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The Word of God at the Meeting Point of Civilisation: Cultural and Identity Search in the Space of Religious Life of Roman Catholics in Contemporary Ukraine

Božja beseda na stičišču civilizacij: iskanje kulture in identitete na področju verskega življenja rimokatoličanov v sodobni Ukrajini

Abstract: The Roman Catholic Church in contemporary Ukraine is to a large extent the heir to the tradition of the Latin rite of Lviv metropolis formed within the Polish Crown and other political entities related to Polish statehood and culture. In the general consciousness, this Church is considered to be the ‚Polish Church‘ as distinct from the ‚Ruthenian Church‘, Orthodox. The revival of the Church in the conditions of the Ukrainian state causes many discussions of an identity nature. Nationalist tendencies lead to the rejection of Polish cultural heritage and the creation of a new quality in the religious space, usually identified with the centuries-old achievements of civilization.

Keywords: Ukraine, Latin Church, Ukrainian language, culture, religion, Catholicism, Orthodoxy

Povzetek: Rimokatoliška Cerkev v sodobni Ukrajini je v marsičem dedinja izročila Lvovske metropolije latinskega obreda, oblikovane znotraj poljskega kraljestva in drugih političnih enot, povezanih s poljsko državnostjo in kulturo. V splošni zavesti velja za ‚poljsko Cerkev‘ in se razlikuje od ‚rutenske Cerkve‘, ki je pravoslavna. Cerkveni prepoved v okoliščinah ukrajinske državnosti povzroča številne razprave o identiteti. Nacionalistične težnje vodijo k zavračanju poljske kulturne dediščine in k vzpostavljanju nove razsežnosti v verskem prostoru. Ta nova razsežnost se običajno identificira z večstoletnimi civilizacijskimi dosežki.

Ključne besede: Ukrajina, latinska Cerkev, ukrajinski jezik, kultura, religija, katolištvo, pravoslavlje

1. Ukraine's Religious and Cultural Identity

The lands of modern Ukraine, in their overwhelming majority, are connected with the history and tradition of Kievan Rus, a huge medieval state encompassing the infinite areas of Eastern Europe, stretching to the Asian steppe. An element integrating these areas, inhabited by East Slavic ethnic groups – also called Ruthenian – and other tribes of non-Slavic origin, became a common cultural tradition arising from the Byzantine Christian heritage adopted in 988 by Grand Duke Vladimir. The capital of modern Ukraine – Kiev – was the centre of this great power and a source of cultural inspiration, which in later centuries evolved into national traditions of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine, and due to the imperial advancement of Russia was also imposed on other nations that entered its orbit of influence. Attempts to divide early Christian Ruthenian tradition into exclusively Ukrainian or Russian, conditioned by political circumstances, were devoid of substantive justifications and appeared only as grotesque ventures to diminish the great and universal tradition of Kievan Rus in the spirit of nineteenth-century nationalisms (Podskalsky 2000, 112–115).¹

Kiev played a special role in Christianisation in the east of Europe, it was called Ruthenian Jerusalem, and the Dnieper, in whose waters the inhabitants of Kiev were baptised, was called the Ruthenian Jordan. Pope John Paul II, visiting the capital of Ukraine in 2001, said: »This is the place of the Baptism of Rus. From Kiev, there began that flowering of Christian life which the Gospel first brought forth in the land of the ancient Rus, then in the lands of Eastern Europe and, later, beyond the Urals, in the lands of Asia.« (Jan Paweł II [John Paul II] 200, 110)

Kiev became not only the capital of the metropolis, but an important religious and political centre, which in the time of the break-up of the great Ruthenian state – progressing since the 13th century – was a visible symbol of the unity of ‚Saint Vladimir's heritage‘, but also an important culture-forming centre (Malmenvall 2016, 550). The Grand Duke of Kiev, Vladimir, the Baptist of Rus, also did a great job of incorporating his lands into the sphere of the Byzantine and Greek world civilisation and, through this, into general European tradition.

»He became a Christian, and imposed the faith as the formal religion in Kievan territories. The other Russian states along the rivers were not slow to follow his example. From his Chersonesus campaign, Vladimir brought back with him to Kiev Greek priests, Greek artisans and Greek church ornaments and books. He also took two bronze quadrigae – destined to decorate the Kiev of Vladimir, as the ‚steeds of San Marco‘ were later to be carried to Venice after the Latin conquest of Byzantium.« (Allen 1941, 13)

Kiev Christianity began to develop very rapidly and expansively. This was mainly due to a dynamic increase in the number of temples and the emergence of large

¹ An attempt to refer to the Russian-Ukrainian debate that has been ongoing since the 1920s, reaching back to the nineteenth-century polemics was made by Gerhard Podskalsky in his work *Christentum und theologische Literatur in der Kiever Rus' (988–1237)* (München, 1982).

monastic centres. According to various sources, just after the baptism, 300 to 400 Orthodox churches were built in Kiev alone (Zinkewych and Sorokowski 1988, 35)². Ruthenian monasteries originating from the famous Kiev Pechersk Monastery (hollowed out in caverns, and caves on the banks of the Dnieper) rose to the rank of great scientific and cultural centres. Here the first histories were created – the chronicles of Rus, intellectual life flourished here, and from here, education and literacy spread throughout the lands of old Rus.

Christianity shaped on the banks of the Dnieper had its characteristic features; it was an emanation of Byzantine culture adopted on the Slavic soil. For centuries, despite the progressing political divisions of the lands of ancient Rus, Christianity retained its universal, 'all-Russia' dimension, which testifies to the religious-civilisational community of the heirs of this tradition. For many researchers, this became the basis for the claim about the existence of a separate civilisation arising from the Byzantine tradition on the Ruthenian ground. Samuel P. Huntington used the term Orthodox civilisation, and the lands of contemporary Ukraine, at least partly have been its organic part and even a centre (Huntington 2011, 56).

After the destruction of the Ruthenian state and after Poland and Lithuania started to exercise sovereignty over its western part, the Orthodox Church maintained its cultural separateness despite the Renaissance, Baroque and Enlightenment trends coming from the West and affecting the entire societies. Even after the creation of the Union with Rome in 1596 and formally joining the Western civilisation space, the Ruthenian Church retained its eastern, Byzantine character (Osadczy 2019, 47). A characteristic mode of holding religious services according to the liturgical texts of Saint John Chrysostom and Saint Basil the Great remained unchanged or subjected to insignificant changes; liturgical books and various prayer texts written in the archaic Church Slavonic language remained the same; Cyrillic letters – *azbuka* – based on the Greek alphabet were used for writing; after the introduction of the Gregorian calendar, the Ruthenian church still retained the old Julian calendar. The Orthodox and Uniate Churches preserved their theology distinct from that of the West, which from the beginning followed a different path than the Latin scholastic-Thomistic search confirmed in the documents of the Council of Trent.

Being a civilisation centre of Russian Orthodoxy, Ukraine became an important part of the Western world as it united with Poland and Lithuania.³ This caused a migratory movement from the West as well as the relocation of the structures of the Latin Church to the newly connected lands. Catholic centres were created primarily in the western part of the Ruthenian lands in cities founded on German town law and inhabited by Germans and Poles, as well as in noble manors and castles of Polish or Polonised knights. In relation to local Eastern Christianity, Ro-

² This fact is described by German chronicler Thietmar and Polish chronicler Maciej Miechowita. Such a large number of temples is also explained by the fact that also small shrines and home chapels built in Ruthenia following a Greek custom were also taken into account.

³ In the eleventh century a part of Ruthenian lands passed under the suzerainty of the Hungarian Crown of Saint Stephen and as Hungarian Ruthenia or Subcarpathian Ruthenia created its hermetic history in complete isolation from the rest of Ukraine without affecting the overall civilisation and cultural situation.

man Catholicism, although not numerous but enjoying a privileged position and social prestige in the Catholic state, represented utterly different cultural and civilisational areas. It should be remembered that after the schism of 1054, intensified by hostility resulting from the raids of the Crusaders on Byzantium, relations between the two Churches were cool and tense. They created two hermetic spaces not interpenetrating each other, using different symbols, referring to completely different aesthetic patterns and also developing according to completely different historical conditions. Catholicism was constantly supplied from its centres in Western Europe with vivid theological and cultural trends, took on more and more attractive, modern forms and, being a minority denomination, sought expansion by emphasising its universal mission. Majority Orthodoxy was locked in a stalemate, cutting off from declining Byzantium, maintained conservative, retarded external forms and had no chance to attract neophytes, as it was associated with ‚Ruthenian faith‘, a national feature of Rus.

Over the centuries, however, the civilisational division was formed, reflecting the political division of the Ukrainian lands between Poland and Russia. The East merged with Russia as Little Ruthenia, actively participating in creating the powerful Orthodox empire, and the West was maximally affected by Poland’s civilisational influence, only at the commune level maintaining attachment to the Eastern Church, already appearing as Uniate. Despite subsequent political changes – the erasure of the Polish state from the world map for over 123 years, the expansion of Bolshevik Russia, the creation of a quasi-state in the form of Soviet Ukraine within which the modern Ukrainian state was formed after the collapse of the USSR, the civilisational and religious division remained a characteristic of Ukraine. Aforementioned S. Huntington wrote quite emphatically about this in the context of the discussion on the clash of civilisations:

»Ukraine, however, is a cleft country with two distinct cultures. The civilisational fault line between the West and Orthodoxy runs through its heart and has done so for centuries. At times in the past, western Ukraine was part of Poland, Lithuania, and the Austro-Hungarian empire. A large portion of its population have been adherents of the Uniate Church which practices Orthodox rites but acknowledges the authority of the Pope. Historically, western Ukrainians have spoken Ukrainian and have been strongly nationalist in their outlook. The people of eastern Ukraine have been overwhelmingly Orthodox and have in large part spoken Russian.«
(Huntington 2011, 267–277)⁴

This civilisation duality with the dominant ‚own‘ Eastern Church (Orthodox or Uniate) and the ‚foreign‘ Latin Church became a characteristic feature of religious

⁴ Giving a brilliant assessment of the cultural and political situation of Ukraine, the author made some simplifications and mental shortcuts that did not quite accurately reflect the religious specificity. The presence of the followers of the Uniate Church in Ukraine was slightly overstated (the total number of the faithful amounts to less than 7 % of the population), while the followers of the Roman Catholic Church were completely omitted.

and devotional reality in Ukraine. Moreover, a symbol of this state of affairs is the capital city of Kiev, as evidenced by the impressions of a foreign observer: »Kiev is where the two legacies meet. The Dnieper, Ukraine's only major natural feature and the boundary which used to divide the country between Russia and Poland, also splits the city into two. The golden domes of its great Orthodox monasteries and the neo-Gothic spire of its Catholic cathedral jostle on the skyline.« (Reid 2000, 16)

2. The Specificity of the Tradition of the Latin Church in Ukraine

The presence of the Catholic Church in the lands of former Rus is a derivative of their inclusion in the Catholic countries and, above all, the Polish-Lithuanian state. The Roman Catholic archdiocese in Ruthenia was founded in 1375 under the rule of the Hungarian king's governor Vladislaus II of Opole. It should be remembered that after the end of the Romanovs' Ruthenian dynasty in 1340, Red Ruthenia, with its capital Lviv, was taken by the Polish king Casimir the Great as the closest heir to these areas. In turn, after his childless death, the King of Hungary, Louis, inherited the Polish Crown with Ruthenia. After the short 'Hungarian episode', the Ruthenian lands returned to the Polish Crown again, but now with its archdiocese. It should be recalled that at that time, Poland had had its ancient archdiocese in legendary Gniezno for over three centuries. After the incorporation of Rus, it became a country in which there were two metropolitans in the state hierarchy – high-rank dignitaries. The Gniezno metropolitan bore the title of primate, held first place in the Senate, followed by the Lviv metropolitan.

In the east, Kamianets and Kiev dioceses were subordinated to the Lviv archdiocese. The situation of the Catholic population was very unstable and dangerous there. As we know, during the Cossack and Polish-Moscow wars, the partitions continually led to the depolonisation and desolation of these areas. Furthermore, right after that conflagrations, the fertile lands were again colonised by the peasant population recruited from counties of Central Poland. Thus, compact Polish and Catholic enclaves were established, maintaining their separateness from the surrounding Orthodox population. Gradually undergoing linguistic and cultural Ukrainianisation, Polish peasants firmly adhered to Catholicism. Churches were the oases of their culture and the only places where the Polish language was heard in public space. Despite the Russian authorities' repeated attempts to introduce the Russian language into Catholic temples, this experiment failed. Not using Polish every day, Roman Catholics in the Eastern Borderlands were within the orbit of the influence of the Polish culture and language in the sphere of religious life. Maria Dunin-Kozicka, a Polish writer, described this situation as follows:

»Only in the churches of Volhynia, Podolia, Ukraine, the publicly spoken Polish tongue could be heard during sermons. Only in presbyteries, after the service, it was possible to gather without being denounced to the po-

lice. At that time, the church was a place of entertainment and relief, God's and Polish outpost, where everyone, despite social differences, felt brothers in common profession of faith and the legacy of the Lechites, prohibited in the offices of speech.« (1928, 127)

Such historical and cultural circumstances led to the perpetuation of the social consciousness of stereotypes that translated into defining the reality surrounding the sphere of operation of the Roman Catholic Church as Polish. The church, the priest, liturgical feasts, etc., were referred to as: 'the Polish church', 'the Polish priest', 'Polish feasts', and 'Polish Christmas, Easter'. The Latin Church was associated with church fairs, ceremonial processions, Eucharistic adoration, playing the organ, and magnificent, extremely suggestive baroque sculptures. Churches were usually made of bricks and well-equipped, beautifully decorated, and their high spires and bell towers dominated the surrounding area.

The Roman Catholic church, along with Polish culture and language, was associated primarily with city culture, the culture of noble courts, and in simplified terms with lord's culture. Therefore, the Latin Church traditionally enjoyed high social prestige in the Ukrainian lands; it was a recognisable feature of the upper social classes. The folk proverb said that God »created a clergyman (a Latin priest) for the master, and a pope (the Orthodox priest) for the peasant«. These socio-cultural stereotypes are perpetuated in the consciousness of the inhabitants of Ukrainian lands (Andreev and Andreeva 2019, 188).

Social revolts or Polish-Ukrainian wars that broke out from time to time often resulted from social and class inequalities. Instinctive acts of aggression were directed against the Latin Church, as the area of life most associated with Polishness. During the escalation of aggression, everything associated with Latin culture and everything connected with Catholicism was cruelly destroyed. The temples were razed, the faithful were murdered, and the clergymen's life was taken with particular ferociousness. Fighting Latin Catholicism in an unbelievably cruel and total way had features characteristic of the clash of civilisations and the conflict between two cultural areas (Osadczy 2019, 67–111). Hence, at the level of folk culture from which Ukrainian national culture grew, hostility to the presence of traces of Latin tradition was very deeply rooted. It was associated with Polishness and, therefore, with a foreign civilisational and societal element. This civilisational space was 'lordly', aristocratic and therefore alien and hostile towards Ukrainian peasant, democratic national tradition. Orthodox churches and Latin churches, which had always been present in the Ukrainian landscape, were called 'Ruthenian or Ukrainian churches' and 'Polish churches', 'Ruthenian feasts' and 'Polish feasts' were celebrated, 'Ruthenian priests' and 'Polish priests' performed rituals. In traditional folk consciousness, from which national culture grew, referring to many centuries of history, these two spaces were hermetically separated from each other, always present and always foreign and even hostile. Hence new challenges of time related to the creation of a universal Ukrainian cultural space in connection with the emergence of the Ukrainian state have become a significant

problem in the religious life of society going beyond the scope of its traditional class space.

3. From ,the Polish Church' to ,the Ukrainian Church'

During the communist rule and struggle with religion, the Roman Catholic Church was the only official institution in the Soviet state that retained its Polish cultural and language character. Until the implementation of the provisions of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) introducing national languages into the liturgy, in the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine, Latin was used in rites of the Mass and other services. Canticles, as well as paraliturgical services (rosaries, litanies, supplications), were traditionally performed in Polish. The priest usually addressed the faithful in Polish.

Over the centuries, especially during the communist dictatorship, the Polish population in Ukraine lost its language in everyday use. On the one hand, it was a natural process of assimilation of the rural population into the overwhelming Ukrainian majority; on the other, it was intended during the Stalinist struggle against the so-called ,Bourgeois nationalism' of non-Russian minorities. In the 1930s, all Latin churches in Soviet Ukraine were destroyed due to Stalinist repression. Manors – centres of maintaining Polishness – were destroyed during the revolutionary struggles of 1917–1920. Catholics in Eastern Polish provinces, annexed by the USSR in 1939, enjoyed religious freedom and the development of Polish religious culture throughout the interwar period. After the Soviet occupation, they became the object of persecution and repression, while the German occupation restored religious freedom in the occupied territories of Soviet Ukraine.

Allowing for limited functioning of the Roman Catholic Church in the USSR, the authorities hoped for its quick ,extinction' as a result of ,legal' procedures. The church was deprived of its hierarchy and seminaries, catechising children and youth was treated as a criminal offence, priests were repressed, and their number was limited to a minimum. As bishop Marcjan Trofimiak, a former ordinary of the diocese of Lutsk recalled, Roman Catholic priests became the most persecuted group in the Soviet Union (Trofimiak 1994, 211).

Roman Catholic centres survived in a few cities in western Ukraine – of which Lviv was the largest – and in Podolia and Kiev region, mainly in rural towns—as a result of the presence of Polish intelligentsia, towns, and especially the famous Lviv cathedral, managed to preserve the traditional cultural and religious order creating peculiar islands of Polish borderland culture. Catholic villages of the Polish population in areas formerly belonging to Tsarist Russia had been subjected to linguistic and cultural assimilation for a long time. Due to the presence of educated priests, it was possible to maintain the Polish language and traditional culture in the area of religious life. A well-known model of cultural and linguistic life was created when the language that was not used in everyday life and which ceased to function at

home was reserved for the sacred sphere and was intended only for prayer and the temple. The Hebrew language of Jews, the hrabar language of Armenians, etc., underwent such a metamorphosis. Losing the Polish language in everyday life, Poles in Ukraine preserved it in the church and prayer. Preserved prayer books in notebooks in which texts of Polish prayers and religious songs were phonetically handwritten in Cyrillic letters – writing used daily – and frequently with mistakes are a specific symbol of this state of affairs. After Polish missals were introduced to churches in Soviet Ukraine in the 1970s, the faithful could not understand Polish used in the Holy Mass; sometimes, they comically distorted the words, completely perverting the content of the prayer. Moreover, thus, instead of ‚Pontius Pilate‘ there was ‚Polish‘ Pilate, and instead of »Hosanna in the highest«, they sang »Oksana [Ukrainian female name] in haying« (Dzwonkowski and Pałyga 1995, 325).

Among Latin Catholics, there was considerable resistance to attempts to introduce the Ukrainian language into religious life. Both Poles and Ukrainians perceived it as the distortion of certain normality, tradition, and eternal order. After the liquidation of the Greek Catholic Church in 1946, gathering the Ukrainian population in the former Galician lands, some former Catholics of the Eastern Rite began to take advantage of the possibility of attending services in the few Roman Catholic churches. Sometimes such faithful constituted the majority in Polish churches because the Polish population was deported to Poland in the new post-war borders. In exceptional circumstances, Ukrainian religious songs were introduced to such services (Osadczy 2009, 82).⁵ The Soviet authorities also made every endeavour so that church life did not go beyond the Polish cultural and linguistic sphere. Without schools, books, and the intelligentsia, the Polish population was doomed to disappear. Striving to eliminate the Roman Catholic Church from public life, the communist authorities made sure that the Church, opening itself to the Ukrainian language, would not be reborn through the influx of new believers from outside. According to the plans of the atheist regime, Catholicism should be locked up in the ghetto of elderly people of Polish nationality whose natural death would also be the demise of the Church. The lack of a hierarchy and seminaries was a guarantee of the definite end of the church structure that could not be included in the process of building communism.

The situation changed after the collapse of the USSR. Universal religious freedom allowed the hierarchical structures of the Catholic Church in Ukraine to be reborn. Separate church organisations were established in the countries newly created on the ruins of the Soviet state. Both from the perspective of the Vatican and the governments of post-Soviet countries, it was necessary to separate from the tradition of Polish Catholicism, which historically was the foundation of Catholic communities in post-Soviet areas – maybe except partly in Lithuania, Latvia and Carpathian Ruthenia – and begin to create Catholic hierarchical structures in the national language and culture (Lopert 2008).⁶

⁵ Exposing himself to the harassment by atheistic authorities, Marcján Trofimiak, priest in Kremenets in Volhynia and priest for Catholics in Western and Central Ukraine, introduced Ukrainian canticles in the Borschiv parish in Podolia.

⁶ This issue is discussed in detail in the article „Identiteta in religioznost“, see Lopert 2008.

In Ukraine, the ‚Polish Church‘ had to become Ukrainian and take its place among other ‚Ukrainian‘ Churches, where Orthodox Churches played the dominant role.

4. Problems in the Search for New Cultural and Linguistic Identity

It is known that attachment to tradition, adherence to archaic noble forms, and connection with generations of the faithful testify to the authenticity and prestige of the Church. The ‚Ukrainian‘ Latin Church could not have these attributes because it found itself in a difficult situation. The whole authentic tradition was associated with Polish history and culture. The rich canticle resources were also exclusively Polish, incorporated into the broad context of Polish religious culture. The air-tightness of the cultural and religious area was preserved despite the progressing Ukrainianisation of the daily life of faithful Catholics. This state of affairs was even, to some extent, satisfactory for the community staying in a kind of isolation from the atheistic environment marked by the surface religiosity characteristic of the culture of the Orthodox Church. The ‚ghetto‘ was a suitable environment for surviving and preserving own identity, even observing the principle of preference for marriages within a religious group. Leaving the underground, establishing full-fledged hierarchical structures, joining the religious life of the country devastated by atheistic ideology opened new perspectives and a new vision in the environment of the Latin Church. Unexpected and tempting perspectives opened for the accomplishment of the evangelising mission. The Latin Church in Ukraine, being part of the universal Church, felt and had the support of the entire Catholic world. First of all, Poland, where the issue of Catholicism at Eastern Borderlands was traditionally treated as Polish, provided succour. Support was also lent by Catholic dioceses from Western Europe and the USA, where societies were more and more secularised and the challenges of helping post-communist countries strongly impacted the mission awareness. The authority of Saint John Paul II, an unquestionable moral standard not only for Catholics, was of great importance. Moreover, orientation to the West, which guided the revolutionary changes in the USSR and the overthrow of the dictatorship of the Communist Party, increased the attractiveness and prestige of the ‚Western‘ Church.

In such circumstances, being closed in the Polish cultural and religious circle became a great limitation for the development of missionary activity. The entry into the new socio-political reality occurred along with the change in the generation of priests in Ukraine. The older generation educated in Polish seminaries, strongly attached to Polish tradition and culture, was leaving. Newly ordained priests originating from post-Soviet families, identifying with the Ukrainian environment, or indifferent to cultural matters, devoid of a more profound humanistic knowledge and, in particular, cut off from the normal transmission of cultural and religious values, willingly began to enter into modern pastoral and ecclesiastical trends as far as possible detaching themselves from tradition.

The retirement of the older generation of hierarchs also foreboded the interruption of a certain continuity of persisting in faith and tradition, excellent examples of which were given by eminent figures of the ‚borderland hierarchs‘ perceived even as patriarchs in times of persecution (Osadczy 2002, 249–254).

In the new historical and political circumstances, a project of the Latin Church, cut off from Polish tradition, creating a new Ukrainian cultural and religious reality, began to be implemented. The assumption was that the Latin church in Ukraine was universal and was to adapt to the language and linguistic and cultural conditions of the faithful, the principle of a ‚blank card‘ was adopted. That is, cutting off from tradition and adapting to existing conditions – e.g. services in Polish in the former dioceses of the Second Polish Republic and preference of the Ukrainian language in central and eastern areas traditionally associated with the Catholic tradition and having a missionary character.

This state of affairs partly provoked discussion and even opposition in central parts of Ukraine – the dioceses of Kamianets and Kiev-Zhytomyr – where the Polish element remained traditionally strong, having lasting attachment to the Polish language in services despite the progress of Ukrainianisation in everyday life. Nevertheless, church factors got heavily involved in creating a new linguistic and cultural reality in the Latin Church in Ukraine through depolonisation and intensified Ukrainianisation of religious life. Not only local clergymen of the post-Soviet generation but also priests coming from Poland were actively involved in this process.

Gradually, the universality of the Church in Ukraine, also taking into account the area of tradition in Polish and the pastoral needs of the Polish population, began to be replaced by the Ukrainian language on a general scale. To the official narrative related to the identity of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine, an explanation was added according to which the allegedly Polish linguistic and cultural character of the Roman Catholic Church was the result of the introduction of the Polish missal after the Second Vatican Council. The Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Conference of Ukraine explained that Polish prayers and the necessary use of Polish missals gave rise to »a misconception, which still persists in society, that the Catholic Church is the Polish Church« (Rims’kij Mesal 2019). Subsequently, there is an even more astounding statement that thanks to the Polish language, which is very close to Ukrainian, as well as the engagement of Polish priests, the Church was able to operate more or less normally. However, as the author of the article about the missal in Ukrainian introduced for use in the Church in Ukraine points out, »finally the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine has been given the opportunity to use its own language« (Rims’kij Mesal 2019).

Cutting off from traditional cultural and linguistic roots and trying to settle in the civilisation space, called by some scholars ‚Orthodoxy‘⁷, put Roman Catholics in Ukraine in a difficult situation. It was necessary to find one’s feet not in a missionary space, devoid of Christian culture, opening up the possibility of creating new forms of Latin Western culture adapting to local conditions, but in lands with

⁷ Among others, S. Huntington uses this nomenclature defining one of eight civilisations as ‚Orthodoxy‘.

over a thousand-year of a tradition of Eastern Christianity, on the basis of which indigenous, native, local tradition has grown. The problem starts with the term Church – Ecclesia. In the Ukrainian tradition, the form Церква is used, univocally associated with the Eastern Church. To define the Western Church, i.e. Polish in the general consciousness, there was a word phonetically reflecting the Polish name of the Church of Костьол. The custom of distinguishing Церква and Костьол prevailed in all East Slavic – Ruthenian – languages. A half-way solution was adopted, the word Церква defines the church as an institution, while the word Костьол remained to describe the temple. In order to eliminate Polish-sounding words in relation to Catholic temples, supporters of total depolonisation began to prefer even less linguistically precise terms храм – temple, собор – cathedral, not only in relation to cathedral temples.

When conducting the Ukrainisation of the linguistic and cultural space of the life of the Roman Catholic Church, the creators of the new reality must consider the functioning of popular words from the sphere of the Orthodox Church in the sphere of popular culture. Roman Catholics in Ukraine had to face a dilemma whether to use ready words developed by the Orthodox Church, familiar to the general public or introduce foreign words from Latin tradition. This dilemma is most spectacularly seen in the use of the words *AMEN* and *alleluia*. These words coming from Hebrew differ in the pronunciation of Eastern and Western Christians. The Greek phonetic version in the form of *AMIN'* and *ALLILUJA* entered the Eastern Christian tradition, and the version of Latin phonetics – *AMEN* and *ALLELUJA* – became established in the Western Christian tradition. As a result of quite strange conclusions, Greek words associated with the life of the Orthodox Church were introduced into the liturgical and prayer tradition of Latin Catholics in Ukraine, i.e. *AMIN'* and *ALLILUJA* (Vukašinović 2010, 19–20)⁸.

The adoption of the names of holidays and ceremonies borrowed from the vocabulary of the Orthodox Church, commonly used in society, somewhat changes the theological content of the commemorated event. Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is defined in the Eastern Church as Успеніє or Успіння, which are terms referring to the Dormition of the Mother of God. In the Latin tradition, the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – *Assumptio Beatissimae Mariae Virginis in caelum* – is stressed. By adopting the version of the name of the feast commonly used in Ukrainian society, the Latin Church distorted the theological tone of the event, having a clear theological connotation and prayer and liturgical tradition in the practice of Roman Catholicism. Attempts to introduce a literal translation of the Polish name of the Assumption ceremony – Внебовзяття – were linguistically ghastly, artificial and did not comply with the rules of Ukrainian grammar. Officially, there is a partial solution to this issue; in the liturgical use, the Eastern Christian version is given, containing in parentheses its meaning in accordance with the Latin theological tradition – Успіння (Взяття до

⁸ Similar problems also arise in the situation of the Orthodox Church adjusting to modernity. An example is the situation in Serbia.

неба) Пресвятої Діви Марії (Molitvi u Zvičajnomu periodi [Ordinary Time Prayers] 2019).

In some situations, it is not possible to use the equivalents of traditional Eastern Christian words to describe the reality of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine. The sacrament of the confirmation, referred to as Миропомазання, is associated with the sacrament administered in the Orthodox Church according to a completely different mode than in the Latin tradition. It is given by the priest during the baptism sacrament and has a completely different connotation from that in the Latin tradition, which emphasises growing up in faith and mature joining in the faithful community. The Polish word *bierzmowanie* is very specific as far as its pronunciation and spelling are concerned, which are clearly associated with the tradition of the Polish language, and its use in such a form is impossible in the Ukrainian language. Hence the word Конфірмація was introduced to define the sacrament of confirmation, which refers to the Latin name of the sacrament – *confirmatio*. This is a completely innovative solution, which introduces a word to circulation which is foreign to both the traditional Polish language and Ukrainian religious culture, referring to the customs of the Orthodox Church.

Many problems are also associated with the use of the names of liturgical vessels, liturgical vestments, liturgical and prayer books, as well as other objects functioning in the religious practices of the Roman Catholic Church. In many situations, there are simply no terms in Ukrainian that describe specific objects that are usual elements of the Latin rite. One of the pioneers of translating the Latin Missal into Ukrainian, Bishop Marcján Trofimiak, a retired ordinary of the Lutsk diocese, for many years the chairman of the Liturgical Commission of the Episcopal Conference of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine, presented the tasks facing the introduction of the Ukrainian language into Roman Catholic religious life:

»We are also trying to be moderate in that the language is to be beautiful, not very poetic, although the note of poetry must be heard; not very archaic, although we have left some archaic words for embellishing the texts, without making it excessively oriental. We have also tried to make this Latin moment always present. It seems that we have succeeded, that it is a purely Latin liturgy in Ukrainian.« (Osadczy 2009, 135)

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