at a place generally accessible and familiar to everyone. According to Eastern tradition of the time, baptism was by immersion in water, so the place had to be accessible to the priests, who baptised the people and read the necessary prayers⁴⁰.

With this solemn public act Kyiv and its citizens initiated the process of the christianisation of Rus'-Ukraine. They were followed by other Ukrainian towns and villages, wherever the spiritual mission could reach. It required much time, work and effort, but most of all, wisdom and patience. The christianisation of the Ukrainian people was a most worthy and mature act, achieved in compliance with the principles of human freedom. Therefore, it became so deeply embedded in the soul of the Ukrainian nation and became an inseparable part of it.

As regards the Russian people and its christianisation, which both the Communists and the Russian Patriarchate talk about so much, the writer Georg Liebbrandt, in his book *Ukraine* (p. 26), has this to say: "it was from the Vikings, or Ruotsi, that the Dnipro State derived its name Rus', which remained even when the Ukrainian people became the ruler of its own state. In the beginning, this name was associated with the Viking dynasty and its country. Later, however, it also became associated with the Kyivan State and its people, — the forefathers of Ukrainians today. Byelorussian and Muscovite territories belonged to Rus' as secondary provinces, and it is Kyiv, as opposed to the other countries, that is referred to in the Chronicles of the 11th and 12th centuries, as the actual Rus'". Therefore, it is incorrect, on the grounds of the similarity between the name Rus' and Russia to assume that the Kyivan State (Rus') was the birthplace of Russia. The Muscovite Principality (later Empire) entered the scene of East European history only in

39 The invasion began in the year 987.

40 Velykyi, p. 125.

the 16th century. This young state was known as Muscovy, and its inhabitants as Muscovites — the real predecessors of today's Russia. They created the actual basis of the later Russian state. Racially, the Muscovites (later Russians), unlike the Rus'men (Ukrainians), are primarily from a Hungaro-Finnish descent with a strong mixture of Mongol blood. The extensive period of time spent under Mongol occupation greatly influenced the development of the character of the Russian people.

Moscow developed into a powerful political and military state and raised pretensions to hegemony in Eastern Europe. For this purpose, it came forward as the alleged "heir" of the old-Ukrainian Kyivan State, and accepted, in a changed form, the name Rus', which was still the official national name of Ukraine. But it was not only this change (in actual fact theft) of name that enabled Moscow to establish its powerful position. It was also due to historic circumstances. The much-propagated alleged "unity" of "all the Russians", the Great-Russians, the Little-Russians (the name given to Ukrainians by Moscow), and the Byelorussians, also greatly contributed to this development. In reality, however, these were three different nations — Ukrainians, Muscovites, and Byelorussians.

In later years, the true heirs of the medieval state of Kyivan-Rus' adopted the modern name Ukrainians in place of the old name Rus', which had been in use until that time. Ukraine is an old name, which already appeared on many occasions in the Chronicle of Nestor. Some historians explain this name as "border-land", and others as "inner-land". In the course of time, this name came into general use to describe the whole nation, which lived on the territory of the former Kyivan State. In this sense, it originated in medieval times and was used throughout the whole continent of Europe, particularly in Germany and other Western states, and has since then been used in many history books.

Throughout the centuries Russia has tried to make the world believe that Ukrainians are merely the "younger brothers" of the Russians, whose history and culture are simply a "marginal aspect" of Russian history and culture, by asserting itself as the "heir" of the Kyivan State and its Church. But, inspite of what the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet Russian authorities would have us believe, 1988 will see the Millennium of Christianity in Ukraine, and it is the Ukrainian people and the Ukrainian Church (with its two denominations — the Ukrainian Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church), the true descendants of Kyivan Rus', who will be celebrating this great event of monumental national and religious significance to which Russia has no rightful claim.

THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH AS AN INSTRUMENT OF MOSCOW'S IMPERIALISM

Relations between the Church and the State can come in many forms. For instance, there are cases of cooperation between the State and Church, of the separation of the Church and State, and a close cooperation between the State and the Church, where the Church has a great influence upon State affairs. Such situations are familiar to us. However, there is one type of Church-State relations, which is very rare and unfamiliar in modern times. It is this type of Church-State relations that I would like to consider here.

Such relations between the Church and the State existed and continue to exist today in Russia-Muscovy. The truth of the matter found expression in the writings of the Rev. H. Budzinskyi, one of the priests behind the Iron Curtain. He was one of 1500 priests, who refused to accept the decisions of the so called Lviv Synod of 1946, during which the Ukrainian Catholic Church was forcibly united with the Russian Orthodox Church. Excerpts of his testimony were translated and released in *America*, the Ukrainian Catholic Daily. He writes as follows: "The Russian Church served in the past with its teaching and faith the bandit imperialism of the Russian tsars, and in time acquired great experience in performing these acts of robbery. The Russian Church authorities cruelly persecuted the Ukrainian nation, in particular its best sons and daughters. With a wild fanaticism it fiercely hated and tried to eradicate the Ukrainian language. The Ukrainians were drawn forcibly to Orthodoxy — not by the Orthodox, but, in fact, by the followers of this godless sect of militant atheists"¹.

The words of Rev. H. Budzinskyi form part of the theme of this brief account. In order to understand how, in the hands of certain rulers or ruling classes the Church can become a means of achieving their political imperialistic goals, I would like to recall an example from the time before the birth of Christ. In the last century B.C., ambitious Roman generals like Sulla, Pompey and Caesar, assumed priestly offices, in order to strengthen their power and gain control of the masses, and were unscrupulous enough to resort to the supernatural and relate

¹ *America*, Ukrainian Catholic Daily, Saturday, January 2, 1971: "Antireligious Terror in Ukraine".

themselves with gods². This idea continued under Octavian, Augustus, and the other emperors of Rome³.

The oriental religions emphasised the divine character of the imperial office and conferred absolute power upon the elected emperor, which included religious authority. Beginning with Severus, the emperor was called "deus" — god. With the conversion of Constantine (312-327 A.D.), some changes were made in this basic concept: God chooses the emperor ("The Law Incarnate"), delegates His power to him, and protects him⁴. By this "Divine Right of Kings", the Byzantine ruler was God's vicegerent and the imperial authority was his reflection of divine power. The emperor was an autocrat, and he alone directed policy at home and abroad, he was the supreme lawgiver, judge, administrator and commander-in-chief. The Church, which regarded itself as the avowed champion of Orthodoxy dedicated to the evangelisation of neighbouring peoples, played an important role in the Christian Byzantine policy. Following the example of Constantine the Great, the emperors implemented their power by calling together general councils to discuss Church doctrine and discipline, and the Patriarch of Constantinople, virtually appointed by the emperor, normally worked closely with him. For these reasons, use of the term "caesaropapism" to describe relations between the Byzantine Church and State is misleading⁵.

The real "caesaropapism", however, was revived in tsarist Russia. It was brought to its climax by Tsar Peter I (the Great), and was cherished and greatly practised by his successors. After the fall of the Byzantine Empire, the Muscovite tsars came to regard Moscow as the "Third Rome"⁶ and themselves as the successors of the Emperors of Byzantium, including in their power complete authority over the State and the Church. In order to secure and maintain such enormous authority they were required to be constantly on their guard, ready at any moment to punish anyone, who dared to oppose their imperial power. Such a position and purpose of the tsars explain their "austerity" or, more properly, their "terrorism". This austerity in matters of the State and Church were applied by the tsars premeditatively in order to achieve their political goals. It was accepted by the Muscovite people as a concept of tyrannical, beneficial austerity, on the part of those in power, a "Power" supposedly given by God. In 1434 the tsar assumed the title "Tsar by the grace of God" for the first time. This entitled him to be austere hereditarily since, according to the concept of the Muscovite

2 *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 12, p. 711/2, 712/1.

3 *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, p. 712/1, 712/2.

4 *Ibid.*, Vol. 12, p. 712/1, 712/2.

5 *Ibid.*, Vol. 2, p. 953/1, 954/2.

6 Gregory Luznytsky, Ph.D., *Ukrainian Church between East and West. Outline of the History of the Ukrainian Church*, Philadelphia, 1954, p. 209. Mykola Holubets, *The Great History of Ukraine from ancient times to 1923*, edited by Ivan Tyktor, Lviv, 1935, p. 354.

people, the ruler had to be severe. In the old Chronicles we read: "The power of the Great Prince has to be exercised honestly and severely, one cannot exist without the other. . ." According to the common Russian persuasion, every Muscovite ruler was anointed by God, and received a special grace from Him. Even without the right to celebrate liturgy he was, nevertheless, the high priest because he became the ruler by the "Grace of God"⁷. Many even resigned themselves to the idea that the tsars declared their right to act as the head of their Church in the same manner as the King of Prussia, the Queen of England, and even the King of Greece were the heads of the Church in their respective countries⁸.

The Separation of the Kyiv and Moscow Metropolitanates

So long as the Kyivan Metropolitan was the official head of the Kyiv Metropolitanate and all the Churches of Rus', the Muscovite tsars did not show much interest in Church matters. Even if Great Prince Basil II was unsatisfied with the choice of the Patriarch of Constantinople, who consecrated Isidore (a Greek from Peloponesus) as the Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Rus', he did not object. So, when the newly consecrated Metropolitan came to Moscow in April 1437, the Prince received him graciously, as Talberg relates, "in order not to offend the old traditions"⁹. According to the old tradition, the Patriarch did not consult the ruler in matters of the installation of Metropolitans, at least not in Kyiv and all of Rus'¹⁰. As this occurred at the time of the Council of Florence, the new Metropolitan went to Ferrara to take part. It is remarkable that Great Prince Basil II did not object to this, which meant that he did not yet feel strong enough to dictate to the Church and impose his will on Church matters. However, he did remind the departing Metropolitan Isidore to make a firm stand on behalf of Orthodoxy in order not to bring any new Council decisions to Rus', as they would not be accepted in Moscow. The Metropolitan, however, felt free to make his own decisions, for on July 5, 1439, he accepted and signed the act of Union with Rome at Florence.

At Florence Metropolitan Isidore was raised by Pope Eugene IV to the dignity of Cardinal-presbyter, and was named his "delegatus a latere" for the countries of Livonia, Lithuania, Rus' and Lechistan

7 Luznytsky, pp. 159-160.

8 Glowin, *Progrès en Russie*, Leipzig, 1853, p. 73; cf. Julian Pelesz, *Geschichte der Union der ruthenischen Kirche mit Rom von den ältesten Zeiten bis auf die Gegenwart*, Band II, p. 756. Note 374.

9 Talberg, *History of the Russian Church*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, N.Y., 1959, pp. 137-138.

10 Holubets, p. 278.

(Poland), particularly Halychyna¹¹. On his arrival in Moscow, on March 19, 1441, to attend the Synod called by the Prince, the Cardinal ordered a deacon to read the Decree of the Council of Florence. Great Prince Basil II became infuriated. Rising from his throne, he called the Cardinal a false shepherd, a soul killer, and a heretic, and denounced him for breaking his oath by bringing new teaching on the Holy Spirit, on purgatory, and so on, into the country¹². After this outburst, Cardinal Isidore was arrested and confined in the Monastery of Chudovo, from where he escaped on the night of September 15, 1441, and arrived in Rome in 1443. After Isidore's deposition as Metropolitan of Kyiv and all Rus', the Great Prince did not inform the Patriarch of Constantinople, who had become a uniate. Instead, at the Synod of Moscow Jona was elected the head of the Muscovite Church on December 15, 1448. Because Constantinople was occupied by the Turks, the Moscow hierarchy, in actual fact the Great Prince himself, did not ask the Patriarch to consecrate a Muscovite Metropolitan. During the reign of Jona, the Metropolitanate of Moscow was separated from that of Kyiv, forming two separate Metropolitanates¹³. After deposing the rightful Metropolitan Isidore, and by failing to ask the Patriarch of Constantinople's approval of the newly-elected Metropolitan Jona, Basil II organised a separate Church, independent of Constantinople, and at the same time in schism with the Catholic Church. Hence it appeared that the Prince had acted purposely, as he desired to have the Church of Moscow completely independent and subject only to himself¹⁴.

Prince Basil II's act was a revival of the old European axiom: "Cuius regio, eius religio!" a tendency, which expressed itself in the custom of investiture¹⁵. The conflict during the second half of the 11th and the first half of 12th century, in which the Church opposed the power of the lay feudal lords, was begun by Pope Gregory VII, and was settled, in principle, by the Concordat of Worms in 1122¹⁶. The Catholic Church had a papacy to fight the interference of the laity in Church matters, but since no such principle existed in the Metropolitanate of Moscow, the Muscovite Orthodox Church was unable to defend itself against interference from the rulers of Moscow¹⁷. To assure the Great Prince's influence upon the Church of Moscow, and to exclude any possibility of interference from the outside, the oath of the Metropolitan in 1480 included a remark that no one from Constantinople would be accepted

11 Talberg, pp. 139-140. Cf. Ivan Kholmskyi, *Istoria Ukrainy* (History of Ukraine), Munich, 1949, pp. 127-132.

12 Luznytsky, p. 188.

13 Talberg, p. 140-144.

14 Luznytsky, pp. 191-192.

15 *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, pp. 600-601; 601-602.

16 *Ibid.*, Vol. 7, pp. 601-602.

17 Talberg, pp. 206-207.

as metropolitan or bishop, and that Constantinople would have no part in the consecration and installation of the hierarchy of Moscow's Church¹⁸.

The Tsars take Control of the Orthodox Church of Moscow

To assure the authority of the tsars over the Muscovite Orthodox Church and to prevent the influence of the Pope, Moscow's Metropolitan, Jona, declared that there were only seven valid Ecumenical Councils. Therefore, the Ecumenical Council in Florence was regarded as illegal and the work of the devil¹⁹

Another method of securing the tsar's authority over the Church was the nomination and installation of metropolitans and bishops by the tsar himself without appeal to Constantinople and the formal consent of the Synods. Along with this, the tsar misappropriated the right of deposition or dethroning of metropolitans and bishops. The first example of the election and installation of the metropolitan by the tsar was Metropolitan Jona and his successor Theodosius²⁰. As an example of the deposition of metropolitans and bishops we have Metropolitan Theophil, who was made Metropolitan of Moscow by Great Prince Ivan III, and then deposed and sent to the Chudovo monastery. In his place, Metropolitan Gennadiy was enthroned by the Great Prince, and was later deposed by him, because he attempted to defend his priests. Metropolitan Serapion and Archbishop Pimen were deposed in a similar manner. Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) practised different methods in disposing of unwanted metropolitans and bishops, as, for example, in the case of Metropolitan Philip. The Tsar ordered him to be brought before his court on November 8, 1568, where he was tried, and sentenced to imprisonment in the Monastery of Otrokh in Tver, where he was eventually killed by the Tsar's henchmen on December 23, 1569²¹. Metropolitan Leonid was also killed on the orders of the Tsar²².

In displaying such force, the tsars gained complete control over the hierarchy of the Muscovite Church. Everyone, who dared to oppose them was deposed, exiled or even killed. In extending their jurisdiction over the Church, the tsars meddled with the internal government of the Church, and made decisions in various Church matters. For example, Great Prince Ivan III called the Muscovite hierarchy together in Moscow on the occasion of the consecration of the Uspenskiy Sobor (1475)

18 *Ibid.*, p. 206.

19 Luznytsky, p. 158.

20 Talberg, pp. 210-211, 214.

21 *Ibid.*, pp. 229-232.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 229-232.

to decide in which direction the procession should go around the church, with or against the sun. In 1482 he called the bishops together again to decide the time of day one should drink the blessed water on the Feast of the Epiphany²³. The increased influence of Great Prince Ivan III and of Tsar Ivan IV can be seen in the *Regulations of the Hundred-Chapter Synod*²⁴. The princes and tsars enjoyed great powers in the governing of the Church of Moscow, as shown in the annals, which declare that “the election of bishops was according to the order of the tsar and according to the benediction and hand-imposition of the metropolitans and the Council of the Synod”. It was no wonder that the Muscovite rulers had such great control over Moscow’s Church, and regarded themselves as its leading and most zealous sons. They were its real lords and rulers. The members of the Church hierarchy, with the metropolitan at their head, regarded themselves, at that time, as the most faithful subjects of the tsars. Karamzyn writes that: “Our priesthood, despite its position and importance, did not show any special desire for power possessed by the priesthood of the Western Church, while it served the Great Prince in state matters as a helpful instrument, and did not dispute its wordly power²⁵. As we can see, the clergy were a truly helpful instrument of the tsars and became even more helpful after the reform of Peter I, who made the whole Church of Moscow a part of his executive Cabinet — again using it for his political purposes.

On the one hand, the Muscovite rulers kept Moscow’s Church under their submission, and on the other, they were very careful to protect it from any outside influence. Talberg calls this the Russian “protective instinct”, which kept them far away from every idea penetrating the country from the West, since these ideas were contrary to their Orthodoxy²⁶. The tsars insisted that their subjects, who married outside their country, kept their faith. Thus, Great Prince Ivan III requested Great Prince Alexander of Lithuania, a Catholic, who married his daughter Helen, not to force her to become a Catholic. When this condition was not fulfilled, the Tsar declared war on Lithuania in 1500. In the peace treaty in March 1503, he insisted on the fulfilment of the above-mentioned condition²⁷. Similarly, Ivan the Terrible decided that his relative, the daughter of Prince Vladimir Andreyevich, who was to wed the Danish Prince Magnus, be married during an Orthodox ceremony and the Prince during his own Protestant ceremony. Even if the tsars did not forbid some foreigners from exercising their religion, they punished them instantly when they attempted to spread their teaching among

23 *Ibid.*, p. 223, cf. pp. 211 and 216.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 233-234, 235.

25 *Ibid.*, pp. 270-273.

26 *Ibid.*, p. 273.

27 *Ibid.*, p. 276; cf. Michael Hrushevsky, *A History of Ukraine*, Published for the Ukrainian National Association, Archon Books, 1970, pp. 141, 205-209.

Russian subjects. Thus, Protestant pastor Thomas of the Socinian Community was drowned in the river Dvyna. In the same way all propagation of the Protestant religion was strictly forbidden²⁸. According to the decision of Great Prince Ivan III, some of the heretics of his time were burned at the stake, the rest were sent to various monasteries, or forced to become soldiers in the Muscovite army²⁹.

The Muscovite rulers were far more hostile regarding Catholics. Great Prince Basil II choked the first attempt of Cardinal Isidore to bring Union Between Rome and Moscow. Popes Paul II and Sixtus IV failed to gain in the marriage of the Great Prince Ivan III to Princess Sophia Paleologos, when Ivan compelled her to become Orthodox. In 1518, Pope Leo X tried in vain to persuade Great Prince Basil III towards Union with Rome, and Pius IV futilely waited for the appearance of the Muscovite bishops at the Council of Trent. The eloquent Jesuit, Anthony Possevin, was unable to move Ivan IV towards Union with Rome in return for his help in the Tsar's war against the Polish King Stephan Bathory³⁰. The Orthodox people were also filled with hatred towards Catholicism. Geidenstein explains the steadfastness and obedience of the Muscovite people towards their rulers as part of their religious beliefs. They regarded all those, who professed a religion other than their own, as pagans and infidels, and, according to the rules of their Orthodox religion, they regarded faithfulness towards their ruler as binding to the same degree as their faith in God. They extolled and praised those, who in their last breath kept their faithfulness to the tsars because they believed that the souls of such people, having separated from their bodies, would be immediately transferred to heaven³¹.

Thus, in forbidding other faiths or rites in their own country, the tsars very eagerly tried to convert others to Muscovite Orthodoxy³².

The final step in submitting Moscow's Church to the power of the tsars was to remove its lands and its property³³.

The Creation of the Patriarchate of Moscow

During the reign of Ivan IV the Terrible, Muscovy became an empire. Therefore, it seemed right and proper for the rulers to have their Church independent from the Patriarchs of Constantinople. To further emphasise their "Divine Right", they decided to submit all Orthodox

28 Talberg, pp. 274-275.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 256-257.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 274-276.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 245.

32 *Ibid.*, pp. 202-203, 205-206; cf. Holubets, pp. 354-355. Luznytsky, pp. 449-553; Pelesz, pp. 551-556, 561.

33 Talberg, pp. 265, 201, 204, 269-270.

Churches in other countries to Moscow. In order to be able to achieve this, Moscow's Metropolitanate had to become a Patriarchate. This idea originated with Tsar Theodore Ivanovych³⁴. Pressed by the Turks and in need of financial support, Patriarch Joachim came to Moscow in 1586. This gave the Tsar an opportunity to call a Synod and begin negotiating with the Patriarch regarding the creation of a Patriarchate in Moscow³⁵. These negotiations were successful. In the summer of 1587, Nicholas, a Greek, came to Moscow and announced that after converting their Councils, the Patriarchates of Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria approved the creation of a Moscow Patriarchate. Out of the three candidates proposed by the Synod of January 10, 1589, the Tsar chose Yow. The date of instalment was designated as January 23 of the same year. From the very beginning of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Tsar demanded its complete independence from Constantinople³⁶. In June 1591, the letter announcing the creation of the Patriarchate was brought to Moscow. Moscow was approved as a Patriarchal See, occupying the fifth place after Jerusalem. This last decision did not please the Tsar, who was hoping that his Patriarchate in Moscow would receive the third place³⁷.

Reciprocating the favour of the tsar, the main promoter of the creation of Moscow's Patriarchate, the patriarchs were completely dedicated to the cause of the tsars and the State. When the impostor Demetrius, who was supported by the Poles, entered Muscovy, Patriarch Yow rose up against him with all his might, excommunicated him, declared him an impostor and ordered the Churches in Russia to read the letter informing the people of the life of Demetrius. At the same time, he threatened "anathema" (excommunication) to all those, who dared to support the impostor³⁸. The faithfulness of Moscow's patriarchs can be seen from the example of Patriarch Hermogen, who, despite his dislike for the cunning and lying Tsar Vasyl Shuyskyi, steadfastly stood by him in defence against his assassins³⁹. Following the example of the Patriarch, many Orthodox bishops opposed the Polish King, who supported the impostor. Following them, many monasteries, which defended themselves against the Polish army, offered their money and precious objects to the Muscovite government for the defence of the country⁴⁰. Patriarch Theophan, on his second trip to Kyiv, installed a metropolitan and his bishops. In doing this, he did not forget the

34 *Ibid.*, pp. 300, 301.

35 *Ibid.*, pp. 301-302.

36 *Ibid.*, pp. 303-304.

37 *Ibid.*, pp. 304-309.

38 *Ibid.*, p. 309.

39 *Ibid.*, pp. 313-316.

40 *Ibid.*, pp. 319-321.

unfaithfulness of the Cossacks to the Muscovite tsars. He, therefore, reproached Hetman Petro Konashevych Sahaydachnyi and the Cossacks for their participation in the war against Muscovy in support of the Polish King Wladyslaw and forbade them to do so in the future⁴¹. Similarly, Patriarch Nikon defended the tsar against rebels by reasoning with them, and finally threatening them with excommunication and Divine Judgement⁴².

Reform of the Russian Church by Tsar Peter I (The Great)

Having attained their victory over the patriarchs, the tsars became more aggressive in meddling in Church affairs. At the Council of 1682, the tsar proposed a number of reforms regarding the Church and the priesthood, which expressed the new ideas of the Russian government concerning the role and position of the Church. These became the forerunners of future reforms, which delivered the Russian Orthodox Church completely into the hands of the tsarist government⁴³. After the death of Patriarch Adrian, Tsar Peter I did not care to install another patriarch, but instead made Stephan Jaworskyi, an exarch, the Guardian of the Patriarchal See. As the highest body in the Church, he introduced the Synodal Administration, which, according to his will, became the Overconsistory of the Russian Church. In January 1721, a Statute was proposed by the tsar before the Senate and representatives of the clergy. The rejection of the tsar's proposition was unthinkable, and, therefore, the proposed Statute was accepted⁴⁴. It was composed of three parts. The first part extended the power of the Synodal Administration over the teaching, discipline and cult of the Orthodox Church. The second laid out the exact rules of the Statute, and the third part stated the requirements of competence of individual members of the Synodal Administration. The number of members in the Synodal Administration was revised many times. Originally there was a president, two vice-presidents, four councilors, four assessors and one secretary. The tsar instituted his "overprocurator" as an officer, who was his immovable representative. Even if he was not a member of the Synod, his duty was to check all the decisions of the Synod in order to make sure that it had no executive power without his or the tsar's approval⁴⁵. Through this reform and the appointment of the Synodal Administration, Tsar Peter I and his successors became the real heads of the Russian Orthodox Church. This is confirmed by the oath all members

41 *Ibid.*, pp. 326-327.

42 *Ibid.*, pp. 339, 340-343.

43 *Ibid.*, pp. 377.

44 Pelesz, pp. 744-745.

45 *Ibid.*, pp. 744-746.

of the Synod were required to take: "I profess and assure with this oath that the highest Judge of the Collegium (Synod) is the tsar, our most gracious Lord"⁴⁶.

Having defined the jurisdiction of the Synod as a reflection of the tsar's power, Peter I made the Church a member of his government, thus marking out the limits of its competence. On the grounds of his highest juridical power, the tsar requested that in certain instances the secrecy of the Holy Sacrament of Penance had to be abolished if the good of the State or the prevention of public disorder required it. Therefore, if someone confessed treason, rebellion or intended assassination of the tsar or a member of the ruler's family, and did not wish to abandon his scheme, the priest was obliged not only to refuse absolution, but in keeping with the accord of the tsar's Ordinance of April 22, 1722, had to denounce that man as a dangerous suspect before the police. When the process against the denounced took place, the priest had to appear as a witness and reveal everything that was said in confession regarding the particular crime⁴⁷. The Russian bishops were required to swear in their oath a submission to obey all the rules of the Synod, acknowledging that they would faithfully fulfil their office according to the will of his Majesty the Tsar and the Synod, and would obey all future ordinances of the Synod. In this way the Church became an obedient instrument of the tsar⁴⁸. Thus, Tsar Peter now increased the absolute power that he possessed in the State to encompass the Church⁴⁹. The Synod was again approved by Patriarch Jeremiah III in his letter of September 23, 1723, in which he wrote: "Our humility approves, enforces and declares that the Synod instituted by the tsar is indeed our sister, and all the powers that the four Patriarchates have it has also, and further we remind, instruct and commission the Synod to always hold faithfully all traditions and Canons of the Seven Councils, as well as other customs of the Oriental Church"⁵⁰. Only the sect of "Raskolniki" dared to oppose this arbitrary mandate of the tsar. They saw all the reforms of Peter I as the work of an antichrist⁵¹. At the clergy's petition to restore the Moscow Patriarchate, the irate tsar placed one hand on his chest, and with the other threw his sword on the table shouting: "Look, this is your Patriarch"⁵². In other words, the tsar had the power by the right of his sword. In order to make the idea of a Patriarchate abominable to the people and to make them more willing to accept his

46 *Ibid.*, p. 747.

47 *Ibid.*, pp. 747-748.

48 *Ibid.*, p. 748.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 749.

50 Pichler, a.a. O. II, p. 182; cf. Pelesz, p. 75, Note 363.

51 Pelesz, pp. 759-786.

52 A. Galitsin, *La Russie au 18. siècle*, Paris, 1863, p. 148; cf. Pelesz, pp. 751-752, Note 365.

reforms, the tsar spread the rumour that the patriarchs had close relations with the Pope.

The successors of Peter I entertained and nourished the idea of themselves as absolute rulers of the State and heads of the Church, and continued to use the Church to their political advantage. Similarly to the Protestants, Peter III declared that he was also the Lord of the land, combining in his person both spiritual and worldly power. Furthermore, he declared himself lord of all Church-property and strove to make the Orthodox priesthood similar to the Protestant ministers. Catherine II, who deprived Peter of his throne, and also of his life, continued to follow the example of her forerunners, and enslaved the Church even more. During her reign the Russian Church was rudely humbled. As she was a completely faithless and immoral ruler, there were no limits to her tyrannical regime. Unlike anyone else, she understood the use of religion and the Russian Orthodox Church in achieving her political ambitions. Her successors continued to keep the absolute "caesaropapism" in the Russian Church. Tsar Paul I wanted to celebrate the Liturgy and Alexander I had arbitrarily dissolved rightful marriages and dispensed Orthodox faithful from their vows. Tsar Nicholas, as the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, forcibly incorporated the Ukrainian Catholic Church into Russian Orthodoxy⁵³. Tsar Alexander II canonised Tikhon, Bishop of Voronezh⁵⁴. Having seen the Russian Orthodox Church become a willing instrument in the hands of the ruling tsars, let us now consider how it served Russian imperialism.

The Russian Rulers use the Orthodox Church to achieve their political goals

In 1649 Russian Orthodoxy began to spread to deepest Southern Siberia and also to parts of Manchuria. In 1691 Metropolitan Paul sent his missionaries there with instructions to go to the towns of unbelievers, to instruct them in the Christian faith, and baptize them. Of course, the "courageous armies of Russia" were there to help them along. In Georgia Ivan IV aided the spread of Russian Orthodoxy considerably, but in offering his help to assist the spreading of the faith, the tsar helped himself to the country as well. So in 1650 Georgia's ruler Alexander, together with his people, became subjects of the Russian Empire⁵⁵. This union of the State and the Church under one ruler consolidated the Russian people. In their understanding, there was only one Orthodox country in the world — Russia — and, therefore, they

53 Pelesz, pp. 755-756.

54 *Ibid.*, p. 749.

55 Talberg, pp. 383-387.

regarded all other countries as heretical infidels⁵⁶. Soloviev defends the interference of the Russian government in Church matters against the objections of Jesuit Piotr Skarga, by saying that it was an absolute necessity for the salvation of the Orthodox Church. In actual fact, it was only the power of the Russian tsars that helped the survival of Orthodoxy. The Union of Rome with the Ukrainians and Byelorussians in 1596 shook the Orthodox Church. As an answer to this Union, the Council of Orthodox hierarchy gathered on October 9, 1596, and deposed the Uniate Metropolitan and the Bishops of Vladimir, Lutsk, Polotsk, Kholm and Pinsk under the pretext that they united the Church with Rome without the decision of a General Council of the entire Eastern Church. The action taken by the deposed bishops was considered as an act of the devil. In order to prevent the Union, the Muscovite hierarchy did not refrain even from assassinating Uniate Bishops. The killing of the Archbishop of Polotsk was not accidental, as the Russian historians expect us to believe, but rather it was inspired by Moscow. This was the third attempt to assassinate a Uniate bishop, the first two being unsuccessful. The first attempt was against Metropolitan Michael IV, and the second was against Metropolitan Ipatiy. This attempt was made by John Tupeka, on the instructions of Moscow's Orthodox Church. He only succeeded in wounding the Metropolitan by cutting two of his fingers. The last and this time successful assassination attempt led to the death of Archbishop Josaphat Kuntsevych in Vitebsk on November 12, 1623. His martyrdom marked hope for the Union with Rome, as the Uniates had 3 million followers in 1623⁵⁷. On returning from his second journey to Moscow, Theophan, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, stopped in Kyiv, in an attempt to prevent the spread of the Union throughout Ukraine. Using the powers granted to him by the Patriarch of Constantinople, he consecrated Metropolitan Yov Boretskyi and six bishops in Pecherska Lavra⁵⁸. In 1622 Boretskyi sent his representative, Bishop Isaakiy of Lutsk, to the Tsar to accept the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under his wing⁵⁹.

The Annexation of Eastern Ukraine (Metropolitanate of Kyiv)

In Pereyaslav, on January 6, 1654, Hetman Bohdan Khmelnytskyi brought the Ukrainian Orthodox Church under the protection of the Muscovite tsar⁶⁰. After this act, Metropolitan Makariy wrote thus:

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 387.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 471-486; cf. Kholmskyi, pp. 162-177, 270-273; Luznytsky, pp. 298-300.

⁵⁸ M. Hrushevsky, p. 242-243.

⁵⁹ N. Talberg, pp. 501-503.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 517-518; cf. Kholmskyi, pp. 205-213; Holubets, pp. 473-474; Hrushevsky, pp. 293-297.

“From that time Kyiv’s Metropolitanate was, to a certain extent, actually regarded as being under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople”. Since all the Orthodox people of Lithuania and Byelorussia depended on the Kyiv Metropolitanate, which was occupied by the Russian armies, the Orthodox people living there affiliated their churches and monasteries to Moscow’s Church⁶¹. They were encouraged to make this union by the Russian army⁶². Under the pretext of protecting Orthodoxy, the Tsar sent his troops and occupied Ukraine. Realising the intention of the Russian manoeuvre, the Ukrainian Orthodox hierarchy attempted to separate itself from the Russian Orthodox Church. Thus the newly elected Metropolitan of Kyiv, Dionisius Balaban, asked not to be consecrated in Moscow⁶³. Disregarding the will of the Ukrainian hierarchy, the Synod of Moscow decided to entrust the administration of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to Maxim Filemonov, who was approved by Tsar Alexei, but not recognised by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. After the peace agreement with Poland on May 6, 1686, Russia received Kyiv, Chernihiv, Smolensk and 56 other larger Ukrainian cities on the right bank of the Dnipro river. At this point all opposition was halted because, after the election of Metropolitan Gedeon of Kyiv, on July 8, 1685, Hetman Samoylovych informed Tsars Ivan and Peter of this and asked for the Kyiv Metropolitanate to become the most important of all the Metropolitanates. Furthermore, he asked that Metropolitan Gedeon be consecrated in Moscow, and that the Russian hierarchy should not interfere with the internal decisions of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv. The Synod of Moscow agreed to this, but refused to recognise Kyiv’s Metropolitanate as an Exarchy of the Patriarchate of Constantinople⁶⁴.

Due to pressure from the Turks, Dionisiy, Patriarch of Constantinople, agreed to Moscow’s request, and, by an official writ, brought the Kyiv Metropolitanate under the jurisdiction of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1687. For this he received 200 guldens and 120 sobol-skins⁶⁵. After the death of Moscow’s Patriarch Adrian, Tsar Peter I could not find a candidate for the Patriarchate on whom he could depend, and so he decided to replace the Patriarchate with a “Holy Synod”, which was equal to the Senate of a civil administration. Both the Russian Senate and the Holy Synod were equal in rights and both were directly subject to the tsar. In their oath both bodies proclaimed the tsar as “the highest judge of the spiritual Collegium”⁶⁶. In 1786, all Church property in Ukraine became secularised, and came under the administration of the State.

61 Talberg, p. 519.

62 Luznytsky, pp. 451-466; Pelesz, pp. 561, 584-590; Kholmskyi, pp. 219-229, 241-244.

63 Holubets, pp. 485-487, 492-495, 511; Hrushevsky, p. 422.

64 Talberg, pp. 523-526; Holubets, pp. 508-511; Hrushevsky, pp. 342-344.

65 Talberg, p. 528.

66 Pelesz, pp. 744-745.

With the ordinance of 1788 Church property of the Kharkiv, Katerynoslav, Kursk and Voronezh gubernias, and of the Cathedrals of Moscow, St. Petersburg, Novhorod and other dioceses went to the government. In return, the priests were to receive a special pension-salary from the state. In this way the tsars now had the entire priesthood in their hands, as they now became state employees⁶⁷.

The Annexation of Western Ukraine and Byelorussia

Having annexed the Ukrainian Orthodox Church together with its possessions in Eastern Ukraine, the tsars, with the help of Russian Orthodoxy, began to secure their possessions in the newly acquired countries. In the peace treaty after the first partition of Poland on September 18, 1773, Catherine II agreed to respect the integrity and freedom of the Uniate Church. With an ordinance she declared that when a priest in a Uniate parish died the people were free to request either an Orthodox or a Uniate priest. In practice, however, it was not the people that were asked to decide, but the local government, which was either Russian, Orthodox or pro-Russian, and which usually requested only Orthodox priests. In this manner the Archdiocese of Polotsk lost 800 parishes and 100.000 people within three years (from 1781-1783)⁶⁸. Catherine II made no effort to hide her intention to destroy the Union, and despite her guarantees to respect the rights, freedom, privileges, possessions, cult and order of the Uniate Church, she openly declared that the Uniates had to return to the Russian Orthodox Church or accept the Latin rite. She was not afraid that the Uniates would accept the Latin rite, as the Byzantine rite was deeply rooted in the mind of the people, insofar as they identified this rite with their religion. Russian agents kept the people in this false belief and the Uniate clergy, most of whom were not highly educated, were unable to offer successful resistance. In addition they were closely watched by Russian agents and persecuted by the Orthodox hierarchy and priests. Catherine knew that through the pressure of the Russian ecclesiastical and secular authorities, the people would have to declare themselves Orthodox⁶⁹.

Having once again guaranteed the freedom of religion in Grodno, on July 13, 1793, at a secret meeting in St. Petersburg on the proposition of Archbishop Eugene Bulgaris, Catherine organised an Orthodox Mission Association with Victor Sadkowski, Bishop of Minsk, as its head. The purpose of this Association was to bring the Uniates back to Orthodoxy on her terms. The military forces received orders to assist the Bis-

67 *Ibid.*, pp. 582-600, 602-609, 661-662.

68 Luznytsky, pp. 449-450.

69 Pelesz, pp. 251-252.

hop in his mission. The Uniate priests were banished, imprisoned or exiled and their churches were given to the Orthodox. The people, who tried to defend them, were deprived of their property. According to Catherine's ordinance, all those whose forefathers became Uniate after 1595 (200 years before) were required to return to Orthodoxy. Any church originally built by the Orthodox, at any point in time, had to be returned to the Orthodox, and the parish itself was ordered back to Orthodoxy⁷⁰. The result of Catherine's efforts was the forceful entry of 2,300 Uniate churches into Orthodoxy in 1795. As a result, out of the original 5000 Uniate parishes in 1796 only 200 remained. Thus, by the use of force, Catherine "freely converted to Orthodoxy" some 8 million Uniates along with 9,316 parishes, and liquidated 145 Basilian monasteries. The property of the Metropolitanate and the dioceses were confiscated and given to Russian noblemen⁷¹. The freedom with which this conversion of the Uniates took place is described in a note of February 21, 1774, from the Polish delegation to the Russian Embassy, which read: "Despite assurances that the persecution of the Uniates would stop, we received new complaints concerning the persecutions by the schismatics 'protected' by Russian troops, directed against the Uniates". This note also stated that in the villages of Bila Tserkva, Prebysko, Rokitany, Perehonivka, Semenivka, Moluivka, and many others, the schismatics, assisted by the troops of the Russian Commandant Kruhlov, imprisoned the Uniate priests, had them beaten, and had the keys to their churches taken away and given to the Orthodox. Having cruelly beaten the Uniate priest, Julian Rozvodovskiyi, the schismatic curate of Bershda, hanged him from an oak-tree. In another region, accompanied by Commandant Kruhlov's soldiers, the schismatics gathered together all the people, and had them beaten and then imprisoned. They were only set free after signing their return to Orthodoxy.⁷²

The Russification of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church took place alongside the destruction of the Union⁷³. During the reign of Tsar Nicholas I (1825-1855), who was called "the policeman of Europe" by his contemporaries, the condition of the Uniate Church did not improve. His credo was "autocracy, Orthodoxy and one Russian people". In his meeting with Pope Gregory XVI in 1845, he called himself "an Orthodox Christian" for whom Moscow's Empire was a Divine State where he, the tsar, was the head of both the State and the Church. For him the return of the Uniates to the so-called "father faith" was a political imperative. His "divine kingdom" — the Russian Empire — would not be a true state, if part of the population were separated from him

70 Luznytsky, pp. 451-452.

71 Pelesz, pp. 554-556.

72 Theiner, *Mon. Pol.* IV, N. 179; cf. Pelesz, pp. 561. No. 119; Luznytsky, pp. 660-665.

73 Hrushevsky, pp. 422-423, 469-474.

— “the head of the State and the Church”⁷⁴. Therefore, by the ordinance of 1826, he forbade the printing and distribution of Catholic prayer books. From the four dioceses he created two: one for the Byelorussians in Polotsk and the other in Zhyrovyski for the Lithuanians. These were subordinated to the Church Collegium, which was dependent on the Russian Senate. By the ordinance of 1832 the Tsar ordered that the children of mixed marriages be raised as Orthodox. Roman Catholic priests were forbidden to administer the Holy Sacraments to Uniates, and Uniates were forbidden to attend Latin Catholic services⁷⁵. He ordered the Uniates to use only those liturgical books, which were printed in Moscow, and forbade Uniate priests from conducting catechism lessons in schools or to stress the difference between Catholics and Orthodox. With the help of turncoat-bishops like Joseph Semiashko of Lithuania, Basil Luzhynskyi of Polotsk and Anthony Zubko of Brest, Moscow’s Patriarchate introduced Orthodoxy by force. With such a “free conversion” hundreds of Uniates and many Uniate priests had been killed and about 160 of them were sent to Siberia. On March 25, 1839, only 21 priests signed the act of the “union of the Ukrainian Catholic Church with the Patriarchate of Moscow” on behalf of two and a half million faithful and hundreds of priests. In 1842 in protest against those horrible crimes committed by the tsarist empire and the Muscovite Church, the Holy See issued a White Book of the Martyrdom of the Catholic Church in Ukraine in the Latin, French and Italian languages⁷⁶.

In 1864 the persecution of the Ukrainian Catholic Church began again. The government had taken all Church property and the priests were salaried by the state. Because Bishop John Kalynskyi of Belz did not comply with the ordinance of the Russian government of June 30, 1864, he, together with a part of his Diocesan Council, was exiled to Viatka on October 3, 1866, where he died a martyr’s death on October 20, 1866⁷⁷. Pope Pius IX issued an encyclical whereby he strongly protested against the persecution of Ukrainian Catholics. This had no result⁷⁸. With the help of Ukrainian turncoat-Muscophiles like I. Voitsitskyi, Rev. Krynytskyi, Philip Diachak and Markyl Popel, the government continued with the destruction of the Catholic Church. Hordes of Russian soldiers were sent to chase Catholic priests from their churches and to replace them with Orthodox priests⁷⁹. Where the people defended their churches they were arrested by the soldiers. In the case of Doku-

74 Talberg, p. 664.

75 Luznytsky, pp. 263-264.

76 *Ibid.*, pp. 465-468; cf. Kholm’skyi, pp. 301-302.

77 Luznytsky, pp. 474-476.

78 *Ibid.*, pp. 476-477.

79 *Ibid.*, pp. 472-480, 666-670.

div 16 men were arrested, while each woman, who took part in the protest, received 80 lashes. Working as missionaries, Russian soldiers arrested 43 priests in Kholmshchyna of whom 22 were deported. In many parishes like Kolodnia they killed hundreds of people and left many of them wounded. Countless others were deported. Finally, having terrorised the people, the Russian agents forced signatures from Catholics, who had been deprived of their clergy. January 1, 1875, was declared as the day of the return of the Uniates to Orthodoxy, and the petition with forced signatures was signed by the Tsar in St. Petersburg in May, 1875⁸⁰.

The Annexation of Halychyna and Carpatho-Ukraine

The Soviet Russians occupied Ukraine in World War II. On November 1, 1944, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi died. They arrested all the other Catholic Bishops, who refused to return to the Russian Orthodox Church. All of them eventually died for the Catholic faith with the exception of Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj, who was later made a Cardinal. In order to destroy the Catholic Church, the Communists set up the "Movement for the Reunion of the Greek-Catholic Church with Moscow's Orthodox Church" on May 28, 1945, having received the blessings of Moscow's Patriarch Alexei⁸¹. Over 300 courageous priests signed a protest against this "reunion" and submitted it to the Vice-President of the Council of People's Commissars of the Soviet Union, Molotov, on June 1, 1945, which of course had no result. Agents of the NKVD forced the priests to sign two documents: 1) that they consent to take part in the "Movement", and 2) that they did it freely. Those, who refused to sign were arrested (about 800 from the Lviv diocese alone) and intimidated into signing the document⁸². A pseudo-Synod took place in Lviv on March 8-10, 1946, with 204 priests and 12 laymen taking part. It declared the Union of Brest annulled and brought the Ukrainian Catholic Church under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow. Another group of priests was terrorised into complicity with Moscow's schemes. According to the list of schismatic Bishop Makarius of Lviv, there were 1111 priests who agreed with the schism; 1500 still remained faithful to the Catholic Church despite imprisonment, deportation and torture⁸³. A similar conversion took place in Carpatho-Ukraine, where there were 641,000 Catholics, 281 parishes, 354 priests and 85 seminarians. The Communists fatally injured Bishop Theodore

80 Luznytsky, pp. 480-482; cf. *Les Missionnaires Moscovites chez les Ruthènes Unis*, Paris, 1876.

81 *Ibid.*, p. 582.

82 *The Black Deeds of the Kremlin, A White Book*, Vol. I, pp. 519-521.

83 *Ibid.*, pp. 520-521.

Romzha in a collision between his carriage and a Soviet Russian armoured vehicle. On October 22, 1944, the Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church nominated Nestor, the former Bishop of Uman, as the Bishop of Mukachiv and Priashiv. The "free conversion of the Ukrainian Catholics to the faith of the forefathers" began in February 1946 and was completed in April 1949. Thus, with every means at their disposal — imprisonment, exile, forced labour, and even death (as in the case of Bishop Romzha) — the Communists destroyed the Catholic Church in Carpatho-Ukraine⁸⁴.

So far 29 different nations have succumbed to Communist captivity⁸⁵. Let us ask a very important question: "Who is next?" The answer can be found in the most recent developments on the territory of the USA and Canada. Metropolitan Filaret of Kyiv, a member of the Presidium of the "Society for Cultural Relations with Ukrainians Abroad" notified the members that the Russian Orthodox Church keeps friendly relations with all organisations that move towards friendship and union with its brothers. The Russian Church already has 24 parishes in Canada, 40 in the USA, and several in Argentina. It sends its priests to serve the faithful in these countries and bring "the Word of God" to them. One thing is strange, however, how the Russian Orthodox Church, which officially has 30,000,000 faithful, but only three seminaries with less than a hundred students in each of them, can afford to send its priests to Canada and the USA. Recently the Russian Orthodox Church has even sent the young Bishop Makariy to Canada, who also has jurisdiction over the Russian Orthodox Church in the USA. They also send about 1000 copies of *Pravoslavnyi Visnyk* (Orthodox Herald) to inform the people about the "happy life of the Church in the USSR"⁸⁶.

There are many speeches by Senators and Congressmen and many declarations by Governors made on behalf of the Subjugated Nations⁸⁷! But words alone are not enough to prevent further Communist aggression, which has already set its foot on the soil of North, Central and South America. Immediate and effective action is needed in order to prevent the free states of the American continent from becoming the next victims in the long line of Subjugated Nations.

84 *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 520-521.

85 *Forward-Looking Address in the House of Representatives*. . . Ninety-First Congress, First Session, Washington, 1969. House Document No. 91-184, p. 10.

86 *Svoboda*, Ukrainian Daily, Saturday, January 9, 1971: "Metropolitan Filaret in USSR about The Russian Church in the USA and Canada".

87 *Forward-Looking Address in the House of Representatives*. . . , pp. 11-99.

Appendices

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY CARDINAL LUBACHIVSKY DURING AN AUDIENCE OF THE UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC EPISCOPATE WITH POPE JOHN PAUL II ON OCTOBER 5, 1985

Your Holiness!

It has already become a well-established tradition that after every Synod of Ukrainian Catholic Bishops in Rome we appear before you, Your Holiness, as the successor of the Apostle St. Peter to bow down before you, to express our thanks, and at the same time to ask for your help and blessings for our Church of Martyrs. For 40 years now our Church has endured terrible persecution in our homeland, but internally it has grown stronger thanks to the Grace of God and the blood of its martyrs and confessors.

This is the first Synod that we have held without the presence of our Confessor of the Faith, His Beatitude the late Josyf Cardinal Slipyj, whom a year ago the Lord called away from us to receive his reward of eternal happiness. We are indebted to Your Holiness and to Cardinal Slipyj that we have become united into a single and indissoluble body with our Church in Ukraine. The Synod of Bishops is a powerful unifying factor for our Church — the body, which has inherited the legacy of the united Church and continued it outside our homeland, and laid the foundations of the life and future of our Church. We have inherited this legacy and wish to faithfully preserve and develop it, and in due course to transfer it to the cities of Lviv and Kyiv when they are free.

This Synod took place at the precise time when Your Holiness is trying to draw the first conclusions from the implementation of the declarations of the Second Vatican Council, which gave us clear instructions: "The Eastern Churches, just as those of the West, have the right and are obliged to be administered according to their own particular laws, for these laws have a long and honourable past, are better suited to the

customs of their faithful and appear to be of greater use in all endeavours for the good of the soul" (On the Eastern Churches, No. 5). Our Synods are a very clear example of this, and are a direct result of the realisation of the Council's decrees.

Taking into account the particularly difficult situation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the world today, we ought to turn our attention to the efforts of the Apostolic See on behalf of our Church in the last century, so that the largest branch of the Eastern Catholic Church can finally be assured of its appropriate place in the bosom of the Catholic Church, and that its mission among the other Eastern Churches may be strengthened. Such a decision by the Apostolic See would be in accordance with the decision of the Second Vatican Council, which practically declared the powers invested in the Archbishop Major to be equal to those of a Patriarch, in its decree on Eastern Churches (No. 10), which was confirmed in the draft of the new Eastern canon law.

Such a decision by the Apostolic See would finally bring to life what it had desired to achieve in the last century when the late Pope Gregory XVI (1843-1853) wished to grant the Ukrainian Catholic Church its own Patriarchate so that it could be saved and adequately strengthened at a time when its further development was threatened by persecution on the part of Tsarist Russia. Today the existence of our Church is under an even greater threat from atheist communism not only because of its forced incorporation into the Russian Orthodox Church, but also because of the unceasing persecution of everyone who carries out his duties as a Catholic Christian and is punished for this by fines, prison, deportation to Siberia, and hard penal labour. Finally, in recent years the Communist Russians even try to take the truth and the historic fact of our christianisation, the millennium of which we are preparing to commemorate in 1988, away from us. With the help of every means of disinformation at its disposal Moscow's Orthodox Patriarchate is spreading lies that it was Russia that was christianised in 988, even though Russia as a state was not in existence as far back even as 500 years ago, but entered world history only in the 15th century under the name Muscovy or Moscovshchyna.

By bestowing the Pallium upon the Archbishop Major of Lviv Your Holiness confirmed the existence of the Ukrainian Catholic Church despite all statements of the Moscow Patriarchate that our Ukrainian Catholic Church does not exist, that it is dead and buried. Its existence has been recognised by the Holy See and when our Church had to conceal its existence in the underground catacombs in our homeland, here in the free world it did not become silent. Its prayers are heard openly and legally, beseeching Almighty God to grant us freedom so that God in His Three Images could be glorified in the liberated churches of

Ukraine. I know that this is also your wish and the subject of your prayers, Your Holiness, you, who have expressed so much love and goodwill towards our people and our Church.

It is true that Pope Gregory XVI did not succeed in elevating our Ukrainian Catholic Church to the status of Patriarchate, but it seems to have been the intention of the Founder of the Church, Jesus Christ, that this great act should be achieved by a Slav, our "brother in blood and bone", as Your Holiness you call yourself, so that in this way our Church and our nation could be united with the See of St. Peter, and we could get support in our struggle to return to that single flock to which Christ referred in the words: "And there shall be one flock and one pastor".

The contribution of our Church towards the spread of the Christian faith among the nations threatened by atheism, and the light and joy it brings to the subjugated peoples, tells us that our duty is to grant our Church the status, which it deserves.

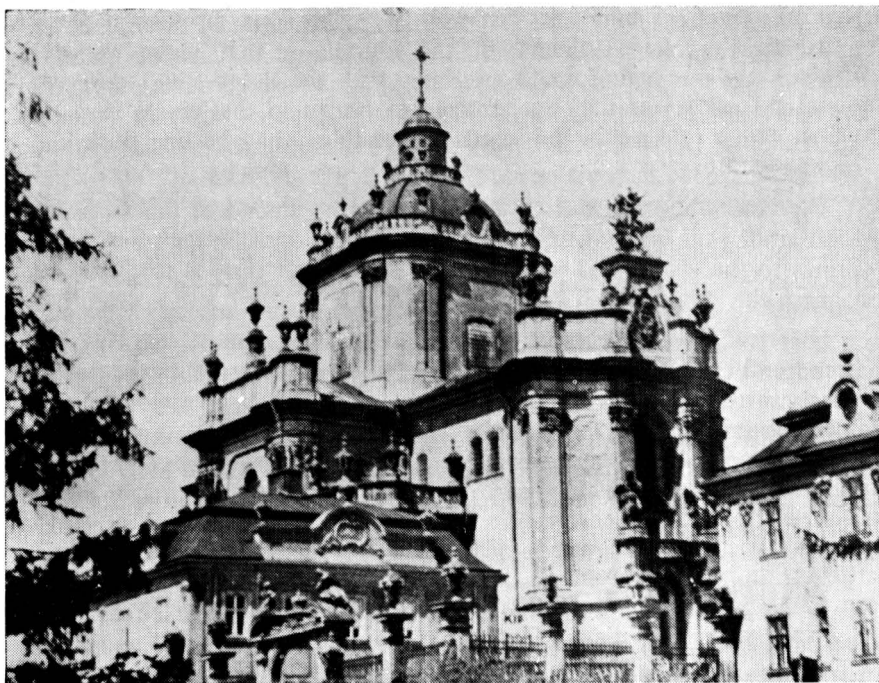
Therefore, Your Holiness, consolidate your faith, and strengthen our hopes and courage in the fight against evil by granting us the Patriarchate for which we ask in this appeal.

Let this latest Synod, which has just taken place, and this meeting with your Holiness be our declaration of faithfulness to the Holy Catholic Church and a plea to Merciful God for a better future for our Church and our nation.

Your Holiness, bless our Ukrainian Catholic Church and our nation.

+ Myroslav I. Cardinal Lubachivsky

Rome, October 5, 1985



Cathedral of St. George, Lviv

ADDRESS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II AT THE FOURTH SYNOD OF UKRAINIAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS, ROME, OCTOBER 5TH, 1985

(Published in Ukrainian in the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*)

Your Eminence Cardinal,
Eminent Brothers!

1) From the bottom of my heart I welcome His Eminence Cardinal Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky, Archbishop Major of Lviv, and all the other Bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, assembled here in Rome at the tomb of the Head Apostle, St. Peter, to take part in the deliberations of the Fourth Synod of Bishops.

According to the rules of the Synod you came here through my blessing for deliberations on the important matters of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, which, for over 400 years now, has remained firmly in communion with this Apostolic See.

The union of your Church with the ecumenical Church around the successor of St. Peter was the beginning of the fruitful development, which could be seen throughout the history of your Church.

Your Church played a great role in the struggle for union in the 16th century. This should be a reason for you to be proud and also an incentive for you to further strengthen your ties with the See of St. Peter. Today, too, the Church greatly desires the unity of Christians. The Second Vatican Council, which we desire to revive by the next extraordinary Synod called to deal with the revival of the spirit and teachings of the Council, described the complete unity of all Christians as one of the main tasks of the Church, and subsequently set out the necessary directives for the attainment of this aim.

With pain in our hearts let us also not forget that your Church, which you represent here at the Synod, has, in the past, suffered much injustice and continues to suffer today for its affiliation to the Catholic Church in communion with St. Peter, and has much experience of persecution.

These painful experiences were always deeply felt by my predecessors at this Apostolic See, and I, too, feel them deep in my heart. For this reason I have often repeated my desire that your religious community should also enjoy religious freedom, to which it has a right the same as

any other religious faith. In this way even representatives of the Holy See insisted upon the recognition of the civil right of the existence for your Church at various gatherings of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which took place in Helsinki.

Although this is your own particular grief, Brothers in the Episcopate, it is also my grief, as your Brother, the first pope from the Slavic race, from where originates this particular care for the salvation of every soul both in the homeland of St. Volodymyr and outside it in the diaspora. The Apostolic See gave your Church an opportunity to express this grief by establishing Dioceses and Eparchies in the Americas, in Canada, Australia, France, England, and Germany, which you represent here at this Synod. But, in shaping the future history of the Ukrainian Church, we cannot leave aside the roots from which it grew or the eminent hierarchy of this Church.

Reverend Brothers!

"It is necessary to go back to the past so that we may come to understand the present and to foresee the future. For, in truth, the mission of the Church, with unfaltering hope, has always been directed to the future" (Apostles of the Slavs, 31).

The day will come, for which we hope and pray and endure our common grief, when the complete unity of all the sons of St. Volodymyr will see the light of day.

2) And how can we fail to mention the important event, which decided your history, when in 1595 the Ukrainian bishops issued the famous declaration stating that it was necessary to reunite the Kyivan Metropolitanate with the Holy See in Rome!

Following that, the Bishop of Lutsk, the Papal Exarch Kyrylo Terlets-kyi, and the Bishop of Volodymyr, Ipatiy Potiy, travelled to Rome as the representatives of the other Ukrainian Bishops. They brought with them the document, which laid out the conditions under which the Ukrainian Church was ready to enter into union with Rome.

3) In his Apostolic Decree, *God is Great and Much Praised*, our predecessor Clement VIII made known the news of this joyful event to the delight of the whole world.

With what joy and benevolence the Roman Church accepted the Ukrainian people, which had joined the unified flock, can also be seen in the Apostolic Epistle, *Blessed be the Pastor*, written on February 7, 1596.

In this Epistle, as a sign of his gratitude, the Bishop of Rome extolled the Act, which had been achieved by the Grace of God, and declared that the customs of the Ukrainian Church and its lawful rites should remain intact. Finally, in a brotherly fashion, he called on the hierarchy to

gather as soon as possible for a Synod of the whole province in order to accept and ratify the union of the Ukrainians with the Catholic Church.

Without this great event your Church and its salutary activity in Ukraine and in many other countries of the world would not exist today and would not have developed to the extent that it did. And you, Eminent Brothers, have this time also gathered in order to ponder over the important issues of the whole Church.

5) On this occasion your diligent efforts and deliberations have a particularly important aim — the worthy celebration of the approaching Millenium of Christianity in Rus'-Ukraine. It is now only 3 years before the great Jubilee of the christianisation of your people.

Although your great Prince Volodymyr, who is rightly regarded as the initiator and champion of the conversion of Rus' to the Christian faith, accepted the religious rites and ceremonies of the East, but being aware of his position not only did he stand, till the end, for the unity of the whole Catholic Church, but also took great care to develop and maintain cordial relations between the Apostolic See and his own state.

Thus the Metropolitan of Kyiv, Isidore, acted in accordance with the oldest tradition of the Ukrainian Church, when he signed the decree by which the Greek Church entered into union with the Latin Church at the Council of Florence in 1439.

6) In more recent times, the bishops and priests, together with their flocks, did not lack the opportunity to demonstrate their courageous spirit and their consistency in the preservation of the Catholic faith in defence of the Church and its holy freedom.

It would give me particular pleasure to give special mention to the ascetic figure of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky, who passed away in God some 40 years ago. When the First World War erupted, he was removed from his see and deported to the far East of the USSR. There he remained under guard for some time, desiring nothing else but to confess his deepest piety before the Apostolic See, completely prepared, should the need arise, by the Grace of God to die a martyr's death for his faith and his flock for whose salvation he had already devoted his strength and efforts for a great part of his life. Forty years ago, too, all the Bishops of Western Ukraine followed in his footsteps together with Cardinal Josyf Slipyj of blessed memory at their head. This eminent figure we recall today on the first anniversary of his death with particular esteem and wonder.

7) In the meantime, dear Brothers, let this saying of the Apostle of Nations give you all strength in your work and your endeavours: "Here are words you may trust: If we died with Him, we shall live with Him; if we endure, we shall reign with Him. If we deny Him, He will deny

us. If we are faithless, He keeps faith, for he cannot deny Himself" (2 Tim. 2, 11-13).

We could not reinforce and conclude our encouragement to you, dear Brothers, more fittingly than with the words of the same Apostle of Nations, who said: "Be alert; stand firm in the faith; be valiant and strong" (1 Cor. 16, 13). Confess your faith bravely before all those, who try to shake it in any way, sparing "no effort to make fast with bonds of peace the unity, which the Spirit gives. There is one body and one Spirit, as there is also one hope held out in God's call to you" (Eph. 4, 3-5).

Remember, Brothers, that "in order to attain complete ecumenism every nation and every culture should bring to a successful conclusion its own particular task laid down in the general plan of Salvation. Each individual tradition, and each particular Church should have time for and should pay heed to other Churches and traditions and at the same time to the ecumenical Catholic community; if it were to concentrate solely around itself, then it would be exposed to the danger of impoverishment" (Apostles of the Slavs, 27).

With complete hope that, with the Grace of God, you will respond to our encouragement with courage and gladness, we wish that the Father of Mercy and God of Happiness may grant you and your Church better and more peaceful times.

Having expressed these thoughts, before concluding my address, I regard it as my duty to thank you, my Brothers in the Episcopate, for your contribution towards this Fourth Synod of the Bishops of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

At the same time, from the bottom of our heart we extend our Apostolic Blessing to all of you and your faithful, especially the priests and members of the monastic orders.

**CARDINAL LUBACHIVSKY'S ADDRESS
DELIVERED AT THE PAPAL SYNOD IN ROME
ON NOVEMBER 25, 1985**

Your Holiness,
Eminences and Excellencies,
Members and Guests!

I now speak for the Ukrainian Catholic Church. The faithful of this Church are not only in their native land of Ukraine; they are also dispersed throughout the world in the various continents. I wish to speak first about the faithful in Ukraine and then of our Church in general.

For the Ukrainian Catholics in Ukraine itself, the Second Vatican Council with its decisions never really occurred. To you this may sound strange, but it is the sad truth of the 20th century. In Ukraine no Catholic bishop, no priest, no layman is permitted to function religiously. For all of them freedom of religion and freedom of conscience do not exist.

My predecessor of blessed memory, Josyf Cardinal Slipyj, Confessor, eyewitness and prisoner for Christ, who for 18 years bore witness to the Church in various prisons, concentration camps and Gulags of Siberia, described our land, before this very assembly in 1971, as "covered with mountains of bodies and rivers of blood". Bloody persecutions, such as during the post-war years, have temporarily subsided, but blatant denial of religious rights is stronger than ever. Distorted facts reach the free world, controlling and biasing public opinion. However, no amount of Soviet misinformation can erase the hideous facts. Our Church is officially outlawed. It exists only underground in great fear of reprisal. I tell you this, in order to remind my dear Brothers in the Episcopate, who enjoy the blessings of the free world, that cruel realities do exist and cannot be ignored in diplomatic silence.

Today, despite the accords of Helsinki and the Holy Father's insistence to respect basic human rights, I stand as Moses before the Pharaoh and proclaim: "Let my people go!" (Ex. 5,4). I also stand before you as Bishop of this Catacomb Church, which has been continuously persecuted by every means by a godless government for the last 40 years. I ask only one favour: namely, that this our highest assembly remember the Suffering Church, and inform those faithful in your pastoral care of the existence of persecuted Christians, now suffering to keep the faith

alive. In St. Paul's words: "If one part is hurt, all parts are hurt with it". (I Cor. 12, 26). If the faithful of the Church in the free world wish to give moral support to their persecuted brothers, they will do much by speaking aloud in their defence and praying for the increase of courageous perseverance. In such Christian solidarity is there genuine proof that we care to further the cause of truth, justice, peace and brotherly love.

There is another matter of which I must speak on this occasion, on this 20th anniversary of Vatican II.

The Ukrainian Catholic Church has been struggling to regain its Eastern heritage, sadly on the decline in the past few centuries. Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi, who led our Church for almost half a century, initiated a return to the Eastern spirituality of our Church. Twenty years ago this movement of rebirth received the seal of approval in the Council's decrees *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* and *Unitatis Redintegratio*. There it was very emphatically stated that those Eastern rite Churches, in full communion with the Apostolic See of Rome, must work strongly to regain completely all their ancestral heritage: canonical, theological, and spiritual (cf. Nos. 4 and 5, *Or. Eccl.*). Vatican II has given us full encouragement to pursue our revival and has helped convince us that we are moving in the proper and necessary direction.

What precisely are we trying to achieve? We wish to live our proper tradition — that of Eastern rite Catholics. Our roots are Eastern. It is important for our souls and the Church that we remain Eastern. We are not searching unusual recognition, nor selfish worldliness, but desire only to follow our own heritage. To be Eastern is not necessarily to be Orthodox. One can be Oriental rite Catholic, just as Latin rite Catholic. We are Oriental rite. This is our heritage. Our existence as both truly Catholic and truly Eastern is the best proof of the universality of Christ's divinely established Church.

As the Eastern Catholic Church, we faithful are deeply concerned about our Eastern Orthodox brothers, who would welcome some overdue clarification from us. To them we "Uniates" are an ecclesiological anomaly. To them we are Latins in Eastern dress because we belong to the Western Patriarchate of Rome. To them we are not a fully-fledged Eastern rite Church in communion with Rome. They consider us to be simply an Eastern rite local group subjected to the Latin rite Church. Eastern ecclesiology finds it difficult to comprehend such a combination. We Catholic Easterners feel very uncomfortable in this present situation. Instead of giving full witness to the universality of the Catholic Church of Christ, we Eastern Catholics, are a hindrance to the witness of our Orthodox brothers in Christ. And indeed we are treated as such. Let us not forget that the Orthodox East, today not yet in union with

the Holy Roman See, is certainly desirous of reestablishing perfect communion with all Christians. We Catholics will some day be called to render an account of our Catholicity and our true universality.

The members of this Synod, who were privileged to participate in the Ecumenical Council 20 years ago, will remember how my immediate predecessor of blessed memory, Josyf Cardinal Slipyj, had asked of the Council on October 11, 1963, that our Church be recognised as one of the Eastern Patriarchates on historical, canonical, ecumenical and pastoral grounds. The Council in its decree for Eastern Churches has made provision for such recognition (cf. No. 11). However, in the last 20 years nothing has been done to proceed accordingly. We find this very discouraging and strange. If the reasoning be a fear of offending existing patriarchates, one is overlooking far weightier reasons. Namely, that the establishment of patriarchates in the Eastern Churches, which are already by their size and organisation ready for that, is required by sound ecumenism and most of all by very practical and pastoral reasons, such as assuring to the faithful the reality of worldwide unity, no matter where fate may have forced them to settle away from their homeland, and of pastoral needs and care to which they are accustomed and for which they do have a right, especially in the modern world. More than a hundred years ago Popes Gregory XVI and Pius IX in the years 1843-1853 desired to proclaim a Ukrainian Patriarchate, for even then our Church was at the danger point of destruction by the Russian Empire. But it seems that Christ himself planned to save this decisive action for the first Pope from a Slavic nation to make such a rewarding proclamation, and this on the eve of the Millennium Jubilee of Ukraine's acceptance of Christianity under the reign of St. Volodymyr the Great. Though our Church has been severely persecuted, God has helped us remain His, as a firm Eastern and Catholic entity — *sui iuris* — with its own synodal body in communion with Peter.

For these reasons I now repeat the request of my predecessor, on behalf of our entire ecclesistical community: namely, that the Ukrainian Catholic Church be accorded the status of a Patriarchate, according to the tradition of the East and the spiritual needs of its faithful, now and in the future.



Cathedral of St. Sophia, Rome

