

THE 'LVIV SOBOR' OF 1946 AND ITS AFTERMATH

Towards Truth and Reconciliation

Edited by
Adam DeVille and
Daniel Galadza

The 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946 and Its Aftermath

Eastern Christian Studies

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For Father Peter Galadza

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIITs	Archive of the Institute of Church History, Ukrainian Catholic University (Архів Інституту Історії Церкви Українського Католицького Університету), Lviv
CARC	Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (Совет по делам религиозных культов), 1944–1965
CAROC	Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (Совет по делам Русской православной церкви), 1943–1965
CRA	Council for Religious Affairs (Совет по делам религий), 1965–1991
GARF	State Archive of the Russian Federation (Государственный архив Российской Федерации [ГАРФ]), Moscow
JMP	Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate (Журнал Московской патриархии)
KGB	Committee for State Security (Комитет государственной безопасности [КГБ])
MP	Moscow Patriarchate (Московский патриархат)
NKGB	People's Commissariat for State Security (Народный комиссариат государственной безопасности [НКГБ]), 1941 and 1943–1946
NKVD	People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (Народный комиссариат внутренних дел [НКВД]), 1934–1946
ROC	Russian Orthodox Church (Русская православная церковь)
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic (Советская Социалистическая Республика [ССР])
TsDAHO	Central State Archive of Civic Associations in Ukraine (Центральний державний архів громадських об'єднань України [ЦДАГО]), Kyiv
TsDAVO	Central State Archives of Supreme Bodies of Power and Government of Ukraine (Центральний державний архів вищих органів влади та управління України [ЦДАВО]), Kyiv
UGCC	Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church (Українська Греко-Католицька Церква [УГКЦ])
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (Союз Советских Социалистических Республик [СССР]), 1917–1991

For further information on archives and abbreviations related to ecclesiastical matters in the Soviet period, see:

- Tatiana A. Chumachenko, *Church and State in Soviet Russia: Russian Orthodoxy from World War II to the Khrushchev Years*, ed. and trans. Edward E. Roslof (London – New York, 2015), pp. vii–viii.
- Victoria Smolkin, *A Sacred Space Is Never Empty: A History of Soviet Atheism* (Princeton – Oxford, 2018), pp. xv–xvi.
- Edward E. Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovationism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905–1946* (Bloomington/IN – Indianapolis/IN, 2002).

THE 'LVIV SOBOR' OF 1946: PERSPECTIVES ON AND CHALLENGES TO A COMMON NARRATIVE*

Adam DeVILLE and Daniel GALADZA

1. INTRODUCTION

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed the greatest persecution of Christians since the time of the early Church, leading, by century's end, to Pope John Paul II calling it a 'century of tears'.¹ This experience of suffering rekindled the desire for unity among Christians in the second half of that century, with the rise of the ecumenical movement leading to dialogue and renewed investigations of ecclesiology, history, and other points of division.

Yet a part of the Church was left out of this dialogue, having been relegated to the catacombs and seen as a stumbling block to Christian unity. Despite the Second Vatican Council's appeal to Eastern Catholic Churches as having 'a special duty of promoting the unity of all Christians, especially Eastern Christians',² the existence of the Eastern Catholic Churches—independent and living Churches that sought to re-establish unity with the See of Rome since the sixteenth century—was seen as an obstacle to this unity.

So great an obstacle were Eastern Catholics in Ukraine that from Friday to Sunday, 8–10 March 1946, culminating in the celebration of the Sunday of Orthodoxy, clergy were assembled in the Western Ukrainian city of Lviv with the aim of liquidating the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic

* The authors wish to thank Regina Augustin and Bernd Mussinghoff of Pro Oriente for their assistance with the publication of this volume; Nadieszda Kizenko and Anatolii Babinskyi for their helpful suggestions regarding archival materials and references; and Peter Galadza for his invaluable insights throughout the planning of the 2016 conference and the editing of this volume.

¹ 'Address to the American Bishops' (24 October 1998), Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19981024_adlimina-usa.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

² *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, par. 24. On this conciliar text, see Adam DeVille, 'Orientalium Ecclesiarum', *The Reception of Vatican II*, eds. M. Levering and M. Lamb (Oxford, 2017), p. 324.

Church (UGCC).³ The Greco-Catholic hierarchy on Soviet-controlled territory had been arrested the previous year by Soviet authorities and sentenced to hard labour in Siberian prison camps.⁴ Despite the absence of any Greco-Catholic hierarchy, a church council, or *sobor*, was convened to force the ‘unification’ of the Greco-Catholic Church to the Russian Orthodox Church. The Catholic Church considered this action unlawful while the Russian Orthodox Church still considers it as a ‘holy act of reuniting’ the ‘uniates’ to the ‘Mother Church’. That the Greco-Catholic Church—a daughter of Constantinople through baptism by St. Vladimir in Kyiv in 988—never considered the Moscow Patriarchate to be its mother Church,⁵ nor desired to abandon union with Rome, did not play a role in the planning of its liquidation by Soviet authorities. Although the method of ‘uniatism’ was condemned by both the Catholic and Orthodox Churches in 1993,⁶ the forced ‘unification’ of Eastern Catholic Churches to the Orthodox Church during the twentieth century has never been openly examined, nor denounced, by the Orthodox Church even though it has all the same unmistakable hallmarks of uniatism.⁷

³ For more on the history of the city of Lviv, see A. Figol, V. Kubijovyč, A. Zhukovsky, ‘Lviv’, *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*, ed. Danylo Husar Struk (Toronto, 1993), vol. 3, pp. 217–229; *Lviv: A City in the Crosscurrents of Culture*, ed. John Czaplicka, special issue of *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 24 (2000). A different scenario played out in the Mukachevo Eparchy and the Trans-Carpathian region: Theodore Romzha of Mukachevo was the poisoned and murdered on 1 November 1947 by Soviet agents and the Greco-Catholic Church was liquidated by the Soviet government in 1949. See ‘Документи відносно ліквідації Греко-Католицької Церкви на Закарпатті’ [Documents concerning the liquidation of the Greco-Catholic Church in Transcarpathia], *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 34/3–4 (1993), pp. 639–650; Christopher Lawrence Zugger, *The Forgotten: Catholics of the Soviet Empire from Lenin through Stalin* (Syracuse/NY, 2001), pp. 430–444.

⁴ Some of these served as ‘laboratories of ecumenism’, where Catholics, Orthodox, Protestants, and ‘anyone who believed in God’ found themselves engaged in a kind of ecumenical dialogue. The camp in Sosnovka in central Russia also served as an underground seminary for the UGCC. See the memoirs of Cardinal Joseph Slipyj, *Йосиф Сліпий, Спомини* [Josyf Slipyj, *Memoirs*], eds. Iwan Dacko and Mariya Horyacha (Lviv – Rome, 2014), p. 220 and pp. 371–372 n. 466.

⁵ For the early history of Ukrainian Christianity, see Sophia Senyk, *A History of the Church in Ukraine*, vol. 1: *To the End of the Thirteenth Century*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 243 (Rome, 1993); ead., *A History of the Church in Ukraine*, vol. 2: *1300 to the Union of Brest*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 289 (Rome, 2011).

⁶ See the ‘Balamand Statement’ from the official international Orthodox-Catholic dialogue, published in 1993 and available here. Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ch_orthodox_docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19930624_lebanon_en.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁷ For a recent attempt to discuss Uniatism in the context of Orthodox-Catholic relations, see the proceedings of a 2019 conference in Stuttgart: *Stolen Churches or Bridges to Orthodoxy?*, vol. 1: *Historical and Theological Perspectives on the Orthodox and Eastern-Catholic Dialogue*, eds. Vladimir Latinovic and Anastacia Wooden (New York, 2021).

2. BRINGING BOTH SIDES TO THE TABLE: A CONFERENCE IN VIENNA

This volume is the result in part of the generosity of the Pro Oriente Foundation of Vienna, which hosted a private conference in that city in June 2016,⁸ seventy years after the titular event led to the attempted abolition of the UGCC. That very nomenclature used to describe the events of March 1946 was and, as readers will soon see, is still today controverted. Many, perhaps most, commentators outside of Russian Orthodox and Russian governmental circles will usually refer to it as the 'pseudo-sobor of Lviv' or the 'so-called synod of Lviv of 1946', recognizing in doing so that there were fatal canonical problems to its legitimacy in the absence of any Catholic bishops. But Russian Orthodox commentators have always maintained, and still today maintain, that it was a legitimate sobor or synod that rightly sought the 'reunification' of the UGCC with its 'mother church', the Russian Orthodox, from which, this thinking runs, it was illegitimately severed at the Union of Brest in 1596.⁹ Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev, former head of the Department of External Church Relations of the Russian Orthodox Church and a member of the International Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue, describes the events in his series of books on the Orthodox Church:

In 1946 the Russian Orthodox Church expanded after the reunification of Ukrainian Greek Catholics with the Orthodox Church. The decision to reunite was made on March 8–9, 1946 at the Council of Lvov, in which 204 Greek Catholic priests and 12 laypersons took part. As a result of this decision more than 3,000 Uniate churches became Orthodox. Thus the tragic effects of the Union of Brest, which had weighed over the Ukraine for four-and-a-half centuries, came to an end. This process of unification, however, took place with the active support of the state authorities, which revoked the registration of Greek Catholic parishes that refused to join the Russian Orthodox Church and subjected the Uniate clergy to fierce persecution. The Russian Orthodox Church was not responsible for these repressions, since it itself had just begun to rise from the ashes.¹⁰

⁸ Particular thanks go to Dr. Johann Marte, Dr. Regina Augustin, and the members of the Pro Oriente Generalsekretariat in Vienna, Austria, for their work in planning and organizing the conference.

⁹ For more on the Union of Brest, see *Four Hundred Years Union of Brest (1596–1996): A Critical Re-evaluation*, ed. Bert Groen, Eastern Christian Studies, 1 (Leuven, 1998); Borys A. Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge/MA, 2001).

¹⁰ Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev, *Orthodox Christianity*, vol. 1: *The History and Canonical Structure of the Orthodox Church*, trans. Basil Bush (Yonkers/NY, 2011), p. 275. For the original Russian, see *Православие* [Orthodoxy], vol. 1: *История, каноническое устройство и вероучение Православной Церкви* [History, canonical

Alfeyev goes on to quote Archpriest Vladislav Tsy-pin, stating that,

according to one researcher, 'having been subjected to incomparably more terrible persecution during the 1930s, the Russian Orthodox Church did not petition for any kind of assistance from the NKVD in the holy matter of joining the Uniates to the Mother Church. The fact that this unification coincided with considerations of state politics could not and should not have hindered the Orthodox Church from admitting those returning to its saving walls.'¹¹

Plainly, then, we have two very different assessments of 1946. This historiographical division has been plaguing Catholic-Orthodox relations in Eastern Europe for decades, and the hope of the conference was that, with greater access to archives and historical documents,¹² scholars from

structure and doctrine of the Orthodox Church] (Moscow, 2008). See also the French translation, published in Paris by Cerf in 2009.

¹¹ Ibid. Quotation from Archpriest Vladislav Tsy-pin, 'Русская Православная Церковь в новейший период. 1917–1999 гг.' [The Russian Orthodox Church in the modern period, 1917–1999], in *Православная Энциклопедия* [Orthodox Encyclopedia], special volume: *Русская Православная Церковь* [Russian Orthodox Church] (Moscow, 2000), pp. 152–153. A recent monograph by Rostyslav Yarema, a priest of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church – Moscow Patriarchate, offers new archival material that shows the strong state interference in the events of 1946. However, he does not link the means and the goals of the sobor and defends it as an act of re-establishing Orthodoxy, justifying it as a suppression of the Union of Brest, which was 'an uncanonical and graceless phenomenon'. See Rostyslav Yarema, *Львовский Церковный Собор 1946 года в свете торжества Православия в Западной Украине* [Lviv Church Sobor of 1946 in light of the triumph of Orthodoxy in Western Ukraine] (Kyiv, 2012), p. 167. For more scholarly perspectives, see Dimitry Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime 1917–1982*, vol. 2 (Crestwood/NY, 1984), esp. pp. 303–310; M. V. Shkarovsky, *Русская Православная Церковь при Сталине и Хрущеве. Государственно-церковные отношения в СССР в 1939–1964 годах* [The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khrushchev. State-church relations in the USSR in the years 1939–1964] (Moscow, 2005), esp. pp. 297–302.

¹² Recent publication of archival material has shown that the hierarchy of the Moscow Patriarchate was initially not eager to bring about the conversion of Greco-Catholics *en masse* by means of the 'initiative group' headed by Fr. Havryil Kostelnyk. Patriarch Alexey I himself was aware of the tactical and canonical problems of planning a church council for Greco-Catholics and favoured individual conversions instead. He even wrote to the Soviet authorities suggesting that a large scale sobor be avoided altogether: 'Are eparchial gatherings necessary? I believe that the convening of eparchial congresses (probably only priests' congresses are assumed, since it is not customary for the Catholic Church to involve the laity in solving church issues) may not only make sense, but also be advantageous as an indication that reunion takes place as a result of the free choice of Uniate clergy, and not under pressure from the Orthodox spiritual leaders with the support of civil authorities ... Is the organization of an All-Uniate Council expedient?' (Нужны ли епархиальные съезды? Я полагаю, что созыв епархиальных съездов [вероятно, предполагаются съезды только священников, т.к. не в обычае католической церкви привлекать мирян к решению церковных вопросов] может

both churches together with other scholars of the period could begin to move towards a common narrative of what happened, in so doing contributing one crucial piece to the on-going process of ecumenical rapprochement and healing of memories.

As readers will soon see, that common narrative still eludes us. But the conference was not in vain insofar as it brought very sharp clarity precisely to those areas where significant questions were still being asked in a sincere manner—e.g., what did Roman popes think and say about this? Is there any canonical support for the idea that it could have been a valid synod? And what did Russian churchmen both know and do about 1946, and to what extent can their actions be considered free and to what extent coerced?¹³ If a commonly agreed upon narrative still eludes us, we are nonetheless now a great deal clearer in our answers to such crucial questions, and relatively clear now as to the few outstanding questions and their attendant stumbling blocks to answering them honestly.

The fact that nominal and historiographical divisions remain is reflected in the policy we adopted in editing the texts for publication: authors have been permitted to keep their own preferences for the spelling of names and places in order to allow them to take their own approach to the question. Apart from basic and generally accepted bibliographic standards of Peeters Publishers of Leuven, we have not imposed a complete stylistic uniformity on this volume because there is no unity, let alone uniformity, in the matters of substance the articles treat. Thus readers will find various

иметь не только смысл, но и пользу как показатель того, что воссоединение совершается по свободному волеизлиянию униатского духовенства, а не под давлением православного духовного начальства при поддержке гражданской власти... Целесообразна ли организация всеуниатского собора?). See Letter 56, Alexey I to G. G. Karlov, 7 December 1945, in *Письма Патриарха Алексия I в Совет по делам Русской Православной Церкви при Совете народных комиссаров — Совете министров СССР, 1945–1970 гг.* [Letters of Patriarch Alexey I to the Council of Russian Orthodox Church affairs at the Council of People's Commissars – Council of Ministers of the USSR, 1945–1970], eds. V. A. Kozlov and S. V. Mironenko (Moscow, 2009), pp. 92–94. Nevertheless, he agreed to collaborate in the end: 'May the Lord bless the approaching Sobor of the Greco-Catholic Church and grant us the joy of union' (Да благословит Господь грядущий Собор греко-католической церкви и да дарует нам радость единения). See Letter 82, Alexey I to S. K. Belyshev, 9 February 1946, in *ibid.*, pp. 126–127, 143, 404, 405

¹³ Pospelovsky notes: 'It is still unclear whether Patriarch Aleksii and his Synod were aware of the violence and repression that went along with the process or if they saw it as the genuinely voluntary product of such enthusiasts as Kostelnyk.' Pospelovsky, *The Russian Church under the Soviet Regime 1917–1982*, vol. 2, p. 308. Compare this with the limited information on the liquidation of the UGCC presented in *Русская Православная Церковь в советское время*, vol. 1, ed. Gerd Stricker (Moscow, 1995), 366–367 (no. 150).

internationally accepted renderings of names and places; and more controversially, readers will find ‘Lviv Sobor’ (with or without quotation marks), ‘synod of Lviv’, ‘pseudo-synod of Lviv’, ‘pseudo-sobor of Lviv’, the ‘so-called synod of Lviv’, and other variants.

Having said that, it must be noted that no serious historian today, outside of an official Russian context, and almost no serious Orthodox commentators—including, this time, some Russian Orthodox themselves—doubts that 1946 was illegitimate and un-Christian.¹⁴ In March 2016 a number of such Orthodox commentators, in an unprecedented and wholly welcome gesture, wrote that in 1946,

the Orthodox Church of Russia, under pressure from the Soviet government, forcefully integrated the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and claimed jurisdiction over it. [...] All serious historians and theologians have no doubts that [this] synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church at Lviv was only a sham. [...] The Orthodox Church of Russia as a whole cannot be held responsible for decisions taken by ecclesiastical authorities who were manipulated or terrorized by the NKVD-KGB. However we [...] feel responsible for the culpable silence surrounding the destruction of this Church by the Soviet regime with the participation of the Patriarchate of Moscow. [...] Thus [...] we assure the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church of our solidarity, of our prayers for all the innocent victims of this Church who were imprisoned, tortured, deported and assassinated by the Soviet government with the complicity of the Patriarchate of Moscow. We humbly ask their pardon for all the injustices they have suffered under the cover of the Orthodox Church and we bow down before the martyrs of this Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church.¹⁵

Such reconciliatory gestures made it easier for scholars and church representatives to come together in Vienna in June 2016 to discuss the difficult events of 1946 and their aftermath.

Looking back on the conference, many participants noted that it is anachronistic to compare the Lviv sobor with the Union of Brest. The

¹⁴ For an overview of 1946 and its aftermath from an Orthodox scholar written not long after the collapse of the Soviet Union, see Alexander F. C. Webster, *The Price of Prophecy: Orthodox Churches on Peace, Freedom, and Security* (Washington/DC – Grand Rapids/MI, 1995), pp. 61–66. On p. 63, Webster notes that the Moscow Patriarchate’s ‘posture betrayed an untoward reliance on the political authority—one that is antithetical to the Orthodox ethos in contravention of a traditional Orthodox teaching (the virtue of religious tolerance). This unfortunate politicization of an internal Church conflict also tended to undermine the rest of the Patriarchate’s political and nationalistic appeal...’

¹⁵ ‘Appeal for the Recognition of the 1946 Lviv “Synod” as a Sham’ (6 March 2016), Online: <https://incommunion.org/2016/03/06/appeal-for-recognition-of-the-1946-lviv-synod-as-a-sham-2/> (Accessed 1 June 2018).

results of conferences on the Union of Brest, which were also organized by Pro Oriente and included both Greco-Catholic and Orthodox participants, were published in several volumes,¹⁶ lending credence to such a conclusion. Likewise, the conclusion at which all participants arrived quite quickly in the discussions of papers was that the state was the main force in the events of 1946 and in the driving seat of all 'reunifications', while theology was in the passenger seat.

Such an arrangement was not entirely new to 1946, even if the methods were different and more brutal. Historical models of the 'Lviv Sobor' could be seen in the tradition of the religious policy of Tsarist Russia.¹⁷ In 1795, 1839, and 1875 all six Greco-Catholic eparchies that came under Russian rule at the end of the eighteenth century were liquidated in less than a hundred years, with significant ideological and procedural similarities, including the political pretext, the use of Greco-Catholic clergy, and the staging of a 'synodal' act of 'reunion' for the purpose of legitimization. Bohdan Bociurkiw, one of the foremost experts on the 1946 sobor, has pointed out similarities between the 'reunion Sobor' of Polotsk in 1839 by three bishops and a part of the clergy which also took place on the Sunday of Orthodoxy.¹⁸

¹⁶ See in particular *Internationales Forschungsgespräch der Stiftung PRO ORIENTE zur Brester Union*, ed. Johann Marte, *Das östliche Christentum N.F.*, 54 (Würzburg, 2004); *Internationales Forschungsgespräch der Stiftung PRO ORIENTE zur Brester Union II*, ed. Johann Marte, *Das östliche Christentum N.F.*, 56 (Würzburg, 2005); *Die Brester Union. Forschungsergebnisse einer interkonfessionellen und internationalen Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Wiener Stiftung PRO ORIENTE*, Teil I: *Vorgeschichte und Ereignisse der Jahre 1595/96*, eds. Johann Marte, Erzbischof Jeremiasz (Anchimiuk), Oleh Turij, and Ernst Christoph Suttner, *Das östliche Christentum N.F.*, 58 (Würzburg, 2010).

¹⁷ For similar policies during the First World War, see *Путь моей жизни. Воспоминания Митрополита Евлогия (Георгиевского), изложенные по его рассказам Т. Манухиной* [The path of my life. Memoirs of Metropolitan Evlogy (Georgievsky), based on his narration to T. Manukhina], *Материалы по истории Церкви* [Materials of Church history], 3 (Moscow, 1994); English translation: *My Life's Journey: The Memoirs of Metropolitan Evlogy*, 2 vols., trans. Alexander Lisenko, *Orthodox Christian Profiles* (Yonkers/NY, 2014).

¹⁸ Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Toronto, 1996), p. 154. This view is put forward in a recent monograph, which describes the preparation, execution, and reception of this forceful act as well as of the 'reunion' in Chełm in 1875. See Nadia Stokolos and Ruslana Sheretiuk, *Драма Церкви: до історії скасування Греко-Уніатської Церкви в Російській імперії та викоринення її духовно-культурних надбань* [Drama of the Church: Toward the history of the liquidation of the Greek-Uniate Church in the Russian empire and the uprooting of her spiritual-cultural heritage] (Rivne, 2011), pp. 95–96 and p. 119.

Regarding 1946, the Russian Orthodox Church representative¹⁹ at the 2016 Vienna conference, Vladislav Petrushko, repeats the claim that the Lviv Sobor, which he said had been accepted by the majority of Greco-Catholic priests in Western Ukraine and was recognized as canonical by all Orthodox local churches, can only be considered alongside the claim that the UGCC itself came into existence in an uncanonical way.²⁰ He argued, in other words, for a moral and historical equivalence between 1596 and 1946. Petrushko repeated these claims less than a month after the meeting of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow in Havana, whose joint declaration expressed the hope that their 'meeting may also contribute to reconciliation wherever tensions exist between Greek Catholics and Orthodox'. The statement continues:

It is today clear that the past method of 'uniatism', understood as the union of one community to the other, separating it from its Church, is not the way to re-establish unity. Nonetheless, the ecclesial communities which emerged in these historical circumstances have the right to exist and to undertake all that is necessary to meet the spiritual needs of their faithful, while seeking to live in peace with their neighbours. Orthodox and Greek Catholics are in need of reconciliation and of mutually acceptable forms of co-existence.²¹

3. PAPERS AND THEIR THEMES

Reconciliation and co-existence do not require uniformity of identity or perspective, but they do require some basic honesty and humility. Such humility and honesty will prevent us from imposing an artificially uniform view on complicated and costly historical events. In seeking to describe

¹⁹ Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev was invited to fulfill this crucial role but was unable to attend.

²⁰ See Vladislav Petrushko, 'Каноничен ли Львовский Собор 1946 года? Беседа с церковным историком Владиславом Петрушко' [Is the Lviv Sobor of 1946 canonical? A conversation with church historian Vladislav Petrushko], *Pravoslavie.ru* (10 March 2016), Online: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/91369.html> (Accessed 1 June 2018). For more reliable sources concerning the clergy statistics mentioned by Petrushko, see Sacra Congregazione Orientale, *Statistica con cenni storici della Gerarchia dei fedeli di Rito Orientale* (Rome, 1932), pp. 196–197; Ivan Hryniokh, 'Знищення Української Церкви російсько-большевицьким режимом' [The destruction of the Ukrainian Church by the Russian-Bolshevik regime], *Богословія* [Theology], 44 (1980), pp. 1–72, here pp. 8–9; Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church* (see n. 13), p. 180.

²¹ 'Joint Declaration of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia', José Martí International Airport – Havana, Cuba, Friday, 12 February 2016, Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2016/february/documents/papa-francesco_20160212_dichiarazione-comune-kirill.html (Accessed 1 June 2018).

those events from 1946, as well as those before and after, a number of themes and issues continue to surface, some of an historiographical, and others of a more properly theological, nature. In the former category the question of whether 1946 has parallels in church history, and how these are to be related, remains a contested point not just among historians but also clergy and laity grappling with how they are to view the conduct of their forebears and sometimes of themselves in a dark and deadly period of the mid-twentieth century. Some, e.g., have alleged that those clergy and faithful of the UGCC who, in 1946, 'opted' to become Orthodox, should be regarded as *traditors*, a term that comes from the Donatist controversy in and around the Church of Carthage in the fourth to fifth centuries. Those making this allegation are in turn sometimes accused of being themselves Donatists, that is, rigorists whose condemnation of others for past events now makes present reconciliation difficult.

One of the salutary reminders offered us by some of the papers in this volume is that people in good faith can and do discern events differently and respond accordingly. Such discernment is often extremely difficult in the context of violence and state-practiced secrecy, factual manipulation, and outright deception. 'Fake news' is not a phenomenon discovered by some American president. It had various effects on people in Ukraine in the aftermath of 1946. *Natalia Shlikhta's* paper in particular is important in showing how real, embodied people reacted differently to the pseudo-sobor—some simply accepting without question the news and fact of 'reunification' with the Russian Orthodox Church; some going along with it (to put it in a Freudian idiom) manifestly but latently or inwardly maintaining their loyalty to the Catholic Church by, e.g., praying silently for the pope; others by going into the underground UGCC; and still others by moving back and forth between the underground UGCC and the officially sanctioned Orthodox Church. Her paper cautions one against the use of simplistic caricatures of one side or the other as either traitors or loyalists—though there are clear enough examples of both.

If there were conflicting responses in Ukraine itself, where, presumably, one at least had more direct access to some of the facts on the ground, then these conflicts were even greater elsewhere. Thus, e.g., bishops and other UGCC émigrés in the West, as *Myroslaw Tataryn's* paper highlights, were themselves often divided as to how to view those who became Orthodox and those who went into the underground. Events were often far from clear to people living them and it is important that those living after them do not unfairly and often unconsciously grant themselves the benefit of a clarity not on offer in 1946 or the immediate aftermath. That

clarity, as Tataryn's paper shows, developed only gradually through three phases over several decades.

In this light, the caution shown by various Roman pontiffs, and documented in *Hyacinth Destivelle's* paper, should not be too hastily condemned as a want of courage or too blithely dismissed as some kind of *Ostpolitik*. As the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar first wrote in 1939, 'the light of the absolute Truth breaks forth only through a vast number of mosaic shards of broken and smoky glass'.²² If some of those living in Ukraine itself sometimes saw through smoky glass, and Ukrainian Catholics in the West did likewise, it is not difficult to see how, in the magisterial documents surveyed by Destivelle, the popes of Rome felt themselves constrained to great circumspection in what they said.

None of this should be taken as a lazy historical relativism or as excuse-making for the conduct of the Stalinist regime or the Russian Orthodox leadership. It is, rather, an appeal for contextual consideration, not least of 'Soviet political religion', as *Cyril Hovorun* has termed it. That 'political religion' is, he concludes, inherently violent, totalitarian, and, it should go without saying, anti-Christian. But it is, he skilfully illustrates with many examples, a perverse simulacrum of Christianity and especially of the Church. Thus Soviet political religion has, for example, its own liturgical rites and hierarchy whose officials function very much as bishops banishing heresies (e.g., Trotskyism). In this light, the state-engineered sobor of 1946 played at being a legitimate council correcting the 'robber synod' of 1596.

Merely because one imitates or plays at something, however, does not mean that one understands it internally or at depth and in detail—as anyone will immediately realize after enduring fatuous lectures about politics from actors who think they know something merely because they play politicians on the screen! Thus it is clear that political religion does not understand canonical processes and requirements internal to ecclesial life and grounded in a very real theology of communion. As a result, the bungling atheistic Soviet authorities in arranging the pseudo-sobor of 1946 failed to meet clear and longstanding canonical criteria for the holding of a legitimate synod. This is the conclusion that *Thomas Mark Németh* and *Teodor Martynyuk* unmistakably arrive at. Their chapter shows clearly that—according to ancient and modern canon law, both Orthodox but especially also Catholic—the gathering of 1946 failed

²² Hans Urs von Balthasar, 'The Fathers, the Scholastics, and Ourselves', *Communio*, 24 (1997), p. 369 (originally published in 1939).

under *all* the relevant criteria to be considered a canonical synod or sobor. No Orthodox church, then or today, would—as one of her leading canonists, Vladislav Tsy-pin, admits—recognize as anything other than completely *ultra vires* a gathering composed of non-Orthodox clergy trying to legislate for an Orthodox church.

And yet, as Németh and Martynyuk conclude, the Russian Orthodox Church to this day will not reject either the ecumenically destructive results of 1946 or its own *sui generis* assessment of the pseudo-sobor's canonicity. Part of the reason for that comes, no doubt, from the fact that there is a long paper trail generated in large part by that very church and published in her own authoritative organs over decades, each time *celebrating* 1946 as a triumphant return to Orthodoxy of wayward faithful who had been snatched away in 1596 at the Union of Brest. **Sergei Firsov** carefully reviews this evidence, going decade by decade, anniversary by anniversary, to review what everyone from the patriarch of Moscow, to local bishops in Ukraine, to aspiring graduate students in search of politically acceptable thesis topics said in praise of the events of 1946. No doubt the formidable powers of disappearance and destruction perfected by agents of both the Soviet and post-Soviet regimes could easily be brought to bear today in eradicating this triumphalist trail of documents if the ROC came to lament this event and wanted these documents to disappear. But the plain fact is that it does not.

Why not? Here **Yury Avvakumov** supplies us with a clear answer: the propaganda value of these documents and this legacy remains high for the ROC, because its propaganda still seems to work. As Avvakumov makes clear, there is a wide and longstanding gulf not always appreciated by everyone between serious historiography and the tawdry, threadbare pseudo-historical propaganda still advanced today in Russia. This propaganda, he demonstrates, continues to try to insinuate that what was done in 1946 to the UGCC can and should be seen as the morally justifiable repudiation of the Union of Brest.

Given how often Brest and its aftermath was raised in 2016 in talking about Lviv 1946, the organizers asked **Frank Sysyn** to talk about the changes before, during, and after Brest. His chapter draws on earlier research he did into the diversity of actors and practices in the region during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This very long view is necessary to answer the question he posed in Vienna in 2016: why was the union so vigorously defended in 1946—to the point of martyrdom and the suffering for almost fifty years of the underground church—when it had such a hard time finding defenders in the same region after 1596?

One of the answers to this question, of course, has to do with the disappearance of certain state actors and the emergence of new ones functioning in different ways. This raises, unsurprisingly, another long-standing and vexatious question, much in evidence in our conference and these papers: what should the relationship be between a national church and the nation-state of which it is a part? The relationship in 1946 in the Soviet Union between Stalin and the Orthodox Church was, of course, extremely delicate after a protracted period of being extremely deadly not just for Orthodox and Catholic but all Christian believers after 1917. After the 'Great Patriotic War' of 1941–1945, the Orthodox Church in 1945 was granted certain freedoms but also reformed its statutes and structures in such a way as to facilitate close control from Moscow.

Natalia Shlikhta's paper very skilfully untangles the lines of direction and control, showing how many political actors, from Stalin and Khrushchev to local party bosses, from Orthodox bishops to erstwhile Catholic clergy and laity, were involved in various aspects not just of the pseudo-sobor in March 1946 but in ongoing monitoring of the results and, where necessary, regular meddling in the church after 1946 to drive out, or at least convert and control, what were labelled as lingering Catholic elements.

Mariya Horyacha's paper fills out the picture in a similar way. She looks in particular at the life and role of Havryil Kostelnyk as leader of the initiative group that culminated in the March pseudo-sobor. Other Catholic priests were involved, and she reviews their activities alongside that of Orthodox and NKGB leaders. Kostelnyk aroused both fierce opposition within the UGCC (from, e.g., the Basilians) as well as varying levels of support and co-operation, none of it enthusiastic and almost all of it coerced via violence, torture, or the threat of the same from government agents. Kostelnyk and the other leaders met pathetic ends within a few years of the pseudo-sobor, all of them dying under highly suspect circumstances.

But Horyacha's paper is not only focused on the past. She asks, in her conclusion, how the present Russian claims about 1946 should be challenged in light of the 1993 Balamand agreement of the official international dialogue between Catholics and Orthodox, and more recently still the 2016 Havana declaration between the pope of Rome and patriarch of Moscow. Both documents forbid the use of 'uniatism' as a method of achieving Orthodox-Catholic unity. That method involves state coercion, which both Catholics and Orthodox have reprobated. If the events of March 1946 do not qualify as a coercive method of uniatism, then the term has no meaning. She thus challenges the Russian Orthodox Church in the present to condemn 1946 in the same terms, and for the same reason, that it condemns 1596.

Another such call is more forcefully and fulsomely sounded by someone who is himself Russian Orthodox: *Antoine Arjakovsky*. His paper takes a wide sweep, looking at the past in order to gauge the prospects of future rapprochement. If the Vienna conference of 2016 did not arrive at a fully worked out common narrative, Arjakovsky looks at some of the factors behind such an outcome before turning to other issues that need attention in the on-going process of striving for Catholic-Orthodox unity.

One thing he highlights is how Catholics but especially Orthodox handle the texts and terminology of the past, and what they and we do with various events of our history. Arjakovsky's approach underscores what von Balthasar noted above: the light of truth can be perceived only through a 'vast number' of shards, and while we may dispute how vast the number is, Arjakovsky insists that it cannot be disputed that there are enough 'shards' to form a not incomplete picture of 1946 as a particularly violent and nasty breakdown of church-state relations and ecumenical relations alike—to say nothing of the murderous consequences for many involved in the sham sobor and many more who lived its consequences for decades after.

What Arjakovsky calls upon his fellow Orthodox to resist, then, is something that Russian Orthodox apologists to the present day still want to do: engage in 'time collapse',²³ merging 1595 into 1946 and indeed into the present. There are connections, to be sure, but no one conflict 'causes', let alone justifies, another, especially when the two in contention here are separated by 350 years in very different ecclesial and political contexts.

That is not to say, however, that there is a complete cleavage between the past and present. Indeed, the whole purpose of the Vienna conference of 2016 was to grapple with just how often the events of 1946 are cited still today as justification for the on-going state of poor relations between Catholics and Orthodox in Ukraine and Russia, and between the Russian and Ukrainian states in the frozen war launched by the former against the latter in 2014. Our struggle—which perdures even after the conference as readers will see upon finishing the papers in this volume—is to find the right balance between dismissing history and historical memory on the one hand, or being imprisoned by it on the other. Thus the past is past, but it is also present. Again von Balthasar:

²³ This phrase comes from the psychoanalyst Vamik Volkan, author of many studies, who has spent his career studying intractable ethno-political and religious conflicts in the Balkans, Israel-Palestine, and Turkey-Cyprus, inter alia. It shows up in many of his works, but most fulsomely in his *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (Boulder/CO, 1998).

We shall not collect the living and sacred documents of our life (and the history of the Church is our life) as a person would collect stamps or butterflies. That would be to demonstrate that we are already dead. Let us read history, our history, as a living account of what we once were, with the double-edged consciousness that all of this has gone forever and that, in spite of everything...every moment of our lives remain mysteriously present.²⁴

4. CONCLUSION

The mysterious ways in which the past continues to inhabit and haunt the present mean that there is much work still to be done. At the most primary level, this requires that Russians read the works of other scholars outside a Russian context. This, as Marcus Plested has recently argued, is not a small problem: 'Russian academia remains to some degree an *alter orbis*, a world unto itself'.²⁵ At a minimum this means that the scholarly work done on Brest and Lviv—most of it published in the last two decades by North American and West-European scholars in languages other than Russian—has not been read, much less carefully considered by Russian speakers.

In looking back on the Vienna conference, it seems that one of the reasons it was not yet ready to bear the fruit hoped for by the organizers ('Towards a Common Narrative') is that many on the Russian side were not and are not yet prepared and equipped to grapple with history and theology done outside the very narrow confines of post-Soviet religiosity and Putinesque historiography. But perhaps those of us outside that contemporary Russian context have not sufficiently appreciated the degree to which critical engagement, let alone acceptance of Western arguments and evidence, might be extremely politically difficult if not impossible under the current regime. (In this light, it is not surprising that, in March 2016, the overwhelming majority of those Orthodox scholars who signed a public statement denouncing the pseudo-sobor of 1946 as a 'sham' were from outside Russia.²⁶)

But let us suppose that we had had a full, fruitful, and lengthy engagement of scholarship, inside and outside Russia, dispassionately discussing

²⁴ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Presence and Thought: An Essay on the Religious Philosophy of Gregory of Nyssa*, trans. Mark Sebanc (San Francisco, 1995), p. 13.

²⁵ Marcus Plested, 'Dispatches from Russia', *First Things* (January 2018), Online: <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2018/01/dispatches-from-russia> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

²⁶ See the statement at n. 15 above.

historical and theological issues alike in their full political and ecclesial context. That in itself would not necessarily guarantee that we would have arrived in Vienna in 2016 at a 'common narrative'. As Plested—and others before him²⁷—have argued, one of the real problems bedevilling Orthodox-Catholic relations and reconciliation today is the construction of Orthodox identities in counter-distinction, if not outright opposition, to Western ones (or at least the perception of the same). This is not a new phenomenon; nor is it limited to Orthodox Christians. Historians, psychoanalysts, sociologists, and psychologists have increasingly recognized over the past four decades now that when it comes to controverted, and still more to traumatic, events of the past they are often not read, so far as possible, dispassionately and objectively on their own (often very messy) terms but are instead read as part of politically pre-determined narratives,²⁸ some of which are cast as either a 'chosen trauma' or 'chosen glory', to cite Vamik Volkan's very useful phrases.²⁹ In this light, it seems very clear that for some Russian Christians today, Brest remains a 'chosen trauma' which was righted with the 'chosen glory' of the 'Lviv Sobor' in the aftermath of the yet more glorious 'great patriotic war' concluded in the summer of 1945 against not only the German enemies of the USSR but also its erstwhile Western allies who were soon to revert to being enemies again.³⁰

What can be done to help those who have not just chosen but in some cases become deeply fastened onto selected narratives of religio-ethno-political glory—or trauma? Here a great deal more work needs to be done to explore means and methods for moving people past these fixations and to provide practical ways to enact the 'healing and purification

²⁷ See, e.g., the very useful collection, *Orthodox Constructions of the West*, eds. A. Papanikalaou and G. Demacopoulos (New York, 2013).

²⁸ An early, and still controversial, work here was Donald P. Spence, *Narrative Truth and Historical Truth: Meaning and Interpretation in Psychoanalysis* (New York, 1982). More recently, see Jeffrey Prager, *Presenting the Past: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Misremembering* (Cambridge/MA, 1998).

²⁹ See especially Vamik Volkan, *Bloodlines: From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (Boulder/CO, 1998).

³⁰ Serhii Plokhyy has suggested the destruction of the UGCC was well underway by Soviet planners as the war against Germany was concluding in April 1945, the same month Stalin ordered the arrest of Metropolitan Joseph Slipyj and the entire UGCC hierarchy: Serhii Plokhyy, 'In the Shadow of Yalta: International Politics and the Soviet Liquidation of the Greco-Catholic Church', *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 35/1–4 (1994), pp. 59–76; *ibid.*, *Yalta: The Price of Peace* (New York, 2010), p. 371. See also Andriy Mykhaleiko, *Metropolit Andrey Graf Sheptytskyj und das NS-Regime. Zwischen christlichem Ideal und politischer Realität*, *Eastern Church Identities*, 1 (Paderborn, 2020) for a new examination of the UGCC hierarchy's activity during the Second World War.

of memories' so often mentioned in Catholic ecumenism for the past four decades.³¹ One such way, which has begun to attract some recent critical attention, is the salutary use of deliberate forgetting in some carefully considered instances.³² It may well be the case that the way forward for Ukrainian Greco-Catholic and Russian Orthodox Christians alike—as, perforce, for all Christians who have sinned against each other—consists in gradually letting go of all of our narratives of both trauma and glory in order that the Lord will find in us those necessary kenotic openings through which He may bring about in all of us a 'forgetting [of] what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead..., the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus' (Philippians 3:13–14), who makes us one as He and His Father are one (cf. John 17:21).

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³¹ For an extensive review and critical discussion of this phrase, see Adam DeVille, 'On the "Healing of Memories": An Analysis of the Concept in Papal Documents in Light of Modern Psychotherapy and Recent Ecumenical Statements', *Eastern Churches Journal*, 11 (2004), pp. 59–88. See also Robert F. Taft, 'The Problem of "Uniatism" and the "Healing of Memories": Anamnesis, not Amnesia', *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 41–42 (2000–2001), pp. 155–196; German translation: 'Das Problem des "Uniatismus" und der "Heilung der Erinnerungen": Anamesis, nicht Amnesia', *ContaCOR* (Collegium Orientale Eichstätt), 4/2 (2002), pp. 102–125.

³² The best place to begin here is Joseph Mueller's landmark article, 'Forgetting as a Principle of Continuity in Tradition', *Theological Studies*, 70 (2009), pp. 751–781.

LVIV AND THE *LONGUE DURÉE*:
ECCLESIAL HISTORY IN UKRAINE
FROM THE UNION OF BREST TO THE SOBOR OF LVIV

Frank E. SYSYN

PREFACE

In 2016 at the Vienna conference I was asked to reflect on the larger, longer context in which the pseudo-synod of 1946 took place. This I did by drawing on some work first published after a conference at Keston College commemorating the millennium of Christianity in Rus' dedicated to the relationships between church, state, and nation in Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union.¹ I am honoured that the editors of this volume have seen fit to publish a somewhat condensed version of my original text.

In Vienna in 2016, I posed the question of why the Union of Brest of 1596, which initially had such difficulty winning support in the Western Ukrainian area usually designated as Galicia, was so vigorously defended after 1946. To answer that question adequately I have found it necessary in what follows to attend to many diverse changes that happened after 1596 involving multiple actors—Polish, Ukrainian, and Russian, *inter alia*—in changing political and ecclesial configurations. In this light, we can ask anew how and why the events of 1946, which appeared to be the final stage of the Russian imperial *revanche* against the Uniate Church² that proceeded with relative success in most of the territories annexed

¹ Frank E. Sysyn, 'The Formation of Modern Ukrainian Religious Culture: The Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', in *Church, Nation and State in Russia and Ukraine*, ed. G. A. Hosking, Studies in Russia and East Europe (London, 1991), pp. 1–22. The article was republished in Serhii Plokhyy and Frank E. Sysyn, *Religion and Nation in Modern Ukraine* (Edmonton – Toronto, 2003) with some updating of bibliography, which has also been undertaken in a few instances in this publication. For the period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the English-language reader now has available the English translation of Mykhailo Hrushevsky, *History of Ukraine-Rus'*, 10 vols. in 12 bks. (Edmonton – Toronto, 1997–2021), of which all volumes have been published by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press. Volumes 4–7 are of particular importance and include updates of literature that appeared since Hrushevsky wrote.

² This term in the period I am considering did not have the same pejorative and offensive connotations it does for many today, so I shall be using it without further qualification in my text.

from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth met with such determined resistance in Western Ukraine as to lead to the emergence of an underground Church.³

The one exception here was to be found in the Chełm (Kholm) eparchy in the 1870s, where the integration of clergy and laity into a Catholic identity and a specific Uniate and westernized ecclesiastical culture played a major role in rejecting Russian Imperial Orthodoxy as did Polish-oriented national activity. In some ways, this prefigured Western Ukrainian allegiances in the 1940s, though with quite different components of ecclesiastical and national identity among the clergy and laity and with a Soviet regime willing to employ the most draconian measures.

How do we understand Chełm Catholic adherence of the 1870s and that of Western Ukraine in the late 1940s? The usual argument for the modern devotion to the Union is the Habsburg reform of the Uniate Church in the late eighteenth century and its transformation into the Greek Catholic Church, which enjoyed equality with the Latin Church. This allowed the Greek Catholics higher standards of education, a more regularized institutional structure, and deeper service by the clergy to the welfare of its flock. The other explanation has been that the Greek Catholic Church gained status as a Ruthenian institution and its clergy took an active role in representing the Ruthenian people or nation. As the clergy abandoned links with Polish identity that some had espoused and as they embraced Rus' or Ruthenian language and culture, they ensured that the Church would remain a central institution in Ruthenian life.⁴ To be sure, some adhered to a generalized East Slavic and Rus' culture and by the end of the nineteenth century even promoted the language and culture of Imperial Russia, but this movement always had difficulty squaring its Russophilism with its Greek Catholicism and its Habsburg loyalties.

That trend would largely break upon the events of World War I when both imperial powers proved to be inept and politically unwise, bungling matters with the local populations and perhaps unnecessarily alienating

³ For more on this, see Barbara Skinner, *The Western Front of the Eastern Church: Uniate and Orthodox Conflict in Eighteenth-Century Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia* (Dekalb/IL, 2009).

⁴ On the Church under the Habsburgs and its national affiliations, see John Paul Himka, *Religion and Nationality in Western Ukraine: The Greek Catholic Church and the Ukrainian National Movement in Galicia* (Montreal – Kingston, 1999). For the Habsburg period and the early twentieth century, see *Religion, Nation, and Secularization in Ukraine*, eds. Martin Schulze Wessel and Frank E. Sysyn (Edmonton – Toronto, 2015).

them. For their part, the Habsburgs moved against purported Russophiles. The Russians, in their occupation of Eastern Galicia from September 1914 to June 1915, mismanaged the religious situation through processes of conversions—some forced—to Orthodoxy while at the same time persecuting Ruthenians of Ukrainian national orientation.

Long before these events, as we shall see in detail below, the Ukrainian national option had already taken hold among much of the Ruthenian population and many of the Greek Catholic clergy. Postulating a unity for Ruthenians in Galicia and Great Ukraine, it too tried to bridge the gap between Greek Catholic and Orthodox Ukrainians. Even though the early modern period left behind a legacy of so many problems over the Union of Brest, it offered models of Ukrainian identity that the Greek Catholics, in Ukraine and those recently emigrated to North America, could embrace, even though they placed the Cossacks and the Orthodox at the core of the Ukrainian national project. If the experience of the North American diaspora can be seen as some indication of lay religious loyalties at the turn of the twentieth century, many of the members of the Church were still willing to abandon Rome in favour of Orthodoxy when the Greek Catholic Church faced an adverse environment, initially to Russian jurisdictions and increasingly to Ukrainian Orthodox groups. In the homeland, the alliance between the Ukrainian national movement and the Greek Catholic Church was decisively sealed during the Polish-Ukrainian war of 1918-1919.

The central figure in infusing the Greek Catholic Church with a centrality in Western Ukraine and ensuring the loyalty of the population to the Church was the great Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi (in office 1901-1944). Combining a new vision for Church union with support for the national cause, the metropolitan played a major role in preserving the Church's influence despite the challenges of secularizing movements and ideologies as well as the attacks of hostile and totalitarian regimes. The final Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine and the death of Sheptyts'kyi in late 1944 set the stage for the Kremlin's assault on the Church. However unequal that struggle was, the commitment of most of the clergy and much of the laity to the preservation of the Church or elements of its traditions and religious culture is clear in their struggles after 1946. At the same time, however, the ability to make compromises with the forced conversion to Russian Orthodoxy could rest not only on arguments of necessity and the lesser evil, but could find justifications that stretched back to the Union of Brest. Such compromises, then, were encoded in the nature of the religious culture that emerged after the

Union as well as in the identity and goals of the Ukrainian national project. In what follows, it is my hope that readers will see how the formation of modern Ukrainian religious culture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries serves as crucial background for the choices and arguments made in 1946 and thereafter.

THE FORMATION OF MODERN UKRAINIAN RELIGIOUS CULTURE: THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the age of Reformation and Counter-Reformation, Cossack revolts and Polish, Muscovite, and Ottoman intervention, the introduction of printing, and the formation of an Eastern Christian higher educational institution in Kyiv—were a period of especially rapid change embodied in a number of historical firsts.⁵ The great Orthodox scholar Georges Florovsky labelled this age ‘The Encounter with the West’ and viewed it as an unstable and dangerous time, which bore only sterile progeny.⁶ Other scholars have seen it as a period of great accomplishments that arose from challenges to the Ukrainian religious genius.⁷

⁵ It should suffice to list a number of firsts in the early part of this period to see the beginnings of modern church life in the Kyiv Metropolitanate. In the early sixteenth century the Belarusian printer Frantsishak Skaryna published the first liturgical books on Ruthenian territories. In the 1560s the Peresopnytsia Gospel was translated into the Ruthenian vernacular. In 1562–1563 Szymon Budny published the first works for Protestant believers in Ruthenian. In 1574, in Lviv, Cyrillic printing finally began in the Ukrainian territories with a primer that was the first of numerous books to teach literacy. In the late 1570s, in Ostroh, Prince Kostiantyn Ostroz’kyi established the first Orthodox higher educational institution. In 1580–81 the Ostroh circle published the first complete Slavonic Bible. In the 1580s the burghers of Lviv strengthened their communal life by organizing a brotherhood or confraternity centred at the newly rebuilt Church of the Dormition. Receiving stauropegial rights that subordinated the brotherhood directly to the patriarch of Constantinople, the brotherhood challenged the authority of the local bishop. For a recent English-language work on this period, see Sophia Senyk, *A History of the Church in Ukraine*, vol. 2 *1300 to the Union of Brest* (Rome, 2011).

⁶ Florovsky’s *Пути русского богословия* (Paris, 1937) has been translated into English as *The Ways of Russian Theology*, part 1, ed. Richard S. Haigh, vol. 5 of *The Collected Works of Georges Florovsky* (Belmont/MA, 1979). See my discussion of his views in my review article ‘Peter Mohyla and the Kiev Academy in Recent Western Works: Divergent Views on Seventeenth-Century Ukrainian Culture’, *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 8/1–2 (June 1984), pp. 156–87.

⁷ The standard positive evaluation of this period is found in vols. 1–2 of Ivan Vlasovs’kyi, *Нарис історії Української Православної Церкви* [Outline of the history of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church], 4 vols. in 5 bks. (New York – South Bound Brook/NJ, 1955–66). Vols. 1–2 cover the church’s history until the end of the seventeenth

In the 1590s Orthodox bishops began meeting regularly at synods to discuss church reforms. In 1595 the bishop of Volodymyr, Ipatii Potii, and the bishop of Lutsk, Kyrylo Terlets'kyi, travelled to Rome to negotiate a church union, which was proclaimed the next year by the metropolitan and five bishops at a synod at Brest. An opposing synod attended by two bishops met in the same city and rejected the union. In the last years of the sixteenth century opposing sides polemicized in print in Ruthenian and Polish about the Union of Brest.

Alarmed by the Orthodox counter-offensive, the Uniates began shoring up their institutions, establishing a seminary in Vilnius in 1601 and creating a Basilian monastic order along west-European lines in 1613. In 1615 the burghers of Kyiv and the inhabitants of the surrounding region formed a brotherhood and later a school. Combined with the printing press at the Kyivan Cave Monastery, these institutions made Kyiv the centre of religious and cultural activities. In 1618 Meletii Smotryts'kyi published a Church Slavonic grammar that established the norms of the language. In 1632 Petro Mohyla, as metropolitan and archimandrite of the Cave Monastery, formed a collegium in Kyiv. By 1642 he had compiled a confession of the Orthodox faith, which was later accepted by other Orthodox Churches.⁸

From the late sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth century the Eastern Christian believers of Ukraine and Belarus, with their activist hierarchs and churches, their numerous schools and monasteries, their scores of new book titles in Slavonic, Ruthenian, and Polish, their numerous innovations in institutions—church brotherhoods, synods of the clergy and the laity, and religious orders patterned on Latin models—and their elaborate debates on church history, structure, and beliefs had entered a new age. From the mid-sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century, church life was fundamentally transformed in Ukraine. With this transformation the foundation was laid for Ukrainian religious traditions that have endured into the modern age. More recent ecclesiastical movements

century; they have appeared in an abridged English translation as Iwan Wlasowsky, *Outline History of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church*, 2 vols. (New York – South Bound Brook/NJ, 1974, 1979).

⁸ The best general treatment of the cultural achievements of this period is Mykhailo Hrushevs'kyi, *Культурно-національний рух на Україні XVI-XVII ст.* [Cultural-national movement in Ukraine 16th–17th cent.], 2nd ed. (n.p., 1919). For the literary production of the period, see *Українські письменники: Біо-бібліографічний словник* [Ukrainian writers: Bio-bibliographical dictionary], vol. 1, *Давня українська література (XI–XVII ст.)* [Ancient Ukrainian literature (11th–17th cent.)], comp. L[eonid] Ie. Makhnovets' (Kyiv, 1960).

find their precedents in this formative period. In acts such as establishing the Orthodox society named in honour of Metropolitan Petro Mohyla in Volhynia in the 1930s and calling on the Soviet government to recognize the legality of the Uniate or Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, twentieth-century Ukrainian churchmen and believers have frequently used the symbols, rhetoric, and institutions that evolved about four hundred years ago.⁹

The major significance of the period for Ukrainian and Belarusian Eastern Christians was their division in 1596 into Orthodox and Uniate believers and churches. Before the late sixteenth century, attempts at uniting Ukrainian and Belarusian believers with Rome had been episodic and had not divided the larger religious community. From 1596 Ukrainian and Belarusian believers have been permanently divided into two churches—one that rejects the church union and holds to Orthodoxy, and another that accepts the union and adheres to Catholicism. Both claim to be the true continuation of the church that was formed when Rus' was Christianized in 988.¹⁰

Modern Ukrainian religious culture emerged in the Kyiv Metropolitanate in the sixteenth century.¹¹ Modern Ukrainian religious culture emerged

⁹ For interpretations of Ukrainian religious traditions, see V'iacheslav Lypyns'kyi, *Релігія і Церква в історії України* [Religion and Church in the history of Ukraine] (Philadelphia, 1925); Dmytro Doroshenko, *Православна Церква в минулому і сучасному житті українського народу* [The Orthodox Church in the past and contemporary life of the Ukrainian people] (Berlin, 1940); Nataliia Polons'ka-Vasylenko, *Історичні підвали УАПЦ* [Historical foundations of the UAOC] (Rome, 1964); and *Релігія в житті українського народу: Збірник матеріалів наукової конференції у Рокка ді Папа (18–20.X.1963)* [Religion in the life of the Ukrainian people: Collection of materials of the scholarly conference in Rocca di Papa (18–20 October 1963)], ed. Volodymyr Ianiv, *Записки Наукового товариства Шевченка* [Notes of the Shevchenko Scientific Society], 181 (Munich – Rome – Paris, 1966).

¹⁰ On the Union of Brest, see the standard work by Edward Likowski, *Unia Brzeska (r. 1596)* [Union of Brest (1596)] (Poznań, 1896), available in German and Ukrainian translations. See also Oscar Halecki, *From Florence to Brest (1439–1596)*, 2nd ed. (Hamden/CT, 1968) for the period before the union. Josef Macha's *Ecclesiastical Unification: A Theoretical Framework Together with Case Studies from the History of Latin-Byzantine Relations*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 198 (Rome, 1974), is an excellent discussion of church life in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The most authoritative volume on the subject is, however, now Borys A. Gudziak's *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest*, Harvard Series in Ukrainian Studies (Cambridge/MA, 2001).

¹¹ Fortunately, there is a bibliography for the large literature on Ukrainian church history of this period: Isydor I. Patrylo, OSBM, *Джерела і бібліографія історії Української Церкви* [Sources and bibliography of the history of the Ukrainian Church], *Analecta OSBM*, ser. 2, sec. 1, vol. 33 (Rome, 1975); and his addendum in *Analecta OSBM*, 10 (1979), pp. 406–87. In this article only a few general works are included in the notes, as

in the Kyiv Metropolitanate in the sixteenth century. From the conversion of 988 until the early fourteenth century, one Metropolitanate of Kyiv and all Rus' had encompassed all East Slavic territories. By the twelfth century Kyiv no longer possessed the paramount political influence in Rus', and the Mongol conquest hastened the disintegration of political unity of the vast Kyiv Metropolitanate. In the early fourteenth century Prince Iurii L'vovych, the Orthodox ruler of Galicia-Volhynia, convinced the Constantinople Patriarchate to establish a temporary Little Rus' Metropolitanate for the eparchies of Peremyshl, Halych, Volodymyr, Lutsk, Turiv, and Kholm. More lasting was the migration of the Kyiv metropolitans in the early fourteenth century to the Suzdal Land, where they later took up residence in Moscow. Until 1458 growing centrifugal forces made the retention of a united Kyiv Metropolitanate seem difficult. The Galician or 'Little Rus'' Metropolitanate was temporarily revived in 1370 on the insistence of Casimir the Great, the Polish ruler who annexed Galicia to his kingdom. The grand dukes of Lithuania, whose domains reached to Kyiv by 1362, sought to have their candidates appointed metropolitan of Kyiv and reside in their state. When they could not do so, they strove to have separate metropolitanates established for their numerous Ruthenian subjects. In general, the patriarchs of Constantinople preferred to retain the unity of the Kyiv Metropolitanate and entrust its headquarters to the steadfastly Orthodox princes of Moscow rather than to the Catholic kings of Poland or to the pagan and, after 1386, Catholic rulers of Lithuania.¹²

The Constantinople Patriarchate brought about the final division of the Kyiv Metropolitanate. Muscovy refused to accept the Union of Florence

are items not included in Patrylo's bibliography, primarily because they are too recent. The basic works on Ukrainian church history are Vlasovs'kyi, *Нарис* (see n. 7); Atanasii Hryhorii Velykyi, *OSBM, 3 літопису християнської України* [From the chronicle of Christian Ukraine], vols. 4–6 (Rome, 1971–1973); Michael Harasiewicz [Mykhailo Harasevych], *Annales Ecclesiae Ruthenae* (Leopolis [Lviv], 1862); Hryhor Luzhnyi'skyi, *Українська Церква між Сходом і Заходом: Нарис історії Української Церкви* [The Ukrainian Church between East and West: Outline of the history of the Ukrainian Church] (Philadelphia, 1954); and Ludomir Bieńkowski, 'Organizacja Kościoła Wschodniego w Polsce' [Organization of the Eastern Church in Poland], in *Kościół w Polsce* [The Church in Poland], vol. 2, ed. Jerzy Kłoczowski (Krakow, 1969), pp. 733–1050. Important works in East Slavic church history are Albert Maria Ammann, *Abriss der Ostslavischen Kirchengeschichte* (Vienna, 1950); Anton V. Kartashev, *Очерки по истории Русской Церкви* [Essays on the history of the Russian Church], 2 vols. (Paris, 1959); and Metropolitan Makarii (Bulgakov), *История Русской Церкви* [History of the Russian Church], 12 vols. (St. Petersburg, 1864–1886).

¹² J. Meyendorff examines ecclesiastical affairs in his *Byzantium and the Rise of Russia: A Study of Byzantino-Russian Relations in the Fourteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1981).

of 1439 or Isidore, the Greek metropolitan of Kyiv. Consequently, it rejected the authority of the patriarchs of Constantinople and declared autocephaly by electing its own metropolitan in 1448. In the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands that were controlled by Catholic rulers, no such rejection of Constantinople's authority or Metropolitan Isidore occurred. Therefore, in 1458, when a new metropolitan of 'Kyiv and all Rus'' was elected for the lands of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland, a permanent break ensued between the two parts of the Kyivan metropolitan see. The change of the title of the metropolitan in Moscow from 'metropolitan of Kyiv and all Rus'' to 'metropolitan of Moscow and all Rus'' brought titulature in line with reality.

For both metropolitanates the events of the mid-fifteenth century hastened the indigenization, indeed the nationalization, of the church. In earlier centuries metropolitans had usually been Greeks, and in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries foreigners still figured prominently (e.g., Gregory Tsamblak and Isidore). At the same time, the cultural distinctness of Russians and Ruthenians, whose vernacular and administrative languages differed and who lived under markedly different political and social systems, made a metropolitan from Muscovy or one from the Grand Duchy of Lithuania more and more alien in the other territory. From 1448 to the declaration of Moscow as a patriarchate in 1589, all metropolitans of Moscow were native Russians, while from 1458 to the subordination of Kyiv to Moscow in 1686 most metropolitans of Kyiv and bishops of the Kyiv Metropolitanate were native Ruthenians. The final division of the Ruthenian and Muscovite churches and their different experiences from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries furthered the evolution of distinct religious traditions.

For the Kyiv Metropolitanate the major problems of the fifteenth century were dealing with the consequences of the Union of Florence and finding a place for itself in Catholic states.¹³ As Constantinople renounced the Union of Florence, the daughter church of Kyiv reasserted its Orthodox allegiance. Nevertheless, in the first century after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the patriarchs displayed little initiative in guiding their distant daughter church, and the church became increasingly dependent on Catholic rulers and Orthodox lay lords. Throughout the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the Polish and Lithuanian governments

¹³ Kazimierz Chodynicki deals with church-state relations in his *Kościół Prawosławny a Rzeczpospolita Polska, 1370–1632: Zarys historyczny* [The Orthodox Church and the Republic of Poland, 1370–1632: An historical outline] (Warsaw, 1934).

enacted legislation that placed the church and its believers in a disadvantageous position in comparison with the Catholic Church. Although the Protestant Reformation weakened the privileged position of the Catholic Church, the Protestant believers and their Catholic opponents engaged in an intellectual battle in which the Orthodox Church was unprepared to take part. Western Christian political dominance and intellectual and organizational superiority combined to challenge a Kyiv Metropolitanate that could not depend for support on Orthodox rulers, domestic or foreign, and that found its Slavonic cultural inheritance deficient in answering the new challenges. Faced with the increasing defections to the Protestants and Catholics, particularly from among the Orthodox nobles, the Kyiv Metropolitanate was endangered by dissolution in the sixteenth century. The response to the challenges brought about numerous innovations in religious culture. One of the responses, however—the acceptance of union with Rome by the metropolitan and most of the bishops—brought about an institutional division in the metropolitanate. After 1596 the Orthodox Church had to compete with a Uniate Kyiv Metropolitanate.

From 1596 to 1620 the Orthodox Church had no metropolitan and was viewed as illegal by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In 1620 Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem consecrated Metropolitan Iov Borets'kyi and five bishops. The government viewed the election of Borets'kyi and his successor, Isaia Kopyns'kyi, as illegitimate. Bowing to pressure from the Orthodox nobility and the Zaporozhian Cossacks, the newly elected King Władysław IV and the Polish-Lithuanian Diet recognized the Orthodox Church as legal in 1632, but assigned only half of the eparchies of the metropolitanate to the Orthodox and required the election of a new hierarchy to replace the one ordained in 1620.

From 1632 to 1647 Metropolitan Petro Mohyla strove to strengthen the Orthodox Metropolitanate's institutional structure throughout the Commonwealth, including in the eparchies assigned to the Uniates. Mohyla used his wealth and influence with the government to carry out a far-reaching programme of developing education and printing, as well as of the reform of church practices. He entertained the possibility of a union with Rome on better terms than the Union of Brest, but never made a final commitment.¹⁴

¹⁴ Thanks to Stepan T. Golubev's *Київський митрополитъ Петръ Могила и его сподвижники (Опытъ церковно-историческаго изслѣдованія)* [The Kievan metropolitan Peter Moghila and his companions (An essay of ecclesiastical history)], 2 vols. (Kyiv, 1883, 1889), this is one of the best-studied periods in Ukrainian church history. See also *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 8/1–2 (June 1984), a special issue on the Kyiv Mohyla

Mohyla's successor as the Orthodox metropolitan of Kyiv, Syl'vestr Kosiv (1647–1657), led the church in more turbulent times. The Cossack revolt that developed into a Ukrainian uprising improved the position of the Orthodox Metropolitanate on a number of occasions. In 1649 King John Casimir of Poland promised to abolish the church union, and the church gained advantages, even though the commitment was never carried out fully. In the territories controlled by Hetman Bohdan Khmelnyts'kyi, both Latin-rite and Uniate institutions and lands were handed over to the Orthodox. There were, however, negative consequences of the revolt and the establishment of the Cossack Hetmanate for the Kyiv Metropolitanate. The Pereiaslav Agreement (1654) placed the status of the metropolitanate in question. Its leadership feared correctly that ties with Muscovy would result in Russian interference in church affairs and the eventual transfer of the metropolitanate from the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Constantinople to the patriarch of Moscow.¹⁵

Already in Metropolitan Kosiv's time the Muscovites insisted that the metropolitan limit his traditional title of 'Kyiv, Halych, and all Rus'' to 'Kyiv, Halych, and all Little Rus''. In addition, victorious Muscovite armies in the Grand Duchy of Lithuania sought to detach Belarusian areas from the Kyiv Metropolitanate and annex them to the Moscow Patriarchate. Kosiv died in April 1657, four months before Hetman Khmelnyts'kyi. At this critical political moment for Ukraine the clergy of the Kyiv Metropolitanate, with the authorization of the new hetman, Ivan Vyhovs'kyi, elected Dionysii Balaban as metropolitan with the blessing of the patriarch of Constantinople. Balaban supported Vyhovs'kyi in his break with Moscow and his negotiation of the Union of Hadiach (8 September 1658), through which he sought to reintegrate the central Ukrainian lands into the Commonwealth as a Rus' duchy, guarantee places in the Polish-Lithuanian Senate for the Orthodox metropolitan and bishops, and abolish the Union of Brest. The failures of Vyhovs'kyi and the Hadiach policy forced the metropolitan to abandon Kyiv and take up residence in the territories controlled by the Commonwealth. Until his

Academy; in particular, see there Ihor Ševčenko, 'The Many Worlds of Peter Mohyla', pp. 9–40, reprinted in his *Ukraine between East and West: Essays on Cultural History to the Early Eighteenth Century* (Edmonton – Toronto, 1996), pp. 164–186. On government policy, see Jan Dzięgielewski, *Polityka wyznaniowa Władysława IV* [The religious policy of Władysław IV] (Warsaw, 1985).

¹⁵ For the history of the Orthodox Church in the late seventeenth century, see Natala Carynyk-Sinclair, *Die Unterstellung der Kiever Metropole unter das Moskauer Patriarchat* (Munich, 1970).

death in 1663, Metropolitan Balaban could not exercise control over the Ukrainian territories on the left bank of the Dnipro River. The Muscovite authorities appointed Bishop Lazar Baranovych of Chernihiv as administrator in these territories in 1659, thereby beginning the division of the Kyiv Metropolitanate along political boundaries.

Political events rapidly eroded the unity and autonomy of the Kyivan metropolitan see in the second half of the seventeenth century. In 1685–1686, during the election of Metropolitan Gedeon Chetvertyns'kyi, the Muscovite government arranged, by means of pressure and bribes, the transfer of the right to consecrate the metropolitans of Kyiv to the patriarch of Moscow, albeit without transfer of the metropolitanate and with retention of the obligation to commemorate the patriarch of Constantinople (whose perspective on these developments is newly available in documents published by his successor in 2018¹⁶). In practice the Kyiv Metropolitanate was dismantled in stages and incorporated into the Moscow patriarchate. The Ukrainian Orthodox clergy had a great impact on the emergence of an Imperial Russian Orthodox Church and by the nineteenth-century only traces of a particular Ukrainian Orthodox tradition and culture remained. Nevertheless, the particular cultural and religious traditions of the late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century metropolitanate and the unique position of Kyiv endured well into the eighteenth century. It served as a model for twentieth-century movements supporting the formation of autonomous and autocephalous churches in Ukraine and Belarus.

The Uniate heir to the Kyivan metropolitan see was not able to win a mass following in the Ukrainian lands until the late seventeenth century, but it did produce dedicated followers and important traditions. The mediocre metropolitan Mykhailo Rahoza, who acceded to the church union, was followed by the energetic Ipatii Potii (1601–13) and Iosyf Ruts'kyi (1613–37) as metropolitans of 'Kyiv, Halych, and all Rus'. They weathered numerous setbacks. The disappointment that two bishops and a large body of the clergy and the laity would not accede to the church union was followed by the blows of the Polish-Lithuanian Senate's refusal to grant seats to the Uniate bishops, the Diet's concessions of benefices to the Orthodox, the government's unwillingness to move decisively against the 'illegal' Orthodox metropolitan and hierarchy

¹⁶ Ecumenical Patriarchate, *The Ecumenical Throne and the Church of Ukraine: The Documents Speak* (2018), Online (English and Greek): <https://www.goarch.org/documents/32058/4830467/The+Ecumenical+Throne+and+the+Church+of+Ukraine+%28ENG+LISH%29.pdf> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

consecrated in 1620, and the recognition of the Orthodox Metropolitanate as an equal competitor to the Uniate one in 1632. In the first fifty years the Uniate Church was more successful in attracting followers in the Belarusian territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania than it was in the Ukrainian territories of the Kingdom of Poland, except for the Kholm region.

The great Cossack revolt of 1648 placed the very existence of the Uniate Church in doubt. Nevertheless, in the second half of the seventeenth century the Uniate Kyiv Metropolitanate began to take shape, assisted by support from Rome and some zealous Catholics in the Commonwealth. The retention of all Belarus, Galicia, and right-bank Ukraine by the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth after 1667 ensured the victory of the church union in these lands by the early eighteenth century. Reaching its greatest extent in the eighteenth century, the Uniate Church took on its own stable ecclesiastical form at the Synod of Zamość in 1720.

That synod has often been regarded as the pinnacle of 'Latinization' and as such would solidify the identity of the Uniate Church through the eighteenth century onwards until, slowly and incompletely, such Latinizations (as seen, e.g., in Zamość mandating the introduction of the *filioque* in the creed, the heavier emphasis on praying for the pope of Rome, and other liturgical peculiarities such as eliminating the addition of hot water to the chalice) would gradually be challenged in the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries by the leadership of Metropolitan Sheptyts'kyi.¹⁷ This process would divide the Church even in Sheptyts'kyi's day and only accelerate after the Second Vatican Council gave strong encouragement to Ukrainian Catholics to purge Latin accretions.¹⁸ It would appear that the western Ukrainian lands with their dense network of parishes and their loss to the Commonwealth in 1772 seem to have retained more elements of earlier Eastern and Ruthenian traditions than many areas of the Right-Bank and Belarus.¹⁹

¹⁷ For more on this, see Peter Galadza, *The Theology and Liturgical Work of Andrei Sheptytsky (1865–1944)*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 272 (Rome, 2004). On the question of 'Latinization' in particular, see also Peter Galadza, 'Liturgical Latinization and Kievan Ecumenism: Losing the Koine of Koinonia', *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 35/1–4 (1994), pp. 173–194.

¹⁸ For more on this, see A.A.J. DeVille, 'Orientalium Ecclesiarum' in *The Reception of Vatican II*, eds. M. Lamb and M. Levering (Oxford, 2017), pp. 324–346; Jean Paul Lieggi and Stefano Parenti, *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, *Commentario ai documenti del Vaticano II*, vol. 3, eds. Serena Noceti and Roberto Repole (Bologna, 2019), pp. 13–162, esp. pp. 97–103.

¹⁹ On the Uniate Church in this period, see Larry Wolff, 'The Uniate Church and the Partitions of Poland: Religious Survival in an Age of Enlightened Absolutism', *Harvard Ukrainian Studies*, 26/1–4 (2002–2003), pp. 153–244.

The triumph of the Russian Empire over the Commonwealth was to devastate the Uniate Church, so that it would only survive in the Galician lands annexed by the Habsburgs, the very territories that had been so anti-Uniate before 1700. Still, the Galician metropolitan see that was established in 1807 continued the traditions of the Uniate Kyiv Metropolitanate. Despite changes in titulature and legal rights, today the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church asserts its direct claims to the heritage of the Metropolitanate of Kyiv, Halych, and All-Rus'.²⁰

The major tradition of this period, for both Orthodox and Uniates, was the emergence of new religious forms that represented an absorption and adaptation of influences from Latin Christianity, which had accompanied the control of the Ukrainian lands by Western Christian powers in the fourteenth century. At the core of Ruthenian culture was a deeply rooted Byzantine-Slavonic tradition embodied in a church that maintained an institutional structure permeating the thousands of settlements in the Ukrainian and Belarusian lands. As an institution of the Rus' faith, the church functioned in a conserving role for a local culture while, at the same time, connecting it to a Byzantine past, a larger Orthodox community, and a supranational Slavonic culture. Latin Christian political domination was accompanied by the placement of the Orthodox Church in an inferior position and with restrictions on the Orthodox and their worship. Consequently, the Rus' church in Ukraine experienced the perils that religious pluralism poses for a church in a subservient position. As Latin Christian culture evolved and flourished, the Orthodox of Ukraine found themselves representatives of an increasingly isolated and inadequate cultural tradition.

From the heights of Kyivan theology to the popular Christmas carols, the Ukrainians accepted outside influences without losing their religious and cultural heritage. In Ukraine there were no religious divisions, such as the great schism in Russia, over the introduction of new liturgical forms. Even those who objected to Western influences, for example, the polemicist Ivan Vyshens'kyi or the Trans-Dnipro monks, were usually too familiar with the 'other' to be able to expurgate it from their own thought or to avoid it in totality. The division within the Ukrainian community arose over a more substantive issue—union with Rome and a change of faith. Although both Orthodox and Uniate Ukrainians have undergone periodic movements to diminish Latin and Western Christian

²⁰ Although Velykyi's *Timonuc* [Chronicle] is a publication of his radio lectures, it is based on his extensive study and editing of sources for the Basilian Fathers' *Analecta*. Until a more scholarly history of the Greek Catholic Church is written, it remains the best comprehensive account.

influence on their religious culture, the Westernization of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries is so deeply embedded in their religious tradition that it cannot be uprooted.²¹

The active role of the laity constitutes a second enduring tradition in Ukrainian church life. Laymen became involved in church affairs and spiritual life and new institutions emerged. The form that the Uniate Church took at the end of the seventeenth century and the remaking of the Orthodox Church in Ukraine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries undermined this role of the laity and lay organizations, but new circumstances have frequently caused a revival of earlier traditions and institutions.²²

In the early seventeenth century, the need to compete for supporters also influenced the Uniate Church to pay heed to the laity. However, as it lost the support of the great nobles, major church brotherhoods, and the Cossacks, the Uniate Church, influenced by Roman practices, reduced the role of the laity. Ultimately it turned to laymen who were not its members—Latin-rite Catholic nobles—to strengthen its position.

A third element of the religious experience of the age was the 'nationalization' of the church and the articulation of a subjective Ruthenian national consciousness based on the view of the church as properly a national institution. The church had always been the Ruthenian church, the embodiment of the conversion of the Rus' rulers and their people in the tenth century. By the sixteenth century new conditions deepened the nation-bearing character of the church. The extinction of Rus' dynasties and polities made the church the only direct institutional link to Kyivan Rus'. The assimilation of many members of the secular elite to Polish culture, accompanied by religious conversions, augmented the role of the church as a spokesman for the Ruthenian tradition. Polish penetration of Ukraine, the development of a Polish vernacular literature and concept of nation, and the deprecation and later persecution of Orthodoxy by Polish clerical leaders and authorities combined to intensify national-religious feeling, in which the Ruthenian people and the Ruthenian church were viewed as one. The church not only embodied the national identity; it also frequently used the Ruthenian language in administration and publications, albeit without advocating the abandonment of Church

²¹ On the convergence of cultural traditions, see Eduard Winter, *Byzanz und Rom im Kampf um die Ukraine, 955–1939* (Leipzig, 1942).

²² On national consciousness in this period, see Teresa Chyńczewska-Hennel, *Świadomość narodowa szlachty ukraińskiej i kozaczyzny od schyłku XVI do połowy XVII wieku* [National consciousness of the Ukrainian nobility from the turn of the 16th to the middle of the 17th century] (Warsaw, 1985).

Slavonic. All of these factors heightened Ruthenian national feeling and the identification of the church as the suprastructure of 'Ruthenian nationhood'. The mix of religious and national sentiment was especially apparent in the organization of church brotherhoods among the Ruthenian burghers, because these burghers, who were subject to discrimination, developed an intense ethno-religious sentiment in an environment in which they competed with other ethno-religious communities—Polish Catholics, Armenians, and Jews.

Even the Union of Brest, which divided the Ruthenians, worked to intensify the identification, as both sides strove that all Ruthenians should be one in faith. At the same time, however, it favoured more sophisticated thinking on Ruthenian national identity, since suddenly church and 'nation' were not coterminous, and polemicists had to discuss the religious divide within the Ruthenian people. The essence of the debate was the historical question of which faith Grand Prince Volodymyr the Great had accepted. In Ukraine, therefore, it inspired knowledge of the Kyivan Rus' past as the cradle of Ruthenian national and religious culture. Even the Protestants occasionally invoked Volodymyr and the conversion as a means of securing legitimacy. While each church could deny the other's legitimacy, it could not deny that there were Ruthenians of another religious persuasion. Orthodox might still see themselves as part of a greater Orthodox world, but they clearly viewed themselves as part of a Ruthenian (or, after the mid-seventeenth century, Ukrainian or Little Rus') division of that world, both as an ecclesiastical and a historico-linguistic community. After 1596 they also had to integrate into their worldview the adherence of fellow Ruthenians to Rome. At least the intellectuals, men such as Meletii Smotryts'kyi and Adam Kysil', articulated these issues, and Smotryts'kyi argued that conversion did not mean a change of nationality, since blood—not religion—defined nationality.²³ The concepts were amorphous, and the unstable political and religious situation prevented their crystallization. But Ukrainians had begun the discussions of religious, national, and cultural issues that have continued to the present. In modern times Ukrainians frequently invested the church with the national significance that it assumed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, especially when other potential national institutions were abolished or usurped.

²³ For Smotryts'kyi's works, as well as an introduction and bibliography by David Frick, see *The Works of Meletij Smotryc'kyi*, Harvard Library of Early Ukrainian Literature: Texts, 1 (Cambridge/MA, 1987). On Kysil', see my study *Between Poland and the Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adam Kysil, 1600–1653* (Cambridge/MA, 1985).

A fourth tradition, or rather experience, of the churches in Ukraine was that of accommodation or conflict of churches with state powers. The relations of a number of political entities (the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Cossack Hetmanate, the Ottoman Empire, the Crimean Khanate, Muscovy/the Russian Empire) with the two Ruthenian churches were diverse and frequently contradictory. In general, however, the leaders of both churches of the Kyiv Metropolitanate found that their church structure and religious traditions had to be restructured in order to adjust to political rulers. Political power has determined much in Ukrainian religious history. Desire to obtain political influence and find favour with the ruler explains the Union of Brest to a considerable degree. Weak central government in the Commonwealth and successful utilization of internal centres of power (Prince Ostroz'kyi, the Zaporozhian Cossacks) and external ones (the Ottomans, Muscovy, the Eastern patriarchates) explain the reason for the survival of the Orthodox Church. Ultimately, however, that church could only ensure long-term existence by coming to terms with king and state—whether through the compromise of 1632 or the ostensible willingness to discuss a new union. In like manner, the Uniate Church survived assaults by Cossacks, nobles, and burghers because it had advocates in the government of the Commonwealth, kings, and senators, as well as Vatican nuncios, who influenced government policy.

In the second half of the seventeenth century, metropolitans and bishops strove for stability amidst an unstable political situation. Uniate hierarchs sought to avoid the consequences of political compromises, such as the Union of Hadiach, which were deleterious to the interests of their church. Ultimately the division of Ukraine between the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and Muscovy (1667, 1686) and the rise of Catholic intolerance in the Commonwealth worked to the Uniates' advantage. By the turn of the eighteenth century the sees of Peremyshl, Lviv, and Lutsk accepted the church union, and the real foundations of the Uniate Church were laid in the Ukrainian territories controlled by Poland.²⁴

The Orthodox clergymen and metropolitanate had greater options and more diverse constituencies. Metropolitan Kosiv sought to come to an accommodation with the Polish-Lithuanian authorities and to minimize the effect of the Pereiaslav Agreement, while Metropolitan Balaban supported Hetman Vyhovs'kyi's policy of reintegrating Ukraine into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth as the Duchy of Rus'. Bishops Metodii Fylymonovych and Lazar Baranovych adjusted to the influence of the

²⁴ For more recent scholarship on this, see Richard Butterwick, *The Polish Revolution and the Catholic Church 1788–1792* (Oxford, 2012).

Muscovite church and state in Ukraine, even at the price of undermining the unity of the Kyiv Metropolitanate. In general, all the Orthodox churchmen found that the church must eventually accommodate to political power, although the period contained many examples of attempts at avoiding this hard reality. Still, the subordination of the Kyiv Metropolitanate to Moscow in 1686, the loss of the western Ukrainian eparchies to the Uniates, and the church's anathema of its great patron, Hetman Ivan Mazepa, in 1708 revealed how political power would draw ecclesiastical boundaries and determine the role of the church.

Ultimately the failure to establish a political entity uniting the Ukrainian territories undermined the position of the local Orthodox church. In the late sixteenth century suggestions were made that the patriarch of Constantinople should migrate to the Ukrainian territories, and in the early seventeenth century various plans envisaged Kyiv as the centre of a patriarchate. Metropolitan Mohyla made Kyiv one of the major seats of the Orthodox world, and in the seventeenth century it appeared that the Kyivan metropolitans might see the prestige of their church raised by the formation of a new Orthodox state on their territory. That possibility receded rapidly after 1660.

Both the Orthodox and Uniate Churches were reorganized along the lines of dominance of Moscow-St. Petersburg and Warsaw in Ukraine in the eighteenth century. By the early eighteenth century the Orthodox metropolitan residing in Kyiv had lost most of his metropolitanate's faithful, controlled by Poland, to the Uniates, while the Chernihiv Eparchy, though part of the Hetmanate, was subordinated directly to the Moscow Patriarchate. Kyiv might still be the home of great monasteries and churches, but the Kyiv Metropolitanate had been dismantled, and by the end of the eighteenth century even the particular practices of the Ukrainian church were largely abolished. In the Polish-controlled territories, the Kyiv metropolitan's Uniate competitor could only use Kyiv in his title, but not reside in the city. His large church in the Belarusian-Ukrainian territories was to a considerable degree Latinized and Polonized. The Uniate Church lost not only the upper classes to the Latin rite, but also much of its active self-identification as a Ruthenian national church that had inspired the formulators of the church union. In the eighteenth century it became the instrument for binding Ukrainians and Belarusians to the Commonwealth that some had hoped it would be in the late sixteenth century.²⁵

²⁵ The relations of the Orthodox and Uniate Churches with the political entities that controlled Ukraine have not been sufficiently studied. On the Hetmanate, see Mykola

A fifth tradition in Ukrainian church affairs of the period was the emergence of a religious, literary, and artistic culture that was specifically Ukrainian, rather than Ruthenian or Belarusian-Ukrainian. The centrality of the church, clergymen, and religious themes in intellectual and cultural pursuits permeated early modern Ukrainian culture. Indeed, religious culture influenced even secular cultural expression, such as administrative buildings, portraiture, or political tracts, because the clergymen and church schools controlled education. Political, economic, and social changes advanced the formation of new Ukrainian cultural models in the seventeenth century.²⁶ The existence of a national Ukrainian culture, closely allied with the church and religious culture, provided an enduring example for relations between church and culture and for styles in Ukrainian religious art, architecture, and music for subsequent generations.

A sixth tradition of the period was the formation of two churches—Orthodox and Catholic—that share the same religious culture. Both groups not only developed out of the church of St. Volodymyr, but were formed from similar influences and conditions in the century before and after the Union of Brest. Locked in heated combat, they were always aware that they were essentially one church and one tradition, distinct not only from the Western churches, but also from other Eastern churches. The Uniate Ruthenians did not easily fit into the norms and practices of the Roman church. The Orthodox had too fully imbibed the influences of the West and the political-social conditions of Ukraine to feel comfortable among other Orthodox churches. Institutions, men, books, practices, and ideas passed from one group to the other in this formative period of modern Ukrainian religious life. Catholic coreligionists have distrusted the Uniates' Catholicism, just as other Orthodox have been suspicious of the full Orthodoxy of Ukrainian believers. They have had some cause to do so, since shared Ukrainian religious characteristics and consciousness have waxed and waned, though they have never died out. In this way they have produced a certain internal Ukrainian ecumenism.

Chubatyi, 'Про правне становище Церкви в козацькій державі' [On the legal position of the Church in the Cossack state], *Богословія* [Theology], 3 (1925), pp. 19–53 and pp. 181–203. More recently, see Serhii Plokhyy, *The Cossacks and Religion in Early Modern Ukraine* (Oxford, 2001).

²⁶ Histories, such as Archimandrite Teodosii Sofonovych's *Кройніка* [Chronicle], traced the history of Ukraine at the same time as the new Cossack elite provided patronage for art and music. For a discussion of Sofonovych's work and of cultural processes in early modern Ukraine, see my article 'The Cultural, Social and Political Context of Ukrainian History-Writing in the Seventeenth Century', in *Dall'Opus Oratorium alla Ricerca Documentaria: La Storiografia polacca, ucraina e russa fra il XVI e il XVIII secolo*, 285–310, ed. Giovanna Brogi Bercoff (Rome, 1986).

The first century after the Union of Brest, when both churches had salient national characteristics and even consciousness, was a time when that which united the two churches seemed very real. Such characteristics, so often troubling to religiously homogeneous neighbours, give an especially modern ring to many statements of the age. Consider the declaration of Adam Kysil' before an Orthodox synod that was composed of clergymen and laymen calling for conciliation between Orthodox and Uniates in 1629:

Gentlemen, you are not the only ones to weep. We all weep at the sight of the rent coat and precious robe of our dear Mother the Holy Eastern Church. You, Gentlemen, bemoan, as do we all, that we are divided from our brethren, we who were in one font of the Holy Spirit six hundred years ago in the Dnipro waters of this metropolis of the Rus' Principality. It wounds you, Gentlemen, and it wounds us all. Behold! There flourish organisms of commonwealths composed of various nations, while we of one nation, of one people, of one religion, of one worship, of one rite, are not as one. We are torn asunder, and thus we decline.²⁷

Throughout this period, the struggle to re-unify the Kyiv Metropolitanate continued. Acceptance that two religious groups would arise where only one had existed came only slowly. Although subsequent divergence in religious culture and traditions has made the existence of Orthodox and Uniate believers among Ukrainians less difficult to accept, the continued instability in relations between the two groups derives in part from awareness of their common origins and shared characteristics. Consequently, each group finds the existence of the other more troubling than it finds the existence of Roman Catholics, Protestants, or Greek and Russian Orthodox. Frequently, however, the two groups have found that the bond of shared religious culture and national loyalties is so strong that denominational affiliations are set aside.

A seventh tradition that arose in the period was an elevation of the Ukrainian churches to more than local significance. The Union of Brest constituted the largest lasting union of Eastern Christians with Rome and brought the Ukrainian and Belarusian territories to the attention of a wider Christian community. It served as a model for unionizing efforts among the Ukrainians of Hungary and the Armenians of the Polish Commonwealth. Clergymen who were active in promoting the church union, such as Metodii Terlets'kyi, used their experience in the Balkans. In discussions of how to gain acceptance of the church union, programs for the

²⁷ Frank E. Sysyn, *Between Poland and the Ukraine: The Dilemma of Adam Kysil, 1600–1653* (Cambridge/MA, 1985), p. 61.

erection of a patriarchate in Kyiv only loosely affiliated with Rome were formulated but never realized.

Although the Ukrainian churches have never again occupied as important a place in the Christian community as they did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the experiments and plans of this age have inspired important modern, twentieth-century spiritual leaders and church movements. Iosyf Ruts'kyi served as a model of a Uniate hierarch with a broad vision of the relation between the Eastern and Western churches for Metropolitan Andrei Sheptyts'kyi. Petro Mohyla provided an example for making Kyiv the centre of a reformed, reinvigorated, virtually independent local Orthodox church for Metropolitan Vasyl' Lypkivs'kyi.

The seven traditions outlined comprise only one method of assessing the significance of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in modern Ukrainian religious culture. All are not of equal importance, and each is but a means to analyze the rich Ukrainian religious experience of the early modern period. Other 'traditions' can surely be added, all of them illustrating that Ukrainian religious culture underwent major changes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that have shaped the Ukrainian religious experience throughout the dark days of the post-war period of the twentieth century.

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ABSTRACT:

This article looks at the context of the Union of Brest of 1595/1596 to document many and varied changes in Galicia, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, and Tsarist Russia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries involving Greek and Latin Catholics and various Orthodox churchmen as well those on the political stage. What becomes clear is that this is a period and a region very familiar with dramatic (and often coerced) changes in religious and political allegiance, and that the Union achieved in Brest would be regularly contested and nearly defeated on a number of occasions well before 1946. With the exception of the Chełm (Kholm) eparchy in the 1870s, the union that would be defended so strongly after 1946 across Western Ukraine had in that territory often struggled to survive over the previous centuries.

SOVIET POLITICAL RELIGION

Cyril HOVORUN

Soviet policies regarding religion should be regarded in a broader framework of what has been called ‘political religion’. This framework is as relevant to the Soviet regime, as, for instance, Marxist ideology of the ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’. That the communist state professed a sort of religion does not contradict its intrinsically atheistic character.

Indeed, the Soviet Union was officially an atheistic state. Its ideology regarded religion as incompatible with Soviet society. In Soviet eschatology God is eliminated by historical process leading to a communist future. Thus the will of history, for Marx, replaced the will of God. It would normally be sufficient just to wait until religion dies when the last believer does but the Soviet leaders did not want to wait for the historical process to be accomplished on its own. They did everything possible to make this future happen sooner, by persecuting religion. In a sense, this was a sort of *synergeia* of the communist state with its deity—history.

Paradoxically, although the Soviet state fought against religion and tried to expel it from all domains of communist society, its methods resembled those of its enemy—religion. This paradox was noticed by the French sociologist Raymond Aron: ‘Socialism is a religion by virtue of being an anti-religion. While it denies the beyond, it brings down to earth some of those hopes that transcendent faith alone had the power to elicit’.¹ Aron rendered this paradox by an oxymoronic expression ‘secular religion’—*religion séculière*. During the twentieth century, this was the only religion capable of moving mountains, he remarked.²

There were several reasons why an atheist state would accept a surrogate of religion. One of them was a need to sell its ideology to the masses, which until recently were faithful and pious. The marketing strategy of Marxism in a religious society was to present atheism as a ‘secular religion’. Another reason was to boost the legitimacy of the regime in

¹ Raymond Aron, ‘L’avenir des religions séculières’, in Raymond Aron, *Histoire et politique: Textes et témoignages* (Paris, 1985), pp. 369–370; English translation: Daniel Gordon, ‘In Search of Limits: Raymond Aron on “Secular Religion” and Communism’, *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 11/2 (2011), pp. 140–141.

² *Ibid.*, p. 383.

the eyes of people. In other words, the Soviet regime wanted to sell to the Russian people not just ideology, including atheism, but also itself. There was no better device to increase the legitimacy of the regime than by preaching it as a religious institution. Italian Guglielmo Ferrero described in 1942 how this worked in all totalitarian regimes of his time:

This exaltation [of masses about their authoritarian rulers] can only be perceived through an emotional crystallization of admiration, gratitude, enthusiasm, and love around the principle of legitimacy that transforms its imperfections, limits and lack of common principles into something that is absolute and inspires devotion. This fervour and this total, sincere, joyful but partly illusory acknowledgment of the superiority of power causes legitimacy to achieve its complete maturity and highest degree of effectiveness, which then transform that legitimacy into a kind of paternalistic authority.

What are the means for achieving this fullness of legitimacy? There are many devices that can be used.... We should add to these the parades, processions, military reviews, triumphal displays, warrior assemblies, great public festivals, the pomp of great religious, and civil celebrations and other such ceremonies.³

In line with this observation of Ferrero, the Soviet Communist cult centred on Vladimir Lenin. He was praised and venerated as an eternally alive deity. A whole cult developed around him, including veneration of his 'relics' in the mausoleum. His writings were considered a communist 'New Testament'. Any piece of writing, either scholarly or journalistic, in the humanities, social sciences, or science, was supposed to quote him. The 'revelations' by Lenin were preceded by the 'Old Testament' penned by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. Leninism, as an interpretation of Marxism, was declared the Marxist 'orthodoxy'. This doctrine was clarified and verified by 'ecumenical councils'—the congresses of the Communist Party. The Communist Party, as the *magisterium* of the Soviet religion, showed no mercy to 'heresies': Trotskyism, Maoism, Titoism, and others were all ruthlessly anathematized and suppressed.

There were complex initiations into the hierarchies of discipleship of Lenin. First, the seven-year-old *Oktiabriata*—the 'October kids'—called thus after the 1917 October revolution, were 'baptised' into the new religion. Then at the age of ten, the *Oktiabriata* were confirmed and entered the ranks of pioneers. Then, at the age of fifteen, the worthiest youth were admitted to *Komsomol*—the Communist union of youth. They were like 'deacons' of the new religion, while members of the Communist

³ Quoted from Emilio Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (Princeton, 2006), p. 5.

Party constituted a caste of 'priests' of the Soviet religion. First secretaries of the regional committees of the Party, who enjoyed the plenitude of power in their regions, functioned in the capacity of 'bishops.' The *Politburo* of the Communist Party was reminiscent to Russians familiar with the Holy Synod of the Orthodox Church in the times of the tsars. Finally, the general secretary of the Communist Party was the 'patriarch' of the Soviet state. Thus, the entire hierarchical structure of the Orthodox Church was replicated in the Soviet bureaucracy.

The USSR was not the only totalitarian regime in the twentieth century having a quasi-religious character. As a matter of fact, the other modern totalitarianisms similarly employed religious symbolism and metaphysical references. In the words of Raymond Aron, they offered 'rival metaphysical interpretations or, more correctly, dogmas' because 'they need their actions and sacrifices to be justified by an absolute value'.⁴ Because of this similarity, Communism, Fascism, and Nazism were commonly identified as 'political religions'. The word was coined by Alexis de Tocqueville, who thus characterised the French Revolution.⁵ For him, this revolution featured a 'body of doctrine', which was a 'sort of political Gospel or Koran'. Just as 'Islam simultaneously had soldiers, apostles, and martyrs', so the French Revolution had its own ones.⁶ For a long time the word remained forgotten, until it was used again to define the totalitarian regimes in the twentieth century. A prominent student of these regimes in our days, Emilio Gentile has defined 'political religion' as

the sacralization of a political system founded on an unchallengeable monopoly of power, ideological monism, and the obligatory and unconditional subordination of the individual and the collectivity to its code of commandments. Consequently, a political religion is intolerant, invasive, and fundamentalist, and it wishes to permeate every aspect of an individual's life and of a society's collective life.⁷

[It is] a form of sacralization of politics that has an exclusive and fundamentalist nature. It does not accept the coexistence of other political ideologies and movements, it denies the autonomy of the individual in relation to the collectivity, it demands compliance with commandments and participation in its political cult, and it sanctifies violence as a legitimate weapon in

⁴ Raymond Aron, 'L'ère des tyrannies d'Élie Halévy', *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*, 46/2 (1939), p. 306.

⁵ Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the Revolution* (Chicago, 1998), p. 328.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 325.

⁷ Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (see n. 3), p. xv.

the fight against its enemies and as an instrument of regeneration. In relation to traditional religious institutions, it either adopts a hostile attitude and aims to eliminate them, or it attempts to establish a rapport of symbiotic coexistence by incorporating the traditional religion into its own system of beliefs and myths while reducing it to a subordinate and auxiliary role.⁸

In the nineteenth century, Moses Hess, a philosopher from the Hegelian school, used the term *politische Religion*⁹ to define a religious zeal for social change. Hess described this religion as non-institutional and, in this sense, opposite to the established churches. He wanted this religion to substitute for traditional religions and his desire was fulfilled in the twentieth century. Hess, however, would probably not like the outcome of his idea.

Bolshevism, Fascism, and Nazism were identified as ‘political religions’ in the early 1930s. In 1932, an Austrian writer Franz Werfel compared three major ideologies of his time as quasi-religions. German political philosopher Eric Voegelin, who later emigrated to the United States, entitled his 1938 book with a phrase borrowed from Hess, *Die politischen Religionen*.¹⁰ Voegelin named among the sources for his concept Louis Rougier and his book *Les mystiques politiques*,¹¹ as well as French Christian personalists, such as Jacques Maritain, Henri de Lubac, and Joseph Vialatoux who explained totalitarian ideologies as spiritual, and not just political phenomena.¹² In 1937, a group of French intellectuals¹³ established in Paris the *Collège de Sociologie*. This college embarked on the studies of ‘sacred sociology’, which included ‘all manifestations of social existence where the active presence of the sacred is clear’.¹⁴ Although the college did not last long and was closed down in 1939, it left a footprint in the studies of totalitarian regimes.

Not everyone in the same field of studies agreed with the methods of the college. The most outspoken opponent of juxtaposing religion and totalitarianism was Hannah Arendt. She argued against this approach in

⁸ Ibid., p. 140.

⁹ Moses Hess, *Die heilige Geschichte der Menschheit* (Stuttgart, 1837), p. 334.

¹⁰ Eric Voegelin, *Die politischen Religionen* (Stockholm, 1939).

¹¹ Louis Rougier, *Les mystiques politiques contemporaines et leurs incidences internationales* (Paris, 1935).

¹² See Didier Musiedlak, ‘Fascisme, religion politique et religion de la politique’, *Vingt-tième siècle. Revue d’histoire*, 108/4 (2010), pp. 71–84.

¹³ Georges Bataille, Roger Caillois, Pierre Klossowski, Jules Monnerot, Pierre Libra, and Georges Ambrosino.

¹⁴ ‘Note on the Foundation of a College of Sociology’ (1937), in *The College of Sociology (1937–39)*, ed. Denis Hollier (Minneapolis, 1988), pp. 3–5.

her essay 'Religion and Politics'.¹⁵ For Arendt, it was a kind of 'blasphemy, always inherent in the term "secular religion"'.¹⁶

The three major political religions of the twentieth century, Communism, Fascism, and Nazism, did not develop independently from each other. Probably the earliest among them was Fascism. It received its impetus from the Italian *Risorgimento*—the process of unification of the Italian nation and formation of a common Italian identity. Among the key figures of this process was Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872), who together with Giuseppe Garibaldi is regarded a founding father of Italian statehood. He was also highly regarded by the Italian fascists, who saw him as their spiritual father. For instance, Mussolini called him a 'profeta' of Italian reunification.¹⁷

Mazzini rendered the *Risorgimento* in religious terms. He interpreted it as the will of God that moves masses to the common goal in a devotional manner.¹⁸ Alfredo Oriani (1852–1909), an early Italian nationalist, interpreted the revival of the Italian state as an outcome of Mazzini's 'mystical and religious' inspiration.¹⁹ Italian fascists inherited from Mazzini the same religious attitude. One of them, Sergio Panunzio, wrote in his book *The General Theory of the Fascist State*, that 'Fascism... brings with it the exaltation, and what is essentially a religion, of the State.... The party State of Fascism is an ecclesiastical state, to distinguish it from the indifference of the atheistic and agnostic State.'²⁰ For Panunzio, the *Partito nazionale fascista* was not just a political party, but a 'spiritual association... collected around a common faith and a common political creed'. For the fascists, 'a political idea and a religious creed are phenomena sharing close affinities. One might better speak of a follower of a modern [revolutionary] political party not in terms of party affiliation, but as a member of a church, an *ecclesia*'.²¹ Another ideologue of

¹⁵ Originally delivered as a paper at a conference in Harvard and then published in 1953 in the Harvard-based journal *Confluence*, edited by Henry Kissinger (no 2 [1]: pp. 105–112). Included to the collection of Arendt's articles: Hannah Arendt, 'Religion and Politics' in *Essays in Understanding, 1930-1954*, ed. Jerome Kohn (New York, 1993), pp. 368–390.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 378–379.

¹⁷ See A. James Gregor, *Totalitarianism and Political Religion: an Intellectual History* (Stanford/CA, 2012), p. 159.

¹⁸ Giuseppe Mazzini, *Duties of Man, and Other Essays* (n.p.: Hardpress, 2013), pp. 148–149.

¹⁹ See Alfredo Oriani, *La lotta politica in Italia* (Rocca San Casciano, 1956), pp. 304–313.

²⁰ Sergio Panunzio, *Teoria generale dello stato fascista* (Perugia, 1939), p. 59.

²¹ Sergio Panunzio, *Il sentimento dello stato* (Rome, 1929), pp. 228–229.

Italian fascism, Giovanni Gentile interpreted Mazzini's faith in the resurrection of the Italian nation as 'neither Catholic, nor Protestant, nor Christian'. Still, it was 'sincerely and profoundly religious'.²²

German Nazism followed the steps of Italian Fascism in adoration of the nation and of the state, and making them deities of a political religion. The Nazis added to this veneration anti-Semitism, which became an intrinsic part of the Nazi political religion. The roots of German anti-Semitism go back to idealistic philosophy as well. Fichte, for instance, wrote in 1793 in his essay *A State Within a State*:

A powerful, hostilely disposed nation is infiltrating almost every country in Europe. This nation is in a state of perpetual war with all these countries, severely afflicting their citizenry. I am referring to the Jewish Nation [*das Judentum*] ... it is founded on the hatred of mankind.²³

This line was continued by such figures of German thought and culture as Richard Wagner.²⁴ He complained in his 1850 essay 'Jewry in Music':

The Jew... rules, and will rule, so long as money remains the power before which all our doings and our dealings lose their force. That the historical adversity of the Jews and the rapacious rawness of Christian-German potentates have brought this power within the hands of Israel's sons—this needs no argument of ours to prove.²⁵

Wagner also tried to communicate his anti-Semitic ideas in his music. Probably the most expressive in this regard is *Parsifal*. Wagner became a favourite composer of Hitler in his young years. When Hitler visited the grave of the composer in Bayreuth in 1933, he told Wagner's daughter-in-law Winifred: 'That was when it all began.'²⁶

Germans like Wagner were not the only source of anti-Semitism for Hitler and his party. Another source was the community of Russian 'white' immigrants to Germany, who had to leave their country after they lost to the Bolsheviks in the civil war. A group of them established an organisation in Munich, which called itself *Aufbau* (full name *Aufbau: Wirtschafts-politische Vereinigung für den Osten* [*Reconstruction: Economic-Political*

²² Giovanni Gentile, *Albori della nuova Italia: Varietà e documenti* (Lanciano, 1923), pp. 203–204.

²³ 'A State Within a State', in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, eds. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, 2011), p. 283.

²⁴ See Joachim Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler: The Prophet and His Disciple*, trans. Ronald Taylor (Cambridge, 2000).

²⁵ Reprinted in *The Jew in the Modern World: A Documentary History*, eds. Paul Mendes-Flohr and Jehuda Reinharz (New York, 2011), p. 303.

²⁶ Köhler, *Wagner's Hitler: The Prophet and His Disciple* (see n. 24), p. 3.

Organization for the East). This organisation supported Hitler at the very early stage of his political activities in 1920.²⁷ One of its members, Alfred Rosenberg, became one of the main ideologues of the Nazi party.

It is probable that Hitler developed his anti-Semitism through this group. Brigitte Hamann, for instance, has argued that Hitler was not yet anti-Semitic during his years in Vienna from 1908 to 1913.²⁸ He began demonstrating apparent anti-Semitism after he came into contact with the Russian *Aufbau* group. A key role in Hitler's conversion to anti-Semitism was played by the *Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, which were imported to Germany by the Russian monarchist Peter Shabelsky-Bork. After he was rescued by German forces, Shabelsky-Bork passed the *Protocols* to a German nationalist, Ludwig Müller von Hausen, who then organised their translation into German and published them in the *Völkischer Beobachter*. In Germany, the *Protocols* became a standard reference work for Nazis.

The *Protocols* were fabricated somewhere in the Russian Empire to fight against different socialist movements, which were associated with Jews. They achieved their goal and inspired many 'alt-right' organisations, such as 'Black Hundred', to launch a violent campaign against Socialists, Communists, and Jews. They raised several waves of pogroms.²⁹

Pogroms were violent manifestations of the Russian political religion, which existed even prior to Communism. This religion was not secular, in the sense that it did not fight against religion. On the contrary, it protected the official religion of the Russian empire—Orthodox Christianity. Its methods, however, were political and constituted the core of the Russian imperial political religion. Anti-Semitism was a part of it. That is how this religion influenced the Nazi political religion.

However, this is not the only Russian influence on the German political religion. The Soviet regime, especially under Joseph Stalin, provided Nazi Germany with the mechanisms of massive extermination of the unwanted population. Hitler modelled his concentration camps on Soviet examples. Another instrument of extermination borrowed by Nazis from the Soviets was famine. As Timothy Snyder has demonstrated in his book

²⁷ Michael Kellogg, *The Russian Roots of Nazism: White Émigrés and the Making of National Socialism, 1917–1945* (Cambridge, 2008), p. 1.

²⁸ Brigitte Hamann, *Hitlers Wien: Lehrjahre eines Diktators* (Munich, 2015), pp. 239–241; English translation: id., *Hitler's Vienna: A Portrait of the Tyrant as a Young Man* (London, 2011).

²⁹ For more on this, see *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*, eds. John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza (New York, 2007).

Bloodlands, the artificial famine that Stalin organised in Ukraine in 1932–1933 was later followed by Hitler, who through artificial starvation wanted to solve the Jewish and the Eastern ‘questions’.³⁰

Italian Fascism and Russian Communism thus contributed much to Nazism, including a fascination with ‘the nation’ and advanced techniques of extermination. They also shared practices of making people subscribe to their quasi-religious doctrines. The bottom line of these practices was coercion. Those who disagreed with Communism in the Soviet Union, or Nazism in Germany, faced tough choices: to comply with the dominant doctrines or to perish. Conversion to the ‘political religions’ was by ‘fire and sword’, not by consent. Coercion is a basic feature of all political religions. These religions can fundamentally disagree with each other on ideological matters, such as in the case of Communism and Nazism, but they would always agree on the methods of how to persuade people to believe in them.

In this regard, all political religions are different from the phenomenon of civil religion. Civil religion is also a form of politics dressed in religious vestments. Similar to political religion, civil religion enhances the legitimacy of political regimes and consolidates people around them. However, the fundamental difference of civil religion from political one is that the former appeals to the consent of people and tries to persuade people to make their choice in favour of a certain political dogma. Civil religion works like TV commercials: it does not force the viewer to buy goods, but propagates them. Emilio Gentile defines civil religion as

the conceptual category that contains the forms of sacralization of a political system that guarantee a plurality of ideas, free competition in the exercise of power, and the ability of the governed to dismiss their governments through peaceful and constitutional methods. Civil religion therefore respects individual freedom, coexists with other ideologies, and does not impose obligatory and unconditional support for its commandments...³¹

[It is] a form of sacralization of a collective political entity that does not identify with the ideology of any particular political movement, acknowledges the separation of church and state, and, although postulating the existence of a supernatural being in the theistic sense, it coexists with traditional religious institutions without identifying with any particular religious confession. It acts as a *shared civic creed* that is above all parties and all religions. It tolerates a high degree of individual autonomy in relation

³⁰ Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin* (New York, 2010), p. 20.

³¹ Gentile, *Politics as Religion* (see n. 3), p. xv.

to the sacralized collectivity and generally elicits spontaneous consent for compliance with its commandments of public ethics and collective liturgy.³²

The term 'civil religion' was introduced by Jean-Jacques Rousseau as a part of his theory of social contract.³³ It belongs to the vocabulary of the Enlightenment and republicanism. It was applied to the American political context in the 1960s by sociologist Robert N. Bellah. In application to the American situation, civil religion means 'a collection of beliefs, symbols, and rituals with respect to sacred things and institutionalized in a collectivity. This religion—there seems to be no other word for it—while...sharing much common in Christianity...served as a genuine vehicle of national religious self-understanding'.³⁴

Just as in the case of Continental political religions, American civil religion features scriptures, prophets, martyrs, priests, and other attributes of any religion. These features were explicated by Jaroslav Pelikan in his study *Interpreting the Bible and the Constitution*.³⁵ To Pelikan, its 'Scripture' is the American Constitution. He remarks that the Declaration of Independence or Gettysburg address do not share the same 'revealing' power.³⁶ This 'Scripture' becomes transformed into a 'Tradition' through what Pelikan called 'interpretive communities'. Among these communities is a college of 'priests'—the judges 'with their robes'—a 'hierarchy' of this religion.³⁷ Among the greatest theologians of the American civil religion, according to Robert Bellah, was Abraham Lincoln.³⁸ George Washington was its moral authority and 'patriarch'.³⁹ Every American president is a 'presbyter' of the American civil religion *ex officio*. Some of them were more popular preachers of it, such as John F. Kennedy, whose inaugural speech in 1961 Bellah used to illustrate American civil religion,⁴⁰ Jimmy Carter, Ronald Reagan, and George W. Bush.⁴¹ Even

³² Ibid., p. 140.

³³ See Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Essential Rousseau: The Social Contract, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality, Discourse on the Arts and Sciences, the Creed of a Savoyard Priest*, trans. Lowell Bair (New York, 1975), p. 17, p. 20, pp. 107–108, p. 110.

³⁴ Robert N. Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America', *Daedalus*, 96/1 (1967), p. 8.

³⁵ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Interpreting the Bible and the Constitution* (New Haven, 2004).

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 18–21.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 22.

³⁸ Robert N. Bellah and Phillip Hammond, *Varieties of Civil Religion* (San Francisco, 1980), p. 15.

³⁹ Michael Angrosino, 'Civil Religion Redux', *Anthropological Quarterly*, 75/2 (2002), pp. 250–251.

⁴⁰ Bellah, 'Civil Religion in America' (see n. 34), p. 1.

⁴¹ Bruce Lincoln summarises the quintessence of Bush's political theology: 'All of these texts convey a sophisticated theology of history that rests on five propositions: (1) God desires freedom for all humanity; (2) this desire manifests itself in history;

Barack Obama has been scrutinized as contributing to the American civil religion.⁴²

Although the term ‘civil religion’ was coined on the European continent, it became applicable primarily in the American context. Most attempts to create a European edition of ‘civil religion’ were not successful so far. Nevertheless, the opportunity of what Jürgen Habermas called ‘post-secularisation’ inspired some European politicians to talk about a European ‘civil religion.’ For instance, the former president of the Italian Senate, Marcello Pera, proposed a form of a European civil religion in his correspondence with then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.⁴³ He suggested that Europe should adopt a ‘Christian civil religion’, which would explain and protect human dignity, the integrity of the traditional family, and tolerance.⁴⁴ It seems that Pera built this concept not so much on Christian beliefs, as he is an atheist, but on the conservative values of Silvio Berlusconi’s *Forza Italia*, of which Pera was a member. Pera has also become an acclaimed opponent of post-modernism and cultural relativism. No wonder, therefore, that attempts to create a European civil religion in the image and likeness of the American civil religion do not look successful so far. Also, attempts to re-establish a civil religion in some traditionally Orthodox countries, such as Russia, tend to end up as a ‘political religion.’⁴⁵

(3) America is called by history (and thus, implicitly by God) to take action on behalf of this cause; (4) insofar as America responds with courage and determination, God’s purpose is served and freedom’s advance is inevitable; (5) with the triumph of freedom, God’s will is accomplished and history comes to an end.’ See Bruce Lincoln, ‘Bush’s God Talk’, in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, eds. Hent de Vries and Lawrence E. Sullivan (New York, 2006), p. 275.

⁴² Richard Crouter, ‘The Irony of Barack Obama: Barack Obama, Reinhold Niebuhr and the Problem of Christian Statecraft’, *Journal of Church and State*, 56/1 (2014), pp. 182–184; Gastón Enrique Espinosa, ‘Barack Obama’s Political Theology: Pluralism, Deliberative Democracy, and the Christian Faith’, *Political Theology*, 13/5 (2012), pp. 610–633; Jeffrey S. Siker, ‘President Obama, the Bible, and Politic Rhetoric’, *Political Theology*, 13/5 (2012), pp. 586–609. See also a comparative study in Jason Ray Moyer, *Not Just Civil Religion: Theology in the Cases of Woodrow Wilson, John Kennedy, and Barack Obama* (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Iowa, 2011).

⁴³ Marcello Pera and Joseph Ratzinger, *Senza radici. Europa, relativismo, cristianesimo, islam* (Milan, 2005); English translation: Marcello Pera and Joseph Ratzinger, *Without Roots: The West, Relativism, Christianity, Islam* (New York, 2006).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 94–96.

⁴⁵ Since 2000, a special journal covers the topics relevant to political religion. From 2000 to 2011 it was entitled *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*. After 2011, it is published as *Politics, Religion & Ideology*.

The categories we have studied here will help us understand better what happened in L'viv in 1946. Effectively, it was one of many manifestations of the Soviet 'political religion'. I do not mean that the Russian Orthodox Church, which the Ukrainian Greek-Catholics were forced to join, was identical with the Soviet 'political religion.' The Russian Orthodox Church had resisted that religion through the struggles of such personalities as Patriarch Tikhon Bellavin and many neomartyrs who preferred to die rather than submit to the quasi-religion that the Communists imposed on the Russian people. Nevertheless, the Russian Church after Stalin's persecutions became more consistent with this religion, just as, for instance, the *Deutsche Christen* became consistent with the political religion of Nazis. For the Russian Church, a token of conversion to that religion was, probably, the Declaration of Metropolitan Sergiy Stragorodsky in 1927. This religion demonstrated its maturity in 1946, when the Greek Catholics were forced to join the Russian church, with full consent of the latter. The coercive method of the Lviv 'council' and persecutions against the Greek Catholics that followed are telling about the nature of the 'Soviet political religion': it was violent and anti-Christian.

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ABSTRACT:

Though officially atheist, the Soviet Union's metaphysics, morals, and liturgics were in many ways a simulacrum of the Christianity it had attempted to abolish. In this light the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church has many hallmarks of heretics being anathematized and forcibly converted to a new 'orthodoxy'. Thus the Soviet Union, in common with Italian and German fascism of the same period, was a clear example of what the Hegelian political philosopher Moses Hess has called 'political religion', replete with cultic figures whose relics (e.g., Lenin) were venerated on certain feast days and whose writings became canonical texts of holy writ.

THE LVIV COUNCIL OF 1946 AS REFLECTED
BY THE CHURCH PRESS OF THE SOVIET ERA:
THE HISTORY OF THE PERCEPTION OF THE ‘UNIATE PROBLEM’

Sergei L. FIRSOV

In 1982, the publishing house of the Moscow Patriarchate, without specifying the edition and print run, published a book dedicated to the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Lviv Church Council. The book, printed with the blessing of Patriarch Pimen (Izvekov), was a collection of documents and materials, preceded by a brief historical sketch prepared by I. F. Oksiyuk. Who this author was and what he wrote will be addressed later; for now, it should be noted that the book consisted of two sections: (1) selected acts of the Lviv Council and (2) the anniversary articles of the epistles of the Patriarchs Alexy (Simansky) and Pimen (Izvekov), as well as reports, articles and addresses of Orthodox hierarchs on the occasion of the anniversary of the council (the tenth anniversary, twentieth anniversary, twenty-fifth anniversary, thirtieth anniversary, and the thirty-fifth anniversary of its convocation). The end of the book contained a list of references on the history of the Union and a list of active participants in the process. Why was this book published in the early 1980s? And why would it be necessary to collect all the high praises of the Lviv Council—for the most part published earlier in the *Журнал Московской Патриархии* (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*)—in a new volume and without reference to the previous publications?

I believe that this publication did not arise by chance in 1982, when the Soviet Union entered a new phase of the Cold War, faced with a boycott by Western countries after it sent a ‘limited military contingent’ to Afghanistan. We should not forget that the beginning of the 1980s was a time of acute political crisis in Poland, when the future of ‘socialist choice’ came under question. The problem significantly troubled the Communist leaders of the Soviet Union, especially because at the end of 1978 the Polish Cardinal Karol Wojtyła was elected pope, adopting the name of John Paul II. The pope, as was widely known, was considered an implacable enemy of Communist ideology and he never concealed his views. Such a change to the situation of foreign policy at the beginning of the 1980s could not fail to affect the Russian Orthodox Church,

especially bearing in mind that the most active supporter of improving Orthodox-Catholic relations, Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov), died on 5 September 1978.

Thus, it would not be wrong to assume that the publication of documents and materials on the Lviv Church Council was motivated by political, ideological, and strategic reasons, even though the official publication was prepared by the Publishing Department of the Moscow Patriarchate in cooperation with the *Журнал Московской Патриархии* (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*) and the *Православный вестник* (*Orthodox Herald*). The introductory article, 'Union: An Historical Overview of Church Unity and Church Unions', treated the main idea that the unnamed compilers of the book sought to convey to the reader: 'the unity of the Church and Church Union'. From the beginning, the author, I. F. Oksiyuk, explained different understandings of unity in the Orthodox East and Catholic West: 'If in the East, the Local Churches tried to "maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3) and accepted the unity of the Universal Church as the communion of local Churches in faith, sacraments, and fraternal communion, the Latin West understood unity as a unity of Church organization, unity of spiritual authority and power, and as the subordination of all the Churches to the jurisdiction of the Roman bishop'.¹ This violation, according to the author, resulted in the breach of Church unity of Christians in East and West. Accordingly, the historical essay was designed to show the political interest of the papacy, which sought the violent subjugation of Orthodox Christians to Rome.

1. BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE AUTHOR, I. F. OKSIYUK

However, before proceeding further to consider the basic thoughts contained in this article, we should say a few words about its author. A graduate of the Kiev Theological Academy with the degree of Master of Theology, Iosif F. Oksiyuk (1894–1991) was a famous religious figure.

¹ 'Если на Востоке Поместные Церкви старались «сохранять единство духа в союзе мира» (Еф. 4, 3) и принимали единство Вселенской Церкви как единение Поместных Церквей в вере, таинствах, братском общении, то на латинском Западе впоследствии единение понимали как единство церковной организации, единство духовного авторитета и власти, как подчинение всех Церквей юрисдикции Римского епископа'. See I. F. Oksiyuk, 'Уния. Исторический очерк. Единство Церкви и церковные унии' [Unia. Historical overview. Unity of the Church and church unions], in *Львовский Церковный Собор. Документы и материалы. 1946–1981* [Lviv Church Council. Documents and materials. 1946–1981] (Moscow, 1982), p. 8.

During his long life he lectured in Kamenetsky University, was an archbishop of the self-declared Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church, and after the forced dissolution of this Church worked as a literary editor in Kharkiv and as an accountant in Poltava. Then Oksiyuk repented and was reunited with the Moscow Patriarchate. From 1937 to 1945 he was imprisoned on the charge—common during this era—of counter-revolutionary activities. In 1946, at the request of his brother, Bishop Macarius (Oksiyuk) of Lviv and Ternopil, he moved to Lviv and became the bishop's secretary and at the same time performing the duties of the secretary of the *Єпархіальний вісник* (*Eparchial Herald*). He retained the position even after the transfer of his brother to the Polish Orthodox Church.

A man with such a rich biography composing an article about the Union of Brest was of course well aware what the secular curators of the Russian Church wanted to hear. He correctly accentuated the lack of desire for union with Rome among believers, stressing notes of fratricidal enmity and serious suffering of the people.² In his opinion, the Union had no spiritual support among the people and relied instead on the official powers, for example, on Polish royal authority. Moreover, despite the Union, the struggle between the defenders of Orthodoxy and the supporters of Latinization never ceased. Therefore, the end of the Union in 1946 was predictable: the majority of the clergy and the believers unanimously reunited with the Orthodox Church.³

The phrase 'unanimity of the majority' (єдинодушіє більшинства) is noteworthy: it turned out that liquidation in 1946 of the heritage of the Union of Brest for the faithful of Western Ukraine was the only possible solution. It must be emphasized once again that such conclusions made at the beginning of the 1980s, of course, did not consider the political background of the unanimous reunification. Under Soviet conditions it was generally pointless to speak publicly about political background. Even the *perestroika* that soon began in the Soviet Union did not affect the official Church statements about the Union. Thus, in essays on the history of the Russian Orthodox Church published in 1988, the story of the Union took up just a few lines, stating only that in March 1946 a council was held in Lviv prepared by the 'Initiative Group' headed by Protopresbyter G. Kostelnyk, which unanimously made the decision to abolish the Union of Brest and return to the bosom of the Russian Orthodox Church.⁴

² Ibid., p. 37.

³ Ibid., p. 38.

⁴ *Русская Православная Церковь 988–1988* [The Russian Orthodox Church 988–1988], part 2: *Очерки истории 1917–1988* [Outline of history 1917–1988] (Moscow, 1988), p. 62.

2. THE PUBLICATION OF *LVIV CHURCH COUNCIL* IN 1982

It is clear that in the book *Львовский Церковный Собор (Lviv Church Council)*, published in 1982, six years before the millennium of the Baptism of Rus', emphasis was placed on unanimity. Materials of the acts of the Lviv Council, partly selected for the book from texts previously published by the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, were to serve as the proof of the inalterability of this fact.⁵ Among these materials, for obvious reasons, there were no addresses of the council to Generalissimo I. V. Stalin and N. S. Khrushchev, at that time head of the Ukrainian Government. There was no collection of materials prepared by the delegate from the Moscow Patriarchate, Archpriest Konstantin Ruzhitsky, about the 'Kiev-Lviv triumph of Orthodoxy' ('Киево-Львовское торжество православия'), which opened the April issue of the *Journal of Moscow Patriarchate* in 1946. But the book published the 'Appeal of the Initiative Group for the reunion of the Greek-Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church', 'Report of the Council Credentials Committee' ('Отчет соборной мандатной комиссии'), 'Report on the motives of the reunification of the Greek-Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church' by Protopresbyter G. Kostelnyk, and the 'Message of the Archbishop of Lviv-Ternopil Macarius'. These texts were probably taken from the Ukrainian book *Діяння Собору Греко-Католицької Церкви (Acts of the Council of the Greek-Catholic Church)*, published in Lviv in 1946, and, in 1965, translated into Russian and published 'for official use' in the Leningrad Theological Academy.⁶

⁵ See, for example, Archpriest K. Ruzhitsky, 'Русская Православная Церковь в ее борьбе за святое православие' [The Russian Orthodox Church in its battle for holy orthodoxy], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1946), pp. 15–21; 'Приветственная телеграмма от имени Собора' [Telegram of greetings on behalf of the Council], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1946), pp. 24–25; 'Приветственная речь Экзарха всей Украины, Высокопреосвященного Иоанна, митрополита Киевского и Галицкого' [Welcome address of the Exarch of all Ukraine, His Eminence Ioann, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galicia], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1946), pp. 13–14; 'Решение Собора Греко-Католической Униатской Церкви, состоявшегося во Львове 8–10 марта 1946 года' [Decisions of the Council of the Greek Catholic Uniate Church, which took place in Lviv 8–10 March 1946], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1946), pp. 22–23; 'Интервью, данное корреспонденту ТАСС' [Interview given to a correspondent of TASS], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1946), pp. 35–37.

⁶ See *Діяння Собора Греко-Католической Церкви во Львові 8–10 марта 1946 года* [Acts of the Council of the Greek Catholic Church in Lviv 8–10 March 1946], trans. [from Ukrainian to Russian] V. Sholomitsky (Leningrad, 1965).

Thus, in a sense, the 1982 book became a kind of supplement to the materials published in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* and in the collection of 1946. Publication was to manifest the council as a victory of Orthodoxy, and even more—a great festival of the triumph of Orthodoxy. It is also characteristic that in an interview given on 9 April 1946 to the official representative of TASS by the members of the presidium of the council, the council's validity was especially mentioned, although it does not deny the fact of the arrest, in the spring of 1945, of all of the hierarchs of the Greek-Catholic Church. Those interviewed, mentioning the names of the arrested, cited reports of the prosecutor of Soviet Ukraine and pointed out that the bishops were subjected to repression as citizens of the USSR 'for active and treacherous collaboration with German occupants', but neither during the council nor after it were any arrests of the clergy of the Greek-Catholic Church made.⁷

The texts published in 1946 and then re-issued in 1982 held to the idea that the Lviv Council was the natural result of the previous history of the Church in Western Ukraine. According to Archbishop Macarius of Lviv and Ternopil, 'the vast majority of the Greek-Catholic clergy, good pastors, the devotees of Christ's truth and entrusted by the Lord with the salvation of souls, departed from Greek-Catholicism and reunited with the Orthodox Church'. And after them, continued the archbishop, with the blessing of the patriarch of Moscow and all Russia, 'the pious faithful people of Transcarpathia returned unanimously'.⁸ As can be seen, the phrase used in the introductory article of the book authored by I. F. Oksiyuk, was taken from the messages of his own brother, originally introduced in the spring of 1946. His message finalized the first section of *Lviv Church Council*.

⁷ 'за активную предательскую и пособническую деятельность в пользу немецких оккупантов'. See 'Интервью, данное корреспонденту ТАСС членами президиума Собора Греко-Католической Униатской Церкви протопресвитером Гавриилом Костельником и епископами Антонием (Пельвецким) и Михаилом (Мельником)' [Interview given to a correspondent of TASS by members of the presidium of the Council of the Greek Catholic Uniate Church, Protopresbyter Gabriel Kostelnyk and Bishops Anthony (Pelvetsky) and Michael (Melnyk)], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), pp. 101–102.

⁸ 'подавляющее большинство греко-католического духовенства, добрые пастыри, преданные Христовой истине и спасению вверенных им от Господа душ, отошли от греко-католичества и воссоединились с Православной Церковью...единодушно обратился благочестивый верующий народ Закарпатья'. See 'Послание архиепископа Львовско-Тернопольского Макария' [Letter of Archbishop Macarius of Lviv-Ternopil], in *ibid.*, p. 105.

3. ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIONS

The second section, 'Anniversary Date', represented, as we have said, greetings, notes, and reports associated with the subsequent anniversaries of the Lviv Council and their previously published texts were taken from the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*. For unknown reasons, the article from the first anniversary of the Council was not included. It was published in the April 1947 issue of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* and described the celebrations in Lviv on 9 March in pathetic tones.⁹ But in 1982, the book included telegrams sent in 1956 by Western bishops to Patriarch Alexy (Simansky) as well as his brief answers.¹⁰ No additional messages were published, apparently because the anniversary was not marked by special celebrations.

The twentieth anniversary was celebrated differently—more loudly. The celebration took place in April 1966 in Lviv, in the presence of two future Russian patriarchs—Metropolitan Pimen (Izvekov) of Krutitsy and Archbishop Alexy (Ridiger) of Tallinn—with the participation of the commissioner for religious affairs under the council of ministers of the Soviet Union, and of the bishops of the Western dioceses of the Russian Orthodox Church. Celebrations continued over the course of four days, during which time the participants listened to the speech of Metropolitan Pimen and Archbishop Nikolai (Iuryk) of Lviv, as well as the report of Archbishop Alexy. While presentations were made by other participants, the compilers of the book decided to include only three, adding to them a brief speech by Metropolitan Pimen, pronounced in St. George's Cathedral on 24 April. Obviously, this speech was put in the book because in the 1980s Pimen was already patriarch, and the book itself was published with his blessing.

The speeches and the report were preceded by a brief description of the celebration, probably compiled by the priest V. Sholomitsky, who was a translator from Ukrainian to Russian at the Lviv Council of 1946. The description, written in a semi-official manner, quoted the words of Archbishop Nikolai (Iuryk) about the disappearance of borders separating Volhynia from Galicia and Transcarpathia: 'Now all the believers are united and form one family—from Vladivostok to the Carpathian moun-

⁹ For more information, see S. Khrutsky, 'Первая годовщина Львовского Собора 1946 года' [First anniversary of the Lviv Council of 1946], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1947), pp. 8–10.

¹⁰ 'Поздравления в связи с 10-летием воссоединения', in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), pp. 109–110. The hierarchs' telegrams and Patriarch Alexy's response were originally published in *JMP*, 4 (April, 1956), pp. 3–4.

tains'.¹¹ The indication of the unification of all Orthodox believers in the country were unified in the spirit of the time: not surprisingly, recalling 1945, Vladyka celebrated the post-war unification of the Ukrainian lands as a great unified Ukrainian Soviet Power, pointing out that 'the emancipated Ukrainian people of ancient Galicia have found their place among the brother-peoples of the great multinational Soviet Motherland'.¹² Archbishop Nikolai, son of a Uniate priest, knew Soviet reality: in 1946 he was a member of the Lviv Church Council, and from 1950 to 1955 he was imprisoned. He knew the true price of 'association' and had experienced the 'rules of the game' in the Soviet system. Even knowing this circumstance, however, we cannot but wonder at the phrase 'great unified Ukrainian Soviet Power'.

More subdued in tone was the speech of Metropolitan Pimen and the report of Metropolitan Alexy. The metropolitan pointed out thoughts, reflections, and insights that occur 'in connection with the past period of Church Union and [the] twentieth anniversary of [the] existence of the Orthodox Galician Church', which were also echoed in the report of Alexy.¹³ Actually, the report briefly characterized the major milestones from the history of the Union and its religious and theological aspects. But the main statement that deserves attention was the conclusion that in connection with the abolition of the Union, the opportunity of quiet development of fraternal relations between the Russian and Catholic Churches had appeared.¹⁴ Let us point out once again: this was said in

¹¹ 'Теперь все верующие объединены и составляют одну семью – от Владивостока до Карпат'. See 'Празднование 20-летия Львовского Церковного Собора' [Celebration of the 20th anniversary of the Lviv Church Council], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 118. The article on the celebration of the jubilee twentieth anniversary originally appeared in *JMP*, 6 (June, 1966), pp. 21–27. Its author was Archpriest I. Korol (И. Король). For unknown reasons, his name is not indicated in the book published in 1982.

¹² '...освобожденный украинский народ древней Галицкой Руси нашел свое место в среде народов-братьев великой многонациональной Советской Родины'. See 'Речь архиепископа Львовского и Тернопольского Николая' [Speech of Archbishop Nikolai of Lviv and Ternopil], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 131 and p. 135. The speech was first published in *JMP*, 6 (June, 1966), pp. 15–21.

¹³ '...в связи с минувшим периодом церковной унии и двадцатилетием православного бытия Галицкой Церкви'. See 'Речь митрополита Крутицкого и Коломенского Пимена' [Speech of Metropolitan Pimen of Krutitsia and Kolomna], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 122. The speech was first published in *JMP*, 6 (June, 1966), pp. 6–7.

¹⁴ '...спокойно развивать братские отношения между [S.F.: Русской и Католической] Церквями'. See 'Доклад архиепископа Таллиннского и Эстонского Алексия' [Report of Archbishop Alexy of Tallinn and Estonia], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 129. The lecture was originally published in *JMP*, 6 (June, 1966), pp. 9–15.

1966, during the active work of Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov), an ardent advocate of inter-Christian dialogue, especially dialogue with the Vatican. In 1965 the Second Vatican Council, which was attended by observers from the Russian Orthodox Church, came to an end. It is in this context, in my opinion, that we should understand the words of Metropolitan Alexy. However, one should also not forget that this report was re-published when relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Holy See had entered a period of crisis. Thus, the statements in 1966 could be understood as a kind of 'political explanation' of what happened twenty years ago. But in the first half of the 1980s, one could ask: was it necessary to explain anything?

The next time that the Lviv Church Council was commemorated was in May 1971, during a church celebration organized in Lviv. It was attended for the first time by the patriarchal exarch of Ukraine, Metropolitan Filaret (Denisenko), who made the anniversary speech. The compilers of the 1982 book did not publish his speech; instead they included a notice about the celebrations, the two epistles of Metropolitan (and later patriarch) Pimen, and the message of the Archbishop Gregory of Mukachevo about the Orthodox Church in Transcarpathia. As before, primary attention was paid to the original falsity of the Union of Brest. The truth of the Lviv Council, called the 'Church and People's Council', was asserted as the free will of the people, aiming to return to the faith of their fathers'.¹⁵

This reference to the free will of the people is noteworthy, as is the label 'Church and People's Council'. These characteristics have become a kind of ideological cliché, which the Russian Church leaders were forced to use when talking about the events of the spring of 1946. They treated the Lviv Council as a victory of historical justice over Catholic lies, while the liquidation of the Union was characterized as the liberation of Western Ukrainian people. Remembering the twenty-fifth anniversary of the council, they did not forget to mention the fact that 'together with other Christian Churches, the Russian Orthodox Church defends peace

¹⁵ '...церковно-народным Собором, свободным волеизъявлением народа, поставившего целью возвратиться к вере своих отцов'. See 'Послание Местоблюстителя Московского Патриаршего престола митрополита Крутицкого и Коломенского Пимена' [Letter of the *locum tenens* of the Moscow Patriarchal throne, Metropolitan Pimen of Krutitsia and Kolomna], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 142. The epistle was originally published in *JMP*, 6 (June, 1971), pp. 24–25.

on earth, love, and friendship between peoples'.¹⁶ It turned out that the Lviv Council helped to strengthen peace in the world. This logic in the 1970s and 1980s, according to the Soviet ideological paradigm, did not seem strange or contrary to the historical facts. On the contrary, the facts were interpreted in such a way as to prove that the Church, like the socialist state, is fighting for a great cause—the salvation of mankind from the threat of global war.

The following four materials were related to the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the Lviv Church Council and, in addition to the regular information about the anniversary celebrations included the congratulatory telegram of Patriarch Pimen to Metropolitan Nikolai (Iuryk) of Lviv, the report of the latter ('Revival of Holy Orthodoxy in the Western Regions of Ukraine'), and the speech of the exarch of Ukraine, Metropolitan Filaret (Denisenko). And again, as in the days of the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary, we hear words of peace and brotherhood. In accordance with tradition, Metropolitan Filaret recalled how church people ('церковные люди') appreciate peace and together with all Soviet people want to make their contribution to its preservation. In his words: 'Our Church unity serves to strengthen friendship in the family of the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union'.¹⁷ The Lviv metropolitan completed his report in similar terms, pointing to the victory of historical truth in the Western lands of Ukraine and stressing that 'we, the faithful children of our Orthodox Church and loyal citizens of our state, believe in the final triumph of truth and goodness throughout the Earth!'¹⁸

Five more years passed, and the Church decided to celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Lviv Council. This time the celebration was particularly solemn. It was attended by fifteen bishops, the participants

¹⁶ 'Сообщение архиепископа Мукачевского и Ужгородского Григория' [Communication of Archbishop Gregory of Mukachevo and Uzhgorod], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 148. The report was originally published in *JMP*, 6 (June, 1971), pp. 34–35.

¹⁷ 'Наше церковное единство служит укреплению дружбы в семье братских народов Советского Союза'. See 'Речь митрополита Киевского и Галицкого Филарета, Патриаршего Экзарха Украины' [Speech of Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and Galicia, Patriarchal Exarch of Ukraine], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 156. The speech was originally published in *JMP*, 9 (September, 1976), pp. 9–10.

¹⁸ '...мы, верные чада своей Православной Церкви и верные граждане своего государства, верим в окончательное торжество истины и добра на всей Земле!'. See 'Доклад митрополита Львовского и Тернопольского Николая' [Report of Metropolitan Nikolai of Lviv and Ternopil], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 161. The lecture was originally published in *JMP*, 9 (September, 1976), pp. 10–12.

of the Lviv Council who remained in good health, and the clergy of the Western Ukrainian dioceses. In his speech, Metropolitan Filaret repeated the words of Metropolitan Alexy (Ridiger), stating that ‘the rejection of the Union is the basis of dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Russian Orthodox Churches’. He had to repeat this because the synod of Ukrainian Uniate bishops, which took place in Rome in 1980, sought to prove the illegitimacy of the 1946 Lviv Council. This gathering worried the hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church, to whom Pope John Paul II in 1981 wrote reassuringly that the decisions of the Uniate bishops and its claims had not been approved by him or the Roman Curia and were, therefore, invalid. Metropolitan Filaret said that because in 1946 at the Lviv Council bishops, clergy and people were present, the council had the historical and canonical right to proceed with the liquidation of the Union of Brest.¹⁹ Of course, the exarch did not comment the fact that those bishops present in 1946—Michael (Melnik) and Anthony (Pelvetsky)—initially had not been bishops, having been ordained immediately before the start of its work. However, he pointed out that the ordination of Michael and Anthony by Russian bishops—and not by Catholic bishops—was justified by the fact that they had decided to terminate the Union with Rome.

Moreover, and more important, the question of the legality of the Lviv Council was once again raised by the Uniate bishops in exile. This was the year of the new confrontation between the USSR and the West—right in the centre of the Catholic Church whose pope for nearly two years now was of course a former citizen of a Warsaw Pact country who did not conceal his negative attitude to the religious policy of the Soviet authorities. Not by chance in his message to the participants of the celebrations and addressed to Patriarch Pimen, did the pope say, among other things: ‘Welcoming the fraternal dialogue of love that began between the Russian Orthodox and Roman Catholic churches after the Second Vatican Council, and the newly opened pan-Orthodox-Catholic theological dialogue, we are deeply convinced that the Union should be fundamentally excluded from ecumenical life, because it does not serve the achievement of Church unity, but rather ruins it’.²⁰

¹⁹ ‘Празднование 35-летия Львовского Церковного Собора’ [Celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Lviv Church Council], *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 163. The article was originally published in *JMP*, 9 (September, 1981), pp. 22–23.

²⁰ ‘Приветствуя братский диалог любви, начавшийся между Русской Православной и Римско-Католической Церквами после Второго Ватиканского Собора, и недавно открывшийся Всеправославно-католический богословский

The reports and presentations of the participants of the celebrations had once again to show why it ruins it. Metropolitan Filaret spoke at length about this.²¹ Another speaker, Metropolitan Sergius of Odessa, also recalled the unity of the Church and people—quoting the words of Patriarch Sergius (Stragorodsky) that ‘the joys of our people are our joys, the sorrows of our people are our sorrows’.²²

Metropolitan Nikolai of Lviv spoke of the timely return of the Greek Catholics to the bosom of Mother Church.²³ Archbishop Iosif (Savrash) of Ivano-Frankivsk spoke about the impotence of the Greek Catholic hierarchy, who led their Church into a hopeless situation and turned it into a minion of the German invaders.²⁴ The speeches, as expected, were full of patriotic fulminations. The word ‘Union’ was invoked solely to provoke negative emotions; it was seen as a synonym of words such as ‘evil’ and ‘deception’.

However, the greatest impression on those who were acquainted with the materials of the celebrations of 1981 was to be produced by the final statement of the participants. Talking of the fact that the participants gave thanks and prayed to God on the occasion of the thirty-fifth anniversary of the return of the Greek-Catholics to the bosom of the Russian Orthodox Church, the drafters of the statement noted that the issue of the Church’s peacekeeping mission was also discussed. Recalling the horrors of the last war, they claimed that the memories of these horrors ‘reinforce

диалог, мы глубоко убеждены, что из экуменической жизни принципиально должна быть исключена уния, так как она не служит достижению церковного единства, а, наоборот, разрушает его’. See ‘Ответное послание Его Святейшеству, Святейшему Пимену, Патриарху Московскому и всея Руси’ [Letter in response to His Holiness Pimen, Patriarch of Moscow and all Rus’], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 172. The epistle was originally published in *JMP*, 8 (August, 1981), pp. 18–19.

²¹ See, for example, ‘Доклад митрополита Киевского и Галицкого, Патриаршего экзарха Украины Филарета’ [Report of Metropolitan Filaret of Kiev and Galicia, Patriarchal exarch of Ukraine], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 175. The lecture was originally published in *JMP*, 10 (October, 1981), pp. 6–13.

²² ‘Радости нашего народа – наши радости, горести нашего народа – наши горести’. See ‘Речь митрополита Одесского и Херсонского Сергия’ [Speech of Metropolitan Sergius of Odessa and Kherson], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 191.

²³ ‘Речь митрополита Львовского и Тернопольского Николая’ [Speech of Metropolitan Nikolai of Lviv and Ternopil], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 196. The speech was originally published in *JMP*, 10 (October, 1981), pp. 13–16.

²⁴ ‘Речь архиепископа Ивано-Франковского и Коломыйского Иосифа’ [Speech of Archbishop Joseph of Ivano-Frankivsk and Kolomyia], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 198. The speech was originally published in *JMP*, 10 (October, 1981), p. 16.

our concern about the growing threat of another world war'. The statement talked about a dangerous exacerbation of international relations caused by 'the militarist circles of West', saying there was a need to do everything to prevent the destruction of humanity 'in the all-absorbing flame of nuclear war'. These lines quoted the statement by L. I. Brezhnev about the importance of cooperation among all peace-loving forces, including religious leaders, who were exhorted to support the peace initiatives of the USSR. 'So,' concluded the authors of the statement, 'our prayers and our actions will be aimed at increasing the contribution of the Russian Orthodox Church in prevention of a new world war, to strengthen peace and justice in relations between nations, for the preservation of life on Earth'.²⁵

As can be seen, this statement was not an ecclesiastical text, but a purely political document, quite suitable (after very minor, 'technical' corrections) for publication in any Soviet newspaper, including *Pravda*. It turned out that the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Lviv Church Council was the only reason for making a statement required by Soviet authorities. Did it meet the interests of the Church?

One should not jump to conclusions. However, let us not forget that it will take less than ten years—and in the context of *perestroika* and *glasnost*—for the Uniate religious structures to appear once more on the territory of Western Ukraine, and many priests of the Russian Orthodox Church to return to the Union. But that is a different story. In our case, it is important to note that during that period no one could imagine that events would develop with such astonishing rapidity and that social perturbations would directly affect the historical perception of the painful 1946 council in the consciousness of many Orthodox believers

4. CONCLUSIONS: AFTER *LVIV CHURCH COUNCIL*

Meanwhile, in the post-war period, until the early 1980s, the view of the Union in church publications and dissertations was purely positive;

²⁵ 'Поэтому, наши молитвы и наши действия и впредь будут направлены на увеличение вклада Русской Православной Церкви в предотвращение новой мировой войны, на укрепление мира и справедливости во взаимоотношениях между народами, на сохранение жизни на Земле'. See 'Заявление участников юбилейного торжества 35-летия Львовского Церковного Собора' [Declaration of participants of the jubilee celebration of the 35th anniversary of the Lviv Church Council], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), p. 202 and p. 203. The statement was originally published in *JMP*, 8 (August, 1981), pp. 19–20.

the studies were predominantly of an apologetic nature. More than seventy works were published, most of them articles in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*. Noteworthy among them are seventeen type-written texts, namely dissertations, research papers, and final academic works, as well as monographs, each with a total of five to seven copies. The vast majority of such texts were drawn up in the Moscow Theological Academy. In the same period Soviet 'revelatory' works of the Union were published as well as collections of documents.

Academic theses were also defended: in the period from late 1940s until early 1980s twenty-three such texts can be counted. Most authors, mindful of repeating claims about the class basis to any religion, sharply and harshly wrote about the Union—both in the pre-revolutionary period and in recent history—in both Russian and Ukrainian. The names of these works spoke for themselves. Suffice it to recall the book of K. E. Dmitruk, *С крестом и трезубцем* (*With Cross and Trident*, [Moscow, 1980]), on the activities of the Uniate Church in the postwar period in the United States, Canada, Germany and England; or, for example, an article by P. Natykach 'Народ проти унії' ('People against the Union') in the Ukrainian atheist magazine *Людина і світ*, 10 (1976). One can also mention the doctoral thesis of a P. A. Petlyakov, *Униатская церковь – оплот антикоммунистической реакции на западноукраинских землях (1919–1946)* (*The Uniate Church as a stronghold of anti-Communist reaction in Western Ukraine [1919–1946]*), defended in Kiev in 1980. As is evident, the title of the thesis predetermined its main conclusion.²⁶

In the Soviet period, the Uniate question, of course, was a political issue. The Russian Orthodox Church, as shown by the materials of the book *Lviv Church Council*, being a hostage of the circumstances, involuntarily followed public policy. The telegrams, letters, and articles included in the book *Lviv Church Council* were originally published in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*. Although they could not be seen in any way other than as an expression of the official position of the Russian Church, nevertheless, scattered as they were in different volumes and published in different years, they could not produce the same impression upon impartial readers when they had the opportunity to see the texts

²⁶ It is noteworthy that the list of literature devoted to the history of the Union and published in the book *Львовский Церковный Собор* includes not only the works of ecclesiastical researchers of the pre-revolutionary and Soviet eras, but also the work of Soviet atheist researchers, including those named above. See 'Список литературы' [List of literature], in *Львовский Церковный Собор* (see n. 1), pp. 207–220.

collected in one volume. This impression was strengthened by the fact that anti-religious rhetoric and state atheism in the USSR were no secret to anybody. In the context of the ideological and military-political confrontation between the USSR and Western countries, the Russian Orthodox Church could do little more than talk about peace in the world, distracting the readers of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* from the true state of Church affairs in the country. It is clear that the psychological consequences of the forced liquidation in 1946 of the Greek Catholics and the involvement of Stalinist authorities—who in the 1930s almost completely destroyed the institutional Church in the Soviet Union and after 1941 for political reasons abruptly changed track—could not be treated as the traumas they doubtless were and are.

Summing up, it should be noted that the book *Lviv Church Council* is a clear illustration of the humiliating dependence in which the Russian Orthodox Church remained during the whole Soviet period. The fact that in 1946 the authorities assisted it in eliminating the Union of Brest sooner or later could not fail to lead to a new confrontation with the Greek Catholics. In the crisis of Communist ideology of the late 1980s and early 1990s, claims about the historical grounding of the Lviv Council began to sound unconvincing to supporters of the Union. The ‘Uniate question’ has again become a question more of a political than a religious nature. Events have come full circle once more—but that is a story for another time.

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ABSTRACT:

This paper examines the publication of the book *Lviv Church Council*, a commemorative volume on the ‘Lviv Sobor’ of 1946—both its content and its context. The publication did not arise by chance in 1982, during a new phase of the Cold War including a political crisis in Poland following the election of Cardinal Wojtyła as pope and the death of Metropolitan Nikodim (Rotov) in 1978. The commemorative book contained official documents and articles that had been published earlier on anniversaries of 1946 in various issues of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*. In the Soviet period, the Uniate question, of course, was a political issue. The Russian Orthodox Church, as shown by the materials of the book *Lviv Church Council*, being a hostage of the circumstances, involuntarily followed public policy. In the context of the ideological and military-political confrontation between the USSR and Western countries, the Russian Orthodox

Church could do little more than talk about peace in the world, distracting the readers of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* from the true state of Church affairs in the country. The book *Lviv Church Council* is a clear illustration of the humiliating dependence in which the Russian Orthodox Church remained during the whole Soviet period.

THE CATHOLIC HISTORY OF THE 'LVIV SOBOR' OF 1946

Mariya HORYACHA

1. INTRODUCTION

Before considering the Catholic history of the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946 it would be appropriate to dispel some old myths.

The first myth was and is the attempt to present the decision of the 'Lviv Sobor' as a long-awaited reunion of the Greek Catholic Church with the Russian Orthodox Church and as a return to the faith of their ancestors.

The second myth, often found in scholarly discourse, is the presentation of the so-called Lviv Sobor as the act of liquidation of the UGCC. If, however, we acknowledge the 'Lviv Sobor' to be a pseudo-sobor, we cannot speak of the liquidation of the UGCC. Even if the Soviet authorities considered the UGCC as non-existent, the reality was quite different. The UGCC was administratively oppressed and persecuted, but still continued to exist in the underground while also developing freely outside the USSR. Many priests did not recognize the decisions of the 'Lviv Sobor' and still continued to perform their pastoral work among the faithful. In fact, after the pseudo-sobor the Church was subject to more severe persecutions which grew in scope and intensity but nevertheless it survived through those difficult circumstances.

The first one who pointed to this confusion was Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj, who, after his first term of incarceration, carefully studied all the legislative acts of the USSR in 1945–1953 and was not able to find any law denying the UGCC its existence. On this basis, Metropolitan Slipyj had never accepted the Soviet rhetoric, and during his second trial he openly defended the UGCC as a legitimate and active Church in the USSR. In spite of his efforts to change the perception of the so-called 'Lviv Sobor', the political intention and actions of the Soviet authorities were directed towards the 'liquidation' of the UGCC, and such terminology was actively used in Soviet documents. Later, the historians, who studied these documents in the Soviet archives, unconsciously (and probably even unintentionally) borrowed this terminology and introduced it

into scholarly usage. This was partly due to the lack of active and competent theologians rooted in academic scholarship.¹

Although for many scholars such statements are obviously flawed and do not require a great deal of argumentation, there is still a considerable number of intellectuals and even official institutions that continue to apply the old Soviet rhetoric, using these ideas and this terminology. For example, in the official commentary of the Department of External Church Relations of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the seventieth anniversary of the 'Lviv Sobor', this event is still considered as a legitimate Greek Catholic sobor and a return to the Orthodox faith. To prove it to be a voluntary conversion, they refer to the fact that there are about 900 Orthodox parishes in Galicia which even after legalization did not return to the UGCC. The document reads as follows:

attempts are being made to denigrate the deeds of the Lviv Sobor of 1946, which is often represented as an act of an atheistic regime aimed at the elimination of the Greek Catholics in Galicia with the aid of the Orthodox. However, it is impossible to assess the Council's activity based only on the facts of persecution of the Greek Catholics, without mentioning the sufferings of the Orthodox Church under the Soviet regime, including numerous instances of torture of Orthodox clergymen and faithful. One cannot provide an assessment of the Council without mentioning a decade of the suffering of the Orthodox population of Ukraine from the Uniate policy, starting with the Union of Brest 1596. In addition, the main reason for the *liquidation* of the UGCC by the punitive organs of the Soviet Union was the overt cooperation of this religious denomination with the Nazi occupying forces and their henchmen in Western Ukraine.²

¹ See Oleh Hirnyk, 'Чи була ліквідована УГКЦ у 1946 році?' [Was the UGCC liquidated in 1946?], *Блог о. Олега Гірника* [Blog of Fr. Oleh Hirnyk], Online: <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/blog/~gaudi/62834/> (Accessed 10 November 2016).

² The Ukrainian text of the document reads as follows: 'Сьогодні в інформаційному полі існують намагання очорнити діяння Львівського собору 1946 року, який часто представляється виключно акцією атеїстичного режиму по знищенню греко-католиків в Галичині за допомогою православних. Однак, не можна давати оцінку діянням собору на основі лише фактів гонінь на греко-католиків, не згадуючи про страждання Православної Церкви від радянської влади, численні катування православних священнослужителів та безлічі вірян. Не можна надавати оцінку собору, не згадуючи й десятилітні страждання православного населення України від уніатської політики, починаючи з часу Берестейської унії 1596 року. Окрім того, головним приводом для ліквідації УГКЦ каральними органами Радянського Союзу була відкрита співпраця цієї релігійної конфесії з німецько-фашистськими окупаційними військами та їх поплічниками на території Західної України'. See 'Коментар Відділу зовнішніх церковних зв'язків УПЦ з нагоди 70-ліття Львівського собору 1946 року', *Документи Української Православної Церкви* (Московського Патріархату) [Documents of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate)], Online: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/resourses/church_doc/uocmp_doc/62784/ (Accessed 10 November 2016).

Moving beyond myths now, I will present the history of the 'Lviv sobor' under four headings: planning, preparation, realisation, and aftermath.

2. PLANNING THE LIQUIDATION OF THE UGCC

The first Bolshevik attempt to attack the UGCC can be seen already during the first period of Soviet occupation of Galicia in 1939–1941. The Bolsheviks immediately started gathering intelligence among the leading circles of the Church, looking for an influential priest to fulfil their task. Protopresbyter Havryil Kostelnyk drew their attention from the very beginning. In March 1940 the NKGB agent Volodymyr Tselevych wrote in his report about Kostelnyk's animosity towards the Vatican and concluded: 'I think Kostelnyk would head the operation directed towards the independence of the Greek Catholic Church from the Vatican'.³

In order to come into contact with Kostelnyk the security services arrested his son Bohdan on 31 January 1940 for cooperating with the nationalist underground movement and searched in Havryil Kostelnyk's apartment, expropriating some books. This search and expropriation required him to come to the regional police station, from where he was conducted to the intelligence service office for a conversation about his potential to head a movement for the creation of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in Galicia. After this conversation several other meetings followed. Intelligence services examined Kostelnyk's views and considered his possible recruitment into the security service.

As a result of this discussion, Kostelnyk wrote an essay on 10 February 1940 entitled 'Is the Conversion of the Uniate Church in Western Ukraine into an Autocephalous Orthodox Church Possible?', in which he presented his views on this question. He argued that this idea was premature and without any ground. It would require a long struggle and could be realised only very slowly and under the most favourable conditions for the Church. Since, however, the Bolsheviks brought about a situation of uncertainty regarding the future of the Church, every Uniate would think: 'If the Church has no future, why then should one struggle for Orthodox autocephaly? What sense is there in giving birth to a stillborn baby?' Kostelnyk noted: 'If anyone had come out with the idea of the transforming the Uniate Church into the Orthodox Church, he would find no support;

³ Volodymyr Serhiychuk et al., eds., *Ліквідація УГКЦ (1939–1946). Документи радянських органів державної безпеки* [Liquidation of the UGCC (1939–1946). Documents of Soviet state security authorities], 2 vols. (Kyiv, 2006), vol. 1, p. 71.

all their relatives and friends would renounce him as insane and a villain, as someone who was engaged in the destruction of the Church for his own interest'.⁴

This essay, however, did not convince the Bolsheviks and they proposed that Kostelnyk undertake the organisational work; but he refused. Their attempt to persuade Kostelnyk to cooperate with the intelligence services, even by pressing on his paternal feelings towards his arrested son, did not work either. To this, Kostelnyk replied, 'If he is guilty, let him be tried', and refused to accept any obligation upon himself with regard to his son's incarceration.⁵

The situation changed during the second Soviet occupation, when the plan for the destruction of the UGCC was encouraged by the most highly placed state authorities. Before passing, however, to considering this situation, it is important to note some changes in Soviet religious policy towards the Russian Orthodox Church in the period between the two occupations. The proclamation of Metropolitan Sergius Stragorodsky, the patriarchal *locum tenens*, in June 1941 with his appeal to all Christians to resist the German invaders, did not pass unnoticed by Stalin. Such loyalty was rewarded by a softening of the Kremlin antireligious policy and, finally, culminated in the meeting of Stalin and Molotov with three Russian hierarchs (Sergius Stragorodsky, Alexius Simansky of Leningrad, and Nikolai Yarushevych of Kyiv) on 4 September 1943. Four days after this meeting, on 8 September, a sobor of bishops was held in Moscow, which elected Metropolitan Sergius as patriarch of Moscow and all Russia. Almost simultaneously, on 14 September, the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC) was established to supervise the activity of the ROC and to serve as a communication channel between the Moscow Patriarchate and the government (the Council of People's Commissars) with Georgiy Karpov, a NKGB colonel, as its chairman.⁶

⁴ Ibid., p. 125–130.

⁵ Ibid., p. 145.

⁶ Georgiy Karpov secretly continued to fulfil the function of the head of the NKGB Department for Religious Affairs. The CAROC had no authority to take independent decisions. It was to report to the Government concerning the Church issues and to receive instructions from it. See Ivan Bilas, *Репресивно-каральна система в Україні. 1917–1953: Суспільно-політичний та історико-правовий аналіз: у 2-х книгах* [Repressive and punitive system in Ukraine. 1917–1953: Socio-political and historical-legal analysis, in 2 books] (Kyiv, 1994), vol. 1, p. 298.

Later, on 19 May 1944, the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (CARC) was formed for all non-Orthodox religious denominations, including the Greek Catholics⁷. The activity of both councils was under the supervision of Molotov, who gave them concrete instructions: 'First of all, the CAROC plenipotentiaries should be appointed in the regions freed from the invaders, as well as in the regions where there are many churches. The plenipotentiaries for the liberated areas should be appointed exclusively from security officers'.⁸ It was through these plenipotentiaries that the Soviet religious policy was implemented in the regions.

The second Soviet occupation of Galicia in 1944 divided the Greek Catholic Church between two borders. The major part—the eparchies of Lviv, Stanislaviv, and about 63% of parishes of the eparchy of Przemyśl—remained within the borders of the USSR. A minority (about 37% of parishes of the Przemyśl eparchy) remained within the Polish border, along with the episcopal see in Przemyśl. Thus, the faithful of the Przemyśl eparchy in the territory of the USSR were cut off from their ruling bishop. Trying to arrange somehow the management of his eparchy in Soviet territory, Josaphat Kotsylovsky, the bishop of Przemyśl, appointed two vicars-general: Mykhailo Melnyk, pastor of Nyzhankovychi, and Mykola Panas, a priest from the Sokal region. At that time, the Church had already been weakened not only by repressions during the first Soviet occupation but also by the exodus of many priests.

When the Soviet army occupied the territory of Western Ukraine,⁹ it faced fierce resistance from the underground nationalist movement. Anticipating a new wave of persecution and repressions, some 300 Greek Catholic priests left their parishes and went abroad. The Soviet authorities did not immediately undertake a new attack on the UGCC. This delay did not, however, mean a change of attitude towards the Church. There were other reasons for this.

First, large-scale resistance by insurgents made the Bolsheviks' situation in the occupied territories very volatile and uncertain. Given the prestige of the UGCC in the region, the Bolsheviks intended to use the influence of the Church in the suppression of the nationalist movement. They were trying to draw her into a propaganda and anti-partisan campaign

⁷ It was first chaired by Konstantin Zaitsev and then by Colonel of State Security Ivan Poliansky.

⁸ Bilas, *Репресивно-каральна система в Україні* (see n. 6), vol. 1, p. 306.

⁹ The Soviet army took Lviv with great battles on 27 July 1944 and the entire region of Western Ukraine was occupied until the end of summer 1944.

to prove her loyalty to the new government.¹⁰ On the other hand, the Bolsheviks wanted to create a false impression of security, so in the meantime they were busy gathering information on the major tensions and contradictions within the Church with a view to sharpening and deepening them. Moreover, the authority and influence of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky in the region was so great that as long as he was alive, the Soviet authorities could do nothing. The war still continued, and the matter of the Polish-Ukrainian border had not yet been resolved. So it was too early to begin an attack on the UGCC.

From the first days of the second occupation of Galicia, Soviet security organs started collecting information about leading figures in the UGCC. In September 1944 NKVD Lieutenant Colonel Sergiy Danylenko¹¹, who in the NKGB went by the name Karin, came to Lviv in the role of a 'plenipotentiary for religious affairs of the USSR government'. He met with Sheptytsky, asking him to make a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet government and to send a delegation to Moscow in order to clarify the status of the UGCC in the USSR. The metropolitan began to prepare such a delegation, but died on 1 November 1944. So the delegation to Moscow was formed and sent by his successor, Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj, in December 1944.¹²

¹⁰ Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton – Toronto, 1996), p. 86.

¹¹ A Soviet spy and the NKVD Lieutenant-Colonel Serhiy Danylenko-Karin (1898–1985) already had great work experience in Soviet security services. After the second Soviet occupation of Western Ukraine in October 1944 he was selected to work with the underground Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists–Ukrainian Insurgent Army (OUN-UPA) in order to liquidate it. In March 1945, he became the head of the operational group of the USSR and NKVD colonel. He was personally involved in direct negotiations between the Soviet authorities and the nationalistic underground movement, and acted at the same time as a plenipotentiary (commissioner) of the CARC with exploratory purposes. In this latter role, he personally negotiated with Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and Josyf Slipyj, and was directly involved in the foundation of the Initiative Group of Havryil Kostelnik and the liquidation of the UGCC. He retired in 1947 but from time to time was involved in certain special operations. He wrote a number of articles, books, and memoirs in a style characteristic of Soviet propaganda literature.

¹² Sergiy Karin insisted that Kostelnik was included among the members of the delegation. See Josyf Slipyj, *Спомини* [Memoirs], eds. Iwan Dacko and Mariya Horyacha (Lviv, 2014), p. 154. The delegation consisted of four members: the brother of the late Metropolitan, Archimandrite Klymentiy Sheptytsky as its head; Fr. Havryil Kostelnik; Fr. Ivan Kotiv; and Studite monk Herman Budzinsky as a translator. For a detailed analysis of the delegation visit to Moscow see: Svitlana Hurkina, 'Архимандрит Климентій Шептицький: Маловивчені сторінки життя' [Archimandrite Klymentiy Sheptytsky: Unknown pages from his life], *Сторінки воєнної історії України* [Pages of military history of Ukraine], 14 (2011), pp. 203–215.

The delegation brought the metropolitan's *Letter to the Clergy and Faithful* and the memorial with the request to the Soviet government to acknowledge the rights and freedom of the UGCC on the conditions fixed in the Concordat of 1925 between Poland and the Apostolic See.¹³ The delegation had two meetings with the head of the CARC Ivan Poliansky, on 22 and 27 December 1944, presenting him the current situation in the Church in the USSR, the documents from the metropolitan, and one hundred thousand roubles for the Red Cross to help wounded soldiers and their families. Poliansky was not happy with the memorial containing some requirements concerning tax exemptions, and the permission for the teaching of religion in schools and hospitals, etc., and refused them as contradicting Soviet religious legislation. Still, on the question as to whether the UGCC was permitted to serve freely in the USSR, he gave an affirmative answer.

Along with the official meetings in Moscow the delegation had several informal meetings. At the delegation's request, a visit to the Moscow Patriarch Alexius was arranged. In addition, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR sent delegates to meet with the three NKGB colonels, whom they mistakenly believed to be the general staff of the Red Army. These 'generals', who introduced themselves as Ivanov, Lebedev, and Sergeev, were interested in the possibility of getting into contact and negotiating with the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) through the mediation of the Church and asked the delegation to influence in some way the nationalist underground movement and persuade the Commander General Roman Shukhevych to cease hostilities against the Red Army. The delegation did not expect such proposals and had no authority to

¹³ The concordat between Poland and the Apostolic See, signed on 10 February and ratified on 2 June 1925, regulated the status of the Catholic Church in Poland and was very beneficial for the UGCC. It provided equal rights to both Latin and Byzantine rites; freedom of organization and activity; exempted churches, religious institutions, and monasteries from taxes; gave broad opportunities for UGCC activity in the sphere of religious education and full freedom in development of the theological seminaries and formation of clergy. Moreover, the Apostolic See preserved for itself the exclusive right to appoint bishops and their auxiliaries without the intervention of the Polish government. The concordat was active until the beginning of World War II in September 1939, when Poland ceased to exist. For the full text of the concordat see: Alexander Bachynsky, *Конкордат заключений між Апостольською Столицею а президентом Річи Посполитої Польської дня 10 лютого 1925, ратифікований польським соймом і обов'язуючий з днем 2. серпня 1925* [Concordat between the Holy See and the President of the Republic of Poland on 10 February 1925, ratified by the Polish Sejm and binding from 2 August 1925] (Lviv, 1925), Online: <http://dds.edu.ua/ua/component/abook/book/3-canon-law/43-konkordat-1925.html> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

decide such an issue. Moreover, eventual contacts of this nature and negotiations with the underground movement could cast suspicions upon the Church's loyalty and provoke a new wave of persecutions against the Church by the authorities. Therefore, the delegation promised to submit the case to the metropolitan after their return to Lviv.

Despite assurances of safety from the 'general staff', Metropolitan Slipyj understood that the UPA did not trust the Bolsheviks and would not surrender. So he decided not to engage personally in negotiations with the UPA but entrusted Studite Archimandrite Klymentiy Shepytsky to inform General Shukhevych of Soviet proposals. Slipyj's premonition was not without foundation. Efforts to arrange the negotiations lasted several months but did not bring about the desired result for the Soviets. Meanwhile the Yalta conference of Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin ran from 4–11 February 1945 and decisively fixed the Soviet-Polish border. This opened the way for the Bolsheviks' plans for the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church.

Shortly after Yalta, on 2 March 1945, Molotov ordered Karpov to prepare concrete proposals with regard to the UGCC. Karpov developed a detailed instruction ('№ 58') with proposals concerning the liquidation of the UGCC. He suggested a series of measures: (1) to establish a Lviv Orthodox eparchy headed by the bishop of Lviv and Ternopil and to offer him support for missionary work; (2) to issue in the name of the patriarch of Moscow a special appeal to the clergy and faithful of the Uniate Church and to distribute it widely therein; and (3) to organise an 'Initiative Group' within the UGCC, which would have as its aim to deliberately break relations with the Vatican and to urge the clergy and the faithful to convert to Orthodoxy.

An important role in this plan was assigned to the ROC. The instruction explicitly stated that 'the Russian Orthodox Church, which in the past had made sufficient efforts to combat Catholicism, should play a significant role in the fight against the Roman Catholic Church (and against the Uniate Church)'.¹⁴ This instruction was presented to Stalin on 15 March 1945 and was approved the following day. Immediately after this, Karpov sent a copy of this instruction with some other directives to the head of the CARC Ivan Poliansky; thus began the preparations for the liquidation of the UGCC. Preparations went in four main directions:

¹⁴ Bilas, *Репресивно-каральна система в Україні* (see n. 6), vol. 1, pp. 310–321.

The first included diverse measures for the organization of the Initiative Group in the UGCC, the selection of candidates for this Group, and their recruitment.

The second direction envisaged the support of the Orthodox mission in Galicia (by the establishment of an Orthodox episcopal see and the publication of a pastoral letter of the Moscow Patriarch with an appeal to convert to Orthodoxy).

The third included special intelligence and operational measures concerning active anti-Soviet elements in the UGCC, such as gathering compromising materials and repressing active antagonists of the reunion, and spreading various rumours to discredit leading figures of the UGCC (for example, rumours that the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky did not die of natural causes, but was poisoned for his loyalty to the Soviet regime and the initiative of reunion, or that Josyf Slipyj was Sheptytsky's illegitimate son, etc.).

The fourth direction involved using the UGCC in the struggle against the Organisation of the Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.¹⁵ I shall not explore this last issue, and will concentrate mainly on the first two directions in the NKGB operation.

3. PREPARATION PERIOD: RECRUITMENT, AGITATION, AND TERROR

The events of the anti-Uniate campaign developed according to an elaborate plan. The main steps were the following: involvement of the Moscow Patriarchate in the action, the preparation of public opinion by the publication of anti-Uniate articles, the arrest of the Greek Catholic hierarchy, the formation of the Initiative Group, and various forms of agitation, repression, and terror.

3.1. *Involvement of the Moscow Patriarchate*

According to Karpov's instruction, the NKGB began to actively engage the ROC in their plans, charging them with different tasks, such as gathering intelligence and promoting missionary activity.

¹⁵ Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, p. 354 (document 62).

Thus, on 20 April 1945, on the recommendation of the NKGB, the Moscow Patriarchate appointed a priest, Fr. Makariy Oksijuk, as bishop of Lviv and Ternopil and on 22 April he was ordained.¹⁶ On 27 May he arrived in Lviv with a group of priests for the organisation of the Orthodox society for missionary activity and for the support of the Initiative Group of the UGCC for reunion with the ROC.

In May 1945 the pastoral letter of Moscow Patriarch Alexius to 'the pastors and faithful of the Greek Catholic Church, residents of the western regions of the Ukrainian SSR'¹⁷ began to circulate in Galicia. It clearly sounded like a call to the faithful to return to the Russian Orthodox Church. This letter was composed much earlier (immediately after the approval of Karpov's instruction) and was agreed upon with Molotov already on 19 March. On 25 April, 10,000 copies of this letter signed by Patriarch Alexius were sent through the Moscow Patriarchate to Lviv to the hands of the newly-appointed Bishop Makariy Oksijuk for distribution among the faithful and clergy in the Greek Catholic parishes¹⁸. The letter appeared without a date and was not re-published in the official *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* (*Журнал Московской патриархии*). Neither did it appear in the three-volume edition of Alexius' collected works. In style and content, it resembled documents of the Soviet authorities, rather than the pastoral letters of the patriarch. These circumstances caused some scholars to seriously doubt the authenticity of this letter.¹⁹

There are indeed good reasons to doubt Alexius' authorship of this message. Such doubts were expressed already at the time of its circulation in Galicia. For example, the vicar-general Mykhailo Melnyk pointed

¹⁶ On 10 March 1944, Nikon Petin (1902–1956), bishop of Donetsk and Voroshylovgrad, was appointed for the Lviv episcopal see but later this decision was revoked, probably because it was not confirmed by the Soviet authorities.

¹⁷ See the text of this letter in: Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Нескорена Церква* [Unconquered Church] (Kyiv, 2001), pp. 46–47. The letter appeared undated with a print run of 10,000 copies. Bociurkiw reasonably suggests that this letter was not written by the Patriarch of Moscow, but in the offices of the NKVD, since it appeared neither in the *JMP* nor in the patriarch's three-volume collected works: *Слова, речи, послания, обращения, доклады, статьи* [Words, speeches, letters, appeals, reports, articles] (Moscow, 1948). In the end of April, Georgiy Karpov notified Nikita Khrushchev that the contents of the letter had been agreed with Molotov already on 19 March. See: Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State* (see n. 10), pp. 119–120; Serhiychuk, *Нескорена Церква* (see above), p. 45. Similar letters were also issued in later times.

¹⁸ TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 1638, f. 34, 35, 35 (both sides).

¹⁹ Bohdan Bociurkiw, 'Т. зв. саморозпуск УГКЦ в 1946 р. у світлі розсекречених архівних документів' [The so-called selfliquidation of the UGCC in 1946 in light of declassified archival material], *Сучасність* [Modernity], 1 (1998), p. 108.

out that the patriarch's appeal only damaged and complicated the whole affair. He said so to Karin in these words:

The appeal of the patriarch, if it truly comes from him, does not withstand criticism. First of all, why should the patriarch be opposed to the deceased Metropolitan Sheptytsky in his message? It should be clear to everyone that Metropolitan Sheptytsky was a great authority for all, and the movement against him, even though he is already deceased, brought feelings of repulsion. Moreover, the Greek Catholics comment on this accusation in such a way, saying that even in the article 'With a Cross or with a Sword', [where] Sheptytsky was accused of his past activity, it was noted that after the coming of the Soviet power he took the path of loyalty. However, the patriarch in his attack did not take into account even this circumstance.²⁰

In addition, Melnyk noted the bad Ukrainian translation of the message, saying: 'I do not know Russian well, but far better than the translators of this letter know Ukrainian'.²¹

The letter of the patriarch also greatly upset the brother of the deceased metropolitan, Klymentiy Sheptytsky, who, while being in Moscow, had visited the patriarch and had a cordial conversation with him. The archimandrite even intended to write a response.²²

As a result, the message of the Moscow patriarch brought the opposite effect to what was expected. Kostelnyk reported to Karin that this letter played a very negative role and considerably undermined their possibilities for organising the Initiative Group.²³ So to correct this mistake, another message was needed. It was delivered first by Bishop Makariy on 24 June, and later by the patriarchal exarch of Ukraine, Ioan Sokolov, on 4 December 1945.²⁴ Having heard that Metropolitan Ioan was preparing a pastoral letter calling for reunion, Kostelnyk even offered his assistance to prevent a repeat of the situation with the earlier patriarchal letter.²⁵

Written without any sensitivity to the religious feelings of the faithful, the patriarchal message was most probably composed in the NKGB offices, according to the plan in instruction '№ 58'. It betrays an unprofessional hand, a poor understanding of the situation, and just plain

²⁰ Serhiychuk et al., *Ликвідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, p. 659 (document 120).

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid., p. 661.

²³ Ibid., p. 660.

²⁴ See *Єпархіальний вісник* [Eparchial herald], 1 (1946), pp. 9–12.

²⁵ Ibid. This correction indeed was done at the meeting of the members of the Initiative Group with the exarch. See Sergiy Khrutsky, 'Собор повороту до віри батьків' [Council of return to parents' faith], *Єпархіальний вісник* [Eparchial herald], 2–3 (1946), p. 11.

ignorance of the nature of the Church and ecclesiastical matters. Ernst Christoph Suttner also points out that the theological content of this message contradicts the dogmatic views of Patriarch Alexius and his predecessor Sergius:

It is impossible that the doctrine rejected by Sergius [...] could be present in the pastoral letter, ascribed to Patriarch Alexius. If Patriarch Alexius had really written this, he would fundamentally be contradicting his predecessor, though nothing of this is known.²⁶

However, the signature of the patriarch raises a more general question of the role of the Moscow Patriarchate in the oppression of the UGCC. And here the opinions of scholars vary, from radical accusation to a no less radical justification, even exculpation of the ROC. For example, Ivan Hrynioch argues, 'The official propaganda of the Moscow Patriarchate played a considerable role in the destruction of the UGCC'.²⁷ Voinarovych claims that the idea of Alexius' letter was the first and necessary step to engage the ROC in the campaign of liquidation of the UGCC but the very implementation of this plan was the work of those in power (the Soviet authorities), and the forced signature of the patriarch is the only evidence of the Moscow Patriarchate's involvement in this campaign.²⁸

Even if the patriarch did not write or sign the message, it is hardly possible to imagine that he was unaware of it, and this silent consent anyway implies responsibility with its consequences. The activity of the Moscow Patriarchate in the preparation of the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946 testifies to its engagement, though we can discuss the degree of voluntariness. The correspondence between Kostelnyk and Alexius reveals that the Moscow Patriarch had a word in this process, though it can be admitted that most actions of the Moscow Patriarchate were undertaken either with the agreement or according to the direct instructions of the NKGB.

²⁶ See Ernst Christoph Suttner, *Українське християнство на початку III тисячоліття: історичний досвід та еклезіологічні перспективи* [Ukrainian Christianity at the beginning of the third millennium: historical experience and ecclesiological perspectives], trans. and ed. Oleh Turiy (Lviv, 2001), pp. 119–121.

²⁷ Ivan Hrynioch, 'The Destruction of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union', *Prologue Quarterly. Problems of Independence and Amity of Nations*, 4/1–2 (1960), pp. 5–51.

²⁸ Viktor Voynalovych, *Партійно-державна політика щодо релігії та релігійних інституцій в Україні 1940-1960-х років: політологічний дискурс* [Party-State policy on religion and religious institutions in Ukraine in the 1940s–1960s: Political science discourse] (Kyiv, 2005), p. 354.

We should acknowledge that not all those who engaged in these acts were following orders willingly. This was particularly the case with Bishop Makariy Oksijuk, who was not happy with his appointment to Lviv. Slipyj even mentions that Oksijuk, being aware of the violent character of the state action against Greek Catholics, did not want to go to Lviv, saying: 'How can I go there, when the metropolitan and clergy are arrested, and the KGB will install me on the throne?'²⁹ After the reunion he tried to be tolerant and not to violate the consciences of the local priests and faithful, saying to one of the reunited priests: 'Father! We do not violate your conscience, so you too, do not violate the conscience of your parishioners. Pray for the Pope and do not forget us, sinners! But remembering the Pope publicly, you can get in conflict with our authorities, who are hostile to the Vatican'.³⁰ Even Slipyj acknowledged that Bishop Makariy had a conscience.

3.2. *Preparation of the Public Opinion by the Publication of anti-Uniate Articles*

To create more favourable conditions for Orthodoxy, the Greek Catholic Church had to be discredited in the eyes of the Ukrainian society. Thus, the liquidation movement began by forming public opinion. On 6 April 1946, the Lviv regional newspaper *Вільна Україна* (Free Ukraine) published an article by Yaroslav Halan (under the pseudonym Vladimir Rosovych) untitled 'With a Cross or with a Sword?'. The article accused the Church of collaboration with Nazism and blamed Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky. On 7 April the article was republished in the Kyiv newspaper *Радянська Україна* (Soviet Ukraine),³¹ and then issued as a separate publication with a circulation of 20,000 copies. It was also read on the radio and actively discussed at various meetings.

²⁹ Slipyj, *Спомини* (see n. 12), p. 166.

³⁰ Yaroslav Rokyt'sky, *Спомини* [Memoirs] (n.p., n.d.), p. 403 (manuscript from the private archive of Fr. Ivan Hovera).

³¹ The daily newspaper *Радянська Україна* [Soviet Ukraine] was an official organ of the Communist Party, the Supreme Soviet, and the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialistic Republic.

3.3. *The Arrest of the Greek Catholic Hierarchy*

On 11 April 1945, the state security organs arrested all the bishops who were active in the USSR: Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj and bishops Nykyta Budka and Mykolay Charnetsky in Lviv, Hryhoriy Khomyshyn and Ivan Lyatyshevsky in Stanislav and the two vicars-general of the eparchy of Przemyśl Mykhailo Melnyk and Mykola Panas³². Following them, the members of cathedral chapters and leading priests and ecclesiastics were arrested.

3.4. *Formation of the Initiative Group*

In the meantime, NKGB authorities were actively seeking candidates to form the Initiative Group for reunification with the ROC. According to some evidence, such work was initially conducted among the arrested Greek Catholic bishops and vicars. Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj witnesses in his *Memoirs* that after his arrest he was not immediately charged with anti-Soviet activity, but first was encouraged to apostatize and to renounce the Catholic Church, and even offered the metropolitan see of Kyiv in return for such actions. However, when the interrogators saw that apostasy was not going to happen, they began to lay charges against Slipyj.³³ Since none of the bishops were willing to collaborate with the NKGB in this operation, the search for candidates moved to influential priests.

It was Protopresbyter Havryil Kostelnyk who drew particular attention of the NKGB. On the one hand, he was a respected priest, an excellent preacher, an intellectual, and an influential theologian; on the other hand, in his views he belonged to the current of so-called Easternizers (*vostochnyky*): he openly opposed the pope and the Vatican and had sympathy for Orthodoxy. The NKGB chose him for the role of the leader of reunion and repeatedly summoned him for long conversations about the possibility of reunion with the Russian Orthodox Church. In the beginning, Kostelnyk was rather sceptical about this idea and refuted the possibility of its practical implementation. Moreover, he made efforts to prevent the collaboration with the Bolsheviks—even contrary to the loyal position of Metropolitan Sheptytsky. He clearly said: ‘We should

³² Bishops Josaphat Kotsylovsky and Hryhoriy Lakota who remained within the Polish borders were arrested somewhat later, in April 1946.

³³ Slipyj, *Спомину* (see n. 12), pp. 161–162.

not compromise ourselves by close contacts with the Soviet authorities, because the time will come when people and Rome will seriously charge us that we agreed to cooperate with the Bolsheviks'.³⁴

The situation changed, however, after the arrest of the hierarchy on 11 April 1945, after which Kostelnyk radically altered his opinion and began actively cooperating with the NKGB. He was arrested along with other members of the Lviv cathedral chapter, but within a few days was released. In the words of one eyewitness, a few days were enough 'to transform Kostelnyk—a fearless preacher in the time of the first and the beginning of the second Soviet occupations—into a horrific instrument of the destructive plan'.³⁵ Such a rapid change obviously did not happen without pressure on him of the NKGB, who reminded Kostelnyk of his nationalist past and his anti-Soviet activity.

Scholars express different views about Kostelnyk's motivation for this radical change. Some—mostly Soviet historians—argue that he made his choice freely and consciously, and that all his activity was a logical development of his anti-papal views and ideological convictions.³⁶ Others suggest that Kostelnyk could not withstand the pressure of the NKGB and compromised, deducing that in the new Soviet reality the UGCC simply had no chance of survival and would be liquidated regardless, whereas its transition to Orthodoxy would allow Church structures and traditional religious life to be preserved³⁷. All these opinions reflect some aspects of Kostelnyk's motivations. We can certainly admit that he sincerely cared about the future of the Church and tried to preserve its way of life and traditions. This care is clearly seen in his correspondence with the Patriarch of Moscow, in which he tried to convince Patriarch Alexius to respect established practices, to appoint bishops only from

³⁴ Serhiychuk et al., *Ликвідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, p. 454 (document 77).

³⁵ 'Свідчення очевидця про т. зв. "Львівський Собор"' [Testimony of an eyewitness of the so-called "Lviv Sobor"], in *Мартирологія Українських Церков, у 4-х томах* [Martyrology of the Ukrainian Churches, in four volumes], vol. 2: *Українська Католицька Церква: Документи, матеріали, християнський самвидав України* [Ukrainian Catholic Church: Documents, materials, Christian samizdat of Ukraine], eds. Osyip Zinkevych and Taras Lonchyna (Toronto – Baltimore, 1985), p. 254.

³⁶ Serhiy Y. Kyrychenko, 'Уніатська Церква: шлях до Львівського собору', in *Західна Україна: перше десятиріччя після війни*, eds. Serhiy. Y. Kyrychenko, Viacheslav S. Koval and Olexiy V. Haran (Kyiv, 1988), pp. 3–10, Online: <http://history.org.ua/JournALL/Preprint/1988/3-1.pdf>.

³⁷ Bohdan Bociurkiw, 'Українська Греко-Католицька Церква в катакомбах' [Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the catacombs], in *Ковчез: Збірник статей з церковної історії* [Ark: Collection of articles on church history], 1 (Lviv, 1993), p. 114.

the local clergy, and not to introduce changes for at least 40 to 50 years.³⁸ However, we can also question whether the chosen way was the best and the only solution, and whether he was justified in collaborating with the Bolsheviks.

One more important factor that influenced Kostelnyk's decision was his illusion of considering himself an independent player in this game with the Bolsheviks. Criticising Josyf Slipyj for his somewhat uncertain position with regard to the Soviet authorities, in March 1945 Kostelnyk said:

He [Josyf Slipyj] and some others with him do not understand the necessity of the delicate work that we now have to conduct with the Bolsheviks. You certainly understand that we will not be sincere with the Bolsheviks. We need to mask [our true intentions], but in such a way that they believe us.³⁹

He argued that 'in questions of the Church, the Greek Catholics need to find meeting points with the Russian Orthodox, that there is no other way, not because we trust the Bolsheviks but because they will try to entrap us, yet we should behave with them in such a way in order to outsmart them'.⁴⁰

This independent position was noticed by both the Orthodox Bishop Makariy Oksijuk and the NKGB. Having read the letter of the Initiative Group, Makariy characterized Kostelnyk as follows:

Kostelnyk may undermine the success of the cause of reunion. His words in the appeal... confirm the suspicions that Kostelnyk and his supporters have a peculiar notion of reunion, that is, that [after reunion] the Uniate Church remains distinct from the Orthodox Church and enters in relations with it only formally, on paper and in minor matters (such as mentioning [during liturgical prayers] the Patriarch [of Moscow] or the Metropolitan of Kyiv). This is unacceptable because at the first opportunity Kostelnyk and his 'brothers' could utilise such a situation for some kind of experiment, such as *Polikarpivshchyna* in [wartime] Volyn or *Lypkivshchyna* in [inter-war Soviet] Ukraine. They might display political partisanship—proclaim the 'independence' of Ukraine with a Nazi touch. In general, we must be very cautious with Kostelnyk so that he does not provoke any kind of intrigue.⁴¹

³⁸ 'Лист Костельника патріарху Московському і всьї Русі Алексію від 3 жовтня 1945 року' [Letter of Kostelnyk to Patriarch Alexius of Moscow and all Rus' from 3 October 1945], in: TsDAVO, f. 4648, op. 3, spr. 8, f. 64–66.

³⁹ Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, pp. 397–404 (document 74).

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 1639, f. 38–39 (from notification of the Commissar of State Security S. Savchenko to N. Krushchev, 11 July 1945).

Kostelnyk repaid Makariy with the same mistrust, saying to his close friends after the June letters of Makariy: 'I am, above all, afraid that such characters as Makariy will start to introduce their ways in Galicia. My colleagues rightfully declare that the Orthodox Church is conservative, lagging behind the times. It will be bad to emulate the regressives. It is necessary to have some reforms introduced in the Orthodox Church'.⁴²

The NKGB knew about Kostelnyk's double intentions and did not trust him either. In the report of NKGB commissar Rodionov we read:

Taking into account the signals that Kostelnyk and others activists of the Uniate Church may try to convert their return to Orthodoxy into a tactical manoeuvre in order to preserve Uniate cadres, the measures should be taken for preventing such attempts and careful monitoring of the behaviour of the Uniates after their formal reunion with the Orthodox Church.⁴³

But let us return to April 1945. On 15 April, Kostelnyk had a meeting with Karin and was finally persuaded to head the movement towards reunion. Karin presented him the situation from the perspective of the Soviet government in the following terms: the Greek Catholic bishops have been arrested and will be sentenced as criminals; one should not expect their return. Since the Church cannot exist without bishops, for the Soviet State the UGCC had ceased to exist; the cathedral chapter and metropolitan ordinariate had been dissolved and, if they dare to act illegally, they will be arrested; the only thing that remains are isolated religious communities and the faithful that have to draw the right conclusions from this situation. Karin then proposed that Kostelnyk organize the Initiative Group that would bring the Church to the reunion with the ROC.⁴⁴

On 18 April, Kostelnyk submitted to Karin an essay entitled 'How can the Galician Greek Catholic Church be converted to Orthodoxy?', in which he presented his view on the possible way of 'reunion' of the UGCC with the ROC as well as the main impediments on this way. He argued that a rapid conversion of Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy would be inefficient. He did not approve of the repressive methods of the NKGB (the so-called course of 'heavy-handedness'), since it would be much harder to liquidate the Union with the halo of martyrdom. He saw it as

⁴² TsDAHO, f. 1, op. 23, spr. 1639, f. 42.

⁴³ Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, p. 668 (document 121). Later, the intelligence dossier on Kostelnyk was opened under the title 'Возрожденцы' [Revivalists].

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 536–544 (document 95).

a longer process of re-education of the faithful and the clergy. He proposed to preserve the old name of the UGGC, appoint eparchial administrators, publish and popularise books on the history of the Union. Thus, Kostelnýk's idea was to influence Greek Catholics through education and, later, through the organization of the Initiative Group.

The government, however, had no patience for such re-education campaigns. Karin therefore demanded from Kostelnýk that he promptly organize the Initiative Group and write an appeal, calling for reunion with the 'faith of the fathers'. To this pressure Kostelnýk succumbed. He regularly met with Karin over the course of a few days, reporting about his organization of the Group and preparation of the text of the declaration, as well as discussing other current issues. To facilitate and hasten the campaign, Kostelnýk asked Karin to urge the clergy of the other two eparchies of Stanislaviv and Przemyśl to join the Group.

The NKGB tried to engage in this operation the two vicars-general of the Soviet-held part of the Przemyśl eparchy—Mykhailo Melnyk, pastor of Nyzhankovychi, for the southern part of the eparchy, in Drohobych oblast, and Mykola Panas, pastor of Potorytsia in the Sokal region, for the northern part, in Lviv Oblast—using various kinds of physical and psychological pressure.

At the end of April, they managed to break Mykhailo Melnyk after he was arrested and tortured in prison.⁴⁵ Being unable to withstand the pressure, he agreed to join the Group.⁴⁶ He did not, however, accept this unconditionally. In his conversation with Karin in Lviv on 14 May Melnyk was assured that the reunion with the ROC would not lead to the appointment of Russian priests for Greek Catholic parishes or any changes in language and rituals. After that, he contacted Kostelnýk and returned to Drohobych in order to start the campaign of convincing priests.

⁴⁵ Scholars failed to find any documents or materials on the arrest and imprisonment of Fr. Panas and Fr. Melnyk in the State Security Archive of Lviv Oblast, but the arrest of the vicars-general of the Przemyśl Eparchy is mentioned in one newspaper article: 'Переслідування Української Греко-Католицької Церкви' [Persecution of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church], *Стрілецькі вісті* [Riflemen's news], 212 (May 1945). Also, Ivan Kryvutsky, in his memoirs, mentioned the persecution of Fr. Melnyk. See: Ivan Kryvutsky, *Де срібнолентий Сян пливе...* [Where the silver river San flows] (Lviv, 2000), p. 104. See also: Bohdan Prach, *Духовенство Перемиської єпархії та Апостольської адміністрації Лемківщини: у 2-х томах* [Clergy of the Przemyśl Eparchy and the Apostolic administration of Lemkivshchyna], vol. 1: *Біографічні нариси (1939–1989)* [Biographical sketches (1939–1989)] (Lviv, 2015), p. xxviii.

⁴⁶ See Hrynioch, 'The Destruction of the Ukrainian Catholic Church' (see n. 27), p. 22.

As for vicar-general Mykola Panas, as soon as the NKGB learned about his appointment, he was called in for a conversation at the NKGB office on 16 May. As a result of this conversation he abstained from joining the Initiative Group but promised to consider the question and not to resist the conversion of priests who were subordinate to him.⁴⁷ From then on we do not know much about him, except the short note in the report of the NKGB Captain Bohdanov, who recorded the words of Kostelnik that Fr. Panas 'was ill and refused the administration of the vicariate, though in principle he personally agreed to join the Initiative Group'.⁴⁸ However, according to the witness of Vasyl Hrynyk (in his report), Panas did not join the Group. He was arrested probably in May 1945, and kept for a few months in a Lviv prison. Under torture he suffered a mental breakdown and became useless to the NKGB as a potential candidate for the Initiative Group. Thus, he was released as hopeless and useless for such a task.⁴⁹

The hardest task was to find a candidate for the Initiative Group from the Eparchy of Stanislaviv, where Bishop Hryhoriy Khomyshyn had been consistently implementing Catholic spirituality. At first the NKGB tried to 'persuade' Ihnatiy Lub, a Basilian monk and professor of theology at the Stanislaviv seminary. He was arrested, terrorized, and released with the task of organising the Group in Stanislaviv. He was, however, soon dismissed as completely unreliable. In his conversation with Karin on 17 May he could hardly bring himself to testify that such people as Sheptytsky and Khomyshyn were more engaged in politics than in ecclesial affairs. As Karin reported, Lub painfully strained to utter any words of condemnation, leading Karin to conclude: 'It is evident that he forcibly

⁴⁷ Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, p. 667 (document 121).

⁴⁸ Ibid., vol. 2, p. 177.

⁴⁹ See the report of Vasyl Hrynyk, the canon of the Przemyśl Cathedral Chapter, to the apostolic visitor for Ukrainians in Western Europe on repressions against the UGCC, 'Church in the Mother Land and in Poland', 18 March 1948 (the original document is in the Historical Archive of the UGCC in Rome; a copy can be found in the Archive of the Institute of Church History at the Ukrainian Catholic University, Lviv): Vasyl Hrynyk, *Церква в рідному краю і в Польщі* [The Church in the native land and in Poland], in AHTs, f. 6, op. 1, spr. 1, f. 28. Most probably Fr. Mykola Panas spent about two months in prison and was released in June or at the beginning of July, since on 11 July 1945 the vice-dean of Belz, Fr. Viktor Zhuk, wrote in his report to the episcopal consistory: 'Є нові вістки, що о. д-р Панас дістав розстрій нервовий, рівний божевіллю. Напазі на волі' [There is new information that Fr. Panas had a mental breakdown, equal to madness. At present, he has been freed]. See Archiwum Państwowe w Przemyślu, Archiwum Biskupstwa Greckokatolickiego [State Archives in Przemyśl, Archives of the Greek Catholic Bishopric], spr. 4790, f. 325. See also Prach, *Духовенство Перемиської єпархії* (see n. 45), vol. 1, p. xxviii.

took over this role because in his character he is apparently a thoroughbred Catholic of Khomyshyn's type and a Jesuit by nature'.⁵⁰ Finally, after meeting with Kostelnyk, Lub wrote a letter refusing to join the Initiative Group and left Lviv for Stanislaviv.

Then another candidate was found in the aged priest Olexander Rusyn, the pastor and dean of Kolomyia. At 77 years of age, however, he was too sick and too old for this task. Afraid of assassination by insurgents, he begged Karin with tears not to impose on him this task and to find someone younger.⁵¹

Finally, after these two failed attempts, a candidate was found in Fr. Antoni Pelvetsky, the pastor of Kopychyntsi and dean of Husiatyn, who also probably agreed to cooperate through pressure and intimidation, though almost nothing is known about his recruitment. He joined the Initiative Group rather late (on 31 May), so that the documents prepared by Kostelnyk and signed on 28 May were likely backdated and actually signed at a meeting of all three members of the Initiative Group with Karin on 31 May.⁵²

3.5. *The Initiative Group's Activity: Agitation, Pressure, Repressions, and Terror*

Once the Initiative Group was formed, it produced two documents: a letter to the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR and an appeal to the clergy, announcing the creation of the Initiative Group as a new administrative body of the UGCC, and its activity towards reunification with the Orthodox Church.⁵³

⁵⁰ Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, p. 684.

⁵¹ Ibid., pp. 672, 729–731, 740; Ruslan Deliatynsky, 'Отець Олександр Русин (1868–1955 pp.): Біографічний нарис' [Father Oleksandr Rusyn (1868–1955)], in *Греко-католицьке духовенство у суспільно-політичному та національно-культурному житті українців: Матеріали всеукраїнської наукової конференції (18 жовтня 2013 р.)* [Greek Catholic clergy in the socio-political and national-cultural life of Ukrainians: Proceedings of the All-Ukrainian Scientific Conference (18 October 2013)], eds. Yaroslav Tkachuk and Andriy Korolko (Kolomyia, 2013), pp. 48–58.

⁵² Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, pp. 769–775 (documents 144–145).

⁵³ 'До Всечесного греко-католицького духовенства в західних областях України' [To the Reverend Greek Catholic clergy in the western regions of Ukraine]. Both documents officially were dated to 28 May 1945, but in his report to the Commissar of State Security, Sergiy Savchenko, on 1 June Karin writes that his very first appointment with Pelvetsky took place on 31 May and only late in the afternoon on this day, at about

In their address to the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR they justified the formation of the Initiative Group by the fact that due to the arrest of the bishops, who were not able to respond adequately to the new situation, the Church appeared in a state of anarchy and disorder. Therefore, the Initiative Group took the responsibility of bringing the Church from anarchy to consolidation by reuniting it with the Orthodox Church and asked that the state authorities approve this initiative. The members of the Group also stated that this act of conversion to Orthodoxy should be developed in consultation with the government and under the auspices of the ROC.⁵⁴ They asked the government to approve this initiative and legalize their activities.

In their address to the clergy of the UGCC the members of the Initiative Group reported that they operated with the permission of the government and from now on the government would not recognize any other administrative authority in the Church beyond this Group. The letter ended with practical instructions concerning the way in which the clergy were to join the Group. Deans had to convene meetings to discuss this letter of appeal. Like-minded priests had to declare their support of the Group as soon as possible. They could do this in one of two ways: either join the group individually and receive a certificate of membership, or make a collective, handwritten statement with signatures of supporters, after which one of them should bring the letter to the office of the Initiative Group together with a contribution to the fund for the publication of books.

The two documents, signed on the same day, to some extent contradict each other. In the letter to the government, the Group only asks to legitimize its activities, whereas in the address to the clergy, it announces its

3 p.m., he had a meeting with all three members of the Initiative Group, during which Kostelnyk, Melnyk, and Pelvetsky signed both documents. In this report, Karin described in detail the course of the meeting and attached Kostelnyk's speech delivered during this meeting. Commissar Savchenko, in his report to Khrushchev on the measures concerning liquidation of the UGCC, informed Khrushchev that the Initiative Group was formed only on 30 May and on the same day its members signed the declaration to the government claiming their intention to work for the reunification of the UGCC with the ROC. It seems that the documents were signed three days later from the date indicated in both documents. For Karin's report on the meeting with the Initiative Group, see Serhiychuk et al., *Ликвідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, pp. 771–775 (document 145). For the text of Kostelnyk's speech, see *ibid.*, pp. 758–759 (document 140). For Savchenko's report to Khrushchev, see *ibid.*, pp. 781–790 (document 148).

⁵⁴ *Діяння Собору Греко-католицької церкви у Львові 8–10 березня 1946 р.* [Acts of the Council of the Greek-Catholic Church in Lviv 8–10 March 1946] (Lviv, 1946), pp. 16–19.

recognition by the authorities as a *fait accompli*. This inconsistency was well understood by the members of the Group: while submitting signed documents to Danylenko-Karin, they asked not to publish their appeal to the government in the press until all priests had received their appeal to the clergy. In fact, the Group received the permission for its activity only on 18 June 1945, and not from the government but from the plenipotentiary of the CAROC. Having received the letter from the Group, Nikita Khrushchev, asked Stalin for directions, and on his advice instructed the plenipotentiary of the CAROC, Pavlo Khodchenko, to answer the letter of the Group. In his letter, which was by no means a piece of legislation, Khodchenko announced the recognition of the Initiative Group as a temporary (interim) administrative body of the UGCC, noting that the group should have its activity approved by the CAROC plenipotentiary for Ukraine and send him lists of the names of pastors who refused to be subject to its jurisdiction.⁵⁵

As we can see, there was no legal act that formally legalized the establishment and operation of the Group. The government did not take such a decision, and the CAROC plenipotentiary had no authority to do so. It should also be noted that the case of the UGCC suddenly moved from the jurisdiction of the CARC (Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults) to the competence of the CAROC. Moreover, the instruction requiring them to submit lists of the rebellious clergy to the plenipotentiary, who was also an employee of the state security forces, actually obliged members of the Group to write denunciations to the NKGB against all opponents who disagreed, after which such priests were subject to repression. Usually they were arrested, accused of anti-Soviet activities, and given lengthy sentences in labour camps.

The letter to the government and Khodchenko's response were published in the Lviv Oblast newspaper *Вільна Україна* (Free Ukraine) only on 6 July 1945, while the address to the Greek Catholic clergy was immediately printed in the form of leaflets and spread widely. The regional NKGB diligently collected information about the reaction of priests, intellectuals, religious activists, and faithful concerning the statements of the Group. The vast majority of priests reacted negatively to this activity of Kostelnyk, while enthusiastic supporters could hardly be found. Many were confused and frightened and opted to wait. Still others stood in clear opposition.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 19–20.

The greatest resistance came from the Basilians who immediately labelled Kostelnyk an apostate and traitor dishonouring the Church, and predicted for him the same fate as Judas. A group of opposing priests congregated around Archimandrite Clement Sheptytsky and Ivan Kotiv. On 5 July 1945, they wrote a letter with 61 signatures to Vyacheslav Molotov, the deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, protesting against the illegal activities of Kostelnyk and his associates.⁵⁶ Two representatives of this group, Ivan Kotiv and Josyf Kladochny, even travelled to Kyiv to meet on 16 July 1945 with the CARC plenipotentiary for Ukraine, Petro Vilkhovy, but achieved nothing. There was no answer to their letter. Only in September did Ivan Poliansky send to the CARC plenipotentiary in the Lviv Oblast a letter with instructions to inform the group that, due to the hostile position of the leaders of the UGCC towards the Soviet regime, the Council did not consider it necessary to react to the issues raised in the letter. But by that time, most of the priests who signed the letter of protest had already been imprisoned.⁵⁷

Meanwhile, the Group, in cooperation with the state security forces, launched an active propaganda campaign among the clergy aimed at persuading pastors to convert to Orthodoxy. Kostelnyk, accompanied by a government official (the NKGB agent Bogdanov), visited various deaneries and at meetings of priests tried to persuade them to join the Initiative Group. Melnyk and Pelvetsky carried out similar propaganda work in their eparchies.⁵⁸ Essentially the Group was only an instrument in the hands of the NKGB, a kind of screen through which the Soviet government conducted a campaign of destroying the UGCC, providing a semblance of legality and voluntariness. In fact, the NKGB documents clearly prove that all the measures, guidelines, and directives towards the liquidation of the UGCC were planned in the offices of the NKGB and finally approved by the Kremlin, and members of the Group were simply executing these plans.

⁵⁶ Serhiychuk et al., *Ликвідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 1, pp. 79–82 (document 178). The letter was signed by 61 priests.

⁵⁷ See Bilas, *Репресивно-каральна система в Україні* (see n. 6), p. 329.

⁵⁸ On the Initiative Group's activity in the Stanislaviv Eparchy, see Ihor O. Andrukhiv, 'Діяльність "ініціативного комітету" на Станіславщині з підготовки Львівського собору (липень 1945 – лютий 1946 рр.)' [Activities of the 'Initiative Committee' in the Stanislaviv region for the preparation of the Lviv council (July 1945–February 1946)], *Сторінки воєнної історії України* [Pages of military history of Ukraine], 7/2 (2003), pp. 138–149.

The deanery meetings, however, did not produce the desired results. Priests were reluctant to respond to this campaign, tried to avoid signing, or simply did not show up for meetings. In some deaneries, all the priests unanimously refused to sign a statement of support for the Group. And even those who had signed these statements did not do so willingly, but under pressure or for fear of arrest. The fate of those priests who openly protested the activities of the Group—and were arrested—clearly pointed to the eventual consequences of such resistance.

But in their conscience, priests did not support this movement. Thus, in October 1945 Kostelnyk, in his letter to Patriarch Alexius of Moscow, wrote that 800 priests had joined the Initiative Group, but admitted that no more than 50 of them joined with conviction. The rest only did so under pressure from the government because ‘there was no alternative’.⁵⁹ The NKGB officer Bogdanov, who accompanied Kostelnyk in his raids on deaneries of the Lviv archeparchy and participated in meetings, testified to this:

Observing each of those present at the meeting, listening to their remarks, questions, comments, I came to the conclusion that, even after signing this declaration, they remained the same Catholics, with the same political views and religious beliefs. They signed the statement only out of fear, and if tomorrow they were offered to reunite with the Orthodox Church (in the full sense), they would have renounced their signatures.⁶⁰

To accelerate the progress of the operation and increase the number of supporters of the Initiative Group, the government resorted to terror and ‘persuasion’ of the clergy. The most ardent opponents, who actively led counter-agitation among priests and faithful, impeding this NKGB movement towards reunification, were arrested and accused of anti-Soviet activities. As of 25 September, five bishops, 115 priests, two abbots, two monks, six seminarians, and sixteen lay people had been arrested.⁶¹ Other ‘unyielding’ priests were summoned for a talk from the regional executive committees where they were intimidated and subjected to death threats to force their signatures to statements. Some priests thus caved in but later withdrew their signatures as invalid because they signed under duress.⁶²

⁵⁹ ‘Лист Костельника патріарху Московському і всьї Русі Алексію від 3 жовтня 1945 року’ (see n. 38), TsDAVO, f. 4648, op. 36 spr. 8, f. 64–66.

⁶⁰ Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 2, p. 100 (document 176).

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 269 (document 204).

⁶² Hrynyk, *Церква в рідному краю і в Польщі* (see n. 49), pp. 2–9.

When the propaganda campaign was approaching its end, on 12–13 December 1945 the joint meeting of the CAROC and CARC plenipotentiaries was convened in Kyiv to sum up the results of the campaign and develop a plan for the sobor. After this consultation, the members of the Group met with the leading NKGB figures (Karpov, Poliansky, Khodchenko, Vilkhovy, Karin, and Bogdanov), and discussed the convocation of the sobor.⁶³ However, in the preparation talks for the sobor it became clear that without the participation of bishops the sobor would be invalid. This mistake nearly became fatal. To find a way out of this situation, it was decided to ordain the two unmarried members of the Initiative Group as bishops of the ROC.⁶⁴ So, in February 1946 Antoni Pelvetsky was ordained bishop of the Stanislaviv Eparchy and Mykhailo Melnyk—bishop of the Przemyśl Eparchy, which was renamed the Staro-Sambir Eparchy, because the Greek Catholic bishop Josaphat Kotsylovsky was still active in Przemyśl.⁶⁵ Archbishop Makariy Oksijuk was to remain in the Lviv Archeparchy, but after the sobor he was to receive an assistant, appointed from among the local Galician priests.

Following the advice of the Moscow Patriarch, the NKGB authorities had originally planned to orchestrate the 'reunification' by convening local eparchial councils, but members of the Group convinced them that the campaign for reunion should be conducted at a general sobor of the three eparchies. The main argument in favour of a single gathering was, as Kostelnik argued, that all three eparchies could send about 100 priests, while for the local councils no more than 40 or 50 delegates could be found. Such low numbers would not bring about due recognition, for 'there would be no end of every sort of mockery concerning it (as they would say that 20–30 priests came together and claim they are a Council!)'.⁶⁶

⁶³ See 'Інформаційний звіт уповноваженого Ради у справах РПЦ при РНК СРСР по УРСР Павла Ходченка від 5 січня 1946 року' [Informational report of the Commissioner of the Council for ROC Affairs under the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR Pavel Khodchenko dated 5 January 1946], in Serhiychuk, *Нескорена Церква* (see n. 17), pp. 81–86 (quotation on p. 86).

⁶⁴ To this end, members of the Initiative Group met with the Patriarchal Exarch of the ROC, Metropolitan Ioann Sokolov.

⁶⁵ Bishop Josafat Kotsylovsky was arrested in April 1946 and handed to the Soviet organs of NKGB in the USSR.

⁶⁶ For the text of Kostelnik's paper on the completion of the Initiative Group's actions regarding the reunification of the UGCC with the ROC and preparations of the Sobor of the UGCC from 19 October 1945, see Serhiychuk et al., *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 3), vol. 2, pp. 302–305 (document 210; quotation on p. 303).

4. REALISATION: THE 'LVIV SOBOR' OF 1946

4.1. *Organisation of the 'Sobor'*

The final planning of the sobor and its whole scenario was meticulously sketched out to the smallest details in the NKGB offices. The objectives and agenda, the conditions of and procedures for 'reunification' with the ROC, the ROC delegation from Moscow of the ROC, the documents to be approved, and the reports to be delivered at the sobor—all this was planned by the NKGB authorities. All texts of reports were preliminarily checked and censored. The list of delegates to the council composed by the Initiative Group also passed a rigorous inspection and had been shortened. Each delegate was thoroughly vetted for reliability in order to prevent any deviations or surprises.⁶⁷ The final list of delegates included 216 priests and nineteen laymen. The preparation and organisation of the sobor was carried out by a special NKGB force of five operatives responsible for the success of the campaign and collecting information about the mood among the delegates. The head of the CAROC Karpov closely followed the course of the whole campaign from Moscow and personally sent his directives, telegrams, and instructions to Lviv.

4.2. *Discreditation of the Greek Catholic Hierarchy*

When everything was ready for the sobor, it was of paramount importance to discredit the imprisoned Greek Catholic hierarchy in the public eye. Thus, on 1 March 1946, a note from the Public Prosecutor's Office was published in national and regional newspapers about the imprisoned Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj and other bishops, accusing them of hostile and treacherous activities supportive of the German invaders.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 565 (document 258).

⁶⁸ Ibid., pp. 560–563 (document 256). The official newspaper of the Vatican, *L'Osservatore Romano*, commenting on the subject, pointed out that, among all imprisoned bishops, only one—Bishop Hryhoriy Khomyshyn of Stanislaviv—was responsible for his eparchy in 1941. Ivan Lyatyshevsky was only his auxiliary, Josyf Slipyj and Nykyta Budka were dependent on Metropolitan Sheptytsky, and Mykolay Charnetsky was banned by the Germans to live in the territory of his jurisdiction (Volyn region) and had to move to Lviv.

4.3. *The Proceedings of the Sobor*

A carefully planned sobor was held on 8–10 March 1946 in Lviv, at St. George's Cathedral. To ensure the attendance of the delegates, the priests were not informed beforehand about the purpose. Many of them received an invitation merely to a conference of supporters of the Initiative Group, and only after their arrival did they learn that they were to participate in a 'sobor'.⁶⁹

There were also delegates whom the NKGB forcibly brought to Lviv.⁷⁰ In order to keep everything under control, these delegates were isolated from the outside world in the Bristol Hotel and were driven to the sessions of the sobor by a special bus taking a fixed route. They could not freely leave the hotel or receive visitors or relatives. If anyone visited them, the conversation was reduced to a few minutes in the presence of a witness—an agent of the NKGB. These limitations were justified by the demands of security, but, in fact, every step and every word were monitored by the NKGB. As one of the participants recalled, once one arrived, one noticed 'watchful eyes': 'A lot of "watchful eyes" fall into the eyes of anyone who even slightly "can see"'.⁷¹ According to the official report, 216 participants took part in the 'sobor'; however, according to the account of one delegate, in reality there were far fewer—approximately 140. To increase the list of participants, later the NKGB submitted the names of priests who had already died or were in prison.⁷² According to the delegate's account, the sobor gave the impression of an unprecedented, heart-breaking funeral rather than that of a great historical moment.⁷³

⁶⁹ Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State* (see n. 10), p. 160.

⁷⁰ According to the evidence of Vasyl Hrynyk, the NKGB sent the agent by car to the parish parish to arrest him and then brought him to Lviv. There they were met by the commander who pretended as if his officers misunderstood his command, claiming that he only cared for the comfort and security of the priest, and with these apologies he led the priest to the 'Sobor'. See: Vasyl Hrynyk, *Церква в рідному краю і в Польщі* (see n. 49), p. 26.

⁷¹ 'Повно всюди кіноапаратури. Це також мене дуже насторожує. «Пильні очі», багато «пильних очей» впадають у очі кожному, хто, хоч трохи «вміє дивитись». Це ще більше мене насторожує'. Yaroslav Rokytsky, *Спомини* (see n. 30), p. 401.

⁷² 'Свідчення очевидця про т. зв. "Львівський собор"' (see n. 35), p. 252 and pp. 254–258.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 256.

One of the participants, Jaroslav Rokytsky (1912–1994), in his *Memoirs* writes about it as follows:

At the beginning of the sobor (if you can call this forced meeting a sobor) Kostelnik clearly stated that any discussion was excluded here. Pelvetsky was the first of the speakers. [...] His speech was short, explained almost nothing, and convinced no one. Marynovych from Drohobych delivered quite a long speech. He talked '*de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*' ('about everything and anything'). At the end of his speech, my neighbour—an old priest—whispered into my ear that by this performance Marynovych wants to save his son from the hands of the investigating authorities. This respectful priest also told me that Kostelnik himself became head of the Initiative Group because his sons or son served in the Division 'SS-Galicia' and fell into the hands of Soviet investigators. So Kostelnik, Marynovych, and some other priests received from the Soviet authorities the assurance that their children would be released if [their] parents bring this Sobor to a successful completion. [...] During voting, if we can say so, lenses of photo and cinema devices of various kinds were directed upon the delegates from different angles. The voting went according to the 'Stalinist system': there were neither votes 'against' nor 'those who abstained'. One event confused, interested, and surprised me. Kostelnik offered and conducted a memorial service for the soul of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky of blessed memory, though all of us were well aware that Metropolitan Sheptytsky would not have ever agreed to such a 'farce' as this 'pseudo-sobor' in the first days of March in 1946.⁷⁴

In fact, everything was done on the first day of the Sobor, on 8 March 1946. After the Divine Liturgy, there were two major talks: Pelvetsky gave a report on the activities of the Initiative Group, and Kostelnik presented the need for reunification with the ROC. No discussion followed afterwards. There were only a few short speeches, and then the issue of reunion was put to an open vote through a raising of hands. The delegates, knowing that they were being filmed by employees of the security forces, began slowly to raise their hands. Although the official report says that the decision was taken unanimously by all the delegates,⁷⁵ one of the participants noted that slightly over 100 hands were raised.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Rokytsky, *Спомини* (see n. 30), pp. 401–402. See also Ivan Hovera, *Львівський псевдособор 1946 року, очима одного з його учасників* [The Lviv pseudo-council of 1946 through the eyes of a participant] (manuscript; Ternopil, 2016). This memorial service is not mentioned in the *Acts of the Sobor*.

⁷⁵ *Діяння Собору* (see n. 54), p. 43.

⁷⁶ 'Свідчення очевидця про т. зв. "Львівський собор"' (see n. 35), p. 256.

Another participant denied that the vote was unanimous, saying that most of the delegates voted in their conscience only for Kostelnyk's project and not for the reunification itself.⁷⁷ However, this vote decided the fate of the Church and in the eyes of Soviet authorities it ceased to exist. All delegates had to sign two documents: a letter to the Moscow Patriarch Alexius and a telegram to the chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the Ukrainian SSR, Mykhailo Hrechukha. Just after the vote, the delegates learned of the newly-ordained Orthodox bishops Melnyk and Pelvetsky. The next day, at the liturgy, the ritual of acceptance of members of the sobor in the bosom of the ROC took place, and telegram greetings to Stalin, Khrushchev, Patriarch Maximos V of Constantinople, Patriarch Alexius of Moscow, and Ukrainian Exarch Metropolitan Ioan were approved, as well as the appeal of the sobor to the clergy and faithful of the UGCC, in which 'reunion' was announced.⁷⁸ The council ended on 10 March, the Sunday of Orthodoxy, with a solemn Divine Liturgy and dinner.

From the ecclesiastical perspective, the 'Lviv Sobor' had no legitimacy since there was no Greek Catholic bishop present, and the Initiative Group had no authority to convene such a 'sobor'. Even state authorization of its activities was carried out with a gross violation of Soviet legislation. The newly consecrated bishops Melnyk and Pelvetsky already belonged to the ROC and could not represent the UGCC.⁷⁹ Coercive participation and total control over the will of the delegates also raises doubts about the legitimacy of the decision to 'return' to Orthodoxy. Most delegates who voted for reunion did so not by conviction but in fear of repression.

⁷⁷ Ilarion Karpiak, '30 лет назад – на Львовском церковном соборе 1946 года' [30 years ago at the Lviv church council], *JMP*, 9 (September, 1976), p. 16.

⁷⁸ All these texts were published in *JMP*, 4 (April, 1946), pp. 22–33, and later reprinted in the *Acts of the Sobor: Діяння Собору* (see n. 54), pp. 135–137. See the article by Sergei L. Firsov, 'The Lviv Council of 1946 as Reflected by the Church Press of the Soviet Era: The History of the Perception of the "Uniate Problem"', in this volume.

⁷⁹ For more detailed information on the non-canonical status of the 'Lviv Sobor' see Iwan Hrynioch, 'The Destruction of the Ukrainian Catholic Church' (see n. 27), pp. 41–43; Atanasiy Velyky, 'Замітки на маргінесі "Діяній" т. зв. Львівського собору 1946 року' [Notes on the margins of the 'Acts' of the so-called Lviv council of 1946], in Atanasiy Velyky, *Світла і тіні української історії: Причинки до історії української церковної думки* [Lights and shadows of Ukrainian history: Supplements to the history of Ukrainian church thought] (Rome, 1969), pp. 94–133; Herman Budzinsky, 'Лист до Генерального прокурора СРСР 25 березня 1966 року' [Letter to the Prosecutor General of the USSR 25 March 1966], in *Мартирологія Українських Церков* (see n. 35), vol. 2, pp. 501–507.

5. AFTERMATH OF THE SOBOR: PERSECUTION AND REPRESSION

Afterwards, the UGCC became illegal and its clergy and faithful came under severe persecution. Most priests who did not recognise the decision of the 'Lviv Sobor' and refused to turn to Orthodoxy suffered repression and were arrested, and their families were deported. All monasteries were also gradually liquidated. The most active members of religious orders were sentenced and exiled to Siberia. Most bishops died in prison. Ivan Lyatyshevsky and Mykolay Charnetsky returned home from exile with their health undermined and soon died in 1957 and 1959 respectively. Only Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj survived, but the government did everything to ensure that he would never return to Lviv. Released in 1963 at the request of Pope John XXIII, Slipyj had to leave the Soviet Union without the right of return. Those priests and faithful who refused to turn to Orthodoxy formed the underground Church.

A tragic fate also befell the organizers of the 'reunification'. Kostelnyk was killed on 20 September 1948 on the steps outside of his home opposite the Transfiguration Church. According to the official Soviet version of events, he fell victim to nationalists. However, some facts, as well as the evidence provided by his family, give grounds to believe Soviet secret agents were involved in the murder of Kostelnyk, who was killed as an inconvenient witness.⁸⁰ Having championed the case of reunification to the end, he became useless, and even dangerous, since he knew too much and acted too independently, having in this case his own ambitions that ran counter to the plans of the NKGB. A similar fate befell the other members of the Initiative Group who died under mysterious circumstances: Bishop Mykhail Melnyk was most likely poisoned in 1955⁸¹ and Bishop Antoni Pelvetsky died suddenly of a heart attack in 1957.⁸² The Soviet writer Yaroslav Halan also did not escape a brutal end

⁸⁰ See "'Батько був розчарований'". Інтерв'ю з Христіною Польяк, дочкою о. д-ра Гавриїла Костельника' ['Father was disappointed'. Interview with Khrystyna Poliak, daughter of Rev. Dr. Havryil Kostelnyk], *Вісмі з Риму. Документація* [Dispatches from Rome. Documentation] (January, 1987), pp. 1–2; Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State* (see n. 10), p. 206.

⁸¹ See Ihor Bryndak, 'Трагічна доля єпископа Михаїла Мельника' [The tragic fate of Bishop Mykhailo Melnyk], *Слово* [Word], 2 (27) (2006), pp. 11–12; Mikhaïl Polsky, *Новые мученики Російські* [Russian New Martyrs] (Jordanville/NY, 1957), vol. 2, p. 287; Prach, *Духовенство Перемиської єпархії* (see n. 45), vol. 1, pp. lxxxii–lxxxiii and pp. 582–584.

⁸² 'Архиеп. Станиславский и Коломыйский Антоний (Некролог)' [Archbishop Antony of Stanislaviv and Kolomyia (Obituary)], *JMP*, 3 (March, 1957), pp. 15–17;

for his anti-Uniate pamphlets—he was killed with an axe in 1949.⁸³ His death caused a new wave of terror and persecution.

6. CONCLUSION: EVALUATION OF THE 'LVIV SOBOR'

Today, more than 75 years after the 'Lviv Sobor', how should we evaluate this event? We can do so from various perspectives. In the eyes of the Soviet state the 'sobor' was an act of violence against the Greek Catholic Church, a special operation using the ROC to liquidate the UGCC. It can be argued that the suppression of the UGCC in the USSR was pending and inevitable. This Church had no chance of survival in a totalitarian state with an atheistic ideology. The oppression of the UGCC in the USSR was not only the consequence of the intolerance of a totalitarian state towards free institutions, but also one of the components of Stalin's national policy. The Church, with its distinctly national character emphasising Ukrainian identity automatically fell into the category of 'hostile to the regime' and had to be destroyed. The documents from the archives of security organs clearly show that the entire operation against the UGCC was planned and carried out by the highest state authorities in the Kremlin with the engagement of the Moscow Patriarchate. However, it should be acknowledged that in this process the ROC did not execute its own independent policy but was only an instrument

Alexey Buevsky, 'Антоний' [Anthony], in *Православная энциклопедия* [Orthodox encyclopedia] (Moscow, 2001), vol. 2, pp. 636–637.

⁸³ Galan's murder is subject to a debate. There are two main versions of his assassination and many variations. According to the official version he was killed by Ukrainian nationalists for his pro-Soviet activities. The two assassins were Ilariy Lukashevych, son of a Greek-Catholic priest, and Mykhailo Stakhur, a member of the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists. However, the OUN did not accept this version and claimed that Halan's murder was an MGB/NKVD provocation in order to start a new wave of repression against locals. Since the official Soviet version contains many contradictions and inconsistencies "the KGB murder theory" appears quite probable. See, for example, Petro Tereshchuk, *Історія одного зрадника. Ярослав Галан* [The story of a traitor. Yaroslav Halan] (Toronto, 1962); Alexandr Bantyshev and Arzen Ukhal, *Убийство на заказ: кто же организовал убийство Ярослава Галана? Опыт независимого расследования* [Murder to order: who organized the assassination of Yaroslav Halan? Attempts at an independent investigation] (Uzhorod, 2002); David R. Marples, *Heroes and Villains: Creating National History in Contemporary Ukraine* (Budapest, 2013), pp. 125–165; Yulia Kysla, "'Пост ім. Ярослава Галана". Осінній атентат у Львові' [Post in honour of Yaroslav Halan'. An autumnal assassination in Lviv], *Україна модерна* [Modern Ukraine] (6 January 2015), Online: <http://uamoderna.com/blogy/yuliya-kisla/kysla-galan> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

of Stalin's religious policy. 'Reunification' formally outlawed the UGCC, but, in fact, the government did not achieve its goal. Although the Church was officially persecuted, it did survive underground. Thus, from the perspective of the UGCC, the 'Lviv Sobor' had no legitimacy or canonical validity; it was not a sobor but an illegal assembly with no competence to make decisions concerning the whole Church.

From the side of the ROC, the 'Lviv Sobor' should be considered a particular union in terms of the Balamand Declaration. To bring the UGCC to reunion, the Moscow Patriarchate applied the old method of Uniatism, the model of unity which has been condemned in the Balamand Declaration of 1993. Since the ROC also signed this document and recently the Moscow Patriarch repeated its statement in the Havana declaration, so to be consistent he should also condemn the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946 on which this method of Uniatism was applied.⁸⁴

Moreover, we should also offer a theological evaluation of the 'Lviv Sobor' in the light of truth. The 'Lviv Sobor' was an act of violence and injustice in regard to many Greek Catholics. The engagement of the Moscow Patriarchate in this evil act of the Soviet state was in no way justifiable. Nevertheless, even today the Moscow Patriarchate is not ready to acknowledge on an official level its complicity in this act of injustice, and to repent for this sin. The hand of reconciliation, extended by the Greek Catholics to the Orthodox on more than one occasion, remains in the air and without reciprocation, let alone acknowledgement. Instead, even today, nearly three decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union, one still hears and reads the same Soviet rhetoric about the collaboration of the Greek Catholic hierarchy with the Nazi regime and the longed-for 'return' to 'the faith of the fathers'.

Fortunately, not all Orthodox Christians share this official view on the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946. I would especially mention in this regard the initiative of some Orthodox faithful and priests who on 7 March 2016 came out with a declaration on historical truth and appealed to the ecclesiastical authorities in Russia and Ukraine to acknowledge the decision

⁸⁴ Joint International Commission for the Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church (24 June 1993), *Uniatism, method of union of the past, and the present search for full communion* (7th plenary session, June 17–24, 1993), in *The Quest for Unity: Orthodox and Catholics in Dialogue. Documents of the Joint International Commission and Official Dialogues in the United States 1965-1995*, eds. John Borelli and John H. Erickson (Crestwood/NY – Washington/DC, 1996), pp. 175–183, Online: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/ch_orthodox_docs/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_19930624_lebanon_en.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

of the so-called 'Lviv Sobor' as being invalid. Such a declaration gives us hope that some time in the future we will come to reconciliation and mutual forgiveness.

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ABSTRACT:

This paper traces the history of the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946, examining its preparation, the details of the gathering itself, and its aftermath. Archival documents of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults of the USSR, the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church, and other state and secret service archives provide detailed information on the planning and preparation of the gathering by the 'Initiative Group'. Personal memoirs of participants and observers also round out the picture of these events. From a Catholic perspective, the gathering can be viewed only as a pseudo-sobor, it was an act of violence and injustice in regard to many Greek Catholics, and the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in this movement, initiated by Soviet state authorities and security services, was wrong and unjust.

CANONICAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE LEGITIMACY OF THE 'LVIV SOBOR' OF 1946

Thomas Mark NÉMETH and Teodor MARTYNYUK

The legitimacy of the so-called Lviv sobor¹ of 1946 is frequently debated. Here, we will not treat its history in detail, as this has been done by others elsewhere. On the basis of Catholic canon law and of the sobor's non-reception by this Church, it is also evident that the Catholic Church regards this gathering as an illegitimate 'pseudo-sobor'. There are, however, divergent assessments of the events of 1946 from the Orthodox side. For the sake of a better canonical evaluation and with a view towards finding a common narrative between the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) and the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), a closer look at the concepts of synodality and canonicity, as well as their application to the events of 1946, is necessary.

1. SYNODALITY

First of all, the nature of this 'sobor'—which consisted of three bishops of the ROC, and 216 priests and nineteen laymen of the UGCC who voted to declare a 'reunion' with the ROC—leads to the question of synodality. Without doubt synodality is an important element of an apostolic Church's constitution and identity, even if the discussion of how much it belongs to the essential structure of the Church is still ongoing.²

Synods are rooted in the practice of the ancient Church. Since the end of the second century, bishops of neighbouring dioceses in Palestine,

¹ In our presentation, we follow the organizers of this conference and use the term 'Lviv Sobor'. However, we do not regard this gathering as a true ecclesiastic assembly.

² See John Meyendorff, 'What is an Ecumenical Council?', *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, 17/4 (1973), pp. 259–273; Eva Synek, *Das "Heilige und große Konzil" von Kreta*, Kirche und Recht, 29 (Freistadt, 2017); Thomas M. Németh, 'Das orthodoxe Konzil von Kreta. Offene Fragen und Perspektiven', in *Zentrum und Peripherie. Theologische Perspektiven auf Kirche und Gesellschaft*, eds. J. Bründl and F. Klug, Bamberger Theologische Studien, 38 (Bamberg, 2017), pp. 325–334; Primacy and Synodality. Deepening Insights. Proceedings of the 23rd Congress of the Society for the Law of the Eastern Churches, ed. Péter Szabó, Kanon, 28 (Hennef, 2019).

Syria, Egypt, Cappadocia, Asia, Rome, Italy, Africa, and Gaul gathered in regional synods for resolving more complex questions which could not simply be resolved on the basis of the local customs. The term *synod* (σύνοδος) means ‘coming together’ and is synonymous with *council* (concilium).³ One liturgical root of synods is the gathering of bishops for the consecration of new bishops. Classically, synods were episcopal or predominantly episcopal assemblies with the power to make decisions. The most important functions of the synod were to decide on matters of faith, in particular by rejecting heresies; to establish canonical rules; to elect bishops and regulate their activity; and to decide on appeals against bishops. In a broader sense synods should foster the unity of the Church by constructing a common identity.

From the third century onward, synods, which were to meet twice a year (each spring and fall), existed at the provincial level of the Church.⁴ Due to the practical difficulties of gathering together twice a year, the Council in Trullo in 691/692 permitted gatherings to take place only once a year.⁵ Later synods, often called standing or permanent, find their

³ In the first millennium, these two terms were considered synonymous. The Greek term σύνοδος means a gathering of travel companions, a collection of persons who meet with one purpose, facing a partially unknown future, in hope and expectation. This term was taken by the ancient Church from secular contexts and began to use it in reference to the assembly of bishops. From the third century the term *concilium* spread in the West. However, this term was also known in the East, because Tertullian, referring to the Eastern Churches, uses the term *concilia*, and the term σύνοδος was known in the West. Gatherings that took place in Rome in the fourth and fifth centuries were also called synods. However, since the tenth century, there was a tendency in the West to use the term *concilium* to refer to bishops’ gatherings at the provincial or entire Church level, whereas the word synod was used to indicate the meeting of clergy with their own bishop. See Norman P. Tanner, *I concili della Chiesa* (Milano, 2007²), pp. 8–10; Éric Besson, ‘La sinodalità è esclusiva del mondo orientale?’, in *Il CCEO – strumento per il futuro delle Chiese orientali cattoliche. Atti del Simposio di Roma, 22-24 febbraio 2017*, eds. G. Ruyssen and S. Kokkaravalayil, *Kanonika*, 25 (Rome, 2017), pp. 693–694.

⁴ See can. 5, Council of Nicaea I: Périclès-Pierre Joannou, *Discipline générale antique (IV–IX s.), Les canons des synodes particuliers*, vol. 1, part. 1, Fonti, fasc. 9 (Grottaferrata, 1962), p. 27 and p. 28. For a general overview, see Aristéides Papadakis and Anthony Cutler, ‘Councils’, in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium*, vol. 1, eds. Alexander Kazhdan et al. (New York – Oxford, 1991), pp. 540–543.

⁵ ‘Whereas, because of barbarian incursion and other intervening causes, the bishops of the Churches find it impossible to hold synods twice a year, it is resolved, on a synod of the aforesaid bishops should by all means be held in each province once a year... Those bishops who do not come together, but remain in their own cities though they be in good health and have no indispensable and necessary business, are to be reprimanded in brotherly fashion.’ Can. 8, Council in Trullo. See *Concilium Constantinopolitanum a. 691/2 in Trullo habitum (Concilium Quinisextum)*, ed. Heinz Ohme, *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*, II, 2,4 (Berlin – New York, 2013), p. 28. For an English translation, see *The Council in Trullo Revisited*, eds. George Nedungatt SJ and Michael Featherstone, *Kanonika*, 6 (Rome, 1995), pp. 79–80.

roots in the so-called permanent (or resident) synod of Constantinople (ἐνδημοῦσα σύνοδος), a gathering of bishops who stayed in the capital and whom the emperor called for advice.⁶ Today each autocephalous Church has a synodal system with one or more synods, sometimes also with the participation of clergy and laity. Synods and other collegial assemblies exist also on the lower levels of metropolias, eparchies, and parishes.⁷

In the first millennium, the Church was also confronted with the problem of the influence of secular authority. The decision of the Seventh Ecumenical Council (AD 787) that civil authorities who impede the convening of the synods should be punished, suggests that the synodal principle was very important for the Church. The same council proposes punishments for metropolitans who neglect the convening of a provincial synod. They are also prohibited from requiring any financial contributions for the convocation of synods.⁸

The history of councils is full of conflicts. In many cases councils could not resolve problems, but increased them or created divisions in the Church. Theological and political antagonism behind councils has often been a force unto itself. Other problems were a lack of preparation and communication, and the influence of non-theological interests. Synods of the ancient Church often sought to speak for the whole Church of Christ. Their decisions were communicated to local churches to be accepted by them. This is a background to the principle of reception by the whole Church. There is, however, a gap between the ideal and reality, as reception often failed. The need for reception entails a high level of responsibility of all churches, which was not always present. For ecumenical councils, 'the canonical literature lacked fixed rules (a typically Byzantine phenomenon) concerning their convocation, composition, and organization' and Byzantine canon law had no clear 'philosophy of ecumenical councils'.⁹

⁶ See Aristeides Papadakis, 'Endemousa Synodos', in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (see n. 4), vol. 1, p. 697.

⁷ For more on Orthodox synodality, see Richard Potz and Eva Synek, *Orthodoxes Kirchenrecht. Eine Einführung, Aktualisierte und erweiterte zweite Auflage*, Kirche und Recht, 28 (Freistadt, 2014), pp. 410–459.

⁸ '...and should a ruler be found to prevent [a synod from being held once a year], let him be excommunicated' (καὶ εἴ τις εὐρεθῇ ἄρχων τοῦτο κωλύων, ἀφοριζέσθω). Can. 6, Council of Nicaea II. *Concilium Universae Nicaenum Secundum. Concilii actiones VI–VII*, ed. Erich Lambert, Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum, II, 3,3 (Berlin – New York, 2013), pp. 906–907.

⁹ Papadakis and Cutler, 'Councils', in *Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium* (see n. 4), vol. 1, p. 541.

Regarding the participants of Eastern Christian synodal bodies, there is a strong tradition of episcopal representation, especially when making decisions in matters of faith, morals, and discipline. But there is also evidence in tradition for participation of clergy and laity, in particular at the eparchial level. In the Slavic church tradition both the terms *synod* and *sobor* are used for collegial bodies, although the terminology is not always uniform. In the modern Orthodox canonical system the former often indicates permanent episcopal bodies of smaller size, while the latter often non-permanent assemblies, which can also include clergy and laity. Ihor Skochylias has examined Greek-Catholic and Orthodox eparchial sobors of the Kyivan tradition more thoroughly and distinguishes between annual, electoral, and unifying assemblies, which can be regarded as inner-ecclesiastical mechanisms for constructing identity and for articulating cultural, religious, and even public programs¹⁰. At the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth century, he notes—under the influence of post-Tridentine ecclesiology—the Greek-Catholic Church shifted from a eucharistically rooted concept of gatherings of the whole local church to an administrative model of the bishop meeting with his councillors. This is reflected by the more frequent use of *synod* (equivalent to *synodus*, *congregatio*, *kongregacija* in the sources) instead of the traditional term *sobor*.¹¹

¹⁰ Ihor Skochylias, *Собори Львівської єпархії XVI–XVII століть* [Councils of the Lviv eparchy of the 16th–17th cent.], *Собори Київської Церкви* [Councils of the Kievian Church], II.1.1 (Lviv, 2006), pp. xciv–xcv.

¹¹ I thank Ihor Skochylias for discussing this idea and for the following references (with original orthography preserved): Skochylias, *Собори Львівської єпархії* (see n. 10), p. xciv, p. 96, p. 98, p. 133, p. 136, p. 138, p. 143, p. 146, pp. 149–151, p. 153, p. 156, p. 158, p. 160, p. 162, p. 164, p. 169, p. 171, p. 173, p. 175, p. 178, p. 181, p. 184, pp. 196–198, p. 207, p. 222, p. 253, p. 262, pp. 264–265, p. 273, p. 277, p. 282, pp. 284–285, pp. 318–319, p. 325, p. 354, p. 360, p. 370, p. 375, p. 377, pp. 379–382, p. 384 (s.v. соборъ енералный пропрезвытерскій, соборъ енералный намесничый, congregatio dioecisana, congregatio decanalis, congregatio generalis, kongregacya, kongregacya generalna dziekańska, sobór, sobór diecezjalny); idem, *Sobory eparchii chełmskiej XVII wieku. Program religijny Slavia Unita w Rzeczypospolitej* [Councils of the Chełm eparchy of the 17th century. The *Slavia Unita* religious program in the Republic of Poland] (Lublin, 2008), pp. 131–133, p. 135, pp. 138–140, pp. 142–144, pp. 156–157, p. 159, pp. 161–165 (соборъ, конгрегация, synodus); idem, *Релігія та культура Західної Волині на початку XVIII ст. За матеріалами Володимирського собору 1715 р.* [Religion and culture of Western Volyn at the beginning of the 18th cent. According to materials of the 1715 Council of Volodymyr] (Lviv, 2008), p. 47, p. 50 (synodus dioecisana, sobór).

In Orthodoxy, there is a strong conviction that neither hierarchy nor clergy nor laity acting alone can represent the fullness of the Church. The encyclical by four Orthodox patriarchs from 6 May 1848 stated that 'the protector of religion is the very body of the Church, i.e., the people themselves (nr. 17)'.¹² More than forty years ago now, Metropolitan Kallistos Ware reflected the common view that there is no external criterion for ecumenicity of councils, such as the number of bishops, the representative character, the conviction of the council, or the recognition by the emperor, the pope, or by a subsequent ecumenical council.¹³ The only one decisive test is the 'sensus fidelium', the recognition by the people of God 'post factum' which, however, cannot be determined by rules. Metropolitan Kallistos referred to Georges Florovsky who stated that regarding infallibility the Church does not give a system but a key, 'not a plan of God's city, but the means to enter it'.¹⁴

More recently, the Chieti Document of the official Catholic-Orthodox dialogue states that 'synodality is a fundamental quality of the Church as a whole' and synodality and primacy exist on the level of the local Church, the regional communion of churches, and the Church at the universal level.¹⁵ The document also states that 'reception by the Church as a whole has always been the ultimate criterion for the ecumenicity of a council'.¹⁶ At the lower levels, reception often plays a lesser role as the applicability of decisions is often closely tied to a local situation that does not necessarily admit wider application or interpretation.

¹² Ἀπάντησις τῶν Ὁρθοδόξων Πατριάρχων τῆς Ἀνατολῆς πρὸς τὸν Πάπαν Πίον θ' (1848): I. Ioannes N. Karmires, *Τὰ δογματικά καὶ συμβολικά μνημεῖα τῆς Ὁρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας*, vol. 2 (Athens, 1935), pp. 902–925, here p. 920.

¹³ Kallistos Ware, 'The Ecumenical Councils and the Conscience of the Church', in *Kanon: Yearbook of the Society of the Law of the Oriental Churches*, vol. 2, ed. Gesellschaft für das Recht der Ostkirchen (Vienna, 1974), pp. 217–233.

¹⁴ Georges V. Florovsky, 'Sobornost: the Catholicity of the Church', in *The Church of God: An Anglo-Russian Symposium by Members of the Fellowship of St. Alban and St. Sergius*, ed. Eric Lionel Mascall (London, 1934), pp. 53–74, here 68–69, quoted from Ware, 'The Ecumenical Councils' (see n. 13), p. 232.

¹⁵ Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church (as a whole), 'Synodality and Primacy during the First Millennium: Towards a Common Understanding in Service to the Unity of the Church. Chieti, 21 September 2016', par. 3, Online: http://www.christianunity.va/content/unita_cristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiese-ortodosse-di-tradizione-bizantina/commissione-mista-internazionale-per-il-dialogo-teologico-tra-la/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-in-inglese1.html (Accessed 24 September 2022). Regarding this document see also: Synek, *Das "Heilige und große Konzil" von Kreta* (see n. 2), pp. 122–124; regarding ecclesial authority in the Orthodox Church: Thomas M. Németh, 'Autorität, religiöse – Orthodox', in *Lexikon für Kirchen- und Religionsrecht*, vol. 1, eds. Heribert Hallermann, Thomas Meckel, Michael Droge, and Heinrich de Wall (Paderborn, 2019), pp. 277–278.

¹⁶ 'Synodality and Primacy during the First Millennium' (see n. 15), par. 18.

2. CANON LAW AND SYNODS IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In order to understand how this applies to the events of 1946, it is first necessary to examine the state of canon law regarding synods and councils at this time in the Metropolia of Lviv, also taking into consideration the canonical norms of the Roman Catholic Church.

2.1. *Synods in the Galician Greek-Catholic Metropolia*

In 1946, the Lviv Metropolia functioned according to the legislative norms of the Lviv Synod of 1891.¹⁷ Title 14 of the 1891 council is devoted to questions of provincial and eparchial synods and explains that a provincial synod is convened by, and under the chairmanship of, the metropolitan, while an eparchial synod is headed by a bishop. If the metropolitan throne should be vacant, then the convocation of the provincial synod falls within the competence of the senior bishop of that province.¹⁸

In addition to the bishops of the province, representatives of the clergy are also called to participate in such synods: the heads of the cathedral chapters (*capitula*), cathedral canons, superiors of monasteries, deans of theological faculties, seminary rectors, as well as clerics appointed jointly by the bishops. The sobor permitted the presence of only one layman, namely the rector, or senior, of the Lviv Stauropelial Institute, who was not even granted a deliberative vote since only bishops with ordinary jurisdiction held a decisive vote and whose results depended on an absolute majority. Likewise, the decisions of the synod, which could

¹⁷ For more on this synod, see *Чинности и рѣшенія руского провинціального Собора въ Галичинѣ отбывшаго ся во Львовѣ въ роцѣ 1891* [Acts and decisions of the Ruthenian provincial Council in Galicia, which took place in Lviv in the year 1891] (Lviv, 1896); *Acta et Decreta Synodi Provincialis Ruthenorum Galiciae habitae Leopolitanae 1891* (Rome, 1896); Myron Stasiv, *Synodus Leopolitana* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Pontificum Institutum Orientalium, Rome, 1959); John-Paul Himka, 'The Issue of Celibacy at the Lviv Provincial Synod of 1891: Unpublished Documents from the Lviv and Przemyśl (Peremyshl) Archives', in *Mappa Mundi: Studia in honorem Jaroslavi Daskevyc septuagenario dedicata*, eds. Ihor Hyrych et al. (Lviv, Kyiv and New York, 1996), pp. 648–670. For the legitimacy and authority of this council, see Federico Marti, 'La legislazione del Sinodo di Leopoli (1891) è una "codificazione" particolare? Riflessione tecnico-giuridica', *Eastern Canon Law*, 2/1 (2013), pp. 131–159.

¹⁸ Lviv Synod 1891, title XIV, no. 3, *Чинности и рѣшенія* (see n. 17), p. 254.

refer to faith, morals, and discipline, were to be reviewed and approved by the Holy See in order to be promulgated.¹⁹

Referring to the Council of Trent (session XXIV, cap. 2), a provincial synod was to take place every third year and an eparchial synod every year. However, if this were not possible, a request was to be sent to the Holy See to convene only bishops and some representatives of the clergy. According to the Lviv Synod, such provincial synods should take place every five years and an eparchial synod every three years.²⁰

2.2. *An Excursus on Provincial Synods in the Latin Church*

From 1917, the Latin Church was governed by the norms of the Pio-Benedictine Code, the *Codex Iuris Canonici* (hereafter: CIC 1917).²¹ It foresees three types of gatherings: the *concilium plenum*, the provincial council, and the *synodus dioecesis*.²² The *concilium plenum* was primarily a gathering of diocesan bishops of two or more ecclesiastical provinces, along with other ordinaries who did not have to be bishops; titular bishops could be invited to this council as well. All of them had the right to vote (can. 281 and 282 §1, CIC 1917). If clerics were invited, they did not vote but had a consultative vote (can. 282 §3, CIC 1917). The peculiarity of the plenary council was that it could be convened with the permission of the Roman pope. The convening and chairing of the council belonged to the duties of the legate appointed by the pope (can. 281, CIC 1917).

Provincial councils united bishops of a specific ecclesial province. They convened every twenty years and the convocation did not require the consent of the pope (can. 283, CIC 1917). The metropolitan had

¹⁹ Lviv Synod 1891, title XIV, no. 2 (voting rights and approval), par. 1, no. 1–2 (participants), *ibid.*, pp. 254–255.

²⁰ Lviv Synod 1891, title XIV, par. 2, *ibid.*, pp. 255–256.

²¹ *Codex Iuris Canonici*, Pii X Pontificis iussu digestus Benedicti Papae XV auctoritate promulgatus, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 9/2 (1917), pp. 3–521. For an English translation, see *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law*, ed. Edward N. Peters (San Francisco, 2001). In 1946, the Eastern codification by Pius XII, enacted between 1949 and 1957 (but remaining incomplete), was still not in force.

²² For more on these types of gatherings, see Astrid Kaptijn, 'Similitudini e differenze tra le "Gemeinsamen Synoden" dell'Occidente post-conciliare e l'Assemblea patriarcale', in *Il diritto canonico orientale a cinquant'anni dal Concilio Vaticano II. Atti del Simposio di Roma, 23-25 aprile 2014*, ed. G. Ruyssen, *Kanonika*, 22 (Rome, 2016), pp. 325–327. See also the detailed bibliography in *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* (see n. 21), p. 118 n. 46.

the duty to convene a council, to determine the place of its convocation, and to lead the meeting. In the case of legal impediments or vacancy of the metropolitan throne, the convening and chairing of the council relied on the nomination of the senior suffragan bishop of the province (can. 284, CIC 1917). Canons 285 to 287 of the CIC 1917 determine who should be called to the provincial council, as well as who had the right to vote, and in particular the mandatory presence of bishops. However, if one of those who were obliged to come to the council was impeded by an obstacle, he could send his deputy, but the deputy was no longer entitled to a vote (can. 287 §1–2, CIC 1917). According to can. 288, CIC 1917: ‘In a Council, whether plenary or provincial, the president, having the consent of the Fathers if it concerns a provincial Council, determines the order to be observed in examining questions and opens, transfers, prorogues, and concludes the Council’.²³ After the termination of a plenary or provincial synod, the chairman was obligated to send all adopted acts and decrees to the Holy See, which was to approve them (*recognitio*). Only then could they be promulgated (can. 291 §1, CIC 1917).

Thus, according to the official canon law of the Roman Catholic Church from 1917 until 1983 when the new *Codex Iuris Canonici* was promulgated, a provincial synod was convened by a metropolitan or, in his absence or in the case of a vacancy, by his most senior suffragan; the attendance of all bishops was mandatory; and the decisions were to be reviewed and approved by the Holy See before they went into force. Although can. 1 of CIC 1917 explicitly states that ‘this [Code] applies only to the Latin Church and does not bind the Oriental, unless it treats of things that, by its nature, apply to the Oriental’, nevertheless the Eastern Catholic Churches drew from the experience of the Latin Church even in areas where they had their own legislation.²⁴

3. CANONICITY OF THE ‘LVIV SOBOR’

Having familiarized ourselves with the state of affairs of Catholic canon law around 1946, one may now turn to the question of the canonicity of the ‘Lviv sobor’ of 1946.

²³ English translation from *The 1917 Pio-Benedictine Code of Canon Law* (see n. 21), p. 120.

²⁴ For Eastern catholic provincial synods see also Acacius Coussa, *Epitome praelectionum de iure ecclesiastico orientali*, vol. 1 (Grottaferrata, 1948), pp. 373–378.

3.1. *Compliance with Canon Law*

Even a superficial analysis of the history of the Lviv sobor, its preparation, convocation, chairmanship, agenda, discussion, and documents adopted, reveals not only several uncanonical elements, but in fact a complete and total absence of *any* basis for it to be considered a canonical church council. To elaborate upon this and substantiate the argument of its uncanonical nature, let us analyse its main elements in the light of both the canons of the first millennium and the later extant legislation of the Lviv Metropolis.

The preparation of the March assembly was carried out by the People's Commissariat of State Security (NKGB) on the order of the highest state leadership of the Soviet Union, with the explicit aim of liquidating the Greek Catholic Church in Galicia. A limited circle of people prepared the gathering, namely government security officials,²⁵ representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate,²⁶ and three former Greek Catholic priests.²⁷ Delegates were selected by the NKGB along with the Initiative Group. However, in accordance with the decisions of the Lviv Synod of 1891, the synod, in addition to the bishops, should have also had in attendance the head of the cathedral chapter (*capitulum*), the superiors of monasteries,

²⁵ N. Serdiuk, 'Репресії органів НКВС-НКДБ щодо УГКЦ' [NKVD-NKGB repressions of the UGCC], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ (1939-1946). Документи радянських органів державної безпеки* [Liquidation of the UGCC (1939–1946). Documents of Soviet state security authorities] (Kyiv, 2006), vol. 1, pp. 45–48.

²⁶ Document 103: 'Шифротелеграма наркома держбезпеки СРСР В. Меркулова наркому держбезпеки УРСР С. Савченку із планом заходів по ліквідації УГКЦ, 22 квітня 1945 р.' [Cipher telegram of the People's Commissar of State Security of the USSR V. Merkulov to the People's Commissar of State Security of the USSR S. Savchenko with the action plan for the liquidation of the UGCC, 22 April 1945'], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 25), vol. 1, pp. 572–573; Document 143: 'Звернення патріарха Московського і всея Русі Алексія до духовенства і віруючих греко-католиків та мешканців Західної України, травень 1945 р.' [Address of Patriarch Alexy of Moscow and All Rus' to the clergy and Greco-Catholics and residents of Western Ukraine, May 1945], in *ibid.*, pp. 766–769.

²⁷ Document 137: 'Звернення Ініціативної групи з возз'єднання УГКЦ з РПЦ до РНК УРСР з проханням узаконити її діяльність' [Appeal of the Initiative Group for Reunification of the UGCC with the ROC to the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian SSR with a request to legalize its activities], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 25), vol. 1, pp. 743–754; Document 145: 'Доповідна записка начальника опергрупи НКДБ УРСР С. Каріна наркому держбезпеки УРСР С. Савченку про організацію Ініціативної групи з возз'єднання УГКЦ з РПЦ...' [Report of the head of the operative group of the KGB of the USSR S. Karin to the People's Commissar of State Security of the USSR S. Savchenko on the organization of the Initiative Group for the reunification of the UGCC with the ROC...], in *ibid.*, pp. 771–775.

and other persons provided for in canon law, mentioned above.²⁸ For the convening of the Lviv pseudo-sobor, this procedure and list of required attendees was completely ignored: not one Greek Catholic bishop was present at the gathering and all three members of the presidium had already converted to the Russian Orthodox Church at the end of February 1946, prior to the convocation of the sobor.

The NKGB, together with the Moscow Patriarchate, however, contemplated the question of the canonicity of the assembly, and the following path was chosen: 'In order to give the Sobor of the Greek Catholic Church validity and canonicity, the members of the Initiative Group, namely Melnyk, general vicar of the Drohobych Eparchy, and Pelvetsky, representative of the Stanislaviv Eparchy, should convert to Orthodoxy and be consecrated bishops'.²⁹ It is difficult to understand the logic of the NKGB: how could Orthodox bishops represent the Greek Catholic Church and give the pseudo-sobor legitimacy? In the same fashion, the presence of several hierarchs of the Russian Orthodox Church does not in any way legitimize the gathering as a canonical Greek Catholic synod.

The decision to convene a 'sobor' was made by secular authorities on 25 January 1946. The procedure for convening the 'Lviv sobor' cannot be considered canonical. According to can. 20 of the Synod of Antioch (AD 341) and can. 19 of the Council of Chalcedon (AD 451), the right to

²⁸ Document 148: 'Доповідна записка наркома держбезпеки УРСР С. Савченка секретарю ЦК КП(б)У М. Хрущову про заходи ліквідації УГКЦ' [Report of the People's Commissar of State Security of the USSR S. Savchenko to the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) M. Khrushchev on measures to liquidate the UGCC], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 25), vol. 1, pp. 778–790; Document 204: 'План заходів НКДБ УРСР з ліквідації Греко-Католицької Церкви в західних областях України, 26 вересня 1945 р.' [Action Plan of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR for the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in the western regions of Ukraine, 26 September 1945], in *ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 274. Cf. N. Serdiuk, 'Репресії органів НКВС-НКДБ щодо УГКЦ' (see n. 25), pp. 41–49; Lviv Synod 1891, title XIV, par. 1, no. 1–2: *Чинности и рѣшеня* (see n. 17), pp. 254–255. See section 2.1. above.

²⁹ 'Для того, щоб надати собору греко-католицької церкви правосильність і канонічність до його скликання здійснити перехід в православ'я і хіротонію в єпископи членів Ініціативної групи – генерального вікарія Дрогобицької єпархії Мельника і представника Станіславської єпархії Пельвецького'. Document 248: 'Витяг із плану заходів НКДБ УРСР по проведенню у м. Львов собору УГКЦ, 6 лютого 1946 р.' [Excerpt from the plan of measures of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR to hold the UGCC Council in Lviv, 6 February 1946], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 25), vol. 2, p. 513. Cf. also Document 252: 'Витяг із висновку НКДБ СРСР по плану заходів НКДБ УРСР щодо проведення собору УГКЦ у м. Львові, 16 лютого 1946 р.' [Excerpt from the conclusions of the NKGB of the Ukrainian SSR on the plan of measures of the UGCC Council in Lviv, 16 February 1946], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 25), vol. 2, p. 534.

convene such gatherings falls to the metropolitan, and this is also his duty according to can. 6 of the Second Council of Nicaea (AD 787).³⁰ The same canonically decisive requirement regarding the procedure for convening a provincial synod is given by the norms of the Lviv Synod of 1891.³¹ In 1946, needless to say, there was no metropolitan because he and all the other bishops had been arrested a year earlier.

Regarding its chairmanship, a provincial synod should be headed by a metropolitan and without his consent, no bishop can or should act in a manner that would affect the affairs of the metropolitan, who is considered *protos* and should be treated as a head. This is clear from can. 34 of the Apostolic Canons and can. 9 of the Synod of Antioch (AD 341). In addition, the metropolitan, together with the bishops, defines the list of matters to be resolved at the synod. The 1891 Lviv Synod clearly emphasized that a synod should be headed by the metropolitan.³² Instead, the priest Gabriel Kostelnik, who, as already mentioned, had joined the Russian Orthodox Church, headed the Lviv gathering and some of the delegates of the pseudo-sobor were formally already members of the Russian Orthodox Church.³³ Therefore, in no way can this gathering be called Greek Catholic.

Because the topics of discussion during the pseudo-sobor were defined by the NKGB, the official reports on the agenda did not touch upon matters of faith, morals, and discipline in the Galician metropolia, which belonged to the competence of the provincial synod, but were aimed at the proclamation of schism, that is, the accession of the Greek Catholic Church to the Russian Orthodox Church. Therefore, the so-called 'decisions of the sobor' did not have any canonical force, because they did not address questions of the metropolia, but proclaimed the 'liquidation of the Union of Brest Union' and 'the return of the Greek Catholics to the mother Russian Orthodox Church'.³⁴ In addition, they were all

³⁰ For references in this section to canons from the first millennium, see section 1 above.

³¹ Lviv Synod 1891, title XIV, no. 3; *Чинности и ршення* (see n. 17), p. 254. Cf. Andrzej Paluch, *Problem legalności 'Synodu' Lwowskiego 1946 roku* [The problem of the legality of the 'Synod' of Lviv in 1946] (Unpublished master's thesis, Lublin, 1997), pp. 62–63. It should be clear that the contemporary norms—not those of the first millennium—were juridically decisive.

³² Lviv Synod 1891, title XIV, no. 3; *Чинности и ршення* (see n. 17), p. 254.

³³ *Діяння Собору Греко-католицької церкви у Львові 8–10 березня 1946 р.* [Acts of the Council of the Greek-Catholic Church in Lviv 8–10 March 1946] (Lviv, 1946), p. 15 and p. 35.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 127–128.

carefully prepared and checked by members of the NKGB. Since the Lviv pseudo-sobor of 1946 cannot be called Greek Catholic, it is clear that there could not have been any talk about its approbation by the Roman Pontiff, as all such synodal decisions were required to have according to the provisions of the Lviv Synod of 1891.

From the letter of the Moscow Patriarch Alexy to the chairman of the Council of Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church G. Karpov of 7 December 1945, it appears that the patriarch himself realized that the convocation of a sobor in Lviv would not have been canonical. Therefore, he proposed to the Soviet authorities that the ‘accession’ of Greek Catholics to the Russian Orthodox Church be carried out at diocesan congresses or on an individual basis. Nevertheless, several subsequent proposals of the Moscow Patriarch about the ways of ‘reunification’ testify to the interest and cooperation of the patriarchate with the NKGB for the accession of the Greek Catholic Church to the Russian Orthodox Church.³⁵ Thus, nobody was particularly concerned with the legitimacy of the ‘sobor’ and any methods that would bring about a council to ‘liquidate the *unia*’ were considered.

3.2. *Statements Concerning the Canonicity of the ‘Lviv Sobor’*

From a scholarly perspective, the best researched and most reliably comprehensive depiction of the Lviv sobor and the events preceding and following it is still the monograph by the Ukrainian-Canadian political

³⁵ Document 228: ‘Лист патріарха Московського і всея Русі Алексія Голови Ради справах РПЦ Г. Карпову з питання возз’єднання УГКЦ з РПЦ, 7 грудня 1945 року’ [Letter of the patriarch Moscow and all Rus’ Alexy to the Chairman of the CAROC G. Karpov on the Reunification of the UGCC with the ROC, 7 December 1945], in V. Serhiychuk, *Ліквідація УГКЦ* (see n. 25), vol. 2, pp. 420–423. For the role of the ROC in the ‘reunion’ of Greek Catholics with the Orthodox Church, see Natalia Shlikhta, *Церква тих, хто вижив. Радянська Україна, середина 1940-х – початок 1970-х рр.* [The Church of Survivors. Soviet Ukraine, mid-1940s – early 1970s] (Kharkiv, 2011), pp. 270–283; Vitaliy Kozak, ‘Канонічність Львівського псевдособору 1946 р. Аргументи “за” і “проти”’ [Canonicity of the Lviv pseudo-sobor of 1946. Arguments ‘for’ and ‘against’], in *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква в історії та сучасних процесах розвитку українського суспільства (до 420-ліття укладення Берестейської унії, 70-ліття Львівського «псевдособору» 1946 р.)*. Матеріали Всеукраїнської науково-практичної конференції, м. Тернопіль, 21-22 квітня 2016 р. [The Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church in history and modern processes of development of Ukrainian society (On the 420th anniversary of the Brest Union, the 70th anniversary of the Lviv 1946 ‘pseudo-sobor’). Proceedings of the All-Ukrainian scientific-practical conference, Ternopil, 21–22 April 2016], eds. E. Bystrytska, A. Kolodniy, and P. Yarotsky (Ternopil, 2016), pp. 159–160.

scientist and church historian Bohdan Bociurkiw.³⁶ He stated that the sobor (1) was not convened by a legitimate Church authority; (2) the Initiative Group leaders were no longer members of the Church for which they pretended to act; (3) the delegates were not elected; (4) no bishop of the UGCC was present; (5) arbitrarily appointed representatives of the ROC participated; and (6) the Soviet authorities intimidated the participants.³⁷ This gathering also contradicted Soviet law requiring the separation of Church and state and preventing interference into the affairs of another Church. For Bociurkiw, it 'could speak only for the clergy present (assuming that the participants were free to express their true views, which they were not)'.³⁸

The Catholic position regarding the Lviv sobor is clear. Pope Benedict XVI regarded it as illegitimate.³⁹ Pope Francis called it a 'pseudo-synod' that caused 'decades of suffering for pastors and the faithful'.⁴⁰ This view has also been clearly expressed by the late Lubomyr Husar, the former primate of the UGCC in a letter to Patriarch Alexy from February 2006. He argued that the sobor was: (1) initiated and organized by the totalitarian Soviet regime (while the Initiative Group followed its plan), (2) a violation of the canon law of the UGCC, and (3) a violation of human rights and religious freedom.⁴¹

³⁶ Bohdan Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton – Toronto, 1996). For the partially updated and supplemented Ukrainian translation, see id., *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква і Радянська держава (1939–1950)* [The Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)] (Lviv, 2005).

³⁷ Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church* (see n. 36), pp. 180–182.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 182.

³⁹ 'Lettre du pape Benoît XVI au cardinal Lubomyr Husar, archevêque majeur de Kyiv-Halyč (22 février 2006)', *Istina*, 51 (2006), p. 193.

⁴⁰ 'Message of His Holiness Pope Francis to His Beatitute Sviatoslav Shevchuk Major Archbishop of Kyiv-Halyč (5 March 2016), Online: https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2016/documents/papa-francesco_20160305_messaggio-beatitudine-shevchuk.html (Accessed 25 September 2022).

⁴¹ 'Українська Греко-Католицька Церква, Верховний Архієпископ Києво-Галицький, Святішому Патріарху Московському і всієї Русі Алексію Другому' [Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church, Major Archbishop of Kyiv and Halych, to His Holiness Alexy II, Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus'], Вих. P-06/25 (14 February 2006), Online: https://risu.org.ua/php_uploads/files/articles/ArticleFiles_63547_Huzar.pdf (Accessed 25 September 2022). For other statements from 2006 see Mykhailo Dymyd, 'Послання Церков з нагоди 60 річчя Львівського Псевдо-собору. Критичний аналіз' [Message of the Churches on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the Lviv Pseudo-sobor. A critical analysis], *Religious Information Service of Ukraine (RISU)*, Online: https://risu.ua/poslannya-cerkov-z-nagodi-60-richchya-lvivskogo-psevdo-soboru-kritichnyi-analiz_n50281 (Accessed 25 September 2022).

From the Orthodox side, a response came from Metropolitan Kirill (Gundyaev, today patriarch of Moscow) of the Department for External Church Relations of the ROC in August 2006.⁴² He claimed to regard the question of canonicity of the sobor as ‘not entirely constructive’, stating that the ROC could raise the same questions for the Union of Brest (1595–1596).⁴³ The metropolitan admitted that the persecution of Greek Catholics by the Soviet rulers cannot be justified, but that it would be absurd to regard the ROC as responsible for this persecution. The letter also points out that the communist dictatorship was not the only repressive system under which Orthodoxy suffered, mentioning here, albeit inadequately and unconvincingly, Austro-Hungarian rule.⁴⁴ The former head of the Department for External Church Relations of the ROC, Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev), recently claimed that the Catholic use of the term ‘pseudo-sobor’ is a sign of considerable difference between Orthodox and Catholic Christians. The metropolitan did not deny the political interference in the liquidation of the UGCC in 1946, but he does not regard the conversions to Orthodoxy in connection with the sobor as entirely coerced.⁴⁵

⁴² ‘Московский Патриархат, Отдел Внешних Церковных Звязей, Его Высокопреосвященству Кардиналу Любомиру Гузару, № 2215’ [Moscow Patriarchate, Department of External Church Relations, His Eminence Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, № 2215] (7 July 2006), Online: https://risu.org.ua/php_uploads/files/articles/ArticleFiles_63547_Gundyayev.pdf (Accessed 24 September 2022). For a commentary on the letter, see Anatolii Babinskyi, ‘Рука, що зависла в повітрі: спроба порозуміння УГКЦ з РПЦ у світлі листування з нагоди 60-ліття Львівського псевдособору 1946 року’ [A hand hanging in the air: An attempt at understanding between the UGCC and the ROC in light of correspondence on the 60th anniversary of the Lviv pseudo-sobor of 1946], *Religious Information Service of Ukraine (RISU)* (31 May 2016), Online: https://risu.ua/ruka-shcho-zavisla-v-povitri-sproba-prozuminnya-ugkc-z-rpc-u-svitli-listuvannya-z-nagodi-60-littya-lvivskogo-psevodosoboru-1946-roku_n79803 (Accessed 24 September 2022).

⁴³ For an analysis of the parallel between Union of Brest in 1596 and the ‘Lviv Sobor’ of 1946, see the article by Yury Avvakumov, ‘Brest 1596 and Lviv 1946 Between Historiography and Propaganda: Ecumenical Lessons of Two Dramatic Events in Church History’, in this volume.

⁴⁴ Despite a problematic paternalism (which existed also under Orthodox rulers), it cannot be denied that the Habsburg rulers established a high-quality canonistic and academic framework for the Orthodox Church in the nineteenth century. The orthodox faculty of Theology established in Czernowitz in 1875 was one of the first Orthodox theological faculties within a state university. See Thomas M. Németh, *Josef von Zhishman und die Orthodoxie in der Donaumonarchie*, Kirche und Recht, 25 (Freistadt, 2012); revised Ukrainian version: id., *Православна церква на Буковині та Йозеф фон Чижман. За лаштунками віденської політики* (Chernivtsi, 2019).

⁴⁵ Metropolitan Hilarion (Alfeyev) of Volokolamsk, ‘Камнем преткновения в православно-католическом диалоге по-прежнему остается уния’ [The Unia still remains a stumbling block in the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue] (10 March 2016), Online: <http://www.patriarchia.ru/db/text/4394818.html> (Accessed 24 September 2022).

A similar statement was issued by the Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) in March 2006.⁴⁶ This statement was criticized by Antoine Arjakovsky, who noted that the UOC-MP admits 'the irregularities of this "synod" and, for the first time, recognizes that it was organized by the Communists in power', but 'continues to justify this synod as an action of "divine providence" since, the document states, the Greek-Catholics represent an historical error'.⁴⁷ In its most recent statement, the UOC-MP again linked the 'Lviv Sobor' with the Union of Brest, calling the latter a forceful incorporation of Orthodox Christians into the Catholic Church and assuming that in the years before 1946 a part of the clergy and faithful of the UGCC wanted to return to Orthodoxy and that the Orthodox population of Ukraine suffered for a long time under Catholic rule.⁴⁸ The repeated comparison between the events of 1596 and 1946 by the Moscow Patriarchate fail to acknowledge the most recent historical research that questions the perspective of the ROC as confessional and anachronistic.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ 'Звернення Священного Синоду Української Православної Церкви до пастви й українського народу з нагоди 60-річчя повернення греко-католиків у лоно Православної Церкви' [Address of the Holy Synod of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to the flock and the Ukrainian people on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the return of Greco-Catholics to the bosom of the Orthodox Church], Online: <http://orthodox.org.ua/article/zvernennya-svyashchennogo-sinodu-ukra%D1%97nsko%D1%97-pravoslavno%D1%97-tserkvi-do-pastvi-i-ukra%D1%97nskogo-nar> (Accessed 24 September 2022).

⁴⁷ Antoine Arjakovsky, 'Histoire et mémoires du pseudo-synode de Lvov/Lviv', in *En attendant le concile de l'Église orthodoxe* (Paris, 2013), pp. 489–500; published in English as id., 'History and Memories of the Pseudo-Synod of Lviv', *The Wheel Blog* (7 March 2016), Online: <https://www.wheeljournal.com/blog/2016/3/7/4x2con66gc772xu933reyhty19n8ba> (Accessed 24 September 2022).

⁴⁸ 'Коментар ВЗЦЗ УПЦ з нагоди 70-ліття Львівського собору 1946 року' [Commentary of the External Church Relations Department of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Lviv Sobor in 1946], Online: <http://news.church.ua/2016/03/11/komentar-vzcz-upcz-z-nagodi-70-littya-lvivskogo-soboru-1946-roku/> (Accessed 24 September 2022). For an analysis of this statement, see Anatolii Babinskyi, 'Про два православні послання з нагоди трагічних подій 1946 року' [About two Orthodox messages on the occasion of the tragic events of 1946], *Religious Information Service of Ukraine (RISU)* (13 March 2016), Online: https://risu.ua/pro-dva-pravoslavni-poslannya-z-nagodi-tragichnih-podiy-1946-roku_n107486 (Accessed 24 September 2022).

⁴⁹ See, for example, Ernst Christoph Suttner, *Die katholische Kirche in der Sowjetunion* (Würzburg, 1992), pp. 74–75; Borys A. Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge/MA, 1998). Ernst Christoph Suttner regarded a comparison between the Union of Brest and the Lviv Sobor as problematic: the former was an ecclesiastic act by a metropolitan synod and the opponents of the Union could organize a protest synod and continued to exist in the Orthodox eparchies of Lviv and Przemyśl, while the situation in 1946 was fundamentally different.

None of these statements address the canonicity or synodality of the ‘Lviv Sobor’ of 1946, instead focusing on the correction of a wrong or a previous injustice. In contrast, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyivan Patriarchate, which was however not recognized as canonical by most other Orthodox Churches, was the only Orthodox Church to comment on the canonicity of the sobor. In 2016, it declared that it ‘deems the so-called Lviv Synod not a manifestation of the collegial will, but the result of oppression of the freedom of religion. It is clear that the gathering of separate church leaders, encouraged and conducted by secular authorities to force the Church to adopt the state-induced resolutions, cannot be considered a true Council’.⁵⁰

Perhaps the most courageous step is a declaration signed by twenty-two Orthodox Christians, among them priests and theologians, published in March 2016 that summarizes the events of 1946 and states that ‘all serious historians and theologians have no doubts that [this] synod of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church at Lviv was only a sham’, concluding with the request: ‘We humbly ask their pardon for all the injustices they have suffered under the cover of the Orthodox Church and we bow down before the martyrs of this Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church’.⁵¹

In contrast to the ROC and UOC-MP statements defending the legitimacy of the ‘Lviv Sobor’, a different emphasis can be found in Vladislav Tsyypin’s history of the Russian Church. To some degree, it resembles the statement by the Department for External Church Relations of the ROC from 2006, which regarded the question of canonicity as ‘not very constructive.’ Tsyypin, who is considered one of the chief canonists of the ROC, distances himself from an affirmation of the ‘canonicity’ of the sobor. He admitted that other Orthodox authors regarded the sobor as uncanonical and unlawful and noted that there are no norms for a change of confession between the Catholic and the Orthodox Churches because of the lack of ecclesial communion and a common canonical base. Even assuming all Greek-Catholic bishops had not been arrested and could have participated, the ‘Lviv Sobor’ would have been regarded as uncanonical by the

⁵⁰ ‘Kyiv Patriarchate on Lviv Pseudo Synod of 1946: We are well aware of our brothers’ pain’, *Religious Information Service of Ukraine (RISU)* (10 March 2016), Online: http://risu.ua/en/kyiv-patriarchate-on-lviv-pseudo-synod-of-1946-we-are-well-aware-of-our-brothers-pain_n78649 (Accessed 24 September 2022)

⁵¹ ‘Appeal for the Recognition of the 1946 Lviv “Synod” as a Sham’, *In Communion. Website of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship* (6 March 2016), Online: <https://incommunion.org/2016/03/06/appeal-for-recognition-of-the-1946-lviv-synod-as-a-sham-2/> (Accessed 24 September 2022)

Catholic Church. On the other hand, if only laypeople had been present at the sobor, the Orthodox Church would have no right to refuse their conversion. For Tsypin, 'the Lviv Sobor is not a Sobor of an Orthodox local Church in the canonical sense of the word. This means that it had only authority for the participants, for those who agreed with its decisions, but not for those who remained Uniates out of conviction'.⁵² Even if Tsypin's historical explanations about 1946 reflect Soviet historiography, his opinion regarding the gathering's canonicity should contribute to a more objective evaluation. The question is why there seems to be a felt need on the part of the ROC to continue to defend the legitimacy of this coerced gathering as an ecclesial act. The facts of violence by the Soviet state cannot be denied any more.

In the light of historical evidence pointing to fear and coercion, as well as the lack of bishops and other failures to meet canonical criteria, it is impossible to argue for the formal canonicity of the 'Lviv Sobor'. The sobor was not a movement of true conversion 'back to Orthodoxy', except perhaps in individual cases, although even the motivation of the members of the Initiative Group is still not fully clear. In any case, to consider the 'Lviv Sobor' as an opportunity for the people of Galicia to finally return to Orthodoxy is inconsistent with the historical facts.

4. CONCLUSIONS: THE NEED FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION

The events of the 'Lviv Sobor' point to the need for further discussions between the ROC and the UGCC regarding issues related to canonicity and synodality. One largely unexamined aspect of the 'Lviv Sobor' that requires self-critical reflection from the ROC is what the ROC itself calls 'counter-uniatism'. When the ROC uses it, it is invariably against the existence of the UGCC. But we would suggest that according to the terms of the 2016 Havana declaration between Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill, the pseudo-sobor was uniatism applied by Orthodox against Greek Catholics.⁵³ Though, as others have noted, some of the wording of this

⁵² Vladislav Tsypin, *История Русской Церкви: 1917–1997* [History of the Russian Church: 1917–1997], *История Русской Церкви* [History of the Russian Church], 9 (Moscow, 1997), p. 347. This statement corresponds with Bociurkiw's observations, quoted above.

⁵³ Consider especially article 25 of the Havana Declaration: 'It is our hope that our meeting may also contribute to reconciliation wherever tensions exist between Greek Catholics and Orthodox. It is today clear that the past method of 'uniatism', understood

declaration is problematic,⁵⁴ it is remarkable that the ROC has never missed an opportunity to condemn ‘uniatism’ in Ukraine but refuses even today to admit the highly uniatistic nature of the Lviv sobor, the case for which is much stronger than in the case of the Union of Brest. One cannot help thinking that it is not uniatism, but the actual presence of the UGCC in Ukraine, that remains the true problem for the ROC.

The discussion of the ‘Lviv Sobor’ also suggests the need to re-examine church-state relationships and re-evaluate the Orthodox canonical tradition. As Sr. Vassa Larin has noted, ‘it seems that there is a need to review the tradition of considering canons ‘sacred,’ ‘divine,’ or unchangeable, and to do so in the spirit of the Church’s traditional freedom in the area of its legislation’.⁵⁵ She has pointed out the need for a systematic ‘hierarchy of canons’, the lack of which causes ‘significant confusion over the “binding” nature and “full force” of the canons’.⁵⁶ According to Richard Potz and Eva Synek ‘the handling of old sources is a basic problem of Orthodox church law’.⁵⁷ Regardless of these problems, we cannot see that any generally accepted legal criteria would support the ‘canonicity’ of the ‘Lviv sobor’.

The events of 1946 raise many questions, which require careful examination from all churches concerned. As noted at the beginning, formal canonical criteria for the recognition of synodal decisions have a relative

as the union of one community to the other, separating it from its Church, is not the way to re-establish unity. Nonetheless, the ecclesial communities which emerged in these historical circumstances have the right to exist and to undertake all that is necessary to meet the spiritual needs of their faithful, while seeking to live in peace with their neighbours. Orthodox and Greek Catholics are in need of reconciliation and of mutually acceptable forms of co-existence’. ‘Joint Declaration of Pope Francis and Patriarch Kirill’, *Vatican Radio* (12 February 2016), Online: http://www.archivioradiovaticana.va/storico/2016/02/12/joint_declaration_of_pope_francis_and_patriarch_kirill/en-1208117 (Accessed 24 September 2022). The content of this statement is identical with the Balamand Document from 1993. See Joint International Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church (as a whole), Uniatism, Method of Union of the Past, and the present Search for Full Communion. Balamand (Lebanon), June 23rd, 1993, Online: <http://www.christianunity.va/content/unitacristiani/en/dialoghi/sezione-orientale/chiese-ortodosse-di-tradizione-bizantina/commissione-mista-internazionale-per-il-dialogo-teologico-tra-la/documenti-di-dialogo/testo-in-lingua-inglese.html> (Accessed 24 September 2022).

⁵⁴ See the comments of Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk: ‘“Two Parallel Worlds” – An Interview with His Beatitude Sviatoslav’ (14 February 2016), Online: <https://royaldoors.net/two-parallel-worlds-interview-beatitude-sviatoslav/> (Accessed 24 September 2022).

⁵⁵ Vassa Larin, ‘The Canonical Rules of the Orthodox Church: Theory and Practice’, *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 52 (2011) pp. 313–330, here p. 329.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Potz and Synek, *Orthodoxes Kirchenrecht* (see n. 7), p. 318.

nature, so that reception remains the decisive factor. In the case of the 'Lviv Sobor' the final word has not been spoken. What remains open is the possibility of the Russian Orthodox Church engaging in a critical re-reading of its history and undertaking a new commitment to Christian unity grounded in a common narrative regarding the events of 1946. In doing so it will contribute to a healing of memories and reconciliation.

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ABSTRACT:

One of the most contentious issues concerning the reception of the events of 1946 is the question of canonicity and legitimacy. This paper examines the history and canonical regulation of church councils in the first millennium and compares this with the gathering in Lviv. Both church representatives and scholars have noted that the sobor was not convened by a legitimate Church authority, the 'Initiative Group' leaders were no longer members of the Church for which they pretended to act, the delegates were not elected, no bishop of the UGCC was present, arbitrarily appointed representatives of the ROC participated, and the Soviet authorities intimidated the participants. These critiques are analysed in the context of early canonical legislation, such as the Council of Trullo and the Seventh Ecumenical Council (AD 787), where the intrusion of civil authorities in church life was a problem, as well as Catholic canon law at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century, which established the norms by which a synod or council of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church in 1946 should have been convened. In no way can the gathering of 1946 be considered a legitimate church council.

THE UKRAINIAN GREEK CATHOLIC CHURCH AFTER THE 1946 ‘LVIV SOBOR’: LIVING THROUGH THE SOVIET PERIOD

Natalia SHLIKHTA

1. INTRODUCTION

Ever since the 1939 ‘reunification’ of Galicia with ‘Great Ukraine’, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (hereafter UGCC) there was destined for liquidation. The Soviet regime did not manage to accomplish this ‘politically important task’—as defined in a report of 2 February 1948 by the Republican Plenipotentiary (уполномоченный) of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults,¹ Petro Vilkhovyi²—over 1939–1941 because of the lack of time and because of the inability of anything or anyone to oppose the powerful figure of the Church’s leader, Metropolitan Andrei Sheptytsky.

The regime’s decision to liquidate the ‘Uniate Church’ (униатская церковь), as the Church was pejoratively labelled in all Soviet-era documents, was conditioned by a number of reasons. This was a geo-political decision, as Serhii Plokyi persuasively argued: the liquidation was seen as an important prerequisite countering ‘imperialist’, viz. Vatican, influences on the newly acquired territories and assuring their smooth integration into the Soviet space.³ The motivation was also to counteract Ukrainian nationalism, even though we find few pre-sobor documents raising the issue. An established link between ‘Uniatism’ and ‘Ukrainian bourgeois nationalism’ was more than a purely propagandistic trope used

¹ The Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC) and the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (CARC) were established as major instruments for state regulation of religious life in the USSR after the change in the Stalinist policy towards the Church in 1943. In 1965 they were merged into the Council for Religious Affairs (CRA). For more details, see: Natalia Shlikhta, *Церква тих, хто вижив. Радянська Україна, середина 1940-х – початок 1970-х р.* [The Church of Those Who Survived. Soviet Ukraine, mid-1940s – early 1970s] (Kharkiv, 2011), pp. 80–95.

² TsDAHO, F. 1, O. 23, File 5096, p. 2.

³ Serhii Plokyi’s comments during Pro Oriente Conference ‘The “Lviv Sobor” of 1946 and Its Aftermath to the Present: Arriving at a Common Narrative’, Vienna, 2 June 2016.

after 1946.⁴ The Stalinist state took the nationality issue seriously, as Yuri Slezkine persuasively argues in his seminal article,⁵ and all loyalties and identifications that were not seen as 'true Soviet patriotism' ever since the mid-1930s were persecuted.⁶ Yet another important reason for the liquidation was the active social stance by the Church, counting on the steadfast adherence of the overwhelming majority of Galicians⁷ who were a part of the Universal Church that *a priori* adhered to the idea of the separation of the Church and State,⁸ had a legacy over many centuries of functioning within hostile ecclesiastical and political surroundings, and therefore embodied distinct religious and socio-political identities.⁹ One cannot but agree with Frank Sysyn, who suggests viewing the liquidation

⁴ The majority of Ukrainian and Ukrainian émigré historians and many Western scholars adhere to this view. See the studies by Bohdan R. Bociurkiw and Vasylyl Markus mentioned in this paper, and also: Walter Kolarz, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (London, 1961), pp. 236–240; Bohdan Iarosh, 'Духовна сфера під тоталітарним тиском' [Spiritual sphere under totalitarian pressure], in *Тоталітарний режим на західноукраїнських землях 30-50-і роки XX століття (Історико-політологічний аспект): Монографія* [The totalitarian regime in Western Ukraine during the 1930s and the 1950s (an historical and political analysis): A monograph] (Luts'k, 1995), pp. 129–150. Soviet policy regarding the UGCC is usually mentioned by those scholars who examine the oppositional potential of a national Church in a communist state. See, for instance: Pedro Ramet, 'Autocephaly and National Identity in Church-State Relations in Eastern Christianity: An Introduction', in *Eastern Christianity and Politics in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Pedro Ramet (Durham – London, 1988), pp. 14–19; Hank Johnston, 'Religio-Nationalist Subcultures under the Communists: Comparisons from the Baltics, Transcaucasia, and Ukraine', in *Politics and Religion in Central and Eastern Europe: Traditions and Transitions*, ed. William H. Swatos, Jr. (Westport – London, 1994), pp. 24–25.

⁵ Yuri Slezkine, 'The USSR as a Communal Apartment, or How a Socialist State Promoted Ethnic Particularism', *Slavic Review*, 53/2 (1994), pp. 414–452.

⁶ Although quite different, the struggle against 'stateless cosmopolites' (безродные космополиты) would be another revealing example here.

⁷ In accordance with the official statistics, on the eve of World War II the UGCC in Galicia was comprised of 3,040 parishes and 4,283,000 believers. See: Kateryna Budz, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині (1946–1968): стратегії виживання та опору у підпіллі* [Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Galicia (1946–1968): strategies of survival and resistance in the catacombs] (Unpublished PhD dissertation, National University of 'Kyiv-Mohyla Academy', Kyiv, 2016), p. 43.

⁸ Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Religion: A Study of Christendom*, vol. 1: *Established Religion* (London, 1966), p. 4.

⁹ See, for instance, articles by Ramet and Peter Sugar elaborating on the importance of historical legacy for determining the position of the Church 'under communism': Pedro Ramet, 'The Historical Role of Religious Institutions in Eastern Europe and Their Place in the Communist Party-State', in *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, ed. Pedro Ramet (Durham – London, 1989), p. 4; Peter Sugar, 'The Interplay of Religious Policy and Nationalities Policy in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe', in *Religion and Nationalism in Soviet and East European Politics*, ed. Pedro Ramet (Durham – London, 1989), pp. 42–59.

of the UGCC within wider contexts of Soviet attacks on nation/nationality, society (peasantry), and religion in the region and beyond.¹⁰

A chosen tactic—liquidation through ‘reunification’ with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC)—was unexpectedly quite logical. The intention was hardly to ‘reward’ the ROC for its wartime ‘patriotic activities’, as some scholars suggest.¹¹ Instead, the regime learned the lesson of the 1920s and 1930s: it was not enough to destroy the hierarchy and clergy in order to liquidate the Church, as their struggle against the ROC showed. It was much easier to control a loyal institutional Church than ‘uncontrolled masses of believers’.¹² These conditioned a choice in favour of ‘reunification’, seen only as a step towards further assimilation of Galicians: their Sovietization (making them Soviet citizens) and Russification (unmaking them Ukrainians) through ‘Orthodoxization’ (making them Orthodox).

The very model of a ‘reunification’ sobor was openly borrowed from the Polotsk Sobor of 1839, just as a generally negative attitude towards ‘the Unia’ was ‘borrowed’ from the imperial period.¹³ However, yet another important consideration played a role here. The communist regime was preoccupied with retaining its atheist image. It was therefore important to present the liquidation of the Church as an exclusively ‘internal church affair’ being of interest solely to *religious* people but not to *Soviet* people and state authorities who were building communism and not dealing with ‘religious prejudices’. Such an attitude was vividly demonstrated for the first time when the so-called ‘extraordinary’ sobor of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church was staged in January 1930 with an aim to ‘self-liquidate’ this Church.¹⁴

¹⁰ See Frank E. Sysyn, ‘Lviv and the *Longue Durée*: Ecclesial History in Ukraine from the Union of Brest to the Sobor of Lviv’ in this volume.

¹¹ Hansjakob Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican, 1917–1979*, trans. Sandra Smith (Athens/OH, 1981), p. 231; Owen Chadwick, *The Christian Church in the Cold War* (London, 1993), p. 52.

¹² See the report by the Republican Plenipotentiary of the CRA, Kostiantyn Lytvyn, discussing this issue. TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 128, pp. 103b–103c.

¹³ See Bohdan R. Bociurkiw’s elaboration on this: Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, ‘Religion and Nationalism in the Contemporary Ukraine’, in George W. Simmonds, ed., *Nationalism in the USSR and Eastern Europe in the Era of Brezhnev and Kosygin* (Detroit, 1977), p. 82; *ibid.*, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton – Toronto, 1996), p. 101.

¹⁴ For more details see: Iryna Prelavska, ‘Переслідування та ліквідація УАПЦ (УПЦ) (1921–1938 р.): огляд архівно-кримінальних справ ГДА ЦБУ та ЦДАГО України’ [The persecution and liquidation of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (Ukrainian Orthodox Church): a review of criminal proceedings from the Branch State Archive of Security Service in Ukraine and the TsDAHO in Ukraine], in *Держава*

My research on the UGCC through the Soviet period draws from numerous archival and oral sources and published documents.¹⁵ This article is composed of three major parts. I start by examining official estimates of the 'Lviv Sobor' found in state and church sources. A publicly presented story of a complete success of the 'reunification' action is challenged by estimates found in secret documents. I further look at Galician Greek Catholics who were meant to become silent objects of 'reunification'. Instead, they opposed the state action either overtly (going into 'catacombs'), or at the level of everyday life practice. I present an overview of the daily practices of 'reunited' parishes in more detail. Finally, I examine how the ROC—on the patriarchal and mainly exarchal levels—benefited both from the formal 'reunification' of the majority of Galicians and, unexpectedly, from the fact that they were not assimilated and retained their distinctiveness from the Orthodox.

2. ESTIMATES IN STATE AND CHURCH SOURCES: WAS THE 'LVIV SOBOR' A SUCCESS STORY?

If measured by external qualifiers, as Soviet authorities always did, the 'reunification' was quite a success. As a result of the 'Lviv Sobor'—being only a visible accord of the NKGB's large-scale operation against the UGCC—the largest Eastern Christian Church in the world ceased to officially exist for forty-five years. According to official data, the ROC acquired 3,289 new parishes and considerably strengthened its cadres, as 1,296 Greek Catholic priests pledged allegiance to the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus.¹⁶ In 1950, following the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in Transcarpathian Ukraine, 'reunited' parishes formed approximately one quarter of all the Orthodox parishes (13,740 church buildings) and 'reunited' priests were 11.5% out of 11,222 priests of the Moscow Patriarchate. Galicia and Transcarpathian Ukraine, whose population constituted just a tiny part of the Ukrainian population, unexpectedly became the 'bulwark of Orthodoxy' in the Ukrainian Republic,

і церква в Україні за радянської доби: Збірник наукових статей за матеріалами I Всеукраїнської наукової конференції, Полтава, 18–19 жовтня 2007 [State and Church in Ukraine under Soviet rule: Collection of articles from the Second All-Ukrainian conference, Poltava, October 18–19, 2007] (Poltava, 2008), pp. 111–120.

¹⁵ A comprehensive presentation of my research findings is given in the monograph: Natalia Shlikhta, *Церква тих, хто вижив* (see n. 1), pp. 251–382.

¹⁶ GARF, F. 6991, O. 2, File 256, pp. 1–2.

providing the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC with 40% of its church infrastructure (8,833 churches) and one-fifth of its 6,348 priests.¹⁷

Not only does official state data create an impression of a great success of the 'reunification' action and smooth transition of the *Uniates* to the *Orthodox* but a review of official church sources presents a similar picture. Less than eighteen months after the 'Lviv Sobor', the Holy Synod of the ROC adopted its first concrete proposals for the 'establishment of Orthodoxy among former Uniates' (введение в ограду православной церковности среди бывших униатов). In its decision of 8 July 1947 (Journal no. 10), composed of seventeen articles, the Synod required that the episcopate in the 'reunited' dioceses introduce and control the implementation of the measures it devised: the introduction of a proper formula of prayer for the Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus' and the Orthodox hierarchy and strict bans on prayers for the Pope (Articles 1–2); the introduction of the Orthodox creed 'without the Latin addition of the filioque' (Article 3); changes introduced in the appearance of 'former Uniate' churches; and intensification of missionary activities.¹⁸ The synodal decision of 12 December 1949 (Journal no. 19) further elaborated on these requirements and paid primary attention to the stimulation of Orthodox missionary activities and coordination of these activities by the episcopate in West Ukraine (Articles 2 and 3).¹⁹

Ecclesiastical authorities apparently considered that these decisions provided all necessary dogmatic, canonical, and practical modifications essential to 'establish Orthodoxy' in the 'reunited' dioceses. All the subsequent decisions and resolutions adopted in Moscow served only to remind, control, and demand from the episcopate and clergy in Galicia the fulfilment of their requirements.

A review of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* (*JMP*; *Журнал Московской патриархии*), which allows one to access the church leadership's 'public' view of the 'Unia' and its liquidation, creates an impression that the 'reunification' and Orthodoxization of 'former Uniates' was not a problem that concerned them. The issues of the *JMP* contained numerous historical surveys describing the persistent struggle of the Orthodox Church and Ukrainian and Russian people against Catholicism

¹⁷ Российский государственный архив социально-политической истории [Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, Moscow] (РГАСПИ), F. 17, O. 132, File 569, pp. 57–58 and 60–61.

¹⁸ GARF, O. 2, File 59a, pp. 57–58.

¹⁹ GARF, File 73a, pp. 66–68.

and the Unia.²⁰ At the same time, references to contemporary activities of the Moscow Patriarchate in the 'reunited' dioceses were unexpectedly few.²¹ Only one article was published by the *JMP* to mark the first anniversary of the 1946 'Lviv Sobor' and it stressed the success and historical importance of the 'liquidation of the Unia'.²²

A systematic examination of *JMP* issues over the decades following 1946, however, complicates the picture. Contrary to what might be expected, the number of articles on life in the 'reunited' dioceses increased over time. It may have been considered sufficient to publish one article to mark the first anniversary of the 'reunification', but when its tenth anniversary was celebrated, the editors found it advisable to include a special rubric 'On the Tenth Anniversary of the Reunification' in the April 1956 issue and to devote two articles to that date.²³ Festivities devoted to the twentieth anniversary of the 'reunification' were rather visible on the pages of the *JMP*. The *JMP* provided a detailed chronicle of the celebrations that took place in Kyiv and Galicia in issues 6 and 7 from 1966. The same tendency was observable five years later. Issue 6 of *JMP* from 1971 was devoted almost entirely to the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the 'reunification' and the articles were also included into issues 7 and 11.

²⁰ See, for instance: Alexei Kabaliuk, 'Из Закарпатской епархии' [From the Transcarpathian Diocese], *JMP*, 2 (February, 1948), pp. 69–70; I. Spassky, 'Митрополит Петр Могила (Его борьба с иезуитско-униатским влиянием на Украине и в Белоруссии)' [Metropolitan Petro Mohyla. His struggle against the Jesuit-Uniate impact in Ukraine and Byelorussia], *JMP*, 1 (January, 1951), pp. 44–52; *ibid.*, 'Неудавшаяся попытка папского престола подчинить своей власти Восточную Церковь (Ферраро-Флорентийский Собор (1438–1439))' [An unsuccessful attempt by the Holy See to subordinate the Eastern Church to its power (The Council of Ferrara-Florence, 1438–1439)], *JMP*, 6 (June, 1951), pp. 38–46; P. Kharlamov, 'К истории православного монашества в Закарпатье' [To the history of the Orthodox monasticism in Zakarpattia], *JMP*, 5 (May, 1957), pp. 61–65.

²¹ Sergei Firsov's paper demonstrates that the observable pattern persisted until the fall of the USSR and all the public mentions of 'the Unia' were restricted to common phrases on the 'victory of Orthodoxy' and 'reestablishment of historical justice' as a result of the 1946 'Sobor'. See Sergei Firsov, 'The Lviv Council of 1946 as Reflected by the Church Press of the Soviet Era: The History of the Perception of the "Uniate Problem"' in this volume.

²² Sergei Khrutsky, 'Первая годовщина Львовского Собора 1946 года' [The first anniversary of the 1946 Lviv Council], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1947), pp. 8–10.

²³ 'К десятилетию воссоединения' [To the tenth anniversary of the reunification], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1956), pp. 3–4; V. Babich, 'Торжества в Почаевкой Лавре' [The celebrations in the Pochaiv Lavra], *JMP*, 4 (April, 1956), pp. 10–15; I. Mironiuk, 'Из жизни Западно-Украинских епархий' [From the life of the West Ukrainian dioceses], *JMP*, 11 (November, 1956), pp. 12–13.

When turning attention to internal church correspondence, we will understand the reason. A letter to Patriarch Alexei (Simanskii) (undated, 1954), prepared with the participation of Metropolitan Nikolai (Iarush-evich), editor-in-chief of the *JMP*, contained a revealing passage:

Many readers are surprised... because of the complete silence of the Journal (not a single article over the last few years) regarding the contemporary needs of the Uniates of Galicia and Transcarpathia who were only recently converted. [This silence is all the more surprising] as it is known that they [i.e., former Uniates] have to celebrate the liturgy using Roman (Catholic) prayer books and that a Roman (Catholic) spirit continues to manifest itself not only in sacramental customs but also in dogmatic understanding.²⁴

This suggests that not only innumerable упорствующие униаты ('stubborn Uniates')—Soviet and church documents freely used this nineteenth-century term—remained a problem for patriarchal authorities after the official 'reunification'. Daily life in 'reunited' parishes was no less problematic and those who converted to Orthodoxy retained many manifest features and practices from their 'Uniate past'. Two more quotes from church documents shed light on religious life in Galicia after 1946 and challenge the official story of success of the 'Lviv Sobor':

Former Uniates frequently declare, 'It is you who joined us, but not we who joined you'. Unfortunately, this is indeed a widely observable phenomenon. Orthodox priests have lost their appearance amongst the former Uniate clergy.

Over the last twenty-five years, our episcopate and clergy have accomplished much in order to overcome the consequences of the Unia and strengthen Orthodox consciousness [of the reunited flock]. However, we cannot ignore that the Unia, which existed for 350 years, undoubtedly influenced both church consciousness and rituals... [Therefore] the episcopate and clergy must continue to undertake every thoughtful effort to overcome the consequences of the Unia, while simultaneously carefully approaching and preserving those local church customs and rituals that do not contradict the Orthodox teaching.

The first quote is taken from the minutes of the meeting of the Special Patriarchal Commission on 12 December 1960, which discussed the forthcoming 'investigation of the formerly Uniate dioceses of Western and Transcarpathian Ukraine'. It acknowledged that although 'former Uniates' formally converted to Orthodoxy, they understood their 'reunification' with the ROC quite specifically and managed to preserve their distinctiveness, including many markedly Uniate features from their past.²⁵

²⁴ GARF, F. 6991, O. 2, File 126, pp. 46–47.

²⁵ GARF, O. 1s, File 1442, p. 195.

The second one is an excerpt from a speech of Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko) delivered during the 1971 Local Council of the ROC.²⁶ In his overview of the life of the Ukrainian Exarchate after the 1945 Local Council, the Exarch of Ukraine focused in detail on the ‘reunification’ of Greek Catholics with the ROC. Unexpectedly, instead of examining the ‘liquidation of the Unia’ as a past event, Metropolitan Filaret described it as a process that was still under way in 1971. Moreover, he warned against the ‘artificial acceleration’ of this process and disclosed that exarchal authorities adhered to the policy of concessions when administering the ‘reunited’ dioceses.

3. HOW TO DEAL WITH THE ‘REUNIFICATION’ I: ANSWERS FROM GALICIAN GREEK CATHOLICS

The majority of scholars writing in the field are convinced that the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church survived in the ‘catacombs’.²⁷ This explains their predominant interest in the activities of the ‘catacomb’ Church through the Soviet period with little or no attention paid to the daily life of ‘reunited’ parishes. My research demonstrates instead that the ‘reunited’ community emerging after 1946 in Galicia did not become *truly Orthodox* and was not assimilated according to the aspirations of Moscow’s authorities. Therefore, it contributed to the survival and further re-emergence of the UGCC after the fall of the USSR. Even a brief sketch of the daily life of ‘reunited’ parishes provided in these pages tellingly demonstrates a gap existing between practice and pronouncements/open declarations, which has become one of the underlying conference themes here in Vienna in 2016.

The regime’s resolve to liquidate the UGCC through its ‘reunification’ with the ROC divided Galician Greek Catholics. The first was the choice by formal promoters of ‘reunification’ and those parish priests who followed them overtly, accepting the regime’s ‘offer’. Whenever one attempts to judge this ‘apostasy’, as mainstream historiography always does, one must take the specific context into account, as Bishop Borys Gudziak has noted: this was an all-powerful state (many would call it

²⁶ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 278, p. 129. The speech was published in the *JMP*: ‘Выступление Экзарха Украины, Митрополита Киевского и Галицкого Филарета на Поместном Соборе’ [Speech by the Exarch of Ukraine, Metropolitan Filaret of Kyiv and Galicia during the Local Council], *JMP*, 8 (August, 1971), pp. 7–14.

²⁷ Mariya Horyacha, ‘The Catholic History of the “Lviv Sobor” of 1946’ in this volume.

‘totalitarian’) that was able to exert enormous pressure upon individuals, leaving them with virtually no choice.²⁸ The latter is frequently emphasized in the memoirs/interviews of ‘reunited’ priests: ‘they broke me down’, in the words of a ‘reunited’ priest, Fr. Oleksandr Bodrevych-Buts.²⁹

Making choices under conditions of ‘no choice’, leaders of the ‘Initiative Group’ (Ініціативна група по возз'єднанню Греко-Католицької Церкви з Російською Православною Церквою) and later also those parish priests who signed reunification pledges, attempted to take all the advantages that this forced step could offer. In their view, this allowed them to preserve an institutional church network and provided legal possibilities to practice their faith in Galicia. One of the Initiative Group leaders, Bishop Mykhail (Melnyk), explained during a deanery meeting of the Drohobych clergy: ‘We have to save [our] Church. I do think it is still possible to save something’.³⁰ Such an understanding of ‘reunification’ was the opposite of that promoted by the authorities. The institutional religious life they preserved and the faith they practiced corresponded little to the ideals depicted in Moscow either by ecclesiastical (making ‘former Uniates’ Orthodox) or by state (making them atheists) authorities and demonstrated the resistance of lived religion to changes forcefully introduced from above.³¹

The alternative option, pursued by those Greek Catholic priests (mainly religious), monks, and nuns who refused to follow the Initiative Group was to ‘preserve the faith...so that people know what it means to be a Greek Catholic’.³² In the words of a ‘catacomb’ priest, Fr. Iulian Rudkevych: ‘Religion is not a pair of gloves. You cannot easily change them’.³³ A decision by the clergy to ‘preserve [true] faith’ meant a choice in

²⁸ Bishop Borys Gudziak’s comments during Pro Oriente Conference ‘The “Lviv Sobor” of 1946 and Its Aftermath to the Present: Arriving at a Common Narrative’, Vienna, 2 June 2016.

²⁹ АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Олександром Бодревичем-Бущем* [Interview with Fr. Oleksandr Bodrevych-Buts], 25 September 1998, Lviv // P-1-1-907, p. 47; Ibid., *Інтерв'ю з отцем Миколою Маркевичем* [Interview with Fr. Mykola Markevych], 17 March 1993, Mykolaiv // P-1-1-337, p. 9; Budz, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині* (see n. 7), pp. 54–55.

³⁰ Quoted in: АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Миколою Цариком* [Interview with Fr. Mykola Tsaryk], 7 February 1993 and 5 February 1994, Lviv // P-1-1-315, p. 24.

³¹ In this regard, my study echoes the underlying theme of the volume edited by Catherine Wanner, *State Secularism and Lived Religion in Soviet Russia and Ukraine* (Oxford, 2012).

³² АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з Наталією Стадник (сестрою Неонілою, Згромадження Сестер Пресвятої Родини)* [Interview with Nataliia Stadnyk (sister Neonila)], 9 February 1994, Chortkiv, Ternopil Oblast // P-1-1-285, p. 28.

³³ Quoted in: Budz, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині* (see n. 7), p. 52.

favour of illegal existence, which presumed that the flock would be deprived of their pastors. In early 1945, when there were no remaining illusions concerning the plans of the Soviet regime, Archimandrite Klymentii Sheptytsky instructed Greek Catholic priests to prepare for 'catacomb' existence. He acknowledged that in order to preserve their loyalty to the Holy See, priests had to leave their parishes and flock as this was the only way to escape repression.³⁴ Kateryna Budz's detailed study demonstrates an insignificant number of secret liturgies and rituals by 'catacomb' priests over the decades after 1946.³⁵

This raises a key issue of the Church's mode of behaviour 'under communism'. The Church had to choose between institutional survival and refusal to make compromises. The latter option turned those who pursued it into 'martyrs of the faith'. However, for the majority of the faithful 'believing without belonging', to use Grace Davie's expression,³⁶ was not an option. For them, 'only one thing [was] important: that in the closest church still existing, the divine service is carried out in its customary order'.³⁷ This observation was made by an Orthodox oppositional priest, Fr. Sergei Zheludkov, in the early 1970s. In Fr. Zheludkov's view, there was only one possibility to satisfy religious needs of the faithful—through securing a 'legal church organization'.³⁸ This, however, was not feasible unless the Church was ready for certain compromises with the regime and, as was the case of the 'reunited' clergy, to make concessions to its own religious conscience.

Those who pursued 'catacomb' existence were resolved to preserve their religio-national identity through rejecting the imposed Orthodox and Soviet identities and thereby deliberately choosing exclusion from socialist society and suffering persecution for 'anti-Soviet activities'. A clear sense of identity and the aura of martyrdom for the faith provided compensation. The choice of those who 'reunited' was different. While externally accepting the Orthodox and Soviet identities, such Greek Catholics constructed a new or, to use David Thompson's notion, 'lived'³⁹

³⁴ АИТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Іваном Кубасм* [Interview with Fr. Ivan Kubai], 10 April 1993, village of Zymna Voda, Pustomyivsky rayon, Lviv Oblast // P-1-1-192, p. 11.

³⁵ Budz, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині* (see n. 7), pp. 152–177.

³⁶ Grace Davie, 'Believing without Belonging: Is This the Future of Religion in Britain?' *Social Compass*, 37/4 (1990), pp. 455–469.

³⁷ Quoted in: Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican* (see n. 11), p. 5.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ David M. Thompson, 'Earthen Vessels or God's Building? The Identity of United and Uniting Churches', unpublished paper for the World Council of Churches' Sixth

identity, which helped them to preserve their religious and national distinctiveness on the level of practice. This identity was understood as standing against the imposed identities and drew on a clear 'us' versus 'them' opposition. 'They' were 'Orthodox' with all the meaning with which this concept was linked in their perception. 'We' consisted of those priests who signed reunification pledges and their parishioners who continued to attend their *own* churches, even though these churches were suddenly declared Orthodox.

The concept of the 'Church within the Church' with regard to 'reunited' Greek Catholics has been suggested by Vasyl Markus. Markus uses this concept to define those Greek Catholic priests and believers who only formally and 'out of political necessity' accepted the authority of the Moscow Patriarchate while they felt 'themselves to be (Greek) Catholics' and managed to preserve their national consciousness. He contends that the 'Church within the Church' remained in the 'precarious state of an alien body within the official church [i.e., the ROC]'.⁴⁰ Markus distinguishes the 'Church within the Church' from 'actual converts' to Orthodoxy and from those who remained between the 'reunited' community, on the one hand, and 'hard-liners' from the 'catacomb' Church, on the other hand, and, for instance, attended services of both groups.⁴¹

Available sources—official and secret state sources, church sources, and oral testimony collected within the project on the oral history of the 'catacomb' Church by the Institute of Church History in Lviv—demonstrate that such an understanding of the concept is too restricted because it is impossible to empirically distinguish between the 'Church within the Church' and the rest of the 'reunited' community. In my view, the 'Church within the Church' was synonymous with the 'reunited' community whose various members (laity, clergy, and episcopate), regardless of the 'sincerity' and motives of their conversion, were inseparably linked to each other by the awareness of their distinctiveness from the ROC and common desire to survive, to 'remain the same', and to remain different from the Orthodox.

Consultation of United and Uniting Churches (Driebergen, Netherlands, 2002). Quoted with the kind permission of the author.

⁴⁰ Vasyl Markus, 'The Suppressed Church: Ukrainian Catholics in the Soviet Union', in *Marxism and Religion in Eastern Europe: Papers Presented at the Banff International Slavic Conference, September 4-7, 1974*, eds. R. T. De George and J. P. Scanlan (Dordrecht, Netherlands, 1976), p. 123.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 122–123.

On the one hand, the faithful of the Greek Catholic 'liturgical' Church were little prepared for illegal existence outside formal church structure. And this was the principal reason why formal 'reunification' was a more viable option for the majority of them, compared to 'catacomb' existence. In addition, Galicians were rarely aware of theological and canonical differences between their Church and the Orthodox. On the other hand, their negative attitude towards Russian Orthodoxy prevented them from complete incorporation into the 'unified body' of the Moscow Patriarchate.

Galicians viewed the ROC as a Muscovite Church and equivalence was made between 'Russian' and 'alien'.⁴² Conversion to Orthodoxy was feared because of the common belief that it would lead to immediate and complete Russification:⁴³ 'Stalin (similar to Peter the Great) imposed Orthodoxy...in order to establish *Russian Orthodox control* over our Ukraine'.⁴⁴ The ROC was also seen as a Bolshevik-state-bureaucratic (*kazionna*) Church, subordinate to the atheist—just as it was previously to the autocratic—regime and controlled by it. A letter of believers from Galicia to *Православний вісник* [Orthodox Herald] in 1971 states: 'The present-day state of Russian Orthodoxy and the Russian Orthodox Church is very sad and lamentable. The Russian Orthodox Church exists nowadays under the authority and guardianship of godless communism and materialism, detached and separated from its people'.⁴⁵

Because the ROC was a Bolshevik-state-bureaucratic Church, carrying out orders of the 'godless' regime ('If we become priests of the Orthodox Church, will the organs of Soviet power give us any assignments besides church service?'⁴⁶), canonicity of its priestly and episcopal ordinations was questioned. One 'reunited' priest noted: 'This Bolshevik Church was not any Church at all.... It was led by KGB agents (кагебісти). Who could trust such a bishop? They [i.e., communists] fabricated (фабрикували)

⁴² GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 373, p. 7; Российский государственный архив новейшей истории (РГАНИ) [Russian State Archive of Contemporary History (RGANI)], Moscow, F. 5, O. 60, File 24, p. 155; АИТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Йосифом Кладочним (монахом Єремією)* [Interview with Fr. Iosyf Kladochnyi (monk Jeremiah)], 27 May 1993, Lviv // P-1-1-304, p. 29.

⁴³ RGANI (see n. 41), F. 5, O. 60, File 24, p. 8; GARF, F. 6991, O. 2, File 256, p. 3.

⁴⁴ АИТс, *Інтерв'ю з владикою Софроном Дмитерком* [Interview with Bishop Sofron Dmyterko], 6 November 1997, Lviv // P-1-1-419, p. 22. Italics are mine.

⁴⁵ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, F. 278, p. 183. *Православний вісник* was the official magazine of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the ROC since 1946.

⁴⁶ GARF, F. 6991, O. 3s, File 16, p. 68 (words of parish clergy as delivered by a plenipotentiary of the CAROC [see n. 1] in Stanislavska Oblast, Serdiuchenko, in his report of 1 December 1945).

those [i.e., bishops] who had no [theological] understanding'.⁴⁷ Another one stated: 'You could never know whether priests were rightly ordained...because Bolsheviks destroyed their [Orthodox] hierarchy at the very beginning. And later...these were all impostors'.⁴⁸

Because of the close association of the ROC with the Soviet regime, an inseparable link was established between 'Orthodox' and 'Soviet/communist'. This recognition of the Orthodox–Soviet linkage further complicated 'genuine' conversion to Orthodoxy and, respectively, complete integration into Soviet society. Just like the Soviet leadership, they regarded Orthodoxization as a step toward the ultimate liquidation of the church network in Galicia.⁴⁹

The rejection of the ROC was also defined by the opposition of 'modernity' and 'backwardness', and 'true faith' and 'ritualism'. The ROC was considered the Church of 'people with little culture', mainly peasants, whose clergy had little and quite superficial theological education—they were 'uneducated *попики*', a diminutive, scornful reference to an Orthodox priest.⁵⁰ It was argued that the Orthodox faithful did not know the essence of the faith, 'They could only make the sign of the cross and that is all'.⁵¹

To add an insightful illustration, it is worth quoting a long extract from the interview of Iaroslava Datsyshyna, widow of a 'reunited' priest. She recalls a visit by an Orthodox priest, whose name she cannot recall, to Stryi, Lviv Oblast. She claims to recount the anecdote with much accuracy. Nonetheless, she depicts a portrait that can be regarded as an imprint of Galicians' perception of the clergy of the ROC. All elements of the image of a Russian *поп* are present in this account: his appearance,

⁴⁷ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Богданом Щуром* [Interview with Fr. Bohdan Shchur], 13 March 1993 and 14 November 1998, village of Derzhiv, Mykolaivsky rayon, Lviv Oblast // P-1-1-331, p. 15.

⁴⁸ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Миколою Маркевичем* (see n. 28), p. 60; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з єпископом Михаїлом Сабригою* [Interview with Bishop Mykhailo Sabryha], 30 March 1994, Ternopil // P-1-1-321, p. 37.

⁴⁹ GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 222, p. 4; TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 1, File 436, p. 409 (report by Bishop Iosyf [Savrash] to the Republican Plenipotentiary of the CAROC, Hryhorii Pinchuk, 30 September 1963).

⁵⁰ *Попыкы*: derived from the Russian popular term *поп* (*pop*). See GARF, F. 6991, O. 2, File 265, p. 3; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Ізидором Бутковським* [Interview with Fr. Izydor Butkovsky], 28 January 1994, Lviv // P-1-1-294, p. 58; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з Анною Свірською (сестрою Дарією, Чин Святого Василя Великого)* [Interview with Anna Svirska (Sister Dariia)], 23 April 1993 and 24 May 1993, Lviv // P-1-1-55, p. 56.

⁵¹ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Михайлом Дацишином* [Interview with Fr. Mykhailo Datsyshyn], 11 February 1993, Stryi, Lviv Oblast // P-1-1-97, p. 9.

his behaviour, his weak morality, and his superficial religiousness become the subject of ridicule and condemnation:

Once a certain батюшка⁵² visited our church [i.e., the Dormition Church in Stryi]. He immediately went to the altar. He observed all those rituals, to see whether my husband performs them correctly... And Mykhailo [i.e., Fr. Datsyshyn] invited him to dinner with us. He came to have dinner with us. We sat down. And... he begins to pray. We are praying. He said, 'Bless God, the food (ястіє) and drink (питіє)... Матушка,⁵³ will we have питіє?' I did not know what to answer and said afterwards, 'Yes, we will have some'. And we began to eat soup. He said, 'And what about питіє?' I said, 'We will have питіє with the second course'. [...] He had a very dirty and greasy ponytail (зашмальцована коса). And he hid it under some kind of yarmulke. He was such a strange (оригінальний) man. At the very end, when he was about to leave our house, he took out a small bottle... From his pants [he took] a perfume bottle. He put perfume on himself, so that there was no smell of vodka.⁵⁴

Because of such circumstances, the survival strategy of the majority of Galicians after the formal liquidation of their Church consisted, firstly, of taking advantage of all that 'reunification' could provide (mainly, legal life 'within the Church') and, secondly, remaining different from the Russian Orthodox through retaining one's traditional customs, habits, patterns of religious life, and traditional church appearance.

The need for a more or less secured legal 'life within a Church' was an important reason why the 'Church within the Church' was the only possible form of survival for the majority of Ukrainian Greek Catholics. Galicians 'did not care' much that their 'own' churches were registered as Orthodox churches and that their 'own' priests, who served in the parishes for many years before 1946, signed reunification pledges. But they 'did care' about the preservation of traditional patterns of their religious life. This primarily presumed traditional performance of rituals and celebration of feasts and the retention of popular customs. This also presumed the retention of traditional appearance of churches and priests. Popular conservatism ensured the ecclesiastical distinctiveness of the 'reunited' community, even though this community formally became part of the ROC. Archbishop Iosyf (Savrash) of Ivano-Frankivsk and Kolomyia estimated the success of Orthodoxization twenty years after the 1946 Lviv 'Sobor' in his report of 9 April 1966. The archbishop maintained

⁵² *Batiushka*: Russian address to a priest, meaning 'father'.

⁵³ *Matushka*: Russian address to a presbytera, i.e. the wife of a priest, meaning 'mother'.

⁵⁴ Interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyna, 21 August 2002, Stryi, Lviv Oblast. Interviewed by Natalia Shlikhta.

that any change to religious life of 'reunited' parishes could only be introduced very carefully and slowly because otherwise this would cause 'a worsening [of the situation in Galicia] and certain [i.e., 'anti-Soviet'] reactions amongst the faithful'.⁵⁵

An examination of the celebration of Easter and Christmas provides an insightful testimony to the retention of its 'own' Galician ritual patterns by the 'Church within the Church'. From the 1940s to the 1960s, local plenipotentiaries of the CAROC/CRA customarily stated in their reports that Easter and Christmas in 'former Uniate churches' were celebrated in accordance with 'Uniate canons'. The 'reunited' flock did not wish to attend Orthodox vespers on the eve of Easter and Christmas. They did not observe an Orthodox tradition of returning home after the festive liturgy with lightened candles on Holy Thursday. They maintained a Greek Catholic tradition of displaying the burial shroud of Christ (плащаниця), which was displayed on the side of the church and believers were required to kneel and kiss it, unlike in the Orthodox Church where it was displayed in the middle of the church. Traditional processions of the cross and icons during festive periods followed local tradition (clockwise movement around the church) and not according to Orthodox canons (counter-clockwise movement). The faithful continued to bless *pasky* (паски, Ukrainian Easter breads) and Easter food on Holy Saturday afternoon, after 3 p.m., rather than according to Orthodox canons. Religious feasts were accompanied with popular traditions of Christmas and Theophany carol singing (колядки and шедрівки) and pageants (вертепи) over the Christmas period, of commemorating the deceased on Bright Monday after Easter, not on Orthodox *radonitsa* (радоница), and of spring ritual folk dances (гаївки) and Marian devotions (маївки) in May.⁵⁶

An insignificant, at first glance, change in the language by plenipotentiaries in Lviv Oblast, Vyshnevsky and Vynnychenko, serves as a symbolic indication that the CAROC/CRA had ultimately acknowledged the failure of all attempts to 'change Uniate rituals'. In his reports from the mid-1940s and the early 1950s, Anatolii Vyshnevsky emphasized that

⁵⁵ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 17, p. 90.

⁵⁶ See Peter Galadza, *The Theology and Liturgical Work of Andrei Sheptytsky (1865–1944)*, *Orientalia Christiana Analecta*, 272 (Rome – Ottawa, 2004), p. 256, p. 300, pp. 435–436; Ivan Hovra, *Літургійне життя священників та вірних в українській греко-католицькій церкві, 1946–1989* [The Liturgical life of priests and faithful in the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church, 1946–1989,] (Lviv, 2019), p. 147 p. 159, pp. 166–167, p. 262.

the 'reunited' flock continued to observe the Uniate rather than Orthodox rituals of blessing *pasky*, commemorating the deceased, etc.⁵⁷ Vyshnevsky's reports from the late 1950s and also Vynnychenko's reports from the 1960s depict the same picture in a considerably different light. Instead of emphasizing the opposition between the Uniate and Orthodox patterns of ritual performance, the plenipotentiaries simply stated that rituals were performed in accordance with an 'established local tradition'.⁵⁸

The practice of simultaneous performance of rituals according to Orthodox and Greek Catholic canons powerfully testified to the fact that the 'Church within the Church' preserved its ecclesiastical distinctiveness. Two distinct communities—the 'Church within the Church' and the Orthodox Church composed of староправославні⁵⁹ and восточники⁶⁰—existed in parallel. This was a feature of the ecclesiastical situation in Galicia characteristic mainly of urban areas. In some cases, two communities (Orthodox and 'reunited') shared the same church. More often, there existed churches attended strictly by the 'reunited' or Orthodox flock. The existence of two Churches and respectively the boundaries separating them became especially visible over festive periods. The CAROC/CRA plenipotentiaries reported that *pasky* were blessed on Holy Saturday afternoon by the 'reunited' community and on Easter early morning by староправославні and восточники, commemorative services at cemeteries were conducted on Bright Monday for the 'reunited' community and on *radonitsa* for староправославні and восточники, etc.⁶¹ The distinctiveness of two communities was even more visible in the villages and small provincial towns. In many cases, one priest (generally from among the 'reunited') had to conduct separate services for both communities. This practice was of great concern for state and ecclesiastical authorities because it strengthened 'the conviction of [reunited] believers that they are special (особенные)'.⁶²

⁵⁷ TsDAVO O. 1, File 193, p. 51; TsDAVO, File 298, p. 16.

⁵⁸ TsDAVO, O. 5, File 7, p. 110; TsDAVO, File 42, p. 98.

⁵⁹ *Staropravoslavni* (Old Orthodox): a small indigenous Orthodox community in Galicia.

⁶⁰ *Vostochniki* or *skhidniaky* (Easterners): a term used in the CAROC/CRA documents and by Galicians to designate migrants from Eastern Ukraine and Russia.

⁶¹ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 88, p. 91 (Vynnychenko's report from 1968); Ibid., File 189, p. 43 (Vynnychenko's report from 1970).

⁶² TsDAHO, F. 1, O. 24, File 5028, pp. 27–28 (definition is from Pinchuk's report of January 1959).

'Reunited' priests claimed to 'remain the same', 'remain Greek Catholic', and 'remain distinct' from the Orthodox clergy: 'We held together with our colleagues who subscribed to Orthodoxy but we actually remained Catholics';⁶³ 'There was no Orthodox among us. These were all Catholic priests at heart. Here is the truth'.⁶⁴

Not only was the distinctiveness from the Orthodox clergy felt and claimed by the 'reunited' clergy, but it was also acknowledged from the outside, by the 'catacomb' Church and by state and ecclesiastical authorities. Regardless of a generally negative attitude towards 'reunited' priests, the 'catacomb' Church clearly distinguished between them and 'Russian (руські) priests from the ROC', seldom equating them.⁶⁵ In the accounts of the 'catacomb' Church, one encounters definitions characteristic for the self-perception of 'reunited' priests: 'He was not Orthodox', 'He was our priest, a Catholic'.⁶⁶

While the 'catacomb' Church drew attention to the identity and convictions of the 'reunited' clergy, local plenipotentiaries of the CAROC/CRA and observers from the Moscow Patriarchate were largely concerned with outward characteristics. Conclusions they derived were always the same: differences in the appearance of the 'reunited' and Orthodox clergy remained visible over the decades after the 'reunification':⁶⁷ 'I have never seen a single priest from former Uniates in a cassock, with long hair and a beard, with a cross on his chest and other attributes of a поп... They mostly... preserve the outward appearance of a Greek Catholic priest—that of a папох (pastor)'.⁶⁸

Perhaps the most telling would be descriptions of bishops—converts from Greek Catholicism—found in official documents. The leaders of the Initiative Group, Bishop Mykhail (Melnyk) of Drohobych and Sambir (1946–1955) and Archbishop Antonii (Pelvetsky) of Stanislav and Kolomyia (1946–1957), were invariably described as 'covert Uniates and nationalists': 'Bishop Mykhail enjoys great authority amongst the clergy as a local

⁶³ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Богданом Щуром* [Interview with Fr. Bohdan Shchur], 14 November 1998, village of Derzhiv, Mykolaivsky rayon, Lviv Oblast // P-1-1-331, pp. 8–9.

⁶⁴ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Олександром Бодревичем-Буцем* (see n. 28), p. 24.

⁶⁵ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з єпископом Михайлом Сабригою* (see n. 47), p. 37.

⁶⁶ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з пані Анною Майданською* [Interview with Mrs. Anna Maidanska], 11 February 1994, village of Opryshivtsi, Ivano Frankivsk Oblast // P-1-1-359, p. 23.

⁶⁷ See, for instance, the conclusions by the Special Patriarchal Commission of 1960. GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 1442, p. 194.

⁶⁸ GARF, File 538, p. 13. Plenipotentiary Kysliakov, Stanislaviv Oblast [after 1962: Ivano-Frankivsk Oblast], 1959.

Uniate,' according to a 1949 fourth-quarter report by Plenipotentiary Shapovalov in Drohobych Oblast.⁶⁹ Their successors from amongst the 'reunited' clergy were viewed no less suspiciously by state officials. For instance, official reports considered that Archbishop Hryhorii (Zakaliaka), who managed all the 'reunited' dioceses in turn except for Ivano-Frankivsk and Kolomyia, remained a true 'западник', a conventional reference to a priest from West Ukrainian oblasts and generally a native of these oblasts, often found in official and church documents: he preserved the appearance of a Uniate priest ('Just have a look at him: he is clean-shaven and with closely cropped hair')⁷⁰ and manifested his 'Janus-like' nature failing to effectively oppose 'clandestine Uniate activities'.⁷¹

Distinctiveness of 'reunited' priests from the Orthodox vividly manifested itself in their liturgical service and their relations with the 'catacomb' Church. It follows from ecclesiastical requirements for Orthodoxization that the proper prayer for the Orthodox hierarchy was considered an essential condition for 'reunification'. Hence priests' refusals to properly pray for the Orthodox hierarchy turned into a significant dissenting action on their part: 'I never prayed for the Patriarch. I stated something like 'Our most holy universal, our... (Святішого вселенського нашого). I never mentioned his name'.⁷² Many 'reunited' priests explained that they prayed for the Orthodox hierarchy 'aloud', while praying for the pope and true hierarchy of the UGCC 'in their hearts'. A few dared to pray for the pope and the 'true' hierarchy 'aloud'. Mrs. Datsyshyna recalls:

We visited the village of Deliatyn [in the Stryi deanery] when there was a patronal feast day in their parish. One very old priest served in this parish. And he [prayed for] 'Our Ecumenical Hierarch (вселенський архиєрей) Pius, the Pope of Rome'. He said this aloud... and then '... and Pimen. Let God settle the dispute between them'.⁷³

⁶⁹ GARF, File 365, p. 14.

⁷⁰ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 1, File 429, p. 99 (critical remark by *staropravoslavna* opposition, reported by Plenipotentiary Radchenko in Ternopil Oblast, 1964). See also: TsDAVO, File 364, p. 47 (report by Inspector Kazantsev of the CAROC, 21 December 1961).

⁷¹ Volodymyr Serhiichuk, ed., *Нескорена Церква: Подвижництво греко-католиків України в боротьбі за віру і державу* [The unconquerable Church: the heroic conduct of Ukrainian Greek Catholics in their struggle for faith and state] (Kyiv, 2001), pp. 406–407 (Pinchuk's report of 3 March 1964).

⁷² АПТs, *Інтерв'ю з оцем Ізидором Бутковським* (see n. 49), p. 20.

⁷³ Interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyn, 22 March 2002. Here one observes the evident compression of time in memory: Pius XII was Pope of Rome from 1939 to 1958, while Pimen (Izvekov) became Patriarch of Moscow and All Rus in 1971, thirteen years after the death of Pius XII. The interview was done in 2002 and she simply forgot the correct names in this phrase.

An examination of oral sources warns against the exaggeration of resistance by 'reunited' priests. Official documents, primarily those produced by the CAROC/CRA, depict the collective portrait of the 'formerly Uniate clergy' as resisters who refused to comply with the requirements of state and ecclesiastical authorities and cooperated with the 'catacomb' Church. Such an oversimplified picture was a result of the exclusive attention by the CAROC/CRA to those features in the life of the 'Church within the Church' that precluded its incorporation into the ROC and assimilation. It was also conditioned by a prevailing attitude encapsulated by James C. Scott: 'Knowing less, they [i.e., the authorities] are free to suspect the worst'.⁷⁴

The 'reunited' clergy largely fulfilled the requirements for the celebration of the Orthodox liturgy. Those digressions from Orthodox canons which they allowed themselves were either those they could convincingly justify by pointing to popular conservatism or those that were less visible. The retention of traditional ritual patterns and the usage of Ukrainian pronunciation of Church Slavonic for the liturgy and Ukrainian-language sermons were justified in that any change would alienate the faithful and compel them to turn towards the 'catacomb' clergy.

If the requirements for the celebration of the liturgy were quite strict, the clergy had more freedom when delivering sermons. Ecclesiastical authorities forbade them to deliver sermons on 'strictly Catholic themes', which signified 'Catholic deviation from the confession of the Universal Church (вселенское церковное сознание)'.⁷⁵ Nonetheless, parish priests often evoked those themes in sermons on the Body of Christ, the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and the Immaculate Conception, which were popular among their parishioners. The utilization of old Greek Catholic prayer books was forbidden by the synodal decision of 12 December 1949, Article 7,⁷⁶ but the 'reunited' clergy continued to use them, claiming that ecclesiastical authorities were not able to supply their parishes with the sufficient number of Ukrainian-language Orthodox prayer books.

The relationship between the 'reunited' and 'catacomb' clergy was far less cordial and close than emerges in official documents. The reason was a negative attitude of 'catacomb' priests towards those who 'signed Orthodoxy'. Fr. Ivan Kubai notes: 'I was very cautious with those who

⁷⁴ James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven – London, 1985), p. 289.

⁷⁵ GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 73a, p. 67. Synodal decision of 12 December 1949, Article 4.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 68.

signed. I had contacts with some signed priests, I could exchange several phrases with them, but I did not trust them'.⁷⁷ Kateryna Budz claims there was a good reason for this, as some 'reunited' priests denounced those in the 'catacombs' and reported on their 'clandestine activities' to local plenipotentiaries and diocesan bishops.⁷⁸

The overall picture was, however, more complex, first because many 'signed' priests maintained personal relations with those priests who refused to 'sign Orthodoxy'. Another reason was the preservation of sacramental communication between the two Churches, between 'reunited' and 'catacomb' priests. To resolve moral confusions and persuade himself that he 'remained the same', a 'reunited' priest, similar to many of his parishioners, found it necessary to confess and receive Holy Communion from a 'true' Greek Catholic priest.⁷⁹ Members of the 'Church within the Church', not excluding the clergy, wanted a 'catacomb' priest to baptize and marry their children, whenever this priest was available.⁸⁰ A 'catacomb' priest, Fr. Mykhailo Kysil, recalls how he once celebrated the marriage of a daughter of a 'reunited' priest. This priest approached him after the ceremony and confessed, 'Dear Father, thank you, Father, for your performance of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony for my daughter. I am a priest. Unfortunately, I have signed [the reunification oath]. That is why I told my daughter, "My child, look for *our* priest, not that one [who has 'reunited']".'⁸¹ Directly or with the help of their parishioners, who had closer contacts with the 'catacomb' clergy, 'reunited' priests ordered special religious services for the health and/or repose of their relatives in the 'catacomb' Church.⁸²

The relationship of the 'reunited' clergy with the 'catacomb' Church became closer after the actions of Vatican II. In addition to sacramental

⁷⁷ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Іваном Кубасем* (see n. 33), p. 41.

⁷⁸ Budz, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині* (see n. 7), pp. 61–65.

⁷⁹ Interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyn, 22 March and 22 August 2002; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Василем Семенюком* [Interview with Fr. Vasyl Semeniuk], 24 June 1993, the village of Berezyvtsia, Ternopil Oblast // P-1-1-171, p. 24; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю групове (з учасниками підпілля)* [Group interview (with the members of the 'catacomb' Church)], 1 April 1993, Zhydachiv, Lviv Oblast // P-1-1-761, p. 26.

⁸⁰ TsDAVO, F. 1, O. 24, File 4263, p. 295; interview with Mrs. Iaroslava Datsyshyna, 22 August 2002; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Іваном Кубасем* (see n. 33), p. 30; АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з пані Лідією Зеленчук-Лопатінською* [Interview with Ms. Lidiia Zelenchuk-Lopatynska], 11 November 1997, Morshyn, Lviv Oblast // P-1-1-780, pp. 23 and 29.

⁸¹ АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Михайлом Киселем* [Interview with Fr. Mykhailo Kysil], 12 January 1994, village of Kozachchyna, Borshchivsky rayon, Ternopil Oblast // P-1-1-272, p. 47. Italics are mine.

⁸² АІІТs, *Інтерв'ю з Наталією Стадник* (see n. 31), p. 25.

communion (*communicatio in sacris*), many 'reunited' priests were since then linked to the 'catacomb' Church institutionally. Under the impact of the reforms of Vatican II,⁸³ Cardinal Slipyi's 'Eastern-rite reforms', and the idea of a unified Kyiv Patriarchate advanced by Ukrainian Greek Catholics in Rome,⁸⁴ the 'catacomb' episcopate was eager to admit the 'reunited' clergy back under the jurisdiction of the UGCC. 'Reunited' priests recall that Bishop Mykolai Charnetsky already in the 1950s admitted them back after they repented and renounced their allegiance to the ROC.⁸⁵ This practice increased significantly from the 1960s onward as a result of conscious policies by the leaders of the 'catacomb' Church, Archbishops Vasyl Velychkovsky (in office 1963–1969) and Volodymyr Sterniuk (1972–1991).

Many 'reunited' priests thus re-established themselves as Greek Catholic priests, simultaneously continuing to perform their duties in registered Orthodox parishes.⁸⁶ Some priests openly renounced their allegiance to the Moscow Patriarchate after they were admitted back to the Greek Catholic Church. Such priests, who had to immediately leave their parishes, represented a lesser threat for Moscow's authorities than those who continued to serve in their parishes. This became apparent to 'catacomb' bishops, who warned 'reunited' priests against the open renunciation of their allegiance to the ROC: 'There was no need to [openly] renounce. There was no need to anger them... What for? There was no need to break with an Orthodox [bishop]. It was sufficient to confess to our [bishop]'.⁸⁷

⁸³ Of primary significance were the following Decrees and Constitutions: *Sacro-sanctum concilium* of 4 December 1963 (Article 4); *Lumen gentium* of 21 November 1964 (Article 8); *Unitatis redintegratio* of 21 November 1964 (Articles 3–4, 15); *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* of 21 November 1964.

⁸⁴ For more details, see: Stehle, *Eastern Politics of the Vatican* (see n. 11), pp. 368–369; Jaroslav Pelikan, *Confessor between East and West: A Portrait of Ukrainian Cardinal Josyf Slipyj* (Grand Rapids/MI, 1990), pp. 196–207; Alexis Ulysses Floridi, *Moscow and the Vatican* (Ann Arbor/MI, 1986), pp. 186–190.

⁸⁵ АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Михайлом Лундою* [Interview with Fr. Mykhailo Lynda], 30 October 1999, village of Lishnia // No 2029, p. 29.

⁸⁶ АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Іллею Огурком* [Interview with Fr. Illia Ohurok], 20 October 1997, Lviv // P-1-1-739, p. 32; АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Йосифом Кладочним (монахом Єремією)* (see n. 41), p. 73 and p. 110; АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Василем Семенюком* (see n. 78), p. 11; АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Михайлом Дацишиним* (see n. 50), p. 7 and pp. 16–17.

⁸⁷ Bishop Ivan Liatyshevsky of the Stanislaviv Diocese to Fr. Butkovsky, who was admitted back to the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in 1956. АІІТс, *Інтерв'ю з отцем Ізидором Бутковським* (see n. 49), p. 85.

This practice had many opponents amongst ‘catacomb’ priests, mainly of the Basilian Order, who could not forgive ‘reunited’ priests their apostasy and were not prepared to accept their dual ecclesiastical subordination, claiming that it was not possible to ‘serve two Churches’.⁸⁸ Those suspicions and critical estimates notwithstanding, this dual ecclesiastical subordination of ‘reunited’ priests—namely the administration of officially Orthodox parishes by crypto-Greek Catholic priests, if one pushes this interpretation to extremes—substantially undermined the Orthodox presence in Galicia from within.

4. HOW TO DEAL WITH THE ‘REUNIFICATION’ II: ANSWERS FROM PATRIARCHAL AND EXARCHAL AUTHORITIES

To conclude this examination, I would like to turn attention once again to the visible structure to which Galician Greek Catholics were or were not integrated as a result of the 1946 ‘Lviv Sobor’—to the ROC. Two levels are of interest for our study here. As far as the position of the Moscow Patriarchate is concerned, ‘struggle against the remnants of the Unia’ became an important—and, in the period Khrushchev’s anti-religious assault, the only—argument enabling the Orthodox Church to claim its own usefulness and/or relevance on the Soviet landscape and present itself as having common interests with the Soviet state and society and thus as being ‘Soviet.’ This was a key element of this Church’s strategy of survival ever since Metropolitan Sergei’s (Stragorodskii) declaration of loyalty in 1927.⁸⁹

This becomes evident from an examination of the notions of ‘reunification’ and Orthodoxization that were advanced in church documents. In a speech delivered on 23 April 1966 during the festivities in Lviv devoted to the twentieth anniversary of the 1946 ‘Sobor’, Archbishop Alexei (Ridiger) of Tallinn and Estonia, then the head of the chancellery of the Moscow Patriarchate, reduced the struggle against the Unia in Galicia

⁸⁸ АИТс, *Інтерв’ю з отцем Йосифом Кладочним (монахом Єремією)* (see n. 41), pp. 110–111. For more information on the attitude of the ‘catacomb’ Church see Serge Keleher, *Passion and Resurrection: The Greek Catholic Church in Soviet Ukraine, 1939–1989* (Lviv, 1993), p. 85; Budz, *Українська Греко-Католицька Церква у Галичині* (see n. 7), pp. 61–72.

⁸⁹ For more details, see: Shlikhta, *Церква тих, хто вижив* (see n. 1), pp. 102–118; Natalia Shlikhta, ‘Adaptability as a Survival Strategy under Communism: Reconsidering the Approach of the Russian Orthodox Church,’ *Religiski-Filozofiski Raksti*, 25 (2019), pp. 217–241.

to its 'national-political aspect'. To complete his detailed survey of the ecclesiastical history of 'South-Western Rus' (Юго-Западная Русь), he briefly remarked that there was also an additional 'religio-theological (религиозно-богословский) aspect' of this centuries-long struggle.⁹⁰

Analogous formulations abound in the official messages of Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), Exarch of Ukraine since 1966. The 'reunification' of the 'separated [Greek Catholic] brethren' was described as their 'liberation from national egoism and a way to overcome [national] hostility and [national-political] separation [of the Eastern Slavs]'.⁹¹ The Unia meant mainly political, not religious, separation of the Slavs, while 'reunification' contributed to the re-establishment of the unity of Ukrainian and Russian people. Such was the central message of Metropolitan Filaret's official speech during the 1971 Local Council.⁹² Regardless of its own ecclesiastical ambitions, the Moscow Patriarchate found it advisable to consider the 'liquidation of the Unia' in national-political, rather than in religious, terms. The conformity of church discourse with clichés of official Soviet rhetoric was not coincidence.

The reminder of the 'politically significant character' of the activities of the ROC in Western Ukraine was used to request reduction of taxes,⁹³ and to protect monasteries and convents⁹⁴ and theological schools⁹⁵ situated there from closure in the years of Khrushchev's antireligious assault. Oleksandr Lysenko concludes: 'by exploiting the [Galician] situation, the Moscow Patriarchate attempted to compel the regime to at least minimal concessions, being well aware of how difficult it was to achieve anything under ordinary circumstances'.⁹⁶

⁹⁰ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 17, pp. 104–105.

⁹¹ TsDAVO, File 69, p. 114 (Archbishop Filaret's message on the fiftieth anniversary of the Ukrainian SSR, 12 December 1967).

⁹² TsDAVO, File 278, pp. 128–129, 135, 142.

⁹³ GARF, F. 6991, O. 1s, File 1442, p. 153.

⁹⁴ GARF, O. 2, File 255, pp. 3–4; See, for instance: Antonina Shapovalova, 'Торжество Православия' [The triumph of Orthodoxy], *JMP*, 10 (October, 1946), pp. 34–43; (Archimandrite) Innokentii, 'В Почаевской Лавре' [In the Pochaiv Lavra], *JMP*, 7 (July, 1953), pp. 46–47; *ibid.*, 'Свято-Успенская Почаевская Лавра в борьбе с католицизмом' [The Holy Dormition Pochaiv Lavra in the struggle against Catholicism], *JMP*, 10 (October, 1953), pp. 28–32; V. Babich, 'Торжество в Почаевской Лавре' [The festivities in the Pochaiv Lavra], *JMP*, 11 (November, 1956), pp. 12–13; *ibid.*, 'Праздник в Почаевской обители' [A feast in the Pochaiv Monastery], *JMP*, 11 (November, 1965), pp. 13–15.

⁹⁵ GARF, F. 6991, O. 2, File 42, p. 4; Nikolai Tuchiemy, 'В Волынской духовной семинарии' [In the Volyn Theological Seminary], *JMP*, 8 (August, 1954), p. 62.

⁹⁶ Oleksandr Lysenko, *Церковне життя в Україні, 1943–1946* [Religious life in Ukraine, 1943–1946] (Kyiv, 1998), p. 329.

The exarchal authorities displayed little enthusiasm for the cause of the 'reunification' and Orthodoxization of 'former Uniates'. Their attitude was set in the mid-1940s and did not undergo any drastic alteration over the next decades for several reasons. First, there was a certain satisfaction with the formal 'reunification' for it had turned the Ukrainian Exarchate into the largest (if measured by the number of communities or parishes) national Orthodox community in the world. In addition any further active participation in the 'struggle against the remnants of the Unia', was replaced with a 'paper struggle against the Unia' (in Volodymyr Pashchenko's definition⁹⁷).

The difference in the approaches of the exarchs who succeeded each other was rather insignificant. Metropolitans Ioann (Sokolov) (1944–1964) and Ioasaf (Leliukhin) (1964–1966) confined themselves to what can be defined as 'passive noninvolvement'. A special note of 19 January 1959 regarding the 'struggle against the remnants of the Unia' in Western Ukraine was prepared by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. This note insightfully captures the essence of this approach:

The exarch of Ukraine [i.e., Metropolitan Ioann] does not compel his clergy to more actively liquidate the remnants of the Unia. He confines himself to the organization of the meetings of [West Ukrainian] bishops and reports that 'The work conducted to liquidate the Uniate habits in the performance of rituals and the conduct of church services is satisfactory' (Metropolitan Ioann's report to Patriarch Alexei of 26 December 1958). There is no need to explain how [unreasonably] optimistic are such estimates by the exarch.⁹⁸

One important reason for such an approach is to be found in the pragmatism of church leaders in Ukraine: awareness of the absence of resources for successful mission in Galicia and realization that the only way to secure nominal allegiance of the 'reunited' flock to the Orthodox Church was through adjusting to them and making numerous concessions to their national feelings and local customs. Another was their conscious or unconscious desire to absolve themselves from embarrassing association with the actions of the state, which considerably compromised the image of the Orthodox Church in the eyes of 'former Uniates'.

⁹⁷ Volodymyr Pashchenko, *Греко-католики в Україні: від 40-х років ХХ століття до наших днів* [The Greco-Catholics in Ukraine: from the 1940s to our days] (Poltava, 2002), pp. 251–252.

⁹⁸ TsDAHO, F. 1, O. 24, File 5028, p. 7.

Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), adhering to his predecessors' 'cautious' approach to Orthodoxization, simultaneously was eager to accentuate a 'Uniate threat' in order to fully exploit the bargaining power of the Exarch of Ukraine. Bohdan R. Bociurkiw assesses his strategy in the following terms: 'Metropolitan Filaret has been skilfully capitalizing on the regime's hostility to the Uniate Church... to improve the position of the "loyal" Orthodox Church in the Ukrainian SSR and to strengthen its hold on the former Uniate dioceses'.⁹⁹

Metropolitan Filaret was in the position to persuasively argue for the necessity of the publication of Ukrainian-language church calendars and prayer books, translation of his own messages into Ukrainian, and the publication of Ukrainian language *Православний вісник*.¹⁰⁰ His letter to the Republican Plenipotentiary of the CRA, Kostiantyn Lytvyn, on 19 March 1967 discloses these tactics. The Exarch described all the undesirable consequences of the closure of *Православний вісник* in 1962, which became especially visible after the outcome of Vatican II. He paid special attention to 'clandestine Uniate activities' and the growth of 'autocephalist' Orthodox opposition at home, as well as the actions of the UGCC abroad. 'Ukrainian nationalists interpret the closure of the magazine as a sign of the restrictions on the use of the Ukrainian language... especially given that the church magazine written in Russian [JMP] is still published'.¹⁰¹ Drawing from this—the (potential) role of the magazine 'in the struggle against the activities of Uniates and Ukrainian nationalists'—the Exarch turned to Lytvyn with the request to support his petition for the renewal of the publication of *Православний вісник*.¹⁰²

Metropolitan Filaret's letter to Lytvyn of 20 November 1973 reveals that his 'skilful capitalizing on the regime's hostility to the Uniate Church' simultaneously served to gain immediate benefits and to generally secure the position of the Orthodox Church in Soviet Ukraine. The metropolitan once again repeated that the conversion of Greek Catholics to Orthodoxy turned them into loyal socialist subjects and friends of the Russian nation.¹⁰³ This preceded his request to the CRA to sanction an increase in the publication of the Ukrainian language church calendar

⁹⁹ Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, 'The Orthodox Church and the Soviet Regime in the Ukraine, 1953–1971', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 14/2 (Summer, 1972), p. 209.

¹⁰⁰ TsDAVO, F. 4648, O. 5, File 351, p. 69 (Metropolitan Filaret's letter to Lytvyn, 20 November 1973); TsDAVO, File 128, p. 156.

¹⁰¹ TsDAVO, File 69, p. 54.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 55.

¹⁰³ TsDAVO, File 351, p. 69.

from 10,000 to 150,000 copies. The publication of this calendar was presented as an important measure facilitating the 'struggle against the Unia and Ukrainian nationalism'. The concluding statement sounded as if it were borrowed from official Soviet documents: 'Thus, the publication of the Orthodox calendar acquires political significance'.¹⁰⁴

The complex ecclesiastical situation in the 'reunited' dioceses also enabled the exarch to at least partially solve the acute problem of the scarcity of Orthodox clergy. Metropolitan Filaret's objective was to secure the position of the Orthodox Church in Galicia and, more broadly, in the Ukrainian Republic. However, a correct appreciation of the situation in the 'reunited' dioceses compelled him to ask for the preparation of 'specially trained' priests that definitively affected the composition of the Orthodox clergy in the Ukrainian Exarchate:

Our seminaries and academies cannot supply the Western Dioceses with the sufficient number of priests. Besides, [their] educational programs do not and cannot take local conditions into account. Local conditions have to certainly be taken into account, if we truly wish to achieve positive results [i.e., the establishment of Orthodoxy]. There is a need to organize effective training of Orthodox pastors especially for the former Greek Catholic Dioceses.¹⁰⁵

5. CONCLUSIONS

As was outlined at the beginning of this paper, there was no room for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the Soviet state. The Stalinist state's logic required its immediate and complete liquidation which was accomplished through its 'reunification' with the Russian Orthodox Church after the victory of World War II. As a result of the 'Lviv Sobor', the UGCC ceased to officially exist in the Soviet state. Its millions of faithful and thousands of clergy and parishes became part of the Moscow Patriarchate, from which the latter evidently benefitted. However, the reality behind this simplistic picture was different. Galician Greek Catholics did not become silent objects of 'reunification': not only the minority that went into 'catacombs', but also the majority that formally became Orthodox opposed the regime's grand plan at the level of daily practice. Rather than becoming Orthodox, they formed a 'Church within the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 70.

¹⁰⁵ TsDAVO, File 170, p. 55.

Church' (within the ROC) that for decades resisted assimilation and preserved its distinctiveness and thereby contributed to the revival of the UGCC as soon as this became possible. Moreover, ecclesiastical authorities—both at the patriarchal and especially exarchal levels—being well aware that Galician Greek Catholics did not become Orthodox, attempted to exploit the complex situation in the 'threatened localities' (загрожені терени, as 'reunited' dioceses were commonly referred to in church documents) for their own sake. The existence of the 'Church within the Church', alongside the 'catacomb' activities of the 'stubborn Uniates', became a powerful argument in relations with the communist state: the Orthodox Church survived the period of antireligious persecutions to a large extent because, at least at the level of official pronouncements, it 'never ceased to struggle against the remnants of the Unia'.

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ABSTRACT:

Despite the supposed liquidation of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church at the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946, the process of 'reunification' continued. Its millions of faithful and thousands of clergy and parishes became part of the Moscow Patriarchate, from which the latter evidently benefitted. However, the reality behind this simplistic picture was different. Galician Greek Catholics did not become silent objects of 'reunification': not only the minority that went into 'catacombs', but also the majority that formally became Orthodox opposed the regime's grand plan at the level of daily practice, documented here by means of unique interviews and access to archival material. Rather than becoming Orthodox, they formed a 'Church within the Church'—a church with Greek Catholic roots and traditions within the Russian Orthodox Church that for decades resisted assimilation and preserved its distinctiveness and thereby contributed to the revival of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in the late 1980s.

THE HOLY SEE AND THE 'LVIV SOBOR' OF 1946

Hyacinthe DESTIVELLE, OP

The question regarding the events of 1946 remains one of the most painful in recent relations between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church. It opened wounds for which only a common reading of history will enable a 'purification of memory', which is an essential part of the reconciliation of Christians.¹ Thus, we can only welcome a 'common reading' of these events in the hope that it may lead to a shared historical approach not only with this issue but also, more generally, in the history of relations between the two churches.

This paper, by reviewing official documents, seeks to present the Holy See's point of view of the 'Lviv Sobor' of 8–10 March 1946; in other words, what was the 'reception' by the Holy See of this event? This paper will not study the history of this event, which is already the subject of numerous studies and other papers here.² It will not aim to analyse the Holy See's policy towards the Soviet Union, or present unofficial decisions or reactions of the Holy See regarding Christians in the region, particularly those of the Russian Orthodox Church or the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church.³ The aim of this paper is very modest: it is to present the Holy See's official declarations regarding the 1946 'Lviv Sobor', in particular those of successive popes, from Pius XII to Francis, but also those of representatives of the then-Secretariat (later Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity, and to ask the following questions: What were these statements, what were their main arguments, and how and why did they evolve?

¹ In this regard, reference is made to the author's article, 'L'œcuménisme entre histoire et mémoire dans l'enseignement catholique récent', *Istina*, 53 (2008), pp. 227–254.

² Reference is made in particular to the work of Bohdan R. Bociurkiw, 'Le synode de Lviv (8–10 mars 1946)', *Istina*, 52 (1989), pp. 266–289.

³ For example, it could be interesting to analyze the archival material of *L'Osservatore Romano* and Radio Vaticana on the situation of Christians in the Soviet Union, and particularly Ukraine.

1. PIUS XII: THE ENCYCLICAL *ORIENTALES OMNES ECCLESIAS*

On 23 December 1945, when persecution had already provided a glimpse of the threats posed to the very existence of the Church then generally known not as ‘Ukrainian’ but as ‘Ruthenian’, Pius XII published *Orientales omnes Ecclesias*. This encyclical, written on the occasion of the 350th anniversary of the Union of Brest, after outlining a vast history of the Ruthenian Church, denounced past persecution and the threat to it that had emerged in the territories newly occupied by the Soviet Union, while at the same time celebrating the anniversary.⁴ The pope lamented the pressure on the faithful to make them leave their Church and join what he called the ‘dissidents’,⁵ as well as the arrest of all its bishops and many priests—arrests that took place on 11 April 1945—as well as the measures taken to prohibit the election of anyone to administer the vacant sees.⁶

With perhaps surprising bluntness, Pius said that the political justification for the persecution was actually a pretext:

We are well aware that this harsh and severe treatment is speciously attributed to political reasons. But this is no new procedure used today for the first time; very often in the course of the centuries the enemies of the Church have hesitated to make public profession of their opposition to the Catholic faith and to attack it openly; they brought cunning and subtle allegations that Catholics were plotting against the State.

In reality, according to the pope, this persecution is nothing more or less than incorporation into the Orthodox Church. Unlike his more typically diplomatic style, here the pope criticized in particularly direct terms the letter that the newly elected Patriarch Alexis had sent on 10 May 1945

⁴ ‘With the greatest fatherly anguish of heart, we see a new and terrible storm threatening this Church. The information which reaches us is scanty, but is sufficient to cause solicitude and fill us with anxiety’. *Orientales omnes Ecclesias*, par. 55, Online: http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_23121945_orientales-omnes-ecclesias.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁵ ‘For we have learnt with great grief that, in those territories which have recently been made over to the sway of Russia, our dear brethren and sons of the Ruthenian people are in dire straits in consequence of their fidelity to the Apostolic See; every means are being employed to take them away from the bosom of their mother, the Church, and to induce them, against their will and against their known religious duty, to enter the communion of the dissidents’. *Orientales omnes Ecclesias* (see n. 4), par. 56.

⁶ ‘Thus it is reported that the clergy of the Ruthenian rite have complained in a letter to the civil government that in the Western Ukraine, as it is called today, their Church has been placed in an extremely difficult position; all its bishops and many of its priests have been arrested; and at the same time it has been prohibited that anyone should take up the government of the same Ruthenian Church’. *Orientales omnes Ecclesias* (see n. 4), par. 56.

to pastors and faithful of the Greek-Catholic Church in Western Ukraine.⁷ It is this letter, according to Pius XII, which expressed the profound reason for the persecution and which had contributed to justifying it:

But faces and events themselves plainly manifest, and show in its true light, what was and is the real cause of this savagery. For, as is well known, the patriarch Alexis, recently elected by the dissident bishops of Russia, openly exalts and preaches defection from the Catholic Church in a letter lately addressed to the Ruthenian Church, a letter which contributed not a little to the initiation of this persecution.⁸

After this strong appeal, Pius XII did not, to our knowledge, make any specific statement on the 'Lviv Sobor' but he did make more general statements bearing on the situation as when, e.g., during his broadcast Christmas message of 24 December 1951, he mentions the 'Church of Silence'. On 7 July 1952, he published his apostolic letter to the peoples of Russia, *Sacro Vergente Anno*,⁹ in which, after recalling the history of relations between the Church of Rome and Russia, also including the emergence of the Soviet regime, he consecrates the peoples of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. But no mention is made of the Ruthenian Greek-Catholic Church. The 'Synod of Lviv' is not even mentioned in the encyclical *Orientales Ecclesias* to the bishops of the Eastern Churches on 15 December 1952.¹⁰ In this encyclical, Pius XII deplores the persecution experienced by Oriental Catholics in Eastern Europe, including Bulgaria, Romania, and Ukraine. Regarding Ukraine, the pope referred to the charges made against Greek-Catholic bishops in Kyiv at the end of February 1946,¹¹ to their sentences to hard labour and to the death of many of them.¹² He also denounced the policy of deporting

⁷ Letter published in *Istina*, 34 (1989), pp. 295–297.

⁸ *Orientales omnes Ecclesias* (see n. 4), par. 57.

⁹ *Sacro Vergente Anno*, Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/it/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-xii_apl_19520707_sacro-vergente-anno.html. (Accessed 20 January 2020). Unless otherwise stated, all English translations are my own.

¹⁰ Encyclical in Italian at: https://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/it/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_15121952_orientales.html (Accessed 20 January 2020). Ad hoc English translation by the author.

¹¹ For 'acts of treason and collaboration with the German forces of occupation'; cf. Judicial notice of the Procurate of the USSR in *Osservatore Romano*, 241 (14–15 October 1946).

¹² '[T]hose Bishops of the Oriental Rite who were among the first to suffer in defence of religion...and who were conducted to Kyiv, where they were tried and condemned to various punishments', while some had already 'met glorious deaths'. By that time, we know of the deaths of Bishop Gregory Khomyshyn, who died in prison in Kyiv in January 1947, and Bishop Nicetas Budka, who died in October 1949 in the region of Karaganda in Kazakhstan; Bishop Josaphat Kotsylovsky, who died in 1947 in Kyiv, and Bishop Gregory Lakota, who died in the Vorkuta camp in 1951.

Catholic populations 'deprived of their legitimate pastors'. But no direct reference to the sobor was made.

The main reaction of Pius XII regarding the suppression of the Greek-Catholic Church was therefore the encyclical *Orientales omnes Ecclesias*. This text, however, was published before the events of the 'Lviv Sobor' and was not followed by other statements of the same intensity, as just noted above. If, however, the Lviv Sobor was not mentioned by Pius XII, the recognition of the existence of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church may appear to be an implicit recognition of its invalidity, at least for the Greek-Catholics who remained in full communion with the Catholic Church.

After Pius's death in 1958, Pope John XXIII, whose extensive experience in Bulgaria had rendered him sensitive to the Eastern Catholics, was highly concerned by the situation of the persecuted Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Having firstly made Metropolitan Josyf Slipyj a cardinal *in pectore*, he succeeded in obtaining his liberation by the Soviet government in order to allow him to participate to the Second Vatican Council. Nevertheless, to our knowledge, no public statement was made by him regarding the 'Lviv Sobor'.

2. PAUL VI: CORRESPONDENCE WITH PATRIARCH ALEXIS I

The pontificate of Pope Paul VI was marked by a certain caution in its attitude to the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. This seems to have been motivated by a dual aspiration: on the one hand, not to aggravate the situation of the Greek-Catholic Church of the catacombs by pronouncing a public condemnation of the persecution to which it was subjected, and, on the other hand, not to compromise the rapprochement since the Second Vatican Council between the Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church. Nevertheless, two important occasions elicited statements from the Holy See.

2.1. *Concerning Greek-Catholics in Czechoslovakia*

The first occasion involved the Greek-Catholic Church in Czechoslovakia. By means of a similar synod to that of Lviv, the Greek-Catholic parishes of the Diocese of Prešov in Slovakia had been incorporated on 28 April 1950 into the Orthodox Church.¹³ However, in 1968, thanks to

¹³ The Greek-Catholics were incorporated into the Moscow Patriarchate before it had recognized the autocephaly of the Czech Orthodox Church in 1951 (which was granted by the Patriarchate of Constantinople only in 1998).

the new political climate, the majority of them decided to re-establish communion with Rome. This decision led to a number of local violent incidents between Catholics and Orthodox, especially regarding questions relating to property, which provoked an exchange of letters between Patriarch Alexis I, Pope Paul VI, and Metropolitan Dorotheos of Prague and All Czechoslovakia. In a letter of 21 October 1968 to Patriarch Alexis I,¹⁴ Pope Paul VI recalled two principles: that of conciliarity and of freedom of conscience.

Firstly, while regretting the violence, Paul VI explained it in terms of the resentment that the Greek-Catholics may have felt because of the lack of conciliarity of the synods that had incorporated them into Orthodoxy. Paul VI recalled that for the Catholic Church, as for the Orthodox Church, no decision can be considered conciliar and valid without the participation and acceptance of bishops:

That fundamental character of conciliarity was lacking in 1950, and in the preceding years, when certain groups have broken relations of full communion existing between the Holy See and certain local Churches. In this context, one better understands how an important number of faithful has maintained in their heart a spirit of that union and manifest it when circumstances so permit.

It is interesting that Paul VI here implicitly denied the canonicity of the annulment of unions, including that of 1946, referring not only to that of Prešov, but also to those of the 'preceding years' regarding 'certain local Churches'.

The second principle mentioned by Paul VI in his letter to Patriarch Alexis I is freedom of conscience. Having expressed his desire to collaborate in addressing this question, he recalled the importance of distinguishing between religious factors, pertaining to 'personal and free conviction of conscience', and 'factors foreign to the Gospel', that is, of a political nature. In an important sentence, the pope argued that the reception into full communion with the Catholic Church must be based on religious motives that exclude 'every motivation which could arise from sentiments foreign to this conviction', that is to say, national or political motivations:

¹⁴ The letter of Paul VI can be found in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, but was published (and wrongly presented as addressed to Patriarch Pimen) in *Doing the Truth in Charity: Statements of Popes Paul VI, John Paul I, John Paul II and the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity (1964–1980)*, eds. Thomas F. Stransky and John B. Sheerin, Ecumenical Documents, 1 (New York, 1982), pp. 216–218. A similar letter was addressed to Metropolitan Dorotheos.

In the past, the relations between our Churches sometimes suffered because of factors foreign to the Gospel which we preach. If Our apostolic charge does not permit us to refuse persons or groups the possibility of entering into full communion with the Roman Catholic Church, be assured that We will never permit this except for reasons which flow from personal and free conviction of conscience, and exclude every motivation which could arise from sentiments foreign to this conviction.

2.2. *Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church of 1971*

The second declaration of the Holy See during the pontificate of Paul VI on the subject of the 'Lviv Sobor' was on the occasion of the local council of the Russian Orthodox Church which was held from 30 May to 2 June 1971. During this council, a resolution ratifying the 'reunion' of Greek-Catholics with the Moscow Patriarchate was adopted, and the newly elected Patriarch Pimen renewed the call to conversion that was made in 1945 to Ukrainian Catholics by Patriarch Alexis I.¹⁵ This resolution was read in the presence of representatives of the Holy See, namely Cardinal Johannes Willebrands, prefect of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, and Father John Long, an official of the same.

Cardinal Willebrands' silent presence was interpreted by some as a confirmation of the prudence of Rome and it roused reactions. Thus, in his speech of 23 October 1971 to a Roman synod of bishops,¹⁶ Cardinal Slipyj, in exile in Rome, echoed the bitterness of Ukrainian Catholics at what he interpreted to be the silence of the Holy See on the persecution of their Church. According to the summary of speeches published by the Vatican Press Office, the cardinal said that 'today for ecclesiastical diplomacy, Ukrainian Catholics...are put aside as awkward', denouncing the fact that 'the Vatican had interceded for Latin Catholics, but was silent about the six million persecuted Ukrainians' and regretting that 'the establishment of a Ukrainian Patriarchate, proposed during the Second Vatican Council, has been refused'.¹⁷ Above all, Cardinal Slipyj lamented

¹⁵ This appeared in the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*, 1971, no. 2. Cf. *Istina*, 34 (1989), pp. 302–303.

¹⁶ The Synod was held from 30 September to 6 November 1971 on the theme 'The Ministerial Priesthood and Justice in the World'.

¹⁷ On the issue of the Patriarchate's recognition, Pope Paul VI replied negatively to Cardinal Slipyj in two letters dated 7 July 1971 and 24 May 1975, as recalled by the spokesman of the Holy See, Dr. Federico Alessandrini, on 18 July 1975 (*Documentation Catholique*, 72 [1975], p. 791), and especially in his address to the Ukrainian bishops on 13 December 1976. In the latter Pope Paul VI explained the reasons for this refusal, both in canonical and contingent terms, and regretted that 'this position is interpreted, in some

that when 'Patriarch Pimen in the synod that elected him declared null our union with Rome, none of the Vatican delegates present protested'.¹⁸

It is improbable that Cardinal Willebrands could have intervened in the council, where he would not have been able to speak. However, his interview with the newspaper *L'Avvenire* soon after gave him the opportunity to clarify the Holy See's position on the annulment of the Unions of Brest and of Uzhorod in 1946 and 1949 respectively.¹⁹ He stated that the Catholic Church could not accept such unilateral actions:

The Council noted the annulment of the unions Brest and Uzhorod, which took place in the 16th and 17th centuries. As is well known, in 1946 and 1949 these two unions were unilaterally declared to be abolished, with the result that these communities were placed under the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Moscow. It is quite certain that we cannot share the thesis whereby, by the annulment of these acts of union, the ecclesial situation of our Eastern Catholic brethren in the Soviet Union has found its solution. The Catholic Church is certainly glad that in the course of recent years, with God's help, important progress has been made in her relations with the Russian Orthodox Church. However, in this dialogue of charity which is now developing, we continue to be firmly convinced, as we have ever been, that such thorny problems cannot be resolved unilaterally.²⁰

Thus, the pontificate of Paul VI, while characterized by great caution on this issue, was marked by the first implicit acknowledgment of the invalidity of the 'Lviv Sobor' and by criticism of the unilateral decisions taken at the time by the Moscow Patriarchate.

3. JOHN PAUL II: FROM CONTROVERSY TO UNDERSTANDING

The first years of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II (1978-2005) were marked by two incidents which led to correspondence between the Holy See and the Moscow Patriarchate on the subject of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, and indirectly on the 'Lviv Sobor.'

circles at least, as a misunderstanding of the Holy See towards Catholic aspirations that had been so put to the test'. See *Osservatore Romano* French version of 13-14 December 1976; *Documentation Catholique*, 74 (1977), p. 9. Ad hoc English translation by the author.

¹⁸ *Documentation Catholique*, 58 (1971), p. 1027.

¹⁹ Cf. M. Delmotte, 'L'Eglise orthodoxe ukrainienne', *Istina*, 27 (1982), pp. 354-358, here p. 356.

²⁰ *L'Avvenire d'Italia* (4 July 1971), published in *Information Service of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity*, 15/3 (1971), p. 9. See also *Documentation Catholique*, 58 (1971), pp. 713-715; *Istina*, 27 (1982), pp. 354-358.

3.1. *John Paul II's Letter to Cardinal Slipyj in 1979*

On 20 November 1978, a scant month into his papacy, John Paul II received Cardinal Slipyj and representatives of the Ukrainian hierarchy in an audience during which he maintained the position of Paul VI on the issue of the patriarchate. However, to demonstrate his closeness to the Ukrainian Catholics, the first Slavic pope addressed a letter to Cardinal Slipyj on 19 March 1979, during the preparation of the millennium of Christianity in Ukraine.²¹ The letter outlined the principles that would shape John Paul II's position on this issue throughout his pontificate. After recalling the historical development of the evangelization of Ukraine, and the division among Christians, the pope referred to the attempt at unity undertaken by the Council of Florence and praised the role played in it by Metropolitan Isidore of Kyiv.²² He then dwelt at length on the 1596 Union, affirming that it remains in force today: 'Although that common history pertains to a time past and gone, nevertheless the religious and ecclesial force of that union at Brest persists till now and bears abundant fruit'. He stressed that 'the Apostolic See has always attributed a special importance to this same unity which shines forth amid the very differences of the Byzantine rite and ecclesial tradition'.²³ While not mentioning the sobor of 1946, the letter recalls the suffering of the Greek-Catholic Church.²⁴ Referring in conclusion to the Second Vatican Council, the pope affirmed that the council sought 'new ways more suited to the mentality of the people of our times' in re-establishing the unity of Christians. However, he points out, this 'ecumenical work...cannot overlook or lessen the importance and usefulness of each of the attempts at restoring the unity of the Church which were made in the past and which—even if only partially—had happy results'. Indeed, the 'genuine ecumenical spirit—according to the more recent meaning of the word—must be shown and proved by a special respect' for the Greek-Catholic Church.²⁵

²¹ 'Letter of His Holiness John Paul II to Cardinal Joseph Slipyj for the Millenium of Christianity in Rus (the Ukraine)', Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19790616_1000-crist-rus.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

²² 'Isidore [was] praised very much on account of the union of the Churches that had been brought about, suffered much because of his devoted ecumenical zeal...'. Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ 'the cross of Christ, which so many of you, dear brothers, have carried on your shoulders...whilst enduring sorrows and injustices for Christ...faithful to the cross right up to their last breath'. Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

The letter concludes by stating that Catholics and Orthodox share not only ecumenical principles but also the same 'principle of religious freedom which constitutes one of the chief doctrines of 'The Declaration of the Rights of Man' (United Nations 1948)'.²⁶

The Moscow Patriarchate reacted negatively to the publication of this letter, fearing that it signified a turning point in the Holy See's policy, namely a policy towards adopting uniatism as the model for future relations between Catholics and Orthodox. This fear was expressed in a letter dated 4 September 1979 from Metropolitan Juvenal of Krutitsy and Kolomna, of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, to Cardinal Willebrands.²⁷ Motivated by 'the fervent wish to avoid a useless polemic and misunderstanding of inter-church relations', the metropolitan sought clarification: 'I have noticed that the letter appears to contradict the spirit of Second Vatican Council and deviates from the relations which have taken shape since the Council between the Roman Catholic Church and Local Orthodox Churches'. '[T]he letter to Cardinal Slipyj contains the statement that "Unia" continues to be an important way towards the restoration of unity... This passage gives the impression that a change has taken place in the ecumenical policy of the Holy See towards its mutual relations with the Orthodox Churches and towards the ecumenical concord of the Churches'.

Willebrands responded to Juvenal with a letter dated 22 September 1979.²⁸ This response, written on behalf of the pope and after discussion with him, sought to clarify the positions of the new pope regarding relations between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches and to recall the presence and to highlight the potential role of the Eastern Catholic Churches. After reiterating the ecumenical commitment of the pope, the cardinal stressed that: 'Pope John Paul II addressed himself to a particular Church which bears its own history and traditions, and is presently undergoing a difficult trial. He did not intend to treat either the theology which should inspire our common search for full ecclesial communion or the method for our development of the relations between our Churches, today and for the future'. The pope had 'no intention whatever of presenting the Union of Brest as the model for our relations with the Orthodox Churches today or as one for the contemplated future union'.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ *Doing the Truth in Charity* (see n. 14), p. 225.

²⁸ Ibid., pp. 226–229.

However, the cardinal continued, 'sometimes one meets in certain Orthodox circles a tendency to judge the experience of the united Catholic Churches in a totally negative manner. Some would even have wished that their suppression be the preliminary condition to the dialogue with the Church of Rome'. The cardinal responded by citing the above-noted passage of the 1968 letter of Pope Paul VI to Patriarch Alexis in which Paul VI declared it to be his pastoral duty to receive Christians wishing to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church and defended the principle of freedom of conscience.²⁹ Subsequently, while recognizing that past efforts towards unity have been 'inspired by a theology which is no longer that of today', and have caused 'new tensions between Catholics and Orthodox', Cardinal Willebrands highlighted that the existence of such Catholic churches originating in these efforts 'has been and remains beneficial' because they recalled specifically that 'the Latin tradition was not the only truly authentic Christian tradition'.³⁰

This correspondence at the time of John Paul II's letter to Cardinal Slipyj therefore did not directly tackle the issue of the 'Lviv Sobor' and brought no concrete solution to the tragic situation of Ukrainian Catholics. However, it enabled the formulation of the principles that would remain those of the Holy See during the pontificate of John Paul II, namely: the distinction between a method of historical union and the actual existence of the united churches, the distinction between the religious (freedom of conscience) and the political spheres, and finally the affirmation of the right to the existence of these churches, despite the tensions created.

²⁹ *Cf. supra.*

³⁰ 'In accord with this same spirit Pope John Paul II asks that one correctly appreciate the deeds of past centuries which intended re-establishing the unity of the Churches. Out of these efforts, carried out in circumstances different from ours and inspired by a theology which is no longer that of today, were born the united Catholic Churches. Their existence has allowed some Christians to express their communion with the Church of Rome, in accordance with the demands of their conscience. Inside the Catholic Church they have brought to mind concretely the fact that the Latin tradition was not the only truly authentic Christian tradition. In this sense their existence has been and remains beneficial. On the other hand, one must recognize that, unhappily, their foundation also has caused a rupture of communion with the Orthodox Churches and created new tensions between Catholics and Orthodox'. *Ibid.*, pp. 228–229.

3.2. *Correspondence after the 1980 Synodal Declaration of the Ukrainian Catholic Church*

Another incident took place shortly after which specifically concerned the 'Lviv Sobor' and which prompted a direct correspondence between John Paul II and Patriarch Pimen. In fact, following the extraordinary synod of the Ukrainian bishops, held from 24 to 27 March 1980, which appointed Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky as coadjutor to the major archbishop of Lviv of the Ukrainians,³¹ another synod of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church was held the same year from 25 to 30 November 1980. This synod, called on the occasion of the fourth centenary of the birth of Saint Josaphat, was intended to nominate candidates for vacant eparchies (including Philadelphia and Chicago) and to prepare the celebration of the millennium of the Baptism of Rus'. Pope John Paul II, receiving the synod on 30 November, recalled the Union of Brest 'sealed by the blood of Saint Josaphat', without mentioning the events of 1946.³²

However, at the conclusion of proceedings a statement was published by the synod on the 'Lviv sobor'. This statement explains that 'the assembly that was convoked on the initiative of some Ukrainian priests under constraint from Soviet civil authorities in 1946 in Lviv and which proclaimed itself a "Synod" cannot be and never was in any manner a legitimate synod of our Church, because it prevented any Ukrainian bishops from taking part in it'. The statement further considers that

The holy Apostolic See of Rome in the person of Pius XII, in his encyclical *Orientales Omnes* of 1945 and equally in his solemn declaration of 15 December 1952, and of John Paul II, in his documents of 19 March 1979

³¹ In his opening address to the Synod, John Paul II, asking the Greek-Catholic Church to remain faithful to its spiritual identity, added: 'The Pope would hope that this identity may not appear in the eyes of our brothers in the Orthodox Church as a sign of antagonism and almost a misunderstanding of the glorious life and traditions of the Eastern Church; and he would hope this precisely in virtue of the modern ecumenical spirit that accompanies the path of dialogue, of mutual understanding, of acknowledging each other – as indeed we are – as brothers in the shared faith in Christ the Saviour, members of Churches seeking to re-establish the full communion willed by Christ'. For an Italian translation, see: http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1980/march/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19800324_sinodo-ucraina.html (Accessed 20 January 2020). The address was delivered by the Pope in Ukrainian.

³² '[...] the renewal of the union of the whole metropolis of Kyiv with this Apostolic See through the well-known union of Brest in 1596. This great work has been sealed by the blood of St Josaphat, and for this reason resists in such a tenacious manner'. 'Discorso di Giovanni Paolo II ai Vescovi del Sinodo Ucraino', Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1980/december/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19801201_sinodo-ucraino.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

and of 5 February 1980, has made known to all that the Ukrainian Catholic Church exists in law and in fact, and in so doing condemned the abuse of power perpetrated against the Ukrainian priests, thus declaring null and void the canonicity of the 'Synod of Lviv of 1946', highlighting its historical falsity.³³

The declaration concluded that 'a synod by means of which our Church abolished the holy union with the Apostolic See of Rome never took place and the so-called "Synod of Lviv" of 1946 never had nor has anything in common with our Ukrainian Church'.³⁴

It is particularly interesting for our purpose to consider the pontifical documents cited in the declaration of the Ukrainian bishops. The first document mentioned is the encyclical *Orientales omnes*, but as we have seen, it was published prior to the sobor. As for Pius XII's encyclical *Orientales Ecclesias* of 15 December 1952 and John Paul II's letter of 19 March 1979 (we found no trace of a document corresponding to 5 February 1980), although it is true that in referring to the existence of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, these documents implicitly recognize the invalidity of the sobor (at least for the Greek Catholics remaining in full communion with the Catholic Church), none of these documents explicitly condemns the sobor, nor do they mention it.

This declaration provoked a new reaction from the Moscow patriarch himself, Pimen, who on 22 December 1980 wrote to Pope John Paul II to express his concern.³⁵ 'With a deep disquiet and bitterness I should say that the Declaration of the Synod could cancel—in the full sense of this term—all the great achievements in the sphere of the fraternal rapprochement between our Churches, which are the results of intense efforts undertaken by both parts during and after the Second Vatican Council'. Indeed, the patriarch continued, 'The contents and the spirit of the Declaration are alien to the spirit of ecumenical fraternity which prevails between us and, moreover, it risks to change and to violate the current structure of the Russian Orthodox Church'. Not wanting to enter into the historical controversy the patriarch affirmed: 'I will not now address some aspects for analysis, as I think that this could deepen tragic memories of relations between our two Churches in the past, which on both sides remain a heavy burden'. He asked the pope 'to take steps not only not to give force to the declaration, but to make known to the Churches that you yourself,

³³ Published in French in *Documentation Catholique*, 78 (1981), p. 46.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ See *Irénikon*, 54 (1981), pp. 280–282.

Holiness, do not bless and do not encourage the path chosen by the Ukrainian Catholic bishops for relations between the Churches today'. Patriarch Pimen personally sent Metropolitan Juvenal to visit the pope and Cardinal Willebrands, asking the metropolitan to report back directly.

Pope John Paul II responded with a letter dated 24 January 1981.³⁶ After recalling that the synod was intended for the nomination of candidates for vacant episcopal sees and for various aspects of pastoral activity, and that the Holy See was holding 'firmly to the position it has always maintained about Ukrainian Catholics', he denied any official status of the statement to the synod:

Without consultation of any sort, someone informed the press regarding projects discussed by the Synod. The Holy See, while holding firmly to the position it has always maintained about the Ukrainian Catholics, regrets such a publication, which took place before I had read these documents, and it quickly informed all the Nunciatures in those countries where there are Ukrainian Catholic communities that these texts had not been approved and were therefore devoid of any official character.

Following this exchange of letters, made public by the Patriarchate of Moscow,³⁷ the Russian Orthodox Church solemnly celebrated, on 16 and 17 May 1981, the thirty-fifth anniversary of the reunion of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church to the Orthodox Church.³⁸ Patriarch Pimen, in his address on the occasion of the anniversary, particularly welcomed that 'the Council of Lvov was the expression of the aspirations of the Church of Galicia to return to the faith of the Holy Orthodox Church which is the historical Church of all the Ukrainian people, to the faith of their ancestors who received holy baptism in the waters of the Dnieper'.

3.3. *The Millennium of the Baptism of Rus': Appeal to Religious Freedom*

The new political context of *perestroika* and the preparation of celebrations for the Millennium of the Baptism of Rus' offered an opportunity to deepen the positions outlined at the beginning of John Paul II's pontificate. In his speech to the fourth synod of Ukrainian bishops, held

³⁶ *Irénikon*, 54 (1981), pp. 282–284.

³⁷ The letters were published in *Bulletin d'Information du Département des relations ecclésiastiques extérieures du Patriarcat de Moscou*.

³⁸ A description of this celebration was published in *Bulletin d'Information du Département des relations ecclésiastiques extérieures du Patriarcat de Moscou* on 19 June 1981; cf. *Irénikon*, 54 (1981), pp. 422–425.

in the Vatican from 22 September to 5 October 1985, the pope, without mentioning the events of 1946, insisted on the principle of religious freedom, relying this time not on the Declaration of Human Rights but on the Helsinki Accords. Recalling that ‘the Church you represent in this Synod, has been—and continues to be—unjustly treated and persecuted because of membership in the Catholic Church’, he stressed that he has ‘often hoped that this Catholic community may enjoy the religious freedom that is its right, like other religious confessions’ and that ‘representatives of the Holy See have asked, in various meetings of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Helsinki, that its civil right to exist be recognized’.³⁹

With the Apostolic Letter *Euntes in mundum* of 25 January 1988 John Paul II called upon the entire Catholic Church to celebrate the millennium of the baptism of Rus’ in Kyiv.⁴⁰ Giving thanks ‘for having called to faith and to grace the sons and daughters of many peoples and nations, who accepted the Christian heritage of the Baptism administered at Kiev’, a baptism received at the time of the undivided Church, the pope underlined that these people ‘belong first of all to the Russian, Ukrainian, and Belarusian nations’.⁴¹ Dated 25 January, the last day of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, and written in a clearly ecumenical spirit, the letter, unlike the one on the same theme in 1979 addressed to Cardinal Slipyj, does not specifically mention either the Union of Brest-Litovsk or the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Indeed, it concludes by saying that ‘[i]n a special way of course this is the feast of the Russian Orthodox Church, which has its centre in Moscow and which we call with joy “Sister Church”. It is precisely she who has received in great part the inheritance of ancient Christian Rus’, linking herself with, and remaining faithful to, the Church of Constantinople’.⁴²

But in addition to this letter to the entire Catholic Church, the pope also addressed the message *Magnum Baptismi Donum* to Ukrainian Catholics on 14 February 1988, the feast of Saints Cyril and Methodius.⁴³

³⁹ Address in Italian at: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1985/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19851005_vescovi-sinodo.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁴⁰ *Euntes in mundum*, Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/apost_letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19880125_euntes-in-mundum-universum.html (Accessed 20 January 2020). For an English translation, see: <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=3700> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁴¹ *Euntes in mundum* (see n. 40), par. 1.

⁴² *Ibid.*, par. 15.

⁴³ *Magnum Baptismi Donum*, Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/la/letters/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_19880214_card-lubachivsky.html (Accessed 20 Janu-

Referring to the Union of Brest, the pope emphasized that it was an attempt 'to revive full *communio* between East and West by reconstituting it', which was its fundamental motive, 'as it was expressed by the ecclesial conscience of the time'.⁴⁴ Making the distinction between the method of uniatism and the reality of the Greek-Catholic Churches which had already been outlined by Cardinal Willebrands in his 1979 letter to Metropolitan Juvenal, a distinction that would be later deepened in the Catholic-Orthodox international theological dialogue, the pope said that

Today, on the basis of a renewed and more profound theological reflection, and on the basis of a resumption of the dialogue between Catholics and Orthodox, we are seeking new paths leading to the desired goal. Nevertheless, the communities of faithful born of these attempts, who for centuries have maintained their communion with the See of Rome, in obedience to an [impulse] from the depth of their consciences, clearly have a right to the solidarity of the Catholic community and especially the Bishop of Rome.⁴⁵

Citing the Second Vatican Council, Pope John Paul II underlined the ecumenical vocation of the Greek-Catholic Churches, affirming that the council fathers did

not see in these Churches an obstacle to full communion with our Orthodox brethren; on the contrary, to the extent to which there shines forth in them in all its profundity the original intuition which begot them, these Churches can understand with particular clarity the new ecumenical perspective suggested at the Council by the Holy Spirit for the whole Church.⁴⁶

The unsigned commentary to this message published on 20 April in *L'Osservatore Romano* is more explicit about the rights of Ukrainian Greek-Catholics and implicitly refers to the events of 1946.⁴⁷ 'While it is indisputable', said the commentary, 'that the majority of the heirs [of Saint Vladimir] are headed by the Moscow Patriarchate, nonetheless we cannot forget the Ukrainian Catholic community, which is comprised of several million faithful in the homeland and in the diaspora'. The commentary identified two different interpretations of the Union of Brest. On the one hand, it is 'the *confirmation* of an ecclesial identity whose fundamental features correspond with those of the Church of Saint Vladimir, namely the Byzantine form of Christianity, the Slavonic liturgical language,

ary 2020). For an English translation, see: <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=3701> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁴⁴ *Magnum Baptismi Donum* (see n. 43), par. 4.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, par. 5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, par. 6.

⁴⁷ *Documentation Catholique*, 85 (1988), pp. 487–489.

full communion with Rome, in conformity with the ecclesial situation of the year 988'. On the other hand, 'the *Russian Orthodox*, in conformity with the development of its Church and its State, interprets the Union of Brest as the passage towards the Latin "orbit", by part of the faithful previously aligned with Constantinople'.

Reiterating the argument developed in 1968 by Paul VI, the commentary stressed the primarily religious motivation underlying the support of the Catholic Church, 'a support and solidarity aimed at restoring to the Ukrainian Catholic community—in conformity with the principles of the civil liberty of conscience and religion, formulated and endorsed by the Constitutions and the documents of the international community—the right to exist as an ecclesial community, legally recognized in civil society'. The commentary implicitly refers here to the events of 1946, explaining that this religious motivation of the Holy See should be differentiated from 'considerations touching upon a national problem, and also from the issue of certain political acts, witnessed during the upheavals of the Second World War, which, whatever the objective truth may be, can in no way be attributed to the ecclesial community as a whole'. The commentary concluded by referring to the Holy See's interventions on the subject within the context of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in conformity with, in particular, the seventh principle of the Helsinki accords.

This call for religious freedom, 'the full right of all peoples of the ancient Kyivan Rus'—Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Russian peoples—baptized in the waters of the Dnieper, at a time in which...the Church was one and undivided', would once again be voiced by John Paul II in a speech to a symposium of historians on 'The Origins, Development and Effects of Slavic-Byzantine Christianity' held in Rome on 5 May 1988.⁴⁸

It should also be borne in mind that at the same time some Orthodox expressed their defence of Ukrainian Catholics. Father Georgij Edelstein, in the independent journal *Réferendum*, published an article in 1987 in which he points out the contradiction between the 'separation between Church and State' officially endorsed by the Soviet Constitution, and the refusal to recognize the very existence of the Ukrainian Catholic Church on the basis of the 1946 Synod: 'The comedy of the Synod of Lvov was enacted to liquidate the bonds of uniatism with the Roman Catholic Church which had been established in Brest in 1596'.⁴⁹ The same

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 660.

⁴⁹ *Réferendum*, n. 6; *Documentation Catholique*, 85 (1988), pp. 417–418. Ad hoc English translation by the author.

argument would be developed in an article published by the same priest and Father Gleb Yakunin in the journal *Russkaja mysl'* in 1989 entitled 'The Shadow of Stalin in Religious Affairs: Response by Metropolitan Philaret of Kyiv'.⁵⁰

In his speech to the bishops participating in the sixth synod of the Greek-Catholic Church of Ukraine on 5 October 1989, John Paul II recalled that the Catholic Church in Ukraine had been 'forced into catacombs, [and had] experienced the martyrdom of bishops and priests, deportations, arrests, closures of churches and monasteries'. He continues, 'in the name of the principles of love, mercy, and Christian solidarity, I implore the leaders of our sister Orthodox Church to overcome their prejudices and to come to the aid of Catholic brothers in need'.⁵¹ The pope called on civil authorities, soliciting 'the efforts and the goodwill of authorities so that, aware of the sorrowful past socio-political circumstances, [they] may resolve the problem, after decades of neglect, of the recognition of the rights of the Ukrainian Catholic Church'. The pope also affirmed that 'without the legalization of the Ukrainian community, the process of democratization will never be achieved', referring again to the Acts of the CSCE in favour of religious freedom.⁵²

3.4. *The Anniversary of Brest in the Light of the Second Vatican Council*

One of the last magisterial texts of Pope John Paul II on this subject is his Apostolic Letter on the occasion of the fourth centenary in 1995 of the Union of Brest, which was issued in the new context of the legalization of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. This letter summarizes the main points of his teaching on the issue. John Paul II does not specifically mention the events of 1946 but refers to 'the martyrs and confessors of the faith of the Church in Ukraine [who] offer us a magnificent lesson in fidelity even at the price of life itself', rejoicing 'now that the chains of imprisonment have been broken, the Greek-Catholic Church in Ukraine has begun again to breathe in freedom and to regain

⁵⁰ *Русская мысль* [Russian thought], 3792 (8 September 1989); *Istina*, 34 (1989), pp. 340–345. Ad hoc English translation by the author.

⁵¹ 'Discours du Pape Jean-Paul II aux évêques participants au VI^e Synode de l'Église catholique ukrainienne', par. 5, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/fr/speeches/1989/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19891005_chiesa-ucraina.html (Accessed 20 January 2020). Ad hoc English translation by the author.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pars. 6 and 7.

fully its own active role in the Church and in history'.⁵³ For the pope, 'the celebration of the Union of Brest should be lived and interpreted in the light of the teachings of the Second Vatican Council'. It is for him 'perhaps the most important aspect for understanding the significance of the anniversary'. Indeed, 'putting the celebrations of the coming year in the context of a reflection on the Church, as proposed by the Council, [the Pope sought] above all to encourage a deeper understanding of the proper role which the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is called to play today in the ecumenical movement'.⁵⁴ 'There are those who see the existence of the Eastern Catholic Churches as a difficulty on the road of ecumenism',⁵⁵ but 'the Eastern Catholic Churches can make a very important contribution to ecumenism',⁵⁶ reflects the pope referring to the decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* 24. Lastly, John Paul II makes 'a plea for the gift of brotherly love, and for the forgiveness of offences and injustices suffered in the course of history'.⁵⁷

4. BENEDICT XVI AND FRANCIS: A 'PSEUDO-SYNOD'

Benedict XVI seems to have been the first pope to explicitly mention the Synod of Lviv and to deny its canonicity, calling it a 'pseudo-synod'. In his letter to Cardinal Lubomyr Husar on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of this event (the first of its kind, it seems), on 22 February 2006 he wrote:

Unfortunately, in those sad days of March 1946, a group of clerics gathered in a Pseudo-Synod who unduly claimed to represent the Church seriously wounded ecclesial unity. Violence was intensified against those who remained faithful to unity with the Bishop of Rome, giving rise to further sufferings and forcing the Church to return underground.

But, although beset by unspeakable trials and sufferings, Divine Providence did not permit the disappearance of a community which for centuries was considered a legitimate and living part of the identity of the Ukrainian

⁵³ 'Apostolic Letter of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II for the Fourth Centenary of the Union of Brest', par. 4, Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_letters/1995/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_19951112_iv-cent-union-brest.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁵⁴ Ibid., par. 5.

⁵⁵ Ibid., par. 6.

⁵⁶ Ibid., par. 10.

⁵⁷ Ibid., par. 11.

People. In this way, the Greek-Catholic Church continued to give its own witness to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ.⁵⁸

Ten years later, in his message of 5 March 2016 to the Major Archbishop Sviatoslav Shevchuk of Kyiv–Halyč for that same anniversary, Pope Francis would reiterate the same expression ‘pseudo-synod’:

In these days, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church is commemorating the sorrowful events of March 1946. Seventy years ago, the ideological and political context, as well as ideas opposed to the very existence of your Church, led to the organization of a pseudo-Synod at Lviv, causing decades of suffering for the pastors and faithful.⁵⁹

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

In concluding this brief outline of the official reactions of the Holy See to the events of 1946, I will try to summarize the main aspects. It should first be noted that before 2006, the Holy See had never spoken officially and directly on the ‘Lviv Sobor’ as such, let alone on its canonicity. Nevertheless, the Holy See has always recognized the existence of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, not only in the diaspora, but in Ukraine itself, which may be considered as an indirect recognition of the invalidity of the synod of Lviv. The main lines of argument of the Holy See were the following:

1. *The distinction between the political and religious spheres.* In the encyclical *Orientales omnes Ecclesias* of 1945, Pius XII denounced the political pretext for a measure that was actually religious in nature. Similarly, Paul VI in his 1968 letter to Patriarch Alexis highlighted the religious nature, and not the political or national character, of membership to the Greek-Catholic Church. As well, we have the statements opposing the confusion of these spheres effected by the Soviet regime claiming to be a guarantor of ecclesial determination, particularly by Father Georgij Edelstein. This argument can be

⁵⁸ ‘Letter of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Cardinal Lubomyr Husar, Major Archbishop of Kyiv–Halič (Ukraine)’, Online: http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/letters/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_let_20060222_husar-ucraina.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁵⁹ ‘Message of His Holiness Pope Francis to His Beatitude Sviatoslav Shevchuk, Major Archbishop of Kyiv–Halyč’, Online: https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2016/documents/papa-francesco_20160305_messaggio-beatitudine-shevchuk.html (Accessed 20 January 2020).

summarized by saying that any given measure for the sake of civil order against any given reprehensible political act of a few cannot have the effect of depriving a whole nation of its religious rights.⁶⁰

2. *The principle of freedom of conscience.* This principle is mentioned already by Paul VI in 1968, and would be particularly developed by John Paul II who firstly based this on the UN Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, as well as the Helsinki Accords.
3. *The absence of bishops at the Synod of Lviv.* This fact is denounced in the letter of Paul VI to Patriarch Alexis in 1968 as a defect of conciliarity and seems to be an implicit recognition of the non-canonical status of the synod.
4. *The unilateral nature* of the decision of the Moscow Patriarchate to abolish the Union of Brest is underlined in 1971 by Cardinal Willebrands, especially in the new context of ecumenical dialogue established following the Second Vatican Council.
5. *The distinction between the historical method of union* (and the theology that inspired it) *and the actual existence of the united Churches.* These have a special ecumenical call by demonstrating that the Latin tradition is not the only Christian tradition.⁶¹

These are the conclusions we can draw from an historical overview that, beyond considering merely the reactions of the Holy See in these tragic events, may enable us to trace the prospects for a reconciliation of memory based on a shared reading of history. May this shared reading also be the opportunity, as hoped for by John Paul II, to make 'a plea for the gift of brotherly love, and for the forgiveness of offences and injustices suffered in the course of history.'⁶²

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⁶⁰ See the *Osservatore Romano* commentary to the letter *Magnum Baptismi Donum* (see n. 43 above).

⁶¹ See Cardinal Willebrand's letter of 1979, John Paul II's Message *Magnum Baptismi Donum* of 1988, and the related articles in the *Osservatore Romano* (see n. 43, n. 44, n. 45, and n. 47 above).

⁶² 'Apostolic Letter of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II for the Fourth Centenary of the Union of Brest' (see n. 57), par. 11.

ABSTRACT:

This paper presents all papal pronouncements on the events of 1946, from Pope Pius XII to Pope Francis. Before 2006, the Holy See had never spoken officially and directly on the 'Lviv Sobor' as such, let alone on its canonicity. Nevertheless, the Holy See has always recognized the existence of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, not only in the diaspora, but in Ukraine itself, which may be considered as an indirect recognition of the invalidity of the synod of Lviv. Pope John Paul II elaborated on the role which the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church is called to play today in the ecumenical movement, while Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis were the first to refer to the Lviv gathering as a 'pseudo-synod'. The paper also presents exchanges between the Holy See and the Russian Orthodox Church regarding the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and ecumenical dialogue.

ÉMIGRÉ UKRAINIAN GRECO-CATHOLIC CHURCH RESPONSES TO THE 1946 PSEUDO-SOBOR OF LVIV

Myroslaw TATARYN

On 8–10 March 1946, according to official Soviet and Russian historiography, the Ukrainian Greco¹-Catholic Church officially re-united with the Russian Orthodox Church. This, along with the realities of a post-World War II world, created a unique reality for the members of the Ukrainian Church living outside of Europe. Before considering the response of the émigré Church to the events of March 1946 it is important to understand the context in which this Church found itself in 1946.

The Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church (UGCC) had begun to establish itself outside its historic East European territory as a result of late-nineteenth-century migration to North America and some areas of South America. Pre-World War II estimates suggest approximately 700,000 Ukrainians in the United States, just over 300,000 in Canada, and perhaps 60,000 in South America.² Given that the overwhelming majority of these settlers came from Western Ukraine (Galicia and Bukovina) they were predominantly Greco-Catholic.³ As a result, the Vatican created two exarchates to serve the United States (Philadelphia) and Canada (Winnipeg).

¹ I will use the term ‘Greco’ rather than the more familiar ‘Greek’ since it more accurately translates the Ukrainian ‘Греко’ referring to the religio-cultural background rather than any ethnic/national (‘Greek’) association.

² Subtelny suggests about 15,000 in Brazil and 40,000 came to Argentina in the inter-war period. Orest Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (Toronto, 1988), p. 545 and p. 551.

³ Orest Subtelny provides the following estimates of religious affiliation for the early twentieth century in the United States: 20% Orthodox, 40% Byzantine (Rusyn) Catholic, and 40% Ukrainian Catholic. See Subtelny, *Ukraine: A History* (see n. 2), p. 544. Canadian census data also points to the Greco-Catholics as the dominant group in the pre- and post-war Ukrainian community: Canada 1941 census: 305,929 identified as Ukrainian of whom 185,948 (61%) identified as Ukrainian Catholics; by 1951 total identified Ukrainians had grown to 395,043 (see: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/kits-trousses/projet-cyber-project/cultur1-eng.htm>; Accessed 20 January 2020) of whom 190,831 (48%) identified as Ukrainian Catholic (see: http://www.statcan.gc.ca/access_acces/archive.action?l=eng&loc=A164_184-eng.csv; Accessed 20 January 2020).

However, given both the significant increase in the émigré community post-World War II⁴ and events in Ukraine, the Vatican quickly moved to expand church structures. Thus in 1946 Bishop Ivan Buchko was named apostolic visitor for Ukrainian Greco-Catholics in Western Europe and played an instrumental role in assisting the tens of thousands in displaced persons camps. In 1948 Canada was divided among Central, Western, and Eastern Canada, with Winnipeg being elevated to an archeparchy in 1956, and Toronto and Edmonton to eparchies in that year. The following apostolic exarchates were also created: Philadelphia and Stamford, both in 1956 (Philadelphia becoming the metropolitan see in 1958 and Stamford was elevated to an eparchy in that year); London, UK in 1957 (elevated to an eparchy in 2013); and Melbourne, Australia in 1958 (elevated to an eparchy in 1982). Although the hierarchy in Ukraine was imprisoned and the church structure decimated there, the Vatican decisions ensured that a hierarchy continued to exist. However, it must be noted that *de jure* the émigré hierarchy was individually and directly responsible to the Vatican and did not have a coordinating structure among themselves. In other words, a hierarchy was created but it was not structured in a synodal manner as a hierarchy of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church. Centrifugal forces already evident in pre-war Galicia were magnified in the émigré situation and clearly manifested themselves in the responses to the events in Ukraine of 1945-46.

This paper will reflect upon responses to the pseudo-sobor of Lviv by the UGCC between 1946 and 1989, and for the same period, the attitudes of the UGCC to the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). I have surveyed published material (and certain materials that were available in the period) by members of the UGCC regarding the events of 1946. In addition, I have searched for references to relations with the ROC but I have not considered polemical or popularist texts referring to the ROC. I should also declare that I am a participant observer to the latter stages of the period under study.⁵

⁴ Subtelny estimates between 200,000 and 220,000 Ukrainians who were in Displaced Person camps after the war remained in the west. 80,000 to 85,000 were then transferred to the United States and approximately 40,000 went to Canada. See: Hanya Krill, 'What did your parents do in the DP camps after the war?' (article based on a lecture presented by Professor Orest Subtelny, Friday 7 March 2003 at the Ukrainian Museum in New York City), Online: http://www.ukrainianmuseum.org/news_030311subtelny-DPcamps.html (Accessed 20 January 2020). The balance were scattered among Australia, Great Britain, South America, and Europe. Once more the dominant religious grouping were the Ukrainian Greco-Catholics.

⁵ I have been an ordained cleric of the UGCC since 1981 and as an administrator of the St. Sophia Religious Association of Canada had ongoing involvement with the Church's Rome office and contacts with the underground UGCC in Ukraine.

As a result of my review, I would propose that we can recognize three distinct periods: the first, 1946 to 1963; the second, 1963 to 1984; and the third, from 1984 to 1989. The first period can best be described as one dominated by anger and personal attacks, rather than any formal statement by the UGCC outside Ukraine on the events of 1945–46. The second period corresponds initially to the arrival of Josyf Slipyj in the West, the Second Vatican Council and its fallout. However, the dating has been chosen to underline the dominant role that Slipyj played in how the UGCC addressed the question we are considering. The third period is dated from the death of Slipyj until the events of 1989 and can be described as the period in which the UGCC takes a formal public stand on its relations with the ROC.

1. INITIAL RESPONSES IN EXILE: 1946 TO 1963

Although the Iron Curtain had fallen and communications between those in the USSR and those in the West were challenging, news of the events of early March 1946 came to be known very quickly. The first few reports also established the main themes of the UGCC response to the pseudo-sobor of Lviv. On 20 March 1946, the Ukrainian language daily in the United States, *Свобода/Svoboda*, published an article regarding the Vatican's response to the event and stated: 'the Vatican sees it as an act of the Soviet government against them, having greater political than ecclesial meaning'.⁶ This element of what will become the standard response to the events of March 8–10 was soon augmented by an article on 3 July 1946 in the same paper. The author, Mykola Chubatyj, a highly respected émigré UGCC historian and founding member of the US Shevchenko Scientific Society, adds what can be termed national and personal elements. Chubatyj states 'The main reason for the oppression of Ukrainian Catholicism is that it is a great force for Ukrainian national distinctiveness from the Muscovites, and so a bulwark of Ukrainian spiritual independence'.⁷

⁶ 'Ватикан проти ухвали синоду у Львові, бо вони без участі єпископів неважні, а єпископи в тюрмах або загинули' [Vatican opposes confirmation of synod in Lviv, because they are invalid without the participation of bishops, but the bishops are in prison or dead], *Svoboda Ukrainian Daily*, 54/55 (20 March 1946), p. 1.

⁷ Mykola Chubatyj, 'Один рік релігійного переслідування українців в Галичині' [One year of religious persecution of Ukrainians in Galicia], *Svoboda Ukrainian Daily*, 54/129 (3 July 1946), p. 2.

In addition, he identifies Fr. Havriil Kostelnyk as the main actor in the staged drama and engages in a series of personal attacks on his character: he is identified as not Galician, not talented, 'unbalanced', 'without self-control', and, most damningly: 'His Ukrainian national views were never too deep, his religious convictions were deeply confused'. Within months of the event the main outlines of the émigré response have been made public: the event was political (motivated by anti-Ukrainian sentiments), the main actor, Fr. Kostelnyk, was not someone of character, and the event itself had no validity. This outline is repeated and, in terms of the attack on Kostelnyk, sharpened in another article by Chubatyj in November of 1948 when he chastises commentators who have lamented the murder of Kostelnyk (20 September 1948). In his vitriolic attack Chubatyj speaks about Kostelnyk's collaboration with historic enemies of Ukraine, his 'treacherous actions', and his conviction of his own infallibility. Chubatyj states that Kostelnyk was 'in the end a minor figure and morally fallen'.⁸ The personal nature of Chubatyj's comments reflect divisions within the Church prior to the war, now heightened by the experience of persecution on the one hand and forced exile on the other. Chubatyj makes clear that he knew Kostelnyk before the war.

The first internal report from a member of the UGCC to reach the West arrived in March 1948 and it represents a more balanced assessment of the events surrounding the pseudo-sobor. The report written by Fr. Vasyl Hrynyk speaks of the 'unspeakable terror' and how many clerics were forced to sign in favour of the 're-union' 'under the threat of the revolver'.⁹ In addition the report also makes clear that some clergy even signed the Initiative Group's declaration at the behest of their parishioners: 'The people often convinced their pastor to sign, so that they would remain with their parish, and so the parish would not have to accept an Orthodox priest'.¹⁰ In 1952 the Press-Information Service in New York published a letter of Ukrainian Catholic priests to the leadership of the USSR in which once more Kostelnyk's actions are condemned and the 're-union' is identified as un-ecclesial. The UGCC has to face the dilemma of some clergy continuing their ministry in the underground while others, although serving within the ROC, continue for their parishioners to be

⁸ Mykola Chubatyj, 'Патріотизм, чи зрада?' [Patriotism, or betrayal?], *Svoboda Ukrainian Daily*, 56/273 (28 November 1948), pp. 2–3.

⁹ *Мартирологія Українських Церков* [Martyrology of the Ukrainian Churches], eds. Osyk Zinkevych and Taras Lonchyna (Toronto – Baltimore, 1985), vol. 2, p. 250.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 252.

UGCC priests. The 'black and white' assessments of the very first articles were not sustainable.

The first semi-official pronouncement by the hierarchy of the UGCC in the West can be found in a document published in Rome in 1953: *First Victims of Communism: White Book on the Religious Persecution in Ukraine*. In this volume begun with a preface by Bishop Ivan Buchko and including a main article by Fr. Atanasii Welykyj, OSBM¹¹, the main outlines of the émigré Church's position is laid out and it follows the earlier narrative in many ways: the supposed 're-union' is a clear act 'under Soviet direction'; the narrative intertwines religious and national history; the event is judged an act of 'political trickery' and the ROC's complicity in the event is condemned.¹² In summation Welykyj terms the actions against the UGCC an example of 'Russian ecclesiastical expansionism'.¹³

On the tenth anniversary of the arrest of the UGCC's hierarchy, Bishop Buchko's paschal letter speaks about the 'sad anniversary' of the bishops' arrests by 'that horrible enemy'. Buchko goes on to express support for those priests in the underground who 'did not accept muscovite Orthodoxy which forms a tight union with Bolshevik atheism'.¹⁴ Thus after condemnations of the pseudo-sobor as un-canonical but enacted with the cooperation of the ROC, the semi-official position of the UGCC designates the ROC as constituted by 'Bolshevik atheists'. The pseudo-sobor of Lviv leads to the émigré hierarchy being unable to see the ROC as other than an agent of Russian/Soviet aggression. The theological chasm which prior to Vatican II posited Russian Orthodoxy as 'other',¹⁵ albeit closer than the Protestant churches, is now deepened with another chapter in an already antagonistic history. Further, the historic antagonism between the two does not allow for any suggestion that the events

¹¹ Fr. Welykyj will in 1963 become the Superior General of the Ukrainian Basilian order and serve in that capacity until 1976.

¹² *First Victims of Communism: White book on the religious persecution in Ukraine* (Rome, 1953), pp. 38–39.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

¹⁴ *Пасхальне слово, привіт і побажання, Високопреосвященнішого Апостольського Візитатора Українців у Західній Європі Духовенству і Вірним* [Paschal word, greeting, and wishes of the Most Reverend Apostolic Visitor of Ukrainians in Western Europe to the Clergy and Faithful] (Rome, 1955), p. 15.

¹⁵ It cannot be forgotten that even a figure like Metropolitan Sheptytsky, whose commitment to union with the Orthodox was second to none, directed most of his ecumenical energy towards Orthodox Ukrainians. Although maintaining excellent personal relations with many ROC hierarchs he recognized the deeply seated theological challenges to union, especially when it came to the Catholic teaching on the Papal office.

of 1945/1946 are part of a revised Soviet approach to the Russian Orthodox Church or to religious institutions generally.¹⁶

It is in the decade before the opening of Vatican II that we increasingly have reference in the émigré community of the UGCC to the 'silent' Church for which, it is implied, the émigré community must speak. In 1958 the superior of the Ukrainian Redemptorists, Fr. Volodymyr Malanchuk (who will become exarch bishop for France in 1961), writes about the liturgy for the 'silent Church' celebrated at the Marian congress in Lourdes in that year.¹⁷ Metropolitan Maxim Hermaniuk of Winnipeg echoes this perspective in his pronouncements of the period.¹⁸ In hindsight, it is clear that in speaking for the silenced Church the émigré hierarchy were often basing their views on spotty and sometimes questionable information.

It is perhaps then not surprising that events relating to Vatican II and the arrival of the UGCC primate highlighted significant differences among the bishops and varying perspectives on the situation in Ukraine. The hostile relationship of the UGCC and the ROC is manifest in the pre-conciliar writings of Metropolitan Hermaniuk who, in spite of this, was a member of the early pre-conciliar discussions about ecumenism in the Catholic Church. In 1959 he unequivocally stated: 'Moscow paralyzed all moves towards union' and throughout their history that Church had sought 'domination of Ukraine'. This judgement is made even more severe when he states: 'Never in its existence has Moscow demonstrated even the slightest remorse over the divisions in the Christian Church and never have they even taken the smallest step to overcome this division'.¹⁹ The context for these statements is Moscow's silence in response to Pope John XXIII's invitation to the council. Hermaniuk juxtaposes this to the position of the Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras who was interested in ecumenical dialogue and a possible presence at the council.²⁰ In the end, Moscow's opposition, which stymied the Ecumenical Patriarch, gave way to representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate being present at the council in spite of their apparent opposition. Intra-Orthodox politics are also significant in establishing the context for ongoing UGCC-ROC

¹⁶ Adriano Roccucci, 'Le tournant de la politique religieuse de Stalin. Pouvoir soviétique et Église orthodoxe de 1943 à 1945', *Cahiers du monde russe*, 50/4 (2009), pp. 671–698. Also see Ivan Hrynioch's article of 1960 discussed below (see n. 29).

¹⁷ V. Malanchuk, 'Українці на міжнародному Марійському конгресі у Люрді' [Ukrainians at the international Marian congress in Lourdes], *Logos*, 9/4 (1958), p. 300.

¹⁸ See the collection: *Наші завдання: збірка статей* [Our tasks: a collection of articles] (Winnipeg, 1960).

¹⁹ *Наші завдання* (see n. 18), p. 36.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

relations. From his council diaries we learn that the appearance of the Russian representatives energized Metropolitan Hermaniuk's efforts to arrange the attendance of a representative of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Canada.²¹

When considering the pre-conciliar positions of the Ukrainian Catholic hierarchy towards Russian Orthodoxy one could easily come to the conclusion that they are motivated more by anti-Russian sentiment than anything else. Again, Metropolitan Hermaniuk provides us a wealth of evidence. In 1960 he wrote: 'Never before has Moscow shown us so clearly and convinced us so strongly, that official Orthodoxy brings to Ukraine religious and political imprisonment. Whereas Ukrainian Catholicism gives Ukraine religious and national independence'.²² As a result it is difficult to judge whether ecumenical gestures, such as towards the Ukrainian Orthodox, are expressions of a theological ecumenism or of a political agenda. Again, the metropolitan's words: 'Ukraine is calling us today to an all-Ukrainian solidarity; it calls all its sons and daughters who have ended up beyond the borders and live in various countries of the free world. Unfortunately, our emigration does not yet exhibit such solidarity. Generally, it is not sufficiently interested in these immense struggles that are being conducted in our native Catholic Ukraine'. Peter Galadza glosses this thus: 'throughout most of his life, Hermaniuk conceived of his own Church's particularity in predominantly ethnic terms'.²³ Hermaniuk's stance here is contrasted with his reputation at the Council as a committed ecumenist.²⁴

²¹ In his diaries, Metropolitan Hermaniuk outlines his responsibility for preparing the draft of the Pastoral Letter of the Ukrainian Catholic Bishops of 1962 in which in item 5 is written: 'It would be a great joy if among all those numerous observers we met observers of our Orthodox bishops...' Throughout the period of October and November 1962 (pp. 69–71) in his diary, on a number of occasions, he connects the issue of the Pastoral Letter with the attendance at the Council of observers from the Russian Orthodox Church. In February, 1963 he initiates a conversation, through his chancellor, with Metropolitan Ilarion of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada of observers from that Church attending the Council (p. 110). *The Second Vatican Council Diaries of Met. Maxim Hermaniuk, C.Ss.R. (1960–1965)*, trans. Jaroslav Z. Skira, ed. Karim Schelkens, Eastern Christian Studies, 15 (Leuven, 2012), pp. 69–71 and p. 110.

²² *Наші завдання* (see n. 18), p. 123.

²³ Peter Galadza, 'The Council Diary of Metropolitan Maxim Hermaniuk and Turning Points in the History of the Catholic Church: An Interpretation', in *Vatican II: Expériences canadiennes – Canadian Experiences*, eds. Michael Attridge, Catherine Clifford, and Gilles Routhier (Ottawa, 2011), pp. 226–238, on p. 236.

²⁴ Yves Congar, OP, *My Journal of the Council* (Collegeville/MN, 2012), p. 220 and pp. 459–460.

The apparent predominance of anti-Russian and anti-communist thinking among émigré Ukrainian bishops was evidenced perhaps even more strongly in the United States. Joseph Komonchak, having studied the pre-conciliar documents, states that 'Bohachevsky wanted the Council to condemn the persecution Communists were waging in several parts of the world, while Senyshyn asked that its malice and how to oppose it should be taught in Catholic schools'.²⁵ Significantly, there was little evidence of an ecumenical inclination among the American bishops. Komonchak notes that while some American Catholic bishops sought a relaxation of some norms regarding contact with non-Catholics, 'Schmondiuk, the auxiliary of the Philadelphia diocese of Ruthenians, took the opposite line: "With regard to the life of the faithful who must all be the salt of the earth: they should not, without valid necessity, mingle with unbelievers and heretics; they should imitate the customs of the faithful in the first centuries of Christianity in order to preserve the simplicity of the Gospel, even if they have to live in an a-Christian society and in times of great technological progress"'.²⁶

Another voice of note was that of the Bishop Isidore Borecky of Toronto, who, according to Michael Fahey, provided 'the most far-reaching and profound submission from a hierarch within the ambit of English-speaking Canadian boundaries'.²⁷ Among his recommendations was a direct engagement of the Orthodox in an attempt to restore the union of East and West, although his submission did not refer to any specific branch of Orthodoxy.²⁸

A final important document of the pre-conciliar period is the article of Fr. Ivan Hrynioch, published in *Пролог* [Prologue] in 1960. This extensive piece provides a review of the events of 1945–1946 echoing already published material and material available to him through the clandestine channels in his purview. It is a more nuanced presentation of events, given that he notes that the events of 1945–1946 represent the revised, post-1943 Soviet policy on religion. This is the period when the war effort demanded a shift away from anti-fascist and anti-capitalist rhetoric to calls for a united defense of the fatherland against a foreign enemy and to this end previously marginalized forces were called to the forefront: 'Among these forces was included the previously hunted,

²⁵ Joseph A. Komonchak, 'U.S. Bishops' Suggestions for Vatican II', *Cristianesimo nella Storia*, 15 (1994), pp. 313–371, on p. 344.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 353.

²⁷ *L'Église canadienne et Vatican II*, ed. Gilles Routhier (Québec, 1997), p. 68.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

oppressed and destroyed Russian Orthodox Church'.²⁹ Hrynioch does not paint the ROC as totally evil, but he recognizes that it was subjugated and 'destroyed'. However, he does not avoid stating the reality that the ROC, having been allowed to re-establish the patriarchate of Moscow and subsequently having elected Patriarch Aleksei who held strongly anti-Catholic views, was now a collaborator in the attack on the Ukrainian Church. Hrynioch notes that not only is 'The ROC and its leaders...silent about the bloody oppression of the UCC in 1944–46. The persecution of Christians...does not call forth from this Church...even the slightest sympathy'.

This, however, is not a simple passive stance. Hrynioch continues: 'Even more, this Church...is actively involved in the liquidation of the UCC, it inspires this action, it carefully prepares it and consciously assists in the violence'.³⁰ Significantly, he places responsibility for the ROC's position on the shoulders of the Patriarch. '[T]he muscovite [sic] Patriarch (Aleksei) is in complete agreement with the Bolshevik, atheist government in its brutal violence against the Christian hierarchs of the Ukrainian Church. But even more he rejoices in the action, benefits from it in order to unscrupulously address the clergy and faithful with flattering words'.³¹ Later he adds: 'The Muscovite Patriarch assists the Russian Bolshevik government to resolve complex legal-canonical questions of the Church in order to create the illusion of legality for the self-liquidation of the UCC'.³² For Hrynioch, even the triumvirate of Kostelnik, Melnyk, and Pelvetskyj do not carry significant responsibility, for they were 'broken' by the Soviets.³³ 'In other words, their decision was not based on an authentic personal conviction nor was it the product of their own initiative. The decision was dictated by fear and external pressure'.³⁴ For Hrynioch, the actual act by which the UGCC was declared illegal was not the pseudo-sobor, but rather the *ukaz* (decree) of 18 June 1945 issued by Khodchenko, the plenipotentiary of the Council for the Affairs of the ROC.³⁵ Everything subsequent to this was, so to speak, window

²⁹ Ivan Hrynioch, 'Знищення Української Церкви російсько-большевицьким режимом' [Destruction of the Ukrainian Church by the Russian-Bolshevik régime], *Богословія* [Theology], 44 (1980), p. 11. This article was originally published in *Prologue Quarterly: Problems of Independence and Amity of Nations* in 1960.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 55.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 42.

dressings. This more balanced report sets the scene for the second period of our review, 1963–1984, a period dominated by a man to whom Hrynioch will serve as a trusted adviser: His Beatitude Josyf Slipyj.

2. THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL AND SLIPYJ: 1963 TO 1984

Before turning to Slipyj's arrival in Rome (and its consequences), we need to turn our attention to 1962 and the beginning of the Second Vatican Council. Clearly, the calling of the council and the associated preparatory work turned people's attention to the possibility of establishing better relations among Christian churches. An article published in the Eparchy of Toronto's newspaper, *Hauua mema* (Our Goal), by Fr. Meletij Solowy, OSBM, called for greater collaboration and stronger ties with the Orthodox Church and specifically refers to John Meyendorff as an example of an Orthodox theologian who shares theological positions very close to those of Catholic theologians. However, as I observed elsewhere, Solowy's 'broad ecumenical vision is not one that finds systematic support within the Ukrainian Catholic community until much later'.³⁶ It can be contrasted with an article in the same paper, later in the year, by Fr. M. Marusyn (who will eventually become both a bishop and then secretary of the Eastern Congregation). For Marusyn, re-union with the Orthodox meant that they would unite as this was done at the Council of Florence!³⁷

The hesitant acceptance of an ecumenical vision for the Ukrainian Church in 1962 is, I suggest, just a symptom of a greater problem: a lack of unity or even coherently presented positions by the hierarchy. Even prior to the conflict among the bishops regarding the establishment and recognition of a Ukrainian Greco-Catholic patriarchate, their lack of a common vision was already demonstrated in the events surrounding the arrival at the council of two observers from the ROC. The diary of Metropolitan Hermaniuk is instructive. Although the bishops seemed to agree that the presence of ROC observers at the council was not welcome, in Hermaniuk's words: 'This is a real tragedy for the council and for all its manifestations. It is hurtful, especially for us Ukrainians, who

³⁶ Myroslaw Tataryn, 'Canada's Ukrainian Catholics and Vatican II: A Guide for the Future or Struggling with the Past?', in *Vatican II: Expériences canadiennes* (see n. 23), p. 234.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 246.

have suffered so much and our brothers who still continue to suffer—especially our Confessor Josyf Slipyj—for our faithfulness to Christ and the Church, through the hands of Moscow and its Orthodox Church’.³⁸ The drafting of a response to their presence was, according to Hermaniuk’s repeated complaints, a trying task, ‘long, unpleasant’.³⁹ Someone from among the bishops informed the Vatican officials of the discussions and this resulted in the bishops being informed that ‘the Holy Father wishes that we, the Ukrainian bishops, not take any actions regarding the presence of the two Russian “observers” at the Council. This means someone has accused us and now our action is paralyzed. It’s a real pity! Shameful!’⁴⁰

Cardinal Bea in fact contended that Bishop Buchko had been in favour of inviting representatives of the ROC.⁴¹ But at the bishops’ meeting it seems that Bishops Senyshyn and Martynets were the most opposed to the drafting of the letter.⁴² Hermaniuk, although ecumenically inclined, did not see in the ROC an ecumenical partner—this position was reserved for the UOC—and in fact he was personally disturbed by the ROC representatives. After a reception hosted by the mayor of Rome, where the two Russian delegates were also in attendance, Hermaniuk wrote: ‘They spoke with the Belarussian Bishop Sipovych from London (England) and, among other things, they asked for me. It seems that they are looking for a chance to meet me. Maybe in order to get to know me better, and then harm me. May God safeguard everyone from the Soviet terror’.⁴³

Much changed for all Ukrainian Catholics in early 1963, with the ‘extraordinary, joyful news,’ as Hermaniuk described it, of the release of the Church’s primate, Josyf Slipyj, then metropolitan of Lviv-Halych. Slipyj’s presence, although publicly welcomed by many, became a source of consternation and division for others. His release, according to Willebrands, was a hopeful sign that in fact the place of the UGCC in the Soviet Union would be normalized and that the ROC ‘was receptive to this’.⁴⁴ However, it became clear that neither the ROC nor many in the Vatican welcomed Slipyj as an independent agent in the new era of Vatican *Ostpolitik*. When Slipyj spoke at the council and called for the creation of a Kyivan patriarchate, the Russian observers were troubled

³⁸ Hermaniuk, *Diaries* (see n. 21), p. 72 (21 October 1962).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 74 (24 October 1962).

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 75 (27 October 1962).

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 71 n. 142.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 78 (31 October 1962).

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 81 (4 November 1962).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111 (4 March 1963).

and made it clear that it would be 'more appropriate' to speak about a patriarch of Lviv.⁴⁵ Similarly, Slipyj's attempt to create a functioning synodal structure for his Church was met with opposition from both the Vatican and his own bishops.⁴⁶ Slipyj's willingness to visit the Soviet embassy in 1963, at least twice, and to meet the ROC council observers were not welcomed by others. In fact, in 1964 two of the Ukrainian bishops, Metropolitan Senyshyn and Exarch Augustine Hornjak raised the possibility that Slipyj collaborated with the Soviet regime.⁴⁷ Ironically, these same bishops will be the ones who are most representative of the Vatican's voice in the bishops' synod, even though the Vatican's policy of *Ostpolitik* is unquestioned.

In subsequent years the common position of the UGCC applauds ecumenism, although one can legitimately question the actual commitment of the bishops. In 1965 Hermaniuk presented the bishops with a draft 'Ecumenical Directory'. At their October meeting the draft was rejected and in his diary Hermaniuk commented that they 'limit our ecumenical practices to a minimum'.⁴⁸ In their subsequent pastoral letter of 1965⁴⁹, the bishops acknowledge that ecumenism was a priority of the council, but in the section on the Council's significance for the UGCC, ecumenism is not mentioned.⁵⁰ It seems that regardless of the true meaning of an ecumenical mindset, for the hierarchs of the UGCC as a whole it was limited to improving relations with the Ukrainian Orthodox. This is mentioned in numerous pastoral letters. In addition, in 1964, they state: 'every appearance of division or break up deeply harms our soul and weakens Christ's Church and corrupts the national organism'⁵¹ and in so doing they tie the ecumenical question to the national question—another clear marker of this period. However, this also indicates that there will be no ecumenical gesture towards the ROC.

When the ROC celebrated the twentieth anniversary of the pseudo-sobor, the bishops issued a pastoral letter stating: 'We do not wish to insert

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 134 (14 October 1963).

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 122–123 (27 September 1963).

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 187 (17 September 1964).

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 269 (11 November 1965).

⁴⁹ 'Common Pastoral Letter of the Ukrainian Catholic Bishops Present at the Fourth Session of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in Rome (1965)', Hermaniuk, *Diaries* (see n. 21), pp. 305–323.

⁵⁰ Ibid., pp. 313–315.

⁵¹ 'Спільне пастирське послання українських католицьких Владик, що брали участь у другій сесії Ватиканського Вселенського Собору в Римі' [Joint pastoral letter of the Ukrainian Catholic Bishop who took part in the second session of the Vatican Ecumenical Council in Rome], *Logos*, 15/1 (1964), p. 6.

any dissonance to the [ecumenical] dialogue which has been initiated, however, in the name of truth we must express our regret and provide some explanations concerning the destruction of our Catholic Church in Ukraine'.⁵² The letter and other pronouncements by the bishops and others will follow the standard trope: the pseudo-sobor has no canonical validity, it was a political act rather than an ecclesial one, and the leaders of the 'Initiative Group', especially Fr. Kostelnyk, are to be condemned as traitors or apostates. What is surprising, however, is that in spite of this trope, it was not until 1980 that the bishops decide to formally declare the pseudo-sobor invalid. In November, in synod, the bishops make a solemn declaration of the invalidity of the event of 1946, stating:

the gathering, which illegally called itself a "sobor", was called by the atheist, civil authority in 1946 in Lviv and it could not be and in no legal way was a sobor of our Church. No single bishop of the Ukrainian Church participated in it and the presence of a number of priests and laity is insufficient for validity or lawfulness of such a "sobor" in any Christian Church, without even considering that most of the participants were forced to attend by the enemy of our Church and our people.⁵³

In a certain sense this declaration put a formal end to this question: for the UGCC the pseudo-sobor of Lviv was an event with no formal or moral authority! The declaration and then death of Slipyj in 1984 mark the end of the second period of our analysis.

3. AFTER SLIPYJ: 1984 TO 1989

In 1986, an extensive article by Katheryna Horbatsch in the official bulletin of the UGCC's Rome office demonstrates a slight shift in the Church's position. The article, reflecting upon the fortieth anniversary of the pseudo-sobor, discussed it in the following way: 'The Lviv ceremony was nothing less than the formal culmination of a plan of action designed to impart a canonical basis to the events'.⁵⁴ The choice of the word 'ceremony' strikingly suggests a moving away from any language which would suggest substantial meaning in the event. The events happened, but what was of more importance was the context of the pseudo-sobor.

⁵² *Мартирологія Українських Церков* (see n. 9), pp. 274–275.

⁵³ 'Торжественне заперечення канонічності т. зв. "Львівського собору" 1946' [Solemn repudiation of the canonicity of the so-called 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946], *Богословія* [Theology], 44 (1980), p. 72.

⁵⁴ Katheryna Horbatsch, 'It's only a piece of paper', *Church of the Catacombs: News of the Underground Ukrainian Church* (St. Catharines/ON, 11 April 1986), p. 3.

The article goes on to discuss the event, but does so in an analytical manner and without any bold rhetoric reminiscent of the past. A year later the same source will present a rather even handed assessment of Fr. Kostelnýk, describing him as a 'broken man' and someone who tried to go down a path which would save what could be saved of the Church.

This more irenic and perhaps even objective approach laid the foundation for a statement by the new primate, Myroslav Ivan Lubachivsky, who made a bold gesture in November 1987. During the Congress of the *Aid to the Church in Need/Kirche in Not*, Lubachivsky stated: 'Following in Christ's Spirit, we extend our hand in forgiveness, reconciliation, and love to the Russian people and the Moscow Patriarchate'.⁵⁵ It must be stated that this gesture was made boldly, but also in a rather 'safe' environment. The head of *Aid to the Church in Need*, Fr. Werenfried van Straaten, had been a long-time collaborator and funder of Lubachivsky's predecessor and van Straaten (perhaps at the behest of the Vatican) had been one of those in Lubachivsky's circle who had lobbied for such a statement. Similarly, the positive role played at this time by Slipyj's and then Lubachivsky's secretary, Fr. Ivan Dacko, cannot be understated. Finally, as Gorbachev's policy of *perestroika* turned its attention to the UGCC and the myth of the Church's liquidation proved untenable, Lubachivsky issued a press release stating: 'The Ukrainian Catholic Church extends its hand to the Patriarchate and the Russian Orthodox Church as a sign of peace, Christian love, forgiveness, reconciliation, and respect. It also states its willingness to establish a constructive dialogue for the salvation of souls, but asks that the Russian Orthodox Church show as much respect, love and reconciliation in the spirit of the Gospel and of justice'.⁵⁶

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Considering the span of 43 years which I have reviewed, it must be said that in many ways the response of the UGCC to the events of 1946, and to the ROC generally, reveals a lack of unity and coherent vision within the UGCC itself. Clearly in the first period there was no vehicle

⁵⁵ 'Сорокліття "Церкви в потребі"' [40 years of 'Church in Need'], *Вісник з Риму: Українське Пресове Бюро* [News from Rome: Ukrainian Press Bureau], 22/11 (1980), p. 2.

⁵⁶ I am in possession of the original press release dated 1 December 1989 and issued by the Ukrainian Press Bureau (Rome).

for developing a common ecclesiastical voice. The positions taken were mostly influenced by personal attitudes towards the personalities involved and/or the dominant Cold War rhetoric. Anti-communism and Catholic triumphalism would not allow for anything but a condemnatory response. Fr. Hrynioch's tempered assessment in 1960 is the surprise. Although some voices take more irenic positions towards Orthodox in general, on the eve of and during Vatican II these shifts are not greeted with universal applause within the UGCC. The arrival of Josyf Slipyj and his attempts to develop a more unified position on various issues for the UGCC is also not met with wholesale approval. The fact that the post-conciliar ecumenical vision is embraced but hardly implemented witnesses the fact that the UGCC is finding it difficult to shift away from the legacy of the Cold War and even envision an accommodation with the ROC. It is also somewhat surprising that an official ecclesiastical condemnation of the pseudo-sobor did not occur until 1980. Finally, in the 1980s, with the first public attempts at reconciliation with the ROC, we can judge this as a breakthrough to developing a more nuanced, even ecumenical, position. However, it cannot go unsaid that those first steps at the highest ecclesiastical level were made with great hesitancy and even fear. Moreover, within the UGCC at all levels, the responses to the statements of Lubachivsky were bewilderment at best and anger at worst. It was not until the fall of the USSR and the practicality of accepting into the UGCC clerics who had been educated and served in the ROC that the émigré UGCC had to adapt to the realities of ecclesiastical boundaries not being as fixed and immovable as they had seemed.

As the structures of the USSR disappeared into the historical past, the UGCC in Ukraine arose from the underground causing a new stumbling block in relations with the ROC. However, at least on the level of the primate of the UGCC, the door had been opened to a dialogue with the ROC. Unfortunately, we are still waiting for such a meeting of hierarchs to heal the past and the present. Nevertheless we can offer thanks to Pro Oriente for facilitating this important step as we await that day!

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ABSTRACT:

Despite the attempted liquidation of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church (UGCC) in 1946, the church continued its existence in Western Europe and North America. This paper analyses responses to the pseudo-sobor of Lviv by the UGCC between 1946 and 1989, and for the same period, the attitudes of the UGCC to the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). Three periods are examined, namely the initial responses in Exile (1946–1963), the Second Vatican Council and the return of Cardinal Josyf Slipyj from Soviet exile (1963–1984), and the period after Slipyj (1984–1989). Initial responses lacked unity and coherency, but with the return of Slipyj a more unified position on various issues was developed, although not always accepted by the UGCC. The 1980s witnessed the first public attempts at reconciliation with the ROC, which can be judged as a breakthrough to developing a more nuanced, even ecumenical, position. However, those first steps at the highest ecclesiastical level were made with great hesitancy and even fear.

BREST 1596 AND LVIV 1946
BETWEEN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND PROPAGANDA:
ECUMENICAL LESSONS OF TWO DRAMATIC EVENTS
IN CHURCH HISTORY

Yury P. AVVAKUMOV

1. CATHOLICS, ORTHODOX, AND UNIATES BETWEEN PAST AND PRESENT

‘We should not take a very short view of our problems, nor should we take a very long view.’¹ This admonition by the celebrated author of *The Great Terror* reminds us that the way that we draw the border separating the historical past from the present speaks more about ourselves than about bygone events. Examples of this are the two dates mentioned in the title: 1596—the date of the union of the Kyivan Church with Rome confirmed at a council in Brest that gave rise to what is known today as the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church (UGCC), and 1946—the year of the so-called ‘Lviv sobor’, or ‘pseudo-sobor,’ that declared the abolition of the Union of Brest after 350 years of its existence and the incorporation of the UGCC into the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (ROC-MP). By regular historiographic standards, both events belong to the past and deserve a dispassionate document-based exploration in the context of their respective epochs.

This is particularly evident for the former date, of course. The seven decades that separate us from the latter date do not supply similar distancing, but the span of time still seems considerable enough and the historical changes that have occurred since then—among them, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the return of the UGCC to legal existence after almost half a century of persecution under the Communist regime—are too consequential to treat it as a part of our present. Both dates, however, count among the neuralgic points of Catholic-Orthodox relations till this day. On an official, ecumenical level, a reasonable and balanced conversation about these events seems to be almost impossible. The vicissitudes of the sixteenth century evoke almost the same passions

¹ Robert Conquest, *Reflections on a Ravaged Century* (New York – London, 2001), p. xiv.

as the occurrences of the twenty-first; the events of the mid-1940s are approached with a partisanship that makes one feel as if we are mentally still not far away from the immediate aftermath of World War II.

What are the roots of this pertinacity of the 'very long view' of our problems that tend, in specific areas, to stick to the idea of an uninterrupted continuity between past centuries and our day? The attempts of some commentators to justify this view solely by pointing to the 'division within the Ruthenian Church' effected by the Union of Brest 'that [the division] lasts till today' can hardly be convincing.² The division within Western Christianity which was effected by the sixteenth-century Reformation is still extant; however, on both the Roman Catholic and the Protestant sides it has been possible to abandon polemics for the sake of dialogue. This dialogue is not always easy, but it has been successfully developing at least since the 1960s and has brought about tangible results, both in the area of doctrine (with the joint Catholic-Lutheran declaration of 1999 on justification as a notable example) and on the level of parish life and everyday mentality. The propagation of enemy images which was still dominant at the beginning of the last century yielded to an atmosphere of peace and mutual respect at the end of it. Even if these attitudes might still display a bit of half-heartedness at times, enormous ecumenical progress is evident.

The achievements of the dialogue between Roman Catholics and Protestants can be illuminating, as a counterexample, for uncovering the failures of Catholic-Uniate-Orthodox relations. Ecclesiologically and canonically, the fears, prejudices, and objections of the Orthodox against Eastern Christian unifications with Rome bear much similarity to the pains, troubles, and biases that the Roman Catholic side experienced concerning Protestant communities since the Reformation. The Patriarchate of Constantinople could be no less resentful about a large ecclesial community leaving its jurisdiction for the sake of establishing communion with the pope in 1596 than the Roman See, scandalized as it was by the crumbling of the established papalist international order under the attack of the Reformers in the aftermath of 1517. Official representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate could experience satisfaction about the abolishment of the Union and the dissolution of the Uniate Church announced in 1946, satisfaction similar to that of Roman Catholic officials upon the conversion

² Sophia Senyk, 'The Union of Brest: An Evaluation', in *Four Hundred Years Union of Brest (1596–1996): A Critical Evaluation*, eds. Bert Groen and Wil van den Bercken (Leuven, 1998), pp. 1–16, here p. 1.

of a John Henry Newman in 1845. Doctrinal questions like the *Filioque* were deemed by many Byzantine-rite Christians of the early modern era to be no less important than, say, issues of the sacramental *septenarium* were to the Roman theologians at the Council of Trent. Over four centuries the struggles of the Reformation period determined the tense character of Catholic-Protestant relations; it has become possible, however, to change the atmosphere drastically. The rise of the ecumenical movement played a decisive role in the Protestant context; on the Catholic side, it was the Second Vatican Council that initiated an ecumenical 'Copernican Turn'.³ Intellectually, this turn was prepared by decades of serious source-based historical research. Generations of historical theologians and church historians on both sides abandoned polemics, striving for mutual understanding, and even entertaining sympathies towards each other's traditions—the names of Karl Barth on the Reformed side and Karl Rahner on the Catholic side could exemplify the story.

But there were also highly consequential political factors, the two World Wars and the decolonization process among them. The incredible shock of the World Wars, with the experience of totalitarian regimes and the Holocaust, enabled the insight into the insanity of propagating and fostering of enemy images not only in the secular but also in the ecclesiastical sphere. The foundation of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948, paralleling and echoing the UN foundation in 1946, is telling in this regard. For the European context, the relationship between ecumenical activities and plans and efforts to build a new post-war, peaceful old continent, has been well shown recently.⁴ The process of decolonization, on the other hand, put an end to most of the European empires and, in theology and church life, enabled non-Western Christian cultures to speak their own distinct voice. The recognition of the cultural plurality of Christianity has reached global dimensions. All these factors made it possible for both Protestants and Catholics to recognize the other, with their own established traditions and histories, as a given, despite the many ecclesiological 'issues' and historical 'offenses' between them. The past and the present have become, at last, clearly distinguished; a historically informed approach has prevailed. Ultimately, it was decisive that, both among decision-makers and among 'ordinary' Christians,

³ Cf. the account of an 'ecumenical revolution' in Protestant-Catholic relations by a contemporary: Robert McAfee Brown, *The Ecumenical Revolution. An Interpretation of the Catholic-Protestant Dialogue* (Garden City/NY, 1967).

⁴ Lucian N. Leustean, *The Ecumenical Movement and the Making of the European Community* (Oxford, 2014).

there was a political-ecclesiastical *will* for a revision of attitudes: the change has come both 'from below' as well as 'from above.'

Nothing of the sort has happened in Catholic-Uniate-Orthodox relations. In the Soviet Union of the Stalinist period, the rise of the ecumenical movement in the West could have no direct impact on Christians behind the Iron Curtain. In the face of bloody Bolshevik persecutions, in prisons and labor camps, there were a lot of amazing examples of spontaneous ecumenism 'from below,' but that ecumenism of the oppressed and the persecuted has never become the foundation of a consistent Christian policy-making.

A telling example of the anti-ecumenical position of the leadership of the ROC-MP in that period is the International Consultation of Heads and Representatives of Autocephalous Orthodox Churches on the occasion of the 500th anniversary of the autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church, held in Moscow in 1948. Its participants categorically refused to follow the invitation of Protestant ecumenists of Europe and America to join the WCC and declared that the purposes of the WCC and the ecumenical movement 'contradict the ideals of Christianity and the goals of the Church of Christ as the Orthodox Church sees them'.⁵ The same Consultation issued a statement on 'the Vatican and the Orthodox Church' in which the Vatican was called 'a center of international fascism' and 'an instigator of two imperialistic [world] wars',⁶ and the papacy was characterized as an 'anti-Christian innovation' which 'threw the Western Church into the abyss of moral decadence'.⁷ This thrust against the Vatican was certainly connected with the consistent anti-Communist position of Pope Pius XII which expressed itself in a series of papal decrees against Communism, one of them issued on July 15, 1948, at the time when the sessions of the Orthodox Consultation in Moscow were still on-going.

The official state policy made an about-turn in the early 1960s under Khrushchev, when participation in international ecumenical organizations became not only allowed but, in effect, prescribed for the leadership of

⁵ *Деяния совещания глав и представителей автокефальных православных церквей в связи с празднованием 500-летия автокефалии Русской Православной Церкви, 8-18 июля 1948 года* [Acts of the conference of heads and representatives of autocephalous Orthodox churches in connection with the celebration of the 500th anniversary of autocephaly of the Russian Orthodox Church, 8–18 July 1948], vol. 2 (Moscow, 1949), p. 435.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 429.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 427–429.

religious communities by the regime. In 1961, a council of bishops held in Moscow, under the leadership of the same Patriarch Alexy I (Simanskii) who signed the documents of the 1948 consultation, announced that the ROC-MP would become a member of the WCC.⁸ In 1962, the ROC-MP responded positively to the invitation of the Roman Catholic Church to send a delegation of observers to the Second Vatican Council—a move which was undertaken contrary to the position of many other autocephalous Orthodox Churches, so that the ROC-MP delegation found itself the only Orthodox representation in the first conciliar session. From the early 1960s up to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, multiple official church delegations were sent to international ecumenical encounters with the purposes of acting as a mouthpiece of Soviet policy on the international level and spying on foreign church leaders and ecumenical activists.⁹ Individual clerics and theologians from the Soviet Union who attended international ecumenical encounters were often truly sincere in their search for mutual understanding with Western Christians; however, their ecumenism had a grave birth defect: it was not the result of an interior ripening and growth within the church but was imposed on it by its Communist curators and was only possible if conducted hand-in-hand with implementing political and intelligence tasks of the Soviet regime.¹⁰

Neither the shock of World War II nor the decolonization process played a role similar to that in the West. The suffering and the losses of the peoples inhabiting the Soviet empire during the ‘Great Patriotic War’ of 1941–1945 were enormous; however, immediately after the defeat of Germany, Stalin’s Russia began a new spiral of military confrontation that led to the Cold War. Overnight, the allies of the Soviet Union in World War II became its enemies in official propaganda. The decline of colonialism had little impact on the Russian Empire, which, even after the collapse of 1917 and the civil war of 1918–1922, reincarnated in the form of the Stalinist Soviet Union, with its paradoxical ideological

⁸ ‘Деяния Архиерейского Собора Русской Православной Церкви’ [Acts of the Council of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church], in *JMP*, 8 (August, 1961), pp. 5–29, here esp. pp. 7–8 and pp. 17–28.

⁹ See excerpts from relevant KGB documents from Yakunin’s report in English translation in: Felix Corley, *Religion in the Soviet Union: An Archival Reader* (Washington Square/NY, 1996), pp. 361–384. See also Christopher Andrew and Vasilii Mitrokhin, *The Sword and the Shield: The Mitrokhin Archive and the Secret History of KGB* (New York, 2001), pp. 486–499.

¹⁰ *KGB Lexicon: The Soviet Intelligence Officer’s Handbook*, ed. Vasilii Mitrokhin, with a foreword by Peter Hennessy (London – Portland/OR, 2002), p. 407.

symbiosis of Bolshevism with imperialistic Russian nationalism.¹¹ In today's Russia, the revanchist mindset attempts to return to this ideological heritage and aspires to a new 'division of the world', similar to the post-war Yalta agreement that made the Soviet leaders masters over almost half of Europe.¹² Against this entire backdrop, ecumenism has become a clearly pejorative word in Orthodox discourse in Russia, and there is very little prospect of appropriating the achievements and experiences of ecumenical reconciliations of the West in the context of the ROC-MP.

2. PERPLEXITIES OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE IN A POST-TRUTH WORLD

The problem of the Catholic-Orthodox discussion of the Union of Brest and the pseudo-sobor of Lviv is thus not only the fact of the division but also—and perhaps primarily—the way that this division is constructed in public discourse and exploited by political and ecclesiastical leaders. The difficulty lies in the fundamental incongruity between the contextual, source-based approach of serious historical scholarship on the one hand, and propagandistic clichés and biased value-judgments promoted by those engaged in pursuing extra-academic, ecclesiastical-political and ideological goals on the other. According to the former approach, the events of the late sixteenth and mid-twentieth century belong to the past, which should be studied in its historical context. The lessons that we can draw from that past today cannot and should not impair the basic principle of ecumenical dialogue: the recognition of the right of every Christian community to freely believe, preach, and develop. The latter approach, on the contrary, utilizes the past—better, its own constructions of the past—for the purposes of a momentary denominational, ecclesiastical, and political 'win' in a zero-sum game; it views ecumenical institutions as a platform for an ideological battle for the promotion of its own interests.

Ecumenical conversations between Catholics and Orthodox thus mirror political developments in the international sphere which have, in the last couple of decades, confronted a spread of propaganda unprecedented in its scope since the collapse of the Communist Bloc. The threat which

¹¹ For a helpful recent study, see Alfred J. Rieber, *Stalin and the Struggle for Supremacy in Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2015).

¹² On Yalta, see an excellent recent study, S. M. Plokhly, *Yalta: The Price of Peace* (London, 2010).

this massive fabrication of lies and ‘alternative facts’ poses to free societies is even higher today than in the time of the Cold War. Digitalized social media have made it staggeringly easier to engineer propagandistic operations and to undermine trust in democratic institutions and in the authority of expert communities, the principle reliable source helping people to distinguish between a fraud and a reality. Despite exploiting the newest media techniques, the mental world of today’s propaganda designers contains virtually nothing new: it feeds on nationalist and imperialist prejudices of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; it cherishes covert sympathies towards some ideological constructs stemming from the fascist doctrines of the 1930s; and, in Russia, it glorifies the totalitarian Communist past and brags about it. The strange susceptibility of some political circles in the free world towards ‘alternative facts’ and ‘alternative realities’ fabricated by authoritarian rulers and their ideological kinsfolk, in effect, resembles the amenability with which official ecumenical boardrooms, committees, and institutions like the WCC received Soviet propaganda in the time of the Cold War.

But, unlike international politics, which enjoyed a considerable relaxation between the free world and former communist countries in the 1990s, there has never been a propaganda-free time in ecumenical relations between ‘East’ and ‘West’, even if professional ecumenists themselves are eager to deny it. Francis Fukuyama’s ‘end of history’ has never loomed in the world of Catholic-Orthodox dialogue. Throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, many Western ecumenists became highly enthusiastic about the ROC-MP participation in ecumenical organizations, and tended to ignore the fact that the decision to ‘go ecumenical’ was made not by the church itself but by its Soviet curators. The enthusiasm of that period proved to be misplaced very soon after the regime’s pressure on religious communities ceased. During the decade after the collapse of communism, many Orthodox church leaders in Russia and former Eastern Bloc countries seemed to hold a sort of latent grudge about the political and intellectual openness of their new post-communist leaders towards the free world and its values. In Russia in particular, the ROC-MP was more than reluctant to denounce the country’s Soviet past: the patriarchate’s invectives were almost exclusively directed against the Bolshevik persecutions of the Orthodox Church, while the dire destinies of political dissidents and other religious and non-religious groups and communities persecuted by the Soviet state never drew particular concern from the ROC-MP’s leadership.

Towards the rise of Putin's authoritarianism in Russia at the beginning of the new century, the patriarchate became perfectly willing to assume the leading role in supplying the Kremlin with quasi-religious ideological constructs that should, in the eyes of the Russian rulers, replace the no longer usable communist ideology. Putin's repeated laments about the collapse of the Soviet Union being 'the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the twentieth century' fell on fertile ground among Orthodox clergy and laypeople and created there a bizarre mix of Soviet nostalgia and dreams about the restoration of the 'dominating and governing' role of the Orthodox Church in the tsarist empire.

It was Patriarch Kirill, not the political leadership of Russia, who first began to publicly promote the idea of the 'Russian World' (RW)—the ideological construct meant to embrace Russians and Russian-speaking people over the entire planet, all of them belonging, from the standpoint of the ROC-MP, to the area of the pastoral care of the Russian Orthodox Church, be it *in actu* or *in potentia*. That Ukrainians and Belarusians were seen as primary members of the 'Russian World' alongside with Russians became clear during Krill's frequent visits to Ukraine in 2008–2012, when the slogan 'Russia, Ukraine, Belarus—the one Holy Rus' was publicly recited at mass rallies gathered to greet him.¹³ Four years later, the idea of the 'Russian World' served as a pretext and ideological legitimization of Russia's annexation of Crimea which, Putin declared, possessed a 'sacred' meaning for the Russians,¹⁴ and of the military intervention in Eastern regions of Ukraine. Revanchist and militarist features of RW-Russia betray its ideological kinship with NS-Germany, calling into memory the *Anschluss* of Austria and the occupation of the Sudetenland in 1938. Today, the idea of the protection—if deemed necessary, with military means—of the imagined members of the 'Russian

¹³ Materials on the role of the Metropolitan, later Patriarch Kirill in the propagation of the 'Russian World' are numerous. See, e.g. Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad's speech at a rock concert with the repetition of the phrase 'Россия, Украина, Беларусь это есть Святая Русь' [Russia, Ukraine, Belarus – this is Holy Rus'] (26 July 2008), Online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjETffx3Hdw> (Accessed 10 February 2018); Patriarch Kirill's speech at the Третья Ассамблея Русского Мира [Third Russkiy Mir Assembly] (3 November 2009), Online: <https://russkiymir.ru/fund/assembly/the-third-assembly-of-the-russian-world/> (Accessed 9 February 2018).

¹⁴ In his address on 18 March 2014, Putin used the word 'свято' [holy]. See 'Обращение Президента Российской Федерации' [Address by President of the Russian Federation] (18 March 2014), Online: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603> (Accessed 2 February 2018). Curiously, the official English translation eliminates this word, using the phrase 'dear to our hearts' instead: 'Address by President of the Russian Federation' (18 March 2014), Online: <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/20603> (Accessed 2 February 2018).

World'-community across the globe causes tensions and conflicts between Russia and most of its neighbors, particularly with those who themselves seek to escape from the shadow of Kremlin's autocratic and corrupt regime.

Given the Moscow Patriarchate's entanglement—if not its leading role—in the current ideological agenda in Russia, the two events of Ukrainian church history that are the subjects of this article have become the hotspots in an imagined 'eternal battle' of the 'Russian World' against the 'West' led by the 'Orthodox civilization'.¹⁵ The Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church is viewed as an enemy, as a political and ideological agent of the West, an especially wicked and insidious one since it is believed to be a Roman Catholic invention aimed at a destruction of Orthodoxy. In this worldview, the Union of Brest in 1596 is naturally regarded as a 'defeat' in the battle for 'Orthodoxy'. On the contrary, the 'liquidation' of the UGCC and its annexation by the Moscow Patriarchate in 1946 is seen as a laudable event, a victory. In the mental world of a contemporary Russian, the return of the UGCC from the underground to legal existence in 1989–1991 is experienced as a harbinger of the Soviet 'defeat' in the Cold War and thus as a 'humiliation'. This makes any unbiased and sober historical and ethical discussion of the 'Sobor' of 1946 impossible: any doubt cast upon its validity would, in the eyes of an ideological combatant of the RW, appear as a retreat.

The insight into the interconnectedness between political and religious spheres can be illuminating in one further regard. There is a conspicuous difference between the unbridled frenzy of domestic Russian political anti-Western propaganda and the artfully poisoned simulation of pluralism in the products touted by Russian media in Europe and North America. RT's and Sputnik's 'alternative facts' offered to international audiences differ in their tone from the anti-American and anti-Western bacchanalias on political talk-shows on Channel One Russia (*Первый канал*) and NTV inside Russia. The puppeteers here and there are, however, the same; the same are also their aims and ideological obsessions. Similarly, the Russian Orthodox odium of the 'Uniates', reaching violent dimensions at home and on the territories invaded by RW-emissaries,¹⁶ takes

¹⁵ One of the most outspoken promoters of this ideology: Alexander Dugin, *Putin vs. Putin: Vladimir Putin Viewed from the Right* (n.p., 2014), esp. pp. 61–72.

¹⁶ See numerous materials on religious policy in the occupied Donbas on the Religious Information Service of Ukraine (RISU) website, Online: https://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/news_regions/donetsk_news (Accessed 10 February 2018); and Crimea, Online: https://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/news_regions/krym_news (Accessed 10 February 2018).

on a more civilized appearance when employed in international ecumenical spheres, in conversations with representatives of the Roman Catholic and various Protestant churches. It usually masks itself as a protest against 'religious persecutions' (of course, of the Moscow Patriarchate only) in neighboring countries and a defense of 'religious freedom' and 'human rights' (for the Orthodox envoys of the 'Russian World', to be sure). The cynicism of a plea for freedom from the mouth of the main religious beneficiary of an authoritarian and aggressive regime is seldom, if at all, publicly exposed by Western ecumenical interlocutors. The artfully offered human-rights phraseology acts like an anesthetic and makes Western representatives feel morally uneasy about protesting the brazen falsehood of the patriarchate's accusations. They justify their silence with the goal of 'continuing the dialogue' with Moscow; Ukraine often simply does not fall into the scope of their interests and concerns. If, however, international ecumenical interlocutors do risk an objection and demonstrate a real knowledge of religious history and the current ecclesiastical situation in Ukraine, the other side resorts to 'post-truth' attitudes: both sides are in some sense right and in some sense wrong; everything is so complex and entangled that the truth is practically impossible to discover; where does it lie exactly? Who could say? Such phraseology sometimes sounds reassuring in the ears of the representatives of the free world by its seemingly—and deceptively—balanced approach. Nowhere is this strategy more evident than in the Moscow Patriarchate's official metanarrative on Brest 1596 and Lviv 1946; it is dangerously closer to propaganda than to historiographic discourse. Let us now look at how it came to be so.

3. LVIV 1946 AS A 'SYMMETRICAL ANTITHESIS' TO BREST 1596?

'The Council of the Greek Catholic clergy, convened by the Initiative Group for the Reunion of the Greek Catholic Church with the Orthodox Church and held on March 8, 9, and 10 [in 1946] in Lvov, in the Cathedral of St. George, adopted a decision to abolish the Brest-Litovsk Union of 1596, break with Rome and reunite with the Orthodox Church of our forefathers'.¹⁷ This statement from the 'Appeal of the [Lvov] Council to the Clergy and Faithful of the Greek Catholic Church in the Western

¹⁷ *The Lvov Church Council. Documents and Materials 1946–1981* (Moscow, 1983), p. 71.

Regions of the Ukraine', published in 1946, summarizes the Moscow Patriarchate's official view on the two events of Ukrainian church history and their relation to each other. The 'Lvov Council' of 1946 appears here as a response, 350 years later, to the 'Brest-Litovsk Union' of 1596. The two dates, 1596 and 1946, have been linked together and presented in a single context by the representatives of the ROC-MP ever since. The documents of the jubilee celebrations of the 'Lvov Council' that took place in 1966, 1976, 1981, and 1986, provide telling examples.¹⁸ Since the return of the UGCC to legal existence in 1989–1990, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the emergence of independent Ukraine in 1991, the ROC-MP's official narrative has not changed. Most recently, it was re-iterated on the international scene in a paper presented *in absentia* of its author at an ecumenical conference in Vienna whose proceedings are recorded in this book.¹⁹

Although the paper was entitled 'The Council of Lvov: An Orthodox view', it addressed predominantly Brest 1596, not Lviv 1946. The author opined that the two councils—the one of Lviv in 1946 and the one of Brest in 1596—'have a lot in common'. The act of the union of Brest was, in the author's view, uncanonical:

At the signing of [the] Brest Unia the principle of conciliarity on which the life of the Orthodox Church is based was absolutely trampled. It could not be the other way since the Church unity was never the true purpose of the transition of the Orthodox bishops of [the] Polish-Lithuanian state to Unia. [...] In 1596 in Brest actually two councils were held—one by the supporters of the Unia and the other by its opponents who were even not invited to the first one. [...] From the [Orthodox] canonical point of view, only [the] Brest council of the opponents of the Unia can be considered canonical and legitimate but not the Brest council of the supporters of the Unia. [...] Thus, it is possible [...] to consider [the] Lvov council [of 1946] [...] as absolutely symmetrical antithesis to the Brest Uniate Council. [...] Yes, [...] the Greek Catholic Church was under state persecution in the Soviet Union, but this sad fact again symmetrically reflects events related to the enforcement of the Unia of Brest in the Rzecz Pospolita. Most of the clerics, monks, and laity of the Metropolia of Kiev were forced to accept the Unia through brutal state violence. [...] In fact, the Council of Lvov has

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 114–203.

¹⁹ V. Petrushko, 'The Council of Lvov: An Orthodox view'. Paper presented at the international conference *The 'Lviv Sobor' and Its Aftermath to the Present: Arriving at Common Narrative*, Vienna, Austria, 2–4 June 2016. The text was read aloud during one of the conference sessions, but not distributed in hardcopy. I am using the transcript of the oral presentation that was kindly provided to me by the organizers. I preserve the language and the style of the original.

done exactly the same thing that [was] previously committed [by the] Brest Council, but in the opposite direction. [...] Is it fair to talk about illegality of one Council completely ignoring the similar problem with the illegality of the other Council? Isn't the injustice of the twentieth century a direct product of the injustice that took place in the XVI century?²⁰

The paper ended with the following passage: 'We can endlessly rip up old wounds on the body of the Church and to show each other historical claims – each side in this case will have a grain of truth. We may call Brest Council a true council, and Lvov Council a pseudo-council, or vice versa. Depending on this, we will celebrate the anniversary of one of the councils and curse the other or vice versa. But on this endless circle-walking we never reach mutual understanding, which is possible only when we truly learn from Christ's true ability to forgive and to love'.²¹

'Symmetry' seems to be the main tool of this narrative. The two events are 'symmetrically' opposed to each other. This 'symmetry' exists on the political as well as on the religious level. The 'injustice' and 'state persecution' of the twentieth century is a 'symmetrical' response to the 'injustice' and 'brutal state violence' of the sixteenth. The alleged canonical 'illegality' of the unionist council of Brest in 1596 should render all discussions about canonical 'illegality' of the council of Lviv of 1946 futile. The 'transition of the Orthodox bishops of the Polish-Lithuanian state' to the 'Unia'—and thus to 'Catholicism'—in 1596 was reversed in 1946 by the 'return' of the Ukrainian Church to 'Orthodoxy'. The listener is expected to conclude that the function of the 1946 gathering in this paradigm is to restore, after 350 years, the relations as they had existed prior to 1596; the declared 'symmetry' between the two events allows us, as it were, to erase three and a half centuries of history, and to discuss 1596 and 1946 in the same ecclesiastical, canonical, and political terms.

At first glance, this kind of reasoning might seem to belong to a category of obsolete and unpretentious nineteenth-century-style polemics not worthy of serious consideration, even if it concluded with a nicely sounding appeal for forgiveness and love—obviously directed to the Catholic side, since there is not a hint at what might be called 'love' towards Greco-Catholics or a word in it of remorse about the annexation of their church by the Moscow Patriarchate. After giving this text a second thought, however, one realizes that this paper, while certainly far from being a piece of high-quality academic research, represents a more

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 2–5.

²¹ Ibid., p. 5.

serious pitfall than appears at first glance. It fits all too well into the nihilistic mental world created by contemporary ‘nothing-is-true-everything-is-possible’²² propaganda which is eager to morally justify any kind of fraud, crime and atrocity committed by Russians by quoting real or alleged frauds, crimes, and atrocities committed by others. This method creates a nightmarish worldview which believes that the entire world is governed by fraud, crime, and atrocity; in this global jungle, ‘good’ is what serves our interests and ‘bad’ is what helps our enemies. The Russian Orthodox justification of Lviv 1946, by pointing to Brest 1596, follows this paradigm: this becomes clear even before entering into any discussion about the historical probability of the author’s assessment of the union of Brest. Even if we conclude that the author is correct in his assessment, his argument does not hold. This way of reasoning, however, can appear attractive to some theologians and professional ecumenists in the West through its deceptively balanced approach, which could be perceived as morally agreeable and intellectually reassuring: both parts displayed shortcomings; the truth lies, as always, somewhere in the middle. The Russian Orthodox author would never say anything like this to an audience of his fellow Orthodox in Russia; for them, he will always present himself as a fighter for the Orthodox truth against the ‘evils’ of the Uniates.²³ The text meant for an international audience, however, displays a sly elusiveness which could induce a well-minded Western listener to believe that the paper is indeed meant to be an example of a ‘balanced approach’.

4. THE STATE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH ON BREST 1596 AND LVIV 1946

This paper by an official ROC-MP representative deserves attention because it is symptomatic of certain paradigms of thought that are still affecting theological and ecumenical discussions in the East and West. To be sure, there can be *no* ‘symmetry’, *no* parallelism between Brest 1596 and Lviv 1946 if we consider them within their appropriate historical context. What unites them is that both dates refer to highly consequential

²² Cf. Peter Pomerantsev, *Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible: Adventures in Modern Russia* (London, 2015).

²³ See, e.g., the interview with V. Petrushko, *Каноничен ли Львовский собор 1946 года? Беседа с церковным историком Владиславом Петрушко* [Was the Lviv Sobor of 1946 canonical? Conversation with church historian Vladislav Petrushko] (10 March 2016), Online: <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/91369.html> (Accessed 28 October 2017).

and dramatic events of ecclesiastical and secular Ukrainian history. But there is a foundational, irreducible incompatibility between the two historical contexts, that of the late sixteenth century, on the one hand, and that of the mid-twentieth century, on the other, as a consequence of which it is misleading to draw any straightforward parallels between them. The fact that papers like this one can still hope for a benevolent reception on the international ecumenical stage shows that professional ecumenists and ecumenical theologians in Europe and North America display too little awareness of the progress that has been achieved by historical research. The overall impression is that ecumenical discourse on Ukrainian church history has not advanced much beyond the level of the early post-Vatican II period of the 1960s and 1970s.

What we have been witnessing in historical research, however—particularly in the last quarter-century—is a dramatic breakthrough to new historiographic dimensions that could, potentially, be conducive to a reconsideration of theological and ecumenical paradigms. The leading role in this breakthrough belongs, very naturally, to Ukrainian historians and international scholars of Ukrainian origin, but there is a growing number of non-Ukrainians working in the area. On the union of Brest, the pioneering monograph *Crisis and Reform* by Borys Gudziak, published in English in 1998 and in Ukrainian in 2000, has been particularly influential.²⁴ Since then, a number of trailblazing studies on the union and its aftermath have been published, including the books by Serhii Plokyh,²⁵ as well as Andrzej Gil and Ihor Skoczylas.²⁶ Borys Gudziak, together with Oleh Turiy, initiated a series of international conferences on the union of Brest in Lviv, Lutsk, Kyiv, Dnipro, Würzburg, and Vienna that started in 1996 and resulted in a publication of a number of important conference volumes; this work is still ongoing.²⁷

²⁴ Borys A. Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge/MA, 1998).

²⁵ Serhii Plokyh, *The Cossacks and Religion in Early Modern Ukraine* (Oxford, 2001).

²⁶ Andrzej Gil and Ihor Skoczylas, *Kościół wschodnie w państwie polsko-litewskim w procesie przemian i adaptacji: Metropolia Kijowska w latach 1458–1795* [Eastern Churches in the Polish-Lithuanian State in the Process of Change and Adaptation: The Kievan Metropolitan in the years 1458–1795] (Lublin – Lviv, 2014).

²⁷ See the papers collected in: *Internationales Forschungsgespräch der Stiftung PRO ORIENTE zur Brester Union. Erstes Treffen*, ed. Johann Marte (Würzburg, 2004); *Internationales Forschungsgespräch der Stiftung PRO ORIENTE zur Brester Union. Zweites Treffen*, ed. Johann Marte (Würzburg, 2005); *Die Union von Brest (1596) in Geschichte und Geschichtsschreibung: Versuch einer Zwischenbilanz*, eds. Johann Marte and Oleh Turiy (Lviv, 2008).

As for the ‘pseudosobor of Lviv’, a notable milestone in the English-speaking research was the book by Bohdan Bociurkiw published in 1996, with an expanded Ukrainian edition printed in Lviv in 2003.²⁸ In the decades since Ukraine gained independence, amazing work has been done in discovering and exploring Ukrainian archival resources that had been inaccessible in the times of the Soviet regime.²⁹ New types of documents including recordings of oral interviews with survivors of the period after 1946 and diverse material objects of the underground church have been collected by the Institute of Church History of the Ukrainian Catholic University. The Institute plays a central role in research on the attempted liquidation of the UGCC and the history of the underground Church, with a series of important publications.³⁰ Finally, a unique and powerful document of the period, the *Memoirs* of Josyf Slipyi, have been made available to the general reader by Iwan Dacko and Maryia Horiacha in an excellently presented and annotated edition.³¹

These studies have brought important results. For the union of Brest, the recent research has managed to place the union within a comprehensive context of the European and Mediterranean religious history of the period—something which has never been done before. This enabled a substantial revision of the formerly influential interpretative paradigm, which denied any global religious and ecumenical significance to the union and viewed it almost exclusively as an act of provincial political opportunism. Contrary to this view, it has been successfully shown that

²⁸ Bohdan Rostyslav Bociurkiw, *The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and the Soviet State (1939–1950)* (Edmonton – Toronto, 1996).

²⁹ *Хресною дорогою. Функціонування і спроби ліквідації Української Греко-Католицької Церкви в умовах СРСР у 1939–1941 та 1944–1946 роках. Збірник документів і матеріалів* [By the Way of the Cross. Functioning of and attempts at liquidation of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church in the USSR in 1939–1941 and 1944–1946. Collection of documents and materials], ed. Mykhailo Haykovsky (Lviv, 2006); *Ліквідація УГКЦ (1939–1946). Документи радянських органів державної безпеки* [Liquidation of the UGCC (1939–1946). Documents of Soviet state security agencies], 2 vols., eds. Serhiy Kokin et al. (Kyiv, 2006); *Патріарх Йосиф Сліпий у документах радянських органів державної безпеки 1939–1987* [Patriarch Joseph Slipyj in the documents of the Soviet state security agencies 1939–1987], 2 vols., ed. V. Serhiychuk (Kyiv, 2012).

³⁰ Most recent publications of the Institute include: *To the Light of Resurrection Through the Thorns of Catacombs. The Underground Activity and Reemergence of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church*, eds. Svitlana Hurkina and Andriy Mykhaleyko (Lviv, 2014); *Persecuted for the Truth. Ukrainian Greek-Catholics behind the Iron Curtain*, eds. Andrew Sorokowski and Roman Skakun (Lviv, 2017). The latter volume won a prize at the All-Ukrainian Publishers’ Forum in Lviv in September 2017.

³¹ Yosyf Slipyj, *Спомину* [Memoirs], eds. Iwan Dacko and Maryia Horiacha (Lviv – Rome, 2014). An English translation of the *Memoirs* is forthcoming.

the conclusion of the union of Brest was conceived by the bishops of the Kyivan Metropolitanate as an instrument of a sweeping reform in their church, her parish life and her theological education, and this reform should be seen against the backdrop of tensions and struggles within the triangle of emerging Western confessions, Greek and Muscovite Christianity, and Islam. The union of Brest of 1596, with all its achievements and setbacks, successes and failures, heroic and disreputable aspects, is a fact of history, and every judgment about it today can be meaningful only within its historical context—this is, perhaps, the main result of the recent research.

For the ‘Lviv pseudosobor’ of 1946, the massive corpus of new archival sources has made the scope of repressions conducted by the totalitarian state evident as never before. Not only does it unambiguously confirm the truth of the dreadful story that has been told and re-told by Ukrainians before Western audiences since 1946, with only very few theologians and ecumenists in the free world ready to listen to them; it *complements* this story with such a fullness of detail which leaves no doubts that we have to do here with what could be legitimately classified as a *crime against humanity* similar to a genocide; in effect, it could be called ‘*ecclesiocide*’. Moreover, the documents from the former Soviet archives in Ukraine make the degree of complicity on the part of the leadership of the Moscow Patriarchate clearly visible. No doubt, we shall be able to obtain the full information about repressions against the UGCC only after the archives of the former KGB, the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC), and the Council for Religious Affairs in Russia become accessible. Already now, however, the recently published documents demonstrate how *concerted* were the actions of the state repressive machine and the Orthodox church of the Moscow Patriarchate.

5. THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF THE TWO HISTORICAL-ECCLESIASTICAL CONTEXTS: POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ASPECTS

All these studies make the *political* contrast between the early modern Polish-Lithuanian State and Soviet Russia evident—in fact, transparent—to any serious observer. After the totalitarianism studies of the post-World War II decades, including those of Hannah Arendt and Robert Conquest, no meaningful historical comparison can ignore the unprecedented nature of twentieth-century totalitarian regimes. It is ridiculous to equate the political pressure of the early modern Polish state with the

Soviet machine of repression. The contrast becomes especially visible if one considers that the adversaries of the union with Rome were able to summon their own council, and in the aftermath of 1596 could abstain from following the union without any dire consequences for themselves. Indeed, the non-Uniate hierarchy did struggle for its legitimacy, but it was finally recognized and henceforth existed (and flourished) parallel to the Uniate. It is sufficient to compare the biography of the non-Uniate bishop Gedeon Balaban (1530–1607) with the destinies of the Greco-Catholic bishops Hryhory Khomyshyn (1867–1947) and Teodor Romzha (1911–1947)—to name only two of the huge number of those repressed, incarcerated, and killed in 1945–1948—to perceive the incompatibility of historical contexts.

In March 1991, when the return of the UGCC to legal existence in Gorbachev's Soviet Union—despite the staunch opposition of the ROC-MP leadership—had already begun, Archbishop Kirill (Gundiayev), then head of the Department for External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate (DECR MP), gave an interview to the French Catholic *La Croix* newspaper. Asked if he would agree that the Uniates became the victims of Orthodox proselytism in 1946, Kirill replied: 'No. Uniates were banned by Stalin, not by our Church. To be sure, for political reasons. We accepted those who decided to become Orthodox [...] without coercion. On the contrary, we fought with the atheistic regime and defended the believers'.³² Since then, the ROC-MP leadership has kept reiterating this misleading alibi up to the present day without wavering from it even a little. Most recently, it has been repeatedly promoted in public by the current head of DECR MP Ilarion Alfeyev.³³ Such denials amazingly resemble the notorious '*ux tam nem*' ('they are not there') about the Russian troops in Crimea, asserted by the Kremlin during the military annexation of the peninsula. As the Russian-born American journalist and author of insightful books on Putin and contemporary Russia, Masha Gessen, correctly noted, these are the tactics of a bully.³⁴

³² Michel Kubler, 'Mgr Kirill: Le droit des uniates à l'existence. Une interview de l'archevêque orthodoxe de Smolensk,' *La Croix* (Tuesday 12 March 1991), p. 16. Translation is mine.

³³ See, e.g.: *Камнем преткновения в православно-католическом диалоге по-прежнему остается уния* [Unia remains a stumbling block in the Orthodox-Catholic dialogue] (<http://www.pravoslavie.ru/91390.html>; accessed 9 February 2018).

³⁴ See: Masha Gessen, *The Trump-Putin Connect: What We Imagine and Why* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ciXnolumIhc>; accessed 9 February 2018). Cf. Masha Gessen, *The Man without a Face. The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin* (New York, 2012); ead., *The Future Is History. How Totalitarianism Reclaimed Russia* (New York, 2017).

It blatantly denies an evident fact, in the conviction that the interlocutor will not have the courage or willingness to expose the falsehood and to protest. Admitting one's own mistakes or misdeeds has become taboo in political life in Russia, particularly in international relations, since Putin came to power. But in fact, as we see in the *La Croix* interview, the ROC-MP leadership was already modeling such behavior in the 1990s.

The picture that emerges from the documents of the period is drastically different from the one painted by Kirill in 1991. As it has been repeatedly shown by historical research, the ROC-MP was re-created after its almost complete destruction in the 1930s—in fact, created anew by Stalin's decision in 1943–1945—to become an indispensable and very efficient instrument of Soviet expansion in the postwar period.³⁵ The entire political-ecclesiastical story of the ROC-MP's service to Stalin cannot be told here, of course. The patriarchate's assiduous glorification of one of the bloodiest tyrants in history is a telling part of this story. To be sure, the Soviet oppressive machine would have been able to decapitate the UGCC and declare it illegal even without the collaboration of the Moscow Patriarchate. The political decision to 'liquidate' the church was made by Stalin, of course, like any other political decision of such importance in the Soviet Union of that period. However, to present this NKVD operation as a 'Triumph of Orthodoxy', to organize a church council, to provide credibility by the ordination of two bishops (Melnik and Pelvetsky) to preside at the council, to tout the 'liquidation' as an act of 'returning' to the 'maternal holy home'³⁶ and as a 'fulfillment of the dreams and prayers of the faithful'—all this would have been impossible without the willing cooperation of the ROC-MP leadership. Particularly incriminating in this regard are the enthusiasm, delight, and rapture that radiate from all the patriarchate's documents, addresses, and speeches related to the 'sobor' of Lviv 1946. A few lines from Archbishop Konstantin Ruzhitsky's address to the participants of the Lviv 'sobor' will suffice as an example:

Today, on the eve of the Feast of the Triumph of Orthodoxy, we feel in our hearts the growing presence of something uncommon, something long wished for, bright, holy... [...] Before the invincible Russian hero [...] we see today all the papal solicitations toppled to the ground. O holy victory of Orthodoxy! O great feast of the Triumph of Holy Orthodoxy! A feast

³⁵ Steven Merritt Miner, *Stalin's Holy War: Religion, Nationalism, and Alliance Politics 1941–1945* (Chapel Hill/NC – London, 2003), esp. pp. 93–161.

³⁶ *The Lvov Church Council. Documents and Materials 1946–1981* (Moscow, 1983), p. 79

of joy and gladness is revealed to us today [...] Let us joyfully celebrate on this day which the Lord has created. [...] Amen.³⁷

Examples of similar phrases by official representatives of the patriarchate are numerous. All these expressions of joy were addressed to a terrorized, demoralized people escorted to the venue under threat of arrest and pronounced in a church surrounded by NKVD operatives.³⁸

The 'Triumph of Orthodoxy' phraseology employed so emphatically in Lviv 1946 leads us to the second manifest incompatibility between the sixteenth-century and the twentieth-century historical contexts—the *religious* one. The Catholic-Orthodox denominational dichotomy which determined the ideological justification of Lviv 1946 had played no specific role in Brest 1596: in the sixteenth century, the process of confessionalization had not yet begun in Byzantine-rite Christianity; in the twentieth century, confessionalism became the determining factor of its religious history. The concept of *Konfessionalisierung*, 'confessionalization', introduced by German historians in the 1960s and 1970s,³⁹ provides the key to the understanding of the religious aspect of the incompatibility of the two contexts. The twists and turns of the protracted history of confessionalization in Central and Eastern Europe can be elucidating for the interpretation of Catholic-Uniate-Orthodox relations.

In the extensive German discussions of *Konfessionalisierung*, the beginnings of the confessional period of Christian history have been associated with the Reformation and placed chronologically in the sixteenth century. There existed, however, a salient asymmetry between the system of denominational identities established by the end of the sixteenth century in the Catholic and Protestant area, and the fluid and at times elusive world of Eastern Christianity—or, perhaps better: multiple 'Eastern Christianities'—in the early modern period. It would be fully misleading to apply the triad 'Roman Catholic–Protestant–Eastern Orthodox' to the early modern world; it would be anachronistically projecting

³⁷ Ibid., p. 91 and p. 97.

³⁸ On the details of the organization of the council see, in particular, the NKVD documents collected in: *Ликвідація УГКЦ (1939–1946)*, eds. Serhiy Kokin et al. (see n. 29), esp. pp. 592–644.

³⁹ Foundational is E. W. Zeeden, *Die Entstehung der Konfessionen* (Munich, 1965). On the concept of 'confessionalization' in Anglophone research context, see: J. M. Headley, H. J. Hillebrand, and A. J. Papalas, *Confessionalization in Europe 1555–1700. Essays in Honor and Memory of Bodo Nischan* (Burlington/VT, 2004); Ute Lotz-Heumann, 'Confessionalization', in *The Ashgate Research Companion to the Counter-Reformation*, eds. A. Bamji, G. H. Janssen, and M. Laven (Burlington/VT, 2013), pp. 33–54.

the clear-cut denominational map of present-day Christianity into the early modern era. The realities of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries show that the relations between Western and Eastern Christianity displayed a complex dialectical process that involved tension and conflict on the one hand, as well as interaction, cooperation, and even fusion and synthesis on the other. Moreover, disagreements, divisions, and clashes were often more pronounced *within* Eastern Christianity, among its different cultural versions and theological projects, than between Eastern Christianity as a whole and Western denominations.

The process of confessionalization in the East, catalyzed by interaction with Western ‘confessions’, began later and lasted longer than in the West:⁴⁰ it began in the early seventeenth and was completed no earlier than by the mid-nineteenth century. Its first, very vague and locally fragmented symptoms seem to surface in the 1620s. Among the factors that contributed to the confessionalization of Eastern Christianity was the establishment of a parallel non-Uniate hierarchy in Ruthenia by Patriarch Theophanes of Jerusalem in 1620 that split the *Rutheni* between the two rival Byzantine-rite churches—the Uniate and the non-Uniate. But it was only in the 1670s and 1680s that there appeared signs of broad consolidation that point to a gradual emergence of ‘Orthodoxy’ as a ‘confession’ in the Western understanding of the term.⁴¹ Fully established, however, the Eastern Orthodox ‘imagined community’—to use the expression introduced by Benedict Anderson into the discourse on nationalism⁴²—appeared, in fact, no earlier than in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with the rise of nationalist and romantic philosophy and ideology, the beginning of the Greek and Slavic fight for independence, and the shaping of the Slavophile movement in the Russian Empire. In the Western context, this era received the name of

⁴⁰ Some scholars, like Ernst-Christoph Suttner, argued that we can speak about the formation of an Orthodox confession by the late seventeenth—early eighteenth centuries; these dates, however, point to the earliest possible period. See, e.g.: Ernst-Christoph Suttner, *Kirche in einer zueinander rückenden Welt. Neuere Aufsätze zu Theologie, Geschichte und Spiritualität des christlichen Ostens* (Würzburg, 2003), esp. pp. 137–154.

⁴¹ The confession of faith published by Patriarch Dositheos of Jerusalem in 1672–1690 played a particularly significant role in this process, see Gerhard Podskalsky, *Griechische Theologie in der Zeit der Türkenherrschaft (1453–1821). Die Orthodoxie im Spannungsfeld der nachreformatorischen Konfessionen des Westens* (Munich, 1988), pp. 282–294; Klaus-Peter Todt, ‘Dositheos II. von Jerusalem’, in *La théologie byzantine et sa tradition*, vol. 2: *XIII^e–XIX^e s.*, eds. Carmelo Giuseppe Conticello and Vassa Conticello (Turnhout, 2002), pp. 659–720.

⁴² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (London – New York, 2006).

‘Second Confessionalization’,⁴³ but, for Eastern Christianity, it was only with this second wave of confessionalization that the process was completed. Thus, it makes sense to speak of a ‘confessionalization lag’ or ‘protracted confessionalization’ with respect to the Eastern Christianity of the early modern era.

The second confessionalization created the world in which Christians live today. And although this world is thousands of years away from the original Christian message, those who belong to these denominational ‘imagined communities’ are often convinced that their identities existed since the beginning of the Christian era. In the Catholic mind of a neo-scholastic type, the church begins as ‘Catholic’; in 1054 the Orthodox church emerges; and in 1596 some Orthodox break with Orthodoxy and convert to Catholicism while retaining their liturgical traditions. In the minds of so many Orthodox of our day, Orthodoxy, with a capital ‘O’, begins with the apostles; in 1054 ‘Catholicism’ emerges; 1596, the year of the Union of Brest, is the birthdate of the ‘Uniate’ confession—a confession of ‘mongrels’ and ‘half-breeds’, as some Orthodox commit a sin by breaking with Orthodoxy and converting to Catholicism before, in 1946, the Uniates return and re-convert to Orthodoxy, thus redeeming their previous sinful act.

The Russian Orthodox paper that was quoted above is constructed on exactly such a narrative. This narrative is flawed because it neglects the fundamental shift in the structure of the Byzantine-rite Christian world that occurred in the period between 1596 and 1946. The union of Brest was concluded on the eve of the confessional era; the Lviv ‘sobor’, on the contrary, belongs fully in the confessional period formed by the second, ‘nationalist-romantic’ confessionalization. This confessional, denominational world is a very late product.

Lviv 1946 and its consequences are horrific not only politically but also, and especially, spiritually and theologically, precisely because of the Orthodox confessional triumphalism that willingly accompanied and justified bloody political repressions. True, the history of Christianity knows a long period of Catholic confessionalism too, but it no longer determines the realities of the Roman Catholic Church, at least since the Second Vatican Council. In Russia, on the contrary, confessional triumphalism continues to dominate the religious scene and is even gaining

⁴³ Cf. Martin Friedrich, ‘Die frühneuzeitliche Konfessionalisierung und das 19. Jahrhundert’, in *Das Konfessionalisierungsparadigma – Leistungen, Probleme, Grenzen*, eds. Thomas Brockmann and Dieter J. Weiß (Münster, 2013), pp. 265–283, here pp. 280–283.

further strength and power. It determines the character of current political-ecclesiastical propaganda, with all its 'post-truth' methods. The 'Triumph of Orthodoxy' mentality is the spiritual parent of the RW-ideology; the otherworldly-sounding formula unmasks itself as a legitimization of weapons and slaughter. Here lies the ultimate reason why any unbiased discussion on the history of the Uniates seems to be so difficult today on an official ecumenical level.

6. EPILOGUE: A LESSON FOR ECUMENISTS. TOWARDS DECONSTRUCTION OF CONFESSIONALISM

The title of this essay promised 'ecumenical lessons'. To conclude, let me point to one such lesson. It could perhaps be called 'a historian's lesson for ecumenists'. It is a lesson in deconstruction. Its purpose is to remind ecumenical theologians in both East and West that some paradigms of our contemporary thought about Christianity, which seem indispensable and self-evident to us and permeate our theology and church life, are constructions of a very recent and rather dubious provenance. Nevertheless, they considerably affect not only our thinking and theorizing but also our actions, our conduct, our way of life in religious spheres. We seem to be breathing the air without noticing it; but this air is, to a degree, poisoned by these paradigms. The way to mutual understanding and to a better future leads through the deconstruction and, ultimately, the abandonment of these paradigms. Such deconstruction and abandonment, however, possesses not only a negative value; quite the contrary, it can open up new perspectives for ecumenical theological thinking and action.

The 'Triumph of Orthodoxy' celebrated at the NKVD-organized gathering of demoralized Greco-Catholic clergy in Lviv in 1946 is often seen as an example of 'political religion'.⁴⁴ Discussing such events within the framework set by notions borrowed from sociological thought is perfectly legitimate, but it diverts attention from the religious background of the event and overlooks the responsibility of church leaders and theologians who provided justification for it. I think that, in reality, 'political religion' has managed to penetrate into theological thinking and ecclesiastical action so deeply that we, church historians, theologians, and ecumenists, even fail to recognize it. Deeply within our own theological thinking there are traces of 'political' religion, and we confuse theology with it.

⁴⁴ E.g., Cyril Hovorun's paper on this topic in this volume.

A perfect example of this interpenetration can be found in those two notions that we are using today when trying to discuss Brest 1596 and Lviv 1946: 'Orthodox' and 'Catholic', 'Orthodoxy' and 'Catholicism'. Contrary to what theologians try to present to the world, the latter does not signify, in our discourse on church history, one of the fundamental qualities of the church defined by the creed of Nicaea-Constantinople. Nor does the former word—Orthodoxy—involve a real existential struggle for the theological Truth. When theologians try to back 'Orthodoxy' and 'Catholicism' up with references to the original meaning of both words, they are playing a trick with their audiences; they are, in fact, deceiving them. These words denote denominational, confessional identities, a pair of things, of entities opposed to each other; two solid, impenetrable, self-sufficient blocs mutually excluding each other. If you are 'Catholic', you are by the very fact of your membership in the Catholic Church not 'Orthodox', 'non-Orthodox'; if you are 'Orthodox', you have nothing to do with Catholics. 'Being Catholic' and 'being Orthodox', in the world in which we live, belong to two different rivaling 'cultural identities'. And we, church historians and theologians, seem to be helpless without them when addressing our problems.

Mutual understanding, I think, will hardly be possible as long as we live in a world of 'Orthodoxy' and 'Catholicism'. Our official ecumenism feeds off of denominationalism: institutional ecumenism and denominationalism are in fact twins, two sides of one and the same coin. And even worse than that: this confessional thinking nourishes political propaganda, too. The 'Triumph of Orthodoxy' has become inseparably linked with the triumph of the 'Russian World'. A better future is possible only after we renounce this detrimental confessionalist paradigm.

In the famous final paragraph of *The Order of Things* (*Les mots et les choses*), Michel Foucault spoke about the disappearance of *man* as a subject of human sciences. Let me quote from that text but substitute 'Orthodoxy and Catholicism' for 'man':

As the archeology of our thought easily shows, Orthodoxy and Catholicism are inventions of recent date. And one is perhaps nearing its end. If those arrangements were to disappear as they appeared, if some event of which we can at the moment do no more than sense the possibility—without knowing either what its form will be or what it promises—were to cause them to crumble, [...] then one can certainly wager that Orthodoxy and Catholicism would be erased, like a face drawn in sand at the edge of the sea.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Cf. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things. An Archaeology of Human Sciences. A Translation of 'Le mots et les choses'* (New York, 1970), p. 387.

The face that will begin to be seen after this erasure is the face of Jesus Christ himself, the humble face of the one who loved, suffered, and never sought to dominate others but to serve them.

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ABSTRACT:

This article argues that taking the 'long view' of 1596-1946 simultaneously creates and solves problems. It gives context to the pseudo-sobor, but the past is also used to justify the sobor, allowing actors in the twentieth century to evade their responsibility. 1946 is thus a microcosm of a problem for Christians outside the Soviet context grappling with the relationship between historical truth and theological claims while avoiding the traps of confessionalism, nationalism, and historical relativism.

TOWARDS A FUTURE COLLABORATION OF BYZANTINE CATHOLIC AND BYZANTINE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS

Antoine ARJAKOVSKY

Since the theme of my intervention concerns the possible perspectives of a fruitful cooperation between the Orthodox Churches and the Byzantine Catholic Churches, I would like to first say a few words about the actual crisis in the Orthodox Church which, in my opinion, stems from a weak sense of its own identity, and then to treat of the work to be done conjointly between the Byzantine Orthodox and Catholics to heal the wounds of the past. Finally, I will say a few words on the basic issues which are awaiting a common witness from these churches. But before this I would like to say a few words on a personal level.

The Orthodox Christian Church to which I belong, the archdiocese of Russian parishes in Western Europe under the omophorion of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, has sharply criticized the position of the Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate since its allegiance to Stalinist power in 1928. It is sufficient to mention the 1961 book on persecuted Christians in the USSR by Nikita Struve,¹ recently recalled to heaven (d. 2016) and to whom I wish to pay tribute. Struve, with the School of Paris in the twentieth century, always extended its solidarity to all Christians of the former Soviet Union who suffered any form of coercion or violence at the hands of political powers. Others, associated with the YMCA Press in Paris, published the famous book by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*, in 1973, and many other works also criticizing the atheist regime founded by the Bolshevik party.

For my part, I made a film in 2006 on the pseudo-synod of Lviv of 1946 and published in 2011 an article on this dramatic event in my book *En attendant le concile de l'Eglise Orthodoxe* to defend the memory of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church.² In March 2016, along with

¹ For the English translation, see *Christians in Contemporary Russia*, trans. Lancelot Sheppard and A. Manson (London, 1967). This translation was based on the 1962 French edition.

² *To understand and to forgive: A documentary film on the Lviv pseudo synod of 1946*, produced and written by Antoine Arjakovsky; Online: <http://arjakovsky.blogspot.fr/2016/03/to-understand-and-to-forgive-documentary.html> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

other Orthodox scholars from different countries, I also published a letter publicly asking for forgiveness from this church because of its persecution by communist authorities with the active support of the Moscow Patriarchate.³

I therefore rejoice at this opportunity to rid ourselves of the ideological historiographies of the past, to reconcile history and truth, to emerge from, as Father Yury Avvakumov quite rightly suggests elsewhere in this volume, the confessional age of the history of the Church, and to consider together, as Christians belonging to different historical traditions, a common future.⁴

1. THE PRESENT CRISIS OF IDENTITY IN THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES

By continually presenting themselves as orthodox, Orthodox Christians have succumbed to the temptation of believing that they had become orthodox! This is the sin of the Orthodox Church. Who can possess the truth? Is not the truth Christ Himself? When, not long ago, the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew gave a talk in Istanbul to all his bishops, he justified the ecumenical commitment of his Church thus: ‘Our participation in the ecumenical movement... does not run counter to our conviction that the Orthodox Church is the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church which we confess in our Nicaean Creed’. There are two ways of interpreting this text. Either—and I hope this is the case—what the patriarch wanted to say was that what the Church professes is the orthodox definition of the Church, and in this we are in full agreement. But is this really sufficient to enter into a dialogue tending towards unity?

The other interpretation would have the patriarch saying that the Orthodox Church, such as we see it today, is the Church professed by the Nicaean Creed and, if this be the case, we have a problem. Indeed, a person would have to be blind not to see the dramatic crisis this Church is now going through, much of it a severe crisis of synodality. There has not been a pan-Orthodox council for at least three centuries. Since Patriarch Athenagoras announced a pan-Orthodox council in 1959, the

³ ‘Appeal for Recognition of the 1946 Lviv “Synod” as a Sham’; Online: <http://incommunion.org/2016/03/06/appeal-for-recognition-of-the-1946-lviv-synod-as-a-sham-2/> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

⁴ Antoine Arjakovsky, *Conversations with Lubomyr, Cardinal Husar, Toward a Post-Confessional Christianity* (Lviv, 2006); Online: <http://www.ecumenicalstudies.org.ua/eng/announcements/1565> (Accessed 20 January 2020).

Orthodox Church has still not been able to arrive at an agreement on the ten questions placed on the agenda! A would-be council, it is true, finally met in Crete in June 2016, but everyone knows that many churches, most notably for our purposes here the Russian Orthodox Church, failed to turn up after first having attempted to ensure that nothing would come of this council by insisting upon procedures to prevent any majority discussion or vote, especially on such hugely important but controverted issues as the autocephaly of the Ukrainian Church, the question of the status of the Orthodox Church in America, the problem of the Church in Qatar, or the war between two Orthodox nations, Russia and Ukraine.

The problem of this crisis of synodality—and thus of authority—within the so-called Orthodox Church, is that it leads to a whole series of grave problems. It is common knowledge that Orthodoxy suffers from the disease of nationalism and ethnophyletism. This has been denounced and condemned many times over the decades by Orthodox authorities, and yet this disease keeps coming back ceaselessly because its roots have not been cut.

The question of caesaropapism, which still has not received similar attention, adds to the problem, particularly in the Russian Church, which receives an essential part of its revenues from the Russian state and finds its hands and feet bound when confronted with the Kremlin. Worse still, this Church justifies its servitude by explaining that there is no better system of government in the Orthodox tradition than the glorious Byzantine ‘symphony’. And there are many other festering wounds in the Orthodox Church, but I do not want to extend the list for it is very painful for me and for us all to recall what we hear almost every day in the news. I would simply like to remind Patriarch Bartholomew that the identification he makes between the holy mystical Church of Christ and the Orthodox Church is very problematic. It is not by hiding its head in the sand that the Orthodox Church can avoid being swept away by history.

For my part, I proposed a solution to this crisis of the Orthodox Church. In a book that I wrote, *What is Orthodoxy?*, I suggested that the Orthodox Church needed to reflect upon itself in order to leave behind this sin of confessional pride, of this permanent attitude of being a persecuted victim, and return to the evangelical path of the awareness of one’s own sin.⁵ Orthodoxy is not *its* attribute. Orthodoxy is the rudder

⁵ Antoine Arjakovsky, *Qu’est-ce que l’orthodoxie?* (Paris, 2013). For the Russian translation, see id., *Что такое Православие?* [What is Orthodoxy?] (Kyiv, 2018).

of faith. But faith is nitro-glycerine for the intellect. Faith is able to move mountains! And, at the same time, faith does not destroy human liberty. This is why it is folly for the Greeks, a scandal for the Jews! This is the reason why, during the history of Christianity, it was so difficult for the apostles and the people of God to integrate the message of Christ.

The historians of the Church have a specific function within the Church insofar as they propose, at a given moment, a synthesis between what has happened and what must be retained in our collective awareness. By their ability to seize what is real and distinguish between what is true and what is false, they give the collective consciousness the capacity to transform the space of experience into a horizon of hope. Upon carefully studying the different histories of the Church which have been written down through the ages, in the East as well as in the West, an important discovery takes shape. The great historians of the Church most frequently seize upon only one aspect of the faith. They have understood 'Orthodoxy' either as worthy glorification, right truth, faithful remembrance, or just knowledge. Today, with hindsight, we can understand that the Christian faith must embody these four definitions *together*. We understand that this has consequences for the way we represent the past and, especially, envisage the future.

In light of these four criteria, then, we can say that Orthodoxy is not the property of a church professing fidelity to the seven ecumenical councils when, in reality, it does not even accept the very first decision of the very first ecumenical council, i.e. the celebration of Easter on the date defined by the Council of Nicaea! Orthodoxy is the faith in the risen Christ, the faith in the Holy Trinity, the faith in the Church, one, holy, catholic and apostolic; it is the capacity of the intellect, united with the heart, to hold together the four poles of glory and memory, of law and justice; it is the continual effort to conform thoughts and conduct according to the four poles of the divine-human cross: epiclesis and anamnesis, the sacrament of the altar and the sacrament of the brother.

It is on the pole of glory and memory that we especially need to do some hard, self-critical reflection so that our narrative of Orthodoxy becomes more open, more inclusive. We no longer definitively fix the limits of the Church at those of 787, the date of the seventh council. We begin to remember that the Spirit was equally at work in 879, at the eighth ecumenical council at Constantinople, that it was also present at the Council of Florence in 1439 and in 1948 when the World Council of Churches was created. We begin to tell ourselves that, in reality, the Spirit is always at work. We realize that our memory plays tricks on us—a bit like when a couple divorce and then look back on their marriage

in a spirit of bitterness, causing them to paint a black image of their whole past—but if it were so black and bitter, how could they have married in the first place, let alone remained together for so long? Sergius Bulgakov and Joseph Gill have rediscovered that the Council of Florence was a real council of unity and not at all a council to be thrown into the trash, as was generally believed for a long time, because of the bitter memories of Sylvester Syropoulos.⁶ This latter had signed all the decisions of the council and, returning to Byzantium and sensing that the wind was blowing in the other direction, rescinded his signature from the documents and wrote a biased account of the events. Too often we continue to follow his example today, leading to confusion as to what is a healthy part of our historical tradition and what is illusion. We are discovering that there are many ways of living orthodoxy, i.e. not in the vain and illusory sentiment of possessing grace, but in the capacity to travel together towards the Kingdom of God upon earth, in a living reading of tradition, of authority and the Scriptures, each one of us with our specific insights, our riches and our limits.

That does not mean that this rudder is no longer able to allow us to distinguish between what is true and what is not. It means that we should arrive at a more refined and complex vision of what differentiates a prejudiced opinion, a partial opinion, and an opinion which cuts us off from life. Today, for example, we have finally understood that what divided Chalcedonians and non-Chalcedonians in the fifth century was misunderstood as a mortal heresy. But after considerable theological and historical scholarship and dialogue between the years 1930-1980, we now understand that the differences of expression employed at Antioch and Alexandria in the fourth century to define the divine humanity of Christ are no longer motives for separation, that they are not sufficient to prevent the heirs of the Copts, the Armenians, the Greeks, and the Latins from communing from the same chalice. All the Orthodox Churches, Chalcedonian or non-Chalcedonian, have understood this; unfortunately, the Moscow Patriarchate and certain communities on Mount Athos continue to oppose full communion.

⁶ Concerning Father Sergius Bulgakov, I find it surprising that his ecclesiology is still being described today as 'idealist' after all recent studies have shown that, on the contrary, not only was he one of the most virulent critics of German Idealism (cf. his *Tragédie de la philosophie* written in 1921) but, above all, his sapiential theology reintroduced the theme of theanthropy into ecclesiology and thus the capacity to envisage the Heavenly Jerusalem and the Earthly Jerusalem. I recommend in particular my book in the review *La Voie*. A. Arjakovsky, *The Way, Religious Thinkers of the Russian Emigration and their Journal (1925-1940)*, trans. Jerry Ryan, eds. John A. Jillions and Michael Plekon (Notre Dame/IN, 2013).

2. HEALING THE WOUNDS OF THE PAST

At the same time, however, as Orthodox lack full communion among ourselves, it is noteworthy that Syrian Orthodox can now communicate eucharistically with Catholics. But this healing of the wounds of the past remains incomplete even a quarter-century after the publication of the text of the mixed international theological commission for dialogue issued after the 1993 meeting at Balamand and also the text of the mixed French commission in 2004. In both texts it is argued that the two Churches, Orthodox and Catholic, must elaborate a common narrative of the past—but in 2021 it has yet to appear! When I see the gigantic sums of money that are paid out by the Churches to construct new buildings in places where there already exist often deserted churches; when I also see the millions of euros spent to organize conferences of reconciliation between Russia and Ukraine and think that these same churches and states have not invested a red cent for the elaboration of this common history, I am appalled.

But it is only through a common narrative of the past, i.e., a shared understanding of what happened in the past, that there can be a beginning of authentic reconciliation among the Churches. There is a twofold reason for this absurd situation. On the one hand, there are those who, in general, do not believe that a common narrative of memories which have clashed—often violently—is possible as long as our intellect hesitates to unite the memorial narrative, founded primarily on myth, and the historical narrative founded principally on rationality. On the other hand are those who believe that the common elaboration of a painful history means already justifying this history, whereas the narration in truth is merely the condition for pardon.

Let us now suppose that we would be able to get rid of these erroneous *a priori* and let us also presuppose that we would be able to bring together historians from both sides who are capable of freeing themselves from their own confessional prejudices and, above all, from their attitudes, be it that of legitimate heirs—or be it that of continuously persecuted minorities; let us suppose, finally, that we succeeded in finding historians who did not despise the category – so reviled by our scientific modernity—of the symbol and the myth which our memories invent and let us imagine for an instant what this history of views exchanged between representatives of the Greek Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches would be like.

First of all, there is the necessity of being able to assign tasks. The text of the 2004 commission explains that uniatism is a complex phenomenon:

uniatism in the sixteenth century differs from uniatism in the nineteenth—and so on. That having been said, an assurance can be given: by putting together an exhaustive bibliography of the subject, an important task has already been accomplished.⁷ What lessons can we learn from these works?

Given the limits of the time allotted to me here, I can only make some brief preliminary remarks. First, it is necessary to avoid both a sacralized history of the Church (which would not recognize the errors of its leaders in the past and which would not satisfy academia) and a secularized history of the Church (which would not recognize the Church as a divine-human body and would not be accepted by believers). It is necessary to put together a ‘history of self-awareness’ of the Churches. This notion of ‘self-awareness’ or auto-revelation of consciousness to itself has nothing ‘idealistic’ about it, even if it appears in nineteenth-century German philosophy. It was examined by Bulgakov in his sophiology and taken up by Vladimir Lossky as an equivalent to the concept of hypostasis. ‘God’, he writes ‘does not *have* three hypostases’. God, in His Wisdom, reveals Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This concept of self-consciousness is very useful for historians. It is the right compromise which allows for a recognition of the human element and the divine element in the history of the Church, without separation nor confusion. Thus, for example, Andriy Chirovsky and Kallistos Ware agree that the spirituality of the Kievan Rus’ was marked by a sense of the *kenosis*—*self-emptying*—of God. The very concept of *kenosis*

⁷ Here I will limit myself to only treating the case of the common history to be written among historians of Christianity in Ukraine, Russia and Belarus. I would invoke, for example *Історія Християнства на Русі-Україні* [History of Christianity in Rus-Ukraine] by Mykola Chubaty, a Greek Catholic historian (Rome – New York, 1976), or the book by the Orthodox historian B. Lourié, *Русское православие между Киевом и Москвой* [Russian Orthodoxy between Kiev and Moscow] (Moscow, 2010), the famous book (in Russian) by Georges Fedotov, *Святые древней Руси* [Saints of ancient Rus] (Paris, 1932), the work (in Russian) of Nicolas Klepinine, *Святой и благовѣрный великій князь Александръ Невскій* [Holy and right-believing great Prince Alexander Nevsky] (Paris, 1926), the article of Father Andriy Chirovsky, ‘Towards an Ecclesial Self-Identity for the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church’ and the response of Metropolitan Kallistos Ware on the occasion of a seminar of the Kyivan Church Study Group in Ottawa in April 1993, *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 35/1–4 (1994), pp. 83–132; Andrew Onuferko, ‘The New Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches: Ecclesiological Presuppositions’, *Logos: A Journal of Eastern Christian Studies*, 35/1–4 (1994), pp. 133–168. Other books which are indispensable for our reflection include the book by Borys Gudziak, *Crisis and Reform, Crisis and Reform: The Kyivan Metropolitanate, the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and the Genesis of the Union of Brest* (Cambridge/MA, 1998); the book by Jean Meyendorff and Aristeides Papadakis, *L’Orient chrétien et l’essor de la papauté (L’Eglise de 1071–1453)* (Paris, 2001), and the work of Cyril Hovorun, *Meta-ecclesiology: Chronicles on Church Awareness* (New York, 2015).

(the idea that God All-Mighty could empty Himself of His divinity to become incarnate, reunite suffering humanity, raise it up and show it the path towards deification) is unique in the history of religions. This historical reality is mysterious and cannot be perfectly grasped by people. Does *kenosis* involve the taking upon one's self of the violence inflicted by another, to the point of death? Or is it the awareness that the power of God offered to humanity is such that it requires that people refuse, even through violence, any victory of darkness over light?

Secondly, on the basis of this concept of kenotic self-consciousness of the Rus' of Kiev, a supplementary step can be taken in the narrative of events which took place in the thirteenth century between North and South Rus'. After the drama of the sack of Kiev by the Tatars, the Rus' were divided in two. Progressively, the Churches at Moscow, but also at Halych and then Lviv, set themselves up as the heirs of the Church of Kiev; this is something which should be acknowledged, even while being aware of—and regretting—the exclusive character of these positions, which was, moreover, further aggravated in the nineteenth century by the narratives of Karamzin and Hrushevsky. This is not a case of judging who was right and who was wrong in their way of understanding the mystery of the divine *kenosis*—that the subsequent civilizational choices were, for the Rus' of the South, to preserve independence and communion with the Mother Churches of Rome and Constantinople in the face of a pagan and then Muslim threat from the Tatars, and for the Rus' of the North, to fight for political and ecclesial independence until a new state was constituted which would be the heir of the theological-political project of Byzantium, culminating in autocephaly for the patriarchate of Moscow.

History, of course, is never determined in advance and free persons can contribute to changing its course. But there obviously were not enough personalities such as Metropolitan Isidore, to explain to the Rus' of the North that the communion of Christians should take priority over considerations of political independence. All those who subsequently attempted to carry out Isidore's work, from Metropolitan Petro Mohyla to Vladimir Solovyev, were considered deviants.

On the other hand, rare were those who, like Nicolas Zernov or Nicolas Berdyaev, tried to explain to the Rus' of the South that the project of 'Moscow, the Third Rome' was based on a profound truth, i.e. the myth of the kingdom of God on earth. These intellectuals, heirs of the spirituality of Nil of Sora, let their repentance be known at Paris during the 1920s. They explained that, following the legacy of the monks of

Trans-Volga, they lost all their influence in society for having despised the power of the state, for having forgotten their portion of responsibility, confided by God to humanity, in the transfiguration of this world. They did, indeed, criticize caesaropapism and, in 1917, they contributed to the overthrow of the fallacious synodal organization of the Church. But they also knew how to rediscover part of the truth in the legacy of Joseph of Volokolamsk, i.e. that Pilate might well have received his power from on high, that property is not an evil in itself, but only when it is exercised to the detriment of those who are without property, that the mission of the Church is not to await the end of the world for the coming of the Kingdom but to prepare it here and now as the Kingdom of God upon earth.

None of this, of course, justifies the imperial posturing of Moscow—first as the third Rome, then as the third International and, today, as the third and latest attempt to form an anti-modern empire. Metropolitan Kallistos Ware was very clear on the fact that the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople has never recognized *de jure* the annexation by the patriarchate of Moscow of the Churches east of the Dniepr River in 1686. Nicolas Lossky has clearly condemned the compromises made by the Orthodox hierarchy with the Soviet power since 1927. And in our own day, as these imperialistic tendencies of Moscow continue to be found, Andrey Zubov, the Muscovite historian, and Svetlana Alexievitch, a Belarus intellectual and recipient of the Nobel Prize in Literature, have firmly condemned the aggressive politics of the Russian state and Church in Crimea.

Similarly, this does not justify the destruction of Greek Catholic churches in Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine. This does not justify the hundreds of millions of persons who suffered under the imperial politics of the tsars, nor the tens of millions who suffered from the colonial politics of the USSR, and the Soviet brainwashing of consciences which continues down to the present day. Reciprocally, this does not justify that, in the past, the Western powers could be tempted to take over from Moscow and appropriate its theological-political heritage for themselves. The attempts, in modern times, to 'latinize' Eastern Christians, the temptation (beginning with Gregory VII in the eleventh century, continuing through Vatican I, and into the present day) to submit all the local Churches of the world to the direct government of a sole primate cannot be accepted as 'just'.

Since Vatican II, and especially since Pope John Paul II, such an imperialistic papacy has come in for severe scrutiny to the extent that it

impedes Christian unity. And now, in our own day, it is a joy to see Pope Francis proposing a synodal mode of decision-making for the Catholic Church and to note that more and more Orthodox bishops, following the lead of Patriarch Athenagoras, are calling for a reconciliation with Rome and a recognition of the specific mission which Christ confided to Peter. Today, both Churches firmly condemn every form of soteriological exclusivity, mindful that the mystical Church is larger than the visible Church. And serious historians of the Russian and Ukrainian nations, from Dmitri Pospelovsky to Olivier Clément, from Serhii Plokhyy to Natalia Yakovenko, are able to show that ‘the Eastern Catholic Churches themselves have not been at the origin of the Uniate model’ and that the Orthodox Churches, down through history, have been ‘forces of resistance to the Tartars, the Muslims and the Communists’. This double self-consciousness of the Greek Catholic and Orthodox Churches in Russia and Ukraine, of being the heirs not only of Churches which, in the past, could have contributed to the propagation of violence, but also of Churches seeking to prepare the future coming of the Kingdom of God upon earth, each one in its own way, is probably the best thing that could happen to these two Churches. But this must be presented in a more precise manner and receive a larger dissemination.

3. THE AREAS WHICH AWAIT THE CHRISTIANS OF BOTH CHURCHES

This double awareness should be accompanied by an in-depth study of the divergences which exist between the two Churches in certain areas in order to prevent these divergences from transforming themselves into oppositions when, in my opinion, they can be understood as complementary positions. As I see it, these areas are the legal aspects, the theological-political aspects, and the ecclesiastical aspects. Given the time allotted to me, I can only touch on these briefly.

3.1. *The Legal Area*

Globally, the Orthodox Churches abandoned the terrain of nomo-canonic law after the seventeenth century when they passed from a consciousness of Orthodoxy as right truth to that of faithful memory. According to John Erickson, the result is that, because of a lack of vital and creative reflection and of adequate tools, the Orthodox Christian consciousness today wavers between anarchism and rigorism. This has

not been the case in the West where the problem of the development of law was the rupture between two exclusive pretensions of universality: that of Roman law, which led to the pretension of papal infallibility, and that of secular law, leading to the impotence of the division of powers and the reaction of totalitarianism.

Since the Middle Ages the patristic saying '*nullum ius intra ecclesiam, nullum ius extra ecclesiam*' has become a dead letter. In the East, the accent has been placed on the first part of the adage and law has been rejected; this has enabled the sultans, tsars and the agents of the KGB to reduce the Church into slavery. In the West, interest centred principally upon the second part of the saying and this has contributed to creating in reaction a secular law which turned against the Church. Father Sergius Bulgakov reflected on this saying in a conference held in Prague on 30 May 1923.

Sophiology can resolve this adage in the following way. Law is made up of two liberties; the uncreated liberty and the created liberty. The rights and duties are not contradictory since the gift of love commands the obligation of service. It should not be thought, as is the case in the East, that the liberty of the grace of the children of God would annihilate the free choice of fallen persons, nor should the liberty of grace be reduced to what created liberty can grasp of it. For if the symbol of human justice is the scale which guarantees equality for each one, the symbol of the justice of God is the sole sheep for which the pastor abandons all the others, or the same salary given to the laborers of the eleventh hour as to those of the first hour, or the lamb slain by the Father for the prodigal son to the detriment of the rights of the elder son.

We must neither equalize nor separate the two laws, the divine and the human. There is a heavenly order and a terrestrial order, celestial temporality and terrestrial temporality and nomo-canonic law is what enables us to express this junction. This is an immense task! It involves a post-modern, ecumenical revision of the *Book of Sentences*, *Pedalion*, the Napoleonic Codes, etc.

3.2. *The Theological-political Area*

This poses the question of the theology of politics. This reflection on the law has important consequences for the theology of politics both in the domain of private rights and political rights. In France the system called '*laïcité*', totally secularized, is less and less able to satisfy the needs of a pluralistic society. The balance between Catholicism and laicism is being questioned by more and more segments of society. This

can be seen today regarding the question of marriage and the family. Thus the Church has contributed not a little to the secularization of marriage by invoking an eternal natural law which escapes both God's mercy and the particular history of the spouses.

This is why the Church, in the East as in the West, is more and more aware that it cannot be only the place where punishments are applied for, if the law which it invokes is divine, it should be based primarily on the infinite compassion of the Father. The goal of the law is the salvation of souls, their healing and not only the application of norms. But the law has nothing 'fallen' about it. On the contrary, it is the formulation, the expression of the constantly fluctuating encounter between created liberty and uncreated Liberty. The protection of widows and orphans, demanded by the law of the Scriptures, is the sign of the coming of the Kingdom of God. It represents a constraint for a given community. But in the measure in which this constraint is the sign of the coming of the Kingdom, it is a liberating constraint. Everything in law which contributes to the protection of the weakest, to the expression of fraternity and love, to the fulfilment of people, to the common good should be supported by the law. Everything in law which involves domination and the oppression of consciences should be condemned.

Let us take the example of marriage. The Church cannot abandon the concept of marriage to secular law. It cannot, for example, admit the contradictory notion of 'same-sex marriage'. For, in this case, the concept of marriage, according to a Christian perspective, would be destroyed. It can only recognize the possibility of civil union and, if needed, accord it certain rights as long as these do not touch upon the eventual rearing of children. In such a case, marriage would lose what has constituted its power throughout the history of civilizations—that the love between a man and a woman is the perfection of the project of the divine creative act. A man leaves his father and mother and becomes a sole flesh with his wife *because of* the creation of man and woman by God (Gen. 5:2). Civil unions can be authorized in function of the principle of liberty of conscience but nobody can be obliged to celebrate such civil unions.

Nor can the Church impose its conception of marriage on everyone since its concept of law is not based on constraint but on grace. This is why the Church, in the course of history, has, for the most part, distinguished civil union from ecclesial marriage. The specifically Christian revelation of marriage is that the great divine-human mystery, that of Christ and the Church, plays itself out in the most profound depths of the love between a man and a woman (Ephesians 5:32).

It took time for the Catholic Church to rediscover marriage as a sacrament of love. In the sixteenth century it had difficulty using its theology to convince the Protestant world of the sacramental dimension, the specifically miraculous dimension, of marriage. Because of an erroneous interpretation by Augustine of the episode of the dialogue between Christ and Sadducees concerning the woman who had seven husbands, it believed that marriage was not prolonged into eternity. But the whole meaning of the episode of the wedding at Cana is that love is the very place where God and persons come together in eternity. It is only recently that the Catholic Church reintroduced the epiclesis on the spouses in the marriage ceremony and celebrated families as *ecclesiola*, as domestic churches.

Another example of the theological-political project which awaits the theologians of the two Churches can be taken, this time from the area of public law. What kind of Constitution should Europe give itself? In spite of the fine effort of the *Ecumenical Charter*, Christians have not worked together enough on this in the twenty-first century. As a result, the Christian elements of European civilization have not been recognized by the 2007 Treaty of Lisbon; this is paradoxical since Christians make up the very great majority of the 500 million European citizens! The principle cause is that Christians have still not arrived at a consensus on the just relationship which should exist between the States and the Churches in Europe and on the political order which should prevail.

In my opinion, Eastern Christians have a special responsibility since their sapiential, personalist, and participative vision of the relationship between God and the world have much to contribute to these debates. Europe can no longer be satisfied with a secular and normative law. The time has come to invent a law which is not content with setting up a separation between States and religions but which also invents new forms of cooperation among them. This sapiential law should propose levels of rights and obligations according to the capacities of engagement in favour of the common good and according to communitarian membership. This would mean leaving behind a flattened out and abstract vision of the notions of equality and liberty and an attention to favouring more fraternity among citizens.

3.3. *The Ecclesiological Area*

All this has important ecclesiological consequences. It is necessary to cease to oppose an invisible Church which escapes our categories,

which is, as it were, outside of the law, outside of theological narrative, and a visible Church forcefully affirmed as the sole instance of catholicity, of reform and of orthodoxy. The present day blockage of the ecumenical movement comes from the fact that it only wants to recognize the visible reality of the Holy Spirit. But, as Saint Luke reminds us, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with signs to be observed...for the kingdom of God is already in the midst of you'(Luke 17:20–21). But today, the ecumenical authorities claim that as long as they are not able to see unity, they will not believe in it and thus they will not authorize it to manifest itself. This brings to mind the error of Thomas. But Christ told him that his disciples will be those who will believe without seeing. In reality, it is faith which allows us to see: a faith which allows even communion with an unknown, as the pilgrims of Emmaus discovered, and not the quality of the theological agreements and the precisions of canon laws. There are not two Churches, but one sole Church under two different appearances. What unites these two appearances is the truly charismatic moment of the awareness of the consciousness of their unity, which can come about in a thousand ways, but always in a personal manner.

It is, then, necessary to rehabilitate the concept of levels of ecclesial consciousness such as Khomiakov, in particular, proposed. With his concept of *sobornost*, he re-defined conciliarity as that quality of relations among human beings which impedes any domination or forced submission. One of these levels of consciousness is that of ecumenical awareness. This is, obviously, a level where there should not be any constraints and which is respectful of each one's experiences, but it is a level which should be recognized by the ecclesial authorities under the risk of sinning, by default, against the Holy Spirit. In this epoch of ours, it is fitting to take into consideration, at all the levels of the Church, the understanding of the *kath holon*, of the reflection of the Trinitarian life, which deepens the comprehension of the famous canon 34 of the Apostles, which integrates the charismas of regulation, resistance and utopia, precisely the charismas of Peter, James and John. Everyone knows that the Transfiguration of the Lord took place in front of Peter, James and John; each one of them subsequently incarnated these charismas of responsibility, resistance and vision in the history of the Church. It is, therefore, a question of giving juridical formality to spiritual ecumenism which, in certain regions of the world, has been prevailing among Catholic and Orthodox Christians for several decades, in such a way that not only those who are not yet ready for inter-communion are respected by both sides in the way they represent the Church, so that all might be able to

travel together towards Christ, each one at his pace, but also in such a way that this reconciled Church might invent new forms of government, of mediation and healing.

4. CONCLUSION

The recurring tensions between the Patriarchate of Moscow and the Greco-Catholic Church of Ukraine are well-known. Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev has with some frequency accused Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk of being a trouble-maker and a warmonger. These completely ridiculous and grotesque accusations are interesting, however, in one particular aspect. It recognizes that this Church unites in synods to name its bishops, to open new dioceses, etc. All this suggests that the Ukrainian Orthodox and Catholics should seize the historical opportunity of their autonomy, finally recognized by Moscow and Rome, to reunite. And the sooner, the better.

But there is a basis and, above all, an opportunity for something to happen. The basis, in my opinion, are the ecumenical texts approved by the two Churches which, in brief, state that both Churches share a same faith, the forgiveness they ask of one another through their representatives and, on the other hand, all the ecumenical meetings which have taken place between the two Churches—from the congresses of Velehrad to the encounters of the Kyivan Church Study Group. I am thinking in particular of the document signed in 2007 at Velehrad by the Catholic and Orthodox delegates proposing a common *modus vivendi* between these two Churches. The best representatives of the two Churches understand that the Catholic and Orthodox Churches complement one another. One has understood the *ekklesia* according to a descending perspective and thus has developed a universalist ecclesiology. The other has understood the *ekklesia* according to an ascending perspective and has arrived at developing a nationalistic ecclesiology. The time has come to unite the two approaches—Petrine and synodal, descending and ascending, by the development of a theanthropic, sapiential, personalist and participative law, founded on the faith of Peter and on the subsidiarity of the levels of responsibility.

The most recent opportunity came in June 2015 when Archbishop Ihor Isichenko, the head of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Kharkiv and one of the most brilliant Ukrainian theologians of his generation, proposed a reunification of his eparchy with the Ukrainian Greek Catholic

Church. This proposition was well received by the primate of the Greek Catholic Church and is now being studied. The two Churches are ready to fulfill the old dream of Metropolitan Petro Mohyla and Metropolitan Josyf Rutsky of communicating from the same chalice in a single Ukrainian Catholic Orthodox Church. You surely know that the *Confession of Faith* of Metropolitan Mohyla, published in 1632, which is a canonical book for all the Orthodox Churches, is addressed to 'orthodox-catholic Christians' [*homo christianus orthodoxocatholicus*] who have the duty to keep and transmit the eternal life!⁸ A whole nation impatiently awaits this reconciliation, even if it is still partial and only concerns a tiny part of the Orthodox world. This makes itself felt especially when Ukrainian Catholic and Orthodox bishops celebrate ecumenical offices together at Saint Sophia in the presence of the highest-ranking state authorities. Saint Sophia of Kiev is the living symbol of the sapiential project of the Rus', from Novgorod to Chersonese, of a reconciled Church, a true New Jerusalem, a meeting place of the heavenly City and the terrestrial City, of the Lamb and the Spouse, between Jews and Christians, among Christians professing all confessions and the just from among all the religions of the world.

If Rome, Moscow, and Constantinople finally allow the Christians of Ukraine to formalize their own vision of unity in plurality in the Church and reunite around the same chalice, there are possibilities that such a reconciliation will provoke similar efforts elsewhere. We would then find ourselves in a new age of ecclesial consciousness in Ukraine and in the rest of the world.

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⁸ Peter Mohyla, *Православное исповѣданіе вѣры* [Orthodox confession of faith] (Kiev, 1750), p. 20; *La confession orthodoxe de Pierre Moghila*, eds. Antoine Malvy and Marcel Viller, *Orientalia Christiana*, 10 (Rome, 1927), p. 1.

ABSTRACT:

This article takes a much wider and more sharply critical sweep than the others in this book, looking not only to the past but also to the future, examining along the way factors that keep and have kept Orthodox and Catholic Christians apart. These include not just different ways of narrating Church history, but also broader questions of cultural encounter and engagement, including legal engagement with the polities of most states today over questions such as marriage. In addition, questions of canon law and ecclesiology, especially having to do with the patriarchal and papal offices, are also entertained.

EPILOGUE

After the conference in Vienna in 2016, this volume of proceedings was submitted to the Eastern Christian Studies series in 2018. Due to the pandemic, delays at Peeters, and the move of this series to Brill, these papers appear only now, in 2022—a year that witnessed the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and the exacerbation of a war that began in 2014. Since 24 February 2022, sermons by the Patriarch of Moscow, Kirill Gundyaev, continue to echo statements made by his predecessors since 1946. Prophetic voices calling for peace and repentance went silent, while political propaganda was preached loud and clear from the pulpit.

It is too early to say what the 7 June 2022 transfer of Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev—an abiding apologist for the admissibility of the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church by the Soviet regime—from Moscow, as the head of the Moscow Patriarchate's External Church Relations Department, to Budapest means. Likewise, the impact of the 27 May 2022 Sobor of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, headed by Metropolitan Onuphry Berezovsky, distancing from the Moscow Patriarchate remains to be seen. These and other events since the 2016 conference, particularly the autocephaly of the Metropolitan Epiphany Dumenko's Orthodox Church of Ukraine granted by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, have implications for the reception of the 'Lviv Sobor' of 1946 and could be signs of openness for reconciliation between Orthodox and Catholics in Ukraine.

Signs of hope for a new way forward were also visible after the collapse of the Soviet Union. As Metropolitan Kallistos Ware (1934–2022) wrote in 1997:

The fate of the Greek Catholics after the Second World War is perhaps the darkest chapter in the story of the Moscow Patriarchate's collusion with Communism. Yet, though driven underground, eastern Catholicism was not exterminated. One of the fruits of Gorbachev's glasnost was that at the end of 1989 the Greek Catholic Church of Ukraine was once more legalized. By 1987 it was already becoming abundantly clear that the Greek Catholics would re-emerge from the catacombs and seek to recover the churches, now in Orthodox hands, that had once belonged to them. If only the Moscow Patriarchate had taken the initiative in proposing a peaceful and negotiated solution, it would have won immense moral authority, and much subsequent

bitterness could have been avoided. Regrettably there was no such initiative. In 1987, and again in 1988, the head of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, Cardinal Myroslav Lubachivsky, approached the Moscow Patriarchate both verbally and in writing, proposing that the two sides, Orthodox and Catholic, should make a public and formal gesture of mutual forgiveness; but no response came from the Moscow Patriarchate. It is easy to understand how wounding the Greek Catholics found this silence. Now the moment of opportunity has passed.¹

Are the events in Ukraine of the last eight years a harbinger of another moment of opportunity appearing on the horizon? Although a common narrative of the events of 1946 and the liquidation of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church remains elusive, hope remains, and rests on the courage of individuals in the Orthodox Church—including within the Moscow Patriarchate—who could make public and formal gestures to accept the extended olive branch of peace, moving together along the path of mutual forgiveness.

¹ Timothy Ware (Bishop Kallistos of Diokleia), *The Orthodox Church*, new edition (London, 1997), 165.

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