

Seeking compromise: encounters between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church  
and the Soviet state

by

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## **Abstract**

The thesis focuses on the place of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church during World War II— one of the most tragic periods in the world history. At the time of the war, the population of western Ukraine, which was Greek-Catholic in its majority, experienced occupation of two regimes, Soviet and Nazi, which set up challenges for the locals. The thesis will focus on the relations of the Church with Soviet state and present state policies towards the UGCC, which interfered with its normal life. In this context, official church policies will be presented, and the methods church leaders used to “normalize” the situation will be described. This discussion will lead to deeper analysis of the adaptation of official church policies by local Greek-Catholic priests. The influence of national and religious identity on clerical understanding of politics will be taken into account. At this point, I will argue that three groups of clergy can be identified on the basis of their response to Soviet policies. What are these groups? How did average priests adapt to new realms? Why did they act in the way they did? All of these questions will be answered through the analysis of primary NKVD-KGB documents found in a couple of major Ukrainian archives.

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## Introduction

In my thesis, “Seeking compromise: Encounters between the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church and the Soviet State,” I analyze the response of the Ukrainian Catholic Church to the pressures of living under two occupations—National Socialism and the Soviet Union. To cope with Soviet religious policies, which attempted to reunite the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (UGCC) with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) during their second invasion, the Ukrainian-Catholic clergy looked for various ways to preserve the church and their faith.

In the mid-twentieth century, the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, namely the Metropolitanate of Halych, which existed in the territory of western Ukraine, was the largest Christian community in the region. The UGCC was created on the basis of the Orthodox rite, but unlike the Russian Orthodox Church, it was led by the Pope. Historically, the UGCC and the Russian Orthodox Church had a complicated relationship in this borderland that touched on issues of faith and ethnic identity. The annexation of western Ukrainian territories to the Soviet Union at the beginning of World War II created a new challenge for the Ukrainian Greek-Catholics, as the church had to find a way to coexist with this state. Therefore, the periods of 1939–1941 and 1944–1946 are crucial in the history of this church, as the church was required to formulate new policies to accommodate to these new conditions.<sup>1</sup> Arguably, the UGCC’s policy during this period influenced the position of the church for the next fifty years.

The main argument that I intend to make is that there were three major options for the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic clergy who remained in the priesthood and stayed in the territory of

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<sup>1</sup> During the German occupation of Ukraine from 1941–1944 the Soviet State had limited influence on the church and therefore this period is less relevant to my thesis. Nevertheless, background information will be provided.

Galicia under Soviet rule. The first way was to collaborate with the state, give up Ukrainian Catholic priesthood, and “initiate” the reunion with the ROC from inside the Church, which was under the control of the Soviet state with some limited independence. This option often required priests to serve as Soviet spies and inform the state about any anti-Soviet activity or to become Soviet activists. The second alternative for priests was to serve as “double-agents.” In this case, priests still reported to the NKVD on the activities of well-known pro-Ukrainian clergymen, such as the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi, who was a charismatic leader of the Church. Although these clergymen did not reveal any essential church information and managed to hide important facts, their cooperation did not provide the Soviets with any new information about the activities of the church, but it was at least ‘something’ to please them. This group also includes those, who did not have any intention to cooperate, but still unintentionally reported to NKVD undercover agents. Additionally, a third option is recognized, in which a significant number of priests rejected all the ‘offers’ of the Soviets, based on devotion to the Church and awareness of their national identity.

It is important to note that the purpose of my research is to analyze the models of accommodation pursued by clergy in the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church during its first encounter with the Soviet state. First, I will analyze the attempts of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic bishops to compromise with the Soviet state. Second, I will describe the plans for “normalization” of the position of the church within the state; specifically, the various ways Greek-Catholic priests’ interacted with the Soviet state and the NKVD. Third, attention will be paid to the activities of the Metropolitans Andrey Sheptytskyi and Yosyf Slipyi, who were leaders of the church at that time, as they helped to define the main policy of the church towards the state.

This topic is essential for the history of Eastern Christianity because it raises various questions about the responses of church officials to repression and persecution. Moreover, this topic helps to explain the liquidation of the church in 1946, when the administrative structure of the church was abolished, and the UGCC was officially merged with the ROC. The recent opening of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD) archives in Ukraine offers new perspectives on these topics.

A number of studies have been conducted about this period by other scholars. However, these researchers tend to focus their projects on remarkable historical figures, who had a significant influence on church policies. In case of the UGCC, those figures were Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi and his successor Yosyf Slipyi, who were Church leaders in the time of Soviet occupation of western Ukraine and who defined the official course of church-state relations. Bohdan Bociurkiw was one of the first scholars who conducted complex research of church-state relations during the Soviet occupation starting in 1939 and published a manuscript in both Ukrainian and English. Bociurkiw explains the overall state religious policies and analyzes the response of Greek-Catholic church authorities. According to this scholar, the Soviet government would not consider any type of relations with Greek-Catholic other than collaboration of the Church. Using this statement as a basis for examining Soviet religious policies, I will present the ways in church's search for compromise with the state regardless the Soviets' view on the future of the UGCC.

In addition, the research of Volodymyr Serhiychuk will be used as a source, since the scholar collected and published essential NKVD documents on the UGCC in Ukraine, which are held in the State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Services in Kyiv. The selection of particular NKVD documents into his printed collections presents Soviet policies towards the church, which

were focused on compromising, making the church collaborate or liquidating it. In this way, Serhiychuk upholds the position of Bohdan Bociurkiw. Bohdan Budurowycz conducted research on relations between Ukrainian culture, the Polish Republic, the Russian Empire and then later the Soviet Union, including the UGCC. The author depicts the church as national institution in the article “The Greek-Catholic Church in Galicia, 1914 – 1944.” In turn, my research shows how this perception of the church as a part of national heritage affected mindsets of Greek-Catholic priests who faced challenges set by Soviet religious policies. Svitlana Hurkina also has made significant contributions to the development of the topic. Hurkina, through the Institute of Church History in Lviv, Ukraine, actively participated in a project called “The Image of Fortitude” (Ukr. “Obraz syly duhu”), in which she and the research team collected thousands of interviews with eyewitnesses from this period. Additionally, she analyzes clerical reaction to the liquidation of the UGCC, that resulted from acceptance the union with the Russian Orthodox Church in 1946. My thesis adds to the story of the fate of Greek-Catholic clergy presenting their interaction with the Soviet state before joining the ROC when the church leaders aimed to find a compromise with the regime.

In contrast, my project will look at how official church policy was adopted and used by clergy at the local level. By adding these local voices, this project will allow for a fuller examination of church-state relations. Due to the recent declassification of archives from that time in Ukraine, researchers now have unprecedented access to what transpired during those years of persecution. I intend to use the NKVD documents, which prescribed various spy missions on the clergy, interrogation protocols, arrests, imprisonment or deportation warrants as well as court sentences. The main source of documents for this thesis is the State Archive of the Ukrainian Security Services in Kyiv, specifically a number of different fonds. Fond 65 consists

of NKVD/KGB cases on specific priests. Fond 13 holds printed Ukrainian publications, including those of nationalists, which were also confiscated during searches and arrests. In addition, this thesis uses resolutions regarding the campaign against the national movement, OUN and UPA, which are found in fond 2. The Archive of Research on the Insurgent Movement holds information on those involved in activities of OUN and UPA. Some NKVD-KGB cases on priests, who served in Galicia, are held in the local archives of state security services, including documents from the Archive of the Administrative Office of the Ukrainian State Security Services in Lviv region. This thesis also relies on the letters of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, taken from the Central State Historical Archive in Lviv region. These documents reveal state policies on the various aspects of the church's activity and overall reaction of the UGCC clergy towards the state. In addition to archival documents, recorded interviews, which were collected by the Institute of Church History in Lviv, with eyewitnesses from that time, who belonged to the circle of church leaders will be used.

The NKVD documents – in most cases criminal records on priests – included interrogation protocols, arrest warrants, trial verdicts, as well as search, investigation or surveillance reports. Usually, search reports were followed by pictures of confiscated 'anti-Soviet' items – in cases of priests these included pictures of Eucharist chalices, priestly vestments, and other necessary elements for serving liturgies. Cases on clergymen involved in the nationalist movement contained evidences to prove this connection, which usually were correspondences with Ukrainian nationalists or any kind of memoirs. Interrogation protocols tell researchers about how the clergy responded to the regime.

Taking into consideration the nature of the Soviet state and its methods of influencing people, the accuracy of the information found in NKVD-KGB documents could be questioned.

The NKVD was ‘famous’ for its ways of persuasion and accusation, which is why a suspect accused of anti-Soviet activity might admit an ‘offence’ even though that person could be innocent. Therefore, a combination of NKVD and other sources, or even solely other sources, for instance, interviews with eyewitnesses, would help to analyze cases.

This thesis will be divided into three chapters. In chapter one, I will describe the religious policies enacted by the Soviet regime during its first invasion to Galicia from 1939 – 1941. Additionally, this chapter will be focused on one of the ways that priests responded to Soviet pressure, particularly priests with Russophile beliefs who volunteered to help. Moreover, a brief analysis of the changes caused by the Nazi invasion of 1941 – 1944 will be presented in order to contextualize why the Soviets took an alternative approach to the UGCC during the second invasion. Chapter two will focus on explaining the attitude of the Soviets towards the Greek-Catholic clergy between 1944 – 1945. This chapter furthers the discussion on the types of clerical reactions shown in chapter one, in addition to introducing another option – cooperation, which differed from collaboration on the basis of motivation and selective information revealed to the NKVD – for priests in their interaction with Soviet officials. In chapter three I will explore cases in which priests rejected the overtures of the Soviet state and explain their motivation for such a decision. I argue that the idea of an independent Ukraine, which these priests felt they could not achieve under Soviet rule, had a place in formation of their viewpoints on the relations with the regime.

## Chapter One:

### Occupations, Priests and the Politics of Identity: The UGCC 1939 –1944

On August 23, 1939, the Red Army occupied the territory of Galicia.<sup>2</sup> The agreement between the Soviet Union and Germany, called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact,<sup>3</sup> was signed on September 28, 1939, officially allowing the Soviet occupation of western Ukrainian territories, including Galicia. The arrival of Soviet troops ushered in a new era for the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (henceforth, UGCC). As the Soviet regime implemented its atheistic policies, Church authorities, along with regular clergy, faced serious challenges. This first occupation of Soviet forces would be relatively short-lived as the German army invaded under Operation Barbarossa in the summer of 1941. The Nazi occupation created a new set of challenges for the UGCC as the Church had to respond to rapid changes and establish relations with the new regime.

This chapter casts light on the development of church-state relations during this period by analysing Soviet religious policies and the reaction of Greek-Catholic clergy. Understanding Soviet religious policy during the first invasion to Galicia is useful for understanding the final establishment of Soviet power in 1944 in the territory of western Ukraine because it shows the link between religion, politics, and nationalism as characteristics of Ukrainian Greek-Catholics, which will be traced later throughout this thesis. Moreover, the chapter will help explain the changes in the attitude of the Soviets towards the Church in 1944 by demonstrating the reaction of Greek-Catholic priests and church leaders towards both occupative regimes. In addition, the

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<sup>2</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva i Radyanska Derzhava (1939 – 1950)* (Lviv, Ukraine: Ukrainian Catholic University Press, 2005), 27.

<sup>3</sup> This was a non-aggression pact between the USSR and the Third Reich. The pact assured the neutrality of the USSR in the conflict between the Third Reich and Poland.

response of some clergy to the anti-religious propaganda will be presented to illustrate not only general church policies but the reaction on local levels and demonstrate the priests' views of the Church in connection to nationalism and politics.

The role of the UGCC in the formation of a Ukrainian national identity complicated the relationship between the Church and each of the occupying forces. The Soviet regime engaged in a comprehensive attack against the Church, in part, because the UGCC emerged as a unifying institution for the Ukrainians of Galicia who supported the idea of a Ukrainian nation. Therefore, the UGCC appeared as an enemy to the Soviet state as a supporter and even initiator of the pro-Ukrainian movement. During German occupation, when the nationalist movement reached the peak of its development and activity, the UGCC supported this struggle for an independent state.

In this process of forming a national identity, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi had a significant influence on Ukrainians in the region. He was actively involved and facilitated Ukrainian cultural development and the pro-Ukrainian movement. Sheptytskyi became a Greek-Catholic leader when Galicia belonged to Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1901. Under his leadership, the Church directed its activity to the political sphere as well. Ukrainian Catholic political parties were created with Greek-Catholic priests as their members. Even though the UGCC never had any official political power, it had the support and trust of much of the Ukrainian population of Galicia. Therefore, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, along with the whole UGCC, performed a significant role beyond the religious sphere in defending national ideas for Ukrainians, who were deprived of their own state.

The UGCC's connection to the Vatican and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) forced the NKVD into more attentive surveillance of the Church. In fact, Rome and its Church were considered to be an enemy with plans to expand missionary activity and increase its influence in

the Soviet Union using, in particular, the Greek-Catholic Church. The NKVD expected to search for “missionaries from Rome” and prevent them from getting any help. According to the report of one of their agents:

In the near future, specially trained people from Italy assigned to come will arrive [...] Sheptytskyi is supposed to facilitate their movement inside the USSR [...] Primarily, these missionaries will be the Jesuits and the Studites [...] These secret missionaries residing in the USSR have to work among large social groups in order to convert Orthodox faithful or atheists to Catholicism [...] They also have to train the people residing in the USSR to conduct the same missions.<sup>4</sup>

The war and Soviet occupation created challenges for the UGCC. The Soviet occupation of Ukraine started with the rapid implementation of anti-religious propaganda in the region. Not only was Christianity held under suspicion, but all other religions were targeted.<sup>5</sup> The policy had a significant impact on the UGCC since churches, monasteries, and church educational institutions were closed, and religious publications were restricted.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the activities of the “Union of the Militant Godless” did significant harm to the Church. The union mainly focused on publishing atheistic articles, which criticized both the faithful and the clergy. Indeed, this propaganda described the Church as a “numerous coven” and an enemy of the state.<sup>7</sup> The slogan, “Fight against religion; fight for socialism!” highlighted the goal of the Union. Its atheistic propaganda was introduced into as many spheres of life as possible. Atheism and the history of Communism became mandatory classes of all educational

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<sup>4</sup> *DA SBU (Derzhavnyi Arhiv Sluzhby Bezpeky Ukrainy)*, f. 2, d. 22, 182 – 183 (Donosy agenta 155).

<sup>5</sup> Oleksandr Volynets. *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva i derzhava: teoriya ta praktyka vzayemodiyi* (Lviv, Ukraine: Ivan Franko National university Press, 2007), 100.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

programs including elementary schools and universities. This was supposed to help raise a new generation which shared Communist Soviet values.

To respond to this situation, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi addressed these issues in pastoral epistles to the Greek-Catholic community. The goal of the epistles was not to judge state policy, but to provide people with guidelines of how to respond and not to give up on their faith.<sup>8</sup> In this case, the Church authorities attempted to protect the faithful and avoid any conflict with the state. In one of Sheptytskyi's well-known epistles, "The History has Been Changed" (Ukr. "Obernulasya karta istoriyi"), he stated:

... [W]e will obey the state authorities, and obey the law, [...] we will not be engaged in politics and secular affairs, we will not stop our sacrificial work for Christ within our nation. Our major task is teaching Catechism to the youth. [...] However, we will foremost serve as an example of the good life, strong prayer and labour to the faithful [...] I give the task to everyone to teach religion.<sup>9</sup>

With this epistle, Metropolitan Andrey presented the response of the Church to Soviet state policy. From the Metropolitan's point of view, the optimal way of co-existence with the Soviet regime was to separate religion and politics as much as possible. He established clear boundaries for priests to 'do their job,' and not to engage in protests against the state and those laws that contradicted Christian doctrines. Moreover, he addressed this epistle not only to priests but also to parents, stating that it was their principal duty to bring up children as Christians.<sup>10</sup>

Metropolitan Sheptytskyi emphasized the importance of teaching children the Christian dogma and involving them in Church activities.

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<sup>8</sup> Hayova Olena, Terekhovskiy Roman, ed., *Pastyrsky poslyannya, 1939 – 1944* (Lviv, Ukraine: Artos, 2010), 3: 34.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

Specific rules were established even for monks. Due to anti-religious policies in the country, monks had to adjust to this new situation in order not to show that they belonged to a religious order and avoid persecution. In fact, they were allowed to wear secular clothes instead of cassocks and black long habits as they used to and live outside of a monastic community in order not to attract attention to themselves.<sup>11</sup> Before the invasion of the Soviets and the establishment of anti-religious policies, the life of monks barely differed from their present-day lifestyle. Monastic communities resided together in a monastery, where they had their daily prayers and served liturgies. Furthermore, they were often involved in the religious life of different parishes. For example, Redemptorist fathers often had evangelical missions, while monks of St. Basil's order were actively involved in providing the youth with basic education.

With respect to this new situation of intolerance toward the Church, Sheptytskyi addressed the clergy and pointed out their duty to protect their parishes from Communist influence:

I entrust the clergy to remind [the people of the] main points of the faith while preaching or teaching catechism [...] Do not let them leave their occupation [...] let them pay significant attention to the catechization of children in a church and at school [...] Let priests and catechists [...] organize, gather, and teach the youth.<sup>12</sup>

His words provided priests with instruction on the main approach of the Church towards the state. He instructed them to stay out of secular politics, enjoining them not to support the existing authorities, which meant to stay neutral.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>12</sup> Hayova Olena, Terekhovskiy Roman, ed., *Pastyrsky poslyannya, 1939 – 1944* (Lviv, Ukraine: Artos, 2010), 2: 548.

Sheptytskyi founded the Metropolitan Council in September 1939, which was responsible for coordinating activities within the Church including pastoral tasks and developing general policies for the Church.<sup>13</sup> Later, in 1940, the Metropolitan Council would be transformed into the Archdiocesan Council that would have similar tasks—namely, to coordinate the Church’s activities and review its policies. The Council began in the St. George’s Cathedral on May 2, 1940. All clergy were invited to discuss the issues of catechization, preaching, missions as well as tasks for priests, the responsibilities of monks, and prayers within a family. The Council saw its role as purely religious:

“The Council strongly asks the clergy to avoid any activity which is somehow related to politics. Our task is to preach the Gospel and lead the people to salvation and, full of love to our nation and all of our neighbours, stay aside from any politics. The Synod reminds [the priests] of the[se] principles, which were always followed by the Clergy.”<sup>14</sup>

The session was held every Thursday until a break was announced on December 20, 1940.

During that time the Council approved 72 rules and 11 decrees.<sup>15</sup>

In an attempt to counteract Soviet pressure by receiving support from the Vatican, Sheptytskyi sent an official letter to Rome to inform the Holy See about the situation in Galicia. The Metropolitan sent his first letter in October 1939 in which he appraised Pope Pius XII about the confiscation of church properties and the liquidation of monasteries and Catholic schools.<sup>16</sup> In addition, Sheptytskyi shared his plans and asked for permission to expand mission to Russia and create Greek-Catholic exarches.

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<sup>13</sup> Svyatoslav Kyiak, *Identychnist ukrainskogo katolytsysmu: henezys, problem, persperktyvy* (Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine: Nova Zorya, 2006), 176.

<sup>14</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 43.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Vasyl Lentsyk, *Vyznachni postati Ukrainskoyi Tserkvy: Mytropolyt Andrey Sheptytskyi i Patriarh Yosyf Slipyi* (Lviv: Svichado, 2010), 86.

In December 1940, Lavrentiy Beria, the deputy head of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, approved a plan which would encourage an internal split within the Church, discredit Church authorities, and disconnect the UGCC from the Vatican.<sup>17</sup> The Soviets aimed to take advantage of an inner conflict among the clergy between supporters and opponents of the Church's connection to the Vatican.<sup>18</sup> Additionally, the complicated relationship between Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi and Bishop Hryhoriy Khomyshyn of Stanislaviv diocese contributed to the Soviet's plan of an internal split within the Church.<sup>19</sup> The Soviets attempted to use disagreements among clergy in order to foment religious divisions. For example, the NKVD report of January 31, 1941, described an argument between the priests Petrash and Syvak from the village Goroholyno, Stanislaviv region over their liturgical schedules.<sup>20</sup> It also alleged that the Church was in violation of canonical rules in order to damage the Metropolitan's and the clergy's reputation.<sup>21</sup> In the same report, the NKVD alleged that Father Dudchak had been behaving unacceptably and was often drunk.<sup>22</sup> We cannot be sure of the veracity of these claims; however, the NKVD used them to challenge clerical authority and weaken their influence on laity as well as damage their relations with other clergy. At that time, the Soviets were aware of the pre-existing internal split within the church between so called "easterners" and "westerners", who advocated for preserving Orthodox rites or implementing more Latin traditions. Therefore, the Soviets aimed to aggravate this division.

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<sup>17</sup> Taras Bublyk, "Dolya yeparkhialnogo duhovenstva Lvivskoyi arkhyeparkhiyi v chas pershoi radianskoyi okupatsiyi (1939 – 1941)," *Istoriya religiy v Ukrayini. Naukovyi shchorichnyk* 1, (2012): 60 – 71.

<sup>18</sup> Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Likvidatsiya UHKTs* (Kyiv, Ukraine: privately printed, 2006), 1: 100.

<sup>19</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 14, 92 – 104 (Dokladnaya zapiska UNKVD v Stanislavove k UNKVD v USSR po vipolneniyu plana operativnyh deystviy po UGKTs).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 15, 4 – 12.

<sup>22</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 14, 92 – 104.

From the beginning of their occupation of Galicia, Soviet authorities and the NKVD recognized the influence of the UGCC in the region. For this reason, they began gathering information about Church authorities and active clergy during the first months of the occupation. In 1940, Beria issued an order, which prescribed surveillance missions on the Greek-Catholic clergy and its “anti-Soviet” activity.<sup>23</sup> The main aspect of these missions was documenting the participation of clergy in any political activity, including their cooperation with the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN). The authorities also sought to monitor their attitude towards the state and any other compromising materials. For instance, an NKVD case called *Chuma* was opened in November 23, 1939.<sup>24</sup> The NKVD conducted surveillance on Greek-Catholic priests and Galician intelligentsia, who were part of the Ukrainian National Revival (Ukr. “Ukrainska Natsionalna Obnova”) political party, which was believed to support an anti-Communist, anti-Soviet, and pro-Polish position.<sup>25</sup>

The Soviets interpreted everyone who did not declare a pro-Soviet position as opposing the Soviet state. Under such circumstances, the Greek-Catholic clergy was forced to deal with the danger of being repressed. While Church authorities, such as Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, instructed the clergy not to get involved in politics, he simultaneously condemned Communist ideology and prescribed the clergy to spread religious education in spite of the state’s official anti-religious policy. Therefore, being aware of the official Church’s attitude towards the state the Metropolitan offered an indirect challenge to the Soviet regime that the clergy would have to weigh. The first Soviet invasion in 1939 – 1941 became the first prolonged encounter of Galician

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<sup>23</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 9, d. 624, 65 (Order provodit nabludenie za Greko-Katolicheskimi svyashchennikamu, podpisan Beriia).

<sup>24</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 16, op. 32, d. 68, 27 – 29 (Informatsiia 2-go otdela UNKVD v Stanislavivskoy oblasti po operativnomu delu “Chuma” kasatelno Greko-Katolicheskikh svyashchennikov).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

Greek-Catholics with the Soviet regime. At that time, they were aware of Communism, but the Church had never experienced an anti-religious state ideology. During this period, despite emigration, many priests followed the lead of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi.<sup>26</sup> Indeed, they obeyed his advice to stay in their parishes and keep preaching the Christian faith during sermons and catechizing despite massive anti-religious ideology.

Being aware of the position of the UGCC in this society, Soviet state security services applied careful strategies in order to gather information about Church leaders. One of the most appealing option for the Soviets was to embed ‘internal spies’ in the church through the recruitment of Greek-Catholic priests. By recruiting priests as spies, especially among the circle of Church authorities, the NKVD acquired detailed information from within the Church. Being aware of the significant influence of Church authorities in Galicia, especially of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, the Soviets followed a cautious plan and did not ‘take a risk’ by arresting Church authorities immediately after the occupation in order to avoid the massive protests which might have occurred in response. Therefore, the first steps included gathering information and compromising facts on Church leaders. Active pro-Ukrainian priests were the main targets of their work.

Triggered by the negative attitude of the UGCC towards the occupation of Galicia, the NKVD opened a specific case under the name *Khodiachie* (Eng. The walking men) in December 1939.<sup>27</sup> While Metropolitan Sheptytskyi was the main target of this operation, the case also contained information about bishops Mykyta Budka and Ivan Buchok as well as priests, Yosyf Slipyi, Leontiy Kunytskyi and Oleksandr Kovalskyi—the last two were members of the

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<sup>26</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 64 – 67.

<sup>27</sup> Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Likvidatsiya UHKTs*, 1: 67.

Metropolitan Council.<sup>28</sup> The name of the case file, “the walking men,” was ironic as the Metropolitan was confined to a wheelchair.

The NKVD had a couple of spies close to the Metropolitan, who provided detailed information regarding the UGCC. The most valuable spies were those reporting on the *Khodiachie* case. There were a few Greek-Catholic priests, who had close relationships with the Metropolitan, working as agents in this case. One of them was Father Stepan Hrab, or *Alfa*.<sup>29</sup> Since he lived in the Metropolitan’s residence at St. George’s Cathedral in Lviv, *Alfa* possessed invaluable information and was seen as a good source, which led to his recruitment in November 1939.<sup>30</sup> Father Hrab reported on the influence of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi in Galicia.<sup>31</sup> Being well-known among clergymen in Lviv, Father Hrab facilitated the recruitment of Fathers Roman Lukan, OSBM and Yulian Harbusevych.<sup>32</sup> After a couple of reports, *Alfa* left Lviv, perhaps not to be forced to report again.<sup>33</sup>

In order to persuade priests to collaborate, the NKVD employed various strategies. Punitive methods were almost always used. The agents were “working” with priests trying to persuade them of their “wrong decision” to remain faithful to the Church. After careful investigations, state security agents picked the best way to “persuade” a priest.

Influencing clergy through arrested family members became one of the usual practices for the NKVD. Indeed, agents attempted to convince Mykola Hrytselyak, the Chancellor of Peremyshl (Przemyśl) Diocese, to carry out assigned tasks in the diocese by promising to

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<sup>28</sup> Taras Bublyk, “Dolya yeparkhialnogo duhovenstva Lvivskoyi arkhyeparkhiyi.”

<sup>29</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 2, d. 32, 17 (Doklad o verbovke Stepana Hraba).

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 11, 87 – 88 (Donos Stepana Hraba).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

alleviate punishment for his son, who was arrested for participation in OUN.<sup>34</sup> At first, Hrytselyak did not accept any offer; moreover, he stated that religion was above everything in his life.<sup>35</sup> However, the promise to release his son and permission for his parents to come to visit him left Father Hrytselyak with no choice other than to collaborate.<sup>36</sup>

The clergy also experienced financial pressure to collaborate with the state. Priests did not have a regular salary from the government; instead they were paid by parishioners. The government began charging the clergy high taxes and assigned them menial public service jobs.<sup>37</sup> For example, Father Roman Levytskyi and his wife were assigned to shovelling snow, while Father Ivan Bilyak was expelled from the parish house, where parish priests usually resided, and was forced to rent a room from one of his parishioners.<sup>38</sup> In this way, the Soviets aimed to interfere with the daily lives of priests and their families.

In response to this situation, Sheptytskyi sent one more letter to Rome on November 7, 1941, in which he reported the condition of the Church under Soviet rule.<sup>39</sup> He expressed his concern over the clergy, who were not able to pay these taxes and, in addition, do public service jobs.<sup>40</sup> Some priests were living below the poverty line and, therefore, they required financial support from their parishes. Eventually, the Metropolitan addressed Nikita Khrushchev, who was in charge of the region, with a request to reduce taxes for the clergy.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 2, d. 32, 62 – 65 (Doklad o verbovke Nikolaya Hrytselyaka).

<sup>37</sup> Taras Bublyk, “Dolya yeparkhialnogo duhovenstva Lvivskoyi arkhyyeparkhiyi.”

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Vasyl Lentsyk, *Vyznachni postati Ukrainskoyi Tserkvy*, 87.

<sup>40</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw. *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 45.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

At the same time, the NKVD also began to apply their usual methods such as arrests, deportations, or executions. According to a NKVD report in early 1941, a couple of “especially active anti-Soviet propagandists” were to be arrested. This list included not only priests, but also laity. For instance, the NKVD wanted to arrest Father Belan and some of his “dangerous” parishioners. They accused him of anti-Soviet agitation during sermons, of forcing parishioners to attend the forbidden liturgy, and of damaging Soviet property to get to church.<sup>42</sup> Despite the widespread anti-Soviet spirit among clergy, the support of the overall population, which the clergy received often prevented or, at least, slowed arrests. In the case of Father Belan, the NKVD changed its decision as it was unwilling to deal with a wave of protest against the state’s religious politics. Moreover, the support of Father Belan among the locals was tremendous.<sup>43</sup>

In terms of religious policies, the first Soviet invasion could be described as the persecution of the Church. The state was focused on making people, in particular Greek-Catholics, collaborate. For this, the NKVD used various methods, for example, financial pressure, intimidations, and physical threats. The most severe methods became arrests and imprisonment. Fearful for the lives of their families or their own lives, the priests agreed to collaborate. During this period, by conservative estimates, thirty-two priests were arrested and disappeared, and six priests died in prison.<sup>44</sup>

Nevertheless, there were some priests who volunteered to take on the role of an NKVD agent. The state security officers did not completely believe in their sincerity and willingness to volunteer, so they used various compromising means in recruitment. Collaboration with the state

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<sup>42</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 15, 156 – 165 (Prikaz 3-go otdela NKVD v USSR glave 2-go otdela UNKVD v Drogobitskoy oblasti kasatelno Greko-Katolicheskikh svyashchennikov).

<sup>43</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 15, 166 - 167.

<sup>44</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 13, d. 398. 34, 33. “Stattya ‘Muchenyystvo Ukrainskoho duhovenstva’ napechatana v gazete ‘Ukrainski shchodenni visti’).

could be called a characteristic of the behaviour of “Russophiles,” a vast number of whom belonged to the Greek-Catholic Church, many of whom were priests. The Russophile movement was widespread in Galicia in the nineteenth century. The movement primarily appeared in opposition to the compromise between the Polish landowning elites and the Austro-Hungarian empire.<sup>45</sup> Overall, the Russophiles advocated for developing closer relations with Russian empire and later Soviet Union. In terms of religious sphere, the idea of merging Ukrainian Greek-Catholics and Orthodox with the Russian Orthodox Church was developed.

On the other hand, the strong influence of the Russian Empire appeared as another cause of the movement. The feeling of a strong connection with Russia and its Orthodox Church was well-developed, and seemed to be a possible ‘defense’ against the Latin influence on Greek-Catholics.<sup>46</sup> The significance of religion, specifically their Orthodox rites, for both Galicians and Russians, pushed the Ukrainians residing in the Austro-Hungarian Empire to support the ‘All-Russia’ idea.<sup>47</sup> However, the Ukrainian national movement, boosted by the Austro-Hungarian Empire, started to gain in popularity in the mid-twentieth century and significantly weakened the Russophiles.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, they had never vanished completely. Small groups of Russophiles still existed before the explosion of the Second World War and the Soviet invasion of Galicia.<sup>49</sup> It turned out to be an appropriate time to rise again. The UGCC, promoting the Ukrainian movement, prompted the intensification of the Russophile movement.<sup>50</sup> Disaffected Russophile priests formed a potential group for the recruitment of NKVD agents. The Soviets gave them the

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<sup>45</sup> John-Paul Himka, “The Construction of Nationality in Galician Rus’: Icarian Flights in Almost All Directions,” in *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation* (The University of Michigan Press, 1999): 109 – 165.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

role of initiators of the ‘Orthodox Action,’ which was supposed to raise massive protests in support of separation from the Vatican and reunion with the Russian Orthodox Church. During the period of the first occupation the Soviets did not consider it to be an option due to anti-religious policy, which covered even the ROC. However, it would later become a main focus of the Soviets’ intervention into religious life in Galicia.

One of the first Russophile priests recruited to the NKVD was father Ivan Paliy (*Nespalov*). Father Paliy’s collaboration with Soviet state security was most likely grounded in his deep hatred towards the Ukrainian nation as expressed in his personal writings found in his NKVD files as well as the Church canonical investigation files.<sup>51</sup> Father Paliy tore down Ukrainian flags in 1931 in his parish church in Stanymyr, Lviv region and later openly spoke against the Ukrainian cultural association Prosvita in Vodnyky, Lviv region. He justified his behavior as “protecting the Russian idea”.<sup>52</sup> These events contributed to Paliy’s suspension from the priesthood in 1937. However, he was allowed to return to priesthood in 1939, apparently due to the lack of clergy, as is indicated in his Church canonical investigation files.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, his hatred towards Metropolitan Sheptytskyi contributed to the interest Soviets had in him.<sup>54</sup> According to Father Paliy’s reports, he spied on those unsatisfied with the Soviet regime or those who were preaching against Soviet policies and supporting nationalist ideas.<sup>55</sup> Usually priests like Ivan Paliy were assigned to gather compromising facts about Sheptytskyi in most cases regarding his connection with the Poles, who were considered Ukrainian national enemies.

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<sup>51</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 11, 390 (Donosy Ivana Paliia); or *Tsentralnyi Derzhavnyi Istorychnyi Arkhiv Lvivskoyi Oblasti (TsDIAL)*, F. 201, Op. 2a, d. 1560 and 1925 (Tserkovni spravy po suspenziyi vid svyashchenstva otsya Ivana Paliya).

<sup>52</sup> *TsDIAL*, f. 201, op. 2a, d. 1560 and 1925.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 11, 400 – 401b.

Fathers Hnatyshak and Hrytselyak were also used for the mobilization of the Russophile clergy not satisfied with Sheptytskyi's policy regarding the Church's connection with Rome. In those priests' opinion, the UGCC had to return to the "original" Orthodox Church from which it came.

The reports of agents, who willingly collaborated, were accepted as true and credible since they matched with the final goal of the NKVD. Often Soviets had to verify the honesty of their voluntary collaborators, so when recruiting volunteer agents, they scrutinized the volunteers' background, including any involvement in national movements, the support of the Polish state, or any administrative offence. Nevertheless, such collaboration of Russophile priests required the Church authorities to respond, so appropriate punishment was prescribed, in turn, by the Church. Such punishment varied from losing parishes to being suspended from priesthood, which was the fate of Father Ivan Paliy.

In addition to those who decided to collaborate voluntarily, there were cases of 'accidental' cooperation. An example of this kind of "cooperation" is Father Heorhiy Moskva, who is also known under the last name, Dombrovskiy. He was born in Zurich to a Polish family.<sup>56</sup> Father Heorhiy obtained a high-quality theological education from the University of Cracow and Gregorian University in Rome. Father Moskva did not have any intention or reason to collaborate; nevertheless, the Soviets saw him as a valuable source and, therefore, found a way to get the information they desired. NKVD agents working undercover aimed to get naïve priests' by requesting pastoral care or confession. This happened to Father Moskva in prison and he told the NKVD undercover agent information regarding the internal and external connection of the UGCC including relations between the UGCC bishops and the church's relations with the

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<sup>56</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 2, op. 2, d. 44, 73 – 87 (Dokladnaya zapiska ot NKVD v USSR k NKVD v SSSR po rassledovanii dela Georgiia Moskvyy-Dombrovskogo).

Rome.<sup>57</sup> Later, the Soviets tried to recruit him as an NKVD agent, however their attempts were not successful.<sup>58</sup> According to the NKVD report, the interrogations of Father Moskva did not lead to a desirable result, since he provided them with false information regarding his real identity and tasks he had done for the Metropolitan, for example pass on information to Rome.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, Father Moskva remained steadfast, and therefore the NKVD failed with his recruitment. He later managed to escape to Hungary and then moved to Rome.<sup>60</sup>

Despite tremendous pressure from the state, the Church managed to survive during this period. As historian Bohdan Bociurkiw has argued, “The new state speeded up to liquidate the basis of the Church in order to break the clergy morally and their will to oppose the arbitrariness of the state.”<sup>61</sup> Due to intensive anti-religious propaganda, the clergy experienced strong pressure in their pastoral duties. However, it turned out to have the opposite effect—according to witnesses, the clergy had even more work to do, since the attendance of masses had increased.<sup>62</sup>

Nevertheless, the situation drastically changed when the German army invaded the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941. The German army moved quickly within the territory of the Soviet Union, in particular Ukraine, first occupying the territory of Galicia. A massive execution of prisoners, including Greek-Catholic clergy preceded the retreat of the Soviet army.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 2, d. 22, 182 – 183 (Doklad agenta 155 o vebovke Moskvy).

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*; the whole NKVD investigation case of Father Heorhiy Moskva could be found at *DA SBU*, f. 6, d. 76104.

<sup>59</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 2, op. 2, d. 44, 73 - 87.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw. *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 45.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>63</sup> Bohdan Budurowycz, "The Greek Catholic Church in Galicia, 1914-1944," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 26, no. 1/4 (2002): 291 – 375, accessed September 22, 2019, <http://www.jstor.org/uml.idm.oclc.org/stable/41036855>.

The German occupation had a profound impact on the people of Galicia. After experiencing Soviet persecution and restrictions, Ukrainians hoped that the Nazis might be their liberators from Soviet rule. Indeed, the first months after the occupation marked a period of slow development of the UGCC. With the arrival of the Germans, posters with the slogan: “The time of Stalinist regime is gone. The German authorities give you the opportunity to pray in freedom again!”<sup>64</sup> were displayed in major cities. Since the Soviets left Galicia and the Germans had not yet establish their religious policies, the Church had time to flourish. The churches were opened again; people could freely attend liturgies and monks could go back to monasteries.

After a couple of months, when the Germans established their position in Galicia, the UGCC was faced with new state religious policies. Having the support of OUN and being welcomed by the UGCC, the Nazis did not recognize the Ukrainian state and instead began to persecute active Ukrainian nationalists, mainly the followers of Stepan Bandera.<sup>65</sup> Help for Jews also became a valid reason for the Nazi regime to persecute Greek-Catholic priests as in the case of Father Omelyan Kowch. Kowch tried to save Jews from persecution, which led to his arrest and imprisonment in Majdanek concentration camp in 1943. With the official establishment of the German rule in Ukraine, its territory was divided into new administrative units, which made it complicated for the division of the UGCC into dioceses. The Nazis aimed to break the Church, including its administrative structure, into small groups in order to prevent its growth.<sup>66</sup> The reaction of Sheptytskyi followed immediately. The Metropolitan addressed this issue to Heinrich Himmler, the Reichsführer of the Schutzstaffel (Protection Squadron; SS), a leading

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<sup>64</sup> Karel C Berkhoff, "Was There a Religious Revival in Soviet Ukraine under the Nazi Regime?" *The Slavonic and East European Review* 78, no. 3 (2000): 536 – 567, accessed September 23, 2019, [www.jstor.org/stable/4213088](http://www.jstor.org/stable/4213088).

<sup>65</sup> Stepan Andriyovych Bandera was a head of OUN(B) wing of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists.

<sup>66</sup> Volodymyr Kosyk, *Ukraina i Nimechchyna v Druhiy Svitoviy Viyni* (Lviv, Paris, New York: Naukove Tovaruskvo imeni Tarasa Shevchenka, 1993), 293.

member of the Nazi Party (NSDAP), and later the German Minister of the Interior, and also informed the Pope about the persecution of the UGCC.<sup>67</sup>

The arrival of the Nazis raised a temporary hope for the national movement in Galicia. Those who aimed to liberate Ukraine from the Soviets supported the German army. One such organization, the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was an especially enthusiastic supporter of the Nazi occupation. Ukrainian nationalism had a lot in common with Fascism and even German Nazism in terms of state administration and its racialized definition of “nation.” For instance, Ukrainian nationalists distributed posters and pamphlets against Jews, Poles, and Russians as they envisioned a Ukrainian state, in which Ukrainians would hold the dominant position.<sup>68</sup> This “partnership” with the German army became one of the methods used by the OUN to achieve its goal. This cooperation was grounded in the belief the Nazis would officially recognize an independent Ukraine if Ukrainian nationalists helped to defeat the Soviets. The “partnership” seemed appealing for both sides since the OUN had the support of Ukrainian youth and Germany had additional means to defeat the Red Army. However, at that time the OUN split into two factions regarding their attitude towards the Nazis and their policies.<sup>69</sup> Stepan Bandera became a leader of the group, the OUN(B), who did not support close collaboration with the Third Reich, and later opposed the Germans. Meanwhile, Andriy Melnyk and his adherents, the OUN(M), believed they would not be able to achieve anything without the help of the Germans. The followers of Bandera proclaimed the Act of the Restoration of Independence of Ukraine in

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<sup>67</sup> Lilianna Hentosh and Andrew Sorokowski, "Rites and Religions: Pages from the History of Inter-denominational and Inter-ethnic Relations in Twentieth-Century Lviv," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 24 (2000): 171 – 203, accessed December 5, 2019, [www.jstor.org/stable/41036815](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41036815).

<sup>68</sup> Tarik Youssef Cyril Amar, *The Paradox of Ukrainian Lviv: A Borderland City Between Stalinists, Nazis, and Nationalists* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 96 – 100.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 166 – 167.

Lviv in June 30, 1941.<sup>70</sup> As they suspected, their decision was not recognized by the Germans, who arrested Bandera and his associate, Yaroslav Stetsko, and sent them to a labor camp in Germany.

As a nationalist organization, OUN could not gain official support from the UGCC. The UGCC could not approve of OUN's methods which interfered with the spread of their influence across Galicia. Even though the Church represented by the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi supported the idea of an independent Ukrainian state, based on Christian values, he could not support OUN's nationalist position and the methods they used. In light of their Christian beliefs, the UGCC advocated among the population for patriotism, defining it as a limitless love for their country and the people and a willingness to protect it, even by paying the price of their own lives. Nevertheless, in most cases the Greek-Catholic clergy used the word nationalism in a positive sense correlating it to patriotism.<sup>71</sup>

Sheptytskyi could not support acts of violence towards the Poles and often spoke out against the OUN's racial policies in his letters. This tension between nationalists and the UGCC started long before the occupation. At the beginning of the 1930s the UGCC and OUN started a "competition" for young Ukrainians. In order to entice more youth, Church leaders established the organization of Ukrainian Youth for Christ (Ukr. *Ukrainska Molod Khrystovi*) and held a celebration parade in Lviv on May 7 – 8, 1933. This led to OUN's first public announcements against the Church. Nationalistic students claimed that "the Ukrainian Catholic movement [...] does not comply with the necessities and requests of the Ukrainian nation and in general in terms

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 167.

<sup>71</sup> Oleh Behen, "Katolytskyi svitohlyad i khrystyianskyi natsionalizm yak alternatyva intehralnomy natsoinalizmovi," in *Natsionalizm i relihiya* (Lviv, Ukraine: Ukrainian Catholic University Press: 2011): 319 – 340.

of their social and political activity is harmful.”<sup>72</sup> Despite the Church’s actions, the youth willingly joined the OUN as they were encouraged by their activities and ideas.

Nevertheless, Sheptytskyi urged the union of all Ukrainian organizations: “Let them forget about any political strife, let them work in unity and agreement on the restoration of our economical, educational, and cultural life destroyed by Bolsheviks. Then, with hope in God, on the basis of the solidarity [...] of all Ukrainians, an independent Ukraine will rise.”<sup>73</sup> In his pastoral letter “To the Ukrainian people,” Sheptytskyi officially supported the proclamation of the Ukrainian state on July 1, 1941.<sup>74</sup> The Nazis immediately denied the proclamation of the Ukrainian state. The Church was left in the position of supporting Ukrainian nationalism but, at the same time, speaking out against excessive extremism and the racial policies of the proto-Fascist nationalists.<sup>75</sup>

The clergy officially did not belong to the OUN; however, they assisted nationalists in a different way. In some cases, priests who were chaplains in prisons served as a means of communication between OUN members and their imprisoned comrades.<sup>76</sup> In April 28, 1943, a special division was formed out of Ukrainian soldiers called SS-Division “Galicia.” It was an official part of the Third Reich, representing Ukrainian forces which fought against the Red Army. The UGCC offered pastoral guidance to members of this division. Many chaplains were assigned to the division by the Metropolitan himself.<sup>77</sup> Primarily, their task was to provide the

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<sup>72</sup> Oleh Behen, “Rozhortannya katolytskoho ruhu i pershi konflikty z natsionalistamy,” in *Natsionalism i relihiya* (Lviv, Ukraine: Ukrainian Catholic University Press: 2011), 265 – 287.

<sup>73</sup> *TsDIAL*, f. 358, op. 1, d. 11, 25 (Pastorske poslannya “Do duhovenstva I virnyh Arhyeparhiyi).

<sup>74</sup> *TsDIAL*, f. 358, op. 1, d. 11, 17a (Pastorske poslannya “Do Ukrainskoho narodu”).

<sup>75</sup> Bohdan Budurowycz, “The Greek Catholic Church in Galicia.”

<sup>76</sup> Vasyl Stefaniv, “Pidtrymka duhovenstvom HKTs ukrainskoho vyzvolnoho ruhu,” in *Natsionalism i relihiya* (Lviv, Ukraine: Ukrainian Catholic University Press: 2011), 241 – 243.

<sup>77</sup> Bohdan Budurowycz, “The Greek Catholic Church in Galicia.”

spiritual relief and cultural development, as well as guide them in accordance with Christian values.<sup>78</sup>

After the invasion of the Nazi army, the OUN armed divisions helped carry out pogroms or massacres of Jews. In fact, the chief Rabbi of Lviv, Ezekiel Lewin, asked Metropolitan Sheptytskyi for help in preventing these murders and he was assured by the Metropolitan of having his support.<sup>79</sup> Nevertheless, neither a public response from the UGCC leader nor a letter addressed to the OUN members responsible for the pogroms followed this oral promise.<sup>80</sup> John-Paul Himka states that even though the Metropolitan raised the question of the murders of NKVD prisoners in his correspondence with Budapest nuncio, he failed to mention the excessive violence against the Jews.<sup>81</sup> According to Himka, Sheptytskyi most likely associated Jews with Communism, as Catholic clergy tended to think at that time.<sup>82</sup>

Later, with continued massacres, the Metropolitan addressed this issue in his pastoral letter, “Thou Shalt Not Kill:”

Those who delude themselves and others that political killing is not a sin do so in a strange manner, as if politics releases a man from obedience to God’s law and justifies a crime that is abhorrent to human nature. This is not so. A Christian is required to observe God’s law both in private and in political and social life. A person who sheds the innocent blood of an enemy, a political opponent, is as much a murderer as a person who does this in the course of a robbery and deserves the same punishment from God and excommunication from the Church”.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> More about German military chaplains look at Doris L. Bergen, “Totalitarianism: German Military Chaplains in World War II and the Dilemmas of Legitimacy.” *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture* 70, no. 2 (June 2001): 232–247.

<sup>79</sup> John-Paul Himka, “Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and the Holocaust,” *Jews and Ukrainians* 26 (2014), 337 – 359.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Lvivski arkhieparchialni vidomosti* 55, no. 11 (Lviv, November 1942), 177–183.

This epistle was a direct challenge to Nazi policies. The epistle is divided into several parts speaking against suicides, the murder of children and political murders.<sup>84</sup> Nevertheless, referring to German leaders and OUN members regarding these issues in general, the Metropolitan did not directly point to the massacres of Jews.

Despite the fact that Sheptytskyi did not speak out in public against pogroms in Lviv, a correspondence and epistles issued in later years of German occupation advocated for the Jews and their rights. These include the letter to Himmler, written in 1942 and a couple of pastoral letters, for example “On Mercy.”<sup>85</sup> The Metropolitan also informed the pope Pius XII and Cardinal Tisserant about the persecution of the Jews.<sup>86</sup> Moreover, in response to the Nazi’s cruel execution of the innocent Jewish population, Greek-Catholic priests often hid Jews from the Germans.<sup>87</sup> Sheptytskyi welcomed children from local rabbinical families to St. George’s Cathedral in Lviv, providing them with shelter.<sup>88</sup> Overall, the Metropolitan rescued from the Nazi persecution about 150 Jews, mostly children.<sup>89</sup>

During the invasion of the Red Army into Galicia, the primary task for the Soviets was integrating this territory into the Soviet Union. The UGCC faced a serious threat. As the largest religious institution in western Ukraine, it was now limited in its access to public spaces by Soviet anti-religious laws and the Church and clergy were persecuted for religious reasons. The Church’s connection to the Vatican made relations with the state even more complicated. Although the UGCC was aware of Communism, it had limited interactions with this type of

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<sup>84</sup> John-Paul Himka, “Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and the Holocaust.”

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Liliana Hentosh and Andrew Sorokowski, "Rites and Religions: Pages from the History of Inter-denominational and Inter-ethnic Relations in Twentieth-Century Lviv," *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 24 (2000): 171-203. Accessed September 24, 2019. [www.jstor.org/stable/41036815](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41036815).

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> John-Paul Himka, “Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky and the Holocaust.”

regime. During this period, the majority of priests followed the advice of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi by staying in their parishes and preaching the Christian faith through sermons and catechization despite the massive anti-religious arrangements in the society.

Nevertheless, the invasion of the Germans interrupted this precarious relationship. The short period of Nazi rule became a turning point in Soviet policies towards the UGCC. First of all, German occupation gave rise to a surge in the Ukrainian national movement. The invasion of the Germans gave hope for the revival of an independent Ukrainian state. Therefore, Ukrainian nationalists partnered with the Third Reich, which allowed Ukrainians to believe that they would receive a Ukrainian state in return for armed support. A Ukrainian nationalistic mood spread across Galicia, gaining many followers. The Church leaders and clergy showed support for this pro-Ukrainian position and, in particular, the idea of a Ukrainian state. Since this national aspiration was considered resistance to the state within the Soviet Union, the Soviets took a different approach in relation to the UGCC the second time around.

## Chapter Two:

### The UGCC and the New Soviet Policy: 1944 – 1945

In 1943 the Third Reich began the retreat of its troops from the Soviet Union after its defeat in the battle for Stalingrad. This was the beginning of the counterattack of the Red Army, which pushed Nazi troops out of its territory, including Galicia. Long battles eventually led to the Soviet reoccupation of Lviv on July 27, 1944. By October 28, 1944, the Soviets restored their political authority over the territory of the Ukrainian SSR. It was the beginning of the second Soviet occupation of Ukraine, which lasted until August 1991, when the Ukrainian SSR proclaimed the independence of Ukraine.

At first glance, the second Soviet invasion differed from the previous one. The state switched to a more tolerant approach towards the UGCC. For instance, the Soviets allowed a seminary and the Theological Academy to function; they also released the clergy from military service. These policy changes indicated a decline in anti-religious propaganda.<sup>90</sup> Yet, much had changed during the German occupation, which created new challenges for the UGCC when Soviet troops re-entered the region. The intensification of the Ukrainian nationalist movement and active support of the Nazi regime by the OUN(M) faction during the German occupation of Galicia led Soviet leaders to search for members of the Greek-Catholic clergy who were supportive of it. In addition, the legitimization of the Russian Orthodox Church during the Second World War also influenced the approach of the Soviets to the UGCC. As the Soviet Union promoted the Orthodox Church as its ‘national Church’ during the war, the unification of all churches under the Russian Orthodox Church became a goal for the Soviets, which also

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<sup>90</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 64.

anticipated the destruction of the UGCC. In this chapter I will explore how during the second invasion church leaders responded to the Soviet policy by attempting to normalize relations with the regime.

In this environment, local Greek-Catholic priests faced a difficult situation. Many priests found themselves in the position of having to choose between collaborating with the state security services or joining the opposition to state policies and likely facing persecution. In the face of this decision, many priests chose to cooperate with Soviet officials. This chapter will focus on why ordinary priests interacted with the NKVD. By analyzing the motivation of these priests, this chapter will shed light on how this group understood Church-state relations.

Some of the Ukrainian NKVD (UNKVD) reports attest that Soviet officials kept an eye on the activities of the UGCC while under German occupation, focusing on its “support” of the Germans and pro-national political and nationalist activities of OUN or UPA.<sup>91</sup> On the whole, the nationalist movements had developed rapidly under the Germans, which was why the Red Army faced strong opposition as it attempted to occupy Galicia in 1944. During this struggle for the territory of western Ukraine, the nationalist movement became a major problem for the establishment of Soviet rule. With the armed support of the OUN(M), in particular the division SS-Galicia as a part of the Nazi army, the Germans attempted to prevent the invasion of the Red Army into Galicia.<sup>92</sup> Substantial resistance forced Soviet authorities to address the population with the request to surrender in exchange for amnesty.<sup>93</sup> The situation led to the approval of a resolution regarding the expansion of ideological political activity in the region. The increase of

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<sup>91</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19: 270 (Dokladnaya zapiska UNKVD v Drogobichskoy oblasti k 2-mu upravleniyu NKVD USSR kasatelno operativnoy raboti po greko-katolicheskomu duhovenstvu).

<sup>92</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 63.

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

Communist pressure was supposed to cut off nationalist movement from any support of the population.<sup>94</sup> The NKVD again started to persecute nationalists and opened cases on priests who were suspected of helping them. For instance, Father Stepan Chervinskyi, who organized fundraising for OUN was under NKVD surveillance as a possible rebel.<sup>95</sup> The strength of the national movement became another reason for the Soviet persecution of Greek-Catholic clergy and laity.

It is important to clarify the Soviets' understanding of the nationalist movement which developed in Galicia. "[I]nvolvement in nationalist activity" often appears in criminal cases of those arrested or interrogated by the NKVD. Officially, the clergy did not belong to the OUN or other nationalist organizations; yet, some Greek-Catholic priests helped to support the cultural development of a Ukrainian patriotic spirit. The Soviets classified any pro-Ukrainian, patriotic cultural activity as 'nationalism' and therefore, as being anti-Soviet.

Soviet officials paid special attention to the activities of Greek-Catholic leaders and their attitude towards the Nazi regime. Indeed, the Greek-Catholic Metropolitan's letter of greeting to Hitler—calling him their liberator from the Communist regime—was found among NKVD documents, specifically in the collection of removed items from arrested participants who were involved in the nationalist movement.<sup>96</sup> Another letter to Hitler found among NKVD materials also revealed the Church's support of nationalist opposition to the Red Army.<sup>97</sup> According to the NKVD report on the search of 'Vatican's agents' among Greek-Catholic clergy, the UGCC

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<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>95</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19: 266 – 272 (Dokladnaya zapiska UNKVD po Drogobitskoy oblasti 2-mu Upravleniyu NKVD USSR ob operativnoy robote kasatelno katolicheskogo duhovenstva).

<sup>96</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 13, d. 372. 35: 125 (Pismo-privetstvie Sheptitskovo k Gitleru kasatelno okkupatsii Kieva natsistskoy armiyey).

<sup>97</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 13, d. 372. 37: 266 – 269 (Pismo Sheptitskogo k Gitleru kasatelno novogo politicheskogo statusa Galicii).

performed the role of the ‘Vatican’s agent’ in the eyes of the Soviets, and the Church was considered to be the Pope’s tool to spread the authority of Rome and its Catholic Church to the Eastern Orthodox Churches.<sup>98</sup> In these documents, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi was also described as an enemy of Orthodoxy.<sup>99</sup> Moreover, the UNKVD instructions of January 11, 1943, assigned its agents to detect all active religious institutions, and arrest allies of Germany.<sup>100</sup>

After watching the defeat of the Nazi army in the battle for Stalingrad, Church leaders prepared for the inevitable Soviet occupation of Galicia. At this point, Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi expressed his concerns to Cardinal Eugene Tisseran, writing on March 22, 1944:

The news of the Red Army approaching [western Ukraine] terrifies our faithful. The intelligentsia, which sometimes involuntarily cooperated with the Germans, is sure they will be persecuted to death. They [intelligentsia] are now leaving the city (Lviv), escaping to Poland, which they find less dangerous. Panic has taken over the clergymen. In thirty villages, which are already occupied by the Red Army, twenty-four priests left their parishes. Priests who stayed, did not experience any pressure from the Soviets, however, the churches left without priests are burned and destroyed... Fugitives arrive in Lviv with the request to be assigned far [from the Soviets] in the western parts of dioceses. I do everything possible to prevent this immigration.<sup>101</sup>

Despite his apprehension, Sheptytskyi hoped that the arrival of the Soviets would stop the destructive anarchy in the region caused by fighting between the Ukrainian and Polish underground movements.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 9, d. 628, 196 – 202 (Direktiva narcoma derzhbezopasnosti SSSR V. Merkulova ob roziske organami NKVD agenturi Vatikana s obzorom deyatelnosti katolicheskogo duhovenstva UGKTs).

<sup>99</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19: 110 – 120 (Dokladnaya zapiska nachalnika UNKVD po Lvovskoy oblasti K. Voloshenko narkomu derzhbezopasnosti USSR S. Savchenko o polozhenii i deyatelnosti duhovenstva UGKTs v period nemetskoy okupatsii).

<sup>100</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 1, op. 5, d. 12, 1 – 5 (Soprovoditelnoye pismo i instruksiya 3-vo Upravleniya NKVD USSR po operativnoy raboti oblastnih upravleniy NKVD kasatelno tserkovnikov i sektantov na osvobozhdennoy ot natsistov territoriyi Ukrainy).

<sup>101</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 54.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

With the new invasion of the Red Army, Sheptytskyi sent a letter of welcome to Stalin, thanking him for “releasing [Ukraine] from its invaders.”<sup>103</sup> During this tense period, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi also addressed the clergy with an epistle encouraging the priests’ to focus on the religious health of their communities and to not engage in politics. As he wrote,

We lived in hard times in our parishes and homeland, when no one knows what to do and seeks everywhere good advice on how to survive [...] the clergy should remember and remind everyone about the...foremost truth of God’s wisdom and the wise guidance of Christ the Saviour.<sup>104</sup>

Even after Sheptytskyi passed away unexpectedly on November 1, 1944, from complications after an illness,<sup>105</sup> his replacement, Archbishop Yosyf Slipyi, reconfirmed the position of Sheptytskyi regarding the relations between the Church and the state by calling on Ukrainians to remain neutral towards Soviet policies. As he wrote:

Our Greek-Catholic Church does not interfere in politics, and by the will of Christ appoints the faithful to obey state laws, which are consistent with God’s laws. We have proved it with our support for the ill, injured, and imprisoned Red Army not only now, but also during the time of German occupation. For centuries we also have preserved our people from denationalization and enslavement, which threatened with its total destruction.<sup>106</sup>

The new Metropolitan upheld the tactics of his predecessor while establishing relations with the state and giving guidelines for the priests.

This position of neutrality was made more difficult as the Soviets already considered everyone who collaborated with the Germans to be enemies of the Soviet Union. Therefore, Church leaders started to take action in order to prevent their persecution for collaborating with

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<sup>103</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19:145 (“Spravka 2-go Upravleniya NKVD USSR po podgotovke Mitropolitom UGKTs Andreem Sheptitskim lista J. Stalinu). Or it could be also found at Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Mytropolyt Andrey Sheptytskyi u dokumentah radyanskyh orhaniv derzhavnoyi bezpeky (1939 – 1944)* (Kyiv, Ukraine: Ukrainian publishing association, 2005), 331 – 332.

<sup>104</sup> Hayova Olena, Terekhovskiy Roman, ed., *Pastyrsky poslyannya, 1939 – 1944*, 3: 321.

<sup>105</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 71.

<sup>106</sup> Hayova Olena, Terekhovskiy Roman, ed., *Pastyrsky poslyannya, 1939 – 1944*, 3: 327.

the Germans and the nationalist movement. At the beginning of October 1944, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi sought to normalize relations with the Soviets by sending a letter to Ivan Polyanskyi, Chair of the Council on Religion and Cults. In this letter, the Metropolitan aimed to explain the neutral attitude of the Church towards the state in order to explain the position of the Church under the Nazi regime.<sup>107</sup> At this point, Polyanskyi, on behalf of the Soviets, offered to have a meeting with the Greek-Catholic authorities to discuss and clarify important details in UGCC's policies regarding the Third Reich.<sup>108</sup>

Additionally, as a method to stabilize or possibly improve relations between the state and the Church, Sheptytskyi, on behalf of the UGCC, decided to make a donation to the Red Cross for injured Soviet soldiers.<sup>109</sup> Church leaders organized a group of priests to visit Moscow, which after having made the donation, met with Polyanskyi. In order to inform the state about his intentions, the Metropolitan sent a letter to Sergei Savchenko, the Commissar for state security.<sup>110</sup> In a letter Sheptytskyi requested passes to Moscow for the delegation, which included Fathers Havryil Kostelnyk, Ivan Kotiv, and Herman Budzinskyi.<sup>111</sup> These passes were required to leave the Republic.

After Sheptytskyi's sudden death, his replacement, Metropolitan Slipyi, continued to form the delegation. Slipyi added a new member to the delegation, Archimandrite Klymentiy Sheptytskyi, who was assigned with the task of delivering financial aid to the injured soldiers in the amount of one hundred thousand Rubles.<sup>112</sup> Church leaders expected the donation to serve as

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<sup>107</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 70.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19: 167 (Pismo Sheptytskogo o delegatsii Greko-Katolicheskikh svyashchennikov v Moskvu).

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Atanasiy Velykyi, *Z Litorysu Khrystyyanskoyi Ukrainy* (Rome, Italy: Publication of OSBM fathers, 1977), 4: 249.

a sign of the positive, or at least neutral, attitude of the Church towards the state. The delegation also passed on two letters—one was written by Yosyf Slipyi and another was written by Andrey Sheptytskyi—addressed to Joseph Stalin.<sup>113</sup>

The delegation departed to Moscow in the middle of December 1944, where they were supposed to meet with the representatives of the Moscow Patriarchy, mainly with Metropolitan Aleksei I (Simanskiy), whom they met a couple of days later after their arrival to Moscow.<sup>114</sup> The delegation attended another important meeting with Polyanskyi on December 22, 1944. In order to show their support of the Soviet regime to Polyanskyi, the representatives of the UGCC praised the liberation of the Church from the hands of the Germans.<sup>115</sup> According to Svitlana Hurkina's research, the representatives of the UGCC attempted to broach the topic of the Church's needs in the most appropriate and respectful way as well as protest Soviet persecution on the basis of the accusation that the church collaborated with the Nazis. Metropolitan Slipyi handed Polyanskyi a memorandum, requesting that the Church be restored to the rights it held prior to the Red Army's invasion in 1939, based on the 1925 Concordat between Poland and the Vatican.<sup>116</sup> On December 27, 1944, the delegation had a second meeting with Polyanskyi, which clarified the response of the state regarding the equality of all religions without exception.<sup>117</sup>

The tasks of the delegation included a meeting with the representative of the US Embassy, Reverend Leopold L.S. Braun.<sup>118</sup> The delegation managed to hold two meetings with

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<sup>113</sup> Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Yosyf Slipyi u dokumentah radyanskyh orhaniv derzhavnoyi bezpeky* (Kyiv, Ukraine: privately printed, 2012), 1: 54.

<sup>114</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 78.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

<sup>116</sup> Svitlana Hurkina, "Arkhymandryt Klymantiy Sheptytskyi u 1944 – 1947," *Storinky voyennoyi istoriyi Ukrainy* 13 (2010): 341 - 353.

<sup>117</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 82 – 83.

<sup>118</sup> Svitlana Hurkina, "Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva i Vatykan: sproby kontaktiv u 1944 – 1949 rr.," *Naukovyi visnyk Uzhhorodskoho Universytetu. Seriya Istorychna* 22 (2009): 73 – 90.

Fr. Braun.<sup>119</sup> Braun had a conversation with Klymentiy Sheptytskyi and then Ivan Kotiv, who negotiated that Braun would inform the Holy See of the difficulties faced by the UGCC under the Soviets.<sup>120</sup> Indeed, Father Sheptytskyi attempted to collect more information regarding current Soviet religious policies during the delegation's mission in Moscow.<sup>121</sup> Since the Soviets had started to arrest the clergy, he tried to clarify the features of the clergy's work.<sup>122</sup>

Nevertheless, the delegation to Moscow did not achieve the desired results. The Soviets did not consider the donation to the Red Cross to be sufficient support of the state and, most importantly, not sufficient enough to justify the Church's policy towards the Germans. Therefore, in November 1944, the representatives of the state commission on the investigation of Nazi crimes had requested that Slipyi sign the document produced from this inquiry. The Metropolitan, however, declined.<sup>123</sup>

This document performed an important role in Soviet policy towards Galician Ukrainians. With the document signed by the Metropolitan the state would draw the Church into anti-nationalist propaganda; and, as the Orthodox Church, Greek-Catholics would be forced to pray for the success of the Red Army.<sup>124</sup> In Metropolitan's point of view, it could lead to the church being controlled by the Soviets.<sup>125</sup> The state's support of the UGCC was contingent on such cooperation.<sup>126</sup> In other words, the Soviets might have shown more tolerance towards the UGCC, if the Church was involved in anti-nationalistic propaganda. The Soviets expected Greek-

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<sup>119</sup> Svitlana Hurkina, "Arkhymandryt Klymantiy Sheptytskyi u 1944 – 1947."

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 76.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 76 – 77.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

Catholics to pressure the nationalists to surrender.<sup>127</sup> For Church leaders such an act meant becoming controlled by the state, like the Russian Orthodox Church. Therefore, Church leaders refused to submit to this pressure.<sup>128</sup>

Nevertheless, Metropolitan Slipiy addressed the nationalists in the epistle “To the clergy and laity.” Primarily, the Metropolitan pointed out the unacceptable murders committed by the nationalists. Slipiy clearly stated that the Church did not support the nationalists’ policy and questioned their understanding of patriotism:

Our villages, destroyed with the war, are in terrible conditions. Armed gangs often come to villages in order to pull civilians into the resistance against the state under patriotic and social slogans, which attracts punitive expeditions and repressions of the innocent ... Executions become a daily phenomenon. Obviously, it harms the Church and Christian life in a significant way as every neglect of the Christian morality and God’s law... It is not true love... which perceives murders as a justified means for their short-term goal... Let our patriotism be the love to our people and ready for each sacrifice, however, let it not be the wrong-perceived nationalism, which grounds the love to the homeland in the hate and murder of those who do not share our views.<sup>129</sup>

For the Metropolitan this epistle was supposed to serve as a public demonstration of the position of the Church towards nationalists. Slipiy expected the letter to be sufficient to fulfil the Soviets’ demand for the Church to participate in the anti-nationalist struggle. From the viewpoint of Church authorities, publicly criticizing the nationalists might be a chance to save the Church from Soviet persecution. In fact, this public message of the Metropolitan to the radical nationalists did please the Soviets and state security.<sup>130</sup> This epistle was widely used in Soviet publications focusing on criticism of nationalists in order to undermine the impact of the nationalists in Galicia.<sup>131</sup> Nonetheless, the Metropolitan worried about the reputation of the

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>129</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 76 – 77.

<sup>130</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 20: 5 – 6 (Plan operativnih deystviy kasatelno UGKTs).

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

Church and its support among the laity, the majority of whom supported or were involved in the nationalist movement.<sup>132</sup>

Further complicating the relationship between the Soviet state and the UGCC was the revival of the Russian Orthodox Church during the Second World War. War losses prompted Stalin to focus on expanding his circle of supporters. The Nazi occupation had laid the ground for the development of Russian nationalism with the priority of protecting the homeland from invaders.<sup>133</sup> Similar to the role of the UGCC in Ukrainian national identity, the Russian Orthodox Church was also considered a part of national Russian heritage. Before the war, the Russian Orthodox Church was strongly persecuted under the Soviet regime. In 1943, Stalin had a discussion with NKVD chief, Lavrentiy Beria, and the Second Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Georgiy Malenkov, in which they gave useful information to Stalin regarding the position of the Russian Orthodox Church and possibilities of its political influence.<sup>134</sup> Stalin established a new Council of Russian Orthodox Church Affairs, which was led by Georgiy Karpov, the head of the secret department of NKVD.<sup>135</sup> The Council was primarily created as a means for regulating of Orthodox Church's activities, and it was expected to "serve as the link between the government and of the USSR and the Patriarch of Moscow and the All Russian Orthodox Church."<sup>136</sup> Alongside the Council for the Russian Orthodox Church affairs, which regulated the Russian Orthodox Church, the Council for Religious Cults, which was led by Konstantin Zaytsev and then Ivan Polyanskyi, was established in order to control

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<sup>132</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 83.

<sup>133</sup> Dennis J Dunn, "Pre-World War II Relations Between Stalin and the Catholic Church," *Journal of Church and State* 15, no. 2 (1973): 193-204. Accessed September 15, 2020. [www.jstor.org/stable/23914636](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23914636).

<sup>134</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 59.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> Tatiana Aleksandrovna Chumachenko, and Edward E. Roslof, *Church and State in Soviet Russia: Russian Orthodoxy from World War II to the Khrushchev Years* (Oxfordshire, Routledge, 2015), 17.

other religious organizations including the UGCC.<sup>137</sup> In addition, it is important to mention that Stalin met the Patriarch and allowed for the restoration of the office and the opening of the seminary in Moscow.

Upon regaining control over Galicia, the Soviets came back with a new plan to unite Orthodox and Greek-Catholic Churches with the Russian Orthodox Church, which was under the ‘patronage’ of the state. That is why the invasion of Soviet forces into the territory of Ukraine was accompanied by the accession, not always voluntary, of the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (which had been restored by the Germans) to the Moscow patriarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>138</sup> For the Ukrainian Orthodox Churches, a union with the Russian Orthodox Church was a way to avoid persecution for those who cooperated with the Nazis and to prove their loyalty to the state. The UGCC leader, Metropolitan Yosyf Slipy, sent a letter of greetings to a new Moscow Patriarch. The letter was published in order to show ‘friendly’ relations between the UGCC and the Russian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Simanskiy, who at that time had replaced Metropolitan Stargorodskiy.<sup>139</sup>

This idea of reuniting the Greek-Catholic Church with the Orthodox Church was not new. During the first invasion, a group of Greek-Catholic priest, mostly Russophiles, advocated for the church to join the Orthodox Church. Perhaps, this position hinted to the Soviets that shifting their policies might work to their advantage. Such a move would allow the state to keep the Ukrainian Church under its control, allowing for its eventual assimilation.

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<sup>137</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 60.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 61 – 62.

According to the approved plan of February 3, 1945, the NKVD started the process of preparing to liquidate the UGCC under the official policy of reunification with the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>140</sup> The same report briefly described the history of the UGCC and outlined a step-by-step process of reunification, implying that the impetus of reunification came from the UGCC.<sup>141</sup> The Soviets attempted to find people among the Greek-Catholic faithful who could promote a new union and force them to organize a pilot group that would have the authority to accept the union on behalf of the UGCC.<sup>142</sup> It was especially important for the Soviets to make the reunification look like an initiative of Greek-Catholics, as they were aware of the great influence of the clergy and of the negative attitude of Ukrainian peasants towards the ruling authorities. The NKVD chose Father Havryil Kostelnyk, who used to promote the Church's separation from Rome, to be its leader.<sup>143</sup> In order to convince the faithful to join the initiative, the NKVD repressed nationalists, Ukrainian patriots and anti-Soviet activists including, Greek-Catholic clergy to set an example of what would happen to other priests who did not cooperate with the state.<sup>144</sup>

After the repression of many ordinary clergy, the NKVD moved to the repression of Church authorities. The NKVD certificate of March 13, 1945, mandated the arrest of the Metropolitan Slipyi, Bishops Budka, Khomyshyn, and Charnetskyi.<sup>145</sup> After a month of careful investigations, the NKVD issued a warrant for arrest of all of the UGCC leaders in April 11, 1945.<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>140</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 20: 1 – 6.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Likvidatsiya UHKTs*, 1: 477 – 479.

While the priests previously had to deal with anti-religious propaganda and various forms of oppression in different spheres, now they were forced to defend themselves from persecution for being pro-Ukrainian, and for their alleged involvement in nationalist movements. The clergy also experienced pressure for supporting the idea of reunification with the Russian Orthodox Church, which worsened after the union was formally accepted in 1946. Even though the state had found new reasons for persecuting the Greek-Catholic clergy, the methods they used, in particular by the NKVD, remained very similar to those of their first arrival in 1939. Priests involved in pro-Ukrainian and anti-Soviet activities were still interrogated, imprisoned, deported or executed. The ways that clergy responded to these policies did not undergo significant changes. They were given the same two stark options: to collaborate or resist.

In most cases the motivation of the priests can be explained as collaboration for survival. There is one figure among Greek-Catholic priests whose agreement to collaborate raises heated debate among scholars. Indeed, questions about Havryil Kostelnyk's reasons for cooperation with the state come up repeatedly. Unlike other priests, who in some cases cooperated with the NKVD, Kostelnyk was the first, who not only collaborated, but showed some level of interest in the NKVD's proposal of unifying the UGCC with the Russian Orthodox Church.

The figure of Havryil Kostelnyk appears to be a tragic one in the history of the UGCC. On the one hand, he was a theologian with a brilliant education, while on the other; Kostelnyk is seen as a betrayer who helped the Soviets to destroy the Church. Father Kostelnyk was born into a family of Ukrainian immigrants in Serbia in 1886. In order to study in the Gymnasium, he moved to Zagreb, Croatia. Later, Kostelnyk was enrolled in Lviv Seminary, and after graduation continued his studies at a university in Switzerland, where he received a doctoral degree in theology. While studying, Kostelnyk started his writing activity, which later resulted in

numerous philosophical and theological writings. In 1913 he was ordained. He taught for ten years at the Lviv Greek-Catholic seminary and at the Theological Academy in Lviv.

Being a highly educated priest, why did he become a target for the Soviet state security? First of all, Father Kostelnyk explicitly spoke out against those who wished to combine Orthodox rites with Latin ones in the UGCC in his sermons and writings. Kostelnyk published a paper called “Whether it is possible to transform the Uniate Church in Western Ukraine into the Autocephalous Orthodox Church?”<sup>147</sup> In this paper he stated that the transformation could occur only when the Church could find itself secure from any threat, which was not the situation during the last few years.<sup>148</sup> Kostelnyk, nevertheless, did not deny the potential for change within the Church. The fact that the question of the return to the Orthodox Church was raised by a Greek-Catholic priest caught the attention of the Soviets since it matched their plan to reunite the UGCC with the Russian Orthodox Church. According to a report of the NKVD in the Lviv region, Father Kostelnyk disapproved of the connection between the UGCC and the Vatican.<sup>149</sup> Moreover, he claimed that he had actively endorsed the return of the UGCC to the Orthodox Church.<sup>150</sup> According to his personal beliefs, the UGCC, which originated from the Orthodox Church, should return to its starting point, which would prevent the Latinization of rites and break the church’s connection with the Vatican.

During his NKVD interrogations, Father Kostelnyk was questioned regarding the renewal of his activity, and whether he was ready to be in charge of the movement for the establishment

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<sup>147</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 3, op. 145, d. 7. 1: 39 – 41 (Referat doktora Gavriila Kostelnika “Vozmozhno li prevrashchenie uniatskoy tserkvi v Zapadnoy Ukraine v avtokefalnuyu pravoslavnyuyu tserkov? ”).

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>149</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 1: 145 – 155 (Dokladnaya zapiska UNKVD po Lvovskoy oblasti k NKVD USSR ob hode ispolneniya plana operativnih meropriyatiy kasatelno UGKTs).

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in western Ukraine.<sup>151</sup> Even though Kostelnyk did not officially enter into a partnership with the Soviets, he met with NKVD agents on a regular basis.<sup>152</sup> He even presented his view of the transformation of the UGCC into the Autocephalous Orthodox Church in written form.<sup>153</sup> However, he maintained that such a union was impossible due to the strong influence of the Metropolitan Sheptytskyi.<sup>154</sup> Father Kostelnyk upheld this position until Metropolitan Sheptytskyi passed away in November 1944.

Since 1945, the NKVD's conversations with Kostelnyk mainly focused on the preparation for the reunification and the establishment of the Initiative group<sup>155</sup> for this process. According to an interview conducted with Father Hryhoriy Budzinskyi, who was a member of the delegation to Moscow, Kostelnyk had a secret meeting with the Soviets even during their mission.<sup>156</sup> Indeed, the clergy had already assumed his collaboration with state security services. Moreover, as Yosyf Kladochnyi noted in his interview, after the arrest of Greek-Catholic leaders, Kostelnyk initiated meetings in order to convince priests to join the Initiative group and support his idea of the establishment of the Orthodox Church out of the UGCC.<sup>157</sup> Kostelnyk published his article, "The Apostle Peter and Popes of Rome, or the Dogmatic Grounds of the Papacy," which reflected his view of the role of the UGCC in the history and lives of Ukrainians. Criticizing the Vatican and the union, Kostelnyk emphasized the inevitable intolerance of Greek-

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid.

<sup>155</sup> 'Initiative group' was planned to be created as the one organized by the Greek-Catholic priests to sing the union with the Russian Orthodox church. The Soviets searched for the priests who could support the split with the Vatican and present the idea of re-unification with the Orthodox church as their own in order to hide the intentions and interests of the Soviets.

<sup>156</sup> Father Heorhiy Budzinskyi, interview by Gudzyak B. Lviv, April 30, 1993, interview П-1-1-1670.3, transcript, Archive of the Institute of Church History, Lviv, Ukraine.

<sup>157</sup> Father Yosyf Kladochnyi, interview by Gudzyak B. Lviv, May 27, 1993, interview П-1-1-304.17, transcript, Archive of the Institute of Church History, Lviv, Ukraine.

Catholics by the Soviets, therefore the reunification was the only way to survive.<sup>158</sup> He argued that the reunification could be the only option to legalize the Church in the state. Kostelnyk thought that the Church could maintain its rites and activities separate from the Russian Orthodox Church by being a part of its administrative structure. Perhaps, Father Kostelnyk naively assumed the Church could remain the same even under the control of the Soviets.

Fear for the safety of his own family could also be identified as a contributing factor to his cooperation with the Soviet state. NKVD agents attempted to intimidate Father Kostelnyk, accusing his sons of anti-Soviet activity since they both were members of the Galicia division.<sup>159</sup> NKVD reports and interrogation protocols demonstrate that the Soviets had used Kostelnyk's family members in order to push him towards collaborating.<sup>160</sup> During the interrogation protocol of Bohdan Kostelnyk, NKVD agents asked about the current occupation as well as the political and religious views of his father.<sup>161</sup> The report of UNKVD in Lviv region also claimed to use information retrieved during the interrogations of Bohdan Kostelnyk in 1941 for the questioning of Father Havryil Kostelnyk.<sup>162</sup> The same report proves that the involvement of Bohdan Kostelnyk in the nationalist movement was used as a 'persuasive means' to force Father Kostelnyk to cooperate with the NKVD and the Soviet state in their plans regarding the Church.<sup>163</sup> Therefore, the nationalistic activity of his sons and Soviet policies towards the nationalists in some way influenced Father Kostelnyk's willingness to accept the offer by the Soviets to collaborate. Nevertheless, in this timeline, threatening his family members was not

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<sup>158</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 123 – 124.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>160</sup> For example, the report of the arrest of Father Havryil's son Bohdan found in *DA SBU*, f. 3, op. 145, d. 7. 1: 28.

<sup>161</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 3, op. 145, d. 7. 1: 32 – 35 (Protokol doprosa Bohdana Kostelnika).

<sup>162</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 65, d. C-9113. 1: 145 – 155.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

enough motivation for him, but we cannot completely dismiss it as a possible reason to collaborate.

In addition, Father Kostelnyk's personal hostility with Metropolitan Yosyf Slipyi turned out to be one more reason to pressure him. Kostelnyk and Slipyi argued about theological issues, which resulted in Kostelnyk being prohibited from teaching in the Lviv seminary, which was managed by Yosyf Slipyi in 1930. One may assume that the personal antipathy between Father Havryil and Metropolitan Slipyi led to Kostelnyk's explicit opposition, which matched the plan by the Soviets. Furthermore, Father Kostelnyk's personal characteristics aggravated the conflict. Arguments Kostelnyk had with the new Church authorities could have contributed to his final decision to collaborate with the Soviets. While under the control and protection of the Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi, Father Havryil could resist Soviet pressure. Metropolitan Sheptytskyi was highly respected by Father Kostelnyk, even though their views on the future of the UGCC differed. While Metropolitan Sheptytskyi was in charge, Kostelnyk did not begin to implement the Soviets' plans on the Church, although he kept in touch with the NKVD through constant meetings and interrogations. However, the situation altered with the changes in the UGCC leadership. Father Kostelnyk did not respect the authority of the new Metropolitan. Considering his disagreements with Metropolitan Slipyi, there was no one among UGCC leadership who could act as a substitute for deceased Metropolitan Sheptytskyi as a role model for Kostelnyk.

An analysis of Kostelnyk's collaboration reveals the methods that the Soviets applied in order to recruit Greek-Catholic clergy and shows some of the reasons why some clergy accepted such a partnership. The case of Father Kostelnyk is unique in the UGCC's history. Both external pressure and inner beliefs influenced Kostelnyk's decision. One may argue it is impossible to

separate the causes of Father Kostelnyk's collaboration from one another. All of the reasons described above could have contributed to his decision and there is no exact answer in either NKVD or Church documents. On the contrary, the NKVD documents on Father Kostelnyk contain evidence on all of these possible reasons, which means that they were used for recruiting Father Kostelnyk for collaboration, including his argument with Metropolitan Slipiy and his sons' involvement in the nationalist movement.

These documents, however, are limited as Father Kostelnyk does not have the chance to speak for himself. The only thing we know about his personal opinion on the UGCC and its further development is that he supported the union with the Orthodox Church; however, he meant the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church. Prior to his interaction with the Soviets,<sup>164</sup> Kostelnyk viewed the Greek-Catholic Church as not being ready for integration into the Orthodox fold and he did not mention the idea of a reunification with the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). After the second occupation, Father Kostelnyk agreed to support the Soviet initiative to merge Churches under the ROC believing that the Greek-Catholic Church would be able to save some of its autonomy and administrative structure.

Not only did Father Kostelnyk accept the offer to collaborate and work on the reunification of the UGCC with the Russian Orthodox Church, he also aimed to persuade other priests. One of these priests who agreed under pressure from Kostelnyk and the NKVD was Father Antony Pelvetskyi, a parish priest in Kopychyntsi, Stanislaviv eparchy. Father Pelvetskyi was one of those priests who was concerned with promoting national identity among his parishioners. During Nazi occupation he was a member of the regional Ukrainian National

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<sup>164</sup> The article "Whether it is possible to transform the Uniate Church in Western Ukraine into the Autocephalous Orthodox Church?" mentioned above, was written before Galicia was occupied by the Soviets in 1939.

Committee and later continued his activities as part of OUN.<sup>165</sup> Additionally, Pelvetskyi followed those who welcomed Hitler and his army to Galicia and encouraged Ukrainians to join the SS-Galicia division.<sup>166</sup> Father Pelvetskyi was reported to the NKVD regarding his anti-Soviet activities. Indeed, his homilies often criticized the Soviet regime.<sup>167</sup> In addition to his active pro-Ukrainian stance, Father Pelvetskyi belonged to the circle of Bishop Hryhoriy Khomyshyn of Stanislaviv eparchy, and he was often invited for personal conversations with the Bishop.<sup>168</sup>

Perhaps his close relations with Church authorities and involvement in the nationalist movement brought him to the attention of the NKVD. Moreover, he seemed to the Soviets to be a good candidate for membership in the Initiative group since he had sufficient authority among other priests and laity due to the trust of Bishop Khomyshyn.<sup>169</sup> For these reasons, the Soviets wanted to recruit him. Father Pelvetskyi was not married, therefore, he could not be intimidated by threatening to persecute his family. Therefore, he accepted the offer to become one of the members of the Initiative group, most likely out of fear for his own life. Later, Father Pelvetskyi was ordained as a Russian Orthodox Bishop and signed the reunification with the Russian Orthodox Church.

In addition to a group of clergy who accepted the Soviet offer to be recruited as agents, there was a number of priests whose partnership raises questions about collaboration. Father Yosyf Kladochnyi is an example of this ‘unusual’ form of partnership. He came from an average family; however, he had the chance to receive a high-quality education with the help of

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<sup>165</sup> Report of UNKDB in Ternopil region to NKDB of the Ukrainian SSR about operational-investigative activity regarding Greek-Catholic clergy. DA SBU, f.65, spr. C-9113. 19: 430 – 437.

<sup>166</sup> DA SBU, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19: 430 – 437 (Dokladnaya zapiska UNKVD po Ternopolskoy oblasti k NKVD USSR o operativno-sledstvennih meropriyatiyah kasatelno grek-katolicheskogo duhovenstva).

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> DA SBU, f. 65, d. C-9113. 19: 430 – 437.

<sup>169</sup> DA SBU, f. 65, d. C-9113. 21: 430 – 431 (Doklad S. Karina o razgovore i doprosah predstavatelya Stanislavskoy yeparhiyi, Antoniyem Pelvetskim).

Metropolitan Sheptytskyi.<sup>170</sup> After graduating from a school abroad, Kladochnyi returned to Lviv and worked in St. George's Cathedral. In 1934 he had been assigned as chaplain for prisoners. Sheptytskyi had carried out these duties until he was arrested in 1939 by the Poles. Through his position as a chaplain, Kladochnyi helped Stepan Bandera, the imprisoned leader of the Ukrainian nationalist movement, to keep in touch with his followers.<sup>171</sup> Later, the Metropolitan appointed Father Kladochnyi as his ambassador to the Pope to pass letters to the Holy See.<sup>172</sup> After the establishment of the Galicia division in 1943, Kladochnyi became a chaplain for the SS-division Galicia.<sup>173</sup> After the establishment of the Initiative group, the NKVD pursued Father Kladochnyi<sup>174</sup> because he had close relations with Church leaders and had authority among the clergy.

Father Kladochnyi's behavior shows how priests adapted to the regime. While keeping in touch with the underground nationalist movement and staying loyal to the Church, Kladochnyi agreed to report to the NKVD regarding the situation within the Church and the nationalists.<sup>175</sup> At that time, Father Kladochnyi went through daily interrogations and reported to the Soviets about the details of his relationship with the Sheptytskyi family. Being aware of his position in the Church, the information he reported was classified as valuable for the NKVD. Indeed, Father Kladochnyi reported that Sheptytskyi encouraged young Ukrainians to join the SS-division Galicia and priests to become chaplains, being aware that the Metropolitan never attempted to keep it a secret.<sup>176</sup> Father Kladochnyi was questioned and reported about his duties in the Church

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<sup>170</sup> *Litopys neskorenoyi Ukrainy* (Lviv: Prosvita, 1993), 1: 513.

<sup>171</sup> Mykola Posivnych, "Uviaznennya Stepana Bandery v polskyh tyurmah," *Ukrainskyi vyzvolnyi ruh: naukovyi zbirnyk* 17 (2012): 87 – 102.

<sup>172</sup> *Litopys neskorenoyi Ukrainy*, 516.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> Father Kladochnyi, interview.

<sup>175</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 13, d. 372. 33: 354 - 356 (Protokol doprosa Iosifa Kladochnogo).

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

for the Metropolitan including his visits to the Vatican; however, he avoided reporting any details on the contents of the Metropolitan's letter to the Pope.<sup>177</sup> This shows how Kladochnyi selectively provided information to the NKVD. He also only revealed the names of those involved in nationalist activities who had already escaped abroad and therefore were out of the reach of the Soviet regime.<sup>178</sup>

Analyzing Father Kladochnyi's case, it is clear that his cooperation with the NKVD consisted of reporting on his activities within the Church and about well-known information, which could not be applied for further use by the NKVD. Therefore, during the two years that the NKVD case on Kladochnyi was opened, the Soviets probably realised that Father Kladochnyi could no longer be used as an informant or figured out he did not provide all of the information he knew, especially on the nationalists. In addition, Father Havryil Kostelnyk attempted to convince him to support the initiative for the transformation of the UGCC into an Orthodox Church; however, his efforts were not successful.<sup>179</sup> After Metropolitan Sheptytskyi passed away and Kostelnyk had begun pressuring him, Father Kladochnyi considered escaping abroad.<sup>180</sup> He contacted the Polish officer, Margulyas, who promised to help him flee across the Soviet-German border; however, the plan failed as NKVD agents arrested Father Kladochnyi and sent him to prison in Lviv.<sup>181</sup>

In the case of Father Yosyf Kladochnyi, fear of Soviet state security services forced him to undertake several compromising actions. Indeed, it was under fear of imprisonment that he

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<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Father Kladochnyi, interview.

<sup>180</sup> Father Kladochnyi, interview.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid. And found in *DA SBU*, f. 65. d. C-9113. 16: 197 – 201 (Operativnoye uvedomlenie 2-go otdela UNKVD po Lvovskoy oblasti ob viskazivaniyah Gavriila Kostelnika).

attempted to escape as well as agreed to report some information, since he had already been in jail. Another possible reason for such behaviour could be his attempt to show favour to Soviet security services in order to gain their tolerance. Perhaps Father Kladochniy considered it the right decision to answer the questions of the Soviets. In his opinion, reporting on something was better than not reporting at all. This basic information did not help the NKVD in their investigations on national activists, who were the main focus of the Soviets. Therefore, it is ambiguous if this ‘partnership’ could be classified as collaboration.

For the NKVD, Father Kladochniy was an obvious target. According to Soviet officials, the international connection of the UGCC with the Vatican was a cause for concern. Since Kladochniy was the ambassador of the UGCC in Rome, it was not surprising that he was dragged in front of the NKVD. His involvement in the nationalist movement also contributed to the Soviets’ interest in him. Considering all of this, why did the Soviets not arrest him immediately? Likely the NKVD wanted him to reveal important information on the nationalists or on Church policies, which never happened, before arresting him

Some cases of ‘partnerships’ – like Father Kladochniy’s and Father Heorhiy Moskva’s (described in Chapter One) can be distinguished from other examples of collaboration. When discussing collaboration, the motivation of the individual has to be taken into consideration. Intentions are the first indicators that point to voluntary collaboration. It is important to note that intention to collaborate does not mean initiation; intention defines the reasons for accepting or rejecting the offer to collaborate, while initiation points to situations in which the offer to collaborate comes from the individual, not from the NKVD. In some cases, people intent to initiate cooperation, as is evident from the example of Russophile priests. This way of interacting with the NKVD should be considered collaboration.

A number of clergy endured severe pressure from the NKVD in their attempts to recruit priests as their agents. Priests who were compromised on various issues such as involvement in nationalist movements, rejection of Soviet policies, and even the violation of Church laws, came to accept the offers made by Soviet officials. In the cases of priests being compromised on the basis of violating Church laws, clergymen agreed to collaborate in order to not have their transgressions revealed to other priests and parishioners. Even though these priests often had very few options other than to become informants for the NKVD, they performed important tasks that allowed for the extension of Soviet power in the region, including spying on other priests and Church authorities and reporting on their anti-Soviet and nationalist activities. Their cooperation can still be understood as collaboration.

Yet, Fathers Kladochnyi and Moskva's cases appear to be different from other cases of collaboration. Yosyf Kladochnyi indeed provided the NKVD with some information on the Sheptytskyi family, focusing on their contribution to Ukrainian cultural development, and his relationships with them. Nevertheless, the Sheptytskyi family was well known and influential in Galicia, which made each member of the family a public person. The clergy were proud of their relations with any of the members of the family, who were highly respected in Galicia for their cultural and leadership activity, especially with Andrey Sheptytskyi, so they did not try to hide these connections. However, the newly arrived Soviet officials were, in general, aware of the reputation of the family in the society but did not know how many priests belonged to the close circle of his supporters. Therefore, any information about Sheptytskyi and his followers was considered to be important. Being interrogated, priests realized that they might be able to avoid imprisonment by providing something well known about Andrey Sheptytskyi, which would not have negative consequences for him, as he never aimed to hide his pro-Ukrainian activities

within the Church and the society. Father Kladochnyi did not reveal any names of people involved in illegal activity, so his cooperation did not have a severe negative impact on the Church and clergy. In fact, Metropolitan Sheptytskyi could expect and knew that Father Kladochnyi was interrogated. This cooperation most likely came out of his fear of imprisonment or repression and became his way to remain devoted to the Church and avoid persecution.

Overall, each case of cooperation has to be analyzed individually prior to being called collaboration. All aspects have to be considered such as the motivation, circumstances or consequences of cooperation and the information they reveal. For example, in the case of Father Heorhiy Moskva (analyzed in Chapter One) motivation defined the nature of his cooperation with the NKVD. In fact, he ignorantly told detailed information on the Church while imprisoned to his cellmate who was an undercover NKVD agent. Indeed, the cooperation of Father Heorhiy was accidental since he never had an intention to do so. Later, he was pressured to collaborate, but he refused, fled and escaped abroad. On the contrary, Father Yosyf Kladochnyi did have an intention to cooperate but he never revealed essential Church information. The goal of his cooperation was rather to protect himself and “feed” the NKVD some information. At the same time, Father Kladochnyi carefully selected the information he reported to ensure it could not potentially lead to persecution. This can be defined as serving both Church and the state. That is why, it is evident that both examples of cooperation with the NKVD constituted non-collaboration.

Therefore, in regard to those differences in ways of cooperation with the Soviet state security services, two different groups of priests can be recognized. One group incorporated those whose cooperation is identified as collaboration based on the judgement made out of motivation and the results of such cooperation. Priests who volunteered to become an NKVD

agent and reported on others are included in the group. Another group, separated from the previous one, covered priests whose 'partnership' did not benefit the NKVD or was accidental.

To conclude, this chapter deals with the new obstacles for the UGCC created by the Soviets and their policies during the second occupation of Galicia. At this time, a new approach to the Church was chosen by state officials. The renewed Russian Orthodox Church was under the state's patronage and therefore other Eastern Orthodox Churches, including the UGCC, were forced to join this new religious institution. Moreover, the period of German occupation provided the NKVD with new reasons to persecute the Church. In fact, the involvement of Greek-Catholic clergy in the nationalist movement allowed the Soviets to accuse them of high treason. At this point, Church authorities tried to pick the most optimal way to demonstrate their neutrality. The change in leadership did not influence the general direction of the Church's policies – it still declared its separation from the state and politics and called on clergy to follow the same position. Additionally, this chapter focuses on the variety of motivations influenced the involvement of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic clergy with the Soviet state. These examples show two possible ways that priests chose to respond to Soviet policies. One model was collaboration, and the other – accidental or selective cooperation.

## **Chapter Three:**

### **Resistance to the Regime**

During the first invasion, the Soviet state initiated an anti-religious policy and a widespread persecution of advocates of nationalist movement, including the UGCC clergy and laity. It threatened everyone who explicitly declared involvement in any religious organization. Under such circumstances, the Greek-Catholic clergy were forced to deal with repression and persecution. While the Church authorities such as Metropolitan Sheptytskyi advised the clergy not to get involved in politics, encouraging the separation of the Church and the state, he simultaneously condemned Communism as an ideology and instructed the clergy to spread religious education in spite of anti-religious policy. Being aware of the official Church's attitude towards the state and the Metropolitan's guidelines, priests still had to make their own decisions about how to respond to Soviet policy.

During the first invasion, the majority of priests followed the lead of Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi. Indeed, they followed his advice to stay in their parishes and keep preaching the Christian faith through sermons and catechization despite the massive anti-religious arrangements in the society. Even though the Soviets posed a threat to Greek-Catholics, many priests remained in their parishes.

However, the situation changed radically with the Nazi invasion. The events that happened during the German occupation changed the attitude of the Soviets toward the UGCC. The intensification of the nationalist movement and the clergy's involvement in it was a sufficient reason for Soviet officials to accuse them of supporting the Third Reich and of participating in anti-Soviet demonstrations. Priests looked for any possible way to accommodate

and protect themselves and their families. The easiest option for priests was to escape. Indeed, as Bishop Mykolai Charnetskyi confirmed in one of his interrogation protocols, many priests had escaped from Galicia to the West out of fear of repression.<sup>182</sup> The Metropolitan and Bishop Charnetskyi received hundreds of letters with requests from priests to be appointed to parishes in the far western parts of the Archeparchy—areas which were under Polish rule and belonged to the UGCC. At this time, priests who remained in Galicia were searching for available methods to adapt to the regime.

In general, the period of World War II and, in particular, the relations between the UGCC and Soviet authorities, is widely discussed among scholars. For the most part, researchers tend to focus their analysis on how Church authorities sought out accommodation with the regime. Nevertheless, Svitlana Hurkina identifies three groups of priests based on their reaction to state policies.<sup>183</sup> Hurkina focuses on the period after the liquidation of the Church in 1946 and looks into the responses of all Greek-Catholics, including bishops, clergy, and laity. In terms of clergy, she divides their options into three categories. They could sign the re-unification with the ROC, resist the union and go underground, or give up the priesthood.<sup>184</sup>

The previous two chapters of this thesis were focused on state policies towards Greek-Catholics and the clergy's ways of accommodation to changing political situations—in particular, their various methods of collaboration or cooperation. A number of priests, however, refused to cooperate with state security services despite the intimidation tactics employed by the

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<sup>182</sup> *DA SBU*, f.13, d. 372. 33: 257 – 274 (Protokol doprosa Nikolaya Charnetskogo).

<sup>183</sup> Svitlana Hurkina, “‘Obraz syly duhu’: hreko-katolytske dukhovenstvo Lvivskoyi arhyeparhiyi pislya Druhoyi Svitovoyi viyny i problema personifikatsiyi relihiynyh perekonan ta identychnosti,” *Ukraina moderna* 11 (2007): 99 – 110.

<sup>184</sup> Svitlana Hurkina, “The Response of Ukrainian Greek-Catholics to the Soviet State's Liquidation and Persecution of their Church: 1945-1989,” *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe* 34, no 4 (2014): 1 – 13.

Soviets. Therefore, this chapter presents case studies of priests who formed the opposition to Soviet policies, focusing on the reasons for their decision to resist. These priests were unshakable in their loyalty to the Church, which they conflated with their Ukrainian patriotic ideas. This group of clergy declared the Soviet state to be the enemy not only of the UGCC, but also of the Ukrainian nation.

Other scholars have examined the circumstances that pushed priests to make this decision. For example, Kateryna Budz focuses on the influence of the laity on parish priests' willingness to support reunification with the ROC. She is convinced that parishioners had a significant role in shaping whether priests resisted or supported the union.<sup>185</sup> In contrast, this chapter presents a correlation between nationalism and Ukrainian Greek-Catholic faith as a main reason for resisting the pressure of the Soviet regime. The link between religion, politics and national identity became essential part of Ukrainian culture, especially of Galician Ukrainians. This is why, religion, namely Catholicism or Greek-Catholicism, affected or, in some cases, even defined Galicians' perception of politics.

As resistance was antithetical to the Soviet state, these priests realized their beliefs might become fatal. Many gave their lives for the Church and the nation as they were accused of spreading anti-Soviet propaganda. In the post-Soviet era, twenty-eight Greek-Catholics, including priests, monks and one layperson, who were tortured by the Soviets in the middle of the twentieth century for being 'defiant',<sup>186</sup> were beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2002 for sacrificing their lives in the name of the faith.

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<sup>185</sup> Kateryna Budz, "Hreko-Katolytski myriany v umovah povoyennoyi likvidatsiyi UHKTs v Halychyni," *Naukovi zapysky NaUKMA* 143, (2013): 26 – 30.

<sup>186</sup> Among those, there was one priest tortured by the Nazi.

One of those recognized by Pope John Paul II was Vasyl Velychkovsky. He was from a priestly family actively involved in the pro-Ukrainian movement.<sup>187</sup> Vasyl was born in 1903 in Stanislaviv (present-day Ivano-Frankivsk).<sup>188</sup> As a young boy, Vasyl had already decided to become a priest. Later he entered Lviv seminary; however, he continued his studies in theology at the Redemptorist monastery in Lviv.<sup>189</sup> In 1925 he joined a monastery of Redemptorist order. After completion of his novitiate, Father Velychkovsky started his work as a teacher of religion, Ukrainian language, literature, history, and geography at the Redemptorist Gymnasium.<sup>190</sup> In 1926 in Stanislaviv he was assigned to evangelical missions for the next twenty years. Velychkovsky started preaching in western Ukrainian villages and then moved to Volhynia.<sup>191</sup>

With the start of the WWII in September 1939, he returned to Stanislaviv.<sup>192</sup> As Velychkovsky mentions in his autobiography, “in 1940 local Soviet authorities wanted to force us out of our monastery<sup>193</sup> and take it over for the state. We told the people. In a few days, the girls and the women of the Confraternity of the Mother of Perpetual Help gathered several thousand signatures in protest against the expulsion of our fathers and took these signatures to the chief procurator...”<sup>194</sup> Such extensive support kept the monastery from being destroyed.<sup>195</sup> Despite Bishop Khomyshyn’s warnings to abstain from public liturgy services so as not to provoke conflict with the Soviets, Father Velychkovsky served a public liturgy with a mass

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<sup>187</sup> Vasyl Velychkovsky, C. Ss. R., *Be Not Afraid: A Martyr’s Story: An Autobiography of Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky*, ed. and trans. Rev. John Sianchuk and Rev. Stephen J. Bachtalows`ky, C. Ss. R. (Yorkton, Sask.: Redeemer’s Voice Press, 2002), 6.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 20 – 23.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 – 30.

<sup>192</sup> Vasyl Velychkovsky, C. Ss. R. *An Autobiography of Blessed Vasyl*, 36 – 37.

<sup>193</sup> The monastery belonged to the Fathers of Redemptorist order.

<sup>194</sup> Vasyl Velychkovsky, C. Ss. R. *An Autobiography of Blessed Vasyl*, 37.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

procession through the city with icons and blue-yellow ribbons.<sup>196</sup> A couple of days after the event, he received the first letter from NKVD. He burnt it as well as the next two. The NKVD sent an agent to Velychkovsky`s home to make him come to the local NKVD office.<sup>197</sup> Immediately, Father Velychkovsky was taken into interrogation where he claimed that he “preached against the Soviets, always and everywhere.”<sup>198</sup> However, he was released with the warning to stop his activities.

During the Nazi occupation he moved to Kamyanets-Podilskyi for the mission, where he continued his pastoral activity as a Redemptorist.<sup>199</sup> He stayed there until the second invasion of the Red Army and then moved to Ternopil where he got to know that there were no Redemptorist priests left.<sup>200</sup> In 1945 Father Velychkovsky was taken to NKVD office for interrogation once again. This time he was asked to support the initiative to unite the UGCC with the ROC in exchange for his freedom.<sup>201</sup> To this Velychkovsky replied, “No, never, under any circumstances!” even though he believed that he might not be allowed to leave the NKVD office.<sup>202</sup> Father Velychkovsky remained steadfast in his belief that the UGCC should not join the ROC.<sup>203</sup> Later in 1945 Velychkovsky was accused of anti-Soviet activity, arrested, and brought to the court in Kyiv.<sup>204</sup> He was sentenced to execution;<sup>205</sup> however, his sentence was changed to ten years in prison. No explanation for this change was found among the NKVD files

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 37 - 38.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 39 – 40.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 43 – 49.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 49 – 51.

<sup>201</sup> *Blessed Vasyl Velychkovsky Shrine and Museum Archives (BVVSMA)*, f. 2, I, A. 1: 269 (Protokol doprosa Vasilii Velichkovskogo).

<sup>202</sup> *BVVSMA*, f. 2, I, A. 1: 268 – 272.

<sup>203</sup> *BVVSMA*, f. 2, I, A. 1: 269.

<sup>204</sup> *BVVSMA*, f. 2, I, A. 1: 43 (Order na arest Vasilii Velichkovskogo).

<sup>205</sup> *BVVSMA*, f. 2, I, A. 1: 218 – 219 (Prigovor Vasiliiu Velichkovskomu).

kept in Ukrainian archives.<sup>206</sup> After Velychkovsky was deported to Vorkuta, he continued to carry on his priestly responsibilities and served as a pastor for prisoners.<sup>207</sup> In the 1960s Bishop Velychkovsky spent several more years in prison in Komunarsk for disobeying Soviet religious laws, after which he was granted a temporary travel document and sent abroad without permission to return to the Soviet Union. Velychkovsky was reunited with his family in Yugoslavia. He later moved to Rome and then was invited to come to Canada. Before his deportation to Rome Metropolitan Slipyi ordained Velychkovsky a bishop and he became the new leader of the underground Church. Bishop Velychkovsky spent the last year of his life in Winnipeg, Canada, where he passed away. After the beatification of Bishop Vasyl Velychkovsky by Pope John Paul II, his body was exhumed and is now placed in the shrine in St. Joseph's Ukrainian Catholic Church in Winnipeg.

Father Mykolva Khmilyovskyi provides another example of the Greek-Catholic priests committed to both the faith and to Ukraine's national struggle. He was born into a peasant family in the village Pokropyvna, Ternopil region. His parents were able to provide their son with a good education, and he was accepted to the Lviv University to pursue theological studies. Khmilyovskyi completed his theological education in Vienna and was later ordained a Greek-Catholic priest. Father Khmilyovskyi and his wife would move to Zolochiv, Lviv region, where he started his active political life. At this point he worked as a catechist and a teacher at a local school. With the start of WWI, Father Khmilyovskyi joined the Ukrainian Galician Army in national liberation struggle. During the interwar period, Khmilyovskyi was assigned as a school principal in Zolochiv as well as a patron of the local branch of *Plast*, the Ukrainian Scout

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<sup>206</sup> *BVVSM*, f. 2, I, A. 1: 236 (Izminenie prigovora Vasiliu Velichkovskomu). This decision came from Superior Court in Moscow, so probably some evidence might be there.

<sup>207</sup> Vasyl Velychkovsky, C. Ss. R. *An Autobiography of Blessed Vasyl*, 67 – 70.

organization. At that time, Father Khmilyovskiy endeavoured to reduce the distribution of the pro-Russian periodical journal *Selrob*. Later, Khmilyovskiy had to move with his family to the village Mshana, Lviv region, where he continued his teaching activity. His fruitful work in the Church earned him the position of a counsellor in the Metropolitan's consistory and a place in the Metropolitan's court.<sup>208</sup>

As the Soviet state began its final attack on the UGCC in 1944 – 1945 by arresting Church leaders, Father Khmilyovskiy took the initiative to organize priests for the resistance<sup>209</sup> to the reunification with the ROC and was proclaimed a leader<sup>210</sup> of the underground Lviv diocese. Not only did he publicly distribute postcards against those who supported the Initiative group, but he also led the opposition in Lviv diocese and managed to offer financial aid to arrested Church leaders.<sup>211</sup> In the mid-1940s, the NKVD discovered a connection between Khmilyovskiy and OUN-UPA. He often corresponded with nationalist leaders and had frequent meetings with them.<sup>212</sup> In one of the letters, Khmilyovskiy emphasized his hope that UPA might become a core of a new “healthy life.”<sup>213</sup> The postcards which he received from UPA leaders could be found in his criminal case. Due to his pro-Ukrainian and religious activity, Khmilyovskiy was arrested first in 1950 and then went through years of imprisonment in Verkhne Uralsk, Siberia.<sup>214</sup>

Another example of a Greek-Catholic priest who conflated his religious and national identities was Father Roman Berest. He was a parish priest in a couple of villages in Galicia—as

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<sup>208</sup> *Spysook dukhovenstva Lvivskoyi Arhyeparhiyi* (Lviv, 1944), 8.

<sup>209</sup> For example, *Arkhiv Upravlinnya SBU Lvivskoyi oblasti (AU SBU LO)*, f. 60, d. II-35073. 1: 94 (Doklad o deiatelnosti Niloaya Khmilyovskogo).

<sup>210</sup> *AU SBU LO*, f. 60, d. II-35073. 1: 209.

<sup>211</sup> For example, *AU SBU LO*, f. 60, d. II-35073. 1: 94 or 154.

<sup>212</sup> For example, *AU SBU LO*, f. 60, d. II-35073. 1: 39 – 40.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> *AU SBU LO*, f. 60, d. II-35073. 1: 4 (Prigovor Nikolaiu Khmilyovskomu).

his daughter Marta Baltro stated in an interview, her father never wanted to work in a city.<sup>215</sup> Wherever he served as a priest, Father Berest always organized cultural activities not only for his parishioners, but also for all residents of villages. He established reading rooms, theatre clubs and choirs.<sup>216</sup> Berest also actively worked with the youth. In the village of Polonych, near Lviv, Father Berest focused his activity on raising the national identity of the peasants, since the village had been under strict Polish control.<sup>217</sup> Father Berest was an ardent patriot, who cared about education and national identity of his parishioners.<sup>218</sup> His daughter, Marta, claimed that he was afraid of even the first invasion of the Red Army.<sup>219</sup> Father Berest suspected the Soviets could destroy the Galician intelligentsia. Moreover, Marta stated that her father could not stay on the sidelines, stating that, “If I am going to die, I will do it not on my knees.”<sup>220</sup> Being well aware of the danger, Father Berest resided with his parents in the apartment in Lviv in order to protect his family in case of the unexpected arrival of NKVD agents. In the fall of 1940 the apartment where he resided was searched, and afterwards Father Berest was arrested for the “prospective” intention to organize an armed rebellion against the state.<sup>221</sup> Furthermore, Marta adds that NKVD agents found a revolver during the search; however, she claims her father had never had any weapons.<sup>222</sup> Father Berest was accused of state betrayal along with a group of OUN members.<sup>223</sup> On January 19, 1941, he was sentenced to death.<sup>224</sup> After the trial, Father

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<sup>215</sup> Marta Baltro, interview by Kmit P. Lviv, December 30, 1992, interview II-1-1-63.2, transcript, the Archive of the Institute of the Church History, Lviv, Ukraine.

<sup>216</sup> Marta Baltro, interview.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Oleksandra Homanchuk, interview by Kupchyk T. Lviv, January 26, 1998, interview II-1-1-63, transcript, the Archive of the Institute of Church History, Lviv, Ukraine.

<sup>219</sup> Marta Baltro, interview.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

Berrest was able to pass a letter to his family to notify about them about the verdict.<sup>225</sup> His daughter claimed that during the investigation he emphasized that his homeland was Ukraine and he had never betrayed it.<sup>226</sup> While in prison Father Berest was often beaten, but he was always taking care of other prisoners providing them with spiritual support and gave them the sacraments such as Confession and Eucharist.<sup>227</sup> After Father Berest's execution on April 14, 1941,<sup>228</sup> his family was also persecuted and deported to Siberia on May 22, 1941.<sup>229</sup>

There is also Father Andryi Bandera, whose son, Stepan Bandera, was one of OUN's leaders. In 1918 Father Bandera actively participated in the national liberation struggle as a chaplain in the Ukrainian Sich Riflemen.<sup>230</sup> Later he was a parish priest in Stryi region, where he remained even during Soviet occupation. Not only was he a Greek-Catholic priest, but he was also an active promoter of Ukrainian culture and cultural development. He organized *Prosvita* cultural clubs in parishes where he served.<sup>231</sup> Father Andriy's daughter Oksana claims he was also persecuted by Polish authorities for his cultural and national activities before the Red Army had invaded.<sup>232</sup> In July 2, 1941, he was taken to jail, according to the accusation report,<sup>233</sup> for supporting Ukrainian nationalists including his son. Stepan, along with his sisters Marta and Oksana, had been already deported from Galicia.<sup>234</sup> Later on July 8, 1941, he was sentenced to death, never denying the accusation of the NKVD.<sup>235</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Oleksandra Homanchuk, interview.

<sup>226</sup> Marta Baltro, interview.

<sup>227</sup> Marta Baltro, interview.

<sup>228</sup> Oleksandra Homanchuk, interview.

<sup>229</sup> Marta Baltro, interview.

<sup>230</sup> Oksana Bandera, interview by Ohorodnyk T. Stryi, February 21, 1998, interview II-1-1-816.5, transcript, the Archive of the Institute of Church History, Lviv, Ukraine.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 6, d. 75140-ФП, 75 – 79 (Obvinenie Andreiu Bandere).

<sup>234</sup> Oksana Bandera, interview.

<sup>235</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 6, d. 75140-ФП, 87 (Prigovor Andreiu Bandere).

In fact, facilitating the nationalists and Ukrainian patriots, who during Nazi occupation fought as a part of Third Reich army became one of the main accusations made by the Soviets against Greek-Catholic priests. Even though the Church did not officially declare its support of the nationalist movement, some priests considered nationalism to be a synonym of ‘patriotism.’ Prior to the arrival of the Soviets in 1939, the church had more freedom of activity and priests were actively involved in Ukrainian cultural development. Villages serve as the best evidence, where priests organized reading clubs or other types of cultural activities for their parishioners.

Another example of resistance could be Father Volodymyr Senkivskyi, who at his first arrest was recruited as an NKVD agent; however, he rejected the offer and was later sentenced to ten years imprisonment.<sup>236</sup> Those who resisted Soviet pressure often received punishment in prisons or concentration camps in Siberia. According to Father Ivan Turko’s memories about his forced deportation to Siberia, the several hundreds of priests who were sent to Arkhangelsk did not get any jobs and, therefore, could not even buy food.<sup>237</sup> According to Father Turko, even locals who tried to help the priests were punished as well.<sup>238</sup>

Despite the fact that many priests were forced to collaborate as their only way of survival or the only way to protect their families from persecution, a number of these men came to regret this decision. Father Oleksiy Holovatskyi wrote a personal confession after reporting on the UGCC’s “illegal anti-Soviet” activities. In this document he claimed that his betrayal of the Church constituted the betrayal of Ukraine, which suffered, along with his ancestors.<sup>239</sup> Holovatskyi admitted that he “realized his fault in collaborating with the enemy

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<sup>236</sup> *Arkhiv Tsentru Doslidzhen Vyzvolnoho Rukhu (ATsDVR)*, f. 1. 31: 1 – 3 (Spohady Otsya Volodymyra Senkivskoho).

<sup>237</sup> *ATsDVR*, f. 1. 31: N/A (Spohady Otsya Ivana Turka).

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>239</sup> *DA SBU*, f. 13, d. 372. 33: 420 (Spovid Otsya Oleksiya Holovatskoho).

which had tortured his nation.”<sup>240</sup> This once again shows how priests conflated their religious and national identities during this period.

The cases described above are examples of non-adaptive behaviour in the Soviet realm. Moreover, they provide insight into the motivation, which united this group of clergy. A strong devotion to the Catholic Church officially pushed them to resist the Soviets. The intention to preserve the church from alien influences made them stand against the unification with the ROC, which, in their opinion, posed threat to the UGCC and its tradition. They saw the priesthood within the Catholic Church as their primary duty, which could not be combined with obeying state policies. Being loyal to both the Church and the Soviet state was never an option for them, as both were opposite in their natures and core principles. At this point, personal beliefs came into play. The clergy chose priesthood in their church above everything else being aware of fatal consequences it might have had.

In addition, the UGCC was always associated with the idea of an independent Ukraine and closely connected to the national movement. Fathers Mykola Khmiloyvskyi and Andriy Bandera seemed to equate devotion to the Church with patriotism, viewing loyalty to the Church and the nation as inseparable. The lives of these priests serve as examples of how belonging to a faith community could influence one’s interpretation of a national identity. Even though the Ukrainian nationalist movement had become primarily secular during the twentieth century, the Greek-Catholic hierarchy and ordinary parish priests still viewed themselves as cultural leaders within the community.

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<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

At the beginning of the 1940s, the national movement was supported mainly by the youth in Galicia. Young Ukrainians actively joined OUN armed units with enthusiasm.<sup>241</sup> The idea of an independent Ukrainian state spread rapidly among the population.<sup>242</sup> The invasion of Germans made this nationalist idea seem to be achievable.<sup>243</sup> Indeed, even the Church leaders, who always believed in and supported the possibility of a Ukrainian state, considered the occupation of the Germans as their chance. Greek-Catholic leaders never supported the methods used by the nationalists such as the massacres of other nationalities;<sup>244</sup> nevertheless, the Church shared with the nationalist movement, the final goal of establishing an independent state.<sup>245</sup>

Since the number of Greek-Catholic faithful prevailed in the region of Galicia, the UGCC was considered a part of the cultural and national heritage even though the Church was viewed as subordinate to the state in terms of leadership.<sup>246</sup> The national movement advocated and fought for a Ukrainian national identity and therefore for Ukrainian culture, which included religion—the Church. Even though the leaders of national movement and Church authorities did not always agree,<sup>247</sup> most Greek-Catholic priests and laity of Galicia did not deeply distinguish between protecting the nation and the Church.<sup>248</sup> Since the Church considered itself to be patrons of pro-Ukrainian, patriotic movement, the betrayal of the Church meant the betrayal of the nation. As a symbol of Ukrainianness, the destruction of the UGCC was perceived as

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<sup>241</sup> Myroslav Shkandrij, *Ukrainian Nationalism: Politics, Ideology, and Literature, 1929-1956* (New cultural and political perspectives: Yale University Press, 2015), 49 – 59.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>245</sup> Anton Shekhovtsov, “By Cross and Sword: ‘Clerical Fascism’ in Interwar Western Ukraine,” *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions* 8, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 271–285.

<sup>246</sup> Vasyl Stefaniv, “Tserkva ta relihiya v ideolohiyi OUN,” in *Natsionalizm i relihiya* (Lviv, Ukraine: Ukrainian Catholic University press: 2011), 249 – 265.

<sup>247</sup> See Chapter 1.

<sup>248</sup> Oleh Behen, “Katolytskyi svitohlyad i khrystyianskyi natsionalizm yak alternatyva intehralnomy natsoinalizmovi,” 334.

representing the vanishing of Ukraine. Therefore, not only priests but also the laity struggled to preserve the Church, to save their nation and hope for an independent state.

It was not only a high level of national identification that compelled these priests to remain true to their political and religious views under the pressure of the Soviets. In order to have a whole picture or description of their response to the Soviet policies, a researcher should consider personal qualities of courage and fidelity as they strengthened decisions of clergy. In fact, such devotion can be hardly be explained or understood when option of collaboration was a matter of life and death.

Despite active resistance to the regime, Soviet pressure did not result in a favourable outcome for the UGCC. In 1945 the activity of the Initiative group, formed by the Soviets from Greek-Catholic priests who willingly agreed or were forced to collaborate and led by Father Kostelnyk, was legally approved by the Council of People's Commissars of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic<sup>249</sup> The group was also granted the right to manage the reunification with the Russian Orthodox Church. By that time all official Greek-Catholic authorities had been arrested. Therefore, in order to sign the union on behalf of the Church, Father Kostelnyk appointed new leaders for the UGCC—Fathers Antoni Pelvetskyi and Myhailo Melnyk, who initially were ordained Orthodox bishops.<sup>250</sup> By the end of February 1946, the participants of the Council accepted the re-unification with the ROC. The Council was held later in March 8 – 10, 1946, where the union was finally signed. It marked the beginning of “legal” destruction of the UGCC, which ceased its existing as a separate religious institution.

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<sup>249</sup> Volodymyr Serhiychuk, *Neskorena Tserkva* (Kyiv: Dnipro, 2001), 59.

<sup>250</sup> Bohdan Bociurkiw, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva*, 127.

This chapter draws a different picture of the responses to the Soviet persecution of the Church. While some priests agreed to collaborate under NKVD pressure, others remained immovable to any kind of Soviet persuasion or intimidation. At this point, it is important to analyze the relationship between religion and politics, which became a driving motivation for this group of clergy. Loyalty to their faith and the Ukrainian nation were inseparable in the eyes of priests. These became sufficient reasons for this group of priests to resist the Soviets. In fact, these factors even defined their way of response to state policies.

## Conclusion

The twentieth century will be remembered as the hardest time in the history of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church. Under three different states – Poland, Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union – Ukrainians were forced to find their place in each of them. The Soviet regime, which is in the main focus of the thesis, could be considered the most severe challenge for the Church since it eventually resulted in its destruction.

During WWII Galicia was one of the most active military zones. In 1939 it was occupied by the Soviets for the first time; in 1941 the Nazis invaded and established their authority for the next two years. However, in 1944 the Soviet troops were able to expel the German army and return Galicia. Chapter One draws on the background of the Soviet and German occupation of Galicia during 1939 – 1944 in order to explain and compare drastic changes in the Soviet policy towards the UGCC during their second invasion in 1944. The first occupation of Galicia by the Soviets marked the beginning of intense anti-religious propaganda. State authorities aimed to keep under control all of the activity of the UGCC using the state security services. State policy banned all religious institution including Christianity and the Greek-Catholic Church. Churches, monasteries and schools had to be closed. The Soviet regime coerced people into joining Communist organizations. At this time, Church authorities attempted to find optimal ways to protect the Church and maintain relations with the state. Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi addressed several pastoral letters to his faithful, both clergy and laity, with directions on how to behave in the new realm of the Soviet regime. With the intention to protect priests, Metropolitan Andrey advised them to avoid any political activity clearly separating Church and state. Due to the closure of Christian schools and the introduction of a course on atheism in public schools, Sheptytskyi instructed parents to provide their children with basic Christian education.

Moreover, Metropolitan Andrey was cautious while giving those guidelines: he did not openly express his opinion regarding the regime and state authorities not to provoke conflict. At this time, the Soviets only applied limited restrictions on the Church because they were aware of the impact the UGCC had in Galicia. Nevertheless, the state placed Greek-Catholics under various types of pressure in order to reduce the number of clergy and interfere Church activity. This included repressions as well. State security services aimed to recruit agents who could report on any anti-Soviet activity among priests. Moreover, the NKVD watched Church leaders, mainly Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytskyi. Those deemed dangerous and active were interrogated and arrested, sometimes along with their families.

However, the invasion of the Nazis interrupted the Soviets when they took control over the territory of Galicia. The establishment of new political authorities brought hope for the recovery of the Greek-Catholic Church. During the first few months of Nazi occupation, churches were re-opened and priests were allowed to preside at liturgy. Furthermore, this period marked the intensification of the Ukrainian national movement, which sought to create an independent Ukrainian state. Ukrainians believed that in return for Ukrainian support of Nazi army, the Germans would recognize their state. Church leaders did not openly support the national movement; however, they upheld the final goal even though the Church condemned cruel methods used by Ukrainian nationalists. In general, the time of German occupation is considered time for the slight development of the Church; but, many Ukrainians, including many Greek-Catholic clergy, were persecuted for involvement in nationalist movement and support of Nazi regime when the Soviets returned.

After the Nazi occupation of Galicia, the Soviets made significant changes to their policy towards the Church. In 1943 the ROC received back some of its property as well as the

patronage of the state. The legitimation of the Russian Orthodox Church was designed to reinforce Stalin's political influence and gain more support among the population. Moreover, the Soviets had a new tool to demolish the UGCC. The idea of reunification of all Churches around the ROC became a new focus of Soviet religious policies. Even though anti-religious propaganda was reduced, Greek-Catholics experienced pressure in other ways. The Soviets, attempting to implement their new plans, searched for clergy who could become promoters of the reunification inside the UGCC. In this way, the union with the ROC could be presented to Greek-Catholic faithful as the initiative of the Church itself. Furthermore, the boost of the national movement during the Nazi occupation and active participation of clergy in it became one more reason to persecute Greek-Catholics. The NKVD tried to use the connection between the clergy and nationalists in order to weaken and cease the activity of Ukrainian nationalists and force the Church into unification. Not to mention the welcome letter of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi to Hitler, which was used as an evidence of positive attitude of the Church toward Nazis and became a reason to consider the UGCC an enemy of the Soviet people.

The two periods of Soviet invasion show drastic differences in state religious policy and attitudes towards the Church, which caused the Greek-Catholic clergy to face diverse challenges. Nevertheless, priests found similar ways of reaction to the state policy during both Soviet occupations. Mainly, this thesis focuses on those priests who remained in their priesthood and stayed in the territory of Galicia. Even though in each case, the behaviour of respective priests has to be carefully analyzed, it is possible to divide Greek-Catholic clergymen into three groups according to their response to Soviet policies and the reasons, which led them to choose that path.

The first group includes those priests who agreed to collaborate with the NKVD. Those priests reported on anti-Soviet agitation, watched Church leaders, and informed state security regarding any Church activity. This cooperation in most cases was involuntary as priests were pressured in various ways. While in 1939 – 1941 the Soviets persecuted priests for their affiliation with religious institutions, which was targeted by the anti-religious policy, the second Soviet invasion in 1944 brought new wave of repression on the basis of involvement in national movement and attempted to initiate the unification with the ROC. Nevertheless, NKVD methods of persuasion changed slightly. Clergy were discredited, taken into interrogations, arrested, and even imprisoned or deported. Often, priests' families were under threat. That is why clergy, usually due to fear of being punished or discredited, agreed on collaboration with NKVD. However, besides involuntary collaboration, Russophile Greek-Catholic priests willingly offered their services to NKVD agents during 1939 – 1941.

At this point, the second group of priests included those, who in some way reported for NKVD, but it differed from regular collaboration. Therefore, in order to recognize the difference, it is important to thoroughly investigate each case. The motivation of each priest had to be taken into consideration, as in case of Father Moskva who was not aware that he was informing undercover NKVD agents about the details of Church activity. Moreover, the information, which clergy had reported should be analyzed. Sometimes priests informed about well-known facts, for example about pro-Ukrainian position of Metropolitan Sheptytskyi, which he himself did not try to hide. So, this group includes also priests who aimed to please the Soviets with some kind of information, but not to reveal any essential facts.

Last but not least, the third group of clergy shows up. These priests overall refused collaboration, and consequently were subject to intimidation. In most cases, they ended up

imprisoned, deported to labor camps, or even executed. Such a devotion to the Church was strengthened by patriotism of these priests, who found a link between religion and nationalism. Indeed, clergy often considered fidelity to Ukraine to be devotion to the UGCC, since the Church also advocated for the independent state. For them betraying the Church meant betraying their national idea and vice-versa. These priests believed the Soviet regime to be harmful and hostile for the UGCC, so they aimed to protect their Church from the threat.

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