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THE LATIN RITE ARCHDIOCESE OF LVIV (1939–1990): STATE OF RESEARCH

ARCHIDIECEZJA LWOWSKA OBRZĄDU ŁACIŃSKIEGO (1939–1990): STAN BADAŃ

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to analyse historiographical sources authored by Ukrainian, Polish and Soviet researchers who studied the situation of the Roman Catholic Church in the Lviv Archdiocese in 1939–1990; to identify the main approaches and methodologies used in the study of this issue in different scholarly traditions, as well as to assess the degree of objectivity and completeness of coverage of the topic; to systematize scholarly achievements on the impact of political, social and cultural processes on the position of the Church; and to identify current areas of research. An analysis of the research conducted to date reveals a change in the approach to capturing the position of the Roman Catholic Church in different periods, particularly in Soviet and contemporary Ukrainian historiography, which adds to our understanding of the issue. Thus, the article aims to contribute to the continuation of further scientific research on the history of the Diocese of Lviv and to identify new fields of scientific inquiry.

Keywords: Roman Catholic Church; clergy; Lviv; Lviv region; Lviv Archdiocese; historiography

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest analiza źródeł historiograficznych autorstwa ukraińskich, polskich i sowieckich badaczy, którzy badali sytuację Kościoła rzymskokato-

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lickiego w archidiecezji lwowskiej w latach 1939-1990, określenie głównych podejść i metodologii stosowanych w badaniu tego zagadnienia w różnych tradycjach naukowych, a także ocena stopnia obiektywności i kompletności ujęcia tematu; usystematyzowanie osiągnięć naukowych na temat wpływu procesów politycznych, społecznych i kulturowych na pozycję Kościoła oraz wskazanie aktualnych obszarów badań. Analiza już przeprowadzonych badań ujawnia zmianę w podejściu do ujęcia pozycji Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w różnych okresach, w szczególności w sowieckiej i współczesnej ukraińskiej historiografii, co wzbogaca nasze zrozumienie tego zagadnienia. Zatem artykuł ma na celu przyczynić się do kontynuacji dalszych badań naukowych dotyczących dziejów diecezji lwowskiej i wskazać nowe pola dociekań naukowych.

Słowa kluczowe: Kościół rzymskokatolicki; duchowieństwo; Lwów; obwód lwowski; archidiecezja lwowska; historiografia

The religious factor plays a significant role in the public life of Ukraine, influencing the formation of spiritual values, social norms, and traditions. This stimulates scholarly interest in the history of religion and the Church as an integral part of national identity. In particular, contemporary historiography focuses on the position of the Roman Catholic Church and the activities of its clergy during the Soviet and German occupation of the territories of present-day Western Ukraine, which had a significant impact on the religious and social life of the region.

The increased interest in studying the history of the Roman Catholic Church during the Second World War and the Soviet period is the result of both current socio-political trends and increased access to archival materials that open up new aspects of this issue. As T. Shevchenko notes, analysing the number of dissertations defended on church topics during the first twenty years of Ukraine's independence (1992–2012), one can see that the share of research on the history of the Roman Catholic Church is 6.1%, which is significantly higher than the number of Roman Catholics in the country (1.1%).¹ This indicates that the Church remains a subject of scholarly and public interest, despite the small proportion of Roman Catholics in Ukraine.

Within the historiographical analysis, two main chronological stages of the study are distinguished: the Soviet or communist period (1939–1980s) and the post-Soviet period (from the late 1980s to the present day). In the Soviet period, church issues were often viewed through the prism of state ideology, which led to a tendency to portray the role of the church as an enemy of the state.² Repressions against the clergy, which were actively carried out at that time, were hardly mentioned, and objective research was largely impossible. After Ukraine gained independence and society democratized, particularly in Poland, the situation changed dramatically: researchers gained access to archives, which greatly expanded the

¹ T. Shevchenko, *Relihiinyi dyskurs ukrainskoi radianskoi ta natsionalnoi istoriografii: kontraversii spadkoiemnosti*, "Istoriografichni doslidzhennia v Ukraini", 24 (2014) p. 80.

² P. Khomiak, *Doslidzhennia obrazu Rymsko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy v radianskii istoriografii*, "Pivdennyi arkhiv (istorychni nauky)", 38 (2022) pp. 103–109.

possibilities for studying historical facts and objectively covering the role of the Roman Catholic Church.

Research on this topic is being conducted by both domestic and foreign historians, which makes historiography interdisciplinary and international. In this context, it is advisable to distinguish several main groups, namely: domestic and foreign studies, which include works by Polish, Lithuanian, Kazakh, Russian, and Belarusian authors. However, as N. Yakovenko points out, such a division is conditional, since scientific approaches, the chosen methodology, and source base are more important than the nationality or citizenship of researchers.

In addition, it is advisable to distinguish between ‘secular’ and ‘church’ researchers, as well as to take into account their confessional affiliation (Catholics, Greek Catholics, Orthodox). This greatly affects the objectivity of the research, as each group has its own methodological, source, and ideological features that shape their scientific approach. Although this division is to some extent arbitrary, it helps to understand the specifics of the approaches used by researchers and the variety of sources they rely on.

The most appropriate way to classify works on this topic is to apply a problematic and thematic approach, which allows analysing both general and highly specialized studies, taking into account the diversity of aspects of church-state relations. Such an approach, according to the ‘cone’ model proposed by N. Yakovenko, makes it possible to avoid the limitations of the national framework and, at the same time, to cover the current state of historiography as comprehensively as possible. This is especially important in the context of comparing works that were created in different time periods and with different factual bases. This approach also makes it possible to take into account the influence of political conditions and source limitations that were characteristic of specific historical epochs.

Analysing the situation in the USSR in comparison with other countries of the communist camp allows us to see common and distinctive features in church-state relations, as well as specific forms of resistance that were manifested among religious communities. This, in particular, applies to important works by such researchers as M. Wierzbicki³ and K. Renik,⁴ who studied the history of the Catholic Church in the territories under Soviet control. They highlighted the forms of protest of believers in Central and Eastern Europe, which included letters, complaints, and appeals to party and state authorities, which are illustrative examples of how Catholics tried to preserve their religious identity.

An important work for understanding the repressive measures against Roman Catholics is the work of A. Hlebowicz, *The Church in Captivity. The Roman Catholic Church in Belarus and Ukraine after World War II*.⁵ It examines the

³ M. Wierzbicki, *Miedzy męczeństwem a przystosowaniem. Kościół katolicki w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej pod rządami komunistów*, “Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość”, 1 (2017) issue 29, pp. 17–24.

⁴ K. Renik, *Podpolnicy. Rozmowy z ludźmi Kościoła na Litwie, Łotwie, Białorusi i Ukrainie 1990–1991*, Warszawa 1991, p. 277.

⁵ A. Hlebowicz, *Kościół w niewoli. Kościół rzymskokatolicki na Białorusi i Ukrainie po II wojnie światowej*, Warszawa 1991, p. 148.

difficult conditions in which believers and their clergy found themselves under the influence of repression. Hlebowicz emphasizes how Catholic communities continued to function and preserve their traditions despite intense pressure from the state authorities.

It should also be noted that the post-war world order and new geopolitical realities significantly affected the position of the Roman Catholic Church in the USSR. This attracted the attention of researchers both from Ukraine and abroad. In his work *The Catholic Church in the USSR*,⁶ H. Khoruzhiy analysed the conditions in which the Church found itself under the Soviet regime, revealing the main aspects of church-state relations and their impact on religious freedom. B. Chaplitsky and I. Osypova focused on the fate of the Roman Catholic clergy, who suffered significant oppression, particularly in the western Ukrainian lands. The works of these and other Russian researchers highlight the policy of the Soviet government, which viewed Latin Rite Catholics as a potential threat from Poland, which required strict measures to limit their activities.

Researcher R. Dzwonkowski in a series of his works examined in detail the issues of repression, the conditions of existence of Roman Catholics, and the revival of the Catholic Church in the USSR. His works are an important source for understanding the attitude of the authorities toward Catholics, who were generally associated with 'Polishness'. Dzwonkowski in his works *Lexicon of the Polish Clergy Repressed in the USSR in 1939–1988*,⁷ *The Revival of the Catholic Church of the Latin Rite in the USSR*,⁸ *The Catholic Church in the USSR (1917–1939)*,⁹ *Religion and the Catholic Church in the USSR 1917–1991*,¹⁰ *The Fate of the Catholic Clergy in the USSR 1917–1939*¹¹ and *The Fate of the Catholic Clergy in the USSR in 1939–1987*¹² emphasizes the importance of the resilience of believers during the period of atheistic propaganda, who resisted pressure and preserved their faith. One of his studies is devoted to the characteristics of the Roman Catholic Church in the territory of the Ukrainian SSR during World War II and in the post-war years.¹³

⁶ H. Khoruzhiy, *Katolytska tserkva v SRSR. Istoriiia relihii v Ukraini*, in: *Tserkovna istoriia, Instytut relihiieznavstva filiiia Lvivskoho muzeiu istorii relihii*, vol. 1, eds. M. Kapralia, O. Kyrychuk, I. Orlevych, Lviv 2016, pp. 697–707.

⁷ R. Dzwonkowski, *Leksykon duchowieństwa polskiego represjonowanego w ZSRR 1939–1988*, Lublin 2003, p. 855.

⁸ Id., *Odrodzenie Kościoła katolickiego obrządku łacińskiego w ZSRR*, in: *Polacy w Kościele katolickim w ZSRR*, ed. ks. E. Walewander, Lublin 1991, pp. 213–214.

⁹ Id., *Kościół katolicki w ZSRR (1917–1939). Zarys historii*, Lublin 1997, pp. 59–107.

¹⁰ Id., *Religia i Kościół katolicki w ZSRR 1917–1991. Kronika*, Lublin 2010, pp. 33–37.

¹¹ Id., *Losy duchowieństwa katolickiego w ZSRR 1917–1939. Martyrologium*, Lublin 1998, p. 664.

¹² Id., *Duchowieństwo katolickie obrządku łacińskiego represjonowane w ZSRR w latach 1939–1987. Materiały do słownika biograficznego*, "Przegląd Wschodni", 6 (1999–2000) issue 3, pp. 523–627.

¹³ Id., *Odrodzenie Kościoła katolickiego na Ukrainie środkowej, południowej i wschodniej w czasie II wojny światowej i bezpośrednio po jej zakończeniu (1941–1948)*, in: *Pasterz i twierdza. Księga jubileuszowa dedykowana księdzu biskupowi Janowi Olszańskiemu ordynariuszowi w Kamieńcu Podolskim*, ed. J. Wołczański, Kraków–Kamieniec Podolski 2001, pp. 23–31.

Among contemporary Ukrainian researchers who have drawn attention to the situation of Roman Catholics in the Ukrainian SSR, it is worth mentioning P. Bondarchuk¹⁴ whose works cover the religious life of Catholics in Ukraine in the context of the political and cultural situation of the time. With his works, P. Bondarchuk laid the groundwork for further research aimed at objectively covering the religious situation in Ukraine, moving away from the dominant Soviet view of Catholicism. Polish researchers such as A. Hlebowicz,¹⁵ J. Dębiński,¹⁶ and W. Osadczy¹⁷ have compiled comprehensive studies that focus on the territorial and cultural aspects of the religious life of Roman Catholics in Ukraine, which significantly broadens the understanding of the confessional situation in the region. Their works are not limited to ethnic discourse but instead emphasize the peculiarities of the cultural environment in which the Catholic community functioned, as well as the role of religious practices in preserving national identity under Soviet restrictions.

The abandonment of the traditional approach, according to which Christian churches in Ukraine were viewed primarily through ethnic discourse, allowed the authors of such works as *History of the Church and Religious Thought in Ukraine*, *History of Religion in Ukraine*, and *History of the Church of Christ in Ukraine*¹⁸ to formulate a new approach focused on the territorial aspect. This approach made it possible to cover different denominations more broadly, paying attention not only to Orthodox, but also to Greek Catholics, Protestants, and Roman Catholics.

Among the important studies that reveal the historical development of religious denominations on the Ukrainian lands are works devoted to certain areas of Christianity: the history of the Orthodox Church, which is addressed by A. Smyrnov¹⁹ and the history of the Greek Catholic Church, which is covered by K. Budz²⁰ and

¹⁴ P. Bondarchuk, *Rymo-katolyky v URSR: osoblyvosti y tendentsii zmin u relihiinosti (druha polovyna 1940 – persha polovyna 1980-kh rr.*, “Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal”, 1 (2021) issue 556, pp. 57–72; id., *Rymo-katolyky v URSR (druha polovyna 1940-kh – persha polovyna 1980-kh rokiv)*, “Istoryko-politychni studii”, 1 (2018) issue 6, pp. 21–39.

¹⁵ A. Hlebowicz, *Kościół w niewoli: Kościół rzymskokatolicki na Białorusi i Ukrainie po II wojnie światowej*, Warszawa 1991, p. 148; id., *Polskie duchowieństwo katolickie na Białorusi i Ukrainie po II wojnie światowej*, in: *Polacy w Kościele katolickim w ZSRR*, ed. E. Walewander, Lublin 1991, pp. 175–185.

¹⁶ J. Dębiński, *Kościół katolicki obrządku łacińskiego na Ukrainie*, “Ateneum Kapłańskie”, 165 (2015) issue 1, pp. 50–79.

¹⁷ V. Osadchy, *Katolytska tserkva v Ukraini: istorychnyi narys*, Lutsk 2001, p. 112.

¹⁸ V. Ulianovskiy, O. Kryzhanovskiy, S. Plokhii, *Istoriia tserkvy ta relihiinoi dumky v Ukraini*, Kyiv 1994, p. 250; *Istoriia religii v Ukraini*, vol. 4, *Katolytyzm*, ed. P. Yarotskiy, Kyiv 2001; I. Isichenko, *Istoriia Khrystovoi Tserkvy v Ukraini*, Kharkiv 2003, p. 473.

¹⁹ A. Smyrnov, *Mizh khrestom, svastykoiu i chervonoiu zirkoiu: ukrainske pravoslavie v roky Druhoi svitovoi viiny*, Odesa 2021, p. 416; id., *Arkhypastyrska pratsia yepyskopa Pereiaslavskoho Mstyslava Skrypnyka v roky nimetskoï okupatsii*, “Naukovi zapysky Natsionalnoho universytetu «Ostrozka akademii». Serii «Istorychni nauky»”, 22 (2014) pp. 163–176.

²⁰ K. Budz, *Ukrainska Hreko-Katolytska Tserkva u Halychyni (1946–1968): stratehii vyzhyvannia ta oporu u pidpilli*, Kyiv 2016, p. 125.

V. Ilnytskyi. Special mention should also be made of the studies by I. Poizdnyk²¹ and A. Chornenkyi²² who examine the interaction between the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic churches, which is a valuable contribution to the study of interfaith relations in Ukraine.

The works of Soviet historians such as Y. Hryhulevych²³ are marked by bias, often distorting facts to fit official Soviet discourse and atheist propaganda. In the works of such authors, the Roman Catholic Church was portrayed as a 'hostile element' that had ties to the Western world and threatened the socialist system. However, after 1991, with the opening of archives and the restoration of historical memory, researchers were able to thoroughly analyse the anti-religious policy of the Soviet government, as reflected in the works of V. Baidych,²⁴ V. Baran,²⁵ P. Bondarchuk,²⁶ V. Voinalovych,²⁷ O. Hura,²⁸ Archbishop Ihor (Isichenko),²⁹

²¹ I. Poizdnyk, *Vidnosyny mizh Hreko-katolytskoiu ta Rymo-katolytskoiu tserkvamy na ukraïno-polskomu porubizhzi (1939–1946 rr.)*, Kyiv 2007, p. 20; id., *Istoriografii rozvytku vidnosyn hreko-katolytskoi ta rymo-katolytskoi tserkov u roky Druhoi svitovoi viiny*, "Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal", 4 (2009) pp. 184–198.

²² A. Chornenkyi, *Diiialnist Rymo-katolytskoi Tserkvy na koryst Ukrainskoi Hreko-Katolytskoi Tserkvy v 1946–1989 rokakh*, "Acta studiosa: Bohoslovskiyi naukovyi zbirnyk", 9 (2017) p. 115–138.

²³ Y. Hryhulevych, *Papstvo stolittia XX*, Kyiv 1988, p. 544.

²⁴ V. Baidych, *Antyrelihiina kampaniia radianskoi vlady u 1958–1964 rr. i rymo-katolytska tserkva v Ukraini*, "Naukovi zapysky Instytutu politychnykh i etnonatsionalnykh doslidzhen im. I. F. Kurasa", 2 (2011) pp. 295–309; id., *V borotbi za viru: rymo-katolytska tserkva v Ukraini (seredyna 1940-kh – persha polovyna 1960-kh rr.)*, Khmelnytskyi 2014, p. 479; id., *Rymo-katolytsyzm u konteksti rozvytku derzhavno-tserkovnykh stosunkiv v SRSR (1920–1960-ti rr.)*, "Istoriia Ukrainy. Malovidomi imena, podii, fakty", 36 (2008) pp. 294–315; id., *Rymo-katolytska tserkva v umovakh radianskoi relihiinoi polityky: ukrainskyi dosvid (seredyna 1940-kh – persha polovyna 1960-kh rokiv)*, Kamianets-Podilskyi 2012, p. 219; id., *Stanovyshche rymo-katolytskoho dukhovenstva v Ukraini v roky „khrushchovskoi vidlyhy” (1953–1957 rr.)*, "Hileia: naukovyi visnyk", 48 (2011) issue 6, pp. 172–179; id., *Rymo-katolytska tserkva v period radianskoi antytserkovnoi kampanii 1958–1964 rr.*, "Visnyk Kamianets-Podilskoho natsionalnoho universytetu im. Ivana Ohienka: istorychni nauky", 4 (2011) pp. 320–328.

²⁵ V. Baran, *Antytserkovna kampaniia na Ukraini v period khrushchovskoi "vidlyhy"*, in: *Istoriia relihii v Ukraini: Tezy povidomlen III kruhloho stolu*, Kyiv–Lviv 1993, pp. 14–15; id., *Vlada i tserkva: z istorii vzaiemyn u 1945–1965 rokakh*, "Suchasnist. Literatura, nauka, mystetstvo, suspilne zhyttia", 5 (1995) pp. 113–128; id., *Represii stalinskoho rezhymu shchodo Rymsko-katolytskoi tserkvy na Volyni i v Skhidnii Halychyni u 1939–1941 rr.*, "Komunizm. System – Ludzie – Dokumentacje", 3 (2014), pp. 49–63.

²⁶ P. Bondarchuk, *Rymo-katolyky v URSR: osoblyvosti y tendentsii zmin u relihiinosti (druha polovyna 1940 – persha polovyna 1980-kh rr.)*, "Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal", 1 (2021) pp. 57–72; id., *Rymo-katolyky v URSR (1945–1991)*, "Ukraina XX stolittia: kultura, ideolohiia, polityka", 27 (2023) p. 84; P. Bondarchuk, V. Danylenko, *Osoblyvosti relihiinoi sytuatsii v URSR (seredyna 1950-ykh – persha polovyna 1960-ykh rokiv)*, "Naukovyi visnyk Mykolaivskoho natsionalnoho universytetu imeni V. O. Sukhomlynskoho", 3 (2012) issue 33, p. 171; P. Bondarchuk, O. Shamrai, *Relihiine zhyttia hreko-katolykiv Halychyny ta Zakarpattia v umovakh radianskoi totalitarnoi systemy (seredyna 1940-kh – seredyna 1960-kh rokiv)*, "Kraieznavstvo", 1-2 (2023) p. 89.

O. Lysenko,³⁰ V. Rozhkov³¹ and V. Serhiychuk.³² These authors have studied in detail the consequences of Soviet repression for religious communities, highlighting the harsh persecution of the Catholic clergy and restrictions on freedom of religion. O. Dovbnia³³ has made an important contribution to the study of historiography on political repression of the Roman Catholic Church in the Ukrainian SSR during World War II and the first post-war years. Her work covers a wide range of aspects of repression against the Catholic clergy and highlights the methods by which the Soviet authorities sought to subjugate religious communities to their goals. Also important is the opinion of the researcher A. Zhyviuk, who concludes that the Communist Party nomenclature deliberately and systematically used representatives of religious denominations, both Orthodox and Catholic.³⁴ He emphasizes that religious communities were viewed by the Soviet authorities exclusively as a tool for strengthening the totalitarian regime, and their leaders as potential resources for promoting party ideology, which indicates a thoughtful approach to the religious policy of the Soviet government.

Not all of the researchers' conclusions are universally recognized and indisputable. For example, B. Mikhalevskyi in his work *Attitudes toward Religion and Faith in the USSR on the Basis of the Constitutions of 1918–1977* points out that the Soviet government committed one of the first historical crimes in the USSR when it persecuted Poles as an ethnic community for their nationality. The author

²⁷ V. Voinalovych, *Dolia rymo-katolytskoho kultu v Ukraini v umovakh polityky derzhavnoho ateizmu (kinets 50-kh – persha polovyna 60-kh rr.)*, "Istoriia Ukrainy: Malovidomi imena, podii, fakty", 20/21 (2003) pp. 405–425.

²⁸ O. Hura, *Vzaïemovidnosyny radianskoi derzhavy i rymo-katolytskoi tserkvy v URSR u doslidzhenniakh suchasnoi ukrainskoi istoriografii*, "Istorychna pamiat", 2 (2011) issue 26, pp. 87–98; id., *Diïalnist svitskykh orhanizatsii katolykiv v URSR naprykintsi 1940-ykh – 1950-ykh rokiv*, "Ukrainske relihiieznastvo", 73 (2015) pp. 142–149; id., *Dolia rymo-katolytskykh hromad v period forsovanoho antyrelihiinoho nastupu radianskoi derzhavy (1950-ti – persha polovyna 1960-kh rr.)*, "Ukraina i Vatykan: do i pislia Druhoho Vatykanskooho Soboru", (2013) p. 504; id., *Polityka radianskoi vlady shchodo rymo-katolytskoi tserkvy u druhii polovyni 40-kh – pershii polovyni 50-kh rokiv XX stolittia*, "Istorychna pamiat", 1 (2009) pp. 60–68; id., *Stanovysheche rymo-katolytskoi tserkvy v Ukraini v umovakh antyrelihiinoi polityky radianskoi derzhavy (kinets 50-kh – persha polovyna 60-kh rokiv XX stolittia)*, "Nauka. Relihiia. Suspilstvo", 4 (2008) pp. 77–83.

²⁹ I. Isichenko, *Istoriia Khrystovoi Tserkvy v Ukraini*, Kharkiv 1999, p. 472.

³⁰ O. Lysenko, *Poza Bozhymy zapovidamy: relihiina polityka totalitarnykh rezhymiv v Ukraini u 1939–1946 rokakh*, Kyiv 2023, p. 436.

³¹ W. Rożkow, *Polityka władz sowieckich wobec Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego w okresie kampanii antyreligijnej 1958–1964*, "Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość", 1 (2021) pp. 209–226.

³² V. Serhiichuk, *U borotbi za ridnu viru. Rymo-katolyky Ukrainy zavzhdy buli neskhytni*, Kyiv 2001, p. 228.

³³ O. Dovbnia, *Politychni represii proty Rymo-katolytskoi tserkvy v URSR (1939–1953 rr.): novitnia vitchyzniana istoriografia*, "Naukovi zapysky Ternopilskoho natsionalnoho pedahohichnoho universytetu im. Volodymyra Hnatiuka. Seriia Istoriia", 2 (2017) issue 3, pp. 66–71.

³⁴ A. Zhyviuk, *"Instrumentalizovana tserkva": vykorystannia kompartiinoiu nomenklaturou predstavnykiv relihiinykh konfesyii u zbroyinii borotbi na Zakhidnii Volyni y Polissi u 1940-kh rr.*, "Z arkhiviv VUCHK, HPU, NKVD, KHB", 2 (2009) issue 33, p. 20.

emphasizes that the Poles were one of the first religious and national groups to be repressed, and this case is a clear indication of a repressive policy that was directed not only against religious faith but also against national identity.

Analysing the relationship between the USSR and the Vatican is an important aspect in understanding the political repression of Roman and Greek Catholics. The Soviet authorities perceived these denominations as potential agents of the Vatican, which created the basis for numerous repressive measures. Soviet scholarly literature, in particular the works of E. Winter,³⁵ J. Hryhulevych,³⁶ L. Kyzia and M. Kovalenko,³⁷ N. Kozachyshyn and O. Matyukhin,³⁸ S. Lozinsky,³⁹ A. Santsevich's dissertation *Subversive Activities of the Vatican and the Struggle of the Workers of People's Democratic Poland Against Catholic Reaction (1945–1953)* resented the Vatican as an 'enemy force' that undermined the foundations of the socialist system. Accusations aimed at discrediting Catholics also included rhetoric about the 'harmful influence' of Catholic ideas on Soviet society.

Soviet researchers, including O. Vyshyvanyuk,⁴⁰ S. Horbach⁴¹ and E. Bystrytska⁴² consistently accused the Holy See of pursuing a 'reactionary' and 'hostile' policy toward the USSR and other countries of the socialist camp. Their works were shaped by the official Soviet ideology, which interpreted the Vatican as a source of threat to communist countries, especially in the context of the policy of the Roman Catholic Church, which had close ties with the Vatican. The fundamental document in this matter was Directive No 140 of 31 October 1944, issued by the People's Commissar for State Security of the USSR V. Merkulov, which contained an 'Overview of the anti-Soviet activities of the Vatican and the Roman Catholic clergy in the USSR'.⁴³ This directive clearly reflects the attitude of the Soviet authorities to Catholic Church structures as forces that potentially undermine the stability of the socialist regime.

The functioning of the Roman Catholic and Greek Catholic Churches, which maintained direct links with the independent Vatican, was indeed perceived by

³⁵ E. Vynter, *Polytyka Vatykana v otnosheniy SSSR. 1917–1968*, Moskva 1977, p. 252.

³⁶ J. Hryhulevych, *Papstvo. Stolittia XX*, Kyiv 1988, p. 544.

³⁷ L. Kyzia, M. Kovalenko, *Vikova borotba ukrainskoho narodu proty Vatykanu*, Kyiv 1959, p. 292.

³⁸ N. Kozachyshyn, O. Matiukhina, "Skhidna polityka" *Vatykanu*, Lviv 1989, p. 72.

³⁹ S. Lozinskyi, *Ystoria papstva. Vyd. Trete*, Moskva 1986, p. 382.

⁴⁰ O. Vyshavaniuk, *Etnokonfesiini protsesy v radianskii Ukraini: mekhanizmy, kharakter i spetsyfika funktsionuvannia khrystianskykh tserkov ta relihiinykh orhanizatsii v pershi povoienni roky (1944–1953 rr.)*, in: *Ukraina i Vatykan*, vol. I, *Ukrainsko-Vatykanski vidnosyny v konteksti suspilnykh i mizhkonfesiinykh problem*, Ivano-Frankivsk–Kyiv 2008, pp. 42–51.

⁴¹ S. Horbach, *Deiaki aspekty vidnosyn mizh Vatykanom ta SRSR pislia Druhoi svitovoi viiny (1945–1953)*, "Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal", 6 (1998) issue 423, pp. 68–76; id., *Skhidnoievropeiska polityka Vatykanu ta Radianskyi Soiuz (1954–1958 rr.)*, "Ukrainskyi istorychnyi zhurnal", 5 (1999) issue 428, pp. 57–71.

⁴² E. Bystrytska, *Skhidna polityka Vatykanu v konteksti vidnosyn Sviatoho Prestolu z Rosiieiu ta SRSR (1878–1964 rr.)*, Ternopil 2009, p. 416.

⁴³ *Likvidatsiia UHKTs (1939–1946): dokumenty radianskykh orhaniv derzhavnoi bezpeky*, vol. 1, ed. W. Serhiichuk, Kyiv 2006, p. 232–240.

the Soviet authorities as a threat. The Vatican, as an autonomous religious and political force, questioned the monopoly of Soviet ideology, particularly in the spiritual sphere. Looking at the relationship between the USSR and the Vatican and analysing the works of the above-mentioned researchers, we can note that their works fully reflected the official position of the state. Therefore, the study of these authors allows us to see how Soviet scholarship sought to discredit the activities of the Holy See, thus justifying repressions against the Catholic clergy. This frees us from the need for a deeper analysis of the Vatican's policy itself but instead opens up a broader understanding of the approaches of Soviet propaganda and its measures aimed at eliminating religious institutions.

Of particular interest to researchers is religious life in western Ukraine, where the population maintained a high level of religiosity even under pressure. In his work, A. Morenchuk⁴⁴ characterized the anti-church campaign conducted in these lands in 1953–1964, highlighting the Soviet authorities' desire to reduce the influence of religion through repression and restrictions on religious activity. Morenchuk notes that despite constant persecution, Western Ukrainian believers remained committed to Catholic traditions and continued to perform religious rites in secret.

The problems faced by the Lviv Diocese are reflected in the works of both domestic and foreign researchers. Among the authors who have devoted their works to this topic, the works of J. Krętosz stand out. In his studies, such as *Liquidation of the Scientific Staff of Lviv in July 1941. The Extraordinary Connection of the Eastern and Western Frontiers. The Influence of Lvivites on the Development of Science and Culture in Upper Silesia after 1945*,⁴⁵ *The Latin Rite Cathedral in Lviv and its rector, Father Rafał Kernytskyi*,⁴⁶ *Committee of the Roman Catholic Cathedral Church in Lviv. Meetings of the executive body and the audit commission of the department 1965–1991*,⁴⁷ Krętosz describes in detail the tendencies toward the destruction of the Roman Catholic clergy in Lviv, which became the object of the aggressive policy of the Soviet government. The author also pays special attention to the ill-treatment of the local intelligentsia, which was aimed at eliminating not only the religious but also the cultural elite associated with capitalist society. In his works, he provides a list of victims among the clergy who died because of the actions of the Soviet and German authorities aimed at the systematic destruction of religious centres and their representatives, which led to severe consequences for local Catholics and Catholic heritage.

Historiographical data based on archival documents are presented by B. Kumor in his work *Lviv Archdiocese of the Latin Rite in the Light of the Diocesan*

⁴⁴ A. Morenchuk, *Tserkovno-relihiine zhyttia v Ukraini v 1953–1964 rokakh (na materialakh zakhidnykh oblastei)*, Luts'k 2009, p. 196.

⁴⁵ J. Krętosz, *Likwidacja kadry naukowej Lwowa w lipcu 1941 roku*, in: *Niezwykła więź Kresów Wschodnich i Zachodnich. Wpływ lwowian na rozwój nauki i kultury na Górnym Śląsku po 1945 roku*, eds. K. Heska-Kwaśniewicz, A. Ratuszna and E. Żurawska, Katowice 2012, pp. 13–21.

⁴⁶ Id., *Katedra obrządku łacińskiego we Lwowie i jej proboszcz o. Rafał Kiernicki OFM Conv. w latach 1948–1991*, Katowice 2003, p. 243.

⁴⁷ Id., *Komitet Rzymskokatolickiej Katedry we Lwowie. Posiedzenia Organu Wykonawczego i Komisji Rewizyjnej Komitetu Katedry 1965–1991*, Katowice 2004, p. 137.

Schematics of 1939.⁴⁸ The author presents comprehensive statistics on the number of parishes, clergy, and churches that remained in the diocese, which allows us to track the policy of atheization of society and nationalization of church property. These data are an important source for understanding the then current situation in the religious life of the region and the role of the Catholic Church in society.

In the early 1990s, at the initiative of Z. Zhelinsky, a significant project of a collective monograph was implemented, which is dedicated to the religious situation in the borderlands of the Second Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth during the World War II. The monograph, published in 1992⁴⁹ reveals in detail the features of the religious life of various church units within the Lviv and Vilnius Roman Catholic Metropolia during 1939–1945. This study allows us to better understand how the Catholic Church developed in the difficult conditions of war and occupation, as well as the oppression and persecution that its representatives and communities experienced.

The famous historian S. Bizun in his work *History marked by a cross. Memories of the life of the Catholic Church in the Lviv land 1939–1945* provides valuable information about the situation of the Roman Catholic Church in this area. One of the important aspects of his research is the characterization of the activities of the clergy and laity of the Roman Catholic community. The author thoroughly analyses the reasons for the difficult situation that arose in the Lviv Diocese during World War II, presenting data on the state of the Church before the war and the first steps of the Soviet authorities on the road to its liquidation. Bizuń's work allows us to realize the significant impact of the events of those years on the development of Catholicism in the region.

Research by historian J. Wołczański⁵⁰ devoted to the activities of the Lviv clergy during the Second World War, provides important data on the number of clergy, monastic orders and religious communities, and also characterizes the condition of

⁴⁸ B. Kumor, *Archidiecezja Lwowska obrządku łacińskiego w świetle schematyzmu archidiecezjalnego z 1939*, "Folia Historica Cracoviensia", 3 (1996) pp. 265–287.

⁴⁹ *Życie religijne pod okupacją 1939–1945: metropolie wileńska i lwowska, zakony*, ed. Z. Zieliński, Katowice 1992, p. 505.

⁵⁰ J. Wołczański, *Aresztowanie i proces ks. Hieronima Kwiatkowskiego we Lwowie po II wojnie światowej*, in: *Wytrwać i przetrwać jak Bóg daje. Świadkowie Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego na Ukrainie sowieckiej 1917–1991*, ed. J. Wołczański, Kraków 2010, p. 471–494; id., *Aresztowanie, proces i zesłanie o. Kazimierza Lendziona CSsR w Związku Sowieckim w roku 1952*, in: *Wytrwać i przetrwać jak Bóg daje*, pp. 495–507; id., *Bazylika Metropolitalna obrządku łacińskiego we Lwowie*, "Radość Wiary", 1 (2001) issue 29, p. 10; id., *Historia Kościoła we Lwowie od 1939 roku*, "Radość Wiary", 2 (1996) issue 11, p. 11; id., *Martyrologium duchowieństwa archidiecezji lwowskiej obrządku łacińskiego w latach 1939–1945*, in: *Prorocy Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej XX wieku*, ed. S. Napiórkowski, Lublin 2009, p. 272; id., *Między zagładą a przetrwaniem*, Kraków 2005, p. 262; id., *Katalog grobów duchowieństwa i siostr zakonnych obrządku łacińskiego i greckokatolickiego na Cmentarzu Janowskim we Lwowie*, "Nasza Przyszłość", 88 (1997) pp. 254–295; id., *Kapłani męczennicy. Świadkowie wiary kościoła lwowskiego ksiądz kanclerz Zygmunt Hahuniewicz (1889–1974)*, "Radość Wiary", 3–4 (1999) issue 23–24, p. 17; id., *Ks. kanonik Augustyn Mednis (1932–2007). Człowiek – kapłan – humanista*, in: *Fides ars scientia. Studia dedykowane pamięci Księdza Kanonika Augustyna Mednisa*, eds. A. Betlej, J. Skrabski, Tarnów 2008, pp. 13–34;

churches and the fate of church property, which was often destroyed or subjected to acts of vandalism. Wołczański also investigated the Polish cemetery in Lviv, where the victims of those tragic events are buried. The author also touches on later periods, in particular, the activities of Father Augustyn Mednis, who made a significant contribution to the preservation of the cultural and historical heritage of the Roman Catholic Church in Lviv and Luts'k. This study is also important for understanding the situation of Catholics in different periods.

Based on archival documents, the fate of the Roman Catholic Church in Soviet Lviv after the death of Joseph Stalin was investigated by P. Olechowski,⁵¹ Commissioner of the Council for Religious Affairs of the Lviv Region. The research of this historian allows us to better understand how changes in the political course affected the situation of religious institutions in the region. Overall, these historical works create a holistic picture of the influence of political and social processes on religious life in Western Ukrainian regions, which helps to better understand the specifics of the development of the Catholic Church in the difficult period of the 20th century.

For the study of the activities of the Roman Catholic Church during the Soviet period, biographical works about prominent spiritual leaders, which were studied by K. Prokop in the book *Archbishops of Halychyna and Lviv of the Latin Rite*⁵² are valuable. Their example was a model for priests who, despite the risks and repressions, continued to hold divine services, provided moral and material support to their communities, which added faith and strength to local parishioners in those difficult times. Figures such as these bishops become symbols of spiritual stability and steadfastness, because it was their activities that contributed to the preservation of the Catholic Church during totalitarian oppression. They help us understand the methods by which the communist authorities attempted to suppress religious organizations, and how the Church, clergy, and laity fought to preserve faith and tradition, often risking their own lives.

The clergy and faithful of the Lviv Diocese were subjected to persecution by the Soviet authorities. The oppressions included the nationalization of church property, arrests and expulsions of clergy, and prohibitions of religious ceremonies. The issue of persecutions in these regions was thoroughly examined by W. Sztelnicki in his works *Archbishop in Exile Yevheniy Bazyak Metropolitan of Lviv*⁵³ and *Forgotten Lviv Hero Fr. Stanislav Frankl*,⁵⁴ J. Zimny *Lviv Hero Fr. Stanislav*

id., "Przybysz z Północy". W 60 rocznicę urodzin ks. Augustyna Mednisa, "Gość Niedzielny", 69 (1992) no. 14, p. 6.

⁵¹ P. Olechowski, *Między ołtarzem a gabinetem partyjnym. Kościół rzymskokatolicki w sowieckim Lwowie w latach 1953–1959 w świetle raportów pełnomocnika Rady ds. Kultów Religijnych w obwodzie lwowskim*, "Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość", 1 (2017) issue 29, pp. 176–201.

⁵² K. Prokop, *Arcybiskupi haliцьcy i lwowscy obrządku łacińskiego. Szkice biograficzne*, Ostróg 2010, p. 449.

⁵³ W. Sztelnicki, *Arcybiskup wygnaniec Eugeniusz Baziak metropolita lwowski*, Kraków 1989, p. 205.

⁵⁴ Id., *Zapomniany lwowski bohater ks. Stanisław Frankl*, Roma 1983, p. 239.

Frankl,⁵⁵ J. Waligóra,⁵⁶ K. Prokop,⁵⁷ J. Żurek,⁵⁸ A. Lazar⁵⁹ and F. Plyachek.⁶⁰ These researchers paid special attention to the activities of Archbishop Yevheniy Bazyak and Father Stanisław Frankl. In particular, the work of M. Leszczyński, *Archbishop Metropolitan Yevheniy Bazyak (1890–1962)*⁶¹ reveals an example of courage and devotion to his faith, which became common to many priests who continued their pastoral ministry despite the threat of arrests, repressions, and eviction.

The work *Biographical Dictionary of the Clergy of the Lviv Metropolis of the Latin Rite of Victims of the Second World War 1939–1945*⁶² is a valuable source for scholars, as it collects information about the clergy who were subjected to repressions and highlights their contribution to the preservation of the church in conditions of repressions and persecutions. For a deeper understanding of the situation of the Catholic clergy in the post-war years, the works of J. Wołczański and I. Iwaszkiw also play a significant role. They contain eyewitness accounts and memoirs of priests, among which I. Iwaszkiw's work on Bishop Jan Tsiensky is particularly worth noting. This publication is remarkably valuable for a deep understanding of the influence of the Soviet regime on the clergy and on religious life in general.⁶³ One of the promising and yet insufficiently researched areas that requires further attention is presented in the work of L. Strilchuk.⁶⁴ The author's research focuses on the issues of memory and commemoration of the numerous victims of repression, which included both clergy and believers of the Roman Catholic Church. This problem requires a comprehensive approach, since in the historical memory of Ukrainian society the topic of repressions against religious communities remained silent for a long time. L. Strilchuk analyses how testimonies about the tragic events of those years are preserved and transmitted, and also the

⁵⁵ J. Żimny, *Lwowski bohater ks. Stanisław Frankl (1903–1944)*, Sandomierz 2000, p. 87.

⁵⁶ J. Waligóra, *Cierpiący pasterz. Ks. arcybiskup-metropolita lwowski Eugeniusz Baziak (1890–1962)*, Rzeszów 2013, p. 172.

⁵⁷ K. Prokop, *Złączeni węzłem apostołskiej sukcesji: metropolici lwowscy Eugeniusz Baziak i Marian Jaworski: w rocznice ich święceń biskupich*, Kraków 2019, p. 246.

⁵⁸ J. Żurek, *Lwowskie losy abp. Eugeniusza Baziaka*, "Biuletyn Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej", 12 (2004) pp. 31–43.

⁵⁹ A. Łazar, *Arcybiskup Eugeniusz Baziak (1890–1962)*, "Rocznik Lubaczowski", 7 (1997) pp. 158–172.

⁶⁰ F. Płaczek, *Bolesław Twardowski arcybiskup metropolita lwowski 1864–1944*, "Studia Lubaczoviensia", 2 (1984) pp. 75–88.

⁶¹ M. Leszczyński, *Arcybiskup Metropolita Eugeniusz Baziak (1890–1962). Życie i działalność duszpasterska*, "Currenda", (1988) issue 7–9, pp. 348–362.

⁶² *Słownik biograficzny duchowieństwa metropolii lwowskiej obrządku łacińskiego ofiar II wojny światowej 1939–1945*, eds. J. Krętosz, M. Pawłowiczowa, Opole 2007, p. 450.

⁶³ I. Iwaszkiw, *Biskup Jan Cieński (1905–1992). Posługa duszpasterska na Ukrainie Zachodniej po II wojnie światowej*, in: *Wytrwać i przetrwać jak Bóg daje. Świadkowie Kościoła rzymskokatolickiego na Ukrainie sowieckiej 1917–1991*, ed. J. Wołczański, Kraków 2010, p. 9–48.

⁶⁴ L. Strilchuk, *Polityka pamięci shchodo represii, vchynenykh radianskoiu vladoiu stosovno vlasnykh hromadian, yaki u roky viiny pobuvaly u viiskovomu poloni ta v okupatsii*, in: *Radianski represii u zakhidnykh oblastakh Ukrainy (1939–1953): istoriia, osobystosti, pamiat: kolektyvna monohrafiia*, ed. V. Il'nytskiy, Riga 2022, pp. 63–81.

modern mechanisms of remembrance, which is of particular importance for studies of religious identity and spiritual revival in the post-Soviet space.

At the same time, O. Kalishchuk's⁶⁵ research reviews the available historical sources and factual material, which allow us to identify regional peculiarities and differences in the functioning of the Roman Catholic Church in Ukraine under the repressive policies of the Soviet regime. Kalishchuk emphasizes that the collected data allow us not only to compare how the Church operated in different regions, but also to understand how the regional context influenced the methods of persecution, resistance measures, and the reaction of Catholic communities.

Such works allow us to trace how, despite powerful atheist propaganda, church leaders remained a pillar of support for their communities, preserved their religious identity, organized underground services, provided believers with spiritual support, and inspired resilience in the face of difficulties. Thanks to this, researchers can better understand how faith and religious community helped people survive tragic circumstances.

Thus, these numerous studies constitute an important scientific basis that allows us to more deeply understand the scale of the influence of the Soviet regime on the Catholic clergy in Ukraine. They also reveal the unwavering spirit and loyalty to their mission that characterized the Catholic clergy during one of the most difficult periods in the history of the church.

In general, modern historiography covering the activities of the Roman Catholic Church in the western Ukrainian regions in the twentieth century contains both deep, fundamental studies and less detailed works. Their scientific quality and depth of coverage of the topic vary depending on the availability of archival materials, methodology and national perspectives from which the history of the church under the occupation regimes is analysed. However, despite significant achievements, there remains great potential for a more comprehensive and integrated approach to this issue, which would allow for a multidimensional understanding of the role of the Roman Catholic clergy.

Today, there is a need for a comprehensive study of the activities of the Roman Catholic clergy in the Lviv Archdiocese, with an emphasis on comparative analysis that would take into account regional characteristics, as well as internal and external factors that influenced the development of the church structure and the spiritual life of parishes. Such analysis is important not only for studying the local features of the Church activities in different regions, but also for revealing significant confessional differences between the Roman Catholic Church and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. Comparing these two faiths will help to understand how they interacted with different political regimes, in particular the Soviet one, which sought to repress or completely eradicate religious activity.

Such studies would also shed light on the specifics of the Church's influence on the social structure of local communities, cultural exchange between different confessions, and the role of religious identity in shaping public resistance to

⁶⁵ O. Kalishchuk, *Rymo-katolytska tserkva v Ukraini u druhii polovyni XX st. u suchasnomu istoriografichnomu dyskursi: rehionalnyi zriz*, "Litopys Volyni", 29 (2023) pp. 58–63.

atheistic propaganda. An in-depth study of this issue would allow restoring and preserving the historical memory of the contribution of the Roman Catholic clergy to the social and cultural life of Western Ukrainian lands, thereby providing an objective and multidimensional coverage of their role in difficult historical periods.

A more holistic study would not only contribute to a deeper understanding of the history of the church in Ukraine, but would also provide a broader context for modern religious studies and historical research, in particular on the relationship between religion, culture, and politics in the Eastern European region.

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